



## *Why did people go to war in 1642?*

### Case study 2: 1640-42 - Source 6

#### Report of tensions in the country, 6 January 1642

(Catalogue ref: SP 16/488/27)

#### What is this source?

These are extracts from a report written by a gentleman called Thomas Wiseman to Sir John Penington. Penington was not in London at the time and wanted to be kept informed of what was happening.

Wealthy and important people at the time were surprisingly well informed about events. There were many pamphlets and newspapers, as well as personal letters such as this one.

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

By 1642 relations between Charles and Parliament were a disaster. In January 1642 Charles lost patience with Parliament and tried to arrest five leading MPs and one Lord (John Pym, John Hampden, Arthur Haselrigg, Denzel Hollis, William Strode and Lord Mandeville). This destroyed any trust that was left between the two sides after years of arguing.

Clashes between Parliament and Charles leading up to this point included:

- In November 1641 they disagreed over who should control the army that was to be sent to Ireland to defeat the rebellion there.
- In the same month Parliament passed the Grand Remonstrance criticising Charles's policies.
- By this stage Parliament was dominated by Charles's opponents, led by John Pym and other Puritans. The Puritans opposed many aspects of Charles's rule. They especially disliked the religious changes he brought in and that many people had been arrested and punished without a trial for opposing the king's policies.



## It's worth knowing that ...

One of the most important privileges of Parliament was that the king could not enter unless he was invited. This rule was to prevent the king sitting in Parliament and making MPs too nervous to say what they really thought. The attempt to arrest the MPs was a big step by Charles and convinced many MPs that he could not be trusted.

Although we talk about Charles fighting Parliament, we should remember that not all MPs thought the same way. In 1640 most MPs were united in criticising Charles. By 1642 some MPs were now on the king's side as they felt that Pym and the other opponents of Charles had gone too far. Many of Charles's supporters stood by him out of loyalty, rather than because they believed he was in the right.

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

1. What did Parliament do to the 12 bishops?
2. How did the king respond?
3. How did the crowd in London treat the king?
4. Was Thomas Wiseman impressed with the way the king handled the situation?
5. Was Wiseman's sympathy with the king or with Parliament?
6. Do you get the impression that Wiseman was a reliable reporter of what happened?
7. What was the reaction to Charles's attempt to arrest the MPs?
8. Does this source give us any clues about why the kingdom went to war in 1642?



## Source 6a

12<sup>th</sup> B<sup>ro</sup> were impeached of  
high treason by the Parliament, and this  
week 5 of the sheriffs members of the house  
of commons, & the Lord Maudslai, in the  
Lords house, by the King, and by the charge  
given them, & their names you may  
perceive, by a petition here<sup>th</sup> enclosed  
w<sup>ch</sup> hath beend such a distemper both in  
the King, & Houses of Parliament. That we are  
not free from the fears of an insurrection





## Source 6b

My lord ma<sup>ty</sup> yesterday came  
in to the Citie, and made a great word  
speech to the Lord Ma<sup>ty</sup>, and so soon  
counten<sup>ed</sup> at the Guild hall where they  
were assembled to take order for the safety  
of the same & did as much as in him lay  
strive to give them all satisfaction, they  
repyed out to her Ma<sup>ty</sup>: to mayntaine the privilege  
of parliament, to whom hee most gently repleyd  
it was his desire so to doe & would not in the  
least invade upon them: but they must give  
him leave to distinguish betwene the parliament  
& some ill affected memb<sup>r</sup> in it w<sup>th</sup> have you  
about by treason, to invade his person and to  
w<sup>th</sup> drawe his people from their allegiance, and  
therefore, both for his owne safety & their good  
hee must & will force them out to bring them  
to Justice, w<sup>th</sup> should bee done in a legall and  
parliamentary way, <sup>& no other way</sup> and if they could heare  
your counsel, hee should bee glad of it, if other-  
wise, hee held them not meete fitt to,  
sitt in that Assembly, w<sup>th</sup> were meete together  
to make good lawes, & to reforme the abuses  
of the Kingdom. & not to betray their King,



## Source 6c

Afterwards his ma:<sup>w</sup> was pleas'd to bidd him selfe  
to dymner to sheriff. Garrett, where hee ma:<sup>ty</sup>  
stayd till 3 of the clock, & then returning  
to whitehall, the vnde multitude followed  
him trying againe, p<sup>r</sup>incelodges of parlant,  
p<sup>r</sup>incelodges of parlant, whereat the good king  
he was somewhat mowd, and I beleve was  
glad; when hee was at home,





## Source 6d

What these distempers will  
 produce: the God of heauen knowes but  
 it is feared, they traue not otherwise end  
 then in blood. The paritau fact will  
 w<sup>th</sup> the, seruaues & serkifmatiks. are  
 to p<sup>ro</sup>uolent both in C<sup>ou</sup>ntrey  
 soe that no man can tell, if the King  
 p<sup>ro</sup>uolent should not agree, w<sup>th</sup> partie,  
 would bee strongest, on Tuesday his  
 ma<sup>ty</sup> went to the house of Co<sup>u</sup>ns to demand  
 the persons of those that were arrested  
 for Treason, but they were not there  
 to be found; the house it seems taking  
 it ill, the King should <sup>in <sup>st</sup> w<sup>ar</sup>me</sup> come to break  
 there p<sup>ro</sup>uolent, & for ought I can  
 vnderstand: resolve to protect their

members, & not to deliuer them in to the  
 hands of the King, & to take them by force  
 they haue such a partie in the riddle that it  
 will rot hott water;