

# The British Empire

## *The British Raj*

### Learning Objective:

To understand and explain how the British Raj in India was established, and how it was structured.



By the time Victoria became queen of the United Kingdom, the East India Company effectively ruled all of India.

**Do you know when the Victorian era was?**



1800

1850

1900

1950

2000

Queen Victoria  
1837-1901



Victoria became queen of the United Kingdom in 1837 – over 180 years ago.

She, and the government of Britain, were unhappy with the East India Company's rule of India. The Indian government were unhappy with being ruled by them, too.

**Why do you think they were unhappy?**

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# ***Why was the East India Company's rule in India unpopular?***

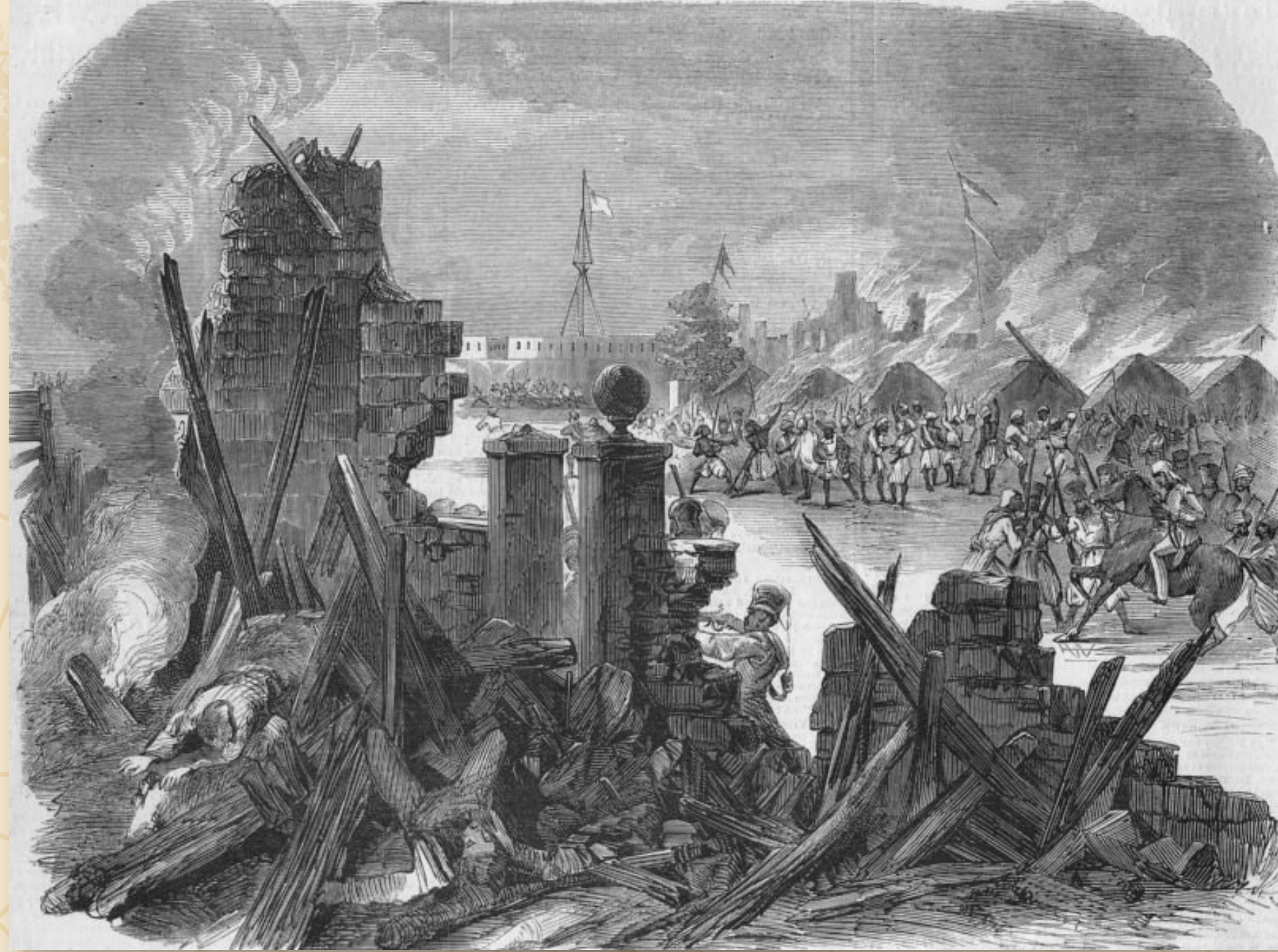
## Queen Victoria and her government.

- The queen believed that she and her government should rule.
- They disliked a private company having so much money and power.
- They felt that the East India Company did not do enough to help the people of India.
- They believed they would be better rulers of India.

## The Indian government and people of India.

- They wanted to rule themselves.
- They disliked the way the East India Company ruled.
- They disliked the East India Company taking money and goods out of India.
- They wanted India to be independent – not ruled by anyone else.



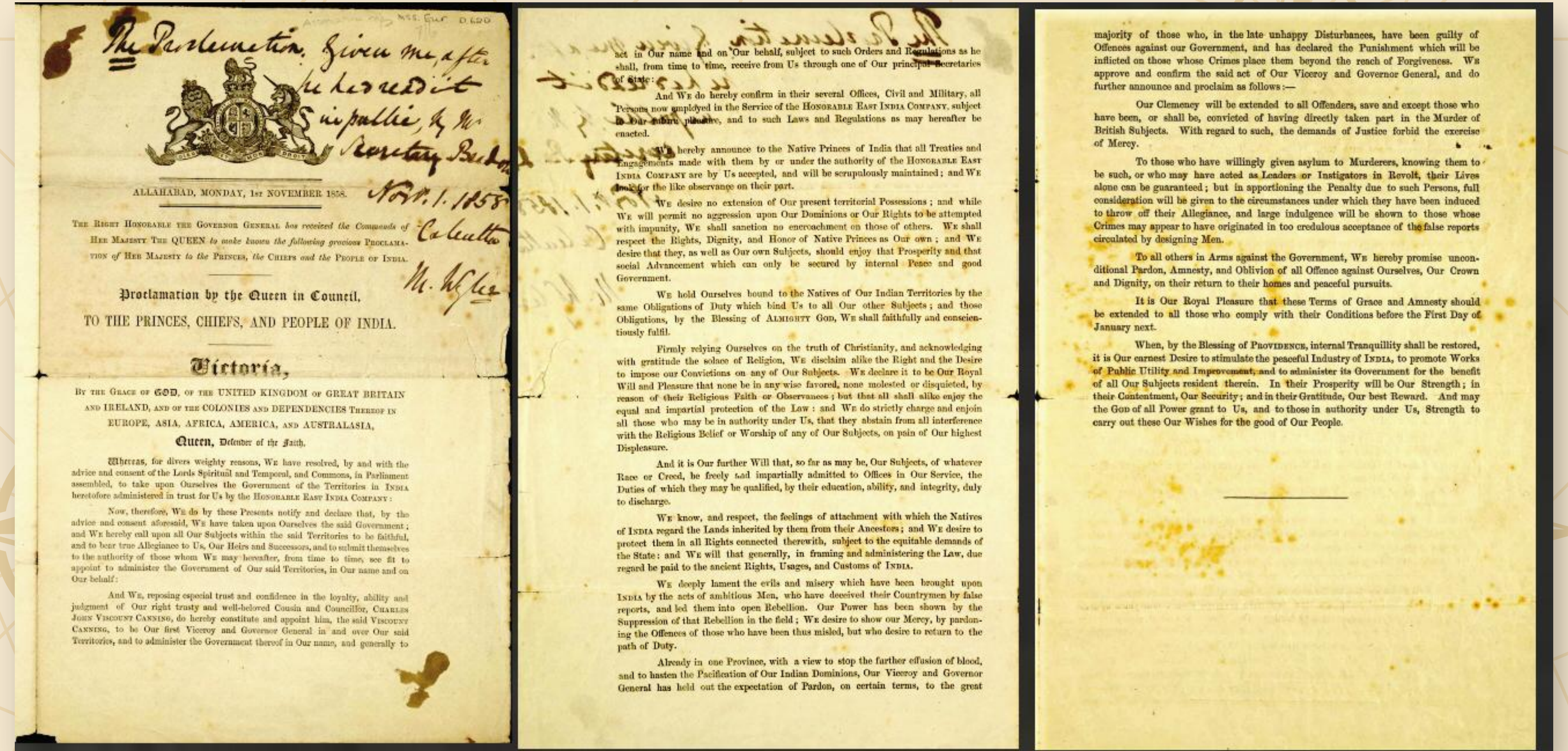


Why do you think so many Indian people revolted against the East India Company?

In 1857, there was a revolt. Many Indian soldiers (called *sepoys*) in the East India Company's private army rose up against the British company. Civilians fought, too. Although there were 50,000 British officers in the East India Company's private army, there were over 300,000 Indian soldiers. The fighting continued for many months, and hundreds of thousands died.







The revolt convinced the British that the East India Company's rule in India had to end. They believed that the violence could have been avoided had the company ruled better. Queen Victoria signed the Government of India Act 1858, which made her, and her government, rulers of India.



The era of the *British Raj* had begun. Britain would rule over India for nearly ninety years more.

What do you think life was like for ordinary Indian people, rich and poor, living under British rule? How do you think it compared to everyday life in Britain?



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***What was life like for people living in India under British rule?  
How do you think it compared to everyday life in Britain?***

British people living  
and working in India.

Rich and powerful  
Indian people.

Poor Indian people.

Indian men.

Indian women.

Indian children.

Today we will be finding out more about what life was like for each of these groups of people.