

Who's Who in 16th Century English Monarchy in

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In order to understand the world of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims we need to understand the religious and political scene in the English 1500s. Their parents, grandparents, and they, themselves, were English subjects who risked their lives challenging the religious status quo of the era. They did not choose their religion; nor was worshipping optional. The reigning king or queen dictated their religion and fined those who didn't participate. Those who tried to decide their religious practices for themselves often ended up tied to a stake and set afire. Less severe repercussions included torture, imprisonment and fines. England left the Catholic Church under King Henry VIII. Throughout the 1500s, faithful Catholic monarchs tried to reverse what King Henry had done.



1491 Birth of future King Henry VIII.

1509 Henry VIII is crowned king, following the death of his older brother, Arthur. He also married his brother's widow Catherine of Aragon, daughter of the Portuguese Ferdinand and Isabella who financed Columbus' 1492 voyage.



1516 Daughter Mary is born to Catherine, the only one of her six children to survive. This Mary is known in history as Bloody Mary

1517 Martin Luther posts his 95 theses in Wittenberg, Germany, launching the Protestant Reformation.

1520 King Henry seeks an annulment for his marriage to Catherine after six babies fail to produce a living male heir to the throne. The Pope denies his request.



1527 Henry and Catherine were divorced without papal approval.

1533 Henry marries Anne Boleyn. Nine months later she has a daughter, Elizabeth. This baby will become Queen Elizabeth I.

1534 King Henry decides he doesn't need Papal approval. With help from Parliament and clergy, he forms the Established Church of England, declaring himself Supreme Governor. Each succeeding monarch inherits the title.



1536 Anne delivers a stillborn son. King Henry has her beheaded.

1536 He then marries Jane Seymour. She dies two weeks after delivering a male heir, Edward, the future English King Edward VI.



1542 Mary Stuart, daughter of King James V of Scotland, and future Mary Queen of Scots, is born a week before her father dies. Mary is crowned Queen of Scots. She is a cousin to Henry VIII's children.

1547 Henry VIII dies at age 55. Nine-year old Edward is crowned King of England.

1547 King James V's daughter Mary is betrothed to the French king's heir, Francis. The next year she moves to France, a Catholic country. Mary was swayed toward Catholicism in her years in France.

1553 English King Edward VI dies at age 15

1553 King Henry's daughter Mary is crowned Queen, the first woman to rule the country. She vigorously persecutes Protestants, determined to turn England back to Catholicism, earning the title 'Bloody Mary.'

1558 English Queen Mary dies during an influenza outbreak, at age 44, with no heirs.

1558 Henry's daughter, Elizabeth is crowned Queen Elizabeth I. England remains Protestant. However, numerous non-conformist clergy and theologians strive to further reform the Established Church of England or completely separate from it. Searchers and enforcers scour the country looking for non-conformist gatherings. Catholics worship at their risk. France continues to sneak priests into England.

1558 Scottish Mary and French crown heir Francis are married.

1559 Francis assumes the throne. He and Mary are crowned king and queen of France.

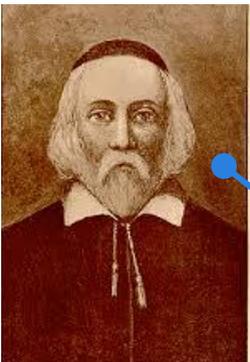
1560 King Francis dies and a year later Mary returns to Scotland.

1565 Scottish Mary is wed to Lord Darnley. They have one son, James, future King of Scotland and England.

1568 Mary Queen of Scots is imprisoned in various English prisons at age 25. She spends the rest of her life imprisoned for her efforts to turn England back to Catholicism and smuggles notes back and forth with French Catholics.

1580 William Brewster enrolls for classes at Cambridge University, where he is first exposed to Separatist and other non-conformist ideologies.

1583 Brewster returns Scrooby where his father is Bailiff and Post Master of the Scrooby Manor, property of the Archbishop of York. The Manor is a stopover between Edinburgh and London and occasionally hosts royalty.



1584 Queen Elizabeth's Ambassador William Davison recruits William Brewster to work for him as a clerk. They travel between London and the Lowlands, especially Leiden.

1586 Queen Elizabeth names Davison as her Secretary of State.

1587 Parliament pressures Queen Elizabeth to sign the death warrant for Mary Queen of Scots. Davison's presents the document for Elizabeth's signature. As instructed, Davison delivers the signed warrant. Mary is beheaded in February 1587. Queen Elizabeth regrets her actions and implicates Davison, sending him to the Tower of London. Brewster again returns to Scrooby. He assumes his father's duties when his father dies in 1590.



1603 Queen Elizabeth dies and is succeeded by Mary' Queen of Scot's son, James. He was already King James VI of Scotland. Now he becomes also King I of England. King James is less tolerant than Queen Elizabeth and removes some 300 clergy from their pulpits after they call for a conference with him to discuss reforms to the Established Church.

1603 William Brewster gets more involved in the Separatists movement in northern England, eventually inviting one of the displaced pastors to lead worship at Scrooby Manor. The Manor is the property of the Archbishop of York.

1607 Separatists attempt to leave England for the Lowlands. They are betrayed by the ship master they hire to take across the English Channel. Several are briefly detained in prison in Boston, England.

1608 The Separatists succeed in emigrating to Amsterdam, where they join other Separatists already settled there.

1609 Conflicts among the Amsterdam church members lead the future Pilgrims to relocate to Leiden, where Brewster had previously travelled with Ambassador Davison.

1620 The Pilgrims travel to the New World.



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