

# The English Civil War



## How it ended: Charles I's last words

(...)For the people, and truly I desire their liberty and freedom as much as any body whomsoever. But I must tell you that their liberty and freedom consists in having of government.(...) **It is not for having share in government,** sirs. That is nothing pertaining to them. **A subject and a sovereign are clean different things,** and therefore until they do that, I mean, that you do put the people in that liberty as I say, certainly they will never enjoy themselves.





(...) **The King:** *Take care that they do not put me to pain*

**A Gentleman :** *Take heed of the ax, pray, take heed of the ax.*

**The King :** *I shall say but very short prayers, and when I thrust out my hands. Does my hair trouble you? (..)*

**The King then asked the Executioner:** *Is my hair well?(...)*

[Then the King put off his doublet and, being in his waistcoat, put his cloak on again. Then looking upon the block, the King said to the Executioner:] *You must set it fast.*

[**Executioner:**] *It is fast, sir.*

[*After a very little pause, the king stretching forth his hands, the Executioner at one blow, severed his head from his body.*]



# How everything started

- There had been a great hostility towards the court since James I, particularly against the Duke of Buckingham who was the King's favourite and prime Minister as:
  1. he was corrupted
  2. he had a relationship with the King
- There were rumors about the moral dissolution of the court.
- When James dies and his son Charles succeeds him, Buckingham keeps exerting his influence on the new king.
- When eventually Buckingham is murdered the country rejoices about the news and the murderer celebrated.





## An unpopular marriage

- Charles married Henrietta Maria who was:
  1. French
  2. Catholic
  3. Luxury-loving

That is why she was unpopular .

- The court starts to be seen as **estranged** from the rest of the country :





## THE COUNTRY

- Virtuous
- Parsimonious
- Honest
- Chaste/  
eterosexual
- Sober
- Patriotic
- Protestant/Puritan

## THE COURT

- Evil
- Spendthrift
- Corrupted
- Promiscuous/  
Homosexual
- Drunk
- Pro-strangers
- Papist





# The Religious Matter

- The state religion was **Anglicanism**, which **refused the authority of the Church of Rome**, but it was very alike in organization and authoritarianism,

**HENCE**

there is a growth of Dissident movements such as Puritants. They refused :

1. Holy images
2. Crucifix
3. Selling of indulgences
4. Kneeling
5. Ecclesiastical hierarchy
6. Restricted interpretation of the Scriptures



# King vs Puritans

- The King was the Head of the Anglican Church.
- The Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, wanted to uproot Dissent using violence.
- Puritans wanted to «purify» the Anglican Church
- Puritans were considered a threat

**DISSENT = PURITANS**



**HENCE**

Many Puritans left the country for the American colonies.





# The Impact of the Press

- In England reading and writing were widespread among the **Puritans**. **WHY?**
- Puritan ideas circulated thanks to the **press**.
- **Lack of control** on writings. **HENCE**
- The King was depicted as :
  1. **persecutor** of the Puritans
  2. **papist**.





# The Clash with Parliament

- Charles I did **not accept** the authority of **Parliament** and tried to rule without calling it, but remember:
  1. According to the **Common Law**, the king was not beyond the Law and could be tried,
  2. **Magna Charta** was a restraint to his power in economic matter,

**HENCE**

The authority of Parliament could be overruled only avoiding any demand of money, in short, Parliament had the purse-strings.





# 17<sup>o</sup> Century English Parliament

House of Lords

House of Commons







## «Common» enemies

- **The Gentry** (small aristocracy and landowners) was the core of the Commons.
- The Gentry was in charge of:
  1. Collecting taxes
  2. Justice
- **Rich merchants** of the City sat in the House of Commons too,

**HENCE**

the Commons had the purse-strings, but in the Commons the king found **firm opposition** to his money requests.





# Ruling without Parliament

- In 1629, worn out by the opposition of Parliament, Charles decides not to summon it any longer.
- For 10 years Charles **will rule** without calling Parliament **as an absolute king**,

**BUT**

What would happened if he were in need of money?  
Could the king raise taxes without Parliament's consent?

The answer is: **NO**



# Searching for money



- The King decided to:
  1. Sell licenses and monopolies
  2. Impose **revenues** such as the **Ship Money** (to coastal counties first and the whole country the following year in 1638)

**BUT**

If a **revenue** is paid two years in a row, at this point it becomes a **tax** and that was not consented.

**HENCE**

The judges of the Supreme Court assert that King cannot impose taxes of his own free will, as this goes against the principle which defends private property.





# Scottish Turmoils



- Scotland is Calvinist and against uniformity to the Church of England.
- In 1637 the «Book of Common Prayers» is imposed to the Church of Scotland.
- The entire country is against the king and the Book's withdrawal is plead, but he refuses.
- The National Covenant, an agreement against the attempt to submit the Church of Scotland, is signed by all Scottish people.
- The National Covenant was printed and circulated in any part of the country.
- In 1638 Charles declares war to Scottish rebels.



# The Scottish War

- The king had no money for the war but he refuses to call Parliament.
- Charles sets to Scotland, but having a small and weak army he decides to call a truce.
- His counselors and Cardinal Laud convince him to call Parliament after 11 years (1640) which would grant money if the King signed the **Petition of Rights**.
- After 3 weeks the king dissolves Parliament (short Parliament) without signing it.





- War cannot be avoided now as the Scottish decide to invade England!
- The King cannot but sign an agreement which allows Scottish army to occupy the North of England and pay the expenditure of occupation.
- At this point he cannot but call Parliament (long Parliament).
- Higher representation of Puritans after the elections.
- This time he accepts the Petition of Rights.



Never step  
on  
Scottish's  
toes!!!







# Power to the Commons

- The Commons start to act as the Governament of the country:
  1. Giving orders to judges,
  2. Abolishing censorship,
  3. Introducing a Puritan policy passing religious laws,
  4. Arresting the Archbishop and Charles's most faithful councillor and friend: Lord Stratford.



At those times there was a law in England which allowed to sentence a man to death , even if there was no evidence

Stratford was put to death with no real evidence.

The King couldn't but sign the sentence of death of his friend.



# Radicalism

- The radical turn of the Puritan part of Parliament was viewed with a certain distrust.
- The supporters of the king grow day by day.
- The plague of those days is also interpreted as a sign against the Puritans.
- In 1642 the King enters Parliament aiming at arresting a group of 5 rebels, but they had already escaped.
- The same year the King declares war to Parliament.



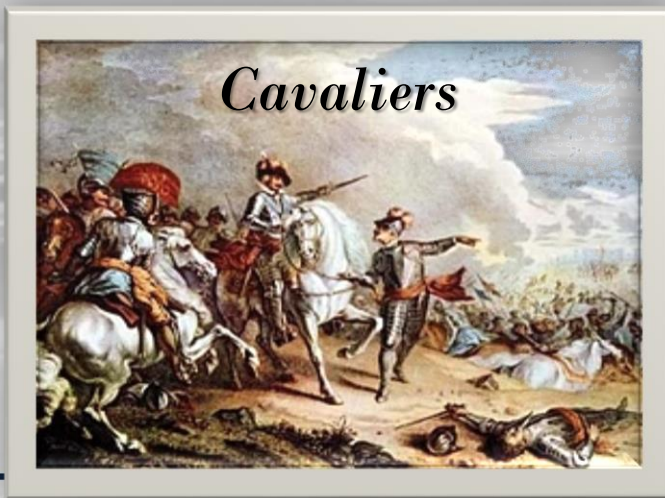


## King's side

- 2/5 of Commons
- 3/4 of Lords
- North
- Young people

## Parliament's side

- 3/5 of Commons
- 1/4 of Lords
- South
- London
- 1. merchants,
- 2. navy
- Old people





You already know  
how it ended.

The  
Parliamentarians  
won the match and  
10 years of  
«Republic» will  
follow

But, that's another  
story! See you !!!

