

Mary I – from *Moving Ideas* by F. Salerno

Henry VIII's first daughter, she became Queen of England with a popular support after the 9 days of Jane Grey's reign. She had Catholic blood in her veins from her mother's side, Catherine of Aragon, that's why her half brother Edward VI didn't want her as his heir to the throne of the Protestant England. She never accepted the break with Rome so she imposed the Catholic religion in England with all the power she had: she restored the Latin Mass, she persuaded Parliament to repeal the existing Protestant religious laws and more than 300 Protestants were burnt alive. The persecution of the Protestants lasted for over four years: many of them went away from England, many others stayed to defend their position. A book, Foxe's ***Book of Martyrs***, published 5 years after Mary's death, emphasized the sufferings of the Protestants and helped popular opinion to know what the situation really was.

Mary married Philip II, heir to the throne of Spain, against the wishes of Parliament which didn't want to submit England to Spain. He was almost always absorbed with his European affairs while Mary remained on the island. She became unpopular and was called "Bloody Mary" for the persecution of the Protestants. When she died, England was what it didn't want to be: religiously divided and completely dependent on Spain.