Henry VIII and Tudors/Stuarts

Henry VII (1485-1509)

War of Roses (between Lancaster (Red Rose) and York (White Rose) for who should be running the country)

Henry (Duke of Lancaster) won and became Henry VII. He married Elizabeth of York to try to make a truce.

They had 6 children (4 of whom survived):

- Arthur (1486)
- Margaret (1489) – she married James IV of Scotland [Scotland had been independent for a long time, so this again was a marriage for country alliances. Their son was James V. James V married Mary Guise of France (one of the 3 most influential noble families of France – they were Catholic). James V & Mary had a daughter – Mary Queen of Scots who became queen when she was 5 days old when James was killed in battle (against Henry VIII)! When John Knox was preaching, Mary Guise (acting as regent for her young daughter) called to France for support who came and arrested John Knox and also took the 5yr old Mary Queen of Scots to France. Mary queen of Scots loved France and high society and imbibing the Catholic teaching – in 1558 she married Francis II king of France, who died very soon after, but she remained in France until she was 18 in 1560. John Knox was released to England (due to negotiation of Edward Seymour during reign of Edward VI) in 1549. He finally returned to Scotland in 1559 and starts preaching to large crowds. Mary Guise (regent) bans preaching. This led to Scottish civil war. Initially French supported Guise, but eventually withdrew support, Guise died and John Knox won and implemented his Confession. He wanted to
implement Book of Discipline creating representative government (monarch no longer above the law) but nobles rejected it.

- Henry (1491) – who would become Henry VIII
- Mary (1496) – married Louis XII of France (an old man without a male heir). Louis XII died and then she married Charles Brandon and had children one of whom had a daughter called Lady Jane Gray [was Lady Jane Gray’s grandmother]

Henry VII needed some alliances. The biggest power in Europe at the time was Spain. The King and Queen of Spain had an unmarried youngest daughter – Catherine of Aragon. So Henry arranged for Catherine to marry Arthur (the heir apparent at the time). A few months after they were officially married in 1502 Arthur unexpectedly died. This put Henry and Catherine in an awkward position!

**Henry VIII (1509-1547)**

1509 Henry VII’s 2nd son succeeded him to become Henry VIII. Henry married his dead brother’s wife Catherine of Aragon (to maintain friendship with Spain). However he needed special dispensation from the Pope to do this – so he sent Wolsey to the Pope and the Pope agreed Henry could marry the Widow. [Apparently Catherine was a virgin still]

1509-1525 during Henry’s early reign, he made lots of war (to make a name for himself etc) but this drained finances.

During this time he had 4 daughters and 3 sons, all of whom died. He blamed Catherine. Thought he was cursed by God for
marrying his brother’s widow. They had one Daughter who survived – Mary Tudor (who became known as Bloody Mary).

In 1521, Henry wrote against Martin Luther and Pope Leo X gave him the title ‘Defender of The Faith’.

From 1525, the King’s ‘Great Matter’ was to produce a male heir and undo the marriage to Catherine. Wolsey had persuaded the Pope in the first place, so Henry sent him back to the Pope to ask for an annulment. The Pope would not – Catherine was daughter of Spanish King – Spain was the biggest ‘cheerleader’ for the Pope and Catholics at the time. The emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (Germany) was also Spanish and he was supporting the Pope against Martin Luther. So for many political (and religious) reasons the Pope said no. Henry VIII fired Wolsey and banished him from court. It is thought Wolsey committed suicide.

Thomas Cromwell, Wolsey’s Lawyer, [who had Protestant sympathies] came to Henry, saying instead of going to Pope, go to the universities – get the opinions of theological scholars. Oxford and Cambridge and some European Universities said that theologically Henry could divorce Catherine. Henry liked this and felt supported and promoted Thomas Cromwell.

In 1533, Henry married Anne Boleyn (a lady in waiting) [she was already pregnant]. She gave birth to a GIRL – Elizabeth. In 1535 Henry officially broke from Rome [the Act of Supremacy]. Thomas More, the Lord Chancellor, a principled Roman Catholic, refused to sign his agreement to the Act of Supremacy and was executed. Thomas Cromwell took Thomas More’s role as King’s advisor.

In 1536-37 the North of England rebelled against Henry. Henry put this down with many ghastly executions. In 1538, Henry, advised by Thomas Cranmer, also put the Tyndale Bible in every church, thinking it would calm the people because in Henry’s mind he thought the gist of the bible was ‘be nice to everyone.
and be submissive to the king.’

Henry’s third wife, Jane Seymour bore him a son called Edward, who succeeded him as Edward VI. Jane died in childbirth.

Henry then married Anne of Cleves. This was arranged by Thomas Cromwell who was hoping that Anne of Cleves, a Protestant, would edge Henry to a more Protestant view of things. Henry didn’t like her and blamed Thomas Cromwell, but treated her fairly well and regarded her as a sister. Sent her to live away from him in a luxury house.

Then he married Catherine Howard, a young 17 year old – she actually loved the King’s groom (& had other affairs) and was executed for infidelity

Finally he married Catherine Parr, a devoted Christian, who worked to get Henry reconciled to his daughters.

Henry died in 1547 at the age of 55.

Note: Henry VIII remained a Roman Catholic in theology, thought and practice all his life – the ONLY thing he changed was that he should be head of the church not the Pope.

**Edward VI (1547-1553)**

When he was 6, he was betrothed to the 1 yr old Mary Queen of Scots by Henry VIII in order to try to forge relationships with Scotland. But some in Scotland didn’t like it so broke off the betrothal. Henry VIII didn’t like this so attacked Scotland in the War of “Rough Wooing”

Became king when he was 10 years old. Educated in moderately reformed views by Thomas Cranmer (Archbishop of Canterbury). Thomas Cranmer preached at Edward’s coronation about Josiah
the boy king of Judah, intending Edward to continue the Reformation. Edward Seymour (Jane Seymour’s brother and Edward’s uncle) became the Lord Protector (the one who effectively rules when you have a child king) – he was a protestant, reformation sympathiser too. Hugh Latimer, a Reformation sympathiser and who had been imprisoned by Henry VIII, was the court preacher. Edward Seymour negotiated the release of John Knox in 1549 who in 1552 was installed as the court preacher.

However, Edward was in poor health and when he was 16 he died in 1553. Edward appointed Lady Jane Gray to succeed him (the granddaughter of Henry VIII’s youngest sister Mary) who was a strong protestant reformation supporter (just like Edward’s inner circle)

**Lady Jane Gray (1553 – 9 days)**

Strong opposition from English people. Not sure Edward was old enough to change old succession laws – it should be Mary Tudor. In addition, Lady Jane Gray was not well known by the English people. She was executed.

**Mary Tudor (1553-1558)**

Born to Henry and Catherine of Aragon (both strong Catholics). As a child she was bright, precocious and well liked. But as Henry became upset with Catherine, Mary stuck with her mum and goes into depression about the split of her parents. When Elizabeth was born, Mary was removed from the line of succession and fell from favour (because Henry wanted England to see Anne Boleyn as his legitimate wife). In 1536, Mary
signed that she agreed to the Act of Supremacy, Henry VIII being true head of Church – she was fearful that Henry would execute her if she didn’t.

Mary remained defiantly Catholic, and despised Edward when he became King. When Edward name Lady Jane Gray successor, he side-lined Mary (and Elizabeth).

However, English people wanted Mary (as the true successor in their eyes) so she was crowned Queen in 1553.

First, she executes Lady Jane Gray. Then she marries (it was expected a ‘solo queen’ would marry) Philip II king of Spain (not liked by the English people). She wanted to become pregnant to produce an heir – but in her desire to be pregnant, she self-induced the pregnancy symptoms – it was a false pregnancy. So after a year, Phillip II went back to Spain never to return. So she has an AWOL husband and no successor. She also wanted to turn country Catholic (see her background), so executed (at least) 283 key protestants, including the 3 ‘Oxford Martyrs’ [Hugh Latimer(1555), Nicholas Ridley(1555), Thomas Cranmer(1556)]. Thomas Cranmer was tortured cruelly and didn’t crack, so they changed the approach and treated him with kindness and gentle persuasion and finally Thomas Cranmer issued a statement saying the pope was head of church, that he believed in Catholic theology and he was wrong – the statement was published throughout England. However, Mary insisted that he still be burned at the stake. His final words at his execution, he said he regretted the recantation and only signed it to save his own life and he now called the pope “Christ’s enemy” and all of his doctrines false. He asked that his hand (which signed the recantation) be burnt first.

Protestant and Reformed books were banned.

Many Protestants fled England and ended up in Geneva, under the influence of John Calvin. [They would later return, find
the Church of England still effectively Catholic in practise and wanted to purify it from the inside out to become more reformed – these returners and purifiers became known as the Puritans]. John Knox fled to Geneva in 1554 and returned to Scotland in 1556 where he was able to persuade the Scottish nobles to enter into a Covenant “to establish the most blessed Word of God and his Congregation in Scotland”. Knox returned to Geneva and formed a close relationship with Calvin in 1557, finally returning to Scotland in May 1559, where he starts preaching to large crowds.

Elizabeth (1558-1603)

Virgin queen – no children – so end of Tudor dynasty. Which way would she go – Catholic or Protestant. She created the ‘Elizabethan Settlement’ – Nominally Protestant but substantially catholic (the feel, and theology, of the church was Catholic despite having the name Protestant.) Those returning from Geneva and other strong Protestants were happy that the church was officially protestant, but when they went to church they weren’t so happy. So they began to seek to purify the church. Most of the Puritan were academics and therefore had a disproportionate influence. The Pope tried to woo Elizabeth back into the Roman Catholic fold, but Elizabeth didn’t want that so the Pope excommunicated her in 1570.

Elizabeth supported John Knox in the Scottish civil war (that resulted when Mary Guise banned preaching). France supported Guise. Henry (king of France) dies leaving Francis II and Mary Queen of scots (as teenagers) ruling France in the middle of the Scottish civil war. Furthermore, when Henry died there was the Huguenot (French Calvinist) uprising in France, meaning
the French had to curtail support of Scottish civil war. In
Jun 1560 Mary Guise dies too. Mary Queen of Scots returned to Scotland in 1560. She seduced the nobility with lavish French-style parties and her cute accent. Initially, she accommodated Protestants (they had just won the civil war), however she reinstalled the mass for her court and nobles. John Knox was a fiery preacher who began to affect the hearts of the Scottish people. Mary summoned Knox 5 times to try and stop him, but whatever tactic she tried, Knox was polite but undeterred. Mary said that she feared the preaching and prayers of John Knox more than any army. But after disputes with John Knox, and various personal intrigues (marriages, affairs and murders) she grew unpopular with even Catholic Scots, she was forced to abdicate and she fled to England in 1568. Her son, James VI, became king. Mary queen of Scots became involved in plots to assassinate Elizabeth and so was executed in 1583.

When Mary Tudor died, Philip II (Mary’s AWOL husband) proposed to Elizabeth. Elizabeth refused. Furthermore, Francis Drake’s exploits annoyed Spain. So in 1588, Spanish Armada to bring England back into Catholic Fold (if not by romance then by war). England defeated Spain leading to reversal in power of Spain and England in World affairs. Elizabeth also favoured trading (rather than raiding) and this began economic growth in England.