**II UNIT**

 **1.Restoration England**

The **Restoration** of the English monarchy began in 1660 when the English, Scottish and Irish monarchies were all restored under Charles II after the Interregnum that followed the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. The term *Restoration* is used to describe both the actual event by which the monarchy was restored, and the period of several years afterwards in which a new political settlement was established. It is very often used to cover the whole reign of Charles II (1660–1685) and often the brief reign of his younger brother James II (1685-1688). In certain contexts it may be used to cover the whole period of the later Stuart monarchs as far as the death of Queen Anne and the accession of the Hanoverian George I in 1714; for example Restoration comedy typically encompasses works written as late as 1710.

**Religious settlement**

The Church of England was restored as the national Church in England, backed by the Clarendon Code and the Act of Uniformity 1662. People reportedly “pranced around May poles as a way of taunting the Presbyterians and Independents” and “burned copies of the Solemn League and Covenant.”

**Restoration Britain**

Historian Roger Baker argues that the Restoration and Charles’ coronation mark a reversal of the stringent Puritan morality, “as though the pendulum [of England’s morality] swung from repression to licence more or less overnight.” Theatres reopened after having been closed during the protectorship of Oliver Cromwell, Puritanism lost its momentum, and the bawdy “Restoration comedy” became a recognizable genre. In addition, women were allowed to perform on stage for the first time. In Scotland, Episcopacy was reinstated.

**Restoration Literature**

**Restoration literature** is the English literature written during the historical period commonly referred to as the English Restoration(1660–1689), which corresponds to the last years of the direct Stuart reign in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. In general, the term is used to denote roughly homogeneous styles of literature that center on a celebration of or reaction to the restored court of Charles II. It is a literature that includes extremes, for it encompasses both *Paradise Lost* and the Earl of Rochester’s *Sodom*, the high-spirited sexual comedy of *The Country Wife* and the moral wisdom of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. It saw Locke’s *Treatises of Government*, the founding of the Royal Society, the experiments and holy meditations of Robert Boyle, the hysterical attacks on theaters from Jeremy Collier, and the pioneering of literary criticism from John Dryden and John Dennis. The period witnessed news become a commodity, the essay developed into a periodical art form, and the beginnings of textual criticism.

The dates for Restoration literature are a matter of convention, and they differ markedly from genre to genre. Thus, the “Restoration” in drama may last until 1700, while in poetry it may last only until 1666 (see 1666 in poetry) and the *annus mirabilis*; and in prose it might end in 1688, with the increasing tensions over succession and the corresponding rise in journalism and periodicals, or not until 1700, when those periodicals grew more stabilized. In general, scholars use the term “Restoration” to denote the literature that began and flourished under Charles II, whether that literature was the laudatory ode that gained a new life with restored aristocracy, the eschatological literature that showed an increasing despair among Puritans, or the literature of rapid communication and trade that followed in the wake of England’s mercantile empire.

**Poetry**

The Restoration was an age of poetry. Not only was poetry the most popular form of literature, but it was also the most *significant* form of literature, as poems affected political events and immediately reflected the times. It was, to its own people, an age dominated only by the king, and not by any single genius. Throughout the period, the lyric, ariel, historical, and epic poem were being developed.

**Prose**

Prose in the Restoration period is dominated by Christian religious writing, but the Restoration also saw the beginnings of two genres that would dominate later periods: fiction and journalism. Religious writing often strayed into political and economic writing, just as political and economic writing implied or directly addressed religion.

**Theatre**

The return of the stage-struck Charles II to power in 1660 was a major event in English theatre history. As soon as the previous Puritan regime’s ban on public stage representations was lifted, the drama recreated itself quickly and abundantly. Two theatre companies, the King’s and the Duke’s Company, were established in London, with two luxurious playhouses built to designs by Christopher Wren and fitted with moveable scenery and thunder and lightning machines.

Traditionally, Restoration plays have been studied by genre rather than chronology, more or less as if they were all contemporary, but scholars today insist on the rapid evolvement of drama in the period and on the importance of social and political factors affecting it. (Unless otherwise indicated, the account below is based on Hume’s influential *Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century*, 1976.) The influence of theatre company competition and playhouse economics is also acknowledged, as is the significance of the appearance of the first professional actresses.

**The Coffeehouse as a Political Reformist**

Although alcohol was served in coffeehouses, it was treated differently than the other waterholes of the England, namely taverns, inns, and alehouses. Although the coffeehouse had a distinct air of the genteel, it also evolved a more infamous image, as it was instrumental in th spread of seditious rumors, or “false news,” to the public at large and being associated with meetings of the malcontents and resentful parties under the government. In fact, Charles II and James II tried to regulate the political exchange in coffeehouses. In December of 1675, Charles II tried to suppress the coffee houses of England altogether. Roger North, a loyalist to the crown, claimed that “…sedition and treason,…atheism, heresy, and blasphemy are publicly taught in diverse of the celebrated coffee-house…” Charles II failure to disrput the coffeehouse culture of free converse and ideas was an indication of England’s ability to progress out of the shadow of its despotic monarchs and claim civil liberties for the common person (Cambridge Journals).

**The Coffeehouse and the News**

Coffeehouses were hotbeds of gossip on current events and in turn were frequented often by journalists. Runners were often sent to coffee houses to report on the events of the day. Because coffeehouses attracted so many patrons, journals, domestic and foreign newspapers, bulletins, auction notices and other publications were sold there. In fact, many owners of coffeehouses made agreements between publishers for distribution rights to publications. Coffeehouses also served as the most efficient postal networks of the 18th century. Bags were hung on the walls for mailing items (Geocities, English Coffee Houses).

 **2. Age of Queen Anne**

Foreign Policy; On the death of William without a child, the Crown passed to Anne, the younger daughter of James II, according to the provisions of the Bill of Rights and the Act of Settlement. She had to bear the legacy of war left by William. For the greater part of her reign Anne was under the influence of the Churchills—Duke of Marlborough and his wife.

The head of the war ministry was Sidney Godolphin, who was the Prime Minister in all but name. Choice of ministers and determination of policy lay with Marlborough and Godolphin. The ministry began as mainly Tory but gradually became almost entirely Whig.

This was particularly because of the opposition of Marlborough to the traditional Tory policy and latter’s opposition to the policy of war which Marlborough supported. The War of the Spanish Succession on which England had embarked under William, was fought on four fronts.

The aim of England was clear enough. She want­ed to rescue Netherlands from French possession, to occupy the barrier fortresses. France had built up along the borders of Netherlands so that a dent in the French defences might be made. England also was determined to the union of the French and the Spanish Crowns in the same person and over and above to dislodge France from colonial, commercial and naval supremacy.

When Duke of Marlborough took command in 1702, the whole of the Spanish Netherlands were in possession of the French. Marlborough attacked the French in the Netherlands with a combined Anglo- Dutch army. His operations in the first two years, 1702 and 1703 were along the Rhine and the Meuse, and although he succeeded in holding the line, he could not make much advance.

 In the mean time the position of the Emperor became very precarious. Prince Eugene of Savoy had been defeated by the French in Italy. On an appeal from the emperor and considering that Austria must be saved, Marlborough withdrew his army from the Rhine and the Meuse and proceeded towards the Danube.

 In August 1704 Marlborough at the head of a combined army of the English, Dutch and Germans and joined by the Austrian army under Prince Eugene, defeated the (French army in the battle of Blenheim (August 13, 1704). Vienna was saved, and the myth of the invin­cibility of the French army was shattered. In the mean time the allies under Sir George Rooke carried the war into Spain and captured Gibraltar.

 In 1706, Marlborough had another crushing vic­tory over the French in the battle of Ramillies (1706) as a result of which the French were driven out of the major part of the Spanish Netherlands. In the same year Prince Eugene defeated the French at Turin, and Italy was cleared of the French troops. But the allies met with a great reverse at Almamanza at the hands of the Spanish troops (1707).

 In other theatres of war success attended the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene. In 1708 the French army was defeat­ed at their hands at Oudenarde. This was followed by another victory at Malplaquet in the next year (1709), by which Flanders was cleared of the French troops. In the naval warfare the English navy succeeded in bringing the Mediterranean under its control.

 Be­sides Gibraltar, Minorca also was occupied by the English navy. The allied forces, however, could not make much headway against Spain. Apart from defeat at Almamanza, the allied forces met with reverses at Brihuega and Villa Visciosa (1710) and had to leave Spain. The War of the Spanish Succes­sion came to a close an 1718 due to a variety of factors.

In 1711, Joseph, Emperor of Austria died and Archduke Charles for whom Austria was fighting France and England and other allies were helping her, himself became successor to the Austrian throne.

To allow Austria to possess Spain was almost simi­larly undesirable from the point of European balance of power as allowing France to occupy Spain. Euro­pean allies, therefore, were not as eager as they had been so long to secure the Spanish throne for Austria.

Apart from this, there was change of the ministry in England. Already war had dragged on for long. Parties to the war had become weary. England and France signed the Treaty of Utrecht and ended hosti­lities between themselves. Other European powers signed two more treaties called the Treaties of Rastadt and Baden. These three treaties together is called the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713.

**By the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, the following arrangements were made:**

England received Gibraltar, Minorca, Newfound land, Hudson Bay territories, Acadie, Kits, Nova- Scotia, etc. By a separate asiento, i.e. treaty, with Spain, England received the right to trade with Spa­nish America and also the right to supply slaves to the Spanish American colonies. France was obliged to recognise the Protestant Succession and Anne as the rightful Queen of England. The Jacobite pretender was expelled from France.

Austria had to give up her claims on the Spanish throne but she obtained Milan, Naples and the Spa­nish Netherlands, instead.

Spain accepted Philip of Anjou, Grandson of Louis XIV as her King Philip V on condition that the thrones of Spain and France were never to be united.

France retained her earlier conquests including had to recognise Queen Anne as the rightful Queen of England, Louis’ grandson was recognised as the king of Spain on condition that the two thrones of Spain and France should not be united.

Holland recovered the territories occupied by France and she was allowed to retain the line of fortresses as a barrier against attacks of France.

The importance of the Treaty of Utrecht insofar as England was concerned lay in her becoming the greatest naval power in the world. Possession of Gibraltar, Minorca, Kits, etc., gave her supremacy over the Mediterranean. Gibraltar and Minorca are the keys to the Mediterranean and Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, keys to the New World.

Occupation of Newfoundland and Hudson Bay territories gave her control over the way to America as also oppor­tunity to expansion in America. England achieved her objectives by this treaty. Compared to the gains of France, England emerged far superior politically commercially, as also in prestige.

Her object of maintaining the European balance of power by stop­ping the French aggression succeeded. This treaty while prevented the union of the thrones of Spain and France recognised the supremacy of France in Europe. For France was allowed to retain her earlier conquests, including Alsace.

The treaty by not re­turning many of the places which originally belong­ed to Austria while recognised France’s supremacy, accepted the hard truth that Austria was a decadent power. Louis XIV’s aim at becoming the dictator of Europe was frustrated and thus the balance of power was maintained.

The War of Spanish Succession was the first round of the conflict between England and France over commercial, colonial and naval rivalry. It ended in the defeat of France and the second round was to be fought in the mid-eighteenth century ending with the Peace of Paris, 1763.

The Treaty of Utrecht also arranged for the safety of Holland and she was made free of French domination. By a sepa­rate Asiento, i.e. Contract, England obtained, the privilege with Spain to supply slaves to the Spanish American colonies.

**2. Queen Anne’s and Scotland:**

James VI of Scotland ascended the English, throne in 1603, on the death of Queen Elizabeth, as James I. Ever since the two Houses of England and Scotland were united, but the union was not political but purely personal. Scotland retained her own Parliament.

Although James I sought to weld both the countries into a political union, the attempt did not succeed. From 1660 Scot­land even got her government separated from that of England. Under William III, Prince of Orange, the Darien scheme failed and the loss sustained by the Scottish merchants was rightly or wrongly attributed to the English jealousy, by the Scots.

The massacre of Glencoe was yet another reason for the Scottish displeasure at the English treatment of the Scots.

The lack of confidence of the Scots in the English government was all the more manifest in 1703 when the Scottish Parliament passed the Bill of Security by which it was provided that Queen Anne’s successor would not be accepted as the king of Scotland unless the commercial restrictions put on Scotland were re­moved and Scotland was placed on the same footing of equality with England.

The powers of the Crown were all assumed by the Scottish Parliament. The passing of the bill was regarded as good as rebellion. Scotland was put under a commercial boycott by England. Tension ran high and it seemed that hosti­lities between the two countries would begin. But at the last moment both sides agreed to a commission to settle the differences and to recommend the terms of union of the two countries.

On the basis of the re­commendation of this commission, the Act of Union (1707) was passed by which adequate representation was given to the Scots in the English Parliament and the separate Parliament in Scotland was abolished. The Scots were allowed to send forty-five members to the House of Commons and sixteen Peers to the House of Lords.

The name England was henceforth to be called Great Britain. In matters of trade and commerce England and Scotland were to be on the same footing of equality. Scottish laws as also the Scottish Church were to remain untouched.

The Act of Union opened a new chapter in the history of England. It made England more secure against any possible external danger and even against the possibility of Scotland being used by any pretender to the English throne or any rebel.

Scotland having been placed on the same footing in matters of trade and commerce found greater opportunities to make economic progress and become an equal partner with England in sharing the future power, prestige and glory of Great Britain.

**.Importance of the Reign of Queen Anne:**

The reign of Queen Anne, like that of William III saw several constitutional improvements. Limitations put on the Prerogatives by the Bill of Rights and the Act of Settlement were now effective. End of religious persecution of the Non-conformists had come, which was initiated by the Act of Toleration.

The law of treason was improved and made certain and the liberty of the Press was completely estab­lished. The judges now for the first time became really independent as they were to retain their places during good behaviour and removable only in case of the commission of any act of misdemeanour or by an address of both Houses of Parliament.

Although the reign of Queen Anne was not a period of Cabinet government as is understood in modern times, it was, however, one in which the ministers and Parliament were progressively drawn closer to each other.

Again, though there was no single comprehensive Budget, yet presentation of each individual branch of revenue assumed the character of a national financial plan. It was during this-reign William Lowndes, Secretary to the Treasury, gave currency to the phrase ways and means, and it was during this reign the practice be­came permanent that no money can be voted for any purpose except on the motion of a minister.

The leading position in the Cabinet, in this way was associated with the Treasury and Lord Treasurer. Godolphin, Lord Treasurer of the period was occasionally referred to as Prime Minister.

Further, the repeal of the clause of the Act of Settlement prohibiting the office-bearers from sitting in the Commons enabled the ministers and the House of Com­mons to evolve a closer association which became the most fundamental characteristic of the English government. The result was that the ministers could continue to sit in the House of Commons. It was also the period which saw exacerbation of party feelings.

It was during the period of her rule that paper money, that most valuable aid to commerce, was introduced. The two great wars, particularly the War of Spanish Succession, had formed the army into a profession and also made apparent that Eng­land must at all times have in readiness for domestic or external defence and operation a trained, skilled, and disciplined standing army.

The establishment of a standing army dates from this period. The free Press now published accounts of events which were subjects of despatches to or from foreign ambassa­dors, except most confidential ones, were now gene­rally to be found in the columns of the new papers which appeared daily.

The reign of Queen Anne and the early part of succeeding one were the golden age of literary men if not of English literature. It was mainly due to the minister’s love and encouragement of literature and science. Sir Isaac Newton was the Master of the Mint and John Locke was a Trade Commissioner, Joseph Addison was a Secretary of State and Mathew Prior, an Envoy to the Court of France. Swift and others were promoted in their professions.

Isaac Newton was the foremost among the distinguished lights of the modern world in Mathematical and Astronomical science. A fit companion of Newton was John Locke who was one of the greatest philosophers and most powerful writers and original thinkers England has produced.

Such were the eminence of Newton and Locke that they divided between themselves the empire of human thought of the age and taught the world not only by their wisdom, by example of their high moral worth.

The greatest poet of the age next to Milton was Dry den, the Chaucer of the seventeenth century, who contributed much to the formation of the spirit and developing the maturity of English literature. The productions of Dryden were both numerous and diversified.

Besides many smaller poems which will fill several volumes, he wrote eight of considerable length, the most distinguished among them being ‘The Hind and, the Panther and Absalom and Achitophel. He produced a poetical version of Vergil and translations from Ovid, Theocritus, Horace, Lucretius, Juvenal and Persius.

During Queen Anne’s time the French language was much undervalued in England, and was seldom studied. At the court, however, the case was just the reverse, and in their private correspondence eminent men of the court there was much use of the French.

The national debt of the period showed a rapid increase, particularly due to war. It was £16,000,000 at the accession of Anne but in next twelve years it rose up to £69,000,000. Besides the expenses of the war, the high salaries of officials also was partially responsible for the great public expenditure during the period.

Besides literature, science and fine, arts, the period was distinguished by richer and statelier architectural productions of the period. The metropolis of the empire, i.e., London which had suffered badly from the Great Fire was replaced by a larger, richer and more magnificent London which was a triumph of English wealth, resources and enterprise.

Sir Christopher Wren was the celebrated architect of the period and his creative mind was behind the grandeur of the metropolis and the restored cathedral of St. Paul. He superintended the construction of fifty-one Churches in London which constitute the chief architectural ornaments of the metropolis.

The importance of Anne’s reign also lies in the success of England in the War of Spanish Succession which gave England supremacy over the Mediterra­nean, checkmated France, prevented the union of the Trench and the Spanish Crown’s and above all suc­cessfully terminate the first round of the commercial, colonial and naval rivalry between England and France, in favour of England by the Treaty of Utre­cht (1713).

In the continental polities England be­came the holder of the balance.

Lastly, it was during this reign that England and Scotland were united with adequate representation of the Scots to the English Parliament and the Scottish Parliament was abolished. The Scots were allowed to send forty-five members to the House of Commons and sixteen Peers to the House of Lords.

The name of England was henceforth substituted by that of Great Britain or United Kingdom with Eng­land and Scotland occupying the same footing of equality.

 **3.Agricultural Revolution**

The Agricultural Revolution was the unprecedented increase in agricultural production in Britain due to increases in labor and land productivity between the mid-17th and late 19th centuries. Agricultural output grew faster than the population over the century to 1770 and thereafter productivity remained among the highest in the world. This increase in the food supply contributed to the rapid growth of population in England and Wales, from 5.5 million in 1700 to over 9 million by 1801, although domestic production gave way to food imports in the 19th century as population more than tripled to over 32 million. The rise in productivity accelerated the decline of the agricultural share of the labor force, adding to the urban workforce on which industrialization depended. The Agricultural Revolution has therefore been cited as a cause of the Industrial Revolution. However, historians also continue to dispute whether the developments leading to the unprecedented agricultural growth can be seen as “a revolution,” since the growth was, in fact, a result of a series of significant changes over a her long period of time. Consequently, the question of when exactly such a revolution took place and of what it consisted remains open.

**Crop Rotation**

One of the most important innovations of the Agricultural Revolution was the development of the Norfolk four-course rotation, which greatly increased crop and livestock yields by improving soil fertility and reducing fallow.

Crop rotation is the practice of growing a series of dissimilar types of crops in the same area in sequential seasons to help restore plant nutrients and mitigate the build-up of pathogens and pests that often occurs when one plant species is continuously cropped. Rotation can also improve soil structure and fertility by alternating deep-rooted and shallow-rooted plants. The Norfolk System, as it is now known, rotates crops so that different crops are planted with the result that different kinds and quantities of nutrients are taken from the soil as the plants grow. An important feature of the Norfolk four-field system was that it used labor at times when demand was not at peak levels. Planting cover crops such as turnips and clover was not permitted under the common field system because they interfered with access to the fields and other people’s livestock could graze the turnips.

During the Middle Ages, the open field system initially used a two-field crop rotation system where one field was left fallow or turned into pasture for a time to try to recover some of its plant nutrients. Later, a three-year three-field crop rotation routine was employed, with a different crop in each of two fields, e.g. oats, rye, wheat, and barley with the second field growing a legume like peas or beans, and the third field fallow. Usually from 10–30% of the arable land in a three-crop rotation system is fallow. Each field was rotated into a different crop nearly every year. Over the following two centuries, the regular planting of legumes such as peas and beans in the fields that were previously fallow slowly restored the fertility of some croplands. The planting of legumes helped to increase plant growth in the empty field due to the bacteria on legume roots’ ability to fix nitrogen from the air into the soil in a form that plants could use. Other crops that were occasionally grown were flax and members of the mustard family. The practice of convertible husbandry, or the alternation of a field between pasture and grain, introduced pasture into the rotation. Because nitrogen builds up slowly over time in pasture, plowing pasture and planting grains resulted in high yields for a few years. A big disadvantage of convertible husbandry, however, was the hard work that had to be put into breaking up pastures and difficulty in establishing them.

It was the farmers in Flanders (in parts of France and current-day Belgium) that discovered a still more effective four-field crop rotation system, using turnips and clover (a legume) as forage crops to replace the three-year crop rotation fallow year. The four-field rotation system allowed farmers to restore soil fertility and restore some of the plant nutrients removed with the crops. Turnips first show up in the probate records in England as early as 1638 but were not widely used until about 1750. Fallow land was about 20% of the arable area in England in 1700 before turnips and clover were extensively grown. Guano and nitrates from South America were introduced in the mid-19th century and fallow steadily declined to reach only about 4% in 1900. Ideally, wheat, barley, turnips, and clover would be planted in that order in each field in successive years. The turnips helped keep the weeds down and were an excellent forage crop—ruminant animals could eat their tops and roots through a large part of the summer and winters. There was no need to let the soil lie fallow as clover would add nitrates (nitrogen-containing salts) back to the soil. The clover made excellent pasture and hay fields as well as green manure when it was plowed under after one or two years. The addition of clover and turnips allowed more animals to be kept through the winter, which in turn produced more milk, cheese, meat, and manure, which maintained soil fertility.

Townshend is often mentioned, together with Jethro Tull, Robert Bakewell, and others, as a major figure in England’s Agricultural Revolution, contributing to adoption of agricultural practices that supported the increase in Britain’s population between 1700 and 1850.

**Other Practices**

n the mid-18th century, two British agriculturalists, Robert Bakewell and Thomas Coke, introduced selective breeding as a scientific practice (mating together two animals with particularly desirable characteristics) and using inbreeding (the mating of close relatives) to stabilize certain qualities in order to reduce genetic diversity. Arguably, Bakewell’s most important breeding program was with sheep. Using native stock, he was able to quickly select for large, yet fine-boned sheep with long, lustrous wool. Bakewell was also the first to breed cattle to be used primarily for beef. Previously, cattle were first and foremost kept for pulling plows as oxen or for dairy uses, with beef from surplus males as an additional bonus. As more and more farmers followed Bakewell’s lead, farm animals increased dramatically in size and quality.

Certain practices that contributed to a more productive use of land intensified, for example converting some pasture land into arable land and recovering fen land and some pastures. It is estimated that the amount of arable land in Britain grew by 10-30% through these land conversions. Other developments came from Flanders and and the Netherlands, where due to the large and dense population, farmers were forced to take maximum advantage of every bit of usable land. The region became a pioneer in canal building, soil restoration and maintenance, soil drainage, and land reclamation technology. Dutch experts like Cornelius Vermuyden brought some of this technology to Britain. Finally, water-meadows were utilized in the late 16th to the 20th centuries and allowed earlier pasturing of livestock after they were wintered on hay. This increased livestock yields, giving more hides, meat, milk, and manure as well as better hay crops.

**Enclosure**

Most of the medieval common land of England was lost due to enclosure. In English social and economic history, enclosure or inclosure was the process that ended traditional rights such as mowing meadows for hay or grazing livestock on common land formerly held in the open field system. Once enclosed, these uses of the land became restricted to the owner and the land cased to be for the use of commoners. In England and Wales, the term is also used for the process that ended the ancient system of arable farming in open fields. Under enclosure, such land was fenced (*enclosed*) and *deeded* or *entitled* to one or more owners. The process of enclosure became a widespread feature of the English agricultural landscape during the 16th century. By the 19th century, unenclosed commons were largely restricted to large areas of rough pasture in mountainous places and relatively small residual parcels of land in the lowlands.

Enclosure could be accomplished by buying the ground rights and all common rights to accomplish exclusive rights of use, which increased the value of the land. The other method was by passing laws causing or forcing enclosure, such as parliamentary enclosure. The latter process of enclosure was sometimes accompanied by force, resistance, and bloodshed, and remains among the most controversial areas of agricultural and economic history in England.

**Implementation of the Acts**

The more productive enclosed farms meant that fewer farmers were needed to work the same land, leaving many villagers without land and grazing rights. Many moved to the cities in search of work in the emerging factories of the Industrial Revolution. Others settled in the English colonies. English Poor Laws were enacted to help these newly poor. Some practices of enclosure were denounced by the Church and legislation was drawn up against it. However, the large, enclosed fields were needed for the gains in agricultural productivity from the 16th to 18th centuries. This controversy led to a series of government acts, culminating in the General Enclosure Act of 1801, which sanctioned large-scale land reform.

The Act of 1801 was one of many parliamentary enclosures that consolidated strips in the open fields into more compact units and enclosed much of the remaining pasture commons or wastes. Parliamentary enclosures usually provided commoners with some other land in compensation for the loss of common rights, although often of poor quality and limited extent. They were also used for the division and privatization of common “wastes” (in the original sense of *uninhabited places*), such as fens, marshes, heathland, downland, and moors. Voluntary enclosure was also frequent at that time.

After 1529, the problem of untended farmland disappeared with the rising population. There was a desire for more arable land along with antagonism toward the tenant-graziers with their flocks and herds. Increased demand along with a scarcity of tillable land caused rents to rise dramatically in the 1520s to mid-century. There were popular efforts to remove old enclosures and much legislation of the 1530s and 1540s concerns this shift. Angry tenants impatient to reclaim pastures for tillage were illegally destroying enclosures.

**Consequences**

The primary benefits to large land holders came from increased value of their own land, not from expropriation. Smaller holders could sell their land to larger ones for a higher price post enclosure. Protests against parliamentary enclosures continued, sometimes also in Parliament, frequently in the villages affected, and sometimes as organized mass revolts. Enclosed land was twice as valuable, a price that could be sustained by its higher productivity. While many villagers received plots in the newly enclosed manor, for small landholders this compensation was not always enough to offset the costs of enclosure and fencing. Many historians believe that enclosure was an important factor in the reduction of small landholders in England as compared to the Continent, although others believe that this process began earlier.

Enclosure faced a great deal of popular resistance because of its effects on the household economies of smallholders and landless laborers. Common rights had included not just the right of cattle or sheep grazing, but also the grazing of geese, foraging for pigs, gleaning, berrying, and fuel gathering. During the period of parliamentary enclosures, employment in agriculture did not fall, but failed to keep pace with the growing population. Consequently, large numbers of people left rural areas to move into the cities where they became laborers in the Industrial Revolution.

Enclosure is considered one of the causes of the British Agricultural Revolution. Enclosed land was under control of the farmer, who was free to adopt better farming practices. There was widespread agreement in contemporary accounts that profit making opportunities were better with enclosed land. Following enclosure, crop yields and livestock output increased while at the same time productivity increased enough to create a surplus of labor. The increased labor supply is considered one of the factors facilitating the Industrial Revolution.

**Social Impact**

The increase in the food supply contributed to the rapid growth of population in England and Wales, from 5.5 million in 1700 to over 9 million by 1801, although domestic production gave way increasingly to food imports in the 19th century as population more than tripled to over 32 million. The rise in productivity accelerated the decline of the agricultural share of the labor force, adding to the urban workforce on which industrialization depended. The Agricultural Revolution has therefore been cited as a cause of the Industrial Revolution. As enclosure deprived many of access to land or left farmers with plots too small and of poor quality, increasing numbers of workers had no choice but migrate to the city. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, however, rural flight occurred in mostly localized regions. Pre-industrial societies did not experience large rural-urban migration flows, primarily due to the inability of cities to support large populations. Lack of large employment industries, high urban mortality, and low food supplies all served as checks keeping pre-industrial cities much smaller than their modern counterparts. While the improved agricultural productivity freed up workers to other sectors of the economy, it took decades of the Industrial Revolution and industrial development to trigger a truly mass rural-to-urban labor migration. As food supplies increased and stabilized and industrialized centers moved into place, cities began to support larger populations, sparking the beginning of rural flight on a massive scale. In England, the proportion of the population living in cities jumped from 17% in 1801 to 72% in 1891.

The development and advancement of  tools and machines decreased the demand for rural labor. That together with increasingly restricted access to land forced many rural workers to migrate to cities, eventually supplying the labor demand created by the Industrial Revolution.

**New Agricultural Market Trend**

Markets were widespread by 1500. These were regulated and not free. The most important development between the 16th century and the mid-19th century was the development of private marketing. By the 19th century, marketing was nationwide and the vast majority of agricultural production was for market rather than for the farmer and his family. The 16th-century market radius was about 10 miles, which could support a town of 10,000. High wagon transportation costs made it uneconomical to ship commodities very far outside the market radius by road, generally limiting shipment to less than 20 or 30 miles to market or to a navigable waterway.

The next stage of development was trading between markets, requiring merchants, credit and forward sales, and knowledge of markets and pricing as well as of supply and demand in different markets. Eventually the market evolved into a national one driven by London and other growing cities. By 1700, there was a national market for wheat. Legislation regulating middlemen required registration, and addressed weights and measures, fixing of prices, and collection of tolls by the government. Market regulations were eased in 1663, when people were allowed some self-regulation to hold inventory, but it was forbidden to withhold commodities from the market in an effort to increase prices. In the late 18th century, the idea of “self regulation” was gaining acceptance. The lack of internal tariffs, customs barriers, and feudal tolls made Britain “the largest coherent market in Europe.”

Commerce was aided by the expansion of roads and inland waterways. Road transport capacity grew from threefold to fourfold from 1500 to 1700. By the early 19th century it cost as much to transport a ton of freight 32 miles by wagon over an unimproved road as it did to ship it 3,000 miles across the Atlantic.

With the development of regional markets and eventually a national market aided by improved transportation infrastructures, farmers were no longer dependent on their local markets and were less subject to having to sell at low prices into an oversupplied local market and not being able to sell their surpluses to distant localities that were experiencing shortages. They also became less subject to price fixing regulations. Farming became a business rather than solely a means of subsistence. Under free market capitalism, farmers had to remain competitive. To be successful, they had to become effective managers who incorporated the latest farming innovations in order to be low-cost producers.