

Philip II became King of Spain when his father, Emperor Charles V, divided his empire into Austrian and Spanish lands. Philip was fanatically opposed to the Reformation and became involved in many conflicts with Protestant states. England, under Elizabeth I, was Europe's most stable Protestant state. Open warfare broke out when England aided a Protestant revolt in the Spanish Netherlands.

#### EVENTS

- 1555 ● **1556 Philip II becomes King of Spain** (the richest and most powerful state in Europe). As a Hapsburg (ruling family of the Holy Roman Empire) and devout Catholic, Philip declares himself protector of the Catholic Church
- 1560 ● **1558 Elizabeth I becomes Queen of England.** She establishes a moderate Protestant regime
- 1570 ● **1568–1609 Dutch rebellion against Spanish rule.** Northern provinces of the Netherlands (Protestant majority) fight for independence
- 1580 ● **1581** Edmund Campion, leader of Jesuit (Catholic) mission in England, executed for allegedly plotting to kill Elizabeth
- **1585** Elizabeth sends troops to support Dutch Protestant revolt
- **1585–1586** English navy captain Francis Drake plunders Spanish colonies in South America. He returns with a rich cargo of silver
- **1587** Drake makes surprise attack on Spanish port of Cádiz, where Philip is preparing a force to invade England to overthrow the English Protestant monarchy. Attack successful; 30 Spanish ships destroyed and invasion delayed
- 1590 ● **May 1588** Philip launches a great seaborne invasion force against England, commanded by Alonso de Guzman (Duke of Medina-Sidonia). Called the **Invincible Armada**; it consists of 134 ships and over 30,000 soldiers.
- **Jul 1588 Spanish Armada arrives in English Channel.** English fleet—commanded by Lord High Admiral William Howard, with only 34 ships but superior guns and more maneuverable vessels—attacks and defeats Armada (Aug), aided by severe weather conditions. More than 40 Spanish ships lost
- 1600 ● **Sep 1588** Strong winds and English pursuit force Armada to take long northerly route; only remnants get back to Spain. Philip abandons hope of overthrowing English Protestant monarchy
- 1610 ●

