

compromise to settle a dispute, with both sides giving up a part of what they demand

tyrant a ruler who uses power oppressively or unjustly

extravagance careless and lavish spending, wastefulness

- **FIGURE 4-13** Charles I and his queen, Henrietta Maria of France. Henrietta is handing Charles a laurel wreath. What might this symbolize? What other objects are included in the painting to proclaim their royal status?



Charles I

Charles I had overcome serious physical problems in his childhood. He also suffered from a lack of affection from his parents. He was shy, spoke with a stammer, and often had fits of temper. When his father became king of England and the family moved to London, Charles was left behind. He was James's second son, but became the heir when his older brother died.

Like his father, Charles I believed in the divine right of kings. He was even less willing to **compromise** with parliament than his father had been. He truly believed that the king had to answer to no one but God. As far as ruling went, he was willing to be a **tyrant**.

Although he was very dignified and could be charming, Charles tended to keep apart from other people. He loved art and enjoyed owning fine possessions. This made others complain about his **extravagance**.

Charles relied on his father's favourite, the despised Duke of Buckingham, for advice. Buckingham led the king into one disaster after another, including wars with France and Spain. Charles was

also in constant conflict with the Puritans. They, along with other Protestants in England, worried that Charles was not doing enough to support Protestantism.

Within a few short years of becoming king, Charles had alienated many people who might otherwise have supported him, and he was badly in need of money. He felt he had no choice but to try to make parliament agree with him.

What main factors led to the English Civil War?

Civil war breaks families and communities apart. Close friends, neighbours, and even siblings may end up fighting on opposite sides. Civil war uses up the resources of a country, and it creates great hardship and serious economic problems. It can take decades to recover from such a war. No one wants a civil war. How did one happen in 17th-century England?

Setting the Stage for Civil War

The main cause of the English Civil War was Charles I's struggle with parliament. Each side believed that it had the right to more control. Compromise was almost impossible due to four main factors: the growing powers of parliament, money, religion, and the behaviour of the king.

England's Parliament

England's parliament dated from Anglo-Saxon times. Its original purpose was to advise the king, and it had little official power. In 1215, however, nobles used Magna Carta to change parliament's role. Magna Carta stated that the king could not rule simply by his own will—he had to obey the laws of the land, like everyone else. People accused of crimes had the right to trial by jury. Most importantly, the king could not introduce new taxes without the consent of parliament.

Parliament in 17th-century England had two parts, or "houses," the same as today. Both houses had to approve new laws. The House of Lords included bishops and other high officials of the Church of England in addition to the nobility. The House of Commons was made up of wealthy landowners and townspeople. During the time of Charles I, the monarch held the right to call or dismiss a parliament.

This was not democracy as we know it today. Most people in Britain did not have the right to sit in either house of parliament, or even to vote for its members. These rights would take years to win. However, this was a stage of development for parliamentary government.

Members of the English parliament in the 17th century were very aware of their rights and powers—and they were prepared to defend them.

Reading

Set a Purpose

As you read, notice how Charles I attempted to maintain power over parliament.

civil war when two or more groups in a country fight each other for control of that country

WEB LINK

To learn more about the parliament of England, past and present, visit our website.

Thinking IT THROUGH

Summarize What's Important

1. Create a graphic organizer to show how their belief in divine right influenced the actions and behaviour James I and Charles I.

Compare and Contrast

2. Use a Venn diagram to compare the qualities of James I and Charles I.

Analyze Critically

3. **Perspectives** Describe the qualities and characteristics of the king from the point of view of a common person and of a noble, such as the Duke of Buckingham. Include their opinion of the divine right of kings in the response.

Synthesize and Evaluate

4. Write a paragraph to answer the section question: *How did the Stuart kings govern?* Set aside your paragraph to help you answer the Chapter Focus Question at the end of the chapter.

seditions libel false and malicious statements against the monarch, which are considered treason

Controlling the Money

Monarchs had large expenses—soldiers, ships, and new palaces were very costly. To raise some money, monarchs could collect rents from their estates, sell noble titles, or sell the rights to import valuable goods.

One thing the monarch could not do to raise money was create new taxes. Only parliament could make new taxes legal. This meant that if the king wanted a new tax, he had to call parliament and explain his decision. For example, if Charles wanted money to go to war, parliament would have to agree that the war was necessary. Parliament could also use the king's need for money to get what it wanted from him. This usually meant increases in parliament's powers, something Charles disliked.

When parliament resisted him, Charles resorted to other means of raising money. These included forced loans, fines, and a return to an ancient custom called ship money. This was a fee the people of coastal towns had once paid to help provide ships in times of war. Charles now wanted all towns and landowners to pay the fee. The idea of the return of ship money caused outrage.

Charles also turned to his chief minister, Lord Strafford, to raise money. Strafford was called "Black Tom Tyrant." He found so many ingenious ways of obtaining money for the king that his methods became known as "Strafford's Fork"—a reference to a king who was "feeding off the country."

Religious Troubles

The Puritans were a powerful and outspoken group in England. There were Puritans in parliament, and they did not like or trust Charles I. They felt that he was becoming lenient toward Catholics—after all, he had even married a Catholic from France.

Charles also allowed one of his favourites, Archbishop Laud, who opposed the more radical forms of Puritanism, to introduce new religious practices. These practices included church decoration and rituals that offended and angered Puritans. Those who complained or criticized the king and Laud were punished for **seditions libel**.

Libel and Freedom of Speech

Today, we may take freedom of speech for granted. Freedom of speech was common among First Nations in North America, and there was relatively peaceful, rapid development of freedom of speech in Canadian society. In many regions of the world, freedom of speech exists because people fought for it, and there are places where this basic freedom still does not exist.

Charles I and his advisers did not believe in freedom of speech. When people wrote **satires** and pamphlets criticizing the government, the writers and printers were arrested and severely punished.

For example, after being found guilty of libel, a Puritan lawyer named William Prynne was forbidden to practise law. He was forced to pay an enormous fine of £5000 (perhaps the equivalent of millions of dollars today). Prynne then had to stand in the **pillory** in two different places in London, and one ear was cut off each time. He was also branded on both sides of his face with the letters "S" and "L," and then imprisoned.

However, even these punishments could not prevent people from expressing their views. The thousands of people who watched the punishments hissed and booed at the officials. William Prynne was so defiant that his ears were cut off twice. Each time he had them sewn back on.

The Problem of the King

James I had avoided direct confrontation with parliament when he could, but Charles was not so fortunate—or so wise. Charles led England into expensive wars in Europe, including the Thirty Years War. Charles had married a Catholic, and was forcing religious reforms.

Charles also used the **Court of Star Chamber** against those who opposed him. People tried by this court were denied the rights they had been granted by Magna Carta. The trials were conducted in secret, there were no juries, and no witnesses were allowed.

Charles felt that he had the right to imprison people and use this court to put them on trial. However, this kind of behaviour was exactly what Magna Carta was meant to prevent, and parliament felt it had to respond.

The Petition of Right

In 1628, in only the third year of his reign, Charles recalled parliament. He hoped that this time it would bend to his wishes. However, the two houses of parliament—the Lords and the Commons—joined together to oppose him in a way they never had before. They told the king he would have no money until he signed the **Petition of Right**. This document was meant not to introduce new laws, but to remind Charles of the civil rights already guaranteed by Magna Carta.

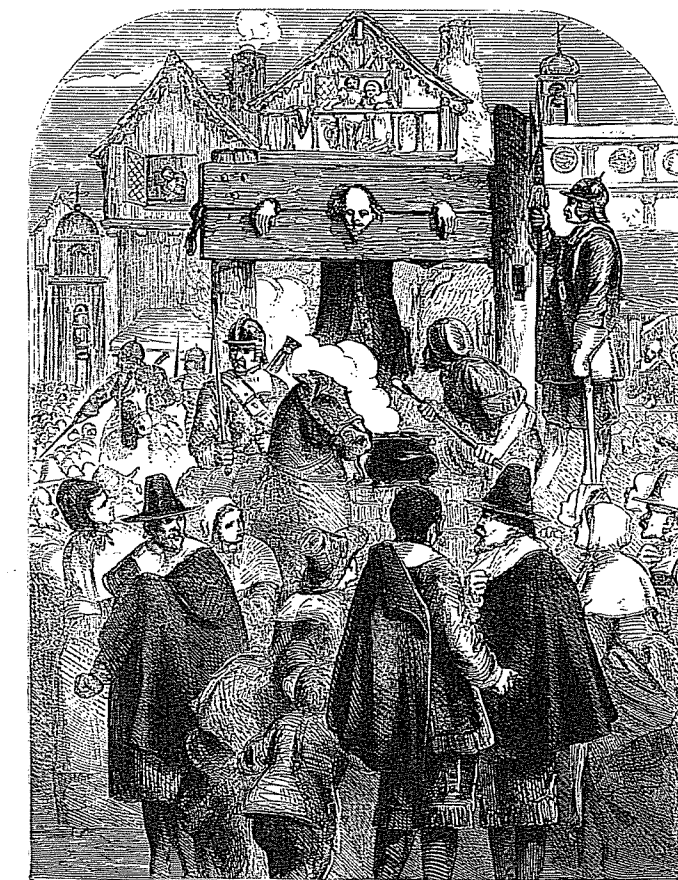


FIGURE 4-14 William Prynne in the pillory. It was during this time that many Puritans began to consider moving to colonies such as New England.

satire a literary work in which corruption, foolishness, or abuses are held up to ridicule and contempt

pillory a device consisting of a wooden board with holes for the head and arms, in which offenders were exposed to public scorn

Court of Star Chamber a royal court where sessions were held in secret

Petition of Right a document affirming specific rights for English citizens

The Petition of Right (1628)

Part of the movement toward democracy in England, the Petition of Right is considered to be as important as Magna Carta. The Petition clearly sets out what parliament believed to be important civil rights, and its influence on law in the United Kingdom is still felt today.

This selection from the Petition of Right spells out one of parliament's major complaints against Charles.

- III. *And whereas also by the statute called "The Great Charter of the Liberties of England" [Magna Carta] it is declared and enacted, that no freeman may be taken or imprisoned or be disseized [relieved] of his freehold or liberties, or his free customs, or be outlawed or exiled, or in any manner destroyed, but by the lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land.*
- IV. *And in the eight-and-twentieth year of the reign of King Edward III, it was declared and enacted by authority of parliament, that no man, of what estate or condition that he be, should be put out of his land or tenements, nor taken, nor imprisoned, nor disinherited nor put to death without being brought to answer by due process of law.*
- V. *Nevertheless, against the tenor of the said statutes, and other the good laws and statutes of your realm to that end provided, divers of your subjects have of late been imprisoned without any cause showed; and when for their deliverance they were brought before your justices by your Majesty's writs of habeas corpus [an order requiring that a prisoner be taken to court to decide if he or she is being imprisoned lawfully], there to undergo and receive as the court should order, and their keepers commanded to certify the causes of their detainer, no cause was certified, but that they were detained by your Majesty's special command...and yet were returned back to several prisons, without being charged with anything to which they might make answer according to the law.*

There are similarities between the Petition of Right and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which was entrenched in the Constitution of Canada in 1982 (more than 350 years later). Section 10 of the Canadian Charter includes the right of habeas corpus:

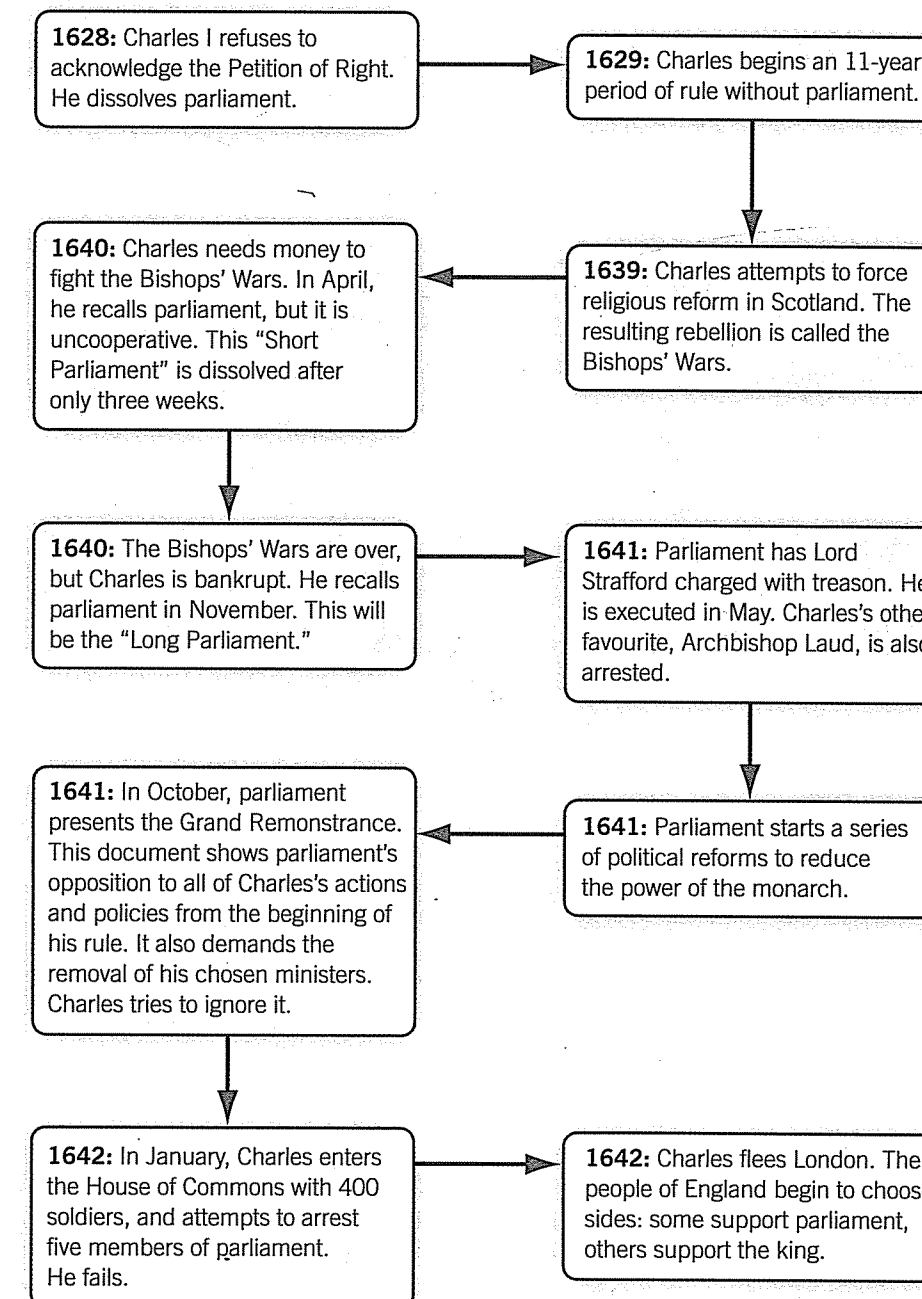
10. *Everyone has the right on arrest or detention*
- to be informed promptly of the reasons therefor;*
 - to retain and instruct counsel without delay and to be informed of that right; and*
 - to have the validity of the detention determined by way of habeas corpus and to be released if the detention is not lawful.*

Thinking IT THROUGH

1. What was parliament's complaint against Charles? How did parliament use Magna Carta to support its complaint?
2. What is *habeas corpus*? Describe how habeas corpus is included in both Magna Carta and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Give specific examples.

Charles reacted to the Petition of Right by dissolving parliament. He then decided to rule without any parliament at all, for 11 years. Although he was entitled to do so, many people called this period the "Eleven Years' Tyranny." It was followed by a series of events that would quickly lead England to civil war.

The Road to Civil War



Civil War Begins

In August of 1642, Charles went to the city of Nottingham. He raised the royal flag and began to rally his followers. His queen took the **Crown Jewels** to Europe to sell them, hoping to raise money. It was clear to everyone that the king was preparing to make war on parliament.

Crown Jewels jewellery used but not personally owned by the royal family



- **FIGURE 4-15** Charles I declares war on parliament at Nottingham, in 1642. Note
- the upward flow of movement in this engraving. How is it created? What is the artist suggesting by this upward flow? What evidence suggests that this is a military occasion?

Thinking IT THROUGH

Summarize What's Important

1. Outline how Magna Carta attempted to control the actions of a monarch.
2. In what ways did Charles I try to raise money without the support of parliament?

Analyze Critically

3. List the ways that Charles I tried to control those who opposed his rule. In your opinion, which of Charles's attempts was most effective in maintaining his control?

Make Connections

4. How important is freedom of speech in Canadian society today? Are there times when this freedom is taken too far? Share your thinking with a partner.

Synthesize and Evaluate

5. Rank the ways parliament tried to limit a monarch's power from most effective to least effective. Give reasons for your opinion.
6. Write a paragraph to answer the section question: *What main factors led to the English Civil War?* Set aside your paragraph to help you answer the Chapter Focus Question at the end of the chapter.

How did the Civil War end the monarchy?

When the Civil War began, both sides had to pull together a fighting force. Each side called on the loyalties of the people. Were you for the king, or for parliament?

Many of Charles's supporters, called "Royalists" or "Cavaliers," came from noble families and were used to fighting and riding. They provided foot soldiers and cavalry for the Royalist army. Charles also had experienced commanders, such as his dashing nephew, Prince Rupert, who could inspire the troops.

Parliament's troops were local militia—farmers and townspeople with almost no military experience. However, parliament did control the navy. It also held the richest part of the country—the south, including London. If Charles did not win the war quickly, parliament's forces and money would surely outlast his.

The Civil War

While Charles was successful at first, he only won small battles. Meanwhile, as battles were fought across England, parliament quickly built a more modern army. The new soldiers, called "Roundheads" (because they cut their hair short, compared to many Cavaliers, who wore long curls), were highly disciplined, usually very religious, and well-equipped. They could also be promoted based on performance and ability. This was a very different practice than in traditional armies, where only nobles could be officers and commanders.

By 1645, the New Model Army had taken shape. Led by a daring commander, Oliver Cromwell, the army was a formidable force. After a series of battles throughout England, the Royalists were finally defeated at the Battle of Naseby on June 14, 1645. Charles was forced to flee to Scotland, where he was made prisoner and handed over to parliament.

Reading

Set a Purpose

As you read this section, make a list of the ways parliament tried to prove Charles was guilty of treason.

Cavalier a supporter of Charles I; derived from the French word *chevalier*, meaning "horseman"



- **FIGURE 4-16** A member of the Roundhead Society
- marches in London in 2010. The New Model Army
- ultimately defeated the Royalists. What do you think
- made this possible?