

Knowledge Organiser: Elizabethan England, c1568-1603



(3) Elizabeth I's problems: rebellions

Timeline	
1569	The Northern Rebellion
1571	The second rebellion—the Ridolfi Plot
1595	The queen makes the Earl of Essex a privy councillor and gave him the monopoly of sweet wine in England.
1599	The queen makes the Earl of Essex the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.
1601	Essex leads a rebellion but it is a disaster and he executed for treason.

Key terms	
Mass	A Catholic church service.
Monopoly	The exclusive right to sell a product. Elizabeth sold these monopolies to favourite courtiers as a way of keeping support.
Treason	An attempt to kill or overthrow the monarch or betray the country; punishable by death.

Exam questions:	
1.	Write an account of the Northern Rebellion (1569). (8 marks)
2.	Write an account of the failure of the Earl of Essex's rebellion. (8 marks)



Duke of Norfolk



A portrait of Elizabeth in her old age



Earl of Essex

Key figures	
The Duke of Norfolk	The Queen's second cousin and the leading English nobleman. He was raised a Protestant despite being from a Catholic family. He was made Lord Lieutenant of the North.
The Earl of Northumberland	His father was executed for leading a rebellion against Henry VIII. He was not allowed to inherit his father's title under Mary I's reign. He was a Catholic but was treated well by Elizabeth.
The Earl of Westmoreland	A Catholic who had become powerful under Mary I's reign. He lost influence under Elizabeth but remained powerful in the north.
Roberto Ridolfi	An Italian banker who travelled widely across Europe. It is believed that he sent money to support Catholic rebels in England. It is likely that he worked as a spy for the Pope for any years.
The Earl of Essex	Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, became a privy councillor in 1595. His power grew further when the queen gave him a monopoly of sweet wine. He led a rebellion against the queen in February 1601.

Why did plots against Elizabeth fail?	
Spies	The network of spies, led by Francis Walsingham, meant that very few plots ever got beyond their earliest stages.
Unconvincing alternatives	Regardless of their religions, most people preferred an English queen over the alternative: Mary, Queen of Scots or Philip II of Spain.
Punishments	Elizabeth took swift action against traitors. Rebel were tortured and put to death, for example, Mary, Queen of Scots and Essex.
Religious settlement	Elizabeth's religious policy kept most of the population happy. Although it became tougher for Catholics as her reign went on, there remained a level of tolerance.
A skilled politician	Elizabeth dealt with her most difficult relationship, with her Parliament, very effectively. She was skilled at getting her own way while still allowing Lords and MPs to feel influential. She would listen but was clear where power lay.

Key questions	
<u>What happened during the Northern Rebellion, 1569?</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many people in northern England retained their Catholic beliefs and there was support for Mary, Queen of Scots, replacing Elizabeth. Elizabeth was aware of the threat and even stopped Mary marrying the Duke of Norfolk. Norfolk left the royal court and headed north. A group of northern lords led by Westmoreland and Northumberland began a rebellion. 4600 men marched south but soon faced opposition and disbanded. 	
<u>What was the Ridolfi Plot, 1571?</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Norfolk spent ten months in the Tower of London before his release when he soon became involved in another plot led by Ridolfi. Having seen the Northern Rebellion fail, he planned for the Netherlands to invade England at the same time as another northern rebellion. The plan was to then murder Elizabeth and replace her with Mary, Queen of Scots. Elizabeth's spies proved too much for the plotters and when Norfolk's involvement was uncovered, he confessed and was executed. 	
<u>What does Essex's rebellion tell us about her authority of Elizabeth?</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essex developed a rivalry with Robert Cecil, another member of the court. In 1598, he became involved in an argument with Elizabeth during a Privy Council meeting but Elizabeth took no further action. Essex was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and was given the important job of defeating a rebellion there. However, instead of crushing it, he made a truce. Elizabeth was furious and banned him from Court and removed his 'sweet wine' monopoly which ruined him financially. Essex mounted a poorly thought out rebellion. With other disgruntled courtiers, he marched to London to take Elizabeth prisoner. He underestimated the support for Elizabeth. His route was blocked and he was arrested and executed for treason in February 1601. The failed rebellion showed that despite Elizabeth's problems, loyalty to the Queen remained firm. 	

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