

**REFORMATION
ENGLAND: THE
PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE
(1536-37)**



REFORMATION ENGLAND: THE PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE (1536-37)

Description

Through an in-depth analysis of various primary and secondary sources, students in this lesson will identify, understand and be able to compare and contrast the goals of the participants in the Pilgrimage of Grace and those who opposed the movement, and in doing so will then be able to theorize as to whether the movement had any real chance of succeeding in an age where royal authority was backed up by historical precedent, a monarch's absolute control of the nation's army and religious traditions designed around the idea that the king ruled by the authority of God.

Subjects

World History
European History

Grade Level

11-12

Duration

90 minutes

Tour Links

- Tower of London
- Westminster Palace
- Clifford's Tower, York Castle
- Scawsby Village

Essential Questions

- Who was Henry VIII? Why did he decide to break the English Church away from Rome?
- Why did Henry decide to dissolve all the English monasteries in 1536? What were the ramifications of that decision?
- Who were Robert Aske and Thomas Darcy? What were their roles in the Pilgrimage of Grace? What happened to Aske and Darcy?
- How did the crown respond to the Pilgrimage of Grace? Was the Pilgrimage doomed to fail?

Academic Summary

Ye shall not enter into this our Pilgrimage of Grace for the common wealth but only for the love ye bear to God's faith and church militant and the maintenance thereof, the preservation of the king's person, his issue, and the purifying of the nobility and to expulse all villain blood and evil counsellors against the common wealth of the same. And that ye shall not enter into our said pilgrimage for no peculiar private profit to no private person but by counsel of the common wealth nor slay nor murder for no envy but in your hearts to put away all fear for the common wealth. And to take before you the cross of Christ and your heart's faith to the restitution of the church and to the suppression of heretics' opinions by the holy content of this book.

"Oath of Honorable Men" – sworn by all supporters of the Pilgrimage of Grace, October 1536

?The Pilgrims' Demands

1. "The first touching our faith":—To have the heresies of "Luther, Wyclif, Husse, Malangton, Elicampadus (sic), Bucerus, Confessa Germanie, Apolugia Malanctons, the works of Tyndall, of Barnys, of Marshall, Raskell, Seynt Germayne, and such other heresies of Anibaptist," destroyed.
2. The supremacy of the Church touching "cura animarum" to be reserved to the See of Rome as before. The consecrations of the bishops to be from him, without any first fruits or pension to be paid to him, or else a reasonable pension for the outward defence of the Faith.
3. That lady Mary may be made legitimate, and the former statute therein annulled for the danger of the title that might incur to the crown of Scotland: that to be by parliament.
4. The suppressed abbeys to be restored to their houses, lands, and goods.
5. To have the tenths and first fruits clearly discharged of the same, unless the clergy will grant a rentcharge in generality to the augmentation of the Crown.
6. To have the Friars Observants restored to their houses.
7. To have the heretics, bishops and temporal, and their sect, to have condign punishment by fire or such other, or else to try the quarrel with us and our part-takers in battle.
8. Lord Cromwell, the Lord Chancellor, and Sir Ric. Riche to have condign punishment, as subverters of the good laws of the realm and maintainers and inventors of heretics.
9. That the lands in Westmoreland, Cumberland, Kendall, Dent, Sedber, Fornes, and the abbey lands in Mashamshire, Kyrkbyshire, Notherdale, may be by tenant right, and the lord to have, at every change two years' rent for "gressom,"¹ according to the grant now made by the lords to the commons there. This to be done by Act of Parliament.
10. The statutes of handguns and crossbows to be repealed, except in the King's forests or parks.
11. That Dr. Lige and Dr. Layton have condign punishment for their extortions from religious houses and other abominable acts.²

12. Reformation for the election of knights of the shire and burgesses, and for the use among the lords in the parliament house after their ancient custom.
13. The statute for inclosures and intacks to be put in execution, and all inclosures and intacks since 4 Hen. VII., to be pulled down "except mountains, forests, and parks."
14. To be discharged of the quinzine and taxes now granted by Act of Parliament.
15. To have a parliament at Nottingham or York, and that shortly.
16. The statute of the declaration of the crown by will to be repealed.
17. Pardon by Act of Parliament for all recognisances, statutes and penalties new forfeited during the time of this commotion.
18. The privileges and rights of the Church to be confirmed by Act of Parliament. Priests not to suffer by sword unless degraded. A man to be saved by his book. "Sanctuary to save a man for all causes in extreme need, and the Church for 40 days, and further according to the laws as they were used in the beginning of this King's days."
19. The liberties of the Church to have their old customs as the county palatine at Durham, Beverlay, Rippon, St. Peter of York, and such other by Act of Parliament.
20. To have the statute "That no man shall not will his lands," repealed.
21. The statutes of treasons for words and such like made since 21 Hen. VIII., to be repealed.
22. That the common laws may have place as was used in the beginning of the reign, and that no injunctions be granted unless the matter has been determined in Chancery.
23. That men north of Trent summoned on subpoena appear at York, or by attorney, unless it be directed on pain of allegiance, or for like matters concerning the King.
24. A remedy against escheators for finding false offices and extorting fees.

Petition presented to members of the King's Council, by Robert Aske, gentleman, Pontefract Castle, Dec 1536

When every man rules, who shall obey? Those that are of the worsor sort must be content that the wiser rule and govern them. An order must be had and a way found so that the better rule the rest. This arrangement is not only expedient, but also most necessary in a commonwealth.

Richard Morrison, "A Remedy for Sedition", pamphlet published by the Royal printer, Dec 1536

Let it be confessed that you, the King's subjects and commoners, have recently committed rebellion that might have ruined your country. You have given comfort to your enemies the Scots, to the high displeasure of God who commands you to obey your sovereign in all things.

Nevertheless, the royal majesty, duly informed that your offenses proceeded from ignorance and false tales, is inclined to extend his most gracious pity and mercy towards you and to grant you his free pardon provided that you heartily repent your offenses and make humble submission to his highness.

King Henry VIII, pardon granted to marchers, London, Dec 1536

I did object to the closing of the monasteries and so did all the country because the abbeys in the north gave great alms (money) to poor men and

served God well. The abbeys were one of the beauties of this realm and were great maintainers and builders of sea walls, bridges and highways. Once the monasteries in the north gave great help to poor men and laudable service to God. Now no hospitality is shown to travelers. Instead, farmers rent out farms and taverns for profit. Any monies earned from abbey lands are now going to the King. Also many tenants who were fed and aided by abbeys now can barely live. Traveling strangers and beggars have no help on the roads.

Robert Aske, testimony given shortly before his execution, April 1537

In November 1534, when Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy declaring Henry VIII Supreme Head of the Church of England, the Protestant Reformation began in England. Not fueled by dogmatic religious questions over doctrine as it was on the European Continent, the English version of the Reformation was instead the result of King Henry's cataclysmic break with the Roman Catholic Church over his relentless pursuit of both the perfect wife and the perfect heir.

Thomas Cromwell, Henry's Lord High Chancellor and head of the King's Council (and a fervent religious reformer), subsequently implemented a series of governmental policies including new taxes, the expansion of Royal power in the north of England, the dissolution of monasteries (many of which had existed for hundreds of years), and the confiscation of Church lands by the Crown. In reaction to these measures, many northerners staged protests and armed demonstrations. By October 1536, what had started out as unorganized protests had coalesced into a rebellion. Led by Robert Aske, a gentleman and lawyer, and Thomas Darcy, 1st Baron Darcy (who represented the concerns of noblemen in Northern England) by the middle of that month, the protest had grown to a mob of 10,000 and was marching on York, a city key to the Crown's hold on Northern England. Calling themselves the "Pilgrimage of Grace", Aske and his followers carried with them a number of grievances directed mostly towards Parliament and Cromwell. In a spirit of non-violence, the pilgrimage agreed to meet with the King's representatives at Scawsby Leys (outside of York), where the rebel ranks had swollen to almost 40,000 by the end of October.

Henry authorized his representatives to promise a general pardon to the protesters if they immediately disbanded, a Parliament to be held at York within a year, and that the dissolution of the monasteries would be halted until the Parliament could be held.

Aske dismissed his followers, and a crisis was avoided. Within a few months (Feb 1537), however, when a new, smaller armed rebellion (not sanctioned by Aske or Darcy) broke out in Northern England, Henry issued arrest warrants for all leaders involved in the Pilgrimage of Grace. Aske and the other leaders were taken to the Tower of London, and after show trials where each was convicted of treason, the rebels were executed in various ways designed to show the extent of Royal power and authority. In total, 216 people were executed as a result of the pilgrimage, including 6 abbots, 38 monks and 16 parish priests. After his conviction, Aske was taken to York castle, where he was hanged in chains from the walls for all to see. Darcy was beheaded on Tower Hill in London and his head was displayed on London Bridge.

Through an in-depth analysis of various primary and secondary sources, students in this lesson will identify, understand and be able to compare and contrast the goals of the participants in the Pilgrimage of Grace and those who opposed the movement, and in doing so will then be able to theorize as to whether the movement had any real chance of succeeding in an age where royal authority was backed up by historical precedent, a monarch's absolute control of the nation's army and religious traditions designed around the idea that the king ruled by the authority of God.

Objectives

1. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain why the Pilgrimage of Grace broke out in response to King Henry VIII's decision to dissolve monasteries as part of the English Reformation.
2. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain the role Robert Aske and Thomas Darcy played in the Pilgrimage of Grace.
3. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain how the Crown responded to the Pilgrimage of Grace in October 1536 and the subsequent second rebellion the following February.

Procedures

Note to teachers – this topic was a DBQ / FRQ question on the 2004 College Board AP European History exam.

I. Anticipatory Set

- Writing / Question: Was Henry VIII justified in breaking the English church from Rome? (5 min)
- Handouts – Copies of the primary sources and readings from the websites listed. (5 min)

II. Body of Lesson

- Lecture / PPT – Brief overview of the Pilgrimage of Grace. (20 min)
- Video – Pilgrimage of Grace (10 min)
- Independent Activity – Students read the primary sources and articles on the Pilgrimage of Grace, taking notes as appropriate. (20 min)
- Suggestion: Have the students read some of the articles for homework to prepare for class discussion.
- Suggestion: Break students into groups and assign different articles to each group.
- Group Activity – Socratic Discussion: Compare and contrast the goals of the participants in the Pilgrimage of Grace and those who opposed the movement. Theorize as to whether the movement had any real chance of succeeding in an age where royal authority was backed up by historical precedent, a monarch's absolute control of the nation's army and religious traditions designed around the idea that the king's authority came from God. (20 min)

III. Closure

- Assessment – Essay / DBQ: Compare and contrast the goals of the participants in the Pilgrimage of Grace and those who opposed the movement, and then theorize as to whether the movement had any real chance of succeeding in an age where royal authority was backed up by historical precedent, a monarch's absolute control of the nation's army and religious traditions designed around the idea that the king ruled by the authority of God.

Extension

On tour: York Castle

While on tour, students can visit York Castle, where they can see for themselves where Robert Aske was hanged in chains on 12 July 1537 in a brutal demonstration of royal authority after he was convicted of treason in the wake of the Pilgrimage of Grace. Aske was held in the Tower of London and convicted of high treason in Westminster before being brought to York for execution.

Web Links

Lesson Plan Websites

- www.luminarium.org/encyclopedia/24articles.htm
Twenty-Four Articles of the Pilgrimage of Grace Rebels, 1536 (primary source)
- englishhistory.net/tudor/grace.html
1536 Pilgrimage of Grace (primary source) – written by Edward Hall, Tudor chronicler, so look for the bias against the north men and their concerns
- www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/the-pilgrimage-of-grace/166.html
The Pilgrimage of Grace (website) – from the BBC
- www.historyofyork.org.uk/themes/tudor-stuart/the-pilgrimage-of-grace
The Pilgrimage of Grace (website) – from the official website for the History of York
- www.tudorplace.com.ar/Documents/PilgrimageofGrace.htm
Pilgrimage of Grace (website) – has primary and secondary sources
- freespace.virgin.net/owston.tj/pilgrimage.htm
The Pilgrimage of Grace 1536-7 (website)
- www.pocklingtonhistory.com/history/postmedieval/pog/index.php
The Pilgrimage of Grace (website)
- www.historylearningsite.co.uk/pilgrimage_grace.htm
The Pilgrimage of Grace (website) – from the History Learning Site (UK)
- www.authorstream.com/Presentation/fischm02-831057-the-dissolution-of-monasteries/
The Dissolution of the Monasteries (PowerPoint)
- www.teachingchannel.org/videos/choosing-primary-source-documents?fd=1
Reading Like a Historian: Primary Source Documents (video) – great 2-minute video on how to incorporate primary sources into the Common Core and history classes. From Shilpa Duvoor of Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City, CA. Highly recommended for teachers.
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=7055c6XhoPY
Henry VIII Mind of a Tyrant Part 4 (video) – from British TV Channel 4. 50-minute segment from this documentary covers Henry's religious views, the Reformation, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the Pilgrimage of Grace. Perhaps too long for most in-class.
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jU2A4AB6gU
A Pilgrimage of Grace (video)

Background Information

- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_Monasteries
Dissolution of the Monasteries – Wikipedia article
- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pilgrimage_of_Grace
Pilgrimage of Grace – Wikipedia article
- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Darcy,_1st_Baron_Darcy_de_Darcy
Thomas Darcy, 1st Baron Darcy de Darcy – Wikipedia article
- [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Aske_\(political_leader\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Aske_(political_leader))
Robert Aske (political leader) – Wikipedia article
- passports.com/group_leaders/on_the_road/the_united_kingdom/country_profile
On the Road: Britain (country profile) – from Passports Educational Travel

Other Relevant Passports Lesson Plans

- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/sir-thomas-more
Reformation England – Sir Thomas More
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/english-reformation
Reformation England – An Overview
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/reformation-britain-pilgrimage-of-grace
Reformation England – Pilgrimage of Grace 1536-37
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/anne-of-cleves
Reformation England – Anne of Cleves: Henry's 4th Wife and Beloved Sister

Key Terms

- Robert Aske
- Thomas Darcy
- Dissolution of the Monasteries
- English Reformation
- King Henry VIII
- Pilgrimage of Grace

