

The War of Austrian Succession



Timeline of major events

1740: Prussia invaded Silesia, starting the Austrian War of Succession.

1741: Prussia claims Silesia. Charles Albert of Bavaria claims to be Holy Roman Emperor and allies with Spain against the Austrians.

1742: Maria Theresa gains support of Hungary's parliament who provide 20,000 men in January. Driving back French and Bavarian troops back to the Bavarian capital Munich. In December, Theresa claimed Prague.

1743: British troops enter Europe on the side of Austria and win the Battle of Dettingen.

1744: French invasion of Britain failed due to storms, other French forces originally planned for the invasion were dispersed elsewhere.

1745: Through the Treaty of Dresden, Frederick II claims authority over Silesia, increasing Prussian population by 50% and became a dominant force in Europe. Maria Theresa's husband, Francis I was also acknowledged as Holy Roman Emperor because Charles Albert died.

1746: The Battle of Culloden saw British troops leave the Austrian Netherlands to face a threat at home, defeating Charles Edward Stuart a Jacobite pretender to the throne.

1748: The Treaty of Aix - la - Chapelle reverts all pre-war territories to their original owners, eg France returning Madras in India to Britain, except Prussia kept Silesia.

Result of the Conflict

The Treaty of Aix - la - Chapelle resolved the conflict, keeping the status quo. Maria Theresa retains the Austrian, Bohemian and Hungarian thrones as Archduchess of Austria and Queen of Hungary, while her husband Francis of Lorraine became the Holy Roman Emperor.

There were territorial changes, Prussia gained control of Silesia, France returned the Madras to Britain, Austrian Netherlands also given back. The Spanish Bourbons were also given back Duchies of Parma, Piacenza + Guastalla.

Tensions were still not settled, nothing was truly settled, leading to the Seven Years War.

Bibliography

- National Army Museum, War of the Austrian Succession, <https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/war-austrian> [Accessed 20th Feburary 2020]
- Brown Mark, *Human remains found on 18th century Royal Navy wreck*, The Guardian, 27th Feburary 2010. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2010/feb/26/shipwreck-navy> [Accessed 29th Feburary].

Background

Following the Spanish War of Succession, Austria added a few territories into its empire, but was left without a heir. Emperor Charles VI of the Holy Roman Empire had only two daughters for the throne, causing a succession crisis ensued. The Pragmatic Sanction was used to stop a crisis, allowing a daughter to become a successor to the Habsburgs, most European nations accepted this but some wished to weaken Austria. Maria Theresa gained the throne following her father's death (1740) while in Prussia, Frederick II gained the Prussia throne. To prove himself as king, Frederick stepped into Austria province of Silesia, beginning the war.

<u>Austria + allies</u>	<u>Prussia + allies</u>
Habsburg Monarchy	Prussia (1740 - 1742, 1744- 1745)
Great Britain	France
Hanover	Jacobites (1745 - 1746)
Dutch Republic	Bavaria (1741 - 1745)
Saxony (1743 - 1745)	Saxony (1741 - 1742)
Savoy - Sardinia (1742 - 1748)	Savoy - Sardinia (1741 - 1742)
Russia (1741- 1743, 1748)	Naples
	Genoa (1745 - 1748)
	Sweden (1741 - 1743)
	Hesse - Kassel
	Palatinate
	Cologne

HMS Victory Excavation



Above: One of the cannons recovered from HMS Victory.

Known as the most powerful ship during the Austrian War of Succession for its heavy weapons, the HMS Victory was sunk during a storm in October 1745 alongside its £700m worth of gold bullion on board. Discovered by Odyssey Marine Exploration in the Channel Islands, a team full of archaeologists in 2009, two cannons were from the Victory - a twelve pounder and a 42 pounder alongside human remains.

Recent news has been quiet about further excavation. Plans were set to raise the Victory from the sea in 2012 and are to be given to the Maritime Heritage Foundation but no more major news has been an-

Other Excavation Finds

Small items gathered after the war are depicted below. For example a French infantry cartridge pouch from the Battle of Dettingen was discovered in decent condition, bearing the crest of the French army during Louis XV's reign. A major item was discovered by a French soldier after France's victory in the Battle of Fontenoy (1745), finding the Duke of Cumberland's personal seal. The Duke of Cumberland known as Prince William led a Pragmatic army against French troops and lost, retreating home to deal with the Jacobite threat which he is most well known for. This retreat explains why the seal was abandoned.



To the left: A French infantry cartridge pouch taken at Dettingen 1743.

To the right: The Duke of Cumberland's personal seal, lost at Fontenoy and later found by a French soldier 1745.

