

Fall 2014 History & Heritage -- #5

Clergy and Commons --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 192-200)

These social estates, together with the baronage or nobility, formed the recognized vocational orders or classes of the medieval world? One of the estates consisted in the greater and lesser men of the cloth like bishops, abbots, monks, and priests; while another included non-noblemen of some standing: rural landholders and free townsmen or burgesses. In England, Edward I's "Model Parliament" (1295) brought together all the estates in a notable expansion of the king's Great Council.

Impeachment Process --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 192-200)

This parliamentary process, a formal accusation with potentially severe consequences brought against a delinquent king, traces its roots to the late 1300's? Together with a still contested power of the purse, the medieval process proved an effective tool in Parliament's ongoing project of building barriers to kingly absolutism. It was not, however, applied directly to kings (who theoretically could do no wrong) but to their chief officials, out of fear of civil war should a king himself be condemned.

Confirmation of the Charters --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 192-200)

This royal decree (1297) was forced upon England's Edward I by the barons, who objected to his arbitrary taxes in support of his wars? The decree bound Edward to the consent of the "Model Parliament" with its three estates—Clergy, Barons, Commons—for any revenue-raising scheme above feudal dues. Thus, Parliament scored a victory in its contest with the king, and the Roman maxim *Quod omnes tangit ab omnibus approbetur* ("What concerns all should be approved by all") was upheld.

Property Qualification --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 192-200)

This voting qualification for British county electors (those choosing their representatives in Commons) was enacted by Parliament in 1430? The qualification binding counties was also embraced by English boroughs, villages having the right to decide for themselves various election rules and regulations. It would be passed on intact to the American colonies and later States (1600's--1800's), its rationale seemingly "to keep the ignorant and disorderly from disturbing elections," writes Kirk.

Lords and Commons --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 192-200)

These political estates, following the clergy's secession from Edward's "model" assembly, together composed Parliament, at first a body of counselors and critics? The more prestigious of the estates was not really a representative body, but one in which nobles or peers by birth and status served the state in their own right. The lesser, representative and made up mostly of knights and burgesses, ironically eclipsed the greater by virtue of its claim to speak for all Englishmen and its power of the purse.