British Isles	France	Spain	Portugal
1603–25 James VI/I	1589–1610 Henry IV	1598–1621 Philip III	1598–1621 Philip II
1625–49 Charles I	1610–43 Louis XIII	1621–65 Philip IV	1621–40 Philip III
1649–60 Interregnum	1643–1715 Louis XIV		1640–56 John IV
1660–85 Charles II		1665–1700 Charles II	1656–67 (1683) Alfonso VI
1685–8 James II			
1688–1702 William and Mary			(1667) 1683– 1706 Peter II
1702–14 Anne		1700–46 Philip V	1706–50 John V
1714–27 George I	1715–74 Louis XV	1746–59 Ferdinand I	
1727–60 George II		1759–88 Charles III	1750–77 Joseph I
1760–1820 George III	1774–92 Louis XVI	1788–1808 Charles IV	1777–1816 Maria I

Fig. 21. Rulers of western Europe, 1600–1789.

The British Isles

In 1603, Queen Elizabeth died after ruling for almost fifty years, and the English throne was inherited by her distant cousin James Stuart (1566–1625), the son of Mary Queen of Scots, who had already been king of Scotland for thirty-five years. James had come to the Scottish throne as an infant, and had been raised by advisors who accepted Calvinist theology and supported the Scottish Presbyterian church structure, in which power was held by elected councils, called presbyteries, rather than by appointed bishops. He gained an excellent education, but also developed a strong sense of the divine right of kings; as we saw above, in a speech to the English Parliament shortly after he assumed the throne, James described himself as their "natural father," responsible only to God. His audience in Parliament, especially the House of Commons, did not agree. During Elizabeth's reign, they had gone beyond discussing and approving

taxes to raising other issues of policy, and they were clearly not willing to accept any lessening in their role.

James inherited Elizabeth's problems, but boasted none of her tactical political skills. Like all early modern monarchs, Elizabeth used patronage very lavishly, rewarding favorites with positions and offices – and often the income that went with them – for their service. Those who hoped for advancement flocked to London and to the court in the same way French aristocrats later would to Versailles. Patronage seekers included some of the great nobles, who held seats in the House of Lords, but also the lower-level nobility – what in England are usually termed "gentry" – and wealthy merchants and professionals, all of whom were represented in the House of Commons. In contrast to France and Spain, English nobles and gentry did not look down on commercial ventures, and they were not tax-exempt. Both gentry and urban merchants gained economically from England's overseas trade, and also invested in new commercial ventures at home, gradually gaining more land and wealth than the high nobility. Members of the House of Commons were better educated as well as wealthier by the seventeenth century, and they were intent on making sure that they had a voice in determining the taxes they were obliged to pay and other matters of public policy.

Some of the gentry and many urban residents, especially in London, were also dissatisfied with the Church of England established by Henry VIII and affirmed by Elizabeth. They thought that the church, with its hierarchical structure of bishops and elaborate ceremonies, was still too close to Roman Catholicism, and they wanted to "purify" it of what they saw as vestiges of Catholicism. These "Puritans," as they became known, had become increasingly vocal toward the end of Elizabeth's reign, and they expected James, who had been raised in Presbyterian Scotland, to support them. Instead he viewed the hierarchy of bishops as a key support for royal power, stating flatly, "no bishop, no king."

The war with Spain had left England deeply in debt at James's accession, and the struggle to pay off these debts gave the House of Commons the leverage it needed to expand its powers. The first three decades of the seventeenth century saw a running battle between the Commons and the king. The Commons gradually gained the right to discuss foreign policy as well as taxation, and refused to approve the union of Scotland and England. These disputes continued under James's son, Charles I (ruled 1625–49), and in 1629 Charles dissolved Parliament and resolved to rule on his own. He financed his government by expanding existing taxes in ways that most people considered illegal, such as charging inland areas as well as port cities special "ship money" for defense. His archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud (1573–1645), tried to force all English churches to adopt more elaborate ceremonies and services or risk punishment through a newly established "Court of High Commission."

Laud's measures were deeply unpopular in many parts of England, but he provoked even greater opposition when he tried to introduce a new prayer book in Scotland, where the church had been Calvinist in theology for more

than seventy-five years. The Scots revolted and invaded England, and in 1640 Charles was forced to call Parliament to pay for an army to fight the Scots. This Parliament, called the "Long Parliament" because it met for thirteen years, was dominated by men with long-standing grievances against the king, and refused to trust him with an army without drastically limiting his power to use that army. It passed an act ruling that the king had to call Parliament at least once every three years, and prohibiting any king from dissolving a Parliament without its approval. It abolished the Court of High Commission and other separate royal courts, and impeached Archbishop Laud. It discussed depriving the bishops of their votes in the House of Lords, and even doing away with the episcopal structure completely. Charles met these demands, as he was faced with both the Scottish invasion and a rebellion in Ireland, in which English Catholics often joined with their Gaelic co-religionists against Protestant Scottish and newer English immigrants. Some members of the House of Commons wanted to go further, however, and give Parliament control over the army, the church, and the appointment of all judges and officials. Charles refused, and also maneuvered to take back some of the measures he had already agreed upon. He began to recruit a separate army from among the nobility and gentry who were loyal to him, and gradually the country split into two camps: the parliamentarians and the royalists, with some moderates in between. England headed toward civil war in what would be the only full-scale revolution in Europe in the seventeenth century.

Looking back at this dramatic period of English history, historians have tried to determine what would make people join one side or the other. The lines were often confusing, but there are some definite trends. Religion was a major factor; in general, Puritans seeking further reformation of the Church of England were parliamentarian, though there were also some Puritans who supported the monarchy. Many people worried that the king planned to return the country to allegiance to Rome. Region also played a role; the south and east of England, including the city of London, tended to support Parliament, while the north and west backed the king. This meant that the more cosmopolitan, richer, and densely populated parts of the country opposed the king. Parliamentarians were also somewhat older; they nostalgically remembered (or imagined) what life had been like under "Good Queen Bess," and thought that the "foreign" Stuarts had broken with these "English" traditions of monarchy. Sometimes the lines reflected local and personal conflicts; as in the Reformation, rivals in various localities took opposing sides, each hoping to gain land or power if the other side lost. Also as in the Reformation – and in later revolutions throughout the world – printed pamphlets whipped up support, with each side portraying the other as foolish or evil. Censorship and other restrictions on publication were not enforced during the chaos of the 1640s, and a wide range of authors took the opportunity to publish political and religious works that might otherwise have been banned.

Those works include many that offered radical plans for change, which were also discussed orally in businesses, houses, and other meeting places. A

group who called themselves Levellers, primarily members of the army, advocated abolishing the House of Lords and extending the vote to all adult males, instead of only those with a certain amount of property; this political egalitarianism disturbed most members of Parliament. Radical religious groups such as the Ranters preached that God was in everyone, so that people should listen to the Jesus Christ inside themselves rather than to ministers in church buildings. Under the leadership of George Fox (1624–94) and his wife Margaret Fell Fox (1614–1702), the Society of Friends – called "Quakers" by their detractors because they sometimes shook when "moved by the spirit" – also stressed equality among Christians, going so far as to suggest that women should have the right to preach and minister to others if they had the spirit. All of these ideas were spread by word of mouth, as Quaker preachers and Leveller orators spoke on street corners and town squares, and also communicated through posters, pamphlets, and cheap books.

Fighting began in the summer of 1642, and was generally indecisive for several years. In 1645, Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), a member of the gentry and a leader in the House of Commons, convinced Parliament to create a completely reorganized army, the New Model Army, with himself in command.

36 Gerrard Winstanley and the True Levellers

Gerrard Winstanley (1609–76) was a laborer and clothing maker who began having religious visions in 1649 telling him that the earth should be held in common. He wrote a series of pamphlets laying out his views, becoming the leader of a community of like-minded people calling for an end to private property. They called themselves True Levellers, though their detractors called them Diggers because they demonstrated their aims in a sort of street theatre, tearing down hedges and digging up fields that had previously been held in common by villages but were now owned by gentry. The True Levellers offered social criticism far more radical than the generally property-owning members of the House of Commons would accept, and they were forced to stop their actions. Winstanley used religious, moral, and political grounds in arguing his ideas:

> In the beginning of time the great Creator made the earth to be a common treasury, to preserve beasts, birds, fishes and man, the lord that was to govern this creation . . . Not one word was spoken in the beginning that one branch of mankind should rule over another . . . But selfish imaginations . . . did set up one man to teach and rule over another. And thereby . . . man was brought in to bondage, and became a greater slave to such of his own kind than the beasts of the field were to him. And hereupon the earth . . . was hedged into enclosures by the teachers and rulers, and the others were made . . . slaves. And that earth that is within this creation made a common storehouse for all, is bought and sold and kept in the hands of a few, whereby the great Creator is mightily dishonored, as if he were a respecter of persons, delighting in the comfortable livelihood of some and rejoicing in the miserable poverty and straits of others. From the beginning it was not so . . . The poorest man hath as true a title and just right to the land as the richest man . . . True freedom lies in the free enjoyment of the earth . . . If the common people have no more freedom in England but only to live among their elder brothers and work for them for hire, what freedom then have they in England more than we can have in Turkey or France? . . . All laws that are not grounded upon equity and reason, not giving a universal freedom to all . . . ought to be cut off with the King's head . . . Wheresoever there is a people . . . united by common community of livelihood into oneness, it will become the strongest land in the world; for then they will be as one man to defend their inheritance . . . Whereas on the other side, pleading for property and single interest divides the people of a land and the whole world into parties, and is the cause of all wars and bloodshed and contention everywhere . . . But when once the earth becomes a common treasury again, as it must . . . then this enmity of all lands will cease.

(From G. H. Sabine, *The Works of Gerrard Winstanley* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1941], pp. 251–4, 288.)

Cromwell whipped the army into a fervor with sermons and hymns, paid it very well, and turned it into a formidable fighting force. Charles was forced to surrender, but the Commons quarreled about what to do next. Cromwell captured the king, and dismissed those members of Parliament who disagreed with him. The remaining members of Parliament (sometimes called the Rump Parliament), abolished the House of Lords, tried Charles for high treason and executed him, to the horror of most of Europe and much of England.

This left Oliver Cromwell master of England, and the army as the most powerful political institution. It passed a constitution, called the Instrument of Government (1653), which made Parliament supreme, but gave Cromwell executive power, with the office of Lord Protector. Cromwell declared that the state of emergency necessitated him having even more power; he dissolved Parliament, proclaimed quasi-martial law, and ruled as virtually a military dictator, dividing the country into twelve districts ruled by major-generals. He was ruthless against the rebellion in Ireland, crushing it and further enhancing Irish hatred of the English; by 1659 Catholics owned less than 10 per cent of the land in Ireland. Officially Cromwell was tolerant in religion (in England), allowing all Protestant Christians the right to worship freely and welcoming Jews back into England after centuries of exclusion, but in practice he enforced measures supported by Puritans, such as closing the theatres and forbidding sports.

Wide discussion of plans for change among radical groups, and other sorts of social turmoil, made Cromwell more intent on maintaining order and control. He banned newspapers, hired innkeepers as spies, and ordered the postal system to open and read all letters. Such measures widened the opposition to his rule, and conspirators gathered around the young Charles, the son of Charles I, who was safely in France. Cromwell appointed his own son Richard – popularly known as "Tumbledown Dick" – as his successor, but after Cromwell's death in 1658 factions were divided about what to do next and Parliament instead backed the restoration of the Stuart monarchy. Most people were weary from years of disruption, and in 1660 Charles returned from France as Charles II. Along with the monarchy, the House of Lords, the established Anglican Church with its hierarchy of bishops, and the courts of law were all restored. Religious dissent was repressed, and those who refused to receive communion in the Church of England could not vote, hold public office, attend university, or preach. Not surprisingly, Charles had good relations with the Parliament that had brought him back; he regained the right to summon Parliament by agreeing to do so regularly. He ruled through a group of advisors who were also members of Parliament. Known as the "Cabal" from the first initials of their names, they formed a group of chief advisors that later came to be called a cabinet of ministers.

In return for having its right to approve taxes assured, Parliament informally agreed to provide Charles with enough revenue to run the kingdom, but it did not, and Charles turned to the wealthiest state in Europe to make up the difference: France. In a secret agreement with Louis XIV, Charles received a

huge annual subsidy in return for support against the Dutch, and a promise that he would gradually return England to Catholicism. The treaty did not stay secret for long, and England was swept by anti-Catholic hysteria, made more powerful by the fact that Charles had no legitimate heirs, so that on his death the throne would pass to his openly Catholic brother James. Parliament attempted to pass legislation that would have prevented the throne from going to a Catholic, but this never became law.

James did succeed his brother, appointed Catholics to important positions, and granted religious toleration. There was a renewal in the tug-of-war over the limits of royal and Parliamentary power. When James's second wife gave birth to a son – thus assuring a Catholic dynasty – a group of leaders in the House of Commons offered the throne to James's Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William, a Dutch prince from the House of Orange-Nassau, who also happened to be a grandson of Charles I. In 1688 William invaded England with a small force, James II and his wife and young son fled to France, and Mary and William were named joint rulers by Parliament. They explicitly recognized that sovereignty was shared by monarch and Parliament, and agreed to a Bill of Rights that, among other provisions, forbade royal interference in the making or enforcement of laws and the creation of a standing army during peacetime. They allowed limited religious toleration, though hostility to Catholicism was enshrined in laws that required all future monarchs to be members of the Protestant Church of England, and allowed only Protestants to own firearms.

This coup, bloodless in England though not in Scotland and Ireland, was later called the "Glorious Revolution." It assured the political power of the gentry, that 2 percent of the population perched socially between the tiny group of high nobles and the rest of the population. Despite the restoration of the House of Lords, the House of Commons was the most powerful half of Parliament, and the majority of members were gentry, along with merchants, lawyers, and professionals who often married into gentry families; this small elite controlled England's policies and institutions into the twentieth century. William brought England into various continental alliances against Louis XIV, and the expenses of war led to the establishment of a regular program for paying off the national debt, financed through the Bank of England, which was founded in 1694. Military campaigns included several in Ireland, where the supporters of James II were eventually defeated, and a series of harsh penal laws were enacted against Catholics, further reducing Catholic landholding. William also authorized a massacre of the leaders of one of the Scottish clans, and opposition to English rule in Scotland simmered, though the two countries were officially united in 1707 with the Union of Parliaments, which provided that Scotland would send members to the House of Lords and the House of Commons in London instead of having its own Parliament. (Scotland reestablished a separate representative assembly in 2000.) Scotland, England, and Ireland were declared the "United Kingdom of Great Britain."

William and Mary, who had no surviving children, were succeeded by Mary's sister Anne (ruled 1702–14), who also had no surviving children, despite

eighteen pregnancies. At Anne's death, the crown passed, with Parliament's approval, to Anne's distant cousin George, the ruler of the small German principality of Hanover. Groups in Scotland favoring James, the son of James II, who had grown to be a young man in France, revolted. This uprising in favor of the Stuarts – termed "Jacobite" from the Latin form of James's name – was suppressed, as was a similar uprising in 1745 which sought to bring back James's son Charles ("Bonnie Prince Charlie").

The Hanoverians, almost all of whom were named George, ruled Britain into the nineteenth century, with more and more executive power moving into the hands of their chief officials, who came to be called Prime Ministers; in this the model was set by the brilliant Robert Walpole (1676–1745) who was the Prime Minister for both George I and George II. George I (ruled 1714–27) and his son George II (ruled 1727–60) were more interested in Hanoverian interests than British ones, and spent much of their time in military campaigns on the continent. They had difficult relations with one another, though both were competent and pragmatic, allowing the further development of political structures, including rival political parties, the Whigs and the Tories. Toward the end of George II's reign, national policy was directed by William Pitt the Elder (1708–78) who managed British successes in the Seven Years War. Under Pitt's leadership, Britain became the dominant European power in North America and south Asia. Part of British North American holdings were lost in the American War of Independence, but British sea power remained formidable.

The Dutch Republic

The tumultuous nature of England's path to a limited monarchy sometimes benefited its neighbor – and often rival – across the Channel, the Republic of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, the seven northern provinces of the Netherlands that had won their independence from the Spanish Habsburgs in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. (This long official name is shortened in various ways: the United Provinces, the Netherlands – which means "low countries" – and the Dutch Republic all refer to the same political entity; "Dutch" is a variant of the word "Deutsch," meaning German. This area is also sometimes called "Holland," the name of its westernmost province, whose provincial capital, The Hague, became the capital of the country.) Individuals and groups who opposed Stuart or Cromwellian rule were welcome in the tolerant Netherlands, as were those fleeing religious or political persecution in other parts of Europe. The French philosopher René Descartes lived most of his adult life in the Netherlands, where he felt freer to write and publish than he did in France. The English philosopher John Locke published many of his important works while living in the Netherlands during the 1680s, where he shared the streets of Dutch cities with French Protestants who had left France after Louis XIV had revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Thousands of Jews from the Iberian peninsula, especially from Portugal, emigrated to