



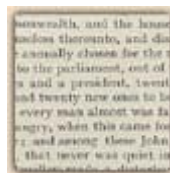
Why did Britain become a republic?

Case study 2: New government

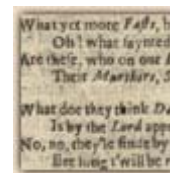
Even today many people are not aware that Britain was ever a republic. After Charles I was put to death in 1649, a monarch no longer led the country. Instead people dreamed up ideas and made plans for a different form of government. Find out more from these documents about what happened next.



Report on the arrest of Levellers, 1649



An account of the setting up of the Commonwealth



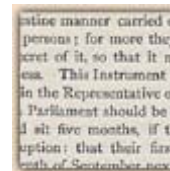
Poem on the new situation in England, 1649



Portrait & symbols of Cromwell & the Commonwealth



Cromwell at the Battle of Worcester, 1651



The setting up of the Instrument of Government

Case study 2: New government - Source 1

A report on the arrest of some Levellers, 29 March 1649

(Catalogue ref: SP 25/62, pp.134-5)

What is this source?

This is a report from a committee of MPs to Parliament. It explains their actions against the leaders of the Levellers.

One of the men they arrested was John Lilburne, a key figure in the Leveller movement.

What's the background to this source?

Before the war of the 1640s it was difficult and dangerous to come up with new ideas and try to publish them. However, during the Civil War censorship was not strongly enforced. Many political groups emerged with new ideas at this time. One of the most radical (extreme) groups was the Levellers.

From 1645 onwards Lilburne and other writers published pamphlets that set out a range of ideas. They organised petitions that gained thousands of signatures. The Levellers wanted the vote to be given to all men, not just rich gentlemen. As well as big political ideas, the Levellers also highlighted important everyday issues. They complained about high food prices that the poor could not afford. They complained about poor pay and late pay for the soldiers in the army. They gained a lot of support from the poor in the towns and among the ordinary soldiers of the New Model Army. Not surprisingly, their ideas were alarming to the nobles and gentry. Their support in the army also worried the army commanders. In May 1649 Levellers in the army led a mutiny, a rebellion against the army leaders at Burford in Oxfordshire.

It's worth knowing that ...

This document was published soon after the king was executed in 1649, so England was a republic. Many radical thinkers like the Levellers hoped that the new England would be a better place. As this source shows, their hopes were not really fulfilled.

A republic is a nation whose head of state is not a monarch. For example a country that is headed by a President might be called a republic.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. Who are arrested?
2. Why were they arrested?
3. What does this tell you about society at the time?
4. What was the title of the book Lilburne was reading from?
5. Try and guess what kind of things the book was saying. Use the notes and the key people & events section to help you. (See key people & events)



Source 1

That it be reported to the House, That in pursuance
of their Order of the 27th of March instant —
this Com^{rs} hath caused four persons to be
apprehended, viz: Lieut^{nt} Colonel John Lilburne,
M^r. William Walwyn, M^r. Richard Overton & —
M^r. Thomas Priner. That the Com^{rs} hath
beene informed by some witnesses, who were
before the Com^{rs}. That the said Lt^{nt} Colonel
Lilburne did read the Booke called Englands —
now Charms discovered, on Sunday last at —
Winchester house, before a great multitude of people
and perswaded Subscriptions to it, and endeavoured
to answer objections made against it, And did
there affirme that himselfe, and three others —
viz: M^r. Walwyn, M^r. Priner and M^r. Cobby
would make good the matter of that Booke, with
their lives

Case study 2: New government - Source 2

An account of the setting up of the Commonwealth in 1649

(By permission of Taylor & Francis: *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, by his widow Lucy, published by George Routledge, 1906, pp. 272-3)

What is this source?

This comes from the *Memoirs of the life of Colonel Hutchinson* written by his wife. Her account was written in the 1660s. It describes his life and career.

Her husband was a senior commander in the army and a trusted ally of Cromwell. He also signed Charles I's death warrant. However, as time went on Colonel Hutchinson became concerned about Cromwell's actions.

What's the background to this source?

England in 1649 was a republic, a state that was not ruled by a monarch. The new state was known as the Commonwealth of England.

When the Second Civil War ended in 1648, Charles I was put on trial and executed in January 1649. After this, MPs and the army had to decide on a new way for the country to be ruled.

It's worth knowing that ...

There were huge challenges facing the new republic when it was formed in 1649.

- There was a lot of sympathy for Charles I and his son (also called Charles).
- There was rebellion in Ireland.
- The Scots were unhappy about the execution of the king.
- England's enemies in Holland were threatening the country.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?



1. What kind of new government was formed after the death of the king?
2. How did the new government work?
3. How did people react to the new government?
4. Was the writer of this source in favour of the new government?
5. What were the achievements of the new government?
6. What was the writer's view of Cromwell?

Source 2



After the death of the king it was debated and resolved to change the form of government from monarchical into a commonwealth, and the house of lords was voted dangerous and useless thereunto, and dissolved. A council of state was to be annually chosen for the management of affairs, accountable to the parliament, out of which, consisting of forty councillors and a president, twenty were every year to go off by lot, and twenty new ones to be supplied. It is true, at that time every man almost was fancying a form of government, and angry, when this came forth, that his invention took not place; and among these John Lilburne, a turbulent, spirited man, that never was quiet in anything, published libels; and the levellers made a disturbance with a kind of insurrection which Cromwell soon appeased, they indeed being betrayed by their own leaders.

But how the public business went on, how Cromwell finished the conquest of Ireland, how the angry presbyterians spit fire out of their pulpits, and endeavoured to blow up the people against the parliament, how they entered into a treasonable conspiracy with Scotland, who had now received and crowned

the son of the late king, who led them in hither in a great army, which the Lord of hosts discomfited; how our public ministers were assassinated and murdered in Spain and Holland¹; and how the Dutch, in this unsettlement of affairs, hoped to gain by making war, wherein they were beaten and brought to sue for peace,—I shall leave to the stories that were then written; and only in general say that the hand of God was mightily seen in prospering and preserving the parliament till Cromwell's ambition unhappily interrupted them.



Case study 2: New government - Source 3

A poem from May 1649 commenting on the new situation in England

(Catalogue ref: SP 9/246/21)

What is this source?

This comes from a pamphlet about the leading figures behind the trial and execution of Charles I.

Those mentioned in the poem include Oliver Cromwell (NoI) and Colonel Pride, who led Pride's Purge of Parliament (Pryde).

What's the background to this source?

From 1646-9 support for Charles I increased across the country. It was not so much that Charles was loved. It was more that rule by Parliament's County Committees and the New Model Army was even harsher than the king's rule.

Most people wanted stability, an end to war and an end to high taxes to pay for the army. As a result, most MPs tried to reach a settlement with Charles. This was unacceptable to some radical (extreme) MPs and to the army commanders. They put Charles on trial and he was executed.

It's worth knowing that ...

The trial and execution of Charles in January 1649 were among the most effective things he ever did. He was seen as standing up to an unpopular minority.

After his death many speeches, writings and drawings praised him. However, this did little good. His son, Charles, was not restored as king until 1660.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. What words would you use to describe the attitude of this source towards those who killed the king?
2. According to this source, what did God think of democracy?

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/>



3. What did the writer of the poem hope that God would do?
4. What does this source tell you about attitudes to the army commanders?
5. Is it possible to tell from this source whether this view was widely held?

Source 3

What yet more *Fasts*, by *Rebells* made?
Oh! what faynted *Devills*
Are these, who on our *Lord* have layd
Their *Murther*, *Sins*, and *Evills*.

What doe they think *Democracy*?
Is by the *Lord* approv'd:
No, no, they'le finde by *Monarchy*,
Ere long t'will be remon'd:

Their *Snivelling* forth *Rebellion* in,
The *Pulpit* doth but vex:
Our *God*, and will but hasten *him*,
T'inthrone yong *CAROLVS REX*.

Then *Tom*, and *Nol*, *Ireton* and *Phill* —
The *Dray-man Pryde* shall drive,
Upon a *Sledge* up *Houle-bouene-Hill*,
Till at *Tyburne* they arive —

Case study 2: New government - Source 4

Accounts of public money used in Ireland, with the portrait and symbols of Cromwell and the Commonwealth

(Catalogue ref: SP 63/281)

What is this source?

This is an account from the 1650s setting out what public money had been spent in Ireland and how it was spent.

By the time this source was produced Cromwell was Lord Protector, so it must be after 1653.

What's the background to this source?

Through the 1640s Irish Catholics rebelled against English control of their country. As a result, Cromwell led his forces to Ireland and defeated the Irish. Cromwell's main campaigns in Ireland took place in 1649. English control over Ireland became more secure than it had ever been.

- English rulers had struggled to control Ireland for many years.
- In the early 1600s James I got Protestant settlers to live in Ireland and help him control the Irish, who were Catholics. These settlers had good land and other privileges, and became leading families in Ireland.
- The Catholic Irish resented this and in 1641 they rebelled. This rebellion was one of the key factors that triggered off the Civil War in 1642.
- As the Civil War raged, the Irish Catholics tried to take control of all of Ireland.
- After the king was executed in 1649, the new military government decided that Ireland was a threat. England's Catholic enemies might be able to use Ireland as a base. So Cromwell led his forces to Ireland to get it back under English control.

It's worth knowing that ...

Cromwell is still a hate figure in Ireland today because of the brutal effectiveness of his campaigns in Ireland. Of course, his victories in Ireland made him a hero in Protestant England.

Cromwell's campaigns in Ireland were savage, although many campaigns in Britain and Europe in the 17th century were equally savage. He destroyed the towns of Drogheda and Wexford and killed many of the soldiers and civilians who had been resisting him. He then drew up plans to take land away from Catholic rebels and give it to his soldiers. James I and Charles I had also done this in the past. Many of the Catholic Irish were forced on to poor lands in the west of Ireland.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. This source gives an account of how public money was spent in Ireland. Do you think it might have had other purposes as well? What?
2. Why do you think the shields were shown down the side of this source?
3. Why was a portrait of Oliver Cromwell put on this document?
4. What impression does the images and the text give you of Oliver Cromwell?



Learning Curve
Civil War



Civil War > Why did Britain become a republic? > New government

Source 4



Case study 2: New government - Source 5

A picture showing Cromwell at the Battle of Worcester, 1651

(Cromwelliana: A chronological detail of events in which Oliver Cromwell was engaged from the year 1642 to his death 1658. Published by Machell Stace, Westminster, 1810)

What is this source?

This picture is an engraving showing Cromwell fighting at the Battle of Worcester in 1651.

The engraving was made by carving the lines of the design onto a hard surface, covering the surface with ink and then printing the design onto paper.

What's the background to this source?

This was a battle between Oliver Cromwell's forces and the Scottish army led by the son of Charles I (also called Charles).

- In the first Civil War Charles I faced several enemies - Parliament, the New Model Army and the Scots. However, these enemies were divided and Charles played them off against each other.
- In 1648 Charles allied with the Scots against Parliament and the army in the second Civil War. He was defeated and executed in 1649.
- England then became a republic, with no monarch. However, Scotland did not. The Scots declared Charles I's son to be their new king, Charles II.
- Charles II invaded England with a Scottish army. Royalist supporters in England joined him.

It's worth knowing that ...

Cromwell defeated Charles II at the Battle of Worcester. This battle destroyed Royalist resistance to Cromwell. It also brought Scotland under English control.

No monarch had ever achieved so much control over England, Scotland and Ireland as Cromwell.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. Can this picture be described as propaganda? Explain your answer.
2. What does the picture say about Cromwell?
3. Do you think Cromwell actually fought in the battle? Test out your views by looking at a detailed account of the Battle at <http://www.british-civil-wars.co.uk/military/1651-worcester.htm>



Learning Curve

Civil War



Civil War > Why did Britain become a republic? > New government

Source 5





Case study 2: New government - Source 6

An account of the setting up of the Instrument of Government in 1653

(By permission of Oxford University Press: Firth (ed.), *The Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow, Lieutenant-General of the Horse in the Army of the Commonwealth of England, 1625-1672*, Vol. 1, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1894, pp. 370-1)

What is this source?

This is an extract from the memoirs of Edmund Ludlow. Ludlow was an MP and commander of the Parliamentary armies in the Civil War. He was a hard-line opponent of Charles I and signed his death warrant.

Ludlow later clashed with Cromwell when Cromwell closed Parliament in 1653 and became Lord Protector. His memoirs were first published in the 1690s when the monarchy had been restored. For these two reasons the book is very hostile towards Cromwell.

What's the background to this source?

The Instrument of Government, dated 15 December 1653, was England's first written constitution. It recorded the basic rules for a new kind of government. It gave power to an elected Lord Protector, advised by a council. Oliver Cromwell became Lord Protector the next day.

- By 1653 Cromwell and other army commanders were frustrated. They had a vision of a more religious, godly country.
- Most MPs in the Rump Parliament did not share this vision. The MPs were afraid of extreme political and religious groups and tried to crush them.
- Cromwell wanted a more tolerant approach to these groups, as long as they did not cause trouble. Although he has a reputation as a religious fanatic, Cromwell was surprisingly relaxed about other faiths and religious groups.
- The Rump Parliament also tried to reduce the size and power of the army because the nobles and gentry were fed up with paying taxes to keep it.

- In 1653 Cromwell lost patience with the Rump and dismissed it. His supporters then made him Lord Protector.

It's worth knowing that ...

Cromwell became Lord Protector for life. He ruled until his death in 1658.

The office of Lord Protector had many of the powers of a king. However, it was not hereditary. So when Cromwell died, none of his children automatically became ruler.

Your turn: What can we learn from this source?

1. What was the Instrument of Government?
2. According to this source, how was it put into place?
3. How can you tell the writer was not in favour of this measure?
4. What were the main terms of the Instrument of Government?
5. What do you notice about the members of Cromwell's council?



Source 6

At the next meeting of officers it was not thought fit to consult with them at all; but they were openly told by Major-General Lambert, that the General would take care of managing the civil government; and then having required them to repair to their respective charges, where their troops and companies lay, that they might preserve the publick peace, he dismissed them.

Thus was this important business that so highly concerned the nation, and in some measure all Europe, in a clandestine manner carried on and huddled up by two or three persons; for more they were not who were let into the secret of it, so that it may justly be called a work of darkness. This Instrument appointed the legislative power to be in the Representative of the people and the Protector; that a Parliament should be chosen every three years, which should sit five months, if they thought fit, without any interruption: that their first meeting should be on the thirteenth of September next ensuing: that the members of whom the Parliament was to consist, should be chosen by the people: that whatsoever they would have enacted, should be presented to the Protector for his consent; and that if he did not confirm it within twenty days after it was first tendred to him, it should have the force and obligation of a law; provided that it extended not to lessen the number or pay of the army, to punish any man on account of his conscience, or to make any alteration in the Instrument of Government; in all which a negative was reserved to the single person. It provided also that all writs should issue out in the Protector's name: that most of the magistrates should be appointed, and all honours conferred by him: that he should have the power of the militia by sea and land: that in the intervals of Parliament the nation should be governed by the Protector and his council, who were not to exceed the number of one and twenty, nor to be under thirteen. The first persons nominated to be of his council were Major-General Lambert, Col. Desborough, Mr. Henry Lawrence, Sir Charles Wolsely, Col. William Sydenham, Mr. Francis Rouse, Philip Viscount Lisle, Col. Philip Jones, Col. Montague, Mr. Richard Major, Walter Strickland, Esq., Sir Gilbert Pickering, Major-General Skippon, and Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, in all fourteen.