



# The Mary Rose King Henry VIII's Great Warship

## THE BEGINNING

In 1509 King Henry VIII ordered new purpose-built warships for his navy. One of the first of these warships was the Mary Rose. She was built in the Royal Dockyard in Portsmouth, very close to where her remains lie today!



## WHY WAS SHE CALLED THE MARY ROSE?

Some people believe that Henry's favourite ship, the Mary Rose, was named after his sister MARY (pictured) and also for the Tudor ROSE, the symbol of Henry's family. Other people believe that because people in Tudor times were very religious the Mary Rose was more likely named after the Virgin Mary.

## HOW IMPORTANT WAS THE MARY ROSE?

The Mary Rose was a very important ship in the English Navy. She was strong and fast. The Mary Rose sailed for 34 years and played important roles in all three of Henry VIII's wars with France!

## WHEN DID SHE SINK?

On July 19<sup>th</sup> 1545, the Mary Rose sailed from Portsmouth with the rest of the English fleet to engage with the French navy which was trying to invade England! During the battle the Mary Rose sank in the Solent. Legend tells us that King Henry VIII actually watched his favourite ship sink from his castle at Southsea.

## WHY DID THE MARY ROSE SINK?

There are many different theories about why the Mary Rose sank in 1545:

- The Mary Rose was overloaded with soldiers and heavy guns
- The crew of the ship were unruly and the officers were incompetent
- The ship took on too much water through the open gun ports
- French gunfire sank the ship
- A freak wind caught the sails as she turned causing her to capsize

There is little chance that we will ever know for certain how the Mary Rose sank.

What do you think happened?

## HOW WAS THE MARY ROSE DISCOVERED?

Immediately after the battle, attempts were made to salvage the Mary Rose but she could not be saved.

For nearly 300 years she lay at the bottom of the Solent, just off the coast of Portsmouth. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, divers discovered the wreck of the ship and were able to recover some artefacts, like guns.

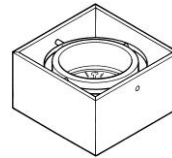
In the 1960s divers found the remains of a ship buried underneath the silt off the coast of Southsea Castle. They had re-discovered the Mary Rose! Very carefully and over a long period of time, the archaeologists and divers excavated the ship underwater and found 25,000 artefacts! Finally in 1982 people all over the world watched on television as the Mary Rose was lifted out of the water and brought back to Portsmouth Dockyard!



## WHAT ELSE WAS FOUND?

Much of the ship's equipment as well as the crew's personal possessions have been found over the past 40 years.

Bronze guns, hand weapons, navigation and carpentry tools as well as food supplies were found.



Compass



Bell

Wooden tankards, combs, gold coins, musical instruments, clothing and shoes belonged to the officers and men.



Tankard



Shoes

## WHAT IS LEFT?

As the Mary Rose lay underwater for so many years only about half of the ship remains. This means we can look inside the ship. The other half gradually washed away by the tides, collapsed or was eaten away by shipworm and other sea creatures!

## WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Today work is being done to conserve the remains of the ship and the artefacts found on her. Right now the ship is being sprayed with a mixture of wax and water, called polyethylene glycol, in preparation to dry the ship out to preserve her for the future.

From September 2009 the Mary Rose Ship Hall will be closed as work begins on building an exciting new museum due to open in 2012. In the current Mary Rose Museum, you will be able to see amazing artefacts rescued from the bottom of the sea, meet one of our costumed guides who will answer your questions and do hands-on activities. You will learn lots more about the ship and her crew!

We hope that you will enjoy your visit to THE MARY ROSE MUSEUM!

Visit us on the web: [www.maryrose.org](http://www.maryrose.org)