

Why were there so few Catholics in England by 1603? Topic 2 Knowledge Organiser

EARLY YEARS: 1558-1580

Laws:

- Act of Uniformity 1559** – all worship the same way, everyone follow Book of Common Prayer in English, non-attenders fined
- Act of Supremacy 1559** – Elizabeth supreme governor of church in England, any insisting the Pope to be the head a traitor for challenging the queen's supremacy

EARLY YEARS: 1558-1580

Decline of Catholicism:

- most priests accepted Elizabeth's changes
- weekly Protestant sermons slowly altered people's beliefs = conformers
- few Elizabethans could afford non-attendance fines
- marriages/baptisms had to follow Protestant prayer book
- With few priests ordinary people didn't follow the Pope's instructions.

EARLY YEARS: 1558-1580

International Threat

- Pope excommunicated Elizabeth from the Roman Catholic church in 1570. Told English Catholics that Elizabeth was not the rightful queen so not to follow her laws.
- Little threat from Mary/Philip: Mary was Catholic and next in line to the throne if Elizabeth died without children. She was not in England until 1568 then was kept in prison. Rebellion in north put down in 1569 and plot to murder Elizabeth in 1571 put down.

RISING THREAT: 1580-1588

Laws:

- Act of Persuasions 1581** – raised fine for recusancy by 10,000% to £20/month, extra £200/year fine for persistent recusants, £66 fine for attending a Mass, imprisonment of recusants who failed to pay fines within 3 months, death penalty for persuading a Protestant to become Catholic (treason)
- Act Against Priests 1585** – Priests under the authority of the Pope were guilty of treason just by setting foot in England. Death penalty for anyone sheltering a Roman Catholic priest, soldiers might appear at Catholic houses at any time to search after receiving information from neighbours or informants
- Recusancy Act 1587** – government allowed to take 2/3 land owned by a recusant behind on fines, even the wealthiest Catholic being driven into debt

RISING THREAT: 1580-1588

- Jesuits Robert Persons and Edmund Campion were smuggled in disguise in England in June 1580.
- Over 100 new priests had arrived from Europe by 1580.
- 'priest holes' were created by many gentry families = secret hiding places for the priests.
- 1586 Margaret Clithrow accused of sheltering priests: she became the first woman Catholic martyr of Elizabeth's reign.
- 1581: Campion was executed.
- Robert Persons & William Allen became more extreme in their opposition to Elizabeth after Campion's death. They sent many more priests.

RISING THREAT: 1580-1588

International Threat

- Rising threat from Mary in plots followed by her execution:*
- Pope declared killing a Elizabeth not sin in 1580, wanting Mary to take the throne. Philip of Spain supported this
- Throckmorton plot (1583)** discovered by Walsingham and torturing reveals plans of an invasion from a powerful French Catholic to put Mary on the throne (though no proven involvement from Mary) – Throckmorton executed
- Bond of Association** passed – anyone plotting to kill Elizabeth could be hunted down and executed and anyone in whose name it was done i.e. Mary could be executed if a plot was made in her name.
- 1584 a Catholic subject of Philip II shot and killed Prince William of Orange so in 1585 Elizabeth sent aid to Protestant Dutch rebels.
- Babington plot (1586)** planning to replace Elizabeth with Mary – Walsingham cracked coded letters to discover Mary had agreed to the plot – Babington and co-conspirator executed.
- Oct 1586 Mary tried, defended herself, found guilty and eventually executed – 1587. Took Elizabeth several weeks to sign her death warrant. She wasn't happy when Mary was actually killed.

SECURING PROTESTANTISM: 1588-1603

Laws:

Act Restraining Recusants 1593

All recusants over 16 to remain within 5 miles of home at all times and banned from holding large gatherings

Elizabeth never made it illegal to hold Catholic beliefs but by enforcing Protestant worship at church services and financially crippling and socially isolating Catholics she did her best to crush the Catholic community.

SECURING PROTESTANTISM: 1588-1603

1588 11 Catholic laymen (not priests) were executed for aiding priests or encouraging conversion to Catholicism.

Priests failed to take advantage of Elizabeth's ailing age:

- they didn't concentrate their work in the north and west where recusancy was strongest – spent too much time in London and failed to build a strong base.
- they concentrated on the gentry and not the lower-class Catholics who then became Protestant
- they were 'too saintly' to overpower Elizabeth's government – they didn't engage in the political struggle
- the priests spent too long squabbling over what to do – the Seminary and Jesuits disagreed over sustaining or converting.
- In 1598 the Pope even sent an Archbishop to decide how to support English Catholics.

SECURING PROTESTANTISM: 1588-1603

1588 Philip II of Spain's attempt to restore the Catholic faith in England was defeated.

1589: Francis Drake led an 'English Armada' to try and stir the Portuguese to revolt against Spain = expensive failure.

1596: Earl of Essex led a successful raid on the Spanish port of Cadiz.

1596 & 1597: Phillip II sent Spain's second and third armada – both wrecked by storms.

1601: The Spanish army failed in attempting to support the Earl of Tyrone's rebellion against English rule in Ireland.

1604: A year after Elizabeth's death the Treaty of London ended the war with Spain.

Why were there so few Catholics in England by 1603?

In total Elizabeth ordered the execution of at least 200 Roman Catholics during her reign. In 1558 there were 3 million people in England and almost all were Catholic. By 1603 there was an even bigger population but only 40,000 Catholics.

KEY DATES	
Laws and actions against Catholics	The Catholic threat
1559: The Act of Uniformity & The Act of Supremacy	1570: Pope Pius V excommunicated Elizabeth from the Catholic Church. 1580: over 100 secret priests had arrived from Europe. 1581: Edmund Campion executed = more priests sent to England. 1583: The Throckmorton Plot 1586: The Babington Plot 1588: The Spanish Armada,
1581: Act of Persuasions	
1583: Bond of Association	
1585: Act against Priests/ The Bloody Question	
1586: Mary Queen of Scot's trial and execution	
1587: Recusancy Act	
1593: Act Restraining Recusants	

KEY TERMS
<p>Protestant – believe in the Bible being in English, churches being simple. Priests can marry. Queen Head of Church.</p> <p>Catholic – believe in the Bible being in Latin, churches fancy and decorated. Priests must not marry. Pope Head of Church.</p> <p>Mass – Catholic church service</p> <p>Excommunicate – officially thrown out of the Catholic faith</p> <p>Monarch – King or Queen</p> <p>Rebellion – rising up against the monarch/govt</p> <p>Supremacy</p> <p>Treason – betraying the country by plotting to overthrow the monarch</p> <p>Recusancy – remaining loyal to the Pope and not attending English church services.</p> <p>Papist – someone who still follows the Pope at the head of the Church and is Catholic at heart but might attend English Church services.</p> <p>Conformer – Catholic who goes to Protestant church and stops being Catholic.</p> <p>Jesuit Priests – specially trained to persuade people to become Catholic or deepen their existing faith. Directly loyal to the Pope. E.g. Robert Persons and Edmund Campion.</p> <p>Seminary Priest – young English Catholics who trained abroad then came to England to support Catholics not to try to convert anyone.</p>