

The Civil War Knowledge Organiser

Why did Charles I shut down parliament?

Charles believed in the “**divine right of kings**” meaning that no man could tell him what to do.

Parliament wanted to **reduce the power** a king should have.



Charles **angered** many people in the country because of his **favourites** and **high spending**.

Parliamentarians vs Royalists

Parliament declared war against King Charles I in 1642.

Parliamentarians—supporters of Parliament. Controlled most of the richer south (London)



Royalists—supporters of the King. Controlled most of poorer north and Wales.



The New Model Army

At the start of the war, armies were “volunteers” (unpaid) forced to fight.

• Oliver Cromwell developed the New Model Army—22,000 professionally trained soldiers paid for their service.

• First two battles were at Naseby and Langport in 1645—king quickly defeated after.

How did Charles rule without parliament?

In 1629, Charles shut parliament down and didn’t reopen it for 11 years—**personal rule**.

He had to find ways of raising money and making decisions without parliament’s approval.

- **Ship money**—old tax on people near the coast now used on everyone.
- **John Hampden**—refused to pay ship money imprisoned 1637. People around the country and in parliament protested
- **Appointment of Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud**. Catholic style ceremonies returned to churches.
- People who protested were punished harshly through the **Star Chamber**.
- Introduced **English Book of Common Prayer** on Scotland. Led to Scotland invading (**The Bishops War**)

Impact of the Civil War

1. **Regicide:** King Charles I was executed for high treason against the people following his defeat. Men from parliament had to sign his death warrant. These people were known as the “regicides”.
2. **Cromwell’s England:** Oliver Cromwell abolished the monarchy and ruled as England’s “Lord Protector”. A strict Puritan who enacted radical laws preventing people from going to theatre, the pub, playing sports events etc. He also led a brutal campaign in Ireland slaughtering hundreds of thousands of Irish Catholics whom he thought might try and rebel against him.
3. **The Restoration:** Following Cromwell’s sudden death in 1658, his son Richard became Lord Protector who was an unsuccessful leader and lacked military experience. The decision was made to “restore” the Stuart monarchy by bringing back Charles’ son, Charles II. This was the only time in Britain’s history since the Saxon period that England was ruled without a monarchy. Charles II immediately called for the capture and execution of the regicides.

