

**The Restoration and the Glorious Revolution:**  
**Politico-Religious Confusion in the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century**

The protectorate collapsed after Cromwell died in September 1658. His son, Richard, was unable to gain the respect of the army, and General **George Monck**, the commander of the English army in Scotland, marched to London, recalled the Long Parliament, and initiated the return of the dead king's eldest son from exile.

**1. The Restoration**

England approved the return of Charles II in May 1660. Parliament restored bishops to the church and expelled Dissenters (Protestants who did not conform to the Church of England). It also restricted their worship and political activity. In **1673**, the **Test Act** (a second Test Act was passed in 1678) removed Roman Catholics from the royal government. The Popish Plot of 1678 and the move to exclude James, the king's Roman Catholic brother, from the succession **revealed the political parties then forming**: The **Whigs** favoured Parliament, and the **Tories** supported the kings and the Anglican Church. However, Charles rapidly regained control and ruled without Parliament. He died in 1685, passing the throne to James.

Despite some works praising Puritanism (such as Paradise Lost, written by John Milton and published in 1667, and Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan and published from 1678 to 1684), the Restoration Period was a reaction against Puritanism—in behaviour, literature, and drama. In 1662, Charles chartered the **Royal Society**, to promote the study of natural science. In 1665, the last outbreak of bubonic plague occurred, and a great fire ravaged London in 1666.

**2. The Glorious Revolution**

James II soon lost the friendliness he had inherited. Unpopular measures and autocratic behaviours quickly led to conflict with the Parliament:

- In 1685, he created a standing army.
- **He put Roman Catholics in the government, army, and university.**
- In 1688, his **Declaration of Indulgence**, allowed Dissenters and Catholics to worship freely.

In addition, the birth of a son, which set up a Roman Catholic succession, encouraged James's opponents to ask for the help of **William of Orange**, a Protestant and stadtholder of the Netherlands and husband of the king's elder daughter, Mary. When William landed, James fled since his army having deserted to William.

*The **Battle of the Boyne** was the most important military engagement of the **Glorious Revolution** in England (1688-1689). Fought on the banks of the Boyne River in Ireland on July 12, 1690, the battle was waged between troops of the exiled James II, former king of England, and the forces of the Netherlands ruler William of Orange, who had been proclaimed William III, king of England, Scotland, and Ireland in 1689. To prevent James from regaining the throne, William led an army of about 35,000 men to Ireland, where James was ensconced with 21,000 of his supporters. James suffered a complete defeat, losing 1500 men, while William lost only 500; James returned to exile in France.*

William temporarily took control of the government, and in 1689, Parliament gave him and Mary the crown jointly, provided that they affirm the **Bill of Rights**. That bill listed and condemned the abuses of James. A **Toleration Act** gave freedom of worship to Protestant dissenters. This revolution was called the **Glorious Revolution** because, unlike that of 1640 to 1660, it was bloodless and successful: Parliament became sovereign and England prosperous. **It was a victory of Whig principles and Tory pragmatism.** John Locke's Two Treatises of Government (1690) provided an attractive theoretical justification for it.

***John Locke** was an English philosopher. He explained his theory of empiricism, a philosophical doctrine holding that all knowledge is based on experience, in An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690). Locke believed the human mind to be **a blank slate** at birth that gathered all its information from its surroundings—starting with simple ideas and combining these simple ideas into more complex ones. **His theory greatly influenced education in Great Britain and the United States.** Locke believed that education should begin in early childhood and should proceed gradually as the child learns increasingly complex ideas.*

*Locke's views, in his Two Treatises of Government (1690), **attacked the theory of divine right of kings** and the nature of the state as conceived by the English philosopher and political theorist Thomas Hobbes. Locke argued that **sovereignty did not reside in the state but with the people**, and that the state is supreme, but only if it is bound by civil and what he called "natural" law. Many of Locke's political ideas, such as those relating to natural rights, property rights, the duty of the government to protect these rights, and the rule of the majority, were later embodied in the United States' Constitution.*

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**Thomas Hobbes** (1588-1679) was an English philosopher and political theorist. He was one of the first modern Western thinkers to provide a secular justification for the political state. His ideas represented a reaction against the decentralizing ideas of the Reformation (1517-1648), which, Hobbes contended, brought anarchy. Regarded as an important early influence on the philosophical doctrine of utilitarianism, Hobbes also contributed to modern psychology and laid the foundations of modern sociology.

With his work *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic* (privately circulated in 1640, then published in 1650), Hobbes defended royal prerogative and was forced to exile in France. But Hobbes's best-known work, *Leviathan; or, The Matter, Form, and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil* (1651), is a powerful exposition of his doctrine of sovereignty. The work was interpreted by the followers of the king as a justification of the Commonwealth and aroused the suspicions of the French authorities by its attack on the papacy. Again fearful of arrest, Hobbes returned to England.

With William, England also got William's wars: the **War of the League of Augsburg** (1689-1697) and the **War of the Spanish Succession** (1701-1714). With those wars, and especially the victory of John Churchill (later Duke of Marlborough) at Blenheim in 1704, England became once again a vital force to be reckoned with in European affairs. Those wars also demonstrated the wealth that England now had at its disposal and the willingness of the English to levy taxes on themselves in Parliament. In 1694, the **Bank of England** was created. This and the developing stock exchange were the basis of London's growing financial position in Britain and in the world.

The Two Treatises of John Locke and his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), based on empiricism and common sense, and the *Principia* of **Isaac Newton** (1687), integrating the laws of motion with the idea of universal gravitation, gave England an authoritative place in the world of thought. This, added to its wealth and military success, showed that England put its house in order and created the basis of ideas and power by which it would dominate the modern world.

### **3. Queen Anne**

Before James II's younger daughter, Anne, came to the throne in 1702, her many children had all died. To prevent a return of the Roman Catholic Stuarts, Parliament in **1701** passed the **Act of Settlement**, providing that the throne should go next to the Protestant Electress Sophia of Hannover, the granddaughter of James I, and to her descendants. Scotland, angry at its exclusion from trade with the English Empire, hesitated to duplicate the act. The only solution was to combine the two kingdoms, which was done by the **Act of Union of 1707**, creating the kingdom of Great Britain.

***The Act of Settlement** was enacted by Parliament in **1701**. It secured the succession of the English crown to members of the house of Hannover in the Protestant faith, unless Queen Anne, the last of the Protestant Stuarts, provided an heir. **The act had the effect of excluding Roman Catholics from the throne.** King George I obtained the British throne in 1714 through the terms in that act.*

***The Act of Union** passed in **1707** by the parliaments of England and Scotland created the **Kingdom of Great Britain**. Scotland retained its judicial system and its Presbyterian church but its parliament was joined with that of England. Henceforth, Scotland sent 45 elected members to the British House of Commons and 16 of its peers to the House of Lords. Scots received the same trading rights as the English had in England and its overseas empire.*

*Another Act of Union was passed in 1800 -1801. It joined the Kingdom of Great Britain and **all of Ireland** into the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland**.*

*The Act of Union passed in 1840 by the British Parliament united the North American provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.*

Anne (1665-1714) was the queen of Great Britain and Ireland (1702-14). She was the last British sovereign of the house of Stuart. She was the second daughter of King James II. Although her father converted to Roman Catholicism in 1672, **Anne remained Protestant** and accepted James's overthrow by the anti-Roman Catholic Glorious Revolution of 1688, which brought her sister Mary and Mary's husband, William of Orange, to the throne. She became queen on William's death in 1702 and favoured **John Churchill**, making him duke of Marlborough and **captain-general of the army**. Marlborough won a series of victories over the French in the War of the Spanish Succession. Devoted to the Church of England, Anne was inclined to favour the pro-church **Tory** faction rather than its **Whig** opponents, but, influenced by the Marlboroughs and Lord Treasurer Sidney Godolphin, earl of Godolphin, she at first excluded the Tories from office. Later, however, her friendship with the Marlboroughs cooled, and in 1710 she took advantage of popular dissatisfaction with the Whigs to remove Godolphin; Marlborough was dismissed the following year. During Queen Anne's reign the kingdoms of England and Scotland were united (1707). Having no surviving children, she was succeeded by her German cousin, George, elector of Hannover, as **King George I of Great Britain and Ireland**.

## Whigs and Tories

Later in the 17th century, the **Whig Party** of England emerged in opposition to King Charles II and to the accession of the Roman Catholic duke of York as James II. The party was largely responsible for the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which established the supremacy of Parliament over the king. Backed by the growing **British mercantile and industrial interests**, the **landed but untitled gentry**, and the **Protestant dissenters**, or nonconformists, the Whig party achieved control of the government in 1714 on the accession of King George I. For nearly 50 years the Whigs remained in power, until in 1760 the opposition Tory Party rode a wave of conservative sentiment into office. During this period, those American colonists who supported the American Revolution were known as Whigs.

For 70 years the Whig party was in the minority in Britain. In 1830, however, their reform platform won popular support, and they were returned to office. During the next few years they passed important reform legislation, known collectively as the Reform Bills. At the same time, the Whig party became known as the Liberal party and the Tory party as the Conservative party.

The **Tory party** was traditionally in opposition to the Whig Party. The name, derived from an Old Irish word meaning runaway or fugitive, was first applied to mid-17th-century Irishmen who, dispossessed by the English, became outlaws.

Later in the 17th century the Whigs employed the word as a term of opprobrium to supporters of the Roman Catholic king James II in particular and the monarchy in general. After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which gave Parliament permanent supremacy over the king, the **Tory Party was the party of the landed aristocracy**, favouring **agricultural interests and the Church of England**. During the latter part of the reign of Queen Anne, beginning in 1710, the Tories reached the height of their power. After 1714, however, they were again the minority party.

In 1760 the Tories regained control of the government under George III; at this time, those American colonials who supported the British in the American Revolution were known as Tories. For 70 years the Tories retained power in Britain, but in 1830 their conservative domestic policies caused their defeat by the Whigs. During the early 1830s the Tory Party became known as the Conservative Party and the Whig Party as the Liberal Party, but the term Tory is still often used as a synonym for Conservative.