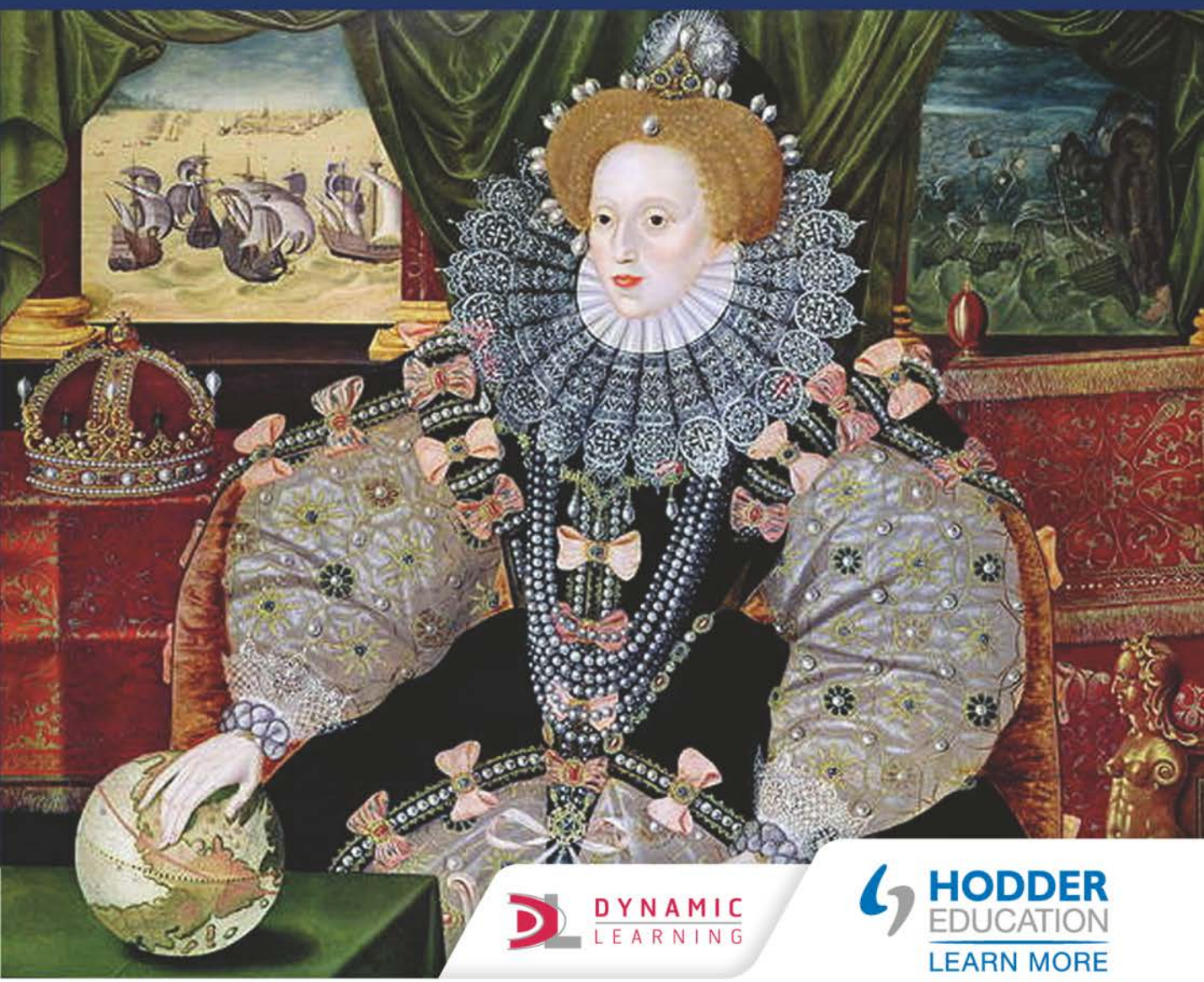
access to history

The Later Tudors

1547–1603

ROGER TURVEY



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Contents

Dedication

Keith Randell (1943–2002)

The *Access to History* series was conceived and developed by Keith, who created a series to 'cater for students as they are, not as we might wish them to be'. He leaves a living legacy of a series that for over 20 years has provided a trusted, stimulating and well-loved accompaniment to post-16 study. Our aim with these new editions is to continue to offer students the best possible support for their studies.

CHAPTER 1

Context

By the time Elizabeth I had ascended the throne of England in 1558, the Tudors had been in power for nearly three-quarters of a century. Begun by Henry VII, the Tudor dynasty was founded following his victory in a dynastic civil war. Continuing on from his father, Henry VIII was a powerful and ruthless king who ruled with an iron fist. The Henrician **Reformation** resulted in the dissolution of the monasteries and the removal of the Pope as head of the English Church. Henry VIII was succeeded by Edward VI (1547–53), a sickly child of nine who was too young to rule. During Edward's **minority**, the kingdom was ruled in turn by two powerful **regents**, the Duke of Somerset (1547–9) and the Duke of Northumberland (1549–53). During Edward's short reign, England became a Protestant nation, although not necessarily a nation of Protestants. Edward VI was followed by Mary I (1553–8), a passionate Roman Catholic who contracted an unpopular marriage with Philip of Spain. Her attempt to undo the religious changes of her father and brother led to the persecution and execution of Protestants. The burning of Protestants earned the Queen the nickname Bloody Mary. The brevity of their reigns, allied to the economic and religious turmoil, led some historians to label this period (1547–58) a 'mid-Tudor crisis'. This was the England inherited by Elizabeth I (1558–1603), whose long reign brought much-needed stability, a measure of peace and significant progress.

KEY TERMS

Reformation The process that transformed the Church and religion in England that was begun by Henry VIII breaking from Rome and making himself the head of the English Church.

Minority A period when the ruler was a child.

Regent Someone who rules a kingdom in the name of, and on behalf of, the monarch.

The Tudor dynasty

- Henry VII (1485–1509)
- Henry VIII (1509–47)
- Edward VI (1547–53)
  - Duke of Somerset (1547–9)
  - Duke of Northumberland (1549–53)
- Mary I (1553–8)
- Elizabeth I (1558–1603)

England and Europe in the 1550s

England was an emerging power in Europe during the 1550s. Henry VIII's active and aggressive foreign policy had cemented England's position as a major player on the international stage. This enabled his successors to involve themselves in continental affairs. However, England was neither strong nor wealthy enough to compete with the great continental powers, such as Spain and France. This meant that it was necessary for England to ally with one or other of its more powerful neighbours (see Figure 6.1, page 115, for a map of Europe at the time). Until 1559, western European foreign policy was dominated by the conflict

KEY TERMS

Valois Family name of the ruling dynasty that reigned in France (1328–1589).

Habsburg Family name of the ruling dynasty that reigned in Austria, Spain, the Netherlands and the Holy Roman Empire (Germany) (1273–1918).

Holy Roman Empire Large central European kingdom roughly equivalent to modern-day Germany and ruled by an elected emperor (c.962–1806).

Elite The most powerful and privileged class of people in society.

Nobility Members of the upper class, holding titles such as duke, earl and baron.

Gentry Members of the middle class, some of whom had titles such as knight and esquire.

State A country or kingdom consisting of a structured government served by paid officials.

Privy Council A royal council consisting of the monarch's ministers and advisers who were known as privy councillors.

Inflation Rising costs of goods and services.

Commonwealth Derived from 'commonweal', meaning the wealth, health and good of the community.

between the **Valois** kings of France and the **Habsburg** rulers of the **Holy Roman Empire** and Spain. Financial and diplomatic considerations made it necessary for English rulers to maintain a delicate balancing act in their relations with both nations.

Historical and geographical context

The kingdom inherited by Elizabeth in 1558 was multi-racial in the sense that it consisted of England, Wales and Ireland. Although the language of government and law was English, several languages were spoken by large numbers of the Crown's subjects, for example, Welsh, Cornish and Gaelic.

On Elizabeth's accession in 1558, the population of the kingdom is estimated to have been around 3 million and had increased to nearly 4 million by the time of her death in 1603. The vast majority of the population lived in small villages, in what was essentially a rural kingdom that was largely dependent on agriculture. Industry was small scale, cloth-making being the most important, and usually located close to cities and large towns, the biggest of which was the capital, London. By the end of Elizabeth's reign, the population of London was around 75,000, whereas the second largest city in the kingdom, Norwich, had less than 20,000 inhabitants.

The kingdom was a rigidly class-based society dominated by the landowning **elite**. This elite consisted of the **nobility**, no more than 40 or 50 families, and **gentry**, estimated to be about 150,000 in number. The landowning elite made up around five per cent of an overwhelmingly rural peasant population. Less than six per cent of the population lived in urban centres, towns and cities, the majority of which were smaller than London and Norwich.

Government and the State

By the middle of the sixteenth century, the **State** was assuming greater responsibility for every aspect of life. Government was becoming centralised and growing numbers of civil servants were being employed to administer both central and local affairs. As the administration grew in size, Elizabeth's senior ministers who sat on her **Privy Council** realised that they had to take more control of the economy to ensure that the country was creating the wealth needed to pay the ever-rising cost of government. Consequently, the government increasingly introduced measures to try to regulate the economy and to boost trade, both domestic and foreign. The peace and stability established during Elizabeth's reign promoted economic growth and social cohesion. Although **inflation** remained a problem, trade continued to flourish and industry continued to grow.

As the English State increased its power and influence, the notion of the **commonwealth** gained greater currency. As the wealth and power of the Church had declined, the government had assumed greater responsibility for the welfare

of the people in the country. Poverty and vagrancy were a serious problem, made worse by periodic economic slumps, disruption of trade and changes in industry and agriculture, especially the **enclosure** of land. Poverty and vagrancy were social evils which the Crown could not solve, but dealt with by passing a series of parliamentary acts to provide some relief.

A central feature in the development of the State was the struggle for power among the ruling elites. Political rivalry and competition for royal **patronage** had the potential to disrupt, perhaps even threaten, the State and monarchy. Elizabeth was careful in her control and management of the elites in this respect.

KEY TERMS

Enclosure The enclosing of land by fences or hedges in order to divide large open fields into smaller more manageable units.

Patronage The award and distribution of royal favours.

Political nation Those with political power and influence: the nobility and gentry.

The monarchy

Although the State was growing in power and becoming more stable with the development of new offices of state and permanent civil servants, it was still dependent on the personality of the monarch. The Tudor State could function only with the consent of the elite, and the aim of government was to establish a working relationship based on trust and mutual cooperation. The monarchy was the most crucial component in maintaining this delicate balance between State and people. For Elizabeth, the people who mattered were the landowners, the **political nation**, gentry and nobility with the wealth and power to challenge or support the Crown and its government.

The accession of a female monarch in 1553 proved especially controversial. Contemporary paternalistic attitudes meant that many thought the ruling monarch should be male because England had no tradition of female monarchs. Elizabeth was conscious that there was opposition to the idea of a female monarch, especially one who was young and unmarried. The Queen took comfort in the fact that the succession of her predecessor, her half-sister Mary, had removed any legal doubts about the right of women to rule in England.

Elizabeth's spirited defence of her prerogative rights became a feature of her rule from the beginning of her reign. She was also ruthless in her treatment of dissident noblemen who threatened her authority. Rebellion, whether motivated by grievances over religion or political ambition, was ruthlessly suppressed. Elizabeth exploited the financial strength of the monarchy to create a Crown-dependent elite. The elites were encouraged to serve the Crown in local administration and the most important of them were attracted to Court, the centre of government, where they competed to gain royal favour.

The relationship between Crown and elites was sometimes strained, particularly when the succession was called into question. There was some anxiety when Elizabeth nearly died of smallpox in 1562, less than four years into her reign, because she was unmarried and had no heirs. This fear was exacerbated by the prospect of her Catholic cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, succeeding to the English throne. It is important to note that Elizabeth withstood the pressure to marry throughout her reign and used it as a bargaining tool in foreign relations.

Religion

The greatest challenge facing Elizabeth was religion. The Reformation had made the monarch head of the Church and given parliament control of religious policy. The Reformation was a significant process that witnessed the gradual shift away from Roman Catholicism to a form of Anglo-Catholicism.

Greater change was to come in the shape of the Edwardian Reformation. Edward VI's reign saw the first attempt to establish Protestantism as the State religion. Although the Protestant revolution is often regarded as the defining characteristic of Edward's short reign, its efficacy has been questioned. Mary had inherited a Protestant Church and State, but she was a devout Catholic determined to return England to the papacy. The struggle to reintroduce Catholicism went side by side with the task of eradicating Protestantism. Despite the brutality of her actions against heretics, Mary failed to re-establish Roman Catholicism.

KEY TERM

Religious Settlement
The establishment of the Anglican Church by Acts of Parliament.

After the turmoil of Edward and Mary, the kingdom had evolved to a point where the majority of the population had come to accept, if not wholeheartedly embrace, the largely Protestant **Religious Settlement** enacted by Elizabeth in 1559.

CHAPTER 2

‘A mid-Tudor crisis’? The Elizabethan inheritance

The kingdom that Henry VIII bequeathed to his successors, Edward VI and Mary I, was plagued by political, religious, economic and social problems. But these problems were not insurmountable, nor did they plunge England into a permanent state of crisis. Arguably, the most serious difficulties facing the Edwardian and Marian regimes arising out of Henry’s legacy were in politics, religion and foreign diplomacy. Historians have long debated the legacy that the Edwardian and Marian regimes left Elizabeth I. In short, did Elizabeth inherit a kingdom that was in a state of crisis? These issues are examined through two sections:

- The reign of Edward VI
- The reign of Mary I

The key debate on page 22 of this chapter asks the question: Was there a mid-Tudor crisis?

KEY DATES

1547 Death of Henry VIII. Accession of Edward VI
Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset became Lord Protector

1549 Rebellion in East Anglia and the West Country
Fall of Somerset

1551 John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland became Lord President of the Council

1553 Death of Edward VI. Brief reign of Lady Jane Grey. Succession of Mary I
Execution of Northumberland
Catholicism reintroduced

1554 Wyatt rebellion
Execution of Lady Jane Grey
Marriage of Mary I and Philip of Spain

1555 Persecution of Protestants began. Bishops Ridley and Latimer burned at the stake

1556 Archbishop Cranmer burned at the stake

1557 England joined Spain in a war against France

1558 Death of Mary. Accession of Elizabeth I

1 The reign of Edward VI

■ *To what extent did government, religion, the economy and foreign policy change during the reign of Edward VI?*

Henry VIII died in January 1547. He was succeeded by nine-year-old Prince Edward, his son by his third wife, Jane Seymour. Edward’s succession was a problem because he was a child and therefore too young to rule.

Henry VIII's legacy

The kingdom that Henry VIII bequeathed to his successor, Edward VI, was plagued by political, religious, economic and social problems. But these problems were not insurmountable and they did not plunge England into a permanent state of crisis. Arguably, the most serious difficulties facing the new Edwardian regime arising out of Henry's legacy were in politics, religion and foreign diplomacy.

Political legacy

In declining health, Henry could do little to stop the struggle for power between rival political factions at Court in the final few years of his reign. Henry's fear was that the government would become a battleground for these contending factions, each keen to secure the dominant position during his son's minority.

Religious legacy

Henry's break with Rome in 1534 led to a power struggle between conservative (Catholic) and reformist (Protestant) factions for control of the Church. Henry's failure to settle the religious problems caused turmoil and led to uncertainty and instability.

Foreign policy

During the last five years of Henry's reign, his grasp of England's foreign policy was slipping. Peaceful diplomacy had been abandoned in favour of military confrontation. Henry's final years were marked by war on two fronts – with France and Scotland – in which he squandered his wealth and endangered the financial strength of his successors. His failure to achieve lasting success in France or to remove the threat of a Scottish invasion led to serious security problems for his successor.

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SOURCE QUESTION

Study Source A. What problems might Henry VIII bequeath to his son and successor, Edward VI?

SOURCE A

From a report by Charles de Marillac, French ambassador at the English Court, sent to King Francis I of France, on Henry VIII's political and religious legacy, 1543, quoted in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, Volume 18, Part 1, January–July 1543, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1901, pp. 212–13.

Thence proceeds … distrust and fear. The King, knowing how many changes he has made, and what tragedies and scandals he has created, would fain keep in favour with everybody, but does not trust a single man, expecting to see them all offended, and he will not cease to dip his hand in blood as long as he doubts his people. Hence every day edicts are published so bloody that with a thousand guards one would scarce be safe. Hence too it is now with us, as affairs incline, he makes alliances which last as long as it makes for him to keep them. Lightness and inconsistency proceeds from the nature of the nation, and has perverted the rights of religion, marriage, faith and promise, as softened wax can be altered to any form.

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Edward VI and government

Governments where the head of state is a child are always afflicted by uncertainty, which is why Henry VIII had intended that Edward VI would take charge of the government when he turned eighteen. In the event, Edward remained a minor throughout his reign, but it would be wrong to conclude that he was simply a spectator. Edward was well educated, intelligent and, as he grew older, became increasingly involved in affairs of state. Therefore, although government was directed, and policy decided, by men whom Edward had inherited and been surrounded by after his succession, these men could not simply ignore his wishes. For example, to the embarrassment of his advisers, in March 1551 the thirteen-year-old king told his Catholic sister, Mary, that he would no longer tolerate her hearing mass in her household. Later that year, Edward began attending meetings of the Privy Council during which he wrote various papers showing his close interest in the making of policy.

Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset

Henry VIII had tried to prevent trouble by establishing a **Regency Council** led by **Edward Seymour**, Earl of Hertford. Seymour was Edward's uncle, which gave him a vested interest in the welfare of the young king. Henry had intended that Seymour should lead, but not dominate, the Regency Council. Seymour was to govern with the aid of a council of ministers, specifically named by Henry VIII, who would share in the government of the kingdom.

However, Seymour was ambitious for personal power and he began to plot against his fellow councillors. By playing one councillor off against another, Seymour quickly split and then gained control of a divided Council. To underline his new status, he assumed the title of **Lord Protector of the Realm** and was promoted to Duke of Somerset by his nephew. The Lord Protector ruled the country for two years until 1549. During this time the political situation deteriorated steadily. This was caused, in part, by Somerset's arrogance and lack of ability. He was simply not up to the task of dealing with the numerous financial, economic and diplomatic difficulties which confronted the kingdom (see pages 10–12). Somerset's failure to deal effectively with the rebellions of 1549 was the final straw for his fellow councillors, who removed him in a palace coup.

Foreign policy

Foreign policy during the first part of Edward VI's reign was strongly influenced by the legacy left by Henry VIII: an uneasy peace and a costly defence. The young king's minority created fears over national security and the succession. There were major concerns over the possibility of renewed French intervention in Scotland and the end of the fragile peace.

KEY TERMS

Regency Council Council of ministers appointed to assist the regent in the government of the kingdom.

Lord Protector of the Realm Title assumed by a nobleman exercising individual regency powers.

KEY FIGURE

Edward Seymour (1500–52)

Seymour, Earl of Hertford and later Duke of Somerset, was the uncle of Edward VI and a member of Henry VIII's Royal Council. After a *coup d'état*, Seymour ruled England as Lord Protector of the realm, 1547–9. Due to his autocratic rule and unpopularity with the nobility, he was removed from power by Northumberland and later executed in 1552.

France and Scotland

The question facing Somerset was whether the war with France and Scotland, begun by Henry VIII in 1542, should continue or not. Somerset inherited a war that Henry VIII had hoped would secure the marriage of Edward VI to the young Mary, Queen of Scots (see pages 130–4). Although the government was all but bankrupt, Somerset continued the war and thereby further hampered the country's finances. At the same time, he strove to continue Henry VIII's policy of keeping on good terms with Charles V, ruler of Spain and the Holy Roman Empire, for fear of provoking him into war.

In 1547 the Franco-Scottish alliance was made, when the French king, Henry II, proclaimed that France and Scotland were one country. Somerset understood that this, along with England's weakening military position in France and a chronic shortage of money, meant that in the long term, this was a war which could not be won. By the autumn of 1549, foreign affairs had reached a critical point. The war had become increasingly unpopular with both the nobility and the general public. High levels of taxation were undermining the economy and provoking hostility towards the government. For some Privy Councillors this was one crisis too many, and they began advocating peace as a means of restoring financial and economic stability.

Somerset's fall from power caused a temporary breakdown in military leadership. This enabled the French to gain the initiative in the war and they went on the offensive. This, combined with a lack of money, forced Somerset's successor, Northumberland, to make peace with both France and Scotland. This annoyed many of the ruling elites who thought that this was a humiliating climb-down. Some of the nobility turned against Somerset with the result that his power was challenged by a member of the Regency Council, John Dudley, Earl of Warwick.

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KEY FIGURE

John Dudley (1504–53)

Dudley, Earl of Warwick and later Duke of Northumberland, was a member of Henry VIII's Royal Council. He removed Somerset from power and ruled England as Lord President of the Council, 1549–53. Removed from power by Mary I and executed in 1553.

John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland

From the ensuing power struggle, **John Dudley**, Earl of Warwick, emerged as the new leader. The eleven-year-old Edward VI was in no position to oppose the change of leadership even if he had wished to do so. Dudley was more energetic and capable a leader than Seymour. He put down the rebellions and restored law and order. He was promoted to Duke of Northumberland by the king and he took the title of Lord President of the Council.

Dudley ruled England as Lord President Northumberland for the remainder of Edward VI's reign. Northumberland was a talented politician who sought to unite rather than divide the Council. He adopted a far more pragmatic approach to government and although he did not achieve all his aims, he brought a measure of political and economic stability to the kingdom. He established a strong relationship with the young king whom he encouraged to take an active interest in the business of government.

Northumberland and royal authority

That Edward VI was a minor and of a sickly disposition was a constant source of concern for Northumberland. Northumberland ruled in the king's name, so his position and power depended on the king's continued health and active support. This put Northumberland at a disadvantage because critics could blame him, rather than the king, for the failings of government. Respect for royal authority tended to diminish when the king's government was conducted by ministers rather than the monarch himself. Like Wolsey and Cromwell before him, history has tended to portray Northumberland as the 'evil councillor'.

Humanism and religion

The middle years of the sixteenth century were a pivotal period in the development of **humanist** and religious thought. The reigns of Edward VI and Mary I witnessed a fierce struggle between Catholics and Protestants to win hearts and minds and, ultimately, for control of the State Church.

Beyond the parish and day-to-day experience of popular worship enjoyed by the majority of the people, the educated elites of both religious faiths – Catholics and Protestants – fought to win the cultural and intellectual battle.

- Inspired by the teachings of **Erasmus**, conservative humanist scholars, such as Bishop Stephen Gardiner, believed that a reformed Catholic Church could improve and enliven the religious experience of the people. He opposed the Protestants because he believed that they were extremists and that their reforms went too far.
- Inspired by the teachings of **Martin Luther**, reformist humanist scholars, such as Hugh Latimer, believed that only a radical overhaul of the Church could transform the religious experience of the people. Luther opposed the Catholics because he believed that the Pope and Church leadership were corrupt. They had let the people down and were incapable of reform.

The humanist scholars on both sides were keen to spread their ideas. The recently invented printing press gave them the means to publish theological (religious) literature, which would underpin the work of committed and charismatic preachers. Cranmer's ***Book of Homilies*** (1547) and Latimer's *Sermons of the Plough* (1548) are prime examples of the theological works being produced by Protestant authors during Edward VI's reign. On the Continent, the Catholic Church was also engaged in the production of theological tracts designed to keep pace with the increasing output of Protestant literature. This renaissance in Catholic humanist and religious thought became the foundation on which the **Counter-Reformation** was based.

KEY TERM

Counter-Reformation Catholic reform of the Church to counter or undo the Protestant changes in the Church.

KEY TERMS

Humanist A scholar who questions the belief systems of the Church and who embraces free thinking, culture and education.

Book of Homilies A book of sermons written by Cranmer for use in church services.

KEY FIGURES

Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536)

Erasmus was a Dutch Renaissance humanist, priest, scholar and theologian. He was a hugely influential figure in the Renaissance and played a pivotal role in the establishment of humanism in universities. Contemporaries referred to him as the 'Prince of the Humanists'. Erasmus's influence on the English episcopal and aristocratic patrons under Henry VIII was immense, especially in education.

Martin Luther (1483–1546)

Luther was a German monk, scholar and theologian. He became a critic of the Catholic Church and in 1517 he published his 'Ninety-five Theses', attacking papal abuses and clerical corruption. This turned him against many of the major teachings of the Catholic Church. He wrote pamphlets developing his ideas and he was forced to leave the Church in 1521. He was the founder of the Protestant Church in Europe.

SOURCE QUESTION

Study Source B. How and why does Cranmer justify the publication of this book?

SOURCE B

Adapted from the introduction to Cranmer's *Book of Homilies*, 1547. Cranmer's *Homilies* was reissued by Elizabeth I in 1562, quoted in *Certain Sermons or Homilies, Appointed to be Read in Churches, in the Time of Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory*, Church of England, 1799, p. v.

Considering how necessary it is, that the word of God, which is the only food of the soul, and that most excellent light that we must walk by, in this our most dangerous pilgrimage, should at all times be preached unto the people, that thereby they may both learn their duty towards God, their Prince, and their neighbours, according to the Scriptures: And also to avoid the manifold enormities which heretofore by false doctrine have crept into the Church of God: and how that all they which are appointed Ministers, have not the gift of preaching sufficiently to instruct the people, which is committed unto them, whereof great inconveniences might rise, and ignorance still be maintained, if some honest remedy be not speedily found and provided.

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KEY FIGURE

Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556)

Appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by Henry VIII in 1532. He assisted the king in securing the break with Rome and in setting up the Anglican Church. During the reign of Edward VI, the Anglican Church became Protestant. As a committed Protestant, he was arrested and imprisoned by Mary I. He was burned to death as a heretic.

KEY TERMS

Books of Common Prayer The first prayer books in English that set out the forms of service for daily and Sunday worship.

Forty-two Articles Articles of faith establishing the Protestant doctrine of the Church.

Laity Lay or ordinary people as distinct from the clergy.

Protestant humanism

The Protestant teachings and ideas adopted in Edward VI's reign led to radical changes. **Thomas Cranmer**'s ***Books of Common Prayer*** (1549 and 1552) and his list of essential doctrine, the **Forty-two Articles** (1552), were intended to form the basis of the new Protestant Church of England. Protestant humanism also placed especial emphasis on educating the **laity**. Bishops were instructed to carry out visitations to encourage the adoption of the new services, and to test whether parishioners could recite the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in English.

Catholic humanism

During Mary's reign, many of Edward's religious changes were reversed and the Protestant ideas he had promoted were rejected. As part of the Counter-Reformation in England, the Catholics followed the Protestants by promoting education and the printing of theological literature. For example, Roger Edgeworth's *Sermons very fruitfull* (1557), a collection of Catholic Reformation sermons, was designed to counter Protestant theology. Ultimately, the brevity of Mary's reign undermined a Catholic revival in England and the succession of Elizabeth enabled Protestant humanist scholars to firmly establish Protestant ideology and theology there.

Edward VI's religious beliefs

Edward showed a keen interest in religious matters. Having received a Protestant education, Edward was determined to break with his father's Anglo-Catholicism and to actively promote the new faith. He was ably supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury Cranmer, who enthusiastically took up the challenge of establishing a Protestant Church. Cranmer was assisted in his religious endeavours by the king's chief ministers, the Dukes of Somerset

SOURCE C

Deathbed portrait of Henry VIII with his son and heir, Edward VI. The painting also depicts the Pope and members of the Royal Council. Painted by an unknown artist *c.*1570.

SOURCE QUESTION

Study Source C. What message is the Elizabethan artist trying to convey?

and Northumberland, both of whom were sympathetic to Protestantism. The ministers, in turn, drew up and guided through parliament the legislation necessary to establish the Protestant faith.

Religious policy

Somerset inherited a divided Church that lacked decisive leadership and a clear direction. Somerset himself was a moderate reformer, as were most members of the Regency Council, whereas Edward VI favoured more radical changes. However, powerful politicians such as the Duke of Norfolk and Bishop Gardiner were opposed to change, and such differences only increased the infighting among the political factions.

To secure the support of Edward VI, Northumberland allowed increasingly radical reforms to be introduced into the Church of England. For example, altars were ordered to be removed and the church service was modelled on the Lutheran system of worship. To ensure religious compliance, the government passed the Act of Uniformity in 1549. Such a move not only angered the Catholic elites at home, but also antagonised Emperor Charles V, England's major continental ally, who was an active supporter of the Roman Catholic Church.

The social impact of the changes in religion was marked by confusion and anger. The population at large was largely conservative and resented changes in their local churches. This anger spilled over into armed insurrection in the Western or Prayer Book Rebellion that broke out in the south-west of England in 1549.

The Western or Prayer Book Rebellion 1549

The popular discontent began in Cornwall in 1549 when the Cornish people rose in rebellion and set up an armed camp at Bodmin. The main leaders of the rebels were local clergy, and it was they who drew up a series of demands to stop the religious changes. They were rejected by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, who was particularly enraged by such insubordination.

In Devon there was an independent uprising at Sampford Courtenay. By 20 June the Devon and Cornish rebels had joined forces at Crediton, and three days later they set up an armed camp at Clyst St Mary. Local negotiations broke down, and the rebels began to blockade the nearby town of Exeter with an army of 6000 men. Lord Russell, who had been sent to crush the rebellion, was hampered by a shortage of troops and a lack of local gentry support. Crucially, the rebels were led by a prominent local gentleman, Humphrey Arundell, who was a skilled tactician and an able commander. As a result, it was not until August that the rebels were finally defeated.

Economic and social problems

Somerset inherited an English economy that was in a very weak condition. Population levels had been increasing rapidly since the 1530s, causing prices to rise and making it difficult for young people to find work. The problem was made worse by a fall in demand for English textiles abroad, which caused growing unemployment among cloth workers. Changes to the pattern of landholding witnessed the wholesale enclosure of land, including common land. Pastoral farming was less labour intensive than arable farming, which led to rising unemployment.

Rising inflation and increasing food prices added to the anger and frustration of the commons. By 1549 there was widespread discontent, which led to a large-scale popular uprising in Norfolk in 1549. The Kett rebellion was largely caused by enclosure and resentment at greedy landlords who were abusing their position of trust. Faith in the notion that those in society who had wealth and power would see to the social and economic welfare of those below them was breaking down. The principles of the **Great Chain of Being** were being debated, and undermined, by Protestant humanist scholars.

KEY TERM

Great Chain of Being
The belief that God had ordained that everybody was born into a specific place in the strict hierarchy of society and had a duty to remain there.

The rebellions led to the overthrow of Somerset. Northumberland learned from Somerset's mistakes and introduced measures to try to restore social and economic stability. The Privy Council and the government were reorganised, finances were reformed, and debts created by the war with France and Scotland began to be paid off. Although the economic situation continued to worsen, additional laws such as the repeal of the harsh Vagrancy Act of 1547 were introduced to help the poorest sections of society.

Edward VI: death and succession

Edward VI's death in 1553 led to a political and constitutional crisis. According to the terms of Henry VIII's will, Mary, the daughter of his first wife, Catherine

of Aragon, was to succeed if Edward died childless. However, Mary was a devout Roman Catholic who hated the Protestant Northumberland. Northumberland feared that Mary would restore the authority of the Pope and so end the Royal Supremacy over the Church of England.

In an effort to prevent this, Northumberland drew up the '**Device**' in an attempt to change the succession by disinheriting Mary and her younger sister Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry VIII's second wife, Anne Boleyn. Instead, the Crown was to pass to Lady Jane Grey, the Protestant granddaughter of Henry VIII's sister, Mary. Because of her royal connections, Jane became a victim of Tudor politics. Edward VI named Jane as his heir because of her attachment to the Protestant faith. The young king was determined to prevent his half-sister, Mary, from succeeding to the throne. In this he was helped by the Lord President Northumberland and by Jane's mother, Frances, and father, Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk.

KEY TERM

Device A document drawn up in the name of Edward VI entitled, 'My devise [sic] for the Succession'.

The accession of Queen Jane

To secure his own position, Northumberland planned to marry Lady Jane Grey to his youngest son, Guildford Dudley. Jane was persuaded to marry Guildford and accept the crown after Edward VI's death. The plot seemed to have succeeded when the Privy Council initially agreed to proclaim Jane Queen of England. However, Mary refused to accept Jane's accession and she gathered an armed force in East Anglia to support her claim to the throne. Northumberland led an army out of London to defeat Mary, but his troops deserted in such large numbers that he was forced to retreat.

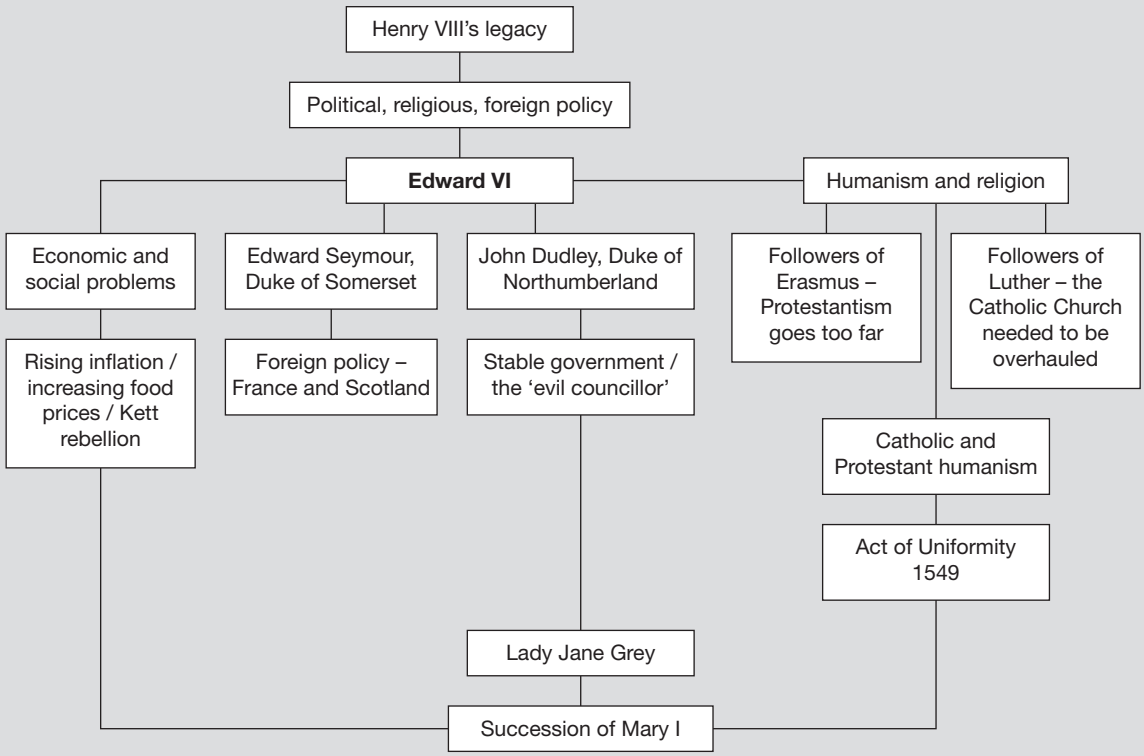
When news of the failure of Northumberland's military expedition to defeat Mary reached the Court, the majority of the Privy Councillors deserted Jane. They were soon joined by the majority of the ruling elites, both Catholic and Protestant, who rallied to the support of Mary. Whether they did this through dislike of Northumberland or to preserve the legitimate succession is not altogether clear. The motivation of many of those who supported Mary may best be summed up in a short contemporary verse. Recalling Mary's accession, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton wrote in 1556:

And though I liked not the religion
Which all her life Queen Mary had professed
Yet in my mind that wicked notion
Right heirs for to displace, I did detest.

After nine days as queen, Jane, together with her husband and father-in-law, was imprisoned in the Tower of London. Northumberland was quickly executed, but Mary was reluctant to execute Jane because she accepted that the teenager was an innocent political pawn. However, when Jane's father led a rebellion, in support of Sir Thomas Wyatt in early 1554, against the Crown, Mary felt she had no choice but to execute her young cousin.

SUMMARY DIAGRAM

THE REIGN OF EDWARD VI



2 The reign of Mary I

■ *To what extent did government, religion, the economy and foreign policy change during the reign of Mary I?*

Mary was the first ruling queen in English history (apart perhaps from Matilda, who claimed the throne, but never properly ruled a kingdom engulfed by civil war in the 1130s and 1140s) and in a male-dominated world she had to work hard at ensuring that her status and authority were respected. She began her reign well, displaying skill and resolution in defeating Northumberland's attempted *coup d'état*. This showed that she was determined to personally exercise her royal authority. Unlike her young brother Edward, who was unable to rule effectively due to his age, Mary was determined to ensure that her gender would not stop her from being fully involved in governing the kingdom.

SOURCE D

Adapted from Thomas Becon, former chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer and Protestant exile in Strasbourg, writing in a pamphlet, ***An Humble Supplication unto God***, 1554, quoted in John Ayre, editor, ***Prayers and Other Pieces of Thomas Becon***, The Parker Society, 1844, p. 223.

We lament that His Majesty Edward VI has been taken away from us for in place of that virtuous prince you have set to rule over us a woman, whom nature has formed to be in subjection unto man, and whom you by your apostle Paul commanded to keep silent. Ah, Lord! To take away the empire from a man, and to give it to a woman, seems to be an evident token of your anger towards us Englishmen. For by the prophet Isaiah you, being displeased with your people threaten to set women to rule over them, as people unworthy to have lawful, natural, and fair government to reign over them. And though we find that women sometimes rule among your people, yet do we read that such as ruled and were queens were for the most part wicked, ungodly, superstitious, and given to idolatry and to all filthy abominations.

SOURCE QUESTION

Study Source D. Apart from gender, why else might Becon have been opposed to Mary I?

ONLINE EXTRAS OCR WWW

Test your ability to test the reliability of a source by using Worksheet 3 at **www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras**

Mary I and government

The system of central and local government remained fundamentally unchanged from Edward's reign. The Privy Council continued to be the centre of the administration. One of the main criticisms of Mary's Privy Council has been that it was too large to conduct business effectively. In addition, it has been claimed that the Council contained too many members who had no real political ability and who lacked administrative experience. The reason for this was that in the first few weeks of her reign, Mary necessarily chose councillors from her own household, and from among leading Catholic noblemen who had supported her.

By October, several moderate members of Northumberland's Council had been sworn in as councillors. Although they were never fully in the Queen's confidence, they supplied a nucleus of political ability and administrative experience previously lacking. Apart from this making the Council too large – reaching 43 at one point – it has been suggested that it led to rivalry between the Catholics, led by Mary's chief minister, the Lord Chancellor, Bishop **Stephen Gardiner**, and the moderates, led by Sir William Paget (see page 16). However, it seems that Mary did not exert any leadership, or show any real confidence in her Council.

Later in her reign, Mary tended to work with a smaller 'inner council' of experienced councillors that included the Spanish ambassador, **Simon Renard**. As her reign progressed, she made less use of the Privy Council and met with it only when she had already decided matters of policy in consultation with Renard, who became her chief adviser. This angered her ministers, who were unhappy at being marginalised. By the end of her reign, her relationship with her ministers had deteriorated.

KEY FIGURES

Stephen Gardiner (1483–1555)

One of the most respected clerics in England, Gardiner served as Henry VIII's Principal Secretary and as Ambassador to France. He became Bishop of Winchester and, after a period of imprisonment during Edward VI's reign, he led Mary's government as Lord Chancellor.

Simon Renard (1513–73)

As Spanish ambassador to England, he exercised considerable influence over Mary I, to the point where, some believe, he was virtually directing English affairs. He arranged Mary's marriage to Philip of Spain.

William Paget

1505	Born in Wednesbury in Staffordshire
1543	Appointed to the Privy Council (from 1543 to his death)
1545	Became, with Edward Seymour, Henry VIII's chief adviser (1545–7)
1547	Appointed Somerset's chief adviser (1547–9)
1549	Created Baron Beaudesert
1554–5	Refused to support Gardiner's religious legislation. Mary demoted him to the office of Lord Privy Seal
1558	Sacked from the Privy Council of Queen Elizabeth
1563	Died

Background

Paget entered parliament in 1529 and was active in his support of Henry VIII's divorce. He was entrusted with significant power by the Duke of Somerset, but he had a more turbulent relationship with Northumberland. Nevertheless, Northumberland recognised his talent and employed him as a minister. Paget initially supported Northumberland's plan to put Jane Grey on the throne, but he soon deserted her for Mary. He was appointed to lead Mary's government along with the Earl of Arundel.

Religious convictions

He kept his religious convictions to himself. Contemporaries thought him variously a Protestant reformer and a Catholic conservative. His support of Mary earned her trust and his handling of the marriage negotiations won the admiration of Philip of Spain. However, his opposition to what he regarded as extreme religious legislation drawn up by his one-time friend Gardiner, led to his losing his leading place in government. Although he was no longer a Privy Councillor or Lord Privy Seal, Elizabeth retained his services as an occasional adviser.

Paget was one of the most able and influential men of the period. He served in the governments of four Tudor monarchs: Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth. His long experience in government was valued and his advice was regularly sought.

Marriage and the succession

Mary's political inexperience and stubbornness are shown in the first major issue of her reign: her marriage and the succession. In an age of male domination, Mary's marriage was considered to be a matter of grave concern, because she would be subject to the authority of her husband whomsoever he happened to be. That Mary must marry was taken for granted if the dynasty was to survive. The key question, of course, was that once married, would Mary rule or would her husband rule through her?

The Privy Council was divided on the matter. There were two realistic candidates for Mary's hand:

- Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, who was favoured by Gardiner. To marry a member of the English nobility was considered unacceptable because his elevation to power would cause jealousy and rivalry that might lead to conflict.
- Philip of Spain, who was supported by Paget. To the increasingly nationalist English, marriage with a foreign prince was equally unacceptable. A foreign husband might drag England into continental conflicts.

Courtenay was a descendant of earlier English kings and such a marriage would have strengthened the Tudor dynasty, but Mary favoured a closer link with the Habsburgs through Philip. Without consulting her Council, Mary announced that she was going to marry Philip.

The marriage treaty was very favourable to England. Philip was to have no regal power in England, no foreign appointments were to be made to the Privy Council, and England was not to be involved in, or pay towards the cost of any of Philip's wars. If the marriage was childless, the succession was to pass to Elizabeth.

That Mary chose her husband and limited his constitutional power within the kingdom showed that she ruled with the full measure of royal authority. Mary did not let her gender limit the exercise of her God-given power. By making it possible for queens to rule as kings, Mary provided her successor, Elizabeth, with a template by establishing the gender-free authority of a queen.

ONLINE EXTRAS AQA **WWW**

Test your understanding of counter-argument by completing Worksheet 4 at **www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras**

Mary's foreign policy

Mary has been criticised for being politically inept, for her determination to marry Philip II of Spain and for her indecision in the negotiations over the restoration of Catholicism to England. However, recent research suggests that this was in fact masterly political inactivity and feigned weakness, designed to win greater concessions from the papacy and the Habsburgs.

The papacy

Mary had to be careful in her negotiations with the papacy. Her desire to reinstate the Pope as head of the restored Catholic Church in England worried those who feared an increase in foreign influence. To some, the Pope represented a foreign power and they feared that a restored papacy would demand the restoration of all Church lands and property confiscated during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI. The fact that even staunchly Catholic landowners refused to give up former Church property forced the Pope to concede on this matter.

Spain and the Habsburgs

As Mary was 37 years old when she became queen, marriage was at the top of the political agenda. To secure the succession she needed an heir, so her choice of husband, Philip of Spain, put marriage firmly at the heart of England's foreign policy.

The Spanish marriage was as much diplomatic as it was personal, for the union of Mary and Philip also marked an alliance between England and Spain. The 1554 treaty with Spain revived an alliance first established in the Treaty of Medina del Campo in 1489. Mary had achieved her objective of forming a closer alliance with the Habsburgs. The terms of the marriage treaty of 1554 stated that:

- The power to govern England rested with Mary alone.
- England was not to become involved in, or fund, the cost of Spain's wars.
- Philip was to assume the title 'King of England', but only for the lifetime of his wife.

- If Mary were to die, Philip would not inherit the English throne.
- If the marriage was childless, the succession would pass to Elizabeth.

In spite of these safeguards, Mary's popularity began to ebb because many people still thought that England would be drawn into Philip's wars and become a mere province of the Habsburg Empire.

The Wyatt rebellion 1554

The strength of this anti-Spanish feeling led to the Wyatt rebellion. The rebellion was instigated by men who had all held important offices at Court under both Henry VIII and Edward VI. Although they had supported Mary's accession, they feared that the growing Spanish influence would endanger their own careers. The conspirators planned to marry Princess Elizabeth to Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, who had been rejected by Mary as an unsuitable match.

Simultaneous rebellions in the West Country (led by Sir Peter Carew), the Welsh borderland (Sir James Croft), the Midlands (Duke of Suffolk, father of Lady Jane Grey) and Kent (Sir Thomas Wyatt) were to be supported by a French fleet. The plan failed because Carew, Croft and the Duke of Suffolk bungled the uprisings.

Wyatt succeeded in raising 3000 men in Kent, and this caused real fear in the government because the rebels were so close to London. The situation was made worse because a number of royal troops sent to crush the revolt deserted to the rebels. Realising the danger, the Privy Council desperately tried to raise fresh forces to protect London. An overly cautious Wyatt failed to press home his advantage and his delay in marching on London gave Mary the time she needed to see to the capital's defence. In refusing to flee her capital, Mary's courage impressed those whom she called on to support her regime. By the time Wyatt arrived at the gates of the city the revolt was doomed to fail. Repulsed at London Bridge and the Tower, Wyatt found Ludgate closed and his troops deserted.

Wyatt surrendered and the revolt was crushed. The rebels were treated leniently for fear of provoking further revolts. Most of the rebels among the commons were pardoned, and fewer than a hundred executions took place. As for the rebel elite, apart from Wyatt and Suffolk, only Jane Grey and her husband Guildford Dudley were executed.

France

In spite of the terms of the marriage treaty of 1554, England was drawn into Spain's war with France, and in 1557, Mary declared war on France. An English army, 5000 strong, joined a Spanish army of nearly 70,000 in the siege of St Quentin in north-eastern France. The capture of St Quentin and defeat of the French in August 1557 was greeted with delight and celebration in England. However, the inexperienced Philip did not press home his advantage and he retired to build up his forces. This allowed the French to do the same and in a surprise attack in January 1558, a force of nearly 30,000 Frenchmen attacked the English garrison at Calais. The Calais garrison, some 2000 Englishman and several hundred Spanish troops, held out for three weeks, but with no

reinforcements coming from either England or Spain had no choice but to surrender. The loss of Calais was seen as a national disaster. Calais was England's last continental possession.

Religious policy

In 1553 no one in England doubted that Mary would restore Roman Catholicism and return England to the authority of Rome. The aristocracy and gentry were initially prepared to conform to Mary's religious views, and the bulk of the population followed their example. But some 800 strongly committed Protestant gentry and clergy left the country and spent the remainder of the reign in exile on the Continent. Such an escape was less easy for the common people and most of the 274 Protestants executed during Mary's reign came from this group. At the beginning of the reign even the most zealous religious radicals were not prepared to go against public opinion, and waited to see what would happen. Certainly, when Mary, using the royal prerogative, suspended the second Act of Uniformity and restored the mass, there was no public outcry.

From Protestantism to Anglo-Catholicism

This lack of religious opposition was apparent when parliament met in October 1553. After a lively debate, the first step towards removing all traces of Protestantism from the Church of England was achieved with the passing of the first Statute of Repeal. This Act swept away all the religious legislation approved by parliament during the reign of Edward VI, and the doctrine of the Church of England was restored to what it had been in 1547 under her father, Henry VIII.

The government turned its attention to Protestant clergy. The Bishops of Gloucester, Hereford, Lincoln and Rochester, and the Archbishop of York were deprived of their bishoprics, and were replaced by committed Catholics. In March 1554 the bishops were instructed to enforce all the religious legislation of the last year of Henry VIII's reign. For example, all married clergy were instructed to give up their wives and families, or lose their parishes. The authorities largely complied with these instructions, and some 800 parish clergy were deprived.

From Anglo-Catholicism to Roman Catholicism

Appointed by the Pope to restore England to the authority of Rome, Cardinal **Reginald Pole** arrived in England in November 1554. His arrival marked the next stage in the restoration of Roman Catholicism. Parliament met in the same month and passed the second Statute of Repeal. This Act ended the Royal Supremacy, and returned England to papal authority by repealing all the religious legislation of the reign of Henry VIII, back to the time of the break with Rome in 1554. The restoration of the Pope as head of the Church came at a price. To achieve this, Mary had to come to a compromise with the landowners. Careful provision was made in the Act to protect the property rights of all those who had bought Church land since 1536. This demonstrates that Mary had to

KEY FIGURE

Reginald Pole (1500–58)

The younger son of Margaret, Countess of Salisbury. Pole pursued a career in the Church and was offered the Archbishopric of York by Henry VIII on condition he support the King's divorce; he refused and fled into exile. He was promoted to Cardinal by the Pope. He was a critic of the religious policies of Henry VIII and Edward VI. He returned to England in 1554 and was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury.

recognise the authority of parliament over matters of religion. It meant that she had to forgo her plans for a full-scale restoration of the monasteries.

Mary's reputation

Elizabethan propagandists were eager later to depict Mary as a weak and unsuccessful pro-Spanish monarch in order to highlight the achievements of their own queen. Protestant reformers reviled her as a cruel tyrant trying to enforce Catholicism through torture and burnings. This has produced a popular picture of 'Bloody Mary' – a stubborn, arrogant, Catholic bigot, who burned Protestants and lost Calais to the French because of her infatuation for Philip of Spain.

In reality, Mary's proposal to return England to the Catholic faith was generally popular. However, when Mary's religious reforms became oppressive and turned to burning heretics, especially such high-profile clergy as Archbishop Cranmer and Bishops Ridley and Latimer, she lost support. The Protestants had always opposed her religious reforms.

The restoration of the Pope as head of the Church, together with the Spanish marriage, stoked up anti-Spanish feelings in a society already primed by Henrician propaganda to reject foreign influence. These issues led to the outbreak of the Wyatt rebellion, in 1554, which aimed at Mary's removal and her replacement by Elizabeth. The rebels were also motivated by their Protestant beliefs and desire to undo Mary's pro-Catholic religious reforms.

SOURCE E

Adapted from Cardinal Pole's decrees, drawn up at the Westminster Synod, 1555, quoted in Richard Watson Dixon, editor, *History of the Church of England. Volume IV: Mary. A.D. 1553–1558*, George Routledge & Sons, 1903, p. 456.

First Decree: On the thanks that should be given to God for the return of this kingdom to the unity of the Church by the daily celebration of mass.

Fourth Decree: That bishops and others who have a cure of souls should preach to the people and parish priests should teach children the basic elements of the faith.

Eleventh Decree: That in the cathedrals a certain number of boys should be educated from which, as if from a seed-bed, it will be possible to raise up those who are worthy of a career in the Church.

SOURCE QUESTION

Study Source E. Why might these decrees suggest that the Roman Catholic faith was not as strong in 1555 as it once was prior to the Reformation?

Economic and social problems

The Marian government inherited serious financial problems that Northumberland had been trying to solve, such as debasement of the coinage and rising inflation. To make matters worse, Mary had given away Crown lands in order to re-establish some monastic foundations. Consequently, during Mary's reign the general economic situation grew worse, with a series of very bad harvests and epidemics of sweating sickness (thought to be either hantavirus or anthrax), bubonic plague (a bacterial infection that caused the

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