

Lionheart And Lackland King Richard King John And The Wars Of Conquest

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A breathtaking and sweeping epic of a family at its breaking point, *Devil's Brood* shows how Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine—two monumental figures once bound by all-consuming love—became the bitterest of adversaries... A.D. 1172. Henry II's three eldest sons conspire against him and align themselves with his greatest enemy, King Louis of France, but it's Eleanor of Aquitaine's involvement in the plot to overthrow her husband that proves to be the harshest betrayal. As a royal family collapses and a marriage ends in all but name, the clash between these two strong-willed and passionate souls will have far-reaching and devastating consequences throughout Christendom.

Famed as the ultimate penalty for traitors, heretics and royalty alike, being sent to the Tower is known to have been experienced by no less than 8,000 unfortunate souls. Many of those who were imprisoned in the Tower never returned to civilisation and those who did, often did so without their head! It is hardly surprising that the Tower has earned itself a reputation among the most infamous buildings on the planet. There have, of course, been other towers. Practically every castle ever built has consisted of at least one; indeed, even by the late 14th century, the Tower proudly boasted no less than 21. Yet

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even as early as the 1100s, the effect that the first Tower had on the psyche of the local population was considerable. The sight of the dark four-pointed citadel – at the time the largest building in London – as it appeared against the backdrop of the expanding city gave rise to many legends, ranging from the exact circumstances of its creation to what went on within its strong walls. In ten centuries what once consisted of a solitary keep has developed into a complex castle around which the history of England has continuously evolved. So revered has it become that legend has it that should the Tower fall, so would the kingdom. Beginning with the early tales surrounding its creation, this book investigates the private life of an English icon. Concentrating on the Tower's developing role throughout the centuries, not in terms of its physical expansion into a site of unique architectural majesty or many purposes but through the eyes of those who experienced its darker side, it pieces together the, often seldom-told, human story and how the fates of many of those who stayed within its walls contributed to its lasting effect on England's – and later the UK's – destiny. From ruthless traitors to unjustly killed Jesuits, vanished treasures to disappeared princes and jaded wives to star-crossed lovers, this book provides a raw and at times unsettling insight into its unsolved mysteries and the lot of its unfortunate victims, thus explaining how this once typical castle came to be the place we will always remember as THE TOWER.

A popular history of the careers of Richard and John, and their wars with France which takes a traditional line,

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contrasting Richard's military prowess with John's incompetence.

A Simon & Schuster eBook. Simon & Schuster has a great book for every reader.

The first biography in many years of Henry IIIThe son and successor of Bad King John, Henry III reigned for 56 years from 1216, the first child king in England for 200 years. England went on to prosper during his reign and his greatest monument is Westminster Abbey, which he made the seat of his government—indeed, Henry III was the first English King to call a parliament. Though often overlooked by historians, Henry III was a unique figure coming out of a chivalric yet Gothic era: a compulsive builder of daunting castles and epic sepulchres; a powerful, unyielding monarch who faced down the De Montfort rebellion and waged war with Wales and France; and, much more than his father, Henry was the king who really hammered out the terms of the Magna Carta with the barons. John Paul Davis brings all his forensic skills and insights to the grand story of the Gothic King in this, the only biography in print of a most remarkable monarch.

"Dan Jones has an enviable gift for telling a dramatic story while at the same time inviting us to consider serious topics like liberty and the seeds of representative government." —Antonia Fraser From the New York Times bestselling author of *The Plantagenets*, a lively, action-packed history of how the Magna Carta came to be—by the author of *Powers and Thrones*. The Magna Carta is revered around the world as the founding document of Western liberty. Its principles—even its language—can be

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found in our Bill of Rights and in the Constitution. But what was this strange document and how did it gain such legendary status? Dan Jones takes us back to the turbulent year of 1215, when, beset by foreign crises and cornered by a growing domestic rebellion, King John reluctantly agreed to fix his seal to a document that would change the course of history. At the time of its creation the Magna Carta was just a peace treaty drafted by a group of rebel barons who were tired of the king's high taxes, arbitrary justice, and endless foreign wars. The fragile peace it established would last only two months, but its principles have reverberated over the centuries. Jones's riveting narrative follows the story of the Magna Carta's creation, its failure, and the war that subsequently engulfed England, and charts the high points in its unexpected afterlife. Reissued by King John's successors it protected the Church, banned unlawful imprisonment, and set limits to the exercise of royal power. It established the principle that taxation must be tied to representation and paved the way for the creation of Parliament. In 1776 American patriots, inspired by that long-ago defiance, dared to pick up arms against another English king and to demand even more far-reaching rights. We think of the Declaration of Independence as our founding document but those who drafted it had their eye on the Magna Carta. In 1051, a monk of Canterbury Cathedral made a bizarre observation in what would eventually form part of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. In his chronicling of the year's events, he described the establishment of a new fortification in Herefordshire by French members of the

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king's party. More sophisticated than the typical Saxon burh, the word provided was alien to his vocabulary. In Latin, its builders had christened it: castellum. Little did anyone at the time know, this unique building would mark a drastic change in the direction of England's history. For almost a thousand years, the castles of England have stood proudly over her landscape. While many bear the scars of centuries of warfare, others continue to enjoy a far more comfortable existence. They are the sites of bloody sieges. The windswept ruin. The royal palace. The home of knights and nobility. The local museum. The posh hotel. Though we all recognise a castle when we see one, no two are ever exactly alike. By digging deep into the history of England's mighty castles, the purpose of this book is to throw light on those who lived there. For as long as there have been castles in England, there have been mysteries within their walls: murders that were never solved, treasures that remain unfound, prisoners left to rot in the ghastliest pits or executions worthy of lasting infamy. From unfortunate victims to long lost legends, infamous owners to ladies in grey, Castles of England offers a fresh investigation into many of those tales that will forever be the cause of intrigue for visitors. To understand who they were is to understand the story of the castle in England. To understand the castle in England is to understand England.

Eleanor's patrilineal descent, from a lineage already prestigious enough to have produced an empress in the eleventh century, gave her the lordship of Aquitaine. But marriage re-emphasized her sex which, in the medieval

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scheme of gender-power relations relegated her to the position of Lady in relation to her Lordly husbands. In this collection, essays provide a context for Eleanor's life and further an evolving understanding of Eleanor's multifaceted career. A valuable collection on the greatest heiress of the medieval period.

Forgotten Queens in Medieval and Early Modern Europe examines queens dowager and queens consort who have disappeared from history or have been deeply misunderstood in modern historical treatment. Divided into eleven chapters, this book covers queenship from 1016 to 1800, demonstrating the influence of queens in different aspects of monarchy over eight centuries and furthering our knowledge of the roles and challenges that they faced. It also promotes a deeper understanding of the methods of power and patronage for women who were not queens, many of which have since become mythologized into what historians have wanted them to be. The chronological organisation of the book, meanwhile, allows the reader to see more clearly how these forgotten queens are related by the power, agency, and patronage they displayed, despite the mythologization to which they have all been subjected. Offering a broad geographical coverage and providing a comparison of queenship across a range of disciplines, such as religious history, art history, and literature, *Forgotten Queens in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* is ideal for students and scholars of pre-modern queenship and of medieval and early modern history courses more generally.

Legend and lore surround the history of kings Richard

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and John, from the ballads of Robin Hood and the novels of Sir Walter Scott to Hollywood movies. Frank McLynn has returned to the original sources to discover what Richard and John, the warring sons of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, were really like, and how their history measures up to the old legends. “With narrative panache and anecdotal detail” (The Independent), McLynn explores the truth behind the early folklore tradition, confirming that “Richard was everything you'd hoped for, and his brother John was the toad you'd always suspected.” This is history at its best—a story well-told, thoroughly researched, unexpectedly revealing, and “a rattling good read” (Spectator).

In *The Restless Kings* Nick Barratt presents the tumultuous struggle for supremacy between the first Plantagenet king, Henry II, and his four sons - a drama that tore apart the most powerful family in western Europe and shaped the future of two nations. As well as exploring the personalities and crises facing these extraordinary people as a family, *The Restless Kings* follows them as they raced around western Europe, struggling to hold together a vast conglomeration of lands - often through force of arms - whilst constantly harried by the their nominal overlord and arch rival, Philip Augustus, king of France. Although the key events took place over 800 years ago, their significance still resonates today. Whether you're looking for the root causes of Brexit or tension in the Middle East, their origins can be found in the actions of the Angevin kings of England. *The Restless Kings* will challenge everything you assumed you knew about the medieval world. Above

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all, it brings to life some of the most remarkable, complex, flawed and brilliant monarchs ever to have sat on the English throne.

The New York Times bestseller, from the author of Powers and Thrones, that tells the story of Britain's greatest and worst dynasty—"a real-life Game of Thrones" (The Wall Street Journal) The first Plantagenet kings inherited a blood-soaked realm from the Normans and transformed it into an empire that stretched at its peak from Scotland to Jerusalem. In this epic narrative history of courage, treachery, ambition, and deception, Dan Jones resurrects the unruly royal dynasty that preceded the Tudors. They produced England's best and worst kings: Henry II and his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine, twice a queen and the most famous woman in Christendom; their son Richard the Lionheart, who fought Saladin in the Third Crusade; and his conniving brother King John, who was forced to grant his people new rights under the Magna Carta, the basis for our own bill of rights. Combining the latest academic research with a gift for storytelling, Jones vividly recreates the great battles of Bannockburn, Crécy, and Sluys and reveals how the maligned kings Edward II and Richard II met their downfalls. This is the era of chivalry and the Black Death, the Knights Templar, the founding of parliament, and the Hundred Years' War, when England's national identity was forged by the sword. When people think of Richard the Lionheart they recall the scene at the end of every Robin Hood epic when he returns from the Crusades to punish his treacherous brother John and the wicked Sheriff of Nottingham. In

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reality Richard detested England and the English, was deeply troubled by his own sexuality and was noted for greed, not generosity, and for murder rather than mercy. In youth Richard showed no interest in girls; instead, a taste for cruelty and a rapacity for gold that would literally be the death of him. To save his own skin, he repeatedly abandoned his supporters to an evil fate, and his indifference to women saw the part of queen at his coronation played by his formidable mother, Queen Eleanor. His brief reign bankrupted England twice, destabilised the powerful empire his parents had put together and set the scene for his brother's ruinous rule. So how has Richard come to be known as the noble Christian warrior associated with such bravery and patriotism? Lionheart reveals the scandalous truth about England's hero king – a truth that is far different from the legend that has endured for eight centuries.

This book, *Lives of Reigning and Consort Queens of England: England's History through the Eyes of its Queens*, is a factual narrative on lives of Norman, Plantagenet, Tudor, Stuart, Hanover, and Windsorqueens covering a millenium of English History. The biographical portraits start at the close of the Dark Ages with the Norman Conquest of 1066, and continue to Modern Time in the life of present Queen Elizabeth II. This narratiev of fifty short chronologicalbiographies gives a view ijnto life and courtly customs from an age far removed from the present toward the way of life we know today. Through the lives of these women, one sees England's history unroll. Although the narratives are brief, they bring individuals to life withoutjudgmental

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prejudice as unique personalities. One of the fifty personalities, 7 were reigning queens, 38 were queen consort wives of monarchs, and 5 were wives of “favorites” who did not reign, but who played a significant role during the life of a ruling king. This sample of women on the throne, or close to the throne is too large to expect any single quality can characterize them all: Some served as exemplary reigning queens, or as consorts whom actively supported a sovereign husband or son. Some assertively played the part of regent as a significant power behind the throne. Some influenced historic events for religious reasons. Many avoided political involvement, but had great influence on culture and custom. Some had personal qualities that made them inherently interesting and deserving of friendship. A relatively small number of the queens were entirely unsuited to be queens. Some queen consorts resisted familiarity and remain enigmatic figures. Some were always manipulated by historic events of the time and deprived them of opportunity to leave a personal mark of history. Others served chiefly as supportive mothers and wives.

Raising Royalty examines the struggles and successes of twenty sets of royal parents over the past thousand years as they raised their children in the public eye. From Edgar and Elfrida in Anglo-Saxon times to William and Kate today, *Raising Royalty* discusses centuries of royal parenting.

This history reveals the failures and fortunes of leadership during the WWII campaign into Japanese-occupied Burma: “a thoroughly satisfying experience”

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(Kirkus). Acclaimed historian Frank McLynn tells the story of four larger-than-life Allied commanders whose lives collided in the Burma campaign, one of the most punishing and protracted military adventures of World War II. This vivid account ranges from Britain's defeat in 1942 through the crucial battles of Imphal and Kohima—known as "the Stalingrad of the East"—and on to ultimate victory in 1945. Frank McLynn narrative focuses on the interactions and antagonisms of its principal players: William Slim, the brilliant general; Orde Wingate, the idiosyncratic commander of a British force of irregulars; Louis Mountbatten, one of Churchill's favorites, overpromoted to the position of Supreme Commander, S.E. Asia; and Joseph "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell, a hard-line—and openly Anglophobic—U.S. general. With lively portraits of each of these men, McLynn shows how the plans and strategies of generals and politicians were translated into a hideous reality for soldiers on the ground.

Die IBOHS verzeichnet jährlich die bedeutendsten Neuerscheinungen geschichtswissenschaftlicher Monographien und Zeitschriftenartikel weltweit, die inhaltlich von der Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zur jüngsten Vergangenheit reichen. Sie ist damit die derzeit einzige laufende Bibliographie dieser Art, die thematisch, zeitlich und geographisch ein derart breites Spektrum abdeckt. Innerhalb der systematischen Gliederung nach Zeitalter, Region oder historischer Disziplin sind die Werke nach Autorennamen oder charakteristischem Titelhauptwort aufgelistet.

Through contextual analysis and by reassessing the

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chronicle evidence, 'King John: An Underrated King' presents a compelling reevaluation of the reign of King John, England's most maligned sovereign. With its thought-provoking analysis of the key issues of John's reign, such as the loss of the French territories, British achievement, Magna Carta, relations with the church, and civil war, the volume presents an engaging argument for rehabilitating King John's reputation. Each chapter features both narrative and contextual analysis, and is prefaced by a timeline outlining the key events of the period. The volume also contains an array of maps and diagrams, as well as a collection of useful study questions.

At its greatest extent, the Angevin Empire stretched from the Scottish border to the Pyrenees. For fifty years it was the dominant political entity and "English" and "French" history were inextricably woven together. This study looks at how these disparate territories came together, how they were ruled, and whether they truly constituted an empire. The new edition of this groundbreaking work has been thoroughly revised and carries two new chapters.

The Journal of Medieval Military History continues to consolidate its now assured position as the leading academic vehicle for scholarly publication in the field of medieval warfare. Medieval Warfare

J. Richard "Dick" Steffy stood inside the limestone

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hall of the Crusader castle in Cyprus and looked at the wood fragments arrayed before him. They were old beyond belief. For more than two millennia they had remained on the sea floor, eaten by worms and soaking up seawater until they had the consistency of wet cardboard. There were some 6,000 pieces in all, and Steffy's job was to put them all back together in their original shape like some massive, ancient jigsaw puzzle. He had volunteered for the job even though he had no qualifications for it. For twenty-five years he'd been an electrician in a small, land-locked town in Pennsylvania. He held no advanced degrees—his understanding of ships was entirely self-taught. Yet he would find himself half a world away from his home town, planning to reassemble a ship that last sailed during the reign of Alexander the Great, and he planned to do it using mathematical formulas and modeling techniques that he'd developed in his basement as a hobby. The first person ever to reconstruct an ancient ship from its sunken fragments, Steffy said ships spoke to him. Steffy joined a team, including friend and fellow scholar George Bass, that laid a foundation for the field of nautical archaeology. Eventually moving to Texas A&M University, his lack of the usual academic credentials caused him to be initially viewed with skepticism by the university's administration. However, his impressive record of publications and his skilled teaching eventually led to

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his being named a full professor. During the next thirty years of study, reconstruction, and modeling of submerged wrecks, Steffy would win a prestigious MacArthur Foundation “genius” grant and would train most of the preeminent scholars in the emerging field of nautical archaeology. Richard Steffy’s son Loren, an accomplished journalist, has mined family memories, archives at Texas A&M and elsewhere, his father’s papers, and interviews with former colleagues to craft not only a professional biography and adventure story of the highest caliber, but also the first history of a field that continues to harvest important new discoveries from the depths of the world’s oceans.

The classic, magnificent bestselling novel about Richard III, now in a special thirtieth anniversary edition with a new preface by the author. In this triumphant combination of scholarship and storytelling, Sharon Kay Penman redeems Richard III—vilified as the bitter, twisted, scheming hunchback who murdered his nephews, the princes in the Tower—from his maligned place in history. Born into the treacherous courts of fifteenth-century England, in the midst of what history has called The War of the Roses, Richard was raised in the shadow of his charismatic brother, King Edward IV. Loyal to his friends and passionately in love with the one woman who was denied him, Richard emerges as a gifted man far more sinned against than sinning. With

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revisions throughout and a new author's preface discussing the astonishing discovery of Richard's remains five centuries after his death, Sharon Kay Penman's brilliant classic is more powerful and glorious than ever.

King John is one of those historical characters who needs little in the way of introduction. If readers are not already familiar with him as the tyrant whose misgovernment gave rise to Magna Carta, we remember him as the villain in the stories of Robin Hood. Formidable and cunning, but also cruel, lecherous, treacherous and untrusting. Twelve years into his reign, John was regarded as a powerful king within the British Isles. But despite this immense early success, when he finally crosses to France to recover his lost empire, he meets with disaster. John returns home penniless to face a tide of criticism about his unjust rule. The result is Magna Carta – a ground-breaking document in posterity, but a worthless piece of parchment in 1215, since John had no intention of honoring it. Like all great tragedies, the world can only be put to rights by the tyrant's death. John finally obliges at Newark Castle in October 1216, dying of dysentery as a great gale howls up the valley of the Trent.

During the Anglo-Norman period a concept of law developed, binding ruler and ruled alike and which was based on custom common throughout the country. This was Common Law and it was from this

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that subsequent law developed. John Hudson's text is an introductory survey of Common Law for students and other non-specialist readers. Certain aspects of medieval law such as its feuds, its ordeals and its outlaws are well known, this text shows how these aspects fitted in to the system as a whole, considers its Anglo-Saxon origins, the influence of the Norman invaders and later administrative reforms. The events and legal processes also throw light on the society, politics and thought of the times. "Insecure siblings fighting for their parents. Attention; bickering spouses who can't stand to be together or apart; adultery and sexual experimentation; even the struggle to balance work and family: These are themes as much at home in our time as they were in the twelfth century. In James Goldman's classic play *The Lion in Winter*, domestic turmoil rises to an art form. Keenly self-aware and motivated as much by spite as by any sense of duty, Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine maneuver against each other to position their favorite son in line for succession. By imagining the inner lives of Henry, Eleanor, and their sons, John, Geoffrey, and Richard, Goldman created the quintessential drama of family strife and competing ambitions, a work that gives visceral, modern-day relevance to the intrigues of Angevin England"--Publisher description.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER "The great Crusader king Richard the Lionheart comes alive in

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all his complex splendor in this masterpiece of medieval tapestry.”—Margaret George A.D. 1189. After the death of his father, Henry II, and the early demise of two of his brothers, Richard is crowned King of England and immediately sets off for the Holy Land. This is the Third Crusade, marked by internecine warfare among the Christians and extraordinary campaigns against the Saracens. Richard’s surviving brother, the younger John, is left behind—and conspires with the French king to steal his brother’s throne. Only their mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, now freed from decades of captivity, remains to protect Richard’s interests and secure his destiny. In this engrossing saga, Sharon Kay Penman delivers a novel of passion, intrigue, battle, and deceit. Lionheart is a sweeping tale of a heroic figure—feared by his enemies and beloved by those he commanded—who became a legend in his own lifetime. “[Sharon Kay] Penman displays her usual grasp of sweeping historical events as well as an uncanny ability to get inside the hearts and minds of her real-life characters. Her reputation for character-driven, solidly detailed historicals is richly deserved.”—Booklist “The beautifully described settings and the characters’ interactions are simply outstanding.”—The Historical Novels Review “Penman takes historical writing to a whole new level.”—The Sacramento Bee “[A] gritty, unsentimental, and richly detailed epic.”—Publishers

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Weekly Don't miss the exclusive conversation between Sharon Kay Penman and Margaret George at the back of the book.

The Historical Dictionary of the British Monarchy provides a chronology starting with the year 495 and continuing to the present day, an introductory essay, an extensive bibliography, and over 600 cross-referenced dictionary entries on significant persons, places, events, institutions, and other aspects of British culture, society, economy, and politics. This book is a must for anyone interested in the British monarchy.

In 1204, the great Angevin Empire created by the joining of the dynasties of Henry II of England and his queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, was fragmenting. At its height, the family landholdings had been among the largest the world had ever seen. From the border of England and Scotland in the north to south of the Pyrenees, it seemed there was nowhere in Europe destined to escape Plantagenet control. Yet within five years of his accession, King John's grip on the family holdings was loosening. Betrayal against his father and brother, the murder of his nephew, and breaking promises made to his supporters were just some of the accusations levelled against him. When Philip II conquered Normandy, the chroniclers believed that an ancient prophecy was fulfilled: that in this year the sword would be separated from the sceptre. For the first time since 1066, England's rule

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over the ancestral land was over. For John, troubles on the continent were just the beginning of a series of challenges that would ultimately define his reign. Difficult relations with the papacy and clergy, coupled with rising dissent among his barons ensured conflict would not be limited to the continent. When John died in 1216, more than half of the country was in the hands of the dauphin of France. Never had the future of the Plantagenet dynasty looked more uncertain. As the following pages will show, throughout the first eighteen years of the reign of Henry III, the future direction of England as a political state, the identity of the ruling family and the fate of Henry II's lost empire were still matters that could have gone either way. For the advisors of the young king, led by the influential regent, William Marshal, 1st Earl of Pembroke, the effects of John's reign would be long and severe. Successful implementation of the failed Magna Carta may have ensured his son's short-term survival, yet living up to such promises created arguably a more significant challenge. This is the story of how the varying actions of two very different kings both threatened and created the English way of life, and ultimately put England on the path to its Lost Civil War.

First published in 2001, *Medieval Germany: An Encyclopedia* provides a comprehensive guide to the German and Dutch-speaking world in the Middle

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Ages, from approximately C.E. 500 to 1500. It offers detailed accounts of a wide variety of aspects of medieval Germany, including language, literature, architecture, politics, warfare, medicine, philosophy and religion. In addition, this reference work includes bibliographies and citations to aid further study. This A-Z encyclopedia, featuring over 500 entries written by expert contributors, will be of key interest to students and scholars, as well as general readers.

King John of England was married to two women: Isabella of Gloucester and Isabelle of Angoulême. The two women were central to shaping John and his reign, each in her own way molding the king and each other over their lives. Little is known about Isabella of Gloucester and she has largely become an historical footnote; Isabelle of Angoulême has a reputation as a witch and poisoner. However, both were products of their time, victims and pawns of the powerful men whose voices overwrote the experiences of women. By examining these two very different women through a modern feminist lens, *The Two Isabellas* offers new insight into one of England's lesser-known queens and a different interpretation of one of its least popular kings. In *The Two Isabellas of King John*, Kristen McQuinn offers new and intriguing insights into two of England's important yet little understood queen-consorts, the wives of King John. Taking a feminist light, McQuinn brightly shines it on both England's least well-known

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consort, Isabella of Gloucester, his first wife, and one of its least popular, Isabelle of Angoulême, his child bride.

First published by Methuen in 1981.

A full, lavishly illustrated study of a nobleman whose exploits became the stuff of medieval romance, once recounted in the same breath as Robin Hood. Ranulf de Blondesville was fabulously rich and powerful. He served six kings, endured difficult regime-change, fought his way across half of France and back and more than once turned wrested victory from defeat. Through contextual analysis and by reassessing the chronicle evidence, 'King John: An Underrated King' presents a compelling reevaluation of the reign of King John, England's most maligned sovereign. With its thought-provoking analysis of the key issues of John's reign, such as the loss of the French territories, British achievement, Magna Carta, relations with the church, and civil war, the volume presents an engaging argument for rehabilitating King John's reputation. Each chapter features both narrative and contextual analysis, and is prefaced by a timeline outlining the key events of the period. The volume also contains an array of maps and diagrams, as well as a collection of useful study questions.

Step back in time to medieval London to find out about the lives of those working and living there. Conflict between England and France was a fact of

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life for centuries, but few realize that its origins date from the time of the Vikings, when a Norse chieftain named Rollo established himself and his progeny in Normandy. In this compelling and entertaining history, Mary McAuliffe takes the reader back to those dark and turbulent times when Rollo's descendants, the dukes of Normandy, asserted their dominance over the weak French monarchy—a dominance that became especially threatening after Duke William conquered England in 1066, giving him a royal crown. Despite this crown, William the Conqueror and his royal successors remained dukes of Normandy, with feudal obligations to their overlord, the king of France. This naturally fostered an ongoing hostility between the French and English crowns that, as McAuliffe convincingly shows, became ever more explosive as the strength and territorial holdings of the English monarchs grew. Conflict erupted regularly over the years, and Eleanor of Aquitaine's desertion of one camp for the other only added fuel to the long-simmering feud. McAuliffe takes the reader back to this dramatic era, providing the fascinating background and context for this "clash of crowns." She offers colorful insights into Richard Lionheart and Eleanor of Aquitaine as well as lesser-known French and English monarchs, especially Philip II of France. Philip proved a determined opponent of Richard Lionheart, and their cutthroat rivalry not only created fatal divisions within

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the Third Crusade but also culminated in an incendiary faceoff at Richard's newly built Château-Gaillard, the seemingly impregnable gateway to empire. The outcome would shape the course of English and French history throughout the centuries that followed.

Mongol leader Genghis Khan was by far the greatest conqueror the world has ever known. His empire stretched from the Pacific Ocean to central Europe, including all of China, the Middle East, and Russia. So how did an illiterate nomad rise to such colossal power and subdue most of the known world, eclipsing Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon? Credited by some with paving the way for the Renaissance, condemned by others for being the most heinous murderer in history, who was Genghis Khan? His actual name was Temujin, and the story of his success is that of the Mongol people: a loose collection of fractious tribes who tended livestock, considered bathing taboo, and possessed an unparalleled genius for horseback warfare. United under Genghis, a strategist of astonishing cunning and versatility, they could dominate any sedentary society they chose. Combining fast-paced accounts of battles with rich cultural background and the latest scholarship, Frank McLynn brings vividly to life the strange world of the Mongols, describes Temujin's rise from boyhood outcast to becoming Genghis Khan, and provides the most accurate and absorbing account yet of one of the most powerful men ever to have lived. The story of that amazingly influential and still somewhat

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mysterious woman, Eleanor of Aquitaine, has the dramatic interest of a novel. She was at the very center of the rich culture and clashing politics of the twelfth century. Richest marriage prize of the Middle Ages, she was Queen of France as the wife of Louis VII, and went with him on the exciting and disastrous Second Crusade. Inspiration of troubadours and trouvères, she played a large part in rendering fashionable the Courts of Love and in establishing the whole courtly tradition of medieval times. Divorced from Louis, she married Henry Plantagenet, who became Henry II of England. Her resources and resourcefulness helped Henry win his throne, she was involved in the conflict over Thomas Becket, and, after Henry's death, she handled the affairs of the Angevin empire with a sagacity that brought her the trust and confidence of popes and kings and emperors. Having been first a Capet and then a Plantagenet, Queen Eleanor was the central figure in the bitter rivalry between those houses for the control of their continental domains—a rivalry that excited the whole period: after Henry's death, her sons, Richard Coeur-de-Lion and John "Lackland" (of Magna Carta fame), fiercely pursued the feud up to and even beyond the end of the century. But the dynastic struggle of the period was accompanied by other stirrings: the intellectual revolt, the struggle between church and state, the secularization of literature and other arts, the rise of the distinctive urban culture of the great cities. Eleanor was concerned with all the movements, closely connected with all the personages; and she knew every city from London and Paris to Byzantium, Jerusalem, and Rome.

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Amy Kelly's story of the queen's long life—the first modern biography—brings together more authentic information about her than has ever been assembled before and reveals in Eleanor a greatness of vision, an intelligence, and a political sagacity that have been missed by those who have dwelt on her caprice and frivolity. It also brings to life the whole period in whose every aspect Eleanor and her four kings were so intimately and influentially involved. Miss Kelly tells Eleanor's absorbing story as it has long waited to be told—with verve and style and a sense of the quality of life in those times, and yet with a scrupulous care for the historic facts.

At his coronation as the new king of England, Richard the Lionheart makes a fateful choice between a mortal crown and a magical one and embarks on a Crusade to free Jerusalem from the infidels, leaving behind a kingdom threatened by beings wielding the powers of dark magic.

No further information has been provided for this title. From a renowned medieval historian comes a new biography of King John, the infamous English king whose reign led to the establishment of the Magna Carta and the birth of constitutional democracy King John (1166-1216) has long been seen as the epitome of bad kings. The son of the most charismatic couple of the middle ages, Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, and younger brother of the heroic crusader king, Richard the Lionheart, John lived much of his life in the shadow of his family. When in 1199 he became ruler of his family's lands in England and France, John proved unequal to

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the task of keeping them together. Early in his reign he lost much of his continental possessions, and over the next decade would come perilously close to losing his English kingdom, too. In *King John*, medieval historian Stephen Church argues that John's reign, for all its failings, would prove to be a crucial turning point in English history. Though he was a masterful political manipulator, John's traditional ideas of unchecked sovereign power were becoming increasingly unpopular among his subjects, resulting in frequent confrontations. Nor was he willing to tolerate any challenges to his authority. For six long years, John and the pope struggled over the appointment of the Archbishop of Canterbury, a clash that led to the king's excommunication. As king of England, John taxed his people heavily to fund his futile attempt to reconquer the lands lost to the king of France. The cost to his people of this failure was great, but it was greater still for John. In 1215, his subjects rose in rebellion against their king and forced upon him a new constitution by which he was to rule. The principles underlying this constitution -- enshrined in the terms of Magna Carta -- would go on to shape democratic constitutions across the globe, including our own. In this authoritative biography, Church describes how it was that a king famous for his misrule gave rise to Magna Carta, the blueprint for good governance.

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