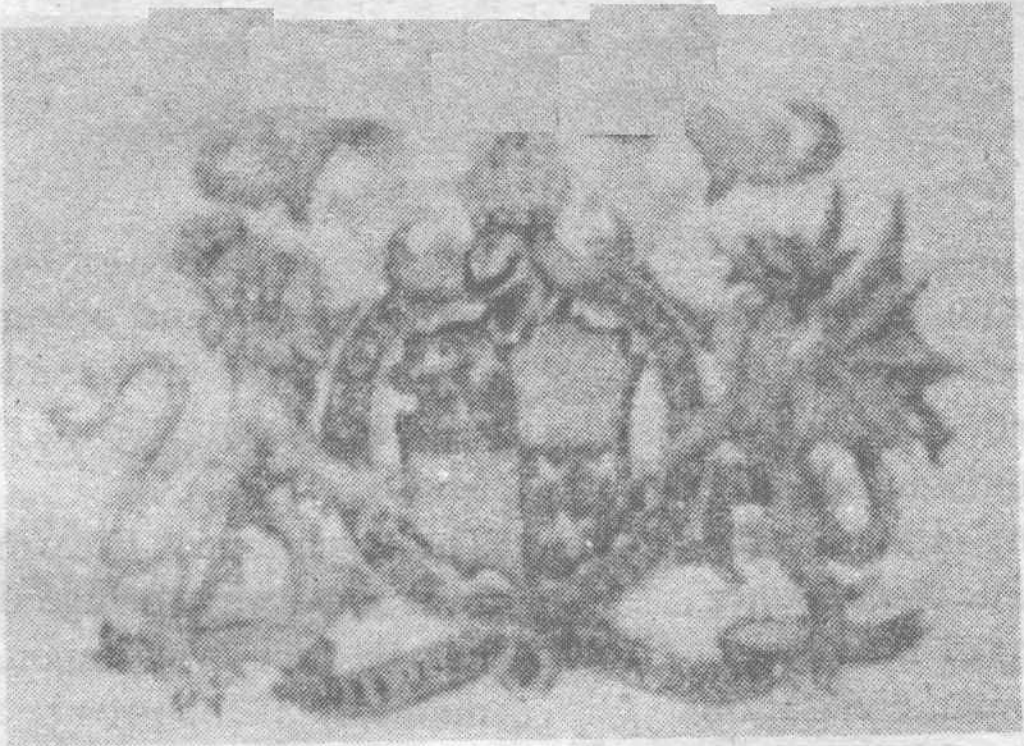


Kings and Queens

Book 2

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Kings and Queens

written by **BRENDA RALPH LEWIS**
illustrated by **JOHN LEIGH-PEMBERTON**
and **PETER ROBINSON**

Ladybird Books Loughborough

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Revised edition

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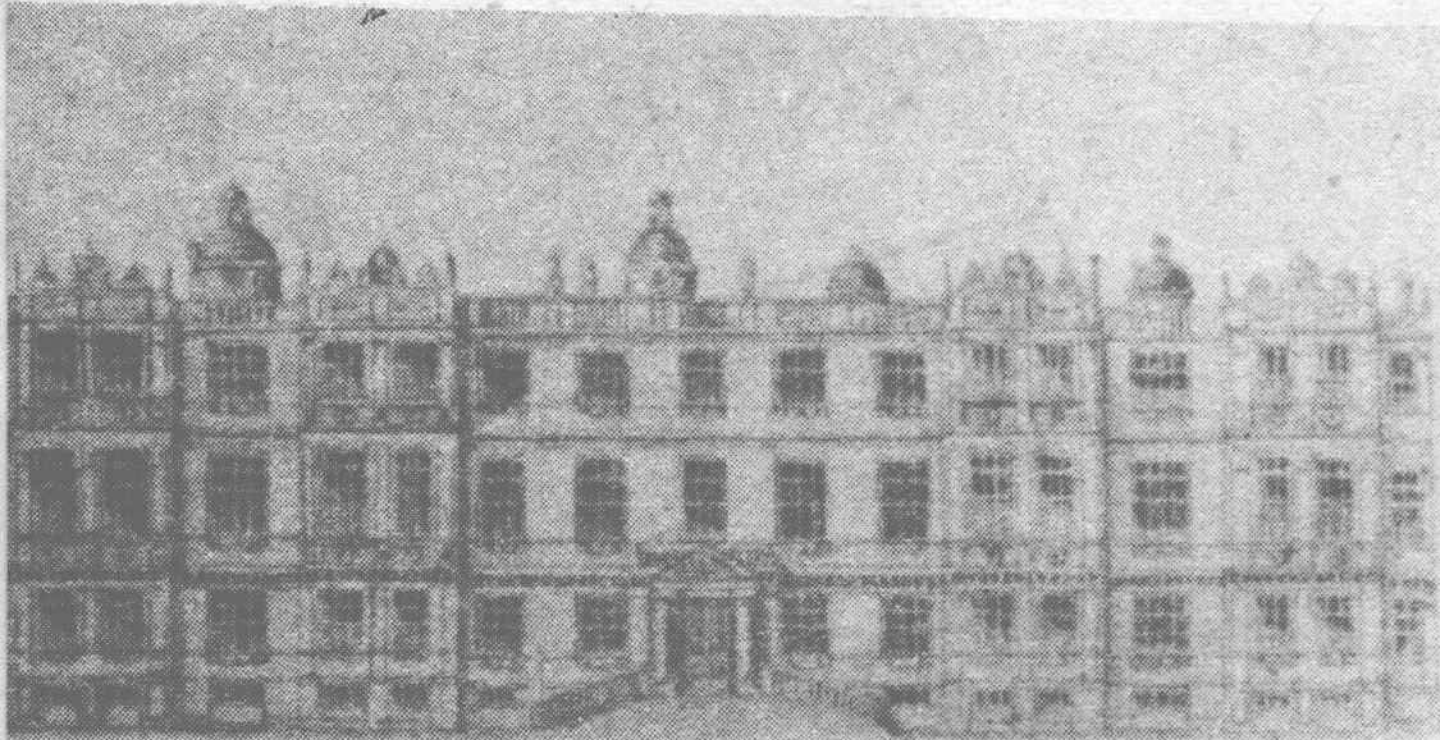
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This book covers the reigns of Kings and Queens of Britain from the accession of the Tudor King, Henry VII, to the present day. Aspects of architecture, costume, transport, the arts and learning are included to give a fuller, richer picture of the lives and times of these monarchs over a period of nearly five hundred years.



Longleat House, a typical example of Renaissance architecture

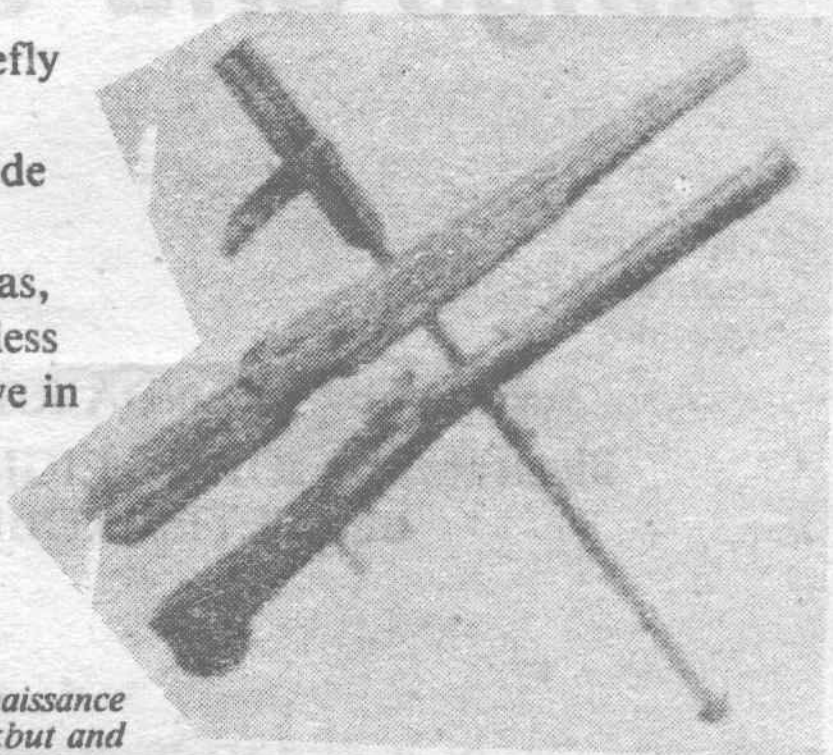
Introduction

When King Henry VII won his crown in battle at Bosworth Field in 1485, the world outside England was changing in many exciting ways. The *Renaissance* (rebirth) of the Ancient Greek and Roman civilisations brought with it new ideas of art, architecture, astronomy, science and medicine.

Venturesome seamen, chiefly the Portuguese, were exploring the oceans outside Europe for the first time. Except in very remote areas, it was becoming less and less necessary for people to live in castles or walled towns.

Europe, in other words, was settling down and becoming more civilised after the long, dangerous centuries of the Middle Ages.

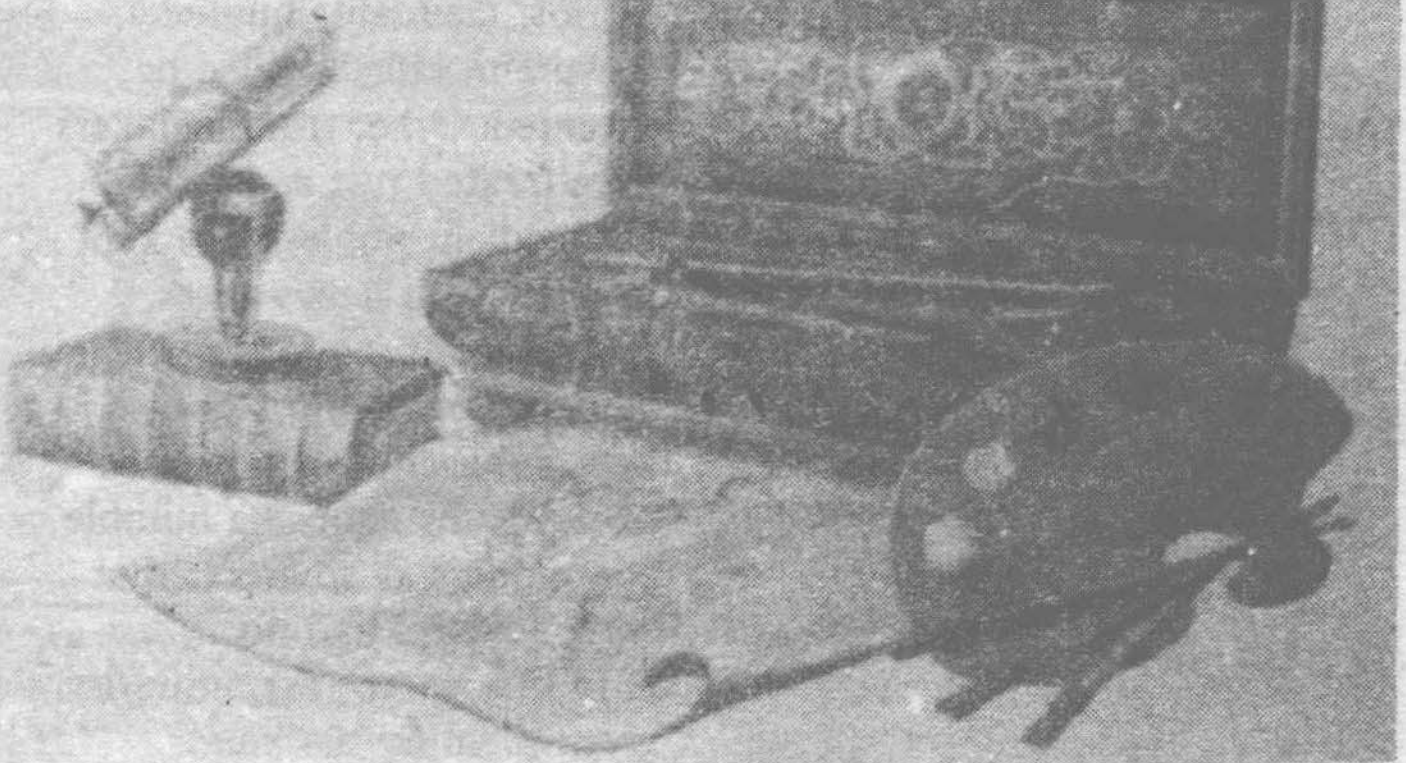
The invention of firearms was sweeping away the age of the heavily-armoured knight, the mainstay of the private armies kept by medieval barons. The feudal system, which made



Early firearms of the Renaissance period. A 16th century hackbut and two 16th century matchlocks

A 16th century virginal

Newton's reflective telescope



the barons so powerful, had largely disappeared, and the power of the Pope in Rome

to order and control the affairs of European countries was not nearly as great as before.

Now, the king was becoming the greatest, most powerful and most important person in the land – and that was something which particularly suited Henry VII.

During the Wars of the Roses, the crown of England had been virtually a plaything for the nobles to squabble over, and kings and princes had been killed and murdered in the brutal struggle for power. In these circumstances, Henry VII had to restore honour and respect, not only to the crown of England, but to the man who wore it.



*Madonna and Child with St Anne
by Leonardo da Vinci, a Renaissance artist
(The National Gallery, London)*

THE TUDORS

King Henry VII – 1485-1509



Of the seven kings of England before Henry VII, only one, Henry V, succeeded peacefully to the throne and died in his bed. Would Henry VII be any luckier? To the end of his reign, Henry was never absolutely certain, for his Yorkist rivals for the crown hatched one plot after another to unseat him. This included trying to pass off two impostors: Lambert Simnel in 1487 and Perkin Warbeck in 1497, as 'rightful heirs' to the throne.

Henry reacted by having Yorkist claimants hunted down and killed, exiled or executed. Other troublemakers were treated just as harshly. Disobedient nobles were kept in order with heavy taxes, fines or confiscations of their land. Wisely, King Henry kept nobles out of positions of power by choosing humble commoners as advisers: that way, advisers had no authority except the authority given them by the king. Previous kings, who had to ask Parliament for money, had been at Parliament's mercy. Henry VII provided



Early Tudor costume was much more dignified than in previous reigns. Beautiful materials were imported from Italy and the East, such as Damask, a rich silk from Damascus

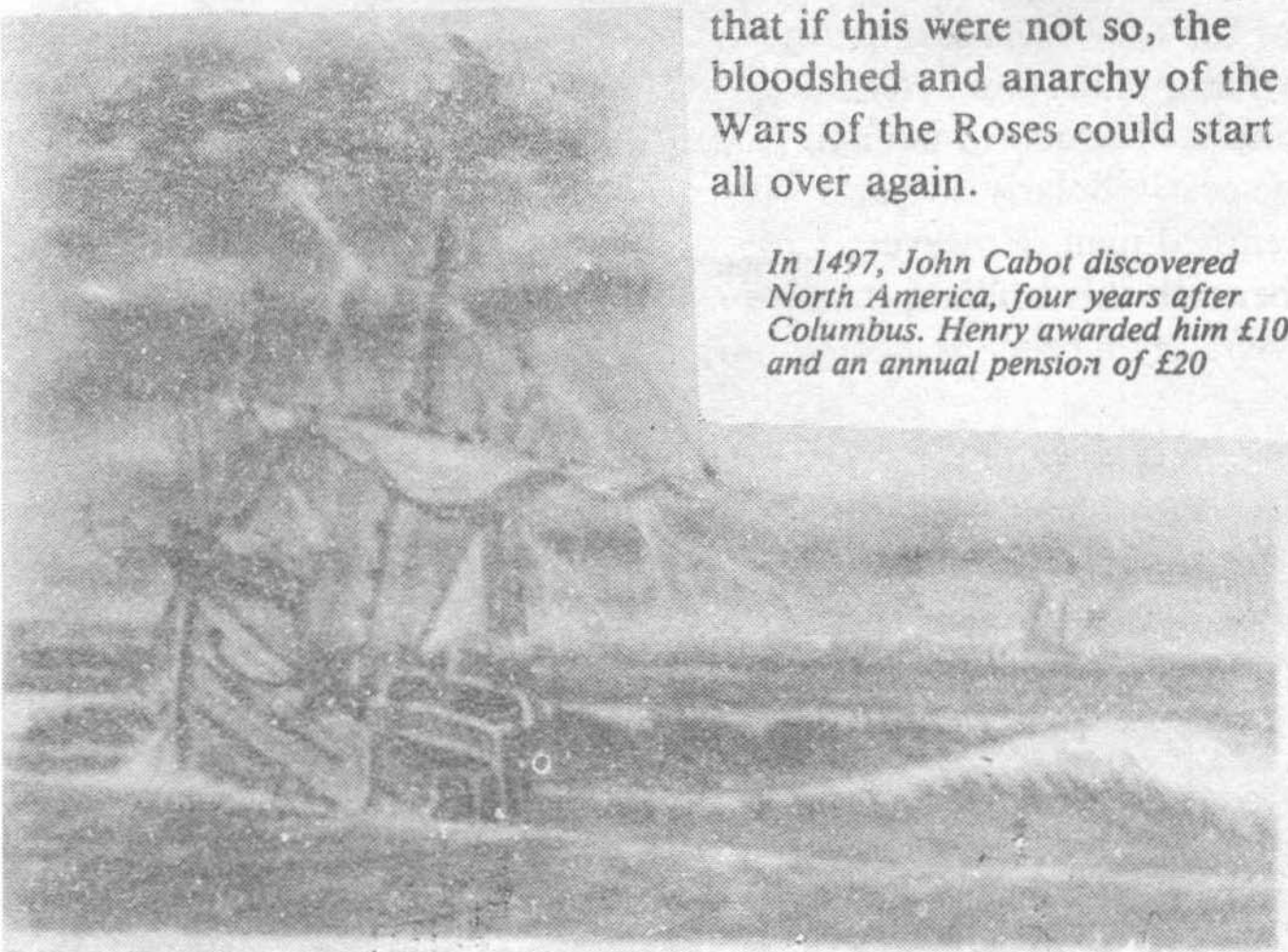


*Initials and trademark of Caxton,
the first British printer.
The Age of Learning was helped by
the invention of movable metal type
which made printed material more
widely available*

himself with his own income, by taxing imported goods or making new tenants on royal estates pay large amounts before they could receive their lands.

Once, kings of England had been seen as mighty warriors or great lawgivers or both. Now, the king was a businessman, arranging trading treaties with foreign countries and staying up late at night to check the royal accounts. It was not glamorous or glorious, but this was how Henry VII made royal power strong and respected once more. For he knew, and his subjects knew, that if this were not so, the bloodshed and anarchy of the Wars of the Roses could start all over again.

In 1497, John Cabot discovered North America, four years after Columbus. Henry awarded him £10 and an annual pension of £20



King Henry VIII – 1509-1547



When the miserly Henry VII was succeeded by his 18-year old son, Henry VIII, the new king seemed to be a true king of the new Renaissance Age – young, handsome, charming and well educated enough to discuss scholarly subjects with learned men. However, beneath this brilliant exterior there lay a cruel despot.

That became clear after 1529 when Henry began trying to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, who had failed to give him the son he so desperately wanted. Henry wanted to marry Catherine's lady-in-waiting, Anne Boleyn. However, the Pope in Rome refused Henry his divorce, and even the clever Cardinal Wolsey, who had run England for Henry for twenty years, could not get the Pope to change his mind. Wolsey was charged with treason, and only his death in 1530 saved him from being put on trial. Then Henry began illtreating Catherine and their daughter Mary, to force Catherine to agree that her marriage was illegal. Catherine refused. Finally, Henry made himself

*The arms of Henry VIII
showing the lion
of England and
the Tudor dragon*



head of the English Church, in place of the Pope, and pronounced his own divorce. Later, with the help of another clever minister, Thomas Cromwell, Henry closed the monasteries in England (1536-1539) and took their wealth. The monks and nuns were thrown out, and many had to beg for a living.

Henry was now a feared and fearsome ruler: to incur his displeasure often meant death. That was the fate of Thomas Cromwell, two of his six wives, including Anne Boleyn, and almost all the surviving Plantagenets, the previous royal family. Little wonder that before Henry died in 1547, he was regarded with terror and dread.

THE SIX WIVES OF HENRY



Catherine of Aragon



Anne Boleyn



Jane Seymour



Anne of Cleves



Catherine Howard



Catherine Parr

King Edward VI – 1547-1553



Edward VI, son of Henry VIII's third wife, Jane Seymour, was only nine when he came to the throne. This was a dangerous situation, for it meant that ambitious men close to the king had the chance to take his power and

use it for their own ends. So it soon proved. First, the young king's uncle, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, overthrew the Regency Council Henry VIII had set up for his son, and made himself Protector. In 1551, however, Somerset was overthrown by the ruthless John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland.

Somerset and Northumberland both ruled like despots, though Northumberland was much more ruthless. He used brute force to impose new Protestant church services on the people. When they rebelled, Northumberland suppressed them with yet

The Lord Protector arguing in front of the boy king at a Council of State



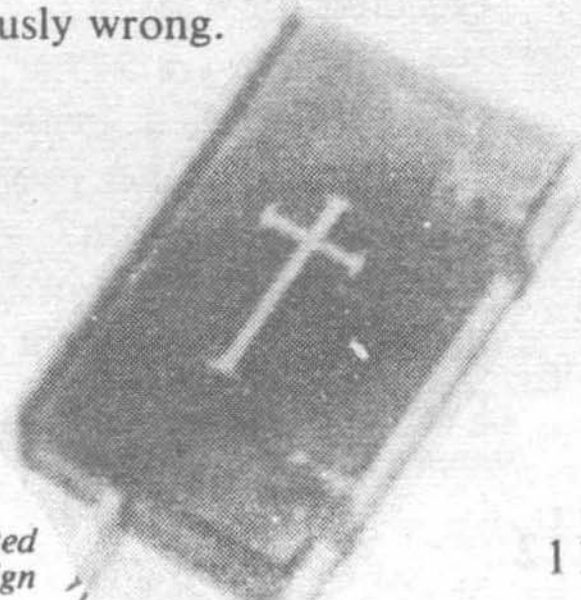


The monasteries had become more and more wealthy and the abbots lived like rich country gentlemen

more force. He used the same method to end unrest when the peasants protested over the enclosure of land, which robbed them of fields to grow their food and graze their cattle.

Then suddenly, Northumberland's power was put in danger when King Edward became dangerously ill in 1552. Mary, daughter of Catherine of Aragon, was Edward's heir and a devout Catholic. So, to cheat Mary of the throne and to stop her bringing Catholicism back to England, Northumberland hatched a plot. He arranged a

marriage between his son and Edward's second cousin, Lady Jane Grey. Then he forced the dying young king to disinherit Mary and name Lady Jane as his successor. On 6th July 1553, after dreadful suffering, 15-year old King Edward died. But immediately, Northumberland found that his plot had gone seriously wrong.



The Church of England Prayer Book printed in English during Edward VI's reign

Queen Mary I – 1553-1558



(National Portrait Gallery, London)

In July 1553, Edward VI's half-sister, Mary, became queen of England amid great popular rejoicing. The people absolutely refused to accept Lady Jane Grey, the 'queen' Northumberland had tried to impose on them, and wholeheartedly greeted Mary as the true heir to the throne. Northumberland was later executed for treason.

Yet only five years later, Queen Mary died, loathed and detested by her people. For many years 17th November, the date of her death in 1558, was kept as a public holiday.

What went wrong? The answer lies with Mary herself, for she became a queen who was ruthlessly determined to wreak revenge on her Protestant enemies, and to restore Catholicism in England. Landowners who had bought former Church lands were infuriated when Mary demanded that they give them up and restore them to the Church. Protestants were enraged when Mary made the English church loyal again to the Pope in Rome. Almost everyone objected fiercely when, in 1554, Mary married the Catholic Prince Philip of Spain, and allowed Spaniards



King Philip II of Spain



Burning Protestant heretics

virtually to control the government. Finally, Mary sickened her subjects by ordering the burning of some 300 Protestant 'heretics' – most of them ordinary Englishmen and women. By the time she died, Queen Mary had failed in every possible way. Philip, whom she loved dearly, did not return her love: he had married Mary only to strengthen the alliance between England and Spain. Her subjects hated Catholicism more than ever before, and even before her death they were calling her by a name that persists to this day: 'Bloody Mary'.



16th century pendant housed in the Royal collection at Windsor