

Novena

3. The Commonwealth and Restoration 1649-1713

Setting the Scene After many years of difficult relations between the king and Parliament, in the 1640s the Puritans and the king's followers went to war against each other. When Oliver Cromwell died in 1658, his son was named Lord Protector, but he was less successful than his father. Although the monarchy was restored, most of the power was held by Parliament; two parties, the Whigs and the Tories, and a prime minister governed the country. The spirit of the Restoration was one of reason; society did not want to see again the kind of problems of the first half of the century. The new middle classes had more and more influence as their wealth grew and they wanted stability above all. It was also a time of war in Europe, the War of the Spanish Succession lasting from 1701 until the Treaty of Utrecht. The United Kingdom was finally united when the Union of the Parliaments of England and Scotland took place in 1707.