

**Ruling Without A Crown:
Oliver Cromwell**

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I have been interested in British history because it is closely intertwined with my life. It is part of my heritage; I have close friends and family who study and teach parts of it. When a friend told me about the incredible, centuries-long journey of Cromwell's decapitated head, I was immediately intrigued by the life of Cromwell. As I conducted my research, I recognized that each part of Cromwell's story aligned with the Revolution, Reaction, Reform theme. The revolutions in the form of the Civil War and the execution of Charles I, led to a reaction in the creation of a new government, and reform seen in his eventual death and the subsequent quick collapse of the Commonwealth a few years later. All of this convinced me that this was my topic.

When beginning to conduct my research, I read and analyzed many articles and speeches, to lay out what parts of the story were revolution, reaction and reform. I used all sorts of archives and databases, a few of which were JSTOR, Google Books, and Sirs Discoverer. In order to find images, I used many resources, including the NYPL Digital Collections and the Cromwell Museums. But the most useful of all my sources was my interviews. One interview was with Kristina Kapitza, of The Cromwell Museum in Huntingdon, England, Cromwell's birthplace. Another with Alex Walton, a Junior Fellow in the Harvard Society of Fellows who earned his Ph.D. in English from UC Berkeley for his work on the English Revolution, as well as an email exchange regarding the impact of Puritanism on Cromwell's rule, with Millersville University Professor Emeritus of history, Francis J. Bremer.

I chose documentary because I had previous experience in both filming and editing, as well as academic competitions. I believe it is the best way to display my specific findings and work with visuals and audio rather than on paper or posterboard. To create my documentary, I used Adobe software, including Premiere Pro for the main cut, Audition for audio, and After Effects for more detailed motion graphics. I also used Riverside, a recording program, to film my virtual interviews. While scripting and editing, I found difficulty knowing how to start and move the story along in a manner that would fit my exact creative vision. I often moved the segments of the script around in the edit to find the exact narrative I was seeking.

My thesis is that Oliver Cromwell's rise to power and the overthrow of the monarchy in the British Isles transformed society, government, and political authority by establishing a republic that defied centuries of traditional leadership and reshaped the future of English governance. Cromwell's actions resulted in the execution of King Charles I, the establishment of the first English republic, and set a precedent against overbearing monarchical rule.