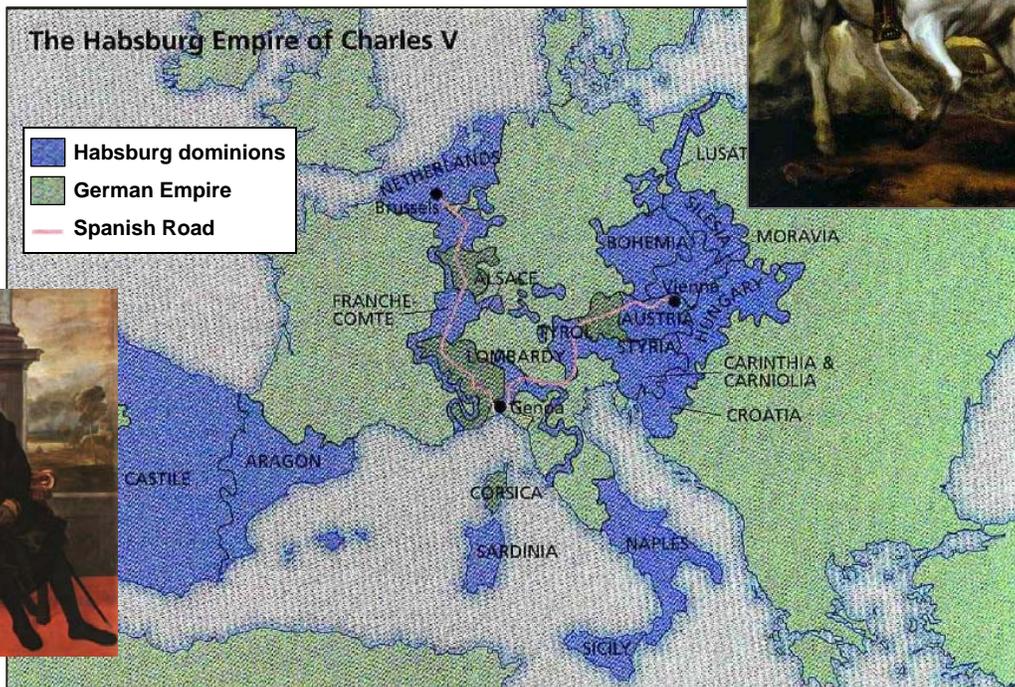


#699 The Defeat of the Spanish Armada – The Dutch gain their independence from Spain, part 1

What is known today as the Netherlands, the land of the Dutch, was once under Roman Catholic Spain's dominion. But remember how the Pilgrims of Scrooby, England, and others made their way to the Netherlands in the early 1600's because it was a Protestant sanctuary [reference Unsealing #592]? The story of the Dutch gaining their independence from Spain helps us to see how it became Protestant.

Charles V of Spain and the Low Countries. Most of the Low Countries – today's Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg – were once ruled by the dukes of Burgundy. Charles V, grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, inherited the lands of the dukes of Burgundy and then became King of Spain in 1516. The Low Countries came under Spanish control. Charles V then became emperor of the entire Holy Roman Empire in 1519. [Charles V ruled over more lands than any sovereign in European history.] What is important about this is that Charles V was representing Roman Catholicism in Europe exactly around the time of the birth (October 31, 1517) and expansion of the Protestant Reformation.

Portrait of Charles V on horseback



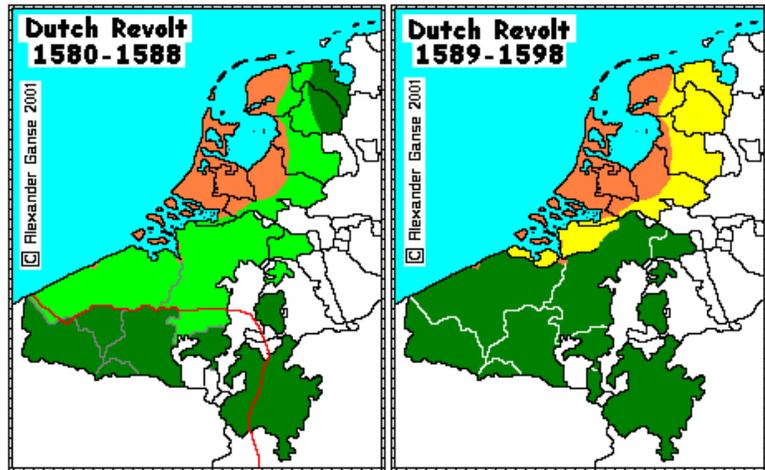
Philip II of Spain and the Low Countries. Charles V's son Philip II, a devout Catholic, took over Spain and the Spanish Netherlands from his father in 1556. By this time there were many Protestants in the Netherlands. Like Louis XIV in France, Philip II believed it was his duty as a king "appointed by God" to fight for the Catholic Church. His savage repression of the Protestants led to a rebellion in the Netherlands. In 1568, the nobles, led by William I (the Silent)

of Orange, began to rebel against Philip II's harsh rule. It was the start of what is called the Eighty Years' War between the Dutch and Spain, for Spain would not formally recognize Dutch independence until 80 years later, in 1648.

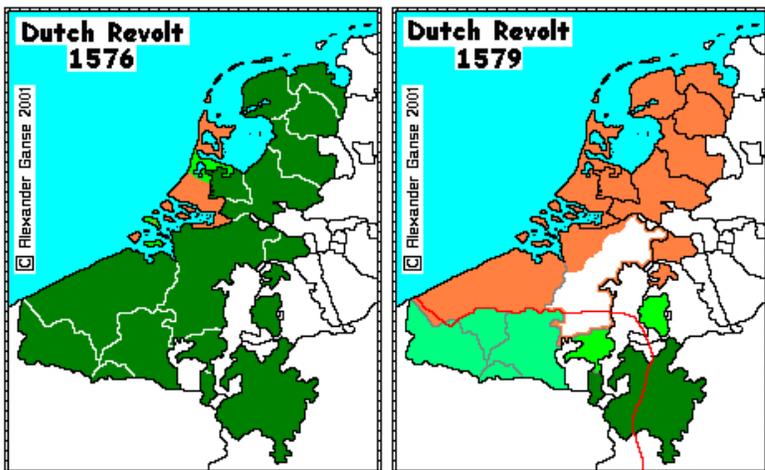
By 1579, the revolt by the nobles in the Spanish Netherlands began to break apart. Roman Catholic nobles in the southern provinces of the Low Countries (now Belgium) had become dissatisfied and returned to Spanish control. Protestantism became stronger in the northern provinces (now the Netherlands), who formed the Union of Utrecht and pledged to continue their revolt against Spain.

Key Understanding: *The founding of the Dutch Republic.*
On July 26, 1581, the northern provinces declared their independence from Spain, founding what later became known as the Dutch Republic, or the Netherlands. They fought for their freedom until 1648, when Spain finally recognized their independence.

Here are maps (*right*) showing various stages of the Dutch revolt from 1576 to 1598.



- | | |
|--|--|
|  held by Spain |  held by Spain |
|  Union of Utrecht |  Union of Utrecht |
|  Spanish conquest |  Liberated by the Dutch |



- | | |
|--|--|
|  held by Spain |  held by Spain |
|  held by the Rebels |  Union of Utrecht |
|  Spanish conquest |  Spanish conquest |
| |  Union of Arras |

These events set the stage for the Protestant Beast of America to rise out of the Protestant England-Netherlands Pit. [Reference Unsealings [#266](#)–[#269](#).]

Revelation 17:08 (KJV) THE BEAST that thou sawest was, and is not; and SHALL ASCEND OUT OF THE [England-Netherlands] PIT, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

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