

Two Continents, Two Civil Wars

Throughout English history, monarchs were overthrown, killed in battle, or discreetly executed, but before 1649, one had never been put on trial and publicly executed. After a long and bloody struggle against Parliament, this is precisely what happened to Charles I in the [English Civil War](#).

The disagreement between Parliament and Charles I was over the absolute power of the monarchy. For centuries, the monarch held authority over all government, economic, and ecclesiastic matters in England. Since the thirteenth century, parliament helped keep the monarch's authority in check – e.g. the monarch could not levy taxes with Parliament's consent. In a series of events, Charles ignored Parliament or attempted to use them to get what he wanted – beginning in 1629, Charles:

- Dissolved Parliament;
- Levied heavy taxes to finance conflicts with France and Spain;
- Offended Puritans, Presbyterians, and other Protestant sects by forcing the doctrine of the Anglican church;
- Recalled Parliament, but then ignored their decisions on taxation; and
- Raised an army to quell rebellion in Scotland without Parliament's consent.

Parliament raised their own army, defeated the Royalists, and, in 1649, had Charles executed. Parliament, led by Oliver Cromwell, established a commonwealth, which ruled England for a decade before Parliament reverted England to a monarchy.

The ideologies of the English Civil War cropped up again over one hundred years later on the opposite side of the Atlantic, and England found itself in the midst of another civil war over monarchical rule. Many of the issues Americans had with the monarchy are the same as those Parliament claimed a century earlier.

- Taxation – Much like Charles I used taxes to finance war with France and Spain against Parliament's wishes, George III levied heavy taxes against the American colonies to help finance the French and Indian War. Without Parliamentary representation, the colonies were unable to formally voice their disagreement.
- Monarchy-dictated leadership – Colonial governors were supposed to support the interests of the colony and be a go-between with the monarchy; George III gave no credence to the Americans' Continental Congress
- A standing army and martial law – In the mid-seventeenth century, Parliament, and the English people, grew increasingly concerned about Charles I's insistence on a standing army. Once Charles I recalled Parliament, two of the four points they insisted upon, and he agreed with, were against quartering soldiers in civilian homes and implementing martial law in peacetime. These two ideas were a serious point of contention in Boston shortly before the outbreak of the Revolution. Civilians were forced to quarter British troops in their homes (the case in multiple British-held locales as the war progressed), and the British Army controlled the city.

Religious commonalities between parliament and continental armies