



Why did people want the king back in 1646?

Case study 2: Viewpoints, 1645-46

To understand why people wanted Charles back on the throne in 1646, we need to look at what people were thinking and saying in 1645 and 1646. These sources will help you to understand people's views and attitudes at the time.



Letter from a lady wanting peace, 1645



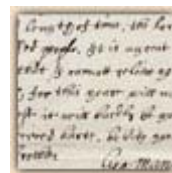
Letter by Charles to Parliament, December 1645



Reply by Parliament to Charles, January 1646



Political pamphlet against the king, 1646



Letter on economic conditions in Cheshire, 1646

Case study 2: Viewpoints, 1645-46 - Source 1

Extract from a letter written by a lady wanting peace, 17 October 1645

(Catalogue ref: SP 16/511/27)

What is this source?

This letter was found in the State Papers from the reign of Charles I. A lady wrote it, but we do not know any more about her.

It is possible that a Royalist supporter in an area controlled by Parliament wrote it, but we cannot be sure of this.

What's the background to this source?

By October 1645 the vast majority of the population were completely sick of war. The death toll of the war was very high from fighting, disease and damage in events like sieges. Historians think that a higher percentage of the population died in the Civil War than died in the World War of 1914-18. Not surprisingly, many people longed for peace.

Another factor that worried many was the increasing power and influence of people with new and radical or extreme ideas. In Parliament, and especially the army, hard-line Protestants called Puritans had become increasingly important. Other groups with radical political ideas, like the Levellers, were also writing pamphlets and gaining some support. For people like this lady, peace and the return of the king were priorities.

It's worth knowing that ...

By the time this letter was written Charles was facing military defeat. His last chance for victory disappeared at the Battle of Naseby in June 1645. He fought on until May 1646, but with no real hope of winning. Despite this, there was no question of getting rid of Charles. No leader on the Parliament side wanted to have a republic, a country not lead by a king. They simply wanted to make Charles listen to Parliament and follow the rule of law.

By late 1645 divisions were beginning to appear within the ranks of the Parliament forces. Some MPs wanted to end the war and stop paying for

the New Model Army. Some were concerned about the rise of hard-line Puritan leaders in the army like Oliver Cromwell.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. What did this lady want?
2. Do you get the impression she would accept Charles as king without any restrictions on him?
3. Study the notes that support this source. Who do you think the lady was referring to when she mentioned people who did not want peace?
4. How did the war affect this lady?
5. How does this source help to explain why Charles gained support in 1646?



Source 1

can not but hope a ^{generall} peace is at hand, is unwise
a, some be to have it so, but all the reason is left
me ~~te~~ me it must be so, and I trust you are of
that minde; althoe I wonder under fauer I hear
no moer talke of it in this partes that it is
a thinge desired by your master and thos about
him, and befor this that somthinge had bin done
but I fear to name or a gainst this blessing
had wee anie thinge to chuse of, in this day
tractions it maught be disputed; but I thinke
that past time a dae after so muche ille
succes; it tis not feet for me to see anie
moer, but praye for peace and to be content
with the suche a one as wee can gette,

Case study 2: Viewpoints, 1645-46 - Source 2

A letter written by Charles I to Parliament about a treaty, 26 December 1645

(Catalogue ref: SP 16/511/87)

What is this source?

This is part of a letter written by Charles I to the Speaker of the House of Parliament in December 1645. The two sides were attempting to work out the terms of a treaty to end the war.

It was one of a series of letters which Charles and Parliament sent to each other in this period.

What's the background to this source?

By the time this source was written it was clear that Charles was losing the war. He eventually surrendered in May 1646. The problem for both sides was to work out peace terms.

Most MPs were so sick of war that they just wanted to restore Charles as king and stop paying taxes to support the army. However, there were some MPs and many army commanders who wanted to force Charles to accept some restrictions on his power. They wanted him to agree to listen to Parliament more and to stop raising taxes. They also wanted him to obey the law and not simply put his opponents in jail. Many Puritan MPs and soldiers also wanted to undo all the changes Charles and Archbishop Laud had brought into the church. They wanted simpler churches with no decorations and simpler church services based on Bible reading.

It's worth knowing that ...

Charles tried to make peace with both Parliament and the Scots in 1645. The Scots had been against him since 1637 and Parliament had been at war with him since 1642. Parliament and the Scots had become allies in 1643 and fought together against Charles.

Although Parliament and the Scots defeated Charles in battle, there was no question of ruling without him. The idea of ruling without a king was not acceptable to any of the MPs, army officers or Scots. The main issue

was whether Charles would be king with no restrictions on his power, a few restrictions, or a lot of restrictions.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. According to this document, what did Charles want?
2. Does the source suggest Charles was being fair and reasonable?
3. From what you know about Charles, why do you think he asked for a treaty?
4. How does this source help to explain why Charles gained support in 1646?

Source 2



If therefore his Ma^{ty} may have the engagement of y^e
two Houses of Parlt at Westm^r, the Com^{rs} of the
parts of Scotland, the Ma^{ty} Aldermen, Common
Counsell & Militia of London, of the shire Comand
in Sr Thomas Fairfax Army, as also of those in
the Scots Army for his Ma^{ty} free & safe coming
to & abode in London or Westm^r: wth such of his
servants now attending him & their followers (not
exceeding in all the number of three hundred) for
the space of forty dayes & after the said tyme for his

free & safe repaire to any of his Garrisons of
Oxon Worcester or Newark, w^{ch} his Ma^{ty} shall
nominate at any tyme before his going from
London or Westm^r: his Ma^{ty} propounds to have a
personall Treaty wth the two Houses of Parlt
at Westm^r & the Com^{rs} of the parts of Scotland
upon all matters w^{ch} may conduce to the restoring
of peace & happinesse to those miserably distressed
Kingdomes

Case study 2: Viewpoints, 1645-46 - Source 3

Extracts from a letter written by Parliament to Charles I, 13 January 1646

(Catalogue ref. SP 16/513/10)

What is this source?

This letter to Charles was signed by the speakers of both Houses of Parliament and by the Commissioners for the Parliament of Scotland.

This letter is their reply to Charles's letter of December 1645, which you can read in source 2 of this case study.

What's the background to this source?

By the time this source was written it was clear that Charles was losing the war. He eventually surrendered in May 1646. The problem for both sides was to work out peace terms.

Most MPs were so sick of war that they just wanted to restore Charles as king and stop paying taxes to support the army. However, there were some MPs and many army commanders who wanted to force Charles to accept some restrictions on his power. They wanted him to agree to listen to Parliament more and to stop raising taxes. They also wanted him to obey the law and not simply put his opponents in jail. Many Puritan MPs and soldiers also wanted to undo all the changes Charles and Archbishop Laud had brought into the church. They wanted simpler churches with no decorations and simpler church services based on Bible reading.

It's worth knowing that ...

Although Parliament and the Scots defeated Charles in battle, there was no question of ruling without him. The idea of ruling without a king was not acceptable to any of the MPs, army officers or Scots. The main issue was whether Charles would be king with no restrictions on his power, a few restrictions, or a lot of restrictions.

Charles tried to make peace with both Parliament and the Scots in 1645. The Scots had been against him since 1637 and Parliament had

been at war with him since 1642. Parliament and the Scots had become allies in 1643 and fought together against Charles.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. What was Parliament's answer to Charles's request to meet and talk?
2. Did Parliament treat Charles with respect in this document?
3. What did Parliament want Charles to do?
4. Why did Parliament think its proposals would be a good basis for peace?
5. MPs and army officers were divided in 1646 between moderates (people who took a middle point of view) and hard-liners. Does this source suggest the moderates or the hard-liners were in charge of Parliament?
6. How does this source help to explain why Charles gained support in 1646?



Source 3

Concerning the personall Treaty desired by yo^r Ma^{ty}: there having
been so much innocent blood of yo^r good Subjects shed in this Warr,
by yo^r Ma^{ty}'s Cominands, & Commissions:

Wherby the three Kingdoms are brought
nearer to utter ruine & destruction; Wee conceive that untill
Satisfaction, & security be first given to both yo^r Kingdoms; yo^r
Ma^{ty}'s coming hither cannot be convenient, nor by Dissentments.
Neither can Wee apprehend it a means conducing to Peace, that
yo^r Ma^{ty} should come to yo^r Parliamt^t for a few days, with any
thoughts of leaving it: especially with Intentions of returning
to hostility against it.

their Authority.
That such yo^r Ma^{ty} against the freedom of the Parliamt^t imports
in both yo^r letters, with many earnest expressions, as it in no other
way than that propounded by yo^r Ma^{ty}, the Peace of yo^r Kingdoms
could be established; yo^r Ma^{ty} may please to remember, that in
our last letter Wee did declare, That Propositions from both Kingdoms
were speedily to be sent to yo^r Ma^{ty}, wch Wee conceive to be the

only way for the attaining a happy & well-grounded Peace: and yo^r
Ma^{ty}'s Assent unto those Propositions, will be an effectuall means
for giving satisfaction & security to yo^r Kingdoms; Will assure a
firm Union betwixt the two Kingdoms, as much desired by each
for other, as for themselves; And settle Religion & secure the Peace
of the Kingdom of Scotland.

Case study 2: Viewpoints, 1645-46 - Source 4

Extract from a political pamphlet against the king, June 1646

(Catalogue ref: SP 16/514/33)

What is this source?

This pamphlet argued against giving Charles control of the militia who had fought on the side of Parliament.

During the reign of Charles I there was strict censorship or banning of written material containing ideas considered harmful for political or other reasons. Anyone producing a pamphlet like this would have been punished severely. During the Civil War censorship broke down. New ideas emerged and were published in pamphlets like this.

What's the background to this source?

This source was published as Charles surrendered in the war. The next big issue was to work out peace terms.

Most MPs and ordinary people were so sick of war that they just wanted to restore Charles as king and stop paying taxes to support the army. However, there were some MPs and many army commanders who wanted to force Charles to accept some restrictions on his power. They wanted him to agree to listen to Parliament more and to stop raising taxes. They also wanted him to obey the law and not simply put his opponents in jail. Many Puritan MPs and soldiers also wanted to undo all the changes Charles and Archbishop Laud had brought into the church.

It's worth knowing that ...

England did not have a regular army in the 1600s. It relied on local forces called militia. Every county had a militia. This was the basis for an army when the country went to war or had to face a rebellion or similar threat. In the past, the king had always been in charge of the militia. However, by 1646 there were plenty of new ideas around.

This pamphlet is probably from a radical (extreme) new thinker. Most of the radicals agreed that giving Charles command of the militia again would put people like them, with their new ideas, in danger. On the other hand, pamphlets like this alarmed moderate (middle-of-the-road) MPs. If people were prepared to question the authority of the king, then

their own authority might also be questioned. As ideas like this spread, moderate MPs began to think Charles would clamp down on these dangerous ideas and so his support grew.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. What did the writer say would happen if the king had control of the militia?
2. Look at the first sentence of point 1 in the source. How does it describe the king?
3. How would you describe the attitude of the writer towards the king?
4. Do you think ideas like this were published widely before the Civil War?
5. What sort of people would have agreed with the ideas of the writer?
6. What sort of people would have disagreed with the ideas of the writer?
7. How does this source help to explain why Charles gained support in 1646?



Source 4



Case study 2: Viewpoints, 1645-46 - Source 5

A letter on economic conditions in Cheshire, 11 July 1646

(Catalogue ref: SP 23/197/39)

What is this source?

This is an extract from a letter written by George Manley to his brother Thomas.

George was in Cheshire and Thomas was in London.

What's the background to this source?

The Civil War was virtually over. However, there were pockets of Royalist soldiers still fighting. Parliament and the army commanders were also very suspicious of areas of the country that had supported Charles, even if they were no longer fighting. As a result, they stationed large numbers of soldiers in these areas and forced the local people to pay for the soldiers through harsh taxes.

Cheshire had tried to declare itself neutral during the Civil War, but Parliament had not allowed this. The city of Chester supported Charles I and so did much of the rest of the county. Parliament forces besieged Chester. Cheshire people had to suffer both Royalist and Parliament armies in their county.

It's worth knowing that ...

Even areas that had not supported Charles had to pay heavy taxes to support the army. As discontent with taxes grew, army control gradually got tighter.

From 1646 onwards the army became an increasingly powerful force. Taxes to pay for the army were far higher than they had ever been in the rule of Charles I. Parliament's County Committees also controlled each county very closely.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. How bad were things in Cheshire in 1646?
2. What did Manley blame for the conditions?
3. How does this source help to explain why Charles gained support in 1646?



Source 5

a poore and miserable countrey we live in, and if this
Stagnation continue, it is like to be worse, if that be possible
of being worse, for the taxes are so many, and the paym^t laid
upon us, is more than our land is worth, our stocks are wasted,
and we are put into a way of ruine, not easily to be recovered, but
by great provident, and length of time, the Lord look down in mercy
upon his poore distressed people. It is a great griefe to me to be
reduced to so low an estate, that I cannot receive yo^r wants in yo^r owne,
for your land and tithes for this year will not yeald you about 20,
yo^r tenants are so opprest it will hardly be gotten from them. And
so wth a troubled and grieved heart, he bids you farewell that will
ever be yo^r loving brother

Geo: Manley