

The causes of the English Revolution

In the seventeenth century England faced a civil war, with parliament fighting against the king. It involved Scotland and Ireland, and ended with parliament executing the king. This was a British revolution, and there were many reasons why it took place. What were the key causes of the revolution? Was the king ultimately to blame?

Objectives

- **Consider** the differences between King James I and King Charles I.
- **Categorise** the long- and short-term causes of the English Revolution.
- **Analyse** the different causes of the civil war to make a judgement.

James I & VI

When Elizabeth died in 1603, James VI of Scotland became James I of England and, for the first time, Scotland and England shared the same monarch. James was an extravagant king who spent money unwisely, and this led to tension with parliament when they refused to give him any more money or raise it through taxes. They knew James would give the funds to his favourites at court. However, one area that James succeeded at was religion. He managed to keep the majority of Catholics and Protestants content throughout his reign.

Charles I

When Charles I became king in 1625 he was keen to keep order in his court. He believed in the **divine right** of kings

▼ **SOURCE A** Anthony van Dyck's painting of Charles I, painted 1637–38



and felt that the royal court should be removed from everyday life. He believed he had been appointed by God and did not want many people involved in the decisions about the country. Where his father had been open and had many in his court, Charles closed the doors to allow only a privileged few. He wanted to make decisions that suited him without being challenged. He made the Duke of Buckingham a favourite (he had also been a favourite of James), which alarmed parliament because of the influence Buckingham had over the king. Charles responded by simply dissolving parliament in 1629, and did not call it for another 11 years. Some people refer to this as the period of personal rule but others call it the 'Eleven Years' Tyranny'.

▼ **INTERPRETATION B** Adapted from A History of England, written in 1920 by the historian James Oliphant; he writes about Charles's personality:

Charles I was a handsome man with cultivated tastes, but he was unfit for the position of king. He was too stupid and cold-hearted to understand or sympathise with the feelings of the people, and events were to prove that he was hopelessly obstinate, self-centred, and untrustworthy.

Foreign policy and the economy

King Charles, like King James before him, had a persistent problem: money. They both needed lots of it from parliament to fight wars, specifically with Spain. James was refused this money as he spent much of it on gifts for his favourites. Charles was refused it because parliament felt they couldn't trust

him. There religious t a Catholic the mone Charles, v the mone in 1637. Th those in c to build th Parliamen it could n therefore parliamen

People re Parliamen to court. publicise personal

Tensi

After Hen gradually were still worshipping them as a against C Plot of 16 father, Ja seventee Charles v princess Buckingham closest a her influ

The pers over reli; made Ar same as to the Ch Arminian worship wanted the cong showed to be m and pain

Laud's c many P the king promine

him. There were concerns about the sincerity of his religious tendencies; not helped by his marriage to a Catholic. There was also a fear that he would use the money to become independent from parliament. Charles, who believed it was his divine right to have the money, introduced a tax known as 'Ship Money' in 1637. This was a tax that was normally paid by those in coastal towns as a means of raising money to build the navy. Charles made everyone pay the tax. Parliament was concerned about Ship Money because it could make Charles financially independent and therefore able to make decisions without consulting parliament.

People refused to pay Ship Money. One Member of Parliament, John Hampden, refused and was taken to court. He was narrowly convicted, and the case publicised the opposition towards Charles and his personal rule.

Tensions over religion

After Henry VIII's changes to the Church, England had gradually become more Protestant. However, there were still many Catholics in England – many of them worshipping in secret – and some Protestants regarded them as a threat. After all, there were Catholic plots against Queen Elizabeth, and the famous Gunpowder Plot of 1605 was a Catholic attempt to kill Charles' father, James. Religion was a contentious issue in the seventeenth century.

Charles was not Catholic but he did marry a Catholic princess from France, Henrietta Maria. When Buckingham was killed in 1628, she became Charles' closest adviser. The people of England were scared of her influence and what this could mean for their Church.

The person who went on to have the most influence over religion in England was William Laud. He was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633 and felt the same as Charles about bringing conformity back to the Church. Laud was not Catholic, but he was Arminian, which meant he thought people should worship in a similar way to Catholics. For example, he wanted the church clergy to be more separate from the congregation and to be dressed in robes that showed their importance; he also wanted churches to be more decorated, with candles, crosses, statues and paintings.

Laud's changes met so much opposition because many **Puritans** – who were Protestants who wanted the king to reverse the **Laudian** reforms – had become prominent in parliament. They were vocal in their

Key Words

divine right tyranny Puritan Laudian
pamphlet Star Chamber pilloried

opposition. One famous case of opposition was from three men: Prynne, Bastwick and Burton, who wrote a **pamphlet** criticising the Church. The men were tried in the **Star Chamber**, which had become a substitute for parliament during Charles' personal rule. It was used against anyone who spoke out against the king and Laud, and was known for being corrupt because it always came down on the side of the king. Prynne, Bastwick and Burton were punished as thieves would be: **pilloried**, their faces branded, and their ears cut off.

What Laud and Charles had not expected was the widespread support for the men. When they were released from prison they were met by a large cheering crowd, and when their ears were cut off people crammed to dip their handkerchiefs in the blood. These men were seen as heroes.

▼ **SOURCE C** A cartoon from c1635, showing the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, choosing a meal made from the ears of Puritans rather than food fit for a prince



Work

- 1 **a** Write three things that you know about James I & VI.
b Write three things you know about Charles I.
c Are there any ways that the kings are different?
- 2 Explain the grievances that parliament had with King Charles. Try to categorise these into economic, religious and political grievances.
- 3 **a** What information does **Source C** give us about the problems people had with Charles?
b Why was this cartoon created? What was its purpose?

The causes of the English Revolution

The Scottish rebellion and the Covenanters

Charles' changes in religion also caused unrest in Scotland. The Scots had always had their own Church which by this time was **Presbyterian**, which is a type of Protestantism. However, in 1637, the king insisted that everyone in Scotland should use the new Laudian prayer book. This relied on the **catechism** – religious instruction from the priest – and moved away from the Protestant method of personal worship. There were riots in St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh: the Scots would not be told how to worship. In 1638, they signed an agreement called a covenant, saying they would not accept the changes. The people who signed it and its supporters became known as the Covenanters. When Charles sent an army to Scotland in 1639, the Covenanters defeated it. They then invaded England.

SOURCE A *Rioting at a church service in Scotland, as worshippers reacted angrily to the king's proposed changes to worship in Scotland*



The Short Parliament and continued opposition

Charles needed more money if he was going to defeat the Scots. Eleven years after he had dissolved parliament, he needed to ask it to meet again, in April 1640. Parliament agreed to provide Charles with funds to fight the Scots, but only with conditions. He had to promise not to pass laws without parliament's agreement, not to raise unpopular taxes, and to stop Laud's religious changes. This parliament was called the Short Parliament as it lasted only a month. Charles would not give in to parliament's demands.

The Earl of Strafford

One of Charles' favourites was Thomas Wentworth, the Earl of Strafford. He had been sent to Ireland to keep control. There was tension in Ireland between Catholics and Protestants in social and political life. Many of the Protestants were from Scotland and England, and had been originally sent to Ireland by James and Charles to keep order and prevent any rebellions; these postings were known as plantations.

Parliament was not happy about Strafford's control in Ireland. He had a strong and loyal army and parliament was concerned that Charles would try to bring this army to England and use it against the English. When parliament refused to give Charles the funds to fight the Scots, Strafford encouraged Charles to rule England on his own, without parliament.

The Long Parliament

Another parliament was called by Charles in November 1640. Charles was running out of options and was keen to defeat the Scots and restore order. He knew he needed parliament.

B *The demands of parliament, November 1640, and what the king had agreed to by the summer of 1641*

Parliament's demands:	The king agreed that:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wentworth and Laud must be removed.• Ministers should be appointed from parliament to advise Charles.• The king must get rid of the Star Chamber.• Parliament must meet regularly.• No taxes without parliament's approval.• Reversal of Laudian reforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strafford was executed and Laud was imprisoned.• Some of Charles' critics were appointed as his advisers.• Courts of the Star Chamber were abolished.• Parliament would meet every three years.• The Long Parliament could be dissolved by Charles without its permission.• Ship Money was made illegal.

Many people
the unrest.
led to this?

Rebelli

When Strafford
Thousands
England th
Catholic pla
rebellion b
Charles' re
took contr

1642 a

By 1642, r
parliamen
Grand Ren
was the st
a fool of b
arrest the
had alrea
to protect
would not

INTER
to arrest t



Many people were convinced that the agreements would mark an end to the unrest. However, in August 1642 the English Civil War began. What led to this?

Rebellion in Ireland

When Strafford returned to England in 1640, riots broke out in Ireland. Thousands of Protestants were killed by Catholics. Many people in England thought that Charles supported the rebellion: they saw it as a Catholic plot. Parliament was willing to give money to suppress the Irish rebellion but they did not want Charles in charge of the army. Despite Charles' response to parliament of, 'By God! Not for an hour!', parliament took control of the army. The king was furious.

1642 and the Five Members

By 1642, relations had deteriorated again between the king and parliament. John Pym, a leading opponent of the king, presented the Grand Remonstrance. This was a list of grievances towards Charles, and was the straw that broke the camel's back. Charles would not be made of a fool of by parliament. He raised an army and marched to parliament to arrest the five men – the Five Members – who led the opposition. They had already escaped but now everyone knew how far Charles would go to protect himself. This was even more proof that he was a tyrant who would not listen to the people.

INTERPRETATION C An engraving, from 1803, showing Charles I attempting to arrest the Five Members



Key Words

Presbyterian catechism

Work

- 1
 - a Put the events from 1637 to August 1642 on a timeline.
 - b Above the timeline, describe the event; below it, explain why it would cause unrest.
 - c Pick the event that you think was the spark for the English Civil War.
- 2 It has been said that Charles' problem was not England but how he dealt with Scotland. How far do you agree?

Extension



Research the lives of each of the Five Members. Who were they and what happened to them – Hampden, Haselrig, Holles, Pym and Strode?

Practice Question

Was religion the main factor in causing the English Civil War?

16 marks

SPaG: 4 marks

Study Tip

You need to explain your answer with reference to religion and other factors. Plan out your answer with all the different events and people you will talk about – see how many link to religion and how many link to other factors. Is there a difference between the short- and long-term factors?

The English Civil War and the role of the New Model Army

In August 1642, Charles was in Nottingham. He called on his loyal supporters, and declared war on parliament. England was now at war, with itself! The English Civil War had begun. For the next six years parliament and the king fought each other using their loyal forces. Mothers, sons, fathers and daughters fought in a quest to win the war, even if it meant fighting against each other. What were they fighting for? How did they fight the war?

Objectives

- **Define** the different sides of the English Civil War.
- **Explain** the key events of the civil war.
- **Evaluate** the role of the New Model Army in the civil war.

Who fought whom?

The war was fought on two sides: the Roundheads (parliament) against the Cavaliers (royalists). It is generally agreed that people's social class affected who they supported. The wealthy landowners supported the king, as a way to show personal loyalty and to keep in place the social structure they benefited from. The middle classes and peasant workers supported parliament, as there was a less rigid social hierarchy in parliament.

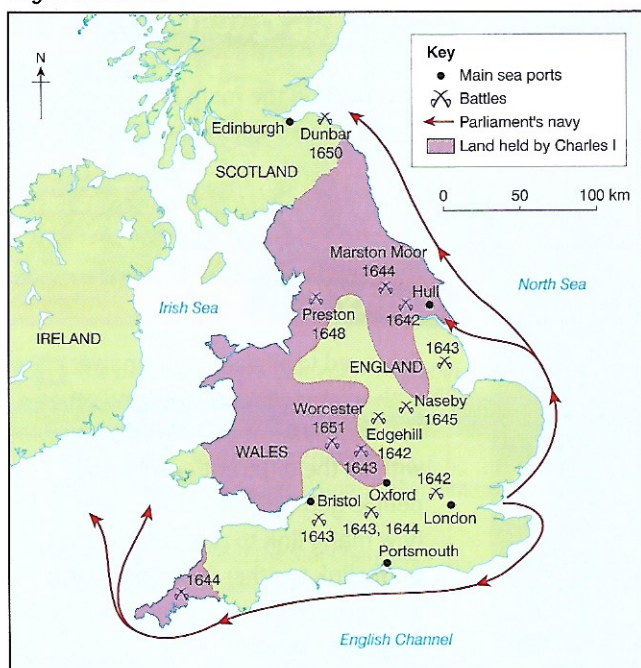
There were also clear geographical allegiances. The king's support was mostly from the north,

and parliament had support in the south and in London. This was partially due to a merchant class (traders and business men, for example) who were not happy about the taxes Charles had been imposing.

Religious and political reforms brought in by Charles gave many people good reason to go against him and support parliament. Furthermore, many people simply felt that Charles' personality did not make him a good king.

There were reports that some families divided their loyalties so that no matter who won, they would be on a winning side. Many poorer people were forced to support whoever their lord supported.

▼ **A** The land held by Charles I and key battles of the English Civil War



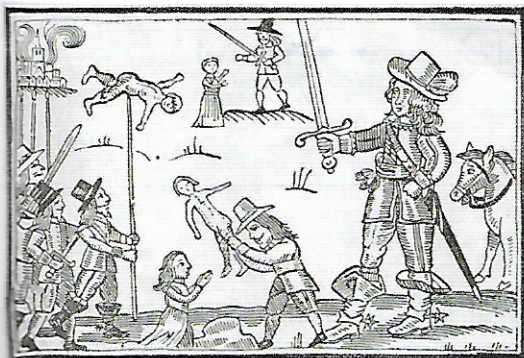
Propaganda as a tactic

The war started with a draw at the Battle of Edgehill, 1642. The king tried to take London but failed, and withdrew to Oxford. Both sides fought using **cavalry** and **infantry**, and used tactics that had been seen in many battles before.

The king's nephew, Prince Rupert, was one of the most prominent royalist commanders. He led successful campaigns against parliamentary forces and this earned him a bad reputation among the Roundheads.

To combat his successes, parliamentary forces created **propaganda** against Rupert and his trusty dog, Boy, who would accompany him into battle. Propaganda is still used today; it is designed to wear the opponent down and make people turn against them. This worked in the case of Rupert, as it made people think he was weak; it created the idea that the king was weak. Look at the following examples of propaganda and consider why they would have been created.

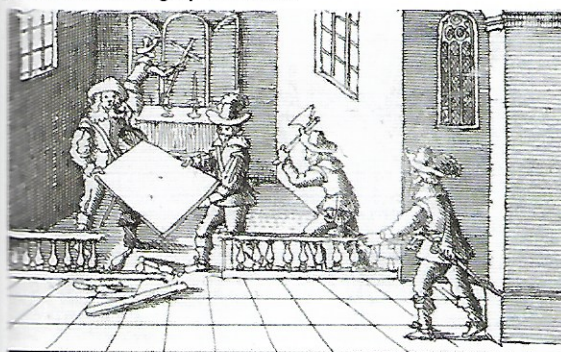
▼ **SOURCE B** A Puritan propaganda drawing from 1644 showing royalist forces murdering women and children



▼ **SOURCE C** A woodcut showing Prince Rupert hiding in a bean field at the Battle of Marston Moor, 1644, with the dog Boy lying dead in the battlefield



▼ **SOURCE D** A drawing showing parliamentary forces smashing up a church



Key Words

cavalry infantry propaganda

The New Model Army and Naseby, 1645

It is important to remember that not all parliamentarians wanted the full removal of the monarchy. They just wanted the removal of royal reforms. This attitude angered Oliver Cromwell. He was the Member of Parliament for Cornwall and had been leading the Roundheads against the Cavaliers, with Thomas Fairfax. Fairfax was a lord who had once worked with Charles to fight the Scots; he joined the parliamentary forces in 1642.

Cromwell was committed to removing the king. He knew that the Battle of Marston Moor could have been a defeat for his side and he did not want that to be the case again. He trained a new army which would be known as the New Model Army. He recruited men based on their ability, rather than their privilege. The army was disciplined and lived by a strict religious and moral code. The men were not allowed to drink or swear.

This army was used for the first time at the Battle of Naseby in 1645. The New Model Army, with 14,000 men, outnumbered the king, with 9000 men. They defeated the royalist cavalry by slowly approaching, rather than charging. They overcame the royalist infantry by manoeuvring behind them and attacking from the rear. Naseby was the end of the king's last great army. The New Model Army, under Cromwell, went on to capture Bristol and then Oxford in 1646. There was now little doubt about who would win the war.

Fact

Women played a big part in fighting the civil war. They mostly worked as nurses but they did defend castles from enemy forces. There are accounts that at Marston Moor, Jane Ingleby of Ripley Castle charged with the royalist forces.

Work

- 1 Create a profile for each side during the war. You should include details of location, religion and social class.
- 2 Copy and complete the table below for **Sources B, C and D**. Which source is the best for finding out about the civil war?

Source	What does it tell us?	Who is winning?	Why was it produced?

- 3 Could parliament have won the war without the New Model Army? Try to show both sides of the argument.

Were the English right to kill their king?

The king had tried to restore his control over England and Scotland but Cromwell's New Model Army proved too strong. Charles was captured in 1647 by the Scots in Nottinghamshire, and imprisoned. He would go on trial accused of treason. The king was killed on a cold January day in 1649. Why did parliament feel the only option was **regicide**? Did everyone agree? Who ruled now the king was dead?

Objectives

- **Describe** Charles I's execution.
- **Explore** the reasons why the king was executed.
- **Assess** the evidence to make a judgement about the execution.

Second Civil War

While Charles was imprisoned he was keen to negotiate with parliament to secure a peaceful end to their disagreements. However, at the same time, he was writing to the Scottish parliament to convince them to raise arms against the English parliament and the New Model Army. He promised them a Presbyterian Church in England. The Scots did raise an army against Cromwell and so the Second Civil War began. The two sides met at the Battle of Preston, 1648. The Scots were defeated and Charles had proved he could not be trusted.

The Rump Parliament

In December 1648, the regiment of Colonel Thomas Pride surrounded the Houses of Parliament and refused entry to Members of Parliament who were known to support negotiations with the king. Thomas Pride was a soldier in the civil war and had fought with Cromwell against the Scots. His actions became known as 'Pride's **Purge**', and meant the king would stand trial with no supporters. The remaining members formed a parliament that was known as the Rump Parliament.

The trial of Charles I

Charles was called before parliament where a special commission had been put in place to try him for treason. However, out of the 135 commissioners due to attend, only 68 turned up. They were scared, as they had openly fought against him; this was not the way society worked. Even Thomas Fairfax did not attend. His wife did, and is reported to have supported the king. For many people things had gone too far. However this was not the case for Oliver Cromwell. When Charles walked into court Cromwell said, 'I tell you we will cut his head off with the crown upon it.'

Another problem parliament encountered was that Charles refused to give a plea – he would not say whether he was guilty or not guilty. He said parliament had no right to act as judge and jury. They could not try the king for treason.

On the second day, the court president, John Bradshaw, allowed the king to speak. They exchanged angry words and Bradshaw ordered

▼ **SOURCE A** *King Charles responded to the charges against him:*

I would know by what power
I am called here. I want to
know by what authority, I mean
lawful. Remember I am your
king, your lawful king.

the king removed. Bradshaw must have known that there was a chance that proceedings would get heated as he wore a specially made bulletproof hat!

With no progress yet made, on 24–27 January witness statements were heard – none in support of Charles. The court heard that Charles:

- was guilty of starting the war by trying to raise an army in Nottingham
- approved of the ill-treatment of parliamentary forces during the war – calling his own subjects enemies
- was plotting with his son to start another war while negotiating with parliament.

On 27 January 1649, parliament found King Charles I guilty of treason and sentenced him to death. Bradshaw justified this by saying that Charles had not done his duty by calling regular parliaments, attacking the basic liberties of the country. Charles would be beheaded.



Execu

At 10:00am
Whitehall
hours. Thi
up – they
partly do
that said
death. The



Was C

People w
execution
objection
soldiers v
that God
taxes the
sense of
too. Crom
necessiti

▼ **SOURCE B** An engraving showing the trial of Charles I



Execution

At 10:00am on 30 January 1649, the king was taken to Whitehall to be executed. Parliament made Charles wait hours. This was partly down to the executioners not turning up – they were too scared to be the one to kill the king – and partly down to **legislation**. Parliament had to secure a law that said no new monarch could be installed on the king's death. The axe fell and the English Revolution was over.

▼ **SOURCE C** A painting of the execution of Charles I



Was Charles a danger to democracy?

People were motivated by many factors to support the execution of the king. There were religious, political and moral objections to the way Charles had been ruling. As far as the soldiers were concerned, Charles' defeat in battle was a sign that God was against him. Other people wanted an end to the taxes they had endured under his reign. Many enjoyed the new sense of freedom – ordinary men could now have influence too. Cromwell described the king's execution as a cruel necessity.

Key Words

regicide purge legislation

▼ **SOURCE D** Adapted from *The History of the Rebellion*, written by the Earl of Clarendon and published in 1702; this was the first full history of the civil war; Clarendon sat in parliament and was a supporter of the king:

It is most certain that, in that very hour when he was thus wickedly murdered in the sight of the sun, he was the worthiest gentleman, the best master and Christian.

▼ **SOURCE E** Adapted from a contemporary pamphlet about Charles' death:

Even the crucifying of our blessed saviour did not equal this, and Christ was yet judged at a lawful court.

Work

- 1 **a** Write an account of the king's execution from either a royalist or a parliamentary viewpoint. Think about key dates, times and people.
- b** Swap books with someone who wrote from the other point of view. How are the accounts different?
- 2 Put the king on trial. In groups allocate roles and play out the trial of Charles I. Remember to focus on why he is being tried. Does everyone have the same reasons?
- 3 Parliament was right to sentence the king to death. How far do you agree?

Practice Question

Explain the significance of the execution of Charles I.

8 marks

Study Tip

Try to explain that people at the time realised that the king's execution was a historic event.

How should Cromwell be remembered?

The Commonwealth was the name for the republic under the leadership of parliament after Charles' death. With Charles dead, the parliamentary army was the strongest force in the Commonwealth and its leader, Oliver Cromwell, the most powerful man. Cromwell is one of the most disputed characters in history. The opinions of him tend to change with shifting political events. When, in the nineteenth century, Britain moved towards a democracy and parliament became more important, historians became more sympathetic towards Cromwell. However, during the time of the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II, Cromwell was regularly depicted in royalist propaganda as the devil. Many people in Ireland have their own interpretations of Cromwell too. So how should he be remembered?

Objectives

- ▶ **Identify** the different views of Cromwell.
- ▶ **Analyse** the interpretations of Cromwell.
- ▶ **Compare** and contrast the Protectorate to earlier parliaments.

Fact

The Protectorate is the name given to the time when England, Scotland and Ireland did not have a monarch, but were ruled by Oliver Cromwell (and then his son). Sometimes this period is referred to as the Interregnum.

▼ **SOURCE A** Samuel Cooper's painting of Cromwell, 1656. Cromwell is said to have told Cooper to paint him exactly as he saw him, 'warts and all'.



Cromwell and the Commonwealth

Positive views of Cromwell's rule?

There were many reasons people supported Cromwell. For example, he won wars against the Dutch and the Spanish and restored England's reputation abroad, and he introduced the Navigation Act in 1651, which stated that any ship coming into or leaving England had to be English. People were free to worship in any way they liked, and many ordinary people felt that Cromwell was on their side.

▼ **SOURCE B** Written by a bishop, 50 years after the Protectorate:

Cromwell would rather have taken a shepherd's staff than the Protectorship. Nothing went more against his feelings than a show of greatness. But he saw it was necessary at that time to keep the nation from falling into extreme disorder.

▼ **SOURCE C** Although Cromwell had always declined the Crown he was given a state burial on his death in 1658.

This painting was produced in 1659. It shows Cromwell wearing the crown and holding the royal sceptre and orb.



Negative Cromwell
Cromwell d...
appointed...
districts he...
presence b...
control on...
even tried...
The Levell...
believed in...
Cromwell, a...
In Ireland...
town of Dro...
townspeople...
— women a...
was taken...
given to Pr...
always hav...

▼ **SOURCE**
dressed as...
executed in...
was made a...
a war again...



Positive Cromwell
Some as...
be view...
example...
power th...

Negative views of Cromwell's rule?

Cromwell didn't please everyone. He appointed Major Generals to the 11 districts he created. People resented their presence because they kept such strict control on many aspects of life: they even tried to stop Christmas celebrations. The Levellers, a religious group who believed in equality, were imprisoned by Cromwell, and their leaders were killed. In Ireland, Cromwell laid siege to the town of Drogheda, and even when the townspeople surrendered he killed them – women and children included. Land was taken from Catholics in Ireland and given to Protestants, so England would always have allies in Ireland.

▼ **SOURCE D** A Dutch drawing of Cromwell dressed as a king, with Charles I being executed in the background. The drawing was made at the time the Dutch were fighting a war against England.



Positive or negative views of Cromwell's rule?

Some aspects of Cromwell's rule can be viewed as positive or negative! For example, Cromwell ended up with more power than Charles, and he secured his

Key Words

providence radicalism

son as his successor. He felt that his victories since Naseby meant it was God's **providence** that he should be in charge, and sinful activities were banned to ensure that the Commonwealth was Godly.

Challenges to the Commonwealth

There were many challenges to Cromwell's Protectorate and from this emerged a political and religious **radicalism** that had never existed before. The civil war saw the development of many Protestant groups, which would challenge Cromwell's authority. The biggest challenge came, however, from a political group. This group was the Levellers. They wanted a reform to political representation for the men who had fought in the New Model Army. Cromwell met with them and their leader, John Lilburne, during the Putney Debates in 1647 where their demands were heard. Support for them soon decreased and Lilburne was imprisoned. Cromwell was able to rule for 10 years.

The end of Cromwell and the Commonwealth

When Cromwell died in 1658 his son, Richard, took over the role. However, Richard was not interested in politics and resigned in 1659. In 1660, Charles II rode into London and was crowned king of England, Scotland and Ireland.

Cromwell's body was dug up from its grave and hung in Tyburn. His head was placed on a spike where it stayed for decades. Most people were happy to have a king back on the throne.

Work

- Pick the top three things you think show Cromwell in a good light, and the top three things that show him in a bad light.
 - Share your lists with your partner. Discuss your choices.
- Study **Sources C** and **D**. Explain the impression that each one gives of Cromwell.

Practice Question

Compare the achievements of the Protectorate to the rule of Simon de Montfort. In what ways were they similar?

8 marks

Study Tip

Separate your points into political and religious outcomes and put all the key information into these factors. Think about how long they lasted and what kind of opposition they had.