

History 361
THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN BRITAIN
1485-1660

Professor Sommerville

This course will explore a decisive period in the making of modern Britain, and of the western world today. Though the social, economic and intellectual aspects of the period will not be neglected, the main focus of the course will be on political and constitutional change. The course will begin with a broad introduction to early-modern Britain. Then we will examine how the turbulent period of the Wars of the Roses was ended, and how the Tudor monarchy broke the independence of the "over-mighty magnates" of late-medieval England.

The Tudors succeeded in introducing far greater unity and centralization than had existed earlier, and this will be the main theme of the first half of the course. Topics discussed will include the Reformation, the so-called "Tudor Revolution in Government," the bitter factional politics of the court of Henry VIII, the Marian Reaction and the "mid-Tudor crisis," and the re-establishment of royal power in the reign of Elizabeth - when an unprecedented flowering of English culture took place, and when English sea-power staved off conquest by Catholic Spain.

The succession of James, King of Scots to the English throne in 1603, united the Scottish and English monarchies but the new Stuart dynasty was soon faced with grave problems. The second half of the course will examine the ways in which financial, constitutional and religious issues combined to lead to civil war and to the execution of the King and the introduction of a republic in England in 1649. We will also see how the advent of a military despotism and the proliferation of radical ideas led the English to reintroduce monarchy in 1660.

Required tasks:

Honors students: one extra 5-6 page term-paper (so if you're a three-credit honors student you do one term-paper, while four-credit honors students do two.

Graduate students will take the final and write two papers (10-15 pages, including notes and bibliographies

Introduction:

- (i) Basic factors
- (ii) Economy and society
- (iii) Government

The foundation of Tudor England:

- (i) The Wars of the Roses and their aftermath
- (ii) Henry VII

Henry VIII and Wolsey

Henry VIII and the Reformation:

- (i) from above

(ii) from below
(iii) the monasteries
Henry VIII - government and society

Edward VI and:
(i) Somerset
(ii) Northumberland
Mary

The reign of Elizabeth
Elizabethan:
(i) Government
(ii) Parliaments
(iii) Puritanism
(iv) Catholicism
Elizabethan exploration and foreign policy

SPRING RECESS

Stuart England 1603-1642
Jacobean England:
(i) the age of Salisbury
(ii) the rule of the Howards
Charles I,
Buckingham and the crisis of 1625-9
Charles I: the personal rule
Charles I: the crisis of 1640-2

EXAM

The Civil War and its origins
The first Civil War
The English Revolution
The Commonwealth
Protectorate and
Restoration: England 1649-60
Science, thought, religion and culture in mid-seventeenth century England

FINAL EXAM