

The Arrest of Five Members

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

KS3 History - Lesson 5 of 6

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Irish Rebellion

Irish Catholics were angry with the English protestants who had settled in Ireland. The Irish resented the English for taking their most **fertile** land and undermining their Catholic ways. Irishmen were encouraged by the Scottish National Covenant who had fought against Charles I and so began their own rebellion. First the rebels tried to take over Dublin, but this failed. As frustrations rose the rebels erupted into violence against the English protestants. Protestants were robbed and expelled from their land, farms and houses were burnt and cattle stolen. In a town called Portadown, there was a **massacre**, which was particularly shocking. Here around 100 men, women and children were thrown off the bridge to drown in the River Bann. Reports at the time stated that 200,000 English protestants were killed during the Irish Rebellion. Historians today believe that is an overestimation and place the figure closer to 10,000.



Great Remonstrance

England was appalled by the Irish Rebellion and the public supported Charles I's decision to send forces to stop it, however, a member of parliament, John Pym, became concerned by the public's enthusiasm towards the King. Pym worried about what a popular Charles might do to Parliament if given an army. So, Pym stopped Charles receiving any funds. Instead Pym decided to highlight Charles' mistakes by passing a document called the Great **Remonstrance**. The Great **Remonstrance** included 204 complaints regarding Charles' religious, economic, and political policies. However, this document only just passed through Parliament with 159 votes to 148. Many MPs believed Pym had gone too far and that MPs should focus their attention on Ireland rather than starting problems in England.



Arrest of Five Members

Charles was appalled by the Great Remonstrance and started to plan how he could remove his opposition in Parliament once and for all. Firstly, Charles sacked any of his closest advisers that were too close to Parliament. Secondly, he accused five members of Parliament (Pym included) of high **treason** due to involvement with the Scottish Covenanters. Then, Charles made his biggest mistake by storming into Parliament and attempting to arrest the five members himself. Charles was unsuccessful. The MPs had already fled. Charles' actions had shown him to be a **tyrant**. By trying to arrest MPs through force Charles had broken an understanding of how monarch and Parliament should work together. Many MPs now felt unsafe and the relationship between King and Parliament had therefore truly broken down.



Glossary

Fertile – Land capable of growing lots of crops.

Massacre – Where many people are deliberately/ brutally killed.

Remonstrance – A forceful protest.

Treason - The crime of betraying one's country (especially by attempting to kill/ overthrow the king or government).

Tyrant – A cruel ruler with absolute power.



Comprehension Questions

1. Why did the Irish dislike the English settlers?
2. How many protestants were killed during the Irish Rebellion?
3. Why did John Pym stop Charles receiving money to crush the Irish Rebellion?
4. What caused some MPs to disagree with the Great Remonstrance?
5. Why did many people accuse Charles of being a tyrant after the arrest of the five members?

