WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHERS?



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This image depicts the place where Joan of Arc was baptized and where she saw her visions. It is the Church of St. Remy of Rheims in Domrémy-la-Pucelle. Nearby is the house of Joan's birth. Photo by Arnaud 25; online via Wikimedia Commons. License: <u>CC BY-SA 4.0</u>

Joan of Arc warned Pierre Cauchon to treat her fairly, but he did not. Even though Cauchon engineered Joan's death by fire in the marketplace of Rouen, it is Joan's memory that has been held in high esteem for all these centuries.

Cauchon and his fellow conspirators did not fare as well.

Henry VI, who signed the warrant that allowed Joan's trial to proceed, lost his own throne and was sent to the <u>Tower of London</u>. He had suffered from attacks of insanity most of his life. Perhaps he had inherited a mental disorder from his grandfather, the feeble-minded Charles VI of France. (In an effort to make peace with the English, Charles VI had given Henry V his daughter, Catherine of Valois. Their union produced Henry VI).

By 1465, Henry VI was completely insane. He lost the throne, but briefly regained it in 1470. It didn't take long before the current king returned him to the Tower of London.

In 1471, Henry's only son and heir was murdered. Henry himself met that same fate, one month later.

But Joan of Arc, the young woman from the hamlet of Domremy, changed the course of French history:

- Born a peasant, not a queen, she helped her country end its bitter internal strife.
- Raised a shepherdess, not a military leader, she helped to end her country's external domination.

Trusting her faith, believing in herself, and in her people—even when they had given up hope—Joan of Arc helped her country develop a national spirit.

The trial that condemned her is a model of impropriety. The justice system that allowed her to go to her death without legal representation is a mockery. But history has the final judgment. Those who terrorized Joan of Arc are vilified today. And she—who remained faithful to her mission and to her faith—is a continuing symbol of all that is best in a human being.

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