

Henry's Background

- Second son of Henry VII, never expected to be king but older brother Arthur had died. This meant he was inexperienced at ruling a country.
- Became king in 1509 aged 18, ruling 2.5 million people. He quickly married Arthur's widow Catherine of Aragon to keep the alliance with Spain
- Was athletic, generous, educated, stubborn and a show off. He believed in the **divine right** of kings and was a strict Catholic.
- He wanted to achieve victories in foreign wars, create a magnificent royal court and produce a son to continue the Tudor dynasty.

Wolsey and the Annulment

- Henry wanted to divorce Catherine of Aragon- she only had one daughter (Mary) and no son, which Henry saw as God's punishment for marring his brothers' wife. Plus Henry had fallen in love with **Anne Boleyn** around 1527.
- Wolsey in charge of getting divorce, but Pope said no as had been captured by Charles V (Catherine's nephew). Wolsey tried to use **Leviticus** in the bible to show the marriage should never have happened, but Catherine used **Deuteronomy**. Wolsey then got the case tried in England but Campeggio was told by the Pope to stall a decision so nothing was decided.
- Catherine spoke up against the divorce at the Blackfriars trial- she had a lot of public support e.g. John Fisher and Thomas More
- 1529 Henry stripped Wolsey of his powers and possessions. 1530 charged with *praemunire* but died before arrived in London. The Boleyn's had persuaded Henry to get rid of Wolsey

Wolsey's Policies

- Became Lord Chancellor in 1515 so was Henry's Chief Minister, and also the Archbishop of York, plus Papal Legate in 1518. He was very educated, charming, gifted and good at diplomacy. A huge change for the son of a butcher!
- He lived like a king (Alter Rex) with magnificent palaces e.g. Hampton Court and an income of £3,000 a year
- Star Chamber**- court set up to give out royal justice to all levels of society, not just the rich. Wolsey also used it to get revenge on political opponents
- Enclosure**- when landlords fenced off land that used to be accessed by the poor. Wolsey set up an enquiry in 1517 and bought 260 cases to court.
- Subsidy**- improved tax system based on a person's income. Raised £170,000 between 1513 and 1516. However, still didn't raise enough for Henry's wars.
- Amicable Grant 1525**- a new direct tax to raise money for the war with France, but didn't get approval from parliament. Rebellion in Suffolk. Henry blamed Wolsey and cancelled the tax. Henry began to doubt Wolsey. Had to abandon plans for war.
- Eltham Ordinances 1526**- improve court efficiency by removing unnecessary jobs, reducing spending and cleaning up palaces. Used to remove political opponents.

Cromwell and the Annulment

- Son of a butcher, well educated lawyer, merchant and MP who worked for Wolsey.
- 1531 suggested Henry could get his annulment by parliament passing a new law giving that power to Henry.
- **Act in Restrain of Appeals 1533**- England not subject to foreign rule and Henry became Supreme Head of England. Could now grant own annulment and marry Anne Boleyn.
- This made Henry appoint Cromwell as his Chief Minister but didn't get as much power as Wolsey. Henry more involved in government himself.
- However, Anne gave birth to a girl, Elizabeth and later miscarried twice.
- Henry wanted to get rid of Anne because she didn't give him a son- he accused her of having affairs with 5 men and being a witch! He also had fallen in love with **Jane Seymour**.
- Anne was executed 1536

Foreign Policy

- Henry won 2 small battles against France in 1513- unimportant targets but made Henry feel like a powerful king
- Rivalry with Francis I of France and Charles V (Hapsburg family also ruled Spain). Allied to Charles through marriage
- **Treaty of London 1518**- attempt to bring peace between the 3 kings, plus 17 other rulers. Henry seen as a great peacemaker
- **Field of the Cloth of Gold 1520** between Henry and Francis- opportunity to show off but no real agreements.
- **War with France 1522-25**: joint attack with Charles but Charles never arrived and used Henry. England seen as a weak power
- **Treaty of More 1525**- alliance with France, then joined the **League of Cognac 1526** against Charles and signed the Treaty of Westminster 1527 to force Charles to improve relations in Europe.

war against Charles, but no English troops used. Banned

Netherlands but unpopular so then allowed again.



Henry VIII in 2 pages



The King's marriages

- Henry married Jane Seymour 11 days after Anne's execution
- **Act of Succession**- declared Mary and Elizabeth illegitimate and Jane's son Edward as the only heir. However, Jane died in childbirth. Seymour family became powerful as uncles to the next king
- 1540 married **Anne of Cleves** for alliance with Protestant Cleves against Catholic France and Spain, as invasion was feared. Henry was still worried about having another son. It showed England's isolation and commitment to Reformation.
- However, Henry found Anne ugly and unsophisticated when she arrived in England. He divorced her within six months- he had fallen in love with **Catherine Howard** and the threat of invasion had disappeared. Anne was rewarded for accepting the divorce so easily.
- Cromwell was blamed for the failure of the marriage, but also was unpopular with the nobility because of his low birth, and being a strong Protestant. Catherine's uncle (Duke of Norfolk) spread rumours about Cromwell,
- Cromwell executed 1540 for treason and heresy. Henry married Catherine the same day. He never appointed a Chief Minister again.
- Catherine was accused of adultery (true!) and executed 1541.
- 1543 married **Catherine Parr** who nursed Henry in his last years, helped bring Henry's 3 children together and promoted learning and Protestantism.

Opposition to the Reformation

- Most people accepted the changes, through fear or loyalty. They didn't see much change in the actual running of the church, as Henry wasn't a full Protestant and even partially returned to Catholicism in 1539
- **Elizabeth Barton**- a nun from Kent claimed God sent her visions against Henry's break from Rome and marriage to Anne.
- **John Fisher**- Catholic Bishop who opposed the annulment and thought Henry couldn't take the Pope's powers. Executed by Henry 1535 for treason.
- **Thomas More**- Resigned as Lord Chancellor in protest as he was a strict Catholic. Executed 1535 for not taking the supremacy oath.

Dissolution of the Monasteries

- 1536-1540 all 800 abbeys closed
- **Cromwell's commissions** showed corruption but had been rushed and looking for problems.
- Henry feared they were loyal to the Pope, not him. 18 executed!
- **Valor Ecclesiasticus** revealed value of Church at £160,000 and 1/3 of English land- could be used to finance Henry's wars
- Unlikely that Henry did it for Protestant reasons as he founded two monasteries in 1537
- **1536 Act of Dissolution** closed 300 smaller ones, the rest surrendered voluntarily

Cromwell and government

- Privy Council**- new simple version of Royal Council, staffed by experienced professionals not nobles who had been chosen based on their titles
- Council of the North**- set up to control North of England more effectively
- Act of Union**- Wales became part of England
- Court of Augmentations**- dealt with income from dissolution
- Court of First Fruits and Tenths**- collected tax from clergy that had previously gone to Rome
- Parliament**- increased its role and amount of Acts passed. Partner in government for Henry. Cromwell could control parliament as an MP.

The Break with Rome

- **Protestantism** came from Germany, where Martin Luther *protested* against the corruption of the Catholic Church. He wanted to *reform* the church- this became the **Reformation**
- Henry began to support Protestant ideas to get his annulment to Catherine of Aragon, but he was also concerned about the state of the Church, was influenced by Protestants like Anne Boleyn and Cromwell, and knew he could gain a lot of money from dissolving the monasteries.
- **The Act of Supremacy 1534**- Henry became the Head of the Church in England, could set church beliefs and backed up the Act of Succession
- **Treason Act**- must take oath to accept Supremacy or risk execution

Impact of Dissolution

- Protestants saw it as a victory
- Henry gained huge amounts of money by selling monastery land
- Many monks found work elsewhere but some, and most nuns were left homeless and unemployed
- Loss of charity to the poor
- Cultural vandalism as libraries and beautiful buildings destroyed, but new schools built with the money

The Pilgrimage of Grace 1536

- Unhappy with Dissolution, but also anger at tax and resentment of Cromwell
- Lincolnshire Uprising**- protest against dissolution, murder Bishop of Lincoln. Henry sent an army, the 10,000 rebels back down
- Yorkshire Rebellion**- Better leadership (Robert Aske) and 40,000 men. Very successful, Henry sent another army but couldn't beat the rebels.
- Negotiated and sent Henry demands (**Pontefract Articles**). Henry agreed to discuss, rebels leave but Henry lied! Starts another rebellion but Henry executes 178 leaders. **Largest Tudor rebellion**