

**HISTORY OF
ENGLAND,
1640-1660**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649603800

History of England, 1640-1660 by J. Davies

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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BY

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LONDON:

GEORGE PHILIP & SON, 32, FLEET STREET.

LIVERPOOL: CAXTON BUILDINGS, SOUTH JOHN STREET, AND
49 & 51, SOUTH CASTLE STREET.

1875.

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1640-1660.

Stuart Line.

CHARLES I.

Dates of Birth, Accession, and Death.—(At Dunfermline), 1600; March 27, 1625-1649, January 30, (executed, at Whitehall).

Descent, &c.—Second, (but eldest surviving), son of James I., by Anne, daughter of Frederick II., of Denmark.

At the age of four, Charles was created Duke of York, and became heir-apparent on the death of his elder brother, Prince Henry, 1612, not, however, receiving the title of "Prince of Wales" till 1614. His education was most sedulously cared for by his father, who himself undertook the political training of his successor.

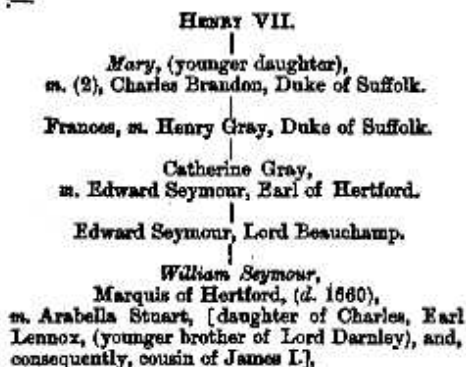
Claim to the Throne.—*Good by hereditary right*,—being the nearest living lineal descendant of Henry VII., through that monarch's elder daughter, Margaret, [w. (1), James IV., of Scotland; (2), Earl of Angus—by which unions, respectively, she became grandmother to Mary, Queen of Scots, and Lord Darnley, the parents of James I].

Bad legally,—since Henry VIII., Parliament having, (as it had a perfect right to do), authorized him to settle the succession by will, had devised the Crown (in case of his own children dying without offspring), to the heirs of his younger sister, Mary, Duchess of Suffolk—thus excluding the Scotch branch to which Charles belonged.

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This appointment was not popular, and James I., (intended, if not actually designated, as her successor, by Elizabeth), was generally accepted, and quietly mounted the Throne, at the decease of the Virgin Queen. His possession of the sceptre until his death so strengthened his title that Charles succeeded him as a matter of course.

The legal heir, by Henry VIII.'s will, was William Seymour, the nearest living representative of the Suffolk family; his descent from Mary is shown by the following table:—



whom it seems to have been the intention of the "Main" conspirators to raise to the throne: for marrying without the Royal permission, Seymour and his wife were imprisoned, both, however, escaping, she to be retaken, and end her days, deranged, in confinement.

Married, (1625), Henrietta Maria, (1609-69), daughter of Henry IV., of France, and Mary de Medici, being left, (by the assassination of her father, the year after her birth), to whose sole care, she imbibed those "foolish notions of the infallibility of sovereigns" which had so pernicious an influence over her, as Queen. Her religious nurture was entrusted to a Carmelite nun, whose training was successful as far "as the outer forms of" Roman "Catholicism" go: her secular education was slight, and superficial. At fifteen, she was beautiful, gay, and high-spirited.

Charles saw her first at a court-ball, at Paris, on his

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way, in undiscovered disguise, with Buckingham, to visit Madrid, with a view to espousing the Infanta of Spain, and conceived for her an instant passion, which led to his proposing for her, on the breaking off of the Spanish match: he was accepted, and a marriage-treaty concluded, before James I.'s death, the union not taking place, however, till the June after Charles's accession.

Her levity, her attachment to the Romish Church, and her imperious spirit, which led her to influence the King towards a violent and arbitrary policy, made her extremely unpopular with the English generally, who attributed to her many of her husband's worst measures.

Just before the breaking-out of the Civil War, she, with a view, also, to escaping impeachment, went to the Continent, to seek assistance for Charles, in alliances and *matériel*, and sold, in Holland, the Crown-jewels, with whose proceeds she purchased a cargo of war-munitions, part, only, of which reached the King. She returned to England, with supplies, 1643, but, in the following year, after the birth of her youngest daughter, at Exeter, fled, finally, to France, where, at Paris, she remained, in great distress and indigence, until her husband's execution, after which, she espoused Jermyz, Earl of St. Albans.

At the Restoration, she revisited England, residing, for a time, at Somerset House.

She died at the Convent of Chaillot, from the effects of a soporific potion, administered to her, by her physicians, while she labored under an, apparently, not dangerous illness. Bossuet pronounced her funeral oration.

Her *Correspondence* with her husband, (to whom she was profoundly attached), has been published.

She was never crowned, owing to her unwillingness to compromise Charles, which, she being a Romanist, must have been the result.

Issue.—Charles II.; Mary, *m.*, William, Prince of Orange, (from which union sprang William III.); Henry, Duke of Gloucester, *d.* 1660; Elizabeth, *d.*, (of a broken heart, in Carisbrooke Castle), 1650—wrote a pathetic account of her last interview with her father; Henrietta Maria, *d.* 1670, *m.* Philip, Duke of Orleans: *in the descendants of Anna Maria, offspring of this marriage, by her husband, Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, is to be*

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found the direct heir of the Stuart Line; another daughter, d. young.

Character.—Of middle height, strong, and well-proportioned, excelling in all manly exercises, and patient of fatigue and privation; hair dark, forehead high, features handsome, expression sweetly grave—approaching the Saturnine; manners somewhat ungracious.

Of strong good sense, and fine intellect; learned, especially in Theology; highly accomplished, with a marked *penchant* for the Fine Arts, of which he was an extravagant patron.

Brave, high-spirited to obstinacy, yet most pliable when complaisantly treated; meek, and moderate, naturally, but stern, hasty, and precipitate when mounted on his political hobby; most beneficent, and capable of warm attachments; partial, and injudicious; tyrannical, owing to his unfortunate political education by his father and Buckingham, and his wife's counsels, this, and his gross and lamentable insincerity, being the sources of his ruin.

Pious, to superstition, and eminently virtuous; strictly temperate and chaste; a fond husband and father.

In fine, a generally excellent character, for the position of a private gentleman, but totally unfitted, naturally and by bringing-up, for a royal position, especially that of a Constitutional King.

WARS.

THE CIVIL WAR, (called by the Royalists "THE GREAT REBELLION"), 1642-1651.

Origin. — Charles's systematic exercise of arbitrary power,—the immediate cause being his attempt to seize the five members of the Commons, and his refusal to consent to the demands which the House, in consequence of that outrage, made of him, as necessary for the assurance of liberty.

The king's rejection, in January, of the demands of Parliament having rendered war almost inevitable, both he and his opponents commenced to take measures for entering upon the contest.

(Here must be inserted, from "Parliamentary and Political Affairs," a sketch of these events, from the outrage upon the Five down to, and inclusive of, the taking, by Parliament, of measures for the defence of the kingdom, in March.)

Preliminary Events. — Hostilities having now become inevitable, Charles, in April, endeavoured to capture the stores of arms in

Hull, advancing thither with only 20 attendants, trusting that the Governor, awed by the Royal presence, and reassured by the smallness of the party, would grant him entrance, and, so, enable him to take measures for seizing the town. Hotham, however, was wide-awake, and, point-blank, refused admission.

Parliament next proceeded, (May), to put in force its *Militia Bill*, levying the forces, (though for their own support), in the King's name.

Charles, to meet this move, summoned the county gentry to York, to form a guard for his person.

The response to this appeal was a gathering from that shire, and other parts of the country, of 600 supporters, amongst whom were 32 of the Upper, and over 60 of the Lower, House, including Falkland, and Hyda.

This act of the King's was at once declared, by both Houses, a violation of the popular trust, and of his Coronation Oath, and as subversive of the Government,—and vigorous steps were taken to constitute a Parliamentary army, the forces levying for Irish service being appropriated, and enlisting being pushed vigorously forward. In London, the popular cause met with enthusiastic support: 4,000 men volunteered in one day,—and immense quantities of plate, and other valuables, (including abundant contributions of ornaments, even thimbles and bodkins, from the female population), were poured into the Parliamentary treasury. The command-in-chief of the revolutionary army was bestowed upon the Earl of Essex, while the Earl of Warwick was entrusted with the fleet.

Meanwhile, part of a cargo of munitions, sent by the Queen from the Continent, reached Charles's hands.

The ultimatum, (for particulars, see "Parliamentary and Political Affairs"), sent, in June, to him, being, with the advice of his counsellors, indignantly rejected, by Charles, the last chance of a peaceful solution of difficulties vanished, and both sides proceeded to draw the sword.

Charles, having collected his available forces, marched South, until he arrived at Nottingham, where he erected the *Royal Standard*, Aug. 23, 1642,—a virtual declaration of hostilities: the weather being stormy, the flag was blown

down, which was regarded as a serious omen. His condition, at this juncture, was sorry in the extreme: he had only about 800 cavalry, and an infantry of 300, together with the Yorkshire train-bands; while, for want of cattle to draw them, the greater portion of his feeble artillery had been left behind at York,—and, at Northampton, whither it had advanced, from London, to meet him, lay the Parliamentary main-body, 10,000 strong. Had the latter now marched upon them, the King's forces must have been effectually dissipated—never, it seems certain, to have reassembled, and, thus, the sad fratricidal contest that ensued have been avoided. But Essex had, as yet, received no orders from Parliament, and, so, their lines lay idle, while the foe gathered strength to maintain a terrible and sanguinary struggle. Yet it was well for England that the Royal cause was not crushed at the outset, for, by the long and dire agony of the Civil War only could be, and was, won the nation's political salvation.

The weakness of the monarch's forces led his advisers to suggest, and him to consent to, an attempt at reconciliation with the Parliament. Accordingly, the Earl of Southampton, Sir John Colepepper, and Sir William Uvedale, hastened to London, with proposals for a treaty, which the Houses refused to entertain, unless Charles should take down his standard, and withdraw his proclamations. To this he would not consent, so that these negotiations, (as well as a second similar essay), proved fruitless.

The *Parliament*, who had been encouraged by their great numerical superiority, now, to their further elation, scored their *first two successes*, in the capture of

Portsmouth, (the best fortified town in the kingdom), owing to the non-vigilance of the Governor, Goring,—and in the *compelling to retire into Wales*, by a body of the popular army, under the Earl of Bedford, a *Royalist levy*, raised in Somersetshire, under the powerful and high-charactered Earl of Hertford.

All the scattered corps of the *Parliamentary forces*, now, by orders, concentrated at Northampton, to the number of 15,000, Essex joining them, and taking the command. *The King*, realizing the incompetency of his small army to meet the foe, retired, for the purpose of augmenting his strength, to Derby; and, thence, to Shrewsbury,