

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Scrinium presents to Her Majesty the Queen the “Petition of the Nobility of England to Pope Clement VII asking for the annulment of Henry VIII’s marriage with Catherine of Aragon”**

**On September 3, the perfect replica of the “*Address of the Peers of England to Pope Clement VII asking for the annulment of King Henry VIII’s marriage to Catherine of Aragon*”, produced by Scrinium, the Vatican Secret Archives’ trust company for the project Exemplaria Praetiosa, will be presented to Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II via the Royal Librarian, Hon Lady Jane Roberts and will become part of the Royal Library’s heritage at Windsor.**

The gift is the reproduction of a key document in the history of the English Church and of the later relationships between England and Europe, standing at a turning point in the history of the Anglican schism. Timing the five-hundredth anniversary of the sovereign’s accession, this outstanding historical testimony is finally restored to England in the shape a facsimile perfectly reproducing the ancient document. The original parchment letter bears an extraordinary set of 83 wax seals and is currently conserved in perfect conditions by the Secret Archives of the Vatican.

Scrinium, the publishing company which supported the project and achieved the work in cooperation with the Vatican Secret Archives, decided to take on such an important initiative which will allow the highest cultural institutions in England to have at their disposals, after 500 years, an invaluable tool for the study of a crucial page of history.

The document, before its final acquisition as a property of the Royal Library, the Royal House’s private collection, will be exhibited at the British Library in a special glass case, purpose-made by the famous glassworks Venini of Murano.

The event of the presentation to the Queen Elizabeth II of the Petition sets forth the cultural relevance of the Project “Exemplaria Praetiosa Archivi Secreti Vaticani” and the worldwide attention that Scrinium’s work keeps receiving for the extraordinarily high quality of its achievements which are the result of long and accurate researches by most qualified scholars and art historians.

## **Speech for Scrinium**

*drafted by  
David Starkey*

2009 is the five-hundredth anniversary of the accession of King Henry VIII and this magnificent exhibition here at the British Library is only one of a series of commemorative events in Britain and throughout the world. Scrinium is very grateful to the British Library for allowing this presentation to take place in such an appropriate setting.

We commemorate Henry's reign because it is a turning point in the English past: in the history of the English Church and England's relations with Europe in particular. The key event in both is the king's divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and his remarriage to Anne Boleyn.

Rome was at the heart of the crisis over the Divorce and its archives hold many of the most important documents. Scrinium, in association with the Secret Archives of the Vatican, is proud to have produced this facsimile of the Petition of the Nobility of England to Pope Clement VII. The Petition, which dates from July 1530, is the most spectacular document in the history of the Divorce and its launch this last June in the Papal Chancery in Rome attracted widespread scholarly and media attention.

The public launch was followed by a private presentation of Exemplar Number I in Arabic numerals of the Facsimile to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. Scrinium is therefore honoured and delighted, in advance of the English launch of the Facsimile this coming autumn, to present Exemplar Number I in Latin numerals to Her Majesty The Queen. And we are most grateful to the Hon Lady Roberts, the Royal Librarian, for coming here today to receive the Facsimile on behalf of Her Majesty and the Royal Library.

Would you please receive this with our warmest thanks?