

Women in power: queen elizabeth

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Women in Power: Queen Elizabeth Queen Elizabeth I was the most remarkable women leader in English history. She was born on September 7, 1533 at Greenwich Palace. Her birth was not celebrated; instead it was a bitter disappointment to her father King Henry VIII, who was highly anticipating the birth of a son. Her mother was executed for treason shortly after her birth Elizabeth lost all heredity to the throne. After Henry VIII's third wife Jane Seymour died, however, Elizabeth was placed back in the order of succession after Edward and Mary by act of parliament.

When she came into power, Elizabeth I had to clean up the big mess that was left by her sister Mary's five year reign. Mary had abruptly changed the national religion from Protestantism to Catholicism, and she was not going to hear any objections. She mercilessly hunted down and executed Protestants who refused to convert. After Elizabeth I took the throne-she switched back to Protestantism and, as Miriam restored religious order in England. Under Elizabeth I, religion and nationality were almost the same.

Her first act as Queen was to form a loyal government: she replaced the Privy Council with qualified advisors such as nobles, lawyers, and businessmen. Although she had an excellent board of advisors, she did not allow them to dominate her decisions. Elizabeth was determined to set up a safe and stable government. During Queen Elizabeth's forty-five year reign, England prospered considerably. Her reign witnessed a wide increase in literacy and achievements in the arts. Famous writers such as Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and Christopher Marlowe emerged.

England also expanded significantly overseas. Elizabeth encouraged explorers like Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Drake, and Sir John Hawkins. Her <https://assignbuster.com/women-in-power-queen-elizabeth/>

sponsorship of explorers like these led to the establishment of English colonies around the world. Under her rule, a middle class of merchants, tradesmen, and craftsmen flourished. Elizabeth I embraced the new scientific thinking of the Renaissance and important scientists such as Sir Francis Bacon and Dr. John Dee emerged. Her leadership established England as one of Europe's leading nations.

Elizabeth's economic achievements were not her only ones; she also had many triumphs in the battlefield, the Spanish Armada being one of them. In 1588, King Phillip of Spain set out to invade England. His plan was to sail one-hundred ships down the English Channel and meet up with the forces of Duke of Parma, who was making their way from the Netherlands, and hopefully overwhelm England. But Elizabeth's men were keeping watch on the shores of England, and as the first ship was spotted the fighting began. While English soldiers and sailors were out fighting for their country, Elizabeth was on her way to Tilbury.

She was not going to sit trembling inside a guarded Palace while her people fought, but was going to go to the coast of the battle and 'live or die' with them. This is where she made one of her most famous speeches, the Tilbury Speech, "I know I have the body of a meek and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a King, and a King of England, too." Queen Elizabeth I truly cared about her people, and she was not afraid to defend them. Spain suffered a humiliating loss, and England proudly celebrated their victory.

The victory was especially remarkable, considering Spain was the most powerful country in the world in the sixteenth century. Queen Elizabeth I

managed to stay alive even though she was the target of many conspiracies and scandalous rumors. Before she even became Queen, she was accused of being involved in the Puritan rebellion by her half-sister, Mary. She was held prisoner in the Tower of London and suffered through torrential questioning. Elizabeth was also the center of a vicious rumor that she allegedly took part in romantic activity with her step-mother Katherine Parr's husband, Thomas Seymour.

This could've easily ruined her reputation, but the rumor was waved off and gossip soon stopped. Assassination conspiracies were also a threat to the Queen. Mary of Scots firmly believed that she was the rightful heir to the throne, and she had constructed several plots to kill the Queen. The fact that Elizabeth had survived through all this turmoil is very remarkable. Queen Elizabeth I had truly earned the love and devotion of her people. Before she was crowned, most people did not believe that a woman could take on the responsibility of ruling a country; Elizabeth proved them very wrong.

Her accession day, November 16, even became a national holiday. Queen Elizabeth I developed her image of the devoted ruler who courted her subjects' opinions and as Gloriana, the goddess around whom England revolved. Queen Elizabeth I was the strongest monarch in English history. Throughout her reign she proved that she really did care about her country and the people in it. She was successful in keeping the country together and safe, as many before her had failed to do. Even after four-hundred years, the people of England still love and remember her.