

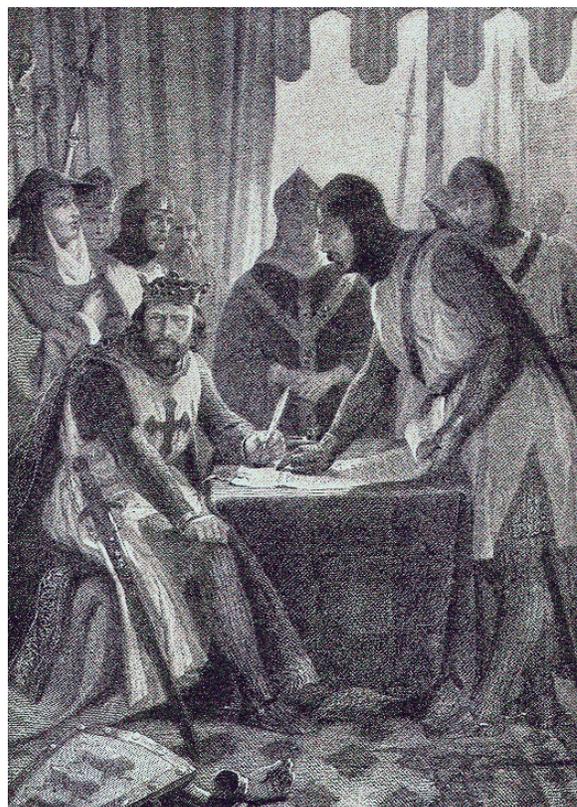
EARLY PLANTAGENETS

1154 TO 1340

HENRY II (PLANTAGENET) TO EDWARD III

ERA SUMMARY – EARLY PLANTAGENETS

The rule of the Plantagenet dynasty was long and eventful. [Henry Plantagenet](#) (II) came to the throne in 1154, and the last Plantagenet, [Richard III](#), was killed at the *Battle of Bosworth* in 1485, over three hundred years later. During this time, great changes took place in England. In the early years of the Plantagenet dynasty, the barons revolted against [king John](#) and forced him to sign the Magna Carta, which guaranteed certain rights to the towns and nobles. Later, they forced the king to call a Parliament, or group of nobles to advise him in ruling the kingdom. The Plantagenets were involved in two long and ruinous wars. The first was the [Hundred Years War](#) with France, which went well for England at first but in the end proved disastrous. The second was the [War of the Roses](#), a frightful civil war between rival claimants to the throne that nearly wiped out the entire Plantagenet line.



KING JOHN SIGNING THE MAGNA CARTA

Henry Plantagenet and Sons

Henry Plantagenet, the founder of the Plantagenet line, was the grandson of [Henry I](#), and the great-grandson of [William Rufus](#). He inherited the throne through his mother, but had to fight to establish his claim. He married another very powerful monarch, [Eleanor of Aquitaine](#), heir to the duchy of Aquitaine, so between the two they eventually controlled much of France as well as all of England. Henry spent much of his reign in various wars, consolidating his power. He supposedly brought Ireland under his dominion and appointed many of his faithful generals as Barons, but in practice English influence in the region was very limited. Henry Plantagenet is also famous for his conflict with Thomas Becket over the rights of the church.

Henry had four sons, two of whom became king. The elder son, [Richard I](#), is best known as a crusader. He spent almost his entire reign away from England, leaving the country in the hands of his devious brother [John Lackland](#). John was one of the worst kings that England ever had and managed to lose most of the land in France that he had inherited from his parents. Finally, [Archbishop Langton](#), and the barons forced him to sign the Magna Carta, limiting his power.

Edwards I, II, and III

John's son [Henry III](#) supposedly ruled for 56 years, but for much of that time his brother-in-law, [Simon de Montfort](#), governed in his place and orchestrated the Parliament. When Henry III's son [Edward I](#) came to the throne the people rejoiced because they finally had a king who was half Saxon and spoke English instead of French, which had been the language of the ruling class since the Norman Conquest. He proved to be a competent king, and brought Wales, Ireland, and Scotland under his sway. His hold on Ireland was never strong though, and shortly after his death [Scotland decisively won its independence](#) from England at the *Battle of Bannockburn*. The Edward I's son was a no-account king with very unpopular favorites. He was deposed in favor of his young son [Edward III](#), who ruled for fifty years and got England involved in the [Hundred Years War](#) with France. There were several important battles in the hundred years war, the first two being *Crecy* and *Poitiers*. England won both battles against great odds, but never succeeded in establishing Edward III's claim to the French throne.

CHARACTERS – EARLY PLANTAGENETS

Character/Date	Short Biography
HENRY II AND SONS	
<u>Henry II</u> 1133–1189	Reclaimed kingdoms in England and Normandy after chaotic reign of Stephen. Founded Plantagenet dynasty.
<u>Eleanor of Aquitaine</u> 1122–1204	Wife of Henry II, queen of Aquitaine. Led dramatic, adventurous life.
<u>Saint Thomas a Becket</u> 1118–1170	Appointed Archbishop by Henry II, but strove for an independent church. Martyred.
<u>Richard I</u> 1157–1199	Son of Henry II. Spent almost his entire reign crusading and fighting in France.
<u>Robin Hood</u> ~ 1200	Leader of a legendary band of benevolent bandits who stole from rich and gave to the poor.
<u>John I</u> 1167–1216	Wicked king, murdered his nephew and usurped throne. Forced to sign the Magna Carta.
<u>Archbishop Langton</u> 1150–1228	Archbishop who rallied opposition to king John and forced him to sign Magna Carta.
<u>Saint Richard de Wyche</u> 1197–1253	Appointed by the Pope against the wishes of Henry III. Faithful servant of the poor.
<u>Henry III</u> 1207–1272	Blundering king whose government lay largely in the hands of Simon de Montfort throughout his reign.
<u>Simon de Montfort</u> 1208–1265	French nobleman who led resistance to Henry III and laid foundations of English Parliament.
EDWARD I, II, III AND RICHARD II	
<u>Edward I</u> 1239–1307	Competent and decisive king of England. Reformed government, pacified Wales and Scotland. Ruled 35 years.
<u>Edward II</u> 1284–1327	Weak and profligate son of Edward I. Lost all his father's holdings in Scotland.
<u>William Wallace</u> 1272–1305	Commoner who led resistance to Edward I's conquest of Scotland.
<u>Robert the Bruce</u> 1274–1329	Scottish nobleman who claimed the crown and led resistance to England at Bannockburn.
<u>James Douglas</u> 1286–1330	Associate of Robert the Bruce. Fought in wars of Scottish Independence.
<u>Philippa of Hainault</u> 1313–1369	Wife of Edward III and mother of 13. Intervened at siege of Calais in favor of citizens.

TIMELINE – EARLY PLANTAGENETS

AD Year	Event
1151	<u>Henry Plantagenet</u> marries <u>Eleanor of Aquitaine</u> , heir in France.
1154	<u>Henry Plantagenet</u> assumes the throne on the death of Stephen.
1170	<u>Saint Thomas a Becket</u> is murdered after he defies Henry II.
1172	<u>Henry II Conquers Ireland</u> .
1190	<u>Richard Coeur de Leon</u> goes on <u>Third Crusade</u> .
1215	<u>John Lackland</u> signs Magna Carta.
1265	Meeting of first Parliament arranged by <u>Simon de Montfort</u> .
1284	<u>Edward I</u> conquers Wales.
1291	Edward I <u>Conquers Scotland</u> .
1314	Scots, under <u>Robert the Bruce</u> <u>Win their Independence</u> at the <i>Battle of Bannockburn</i> .
1348- 1349	Black Plague devastates all of Europe.

RECOMMENDED READING – EARLY PLANTAGENETS.

CORE READING ASSIGNMENTS

- Guerber - [The Story of the English](#) [Story of Fair Rosamond](#) to [The Murderers punished](#) (19)
Marshall - [Our Island Story](#) [Henry II—Gilbert and Rohesia](#) to [The Battle of Bannockburn](#) (15)

SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Harding - [The Story of England](#) [Henry II, First Plantagenet King](#) to [The War of the Roses](#) (10)
Church - [Stories from English History](#) [Thomas Becket, The Chancellor](#) to [The Great Battle of Poitiers](#) (12)
Morris - [Historical Tales: English](#) [Captivity of Richard I](#) to [Bruce at Bannockburn](#) (4)
Abbott - [Richard I](#) *entire book*
Tappan - [The Chaucer Story Book](#) *entire book*
Marshall - [English Literature for Boys and Girls](#) [About some Song Stories](#) to [The Story of Everyman](#) (17)

EASY READING SELECTIONS

- Cambridge Press - [Cambridge Historical Reade--Primary](#) [Richard the Lion-Heart](#) to [Little Princes in the Tower](#) (10)
Haaren - [Famous Men of the Middle Ages](#) [Henry the Second and His Sons](#) to [Warwick the Kingmaker](#) (5)
Skae - [Stories from English History](#) [Boy Who Would be a King](#) to [The Black Prince](#) (2)
Lindsay - [Ivanhoe Told to the Children](#) *entire book*
Marshall - [Stories of Robin Hood Told to the Children](#) *entire book*