

## Mary Queen of Scots

Mary Stuart was born in 1542. Her father was the King of Scotland and her mother was a French Princess. Mary's father died after a battle against the English and Mary became Queen of Scotland when she was just six days old. She was known as Mary Queen of Scots.



Scotland was a difficult country to rule at this time. There were two types of Christians - Catholics and Protestants, and they were fighting about who should be in charge. Many noble men were also arguing about who should have the power. The Queen was a baby, so a regent was needed. A regent is an adult who looks after the country for a child King or Queen until they are old enough to take over. Queen Mary's regent was a man called the Earl of Arran.



Henry VIII was King of England but he wanted to rule Scotland too. He spent years invading the country. He decided that his five year old son, Prince Edward, should marry Mary so that the two countries would be ruled by him. However, the King of France wanted Mary to marry his son as well. Henry invaded Scotland again to take the young child.

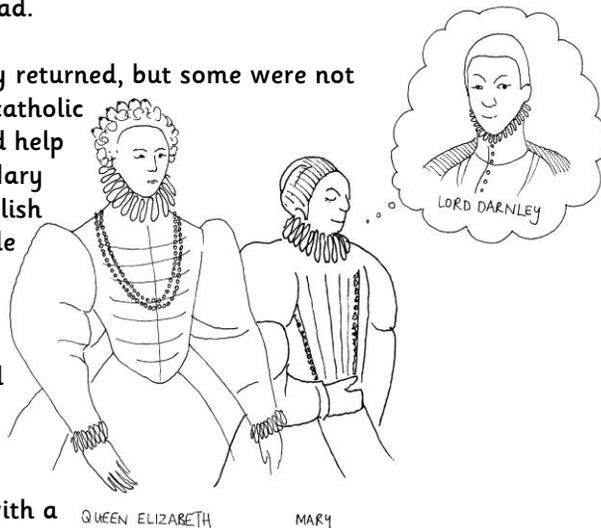
Mary's mother tried to protect the Queen by hiding her in different castles. After five years, she asked the King of France for help and he agreed. He arranged for Mary to travel to France where she would be safe from Henry VIII and would marry his son instead. Mary travelled with four of her friends to look after her whilst her mother stayed behind to help rule Scotland.

Mary lived with the French Royal family for the next thirteen years. When she was fifteen she married the French Prince at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. One year later the King of France died unexpectedly. This meant Mary and her new husband became the King and Queen of France.

The next year Mary's mother died in Scotland. Sadly, later that year Mary's husband also died. Mary was very lonely and sad and even though she was Queen of France, she was not allowed to rule there without her husband. She decided to return to Scotland to rule there instead.

Most Scottish people cheered on the streets when Queen Mary returned, but some were not pleased to see her. When she had left Scotland, it was a catholic country, now it was protestant. Mary realised that she needed help ruling in this new Scotland. Queen Elizabeth offered to help Mary find a husband, but Mary chose someone else. He was an English man called Lord Darnley. This made Elizabeth angry and made her think Queen Mary and Lord Darnley wanted to rule England too.

Mary's husband was not popular with the Scottish people and he turned out to be a greedy and lazy ruler. Whilst Mary was pregnant, he was very cruel to her and even helped to murder her secretary. Even though everyone was angry at him, Mary decided to forgive him. At this time Mary also made friends with a man called Lord Bothwell who she had known in France.



Mary gave birth to a baby boy and named him James. She told her half-brother that she wanted a divorce from Darnley and soon afterwards Darnley and his servant were mysteriously killed in an explosion at his home. Many people blamed Lord Bothwell for his murder because he was in love with Mary. People became angry with the Queen when he was not punished. Mary did not seem to care and carried on spending time with Lord Bothwell anyway. This made people think Mary knew about the plot.



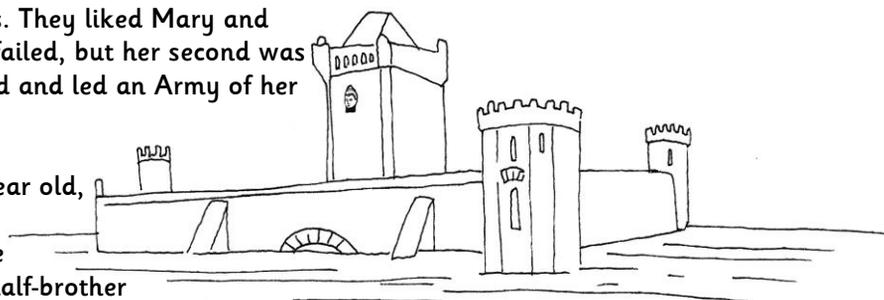
A few months later, Lord Bothwell kidnapped the Queen on her way home and married her in secret. The Lords of Scotland were very angry by this and now thought Mary was unfit to rule. They marched to Mary's castle to imprison Bothwell.

Their plan failed and Queen Mary and Lord Bothwell both managed to escape in the night. Queen Mary began to gather an Army to fight the Lords. The Lords caught up with the Mary and told her if she still wanted to be Queen then Lord Bothwell would have to flee Scotland. He ran away to Denmark and she returned to Edinburgh thinking she was still a Queen

When Mary reached Edinburgh she realised that she had been tricked. She was no longer the Queen, but a prisoner. The Lords of Scotland locked her up on a remote island in the damp and cold Loch Leven Castle. Here Mary became very sick and signed papers that meant her one year old son, Prince James was the new King of Scotland. He became King James VI.

Whilst in prison Mary made two friends. They liked Mary and helped her to escape. Her first attempt failed, but her second was successful. She ran away from the island and led an Army of her followers to take back her throne.

Because King James VI was only one year old, Mary's half-brother was running the country until he was old enough to take over. Mary led her Army to where her half-brother was staying and the two sides fought. Just before the fight started, one of Mary's Generals fainted. This meant the Army was unorganised and Queen Mary lost the battle. Mary ran away to England, planning to ask Queen Elizabeth for help.



Queen Elizabeth was still worried that Queen Mary also wanted to rule England. She also thought that Mary was guilty of helping to kill her relative, Lord Darnley. Elizabeth would not help Mary and put her in prison with a lady in waiting called Mary Seton, who had travelled to France with Mary all those years ago.

Mary was Elizabeth's prisoner for nineteen years. Some English Catholics tried to help her escape and become Queen of England but she was always caught. Then she was banned from writing letters. She hoped her son, King James VI would come to help her, but he had been told by her half-brother that his mother was evil and untrustworthy.

In 1586 Mary found out that her son had signed an agreement with Queen Elizabeth that meant that when Elizabeth died he would be King of England as well. This made Mary very upset and angry and she realised her son would not help her. Queen Mary tried to escape and become Queen of England once again. This time one of Elizabeth's guards found the letter and told Queen Elizabeth about the plan.



In 1587 Mary Queen of Scots was arrested for treason and put on trial. She was found guilty of treason (plotting to kill Queen Elizabeth) and she was executed. Her son King James VI of Scotland also became King James I of England in 1603.

Megan Dunsby

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1. In what year was Mary Queen of Scots born?
2. Which part of the front page of the text tells you what the passage is about? (AF4)
3. Loch Leven Castle is described as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (AF2)
4. Can you think of another adjective to describe how you imagine Loch Leven Castle to be? (AF3/AF5)
5. How do you feel about Mary Queen of Scots after reading this passage? Why? (AF3)
6. Match the following words with their meanings. (AF2)

regent	another word for fight
battle	a person who rules a kingdom for a young King or Queen.
kidnapped	to run away
flee	an army officer in charge of a group of soldiers
General	to take someone without their permission
7. Do you think the explosion at Lord Darnley's home was an accident? Why or why not? (AF3)
8. What does the word 'treason' mean? (AF2)
9. How do you think Queen Mary felt about her son when she was in prison in England? (AF3)

## Mary Queen of Scots

1. Which part of the front page of the text tells you what the passage is about? (AF4) **The title.**

2. Loch Leven Castle is described as **cold** and **damp**. (AF2)

3. Can you think of another adjective to describe how you imagine Loch Leven Castle to be? (AF3/AF5) **Dark, wet, windy, lonely, etc.**

4. How do you feel about Mary Queen of Scots after reading this passage? Why? (AF3)  
**Various answers if justified.**

5. Match the following words with their meanings. (AF2)

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6. Do you think the explosion at Lord Darnley's home was an accident? Why or why not? (AF3) **Various answers if justified.**

7. What does 'treason' mean? (AF2) **To kill or over throw the King or Queen.**

8. How do you think Queen Mary felt about son when she was in prison in England? (AF3)  
**Various answers if justified.**