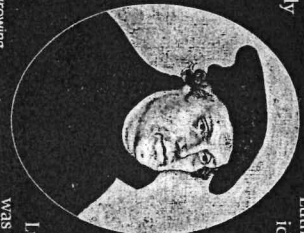


Catholics and Protestants

By the 1500s, many people were unhappy with the Catholic Church. They thought that its leaders were only interested in wealth and power, and complained that many of its priests were badly educated and lazy.

A few determined people protested about the Church. At first, they tried to reform or improve it, but later they broke away completely. Their followers became known as Protestants, and the movement they started was called the Reformation.

Martin Luther, the leader of a growing protest against the Catholic Church



Luther's changes

Luther went into hiding and worked on his ideas for how the Church should be run. He believed that church services should be kept simple, and that people should read the Bible for themselves, instead of learning everything from priests. Luther translated the Bible from Latin into German, and many copies of his Bible were printed.

By 1525, people all over Germany were holding simple services based on Luther's ideas, and the Lutheran Church was born.

John Calvin

In 1541, John Calvin, a French reformer, started the Calvinist Church in Geneva. Calvinism is a strict form of Protestantism, and it was very popular in Switzerland and Scotland. By 1560, large numbers of people in northern Europe had become either Lutherans or Calvinists (see map).

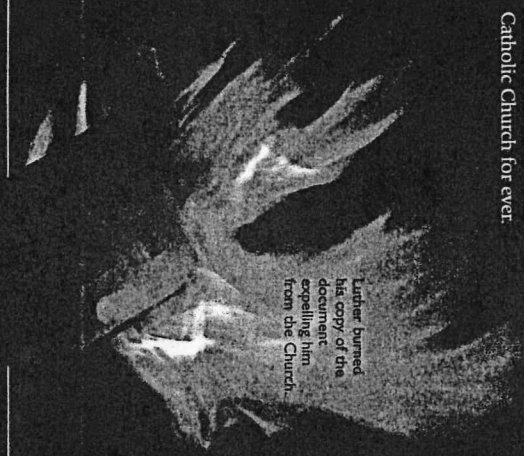


John Calvin, founder of the Calvinist Church

Henry's rebellion

King Henry VIII of England argued with the Pope because he refused to allow Henry to divorce his wife, Catherine of Aragon. In 1531, Henry decided to take the place of the Pope, and made himself head of the Church in England, which later became known as the Anglican Church.

Henry VIII thought many monks and nuns did not lead holy lives, so he closed down the abbots where they lived. Most of these abbots are now in ruins, like Rewerk Abbey shown here.



Luther burned his copy of the document expelling him from the Church.

Catholics fight back

The leaders of the Catholic Church tried hard to win people back to their Church. They made many changes, which together became known as the Counter-Reformation.



During the Counter-Reformation, sculptors carved beautiful statues for Catholic cathedrals and churches. This statue of St. Teresa and an angel is by the Italian sculptor Bernini.

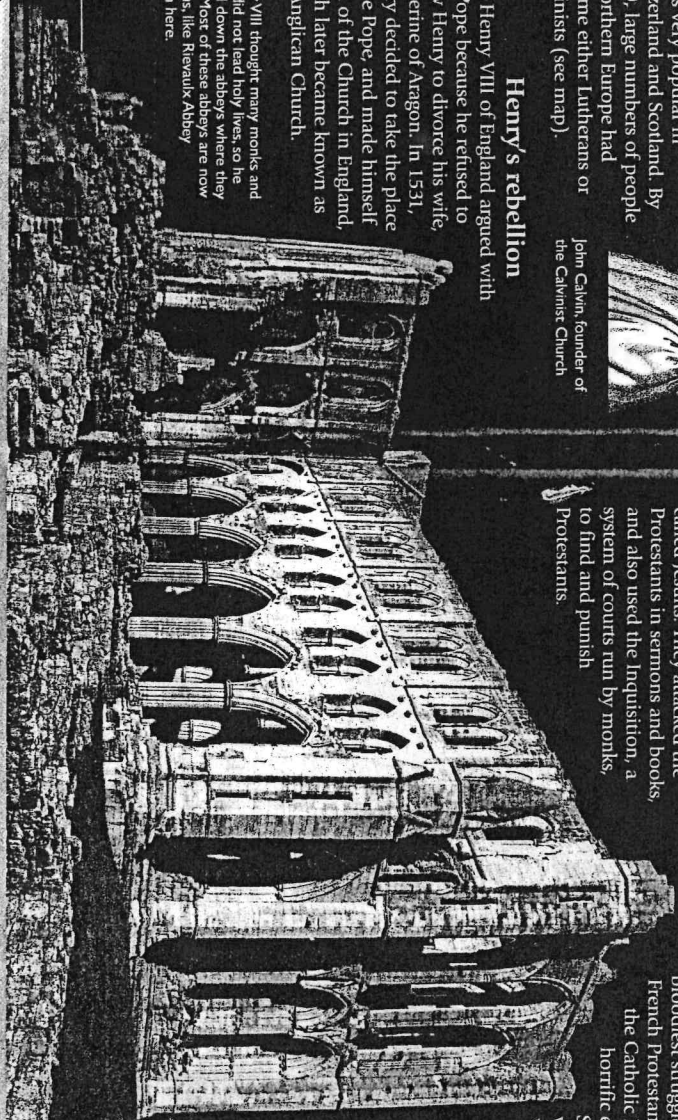
Catholic leaders set up colleges for priests, built elaborate churches, and trained teacher-priests, called Jesuits. They attacked the Protestants in sermons and books, and also used the Inquisition, a system of courts run by monks, to find and punish Protestants.



Religious wars

During the 16th century, Protestants and Catholics fought each other all over Europe. One of the bloodiest struggles took place in France where French Protestants, known as Huguenots, fought the Catholic king and his supporters. The most horrific event in the French wars was the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, when thousands of Huguenots were slaughtered by Catholics. Eventually, after 30 years of war, the Huguenots were given the freedom to worship.

Important dates	Event
1517	Luther writes his list of 95 suggested reforms.
1531	Henry VIII declares himself head of the English Church.
1541	Calvin starts his Church.
1545	The Counter-Reformation begins.
1562-1589	Religious wars in France.
1572	St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.



The Power of the Habsburgs

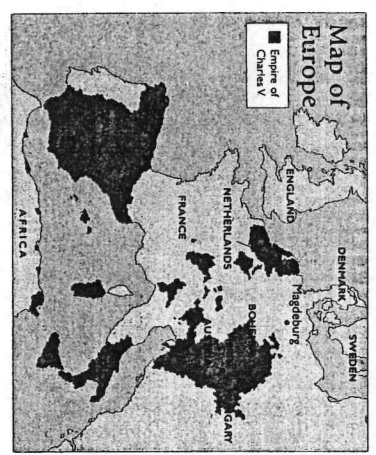
The ambitious Habsburg family began ruling Austria in the late 13th century. By marrying into some of Europe's richest families, they gained vast areas of land, and soon became the most powerful rulers in Europe.

The empire of Charles V

In the first half of the 16th century, the Habsburg emperor Charles V governed large areas of Europe, as well as colonies in the Americas. Charles was a strong ruler who defended his empire well. He won wars against the French and drove an army of Ottoman Turks out of Vienna (see page 8).

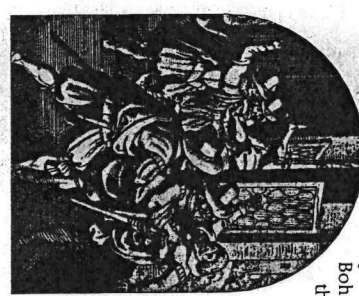
The empire divides

In 1556, Charles V retired to a monastery, dividing his lands between his son, Philip II, and his brother, Ferdinand. Philip II became King of Spain, and also controlled Italy, the Netherlands, and Spain's American colonies, while Ferdinand ruled from Austria and inherited the title of emperor. Spanish settlers in America started mining gold and silver.



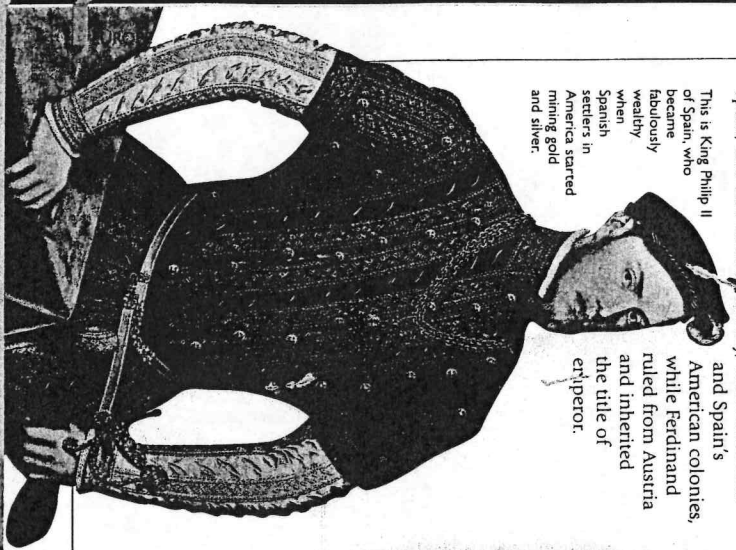
The Thirty Years' War

The Thirty Years' War started as a religious struggle between Protestants and Catholics in central Europe. It began in Bohemia (now part of the Czech Republic) when a group of Protestant nobles threw some Catholic Habsburg emperor out of a window.



This 17th-century drawing shows the event which helped to start the Thirty Years' War.

Spain and the Catholic German states supported the Habsburg emperor, while Bohemia was joined by Denmark and the Protestant German states. Later, Sweden and France also fought against the Habsburgs. By the end of the Thirty Years' War, the Habsburgs had become much less powerful.



The War of the Spanish Succession

The last of the Spanish Habsburgs was Charles II, who died in 1700. Charles had no children, so he left his lands to his distant relative, Philip, the grandson of the French king. The English and the Dutch were afraid that France and Spain would unite, so in 1701 they formed a "Grand Alliance" to fight against France.

The war lasted for 13 years and many European countries joined in. Eventually, the Alliance allowed Philip to become King of Spain, on the understanding that France and Spain would always remain separate. This was the end of the Habsburgs in Spain, but they still ruled in Austria.

Maria Theresa

In 1740, the 23-year-old Maria Theresa became the new ruler of the Habsburg Empire. When she took over, the empire was poor and weak, but she managed to make it strong again. Maria Theresa welcomed many musicians and artists to her court in Vienna. One of these musicians was the brilliant composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Here you can see the Schonbrunn Palace in Vienna, which was rebuilt by Maria Theresa.

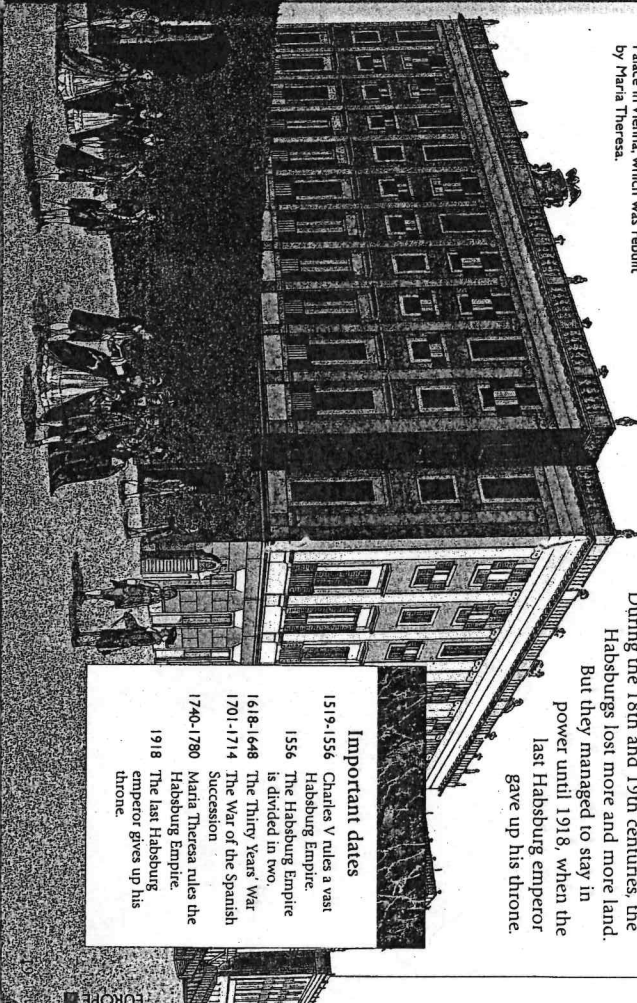


This portrait shows Maria Theresa, who ruled the Austrian Habsburg Empire for 40 years.

The later Habsburgs

During the 18th and 19th centuries, the Habsburgs lost more and more land. But they managed to stay in power until 1918, when the last Habsburg emperor gave up his throne.

Important dates	
1519-1556	Charles V rules a vast Habsburg Empire.
1556	The Habsburg Empire is divided in two.
1618-1648	The Thirty Years' War
1701-1714	The War of the Spanish Succession
1740-1780	Maria Theresa rules the Habsburg Empire.
1918	The last Habsburg emperor gives up his throne.



Russians and Prussians

During the 18th century, eastern Europe was dominated by two very powerful rulers. Catherine the Great of Russia and Frederick the Great of Prussia both insisted that they should have complete power, and both of them used their power to make their countries rich and successful.

Catherine the Great



Catherine the Great was an intelligent and determined ruler who demanded total obedience from her people.

Catherine II became Tsarina (empress) of Russia in 1762, and ruled for more than 30 years. She encouraged Russian trade, set up universities, and invited thinkers and writers to her splendid court at St. Petersburg. Later, she became known as Catherine the Great.

New lands

Catherine's army won new land around the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea, and the Russians built ports on both of these coasts. But Russia's most important gains came from the break-up of the weak Polish kingdom. Poland was split between Russia, Austria and Prussia, and Catherine made sure that her country had the largest share.

Life in Russia

While Catherine and her courtiers lived in luxury, the Russian peasants paid heavy taxes and had to fight in the army. At first, Catherine planned to make life better for her people, but most of her plans were never put into action. Peasant rebellions were brutally crushed, and when Catherine drove through Russia, her officials paid wealthy farmers to pretend to be peasants so that she wouldn't see how poor her people really were.

In this scene, Tsarina Catherine is driving through the Russian countryside in her sleigh.

Catherine's sleigh passes wealthy farmers like this, but most Russian peasants live in timbered stock.

Wealthy farmers in warm-weather woods like the scyth.

An official pushes the real peasants out of sight.

Map of eastern Europe



The rise of Prussia

In 1618, the weak state of Prussia was inherited by the ruler of the German state of Brandenburg. Prussia's new rulers built up a strong army and united all their lands under an efficient government. In 1701, the ruler of Brandenburg was crowned King of Prussia, and an ambitious new country was born.

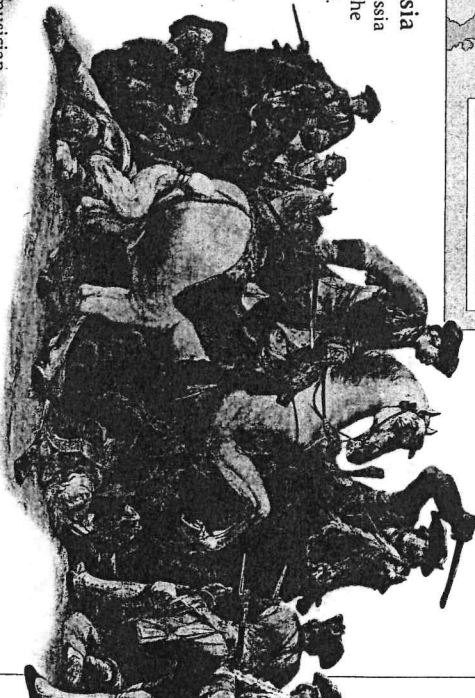
Frederick the Great

Frederick II, known as Frederick the Great, became King of Prussia in 1740. He was a talented musician, a brave general, and a stern ruler who believed that only a king with total power could make a real difference to the lives of his people. Frederick improved education for middle-class boys, encouraged the study of science, and helped to build up farming and trade in Prussia. He also made it illegal to torture prisoners, and allowed both Catholics and Protestants to follow their own religion.

Frederick's wars

Frederick the Great was a brilliant soldier who used his well-trained army to conquer large areas of land. He won outstanding victories against France and Austria in the Seven Years' War, and by the end of his reign he had doubled the size of Prussia.

This 18th-century painting shows a violent battle in the Seven Years War.



Important dates	
1701-1713	Frederick I is the first King of Prussia.
1740-1786	Frederick the Great is King of Prussia.
1756-1763	Prussia and Britain fight France, Russia and Austria in the Seven Years' War.
1762-1796	Catherine the Great is Tsarina of Russia.

