

**THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PODCAST
TRANSCRIPTS**

**EPISODE 191:
A VISION OF THE FUTURE**

Presented by Kevin W. Stroud

EPISODE 191: A VISION OF THE FUTURE

Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 191: A Vision of the Future. This time, as we work our way through the story of English, we’re going to complete our look at the decade of the 1640s. The English Civil War continued to rage, and finally came to an end. And the king met his untimely demise. During this same period, a new sound was established in English. And a vision of the future emerged both socially and linguistically. So this time, we have a lot to explore.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast and get bonus episodes at Patreon.com/historyofenglish.

Now let’s pick up where we left off last time. At the end of the last episode, I told you about a writer and grammarian named Richard Hodges who published a book called ‘The English Primrose’ in 1644. The book is notable because Hodges invented a variety of unique symbols to represent all the sounds in the English language at the time, at least in the dialect of English spoken around London. As I noted last time, he is considered to be the first writer to distinguish the traditional ‘short U’ sound in a word like *put* and the newer ‘short U’ sound in a word like *putt*. That distinction had probably been underway for a while, but it isn’t clearly represented in writing until Hodges distinguished those two sounds with separate symbols in this particular book.

Well, his book also contains another first. It contains a specific, unique symbol for the sound heard in the middle of the word *vision*. It’s the /ʒ/ sound that we also hear in words like *pleasure*, *usual*, *occasion*, *genre* and *prestige*.

Hodges’s book is the first to clearly represent this new sound. Like many other grammarians that we have looked at, he tried to create his own phonetic alphabet so that each sound in the language had its own unique letter or symbol, and he illustrated his phonetic spelling system with specific words to show how each sound was pronounced at the time. And among the words he listed was the word *vision* – a word that would have traditionally been pronounced like it is spelled – as /VIH-see-un/. But Hodges indicated that the word was no longer pronounced that way by most people. Instead, there was a new sound in the middle of the word. And Hodges represented that sound with a unique symbol. That sound was almost certainly the /ʒ/ sound that the word has today. So from /VIH-see-un/ to /VIH-ʒun/. And by including the word *vision* in his book, and giving the sound in the middle of that word a unique symbol, he literally gave us ‘a vision of the future’ because that /ʒ/ sound in the middle of the word was destined to become more and more popular with time, so much so that it has become a basic sound or phoneme within Modern English.

Of course, that /ʒ/ sound isn’t represented with a specific letter today. It can be represented with a variety of letters. And that’s because the sound developed relatively recently after the alphabet was already established. We sometimes represent it with [si] as in *vision* and *occasion*. And we sometimes represent it with [su] as in *pleasure*, and *measure*, and *unusual*. Sometimes we spell

it with a [g] as in *genre* and *prestige* and *sabotage*. And sometimes we spell it with a [j] as in French names like *Jacques* and *Jean Pierre*. And all of those spellings provide a clue about the origin of this sound and how it developed within early Modern English.

The sound actually came into English from two different sources. The first was from English itself because this sound emerged in early Modern English as part of a natural development within the language. The other source of the sound was French, which already had that sound and contributed a lot of loanwords to English so that the sound was reinforced through that French influence.

Now I briefly discussed the development of this sound back in Episode 159 called ‘Elizabethan Voices’ where I looked at the sound of English during the Elizabethan period. And in that episode, I previewed this development. Specifically, where the ‘s’ sound in a word was followed by a succession of two or more vowels, the ‘S’ sound tended to become voiced and slurred. It first shifted to a ‘Z’ or ‘zed’ sound, and then it later shifted to this /ʒ/ sound.

So in the case of a word like *vision*, it was originally pronounced like it is spelled as /VIH-si-un/. So we have the ‘s’ sound followed by two vowels in succession – /i/ and /u/ – /VIH-si-un/. The first part of the evolution occurred when the ‘S’ sound became a ‘Z’ sound, so from /VIH-si-un/ to /VIH-zi-un/. And then later, the sound evolved further as that ‘Z’ sound and the vowel sounds that followed it blended together, and the pronunciation shifted from /VIH-zi-un/ to /VIH-ʒun/. That’s the evolution that most historical linguists believe happened over the course of the 1500s and early 1600s.

But again, we don’t have any clear evidence of this new /ʒ/ sound in any of the phonetic spelling systems from that earlier period. So up until the mid-1600s, some people probably pronounced the word *vision* like we do today, but that pronunciation was not yet standard, so it was probably dismissed and ridiculed by a lot of people. But by the current point in our overall story of English in 1644, that modern pronunciation had become so common and widespread that Richard Hodges considered it to be the only acceptable way to pronounce the word. So much so, that he had to come up with a new symbol to represent the sound in his phonetic spelling system. So we can say that the /ʒ/ sound had been standardized and accepted within English by that point.

As I just illustrated, the sound gradually emerged on its own within English, but French also had that sound, and as we know, a lot of French words passed into English. So that sound also came into English from French. But in this case, the development was a little more complicated.

The French language didn’t originally have the /ʒ/ sound because French evolved out of Latin, and Latin didn’t have that sound. But the sound developed within French in the 1200s, so about three centuries before it started to emerge within English. In French, the /ʒ/ sound largely developed out of the /j/ sound, which is the sound of letter J and also the soft sound of letter G. So, the name *Jacques* (/jahk/) became /ʒahk/ during the 1200s and 1300s in France.

That was the height of the Middle English period in England – when a lot of French words were passing into English. But again, English didn't really have that /ʒ/ sound yet. So as those words passed from French into English, English speakers just pronounced those words with the closest sound available in English, which was /j/ – the regular 'J' sound or 'soft G' sound. And that's why older French words that were borrowed into English before the 1600s are still pronounced with the /j/ sound, instead of the newer /ʒ/ sound.

So for example, the word *marriage* came into English in the 1300s from the French word *mariage* (/mair-ee-Aʒ/). The /ʒ/ sound at the end was anglicized to /j/, and the word has been pronounced that way ever since. The same thing happened with *message* (/meh-SAʒ/), which was anglicized to *message*. And the Old French word *langage* (/lahn-GAHʒ/) was anglicized to *language*. And *bagage* (/bæ-GÆʒ/) was anglicized to *baggage*. Again, those were all French words that passed into English in the 1300s and 1400s before the /ʒ/ sound existed in English. So English speakers altered the pronunciation to make them fit the English sound system.

But as we've seen, this /ʒ/ sound probably started to emerge in English in the 1500s, and had become generally accepted by the mid-1600s, so French words that were borrowed after that time frame have tended to retain that French /ʒ/ sound because English speakers were using that sound after that point. That includes words like *mirage*, *entourage*, *camouflage*, *sabotage*, the color *beige* and *genre* (as in a genre of music).

This development also produced some interesting contrasts in Modern English where the same word was borrowed twice from French – the first time before the mid-1600s and the second time after that point. So the first time the word was borrowed, the /ʒ/ sound was anglicized to /j/, but the second time, the /ʒ/ sound was retained.

That's why we have the English name *Jack* and the French name *Jacques*. Of course, both are variations of the same French name – *Jacques*. *Jack* is the older version borrowed during the Middle English period, and it was anglicized from *Jacques* to *Jack*.

Another example is the word *voyage*, which was borrowed from French in the late 1200s. Today, it has the regular English 'soft G' sound at the end – *voyage*. But the original French version has been re-borrowed in recent years in the term *bon voyage* meaning 'Have a good trip.'

The word *rouge* is used today to refer to reddish-colored cosmetics. Of course, it's the French word for *red*, and that modern sense of the word as make-up has been around since the 1700s. Since it's a relatively recent loanword, it has retained that French /ʒ/ sound – *rouge*. But that version of the word is really the second version to be borrowed into English. The first time it passed into English was during the Middle English period where it was used in the literal French sense of the word as the color red. So it would have been common in the 1400s to hear someone refer to something red or reddish as being *rouge*, but an English speaker at that time almost certainly would have pronounced /ru:j/, since the /ʒ/ sound had not yet appeared in English. As I noted, when the word was re-borrowed in the sense of cosmetics in the 1700s, it retained much of the original French pronunciation as /ru:ʒ/.

Of course, the pronunciation of that /ʒ/ sound in French loanwords can vary quite a bit today. For example, the word *prestige* was first borrowed around the current point in our overall story of English in the mid-1600s. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word was most likely pronounced as /pres-TEEJ/ with a ‘soft G’ sound until the 1800s, at which time the word started to be pronounced with the /ʒ/ sound as /pres-TEEʒ/. There is still some variation in the way the word is pronounced today.

The same thing has happened with the part of the house where you park your car. Depending on where you are from, you either call it a *garage* (/guh-RAʒ/) with the /ʒ/ sound or /GAIR-ij/ or /GAIR-aj/ with the ‘soft G’ sound. Of course, *garage* (/guh-RAʒ/) is the common American pronunciation, while the other variations are more common in the UK. The word didn’t enter English until the early 1900s, so it’s a very recent loanword. And the American pronunciation as *garage* (/guh-RAʒ/) retains much of the original French form. But the word has been anglicized in the British pronunciation, where the /j/ sound is more common at the end.

Again, all of these developments can really be traced back to the mid-1600s when the /ʒ/ sound became a generally-accepted sound within English, and can specifically be traced back to Richard Hodges’s book called ‘The English Primrose,’ which confirmed that the sound had become widespread within English by 1644.

By the way, this particular book called ‘The English Primrose’ also contains the first recorded use of the word *semi-colon* in reference to the punctuation mark. And it also contains one of the earliest uses of the word *hyphen*. So that shows that punctuation was also becoming more advanced and sophisticated during this period.

Of course, this was a period of great turmoil in England as the country was being torn apart by the Civil War that was raging in the 1640s. And in fact, the year that the English Primrose was published was also the year that the largest battle ever fought on English soil took place. It is known as the Battle of Marston Moor, and it proved to be a turning point in the war.

So first a little background. As we saw last time, the war broke out when the forces of King Charles met the forces raised by Parliament in 1642. For the first couple of years, there were numerous skirmishes and small battles, but nothing really decisive.

Parliament had made an alliance with the leaders of Scotland because they both opposed the king’s religious reforms involving the Anglican Church, and his attempt to impose that form of worship in Scotland.

Early in 1644, 20,000 Scottish soldiers crossed the border to join forces with the Parliamentarians. By July, the Scots had fought their way southward and joined with their English allies at Yorkshire in northern England. And it was there – eight miles west of York at a meadow called Marston Moor – that the combined forces of Parliament and the Scots squared off against King Charles and his Cavaliers. Nearly 50,000 men fought in the battle. As I noted, it is generally considered to be the largest battle ever fought on English soil. And the result was a major victory for Parliament. About 4,000 of the king’s men were killed, a large portion of his

infantry was lost, and his cavalry was driven from the field. York and Newcastle surrendered. It was a decisive defeat for Charles, and it was a turning point in the war. [*SOURCES: Rebellion: Peter Ackroyd, p. 270; and England Under the Stuarts, G.M. Trevelyan, p. 246-8.*]

The main problem for Charles is that the defeat cost him control of northern England, and that's where he recruited most of his soldiers. So even though he continued to have support in the west, he needed access to the north so that the region could supply him with reinforcements and other essential resources. And over time, the loss of that region severely hampered his efforts in other parts of the country.

Parliament's victory at Marston Moor confirmed the power of its alliance with the Scots. And it also highlighted another military advantage. That advantage was a 45-year old cavalry commander named Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell was quickly emerging as one of the most effective leaders of the Parliamentary forces, and he and his cavalry played a decisive role at the Battle of Marston Moor. After the victory, he acquired the nickname 'Ironsides.' And of course, we'll be seeing a lot more of him as we move forward.

While the Battle of Marston Moor was a turning point in the war, it was only that. It didn't bring an end to the conflict. The king continued to have support in the west of England and in Wales, so the focus of the war would soon turn to that region. The Cavaliers actually had some notable victories there, which only served to prolong the conflict.

In fact, it was Parliament's losses in the west that led to the next notable development, and that was Parliament's decision to completely revamp and reorganize its entire military system. Parliament had raised its forces the way they had always been raised – by relying on local militias and recruiting anyone else who could be pressed into service with short enlistments. The problem is that those men were poorly trained, poorly equipped, and tended to have little or no loyalty to the military cause. So when the guns and cannons started firing, many of them would flee the battlefield. The soldiers would sometimes enlist with the Parliamentary forces for a while, then turn around and enlist with the king's forces, and sometimes even go back and forth between the two sides depending on who was paying more. It was the traditional makeshift system, but it didn't tend to produce an effective fighting force. [*SOURCE: England Under the Stuarts, G.M. Trevelyan, p. 248-9*]

So at the end of the year, Parliament decided to completely reorganize its military. The army was to operate under a new model, which became known as the New Model Army. The new model relied on long-term professional soldiers who were highly trained, well-paid, and well-equipped. They would be more reliable and more effective on the battlefield. The new army was organized on a national basis – not regionally as had tended to be the case. And it was to be funded with a new national tax. And even though it took a while to get the New Model Army up and running, when it was finally in place, it ensured Parliament's ultimate victory over the king. The Cavaliers were no match for Parliament's new army.

This is really the beginning of a permanent, free-standing army in England. And it was such an important development that it actually changed the way people referred to the army. After its creation, people started to use the phrase ‘the army’ when referring to country’s permanent military forces. The word **army** has been around prior to this point, but it was used more generally. People might refer to ‘an army of soldiers,’ but they didn’t tend to refer to ‘the army’ in the way we do today because there was no permanent, free-standing army at the time. But after the 1640s, it became more common for people to refer to ‘the army’ with that definite article in the way we do today. [SOURCE: *History in English Words*, Owen Barfield, p.72]

The new army was equipped with new swords and firearms, and the infantry also received new standard uniforms. Those standard-issue uniforms included coats that were made of red cloth. And over time, the soldiers came to be known as ‘The Red Coats.’ That term was especially common in North America during and after the American Revolutionary War. [SOURCE: *Rebellion*, Peter Ackroyd, p. 274-5]

While the infantry was equipped with new red coats, the cavalry tended to wear thick leather coats known as **buffs** or **buff coats**. These coats were usually made from the hides of cows, oxen or elk, but they were also made from the hides of bison or buffalos. And that’s how the coats became known as **buffs** or **buff coats**. It comes from the word **buffalo**. That thick leather was the next best thing to body armor or chain mail.

In fact, the association of the word **buff** with animal hides or animal skin is how the word came to be used in English to refer to someone who is nude. If you are ‘in the buff,’ you are just wearing your skin.

And those buff coats are also the origin of another use of the word **buff** in English. When we refer to someone as a ‘film buff,’ or a ‘music buff,’ or a ‘wine buff,’ the ‘**buff**’ part is actually derived from those leather buff coats worn by soldiers. This usage is really an Americanism and originated in North America in the 1900s. So let me explain how that happened. Buff coats remained popular well into the 1800s and early 1900s. Soldiers wore them, but they were also popular with firefighters because the thick coats provided protection from the fire and embers. Fires were a big deal in earlier periods of history when firefighting equipment was more basic and limited. So when a fire broke out in a place like New York City, the professional firefighters were often joined by volunteers who came rushing in with their buff coats to help out, even though the volunteers often got in the way. The professionals started referring to the volunteers as ‘buffs’ because of their buff coats. The term was often used derisively, but it came to refer to people who were fascinated with fires and firefighting, not because it was their profession, but simply because they were enamored by the flames and the thrill of putting out the fire. And from there – over the course of the 20th century – the term **buff** was extended to any similar type of obsession or fascination – thus an ‘opera buff’ or a ‘movie buff.’ But it all goes back to fires and buff coats – the same type of buff coats worn by the cavalry in the English Civil War.

Now speaking of the cavalry, during the Civil War, when one army faced off against another, the lines of horses had to be directed by one of the officers. The officer who directed the cavalry’s movements was almost always stationed on the right side of the formation. And that person

became known as the 'right-hand man.' That term is first recorded in the 1620s, but it became much more common during the period when England was at war with itself. Very soon, the term was extended to a leading officer or soldier who accompanied the commander of the cavalry, or the king, or some other prominent person. It was customary for that officer to position himself and his horse on the right side of the commander. And again, this officer was referred to as the commander's 'right-hand man.' [SOURCE: *Sticklers, Sideburns & Bikinis*, Graeme Donald, p. 226] Over time, the term has come to refer to any type of loyal assistant or essential helper. But again, even though the basic idea or concept has been around for a long time, the term 'right-hand man' isn't really found in English until the early 1600s, and it appears likely that the military use of the term during the English Civil War encouraged its spread within English to the point where it is an extremely common term today.

Other common military terms are recorded for the first time during the period of the Civil War, including words like *firearm*, *brigade* and *field artillery*. The place where a military commander was stationed or resided was called the *headquarters*, and that word was first recorded a couple of decades earlier in the 1620s, but again, it became much more common during the period of the Civil War. The same thing happened with the word *platoon* – a French word first found in English in the 1500s, but again, it became much more common in the mid-1600s thanks to the war.

Now early in 1645, with Parliament's success on the battlefield, the assembly was feeling confident, and it decided to push forward with its political agenda. The first target was William Laud – the archbishop of Canterbury who was behind the religious reforms that had fueled so many of the divisions throughout Britain. Parliament had imprisoned him several months earlier, but in January, he was executed. It was around the same time that Parliament famously banned Christmas celebrations. The Puritans objected to the festivals that accompanied Christmas because they considered the celebrations to be frivolous and wasteful. They thought the holiday should be a time of serious reflection, not joyous celebrations.

This hardcore attitude of the Puritans was soon reflected in the language. Those who opposed the Puritans increasingly viewed them as radical and unrelenting in their beliefs. And the word *puritanical* gradually came to refer to such extreme attitudes and beliefs. Today, we still use the word to refer to someone who is 'overly strict or demanding or dour.' Similarly, the words *fanatic* and *fanatical* acquired new currency during this period. The words had been around in the language since the prior century, but prior to this point in time, they were fancy Latin words that weren't really common in ordinary speech. But now, the king's supporters started using those terms to insult the Puritans, and through those insults, the words *fanatic* and *fanatical* became part of the everyday lexicon of English. [SOURCE: *History in English Words*, Owen Barfield, p. 72] But in the early part of the year 1645, the Puritans were ascendant and were the driving force behind Parliament.

The king's forces had never completely recovered from their earlier defeat at Marston Moor, and by springtime, Parliament's New Model Army was ready to take the field. The new professional army was looking for a battle that would prove to be decisive, and they got it in June near the village of Naseby in the Midlands. At the Battle of Naseby, the New Model Army completely

overwhelmed the king's forces. The victory was so decisive that it made the outcome of the war inevitable. Charles's cavalry was destroyed, and he was no longer able to pose a serious threat on the battlefield. However, a few cities continued to hold out, especially in the west. Over the following months, the New Model Army was able to force those cities to surrender one by one, so the war didn't end until the following year. But the king's defeat was effectively ensured at Naseby in 1645.

After the victory at Naseby, the Parliamentary forces came across some of the king's private letters and correspondence. And the letters showed that he had been negotiating with the French and the Irish for reinforcements and supplies, and possibly for their direct intervention in the war. The discovery of these letters caused public opinion to turn even further against Charles.

[SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England*, Charles Firth, p. 87]

As I noted in a prior episode, the Irish had recently risen in rebellion against the English settlers and English soldiers in Ireland. And the fact that Charles had made a rough alliance with them did not go down well in England. In fact, it was Charles's alliance with the Irish Catholics that led to a very common political term in England – the word **Tory**, which is used today to refer to a member of the Conservative Party in England. Interestingly, the word **Tory** is an Irish word that meant 'an outlaw or a raiding party.' English people in Ireland considered the Irish who robbed and attacked them to be raiders and outlaws and bandits, so they started using that Irish word **toruighe** to refer to them. And when the Irish uprising began during the English Civil War, the word was extended to those rebels. But as we've just seen, King Charles reached out to them for support against Parliament. So within England, the term came to mean an Irish supporter of the king. And from there, it came to mean any supporter of the king or the monarchy. Now the history of this word was further shaped and refined by political developments in England over the following centuries, but much of that original meaning as a Royalist survives today. Today, the word refers to Conservatives who tend to favor tradition, and the establishment, and the monarchy. That's also why the word **Tory** fell out of use in early American politics. During the American Revolutionary War in the 1700s, supporters of King George and the British cause were called **Tories**. So the word acquired a negative connotation in early American politics, and it fell out of use here soon after the Revolutionary War.

So it is interesting that the common nickname for British Conservatives is ultimately a word for an Irish outlaw. And it shows how politics and war make strange bedfellows. Of course, it makes strange bedfellows when political leaders are mainly interested in their own personal objectives, and are willing to make an alliance with anyone who can help them pursue those goals. And that's what Charles was doing when he turned to the Irish and the French for help. He was willing to work with England's traditional enemies to secure his throne. And that attitude didn't change over his remaining years. He was constantly scheming and plotting and trying to find a way to divide his enemies and play them off against each other. He was never willing to fully submit to Parliament.

Today, we might say that he was 'self-centered.' And it's possible that people at the time said the same thing because the term '**self-centered**' is recorded for the first time in this same year of 1645. By the way, the term **self-centered** wasn't the only expression from this period to express

the same idea or concept. We also find the terms *self-ful* and *self-ended*, which are both recorded for the first time in this same decade of the 1640s. But both of those terms were gradually replaced with the term *selfish*, which was another relatively new term in the language, being first recorded in the 1620s. So within a period of a couple of decades in the mid-1600s, we find these terms popping up in English – *self-ended*, *self-ful*, *selfish*, and *self-centered*. And that isn't a coincidence. It reflects something that was happening at the time in English society – and really in Western society in general. The concept of 'self' was changing, and the language was reflecting that change.

Now this isn't a podcast about a philosophy, but let's scratch the surface of philosophy for a minute. When we think about the concept of 'self,' we have to think about how we are connected to the things around us. How do we perceive our place in the world and in society? Are we completely unique, independent and free-thinking individuals? Or are we just a small part of some larger interconnected society where everyone has a specific role to play and a specific purpose to support the greater good? Of course, those are two clearly contrasting views of self – and there are many variations that philosophers consider. But it is an important point because the concept of self was changing in the early modern period.

Previously, people tended to see themselves as part of a larger whole – as a small cog in a larger machine. The feudal system encouraged that view, and the traditional structure of the Church tended to reflect that view. Everyone had a place and role in society, and you weren't really supposed to question or challenge that role.

This traditional view was expressed in a poem by John Donne that I discussed a few episodes back in Episode 187. That was the poem where he said that “no man is an island.” He wrote that all humans are interconnected, and the death of one person is partially the death of all us. In that episode, I read the following passage:

No man is an Iland, intire of itselfe;
every man is a peece of the Continent,
a part of the maine;

And he concluded the passage by writing:

any mans death diminishes me,
because I am involved in Mankinde;
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
It tolls for thee.

Well again, that perfectly encapsulates the traditional way that people perceived of themselves as part of a larger interconnected society. But even when John Donne wrote that poem in the 1620s, that traditional concept was changing. It was changing due to many different factors – like the European Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the Protestant Reformation, the introduction of the printing press, and the spread of literacy. Those were just some of the factors, and they were changing the way people perceived themselves in relation to the world around them. People in

the 1600s were much more likely than their ancestors to question and challenge conventional ideas. And they were much more likely to see themselves as separate and independent beings – rather than a small part of a larger whole. Again, the concept of ‘self’ was changing.

This changing concept is reflected in the philosophy of Rene Descartes – the French writer, philosopher and mathematician. He lived and wrote during this same period, and he began by doubting and challenging everything. I when I say ‘everything, I mean everything – even his own existence. But he argued that he could prove his existence beyond any doubt. It was Descartes who came up with the famous line, “I think, therefore I am.” He originally expressed the idea in a French work in the late 1630s, and he repeated it in a Latin work composed in 1644 – a year before the current point in our overall narrative. The line purported to prove that the act of thinking means that there is an entity that is producing those thoughts, and that entity is the self. So the act of thinking proves the existence of the self.

Descartes’s philosophy was based on starting with doubt and then working from there with fundamental proofs in a very logical, systematic and mathematical way. His approach had a significant impact on the development of science going forward, and we’ll look at some of those impacts in a future episode. But it also had philosophical and political implications because his starting point wasn’t God or tradition. It was individual thought – the individual mind – the self. And again, and it both reflected and encouraged the growing sense of ‘self’ in the early 1600s. It was the modern Western idea that we make our decisions freely and independently – that our fate is not predetermined. But that perspective was relatively new in the 1600s. And in the writings of people from this period like Descartes, we have another vision of the future.

Now I know what you’re saying. “All of this philosophy stuff is mildly interesting, but what does it have to do with the history of English?” Well, this changing view of ‘self’ was so fundamental during this period that it is reflected in the language we speak today.

Prior to this period, the word *self* was mostly used as an identifier, and was used in pronoun forms like *myself*, or *yourself*, or *themselves*. It wasn’t really used in combination with other words to express more sophisticated ideas and concepts. But that started to change in the late 1500s and early 1600s. Suddenly, out of nowhere, lots of new compound words based on the word *self* began to appear in English for the first time.

I began this discussion by noting how terms like *self-ended*, *self-ful*, *selfish*, and *self-centered*. appeared in English during the mid-1600s. Well, that’s not all. As we look through documents from the early modern period, we find lots of those new compound terms based on the concept of ‘self.’ At the end of the 1500s, we find the first recorded use of the terms *self-interest*, *self-righteous*, *self-governing*, *self-hatred* and *self-sufficient*. Presumably, those new words were needed to reflect those concepts, which were increasingly common. In the early 1600s, we find the first known use of words like *self-confidence*, *self-contained*, *self-pity*, *self-harm*, *self-inflicted*, *self-preservation* and *self-defense*. By the mid-1600s, we find the word *self-esteem*, which epitomizes this newer sense of the word *self*. From there, we find the term *self-examination*, to examine one’s self. And *self-conscious*, which is an awareness of one’s self. And *self-evident*, the state of something being obvious and apparent in itself. *Self-loathing*, to

hate one's self. And *self-determination*, a very important idea that an individual can determine his or her own fate and future. And *self-enjoyment*, the joy that one finds within one's self. And *self-improvement*, the ability to make one's self better. All of those terms were new to the language in the mid-1600s.

Of course, as I noted at the beginning of this discussion, this new focus on *self* isn't always a good thing. It can lead to *selfishness* and *self-centeredness*, which were also new terms in the language.

These words reflect a future marked by increasing self-reliance, self-determination, and self-confidence. But this wasn't the only development in the language that was giving us a vision of the future. Grammatical changes were also pointing to the future – literally, because in the year 1646, we have confirmation that there were new ways of expressing the future tense in English.

This indication comes from a book published in 1646 called 'The English Accidence' by a writer named Joshua Poole. Now first of all, a quick note about that title 'The English Accidence' – spelled 'a-c-c-i-d-e-n-c-e.' That isn't a variation of the word *accident*. It's a separate word that refers to a specific branch of linguistics that deals with grammar, and more specifically, it deals with grammatical inflections and other ways in which words change or vary within a sentence to reflect differences in meaning. So this book called 'The English Accidence' was an analysis of English grammar. It was written as a guide to help students who were trying to learn Latin by explaining how English grammar worked in comparison to Latin.

Well the reason why Poole's book is notable is because it contains the following passage about the future tense in English: "About to, or going to, is the signe of the participle of the future . . ." Now that's a short line, but it packs a powerful punch because it confirms an important development in English grammar. That passage is the first clear statement we have that people were speaking about things happening in the future by saying "is about to" as in "The tree is about to fall," and also by saying "is going to" as in "The tree is going to fall." Poole's statement confirms that those types of sentence structures were common and acceptable within English by the current point in our overall story in the 1640s.

Now let me digress and explain why that is a notable development in the language. As I discussed in the early episodes of the podcast, the present tense and the past tense were traditionally indicated by altering the form of the verb, usually by placing a specific inflectional suffix on the end of the verb. Even though those inflections have eroded in English over the centuries, we still do that when we add an [-s] to a verb to mark the present tense in third person singular – like in the sentence "The horse jumps the fence." And we add an [-ed] to the verb to mark the past tense, like in the sentence "The horse jumped the fence." But notice that there is no ending that we can put on the verb to indicate the future tense. There is no suffix that conveys the idea that the horse will jump the fence in the future.

Now there was a future inflection in the original Indo-European language, but it was lost during the Proto-Germanic period. As a result, Germanic languages like English have to add words to the sentence to indicate that something will happen in the future.

In Old English, this was usually done by using the present tense form of the verb and adding a time element to the sentence. So instead of saying something like “The horse jumps,” a speaker would say “The horse jumps the fence tomorrow,” or the “The horse jumps the fence at sunset,” or “The horse jumps the fence next week.” Of course, that’s Modern English, not Old English, but you get the idea.

Then during the Middle English period, a new way of indicating the future emerged. People started adding the word *will* or *shall* before the verb to indicate the future tense. So people started saying something like “The horse will jump the fence.” I discussed this development back in Episode 109. And it remains a very common way of indicating a future action to this day.

But then we had the development that Joshua Poole referred to in his book published in 1646. English speakers found a new way to express the future tense when they started using phrases like ‘is going to’ or ‘is about to’ when talking about something occurring in the future. These forms can be found in the occasional document in the 1500s and early 1600s, but there is no evidence that they were widely used, and grammarians from those periods never mention those forms as being generally accepted, that is until Joshua Poole in 1646 who specifically stated that both of those forms were “the signe of the participle of the future.” In other words, they were both generally accepted forms in the language by that point. So how did that happen? How did those forms come about?

Well, the answer is not entirely clear. The historical record can reveal what happened, but it doesn’t necessarily explain why it happened. Much like the earlier discussion about the /ʒ/ sound, it probably came about through a combination of French influence and natural developments within English itself.

Some linguists point to French influence because French has a way of indicating the future that is almost identical the English phrase ‘is going to.’ So it is suspected that that French form was translated directly into English, the new form influenced English speakers in the Middle Ages. [SOURCE: *The History of English: An Introduction*, Stephan Gramley, p. 140]

Other linguists believe the use of the phrase ‘is going to’ to indicate the future occurred within the language naturally on its own. They believe that it was originally used literally to mean that someone or something was moving from one place to another, then it came to be used to express an intention to move to another place, and then came to be used more generally to describe an action taking place in the future. So let me give you a few examples to illustrate that type of development.

We begin with the literal use of ‘is going to’ to indicate movement from one place to another. That is what ‘to go’ means. It means ‘to move or travel.’ And that’s how the phrase first appeared in English. So let’s suppose I call you on your cell phone, and you answer while driving your car. If I were to ask you what you’re doing, you might say, “I am going to the store.” That sentence means you are literally traveling to the store as you’re speaking to me. Again, that’s the way the phrase ‘is going to’ first appeared in English. That type of verb pattern is called the Present Progressive Tense or the Present Continuous Tense. It’s what happens when we use a form of the

verb ‘to be’ before the action verb and add [-ing] to the end of the action verb. But it’s a type present tense – not future tense – because it is describing something that is occurring right now. “I am going.” “He is eating.” “They are sleeping.” That verb pattern has been around since the 1300s, and I discussed its appearance back in Episode 126. So how did the phrase “is going to” evolve from a present tense form to a future tense form?

Well, historical linguists think the next step was the use of that phrase to express an intent to move. So it shifted from a present tense expression to an expression of intent or purpose. Let me illustrate that development with a variation of the example I used before. This time, I’m at your house, and I see you grab your keys, and I ask you what you’re doing. And you say the same phrase you said before – “I am going to the store.” But this time, you’re not in your car on your way to the store. You’re getting ready to go. You’re starting the process, but you haven’t left yet. You’re sort of in between the present and the future. So when you grab your keys and say that you’re going to the store, you’re really expressing your intent or purpose. Again, that was the next development in the use of the phrase “is going to.” And there is evidence of that development as early as the late 1400s.

Then in the 1500s, there is evidence of the phrase being used to express a future action – but in a very limited way. It was still used to express physical movement, but it was physical movement that was to take place at some point in the future. So by way of example, suppose I see you making a list, and I ask you what you’re doing. You say, “I’m making a grocery list because I’m going to the store.” Now that statement is even further removed from the act of getting in the car and traveling to the store. It is still a statement of intent, but it isn’t an immediate intent, it’s a future intent. You’re going to the store at some point after you make the list – maybe an hour, maybe two hours, maybe tomorrow. So the phrase is being used to indicate a future action. And again, we can find evidence of this development in the 1500s, though it wasn’t common.

And from there, we have the final development where the phrase ‘is going to’ doesn’t involve any physical movement at all, and is used purely to indicate some future action. So again, to give you an example, this time I ask you if you want to go to the store after dinner. And you reply by saying, “No, I am going to stay home.” In this example, the phrase ‘I am going to’ doesn’t involve you actually ‘going’ anywhere. You’re staying home. So all sense of movement has been removed from the phrase, and the use of the word *going* is now strictly indicating a future action. This development was in place by the early 1600s, but again, there is no evidence that it was common and widely accepted in the language until Joshua Poole’s book in 1646. [*SOURCE: The Unfolding of Language, Guy Deutscher, p. 146-51.*]

By the way, that other phrase ‘is about to’ doesn’t appear to be as widely studied, but it probably went through a similar process. In its original sense, the word *about* also involved movement. In earlier periods of English, it was common to hear people say things like “He spins about in a circle,” or “She leads him about on a chain,” or “The mouse moved about the house.” So many scholars think that same sense of movement caused the phrase “is about to” to evolve over time into an indication of a future action.

Now around the time that Joshua Poole's book was published in 1646, the first phase of the English Civil War was winding down. By this point, Charles's knew that his defeat was inevitable. The city of Oxford was still holding out for him in May, but negotiations for its surrender were already underway. Rather than allowing himself to fall into the hands of New Model Army, Charles fled from Oxford and surrendered to the Scottish army instead. He hoped to strike a deal with the Scots, but the Scots weren't really interested, so they held him as prisoner. Over the next few weeks, Oxford and a few remaining castles in Wales finally surrendered. The first phase of the Civil War came to an end. Many historians refer to this first phrase as the First English Civil War. [*SOURCE: Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England, Charles Firth, p. 89*]

We now enter into a period of negotiations between Parliament and the king, who was being held by the Scots. The negotiations concerned the future of England after the war; whether Charles would return to the throne in some capacity, and if so, under what conditions. There were also discussions about who would control the army going forward and how the English Church would be structured. As the negotiations dragged on, fractures started to appear on the Parliamentary side. By its very nature, the assembly was comprised of members with different opinions. And that wasn't the only source of division. The New Model Army was emerging as its own separate player in the negotiations. In fact, from this point forward, the conflict was no longer a simple two-way dispute between the king and parliament. It became a three-way conflict between the king, the parliament and the army. And the army had soldiers to impose its will on the others.

In order to understand why the army emerged as a distinct player in this conflict, we need consider what was being negotiated and the interests that the army represented. And as you might have guessed, religion was at the heart of the conflict. Charles had been trying to defend the established Anglican Church of England, which was governed by bishops, most of whom were appointed by the monarch. So the traditional Church of England had a 'top-down' form of government where the king and the bishops could effectively impose their views and their policies on everyone else. Meanwhile, Parliament generally preferred the Presbyterian model that was used by their Scottish allies in Scotland. In fact, part of the reason why the Scots had joined with Parliament in the first place is because there was an understanding that the Scottish model would be adopted in England if Parliament was successful in the war. And the Scottish Presbyterian Church had a form of government that was more of a 'bottom-up' approach, in contrast to the Anglican Church. In the Presbyterian system, each congregation selected its own leaders or elders. Meanwhile, groups of local churches were governed by a higher assembly, and those assemblies were grouped together into even higher assemblies. So this type of structure was more of a 'bottom up' approach where local congregations had more say and input into church matters.

These opposing church models were part of the conflict between Parliament and the king as they negotiated how the English Church would be structured after the war. But despite the fundamental differences between the two models, they both had one very important thing in common. Neither one allowed any dissent. Whichever model was chosen, it would be the only accepted Church of England. No other Churches or denominations would be sanctioned. And

there would be no freedom of worship. Local congregations were not allowed to worship as they pleased.

But there was a growing number of people who wanted to be able to choose their own form of worship. They didn't want to be forced into a Church that didn't reflect their religious views. They wanted to be able to use their preferred Prayer Book, and they wanted to attend church services with the rituals and ceremonies that reflected their own beliefs. Those people were called the Independents, and they represented a third option. They also posed a threat to the both the traditional Anglicans and the Presbyterians.

And this is why the New Model Army becomes such a crucial part of this story – because the army had come to be dominated by Independents, especially at the officer level. So the army leadership didn't really support either of the Church models that were being debated. The army also feared that Parliament was making too many concessions to the king. They knew what Charles was like. They had observed his scheming. And they felt that as soon as Charles was back on the throne, he would go back to his old ways, and he would send the country right back into civil war.

Meanwhile, Parliament started to see the New Model Army and its Independent leadership as a growing threat. Many members of Parliament wanted to stamp out the Independent movement before it has a chance to spread throughout the country. So in early 1647, Parliament made plans to disband the New Model Army. The army was to be replaced with the London militia and other local forces, together with some of the remaining Cavaliers. The Independent officers of the New Model Army were to be completely purged from any role in the military going forward. And even more insulting to the army leadership, the plan was to dismiss all of the soldiers without paying them what they were owed. It was all too much for the army, which had secured Parliament's victory in the war. And that was the point at which the army started to break from Parliament and pursue its own interests. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England*, Charles Firth, p. 99]

By the way, Parliament had not paid the Scottish forces either for their assistance in the war. In fact, the Scots got so tired of the negotiations, that they finally decided to settle up with Parliament. In exchange for a substantial payment, they turned Charles over to Parliament and went back home. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England*, Charles Firth, p. 98] That meant the Scottish forces were no longer around able to provide assistance to Parliament.

In June, the leadership of the New Model Army decided to take action rather than being disbanded. The army sent a group of soldiers to seize the king from the house where he was being kept by Parliament. They didn't want Parliament to return him to London and put him back on the throne. Two months later, the army marched into London and took control of the city. The army now had a seat at the negotiating table, but what were its demands?

Well, that had to be sorted out. In October, a series of internal army debates took place at the army's headquarters at Putney near Westminster. The goal was to find a consensus among the various factions within the army. Lots of ideas were discussed and various proposals were made. These debates are known to history as the Putney Debates. And one of the reasons why they are so important to history is because of a radical faction called the Levellers, who had a strong voice in the army at the time.

The Levellers wanted to break apart the English class system which had existed since the Norman Conquest. We would call them 'egalitarians' today. They believed that everyone should be treated equally under the law. They believed that the government derived its power from the people – not from the king or from God for that matter. And accordingly, they argued for freedom of religion and freedom of worship. And they wanted voting rights to be expanded beyond the wealthy landowners to include most adult males, regardless of class or wealth. The movement's leaders promoted their ideas in a series of manifestoes, including one called 'Agreement of the People,' which is considered to be one of the earliest published arguments in favor of broad democracy with limited government power. In many respects, these ideas reflected a broader libertarian sentiment that was starting to grow, and was partly an outgrowth of that new concept of 'self' that I talked about earlier.

But ultimately, these ideas were just too radical for the mid-1600s. In the end, the New Model Army adopted a much more modest set of proposals and compromises. But the Leveller ideas didn't disappear. They would continue to spread, and they obviously influenced political thinkers in the American colonies a century later when the colonists had their own problems with a British king. So in these Leveller ideas of the mid-1600s, we get another vision of the future.

We might say that the Levellers were visionaries, and I say that because the word *visionary* was recorded for the first time in English around this same time in 1648. And of course, it was a variation of the word *vision*, and was presumably pronounced with that new /ʒ/ sound that I discussed at the beginning of the episode.

Now I should note that there were limits on some of the new social and political ideas. For example, the Levellers didn't have much to say about the rights of women. But the term 'women's rights' is actually recorded for the first time in the 1630s illustrating that some people were starting to think about political rights in ways that were previously unknown in England.

As I noted, the radical ideas of the Levellers got a hearing before the leaders of the New Model Army, but they were ultimately rejected in favor of a more modest set of compromises. Oliver Cromwell insisted that the army's position lead to a workable solution that would avoid further conflict. [SOURCE: *England Under the Stuarts*, G.M. Trevelyan, p. 270-1] In the end, the proposals that emerged from Putney kept the traditional government framework of the king, the House of Commons and the House of Lords, with the House of Commons being the most important and powerful branch. [SOURCE: *Rebellion*, Peter Ackroyd, p. 298]

But before the various parties could agree to anything, King Charles was once again plotting behind the scenes – this time with a faction of the Scots who were willing to switch sides and support him. The plan was to get those Scottish supporters to help him recover the throne, and in exchange, he would finally agree to support the Presbyterians and suppress the Independents who wanted religious freedom. [*SOURCE: Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England, Charles Firth, p. 117*]

Meanwhile, popular opinion was starting to turn in Charles's favor. People were growing tired of the harsh reforms that the Puritans had been pushing through Parliament. They were also upset that the king was being held as a prisoner. So early in 1648, riots in support of the king started to break out in various parts of the country. By springtime, the entire southern part of Wales declared its support for the king. And from there, other pockets of royal support popped up around the country.

All of this led to a renewal of the war – what some historians sometimes call the Second English Civil War. The New Model Army once again took to the field, but this brief renewal of the war was mostly a series of sieges in which the army tried to retake castles and cities occupied by forces who were loyal to the king.

Interestingly, one of those sieges may have given us a very well-known nursery rhyme. According to a popular legend, Humpty Dumpty originated with a siege at the city of Colchester in the eastern part of the country. Forces sympathetic to the king took control of the city, and the Parliamentary forces arrived to take the city back. Supposedly, there was a large, powerful cannon placed on the walls of the city at a church located beside the wall. People called the cannon Humpty Dumpty, and during the siege, the top of the wall was blown apart causing the cannon to fall to the ground and break apart. And all the king's horses (or cavalry) and all the king's men (or infantry) couldn't put the cannon back together. And after that, the city surrendered to the besieging army.

Now, that's a great story. It's recounted in numerous books about the history and origin of nursery rhymes. See the transcript of this episode for specific citations if you're interested. [*SOURCES: Heavy Words Thrown Lightly: The Reason Behind the Rhyme, Chris Roberts, p. 27; and Pop Goes the Weasel: The Secret Meaning of Nursery Rhymes, Albert Jack, p. 69*] And notably, it is the story promoted by the local Colchester tourist board. But is it true? Well, that depends on who you ask.

There is very little verifiable evidence to support the story. The nursery rhyme isn't even recorded until the very end of the 1700s, so a century and a half after this siege. Here's the original version of the poem from a book called 'Juvenile Amusements' published in 1797:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
Four-score Men and Four-score more,
Could not make Humpty Dumpty where he was before.

There is no evidence connecting the poem to the Civil War until the mid-1900s – so that’s three centuries after the event that supposedly gave birth to the poem. The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes first published in 1951 only makes a quick mention of the possible connection to the war, but that reference is notable. It reads, “Professor David Daube, in one of a series of spoof nursery rhyme histories for The Oxford Magazine (1956), put forward the ingenious idea that Humpty Dumpty was a siege machine in the Civil War.” [SOURCE: *The Oxford History of Nursery Rhymes*, Iona and Peter Opie, Eds., p. 254] So that suggests that the connection began as a spoof or made-up story. And in fact, Daube’s account in the referenced magazine article referred to a completely different siege at the city of Gloucester earlier in the war.

So from all of that, I think we need to take the connection between Humpty Dumpty and the Siege of Colchester with a grain of salt. And speaking of taking things with ‘a grain of salt’ or ‘a pinch of salt,’ that phrase happens to be found in English for the first time around the current point in our overall story. The first recorded citation in the Oxford English Dictionary is from 1647 – the year before the Siege of Colchester. The idea is that a little bit of salt makes it easier to eat food that is very bland and tasteless. So if you take it with a pinch of salt, it’s a little easier to swallow. And you might need a little pinch of salt to swallow the claim that Humpty Dumpty came from the Siege of Colchester – with apologies to the Colchester tourist board.

By the way, in the popular imagination, we tend to think of Humpty Dumpty as an egg, not a cannon. But why do we think of him as an egg? The nursery rhyme doesn’t say anything about eggs. Well, many scholars think the poem began as a riddle. Riddles in the form of short poems go all the way back to Old English. You might remember that I looked at Old English riddles in an early episode of the podcast. And if that’s how Humpty Dumpty actually began, and people were supposed to solve the riddle and guess what Humpty Dumpty was, the likely answer was an egg. Also, Lewis Carol presented him as an egg in his popular 19th century book called ‘Through the Looking Glass’ – the sequel to ‘Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland.’ So all of that has cemented the idea in the popular imagination that Humpty Dumpty was an egg.

Now, as I noted, the Siege of Colchester was one of many sieges during this brief renewal of the Civil War. One by one, the New Model Army was able to recover those cities that had thrown their support to the king. But relatively late in the process, Charles’s allies in Scotland carried through on their agreement and they crossed the border into northern England to support him and the other Royalists. But they arrived a bit too late. The New Model Army had already put down most of the uprisings and defeated most of the king’s supporters in England. Oliver Cromwell then took his forces north to meet the Scottish forces and soundly defeated them in August. The Scottish forces then headed back to Scotland with Cromwell in pursuit.

It is at this point that we have one final development in the Civil War that is notable for the story of English. As I noted, not all Scots supported the Scottish faction that had tried to intervene on the king’s behalf. Many remained opposed to Charles and continued to support Parliament. That anti-royal sentiment was especially strong in southwestern Scotland among a group of Scots known as the ‘Whiggamores.’ The etymology of that word is somewhat disputed, but it appears that the people of southern Scotland used the word *whig* when they were driving a horse or pushing it forward. And *whiggamore* is literally ‘whig a mare.’ It referred to someone who rode

a horse and urged it forward. In some situations, it even referred to a horse thief. At any rate, the term was applied to a group of Scots from southwestern England who remained loyal to Parliament and who carried out a raid in Edinburgh against the Scottish forces who were supporting the king. This raid became known as the Whiggamore Raid.

The reason why the whiggamores are notable is because their name is the source of the word *whig* ('w-h-i-g'), which came to be used for the name of a political movement and political party in the mid-1600s. The term was originally used by the Royalists as a derisive term for their opponents who supported Parliament. The implication was that they were nothing more than raiders and horse thieves. But the term was soon embraced by those opposed to the monarchy. So the term *Whig* came to refer a critic of the monarchy, while the term *Tory*, which I discussed earlier, was used to refer to a supporter of the monarchy. Interestingly, neither word is native to England. One came from Ireland and one came from Scotland, and both had an association with raiders, and bandits, and thieves. But those two terms came to represent the opposing sides of the political debate in England for the next few centuries.

Also, as I noted earlier in the discussion about the word *Tory*, that word fell out of use in American politics after the American Revolution because the term was associated with supporters of the king. But for the same reason, the term *Whig* survived in American politics because it had the opposite association. It was associated with those who opposed the king. And that's why the word *Whig* continued to be used in early American politics. In fact, a formal party was organized under that name in the early 1800s.

So the terms *Tory* and *Whig* both had origins in the English Civil War. And this second phase of the Civil War came to an end in September of 1648 with the defeat of the Charles's Scottish supporters.

By this point, the leaders of the New Model Army were completely exasperated with the king, and they had lost their patience with many of the members of Parliament who were not willing to hold him to account. In fact, many of those members were already negotiating with the king again to bring him back to London and return him to the throne in a reduced capacity. But the army leaders knew that Charles would never accept a such a reduced position, and the country would soon be at war again as soon as the king could rally his supporters.

By this point the most influential officer in the New Model Army was Oliver Cromwell. He had supported a settlement between various parities, but after the renewed warfare, he also lost his patience with Charles. Now, he sided with those in the army who wanted to get of Charles once and for all. And that meant they had to get rid of the moderate members of Parliament who resisted such a radical action.

On December 6, an army colonel named Thomas Pride and a group of soldiers blocked the entrance to Parliament and arrested 45 members as they tried to enter the chamber. Another 96 members were turned away. The members that remained were mostly aligned with the Independents who controlled the army. This event is known to history as Pride's Purge, and

small Parliament that remained came to be known as the Rump Parliament. [SOURCE: *Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England*, Charles Firth, p. 135]

In plain terms, it was a military coup. The New Model Army was now in charge of the country. It had taken control of Parliament, and it was preparing to eliminate the monarchy. In fact, perhaps it is appropriate that the French term *coup d'état* is first recorded in English during this same period. The term literally means 'the stroke of the state,' and it refers to a sudden change in government leadership by force or coercion. And for the first and only time in history, an English monarch was in the process of being deposed by the military.

The remaining members of the Rump Parliament declared that the supreme authority in England was now the House of Commons – not the king. And they demanded that Charles face trial for his actions against Parliament and against the country. Charles refused to cooperate with the trial, but it didn't really matter. The verdict was a foregone conclusion.

While the trial took place in January of 1649, Charles was kept as a prisoner in a house located next to the Houses of Parliament. It was the house that had been owned by the book collector Robert Cotton. I mentioned Cotton in the early episodes of the podcast because he collected many Old and Middle English documents that would have been lost to history if not for his efforts. That included the only surviving copy of the Beowulf poem, as well as copies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, the Lindisfarne Gospels, and others. A good chunk of early English history was preserved in those books, and they were kept at Robert Cotton's house next to Parliament. That building became his library. And the last time I mentioned that library was in Episode 188 when King Charles ordered the library to be locked and sealed shut. He didn't like the fact that his critics in Parliament were using the library as meeting house, and were also perusing the old legal documents in the collection to find a legal basis to oppose him. Cotton was personally devastated by the closure, and he died a short time later.

Well, now, the king who had ordered the library to be closed was being held as a prisoner within the same walls surrounded by those same works of literature.

The commission that carried out the trial rendered its verdict a few days later. To no one's surprise, Charles was found guilty, and he was sentenced to death. On the morning of January 30, 1649, Charles was taken to the scaffold and executed bringing an end to his tumultuous reign. It was a radical and revolutionary step for a parliament to kill its king. And the general public didn't really support the decision. For all of his problems, the general public still considered Charles to be their king, and many were shocked that Parliament and the army had the gall to end his life with a public execution.

But the next step was even more radical and revolutionary. Parliament and the army had no plans to place Charles's son on the throne, or any other member of the royal family for that matter. For the first time in English history, England would not have a monarch. Instead, the country would be ruled as a republic. The idea had been unthinkable just a couple of years earlier, but now it was a reality.

Next time, we'll move the story forward into the next decade – the 1650s. And we'll also turn our attention away from England to observe the impact of these developments in other parts of the world. And as you might imagine, the impacts were far-reaching, not just politically, but also linguistically.

So until then, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.