

James Charles Stuart

James VI and I



King James I, (June 19, 1566 – March 27, 1625) is my 22nd cousin, 11 times removed. Our ancestors in common are Eystein Glumra Ivarsson and Aseda Rognvaldsdatter. They are James' 21st great grandparents and my 32nd great grandparents. Eystein Glumra Ivarsson and Aseda Rognvaldsdatter are ninth century Vikings from Norway.

James I was born in 1566 to Mary Queen of Scots and her second husband, Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley. James descended from the Tudors through Margaret, daughter of Henry VII: both Mary Queen of Scots and Henry Stewart were grandchildren of Margaret Tudor. James ascended the Scottish throne upon the abdication of his mother in 1567, but Scotland was ruled by regent until James reached his majority. He married Anne of Denmark in 1589, who bore him three sons and four daughters: Henry, Elizabeth, Margaret, Charles, Robert, Mary and Sophia. He was named successor to the English throne by his cousin, Elizabeth I and ascended that throne in 1603. James died of a stroke in 1625 after ruling Scotland for 58 years and England for 22 years.

Religious dissension was the basis of an event that confirmed and fueled James' paranoia: the Gunpowder Plot of November 5, 1605. Guy Fawkes and four other Catholic dissenters were caught

attempting to blow up the House of Lords on a day in which the King was to open the session. The conspirators were executed, but a fresh wave of anti-Catholic sentiments washed across England.

James also disliked the Puritans who became excessive in their demands on the King, resulting in the first wave of English immigrants to North America. The ship *Mayflower* in 1620 was the first to complete the Atlantic crossing of these Pilgrims. Its 102 passengers included [William Bradford](#), my [seventh great grandfather](#), who became [Governor of Plymouth Colony](#) for several dozen years in the 1600's.



After the Gunpowder Plot, James sanctioned harsh measures to control non-conforming English Catholics. In May 1606, Parliament passed the Popish Recusants Act, which could require any citizen to take an Oath of Allegiance denying the Pope's authority over the king, James was conciliatory towards Catholics who took the Oath of Allegiance, and tolerated crypto-Catholicism even at court. Henry Howard, for example, was a crypto-Catholic, received back into the Catholic Church in his final months. On ascending the English throne, James suspected that he might need the support of Catholics in England, so he assured the Earl of Northumberland, a prominent sympathiser of the old religion, that he would not persecute "any that will be quiet and give but an outward obedience to the law".

In the Millenary Petition of 1603, the Puritan clergy demanded the abolition of confirmation, wedding rings, and the term "priest", among other things, and that the wearing of cap and surplice become optional. James was strict in enforcing conformity at first, inducing a

sense of persecution amongst many Puritans; but ejections and suspensions from livings became rarer as the reign continued. As a result of the Hampton Court Conference of 1604, a new translation and compilation of approved books of the Bible was commissioned to resolve discrepancies among different translations then being used. The Authorized King James Version, as it came to be known, was completed in 1611 and is considered a masterpiece of Jacobean prose. It is still in widespread use.

In Scotland, James attempted to bring the Scottish kirk "so neir as can be" to the English church and to reestablish episcopacy, a policy that met with strong opposition from presbyterians. James returned to Scotland in 1617 for the only time after his accession in England, in the hope of implementing Anglican ritual. James's bishops forced his [Five Articles of Perth](#) through a General Assembly the following year, but the rulings were widely resisted. James left the church in Scotland divided at his death, a source of future problems for his son.

James, however, did manage to commission an [Authorized Version of the Bible](#), printed in English in 1611. It is what commonly is known as the King James version of the Bible.

The relationship between King and Parliament steadily eroded. Extravagant spending (particularly on James' favorites), inflation and bungled foreign policies discredited James in the eyes of Parliament. Parliament flatly refused to disburse funds to a king who ignored their concerns and were annoyed by rewards lavished on favorites and great amounts spent on decoration. James awarded over 200 peerages (landed titles) as, essentially, bribes designed to win loyalty, the most controversial of which was his creation of George Villiers (his closest advisor and companion) as [Duke of Buckingham](#). Buckingham was highly influential in foreign policy, which

failed miserably. James tried to kindle Spanish relations by seeking a marriage between his son Charles and the Spanish Infanta (who was less than receptive to the clumsy overtures of Charles and Buckingham), and by executing Sir Walter Raleigh at the behest of Spain.

Source: <http://www.britannia.com/history/monarchs/mon46.html>

King James' critiques cite as a defect in his character his public friendship with George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham, who was considered an active homosexual, even though he married and gave issue to children. The King's reliance upon Villiers' influence in the matters of court was just too chummy for some people. Villiers continued to be a public distraction in the subsequent administration of King Charles I.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Villiers,_1st_Duke_of_Buckingham

On January 31, 1606, Guy Fawkes, convicted for his part in the Gunpowder Plot against the English Parliament and King James I, was executed.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guy_Fawkes

After about the age of fifty, James suffered increasingly from arthritis, gout and kidney stones. He also lost his teeth and drank heavily. The King was often seriously ill during the last year of his life, leaving him an increasingly peripheral figure, rarely able to visit London, while Buckingham consolidated his control of Charles to ensure his own future. One theory is that James may have suffered from porphyria, a disease of which his descendant George III of the United Kingdom exhibited some symptoms. James described his urine to

physician Théodore de Mayerne as being the "dark red colour of Alicante wine."The theory is dismissed by some experts, particularly in James's case, because he had kidney stones which can lead to blood in the urine, colouring it red.

In early 1625, James was plagued by severe attacks of arthritis, gout, and fainting fits, and fell seriously ill in March with tertian ague and then suffered a stroke. He died at Theobalds House on 27 March during a violent attack of dysentery, with Buckingham at his bedside. James's funeral on 7 May was a magnificent but disorderly affair. Bishop John Williams of Lincoln preached the sermon, observing, "King Solomon died in Peace, when he had lived about sixty years ... and so you know did King James". The sermon was later printed as Great Britain's Salomon.

James was buried in Westminster Abbey. The position of the tomb was lost for many years until his lead coffin was found in the Henry VII vault in the 19th century, during an excavation.



Compilation by
Dwight Albert (D. A.) Sharpe
805 Derting Road East
Aurora, TX 76078-3712

817-504-6508

da@dasharpe.com

www.dasharpe.com

