

Elizabeth I (1558-1603) and Mary, Queen of Scots.

Early Life



Born 8th December, 1542 at Linlithgow Castle. Her father, James V, died on 14th Dec, 1542.

- She was the granddaughter of Margaret, (daughter of Henry VII of England)
- She was daughter of James V of Scotland and Marie de Guise. She had Tudor, French and Stuart blood running through her veins.
- Henry VIII had intended to marry his son Edward to Mary, thereby uniting the two kingdoms.
- The Scots were suspicious of Henry's intentions and on 9th September, 1543, Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland at the tender age of 9 months old. Stirling Castle was the venue. Her mother acted as Regent until 1560. Henry himself was suspicious of the intentions of Mary's family and he feared a French alliance that would threaten England's security.
- Henry demanded that Mary be handed over. The Scots refused and so Henry orders the invasion of Scotland. However, Henry died before any fighting takes place.
- Protector Somerset, was in command of the army and the Scots are heavily defeated at the Battle of Pinkie in 1547.
- Somerset continues Henry's demands for Mary to be handed over to marry Edward.
- Mary is smuggled out of Scotland and sails to France to marry the Dauphin Francis
- In 1560, Francis II, her husband dies and she returns to Scotland to become Queen.
- In her absence, much of Lowland Scotland had been converted to Presbyterian (Protestant) religion by John Knox.

Return to Scotland

- Almost immediately after her return she began to argue with John Knox. This made her very unpopular with a considerable number of Scots.
- On 29th January, 1565, she followed this by unwisely marrying an Englishman called Lord Henry Darnley. This made her even more unpopular.



Henry Darnley



David Rizzio



John Knox

- Having been brought up in the French Court, her way of living offended many people.
- Darnley wanted the title King of Scotland. Mary refused. Darnley was furious and being jealous of her friendship with her Italian secretary David Rizzio, he arranged Rizzio's murder on 9th March, 1566. He was stabbed to death in front of a pregnant Mary Stuart.
- Shortly afterwards, on 19th June, 1566, Mary gave birth to a son James.



- On 9th February, 1567, Darnley died in mysterious circumstances when his house was blown up with gunpowder. The finger of suspicion pointed at Mary.



Bothwell

- On 15th May, 1567, She then married James Hepburn, the Earl of Bothwell, who was also a suspect for Darnley's murder.
- This was the last straw for many Scots. They rebelled against her and Mary's army was defeated at the **Battle of Carberry Hills** on 15th June, 1567. She was captured and imprisoned in Loch Leven Castle and was forced to give up the throne in favour on her son.

- Here she managed to befriend her jailer and with his help she escaped on the 17th June 1567, and raised a small army.
- On 13th May, 1568, she was again defeated at the **Battle of Langside**.
- Mary avoided capture and on 16th May, 1568, fled over the border to England seeking refuge from her cousin Queen Elizabeth.
- Elizabeth immediately realised the implications and threat of having a Catholic Queen living in England and placed her under semi-captivity. Mary was to remain in England for the next 18 years.

Mary's Stay (captivity) in England. 1568-1587

- The Roman Catholics in England did not accept Elizabeth as the rightful Queen. They believed that the marriage between Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn was illegal because at the time Henry was still married to Catherine of Aragon. This made Elizabeth an illegitimate child and unsuitable for the throne of England. Mary Stuart was the rightful Queen.
- Mary thought that it would please Elizabeth, if she were to marry one of her subjects. The first candidate was the Duke of Norfolk. Although they never actually met, the courtship took place by correspondence and gifts such as a diamond ring from Norfolk and an embroidered pillow from Mary. Far from being pleased with this arrangement, Elizabeth condemned it as plotting against her and locked up Norfolk in the Tower of London. He was later released.



- Elizabeth had started the process of restoring Mary to the Scottish throne but was dragging her feet as much as possible using the murder of Darnley as an excuse. There was to be a trial that revolved around the **casket letters**. These letters, written by Mary to Bothwell, allegedly proved their involvement in the murder of Darnley. However, the original letters went missing mysteriously and the copies were evidently tampered with by the Earl of Morton who had much to gain from Mary never returning to Scotland.



The Casket Letters

During the period of Mary's stay in England, she became the centre of Roman Catholic plots and conspiracies against Elizabeth.

These plots were

1. **The Revolt of the Northern Earls - 1569**
2. **Ridolfi's Plot - 1572**
3. **Throckmorton's Plot - 1583**
4. **Babington's Plot - 1586**

The Revolt of The Northern Earls. - 1569

- The north of England was much more Catholic than the south.
- The Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland agreed to raise troops against Elizabeth. The Duke of Norfolk and the Spanish Ambassador, De Spes were also involved.

The plan was as follows;

1. Mary was to be released.
2. She would marry the Duke of Norfolk.
3. The Catholics would rise in revolt.
4. A Spanish army would invade England.
5. Mary would be crowned Queen of England
6. The Catholic faith would be restored in England



- William Cecil, Elizabeth's secretary found out about the plan.
- The Duke of Norfolk was imprisoned in the Tower. Released and placed under house arrest in 1570.
- Mary was removed out of reach of the rebels
- Northumberland and Westmoreland carried through the plan, but as no help came from the Spanish, the rebels quickly lost hope. The two Earls fled to Scotland.
- Elizabeth took terrible revenge on the North. She wanted an example set. Nearly 800 men were executed.
- The lands of the two Earls were confiscated. Northumberland later captured and executed.

The Ridolfi Plot - 1571

- This plot was once again organised by the Spanish Ambassador De Spes and a Spanish banker called Roberto Ridolfi.
- Once again the plan was for Mary to be released to marry the Duke of Norfolk.
- Cecil's spies did their job again and the plot was discovered.
- Ridolfi and De Spes were expelled from England.
- The Duke of Norfolk was arrested, tried for treason and after a delay of six months, executed.

Parliament was now alarmed at the threat that Mary posed to Elizabeth. They began to urge Elizabeth to sign a death warrant for Mary. However, by 1572 Elizabeth's tolerance of her cousin was beginning to wear thin.

Throckmorton's Plot - 1583

Francis Throckmorton, an English Catholic was the central figure in the plot. Father Parsons, a Jesuit Priest, helped him.

1. The plan was to kill Elizabeth.
2. The Duke of Guise would invade with an army
3. The Pope and Philip II would provide the money.
4. The Spanish Ambassador Mendoza was also involved
5. Throckmorton and Father Parsons were to raise a revolt of Catholics when the Duke of Guise landed.
6. Mary was to be crowned Queen.



- Sir Francis Walsingham's spies got wind of the plot.
- Throckmorton was arrested and tortured on the rack. He confessed and implicated Mary and Mendoza and Father Parsons who was executed.
- Throckmorton was executed. Mendoza was exiled.
- Yet again Elizabeth refused to condemn her cousin to death. She wanted absolute, undeniable proof that Mary was involved before she would consider a death warrant.

Babington Plot - 1586

- Walsingham decided that once and for all he was going to prove Mary's involvement in the plots.
- One of Walsingham's spies called Gifford, befriended Mary and persuaded her to let him carry her letters to and from the French Ambassador.
- Anthony Babington was a Catholic who planned, along with five others including a Jesuit called Father Ballard, to kill Elizabeth, and then start a Catholic rebellion. But he would not do so without Mary's permission. He wrote a letter to Mary that was intercepted by Walsingham.
- Mary wrote a reply giving her consent to the plan. Walsingham now had the proof he needed and in Mary's own writing.
- Babington and his co-conspirators were arrested and tortured. They confessed and were sentenced to death.
- A special court also found Mary guilty and sentenced her to death.
- Before that it is believed that she had written to Paulet hinting that he should assassinate Mary himself and thus relieve her of the responsibility.
- Unfortunately for her, Paulet's puritanism and honour got in the way and he refused to do so.
- Mary was brought to trial in October 1586. She was sentenced to death on October 25, but not until February 1, 1587, did Elizabeth sign the warrant of execution.

- Elizabeth I finally signed Mary's death warrant among a pile of other papers on 1st February 1587. Later, she would try to save her face by pretending that this warrant had been for safekeeping and not execution, but no one really believed her.

At **Fotheringhay Castle** on the 7th February, Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded.

Elizabeth's guilt got the better of her when she heard that the execution had been carried out. She was furious and claimed that she never intended the sentence to be carried out. Davison, her secretary, bore the brunt of the blame, for passing on the warrant when instructed to keep it. He was fined.

