

The War of the Austrian Succession and Related Global Events: A Timeline

This timeline details the most important and interesting global events in the War of the Austrian Succession. However, not all political actions and battles are listed. All dates are given according to the Gregorian calendar (New Style calendar).

European Context

Pragmatic Sanction:

Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI (*1711, †1740) had issued the Pragmatic Sanction to regulate the succession of all the Hereditary Lands of the House of Habsburg after his death – if there was no male heir, the eldest daughter should inherit.

Maria Theresa as heir:

Maria Theresa's (*1717, †1780) reign began with the death of Charles VI. Several major powers in Europe had not recognised the Pragmatic Sanction: Charles VII (elector of Bavaria), King August III of Poland and King Philip V of Spain.

Beginning of the First Silesian War and the War of the Austrian Succession:

Frederick the Great (*1712, †1786) took advantage of the conflict situation and the Prussian occupied Silesia on 16 December 1740. This event triggered the war of succession.

- Allies of Maria Theresa: Great Britain, Russia, Netherlands
- Prussian allies: France, Spain, Bavaria

Allied French and Bavarian squads occupied Upper Austria and Bohemia.

With the coronation of Charles VII (*1697, †1745) as Holy Roman Emperor, the House of Habsburg lost their traditional imperial title

Treaty of Berlin:

End of the First Silesian War: Maria Theresa was forced to surrender the territories of Lower and Upper Silesia and the County of Glatz.

After the retaking of occupied Bohemia, Maria Theresa was crowned Queen of Bohemia.

Sea Battles and Colonial Conflicts

Background

April 1713

October 1739

21 November
1739

20 October
1740

December 1740 War of the Austrian Succession

March - May
1741

July 1741

12 February
1742

28 July 1742

March - May
1743

12 May 1743

22 February
1744

March 1744

Beginning of the War of Jenkins' Ear
Colonial war between Great Britain and Spain

Battle of Portobello:
Panama, War of Jenkins' Ear: Under Vice Admiral Edward Vernon, the Spanish silver-transshipment port of Porto Bello was successfully taken by the British. Vernon was celebrated as a national hero.

Expedition to Cartagena de Indias:
Colombia, War of Jenkins' Ear: With a fleet of 124 ships, the British unsuccessfully blockaded and besieged the important Spanish gold trading port of Cartagena de Indias. Similar actions in Florida, Cuba and Panama also failed.

Battles of La Guaira (2 - 6 March) and Battle of Puerto Cabello (26 April - 5 May):
Venezuela, War of Jenkins' Ear: Charles Knowles led the British expeditionary fleet in the battles of La Guaira and Puerto Cabello. The aim of the expeditions was to capture the important military ports of the Spaniards. However, the British lost both battles.

Battle of Toulon:
Mediterranean: This sea battle took place between a combined Spanish-French fleet of 30 ships and a British fleet of 33 ships under the command of Thomas Mathews. Despite their larger fleet and their superior armament, the British were unable to achieve a victory due to disagreements in the fleet command. The battle was inconclusive.

Official declaration of war between Great Britain and France:
Trade war, King George's War (West Indies, North America), First Carnatic War (India)

Second Silesian War:

Prussia occupied Silesia once again, as Frederick the Great feared the War of the Austrian Succession might advance in Austria's favour.

Maria Theresa's husband Francis I (*1708, †1765) was crowned as Holy Roman Emperor after the death of Charles VII on 20 January 1745.

Treaty of Dresden:

End of Second Silesian War: Maria Theresa was forced to recognise Prussia's possession of Silesia. In return, Frederick the Great recognised Francis I as Emperor.

August 1744

Siege of Louisbourg:
Cape Breton Island, King George's War: By capturing the fortress of Louisbourg, which protected French shipping and maritime trade, the British hoped to drive the French out of North America. After a six-week siege with over 4,000 men, the fortress was successfully seized.

May - June 1745

13 September 1745

Battle of Negapatam:
Indian Ocean, First Carnatic War: To harm French trade, a fleet under the command of Curtis Barnett was sent into the Indian Ocean and encountered the French squadron of Louis-Charles Mahé de La Bourdonnais. A military conflict ensued, in which both sides suffered great damage. In July 1746, both squadrons, the British now under the command of Edward Peyton, engaged again. Peyton halted the attack to wait for reinforcements. La Bourdonnais took advantage of the British defencelessness and captured Madras.

25 December 1745

25 July 1746

Raid on Lorient:
France: Lorient served as an important port for the French East India Company and was therefore a strategically chosen target for the British expedition, which was under the command of Richard Lestock and James St Clair. The British were able to destroy the fort of Quiberon, but the capture of the port failed.

September - October 1746

21 September 1746

Battle of Madras:
First Carnatic War: Madras (an important British trading post) and Fort St. George were captured by the French.

14 May 1747

First Battle of Cape Finisterre:
Eastern Atlantic Ocean: A British squadron of 14 warships and a French convoy with military escort encountered one another in an armed conflict. The battle ended with a British victory.

25 October 1747

Second Battle of Cape Finisterre:
Eastern Atlantic Ocean: A similar sea battle between 14 British ships of the line and an escorted French merchant convoy of more than 250 ships occurred. This battle also ended in a British victory.

30 April 1748
Draft treaty of peace

Siege of Pondicherry:
First Carnatic War, India: Admiral Edward Boscawen, not yet having heard of the agreed upon truce, sailed to Pondicherry to capture the French city. Due to the monsoon season and numerous cases of illness in his crew, he was forced to abandon the siege.

August - October 1748

12 October 1748

Battle of Havana:
Caribbean Basin, King George's War: The naval battle was the last military event in the War of the Austrian Succession. It took place between a British squadron of seven ships, commanded by Rear Admiral Charles Knowles, and a Spanish squadron of the same size. The British only succeeded in capturing one enemy ship.

18 October 1748
Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle

Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle:
End of the conflict over the Austrian succession and end of the Anglo-French War.
Result for Austria: Maria Theresa lost Silesia, but her succession was recognised by all parties and she recovered the other captured territories
Result for Great Britain: Mutual return of all conquered territories



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