

Topic Page: [Edward VI](#)

Definition: **Edward VI** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

King of England (1547-53), only legitimate son of Henry VIII. Edward reigned under two regents, the Dukes of Somerset (1547-49) and Northumberland (1549-53). During his reign, the introduction of Protestant liturgy consolidated the Reformation. He died at 16 after willing the crown to Northumberland's daughter-in-law, Lady Jane Grey, in an attempt to exclude the Catholic Mary I.

Summary Article: **Edward VI**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

1537–53, king of England (1547–53), son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour. Edward succeeded his father to the throne at the age of nine. Henry had made arrangements for a council of regents, but the council immediately appointed Edward's uncle, Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford (later duke of Somerset), as lord protector. Henry's absolutism was relaxed by a liberalization of the treason and heresy laws. Tempering the reforming zeal of Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, the government moved slowly toward Protestantism. The Act of Uniformity (1549), which required use of the first Book of Common Prayer, increased contention between Roman Catholics and reformers, and an unsuccessful rebellion occurred in the west. The dissolution of chantries and the destruction of relics, both begun under Henry, proceeded apace. Somerset won a victory over the Scots at Pinkie (1547) but failed to persuade them to agree to a marriage between Edward and Mary Queen of Scots. The Scots instead strengthened their alliance with France, the power that increasingly threatened England's safety. War between France and England broke out in 1549 over the possession of Boulogne. Meanwhile there had arisen at home the pressing agrarian problem of inclosure of common lands. By espousing the cause of the disgruntled peasantry, even after the rebellion of Robert Kett, Somerset aroused the opposition of the gentry and the council, thus affording his rival, John Dudley, earl of Warwick (later duke of Northumberland), an opportunity to secure his overthrow (1549). Dudley, after confining Somerset in the Tower of London, won complete ascendancy over Edward. With the prorogation (1550) of Parliament and the expulsion of Catholics from the council, the reformers triumphed, and Dudley gained control of the government. He secured peace with France by an ignominious treaty. The confiscation of chantry lands and church treasures brought needed revenue. A second Act of Uniformity and a second Book of Common Prayer, both more strongly Protestant, were adopted. After Somerset's execution (1552), Northumberland's government became increasingly unpopular. Fearing the accession of the Catholic princess, Mary (later Mary I), the duke inveigled Edward into settling the crown on Lady Jane Grey, granddaughter of Henry VIII's sister and wife of Northumberland's son, to follow him in succession. The young king died of tuberculosis at age 15.

See Pollard, A. F. , *England under Protector Somerset* (1900) and *Political History of England, 1547-1603* (1910);

Chapman, H. W. , *The Last Tudor King* (1958);

Mackie, J. D. , *The Earlier Tudors, 1485-1558* (1952, 2d ed. 1959);
studies by W. K. Jordan (1968 and 1970).

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

Edward VI. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/edward_vi



The Columbia Encyclopedia, © Columbia University Press 2018



The Columbia Encyclopedia, © Columbia University Press 2018

APA

Edward VI. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/edward_vi

Chicago

"Edward VI." In *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, by Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University. 8th ed. Columbia University Press, 2018. https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/edward_vi

Harvard

Edward VI. (2018). In P. Lagasse & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia*. (8th ed.). [Online]. New York: Columbia University Press. Available from: https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/edward_vi [Accessed 14 November 2019].

MLA

"Edward VI." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University, Columbia University Press, 8th edition, 2018. *Credo Reference*, https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/edward_vi. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.