

History Unit 2 Elizabeth

Lesson 18 of 30

How did developments in the New World contribute to the breakdown of relations between England and Spain?



The New World

Before the reign of **Elizabeth I**, England had little involvement in global exploration. However, in the 16th century, England's traditional trade in wool and cloth had been disrupted by ongoing conflict in the Netherlands. This made it hard for English merchants to make money. Global exploration offered the chance to establish new trade opportunities.

An area of particular interest to England was the '**New World**', areas of North and South America which were largely controlled by Spain. **The New World** had valuable resources such as sugar, tobacco and silver which was making Spain an incredibly wealthy country. England too desired the wealth that could be made through the trade of resources such as this in the **New World**.

Increased exploration in the 16th century was made possible by developments in technology. Improved ship design made it easier for ships to withstand the long and dangerous journeys to the **New World** and the invention of the **astrolabe** made ships easier to navigate.



Trade and territory

Background

In the 16th century, England relied heavily on the cloth trade which was based in Antwerp. The Netherlands were controlled by the Spanish and during **Elizabeth's** reign, trade became more difficult due to the increased trade restrictions.

Spain had established a large overseas Empire in the **New World** across the Americas. These territories made Spain rich through the export of goods such as sugar and tobacco, mining and through the trade of enslaved Africans.

Impact

England too wanted some of the wealth that the **New World** could offer. England began to establish a series of trading companies in the 16th century to set up more direct links with trading partners that were not controlled by Spain. Privateers such as **Francis Drake** also began to claim territory in the Americas under England's name, such as **New Albion** in North California. **King Philip II of Spain** believed that these actions were a direct challenge to Spanish dominance in the **New World**.



Privateering

Background

Through the establishment of overseas territories in the New World, Spain was able to grow its wealth and power in the 16th century. England too, desired this wealth. However, Spain controlled trade in the New World and rarely allowed rival countries like England to trade with their colonies.

Impact

In response, Elizabeth's government licensed 'privateers'. **Privateers** were individuals who routinely attacked Spanish ports and treasure ships to steal their treasure and goods. On one journey, privateer **Francis Drake** brought back an estimated £400,000 worth of Spanish treasure. **King Philip II** saw privateering as piracy. Attacks on Spanish ships and ports caused damage to both Spain's finances and the navy. **King Philip II** saw this as an attack on Spain's interests in the New World.



Drake's circumnavigation of the Globe

Background

Francis Drake was one of the most famous English privateers during Elizabeth's reign. In 1577, he set off on an expedition on his ship '**The Golden Hind**'. Although he did not intend to, **Drake** became the second person to successfully circumnavigate (sail the whole way around) the Globe. On the voyage **Drake** and his crew had raided Spanish ports and ships and taken their treasure.

Impact on relations with Spain

When **Drake** returned to England in 1580, he returned with around £400,000 worth of treasure which had been taken from the Spanish ports and ships. This made both **Drake** and Elizabeth wealthy. **King Philip II of Spain** interpreted **Drake's** privateering as a direct attack on Spanish interests and demanded his punishment. Relations deteriorated further when Elizabeth I knighted **Drake** in 1580 as a reward for his voyage.



Comprehension Questions

1. Why did England undertake increased exploration in the 16th century?
2. How did countries like Spain gain wealth from the **New World**?
3. Why did England engage in **privateering** in the New World?
4. What did King Philip II of Spain think of **privateering**?
- 5. Challenge question:** Explain the consequences of England's exploration of the New World.

*One consequence of England's exploration in the New World was...
This meant that...*



Extension Question

Explain how the New World caused conflict between England and Spain.

Use the sentence starters and key words below to answer this question

Sentence starters:	Key words
<i>One reason why the New World caused conflict between England and Spain was....</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Commercial rivalry- Privateering- Sir Francis Drake- Circumnavigation of the Globe- Exploration- Colonies- Licenses- Trade
<i>This caused conflict because....</i>	
<i>Another why the New World caused conflict between England and Spain was....</i>	
<i>This caused conflict because....</i>	



Glossary

The New World - A term used to refer to the Americas (North and South America).

Commercial rivalry - Rivalry between countries over trade.

Circumnavigate - To sail/ travel all the way around something.

Privateering - The act of attacking enemy ships at sea with the license to do so from the government.

Piracy - The act of attacking enemy ships at sea without a license from the government to do so.

The astrolabe - An instrument that was used to help sailors navigate.

The Golden Hind - The ship upon which Sir Francis Drake circumnavigated the globe between 1577 and 1580.

