

assert himself as head of the church at the same time. The idea was not sold immediately but in 1533 Cranmer married Henry and Anne Boleyn in an open ceremony and if the nation was not pleased with the legality of the affair, those who disagreed did not say much about it with impunity. Catherine of Aragon was pensioned and set aside and her only living child, Mary never got over this affrontage and a few years later would even the score with Cranmer.

Perhaps it is fitting to finish the private life of Henry by noting the complete marriage record: He divorced Anne in 1537 (Catherine died that year) and married Jane Seymour, the mother of King Edward. In 1540 he married Anne of Cleves and later Catherine Howard. In 1543 he married Catherine Parr who outlived him. Queen Elizabeth was his daughter by Anne Boleyn. The marriage problem was the straw that broke the camel's back in his relationship with Rome...it was just about the only controversy that he really had with the Vatican but it prompted others.

#### The Legal Steps

While the term "legal" might be questioned, what I have in mind is the matter of the acts of court (Parliament) etc., that precipitated and finalized the break with the Vatican.

The real beginning, of course, was the failure of Clement VII to grant the annulment. But in 1531, in clearing the way for the action suggested by Cranmer, Henry charged all of the English clergy with violation of the edict of 1353, the bill of Praemunire which forbade any appeal to external powers in the apportionment or appointment of English ecclesiastical offices. It was intended, in its day, to curb the power of the papacy in the appointment of English clerics, something of an investiture dispute in English clothes. It had never been enforced and technically speaking, the effort of Wolsey to get a favorable judgment from Clement had been in apparent violation of this act. Consequently there was no doubt that the entire clergy was guilty. Henry laid a huge charge before them for forgiveness; they could recognize him as head of the English church or take the consequences of their treasonous acts. With some dissenters, the English clergy came to this agreement grudgingly in 1532 and recognized Henry as head of the English church. It marked an end to the recognition of the primacy of the pope in England.