Bloody Mary Essay, Research Paper

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Bloody Mary

Mary I, Queen of England was a very prominent figure in

European history. Her reign as queen was filled with many trials and

tribulations that were not accepted by most of England. Many of

Mary’s rash decisions were most likely do to her upbringing and her

lack of will power. Whether it is being declared a bastard as a young

child by her tyrannical father, Henry VIII, or her marriage to Phillip of

Spain, Mary was easily influenced by others and it showed as she grew

older and took over the thrown.

Mary was born the daughter of Henry VIII and Katherine. Henry

had failed again to bear a son to retain the thrown after him. His

annulment from Katherine was not granted so Henry decreed that the

Church of England be separate from the Church of Rome. Katherine

still tried not to jeopardize her daughter’s succession to the thrown, for

this she was banished and Mary was declared a bastard. These events

had a devastating effect on Mary who was once adored by both parents.

Mary never saw her mother again and her stepmother, Anne Boleyn,

treated her with extreme cruelty, even threatening to have her executed.

All these things affected Mary’s adolescence. She suffered

premenstrual tension her whole life; her periods were infrequent or

absent all together. But through all this her mother’s influence stayed

with her. She inherited her piety and love of religion from her mother

and made it her life’s crusade to restore England with the faith

Katherine had been so devoted.

Mary’s innocence and naivety stayed with her throughout her

whole life. This was present in her statement, “What is a whore, I’ve

never heard the word before.”(Weir 12). And even more present in her

marriage to Philip of Spain. Philip was simply following orders, in no

way was he attracted to Mary; Philip wanted to gain England as part of

the Habsburg empire. Neither Spain nor England agreed with the

marriage. They communicated in Latin since both could not

communicate in English or Spanish(Marilee 2). Mary then led Philip

through many false pregnancies, this was due to her irregular periods

and she was now entering menopause and developing a stomach tumor.

Few questioned her because she honestly believed herself(Liston 117).

Philip left and said he wouldn’t return unless he was crowned king.

Mary continued to help Philip with the war on France and it was greatly

hurting England. It was costing them money, weapons, and Calais, their

last foothold on the continent; the people who widely accepted Mary

were beginning to turn away(Marilee 2).

Philip returned to England with two friars, leaders of the Spanish

Inquisition. They encouraged Mary to take charge of her own desire

and reestablish Catholicism in England(Liston 193). For what Mary

thought was for the good of all the English people, she mercilessly killed

more than three hundred of her subjects. Most of these victims were

burned at the stake by incompetent executors. Gunpowder bags

wouldn’t explode, wet wood would burn slowly, and spectators were

forced to watch innocent Protestants become martyrs. This all only

strengthened the religion Mary hoped to destroy(Weir 219).

Mary was further weakened by famine that set in while the

burnings continued. All of England grew to hate her and she adopted

the name “Bloody” Mary which is still commonly known today. She

then became a laughing stock when she begged for Philip’s return and

claimed more pregnancies. She faced death realizing that Elizabeth

would succeed her, she imprisoned her and threatened her with

execution, but much like Henry VIII did not want Mary to inherit the

thrown; her wishes ceased to matter when she died(Trease 227).

Mary’s sheer naivety made her very gullible for anyone who

wanted something from her. The influence of her mother was simply

exploited by Philip and the leaders of Spain, she would have never done

that but the man she adored made her believe it was the right thing to

do. Katherine was the only secure figure in Mary’s life and when she

was banished, Mary’s spirit and independence unknowingly withered.

Outline

Thesis: Mary’s innocence made her easily influenced by others and

it showed as she grew older and took over the thrown.

I. Introduction to Mary I

A. Lack of will power

B. Trials during her life

1. Bastard as a young child

2. Marriage to Philip

II. Mary’s early childhood

A. Henry VIII her father

1. Left his wife and his daughter

2. Anne Boleyn

B. Katherine

1. Never jeopardized her daughter

2. Banished by Henry

3. Greatly influenced Mary’s life

a. Love of religion

b. Mary would restore England to that faith

4. Tension brought by these tragic events

III. Mary’s innocence

A. What is a whore

B. Marriage to Philip of Spain

1. Following orders

2. Wanted England as part of the Habsburg empire.

3. Communicated in Latin

a. Philip didn’t know English

b. Mary didn’t know Spanish

4. Mary led Philip through false pregnancies

a. irregular period

b. menopause

c. stomach tumor

5. Philip left England

a. Mary continued to help Philip

b. It was hurting England

IV. Mary’s bloodbath

A. Philip’s return to England

B. Influence of leaders of the Spanish Inquisition

C. Execution of more than three hundred

1. Burned at the stake

2. Protestants became martyrs

3. Only strengthened their religion

V. Mary’s fall

A. Famine

B. Adopted the nick name “Bloody” Mary

C. More false pregnancies

D. Her hated sister Elizabeth would retain the thrown