

## CHAPTER 8:

# The Puritan Migration; the English Civil War

## The Spanish Match

King James VI & I had three children. As rich young royals, all three probably expected to lead long, happy lives. Instead, one died young; one spent more than half her life in **exile**; and one became the only King of England ever to be beheaded!



Prince Henry Stuart

The oldest child, **Henry Stuart**, was born in 1594. This young prince was everything James could want in a son—tall, healthy, sporting and adventurous. Everyone expected Henry to make a great king someday.

That is, until 1612— when all of a sudden, Henry caught typhoid fever and died. The beloved prince was only 18 years old. For the first time, Englishmen on both sides of the Atlantic mourned the death of a royal.

The middle child was **Elizabeth Stuart**, born in 1596; and the youngest was **Charles Stuart**, born in 1600. Compared to Henry, Charles was less tall, less healthy and far less popular. But he was the only son James had left.

Elizabeth married in 1613, five years before the Thirty Years' War started. The lucky groom was Frederick, a German prince from a country called the Palatinate of the Rhine. Elizabeth's Frederick was the same Frederick we met in Chapter 7— the one who would soon become King Frederick V of Bohemia!

Alas, Frederick wasn't king for long. Hardly a year after Frederick's crowning, the Holy Roman Emperor crushed his army at the Battle of White Mountain. Fortunately, Frederick had already sent Elizabeth to safety in the Netherlands. From her new home in exile, Elizabeth pleaded with her powerful father to do something— anything— to help her husband.

King James' answer to his daughter's problems was a tricky plan called the **Spanish Match**. As we read in Chapter 3, James had already made peace with Spain. Now he went a step farther.

It so happened that the King of Spain had a daughter. Her name was Maria Anna, and she was just a few years younger than James' son Charles. James sent ambassadors to ask: would the King of Spain agree to a marriage between Maria Anna and Charles?

How could a wedding in Spain help Elizabeth's husband in Germany? The answer is that the Spanish king and the German emperor came from the same family: they were both Habsburgs. If Prince Charles married into the Habsburg family, then maybe he could convince the Habsburgs to forgive Elizabeth's husband!

Alas, the Spanish Match was doomed from the start. For Charles was Protestant; while Maria Anna was a strict Catholic. Like most of the Habsburgs, Maria Anna would sooner murder a Protestant than marry one— especially with the Thirty Years' War going on.



An **exile** is someone who can't live in his home country— either because he has been kicked out, or because he is afraid of what will happen to him if he goes home.



Elizabeth Stuart in exile



A young Charles Stuart

Prince Charles did his best to save the Spanish Match. He even sailed to Spain, traveling in disguise so that no one would know. Upon reaching the royal court at Madrid, Charles gallantly swept off his disguise and asked for Maria's hand in person! But even then, she turned him down flat.

Since Spain had refused him, Charles turned to Spain's worst enemy: France. By this time, King James had died, leaving Charles to take his place. The newly-crowned **King Charles I of England** married **Princess Henrietta Maria**, sister to the King of France, in 1625.



Like James before him, Charles believed in a **philosophy** called the

A **philosophy** is a certain way of thinking about life and the world.

**Divine Right of Kings.** In other words, he believed that God had given him the right to rule. In Charles' mind, a king's authority didn't come from the people he ruled. No, authority came from God, Who personally chose each king and set him on his throne.

All Christians who believed in the Divine Right of Kings felt a duty to obey their king. They could never overthrow their king— no matter what he did wrong, or how much they hated him! Since God had chosen the king, God alone had the right to remove him.

Charles' father had written a famous paper about the Divine Right of Kings. In "The True Law of Free Monarchies," King James quoted the Apostle Paul from Romans 13:1-2:

"Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established... Whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves."

When did Paul write the Book of Romans, James asked? In the time of Emperor Nero— the most Christian-hating Roman emperor ever! If God wanted Christians to obey Nero, James said, then surely He wanted them to obey Christian kings!

Charles also had strong ideas about **Parliament**. Some Englishmen believed Parliament should have the power to approve new laws. But Charles believed that Parliament's laws were only suggestions. In his eyes, the final decision on any law should belong to the king, and no one else!

Charles was especially worried about one kind of law: tax law. Ever since the 1200s, no King of England had been able to raise taxes without permission from Parliament.

Charles hated this old rule. He had big plans for his reign, mostly about fighting in the Thirty Years' War. But he couldn't fight without extra money— which meant raising taxes. And Parliament refused to raise taxes— because it didn't approve of Charles' plans!

To a man who believed in the Divine Right of Kings, this seemed completely backward. The king should be telling Parliament what to do, not the other way around!



King Charles I (1600 – 1649)

Remember what **Parliament** was: a body of representatives that started in the 1200s, soon after the Magna Carta. Members of the lower house, the **House of Commons**, were elected by the people. Members of the upper house, the **House of Lords**, either inherited their places or were appointed by the king.

Charles finally decided what to do about all this. If Parliament wouldn't do as he ordered, then he would do without Parliament! In 1629, Charles dissolved Parliament— in other words, shut it down and sent it home. For members of the House of Commons, this meant running for re-election if they ever wanted to go back.



The Palace of Westminster, where Parliament now meets

This wasn't the first time Charles had dissolved Parliament. Ordinarily, he would have called for new elections within a year or two. But this time he didn't. Instead, he ruled England on his own— for eleven whole years! The years from 1629 – 1640 are called the **Personal Rule** of King Charles I. For all that time, the people of England had no voice in their own government.

## The Puritan Migration

Personal Rule was the last straw for **Puritans**.

For years now, Puritans had been worrying that England was in serious trouble. For one thing, the **economy** was terrible. Times were so hard that even hard-working people like the Puritans couldn't earn enough to get by.

Puritans also worried that Protestants were losing the Thirty Years' War. When Charles started his Personal Rule, Albrecht von Wallenstein was killing Protestants by the thousands— on his way to winning the Danish Phase of the war (Chapter 7). Any win for Catholics was a loss for Puritans.

In Puritan minds, all these problems could only mean one thing. God must be angry with England!

The Puritans saw a pattern in the Old Testament. When the people of Israel followed God, He blessed them. They did well at everything they tried, having good harvests and winning all their battles. But when Israel turned away from God, He stopped blessing them. Their enemies beat them so badly that they wound up losing their whole country (Year One).

Now it seemed that God had stopped blessing England. And God would only do that for one reason: because the Church of England had turned away from God.

Puritans were disgusted with the Church of England. They wanted to follow the Bible alone, and forget the old Catholic traditions. But the Church refused to forget. English priests still wore fancy robes and led fancy rituals, just like Catholic ones did. And the Church of England was still led by bishops, like the Catholic Church.

The king's choice of wives didn't help. Like most Frenchwomen, Princess Henrietta Maria had been raised Catholic.

She could have switched to Protestant when she married King Charles; but she didn't. Instead, she stayed Catholic— which meant that Charles' children would have a Catholic mother, and learn Catholic ideas growing up. With royals like that, Puritans feared that England might turn Catholic again someday.



Queen Henrietta Maria's coat of arms

Remember who the **Puritans** were: strict English Protestants who wanted purify the Church of England. They wanted to follow the Bible alone, and forget the old Catholic traditions.

The **economy** is a country's financial fortunes. When the economy is good, most people have plenty of food, shelter and so on. When the economy is bad, people suffer.



Queen Henrietta Maria (1609 – 1669)





"The Puritan" sculpture by Augustus Saint-Gaudens

Since they couldn't trust the royal family, Puritans put their trust in Parliament. They sent as many Puritan members to Parliament as they could, hoping that a Puritan Parliament would fix England's problems. But then Charles sent Parliament home, and started his Personal Rule!

At this point, many Puritans lost hope. Without Parliament, they feared that things might never get better. God might stop blessing England entirely, bringing even worse problems. They didn't want to be there when that happened.

The only answer was to get out. In 1630, the year after Personal Rule began, Puritans started moving out of England. The **Puritan Migration** carried them in all directions. Some moved to the Netherlands, or to the West Indies.

Others followed the Pilgrims to New England. Between 1630 and 1640, about 15 – 20,000 Puritans moved to the New England coast, between Dutch New Netherland and French Acadia.

## Massachusetts Bay Colony

One of the first to join the Puritan Migration was a lawyer called **John Winthrop**.

Winthrop was born into a rich family from Groton, England. As a teenager, he managed farming and cloth-making businesses for his father, the Lord of Groton Manor. He went to college in Cambridge, followed by law school in London. Then it was back to Groton, where he took over his father's job.

Winthrop did fine in Groton— until the 1620s, when the economy crashed (above). After that, his businesses suffered so badly that he couldn't earn a living in Groton anymore. He had to go to London, where he found work as a government lawyer.

Winthrop's time in London showed him just how wicked Charles' government had become. In Winthrop's eyes, Charles didn't look like a Christian king at all. He felt sure that God would punish Charles someday; and he didn't want to be there when it happened. He decided to sell everything he owned and move to New England.

In 1629, Winthrop joined a company of Puritan businessmen who all felt the same way he did. These gentlemen had already bought the right to settle on part of the New England coastline. Their new home lay north of Plymouth Colony, around **Massachusetts Bay**. As a government lawyer, John Winthrop seemed like just the man to govern the new colony the

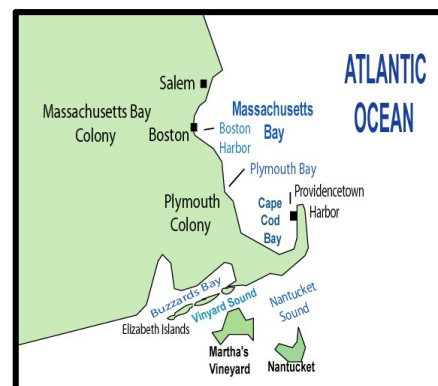
**Massachusetts Bay Company** was planning.

Winthrop wasn't the first governor the company sent to New

England. By this time, there were several settlements struggling along near Plymouth colony. One of these, **Salem**, stood about 40 miles up the coast from Plymouth Bay.



John Winthrop (1588 – 1649), longtime Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony

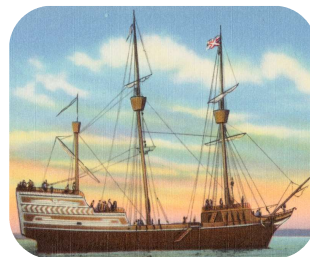


When the company bought the right to settle on Massachusetts Bay, it sent a governor to take charge of Salem. Governor John Endicott reached Salem in 1628, the year before Winthrop joined the company. Endicott's job was to prepare for all settlers the company was hoping to send soon.

Back in England, Governor John Winthrop was also preparing. His first job was to find plenty of settlers; for the company wanted a strong colony. About 700 – 1,000 settlers would sail with Winthrop on his first voyage, most of them Puritans. To carry them all, plus all their tons of supplies, Winthrop hired eleven ships— including his flagship, *Arbella*. The **Winthrop Fleet** set sail in April 1630.

On his way across the Atlantic, John Winthrop preached a famous sermon called "**A Model of Christian Charity.**" He wanted everyone aboard to share his high hopes for their new life ahead. The New England could be so much better than the old one, Winthrop said! If the colonists would only follow God, then God would bless them mightily. With God's help, New England would thrive!

Winthrop also warned that the world would be watching:



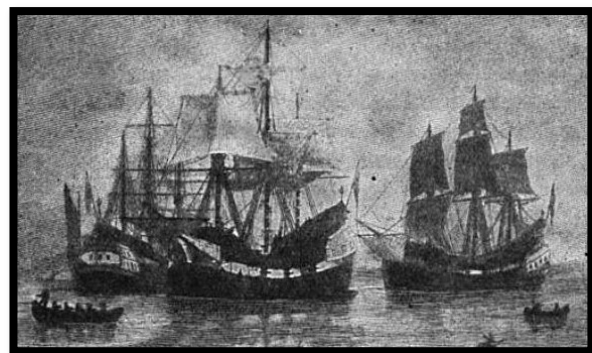
"For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world.

We shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God..."

After a long, hard crossing, the Winthrop Fleet finally reached Salem in June 1630. But when Winthrop got a good look at Salem, he wasn't sure that it was the best place to start. So he looked around for something better.

He soon found what he was looking for. Fifteen miles down the coast from Salem, Winthrop found a great harbor— much better than either Salem or Plymouth had.

The future **Boston** also had two fine rivers, the Charles and the Mystic. Both rivers were lined with meadows that were already cleared, and covered with rich topsoil. All



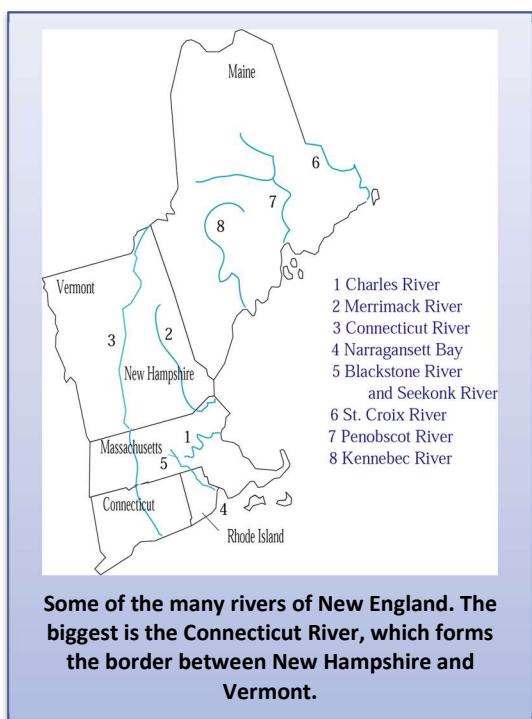
The Winthrop Fleet arriving in Boston

these blessings lay like lost jewels, just waiting to be found.

Who had lost all these jewels? The natives, of course. Boston was empty for the same reason Plymouth had been empty: because of the Great Plague of the 1610s. The Massachusetts people had been almost completely wiped out by European diseases, just like Squanto's people (Chapter 6).

The Winthrop Fleet carried enough colonists to build several villages. Besides Boston itself, there were also Watertown, Roxbury, Dorchester and Newton. The next few years brought more villages, with names like Chelmsford, Ipswich, Braintree, Concord and Newbury.

Early New England villages were built around open spaces called **commons** or **village greens**. The commons started out as common pastures— free fields where anyone could graze a milk cow or feed a few chickens. Later, the commons became a place for public gatherings, or for public punishment in the **pillory** (next page).



Some of the many rivers of New England. The biggest is the Connecticut River, which forms the border between New Hampshire and Vermont.



From the beginning, the government of Massachusetts was different from the government of England. Back home, the only people who had the right to vote were men who owned a certain amount of property. But in Massachusetts, every free man who sailed with the Winthrop Fleet had the right to vote— rich or poor.

Why? Because John Winthrop believed that everyone who took part in that first voyage was making a special **covenant** with God. In his eyes, every man who joined that covenant deserved the right to vote.

A **covenant** is a special agreement or contract.

The rules were different for colonists who came later. After the Winthrop Fleet, only church members received the right to vote. The government trusted Puritan ministers and their congregations to decide which new colonists were trustworthy enough to have a vote.

Joining the church wasn't as easy as it sounds. To be a member of a Massachusetts Puritan church, one had to convince the minister that knowing Christ had really changed one's life. To do that, one had to lead a very **moral** life.

Good morals were everything to the Puritans. Early Massachusetts was a lot like Geneva, Switzerland in the days of John Calvin (Year Two). The government frowned on anything that even looked immoral. Playing card games, gambling, acting in plays, dancing, singing non-Christian songs— any of these would bring stares of disapproval from the neighbors. Puritans also frowned on the bad habit of smoking Virginia tobacco.

The more obvious kinds of bad morals— things like cursing, being drunk in public or skipping church— brought worse punishments. The first offense might only bring a fine. But a second offense might send one to the **pillory**.

Most New England children had little time for play; for they were already hard at work before age seven. Younger children carried water and firewood, hoed gardens and tended livestock. Older boys worked at hunting and trapping; while older girls worked at making clothes and taking care of younger brothers and sisters.

Children of all ages did schoolwork— for education was very important to Puritan parents. Education was like fertilizer, preparing a child's mind for the seed of God's Word. Within a few years after the Winthrop Fleet arrived, most Massachusetts towns offered some kind of public education.

The younger children of New England often memorized their lessons from **hornbooks**. These were simple facts printed on paper, and then pasted onto boards.

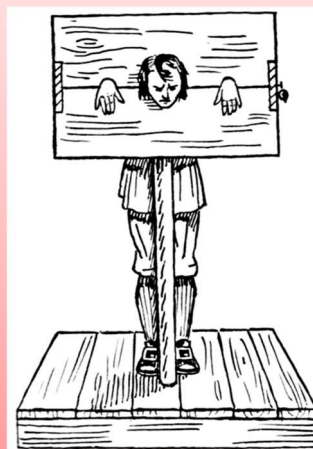
The name "hornbook" comes from cow's horn. If cow's horn is boiled long enough, then the bony insides fall away, leaving a thin outer layer that is see-through and waterproof. In the days before plastics, hornbook makers pasted thin layers of horn over their lessons, protecting them so that children could use them again and again.



**Morals** are rules about right and wrong.

The **pillory** was a device for punishing criminals in public. Having to stand in the pillory for hours at a time, with head and hands uncomfortably locked in place, was only part of the punishment. The other part was the humiliation of knowing that everyone in town was watching.

The stocks were a lot like the pillory. The difference was that the stocks bound the legs, not the head and hands.





# The National Covenant



Remember who the **Archbishop of Canterbury** was: the head bishop in charge of all English churches.



William Laud (1573 – 1645),  
Archbishop of Canterbury

What Laud wanted was for all his churches to worship the same way: following the Book of Common Prayer (Year Two). The prayer book told ministers exactly how to lead every service, word-for-word. The problem was, Puritans hated the Book of Common Prayer; for it was full of the Catholic traditions they were trying to get rid of.

Archbishop Laud took office in 1633, three years after the Puritan Migration started. Right away, Laud started firing Puritan ministers, and replacing them with ones who agreed with him.

But the real trouble started when Laud sent his Book of Common Prayer to Scotland.

In 1637, Archbishop Laud used a cruel old court called the Star Chamber to try three Puritans who had dared to criticize him. All three were sentenced to life in prison. They also suffered a humiliating penalty that was usually reserved for common criminals: they had to stand in the pillory while their ears were lopped off.

Like his father before him, Charles I was King of Scotland as well as England. Laud wanted all the king's churches to follow the Book of Common Prayer— not just English churches, but also Scottish ones.

The problem was, the Scots had never had a Book of Common Prayer before. Why? Because the Scots loved Biblical preaching as much as the Puritans did! Since the days of John Knox, the Scots had wanted nothing to do with the old Catholic traditions (Chapter 2).

Laud didn't care what the Scots wanted. In 1637, Laud ordered the Church of Scotland to start using his new Scottish Book of Common Prayer— whether the Scots liked it or not!

One Sunday that July, the people of Edinburgh, Scotland filed into St. Giles' Church as usual. They were expecting to hear the same kind of Biblical preaching they always heard. Instead, they were stunned to hear their minister reading a fancy ceremony from Archbishop

Laud's prayer book!

The first to react was a feisty woman called Jenny Geddes. To Jenny's ears, the minister's words sounded a lot like the Mass— the Catholic way of holding communion. At the sound of those hated words, Jenny picked up her folding stool and hurled it at the minister, shouting at him:

"May the devil cause you colic in your gut, you false thief! How dare you say the Mass in my ear?!"



Scottish worshipers throwing stools at their minister



Jenny Geddes wasn't the only Scot who was upset. No Scot wanted an English bishop telling him how to worship— even if the two countries did share a king!

The year after Laud sent his prayer book, the Scots let the king know how upset they were. All over Scotland, people called

**Covenanters** signed an important paper called the **National Covenant**. Basically, Covenanters wanted the same things Puritans wanted: to follow the Bible, and forget the old Catholic traditions.

The National Covenant put the king on notice. The Scots were still loyal to their king, and didn't want to disobey him. But no one could change Scottish worship without permission— not even the king!

Later that year, the Scots took the bold step of throwing out their bishops! From now on, they said, the king's bishops would have no power in Scotland. Instead, **elders** would lead the Church of Scotland.



Edinburgh Castle, Scotland

## Two Bishops' Wars



1628 Portrait of King Charles

When the Scots threw out his bishops, King Charles couldn't help but remember his father's famous words: "No bishop, no king" (Chapter 6). Like James, Charles worried about what might come next. If he let the Scots get away with throwing out their bishops, then they might soon throw out their king as well!

An **elder** is a leader who oversees a church. Scottish elders were elected by their congregations, not appointed by the king.

To keep that from happening, Charles went to war. The **First Bishops' War** had one main goal: forcing the Scots to take back the king's bishops.

The problem was, wars cost a lot of money. Charles' Personal Rule was still going on— which meant that there was still no Parliament. Without Parliament, Charles couldn't raise taxes— which meant that he couldn't afford the First Bishops' War.

Charles could see no other way to raise the money he needed. Much as he didn't want to, the king finally called his first Parliament in 11 years: the **Short Parliament** of 1640.

But when the Short Parliament came to London, it didn't want to talk about taxes. Instead, it wanted to talk about everything Charles had done wrong for the last 11 years!

Naturally, Charles was furious with the Short Parliament. He hated it so much that he dissolved it after only three weeks— which explains why it is called "short."

Meanwhile, the First Bishops' War failed. Charles started the **Second Bishops' War** that same year, and for the same reason: to put the king's bishops back in charge of the Church of Scotland.

The Second Bishops' War turned out to be a disaster. The Scots did more than just defeat Charles. They also made him pay for the war! At war's end, the Scots took over two counties in northern England. They refused to give them back until Charles paid back every penny they had spent fighting him!

Now Charles needed more money than ever. Once again, he had no choice but to call a new Parliament. This time, he would have to keep Parliament in session, no matter how much he hated it— for he desperately needed the money that only Parliament could give.

The new Parliament came to London in November 1640. Charles didn't know it yet; but in calling the **Long Parliament**, he had just created his own worst enemy.







Charles, Henrietta and children

## Three English Civil Wars

The Long Parliament laid down the law to Charles. From now on, it said, the king could not simply dissolve Parliament whenever he wanted. Parliament would meet at least once every three years, whether the king wanted it to or not. It would also stay in session for at least fifty days— again, whether the king wanted it to or not. There would be no more Short Parliaments, and no more Personal Rules.

Since the Long Parliament was mostly Puritan, it also told Charles what it thought of the Church of England. Among other things, it accused Archbishop Laud of trying to make England Catholic again!

An even worse trouble started over Charles' Catholic wife, Queen Henrietta Maria.

In late 1641, a rebellion broke out in Catholic Ireland. Since Henrietta Maria was Catholic, some said that she must have started this Irish rebellion! True or not, Parliament took this rumor seriously. Five members of Parliament wanted to place the queen on trial!

At this, Charles decided to teach Parliament a lesson about the Divine Right of Kings. With hundreds of soldiers at his back, Charles marched into the House of Commons to arrest the men who had accused his queen! Alas for Charles, the men weren't there; for someone had warned them beforehand. The king had to walk out empty-handed— muttering in his embarrassment, "All my birds have flown."

Afterward, the members of the Long Parliament were furious! In their eyes, those five members had done nothing wrong. They were only speaking their minds, after all. Wasn't that the whole point of being in Parliament— to speak one's mind, for the good of the country? If the king could arrest members of Parliament for that, then he was a tyrant, and Parliament had no real power at all!

A civil war is a war between citizens of the same country.

From that day forward, England was headed for **civil war**. Over the months that followed, the English chose up sides:

- Those who sided with the king were called Royalists. But the Puritans gave them a French nickname: Cavaliers. They were mocking the Royalists for their fancy hairstyles and feathered hats, which were just like the ones French Catholics wore.
- Those who sided with Parliament were called Parliamentarians. But Royalists called them Roundheads, mocking them for their short hair. Most Parliamentarians were Puritans.

There were actually three English civil wars, not one. The **First English Civil War** started in 1642, the same year Charles invaded the Long Parliament.

The Parliamentarians were in big trouble at first. Much of the country stayed loyal to the king— which meant that Parliament needed allies.

Fortunately, Parliament found a handy ally to the north: Scotland. After two Bishops' Wars, the Scottish Covenanters were happy to help Parliament punish Charles.

With Scottish help, Parliament finally won the First English Civil War. In 1646, the king became a prisoner of his worst enemy: the Long Parliament!



Oliver Cromwell, Parliament's best general. Cromwell was known for his bold cavalry charges, which overwhelmed the enemy with their terrifying strength. This is how Cromwell's cavalry earned its famous nickname: "Ironsides."

The **Second English Civil War** was more complicated than the first.

The English believed in tradition. They loved their Parliament; but they also loved their king. Even after five ugly years of war, most Englishmen still wanted Charles to be their king. Instead of getting rid of Charles, the Long Parliament tried to work out a deal with him.

Meanwhile, Charles was working on another deal. In 1647, Charles secretly joined an alliance called the **Engagement**. His new allies were the Long Parliament's old allies: the Scottish Covenanters!

By now, some of the Covenanters had stopped trusting the Long Parliament. Charles finally convinced them to invade England and help him take back his throne. In exchange, Charles agreed to do something the Scots wanted: get rid of his bishops! For the next three years, Charles promised, the Church of England would have no bishops. It would be run by elders, just like the Church of Scotland.

When the Scots invaded, the Royalists rebelled against Parliament, and the war was on again. The Second English Civil War was as terrible as the first, if not as long. Thousands of people died before Parliament's best general, Oliver Cromwell, defeated the Scots at the famous **Battle of Preston**.

This time, Parliament was out for blood. It was determined to punish Charles for dragging England into civil war a second time. King or no, Parliament created a High Court of Justice to put Charles on trial.



King Charles I at his trial

The trial of King Charles I started on January 20, 1649, when the Chief Judge of the High Court rose to read out the charges. After all he'd been through, Charles still believed in the Divine Right of Kings as much as ever. When the judge started to speak, Charles rapped him on the shoulder with a silver-tipped cane— ordering him to “Hold.” But the judge went right on. So Charles rapped him on the shoulder again— this time so hard that the tip of the cane fell off!

When it came Charles' turn to speak, he refused to plead guilty or innocent. Instead, he insisted that the High Court had no right to try him! For the High Court had been created by Parliament; and in his eyes, Parliament could do nothing without the king's approval. To a man who believed in the Divine Right of Kings, the whole trial made no sense.

In Parliament's mind, though, it made perfect sense. The decision came on January 26, when the High Court announced:

“...Charles Stuart, as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy to the good people of this nation, shall be put to death by the severing of his head from his body.”

On the day of his execution, Charles called for a second shirt to put over his first. The morning air was cold. Charles knew that he might shiver without a second shirt; and he didn't want onlookers to think he was quaking with fear. Just before the executioner's axe fell, Charles uttered these last words:

“I shall go from a corruptible to an incorruptible Crown, where no disturbance can be.”

A few weeks later, Parliament passed an **Act Abolishing the Kingship**. For the first time since its founding back in 927, England had no king!



The Royalists' best general, Prince Rupert, in his long hair and feathered hat. Rupert was rarely separated from his dog, a rare white poodle called Boye. According to Roundhead writers, Boye was a devil-dog who protected Rupert by snatching musket balls out of mid-air with his teeth!

