

Rise of Modern Monarchy in England 16th century

1.- Henry VIII:

Henry VIII was married with Catherine of Aragon (daughter of the Catholic Monarchs and aunt of Charles V). She had not been able to give him a male heir. Of her six children, only Princess Mary lived past infancy. Henry wanted a male heir to continue his dynasty. He wanted to marry Anne Boleyn but he couldn't convince the Pope to annul his marriage. To do so, Henry decided to bypass papal authority and he placed himself as the head of England's Church.

Henry married Anne Boleyn but had a daughter, Elizabeth. Then, he accused Anne Boleyn of adultery and beheaded her.

Henry married to Jane Seymour, who died shortly after giving birth to a son, Edward.

A fourth marriage to Anne of Cleves, a political alliance, ended shortly by annulment.

Catherine Howard, Henry's fifth wife, was also accused of adultery and beheaded.

Only his sixth wife, Catherine Parr, outlived Henry.

Before dying, Henry established the line of succession. The crown was to pass first to Edward VI, then to Mary I, and finally to Elizabeth I.

2.- Edward VI:

Only nine years old when he inherited the English crown in 1547, Edward VI was a sickly youngster. A council of regents was established to help him. And a lord protector was established to rule the country.

During his reign, England suffered financial problems and religious problems. Unemployment, displaced populations, rising prices, and increased crime occurred.

Edward VI was afflicted with tuberculosis and was going to die so the lord protector tried to claim the throne. Mary, the son of Catherine of Aragon, called together an army of supporters and after Edward's death, was crowned queen.

3.- Mary I:

Mary's childhood had been desperately unhappy. Her parents had divorced; she was separated from her mother and persecuted in various ways for being devoutly catholic in times of Protestant domination. Mary was convinced she should restore Catholicism to England as the state religion.

She also married Philip of Spain, the son of Charles V. Mary persuade Parliament to restore papal authority and began active persecution of Protestant heretics. Because of this persecution she became known as "Bloody Mary"

After Queen Mary's death in 1558, Elizabeth came to the throne.

4.- Elizabeth I:

Elizabeth, Anne Boleyn's daughter, was a well-qualified person. She inherited the throne as well as a civil war and several other problems. Elizabeth knew foreign involvement cost money, so she carefully avoided it. To weaken king Philip II, Elizabeth aid the Spanish Low Countries in their rebellion.

Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland, claimed the English throne on the grounds that Henry VIII had not been married to Elizabeth's mother in the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church. Mary claimed her right through Henry's sister Margaret. She also had married Francis who would become king of France. France and Spain tried to help Mary claim the English throne. But she couldn't. Finally, Mary was beheaded for her involvement in a plot against Elizabeth's life.

Philip II of Spain sent the “Invincible Armada” to avoid English interference in the Netherlands, also as a religious crusade, and to stop English interference with America trade. The ships were destroyed by storms in the North. By defeating the Armada, England remained independent and protestant.

Elizabeth I gave England a period of much needed stability. She was an absolute queen. Parliament lost all its power. She manipulated procedures to make appropriations of money seem like voluntary grants of the people’s representatives.

5.- James I:

When Elizabeth died in 1603, she left no direct heir. The nearest relative was her cousin, James I of Scotland. James’s accession to the English throne united the crowns of Scotland and England, and was the first to call himself king of Great Britain.

Rise of Modern Monarchy in England 17th century

In the 17th century, England replaced Spain and Portugal as the leaders of trade. Large trading companies were formed to promote trade with Asia and America. As a result, the bourgeoisie grew in importance gaining considerable economic and political power.

When Elizabeth I died in 1603, she left no direct heir. The nearest relative was her cousin, James I of Scotland, who was elected king. **James I’s** accession to the English throne united the crowns of Scotland and England, and James was the first to call himself king of Great Britain.

James I was the first of the Stuart kings. He was Protestant. The wars during Elizabeth’s last year had drained English resources. James began to quarrel with Parliament almost immediately. James believed in the divine right of kings so he insisted that no restrictions should be made on his power. He

also insisted on saying that people's liberties were gifts of the king. Problems between James I and Parliament continued throughout his reign.

James I's involvement in the Thirty Years War was brief. He tried to avoid war by arranging a marriage between his son, Charles, and the Spanish infanta but it never took place.

When James died in 1625, he was succeeded by his son, **Charles I**. Like his father, Charles believed in the divine right of kings and disliked the Puritans. He also had problems with Parliament, which refused to give him money. Charles became involved in a war with France so he needed money desperately. He therefore agreed to sign the Declaration of Rights, a document in which he agreed not to tax anyone without the consent of Parliament, not to imprison anyone without a trial, and not to compel citizens to house soldiers in their homes during peacetime.

After the war, Charles tried to avoid the Declaration of Rights. A civil war began. In the end, supporters of Parliament won. Charles was charged with treason and beheaded in 1649. After Charles' death, England became a **republic**. The republic was known as the **Commonwealth**. A council of state was set up in place of the king. **Oliver Cromwell**, a political leader, dominated the council as Lord Protector. When Cromwell died in 1658, the new Parliament arranged for **Restoration of Charles II**. In 1660, England again became a monarchy. Charles II, the son of Charles I, promised to respect Parliament and to observe the Petition of Right. At the same time, Parliament decided to exclude non-Anglicans from government. During this reign, two political parties developed: the Whig party that supported Parliament; and the Tory Party that supported the king.

Charles was succeeded by his brother, James II. James was a Catholic so the Whigs tried to bar him from succession but they were unsuccessful. He enlarged the army and restored Catholics to important positions.

Rise of Modern Monarchy/ Absolutism in France.

The rise of absolutism in France followed a course similar to that of England. French rulers had to contend with a Huguenot opposition. However, there was one difference: England enjoyed geographical isolation that protected her against invasion. France faced constant threat of invasion.

French absolutism evolved gradually. Kings introduced new taxation to support a standing army and were able to reduce the nobles' power. The nobles were gradually reduced to the level of courtiers, dependent on the king for their titles and prestige. The trend towards absolutism was interrupted in the sixteenth century. France became involved in a war with Spain and an internal struggle. A civil war between the Huguenots and the Catholics contested which group would control the throne. The nobles took advantage of the confusion to reassert their powers.

1.- Wars of Religion:

France was divided by religious differences between the Huguenots or French Calvinists; the Catholics, who wanted Catholicism as the only national religion; and the Politiques, Catholics who were more interested in politics than in religion.

Although the Huguenots were allowed to practice without persecution after 1560, France remained officially Catholic. Attempting to unite France, Queen Mother Catherine arranged a marriage between her Catholic daughter, Margaret, and the leader of the French Huguenots, king Henry of Navarre. However, during the wedding a Huguenot leader was killed. To prevent a Protestant rebellion, Catherine decided to attack and ten thousand of Protestants were killed. It was called the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew.

After several years of bloodshed, Henry of Navarre became King Henry IV of France in 1589.

2.- Henry IV:

After, Henry III assassination without direct heir, Henry of Navarre declared himself king. However, French Catholics and Philip II of Spain refused to recognize him. Henry had to fight, with help from England, for four more years. Finally, he became Catholic to restore peace and secure the throne. He was crowned Henry IV in 1594, thus beginning the Bourbon dynasty.

He didn't forget the Huguenots and issued the **Edict of Nantes** which gave freedom of worship and political rights to the Huguenots. France became the first country to allow more than one religious group.

Henry concentrated on taking away powers from nobility and rebuilding France. He promoted agriculture and public work.

When Henry IV was assassinated in 1610, his eight-year-old son became **Louis XIII**. Louis' mother became regent but her policies brought disorder to France again. Disaster was prevented with the rise of Richelieu, who had been secretary of state, as chief minister of France. **Richelieu** was the real power behind Louis XIII.

Rise of Absolutism in France. 17th century

As a result of Spain's loss of supremacy, France became the supreme power in Europe.

Louis XIII and his Prime Minister **Richelieu** strengthened the king's absolute power in France by forcing the nobles to stay at the court where it would be easier to watch them. They also issued an edict requiring the destruction of all the nobles' castles that were no longer needed for national defence. Control of local districts was given to royal officials called intendants, who answered directly to the king.

After this, Louis XIII and Richelieu concentrated on weakening the power of the Hapsburgs. That's why, though a Catholic country, France entered the Thirty Years' War on the side of the Protestants. Although Spain was still fighting, the German Hapsburgs signed the Peace of Westphalia, abandoning alone Spain, which had to sign the Peace as well, thereby losing territories.

When Louis XIII died in 1643, his four year-old son became **Louis XIV**. His mother, Anne of Austria became regent while his favourite **Mazarin**, ruled until the monarch was old enough to take power himself. After the Peace of Westphalia, France became the most powerful country in Europe. French **foreign policy** focused on increasing its power by extending its frontiers and creating a colonial empire.

The reign of **Louis XIV** in the 17th century was the clearest example of an absolute monarchy. The king increased his power at the expense of the nobles, the Church and Parliament. Louis believed in the divine right of Kings. *L'état c'est moi* are indicative words of Louis perception of his authority. Louis XIV ruled with unlimited powers. He increased the power of intendants restricted the power of nobles, persecuted Huguenots and spent huge amounts of money on palaces like Versailles, parties, and other luxuries.

Because France was the most important country, Europe followed the French example. French dress and manners were imitated in other European courts. French became the language of polite society and the official language of many courts.

The rivalry between the Bourbons and the Hapsburgs and the desire to extend France boundaries led to a series of wars between Louis XIV of France and Charles II of Spain. Peace was finally reached because of the heavy loss of in men and money and because Louis XIV wanted Charles II of Spain to select his grandson, Philip of Bourbon, as his heir. When Charles II died, the War of the Spanish Succession broke out. Charles had left his possessions to Philip but the other nations refused to acknowledge him. They did not want Bourbons

in Paris and Madrid. They feared Louis would unite the crowns and form an empire stretching from the Netherlands to Sicily.

England, the Dutch Netherlands, Austria, and Prussia allied against France. The war began in 1702 and was fought in Europe. Peace was finally reached by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. France and England received some colonies in America; Austria received Naples, Milan and Sardinia; and the Spanish United Provinces became independent as the Netherlands. The treaty recognized Philip as king of Spain. He would become King Philip V, but under the stipulation that the crowns of Spain and France would never unite.