

Labels for January 29: the English Civil Wars

Call Number: STC 9246
1626

A declaration of the true causes which moued His Maiestie to assemble, and after enforced him to dissolve the two last meetings in Parliament.

Charles I dissolved Parliament several times during his reign due to his displeasure with what he viewed as their impositions on his sovereign authority—one of the many factors that lead to the exacerbation of conflict. Between 1629 and 1640, he refused to call a Parliament, effectively ruling alone. This period is known as “The Personal Rule.”

Call Number: 265- 621b
1640

By the King. A proclamation for the levying and payment of the ship-moneys in arreare.

One of the main points of contention between Charles and his Parliaments was his constant levying of “ship money” taxes. “Ship money” was originally a medieval taxation on coastal towns and villages, where the inhabitants were required to reimburse the Crown for the full cost of the naval ships protecting them from foreign attack. Ship money was one of the few taxes that could be levied by the Crown without permission of Parliament—Charles I abused this privilege, invoking it often and expanding it further inland, drawing the ire of his government.

Call Number: 147- 077q
1641

A dialogue betwixt rattle-head and round-head

Just like today, early modern people had lots of opinions, and engaging in political discourse was challenging and often frustrating. This is an example of a satirical pamphlet produced near the beginning of the first English Civil War—“rattle-heads” was a derogatory term for royalists or cavaliers, called so because their opponents claimed their heads were empty. “Round-heads” were supporters of Parliamentary representatives, called so because many of the Puritans in Parliament favored short, rounded haircuts, as opposed to the longer hairstyles worn by the aristocracy and the king).

Call Number: Wing E2221
1641

A remonstrance of the state of the kingdom: Die Mercurii 15. Decemb. 1641: It is this day resolv'd upon the question, by the House of Commons, that order shall be now given for the printing of this remonstrance, of the state of the kingdom.

In 1640, due in part to wars in Scotland, Charles was forced to finally call a Parliament. The first he quickly dissolved after only three weeks, but was again forced to call for a Parliament later in the year due to the pressing need to pass financial legislation. Called the “Long Parliament,” the representatives quickly passed legislation stipulating that they could not be dissolved except by agreement of the members. Among other actions, they issued this official rebuke, known popularly as The Great Remonstrance, which outlined all of their grievances with Charles. The Parliament sat from 1640-1648, when it was forced to dissolve by the New Model Army.

Call Number: 149- 566q
1641

His Maiesties declaration, to all his loving subiects: Published with the advice of his Privie Councill.

Charles attempted to reinforce his authority, relying on rhetoric that established him as the center of government and a father figure to his people. This pamphlet prominently features his coat of arms.

Call Number: Wing P415
1642

A petition or declaration, humbly desired to be presented to the view of His most Excellent Majestie; by all his Majesties most loyall and dutifull subjects.

By 1642 it was clear that war was inevitable. Calls for peaceful resolution such as this were published, but had no effect. In January, Charles attempted to arrest several parliamentary members for treason, and in March, Parliament seized control of the militia. By September, they were engaging in open warfare.

Call Number: ART 228- 824 (size L)
17th century

Carolus I, Dei gratia Magnae Britanniae, Franciae et Hiberniae Rex

Call Number: ART 228- 825 (size L)
17th century

Oliverius Magnae Britanniae, Hiberniae et totius Anglici imperii protector ...

These amazing portraits are from the same engraved copper plate—although based on a portrait of Charles I by Anthony van Dyck, the plate was initially engraved as a portrait of Cromwell, and was later altered to show Charles again.

Call Number: Wing H2247
1651

*Leviathan, or the matter, forme, & power of a common-wealth ecclesiasticall and
civil. : By Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury.*

One of the most famous political works in English history, *Leviathan* was written during the English Civil War and defends the idea of the monarchy. The frontispiece, by the engraver Abraham Bosse, depicts a king as being made up of the physical bodies of his people—a powerful piece of royalist rhetoric. It was published in 1651, two to three years after Charles lost his head.