

threats of Spain, a number of minor plots were hatched against the Elizabethan throne...or at least were purported to have been hatched. The most famous of these was the Babington Plot in which Mary, Queen of Scots was implicated. Mary had fled to England in 1567 after a presbyterian uprising in Scotland that marked the end of the Catholic rule in that land. A blood relative to Elizabeth and a suspected plotter for the throne, she was placed in the Tower and kept under lock and key. (The family connexions are complicated, however. Mary, Queen of Scots, was the daughter of Mary of Lorraine and James V of Scotland. Mary of Lorraine was the daughter of a marriage of one of Henry VII's children into the Guise family of France, and therefore her daughter would have been a second cousin to Elizabeth, or something such as that). In a long sequence of letters, Mary agreed to reward those who would free her and while she did not speak of harm to Elizabeth, that was implicit. The recipient of the letters--or some of them--was Sir Anthony Babington, and when the letters were discovered through practice of intrigue, Babington, et al were arrested, charged as traitors, found guilty, and executed. Mary was brought to trial in 1586, found guilty of knowing of the treason and not reporting same (among other charges) and was condemned and executed. The Babington plot was only one of a number of similar suggested deceptions following the excommunication of Elizabeth in 1568.

It is safe to say the Elizabeth moved on supposed traitors and Romanists with considerable vigor. How many of the plots and attempted overthrows were real and how many were invented by political activists is hard to say. But by the end of the century the new queen (not new by then, of course) had fairly well strengthened her hand and the protestant movement in England was strong. But, as it had never been an essential reformation, rather one imposed by politics and consequence, the threat of a loss of the reformation truths was always present.

SummarySummary

During Elizabeth's reign, the Anglican church became the established church of England...continuing in tenuous manners the apostolic succession, and eventually claiming to be the True, Holy and Apostolic church. While the doctrinal standards of the Anglican order had a Calvinistic thrust in many parts, sufficient ceremonies remained to satisfy the liturgically minded. This, in time, would pave the