

the Story of the World

HISTORY FOR THE CLASSICAL CHILD



Volume 3: Early Modern Times

From Elizabeth the First to the Forty-Niners

Susan Wise Bauer

The **Story** of the **World**
History for the Classical Child

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Susan Wise Bauer

illustrations by Sarah Park



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Sample

Chapter One

A World of Empires



The Holy Roman Empire

Imagine that you're a world traveler in the year 1600. You've spent the last twenty years journeying around the world. You've slept in Arabian tents, European palaces, and Native American longhouses. You've eaten fermented fish sauce in Rome, calf's-intestine pudding in England, sugar-coated beets in Wittenberg, and gilded boar's head in France. You only have two teeth left (the rest fell out because of scurvy and the sugared beets), and on your last journey to Iceland, you lost three toes to frostbite. You've been bitten by a camel in Asia, a cobra in India, and a water moccasin in North America.

In your travels around the world, you've seen two flags—one with a red cross on a white background, and the other bearing a two-headed eagle—all over the world. You've seen the red cross and the two-headed eagle in Spain and Portugal and all over Europe, from the Alps up to the soggy coast of the Netherlands. You've seen these flags flying over settlements in North America, South America, and even in the Philippines. No matter where you go, the red cross and the two-headed eagle are there!

The two kings who fly these flags, Philip II of Spain and Ferdinand I of the Holy Roman Empire, are nephew and uncle. And they rule over an enormous part of the world because of one very fortunate little boy.

A hundred years before our story begins, in the year 1500, this fortunate baby was born in a cold stone palace in northern Europe. His father was the king of the Netherlands. His grandfather ruled over lands in Germany. And his other grandfather was the king of Spain. This baby, who was named Charles, had three kings in his family!

When Charles was only six, his father died and Charles became king of the Netherlands. When he was sixteen, his Spanish grandfather died and left him the throne of Spain. When he was nineteen, his German grandfather died and he became king over the German lands. Charles was still a teenager—but he was a teenager with three thrones.

But Charles wanted even more. He wanted the title “Holy Roman Emperor.”

Fifteen hundred years before Charles was born, the Roman Empire spread across Europe and down into Africa. Everyone who lived inside the empire’s borders was expected to follow Rome’s laws and to live in peace. This “Roman peace” lasted until barbarians invaded. Then the Roman empire collapsed.

For the next five hundred years, warring peoples fought with each other all over Europe—until a great king named Charlemagne came to the throne of France. Charlemagne conquered the nearby German lands and added them to his own territory. He passed laws to keep his kingdom peaceful. His empire became so large that the pope—the leader of the Christian church in the West, called the Catholic Church—held a special church service and proclaimed Charlemagne to be the Roman Emperor.

But the Roman empire had been destroyed centuries ago. So what did this mean?

It meant that Charlemagne’s new empire would keep the peace over a large part of Europe, just as the Roman empire had done in ancient times. And since Charlemagne was a Christian, his new “Roman empire” could also spread Christianity through the world. That’s why Charlemagne eventually became known as the *Holy* Roman Emperor.

Charles wanted to be known as the Holy Roman Emperor too. But first, he had to convince the pope to hold a special service proclaiming *him* Holy Roman Emperor! And the pope wasn’t sure he wanted to give Charles this title—and the power that went along with it. Charles already ruled most of Europe. If Charles became even stronger, what would happen to the power of the pope?

The pope wasn't alone in his worries. The king of France was afraid that Charles might invade France. And the princes who ruled over Italy were also anxious to keep their independence from Charles. So the king of France, the pope, and the Italian princes all joined together to fight against Charles and his armies.

Charles wasn't discouraged. If he couldn't convince the pope to crown him emperor willingly, he would resort to force.

His strategy was simple—and shocking. For years,

Charles had oppressed the Protestant Christians who lived in his territories.

These Protestants believed that the Catholic church was corrupt and that the pope did not have the authority to tell all Christians how to worship and live. Charles had put Protestants in jail, taken away their land, and executed them. But Charles knew that these Protestants would be



Charles V

willing to fight against the Pope. So he hired an army of German Protestants and sent them, along with his own soldiers, to attack Rome!

This angry army, called the “German Fury,” marched down to Rome and surrounded it. The pope’s soldiers were outnumbered. They fired a few shots from the walls with their old, battered cannons—but the invaders broke down the gates and streamed through the city. The pope and his soldiers retreated to a fortress inside the city and barred themselves in. For eight months, the pope remained a prisoner inside this fortress, while the German Fury stormed through Rome, burning, killing, and stealing treasure.

Meanwhile, Charles was still up in Spain, pretending that he knew nothing about the attack on Rome. He sent a

message to the pope, claiming that the German Fury had acted without his permission. "I'm outraged!" Charles exclaimed. "How could such a thing happen?"

Did the pope believe this message? We don't know. But we do know that the pope agreed to hold the special service which would crown Charles "Holy Roman Emperor." In return, Charles helped the pope to fend off the Fury.

Now Charles could describe himself as "King of the Romans; King of Spain, Sicily, Jerusalem, the Indies and the mainland on the far side of the Atlantic; Archduke of Austria; Duke of Burgundy and Athens; Count of Habsburg and Flanders; Lord of Asia and Africa." But despite his fancy titles, Charles had plenty of problems. He had spent years and years of his reign fighting, and wars cost money. He was growing poorer and poorer. Within his own kingdoms, Catholics and Protestants were constantly battling with each other. And his Protestant subjects no longer wanted to obey Charles's decrees.

Twenty-four years after the pope crowned him as emperor, Charles decided that he could no longer rule his empire. Dressed in black, leaning on the arm of one of his favorite noblemen, he rose from his throne and told his followers, "I have done my best to protect my country and my faith. But I am too weak and ill to continue the struggle. So I must resign my throne. I will give Spain, the Netherlands, and my Italian lands to my son, Philip." All of Charles's followers wept as the emperor sank back onto his throne.

One year later, Charles V gave the rest of his empire to his brother Ferdinand, who became the Holy Roman Emperor in his place. Charles went to live in a monastery, where he spent his days praying and reading. He died less than two years later.

The fortunate little boy had lost his kingdoms. But his brother, Ferdinand, and his son, Philip, now ruled over the richest kingdoms in the West. And their actions would change the world.



The Riches of Spain

A young boy stands in a dark cave. A heavy sack leans against his bare legs. Beneath his feet, he feels damp, slick clay and rough ridges of stone. Sweat runs down his face. Ahead of him, dim torchlight flickers in the blackness. The hollow sound of metal picks, hacking away at mountain rock, rings through the dark.

He turns around and sees a tunnel, sloping sharply up toward a far-away gleam of daylight. He bends down to lift the sack; needle-edged pieces of stone jut through its rough sides and scrape against his arms and back. He starts to struggle up the tunnel, bent almost double by the weight and gasping for breath. But the air is so warm and foul that he can barely pull it into his lungs.

He isn't much older than you. And he works in a South American mine, collecting gold for Philip II, the king of Spain.

The Spanish came to South America the very first time by accident. For hundreds of years, traders from Spain and other European countries had traveled east (*right* on your map) to India, where they bought cloves, nutmeg, and pepper. But the long and difficult road to India lay through dry deserts and over steep mountain ridges. So an adventurer named Christopher Columbus set sail from Europe and went west (*left* on your map), hoping to go all the way around the world and reach India from the other side. When he caught sight of land, he was sure that he had reached the islands near India. He named the people who came out to meet him Indians. And he claimed the land for Spain, because the queen of Spain had given him money to buy his ships.

After Columbus returned home, other Spanish adventurers, called *conquistadores*, followed his sea route to "India." They realized that Columbus hadn't reached India at all. He had found an entirely new land! And this new land held