

History of England from the Tudors to the Stuarts

(48 lectures, 30 minutes/lecture)

Course No. 8470

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During the 229-year period from 1485 to 1714, England transformed itself from a minor feudal state into what has been called "the first modern society" and emerged as the wealthiest and most powerful nation in the world.

And what a story it is. The English survived repeated epidemics and famines, one failed invasion and two successful ones, two civil wars, a series of violent religious reformations and counter-reformations, and confrontations with two of the most powerful monarchs on Earth, Louis XIV of France and Philip II of Spain.

But they did much more than survive. They produced a marvelous culture that gave the world the ideas of John Locke, the plays of Shakespeare, the wit of Swift, the poetry of Milton, the buildings of Christopher Wren, the science of Isaac Newton, and the verse of the King James Bible, to name a very few.

And, despite the cruelty, bloodshed, and religious suppression they visited upon so many, they also left behind something else: the political principles and ideals for which we—and so many of them—would work and die, and on which we would build our nation.

"A Terrific Story"

Professor Robert Bucholz presents a sweeping, 48-lecture course on one of the most intriguing periods in modern history. England's changing social, economic, religious, and political structures unfold while first the Tudors (1485-1603) and then the Stuarts (1603-1714) establish their monarchies, and you hear the facts behind such enduring stories as:

- Henry VIII's wives and his fear that a woman would rule
- the reigns of Henry's three children: the popular Elizabeth I, "Bloody Mary," and Edward VI
- James I insisting monarchy be stronger than Parliament
- Charles I dressing in his best clothes to walk to his own beheading
- James II believing Britain couldn't live without him
- William III, invited by the British to invade their country
- Queen Anne's War and her immense popularity
- the great, tumultuous city of London
- continuing religious persecution and change, including the Reformation and ongoing relationships between the monarchy and the pope
- change through the onset of the printed word

- problems of law and order, witchcraft, the Poor Law, and the rise of Puritanism
- the blossoming of Elizabethan and Jacobean culture in art, music, and literature.

You learn about great works of art, important discoveries, castles, and coronations. And along with the rich history of England's monarchs you also learn how the English people were born, worked, played, worshipped, fell in love, and died.

You also discover answers to such intriguing questions as:

- Why have all Britain's glory days been under women monarchs?
- Why did experimenting with a Republic lead to the monarchy's return?
- Why was Thomas More executed?
- Why do rebellion and war continue in Ireland and Scotland?
- What has been England's ongoing relationship with Wales?

And Professor Bucholz presents this history in an intimate way that draws you into unfolding events, weaving quotes from parish records, diaries, letters, newspapers, and the political press into his own narrative.

"This is," he says simply, "a terrific story."

AudioFile© magazine comments: "Professor Bucholz intertwines descriptions of court intrigue with portrayals of its effect on those governed, from the merchant to the tenant farmer to the beggar. Bucholz's lecturing style engages his students in the realities of the time with empathy, data, and humor... The listener will find no dry history here, but a colorful album of real peoples' memories."

Robert Bucholz (Ph.D., Oxford University) is Associate Professor of History at Loyola University of Chicago, where he won the first-ever Sujack Award for Teaching Excellence. Author of *Early Modern England 1485-1714* (with Newton Key), Professor Bucholz—whose work has been solicited and commented upon by His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales—is a noted expert on the English court and royal household and a frequent media commentator on British history and the Royal Family.

Two Strong Queens and an Execution

This is a course filled with dramatic moments.

With Professor Bucholz, you find yourself in the hallway outside the bedchamber of Queen Anne on the night of July 27, 1714, next to the loyal servants who clearly hear the sounds of their beloved monarch weeping.

That day, the queen had been left with no choice but to demand the resignation of her Lord Treasurer, Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, the greatest politician of his era and the last of the original ministers she had chosen when assuming the throne.

It is a frankly stunning moment and a vivid portrait of Queen Anne. For this plain and sickly woman, lacking the star quality of Elizabeth and of whom little had been expected when she took the throne 12 years earlier, had nevertheless managed to forge the most successful reign of any of the Stuart monarchs, becoming a strong and effective queen with an instinctive love for and understanding of her people.

Indeed, Professor Bucholz argues that the two most clearly successful reigns of this period were those of women, Queen Anne on the Stuart side, and, on the Tudor side, Elizabeth—the "Virgin Queen" who deliberately created the myth of "Gloriana." Moreover, they did this in the face of a thousand years of belief in the "Great Chain of Being," the immutable hierarchy in which every person on Earth had a clearly defined and accepted rank, the challenging of which in any form was a grave sin.

And Professor Bucholz gives you a great deal more. He takes you to the floor of Parliament during the contentious debate over the fate of Charles I, with Oliver Cromwell thundering, "I tell you, I will cut off his head with the crown on it!"; then to the king's final meeting with his youngest sons where he asks them to preserve the monarchy; and, finally, to the execution itself, the march to the block taking Charles directly underneath a painting of James I on the ceiling of Whitehall Palace—his own father portrayed as a deified monarch.

This was far more than great theater. For England had, for the first time, "judicially and publicly murdered" its monarch, literally "lopping off [Earth's] highest link in the Great Chain of Being" and creating, for the only time in its history, a Republic.

Repercussions across the Ocean

It was during this period that England became a world power and, in the process, established its American colonies—thus becoming our mother country. That is, the culture of early-modern England is our root culture, and many of our institutions, laws, customs, and traditions can be traced back to that time and place.

In particular, the civil wars, revolutions, and parliamentary and legal battles described in this course led to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, rule of law, the rights to trial by jury and *habeas corpus*, the first modern political parties, and a kind of popular participation in politics that would lead, ultimately, to democracies on both sides of the Atlantic.

"For these reasons," states Professor Bucholz, "this is not only an interesting course in its own right, it is also one with direct relevance for 21st-century Americans."

Course Lecture Titles

Part 1

1. England 1485—1714, the First Modern Country
2. The Land and Its People in 1485—I
3. The Land and Its People in 1485—II
4. The Land and Its People in 1485—III
5. Medieval Prelude—1377-1455
6. Medieval Prelude—1455-85
7. Establishing the Tudor Dynasty—1485-97
8. Establishing the Tudor Dynasty—1497-1509
9. Young King Hal—1509—27
10. The King's Great Matter—1527-30
11. The Break from Rome—1529-36
12. A Tudor Revolution—1536-47

Part 2

13. The Last Years of Henry VIII—1540-47
14. Edward VI—1547-53
15. Mary I—1553-58
16. Young Elizabeth-1558
17. The Elizabethan Settlement—1558-68
18. Set in a Dangerous World—1568-88
19. Heart and Stomach of a Queen—1588-1603
20. The Land and Its People in 1603
21. Private Life—The Elite
22. Private Life—The Commoners
23. The Ties that Bound
24. Order and Disorder

Part 3

25. Towns, Trade, and Colonization
26. London
27. The Elizabethan and Jacobean Age
28. Establishing the Stuart Dynasty—1603-25
29. The Ascendancy of Buckingham—1614-28
30. Religion and Local Control—1628-37
31. Crisis of the Three Kingdoms—1637-42
32. The Civil Wars—1642-49
33. The Search for a Settlement—1649-53
34. Cromwellian England—1653-60
35. The Restoration Settlement—1660-70
36. The Failure of the Restoration—1670-78

Part 4

37. The Popish Plot and Exclusion—1678-85
38. A Catholic Restoration? 1685-88
39. The Glorious Revolution—1688-89
40. King William's War—1689-92
41. King William's War—1692-1702
42. Queen Anne and the Rage of Party—1702
43. Queen Anne's War—1702-10
44. Queen Anne's Peace—1710-14
45. Hanoverian Epilogue—1714-30
46. The Land and Its People in 1714-I
47. The Land and Its People in 1714-II
48. The Meaning of English History—1485-1714