

# TUDOR TIMES

## THE WARS OF THE ROSES

After the Hundred Years War the kings of England got into such a big fight about who should be king that a long civil war lasting from 1455 to 1485 broke out. It was called the wars of the Roses because on one side there was the Lancaster line that took a red rose as its symbol and on the other side there was the York family which took a white rose as its symbol.

Both sides were descended from King Edward III, and believed their representative should be king. In 1485 the Yorkist King Richard III was defeated by Henry Tudor who ascended to the throne as Henry VII. Henry's marriage to the Yorkist princess Elizabeth united the Houses of Lancaster and York, finally bringing the war to an end.

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Henry VII was a very strong king and he weakened the aristocracy so that he could stay in power. He made Parliament stronger but not the aristocratic parliament, in fact he worked mainly with the new lower class part of Parliament, the House of Commons, rather than the House of Lords. He governed his kingdom like a businessman leaving his son Henry VIII one million pounds as inheritance.

The most important event during the reign of Henry VIII was the break with Rome, or the Reformation. This breach was caused not by religious

## PIRATE

officially gave pirates the right to represent them in their wars. Sir Francis Drake, the English sea captain and expert seaman.

during the Elizabethan age when England and Spain were great rivals. Mission to explore and seek treasures and spices. But she also gave him the secret goal of attacking

1577 with five ships. After facing many difficulties such as storms, starvation and illness, he returned to England on board his ship the "Golden Hind". His victory over Spain's "Invincible Armada" and his circumnavigating the world. At 4000 miles off Puerto Rico he was shot at by Spanish ships. He was wounded but he was not killed.

matters but by the failure of his wife Catherine of Aragon to give him a male heir. Henry asked the Pope for a decree of nullity of his marriage but Pope Clement VII refused to allow Henry to divorce Catherine. So Henry forced the English Church to recognize him as its head and, at the same time, Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy which made the king the official head of the national Church. Much of the Church land was confiscated and sold to landlords and merchants who became ever wealthier. The Tudor age came to an end with Elizabeth the First, Henry VIII's daughter.

The forty-five years of Elizabeth's reign saw the flourishing of the Renaissance especially in the field of literature, which reached its peak with the brilliant career of William Shakespeare.

The Queen never married and dedicated her life to the creation of a stronger England. It was also the age of the seafarers Walter Raleigh, Francis Drake and John Hawkins who gave great impulse to exploration and colonization.

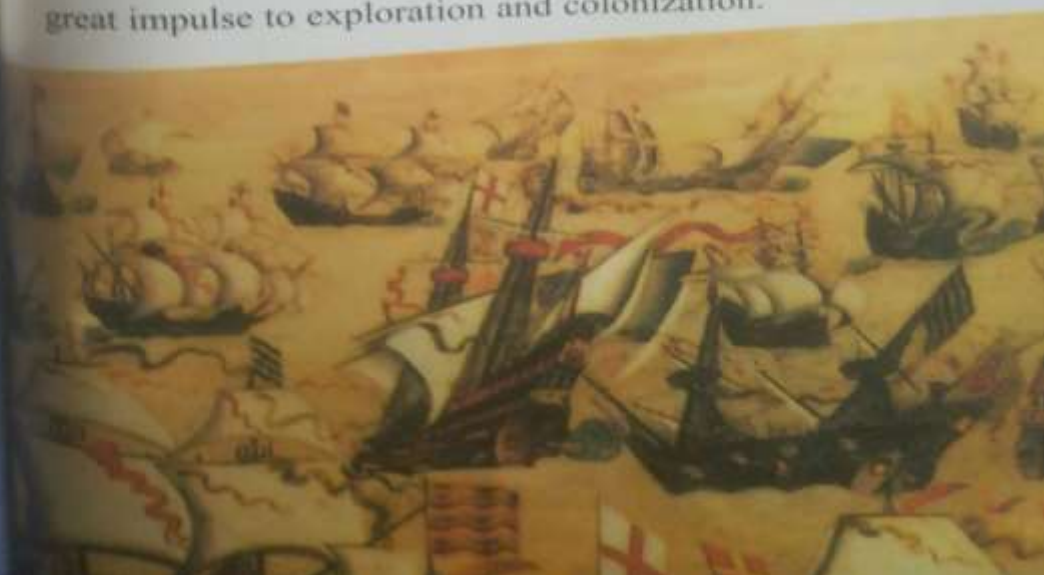
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## HISTORICAL NOTES

# Exercises



1. Answer the following questions.
  1. Why was it called the Wars of the Roses?
  2. What definitively united the Houses of Lancaster and York?
  3. Who was the first Tudor king?
  4. What was the most important event during the reign of Henry VIII?
  5. What caused the breach with Pope Clement VII?
  6. What is the Act of Supremacy?
  7. Who was Elizabeth's father?
  8. How many years did she reign?
  9. Did she marry?

2. Refine your information on King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I on the internet or other sources.

3. What do these numbers refer to?  
a) 1400 b) 140 c) 1540 d) 1557 e) 1596 f) 55.