

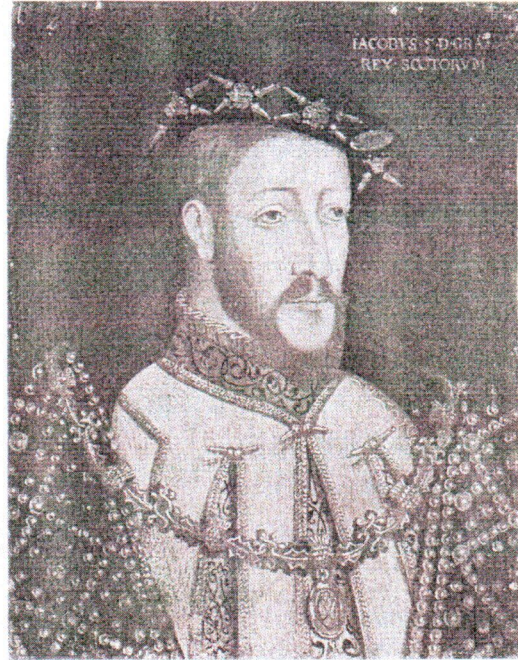
JAMES V

(1513–1542), king of Scots

He was called of some, a good poor man's king; of others he was termed a murderer of the nobility, and one that had decreed their whole destruction. Some praised him for the repression of theft and oppression: others dispraised him for the defoulling of men's wives and virgins . . . And yet none spake altogether besides the truth.

(John Knox, *History of the Reformation in Scotland*)

SON of James IV and nephew of Henry VIII, James was eighteen months old when his father was killed at Flodden. During childhood he was the sport of noble factions, but in 1528 he escaped from the Douglasses and began his personal rule, pursuing his opponents with a severity that bordered on savagery. The rift between Henry VIII and the Emperor gave James the opportunity of playing a balancing role, and he received the Garter from one and the Golden Fleece from the other. In 1537 he married Madeleine, daughter of Francis I and, on her death within a few months, he married Mary of Guise. Partly under the influence of his second wife, James defended the Papacy and put down reformist preachers. In December 1541 he broke an agreement to meet Henry VIII at York and war followed. Late in 1542 James, already ill, despatched a force across the border: it was trapped and forced to surrender at Solway Moss. James, overcome by the news, died the following month, leaving as his heir a week-old daughter, Mary.



JAMES V at the age of twenty-eight.

consummated, but the papal dispensation granted in 1503, to cover all circumstances, had assumed that it had been. Technically, Henry was asking, not for a divorce, but for recognition that he had never been married at all. Even divorces were by no means unknown. Louis XII had been granted a divorce in 1499. The duke of Suffolk, the king's brother-in-law, had had a marriage annulled by reason of consanguinity in 1507, and Henry's sister Margaret, widow of James IV of Scotland, had a divorce granted in 1527 to end an imprudent second marriage, to Henry's great indignation. Henry may well have believed that Wolsey's vast influence with the papacy would be sufficient to obtain a ruling in his favour. When Wolsey and Campeggio were empowered to decide the matter in May 1529, all seemed to be on course, but in July the pope avoked the cause to Rome. Within three months, Wolsey was dismissed and charged with praemunire.

The years of Wolsey's supremacy were colourful rather than deeply significant. The kind of prestige which the treaty of London or the Field of the Cloth of