

AQA A Level History

Component 1: The Breadth Study The Tudors: England 1485-1603

Instability and consolidation: 'the mid-Tudor crisis', 1547-63 – Part 2



Name..... Tutor Group.....

Component 1: The Tudors 1547-1603

This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period through the following key questions:

- *How effectively did the Tudors restore and develop the powers of the monarchy?*
- *In what ways and how effectively was England governed during this period?*
- *How did relations with foreign powers change and how was the succession secured?*
- *How did English society and economy change and with what effects?*
- *How far did intellectual and religious ideas change and develop and with what effects?*
- *How important was the role of key individuals and groups and how were they affected by developments?*

Instability and consolidation: 'the Mid-Tudor Crisis', 1547–1563 (A-level only)

- Edward VI, Somerset and Northumberland; royal authority; problems of succession; relations with foreign powers
- The social impact of religious and economic changes under Edward VI; rebellion; intellectual developments; humanist and religious thought
- Mary I and her ministers; royal authority; problems of succession; relations with foreign powers
- The social impact of religious and economic changes under Mary I; rebellion; intellectual developments; humanist and religious thought
- Elizabeth I: character and aims; consolidation of power, including the Act of Settlement and relations with foreign powers
- The impact of economic, social and religious developments in the early years of Elizabeth's rule

The triumph of Elizabeth, 1563–1603 (A-level only)

- Elizabethan government: court, ministers and parliament; factional rivalries
- Foreign affairs: issues of succession; Mary, Queen of Scots; relations with Spain
- Society: continuity and change; problems in the regions; social discontent and rebellions
- Economic development: trade, exploration and colonisation; prosperity and depression
- Religious developments, change and continuity; the English renaissance and 'the Golden Age' of art, literature and music
- The last years of Elizabeth: the state of England politically, economically, religiously and socially by 1603

Timeline 1547-1603

- 1547:** Death of Henry VIII. Duke of Somerset appointed Protector. Third set of royal injunctions issued. Invasion of Scotland.
- 1548:** Enclosure commission.
- 1549:** Execution of Thomas Seymour. Fall of Somerset. Earl of Warwick takes over leadership of government. Act of Uniformity and issue of first Book of Common Prayer. Western Rebellion. Kett's Rebellion.
- 1550:** Warwick becomes Lord President of the Council, and Duke of Northumberland.
- 1552:** Execution of Somerset. Act of Uniformity and issue of Second Book of Common Prayer.
- 1553:** Death of Edward VI, who is temporarily succeeded by Lady Jane Grey. Mary I proclaimed Queen. Execution of Northumberland. Forty-two Articles of religion. Pole appointed papal legate to England.
- 1554:** Wyatt's rebellion. Execution of Lady Jane Grey. Marriage of Mary and Philip of Spain.
- 1555:** Restoration of heresy law. Burnings for heresy resume. Harvest failure.
- 1556:** Execution of Cranmer. Harvest failure.
- 1557:** Paul IV revokes Pole's papal legateship. War against France. Influenza epidemic.
- 1558:** Death of Mary I and accession of Elizabeth I. Sir William Cecil appointed secretary. Loss of Calais. Influenza epidemic continues.
- 1559:** Coronation of Elizabeth I. Acts of supremacy and Uniformity. Fourth set of royal injunctions. Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis signed.
- 1560:** Treaty of Edinburgh signed.
- 1562:** Elizabeth seriously ill with smallpox. Military support for French Huguenots.
- 1563:** Elizabeth urged to marry. Thirty-Nine articles issued. Publication of Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'. Statue of Artificers.
- 1564:** Treaty of Troyes signed.
- 1566:** Elizabeth again pressed to marry. Parker's Advertisements.
- 1567:** Mary, Queen of Scots forced to abdicate.
- 1568:** Mary, Queen of Scots flees to England. Clash between Spanish fleet and English fleet under John Hawkins. Elizabeth impounds Spanish bullion.
- 1569:** Northern Rebellion.
- 1570:** Elizabeth excommunicated by Pope Pius V.
- 1571:** Ridolfi Plot. Cecil raised to peerage as Lord Burghley.
- 1572:** Duke of Norfolk executed. Treaty of Blois signed.
- 1573:** Sir Francis Walsingham appointed Secretary of State.
- 1574:** Arrival of first Catholic missionary priests.
- 1575:** Edmund Grindal appointed Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 1577:** Suspension of Grindal. Execution of first Catholic priest, Cuthbert Mayne.
- 1579:** Marriage negotiations between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou.
- 1580:** Tightening of anti-Catholic Laws.
- 1583:** Throckmorton Plot. John Whitgift appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. Whitgifts Articles issued.
- 1584:** Bond of Association. Expulsion of Spanish ambassador. Treaty of Joinville.
- 1585:** Parry plot. Further tightening of anti-Catholic legislation. Treaty of Nonsuch. Start of War between England and Spain.
- 1586:** Babington Plot. Mary Queen of Scots convicted of treason. Treaty of Berwick.
- 1587:** Mary, Queen of Scots executed. Successful English attack on Spanish fleets in Cadiz.
- 1588:** Death of Earl of Leicester. First 'Marprelate' tracts published. Defeat of Spanish Armada.
- 1590:** Death of Walsingham.
- 1591:** Death of Sir Christopher Hatton. Robert Cecil promoted to Privy Council.
- 1593:** Execution of separatists.
- 1594:** Start of Tyrone Rebellion in Ireland. Harvest failure.
- 1595:** Harvest failure.
- 1596:** Cecil appointed Secretary of State. Harvest failure. Food riots.
- 1598:** Death of Lord Burghley. Defeat of English force in Ireland at Battle of Yellow Ford. Poor Law enacted.
- 1599:** 'Rebellion' and execution of Earl of Essex. Agitation in Parliament over monopolies. Poor law revised.
- 1603:** Death of Elizabeth I and accession of James I.

Royal authority under Edward VI



The accession of a 9-year-old King created many problems. It was by no means clear that he would have a trouble free accession. Power had been seized by his uncle **Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford** (*he was the brother of Henry VIII's third wife, Jane Seymour. As a soldier he became very politically influential towards the end of Henry's reign*)

As Henry's first and only surviving male heir Edward had a protected and cosseted upbringing. He was a clever boy particularly at languages and seemed to be a very serious boy. When he became King he was **Supreme Head of the Church of England** and **Defender of the Faith**

Edward had a difficult inheritance

- The country was divided on religious grounds.
- Crown finances had been ruined by expensive wars against France and Scotland.
- To pay for the wars the coinage had been **debased**, leading to a considerable rise in the rate of inflation and a substantial decline in real income for many.
- The Crown had compromised its own long term security by selling off monastic lands, often at a considerable discount, in order to raise money quickly.

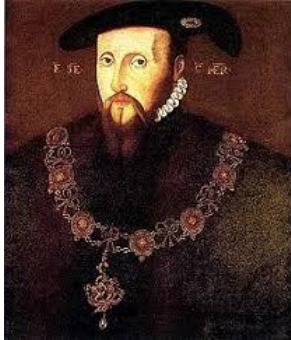
Henry VIII, in his will had set up a **Regency Council** to govern England until Edward became an adult. This was made up of 16 members, supported by a further 12 who required to assist as required. The Regency Council was balanced between Protestants such as Hertford, Cranmer and Sir Anthony Denny and religious conservatives such as Thomas Wriothesley (Earl of Southampton) and Lord St John.

There were several administrators and lawyers who might have been expected to ensure the interests of good government. On the other hand, the great noble families were under-represented. The Regency Council did not last long; it promptly delegated its power to Hertford who was appointed **Protector** (*the term used to describe Seymour, Duke of Somerset who was in charge of the kingdom as Edward was too young to rule in his own right; his rule is described as a 'protectorate' or 'protectorship'*).

The government was worried about rebellions and domestic security. **Archbishop Cranmer** gave a **homily** (*a published reading which could be substituted for a sermon produced by a clergyman*) on *Obedience*, published in 1547. This was to be read in parish churches and made it clear to the public that obedience to the authority of the King was in accordance with the will of God; disobedience was, therefore a **mortal sin** (*a sin, which if unforgiven, could lead a person's soul to be subject to eternal damnation*).

To what extent is it fair to predict that Edward's reign would be the least successful of all the Tudors?

The Duke of Somerset



Hertford counted on the support of Archbishop Cranmer, Viscount Lisle (later Earl of Warwick and Duke of Northumberland) and Sir William Paget. He rewarded his supporters and himself with promotions within the peerage (he became **Duke of Somerset** and **Lord Protector**) and substantial grants of Crown

Within weeks Somerset had awarded himself control, governing largely with members of his own household, **Sir Michael Stanhope**, as Chief Gentleman. Increasingly, members of the Privy Council felt resentment at the protectorate; within a few weeks one of them, the **Earl of Southampton**, had been arrested. Moreover, there could be no guarantee of wider public acceptance of Somerset's protectorate. Consequently, there were widespread fears about the breakdown of law and order. He had important supporters within the Council who also wanted moderate religious reform to continue. He also tried to implement social reforms following the bad effects on the peasants of land enclosures and price rises during Henry VIII's reign. Somerset is sometimes viewed as the '**Good Duke**' because he tried to help the poor, but he has also been seen as a weak leader as the country faced major crises by 1549.

The atmosphere within Somerset's regime was quickly soured by factional rivalries. The first victim was Somerset's brother **Thomas Seymour** (*had married Henry VIII's widow Katherine Parr, there were rumours of an affair with Princess Elizabeth*). Thomas not only sought to turn Edward VI against his brother, the Protector but also tried to plot with the Earl of Southampton against Somerset. This gave Somerset little choice but to bring treason charges against Thomas Seymour. He was assisted by Southampton who denounced Seymour and thereby achieved his readmission to the Council.

Such problems were reinforced by policy failings under Somerset. At the heart of these failings lay Somerset's approach to foreign affairs, especially with regard to Scotland (see p12). Moreover, he badly mishandled the **Western** and **Kett's rebellions** that broke out in 1549 (see booklet 3b). Even before 1549, however misgivings about Somerset had been growing. His arrogant and dictatorial manner created enemies, especially Southampton who resented his earlier imprisonment. His style of government and his policy failures combined to weaken him in the minds of many of those who had originally supported him. The most important such enemy

was the **Earl of Warwick** (later the **Duke of Northumberland**) and the apparent feebleness of Somerset's response to the rebellions of 1549 gave Warwick the opportunity to strike.

At some stage in August 1549 Warwick and Southampton, along with the Earl of Arundel and Lord St John decided that Somerset's control should be brought to an end. Initially they tried to secure the support of Princess Mary, but she decided to stay well clear of any conspiracy. By October the conspirators were ready to strike. There was a stand-off between the conspirators, based in London and Somerset who was at Hampton Court but who crucially still had control over the king. Somerset and Edward retreated to Windsor but, in the end, Somerset, having been promised that no treason charges would be pressed against him surrendered.

Was it inevitable that Somerset would be overthrown?

The Duke of Northumberland



Warwick was the leader of the plot against Somerset and the Protectorate. He wanted to avoid the concentration of power that had been a factor in the fall of Somerset. So he did not re-establish the protectorate. Instead he ruled as **Lord President of the Council**.

He launched a second coup to get rid of the conservatives who had supported the first coup. Whether he did this so that he could exercise unlimited power himself or whether he feared being overthrown by the conservatives is unclear.

The religious character of the regime was shaped by the purging of the conservatives (Southampton & Arundel), the support of Archbishop Cranmer and Edward VI's assertive Protestantism. Warwick promoted himself to **Duke of Northumberland**.

Northumberland favoured a collective approach to government and made effective use of the Privy Council. **William Cecil** who had been one of Somerset's men became one of Northumberland's key administrators. This came under threat when Somerset attempted a counter-coup. He had been readmitted to the Council and wanted to get his old position back. This coup was unsuccessful and Somerset was executed. Possibly understandably this forced Northumberland to behave in the same way as Somerset had before he was removed. Northumberland's potential enemies like Paget were taken to the Tower of London.

How far is Northumberland similar to Somerset?

Problems of succession

Although Northumberland had restored some stability his attempts to alter the succession would affect how he was viewed by contemporaries and historians. In his will Henry VIII had said that he should be succeeded by his son Edward, but if he should die without children then **Princess Mary** should take the throne. This was not an issue for most of the time and although Edward was not the healthiest of children he was expected to reach adulthood. However, in February 1553 he became ill and by the end of March it was reported that he was dying.

This created a problem for Northumberland as if Mary came to the throne then Catholicism would be restored. The policies pursued since 1550 would be swept aside along with the men who promoted them. So he hatched a plan-the **Devyse** to alter the succession which was based on two facts

- 1. Mary had been made illegitimate when Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon had broken down. Similarly, Elizabeth had also been made illegitimate by the collapse of Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn. Although both women had officially been restored to the succession, these changes had been damaging*
- 2. Henry's will had directed the succession towards his own children, but had not set aside the claims to his younger sister's family might make. Northumberland had decided to ensure that Edward's will did not pass the Crown to either Mary or Elizabeth, but to Lady Jane Grey*

The plan may have come from Edward as he was keen to ensure the continuation of Protestantism and was prepared to exclude his half- sisters Mary & Elizabeth from the succession. He saw them as being **illegitimate**.



Northumberland's preferred choice was **Lady Jane Grey**. She was married to Northumberland's son Guilford Dudley. In June 1553, Mary & Elizabeth were both declared illegitimate and preparations were made to call a Parliament to ratify the new succession.

Edward died on 6th July 1553, before the parliament could meet which meant the Devyse was illegal. Northumberland did declare Lady Jane Grey as Queen on 9th July 1553.

Is there any justification for Northumberland's actions regarding the succession?

Could he have done anything differently to ensure his plan succeeded?

What happened to Lady Jane Grey ‘the nine day Queen’?



Relations with foreign powers

Somerset inherited Henry VIII's foreign policy which was far from successful. Somerset's focus was on **Scotland** whereas Henry had been more concerned with France. Somerset wanted to marry Edward VI to the infant **Mary, Queen of Scots** to unite the two countries. This was not wanted in Scotland and he had to deal with the twin threats of Scotland and France. He hoped to isolate France by agreeing an alliance with France. The new king of France, **Henry II** was keen to assert himself and sent 4,000 troops to Scotland.

Somerset was going to do unite Scotland with England by defeating the Scots in battle, build a number of forts and force the Scots to accept the marriage. This plan started well with the defeat of the Scots at the **Battle of Pinkie** in September 1547. The rest of the plan was less successful



- He couldn't capture important castles like Edinburgh & Dunbar. The English army was not strong enough to occupy the whole of Scotland.
- He didn't appreciate the close ties between France and Scotland that allowed France to ensure that Edinburgh was not blockaded.
- This link also meant that Mary Queen of Scots was taken to France in August 1548 where she married the heir to the French throne, the **Dauphin**.

This complete failure was to have disastrous consequences for Somerset – the cost of an unsuccessful military campaign (£600,000), his failure to arrange the marriage and a deteriorating relationship with France who threatened war in 1549. This threat of war happened at the same time as religious and economic rebellions (see Booklet 3b). In the summer he withdrew troops from Scotland to deal with the rebellions that had broken out and also to protect the south coast against a possible French invasion. This was another reason for the opposition to Somerset and his way of running the government that would ultimately lead to his downfall.

Northumberland completely changed the direction of foreign policy. He was willing to sacrifice influence in Scotland to concentrate on urgent problems in England. He ended the wars with France and Scotland which helped stabilise the finances of the Crown. He realised that a future friendship with France might be valuable if the main enemy was seen as **Spain** and the **Holy Roman Empire**. They were both ruled by the Emperor Charles V who was a hard-line Catholic. This was at the time when the **Counter-Reformation** was just starting in Europe where Catholic countries were seeking to regain ground lost to the Protestants.

To end the war with France Northumberland had to return **Boulogne** to France (they paid £133,333 for it – which was a substantial sum). Any potential loss of prestige with these actions was offset by the financial benefits and with less French support for the Scots; the Scots themselves became less of a threat. An alliance was agreed with France on the future marriage of Edward VI and Henry II's daughter Elizabeth. Relations with Charles V were bad as he was angry about the move towards more extreme Protestantism that was being implemented in England.

Is it too simplistic to say that Somerset's foreign policy was a failure and Northumberland's was a success?

Check your understanding

Term	Meaning
Battle of Pinkie	
Counter-Reformation	
Debasement of currency	
Devyse	
homily	
Illegitimate	
Mortal sin	
Protector	
Regency Council	

Further reading/ research

Murphy, Tillbrook & Walsh Atkins 'England, 1485-1603' Collins 1999

Ellesmore, Hudson & Rogerson 'The Early Tudors: England 1485-1558' Murray 2001

Randall & Turvey 'Henry VIII to Mary I' Hodder 2008

