

## BALLAD #2: THE DEATH OF QUEEN JANE (XVII century)



A version of this ballad appears as early as 1612. It is reprinted in *Old Ballads* (1723). This is Child Ballad #170.

The Queen Jane referred to is Jane Seymour, third of Henry VIII's six wives, and mother to his only legitimate son, Edward VI. Jane bore Edward on October 12, 1537 and died on October 24. There were rumors that surgery was involved in the birth (i.e. that it was cesarean) from which Queen Jane died. The rumors were denied

Jane Seymour (c. 1508 – 24 October 1537) was Queen of England as the third wife of King Henry VIII of England from their marriage on 30 May 1536 until her death the next year. She became queen following the execution of Henry's second wife, Anne Boleyn. She died of postnatal complications less than two weeks after the birth of her only child, the future King Edward VI. She was the only wife of Henry to receive a queen's funeral or to be buried beside him in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

Jane's labour had been difficult, lasting two days and three nights, probably because the baby was not well positioned. She died on 24 October 1537 at Hampton Court Palace. Within a few weeks, there were conflicting accounts of the cause of her death. More recently, various speculations have been made. According to King Edward's biographer Jennifer Loach, her death may have been due to an infection from a retained placenta.

Jane gave the King the son he so desperately desired, helped to restore Mary to the succession and her father's affections, and used her influence to bring about the advancement of her family.



**Divorced, beheaded and died**  
**Divorced, beheaded, survived**  
I'm Henry VIII, I had 6 sorry wives  
Some might say I ruined their lives...

\_\_\_\_\_ was one

She failed to give me a son  
I had to ask her for a divorce  
That broke her poor heart of course

Young \_\_\_\_\_, she was two  
Had a daughter, the best she could do  
I said she flirted with some other man  
And off for the chop went dear Anne

Lovely \_\_\_\_\_ was three

The love of a lifetime for me  
She gave me a son, little prince Ed  
Then poor old Jane went and dropped dead

**Divorced, beheaded and died**  
**Divorced, beheaded, survived...**

\_\_\_\_\_ came at four

I fell for a portrait I saw  
Then laid eyes on her face and cried "She's a horse!  
I must have another divorce!"

\_\_\_\_\_ was five

A child of 19, so alive  
She flirted with others, no way to behave  
The axe sent young Cath to her grave

\_\_\_\_\_, she was last

By then all my best days were past  
I lay on my deathbed aged just 55  
Lucky young Catherine, the last, stayed alive

**Divorced, beheaded and died**  
**Divorced, beheaded, survived...**

**Catherine Howard**



**Catherine Parr**



**Catherine of Aragon**



**Anne Boleyn**



**Jane Seymour**



**Anne Cleves**



# The Death of Queen Jane (version by Oscar Isaac - 2013)

Queen Jane lay in labor full nine days or more  
'Til her women grew so tired, they could no longer there  
They could no longer there

"Good women, good women, good women that you may be  
Will you open my right side and find my baby?  
And find my baby

"Oh no, " cried the women, "That's a thing that can never be  
We will call on King Henry and hear what he may say  
And hear what he may say"

King Henry was sent for, King Henry he did come  
Saying, "What does ail you my lady? Your eyes, they look so dim  
Your eyes, they look so dim"

"King Henry, King Henry, will you do one thing for me?  
Will you open my right side and find my baby  
And find my baby"

"Oh no, cried King Henry, "That's a thing that I can never do  
If I lose the flower of England, I shall lose the branch too  
I shall lose the branch too"

There was fiddling, aye, and dancing on the day the babe was born  
But poor Queen Jane beloved lay cold as a stone  
Lay cold as a stone

