

The Tudor period

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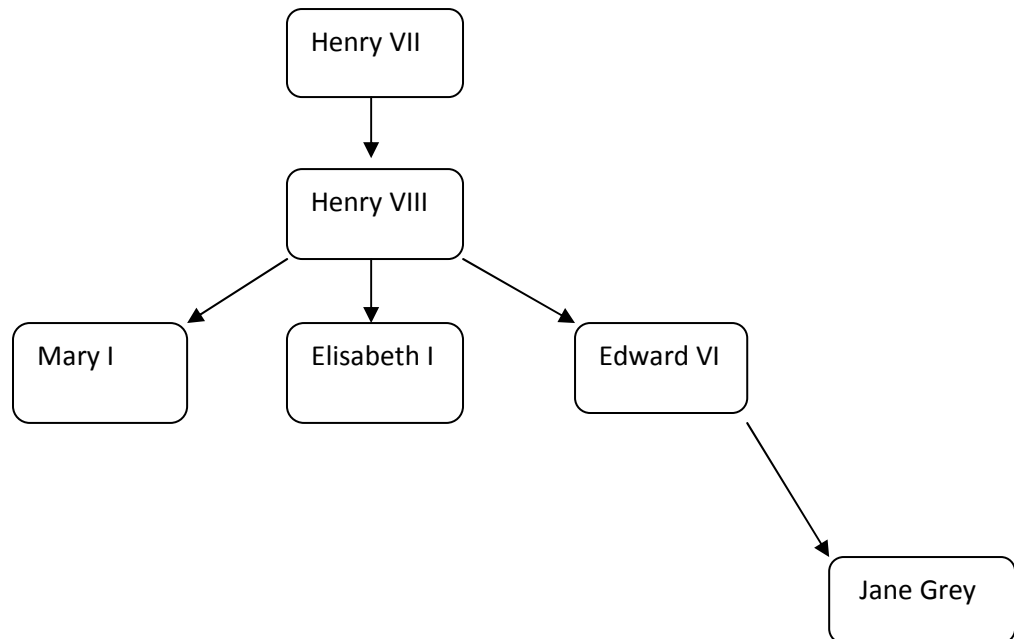
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In history the Tudor period started in the end of the middle Ages in 1485 with Henry VII and ended in 1603 almost half a century before the Great Plague with Elisabeth I. The Tudor period is the time when the Tudor dynasty or the house of Tudor ruled England, Wales, and Ireland.

The monarchs of the house of Tudor



Henry VII ascended the throne in 1485. He was the leader of the house of Lancaster of Wales and had a vague right to the throne by his mother's side. A succession to the throne did not exist in England so Henry VII marched in with about 5000 soldiers from Wales, defeated Richard III and ascended the throne through a conquest.

His aim as a King was to keep the peace in England and to achieve economic wealth. By the time of his rule he reached all of his ambition.

In 1509 Henry VII died and his son Henry VIII succeeded to the throne of England. Henry VIII presented himself as the leader of the church and dissociated himself from the Roman church. Everyone in the nation who did not accept it or who did not take the oath to break with the Roman Catholic Church was killed.

He spent all the money his father, Henry VII, had saved and lead England into a war with France and Scotland. He abandoned everything his father once fought for and achieved.

When Henry VIII died in 1547 his ten-year-old son, Edward VI became King of England. He ruled for six years. Before he died aged sixteen in 1553 he appointed his cousin Jane Grey as his successor.

Lady Jane Grey, also called “The nine day Queen”, wasn’t the legitimate heiress to the throne. Actually Mary Tudor, daughter of Henry VIII, should have been the true Queen of England. Mary fought for her right and won. Lady Jane Grey was never crowned and was executed after one year in prison.

Queen Mary I. fought to bring back the Roman Catholic Church which her father had disestablished. Many people protested against her bringing back the Roman Catholic Church, 300 of them died. Mary I. has been called “bloody Mary”, her reign ended five years later with her death in 1558.

When Mary I. died, Elisabeth I, daughter of Henry VIII and half sister of Mary I, became Queen of England. Queen Elisabeth I was Protestant and with her the Church combined Protestant and Catholic for the first time. She has been called “the virgin Queen”, because she never married and never gave birth to an heir. Because of that James VI of Scotland became the successor to the throne of England. He became James I of England and with him the two Kingdoms England and Scotland were united for the first time. With him the Tudor dynasty ended in 1603.

Daily life

Poverty

During the Tudor period about one-third of the population lived in poverty. The wealthy had to give alms, so the others had a chance to survive. The Tudor law was hard to the poor population and they couldn’t escape of poverty, because they were unable to find work. The ones who tried to find work elsewhere were called vagabonds and could be punished, which included for example whipping, burning or execution. Finally in 1576 the idea of a workhouse for the people living in poverty came.

Health

The average life span was about 35 years, but about 33%-50% of the population never reached the age of sixteen. This is such a high rate because the Tudor municipalities were overcrowded and unhygienic. They left rubbish in the street because they didn’t have sewers or drains. They had animals like rats in the

cities. In larger cities like London there were diseases like smallpox, measles, malaria, typhus, diphtheria, scarlet fever and chickenpox. During the Tudor period outbreaks of the Black Death pandemic appeared in 1498, 1535, 1543, 1563, 1589 and 1603. The cause of the fast spread of the Black Death pandemic was the increase of infected rats.

Homes

A big part of the population lived in small villages in thatched huts with one or two rooms. Their houses had basic furniture with stools. The fire was the only way of cooking, but early Tudor houses and the homes of poorer people didn't have a chimney, so the smoke left through a hole in the roof.

During the Tudor period the first houses were built with the use of glass. The glass was expensive and difficult to make, so they didn't use much of it. People demonstrated wealth with extensive use of glass. The people who couldn't pay the glass used polished horn, cloth or paper. Wealthy Tudor homes had many rooms where a lot of guests could be accommodated, fed and entertained.

Education

In Tudor times not many children went to school. Only sons of wealthy or working families could pay the attendance fee. Boys were allowed to start school at the age of four. They went to school six days a week from 7am in the winter and 6 am in the summer to 5 pm. The wealthiest families hired a teacher, also known as a tutor, so they could teach their boys at home. They had two types of schools; the Petty School, where children learned to read and write and the Grammar School, where children learned Latin. In school pupils mostly had to speak Latin, but they were also taught Greek, religion and mathematics. They learned to write by copying and to read by reading the alphabet and the Lord's Prayer. Teachers were very strict and often beat their pupils. Wealthier boys had a "whipping boy" who received the punishment. After school there were two universities in Tudor England; Oxford and Cambridge. Some boys went to University at the age of about fourteen.

Girls either had to help their parents at home or they had to work to bring in money; they were not allowed to go to school. Boys were educated for work and girls for marriage, doing the household and looking after their husbands.

Conclusion

The time of the Tudor dynasty had a big influence on the whole following development of Britain's history. That period brought the succession to the throne. If that had not been the case there maybe would have been different

Queens and Kings in the history of Britain and the Kingdom would have developed differently.

Moreover England and Scotland were united for the first time by Elisabeth I.. She didn't follow the line of her family by giving the throne to James VI of Scotland.

Those points show how important the house of Tudor was to the history of Britain. The United Kingdom wouldn't be the same without the Tudor dynasty.

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