

**Volume 7**

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**Mary Queen of Scots II**

**Lead: Into the burgeoning turmoil that was Scotland in the 1560s Mary Stuart, recently widowed Queen of France, returned to claim her rights as Queen of the Scots.**

**Intro: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: As a young child Mary was sent to France to be educated and groomed in the French royal household. In 1558 she married Francis, the Dauphin of France, the heir to the French throne. When his father, King Henry II died in a hunting accident, Mary became the**

**Queen of France. When Francis died suddenly 18 months later, Mary was left with a choice, to remain in Paris, a foreigner and a has-been, or return to Edinburgh. The thought of exchanging the sparkling social and intellectual life of Paris for the dreary isolation of Scotland must have been daunting, but Mary had a daring streak in her and Scotland loomed on a horizon filled with opportunity.**

**Back in Scotland, however, the political landscape, which just a few years previous had strongly favored continued pro-French and pro-Catholic policy, had shifted. During the late 1550s, a significant percentage of Scottish lairds had rebelled against this policy. The so-**

**called Lords of the Congregation, part army, part covenant of the faithful, whipped on by the preaching of John Knox, aided by English soldiers and English money, and by the death of the pro-French regent Mary of Guise, Mary Stuart's mother, the Protestant faction triumphed. It remained to be seen if the return of the Queen could alter the balance of power.**

**Mary started well enough. She charmed her counselors and for the most part, took their advice. The major question facing them was the succession to the English throne. Elizabeth I, Mary's cousin, did not seem inclined to marry and produce a direct heir, therefore, by normal**

**rights the designation should have gone to Mary. On this question the Catholic Mary and her Protestant subjects were united. It was not religion that proved the Queen's undoing, it was her romantic ambition and her lack of prudential judgment. Next time: The foolish Queen.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

## Resources

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