

Why did people want the king back in 1646?

Case study 1: Effects of war, 1642-45 - Source 4

Petition of Mary Baker to stop a County Committee in Kent taking her husband's money, July 1643

(Catalogue ref: SP 19/90)

What is this source?

This source is a petition or request from Mary Baker to help her husband, Sir John Baker, whom had his land and goods taken by a County Committee in Kent. Then a warrant was issued to take more money from him.

A warrant was basically an order. This warrant gave the committee in Kent the power to demand a further £600, a great deal of money. The petition was Mary Baker's request that her husband not have to pay the money.

What's the background to this source?

By the time this source was written the war had been going on for about a year. During that time both Parliament and the king used local supporters to raise money to pay for their armies. Controlling London and the South East of England gave Parliament a big advantage in its war effort against the king.

Armies needed soldiers, food, equipment and money. Throughout the war both sides constantly brought in new laws and taxes that were designed to raise money and resources for the war. On top of the official methods, there were also a lot of unofficial methods. Local bands of soldiers would descend on a farm or village and demand food and shelter. As the armies got bigger during the war, so did the demands on the population to feed and pay for these armies. There were many people in the same difficult circumstances as the Bakers.

It's worth knowing that ...

Areas controlled by Parliament were run by committees. Parliament's County Committees controlled their areas very strictly. The committee in Kent probably took the Baker's land because they supported the king.



County Committees were made up of men loyal to Parliament. Their job was to control their area and also to help Parliament's war effort by supplying Parliament forces with food and equipment. The Royalist side used a similar approach.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. What happened to Mary Baker's husband?
2. Why do you think the committee in Kent targeted him?
3. According to this document, why could he not pay any more?
4. How does this source help to explain why many people were supporting Charles in 1646?

Source 4

The humble petition of Mary Baker
wife of S^r John Baker Barronett.

Sheweth

That in Aprill last the Comittie in Kent did sequester the estate of your
petitioners husband in Kent where his Mansion house (about 40. miles
from London) and all his Land byes, to the value of about 2000^l and

your petitioners husband, being much indisposed in his health, his whole
estate sequestred, and so altogether disabled to pay a 22th parte.
yet under the les, a warrante was issued out against your petitioners husband
to make payment of the remainder, whereas in truth your petitioners
husband is much indrbed, and hath at this time not means left to
maintaine himselfe, and his wif, and children.