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What were Cromwell's main political and religious aims for the Commonwealth 1650-1660?

Key Stages 3-4 | Early modern 1485-1750

Lesson resource



Introduction

On 30 January 1649 Charles I the King of England was executed. Since 1642 civil war had raged in England, Scotland and Ireland and men on opposite sides (Royalists and Parliamentarians) fought in battles and sieges that claimed the lives of many. Charles I was viewed by some to be the man responsible for the bloodshed and therefore could not be trusted on the throne any longer. A trial resulted in a guilty verdict and he was executed outside Banqueting House in Whitehall. During the wars Oliver Cromwell had risen amongst Army ranks and he led the successful New Model Army which had helped to secure Parliament's eventual victory. Cromwell also achieved widespread political influence and was a high profile supporter of the trial and execution of the King.

After the King's execution England remained politically instable. For example, Charles I's son joined with the Scots in a failed attempt to recapture the throne at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. The Parliament then in power was known as the 'Rump Parliament' because it was made up of men who had been elected in 1640 ('The Long Parliament') but now only contained those who had been allowed to stay after a purge of Parliament in 1648 by the Army. Over the course of the war the leaders of the Army were increasingly radicalised and soon became impatient with the inactivity of this parliament. In 1653 Oliver Cromwell forcibly removed 'The Rump' from power and replaced it with a new group called the Nominated Assembly (also known as 'Barebone's Parliament' or the 'Parliament of Saints'). This was religiously motivated and designed to put in government those who would push forward religious reform in line with Puritan ideas. These men were unelected, and despite initial feelings of optimism, the experiment failed and lasted less than six months.

A new constitution was proposed: an elected governor known as The Lord Protector who would rule with the assistance of a Council of State. In December 1653 Oliver Cromwell was installed as Lord Protector and

Suitable for:

KS 3 - 4

Time period:

Early modern 1485-1750

Connections to the Curriculum:

Key stage 3:

The development of Church, state and society in Britain 1509-1745

Key stage 4:

AQA GCSE History (8145)

Thematic study 2B Britain:

Power and the People c1170

to the present day, part two:

Challenging royal authority: the short and long term impact of the English Revolution including the significance of trial and execution of Charles I and Oliver Cromwell and the Commonwealth.

Edexcel GCSE History (9-1)

Unit: Warfare and British Society, c1250-present, option 12, Warfare and English Society in the Early Modern Period: the experience of war.

OCR GCSE

History A, Explaining the Modern World (J410). Unit: War and British Society c.790-2010: Charles I's personal rule 1629-1640; the Civil Wars and the abolition of the monarchy; the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660.

Introduction

he moved into the former residence of Charles I at Whitehall Palace. The regime gradually gained more of the trappings of monarchy and there were those who thought Cromwell should be offered the crown in order to promote stability and peace. Cromwell refused to be made King but when he was re-installed as Lord Protector in 1657 his ceremony was reminiscent of a traditional coronation. He also named his heir and successor: his son Richard Cromwell.

In September 1658 Oliver Cromwell died and the government was thrown into turmoil. His elected successor Richard came into power but his reign was fraught with difficulties and in less than a year he resigned as Lord Protector. The 'Rump Parliament' was reinstated but soon there were calls for the original members, who had been expelled by the Army in 1648, to be reinstated. In February 1660 these men were allowed to return and so the original 'Long Parliament' (elected in 1640) once again sat in Westminster and was now known as the Convention Parliament. In May 1660 this Parliament declared Charles II to have been King since the execution of Charles I and invited him to return to England to take up the throne.

The decade between the execution of Charles I and the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 was a turbulent period in British history. There were many in the country who wanted to see reforms in religion to make it more Puritan and less like the Catholic Church. However, some groups of people took these ideas further and formed radical groups such as the Quakers who were seen by many as a threat to the regime. There were also political differences over how the country should be governed and whether Cromwell should rule as a monarch rather than as Lord Protector. Finally, despite the end of the civil wars, warfare continued. Parliament embarked on a series of wars with the Dutch Republic over trade and Cromwell went on campaigns in Scotland and Ireland to try to establish the Commonwealth and subdue opposition.

This resource contains original sources written by people who observed and reported on these events. Their accounts contain clues about Cromwell's main aims during this period, as well as the difficulties that he came up against trying to implement them.

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Teachers' notes

This lesson has a [video starter activity](#)¹ based on one of our documents to 'hook' students into the lesson tasks that follow.

This lesson could be used as part of a teaching programme for any of the thematic studies for the GCSE history courses relating to the study of Warfare and British society or Power and Authority. The documents provided here give some insight into aspects of domestic and foreign policy during the Commonwealth period under Oliver Cromwell when England was a republic. The sources for example reveal the impact of puritan beliefs on the celebration of Christmas, the nature of martial law, Cromwell's treatment of royalist supporters, his foreign policy and its effects at home. Other documents provide evidence of Charles II's court in exile and some detail surrounding the restoration of the monarchy in 1660.

We hope that these records will offer students a chance to develop their powers of evaluation and analysis. Teachers may also wish to use the sources to develop their own lessons in a different way or combine with them other sources available from our [Civil War website](#) which has a whole section devoted to Oliver Cromwell based on extracts of his speeches and letters and sources from others writing about him.

All sources in this lesson have been provided with a transcript (modernised in some cases) and more difficult language has been explained in square brackets to support students. Obvious differences in the spelling have not been altered. Each source is captioned and dated to provide a sense of what the document is about. All document images and can be downloaded as a pdf file for educational purposes.

Please note that some of the letters in this lesson were written to or from somebody called 'Secretary Nicholas'. He was Secretary of State for Charles II, son of the executed Charles I. 'Secretary Nicholas' was living in exile in Europe and he kept in regular contact with people in England to keep informed about what was happening and the likelihood of Charles II returning to the throne. Therefore teachers could by way of extension ask their students to:

- Re-look at the letters and identify which ones were to or from 'Secretary Nicholas'.
- Consider if this might affect the accuracy of the information contained within the letters and/or if they might alter any of their answers to the questions.
- Consider why some of these letters are now included in government papers.
- Take a look at the [Great Seal of Elizabeth I](#)³ and compare her seal to that of Cromwell and Charles I shown in the [History Hook video](#)¹.

Finally, all of the letters used in this lesson were written to inform their readers about England in the 1650s. Some were written by people loyal to Cromwell and others written by Royalists, were

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SrJe2Qmf0b4>

² <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/civilwar/>

³ <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/the-great-seal/>

Teachers' notes

not. Thus, students could also write their own letter using the sources:

- Imagine you are living in England in the 1650s and have a friend living abroad who wants to know what life was like. Use the sources in this activity to compile your own account.
- Decide if you want to support Cromwell and his regime or the exiled King Charles II and try to make your report persuasive.

Sources

- Source 1: Report of Sir Henry Mildmay to the Council of State, 15 December 1650 (SP 25/15 pp. 54-55)
- Source 2: Extract from a letter from Sir George Radcliffe to [Secretary Nicholas], 2 September 1650 (SP 18/11 f2)
- Source 3: Letter George Dawson to the Admiralty Committee, 12 May 1652 (SP 18/36, ff. 79-80)
- Source 4: Extract from a letter [Secretary Nicholas] to Jos. Jane, 4 March 1655 (SP 18/125, ff. 9-11)
- Source 5: Extract from a letter [Secretary Nicholas] to Jos. Jane, 4 March 1655 (SP 18/125, ff. 9-11)
- Source 6: Letter from Captain Henry Hatsell to Colonel Jno. Clarke, Admiralty Chamber, Whitehall, 18 April 1655 (SP 18/96 f. 78)
- Source 7: Extract from letter to Charles Perrott to Jos. Williamson, Saumur, 25 January 1657 (SP 18/153, ff. 97-98)
- Source 8: Extract from letter from Charles Perrott to Williamson, 6 March 1657 (SP 18/154, f. 25)
- Source 9: Letter from William Downeman alias Mr. Mills to Thomas Betts [alias Sec. Nicholas] 16 March, 1660 'Flanders Correspondence' (SP 77/33 ff. 31-33)

Tasks

Look at Source 1

Report of Sir Henry Mildmay to the Council of State, 15 December 1650. Catalogue ref: SP 25/15 pp. 54-55

- What is the attitude of author of this report towards the celebration of Christmas Day? Can you explain his views?
- What does this report reveal about popular attitudes towards the celebration of Christmas? How would you explain them?

Look at Source 2

Extract from a letter to Secretary Nicholas, September 1650. Catalogue ref: SP 18/11 f2

- What does this letter suggest about the success of Cromwell's armies in Scotland and Ireland?

Look at Source 3

Letter George Dawson to the Admiralty Committee, 12 May 1652. Catalogue ref: SP 18/36, ff. 79-80

- How did the keelmen feel towards naval service? How might you explain this?
- How did they try to avoid being put on board ships?

Look at Source 4

Extract from a letter [Secretary Nicholas] to Jos. Jane, 4 March 1655. Catalogue ref: SP 18/125, ff. 9-11

- What purpose would Cromwell and the Major Generals have had for punishing those who had fought for the King by taking away their estates?
- Do you think that the writer of this letter supported the rule of the Major Generals? Explain your answer.

Look at Source 5

Extract from a letter [Secretary Nicholas] to Jos. Jane, 4 March 1655. Catalogue ref: SP 18/125, ff. 9-11

- According to this letter, do you think the men who went to sea for the Western Design supported Cromwell?
- What is going to happen to "2,000 young women of England"?

Tasks

- The author writes that these women had “lent the rebellious State” their “silver thimbles and bodkins” because many women gave their family silver to the Parliamentary war effort in the 1640s. What do you think the writer of this letter thought of that?

Look at Source 6

Letter to the Admiralty at Whitehall, April 1655. Catalogue ref: SP 18/96 f. 78

- What does this source tell us about the way in which Penruddock was dealt with by the government following his failed uprising?
- What reasons do you think Penruddock would have had to rise up in rebellion against the government?
- What does this source reveal about the judicial system during the Commonwealth?

Look at Source 7

Extract from letter with news from Charles II in exile, January 1657. Catalogue ref: SP 18/153, ff. 97-98

- What do you think the writer meant by the phrase “that would have sent the Protector to heaven in a fiery chariot”.
- What might have been the causes of these plots and treasons in Cromwell's England?

Look at Source 8

Extract from letter with news about the coronation of Cromwell, March 1657. Catalogue ref: SP 18/154, f. 25

- What might the reasons have been for people wanting Cromwell to become King of England?
- What might the reasons have been for people not wanting Cromwell to becoming King of England?

Look at Source 9

Letter to Secretary Nicholas about the restoration of the monarchy, March 1660. Catalogue ref: SP 77/33 ff. 31-33

- Does this letter suggest that people in the country at large were pleased that England would have a King again? What tells you this?
- Is there any reason to doubt if this letter is a complete picture of the opinions of ordinary people in 1660?

Source 1: Report of Sir Henry Mildmay to the Council of State, 15 December 1650. Catalogue Ref: SP 25/15 pp. 54-55

Report
sent to S^r Hon.
Mildmay

The Council having received several Informations that there was a very wilful & first observation of the day solemnly called Christmas-day throughout the Cities of London & Westminster by a general keeping of their shops shut up and that there were Contumacious speeches used by some in favour thereof, whilst the Council considering to be upon the old grounds of Superstition and malignancy and tending to the enervating of the faith and contempt of the protestant Lawes & government. have thought fit that the Parliament be moved to take the same into Consideration for such further provisions

33^v
& penalties for the abolishing & punishing of these & superstitious observations and meetings & such malicious contrivances of offenders in that behalf as their wisdoms shall judge fit. They have likewise received Informations of persons report unto & consisting of the idolatrous images in several places being great numbers of Changeling's by notorious breach of the Lawes & Statutes of the government: wherein according to notice given they have already taken some courses and desire the parliament will be pleased to take that matter also into their Consideration for further providing & suppression of that Practice in such way as to them shall seeme meet. That it be likewise reported to the said Parliament that the Council is informed that there are still remaining the Churches & pictures of the Cross being in several Churches Halls upon the gates & in other publick places of the City of London that the said Council be moved to appoint within they shall think fit to take the same down & pictures taken down & destroyed & to give an account of those executed in the same to the said Council as they shall think fit to allow for that purpose.

Transcript: Source 1

Sir Hen. Mildmay to report to Parliament that Council have received informations that there was very wilful and strict observation of the day commonly called Christmas Day, throughout the cities of London and Westminster, by a general keeping of shops shut up; and that there were contemptuous [disrespectful] speeches used by some in favour thereof, which Council conceives to be upon the old grounds of superstition [belief usually founded on ignorance or fear] and malignancy [evil/hostile], and tending to the avowing of the same, and contempt of the present laws and Government, and therefore request Parliament to consider further provisions [laws] and penalties for abolishing and punishing those old superstitious observations, and meeting with such malicious contradiction of offenders in that behalf.

Also that they have received information of frequent resort and exercise of the idolatrous [worship of idols or false gods] mass [celebration of the Eucharist in the Catholic Church], to the great dishonour of Almighty God, notorious breach of the laws, and scandal of the Government, wherein they have already taken some course, and desire Parliament to take that matter also into consideration, for further remedies and suppression of that idolatry.

That Council are also informed that the arms and pictures of the late King still remain in several churches and halls, and upon the gates and other public places of the city of London, and request Parliament to appoint some person to see the same taken down and defaced, and give an account of the execution of the same within a limited time as they shall think right to allow for that purpose.

Source 2: Extract from a letter to Secretary Nicholas, September 1650. Catalogue Ref: SP 18/11 f2

business may yet doe well. Comesse must fight or begonne. His men eat nothing but bread and cheese; drink ill water, and lay on y^e ground wth out huts: w^{ch} they will not longe endure. It may probably be guessed y^e he hath left at least 2000 men some killed, more wounded, and many runne away. 400 of his men came over to y^e Scots: they would not suffer them to stay in the Army: but sent them into good quarters, under the command of Weldon. They are thinkinge of a Modell for an Army to wait on the Kinge into England. But Cromwell must be beaten or retire first. And so much for Scotland.

more of him, since he left Calais. Colonel Blague is here at present: but I can sell y^e no thinge of s^r R: Page or m^r Coke. Out of beland all I heare is, that y^e Plague hath made a horrid desolation there. 1100 a weeke dyed in Dublin. Connaught is cleare, and kept by my Lord Nenricard, who has a pretty Army and so hath Cistelehaven: but they have not means to hold them in a body 3 weekes together: but must quarter them abroad. Hugh ~~exo~~ Neil, Owen neplew, who defended Clenmilfo gallantly) hath gathered up 2. or 3000 men y^e delights of y^e bp of Clogher Army, in Ulster, and is considerable to y^e enemy. On the other side Arson is awake in foot, only now the Scots in Ulster have recruited him: but he hath in severall places, in all 6000 horse. There was lately a speech y^e 3. regim^{ts} sent of them should be sent into England. for I ghesse much of this w^{ch} have

Transcript: Source 2

Even though King Charles I had been executed and fighting in England had stopped, Cromwell still faced threats to his regime in Scotland and Ireland. A lot of resources were used to subdue local populations and to fight armed forces. There were atrocities in both countries and ordinary civilians were killed.

Transcript

...Cromwell must fight or be gone [from Scotland]. His men eat nothing but bread and cheese, drink ill water, and lie on the ground without huts, which they will not long endure. He has probably lost 2,000 men in killed, wounded, and run away; 400 of his men came over to the Scots; they would not suffer them to stay in the army, but sent them into good quarters, under the command of Weldon. They are thinking of a model for an army to wait on the King into England, but Cromwell must be beaten or retire first. So much for Scotland.

Out of Ireland all I hear is that the plague has made a horrid desolation there; 1,100 a week died in Dublin; Connaught is clear, and kept by Lord Clanricarde, who has a pretty [skilful] army, and so has Castlehaven; but they have no means to hold them in a body three weeks together, but must quarter them abroad. Hugh O' Neile, (nephew of Owen, who defended Clonmel so gallantly), has gathered up 2,000 or 3,000 men, the relics of the Bishop of Clogher's army in Ulster, and is considerable to the enemy. On the other side, Ireton [Cromwell's officer] is weak in foot; only the Scots have now recruited him in Ulster, but he has 6,000 horse [troops that fought mounted as cavalry] in several places. There was a talk that three regiments of the horse would be sent to England.

Source 3: Letter to the Admiralty Committee, May 1652.

Catalogue Ref: SP 18/36, ff. 79-80

with sailors. hath all the assistance of Maio or my father tan
 aforesaid in the raising of men. It is said to strike what
 An unwillingness we find in Macdonnell's Low boy hidey-bug
 None is gotten but as soon are taken out of grave beds at
 Midnight (a few) as about 3 or 400 are gotten & as soon
 are taken & from 200 money given for 1 man away for as
 now we are transported to Lord Howe. Down to Enmouth
 Castle and there shall be kept until the first shipping of
 the 1000 & there shall be sent on board from west. So
 the 1000 & 1000. Maio was transported to Lord Howe &
 2000 from there will be sent down to Enmouth.
 Castle. & so on board

125

1800-13

Transcript: Source 3

Between 1652 and 1654 England was at war with the Dutch Republic as a result of a dispute about trade rights. The war took place at sea so many sailors and soldiers were called up to serve, including keelmen who worked on coal ships [keels were the large boats used to carry coal from the river bank to waiting collier ships].

Transcript

Mr Taylor hath all the assistance the Mayor or myself can afford him in this raising of men. It is sad to think what an unwillingness we find in mariners (how they hide themselves). None is gotten but as they are taken out of their beds at midnight. After, about 30 or 40 are gotten and as they are taken, and impressed money [money paid after men have entered service] given, they run away. So now we are constrained to send them down to Tynmouth Castle and there shall be kept until the first ships that call here and then shall be sent on board. Some were so refractory [stubborn or unmanageable] that the mayor was constrained to send them to prison and from thence will be sent down to Tynmouth Castle and so onboard.

Source 4: Extract from a letter to Secretary Nicholas, March 1655..

Catalogue Ref: SP 18/125, ff. 9-11

That run to find out if you is, but they are in the last. Their great
 distress in being of power; I call it all of them say badly, they are
 not any longer, & some of them more it appears. They cannot then be
 their objects were in their great power, yet nothing will (it is all) with
 the Mr. Guller, who will be in; I am in; I am in
 very sorry for the suppression of the the whole in Engl. / for
 him the good lady the whole is, it seems in the whole, & that it
 be under a number of the same. Some of the same & but, but I
 cannot give it all to be the report of it, even among the wife a
 man will rather make his own into from. The same thing is
 not, that is, the same thing of the same. The lady the same is very
 dangerous. I. R. which is the same. The whole & but lady for the same.

Transcript: Source 4

From 1655 Cromwell ordered that each County in England be governed by a Major-General. This was a form of military government which was an attempt to provide better law enforcement in the country as well as to reform the nation's morals. One of their responsibilities was to punish those who had fought for the King.

Transcript

Several persons are now sequestered [held in custody and forced to give up their estates] for being in the late King's garrisons in time of war, though they only lived there because their estates were there, and never acted; but nothing will satisfy the Majors General, whose wills are laws in the country. I am very sorry for the sufferings of these neuters [people who did not take sides, were neutral]. I hear Heenvliet's daughter is come to Holland to marry Somerdike's son, but I think so wise a man will marry his son into some noble family. When do Heenvliet and his lady go for France? Lady Hume is dangerously ill. [4 pages; the italics are in cypher, undecyphered.]

Source 5: Extract from a letter to Secretary Nicholas, March 1655.

Catalogue Ref: SP 18/125, ff. 9-11

[illegible]

Transcript: Source 5

During the 1650s England had ambitions to capture and settle overseas colonies in the Caribbean which were controlled by the Spanish. Fleets were sent by sea to islands such as Barbados and Jamaica but these met with limited success and were unpopular.

Transcript

The fleet in the Downs is very mutinous. Blake and Montague were sent by Cromwell to pacify the seamen, who are angry because Lawson is not Vice-admiral. Cromwell took his commission from him, suspecting him to have had a hand in last year's mutiny. Badiley takes his place, but is not so well beloved as the other. The discontent among seamen is so general that, if they had known they would have security in the King of Spain's ports, by his having made a fast conjunction [joined] with our King, many, nay most of the fleet would have abandoned Cromwell, who is said to be most odious among the seamen. You will have heard of the orders for pressing 2,000 young women in England to be sent to the West Indies; 400 are already put into 10 ships that are soon to be sent with provisions for Jamaica. This is an excellent expedient [appropriate solution for now] to pay the godly women for their silver thimbles and bodkins, lent the rebellious State at the beginning of the rebellion, for in those Indies, they may have wedges and ingots of silver, to make thimbles and bodkins for all the holy sisters in England. Capt. Carey has brought into Dunkirk 3 English prizes, worth 2,000 l. [£2,000] or 3,000 l. [£3,000]

Source 6: Letter to the Admiralty at Whitehall, April 1655.

Catalogue Ref: SP 18/96 f. 78

Since my coming from Plymouth
 yesterday I came here & lay
 in the night: and this day the officers
 to whom you were
~~sent~~ I am persuaded: and ten
 of the gentlemen of reputation
 only I am persuaded they
 find guilty of high treason
 and other crimes will come
 on tomorrow morning: and by
 one of them I do challenge

22 of the jury men as they came to the
 Court of the Jury Sworn of 12 what showing any cause
 but suppose they will be shown such will be the
 18th of the jury men to the Court: the 11th of the jury men
 18th of the jury men to the Court: the 11th of the jury men

Transcript: Source 6

In 1655 Colonel John Penruddock led a royalist rebellion against Cromwell's regime in which he tried to gather popular support to overthrow the government. The plan failed and he and his supporters were tried and executed. Later in 1657, there was a plot to assassinate Cromwell, one plot of many.

Transcript

I came here yesterday, and the assizes commenced to-day, when the juries were empanelled [selected], and 10 of the insurrectionists were arraigned [called to court], but only Penruddock tried; he was found guilty of high treason; the other 9 will be tried tomorrow. Penruddock challenged 22 jurymen, without showing any cause, before 12 could be sworn, and as the rest may do the same, it will cause the trials to be long; but it is the law, and ought to be submitted to. I must be here, for the prisoners deny at the bar what they confessed at their first examination.

Source 7: Extract from letter with news from Charles II in exile, January 1657. Catalogue Ref: SP 18/153, ff. 97-98

But I suppose to as little satisfaction to them as to others of either name of James (son)
 only. it only tells how of King Dances & must surely be especially, when of
 Queen says her son may be, & how of Kings new guard of a hundred gentlemen
 musketry like of Blows Henry. I have a parcel of other men for here.
 from England & other take nothing but Blows, treason, & a Gunpowder
 treason, & like of a new new brand of ~~new~~ James his heart, of all
 one blow would have, first of ~~the~~ to have in a very character, A strange
 notion for the gown a body. fine of his greatly in misprison as actors

in the intended Tragedy, but ye find power y say away Lambert, who may
win a match of match of Execution: this I think is of the worst of
a letter from young Mr. D. Bourdieu to his father: I suppose you have heard
of y different behavior of R. & D. of York, by reason of John Barclay
y Duke thinking it fittest to leave his brother, than to part w such a servant,
but I know y thinking is now composed & y Duke returned to Bragg, where
y King goes on slowly enough: y King expected out of y French army
pag y duty in execution, y answer being (Especially young Muskroy) that
they know not how to disperse w their Engagement to y French, & I suppose

Transcript: Source 7

This letter was sent to France where Charles II was in exile at the palace of the Louvre in Paris.

Transcript

... I would send you the Gazette [official journal or newspaper] but it will only tell you how the King [Charles II] danced, how his guard of 100 gentlemen liked the blue livery, and where the Queen [Henrietta Maria, his mother] said her Ave Marias [Catholic Latin prayers] The news from England is of plots and treasons, year of gunpowder treasons, that would have sent the Protector to heaven in a fiery chariot. Five of his guards are imprisoned as actors in the intended tragedy, but the prime plotter, they say, was Lambert, who was within an inch of execution. This news is in a letter from young De Bourdeaux to his father.

I suppose you have heard of the difference between the King and the Duke of York [Charles's brother James] about Sir John Berkley, the King preferring to leave his brother than part with such a servant. I hear the business is composed, and the Duke returned to Bruges, where the levies go on slowly enough. The Irish expected out of the French army pay their duty in excuses; their answer—especially young Muskerry's— being that they know not how to dispense with their engagement to the French.

Source 8: Extract from letter with news about the coronation of Cromwell, March 1657. Catalogue Ref: SP 18/154, f. 25

... of a coronation at London; the letter from shewes say it has been
 putt to y^e vote in parliament. & carry'd in y^e Affirmation, opposed only
 by 14: but they say his highnes will not accept^{re} until it passes without
 contradiction. The deal of the business is I shal^l be here, in I suppose not
 many to you. The breach between y^e R^{oy} & Duke of G^l is not quite
 made up. poor hopey there an^d of a good deal didd^d, or of brother who
 y^e bond of unity is broken. I shal^l have nothing more but to subscribe my self
 Yours man. 16. 1657.

27
 8th 40th sayth full for Ch^{arles}

Transcript: Source 8


During the 1650s some people wanted to make Cromwell the King and have a ceremony in which he was crowned. Not everybody agreed with this idea and Cromwell himself was unsure.

Transcript

There is much talk of a coronation at London; the letters say it has been voted in Parliament, opposed only by 14, but his Highness [Cromwell] will not accept it unless it pass nem. con. [Latin: 'nemine contradicente' meaning without opposition] The breach between the King [Charles II] and Duke of York [his younger brother James] is not quite made up; poor hopes of a kingdom divided, or of brothers where the bond of unity is broken.

P.S.—Mr. Fuller, the ambassador's chaplain, tells us the coronation is a certain thing, and will surely come to pass soon.

Source 9: Letter to Secretary Nicholas about the restoration of the monarchy, March 1660. Catalogue Ref: SP 77/33 ff. 31-33

80.  16th March 59. 31

ist day it was expected by some should have dissolved
themselves according to their vote and engagement to
the Bill and Nation. But the military of the Country not
yet settled and other business of importance suggested
they voted the Bill 20000^l they not so much to gratify
Hampton Court to the Right owner as possibly to oblige them
to a Collection of their longer sittings. That they may do
what they see need must be done. A moderate one the King
for the Public weal and their own. The body of the House
that Dissolved the House of Lords are now dissolved
themselves and the engagement for a Republic without King or
House of Lords is null and void, so that now we have Kings
and Lords in formality of their own language. They not yet in great
sittings and splendour as day the very Parliament (Excell^t Parliament)
that still remembered the late King. ^{and} and with the place for his
state many old things were by order of the Publicly all removed
obliterated. And instead of Excell^t & mine L^{ty} King and Subsequent
Bonfire in and about the change. The Bishops, the Clergy, the Doctors
in City and Country so much impatient call for their King
and a sure peace in him and so accordingly at least the people
everywhere much of way. They are good signs of an
approaching peace and happiness. Surely the good House understands
these and understands so well that I assure they will see all
their Master Art to be this Instrument of restoring the Nation
thence. And by the opinion many knowing men that get much
honor at that hour himself. Almost right to him; the Learned
Men are unwilling to run the hazard of new elections. The
Country have more honesty and will than they had. And they have
done for it. They will pay as off those heavy taxes
of an Immortal Parliament. Some objections there are to make

Transcript: Source 9

After the death of Oliver Cromwell, his son Richard failed to effectively govern the country. George Monck, first Duke of Albemarle, played a key role in the Restoration settlement that brought back Charles II, the son of the executed Charles I, to return as King in 1660.

Transcript

This day the House was expected to dissolve, according to their votes and engagements to the General and nation, but the militias of the counties not being yet passed, and other business unperfected, they voted the General 20,000l., haply not so much to preserve Hampton Court to the right owner, as to oblige him to tolerate their longer sitting, that they may do what they see now must be done, — accommodate with the King for the public weal [welfare] and their own. The votes of the House that dissolved the House of Peers are now dissolved themselves, and the engagement for a Republic, without King or House of Lords, is null [void] and vacated, so that now we have King and Lords in formality of their own law, though not yet in present sitting and splendour. Yesterday the very characters "Exit tyrannus" that murdered the late King [Charles I], and were set over the place for his statue in the Old Change, were by order publicly obliterated at noon, and "Vive le Roy" put up instead. There were bonfires in and about the Change.

The pulpits, the press, the people in city and counties, with much impatience call for their King, and a sure peace in him, and seemingly the chief powers incline that way. I presume the present Parliament understands their interests so well that they will use all their master-art to be the instrument of restoring the nation thereto. Many knowing men think that Monk [George Monck] aims at that honour himself.

The secluded members are unwilling to run the hazard of the elections. The counties have more honesty and wit than they had, and they paid dearly for it. They would fain [be compelled] cast off those heavy chains of an immortal [everlasting] Parliament.



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