



# *English Culture and History of Language*

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## INTRODUCTION: SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLAND

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### WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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William Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564, in the Warwickshire market town of Stratford-on-Avon. His father, John Shakespeare (c. 1530–1601), was a Stratford glove maker and grain dealer, who married Mary Arden (c. 1540–1608) in about 1557. The couple had eight children, of whom five survived into adulthood: William, the eldest; his three brothers, Gilbert (1566–1612), Richard (1574–1613), and Edmund (1580–1607), and his sister, Joan (1569–1646). In the 1560s, the Shakespeare family prospered. John was a town alderman and owned several houses in Stratford. In the 1570s, John's fortunes declined. He mortgaged and lost much of his property, including his wife's inheritance, and was dropped from the town council in 1586. He thereafter appears in the record mainly in relation to lawsuits for debt.

William Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway (c. 1556–1623) in 1582, only a few months before the birth of their daughter Susanna (1583–1649), a not uncommon occurrence in Elizabethan England. In 1585, Anne gave birth to twins, a son named Hamnet, who died at age 11 in 1596, and a daughter Judith, who lived until 1662. Sometime in the late 1580s, Shakespeare left Stratford and his family and moved to London, where he began a successful career as an actor and playwright, coming eventually to be a shareholder in an acting company, the Chamberlain's Men, later known as the King's Men. In 1596, William helped his father obtain a coat of arms, allowing John to die a gentleman in 1601 when William inherited his remaining properties in Stratford.

William produced the bulk of his plays and poems between 1590 and 1613 when he retired again to Stratford. In his will, made on March 25, 1616, about a month before his death, Shakespeare leaves his long abandoned wife "my second best bed with the furniture" (Lambert, p. 87). No mention is made in the will of any manuscripts or other literary property. At his death, Shakespeare had only one grandchild, Elizabeth Hall (1608–1670), the daughter of Susanna and her husband John Hall, a Puritan physician. Shakespeare's other daughter, Judith, married Thomas Quiney in 1616 and gave birth to two sons, Richard in 1618 and Thomas in 1620. However, both of these grandsons died childless in 1639, as did Elizabeth Hall in 1670, leaving William Shakespeare with no further direct descendants.

Beyond this, little is known of the life and career of William Shakespeare, the man who is considered by many to be the greatest writer in the English language. Because we know so little about large parts of Shakespeare's life, many questions and much speculation have

arisen about his education, his appearance, his religion, his sexuality, and, most importantly, his authorship of the works ascribed to him. Arguing that Shakespeare's education was brief and his early life provincial, opponents of Shakespeare's authorship believe that he could not have obtained the learning and experience to write brilliant plays that spoke clearly of the playwright's familiarity with the royal court, the military camp, the legal world, and other specific realms of experience. As a result, many other Elizabethan writers have been proposed as the true author of the works of Shakespeare, including, most notably, Sir Francis Bacon, Christopher Marlowe, and Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford. Other writers argue that the works of Shakespeare were the result of a collaboration of writers that may have included the man from Stratford, as well as Oxford, Marlowe, and other London dramatists.

Fueling these arguments is a severe lack of documentary evidence for Shakespeare's life and career. No manuscripts exist for any of Shakespeare's plays, and only six signatures can positively be attributed to him. Eighteen of Shakespeare's plays appeared in print for the first time only in 1623 with the publication of the First Folio, the first published collection of Shakespeare's dramatic works. However, most modern Shakespeare scholars reject these arguments for alternative authorship as unconvincing and maintain that the outlines of Shakespeare's life are well known and that he was well established in the London theater community as a talented playwright by the late 1590s. Certainly, the genius of Shakespeare was already recognized within a few years of his death. In the preface to the First Folio, which was edited by Shakespeare's acting colleagues, John Heminges and Henry Condell, the playwright Ben Jonson declared that Shakespeare was "not of an age, but for all time."

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### QUEEN ELIZABETH I

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Princess Elizabeth was born on September 7, 1533, the daughter of Henry VIII and his second wife, Anne Boleyn. Proclaimed heir to the throne at her birth, Elizabeth was removed from the succession and declared illegitimate upon the execution of her mother for treason and adultery in May 1536. As an adult, Elizabeth is said never to have spoken of her mother. The succession was settled in 1537 with the birth of Elizabeth's half-brother, who became king as Edward VI upon Henry's death in January 1547. Under the terms of the late king's will, Elizabeth was restored to the succession, standing next in line after Edward and her elder half-sister Mary.

When Edward died childless in 1553, Elizabeth supported her sister against an unsuccessful coup attempt endorsed by the late king, who, as a Protestant, feared that his devoutly Catholic sister Mary would return England to Rome. He was right, and Elizabeth's reluctance to accept Catholicism and her position as a Protestant alternative to Mary cost Elizabeth the queen's favor. Imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1554 on suspicion of involvement in Wyatt's Rebellion, an uprising that sought to dethrone Mary, Elizabeth admitted nothing and was eventually released for lack of evidence.

Upon Elizabeth's accession to the throne in November 1558, the two most pressing problems facing her were the question of her marriage and the succession. Because Elizabeth's heir was her Catholic cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, and because the age expected a woman ruler to take a husband to help her govern, Elizabeth's ministers and Parliaments urged her to marry and produce a Protestant heir. Although for a time she seemed likely to marry Robert Dudley, her favorite and the love of her life, and though many other suitors were proposed, Elizabeth confounded expectations by remaining unmarried and refusing to formally name a successor.

Elizabeth also steadfastly maintained the moderate Anglican Church that Parliament had mandated largely according to her wishes in 1559. This policy frustrated Puritans, English Protestants who thought the Church was still too close to Catholicism in ritual and practice, but also spared England the religious wars that decimated sixteenth-century France. Catholic conspiracies to place Mary on the English throne and the threat of invasion from a Spanish, Catholic Netherlands forced Elizabeth to intervene militarily in the Netherlands Revolt against Spain in 1585, a decision that drew England into war with Spain. In 1588, one year after Elizabeth reluctantly consented to the execution of Mary, who had been a prisoner in England for 19 years, Philip II of Spain launched the Spanish Armada against England. The defeat of the Armada destroyed the myth of Spanish invincibility, cemented Elizabeth's hold on the affection of her people, and heartened Protestants across Europe.

Although the years after the defeat of the Armada witnessed military failure and economic decline, they also saw the flowering of the greatest cultural renaissance in English history. Remarkable developments in music, architecture, art, and, especially, drama and poetry, as well as brilliant achievements in commerce and exploration, made England's Elizabethan Age a period of confidence and progress. Almost 70, Elizabeth died on March 24, 1603, still loved and respected by most of her people.

Little contemporary evidence survives as to the queen's physical appearance. She was described as slightly above average height for an upper-class woman of her time, with fair skin, dark eyes, a long slightly hooked nose, and reddish-gold hair that curled naturally. She had a slim figure and beautiful hands with long fingers of which she was quite proud. She apparently resembled her father more than her mother and her paternal grandfather, Henry VII, most of all. She also shared certain personality traits with her grandfather, both monarchs being accused of frugality to the point of meanness. Neither displayed the bluff openhandedness of Henry VIII when it came to distributing rewards for royal service, and both strove to remain solvent by limiting expenditure, particularly for war. Elizabeth and her grandfather also shared a strong sense of national responsibility, carefully weighing the benefits and risks of each action for the nation as a whole. In Elizabeth, this caution often exasperated her ministers, who saw it merely as procrastination and indecision and confirmation of their own notions about the unfitness of women to rule. However, over time, her ministers and most of her subjects came to appreciate her sound judgment and common sense, and, after her death, many English people came to look upon Elizabeth's reign as a lost golden age.

Elizabeth always considered the love of her people to be her strongest asset in governing, and she strove all her life to win and retain that love. Even such political and religious enemies as Philip II, who approved and financed plans for her overthrow and murder, gave her a grudging respect as an intelligent and worthy opponent. Historians today consider Elizabeth one of the greatest monarchs in English history and one of the greatest women rulers of all time. By refusing to be pressured into marrying, Elizabeth allowed England to survive as an independent power. By crafting and maintaining a broadly based religious settlement, by pursuing peace and financial prudence, and by inspiring achievement in others through competition for her favor, Elizabeth gave England a new national unity and a new national confidence.

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## KING JAMES I

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On Elizabeth's death, her throne passed quietly to her kinsman, King James VI of Scotland, the son of Mary, Queen of Scots. Born on June 19, 1566, James became king a

year later upon the forced abdication of his mother. Because Mary fled to England in 1568 and was held prisoner there for the rest of her life, James never knew her and was brought up as a Protestant, a fact that eventually cleared his way to the English throne. James' early years as king were characterized by political disorder and civil war. In 1583, the king, now 16, initiated his personal rule, striving throughout the 1590s to secure his control over the kingdom, the nobility, and the Scottish Church, a more Calvinistic institution enjoying greater independence from the Crown than its counterpart in England.

In 1589, James married Anne of Denmark. The queen bore him three children who lived to adulthood—Henry, who died in 1612; Charles, later king as Charles I; and Elizabeth, from whom later monarchs of England, including Queen Elizabeth II, descend. In two books published in the 1590s, *The True Law of Free Monarchies and Basilikon Doron*, James set forth his theory of divine right kingship, arguing that an anointed monarch was answerable only to God and thus could be removed from his throne only by God, not by the will or action of the people.

James tried to persuade Elizabeth to formally name him her heir, but this she steadfastly refused to do, remembering her sister's reign when she had been the popular alternative to an unpopular queen. Elizabeth, however, granted James a pension in 1586 and promised not to oppose his claims to the Crown so long as his policies in Scotland, particularly as to religion and foreign affairs, met her approval. These favors limited James' reaction to his mother's execution in 1587 to formal protests and ensured his neutrality when the Spanish Armada entered the English Channel in 1588. James had no intention of jeopardizing his chance to rule England for a mother he could not remember. Although James frequently annoyed Elizabeth by ignoring the stream of advice she sent northward in her letters, he never provoked her unduly. By 1601, many English courtiers, including the queen's chief minister, Sir Robert Cecil, were secretly corresponding with James, thereby tacitly acknowledging him as the next ruler of England. He therefore succeeded to the English throne without incident upon Elizabeth's death in March 1603.

Following his accession, James took Shakespeare's acting company, the Chamberlain's Men, under his direct patronage, making them the King's Men. The company performed frequently at court, especially for Queen Anne and her daughter, Princess Elizabeth. The accounts of the treasurer of the king's chamber record court performances of numerous of Shakespeare's plays, including *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Tempest*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and both parts of *Henry IV*. Because James was less parsimonious than his predecessor, court entertainments became more frequent and more lavish, with Ben Jonson producing many masques and pageants. James died on March 27, 1625, and was succeeded by his surviving son, Charles I.

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## ECONOMIC LIFE

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Agriculture formed the heart of the Elizabethan economy, employing far more English people than any other industry or occupation. Elizabethan England grew or produced most of the food and raw materials its people required, including hides for leather, wool for cloth, hemp for naval supplies, tallow for candles and soap, and horses for transport. Over the course of the reign, Elizabethan agricultural production transformed from being mainly for the subsistence of the farmer or local community to production for sale to wider markets. This change was the result of a rapidly growing population, which caused a steep rise in both the demand and price of food. Small peasant farmers gave way to gentleman and yeoman farmers, whose larger acreages allowed them to produce grain surpluses that could be sold in London and anywhere in the kingdom where demand outstripped supply.



The growth of the English cloth industry, which thrived on the increased production of English wool growers, enhanced this demand. As more rural workers engaged in the manufacture of cloth, they joined the growing populations of London and other towns, which relied on others to grow food. As a result of this demand, new farming methods were devised to improve yields, and marginal lands, out of production since the Black Death of the fourteenth century, went back into production. Many gentleman and yeoman farmers practiced enclosure, whereby land that had been pasture for the common use of a village was enclosed with a hedge or fence and given over by the landlord to the production of grain for the commercial market. Enclosure sometimes led to economic hardship for husbandmen and cottagers, who often lost the land they rented when their gentry landlords realized they could increase profits by working the land themselves with hired laborers. Nonetheless, except for the 1590s, when bad harvests necessitated grain imports, Elizabethan agriculture supplied the ordinary needs of the English people.

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## SOCIAL LIFE

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Elizabethan society was characterized by a high degree of stratification, with people divided into various clearly delineated classes and ranks. As a consequence of the medieval feudal system, whereby the king granted land to a lord in return for military service, Elizabethan social distinctions were based primarily on the holding of land. Although feudal institutions had largely broken down, Elizabethan society was still heavily rural, with almost 90 percent of the population living on isolated farmsteads or in villages or towns under 2,000 people. Political and economic power was concentrated in the 3 to 4 percent of the population that constituted the landholding elite—the royal family, the titled nobility, and the gentry. Under Elizabeth, who had no spouse, children, or living siblings, the royal family consisted largely of the queen herself, although she had many distant cousins among the nobility and gentry. Under James, the royal family expanded to include a spouse and three children. Possessing titles of nobility and the right to be summoned to the House of Lords, the peerage numbered about 60 during Elizabeth's reign, but rapidly expanded under James, who was far more willing than his predecessor to grant noble titles. The number of Elizabethans who possessed the land, lifestyle, and local influence to claim the status of gentleman numbered about 16,000 at James' accession and grew during his reign. Both the nobility and gentry were further subdivided by title and degree of wealth.

Over 80 percent of the population consisted of rural residents lacking the land and lifestyle to qualify as gentry. These rural commons were divided into yeomen, husbandmen, cottagers, and landless laborers. A yeoman farmed at least 50 acres of freehold, which was land not rented or leased from a nobleman or gentleman and capable of being inherited by the yeoman's heirs. A yeoman also had an annual income of at least 40 shillings, the income required for a man to vote in county elections for Parliament. Husbandmen rented between 5 and 50 acres of land from larger landholders. Cottagers worked a few acres of land attached to their cottages and supplemented their income by working for others. Landless laborers had no land at all and depended entirely on wage work. Husbandmen, cottagers, and landless laborers comprised the great majority of the English rural population.

The remaining 10 to 15 percent of the Elizabethan and Jacobean population comprised a growing body of town dwellers—professionals (e.g., lawyers or physicians), merchants, craftsmen, and civil and military officers of the Crown. With the wealthier yeoman, these groups were called the “middling sort.” They constituted the most upwardly mobile portion of society. As they grew more prosperous, these groups gradually acquired the land and adopted the lifestyle that would qualify them as gentlemen, a status often unofficially

conferred by local society, if not officially by the College of Arms. The clergy represented English society in miniature with the archbishops and bishops recognized as an ecclesiastical nobility. Some of the vicars and chaplains of the poorer villages shared the low social status of the cottagers and laborers in their parishes. Despite its rigid formal distinctions of class, Elizabethan and Jacobean society was becoming increasingly fluid as wealthy merchants and lawyers rose into the gentry and poorer gentlemen sank to yeoman status.

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### RELIGIOUS LIFE

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From her sister, Mary I, Elizabeth inherited an English Catholic Church that recognized the authority of the pope. Elizabeth's own theological views and liturgical preferences remain unclear even today, but she had been educated by anti-papal reformers, and she recognized the great unpopularity that Mary's burning of Protestant heretics had brought to the Crown and to Catholicism. As regards religion, the queen and her ministers wanted to satisfy as many people as possible by making as few changes as possible. While disliking papal authority, most English people in 1558 were not strong Protestants and probably would have been content with a church freed from papal control, but essentially Catholic in doctrine and practice. Thus, the two main issues for Elizabeth's government and Parliament were defining the relationship between Church and Crown and determining a form of worship. However, Catholic nobles and Mary's bishops opposed even the most moderate changes while returning Marian exiles, English Protestants who had fled to the continent during Mary's reign, demanded a radically Protestant church.

In light of this opposition, the government gave up on placating Catholics and proposed more Protestant religious legislation that gave England a church largely based on the doctrines of Calvinism. The Act of Supremacy abolished papal authority, but heeded complaints about a laywoman heading the Church and gave Parliament a larger role in directing religious affairs. The Act of Uniformity abolished the Catholic Mass and restored an altered version of the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer* to appease Catholics and conservatives. By giving the Church a form of worship that was too radical for Catholics and too conservative for Protestants, the queen and Parliament established a religious settlement that became known as the *via media*, the "middle way," an attempt to accommodate as many viewpoints as possible within the new Church.

Nonetheless, Elizabeth was determined that the English Church would serve the needs of the English state as she herself defined those needs. Thus, the Anglican Church was Calvinist in doctrine, episcopal in structure, and governed by the Crown through Parliament. Although bishops had disappeared from the Calvinistic churches of Europe, Elizabeth retained them because they served as useful instruments of royal control. Although she insisted on conformity to the manner of worship laid down by Parliament in the Act of Uniformity and the *Book of Common Prayer*, Elizabeth allowed a wide variety of beliefs and practices to exist within this mandated framework. Anglicans could largely believe as they wished, so long as they outwardly conformed and kept their unapproved opinions to themselves. The Anglican Church was thus based on the idea that matters of worship and church government not specifically outlined in the Bible and authorized by the state could be left to local practice and national custom as things indifferent to salvation and true belief.

Puritans, however, maintained that almost all religious practices were strictly prescribed in Scripture and could not be left to local or national tradition. At the Church's creation in 1559, Anglican doctrine and liturgy were vaguely defined because the government sought

to include as many people as possible, whether conservatives or advanced reformers, within the new church. But the parameters of Anglicanism became sharper during the course of the reign as Roman Catholics fell away and Puritans began to distinguish themselves from the national church through disputes over vestments, governance, and liturgy. By Elizabeth's death in 1603, her Anglican Church had won the allegiance and devotion of most of her subjects.

Puritans looked forward to the accession of James I, whom they considered a convinced Calvinist willing to undertake the reforms Elizabeth had refused. But the king disappointed his Puritan subjects, being unwilling to abolish bishops or make any other changes that he believed weakened his control over the Church. The king did, however, agree to the Puritan request for better lay access to the Word of God, ordering the creation of a new English translation of the Bible to be used by all Anglicans. This Authorized or "King James" version of the Bible is still in use today.

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## POLITICAL LIFE

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The highest expression of English national government in the reigns of Elizabeth and James was the King (Queen) in Parliament, the monarch acting with and through the consent of the national legislature. Parliamentary statute, passed by the two houses of Parliament, the Lords and Commons, and approved by the monarch, was the highest law of the realm, controlling and modifying even the common law. However, Parliament was not a permanent part of government, being summoned and dismissed by the Crown. Elizabeth called 10 Parliaments during her 44-year reign. James summoned four during a 22-year reign. Because Parliament was usually summoned to approve new taxation, its irregularity was not necessarily unpopular. Elizabeth summoned fewer parliaments in the early years of her reign, when she sought to avoid war, promote trade, and keep taxes low. After 1585, the continuance of war with Spain saw more frequent parliaments, longer sessions, and increased Crown demands for taxation. Under James, Parliament slowly developed into a focus for discontent with Crown policies, leading James to summon only two Parliaments during the first 18 years of his reign. The Parliament of 1614 was so quarrelsome and ineffective that it became known as the "Addled Parliament."

The Elizabethan House of Lords consisted of 70 to 80 members—two archbishops, 26 bishops, and the rest titled noblemen summoned by special writ. Under James, the House of Lords expanded as the king created many new peers. By 1603, the House of Commons numbered 462—90 representatives from the counties of England and Wales and 372 from 191 parliamentary towns, with London sending four representatives. In the counties, only male residents holding lands worth at least 40 shillings per year could vote, a qualification that essentially restricted the franchise to the gentry. In the towns, voting qualifications depended upon how the town's charter defined a voter. In many boroughs, the vote was narrowly restricted.

Parliament provided legislative remedies for public matters brought before it by the Privy Council, which handled day-to-day administration. Privy councilors were often elected to Parliament, where they were expected to further the Crown's interests. The Commons, which met in St. Stephen's Chapel at Westminster, had the right to initiate all tax bills. Debate in the Commons was directed by the speaker, a Crown nominee elected by the House at the start of each session. To become statute, bills passed through three readings. The first reading informed members of the bill's content, the second initiated debate, and the third, after revision, refined the wording of the measure. Upon receiving the royal

assent, a bill passed after a third reading became statute. The debates and decisions of the Lords and Commons were recorded by the clerk of each House, who kept journals of all parliamentary activities.

The main units of local government in Shakespeare's England were the 53 shires (or counties) into which England and Wales were divided. Because the Crown had no professional and salaried bureaucracy, it relied on the gentry, the social and political elite of the counties, to administer the shires in the royal interest. Through a series of largely unpaid local offices, the gentry implemented government policy in the shires by enforcing royal proclamations and parliamentary statutes. The most important local officials were the justices of the peace (JPs), who had both administrative and judicial functions. Each year, the Crown appointed a commission of the peace for each county that included between 30 and 60 men selected on the basis of their social, political, and economic position within the shire. Most of the work of the commission was undertaken by the quorum, a specially nominated inner circle of JPs that often included members with legal experience. Another important county official was the sheriff, who supervised local prisons, impaneled juries, and implemented criminal sentences imposed by the JPs.

Other shire officials included the coroner, who investigated suspicious deaths; the escheator, who enforced the Crown's feudal rights; the customer, who collected certain taxes; and the constable, who kept peace within the hundred, an administrative subdivision of the shire. A more recent local office was that of lord lieutenant, a military official responsible for supervising the county militia, storing and maintaining stocks of arms and ammunition, and organizing local defenses. Local noblemen were often named lord lieutenant for a group of counties, with deputy lieutenants under them responsible for one county each. Until the start of the Spanish war in 1585, lord lieutenants were appointed on an ad hoc basis, but wartime demanded more regular arrangements for local defense, and lord lieutenants were thereafter appointed for life. Working under the JPs were also such parish officers as the constables, who kept the peace within a parish; watchmen, who assisted the constables; and surveyors of the highways and overseers of the poor, who maintained roads and supervised poor relief within each parish.

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### LITERARY LIFE

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The last two decades of the reign of Elizabeth and the first two of James witnessed the writing and production of some of the finest plays in the English language. In 1500, English drama consisted of medieval morality plays and cycles of mystery plays, religious drama performed by amateur actors in town streets during fairs and holidays. Over the next century, a professional theater developed from these beginnings. The Reformation freed English drama from religious themes and provided playwrights with secular plots while English nationalism generated by the break with Rome caused writers to mine English history for stories and characters. English humanism put Elizabethan and Jacobean writers in touch with classical Greek and Roman styles and imbued them with a love of drama and literature. Wary of the political and religious purposes for which drama could be used, Elizabeth banned the performance of unlicensed plays in 1559 and suppressed religious play cycles in the 1570s.

In 1572, the Queen forbade anyone but noblemen to sponsor professional troupes of players, and, in 1574, she authorized her master of revels to license all plays and acting companies. These actions placed the English theater under royal control and accelerated the secularization of Elizabethan drama. Beginning with Leicester's Men, an acting troupe sponsored by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who used the stage to promote his political

program and his hopes for a royal marriage, numerous professional companies arose under the patronage of important courtiers. Along with the development of groups of professional players came the building of permanent theaters, the first being James Burbage's London playhouse, The Theatre, constructed in 1576.

Other theaters soon appeared in and around London, including Burbage's Blackfriars (1576), the Rose (1587), and the Swan (1595). Many company actors became shareholders in particular theaters. For example, William Shakespeare and the other principals of the Chamberlain's Men were part owners of the Globe Theater. The development of a professional theater meant that playwrights no longer had to attach themselves to noble patrons or limit themselves to the themes and forms their patrons favored, but could, within government guidelines, write plays on themes that interested themselves and their audiences. These developments opened the playwriting profession to many who otherwise might not have been able to develop their talents, such playwrights as John Lyly, Robert Greene, Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, and Shakespeare.

Stretching across the reigns of Elizabeth and James, the period from 1575 to 1610 was one of the most creative and prolific in the history of English poetry. This poetic flowering began in the previous quarter century when humanist scholars and Protestant reformers used English, long considered inferior to Latin and Greek as a literary language, to teach and preach. Prose works of scholarship like Roger Ascham's *The Schoolmaster* (1570) and religious works like John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and Thomas Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer* (1549, 1552), illustrated the strength and flexibility of Elizabethan English. Poetry, the pastime of courtiers in earlier decades, reached a wider audience in the 1560s with the publication of Richard Tottel's anthology *Songs and Sonnets* (1557), a work generally known as "Tottel's Miscellany." By popularizing the court poetry of Henry VIII's time and the work of unknown contemporary poets, Tottel inspired a host of similar poetry collections that built demand for English verse.

This growing interest in poetry was illustrated by the popularity of *A Mirror for Magistrates*, a collection of poetic laments supposedly spoken by participants in the Wars of the Roses. Compiled by various editors and containing the efforts of such contemporary poets as Thomas Sackville and Thomas Churchyard, the *Mirror* went through four editions between 1559 and 1587. The plainer, simpler poetry published by Tottel and the *Mirror* in the 1560s was superseded in the next two decades by the more ornate and innovative lyric poetry written by Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney. Spenser was the first English poet to use print to deliberately disseminate his work to a wider public. His *The Faerie Queen* (1590–1609) was a lyric epic of Protestant nationalism, casting Elizabeth as the Faerie Queen herself. Sidney's work was also infused with Protestant fervor and tied to the cult of Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen. Where Spenser inspired every English poet of the 1590s to try lyric poetry, Sidney, through his *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) cycle, initiated a great flood of sonnet sequences, including one published by William Shakespeare in 1609. In the 1590s and the 1600s, English poetry was being enriched by many talented poets innovating new forms and exploring new themes and topics.

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## Chapter 1: King Henry VIII: Marital Problems



The Middle Ages are taken to have ended when Richard III was defeated by Henry Tudor in 1485. Henry's accession as Henry VII marked the end of the Wars of the Roses, which had dominated English politics for much of the fifteenth century, and was to herald the beginning of an unprecedented period of peace that lasted until the outbreak of civil war in 1642. Henry VII devoted his reign to establishing the security of his throne, which he passed on to his son Henry VIII in 1509.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eO0pPrGi6o>

.. Almost everyone in England knew about King Henry VIII's marital troubles. In 1529, he had started divorce proceedings against his first wife, Queen Catherine. She had given

birth to one daughter, but no sons, and King Henry wanted a son to serve as heir to the throne.

The pope, as leader of the Roman Catholic Church, denied King Henry's request for a divorce. Letters flew back and forth between London and Rome, all to no avail. The pope would not change an earlier decision, which had allowed King Henry to marry Queen Catherine in the first place. Queen Catherine was first married to King Henry's older brother, Arthur. After Arthur died, Catherine received special permission from the pope to marry King Henry.

With the pope unwilling to grant him a divorce, King Henry formally broke ties with Rome and the Roman Catholic Church in the spring of 1534. He announced that he and his people were no longer part of the church. They were now members of the new English Catholic Church. King Henry was the head of this new church and he held as much power in it as did the pope.

With this new power, King Henry VIII granted himself a divorce from Queen Catherine. He married Anne Boleyn almost immediately. He had been in love with Anne Boleyn for many years.

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this  
England . . .

*Richard II*

People said she had cast a spell on him, and it seemed that the people were right, for he had done monumental things in order to marry her.

King Henry and Anne Boleyn married in the spring of 1533. Their child, Princess Elizabeth, was born that September into a very dangerous time. Her aggressive and impatient father made many enemies, both through his changes to the church



and with his military policies. As long as her mother, Queen Anne Boleyn, was in the people's favor, Elizabeth had nothing to fear. If her mother fell from grace, however, Princess Elizabeth would be in great danger.

As the years went by, Anne Boleyn kept her looks. People remarked on her fine black eyes and great style in dancing, but King Henry seemed less and less interested in his wife. He had done huge and momentous things in order to marry her, but she had failed to provide him with a son.

King Henry believed he must have a son to follow after him, that the country needed a male ruler. He believed that England could not be ruled by a woman. King Henry's father, King Henry VII, was the first of the Tudor family line. The Tudors were not an ancient family. They had come to the English throne in 1485. They could not afford to have the crown pass to a woman. No, King Henry must have a son.

In the spring of 1536, King Henry granted himself a divorce from Anne Boleyn. As leader of the English Catholic Church, he had the power to do so, as he had previously done with Queen Catherine.

Anne Boleyn was charged with adultery and treason. Found guilty on both counts, she was beheaded at the Tower of London in May 1536.

Young Princess Elizabeth now had no mother and her father showed no interest in her. King Henry, meanwhile, was already planning his next wedding, his third. In 1536, King Henry married Anne Seymour, who had been one of the ladies-in-waiting to Anne Boleyn. King Henry was happy for a time and he was extremely happy when Jane Seymour gave birth to a son named Edward. King Henry finally had a son and a male heir.

King Henry's joy was short-lived, however. Queen Jane Seymour died just a week after giving birth to Prince Edward. King Henry mourned her deeply. He seemed to have genuinely cared for her.

Princess Elizabeth found that her servants now called her "Lady Elizabeth." She asked them why, but she was too young to understand that she had been disinherited and was no longer considered a princess. Her father had announced that she was an illegitimate child, as was her older half sister, Princess Mary. Both of them were now mere ladies of the court, princesses no longer.

During his life, King Henry VIII had a total of six wives. They were: Catherine of Aragon, with whom he had a daughter, Princess Mary; Anne Boleyn, with whom he had a daughter, Princess Elizabeth; Jane Seymour, with whom he had a son, Prince Edward; Anne of Cleves, with whom he had no children; Catherine Howard, with whom he had no children; and Catherine Parr, who outlived her husband, but bore him no children. It was clear that King Henry would eventually have to decide which of his three children would become king or queen.

Growing up among the members of her father's royal court, young Elizabeth came to fear and distrust men. Her father was a dangerous man. He lost his temper often and sometimes struck his servants. Sometimes he even had his counselors beheaded. He had been a good man in his youth, many people said, but he had grown tyrannical and mean as he got older.

Now in his 50s, King Henry lived a risky, fast-paced lifestyle. Not only did he take chances riding and hunting, but he was also a robust eater. Plates of food and goblets of wine disappeared from his

table. No one was going to risk sending the king into an outburst by telling him he should stop eating so much.

While King Henry ate and drank in excess, young Elizabeth grew in grace and knowledge. She was always a very pretty girl and, by the time she was 12, she was one of the tallest girls among those her age. She also loved her books very much and she learned a great deal, reading in Greek, Latin, French, and Spanish. All of her tutors agreed that she was a very intelligent child.

Lady Elizabeth often read and studied with her older half sister, Mary, and her younger half brother, Edward. The two princesses and the prince got along well in these early years. All of their mothers were dead and their ferocious father was unapproachable, so they relied on each other. Then, in January 1547, came the news. King Henry was dead.

**Sources:**

Forgeng, ed. *Daily Life in Elizabethan England*, 2010.  
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## Chapter 2: Elizabeth vs. Mary



Shortly before he died, King Henry VIII made out his will. He insisted that Parliament, which consisted of the House of Lords and the House of Commons, make his will into English law. King Henry's will removed the taint of illegitimacy from Elizabeth and her half sister Mary. Both were acknowledged

as true English princesses, but neither would inherit the throne.

King Henry believed in the rule of men. Even though Prince Edward was the youngest of the children, he would inherit the throne. The king's will went on to say:

- If Prince Edward died without any children, the throne would pass to Princess Mary.
- If Princess Mary died without any children, the throne would pass to Princess Elizabeth.
- If Princess Elizabeth died without any children, the throne would pass to Lady Jane Grey, a second cousin of the three royal children's.

King Henry had always been the type of man that people obeyed. Even from the grave, he would influence future events. As a result of the royal will, Prince Edward became King Edward VI in 1547. Although King Edward was not yet ten years old, he was already very intelligent. No one expected a young boy to know all about the kingdom, however, so he had the advice and counsel of several older

men. One of them was Lord Dudley, who became the Duke of Northumberland.

Elizabeth was delighted to be a princess once more, but she knew the royal court was full of dangers. She was closely guarded in what she said. No one really knew what she was thinking.

Elizabeth was on good terms with the new king, her older half brother. One of her earliest letters, among those that still survive today, was addressed to him: “Indeed, when I call to mind the particular benefits of the most good and most great God, I judge this to be the greatest all: that He has quickly and mercifully restored you to London after your recent illness.”<sup>1</sup>

Young King Edward was often ill. “Into which I think indeed that you fell by some special providence of God, just as I wrote in my recent letter to your majesty, so that every occasion of illness has vanished.”<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth went on to say, “Nothing is so uncertain or less enduring than the life of man, who truly, by the testimony of Pindar, is nothing else than a dream of shadows.”<sup>3</sup>

Young Elizabeth, 13 at the time, knew something about the uncertainty of life. She had seen several

## The Marriages and Children of King Henry VIII

**First marriage:** Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon (They are divorced in 1533.)  
Daughter Mary, born in 1516; dies in 1558.

**Second marriage:** Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn (She is beheaded in 1536.)  
Daughter Elizabeth, born in 1533; dies in 1603.

**Third marriage:** Henry VIII and Jane Seymour (She dies soon after childbirth in 1537.)  
Son Edward, born in 1537; dies in 1553.

**Fourth marriage:** Henry VIII and Anne of Cleves (Marriage is annulled.)

**Fifth marriage:** Henry VIII and Catherine Howard (She is beheaded in 1542.)

**Sixth marriage:** Henry VIII and Catherine Parr (She outlives her husband, who dies in 1547.)

Mary, Elizabeth, and Edward were half brothers and sisters. Lady Jane Grey was a second cousin to all three of them. Mary, Queen of Scots was their first cousin, once removed.





people come and go in her life already. She concluded by saying, “To which providence I commit the protection of your majesty, and at the same time ask that he keep you safe and sound for the longest possible time.”<sup>4</sup>

Elizabeth had a special bond with her half brother King Edward. They were both firm Protestants. King Henry VIII had separated England from the Roman Catholic Church, but he had kept many of the former rituals in his new English Catholic Church. King Edward VI and his counselors changed these rituals. By requiring that every church in the nation use the new Book of Common Prayer, they ensured that England would become a truly Protestant country.

While Princess Elizabeth and King Edward VI were both Protestants, their sister Princess Mary was Roman Catholic. There was also a generation gap between the siblings. Mary, born in 1516, had grown up in an England that knew only the Catholic religion. Her two younger siblings, Elizabeth and Edward, born in 1533 and 1537 respectively, had grown up in a country that leaned toward Protestantism. The gap between the siblings

was mirrored by the gap between the English people themselves. Almost everyone under the age of 20 or 25 tended to be Protestant, while many of those over the age of 40 tended to be Catholic.

King Edward VI died in the spring of 1553. He was only 16, but he had suffered from consumption (an illness now known as tuberculosis) for some time. The boy king was dead, but King Henry VIII's will had been quite explicit about the royal line of succession. Princess Mary would now be the queen of England. Many English Protestants feared, however, that Queen Mary would try to turn them into Catholics once more. A rebellion broke out right away.

The Dudley family, led by the Duke of Northumberland, supported Lady Jane Grey for queen. She was a second cousin to Elizabeth and Mary, and she was a good Protestant. The Dudleys took her to London and had her crowned. Meanwhile, both Princess Mary and Princess Elizabeth escaped northward.

Despite the turmoil, many English people turned out to support Princess Mary. Even those men and women who feared her Catholicism, still believed

she was the rightful queen. Many of them were also impressed by the courage she showed in the face of danger. Within two weeks, Princess Mary had raised an army and was marching on London.

As the resistance melted away, Princess Mary entered London in triumph. She was accompanied by Princess Elizabeth, who rode by her side. The two sisters were triumphant. The rebel leaders were sent to the Tower of London and many of them were later executed.

Princess Mary enjoyed a splendid coronation in 1553. She made a good beginning with her new subjects, but she surprised many when she announced that she intended to marry her cousin Philip, the future king of Spain.

Not only was Queen Mary a Catholic, but she also wanted to bring England back to the Catholic faith. Marrying the most powerful Catholic prince in all of Europe was a good way to do this. With Philip by her side, Queen Mary would be able to require all of her subjects to observe the Roman Catholic faith—or so she thought.

Even before Philip arrived, Princess Elizabeth was in trouble with her half sister. Everyone

who knew Princess Elizabeth was sure she was devoted to the Protestant faith. She was often seen reading religious books and pamphlets about Protestantism. However, Queen Mary thought she could bring her younger sister around. For months, Queen Mary kept asking when Princess Elizabeth would worship at the royal chapel with her. Princess Elizabeth did come, at times, but she often did not attend services, pleading illness. At other times, she came to the chapel, but did not stay for the entire Mass. By the start of 1554, Queen Mary had become deeply suspicious of her younger sister.

On March 17, 1554, a group of officers and soldiers came to take Princess Elizabeth to the Tower of London. Nothing could provoke as much fear in young Elizabeth as the tower. This was where her mother had been executed in 1536. This was where traitors went to receive the king's or queen's justice. Princess Elizabeth begged the officers to allow her to write to Queen Mary. If only the queen would agree to meet her, Princess Elizabeth felt sure she could win her over. Apparently Princess Elizabeth thought she had great influence over

Queen Mary, while Queen Mary thought the same thing of Princess Elizabeth. The letter began:

If any ever did try this old saying—that a king’s word was more than another man’s oath—I most humbly beseech your majesty to verify it to me, and to remember your last promise and my last demand: that I be not condemned without answer and due proof.<sup>5</sup>

Only Princess Elizabeth would have used the word *demand* in a letter like this.

“I am by your Council from you commanded to go unto the Tower, a place more wonted for a false traitor than a true subject.”<sup>6</sup> Princess Elizabeth knew that many people went into the tower, but few ever came out whole and healthy once more.

I protest afore God (who shall judge my truth, whatsoever malice shall devise), that I never practiced, counseled, nor consented to anything that might be prejudicial to your person any way or dangerous to the state by any mean.<sup>7</sup>

Princess Elizabeth begged Queen Mary not to believe the stories that were being spread about

her. Princess Elizabeth insisted that she was a good and faithful subject. She concluded by saying “Your highnesses’ [*sic*] most faithful subject that hath been from the beginning and will be to my end, Elizabeth.”<sup>8</sup>

Princess Elizabeth carefully drew long horizontal lines down the length of the rest of the paper. She did not want anyone to insert other words and claim they belonged to her. Handing the paper to the officers, she learned that, during the time she had taken to write the letter, the tide of the Thames River had changed. It was now too late in the day for her to go to the tower. Princess Elizabeth had bought herself another day of freedom.

Queen Mary did not even read Princess Elizabeth’s letter. She was already persuaded that her half sister was a traitor. Princess Elizabeth was sent to the Tower of London the next day. What was behind Queen Mary’s suspicions? Despite the fact that Princess Elizabeth was a Protestant, she was becoming the favorite among the common people. At age 20, she was many years younger than her half sister and far prettier. Princess Elizabeth had turned into a beautiful young woman

and her charm was even greater than her beauty. Queen Mary saw that the people preferred Princess Elizabeth, and this upset her.

Princess Elizabeth, meanwhile, spent two months in the Tower of London. She was treated well when she was there and after two months she was allowed to come back to court. She was not present for the wedding between Queen Mary and King Philip of Spain, however, which took place in the summer of 1554.

Queen Mary desperately wanted a child. She had waited a long time for marriage, but now she was disappointed in her husband. King Philip seemed to have married her for political reasons. He was not warm toward his wife and he often disappeared for months.

The year 1554 was a decent time for Queen Mary, but her life and reign soon began to enter a period of decline. Queen Mary thought she was pregnant in 1555, but this turned out to be a false hope. Meanwhile, King Philip kept his distance from his wife, who seemed to grow sadder and lonelier with each passing day.

Sometime in 1555 or 1556, Queen Mary decided to require the English people to become Roman

Catholics once more. Lacking the help of her husband, Queen Mary tried to do this on her own. She announced that Catholic Mass would be held in all churches throughout the land. She also began persecuting those Protestants who would not renounce their faith.

The people's fears were coming true. This forced conversion to Catholicism was exactly the reason some people had supported the rebellion in favor of Lady Jane Grey, but it was too late now. Mary was queen and she would do as she pleased.

Queen Mary soon turned her unhappiness on others. She ordered that those Protestants who would not renounce their faith be executed. In 1557 and 1558, some 300 leading Protestants were burned at the stake for refusing to renounce their religion. People began calling the queen "Bloody Mary."

While Queen Mary became more and more unpopular, Elizabeth's popularity continued to rise. The common people had always liked her. She reminded them of her long-dead father, King Henry VIII. As the years had passed, people began to forget about King Henry's tyrannical nature. They began instead to remember the handsome man he





Sometime in 1555 or 1556, Queen Mary decided to require the English people to become Roman Catholics once more. She began persecuting those Protestants who would not renounce their faith. The execution of Protestants at Smithfield in 1557 is shown here.

had been in his youth. As they recalled King Henry more favorably, they began to transfer this favor to Princess Elizabeth. A set of poems began to extol the virtues of Princess Elizabeth, while condemning Queen Mary:

*When Margaret Eliot, being a maid,  
After condemning in prison died;  
When lame Lamarock the fire essayed,  
And blind Aprice with him was tried;  
When these two impotents were put to death,  
We wished for our Elizabeth.<sup>9</sup>*

Princess Elizabeth would not have to wait long for her time as queen. Queen Mary was ill. While Elizabeth held her own court at Hatfield House, her favorite residence, many courtiers quietly drifted away from Queen Mary's court and came to Hatfield.

Queen Mary weakened during the summer of 1558 and died that November. News of her death spread very quickly. Messengers rode to Hatfield House, where they found Elizabeth sitting under a tree reading in Greek. She had always been a lover of many languages. When they told her that the queen was dead, Elizabeth rose and quoted from the Bible, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." She had already slipped into the practice of using the royal "we."<sup>10</sup> In November 1558, at the age of 25, Princess Elizabeth became queen of England.

**Sources:**

*Crompton. Queen Elizabeth's Golden Age, 2006.*

## CHAPTER THREE

### Elizabeth I (1558-1603)



Upon Elizabeth's accession to the throne in November 1558, the two most pressing problems facing her were the question of her marriage and the succession. Because Elizabeth's heir was her Catholic cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, and because the age expected a woman ruler to take a husband to help her govern, Elizabeth's ministers and Parliaments urged her to marry and produce a Protestant heir. Although for a time she seemed likely to marry Robert Dudley, her favorite and the love of her life, and though

**many other suitors were proposed, Elizabeth confounded expectations by remaining unmarried and refusing to formally name a successor.**

**Elizabeth always considered the love of her people to be her strongest asset in governing, and she strove all her life to win and retain that love. Even such political and religious enemies as Philip II, who approved and financed plans for her overthrow and murder, gave her a grudging respect as an intelligent and worthy opponent. Historians today consider Elizabeth one of the greatest monarchs in English history and one of the**

**greatest women rulers of all time. By refusing to be pressured into marrying, Elizabeth allowed England to survive as an independent power.**

**Elizabeth had lots of things going for her:**

- **She was a frugal monarchy, and, as a result, could protect her popularity by \*not\* raising taxes.**
- **She was a great diplomat. She used the promise of marriage to reduce potential problems. Historians believe that she may have delayed the 1588 Armada by hinting at the possibility of marriage to King Philip.**

- **She was an excellent public speaker, and, as a result, could unite her people, giving them a clear common vision.**
- **She encouraged exploration (sending out people like Drake and Raleigh), and, long term, England would greatly benefit from colonies and increased trade.**
- **Most important, Elizabeth managed to keep religious troubles to a minimum with her policy of latitudinarianism, a policy that included as many people as possible within church of England, and persecuted any hold outs on either Catholic or Puritan side.**

**Sources:**

Forgeng, ed. *Daily Life in Elizabethan England*, 2009.  
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## Chapter 4



# ELIZABETHAN England

The reign of Elizabeth is for many people one of the most fascinating periods in the history of the English-speaking world. Our images of the Elizabethan age, whether derived from the stage, screen, or books, have an enduring romantic appeal: the daring impudence of the sea-dogs, the chivalric valor of Sir Philip Sidney at Zutphen or the Earl of Essex at the gates of Cadiz, the elegant clash of steel as masters of the rapier display their skill. In addition to its imaginative appeal, the period is one of considerable historical importance. In political terms, Elizabeth's reign saw the definitive emergence of England as a significant naval power, as well as the growth of England's commercial and colonial activities: the British Empire, which so shaped the world in which we live, had its roots in the reign of Elizabeth. In the cultural sphere, England's achievements were no less significant, most notably in the person of William Shakespeare.

Elizabethan daily life has received a good deal of attention during the past 200 years. Yet although many books have been written on the subject, this volume is very different in one fundamental respect, which has influenced its shape in many ways.

This is the first book on Elizabethan England to arise out of the practice of living history. In its broadest sense, living history might be described as the material re-creation of elements of the past. In this sense, it includes a wide variety of activities. People who play historical music (especially on reproduction instruments) or who engage in historical crafts are practicing a form of living history.



An English army on the march. [*Shakespeare's England*]

In its fullest sense, living history involves the attempt to re-create an entire historical setting. Perhaps the most outstanding example is the historical site of Plimoth Plantation in Massachusetts, where the visitor will find not only reconstructed houses of the pilgrim settlers of 1627, but also a staff of highly trained interpreters who represent the individual men and women who were at the settlement in that year, even down to the dialect of English likely to have been spoken by the persons they are portraying.

This book began life as *The Elizabethan Handbook*, a brief guide written by the University Medieval and Renaissance Association of Toronto (an amateur living-history group based at the University of Toronto), to accompany its "Fencing, Dancing, and Bearbaiting" Elizabethan living history event in 1991. It was privately published in expanded and revised form in 1993, as part of a series of manuals geared for living-history use. Very little of the original text still remains, but the underlying connection with living history is very much present.

The living-history background of this book gives it two particular advantages over previous works. The first is its hands-on approach. In addition to telling the reader what sort of foods people ate, what sort of clothes they wore, and what sort of games they played, this book includes actual recipes, patterns, and rules, based on sources from the period. We ourselves have had great fun reproducing such aspects of the past and hope that readers will enjoy them too.

The second important advantage is the perspective that living history affords. This book is not only based on the author's reading about the Elizabethan period. It is also informed by time spent living in thatched



cottages, cooking over open hearths, and sleeping on straw mattresses. The simple act of doing these things cannot actually tell you how they were done, but there is no better way to focus your attention on the essential parts of historical daily life than by actually trying to live it. As a result, this book offers a uniquely clear, focused, and detailed account of the Elizabethan world. Many fundamental topics that other books mention only briefly (if at all) are given full attention here: water supply, sanitation, sources of heat and light.

This book is also distinguished by its attention to the daily life of ordinary people. Books about Elizabethan England often focus on the world of the aristocracy, leaving the impression that every man in Elizabethan England wore an enormous starched ruff, every woman wore a rich brocade gown, and they all lived in huge brick mansions. Yet the lives of ordinary people can be just as interesting and informative. This book tries to give the other 98 percent of the population a degree of attention more in keeping with their numbers.

Another important feature of this book is that it attempts to incorporate a high quality of scholarly research in a form that is accessible to a broad readership. There tends to be a great divide between scholarly and popular accounts of the past. Scholarly accounts generally offer high-quality information based on primary sources—primary sources being sources of information contemporary with the period in question, as opposed to secondary sources, which are modern works that make use of primary sources, or tertiary sources, which are modern works that rely on secondary sources. The information in scholarly works is generally superior, since the authors are in closer contact with the original sources of information, but their language and content tend to be geared toward the specialist, and they often assume a great deal of background knowledge on the part of the reader. On the other hand, popular works are written for a broader audience but often rely on inferior secondary and even tertiary sources of information.

As far as has been possible with so vast a subject, this book relies directly on primary sources; in particular, it has made use of some original books and manuscripts that are especially rich sources of information but are not well known even in scholarly circles (the rules for games, for example, derive from a forgotten 17th-century treatise on the subject). This is particularly true in the hands-on sections of the book: the patterns, recipes, rules, and so on are all based as far as possible on primary sources. Where primary sources are impractical, the book strives to make use of the best and most recent secondary work on the period.

At the same time, I have attempted to present this information in a format that will be accessible and enjoyable for a wide audience. After all, the greatest value of the past lies in its interaction with the present. If history only touches the historians, it is truly a lifeless form of knowledge. Readers of this book may be surprised to find just how much of Elizabethan life

is relevant to the present. The Elizabethans were dealing with many of the same issues that face us today: unemployment resulting from an economy in transition, conflicting views over the relationship between religion and the state, a technological revolution in the media of communication, bitter cultural strife, and a general sense that the established social order was at risk of disintegration. In the modern age, where we are increasingly worried about our ability to sustain our standard of living and about the impact of our activities on the environment, we can benefit by learning how people lived in a period when their material expectations were much lower and the degree of industrialization was still quite limited. This is not to suggest that we should idealize the Elizabethan age—it was also a period of hardship, brutality, and intolerance—but we can acquire a much more meaningful perspective on the present by becoming familiar with the past.

## Chapter 5

# Daily Life in Elizabethan England



The Middle Ages are customarily taken to have ended when Richard III was defeated by Henry Tudor at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. Henry's accession as Henry VII marked the end of the Wars of the Roses, which had dominated English politics for much of the 15th century. The coronation of the first Tudor monarch was to herald the beginning of an unprecedented period of peace that lasted until the outbreak of civil war in 1642.

Henry VII devoted his reign to establishing the security of his throne, which he passed on to his son Henry VIII in 1509. Henry VIII is best known for having married six wives, but his marital affairs were of great political importance as well. His first wife, Catherine of Aragon, produced only a daughter, named Mary. Desperate for a male heir, Henry applied to the pope to have his marriage annulled. The request was refused, so Henry arranged for Parliament to pass a body of legislation that withdrew England from the Catholic Church, placing the king at the head of the new Church of England.

As head of his own church, Henry had his marriage annulled and married Anne Boleyn. This marriage proved no more successful in Henry's eyes, as it produced only a daughter—little did he know that this daughter, as Elizabeth I, was to become one of England's most successful and best-loved monarchs. Henry had Anne Boleyn executed on charges of adultery. His third wife, Jane Seymour, died of natural causes, but not before bearing him his only son, Edward. Of Henry's three subsequent wives, none bore any heirs.

Henry had no desire to make any significant changes in church teachings, but there was growing pressure in the country to follow the lead of the Continental Protestants such as Martin Luther; English Protestants were later heavily influenced by Jean Calvin, a French Protestant who established a rigidly Protestant state in Geneva.

The English church moved only slightly toward Protestantism in Henry's lifetime. Upon Henry's death in 1547, his son came to the throne as Edward VI. Edward was still underage, and his reign was dominated by his guardians, who promoted Protestant reformation in the English church. Edward died in 1553 before reaching the age of majority. The throne passed to his eldest half-sister, Mary. Mary had been raised a devout Catholic by her mother, and it came as no surprise that Mary brought England back into the Catholic Church. Her reign would prove brief and undistinguished. She committed England to a Spanish alliance by marrying Philip II, who became king of Spain in 1556. The marriage led to English participation in Philip's war against France. The war went poorly and England lost Calais, the last remnant of its once extensive French empire. Mary died shortly after, in 1558. Today she is popularly remembered as Bloody Mary due to her persecution of Protestants—some 300 were executed during her reign, while others escaped into exile in Protestant communities on the Continent.

With Mary's death, the throne passed to Henry's only surviving child, Elizabeth. She was not an ardent Protestant, although she was of Protestant leanings. Even more important, her claim to the throne depended on the independence of the English church. The pope had never recognized Henry's divorce, so in Catholic eyes, Elizabeth was the illegitimate child of an adulterous union and could not be queen. Elizabeth had Parliament withdraw England from the Catholic Church once more and was established as head of the Church of England, as her father had been.

The new queen faced serious international challenges. Her country was still officially at war with France and Scotland. Elizabeth swiftly concluded a peace treaty, but Scotland, now under the governance of a French regent, Mary of Guise, remained a potential threat. Mary reigned in the name of her daughter, Mary Stuart (known today as Mary Queen of Scots), who remained in France, where she was queen consort of the French king Francis II. Elizabeth strengthened her position in Scotland by cultivating relations with the growing number of Scottish Protestants who preferred Protestant England to Catholic France. In 1559 John Knox, the spiritual leader of the militant Scottish Protestants, returned to Scotland from exile in Geneva, and the country rose against the regent. After some hesitation, Elizabeth sent military support. The French were expelled from Scotland, and the Protestant party took effective control.

France too had a growing Protestant movement, and the death of Francis II in 1560 led to a civil war between Protestants and Catholics. Elizabeth sent troops to Normandy in 1562 to support the Protestant cause, hoping to reestablish the foothold on the Continent that her sister had lost, but

the army was ravaged by illness and had to be withdrawn the following year. Religious conflict between French Catholics and Protestants erupted intermittently throughout Elizabeth's reign, substantially undermining France's influence in international affairs.

The death of Francis II impacted Scotland as well, as the widowed Mary Stuart returned to her native country. Her reign was tumultuous, and relations with her subjects were not helped by her firm Catholicism. After a series of misadventures, Mary's subjects rose against her, and she was ultimately forced to seek refuge in England in 1568.

The situation was extremely awkward for Elizabeth, who believed in the divine right of a monarch to occupy her throne, but who was also dependent on the Protestant party in Scotland to keep England's northern border secure. To make matters worse, Mary had some claim to the English throne by right of her grandmother, a sister of Henry VIII. According to the Catholic Church, Elizabeth was illegitimate and Mary was the rightful queen. Mary remained in comfortable confinement in England during a series of fruitless negotiations to restore her to the Scottish throne.

Unfortunately for Mary, she was unable to resist meddling in English politics. Many Catholics wanted to see her replace Elizabeth as Queen of England, and Mary was only too willing to entertain the idea. Northern England was still home to large numbers of Catholics, and in 1569 several of the northern earls led a rebellion against Elizabeth, thinking to place Mary on the throne. The rebels were swiftly suppressed, but the incident was a reminder of the threat posed by Elizabeth's Catholic rival. The following year, the pope issued a Bull, or papal decree, excommunicating Elizabeth and declaring her deposed, a move that further strained relations between the two queens.

Mary's interactions with Catholic conspirators only intensified after the Northern Rebellion. During 1570–71 a plot was organized by Roberto Ridolfi, a Florentine banker, to have Mary wed the Duke of Norfolk, the highest-ranking nobleman in England, with an eye to creating a powerful Catholic alliance to topple the Queen. The plot was discovered, and Norfolk, already under suspicion for his involvement with the rebellion of 1569, was executed for treason. Many people urged Elizabeth to have Mary executed as well, but she was extremely reluctant to kill a queen, knowing the implications to herself.

In the meantime, relations with Spain were deteriorating. At first Elizabeth had worked to preserve something of the alliance between England and Spain created by her sister's marriage to Philip II, but the atmosphere of religious conflict on the Continent made this increasingly difficult. In the Low Countries, a population that had come to embrace Protestantism was still under the rule of the Catholic Philip II. Rebellion erupted in 1566–67. At first Protestantism was widely spread throughout the area, but over time a successful Spanish counteroffensive succeeded in regaining the southern provinces (equivalent to modern-day Belgium), leaving

only the northern provinces (the modern Netherlands) in a state of rebellion. Popular sentiment in England was strongly in support of the Protestant rebels, and many Englishmen volunteered to fight in the Netherlands against Spain, even though Spain and England were still officially friends. Even Elizabeth, who still wanted to eke out what remained of the Spanish alliance, was not happy about the presence of a large Catholic force suppressing Protestantism practically on England's doorstep.

Spain's very size and power made it a threat, and the situation was made worse by Spain's vast and profitable empire in the New World. Elizabeth was reluctant to undertake the risks and expense of war, but she turned to more subtle means of undermining Spanish power. In particular, she gave her support to the sea-dogs, privateers who preyed on Spanish shipping. Perhaps the greatest was Francis Drake, who circled the globe in 1577–80, wreaking havoc on Spanish shipping and colonies and returning home with a phenomenal 4,700 percent profit for those who had invested in the voyage. The Queen herself was the largest shareholder.

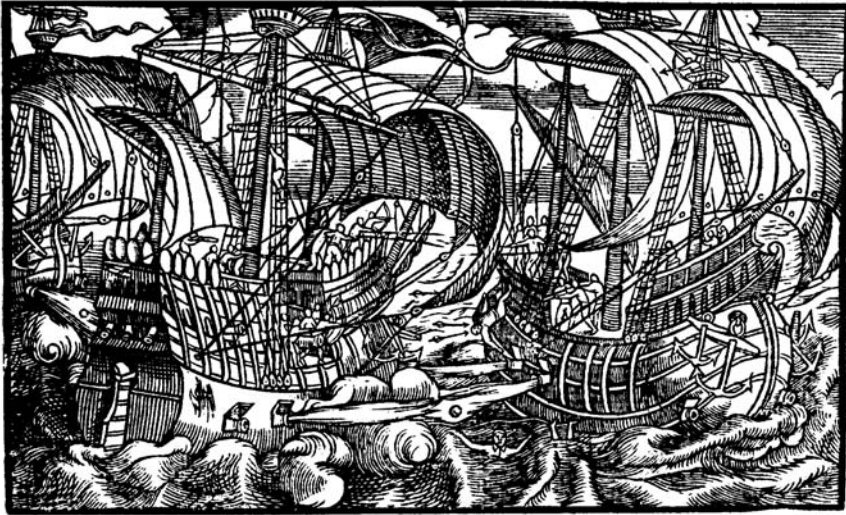
By 1584 the international situation was becoming extremely ominous. A Catholic fanatic had assassinated William of Orange, the leader of the Dutch Protestants, reminding Elizabeth that Europe's mounting religious conflict could threaten her very life. The Catholic faction that dominated France was negotiating an alliance with Spain, and Antwerp was on the verge of falling to a Spanish siege. Elizabeth concluded a treaty with the Dutch Protestants and sent an English army to aid them in their cause.

Under the circumstances, Mary Stuart was a grave liability. She continued to be at the center of plots against Elizabeth. In 1583 a Catholic Englishman named Francis Throckmorton was arrested and found to be carrying a list of leading Catholics and potential landing places for an invading army. Under torture, he revealed plans for a major Spanish invasion of England.

The Queen's advisors urged the death of Mary, but still Elizabeth resisted. In 1586 a further plot was uncovered in which a young Catholic gentleman named Anthony Babington had engaged with several accomplices to assassinate the Queen. Mary had given her explicit assent to the scheme. After a trial and prolonged vacillation by Elizabeth, an order was sent in 1587 for Mary's execution; but after Mary was beheaded, Elizabeth denied that she had ordered the execution and made a show of punishing those involved.

All this while, Spain had been making preparations to remove Elizabeth by force, gathering a massive fleet in various Spanish ports. The fleet was to sail to the Spanish Netherlands, rendezvous with the Spanish army stationed there, and make the short crossing to England. In the summer of 1588, the Invincible Armada set sail.

The expedition was a disastrous failure. The English ships, smaller, more agile, better crewed, and more heavily armed with cannons, harassed the Spanish fleet as it sailed up the English Channel. In the face of bad weather,



A fight at sea. [Holinshed]

the Spanish anchored at Calais; during the night the English set several of their own ships on fire and sent them in among the Spanish ships, forcing the Armada to disperse. The next day there was heavy fighting off the Flemish coast, as winds from the west forced the Spanish ships eastward, and several of them were lost to the coastal shoals. It proved impossible to rendezvous with the army, and the adverse winds made it impossible for the Armada to sail back into the Channel. The fleet was forced to make its way around the British Isles, battered by storms and decimated by malnutrition and disease, until about half the original fleet finally made it back to Spain in mid-September.

The war with Spain dragged on inconclusively for the rest of Elizabeth's reign. The Spanish sent several subsequent armadas, but none met with any success; the English sent raids to Spanish ports, with minimal effect. In the mean time, England's military entanglements spread. The Dutch provinces continued their war for independence with English assistance. The Protestant Henri of Navarre inherited the French crown as Henri IV in 1589, and Elizabeth sent multiple expeditions to help him secure his throne.

Elizabeth's greatest problem was in Ireland, where centuries of resistance to English domination were coming to a head. Already in 1579–83 there had been a protracted rebellion by one of the leading Irish lords in the southern part of the country. In 1580 the Spanish had sent a small and unsuccessful expedition to Kerry. In 1596 Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone and perhaps the most powerful man in northern Ireland, began a major revolt against England, assisted by Spanish supplies. In 1599 Elizabeth sent Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, to suppress the revolt, but he proved

thoroughly incompetent as a military commander. He was recalled and promptly became embroiled in a plot to take over the government. The scheme failed miserably: Essex was imprisoned and, ultimately, executed.

The money and supplies required for supporting these military efforts strained the English economy in the 1590s. The situation was exacerbated by a series of bad harvests in 1594–97. A likely contributing factor in these repeated crop failures was a climatic downturn that began around the time of Elizabeth's accession and would last through the 1600s. Known to historians as the Little Ice Age, the trend brought colder and wetter weather, even freezing the Thames River in 1565 and 1595. Grain shortages in the mid-1590s led to runaway inflation, famine, and civil unrest. Repeated visitations of the plague only worsened the sense of crisis.

Yet these years of domestic troubles were also in many ways the cultural pinnacle of Elizabeth's reign. England's first permanent theater was built in London in 1576; in 1598–99 it was moved to the south bank of the Thames and renamed the Globe. The Globe and the other burgeoning theaters of late Elizabethan London would host the works of some of the most renowned playwrights in the English language: Christopher Marlowe was at the apex in the late 1580s and early 90s, Ben Jonson was on the rise by 1600, and William Shakespeare penned many of his most famous plays during the final decade of Elizabeth's reign. Poetry too was enjoying a golden age: Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queen* appeared in 1590, and Shakespeare's earliest published poetry in 1593. At the geopolitical level, some of the initial groundwork was laid that would lead to the emergence of the British Empire: the first attempt to found an overseas colony was in 1585 in Roanoke—although the colony did not survive, the English claim to Virginia (named for Elizabeth as the Virgin Queen) would be revived with colonies at Jamestown and Plymouth under Elizabeth's successor. In 1600 Elizabeth chartered the East India Company, which would ultimately become the agent for Britain's imperial expansion in Asia.

By the time Elizabeth died in 1603, having lived 69 years and ruled for almost half a century, many of her subjects were ready to see someone new on the throne. Willful to the end, the Queen refused to take to her bed: she passed away upright in her chair. She had never married, and there were no immediate heirs. The crown passed peacefully to James VI, son of Mary Stuart. Already king of Scotland, James now ruled England as James I, the first of the country's Stuart kings. His subjects were delighted to have a man on the throne again, but he and his heirs proved less adept at managing England than Elizabeth. James's son Charles would lose the throne and his life through civil war in the 1640s, and his grandson James II would be overthrown in a bloodless coup in 1688. Under the Stuarts, Elizabeth's reign came to be idealized as a lost golden age, and the mythology of Elizabeth's "merrie England" persists even into the 21st century.

**Sources:**

Forgeng. *Daily Life in Elizabethan England*, 2010.



# Chapter Six



1500–1649

## *The English Reformation and Renaissance*

### INTRODUCTION

The long period covered in this chapter takes us from the reign of the **Tudor\*** monarch, King Henry VII (died 1509 – succeeded by Henry VIII), to the execution by Parliament of the **Stuart\*** King Charles I in 1649. It is a period which establishes the foundations of the modern United Kingdom, and includes **The (English) Reformation\***, **The (English) Renaissance\***, the **Elizabethan\*** period (with its great flowering of a national literature), the first part of the Stuart\* reign [see Chapter 2 for its continuation after 1660], the **Jacobean\*** and **Caroline\*** periods, and **The English Civil War\***.

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## 1.1 TUDOR

*The family name of the line of monarchs – ‘The Tudors’ – who held the English throne from 1485 to 1603, and hence the name of the period from the accession of Henry VII to the death of Elizabeth I.*

With the murder of Edward V and his brother Richard (‘the Princes in the Tower’) in 1483, the death of the Yorkist Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field, and the end of the Wars of the Roses (1455–85, an intermittent civil war was waged between the houses of York [white] and Lancaster [red] which had deeply divided the kingdom), the Plantagenet line ended, and the Lancastrian Henry Tudor acceded to the throne. He was descended from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, on his mother’s side, and from the kings of France and native Welsh princes on his father’s, his family name deriving from Owen Tudor whom his maternal grandmother, Catherine, daughter of Charles VI of France, had married after the death of her husband, Henry V of England. The self-pronounced Welsh origins of the usurping Tudors were central to the *Tudor Myth*, which claimed the dynasty’s descent from ancient British rulers, including King Arthur, and promised to restore the power and glory of Camelot. The stylised figure of the *Tudor Rose* – red and white to symbolise the houses of Lancaster and York, and thus the end of hostilities between them – was adopted as a badge by Henry VII. It features prominently in *Tudor Architecture*, which is characterised by half-timbering and patterned brickwork.

### *Key Timeline Narratives 1500–1603*

- **The Succession** The problem of protecting a line of succession for the Tudor dynasty, especially the failure of Henry VIII and his queen, Catherine of Aragon, to produce a son and heir, which helped to instigate the English **Reformation\***, and the youthfulness and then the early death of Henry’s only son (by Jane Seymour), King Edward VI.
- **Religion** The inception of religious strife in what was later to become ‘Great Britain’, and which dominated its history for at least the next three centuries. A crucial instance of this was the furor, after the death of Edward VI (1553), around the accession of Henry VIII’s legitimate daughter by Catherine of Aragon, Mary I (Mary Tudor), a Roman Catholic who married Philip II, King of Spain, and whose persecution of English Protestants in an attempt to restore England to the Roman Catholic fold resulted in the sobriquet ‘Bloody Mary’. When she died childless in 1558, her half-sister, Queen Elizabeth I (daughter of Ann Boleyn, Henry VIII’s second wife), acceded to the throne, but Elizabeth’s failure to marry and produce an heir in her turn led, on her death in 1603, to the end the Tudor line and the start of the **Stuart\*** succession.
- **Politics** The gradual development of an English national state and identity, distinct from the still largely Catholic mainland Europe.

## 1.2 THE (ENGLISH) REFORMATION

*Literally, ‘reformation’ means an act of reforming, amending and improving. Capitalised and preceded by the definite article, ‘The Reformation’ identifies that period and process in the 16th*

*Century in Europe which saw the doctrine and power of the Roman Catholic Church challenged and in many cases replaced by the various forms of Protestant religion.*

However, political and economic factors also determined its course and nature: the hostility of rulers and jurists to the temporal encroachments of the Vatican; the growing wealth of the clergy, and the religious and moral laxity of many; the development of printing, which assisted the spread of ideas; and related to this, the humanism of the **Renaissance\***, which encouraged a new critical and enquiring attitude of mind. The individualism at the heart of Reformation religions, combined with their embattled location in diverse Northern European states, also helped to foster the growth of nationalism and the economic prosperity of the mercantile classes.

The Dutch humanist scholar, Erasmus, who introduced a Greek edition of the Scriptures in 1516 to replace the Vatican's Latin one, is usually regarded as the principal intellectual force behind the Reformation (as, indeed, behind the later Renaissance\*, too). Whilst not attacking the authority of the Pope himself, Erasmus nevertheless castigated the Church for its abuses (selling pardons and religious relics) and for its pedantry (e.g. in *In Praise of Folly*, 1509). The start of the Reformation proper is normally dated to 1517, when the German theologian, Martin Luther, nailed his *95 Theses Against the Sale of Papal Indulgencies* to a church door in Wittenberg. Unlike Erasmus (who was to attack the reformers' zeal in 1523), Luther refused to submit to the Pope's authority, which led to his excommunication in 1521, and the consequent spread of Protestantism across much of Northern Europe. The Lutheran reformers sought to restore Christianity to its early purity, their main tenets being justification by faith and the absolute authority of the Scriptures in all matters of faith, in contradistinction to ecclesiastical tradition (i.e. that of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church). The new religion was then driven by the far stricter religious and moral teachings of, for example, the French reformer, Jean Calvin, based in the middle years of the 16th Century in Geneva, from where was exported a widely influential, severe and doctrinaire brand of Protestant individualism (including the doctrine of predestination). Calvinism flourished in Switzerland, the Low Countries, and in Scotland under John Knox. The reaction against such developments in Roman Catholic Europe is known as the 'Counter-Reformation'.

The English Reformation should be seen in the context of the European movement, but it was rather differently motivated and inflected. In 1519, Henry VIII had written a book against Luther entitled *Defence of the Seven Sacraments*. For this, the Pope bestowed on him the title, 'Fidei Defensor' ('Defender of the Faith'), but the failure of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon to produce a male heir led him to seek permission from Rome to divorce her, so that he could marry the already pregnant Ann Boleyn. The Vatican demurred, Henry married Ann regardless and was excommunicated. He made Thomas Cranmer Archbishop of Canterbury, and by the Act of Supremacy in 1534, declared himself 'the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England'. Although Henry continued to claim to be a Catholic, from 1536 to 1539, he carried out the Dissolution of the Monasteries, whereby the hundreds of religious houses in England were ransacked for their wealth, their abbeys often destroyed, and their lands confiscated and sold.

During the minority reign of his son, Edward VI, who succeeded Henry at the age of nine, the powerful men in his Protectorate introduced stringent Protestant reforms which inclined the country towards Calvinism. On Edward's death, Mary I [see **Tudor\*** above] attempted to reintroduce Catholicism as the national religion with considerable support, but her unpopular marriage to the king of Catholic Spain, together with the increasing ferocity of the persecution of Protestants (Bishops Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer, amongst many others, were burnt at the stake), turned the tide against her. Her half-sister, Elizabeth I, succeeded her in 1558, and managed, in the course of her long and eventful reign [see **Elizabethan\*** below], to effect a compromise between Catholic liturgy (which she enjoyed) and Protestant faith (which she believed in). A major Catholic uprising occurred in the north of England in 1569 (it was suppressed), but after 1570, in reaction to Rome's deeply resented declaration that Elizabeth was illegitimate, the so-called Elizabethan Church Settlement increasingly gained popular support.

### **1.3 THE (ENGLISH) RENAISSANCE**

*The noun 'renaissance', from the French 'renascence', literally means 'rebirth'. Capitalised, and with the direct article, 'The Renaissance' defines the artistic, literary and scientific revival which took place in Europe from the 14th Century to the mid-17th Century (the end-date is disputed).*

This period has been seen as an intermediate period between the Middle Ages and the full development of the modern world (even so, its later phases are now more usually described by historians as belonging to 'the Early Modern Period', a less loaded term than 'The Renaissance'). The movement originated in Italy, where the word 'rinascità' was in use by the mid-16th Century to describe the great flowering of the Italian arts in the 14th Century ('Quattrocento'), and later spread throughout Europe. However, the term was first used in English only in 1840, and its general currency was established in the mid-19th Century by the Swiss historian, Jacob Burckhardt, in his work, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860). 'Renaissance' can also be used as an adjective, as in 'Renaissance painting' or 'Renaissance Man' [see below].

In general terms, the Renaissance was characterised by the renewed influence of classical culture and values; a new humanism in part derived from these; and the beginning of objective scientific enquiry. It represents a contrast to the Church-centred culture of the medieval period in its celebration of humanity and individuality; but although the the notion of 'rebirth' suggests a sudden rupture with the past, the Renaissance is probably better thought of as a process of gradual change. In 14th-century Italy, a humanist and classical literary revival began with the writings of Petrarch and Boccaccio, while Giotto established the foundations of Renaissance painting. In the 15th Century, Byzantine scholars founded a Platonic Academy in Florence, and with the the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, Greek scholars brought classical manuscripts to Italy, the invention of printing thereafter allowing the 'new learning' to spread throughout Europe. Fifteenth-century Italian art includes the work of Fra Angelico, Mantegna and Botticelli in painting, Donatello and Ghiberti in sculpture, and Brunelleschi in architecture,

while at its height in the 16th Century, the great names of the Italian Renaissance are: in painting and sculpture, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Titian, Giovanni Bellini; in literature, Tasso and Ariosto; in political thought, Machiavelli; and in music, Palestrina. It is the multiple talents of, for example, Michaelangelo (painter, poet, architect, sculptor) and da Vinci (painter, anatomist, scientific inventor) which give us the notion of *Renaissance Man*: someone equally capable of high success in several different fields of expertise, and himself both an exemplar and celebrant of that proud humanity, physical and mental, which characterises the Renaissance world-view and which is otherwise expressed in its valorisation of the fully rounded ‘gentleman’ or ‘courtier’ (Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano*; translated into English by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1552–3). Elsewhere in Europe, this is also the period of such writers as Ronsard, Rabelais, Lope de Vega, Cervantes and Montaigne, and visual artists, Dürer, El Greco, Holbein and the Bruegel family.

In experimental science, mathematics, geography and astronomy, too, a new inquiring spirit was developing which freed human beings to explore, understand and enjoy the physical world in ways impossible under the medieval Church’s dispensation. Copernicus placed the sun, not the earth, at the centre of the universe, which Galileo was later to verify using a telescope, and all sorts of other instruments for investigating and measuring the universe were invented; the Spanish and Portuguese ‘discovered’ the New World of the Americas and first circumnavigated the globe; anatomy developed rapidly; Erasmus and other scholars promoted a neo-classical humanism in philosophical thinking based on notions of a harmonious universe with Man at the centre of it, of a more heroic humanity capable of perfectibility, reason not religion as the principle governing human behaviour, and above all, an elation mixed with anxiety about the apparently boundless freedom to think everything anew: as John Donne famously put it: ‘The new philosophy calls all in doubt.’

The English Renaissance is normally dated from either c.1476, with the introduction of printing into England by William Caxton, or 1485 with the arrival of the Tudor\* dynasty, and reaching its apogee in the Elizabethan\* and Jacobean\* periods. There were signs of the times in Henry VIII’s reign: Sir Thomas More, a friend of Erasmus, published his *Utopia*; another humanist, Sir Thomas Elyot, published *The Boke named the Govenour*; King Henry himself had the education, abilities and tastes of a Renaissance ‘courtier’ [see above]; the poetry of John Skelton, Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, belongs to this period; and a number of colleges at Oxford and Cambridge Universities were founded. But cultural historians believe that the effects of the Reformation slowed the Renaissance process down in England, and there is certainly no achievement in the visual arts to match that of 15th- and 16th-century Italy. The height of the English Renaissance, then, and especially so in literature (although also in music, architecture and art), belongs to the later Elizabethan period, indicative events in the late 1570s and early 1580s being the building and opening of the first public theatres in London and the composition by Sir Philip Sidney, a quintessential type of the Renaissance ‘gentleman’, of his *Arcadia* (the ‘Old’ version) and *Defence of Poetry*. However, general characteristics of cultural developments throughout the period would include: as a reflex of the Reformation, a great increase in printed works in the English language, resulting in a rapid rise in literacy; the enforced spread of English in Wales and Ireland, and then its exportation to the New World; a new sense of

national identity and pride which fostered confidence in using English for serious writing (rather than Latin) and for the creation of a national literature which would compete with those in classical and other European languages; a huge expansion in vocabulary (it is estimated that during the century and a half from c.1500, exploration, trade, translation and scholarship caused well over 10,000 new words to enter English from Latin, Greek, European and other languages, as well as neologisms created by native authors); a consequent linguistic exuberance and innovativeness in literary style, form and genre; and the development of a literature which enthusiastically explored the social, political, religious, cultural and emotional implications of newly liberated, human-centred experience.

## 1.4 ELIZABETHAN

*As an adjective, 'Elizabethan' designates the reign of Queen Elizabeth I of England and Ireland, 1558–1603, and the literature, art, music and architecture produced in those years; as a noun, it identifies someone living during the period – although it tends to be used more specifically for the literary writers of the second half of the era ('Sidney and Spenser were distinguished Elizabethans').*

On the death of Mary I [see Tudor\*], Elizabeth acceded to the throne, and immediately faced religious strife, economic instability and war with France. But while the history of her reign shows the resolution of many such problems, it is also marked throughout by domestic unrest and rebellion in Ireland, hostile relations with much of continental Europe, and religious opposition by, and suppression of, both Catholics and Puritans. Nevertheless, it is also witness to a great enhancement of national identity and pride, the major achievements of the English Renaissance\*, an increase in English international power, and the inception of a capitalist economy.

### *Key Timeline Narratives*

- **Religion** The re-establishment of the Church of England on a moderate basis; a string of Catholic plots against Elizabeth, focused after 1568 around the exiled and imprisoned Mary, Queen of Scots (finally executed in 1587), the severe repression of English Catholics, and the related chronic crisis about the succession throughout the unmarried and childless Elizabeth's reign; relations with Protestant Scotland; the increasing opposition of the Puritans to Anglicanism, their growing power in Parliament and resistance to the Crown, and the resulting attempts to suppress them.
- **Ireland and Europe** The 'planting' (colonising) of Ireland by English and Scottish Protestants, and the series of Irish revolts from 1569 until the reconquest and 'pacification' of 1600–3; strained relations with Catholic Europe over religion and the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, but also exacerbated by England's rapid development as a major maritime power – both in terms of international trade and of the licensed piracy of, for example, Sir John Hawkins and Sir Francis Drake who plundered Spanish ships in the Americas – culminating in the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

- **North America** The start of the settling and colonising of North America with Sir Walter Raleigh's ventures in Virginia.
- **Social and Economic Developments** The beginnings of social legislation in Parliament in respect of Poor Relief Acts and associated initiatives; the physical and symbolic expansion of London as capital city; the development of banking and other financial institutions to facilitate and expand a fledgling capitalist economy, but also economic depression and social unrest caused by a combination of Elizabeth's fiscal policies, heavy taxation and a series of bad harvests in the 1590s.
- **Literary and Cultural Events** The continued founding of new schools, Oxbridge colleges and libraries; the widespread translation of religious, classical and other literary works into English; the extensive building of theatres in London, and the rapid upsurge in dramatic writing; the appearance in the later part of the period not only of a significant literature in English, but also accompanying it, a literary critical discourse in which to discuss and promote it; developments in English painting (especially portraiture), music (especially songs and madrigals), and architecture (especially the erection of great houses and other public buildings across the country).

## 1.5 STUART (ALSO STEWART)

*The family name of the line of monarchs – 'the Stuarts' – who occupied the British throne from the accession of King James I in 1603 to the deposition and execution of King Charles I in 1649; and from the Restoration\* of King Charles II in 1660 to the death of Queen Anne in 1714.*

The 'missing' period between 1649 and 1660 is the **Interregnum\***, during which Great Britain was governed first as a **Commonwealth\*** under Parliament and then as a **Protectorate\*** under Oliver Cromwell. [Commentary and suggested timeline narratives in respect of the restored Stuart line after 1660 will be found in the glosses to Chapter 2.]

The Stuarts, in fact, were monarchs of Scotland from 1371 to 1714, and on the death of Elizabeth I without an heir, her cousin, the then James VI of Scotland, acceded to the English throne as James I of England [see also Jacobean\*]. James, the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, who had become King of Scotland on his mother's forced abdication in 1567, and who made only token protest at her execution in 1587 [see under Elizabethan\*], was a staunch Protestant whose claim to the throne, accepted by both Elizabeth and Parliament, derived from the marriage of James IV of Scotland to Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII of England. James's joint monarchy effectively brought about the union of England and Scotland, and in 1604, he was declared king of 'Great Britain, France and Ireland' – the reference to France by this point being anachronistic wishful thinking. [It is from this point, then, that the present volume will normally use 'Great Britain'/'British' and not 'English' when referring to historical and cultural events – except where the latter term is specifically correct. After 1800, when the Act of Union united the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland to form 'The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland', 'UK' will tend to be substituted for 'British/Britain'.]

## Chapter 7 Literature



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qez8rYZawds>

### POETRY:



The reign of Elizabeth was one of the most creative and prolific periods in the history of English poetry. This poetic flowering began in the quarter century between 1550 and 1575, when humanist scholars and Protestant reformers used English, long considered inferior to Latin and Greek, as a literary language to teach and to preach. Prose works of scholarship, like Roger ASCHAM's *The Schoolmaster* (1570)



and religious works like John FOXE's "Book of Martyrs," illustrated the strength and flexibility of Elizabethan English. Poetry, the pastime of courtiers in earlier decades, reached a wider audience in the 1560s with the publication of Richard TOTTEL's anthology *Songs and Sonnets* (1557), a work generally known as "Tottel's Miscellany." By popularizing the court poetry of HENRY VIII's time and the work of unknown contemporary poets, Tottel inspired a host of similar poetry collections that helped build demand for English verse.

This growing interest in poetry was illustrated by the popularity of *A Mirror for Magistrates*, a

collection of poetic laments supposedly spoken by participants in the Wars of the Roses. The plainer, simpler poetry published by Tottel and the *Mirror* in the 1560s was superseded in the next two decades by the more ornate and innovative lyric poetry written by Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney. Spenser was the first English poet to use print to deliberately disseminate his work to a wider public. His *The Faerie Queen* was a lyric epic of Protestant nationalism, casting Elizabeth as the Faerie Queen herself. Sidney's work was also fused with Protestant fervor and tied to the cult of the Virgin Queen. Where Spenser inspired every

**English poet of the 1590s to try lyric poetry,  
Sidney, through his *Astrophel and Stella* cycle,  
initiated a flood of sonnet sequences, including  
William Shakespeare's.**

**Which whoso list look back to former ages,  
And call to count the things that then were done,  
Shall find that all the works of those wise sages,  
And brave exploits which great Heroes won,  
In love were either ended or begun:  
Witness the father of Philosophic,  
Which to his Critias, shaded oft from sun,  
Of love full many lessons did apply,  
The which these . . . censors cannot well deny.**

...

**To such therefore I do not sing at all,  
But to that sacred Saint my sovereign Queen,  
In whose chaste breast all bounty natural  
And treasures of true love enlocked been,**

**Bove all her sex that ever yet was seen;  
To her I sing of love, that loveth best,  
And best is lov'd of all alive I ween:  
To her this song most fitly is address,  
The Queen of love, and Prince of peace from heaven  
blest.**

**Sources:**

**Shenk. *Learned Queen: The Image of Elizabeth I in Politics and Poetry*, 2010.**

# Timelines: 1500–1649

PERIOD	YEAR	INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS	SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS	AUTHORS	INDICATIVE TITLES
TUDOR	1500	Henry VII king (since 1485); Great Jubilee Year. [During this century, Renaissance spreads from Italy thro out W. Europe.]	<b>Music:</b> 1st virginals & violins. <b>Art:</b> [c.] Giorgione [pnt] 'Judith'; [c.] Giovanni Bellini [pnt] 'Madonna and Child in a Landscape'; Albrecht Dürer [pnt] 'Young Man Wearing a Cap'; [c.] Lucas Cranach the Elder [pnt] 'Crucifixion'	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> 1st printing press estab d in Fleet Street	
	1501	Prince Arthur, Henry's heir, m. Catherine of Aragon – Arthur dies 6 mths later; 1st voyage of Anglo-Portugese Syndicate to N. America carrying slaves	<b>Art:</b> Holyrood House, Edinburgh, 1st built; [–1504] Michelangelo [sculpt] 'David'	<b>P:</b> Gavin Douglas (c.1447–1522) <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Aldine Press edtn of Virgil pub.d	<i>The Palace of Honour</i> [Scots poem; pmt.d 1553] Aldine Press edtn of Virgil
	1502	[>] Expanding discovery of 'The New World'	<b>Art:</b> Bellini, 'Baptism of Christ'; [–1503] Raphael [pnt], 'Coronation of the Virgin' & [–1503] 'Madonna Conestabile; Dürer, 'Hare'	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Further Aldine Press edtns of classical authors pub.d	
	1503	Catherine of Aragon betrothed to 11-yr-old Prince Henry, next in line to throne [becomes Henry VIII]; 1st gold sovereigns struck	Desiderius Erasmus, <i>Handbook of a Christian Soldier</i> . <b>Art:</b> Raphael, 'Crucifixion' [NG] & [–1504] 'The Knight's Dream (Vision of a Knight)' [NG]; Michelangelo [pnt] 'Doni Tondo (The Holy Family)'; [–1507] Leonardo da Vinci [pnt] 'Mona Lisa'; Matthias Grünewald [pnt] 'Lindenhardt Altarpiece'	<b>P:</b> William Dunbar (c.1460–c.1520) <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> <i>The Thistle and the Rose</i> [allegorical poem]	
	1504	Henry VII institutes state supervision of guilds & companies; 1st silver shilling minted	<b>Int. Lit.:</b> Jacopo Samazaro, <i>Arcadia</i> [lt. pastoral romance]. <b>Art:</b> Giorgione, 'Madonna with Sts Francis and Liberale'; Raphael, 'Marriage of the Virgin'; Dürer, 'Adoration of the Magi'; Cranach, 'The Flight into Egypt'		
	1505	Henry issues new Charter to Merchant Adventurers; [>] Portuguese trading empire expands in Indian Ocean & Far East	Christ's College, Cambridge, fnd.d. <b>Art:</b> Hieronymus Bosch [pnt] 'The Garden of Earthly Delights' [triptych; begun c.1485] & [c.] 'The Hay Wagon' [triptych]	<b>P:</b> John Skelton (c.1460–1529) <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> By now, Skelton is recognised as the 'Laureate' poet	[c.] <i>Ware the Hawk &amp; Philip Sparrow</i> [wrtn]
	1506	Commercial treaty between England & Netherlands	Columbus dies. <b>Art:</b> 1st-century BC Laocoön sculpture group discovered in Rome; [–1626] Donato Bramante builds the new Basilica of St Peter's, Rome; Giorgione, 'Tempesta'; Lorenzo Lotto [pnt] 'St Jerome in the Wilderness'		
	1507		Martin Waldseemüller, Ger. cartographer, 1st names 'America' on his new world map & globe. <b>Art:</b> Leonardo, 'Virgin of the Rocks' [NG has copy] & [c.] 'Madonna and Child with St Anne' [cartoon; NG]; Giorgione, 'Sleeping Venus'	<b>P:</b> Dunbar	[c.] <i>Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins</i>
	1508		Martin Luther becomes Professor of Divinity at Wittenberg. <b>Art:</b> [–1511] Baldassarre Peruzzi builds Villa Farnesina, Florence; [c.] Michelangelo [pnt]	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> 7 of Dunbar's poems pmt.d [1st e.g. of Scots typography]	

- 1509** Henry VII dies, Henry VIII becomes king of England – m. to Catherine of Aragon [v.1503]
- 1510** Parliament grants Henry VIII life-long duties on tonnage, poundage & wool
- 1511**
- 1512** **Art:** Dürer [engrv.] 'St Jerome' [BM]; [c.–1515] Grünewald, 'Isenheim Altarpiece'; [–1518] Pietro Torrigiano [sculpt] tomb of Henry VII & Elizabeth of York [Westminster Abbey]
- 1513** Scots, allied with French, beaten at Battle of Flodden; Balboa crosses Isthmus of Panama & discovers the Pacific; Florida discovered
- 1514** Peace and treaty between England & France – Spain now recognised as England's main rival
- 1515** Commercial treaty between England & Spain; Thomas Wolsey created Cardinal & becomes Lord Chancellor
- 1516** Princess Mary born [later Queen Mary I, 'Mary Tudor']
- 'Entombment of Christ' [NGI] & [–1512] prnts Sistine Chapel ceiling, Vatican, Rome; Lucas van Leyden [engrv.] 'David Playing Before Saul'
- Peter Henlein invents 'Nuremberg Egg' – 1st watch; Brasenose College, Oxford & St Paul's School, London, fnd.d. Erasmus, *In Praise of Folly* [pub.d Paris, 1511]. **Art:** [–1511] Raphael decorates Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican [incls 'School of Athens']; Cranach, 'Adam and Eve'
- [c.–1514] Erasmus, Professor of Greek at Cambridge. **Art:** [–1517] van Leyden [engrv.] 'Return of the Prodigal Son', 'Ecce Homo' & 'Ascent to Calvary'
- [c.] St. John's College, Cambridge, fnd.d. **Art:** [–1512] Raphael, 'Galatea' [fresco; Villa Farnesina, Florence]
- Art:** [–1515] Raphael, 'Madonna della Sedia'; Dürer [engrv.] 'Melancholia' & 'St Jerome in his Study'; [–1515] Antonio Correggio [pnt] 'Madonna with St Francis' [altarpiece]
- Art:** [–1530] Thomas Wolsey builds Hampton Court Palace – presented to Henry VIII, 1526; [–1516] Raphael, 'Baldassare Castiglione'; [–1516] Michelangelo [sculpt] 'Moses' & [c.] 'Bound Slaves'; [c.] Titian [pnt] 'Sacred and Profane Love'
- Erasmus edits Greek New Testament. **Int. Lit:** Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso* [completed in 3rd edtn, 1532]. **Art:** St George's Chapel, Windsor, completed; [c.–1518] Titian, 'Assumption of the Virgin' [altarpiece]
- P:** Alexander Barclay (1475?–1552)
- The Ship of Fools* [Eng. trans/imitation of earlier Ger. poem]
- P:** Douglas
- Virgil's *Aeneid* [Eng. trans wrtn; prnt.d 1553]
- P:** Barclay
- Eclogues* [completed; Eng. trans of Lat. history by Sallust]
- Pr/F:** Sir Thomas More (1477/8?–1535)
- [–1518] *History of King Richard III* [prnt.d 1557]
- Dr:** Skelton
- [c.] *Magnificence* [morality play wrtn; pub. posthum. 1533]
- Pr/F:** More
- Utopia* [pub.d in Latin at Louvain by Erasmus; Eng. trans 1551]

PERIOD	YEAR	INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS	SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS	AUTHORS	INDICATIVE TITLES
TUDOR	1517	'Evil May Day' riots in London against foreign merchants & craftsmen	Luther nails his 95 'Theses' [against sale of indulgences] to Wittenberg church door: start of Reformation; Corpus Christi: College, Oxford, fnd.d; coffee 1st imported to Europe. <b>Art:</b> [–1519] Raphael et al. 'Loggia di Psiche' [frescoes; Rome]; Andrea del Sarto [pnt] 'Madonna of the Harpies'	<b>P:</b> Skelton	[c.] <i>The Tunning of Elynour Rummyng</i> [wrtn; pmt.d. c.1521]
	1518	Wolsey's diplomacy brings Peace of London between England & continental powers; agreement between English merchants & Antwerp	Royal College of Physicians fnd.d; interrogation of Luther – refuses to recant. <b>Art:</b> Dürer [etch] 'Landscape with a Cannon' [BM]; [–c.1520] Titian, 'Bacchanal'	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b>	1st copyright awarded to the King's Printer
	1519	[–1521] Cortez conquers Mexico; [–1522] Magellan's voyage round the world begins	Da Vinci dies; Zwingli begins Protestant preaching in Zurich. <b>Art:</b> [–1526] Titian 'Madonna of the Pesaro Family' [altarpiece]		
	1520	Henry VIII meets Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor & King of Spain, signs secret treaty [hostile to France] at Calais; commercial treaty also made between England & Emperor; Henry meets Francis I of France on the Field of Cloth of Gold, but no treaty against Holy Roman Empire; Suleiman the Magnificent, Sultan of Turkey – empire stretches from Baghdad to Hungary; Magellan discovers Chile & 'Magellan Strait', enters & names 'Pacific'	Raphael dies; Luther declared a heretic by Pope, burns excommunication bull, pub.s reform pamphlets – Reformation movement in Netherlands; chocolate 1st imported to Europe. <b>Art:</b> [–c.1534] Michelangelo designs tombs & chapel for Medici, Florence; Dürer [draws] 'Erasmus'; Cranach [engrv.] 'Luther'	<b>P:</b> Skelton	[–1522] <i>Speke Parott, Collyn Clout, Why Come Ye Nat to Courte?</i> [wrtn; satirical attacks on Cardinal Wolsey]
	1521	Secret treaty against France made in Bruges between Wolsey & Charles V; Henry VIII declared 'Defender of the Faith' by Pope Leo X for his <i>Golden Book</i> [riposte to Luther]; Magellan dies [v.1522]	Luther condemned as heretic before the Diet of Worms – Edict outlawing him & his followers; silk 1st manufactured in France. <b>Art:</b> [–1522] Hans Holbein the Younger [pnt] 'The Dead Christ in the Tomb'	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b>	Books 1st printed in Cambridge
	1522	England declares war on France – Scot.-Fr. alliance; Magellan's ship returns to Spain – 1st circumnavigation of world	Luther's trans of New Testament 1st pub.d. <b>Art:</b> [–1523] Titian, 'Bacchus and Ariadne'; Correggio, 'Adoration of the Shepherds (Night)' [NG]	<b>P:</b> Skelton <b>Lit. 'Events':</b>	<i>Garlande of Laurell</i> Tudur Aled, major poet at Caerwys Eisteddfod
	1523	Statutes regulating trade intro.d – esp.ly against foreign merchants; invasion of France by Allies; Diet of Nuremberg – Pope promises to abolish abuses	Zwingli brings reformation to Zurich; John Fitzherbert, <i>Husbandry</i> [1st Eng. agricultural handbook]. <b>Art:</b> Holbein, 'Erasmus' [NG];		
	1524	Allies besiege Marselles; Francisco Pizarro explores S. American coast, lands in Ecuador	1st Lutheran hymn book; Erasmus, <i>De Libero Arbitrio</i> [refutes Luther]. <b>Art:</b> Michelangelo begins building Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence; [–1525] Holbein [woodcuts] 'The Dance of Death'; [–1530] Correggio, 'Assumption of the Virgin'		

- 1525** French defeated by Germans & Spanish at Pavia; peace between England & France; peasants' revolt in Germany violently suppressed – end of free peasantry
- 1526** Peace of Madrid between Charles V & Francis I; [–1761] Mogul dynasty established at Delhi; by Babar – takes Koh-i-Noor diamond from Agra; Cabot sails to River Plate estuary; Pizarro reaches Peru
- 1527** Henry VIII seeks annulment of marriage to Catherine of Aragon; Anglo-Fr. alliance of Amiens; Rome sacked by Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor; Babar defeats Hindus at Kanwaha; John Rut's voyage in search of NW Passage
- 1528** England declares war on Charles V & Holy Roman Empire; Eng. merchants arrested in Spain & Flanders as reprisal for Wolsey's wool trade policy
- 1529** Henry VIII accedes to Peace of Cambrai between Charles V & Francis I; fall of Wolsey [failure to secure Pope's acceptance of king's wish to divorce]; [–1532] Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor; rise of Thomas Cromwell; [–1536] Henry summons 'Reformation Parliament'; Treaty of Saragossa defines frontier between Sp. & Portug. territories in Pacific; 1st siege of Vienna by Turks
- 1530** Charles V crowned Holy Roman Emperor by Pope; Portuguese begin to colonise Brazil; [–1532] William Hawkins makes 3 expeditions to Brazil
- William Tyndale forced out of England – [–1526] his Eng. trans of New Testament pub.d at Worms; Wolsey founds Cardinal College, Oxford, [re-endowed as Christchurch, 1546]; Galen's medical works 1st pubd in original Grk. **Art:** Holbein, 'The Passion of Christ' [4 panels of altarpiece]; del Sarto, 'Madonna del Sacco'
- Tyndale's New Testament burned; Luther publs Order of Service in German & *De Servo Arbitrio* [against Erasmus]; Paracelsus extends use of medicine; Hippocrates's medical work 1st pub.d in original Grk. **Art:** Dürer, 'Four Apostles'; [c.] Cranach, 'Judith'; Lotto, 'Young Man in a Striped Coat'; van Leyden [pnt] 'The Last Judgment' [triptych]; Albrecht Altdorfer [pnt] 'Susannah at the Bath'
- Reformation spreading through Germany & Scandinavia. **Art:** Lotto, 'Portrait of Andrea Odoni' [Hampton Court]; Holbein, 'Sir Henry Guildford' [Royal Coll.]; Sir Thomas More & 'Lady with a Squirrel and Starling' [NG]
- Cocoa beans 1st imported to Europe; Baldassare Castiglione, *Il Cortegiano* [Eng. trans as *The Courtier*, 1561]. **Art:** Le Breton designs Palace of Fontainebleau for Francis I; [–1530] Holbein, 'St Mary with Burgomaster Jakob Meyer (The Darmstadt Madonna)'; [–1530] Parmigianino [pnt] 'Madonna of the Rose'
- Simon Fish, *A Supplication for the Beggars*; Diego Ribero produces accurate map of Pacific. **Art:** Michelangelo becomes overseer of fortifications. Florence, Titian, 'Pesaro Madonna'; Altdorfer, 'Battle of Arbelá'
- Henry VIII takes over & rebuilds Whitehall Palace; 'lepra'/'the pox' now identified as 'syphilis'. **Art:** [–1580] Limoges enamels on copper produced; Michelangelo [sculpt in marble] 'The Virgin and the Child Jesus', 'Medici Chapel'; Titian, 'Virgin and Child with St Catherine (Virgin with the Rabbit)'; [c.] Correggio, 'Madonna della Scodella', 'Leda and the Swan' & [–1532] 'Danaë'
- Prif:** Hector Boece  
(c.1465–1536) *History of Scotland* [in Latin]
- P:** Sir David Lindsay  
(1486–1555) *Complaynt to the King* [Scots poem]
- Lit. 'Events':**  
Skelton dies



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TUDOR	1531	Henry VIII declared 'Head of the Church in England'; Beggars Act distinguishes between able-bodied & impotent poor – unlicensed beggars to be whipped; Act regulates construction of London sewers; Charles V bans Reformation doctrines in Netherlands; Inquisition established in Portugal	Erasmus, 1st complete edtn of Aristotle. <b>Art:</b> Cranach, 'Venus and Amor'	<b>Pr/F:</b> Sir Thomas Elyot (c.1490–1546)	<i>The Boke named the Governour</i> [humanist treatise on moral education]
	1532	Submission of the clergy to Henry VIII – start of Reformation in England; Sir Thomas More resigns; Gynmt regulates various trades (e.g. wholesale price of wine); Turks invade Hungary; [–1534] Pizarro conquers Peru	Jean Calvin begins Reformation work in Paris. <b>Int. Lit.:</b> François Rabelais, <i>Pantagruel</i> [Fr. satirical fiction; v.1534]. <b>Art:</b> St James's Palace Chapel built; Holbein settles in London; [c.] Correggio, 'Jupiter and Io'; Cranach, 'Venus'; [–1536] Baldassare Peruzzi builds Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne, Rome	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> 1st complete edtn of Chaucer's works pub.d	
	1533	Henry declares his marriage to Catherine of Aragon void – secret m. to Anne Boleyn – Princess Elizabeth born [later Queen Elizabeth I] – Henry excommunicated by Pope Clement VII; Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury; Thomas Cromwell, Privy Councillor & Secretary of State; all farmers must grow flax – to check unemployment caused by linen imports; [–1584] Ivan the Terrible begins to rule Russia	Meat to be sold by weight – gynmt statute fixes maximum price for it; 1st cultivation of sugar-cane in Brazil. <b>Art:</b> Holbein, 'The Ambassadors: Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve' [NG], 'Robert Cheeseman of Dormanswell' & [c.] 'Thomas Cromwell' [miniature; NPG]; Titian, 'Charles V'	<b>Pr/F:</b> More <b>Dr:</b> John Heywood (c.1497–c.1580) <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> 'Morality Plays' were being performed in the early to mid-16th Century	<i>An Apologie of Syr Thomas More</i> [c.] <i>Play of the Weather</i>
	1534	Papal decree declares Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon valid – Parliament passes Act of Supremacy [Henry takes over Pope's powers & becomes Supreme Head of Church in England (1535)] & Act of Succession [Anne Boleyn's children by king to succeed him] – Sir Thomas More & Bishop Fisher refuse to swear to Acts – clergy forced to submit to king – no further money [Peter's Pence] to be paid to Rome; Jacques Cartier claims Labrador, N. America, for France	Act permits farmers only 2000 sheep to limit enclosure for pasture; wool cloth manufacture in Worcestershire limited to county's 5 towns; Ignatius Loyola fnds Society of Jesus [Jesuit Order] in Paris; Luther's trans of whole Bible completed. <b>Int. Lit.:</b> Rabelais, <i>Gargantua</i> [final full version of <i>Pantagruel</i> and <i>Gargantua</i> , 1564]. <b>Art:</b> [–1545] Michelangelo builds Palazzo Farnese, Rome; [–1540] Parmigianino, 'Madonna with the Long Neck'	<b>Dr:</b> J. Heywood [c.] <i>A Play of Love</i>	
	1535	English bishops abjure Pope's authority in England; Cromwell, Vicar General – orders visitation of churches & monasteries; trial and execution of More & Fisher; Statute of Uses restricts testamentary rights of landowners; [>] S. America being opened up – esp. by Spain – thro'out this period; Cartier discovers St Lawrence river	Miles Coverdale, 1st complete Eng. trans of Bible. <b>Art:</b> [c.] Holbein, 'Allegory of the Old and New Testaments' [SNG]		
	1536	Authority of Bishop of Rome declared void for England; [–1539] Act of Suppression begins dissolution of monasteries; reform of universities; Catherine of Aragon dies; Anne Boleyn executed – Henry m. Jane Seymour; Act of Union unites England & Wales [Welsh language excluded from official use]; [–1537] 'Pilgrimage of Grace' – insurrection in northern counties – crushed; law	Calvin goes to Geneva – 1st <i>Institutes</i> [in Latin]; at instigation of Henry VIII, Tyndale burned at stake in Netherlands. <b>Art:</b> Holbein becomes court painter to Henry VIII – [–1537] pmts 'Portrait of Jane Seymour'; [c.–1541] Michelangelo, 'Last Judgement' [Sistine Chapel]; [–1538] Titian, 'Duke of Urbino' & 'Eleonora Gonzaga' [Duke's wife]; Jacopo Sansovino begins the Old Library, Piazzetta San Marco, Venice		

- introduced for relief of poor; Cartier claims Canada for France
- 1537** Henry VIII orders *Bishops' Book* to be pub.d – strictly orthodox to RC doctrine, except for authority of Pope; Jane Seymour dies; leaving son, Prince Edward [later King Edward VI]; Act of Parliament orders all Irish to speak English & wear English-style dress
- 1538** Pope Paul III issues Bull of excommunication & deposition against Henry VIII; Thomas à Becket's shrine at Canterbury & other holy places destroyed; Turks capture Aden
- 1539** Act of the Six Articles (the 'Bloody Statute') abolishes 'diversity of opinions' & insists on fundamental RC doctrines for worship in England – burning at stake punishment for breach of Act; marriage contract between Henry VIII & Anne of Cleves [to cement ties with Protestant Germany]; merchants granted free trade for 7 years; Spain annexes Cuba
- 1540** Henry m. Anne of Cleves – marriage annulled in 6 mths – Henry m. Catherine Howard; Cromwell executed; barbers & surgeons joined in one Guild; Spain discovers California
- 1541** Henry declares himself King of Ireland & Head of Irish Church; Wales given representation in Parliament; Catholic conspiracy to raise N. of England – Henry makes a 'progress' there; Hungary conquered & [–1688] becomes a province of Turkey; [>] N. America being opened up thro'out this period
- 1542** War between England & Scotland; Catherine Howard beheaded; Mary, Queen of Scots, born – James V dies – his widow, Mary of Guise, regent of Scotland; Inquisition estab.d in Cologne & Rome
- 1543** Henry VIII m. Catherine Parr; Anglo-Scots war ends with proposal that Mary Q of S should m. Prince Edward – Scots repudiate this [v.1544]; Wales integrated further into England by creation of 12 counties, introduction of English common law & allocation of seats at Westminster; Henry VIII in alliance with Charles V against France
- Sansovino begins Palazzo Corner (Ca' Grande), Venice [designed, 1532]
- Sir Thomas Elyot pub.s a Latin–English dictionary; **Art:** Holbein issues woodcut series, 'The Dance of Death' [begun 1523] & [c.] pnts 'Edward, Prince of Wales'; Titian, 'The Venus of Urbino'
- Henry VIII licenses the 'Great Bible' [based on combination of Tyndale's & Coverdale's Eng. trans – preface by Cranmer – copies to be placed in every parish church]. **Art:** [–1540] Holbein, 'Anne of Cleves' [watercolour; V&A]
- Henry VIII fnds 1st Cambridge Regius Professorship; Pope approves Jesuit Order. **Int. Lit.:** Aretino, *Orazia*. **Art:** Stirling Palace begun by James V of Scotland; [c.] Holbein, 'Catherine Howard'
- Henry VIII fnds King's Schools at Chester & Worcester; Southwell Minster fnd.d; John Knox begins Reformation in Scotland; Calvin estab.s Protestant church at Geneva; Loyola, 1st General of Jesuit missionaries
- Magdalene College, Cambridge, fnd.d; Robert Recorde, *Ground of Artes* – 1st maths book in English. **Art:** [–1545] Michelangelo, 'Crucifixion of St Peter' & 'Conversion of St Paul' [frescoes, Pauline Chapel, Vatican]; [c.–1546] Bronzino [pnt] 'Allegory of Venus, Cupid, Folly, and Time' [NG]
- Copernicus, *De revolutionibus* [treatise on sun-centred universe – supersedes Ptolemaic system – banned by RC Church until 1758]; Andreas Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* [repudiates Galen & advances biological science]. **Art:** Benvenuto Cellini completes gold salt-cellar for Francis I of France
- [c.] *King John* [1st Eng. history play]
- Licensing of books commences as monastery libraries continue to be destroyed
- [c.] Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503–1542) & Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1518–1547), write their poetry – 1st pub.d in *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557)
- Dr:** John Bale (1495–1563)
- Lit. Events:**
- Lit. Events:**
- Dr:** Sir David Lindsay [or Lindsay] (c.1486–1555)
- Dr:** J. Heywood
- [c.] *The Playe called the Four Ps* [prnt.d, 1569]
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TUDOR	1544	'Rough Wooing' [v.1543]; Eng. army invades Scotland & devastates South & Edinburgh; 3rd Succession Act places Princesses Mary & Elizabeth in line to throne; Henry VIII & Charles V invade France – Henry captures Boulogne	Litany issued in English; 'lion passant' 1st regularly stamped on Eng. silver; Holyrood House, Scotland, destroyed by English – immediately rebuilt		
	1545	Scots defeat English at Ancrum Moor – English immediately re-invade; Fr. invasion scare – loss of royal ship, 'Mary Rose' – England in command of Channel; [–1547] Council of Trent reformulates RC doctrine & administration – begins Counter-Reformation against Protestantism [also meets 1551–2, 1562–3]	Services for morning & evening prayer issued in English; 1st complete edtn of Luther's works. <b>Art:</b> [c.] Titian, 'Portrait of a Man (Young Englishman)', 'Pietro Aretino' & [c.] 'Danaë'; [–1554] Cellini [sculpt] 'Perseus with the Head of Medusa'	<b>Pr/F:</b> Elyot Roger Ascham (1515–68)	<i>Defence of Good Women</i> <i>Toxophilus</i> [treatise on archery]
	1546	Anglo-French war ends – Boulogne remains English for 8 yrs; Henry fnds Eng. Navy Board; large weaving factory estab'd by William Stumpe – employs 500 workers; Scottish revolt against Rome begins; Empire & Papacy allied against Protestants	Henry VIII fnds Trinity College, Cambridge & Oxford Regius Professorships; 1st accurate map of Britain produced in Rome. <b>Art:</b> Louvre, Paris, rebuilt; [–1564] Michelangelo, chief architect, St Peter's, Rome; [–1580] Andrea Palladio estab's Palladian architecture in Italy [incl's Villa Capra (Villa Rotunda), Vicenza, 1550–1 & Teatro Olimpico, Vicenza, begun 1580]; [–1547] Cellini [sculpt] 'Cosimo I de' Medici'; Gerlach Flicke [pnt] 'Thomas Cranmer' [NPG]; [c. & attrib.] William Scrots [pnt] 'Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey' [NPG]	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> <i>Yn y Llynyr hwmn</i> [1st book prnt. d in Welsh]	
	1547	Death of Henry VIII, King Edward VI [aged 4] accedes – Duke of Somerset, Protector [–1552] – [> period of radical Protestantism in Eng. Church ensues – Six Articles repealed [v. 1539]; Three Acts to combat enclosure; fierce vagrancy laws introduced; 1st Poor Law raised in London; Treasons Act removes much repressive legislation; English invade & defeat Scotland	<i>Book of Homilies</i> [for use by clergy]] 1st issued; Knox exiled to France; [c.] Nostradamus begins to make predictions. <b>Art:</b> Tintoretto [pnt] 'The Last Supper'	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey [poet] executed	
	1548	Mary Q of S sent to France to be betrothed to the Dauphin [v.1558]; Craft Guilds [except London's] & Chantry chapels abolished; religious unrest in 'liberal' atmosphere created by Treasons Act of 1547	Roger Ascham becomes tutor to Princess Elizabeth; 7 professorships fnd.d at London, but no university estab.d until 1828; Knox, <i>Epistle on Justification by Faith</i> . <b>Art:</b> Palazzo Pitti, Florence begun; Titian, 'Emperor Charles V'; Tintoretto, 'Miracle of the Slave (St Mark Rescuing a Slave)'	<b>Pr/F:</b> Edward Hall [or Halle] (c.1499–1547)	<i>The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Families of York and Lancaster</i> [posthm.]; aka <i>Hall's Chronicle</i>
	1549	Act of Uniformity: mass & use of Latin abolished in Eng. church services; fierce Treason Act reverses 'liberal' legislation of 1547–8 – rebellions suppressed in Eng. counties [against enclosures & new religious policies]; price-rings by provision dealers made illegal; tax on sheep & cloth; 1st bad harvest of Edward VI's reign; England & France at war; Jesuit missionaries reach Japan	1st <i>English Book of Common Prayer</i> pub.d [mainly edited by Cranmer] – use enforced from now on; [c.] Lindisfarne Castle, Holy Island, begun; Somerset House fnd.d. <b>Art:</b> [c.] Tintoretto, 'St. Augustine Healing the Plague-Stricken'	<b>Theory/Crit:</b>	Joachim du Bellay pub's manifesto of the Pléiade [group of modernising Fr. poets, incl's Pierre de Ronsard, v. 1550], <i>Defence and Illustration of the French Language</i> [advocates use of French not Latin for literature & classical & Italian models not medieval traditions]

- 1550** Peace of Boulogne between England & France & England & Scotland – Boulogne & Scotland relinquished to France; 2nd bad harvest of Edward VI's reign – local uprisings continue; boom in Eng. cloth exports
- 1551** 42 Articles intro.d to give Eng. Protestant religion a definitive creed; 'Great debasement' & revaluation of Eng. coinage; 3rd bad harvest – unrest continues; fall in cloth exports – 16C boom over; [–1552] 2nd session of Council of Trent [v.1545]
- 1552** 2nd Act of Uniformity [v. also 1549, 1559, 1562] confirms 42 Articles of 1551 & prescribes use of new & more clearly Protestant Book of Common Prayer [withdrawn on Mary's accession, 1553]; Act passed for collection of funds in churches to assist 'deserving' poor; 1st 'Bridewell' [gaol] estab.d in London
- 1553** Edward VI dies – leading Protestants proclaim Lady Jane Grey queen to ensure Protestant succession – reigns for 10 days – replaced by Mary I (Mary Tudor) – RC monarchy restored – England reconciled with Rome – RC bishops reinstated – Protestant bishops arrested; Richard Chancellor's voyage to Moscow – treaty gives trading freedom to Eng. ships
- 1554** Lady Jane Grey executed; Sir Thomas Wyatt [son of poet] leads failed rebellion of Kentish men against Mary – executed; Mary m. Philip (later II) of Spain, son & heir to Charles V; Act of Supremacy revoked [v.1534] – RCism re-estab.d in England – Cardinal Pole arrives as Papal Legate; [–1555] Muscovy Trading Co. estab.d to develop Anglo-Russian trade [1st joint-stock Co.]
- 1555** Act restores papal supremacy; [–1558] Queen ('Bloody Mary') begins persecution of Eng. Protestants – Bishops Hooper, Ridley and Latimer burned – Cranmer deprived of Archbishopric of Canterbury; Knox returns from exile in France – unites Scottish Protestants; Peace of Augsburg accepts Protestantism as dominant in Germany
- 1556** Cranmer burned at stake – Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury, Charles V abdicates – Philip II, king of Spain – Mary supports Spain in war with France; worst harvest of century – series of epidemics begins; [–1605] Akbar the Great, Mogul emperor – defeats Hindus at Panipat
- Int. Lit.:** Pierre de Ronsard, *Odes* [Fr. Pliéade movement, v.1549]. **Art:** Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (enlarged edn, 1568); [–1551] Titian, 'King Philip II of Spain' & 'Johann Friedrich, Elector of Saxony'; [c.] Tintoretto, 'Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet'
- [c.] coaches 1st intro.d in England. **Music:** [>] Giovanni da Palestrina comp. many masses as master of the Julian choir, St Peter's, Rome. **Art:** Tintoretto, 'Susanna and the Elders'
- Christ's Hospital, London & Shrewsbury Schools fnd.d. **Int. Lit.:** de Ronsard, *Les Amours de Cassandre* [Petraarchan sonnets]. **Music:** Thomas Tallis [father of Eng. cathedral music] comp. 'Service in the Dorian Mode' [1st pub.d 1641]
- The 'Great Harry' [largest Eng. ship] burned; Tonbridge School fnd.d; [–1594] Richard Hooker, *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* [defence of C of E]; last 3 vols pub.d posthm. in 17C. **Art:** [c.] Titian, 'Danaë'; Paolo Veronese [pnt] 'Templation of St Anthony' & 'Juno Bestowing Her Gifts on Venice'
- Int. Lit.:** Matteo Bendello, *Novelle* [2 14 lt. stories]. **Music:** [c.] Palestrina [comp] church music & part-songs. **Art:** Cellini, 'Perseus holding the head of Medusa' [bronze statue]; [c.] Titian, 'Venus and Adonis'
- St John's & Trinity Colleges, Oxford & Gresham's School fnd.d; Gray's Inn Hall, London, begun. **Int. Lit.:** Ronsard, *Hymnes*. **Art:** [–1572] Vasari redesigns Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, for Cosimo de' Medici & decorates interior with frescoes; Michelangelo [sculpt] 'Rondanini Pietà'; Tintoretto, 'Venus, Vulcan and Mars' [completed]
- 1st trucks run on rails in Germany. **Int. Lit.:** Ronsard, *Les Amours de Marié*. **Music:** 'Old Hundredth' psalm tune in Knox's Psalter].
- Pr/F:** More *Utopia* [posthm. Eng. trans.]
- Dr:** Anon [attrib. to William Stevenson (d. 1575)]
- Dr:** Nicholas Udall (1505–56)
- Theory/Crit:** Thomas Wilson, *Arte of Rhetorique*
- P:** Elizabeth Tudor (later Queen Elizabeth I; 1533–1603)
- Lit. 'Events':** Stationers' Co. acquires monopoly of Eng. printing [Royal Charter, 1557] – industry required to censor the works it was publishing

PERIOD	YEAR	INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS	SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS	AUTHORS	INDICATIVE TITLES
TUDOR/ELIZABETHAN	1557	Anglo-Fr. war – France defeated by English & Spanish; Disputation at Worms – last attempt by Holy Roman Empire to reconcile RC & Lutheran views	1st Covenant signed in Scotland; Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, fnd.d; Repton College fnd.d. <b>Int. Lit.:</b> Jörg Wickram, <i>Der Goldfaden</i> [early Ger. novel]. <b>Art:</b> Mosque of Suleiman I, Constantinople, built	<b>P:</b> Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1518–47) <b>Lit. Events:</b>	Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i> , Bks II, IV [posthm.; Eng. trans]  Richard Tottel (ed.), <i>Songes and Sonnetts</i> [‘Tottel’s Miscellany’; incl.s poetry of Surrey & Wyatt]; play entitled <i>A Sack Full of News</i> pf.d & suppressed at Boar’s Head Inn Theatre, Aldgate
	1558	English lose Calais to France [last Eng. possession in Europe]; Mary I dies – Queen Elizabeth I accedes; William Cecil, Secretary of State; Mary Q of S. m. Francis, Dauphin of France; 1st Russian trade delegation to London	[c.] 1st firearms manufactured: Knox, <i>First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women</i> [attack on the rule of Mary I in England & Mary of Guise in Scotland, regent & mother of Mary, Q of S]. <b>Int. Lit.:</b> Marguerite d’Angoulême, <i>The Heptaméron</i> . <b>Art:</b> Sir Thomas Lucy builds Charlecote Park, Warwickshire; [c.] Pieter Brueghel the Elder [pnt] ‘The Alchemist at Work’	<b>Lit. Events:</b>	Thomas Phaer’s trans of Virgil pub.d
	1559	Acts of Supremacy & Uniformity restore & fully establish C of E [Queen, ‘Supreme Governor’] – England severed from Rome – Court of High Commission estab.d to enforce Acts & religious conformity; Philip II of Spain [Mary I’s widower] offers to m. Elizabeth – refused; Francis II accedes to Fr. throne – Mary Q of S now also Queen of France; Huguenots estab. reformed churches in France	Revised [less extreme] Prayer Book of Elizabeth I issued – a Bible to be placed in every church – priests can marry; [>] beginnings of Puritanism; Anyot’s Fr. trans of Plutarch’s <i>Lives</i> . <b>Art:</b> Titian, ‘Diana and Actaeon’ [on loan to SNG]	<b>P/R:</b> Anon	<i>Mirror for Magistrates</i> [didactic chronicles; 5 edtns by 1610]
	1560	Treaty of Berwick: Eng. military help given to Scottish rebels; Treaty of Edinburgh: Fr. troops to withdraw – Francis II & Mary reject it; Scots Parliament estab.s Reformed Church – papal authority abolished – only Protestant faith recognised; [–1561] Sir Thomas Gresham: reforms currency [‘Gresham’s Law’: coins of lower intrinsic value will drive coins of higher intrinsic value but equal legal exchange value out of circulation]; Parliament in Ireland imposes Royal Supremacy & Book of Common Prayer; Francis II of France dies	[>] Eng. & Scot. settlers begin to estab. Eng. language in Ireland & Scots in Ulster; ‘Geneva Bible’ pub.d by reformers; Knox’s writings form framework for Scottish Prebyterianism; Elizabeth I fnd.s Westminster School; Peter Whithorne, Eng. trans of Machiavelli, <i>The Art of War</i> . <b>Art:</b> [–1580] Vasari builds Uffizi Palace, Florence; formal gardens at Penshurst Place, Kent, laid out; [c.–1570] Tintoretto, ‘Susannah and the Elders’; Titian, ‘Death of Actaeon’ [NG]	<b>Dr:</b> Jasper Heywood (1535–98)	<i>Thyestes</i> [trans of Seneca; pmt.d]
1561	Mary Q of S [as widowed Q of France] returns to Scotland – Elizabeth I refuses her passage over English soil	Knox estab.s Scottish Church constitution; [–20C] sterling standard silver coinage estab.d; Merchant Taylor’s School, London, fnd.d; Fallopius undertakes research on female anatomy	<b>Dr:</b> Thomas Norton (1532–84) & Thomas Sackville (1536–1608) <b>Lit. Events:</b>	<i>Gorbuduc</i> [1st Eng. blank verse tragedy – pf.d for Elizabeth I; pmt.d 1565; rev.d edtn 1570, with title <i>The Tragicall of Ferrex and Porrex</i> ]  Sir Thomas Hoby, Eng. trans of Castiglione’s <i>The Courtier</i> (1528)	
1562	4th Act of Uniformity prescribes use of Book of Common Prayer [v. also 1549, 1552, 1559]; Elizabeth I nearly dies of smallpox – succession	<b>Theory/Crit:</b> Julius Caesar Scaliger, <i>Poetics</i> [posthm.; Fr. neo-classical literary theory]  [–1572] Middle Temple Hall, London, built; Torquato Tasso, <i>Rinaldo</i> [Ital. poem]. <b>Art:</b> Tintoretto, ‘Christ at the Sea of Galilee’, & [–1566] ‘Miracles of St Mark’			

- dilemma; Treaty of Hampton Court between Elizabeth & Fr. Protestant Huguenots – Fr. religious wars begin; Eng. occupy Le Havre; [–1563] Council of Trent re-opens [v. 1545]; 1st voyage of Sir John Hawkins to W. Indies carrying W. African slaves
- 1563** Convocation of Anglican Church approves 'Thirty-Nine Articles' [rev.d 1562] setting out its doctrine; [–1814] Statute of Apprentices seeks to solve unemployment & poverty by giving every man a trade [regulates conditions of employment for mass of population]; Act against enclosure; serious outbreak of plague in London & elsewhere – 1000s die; French regain Le Havre
- 1564** Elizabeth I suggests Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, might m. Mary Q of S; 1st Puritan opposition to Anglicanism; Court of High Commission estab.d in Ireland to enforce conformity – riots against Eng. 'plantation' [colonisation] of Ireland; Anglo-Fr. peace; Anglo-Sp. trade war; Eng. merchants make trading agreements with Ger. & Dutch counterparts; [–1565] Hawkins 2nd voyage to W. Indies
- Mary Q of S m. her cousin, Lord Darnley
- 1565** Succession issue between Elizabeth I & Parliament – she forbids discussion of possible marriage; [>] many Puritan Bills brought before Commons; [–1568] Gresham builds & fnd.s Royal Exchange, London; Mary Q of S's secretary, David Rizzio, murdered in Holyrood Palace
- 1567** Darnley murdered by Earl of Bothwell [perhaps at Mary Q of S's instigation] – Mary m. Bothwell – defeated by Scots lords – forced to abdicate – is imprisoned – her 1-yr-old son becomes King James VI [later also James I of England] – regency in Scotland; [–1568] 1st revolt of Netherlands suppressed by Sp. troops under Duke of Alba; [–1568] Hawkins 3rd voyage to W. Indies [with Francis Drake]
- [3 canvases]; [–1565] Brueghel, 'Fall of Icarus'; Veronese, 'The Marriage at Cana'
- 2nd *Book of Homilies*; John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* ['Foxe's Book of Martyrs' – defence of Protestant reformers – Eng. trans from Latin]. **Music**: William Byrd appointed organist at Lincoln Cathedral. **Art**: John Shute, *First and Chief Grounds of Architecture*; Brueghel, 'Tower of Babel'
- 1st horse-drawn coach intro.d in England from Holland; 1st complete *Index* of prohibited books issued by Pope. **Art**: Michelangelo dies; Philibert Delorme begins building Tuileries, Paris; [–1587] Tintoretto, 'The Life of Christ' [cycle of paintings; incs 'The Flight into Egypt']
- [>] sweet potatoes, etc. intro.d into Britain from America; pencils 1st made in England; John Stow, *Summary of English Chronicles*. **Art**: Brueghel, 'The Seasons'; [c.] Titian, 'Annunciation'; [c.] Tintoretto, 'Crucifixion'; Giambologna [sculpt] 'Samson Slaying a Philistine' [V&A]
- Art**: [–1580] Longleat House, Wiltshire, built; [c.] Veronese, 'Family of Darius before Alexander' [NG]
- Welsh trans of New Testament & Prayer Book; Rugby School fnd.d. **Music**: Palestrina [comp] 'Missa Papae Marcelli'; [c.] Thomas Tallis, Eng. composer of church music, etc., active. **Art**: Titian, 'Ecce Homo'; [c.] Giambologna, 'Venus'
- P**: Barnabe Googe (1540–94)
- Eclogues, Epitaphs and Sonnets* [1st Eng. pastorals]
- P**: George Gascoigne (c.1539–78)
- The Supposes* [trans & adaptn of Ariosto – prose comedy]
- P**: George Turberville (c.1540–1610)
- Epitaphes, Epigrams, Songs, and Sonets*
- play entitled *Samson* pf.d at Red Lion Inn Theatre, Stepney
- Lit. 'Events'**: Pierre de Ronsard
- Theory/Crit**: Pierre de Ronsard
- Lit. 'Events'**: Arthur Golding, Eng. trans of Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Bks I–IV
- Lit. 'Events'**: William Adlington, Eng. trans of Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*
- P**: George Gascoigne (c.1539–78)
- The Supposes* [trans & adaptn of Ariosto – prose comedy]
- Dr**: Gascoigne
- Lit. 'Events'**: William Adlington, Eng. trans of Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*
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TUDOR/ELIZABETHAN	1568	Mary Q of S escapes captivity – again defeated – flees to England – Elizabeth I imprisons her for life; Elizabeth orders seizure of Sp. ships carrying bullion to pay Alba's troops – Alba's 'Bloody Council' condemns all Protestants in Netherlands to death as heretics – 1000s of Huguenot artisans flee to England; Hawkins's ships attacked by Spanish off Mexico; wars between Huguenots & Catholics in France continue	Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, supervises preparation of the 'Bishops' Bible'; Eisteddfod held at Flint, Wales; school for Eng. Jesuits fnd.d at Douai. <b>Art:</b> Brueghel, 'Peasant Dance' & 'Peasant Wedding'		
	1569	Pro-Catholic 'rising of Northern Earls' to replace Elizabeth I with Mary Q of S – quelled	Gerardus Mercator's Chart & 'Cosmographia' [map of the world] fnds modern cartography. <b>Art:</b> [c.] El Greco [pnt] 'Coronation of a Saint or King' [Modena polyptych]		
	1570	Elizabeth I declared usurper by Pope & excommunicated – RC subjects absolved from allegiance to crown; Ridolfo plot against Elizabeth foiled [RC conspiracy supported by Spain to overthrow Queen & substitute Mary Q of S]; 1st voyage of Francis Drake to W. Indies	<b>Art:</b> Palladio, <i>Treatise on Architecture</i> ; [–1580] Veronese, 'The Finding of Moses'; [–1580] Giambologna [sculpt] 'Flying Mercury' [bronze]; El Greco, 'Christ Expelling the Merchants from the Temple'	<b>Pr/F:</b> Ascham	<i>The Scholemaster</i> [posthm.; wrtn c. 1558–63; treatise on education]
	1571	Further tension between Parliament & Elizabeth over Succession issue [re Mary Q of S]; Parliament prohibits papal bulls in England; Treasons Act – high treason to deny Royal Supremacy or call Queen a heretic; Elizabeth opens Royal Exchange [London Stock Exchange; v.1566] – [>] England's capitalist economy grows – extensive overseas trade; sea battle of Lepanto destroys invading Turks' naval power	Statutory confirmation of [revised] Thirty-Nine Articles – now printed in Prayer Book; Jesus College, Oxford & Harrow School fnd.d. <b>Art:</b> [c.] Veronese, 'Feast in the House of the Pharisee'		
	1572	Duke of Norfolk executed for part in Ridolfo plot [v.1570]; Succession issue continues; Duke of Alençon, suitor to Elizabeth; Poor Relief Act levies 1st compulsory rate on each parish & defines vagrancy; St Bartholomew's Day massacre of 1000s of Protestants in Paris; Drake's expedition to attack Sp. harbours in the Americas & seize treasure – 1st Englishman to see the Pacific	Society of Antiquaries fnd.d; Bombelli, <i>Algebra</i> ; Etienne, <i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i> . <b>Art:</b> Nicholas Hilliard [pnt] 'Elizabeth I' [miniature; NPG] & 'Portrait of a Man of Twenty-Four' [miniature; V&A]		Actors not under aristocratic patronage declared vagabonds
1573	Sir Francis Walsingham, Sec. of State – creates 'trained bands' of militia; Edinburgh Castle falls to Anglo-Scottish force; 1st Earl of Essex granted 'plantation' rights in Ireland – [>] ruthless colonisation underway; Hawkins, Treasurer of Navy Board – promotes greater efficiency	<b>Int. Lit.:</b> Tasso, <i>Aminta</i> [lit. pastoral play]. <b>Art:</b> [c.] Titian, 'Pieta' [unfinished]; Veronese, 'Adoration of the Magi' [NG]; Giambologna, 'Astronomy' [glit bronze]		<b>P:</b> Isabella Whitney (late-1540s-date unknown) A Sweet Nosegay	
1574	1st RC priests' mission from continent to reconvert England; Anglo-Sp. settlement of claims & counter-claims since 1568	<b>Art</b> Taddeo Zuccaro [pnt] 'Elizabeth I' & 'Mary, Queen of Scots'			

- 1575** Elizabeth I declines sovereignty of Netherlands; Parliament wins right of freedom from arrest for members & their servants; Essex's army massacres inhabitants of Rathlin Island off the NE coast of Ireland
- 1576** Poor Relief Act makes materials available for able-bodied poor to work & requires all corporate towns to estab. workhouses & Bridewells for vagabonds; Jesuit priests arrive in England from Douai; unpaid Sp. troops sack Antwerp – Sp. control of Netherlands collapses; [–1579] Martin Frobisher's 3 voyages to find NW Passage – annexes Frobisher Bay
- 1577** 1st Jesuit missionary executed at Tyburn; complaints about enclosure of commons for breeding; [–1580] Drake begins voyage round the world
- 1578** Levant Trading Co. [for Turkey] fnd'd; Drake sails through Magellan Strait into Pacific; King James VI assumes personal rule [gynmt] of Scotland
- 1579** Duke of Alençon visits England to woo Elizabeth I; [–1583] Earl of Desmond's rebellion in Ireland; a further Jesuit mission to England underway; Eastland Trading Co. [for Baltic] granted Charter; Sp. reconquest of Netherlands begins; Drake claims 'New Albion' [California] for England
- 1580** New mission of RC priests to England [incl. Edmund Campion]; earthquake in London; Lord Grey, Lord Deputy of Ireland, & Sir Walter Raleigh ruthlessly suppress rebellion – many massacred; treaty with Turkey opens up trade; Drake returns laden with treasure – 1st Englishman to circumnavigate the globe
- MUSIC:** Tallis & Byrd [comp.] *Cantiones Sacrae*. **Art:** [c.] Veronese, 'Mystic Marriage of St Catherine'
- PR/F:** Turberville  
**Lit. 'Events':** George Gascoigne  
**Theory/Crit:**
- Sir Humphrey Gilbert, *Discourse of a discovery for a new passage to Cathia* [in favour of Eng. colonisation]. Leonard Digges, Eng. trans of Copernicus. **Art:** [–1584] Veronese, 'Mars and Venus'
- William Harrison, *Description of England & Description of Britain* [wrtn for] Raphael Holinshed [compiler], *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* ['Holinshed's Chronicles'; reissued posthum. in 3 vols, 1586–7]. **Art:** El Greco, 'The Assumption of the Virgin'; Hilliard, 'Self-Portrait' [miniature; V&A]
- Jesuit Eng. College, Douai, moves to Rheims. **Int. Lit.:** Ronsard, *Les Amours d'Hélén*
- Jesuit Eng. College moves to Rome; Christopher Saxton pub's atlas of England & Wales [commissioned by Elizabeth I; 1st national atlas of any country]. **Art:** El Greco, 'Espolio (Disrobing of Christ)'; [–1583] Giambologna [sculpt] 'Rape of the Sabinas' [Florence]
- [c.] coffee 1st imported to Italy; John Stow, *Annals, or a General Chronicle of England*; Michel de Montaigne, *Essais* [& 1588; v.1603]. **Music:** [c.] early ref. made to song 'Greensleeves'. **Art:** Palladio builds Teatro Olimpico, Vicenza; Woolaton Hall, Nottinghamshire, begun; El Greco, 'Adoration of the Name of Jesus (Dream of Philip II)' & 'The Martyrdom of St Maurice'. **Lit. 'Events':** Spenser & Raleigh go to Ireland; performance of plays on Sunday banned; last Miracle Plays pf.d at Coventry
- The Book of Falconrie*  
Paul's Theatre [private] opens
- Certain Notes of Instruction on Making of Verse* [early Eng. essay on subject]
- The Noble Art of Venerie*  
James Burbage's 'The Theatre', Shoreditch, opens [outside city limits], replacing one at Red Lion Inn [v.1567]; 1st [private] Blackfriars Theatre opens [with child actors]; [>] theatrical activity at Newington Butts [Elephant & Castle]
- [–1580] 'Old' *Arcadia* [wrtn; prose romance; v. also 1580, 1590 & 1593]
- Curtain Theatre, Finsbury Fields, opens
- Euphues, The Anatomie of Wit* [Pt I]  
[c.] *The Lady of May* [masque pf.d before Q. Elizabeth]
- The Shepheard's Calendar*
- Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* [Eng. trans from French]
- School of Abuse* [satirical attack on the theatre]
- Astrophil and Stella* [sonnet sequence wrtn; pub.d posthum., 1591]  
*Euphues and his England* [Pt II]
- [c. –1583] *An Apologie for Poetrie* [wrtn; pub.d posthum., 1595; also pub.d as *The Defence of Poesie*, 1595]
- P:** Edmund Spenser (1552–99)  
**PR/F:** Sir Thomas North (1535–1600)  
**Theory/Crit:** Stephen Gosson
- P:** Sidney  
**PR/F:** Lyly  
**Theory/crit:** Sidney



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TUDOR/ELIZABETHAN	1581	Campion executed; [s] Gvnmt repression of Eng. RCs increases – heavy fines for recusancy [refusal to attend C of E when legally compulsory]; Elizabeth I's proposed m. to Duke Francis of Anjou under negotiation; Levant [trading] Co. fndd	Sedan chairs intro.d in England; Galileo discovers regular periodicity of the pendulum. <b>Int. Lit.:</b> Tasso, <i>Jerusalem Delivered</i> [epic of 1st Crusade]; <b>Music:</b> [c.] 1st dramatic ballet pf.d at Versailles. <b>Art:</b> [–1584] Tintoretto, 'Triumph of Venice as Queen of the Seas' [ceiling decoration]	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Jasper Heywood [8 others], Eng. trans, <i>Seneca his Ten Tragedies</i> ; Joseph Hall, Eng. trans <i>Ten Books of Homer's Iliads</i>	
	1582	All Jesuits & seminary priests declared traitors; Duke Francis leaves – m. negotiations end; Elizabeth I revises weights standards [unchanged until 1824]; 1st London waterworks constructed; 'Raid of Ruthven' – King James VI kidnapped by Scots Protestants to protect him from RCs	Pope Gregory XIII intros the Gregorian Calendar [11 days ahead of the old one] – England resists it until 1752; Edinburgh University fnd.d; Richard Hakluyt, <i>Divers Voyages touching the Discovery of America</i> [advocates colonisation of N. America]; George Buchanan, <i>Reverum Scotticarum Historia</i> [20 vols]	<b>P:</b> Thomas Watson (c.1557–92) <b>Pr/F:</b> Sidney <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Richard Stanyhurst, Eng. trans <i>The First Four Books of Virgil his Aeneis</i>	<i>Hecatompathia or the Passionate Century of Love</i> [100 18-line 'sonnets'] [–1584] 'New' <i>Arcadia</i> [wrt'n; unfinished revision; v.1577, 1590 & 1593]
	1583	Somerville plot to assassinate Elizabeth I discv.d – also Throckmorton plot for Sp. invasion on behalf of Mary, Q of S; John Whitgift becomes Archbishop of Canterbury – to check Puritanism & ensure conformity; Earl of Desmond killed – Ir. rebellion ends [v.1579]; Sir Humphrey Gilbert annexes Newfoundland for Eng. crown & establs 1st colony of British Empire	A life assurance policy 1st issued; Edinburgh University fnd.d; Thomas Smith, <i>De Republica Anglorum</i> [describes Elizabethan constitution]; Philip Stubbes, <i>Anatomie of Abuses</i> [Puritan pamphlet denouncing luxury of the times]; Joseph Julius Scaliger estab.s scientific basis for ancient chronology	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> 'Queen Elizabeth's Men' [theatre Co.] formed; 1st Cambridge University Press printer employed	
	1584	Pope launches 'Enterprise of England' to restore RCism to England; Sp. ambassador expelled; alliance between Elizabeth I & James VI of Scotland to defend religion; Elizabeth frustrates Puritan campaign in Parliament to further reform Church; [–1589] Sir Walter Raleigh sends expedition to N. America to annex lands in the Queen's name	Emmanuel College, Cambridge & Uppingham School fnd.d; Knox, <i>History of the Reformation in Scotland</i> [posthm.]; Hakluyt, <i>A Discourse Concerning the Western Planting</i> [supports Raleigh's plan to colonise Virginia]. <b>Music:</b> Palestrina [comp] setting for the 'Song of Solomon'. <b>Art:</b> Tintoretto, 'Life of the Virgin' [series; incl's 'Mary Magdalene in the Wilderness']	<b>P:</b> Anne Cecil de Vere (1556–89) <b>Pr/F:</b> Robert Greene (1558–92) <b>Dr:</b> Lyly George Peele (c.1558–c.1598) <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Sonnets <i>Myrror of Modestie</i> <i>Campaspe</i> [romantic comedy] <i>The Arraignement of Paris</i> [pmt.d; pf.d at Court, 1581?] 1st Blackfriars theatre closes	
1585	Elizabeth I sends Earl of Leicester to aid Dutch & wage undeclared war on Spain – also sends Drake to plunder Sp. possessions in W. Indies; Parliament passes Act against Jesuits & priests; Roanoke Island, Virginia – Raleigh's 1st settlement in N. America fndd [abandoned 1586]; Barbary Co. fnd.d [N. Africa trade]; [–1587] John Davis, seeking NW Passage, discovers Davis Strait	Court of Star Chamber suppresses all printing offices outside London; earliest spring-driven Eng. clocks made; [–1587] William Camden, <i>Britannia</i> [in Latin; Eng. trans, Philemon Holland, 1610 – topographical survey & history of British Isles]. <b>Int. Lit.:</b> Miguel de Cervantes, <i>La Galatea</i> [pastoral romance; prnt.d]. <b>Art:</b> [c.] Delft pottery begins to be made	<b>P:</b> Watson <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> <i>Amyntas</i> ['sonnets'] [c.] Shakespeare leaves Stratford for London		

- 1586** Babington Plot to kill Eliz. – Mary Q. of S tried for complicity – sentenced to death; Treaty of Berwick between Scots & English; 3rd circumnavigation of the world by Cavendish; Drake returns with large booty
- 1587** Mary Q. of S executed – James VI of Scotland now heir apparent to English throne; an MP challenges Elizabeth's absolutism in Church affairs & defends free speech; Leicester's Dutch expedition fails; Pope proclaims crusade against England; Drake destroys Sp. fleet at Cadiz – delays Armada for a year, new attempt to colonise Virginia (fails 1591)
- 1588** Defeat of Spanish Armada – Elizabeth I addresses troops at Tilbury; Elizabeth builds 1st Chatham Dockyard; Billingsgate, London, opens as landing-stage
- 1589** 1st Standing Committee on Privileges set up by Commons; [–1592] Archbishop Whitgift's onslaught on Presbyterianism; London merchants seek to send trading mission to India; Eng. attacks on Portuguese coast; Henry of Navarre as Henry IV of France starts Bourbon dynasty – Elizabeth I forms alliance – Eng. troops help in reconquest of France
- 1590** Archbishop Whitgift & Bishop Bancroft of London launch offensive against Puritan ministers; relief expedition to Roanoke colony (Virginia) finds settlers have inexplicably vanished
- 1591** The 'Revenge' in battle with Sp. fleet – Sir Richard Grenville killed; [–1594] 1st Eng. voyage to reach E. Indies
- 1592** Raleigh disgraced after secret affair with, and later m. to, Elizabeth I's maid of honour; Presbyterian Church estab.d in Scotland; Davis discovers Falkland Islands
- [c.] potatoes & tobacco 1st intro.d into England from N. America. **Art:** El Greco, 'Burial of Count Orgaz'
- Theory/Crit:** William Webbe, *Discourse of English Poetrie*
- Music:** Claudio Monteverdi [comp] 1st book of madrigals. **Art:** [–1591] Rialto Bridge, over Grand Canal, Venice, built; [c.] Hilliard, 'Young Man Leaning Against a Rose Tree' [miniature; V&A]
- Lit. 'Events':** Philip Henslowe's Rose Theatre, Bankside, opens; Holinshed, *Chronicles* [3-vol. 2nd edtn]
- William Morgan's trans of Bible into Welsh [has enabled survival of Welsh language into modern times]; [–1589] Martin Marprelate' tracts attack episcopacy; Thomas Harriot, *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. **Art:** [–1591] cupola of St Peter's, Rome, built; Tintoretto, 'Paradise' [claimed to be the largest painting in the world]
- 1st Eng. knitting machine made; Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics and Discoveries of the English Nation* [1st edtn; expanded, 3 vols, 1598–1600].
- Lit. 'Events':** Spenser returns with Raleigh from Ireland to Court
- 1st Eng. paper mill estab.d at Dartford. **Music:** Monteverdi, 2nd madrigal book; Thomas Watson, *First Set of Italian Madrigals Englished*. **Art:** [–1597] Hardwick Hall, Derby, built; El Greco, 'St Jerome'; [c.] Hilliard, 'George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland' [NMM, Greenwich].
- Lit. 'Events':** Paul's Playhouse closes
- Elizabeth I fnds Trinity College, Dublin; Raleigh, *A Report about ... the Isles of Azores*.
- Lit. 'Events':** posthum. pub. of Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* popularises sonnet form; Sir John Harrington, Eng. trans of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*
- Ruins of Pompeii 1st discv.d; Galileo, *Della Scienza Meccanica*. **Music:** Monteverdi, 3rd madrigal book. **Art:** [c.] Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger [pnt] 'Elizabeth I' ('The Ditchley Portrait') [NPG]
- Lit. 'Events':** [–1594] plague in London closes theatres
- [–1606] *Albion's England* [long historical poem]
- P:** William Warner (c.1558–1609)
- Pr/F:** Sidney
- Dr:** Anon
- Lit. 'Events':** Sidney killed fighting Spanish in Netherlands
- [c.] *The Famous Victories of Henry V*
- [c.] *The Spanish Tragedy* [pmt.d c.1592; reprint.d with additions 1602]
- [c.–1588] *Tamburlaine the Great* Pts I & II [pmt.d, 1590] & [c.] *Dr Faustus* [earliest extant pmt.d edtn, 1604]
- Pandosto, or The Triumph of Time** [romance]
- [c.] *Endimion, the Man in the Moon* [pmt.d 1591]
- Eng. trans of 1st Ger. book on Dr Faustus pub.d; Vatican Library opens
- [c.] *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* [pmt.d, 1594]
- [c.] *The Jew of Malta* [earliest extant pmt.d text, 1633]
- The Anatomie of Absurditie* [attack on contemp. writing]
- The Arte of English Poesie*
- The Faerie Queene* [Bks I–III]
- 'New' *Arcadia* [pub.d posthum, unfinished]
- [c.] *The Old Wives' Tale* [pmt.d 1595]
- [c.1590–4] early comedies & history plays, *Richard III* & *Titus Andronicus*
- Complaints* [misc. short poems]
- The Harmonie of the Church* [metrical rendition of passages from scripture]
- [c.] *Arden of Faversham* [pmt.d 1592]
- [c.] *James IV* [pmt.d 1598]
- [–1593] *Venus and Adonis*
- Della* [sonnets] & *The Complaint of Rosalind*
- Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Diuell Gallathea and Midas*
- Edward II* [pmt.d 1594]

PERIOD	YEAR	INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS	SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS	AUTHORS	INDICATIVE TITLES
TUDOR/ELIZABETHAN	1593	Elizabeth I defines freedom of speech in Parliament as the privilege to say 'Aye' or 'No' – Parliament dissolved; all absentees from church over 16 to be imprisoned; Act passed against the seditious & disloyal – opponents of royal supremacy to be executed; [–1603] widespread rebellion in N. Ireland – supported by Spain	<b>Music:</b> Thomas Morley [comp] 5 books of madrigals. <b>Art:</b> [c.] El Greco, 'The Crucifixion' & 'The Resurrection'; [–1594] Caravaggio, 'Boy with a Basket of Fruit' <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Marlowe killed	<b>P:</b> Drayton Marlowe  Watson John Donne (c.1572–1631) Mary Sidney, Duchess of Pembroke (1561–1621) <b>Pr/F:</b> Nashe P. Sidney  <b>Dr:</b> Marlowe	<i>The Shepherd's Garland</i> & <i>Piers Gaveston</i> [verse history] <i>Hero and Leander</i> [cont.d by Chapman & pub.d, 1598] <i>The Teares of Fancie</i> [sonnets] [c.1593–1601] <i>Songs and Sonets, Elegies, Satyres</i> & Verse Letters [wrtn] [–1600] <i>Psalms</i> [revises & conts her brother Philip's trans; 1st pub.d 1623]  <i>Christ's Tears over Jerusalem</i> 'New' Arcadia [repub.d with parts of 'Old' incorporated] <i>The Massacre at Paris</i>
	1594	[–1597] 1st of bad harvests leads to high prices, famine, plague & riots; Lord Mayor's conference on problem of rogues in London; English sack Portug. colony of Pernambuco & open up trade in E. Indies	<b>Lit. 'Events':</b> theatres reopen	<b>P:</b> Drayton Shakespeare  <b>Pr/F:</b> Nashe <b>Dr:</b> Lyly Shakespeare  Thomas Heywood (c.1574–1641)	[–1619] <i>Idea</i> [sonnet sequence] <i>The Rape of Lucrece</i> & [>] <i>Sonnets</i> [pub.d, 1609] <i>The Unfortunate Traveller</i> [c.] <i>Mother Bomble</i> [comedy] [c.1594–1600] incs: <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , <i>MND</i> , <i>Henry IV, Richard II</i> , <i>Henry V</i> , <i>Merchant of Venice</i> , <i>Much Ado</i> , <i>Julius Caesar</i> , <i>As You Like It</i> , [c.] <i>The Four Prentices of London</i>
	1595	Apprentices & masterless men riot in Southwark; Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, openly joins Ir. rebellion; Raleigh voyages to Guiana, S. America seeking 'El Dorado' [legendary place rich in gold] – explores Orinoco river; Dutch begin to colonise E. Indies	[c.] 1st heels on shoes; bows & arrows finally abolished as weapons of war. <b>Art:</b> [c.] Caravaggio, 'Lute Player' <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Swan theatre, Bankside, built; Robert Southwell, Jesuit poet, hanged – <i>St Peter's Complaint</i> [poems] prnt.d	<b>P:</b> Daniel Spenser  <b>Dr:</b> M. Sidney George Chapman (c.1557–1634) Anthony Munday (1553–1633) et al	[–1609] <i>A History of the Civil Wars between York and Lancaster</i> [poem in 8 Bks] <i>Amoretti</i> [sonnets] & [–1596] <i>Epithalamion</i> & <i>Colin Clout Comes Home Again</i> <i>The Tragedy of Antonie</i> [trans] <i>The Blind Beggar of Alexandria</i>  <i>Sir Thomas More</i> [Shakespeare may have collaborated]
1596	Peasants' uprising in S. Oxfordshire over grain prices & enclosures; Earl of Essex's force sacks Cadiz; Eng. Fr. & Dutch allied against Spain – storms prevent 2nd Sp. Armada; Barents Sea discov.d	Drake dies; tomatoes intro.d into England; Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge & Whitgift School, Croydon, fnd.d; Raleigh, <i>The Discovery of Guiana</i> <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> 2nd Blackfriars theatre built [residents' petition prohibits opening]	<b>P:</b> Spenser  Sir John Davies (1569–1626)	<i>The Faerie Queene</i> [Bks IV–VI], <i>Prothalamion</i> & <i>Four Hymns</i> <i>Orchestra, or a Poeme of Daunting</i>	
1597	1576 Act for poor relief reinstated [in effect till 1834] – workhouses built; vagrancy law provides for punishment of beggars & 'masterless men'; complaint [from Durham] about huge reduction of tillage by enclosure; [–1602] Ir. rebellion under	Gresham's College, London, fnd.d; King James VI [of Scotland], <i>Demonologie</i> [on witchcraft]. <b>Music:</b> Morley, <i>A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke</i> ; John Dowland [comp] 1st book of Eng. airs, with lute accompaniment; [c.] Ottavio Rinuccini	<b>P:</b> Joseph Hall (1574–1656) <b>Pr/F:</b> Sir Francis Bacon (1561–1626)	<i>Virgdemiarum</i> [satires]  Essays [v.1612 & 1622]	

- [comp] 'La Dafne' [early lt. opera]. **Art:** [–1599] El Greco, 3 altarpieces, S. José Chapel, Toledo [incl's 'St Joseph Leading the Child Jesus']; [–1600] Annibale Carracci pnts frescoes in Gallery of Farnese Palace, Rome
- 1st ref. to game of cricket; [–1602] Sir Thomas Bodley rebuilds university library, Oxford; [–1600] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations* [2nd edn, 3 vols]; Stow, *A Survey of London and Westminster*. **Art:** [c.–1600] El Greco, 'Portrait of Cardinal Niño de Guevara'; [c.] Caravaggio, 'Sick Little Bacchus'
- Lit. 'Events':** Spenser flees to London from rebellion in Ireland – writes *View of the Present State of Ireland* [banned – pub.d 1633]; George Chapman, Eng. trans of Homer's *Iliad*, I–II, VII–XI [8, 1610, 1611]; Burbage's 'The Theatre' [v.1576] dismantled – timbers used to construct Globe Theatre [v.1599]
- Lit. 'Events':** Spenser dies; Samuel Daniel, Poet Laureate – pubs *Poetical Essays & Musophilus*, or *A General Defence of Learning*; bishops attack satire & erotic poetry; Burbage's Globe Theatre, Bankside, opens [in use until closing of the theatres in 1642; pulled down, 1644]; 2nd Blackfriars Theatre opens; Paul's Playhouse reopens
- Hugh O'Neill, 2nd Earl of Tyrone ('the O'Neill'): Eng. routed near Armagh – whole province in revolt; storms destroy 3rd Sp. Armada; Eng. raiders sack Portug. Azores
- Edict of Nantes; Henri IV (Henri of Navarre) grants freedom of worship to Fr. Protestants [v. 1685]
- Essex concludes unfavourable treaty with Tyrone in Ireland – banished by Elizabeth I; King James VI of Scotland pubs *Basilikon Doron*, the *True Law of Free Monarchies* condemning Prebyterianism & asserting Divine Right of Kings
- [–1603] Lord Mountjoy achieves victory over Tyrone at Battle of Kinsale – systematically ravages Ir. districts & starves them into surrender; Elizabeth I grants charter to London merchants to estab. East India Company [active until 1858]; 1st Englishman, William Adams, lands in Japan
- Essex's rebellion against Elizabeth I fails – Essex executed; Poor Law Act codifies all Tudor poor laws; Parliament abolishes Monopolies; Sp. troops land in Ireland to aid Tyrone – Mountjoy routs them; 1st E. India Co. trading voyage; Jesuit missionaries reach China
- [–1600] Thomas of Reading, *Jack of Newbury & The Gentle Craft* [short novels]  
A *Humorous Day's Mirth*
- Thomas Deloney (c.1560–1600)  
**Dr:** Chapman
- P:** Chapman
- Dr:** Munday & Henry Chettle (c.1560–c.1607)  
Ben Jonson (1572–1637)
- Hero and Leander* [cont's & pubs Marlowe's poem]  
*Robin Hood* [2 plays; prnt.d 1601?]
- Everyman in His Humour* [1st version; prnt.d 1601]
- Nosce Teipsum  
*The Scourge of Villainie* [satires]
- A *Warning for Fair Women* [prnt.d]  
*The Shoemaker's Holiday & Old Fortunatus* [both prnt.d 1600]  
*Everyman Out of His Humour*  
*Histiomastix & Antonio and Mellica* [prnt.d 1602]  
*The Two Angry Women of Abingdon*
- Nosce Teipsum  
*The Fair Maid of the West*; or, *A Girl Worth Gold* [Pt 1, v.1630]  
[–1601] *Cynthia's Revels*  
*Antonio's Revenge* [prnt.d 1602]  
[c.1600–4] incl's: *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *All's Well*, *Measure for Measure*, *Trilussa and Cressida*, *Othello*
- Henry Porter (dates unknown)
- Dr:** T. Heywood  
Jonson  
Marston  
Shakespeare
- Two Lamentable Tragedies* [prnt.d]  
*The Poetaster* [attacks Dekker & Marston]  
*Satiromastix* [riposte to Jonson]
- William Gilbert, *De Magnete* [on magnetism & electricity]. **Music:** recorders become popular in England; Dowland, 2nd book of songs; Jacopo Peri [comp] 'Euridice' [early lt. opera]. **Art:** [–1601] Caravaggio, 'Crucifixion of St Peter' & 'Conversion of St Paul' [Rome]
- Lit. 'Events':** Fortune Theatre, Cripplegate, opens; *England's Helicon* pub.d [anthology of Eng. lyrics – incl's Marlowe's 'Come live with me and be my love' & Raleigh's reply]; Edward Fairfax, Eng. trans of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* [v.1581]
- Trinity College Library, Cambridge, fnd.d. **Music:** Morley compiles collection in honour of Elizabeth I, 'The Triumphs of Oriana'; [–1617] Thomas Campion pubs 5 'Books of Aires' [lyrics set to music – see 1610 & 1612]. **Art:** Montacute House, Somerset completed
- Lit. 'Events':** Elizabeth I's 'Golden speech'; Boar's Head Theatre, Whitechapel, opens

PERIOD	YEAR	INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS	SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS	AUTHORS	INDICATIVE TITLES
	1602	Sp. surrender – reconquest of Ireland begins; Dutch East India Co. estab.d	Bodleian Library, Oxford, so named & opens. Art: Long Gallery, Haddon Hall, Derbyshire, built	<b>Dr:</b> Chettle Dekker <b>Theory/Crit:</b> Thomas Campion Samuel Daniel	[c.] <i>The Tragedy of Hoffman The Merry Devil of Edmonton</i>  Observations on <i>The Art of English Poesie</i> [advocates classical metre] Defence of <i>Rhyme</i> [reply: champions native Eng. use of rhyme]
	1603	Elizabeth I dies – James VI of Scotland becomes King James I – creates Union of England & Scotland – Succession plots against him – Raleigh implicated & imprisoned in Tower; reconquest of Ireland completed – Tyrone submits; under James I, witchcraft becomes a punishable offence in Eng. law; plague kills 33,500 in London	<b>MUSIC:</b> Dowland, 3rd book of songs. <b>Art:</b> Audley End House, Essex, built <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> James I becomes patron of 2 boys theatre companies; [–1604] plague closes theatres; John Florio, Eng. trans of Montaigne, <i>Essays</i>	<b>Pr/F:</b> Dekker  <b>Dr:</b> T. Heywood Jonson	<i>The Wonderful Year</i> [pamphlet describing the plague] <i>A Woman Killed with Kindness</i> [prnt.d 1607] <i>Sejanus</i>
	1604	James I declared king of 'Great Britain, France & Ireland'; James's 1st Parliament; Act confirms anti-RC recusancy statutes – James orders RC priests to be banished; [–1605] campaign against Nonconformist ministers – some ejected from livings; Eng. priests given statutory authority to marry; 1597 vagrancy law expanded; peace treaty with Spain	Hampton Court Conference: C of E bishops denounce both RCism & Puritanism – also consider Church reform & standard text of the Bible – James I orders new trans [by Lancelot Andrewes & others; completed 1611]; Blundell's School, Tiverton, fnd.d; Robert Cawdrey, <i>The Table Alphabetical</i> [1st Eng. dictionary]. <b>Music:</b> Company of Musicians, London, fnd.d. <b>Art:</b> Caravaggio, 'Deposition of Christ' <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Red Bull theatre, Clerkenwell, replaces Boars Head	<b>Dr:</b> Chapman Dekker & John Webster (c.1578–c.1632) Dekker & Thomas Middleton (c.1580–1627) Marston Shakespeare	<i>Bussy d'Ambois</i> [prnt.d 1607] <i>Westward Ho!</i>  <i>The Honest Whore</i> [Pt I, Pt II (by Dekker), 1630]  <i>The Dutch Courtezan &amp; The Malcontent</i> [ampnt.d] [c.1604–9] incl: <i>King Lear</i> , <i>Macbeth</i> , <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> , <i>Coriolanus</i> , <i>Pericles</i>
	1605	Gunpowder Plot: RC conspirators led by Guy Fawkes unsuccessfully attempt to blow up king & Parliament because of C of E intolerance; Ir. settlement attempted on Eng. legal lines; [>] thro'out this period, many London trades companies incorporated	<b>Int. Lit.:</b> Miguel de Cervantes, <i>Don Quixote</i> , Pt. I [Eng. trans, 1612]. <b>Art:</b> [c.] El Greco, 'St Bartholomew'	<b>Pr/F:</b> Bacon <b>Dr:</b> Chapman, Jonson & Marston Jonson Middleton	<i>The Advancement of Learning</i>  <i>Eastward Ho!</i> [ampnt.d] <i>The Masque of Blackness</i> [designed by Inigo Jones] <i>Michaelmas Term &amp; A Trick to Catch the Old One</i> [prnt.d 1607–8]
	1606	Gunpowder Plotters executed; persecution of RCs by Parliament; Courts & merchants in conflict over royal duties levied at ports; Royal Charter granted to Virginia Co. – expedition to recolonise it; Sp. discover Torres Strait – Dutch explore N. coast of 'New Holland' (Australia)	<b>Art:</b> [c.] El Greco, 'The Feast in the House of Simon'; Peter Paul Rubens [pnt] 'The Circumcision' [Genoa altarpiece] & 'Virgin in a Glory of Angels'. <b>Lit. 'Events':</b> Whitefriars [private] theatre built; Rose theatre demolished; Paul's Playhouse closes	<b>P:</b> Drayton  <b>Dr:</b> Jonson Middleton Middleton & Dekker John Day (1574–1640)	[c.] <i>Poems, Lyric and Pastoral</i> [incl: 'Ballad of Agincourt': 'Faire stood the wind for France'] <i>Volpone</i> [prnt.d 1607] & <i>Hymenaei</i> [masque] [attrib.] <i>The Revenger's Tragedy</i> & [c.] <i>A Mad World, My Masters</i> [prnt.d 1611] <i>The Roaring Girl</i> [prnt.d 1611]  <i>The Isle of Gulls</i>
	1607	Confiscated Ir. lands given to Eng. & Scots settlers – 'Plantation' [colonisation] of Ulster recommenced; Eng. Parliament rejects Union of England &	[c.] forks 1st in use in Italy. <b>Int. Lit.:</b> [c.–1623] Honoré d'Urfé, <i>L'Astrée</i> [much imitated Fr. pastoral romance; many different edtns]. <b>Music:</b> [c.] Anon,	<b>P:</b> Donne <b>Dr:</b> Francis Beaumont	<i>La Corona</i> [divine poems; wrtn]  <i>The Woman Hater</i> [pf.d?] &

- Scotland; Jamestown colony, Virginia, estab.d – 1st permanent Eng. settlement – Chesapeake Bay explored
- Courts affirm common citizenship for those born after James I's accession; New Book of Rates regulates customs duties [to Crown's advantage]; mutual defence treaty between England & Netherlands; Quebec fnd.d in 'New France' (Canada)
- 1608**
- 12-yr truce between Spain & United Provinces [Netherlands] – latter make alliance with England & France for 12 years
- 1609**
- Parliament refuses James substitution of annual grant for feudal dues – the 'Great Contract'; further vagrancy law passed; episcopacy restored in Scotland; Henry IV of France assassinated – Louis XIII, king; [–1611] Henry Hudson explores bay & river so named in Canada
- 1610**
- Parliament dissolved; [–1623] tortuous negotiations begin over possible m. between Prince Charles & Sp. Infanta; [>] James I creates Order of Baronets – sold to raise money; 1st Eng. envoy visits Great Mogul [v.1614]; Dutch 1st trade with Japan
- 1611**
- Prince Henry dies, Prince Charles [later King Charles II] becomes heir apparent; last recorded burning of heretics; [c.] Lancashire witches hanged; Bermudas colonised from Virginia; [–1613] E. India Co. estab.s 'factory' [trading settlement] at Surat, Gujarat, India
- 1612**
- 'There is a Lady Sweet and Kind' [madrigal]; Monteverdi; 'Orpheus' [lt. opera]. **Art:** [–1611] Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, built
- Art:** [–1610] Holland House, Kensington, built; El Greco, 'View of Toledo'
- Lit. 'Events':** The King's Men [Shakespeare's Co.] lease Blackfriars theatre; plague closes theatres [until Dec. 1609]
- Sir Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha* [extreme advocacy of Divine Right of Kings]; Charterhouse School fnd.d; 1st regular newspapers pub.d in Germany; [c.] Galileo Galilei makes telescope & observes craters on moon – pubs scientific theories; Johann Kepler, *New Astronomy* [announces 1st 2 laws of planetary motion]. **Art:** [–1610] Peter Paul Rubens [pnt] 'Self-Portrait with his Wife Isabella [Brandt]'; Adam Elsheimer [pnt] 'The Flight into Egypt'
- Tea 1st intro.d into Europe; [–1612] Wadham College, Oxford, fnd.d; Galileo records Saturn's rings & Jupiter's moons. **Music:** Campion, *Two Bookes of Ayres*. **Art:** Ham House, Surrey & Fountains Hall, Yorkshire, built; [c.] El Greco, 'Vision of the Apocalypse'; [c.] [attrib.] John Taylor [pnt] 'William Shakespeare' [NPG]
- The 'Authorised Version' of the Bible ('King James's Bible') pub.d – supersedes all previous edtns; Kepler invents astronomical telescope. **Art:** [c.] Guido Reni [pnt] 'Triumph of Samson'
- John Smith, *A True Relation of Virginia since the First Planting of that Colony*. **Music:** Campion, *Third and Fourth Booke of Ayres*. **Art:** Rubens, 'Resurrection' [trptych, Antwerp Cathedral] & [–1614] 'Descent from the Cross'
- Lit. 'Events':** T. Heywood, *An Apology for Actors*, pub.d
- (c.1584–1616)
- P:** Donne
- Pr/F:** Dekker
- Dr:** Anon  
Day  
Jonson  
John Fletcher  
(1579–1625)
- Pr/F:** Dekker
- Dr:** Jonson  
Shakespeare  
Beaumont & Fletcher  
Cyril Tourneur  
(c.1575–1626)
- Pr/F:** Donne  
**Dr:** Beaumont & Fletcher  
Jonson
- Lit. 'Events':**
- P:** Donne  
Aemilia Lanier  
(1569–1645)  
**Pr/F:** Donne  
**Dr:** Beaumont & Fletcher  
Jonson
- P:** Donne  
Dryton  
**Pr/F:** Bacon  
**Dr:** Webster
- [–1608] *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* [pnt.d 1613; possibly co-authored by John Fletcher]
- [c.1608–15] *Holy Sonnets* & other religious poems [wrtn]
- The Bellman of London & Lanthorn and Candlelight* [pamphlets about London vagabonds]
- A Yorkshire Tragedy* [pnt.d]  
*Humour Out of Breath*  
*The Masque of Beauty*  
*The Faithful Shepherdess*
- The Gull's Hornbook* [pamphlet about London gallants]
- Epicœne, or The Silent Woman* [extant text in *Works*, 1616] & *Masque of Queens* [c.1609–13]; 'Last Plays': *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest* [v.1613–14] [c.]. *Philaster* [pnt.d 1620]
- The Atheists Tragedy* [pnt.d 1611]
- Pseudo-Martyr* [attack on Jesuits] [–1611] *The Maid's Tragedy* [pnt.d 1619]
- The Alchemist* [pnt.d 1612]
- [>] Stationers' Co. send a copy of every book pub.d in England to Bodleian Library; [–1611] George Chapman completes Eng. trans of Homer's *Iliad*
- An Anatomy of the World (The First Anniversary)* pub.d  
*Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* [poems]  
*Ignatius His Conclave* [attack on RCism] *A King and No King*  
*Catiline his Conspiracy & Oberon*  
*The Second Anniversary (The Progress of the Soul)* [with reprint of *1st Anniversary*, 1611]  
*Poly-Olbiion* [Pt I of long topographical patriotic poem, Pt II, 1622]  
*Essays* [2nd & enlarged edtn]  
*The White Devil* [pnt.d; wrtn c.1609–12]

## Chapter 8

# End of the Golden Age



**A**s the year 1599 came to an end, Queen Elizabeth and England entered a new century, the seventeenth. Queen Elizabeth had been in power for 42 years. During that time, her love for her subjects and their love for her had increased. There was a remarkable

bond between this ruler and her subjects, something seldom seen in history.

Queen Elizabeth knew, however, that she would not live much longer. One by one, her faithful advisors and friends had died. Perhaps the cruelest loss had been the death of William Cecil, Lord Burghley. He had been at Elizabeth's side through the early days of her rule and through the glorious victory over the Spanish Armada. Queen Elizabeth was bitterly sad over his death. His son, Robert Cecil, became the new chief councilor, but he was no replacement for his father.

In the last years and months of her life, Queen Elizabeth sometimes regretted the things she had done. Perhaps she had been wrong in her decision to execute Mary, Queen of Scots. Perhaps she should have married at some point. Now, she had no one to talk to. William Cecil had been her closest advisor. Sir Walter Raleigh and the Earl of Essex had been her greatest friends. They were all gone now, either dead or in disgrace. Queen Elizabeth also saw trouble on the horizon. She had done very well against Spain and other



outside foes, but she knew that there was trouble at home.

First, the House of Commons and the House of Lords became less helpful to her. In the past, the two houses, which made up Parliament, had been very helpful to the queen. They usually granted her the money she asked for, but times had changed. There was a new group in the House of Commons that wanted to limit the royal powers. Queen Elizabeth knew that she would get what she needed, but she worried about the future—about what her successor would do with the House of Commons and the House of Lords—and whom to name as her successor.

There was only one answer to that question. It had to be James VI, King of Scots. He was the only son of Mary, Queen of Scots. He had been a child when his mother fled to England and was imprisoned. He had never done anything to rescue his mother. In fact, he had been a strong ally of Queen Elizabeth's over the past 20 years. Given his blood relationship, and the fact that Queen Elizabeth had no children, King James had to be her successor.

Queen Elizabeth was worried about something else, too—religion. During her reign, Elizabeth had

been a strong Protestant, but she had not tried to force England's Catholics to convert to her faith. This had made some of the hard-line Protestants angry. They formed a group called the Puritans. They wanted to purify the church.

Queen Elizabeth did not like the Puritans and she made life difficult for them. As she headed into her later years, Queen Elizabeth was worried that the Puritans would make trouble. She could not have known that some of them would cross the Atlantic Ocean to start new colonies, but one group of them—the Pilgrims—would indeed come to Plymouth, Massachusetts, to start a new life.

In November 1603, Queen Elizabeth met her Parliament for the last time. She gave what is known as her golden speech. She told the members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords that she loved them. She told them that, even though there might be greater kings or queens in the future, none would love them as much as she had. As she left Parliament, the members bowed their heads. They knew she was the greatest ruler of their time.

Soon after her famous speech, Queen Elizabeth's health began to decline. She was tired more often.

She even stumbled sometimes. For a woman who had danced throughout her life, this was a difficult transition. She grew even weaker in the winter of 1603.

One day, toward the end of her life, Queen Elizabeth sat on a pile of cushions in the middle of a room. She was too tired to move. Robert Cecil, the son of William Cecil, came forward. He said, “Your Majesty, for the sake of the people, you must go to bed.” Queen Elizabeth turned slowly. “*Must, must.* Little man, little man, you do not use that word with princes. Were your father still alive, you would not dare say it.”<sup>20</sup> Queen Elizabeth got up, but a little while later she went to bed and never really got out of it again. She died on March 24, 1603, a few months before her seventieth birthday.

Queen Elizabeth’s funeral was the grandest event seen in many years. Horses draped in black pulled the funeral chariot. The queen lay in her coffin, on top of which there was a wooden image of her. People wept openly. Queen Elizabeth was dead, and England’s Golden Age had died with her. Even though there were years of prosperity and victory in the future, nothing would ever mean as much to the



Queen Elizabeth I died on March 24, 1603, a few months before her seventieth birthday. Her funeral (shown here) was a grand event in England.

English people as Queen Elizabeth. She was their glorious queen and she would be missed.

Queen Elizabeth made history. She was one of those rare people who came forward at an important time to do great things. Though some 400 years have passed since her death, we still remember Queen Elizabeth, and her legacy, which will live on for many years to come.

## CHRONOLOGY & TIMELINE

- 1533** Elizabeth is born to Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.
- 1534** Henry VIII creates the new English Catholic Church.
- 1536** Anne Boleyn is beheaded for treason and adultery.
- 1537** Henry VIII and Jane Seymour have a son, Prince Edward.
- 1543** Mary, Queen of Scots is born.
- 1547** Henry VIII dies and is succeeded by Edward VI.
- 1549** Edward VI and his ministers approve the new *Book of Common Prayer*, making England a Protestant nation.
- 1553** Edward VI dies and is succeeded by Queen Mary I.

**1533** Elizabeth is born to Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn

**1543** Mary, Queen of Scots is born

1530

**1537** Henry VIII and Jane Seymour have a son, Prince Edward

**1547** Henry VIII dies and is succeeded by Edward VI

## CHRONOLOGY & TIMELINE

- 1554** Queen Elizabeth spends some time in the Tower of London.
- 1557** Many English Protestants die at the stake for refusing to renounce their religion.
- 1558** Queen Mary I dies and is succeeded by Queen Elizabeth I.
- 1560** Robert Dudley's wife dies.
- 1568** Mary, Queen of Scots comes to England.
- 1580** Francis Drake comes home after sailing around the world.
- 1581** Queen Elizabeth knights Francis Drake.

**1558** Queen Mary I dies and is succeeded by Queen Elizabeth I

**1588** English forces defeat the Spanish Armada

**1610**

**1553** Edward VI dies and is succeeded by Queen Mary I

**1587** Queen Elizabeth orders that Mary, Queen of Scots be executed

**1603** Queen Elizabeth dies

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1587** Queen Elizabeth orders that Mary, Queen of Scots be executed.
- 1588** English forces defeat the Spanish Armada.
- 1588** Robert Dudley dies.
- 1590** The colonists at the Roanoke colony mysteriously disappear.
- 1598** King Philip of Spain dies.
- 1601** The Earl of Essex is executed.
- 1603** Queen Elizabeth dies.

### Sources:

Crompton. *Queen Elizabeth's Golden Age, 2006.*



## Chapter 9: Interesting Facts

1

**Although Elizabethan England had no national educational system, education was gradually becoming more available to the children of the middle classes, the sons of urban merchants and craftsmen, and those of rural landholding.**

2

**Formal education, whether through private tutors or local schools, was limited almost exclusively to boys.**





3

Grammar schools, private educational foundations that sought to give boys a basic grounding in Latin grammar and vocabulary, were established in many towns in the Elizabethan period, becoming the chief engine for extending educational opportunity to middle-class boys and to a few lower-class students who showed promise. As a boy, William SHAKESPEARE is believed to have attended the grammar school in his hometown of Stratford upon-Avon.



4

Most learning in Elizabethan schools was by rote, with students reciting what they had memorized.



**5**

**Discipline in Elizabethan schools was commonly harsh, with most teachers using a birch rod to beat students who did not properly apply themselves to their studies or who broke school rules.**



**6**

**In sixteenth-century England, married women were considered to be under the guardianship of their husbands, and their legal rights were largely subsumed in their spouse's. Even the Queen, who could inherit the Crown, was expected to marry so that her husband could help her govern, if not rule for her.**



7

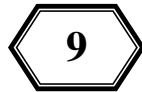
Although social mobility was increasing, Elizabethan society was highly class conscious, and modes of dress were important in delineating one class from another. Attempts to ape one's social superiors by affecting types of dress considered inappropriate to one's class were scorned and even subject to punishment under the law.



8

By the 1580s, the PURITANS—Protestants who desired more extensive reform of the English Church than the Queen would allow—were demanding stronger measures to root out immorality from English society. Specifically, they called for the closure of theaters and the end of traditional holiday festivities, especially at Christmas. The demand for

**modesty in dress, especially as expressed in Crowley's poem, but also to some extent in Harrison's prose, is religiously based, reflecting a Puritan sensibility.**



**Tenant farmers and landless laborers in the countryside comprised perhaps 70 to 75 percent of the total population of Elizabethan England.**



**The sixteenth century was a period of European-wide inflation, with prices for food, housing, and basic commodities rising sharply throughout the Tudor period, and especially in the middle decades of the century.**

**In times of peace, the Queen was expected to support herself and conduct the business of government entirely from her own ordinary revenues. These regular annual revenues came largely from two sources—income derived from the royal estates and the custom taxes, which were collected on imports and exports.**

**The Crown was expected to ask Parliament for grants of taxation only in times of emergency or extraordinary expense. War, which was enormously expensive, was the most frequent reason for heavy taxation. Elizabeth hated the waste and expense of**

**war, hence her strenuous efforts to avoid entering into it in the first decades of her reign.**

**13**

**In 1588 alone, the cost of defending the realm against the Spanish Armada exceeded £160,000.**

**14**

**The Queen's many other military expenses after 1585 included maintaining the fleet and the naval war against Spain, maintaining an English army in the Netherlands, maintaining coastal defenses, and supporting the Protestant party in the French civil wars.**

Aside from court poets like Sir Philip SIDNEY, who would have viewed making money from their writings as demeaning, writers, playwrights, players, and others who did seek to earn a living from the pen were often considered disreputable figures in Elizabethan society, and some, such as Greene, Thomas KYD, and Christopher MARLOWE, fitted rather easily into and drew much inspiration out of London's seamy street life.

London was the political and economic capital of England. Parliament and the courts of COMMON LAW were situated a mile away at Westminster. Over half the Crown's tax revenue from towns came from London, as did more than two-thirds of its customs

revenue and huge amounts of loan money from city merchants.

17

In medieval times, poor relief in the countryside was a function of the village community, where the local parish priest was expected to set aside part of his income from TITHES to support the poor of the parish. As part of their duty as Christians, wealthy noble and gentry households also supplied alms for the local poor, as did the many monastic communities throughout the realm.

18

The Reformation, by discouraging begging, emphasizing personal responsibility, and overthrowing monasteries, further disrupted the



**already declining medieval system of poor relief and made some form of state action necessary.**

**19**

**The Poor Law of 1536 outlawed private almsgiving by most individuals, but did provide for a voluntary collection in all parishes to educate children, maintain the disabled, and employ the healthy. Although it gave some help to the truly needy, the act's main thrust was the punishment and control of able-bodied beggars and vagrants.**

**20**

**In the Elizabethan period, many functions of government were considered outside the jurisdiction of Parliament and reserved for the Crown, including**

ordering the succession, conducting foreign policy, and declaring war and peace.

21

**ELIZABETH I** also sought to limit Parliament's involvement in the governing of the English Church and the ordering of official doctrine and practice, although many, especially **PURITANS**, tried to increase Parliament's role in ecclesiastical affairs.

22

When speaking of the authority of Parliament, Smith always means the King/Queen in Parliament. For Elizabethans, the monarch functioning with the consent of the community of the realm as given

**through Parliament was the ultimate expression of national authority.**



**Parliament is the supreme legislature of England, comprising the monarch, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. The Elizabethan House of Lords consisted of 70 to 80 members. By 1603, the House of Commons numbered 462 (90 representatives from the counties of England and Wales and 372 from the 191 parliamentary towns, with London sending 4 representatives).**

**The Commons had the right to initiate all tax bills. Debate in the Commons was directed by the speaker, a Crown nominee elected by the House at the start of each session. To become statute, bills passed through three readings. The first reading informed members of the bill's content, the second initiated debate, and the third refined the wording of the measure. Upon receiving the assent of the monarch, a bill passed after third reading became statute.**

**In the seventeenth century, Parliament, in response to what was perceived by many as the tyranny of the Crown, sought to acquire new powers, including the limitation of Crown rights, control of the military,**

**oversight of foreign policy, and greater direction of ecclesiastical matters.**

**26**

**By making possible for the first time the wide and rapid dissemination of dissenting opinion on matters both political and religious, the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century confronted European governments with a new and perplexing problem. The need to address this problem led to the extensive use of censorship.**

**27**

**Every book printed in Elizabethan England, except for those printed on the presses of the universities at Oxford and Cambridge, had to be registered with the**

**Stationers' Company, a corporate body to which all professional printers and booksellers belonged. Mary I issued the Stationers' Company charter in 1557, and Elizabeth confirmed it in 1559.**



**Printing was a vibrant and growing trade in Elizabethan England, but it declined in the seventeenth century as increasing religious and political conflict led to harsher government restrictions. Also, the government granted more monopolies on certain types of printing to particular printers, thus choking off all competition in the printing trade. Finally, traditional English mistrust of foreigners prevented important technical innovations made by European printers from entering England,**

**thus causing English printers to fall behind their continental counterparts in terms of skill and equipment.**



**In the sixteenth century, thanks in part to its role in making the English Reformation. Parliament was firmly established as the supreme legislative body of the realm. All its enactments were held as binding. However, only in the seventeenth century, in response to what was perceived as the tyranny of the Stuart kings, did Parliament begin to demand to be a regular part of government that should meet by law at regular intervals, and not simply at the will of the monarch. Parliament had to fight and win a war with the King**

**in the 1640s; govern the country, in various forms, without a monarch in the 1650s; and replace one monarch with another in 1688–1689 before the principle of regular Parliaments was firmly established. In 1694, the Triennial Act required a meeting of Parliament every three years and stipulated that no Parliament could legally run for more than three years. Thus, by the eighteenth century, Parliament became increasingly independent from royal control and a regular and indispensable part of government.**



**The monarch was God’s “deputy and Vicar on Earth,” an idea that formed the basis of the royal supremacy, the right of the English monarch to**



**control the English Church. Prior to the 1530s, control over the English Church was shared between the Crown and the papacy, but HENRY VIII, during the struggle to annul his first marriage, forced the English Church to accept him as its supreme head. Because the king's headship over the Church was seen as coming from God, not Parliament, the 1534 Act of Supremacy only acknowledged the royal right to control the Church and gave the King authority to punish anyone who denied that right.**



**In 1559, when Elizabeth sought to reestablish the royal supremacy, which her sister MARY I had abolished,**

she faced difficulties imposed by her gender and by the growth of English Protestantism. That a woman should govern the state, let alone the Church, was a difficult proposition for most Englishmen. That any layperson, male or female, should hold absolute sway over ecclesiastical matters was a proposition increasingly questioned not only by Catholics, but also by radical Protestants. To meet these objections, Parliament gave the Queen the title of supreme governor rather than her father's more exalted title of supreme head. Also, by stating that the right to govern the Church was given to the Crown by Parliament, the act associated Parliament with the Queen in the leadership of the Church and gave Parliament greater authority over Church doctrine and administration.

**The English Reformation began in the 1530s as a political act of the Crown rather than as a popular movement of the people. Unable to obtain from the pope an annulment of his marriage, HENRY VIII used Parliament to end papal authority in England and make himself supreme head of the English Church.**

**Besides permitting his annulment, the break with Rome allowed Henry to abolish the monasteries and seize their property for himself and his supporters.**

**At Elizabeth's accession in 1558, a majority of English people probably tended toward Catholicism, though few opposed the new Queen's decision to restore Protestantism.**

**Spain in the Elizabethan era controlled a huge overseas empire that included Mexico and other parts of North America, Central America, much of South America, and, in Europe, the Netherlands and parts of Italy. After 1580, Portugal and her vast trading and colonial empire in Africa, Brazil, and East Asia also fell under the control of Spain, which already dominated the Mediterranean trade.**

**While Spain grew rich on silver from Peru, spices from India, and gold from Africa, she strictly forbade foreign trade with her colonies and territories and jealously guarded her trade routes, such as the lucrative Southeast Passage around Africa to India and China. For almost a century, England had tried unsuccessfully to open trade with Spanish America and to discover a feasible northern passage to Asia.**

**American colonization was a daunting undertaking because the colonists had only those supplies they could carry with them. Resupply from England could take months or years, and the ships that brought the**

**colonists quickly departed, leaving them without a good means of communication or return should problems arise. The first colonists thus found themselves heavily dependent on the local Native Americans, whose initial willingness to help declined as the colonists became more needy and demanding, a situation that sometimes led to violence.**



**An estimated 68 persons were executed under the Penal Laws during the reign of Elizabeth, 48 priests and 20 laypersons. Unlike the Protestants who were burned for heresy during the reign of Elizabeth's Catholic sister, MARY I, the Catholics who died under Elizabeth were executed for treason, not for religion.**

**The war with Spain that began in 1585; the presence in England of MARY, Queen of Scots, the Catholic claimant to the English throne; and the invasion of the Spanish Armada in 1588 also increased tensions between England and the Catholic world, particularly Spain, and thus made more vigorous the enforcement of laws against Catholic clergy.**

**Priest holes were secret hiding places built into the country homes of Catholic gentry for the concealment from the authorities of Catholic clergymen. The English Penal Laws spurred the construction of small, secure places of concealment in the gentry homes**

where priests headquartered. The most skillful designer of priest holes was Nicholas Owen, who would work at night to construct hiding places that could foil even long and careful searches. Owen often devised hiding places within hiding places and usually contrived some sort of escape route and some means whereby the occupant of the hole might be fed during prolonged searches.



Englishmen and women could largely believe as they wished, so long as they outwardly conformed and kept unapproved opinions to themselves.



In the Middle Ages, most theater had been religious in nature, using humor or cautionary tales to reinforce



**the teachings of the Church. With the Reformation, the government, understanding that plays could be used to promote a particular religious or political point of view, gradually brought the theater under royal control. ELIZABETH banned the performance of unlicensed plays in 1559, restricted the sponsorship of troupes of players to noblemen in 1572, and empowered her master of revels to license all plays and acting companies in 1574.**



**Puritans objected to plays on religious grounds, and the government had political concerns, but there were also other reasons to regulate the public theater. In 1592, an outbreak of the plague caused the city of**

**London to close all theaters and disband all acting companies. Theaters did not reopen until 1594.**



**In the 1570s, Robert DUDLEY, Earl of Leicester, the royal favorite, used plays and entertainments that his players performed for the Queen to promote his marriage to Elizabeth and to enhance his position at court.**



**Because it is closely associated with William SHAKESPEARE, the Globe Theater is the best-known theater of Elizabethan London. In June 1613, a blank volley fired as part of a performance of**

**Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* started a fire that burned the Globe to the ground. It was rebuilt in 1614.**



**In the 1590s, the yearly number of incoming freshmen at Oxford was about 360, over three times the number of the 1510s. Many incoming students did not complete the full four-year course of study for a degree, leaving after two or three years to tour Europe or begin legal studies. The expansion of Elizabethan trade and exploration also created a demand for more courses in geography and history and for more training in such practical skills as navigation.**

**Sidney was a member of a group of court poets and philosophers known as the “Aeropagus,” which sought to elevate both the quality and appreciation of English poetry and literature.**

**Most of Sidney’s works, such the “Apology” and his popular prose romance *Arcadia*, were published after his death. Thus, unlike Gosson and other writers not of the nobility or GENTRY, poetry for Sidney was a pastime, not a livelihood.**

**The Elizabethan period was a time of transition from a system of private literary patronage, where a poet or writer relied on a wealthy nobleman for financial support, to the appearance of professional authors who relied on the sale of their works to earn a livelihood. During the reign of ELIZABETH I, the old system was by no means dead, but the new system was clearly developing.**

**Firmly committed to the Protestant cause, Sidney deplored the Queen's proposed marriage to Francis VALOIS, Duke of Anjou, the brother of the French king. To protest the match, he sent a bold letter of**

remonstrance to the Queen and quarreled violently with Edward de VERE, Earl of Oxford, who supported the marriage. These actions brought Sidney into royal disfavor and led him to exile himself from court. During this exile, Sidney wrote his most famous works, the *Astrophel and Stella* sonnet sequence, the romance *Arcadia*, and the “Apology.” He was readmitted to favor in 1582, but again angered the Queen in the following year when he made an unapproved marriage with the daughter of Sir Francis Walsingham. Denied royal employment, Sidney was about to sail for the New World with Sir Francis Drake when Elizabeth appointed him governor of the Dutch town of Flushing. A year later, in 1586, Sidney died of wounds received in battle against the Spanish in the Netherlands.

The reign of Elizabeth was one of the most creative and prolific periods in the history of English poetry. This poetic flowering began in the quarter century between 1550 and 1575.

Spenser was the first English poet to use print to deliberately disseminate his work to a wider public. His *The Faerie Queen* was a lyric epic of Protestant nationalism, casting Elizabeth as the Faerie Queen herself. *The Faerie Queene* won Spenser an annuity of £50 for life, thus providing him with the royal recognition and patronage.

**Shakespeare wrote two major four-play cycles, known as tetralogies, covering the history of England from the deposition of Richard II in 1399 to the accession of HENRY VII, Elizabeth's grandfather, in 1485. These eight plays view the first of those events as an overthrow of the divine order and the second as the restoration of that order, thus the rise of the Tudor dynasty was sanctioned by God, a very politic opinion to hold with a Tudor Queen on the throne.**

***Richard III* is one of the most popular of Shakespeare's plays in large part because of the playwright's striking depiction of the wicked king,**



whose witty enthusiasm for villainy makes the character a perfect contrast to Shakespeare's virtuous Henry VII. Since 1485, Tudor propaganda had depicted Richard III as a man so ambitious for the throne that he would murder anyone who stood in his way of achieving it.



*The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, now known popularly as Holinshed's *Chronicles* because it was written and compiled under the editorship of Raphael Holinshed, was one of the most popular Elizabethan histories of Britain and the source for Shakespeare's plays --- the 10 English history plays and *King Lear*, *Cymbeline*, and *Macbeth*.

**Edmund SPENSER** was among the foremost poets of the Elizabethan age. His highly innovative *The Shepheardes Calendar*, a long poem dedicated to fellow poet Sir Philip SIDNEY, was enthusiastically received, especially at court, and led to Spenser's appointment as secretary to the lord deputy of Ireland.

Like most great epics, *The Faerie Queene* is an expression of national pride. The poem praises the Tudor dynasty by connecting it to the glorious history of King Arthur, the legendary hero of early Britain. Elizabeth herself is clearly Gloriana, the manifestation of national glory, but many other characters in the

epic can be identified, in full or in part, with prominent Elizabethans.



Spenser deliberately employed outmoded and outdated words and phrases in *The Faerie Queene* to heighten the mythological and magical effect of the text.



Unlike modern playhouses and theater companies, Elizabethan theaters and acting troupes did not offer a succession of performances of one play. No play was ever performed two days in a row. This rule held true even for the most popular works of the most popular playwrights, such as William SHAKESPEARE and

**Christopher MARLOWE.** The practice of rotating different plays seems to have been an attempt to keep a limited London audience from drifting off to a rival theater after they had seen a particular play. The first recorded instance of a play being performed on successive days was the nine-day run of Middleton's *A Game at Chess* in August 1624.



**In Elizabethan theatre all women's roles were performed by men.**



**Many noblemen, such as Sir Philip SIDNEY, were well known as poets and writers, but they did not publish their works for mass consumption. They**

**instead circulated them privately among aristocratic and court circles. Although some scholars dispute this, most accept the idea that it would have been considered degrading and inappropriate for a nobleman to publish his plays and allow them to be performed on the public stage.**



**The English sonnet, a sixteenth-century English variation on a popular Italian verse form, is one of the most common poetic forms in English and American poetry. Because the English form was associated so closely with William Shakespeare, it has become widely known as the Shakespearean sonnet. Sir Thomas WYATT, who wrote poetry for Anne**

**BOLEYN**, and Henry **HOWARD**, Earl of Surrey, a cousin of Queen **ELIZABETH**, imported the sonnet into England in the 1530s and 1540s, but they made some modifications. Elizabethan poets, including Shakespeare, further altered the rhyme scheme to produce the standard Shakespearean form: *ababcdcdefefgg*. However, the sonnet form was flexible, and variations in rhyme and meter were common.



Mary and Elizabeth were cousins. Mary's grandmother was Margaret **TUDOR**, the sister of Elizabeth's father, **HENRY VIII**, and the mother of Mary's father, **JAMES V** of Scotland. Thus Elizabeth and Mary were both descended from **HENRY VII**, the

**founder of the Tudor dynasty, Elizabeth being his granddaughter and Mary his great-granddaughter. Because Elizabeth's siblings were dead and she herself was childless, Mary was, by right, next heir to the English throne. Because Mary was staunchly Catholic and pro-French, the prospect of Mary's accession terrified English Protestants.**



**Although Mary never sat upon the English throne, her son reigned after Elizabeth as JAMES I, and all succeeding English monarchs, including the current Queen, Elizabeth II, are descended from Mary, Queen of Scots, and not from Elizabeth I..**

65

**Protestants had been calling for the execution of Mary since at least 1572.**

66

**About 1580 Elizabethan drama began its course. Shakespeare probably came to London in 1586.**

**Source:**  
*Wagner, Voices of Shakespeare's England, 2010.*



## CHAPTER 10

### History of the English Language



A language related to Modern English has been spoken in Britain since the early fifth century. Before the Roman legions left Britain, the east coast of England was already being subjected to raids from Saxon invaders from beyond the North Sea. In the course of the next century, the newcomers began to settle permanently. According to Bede, a monk from Jarrow writing in the late eighth century, they belonged to three tribes, Angles, Saxons and Jutes. The people are now generally referred to as *Anglo-Saxons*, but their language has always been called *English*. Eventually they conquered the whole of what

is now England, and English replaced the Celtic language, which was until then spoken by the mass of the population.

The English speakers were themselves subjected to further raids from across the North Sea, this time from Danes. The first raids date from 797, and eventually the Danes conquered a large part of England north and east of a line stretching from Chester to the Thames. At the time of King Alfred, only the land south and west of this line remained in Anglo-Saxon hands. The Danish invasion and subsequent settlement had a considerable influence on the English language, and many words were borrowed into English, especially into the dialects of the north.

After the Norman Conquest in 1066, French became the spoken language of the aristocracy in

England, while Latin was adopted as the main written language. English was still spoken by the lower orders of society, but the old written tradition eventually collapsed, and few English written records survive for 200 years after about 1150. French remained in use for some 300 years, until it was gradually replaced by English after the middle of the fourteenth century. The kind of English that emerged, however, was strongly influenced by French, and contained a large number of French words and expressions. The French influence can be seen in the language of Chaucer, who died in 1400.

Caxton introduced printing into England in the 1470s, and written texts became much more widely available than before. Printing was the catalyst for the major upheavals of the sixteenth century which were

linked in various ways to the Renaissance and the Reformation. It is from about this time that scholars began to write in English instead of Latin, and as a result many Latin words were borrowed into English. English literature flourished at the end of the sixteenth century, the time of Shakespeare (1564—1616). The Authorized Version of the English Bible was published in 1611.

### **Language and Social Change:**

Even from this broadly sketched outline it is immediately clear that the history of the language has been determined in various ways by social change. For most of the 1500 years of its history English has been subjected to a pattern of continuous small-scale change interrupted by major events which have

brought about dramatic and sudden change. It is these major discontinuities that enable us to divide the history of the language into convenient 'periods'. The first of these continued until shortly after the Norman Conquest and is known as *Old English*. The period of French domination is the *Middle English* period, and finally, from about the time of the introduction of printing, when the language becomes recognizably similar to the modern language, it is possible to talk of *Modern English*. In order to understand the details of language change, it is important to investigate the kind of social changes that are involved and how they can bring about changes in the language.

## **Language Contact:**

**The English language has not existed in isolation and has always been in close contact with other European languages. The effect of contact is used to determine which of several languages is employed in particular social situations. Conquest by foreign invaders is inevitably followed by the introduction of the languages of the invaders, and this can take several forms. The new language may take hold permanently, as in the case of Anglo-Saxon or the invaders may eventually give up their language, as in the case of the Danes and the Normans. Where several languages are in use simultaneously, they may have different functions: for example, after the Norman conquest English and French were used as**

vernaculars, and Latin was used as the language of record.

When a language is given up, its users may transfer some of its patterns into the new language. In this way foreign influence has peaked when Danes adopted Anglo-Saxon, when bureaucrats began to use English rather than French, and when scholars began to write in English rather than Latin. The process of adopting features of another language is known as *borrowing*, and the most readily borrowed items are words. English has thousands of words borrowed from Danish, French and Latin. In more recent centuries words have been borrowed from all over the globe as a result of mercantile contact and imperial expansion.

Contact must be taken into account when we consider the origin of the English language. It is self-

evident that it is not a single object with a single origin. English vocabulary, expressions and idioms come from a wide range of sources, mainly Latin, French and Germanic, but also Hindi, Hungarian and native American and Australian languages. English pronunciation is largely Anglo-Saxon, but also in part Danish and French. English grammar is basically Germanic, but it has been modified by French and Latin.



*The contents of this textbook have been reproduced from the original for educational purposes only. The following is a list of the references that this textbook relied on.*

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## CHRONOLOGY OF ENGLISH HISTORY FROM THE BIRTH OF ELIZABETH I TO THE DEATH OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, 1533–1616

- 1533** January 25 Henry VIII secretly marries Anne Boleyn  
September 7 Birth of Princess Elizabeth later Elizabeth I
- 1536** May 19 Execution of Anne Boleyn for treason
- 1537** October 12 Birth of Prince Edward later Edward VI, son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour and half-brother of Elizabeth I
- 1542** December 8 Birth of Princess Mary of Scotland, daughter of James V and Marie de Guise and cousin of Elizabeth I  
December 14 Six-day-old Princess Mary becomes queen of Scotland on the sudden death of her father
- 1547** January 28 Death of Henry VIII; Accession of Edward VI
- 1550** April 12 Birth of Edward de Vere, future seventeenth Earl of Oxford
- 1553** July 6 Death of Edward VI  
July 10 Lady Jane Grey, a cousin of Elizabeth I and her half-siblings, is proclaimed queen  
July 19 Queen Jane is deposed; Accession of Mary I; Princess Elizabeth becomes heir presumptive to the English Crown
- 1554** January/February Sir Thomas Wyatt leads an unsuccessful rebellion against Queen Mary's proposed marriage to Prince Philip later Philip II of Spain. Replacing Mary with her sister Elizabeth is an avowed aim of some of the rebels  
March 18 Princess Elizabeth, suspected of supporting Wyatt's Rebellion, is imprisoned in the Tower of London  
May 19 Princess Elizabeth is removed from the Tower and confined at the royal manor of Woodstock  
July 25 Queen Mary marries Prince Philip of Spain
- 1555** April Princess Elizabeth is allowed to return to Court, but remains confined to her apartments  
October Princess Elizabeth is allowed to withdraw from Court to her house at Hatfield
- 1558** April 24 Mary of Scotland marries the Dauphin Francis, son of Henri II and heir to the French throne

- November 17 Death of Mary I; Accession of Elizabeth I
- November 20 Elizabeth appoints Sir William Cecil secretary of state and principal secretary
- 1559** January 10 Philip II of Spain, husband of the late Queen Mary, proposes marriage to Elizabeth, who refuses him
- January 15 Coronation of Elizabeth I
- January 23 First parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament passes [April 29] the Act of Supremacy, severing England from Rome, and the Act of Uniformity, giving England a Protestant Church
- June 5 Elizabeth rejects marriage proposal of Charles, the Catholic archduke of Austria
- July 7 Scottish Protestants occupy Edinburgh, beginning civil war between Protestant lords of Scotland and French-backed Catholic regency government of Marie de Guise, mother of Mary of Scotland
- July 10 Death of Henri II of France; Accession of Francis II and his wife, Mary of Scotland, to the French throne
- July 17 Shane O'Neill succeeds to earldom of Tyrone in northern Ireland
- September 24 Scottish Protestants appeal to Elizabeth for help in Scottish civil war
- December 17 Matthew Parker becomes Elizabeth's first Archbishop of Canterbury
- 1560** January 12 Irish Parliament passes Act of Uniformity, giving Ireland a Protestant Church
- February 22 Elizabeth signs Treaty of Berwick with Scottish Protestants
- July 6 Conclusion of Treaty of Edinburgh, whereby English and French troops withdraw from Scotland, Mary is pledged to recognize Elizabeth as rightful queen of England, and a Protestant provisional government rules Scotland in Mary's absence
- August 24 Scottish Parliament establishes a Protestant Church
- September 8 Amy Robsart Dudley, wife of Robert Dudley, favorite of Elizabeth, dies under mysterious circumstances, and rumors spread that Dudley murdered his wife to marry the Queen
- December 5 Death of Francis II of France widows Mary of Scotland; Accession of Charles IX to French throne
- 1561** July 13 Elizabeth refuses Mary safe passage to Scotland because Mary refuses to ratify the Treaty of Edinburgh
- August 19 Queen Mary returns to Scotland from France and continues Protestant government under her half-brother, James, Earl of Moray
- 1562** August 24 Recoinage of debased English currency restores European confidence in English money
- September 20 Elizabeth concludes treaty with French Protestants, providing military assistance in exchange for English possession of Le Harve
- October Elizabeth falls seriously ill with smallpox, raising fears of civil war should she die without a clear successor; Elizabeth names Dudley protector in event of her death
- October John Hawkins launches first slaving expedition to Africa and first trading expedition to Spanish America
- November/December Shane O'Neill rises in rebellion in Ulster in northern Ireland

- 1563** Publication of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, known popularly as *The Book of Martyrs*
- January 11 Second parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament unsuccessfully petitions Elizabeth to marry and settle the succession and passes an Act of Artificers, which regulates wages and conditions of employment, and an Act for Relief of the Poor
- April Parliament orders a Welsh translation of the *Book of Common Prayer*
- September 11 Shane O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone, submits to the Queen's deputy in Ireland and ends his rebellion
- 1564** March Elizabeth proposes Robert Dudley as husband for Mary of Scotland
- April 11 Calais, lost to France by Queen Mary in 1558, is officially recognized as a French possession in the Anglo-French Treaty of Troyes
- April 23 Birth of William Shakespeare
- April 26 Baptism of William Shakespeare, son of John Shakespeare, is entered in the Stratford Parish register
- September 28 Elizabeth raises Robert Dudley to peerage as Earl of Leicester
- October Riots occur in Ireland against the plantation of English colonists in the Irish counties of Offaly and Leix renamed by the English Queen's and King's Counties
- October 18 John Hawkins launches his second voyage to Africa and America
- 1565** July 25 Mary of Scotland marries Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, a great-grandson of Henry VII
- Summer Queen visits Coventry on her summer progress
- October 6 Mary of Scotland defeats pro-English, pro-Protestant forces under her half-brother, James, Earl of Moray
- 1566** March Various London clergy are suspended for refusing to wear vestments
- March 9 A group of Protestant lords, with the support of Lord Darnley, seize and murder David Rizzio, Queen Mary's French secretary, in the Scottish queen's presence; Mary is placed under arrest
- March 20 Mary of Scotland resumes control of the Scottish government with the support of Lord Darnley
- June 19 Birth of Prince James of Scotland later James I of England, son of Queen Mary and Lord Darnley
- August/September Elizabeth's summer progress takes her to Stamford, Woodstock, and Oxford
- September 30 Third parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament unsuccessfully petitions Elizabeth to marry and settle the succession and seeks unsuccessfully to make Protestant alterations in the Anglican settlement of 1559
- 1567** February 10 Lord Darnley, ill with syphilis, is murdered at Kirk o'Field outside Edinburgh
- April 24 James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, abducts and imprisons Queen Mary at Dunbar Castle
- May 15 Mary of Scotland marries Bothwell
- June 2 Death of the Irish rebel Shane O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone
- June 15 Scottish nobles defeat Queen Mary at Carberry Hill; Bothwell flees Scotland

## Chronology

- July 24 Queen Mary, imprisoned at Lochleven, abdicates the Scottish Crown in favor of her son
- August 22 James, Earl of Moray, proclaimed regent for young King James VI of Scotland
- October 2 John Hawkins launches his third voyage to Africa and America
- 1568** May 2 Queen Mary escapes from Lochleven
- May 13 Mary defeated at Langside
- May 16 Mary of Scotland flees into England and is imprisoned by Elizabeth
- September 21 John Hawkins is routed by Spanish at San Juan de Ulloa
- December Elizabeth orders seizure of Spanish bullion onboard ships driven by privateers into Plymouth and Southampton
- 1569** June James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald leads a rebellion against English rule in southern Ireland
- November 1 Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, is arrested for conspiring with Mary of Scotland
- November 14 Rebels led by Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and Charles Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, enter Durham and restore Catholic worship in the cathedral; the Northern Rebellion, attracting no support elsewhere in the kingdom, fades away by the end of the year
- 1570** January 23 James, Earl of Moray, the regent for James VI, is assassinated
- February Pope Pius V issues the bull *Regnans in Excelsis*, which declares Elizabeth excommunicated and deposed
- August The Duke of Norfolk is released from the Tower but remains under house arrest
- September Elizabeth considers marriage proposals from Archduke Charles of Austria and Henri, Duke of Anjou later Henri III of France
- 1571** February 25 Elizabeth raises Sir William Cecil to the peerage as Lord Burghley
- April The Ridolfi Plot, involving Mary of Scotland, the Duke of Norfolk, and the Spanish ambassador in a scheme to overthrow Elizabeth, is uncovered
- April 2 Fourth parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament, reacting to the Northern Rebellion and the Queen's excommunication, makes publishing a papal bull or calling the Queen a heretic treason, but is frustrated by the Queen in attempts to compel Catholics to attend Anglican services or to pay ruinous fines for not attending
- September 3 The Duke of Norfolk is imprisoned in the Tower for his involvement in the Ridolfi Plot
- December Sir John Perrot begins an Anglicization program in southern Ireland, the scene of recent rebellions against English rule
- 1572** March 1 Elizabeth closes English ports to the Dutch Sea Beggars
- April 1, 22 Sea Beggars capture the Dutch ports of Brill and Flushing, thus igniting a Dutch revolt against Spanish rule
- April 21 Treaty of Blois with France provides for mutual assistance in case of attack and an Anglo-French effort to settle the ongoing conflict between pro- and anti-Mary factions in Scotland
- May 8 Fifth parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament works unsuccessfully for the execution of Mary of Scotland and successful-

- ly for the execution of the Duke of Norfolk, and Puritan members seek unsuccessfully to alter the 1559 settlement and establish a Presbyterian Church structure
- June 2 Execution of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, for involvement in the Ridolfi Plot
- Summer Queen visits Warwick on her summer progress
- August 24 Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre of Protestants occurs in France; many Huguenots subsequently seek asylum in England
- August 29 Francis Drake seizes Spanish treasure ships in the West Indies
- 1573** July 9 Elizabeth grants Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, right to colonize Ulster in Northern Ireland
- August 9 Drake returns from America with enormous treasure taken from Spanish
- December Sir Francis Walsingham, a strong Puritan, is made secretary of state
- 1574** Arrival of first seminary priests in England
- May 30 Death of Charles IX of France; Accession of Henri III formerly a suitor of Elizabeth as Duke of Anjou
- Summer Queen visits Bristol and the West on her summer progress
- 1575** May 17 Death of Archbishop Matthew Parker
- May 22 Elizabeth withdraws her support for Essex's plans to colonize Ulster in Ireland
- Summer Elizabeth visits Reading, Windsor, Woodstock, and other towns north and west of London on her summer progress
- July 26 Essex's army in Ireland massacres the inhabitants of Rathlin Island
- December 24 Edmund Grindal becomes Elizabeth's second Archbishop of Canterbury
- 1576** James Burbage opens the Theater, which is considered the first playhouse in London
- February 8 Sixth parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament again petitions the Queen to marry, and Puritan members again seek unsuccessfully to alter the 1559 settlement of religion
- March 15 Peter Wentworth, a Puritan member of Parliament, is imprisoned in the Tower for criticizing the Queen and demanding Parliament's right to freedom of speech without interference from the Crown
- June 7 Martin Frobisher launches his first voyage of exploration to America
- September 22 Death of the Earl of Essex in Ireland
- December 20 Archbishop Grindal refuses to suppress prophesyings as ordered by Elizabeth
- 1577** James Burbage opens The Theatre, the first permanent, professional theater in England, on the south bank of the Thames opposite London
- May 25 Martin Frobisher launches his second voyage of exploration to America
- June Archbishop Grindal is placed under house arrest and suspended from his office for his refusal to suppress prophesyings
- December 13 Francis Drake launches his voyage of circumnavigation
- 1578** April 4 Mary of Scotland's last husband, the Earl of Bothwell, dies in a dungeon in Denmark

- May 31 Martin Frobisher launches his third voyage of exploration to America  
 June Elizabeth entertains marriage proposal from Francis, Duke of Alençon, brother of Henri III of France  
 Summer Elizabeth visits Norwich and eastern England on summer progress  
 September 21 Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, marries Lettice Knollys Devereux, Countess of Essex and cousin of the Queen, without Elizabeth's knowledge or consent  
 September 26 Sir Humphrey Gilbert launches his first voyage of exploration to America
- 1579** July James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald and a papal force land in southern Ireland at Smerwick  
 August The Duke of Alençon arrives in England to woo Elizabeth  
 August 18 Death in battle of the Irish rebel James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald
- 1580** June Jesuit missionaries Edmund Campion and Robert Parsons arrive in England  
 September 26 Drake enters Plymouth harbor, completing his three-year circumnavigation of the globe  
 November 10 English forces capture the rebel fortress at Smerwick and crush latest Irish rebellion
- 1581** January 16 Seventh parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament imposes ruinous fines on Catholic recusants i.e., Catholics who refuse to attend Anglican services and make converting or being converted to Catholicism treason  
 April 4 Elizabeth knights Drake on the deck of the *Golden Hind*  
 November 2 Duke of Alençon arrives in London to finalize marriage agreement with Elizabeth  
 December 1 Execution of the Jesuit priest Edmund Campion
- 1582** February Alençon leaves England after Elizabeth backs out of marriage  
 November 28 Marriage bond between William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway entered in the Registry of the Diocese of Worcester
- 1583** c. May 23 Birth of Shakespeare's daughter, Susanna  
 May 26 Baptism of Susanna, daughter of William Shakespeare  
 June 11 Sir Humphrey Gilbert launches his second voyage of exploration to America  
 July 6 Death of Archbishop Grindal while still under house arrest  
 July/August Sir Humphrey Gilbert discovers and explores Newfoundland  
 September 9 Sir Humphrey Gilbert is lost at sea  
 September 23 John Whitgift becomes Elizabeth's third Archbishop of Canterbury  
 November Discovery of the Throckmorton Plot to replace Elizabeth with Mary of Scotland
- 1584** March 25 Sir Walter Raleigh, half-brother of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, obtains a patent from the Queen to plant English colonies in America  
 April 27 Sir Walter Raleigh sends out an exploratory mission to America under Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe; the expedition explores a portion of the North American coast that is subsequently named Virginia by Raleigh in honor of Elizabeth, the "Virgin Queen"  
 June 10 Death of the Duke of Alençon; Assassination of the Dutch Protestant leader, William of Orange

- November 23 Eighth parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament banishes all Catholic priests, recalls all Englishmen in Catholic seminaries in Europe, and prescribes death for anyone conspiring to overthrow or assassinate the Queen
- October Formation of the Bond of Association, pledging members to protect Elizabeth from her enemies
- 1585** February Baptism of Hamnet and Judith, twins, son and daughter of William Shakespeare
- April 9 Sir Walter Raleigh sends out a colonizing expedition to Virginia under his cousin Richard Grenville; the expedition establishes the first English colony at Roanoke
- May Anglo-Spanish relations deteriorate to war; Philip II orders seizure of all English vessels in the Atlantic ports of Spain
- June 7 John Davis launches his first voyage of exploration to America
- August 10 Elizabeth concludes a treaty of alliance with the Dutch, promising the Dutch military assistance against Spain
- September 7 Drake sets sail on a raid of Spanish America
- December The Earl of Leicester sails to the Netherlands with an army of 7,000
- 1586** May 7 John Davis launches his second voyage of exploration to America
- June Sir Francis Drake evacuates the English colonists from Roanoke; Philip II begins massing an armada for an attack on England
- September 20 Execution of Anthony Babington and six others for their involvement in the Babington Plot to replace Elizabeth with Mary of Scotland
- October 14 Mary found guilty of treason for her involvement in the Babington Plot
- October 15 Ninth parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament, reacting to the Babington Plot and the trial and condemnation of Mary of Scotland, petitions the hesitant queen to go forward with Mary's execution
- 1587** February 8 Execution of Mary of Scotland at Fotheringay Castle
- April 21 Drake attacks Cadiz, destroying most of the fleet being gathered there for Philip's invasion of England
- May 8 Sir Walter Raleigh sends out a second colonizing expedition to Virginia under John White; the colonists establish second colony on Roanoke Island
- May 19 John Davis launches his third voyage of exploration to America
- August 18 Birth at Roanoke Colony of Virginia Dare, first English child born in America
- December 24 Lord Willoughby replaces Leicester as commander of the English forces in the Netherlands
- 1588** May 20 Spanish Armada leaves Lisbon for England
- June Preparations begin in England and around London to repel Spanish Armada; Earl of Leicester is put in command of English army of defense
- July 19 Spanish Armada is sighted
- July 28/August 8 English fleet meets Armada in a series of naval battles in the English Channel, culminating in the Battle of Gravelines; after which, the Armada is driven north by storms
- September 4 Death of the Earl of Leicester



- September 11 Storms off Ireland destroy many of the remaining Armada vessels
- October Marprelate Tracts attacking the bishops of the Church of England begin to circulate in London
- November 24 Royal thanksgiving service held at Saint Paul's Cathedral for England's delivery from the Armada
- 1589** February 4 Tenth parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament seeks again to alter the religious settlement of 1559 and is again unsuccessful
- April 8 Drake and Sir John Norris launch the ultimately unsuccessful Portugal Expedition against Spain
- July 22 Murder of Henri III of France; Henri of Navarre, a Protestant, is proclaimed King as Henry IV
- 1590** Edmund Spenser publishes the first three books of *The Faerie Queen*  
William Shakespeare begins the writing of the three parts of his *Henry VI*
- April 6 Death of Sir Francis Walsingham; Robert Cecil, Burghley's son, succeeds Walsingham as secretary of state
- August 17 John White's relief expedition lands at Roanoke, but finds no trace of the colonists or their whereabouts
- 1591** May 13 Puritans associated with the Marprelate Tracts are charged with sedition
- August 3 Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, stepson of the late Earl of Leicester and new favorite of the Queen, leads an English military expedition to France to assist Henri IV
- September 3 Death of Sir Richard Grenville and loss of the *Revenge* in a naval battle between English and Spanish squadrons in the Azores
- 1592** Robert Greene criticizes Shakespeare in his *A Groatworth of Wit*, which is the first print reference to Shakespeare as a playwright
- January The Earl of Essex is recalled from command of English forces in France
- February 25 The lord mayor of London petitions Archbishop Whitgift to do something about the corrupting influence plays and playhouses are having on the apprentices and servants of the city
- August 7 Sir Walter Raleigh imprisoned for seducing one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting
- September Fears of a new Spanish invasion, which prove to be unfounded, sweep the southern coast of England; William Shakespeare is working as an actor and playwright in London, where he will write some of his most famous plays in the 1590s
- 1593** First likely performance of *Richard III*
- February 19 Eleventh parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament passes a measure punishing Puritans and other Protestants who refuse to conform to the Church of England with imprisonment and then exile for continued refusal
- April 6 Radical Protestants Henry Barrow and John Greenwood are hanged for sedition
- April 18 William Shakespeare's poem "Venus and Adonis" entered in the register at Stationers' Hall

- May 30 Death of playwright Christopher Marlowe in a mysterious tavern brawl
- May 31 John Penry hanged for his role in publishing the Marprelate Tracts
- June/July Severe visitation of the plague
- July Henri IV of France converts to Catholicism
- 1594** Probable first performance of *The Taming of the Shrew*
- February 6 William Shakespeare's play *Titus Adronicus* entered in the Stationers' Register
- February 19 Birth of Prince Henry, son of James VI of Scotland
- March 12 William Shakespeare's play *Henry VI, Part 1* entered in the Stationers' Register
- Summer Three-year period of rainy summer weather and bad harvests begins
- 1595** Probable first performances of *Richard II*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- January 25 Beginning of Irish rebellion led by Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone
- February 6 Sir Walter Raleigh launches a voyage of American exploration to search for El Dorado
- March 15 Payment made by the treasurer of the royal chamber to William Kempe, William Shakespeare, and Richard Burbage for two comedies performed before the Queen at Christmas 1594
- February 22 Execution of Robert Southwell, a Jesuit priest
- August 28 Drake and Hawkins launch a raiding expedition against the Spanish West Indies
- 1596** January 29 Drake dies at sea off Panama
- March 17 Spanish raid English coast near Plymouth
- July 6 Earl of Tyrone raises a new rebellion in southern Ireland
- June 20 Earl of Essex captures Cadiz and holds it until 4 July
- July 5 Sir Robert Cecil is made principal secretary
- July/August One of the worst harvests of the century leads to food riots in Kent and elsewhere
- August 11 Burial of Hamnet, son of William Shakespeare
- October Second Spanish Armada is wrecked by storms
- October 20 Grant of arms is made to John Shakespeare, father of William Shakespeare
- 1597** July Raleigh and the Earl of Essex launch the ultimately unsuccessful Islands Voyage against Spain
- August 29 William Shakespeare's play *Richard II* entered in the Stationers' Register
- October Third Spanish Armada is wrecked by storms
- October 20 William Shakespeare's play *Richard III* entered in the Stationers' Register
- October 24 Twelfth parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament petitions the Queen for redress of monopolies and passes a new Act for Relief of the Poor
- 1598** July 22 William Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice* entered in the Stationers' Register
- August 4 Death of William Cecil, Lord Burghley

- August 14 Irish rebels under the Earl of Tyrone defeat the English at the Battle of Yellow Ford in northern Ireland
  - September 13 Death of Philip II of Spain
  - November Tyrone and other Irish rebels raid Dublin
- 1599**
  - Probable first performances of *Henry V* and *Julius Caesar*
  - Richard Burbage builds the Globe Theatre; Shakespeare is a shareholder in the Globe, as well as an actor and principal playwright
  - March 12 Earl of Essex is made lord lieutenant of Ireland
  - April 15 Essex arrives in Dublin with an English army
  - September 8 Essex arranges a truce with Tyrone in Ireland
  - September 24 Essex returns to England without the Queen's permission
- 1600**
  - Likely first performance of *Hamlet*
  - May Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, the new lord deputy of Ireland, arrives in Dublin
  - June 5 Elizabeth pardons Essex, but deprives him of most of his offices and places him under house arrest
  - August 14 William Shakespeare's play *Henry V* entered in the Stationers' Register
  - August 26 Essex is released from confinement, but barred from the Court
  - October 8 William Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* entered in the Stationers' Register
- 1601**
  - February 7 Supporters of Essex request a special performance of Shakespeare's *Richard II*, with its scene depicting the deposition of the monarch, at the Globe Theatre
  - February 8 The Earl of Essex raises a rebellion in London
  - February 25 Execution of the Earl of Essex at the Tower of London
  - April Sir Robert Cecil opens a secret correspondence with James VI of Scotland, the Queen's likely heir
  - September Spanish fleet lands at Kinsale in Ireland to aid Tyrone and the Irish rebels against the English government
  - September 8 Burial of John Shakespeare, father of William Shakespeare
  - October 27 Thirteenth and last parliamentary session of the reign opens; Parliament again petitions the Queen to reform her use of monopolies
  - November 30 Elizabeth delivers Golden Speech on monopolies to a deputation from Parliament
  - December 24 Mountjoy wins a resounding victory over Tyrone and the Irish rebels at Kinsale
- 1602**
  - January 2 Spanish commander at Kinsale in Ireland surrenders to Mountjoy
  - January 18 William Shakespeare's play *The Merry Wives of Windsor* entered in the Stationers' Register
  - July 26 William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* entered in the Stationers' Register
- 1603**
  - March 24 Death of Elizabeth I; Accession of James VI of Scotland, the son of the late Queen Mary, to the English throne as James I
  - April English Puritan ministers present the Millenary Petition to the new King; the Millenary petition, so named because it was supposedly signed by a thousand ministers, asked James to remove or modify various Church rituals and ceremonies in accordance with Puritan views

- April 10 James VI of Scotland is officially proclaimed James I, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland
- May 17 Issuance of a royal warrant for a patent authorizing the theatrical company to which William Shakespeare belongs to put on theatrical performances at the Globe Theater
- June 23 James I issues a proclamation ending England's war with Spain
- Summer Two plots against James I the Catholic Bye Plot and the Protestant Main Plot are uncovered and suppressed; Sir Walter Raleigh is implicated in the Main Plot and imprisoned in the Tower of London
- 1604** Likely first performance of *Othello*
- January 14–18 Hampton Court Conference, a debate between Anglican and Puritan divines chaired by James I, is held at Hampton Court Palace
- March 19 First Parliament of James I is convened
- June 24 Death of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford
- July 22 King appoints 54 scholars to serve as translators on a project to produce a new and government authorized version of the English Bible
- August 19 Treaty of London officially ends the war with Spain
- September Canons of 1604 are officially announced to the Church of England
- 1605** Probable first performance of *King Lear*
- November 5 Gunpowder Plot, a Catholic scheme to blow up the King and Parliament, is uncovered and foiled
- 1606** Probable first performance of *Macbeth*
- Spring Parliament debates and passes new Penal Laws against Roman Catholics, including one ordering recusants suspected of disloyalty to take an oath to the King
- November In Bate's Case, the Court of Exchequer establishes the Crown's right to levy impositions, taxes on imports, and sometimes exports imposed by royal decree rather than by consent of Parliament
- December 26 William Shakespeare's company gives a performance of his play *King Lear* before the King at Whitehall Palace
- 1607** May 14 Jamestown Colony is established in Virginia
- November 29 William Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet* entered in the Stationers' Register
- December 31 Burial of Edmund Shakespeare, brother of William Shakespeare
- 1608** February 18 Birth of Elizabeth Hall, Shakespeare's only granddaughter
- June 26 Treaty is concluded with the Netherlands
- September 9 Burial of Mary Shakespeare, mother of William Shakespeare
- 1609** April 9 Start of the Twelve Years' Truce between Spain and the Netherlands
- June 17 Establishment of an English alliance with the Netherlands and France to guarantee the Twelve Years' Truce
- May 20 William Shakespeare's *Sonnets* entered in the Stationers' Register
- 1610** February Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, the lord treasurer, proposes that Parliament grant the King an annual revenue of £200,000; Parliament turns the proposal into the so-called Great Contract by demanding abolition of wardship and other reforms
- April 20 Dr. Simon Forman attends a performance of William Shakespeare's play *Macbeth* at the Globe Theater

## Chronology

- July 23 Parliament is prorogued with the Great Contract unpassed  
October Parliament reconvenes and rejects the Great Contract
- 1611** Completion of the Authorized Version of the Bible, known as the King James Bible
- February 9 James I dissolves his first Parliament  
May 22 King James creates a new rank in the English peerage, the baronet
- 1612** May 24 Death of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, lord treasurer of England  
November 5 Death of Henry, Prince of Wales, eldest son of James I and heir to the throne
- 1613** February 14 Elizabeth, daughter of James I, marries Frederick V, elector of the Palatinate of the Rhine; Elizabeth's great-grandson will become King of England as George I in 1714
- March 10 William Shakespeare buys a house in Blackfriars in London  
June 29 Globe Theater burns to the ground during a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*
- 1614** April 5– Short life of James I's second Parliament, known as the Addled  
June 7 Parliament
- 1616** February 10 Marriage of Judith Shakespeare to Thomas Quiney  
March 25 William Shakespeare makes his will, leaving his wife "my second best bed with the furniture"  
April 23 Death of William Shakespeare in Stratford  
April 25 Burial of William Shakespeare
- 1623** Publication of the First Folio, the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays

### Sources:

Forgeng. *Daily Life in Elizabethan England*, 2010.



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## TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER

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- ∞ Elizabethan education was reserved mainly for boys of certain social and economic classes. Consider how this differs from public education in the United States and elsewhere in the twenty-first century. Consider also what this says about the assumptions Elizabethan society made about the purpose and aims of formal education and how those compare with the basic assumptions that underlie the purpose and goals of modern education.
- ∞ Humanism was an educational program based on the moral and intellectual value of studying the literature of ancient Greece and Rome. Humanist training also sought to imbue students with the classical civic virtues—active involvement in public affairs and the rendering of service to the state. Use the Internet to research what is meant today by the term “secular humanism” and compare it to the humanism of the sixteenth century. Consider how the current debate between advocates of a religious-based education and those of a secular humanist education compares and contrasts to the sixteenth-century notions of humanism and the role of religion in education.
- ∞ How does the debate over the use of corporal punishment that still rages in child-rearing and educational circles today compare and contrast to the same debate, if indeed you think it existed, in the sixteenth century?

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### Web Sites

- Educating Shakespeare: <http://www.likesnail.org.uk/welcome-es.htm>
- Elizabethan Education: <http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/elizabethan-education.htm>
- What Every Schoolboy Knows: <http://www.elizabethan.org/compendium/54.html>



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### AFTERMATH

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In the seventeenth century, Parliament, in response to what was perceived by many as the tyranny of the Crown, sought to acquire new powers, including the limitation of Crown rights, control of the military, oversight of foreign policy, and greater direction of ecclesiastical matters. In the eighteenth century, the Crown's right to veto legislation lapsed, and, by the nineteenth century, Parliament had established the principle that Crown ministers should serve only with the confidence and support of Parliament. By the twentieth century, the monarch, although still the official head of state, had become merely a figurehead, and the kingdom was governed by the House of Commons, the majority party in which, as determined by regular, popular elections, governed the country.

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### ASK YOURSELF

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1. Although Smith declared that Parliament “represents and has the power of the whole realm,” he said little in this passage about how members of Parliament are selected or by whom. How were Elizabethan elections for Parliament conducted? Who could vote, and who could not? Why, despite numerous restrictions on voting, do you think Smith believed the Elizabethan Parliament was fairly representative of the realm?
2. What did Smith mean when he wrote that Parliament “restores in blood”?
3. How and in what instances did Parliament function as a court of law?

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### TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER

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- ∞ Access the Web site of the British Parliament at <http://www.parliament.uk> and read particularly the History and How Parliament Works sections to get an idea of key dates in parliamentary history and how Parliament functions today. Select one of the topics mentioned in either of these sections, such as elections, the Houses of Lords or Commons, the Parliament building, or the process whereby laws are enacted, and write a brief description of the topic that could serve future readers as a useful description of the way things were at the start of the twenty-first century, just as Smith's writing helps present-day readers understand the character of Elizabethan Parliaments.
- ∞ Access the Web sites of the U.S. House of Representatives at <http://www.house.gov> or the U.S. Senate at <http://www.senate.gov>, and, as in the topic above, write a description of some aspect of either body that would serve as a useful snapshot of the present-day U.S. Congress for future readers.

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### AFTERMATH

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Hoping to secure the Queen's financial backing for his colonization scheme, Raleigh named the newly explored region Virginia, in honor of ELIZABETH, the "Virgin Queen." Although this ploy failed, Raleigh also widely distributed Barlowe's "First Voyage to Roanoke" to stimulate private investment in his colonial venture, and this effort was more successful. Barlowe's vivid description of the natural abundance of the region attracted private backers by convincing them that Virginia could supply England with all manner of products and commodities that were then only available from Spanish-controlled territories. As a result, Raleigh was able to raise the funding required to send his first colonization expedition to Roanoke in 1585 and a second in 1587 (see "Roanoke Colonies," p. 85).

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### ASK YOURSELF

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1. What aspects of the Roanoke area does Barlowe emphasize in his report? Why do you think he does so?
2. Why do you think Wingina and the Roanoke Indians were so friendly to the English explorers? Barlowe ascribes it to their simplicity and lack of guile, but may there have been other reasons? How do you think the Roanoke people actually felt about these sudden strangers in their midst? Why?

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### TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER

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- ☞ Access the American Journeys Web site at <http://www.americanjourneys.org/index.asp>, and read parts of the other accounts of Elizabethan explorations of America that are provided there, such as those by John Sparke, Ralph Lane, John White, or John Brereton. Compare these accounts to Barlowe's, and write an essay describing how they compare or how they differ. Explain what you believe to be the writer's reasons for setting down his account.
- ☞ Access the Virginia Historical Society Web site at <http://www.vahistorical.org/cole/overview.htm> and the Virtual Jamestown site at <http://www.virtualjamestown.org> to view the drawings of Raleigh's Virginia made by artist John White, a Roanoke colonist, and the engravings made from White's drawings by Theodor De Bry. From these images, write your own brief description of Virginia from the viewpoint of one of Raleigh's servants who has been charged with producing an account that will stimulate interest and investment in further colonization ventures.

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### AFTERMATH

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Printing was a vibrant and growing trade in Elizabethan England, but it declined in the seventeenth century as increasing religious and political conflict led to harsher government restrictions. Also, the government granted more monopolies on certain types of printing to particular printers, thus choking off all competition in the printing trade. Finally, traditional English mistrust of foreigners prevented important technical innovations made by European printers from entering England, thus causing English printers to fall behind their continental counterparts in terms of skill and equipment.

With the advent of the English Civil War in the 1640s, Parliament rescinded the privileges of the Stationers' Company and abolished Star Chamber, acts that led in the next two decades to an explosion of new publications in all forms, particularly in London. Although some press censorship was restored by the parliamentary regimes of the 1640s and 1650s, rival political and religious factions produced numerous tracts offering their points of view, and so-called disorderly printing flourished. In 1662, after the restoration of the monarchy, press censorship became more effective, especially in terms of religious materials. However, after the Glorious Revolution of 1689, royal control of the press declined, and, in 1709, Parliament passed the groundbreaking Copyright Act, which ended the control of the Stationers' Company by vesting authors, rather than printers, with a monopoly on the reproduction of their works.

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### ASK YOURSELF

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1. Access the U.S. Constitution at <http://www.usconstitution.net/const.html#Am1>, and read the very brief First Amendment to the Constitution regarding freedom of speech. What impact do you think the history and tradition of Crown censorship in England had on the United States and on the writing of this Amendment?
2. What topics, issues, and controversies have caused censorship debates in the United States in the last 50 years? What kinds of materials have people tried to ban from their libraries or communities, and why?

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### TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER

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- ∞ Read the various definitions of censorship provided by PBS at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/cultureshock/whodecides/definitions.html>. Then draft your own definition of censorship.
- ∞ Access a copy of the 1709 Copyright Act at [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Copyright\\_Act\\_1709](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Copyright_Act_1709). Write an essay analyzing this statute and how it changed perceptions of who controlled written material.

### Further Information

- Auchter, Dorothy. *Dictionary of Literary and Dramatic Censorship in Tudor and Stuart England*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001.
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- Rostenberg, Leona. *The Minority Press and the English Crown: A Study in Repression, 1558–1625*. Nieuwkoop, Netherlands: B. De Graaf, 1971.

*The contents of this textbook have been reproduced from the original sources for educational purposes only. The following is a list of the references that this textbook relied on.*

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