



## *What kind of king was Charles I?*

### Case study 1: Monarchs before Charles I

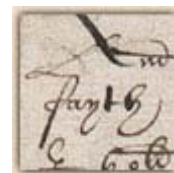
The two rulers who came before Charles I were Elizabeth I (1558-1603) and James I (1603-25). Studying these two rulers can help us to see whether Charles I ruled in a similar or different way. What do the sources tell us about how Elizabeth and James ruled?



**Great Seal of Elizabeth I**



**Great Seal of James I**



**Speech by James I to Parliament, 1609**

## Case study 1: Monarchs before Charles I – Source 1

### The second Great Seal of Elizabeth I

(Catalogue ref: SC 13/N3)

#### What is this source?

This is the Great Seal of Elizabeth I. The main job of a seal was to seal up a document. The queen rolled or folded the document, poured hot wax on the join and then pushed this seal into the hot wax.

This stopped anyone from looking at the document except the person it was sent to. The seal also showed that the document really did come from the queen.

#### What's the background to this source?

Elizabeth had a reputation as an outstanding ruler. This was partly because she was very good at propaganda (promoting her own viewpoint and reputation). However, she could also point to many real achievements.

For example, her forces defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588. Elizabeth also got on reasonably well with her nobles and with Parliament. She had many arguments with them, but she was usually able to find a compromise, a middle way that everyone could accept.

#### It's worth knowing that...

The other job of the seal was to send very strong messages to people about the ruler. It was packed full of symbols.

You can see:

- The motto: Elizabetha Dei Gracia Anglie Francie Et Hibernie Regina Fidei Defensor (Elizabeth, by the grace of God, ruler of England, France and Ireland and Defender of the Protestant Church)
- The orb (the round object representing the queen's role as head of the church)
- The sceptre (representing the queen's power on earth)
- Rays of light shining down on Elizabeth

- Elizabeth on a throne and Elizabeth riding a horse
- A Tudor rose, the badge of the Tudor monarchs of England
- A fleur-de-lys, which stood for France, and a harp for Ireland

### Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. What do you think the rays of light shining down on Elizabeth were meant to show?
2. What other features can you find in this seal and what messages do you think they were meant to send?
3. Looking at the seal, which of the following words best describe the image of Elizabeth:
  - a. Powerful?
  - b. Wise?
  - c. Foolish?
  - d. Weak?
  - e. Magnificent?
  - f. Strong?
  - g. Cruel?
  - h. Fair?
  - i. Caring?
4. Why do you think Elizabeth had the symbols for England, France and Ireland on her seal?
5. Do you think there is a connection between images of the queen like this and Elizabeth's reputation as a great ruler?



Learning Curve

# Civil War



Civil War > What kind of king was Charles I? > Monarchs before Charles I

## Source 1a





## Source 1b



## Case study 1: Monarchs before Charles I – Source 2

### The first Great Seal of James I

(Catalogue ref: SC 13/N4)

#### What is this source?

This is the Great Seal of James I. The main job of a seal was to seal up a document. The king rolled or folded the document, poured hot wax on the join and then pushed this seal into the hot wax.

This stopped anyone from looking at the document except the person it was sent to. The seal also showed that the document really did come from the king.

#### What's the background to this source?

James ruled from 1603-25 and he was the father of Charles I. James had a poor reputation as a monarch in some ways.

This was because his court was rather disorganised and he often drank too much. However, historians now point out that James was good at reaching compromises with his opponents on difficult issues. One reason for this is that his court was not too stuffy or formal. MPs and nobles found it easy to approach James and tell him about their concerns.

#### It's worth knowing that...

The other job of the seal was to send very strong messages to people about the ruler. It was packed full of symbols.

You can see:

- The motto - *Jacobus Dei Gracia Anglie Francie Et Hibernie Regina Fidei Defensor* (James, by the grace of God, ruler of England, France and Ireland and Defender of the Protestant Church)
- The Tudor rose (James was related to the Tudors, which is why he became king of England after Elizabeth died with no children)
- The king in armour with a sword

- The fleur de lys (flower) of France (English rulers claimed to rule France since medieval times, but by the 1600s it was just a tradition on the coat of arms)
- The thistle of Scotland
- The harp of Ireland
- The lion of England
- The orb (the round object representing the monarch's role as head of the church)
- The sceptre (representing the monarch's power on earth)

### Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

James had some very strong ideas about what it meant to be a monarch. See if you can find the symbols on the seal that show his views.

1. He saw himself as an emperor, a king who rules more than one kingdom.
2. He wanted the three kingdoms he ruled to be united as one state rather than seeing themselves as three different countries.
3. He was a committed Protestant and took his duty to run and protect the church very seriously.
4. He saw himself as the defender of his people against the enemies of his kingdoms.
5. He believed in law and justice.



## Source 2a





## Source 2b



## Case study 1: Monarchs before Charles I – Source 3

### Part of a speech by James I to Parliament in 1609

(Catalogue ref: SP 14/53/31)

#### What is this source?

This is an extract from a major speech which James I made to the Parliament of England.

Parliament was made up of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The Lords were the great nobles, landowners and powerful men of the realm. The Commons were smaller landowners, plus wealthy merchants and traders.

#### What's the background to this source?

In this speech, James set out his views on how he would run the country.

James became king in 1603. He wanted the Lords and Members of Parliament to know what he expected of them and what they could expect from him.

#### It's worth knowing that...

James had a poor reputation as a monarch in some ways because his court was rather disorganised and he often drank too much. However, historians now point out that James was good at reaching compromises with his opponents on difficult issues.

One reason for this is that his court was not too stuffy or formal. MPs and nobles found it easy to approach James and tell him about their concerns.

#### Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

What was James trying to say? Try to identify parts of the speech showing that:

1. James believed in the Divine Right of kings – that kings were appointed by God.
2. James would not accept anyone challenging his authority.
3. James accepted that he had a responsibility to look after his people.
4. James would respect the laws of the land.



Learning Curve  

# Civil War



### Source 3a

And no because any Christian is bound to give account of his faith, I will hold it my duty to lett my people know what I hold in this point.

Kings are god on earth, & this is illustrated by 3 degrees of comparison.

1. They are compared to god & sayd to be gods on earth, & some of us have

### Source 3b

2. They are the great fathers of the family
3. They are heads of the politique body

They are like gods for god maketh & maintaineth the doo they, god hath power of life & death, he hath they, god is corruptible to no man, no more are they, god adoureth & pulleth downe the doo they, all things are within the power of god, the are the gods of the subiect in the disposing of the k: & this is how in a king goddally, pud. sed.

Soe Kings in the beginning some were chosen by the people, some by request, some otherwise. They were governed as they thought fit, but some they have the request to govern by lawes, & may not be said to them, as the woman said to y<sup>e</sup> philip aut lege secundum leges, aut ne rex sis. And therefore we should well observe a k. to have to govern by his lawes, & should hym to be a tyrant, for soe you not but be pined being firm at his devotion to observe the lawes & c.