PHILIP II: KING CONSORT of BRITAIN



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King Philip II of Spain had a special Coat of Arms while he was simultaneously King Consort of England. This image depicts that Coat of Arms. Philip was able to use it between 1556-1558, while he was married to Queen Mary I of England. Image online courtesy Heralder, via Wikimedia Commons. License: CC BY-SA 3.0

When <u>Mary Tudor</u> became Queen - following the <u>disastrous end</u> of a <u>nine-day rule</u> by <u>Lady Jane Grey</u> - Elizabeth was nineteen years old. The country was in need of a strong leader, but many people were anxious.

Edward's council had made mistakes, contributing to an <u>unstable economy</u>. A series of bad harvests helped to force prices higher, and Britain's currency was in trouble. Would Mary, and her advisors, be able to manage their way through difficult times?

After twenty years of Tudor rule, Britain was reasonably stable on the religious front. Would Mary (a Catholic, like her mother) try to make Britain Catholic again? Would she allow religious freedom? Would she persecute Protestants?

Her mother (<u>Catherine of Aragon</u>, youngest daughter of <u>Ferdinand and Isabella</u>) had been humiliated when Henry pushed her aside in favor of Anne Boleyn. Would Mary hold those facts (and her mother's anguish) against her half-sister?

Those who hoped for status-quo, under <u>Mary I</u>, must have been disappointed when Her Majesty announced whom she would marry. Aged thirty-seven when she became Queen, Mary wanted a child. The person she selected to have it with was <u>Philip of Spain</u>, heir to the Spanish throne.

A Catholic, <u>Mary's fiance'</u> was the son of her cousin, <u>Charles V</u>. Even people who shared her religious faith were concerned. It was one thing to marry a Catholic - even a powerful one - but the son of the <u>Holy Roman</u> Emperor? The issues were troubling:

- Would Britain merely become an appendage of the House of Habsburg?
- Would the Spanish Inquisition become part of Britain's life as it had elsewhere?
- Would people be condemned as heretics for practicing their Protestant faith?
- Would Elizabeth, the Queen's heir and half-sister, be forced to conform to Mary's religious beliefs?

History proves the peoples' concerns were justified. Mary I became known as "Bloody Mary." <u>Her younger husband</u> became Philip II, King of Spain, at the same time that he was "king consort of England." His position, it is said, allowed him to use some of Britain's gold to fund non-British military objectives.

While Mary viewed her sister as a threat, <u>Philip</u> advised a reconciliation. Historians believe that had it not been for her brother-in-law, Elizabeth may have died like her mother. At a future date, when they were at odds, Philip would remind Elizabeth of his role in sparing her life.

The Queen, meanwhile, had become very ill. Thinking she was expecting a child, she was devastated to learn she wasn't even pregnant. In 1558, she died without an heir, and Philip (who had essentially <u>deserted her</u>) was no longer King of England.

The crown would next rest on the head of twenty-five-year-old <u>Princess Elizabeth</u>. It would remain there for many decades.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/PHILIP-II-KING-CONSORT-of-BRITAIN-Elizabeth-I-The-Golden-Age

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/PHILIP-II-KING-CONSORT-of-BRITAIN-Elizabeth-I-The-Golden-Age

Media Stream



Mary Tudor in 1554 Image online, Wikimedia Commons. PD

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Beheading of Lady Jane Grey Image online, via the National Gallery Website.

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Ferdinand and Isabella - Queen Mary's Grandparents Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Royal Portrait of Queen Mary Image online, courtesy the museodelprado.es website.

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<u>Philip of Spain - Queen Mary's Fiance and Cousin</u> Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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<u>Charles V - Mary Tudor's Cousin, Philip's Father</u> Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Dominions of the House of Habsburg

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King Philip II of Spain and King Consort of England

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Philip II Reconciles Mary and Elizabeth Tudor

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Scene from the Spanish Inquisition

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Signature - Princess Elizabeth, 1549

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Catherine of Aragon

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Series Producers:

Mark Shivas and Ronald Travers

Starring:

Annette Crosbie in the award-winning role of Catherine of Aragon

Keith Michell in the award-winning role of Henry VIII

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Lady Jane Grey

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