

# Edward VI 1547-1553 - Religious Changes



On the death of his father, Edward became King. His father Henry VIII, had passed an act of Parliament to decide the succession of the throne. He placed his children, Edward, Mary and Elizabeth in that order and appointed a **Council of Regency** to rule on behalf of Edward until he came of age. The council included Edward Seymour (Jane Seymour's brother) who became Lord Protector of the Realm and also took on the title of the Duke of Somerset. Other members were a mixture of Protestants and Catholics. This mixture shows how Henry was favouring a more moderate approach to religion at the time of his death. Edward was brought up as a Protestant. A Protestant was someone who protested against the Catholic beliefs.

Somerset's first concern was with Scotland. Like Henry VIII, he favoured a unification of the country and this could be achieved through a marriage of Edward VI to Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots. Scotland was invaded and in 1547, the Scots were heavily defeated at the battle of Pinkie Clough. Still, the Scots refused to agree to the marriage and Mary was shipped off to France where she became engaged to the Dauphin. Scotland had been beaten in battle but was far from under English control. Many regarded the war as a waste of time. Its aim had not been achieved.

## SOMERSET'S RELIGIOUS REFORMS. (Changes)



On his return from Scotland, Somerset set out on his religious reforms. He was a Protestant who wanted to modify Henry VIII's harsh laws.

- The **treason and heresy laws** of Henry VIII were **repealed**. (6 articles)
- Statute of 'De Heritico Comburendo' was repealed. (Burning of heretics)
- **No restrictions** were placed on the printing **press** or publication of the scriptures.
- **No political prisoners** were tortured in the Tower.
- The repeal of the heresy law **encouraged foreign preachers** to visit England. This

caused confusion as many of them preached different things.

- Somerset felt that it was important to bring the **English language** into worship. In 1549, The **First Prayer Book of Edward VI**, written in English, was published. Thomas Cranmer was responsible for it being put together. The Prayer Book was a direct translation from Latin prayer books and therefore did not include any of the new Protestant beliefs.
- In 1549, an **Act of Uniformity** was passed - said that **all churches** were to use the new prayer book.
- The introduction of the new prayer book and service caused discontent particularly in Devon and Cornwall. Here, Catholics refused to use it. The rebellion was put down in July 1549.
- Priests were allowed to marry.
- Laws were passed to make churches plainer. Catholic churches were rich in decorations and colour. Now under Edward, stained glass windows and pictures were removed from churches; the furniture within churches became very basic and plain. Priests were to wear plain clothes.
- **Chantry and churches** had their money and treasures taken. This was a continuance of the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

## Northumberland's rule



The Duke of Northumberland now took over the reins of government. He was totally unlike Somerset, being self seeking and totally unscrupulous. Although, the Regency was dissolved, he had **great influence over Edward VI**. Somerset was released from the Tower and readmitted to the council. He was later accused of a trumped up charge of conspiracy and executed. Northumberland then followed a rigorous policy of religious reform.

Northumberland was extreme in his reforms. However, he was not as protestant in his beliefs as Somerset. His reforms were driven mainly to please his Protestant supporters and to raise money.

- **All Catholic members of the Council were dismissed.**
- Chancies and Churches continued to be ransacked and stripped of treasures etc. Church lands were seized.
- To avoid too much criticism some of the money went towards building eighteen (18) King Edward VI's **Grammar Schools**. However, most of the money went into the treasury. Most of the land was sold to the 'New Rich' who had previously bought land from Henry VIII. Some land also went to members of the Council.
- **Festival days abolished**, which meant that workers lost their holidays (Holy days).
- Any **Bishop who objected** to his reforms was **removed** from their position. Among them were Bonner, Bishop of London and Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester.
- In 1552, a **Second English Prayer Book** was published. It was very different from the first and was based on Protestant beliefs and had no mention of the Mass. A **Second Act of Uniformity** followed which made its use mandatory. (only book to be used)

In 1553, Cranmer published the '42 Articles' based on Protestant beliefs and all clergy men had to follow these.

	HENRY VIII 1509-1547	EDWARD VI 1547-1553	MARY 1553-1558	ELIZABETH 1558-1603
HEAD OF CHURCH	KING REPLACED POPE AS HEAD OF CHURCH	KING WAS HEAD OF THE CHURCH	POPE BECAME HEAD OF CHURCH AGAIN	QUEEN BECAME 'GOVERNOR OF THE CHURCH', HOPED TO PLEASE CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS
CHURCH SERVICES	LITTLE CHANGE. STILL IN LATIN	SERVICES IN ENGLISH	SERVICES IN LATIN	SERVICES IN ENGLISH
PRAYERS	LORD'S PRAYER IN ENGLISH, BUT MOST OTHER PRAYERS IN LATIN	NEW PRAYER BOOKS WITH PRAYERS IN ENGLISH	NEW PRAYER BOOK BANNED.	NEW PRAYER BOOK WITH PRAYERS IN ENGLISH
BIBLE	IN ENGLISH	IN ENGLISH	IN ENGLISH	IN ENGLISH
PRIESTS	NOT ALLOWED TO MARRY	PRIESTS COULD MARRY	PRIESTS AND WIVES HAD TO SEPARATE	PRIESTS COULD MARRY AGAIN

Reformation	The religious revolution of the 16th Century, when protestant Churches broke away from the Catholic Church.
Catholic	A Christian who accepts the authority of the Church and Pope in Rome
Protestant	A Christian who relies on the teachings of the Bible, and does not accept the authority of the Pope. There are several different groups of Protestants,- Lutherans, Calvinists, Zwinglians, Presbyterians
Heresy	Belief which is different from the official teachings of the church. A heretic is someone with such beliefs.
Inquisition	A special court of the Catholic Church, used to condemn heresy.
Recant	To go back on one's beliefs and admit they were false.
Excommunication	Being expelled from the church and deprived of church privileges
Bull	An official announcement by the Pope, with his seal attached. (bull is Latin for seal)
Laity, Laymen	Everyone who belongs to a church, but is not one of the clergy
Clergy, cleric	Ministers of a church or religion, such as priest, vicar, monk.
Interdict	The closing down of a Church so that no services can take place.
Pope	The Bishop of Rome, the head of the Roman Catholic Church.
Absenteeism	Deliberately making oneself absent from a place of work. A practice carried out by bishops
Nepotism	Showing undue favouritism to one's friends and relatives. Often practised by bishops who gave positions to their friends and relatives.
Indulgences	The selling of pieces of paper by friars which forgive one's sins.
Pluralism	The holding by one person of more than one position / office at the same time.
Counter Reformation	The attempt by the Roman Catholic Church to change the alterations made by the Reformation (Protestants)
Renaissance	The revival of arts and letters, the transition from the middle ages to the modern day
Martyr	A person who suffers or is prepared to die for their faith or beliefs.
Canonise	To make a person a saint. i.e. Thomas Becket or Thomas More
Despot	A monarch ruling with absolute power. Another word for tyranny. A monarch who is accountable to no constitution
Mass	The celebration of the Last Supper. Mainly carried out in Roman Catholic Churches although some Protestant. However, Catholics believe that after bread and wine is consecrated (made holy) it changes into the blood and body of Christ.