

THE BEDFORD SERIES IN HISTORY AND CULTURE

**England's Glorious Revolution,
1688-1689**

A Brief History with Documents

PART ONE

Introduction

The Revolution of 1688-1689: The First Modern Revolution

On November 5, 1688, after months of preparation and one false start, William Prince of Orange arrived at Torbay on England's southwestern coast with an army perhaps as large as twenty-one thousand men. On its face, the invasion seemed doomed to disaster. Exactly one hundred years earlier, the Spanish, then the greatest power in Western Europe, had attempted to invade England with a huge army and an incomparable fleet. England's Queen Elizabeth (r. 1558-1603) had no military experience and, what was worse, a makeshift navy and no regular army. Nevertheless, the Spanish armada never landed in England, having been defeated in battle by the English and dispersed by the unpredictable and stormy weather of the North Sea. Later, in the summer of 1685, just prior to William's sailing, the illegitimate son of Charles II (r. 1660-85), James Duke of Monmouth, had led an invasion of England from the Dutch Republic. He landed in the west of England at Lyme Regis, not too far from Torbay. Yet within a matter of weeks, Monmouth's attempt to seize the crown from his uncle, James II (r. 1685-88), in 1685 had met with utter and complete defeat. Monmouth himself was beheaded, and his followers were rounded up and either executed or transported as servants to English possessions in North America.

Prince William's initial reception in England's West Country must have filled him with a sense of foreboding. William, who was the Dutch stadtholder (the military but not political leader of the Dutch Republic) and an experienced soldier, was not initially welcomed with wild cheering and celebrating maidens as his ill-fated cousin, Monmouth, had been three years before. Instead, William was initially met with reticence, caution, and reserve. The inhabitants of the West Country were wary of supporting yet another failed invasion. However, William soon had reason to shed his habitual formality and shyness. Common people, gentry, and nobility, disgusted with James II's government but fearing his power, soon found the courage to pour into William's camp and rise independently throughout England, offering both physical and financial support. After the revolutionaries gained local control, in town squares and coffeehouses throughout the kingdom they read aloud William's *Declaration* (see Document 2), which announced his reasons for intervening in English politics. Each reading of the *Declaration*, it seemed, was followed by another round of toasts to the success of William, England's new hero and deliverer. Simultaneously, noblemen, substantial gentry, and more humble townspeople throughout the kingdom—most of whom had long known of William's plans and many of whom had invited him to England—rose in support of the Dutch prince who was also the husband of James II's own daughter Mary. These giddy rebels were England's "desperate thousands," as the Williamite supporter Colley Cibber described them—desperate because, should William fail, they would be judged guilty of treason (see Document 5).

Although William was successful in the end, he had some disadvantages. Unlike Queen Elizabeth in 1588, James had a huge professional army at his disposal. This army was well versed and drilled in all the methods of modern warfare. It was, observed two well-informed London merchants, "the completest army, perhaps, in the world" (Document 3). Yet as William, his troops, and his new crew of enthusiastic volunteers marched on James II's army, the English king lost his nerve. Some of James II's officer corps, the pride and joy of his kingdom, deserted to the invading force. John Churchill,¹ James II's lifelong friend and the lieutenant general of the army, was only one of the most devastating deserters. He was joined by men like the Duke of

¹John Churchill, Lord Marlborough (1650–1722), a longtime friend and confidant of James II, made 1st Earl of Marlborough (1689), 1st Duke of Marlborough (1702), and commander in chief of the armed forces under both William III and Anne I (1701–1711).

Grafton, James II's nephew, and the Duke of Ormond and Lord Corrbury, both of whose families had long and loyally served the Stuart royal family. Princess Anne, James II's own younger daughter, had fled to join William's supporters in Nottingham. Mobs throughout the kingdom rose against their governors. Townspeople threw out military governors. Rural laborers attacked the houses and lands of James II's greatest supporters in Kent, Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the West Country. Hearing all this news, James II retreated from Salisbury to London and placed his fleeing hopes on a negotiated settlement. Instead of having to fight his way to London, William was escorted the entire way by cheering crowds.

James II fled to France on December 23, 1688, less than two months after William of Orange arrived in England. It had become clear to James that a negotiated settlement would strip him of all his power. Persistent mob violence in London and throughout the country convinced him that nothing could protect his person or his family. Then, between January 22 and August 20, 1689, a Parliament made up of England's substantial gentlemen and noblemen met and declared William and his wife, Mary—who as James II's eldest daughter had a strong hereditary claim to the throne—king and queen. At every stage in their deliberations, the House of Commons and the House of Lords were encouraged by thousands of men and women assembled outside their chambers. England had new rulers who, it appeared, were placed on the throne by the will of the English people. The power of that throne, Parliament implied in its Declaration of Rights, was limited by the rights of English subjects (see Document 12).

The new monarchs soon reversed many of the policies of the old regime. Whereas James II had admired France's great monarch, Louis XIV, William and Mary declared war against France. Whereas James II promoted an imperial policy based on the ideas and aspirations of the East India Company, William and Mary turned against that company and preferred instead to support the development of England's fledgling manufacturing industries. Whereas Charles II and his younger brother, James II, had promoted clerics within the Church of England who celebrated the divine right of kings and the necessity for a compulsory, uniform state church, William and Mary promoted new bishops who advocated religious toleration and insisted on the limited nature of royal authority. On May 24, 1689, Parliament passed the Act of Toleration, guaranteeing freedom of worship for all Protestants. William and Mary personally protected the right to worship of most other religious minorities (see Document 36).

Participants and observers were unanimous in declaring England's transformation revolutionary. "I question if in all the histories of empire there is one instance of so bloodless a revolution as that in England in 1688," gushed the revolutionary volunteer Colley Cibber. He reflected incredulously that a nation so recently riven by violent party squabbles—indeed, the political parties of Whig and Tory had been born merely ten years before over the possible accession of James II to the crown²—could unite so quickly and so universally. As Cibber noted, 1688 was a time when "Whigs, Tories, princes, prelates, nobles, clergy, common people, and a standing army, were unanimous. To have seen all England of one mind is to have lived at a very particular juncture. Happy nation...!" (Document 5). The London merchants Francis Barrington and Benjamin Steele, who were compelled to give up trading in the tumultuous months of the revolution, were equally impressed. "Now certainly when the providences of God are considered in this whole transaction," they explained to their Tunis-based trading partners, "never anything happened with so many amazing circumstances as this hath done—the bonding of the spirits of people so universally one way, nay even the minds of persons whose long differings with each other made one think 'twas impossible they should be reconciled in anything, did all agree to help on this work; the speediness of its execution; and all without the loss of 50 men on all sides—makes it the most astonishing alteration that ever yet befell any one part of the universe" (Document 3).

By all contemporary accounts, the revolution was a wondrous one. Indeed, as early as December 1688, observers called it the "Glorious Revolution." The term originally referred to the improbability of the event and the rapidity with which James II was overthrown. Over time, scholars have used the term *Glorious Revolution* to differentiate the Revolution of 1688–89 from subsequent great revolutions. *Glorious* came to mean bloodless and hence conservative. However, because the revolution effected changes more radical than previously supposed, it is more accurate to refer to this series of events instead as the "Revolution of 1688–89."

²The Tory Party was created in 1679 to 1681 in opposition to the Whigs. Where the Whigs hoped to exclude James Duke of York from the throne, the Tories wanted to ensure that he would eventually be crowned James II. Through the cut and thrust of debate in that political crisis, Whigs came to be associated with policies of religious toleration and political resistance. Tories came to be associated with religious uniformity and unconditional political loyalty or passive obedience.

Before the revolution itself was over, fierce debates began about the causes and consequences of the event. This debate raged from the 1690s through the end of the eighteenth century. In 1789, on the one hundred and first anniversary of William of Orange's landing in England, the most celebrated English Dissenting cleric of the eighteenth century and a prominent supporter of the American Revolution, Richard Price, stood up to address his fellow members of the Revolution Society at the meetinghouse in the Old Jewry just outside London's Guildhall. In his sermon, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*, which in print instantly became a best-seller in Britain and throughout Europe, Price admonished his audience to reverse the principles of 1688–89. "By a bloodless victory, the fetters which despotism had been long preparing for us were broken," Price recalled. "The rights of the people were asserted, a tyrant expelled, and a sovereign of our own choice appointed in his room. Security was given to our property, and our consciences were emancipated. The bounds of free enquiry were enlarged." In short, Price argued, the "era of light and liberty was introduced among us, by which we have been made an example to other kingdoms, and became the instructors of the world" (Document 6).

Price's optimistic, open-ended, and radical commentary on the meaning of the Revolution of 1688–89 elicited a number of critical responses. But no response to Richard Price's *Discourse* was more famous, more influential, or more widely read than that of Edmund Burke. Burke felt compelled to write his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) to dispel the dangerous principles espoused by Dr. Price. Burke duly recorded "the dislike I feel to revolutions, the signals which have so often been given from pulpits"—reminding his readers that Price had celebrated the principles of 1688–89 from the pulpit of the Dissenting meetinghouse in the Old Jewry. Burke, like his antagonist Price, found much to celebrate in 1688–89. But unlike Price, Burke argued that there had been no innovation, no revolution, but merely a sensible and backward-looking restoration of the old order. The Revolution of 1688–89 was motivated by not a single new idea. James II had been the radical revolutionary; the English people had merely restored normalcy in 1688–89. "The Revolution was made to preserve our ancient indisputable laws and liberties, and that ancient constitution of government which is our only security for law and liberty," Burke explained. "The very idea of the fabrication of a new government, is enough to fill us with disgust and horror. We wished at the period of the Revolution, and do now wish, to derive all we possess as

in agriculture in the late seventeenth century, a figure roughly comparable to the United States on the eve of the American Civil War. Although England had been an economic backwater in the sixteenth century, the Dutch Republic had emerged as Europe's prime manufacturer in the late seventeenth century. The evidence suggests that much of England's transformation from an agrarian to a manufacturing society occurred in the second half of the seventeenth century.

By the late seventeenth century, the English produced a wide range of manufactured goods. Cloth making was England's leading industry, as it had been for centuries. But over the course of the seventeenth century, English cloth producers significantly retooled and shifted the focus of their manufacturing. Previously, the English had produced heavy woolen broadcloths appropriate for the colder climates of Northern Europe. By the accession of James II, English manufacturers produced new, lighter cloths involving mixes of wool and linen that were appropriate for the warmer climates of Southern Europe and the New World. In fact, woolen goods had ceased to be the only manufactured products exported from England. A wide range of English products replaced imports on the English market and began to compete successfully abroad. Sugar refineries, glass makers, pottery makers, and iron foundries proliferated in the late seventeenth century. English shipbuilding grew more rapidly in the seventeenth century than anytime before or since. After 1600, English miners produced much more coal, tin, iron ore, and lead than ever before. By the 1680s, England had become a nation of manufacturers.

Not only did England become a more commercial society over the course of the seventeenth century, it became a more urban society. The percentage of English people living in urban environments rose dramatically. Whereas between 10 and 12 percent of English people lived in towns in the early sixteenth century, as many as 40 percent lived in urban areas by 1700. The United States did not achieve a comparable urbanization rate until after the Civil War. This rapid urbanization set England apart from all of continental Europe outside the Dutch Republic. Whereas most of Europe was becoming less urban in the late seventeenth century, England's towns enjoyed sustained growth.

Much, but not all, of England's urban growth was attributable to the remarkable growth of the capital, London. London grew from a population of 75,000 in 1550 to a population of 575,000 in 1700. In the reign of James II, London was the largest city in Europe. Many of the cities that would later become England's industrial centers also grew dra-

matically in the seventeenth century. Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, Liverpool, Sheffield, and Portsmouth were all transformed from small villages to bustling cities. Philadelphia, New York, and Boston—none of which had existed at the beginning of the seventeenth century—were among the larger cities under English rule. Norwich, Exeter, and Bristol, already substantial places in 1600, grew considerably over the course of the seventeenth century.

Not only did England's towns grow dramatically in the seventeenth century, they also became more comfortable places to live. Houses became bigger and more sturdy. Mud walls and thatched roofs were replaced by brick and tile. Streets were widened and paved. Towns and cities, which had been universally dark at night, were now graced for the first time with public streetlights. The threat of fire, the bane of early modern urban dwellers, was diminished by the advent almost simultaneously of fire departments and fire insurance. As an increasingly large percentage of the population was paid with money rather than goods, shops, already present in larger market towns before the seventeenth century, proliferated. Urban dwellers could now visit cookshops, bookshops, barber shops, and purveyors of groceries in humble villages as well as in the urban metropolis (see Document 9).

Economic improvement and urban growth spawned a variety of new leisure options as well. From the 1650s, coffeehouses spread throughout the country at a rapid pace (see Document 11). By the end of the century, there were said to be several thousand coffeehouses in London alone, but even modest towns like Kendal, Carlisle, and Preston in the northwest of England had their own popular coffeehouses. In 1661, London's first pleasure garden (early modern amusement park), the Vauxhall Gardens, opened on the south bank of the Thames. Urban amenities were supplemented by the emergence of leisure towns. Spas were all the rage in late-seventeenth-century England. The most famous and elite were at Bath and Tunbridge Wells, but similar if less elaborate resorts opened in Derbyshire, Yorkshire, and Berkshire and in the London suburb of Islington.

England's rapidly developing infrastructure facilitated the trends toward urbanization and commercialization. The passage of the first turnpike act in 1663 was a landmark in the development of England's network of roads. Soon stagecoaches, rarities before the 1640s, were offering regularly scheduled service to all of England's major towns and many minor ones. Wagons and carts plied the same routes with commercial merchandise. London had more than six hundred hackney coaches, which were essentially early modern taxis, to take passengers

to their destinations. England's rivers were increasingly busy with passenger and commercial barges. An even greater amount of traffic traveled on the regular coastal routes, taking, for example, coal from Newcastle to London. The post office, which had only really carried court correspondence before the 1630s, became the primary institution of commercial and personal interchange in the late seventeenth century. The creation of the Penny Post in the late 1670s guaranteed same-day delivery of letters throughout the greater London area for a single penny. The rapidly expanding road system and the ever intensifying network of local post offices guaranteed slightly slower but no less regular delivery throughout England.

Increasing urbanization, combined with a rapidly intensifying infrastructure, made it possible for England to develop a remarkable news culture in the late seventeenth century. The English, it is true, already had a well-developed taste for news before the outbreak of the English Civil War in the 1640s. After the Civil War and the elimination of press censorship, however, newspapers, newsletters, and pamphlets debating the significance of recent events proliferated. From the 1650s, the new coffeehouses provided ideal sites for debate, discussion, and dissemination of the latest information. By the accession of James II, the English were known throughout Europe as a news-hungry people.

England in the late seventeenth century was developing many of the characteristics of a modern society. England's commerce was growing faster than its population. The country was increasingly urban. Local and regional economies were being integrated into a national economic system. Modern economic instruments—such as private banking, insurance, and paper money—were becoming common. And England was deviating from the European economic norm. Whereas the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had been boom years for most of Europe, only England and the Netherlands enjoyed sustained economic growth after the 1620s. In large part this was because England's extensive overseas trade with the East and West Indies and North America made it relatively immune to the increasing tide of economic protectionist barriers that swept through Europe at the time (see Documents 8–10). England could survive the exclusion of its manufactures from European markets in part because it could continue to export them to its colonies. It could survive without many European raw materials and luxury goods because it was agriculturally self-sufficient and because it could import sugar and tobacco from the New World and fabrics and spices from the East. England's position in the Atlantic world markets set it apart from its European

economic competitors, allowing it to become one of the first modern economies.

Failure to recognize England's economic and social transformation in the late seventeenth century has deeply distorted the traditional interpretation of the Revolution of 1688–89. When the great nineteenth-century Whig historian Thomas Babington Macaulay concluded that the revolution was a deeply conservative event, he did so in large part because he believed that England's society in the late seventeenth century was hopelessly backward and that a backward society could not produce a modern revolution. But the mass of social and economic historians since Macaulay's time have demonstrated that far from being an economic backwater, England was a rapidly modernizing society in the late seventeenth century.

ENGLISH POLITICS IN 1685

England's political life in the mid- to late seventeenth century was similarly marked by great change. Because England in the seventeenth century was politically violent rather than politically stable, most Europeans thought of England as a remarkably tumultuous place. Between 1640 and 1660, the British Isles were torn apart by a series of civil wars. In January 1649, a parliamentary tribunal judged Charles I, the father of both Charles II and James II, guilty of treason and had him beheaded. The ensuing eleven-year interregnum dramatically transformed England's political and social landscape. The House of Lords was abolished. Parliament implemented land taxes on England's social elite for the first time. In the absence of a coercive state church government by bishops was eliminated in October 1640, a bewildering variety of sects emerged. For many scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this was *the* English revolution.

As great as the midcentury convulsion was, however, it was followed by the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. Charles II returned from his continental exile, along with his brother James, in triumph. After almost a decade of political upheaval that had intensified after the Protector Oliver Cromwell's death in 1658, the English people were ready for a return to traditional rule. Crowds enthusiastically cheered Charles II's arrival in London, hoping that the return of the king would bring with it the return of political stability. His first Parliament, elected in 1662, restored the power of the monarchy. Charles II quickly regained almost all of the executive powers his father had bargained

away in the 1640s. The Act of Uniformity of 1662 once again made the Church of England the only legal religious body in England. English men and women were once again compelled by law to attend Church of England services on Sundays. The Civil War and the interregnum had turned England upside down, but the Restoration had almost turned it right back up again.

Almost, but not quite. Because of the high cost of fighting first civil wars and then foreign wars in the 1640s and 1650, the English state was forced to devise new forms of taxation and develop vast new layers of bureaucracy. As a result the English state was much more powerful in 1662 than it had been in 1640. England now had a professional army and navy, if somewhat reduced from their size in the 1650s. England now had a more extensive state infrastructure, supported by a larger network of roads than had existed before the Civil War. Charles II also had to contend with a much more deeply politicized nation. While the new king had been welcomed enthusiastically by a substantial portion of the nation, a much larger proportion of that nation had become consumers of political information in the tumultuous two decades since the outbreak of the Civil War and had become more critical and wary. While the Church of England reclaimed the legal religious monopoly, many in England had actively read and debated the variety of religious pamphlets, sermons, and broadsides easily available from the early 1640s. Religiously, politically, and economically, the English ruled by Charles II were a different people than his father had governed.

Tensions between Charles II's restored monarchy and his political and religious critics came to a head in the late 1670s. Three successive Parliaments raised profound questions about the nature and power of Charles II's regime. The crisis was set off by the twin fears of increasing French power on the continent and the realization that Charles II's brother and heir, James Duke of York, was a Roman Catholic. Charles II's critics, who came to be known as the Whig Party—named after the virulently anti-Catholic Scottish Presbyterian Whiggamores—wanted war with France and wanted James excluded from the succession. Charles's numerous supporters, increasingly called Tories after Irish Roman Catholics, claimed that the French threat was overstated and insisted on James's indefeasible hereditary right to the throne. Because of the high level of ideological tension, and the unprecedented strength of political opposition, Charles II was forced to call three parliamentary elections in three years, which succeeded in energizing the political nation. Huge numbers of people

petitioned and addressed in support of both parties. Eventually, Charles II and his Tory supporters were able to defeat the Whigs both in the arenas of high politics and in the court of public opinion. Many came to believe that the Whigs sought to reinstitute England's civil wars. Whig leaders, including the Earl of Shaftesbury and his secretary, John Locke, fled to the Netherlands.

In 1683, a failed plot by radical Whigs to assassinate Charles II and his brother decisively turned much of the public against the Whigs. Charles was freed to initiate a widespread campaign against the parliamentary constituencies, or corporations, that had returned Whig members to the Parliaments of 1679 to 1681. Prosecutions against religious Dissenters, thought to be the natural allies of the Whigs, were significantly ramped up. The king was able to restore strict control of the press. Roger L'Estrange served both as licenser of the press and as chief government propagandist through his widely distributed newspaper, the *Observer in Dialogue* (see Document 37).

Charles II died in February 1685 and was peacefully succeeded by his brother, James II. At this moment, the English monarchy was poised to achieve the same kind of absolute political authority enjoyed in France, Denmark, and Sweden. A poorly planned and badly managed rebellion in June 1685 led by Charles II's illegitimate son, James Duke of Monmouth, only strengthened James II's position. The Duke of Monmouth landed in the west of England in mid-June with a handful of men. While he quickly gathered support from the religiously persecuted Protestant Nonconformists (those who were unable to conform to the rituals or accept the hierarchy of the Church of England), he never achieved support from the politically powerful western gentry and nobility. This was in part because the Duke of Monmouth portrayed his rebellion solely as a war of religion. He insisted that he was the proper heir to the throne and that James II's title was a Roman Catholic hoax. For the Duke of Monmouth, his was a struggle about whether England would have a Protestant or a Catholic monarchy. Unfortunately for Monmouth, many in England—especially many of the middle and higher echelons of society—believed the lesson of the previous century of European history was that wars of religion resulted only in massive bloodshed and political confusion.

James II's army fairly quickly defeated the Duke of Monmouth's ragtag forces. As soon as James captured his nephew, he had him beheaded and had his lord chancellor prosecute Monmouth's supporters to the fullest extent of the law. James used the event to point out

the inadequacies of England's county militias. England could only be safe at home and abroad, he argued, with a modern standing army. He needed an army, James II argued, modeled on that constructed by the powerful Louis XIV of France.

Over the next three years, James II succeeded in creating a modern state apparatus with extensive powers. Not only did he claim extensive political powers, but he used these powers. Towns throughout England, from Berwick to Portsmouth, from Plymouth to York, from Chester to Hull, hosted large military garrisons. James worked closely with longtime acquaintance Samuel Pepys to build up and equip an efficient navy. James used the post office to circulate government propaganda and to survey the writings of any politician whose loyalty he suspected. In theory, James created the Ecclesiastical Commission to run the Protestant Church of England since he, as a practicing Roman Catholic, could not. In practice, the Ecclesiastical Commission cracked down on political commentary emanating from England's pulpits. Since it interpreted criticism of the Catholic Church as political criticism of the king's faith, Protestant clerics were severely limited in their freedom to preach.

James II also promoted an innovative religious policy. The new king was determined to restore the Roman Catholic Church to its rightful place in English religious life. He knew, however, that the overwhelming majority of English men and women were devout Protestants with profound anti-Catholic prejudices who would not accept Catholicism as the official state religion. Therefore he simply hoped to free Catholicism from legal and political prohibition in England. When it became clear that no amount of personal lobbying would convince his Tory supporters to vote in Parliament for a repeal of the laws condemning Catholics and Protestant Nonconformists, James turned his hopes to his former enemies: Protestant Nonconformists. James issued two Declarations of Indulgence (see one in Document 32) annulling the penalties against Catholics and Protestant Dissenters (Nonconformists). At the same time, he initiated a widespread campaign to secure a Parliament that would reverse the older parliamentary statutes. Whereas contemporary politicians conduct political surveys to fine-tune their political message, James II conducted a massive political survey to fine-tune the electorate. He asked politicians and potential politicians whether they would support repeal of the penal laws against Protestant Dissenting and Roman Catholic religious worship and repeal of the Test Acts (enacted in 1673) against Protestant Dissenting and Roman Catholic political participation. Those who re-

fused to support his policies were removed from positions of political and social authority.

James II's newly intrusive and powerful state represented an affront to the ideas and way of life of many in England. For others, James's active attempts to modernize the English polity in the fashion of Louis XIV's France represented a real opportunity. Some old Tories were caught in between: They found James II's actions abhorrent but could not justify resisting an anointed king. But almost no one in England could refrain from taking sides. James II succeeded in polarizing his nation.

The rapid collapse of James II's position in England in the winter of 1688-89 has masked for many historians the seriousness of James II's program. James almost succeeded in creating a modernized English state with a coherent foreign and imperial policy (see "Revolution in Politics" below). James did have significant support for his policies both within England and in Scotland and Ireland. That Jacobites (supporters of James II's claim) fought in Ireland and Scotland to restore their king was a strategic decision, not a recognition of their numerical weakness in England. James II had many supporters within England. Not only did he have Catholic friends in England, but among his supporters were Quakers, such as William Penn, and members of the Church of England, such as the Duke of Beaufort, the Earl of Huntingdon, and the Earl of Clarendon. Many old Tories who were critical of James II's modernizing policies came to support their former king once it became clear that William III and his supporters aimed not only to reverse James's policies but also to adopt a modernizing program of their own. These Jacobites were well aware that the Revolution of 1688-89 was much more than a constitutional struggle.

REVOLUTION IN POLITICS

Ignoring the rapidly changing nature of English society, the traditional story of the Revolution of 1688-89 has begun and ended with the constitution. The Declaration of Rights of February 1689 (Document 12), which became the Bill of Rights when it was given the status of a parliamentary statute in December 1689, is normally seen to have encapsulated the essence of the revolution. The revolution did systematically codify the political rights of Englishmen. In fact, the English Bill of Rights was a major influence among the American colonists in drafting their Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Yet Edmund Burke and many historians who have followed him have suggested that the Bill of Rights only restated old law. He was right, of course, to point out that many things insisted on in the Bill of Rights had precedents in English history. The Petition of Right of 1628, for example, had already established some of these important rights. Nevertheless, there were some distinctly novel elements in the Declaration of Rights, elements that reflected specific discontent with the rule of James II. The Declaration of Rights emphasized changes in the nature of the succession to the English crown by excluding James II's son; it insisted that kings did not have the right to dispense with or suspend laws passed by Parliament; and it prohibited the monarch from raising a permanent standing army. At the same time, the Declaration and Bill of Rights insisted more forcefully than ever that elections to Parliament must be free of governmental interference.

Not only did the Declaration and Bill of Rights insist that a wide variety of rights were held by all Englishmen, but defenders of the new regime described the nature of government in terms very different from those used by propagandists for James II. After one of the more serious rebellions against Charles II's regime in 1683—now known as the Rye House Plot—Oxford University banned a series of political and religious propositions. In essence, one of England's two universities, which was itself very closely tied to the government, insisted that England was governed by a divine-right monarch who was answerable to no one but God. All political resistance and most forms of political criticism were illegal. That monarch, the decrees implied, was supported by the Protestant Church of England. All religious meetings outside of that church were simultaneously illegal and a potential subversive threat to the regime. After James II's accession and the short-lived and ill-fated rebellion led by his nephew, James Duke of Monmouth, in the summer of 1685, these same themes were enunciated in sermon after sermon across the country. After the Revolution of 1688–89, by contrast, a variety of different justifications for the legitimacy of the regime were heard. For example, some argued that James II had broken the original contract with the people and hence had been deposed. Others maintained that James II had providentially deserted his country, rendering the throne vacant. While the notion that the power of England's kings was limited by law by no means monopolized the ideological landscape, it did have a prominence in official circles that was unknown during the reigns of Charles II and James II.

In a narrowly constitutional and political sense, the Revolution of

1688–89 did alter the ideological orientation of England's polity. The Declaration of Rights did advance new rights and clarify old ones. That many moderate supporters of the revolution objected to some of the language in the declaration makes clear that this document was not merely restating old law. However, it is surely correct to suggest, as Colley Cibber did, that the English had frequently made claims to their rights in the past. None of the arguments for limited monarchy published in pamphlets or preached in sermons were all that novel. The same arguments had been advanced during the parliamentary struggles of the 1620s, during the English Civil War in the 1640s, and during the debates over the succession during Charles II's reign. What was new, as Cibber noted, was that these rights were given substance (see Document 5). Legal guarantees meant little if the king was able to ignore the law. A theory of limited monarchy did not constrain the king if he was not obliged in practice as well as in theory to convene Parliament.⁶

Why, in fact, did English monarchs follow the law after the revolution? What gave the Declaration of Rights substance? Three revolutionary changes in the orientation of the English state had the combined effect of compelling English kings to be limited monarchs: the radical reorientation of English foreign policy, English political economy, and the Church of England. These revolutionary changes are what distinguish the Revolution of 1688–89 as the first modern revolution.

REVOLUTION IN FOREIGN POLICY

The English in the late seventeenth century were not an intellectually insular people. They had a sophisticated understanding of European and extra-European affairs. Throughout the late seventeenth century, newspapers were filled with stories detailing political and military developments on the European continent. Coffeehouses were abuzz with gossip about Louis XIV's most recent escapade, the latest Spanish court intrigue, and the most recent Ottoman military exploit. English country gentlemen routinely subscribed to European as well as English newspapers. Sermons were liberally sprinkled with references to

⁶Both Charles II and James II were required by the Triennial Act of 1664 to convene Parliament every three years. There was nothing, however, that could compel them to do so.

religious and secular European trends. Bookshops in the capital and provincial centers stocked a wide variety of works from European presses.

When the English turned their thoughts to continental affairs, they were usually struck by the great struggle taking place between Europe's economic dynamo, the Dutch Republic, and Europe's greatest military power, the France of Louis XIV. To James II, like his older brother, Charles II, the Dutch Republic offered a very troubling prospect. After Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660, the Netherlands immediately provided an offshore home to his political and ideological enemies. It was for this reason that Charles II, with James at his side, fought two unsuccessful wars against the Dutch Republic (1665-67, 1672-74). When James II succeeded his brother in 1685, the Netherlands hosted a wide array of his opponents. Gilbert Burnet, a leading opponent of James II's religious policies, had fled there, as had John Locke, one of James II's greatest political critics. The passenger barges, town squares, and coffeehouses of the greatest Dutch towns hosted a wide range of English and Scottish political exiles.

English exiles fled to the Dutch Republic because it represented the political antithesis of the later Stuart monarchy. Whereas Charles II and James II claimed to rule England by hereditary divine right, the Netherlands was manifestly a republic. It was true that James II's son-in-law, William III of Orange, played an extremely important role in the politics of the Netherlands. Yet his role was not that of a king. He came to political authority on a wave of popular sentiment in 1672. His control over the Dutch military was always subject to the oversight of the Dutch States General.⁷ Real political power lay in the individual assembly of each of the seven Dutch provinces. Holland, the richest and demographically the largest of the Dutch provinces, had a disproportionate influence on Dutch policy. And Holland was extremely wary of allowing any member of the House of Orange to appear anything like a king. From the perspective of James II in London, the Dutch Republic provided a dangerous political example for his countrymen and for Europe as a whole. The Dutch Republic appeared to James and his supporters as a political cancer.

The religious policy of the Dutch polity also provided a clear con-

⁷The Dutch States General was equivalent to a parliament that met in The Hague. Unlike the English Parliament, however, members were not directly elected. The States General was, in effect, a meeting of the representatives of the seven Dutch provinces.

trast with the coercive state church in England. The Dutch Republic (or the United Provinces of the Netherlands) was the most religiously tolerant country in Europe. Many of Europe's religious refugees fled to the Netherlands. Mennonites went to the Dutch Republic when they were evicted from Germany. Jews fled to the Netherlands from Spain and Portugal. Thousands of French Protestants, called Huguenots, came to the Netherlands as they were increasingly persecuted in Louis XIV's France. And the Netherlands provided a refuge for English Protestants who could not stomach the rituals and requirements of the Church of England. Quakers, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists all made their homes in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Utrecht.

While it may be hard for us to imagine, the Dutch Republic in the late seventeenth century was also a great military and naval power. The Dutch had achieved their independence in the early seventeenth century by defeating the most powerful European monarchy of that era, Spain. The Dutch military had set the European standard for precise drilling and training. Its methods were adopted and mimicked all over Europe. But the real Dutch strength was at sea. Dutch naval prowess was proverbial in the seventeenth century. Dutch traders were prominent in the West Indies, on the west coast of Africa, in European waters, and above all in the East Indies. The Dutch East India Company had established a colonial capital at Batavia (modern Jakarta) in Indonesia and had come to dominate the European trade along the southern coast of India, Persia, and Japan. The extent of their maritime empire made plausible Stuart fears that the Dutch would soon achieve universal dominion based on commercial hegemony.

From James II's perspective, the Dutch polity needed to be destroyed. England could never be stable as long as the Dutch Republic sheltered his enemies, financed their plots, and promoted such dangerous political ideas. Dutch commercial hegemony convinced James and his advisers that failure to act may well mean slow but certain economic strangulation for England. Court sentiment grew that James II must finish the job that Charles II had begun in his two inconclusive wars against the Dutch. Court memoranda circulated arguing that the Netherlands must be destroyed. In preparation for this final blow at the heart of the ideologically threatening Dutch Republic, James carefully built up his navy. Meanwhile, his propagandists spewed forth poems and pamphlets castigating the Dutch for their political and religious corruption. In January 1688, James recalled the three English regiments that had traditionally protected the Dutch Republic against

threats from continental powers. By the spring, most political gossips were certain war would come that summer or autumn (see Documents 15–20). And come it did, in the form of a Dutch preemptive first strike in November 1688.

While Charles II and James II were convinced that the Netherlands posed the greatest threat to England, most of their subjects increasingly believed that France was the greater threat to the English way of life. Louis XIV was the most powerful king in Europe.⁸ His soldiers, numbered in the hundreds of thousands. James II's army, by contrast, was only about forty thousand strong. French diplomats had succeeded in bullying and cajoling much of Europe into acquiescing to the inevitability of French power. Already by the 1670s, most European observers were convinced that France had replaced Spain as the greatest monarchy in Europe. Many believed that it was only a matter of time before Louis XIV would proclaim himself "universal monarch."

For many in England, the regime of Louis XIV was a greater ideological danger than the Dutch Republic. Louis XIV appeared to check his ambition no limits on his power. There was no parliament to check his ambitions. There was no law that could bind him. When Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685—an edict issued by Louis's grandfather Henri IV in 1598 that guaranteed certain rights to the French Protestant community—it seemed to many that he had overturned France's equivalent of the Magna Carta. Louis XIV was the embodiment of a king who recognized no earthly superior (see Documents 21–22).

From the 1670s, the English were increasingly concerned about Louis XIV's economic practices as well. Louis and his great minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, had created a number of successful national manufactures. They had also promoted a remarkably thoroughgoing series of tariff and nontariff trade barriers. The result was that English manufacturers were unable to sell their goods in the lucrative French marketplace. Many cloth-making regions in England that had depended on French outlets for their products had to reorient their trade. By contrast, England was a great consumer of French luxury goods, such as silks and red wines. Many commentators remarked on the ubiquity of French fashions in London and English provincial cities.

Louis XIV's religious policies were just as terrifying to many in England. Not only was Louis XIV a committed Catholic, but he was

⁸ See William Belk, *Louis XIV and Absolutism* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000).

committed to the notion that only religious uniformity was compatible with a strong state. French Calvinists, who had long enjoyed specific religious guarantees, were offered the choice of conversion or annihilation. Thousands fled. Thousands more converted. For some in England, Louis XIV's actions proved that no Roman Catholic monarch could be trusted. For most, however, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the subsequent forcible conversions demonstrated that it was impossible to maintain religious liberty without first guaranteeing civil liberty. Religious toleration would always be fragile under absolutist regimes.

For the English, the choice between a French or a Dutch alignment was much more than a question of geopolitics. It was the choice between two very different ways of life. It was a choice with stark contrasts not unlike that offered to many Europeans at the height of the cold war. With each accretion of French power in the late seventeenth century, more and more English citizens concluded that France—much more than the Netherlands—posed a threat to the English polity and society. In fact, many hoped that when James II, a man with a sterling reputation as a military leader, came to the throne, England would at long last go to war with France. However, James, unlike most of his countrymen, felt that the Dutch Republic was a far greater threat. His perceived appeasement of France played no small role in turning the English against his regime. It was therefore one of the primary aims of the revolutionaries of 1688–89 to reverse England's foreign policy. The first prong of the revolutionary program of 1688–89 was to declare war against France (see Documents 23–24). In fact, William's prime qualification for the job of English king in the eyes of many was his lifelong commitment to containing the growing power of Louis XIV. By bringing William to the throne in 1689, the revolutionaries had achieved their first objective: they had radically reoriented English foreign policy.

REVOLUTION IN POLITICAL ECONOMY

The Revolution of 1688–89 dramatically reoriented England's social and economic policy. Both James II and William III had sophisticated and activist economic programs. Like modern leaders, and unlike medieval ones, they sought to improve their subjects' material well-being. While the two kings disagreed profoundly in their ideological assumptions and their preferred policies, they agreed that a successful

political economic program was a vital element of statecraft. Historians, however, have ignored this central element of the revolution because they assume that the late-seventeenth-century state functioned like a medieval state. They assume that debates about political economy did not begin until the late eighteenth century.

Just as England's economy changed rapidly in the seventeenth century, so did the nature of English statecraft. Wars in the late seventeenth century were very different from military struggles of the late Middle Ages or the Renaissance. Armies were much larger. The fighting season was much longer. Set-piece battles had, by and large, been replaced by long sieges. Late-seventeenth-century wars were wars of attrition. Increasingly, this meant that the most powerful state was that state that could marshal the greatest financial resources. Money, in the language of the seventeenth century, provided the sinews of power (see Document 10).

Charles II and James II were well aware that changes in the nature of warfare, coupled with the widening of economic horizons, meant that the nature of politics in the late seventeenth century was very different from what it had been in their father's day. Charles II was fascinated by new manufacturing techniques. He eagerly visited the launching of new ships. His brother, James, was more involved still in the machinery of the modern state. James served as director of England's Royal African Company in the 1670s and 1680s. He invested heavily in East India Company stock. He befriended leading members of England's increasingly powerful merchant community. James also did all he could to modernize England's navy with the help of a trusted civil servant, the famous diarist Samuel Pepys. James knew that to be a successful modern monarch, above all to be one who could compete with the Dutch, he needed to have a modern economy and a modern navy.

Making economic policy in the late seventeenth century, much like developing an economic agenda today, required selecting from among a variety of plausible policies. Again, much like in the contemporary world, a politician's ideological predisposition informed his or her economic agenda. James II's political economic agenda was simultaneously informed by his experience with the East India and Royal African companies and his commitment to the notion that the Dutch Republic was England's great political rival. By the 1680s, James had developed a coherent, sophisticated, and thoroughly modern economic and imperial strategy.

James and his advisers, such as the East India merchant Josiah

Child, the Africa merchant Benjamin Bathurst, and the Lord Chancellor George Jeffries, believed that the basis of all property and wealth was land. It was land that provided the agrarian base for all economies. Coveted luxuries like tobacco, sugar, and spices were all products of the land. Since the amount of land in the world was necessarily finite, the struggle for prosperity was a zero-sum game—what one nation gained, another lost (see Documents 25–26). James therefore sought to rationalize and promote England's imperial possessions. In North America, James, while still Duke of York, amalgamated New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts to create the Dominion of New England in 1684. He sought to create a parallel Dominion of the West Indies. And he began to create a new Dominion of India based in Bombay. Because James assumed the viciousness of international competition, the English monarch worked with the African and East India companies, as well as his Board of Trade, to ensure that these colonies would be militarily self-sufficient. James felt deeply that economic and imperial policy was a central part of the royal prerogative. Trading companies and their territories, therefore, answered to the king alone, and not to Parliament. In the colonies, there was only the king's law. Parliament had no jurisdiction outside of England.

James and his advisers were convinced that his great imperial competitors were the Dutch. This was, in part, because James felt that the key to imperial success lay in India, not in the West Indies. It was Indian cloth and spices that yielded the largest profits for the merchants and that guaranteed the largest customs revenues for the crown. In the East Indies, there was little question that the Dutch were England's greatest European rivals. This was less true in the West Indies after the demise of the Dutch colony in Brazil and the conquest of New Amsterdam (New York) by the English. In Europe, too, Dutch manufacturers competed with the English for increasingly dwindling markets.

James II's economic policy had clear domestic corollaries as well. Since land, and not manufacturing, was the basis of wealth, James sought to promote England's landed gentlemen at the expense of the newly developing manufacturing sectors. Land was lightly taxed, whereas the hearth tax imposed after Charles II's restoration heavily assessed those who needed heat to manufacture their products. Sheffield ironworkers, for example, deeply resented the tax policies of the later Stuart monarchs. James also sought to promote England's fishing industry, a sort of farming of the sea. Here, too, English fishermen were in desperate competition with the Dutch for the European

herring trade. Indeed, some of James II's economic advisers argued that Dutch wealth depended on the riches generated by the fisheries that the Dutch had stolen from the English.

James II and his friends from the committee rooms of the Africa and East India companies did not, however, hold a monopoly on economic ideas in the late seventeenth century. Their ideas were opposed by another powerful, wealthy, and influential group of merchants. Many of these merchants had been purged from the East India Company in the 1670s and 1680s, and many had ties to England's manufacturing community or were themselves manufacturers. Unlike the circle around James II, they argued that the basis of property and wealth was human labor rather than land. Since wealth was created by work, it was not necessarily finite; it was infinitely expandable. As a result, economic competition was not a zero-sum game; it was possible for several nations to become wealthier simultaneously. Within each kingdom, manufacturing would drive the national economy. As workers produced more, they would have more disposable income with which to purchase more goods, in turn stimulating more industries. In this view, there were no limits to economic growth.

From these assumptions grew an alternative understanding of economic and imperial policy. Proponents of this view argued that the key to England's long-term prosperity was in manufacturing. Therefore the East India trade, a trade that imported finished calicoes and other cheap cloths that competed with the English clothing industry, should be discouraged. The West Indies, which produced sugar to be refined in England and tobacco that could be reexported throughout Europe, was another matter. Similarly, proponents of this view understood the international economic order very differently. Since, in their view, trade was infinitely expandable, these merchants did not see Dutch economic prosperity as threatening. The French, by contrast, were a danger. French protectionist policies excluded English manufactures from French markets. And the diplomatic pressure the French were able to exert on other countries closed even more markets to the English. Unsurprisingly, many of the loudest proponents of this view were merchants who once traded heavily with France (see Documents 27 and 29).

On the domestic front, proponents of this view shared with their opponents the conviction that the state should intervene in the economy. But unlike James II and his supporters, those who thought that wealth was infinitely expandable argued that government economic policy should favor the manufacturing sector rather than the landed

elite. They hated the hearth tax for harming manufacturers and longed for a return to the high land taxes of the 1640s and 1650s.

Supporters of the manufacturing sector became increasingly frustrated with James II's economic policies. They detested the favoritism shown to the East India and Royal African companies. They lamented James's acquiescence to Louis XIV's protectionist measures. They resented the steady drumbeat for war against the Dutch. Unsurprisingly, many of James's economic opponents began to turn decisively against the regime, sending money to William of Orange in 1688, thinking that only he could remedy their plight.

After William and Mary succeeded in overthrowing James II, the defenders of England's manufacturing sector gained the upper hand. The same Parliament that placed William on the throne reversed James II's taxation policies. In April 1689, the hearth tax was repealed, and in December 1689, a land tax was instituted for the first time since the 1650s. Many then turned their attention to the monopoly held by the East India Company. In session after session of Parliament in the 1690s, proposals were put forward to disband or reorganize the East India Company. While the company's opponents succeeded in establishing the principle that all companies were subject to Parliament and English law, the company itself remained. It survived in large part because in a time of warfare against the French, the East India Company had the potential to offer the government large loans to pay for an increasingly expensive war. The company's opponents, however, merely shifted their ground. They succeeded in limiting the East India Company's influence by establishing the Bank of England in 1694, which simultaneously loaned the government money to pay for the war⁹ and helped redistribute money in the form of loans to the manufacturing sector. The bank—supported politically by James II's opponents, such as John Locke and Isaac Newton, and financially by the old enemies of the East India Company—was based on the notion that England's economic future lay in the manufacturing sector and not exclusively in the land (see Document 28).

The Revolution of 1688–89 completely reoriented England's political economy. James II had pursued an imperial policy emphasizing the importance of land and the East Indies. The new regime pointed England toward manufacturing and the West Indies. James II's regime had adopted economic views not unlike those of Colbert in France and

⁹The bank, however, was answerable to Parliament, not to the king alone. The king could not simply seize money.

believed that the Dutch were its greatest economic rivals. William and Mary, unsurprisingly, drew their economic inspiration from the Netherlands and argued that French protectionism posed the greatest threat to England's economic future.

REVOLUTION IN THE CHURCH

While warfare and political economy had changed substantially over the course of the seventeenth century, the Church retained a socially and culturally central role in the lives of the English. All English men and women were compelled by law to attend Church of England services every Sunday. All other forms of religious worship were illegal. The Revolution of 1688–89 radically shifted power within the Church of England and eliminated many of the prohibitions against worship outside that Church.

After the Restoration in 1660, Charles II promoted a very specific kind of churchman to the highest ranks in the Church of England. These men came to be known as *high churchmen*. Those who were preferred to episcopal sees and rich deaneries were by and large men who condemned the temporary disestablishment of the Church of England in the 1640s and 1650s. They blamed the interregnum for unleashing a series of unwholesome and dangerous religious sects. Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Quakers, Ranters, and Fifth Monarchy Men all preached and published in the 1640s and 1650s. While the Act of Uniformity of 1662 had outlawed these and other sects and had firmly reestablished the Church of England, the Anglican clergy knew full well that religious dissent had not been eviscerated. These men believed that religious dissent was both politically subversive and spiritually dangerous. Religious Dissenters, they argued, actively disobeyed the king's law and had been responsible for initiating the civil war that ended with the execution of Charles I. Dissenters, the high churchmen claimed, refused to obey human laws that contradicted their interpretation of divine law. Since there could be only one true church, many high church divines contended, religious Dissenters were necessarily guilty of the sin of schism. These high church divines therefore adamantly opposed any loosening of church requirements. They rejected calls for comprehension—making the definition of Church of England practice looser so as to include moderate Presbyterians—because they believed strongly in the efficacy of their version of church ritual. They opposed toler-

ation—legalizing religious worship outside the Church of England—because there could be only one true path to salvation (see Document 30). High churchmen were deeply devoted to improving the ties between the priest and his parochial community. But for them, pastoral care meant ensuring that parishioners were orthodox and frequent communicants as a prerequisite to receiving poor relief.

The high churchmen did hold the majority of desirable church benefices during the reigns of Charles II and James II. From the 1670s, they were able to work very closely with powerful laymen to secure the most desirable posts. Archbishop of Canterbury Gilbert Sheldon and his successor, William Sancroft, did much to improve the quality of the Church of England clergy through their pastoral letters and episcopal visitations. They also worked extremely hard to maintain its ideological purity.

The high churchmen did not, however, monopolize all positions within the Church of England. A number of clerics with a distinctly different vision for the Church retained both posts and influence. These men came to be known as *low churchmen*. This group of men had, by and large, not gone into exile in the 1640s and 1650s. Many of them had in fact been educated at Oxford or Cambridge during the interregnum, when the Church of England had lost its monopoly over the universities. While they themselves conformed to the Church of England, many of these low churchmen came from families that were more associated with the parliamentary and puritan sides in the English civil wars. And, perhaps tellingly, many of these men served as parish priests in London.

This group of men, which included Gilbert Burnet, Simon Patrick, and the postrevolutionary Archbishop of Canterbury John Tillotson, held very different views from their opponents. They argued that while there was only one true church, that true church would not be marked by persecution. They also came to believe that a religious man or woman was characterized less by the purity of his or her doctrine than by his or her moral character. Given these premises, they did not believe that religious dissent was an act of political obstinacy, but rather a conscientious following of deeply felt convictions (see Document 31).

Low churchmen differed radically from their high church brethren on three important issues. First, they argued in favor of a broader, comprehensive Church of England that included moderate Dissenters and toleration for those who could not be so accommodated. Since dissent was an act of conscience, and conscience could not be coerced,

the low churchmen insisted that the Church needed to make space for as many conscientious believers as it could. There would always be those who would remain unable to worship in the Church of England, but it was better by far to allow them to live comfortable and productive lives in England than to compel them to be exiles. Second, they maintained that clergy had no role to play in politics. They insisted that the Bible had not specified any particular form of government as being best. Governments, they maintained, played no part in the salvation of subjects. The low churchmen thus asserted that rebellion was never justified by the claim that the king was a heretic. They also insisted, however, that rulers were responsible for promotion of the common good. Low churchmen denied that any prince was answerable only to God. A tyrant could and should be resisted for secular reasons. Third, the low churchmen had a different view of pastoral care. They agreed with the high churchmen that the great weakness of earlier Protestants was their neglect of the social and moral well-being of their parishioners. However, unlike the high churchmen, they argued that moral and physical amelioration had to precede doctrinal catechism. A starving man, they reasoned, would accede to whatever doctrines would gain him food. Using poor relief as an incentive to attend church did not create sincere believers.

The reign of James II was a trying period for both high and low churchmen. James's Declarations of Indulgence of 1687 (see Document 32) and 1688 and his patronage of Catholic missionaries created a temporary alliance of these two groups. They both feared that James would attempt to recatholicize England. However, their temporary alliance should not blind us to their real religious differences.

From 1689, the fortunes of the high and low churchmen were reversed. Many high churchmen could not take the oaths of allegiance to the new regime because doing so would imply that resistance to a legitimate monarch could be justified. Many more grudgingly took the new oaths, arguing that William and Mary had in fact been crowned king and queen. Whether or not the new regime was legitimate was not a proper question, they said. They took the oaths in the belief that some government was preferable to anarchy. There were eighteen episcopal vacancies for the new monarchs to fill between 1689 and 1692. William and Mary had an opportunity to reshape the Church of England in their own image. They did not let the opportunity slip. They overwhelmingly appointed low churchmen to the vacant episcopal sees. While the low churchmen failed to get a comprehension bill through Parliament, they did secure the passage of the Toleration Act

in 1689, which guaranteed freedom of religious worship for all non-Roman Catholic Christians. They also were among the many in Parliament who in 1696 passed a parliamentary act declaring that William was the lawful and rightful king of England, not merely the king whom the English happened to have. They gained parliamentary legitimacy for the political resistance that had spawned the revolution.¹⁰ And the new low church bishops played a prominent role in promoting the reformation-of-manners movement, a campaign to improve the moral quality of English life. Both lay and clerical low churchmen had worked closely with Protestant Nonconformists to overthrow James II. After his departure they were able to fundamentally transform the Church of England.

INTERPRETING THE REVOLUTION OF 1688-1689

Why did the Revolution of 1688-89 make the rights of Englishmen tangible? Why did the events of that time finally make real the rights so many Englishmen had long claimed to be theirs in theory? The answer lies beyond the sphere of narrow constitutional history. For financial and commercial reasons, William and Mary and their successors were compelled to accept the Bill of Rights as a limitation on their power. The massive cost of the wars against France compelled them to rely on Parliament as an institution for financial support. English monarchs had to convene Parliament on a regular basis to authorize levying taxes to support the cost of war against the world's greatest power. By committing themselves to the promotion of a commercial society that privileged manufacturing, the English monarchs also committed themselves to protecting the rights enumerated in the Bill of Rights. What merchant or tradesman would invest in any business enterprise without guarantees that their property would be secure?

By promoting low churchmen, William and Mary also committed themselves to a religious party that insisted that government existed to serve the people and was ultimately answerable to the people. The

¹⁰Low churchmen argued that only by severing the close ties between the Church of England and the state could the Church be freed to pursue its proper pursuits of salvation and moral improvement. While they argued that political resistance was legitimate, they advanced that argument not as churchmen, but as Englishmen. They referred not to divine law, but to natural law and parliamentary statutes. They argued that high churchmen erred in positing that the Bible gave positive arguments for any one form of government. The Bible, in the view of the low churchmen, offered no prescription for politics.

revolution that had taken place in the Church of England ensured that preachers throughout England would frequently remind their parishioners that they had a right to resist a government that broke the law.

From as early as 1689, however, many interpreters of the Revolution of 1688–89 have insisted that there was nothing modern or innovative about it. Some have claimed that James II was overthrown by the opponents of his advocacy of religious toleration. Upon his invasion of Ireland in 1689 in an attempt to retake his kingdoms, James II argued that he had been overthrown by a reactionary religious faction. He claimed that he was stripped of his crown by high churchmen who resented his policy of religious toleration by royal edict. James had, in fact, issued two Declarations of Indulgence in England (1687 and 1688) that had in effect nullified the 1662 Act of Uniformity. All English people were thereby allowed to worship at the churches of their choice. Initially, it is true, the declarations were greeted with euphoria by the long-persecuted religious dissenters. Soon, however, they came to realize that their religious freedom depended on James II's claim that he could dispense with parliamentary statutes. Increasingly, religious dissenters realized that if the king had the right to nullify one parliamentary statute, by the same logic he could render invalid all laws. By June 1688, many religious Dissenters joined members of the Church of England in denouncing the arrest and trial of seven Anglican bishops for refusing to read the second Declaration of Indulgence. They understood that the bishops' refusal was in fact a defense of civil rights, rather than a condemnation of religious toleration. Dissenters had become convinced that there could be no religious liberty without civil liberty (see Documents 33–34).

Other scholars have suggested that the Revolution of 1688–89 was no more than an anti-Catholic coup d'état. The Protestant English, these scholars argue, were pathologically anti-Catholic. The events of 1688–89 merely replaced a Roman Catholic monarch with an acceptable Protestant one. The revolution, in this view, was a late phase of the European wars of religion. Elegant and simple as this explanation is, it fails to take account of Catholic attitudes or to explain the nature of the postrevolutionary regime. Roman Catholics were deeply divided over James II's policies. Many old English Catholic families, while delighted to have freedom of religious worship, were themselves worried about James II's absolutism. They soon found a leader in the papal nuncio who was invited to England by James. The nuncio, infuriated by the pro-French policies being pursued by James and his pro-French advisers, led a group of Catholic gentry and noblemen in

opposition to royal policies. Religious bigotry lay behind only a fraction of the opposition to James II (see Document 35). More significantly, the new regime did not pursue anti-Catholic policies. The war against France was fought in alliance with the Catholic Holy Roman emperor and the Catholic king of Spain. William intervened to prevent illegal actions against Roman Catholic civilians (see Document 36). While the Act of Toleration did exclude them, many Roman Catholics claimed that in practice they enjoyed more religious freedom than at any time since the reign of Henry VIII (1509–1547).

Late-seventeenth-century England was not a secular society. People went to church regularly and believed deeply in God. But the Revolution of 1688–89 was not a war of religion. William and Mary were uninterested in pursuing religious crusades at home or abroad. The revolution was perhaps the first political struggle of the Enlightenment,¹¹ a struggle in which the political rights and material welfare of the people were at stake; it was certainly not the last battle of the age of religious wars.

THE FIRST MODERN REVOLUTION

The Revolution of 1688–89 was the first modern revolution. It was not, however, a revolution that pitted a modernizing faction against a reactionary one. Both sides advocated modernization. Both James II and William III accepted that political economy was a central element of modern statecraft. Whereas Renaissance politicians had felt that their responsibilities were to promote the religious and political virtue of their subjects, James and William both believed that they were also responsible for promoting their economic welfare. Modern statecraft, they both felt, included political economy.

James and William simply had very different visions for a modernized England. James, deeply impressed by the success and grandeur of Louis XIV, opted for a large, powerful bureaucratic state that relied on land for its political power. He envisaged an English future that included an expanding empire. James felt that political power depended on a strong state that was religiously pluralist, but politically uniform. A modern sovereign, he believed, needed absolute and unquestioned

¹¹The Enlightenment was a broad-based and multinational eighteenth-century movement aiming at improving the human condition in this world. Many of the central concerns of the Enlightenment—political economy, the relationship between church and state, and the power of the king—were central concerns of the Revolution of 1688–89.

authority to make and enforce policy. This sovereign, James argued, needed a large bureaucracy and a powerful permanent army to enforce his authority at home and abroad. Those modern institutions could, in turn, best be maintained by the income generated from imperial trade, principally with the East Indies.

William, by contrast, drew inspiration for his version of the modern state from his native Dutch Republic. He agreed with James that a powerful state required a large bureaucracy and a permanent military force. William committed himself, however, to a political economy that emphasized manufacturing as the primary source of national wealth. As a result, William was committed to recognizing legal protections for property and to creating institutions like the Bank of England that promoted manufacturing. Unlike Charles II and James II, William was committed to toleration by statute. He and his supporters maintained that only parliamentary guarantees for religious freedom would attract the labor pool necessary for work in England's industries.

These two contrasting political visions are encapsulated in the writings of two of the most effective pamphleteers of the late seventeenth century: Roger L'Estrange and John Locke. Locke has been widely viewed as one of the first great thinkers of the modern age. L'Estrange, now almost forgotten, offered an alternative vision of modernity. In a series of newspapers, newsletters, and pamphlets, L'Estrange, who had served Charles II as licenser of the press,¹² defended the ideological vision of James II and his elder brother. L'Estrange emphasized that no government could be stable that tolerated political dissent. This was in large part why he castigated England's religious Nonconformists, who objected publicly to the laws prohibiting religious worship outside the Church of England. This was also why L'Estrange so detested the Dutch. In political economy, L'Estrange emphasized the importance of seizing as many of the world's limited resources as possible. L'Estrange's adamant defense of a royal fishery was based on the assumption that wealth was finite. By reclaiming their coastal fish farm, the English were necessarily reclaiming that scarce resource from their Dutch rivals (see Documents 37–38).

John Locke, by contrast, published a set of deeply influential pamphlets in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution of 1688–89. He argued that because governments were created to serve the needs of the people, the people therefore served as a necessary and legitimate

¹² L'Estrange was responsible for reading and approving, as politically and religiously orthodox, all books printed in England.

check on the authority of the sovereign. In fact, he argued that government was initially created to protect the property that came into existence through human labor. Locke, who was one of the earliest supporters of the Bank of England, helped promote English manufactures during his term on England's Board of Trade. He had developed a deep distaste for the French regime during his travels there in the 1670s and was an ardent supporter of war against France. Only by limiting the power of Louis XIV, he argued, could the liberties of England and all Europe be guaranteed. John Locke, who returned to England from his exile in the Dutch Republic just after James II's flight to France, became for many the ideological voice of the postrevolutionary regime.

Scholars usually dismiss the Revolution of 1688–89 in England as a narrowly political event. They have argued that it was at most a political revolution, not a social revolution. They do so, however, because they have focused too narrowly on the constitutional achievements of 1689. The ideological contrast between Roger L'Estrange and John Locke reveals that there was much more at stake than a mere constitutional adjustment. The Revolution of 1688–89 transformed England from a pro-French into a pro-Dutch alignment. James II's government promoted an agrarian society; the postrevolutionary state adopted a political economy that favored manufacturing. The Church under James II was tightly controlled by high churchmen; after the revolution, it was dominated by a set of low church clergymen who were committed to religious toleration, monarchy limited by law, and social amelioration. The revolution radically altered the English state, the English economy, and the English church. The English had truly brought about the first modern revolution.