

Beginnings of the Auld Alliance

The 'auld alliance'

Margaret Tudor, eldest daughter of Henry VII of England, married James IV of Scotland in 1503. This brought the blood relationship between the rulers of England and Scotland closer. Henry VIII's hostility towards the 'auld enemy', however, ensured that their political relationship was as bad as at any time since the fourteenth century. Scotland looked to strengthen the alliance with France to counter Henry VIII, while the English Reformation from 1536 made religion a crucial factor in politics for the first time.

French influence in Scotland grew quickly after the marriage of James V of Scotland to Mary, daughter of Claude de Lorraine, Duke of Guise, a leading French noble, in 1538. The pro-French cardinal David Beaton allied with Mary to become regent of her daughter, Mary Queen of Scots, in 1544. Both regents hoped to overturn the Treaty of Greenwich of 1543, which had proposed the marriage of Edward, Prince of Wales (the son of Henry VIII) and Mary Queen of Scots.

The accession of Henry II in France in March 1547 favoured French supporters in Scotland, since Francis, 2nd Duke of Guise (and uncle of Mary Queen of Scots), dominated the new king. The marriage of Queen Mary to the [Dauphin](#) Francis was soon proposed. The English revived the feudal claims to Scotland to counter this French influence, and invaded Scotland in 1547 to enforce the Treaty of Greenwich. Despite the capture of Edinburgh, Roxburgh, and Haddington, however, war continued into Mary I's reign.

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