

Stuart England

From Absolutism to
Constitutionalism

James I



- James I (1566-1625): son of Mary, Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley
 - ◆ aka James VI of Scotland
 - ◆ Protestant
 - ◆ became ruler of Scotland in 1567 (1 year old) after Mary fled to England; 1576 becomes sovereign
- Upheld the idea of “divine right of kings”
 - Wrote *The True Law of Free Monarchy*
- 1603 crowned King of England, upon death of Elizabeth I

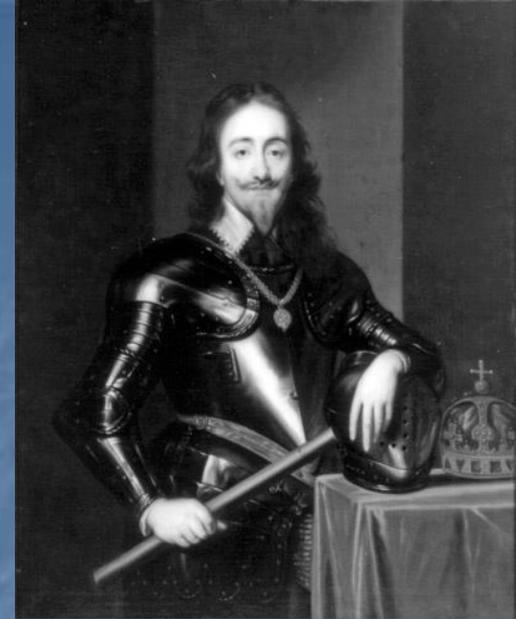
James I

- 1604 – Hampton Court Conference: Puritans call for radical reforms in CoE; James says no but does call to expel all Catholic priests
 - “No bishop, no king” if the CoE loses its hierarchy the strength of the monarch could be jeopardized
- 1605 – Gunpowder Plot – Catholic plot to blow up James at Parliament; Guy Fawkes (explosive expert) caught in the act
- Rise of radical Protestants: Puritans [mostly gentry (many sat in the House of Commons)]
 - ◆ purify church: pare down rituals, educate clergy, limit power of bishops
- King James Bible (1611) – official translation sponsored by James I for the CoE

Suspicion grows towards James I

- Raised revenue for state by creating new custom duties, did not call Parliament and ask for tax increase
- Royal patronage and selling of peerages/titles = corruption
- 1604 – declares peace with SPAIN! = distrust among the English
- James I tries to make penal laws against Catholics less strict
- 1618 – James I does not go to the aid of Frederick V in Bohemia even though his daughter Elizabeth is Frederick's wife
- James arranges marriage between Charles and Henrietta Marie (Catholic daughter of Henry IV of France)
- 1624 – Parliament pressures James to enter into war with Spain

Charles I



- Charles I (b. 1600 / r. 1625-49)
- Does not work well with Parliament
 - Parliament greatly supported by middle class and Puritans and afraid of absolutism, Star Chamber, High Commission & taxation
- religious intolerance – many English/Scots emigrate: New England, Virginia, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Carolinas, Barbados, Ireland

Charles I

- supports Anglicans & Archbishop Laud (religious conformity); although married to French Catholic Henrietta Maria (Louis XIII's sister)
- Years of bad decisions
 - ◆ Irish reforms that hurt English landholders
 - ◆ angered Puritans by backing Anglicans
 - ◆ levied "ship money" tax on all cities & towns
 - ◆ w/o parliamentary consent
 - ◆ Forced loan for all English property owners
 - ◆ Housed military troops in people's private homes

Charles I



- 1625-28 summons & dissolves Parliament 3X
- Parliament reacts and issues *Petition of Right*, 1628 which prohibited:
 - taxation w/o consent of Parliament; forced loans
 - arbitrary arrest; lack of enforcement of *habeus corpus*; arbitrary infringement on property
 - Billeting (quartering) of soldiers in private homes
 - declaration of martial law in peacetime
- At first Charles agreed to these stipulations BUT then in 1629 he dissolved Parliament for 11 years and did not hold to his word

Suspicion mounts against Charles I

- Charles I makes peace with France in 1629 and Spain in 1630
- Thomas Wentworth tries to build strong centralization around Charles I especially when it came to raising money for the crown

Religious Problems w/ Scotland

- 1637 Scots rebel against Anglican church & Charles I
 - Introduction of Anglican-style prayer book ends in two Bishop's Wars (1639 & 1640)
 - Ends with Treaty of Ripon – Charles I must pay reparations
- Short Parliament (lasted less than a month)
 - Charles I is forced to convene Parliament b/c he needs funding to keep up the battle vs. the Scots
 - SP refuses him and he dissolves them

Long Parliament (1640-1660)

- Led by John Pym for more info see <http://www.british-civil-wars.co.uk/biog/pym.htm>
- Wentworth (1641) and Archbishop Laud (1645) impeached & executed
- Triennial Act, Feb. 1641
 - King must call a meeting of Parliament every three years regardless
- Oct. 1641 – CI asks for \$\$ for military; Parliament demands to become commander-in-chief of military over the king
- Nov. 1641, [Grand Remonstrance](#) – a long list of grievances that Parliament had with the king
 - “the Remonstrance called for the setting up of an Assembly of Divines, nominated by Parliament, to supervise ongoing reform of the Church; furthermore, it demanded that the King's ministers should be approved by Parliament, with the right of veto over those it considered unsuitable”
- Jan. 1642 – CI invades Parliament in the hopes of arresting Pym and his supporters
- House of Commons passes Militia Ordinance = Parliament can now raise an army of its own

English Civil War

- 1642-46 Open war btw. Parliament (Puritan & middle class) and king (nobility, clergy, peasants)
 - ◆ Roundheads = Parliament
 - ◆ Cavaliers = king's army
- Battle of Stow-on-the-Wold 1646, Parliament wins out by capturing the king & becomes increasingly radical and divided
 - Presbyterians want to disband army, keep king, Presbyterian state church
 - Independents (Puritans) are opposed to a national Presbyterian church
- Charles I flees to Scotland – this is seen as an act of treason!!!!
- 1648 2nd Civil War, led by Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658)

Oliver Cromwell & politics



- Ironsides – military force independent of New Model Army, extreme Protestants & supporters of Parliamentary authority (not supporters of “Presbyterianisation” of CoE)
- 1647 – Pride’s Purge: Cromwell drives out remaining Presbyterian faction leaving a Rump Parliament of 50-60 like-minded Members of Parliament
 - House of Commons now decrees Acts of Parliament w/o consent of king or House of Lords!!

Oliver Cromwell, Scotland & Ireland

- Charles I tried and convicted of treason
- 1649 King Charles I beheaded
- 1650 Scots crushed
- in Ireland much bloodshed
 - ◆ 1641 Protestant massacre at Ulster
 - ◆ followed by Catholic massacres at Drogheda & Wexford
 - ◆ Catholicism driven underground

Opposition to Cromwell –

■ Political Groups

- Levellers (John Lilburne): democratic group “one man – one vote”
 - ◆ called for written constitution; almost universal manhood suffrage; equality of representation in government
 - ◆ “Diggers” – “squatters” on public & private lands
 - ◆ “leveling of all estates” – abandonment of all private property

■ Religious Groups

- ◆ Society of Friends / Quakers (George Fox)
- ◆ Fifth Monarchy Men – millennial end of the world group

Oliver Cromwell,



Lord Protector of the Commonwealth

- 1651 Navigation Act -> First Anglo-Dutch War
- warred against Spain and obtained Jamaica
 - ◆ real advances overseas would be made by Charles II, William & Mary
- 1653 Rump Parliament dissolved: *"You have sat here too long for the good you do. In the name of God, go!"* Calls a new Parliament but...
- 1655 dissolves Parliament altogether SO the Commonwealth = military dictatorship
 - 10% tax on Royalists
 - Cromwell's policies and law become arbitrary
- 1658 dies and his son is booted from protectorate
- Stuart Family and Monarchy Restored
 - 1660 Charles II crowned king of England & Scotland

The Restoration, 1660-1688

- Restores 1640s monarchy
 - ◆ monarchy, House of Stuart
 - ◆ Church of England
 - ◆ Parliament
- Only difference
 - ◆ more loyalty to the crown, in attempt to keep the peace



Parliamentary changes of the Restoration

- ◆ Parliament set taxes, which in turn they paid to the king
- Propertied aristocracy with much political pull: House of Lords & serve as local justices (squirearchy)
- Clarendon Code = Dissenters (Puritans and Catholics) barred from town corporations; Puritan clergy could not teach school & were banned from politics (local and national); prohibited all conventicles not held in accordance with Church of England.

Problems again

- Parliament & Charles II at odds
 - ◆ Charles II inclined toward Catholicism & religious toleration
 - ◆ admirer of Louis XIV and absolutism!
 - ◆ 1670 Treaty of Dover (secret): joins Louis XIV in war against Dutch, Louis pays 3 million livres a year during war – maybe Charles would convert
- James, Duke of York (Charles II's brother) openly converts to Catholicism – he will be next king!!
- Charles II issues Declaration of Indulgence, 1672
 - religious toleration of Puritans and Catholics!

Problems again

- Parliament responds w/ Test Act, 1673
 - all civil and military officeholders must take communion in Anglican Church & swear an oath against transubstantiation
- Popish Plot, 1678 – Titus Oates claimed that Charles II wife, Catherine of Braganza, was plotting w/ Jesuits and Irish to have CII killed so that James II could be king = ~80 executions of innocent Catholics
- Parliament splits
 - ◆ Whigs (suspicious of king, the French & Catholics): primarily noblemen, but merchant class, middle class
 - ◆ Attempt to keep James II from ever ascending the throne
 - ◆ Tories (supporters of king): lesser aristocracy & gentry, often poorer classes as well

Charles II suspicious of Parliament

- From 1681-1685 CII reigns w/o recalling Parliament
 - He receives monetary assistance from Louis XIV
 - He increases customs duties
 - He tried to seat Parliament with members that would be loyal to him
 - He drove out and executed Whig leaders on grounds of treason
- 1685 converted to Catholicism on his deathbed

James II



- 1685 James II crowned
 - ◆ alienated both Whigs & Tories
 - ◆ repealed Test Act
 - ◆ Dissolved Parliament; appointed Catholics to high positions at court and in military
 - ◆ 1687, Declaration of Indulgence: program of general religious toleration
 - ◆ 1688, 7 Anglican bishops imprisoned for refusing to publicize the Declaration of Indulgence
 - ◆ 1688 James's first son born and baptized into Catholic faith
 - ◆ Before the birth of this son, the throne would have gone to Mary, JII PROTESTANT daughter!

William and Mary



Glorious Revolution of 1688/89

- ◆ Parliament abandons James II and offers crown to Mary (yep, JII's daughter) and William III of Orange
- ◆ 1689 William invades England w/ support of Whigs & Tories
- ◆ William and Mary accept the Bill of Rights, 1689
- ◆ Act of Toleration, 1689: religious freedom except for Catholics and non-trinitarians, but no political/public service rights for any non-Anglicans

Bill of Rights, 1689

- enacted by Parliament it states:
 - ◆ no law may be suspended by king
 - ◆ no taxes may be levied or army maintained w/o consent of Parliament
 - ◆ no subject could be arrested & detained w/o legal process
 - ◆ Prohibited Roman Catholics from occupying the English throne
- It establishes a contractual relationship btw. king & people

Queen Anne

- Act of Settlement, 1701
 - ◆ Upon Anne's death the English throne would pass to the Protestant House of Hanover in Germany
- 1707 Act of Union created Great Britain
 - England and Scotland are officially united
 - ◆ Scotland retained their own legal system & Presbyterian church but gov't./parliament fused w/ England
 - Scots obtain rights to English East India Company & English colonies; within English system of mercantilism & Navigation Acts

2 Responses to Revolution

- Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)
 - *Leviathan*, 1651 – supports idea of absolute rule b/c humans = animalistic, “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” therefore the “commonwealth” must rely on a sovereign ruler and may not rebel
- John Locke (1632-1704)
 - *Two Treatises of Government* - mutual agreement = gov't. protects inalienable natural rights (life, liberty, property) of individuals – individuals act reasonably toward gov't but if gov't. breaks agreement people should rebel
 - *however these ideas applied to landed aristocracy not to all*

The thing to bear in mind when considering the ideas of both of these men is their own personal experience. Hobbes experienced Cromwell's “Puritan republic” but didn't live to see the Glorious Revolution. Locke experienced both.