# Britain and the effects of the Reformation

### Why did religious conflicts develop across Britain?

In England, a Reformation was carried out on the instructions and in the interests of Henry VIII. Henry was no Protestant and his seizure of the Church and its property was motivated by a desire for power and wealth, as well as the need for a divorce in order to marry Anne Boleyn and, hopefully, to produce a male heir. In 1534 the Act of Supremacy declared the King to be Head of the Church and this was followed by the seizure of Church property, including the monasteries, and laws to enforce royal control and regulate the succession to the throne. By rejecting the authority of the Pope he placed himself in the Protestant camp and was forced to grant positions of influence in the Church to men with Protestant ideas. Equally significant, the chosen method of establishing and enforcing his new powers was the use of statute law, made, and only reversible, in parliament.

Hence, when a genuinely Protestant Reformation was carried out during the short reign (1547–53) of his son, Edward, which his Catholic daughter Mary could not entirely reverse during her even shorter reign (1553–58), both settlements required the co-operation of the political elite in parliament once more. As a result, when Elizabeth sought to create reconciliation and a moderate compromise in the Church of England, not only did she have to establish it by parliamentary statute, she was also faced by parliamentary efforts to modify and change the arrangements that she put in place. The effect of Henry's actions was to enhance both the status and power of parliaments, at a time when religious ideas and conflicts made its members more concerned and more willing to exercise their influence.

## Conflict of ideas

Mary's persecution of Protestants and her links with Spain (she married the heir to the Spanish crown) created a backlash against Catholicism across all social classes. Perhaps equally important, her persecution drove some Protestants into exile in Europe, where they came into contact with other Protestant groups. The development of Protestant ideas posed a number of problems for government. Luther argued that the rules for Church government, as well as salvation, could be found in the Bible, and that the Christian monarch, or godly ruler, had the power and responsibility of interpreting and enforcing them. However, the Bible – part history, part mythology, part poetry – was often unclear and contradictory, and men and women who believed that their salvation depended on it were inclined to interpret it for themselves. The result was that Protestant ideas soon began to develop in different ways, and the varied and piecemeal nature of reform in different areas reinforced these differences.

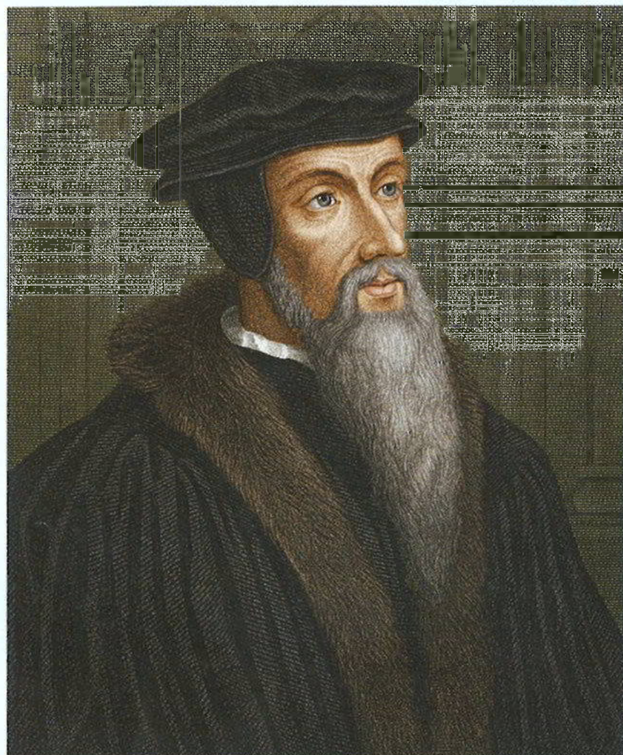
By the time of Mary's death, there was considerable variation of opinion on what constituted a 'true' Church. The model favoured by many was that established by the French reformer, John Calvin. Calvin had extended Luther's ideas about salvation to establish the doctrine that some people were predestined to be saved, because they were able to accept the gift of salvation and the disciplined Christianity that went with it. The sign of such **predestination** was the ability to live a godly life and accept the rules of a godly Church. The idea that God would exclude some souls from a gift that He granted freely was in some ways illogical and would be rejected by later religious leaders, but such assurance of salvation did encourage great dedication and commitment among Calvin's followers. The result was that many exiles

**Predestination** – The belief held by Calvin and his followers that God chooses beforehand those to whom he will grant salvation.

**Presbyterianism** – A system of church organisation in which the individual congregations were governed by a minister with the help of lay Elders (senior members) under the supervision of an elected assembly known as a Synod.

returned after Mary's death, determined to reform the Church along Calvinist lines. This meant getting rid of all traces of Catholic ceremonies and rituals and allowing ministers to concentrate on preaching the Word of God and ensuring that their parishioners lived godly lives (whether or not they wanted to!). In Scotland the reformer John Knox was able to establish a Calvinist system known as **Presbyterianism**, but in England the reformers came up against a Queen who was more interested in political control and religious peace than in their cherished schemes of reform.

## John Calvin (1509–64)

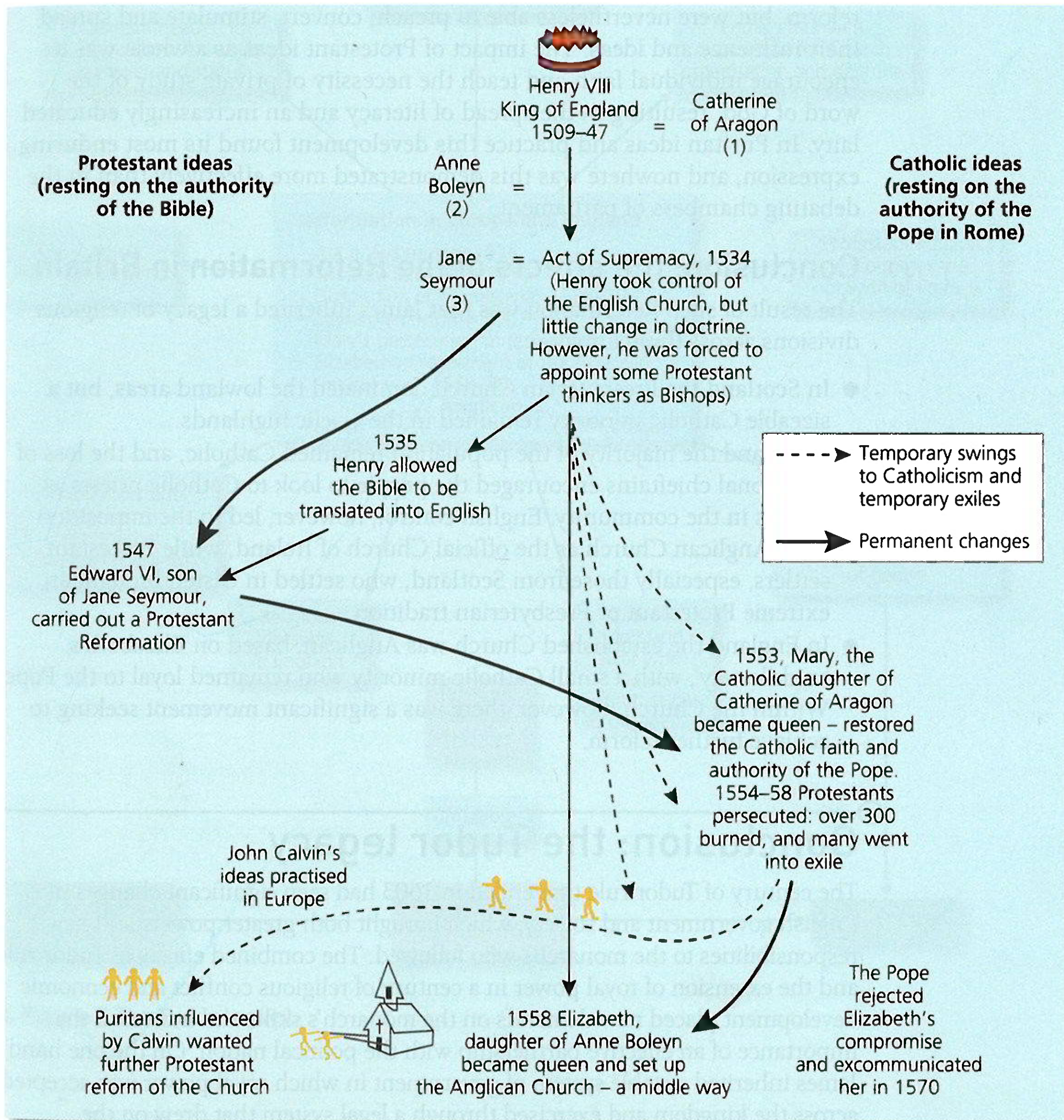


John Calvin was the most influential Protestant reformer after Luther. He established his own church in the city of Geneva. His doctrine became dominant among Protestants in France, Switzerland, Scotland and the Netherlands and to an extent within the early Church of England. Its core was the idea of predestination, which claimed that God divided humanity into 'saints', who were predestined to follow the path of true religion and escape sin, and sinners, the 'unregenerate' who were condemned to hell. The sign of sainthood lay in a daily struggle to avoid sin and to carry out God's will in daily life, a struggle that required the discipline and support of a Calvinist Church. These gave great authority to the minister and certain senior members of the congregation (known as elders or presbyters) to control the behaviour and lives of their followers, and came to be known as Presbyterian. Only those who were able to accept the restrictions entailed by this discipline could be sure of salvation.

The harshness of this doctrine led it to be first softened (by an implied expansion of the number of possible saints and reduction of the number of irredeemable sinners) and later challenged by other reformers. It also came to be abused by some known as Antinomians, who argued that since they were predestined to heaven by God, they need not fear to sin in their daily life. For most Calvinists, however, the belief that, as long as they genuinely sought a godly life, they could be sure of ultimate victory over sin, was a powerful inspiration. They could serve God in whatever capacity they had – as a merchant or labourer as well as a minister – and any success was evidence of God's approval, as well as enhancing the reputation of God's people. The task was not easy and it was important that the Church to which they had access should support them with good preaching and instruction and not hinder them by unnecessary and possibly corrupting ceremonies and sacraments. Hence Calvinist enthusiasts required the correct forms and organisation within their Church, to reflect doctrine in practice as well as in words.

## The Elizabethan settlement

As the daughter of Anne Boleyn, whose marriage to Henry had never been recognised by the Catholic Church, Queen Elizabeth was bound to establish a broadly Protestant form of worship when she came to the throne in 1558. But as a skilful politician she recognised the need for healing and reconciliation in the religion of England. The result was the Elizabethan settlement and the establishment of an Anglican Church which sought to provide a compromise – a 'middle way' between the Catholic and Protestant extremes. Undeniably Protestant in doctrine, it retained many of the familiar ceremonies and services inherited from the Catholic Church, as well as bishops, whom Elizabeth appointed and controlled and who therefore maintained her authority. It was able to satisfy the needs of most of her subjects but, like most compromises, it left dissatisfied minorities at both ends of the spectrum (see Figure 4, below).




▲ **Figure 4 The Tudor pendulum. Why would the developments shown in the diagram encourage religious confusion and division in England?**

A minority of English Catholics gave primary loyalty to the Pope; their treason in attempting to replace Elizabeth with the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots in the Northern Rebellion of 1568–69 led to a Papal Bull (declaration) issued in 1570, which excommunicated Elizabeth and enjoined a duty on Catholics to remove her from the throne. This, and their links with Spain, did much to create anti-Catholic feeling in England. A minority of Protestants was dissatisfied with a half-reformed Church and sought to persuade or pressurise the Queen into further change. Their desire for further purification of the Church led them to be nicknamed 'Puritans'. In the 1570s attempts were made to introduce reforms through Parliament, prompting the angry Queen to forbid such discussions and raise political conflict over MPs' rights to free speech. Having lost this battle, Puritan preachers attempted to change the Church from within. Elizabeth, who was determined to maintain the system of bishops as the best method of ensuring her own, royal control, suppressed their meetings and muted their protests, but she could not silence them entirely. By 1603 they had been denied the fulfilment of their plans for reform, but were nevertheless able to preach, convert, stimulate and spread their influence and ideas. The impact of Protestant ideas as a whole was to encourage individual faith and teach the necessity of private study of the word of God, resulting in the spread of literacy and an increasingly educated laity. In Puritan ideas and practice this development found its most enduring expression, and nowhere was this demonstrated more effectively than in the debating chambers of parliament.

### Conclusion: the effects of the Reformation in Britain

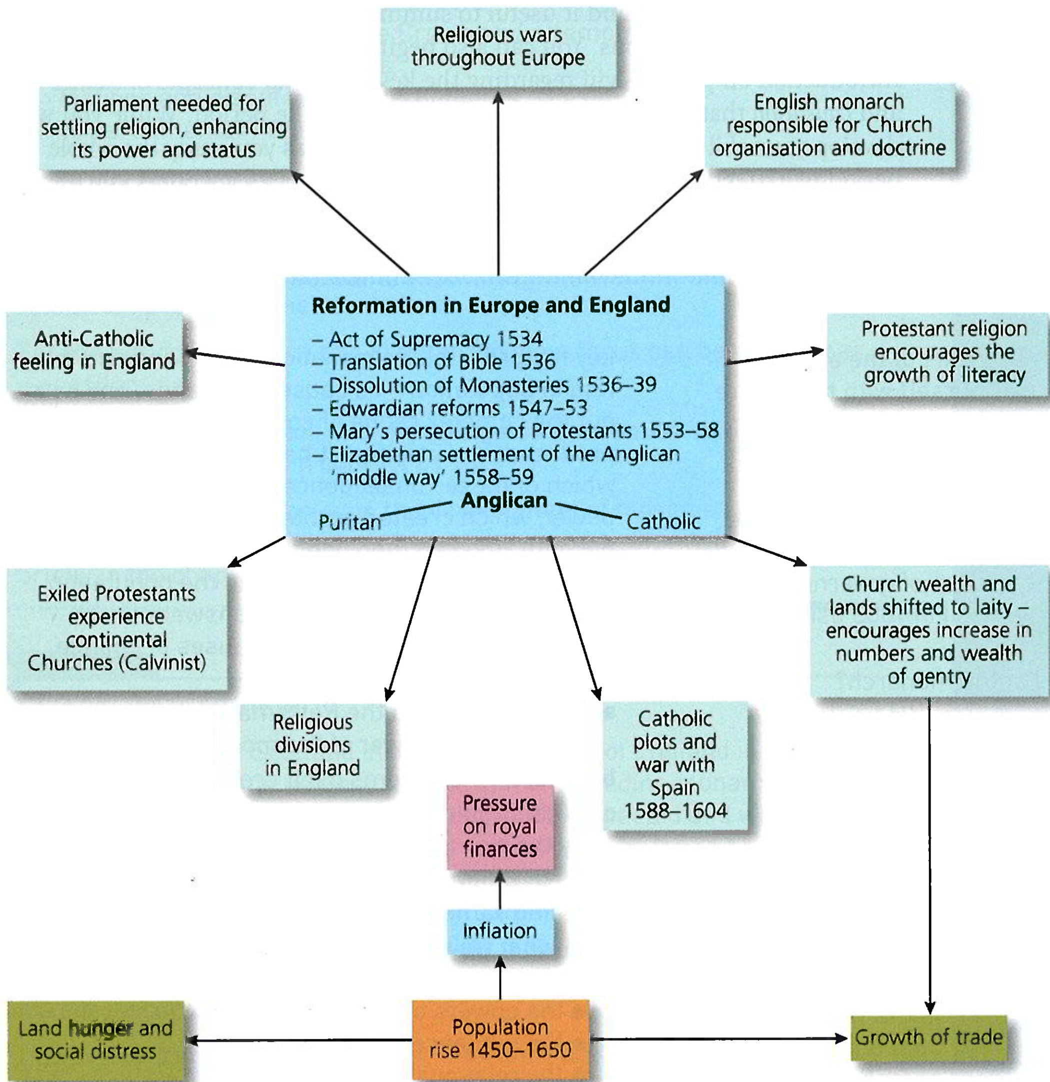
The result of such Reformation was that James inherited a legacy of religious divisions across three kingdoms:

- In Scotland the Presbyterian Church dominated the lowland areas, but a sizeable Catholic minority remained in the Gaelic highlands.
- In Ireland the majority of the population remained Catholic, and the loss of traditional chieftains encouraged the people to look to Catholic priests as leaders in the community. English control, however, led to the imposition of an Anglican Church as the official Church of Ireland, while Protestant settlers, especially those from Scotland, who settled in Ulster, brought an extreme Protestant or Presbyterian tradition.
- In England the established Church was Anglican, based on Elizabeth's 'middle way', with a small Catholic minority who remained loyal to the Pope. Within the Church, however, there was a significant movement seeking to achieve further reform.

## Conclusion: the Tudor legacy

The century of Tudor rule that ended in 1603 had seen significant changes in English government and society, which brought both greater powers and new responsibilities to the monarchs who followed. The combined effects of Tudor rule and the extension of royal power in a century of religious conflict and economic development placed new demands on the monarch's skills and increased the importance of an effective partnership with the political nation. On the one hand James inherited a stable system of government in which royal power was accepted across the kingdom and exercised through a legal system that drew on the Common Law and tradition, while also enshrining areas of direct power through the exercise of the royal prerogative. Alongside this he inherited a relatively prosperous and well-ordered society, with increasingly educated and able administrators and systems of social control in the Poor Laws and a state Church.

At the same time, however, as head of the Church of England he inherited responsibility for hugely contentious issues that could affect key individuals at every level of society. In addition he faced significant financial problems, made worse by an ongoing war against Catholic Spain and a rebellion in Catholic Ireland, which affected the power of the Crown to carry out decisions and policies at home and abroad. Perhaps most significantly, the essential forum for dealing with these matters was no longer simply the royal Court and Privy Council, but included an increasingly necessary, but increasingly independent and articulate, section of the wider political elite under the form and name of a Parliament. If James was to manage his legacy effectively, as Elizabeth had already discovered, his handling of this institution would be crucial.




▲ **Figure 5** The Tudor legacy.

# Foreign policy and war, 1618–23

**How did events in Europe create problems for James and his Parliaments?**

Since 1604, when he had ended Elizabeth's war with Spain, James had kept England at peace. This was partly a matter of necessity, since he could not afford to finance military action, but it was also a matter of preference. James hoped that by standing aside from the religious struggles enveloping Europe he could maintain contact with both Catholic and Protestant powers, and act as peacemaker. Hence he married his daughter Elizabeth to a German Protestant prince, the Elector Palatine, and sought a Spanish Catholic wife for his son Charles.

His friendship with the Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, was regarded with suspicion by many of his subjects, whose fear of Catholic influence was exceeded only by their bitter memories of Spanish plots and Spanish threats against Elizabeth. Nevertheless, James hoped to cultivate contacts with the Habsburg rulers of Spain by marrying his son Charles to the King of Spain's daughter, the Infanta Isabella. Problems arose, however, with the outbreak of the Thirty Years War in Europe, which created serious difficulties for James and for England.

## The Thirty Years War

The Thirty Years War began in 1618 when a German prince, the Elector Palatine, was invited to take the throne of Protestant Bohemia, in place of Archduke Ferdinand of Styria, the Habsburg candidate who had been presented in 1617. The Elector was a Protestant, and the son-in-law of James I, who advised him not to accept. When the Elector ignored this advice, he was attacked and driven out of Bohemia by Ferdinand, who had become Holy Roman Emperor in 1619. Ferdinand then sought to punish him by seizing his hereditary lands in the Palatinate. This aroused the other German princes, especially the Protestants in northern Germany, who feared the same treatment. The war therefore escalated – the Protestants of the Dutch Republic and Scandinavia entered in support of the Princes, while the Spanish Habsburgs supported their Austrian cousins. Although nominally Catholic, France took the opportunity to challenge Habsburg power by helping the Protestants.

**Holy Roman Emperor** – The head of the Holy Roman Empire, which was established in Germany in the early Middle Ages, bringing 329 small German states together under a single leader. By the late fifteenth century the Austrian family of Habsburg had established a right to be 'elected' to the position, giving them effective control of modern Germany, Austria and much of central Europe.

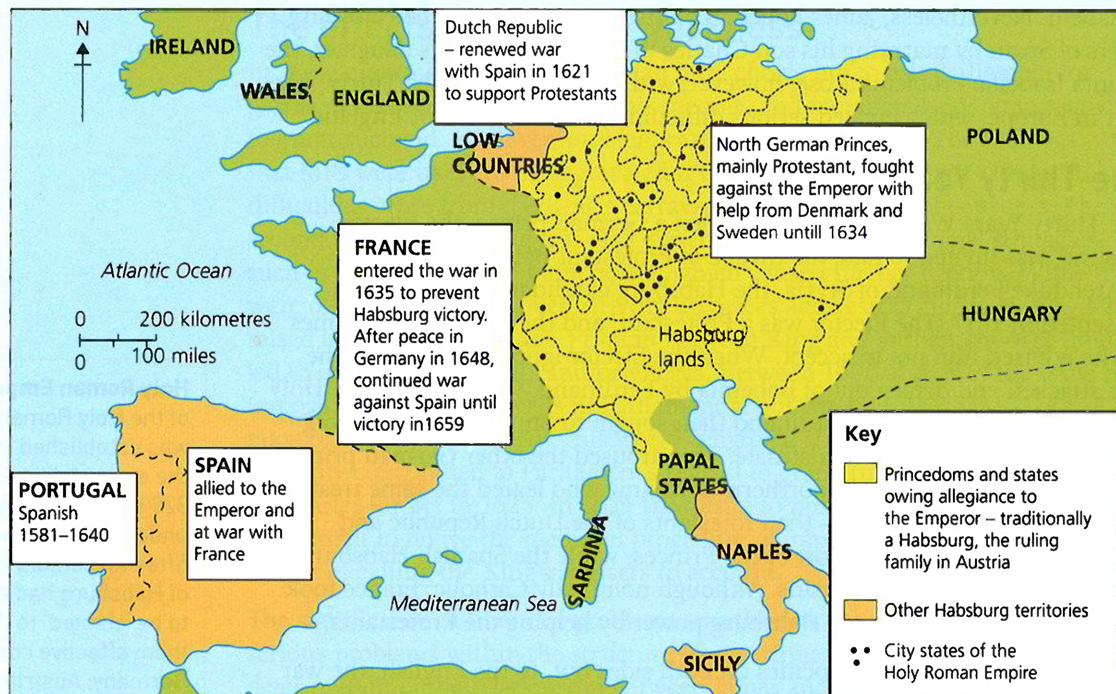
Germany was ravaged by atrocities on both sides but, to the English, the war was portrayed as a struggle against Catholic tyranny. It finally ended in 1648, although the war between France and Spain continued until 1659, when French victory laid the foundations for the dominance of Europe by Louis XIV and introduced a new threat to English power.

## War, religion and parliaments

As the largest Protestant power in Europe, England could hardly stand aside in the face of Catholic aggression, but could not finance a prolonged war. As a Protestant King and the father-in-law of the victim, James needed to act, but lacked the means to do so effectively. Initially, he sought to use his contacts with Spain, but tried to increase his impact, and his value as an ally, by making preparations for war as an alternative strategy. In 1621 he summoned a Parliament and asked for money to finance intervention in Europe. Aware of the dangers of inflaming an already volatile fear of Catholicism, he stressed the need to prepare for war to secure peace, and redoubled his diplomatic efforts. At first it appeared that his strategy might be successful. Faced with a depression in trade caused by war in Europe, MPs had no wish to incur unnecessary expense. Nevertheless, they voted two subsidies, and then turned their attention to waste, extravagance and corruption at Court.

## Europe during the Thirty Years War

Figure 2 shows the complicated arrangement of states in central Europe that led to the eruption of war in 1618. The Thirty Years War was the final stage of the two great rivalries that dominated Europe throughout the sixteenth century – between Catholic and Protestant, and between French and Habsburg monarchies. The Habsburg family controlled Spain and the Spanish Netherlands and lands along the eastern borders of France, as well as parts of Italy and Austria. Their possessions therefore encircled France and had for some time posed a threat to its independence and security. They had also established a tradition of electing Habsburgs to be Holy Roman Emperor, with nominal lordship over the many petty princes who ruled Germany, and, as a separate title, to be King of Bohemia (now the Czech Republic). The Habsburgs were devoutly Catholic, and supported the aggressive Catholicism of the Counter-Reformation.




▲ **Figure 2** Europe during the Thirty Years War, 1618–48.

These complaints were not directed at the King – in fact many of the attacks were orchestrated by courtiers and Court factions anxious to weaken rivals, especially the Duke of Buckingham. By allowing the Commons to impeach the Lord Chancellor, Sir Francis Bacon, for taking bribes, the Duke survived, and the session ended quietly. In November 1621, when members reassembled, they were directed once again to consider the need for war finance; many MPs did have strong Protestant views and in December they petitioned the King to enter the war against the Habsburgs. At this point, several MPs raised the issue of what kind of war should be fought. The relief of James's daughter and the reconquest of the Palatinate would require a land war and the equipping of an army. Many members were aware of the expense involved, and were equally aware that Spanish strength came from her possessions in South America and the flow of silver from her colonies. To them, it made more sense to consider a naval war, with its echoes of Elizabethan glory and possible financial windfalls from Spanish treasure, and they said so in a Commons debate.

## Protestation and dissolution

From James's point of view, this debate over the nature of the war to be fought overstepped the bounds of parliamentary privilege, and strayed into the formulation of policy, which was the prerogative of the King. Angrily, he reminded members of the limits of their privilege of free speech – to freely discuss issues raised by the monarch, not to raise issues of their own – and that it came by the will of the sovereign. Provoked in their turn, the Commons set out a Protestation (see Source C), asserting that the rights of Parliament and the liberties of the subject 'are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England' – which James tore out of the Commons Journal.

**Source C** From the Commons Protestation of 18 December, 1621.

That the liberties, franchises, privileges and jurisdictions of Parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England; and that the arduous and urgent affairs concerning the King, State and defence of the realm and of the Church of England, are proper subjects and matter of counsel and debate in Parliament; and that in the handling and proceeding of those businesses every member of the House of Parliament hath, and of right ought to have, freedom of speech to propound, treat, reason and bring to conclusion the same...

What does Source C suggest about the relationship between James and Parliament in 1621? If you compare Source C with Source B on page 24, is there any indication that the relationship had changed?

In essence, the quarrel was the same as that of 1604 (see page 22), turning on the issue of whether Parliament's privileges existed by right or by gift of the monarch. In this case, however, MPs were claiming the right to debate royal policy on foreign affairs and religion. Whatever the rights of free speech, these areas of policy came within the King's recognised prerogatives, and the Commons were encroaching on royal powers. James had every right to object, although whether his reaction was politically wise is more debatable. To have allowed the debate would have set a dangerous precedent, but once the issue moved on to parliamentary privileges, there was little chance of agreement. It was clear to James that there would be no grant of taxes, and there had been some attacks on both his policy and his favourite, the Duke of Buckingham. Accordingly, he dissolved the Parliament and continued his diplomatic pursuit of Spanish friendship and a Spanish marriage for his son.

## The legacy of the 1621 Parliament

The legacy of the Parliament of 1621 was complex. While his foreign policy had made little progress, the King had defended his prerogative with some success. Nevertheless, there were some worrying signs and precedents. The Commons had been able to bring some government office-holders to account, using the mechanism of impeachment. These proceedings had arisen from rivalries among government factions, but there was no guarantee that the Court or the Lords would always be able to orchestrate their use. The quarrel over privilege and prerogative had sharpened existing fears. Above all, the airing of concerns about foreign policy had alerted Protestant opinion to the Catholic threat and raised concerns about the King's attitude towards Spain. Members had expressed concern about a Catholic marriage, and the concessions that would be required by Spain. The Parliament of 1621 had not precipitated a crisis, but the monarch might well find that it had increased the capacity of later assemblies to do so.

## Charles and Buckingham

The likelihood of crisis was also increased by the fact that control of affairs was slipping from James to Buckingham and Prince Charles. As the King grew older, and his health deteriorated, he was more content to leave the running of government to his favourite, although he retained control of political strategy. In 1623, however, his strategy was wrecked by the actions of Charles and Buckingham in undertaking a secret visit to Spain to try to secure the proposed marriage. Their motives are not entirely clear – for Charles it was probably a romantic gesture prompted by naivety and youth, for Buckingham the chance to win the favour of the next King. Whatever their reasons, their secret departure and unannounced arrival in Spain wrecked James's plans. His grand diplomatic strategy was reduced to a need to ensure the safety of his son. For Charles and Buckingham, it was a humiliation; the Spanish stalled on marriage negotiations, and then rejected the match. By 1624 they had returned to England, determined on revenge.

Under pressure from Charles and Buckingham, James summoned Parliament to ask for money to finance a war with Spain. His reservations were set aside by an anti-Catholic Parliament in alliance with his favourite and his heir. The King, who was weakened by age and ill-health, was powerless to resist. In order to secure their war, Charles and Buckingham agreed to the naval strategy favoured by MPs but, nevertheless, paid an army to serve in the Palatinate under the command of German mercenary, Count Mansfeld. This deception and the disastrous failure of the expedition infuriated Parliament when it reassembled in 1625, but it was Charles who reaped the bitter harvest, since James had died in March.

### KEY DATES: FOREIGN POLICY AND WAR

**1618** Outbreak of the Thirty Years War.

**1620** Defeat and exile of the Elector Palatine.

**1621** James calls Parliament and debates on foreign policy lead to the Commons Protestation and an early dissolution.

**1623** Charles and Buckingham visit Spain, causing the collapse of James' diplomatic strategy.

# Interpretations: James I – the Wisest Fool in Christendom?

It was the contemporary King of France, Henry IV who is reputed to have made this unflattering comment on James I and his skills as a monarch, probably in reference to the publication of his work, *The True Law of Free Monarchies*, in 1598, and the apparent contrast between his philosophical wisdom and his practical management of the role of monarch. This was reinforced by the style of his court and the sometimes personally motivated attacks that are summarised in Trevelyan's claims on page 26. However, the remark has also been interpreted as suggesting that, despite his high-flown claims and rhetoric regarding the Divine Right of Kings, James demonstrated a great deal of common sense and realism in dealing with tensions both in Britain and Europe. For whatever reason, many historians' judgements of James have been deeply unflattering, but others have argued that he managed a difficult legacy well and that it was not until the accession of his son Charles that tensions within the system of government degenerated into open conflict.

When, with the wisdom of hindsight, contemporaries looked back at the causes of the 'Great Rebellion', they very rarely went back before the accession of Charles I in 1625. They were probably right.

## James I

James I was, in many ways, a highly successful king. This was despite some grave defects of character and judgement. He was the very reverse of Queen Elizabeth. He had a highly articulate, fully developed, and wholly consistent view of the nature of monarchy and of kingly power – and he wholly failed to live up to it. He was a major intellectual, writing theoretical works on government and engaging effectively in debate with leading Catholic polemicists on theological and political issues, as well as turning his mind and his pen to the ancient but still growing threat of witchcraft, and to the recent and menacing introduction of tobacco. He believed that kings derived their authority directly from God and were answerable to God alone for the discharge of that trust. But James also believed that he was in practice constrained by solemn oaths made at his coronation to rule according to the 'laws and customs of the realm'. However absolute kings might be in the abstract, in the actual situation in which he found himself, he accepted that he could only make law and raise taxation in Parliament, and that every one of his actions as king was subject to judicial review. His prerogative, derived though it was from God, was enforceable only under the law. James was, in this respect, as good as his word. He had several disagreements with his Parliaments, or at any rate with groups of members of Parliament, but these differences were mostly unnecessary and of temporary effect. Thus he lectured the Commons in 1621 that their privileges derived from his gift, and this led to a row about their origins. But he was only claiming a right to comment on their use of his gift; he was not claiming, and at no point in relation to any such rights and liberties did he claim, that he had the right to revoke such gifts. It was this tactlessness, this ability to make the right





argument at the wrong moment, that earned him Henry IV of France's sobriquet, 'the wisest fool in Christendom'.

His greatest failings, however, were not intellectual but moral and personal. He was an undignified figure, unkempt, uncouth, unsystematic, and fussy. He presided over a court where peculation and the enjoyment of perquisites rapidly obstructed efficient and honest government. Royal poverty made some remuneration of officials from tainted sources unavoidable. But under James (though not under his son) this got out of hand.

The public image of the court was made worse by a series of scandals involving sexual offences and murder. At one point in 1619 a former lord chamberlain, a former lord treasurer, a former secretary of state, and a former captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners all languished in the Tower on charges of a sexual or financial nature. In 1618, the king's latent homosexuality gave way to a passionate affair with a young courtier of minor gentry background, who rose within a few years to become duke of Buckingham, the first non-royal duke to be created for over a century. Buckingham was to take over the reins of government from the ailing James and to hold them for the young and prim Charles I, until his assassination in 1628. Such a poor public image cost the king dear. His lack of fiscal self-restraint both heightened his financial problem and reduced the willingness of the community at large to grant him adequate supply.

James I was a visionary king, and in terms of his own hopes and ambitions he was a failure. His vision was one of unity. He hoped to extend the union of the Crowns of England and Scotland into a fuller union of the kingdoms of Britain. He wanted full union of laws, of parliaments, of churches; he had to settle for a limited economic union, a limited recognition of joint citizenship, and a common flag. The sought-after 'union of hearts and minds' completely eluded him. James's vision was expressed in flexible, gradualist proposals. It was

wrecked by the small-mindedness and negative reflexes of the parliamentary county gentry. He also sought to use the power and authority of his three crowns – England, Scotland, and Ireland – to promote the peace and unity of Christian princes, an aim which produced solid achievements in James's arbitration in the Baltic and in Germany in his early years, but which was discredited in his later years by his inability to prevent the outbreak of the Thirty Years War and the renewed conflict in the Low Countries. Finally, he sought to use his position as head of the 'Catholic and Reformed' Church of England, and as the promoter of co-operation between the Presbyterian Scots and episcopal English Churches, to advance the reunion of Christian Churches. His attempts to arrange an ecumenical council and the response of moderates in all churches, Catholic, orthodox, Lutheran, and Calvinist, to his calls for an end to religious strife were again wrecked by the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. But they had struck a resonant chord in many quarters.

James's reign did see, however, the growth of political stability in England, a lessening of religious passions, domestic peace, and the continuing respect of the international community. His 'plantation policy' in Ulster, involving the dispossession of native Irish Catholic landowners and their replacement by thousands of families from England (many of them in and around Londonderry settled by a consortium of Londoners) and (even more) from south-west Scotland, can also be counted a rather heartless short-term success, though its consequences are – all too grimly – still with us. He left large debts, a court with an unsavoury reputation, and a commitment to fight a limited war with Spain without adequate financial means.

He had squabbled with his Parliament and had failed to secure some important measures which he had propounded to them: of these, the Act of Union with Scotland and an elaborate scheme, known as the Great Contract, for rationalizing his revenues were the only ones that mattered. But he had suffered no major defeat at their hands in the





sense that Parliament failed to secure any reduction in royal power and had not enhanced its own participation in government by one jot. Parliament met when the king chose and was dismissed when its usefulness was at an end. Procedural developments were few and had no bearing on parliamentary power. Parliament had sat for less than one month in six during the reign and direct taxation counted for less than one-tenth of the total royal budget. Most members recognized that its very survival as an institution was in serious doubt. No one believed that the disappearance of Parliament gave them the right, let alone the opportunity, to resist the king. James was a Protestant king who ruled under law. He generated distaste in some, but distrust and hatred in few if any, of his subjects. Charles I's succession in 1625 was the most peaceful and secure since 1509, and arguably since 1307.

## Charles I

Just as there is a startling contrast between Elizabeth I and James I so there is between James I and Charles I. Where James was an informal, scruffy, approachable man, Charles was glacial, prudish, withdrawn, and shifty. He was a runt, a weakling brought up in the shadow of an accomplished elder brother who died of smallpox when Charles was 12. Charles was short, a stammerer, a man of deep indecision who tried to simplify the world around him by persuading himself that where the king led by example and where order and uniformity were set forth, obedience and peace would follow. He was one of those politicians so confident of the purity of his own motives and actions, so full of rectitude, that he saw no need to explain his actions or justify his conduct to his people. He was an inaccessible king except to his confidants. He was a silent king where James was voluble, a king assertive by deed not word. He was in many ways the icon that James had described in *Basilikon Doron*.

Government was very differently run. Charles was a chaste king who presided over a chaste court; venality and peculation were stanched; in