The English Civil War and The Glorious Revolution
Parliament: The English legislative government. The U.S. equivalent is Congress. This branch of government passes laws.
The Beginnings of Parliament:

In 1066, with the Norman invasion of England, the feudal system developed. The early English kings, however, could not have ruled without the support of the nobles and the clergy. In order to seek advice on major decisions, the early English kings assembled a Great Council, consisting of archbishops, bishops, abbots, barons and earls. This Great Council, over time, evolved into Parliament. Initially, Parliament was summoned when the king needed to raise money through taxes. In 1272, the role of Parliament increased.

The king of that time, Edward I, was determined to unite Wales, England and Scotland under one rule. However, even though he was using force to unite these areas, he also wanted to avoid rebellion. He therefore encouraged all segments of the population to submit petitions, to state their grievances against the government. This tradition continues today.
After Edward’s reign, the authority of Parliament depended on the strength of the monarch. When the king or queen was strong, he or she would have enough influence to pass their laws through Parliament without much trouble. When weak monarchs governed, Parliament often became the center of opposition. In addition, Parliament evolved into two houses. The House of Lords has positions filled by the nobility, which are inherited. The second House, the House of Commons, is filled with elected representatives. (Our system, the Senate, and the House of Representatives, is based on the Parliamentary system).
• Notes:

• **Parliament**: The English legislative government. The U.S. equivalent is Congress. This branch of government passes laws.

• Parliament consists of two Houses, the House of Lords and the House of Commons.
During the reign of Edward III (1327-1377) the role of Parliament increased. It was established that no law could be passed, or a tax levied, unless it had the consent of both Houses of Parliament and the monarch. However, even though this was established, there were periods when Parliament did not meet at all. During the Tudor monarchy (Henry VIII, Mary I, Elizabeth I), the monarchs would call and close Parliament only when they needed it. Parliament’s financial power was one obstacle to English rulers becoming absolute monarchs. This struggle between the monarchy and Parliament is what led to the English Civil War.
Background for the English Civil War:

As you may recall, Elizabeth I of England never married. When she died in 1603, she had no direct heir. Her nearest relative was her cousin, James Stuart (her father’s sister’s grandson). Already the king of Scotland, James Stuart became King James I of England in 1603. Although England and Scotland were not united until 1707, they now shared a ruler.
James inherited the unsettled issues of Elizabeth’s reign. His worst struggles with Parliament were over money. In 1614, after Parliament refused to grant James the money he requested, he dismissed Parliament, and ruled until 1621 without calling Parliament into session.

In addition, James offended the Puritan members of Parliament. The Puritans hoped he would enact reforms to purify the English church of Catholic practices. Except for agreeing to a new translation of the Bible, however, he refused to make Puritan reforms.
Notes:

• In 1603, Elizabeth I died, and her cousin, James Stuart became James I of England.
• James I and Parliament fought over money, and James dissolved Parliament for a period of 7 years.
Charles I:

In 1625, James I died, and his oldest son, Charles, became Charles I of England. Charles always needed money, in part because he was at war with both Spain and France. Several times when Parliament refused to give him funds, he dissolved (dismissed) it.
By 1628, Charles was forced to call Parliament again. This time it refused to grant him any money until he signed a document that is known as the Petition of Right. In this petition, the king agreed to four points:

• He would not imprison subjects without due cause.
• He would not levy taxes without Parliament’s consent.
• He would not house soldiers in private homes.
• He would not impose martial law in peacetime.

Movie clip: “A loan with conditions”
After agreeing to the petition, Charles ignored it. Even so, the petition was important. It set forth the idea that the law was higher than the king. This idea contradicted theories of absolute monarchy. In 1629, Charles dissolved Parliament and refused to call it back into session. To get money, he imposed all kinds of fees and fines on the English people. One such fee was a fine against Puritans for not attending Anglican Church services. His popularity decreased year by year.
English Civil War:

Charles offended Puritans by upholding the rituals of the Anglican Church. In addition, in 1637, Charles tried to force the Presbyterian Scots to accept a version of the Anglican prayer book. He wanted both his kingdoms to follow one religion. The Scots rebelled, assembled a huge army, and threatened to invade England. To meet this danger, Charles needed money — money he could get only by calling Parliament into session. This gave Parliament a chance to oppose him.
The English Civil War – background:

- In 1625, James I died, and his son, Charles, became King of England.
- Charles was in need of money. When Parliament refused his demands, he dissolved it.
- By 1628, Charles was forced to call Parliament again. Parliament refused to grant Charles’ requests until he signed the Petition of Rights. This Petition set forth the idea that the law was higher than the king.
- Charles ignored the Petition, and dissolved Parliament.
- In 1641, Scots were threatening to invade England. Charles needed money, and had to call Parliament back into session.
During the autumn of 1641, Parliament passed laws to limit royal power. Furious, Charles tried to arrest Parliament’s leaders in January 1642, but they escaped. Equally furious, a mob of Londoners raged outside the palace. Charles fled London and raised an army in the north of England, where people were loyal to him.
From 1642 to 1649, supporters and opponents of King Charles fought the English Civil War. Those who remained loyal to Charles were called Royalists or Cavaliers. On the other side were Puritan supporters of Parliament. Because these men wore their hair short over their ears, Cavaliers called them Roundheads.
At first neither side could gain a lasting advantage. However, by 1644 the Puritans found a general who could win – Oliver Cromwell. In 1645, Cromwell’s New Model Army began defeating the Cavaliers, and the tide turned toward the Puritans.
The New Model Army consisted of 22,000 soldiers, with both cavalry and infantry regiments. A “Soldier’s catechism” set out new regulations and drill procedures. The administration of the Army was more centralized, with improved provision of food, clothing and other supplies. Proficiency, rather than wealth or social standing, determined leadership roles and promotions. In addition, Cromwell preferred the soldiers and the officers to be Puritans, as he was.

Movie clip: “A parley with Roundheads”
Cromwell video
In 1649, Cromwell and the Puritans brought Charles to trial for treason against Parliament. They found him guilty of high treason, as a “tyrant, traitor, murderer and public enemy”. Charles was sentenced to death. The execution of Charles was revolutionary. Kings had often been overthrown, killed in battle, or put to death in secret. Never before, however, had a reigning monarch faced a public trial and execution.

Youtube: Trial of King Charles I, posted by PublicEnquiry

A plate depicting the Trial of Charles I on January 4, 1649
Charles I was executed on January 30, 1649. The execution took place at Whitehall on a scaffold in front of the Banqueting House. Charles was separated from the people by large ranks of soldiers. His last speech reached only those with him on the scaffold. His last words were, “I shall go from a corruptible to an incorruptible Crown, where no disturbance can be.”

This contemporary German print depicts Charles I’s decapitation.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4b0G_auKCI
Notes:
• During the autumn of 1641, Parliament passed laws to limit royal power. Furious, Charles tried to arrest Parliament’s leaders in January 1642, but they escaped. This was the beginning of the Civil War.
• The English Civil War was from 1642 – 1649.
• Supporters of the Crown were called Cavaliers.
• Supporters of Parliament were called Roundheads.
• Oliver Cromwell created the New Model Army, which ultimately won the War.
• Charles I was captured, found guilty of treason and beheaded (by ax)
The Aftermath:

After the execution of Charles I, a republic was declared, known as the Commonwealth of England. The monarchy and the House of Lords were abolished. Parliament exercised both executive and legislative powers. In 1651, Cromwell tried to get Parliament into setting dates for new elections. Parliament never settled on setting election dates.

Victorian engraving depicting Cromwell refusing the monarchy (the Victorian era started in 1837).
In frustration, on April 20, 1653, Cromwell, with the support of about 40 musketeers, cleared the chamber and dissolved Parliament by force. Cromwell is supposed to have said, “you are no Parliament, I say you are no Parliament; I will put an end to your sitting”. Cromwell’s associate John Lambert drafted a constitution, the first written constitution of any modern European state. However, Cromwell eventually tore up the document and became a military dictator.
Puritan Morality:
In England, Cromwell and the Puritans sought to reform society. They made laws that promoted Puritan morality and abolished activities they found sinful, such as the theater, sporting events, and dancing. Although he was a Puritan, Cromwell favored religious toleration for all Christians except Catholics. He even allowed Jews to return - they had been expelled from England in 1290.
The Aftermath:

- A Republic, the Commonwealth of England, was formed after the execution of Charles I.
- In 1653, when Parliament refused to hold elections, Cromwell took over, and became a military dictator.
- Under Cromwell’s rule as Lord Protector, laws were passed that outlawed the theater, dancing and sporting events.
- Cromwell died in 1658.
Restoration and Revolution:

Oliver Cromwell ruled as “Lord Protector” until his death in 1658. He was succeeded by his son, Richard. Although Richard was not entirely without ability, he had no power base in either Parliament or the Army, and was forced to resign in May 1659. At this time, Parliament voted to ask the older son of Charles I to rule England.

Half-Crown coin of Oliver Cromwell, 1658. The Latin inscription translates to:
"Oliver, by the Grace of God Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland and other (territories)".
When Prince Charles entered London in 1660, crowds shouted joyfully and bells rang. On this note of celebration, the reign of Charles II began. Because he restored the monarchy, the period of his rule is called the Restoration. The Restoration was also accompanied by social change. The Puritan movement lost its momentum. Theaters reopened, and Theater licenses granted by Charles II were the first in England that permitted women to play female roles on stage.

Charles II in the robes of the Order of the Garter, c. 1675, as painted by Sir Peter Lely.
During Charles II’s reign, Parliament passed an important guarantee of freedom, habeas corpus. Habeas corpus is Latin, and means “to have the body”. This 1679 law gave every prisoner the right to obtain a writ of document ordering that the prisoner be brought before a judge to specify the charges against the prisoner. The judge would decide whether the prisoner should be tried or set free. Because of the Habeas Corpus Act, a monarch could no longer put someone in jail simply for opposing the ruler. Also, prisoners could not be held indefinitely without trials.

Does the Habeas Corpus Act limit a monarch’s power?
In addition, Parliament debated who should inherit Charles’ throne. Because Charles had no legitimate child, his heir was his brother James, who was Catholic. A group called the Whigs opposed James, and a group called the Tories supported him. These two groups were the ancestors of England’s first political parties.
Notes:

The Restoration:

• When Cromwell died in 1658, Parliament voted to have Charles I’s son to return as king.

• Charles II was crowned king in 1660.

• Habeas Corpus was passed in 1679.

• Since Charles II had no legitimate heirs, upon his death the crown went to James, Charles’ brother.
James II and the Glorious Revolution:

In 1685, Charles II died, and his brother became James II. James soon offended his subjects by displaying his Catholicism. Violating English law, he appointed several Catholics to high office. When Parliament protested, James dissolved it. In 1688, James’ second wife gave birth to a son. English Protestants became terrified at the prospect of a line of Catholics kings.
James had an older daughter, Mary, who was Protestant. She was also the wife of William of Orange, a prince of the Netherlands, and who was also the grandson of Charles I of England. Seven members of Parliament invited William and Mary to overthrow James for the sake of Protestantism. When William led his army to London in 1688, James fled to France. This bloodless overthrow of King James II is called the Glorious Revolution, because not a single shot was fired.

The flight of James II after his defeat at the Battle of the Boyne, by Andrew Carrick Gow
How these folks are related:

James I  
m. Anne of Denmark  
d. 1625

Henry Frederick  
d. 1612

Elizabeth

Charles I  
Executed 1649

William II of Orange  
m. Mary

William III of Orange

Charles II  
d. 1685

James II  
m. Anne Hyde

Mary of Modena  
(wife #2)

Mary II  
m. Mary II
At their coronation, William and Mary vowed to recognize Parliament as their partner in governing. England had become a constitutional monarchy, where laws limited the ruler’s power.
Bill of Rights:
To make clear the limits of royal power, Parliament drafted a bill of Rights in 1689. The Bill of Rights laid out certain basic rights for (at the time) all Englishmen, regardless of social status. This document listed many things that a ruler could not do:

- no royal interference with the law
- no suspending of Parliament’s laws
- no levying of taxes without a specific grant from Parliament
- no interfering with the freedom of speech in Parliament
- no standing army during a time of peace
- no royal interference in the freedom of the people to have arms for their own defense as suitable to their class and as allowed by law
- no penalty for a citizen who petitions the king about grievances
- William and Mary consented to these and other limits on their royal power.
Cabinet System Develops:
After 1688, no British monarch could rule without the consent of Parliament. At the same time, Parliament could not rule without the consent of the monarch. If the two disagreed, government came to a standstill.

During the 1700s, this potential problem was remedied by the development of a group of government ministers, or officials, called the cabinet. These ministers acted in the ruler’s name but in reality represented the major party of Parliament. Therefore, they became the link between the monarch and the majority party in Parliament.

Over time, the cabinet became the center of power and policymaking. Under the cabinet system, the leader of the majority party in Parliament heads the cabinet and is called the prime minister. This system of English government continues today.
The Glorious Revolution:

- In 1685, James II became king after his brother, Charles II died.
- James offended Parliament in two ways: he flaunted his Catholicism, and he dissolved Parliament.
- When James’ second wife gave birth to a son, Parliament was afraid that England would no longer be a Protestant nation.
- 7 members of Parliament then went to Mary, James’ daughter from his first marriage, and invited her to take the throne.

(sorry, there’s a second page!)
• In 1688, William of Orange (Mary’s husband) landed in England, and headed toward London.
• James II and his family fled to France, thereby abdicating (giving up) his throne.
• William and Mary became joint rulers of England.
• The Glorious Revolution is called that, since not a single shot was fired.
• William and Mary agreed to sign the Bill of Rights, and a constitutional monarchy was established.
How can you remember the rulers? It’s a James sandwich!

Information gathered from:
www.wikipedia.org
Modern World History, McDougal Littell, 2007