

CIVIL WAR OF ENGLAND

The **English Civil War** happened in the middle 17th century. The term civil war is a war where the sides involved in the fighting are from the same country.

At the centre, there was a struggle between King Charles I and the Parliament of England over how England should be ruled. The King wanted to rule without Parliament telling him what to do. At first Parliament wanted to reduce the King's power, but later it decided that the country did not need a king. King Charles's supporters were known as the Royalists, and were nicknamed "Cavaliers". Parliament's supporters were known as the Parliamentarians, and were nicknamed "Roundheads".

From 1639 to 1653, there was fighting in England, Scotland and Ireland, three separate countries that were ruled by the same king. The fighting that took place in each of these countries broke out at different times and for different reasons. In England, it lasted from 1642 to 1651. Some people think of this as one big war, while others think of it as three separate wars: the First English Civil War (1642-46), the Second English Civil War (1648) and the Third English Civil War (1649-51). The wars are also sometimes known as the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, including the Bishops' Wars in Scotland in 1639 to 1640 and the Irish Rebellion from 1641 to 1653.

The Parliamentarians won the war. Charles I was captured, put on trial and in 1649 he was executed. His son Charles II then tried to take over the country, but lost and escaped abroad. As a result, the three kingdoms spent 11 years without a king. For most of this time, they were run by Oliver Cromwell, a former Parliamentarian general. After Cromwell's death, the monarchy was restored under Charles II. However, kings were never as powerful as they had been before the war.

First English Civil War (1642-46)

In mid-1642, both sides started travelling around the country to gather supporters and weapons. On 22 August, King Charles raised the royal flag in Nottingham. By doing this, he was announcing that he was at war with Parliament.

The King found more support in the countryside, poorer parts of the country and northern and western England. Parliament found more support in most cities, ports,

richer parts of the country and southern and eastern England. People who were secretly Catholic mostly supported the King. The [Royal Navy](#) and most [Puritans](#) supported Parliament. Some areas supported Parliament because of local problems, such as the land drainage works in [The Fens](#).

The Royalist armies were led by Prince Rupert, the King's nephew. The Parliamentary armies were at first led by the Earl of Essex. The Royalists decided they would try to fight the Parliamentarians quickly, and so went to meet them in [Warwickshire](#). The first major battle was the Battle of Edgehill in October 1642. The battle ended in a draw. The King tried to return to [London](#) but was blocked by the Parliamentary army. He moved with his armies to [Oxford](#), where he had more loyal followers.

The first year of the war went fairly well for the Royalists. They strengthened their control over the north and west, but were less successful in the [Midlands](#). After mid-1643, the Parliamentarians started to do better. They won battles in [Lincolnshire](#), in the east and at Newbury to the west of London.

King Charles made a deal with the Irish rebels to stop the fighting in Ireland, freeing up soldiers that could fight for him. Parliament made a deal with the Scottish Covenantors, who would help them. Parliament were also helped by a talented army leader called [Oliver Cromwell](#). He led a [cavalry](#) (horse riders) unit called the "Ironsides". The Ironsides were better organised than most cavalry units, which made them far better at fighting.

The Battle of Marston Moor, 1644

Helped by the Scots and the Ironsides, Parliament won a major victory the Battle of Marston Moor in July 1644. They took control of northern England. The Royalists were weakened but not yet defeated. They won the Battle of Lostwithiel in Cornwall, defeating Essex's soldiers. They also managed to fight to a draw at a second Battle of Newbury in October.

In 1645, Parliament organised its soldiers into the New Model Army. The Earl of Essex was replaced by Sir Thomas Fairfax. Oliver Cromwell became Fairfax's deputy. The New Model Army was better organised than any army that had come before it. They defeated the King's largest army at the Battle of Naseby in June 1645. Most of the Royalist soldiers at Naseby were taken prisoner. King Charles escaped Naseby but left behind his baggage, which had letters inside them. The Parliamentarians opened them and found out that the King was trying to get help from the Irish Catholics and from Catholic countries. The King lost support because of this.

The other main Royalist army was defeated at the Battle of Langport in [Somerset](#), one month later. The Parliamentarians took control of South West England, where they been weak. King Charles tried gather his remaining supporters in the Midlands. Many fortress towns in the area from Oxford to [Newark-on-Trent](#) were still loyal to him. In May 1646, Charles met a Scottish army in [Nottinghamshire](#). The Scots took him prisoner.

The Thirty Years' Wars 1618-1648

The Origins of the Conflict

The **Peace of Augsburg of 1555** had brought a temporary truce in the religious conflict in the German states. This settlement had recognized only Lutherans and Roman Catholics, but Calvinism had subsequently made gains in a number of states. The Calvinists began to demand recognition of their rights. The Thirty Years' War began, however, as a direct result of a conflict in the Hapsburg-ruled Kingdom of Bohemia.

The Bohemian Period (1618-1625)

In 1617, the Bohemian Diet elected Ferdinand of Styria as king of Bohemia. Ferdinand, a member of the Hapsburg family, became Holy Roman emperor two years later, as Ferdinand II (r. 1619-1637). He was an ardent supporter of the Catholic cause.

Ferdinand's election alarmed Bohemian Calvinists, who feared the loss of their religious rights. In May 1618, the Calvinist revolt began when the rebels threw two Catholic members of the Bohemian royal council from a window some seventy feet above the ground. Both councillors fell into a pile of manure, and suffered only minor injuries. This incident became known as the **Defenestration of Prague**.

Emperor Ferdinand II won the support of Maximilian I (1573-1651) of Bavaria, the leader of Catholic League. Troops of the Holy Roman Empire and Bavaria commanded by Baron Tilly (1559-1632), invaded Bohemia. Tilly won a decisive victory over the forces of Frederick V at the **Battle of White Mountain**, near Prague. Frederick fled to Holland.

Emperor Ferdinand II regained the Bohemian throne, Maximilian of Bavaria acquired the Palatinate. The Bohemian phase of the Thirty Years' War thus ended with a Hapsburg and Catholic victory.

The Danish Period (1625-1629)

The Danish period of the conflict began when King Christian IV (r. 1588-1648), the Lutheran ruler of Denmark supported the Protestants in 1625 against Ferdinand II. King Christian was also the duke of **Holstein** and a prince of the Holy Roman Empire.

Ferdinand secured the assistance of Albrecht von Wallenstein (1583-1634), who raised an independent army of 50,000. The combined forces of Wallenstein and Tilly defeated Christian in 1626 and then occupied the duchy of Holstein.

Taking control of Prague, the rebels declared Ferdinand deposed and elected a new king, Frederick V (1596-1632), the elector of the Palatinate in western Germany

and a Calvinist. The German Protestant Union, which Frederick headed, provided some aid to the Bohemian rebels.

The **Treaty of Lubeck** of 1629 restored Holstein to Christian IV, but the Danish king pledged not to intervene further in German affairs. The Danish period of the war, like the Bohemian period, thus ended with a Hapsburg and Catholic victory.

The Swedish Period (1630-1635)

The Catholic victories alarmed Protestants almost everywhere. The victories of the emperor endangered the independence of the German princes, while the French Bourbons were concerned about the growth of Hapsburg power.

The new Protestant leader became King Gustavus Adolphus (r. 1611-1632) of Sweden. In the summer of 1630, the Swedes moved into Germany. Later in the year, France and Sweden signed an alliance, and France entered the war against the Hapsburgs.

The Thirty Years' War had begun primarily as a German conflict over religious issues. The conflict now became a wider European war, fought mainly over political issues, as Catholic France and Protestant Sweden joined forces against the Catholic Hapsburgs. During the early stages of the conflict, the Swedes won several notable victories. Tilly, the imperial commander, fell in battle in 1632.

Emperor Ferdinand II called on Wallenstein to form a new army. In November 1632, at the **Battle of Lutzen**, the Swedes defeated Wallenstein, but **Gustavus Adolphus** was killed in the fighting.

When Wallenstein entered into secret negotiations with Sweden and France, he was assassinated a few days later. The emperor's army decisively defeated the Swedes at Nordlingen in southern Germany.

The Treaty of Prague

The deaths of both Gustavus Adolphus and Wallenstein, together with the exhaustion of both the Holy Roman emperor and the German Protestant princes, brought an end to the Swedish period of the war. **The Treaty of Prague, 1635** generally strengthened the Hapsburgs and weakened the power of the German princes.

The French Period (1635- 1648)

The settlement reached in the Treaty of Prague was wrecked by the French decision to intervene directly in the war. **Cardinal Richelieu** (1585-1642), the chief minister of King Louis XIII (r. 161~1643) of France wanted to weaken the

power of the Hapsburgs and take the province of Alsace from the Holy Roman Empire. In addition, Richelieu was plotting against Spain and its Hapsburg king, Philip IV (r. 1621-1665).

Both in Germany and in the Franco-Spanish conflict, the fortunes of war fluctuated. For a time, the forces of the Holy Roman emperor, aided by King Maximilian of Bavaria and other Catholic princes, more than held their own against the Swedes and German Protestants. France's success against Spain, enabled the French to send larger forces into Germany. This helped tip the balance in favor of the emperor's foes.

Emperor Ferdinand II died in 1637 and was succeeded by his son, Ferdinand III (r. 1637-1657). Peace negotiations began in 1641, but made little progress until the death of Cardinal Richelieu in 1642 and the French occupation of Bavaria in 1646.

The Peace of Westphalia (1648)

The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 ended the Thirty Years' War. Sweden acquired western Pomerania, Eastern Pomerania was assigned to Brandenburg. France annexed part of Alsace and some nearby territory.

The settlement formally recognized the independence of the Dutch Republic and Switzerland and granted the German states the right to make treaties and alliances, thereby further weakening the authority of the Holy Roman emperor.

In religious affairs, the Peace of Westphalia expanded the Peace of Augsburg to include Calvinists, as well as Catholics and Lutherans.

The Peace of Westphalia ended the Holy Roman emperor's hope of restoring both his own power and the Catholic faith throughout the empire. The empire was now fragmented into a number of virtually independent states.

The end of the Thirty Years' War left Hapsburg Spain isolated.

The French war against Spain continued until 1659, when the **Treaty of the Pyrenees** awarded France part of the Spanish Netherlands and some territory in northern Spain. King Philip IV of Spain agreed to the marriage of his daughter Maria Theresa to King Louis XIV (r. 1643-1715) of France.

Together, the Peace of Westphalia and the Treaty of the Pyrenees established France as the predominant power on the European continent.

DUTCH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Eighty Years' War, (1568–1648), the war of **Netherlands** independence from **Spain**, which led to the separation of the northern and southern Netherlands and to the formation of the **United Provinces of the Netherlands** (the Dutch Republic). The first phase of the war began with two unsuccessful invasions of the provinces by mercenary armies under Prince **William I** of Orange (1568 and 1572) and foreign-based raids by the **Geuzen**, the irregular Dutch land and sea forces. By the end of 1573 the Geuzen had captured, converted to Calvinism, and secured against Spanish attack the provinces of Holland and Zeeland. The other provinces joined in the revolt in 1576, and a general union was formed.

In 1579 the union was fatally weakened by the defection of the Roman Catholic Walloon provinces. By 1588 the Spanish, under Alessandro Farnese (the Duke of Parma), had reconquered the southern **Low Countries** and stood poised for a death blow against the nascent Dutch Republic in the north. Spain's concurrent enterprises against England and **France** at this time, however, allowed the republic to begin a counteroffensive. By the Twelve Years' Truce, begun in 1609, the Dutch frontiers were secured.

Fighting resumed in 1621 and formed a part of the general **Thirty Years' War**. After 1625 the Dutch, under Prince **Frederick Henry** of Orange, reversed an early trend of Spanish successes and scored significant victories. The Franco-Dutch alliance of 1635 led to the French conquest of the Walloon provinces and a sustained French drive into **Flanders**. The republic and Spain, fearful of the growing power of France, concluded a separate peace in 1648 by which Spain finally recognized Dutch independence.

GLORIOUS REVOLUTION

The Glorious Revolution, also called "The Revolution of 1688" and "The Bloodless Revolution," took place from 1688 to 1689 in England. It involved the overthrow of the Catholic king James II, who was replaced by his Protestant daughter Mary and her Dutch husband, William of Orange. Motives for the revolution were complex and included both political and religious concerns. The event ultimately changed how England was governed, giving Parliament more power over the monarchy and planting seeds for the beginnings of a political democracy.

King James II

King James II took the throne in England in 1685, during a time when relations between Catholics and Protestants were tense. There was also considerable friction between the monarchy and the **British Parliament**. James, who was Catholic, supported the freedom of worship for Catholics and appointed Catholic officers to

the army. He also had close ties with France—a relationship that concerned many of the English people.

In 1687, King James II issued a Declaration of Indulgence, which suspended penal laws against Catholics and granted acceptance of some Protestant dissenters. Later that year, the king formally dissolved his Parliament and attempted to create a new Parliament that would support him unconditionally. James's daughter [Mary](#), a Protestant, was the rightful heir to the throne until 1688 when James had a son, James Francis Edward Stuart, whom he announced would be raised Catholic. The birth of James's son changed the line of succession, and many feared a Catholic dynasty in England was imminent. The Whigs, the main group that opposed Catholic succession, were especially outraged.

The king's elevation of Catholicism, his close relationship with France, his conflict with Parliament and uncertainty over who would succeed James on the English throne led to whispers of a revolt—and ultimately the fall of James II.

William of Orange

In 1688, seven of King James's peers wrote to the Dutch leader, William of Orange, pledging their allegiance to the prince if he invaded England. William was already in the process of taking military action against England, and the letter served as an additional propaganda motive. William of Orange assembled an impressive armada for the invasion and landed in Torbay, Devon, in November 1688. King James, however, had prepared for military attacks and left London to bring his forces to meet the invading army. But several of James's own men, including his family members, deserted him and defected to William's side. In addition to this setback, James's health was deteriorating. James decided to retreat back to London on November 23. He soon announced that he was willing to agree to a "free" Parliament but was making plans to flee the country due to concerns for his own safety. In December 1688, King James made an attempt to escape but was captured. Later that month, he made another attempt and successfully fled to France, where his Catholic cousin [Louis XIV](#) held the throne and where James eventually died in exile in 1701.

Bill of Rights

In January 1689, the now-famous Convention Parliament met. After significant pressure from William, Parliament agreed to a [joint monarchy](#), with William as king and James's daughter, Mary, as queen. The two new rulers accepted more restrictions from Parliament than any previous monarchs, causing an unprecedented shift in the distribution of power throughout the British realm.

The king and queen both signed the Declaration of Rights, which became known as the Bill of Rights. This document acknowledged several constitutional principles, including the right for regular Parliaments, free elections and [freedom of speech](#) in Parliament. Additionally, it forbade the monarchy from being Catholic.

Bloodless Revolution

The Glorious Revolution is sometimes dubbed the Bloodless Revolution, although this description isn't entirely accurate. While there was little bloodshed and violence in England, the revolution led to significant loss of life in Ireland and Scotland. Catholic historians typically refer to the Glorious Revolution as the "Revolution of 1688," while Whig historians prefer the phrase "Bloodless Revolution." The term "Glorious Revolution" was first coined by John Hampden in 1689.

Legacy of the Glorious Revolution

Many historians believe the Glorious Revolution was one of the most important events leading to Britain's transformation from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. After this event, the monarchy in England would never hold absolute power again. With the Bill of Rights, the regent's power was defined, written down and limited for the first time. Parliament's function and influence changed dramatically in the years following the revolution. The event also had an impact on the [13 colonies](#) in North America. The colonists were temporarily freed of strict, anti-[Puritan](#) laws after King James was overthrown.

When news of the revolution reached the Americans, several uprisings followed, including the Boston Revolt, Leisler's Rebellion in [New York](#) and the Protestant Revolution in [Maryland](#). Since the Glorious Revolution, Parliament's power in Britain has continued to increase, while the monarchy's influence has waned. There's no

doubt this important event helped set the stage for the United Kingdom's present-day political system and government.