

Cambridge University Press

0521660556 - Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI

Stephen Alford

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

KINGSHIP AND POLITICS IN THE REIGN OF EDWARD VI

This book offers a reappraisal of the kingship and politics of the reign of Edward VI, the third Tudor king of England who reigned from the age of nine in 1547 until his death in 1553. The reign has often been interpreted as a period of political instability, mainly because of Edward's age, but this account challenges the view that the king's minority was a time of unstable political faction. It shows how Edward was shaped and educated from the start for adult kingship, and how Edwardian politics evolved to accommodate a maturing and able young king.

The book also explores the political values of the men around the king, and tries to reconstruct the relationships of family and association that bound together the governing elite in the king's Council, his court, and in the universities. It also, importantly, assesses the impact of Edward's reign on Elizabethan politics, both conceptually (the notion of what it was to be a monarch) and practically (the importance in Elizabeth's reign of men who had already shaped Edwardian politics).

STEPHEN ALFORD is Assistant Lecturer in History, University of Cambridge, and Fellow of King's College. His previous publications include *The Early Elizabethan Polity: William Cecil and the British Succession Crisis, 1558–1569* (Cambridge, 1998).

Cambridge University Press

0521660556 - Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI

Stephen Alford

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

KINGSHIP AND POLITICS IN THE REIGN OF EDWARD VI

STEPHEN ALFORD



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

0521660556 - Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI

Stephen Alford

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
447 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Stephen Alford 2002

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2002

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Baskerville Monotype 11/12.5 pt. System L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Alford, Stephen, 1970–
Kingship and politics in the reign of Edward VI / Stephen Alford.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 66055 6

1. Edward VI, King of England, 1537–1553.
2. Great Britain – Politics and government – 1547–1553.
3. Monarchy – Great Britain – History – 16th century.
4. Great Britain – History – Edward VI, 1547–1553.
5. Great Britain – Kings and rulers – Biography.
- I. Title.

DA345 .A45 2002

942.05'3–dc21 2001 043603

ISBN 0 521 66055 6 hardback

Cambridge University Press

0521660556 - Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI

Stephen Alford

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

In memory of my grandparents, Phoebe and Harry Corbett

Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>Abbreviations and conventions</i>	xiii
Introduction	i
1 Constructing the reign of Edward VI	5
2 King and kingship	32
3 The dynamics of power 1547–1549	65
4 Reforming the kingdom	100
5 An evolving polity 1549–1553	136
6 Beyond 1553: the Edwardian legacy	175
<i>Bibliography</i>	208
<i>Index</i>	225

Cambridge University Press

0521660556 - Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI

Stephen Alford

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Wo be unto thee (O thou realm and land) whose king is but a child,
and whose princes are early at their banquets. But well is thee
(O thou realm and land) whose king is come of noblesse, and whose
princes eat in due season, for strength and not for lust.

Ecclesiastes 10:16–17.

Illustrations

1 The frontispiece to Thomas Cranmer's Catechism (1548), from Cambridge University Library, shelf-mark Young 251. Reproduced by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.	page 42
2 The title-page of <i>An Homelye to be read in the tyme of pestylence, and a moste presente remedye for thesame</i> (1553) by John Hooper, from Durham University Library, shelf-mark EWBO. B53H. Reproduced by permission of Durham University Library.	54
3 The families of Seymour, Stanhope, and Page.	88
4 The contents page of the first edition of <i>A tragoedie or Dialoge of the unjuste usurped primacie of the Bishop of Rome</i> (1549), from Cambridge University Library, shelf-mark F.3.52. Reproduced by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.	106
5 The representation of the imperial arms in <i>A Coppye of a Letter contayning certayne newes, and the Articles or requestes of the Devonshyre & Cornyshe rebelles</i> (1549), from Corpus Christi College, Oxford, shelf-mark Δ.22.2(5). Reproduced by permission of the President and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.	120
6 John Day's and William Seres' imperial colophon of 1549, from Cambridge University Library, shelf-mark Sel.3.214. Reproduced by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.	121
7 The families of Cecil, Cheke, and Cooke.	144
8 The families of Herbert, Parr, Talbot, and Throckmorton.	152
9 The families of Denny, Gates, Mildmay, and Walsingham.	154

Cambridge University Press
0521660556 - Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI
Stephen Alford
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

x	<i>List of illustrations</i>	
10	Richard Grafton's idealized representation of Edward taking counsel, on the title-page of <i>The union of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre & Yorke</i> (1548), from King's College, Cambridge, shelf-mark A.5.38. Reproduced by permission of the Provost and Scholars of King's College, Cambridge.	165

Cambridge University Press

0521660556 - Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI

Stephen Alford

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Acknowledgements*

Research can be a solitary affair – but it rarely is, and I am deeply grateful to friends and colleagues who have supported and encouraged me in piecing together and writing *Kingship and politics*. John Guy has responded so patiently to energetic bursts of correspondence. He read a complete draft of the book at the busiest time of the academic year, and his comments, criticisms, and corrections were invaluable. John Cramsie, my trusty counsellor and great friend, lived with the curse of the unannounced e-mail attachment at a time when he had far more important things to do than to read drafts of chapters that barely made sense to their author. Tom Freeman is as encyclopaedic as he is generous, and I owe to him my account of the subtle but important changes in John Foxe's presentation of John Dudley between 1559 and 1570, and much more besides. Lisa Richardson very kindly allowed me to appropriate her fascinating exploration of the relationship between John Hayward's *The Life, and Raigne of King Edward the Sixt* and Richard Grenewey's *The annales of Cornelius Tacitus*. Elizabeth Evenden, whose work on the printer John Day is of critical significance to any historian working on the politics of the reigns of Edward and Elizabeth, helped me to pin down the relationship between Day and Richard Grafton. Natalie Mears pointed me in the direction of *The copie of a pistel or letter sent to Gilbard Potter*, and Alan Bryson, the author of an extremely important thesis on ‘“The speciall men in every shere”: the Edwardian regime, 1547–53’ (University of St Andrews, 2001), kindly sent me references to, and transcripts of, some documents that informed his own research. I suspect that Dale Hoak may disagree with some of the claims of *Kingship and politics*, but from the (as yet) unpublished papers he kindly sent me I am fairly certain that we are intrigued by many of the same features of Edwardian and Elizabethan political history. I am extremely grateful to William Davies of Cambridge University Press for his patience and encouragement in gently steering me in the direction of completion. Max has tolerated my

Cambridge University Press

0521660556 - Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI

Stephen Alford

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

historical ramblings with patience and humour, listened without choice to strange thoughts on the reign of Edward, and allowed a cast of historical characters to invade our marriage (Stephen Gardiner was her least favourite). Albert, Flash, and Zorro naturally did what cats do best: they tried to convince me of the folly of taking life so seriously and encouraged me to find more productive and exciting uses for piles of paper. They nearly succeeded.

This book began life as a Postdoctoral Fellowship project funded by the British Academy, hosted by the Cambridge Faculty of History, and complemented by a research fellowship at Fitzwilliam College. I am deeply grateful to the Academy, to its Assistant Secretary Ken Emond, and to the Master and Fellows of Fitzwilliam – Rosemary Horrox in particular, whose support has, and always will be, appreciated. King's elected me to an Ehrman Fellowship in 1999, and as a college community it has provided me with everything a historian could wish for: friendship, conversation, and the time and freedom to write a book on Tudor kingship yards away from one of the finest architectural legacies of the dynasty.

Peter Jones and Rosalind Moad of King's College deserve very special thanks for helping me to navigate the College Library and Archive. The staff of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Rooms of Cambridge University Library have been, as ever, extremely supportive. A number of librarians across the country – Nicholas Bennett (Cathedral Librarian at Lincoln), Gill Cannell (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge), Christina Mackwell (Lambeth Palace Library), Sarah Newton (Corpus Christi College, Oxford), and Elizabeth Rainey (Durham University Library) – checked references, traced editions, and answered frantic e-mails, and I am very grateful to them. Crown copyright documents in the Public Record Office are quoted by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, manuscripts in the British Library by permission of the Trustees, and those in Cambridge University Library by permission of the Syndics. Documents in the College Archives of King's College, Cambridge are quoted by permission of the Provost and Scholars, and papers in the Parker Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge by permission of the Master and Fellows. I am grateful to the Marquess of Salisbury for allowing me to quote from the Cecil Papers at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire. Quotations from the Portland Papers and the Seymour Papers are included by permission of the Marquess of Bath, Longleat House, Warminster, Wiltshire, Great Britain. The quotations from 'An ordre for redresse of the state of the Realme' (c. 1559) are reproduced by permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Abbreviations and conventions

<i>APC</i>	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England</i> , ed. J.R. Dasent: 3 vols. for Edward VI's reign (1547–50, 1550–52, 1552–54), published between 1890 and 1892 (HMSO; London)
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward VI</i> , in 6 vols. (1547–48, 1548–49, 1549–51, 1550–53, 1553, and <i>Index</i>), published between 1924 and 1929 (HMSO; London)
fo(s).	folio(s)
Knighton	C.S. Knighton, ed., <i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reign of Edward VI 1547–1553</i> (HMSO; London, 1992) [cited by entry number]
MS	manuscript
sig(s).	signature(s)
SP	Public Record Office, Kew, London, State Papers
<i>STC</i>	<i>A short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English books printed abroad 1475–1640</i> , ed. W.A. Jackson, F.S. Ferguson, and Katharine F. Pantzer, 3 vols. (Bibliographical Society; London, 1976–91)

All quotations are in original spelling, but I have transcribed the thorn as ‘th’, silently extended contractions, and modernized the Tudor habit of using ‘u’ for ‘v’, ‘v’ for ‘u’, and ‘i’ for ‘j’.

Scriptural quotations are from *The Byble, that is to say all the holy Scripture*, edited by Edmund Beke from ‘Thomas Matthew’s Bible’ (the translations of William Tyndale and John Rogers), published by John Day and William Seres in London in 1549 (*STC* 2077).

In giving dates, the Old Style has been retained, but the year is assumed to have begun on 1 January.