



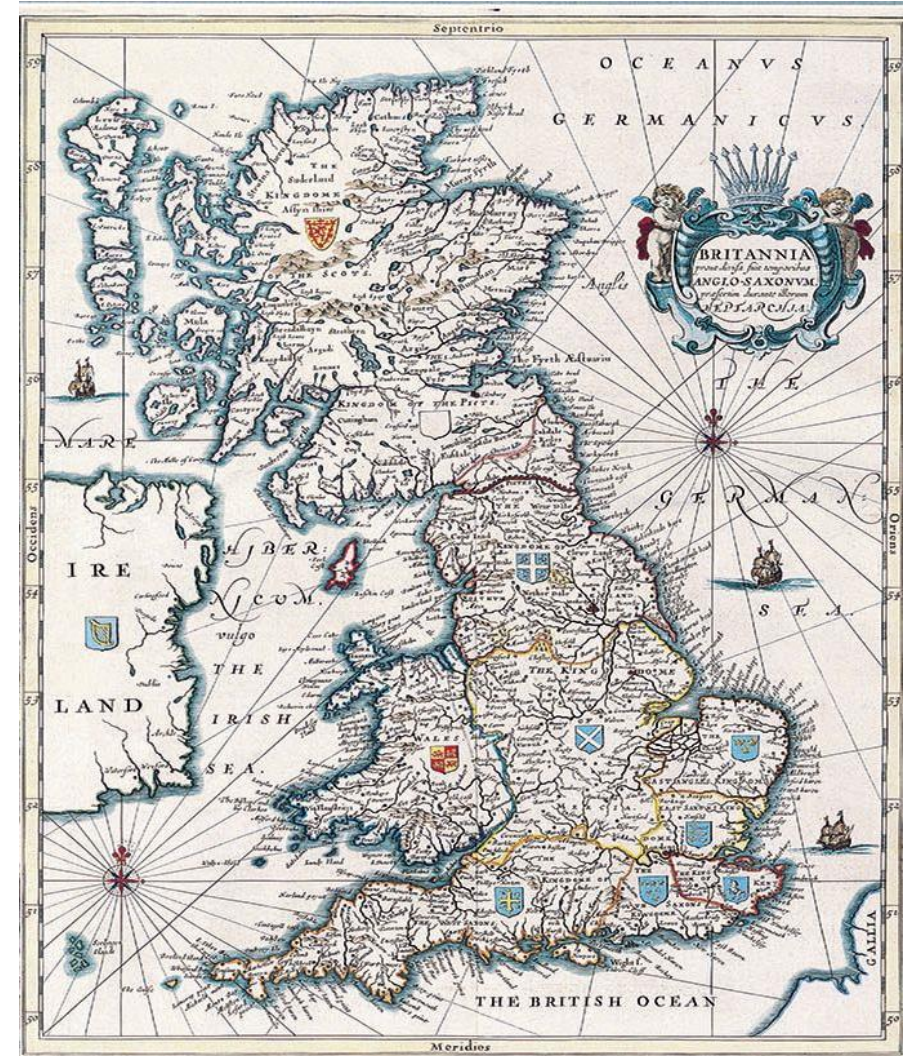
What sort of monarch was Charles I?

L/O:

- To define 'monarchy'.
- To examine source material and make a conclusion as to who Charles I was.

What was Britain like in 1625?

- No such thing as the UK – Three Kingdoms all controlled by the Stuart dynasty.
 - England and Wales
 - Scotland
 - Ireland
- All three Kingdoms had different religions:
 - Scotland was Calvinist (a form of Puritanism – strict protestants)
 - Ireland was Catholic
 - England (Anglican) – the Church set up by Elizabeth I
- **What does it mean to be a monarch?**



What does Kishlansky's work reveal to us about the monarch in the seventeenth-century?

“Seventeenth-century Britain was a kingdom, the dominion of a monarch. Dominion was a potent word, for its root, *dominus*, denoted lordship in heaven as on earth. In theory, the king of England, Scotland and Ireland held absolute power over the lives and property of his subjects, in the first cases by hereditary descent, in the case of Ireland by conquest. ‘Kings make and unmake their subjects; they have power of raising, and casting down; of life, and of death.’ The king or queen could levy taxes, pardon criminals, declare war or settle peace. He or she licensed all manufacture, regulated all markets, governed all trade... the sovereign’s word was law, promulgated with the advice of his council. He could choose his counsellors at will, command them to serve him, and ignore their recommendations with impunity. His power to summon and dissolve parliaments was unquestioned, as was his freedom to accept or reject bills that passed the Houses. He created all bishops, all judges, all peers, because the monarch was the apex of the church, law and aristocracy.”

M. Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed 1603-1714*

The issue of monarchy in the 17th century:

- **Divine Right of Kings = Belief that God gave the monarch power to rule. People as subjects not citizens.**
- **Parliament = landed nobility and gentry that are able to advise the monarch and raise taxes.**

Discuss:

- 1) Why might Parliament have a problem with the issue of Divine Right?
- 2) Why might the King have an issue with Parliament feeling they can advise him?
- 3) What might impact the relationship between the King and Parliament?

What sort of monarch was Charles I?

Read through the sources that you have been given on Charles I.

- How did Charles I view himself?
- In what ways did this differ from others at the time?
- What impression do you get of Charles I as a monarch from this collection of sources?
- What limitations are there to the individual sources/ whole collection?



James Oliphant – A History of England (1920)

“Charles I was a handsome man with cultivated tastes... but he was unfit for the position of king... He was too stupid and cold-hearted to understand or sympathise with the feelings of the people, and events were to prove that he was hopelessly obstinate, self-centred, and untrustworthy.”

Discuss:

- 1) What does Oliphant mean when he says that Charles was “obstinate, self-centred, and untrustworthy”?
- 2) What evidence do you have to prove Oliphant’s interpretation of Charles I?
- 3) What will have shaped Oliphant’s interpretation of Charles I? How might other historians’ view of Charles differ?

Were Parliament and the Political Nation right to be critical of Charles I's exercise of power?

