

Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria

Ministry of High Education and Scientific Research



University of Saida

Faculty of Arts, and Languages

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Section of English



Political and Religious Reformation Under the Tudors (1485-1603)

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Candidacy for the Degree of
Master LMD in British Civilization

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Academic Year 2014/2015

Achnowledgements

This paper could not have been written without the tireless and enthusiastic support of whom I have been privileged to have as my supervisor Dr.M.Boulenouar. I also have been met with great deal of kindness and generosity in the course of writing this research paper by a great number of friends and classmates who have kindly given valuable support in gathering helpful information and reliable resources, moreover I'm quite grateful and mostly indebted to my beloved parents for their constant encouragement and love.

Dedications

It is with my deepest gratitude and warmest affection that I dedicate this thesis to my two candles that light my path in this life; my dear father and my beloved mother for their admirable and endless encouragement, furthermore, I would like to dedicate this modest work to my respectful supervisor who has been a constant and a great source of inspiration. To Almighty God for allowing and blessing this work till the end, and last but not least, I dedicate this work to my closest friends, Asma, Fatima and Sahla, my sweet sister 'Ferial' and my beloved brother 'Mohamed' who have been helping me along with the production of this thesis.

Abstract

In my research paper, i have chosen to speak about one of the most famous royal families that ruled England for approximately 118 and the Religious and Political Reformation that occurred under each monarch of the Tudor house.

The Tudor period is described as an everlasting and full of events period that started with the first Tudor king and ended with a disappointed Tudor queen, yet helpful and precise introduction of the Tudor family, along with some biographies about the five Tudor monarchs: Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward V, Mary I and finally Elizabeth I is essential for a full understanding of that period, this great family had come to rule in the hard way, in other words the birth and most importantly survival of this dynasty was a hard mission putted on the shoulders of not only the male members of the family but also the female ones.

Moreover, in this thesis I will deal with the different reformations that happened during the Tudor Period and how it differentiate under each monarch and ultimately those political and religious reformation that contributed into shifting a medieval England into a modern England according to the whims of the Tudor Monarchs and how widely and astonishingly different were their political ideas along with their varying faith.

Last but not least, I will try to conclude and analyse what I have dealt with all along the thesis, and at the same time I will discuss the end of the Tudor era emphasizing on Elizabeth last years and the epoch named after her and the legacy left by this great dynasty, historians had argued that it is more regrettable than sorrowful that the Tudor dynasty had come to an end.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

General Introduction

Over its centuries of formidable existence, England had many different rulers sit on its throne; as a matter of fact historians have argued that life in England in specific and Britain in general has been shaped from its beginning by strong and exceptional queens and kings throughout the history of Britain; it is even safe to say that those monarchs had played an undeniable part in the making of the history of Britain.

One of the largest and most celebrated reigns in the country's history is that of the Tudors; the Tudor centuries are amongst the most dynamic in the whole history of the British Isles to the extent that a whole period was named after them, and though more than 500 hundred years had passed, scholars and novelists are still curious yet deeply fascinated about their period and the impact that they had on Britain, especially that the reign of the Tudor dynasty happens to coincide in point of time with the greatest reformation in Britain History.

My dissertation theme is mainly about the Political and Religious Reformation under the Tudors, and the impact of their actions on the country which they ruled, but in order to understand the Tudor monarchs it is important first of all to understand their times, for some would think that their actions may seem cruel however it is essential to remember that the time back then was totally different than now.

This work is divided into three chapters, in the first one I will deal with a brief biographies of the great monarchs of the Tudor House who have made significant contributions in the different areas of government and religion, I will also explain how did this dynasty come to rule and under which circumstances, furthermore I will give a kind of idea of how was society and life in Britain before the arrival or the birth of that dynasty.

In the second chapter I will go deep into explaining the most important phase in the Tudor period which is the English Reformation and how it started, moreover I will discuss the manner in which each Tudor monarch have handled

General Introduction

the reformation and mostly how different were both their policies and religion which I think was quite interesting that though they were a family however they were far away of having and sharing nor the same ideas neither religion, I will also explore how church has changed along the Tudor period.

In the third and last chapter I will purposely give a kind of both an analyse and a closure to the former chapters, it will involve Elizabeth I last years in her reign and the major events that occurred during her period of ruling and ultimately her death which only meant bringing the Tudor dynasty to a closure.

The objective of my research paper is to explore a magnificent period of an unforgettable royal family and most importantly to demonstrate how the Tudor Reformation had contributed into the change of the English History and how it pushed the Country into a more Protestant country that ultimately made England emerged from the medieval world.

The problematic of this thesis which I will reflect on and try to resolve is: *How did the Tudor Dynasty political and Religious Reformation and legacy contribute into shaping a modern Britain?

*What were the extents of the religious changes during that period?

Chapter One

The Tudor Period (1485-1603)

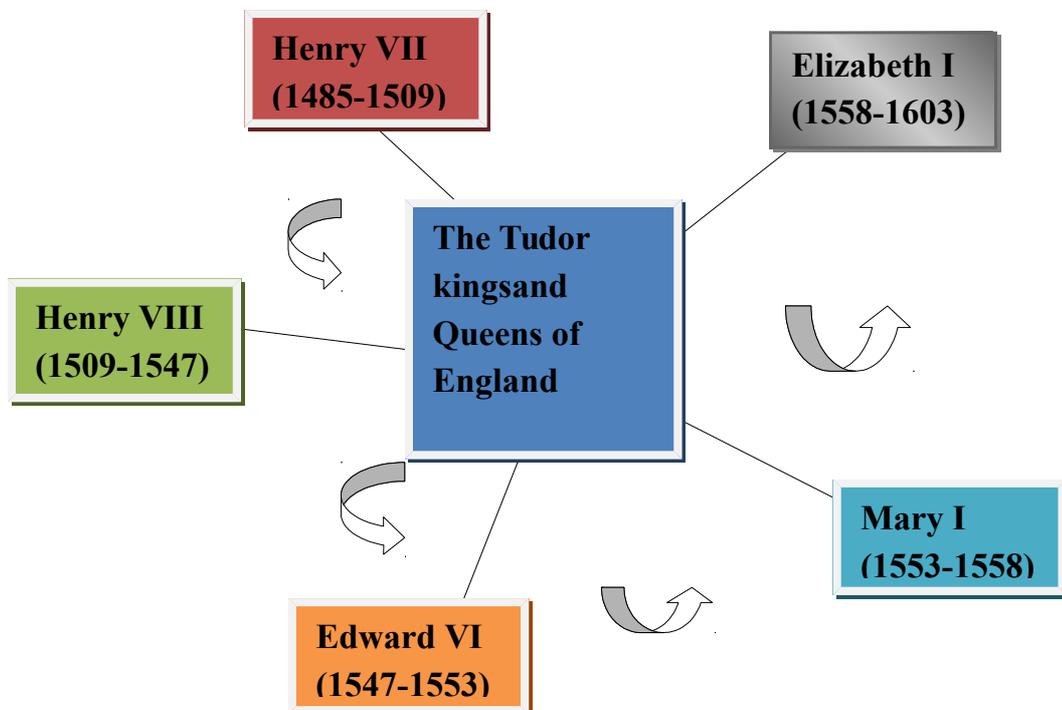
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1.1 Introduction

The Tudors are one of the most known families that ruled England and Wales from 1485 to 1603. This period is considered as the most exciting periods of British history, a period which has been deeply studied and widely learnt. First of all this chapter will deal with a brief representation of the monarchs of the Tudor dynasty leading us to the most important figures of this royal family based on the fact that the Tudors kings and queens were very powerful monarchs, furthermore I will discuss how was the condition of the English society before the Tudor period and how this great dynasty come to rule or in other sense the birth of an entire new dynasty and the intriguing circumstances surrounding it and why the Tudor dynasty had difficulty establishing itself, in addition a kind of a tree family will be included in this chapter to present the dynasty in a simple way and last but not least the symbol that represented the House of Tudors and which has been used from the onset of the dynasty until the end of it.

1.2 The Tudor Monarchs



1.1 Figure: Members of the Tudor House.

The Tudors reigned for a total of a long, tiring, and full of events 118 years, from 1485 to 1603, yet comparing the duration of their reigning with other dynasties, it is quite noticed that the ruling of their dynasty wasn't exactly that long. There were 5 powerful crowned monarchs in this royal family: Henry VII (1485-1509), Henry VIII (1509-1547), Edward VI (1547-1553), Mary I (1553-1558), Elizabeth I (1558-1603), it is quite impressive how this family rose from obscure welsh gentry to the throne of England, in other words it is even astonishing the appearance of such a royal family from nowhere in 1485, how it lasted briefly and then completely vanished. Therefore for a better understanding of the Tudor Monarchs and their extraordinary, full of events and change reign in England, a brief biography of each monarch is a crucial and essential step in this process.

Different stories were made up about the Tudor Monarchs, amongst those stories there are ones which give credits only for couple of these famous rulers, criticizing the rest of them and describing their reign as merely disastrous, others argue that each monarch of the house of Tudors is completely different from the other with less similarities and definitely contrasting impact on the history of England. However, one thing is sure, whether the Tudor Monarchs were highly praised or harshly criticized, being the most famous dynasty in England's history is an undeniable fact.

1.2.1 Henry VII (The First Tudor)

**Henry VII**

Source: < tudorplace.com.ar/ >

Henry Tudor was born on Pembroke castle in the 28th January 1457, south-west of Wales as the grandson of a Lancastrian queen ‘Catherine de Valois’ ,and son of Edmund Tudor ‘Earl of Richmond’ and ‘Margret Beaufort’. His father had died shortly before he was even born, two months to be precise and his mother shockingly was only thirteen. Henry actually was born at the start of the War of Roses in a really difficult time when the country was divided by conflict, when a series of power struggles arose between the ruling House of Lancaster and the rival House of York for the control of the throne, therefore he grow up in an extremely uncertain times.

Henry had lived in hiding for many years in France until his late twenties to avoid being murdered by Yorkist Plantagenet; actually he was raised in Wales until 14 when he was forced to flee abroad precisely to Brittany (France) when Lancastrian king Henry VI was murdered by Yorkist king Edmund IV making

him next in line to the throne. He had the right to the throne by his mother's side and to become the leader of the House of Lancaster. In 1458 he returned from exile and marched across Wales supported by the Welsh and after a harsh war against King Richard III at the Bosworth field he defeated him and crowned himself as the king of England : King Henry VII.

From the onset of his reign, Henry was determined to bring order to England after 85 years of civil war. His only interest was the welfare of his people and the fact that he inherited a war-weary country was bad enough for him to do his best to put an end to wars for once and all. His aim as a king was to keep peace in England and to achieve economic wealth. By the time of his rule he reached all of his ambitions. He married the daughter of Edward IV hence a royal heiress, Elizabeth of York. They had a total of 8 children, however only 4 survived namely: Arthur the supposedly next in line for the throne 'Prince of Wales', unfortunately he died after a short period after getting married to the Spanish princess Catherine of Aragon. Leaving Henry VII with only 3 offspring of his own, Henry VIII Prince of York and the future king of England, Margaret queen of Scotland, she married King James IV of Scotland and established a peaceful alliance with that country, and Mary the Future queen of France.

King Henry's health gets worse by 1507 and ultimately died of tuberculosis on 21 April 1509 aged only 52 and was buried at Westminster Abbey. Henry, the first Tudor king, emerged as ruler but as fugitive with a flimsy claim to England throne. For Henry his queen and children were the living embodiment of his hope for a dynasty. He ruled England for almost a quarter century, he was known as a wise king who brought justice and stability to the land and law and order to England after many years of total chaos.

1.2.2 Henry VIII (Bluff King Hal)



Henry VIII

Source: <ago.net/henry-viii>

Henry VIII was born on June 28th, 1491 at Greenwich Palace, down the river from Westminster, the second son of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York. King of England from 1509 aged only 17 when he ascended to the throne and succeeded his father Henry VII. Henry had charm and intelligence; he was fluent in 6 different languages, and also a quite gifted musician actually at the age of 10 he could play many instruments and no need to say he was also good in arts. On his deathbed king Henry VII had requested from his younger son Henry VIII to marry his brother Arthur's widow Catherine of Aragon because the greatest thing to come of their marriage was an alliance between England and Spain. Eventually he get married to Catherine for over than 20 years, she was interested in politics and Henry often turned to her for advice. They had a daughter named Mary.

Unfortunately, Henry's biggest problem was the fact that his wife Catherine had failed to produce him with an heir, in other words he got frustrated with the lack of sons Catherine was giving him, so the king started scheming to

end his marriage to Catherine and for years he struggled unsuccessfully to have his marriage annulled but the pope would never grant him a divorce. Finally fed up with the pope, he broke free from the church and started his own 'The Church of England' declaring himself as the supreme head of church and announcing that his first marriage was an invalid one. Now that Catherine got divorced, Henry married his second wife 'Anne Boleyn' whom were already pregnant, ironically even after marrying another time Anne failed to produce a son instead she had a daughter 'Elizabeth', no need to say that Henry was not pleased at all by the result and he accused her of treason and adultery and she was beheaded when Elizabeth was less than 3 years old.

Only few days after the execution of Anne Boleyn, Henry remarried in 1536, the third wife name was 'Jane Seymour' and they finally had a boy who they named Edward unfortunately Jane Seymour allegedly died in childbirth. Henry than wanted to marry again and he was advised by his advisor to marry the 25 old year German princess 'Anne of Cleves', they were married in 1540 to form a tie between German and England but Henry didn't like his new bride at all and after only six months, Henry found it no longer to be in his advantage and divorced her. Next came wife number five a young girl named 'Catherine Howard' whom he married in the same year and later on accused her of adultery and she was beheaded. Finally 'Catherine Parr' was Henry's sixth and last wife, he was old and ill and she was fortunate enough to outlive Henry and survive. Many people argue that king Henry VIII had his own nickname though not a famous one, he was called 'Bluff King Hal' in which the word 'Bluff' mean abrupt, blunt and roughly frank which fitted his characterization, in the other hand the word 'Hal' is a short term of Henry.

Henry VIII died on January 28th, 1547 in st James's palace, Westminster aged 55 years and he was buried at Windsor castle beside his third wife, Jane Seymour. Henry VIII's reason for marrying several times was a vain attempt to produce a healthy son and heir who could succeed him, and to make sure that the Tudors would keep on ruling England after he died. He had a very complex

personality, he had his faults but he was a brilliant man and an unforgettable monarch.

1.2.3 Edward VI (The Child King)



Edward VI

Source: < tudorhistory.org >

Edward VI was born on October 11th, 1537 at Hampton Palace, son of Henry VIII and his third wife Jane Seymour; this boy king had succeeded to the throne after his father's death in January 1547, aged only 9 years old. Few monarchs had been so well prepared for the duties and responsibilities of kingship as Edward VI; he learned philosophy, music and even spoke and understood Latin and Greek. He was most loved by his father king Henry VIII after he waited, married and remarried desperately striving through the whole last decades for a male heir.

Edward was never well, actually a lot of scholars called him the sick king or child therefore the country was run by his protectors, a council was appointed to rule during Edward's minority with Edward's uncle, The Duke of Somerset as protector of the country and the king. It was decided that the king would take charge of the country at age sixteen. Edward suffered bouts of measles and small

pox in April 1552 and from that time his health declined. It was obvious that the young king was dying of Tuberculosis which is definitely a bad news for the sake of the dynasty.

On July 6th, 1553 Edward whispered his last praying and died, he was only 15 years old. He would be succeeded briefly by the unfortunate Lady Jane who only ruled 9 days and then get executed. Edward VI was the only surviving son of Henry VIII and last of the male Tudors, yet his reign has a significance in English History out of all proportion to its brief six years span. Throughout Edward short reign, the young ruler kept a journal, a detailed diary recounting events in his kingdom. It is a fascinating record of Tudor England through the eyes of its monarch. The death of the child king can be interpreted by many people as the near end of the Tudor dynasty.

1.2.4 Mary I (Bloody Mary)



Mary I

Source:<luminarium.org >

Mary Tudor was born on February 18th, 1516; she was the eldest daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, she received an excellent education and she was good in languages, science and music. After her father divorced her mother ‘Catherine’, Mary officially became an illegitimate child and was called Lady Mary instead of Princess Mary. Eventually her mother died without seeing her which to say the least was devastating. Mary was 37 when she came to the throne becoming Mary I queen of England after the death of her half-brother Edward VI and the overthrow of Lady Jane Grey and ultimately her execution. Then she had Elizabeth her half-sister imprisoned in the tower of London for two months, suspecting her of planning a plot with the Protestants to take over the throne. She was strongly determined to return England to the one true faith ‘Roman Catholic’.

Mary was the first woman to rule as a monarch and the least successful of all the Tudor rulers. Soon after her succession Mary was desperate to get married and produce a male heir therefore she proposed to Philip of Spain, the son of Emperor Charles V, Philip who was an heir to the Spanish throne, not exactly a happy marriage as some argue, unfortunately she never had an heir

which brought sadness and loneliness to her life, and threatens more the survival of the nearly finished dynasty because clearly in a way it was her duty to secure the dynasty. Mary was England's first regnant and the fact that she married the foreigner Philip II wasn't really accepted and welcomed by her people therefore Mary's reign is often viewed as disastrous, matter of fact during her reign she earned the nickname 'Bloody Mary' for almost 300 people were burned alive with her full approval, and many people believe that during the reign of Mary 1, all England was thrown into full chaos. Tortured by loneliness and unhappiness, Queen Mary fell ill and died on November 17th, 1558, after 6 years on the throne and at the age of 43. It is tragedy that 450 years after her death, she remains the most hated monarch in English history though that was considered a little bit harsh by others for allegedly she has done what was best for her people, faith and country though not good enough to be remembered of.

1.2.5 Elizabeth I (The Virgin Queen)



Elizabeth I

Source: < tudorhistory.org >

The last Tudor Monarch, Elizabeth I, was born at Greenwich Palace at 7 September 1533; the younger daughter of Henry VIII and his second wife ‘Anne Boleyn’. She was named Elizabeth after both her grandmother’s Elizabeth of York (Henry’s mother) and Elizabeth Howard (Anne Boleyn mother). As a child, Elizabeth was very fluent in six languages and very educated; she was both intelligent and had a strong personality. She studied philosophy and history and loved riding and shooting with a crossbow. However Elizabeth childhood wasn’t quite happy for she has witnessed the execution of her own mother ‘Anne’ by the approval of her father when she was barely 3 years old. For her, it was a trauma for life. At some point she even was declared illegitimate and a mere lady instead of princess. Moreover she had some problems and conflicts with her sister Mary who thought of her as a threat.

After the death of her half-sister Mary I, and in January 1559, Elizabeth I was crowned queen of England, aged only 25 years, she was the last of the great Tudor dynasty. Indeed it wasn’t well perceived by people back then to have another queen, so marriage was a necessary step. However Elizabeth had chosen not to get married, for her she was already married to ‘England’, earning her

nickname as the virgin queen. She had her own reasons political and personal ones. *“Elizabeth would never be able to remember a time when she had not known that her mother had died because her father ordered it”* (Plowden, 1971:68)

In other words, some people argue that her desire not to get married could be the result of her seeing her mother get executed by her father. Hence a complete trauma leading to the refusal of marriage and the lack of an heir and that brought the end to their great dynasty.

During Elizabeth’s reign England progress in the field of discovery and colonization was immense, some people think that she was the greatest monarch and that she was strong ruler with the courage of her father, a powerful woman who used her position to get what she wanted both politically and personally. Elizabeth was also called ‘Gloriana’ and ‘Good Queen Bess’, a queen who went through a lot in her life time, but that only made her an excellent queen and a great leader. Actually her reign was referred as the Golden Age, and she was one of the best loved monarchs in British history. By the time of her death in 1603, Queen Elizabeth had become a legend. She was buried next to her half-sister Mary I. she ruled over England for 45 years starting from the middle of the 16th century until the beginning of the 17th century.

1.3 English Society before the Tudor Period

In the 15th century, life in England before the reign of the Tudors wasn’t exactly a good one, in contrary life was quite bad amidst the chaos of constant wars that have ruined the peace of the land and brought worrisome in the hearts of its people. Stability was a distant dream that can barely come true for so many reasons. A complete turmoil was all over the country which was caused by one of the longest wars that Britain has ever been in ‘The Hundred Years War’ a long and tiring conflict that pitted the kings and kingdoms of France and England against each other. To make things even worse and after the end of this long term war which ended abruptly by the English defeat, and left England bankrupted and economically destroyed and at the same time diseases were spreading all over the

land causing thousands of deaths, immediately another war arose in England leaving no room for people to breath and live in peace, a long dynastic struggle that would much later come to know as ‘The War of Roses’ which allegedly has its root from the Hundred Years War, A very important war which marked the change of the English history forever.

1.4 The War of Roses (1455-1485)

War of Roses were basically a series of battles that were fought between the supporters of the House of Lancaster and the supporters of the House of York, for both had claim to the English throne therefore it is considered as the longest period of civil war in English History. It is said that indeed both houses had an equal right to claim the throne for the House of Lancaster were descendent from Edward III through his second son ‘John of Gaunt’, whereas the House of York were descendants from Edward III through his fourth son Edmund of Langley. It was called the War of Roses because each side of the family was represented by different colored roses, a White Rose to represent the House of York and in the other hand a Red Rose to represent the House of Lancaster.

A bitter struggle over the crown lasted for 32 years between the two houses with countless battles full of carnage and no clear victory. On the 26 of August, a battle which eventually would be the last battle between the two families took place ‘The Battle of Bosworth’ it was named after the town of market Bosworth, two rival claimants to the English throne faced each other, and the winner will become the new king of England. On one side was Richard III, the Yorkist king ruling at that time, and on the other Henry VII, the powerful Lancastrian heir. Both men knew that this battle would result in one of them being killed, in other words both men were battling it out for life or death.

At the time the war took place, the civil war between the two houses was generally referred as ‘The cousin’s war’, they were not known as the War of Roses until sometime later. Henry gathered allies abroad, then with about 2000 French mercenaries and other Lancastrian lords and knights; he gathered

reinforcements as he marched through Wales in virtue of his Welsh descent, aiming to put an end to the reign of Richard III and by the time he reached England the size of his army had grown to 5000 men. When Richard heard about the arrival of Henry he marched his own army to meet his rival for the throne. All thought that Richard held the stronger hand to defeat Henry whom basically was a threat to his monarchy since he was a competent leader and for sure he had the best equipped and experienced army.

Henry's forces now charged King Richard's army. Although outnumbered, Richard's superior position at the top of the hill enabled him to stop the rival forces breaking through at first. Gradually Richard's men began to lose hope and began to leave, it is also thought that Richard was betrayed by his own men, so eventually surrounded by enemies he got killed after fighting the whole battle in a courageous way, actually it was agreed that Richard had fought with all his strength, withstanding all the betrayals of his once trusted men on the battlefield. *"In a short time the battle of Bosworth Field was over. Henry had gained a decisive victory. Though the fight only lasted two hours, the loss was heavy"*

(Temerley, 1914:21)

Thus we can interpret the above quotation in this way, although Richard's army was larger but was nonetheless beaten. At the end of that fierce and bloody battle, Richard died with his sword in his hand and immediately his crown was placed on the head of Henry and proclaimed Henry VII, king of England. The first ruler of a new dynasty which will bring enormous changes to the country, in other sense the Tudor age had officially begun.

1.5 The Founding of a New Dynasty

England became in the hands of the Tudors when the Lancastrian Henry Tudor known eventually as King Henry VII took the throne in 1485, after his killing the Yorkist Richard at the battle of Bosworth in Leicestershire which was

the last stage of the two roses war. Therefore after years of uncertainty and exile he finally managed to become king of England, gaining the crown in one of the most ancient ways imaginable which is battling out with the man who already sat on England's throne and taking up the throne after that man's bloody death.

"The Tudor age began in 1485 when the last of the Plantagenet kings, Richard III, was defeated and killed at Bosworth Field, near Leicester. Henry Tudor and the House of Lancaster had triumphed against the Yorkist. The Wars of the Roses were at an end and England had a new monarch and a new dynasty. Henry VII was the first of the Tudor monarchs". (Harrison, 1995:02)

When ascending the thrown Henry VII had a really difficult time for he had to establish a new dynasty with a questionable title, it means him being challenged was a sure thing to happen. *"The difficulties that faced him dwarfed his early struggles"*. (Temerley, 1914:23). In other words, he was immediately presented with problems; he was a king by conquest, a usurper, not by blood right. His line of descent was weak; furthermore not all of the influential supporters of the House of York perished at Bosworth and some of those who survived could be accepted to make some trouble for Henry by resisting the new government or even overthrowing it.

A quite necessary step had to be taken by Henry to prove and strengthen his hereditary claim by marrying the rival princess of the House of York, Elizabeth of York, and working hard in making his subjects contented with his rule and in order to satisfy many of his supporters. *"The marriage of Lancaster and York was a useful public proclamation of Henry's intention to restore unity, but he and his dynasty had to solve more fundamental problems if they were to survive"* (Webster, 1998: 72)

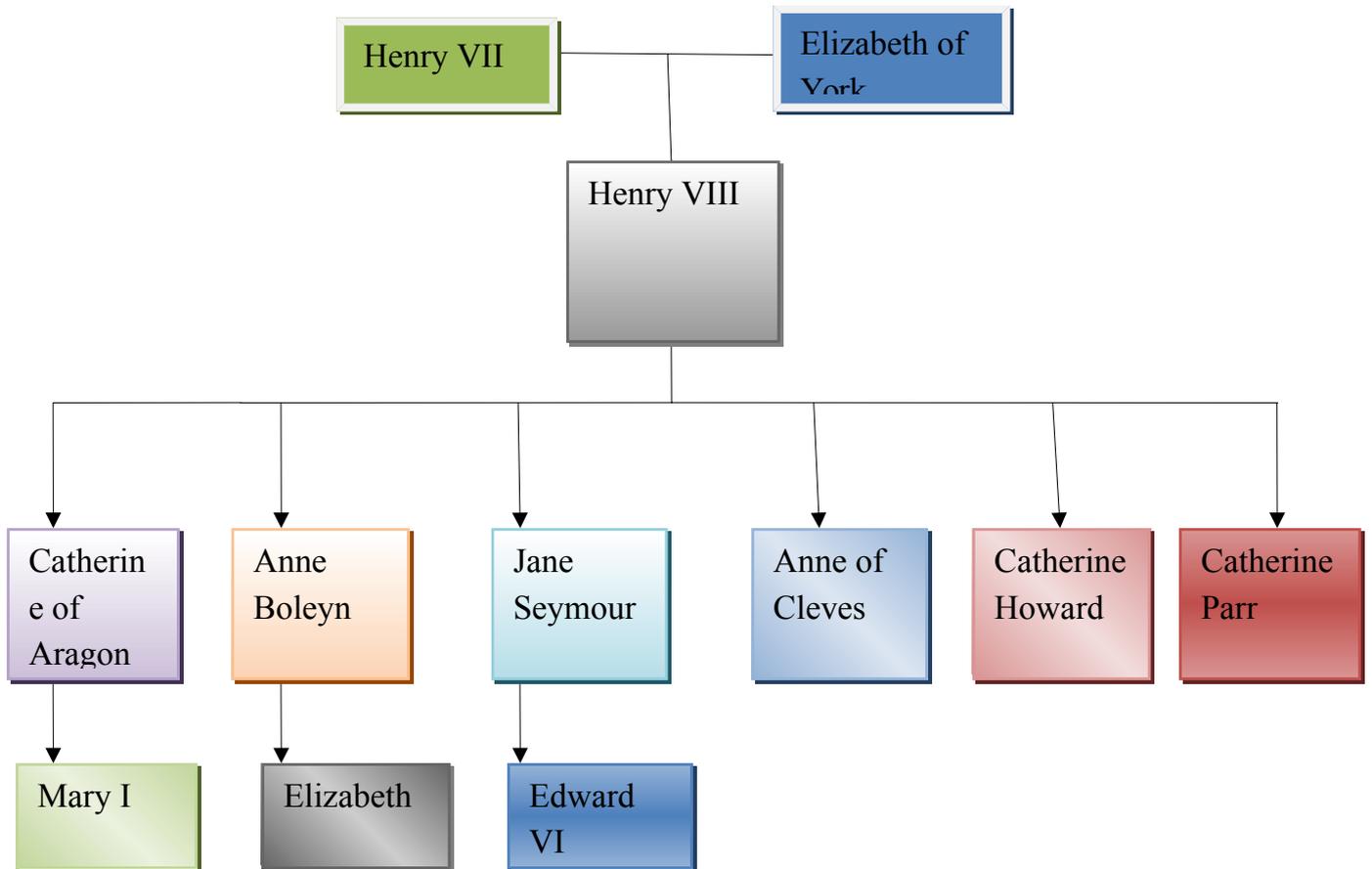
In other words Henry consolidated his victory by marrying the person who really had greater right to the throne than him 'Elizabeth of York', yet that wasn't the end of his problems he faced many plots and pretenders to the throne but nothing could stop him from making his own dynasty and maintaining his throne and getting rid of all his enemies surrounding him who were threats to his

monarchy. He struggled to assert himself as king, to establish himself by his own right he even overcome various pretenders.

Henry VII was the first ruler of the Tudor dynasty after the defeat of Richard III so he had to make plans to assure the surviving of his new dynasty, but as already mentioned it was not an easy task for him for he met countless attempt of overthrowing him but he managed to resist and protect his position as the king of England and most importantly to protect the new dynasty that he started. He took over a country which was torn apart by civil war, but he managed to bring peace back to England by marrying Elizabeth from York, therefore uniting both houses and putting an end to their continuous conflict, he even brought the Lancaster and York roses together which became the Tudor rose. He brought peace and stability to England after 85 years of civil war. At the end it is fair to say that Henry VII founded the Tudor dynasty, forged trade agreements with other European countries, banned the barons and rebuilt the royal finances. He was not a weak king by any means and he didn't hesitate killing his rivals, even with little cause. But Henry's great intellect and instinct for survival steered a course that ensured his dynasty kept hold of England's crown.

1.5.1 The Tudor Family Tree

The diagram below explains and introduces the most important figures of the house of Tudors, the monarchs who defeated the time by the immortal reputation and changed the history of England forever.



1.2 Figure: Ancestral tree of the Tudor House.

1.5.2 The Tudor Rose (The Union Rose)



The Symbol of the Tudor House

Source: <alternatchistory.com>

Historically speaking, the use of roses to present houses in England actually evolved from a Greek myth in which the rose becomes the emblem of silence and secrecy. Meanwhile both the house of York and the house of Lancastrian had their own ‘roses’, a white rose was the emblem of the house of York and a red one for the rival house of Lancastrian. The red rose of Lancaster is quite similar to the Yorkist one; these are obtained from symbols of the Royal Duchies of Lancaster and York in the 15th century. Therefore the name of the war of roses, the civil war was a meaningful one between the two houses; furthermore the Tudor rose was created when Henry VII the Lancastrian leader defeated the Yorkist king Richard III and married the Yorkist princess Elizabeth of York and later on adapter the Tudor rose, which was a combination of both roses. In other words, the dynasty of the Tudors was symbolized by the Tudor rose as their emblem, that emblem eventually become part of the British Heraldic tradition.

“Under the Tudor sovereigns, the heraldic rose often shows a double row of petals, a fact which is doubtless accounted for by the then increasing familiarity with the cultivated variety; and also by the attempt to conjoin the rival emblems of the warring factions of York and Lancaster”

(Fox-Davies, 1909:269)

The design took the white rose of York as the center of the flower, and the red rose of Lancaster as the outside edging, the design symbolized unity and mutual

regard. The Tudor rose can be found in many old buildings; as a matter of fact it is even still used in modern England.

1.6 Conclusion

The age of the Tudors was really important period in England history that extends from 1485 to 1603 and lasted for over 100 years. Actually the United Kingdom wouldn't be the same without the Tudor dynasty; moreover the time of the Tudor dynasty had big influence on the development of Britain History. The monarchs of the Tudors occupy a unique place in the history of Britain as Henry VIII and Elizabeth I are among England's most recognizable rulers. Nevertheless starting a new dynasty was not an easy matter, for England has suffered from long term wars for a long time before the birth of the dynasty but eventually Henry Tudor later known as Henry VII was declared as King of England on Bosworth field when the principles and practice of succession to the English throne were in state of chaos, as far as hereditary right is concerned, his claim was hardly a strong one but he managed to withstand all the problems he faced, and all the pretenders who claimed the throne and even the plots which has been made against him. He married the heiress of York, so the two of them would unite the hereditary claims of the rival houses and the title of their offspring would be technically indisputable thus the survival of the new dynasty and the recreation of the symbol of the house. However, major events and reformation were about to be introduced under the Tudor monarchs and change the history of England once and for all.

Chapter Two

Tudor Reformation

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2.1 Introduction

The 16th and 17th centuries were periods of great upheaval and reforms in terms of religion and politics. The change in social, political and religious affairs by the Reformation which was introduced by The Tudors Kings and Queens whom I have dealt with in first chapter, led to the rise of England from middle to modern England, in other words the Tudor Reformation brought a big changes which resulted in a great impact on the British society. Therefore in this chapter, I will take the chance to discuss those different reformations, political and religious ones under each Tudor Monarch and I will talk about how religion kept changing under each one of them leaving people wondering whether England at that time were Protestant or Catholic. Thus it is fair to say that during the 16th century, England emerged from the medieval world. It was a time of great change, most notably it marked the end of the Catholic Church.

2.2 Henry VIII's Breach of Rome

Henry VIII is widely and amusingly known by his six wives mostly better than any other achievements of his. However another major fact which marked his life significantly and was considered by others as the onset of the reformation in England was thereby the break with Rome. To be more precise, Henry VIII was the king who dared to break with the holy Catholic Church in order to preserve the line of his dynasty, at least that's what he believed he was doing. Though the mission of getting a divorce from a Catholic Church which firmly forbids it was not an easy task at all and it is certain that the burden of discovering some way to enable Henry to marry again was lead upon the Cardinal's¹ shoulders. Actually many reasons were given to justify his surprising decision at the time as some would argue that it was the right thing to do for it was an attempt to remarry and get a male heir, whereas others believe it was a reckless decision out of the blue. Whether it was the right thing to do or not, this

1- Henry's Lord Chancellor was Cardinal Wolsey until 1529, when Wolsey failed to put through Henry's divorce with Catherine and was charged with high treason.

matter is still debatable, nevertheless the question in need to answer is what were exactly the reasons or the motives that pushed Henry VIII to break from Rome?

2.2.1 The Reasons behind the Withdrawal from Rome

The break from Rome wasn't an unplanned or rushed decision taken by a king who is driven by lust as some would think, although it is not that far from the truth; however the breach was a long struggle for Henry full of uncertainty and hesitation for some point or another. The reasons of the withdrawal varied and differed though the result was one. One of the major reasons said to be the fact that Henry needed desperately a male heir to ensure the survival of his dynasty since having a female heir wasn't neither enough nor acceptable for him and he believed only a boy could inherit his kingdom, unwilling to commit his dynasty to the fortunes of a female successor. He has been married to Catherine his first wife for more than 18 years, yet no male heir was produced or rather the ones who were born soon died in their infancy, and the fact that Catherine, who now in her 40's and past the age of bearing children made things only worse and his desire for an annulment for the marriage only stronger. *"He feels it necessary to offer excuses for the womanly weakness which blinded Katherine to her obvious duty"* (Innes, 1911:57)

Thus Henry wanted to divorce Catherine in order to remarry and be able to have a male heir, because he really thought that the death of all his male children from Catherine had been a divine judgment on an unlawful union, and therefore asking for a divorce and declaring his marriage as null now was proved so he could put his conscience at ease. But whatever the reason he gave the pope to annul the marriage, the pope would never grant him one because the Roman Catholic faith believed in marriage for life, it did not recognize, let alone support divorce. However Henry was still persistent in his demand, he even accused the pope for not pursuing the teaching of the Bible, book of Leviticus², in which the marriage of a man to his brother's wife was forbidden, and that god has cursed his

2 - In the Bible, Book of Leviticus, it was written "if a man shall take his brother's wife it is an unclean thing. They shall be childless"

marriage by not granting him a son. He thought that he was living in sin and the only way to repent and be able to have an heir was to get rid of Catherine, but even that wouldn't change the pope's mind; it only made him hang up more to his opinion. There is no need to describe the anger and frustration felt by Henry who really thought that the pope should listen to him and fear him rather than contradicting him. *"The king's own threats to Rome made no progress against Clement VII's fear of the emperor. The pope had not granted an annulment, and it seemed unlikely that he ever would."* (Haigh, 1993:105)

In other words, Henry might be the king, but he was not all powerful and as it is obvious his request to divorce Catherine would have to be first approved by the pope Clement VII, who refused firmly the negotiations with Cardinal Wolsey to reach his sovereign's aim out of fear of the Emperor Charles V, the nephew of Catherine who was the most powerful force in Europe and also because he owed allegiance to him. The pope was more afraid from Charles V than of his own king Henry. Another reason some say, is the fact that the woman whom Henry allegedly fell for her and wanted her 'Anne Boleyn' refused to become his mistress, she wanted marriage leaving Henry with the only choice of divorcing his first wife, thinking that marrying Anne would bring him the male heir he longed for.

Whereas some historians believe the reason behind the withdrawal or the break from Rome was a religious one, or in other sense because of the impossibility of getting a divorce in the Catholic faith, others argue that Henry had another important reason which can be regarded as a possible motive too, since the Church had so much power and consequently it was very wealthy, it had many lands and properties that tempted Henry to get that power from the church and to seize all the lands that belonged to the church, he wanted all the power for himself as he thought he should be the supreme power in his kingdom and all that wealth of the church should belong to him especially because he was all in debt and that could be a great help in financing costly European wars, so

the split from Rome could be the only way to get all this power and wealth, therefore this can be regarded as a further reason for the breach.

The combination of all the mentioned reasons above, which varied from the reluctance or precisely the unwillingness of the pope to grant the divorce out of fear in one hand and of faith in the other, and the desperate need for a male successor and eventually for another marriage, and the desire to marry Anne who promised him for a male son if a marriage would take a place and above all the need for the possession of power and wealth which belonged to the church, all of that contributed to the split of England from Rome and the start of a new church headed by the King himself, the Anglican church.

2.2.2 The Aftermath of the Breach

The split with Rome had a tremendous impact on the English history as Henry finally was able to get his divorce from Catherine and could now remarry again, a blessed marriage that he thought would bring him an heir. Obviously after the breach, the pope was no longer the most powerful man in the church, as a matter of fact he was deprived from all the power he once had, to some this would have been a natural move as it had been Clement VII who has refused to sanction an annulment of Henry's marriage to his first wife. Now, with no competition over the power, and with the firm believe that the kingdom should be governed and headed merely by him, without the need for permission to get whatever he want, Henry declared himself the supreme head of the new church which was later known as the Anglican Church.

2.2.2.1 The Act of Supremacy 1534

The act of supremacy was passed by the parliament in 1534, in which all the authority and power held by the pope before had been stripped and given to Henry, therefore he gained a new title, in addition to his supremacy over his country, he also became the supreme head of the church of England. Although Henry remained Catholic all his life, the break with Rome eventually turns England into a Protestant country. With the pope out of the way, the nation has

turned to a sovereign realm, subject to no other state or authority except of the king himself. Henry even went so far to consider the refusal of acknowledging him as the head of the church as a crime that should be punished severely. Now with his ultimate power he can choose his own bishops and archbishops. It is also said that the split from Rome and eventually the act of supremacy were considered as a political reform more than a religious one, or in other words the big change that occurred in the change wasn't the change of the religion from Catholicism to Protestantism in some point but the change was actually in the replacement of the pope by the king as the supreme head of the Church. *"The act of supremacy introduced an important change in the Church of England. It was a change in the church in only one respect- not doctrine or form of worship, but in the government of the church"*. (Kuiper, 1988:223)

Thus the act of supremacy can be seen under a different light as a kind of a broad policy initiated by Henry for one reason and only, which is to increase the power of the English monarch and therefore decreasing the power of Rome.

2.2.2.2 The Dissolution of the Monasteries

The dissolution of the monasteries was another big step taken by Henry; he basically ordered a survey of the monasteries which later on reported that the monks there were all immoral and rich and most importantly totally corrupted, this can be seen as a mere justification for Henry's action when dissolving the monasteries. As a matter of fact Henry dissolved almost 825 monasteries over a period of four years and consequently took all their wealth. *"The crown's fist targets were the smaller houses, but the larger ones, as determined by income, also were soon in their insights"* (Mann, 2007: 20)

In other words, the process of dissolving the monasteries which was by the order of the king wasn't a fast one, it was piecemeal. At first it started with the closing of the small and less powerful monasteries than eventually extended to the dissolving of the bigger one, the aim behind the shutting down of the monasteries was quite obvious because Henry was not only driven by his lust for

power as he wanted to have the supreme power in the land leaving no room for the other powers of the clergy, but also blinded by greed. Henry was well aware of the amount of wealth possessed by the monasteries in addition to the lands and properties; hence the only way to lay a hand on that wealth was to dissolve the monasteries whether be big or small. He confiscated all the lands and buildings owned by the former monasteries, he even sell many of them to the wealthy gentry out of need for money, after he had wasted all the inheritance left by his own father and especially because he was in debt and needed the money to fund his expensive wars with France and Scotland.

This dissolution of the monasteries, as it is known took place between 1536 and 1540 the Crown the authority to disband monasteries in England, Wales and Ireland, appropriate their income and dispossess them of their assets.

2.3 Edward VI's Protestant Reformation

Following the death of Henry VIII, Edward VI came to the thrown as it was planned by his father since he was the only surviving son he ever had therefore the legitimate successor according to the line of succession. Edward was only 9 years old when he was proclaimed as king of England, he was too young to be able to rule all by himself but that matter was already solved by his father before his death, and he has appointed a Privy Council known also as the Regency Council to exercise power for him made by executors. *“These executors were also privy councillors; by virtue of their appointment in the will they became at Henry’s death the only members of an already existing, quite formal institution.”* (Hoak, 1976:01)

In other sense the Council was essentially made of 16 executors whom Henry VII had personally chosen to help Edward until he reach the appropriate age to rule by himself which is in this case 18. On the basis of the lack of suitable age to rule, Edward Seymour, brother of Jane Seymour and Edward VI's uncle was made Lord Protector of the realm and Duke of Somerset, and in some way ruled on behalf of his nephew.

It is known that though Henry VIII split from Rome, he maintains a loyal Catholic; he was never fond of the Protestantism, as a matter of fact the only thing that Henry changed after the split is that he declared himself as the head of church instead of the pope but he was still a Catholic who believes firmly in the Catholic faith so after his death he wished for his son to maintain and preserve Catholicism in the land, but that wasn't the case at all.

Edward Seymour was a keen Protestant who made sure that his nephew was given a Protestant education; his tutors were quite sympathetic to the Protestant ideas. The main tutor of Edward was Thomas Cranmer who was the Archbishop of Canterbury under his father and continued to be under Edward's reign, Cranmer thought that even after the split from Rome Henry was way too Catholic and that doesn't pleased him, for he was always for the Protestant Reformation, thus there is no need to say how deeply Edward was already influenced by Protestantism and by reforms at the same time.

Big changes were bound to happen under the reign of Edward VI, the country was already in her way to become a Protestant one, which meant only one thing, this kind of new worship is going to replace the former one which is Catholicism, or in other words the Catholic faith is no longer the official religion in England. With the beginning of an undoubted reformation many things will be banned firmly, for instance most of the Catholic rituals and ceremonies were banned immediately, most importantly the Latin Mass and the use of Latin in churches were also abolished, even Henry's desire for the maintenance of the Catholic faith in England which was declared in his act of six articles³ was completely ignored and consequently abolished. Another reform was the granting of permission to the priests to get married which was by the way not allowed under Henry's reign, even the images, statues and pictures that were in the church had been pulled down and sometimes destroyed.

³ -The Act was passed by Parliament in June of 1539. It remained Henry's policy toward reforms until his death. The Six Articles was referred to as "the bloody whip with six strings" by many Protestants.

2.3.1 The First Prayer Book

Generally speaking, the Book of Common Prayer is traditional service book used by the Church of England from 1549 until the mid-1970s, and at that time it was in every house in England, the origin of this Prayer Book was at time of the English Reformation when a big struggle of ideologies was at its peak. The Prayer Book under Henry's reign was written in Latin since it was a big matter in the Catholic faith as we know that Latin was considered the language of the Christ and thereby only the priests could understand it, however things change under Edward's reign and this Book was finally simplified or more precisely translated into English in order to be read and understood by everybody not only the priests, because worship should be in the language of people, understandably this was considered as a big step in reforming the country into Protestantism and the first book of common prayer was going to be the prove of it. *"The first book of common prayer of 1549, under the young Edward VI, was the work, as always, of committees, based on the best use, that of Sarum (Salisbury), and influenced by several service books from the continent."* (Head, 2006:119)

In other sense, it is agreed that the first prayer book was a work prepared by a gathering of learned bishops and priests, however Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury was believed to be primarily held responsible for the first book of common prayer of 1549, furthermore his attribution in the change and reforming of worship, doctrine and practices of Church is quite undeniable under the reign of the young Protestant king Edward VI. The first prayer book was deeply influenced by the thoughts of some of the important figures of the Protestant reformation such as John Knox, also by the vernacular German forms prepared by the famous reformer Martin Luther, and also based on the Sarum⁴ use.

Allegedly the first prayer book was disliked by both the Protestant and the Catholics at some extent, therefore Cranmer produced a new or in this sense a

⁴ -The Sarum use is the name applied to the particular rendering of divine worship in the English church that was developed at Salisbury, in Wiltshire.

second and more radical Protestant book in 1552, however that didn't last much for after a year Edward VI died and his half-sister Mary I came to the throne, a devoted Catholic who wanted things her way.

2.3.2 The Act of Uniformity 1549

Now with the existing of an English Prayer Book which was formerly written by Cranmer, a great reformer, the need to establish the Prayer book to be the only legal and official book used in worshipping in all over the English Churches, had driven the Parliament to pass an act to reinforce the use of it, after a long debate and a slight resistance from mostly the Catholics whom were firmly against the English Prayer book and the reform in general, the act nevertheless was passed on 21 January 1549, and was ultimately referred as the Act of Uniformity. "The act is important chiefly because it established the First Prayer Book of Edward VI as the only legal form of worship. The book which had been composed by Archbishop Cranmer, was intended to be a statement of Protestant Doctrine" (Bray, 2004:266).

All the Churches in England were required to use the English Prayer Book as a book which will unit all the kingdom under the same faith and way of worship and the refusal of using or adopting it, would be faced by severe punishments, it would be either by the seizure of the income of the churches, or in some cases could lead to life in prison without the possibility of bailing. Opposition to the prayer book still existed and sometimes led to open rebellions in some regions in England however they were putted down at the end.

2.4 Mary's Restoration of the Catholic Faith

Mary I came to the throne on 1553, soon after the death of her half-brother Edward VI, however her becoming a queen was neither an easy thing nor it was planned before. As a matter of fact, when Edward was in his death bed, he was deeply pressured by John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, and the man who replaced Edward's uncle Edward Seymour but never been declared as Lord Protector, to sign a kind of document to exclude both Mary and Elizabeth from

succeeding to the throne, he went even further to persuade him of their illegitimacy, for he had a plot to take control over the country driven by greed for more power and wealth, he wanted Lady Jane Grey, a Protestant cousin of Edward to succeed him, and since Lady Jane was already married to his son, he thought putting her on the throne will make him more powerful and most importantly untouchable. He wanted to keep a Protestant monarch under the throne and to have that monarch under his thumbs. Indeed after the death of Edward VI, and according to his will, Lady Jane Grey came to the throne as the next Protestant queen of England though her claim to the throne was dubious.

However, Lady Jane reign's unfortunately didn't last more than 9 days, the shortest period ruled by any English monarch in the history of England for Mary who was actually the rightful heir of the throne according to her father Henry's line of succession, after hearing the shocking news, she had built up an overwhelming army full of her supporters who believed her right to the throne, and stormed through England with a strong claim to the throne and an undeniable support from her followers, where she managed eventually to overthrow Lady Jane and imprisoned her and ultimately declaring herself as the new rightful queen of England, Mary I.

Now with the arrival of a new queen, changes were bound to happen, especially the fact that Mary was a staunch Catholic who to say the least despised Protestantism, decided to restore Catholicism in the country as the only and true faith in the land and one can imagine the confusion caused by that fast shift of ideology from Edward Protestant reign to Mary Catholic reign.

Mary I had worked quite hard to restore Catholicism in England and to eliminate all threads of Protestantism which were early established by the short reign of her half-brother Edward VI, and unlike both her father and her brother she refused the position of the supreme head of church, in contrary she restored the position of the pope as the only head of church and initiated the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic Church on the basis that Protestantism was only the official religion in England for six years, whereas Catholicism for

hundreds of years. Moreover, she made sure to release all the Catholic priests and bishops whom they were once prisoned by her Protestant brother Edward VI and some of them were even become her own advisors.

When Mary I was crowned, she lost no time banning the Protestant Prayer Book which was formally written by Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury under the consent and approval of Edward VI, and unlike her half-brother order all services were ought to be held in Latin only, As a result, the old Roman Catholic services and doctrine were revived with the Latin Prayer Book instead of the English ones of Edward's reign, and the priests were no longer allowed to get married, as a matter of fact some of the priests who have been already married under Edward's reign had to separate with their own family forcibly, and all the church had to be decorated all over again by the paintings and the different statues of the saints which were previously destroyed by Protestant reformers, Mary desperately tried to give back all the land which were taken from the monasteries but that wasn't an easy task however she was quite able to re-open some of the monasteries and almost immediately most of the Protestant priests and bishops were imprisoned and treated badly.

2.4.1 The Unpopular Spanish Marriage

The fourth Tudor monarch and the queen of England, Mary I had a huge responsibility put upon her shoulders beside the welfare of her kingdom and people, now she has the responsibility of securing and preserving the dynasty from disappearing and vanishing, the fact that all the male line in her dynasty are all dead posed a threat on her dynasty, Mary I believed that she must marry as soon as possible to produce an heir and most importantly to prevent her half-sister from succeeding her later on and bringing Protestantism back in the land.

When Mary I was proclaimed queen of England she was already past her youthfulness, actually she was 37 years old, an age when practically every woman should already been married and a mother of many children at that time

She was fearful that she was too old to bear children, but she was determined to “provide England with an heir, and thereby deprive the bastard Elizabeth of a chance to rule.” (Lehman, 2005: 270)

In other words and after securing her throne, Mary I shifted her attention into finding an appropriate husband and thereby to produce a male heir, for if she remained or died childless, her half-sister, the Protestant Elizabeth would be next in line of succession according to their father's Henry VIII will, and without a doubt Mary I resolved not to let this happen after any circumstances. The search for a suitable husband for the queen started with many different candidates; however the one who has been chosen by Mary herself was Philip II, a leading European Roman Catholic and heir to the Spanish throne, vast territories in the continental Europe and the new world, son of her cousin Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, nevertheless that kind of choice was not welcomed at all neither by her people nor by the Privy Council for a very simple and obvious reason which was the fact that Philip II was a complete foreigner, not an English man as was expected to be chosen.

Many obstacles were putted in the way of this Spanish marriage, especially that the Protestant living in England were afraid of this kind of combination between a staunch Catholic queen, and a devout Catholic husband too, whereas the parliament were afraid of being ruled by a foreigner who would eventually control both England and Spain, and probably leading England to be under the complete control of Spain, and moreover dragging England into war with France anytime since France was the main rival of Spain. Consequently, the worrisome of her people and mainly the parliament made Mary at first skeptical or better off hesitated to get married immediately; she needed the consent and advice of her cousin Charles V too about the marriage. *“Charles V no doubt saw this wedding as a means of isolating the French monarchy, his main rival, and of securing the survival of Catholicism in the troubled land of England.”* (De groot, 2005:21)

In other sense, Charles V welcomed the idea of marriage not out of love of his cousin but mainly because he had his own intentions as having England by

their side in case there would be a war between Spain and France, and his desire to make sure England would maintain Catholic, however the Parliament were not about to accept this marriage without a fight, they insist that Philip signs a kind of treaty with two main conditions, the most important one is after the marriage and though Philip will be proclaimed king of England, he will never be crowned, another point is that with the death of Mary he will no longer have the title of 'king', also no foreigners are allowed to be part in any official positions in England, the Parliament believed that those kind of conditions would help convincing people into accepting this unpopular marriage to a foreigner.

Philip II was unwilling to accept those conditions, however he was convinced by his own Father Charles V, after a while and as a part of the marriage negotiations, a portrait of him was sent to Mary and allegedly the queen felt in love instantly, and two days after they met the marriage took place on 25th July 1554, with no consideration to the resentment and the opposition of her people. It has been said that the marriage was never a happy one, for Philip never really loved his wife Mary, he was already eleven years younger than her, he couldn't even speak English, their conversation were a mixture of French, Spanish and Latin, and overall he hated England. After a while of their marriage and with the obsession of Mary and her desire to have an heir, she had experienced two false pregnancies that made her depressed, bitterly disappointed, quite sad and lonely especially after Philip departure to Spain when hearing the news of the death of his father Charles V and being away from her for a long time. Eventually, Mary I died in 1558 childless and without a husband to hold her hand till the end.

2.4.2 The Persecution of the Protestants

If something is sure about Mary I, it would be that this queen really hated, loathed and despised the Protestants in special and anything related to Protestantism in general. The reasons behind this strong hatred is disputable, some claim that Mary I hated the Protestants because when she was a child her father divorced her Catholic mother for the Protestant Anne Boleyn, while others

argue that Mary hated Protestants simply because she was a devout Catholic who believed that nobody would be able to go to heaven unless the Roman Catholic Church was brought back and therefore she has to save the souls of her subjects and also because England was Catholic for centuries before Protestantism. Though the reasons may vary and differ, however Mary I is remembered mostly by her horrible deeds such as the persecutions of thousands of innocent Protestants. *“Undoubtedly, the persecution of Protestants during Mary’s reign was severe and unprecedented in England in its intensity”* (Duncan, 2012:180)

It may be slightly unfair that Mary’s reign is remembered as a horrible period ruled by an evil, harsh queen who had done all what was in her power to kill, burn and torture thousands of Protestants, but that doesn’t make it any less regrettable to earn her the nickname ‘Bloody Mary’ until after her death. This sobriquet was given to her by the Protestants who had witnessed the cruelty of her reign and outlived it. From the very first start, Mary I declared on her accession that the only true and formal faith in England would be the Catholic faith; she deliberately released all the Catholic priests and bishops and instead arrested all the Protestants ones. It was quite clear that Mary was not playing games; she knew exactly what she was doing for she realized that she was surrounded by Protestants who are giving their best to overthrow her in favour of her half-sister Elizabeth, so she needed to survive and protect both herself and her beloved faith. Indeed plots were made against her by Protestants, who were furious of her marriage to Philip and were afraid of their lives; Wyatt’s revolt is the biggest revolt that occurred during Mary’s reign plotted by Protestants who held grudges against her and that only added fuel on the fire and gave Mary I one more reason to hate Protestants even more.

It is safe to say that the persecutions of the Protestants did not start immediately after Mary came to the throne, actually Mary declared that those who did not follow the faith which in this case is Catholicism, they will be considered and tried as heretics, and thereby tortured and burned alive, and if they decided to recant they were promised mercy which to say the truth wasn’t

always the case. It was obvious that Mary didn't care about religious toleration at all, for her it was simple either you turn your faith or you burn to death, nevertheless Cardinal Paul, archbishop of Canterbury pointed by Mary, shares responsibility for those persecutions as well because he was the one who convinced Mary that she was doing the right thing to deal with those heretics. "Mary saw 287 heretics burned in her short reign of less than five full years. Many other martyrs died in prison from neglect and torture" (Lehman, 2005:271)

Unfortunately, many people died because of Mary's lack of mercy and toleration, the clergymen were first to be burned alive on stake, followed by man, woman and even innocent children, all burned in stake, a scene that makes the body shivers from its cruelty. Thomas Cranmer, the former Protestant archbishop of Canterbury was considered by the Protestant as a martyr for at first and out of fear of his life, he signed a kind of recantation of his faith to seek mercy, however Mary still wanted him dead, so when he was getting burned he thrust his hand into the flames first as a punishment for signing the recanting and insisted that .Protestantism is the right faith and encouraged the Protestants to stay strong

The Marian persecution was unjustifiable, she only wanted to get rid of people who would oppose her rule due to their religious views, her dreadful history of burning thousands of people is immortal, she may have believed that she was devoted to her religion and loyal to the Catholic faith thus considering herself as a defender of the Catholic believes, but that was far away from the truth, and moreover that didn't put an end to Protestantism, in contrary it strengthened it and the persecution of the Protestants committed by Mary had done much damage to the standing of Catholicism in England .

2.5 The Transition from Catholicism to Protestantism

Elizabeth I, one of the greatest monarchs who are constantly mentioned, remembered and praised in England's history for their greatest achievements, she was the next Tudor queen and unfortunately the last one to rule after the death of

her half-sister Mary I in 1558, it was a moment of supreme triumph for the unwanted daughter who had spent her life in the shadow of court cast aside and forgotten. Elizabeth came the throne at age 25, this Protestant queen was once and under her sister's reign in a great danger of being executed for she was accused of being a part in a conspiracy led by the Protestants against Mary I, and she only managed to keep her head for the lack of proof against her, however she was kept in the tower of London for a while. Ironically after the death of Mary I, Elizabeth was literally driven from the tower of London in which once was consider a traitor and a prisoner to sit on the throne as the future queen of England.

Now with a Protestant queen on the throne, change was unavoidable, unlike her tyrant Catholic sister who threw England on turmoil for a whole 5 years of her reign; Elizabeth promised to never make the same mistakes which were once made by her half-sister Mary I, she made sure to her people that she will bring stability to the land once again, and to do her best in regards to the welfare of her country. However, Protestantism was immediately restored under her reign and was considered as the legal religion of England, and Catholicism . was firmly considered as an outlawed religion

Upon Mary's death in 1558, the Protestant Elizabeth I, daughter of Henry VIII "and Anne Boleyn, took the throne and established England once again as a Protestant nation" (Papazian, 2003,02) .In other words, what Mary's feared the most when she was alive did come true; Elizabeth brought back Protestantism to the land as her half-brother Edward VI done in a considerable short period during his reign. "Elizabeth was aProtestant in her genes, because her mother was Anne Boleyn and her legitimacy was denied formally and forever by the Church of .Rome" (Zahl, 2001:07)

Although Elizabeth I was a strong believer of her own faith, nevertheless and most remarkably she was a tolerable queen to some extent, some record showed that during her reign Elizabeth explicitly has expressed her opinion about

both religion, saying that both Catholicism and Protestantism are part of the same faith, but that definitely didn't mean that she welcomed the rival religion.

Within her reign, Elizabeth as her father, abolished the authority of the pope and once again a Tudor monarch had declared herself as the supreme head of the church, though she was called the supreme governor instead of the supreme head, consequently the Anglican church has been once again restored by Elizabeth, she didn't instantly take steps towards the Catholic priests and bishops, unless they refuse to take the oath of allegiance towards her, And understandably she did surround herself by Protestants thus putting the Catholics at a safe distance far from her; another reforming step which was taken by Elizabeth was restoring the English Prayer book which was once wrote under her brother's reign with some modification.

When ascending the throne, Elizabeth inherited a country with deep rooted problems and a potential civil war, the protestants couldn't stand the Catholics and the Catholics didn't want to live with them, and despite the fact that Elizabeth was unlike her fanatic Catholic sister who persecuted the Protestants mercilessly that didn't help much to put an end to the mutual hatred by the rival religions, another problem was the fact that when Elizabeth brought England into Protestantism that meant that England would be targeted by both France and Catholic Spain, therefore as a queen she needed to take urgent steps to bring stability to her land and to survive all the plots and conspiracies that were planned against her, the bottom of line is that Elizabeth was in no position to be envied for, as her sister before her, she needed to protect her country, faith and the survival of the dynasty as soon as possible.

2.5.1 The Act of Supremacy 1559

Elizabeth as a Protestant queen wanted to walk on her father's path by firstly reversing all her Catholic sister's settlements and acts and most importantly to abolish the Papal supremacy over the church by passing an act of supremacy as her father Henry VIII once did, however that was easier said than

done for though the House of Commons passed the bill, Elizabeth biggest problem was the refusal of the house of Lords to pass the act or even to reconsider, a reminder to Elizabeth not to underestimate the power of Catholics and to push herself harder to achieve her goal. *“The act passed the House of Commons easily. In the House of Lords it was opposed by all bishops who attended”* (Simpson, 2001:49)

In other sense, the majority of the House of Lords were Catholic, thus it is understandable to refuse to acknowledge Elizabeth as the supreme head of church instead of the pope who was thought to be appointed by god, and the fact that Elizabeth was a woman on top of that only made things worse, needless to say that the whole matter of supremacy didn't pleased the Catholics at all, and moreover the title of supreme head of church was never given to a woman before, thereby Elizabeth had to try harder to pass the act with strong opposition rising against her and after a long fight the act was passed finally and after some effort on 1559 with compromise from both opposing sides in order for things to .work out easily and without difficulty

Elizabeth was recognized as ‘supreme governor’ rather than ‘supreme head’“ of the Church of England, with the same powers and prerogatives as her father had enjoyed. All clergymen, civil servants and academics were required to take the oath of supremacy. Refusal to do so resulted in loss of offices; a third refusal was punishable as treason” (Morris, 2002:303)

Elizabeth did become the supreme head of the Anglican Church however as a kind of compromise, and the fact that the title of supreme head was doubtful to be borne by a woman, it was decided that it would be appropriate that Elizabeth would be addresses as the supreme governor of the church, and Elizabeth was more than content to retain the substance of the supremacy as ‘supreme governor’ of the realm in contrast to her father and all the bishops, the Catholic ones of course who are either hesitated or firmly refused to take the oath of supremacy will be punished severely.

2.5.2 The Act of Uniformity 1559

The act of uniformity was passed on May the 8th 1559; it was a part of the religious settlement set by Queen Elizabeth I in order to put an end to the religious instability in the land and as a desperate way to unify the Church, mainly this act stated and emphasis the re-use of the English Common Prayer Book which was once used in Edward's reign with a slight of modification and some revision from the Edwardian version of 1552, this book had to be in every house in the realm.

“Attendance at Anglican services was made compulsory. The fine for non-attendance was set at one shilling per offense. Priests refusing to use the prayer book were liable to a fine upon the first offense and life imprisonment for a third refusal”
(Ibid: 303)

Upon passing the act, immediately it has been clear that from now on attending the church on Sundays or holy days was not a matter of personal choice anymore; in contrary it became compulsory, and disobeying the statements of the act or/and the disrespect of the Book of Common Prayer and the refusal to use it especially by the Catholic bishops and clergymen would certainly have circumstances, such as paying a fine of 12 Pence, along with other measures and punishments that would be taken against them.

The enforced act of uniformity clearly intensify the act of supremacy and the superiority of Elizabeth over the church, and the fact that any kind of refusal to admit her superiority would be taken in a serious way, the punishment will vary from exile to treason to death, an oath of supremacy was a necessary step to be taken by clergymen in all the churches. The act of uniformity of 1559 is highly considered as the act which made Protestantism, the official religion and faith of England.

2.5.3 Elizabeth Symbolic Marriage to England

As it has already been stated before, Elizabeth was on her early twenties when she ascended to the throne, a suitable age for an upcoming queen to get

married and produce an heir to rule the land one day, the only dilemma was finding the appropriate husband who would help Elizabeth to govern the country, but in the same time that husband had to be accepted by her people, for the unpopular marriage that her half-sister Mary had before, and her inability to please her people was hunting Elizabeth now. Elizabeth's marriage was thereby a really important matter and priority to both the parliament and the people that had to be dealt with, because for them a woman can't and should not rule by herself that was far away unacceptable, she needed a husband to help her make political decisions and to lead the military campaigns.

Elizabeth wasn't feeling at ease either, for now the whole responsibility of carrying the Tudor dynasty survival was led upon her shoulders, but in the same time choosing the wrong husband would lead to needless problems, or in other sense choosing a foreign husband would be the biggest mistake she would ever make, for she would put England in the hands of a foreigner who would eventually like to rule the land as the actual king rather than a mere consort, and would interfere in the foreign policies serving his country first and himself second, leading to the disapproval of the parliament in one hand and the people in the other. At the same time choosing an English man as a fellow husband wasn't that easy either, there were also either political problems or religious ones, Elizabeth was a Protestant queen and that meant that marrying a Catholic was out of the question, and if marrying a Protestant as her that would displease the Catholics and lead to a probable civil war, while Elizabeth was already dealing with the religious instability in the land.

Elizabeth final decision was her refusal to get married at all, which sounded really unexpected and dangerous by most people, her desire never to get married led the historians to have many speculations about the reasons behind it, some said that seeing her father marry and remarry many times and witnessing the cruel and harsh end of each wife including the execution of her own mother, has contributed in her fear and insecurity throughout marriage.

“It is easy to find in Elizabeth’s childhood experiences a ready explanation for an irrational and pathological aversion to marriage. After all, her mother, Anne Boleyn, was executed by her father on a charge of adultery when Elizabeth was not yet three years old” (Duran,2002:04)

Elizabeth had clearly drawn a bad image of marriage in her head because of her father deeds, and her half-sister sad and unhappy marriage only confirmed her ideas about marriage.

Though Elizabeth was unwilling to get married, she still had some tricks under her sleeve, she was known for her intelligence and that she was a great politician, thereby she decided not to let the suitors know her real intention about marriage, it is even safe to say that she manipulated the suitors into thinking that she would eventually marry one of them, determined to maintain and keep friendly relationship with the suitors countries. Elizabeth was one of the most powerful queen in Europe, thus proposals were drowning from everywhere, ironically one of the suitors were none other than her formerly brother in law Philip II, that was quite a shock to her but she politely refused his proposal, in which resulted later into a serious of battles with Spain ‘The Spanish Armada’.

Elizabeth declared in many occasion and under pressure of her advisors, that she is already married, and that her spouse is none other than England, her beloved country. *“When Parliament asked Elizabeth to get married as soon as possible, she declared, ‘I am already bound unto an husband, which is the Kingdom of England’*. (Weatherly, 2006:50). She frequently expressed a preference for a life of Celibacy; she wanted to keep her image as the virgin queen who had sacrificed her own happiness over the happiness of her people and the welfare of her country, the queen who ruled a powerful and a great land all by herself. Some historians might interpreted her celibacy and her rejection to the whole idea of marriage as a fear of childbirth since at that time it was a dangerous matter, or her obsession about wanting to possess all the powers of a monarch all by herself instead of sharing it with a husband, however it is undeniable that declaring England as her spouse was the most honorable thing that a queen could ever do.

2.6 The Church Change Over the Tudor Period

The table below explains some of the major changes that occurred to the Church during the Tudors Reign and how it kept changing from a monarch to another though they were from the same family.

	Henry VIII (1509-1547)	Edward VI (1547-1553)	Mary I (1553-1558)	Elizabeth I (1558-1603)
The head of the Church	At first, it was the Pope, but then Henry VIII declared himself the Supreme Head of the Church	Edward VI was the Supreme Head of the Church	The Pope was the Supreme Head of the Church	Elizabeth I was the Supreme Governor of the Church
The language of the Bible	The Bible was written in Latin and only few people including the priests could understand it	English was the language of the bible (The English Prayer Book)	Mary I banned The English Prayer Book and replaced it with the old Latin one	In the reign of Elizabeth I, the Bible was written in English
The Church services	Though Henry VIII broke with Rome the Church services remained Latin	After the introduction of the English Prayer Book in 1552, services were in English	The services were banned in English and once again they were in Latin	Once again the services were in English by introducing a new Common Prayer Book
The state of the Priests	Priests were not allowed to marry.	Priests could marry if they want	They were no more allowed to marry and they had to leave their wives	They could marry again though they were encouraged to be celibate

2.1 Figure: The Church Transition under the Tudors Monarchs

2.7 Conclusion

It is a given knowledge that England at the outset of the 16th century was a Christian country; thereby Catholicism was mostly the only existing religion in the land, and the Pope led the Roman Catholic Church peacefully, however, and with the Tudors reign, things changed radically, and with the reformation spreading all over England, a new religion was introduced known as Protestantism. The way that England had bounced from Catholicism to Protestantism had caused much unrest and instability, and the fact that each and every Tudor Monarch wanted his way of ruling the country with different laws, political views, contrasting acts, bills and most importantly diverse religion which had contributed into shaping the history of England. The Tudor monarchs reign was full of establishments and different Reformation, whether their reign was good or not could not be judged entirely without being full aware of the conditions surrounding them at that time, unfortunately and as it is known everything has an end and so was the faith which was awaiting for Tudor House which I will deal with in the last chapter.

Chapter Three

The Tudor Everlasting Legacy on England

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3.1 Introduction

Dealing with one of the most famous royal families whom had ruled England for a considerable period of time and getting to know this great dynasty known as the Tudors was my priority in first chapter, whereas in the second one, I handled mostly the different achievements or more specifically the political and religious reformation change under each monarch of the Tudor House. Therefore dealing with the end of the Tudor era and focusing on the legacy left by them that helped shaping modern England would be discussed and analyzed in the third and final chapter in addition to the last years of queen Elizabeth I, since she was the last Tudor monarch and the one with a whole era named after her ‘the Elizabethan Era’ or ‘the Golden Age’.

3.2 Elizabeth’s Last Years

Elizabeth had been the sovereign of England for almost 45 long years; in her reign she had faced many obstacles which were putted entrant of her and which she eventually managed to overcome all of them, this great monarch had been always admired by people in general and historians in a specific way, moreover Elizabeth I has been considered and praised as one of the greatest monarch of England, what she has managed to achieve during her reign though she has never been married and had ruled England all by herself without taking into consideration her gender as a woman as a weakness as some believe, had been widely admired by people for a very long time. “*Elizabeth I had in last resort created a severe problem for her successor who could not easily meet the high standards she had set.*” (Jansohn, 2004:37). In other words some people believed firmly that after having a great monarch who had putted all her life by side in order to serve her beloved country and most importantly the welfare of her subjects have laid a heavy weight on the next monarch’s shoulders, for it was going to be a great responsibility to maintain or better off, to carry on and outstand the achievements of a great queen. So how was Elizabeth last years, and what happened during that time that had solidified her image as a capable queen and a powerful one?

3.2.1 Mary, Queen of Scots



Mary Queen of Scots

Source: < maryqueenscots.co >

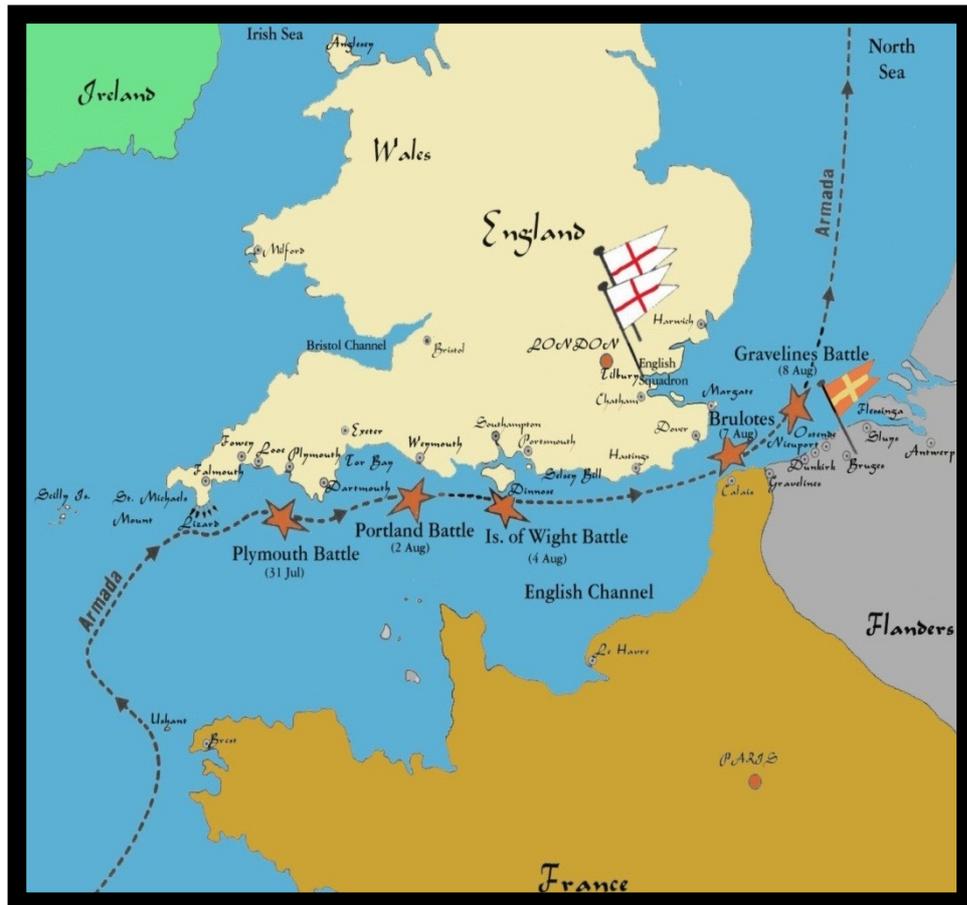
Mary, queen of Scots is a well-deserved mentioning figure during the Tudor period; she was the daughter of King James V of Scotland and Mary of Guise, she was born on December 8th, 1542, in Linlithgow Palace, West Lothian, Scotland. This unfortunate girl had to become the queen of scots almost immediately after she had been born, for her father king James V had died shortly after her birth. Mary's mother's family was actually one of the most powerful families in France; therefore Mary was sent to her grandmother in France there to live and brought up as a Catholic woman. When turning Fifteen, Mary married Henry's II of France son, the Dauphin Francis in order to unite Scotland and France under the newly married couple, nevertheless Francis died unexpectedly prematurely and Mary was sent back to Scotland once again as queen of Scotland aged only 18 years old.

Now, finally at home, Mary queen of scots, remarried for the second time to her cousin. Her husband Lord Darnley 'Henry Stuart' was not quite a popular man, as a matter of fact he was criticized and hated by many Scottish nobles for he was a violent man with a habit of drinking heavily, Mary had a son with him and he was named James VI though things between them weren't good. On 1967,

a huge explosion occurred in Kirk O'Field, a house where Lord Darnley was staying, his body was found outside this foundation, some people claimed that he hasn't died because of the explosion but out of strangulation, therefore it was considered as a conspiracy plotted by Mary herself and Earl Bothwell, a Scottish nobleman whom Mary was allegedly close to him, and whom she had married shortly after the murder of her second husband, in order to get rid of Lord Darnley, however Earl Bothwell's end was as tragic as lord Darnley, he had been imprisoned and ultimately died as an insane man. Mary also was captured, imprisoned and even forced to abdicate for her son, James VI, for marrying her husband's murderer but she eventually managed to escape and fled to England, she believed that her cousin Elizabeth I, would be more than willing to help and protect her, because of the family ties they both share, unfortunately, Mary couldn't be more wrong.

Mary was actually a Catholic woman, a fact that didn't help her bonding with her cousin, for the truth was that Mary had become an undeniable threat to the Protestant Elizabeth, Catholics were already plotting to overthrow Elizabeth and replace her by Mary, thereby Elizabeth had no choice except to put Mary in prison though she was not completely convinced that her cousin was plotting against her, and the last thing she needed was problems with Spain if Mary was executed, moreover Elizabeth didn't want to send her back to Scotland to be killed and she wasn't about to kill another queen not alone her own cousin, but after some evidence were introduced to Elizabeth that proved Mary's involvement in a conspiracy against her, she was obliged to sign a death warrant and Mary was sentenced to death in 1587, a death that brought problem running to Elizabeth for now she was about to face the wrath of the most powerful Catholic country: Spain.

3.2.2 The Defeat of the Invincible Armada



Spanish Armada: Map of the 1588 battle locations

Source: < hawesomestories.com >

It is safe to say that Spain was in bad terms with England for many reasons, for instance the fact that Philip II, after the death of his wife Mary I, had proposed marriage to his previous sister in law Elizabeth, which I think was quite inappropriate, but her firm refusal for even considering him as a suitor had offended and angered him in many ways, also England was during Elizabeth reign a Protestant country which made the devoutly Catholic Spain quite displeased, Elizabeth also went as far as to support some of the Dutch Protestant rebels in the Spanish Netherlands, moreover, many Spanish ships which were loaded with huge sum of money and silver were repeatedly raided and plundered by English ships which made Philip furious, but allegedly the imprisonment of Mary, queen of scots and Philip's cousin, and consequently her execution was the final trigger for launching the Armada against England.

The Spanish Armada was the Spanish invasion naval fleet that had been built under the command of Philip II as an attempt to invade England, overthrow Elizabeth and most importantly bring England back to Catholicism. The Spanish Armada consisted of Huge ships taller and higher than the usual form of ships and well equipped ones, the comparison between the Spanish fleet and the English ships were unreasonable, however a year before the battle, Sir Francis Drake, a famous English naval Captain had skillfully attacked and destroyed most of the Spanish fleet which left Philip understandably full of wrath for the need to assemble another fleet not as equipped as the first one and in a short period of time was quite devastating. In 1588, Philip appointed as the naval captain of the Armada, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, a Spanish commander, though he was not that experienced to be able to lead the armada, Medina had no choice. Philip's plan was simple, Medina had to gather all the ships in Lisbon, Portugal, than he had to sail to Netherlands to pick up the Spanish army awaiting there leaded by the Duke of Parma across the English Channel, obviously that was easier said than done, for the Spanish Armada faced so many obstacles as soon as it anchored in Calais, there was no trace of the supposedly back up army of the Duke of Parma and the English fireships were smaller and easy to move and maneuver and they managed to damage most of the Spanish ships, the weather was not in their side either, it was believed that it was a bad omen, for most of their ships were completely wrecked, and with the weather against the Armada , the Spanish Armada could not turn back throw the English Channel to head back home, they were forced to sail around Scotland and west coast of Ireland, where only few ships managed to returned to Spain while the others were destroyed and wrecked, a lot of sailors have died, some drowned and some died out of starvation, the battle of Gravelines was the last decisive battle which declared the defeat of the supposedly an invincible Armada, a huge humiliation for Spain and Philip II.

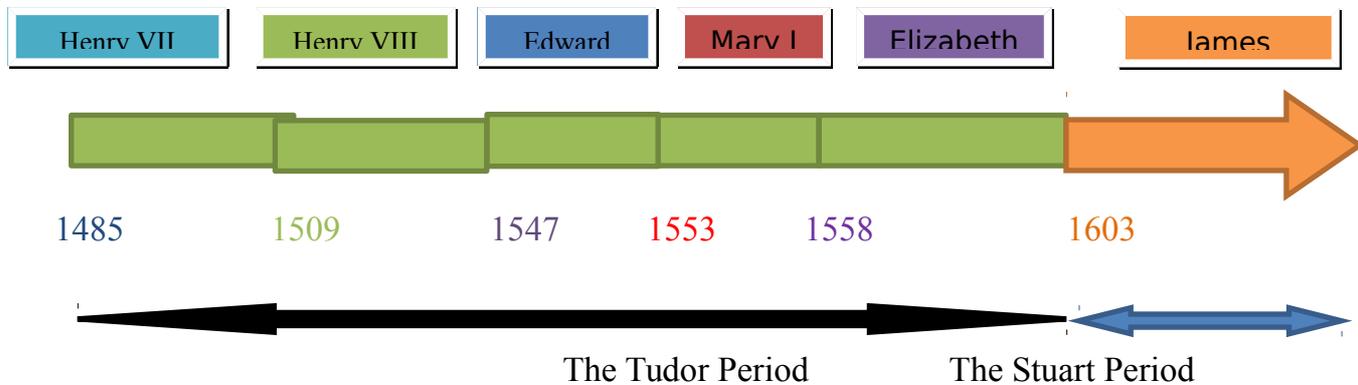
3.3 The Elizabethan Era (The Golden Age)

Before getting a real and clear idea about Elizabeth I great achievements, I wondered for a long time how come among the entire Tudor dynasty, Elizabeth I was the most famous and prominent figure of that family, but after some extensive readings and related researches about Elizabeth I, I come to know the reason. Elizabeth I was quite a formidable queen that a whole era was named after her 'The Elizabethan Era' or as some historians depicts her period of reign as the Golden age, the reason behind the naming of her era is simple yet worth to mention and be studied, we all know how Elizabeth had suffered during the onset of her coronation when inheriting a country which were in the edge of having a bloody civil war between the Protestants and the Catholic, that was a great concern for Elizabeth in addition to the escalating fear that was all over England from the other European superpowers, for England at Elizabeth reign was a new reformed Protestant country which meant England was soon or later about to clash with the Catholic Spain, the most powerful superpower at that time.

However, Elizabeth managed to overcome all the difficulties facing her, she was capable of putting an end to the constant conflict between the Protestant and the Catholic, and at the same time it was only during her reign that the Spanish Armada was defeated and humiliated which ultimately brought stability to the country after so many years of concern and agony, a new period of peace and prosperity started, Also England became economically healthier than before, moreover the Elizabethan era experienced a new period of flourishement usually called the Renaissance in which music, poetry, Theater, drama and literature continues to thrive and prosper, as a matter of fact that period knew some of the most famous figures known in the whole world such as the greatest playwright Shakespeare, the magnificent poet Edmund Spenser, the skillful composer William Byrd and the talented painter Nicholas Hilliard, likewise the Elizabethan era saw a rise of the English navy and in exploration and navigation, Sir Walter Raleigh was one of the most English explorers at that period, therefore after enlisting all the possible reasons for the naming of the era after her, I believe that Elizabeth had earned her reputation as one of the greatest queen of the English history and thereby the description of her era as the Golden age. Thus Elizabeth I

is fairly and understandably the most famous monarch of the Tudor House in specific and the English history in general.

3.4 The End of the Tudor Dynasty



3.1 Figure: The Extinguishment of the Tudor House

Historically speaking the Tudor Monarchs have fought all their lives for the survival of their Dynasty, in other words each monarch took the responsibility of carrying the line of the almost extinguished dynasty upon his/her shoulders, a heavy weight which had been bothering and ruining the peace of their lives, it has even been rumored that the Tudors were really cursed from the start, it was already a bad omen when Arthur, Henry VII's oldest son died, leaving Henry VIII, the only surviving male of the dynasty, and to make things even worse, Henry VIII had struggled more than any other monarch of England for his need for a male heir to carry on the dynasty he even went as far as to marry six wives in order to produce an heir, but he was quite disappointed when he had two daughters, he was so mad that he divorced his first wife and beheaded his second, and when he thought finally fate smiled in his face when his third wife produce the long waited male heir, it turned out that the new born prince and the future king was a sickly child and that ultimately his fate was to die in a really young age. Things didn't change with the succession of Mary I, after experiencing two false pregnancies, she ends up dying alone and most importantly childless.

Elizabeth I was the last hope of her dynasty, the only Tudor monarch left from the supposedly cursed dynasty, one would think that Elizabeth's first reaction after her succession would be getting married and producing a male heir, but that wasn't the case at all, as it is known Elizabeth refused to marry all her life, she died as a virgin queen and as childless as her sister Mary was, this ultimately meant one thing and one thing only, that was definitely the end of the Tudor dynasty, for when Elizabeth were in her death bed and asked by her advisors who would succeed her, she named James VI as her successor, the reason she named him is because his mother, Mary queen of scots was the supposedly the nearest legal successor to Elizabeth but since she was executed under the command of Elizabeth, her son James was Elizabeth logical choice and the fact that he was a Protestant was a plus for him. In 1603, and with the death of Elizabeth, the Tudor Period officially ended and the Stuart period started with James VI of Scotland and I of England.

3.5 The Impact of the Tudors in Shaping a Modern Britain

The sixteen century was described by many scholars as the time which saw the emergence of a modern England, It is undeniably fascinating and remarkable how England had shifted from medieval to modern times under the reign of the Tudor family; historians had argued that the Tudor era had had a huge influence on the English history in many ways, the start of the shifting process could be traced back to the most important event that happened during Henry VIII's reign, the legendary split from the Roman Catholic Church and the establishment of the Anglican church was a step toward changing England history, that period witnessed some radical reformations too, the power was no longer in the hands of the church as it used to.

Though the transmission from medieval to modern times was piecemeal, yet all along the reign of Edward VI, and his half-sister Mary I, magnificent changes happened, it was a time of reformation, however that process of shifting had accelerated during Elizabeth I reign, a golden age had yet to be started and carried along with it tremendous changes which were the reasons behind the transmission to modernity, as a matter of fact the Elizabethan era as it is known is mostly famous for the Renaissance or as it is called the early modern period, a period in which art, literature, poetry, drama and music had impressively flourished and driven the country to a new modern direction, moreover it was during the Tudor era that the state was also becoming a modern one, for the first time, the registration of marriages, deaths, and baptisms were compulsory in every parish as a kind of collecting and gathering information and data, in addition it was during the Tudor period that the parliament conditions changed from merely being called by the sovereign for advices to becoming a really important political figure in the realm with enough power to debate, last but not least, it was during Henry VIII's reign that the begging of the modern navy was introduced, only in his time the fleet of warships which were built were the first standing military force at that time which I think is quite impressive because it was also during Elizabeth I reign, that explorations were starting and encouraged

by her, it was time of great discovery while the east India company was first created and consequently laying the foundations of the British Empire.

3.6 Conclusion

Elizabeth I was the last Tudor monarch of her family, during her last years she had experienced many difficulties whether they were personal ones as executing her Catholic cousin who represented a threat, or more intriguing as facing the biggest enemy she ever had encountered who threatened both her country and her life which were the Spanish Armada; ultimately she managed to overcome all the obstacles and she had stubbornly and fiercely preserved her position as the queen of England till her last breath, unfortunately the only thing she didn't managed to achieve was securing the survival of her dynasty which ended as soon as she died, but most importantly the legacy which was left by her and all her family never ceased to be acknowledged, as a matter of fact the Tudor period was quite fundamental in the shaping of modern Britain.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The Tudors were not similar to any other royal family that ruled England before; the fascinating thing about them is that though their dynasty wasn't that long and their family consisted of merely five monarchs, nevertheless the impact of their actions was huge on the history of not only England but Britain too. The starting of the dynasty was thanks to Henry VII, the first Tudor, he had won his place as king of England in his battle against Richard III, despite of the accusations of his weak claim to the throne, he managed to overcome all the obstacles and the pretenders who wanted him out of the way, furthermore he married the daughter of his rivals in order to bring peace and stability to the land after the Hundred years war and the War of Roses.

Henry VIII came to the throne after the death of his father, unlike his father he had no problems in succeeding to the throne, he is mostly remembered for his six wives and the way he ended his relationships with them either by divorce or execution, furthermore his split with Rome out of his need for divorce and a male heir had started the English Reformation, and for the first time Protestantism was spreading in the land clashing with Catholicism, and all along the Tudor period, Religion changed constantly, though Henry split with Rome, he remained Catholic, however Edward brought Protestantism to the land, making huge Political and religious reformation, than Mary I, Henry VII's eldest daughter was a staunch Catholic and she brought Catholicism back and persecuted all the Protestants, Finally Elizabeth I, the last Tudor monarch reversed all her sister's deeds and declared England as a Protestant country.

Historians all agreed that out of the Tudor monarchs, only two monarchs stood up, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, as a matter of fact Elizabeth I ruled England for almost 45 years, she was both loved and respected by her people, especially that during her reign, the defeat of the Spanish Armada had shifted the balance of naval power in Europe toward England. In her reign, and in order for Elizabeth to survive and to protect her dynasty and her country, she was obliged to execute her own cousin, the Catholic Mary queen of scots, though it was hard to her but it was essential.

General Conclusion

It may seem that the Tudors were in many ways invincible, however a curse was legendary put upon them, for that dynasty always had the problem of producing an heir to preserve the dynasty, Henry VIII had married several times just to have an heir and to protect the survival of the dynasty, his only male heir was unfortunately a sick child who died aged only 16 and of course childless, and his eldest daughter Mary I, though she married, she had two false pregnancies and was not able to produce any heir and as her brother, she died childless, leaving a huge burden upon Elizabeth's shoulders, she had to bring an heir or else the dynasty will end definitely with her death, however, Elizabeth decided not to get married she declared to everybody that her only husband and king is England, she was officially married to her beloved England, the reasons of her refusal to marry were different yet still unconfirmed, by the time Elizabeth was dying and since she had no child, she named James Stuart as her successor, which meant the end of the Tudor dynasty.

It was only during the Elizabethan era that England started to emerge from its European shell, and started to get a name in the wider world, the bottom line is that the Tudor period is so important because the political and religious reformation that had happened under the Tudors had pushed and shaped the modern Britain that is known now, the first thoughts of creating an empire, along with the beginning of the Church of England, all lie within this specific period in which the Tudors were uniquely the dominators.

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