

Longwood University

## Digital Commons @ Longwood University

---

Spring Presentation of Undergraduate Research

Office of Student Research

---

Spring 4-23-2019

### Mary Tudor: A Catholic Leader in a Protestant State

Braeden Glancy  
*Longwood University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.longwood.edu/spur>



Part of the [European History Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Glancy, Braeden, "Mary Tudor: A Catholic Leader in a Protestant State" (2019). *Spring Presentation of Undergraduate Research*. 3.

<https://digitalcommons.longwood.edu/spur/3>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Student Research at Digital Commons @ Longwood University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring Presentation of Undergraduate Research by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Longwood University. For more information, please contact [hamiltonma@longwood.edu](mailto:hamiltonma@longwood.edu), [alwinehd@longwood.edu](mailto:alwinehd@longwood.edu).

# Mary Tudor: A Catholic Leader in a Protestant State

Braeden Glancy

## Introduction

One of the initial challenges faced by Mary I was her marriage to Philip of Spain. It was apparent that the impetus behind the marriage was predominantly a political maneuver to keep an alliance with Spain against France as well as a safeguard to her position as monarch with the potential for Catholic heir. The union between Mary and Philip catalyzed her unpopularity throughout the country. She already had a reputation amongst the people but this really solidified the public's opinion of her as a monarch, though the three major reasoning's behind the negative perceptions of the Spanish Marriage were gender, ethnicity and religion.

In addition to her marriage to Philip, a major challenge faced by Mary I was her Catholic religious stance and its implications on the newly reformed Protestant England. Mary sought out Catholic advisors to assist her in the plans of a Catholic Revival which brought about the return of Cardinal Reginald Pole who was ultimately appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. Pole believed that in order to restore England to its previous Roman Catholic roots, indoctrination of the reformed Protest clergy was where it would happen. The two major intentions of Mary I and her religious policy were the disestablishment of religious houses and the return to Catholic traditions though the most impactful debate within her religious policy was that of transubstantiation and the eucharist. The Protestant Reformation questioned the validity of transubstantiation and the skepticism continued through the Marian regime.

In response to the drastic changes in England during the rule of Mary I, riots and rebellions erupted throughout the country. The most notorious of these rebellions was Wyatt's Rebellion was formed out of the xenophobic opinions of the Spanish following the announcement of the Spanish Marriage and exemplified the religious and political strife cause by Marian religious reform. Following the rebellion, Mary's popularity across England plummeted as this highlight the flaws in her position and policy. With the theme of heresy consuming the perceptions of the Queen and her government after the reinstatement of Heresy Laws, the notion of martyrdom dominated the public impression of the reforms and executions. In his *Actes and Monuments*, John Foxe illuminated the flaws in Marian strategy by advertising the public opinion of the government and the persecution and execution of Protestant individuals. His representation of the persecution experienced by Protestants in Marian England resonated with other practitioners of Protestant religions and spread awareness of the negligence and transgressions of the crown.



Oil painting by Antonio Mor. Mary Tudor, Queen of England, 1554.

## Abstract

**Research Question:** What challenges faced by Mary Tudor, in regards to religious policy, were most critical during her reign?

**Thesis:** While Mary I faced many challenges during her reign, the most critical were her marriage to Philip of Spain, the attempted amalgamation of church and state through indoctrination of the Protestant clergy, and the rebellions and executions of Protestants in England which all culminated into denominational conflict throughout England.

## Methods

This research was conducted using both primary and secondary sources as well as databases at the Longwood Greenwood Library.

## Conclusion

The immense culmination of challenges faced by Mary I during her time on the English throne contributed to the overall denominational conflict and strife in England. Situated between two prominent Protestant rulers, Mary's reign was consumed by hostility and discord as she sought to repair England's Catholic religion and rebuild relations with Rome. Mary I was ill-fated from the beginning of her reign as a female, Catholic monarch in a Protestant country traditionally ruled by men, but her aggressive action to scrutinize and amend the reforms made prior to her time on the throne would ultimately cause her downfall. With all of this being said, the most critical aspects of Mary I's reign, in regards to religion, were her strategic marriage to Spanish Prince Philip and the xenophobic sentiments towards the union, her devout religious upbringing in culmination with the appointment of particular advisors and the rebellions and eventual executions of around 300 practicing Protestants.

## References

- Armstrong, Colin. "English Catholicism under Mary Tudor." *The Catholic Historical Review* 93, no. 3 (2007): 589-93. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25164316>.
- Duffy, Eamon. *Fires of Faith: Catholic Church under Mary Tudor*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- Fletcher, Anthony, and Diarmaid MacCulloch. *Tudor Rebellions*. 6th ed. London: Routledge, 2015.
- Foxe, John. *The Actes and Monuments*. London: John Day, 1570.
- Loades, David Michael. *Mary Tudor: A Life*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997.
- Pollnitz, Aysha. *Princely Education in Early Modern Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Porter, Linda. *Mary Tudor: The First Queen*. Cornwall: MPG Books, 2007.
- Tanner, J.R. *Tudor Constitutional Documents A.D. 1485-1603: With and Historical Commentary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930.