

Thirty Years War

Enquiry: Why did the Civil War break out in 1642?

KS3 History - Lesson 1 of 6

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Charles vs Spain

When the Thirty Years War broke out, King James I was reluctant to involve his kingdoms. Although the English Parliament wanted to join the war, James did not want to start fighting against Catholic Spain because Spain was so powerful. In 1623, however, Charles and the Duke of Buckingham had returned to England after the Spanish princess Maria Anna had rejected Charles' marriage proposal. The rejection had been humiliating and Charles wanted revenge against the Spanish. Parliament also wanted to protect Protestants in Europe from Spanish aggression. Therefore, Parliament agreed to give Charles money to send ships to fight the Spanish. In 1625, Charles and Buckingham decided to go beyond this agreement and instead paid for an army to fight in the war. The army's attack was poorly planned and became a disaster with many Englishmen losing their lives. Charles was held fully responsible because he had just inherited the throne from his father.



Cadiz

In 1625 Charles allowed the Duke of Buckingham to attack Cadiz (an area off Spain's coast) to bring England glory. Due to Buckingham's poor planning this attack was another disaster with 7,000 Englishmen left dead or injured. Parliament were furious at Buckingham for his poor leadership and demanded that he should be put on trial for his actions. This trial is known as **impeachment** and Charles could not stand the idea of his friend being found guilty so **dissolved** parliament in 1626. Dissolving parliament also meant Charles stopped being able to raise any new taxes.



La Rochelle

After the failed marriage to the Spanish princess, Buckingham had arranged another marriage for Charles to a woman called Henrietta Maria. Henrietta Maria was sister to the French King and it was hoped the marriage would stop future conflicts between Charles' kingdoms and France. The English parliament, however, were upset about the marriage because Henrietta Maria was a Catholic.

Then in 1627 French Protestants rebelled in La Rochelle against France's Catholic government. Buckingham led an attack on La Rochelle to defend French Protestants. Again it ended in disaster with 5,000 Englishmen losing their lives. As a result, England's Protestants were unimpressed and despite Charles's marriage, France was still an enemy.



Glossary

Impeachment – Where parliament will put people of high importance on trial. In the 1600s, if someone was found to be guilty of a serious crime then they could be executed.

Dissolved – Stopped parliament, they could no longer continue to be in session.

Rebellion – An uprising – where people refuse to obey the established authority.



Comprehension Questions

1. What caused Charles to want revenge against the Spanish?
2. How did Charles go beyond his agreement with parliament in 1625?
3. Why did parliament want to impeach the Duke of Buckingham?
4. Why was dissolving parliament in 1626 a bad choice for Charles I?
5. How did Buckingham cause both religious and political conflict in 1627?

