

# The Rise of Parliamentary Democracy in England – Outline

## I. James I

- a. James Stuart (James VI of Scotland) inherited the English throne from his cousin, Elizabeth I, in 1603
  - i. Elizabeth I died without producing an heir
  - ii. James VI of Scotland became James I of England
- b. Problems with Parliament
  - i. Fought over money
  - ii. Fought over religion
    - 1. Refused to make reforms to “purify” the English church of Catholic practices
    - 2. All he agreed to was a new translation of the Bible (the “King James Version”)

## II. Charles I

- a. Charles I inherited the throne from his father in 1625
- b. Fought with Parliament over money
  - i. Needed funding for wars with France and Spain
- c. Dissolved Parliament whenever he couldn’t get his way
  - i. 1628 – recalled Parliament
  - ii. In exchange for money, Charles I had to sign the Petition of Right
  - iii. He signed it, then ignored it

## III. Petition of Right (1628)

- a. Parliament had Charles I sign it in exchange for funding
- b. Petition of Right guaranteed basic liberties
  - i. Only Parliament could levy taxes
  - ii. No martial law during peacetime
  - iii. *Habeas corpus*
    - 1. Prisoners could not be held indefinitely without trial
    - 2. They had the right to go before a judge and hear charges
  - iv. Soldiers could not be quartered (billeted) in private homes
- c. Charles I signed it, then ignored it
  - i. Attempted to rule as an absolute monarch
  - ii. 1629 – Charles I dissolved Parliament
    - 1. Set up fines and fees on the people
    - 2. Increasingly unpopular

## IV. Religious problems

- a. Protestants wanted to get rid of what they saw as Catholic elements in the Church of England
- b. Charles I wanted to keep the Anglican (English) church as it was
  - i. Wanted to make the religion universal throughout England and Scotland
    - 1. Introduced an Anglican prayer book to Scottish Presbyterians
    - 2. Scots rebelled and threatened an invasion of England
    - 3. Charles I had to recall Parliament yet again for funds for the defense of England

**V. Parliament again in session**

- a. Fall, 1641 – Parliament attempted to limit royal power
- b. January, 1642 – Charles I tried to arrest the leaders of Parliament, but they got away
- c. Mob gathered outside of the palace
- d. Charles I fled to the north of England and raised an army

**VI. English Civil War (1642-1651)**

- a. Charles I's supporters – Royalists (a.k.a. Cavaliers)
- b. Parliament's supporters – Puritans (a.k.a. Roundheads or Parliamentarians)
  - i. Led by Oliver Cromwell and his New Model Army
    - 1. 1647 – took Charles I prisoner
- c. 1649 – Charles I brought to trial and executed (beheaded) for treason against Parliament
  - i. Dramatic challenge to concept of absolute monarchy
  - ii. Monarch was not “the state” because he/she was subject to the laws of the state
- d. Civil war (a.k.a. Puritan Revolution) was actually several separate civil wars
  - i. But all fought for essentially the same reasons, and by almost the same groups
  - ii. Charles II (son of Charles I) defeated by Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army
    - 1. Lived in exile in Europe until 1660

**VII. Commonwealth (1649-1660)**

- a. Historians give different dates for this period
  - i. Civil war (a.k.a. Puritan Revolution) waged (especially during the early years), with different groups struggling for control of Parliament
  - ii. 1649-1660 – period during which the Stuarts were out of power in England
- b. Parliament was dismissed
- c. Cromwell established a republican government with a constitution written by John Lambert
  - i. But Cromwell ripped up the constitution
    - 1. Cromwell became a dictator

**VIII. Cromwell and the Puritan Revolution**

- a. Tried to create a Puritan society in England
  - i. Attempted to “purify” it by banning “sinful” activities
  - ii. “Sinful” activities included dancing, sports, and theater
- b. Some religious toleration
  - i. Christians
    - 1. Protestants were tolerated
    - 2. Catholics were not tolerated
  - ii. Jews
    - 1. Had been expelled in 1290
    - 2. Cromwell let them back into England

**IX. Conquest of Ireland**

- a. English had ruled and colonized Ireland for over 500 years
  - i. But Irish disliked and fought against foreign rule
  - ii. Most Irish were Catholic and opposed to Protestant Puritan reforms
  - iii. Cromwell was extremely anti-Catholic
- b. Irish rebelled against Cromwell
  - i. Cromwell's New Model Army landed in Ireland in 1649
  - ii. Fighting was bitter and violent

1. Cromwell's forces forcibly evicted civilians and destroyed food supplies, sparking a large famine
- c. Act of Settlement (1652)
  - i. Cromwell's forces won
  - ii. All land owned by Catholics who'd fought Cromwell was confiscated by Cromwell's government
  - iii. Circa 12,000 soldiers were paid with confiscated Irish lands
  - iv. The class of wealthy Catholic landowners was effectively destroyed in Ireland
    1. Irish came to work as tenant farmers on their ancestral lands

## X. Restoration

- a. Oliver Cromwell died in 1658
  - i. His son, Richard Cromwell, briefly ruled after his death
- b. Parliament invited Charles I's son to be king
  - i. The period when the Stuart dynasty (under Charles II) was restored to power is known as the *Restoration*
- c. Reign of Charles II (1660-1685)
  - i. 1679 – Charles II agreed to right to write of *habeas corpus* – “to have the body”
    1. From earlier Petition of Right
    2. Prisoner could demand to be brought before a judge to hear charges (could not be held indefinitely)

## XI. Political parties develop

- a. Charles II died in 1685
  - i. He had no legitimate heir
- b. First political parties in Parliament debated who'd be heir to the throne
  - i. Tories
    1. Supported Charles II's brother, James, who was Catholic
  - ii. Whigs
    1. Did not want a Catholic monarch
- c. James II came to the throne in 1685 when his brother, Charles II, died

## XII. Reign of James II (1685-1688)

- a. James II put Catholics in power (against English law)
  - i. He dissolved Parliament when it objected
- b. James II was married twice
  - i. First wife – Anne Hyde
    1. Daughters Anne and Mary raised as Protestants
      - a. Mary married Prince William of Orange (part of the Netherlands)
  - ii. Second wife – Mary of Modena – Catholic
    1. Gave birth to son, James Frances Edward Stuart
    2. A Catholic son threatened Protestant rule in England
- c. FYI: William III and Mary II were not only husband and wife, but first cousins
  - i. William III was the son of Mary, sister of Charles II and James II
  - ii. Marriages between first cousins were common to around 1900, especially among European royalty

## XIII. Glorious Revolution

- a. Parliament was scared that Catholic monarchs would rule England

- b. Some members of Parliament offered the throne to James II's Protestant daughter, Mary, and her husband, William
- c. James II fled to France

#### XIV. English Bill of Rights (1689)

- a. England became a constitutional monarchy
  - i. Monarch's power limited by laws
  - ii. William and Mary consented to these changes
- b. English Bill of Rights
  - i. No taxation without consent of Parliament
  - ii. Monarch could not suspend the laws of Parliament
  - iii. Freedom of speech for parliamentary debates
  - iv. Citizens free to petition the monarch regarding grievances

#### XV. Cabinet system

- a. Dilemma
  - i. 1688 – no monarch could hold the throne without Parliament's consent
  - ii. But Parliament needed the monarch's permission to rule
- b. 18<sup>th</sup> century (1700s)
  - i. Representatives of the majority party formed a cabinet
  - ii. Cabinet worked closely with the monarch
  - iii. Leader of the cabinet – Prime Minister
  - iv. Prime minister and his/her cabinet are effectively the leaders of the British government today
    - 1. Since the joint reign of William and Mary, the role of the monarch has weakened to the point of being merely a ceremonial head of state

#### XVI. Timeline of 17<sup>th</sup>-century England

- a. 1603 – James I (James VI of Scotland) inherited the English throne from his cousin, Elizabeth I
- b. 1625 – Charles I inherited the English throne from his father, James I
- c. 1628 – Charles I signed the Petition of Right
- d. 1642 – The English Civil War, also called the Puritan Revolution, began
- e. 1649 – Charles I was beheaded for treason
- f. 1649-1660 – England was run as the Commonwealth, led primarily by Oliver Cromwell
- g. 1660 – The Restoration period began as Charles II (son of Charles I) was crowned king
- h. 1685 – James II inherited the throne from his brother, Charles II
- i. 1688 – James II fled England
- j. 1689 – William III and Mary II took the throne of England; they agreed to the English Bill of Rights

#### XVII. Review questions

- a. How did the House of Stuart (the Stuart dynasty) come to power in England?
- b. Why did James I and Charles I have conflicts with Parliament?
- c. Describe the Puritan Revolution led by Oliver Cromwell.
- d. How and why was Ireland conquered and colonized under Cromwell's leadership?
- e. What was the Restoration?
- f. What events led up to James II losing the English throne?
- g. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, many English people came to associate Protestantism with parliamentary democracy, and Catholicism with absolute monarchy. Do you agree with this way of thinking? Why or why not?