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Honorable Mention, Dunham Bible Museum

King Henry VIII reigned over England from 1509 to 1543, during which time he made and advocated many changes in England. The most significant shift that he made however, was the split from the Catholic Church and the forming of the Church of England in which he placed himself as the head of not just the state, but the church as well. This split gave way to a landmark it became the first published Bible in the English language authorized by a royal in England after restrictions on its reading by the same King Henry.. Queen Mary, his daughter and successor after his son King Edward VII died, also made attempts to bring back Catholicism, so this Bible lost much of its importance during this time.

King Henry VIII became king in June 24, 1509 and split from the Catholic Church

<sup>1</sup> King Henry wanted to have his marriage with Catherine of Argon annulled, however the Pope refused to do this. As a result, King Henry took the decision to begin the formation of his own church. In this new institution, King Henry placed himself as the head of his own church, and as such he could allow his own divorce.

By 1539, the King as new head of his own Church, believed he could and should publish

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<sup>1</sup> tudorhistory.org; Michael D. and Henry Palmer, *Henry VIII*

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<sup>2</sup> This lead to the

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Soon enough, the Bibles began to be distributed to all churches in England. This became a very different experience because the Bibles read and recited within the Catholic Church were

the first Bible produced in English as authorized b

outside the church building. In fact, some of these Great Bibles were even chained to the pulpit to prevent them from being robbed.

Although, King Henry placed great liberties on the reading of this Bible within the church building during the first years of its publication, the controversy over the common people reading the

<sup>5</sup> What King Henry believed to be a great idea to establish his supreme authority, soon began to spin out his hands and ba English Bible had made it possible for ordinary subjects to appeal to a new authority in the

<sup>6</sup> Due to this, the King was forced to make several

<sup>7</sup> The liberty enjoyed by many commons on the reading of scripture was eliminated.

ordered by a monarch. Having this landmark Bible in a museum is great because we are able to appreciate the beginnings of what we know as the present Bible, and the pioneers of the Bibles we use now. If I had encountered the Great Bible in its historical setting, it would have had a deeper appreciation for it. Walking into the city where it originated, and into the churches in which it was exhibited would have allowed the viewer to go back to the past and into that time and age.

its origin and background. This artifact contains great importance, as it played such a significant role right in the middle of the Reformation of England. It marked the ending of authority of the Catholic Church in England, and the beginning of the new Church under King Henry VIII.

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