

# Richard III (Penguin Monarchs): A Failed King

George III

*Richard (1953). King George III and the Politicians. Oxford University Press. Reitan, E. A., ed. (1964). George III, Tyrant Or Constitutional Monarch*

George III (George William Frederick; 4 June 1738 – 29 January 1820) was King of Great Britain and Ireland from 25 October 1760 until his death in 1820. The Acts of Union 1800 unified Great Britain and Ireland into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, with George as its king. He was concurrently duke and prince-elector of Hanover in the Holy Roman Empire before becoming King of Hanover on 12 October 1814. He was the first monarch of the House of Hanover who was born in Great Britain, spoke English as his first language, and never visited Hanover.

George was born during the reign of his paternal grandfather, King George II, as the first son of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha. Following his father's death in 1751, Prince George became heir apparent and Prince of Wales. He succeeded to the throne on George II's death in 1760. The following year, he married Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, with whom he had 15 children. George III's life and reign were marked by a series of military conflicts involving his kingdoms, much of the rest of Europe, and places farther afield in Africa, the Americas and Asia. Early in his reign, Great Britain defeated France in the Seven Years' War, becoming the dominant European power in North America and India. However, Britain lost 13 of its North American colonies in the American War of Independence. Further wars against revolutionary and Napoleonic France from 1793 concluded in the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. In 1807, the transatlantic slave trade was banned from the British Empire.

In the later part of his life, George had recurrent and eventually permanent mental illness. The exact nature of the mental illness is not known definitively, but historians and medical experts have suggested that his symptoms and behaviour traits were consistent with either bipolar disorder or porphyria. In 1810, George suffered a final relapse, and his eldest son, George, Prince of Wales, was named Prince Regent the following year. The King died aged 81, at which time the Regent succeeded him as George IV. George III reigned during much of the Georgian and Regency eras. At the time of his death, he was the longest-lived and longest-reigning British monarch, having reigned for 59 years and 96 days; he remains the longest-lived and longest-reigning male monarch in British history.

Richard III of England

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Richard III (2 October 1452 – 22 August 1485) was King of England from 26 June 1483 until his death in 1485. He was the last king of the Plantagenet dynasty and its cadet branch the House of York. His defeat and death at the Battle of Bosworth Field marked the end of the Middle Ages in England.

Richard was created Duke of Gloucester in 1461 after the accession to the throne of his older brother Edward IV. This was during the period known as the Wars of the Roses, an era when two branches of the royal family contested the throne; Edward and Richard were Yorkists, and their side of the family faced off against their Lancastrian cousins. In 1472, Richard married Anne Neville, daughter of Richard Neville, 16th Earl of Warwick, and widow of Edward of Westminster, son of Henry VI. He governed northern England during Edward's reign, and played a role in the invasion of Scotland in 1482. When Edward IV died in April 1483, Richard was named Lord Protector of the realm for Edward's eldest son and successor, the 12-year-old Edward V. Before arrangements were complete for Edward V's coronation, scheduled for 22 June 1483, the

marriage of his parents was declared bigamous and therefore invalid. Now officially illegitimate, Edward and his siblings were barred from inheriting the throne. On 25 June, an assembly of lords and commoners endorsed a declaration to this effect, and proclaimed Richard as the rightful king. He was crowned on 6 July 1483. Edward and his younger brother Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York, called the "Princes in the Tower", disappeared from the Tower of London around August 1483.

There were two major rebellions against Richard during his reign. In October 1483, an unsuccessful revolt was led by staunch allies of Edward IV and Richard's former ally, Henry Stafford, 2nd Duke of Buckingham. Then, in August 1485, Henry Tudor and his uncle, Jasper Tudor, landed in Wales with a contingent of French troops, and marched through Pembrokeshire, recruiting soldiers. Henry's forces defeated Richard's army near the Leicestershire town of Market Bosworth. Richard was slain, making him the last English king to die in battle. Henry Tudor then ascended the throne as Henry VII.

Richard's corpse was taken to the nearby town of Leicester and buried without ceremony. His original tomb monument is believed to have been removed during the English Reformation, and his remains were wrongly thought to have been thrown into the River Soar. In 2012, an archaeological excavation was commissioned by Ricardian author Philippa Langley with the assistance of the Richard III Society on the site previously occupied by Grey Friars Priory. The University of Leicester identified the human skeleton found at the site as that of Richard III as a result of radiocarbon dating, comparison with contemporary reports of his appearance, identification of trauma sustained at Bosworth and comparison of his mitochondrial DNA with that of two matrilineal descendants of his sister Anne. He was reburied in Leicester Cathedral in 2015.

## Henry III of England

*Henry III (1 October 1207 – 16 November 1272), also known as Henry of Winchester, was King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine from 1216*

Henry III (1 October 1207 – 16 November 1272), also known as Henry of Winchester, was King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine from 1216 until his death in 1272. The son of John, King of England, and Isabella of Angoulême, Henry acceded to the throne when he was only nine in the middle of the First Barons' War. Cardinal Guala Bicchieri declared the war against the rebel barons to be a religious crusade and Henry's forces, led by William Marshal, defeated the rebels at the battles of Lincoln and Sandwich in 1217. Henry promised to abide by the Great Charter of 1225, a later version of Magna Carta (1215), which limited royal power and protected the rights of the major barons. Henry's early reign was dominated first by William Marshal, and after his death in 1219 by the magnate Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent. In 1230 the King attempted to reconquer the provinces of France that had once belonged to his father, but the invasion was a debacle. A revolt led by William Marshal's son Richard broke out in 1232, ending in a peace settlement negotiated by the Catholic Church.

Following the revolt, Henry ruled England personally, rather than governing through senior ministers. He travelled less than previous monarchs, investing heavily in a handful of his favourite palaces and castles. He married Eleanor of Provence, with whom he had five children. Henry was known for his piety, holding lavish religious ceremonies and giving generously to charities; the King was particularly devoted to the figure of Edward the Confessor, whom he adopted as his patron saint. He extracted huge sums of money from the Jews in England, ultimately crippling their ability to do business. As attitudes towards the Jews hardened, he later introduced the Statute of Jewry, which attempting to segregate the Jewish community from the English populace. In a fresh attempt to reclaim his family's lands in France, he invaded Poitou in 1242, leading to the disastrous Battle of Taillebourg. After this, Henry relied on diplomacy, cultivating an alliance with Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor. Henry supported his brother Richard of Cornwall in his successful bid to become King of the Romans in 1256, but was unable to place his own son Edmund Crouchback on the throne of Sicily, despite investing large amounts of money. He planned to go on crusade to the Levant, but was prevented from doing so by rebellions in Gascony.

By 1258, Henry's rule had grown increasingly unpopular due to the failure of his expensive foreign policies, the notoriety of his Poitevin half-brothers, and the role of his local officials in collecting taxes and debts. In response to this state of affairs, a coalition of his barons seized power in a coup d'état and expelled the Poitevins from England, reforming the royal government through a process called the Provisions of Oxford. In 1259, Henry and the baronial government consented to the Treaty of Paris, under which Henry gave up his rights to his other lands in France in return for King Louis IX recognising him as the rightful ruler of Gascony. Despite the ultimate collapse of the baronial regime, Henry was unable to reform a stable government and instability continued across England.

In 1263 one of the more radical barons, Simon de Montfort, seized power, resulting in the Second Barons' War. Henry persuaded Louis to support his cause and mobilised an army. The Battle of Lewes was fought in 1264 when Henry was defeated and taken prisoner. Henry's eldest son, Edward, escaped from captivity to defeat Simon at the Battle of Evesham the following year and freed his father. Henry initially exacted a harsh revenge on the remaining rebels but was persuaded by the Church to mollify his policies through the Dictum of Kenilworth. Reconstruction was slow, and Henry had to acquiesce to several measures, including further suppression of the Jews, to maintain baronial and popular support. Henry died in 1272, leaving Edward as his successor. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, which he had rebuilt in the second half of his reign, and was moved to his current tomb in 1290. Some miracles were declared after his death, but he was not canonised. Henry's reign of 56 years was the longest in medieval English history and would not be surpassed by an English, or later British, monarch until that of George III in the 18th and 19th centuries.

## Richard I of England

*and early Plantagenet monarchs and their relationship with rulers of Western Europe : Red borders indicate English monarchs : Bold borders indicate*

Richard I (8 September 1157 – 6 April 1199), known as Richard the Lionheart or Richard Cœur de Lion (Old Norman French: Quor de Lion) because of his reputation as a great military leader and warrior, was King of England from 1189 until his death in 1199. He also ruled as Duke of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Gascony; Lord of Cyprus; Count of Poitiers, Anjou, Maine, and Nantes; and was overlord of Brittany at various times during the same period. He was the third of five sons of Henry II of England and Eleanor of Aquitaine and was therefore not expected to become king, but his two elder brothers predeceased their father.

By the age of 16, Richard had taken command of his own army, putting down rebellions in Poitou against his father. Richard was an important Christian commander during the Third Crusade, leading the campaign after the departure of Philip II of France. Despite achieving several victories against his Muslim counterpart, Saladin, he was ultimately forced to end his campaign without retaking Jerusalem.

Richard probably spoke both French and Occitan. He was born in England, where he spent his childhood; before becoming king, however, he lived most of his adult life in the Duchy of Aquitaine, in the southwest of France. Following his accession, he spent very little time, perhaps as little as six months, in England. Most of his reign was spent on Crusade, in captivity, or actively defending the French portions of the Angevin Empire. Though regarded as a model king during the four centuries after his death and viewed as a pious hero by his subjects, he was later perceived by historians as a ruler who treated the kingdom of England merely as a source of revenue for his armies rather than a land entrusted to his stewardship. This "Little England" view of Richard has come under increasing scrutiny by modern historians, who view it as anachronistic. Richard I remains one of the few kings of England remembered more commonly by his epithet than his regnal number, and is an enduring iconic figure both in England and in France.

## Edward III of England

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Edward III (13 November 1312 – 21 June 1377), also known as Edward of Windsor before his accession, was King of England from January 1327 until his death in 1377. He is noted for his military success and for restoring royal authority after the disastrous and unorthodox reign of his father, Edward II. Edward III transformed the Kingdom of England into one of the most formidable military powers in Europe. His fifty-year reign is one of the longest in English history, and saw vital developments in legislation and government, in particular the evolution of the English Parliament, as well as the ravages of the Black Death. He outlived his eldest son, Edward the Black Prince, and was succeeded by his grandson, Richard II.

Edward was crowned at age fourteen after his father was deposed by his mother, Isabella of France, and her lover, Roger Mortimer. At the age of seventeen, he led a successful coup d'état against Mortimer, the de facto ruler of England, and began his personal reign. After a successful campaign in Scotland, he declared himself rightful heir to the French throne, starting the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453). Following some initial setbacks, this first phase of the war went exceptionally well for England and would become known as the Edwardian War. Victories at Crécy and Poitiers led to the highly favourable Treaty of Brétigny (1360), in which England made territorial gains, and Edward renounced his claim to the French throne. Edward's later years were marked by foreign policy failure and domestic strife, largely as a result of his decreasing activity and poor health. The second phase of the Hundred Years' War began in 1369, leading to the loss of most of Edward's conquests, save for the Pale of Calais, by 1375.

Edward was temperamental and thought himself capable of feats such as healing by the royal touch, as some prior English kings did. He was also capable of unusual clemency. He was in many ways a conventional medieval king whose main interest was warfare, but he also had a broad range of non-military interests. Admired in his own time, and for centuries after, he was later denounced as an irresponsible adventurer by Whig historians, but modern historians credit him with significant achievements.

#### Richard II of England

*Richard's father died in 1376, leaving Richard as heir apparent to his grandfather, King Edward III; upon the latter's death, the 10-year-old Richard*

Richard II (6 January 1367 – c. 14 February 1400), also known as Richard of Bordeaux, was King of England from 1377 until he was deposed in 1399. He was the son of Edward, Prince of Wales (later known as the Black Prince), and Joan, Countess of Kent. Richard's father died in 1376, leaving Richard as heir apparent to his grandfather, King Edward III; upon the latter's death, the 10-year-old Richard succeeded to the throne.

During Richard's first years as king, government was in the hands of a series of regency councils, influenced by Richard's uncles John of Gaunt and Thomas of Woodstock. England at that time faced various problems, most notably the Hundred Years' War. A major challenge of the reign was the Peasants' Revolt in 1381, and the young king played a central part in the successful suppression of this crisis. Less warlike than either his father or grandfather, he sought to bring an end to the Hundred Years' War. A firm believer in the royal prerogative, Richard restrained the power of the aristocracy and relied on a private retinue for military protection instead. In contrast to his grandfather, Richard cultivated a refined atmosphere centred on art and culture at court, in which the king was an elevated figure.

The King's dependence on a small number of courtiers caused discontent among the nobility, and in 1387 control of government was taken over by a group of aristocrats known as the Lords Appellant. By 1389 Richard had regained control, and for the next eight years governed in relative harmony with his former opponents. In 1397, he took his revenge on the Appellants, many of whom were executed or exiled. The next two years have been described by historians as Richard's "tyranny". In 1399, after John of Gaunt died, the King disinherited Gaunt's son Henry Bolingbroke, who had previously been exiled. Henry invaded England in June 1399 with a small force that quickly grew in numbers. Meeting little resistance, he deposed Richard and had himself crowned king. Richard is thought to have been starved to death in captivity, although questions remain regarding his final fate.

Richard's posthumous reputation has been shaped to a large extent by William Shakespeare, whose play *Richard II* portrayed Richard's misrule and his deposition as responsible for the 15th-century Wars of the Roses. Modern historians do not accept this interpretation, while not exonerating Richard from responsibility for his own deposition. While probably not insane, as many historians of the 19th and 20th centuries believed him to be, he may have had a personality disorder, particularly manifesting itself towards the end of his reign. Most authorities agree that his policies were not unrealistic or even entirely unprecedented, but that the way in which he carried them out was unacceptable to the political establishment, leading to his downfall.

## Richard II (play)

*and Death of King Richard the Second (1595), also Richard II, is a Shakespearean history play about the lifetime and reign of King Richard II of England*

The Life and Death of King Richard the Second (1595), also *Richard II*, is a Shakespearean history play about the lifetime and reign of King Richard II of England (r. 1377–1399). As a dramatised period history of the English monarchy, *Richard II* chronicles the machinations of the noblemen of the royal court who conspire, precipitate, and realise the downfall and death of the King of England.

As the first work in the Henriad tetralogy of English history plays, the political narrative of *Richard II* is thematically followed throughout the stories of *Henry IV, Part 1*, *Henry IV, Part 2*, and *Henry V*, which also are histories of the reigns of his royal successors to the Throne of England. Although the First Folio (1623) classifies *The Life and Death of Richard the Second* as an English history play, the earlier Quarto edition (1597) classifies *Richard II* as a tragedy, under the title *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second*.

## History of the English monarchy

*of royal power. The Crown of Ireland Act 1542 granted English monarchs the title King of Ireland. In 1603, the childless Elizabeth I was succeeded by*

The history of the English monarchy covers the reigns of English kings and queens from the 9th century to 1707. The English monarchy traces its origins to the petty kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England, which consolidated into the Kingdom of England by the 10th century. Anglo-Saxon England had an elective monarchy, but this was replaced by primogeniture after the Norman Conquest in 1066. The Norman and Plantagenet dynasties expanded their authority throughout the British Isles, creating the Lordship of Ireland in 1177 and conquering Wales in 1283.

The monarchy's gradual evolution into a constitutional and ceremonial monarchy is a major theme in the historical development of the British constitution. In 1215, King John agreed to limit his own powers over his subjects according to the terms of Magna Carta. To gain the consent of the political community, English kings began summoning Parliaments to approve taxation and to enact statutes. Gradually, Parliament's authority expanded at the expense of royal power.

The Crown of Ireland Act 1542 granted English monarchs the title King of Ireland. In 1603, the childless Elizabeth I was succeeded by James VI of Scotland, known as James I in England. Under the Union of the Crowns, England and the Kingdom of Scotland were ruled by a single sovereign while remaining separate nations. For the history of the British monarchy after 1603, see *History of the monarchy of the United Kingdom*.

## List of biographies of Richard III of England

*King: The Search for Richard III. John Murray Press. ISBN 978-1-84854-892-3. Horrox, Rosemary (24 September 2020). Richard III (Penguin Monarchs): A Failed*

List of published printed works in English where Richard III of England is among the main subjects.

## John, King of England

*and early Plantagenet monarchs and their relationship with rulers of Western Europe : Red borders indicate English monarchs : Bold borders indicate*

John (24 December 1166 – 19 October 1216) was King of England from 1199 until his death in 1216. He lost the Duchy of Normandy and most of his other French lands to King Philip II of France, resulting in the collapse of the Angevin Empire and contributing to the subsequent growth in power of the French Capetian dynasty during the 13th century. The baronial revolt at the end of John's reign led to the sealing of Magna Carta, a document considered a foundational milestone in English and later British constitutional history.

John was the youngest son of King Henry II of England and Duchess Eleanor of Aquitaine. He was nicknamed John Lackland (Norman: Jean sans Terre, lit. 'John without land') because, as a younger son, he was not expected to inherit significant lands. He became Henry's favourite child following the failed revolt of 1173–1174 by his brothers Henry the Young King, Richard, and Geoffrey against their father. John was appointed Lord of Ireland in 1177 and given lands in England and on the continent. During the reign of his brother Richard I, he unsuccessfully attempted a rebellion against Richard's royal administrators while the King was participating in the Third Crusade, but he was proclaimed king after Richard died in 1199. He came to an agreement with Philip II of France to recognise John's possession of the continental Angevin lands at the peace treaty of Le Goulet in 1200.

When war with France broke out again in 1202, John achieved early victories, but shortages of military resources and his treatment of Norman, Breton, and Anjou nobles resulted in the collapse of his empire in northern France in 1204. He spent much of the next decade attempting to regain these lands, raising huge revenues, reforming his armed forces and rebuilding continental alliances. His judicial reforms had a lasting effect on the English common law system, as well as providing an additional source of revenue. His dispute with Pope Innocent III over the election of Archbishop of Canterbury Stephen Langton led to the Papal Interdict of 1208, in which church services were banned until 1214, as well as John's excommunication the following year, a dispute he finally settled in 1213. John's attempt to defeat Philip in 1214 failed because of the French victory over John's allies at the Battle of Bouvines. When he returned to England, John faced a rebellion by many of his barons, who were unhappy with his fiscal policies and his treatment of many of England's most powerful nobles. Magna Carta was drafted as a peace treaty between John and the barons, and agreed in 1215. However, neither side complied with its conditions and civil war broke out shortly afterwards, with the barons aided by Prince Louis of France. It soon descended into a stalemate. John died of dysentery contracted while on campaign in eastern England in late 1216; supporters of his son Henry III went on to achieve victory over Louis and the rebel barons the following year.

Contemporary chroniclers were mostly critical of John's performance as king, and his reign has since been the subject of significant debate and periodic revision by historians from the 16th century onwards. Historian Jim Bradbury has summarised the current historical opinion of John's positive qualities, observing that John is today usually considered a "hard-working administrator, an able man, an able general". Nonetheless, modern historians agree that he also had many faults as king, including what historian Ralph Turner describes as "distasteful, even dangerous personality traits", such as pettiness, spitefulness, and cruelty. These negative qualities provided extensive material for fiction writers in the Victorian era, and John remains a recurring character within Western popular culture, primarily as a villain in Robin Hood folklore.

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