

MOMENTOUS DECISIONS

Henry VIII

Henry VIII of England (1531/32), son of Henry VII

What decision?

To rid himself of his first wife, Catherine of Aragon.

Why?

Unknown for certain. The most likely one is that Catherine had been unable to bear a male heir, even after several miscarriages, and bearing a girl child 'Mary'. Also she was in her forties.

Henry was infatuated with Anne Boleyn, who rebuffed his advances, so he decided to marry her.

He secretly married Anne at Dover, then again in London 25/1/1533.



Result

- The separation from Rome, of The Church of England, with Henry as its head, and the start of the Reformation in England.
- What might have happened otherwise?
- Queen Elizabeth I would not have been born.
- Was it a good or bad decision?
- Some extra history next.



Henry VIII (28 June 1491 – 28 January 1547)

Domestically, he is known for his radical changes to the English Constitution, reinstating the theory of the divine right of kings of England, thus greatly expanding royal power.

Charges of treason and heresy were commonly used to quash dissent; those accused were often executed without a formal trial.

Eighteen year-old Henry after his coronation in 1509.



Henry marries his brother's widow

- His brother, Prince Arthur, was married to Catherine of Aragon, the youngest surviving child of King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile.
- In 1502, Arthur died at the age of 15 years, after 20 weeks of marriage to Catherine.



First marriage

- Henry, almost 18, married Catherine at the friar's church in Greenwich on 11th June 1509.
- On 23rd June 1509, Henry led Catherine from the Tower of London to Westminster Abbey for their coronation on 24th June 1509.



Mary Boleyn

- Mary Boleyn was one of the mistresses of Henry VIII, from a period of roughly 1521 to 1526.
- In the last stages of this affair, he became enamoured of Mary's sister, Anne Boleyn, then a charismatic young woman in the Queen's entourage.
- Anne, however, resisted his attempts to seduce her, and refused to become his mistress.



Anne Boleyn

- Henry developed an absorbing desire to annul his marriage to Catherine so that he could marry Anne.
- By 1527, he had convinced himself that in marrying Catherine, his brother's wife, he had acted contrary to Leviticus 20:21.
- The Pope refused his approval of a divorce.
- In 1531, Catherine was banished from court, her rooms were given to Anne.



Thomas Cranmer

- When the Archbishop of Canterbury William Warham died, Anne's influence and the need to find a trustworthy supporter of the divorce had Thomas Cranmer appointed to the vacant position.
- This was approved by the Pope, unaware of the King's covert plans for the Church.



Twice married

In the winter of 1532, Henry met with Francis I at Calais and enlisted the support of the French king for his new marriage.

Immediately upon returning to Dover in England, Henry and Anne went through a secret wedding service.

She soon became pregnant, and there was a second wedding service in London on 25th January 1533.

Anne Boleyn's Coat of Arms as Queen Consort.



Marriage validated against the Pope's wishes

On 23 May 1533, Cranmer, sitting in judgment at a special court convened at Dunstable Priory to rule on the validity of the king's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, declared the marriage of Henry and Catherine null and void.

Five days later, on 28 May 1533, Cranmer declared the marriage of Henry and Anne to be valid.

An early-20th-century painting of Anne Boleyn, depicting her deer hunting with the King in Windsor Forest.



Protestant Church established

- The Church of England separated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534 and became the established church by an Act of Parliament in the Act of Supremacy, beginning a series of events known as the English Reformation.

- Canterbury Cathedral.



Question again

Was it a good or bad decision of
Henry's to divorce Catherine of
Aragon?