

King Edward Plantagenet I

King of England



Born: 17 Jun 1239 Westminster, ENG
 Married: 1 Nov 1254 Eleanor of Castile
 Died: 7 Jul 1307 Cumberland, ENG
 Parents: King Henry III of England & Eleanor of Provence

Edward was born at the Palace of Westminster on the night of 17/18 June 1239, to King Henry III and Eleanor of Provence.^[2] Henry was devoted to the cult of Edward the Confessor, and for this reason decided to name his firstborn son Edward – not a common name among the English aristocracy at the time.^[3] Edward was in the care of Hugh Giffard – father of the future Chancellor Godfrey Giffard – until Bartholomew Pecche took over at Giffard's death in 1246.^[4] Among his childhood companions was his cousin Henry of Almain, son of King Henry's brother Richard of Cornwall.^[5]

In 1254 there were fears that Castile might invade the English province of Gascony. As a preventive measure, it was agreed that Edward should marry Eleanor, half-sister of King Alfonso X of Castile.^[6] As part of the marriage agreement, Alfonso insisted that grants of land worth 15,000 marks a year be made to the young prince, not yet fifteen years of age.^[7] Though the endowments King Henry made were sizeable, the independence they provided for Edward was limited. He had already received Gascony as early as 1249, but Simon de Montfort, 6th Earl of Leicester had been appointed to serve as royal lieutenant there the year before, so in practice Edward derived neither authority nor revenue from this province.^[8] The grant he received in 1254 included most of Ireland, and much land in Wales and England, including the earldom of Chester.^[9] The king maintained much control of the land in question, however, and particularly in Ireland was Edward's power limited.^[10]

Eleanor and Edward were married on 1 November 1254 in the monastery of Las Huelgas in Castile.^[11] They would go on to have at least fifteen (possibly sixteen) children,^[12] and her death in 1290 affected Edward deeply. He displayed his grief by erecting the Eleanor crosses, one at each place where her funeral cortège stopped for the night.^[13] His second marriage (at the age of 60) at Canterbury on 10 September 1299, to Marguerite of France (aged 17 and known as the "Pearl of France" by her husband's English subjects), the daughter of King Philip III of France (Phillip the Bold) and Maria of Brabant, produced three children.

In the years from 1254 to 1257, Edward was under the influence of the court faction known as the Savoyards, relatives of his mother, Eleanor of Provence.^[14] The most notable of this group was Peter of Savoy, the queen's uncle.^[15] From 1257 onwards, he increasingly fell in with the Poitevin, or Lusignan faction – the king's half-brothers – led by men such as William de Valence.^[16] Both these groups were considered privileged foreigners, and were deeply resented by the established English aristocracy.^[17]

Early ambitions

Edward had shown independence in political matters as early as 1255 when he took sides in a local conflict in Gascony, contrary to his father's policy of mediation.^[18] In May 1258 a group of magnates drew up a document for reform of the king's government – the so-called Provisions of Oxford – largely directed against the Lusignans. Edward stood by his political allies, and strongly opposed the Provisions. The reform movement had success, however, and gradually Edward's attitude started to change. In March 1259 he entered into a formal alliance with one of the main reformers Richard de Clare, earl of Gloucester. Then, on 15 October, 1259 he announced that he supported the barons' goals, and their leader, Simon de Montfort.^[19]

The motive behind Edward's change of heart could have been purely pragmatic; Montfort was in a good position to support his cause in Gascony.^[20] When the king left for France in November, Edward's behaviour turned into pure insubordination, as he made several appointments to advance the cause of the reformers. King Henry started believing that his son was plotting to depose him.^[21] When the king returned he initially refused to see his son, but through the mediation of the Earl of Cornwall and the archbishop of Canterbury the two were eventually reconciled.^[22] Edward was sent abroad, and in November 1260 he once more united with the Lusignans, who had been exiled to France.^[23]

Back in England, early in 1262, Edward fell out with some of his former allies over financial matters. A year later he led a campaign in Wales against Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, with limited results.^[24] Around the same time Simon de Montfort, who had been out of the country since 1261, returned to England and reignited the baronial reform movement.^[25] The king gave in to the barons' demands, but Edward – who was now firmly on the side of his father – held out. He reunited with some of the men he had alienated the year before – among them Henry of Almain and John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey – and retook Windsor Castle from the rebels.^[26] Through the arbitration of the King Louis IX of France, an agreement was made between the two parties. This so-called Mise of Amiens was largely favourable to the royalist side, and laid the seeds for further conflict.^[27]

Civil war

The years 1264–1267 saw the conflict known as the Barons' War, where baronial forces led by Simon de Montfort fought against those who remained loyal to the king.^[28] The first scene of battle was the city of Gloucester, which Edward managed to retake from the enemy. When Robert de Ferrers, earl of Derby, came to the assistance of the rebels, Edward negotiated a truce with the earl, the terms of which he later broke. Edward then proceeded to capture Northampton from Montfort's son Simon, before embarking on a retaliatory campaign against Derby's lands.^[29] The baronial and royalist forces finally met at the Battle of Lewes, on 14 May 1264. Edward's forces performed well, but the king's army nevertheless lost the battle. Edward, along with his cousin Henry of Almain, was given up as prisoners to Montfort.^[30]

Edward remained in captivity until March, and even after his release he was kept under strict surveillance.^[31] Then, on 28 May, he managed to escape his custodians, and joined up with the earl of Gloucester, who had recently defected to the king's side.^[32] Montfort's support was now dwindling, and Edward retook Worcester and Gloucester with relative little effort.^[33] In the meanwhile, Montfort had made an alliance with Llywelyn, and started moving east to join forces with his son Simon. Edward managed to make a surprise attack at Kenilworth Castle, where the younger Montfort was quartered, before moving on to cut off the earl of Leicester.^[34] The two forces then met at the second great encounter of the Barons' War – the Battle of Evesham, on 4 August 1265. Montfort stood little chance against the superior royal forces, and after his defeat he was killed and mutilated in the field.^[35]

The war was not over with Montfort's death, and Edward participated in the continued campaigning. At Christmas he came to terms with the younger Simon de Montfort and his associates in the Isle of Axholme in Lincolnshire, and in March he led a successful assault on the Cinque Ports.^[36] A contingent of rebels held out in the virtually impregnable Kenilworth Castle, and did not surrender until the drafting of the conciliatory Dictum of Kenilworth.^[37] In April it seemed as if Gloucester would take up the cause of the reform movement, and civil war would return, but after a renegotiation of the terms of the Dictum of

Kenilworth the parties came to an agreement.^[38] Edward, however, was little involved in the settlement negotiations following the wars; at this point his main focus was on planning his upcoming crusade.^[39]

Crusade and accession

Edward took the cross in an elaborate ceremony on 24 June 1268, along with his brother Edmund and cousin Henry of Almain. Among others who committed themselves to the cause were former adversaries like the earl of Gloucester, though the earl did not end up going.^[41] With the country pacified, the greatest impediment to the project was providing sufficient finances.^[42] King Louis IX of France, who was the leader of the crusade, provided a loan of about £17,500.^[43] This, however, was not enough; the rest had to be raised through a lay tax, something which had not happened since 1237.^[43] In May 1270, parliament granted a tax of a twentieth,^[44] in exchange for which the king agreed to reconfirm Magna Carta, and to impose restrictions on Jewish money lending.^[45] On 20 August Edward sailed from Dover for France.^[46] It is impossible to determine the size of the force with any certainty, but Edward probably brought with him around 225 knights and all together less than 1000 men.^[42]

The original goal of the crusade was to relieve the beleaguered Christian stronghold of Acre, but Louis had been diverted to Tunis. The French king and his brother Charles of Anjou, who had made himself king of Sicily, decided to attack the emirate in order to establish a stronghold in North Africa.^[47] The plans failed when the French forces were struck by an epidemic which, on 25 August, took the life of King Louis himself.^[48] By the time Edward arrived at Tunis, Charles had already signed a treaty with the emir, and there was little else to do than to return to Sicily. The crusade was postponed until next spring, but a devastating storm off the coast of Sicily dissuaded Charles of Anjou and Louis's successor Philip III from any further campaigning.^[49] Edward decided to continue alone, and on 9 May 1271 he finally landed at Acre.^[50]

Operations during the Crusade of Edward I.

The situation in the Holy Land at the time of Edward's arrival was a precarious one. Jerusalem had fallen in 1187, and Acre was now the centre of the Christian state.^[51] The Muslim states were on the offensive under the Mamluk leadership of Baibars, and were now threatening Acre itself. Though Edward's men were an important addition to the garrison, they stood little chance against Baibars' superior forces, and an initial raid at nearby St Georges-de-Lebeyne in June was largely futile.^[52] An embassy to the Mongols helped bring about an attack on Aleppo in the north, allowing the crusading armies a distraction.^[53] In November, Edward led a raid on Qaqun, which could have served as a bridgehead to Jerusalem, but both the Mongol invasion and the attack on Qaqun failed. Things now seemed increasingly desperate, and in May 1272 Hugh III of Cyprus, who was the nominal king of Jerusalem, signed a ten-year truce with Baibars.^[54] Edward was initially defiant, but an attack by a Muslim assassin in June forced him to abandon any further campaigning. Even though he managed to kill the assassin, he was struck in the arm by a poisoned dagger, and became strongly reduced physically over the next months.^[55]

It was not until 24 September that Edward left Acre. Arriving in Sicily, he was met with the news that Henry III had died on 16 November.^[56] Edward was deeply saddened by these news, but rather than hurrying home at once, he made a leisurely journey northwards. This was partly due to his health still being poor, but also due to a lack of urgency.^[57] The political situation in England was stable after the mid-century upheavals, and Edward was proclaimed king at his father's death, rather than at his own coronation, as had up until then been customary.^[58] The new king embarked on an overland journey through Italy and France, where among other things he visited the pope in Rome and suppressed a rebellion in Gascony.^[59] Only on 2 August 1274 did he return to England, and was crowned on 19 August.^[60]

Administration and the law

Upon returning home, Edward immediately embarked on the administrative business of the nation, and his major concern was restoring order and re-establishing royal authority after the disastrous reign of his father.^[61] In order to accomplish this he immediately ordered an extensive change of administrative personnel. The most important of these was the appointment of Robert Burnell as chancellor; a man who

would remain in the post until 1292, as one of the king's closest associates.^[62] Edward then proceeded to replace most local officials, such as the escheators and sheriffs.^[63] This last measure was done in preparation for an extensive inquest covering all of England, that would hear complaints about abuse of power by royal officers. The inquest produced the so-called Hundred Rolls, from the administrative subdivision of the hundred.^[64]

The second purpose of the inquest was to establish what land and rights the crown had lost during the reign of Henry III.^[65] The Hundred Rolls formed the basis for the later legal inquiries called the *Quo warranto* proceedings. The purpose of these inquiries was to establish by what warrant (Latin: *Quo warranto*) various liberties were held.^[66] If the defendant could not produce a royal licence to prove the grant of the liberty, then it was the crown's opinion – based on the writings of Bracton – that the liberty should revert to the king. This caused great consternation among the aristocracy, who insisted that long use in itself constituted license.^[67] A compromise was eventually reached in 1290, whereby a liberty was considered legitimate as long as it could be shown to have been exercised since the coronation of King Richard I, in 1189.^[68] Royal gains from the *Quo warranto* proceedings were insignificant; few liberties were returned to the king.^[69] Edward had nevertheless won a significant victory, in clearly establishing the principle that all liberties essentially emanated from the king.^[70]

The 1290 Statute of *Quo warranto* was only one part of a wider legislative effort, which was one of the most important contributions of Edward I's reign.^[5] This era of legislative action had started already at the time of the baronial reform movement; the Statute of Marlborough (1267) contained elements both of the Provisions of Oxford and the Dictum of Kenilworth.^[71] The compilation of the Hundred Rolls was followed shortly after by the issue of Westminster I (1275), which asserted the royal prerogative and outlined restrictions on liberties.^[72] In Mortmain (1279), the issue was grants of land to the church.^[73] The first clause of Westminster II (1285), known as *De donis conditionalibus*, dealt with family settlement of land, and entails.^[74] Merchants (1285) established firm rules for the recovery of debts,^[75] while Winchester (1285) dealt with peacekeeping on a local level.^[76] *Quia emptores* (1290) – issued along with *Quo warranto* – set out to remedy land ownership disputes resulting from alienation of land by subinfeudation.^[77] The age of the great statutes largely ended with the death of Robert Burnell in 1292.^[78]

Welsh wars

One of Edward's early moves was the conquest of Wales. In the 1250s Henry III and Edward had attempted to conquer and hold down Wales. However although much of Wales was subdued by Henry, the Welsh led by Llywelyn ap Gruffydd resisted the English invasion. Despite sending reinforcement armies to try and hold down Wales, the English were heavily defeated and ultimately lost the war. These Welsh victories led to the 1267 Treaty of Montgomery which allowed Llywelyn ap Gruffydd to extend Welsh territories southwards into what had been the lands of the English Marcher Lords and obtained English royal recognition of his title of Prince of Wales, although he still owed homage to the English monarch as overlord. Llywelyn repeatedly refused to pay homage to Edward in 1274–76 due to the fact that Edward had broken the treaty by welcoming Llywelyn's brother Dafydd under his protection (at the time Dafydd was an enemy of Llywelyn). Edward then raised a huge army, almost half of which was made up of Welshmen who resented Llywelyn's rule, and launched his first campaign against the Welsh prince in 1276–1277. Having witnessed the defeats that he and his father had suffered against the Welsh, Edward had learned many lessons from these experiences and so he employed tactics that would counter the tactics of the Welsh. After this campaign, Llywelyn was forced to pay homage to Edward and was stripped of all but a rump of territory in Gwynedd. But Edward allowed Llywelyn to retain the title of Prince of Wales, and eventually allowed him to marry Eleanor de Montfort, daughter of the late Earl Simon who he had recently captured using pirates that were under his pay.

Llywelyn's younger brother, Dafydd (who had previously been an ally of the English) started another rebellion in 1282, and was soon joined by his brother and many other Welshmen in a war of national liberation. Edward was caught off guard by this revolt but responded quickly and decisively, vowing to remove the Welsh monarchy forever. The English suffered a row of defeats - the army of the Earl of Gloucester was ambushed and destroyed in the south, and in the north at the Menai Straits where a large English force that was attempting to cross from Anglesey to mainland Wales was destroyed by the

army of the princes of Gwynedd. The Welsh resistance suddenly halted however when Llywelyn was killed in an obscure battle with English forces (led by some of the Welsh marcher lords) in December 1282. Snowdonia was occupied the following spring and at length Dafydd ap Gruffudd was captured and taken to Shrewsbury, where he was tried and executed for treason. To consolidate his conquest, Edward began construction of a string of massive stone castles encircling the principality, of which the most celebrated are Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech. The Welsh wars however damaged the English treasury due to the money spent on new troops and new castles to be built, and it was this that brought the downfall of Edward in his campaign in Scotland.

The Principality of Wales was incorporated into England under the Statute of Rhuddlan in 1284 and, in 1301, Edward invested his eldest son, Edward of Caernarfon, as Prince of Wales. Since that time, with the exception of Edward III, the eldest sons of all English monarchs have borne this title.

Scottish wars

In 1289, after his return from a lengthy stay in his Duchy of Gascony, Edward turned his attentions to Scotland. He had planned to marry his son and heir Edward, to the heiress Margaret, the Maid of Norway, but when Margaret died with no clear successor, the Scottish Guardians invited Edward's arbitration, to prevent the country from descending into civil war. Before the process got underway, and to the surprise and consternation of many of Scots, Edward insisted that he must be recognised as overlord of Scotland. Eventually, after weeks of English machination and intimidation, this precondition was accepted, with the proviso that Edward's overlordship would only be temporary.

His overlordship acknowledged, Edward proceeded to hear the great case (or 'The Great Cause', a term first recorded in the 18th century) to decide who had the best right to be the new Scottish king. Proceedings took place at Berwick upon Tweed. After lengthy debates and adjournments, Edward ruled in favour of John Balliol in November 1292. Balliol was enthroned at Scone on 30 November, 1292.

In the weeks after this decision, however, Edward revealed that he had no intention of dropping his claim to be Scotland's superior lord. Balliol was forced to seal documents freeing Edward from his earlier promises. Soon the new Scottish king found himself being overruled from Westminster, and even summoned there on the appeal of his own Scottish subjects.

When, in 1294, Edward also demanded Scottish military service against France, it was the final straw. In 1295 the Scots concluded a treaty with France and readied themselves for war with England.

The war began in March 1296 when the Scots crossed the border and tried, unsuccessfully, to take Carlisle. Days later Edward's massive army struck into Scotland and demanded the surrender of Berwick. When this was refused the English attacked, killing most of the citizens-although the extent of the massacre is a source of contention; with postulated civilian death figures ranging from 7,000 to 60,000, dependent on the source.

After Berwick, and the defeat of the Scots by an English army at the Battle of Dunbar (1296), Edward proceeded north, taking Edinburgh and travelling as far north as Elgin - farther, as one contemporary noted, than any earlier English king. On his return south he confiscated the Stone of Destiny and carted it from Perth to Westminster Abbey. Balliol, deprived of his crown, the royal regalia ripped from his tabard (hence his nickname, Toom Tabard) was imprisoned in the Tower of London for three years (later he was transferred to papal custody, and at length allowed to return to his ancestral estates in France). All freeholders in Scotland were required to swear an oath of homage to Edward, and he ruled Scotland like a province through English viceroys.

Opposition sprang up (see Wars of Scottish Independence), and Edward executed the focus of discontent, William Wallace, on 23 August, 1305, having earlier defeated him at the Battle of Falkirk (1298). Although he won the battle, Edward lost many men in the battle and was forced to retreat back to England.

The capitulation of the Scottish political community in 1304 must have seemed to Edward to settle the Scottish question in his favour. Although he began to make arrangements for the governance of the newly-defeated realm, all of his efforts were invalidated by Robert Bruce's murder of John 'the Red' Comyn of Badenoch and his subsequent seizure of the Scottish crown. The king appears to have been greatly angered by the latest Scottish rebellion and ordered rebels to be shown no quarter. Many of Bruce's closest supporters were hanged when they were captured by Edward's men. Although Bruce was initially forced from Scotland, by 1307 he had returned to Scotland. Edward, apparently frustrated by his men's inability to crush Bruce, made arrangements to lead a campaign personally against the rebel-king. Edward was too old and too weak to undertake such a task and died before he could reach Scotland.

Later reign and death

Edward's later life was fraught with difficulty, as he lost his beloved first wife Eleanor and his heir failed to develop the expected kingly character.

Edward's plan to conquer Scotland ultimately failed. In 1307 he died at Burgh-by-Sands, Cumberland on the Scottish border, while on his way to wage another campaign against the Scots under the leadership of Robert the Bruce. According to a later chronicler tradition, Edward asked to have his bones carried on future military campaigns in Scotland. More credible and contemporary writers reported that the king's last request was to have his heart taken to the Holy Land. All that is certain is that Edward was buried in Westminster Abbey in a plain black marble tomb, which in later years was painted with the words *Edwardus Primus Scottorum malleus hic est, pactum serva, (Here is Edward I, Hammer of the Scots. Keep Troth)*.^[79]

On 2 January, 1774, the Society of Antiquaries opened the coffin and discovered that his body had been perfectly preserved for 467 years. His body was measured to be 6 feet 2 inches (188 cm) Hence the nickname "Longshanks" meaning long legs.^[80]

Government and law under Edward I

A portrait of Edward I hangs in the United States House of Representatives chamber. It commemorates Edward's contribution to the Anglo-American legal system.

See also List of Parliaments of Edward I

Unlike his father, Henry III, Edward I took great interest in the workings of his government and undertook a number of reforms to regain royal control in government and administration. It was during Edward's reign that parliament began to meet regularly. And though still extremely limited to matters of taxation, it enabled Edward I to obtain a number of taxation grants which had been impossible for Henry III.

Edward's personal treasure, valued at over a year's worth of the kingdom's tax revenue, was stolen by Richard of Pudlicott in 1306, leading to one of the largest criminal trials of the period.

Persecution of the Jews

As Edward exercised greater control over the barons, his popularity waned. To combat his falling popularity and to drum up support for his campaigns against Wales and Scotland, Edward united the country by attacking the practice of usury which had impoverished many of his subjects. In 1275, Edward issued the Statute of the Jewry, which imposed various restrictions upon the Jews of England; most notably, outlawing usury and introducing to England the practice of requiring Jews to wear a yellow badge on their outer garments. In 1279, in the context of a crack-down on coin-clippers, he arrested all the heads of Jewish households in England, and had around 300 of them executed in the Tower of London. Others were executed in their homes. Edward became a national hero and won the support he needed.

Expulsion of the Jews

By the Edict of Expulsion of 1290, Edward formally expelled all Jews from England. The motive for this expulsion was first and foremost financial - in almost every case, all their money and property was confiscated. They did not return until the 17th century, when Oliver Cromwell invited them to come back.

Edward, after his return from a three year stay on the Continent, was around £100,000 in debt. Such a large sum - around four times his normal annual income - could only come from a grant of parliamentary taxation. It seems that parliament was persuaded to vote for this tax, as had been the case on several earlier occasions in Edward's reign.

King Edward I (d. 1307)



He succeeded his father Henry III in 1272 and became the first king to be crowned in the new Abbey. He built the tomb of Henry and also that of his first wife Queen Eleanor. He also deposited the famous Stone of Scone, on which the Scottish kings had been crowned, in the Abbey although it was returned to Scotland at the end of the 20th century. He died in July 1307 at Burgh-on-the-Sands, Cumberland, on his final campaign against the Scots and his body was brought back to England, where it lay at Waltham Abbey, Essex, near the grave of King Harold II, for about fifteen weeks. In October the late King's body was brought back to London where it lay for three successive nights in the churches of Holy Trinity, St Paul's and Friars Minor before being brought to the Abbey for burial.

The tomb chest is plain and consists of grey marble slabs, joined without mortar, on a stone base; there was never an effigy. There was once a wooden canopy over it and an iron grille between it and the ambulatory, but these are now lost. On the ambulatory side is painted '*Edward Primus Scotorum Malleus*' and '*Pactum Serva*'. ('Edward I Hammer of the Scots' and 'Keep Troth') although these were probably added in the mid XVI century.

In 1774 the tomb was opened to reveal a Purbeck marble coffin in which lay the King wrapped in a waxed linen cloth, his face being covered by crimson face cloth. Below this the King wore his royal robes, holding a rod and scepter and wearing a crown on this head. Below these robes there was a closely fitting wax cloth. He was found to be 6' 2" tall: hence his nickname *Longshanks*.

[http://www.churchmonumentsociety.org/London_Westminster.html#King_Edward_I_\(d._1304\)](http://www.churchmonumentsociety.org/London_Westminster.html#King_Edward_I_(d._1304))

EDWARD I

1272–1307



THE COAT OF ARMS
OF EDWARD I

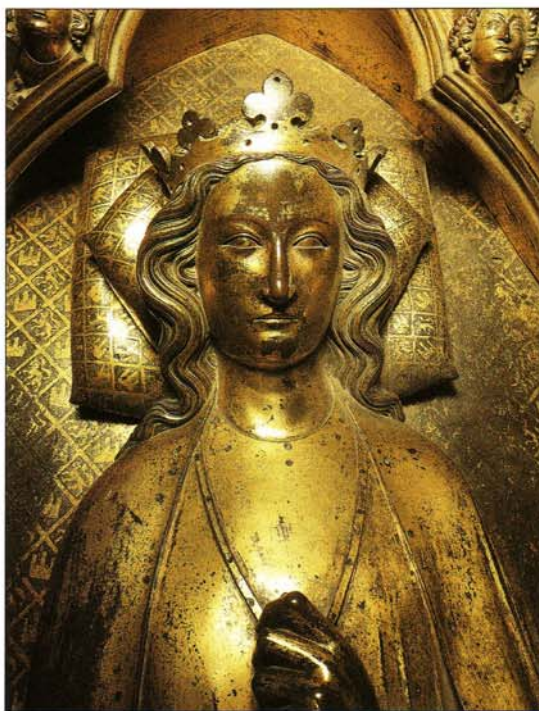
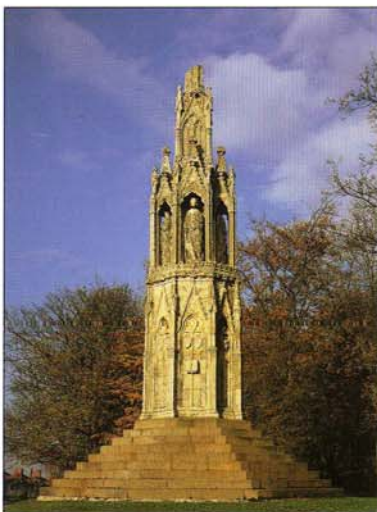
A RENOWNED WARRIOR, Edward I is best remembered for his attempt to unite the kingdoms of England and Scotland under his personal rule, earning the nickname “Hammer of the Scots”. He successfully conquered Wales, incorporating the Principality into England in 1284, and made his own son Prince of Wales in 1301. As a legal reformer, he reorganized the law courts, clarified much of the law and dismissed corrupt judges. In summoning a partly elected Parliament in 1295 – the so-called Model Parliament – Edward attempted to ensure that “what touches all should be approved by all”, an early attempt at representative democracy.

EDWARD I

- ◆ **Born** Westminster, 17/18 June 1239, first son of Henry III and Eleanor of Provence.
- ◆ **Married** Eleanor of Castile, Burgos, Spain, Oct 1254, 16 children; Margaret of France, Canterbury, 8/10 Sept 1299, 3 children.
- ◆ **Acceded** 20 Nov 1272.
- ◆ **Crowned** Westminster Abbey, 19 Aug 1274.
- ◆ **Died** Burgh-on-Sands, Cumbria, 7 July 1307, aged 68.

REFORMING THE SYSTEM

Between 1275 and 1290, Edward instituted a series of reforms aimed at remedying long-standing grievances. He checked who owned what lands by means of writs of *Quo Warranto* in 1278; dealt with the prevalence of highway robbery and violence in the Statute of Winchester of 1285 by appointing the first Justices of the Peace; and gave local residents the responsibility of policing their own communities. And in 1295 he summoned a Parliament that, because of its composition of lords, clergy, knights and elected burgesses, came to be known as the Model Parliament.



IN MEMORIAM
Eleanor's body was brought from Nottinghamshire to London for burial in Westminster Abbey (her effigy is shown above). At each of the 12 places the cortège stopped, Edward erected a memorial (left).

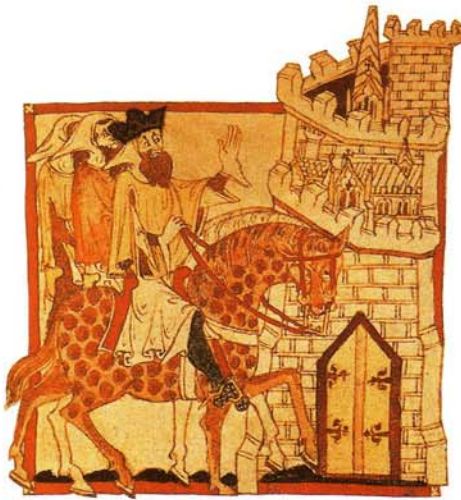
ELEANOR OF CASTILE

Edward's first wife Eleanor was a dark-haired, beautiful woman. She accompanied Edward on Crusade in 1270-73, giving birth to at least two of their 16 children while abroad. When she died in 1290, aged 54, Edward was heartbroken.



ON CRUSADE

In 1267 the Eighth Crusade was launched by Louis IX of France to expel the infidel Muslims from Palestine. Edward, who was Louis's nephew, agreed to join the Crusade and set out from Dover in 1270. Louis died of plague soon after and his successor was not interested in continuing the Crusade. Edward decided to carry on and eventually arrived at Acre in 1271. There, a year was wasted by squabbles between the various Christian armies and Edward left Palestine in 1272, returning to England in 1274.



THE KING RETURNS

Edward was still heir to the throne when he went on Crusade in 1270. He returned to England in 1274 a king in his own right, for Henry III had died in 1272. The contemporary manuscript illustration above shows Edward entering London as its new king.

“LONGSHANKS”

At two metres (six feet) tall, Edward was called “Longshanks” because he stood head and shoulders above his fellow Englishmen. He had black hair, which in later life turned snowy white, and was regarded as handsome, despite a drooping eyelid. Edward was once considered the greatest of our medieval kings, although his reputation has recently undergone a reappraisal and he has emerged a little less unblemished. He could be a bully, was ambitious and devious, often capricious – he sacked a number of top officials for still undiscovered reasons – and could be ruthlessly cruel. Like so many of the Plantagenets, he had a violent temper: he once clouted a page at a royal wedding so hard that he agreed to pay him damages. Yet allowing for contemporary exaggeration, his reputation for chivalry and fearlessness remains uncashed, and he was a brave fighter and an able administrator.

EDWARD

In 1274 Edward was crowned in Westminster Abbey, as shown in this contemporary illustration.

EVENTS OF THE REIGN 1272 – 1307

- ◆ 1272 On his way home from Crusade, Edward hears that, on the death of his father Henry III, he has become King.
- ◆ 1274 Edward arrives back in England and is crowned in Westminster Abbey.
- ◆ 1277 Edward invades North Wales to compel Prince Llywelyn to pay homage to him.
- ◆ 1278 Writs of *Quo Warranto* issued to end the quarrels over land ownership.
- ◆ 1279 Statute of Mortmain stops landowners giving land to the Church to avoid feudal dues.
- ◆ 1282 Edward invades North Wales again and defeats Llywelyn, who is killed later in the year.
- ◆ 1284 Welsh independence ended by Statute of Rhuddlan.
- ◆ 1285 Statute of Winchester controls highway robbery and violence, and institutes the first Justices of the Peace.
- ◆ 1290 Edward expels all Jews from England.
- ◆ 1290 Margaret, Maid of Norway, heir to the Scottish throne, dies on way home to claim her inheritance.
- ◆ 1290 Death of Eleanor of Castile at the age of 54.
- ◆ 1292 Edward chooses John Balliol to be King of Scotland.
- ◆ 1295 Model Parliament is summoned with lords, clergy and representatives from each shire, city and borough.
- ◆ 1295 Balliol summoned to join Edward on a campaign in France; he refuses and forms the Auld Alliance with France.
- ◆ 1296 Edward invades Scotland and defeats and deposes Balliol. He then takes over the throne of Scotland and removes the Stone of Scone to Westminster.
- ◆ 1297 Scots rise against English rule and under William Wallace defeat Edward at the Battle of Stirling Bridge.
- ◆ 1298 Edward invades Scotland again and defeats William Wallace at the Battle of Falkirk.
- ◆ 1299 Edward marries Margaret of France.
- ◆ 1301 Edward creates his son Prince of Wales.
- ◆ 1305 Wallace is betrayed, tried and executed in London.
- ◆ 1306 Robert Bruce takes over leadership of Scottish resistance to English rule and is crowned King of Scotland at Scone.
- ◆ 1307 Edward invades Scotland again, but dies on his way north.

