

The Tudor dynasty ruled England from 1485 to 1603. Elizabeth presided over England's rise to glory abroad and to prosperity and literary achievement at home, justifiably giving her name to England's golden age. Thomas Cromwell, Henry's second administrative genius, oversaw the revolutionary changes of the 1530s: the break with Rome and dissolution of the monasteries, the new growth of Parliament, especially the House of Commons, and the creation out of the old King's Council of a new bureaucratic structure including the Privy Council and the prerogative courts, which were controlled by the Crown. He gained recognition abroad, from Spain in 1489 by the Treaty of Medina del Campo, and then from France, the Netherlands, and Scotland. He exhausted his inherited wealth, but won fame and discovered the talents of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, who as chancellor and archbishop of York dominated the years 1514–29. She assisted the Protestant rebels in the Spanish Netherlands and encouraged English sailors to raid Spanish ships on the high seas. Under Edward VI, a minor dominated successively by Edward Seymour, duke of Somerset, and John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, the English Church became Protestant. Almost as a gesture of how his reign would proceed, one of Henry's first decisions was to order the arrest and the execution of Sir Richard Empson and Edward Dudley – the two men who had been responsible for implementing Henry VII's financial measures. Ruthless, ambitious and bold, Henry VIII was a vivid contrast to his careful, father. When Edward died at the age of 16, Northumberland tried to save Protestantism and himself by placing Edward's Protestant cousin, Lady Jane Grey, on the throne instead of his Catholic Princess Mary. Most Tudor monarchs came to the throne – and remained on the throne – unchallenged. Henry VII possessed only his ability and the ancient name and audacity of his Welsh ancestors. His grandfather had married the widow of Henry V, and his father had married Margaret Beaufort, who was descended illegitimately from Edward III. When the all – capable Wolsey could not obtain it, Henry dismissed him and summoned the Reformation Parliament. She neutralized the Scottish threat by helping the Protestant and pro – English faction to win dominance there. Her navy defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588 and prevented the invasion of England. ( Collection of taxes ) In 1513 Henry won the Battle of the Spurs in France and beat the Scots at Flodden. Wanting a son, and smitten by the dark eyes of Anne Boleyn, Henry appealed to the pope for a divorce.