

# The Last Plantagenet

## House of Plantagenet

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The House of Plantagenet (plan-TAJ-in-it) was a royal house which originated in the French county of Anjou. The name Plantagenet is used by modern historians to identify four distinct royal houses: the Angevins, who were also counts of Anjou; the main line of the Plantagenets following the loss of Anjou; and the Houses of Lancaster and York, two of the Plantagenets' cadet branches. The family held the English throne from 1154, with the accession of Henry II, until 1485, when Richard III died in battle.

England was transformed under the Plantagenets, although only partly intentionally. The Plantagenet kings were often forced to negotiate compromises such as Magna Carta, which constrained royal power in return for financial and military support. The king was no longer just the most powerful man in the nation, holding the prerogative of judgement, feudal tribute and warfare, but had defined duties to the realm, underpinned by a sophisticated justice system. By the end of the reign of Edward III, the Plantagenets developed a new identity including adopting the language of the ordinary people—Middle English—as the language of governance. This is one of the reasons that the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography considers Edward III as culturally the first English Plantagenet ruler.

In the 15th century, the Plantagenets were defeated in the Hundred Years' War and beset with social, political and economic problems. Popular revolts were commonplace, triggered by the denial of numerous freedoms. English nobles raised private armies, engaged in private feuds and openly defied Henry VI. The rivalry between the House of Plantagenet's two cadet branches of York and Lancaster brought about the Wars of the Roses, a decades-long fight for the English succession. It culminated in the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, when the reign of the Plantagenets and the English Middle Ages both met their end with the death of King Richard III. Henry VII, a Lancastrian, became king of England; five months later he married Elizabeth of York, thus ending the Wars of the Roses and giving rise to the Tudor dynasty. The Tudors worked to centralise English royal power, which allowed them to avoid some of the problems that had plagued the last Plantagenet rulers. The resulting stability allowed for the English Renaissance and the advent of early modern Britain. Every monarch of England, and later the United Kingdom, from Henry VII to present has been a descendant of the Plantagenets.

## Plantagenet Alliance

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The Plantagenet Alliance was a small grouping of individuals claiming to be descendants of the House of Plantagenet. The Alliance was formed in 2013 shortly after the discovery and identification of the remains of Richard III, the last Plantagenet king of England who died in 1485, in order to advance their views on the location of Richard's reburial. Reports of the number of members of the Alliance varied between fifteen and around forty.

In 2013 and 2014 the group campaigned to have Richard re-interred at York Minster, believing that, as his collateral descendants, they knew his wishes. They referred to themselves as "his Majesty's representatives and voice". However, historians disputed that there was any evidence that Richard III wanted to be buried in York. The Plantagenet Alliance's standing to represent Richard was also challenged on the basis that he would have had many millions of other living collateral descendants whose views were not necessarily

represented by the Alliance.

The Alliance's activities included initiating a judicial review of decisions taken by the Ministry of Justice relating to the proposed re-interment in Leicester. The Alliance lost the judicial review in 2014 and the campaign to have Richard's remains buried in York failed. The group has not been publicly active since the loss of the court case. Richard III's remains were finally re-interred within the interior of the Leicester Cathedral on 26 March 2015.

## Anne Neville

*Warwick The Last Plantagenet Queen (2012) Liz Orwin, The Maid's Tale: Anne (2016) Anne Neville is one of the main characters in: Olive Eckerson, The Golden*

Anne Neville (11 June 1456 – 16 March 1485) was Queen of England from 26 June 1483 until her death in 1485 as the wife of King Richard III. She was the younger of the two daughters and co-heiresses of Richard Neville, 16th Earl of Warwick (the "Kingmaker"), and Anne de Beauchamp. Before her marriage to Richard, she had been Princess of Wales as the wife of Edward of Westminster, Prince of Wales, the only son and heir apparent of King Henry VI.

As a member of the powerful House of Neville, Anne played a critical part in the Wars of the Roses fought between the houses of York and Lancaster for the English crown. Her father betrothed her as a girl to Prince Edward, the only son of the ousted king Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou. The marriage was to seal an alliance with the Lancastrians and halt the Wars of the Roses.

After the death of Prince Edward and defeat of the Lancastrians at the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, Anne married Richard, Duke of Gloucester, younger brother of King Edward IV and of George, Duke of Clarence, the husband of Anne's elder sister Isabel. Richard was also Anne's first cousin once removed; her great-aunt, Cecily Neville, was Richard's mother. Anne became queen when Richard acceded to the throne in June 1483, following the declaration that Edward IV's children by Elizabeth Woodville were illegitimate. Anne predeceased her husband by five months, dying in March 1485. Her only child, Edward of Middleham, died in 1484 at the age of seven.

## Richard of Eastwell

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## Richard III Society

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The Richard III Society is a Ricardian society dedicated to the re-assessment of the reputation of King Richard III, the last Plantagenet King of England and the last English King to be killed in battle, and whose reputation was widely maligned in the centuries since his death, in large part due to Tudor propaganda.

In 2012, the society gained worldwide attraction due to its role in the finding of King Richard's remains.

## Simon Farnaby

*Richard III: The King in the Car Park in 2013, tracing the discovery and identification of the remains of the last Plantagenet king, the 2014 Channel*

Simon Farnaby (born 2 April 1973) is an English actor, comedian, children's entertainer, writer and singer. He is best known for his work with the Them There collective where he has written and starred in productions including the sketch show Horrible Histories, Yonderland, and Ghosts, as well as writing for film.

Farnaby earned BAFTA nominations for his co-writing of Paddington 2, both for Best Adapted Screenplay and Best British Film, and was the winner of the 2023 Television BAFTA for memorable TV moment. In 2023, he co-wrote and appeared in Wonka, a film which serves as a prequel to the Roald Dahl novel Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, exploring Willy Wonka's origins.

Richard Plantagenet

*Richard Plantagenet, 3rd Duke of York (1411–1460), father of Edward IV and Richard III of England  
Richard III of England (1452–1485), the last Plantagenet king*

Richard Plantagenet may refer to any Richard who was a descendant of Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou:

Richard I of England (1157–1199), also known as Richard the Lionheart, third son of King Henry II of England

Richard, 1st Earl of Cornwall (1209–1272), second son of John of England and younger brother of Henry III of England

Richard II of England (1367–1400), son of Edward, the Black Prince

Richard Plantagenet, of York, of Conisburgh, 3rd Earl of Cambridge (1385-1415), father of Richard Plantagenet, 3rd Duke of York.

Richard Plantagenet, 3rd Duke of York (1411–1460), father of Edward IV and Richard III of England

Richard III of England (1452–1485), the last Plantagenet king.

Richard Plantagenet (Richard of Eastwell) (1469–1550), possible illegitimate son of Richard III of England

Richard of Shrewsbury, 1st Duke of York (1473–1483), second son of Edward IV of England and younger brother of Edward V of England

His imposter, Perkin Warbeck (1474-1499)

Richard Plantagenet (1476–1477), youngest child of George Plantagenet, 1st Duke of Clarence

Richard Plantagenet Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos-Grenville, 2nd Duke of Buckingham and Chandos (1797-1861), politician.

Richard Plantagenet Campbell Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos-Grenville, 3rd Duke of Buckingham and Chandos (1823-1889), politician and son of the 2nd Duke.

English claims to the French throne

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From 1340, English monarchs, beginning with the Plantagenet king Edward III, claimed to be the rightful kings of France and fought the Hundred Years' War, in part, to enforce their claim. Every English and, later, British monarch from Edward to George III, until 1801, included in their titles king or queen of France. This was despite the English losing the Hundred Years' War by 1453 and failing to secure the crown in several attempted invasions of France over the following seventy years. From the early 16th century, the claim lacked any credible possibility of realisation and faded as a political issue.

Edward's claim was based on his being, through his mother, the nearest male relative (nephew) of the last direct line Capetian king of France, Charles IV, who died in 1328. However, Philip of Valois, from a cadet branch of the Capetians, became king instead, as the French magnates preferred a French rather than a foreign monarch. The justification given was that the crown supposedly could not be inherited through the female line and Philip was Charles's nearest male relative (cousin) through the male line. From 1337, Edward spent most of the rest of his life at war with Philip and his Valois successors, in part, to pursue his claim to the throne, although Edward's main concern was, in fact, to protect his rights to his lands in Guyenne and Gascony, in southwest France. He never succeeded in securing the French crown and after he died in 1377, the war petered out.

Subsequent English monarchs traced their claim to the French throne to Edward and his claim through his mother. Initially, this was rebutted by the French on the basis of a vague appeal to custom. However, from the 15th century, the Valois case came to be based on the assertion that the 6th century Frankish legal code known as Salic law applied to the succession and excluded inheritance of the crown by or through women. In 1415 Henry V revived the claim after a period of peace and invaded France. Following his crushing defeat of the French at Agincourt, he succeeded in taking control of northern France and in his treaty with the French was declared heir of Charles VI. Both kings died in 1422 and Henry's son, Henry VI, was crowned king in both countries, creating the so-called dual monarchy of England and France. However, French resistance to the dual monarchy resulted in the English being expelled from France by 1453, ending the Hundred Years' War but leaving Calais as the last remaining English possession.

Further invasions to claim the throne were attempted by Edward IV in 1475, Henry VII in 1492 and, finally, by Henry VIII who repeatedly invaded France between 1513 and 1523 with that objective. All failed and by this time the claim had become wholly unrealistic. England and France would continue to fight wars but none were over the claim to the crown. Calais was lost in 1558 but monarchs of England and Great Britain nevertheless continued to include France in their titles, even in treaties with French kings. Because of the improbable and unrealistic nature of the claim, the inclusion was ignored. However, following the French Revolution, the new republican government of France objected to the practice and the title ceased to be used in 1801 and the claim finally abandoned the following year.

## Angevin Empire

*The Angevin Empire (/ˈændʒəˈvɪn/; French: Empire Plantagenêt) was the collection of territories held by the House of Plantagenet during the 12th and 13th*

The Angevin Empire (; French: Empire Plantagenêt) was the collection of territories held by the House of Plantagenet during the 12th and 13th centuries, when they ruled over an area covering roughly all of present-day England, half of France, and parts of Ireland and Wales, and had further influence over much of the remaining British Isles. It may be described as an early example of a composite monarchy. The empire was established by Henry II of England, who succeeded his father Geoffrey as Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou (from the latter of which the term Angevin is derived). Henry married Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1152, acquiring the Duchy of Aquitaine, and inherited his mother Empress Matilda's claim to the English throne, succeeding his rival Stephen in 1154. Although their title of highest rank came from the Kingdom of England, the Plantagenets held court primarily on the continent at Angers in Anjou, and at Chinon in Touraine.

The influence and power of the Angevin kings of England brought them into conflict with the kings of France of the House of Capet, to whom they also owed feudal homage for their French possessions, bringing in a period of rivalry between the dynasties. Despite the extent of Angevin rule, Henry's son John was defeated in the Anglo-French War (1213–1214) by Philip II of France following the Battle of Bouvines. John lost control of most of his continental possessions, apart from Guyenne and Gascony in southern Aquitaine. This defeat set the scene for further conflicts between England and France, leading up to the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453), in which the Plantagenets, for a time, would re-establish dominion over much of western, central and northern France, before losing their possessions again, this time permanently.

Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou

*to the 300-year long reign of the Plantagenet dynasty in England. Although it was never his family name or last name, "Plantagenet" was taken for the dynasty*

Geoffrey V (24 August 1113 – 7 September 1151), called the Fair (French: le Bel), Plantagenet, and of Anjou, was the count of Anjou and Maine by inheritance from 1129, and also duke of Normandy by his marriage claim and conquest, from 1144.

Geoffrey married Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I, king of England and duke of Normandy. Geoffrey and Matilda's marriage led, through their son Henry II, to the 300-year long reign of the Plantagenet dynasty in England. Although it was never his family name or last name, "Plantagenet" was taken for the dynasty from Geoffrey's epithet, long after his death. Geoffrey's ancestral domain of Anjou in north central France gives rise to the name Angevin, and what modern historians name as the Angevin Empire in the 12th century.

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