This chapter discusses the historical development of the British constitution. The key to understanding the evolution of the British constitution is to imagine it being shaped by a dynamic ebb and flow of power between the key players — the monarch, Parliament, the Church, governments, judges — to determine the issue of where supreme power and authority would ultimately settle and reside. In the case of the UK, supreme authority settled in the monarch in Parliament, while political power resided with the executive. The chapter then argues that the constitution is fluid and changing, despite the received view that it has evolved slowly and peacefully without invasion or violent revolution. Despite fluctuations in power, and changes in Britain’s territorial composition and external alliances, there has always been a sense that the constitution is based on the collective memory of ancient laws and principles that fundamentally protect the people and cannot be changed.
2. How the UK constitution has developed

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