

Was James I a powerful ruler in a golden age?

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Did he consider himself powerful?

Kings were gods lieutenants on earth and that they sat upon his throne.

They were even called gods by god himself.

They have power of raising and casting down; of life, and of death.

Said James I 1610 (spoken to parliament)

So yes, he did believe he was powerful, because he believed that he was gods representative on earth.

What did other people think of him?

Court officer-1650

“His legs were very weak; that weakness made him lean on other men’s shoulders. He would never change his clothes until worn out to very rags. He was very witty. He was very free with what he did not have, and would rather part with £100 he never had than one twenty shilling piece in his own pocket.”

This court officer’s opinion seems to be quite negative towards James I but respected him for maybe his freedom and wit.

Court officer-1650

“He was of middle build. His clothes were made large and loose for stiletto proof. By nature he was afraid. His eyes were very large and rolling, his beard was very thin, his tongue too large for his mouth, which made him stammer, and made him drink very clumsily, as if eating his drink.”

This court officer seems to not think kindly of James I and his quote is entirely negative.

What did other people think of him?

Sir John Oglander-
1585-1655

“King James was the most cowardly man I ever knew, to hear of war was death to him. Otherwise he was the best scholar and the wisest prince for general knowledge England ever had. He hated men that spoke ill of others. He had many witty jests and was very understanding of the Protestant religion.

He loved young men, especially his favourite, the Duke of Buckingham. He was inclined towards peace and this was his greatest fault.”

Like others this man says James is an absolute coward who loved peace, however, it also mentions that he was the best scholar and wisest prince for general knowledge England ever had.

Modern historian

“James was a bright child and did well at his lessons At the age of eight he could translate passages from the Bible from Latin into French. His tutor George Buchanan, made him work very hard. James was so frightened of him that he had nightmares about him. He had few other children to play with so he often felt lonely and unhappy.”

I think this quote describe him in a completely sympathetic view as it tells that he had nightmares of a man, that he was sad and lonely as a child, but also that he was a bright child and he did well in his lessons.

What did other people think of him?

Visiting foreign official

If the king fancies a particular stag among the herd, he lets the keepers know.

There they lead the dogs and away they run on its trail. Without stop the king hurries after the dogs until they have caught the stag.

James thrusts his hands into the dead stag's guts and smears the faces of the courtiers and the hounds with blood.

This particular passage is unique as it describes James I in a somewhat disgusting way and disturbed way, but also in a negative light.

Was it a golden age?

Queen Elizabeth I was James Stuart's grandfather's cousin. When she died James VI of Scotland became James I of England.

Scotland was a very separate country to England. James hoped to unite the two countries.

He wanted the two countries to share the same money and the same flag.

James hoped that the Elizabethan 'golden age' would continue as the 'golden age' of the Stuarts.

Various suggestions and quotes from James I's advisors

My Lord,
You must cut down on the amount of money you spend at court on presents, feasts, and parties!

My Lord,
Parliament is furious because you will not give them the right to question you over the way you raise money from your people.

My Lord,
My Lord the Catholic emperor of Austria has claimed the Bohemian throne instead of allowing your Protestant son in law to rule. This is war!

My Lord,
Our war with Spain, begun in Queen Elizabeth's reign, still drags on. It is costing a huge amount of money!

My Lord,
The M.P.s are outraged because you tore out the page of the House of Commons journal in which they claim their rights against you, and then dissolved parliament.

Various suggestions and quotes from James I's advisors

My Lord,
The Puritans are angry because you have banned their books, and force them to be under the orders of your bishops.

My Lord,
The people of London hate the Spanish because they are Catholics. You must not try to make peace with Spain!

My Lord,
We have found evidence of a Catholic plot to blow up parliament and kill you and all your advisors. This is treason!

My Lord,
The Catholics say that you not allowing them to practice their religion freely because you are a Protestant.

My Lord,
The people of Ireland hate you for seizing their lands and dividing it between your supporters.

Was James I a powerful ruler in a golden age?

Overall, I don't think he was a very powerful ruler because of his many faults

Overall, I don't think it was a golden age because there was still war and other things that could definitely not be classed as peaceful.