

# The Development of English Democracy


The Development of English Democracy

The Development of English Democracy

**Content**

- Early Development of Democracy (1100 -1500)
- English Civil War (1642-1651)
- Restoration and Glorious Revolution (1660-1688)

Select any event to get started.



Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

Early Development of Democracy (1100 -1500)

English Civil War (1642-1651)


Restoration and Glorious Revolution (1660-1688)

## Early History (1100-1457)

### 1100s - Jury System and Common Law

The Development of English Democracy

1100s - Jury System and Common Law



1100s - Jury System and Common Law

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

Some of the earliest examples of rights for English citizens are found in the jury system and common law, which are still in place today in modified forms.

In the 1100s, King Henry II introduced the jury system whereby 12 free men acted as jurors who testified to the facts of a case to help a judge make a decision.


Over time, the decisions of judges throughout England were compiled into a unified body of law. This was known as common law, because it was common to the entire kingdom. Since one of the main principles of common law is that it is unfair to treat similar actions differently on different occasions, common law is based primarily on court decisions from the past and is not written down.

Pretend that you made a speech in front of your school and the principal decided to arrest you and put you in jail for what you said. If your case went to trial, the judge would look at how other people who had done the same thing in the past were judged to see whether you were guilty of breaking the law. These earlier cases would set the precedent for how your actions would be judged.

## Magna Carta and John II

The Development of English Democracy

Magna Carta and John II



Magna Carta and John II

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

### ***Narration Script***

England has a long history of limiting the power of the king. In 1215, King John I placed high taxes on the English barons, or aristocracy, in order to pay for his wars. In response, the barons forced the king to sign the Magna Carta, a document that greatly restricted his power. This document was originally designed to benefit the barons, but eventually was used to give rights to all Englishmen.

Let's take a look at some of the more important clauses this document contained with respect to the development of democracy in England and eventually the 13 American colonies.


Clause 12 states that, "taxes shall be levied in our kingdom only by the common consent of our kingdom." In other words, taxes cannot be imposed on citizens without their consent. You may remember that one of the reasons that the colonists in America rebelled was that they were being taxed without their consent, an idea similar to this clause.

In clause 39 it states that, "No free man shall be arrested or imprisoned except by the legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land." This clause introduces the idea that individuals have the right to trial by jury and cannot be imprisoned without cause.

# Magna Carta and Parliament

The Development of English Democracy

## Magna Carta and Parliament



Magna Carta and Parliament

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

## ***Narration Script***

In addition to limiting the king's power, the Magna Carta established the framework for Parliament, which grew more powerful over time. Parliament started as a group of advisors to the monarch, and it grew into a national body for making laws with representatives for all of England. The first elected Parliament was formed in 1265 to give people a voice in their government. Today, Parliament holds all of the power in England. Its establishment gave the common people a voice in government for the first time.

## Tudor Dynasty (1457-1603)

### Henry VIII

The screenshot shows a software interface with a title bar that reads "The Development of English Democracy". Below the title bar is a window titled "Henry VIII" containing a portrait of Henry VIII. At the bottom of the window is a horizontal timeline with five colored segments: green, red, blue, yellow, and dark blue. The red segment is currently selected and highlighted. Below the timeline, the text "Early History (1...", "Tudor Dynasty (145...", "Stuart Dynasty (160...", "Interreg...", and "Restoration and the Gloriou..." is visible.

### ***Narration Script***


The Tudor family held the English throne from 1457 to 1603. Of these rulers, Henry VIII was the strongest. One of the most important acts that he undertook during his reign was to split with the Catholic Church and form the Protestant Church of England. Although this resulted in conflict between English Catholics and Protestants, it also strengthened Henry's position since he ruled the country and the Church of England.

Henry had many children by many different wives, and the heirs that followed him to the throne were not that similar. His son Edward VI became king in 1547 and was Protestant. Edward VI was a very sickly boy and died in his teens just six years after becoming king.

# Mary Tudor

The Development of English Democracy

Mary Tudor



Mary Tudor

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

The image shows a screenshot of an educational interface. At the top, a dark bar contains the text "The Development of English Democracy" and a back arrow. Below this is a window titled "Mary Tudor" with a portrait of the queen. The portrait shows Mary Tudor in a dark, ornate dress with large, puffed sleeves and a high collar. Below the portrait is a navigation bar with a label "Mary Tudor" and a series of colored arrows representing a timeline: green, red, blue, yellow, and blue. Below the arrows are labels for different historical periods: "Early History (1...", "Tudor Dynasty (145...", "Stuart Dynasty (160...", "Interreg...", and "Restoration and the Gloriou...".

## ***Narration Script***

The next to inherit the throne was Mary Tudor in 1553. She was Catholic and tried to make England a Catholic country once again. Her nickname was "Bloody Mary" because she burned hundreds of English Protestants at the stake. Mary died in 1558 and her half-sister Elizabeth became queen.

# Elizabeth I

The Development of English Democracy

Elizabeth I



Elizabeth I

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

## ***Narration Script***

Although Elizabeth was Protestant, she tried to settle conflicts between Catholics and Protestants by making the Church of England appeal to both groups. The Church of England maintained many Catholic rituals, however, one important difference was that the English monarch was the head of the church, not the Pope.

In addition, Elizabeth strengthened the role of the monarch over Parliament. She never married and had no children. She claimed that she was married to England and was given the nickname the “Virgin Queen.” When Jamestown was founded in 1607 in North America, the colony was named Virginia after her nickname.

Elizabeth reigned during England’s golden age and is regarded as one of the country’s greatest monarchs. When she died in 1603 without a direct heir to replace her, the English throne passed to her relatives who were the ruling family in Scotland, the Stuarts.

# Stuart Dynasty (1603-1649)

## James I

The Development of English Democracy

James I

James I from Scotland  
King of England from 1603-1625

James I

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

A screenshot of a presentation slide titled "The Development of English Democracy". The slide features a portrait of James I, King of England from 1603-1625, and a timeline of English history. The timeline includes: Early History (1...), Tudor Dynasty (145...), Stuart Dynasty (160...), Interreg..., and Restoration and the Gloriou... The Stuart Dynasty section is highlighted in blue, and a label "James I" points to it.

### ***Narration Script***

After Elizabeth's death, her cousin James Stuart of Scotland took the throne and a new dynasty, the Stuarts, now ruled both Scotland and England under King James I. James clashed with Parliament as he believed in the divine right of kings. He also drew criticism from Protestants who felt he was making the Church of England too Catholic.



# Charles I

The Development of English Democracy

Charles I



Charles I

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

The image shows a digital interface for a presentation. At the top, a dark bar contains the title 'The Development of English Democracy' and a back arrow. Below this is a window titled 'Charles I' with navigation arrows. The main content area features a painting of Charles I on horseback, dressed in 17th-century attire. Below the painting is a timeline with five colored segments: green, red, blue, yellow, and dark blue. A white box labeled 'Charles I' is positioned above the blue segment, which is currently selected. The timeline labels are 'Early History (1...', 'Tudor Dynasty (145...', 'Stuart Dynasty (160...', 'Interreg...', and 'Restoration and the Gloriou...'. A scroll bar is visible at the bottom right of the window.

## ***Narration Script***

In 1625, James' son Charles became king and brought even more conflict between the king and Parliament. Charles I also seemed to favor Catholicism, which angered some Protestants.

In 1629, he called on Parliament to raise taxes, but before they would, Parliament insisted that Charles sign the Petition of Right, a document which prohibited the king from raising taxes without their consent. This document also prohibited the king from imprisoning citizens unless they were accused of a crime.

Charles signed the document, however, after Parliament continued to press for more changes Charles disbanded it. For 11 years, Charles refused to call a meeting of Parliament, which angered its members. Finally, in 1640 Charles needed money to put down a rebellion of Calvinists in Scotland, so he was forced to call Parliament into session. In return, Parliament revolted against the king.

## Civil War

The Development of English Democracy

Civil War



Roundheads  
Supported Parliament

Civil War

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

### ***Narration Script***

In 1642, Charles was thrown out of his palace by supporters of Parliament called the "roundheads". He fled to northern England and gathered an army of supporters called the Cavaliers, who were wealthy nobles that were trained in warfare. The roundheads tended to be lesser nobles, common people, and Puritan clergy. Their leader was Oliver Cromwell, a Puritan and a skilled general. The English Civil War erupted resulting in the deaths of 100,000 Englishmen and destroying much of the countryside.

Cromwell proved to be a military genius and eventually defeated the Cavaliers. Parliament held a trial for Charles I and had him beheaded in public on charges of treason.

## Interregnum (1649-1660)

### Oliver Cromwell

The screenshot shows a presentation window titled "The Development of English Democracy" with a sub-window titled "Oliver Cromwell". The sub-window contains a photograph of a statue of Oliver Cromwell on the left and a list of key facts on the right:

- Oliver Cromwell
- Disbanded Parliament
- "Lord Protector"
- Puritan
- Parliament restored monarchy 1659

At the bottom of the presentation is a navigation bar with five colored arrows representing different historical periods: Early History (1...), Tudor Dynasty (145...), Stuart Dynasty (160...), Interreg... (highlighted in yellow), and Restoration and the Gloriou... A small label "Oliver Cromwell" is positioned above the Interregnum arrow.

### ***Narration Script***

At the end of the civil war, Parliament declared England a republic known as the Commonwealth, with Cromwell as the leader. He eventually disbanded Parliament, wrote a constitution and took charge of England under the title of "Lord Protector". His government was essentially a military dictatorship.

Cromwell was a Puritan, an extreme Protestant group that sought to purify the Church of England from its Catholic influences. Thousands of Catholics died as a result of his persecution. He banned all types of leisure activities and made people dedicate their lives to work and prayer. His reign was even more unpopular than the Stuart monarchs. After Cromwell's death, most Englishmen longed to return to the days of the monarchy. In 1659, Parliament met for the first time since Cromwell had disbanded it six years before. England's Parliament voted to restore Charles Stuart, the son of Charles I to the English throne.

[Image of Oliver Cromwell statue © Copyright David Bartlett and licensed for reuse under this Creative Commons License.]

# Restoration and the Glorious Revolution (1660-1688)

## Charles II

The Development of English Democracy

Charles II

Charles II

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

### ***Narration Script***

Charles II's reign became known as the Restoration of England as, once again, England had a monarch. The nickname for the period when Charles II ruled was the "Merry Monarchy" because the English people were so happy that Cromwell's rule had finally ended.

## James II

The screenshot shows a software interface for a history lesson. At the top, a black header bar contains the text "The Development of English Democracy" and a back arrow icon. Below this is a white window titled "James II" with left and right navigation arrows. The main content area is a large, dark grey rectangle, likely a video player. At the bottom, a horizontal timeline consists of five colored arrow-shaped segments: green, red, blue, yellow, and dark blue. Each segment contains several small white circles. A white tooltip box with the text "James II" is positioned over the yellow segment. Below the timeline, the text "Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou..." is visible.

### ***Narration Script***

After Charles II's death in 1685, his brother James became king. The rule of James II would once again pose problems for England. James II was openly Catholic, and many people feared he might force Catholicism on England. He also believed in divine right and took more rights for the king. Problems continued when James II had a Catholic son, leading to fears of a line of Catholic monarchs. Protestants looked for a way to remedy this problem.

In response to James becoming king, members of Parliament began to form the first political parties: the "Tories" supported King James, while the "Whigs" opposed his coronation.

# William and Mary

The image shows a screenshot of a presentation window. The main window title is "The Development of English Democracy". Inside, there is a sub-window titled "William and Mary" which contains two portraits: William of Orange on the left and Mary II on the right. Below the portraits is a navigation bar with five colored arrows pointing right, each with a small circle above it. The arrows are labeled: "Early History (1...", "Tudor Dynasty (145...", "Stuart Dynasty (160...", "Interreg...", and "Restoration and the Gloriou...". A tooltip labeled "William and Mary" is positioned over the fifth arrow.

## ***Narration Script***

James II had a Protestant daughter, Mary, by his first wife. She was now married to William of Orange, a noble in The Netherlands. Whig conspirators known as the “immortal seven” invited Mary and William to come to England and try to overthrow James II to replace him on the English throne.

William and Mary’s armies landed in Northern England and prepared for war against James II. James II’s forces proved to be unreliable as he was very unpopular. Mary refused to fight for him. James fled to Paris and William and Mary were crowned king and queen. Since this happened with very little bloodshed, people called it the “Glorious” or “Bloodless” Revolution.

In order for Mary and William to take the throne, Parliament required that they recognize this institution as the most powerful branch of England’s government, even over the monarchy itself.

To further protect the rights of Englishmen, the English Bill of Rights was signed in 1689. Among the rights it secured were: freedom of speech in Parliament, no excessive bail, and the monarch could not suspend the laws of Parliament. William and Mary’s reign marked the end of a movement towards an absolute monarch and a new era of English democracy.

## Review

The Development of English Democracy

Review

Select the quiz and answer the review questions. Close the quiz when you have finished by selecting the "x" in the upper right corner.

Review

Early History (1... Tudor Dynasty (145... Stuart Dynasty (160... Interreg... Restoration and the Gloriou...

### ***Event Text***

Select the quiz and answer the review questions. Close the quiz when you have finished by selecting the "x" in the upper right corner.

## Legacy of England's Period of Turmoil

The screenshot shows a presentation window titled "The Development of English Democracy" with a sub-window titled "Legacy of England's Period of Turmoil". The main content area contains a dark box with the following text:

- Legacy of England's Period of Turmoil
- Parliamentary power increased over Royal power
- English Democracy
- The Formation of Political Parties

At the bottom, a navigation bar shows a sequence of colored arrows representing historical periods: Early History (1...), Tudor Dynasty (145...), Stuart Dynasty (160...), Interreg..., and Restoration and the Gloriou... The current slide is highlighted in yellow.

### ***Narration Script***

The legacy of England's period of conflict and disorder between 1550 to 1689 was that parliamentary power increased over royal power. The monarchs became much weaker while the Parliament and people saw their power increase in government. Also, the period of disagreements in Parliament led to the establishment of political parties and factions, which are groups of citizens with similar ideas. Although the development of political parties was associated with conflict in England, they remained a part of its political system. Today they are an important part of any democratic political system.

In spite of all this turmoil, England emerged from this period as a stronger nation, and its citizens, even the common people, had more power than their European counterparts.