1.1 The quest for political stability, 1625–88

KEY QUESTIONS

- Why did monarchical government fail in the years 1625–49?
- To what extent did republican rule provide a stable government, 1649–60?
- Why was the Stuart monarchy restored in 1660, only to collapse 28 years later?

INTRODUCTION

In 1625, against a background of political and religious conflict across Europe, Charles I inherited the thrones of three British kingdoms: England (with Wales), Ireland and Scotland. Although he ruled all three kingdoms, they did not constitute a single unit: each kingdom had its own culture, its own religious arrangements and its own parliament. He was king by inheritance – as the eldest living son of King James I – and by **Divine Right**, chosen and approved by God himself, as symbolised in the coronation ceremony.

Civil War in England was sparked by rebellions in Scotland and Ireland in 1642, and the king was eventually defeated by an army organised and led by the English parliament. From 1646 to 1648, the victorious parliamentarians attempted to negotiate a settlement with the king, but Charles refused to negotiate honestly and used the time to raise new forces and renew the war with the help of the Scots. In 1649, this Divine Right monarch was executed in a public beheading outside the Banqueting Hall of his own Palace of Whitehall in London. Moreover, the death of the king was followed by the formal abolition of the monarchy and England's only period of **republican** government.

This action, and the ideology that motivated it, led some historians to view these events as an English Revolution, a forerunner of the similar events that took place in France in 1789 and Russia in 1917. Charles was not the first British monarch to meet a violent death, but he was the first to be publicly tried in the name of the people and executed according to judicial procedures while still king. The implication of this was that kings could be held responsible by their subjects, and not by God alone. Although the monarchy was restored in 1660, and Charles's sons still claimed to rule by Divine Right, in practice Charles II and then James II knew the possible consequences of conflict with parliament. When James faced the prospect of a new civil war in 1688, he fled into exile in France rather than risk his father's fate. The Glorious Revolution of 1688–89, and the settlements that followed it, owed much to the lessons learned in 1649.

KEY TERMS

Divine Right
This principle is founded on the belief that the monarch was God's representative on earth, and answerable to God alone. It was a sin against God therefore to stand against the monarch.

Republican
In a republic, supreme political power is held by elected representatives rather than a hereditary monarch.

Monarchy in 1625

The source of law and government in all three British kingdoms was the monarch, deriving power from God. The centre of political life was therefore the Royal Court, made up of the monarch's friends, servants and associates, as well as important office-holders and some foreign ambassadors. Within this there was an inner circle of close friends and advisers, known as the Privy [private] Council, whose members advised the monarch. Each of the three kingdoms had its own council, but the greater wealth and power of England, and the inclusion of Wales, made the English kingdom the dominant seat of government**.** The king's power was not unlimited, because it was generally recognised that the highest form of law was Statute law, made by the **King-in-Parliament**, which took precedence over **Prerogative** actions.

Beyond the confines of the court, there were a number of other important institutions, all coming ultimately under royal control. As head of the Church of England, the king appointed the bishops and archbishops who controlled the lower clergy, and exercised authority over the laity (non-clergy). The Church of England was a Protestant Church, as Henry VIII had broken away from the Catholic Church and his daughter, Elizabeth, had imposed a Protestant settlement. The senior archbishop, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was normally a member of the Privy Council. The Common Law courts were staffed by judges appointed by the king. At a local level the law was administered and enforced by Justices of the Peace (JPs). At the lowest level, they were assisted by parish officials – constables, overseers of the poor and church wardens – whose actions the JPs were expected to supervise. By comparison, the institution of parliament played only a limited role in government – while its functions were important, its meetings were occasional and entirely at the discretion of the monarch. Nevertheless, by 1625, parliaments were a vital and increasingly regular part of the system.

Charles I did not take on a simple or straightforward task when he ascended the throne in March 1625. The main issue that faced Charles was the war with Spain that had been fought by his father, James I. The origins of the war lay in the religious conflicts that had erupted in central Europe and developed into open warfare in 1618. James I had tried to avoid entanglement in the fighting, instead seeking to intervene by diplomatic means. He tried to negotiate a marriage for his son, then known as Prince Charles, with the daughter of the King of Spain, in order to bring a rapid end to the war or, at the very least, restore his daughter Elizabeth and her husband to the **Palatinate**. In order to strengthen his diplomatic credentials, he called a parliament and sought financial backing to prepare for war. The anti-Catholic feeling in England ensured he received support from Members of Parliament (MPs), who promptly granted taxes as required, but also embarked on a debate about how the war should be conducted.

KEY TERMS

King-in-Parliament
The power of the monarch to make laws with the assistance and approval of parliament.

Prerogative
The powers that could only be wielded by the king, such as the power to declare war and sign treaties.

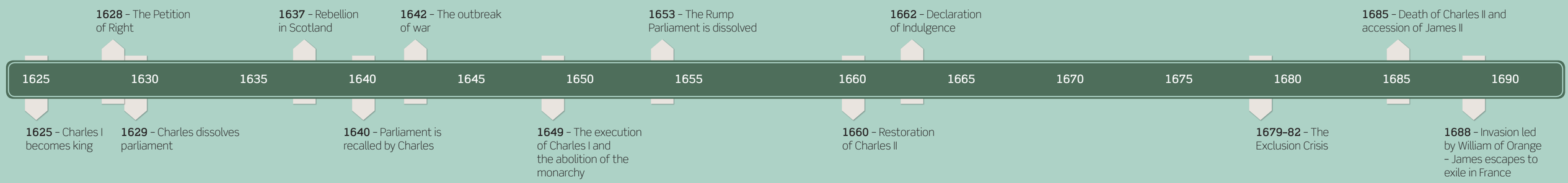
KEY TERM

Palatinate
The territory in Germany ruled by the Count Palatine of the Rhine. The territory was fragmented, with no continuous border, and spread over a large area.

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KING

Royal Court

Consisted of the king's friends, servants, chosen advisers and office-holders, and the greater nobility

Privy Council

Included the king's chosen advisers and heads of major departments; their function was to advise the king and supervise government departments (Treasury, Chancery, Exchequer) as well as local government

Parliament	Common Law Courts	Local government in counties and boroughs	Prerogative Courts	The Church
House of Lords (including 26 bishops) and House of Commons • 2 MPs from each county and borough • called and dismissed by the king • able to pass statute laws to add to the Common Law (custom, precedent and royal proclamations)	1 Exchequer, King's Bench and Common Pleas in London • judges appointed by the king 2 Judges on circuit held County Assizes 3 JPs met in petty and Quarter Sessions, sent serious cases to the Assizes	• Lords Lieutenant (in charge of militia) • Sheriffs (in charge of gaols and elections) • JPs, who administered law and supervised parish officials (constables, overseers of the poor and church wardens)	Run by Privy Councillors, representing the king's direct authority 1 Chancery and Star Chamber in London 2 Court of High Commission dealing with Church affairs 3 Regional Councils of the North and Welsh Marches	Governed by archbishops and bishops chosen by the king Lower clergy, supported by churchwardens

Electorate, consisting mainly of gentry and merchant elite. but with some of the 'middling sort' – yeomen and master craftsmen. These also provided local government personnel at appropriate levels.

The people – tenant farmers, craftsmen, labourers and paupers. Without any means of expressing their concerns other than to sympathetic local gentry, their tendency had been to resort to riot and disorder, including attacks on the property (and occasionally the persons) of their betters. They were therefore regarded as a danger to society, in need of control if stability was to be assured.

Figure 1.1: The structure of government and society in England, 1625.

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ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Government and society

1 Who exercised the most power in England, other than the monarch?

2 What is the significance of the fact that most positions outside the Royal Court were unpaid?

To obtain the necessary subsidies (parliamentary taxes), James had used the influence of his chief adviser, the Duke of Buckingham, to encourage MPs to debate the strategy for war and agreed to conduct a naval war. Meanwhile, Buckingham had negotiated a marriage for Charles with Henrietta Maria, the sister of the French king, in 1625 and an agreement to send troops to support a joint intervention to assist the Protestant cause in Germany. When the troops were dispatched under the command of a mercenary, Count Mansfeld, the poorly equipped English wasted away on the Belgian coast, ravaged by bad weather and disease. By the time this became clear, James was already dead, and it was King Charles I who had to deal with the consequences.

EXTEND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (1592–1628)

George Villiers was born into a minor gentry family in Leicestershire, but was introduced to the king in 1613 in an attempt by court rivals to undermine James's favourite, Robert Carr. Given James's noted fondness for handsome and charming young men, it was not surprising that the Villiers' fortunes rose rapidly.

Although skilled in court politics, Buckingham had little to offer as a statesman, but this did not cause great damage until he extended his influence to the young Prince Charles (who had actively disliked him at first) in 1623. Recognising that the heir to the throne lacked confidence, he set out to gain his friendship and support.

The occasion of their new relationship was the attempt to negotiate a marriage for Charles with the Spanish Infanta (daughter of the Spanish king) and in 1623 they embarked on a diplomatically disastrous adventure by secretly travelling to Madrid so that Charles could woo her in person. The Spanish were shocked and the plan failed, but the visit seems to have enabled Buckingham to gain the affection of the young prince, which never wavered thereafter.

WHY DID MONARCHICAL GOVERNMENT FAIL IN THE YEARS 1625–49?

Charles I and parliament, 1625–29

TIMELINE OF 1625–29

1625
Henrietta Maria arrives in England
House of Commons refuses Charles the customary grant of Tonnage and Poundage for life

1626
Attack on Cadiz and English ships used at La Rochelle: war with France after French made peace with Spain

1626
Charles dissolves parliament to prevent impeachment of Buckingham

1627
Charles issues demands for a forced loan
Five Knights case
Failure of attempt to relieve Protestant Huguenots at La Rochelle

1628
Assassination of Buckingham
Petition of Right

1629
Three Resolutions leads to dissolution and proclamation of personal rule; Peace with France

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The 1625 parliament

When Charles succeeded to the throne in March 1625, he found an empty Treasury and dwindling credit. Charles moved to gain a loan from City of London merchants of £60,000, but this was not enough and he had little choice but to face a parliament. The actions of MPs, and the few Lords who worked with them in 1625–29, were mainly focused on the recognised parliamentary functions of taxation, defence of the common law and the occasional attempt to bring 'evil counsellors' to book through the process of **impeachment**. Nevertheless, the meeting of parliament in June 1625 initiated a sequence of quarrels that destroyed any co-operation between king and parliament and led Charles to embark on a period of Personal Rule in 1629.

Disagreements began when the Commons refused to grant Charles the right to collect an excise tax, Tonnage and Poundage, for life, in response to the disastrous Mansfeld campaign. Instead, the MPs suggested that a grant should be made for a year, so he would be forced to call a parliament regularly.

KEY TERM

Impeachment
A process whereby government advisers and officers could be accused of crimes by the House of Commons and tried in the House of Lords. As a method of bringing 'evil counsellors' to justice it was open to manipulation by court factions, but it was an important way of demonstrating public anger to the king and of removing men who were genuinely incompetent or worse.

KEY TERMS

Arminian
A follower of the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609). Arminius rejected the Calvinist notion of predestination, believing that all Christians have free will and can influence whether they enter heaven or hell. Arminianism in the 1620s and 1630s is associated with 'high church' practices (similar to those of the Catholic Church) such as the use of organs, hymns and bowing to the cross.

Habeas corpus
A demand made by a prisoner to their custodian. When issued, the prisoner has the right to go before a court and demand to know the reason for their detention.

Prerogative Court
A court where the powers of the sovereign are exercised, often by judges nominated by the king or queen.

The mood darkened when the new Catholic Queen Henrietta Maria arrived in England, establishing her own court of Catholic advisers. Meanwhile, Charles had shown more of his religious sympathies by promoting **Arminian** clergy in the Church and offering a position at court to Arminians such as Richard Montagu. Additionally, the foreign policy failures mounted. The planned war had led to conscription of troops and the forced billeting of troops in people's houses, at a time when a serious outbreak of the plague had already disrupted the economy. In late 1625, a naval expedition was sent to attack the port of Cadiz in Spain. Poorly trained and equipped, and badly led by Buckingham's nominee, Viscount Wimbledon, it failed completely. When the Commons began discussing impeachment proceedings against Buckingham, Charles hastily dissolved parliament.

The 1626 parliament and prerogative rule

In these circumstances, Charles's decision to call another parliament in early 1626 indicates a serious lack of awareness. When parliament met, the issue of subsidies was set aside to launch an attack on Buckingham. An angry Commons combined with the Lords, and court rivals whom Buckingham had driven from office, to launch an impeachment against him. Forced to dissolve parliament without any grant of taxation in order to stop the process of impeachment, Charles responded by demanding a forced loan from all taxpayers, and this time any who refused payment were to be punished by being imprisoned or conscripted into military service. For many of the political nation, this was a direct challenge to the law and the existence of parliaments, and some began to show their unhappiness. Lord Chief Justice Carew refused to endorse the legality of the loan and was dismissed. In 1627, a group of five knights who had refused to pay the loan and been imprisoned sued for release under **habeas corpus**. They were refused the opportunity to go to court, because the king claimed a right to an emergency power of arrest.

Confrontation and dissolution, 1628–29

The result of the 'Five Knights case' was a major confrontation in 1628, when Charles summoned another parliament to provide funds for the now desperate need for national defence. The attack on Cadiz had been followed up by a further deterioration in relations with the other Catholic power, France, in which Buckingham's inept diplomacy led to war and a failed attempt to support a Protestant rebellion in La Rochelle. At war with both France and Spain, Charles had no choice but to seek further subsidies. Aware that outright confrontation could lead to another dissolution, attacks on Buckingham by parliament were abandoned in favour of a more subtle strategy. On the one hand, the Commons voted a total of five subsidies in taxation. At the same time, they prepared a carefully worded document, named the Petition of Right, and offered it to the king, asking him to reverse the decision made in the Five Knights case. They also demanded that, in future, citizens would not be asked to pay forced loans, imprisoned without trial, subjected to martial law or forced to provide free lodgings for soldiers.

After ending the session of parliament because of continuing complaints about Buckingham and the promotion of Arminians in the Church, Charles published a revised version of the Petition that asserted his right to continue collecting Tonnage and Poundage without a parliamentary grant. Using the same justification of emergency powers in the national interest, he also imprisoned any merchants who refused. When one of them, Richard Chambers, was granted bail by the common law courts, Charles had him imprisoned by the **Prerogative Court** of the Star Chamber on direct royal authority. Meanwhile, he also appointed William Laud, a noted Arminian cleric, as Bishop of London.

The Petition of Right had briefly offered the opportunity for reconciliation between Charles and parliament, but the chance of this diminished rapidly as a result of his actions. On top of this, Buckingham was assassinated by a disgruntled army officer named John Felton while reviewing the fleet at Portsmouth. While Charles grieved, the public celebrated with bonfires and, when parliament reassembled in January 1629, the news was further celebrated by MPs. When the reassembled parliament began to look into breaches of the Petition, and the treatment of merchants who had refused to pay Tonnage and Poundage, Charles ordered parliament to adjourn.

On the day of the adjournment, a group of MPs led by Denzil Holles and Sir John Eliot demanded the passing of three formal resolutions against the growth of Arminianism, the levying of Tonnage and Poundage, and the actions of those who paid it. When the Speaker refused to delay the adjournment, they held him in his chair until the resolutions passed, amid shouting and confusion.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

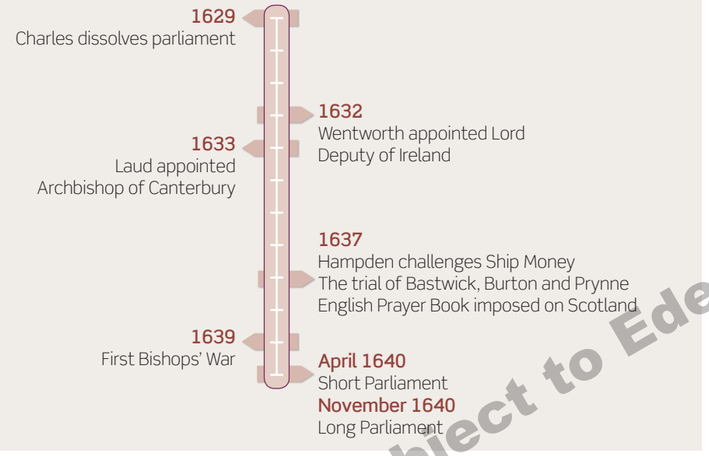
Charles, parliaments and Buckingham, 1625–29

1 Write a summary paragraph to explain why Charles failed to work with parliament between 1625 and 1629.

2 Create a flowchart outlining the process by which relations between king and parliament broke down.

Personal rule and its failure, 1629–40

TIMELINE OF PERSONAL RULE



The significance of the dissolution, 1629–30

With hindsight, it is possible to see that the events of 1629 had significant effects on the quest for stable government in England; it is considered by some historians to mark a turning point in the development of the conflict that led eventually to civil war. Following the views of those who opposed Charles in these years, a number of historians writing in the 19th and early 20th centuries argued that Charles was seeking to create an **absolute monarchy**, similar to those that existed in Spain and, later, in France under Louis XIV. In their view, the dissolution of 1629 and the personal rule that followed constituted a deliberate attempt to destroy parliament as an institution and govern entirely by the authority of a Divine Right monarch, responsible only to God. Parliamentary opponents were imprisoned, most notably John Eliot, who died in the Tower of London in 1632. Their term for what is now mainly labelled the personal rule was the 'Eleven Years Tyranny'. More recent historians have challenged this argument and concluded that what Charles intended in these years was to create an efficient and stable system of government, based on his own political and religious beliefs. Source 1 offers some clues to his thinking.

KEY TERM

Absolute monarchy
A system of government in which the monarch holds unrestricted power over the state and people. Absolute monarchies are often hereditary.

SOURCE 1 From 'The Declaration of Charles I', published 10 March 1629.

Howsoever princes are not bound to give an account of their actions but to God alone... we have thought good to set thus much down by way of declaration, that we may appear to the world in the truth and sincerity of our actions... As we have been careful for the settling of religion and quieting the church, so we were not unmindful of the preservation of the just and ancient liberties of our subjects... [but] the House [of Commons] hath of late years endeavoured to extend their privileges by setting up general committees for religion, for courts of justice, for trade and the like... So as, where in former times the Knights and Burgesses were wont to communicate to the House such business as they brought from their countries [counties], now... they make enquiry upon all sorts of men... to break through all respects and ligaments of government, and to erect a universal over-swaying power to themselves, which belongs only to us, and not to them...

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If Charles was attempting to establish an absolute monarchy, contemporaries seem to have been unaware of it. Across the country, the dissolution provoked very little reaction, in part because the behaviour of the MPs who forced the Three Resolutions through the House seemed to justify it. Far from causing a dangerous reaction from the political nation, the first few years of the personal rule seem to have been remarkably calm and orderly. Charles proved to be an effective ruler, devoting many hours to the daily business of government and meeting regularly with a Privy Council led by two efficient administrators, William Laud, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633, and Sir Thomas Wentworth, later Lord Strafford. Wentworth had made a name for himself as President of the Council of the North from 1628, and was appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1632.

Government and finance, 1630–36

Charles signed the Treaty of Madrid in 1630, ending hostilities with Spain. This would lead to Charles's annual spending on war reducing from £500,000 in the years 1625–29 to less than £70,000 in the 1630s. Charles gave his attention to the Crown's finances, reorganising the management of Crown lands, adding new impositions to the collection of Tonnage and Poundage and reviving a number of feudal payments, such as fines for building on, or otherwise encroaching on, royal forests. The practice of selling monopoly licenses was revived, which would give one individual or company the right to dominate production of certain products. In 1634, Charles issued a monopoly patent for the production of soap, claiming that it would improve both the quality and the supply. It generated considerable resentment and became the subject of public debate in 1641, when opponents claimed that many people had been driven out of business and prices to the public had significantly increased in order to benefit the king's revenues. The greatest controversy of all, however, came with the establishment of an annual levy of Ship Money across the country, eventually worth about £200,000 a year to the Exchequer.

The levying of Ship Money for the upkeep of the navy was not new. Unlike parliamentary taxes, it was a demand for payment of an amount set by the government and collected by the county sheriffs, normally from the counties that lined the coasts. Most monarchs had levied Ship Money once or twice during their reign. The difference with Charles was that he introduced it as an annual tax, and levied it across the entire country, thereby greatly increasing its value. The first year of the levy, in 1634, was carried out in the traditional way, and provoked little comment. But, in 1635, it was repeated and extended to the inland counties. By 1636, it had become an annual tax, with the capability of providing a regular income that was independent of any parliament. If the king had no need of parliamentary grants, then he had no need of parliaments. Even if they were called, they would have little power to influence the government. As early as 1610, MPs had remarked that the main reason for summoning parliaments was to obtain money and that, if that need ceased, it was unlikely that parliaments would survive. Other financial devices included distraint of knighthood, a medieval custom whereby all those with land worth over £40 per annum were expected to be knighted by the monarch. If they had failed to present themselves at Charles's coronation, they were fined. Over 9,000 individuals were charged, and a brief campaign against the tax began in Yorkshire in 1634, but gained little support when the exchequer judges supported Charles's right to collect the tax.

The new order in Church and state, 1629–36

It is not surprising that those who opposed the general direction of Charles's government were deeply concerned by the issue of finance and attempted to mount resistance. It is also unsurprising that the same group had strong **Puritan** connections, and were disturbed by the ongoing reforms in the Church as well as state and society.

KEY TERM

Puritan
A Protestant who believed that the Reformation of the Church under Elizabeth I had not gone far enough, and sought to simplify worship and 'purify' it from the taint of Catholic ceremony and superstition.

In the Church of England, the promotion of Arminians like Laud brought a new insistence on control of the clergy by the bishops and of the laity by the clergy. Charles and Laud demanded strict adherence to rules and the substitution of ritual and formality in place of the Puritan emphasis on individual prayer and preaching. Those ministers who resisted were brought before the Church courts or the prerogative Court of High Commission and, if they failed to conform, were deprived of their livings. It has been pointed out that the number of clergy forced out did not rise greatly during the 1630s, but these numbers exclude the hundred or more clergy who chose to emigrate to the Puritan colonies of New England in America. The practice of Puritan gentry buying up the right to appoint the local minister or the right to collect the tithes that formed his salary was strictly forbidden, and a group known as the Feoffees, who had organised the practice to ensure the appointment of Puritan clergy, were forced to disband.

An emphasis on order, formality and hierarchy coloured Charles's Church policies, and it was no coincidence that Catholic influence at Court was perceived to have increased in line with the changes elsewhere. Unlike the chaotic, and sometimes corrupt, court of King James, Charles had created a well-ordered regime with an emphasis on hierarchy and ceremony designed to instil respect for monarchy and emphasise the religious roots of his power. Churches were decorated with statues and colour, organs were restored, and the altar was moved to the east end of the Church in order for a traditional communion to take place.

Charles's most loyal servants during his personal rule were Archbishop Laud and Thomas Wentworth. Wentworth was based mainly in the North, until sent to Ireland as Lord Deputy in 1632, while Laud's residence as archbishop lay outside the court itself. The Queen's influence had also become considerable. Not only did she maintain her own chapel and Catholic clergy, she actively encouraged others, including her children, to participate in Catholic worship. From 1635, Charles welcomed to his court an ambassador from the pope, whose interest in art and royal imagery led to a close relationship between the two men. For those who did not share Charles's vision, the unfolding picture of his government in Church and state was ominously clear, uniform and threatening to all that they valued.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Personal rule

1 Read Source 1.
   - a What accusation does Charles make against MPs in the House of Commons?
   - b What does he see as their legitimate role in government?
   - c What does the declaration suggest about his view of his own role and function as king?
2 Which groups in society would resent the financial and religious reforms made by Charles? Look at each reform in turn.

SOURCE 2 *Charles I on horseback*, by the Flemish court painter, Anthony Van Dyck, 1633.



ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The image of Charles I

1 What image of monarchy does the painting by Van Dyke (Source 2) seek to portray? Bearing in mind that Charles was a small man, how is his figure given presence and stature?
2 To what extent does the painting support the analysis of Charles I's personality provided in Extract 1?

EXTRACT 1 From C. Carlton, 'Three British Revolutions and the Personality of Kingship' in J.A. Pocock (ed.) *Three British Revolutions: 1641, 1688, 1776* (1980).

> An authoritarian personality, Charles was incapable of conceding at a time when compromises were desperately demanded from the English monarchy. He was full of that outward self-certainty (manifest in such doctrines as divine right) that only intense inner doubt can engender... Charles saw his kingly role as a judge to whom issues were taken for decision... not that of a bargainer who settled disputes between rival branches of government, and negotiated settlements with other powerful interest groups. No wonder Charles' parliaments all ended in discord... Charles was psychologically incapable of dealing with a parliament that was anything more than a rubber stamp.

Reaction and resistance, 1636–40

The first attempts at organised resistance came in 1636 from a group of Puritan gentry and nobility who had been active in parliament before 1629 and maintained contact thereafter through a privately organised shipping company, the Providence Island Company. The leaders of the group were John Pym, the Earl of Warwick, the Duke of Bedford and Lord Saye and Sele. Their contacts stretched to a number of family members in East Anglia and the lawyer Oliver St. John, as well as a Buckinghamshire gentleman named John Hampden. Hampden refused to pay his Ship Money in 1636 and initiated a legal challenge, which Charles decided to use as a test case in 1637. St. John acted as Hampden's counsel. Unsurprisingly, the judges in the Court of the King's Bench found in the king's favour when they made their decision in early 1638, but the margin of their decision was a narrow seven to five. Equally significant, the reaction of the gentry in various parts of the country was, according to the future moderate Royalist, Sir Edward Hyde, generally hostile.

Nevertheless, the case represented a defeat for the opposition, and once again the lack of a parliament to speak for them revealed the weakness of their position. Those who did attempt to speak out were quickly silenced by action from the Privy Council and Prerogative Courts. In 1637, one of these courts, the Star Chamber, sentenced three Puritan writers, who had published attacks on the government, to have their ears cut off and be branded on the cheeks before being imprisoned at the king's pleasure. The defendants, Henry Burton, John Bastwick and William Prynne, became notorious. That the sentence had been imposed by Laud emphasised the increasing influence of the Laudian bishops in the government of the state as well as the Church. The presence of clergymen in government was also evident in the appointment of William Juxon, Bishop of London, to the post of Lord Treasurer in 1636.

Although opposition to Ship Money increased, and the yield fell to just 20 percent of expected money in 1639, this was not so much because resistance was stronger or better organised, but because the Privy Council and county sheriffs were increasingly distracted and overburdened by the need to raise an army to fight in Scotland.

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The Scottish troubles and collapse of personal rule

If Charles had ever formed a conscious intention to establish an absolute monarchy, his decision to extend his programme of reform to Scotland ensured his failure. In provoking a war that he could not sustain, he weakened his grip on government and demonstrated an inability to understand the impact of his decisions in the three kingdoms. Despite being born there, Charles had little understanding of his Scottish kingdom and only visited in order to be crowned King of Scotland in 1633. Nor did he trust the Scottish Privy Council to make decisions, preferring to rely on the advice of a few Scottish exiles who lived permanently in London. Unlike the Church of England, the Scottish Kirk (Church) had undergone a thoroughly Calvinist reformation led by John Knox in 1560, and emerged as a highly organised **Presbyterian** institution run by an assembly of ministers and lay Elders. A number of events in Scotland caused Charles to recall parliament in 1640.

KEY TERM

Presbyterian
A church governed by an assembly of elders or officials rather than a hierarchy of bishops.

- In 1636, Charles issued a Book of Canons to the Scottish clergy. This listed instructions as to how they should lay out their churches and introduced a number of practices associated with the Church of England.
- In 1637, Charles introduced the English Prayer Book to Scottish churches. When the book was first read in St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, a riot broke out. Disorder spread across the lowlands and, in 1638, the Scottish clergy and nobility met and drew up a National Covenant to defend the Kirk and restore their religious rights.
- Both Charles and the Covenanters raised armies, but Charles, lacking money, had to rely on the county militias from England. Realising he could not win, Charles signed the Treaty of Berwick in 1639, ending what became known as the First Bishops' War.
- Many of the gentry were unhappy with the idea of funding a war with the Scots, and there was a 'taxpayers strike' in the years 1639–40. Lacking funds, and unable to borrow money from the London merchants, Charles turned to Wentworth, who advised him to call a parliament. When this so-called Short Parliament assembled in April 1640, amid a flood of petitions against various aspects of personal rule, Charles had the opportunity to save the situation by making concessions. Instead, after demanding money from parliament, the Commons entered into a series of debates, and Charles was compelled to dissolve parliament after only three weeks.
- Charles collected together an ill-organised and under-equipped force in order to fight a Second Bishops' War. Most of his soldiers actually sympathised with the Scots, and occupied themselves burning altar rails and other symbols associated with Catholicism. Charles was defeated at the Battle of Newburn, near Newcastle, and under the terms of the subsequent Treaty of Ripon in October 1640 he was forced to pay the Scots £850 a day while they occupied Newcastle.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The collapse of personal rule

1 Why was John Hampden's Ship Money case significant?

2 Why do you think Charles was so determined to fight the Scots, despite the costs this would incur?

The failure to compromise, 1640–49

TIMELINE OF CIVIL WAR AND THE SEARCH FOR A SETTLEMENT

November 1640 – Long Parliament is called
May 1641 – Strafford (Wentworth) is put on trial and executed
October 1641 – Irish Rebellion
August 1642 – Charles raises his standard and declares war
December 1643 – John Pym dies
April 1646 – Charles surrenders to the Scots
October 1647 – The Putney Debates
1648 – The Second Civil War
January 1649 – Charles is executed

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Parliament attacks the prerogative, 1640–41

When the **Long Parliament** assembled, Pym and his allies were ready to seize the opportunity for which they had waited so long. The early months of the parliament saw the arrest and impeachments of Laud and Strafford, steps to forbid the financial strategies used by Charles to raise money outside parliament, and the passing of two Acts to ensure the future security of parliaments. The group that led the opposition, known as '**Pym's Junto**' by later historians, was certainly a new element in English politics, but the emergence of an organised opposition of this kind was the result, rather than the cause, of the build-up to the political crisis. Relations between both sides broke down over the course of 1640–42.

KEY TERMS

Long Parliament
So-called because, although it was purged and unable to assemble for long periods, it was not dissolved until 1659.

Pym's Junto
The group that organised the opposition strategy to the king in the Long Parliament, led by John Pym, John Hampden and Arthur Haselrig. Pym's training as a lawyer and meticulous work in recording Charles's illegal actions in the 1630s made him an ideal leader for the opposition.

- The opposition began by removing the king's 'evil counsellors', who had been blamed for the policies enacted during personal rule. Wentworth (now Earl of Strafford) and Laud were both arrested in November 1640 and impeached. In February 1641, parliament introduced the Triennial Act, which laid down an obligation for Charles to call a parliament at least once every three years.
- Strafford was put on trial in April 1641, but to be found guilty of treason he would have to be tried in the House of Lords. Knowing that the Lords would find him not guilty, as he was one of their own, the opposition resorted to passing an **Act of Attainder** against Strafford and he was beheaded in May. To secure the passage of the Act, Pym revealed the existence of a plot by Catholic army officers to release Strafford and dissolve parliament by force. This became known as the First Army Plot and was followed by another at the end of 1641 aimed at bolstering support for Charles. An angry mob surrounded parliament after parliament passed the Attainder, and Charles, who had promised to protect Strafford, was compelled to sign his death warrant. At the same time, Pym secured another Act, against the Dissolution of this Parliament without its Own Consent.

KEY TERM

Act of Attainder
An Act of parliament that effectively acts as a death warrant. The Act only required a suspicion of guilt, and, as long as it was passed by both Houses and signed by the monarch, no trial was required.

- Some MPs thought that Pym had gone too far in pursuing Strafford and, when a bill was introduced to exclude bishops from the Lords and then establish a new Church along Presbyterian lines, clear divisions among the MPs started to become clear.
- In June 1641, Pym pushed for more constitutional changes, including the abolition of the Prerogative Courts and the abolition of Ship Money. A 'middle group' of moderates emerged in the Commons, led by Sir Edward Hyde and encouraged by allies in the Lords such as Lord Falkland. They favoured a settlement with both king and parliament, and would become known as Constitutional Royalists.
- The opposition drew up Ten Propositions to be considered by the king and requested he accept them before he left for Scotland to make peace. These propositions included significant extensions of parliamentary power, such as the right to approve the king's advisers and measures to protect themselves from royal vengeance.

The build-up to war, 1641–42

The MPs returned to Westminster in October, and they were greeted by growing rumours of a rising among Irish Catholics and attacks on Protestant settlers in Ireland. These rumours quickly developed into tales of massacre, at least 200,000 deaths, and the landing of an Irish army in North West England. Nothing could have been better calculated to induce panic among the population, with the possibility of English Catholics rising to join the Irish and tales of brutality and torture increasing daily. The reality, of course, proved much less dramatic, with only a few thousand deaths, but the conjunction of Irish influence, Catholicism and a king who was already mistrusted had done the damage.

Despite the spread of panic over the Irish rebellion, Charles remained in Scotland until November and, in his absence, parliament decided that an army must be raised to tackle the rebellion. Some MPs feared that Charles might use the army against parliament, so Pym devised a plan to unite the Commons behind a demand that parliament should be allowed to approve the king's choice of commander. He sent the king the 'Grand Remonstrance' on 22 November 1641, a document that asserted much of what had been included in the Ten Propositions. When the Grand Remonstrance was put before parliament, it passed the Commons by only 11 votes, thereby revealing the extent of its divisions. When Arthur Haselrig presented the Militia bill to provide an army under the control of parliament to tackle the Irish Rebellion, outraged moderates flocked to Charles's side.

In early January 1642, rumours reached the king that Pym was planning to impeach the queen. On 3 January, Charles ordered the House of Lords to begin impeachment proceedings against the opposition leaders; on 4 January, he arrived at the House of Commons with a warrant for the arrest of five leading members, including Pym and Hampden, backed by an armed escort of 300 soldiers. Such an open attack on the rights of parliament might have been worth the risk if it succeeded, but the five members in question had been warned and had already taken refuge in the City. By 10 January, the king abandoned London for the safety of his family and retired to Hampton Court. From there he would move the court to his northern capital of York. In June, parliament issued Nineteen Propositions as the basis for a negotiated settlement, but the list of demands, including that

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parliament should oversee the education of the king's children, suggests that their primary purpose was to state the case for parliament and rally support. The kng's reply did the same. Both sides attempted to protect themselves by raising forces, and the king finally raised his standard at Nottingham in August 1642 to declare war.

Historians have attempted to explain the causes of the Civil War and it is a topic that excites much debate. Two interpretations are offered in Extracts 2 and 3.

EXTRACT 2

From John Morrill, 'What was the English Revolution?' in *History Today*, March 1984.

Those living through the period 1570–1640 would have felt themselves much closer to civil war in the first two decades than in the last two... The Crown had weathered the storm induced by a century of population growth and price inflation. By the 1630s... the economic and social outlook was rosier... Far from being a state sliding into civil war and anarchy, the early Stuart state saw fewer treason trials, no revolts, fewer riots... It can thus be argued that the civil wars grew out of the policies and out of the particular failings of a particular king, Charles I.

EXTRACT 3

From Antony Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War* (1981).

Great events do not necessarily have great causes, though it is natural for historians to seek them. Most of [the MPs] who rode up to Westminster in November 1640 had no concept of a parliamentary cause in their minds. Reconciliation and settlement were seen as the purposes of parliaments, and the reforms that most MPs envisaged seemed perfectly compatible with such an end. Only Pym and a few close friends saw the matter in totally different terms: for them the parliamentary cause was the rooting out of a conspiracy that struck at the core of the nation's life... All this, though, is only one side of the picture. Charles I had a jaundiced [sceptical] view of parliaments and a strong sense of distrust of certain individuals who, he believed, were ready to challenge his monarchy for private and selfish ends. [This] would have been less serious if his character had been different. He was a man who magnified distrust even in the most loyal hearts...

What happened in 1641 and 1642 was that two groups of men became the prisoners of competing myths that fed on one another, so that events seemed to confirm two opposing interpretations of the political crisis that were both originally misconceived and erroneous.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The causes of the Civil War

1 Why did the Civil War break out, according to Extracts 2 and 3?

2 The historians offer different interpretations of the causes of the Civil War, but are they incompatible?

3 Using the information on the build-up to war, how far do you agree that the Civil War was the intended outcome of an effort to reform the monarchy and secure stable government?

THINKING HISTORICALLY — Causation (4a&b)

Fragile history

Nothing that happens is inevitable. There are causes of change that did not have to develop as they did. Something could have altered or someone could have chosen differently. What actually occurred in the past did happen, but it did not have to be like that.

Work on your own and answer the questions below. When you have answered them, discuss your answers in groups.

Perceived reasons for the outbreak of the English Civil War:

Development	Event	State of affairs	Event	Trigger event
The rise in distrust between Charles and parliament	The attempted introduction of a new Prayer Book in Scotland in 1637	Tension within the Protestant movement between Arminians and Puritans	The impeachment of the Earl of Strafford	Charles's attempt to arrest five MPs in parliament

1 Consider the introduction of the English Prayer Book to Scotland and the religious tensions of the time.
   - a How did the introduction of the Prayer Book affect the tension between Protestants?
   - b Had there been no tension, would the Prayer Book still have been important?
   - c What other aspects of the situation existing in 1637 would have been affected had there been no religious tension?

2 Consider the distrust between Charles and parliament, and the incidents involving Strafford and the five MPs.
   - a How important is the distrust between Charles and parliament as a causal factor of the two events?
   - b What might have happened had Charles refused to sign Strafford's death warrant?

3 What other consequences came about as a result of the information in the table? Try to identify at least one consequence for each.

4 Choose one factor. How might the English Civil War have developed differently if this factor had not been present?

The victory of parliament, 1642–46

In military terms, the Civil War of 1642–46 consisted of three main phases.

- In 1642–43, the advantage lay with the king, who controlled much of the country and benefitted from the support of the majority of gentry and nobility. In addition, he controlled the existing officer corps and was ably assisted by his nephews, Prince Rupert of the Rhine and Maurice of Nassau, both of whom had gained experience of fighting in the Thirty Years War (1618–48). In October 1642, the royalist forces gained a marginal advantage at the Battle of Edgehill.
- In 1643, Pym established an excise tax in the parliamentary areas to maintain parliament's forces. With some difficulty, Pym maintained parliamentary unity in the face of military defeats and a strong desire among many MPs for peace. Although he had to agree to peace negotiations at Oxford, he had prevented the 'peace party', who wanted a negotiated settlement with Charles, from making the kind of concessions that Charles would have required. By late 1643, Pym was seriously ill (probably with a form of cancer) but, before his death, he succeeded in persuading the Commons to sign a Solemn League and Covenant with the Scottish forces, thereby bringing an effective and experienced force to the aid of parliament's forces in the North. The Scottish army was instrumental in the parliamentary victory at Marston Moor in July 1644.
- Poor performances by the parliamentary leader, the Earl of Essex, created a crisis within parliament and among its military commanders. After failed peace talks at Uxbridge in early 1645, a motion was presented in parliament for a Self-Denying Ordinance, under which all the military leaders, such as Essex and Lord Manchester, would resign their commands to facilitate the creation of a single 'New Model' army. An army of 22,000 men was created, led by the Yorkshire gentleman, Sir Thomas Fairfax, which drew from all of the existing forces. Fairfax was a man with proven talent as a soldier, and little interest in politics, making him acceptable to both the 'peace' and 'war' parties that had emerged in parliament. Another commander who had achieved his status through merit rather than title was Oliver Cromwell, who was appointed cavalry commander.

The creation of the New Model Army marked the third phase of the war and effectively secured parliamentary victory. Its first major success came at the Battle of Naseby in June 1645, and Fairfax moved south and mopped up resistance in much of the South West. Its success has been attributed to its character as an army of the godly, but in fact it owed much more to training, discipline and leadership.

The search for settlement, 1646–47

When Charles surrendered to the Scots in April 1646, the overwhelming reaction among parliament's supporters was one of relief and a desire for a speedy settlement. It is clear that, at this time, there was no thought of removing or replacing Charles, and even less consideration of government without a monarchy. One of the initial sources of discontent in parliament, Charles's advisers, had been removed when Laud was finally executed in 1645. While Charles was held by the Scots at Newcastle, he received separate proposals for a settlement from the Scots and from the English parliament, both of which would have restored him to his throne, albeit with some restrictions. Of the two, the Scottish proposals were more generous in political terms.

The Scots entered the war in order to secure the future of the Presbyterian Church. They had been left dissatisfied at the authorities in Westminster, who offered disappointing religious settlements. As parliament were not going to give them their desired reformation, they turned to Charles, although he delayed his response to the Scottish proposals. The Scots gave up in February 1647 and handed him over to the English.

Divisions in parliament

Parliament offered Charles its own Proposals at Newcastle in July 1646. The group now dominating parliament had been labelled 'political Presbyterians' because of its desire to restrict religious freedom and bring the more radical elements under control. The Newcastle Propositions consisted of the following demands:

- parliament would nominate the key officers of state
- parliament would control the militia for 20 years
- bishops would be abolished and a Presbyterian Church would be created for an experimental three years.

Charles delayed his answer, although he was never likely to accept all of the proposals. While parliament waited for his response, the radical Levellers, who had started as a group advocating religious toleration, developed a political programme. The Levellers had support from within the New Model Army, but the main concern of most soldiers was the arrears of pay that had not been given to them. Despite Cromwell speaking up in their defence, parliament voted to disband the army without pay. Within a few months, the army emerged as a rival political force. They elected their own political spokesmen, known as Agitators.

On 4 June 1647, a junior officer, Cornet Joyce, arrived with an escort at Holdenby House to take possession of the king and escort him to join the army at Newmarket, from where he was later transferred to Hampton Court and held under army supervision. The next day, the leading officers (including Oliver Cromwell) signed an Engagement to stand with the army, and established a General Council consisting of both officers and Agitators. Cromwell was at this point still subordinate to Thomas Fairfax, commander-in-chief of the parliamentary army. Cromwell, however, was more politically astute and ensured he was at the centre of negotiations. Cromwell had chosen to place army unity above other concerns and he was quickly supported by other leading officers, including his son-in-law, Henry Ireton. By mid-June, a document penned by Ireton, the *Representation of the Army*, was published. In it, he demanded the expulsion of 11 Presbyterian MPs and reasonable religious toleration, as well as fresh elections with a wider electorate.

For the army leaders, the priority was a fair settlement with the king and, on 2 August, they presented him with the Heads of the Proposals, drafted by Henry Ireton, as the basis for negotiation. The Proposals included the following.

- The Triennial Act would be repealed and replaced with Biennial parliaments.

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- Parliament would nominate key officers of state for 10 years.
- Parliament would control the militia for 10 years.
- There would be continued use of bishops in the Church but a restriction on their coercive powers.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The victory of parliament

1 In what ways would MPs learn from the experience of governing the areas held by parliament during the Civil War?

2 In what ways did the experience of warfare encourage radical religious and political ideas?

Politicisation of the army

The Leveller influence in the army became more pronounced and many demanded a more radical blueprint than the Heads of the Proposals. In October 1647, the Leveller-influenced soldiers offered alternative proposals in the *Case of the Army Truly Stated*, which was drawn up into a potential settlement under the title of *The Agreement of the People* and presented to the Army General Council by the Agitators, with the support of some junior officers. In the ensuing debates at Putney, the gulf between the radicals and the leading officers became clearer and wider. The spokesman for the radicals was Colonel Thomas Rainsborough, the highest-ranking Leveller officer. He demanded complete religious freedom and annual parliaments elected by all adult males. Ireton, speaking for the army 'grandees', or senior commanders, countered with the claim that voters must have enough property to prevent them from easy migration. Cromwell focused on maintaining a level of civility between participants and avoiding a complete breakdown of relations between the two groups. The debates were brought to an abrupt end by the news that Charles had escaped from captivity at Hampton Court.

Charles was soon in custody again at Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight, but his escape meant the Agitators had to return to their regiments. At one army muster at Ware in Hertfordshire, a group of London Levellers appeared with copies of *The Agreement of the People* and urged the troops to mutiny. Cromwell quickly rode into the ranks to restore order and punish their leaders. On 26 December, the king had signed a secret Engagement with the Scots, where he promised to establish a Presbyterian Church in England for three years in return for their military assistance. While an angry parliament voted in early January to hold no more negotiations with Charles, the army readied itself for more action.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Conflicting agendas

1 What did the political Presbyterians want from the post-war settlement?

2 In what ways did the army take political actions?

The Second Civil War and the execution of Charles I, 1648–49

The Scots entered England in April 1648, triggering the brief Second Civil War, and were easily defeated by an army commanded by Cromwell in August. Some MPs were still having doubts about ending negotiations, although Charles refused point blank to abolish bishops for more than three years. After a prayer meeting at Windsor, the army presented a Remonstrance to the Commons on 20 November. Written by Ireton, it demanded that Charles be brought to justice. Cromwell agonised about his own stance, but eventually decided that, by deliberately renewing the war in 1648, Charles had betrayed the trust of his people in the eyes of God. Parliament sent four bills to Charles as a final demand, which consisted of a slightly modified version of the Newcastle Propositions. Charles replied that he would consider allowing parliament to have some control of the militia, although he had already confided to friends that he had no intention of standing by his answer.

The Commons promptly voted the king's reply to be a basis for further negotiation. Ireton, already set on punishing the king, acted to forestall this settlement. On 5 December, the Commons was surrounded by soldiers from the regiment of Colonel Thomas Pride. He excluded 186 MPs who supported continued negotiations, and arrested another 45 who had been active in promoting further discussions. This left a 'Rump' House of 240, of whom 71 would become actively involved in the trial and execution of Charles I. A High Court of Justice was created to try Charles. He was found guilty on 27 January 1649 and beheaded on 30 January.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The search for a settlement

Create a table to explain why a settlement was not reached between 1646 and 1649. The headings for your columns should be 'Political Presbyterians', 'Scots', 'Charles' and 'The army'. Under each heading, explain why that group or individual was responsible for the lack of a settlement.

AS Level Exam-Style Question Section A

Were the actions of Charles I the main reason for the political instability that existed in the years 1625–46? (20 marks)

Tip

Charles's actions before personal rule, during the 1630s and during the search for a settled government should be weighed up against other reasons for instability.

A Level Exam-Style Question Section A

To what extent did the failures of English government in the years 1625–49 arise from a lack of money? (20 marks)

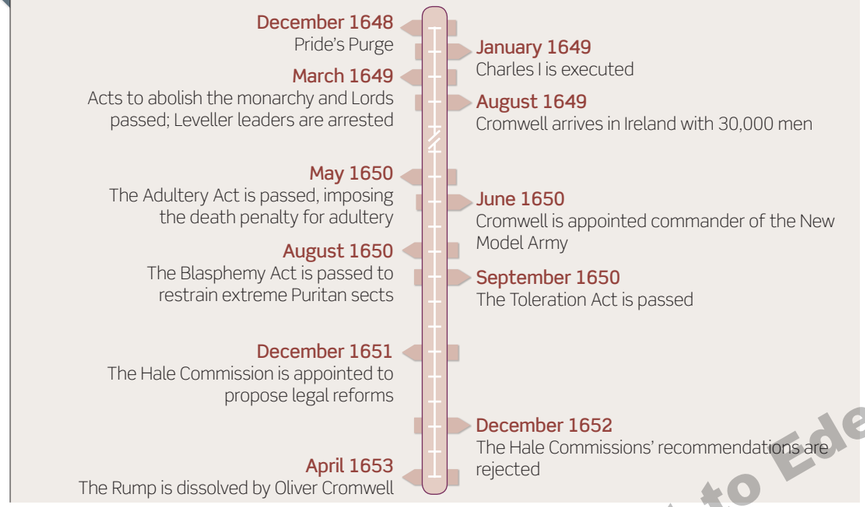
Tip

It is essential to plan your arguments before you start writing. These may include lack of money, religious issues and the personality of the king, among others.

TO WHAT EXTENT DID REPUBLICAN RULE PROVIDE A STABLE GOVERNMENT, 1649–60?

Reasons for the failure of republican governments, 1649–53

TIMELINE OF THE RUMP PARLIAMENT



The rule of the Rump

From the very beginning, those who carried through the execution of Charles I faced problems in establishing a government to replace him. Ireland was already a royalist stronghold and, when news of the execution reached Scotland, Charles II was immediately proclaimed king there in February 1649, although he was still in exile in Holland at the time and would not be crowned until 1651. Within England, the situation was no better. The haste with which the regicides had been forced to act prevented any attempt to plan ahead. Ireton had intended to dissolve parliament and hold new elections, but the mood of the country made that impossible, and power simply had to pass to the remnant of MPs who remained at Westminster. On 4 January 1649, the remaining MPs, collectively known as the Rump, reassembled. When the few Lords who had remained as allies refused to return, the assembly declared itself to be the sole legislative authority and elected a **Council of State** to govern in its name. It was not until March 1649 that the monarchy and House of Lords were abolished and then two months later that England was declared to be a **Commonwealth** governed by a single-chamber parliament.

KEY TERMS

Council of State
A government council that considers high-level policy, similar to the Privy Council.

Commonwealth
The official name given to the government of England from the abolition of the monarchy in 1649 to the establishment of the Protectorate in 1653.

EXTEND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

The Rump and radicalism

Other than the Anabaptists and Levellers within the army, by 1650 a number of more eccentric groups had emerged. These included the Fifth Monarchists and Ranters, who took ideas that were quite widespread to extremes that made them a threat to society.

The Fifth Monarchists believed, as a number of people did, that Christ would eventually return to earth to rule in person, but the events of war also convinced them that this return was imminent and it was the duty of true believers (the Saints) to seize control of government and prepare the way.

The Ranters took the idea of predestination and argued that, if they were predestined to be saved, then they were incapable of sin – apparently sinful actions simply demonstrated the purity of their minds. The most important group to emerge, however, were the Quakers, who believed in complete spiritual equality and the right of all people to follow the spirit of God within them.

Although these groups expected religious toleration, it was not forthcoming. The Toleration Act of 1650 removed the requirement for people to attend church as long as they took part in a religious service each week. However, nothing was done to remove tithes (church taxes) and, in April 1652, the Rump declared that the collection of tithes should continue. The Blasphemy Act of August 1650 was aimed at restricting radical religious sects.

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The failure of the Rump

The fundamental issue facing the new regime was already clear. The 'revolution' of 1649 was the work of a minority, who needed wider support in order to establish an effective government, and across the country local government and order still depended on the active co-operation of the political nation. The first task of the new regime was therefore to restore stability, to calm the fears of the men of property and win their confidence. Unfortunately, the main source of those fears was the very army on which the regime's existence depended.

The problem was demonstrated clearly in the first two years of the Commonwealth's existence. The army fulfilled its role by suppressing threats from the Levellers, in particular a mutiny of Leveller soldiers at Burford in May 1649 that resulted in several of their leaders being shot. The army also continued to counter the threat from the royalists in Ireland and Scotland. The Council of State turned its attention to the reform of government. Reform of the law, a greater measure of social justice – for example, the ending of imprisonment for debt and an end to high taxation – would help to win over opinion across a range of social classes.

While many of the greater gentry and nobility refused to co-operate with the regime, the lesser gentry had taken over much of local government. The distinct lack of support that greeted Charles II's attempted invasion in 1651 suggested that a combination of reform and stability from the new regime could succeed in generating the acceptance that it needed. Charles was easily defeated at the Battle of Worcester, although it served as a reminder that the threat of royalism was not extinct.

Two factors prevented the Rump from providing stability.

- The first was that the proposed reforms involved complex areas such as the law that could not be agreed upon. The Hale Commission was set up in 1651 to investigate reform of the legal system. The Commission met regularly for a year, but its recommendations were never adopted. The rate of reform in general slowed down with time. In 1649, 125 Acts of parliament were passed, reducing to just 51 in 1652.
- The second was the necessity of maintaining a large standing army, the maintenance of which was the major reason for high taxation. Without reliable support from the political nation, the regime could not reduce or dispense with the army, but as long as the army existed, that reliable support would not be forthcoming. In April 1649, the Rump began the sale of Crown lands to raise money, but wars in Ireland, Scotland and against the Dutch led to a shortfall in revenue of £700,000 in 1653.

Cromwell had landed in Ireland in August 1649 to suppress Catholic royalist sympathisers. He expected a swift victory, but only achieved success after he had stormed the strongholds of Drogheda and Wexford, controversially slaughtering thousands of defenders after they had surrendered, and civilians, in the process. He returned to England in 1650 to conquer Scotland, and left Ireton to complete the Irish campaign. Although they had been parliament's allies, the Scots had cut ties with the English after Charles was killed. After Charles II was declared king in Scotland and made peace with the Covenanters, they assembled an army to invade England. With Fairfax reluctant to take on the task of marching to Scotland to attack first, Cromwell was appointed commander-in-chief and, in September 1650, defeated the Scots at Dunbar. Charles led his army south a year later, hoping to gain support, but a dispirited army was defeated by Cromwell at Worcester on 3 September 1651. The First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–54) also took its toll on the treasury. In order to pay for the construction of warships, the **monthly assessment** was raised to £90,000. The assessment alone now raised as much as Charles's entire annual revenue.

In the end, a combination of repressive measures and apparent self-seeking by parliament drove Cromwell to dissolve the Rump by force in 1653 and take on himself the role of combining stability with measures of reform. Since the victory over Charles II at Worcester, he had sought to restrain the demands of the Army Council while doing all that he could to persuade the Rump to enact reforms, but in April 1653 he ran out of patience. The final straw appears to have been the decision taken by MPs to hold new elections in order to replace those MPs who had been excluded or had chosen to stay away. Given the mood in the country, it was clear that the elections would increase the representation of conservative views, and Cromwell was aware that any chance of further reforms would disappear. When he discovered that the Rump planned to rush through a bill for elections before addressing any of the reforms desired by the army, he ordered its dissolution. Sources 3–5 provide differing accounts of the dissolution.

KEY TERM

Monthly assessment
A tax modelled on the Ship Money system, originally collected in areas under the control of parliament during the Civil War.

SOURCE 3 Edmund Ludlow's account of the dissolution, from *The Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow* (1698–99). Ludlow had recently acted as an officer in the army against Irish royalists.

> [Cromwell] suddenly standing up, made a speech, wherein he loaded the Parliament with the vilest reproaches, charging them not to have a heart to do anything for the public good, to have espoused the corrupt interest of the Presbytery and the lawyers, who were the supporters of tyranny and oppression, accusing them of an intention to perpetuate themselves in power... the General stept into the midst of the House, where continuing his distracted language, he said 'Come, come, I will put an end to your prating [idle chatter]'; then walking up and down the House like a madman, and kicking the ground with his feet, he cried out 'You are no Parliament, I say you are no Parliament; I will put an end to your sitting; call them in, call them in'. Whereupon... Lieutenant-Colonel Worsley with two files of musketeers entered the House.

SOURCE 4 A report by Lorenzo Paulucci, Venetian Ambassador, to the Venetian court, May 1653.

> The dissolution is viewed with admiration rather than surprise and gives general satisfaction. The popular voice and the press shows how much the nation disapproved the administration of the parliament, which is principally reproached for having constantly promised law reform but never having done anything, and with having broken faith with those who advanced considerable loans during the civil wars. While instead of seeking to relieve the people, as they promised, they always deceived and taxed them more and more and finally they saddled the country with a troublesome and expensive war with Holland.

SOURCE 5 Cromwell dissolving the Rump, from a contemporary Dutch engraving. Cromwell says: 'Be gone you rogues. You have sat long enough.' On the wall, the words 'This House to Let' are written.



ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The failure of the Rump

1 For what reasons were the army and the political nation dissatisfied with the Rump?

2 According to Sources 3 and 4, why did Cromwell dissolve the Rump?

3 Why do you think animals are included in the engraving of Cromwell dissolving the Rump (Source 5)?

THINKING HISTORICALLY Evidence (3a)

The value of evidence

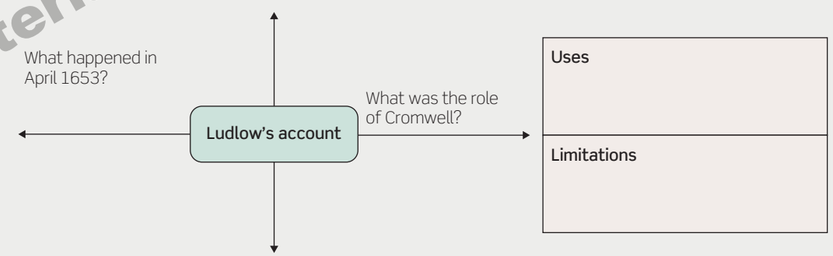
Read Sources 3 and 4, and complete the following.

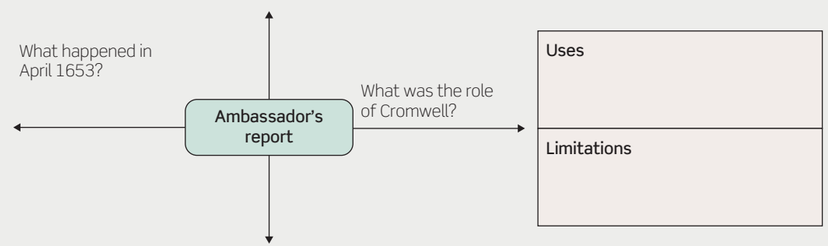
1 Write down at least three ways in which Ludlow's account is useful for establishing the causes of the dissolution of the Rump, and three ways in which the Venetian Ambassador's report is useful.

2 Compare your answers with a partner, then try to come up with at least two limitations of each source for establishing the causes of the dissolution of the Rump.

3 Discuss with a partner whether you think Ludlow or the Ambassador is more useful for establishing the causes of the dissolution of the Rump.

4 What if the sources were used to answer the question 'What was the role of Cromwell in the dissolution of the Rump?' Copy and complete the diagrams to show the usefulness and limitations of the two sources for this question and for two questions of your own.





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The role of Oliver Cromwell, 1653–60

EXTEND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Oliver Cromwell's early life

Cromwell was born into the landed gentry in East Anglia, although as a younger son his father inherited property in the town of Huntingdon rather than the main family estate at Hinchinbroke. Brought up a Protestant and partly educated by a local Puritan, Thomas Beard, Cromwell nevertheless underwent a process of 'conversion' before adopting his characteristic beliefs and embarking on a life dedicated to God's service.

By his own account, Cromwell indulged in a range of youthful sins during his education at Sidney Sussex College in Cambridge. He served as MP for Huntingdon in 1628, suggesting that he had attained some status in the town. There followed a crisis that seems to have arisen from a quarrel within the Huntingdon Corporation about the spending of money that had been given to the town to endow a public lecture by a preacher. Cromwell objected to the way that the money was being used and apparently spoke out, but his opponents were able to use contacts in the Privy Council to uphold their actions, and he was forced into a humiliating public apology.

As a result, he had to sell his father's house at a loss and use the remains of his inheritance to purchase land at St. Ives, where he worked as a yeoman farmer, a degrading experience for one brought up as a gentleman. It would appear that this experience led to some kind of depression, from which he recovered through prayer and the study of similar trials endured by individuals in the Bible, becoming convinced that God had punished him for his worldliness as a means of bringing him to salvation.

Thereafter, Cromwell's life is an illustration of the powerful and active faith that Puritanism engendered. Dedicating his life to God's service meant using his energy and talents to promote godliness in whatever way they permitted. Shortly after his conversion, he inherited a house in Ely and the role of Steward (business manager) for the Cathedral there, which included management of its land and property. Thus restored to a level of prosperity, he nevertheless remained sufficiently outspoken to stand as champion for the Fen dwellers, whose livelihoods were threatened by schemes for drainage and land improvement, insisting that they be compensated.

This would not be the last occasion when he showed sympathy for the poor and humble, and much of his military success arose from a willingness to recognise talent, reward hard work and discipline, and promote men on merit, regardless of their status. In 1640, he was elected to the Long Parliament as MP for Cambridge, where his family links brought him into contact with the opposition leaders, and when war was imminent in 1642 he returned to Cambridge and raised a force of local volunteers to take control of Cambridge Castle.

Nominated Assembly, 1653

Unsure of the next step after dissolving the Rump, Cromwell was advised by Colonel Lambert to introduce a new constitution. He seems to have listened to the suggestion made by Colonel Thomas Harrison to ask the various churches and radical groups to nominate an assembly of good men to consider and formulate a government. Cromwell formed a committee of four generals, which asked the Independent Churches to nominate members for a new parliament that would become known as the Nominated Assembly. Once the members had been nominated, the Council of Officers added several more names and reduced the total down to 140. This assembly even included members from Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and Cromwell told the members that they were to answer the call of God and enact a godly reformation in his opening speech (Source 6).

SOURCE 6 Oliver Cromwell's speech to the Barebones Parliament, 14 July 1653.

> Truly you are called by God... And you are called to be faithful with the Saints who have been instrumental to your call... Therefore, I beseech you,-but I think I need not,-have a care of the Whole Flock! Love the sheep, love the lambs, love all, tender all, cherish and countenance all, in all things that are good. And if the poorest Christian, the most mistaken Christian, shall desire to live peaceably and quietly under you,-I say, if any shall desire but to lead a life of godliness and honesty, let him be protected.

The commonly used nickname for this parliament, the 'Barebones Parliament', comes from the name of one of its more radical members, 'Praise-God' Nicholas Barbon, a leather seller and preacher from London. However, the majority of its members were of the lesser gentry, who were conservative by nature and had little interest in godly reforms.

A number of moderate and relatively progressive reforms were enacted, as follows.

- The war with the Dutch was continued, as the members of the Assembly were well aware of the need to secure trade routes.
- Legal measures to help debtors were introduced.
- Regulations concerning the treatment of lunatics were introduced.
- Civil marriage was allowed, officiated by JPs.

Although nowhere near as eccentric as its nickname suggested, this nominated assembly did include a radical minority of Fifth Monarchists, whose schemes for godly government frightened the more cautious members. Cromwell was faced with the question of how to deliver reform without alienating the conservative members. The radical 'saints' felt they could not work with 'sinners' of the conservative gentry and the propertied members were unhappy at the suggestion that the Assembly abolish tithes, which were often key to their financial well-being.

In December 1653, the more moderate members met and voted to dissolve the Assembly. Major-General John Lambert produced the **Instrument of Government** three days later, offering an entirely new constitution, formalised in a Protectorate, with government by a single person in Oliver Cromwell and a parliament designed by Lambert.

KEY TERM

Instrument of Government
The constitutional document that established the Protectorate. It contained 42 articles and vested executive authority in Cromwell and a Council of State of 21 members. It was replaced by the Humble Petition and Advice in May 1657.

ACTIVITY
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The Nominated Assembly
Why did the Barebones Parliament fail to deliver the stability and reform that it promised?

The First Protectorate Parliament, 1654–55

The Instrument of Government served as the constitutional basis of Cromwell's power, and was modelled on the Heads of the Proposals issued by Ireton in 1647. It was designed by Lambert with the Army Council, and stated that the Lord Protector would be supported by a Council of State and single-chamber parliament with 460 members. Parliaments were to be elected every three years by voters with at least £200 of personal property, and they would sit for a minimum of five months. On top of this, Cromwell would remain head of the New Model Army. On Cromwell's death, a new Protector would be elected by the Council of State. There would be a state Church, but freedom of worship was granted for all except Catholics and the supporters of bishops. This government would rule over England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

There was some initial success for this First Protectorate Parliament. Eighty-four ordinances were issued, which included banning bear-baiting and cock-fighting, improving postal services and allowing for the maintenance of roads. Laws were also passed to prohibit blasphemy and drunkenness. Despite some success in the role of Lord Protector, Cromwell faced the same fundamental problems as the Rump, compounded by his own concern for the army and the interests of the men who served in it. He also faced bitter resentment from the republican MPs whom he had excluded from power after the dissolution of the Rump. When they succeeded in destabilising his first parliament by refusing to recognise the Instrument of Government, Cromwell dissolved it in January 1655.

The rule of the major-generals, 1655–56 and the Second Protectorate Parliament

In the spring of 1655, a royalist rising led by John Penruddock broke out in Wiltshire and, although it was easily defeated, Cromwell decided it showed that greater control of the provinces was needed. He imposed centralised military rule over the entire country by dividing it into 11 districts, each under the command of a major-general. They would be responsible for local government and security, and were encouraged to attempt a 'reformation of manners' across the social spectrum.

The major-generals were to be assisted in their task by a new militia, to be paid for by a ten percent tax on the estates of royalists. The effectiveness of the government of major-generals was mixed. In Lancashire, Major-General Worsley closed down 200 alehouses and, in Lincolnshire, Major-General Whalley suppressed traditional entertainments including stage plays and horse racing. Others seem to have neglected many of their duties and did not apply themselves with the same enthusiasm.

Meanwhile, Cromwell had established **Commissions of Triers and Ejectors** to supervise the running of the Church, with an emphasis on quality of preaching and flexibility of belief. It is a measure of his achievements that, in 1657, he was offered the Crown by a second parliament, elected on a reasonably broad franchise. It is also significant that, by offering the Crown, they sought to direct his power into traditional channels, which would define and limit this power by law. While the major-generals had proved reasonably efficient, their military nature, the restrictions imposed on social activities and the replacement of the local elites by outsiders imposed by central government was unpopular. Hence, the new Second Protectorate Parliament (1656–58) was determined on their replacement, and Cromwell recognised the need to compromise and accepted the idea of a new constitution.

KEY TERM

Commissions of Triers and Ejectors
Established in 1654, these commissions served to vet members of the clergy and eject unsuitable individuals. In five years, judgements were passed on 3,500 Church appointments.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

King Oliver?

1 Did the Instrument of Government fulfil the original aspirations of the parliamentary opposition between 1640 and 1642?
2 What concerns would contemporaries have had over its use?
3 Why was the rule of the major-generals so short-lived?

The Humble Petition and Advice, 1657

When it came, the new constitution proved to be based on the restoration of monarchy. The Humble Petition and Advice was a new constitutional document offered to Cromwell by the Second Protectorate Parliament, and consisted of the following.

- Government by a king (changed to Lord Protector when Cromwell refused the Crown).
- The Lords and Commons to govern with the Protector.
- Provision for a hereditary succession.
- Parliament to control the army, and officers of state to be approved by parliament.
- Regular elections and limited religious toleration.

The use of the term 'king' would automatically confirm that traditional laws and the courts system would be used. According to Edward Hyde, the Humble Petition was welcomed by some royalists as a step towards a Stuart Restoration but, if Cromwell himself was declared king, he would face a severe backlash.

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SOURCE 7 Oliver Cromwell between two pillars, from an illustration produced in 1658. Cromwell is presented as the bringer of prosperity and defender of moral virtues.



There is no doubt that Cromwell sympathised with the idea, and agonised over whether to accept. The Humble Petition and Advice would have done much to restore stability, and made provision for the succession. He was prevented from accepting the offer by the two considerations that had motivated his career from 1648 onwards – his desire for a 'godly reformation' in which all men (and to some extent women) should be free to find God in their own way, as long as it did not harm others, and his belief that God had chosen the army as the means of achieving this. It was the opposition of the army, including many of those closest to him, that led Cromwell to reject the Crown. Whether or not the experiment of the Humble Petition and Advice could have produced a genuinely constitutional monarchy is still a matter of debate. What is clear is that the death of Cromwell in September 1658 marked the end of the opportunity.

Cromwell was succeeded by his son, Richard, who hastily summoned the brief Third Protectorate Parliament in January 1659. Richard was a civilian and, unlike his father, he had no experience of warfare. He was unacceptable to the Council of Officers, who forced him to resign later in 1659 and then recalled the Rump – who proved to have learned nothing from their earlier failures. With the ruling minority disintegrating rapidly, the initiative was taken by General George Monck. Monck was a professional soldier who had fought for the royalists in the Civil War, and later fought with Cromwell at Dunbar and in the Anglo-Dutch War. Stationed in Scotland, Monck decided to act when he realised Richard Cromwell would not be an effective leader. He marched his forces to London to restore a free parliament on the understanding that the ultimate outcome would be the restoration of the Stuarts.

THINKING HISTORICALLY Causation (3a&b)

The might of human agency

1 'Our lack of control'. Work in pairs.

Describe to your partner a situation where things did not work out as you had intended. Then explain how you would have done things differently to make the situation as you would have wanted. Your partner will then tell the group about that situation and whether they think your alternative actions would have had the desired effect.

2 'The Tyranny of failed actions'. Work individually.

Think about the following event: Cromwell accepting a modified version of the Humble Petition and Advice in 1657.

a Write down three ways that he could have acted differently in that situation.

b Now imagine that you are Cromwell. Write a defence of your actions. Try to think about the things you would have known about at the time and make sure you do not use the benefit of hindsight.

3 'Arguments'. Work in groups of between four and six.

In turn, each group member will read out their defence. Other group members suggest ways to reassure the reader that they were not a failure and that in some ways what happened was a good outcome.

4 Think about the following event: the escape of Charles from Hampton Court and its impact on Cromwell's position.

a In what ways were the consequences of Charles's escape not anticipated by Cromwell?

b In what ways did the escape turn out better for Cromwell than intended?

5 Think about the following event: Charles's attempted arrest of five leading members of parliament in January 1642.

a In what ways were the consequences of the five members' incident not anticipated by Charles?

b In what ways did the five members' incident turn out worse for Charles than the intended consequences?

6 To what extent are historical individuals in control of the history they helped to create? Explain your answer with reference to specific historical examples from this topic and others you have studied.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Cromwell and the Protectorate

1 What impression of Cromwell is the artist of Source 7 trying to create?

2 Were there any differences between the role of Lord Protector in the Humble Petition and Advice and the role of king?

3 Was the restoration of the monarchy inevitable?

AS Level Exam-Style Question Section A

Was the conservative nature of parliament the main reason for the failure of republican governments to find a political settlement in the years 1649–60? (20 marks)

Tip

Assess all the attempts at a political settlement you have encountered in this period – the Rump, Nominated Assembly, Protectorate Parliaments and rule of the major-generals.

WHY WAS THE STUART MONARCHY RESTORED IN 1660 ONLY TO COLLAPSE 28 YEARS LATER?

In January 1660, troops led by General Monck entered London to restore order after an attempt by the army to remove the Rump had led to riots and demands for free elections. In February, he enabled the members of the Long Parliament who had been purged in 1648 to return so that it could dissolve itself. In April, a newly elected assembly (calling itself the Convention Parliament because it had not been summoned by the king) met and was presented with a copy of the Declaration of Breda, issued by Charles II on 4 April 1660, with the advice of Edward Hyde and of Monck himself.

Charles had spent most of his exile at the court of Louis XIV in France but, as the likelihood of a restoration increased in late 1659, Monck had advised that he move into Protestant Holland, and it

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was in the Dutch city of Breda that the Declaration was devised. The Declaration made a number of promises as follows.

- Co-operation and harmony with the political nation.
- An amnesty for actions taken in the years of war and **Interregnum**, except for those who had signed the death warrant of Charles I.
- The settlement of outstanding issues in partnership with parliament.
- Arrears of pay would be given to the army and religious toleration would continue if the monarchy was restored.

KEY TERM

Interregnum
The time in which a throne is vacant between two successive reigns, i.e. from Charles I's execution in 1649 to Charles II's restoration in 1660.

On 5 May, parliament voted that government should now consist of the king, Lords and Commons, and on 25 May Charles II landed at Dover to an ecstatic welcome. Because the Declaration of Breda had promised all that parliament required, there were no preconditions for the king's return, but his claim to have returned in the twelfth year of his reign, with its indication that the moment of his accession was the moment of his father's death, should perhaps have raised some questions. However conciliatory his words, and however sincere his desire to co-operate in creating a lasting settlement, King Charles II saw himself as monarch by the will of God, not by parliament.

The Restoration Settlement, 1660–64

Because the Declaration of Breda pre-empted any attempt by parliament to lay down terms for the monarch's return, the restoration of the Stuarts in 1660 was effectively unconditional. This meant that the details of settlement had to be worked out after the king's return, by parliaments that were open to royal manipulation and subject to the pressure of public opinion. The first part was the work of the Convention Parliament but, in December 1660, it was dissolved and new elections were held. After a failed rebellion in London in 1661, led by the Fifth Monarchist Thomas Venner, had reignited fears of radical groups and soured the political atmosphere, these elections produced a massive royalist majority that gave it the nickname of the **Cavalier Parliament**. Unlike its predecessor, this parliament was seeking not reconciliation but revenge. As a result, the settlement settled little, and certainly not the problems that had been responsible for war and revolution in the first place.

The main features of the settlement are laid out below. The effect of the Cavalier Parliament was to weaken the restrictions on the king's power and undermine the clarity that had been achieved by the Convention Parliament. By retaining the 1641 Triennial Act and ensuring parliamentary control of the militia, as well as confirming the abolition of the Prerogative Courts, the legislation of 1660 had set clear limits on the royal prerogative and protected the powers of parliaments and the Common Law. The work of the Cavalier Parliament served to undermine this and leave a number of grey areas that would cause uncertainty and tension in the years that followed. For example, the Militia Act of 1661 stated that the king alone was in supreme command of the armed forces, and a revised Triennial Act in 1664 did not provide any mechanisms to enforce the calling of parliament every three years.

The Cavalier Parliament also had the effect of renewing the religious conflicts that had undermined effective political development since 1625. The Convention Parliament had restored the Anglican Church and the bishops, but the details of organisation were to be left to a meeting of the clergy to be held at the Savoy Palace in London. In broad terms, those who attended the Savoy Meeting fell into three categories.

- At one end of the spectrum were the Presbyterian royalists, who sought a reformed Church that would allow moderate Puritans to remain within it.
- At the other end were the High Church party led by Gilbert Sheldon, Bishop of London, who sought the restoration of the Laudian system.
- Between them were a number of clergy who can be labelled **Latitudinarians**.

When the meeting began, in April 1661, the impact of Venner's rising and the election of a vengeful parliament had greatly strengthened the numbers and determination of the High Church party. This was compounded by the tendency of the Presbyterians to become bogged down in detail as the debates progressed.

By the summer of 1661, the opportunity for genuine reconciliation had disappeared and, in religious terms at least, the royalists had their revenge. The Act of Uniformity, passed in 1662, restored the Laudian Church and set conditions so stringent that around 1,800 ministers were unable to conform and were expelled from their livings. Having created these non-conformists (also known as dissenters), the High Church party, with the aid of parliament, set about driving them out of existence.

Already, in November 1661, an Act had been passed to ensure that only those who took Anglican Communion could be chosen to sit on the borough Corporations that governed many of the ports and market towns, which had shown themselves to be Puritan strongholds. Now the Act of Uniformity ensured that few Puritans would qualify. This was followed up when Sheldon, now Archbishop of Canterbury (as had been his mentor, Laud), secured a Conventicle Act ensuring harsh punishment for those who tried to conduct a religious life in separate congregations meeting outside the Church. Ironically, this attempt to destroy Puritanism did much to ensure its survival. The Congregationalists, Baptists and Quakers who made up the bulk of the separatists were relatively few in number and had limited contacts and influence. Left to suffer this persecution alone, their isolation and weakness would have made them vulnerable, but by driving the much larger number of Presbyterians and their contacts among the gentry and merchant classes into the same category, the legislation made dissent a significant religious and political influence in English society. The impact would be seen in the political conflicts of the next three decades.

KEY TERMS

Cavalier Parliament (1661–79)
So-called because it was overwhelmingly royalist. 'Cavalier' was a derogatory term used by the parliamentarians to describe the royalists; it derives from the Spanish word *caballero*, meaning armed soldiers or horsemen. The word 'roundhead' was used in return by the royalists to describe the parliamentarian soldiers, a reference to the shaved heads of the London apprentices who fought for parliament.

Latitudinarian
Member of moderate clergy who desired a flexible regime that would accommodate a broad range of religious ideas.

ACTIVITY
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Restoration
Why was religion a major issue for the Cavalier Parliament?

Date	Parliament, Church and King	Politics and Parties	Government: finance, administration and foreign policy
1660	Monarchy and Church of England restored, Bishops appointed Desire for reconciliation indicated by offer of Bishopric to Presbyterian, Richard Baxter	Act of Indemnity and Oblivion: only regicides and 9 individuals exempted from pardon	
1661	Convention Parliament dissolved April: Savoy Conference begins May: Cavalier Parliament assembles Failure of the Savoy Conference November: Corporation Act, first measure of so-called Clarendon Code designed to destroy Puritan influence	Elections to Parliament produce royalist/anti-Puritan majority Support of royalists in parliament strengthens High Church party in Church at the expense of Latitudinarians	Abolition of Feudal Tenures ended monarch's right to feudal taxes such as Forced Loans; failure to restore Prerogative Courts meant other taxes such as Ship Money also disappeared; king compensated with regular income from taxation, mainly customs duties and excise tax, of £1,200,000 p.a. Charles doubled size of the Privy Council to 120, in an attempt to accommodate different factions (unwieldy, so relied on unofficial inner group, at this time led by Clarendon)
1662	Quaker Act: subjected Quakers to severe penalties by authorising magistrates to offer them the Oath of Allegiance; many imprisoned by this device	King Charles issued a Declaration of Indulgence, suspending the Act of Uniformity, but majority in parliament forced its withdrawal	Licensing Act: reintroduced censorship of the press, i.e. any printed matter, not just newspapers Hearth Tax voted to increase royal revenues
1664	Act of Uniformity: about 1,800 Puritan ministers, possibly one-quarter of clergy, ejected Conventicle Act passed; expired 1668, renewed 1670 Triennial Act of 1641 repealed and replaced by a weaker version – provided no machinery for a parliament to assemble in the event of the king failing to summon one		Dunkirk sold to Louis XIV, ending English possessions in France

Figure 1.2: Table showing the main features of the Restoration Settlement, 1660–64.

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Charles II and finance

The Convention Parliament had already offered Charles less money than he needed and, although the Cavalier Parliament granted him some funds, he needed to raise regular taxation. The abolition of Feudal Tenures had ended the monarch's right to feudal taxes, such as Forced Loans, and to restore taxes such as Ship Money was unthinkable. Charles was compensated with a regular income from customs duties and excise tax, which stood at around £1.2 million per year. The Hearth Tax was authorised by parliament in November 1661 and levied in 1662, and was assessed based on the number of hearths in each house. The Hearth Tax was a disappointment as only one-third of the expected revenue of £250,000 was collected in the first year, and it struggled to raise significant amounts in the years that followed. Many MPs were pleased with this outcome as they endeavoured to retain financial control over the king.

Conflicts between king and parliaments, 1665–81

The Restoration Settlement, therefore, did not solve the problems that had led to war and revolution, and left the future of the monarchy to be worked out in practice by Charles and his parliaments. One problem was the series of contradictions created by the piecemeal process of settling the immediate issues. By claiming to be in the twelfth year of his reign when he returned, Charles had laid down a claim to Divine Right. The reality was that he had been recalled by a parliament, which had provided him with a proper income, but one that was never sufficient to give him independence, even in the areas that undoubtedly lay within his prerogative, such as foreign policy. Similarly, he had shown his desire for a tolerant Church, of which he was the theoretical head, but had been denied this by the actions of parliament.

Given the lack of clarity over key powers, and the difference between theory and practice in government, it is not surprising that conflict re-emerged. What made it more serious, however, was the growing suspicion within the political nation that the king had a secret agenda to pursue, and that the agenda was one which favoured Catholicism.

Renewed suspicions, 1665–78

The first signs of this had been seen when the king attempted to suspend the Act of Uniformity in 1662 and provide a measure of religious toleration. The immediate benefits would have been felt by the dissenters and Latitudinarians, and there is no reason to doubt that Charles was genuinely opposed to religious persecution – unless it served a wider purpose or was made necessary by the actions of the persecuted. An added effect, however, was that a more tolerant atmosphere would also help the English Catholics, as well as easing religious divisions in Ireland and Scotland, and by 1665 there were indications that Charles's policies were intended to work in that direction.

Given his French Catholic mother and his years in Catholic France, it was not surprising that Charles's foreign policy was decidedly pro-French. In 1665, he embarked on the Second Anglo-Dutch War, justified by commercial rivalry but also designed to aid Louis XIV in his campaign to destroy the Protestant Dutch Republic and extend French territory. Unfortunately for Charles, the war was badly managed. Its leading exponent, James, Duke of York (the king's brother), was Lord High Admiral and hoped that success would help to free the Crown from its financial dependence on parliaments. Despite his victories at Lowestoft and Sole Bay, the Dutch were able to break the chain that blocked the Medway River and destroy the English ships at anchor on the other side.

The political impact of this humiliation by the Dutch was increased by the outbreak of the Great Plague in London in 1665 and the Great Fire that followed a year later. Suspicions abounded that the Plague was the work of Catholic advisers to the king, and rumours sparked that the fire had been started by Papists who were plotting to seize power, helped by Papists at court. Charles was able to deflect some of the criticism by allowing parliament to blame Edward Hyde, now Earl of Clarendon (who had, in fact, opposed the war), and replacing Clarendon in 1667 with a group of advisers known as the **Cabal**, which included two Catholics. In 1668, Charles's brother James announced his conversion to Catholicism and, when Charles signed a treaty with the French at Dover in 1670 that committed England to further war with the Dutch, Charles's Catholic leanings were confirmed. It was as well that the political nation, in and out of parliament, were unaware of a secret clause committing Charles to announce his own conversion to Catholicism at an appropriate time, and that a French subsidy that accompanied the Treaty was designed to free the king from dependence on parliaments.

KEY TERM

Cabal
The Cabal Ministry refers to a senior group of privy councillors under Charles II, active from approximately 1668 to 1674. Power was shared by this group rather than a single royal favourite, as had been the case under Charles I and James I.

Suspicions confirmed

In this context, the second attempt by Charles to establish religious toleration, the Declaration of Indulgence issued in 1672, was bound to cause conflict. Charles had attempted a Declaration of Indulgence in 1662, although he had been forced to withdraw it by a strongly Anglican parliament. Although hostility to the Puritan dissenters had declined, and many people had come to dislike the persecution of otherwise respectable and peaceable members of their communities, there were two significant problems with the Declaration.

- The first was that it included Catholics, which many suspected to be its main purpose.
- The second was that it was based on a claim that the monarch's prerogative powers included the right to 'dispense with', i.e. suspend the operation of, the law. It was one thing to accept such powers in the case of individuals, where, for example, a particular law was operating unfairly, but the Declaration did not come into that category – it involved the suspension of the law for a whole section of the nation on a permanent basis and, as such, it was a challenge to the rule of law itself. Even many who sympathised with the dissenters realised the significance of the precedent it would set, and felt obliged to oppose it.

As long as parliament was not in session, the Indulgence could be maintained, but by 1673 financial problems forced Charles to recall parliament. In 1672, Charles found himself unable to pay his debts so he had suspended repayments to his creditors in what became known as the Stop of the Exchequer. Obliged by the Treaty of Dover to begin the Third Anglo-Dutch War, he had little choice but to ask for parliamentary grants. The price demanded in the Commons was the withdrawal of the Indulgence. An attempt to provide toleration for Protestants passed the Commons in March, but was blocked in the Lords by the combined opposition of the king and the bishops. Charles could not, however, prevent the passing of a Test Act, which forced holders of public office to deny key Catholic doctrines and led immediately to the resignation of Lord Treasurer Clifford and Charles's brother James as Lord Admiral.

Unlike his father, Charles was capable of recognising when he had overstepped his powers, and he now accepted political reality by appointing as Treasurer Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby, whose views and credentials were impeccably Anglican and Protestant. Danby now pursued a foreign policy that favoured the Dutch – sealed by a marriage in 1677 between Mary, the Protestant daughter of the Duke of York, and William of Orange, leader of the United Provinces. In the process, he offended a number of parliamentary groups and individuals, not least Antony Ashley Cooper, by now Earl of Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury had served Charles in the Cabal and throughout the period of the Indulgence, and had a genuine desire for toleration for dissenters. The presence of an orthodox Anglican in Danby threatened this toleration because he only favoured strict conformity. Shaftesbury's disillusionment with Charles led him to gather like-minded allies and form a potential opposition, that would become known as the Whigs, but as long as Danby could rely on the support of the king and dispense royal patronage, along with appropriate gifts and inappropriate bribery, his position would remain secure.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Conflict between Charles and parliament, 1665–78

1 What was the impact of Charles suspending the Act of Uniformity?
2 Who would oppose the Declaration of Indulgence? Why?
3 Why did Charles appoint Danby as Treasurer?

The Popish Plot

Nevertheless, the religious fears that Charles (and his brother's conversion) had created lay close to the surface and reappeared with the emergence of the so-called Popish Plot. In August 1678, an Anglican priest named Titus Oates, who had been educated at a **Jesuit** school in France, approached the London magistrate, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, with a story of a plot organised by the Jesuits and the French to murder Charles II and replace him on the throne with his Catholic brother. The story lacked credibility and the character of Oates still more so but, shortly afterwards, Godfrey was found dead in a London park and the plot began to seem more believable.

KEY TERM

Jesuit
A member of the Roman Catholic religious order, the Society of Jesus, founded in 1534.

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Investigations revealed correspondence written by Edward Coleman, a former employee of the Duke of York, to Jesuit and French agents, which seemed to confirm Oates's story. With broadsheet publications appearing that detailed the plot and wove in real events, both parliament and public accepted its existence. For the next year, Oates was able to accuse whomever he chose, until his imagination went too far and doubts emerged. By then, however, the rumours had sparked a full-scale political crisis when the opposition in parliament attempted to pass a law to exclude James from the succession.

SOURCE 8 Example of a contemporary broadsheet showing details of the Popish Plot. This was produced and distributed around London in late 1678.



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Whigs and Tories: the Exclusion Crisis, 1679–81

For Shaftesbury and his associates, the Popish Plot provided a golden opportunity to challenge Danby's power and influence parliament to move in the direction they desired. His methods of parliamentary management had included a level of bribery and corruption, funded by French subsidies, that could now be linked to the activities described by Oates to suggest betrayal of the national interest, if not outright treason. In 1678, they sought to impeach him, using evidence provided by the French ambassador that he had accepted subsidies from France. An attempt by Charles to save him by dissolving the Cavalier Parliament in January 1679 failed, because new elections produced an anti-Danby majority. These MPs were by now known as Whigs – a term used to describe those MPs who favoured reform at the expense of the Crown. In reply, the Whigs labelled their High Church enemies Tories, a reference to Irish Catholic bandits.

The new parliament then forced Charles to appoint a new Privy Council, chosen by parliament. The next step was the introduction of a bill to exclude the Catholic Duke of York from the throne and replace him with Charles's illegitimate but Protestant son, the Duke of Monmouth. Whether or not the Whigs believed the details of the Plot, it was likely that – in the event of Charles's death – his brother would become king and James had made no secret of his faith. It was inevitable that, if he became king, he would adopt pro-Catholic policies and might well be prepared to impose them by force. The association of Catholicism with absolute monarchy that had helped to sour relations with Charles I had reached new heights in the contemporary example of Louis XIV, who had not only secured absolute power in France, but used it to persecute French Protestants. Although this persecution would not reach a peak until 1685, both Anglicans and dissenters were aware of the pattern of events through tales brought by French refugees. There was no reason to believe that James would behave differently and, as the childless Charles II and his wife grew older, every reason to fear that this nightmare would become reality.

For Charles, however, the attempt to exclude his brother from his rightful inheritance was a step too far, and he was determined to resist. There is no evidence of personal sentiment: when details of the Popish Plot reached Charles, he was reputed to have told James that he did not fear assassination if the only alternative was to place James on the throne. What he would not tolerate, however, was a blatant attack on hereditary Divine Right monarchy, and he set out to defeat it. In this he showed a determination and resolve that contrasted with his apparent apathy in other matters. However willing to avoid confrontation and compromise with parliament on other issues, he showed that – in defence of the principles of Divine Right – he was not only determined, but also tactically aware. The Exclusion Crisis played out in three stages.

- In 1679, the first Exclusion bill had passed the Commons but was prevented from going to the Lords when Charles dissolved parliament.
- In 1680, a new parliament presented another bill, which was defeated in the Lords by heavy pressure from the king, including personal attendance at the debates. He thus prevented Whig triumph by using his powers of delay and, by 1680, the anti-Popish hysteria that had encouraged uncommitted MPs to support the Whigs was subsiding. Thirty-five Catholics had been tried and executed, or fled into exile, but Oates was running out of credible victims.
- Charles had made a secret agreement with Louis XIV in 1675. This stated that if parliament showed hostility to France, Charles would suspend it. When he suspended parliament in 1675, the first payment of £100,000 reached Charles, and in 1681 he was financially independent. In addition, he decreed that the 1681 parliament should meet in Oxford, away from the Whig stronghold of London and any possible interventions by the London mob. When the Whigs passed yet another Exclusion bill, he dissolved parliament and ordered the arrest of Shaftesbury for treason.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis

1 What was the political impact of the Popish Plot?

2 Why did Charles defend his brother, despite the fact that he was a Catholic?

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Personal rule and the collapse of royal power, 1681–88

The Rye House Plot and decline in Whig power

Although he was acquitted by a sympathetic jury, Shaftesbury found himself facing new charges and was forced into exile in November 1682. In desperation, a group of old Cromwellian soldiers concocted a plot to kill Charles at Rye House in April 1683 and to replace him with Monmouth. The plot failed and they were arrested, but it provided the necessary means to destroy the remaining Whig leaders. Some of them had undoubtedly known of the plot, others such as Lord William Russell were convicted on doubtful evidence because of their political role. Russell had been a long-standing opponent of a Catholic succession and was an acknowledged leader of the 'Country' party and later the Whig faction.

The Rye House Plot was a serious mistake on the part of those leaders who were aware of it, because it discredited the Whigs and sparked a royalist backlash that allowed Charles to avoid calling a parliament for the rest of his reign, in direct contravention of the Triennial Act he had revised in 1664 (although Charles's reissued Act did not include a mechanism to enforce the calling of regular parliaments). In the meantime, he began a process of recalling and revising the borough charters that controlled elections to the Corporations and the selection of parliamentary candidates. By vesting the power to vote in a small group of aldermen, who could be hand-picked as supporters or subjected to government pressure, it was possible to ensure the election of more compliant parliaments in future. The process would take time, and was only partly executed when Charles died in 1685, but it was continued by James, who succeeded his brother without opposition.

James II and personal rule

The parliament called on James's accession proved remarkably co-operative and, when Monmouth raised a rebellion in Dorset in June 1685, he received little support from the political nation. His army was ill-equipped and poorly prepared and, when his supporters had been defeated, they were subjected to bloody punishments. Distraught at the slaughter, Monmouth himself was captured and beheaded on his uncle's orders.

The extent of this victory has led some historians to label the 1680s as a second period of Stuart despotism, a demonstration of the power still held by the monarch if used in the right way, and it is clear that Charles had left his brother in a strong position. A generous financial settlement from the 1685 parliament, elected in many places on the remodelled charters, gave James some independence and the lack of support for Monmouth indicates both respect for the king's hereditary rights and fear of further upheaval. The Exclusion Crisis had revealed a willingness among some MPs to challenge the hereditary principle and insist on a monarch who could be trusted to govern with the consent of the people, or at least of parliaments. In practice, the Whigs had overplayed their hand, but Charles II had shown unusual determination and skill in defeating them. On balance, the crisis reveals that the legacy of civil war and the execution of the monarch was a mixed inheritance. On the one hand, the king could rely on fear of the upheaval that civil war would bring and a desperate desire for stability to rally support. At the same time, both the king and those who opposed him knew that a monarch had been replaced and that parliaments had proved capable of governing.

James II in decline

Within three years, the strong position in which Charles had left the monarchy had disintegrated and a second Stuart monarch was forcibly removed from the throne. The main reason for this lay in the character and beliefs of James II, but the underlying issues bore strong resemblance to those that had destroyed his father. James was deposed because he represented a threat to the Protestant religion and the rule of law. The determination with which his enemies plotted his downfall arose from that fear of Catholic absolutism that had divided kings from parliaments throughout the century and created problems that had never been fully resolved. The importance of James's personality, and the decisions that he made, lies mainly in the fact that, unlike his father and brother, he did not divide the nation. Instead, he managed to alienate most sections and interests to the point where his authority, and that of the Crown, collapsed completely.

James's primary aim on his accession was to establish religious freedom and legal equality for Catholics, and his reaction when parliament refused to co-operate was that of an autocrat – he would establish their rights by royal prerogative. In 1685, he issued personal dispensations to allow Catholics to become army officers, and used the case of *Godden v Hales* in 1686 to obtain a judicial declaration that he could issue such dispensations as and when he thought necessary. Sir Edward Hales, a Catholic, was prosecuted by his coachman, Arthur Godden, for holding a military command without taking Anglican Communion and the oath of allegiance prescribed by the Test Act. When the case was brought to trial, it was judged that only the king could judge whether Hales was at fault.

In 1687, he used this ruling to issue a new Declaration of Indulgence, granting freedom of worship to both Catholic and Protestant dissenters. It is highly likely that James was sincere in his desire for toleration – his close friendship with the Quaker, William Penn, would suggest that this was the case. It is also possible that he had no secret design to establish Catholic superiority, but in the context of events in France and the persecution of continental Protestants, it was unlikely that this would have been believed. The behaviour of his cousin, Louis XIV, who had revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685 on which the rights of Protestants in France depended, offered an ominous example, and his own autocratic methods reinforced fears that he threatened parliament and the rule of law.

- Borough charters were further remodelled, and Catholics were appointed as magistrates.
- An Ecclesiastical Commission was set up to act as a Court for Church affairs, with powers similar to those exercised by the Prerogative Court of High Commission, abolished in 1641. These included the ability to make and revise appointments and property settlements, which James used to expel the Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford, and replace them with Catholics. Where James believed that he was creating equality and redistributing privilege, others saw a blatant attack on the Church, the Protestant religion, and the security of law and property. The result was predictable, even if the form and outcome were not.
- In 1688, James renewed the Declaration of Indulgence and ordered that it be read from the pulpit in every parish, forcing the Church to rubber-stamp the reduction of its own power. When seven bishops refused to obey the order, they were arrested, charged with sedition, tried and acquitted amid public celebration. By now the king had threatened the existence of parliaments, the supremacy of law, the rights of property-holders and the security of the Church.

Two days later, James's young second wife, Mary of Modena, gave birth to a son. Up to this point, those who were threatened by James's actions had been held back from mounting a challenge by the equal, or greater, fear of renewed civil war and by the knowledge that James was an old man with two Protestant daughters to succeed him. Now, however, they faced the prospect of a Catholic heir who would take precedence over his sisters. If James could establish a succession of Catholic monarchs, then there was no prospect of relief and no alternative to taking action.

ACTIVITIES
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Charles II, James II, parliament and personal rule

1 Was the Rye House Plot beneficial to Charles?

2 Why is the case of *Godden v Hales* significant?

3 Other than his Catholicism, are there any other reasons why James was destined to fail?

Collapse of royal power

In the summer of 1688, a letter was carried to Holland, signed by seven leading political figures, representing virtually all sections of the political nation in England. Its purpose was to invite William of Orange, the husband of James's daughter, Mary, to intervene in England with an armed force. This was not an invitation to take the Crown, but to mount an invasion, and it was accepted for two reasons.

- The first is that the seven names represented almost all of the interests and institutions that formed the political elite in England. The names of Russell, Sidney, Lumley and Devonshire represented Whig traditions, the Earl of Danby (whose impeachment had been rescinded in 1685) and Bishop of London (Henry Compton) were well-known Tories. Shrewsbury was a Catholic who had been persuaded to convert to Anglicanism. Such names were a sign of how many factions James had alienated, and of the potential support for William.

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- The second factor was that invasion offered a way of pursuing the purpose that had become William's life work – to ensure the survival of the Dutch Republic in its struggle with Louis XIV, who had waged a campaign to destroy it since 1667. If William could secure control of England, and bring England into the war, then the balance of resources that had always favoured France might be tipped against Louis. It was for this reason that the Dutch authorities supported William's expedition with the necessary ships, supplies and a small, but well-prepared, army.

After a series of delays occasioned by bad weather, William's forces landed at Torbay in Devon in November 1688. Their victory was by no means assured, especially if James showed the determination to resist. He had an effective army at his disposal, and a call to resist foreign invasion was always capable of rallying support. Instead he hesitated and, while he hesitated, his supporters deserted him. Finally, as William approached London in December, James panicked and fled into exile. When he was recaptured and brought back to London, an opportunity was provided for him to escape once more, since it was the ideal outcome for those who wished to remove him.

There would be no High Court, no trial and no public execution to create a martyr for the Stuart cause. By leaving the throne vacant, James allowed his opponents to claim that he had abdicated, and to invite William and Mary, his Protestant heir, to take his place. There is a good deal of evidence to suggest that his tame surrender to revolution was encouraged, if not determined, by the memory of what had happened to his father 40 years earlier. If James had learnt a lesson from the fate of Charles I, the management of the coup by his enemies suggests that they had also learned from the experience of 1640–60, and that they would try to use that experience in providing a stable and lasting settlement for the future.

ACTIVITY
KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The collapse of James II

How far do you agree that the only reason for the collapse of the monarchy after 1685 was differences over religion?

ACTIVITY
SUMMARY

The search for political stability, 1625–88

1 Why are the following dates important when assessing the quest for stable government between 1625 and 1688? 1628, 1641, 1647, 1653, 1657, 1660, 1665, 1672, 1685.

2 Were there significant changes in the powers of the monarchy between 1625 and 1688? What elements remained unchanged?

3 What changes were there in the demands and proposals made by the political nation (or a significant section of it) over the period?

4 What issues continued to cause problems throughout the period?

5 Do any of your answers to the questions above suggest that the attitudes and expectations held by king and parliament had changed over the period?

A Level Exam-Style Question Section B

How accurate is it to say that the main cause of political instability in England in the years 1665–88 was the Restoration Settlement? (20 marks)

Tip

You should introduce your essay with a paragraph that analyses the main features of the Restoration Settlement, and use that to begin your explanation of how it caused problems.

WIDER READING

Anderson, A. *An Introduction to Stuart Britain*, Hodder (1999) An overview of the Stuart period, including the major political events

Coward, B. *Stuart England 1603–1714*, Routledge (2011) Provides in-depth discussions of the political events of the period

Kishlansky, M. *A Monarchy Transformed, Britain 1603–1714*, Penguin (1997) Provides in-depth discussions of the political events of the period

Scarboro, D. *England 1625–1660: Charles I, the Civil war and Cromwell*, Hodder Murray (2005) Provides similar coverage to Seel

Seel, G.E. *Regicide and Republic: England 1603–1660*, Cambridge University Press (2001) Provides detail on the political situation up to the Restoration

Smith, D.L. *A History of the Modern British Isles 1603–1707*, Blackwell (1998) Provides in-depth discussions of the political events of the period

Worden, B. *The English Civil Wars*, W&N (2010) An accessible overview of the current state of the historical debate surrounding the period 1640–1660

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