

My time working with The Tudor Tailor was split into two halves, the first of which was a three-week placement at Ninya's studio in March 2014. During this placement, I began by helping Ninya to create some of the many layers of her Catherine Parr recreation – really being thrown in at the deep end with historically-accurate sewing techniques and practices (which I loved!). While we worked, I was able to ask Ninya questions about all aspects of her work, ranging from Tudor design and construction techniques to how The Tudor Tailor operates as a business. The information I learned on this placement became invaluable in my final year at university and will continue to be so in the future.

In the final week of this placement, I was asked to create an outfit for each of Ninya's daughters to wear when they attended fairs and events. I really enjoyed the detail and hand finishing that went into these garments (plus tiny garments are just so cute when they are finished!) It was during this I began to learn more about *The Tudor Child* projects and exhibitions and became interested in a set of clothing accounts Ninya had detailing the outfits that the Willoughby children of Wollaton Hall wore in the 1550s. Wollaton Hall is located in my university town of Nottingham and conveniently only a few minutes away from The Tudor Tailor's studio. It was at this point Ninya mentioned they were considering asking a local student to take on the project of designing and producing an outfit from these accounts to be used in future exhibitions and I jumped at the chance!

This led to my second placement with The Tudor Tailor, starting in September 2015 and running the whole of my final year at university. Using the clothing accounts as my main source along with other historical accounts, portraits and clothing remains as other inspiration, I worked closely with Ninya to design and create one of the outfits described in the accounts. Both Jane and Ninya were very helpful in pointing me in the right direction to find the evidence and inspiration I needed for the project, but they left many of the design decisions to me. I thought this was a great approach as it meant I learnt how to apply historical research to my designs in a way that was accurate but still creative. Most importantly, I learnt how to go about this process for myself, although Jane and Ninya were always there to ask if I needed help or to rein in my ideas if they felt I was going in the wrong direction.

Once an outfit was settled on, I began making the garments and bringing Margaret Willoughby to life. I used this project as one of my final degree pieces, so it was something I spent a lot of time on and it came to mean a great deal to me. Throughout this process, I was introduced to many other experts in the historical recreation field who could help to create or offer advice on any parts of the garment that I could not make for myself.

The thing that I enjoyed most about this project was the huge amount of different historical processes and techniques that I learnt about and put into practice – all things I probably would have never considered if I was making a modern garment.

Now I have finished university, the skills I learnt researching and creating this garment continue to influence my making. Technical abilities aside, I was also hugely inspired by the attitude and dedication that Jane and Ninya have towards running their business and striving for the absolute best they can create.