THE ROLE OF RITUAL AND CEREMONIAL

IN THE REIGN OF EDWARD I

by

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Abstract

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Often it is said that no one is better at pomp and pageantry than the British monarchy, and indeed, this has been the case at least since the time when medieval kings ruled England. One monarch in particular stands out as having successfully utilized royal ritual and ceremonial to great political, military and personal gain. Edward I is widely considered one of England's most dynamic, respected and successful monarchs. Called a "precedent seeker,"[1] the king's reign was ". . . one of the most pivotal in the whole of British history, a moment when the destinies of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland were decided."[2] Edward summoned the biggest armies and convened the largest parliaments seen in England during the entire span of the Middle Ages. He constructed the greatest, most imposing chain of castle fortifications in all of Europe, expelled the Jews from the British Isles in the stroke of a pen, decisively conquered the Welsh and very nearly overcame the Scots. And unlike his father, Edward fulfilled his crusading vow and set out on campaign with the saintly Louis IX of France.

A life-long adherent of the cult of King Arthur, Edward was heavily influenced by the mythical king's chivalric legend. A student of history and an intuitive leader, Edward

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[1] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 105.
[2] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), xii.

understood the significance of pageantry, of tradition, of symbolism, of ritual and of spectacle. On many occasions throughout his thirty-six-year reign he creatively utilized all of the considerable trappings of kingship at his disposal to emphasize the power of the monarchy, to achieve political gains, and to undergird religious principles. It was a keen skill he inherited from his father, Henry III, who had become proficient at pageantry as a means of diverting attention from the abundant political failures of his long reign. The wise son learned from his father's missteps and fashioned a style of rule that combined military and political success with rich celebration and solemn ceremonial. Indeed, some of the traditions either initiated or improved upon by Edward I are still in practice over 700 years later. This ambitious transitional monarch possessed a very clear vision of the England he wished to shape and had an instinct for which measures would appeal to nobles and commoners alike in order to win their cooperation and compliance.

For the most part, medieval subjects followed the king because there was a basic societal need for leadership. This relationship was a somewhat tangled web, which Edward I innately understood, and as such, he successfully exploited royal spectacle of all sorts – pageantry, ritual, and symbolism, ceremonial – to display power in foreign relations, suppress rebellion, contain his nobility and demonstrate his piety. The following paper will explore occasions of ceremony and ritual linked to King Edward I as an arbiter of royal power, as well as consider the means by which he utilized the influence of his position and the majesty of the monarchy to affirm and reinforce his extensive authority.

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Chapter 1

Literature Review & Theory

Much has been written about Edward I, from the contemporary medieval chroniclers and the records kept by royal scribes and church clerics to the most recent scholarly work set for release this month. The eighteenth century saw the creation of the modern formal academic study of history in England, and the advent of the public schools system in nineteenth century incorporated the teaching of history in part to promote nationalistic ideals. For British historians, it was only natural to look to previous leaders to study their lives and the times in which they had lived.

One of the first widely circulated academic biographies of Edward I was penned by William Stubbs in his Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II in 1882-1883, to compliment The Constitutional History of England which he had written in 1880. Stubbs was a graduate Christ Church, Oxford, a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and held the college living of Navestock, Essex. Eventually he was appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, and held the chair until 1884. Also an Anglican bishop, Stubbs' works fall with the Whig tradition of historical writing. In his work, he generously praised Edward as a king and asserted that he was deliberately working towards the goal of a constitutional government. A decade later, Stubbs' student, T.F. Tout authored Edward I in 1893 and Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England: The Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals in 1920. He did not cite his sources, and therefore these works contain no footnotes or endnotes. A graduate of Balliol College, Oxford, and a fellow of Pembroke, he taught at the University of

Wales, Lampeter, and the University of Manchester. Tout took a contrary view to that of his mentor and believed the governmental reforms of Edward's monarchy would not have occurred without the king's consent. "Even the parliamentary system grew up in obedience to the royal will. It was no yielding to a people crying for liberty, but the shrewd device of an autocrat, anxious to use the mass of the people as a check upon his hereditary foes among the greater baronage."[3]

The most prominent Edward I scholar of the mid-twentieth century was F.M. Powicke. From 1928 until his retirement as Regius Professor at Oxford, Powicke turned out two major works: King Henry III and the Lord Edward in 1947 and his broad survey work The Thirteenth Century in 1953. Beforehand, he was a Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and a professor at Belfast and Manchester Universities. The year 1968 saw the publication of two biographies about Edward I, one a full-length book by L.F. Salzman, and the other a concise reader by E. L. G. Stones. Twenty years passed before "...the first scholarly study devoted exclusively to the political career of Edward I,"[4] simply titled Edward I, was produced by Durham University Professor Dr. Michael Prestwich in 1988. He has also authored several other books, including Plantagenet England 1225-1360, The Three Edwards: War and State in England 1272-1377, and War, Politics, and Finance Under Edward I. Deemed an authority on Edward I, Prestwich seeks to evaluate the king by the contemporary standards of his time, and in particular highlights Edward's

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[3] T.F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England: The Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals. ii.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1920), 190.

[4] J.H. Denton and Michael Prestwich, "Review of Edward I," *English Historical Review* 104 (1989): 981-984.

contributions to systems of the law, parliament and taxation, as well as his military campaigns. Prestwich also claims that the roots of the disastrous reign of his son Edward II existed in Edward I's reign. In between, K. B. MacFarlane wrote The Nobility of Later Medieval England, in 1981, in which he was critical of Edward's numerous efforts to curtail the power and influence of his earls, stating the king's policies "...belonged less to the future than to the past." The same year, John Chancellor teamed with Antonia Frasier to produce The Life and Times of Edward I. Another twenty years after Prestwich's seminal work, Dr. Marc Morris came out with Edward I, A Great and Terrible King (2008). Dr. Morris studied and taught at the University of London and the University of Oxford before steering his career toward broadcasting.

Other authors have chosen to write about specific aspects of Edward's life and reign, including Dr. Fiona Watson, whose book Under the Hammer deals with Edward's Scottish campaigns. Several works have been published about Edward's queen, one of the most comprehensive of which is Eleanor of Castile by John Carmi Parsons, who also wrote The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castile in 1290 and Medieval Queenship. Dr. Sandra Raban, Cambridge Emerita Fellow, has written several books, including Mortmain Legislation and the English Church 1279-1500, one in a series of the Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, as well as A Second Domesday?: The Hundred Rolls of 1279-80 and England Under Edward I and Edward II: 1259-1327, which concerns primarily the economic and social history during the consecutive reigns. The most recent book is by Cambridge professor Dr. Caroline Burt, who has written several scholarly articles about Edward's rule and has a new work due for release

December 31, 2012, titled Edward I and the Governance of England 1272-1307, which is also part of the Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought series.

And, finally, there are works about topics that relate to Edward's tenure as monarch. Over the past twenty-plus years, Dr. Paul Binski, Professor of Medieval Art at Cambridge University, has written extensively on the art, architecture and long history of Westminster Abbey as well as the related topics of royal death and burial during the Plantagenet era. In his 1996 book Simon de Montfort, J. R. Maddicott profiles the earl and explores the motivation behind Edward's complex uncle and godfather. A current leading scholar on medieval Jewish history, Robin Mundill has authored several books, including The King's Jews, which outline their exploitation and persecution leading up to their expulsion by Edward in 1290.

As with most medieval subjects, relevant primary sources can be difficult to find in significant numbers. However, for the reign of Edward I, though there is not one primary chronicler, it is possible to string together information found within the surviving chronicles, including Matthew Paris' *Monachi Sancti Albani* and *Chronica Majora*, but also *The Annales Londonienses*, *The Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, Bartholomaei de Cotton, *Historia Anglicana* by Thomas Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, as well as the chronicles of Bury St. Edmunds, Pierre de Langtoft and Walter of Guisborough. Other contemporary chronicles include Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historarium*, Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain, Gerald of Wales' The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales, and The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury. Extant relevant church and government records include The

Ledger Book of Vale Royal Abbey, *Chronicon de Lanercost*, *Historia de Rebus Gestis Glastoniensibus*, The Parliament Roles of Medieval England, The Royal Charter Witness Lists of Edward I, a group of documents called English Historical Documents, and King Arthur in Legend and History. Some of King Edward's personal correspondence, and that of his son, is also accessible for study and interpretation.

In addition, other non-textural sources may be utilized in dissecting the medieval sphere in which Edward and his court operated. The royal seals of Norman, Angevin and Plantagenet kings provide clues to manner of dress, regalia, some physical features, and motto among other aspects. Coins produced during the reign of Edward I depict the head of the monarch on one side and some other pictorial representation on the other, and like the seals, can hold further clues to some of the regalia worn by the king as well as other details regarding the sovereign. However, in these depictions, the kings' faces lack distinctive features, and without their beards, scepters and crowns, they could easily be mistaken for renderings of saints.[5] In addition, there survives a contemporary painting believed to be that of the coronation of Edward III in 1330 which may be carefully studied for hints about specific details related to the highly ritualized ceremony. We also have a number of other contemporary pieces of art, engravings and illustrations depicting coronations from which we can glean information as well.

One of the greatest sources of material regarding the medieval English coronation service may be found in the records relating to the four recensions the English coronation service and the coronation oath. In addition, several manuscript illustrations from the

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[5] John Steane, The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy (London: Routledge. 1999), 15.

period provide colorful windows into Edward's life, including one that features the sport of hawking practiced by the king. The funeral effigies of previous and successive kings and queens, many of which are located in Westminster Abbey, also tell a story about the individual they seek to honor as well as the time in which they lived. During the eighteenth century, the tombs of several medieval monarchs were opened in order to scientifically study the remains within. Historians can learn much from what was found inside the sealed coffin of Edward I when it was examined in1774 and a detailed inventory taken of the contents. Further, many of the building projects undertaken by Edward remain standing, some still almost fully intact, and can be visited and studied carefully for architectural nuances as well as evidence of medieval royal life.

Theory

Whether Edward I's strategic utilization of ceremony and ritual was strictly for political gain or whether it was a trait that he intuitively inherited growing up at his father's court may be debatable, but the success of this strategy which the king effectively engaged even before coming to the throne cannot be denied. Perhaps it is simply that Edward instinctively understood human nature as well as political theory. Whatever the derivation, his skillful use of the wide-ranging more theatrical trappings of his position served him well over the course of his lifetime and was fundamental in forming his enduring legacy as one of Britain's most powerful and successful monarchs.

Edward I's thirty-six-year reign proved a pivotal point in English History. He did not ascend the throne until the age of thirty-three, which allowed him the opportunity to

further hone his historical acumen and to observe and learn from his father's example, both positive and negative. Thus, Edward was afforded the time and maturity to determine how best to shape his tenure, the most obvious and most effective being his keen use of ceremonial, ritual and spectacle to assert power over his own subjects, as well as his fellow monarchs and even the infidels in the Holy Land. In doing so, he was able to strike a balance between the uninspired reign of his father and the seventeen years of his grandfather's disastrous rule. In mastering this balance, he was then free to pursue his personal goals for his reign.

The reign of Edward I has been the life-long study of some of the most learned medieval historians. Several authors have implemented a topical type of methodology in writing about Edward, though they have primarily dealt with finances, war, law and governmental matters, yet in some or another, they all touch on Edward's use of ritual and ceremonial. The earlier scholars, such as Tout and Powicke, make incidental mention of these topics, while Dr. Prestwich wrote an engaging article about the king's piety, and his numerous books and articles contain references to examples of the king's frequent use of ritual and ceremony. Dr. Morris has scattered dozens of examples through his comprehensive biography, but to my knowledge, no one has collected these illustrations into one work in order to examine the relationship between ceremonial and ritual and King Edward I as an arbiter of royal power. Scholarly study of the life of the king is made infinitely more difficult in that "Edward's reign and character are that much more obscure for lacking a chronicler to record them with humor and objectivity."[6] That said, it

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[6] John Chancellor, *The Life and Times of Edward I*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981), 25.

is fortunate that the household records survive, as much can be gleaned from the study of those documents. However, when the focus of inquiry is centered upon the extravagant spectacle that accompanied many of the events in the monarch's life, an alternate strategy must be employed, requiring tidbits from numerous sources to be strung together in order to paint as complete a picture as possible. It then becomes necessary to organize the events into some sort of plausible thematic form.

Social theorists have written volumes on the subject of the uses and abuses of power in the guise of propaganda and extravaganza throughout the ages. Interpreting the past is even more difficult due to the temptation to project our own social mores upon medieval actors. To this tendency, historian Johan Huizinga issues a prescient warning, "there is not a more dangerous tendency in history than that of representing the past as if were a rational whole dictated by clearly defined interests."[7] Writer Marc Bloch, author of *Les rois thaumaturges* (translated as The Royal Touch: Monarchy and Miracles in France and England) written in 1924, was the first to apply methods of ethnography and anthropology to the study of medieval monarchial customs.[8] Rejecting the notion that all human societies inevitably undergo the same phases of life, in the same sequence, Bloch underscores the importance of observing the whole of a society – culture, religion, geography, customs, etc. – in considering a particular aspect of it, such as monarchy. From this initial work, there have emerged three schools of thought on the subject, all of which fall within the German tradition of the study of history.

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[7] Johan Huizinga, *The waning of the Middle Ages; a study of the forms of life, thought, and art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth centuries* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1954), 82.

[8] Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Monarchies and Miracles in France and England* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1973), 139.

Those who adhere to the ideas of Göttingen professor P. E. Schramm, writing in the first half of the twentieth century, view medieval coronations within the context of the symbolism of kingship. Schramm contended that because "the iconography of rulership" was closely akin to "symbolically relevant objects," and focused on those objects and the part they played in the coronation politically, theologically and allegorically.[9] Those who focus on medieval political thought and legal theory tend to be more closely aligned with the work of Walter Ullman, whose primary concern was papal and royal sovereignty.[10] And the followers of Ernst H. Kantorowicz tend toward a "political theology" within the overall perception of the state, taking a broad view to encompass the move from a religious-themed rule to that of law- and man-centered rule.[11] Finally, Jacques le Goff tied the concepts up neatly by observing that the symbolic monarchy and royal ritual acts naturally lead to further inquiry because these key elements impacted the fates of all medieval peoples and therefore increase our knowledge of the era as a whole.[12] And as with many historical strains, there is certainly overlap between the three.

More recently, in writing about the rites of power, David Kertzer remarked that "power must be expressed through symbolic guises."[13] He continues by stating that "the splendiferous elaboration of ritual that so colorfully marks the British royal family today represents not a simple continuation of a long-held tradition, but a re-elaboration of old

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[9] David Thimme, "Percy Ernst Schramm and the Middle Ages: Changes a View of History," *Schriftenreihe the Historical Commission of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences,* 75 (2006): 122.

[10] Walter Ullman, *Medieval Political Thought* (Harmondsworth [etc.]: Penguin book, 1975), 12.

[11] Clifford Geertz, "Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power," in *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual and Politics in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 15.

[12] János M. Bak, *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 4-6.

[13] David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 174.

symbols to meet changing political conditions."[14] He goes on to explain that everyone in society benefitted from participation in the "sacred ruler" model: the nobles were assured their spot in the top tier of the social hierarchy, while the subjects experienced stability as well a sense of pride by "tying them to a larger imagined tradition of greatness."[15] John of Salisbury, in his the twelfth century work Policraticus, attributed three principle functions to the monarch: "he is divinely ordained to exercise his power on earth in order to keep the peace, render justice to his subjects . . . [and] use his secular power to strengthen the faith." He stresses that the king "also embodies the whole of his people to the point that his fate is theirs.[16]

 Another modern theorist, Gerd Althoff , claims "the actors on medieval political stages did not carry out rituals in a servile way but rather used the rituals in a utilitarian-rational way. They varied, mixed or updated them in keeping with the given situation or even invented new rituals if there was no suitable pre-existing ritual language at their disposal."[17] He also states that "public interactions involving secular and clerical magnates – but not only these – consisted for the most part of ritual-demonstrative actions that acknowledged the existing order and expressed the status and honor of the participants."[18] Fellow historian Clifford Geertz contends that "the real is as imagined as the imaginary."[19] And he addresses the quality of charisma found in Weber's brand of

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[14] David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 174-175.

[15] Ibid, 47.

[16] Henry Allen Myers and Herwig Wolfram, *Medieval Kingship* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1992), 247.

[17] Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary. 2002. *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography* (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 2002), 73.

[18] Ibid, 74.

[19] Clifford Geertz and Sean Wilentz, *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Politics Since the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 176.

sociology, a characteristic so often found in political leaders, though not always used ethically by those in authority.

Writing in the 1980's, Eric Hobsbawm, defines the method of inventing traditions as "the process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only by imposing repetition."[20] He goes on to assert that traditions often use history to legitimize their actions and to promote group unity. He alleges that the invention of traditions occurs most frequently when a society undergoes rapid transformation and destroys the old traditions and produces new ones. "Novelty is no less novel for being able to dress up easily as antiquity." Edward Muir states "rituals give access to emotional states that resist expression in language." He contends that ritual involves repetition attached to a particular time and place, and it encompasses all of the senses, and it is for this very reason that rituals are so difficult to define.[21]

In the past decade, a rather heated debate has arisen between Phillipe Buc and Geoffrey Koziol regarding medieval rituals. Buc's book, Dangers of Ritual, argues that medieval rituals were accepted with blind faith, and were typically invoked in order to reduce conflicts and promote order and obedience. He claims that Judeo-Christian imprinting influences the sociological and ethnological treatments of society and ritual, and historians who refer to these rituals tend to see only "good" rituals and make the

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[20] Eric J. Hobsbawn and Terence O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 4.
[21] Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 2.

assumption that "good" rituals are an indication of a "good" community or society. Ritual meaning is not a static idea.[22]

Koziol states that what little we know of medieval ritual was written by contemporary who had a biased view and often an agenda. One "cannot speak of rituals either in the abstract as having been either active agents or passive representations of consensus or community." He asserts that rituals were "rhetorical tropes" designed by "clerical polemicists to support their protagonists and their claims."[23] Further, he stresses that the motivation behind the ritual and its significance within a particular setting are more important than the act itself and is not always immediately evident without an examination of the factors surrounding it. Gerd Althoff concurs, claiming that "in order to obtain an adequate understanding of the contents of medieval rituals, we have to strive to regain the point of view from which medieval contemporaries looked at rituals."[24] He goes on to state that "rituals are usually arranged ceremoniously; they frequently serve to acknowledge the social order, and often they serve the purpose of commemoration – or both."[25] Koziol affirms the importance of honor and rank, emotional element, ideals, values that composed their identity, and calls for a shift from the meaning of rituals to the cultural practices that included them.[26]

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[22] Phillipe Buc, "The Monster and the Critics, a Ritual Reply," *Early Medieval Europe*. 15 (4)(2007): 433.

[23] Geoffrey Koziol, "The Dangers of Polemic: Is Ritual Still an Interesting Topic of Study?" *Early Medieval Europe*. 11 (4)(2002): 368-369.

[24] Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary. *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography* (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 2002), 87.

[25] Ibid, 72.

[26] Geoffrey Koziol, "The Dangers of Polemic: Is Ritual Still an Interesting Topic of Study?" *Early Medieval Europe.* 11 (4)(2002): 368-369.

Christina Pössell brings another element of ritual to the table, declaring that the study of ritual is "a liberation," allowing us to "move beyond the constitutional analysis of history, from what royal and aristocratic power ought to be and on to how it was demonstrated and negotiated between emperors, popes, rulers and their aristocrats."[27] We modern historians are often equally as in awe of rituals as those medieval who participated in them and relegate rituals to the past, refusing to see them as part of today's society. She emphasizes that we must avoided assuming that medievals were "more gullible, less rational or less complex than their modern counterparts."[28] It would seem we have to look no further than the 2011 wedding of Prince William to determine that now as a global society, we are still enthralled with the ritual of the wedding service, the ceremony of the procession and the spectacle of it all.

I am most drawn to Pössell's theory because it best expresses what I believe Edward accomplished over the course of his reign in that he captured the imagination of those around him, subjects and peers alike, through the artful use of ritual, ceremony and spectacle, while at the same time solidifying his hold on power within his own kingdom as well as abroad. This paper seeks to examine Edward I's reign through the lens of projected and perceived power. Written topically rather than chronologically, this work will focus upon the various spheres in which Edward I utilized the grandeur of his office and the magnificence of monarchy to affirm and undergird his extensive power.

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[27] Christina Pössell, "Mystifyied Medievalists," *Early Medieval Europe*. 17 (2)(2009): 113-114.
[28] Ibid.

Chapter 2

Displaying Power in Foreign Relations

During his long thirty-six-year reign, Edward distinguished himself on many occasions among his European royal peers. He was fortunate to have known his esteemed French cousin Louis IX whose advice he often sought and whose example he frequently followed. He was also influenced by Louis IX's brother, Charles of Anjou, as well as his brother-in-law Alfonso X of Castile. Relationships between rulers were steeped in royal rituals and court etiquette, all of which were ultimately concerned with the exhibition power, each entity being careful not to offend the sensibilities of his fellow monarch while doing everything possible to hold his ground in flaunting his dominance. In the case of his enemies, Edward could be ruthless, especially if he believed he had been wronged or betrayed. For centuries there existed a chivalrous code of war in which the tenets of battle and the disposition prisoners of war, particularly those of noble or royal birth, to which were strictly adhered. In a blatant display of raw power, Edward forged new ground in this area with the Welsh as well as the Scottish rebels, and indeed even his own countrymen, making examples of their revered leaders in order to prevent further uprising, thus rewriting some of the traditional rules of medieval warfare.

A number of foreign policy issues and disputes arose during Edward's reign, including the Great Cause, Sicilian Vespers, negotiated treaties, marriage alliances, and the Ninth Crusade, all of which presented opportunities for Edward to demonstrate his considerable leadership skills. King Edward I vowed to take the cross and join his cousin King Louis IX of France partly out of gratitude to God for victory at Evesham, which had

effectively ended the Baron's War, and also to serve in his father's stead in order to fulfill

the crusading promise Henry III had made in 1250 but never satisfied. He may also have

sought atonement for the excessive violence and blood-letting at the Battle of Evesham.

And of course, the English were always keen to stay abreast of their French

counterparts.[29]

The origins of Edward's crusading expedition can be traced to the second half of

1266 when Pope Clement IV's papal legate, Cardinal Ottobuono, began preaching the

crusade in England. He presented the case at the Bury St. Edmund's joint parliament and

ecumenical gathering in February of 1267, though the response from both nobles and

clerics was none too enthusiastic. Sixteen months later, Ottobuono again preached the

pope's crusading message, and Edward at last formally took the crusader's cross, along

with his younger brother Edmund and cousin Henry of Almain, in an elaborate ceremony

convened at Northampton on Sunday, June 24, 1268 – the feast of St. John the Baptist –

fittingly held in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre which had been built by a knight who

had participated in the First Crusade and designed the church to mirror the one he had

seen in Jerusalem. Hundreds of others also responded to the sacred call.[30] Edward's wife

Eleanor, despite having small children to care for, also took the crusader's vow along

with her husband.

In preparation for the great expedition, Edward and his advisors traveled to Paris

in August of 1269, for a strategy and logistics meeting with crusading veteran and

[29] Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 144-151.

[30] S. Lloyd, "The Lord Edward's Crusade, 1270-72: Its Setting and Significance," in *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, ed. Paul Binski (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1986), 122.

campaign leader Louis IX and his brother Charles Anjou. A firm date of August 1270 was set for their departure from the southern coast of France, affording Edward a year to gather all of the necessary men and supplies.[31] In early August, Henry formally resigned his twenty-two-year-old crusading vow and made over his proxy to Edward.[32] On August 20, 1270, the lord Edward and Eleanor left England with their contingent of nobles, knights and fellow crusaders – about 1,000 in total – and set sail for the Holy Land.[33]

The chivalric ideal of thirteenth-century knighthood was to put away all conflict with fellow Christians and "fight the good fight of the Holy Cross against the blasphemous infidels who profaned the sepulcher of the Lord."[34] By 1270, the state of affairs for the Christian states in the Middle East had declined considerably. Jerusalem had fallen in 1244 never to be conquered by crusaders again. King Louis IX of France had departed early, on July 8, from Aigues-Mortes on the French Mediterranean coast, and instead of heading directly to the Levant, where the original objective was to relieve the Christian fortress town of Acre, Louis and his brother unexpectedly diverted to Tunis, where Louis believed he might be able to convert the Emir to Christianity, thereby establishing a Christian kingdom in North Africa. His brother Charles had more nefarious motives. He wished to reinstate the hefty fees Tunisia had recently ceased to pay to the

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[31] Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 127-129.
[32] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 93.
[33] Ibid.
[34] T. F. Tout, *Edward the First* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 4.

Sicilian crown. Edward and his entourage got off to a late start in departing from England, and by the time they arrived, Louis had died, most likely of dysentery, and Charles of Anjou had signed a peace treaty with the Muslims in Tunis. The campaign was postponed until the spring, while a bad storm was the final straw in dissuading France's new king, Philip III, from continuing with the French crusading mission, and he soon set off for Paris. Charles of Anjou returned to Sicily but rejoined Edward at Cyprus.

Undeterred, Edward declared, "By God's blood, though all my fellow soldiers and countrymen desert me, I will go to Acre with Fowin my groom, and keep my word and my oath to the death."[35] True to his vow, he continued on without the French contingent, landing in Acre in May, 1271, at the head of a much smaller crusader army weakened by dysentery, though his efforts there were to prove anticlimactic. Soon afterward, Baibars attempted to have the English heir murdered in his tent. Edward overcame and killed the Assassin (the name of an order of Shi'ite Muslims), but not before he received a serious cut from the poison dagger. Legend has it that the queen sucked the poison from the king's wound, though scholars believe that if anyone made such a sacrificial act, it was likely to have been Otto de Grandson.[36]

In September 1272, Edward was well enough to leave Acre and sailed for Trapani in Sicily where he was hosted by his uncle Charles of Anjou. While continuing to recuperate on the island, he learned of the death of his son John in October, and the

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[35] T. F. Tout, *Edward the First* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 50.
[36] John Carmi Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile: Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 29-30.

following month, the loss of his father. In 1273, Edward started his homeward journey via Rome, where he called on Pope Gregory X, then continued on to his dukedom of Gascony to take care of some business there, and then to Paris, where he performed homage for Gascony and conferred with the new French king, before finally sailing for Dover in August of 1274.

The Ninth Crusade was the last pope-sanctioned crusade of the thirteenth century and is generally considered to be the last of the major medieval crusading expeditions, rendering Edward the last western European king to have participated in the sacred cause. In May of 1291, Acre fell and with it the last vestiges of the western crusading movement. Though the Ninth Crusade did not prove very productive militarily, amounting to no more than a minor excursion with modest results, for Edward and Eleanor personally it saw the birth of two more children. It was at Acre that Eleanor gave birth to a daughter, afterward known as "Joan of Acre," and later at Bayonne, in Gascony, she delivered a boy named Alphonso. More importantly, the crusading experience opened up the world for Edward and "seems to have lent substance to the wider and more imperial aspects of Edward's [foreign] policy."[37] The camaraderie Edward established within the small group of companions who accompanied him on the eastward trek led to life-long friendships that played pivotal roles later in his reign.[38]

Back in England, there were more predicaments on the horizon. In a time of high infant mortality rates and short life expectancies, battles over royal succession were a

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[37] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 105.
[38] Michael Prestwich, *The Three Edwards: War and State in England, 1272-1377* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 7-8.

regular source of tension during the medieval era. The problem of the "Sicilian Vespers" presented a succession crisis within Europe which eventually ensnared the English king. The turmoil began with a revolt in Sicily in 1282 which resulted in the ouster of Edward's French relative Charles of Anjou, also King of Sicily and brother of the late Louis IX, followed by the Sicilian invitation to Peter of Aragon to assume the throne, as he was married to Constance, daughter of the former Sicilian king whom Charles had usurped. The French Pope Martin IV predictably backed Charles, as did his nephew, the French king Philip III, who tried to compel Edward's participation via his role as Edward's overload for Gascony. For a couple of years, Edward had managed to remain out of the fray by claiming his resources were tied up in his Welsh campaign. Not inclined to intervene militarily, as ordered by the pope, who had gone so far as to elevate the action to crusade status, Edward sought to negotiate a peaceful outcome, but with little success. Perhaps Edward's biggest frustration with the whole predicament was that the pope was squandering the crusading funds he had spent years accumulating (and which Edward had counted upon for his second crusading endeavor) on a foolish war between two Christian kings. However, in 1285, just as Edward was fresh out of excuses why he could not engage in the war, all of the players died in rather quick succession, inadvertently propelling Edward to the role senior statesmen in Europe.[39]

During the late spring of 1286, in this new international capacity, Edward decided his best option was to meet personally with the various parties and try again to broker a truce with a new slate of leaders. He first met with Alfonso III of Aragon at Oloron close

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[39] E.L.G. Stones, *Edward I* (London: Oxford U.P., 1968), 31-32.

to the Gascon border. Edward had with him a contingency of Welshmen, emphasizing the

extent of his conquests and therefore his military prowess. Not to be outdone, Alfonso

arrived from Aragon with a group Saracens. As was typical of meetings between kings,

there was much feasting and celebrating, with jousts and assorted games. Gifts were

exchanged; Alfonso gave Edward a wildcat and a lion. Alfonso demanded hostages and

cash, the negotiations culminating in three of Charles of Anjou's sons, including his heir,

along with sixty noblemen from Provence being handed over along with 50,000 marks.[40]

Edward was finally able to broker a truce, which was signed on July 15, 1286, putting an

end to the Sicilian Vespers issue. Edward had an ulterior motive in expediently finalizing

the dispute, for he desperately wanted to organize and lead another crusade.

Edward found himself involved in two more such conflicts during his reign, the

first of which had a direct impact upon his plans for his own succession. Friction between

England and Scotland can be traced to the period shortly after the Norman Conquest.

Initially Malcolm III Canmore acknowledged King William's rule and became his liege

lord. Despite relatively minor skirmishes over the years, contention between the English

and the Scots did not erupt into full-fledged war until the reign of Edward I. Tensions

initially arose with crisis of the Scottish succession known as "The Great Cause," the

consequences of which led to continued wars with Scotland for two centuries to follow.

Yet it began as a rather routine marriage alliance.

Relations between the two kingdoms were amicable until Edward's brother-in-

law Alexander III died suddenly in a riding accident on March 18, 1286. The children of

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[40] Marc Morris, *Edward I*, A Great and Terrible King (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 209-210.

his marriage to Edward's sister had all died, as had his wife. At the time of his death, his second wife Yolande of Dreux was pregnant but delivered a still-born child later the same year.[41] Alexander and Margaret's oldest daughter had married King Eric of Norway, but died giving birth to their only offspring, also named Margaret, in 1283. The marriage contract between Eric and Margaret stipulated that their children would succeed to the throne of the Scotland should Alexander's heirs not survive.[42] That child, sole heir to the Scottish crown, was three-year-old Margaret, known as the "Maid of Norway." Edward proposed a marriage contract between The Maid and his son and heir Edward, thus solidifying his hold upon Scotland and ensuring peace between the neighboring realms. Upon his father's death, Edward of Caernarfon would not only become king of England, but king of Scotland by right of his wife.

In 1286, Edward, the Norwegian ambassadors and the Scottish Guardians all agreed that The Maid, now aged seven, would travel to England within the next twelve months and be immediately wed to Edward of Caernarfon. It represented the union of two kingdoms and promised a powerful protector for The Maid and peaceful neighbors for the English. However, the Scots were concerned that the two kingdoms would be merged and Scottish independence forfeited with the marriage, and they sought a prenuptial agreement to prevent such a scenario. Edward found himself embroiled in a royal power struggle that quickly stagnated and became a royal stand-off. The sticking point was Edward's insistence that he control all Scottish castles so that he would be able

[41] Marc Morris, *Edward I*, A Great and Terrible King (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 232-233.
[42] A.A. Duncan, *The Kingship of the Scots 842–1292: Succession and Independence* (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2002), 321-324.

to safeguard their security. The impasse was broken when word reached the negotiators that The Maid had already sailed from Norway and was en route to Scotland. As the Scots awaited the arrival of their new queen in the early fall of 1290, they gathered at Scone Abbey to prepare for her coronation. Edward also wanted to make a good impression on his soon-to-be daughter-in-law, so he sent the bishop of Durham to present her with a cache of jewels. Officials from both kingdoms rode north to meet the Norwegian vessel carrying the little queen, which had unexpectantly docked in the Orkney Islands. During their journey, they had received word that The Maid had fallen ill, perhaps from food poisoning.[43] Upon arriving at port, they quickly learned that the girl was dead, as were the hopes and dreams of the English king.

With the death of The Maid, the Scottish throne was once again vacant, and Edward was once again embroiled in its succession crisis. The Scots had to go back over a hundred years to locate distant royal lines that were still in existence. The two best candidates were Robert Bruce and John Baillol. The bishop of St. Andrews, in effort to secure a respected outside mediator, wrote to Edward and asked him to intervene in order to prevent a civil war. The death of The Maid had deprived the king of a very alluring trophy in Scotland, and the death of his own Queen Eleanor only a couple of months later sent him into a self-imposed exile where in the midst of his grief he devised a new plan for Scotland, which he presented to his nobles in early 1291. One chronicler reports that the king "said that it was in his mind to reduce the king and kingdom of Scotland to his

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[43] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 237.

rule, as he had recently subjugated Wales to his authority."[44] Edward arranged for a court

to be set up to decide the issue, which on November 17, 1292, ruled in favor of John

Balliol, with his son Edward of Caernarfon becoming heir designate. Before leaving for

his coronation at Scone, Baillol publicly swore fealty to Edward for Scotland in the most

explicit terms at Norham – in England. Then at Newcastle a little more than a month

later, the new Scottish king knelt before Edward and did homage in front of the magnates

there assembled for the Christmas court.[45]

  In his capacity as overlord of Scotland, Edward soon sought military support from

the Scottish king in 1295 for his battle for Gascony in France. King John Baillol

repeatedly ignored Edward's summons, so the king sent two clerics to demand the

surrender of the three castles as a fine for disobedience to his leige lord to whom Baillol

had sworn fealty in1291. Baillol refused. On December 16, 1295, Edward declared his

intent "of marching against John, king of Scots, who has violated the fealty he owes the

Crown of England."[46] Edward also sought an historical basis for his claims upon

Scotland. In a letter to Pope Boniface VIII justifying his rightful dominance of Scotland,

he reached way back into the Old Testament to Biblical judges Eli and Samuel, then leapt

to a Trojan named Brutus who conquered Albion (Britain) and founded London, while at

the same time appointing his son Albanact ruler of Scotland, which later came under the

control of King Arthur and was subsequently passed down the generations of English

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[44] A.A. Duncan, *The Kingship of the Scots 842–1292: Succession and Independence* (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2002), 178, 197-199.

[45] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 260.

[46] A.A. Duncan, *The Kingship of the Scots 842–1292: Succession and Independence* (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2002), 321-324.

kings to Edward himself. He even went as far as to have a genealogical roll created in 1300 to illustrate this continuous thread between Brutus and Edward I. The king ordered the monasteries to scour their archives in search of evidence for this link as well.[47]

Seven months later, Baillol and his supporters surrendered at Montrose, followed by the abdication of the Scottish king, at which time Edward held a humiliating ceremony where he very publicly unmade the king of the Scots which he himself had created only four years earlier. Baillol was forced to surrender his royal regalia, and then in a dramatic show of ceremonial emasculation, Edward ripped the Scottish royal coat of arms from Baillol's tabard, thus his moniker "Toom Tabard" (empty coat). He was then sent to London for an extended stay in the Tower.[48] This event was the precursor to a long series of battles with the Scots over English supremacy versus Scottish independence.

In the ongoing struggles that ensued, William Wallace, of Scottish lore, was an arrogant grassroots rebel leader with whom Edward eventually dealt harshly. In September of 1297, an army commanded by Wallace and Andrew Moray were victorious at the Battle of Stirling Bridge. Hugh Cressingham, the English treasurer in Scotland, died in the fighting, and reputedly his body was subsequently flayed and the skin cut into small pieces and distributed as tokens of the triumph. Wallace allegedly had "a broad strip [of Cressingham's skin] ... taken from the head to the heel, to make therewith a baldrick for his sword."[49] After the battle, on behalf of the deposed John Balliol, Moray

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[47] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 139.

[48] M. Blount and E.L.G. Stones, "The Surrender of King John of Scotland to Edward I in 1296: some new evidence," *Bulletin of Historical Research*, xlviii (1975): 99.

[49] Herbert Maxwell and James Wilson, *The Chronicle of Lanercost, 1272-1346* (Glasgow: J. Maclehose and Sons, 1913), 164.

and Wallace assumed the title of Guardians of the Kingdom of Scotland, but Moray died several months later, leaving Wallace sole Guardian. That same year, Wallace led a large-scale month-long raid into northern England, consuming everything it its path. One chronicler wrote, "In all the monasteries and churches between Newcastle and Carlisle, the service of God totally ceased, for all the canons, monks and priests fled before the Scots, as did nearly all the people."[50] Almost one year later, Wallace commanded the Scottish forces at the Battle of Falkirk, on July 22, 1298, where the Scots were roundly defeated by the English forces, and Wallace narrowly escaped.

Wallace managed to evade capture for over six years, until August 5, 1305, when he was turned over to English soldiers at Robroyston, who brought him to London and imprisoned him at the Tower of London. His trial, such as it was, lasted only one day and took place in Westminster Hall on August 23, 1305, where the Scottish knight was accused of treason and of war crimes against innocent civilians, "sparing neither age nor sex, monk nor nun."[51] Responding to the charge of treason, he proclaimed, "I could not be a traitor to Edward, for I was never his subject."[52] He was then crowned with a garland of oak to suggest he was a vanquished "king" of outlaws. Wallace was escorted from the hall back to the Tower of London, stripped naked and dragged through the city behind a horse. He endured a slow and grisly death; he was first hanged (but not unto death), then drawn and quartered, castrated, eviscerated and his bowels burnt before him.

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[50] Walter Guisborough and Harry Rothwell, *The Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough ;Previously Edited as the Chronicle of Walter of Hemingford or Hemingburgh* (London: Offices of the Society, 1957), 104.

[51] Gary Solis, *The law of armed conflict: international humanitarian law in war* (Cambridge, [Eng]: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 6.

[52] Herbert Maxwell and James Wilson, *The Chronicle of Lanercost, 1272-1346* (Glasgow: J. Maclehose and Sons, 1913), 164.

Next, he was beheaded, and his head, dipped in tar, was placed on a pike atop London Bridge. Finally, he was dismembered and his limbs dispatched to the Scottish cities of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Stirling, and Perth as a reminder of the consequences of challenging the authority of the English king.[53] The castration in particular may have been an escalation of the humiliation done to Baillol two years before.

In the summer of 1279, Edward and Eleanor crossed to France to take care of a list of issues that demanded their personal attention. The queen was required to homage to King Philip III for her new lordship of Ponthieu. When a woman performed homage, she did not say, 'I become your woman' because it was considered unfitting because she had already proclaimed as much to her husband, when she was married. Instead, she promised, "I do to you homage, and to you shall be faithful and true, and faith to you shall bear for the tenements I hold of you, saving the faith I owe to our sovereign lord the king."[54] For men, the prescription followed a time-honored tradition. The junior candidate who was to become the vassal of his senior (seigneur) knelt and presented himself bareheaded and without weapons as a sign of his submission to the will of the lord. Then the vassal would clasp his hands before his chest in the ultimate sign of submission, mirroring the Christian position of prayer, and then extend his clasped hands toward to the lord, who grasped the vassal's hands between his own, demonstrating he

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[53] Joseph Stevenson, *Documents illustrative of Sir William Wallace, his life and times* ([Edinburgh]: Printed for the Maitland Club, 1841), 189, 192.

[54] Thomas Littelton and Eugene Wambaugh, *Littleton's Tenures in English*, ed. Eugene Wambaugh (Littleton, Colo: Rothman, 1985), 39-42.

was the superior in the relationship. The candidate would then announce his desire to become "the man," and the lord would indicate his acceptance, completing the act of homage. The vassal would then place his hands upon a Bible or a saint's relic and swear to remain faithful and never harm his lord in any way. This created a new pact of protection and mutual services, which included a prescribed number of days of military duty if called upon by the king.

Fealty, or fidelitas in Latin, was performed as a freeholder, holding his right hand upon a book and saying, "Know ye this, my lord, that I shall be faithful and true unto you, and faith to you shall bear for the lands which I claim to hold of you, and that I shall lawfully do to you the customs and services which I ought to do, at the terms assigned, so help me God and his saints," and he then kissed the book.[55] But he did not kneel when he made his oath of fealty, nor did he make "humble reverence" as in homage. Further, one could swear "fealty" to many different overlords with respect to different land holdings, but "homage" could only be performed to a single liege lord.

Occasionally, the custom of homage could create conflicting obligations. For example, King Edward was sovereign in England, meaning he had no duty of homage regarding any English holding. However, this was not the case for their French lands. The French kings, though weaker militarily, still had the right to demand homage from their English counterparts. The usual oath was therefore originally modified by Henry II to add the qualification "for the lands I hold overseas."[56] The implication was that no

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[55] Thomas Littelton and Eugene Wambaugh, *Littleton's Tenures in English*, ed. Eugene Wambaugh (Littleton, Colo: Rothman, 1985), 39-42.

[56] Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 321–323.

"knight's service"[57] was owed for the conquered English lands. After King John surrendered Normandy to France in 1204, English magnates with holdings on both sides of the Channel were faced with conflicting loyalties. John still expected to recover his ancestral lands, and those English lords who held lands in Normandy would have to choose sides. Many were forced to abandon their continental holdings.[58]

On another occasion in the fall of 1278, King Alexander III of Scotland, former brother-in-law of Edward, was in attendance at the wedding of Llywelyn ap Grufydd to Eleanor de Montfort. On his journey to Worcester, where the nuptials were held, Alexander insisted upon a large escort of English nobles to emphasize his power and independence, though he would also be required to do homage to Edward for his English lands. Alexander offered to perform his homage soon after the wedding, but Edward insisted the act take place in the presence of his full council at Westminster when they met a couple of weeks later. Alexander acquiesced, but underscored that he was doing so only as a favor to the king. The ceremony took place on October 8. Alexander obliged by reciting his personal limited homage for his English holdings. It was then that the bishop of Norwich suggested Alexander should also do homage for Scotland. According to a Scottish report, Alexander responded by stating, "Nobody but God has the right to homage for my kingdom of Scotland, and I hold it of nobody but God himself."[59]

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[57] Thomas Littelton and Eugene Wambaugh, *Littleton's Tenures in English*, ed. Eugene Wambaugh (Littleton, Colo: Rothman, 1985), 39-42.

[58] Ibid.

[59] A.A. Duncan, *The Kingship of the Scots 842–1292: Succession and Independence* (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2002), 160.

There were consequences for those who failed to performing homage, especially for high-ranking nobles. The treaty of 1264 required Llywelyn to do homage to King Henry III in a ceremony, held in 1267, where Llywelyn formally and publicly acknowledged that he held Wales at the pleasure of the King of England in his capacity as the king's vassal. The ceremony had to be repeated with each new king or new leader in Wales, and typically was done during the coronation festivities, but conspicuously Llywelyn was not in attendance Edward I's coronation in August of 1274, and continued to evade his duty as a vassal of the king. His refusal was tantamount to denying Edward's rights as overlord of Wales. The situation was further exacerbated by Llywelyn's expressed intent to marry Edward's cousin Eleanor de Montfort, daughter of the late earl. The impasse eventually led to declaration of war late in 1276, and fighting commenced in 1277 with an invasion of Wales led by the king himself. Surrounded by English troops, Llywelyn decided his best option was to sign the Treaty of Conway, which he did on November 9, 1277, reducing his land holding in Wales by half, granting his brother Dafydd large tracts of land as a reward for his support of the king during the war, and requiring him to finally do his homage to the king.

Per the king's specific orders, Llywelyn made his way to London in December of 1277, and in "the final act of this piece of political theater,"[60] the erstwhile Prince of Wales knelt before King Edward on Christmas Day, and in front of a multitude of nobles and clergy, placed his hands between those of the king and swore allegiance to his liege

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[60] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 158.

lord. In return for his submission, Llywelyn was rewarded by the bestowal of the king's royal blessing upon his marriage to Eleanor, the cost for which the king incurred, and acting as chief celebrant at the nuptials and paying for the festivities as well.[61]

Armed battles were a regular occurrence in medieval political life for which a host of unwritten rules applied. One common tactic involved the taking of prisoners of war. Hostage exchanges were a regular feature of medieval treaties agreed upon following significant military conflicts or other major disagreements. Typically, the victor imposed this requirement, whereby one or more high-born young males from the defeated party were confined within a particular castle under the close supervision of the victorious party until all of the tenets of the treaty had been fulfilled. The practice was also a public and visible display of power on the part of the victor, as well as a way to continue to relish his triumph while insuring he received his spoils of war. During the raids of Simon de Montfort and his supporters upon his return to England in the spring of 1263, he unleashed devastating attack upon the lands of the queen and her adherents. The queen's Savoyard kinsman, the Bishop of Hereford, was dragged from his church and locked up in one of the castles belonging to Roger Clifford, then thereby held hostage. Edward was first taken as a hostage, along with his royal cousin Henry of Almain, by his own uncle Simon de Montfort, on May 16, 1264, following the Battle of Lewes. The great of Earl Leicester, Simon de Montfort, demanded both the heir and the son of the Earl of Cornwall as assurance that the king and the royalists would adhere to the array of promises and concessions forced upon them by the renegade nobles. Though

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[61] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 65.

Henry III was not formally considered a hostage, he was closely supervised by

Montfortian operatives within his own household, and in fact, his movements were so

restricted, there was little difference in his existence in London and that of his son and

nephew who remained in custody as hostages at Wallingford Castle in Berkshire.[62]

Simon de Montfort pretended to yield to increasing pressure from the English magnates

to release the lord Edward and turn him over to his father. In a formal ceremony held at

Westminster Hall on March 11, 1265, de Montfort feigned to magnanimously release his

prized royal hostages. The cost, however, was steep, requiring Edward to hand over

almost all of his lands, which by that time were extensive and covered large tracts in

Wales, Ireland, Chester, and Gascony.[63] The hollow spectacle held no real significance,

but it did serve as an important, though certainly unintended catalyst in that it motivated

Gilbert de Clare, the wealthy and powerful Marcher Earl of Gloucester, to throw his

imposing support behind the royalists, which eventually led to the decisive Battle of

Evesham and the full restoration of the monarchy under Henry III.

There were further instances of hostage-taking during Edward's reign. To ensure

compliance with the Treaty of Conway, signed by Edward and Llywelyn in 1277,

Edward took hostages in exchange for Llywelyn's continued adherence to the terms of

the agreement. Edward also demanded hostages following the Welsh War of 1283 in

order to prevent any further uprisings.[64] In May of 1295, Edward required a number of

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[62] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 65.
[63] Ibid, 188.
[64] Ibid, 279.

Welsh hostages as he advanced through each district.[65] During the Sicilian Vespers crisis,

Edward offered some of his own men to temporarily stand in as hostages for

Charles of Salerno until he was able to gather his three sons and the sixty noblemen he

had promised to Alfonso III of Aragon to finally settle the issue.

One of the most prevalent means of medieval foreign relations was the practice of

marriage diplomacy, primarily because it was infinitely less expensive than wars and

promoted long-lasting ties that reached far beyond treaties and into familial bonds. The

ritualized medieval sacramental ceremony of marriage represented the uniting of two

kingdoms and two bloodlines, as well as two individuals, and benefitted the relations of

both the bride and the groom. After a brief childhood, the next major event for the child

of a medieval monarch, especially an heir to the throne, was arranging for a suitable and

advantageous marriage. Henry III sought a union for his son, the then lord Edward, to

Eleanor of Castile in order to settle an ongoing dispute with Castile over Gascony.

Alfonso X of Castile had taken advantage of the situation and resurrected a rather weak

claim to the region.[66] Henry traveled to Gascony to personally attempt to strike a

compromise, the result of which was the proposed marriage between his fourteen-year-

old son Edward and Eleanor of Castile, half-sister of Alfonso X, who was a year younger

than Edward. While his marriage was politically expedient, the Church had forbidden

forced marriages since the twelfth century, and in a youthful chivalric moment, Edward

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[65] Michael Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 32.
[66] Bjōrn K. U. Weiler and Ifor Rowlands, *England and Europe in the Reign of Henry III (1216-1272)* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2002), 167.

said that he "willingly and spontaneously" agreed to marry Eleanor, "of whose prudence and beauty we have heard by general report."[67]

The fact that the wedding ceremony of Edward and Eleanor took place in Castile in October 1254 – in the birth month of the groom's father as well as Edward the Confessor – at the convent church of Santa Maria Las Hueglas in Burgos, Castile, was rather unusual yet significant. Typically the foreign bride would have been brought to the kingdom of the bridegroom, particularly if he was an heir to the throne, and often she would even be raised from childhood along with him and his siblings in the same household in order to become a more integrated part of her future country. Alfonso insisted that Edward come to Castile, probably to soothe his pride over the loss of his trumped up assertions in Gascony. The nuptials of Edward and Eleanor closely mirrored those of their common ancestors Leonor of England and Alfonso VIII of Castile, who had been married in the same church exactly fifty years earlier. Edward was knighted by his future brother-in-law king Alfonso X prior to the wedding, along with some of his noble English companions.[68] Thus Edward crossed two of the most important and ritualized thresholds of medieval noble coming-of-age by at once becoming a knight and a husband. Edward's father King Henry III, the author of the match, proclaimed "friendship between princes can be obtained in no more fitting manner than by the link of the conjugal troth."[69]

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[67] Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *The Learned King: the Reign of Alfonso X of Castile* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 189.

[68] John Carmi Parsons, *Medieval Queenship* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 63.

[69] William Stubbs, *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II* (Wiesbaden: Kraus Reprint, 1965), 161.

Edward and Eleanor were both strong proponents of marriage diplomacy, likely because their own experience had proved to be so constructive, and they arranged a number of political marriages for their children and relatives as well as their staff. Their eldest daughter Eleanor was initially engaged to Alfonso, son of Peter III of Aragon, but because his parents had been placed under papal interdict due to the Sicilian Vespers controversy, Edward sought to delay the marriage, which eventually came to naught because Alfonso died before the nuptials could take place. In 1293, Eleanor subsequently married the French nobleman, Henry III, Count of Bar, in Bristol in an effort to unite Bar and England against the French King Philip IV, whose sister Margaret Edward himself wed in 1299 as part of a peace agreement.[70]

Edward and Eleanor's second daughter Joan of Acre's first marriage was arranged for her by her parents to Hartman, son of King Rudolph I of Germany, when she was only five. However, he drowned at Rheinau shortly before the marriage took place. Almost immediately, Edward then betrothed Joan to Gilbert de Clare, 7th Earl of Gloucester, thirty years older than Joan and newly divorced from Henry III's niece Alice de Lusignan, the earl was one of the most powerful noble's in her father's kingdom. To ensure the support of de Clare, Edward gave his eighteen-year-old daughter to the forty-six-year-old divorcé in a private ceremony held in the royal chapel (St. Stephen's at Westminster Palace) just prior to the start of the parliamentary session.[71] As always, the king had more than one motive for arranging this union. It was customary for nobles to

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[70] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 224.
[71] Ibid, 225.

give a fellow noble, especially the king, a monetary gift on the occasion of one of his children's marriages.[72]

Until his untimely death in August of 1284, at the age of 10, Alphonso was the longed-for heir to the throne upon whom hung all of Edward's hopes and dreams for England's future. By all accounts he was an intelligent dutiful son, and to help ensure the prospects for his future success, the king betrothed his son to Margaret of Holland. However, just months before the wedding, Alphonso died suddenly at Windsor Castle. Even this sad event did not curb the king and queen's efforts at royal match-making. Their daughter Margaret was chosen to wed John II, Duke of Brabant, in 1290, to secure another ally against the French. She had been acquainted with her groom since childhood, as they had been betrothed in 1278 when she was just three years old. The wedding festivities, which took place July 8, 1290, in London, were quite extravagant. Upgraded to a state occasion, the ceremony was held in Westminster Abbey and attended by hundreds of nobles and celebrated by a very large group of Londoners with free-flowing wine and merriment, compliments of the king. The wedding feast featured 426 minstrels on hand to entertain the guests.[73]

Marriage negotiations ensued for their daughter Elizabeth to wed John I, Count of Holland, and he was duly sent to England to be educated and integrated into the English court. On January 7, 1297, they were married at Ipswich. This union provided Edward with a friendly spot on the continental coast where he might land troops and outflank the French who were concentrated in Gascony at the time of the wedding. However, in1299

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[72] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 227.
[73] Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 108.

John died of dysentery, at which time the bride was promptly dispatched to her parents in England, having failed to provide her adopted country with an heir. Upon her return to England, in 1302 Elizabeth was married at Westminster Abbey to Humphrey de Bohun, 4th Earl of Hereford, 3rd Earl of Essex, and also Constable of England.[74]

The king's brother Edmund was sent to France in 1299 to negotiate the impasse between the two kingdoms over a naval confrontation between some Gascon and Britaigne ships that had grown to epic political proportions. The negotiations took place in secret and Edward did not consult his nobles, as was his habit. However, the only part of the agreement that Philip IV adhered to was the marriage of his sister Margaret to the widowed king Edward. The French king and his Valois brother had tricked Edward and Edmund out of Gascony by reneging on their promises.74 A peace treaty was finally agreed upon with Philip IV, the terms including the marriage of the king to Philip's sister, as well as the betrothal of Edward of Caernarfon to Philip's daughter Isabella, only four years old at the time.[75] On September 8, 1299, the queen-to-be landed at Dover and was welcomed by the bridegroom's son Edward of Caernarfon. The wedding ceremony took place two days later in the doorway of Canterbury cathedral conducted by Archbishop of Canterbury.

Edward of Caernarfon was twenty-three years old and still unmarried when his father died in 1307, the only one of his siblings to enjoy such freedom. He was in no hurry to bring his betrothed to England and may well have delayed the marriage simply

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[74] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 269-270.
[75] Elizabeth Hallam, *English Royal Marriages: The French Marriages of Edward I and Edward II: 1299 and 1307* (London: H.M.S.O., 1981), 4.

to spite his father. His reluctance may also be attributable to the son's strong attachment to Piers Gaveston, as was the king's assessment, or perhaps because the new king had been so involved in the ongoing Scottish battles he had relegated his wedding to a lower spot on his list of priorities. Edward II knew that he was duty-bound to provided heirs for the kingdom in order to ensure the succession, to pacify the nobles and to arrange his own marriage alliances one day. And he certainly recognized the importance of maintaining a firm peace with the French. So a little over a year after burying his father, Edward did indeed wed Isabella, eleven years his junior. Contrary to the underlying purpose of the marriage alliance, Isabella eventually became England's worst enemy. Probably due to the humiliation she suffered in the face of her husband's infidelities with Gaveston, she eventually formed an alliance of her own with her lover Roger Mortimer and usurped the throne, deposing and imprisoning her ineffectual husband and placing her twelve-year-old son Edward III on the throne with herself as regent. Edward II died under mysterious circumstances almost two years later at Berkeley Castle, most likely murdered.[76] Royal marriages often created strange bedfellows.

By the end of the thirteenth century, Edward had become the elder statesman of European monarchs, much as Louis IX had been at the outset of Edward's reign. His judgment was respected by his fellow monarchs, and they sought his advice in resolving conflicts of their own. Like every king, Edward had moments when he lost his temper and acted on impulse, but he was known for generally being fair and level-headed, which is why his advice and intervention were valued by his peers. However, he would never

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[76] May McKisack, *The fourteenth century: 1307-1399* (Oxford, Eng: Clarendon Press, 1959), 94-95.

have been consulted had he not been perceived as a powerful leader, a quality he

developed over the years in part through ceremony and spectacle in his interactions with

his fellow rulers.

Chapter 3

Suppressing Rebellion

A fitting cliché for medieval monarchs, "keep your friends close and your enemies closer," is advice that surely applied to Edward's administration of his realm. The thirteenth century medieval court was rife with intrigue, and it is ironic that the nobles, who flourished at the benevolent hand of the king, were often the very ones stirring up the most controversy. Rebellion colored Edward's early years before he even ascended the throne. Though at times Henry III had shown himself capable of kingship and warfare, he had enmeshed himself so deeply within his wife's entanglements that he was rendered virtually ineffective as a leader. His father's mistakes were not lost on Edward, who as a young man had been forced to take up arms against his own uncle in order to put down a mounting rebellion of English magnates. Negotiations had failed, and Edward realized that only a show of power through an armed conflict would resolve the issues. In the process, he learned some powerful lessons which he carried into his own reign.

Edward was raised like any other English child of noble birth. In thirteenth-century Europe, kings often conferred upon their heirs a grant of land, typically somewhat remote and not necessarily part of the kingdom, known in England as an affinity or an appanage, where the heir could practice kingship and governance without the risk of too much harm to the monarch. Henry III bestowed a very generous portfolio of territories upon Edward in 1253 and 1254, around the time of his marriage to Eleanor of Castile. In fact, King Alfonso X required an annual income of 10,000 before he would

approve the marriage contract of his half-sister to the lord Edward. This included the cities of Stamford, Bristol and Grantham, all of Ireland, the earldom of Chester, all of the king's possessions in Wales, the Islands of Jersey, Guernsey, and Oléron, and all of Gascony. Basically, Henry turned over to his son all of his holdings outside of England proper, making him, in one fell stroke, the richest land holder in England beside the king himself.[77]

Even before he ascended the throne, Edward faced challenges from England's restless nobles, those men who should have been allies, but instead turned against their king. The Welsh were also a continuous source of tumult for much of Edward's life. In late August of 1256, Edward had just returned from Wales via his earldom of Chester after he had renounced his temporarily misguided defection to the side of the rebel barons. London was decked out for the occasion of symbolic royal family reunion to receive Edward, and a great feast had been laid at Westminster Palace in a show of unity. All of Henry and Eleanor's children attended, included Margaret and Alexander, king and queen of Scotland. Though there had been continuing tension between Henry and his heir due to Edward's rebellious association with Simon de Montfort and a group of disgruntled earls, the king was quoted as saying, "Let not my son Edward appear before me. If I see him, I shall not restrain myself from embracing him."[78] In fact, Edward was more upset with his mother and her kinsmen for placing restrictions upon him in his

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[77] T. F. Tout, *Edward the First* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 12-13.
[78] Harry Rothwell, *English Historical Documents. Volume 3, 1189-1327* (London: Routledge, 1996), 197-198.

father's absence. One chronicler reported, "she was said to be the cause of all the malice."[79] Thanks to the intervention and mediation of Henry's brother Richard of Cornwall, Edward was reconciled with his parents in a special ceremony held at St. Paul's in front of an assembly of the English magnates where, after he denied his actions were intended to harm his father, they gave their son the kiss of peace.[80]

Tensions between the barons and the crown finally erupted into a full-scale conflict. The nobles, led by Simon de Montfort, wanted King Henry III to return to the Provisions of Oxford to which he had agreed in 1253. Henry's refusal led directly to the Battle of Lewes. Prior to the battle, Edward informed his troops that the usual battlefield rules of chivalry would be formally suspended. No surrender would be accepted. The chronicler Robert of Gloucester called it "the murder of Evesham, for battle it was none."[81] The royalists sought out Earl Simon, first killing his horse from beneath him, and with his lance struck him through the neck. Earl Roger de Mortimer struck the fatal blow, his armor and shield-straps easily recognizable.[82] Then all the knights of importance turned their backs, while others beheaded him, cut off his hands and feet, as well as his genitals, which they stuffed in his mouth, and finished by riddling his lifeless body with multiple stab wounds. De Montfort's severed head was carried on a pike to Wigmore Castle and presented to de Mortimer's wife as a trophy of the royalists' triumph. One chronicler suggested that the castration was done in retribution for de

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[79] Harry Rothwell, *English Historical Documents. Volume 3, 1189-1327* (London: Routledge, 1996), 197-198.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Olivier de Laborderie, J. R. Maddicott and David A. Carpenter, "The Last Hours of Simon de Montfort: A New Account," *English Historical Review* 115 (Apr., 2000): 403.
[82] Ibid, 411.

Montfort marrying the king's sister without prior royal approval and after she had made a vow of chastity.[83] His corpse was stripped, and he was found to be wearing a hair shirt, a common medieval act of penance.[84]

Simon de Montfort's summary execution on the battlefield, along with nearly forty other knights, was an act of aristocratic slaughter that had not been seen in England since the Conquest some two hundred years earlier. At Lewes the previous year, there had been very few knightly fatalities, and the same had been true of most battles in England and Normandy since at least the reign of Henry I. The armor worn by knights usually prevented serious injury during the actual fighting, and the code of chivalry dictated that when a knight was surrounded and disarmed, he was permitted to surrender. Indeed, the aim in battle was usually to capture, not to kill, one's knightly opponents in order to use them during peace negotiations. At Evesham, surrenders were not heeded and knights were deliberately killed. With no legal precedent in England for the execution of magnates accused of political crimes, murder on the battlefield was the only way of permanently eliminating a traitor such as Simon de Montfort.[85] In particular, the desecration of the earl's body was the ultimate in humiliation and defeat, and served as a warning to anyone who dared cross the king again.

To understand Edward's deep and lasting conviction that Wales, as well as Scotland, were rightfully subjugated to the English crown, it is important grasp his near obsession with the legends of King Arthur. Edward, and indeed all of England, believed

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[83] M. T. Clanchy, *England and It's Rulers* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1998), 280.

[84] J.R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 89.

[85] Olivier de Laborderie, J. R. Maddicott and David A. Carpenter, "The Last Hours of Simon de Montfort: A New Account," *English Historical Review* 115 (Apr., 2000): 403.

King Arthur was an historical figure. Much of what was known of Arthur by those of Edward's day came from Welshman Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae (translated as History of the Kings of England), which he penned in the 1130's. Edward had a keen awareness of history and routinely made adept use of this knowledge. He also was known to have owned the Arthurian romances and was likely well acquainted with their chivalric tales.[86] Over the years, he became as infatuated with the legend of King Arthur as his father before him had been with the cult of St. Edward the Confessor. A legendary English leader, King Arthur was said to have led the defense of Britain against the Saxon invaders in the early sixth century. Medieval people – kings and commoners alike – were heavily influenced by oral histories, legends and folklore, and they were not nearly as concerned with the historical accuracy of the Arthurian legend as the principles they represented.

The ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, the purported burial place of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere, are all that remain of what was once the greatest monastic foundation and church in all of Britain, which, at the height of the Middle Ages, was the leading shrine in all of Europe, which some even considered to be as important as Rome itself. Another medieval chronicler, Gerald of Wales, relates that the Glastonbury monks had purportedly uncovered a hollowed-out log containing two bodies. A stone slab cover was found at the seven-foot level, and attached to its underside was an oddly shaped cross with a Latin inscription naming the occupants of the coffin as the renowned King Arthur

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[86] Marc Morris, *Edward I*, A Great and Terrible King (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 165.

and his queen, Guinevere.[87] From their grave, the bodies of Arthur and Guinevere may have been translated to a tomb inside the newly rebuilt Lady Chapel at Glastonbury Abbey, which had been completed in 1186. After the discovery and translation of their remains, nothing was heard of the tomb or the bodies until many years later when the "Annals of Waverley" claimed they were in the treasury in the east range of the abbey church, awaiting removal to a more fitting location. The bodies remained there until 1278, when King Edward I arrived at Glastonbury in the spring to preside over their reburial.

Two days after celebrating Easter at the abbey, Edward ordered Arthur's grave to be opened at twilight, presumably to increase the dramatic effect. "There in two caskets were found the bones of the said king, of wondrous size, and those of Guinevere, of marvelous beauty," wrote a local chronicler.[88] The following morning, Edward personally enveloped Arthur's bone in a piece of silk, while Queen Eleanor did the same for Guinevere's remains. The two sets of bones were then placed in the abbey treasury until a new, and ostensibly more fitting, tomb could be made. From a sixteenth century account, it would seem the new coffin was constructed of black marble flanked on each end by lions and an effigy of the mythical king at the foot and placed underneath the high altar, in the recently rebuilt great abbey church.[89] This solemn ceremony forever entwined the lives of Edward and his idol Arthur in the mind of the king as well as his subjects.

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[87] Gerald of Wales, *The Journey Through Wales and The Description of Wales* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), 272.
[88] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 165.
[89] Ibid, 165-166.

It is his association with the legend of King Arthur that may have led Edward I to believe he was the just claimant to the Welsh lands.[90] King Arthur was alleged to have been born at Tintagel Castle in Northern Cornwall, very close to the southern Welsh border. Another quasi-historical basis for Edward's claim upon Wales was based in the Roman legionary fort of Segontium at Caernarfon, located in the far northwest part of the country. According to Welsh legend, it had been built during the reign of Roman Emperor Magnus Maximus, who claimed he had seen the great fort in a dream and then travelled to Wales to discover it was a reality.[91] The chronicler Gildas says that Maximus left Britain not only with all of its Roman troops, but also with all of its armed bands, governors, and the flower of its youth, never to return.[92] Since he planned to continue as the ruler of Britain, the most practical course of action for the emperor was to transfer local authority to local rulers. Early Welsh genealogies list Maximus as the founding father of several medieval Welsh kingdoms.[93] Emperor Maximus was said to be the father of the Emperor Constantine, the first Christian Roman Emperor, who in turn was the alleged grandfather of the storied King Arthur. In 1283, while constructing his great castle at Caernarfon, Edward rather fortuitously "discovered" the grave of Emperor Magnus Maximus, disinterred the body, and had it reburied in a nearby church to further strengthen his association with the history of the region.[94]

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[90] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 166.

[91] Geoffrey of Monmouth, Geoffrey of Monmouth: *Historia Regum Britanniae*, an edition and translation of *De Gestis Britonum (Historia regum Britanniae)* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 254.

[92] Gildas, *Opus Novum: de Calamitate, De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (1525), 13-14.

[93] Philmore Egerton,*"The Annales Cambriae and Old Welsh Genealogies, from Harleian MS. 3859,"* (1888), 28.

[94] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 191.

While Henry III enthusiastically promoted the cult of St. Edward the Confessor, his son Edward I, though certainly an image-conscious ruler, sought a departure from the Anglo-Saxon Confessor and the Old Testament archetypes, turning his passions instead toward an Roman-to-Arthurian model in his ongoing efforts to subdue Wales. In 1285, Edward collectively dedicated the trophies of his Welsh conquests to the Shrine of St Edward, including the Welsh Cross of Neith and the crown of King Arthur, a rather plain coronet that had previously belonged to Llywelyn and his predecessor Princes of Wales symbolically linking the royal Welsh past to the royal English future.[95]

Edward continued to exploit this association with King Arthur. He chose to spend his forty-fifth birthday, in June of 1284, with his court at the deep dark mystical mountainous Lake Lly Cwm Dulyn south of Caernarfon in Wales, and the following month, the king staged a brilliant Round Table tournament, a recreation of the legendary feasts of King Arthur,[96] at the remote village of Nefyn, also in Caernarvonshire, where the prophecies of Merlin were said to have been found. The event was held to celebrate the English victory in second Welsh War. It was so entertaining, the king and his court stayed for over a month. Nobles and knights flocked from every part of England and even from Gascony. It was even more a demonstration of strength than a pageant.

Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, also known as "the Last," was the grandson of Llywelyn the Great, sole ruler of Gwynedd who had forged a treaty with King John of England in

[95] R.R. Davies, *The First English Empire: Power and Identities in the British Isles 1093-1343* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 32.

Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris. Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum*; Comprising the History of England from the Descent of the Saxons to A.D. 1235, formerly ascribed to Matthew Paris (New York: AMS Press, 1968), 59.

Edward and William Stubbs, *Annales Londonienses* and *Annales Paulini* ([Nendeln]: Kraus, 1965), 92.

[96] E.L.G. Stones, *Edward I* (London: Oxford U.P., 1968), 30.

1200. Llywelyn the Great's relationship with John remained on good terms for the next ten years, and in 1205, he married John's illegitimate daughter Joan. Their grandson, Llywelyn ap Gruffydd wed Eleanor de Montfort, and they had one daughter, Gwenllian, though Eleanor died in childbirth at Abergwyngregyn in June of 1282. Llywelyn was killed later that same year at the Battle of Orewin Bridge at Builth Wells, Wales, on December 11, 1282, having been lured into a trap by some of the Marcher lords and perhaps even some of his own men

Along with the severed head he sent to Edward at Rhuddlan, the captain of the English troops included a note to the king, "Know, Sire, that Llywelyn ap Gruffudd is dead, his army broken, and the flower of his men killed."[97] Having died under church ban, Llywelyn was denied Christian burial. Instead, after being shown to the English troops based in Anglesey, the king ordered his severed head delivered to London. Upon arrival in the capital city, it was paraded through the streets on the point of a lance by a horseman and accompanied by great fanfare, then placed upon the city pillory for a day, and crowned with a garland of silver ivy-leaves to show he was "king" of outlaws. Finally, the Welsh trophy was mounted upon the great gate of the Tower of London, thus posthumously fulfilling the old Welsh prophecy that a Welsh king would ride crowned through London.[98] Edward proclaimed that his efforts to vanquish the rebellious Welsh

[97] J. Beverley Smith, *Llywelyn ap Gruffudd: Prince of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), 550-568.

[98] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 186.

were for "the praise of God, the increase and renown of him and his realm, and the perpetual peace of his realm and people."[99]

Llywelyn's brother Dafydd immediately assumed the throne following his brother's death and thus unknowingly became the last Welsh Prince of Wales, reigning for a mere ten months. For a myriad of reasons, not least of which was to underscore the superior English might, Edward was determined that Dafydd's death was to be slow and agonizing, but it also proved to be precedent-setting as well. On October 3, 1283, Dafydd was dragged through the streets of Shrewsbury lashed to a horse's tail, hanged alive, revived, then disemboweled and his entrails burned before him as punishment for "his sacrilege in committing his crimes in the week of Christ's passion."1[100] For the grave crime of plotting the death of the king, his dismembered limbs were sent to Winchester, York, Northampton, and Bristol as an example of the fate of those who subvert the will of the king. Finally, his head was set upon the gate at the Tower of London next to his brother Llywelyn's.1[101] This gruesome death saga sent a message to anyone, especially the Scots, that English overlordship would be acknowledged and observed – or else.

Treason was not a new concept in medieval England, but this incident marked the first time it had been referred to in terms of a rebellion by another anointed prince. At the order of the conquering English king, the Welsh Prince of Gwynedd, and subsequently

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[99] Great Britain, *Calendar of Various Chancery Rolls: Supplementary Close Rolls, Welsh rolls, Scutage Rolls; A.D. 1277-1326* (Nendeln: Kraus, 1976), 275-276.

[100] Ralph Maud, *David the Last Prince of Wales. The Ten "Lost" Months of Welsh History* (Swyddffynnon, Ceredigion: Cofiwn, 1983), 20.

[101] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 190.

his brother, became the first crowned monarchs in recorded history to have undergone such an extreme and gruesome death sentence. Since the times of William Rufus, no English noble, except under John, had paid for the penalty of rebellion with his life. The chroniclers aver that the actions were those "in previous times unknown."1[102] However, Edward deemed such harsh measures necessary in order to assert English dominance in Wales by making an example of the Welsh princes, to squelch any vengeful reprisals and to underscore the immense power of the English crown.

After crushing the revolt of 1282, Edward consolidated his control of northwest Wales by constructing an "iron ring" of castles around the area, a day's march apart, for defensive purposes but also as a permanent reminder of the English king's might and power. Towns rose up around the fortresses stocked with English immigrants for permanent settlement in order to integrate English customs, religion and provide supply of soldiers. They were also located near bodies of water to be easily supplied by ship as well as over land.1[103] These impressive and intimidating structures, built at Harlech, Caernarfon, Conwy and Beaumaris, still stand to this day, a testament to their size and brute strength. The English conquest of Wales was officially completed in 1284 with the passage of the Statute of Rhuddlan into law. In 1301, Edward's eldest surviving son, Edward of Caernarfon, was officially invested with the title Prince of Wales, beginning the tradition of bestowing the title upon the heir to the English throne and ensuring a smooth transition with each change of the monarch in England.

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[102] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 190.
[103] Ibid, 159-160.

Designed by Master James of St. George, construction of Caernarfon Castle commenced in 1283. He envisioned an enormous castle fortification complete with multiple polygonal towers and turrets, contrasting bands of brick in a nod to the great walls of the city of Constantinople which the king had personally observed in the course of his crusading adventure. It was also fashioned with arrow slits and a suite of royal apartments for future visits. Its aesthetic components associated the king with older clerical and monastic traditions of Roman and Byzantium cultures and linked royal power to papal power.[104] Byzantine-influenced architecture, directly attributed to the king's crusading experience; also seen in cosmati tiles in Westminster Abbey. The king intended that a master justiciar of northwest Wales would utilize Caernarfon as a home and base of operations. Welsh legend recorded in Mabinogion that Magnus had a dream in which he envisioned a fortified city set in the mountains with multicolored towers and a hall with throne decorated with eagles, "a great castle, the fairest that mortal had ever seen."[105] The concept of Caernarfon Castle was intentionally designed around this legend.[106]

From the time of his birth, Edward's life was immersed in symbolism and meaning. It was no accident that his birth occurred at the palace built by Edward the Confessor, just yards away from his venerated Westminster abbey, as Henry had untaken a massive expansion and remodeling of the abbey and planned to install the shrine of St.

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[104] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 104-106.

[105] R.K. Morris, "The Architecture of Arthurian Enthusiasm; Castle Symbolism in the Reigns of Edward I and His Successors," in *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France: Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium,* ed. M. Strickland (Stamford, Lincolnshire: Paul Watkins, 1998), 72-73.

[106] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 105.

Edward the Confessor near the altar. To celebrate the arrival of the new heir, Henry

ordered the choir of the royal chapel to intone his favorite chant, Christus Vincit, Christus

Regnant, Christus Imperat (Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ overcomes), as he

quickly set about dispatching royal messengers to the far reaches of the kingdom to

proclaim the royal birth. The 50,000 residents of the nearby walled city of London

flooded the streets in celebration, dancing and singing with tambourines and drums by

lantern light. In the days following, the royal messengers returned to court bearing

expensive gifts from the king's noblest subjects.[107]

King Henry III had come to the throne in 1216, exactly 150 years after the

Norman Conquest of 1066. The son of the notorious King John and the first child-king of

the Norman era, Henry acceded to the throne at the age of nine. He grew up in an

atmosphere of great uncertainty, which perhaps at least in part explains his devotion to

Edward the Confessor. The English court Henry inherited from his evil absent father

remained culturally French, due to the Norman ancestry of his predecessors, whose

language was also French. After her husband's death, his glamorous yet self-absorbed

mother, Isabella de Angoulême, returned to France, remarried, and had a whole new

family, never to return to England and effectively abandoning her children by John,

leaving Henry a veritable orphan.

In addition, many of the English nobles were of French descent, owing to William

I who had rewarded his Norman supporters with lands and titles in his newly acquired

realm. As such, they gave their children French names, too. Not so, King Henry. By that

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[107] Matthew Paris and J. A. Giles, *English History from the Year 1235 to 1273* (New York: AMS Press, 1968), 172.

time, at the age of thirty-one, he was fully engaged in the cult of Edward the Confessor, and as an act of reverence and admiration, bestowed the very English name of Edward upon his first-born son. By any account, it was an unusual choice. The death of Edward the Confessor sparked the succession crisis which led directly to the invasion of his distant kinsman William, Duke of Normandy, and therefore, from the Norman perspective, "Edward" was a name associated with the defeated party, but ironically, he was also the single legitimate link between the Normans and the Anglo-Saxons. Like Henry, Edward the Confessor was not known as a warrior, but instead as a man of piety, and the builder of the Palace of Westminster, situated adjacent to the great abbey. By the time of Edward's birth almost 200 years later, sainthood had officially been conferred upon the Confessor, and his reign had taken on the air of a golden period in English history. This association boded well for the new thirteenth-century Edward.

Whether it was an attempt to symbolically Anglicize the monarchy, a rejection of his own "French" background, or a purely devotional act to honor the Confessor, the new little lord's name was certainly quite popular with Henry's English subjects. So it was not at all surprising that Henry had his newborn heir baptized at Westminster Abbey, before his recently erected shrine to the Confessor. Indeed, Edward was the first English king to be christened in the great church, by a papal legate[108] amidst a swarm of clergy, nobles and his twelve godparents, who included Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester[109] and Humphrey de Bohun, 2nd Earl of Hereford, 1st Earl of Essex.[110] His father was

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[108] T. F. Tout, *Edward the First* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 1.

[109] J. R. Maddicott, *Simon De Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 23.

[110] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 4.

determined Edward would be raised with all of the love, attention, affection and guidance his own troubled childhood had so sorely lacked. Indeed, true to his very English and auspicious beginning, Edward eventually grew to become the embodiment of a true English king.

Much like his father before him, Edward choreographed the birth of his son Edward, though for political rather than religious purposes, thereby linking the domination of Wales by the current king to the future of his heir. Born in a temporary timber apartment at the construction site of what was to become the impenetrable Caernarfon Castle in far northwest Wales, Edward II, or Edward of Caernarfon as he was known then, became the heir-apparent at just a few months of age, following the death of his elder brother, Alphonso. Edward II was not formally created Prince of Wales until 1301, but was always well-received by the Welsh people because he had been born there.

King Edward could never quite abandon the hope that he might one day regain all of the French territories so carelessly lost by his inept grandfather. He spent a significant portion of his thirty-six-year reign on French soil, much of that in the remaining stronghold of Gascony, where Edward built a series of bastides, or defensive towns, during fall of 1287 through 1288 until August 1289. These settlements served a dual purpose, as commercial centers, they were a source of income, directly accruing local tolls and taxes, and indirectly increasing commerce that was taxed elsewhere, such as Bordeaux. They also represented Edward's scope and authority as the overlord of Gascony, increasing his seigneurial influence.[111] The first one was on the banks of the

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[111] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 213.

Garonne River where it met the Dordogne, Burgus Reginae (Queensborough) in honor of Eleanor of Castile.[112]

The king's subjugation of Wales had lasted much longer than he had anticipated. By May of 1285 it had been almost three years since the he had been in London for any length of time. In order to celebrate the great victory over the Welsh and reconnect with Londoners, the king staged a grand spectacle. On Friday, May 4, the day before opening of new parliament, the De Donis (the gift) ceremony was held. The king and queen processed from the Tower of London (still decorated with the rotting heads of the conquered Welsh leaders) to Westminster Abbey accompanied by all of the nobles and at least fourteen bishops, Archbishop of Canterbury who carried the sacred Welsh relic the Croes Naid, or Cross of Neath, which Edward had brought back from the Abbey of Conway and was said to have been fashioned from the True Cross, and was solemnly laid upon the high altar. This celebration marked triumphant conclusion to the physical and spiritual subjugation of Wales.[113] Edward later transferred the Cross of Neath to the nuns at St. Helena at Bishopsgate. This small detail once again demonstrates Edward's keen sense of history, for it was St. Helena, mother of the first Christian Emperor Constantine, who was said to have discovered the True Cross on her pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 327.[114] Perhaps this procession, which was almost identical to the one made at his coronation eleven years before, might be interpreted as a veritable coronation of Edward as king of the vanquished Welsh.

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[112] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 212.
[113] E.L.G. Stones, *Edward I* (London: Oxford U.P., 1968), 30.
[114] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 200.

Knighthood comprised a very important link in medieval society between commoners and nobles and royals. Knights, known as "the community of the bachelorhood of England,"[115] typically were country gentlemen who were sometimes called to meet with the king in parliament as representatives of the general populous of the kingdom and to fight for the king's cause when mustered. During the high Middle Ages, a knight was recognized by society as a man who possessed exceptional combat skills and who strictly adhered to the code of chivalry. The medieval ceremony of knighting provided a very important bond between the king and his nobles. A nobiliary rite of passage, the knighting ceremony may have initially been reserved solely for the inauguration of kings, but evolved during the medieval era into formal initiation into the warrior-lord class, primary through the rise in popularity of the tournament which originated in northern France and was imported to England with the Normans.[116] However, it seems that that knighthood obtained a much wider scale with the advent of the crusades in 1096, when a hierarchy of military command became necessary in organizing the various groups of crusaders traveling under the banners of several monarchs and numerous noblemen. The Church endorsed and indeed sanctified the crusades, and every crusader swore "to defend to his uttermost the weak, the orphan, the widow and the oppressed; he should be courteous, and women should receive his especial care."[117] Edward I, who had participated in a number of battles and campaigns, as well as a crusade, before he even reached the throne, was much involved in the ceremonies of

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[115] T. F. Tout, *Edward the First* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 29.

[116] D'Arcy J.D. Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: the Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325-1520* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 12.

[117] Ibid, 453.

knighting men. There are several surviving accounts of his presence at and active participation in these events.

The public ceremony of knighthood, the adoubement, or the accolade, was a deeply religious ritual, many aspects of which mirrored a priestly ordination, and included blessings from the church to go forward and an admonition to protect the church both physically and spiritually. The formal entry into knighthood began with an overnight vigil in the chapel of a castle or a church. During his last night as a squire, a knight's apprentice, the candidate prepared for the ceremony by ritually bathing as a symbol of purification. He dressed for this vigil in a white tunic to represent purity, which he then covered with a red robe which symbolized nobility. His footwear and hose were black, representing death.[118] A sword and shield, emblazoned with a heraldic symbol which identified him, was placed on the altar of the chapel and the knight knelt or stood at the altar in silent prayer for ten hours.

The next morning, he was joined by other knights to hear mass and a lengthy sermon on the duties of knighthood. A sponsor took possession of the sword and shield which had been blessed by the priest, and passed it to the lord who was to conduct the knighting ceremony. The knight was then presented to the lord, who in England was almost always the king, by two sponsors and took his vows and swore an oath of allegiance to the lord, avowing to: 1.) never traffic with traitors, 2.) never give evil counsel to a lady, whether married or not; he must treat her with great respect and defend her against all, 3.) observe fasts and abstinences, and 4.) every day hear mass and make

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[118] D'Arcy J. Boulton, *The knights of the Crown: the monarch. orders of knighthood in later medieval Europe 1325-1520* (Woodbridge: Boydell Pr., 1987), 9.

an offering in church. This oath was taken with utmost sincerity, accompanied by the threat of divine retribution should the uttering prove false. Any breach of the sacred oath was considered a crime against God leading to eternal damnation.[119]

The dubbing, the final part of the knighting ceremony, was regarded as an essential act of the ceremony and was conducted by the king, who in England maintained the exclusive right to confer knighthoods known as the "fount of honor."[120] The king presented the sword and shield and "dubbed" the squire by gently striking a blow with the flat of the hand or the side of the sword. A candidate for knighthood was called a colée and was proclaimed a knight when the king announced, "I dub thee sir knight." The sponsors then placed gold spurs (distinguished from the silver spurs of the squires) upon the knight and girded his sword about him. At the end of the knighting ceremony, a knight claimed the title "sir."[121] By contrast, the spurs of a disgraced knight were hacked off and his shield was hung upside down as a sign of the dishonor he had brought to his exalted position. A celebration accompanied the induction of the new knight, which featured a great feast attended by fellow knights, nobles and oftentimes the king. The women and ladies of the court or manor would join the fanfare, which was accompanied by music and dancing. In addition, a formal commendation ceremony often followed, which came about during the early medieval period in order to create a feudal

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[119] D'Arcy J. Boulton, *The knights of the Crown: the monarch. orders of knighthood in later medieval Europe 1325-1520* (Woodbridge: Boydell Pr., 1987), 453.
[120] Ibid, 454.
[121] Stephen Church and Ruth Harvey. *Medieval Knighthood V: Papers from the Sixth Strawberry Hill Conference 1994* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995), 59.

relationship between a nobleman or the king and his fighting man, also known as his vassal.

Grants of land and manors were often bequeathed by the king or the lord under whom the knight served to provide income for equipment, the training of squires, as well as in recognition of the knight's status within medieval society. The commendation ceremony was comprised of two elements, one to perform the act of homage and the other an oath of fealty. A tournament was often arranged for the following day allowing the new knight and his fellows to demonstrate their knightly skills.[122] The date the knighting took place was often significant as well. Pentecost, one of the three great feasts of the liturgical year, was popular, perhaps because the court was already gathered, making the knighthood ceremony an added cause for celebration. Easter season and between Christmas and Candlemas, which are the other two major medieval celebratory feast days. "the ideology and Arthurian mythology of chivalry were firmly established in the minds of all men of high birth" by the reign of Henry III.[123]

In addition to forming a key organizational component to his men-at-arms, Edward I may also have appreciated that knighthood provided not only a useful but also an inexpensive vehicle by which to demonstrate his benefice and at the same time add to ranks of his soldierly ranks when he needed to call upon them for a military purposes. A large contingent of knights also flaunted the power and might of the king. Plus, knighthood was not a hereditary honor like and earldom, but instead was granted solely at

[122] Stephen Church and Ruth Harvey. *Medieval Knighthood V: Papers from the Sixth Strawberry Hill Conference 1994* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995), 59.

[123] D'Arcy J.D. Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: the Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325-1520* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 89.

the discretion of the king, which provided him with a tool for conferring honors and at the same time bound the honoree to him by creating a moral obligation to the monarch. Edward I made a habit of knighting his magnates, thus establishing a chivalric bond with them. Knighthood offered an ideal medium for the king to accomplish internal undergirding of his top echelons as well as building a framework for what served as his officer corps, all contained within a relatively effortless and cost-effective act.[124] Edward used this "font of honors" to reward those who had been loyal, but was also just as likely to strip honors and lands from those who betrayed him. By the time Edward I came to the throne, knighthood was "not merely the embodiment of the full manhood of lordly men, but of the traditional military."[125] From the time of Richard I and the Third Crusade through the reign of Henry III, there are several exceptions to the custom of English kings bestowing knighthoods upon English squires.

Whether it was the tournament or the knight which came first, the tournament provided an opportunity for knights to sharpen their talents and exhibit their martial abilities. And in his day, whether in England or France, no one excelled at the knightly arts like Edward. It is likely that, in keeping with medieval aristocratic tradition, Edward was trained in the arts of horsemanship and weaponry during his formative childhood years at Windsor Castle. On any number of occasions, Edward engaged in the sporting events of the tiltyard. The lord Edward's first tournament of took place just before his seventeenth birthday in June 1256 at Blyth in Nottinghamshire, and had been arranged

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[124] Stephen Church and Ruth Harvey. *Medieval Knighthood V: Papers from the Sixth Strawberry Hill Conference 1994* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995), 99.

[125] D'Arcy J.D. Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: the Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325-1520* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 99.

especially for him and as a part of his chivalric training when he became a blooded knight.[126] Thirteenth century tournaments were not like the ones convened later in the medieval era which were held in a large festive arena surrounded by crowds of well-dressed onlookers, but were much more primitive and staged for training purposes as simulated battles, taking on the character of a violent clash between two small forces of knights which often resulted in serious injury or even death for the participants, though they wore full armor and used blunted weapons.[127] One chronicler noted that the lord Edward did not fare well and on one occasion was badly wounded.[128] A series of tournaments were organized in the autumn of 1267, following all of the civil upheavals of the Baron's wars. Edward and his companions participated in these tournaments in order to fill their desire for new martial adventures[129] At Winchester, late in the summer of 1285, after meeting with his magnates, the king held a much larger and even more spectacular tournament than the one at Nefyn in order to celebrate the English victory over the Welsh. He had an actual round table constructed that was eighteen feet in diameter and weighed three quarters of a ton, around which the king and his chivalric companions feasted and celebrated. It still exists and hangs in the Winchester Castle great hall.[130]

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[126] Matthew Paris and Henry Richards Luard, *Matthai Parisiensis, Monachi Cancti Albani, Chronica Majora* (London: Longman & Co., 1872), 607.

[127] Ibid, 609.

[128] Robin Studd, *An Itinerary of Lord Edward* (Kew, Richmond, Surrey: List and Index Society, 2000), 65.

[129] Henry Richards *Luard, Annales monastici* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1864), 122.

[130] Marc Morris, "King Edward I and the Knights of the Round Table," in *Foundations of Medieval Scholarship: records edited in honor of David Crook*, ed. P. Brand and S. Cunningham (York, 2008), 57.

The Feast of the Swans was a chivalric celebration of the knighting of 267 men at Westminster Hall on May 22, 1306, following a call to arms by Edward I. The king first knighted his son Edward of Caernarfon, Prince of Wales, and he in turn knighted the 266 others. At the feast that followed the king had two swans brought in. He swore before God, the assembled nobles and the swans to avenge the savage murder of John III Comyn, lord of Badenoch, and the desecration of Greyfriars Church in Dumfries, Scotland, by the Earl of Carrick, Robert Bruce, and his accomplices earlier in the year, and to fight the infidels in the Holy Land. Among those knighted during the ceremony was Piers Gaveston, constant companion of Edward of Caernarfon.

The role of military leader was an essential component of medieval kingship and one that came quite naturally to the athletic king. Edward excelled in the role in part due to his sheer size and physical strength and also because he did not ask his men to do anything he was not willing to do. He had performed all of the rituals of the knighting ceremony, put in his time in the tiltyard, and observed all of the obsequies that accompanied medieval conflicts. Inevitably, this earned him the respect of his men, but also of his foes, further increasing his stature.

Chapter 4

Demonstrating Piety

In the medieval world, the church was the center of society, for the peasant all the way up to the king himself, and all were subject to the spiritual lordship of the pope. As a boy at his father's court, Edward had been surrounded by the cult of St. Edward the Confessor, which no doubt impacted his later religious sentiments. Religious piety is not always readily ascribed to Edward I, who is more renowned for his military exploits. However, the royal household accounts from his reign give great insight into the king's character in this regard and also reveal the skill with which he combined the rituals and ceremonial of religious occasions with political ends to strengthen his power profile amongst the clergy as well as the nobles, his subjects, and his fellow monarchs. In many respects, Edward's piety was very similar to that of his father, including the distribution of alms, feeding hundreds of paupers every week, and frequenting places of worship all over the kingdom, making rich offerings of gold and jewels.[131] At his death, one chronicler declared him "the most Christian king of England."[132] As a divinely appointed monarch, it was crucial that Edward be seen to embody piety in order to maintain his standing among the clerics and his subjects alike.

From all accounts, it seems that Edward I, particularly during his tenure as king, was a genuinely pious man. Evidence of this can be found in his frequent visits to some

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[131] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 367-368.

[132] Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris. Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum*; Comprising the History of England from the Descent of the Saxons to A.D. 1235, formerly ascribed to Matthew Paris (New York: AMS Press, 1968), 329.

of the major English shrines, particularly in times of war or during personal trials, as well as several in France. The most common relics at these shrines were nails and pieces of wood that the keepers of the shrine professed came from the "true cross," the cross upon which Jesus was crucified. Many of the cathedrals in medieval England in the early twelfth century were part of large monasteries which had already been in place for hundreds of years. Most of the English cathedrals, and many of the abbeys and larger churches, had a prominent shrine at their eastern end containing the remains of a venerated saint.

In the Middle Ages, the church encouraged parishioners to make pilgrimages to these shrines, special holy places where it was believed that if one prayed there, one might be forgiven for one's sins and improve one's chances of going to heaven. Others went to shrines hoping to be cured from an illness. Still others made the trek prior to being knighted or participating in a judicial trial. When pilgrims arrived at the shrine, they would pay money to be allowed to gaze upon the holy relics. In some cases, pilgrims were even allowed to touch and kiss them. The keeper of the shrine would also give the pilgrim a metal badge that had been stamped with the symbol of the shrine, which were then affixed to the pilgrim's hat so that others would know of their visit. Perhaps Edward's first pilgrimage as a married man was in the late summer of 1256 when he and Eleanor ventured north to call on his sister Margaret who had married Scots King Alexander III. It seems the two couples visited the shrine of St. Ninian, an eighth century Christian saint and an early missionary among the Pictish peoples,[133] based upon an entry

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[133] *The Miscellaneous Works of Venerable Bede*, ed. J. A. Giles, (London: Whittaker and Co., 1863), 167.

in the royal records that places Edward at Whithorn in Galloway where the shrine was located.[134]

Important medieval English shrines included St Alban's, a frequent stop for the king as it was located just north of London. Here he came not only to pray before battles, but to conduct royal business and hold high level meetings. Edward's second wife Margaret was also fond of St. Alban's and visited regularly as well. As it was a major place of pilgrimage where streams of pilgrims made their way to the church and left offerings, it also stands to reason that those same pilgrims observed the king's frequent visits and lavish gifts, enhancing his image as an obedient and benevolent divinely appointed ruler. Also situated north of London, Waltham Abbey, a place of worship since at least 1030, was one of the places where the body of Eleanor of Castile rested on its way to Westminster for burial in 1290. The embalmed body of her husband, Edward I, also lay in state at the abbey for fifteen weeks in the fall of 1307.[135] The Augustinian church was also a popular place for overnight stays with kings and other notables who were hunting in Waltham Forest.[136]

"The shrines and altars of Norfolk and Suffolk were a favorite recourse when divine assistance was required."[137] Walsingham in Norfolk was, in the twelfth century, one of the four main shrines in Christendom and the foremost Marian shrine in the world at that time. In Edward's day, it was as famous as Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago de

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[134] Robin Studd, *An Itinerary of Lord Edward* (Kew, Richmond, Surrey: List and Index Society, 2000), 30.

[135] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 364.

[136] Leslie Watkiss and Marjorie Chibnall, *The Waltham Chronicle: An Account of the Discovery of Our Holy Cross at Montacute and Its Conveyance to Waltham* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 13.

[137] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 199.

Compostella, and as pilgrims flocked there by the thousands, and it became known in England as Mary's Dowry. Edward I had a particular devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham because he believed she had saved him from a near-fatal accident as a young man, and he visited the shrine at least thirteen times. In fact, every English monarch from Henry II until the Reformation is known to have paid at least one visit to Walsingham. In the early spring of 1286, as Edward was collecting supplies in preparation for crossing the channel to try to negotiate a peaceful end to the Sicilian Vespers crisis, he visited the shrines of Norfolk and Suffolk, which most assuredly included Walsingham.[138]

St. Bromhold was another church on Edward's East Anglia pilgrimage circuit. The shrine held a piece of the true cross brought back to England from crusade by the personal priest of the Count of Flanders. Bromhold was also included on the king's spiritual round of shrines prior to the 1277 Welsh campaign.[139] In April of 1300 the king left Westminster for the East Anglia shrines to make spiritual preparation for the upcoming war with the Scots.[140] Edward I prayed before the shrine at Bury St. Edmunds en route to do battle with the Scots. Upon his departure, he looked back and bowed to the martyr's shrine.[141] Several days later, he sent his royal standard back to the priory with instructions that the mass for St. Edmund be celebrated over the banner, which should

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[138] Robin Studd, *An Itinerary of Lord Edward* (Kew, Richmond, Surrey: List and Index Society, 2000), 202-205.
[139] Ibid, 74-75.
[140] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 269.
[141] L.F. Salzman, *Edward I* (New York: Praeger, 1968), 178.

then touch all of the relics at Bury St. Edmunds.[142] In January of 1281, Edward traveled to East Anglia to take in his favorite places of pilgrimage.[143]

Lincoln Cathedral was another frequent pilgrimage stopping point for the King Edward, and it was here that his wife Eleanor's body lay temporarily on her journey back to London and where her visceral remains were buried. At the time of the Reformation, St. Hugh of Lincoln was the best-known English saint after Thomas Becket. In 1280, Edward traveled to Lincoln Cathedral to be present for the translation of the remains of St. Hugh, who died in 1200, and also to mark the unveiling of the great "Angel Choir" at the cathedral, a masterpiece of English Gothic architecture. Great celebratory fountains ran red with wine and the presence of the king lent additional prestige to the event, drawing even larger crowds and resulting in a generous monetary gift to the church.[144] Another of the more well-known and oft-visited English shrines was St. Cuthbert at Durham Cathedral. St. Cuthbert, Abbot of Landisfarne in the seventh century, has been described as "perhaps the most popular saint in England prior to the death of Thomas Becket in 1170."[145] When heading to the northeast of England, Edward often stopped to visit the shrine and to meet with the Bishop of Durham, the most prominent and loyal of which was Anthony Bek, who fought in several of the Scottish campaigns and served as a negotiator in the Welsh conflicts. Within his region, the Bishop of Durham had almost as

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[142] Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977), 45.

[143] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 173.

[144] E. B. Fryde, *Handbook of British Chronology* (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1986), 255.

[145] David Hugh Farmer, *Benedict's Disciples* (Leominster [Eng.]: F. Wright Books, 1980), 52-53.

much power as the king of England himself, and St. Cuthbert became a powerful symbol of the autonomy the region enjoyed.

St. John of Beverly served as Bishop of Hexham and then Bishop of York, the most important religious designation in the whole north of England. He went on to found the town of Beverley in the East Riding of Yorkshire by building a monastery there, around which the village of Beverley grew. Edward I was a devotee of St. John, and his patronage helped to further the cult. In 1295, Edward established a chantry in Beverley Minster in the saint's honor, and six years later he made a donation to assist in the building of the shrine, plus he diverted half of a fine owed by the town to the same purpose and then ceded the other half. Edward visited Beverly Minster on several occasions, in 1296, 1297, and 1300, as he made his way north to engage the Scots, and each time he departed for campaign, he took the banner of St. John along with him to carry with the English forces into battle.[146] On October 25, 1307, three and a half months after Edward's death, St. John's relics were translated to his new shrine which Edward had helped to finance.[147]

After the death of St. Thomas Becket in 1170, Canterbury Cathedral quickly became the most popular shrine in England. Becket served as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162 until his murder in 1170, and following his brutal slaying, St. Thomas instantly became one of the most venerated saints in western Christendom, and his shrine an enormously popular pilgrimage site. When he visited the shrine in the summer of

[146] D.M. Palliser, "John of Beverley [St John of Beverley (d. 721)]" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Howard Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[147] Michael J. Walsh, *A New Dictionary of Saints: East and West* (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 2007), 316.

1285, along with the queen and his children, Edward presented four gold statuettes inlaid with precious jewels, two of which depicted St. George and his horse and the other two representing Edward the Confessor and St. John.[148] Upon the birth of the king's last two sons in 1297 and 1300, substantial offerings were made at Canterbury. In 1286, when one of his prized falcons was ailing, Edward made a gift of a wax image of the bird, which was presented at the altar of Becket's shrine.[149] By frequenting Canterbury, and bestowing it with such rich gifts, Edward also curried favor with the archbishop.

Following the final defeat of the Welsh in the fall of 1283, Edward set out on a religious journey to cathedrals, abbeys and priories in the Marcher lands of Herefordshire, Gloucester and Worcestershire. The king solemnly made offerings at each shrine in thanks to God for his victory over Wales.[150] The shrine of St. Swithun at Winchester Cathedral was perhaps the second most popular place of pilgrimage in medieval England and enjoyed periodic visits from Edward I. King John, Edward's grandfather, was buried at Worcester Cathedral, which may have been an added reason for Edward's pilgrimages there. Together with Saint Oswald, Worcester's other great Anglo-Saxon saint, St. Wulfstan received pilgrims throughout the Middle Ages, including several kings. It was here Edward came to pray in August of 1294 just prior to his departure for war with the French over his Gascon holdings and sought God's blessing upon his troops and the intercession of the venerated saint.[151] Shortly after the

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[148] A.J. Taylor, *Studies in Castles and Castle-Building* (London: Hambledon Press, 1985), 291-297.

[149] Michael Prestwich, "The Piety of Edward I," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1986), 124.

[150] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 190.

[151] Ibid, 272.

death of Queen Eleanor in November of 1290, the king retreated to the religious

community of Ashridge Priory, a medieval abbey of the Brothers of Penitence in

Hertforshire, where he remained through late January 1291.[152]

Some medieval pilgrims traveled abroad to shrines in France, Germany, Rome

and Jerusalem. During the late summer and early fall of 1286, the king and queen, like

Henry III before them, visited the French shrine at Auxerre of the English St. Edmund at

the abbey of Pontigny, the grave of Edmund of Abingdon, former Archbishop of

Canterbury who presided over Edward's baptism. The royal couple also traveled to

Fontevrault Abbey to visit the burial sites of Henry II, Eleanor of Aquitaine and Richard

I.[153] They also prayed at the shrines of St. Benedict of Nursia, the father of Western

monasticism, at Fleury, and to St. Martin, the patron saint of soldiers, whose shrine at

Tours became a regular stopping-point for medieval pilgrims on the way to Santiago de

Compostella.[154] The king continued to patronize French saints, dispatching a messenger

to St. Denis in Paris to place gold cloth and a gold ring on the altar of the great church, as

well as a fifty-pound candle and monies to feed 140 paupers. Similar dispatches were

made via royal courier to the shrine of the Three Kings in Cologne and to Santiago de

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[152] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 240.
[153] Ibid, 207.
 Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman
   and Littlefield, 1977), 137-139.
[154] Alexandre Vidier and Radulphus Tortarius, Benoit-sur-Loire, et les Miracles de saint Benoipar les soins
   des moines de l'abbaye de Saint-Benoi, (Paris, 1965), 178.

Compostella. The court records offer no indication for purpose behind these gifts.[155] The

pilgrimages gave the king a legitimate excuse to be in France and thereby send a subtle

message to the French king.

Of course, the most elaborate shrine in England lay right in the heart of London.

The canonization of Edward the Confessor in 1160 and the coronation of William the

Conqueror on Christmas Day – a Sunday – in 1066 only served to enhance the cult which

had rapidly grown up around the old king. Edward was called "Confessor," which was

deemed a more appropriate designation for one who had lived a saintly life but was

neither a martyr nor churchman.[156] The monks of Westminster Abbey had gathered a

great trove of vestments, scepters, a crown and other royal finery, declaring them the

regalia of the saintly king and thus the collection became the regalia of the English

monarchs until lost by King John in 1216.[157] Thanks in large part to the patronage and

devotion of Henry III, the Anglo-Saxon monarch-turned-saint, Edward the Confessor,

was translated to his newly built shrine in Westminster Abbey on October 13, 1269 – St.

Edward's feast day – in a splendid ceremony attended by the king, John de Warenne, and

many other nobles and clergymen. The coffin of the venerated saint was solemnly borne

by Edward, his brother Edmund, and Richard of Cornwall, in a procession around the

church. The service was officiated by Archbishop of York Walter Giffard and was

followed by a feast.[158] All of the Plantagenet monarchs desired to be buried as close the

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[155] Michael Prestwich, "The Piety of Edward I," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1986), 124.

[156] D.A. Carpenter. 2007. "King Henry III and Saint Edward the Confessor: The Origins of the Cult," *English Historical Review*. 122 (498): 865–891.

[157] John Chancellor, *The Life and Times of Edward I,* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981), 16.

[158] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 89.

Confessor's new shrine as possible, and indeed, they were placed there according to their wishes.

Edward I and Eleanor followed a wide-spread noble custom of the time in consecrating one of their children to the church. This act expressed their piety and lent enormous status to the priory they chose for their child. Mary of Woodstock, so named for her place of birth, was the royal couple's eleventh child and became a Benedictine nun on Assumption Day, August 15, 1285, at the priory of Amesbury, a daughter house of Fontevrault Abbey in France and burial place of her ancestor Eleanor of Aquitaine. Because her mother was not keen on her taking vows at the age of seven, she was not formally veiled until she was twelve. At Amesbury, she joined her paternal grandmother, dowager Queen Eleanor of Provence, and her cousin Eleanor of Brittany. Her doting parents granted Mary a generous annual stipend for life, and she also received double the usual allowance for clothing and a special entitlement to wine from the stores, and lived in comfort in private quarters. Her father visited Mary and his mother and niece at the priory several times, twice in 1286 and in 1289, and again in 1290 and 1291.

Several members of the king's court aided the king in his public charitable roles which to some extent are indicative of his personal piety. The Archbishops of Canterbury played a significant ceremonial role within monarchial structure. So important was their stature that upon learning of the death of Archbishop of Canterbury Boniface of Savoy, Edward returned to London from Portsmouth and delayed his departure for crusade for an additional two weeks.[159] Almost twenty years later, on

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[159] L.F. Salzman, *Edward I* (New York: Praeger, 1968), 30.

Sunday, July 14, 1298, King Edward stood on the steps of Westminster Hall and addressed the gathered crowds, in response to the battle that had been waged between he and the clergy, in particular the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Winchelsea. He admitted making mistakes and acknowledged the burden and suffering their rift had caused his subjects, but insisted that he was defending his people and acting in their best interest,[160] saying "I am castle for you, and wall, and house,"[161] The archbishop stood next to the king in tears, and the two appeared to all present to be reconciled. Edward took one step further, with his impending departure for the war with France, and asked everyone one there to swear fealty to his thirteen-year-old son Edward of Caernarfon.[162]

The medieval king represented not only a militarily strong figure, but a benevolent father-figure to his subjects as well. Royal almsgiving constituted a standardized manner for feeding the poor and paupers, with a set number of weekly disbursements distributed by a court official aptly named the King's Almoner. At least two men occupied this role during Edward's tenure, "Ralph the Almoner" at the outset of his reign and Henry de Bluntesdon from the early 1280's forward. Over the course of Edward I's administration, the number as well as the frequency of monetary gifts increased. This custom represented a genuine concern on the king's part for the less fortunate in his realm, but also served as a sort of public relations vehicle to emphasize the charitable nature of the monarch. Various religious holidays saw an increase in almsgiving, including Christmas and Easter, as well as the feast days of the Conception,

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[160] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 298.

[161] Jeffrey H. Denton, *Robert Winchelsey and the Crown, 1294-1313: A Study in the Defence of Ecclesiastical Liberty* (Cambridge [Eng.]: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 132.

[162] T.F. Tout, *Edward the First* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 226.

Annunciation, Purification and Assumption of the Virgin, in addition to the most important saints' days. The king also distributed alms as a sort of penance, such as failing to attend chapel, consuming meat on a Friday or hunting on a saint's day. Occasions of great personal joy yielded royal oblations, such as the birth of a child or a wedding, or a death, such as that of Queen Eleanor in 1290, when the king rendered numerous offerings for her soul.[163] Almsgiving was a practice reserved for the monarch, and Edward's generosity in this act over the course of his reign, while certainly born of sincere charity, also set him apart from any other magnate in the realm while visibly raising his charitable profile and undergirding his royal prerogative.

The distribution of Maundy money is a Church of England religious service regularized by Edward I and still conducted today. The ceremony is held on Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday, where the monarch or a royal official formulaically distributes small silver coins known as "Maundy money" as symbolic alms to elderly recipients. The coins are legal tender but do not circulate because of their silver content and numismatic value. Few details of the thirteenth century Maundy survive, though they are known to have existed from records which show the expenditures necessary for the gifts to the poor.[164] Recipients were once chosen for their poverty and were entitled to remain as Maundy recipients for life. The word Maundy derives from the command – or mandatum – of Christ at the Last Supper, that his disciples love one another and obey the following command: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed

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[163] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 230.
[164] Brian Robinson, *Silver Pennies and Linen Towels: The Story of the Royal Maundy* (London: Spink, 1992), 21.

your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you."[165] Mandatum is the derivation of the word "Maundy," and the Royal Maundy service evolved from this command of Jesus to his disciples. The very act of humbling himself by doing the pedilavium proclaimed the monarch's greatness.[166] The monarch was not necessarily unaccompanied in performing the rituals of the Maundy service, as Henry III's children, including his heir Edward, assisted him as part of their political and religious training.[167] Before Edward, several Maundys might be kept during the year, but as king, Edward was the first monarch to keep the Maundy fixed on or about Maundy Thursday before Easter Sunday.[168]

The founding of Vale Royal Abbey was "the single greatest act of piety by Edward I, though his piety . . . had a distinctly political face."[169] A legend has been widely circulated and handed down maintaining that Edward had vowed to establish a great monastic house after narrowly surviving a terrifying sea voyage during the winter of 1263-64. However, some scholars are skeptical as this particular story line was not an uncommon medieval literary device. The first royal charter launching the Vale Royal project was signed by the lord Edward in August of 1270, just prior to his departure on

[165] John 13:15

[166] Virginia Cole, "Ritual Charity and Royal Children in Thirteenth-Century England," in *Medieval and early modern ritual: formalized behavior in Europe, China, and Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 233.

[167] Ibid.

[168] Ibid.

[169] J.H. Denton, Jeffrey Denton, "From the Foundation of Vale Royal Abbey to the Statute of Carlisle," in *Thirteenth century England IV: proceedings of the Newcastle Upon Tyne conference 1991* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1991), 124.

crusade. It is probable that the design was largely based upon Louis IX's French

Cistercian abbey at Royaumont, north of Paris.[170] King Edward had lofty ambitions for

Vale Royal. It was intended to be an abbey of the first importance, to surpass all the other

religious houses in Britain in scale and beauty and provide a fitting symbol of the wealth

and power of the English monarchy. The register of Vale Royal states that the king

intended "no monastery should be more royal than this one, in liberties, wealth and honor

throughout the whole world."[171] Edward chose the Cistercian order to manage his abbey,

an austere group founded in 1098 in France, who believed in self-sufficiency and manual

labor.

Following his return from crusade and subsequent coronation, preparations began

in earnest, and perhaps not coincidentally, just prior to the invasion of Wales, the

foundation stone of Vale Royal Abbey was laid at the location of the high altar by the

king himself on August 13, 1277, in a copious spectacle attended by the king and queen,

the Bishop of Bath and Wells (Chancellor Robert Burnell), the Bishop of St. Asaph, and

the Earls of Gloucester, Cornwall, Warwick and Surrey. The queen laid the next two

stones, one for herself and one for their son Alphonso, heir to the throne, followed by

many other stones placed by the assembled nobles and clerics.[172] Burnell celebrated mass

and in his homily stressed that the founding of the abbey was first and foremost and act

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[170] Elizabeth Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," in *Eleanor of Castile, 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford: Watkins, 1990), 15.

[171] *The Ledger Book of Vale Royal*, ed. John Brownbill (Edinburgh: Ballantine, Hanson and Co., 1914), 3.

[172] J.H. Denton, Jeffrey Denton, "From the Foundation of Vale Royal Abbey to the Statute of Carlisle," in *Thirteenth century England IV: proceedings of the Newcastle Upon Tyne conference 1991* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1991), 125.

of piety on the part of the king intended to invoke God's favor on the king's endeavors in Wales.[173]

Six years later, the consecration of Vale Royal Abbey was officiated by Anthony Bek, Bishop of Durham, and once again attended by a bevy of clergy, nobles and royals. Both events saw the presentation of a significant relic to help boost the distinction of the abbey, which included a piece of the True Cross acquired by Edward himself and brought back from the Holy Land. En route home from the crusade, Edward traveled through eastern France and likely saw many of the well-established French abbeys, including the formidable St. Denis north of Paris. September of 1284 saw the king and queen back at Vale Royal for the presentation of yet another trophy from the latest Welsh war, a silver chalice made from the melted-down seals of Dafydd, Llywelyn and his consort Eleanor de Montfort.[174] At first matters went well with the new foundation. Edward endowed it with cash, lands and churches, as well as relics, sacred vessels, sumptuous vestments and precious books, and Queen Eleanor also "unceasingly adorned the monastery" with "immense honors and gifts."[175]

With the establishment of Vale Royal Abbey, Edward joined the ranks of the top tier European monarchs of the thirteenth century. While Edward was known as a religious man, this project was more about the embodiment of kingly power and prestige and less about personal piety and spiritual devotion. As the 1280's progressed, the royal finances first went into arrears then were completely depleted. King Edward needed

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[173] *The Ledger Book of Vale Royal*, ed. John Brownbill (Edinburgh: Ballantine, Hanson and Co., 1914), 4-5.
[174] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 195.
[175] *The Ledger Book of Vale Royal*, ed. John Brownbill (Edinburgh: Ballantine, Hanson and Co., 1914), 3.

money to pay for his numerous wars and workmen to build the great ring of Welsh castles he put up to cement his conquest there. He took not only the money which had been set aside for Vale Royal but also conscripted the masons and other laborers to build his Welsh fortifications. The monks were left struggling to pay to complete the vast project and provide the running costs of it all by themselves, a task that would prove beyond their means. In 1290, the king abruptly halted construction, likely due to financial constraints as well as increasing tensions between the crown and the Church. However, this is only speculation, as no evidence has been found to draw a definitive conclusion.[176] Work stopped for at least a decade after 1290 and was resumed only on a much reduced scale thereafter. However, in 1299, the king issued a protective charter granting Vale Royal and its possessions "in frankelmoin forever,"[177] indicating no military service, or any other secular or religious service, would be required of the institution. The abbey was never completed.

Another great religious building project undertaken by Edward was the extensive remodeling of St. Stephen's Chapel and significant upgrading of the Painted Chamber at Westminster Palace, both within the confines of the royal Palace of Westminster. King Henry III was in attendance at the consecration of Louis IX's masterpiece Sainte

[176] Michael Prestwich, "The Piety of Edward I," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1986), 120.

[177] *The Ledger Book of Vale Royal*, ed. John Brownbill (Edinburgh: Ballantine, Hanson and Co., 1914), 126.

Chappelle in Paris in April of 1248, and wished to construct a chapel in his principal palace at Westminster to rival it. In 1292, he began a rebuilding project, which he proclaimed was "in honor of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the blessed Stephen."[178] The Chapel of St. Stephen was initially used as the king's private chapel r, and still remains in the form of St Stephen's Hall. Likely with Sainte Chappelle in mind, Edward determined to create a venue without rival. Committed to utilizing only the finest materials, the stone was imported from Boulogne and Caen in France, the marble from the Isle of Purbeck, and the iron shipped from Spain. Perhaps because of the elaborate materials used, the project was not completed for seventy years due to inconsistencies in royal financing. The king also ordered some improvements to Westminster Abbey, and while his contributions were not nearly as significant as those wrought by his father, Edward did leave a substantial sacred building legacy in his London capital through his rebuilding of the chapel of St. Stephen in the palace of Westminster.

In his additions to the Painted Chamber at Westminster Abbey, the king instructed his artists to use scenes from the Book of Maccabees. This association with the great Jewish warrior Judas Maccabee was a natural one for the king, combining his chivalric as well as his spiritual identities, with a nod to his idol King Arthur. As the king was still intending to embark upon a second crusade in 1293, this link with Arthur is all the more probable.[179] In addition, it is in keeping with the king's affinity for yoking his objectives to those of historical figures, real or imagined. Historians have speculated as to the

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[178] Robert Cooke, *The Palace of Westminster: Houses of Parliament* (New York, N.Y.: Burton Skira, 1987), 21.

[179] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 16.

motivation for these two religiously-based projects. There were similarly styled artistic works implemented in the same period at the chapel of Merton College, Oxford (one of the king's benefices), and at York Minster. However, Edward's mother and wife, two of the most influential people over the course of his lifetime, both died in 1290. Along with the Eleanor Crosses and the grand effigies the king ordered for his father and his queen, perhaps the expanded paintings and the overhaul of the chapel were further displays of grief and piety, worthy pursuits for the king to channel his profound loss.

Across the road from Westminster Palace, Henry III laid the cornerstone of Lady Chapel at east end of Westminster Abbey the day before his second coronation in 1220, and donated his gold coronation spurs to the building fund for the chapel modeled upon the Abbey of Jumièges near Rouen in France, it was described as "a French thought expressed in English idiom."[180] The Italian cosmati tile of the sacrarium floor was laid down in 1268 as a sign of St. Peter's universal and abiding presence at Westminster Abbey, crafting a distinctive place for the consecration of the English kings.[181] In keeping with his father's wishes for his final resting place, Edward established the precedence of burying English monarchs at Westminster Abbey.[182] Queen Eleanor, added to this tradition by having her children who predeceased her buried there. The French model of St. Denis, personally visited and admired by both Henry and Edward, was likely another model for an English royal burial site.

[180] Paul Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster* (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1986), 97.
[181] Ibid, 140.
[182] Ibid, 92.

However, Edward's most poignant and lasting contribution is perhaps the string of crosses he erected along the funeral route of his wife's coffin. As a Castilian, Eleanor was never fully accepted by the English aristocracy. However, she was a well-loved wife, "lively, vigorous and well-educated . . . who was by the standards of her time a concerned mother."[183] In medieval times, the rituals of death were every bit as powerful and significant as any in life. When his beloved Queen Eleanor died in November of 1290, even in his grief, Edward organized a somber funeral procession and ordered extensive commemorations to honor her and to establish her place within the realm and indeed in history, even in death. On November 20, as the royal party made its way north, they arrived at Harby where the Queen had developed grave symptoms and was unable to continue the journey. When it became apparent that the Queen's life was coming to an end, the king was by her bedside. From November 20-27, records show that the king attended to business such as signing writs, but then the entries cease. On the evening of November 28, after receiving last rites, the Queen died at age 49. Edward wrote to the Queen's friend, the Abbot of Cluny, "I loved her tenderly in her lifetime, and I do not cease to love her now she is dead."[184] Writing to Archbishop Romanus of York, he asked for the prayers of the faithful for the soul of Queen Eleanor, "our wife from our

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[183] Elizabeth Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," in *Eleanor of Castile, 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford: Watkins, 1990), 19.

[184] Thomas Rymer, Rapin de Thoyras, Stephen Whatley, and Jean Le Clerc. Acta regia: or, an account of the treaties, letters and instruments between the monarchs of England and foreign powers, publish'd in Mr. Rymer's *Foedera*, ... Translated from the French of M. Rapin, as publish'd by M. Le Clerc. (London: printed for J. Darby, A. Bettesworth, F. Fayram, J. Pemberton, C. Rivington [and 4 others in London], 1726), 743.

childhood,"[185] and the Archbishop at once granted an indulgence of forty days for those who should pray for the Queen's soul. The king was stricken with grief at her death and had his beloved queen commemorated in no fewer than three tombs and twelve memorial crosses, with probably the greatest funerary display of any English monarch or consort. However, these memorials were not only symbols of the king's devotion to his wife of thirty-six years, they were also a means of dynastic glorification, "evidence of his desire to enhance the prestige of the monarchy" with "symbols of piety and power."[186]

Eleanor's body was initially taken to the Gilbertine priory of St. Katherine's in nearby Lincoln where she was eviscerated and embalmed. From November 30 to December 4, her body lay in state at the Priory. The first Eleanor memorial of stone and marble was erected opposite the priory gates and surmounted by a cross. Her viscera were then interred in the Chapel of St. Mary in Lincoln Cathedral, and her body and heart, which was eventually buried separately at her favored Domincan order's Blackfriars Priory in London, began the long slow journey back to London. On the morning of December 4, 1290, on the first and longest stage of the 225-mile mournful journey to Westminster Abbey, the cortège bearing the Queen's remains set off from Lincoln on medieval roads in the short daylight hours of mid-winter, with all of the pomp and ceremony befitting the beloved wife of a respected medieval English monarch. King Edward I brought the funeral procession of Queen Eleanor to Grantham, laying her body to rest at St Wulfram's on the night of December 4. The next stop was at Stamford, then

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[185] T.F. Tout, *Edward the First* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co. , 1893), 176.

[186] Robert Cooke, *The Palace of Westminster: Houses of Parliament* (New York, N.Y.: Burton Skira, 1987), 204-206.

Northampton where the king stayed at nearby Northampton Castle while the Queen's bier reposed at the abbey. Stony Stratford was next, followed by Woburn where the Queen's funeral procession stopped for the night at the Cistercian Abbey. The cortège continued on to the neighboring Augustinian Priory at Dunstable in Bedfordshire, and the next night, the body of the late Queen Eleanor was laid before the high altar of St. Peter's Church.

The following morning, after a requiem mass had been heard, the procession moved on to St. Alban's, location of one of the queen's favorite shrines, where the queen's body was received on the night of December 13, and placed on a bier before the high altar of the monastery as the monks held all-night prayer vigil.[187] The funeral cortège may have stayed two nights at Waltham, as King Edward I rode on ahead to prepare for the reception of Queen Eleanor's body in London. The final two stops were at Cheapside and finally at Charing, where the king kept his prized falcons and perhaps not coincidentally where the most splendid of the crosses was built. The Dunstable chronicler records that after the bier had rested for the night and the cortège had subsequently passed through each town, the procession stopped while "the king's chancellor and great men there present had marked a fitting place where they might afterwards erect, at the king's expense, a cross of wonderful size."[188]

At last, the remains of the late Queen arrived at Westminster Abbey. Over the centuries, those of high-born status have wished to be buried alongside their family

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[187] Elizabeth Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," in *Eleanor of Castile, 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford: Watkins, 1990), 18.

[188] Ibid, 14-15.

and/or their peers, so long funeral journeys were not uncommon. However, it was not until the ninth century that the Church allowed non-clerics to be buried inside churches. Eleanor had likely made arrangements for her tomb long beforehand, and her body was placed into a grave near the high altar – which had also temporarily held the corpses of Edward the Confessor and Henry III before they were translated to their final tombs within the Abbey – until her own tomb was completed. The Queen's body was buried in Westminster Abbey, a magnificent gilt bronze effigy surmounting her tomb. The heraldry on her tomb honors her Castilian heritage, but the style is more in line with the royal effigies produced for the royal burial church of St. Denis in France in the mid-1260's, including the heraldry on the tomb and pillow beneath the effigy's head, scepter in hand, paste jewels in the crown and on the robe.[189] The body itself was dressed in royal robes, with a crown and scepter.[190] Eleanor's gilt bronze effigies – one for Lincoln and one for Westminster Abbey – were the largest produced in England up until that time and were commissioned by the king himself at the time of queen's death.[191] Her final resting place in Westminster Abbey is located near her father-in-law Henry III as well as Edward the Confessor. The inscription reads: "Here lies Eleanor, sometime Queen of England, wife of King Edward son of King Henry, and daughter of the King of Spain and Countess of Ponthieu, on whose soul God in His pity have mercy. Amen." It was documented that the King attended memorial services for Eleanor until his own death

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[189] John Carmi Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile: Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 207.
[190] Ibid, 60.
[191] David Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Her Death: 28 November 1290* (Stamford: Watkins, 1991), 73.

seventeen years later.[192] He also founded numerous chantries for Eleanor.[193] A contemporary poet, Piers Langtoft wrote at the time: "His solace all was reft sith she was from him gone, On fell things he thought, and waxed heavy as lead, For sadness him o'ermastered since Eleanor was dead."[194]

The king, utterly bereft at the loss of his beloved queen to whom, by all accounts, he had been faithful and true throughout their 36-year marriage, erected twelve crosses between 1291 and 1294, one for each of the places her body rested for the night on the mournful journey from Lincoln to London, as a memorial the legacy the king sought to promote, that of a virtuous woman and well-loved companion. The king ordered that "every place where her bier had rested, a cross of the finest workmanship should be erected in her memory, so that passers-by might pray for her soul," and that "the queen's portrait should be painted on each cross."[195] These monuments, which have been called the "poetry of grief,"[196] along with the three tombs he commissioned, represent "the most magnificent funerary display ever accorded an English monarch, let alone a consort."[197] Blending English and French traditions, the queen's entrails were enshrined in an elaborate tomb in Lincoln Cathedral and her heart was transferred to Blackfriars to join

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[192] Elizabeth Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," in *Eleanor of Castile, 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford: Watkins, 1990), 16.

[193] Ibid, 17.

[194] Robert Mannyng and Peter Langtoft, *A Chronicle of England in Olde English Meeter from Brute to K. Richarde the 1* (1500), 114.

[195] William Rishanger and Henry T. Riley,, Willelmi Rishanger, *quondam monachi S. Albani, et quorundam anonymorum, chronica et annales, regnantibus Henrico Tertio et Edwardo Primo* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1865), 210-211.

[196] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 200.

[197] Nicola Coldstream, "The Commissioning and Design of the Eleanor Crosses," in *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th anniversary of her death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford: Watkins, 1991), 55.

that of her beloved son Alphonso at her request. Having three tombs ensured that prayers

would be said at all three, tripling the intercession of the monks and at the same time,

satisfying various monastic foundations vying for royal burials, all the while maintaining

the beginnings of a royal mausoleum at Westminster Abbey.[198]

Initially, the crosses were set up to encourage Edward's subjects to pray for the

soul of their dearly departed Queen. However, there were likely other motives. The

intricately designed crosses featured statues of the queen, and along with the effigies and

decorative tombs were "designed to impress on the people an image and idea of the

splendor of royalty."[199] There were some medieval precedents for erecting memorial

crosses, a practice which originated in the Anglo-Saxon period. William II had a cross

built on the Strand in London to honor his late mother Queen Matilda. And Henry III

ordered a cross built at Merton Surrey to honor his cousin William de Warrene, 5th Earl

of Surrey. In France, the priory of St.-Julien-de-la-Croix-du-Roi at Mantes was initially

founded because it was a stopping place for corpse of King Philip II.[200] The hugely

extravagant gesture of the twelve crosses may also have been Edward's attempt to

compete with the montjoies, the large crosses erected between Aigues-Mortes along the

Côte d'Azur and the Basilica of St. Denis north of Paris, located at each overnight

stopping place along the funeral route of King Louis IX of France, who had died on

crusade in Tunis twenty years earlier. Regardless of his motives, pure or otherwise, once

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[198] Elizabeth Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," in *Eleanor of Castile, 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford: Watkins, 1990), 16.

[199] Howard Colvin, *The History of the King's Works* (London: H.M. Stationery Off, 1963), 479-485.

[200] Elizabeth Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," in *Eleanor of Castile, 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford: Watkins, 1990), 18.

again Edward demonstrated his grasp of religious ritual and ceremonial means to advance his personal as well as his political ends.

The king's own death was no less poignant that those of his close kin. King Edward I of England, known as 'the Hammer of the Scots" for his repeated attempts to conquer that country, died on July 7, 1307. The ailing but indomitable king, then aged 68, was mortally ill but refused to admit defeat. He had embarked on horseback on the journey which was to prove his last two weeks earlier, on June 26. The protracted journey belied the deteriorating state of the king's health, and finally, he was forced to be carried in a litter. For a once vibrant man so steeped in the symbolism of vitality and power, this must have been the ultimate humiliation, and yet, he chose to put duty above personal comfort and kingly pride. Reaching Kirkandrews-on-Eden on July 2, he struggled on until three days later he arrived at Burgh by Sands, Solway Firth, Cumberland, England, where waited for favorable weather conditions to allow him to cross the estuary on his way to Scotland to attempt to crush yet another rebellion lead by Robert the Bruce. There he finally breathed his last on the Feast of St. Thomas around mid-afternoon.[201]

The king was reported to have had several deathbed requests. According to one tradition, he asked that his heart be carried to the Holy Land, along with an army to fight the infidels. A more dubious story claims that so great had been Edward I's resolution to conquer Scotland, and so grave were his doubts about his son Edward's ability to continue his work, he was purported to have asked his flesh to be boiled from his bones, so that they could be carried with the army on every future campaign into Scotland,

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[201] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 362.

apparently as some kind of talisman. Yet another, perhaps more credible account of his deathbed scene, in which, according to one chronicle, Edward gathered around him the Earl of Lincoln, Aymer de Valence, and the Earl of Warwick, Robert Clifford, and charged them with looking after his son Edward. In particular he wished them to ensure that Piers Gaveston, his son Edward's "favorite," was not allowed to return to the country.[202]

For almost two weeks after his death, only three people, besides the king's attendants, knew of his death, and they were the queen, the Prince of Wales and the Bishop of Lincoln. Walter Guisborough reported that anyone who spoke of it was immediately jailed.[203] The new rule of Edward II was not proclaimed until July 20 at Carlisle Castle. The king's embalmed body was initially borne to St Michael's Parish Church at Burgh by Sands to lay in state until October 18, before being transported to Waltham Abbey in Essex, one of the places his wife's body had rested years before, then his funeral cortege departed for London accompanied by the Bishop of Coventry, processing in stages to the capital city, where it lay in the priory of Holy Trinity as well as at St. Paul's Cathedral, among other churches in the city, before finally arriving at Westminster Abbey for his funeral and interment. There his body was visited by his eldest son, Edward, Prince of Wales, who had been in Scotland at the time of his father's death.

Edward's funeral was held on Friday, October 27, at Westminster Abbey, where the king was laid to rest. Guisborough said the service was attended by "magnates of all

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[202] Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 336.
[203] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 363.

lands and diverse regions, and Edward was laid to rest amongst his fathers."[204] Edward's large grey marble tomb held no effigy or decoration and the inscription "Edwardus Primus Scotorum Malleus. Pactum Serva" (Edward the First, Hammer of the Scots. Keep Troth.) was not added until the sixteenth century. In 1774, his tomb was opened by the Society of Antiquaries and his body found to have been well-preserved over the preceding 467 years.[205] Inside the Purbeck marble coffin his body was observed to be nearly whole, measuring six feet two inches tall and wrapped in a waxed linen cloth and wearing royal robes of red and gold with a crimson mantle. A contemporary illustration shows the king with a gilt coronet on his head wearing a tunic emblazoned with the crusaders' cross, a staff and a scepter surmounted by a dove and oak leaves in enamels, as well as copies of the rod and scepter, jeweled gloves, and a purple coronation robe.[206] Two Irish clergy who visited Westminster Abbey in 1320 reported the inscription on Edward's tomb as reading, "the most Maccabean king of the English." This is the origin of his nickname "Hammer of the Scots" from the original Hebrew and references the extensive murals in the Painted Chamber of the Palace of Westminster of Judas Maccabeus.[207]

Whatever Edward undertook, he usually did so spectacularly, in keeping with the loftiness of his royal station and always with an eye to the perception of his supremacy.

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[204] Michael Prestwich, Edward I (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 558.
[205] Ibid, 339.
[206] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 110.
[207] Ibid, 198.

Even projects he did not finish, such as Vale Royal Abbey, were at least begun with all of the flare he could muster. Death in the medieval era brought together an intense mixture of piety and ritual. For a monarch or his consort, this was even more strikingly so. The Eleanor Crosses, three of which still exist today, are the most profound demonstration of grief ever expressed by a monarch. Not even Queen Victoria's decades of widow's weeds could compete with Edward's commission. Though in elevating his queen to such exalted status, at the same time he increased his own profile as the husband of a woman so deserving of such adulation.

Chapter 5

Influencing His Subjects

King Edward's subjects were typical of most Europeans of the medieval era in that they were largely uneducated and therefore largely illiterate, making them more prone to persuasion. As such, they were more susceptible to belief in the supernatural and therefore more readily ascribed various inexplicable events to such notions. Even events that were purely coincidental were often seen as "omens" portending doom. Conversely, when pleasantly surprised by good fortune, they tended to auspicious circumstances. Though Edward does not seem to be particularly affected by such things, he nonetheless participated in several rituals which now seem to lean heavily toward the superstitious.

One such practice touching for the King's Evil was a medieval ritual intended to cure victims of aegritudo regis or morbus regizs, better known as scrofula, a disease that attacks the lymph system. Though it was potentially disfiguring, the condition was not usually fatal. During the Middle Ages, about one percent of Londoners were afflicted by the disease. Scrofula was a term used to encompass a number of similar ailments which often disappeared naturally within a short period of time. The practice, which involved the king either administering a sort of blessing or signing the cross over the afflicted, underscored the king's wide-ranging powers, greatly increased his esteem and demonstrated in literal terms his exclusive divine connection to God. Touching for the king's evil first documented in England under Edward I, and reached its height in 1289-1290, with a total of 1736 individuals who sought out and were cured by their

sovereign.[208] The ritual healing of scrofula sores primarily took place on Sundays, but was considered especially effective if performed on Good Friday. By custom, patients who had received the king's touch were housed and cared for at the expense of the crown until they had been completely cured or eventually died. By the thirteenth century, however, patients were no longer housed by the monarch but received payments from the king for their care.

Edward's 1276-1277 exchequer accounts provide firm evidence that the king engaged in this phenomenon, as through his confessor, he was providing payments of one penny per person to those sufferers he had cured, which for that one-year period totaled 627 patients. In subsequent years, the number varied from 197 in 1283-84, to 1219 in 1303. It seems the king only tapped into this special power when on English soil, as there are no records of touching while he was in Wales or on the Continent, though in 1303-1304, at least 995 people in Scotland were touched (perhaps this is because the king never considered Scotland as sovereign nation, but subject to English overlordship).[209] It may be surmised that the practice took place during his father's reign since Edward's practice was well under way by 1276. Henry III was a great admirer of his cousin and brother-in-law, Louis IX, who also participated in touching.[210] Given Henry's piety, his love of ritual and spectacle, his visits with the king in France, and his overarching need to keep up with the French, it could be postulated that the impetus for practice of English touching for the king's evil was to be found in the French model. Henry's personality was

[208] Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 104.
[209] Michael Prestwich, "The Piety of Edward I," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1986), 124.
[210] Ibid, 125.

such that he may have believed that if Louis IX and his idol Edward the Confessor –
though he was only credited with one healing – had the power of healing, then it must
surely reside with him as well.[211] Therefore it is likely that the custom of touching was
probably established at the English court sometime between 1259 and 1272, though no
specific records survive. Touching served to help undergird English sacramental
kingship, while Henry may have considered it one of his sacred rights as the anointed
monarch.[212]

The church sought to maintain focus upon its prerogatives and had several means
by which to keep errant parishioners in line. Excommunication was a very powerful tool
wielded by the clergy to frighten congregants into submission, including those of noble
birth and bearing. Clerics believed the sovereignty of the church surmounted that of the
monarchy, and the king of course believed he should have the last word within his own
realm, causing a delicate balance between the two powers ruling over the same group of
constituents. Twice a year, the Bishops in their pontifical robes, with tapers burning, in
the presence of the king and the representatives of the estates of England, pronounced the
greater excommunication against recent transgressors. The solemn and imposing
ceremony took place in a public forum in the great Hall of Westminster, with the
sentence pronounced by the archbishop of Canterbury and thirteen bishops, each bearing
a taper. The archbishop proclaimed, "We declare him excommunicated and anathema.

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[211] Michael Prestwich, "The Piety of Edward I," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1986), 126.
[212] Ibid.

We judge him damned and condemned to eternal fire with Satan and his angels and all

the reprobate, so long as he will not burst the fetters of demons, do penance and satisfy

the Church." A bell was rung as the book was closed. The bishops responded, "So be it."

The candles were then simultaneously extinguished, wick down, signifying the severing

of the unrepentant sinner's attachment to the church as well as his soul from the sight of

God. Finally, the king placed his right hand to his heart and declared, "As God helps me,

I will keep all these things faithfully, as I am a knight and as I am a crowned and anointed

king."[213]

The record of the excommunication was widely distributed and preserved – the

sentence itself, by ecclesiastic order, was published in parish churches on Sundays and

festival days, accompanied by the burning of candles and the ringing of bells, as if tolling

for the dead.[214] The symbolism of the ceremony was significant: the bell represented the

open announcement of the act, the excommunication record was the authority of the

words spoken by the bishop, and the tapers suggested the possibility that the ban could be

lifted, should the excommunicate be satisfactorily repentant.[215] A copy of the

proclamation, as pronounced in May of 1253, with Edward in attendance in Westminster

Hall, declares that, "by the authority of Almighty God, and the blessed Apostles and

Martyrs, and all the saints in heaven, all those who violate the English liberties, and

secretly or openly, by deed, word, or counsel, do make statutes, or observe then being

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[213] Thomas Rymer, Rapin de Thoyras, Stephen Whatley, and Jean Le Clerc. Acta regia: or, an account of the treaties, letters and instruments between the monarchs of England and foreign powers, publish'd in Mr. Rymer's *Foedera*, ... Translated from the French of M. Rapin, as publish'd by M. Le Clerc. (London: printed for J. Darby, A. Bettesworth, F. Fayram, J. Pemberton, C. Rivington [and 4 others in London], 1726), 474-479.
[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.

made, against said liberties, are accursed and sequestered from the company of heaven and the sacraments of the Holy Church."[216]

More spectacular, more profound and more significant than all of the other events associated with royalty was – and still is - the ancient coronation ceremony, a spectacle which holds the most symbolism, offers the most lavish pageantry and inspires the greatest awe. At its core, it is a ritual which consecrates the new king, invests him with the rites of unction and conveys the royal regalia. In return, the king makes a series of prescribed promises. In medieval times, all temporal authority came from the king, and the king derived his authority directly from God, a relationship which was ritualized during his coronation, and largely followed the form for the consecration of a bishop, the primary difference being the use of the chrism, or holy oil. The medieval coronation ceremony represented a statement on the connection between the king and his subjects.[217] In post-Christian England, a crowned king was set apart from all others through the anointing - the "hallowing" of the Sovereign - and afterward was perceived as a somewhat mystical figure,[218] with ultimate authority over his subjects, and was even believed to have obtained healing powers.

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[216] Thomas Rymer, Rapin de Thoyras, Stephen Whatley, and Jean Le Clerc. Acta regia: or, an account of the treaties, letters and instruments between the monarchs of England and foreign powers, publish'd in Mr. Rymer's *Foedera*, ... Translated from the French of M. Rapin, as publish'd by M. Le Clerc. (London: printed for J. Darby, A. Bettesworth, F. Fayram, J. Pemberton, C. Rivington [and 4 others in London], 1726), 474-479.

[217] David J. Sturdy, "Continuity versus Change: Historians and English Coronations of the Medieval and Early Modern Periods," in *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 295.

[218] W.R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the Antiquities of the Coronation* (London: Duckworth, 1911), 33.

For his part, the king swore the coronation oath, creating a solemn binding pact with his people. The custom of a public ceremony inaugurating a new king or chief had long been in existence, though a new religious element was added to the service when England became Christianized in the seventh century. The revised ceremony, with excerpts taken directly from Old Testament accounts of the anointing of King Saul and King David by the priest Samuel, advanced the concept of kingship, as an anointed endowed a prince with divine blessing and some measure of priestly, if not divine character. The phrase "the Lord's anointed" is in reference to the Old Testament Biblical kings.[219]

Until Edward I, the reign of a new king did not officially begin until his coronation, or more specifically, his anointing. The first Norman monarch, William I "the Conqueror," was crowned on the day he became king, on Sunday, December 25, 1066, in Westminster Abbey, and most of his successors were crowned within days or weeks of their accession. However, Edward was in Sicily on his way home from his crusading mission when he learned of his father's death and wrote of his "bitter sadness" in learning of the loss of his father.[220] When his son and heir left on crusade 1271, Henry III had been in failing health for two years, and in the fall of 1272, he was once again ill. However, Edward had wisely made provision in the event of his father's death while he was in the Latin East.

During the Middle Ages, when a king died, all of his authority died with him, and therefore, it was unthinkable that England should be left rudderless while awaiting the

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[219] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 114.
[220] Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 74.

return of their new king, which of itself assumed that Edward would even survive the crusade or the travel to and from the Levant. Therefore, prior to his departure, it was agreed that Edward's reign would commence at the very moment his father died, with all accompanying rights and privileges, rather than at his coronation. In addition, before Edward left for the crusade, Henry transferred all of the royal castles and lands to constables and sheriffs chosen by Edward, ensuring that Edward would have a firm grip on power though absent. Finally, Edward had appointed a committee of five men, headed by his uncle, Henry's brother Richard of Cornwall, to serve as regents and oversee the day-to-day affairs of the realm. The day after Henry's death, on November 17, King Edward I's peace was proclaimed in Westminster Hall. The inherent perils of an interregnum were unthinkable, and the king's peace itself was subject to interruption by the death of the sovereign, as it perished with him. Therefore, the king's council announced his peace throughout the kingdom.

Because very little primary source material remains from the actual coronation service of Edward I, most of what we know is found in the surviving accounts of prior and subsequent coronations, as well as information gleaned from various sources, including the records from the third recension of the English coronation service (also known as the Order of Henry I) and coronation oath, the funeral effigies of previous and successive kings and queens, and the inventory taken upon the exhumation of the Edward I's body in 1774, which included some coronation objects. The oldest detailed coronation records that remain are those of Richard I, Edward's great-uncle, who was crowned on September 3, 1189. With these documents, it is possible to reconstruct a plausible

account of the coronation ceremony held for Edward I, as well as determine the names of those who participated.

The new king landed at Dover on August 2, 1274, to tremendous enthusiasm amongst a large gathering of his subjects. One Londoner penned a song that read, in part, "Behold, he shines like a new Richard."[221] The prospect of Edward's coronation held even more excitement because he had been away for almost four years and was returning to England a crusading hero. Even though Edward was already in fact king, his coronation was in no way redundant, for while his writs proclaimed him king, "by the grace of God,"[222] it was still incumbent upon the king and his subjects to ritually call upon God for His blessing of the new sovereign. On Saturday, August 18, Edward and his entourage were welcomed by the lord mayor, Henry le Walleis, and the citizens of London with a ceremonial triumphal entry into the city of London, which had been decorated in silks and gold cloth. In addition, the nobility was on hand to cheer the royal procession headed by the new king. One chronicler declared, "Neither tongue nor pen" were adequate to describe the event.[223] In a time when true likenesses of the king did not exist, it was important for the people to see the sovereign in the flesh. The robust figure of the tall king only served to further his reputation as a mighty king.

Following the grand procession, the king and his household retired to

[221] Thomas Wright, *The Political Songs of England, from the Reign of John to that of Edward II* (London: Printed for the Camden Society, by J.B. Nichols and Son, 1839), 128.

[222] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 111.

[223] Roy C. Strong, *Coronation: from the 8th to the 21st Century* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), 133.

Westminster Palace where they heard evensong and were served "of the voyde," a ceremony at which the king partook of spice and wine.[224] Edward then secluded himself to ritually prepare for the solemn sacred ceremony the next day, very similar to the way a squire being knighted would have prepared himself,[225] fasting in solitude and quiet contemplation of the awesome responsibility he was about to undertake. After Edward's bath, the Abbot of Westminster, Richard de Ware, would have come to hear his confession in preparation for the communion part of the coronation service. The daunting responsibility of kingship must have profoundly weighed upon Edward that night.

The following day, that of the coronation, after Edward had bathed again and heard mass, he was ceremonially dressed by the Lord Great Chamberlain, Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, in a white silk shirt and fitted red coat, with silk breeches and stockings, all topped by a full-length red parliament robe, an ermine cape and a long crimson velvet train lined with more ermine and decorated with gold lace, most likely finished off by very lightweight shoes, if any at all.[226] Edward then made his way to Westminster Hall where a marble chair had been set up for him and into which the nobles lifted him, somewhat akin to the Teutonic custom of raising a new king upon a shield.[227] Another similar chair was prepared for the queen as well, but placed one or two steps lower than the king's. Edward sat in the great hall in the company of his leading magnates awaiting the prelates of Westminster to arrive with the regalia and the various

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[224] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxi.
[225] Ibid, lxiii.
[226] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxii.
[227] Ibid, xxiii.

vestments, each of which was first presented to the king, who then handed it to the designated noble who would carry it in the procession to and within the abbey.

At the appointed time, the king and queen, led by a bevy of clergy singing *ea quae in reception regum decantari solent*, and all of the leading nobles, processed the short distance from the Palace of Westminster across to the great abbey under a canopy held by the Barons of the Cinque Ports, led by their Lord Warden, Stephen de Pencester. The origin of the close attendance of the Cinque Ports Barons upon the king arose from the fact that the Cinque Ports (the five southern sea ports of Hastings, New Romney, Hythe, Dover, and Sandwich), were regarded as the "gates of the kingdom"[228] through which any invader would necessarily have to pass, therefore the proximity of the Barons of the Cinque Ports to the king symbolized their protection of the kingdom from foreign invasion by the covering of the monarch with a canopy of purple silk held up by silver lances, adorned with silver gilt bells at each corner.[229]

Immediately preceding the king were the chalice and paten of St. Edward, borne by the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Treasurer, only if they were also bishops. If not, two bishops would have been appointed. For Edward's coronation, neither Robert Burnell, the Lord Chancellor, nor Philip of Eye, Canon of St. Paul's, the Lord High Treasurer, were bishops at the time, so presumably, two bishops were selected by the king. The Bishop of Durham, Robert Stitchill, and the Bishop of Bath and Wells,

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[228] Samuel Jeake, *Charters of the Cinque Ports, two ancient towns and their members* (London: Printed for Bernard Lintot, 1728), L1.

[229] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxiv.

William of Bitton II, served as supporters of the king during the short public walk from the palace to the abbey.[230] Additionally, the robes of St. Edward were conveyed on "a very large board"[231] while three ceremonial swords followed behind.

Apart from the crown and scepter, the third most potent symbol of royal power was the sword.[232] Curtana, also known as the Sword of Mercy, was likely so named because of its abbreviated length, as the point had at some point been cut off. Though more obtuse in shape, The Sword of the Church, as well as the Sword of Justice, are both appointed and included in the procession,[233] as is St. Edward's Staff, four-feet-seven-and-a-half-inches long, and described as a rod of gold divided at intervals with collars of ornamental leaf patterns. At the top is a sphere and cross patée, and tradition holds that formerly a piece of the true cross was enclosed within the mound. The staff is supposed to guide the footsteps of the king, and is tipped with a steel pike of a little over four inches in length.[234] St. Edward's Staff was carried by the king himself in the same manner as a bishop's crozier. Behind the king came the queen's procession, with nobles carrying the ivory rod with the dove, the queen's scepter and the queen's crown, and finally the queen herself walking beneath a canopy much like the king's, held by two bishops.[235]

Upon entering the west door of Westminster Abbey, the formal procession, coordinated by the Earl Marshal, Roger Bigod, 5th Earl of Norfolk, was arranged by

[230] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxiv.
[231] Ibid.
[232] John Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy* (London: Routledge, 1999), 14.
[233] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxiv.
[234] Roy C. Strong, *Coronation: from the 8th to the 21st Century* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), 54.
[235] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxvi.

virtue of office, by special appointment, by hereditary right, by "right of custom," or by right of the possession of certain lands by tenure known as grand serjeantry, all of which were subject to the sovereign's pleasure. The Earl Marshal's office had long been the claim of the family of Bigod, who, in the thirteenth century held by the earls of Norfolk, and has always apparently been hereditary. The duties of the Earl Marshal lay more in the planning stages and therefore are not as extensive on the day of the coronation as those of the Lord Chamberlain, though the scope his responsibilities were nonetheless tremendous. It was the Earl of Norfolk, in his capacity as Earl Marshal, who organized and arranged the festivities for the entire day of the coronation, drawn up and parsed the guest list, sent out the invitations, allocated the stations and seating for around 7,000 guests within the abbey, and overall kept good order in the king's presence.

His most important duty was in organizing and assembling the coronation ceremonies, as he had the responsibility of guiding, though not performing the event, much like a master of ceremonies. His place in the grand procession was next to the Lord Great Chamberlain, Robert de Vere, 5th Earl of Oxford, which was granted to the family of de Vere in the time of Henry I. He carried a white wand in the procession and his duties within the abbey during the coronation were extensive. The third primary officiant, the Lord High Steward, was the first of the great offices of state to be established in England. Edward affirmed the appointment of his younger brother Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, who was elevated to the title by his father in 1265. The duties of the Lord High Constable are less than those of the Lord High Steward, but, like the Earl Marshal, he carries his baton of office in the procession and accompanies the Earl

Marshal during the ceremony.[236] The Lord High Constable at the time of Edward I's coronation was Humphrey de Bohun, 2nd Earl of Hereford, and 1st Earl of Essex, who thirty years earlier had stood as one of the nine godfathers of the lord Edward.

Thus began the first part of the service as the sovereign and all of the participants processed from the west end of the cavernous abbey, through the nave and the quire to the sacrarium, the theater area at the intersection of the nave and quire in front of the high altar, as verses from Psalm 122 were sung: "I was glad when they said unto me: We will go into the house of the Lord."[237] Typically, the lesser members of a royal procession came first, with the sovereign being the last to enter the church. Based on this convention, perhaps first to enter the church were the King's Heralds and Pursuivants, or junior officers of arms of England. Next was the Bearer of the Great Golden Spurs, or St. George's Spurs, emblems of knighthood and chivalry, borne in the procession and then laid upon the altar by William de Valence, in his role as 1st Earl of Pembroke. He performed his service jure sanguinis, based upon his descent from William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, heir to his brother, John Marshall, who bore the Spurs at the coronation of Richard I in 1189.

Following the swords came the four ceremonial swords, the first of which was the Sword of State, to be carried by the Earl of Chester, though the title had rested with Edmund of Lancaster since 1253, he had other roles in the service, so it is unknown who bore the ceremonial sword. The Sword of Temporal Justice and Curtana, the broken

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[236] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxvii.
[237] Ibid, xxvi.

sword or the Sword of Mercy, also known as the Sword of Edward the Confessor, were transported by William Beauchamp 9th, Earl of Warwick. The king's nephew, John of Brittany, in his capacity as 2nd Earl of Richmond, was entitled to carry the Scepter with the Dove. Then, just before the clergy came the king's younger brother, the 1st Earl of Lancaster, Edmund "Crossback,", so named because he had been on crusade, and as such, had earned the right to wear the crusader's cross on the back of his tunic. By custom, the Earl of Lancaster was afforded the singularly exalted privilege of carrying Saint Edward's Crown in the abbey procession, the one with which the English kings are crowned.

The Abbot of Westminster, Richard de Ware, received the ornaments and regalia from the Archbishop Robert Kilwardby, who in turn had received them from the ceremonial bearers in the procession. The abbot laid them upon the altar at the beginning of the ceremonies, and then delivered them to the appropriate persons when called for by the order of service. Once the king had made his way down the long center aisle of the abbey, he effected a "humble adoration" toward the high altar and taken his place in the chair of estate. The coronation service commenced when the archbishop asked the assembled crowds on all three sides if they would accept the lord Edward as king, to which the audience, including hundreds of knights dressed in surcoats adorned with heraldic symbols,[238] shouted its enthusiastic consent.[239] This was referred to as the "election" of the king.

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[238] W.R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the Antiquities of the Coronation* (London: Duckworth, 1911), 42.

[239] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxvii.

Officiating and overseeing the entire ceremony, conducted completely in Latin according to the ordines – liturgical scripts written to guide those performing the rite of coronation – was the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose right to anoint and crown the king can be traced back to the eleventh century. After the lord Edward had been acclaimed by the assembly, the choir sang *Firmetur manus tua*, as the prelates participating in the ceremony vested themselves and ushers spread carpets and cushions on the floor in front of the altar for the king's use later in the ceremony.[240] There was a "pulpitum,"[241] or canopied stage, set up in the center of the sacrarium where the quire crossed the transepts, with two sets of stairs, one on each side, and draping of lavish tapestries and gold cloth, an arrangement which allowed the king to be seen by all those in attendance. Perhaps the raised stage was akin to similar ones employed by the emperors of Constantinople, as were several other elements of the English coronation.[242] Other features must have made Edward's coronation a dazzling pageant, as the columns of the abbey were of new and highly polished marble, the windows filled with brilliantly colored stained glass, the altar frontal covered in glistening golden embroidery and dotted with enamels and jewels, the sacrarium of Italian cosmati tiles newly laid and finely polished, the area hung with huge rich tapestries depicting the life of Christ on one side and that of the Confessor on the other, all set against the backdrop of the gleaming new shrine of Edward the

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[240] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxvii.
[241] W.R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the Antiquities of the Coronation* (London: Duckworth, 1911), 31.
[242] Ibid, 32.

Confessor.[243] The entire spectacle was illuminated by hundreds and hundreds of candles, their light dancing off of the vast glittering finery within.

At this point in the service, the king came forward and offered a sumptuous pall for the altar and a one-pound wedge of gold, which he presented to the archbishop. The king then lay prostrate with his head toward the altar, stood, and following the litany, the archbishop administered the coronation oath, in which the king made three solemn promises, which he swore upon the gospels. First, he pledged to keep peace in the realm for the church and his people; second, he promised to repress avarice and injustice in all ranks of life; and last, he vowed to exercise justice and mercy in his judgments. The archbishop exhorted the king not to undertake the mantle of governing the realm unless he intended to rule to the very best of his ability, to which the king answered that with God's help, he would do so.[244] The king returned to the altar and confirmed the vows to which he had just assented.

The consecration of the monarch in preparation for receiving the unction began, as three bishops said three prayers over the king: *Omnipotens sempiterne Deus creator*, *Benedic Domine hunc regem*, and *Deus ineffabilis auctor mundi*. Immediately afterward, the unction was administered by the archbishop with *oleum sanctificatum*, or holy oil. This was the most significant ritual around which the entire service revolved, because without it, the king was not officially the king. It was this singular act that elevated the monarch to his position of authority over all of his subjects, and it also represented the

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[243] W.R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the Antiquities of the Coronation* (London: Duckworth, 1911), 41.
[244] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxviii.

seven gifts of the Holy Ghost transmitted to the monarch through the sacrament of anointing.[245] The Lord Chamberlain approached and removed the king's parliament robe, and the king knelt for the anointing. For Richard I's coronation eighty-five years prior, the king was anointed in three places – the head, the hands and the chest, signifying glory, knowledge and strength[246] – and this was likely the case for Edward as well. The abbot poured the oil from an ampulla into the coronation spoon from which the archbishop anointed the king by forming a cross, first on the palms of his hands reciting the formula *Ungantur manus*, followed by the prayer *Prospice omnipotens Deus*. Then the king was anointed on the chest with *Ungantur pectus*, and finally on the head with *Ungantur caput*.[247] Once the anointing was complete, the Archbishop returned to the altar and said the prayers *Deus Dei Filius* and *Deus qui es instorum*, while the abbot dried the places where the king was anointed, except his head, with cotton wool or linen and closed the king's shirt. The abbot gave the king a pair of linen gloves to cover the places on his hands where he had been anointed and the Lord Great Chamberlain then placed "a shallow coif of fine lawn"[248] on the king's head after the last prayer, which brought to a close the second portion of the ceremony. At the time there existed an additional piece of the regalia called St. Edward's comb, made of ivory or bone, which may have been used to arrange the king's hair after the anointing.[249]

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[245] Robertv Grosseteste, Frank Anthony, Carl Mantello, and Joseph Ward Goering. *The letters of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 324.

[246] Hoveden, and William Stubbs. *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene* ([Wiesbaden]: Kraus Reprint, 1964), 394.

[247] H.G. Richardson, "The Coronation in Medieval England: The Evolution of the Office and the Oath," *Traditio*. 16 (1960): 118.

[248] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xxxix.

[249] Roy C. Strong, *Coronation: from the 8th to the 21st Century* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), 54.

The final portion of the ceremony related to the array of regalia with which the king was to be invested. The symbolic and ritual coronation artifacts functioned to legitimate, to sanctify, and to link medieval monarchs to past régimes while undergirding their power and majesty for the forthcoming reign. The archbishop blessed the ornaments of coronation, after which the king was first clothed with *Colobium sindonis* (shroud tunic), a loose white undergarment of fine linen cloth edged with a lace border, open at the sides, sleeveless and cut low at the neck. It symbolized the royal authority derived from the people. He then received the *supertunica*, or tunicle, a long coat of gold silk, lined with crimson silk and decorated with flowers which reached to the ankles and had wide-flowing sleeves. It was also trimmed with gold lace and fastened by a sword belt. The garment's origins derived from the full dress uniform of a consul of the Byzantine Empire. Next the buskins, or tinsin hose, were fitted on, followed by the Spurs, which were delivered to the king and put on by the person who carried them in the procession, which in 1274 was Edward's uncle William de Valence. The spurs were made of solid gold with straps of crimson velvet and embroidered in gold. They were known as St. George's Spurs, and signified knighthood and chivalry,[250] and along with the sword, served to emphasize the military character of the sovereign.

A sword belt was then fastened over the *supertunica* so that the Sword of State could be attached. It was retrieved from the altar where it had been placed during the procession. At this time, the sword was blessed by the archbishop, and delivered to the king by the bishops, while the Lord Great Chamberlain affixed it to the king's waist. The

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[250] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation* Records (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), 125.

blade was about thirty-two inches long, the grip and the pommel made of gilt metal, while the scabbard was covered with crimson velvet encircled with gilded metal plates bearing designs in high relief.[251] The last item was the pallium, or royal mantle, for which we have an accurate description, again from the king's reopened casket. It was made of crimson satin and clasped on the left shoulder with a brilliant jeweled brooch, and once again mirrored those worn by the Byzantine emperors, in particular it was similar to the one found in a mosaic of Justinian located in Ravenna.[252] Virtually none of the medieval vestments have survived as the kings were buried in their coronation robes, *tunica usque ad talos longa desuper pallio regai adornabitur*.[253] In addition, various medieval garments used in past coronation ceremonies were also sold off at the time, an irreparable loss.[254]

The next set of items to be bestowed upon the king was the ornamental regalia. Because the original Norman crown, along with all of the other royal regalia, had been lost by King John in 1216 in the rising tide and quicksands of the Great Wash, it is likely Edward wore the same simple circlet with which his father was crowned. The custom of a ruler wearing a crown in England could probably be traced to the sixth century when the Romans occupied the British Isles and brought with them the custom of wearing laurel wreaths on their heads. The Crown of England, known as St. Edward's Crown, was the one with which the king is crowned when he ascended the throne at his coronation. Based

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[251] http://www.londononline.co.uk/monarchy/Ancient_Coronation_Services/, accessed March 5, 2012.

[252] W.R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the Antiquities of the Coronation* (London: Duckworth, 1911), 51.

[253] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xliii.

[254] http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/crown_jewels.htm, accessed March 9, 2012.

upon coins, statuary and Edward I's seal, it is possible to glean how his coronation crown may have looked. Contemporary descriptions state that it was a "gold crown decorated with diverse stones."[255] Another source described it as a circle with four alternating crosses and four fleurs-de-lis, and from the crosses rose two arches that met over the center and were topped by a cross affixed atop a small orb. Inside the circlet was a purple velvet cap trimmed with ermine.[256] The archbishop blessed the crown with the prayer *Deus tuorum corona*, then received it from the abbot and placed it upon the king's head.

In the medieval era, the crowning of the sovereign was not nearly as significant as the unction[257] and the enthronement and held approximately the same importance as the delivery of the scepters and other royal accoutrements. Immediately after the crowning, the archbishop prayed *Coronet te Deus then Deus perpetuitatis*, followed by the anthem *Confortare et esto vir*. The one element of Edward's coronation that the chroniclers did not fail to record was the king's own novel insertion into the crowning portion of the ceremony. Once the crown had been placed upon his head, Edward immediately removed it and set it aside, vowing he would never take it up again until he had recovered the lands "given away" by his father to the earls, barons and knights of England, and to aliens."[258] In addition to the actual lands his father and grandfather had lost, the king was almost certainly referring to the sovereign rights of the crown as well.

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[255] R.W. Lightbown, "The English Coronation Regalia Before the Commonwealth," in *The Crown Jewels: The History of the Coronation Regalia in the Jewel House of the Tower of London : in two volumes Vol. I, The History*, ed Claude Blair (London: Stationery Office, 1998), 257 – 353.

[256] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xliv.

[257] H.G. Richardson, "The Coronation in Medieval England: The Evolution of the Office and the Oath," *Traditio*. 16 (1960): 117.

[258] J.R. Maddicott, "Edward I and the Lessons of Baronial Reform," in *Thirteenth century England IX: proceedings of the Durham Conference, 2001* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell, 2003), 10.

The next ornament bestowed, following *Deus Dei Filius*, was the coronation ring, sometimes called the wedding ring of England, over which the archbishop said *Accipe reguae dignitatis anulum*. There was a legend that Edward the Confessor gave a pauper one of his valuable rings, and soon afterwards, an old man gave the ring to two pilgrims in the Levant, claiming he was St. John the Evangelist, and instructing the pilgrims to give it to their king, which they did.[259] Another fable claimed that the tighter the ring fit on the monarch's finger, the longer he would reign.[260] The ring was also an ancient emblem of a doctor as well as a symbol of Christian faith.[261] When the king received the ring, he first removed the linen glove which he had worn since the anointing, though it is unclear on which hand or which finger the ring was placed. Interestingly, no ring was found on Edward I's body when his coffin was disinterred. The bracelets were another ancient custom dating back to the Israelites, as King Saul was wearing them at the time of his death, and they were brought to David, his successor, as an acknowledgement of his regal power.[262] It was at this point in the service they may have been presented to the king, after which he ungirded the Sword of State and placed it upon the altar, still in its purple velvet scabbard, when "the greatest noble present" exchanged the sword for an offering of 100 shillings.[263]

The Lord of the Manor of Worksop, who in 1274, was Sir Thomas de Furnival by right of tenure by grand serjeantry, provided the king a set of gloves, and supported his

William Stubbs and James Cornford. 1979. The Constitutional History of England (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 109.

[259] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xlix.

[260] Ibid, xlix.

[261] Ibid, xliv.

[262] Ibid, xl.

[263] Ibid, li.

right arm while he held the Scepter with the Cross,[264] which was the next item delivered

into the king's right hand. Its stem was twisted and was surmounted by a small orb with a

cross on top of it. This was followed by the prayer *Omnium Domine fons bonorum*.

Finally, the Rod with the Dove, also called a *virga*, was placed in the king's left hand and

symbolized peace.[265] The scepter and rod also harken back to the Byzantine Empire

where sixth century coins show the emperor with both, and pre-conquest Anglo-Saxon

coins and seals show the same. The scepter is indicative of regal power, while the rod

symbolizes the "paternal authority of the sovereign."[266] Edward I was buried with the

ones used at his coronation. The prayer invoked for the rod was *Accipe virgum virtutis*,

followed by the blessing *Benedicat tibi Dominus*, after which the king kissed the two

bishops who had supported him throughout the service. Almost certainly an orb was

delivered as well, which in the thirteenth century royal seals had a long stem on top

capped by a cross, but the precise timing within the coronation service is somewhat

unclear.[267] The Bayeux Tapestry depicts King Harold with a cross-topped orb in one hand

and an ornamental rod in the other.[268]

The king then sat in the Chair of State, still crowned and bearing the Scepter with

the Cross and the Rod with the Dove, and awaited the start of the *Te Deum*.[269] Following

the hymn, it was at this juncture that the king ascended the stairs to the elevated stage,

accompanied by the bishops of Durham and Bath, the abbot of Westminster, with the four

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[264] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), li.

[265] Ibid, liv.

[266] Ibid, xliii.

[267] Ibid, li.

[268] W.R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the Antiquities of the Coronation* (London: Duckworth, 1911), 46.

[269] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xliv.

swords carried before him, and was enthroned upon St. Edward's Chair as the archbishop

proclaims *Sta et retine*. A long line then formed of lords temporal and spiritual who

approached the king on his throne to perform homage to their new monarch. The

archbishop of Canterbury was the first to pledge fealty (as clerics did not hold lands in

their own name, but in that of the church, they did not perform homage), along with all of

the other bishops in attendance. The archbishop knelt before the king and spoke for the

group as he recited the oath of fealty, "to be faithful and true, and faith and truth bear

unto you our sovereign lord and your heirs kings of England; and I shall do and truly

acknowledge the lands which I claim to hold of you, as in right of the church, so help me

God," then he rose and kissed the king's left cheek, as did all of the bishops in

succession.

The nobles then performed homage for their lands, beginning with the most senior

in order of hierarchy, also kneeling before the king and placing their hands between those

of the king while reciting the oath of homage, to "become your liege man of life and limb

and of earthly worship; and faith and truth shall bear unto you, to live and die against all

manner of folks, so help me God." Finally, each one touched the king's crown and kissed

his left cheek. While these oaths were being said, it was customary to issue a general

pardon read out by the Lord Chancellor.[270] Once all of the peers had complete their acts

of homage, they stood around the king and together lifted the crown off of his head to

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[270] Roy C. Strong, 2006. *Coronation: from the 8th to the 21st century* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), 203.

ease its weight,[271] perhaps symbolically indicating their collective support of the king and their willingness to share his burden.

Presumably that Queen Eleanor's coronation took place immediately following that of her husband's and was decidedly shorter in length. She was also supported by two bishops, appointed by the king, and attended by a noblewoman "for her consolation"[272] who performed the functions which the abbot performed for the king. *Spiritus sancti gratia* and *Deus qui solus* were said as the queen knelt at the altar, her hair loose about her shoulders and dressed in a purple velvet robe. She was anointed by the archbishop (sometimes that of York instead of Canterbury) only on the head and chest, followed by the prayer *Omnipotens simpiterne Deus affluentum*. There were no sacred vestments to bestow, though the archbishop slipped the coronation ring on her finger saying *Accipe anulum*, then recited *Accipe coronam gloriae* and placed the crown on her head, followed by the scepter in her right hand and the ivory rod in her left hand.[273] In the queen's coronation service, the Biblical Esther was presented as a model of ideal queenship. Royal wives were actively encouraged by the clergy to instill empathy in the king toward his subjects and to help him keep his reign within church guidelines.[274]

With the king and queen anointed, crowned and enthroned, the service moved on to the mass. The gospel has remained the same throughout, probably since the eighth century Anglo-Saxon King Egbert.[275] The mass was followed by the Nicene Creed,

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[271] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), xlvii.
[272] Ibid, lviii.
[273] Ibid, lvii-lviii.
[274] Robertus Grosseteste and Henry R. Luard, *Roberti Grosseteste Epistolae: episcopi quondam Lincolniensis* (London: Longman [u.a.], 1861), 271-272.
[275] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), lx.

during which the gospels were brought to the king for him to kiss, still seated on his throne atop the stage at the conclusion of the creed. During the singing of the offertory anthem, perhaps *Exaudi Deus orationem meam*, the king and queen proceed to the altar to prepare to receive Holy Communion from St. Edward's chalice and paten. The chalice has been described as being made of agate or of stone with a dog's head foot featured. The archbishop recited the blessings *Omnipotens Deus det tibi* and *Benedic Domine fortitudinem*, followed by "the secret," *Munera Domine quaesumus*. Then the royal couple went uncrowned to their "faldstools" where they remained through the preface, *Qui es fons immarcessibilis lucis*, and the singing of *Agnus Dei*, until communion when they said their Confiteor to the archbishop before the altar behind a large piece of while silk held on each end by two bishops. However, they only received communion in one kind, the bread, and did not receive the wine,[276] though once the king stood, he used the unconsecrated wine in the chalice to rinse his mouth.

The king and queen then made their way to St. Edward's chapel, followed by all of the participating officers of state and the clergy where the Lord Great Chamberlain removed all of the king's vestments and placed upon him a crimson parliament robe edged in ermine. The archbishop removed the crown of St. Edward, likely replacing it with a simpler coronet, and did the same for the queen, then handed them their respective scepters and rods. The remainder of the vestments and ornaments were placed on the altar of St. Edward's shrine. They then returned to their thrones while the clerics divested themselves of their copes and pontificals. Once everyone was in place, the recessional

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[276] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), lx.

from the abbey began, in the same order as the earlier processional. The king and queen, last to exit the abbey, returned to their chambers in Westminster Palace to rest and prepare for the feast to follow.[277]

The Coronation Banquet followed the coronation ceremonies and was held in the great Hall of Westminster. Most of the services performed for the coronation banquet, like those of the coronation, were in virtue of grand serjeantry, such as that of the Chief Butler, which in 1274 had fallen to Gilbert de Claire, Earl of Gloucester, the Lardiner, held by the de Burdeleys family, and the Naperer, held by the Lord of the Manor of Ashley etc."[278] Once the king and queen entered the great hall and were seated on the dais, the dean of the Chapel Royal said grace and all of the guests, who had remained standing since the king and queen entered the hall, were then seated and the banquet began with a number of courses.

Perhaps the most celebrated of the feudal services was that of King's Champion whose right to serve rested on the possession of the Manor of Scrivelsby, in Lincolnshire. At the coronation of Edward I, the holder of the title was William Marmion. The duty of the King's Champion at the Coronation Banquet consisted of riding to the door of Westminster Hall, with armor from head to toe, preceded by trumpeters, two squires bearing his shield and lance, and a herald, flanked by the Lord High Constable, the Earl Marshal.[279] The herald read out the challenge to those present to "adventure his life" against anyone who should "deny or gainsay our sovereign lord," then the King's

[277] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), lxii-lxiii.
[278] http://www.londononline.co.uk/monarchy/Ancient_Coronation_Services/, accessed March 5, 2012.
[279] L.G.W. Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1975), lxv.

Champion dramatically threw down his gauntlet. This was repeated two more times, in the middle of the hall and then upon the steps in front of the king's table. The ceremony was conducted with great pomp and showmanship, after which the King drank the Champion's health and presented him with a silver bowl as a fee for his service. If the Champion's challenge had ever been accepted, which it never was, and he won the ensuing competition, he was then entitled to his opponent's armor and horse with the accessories of his opponent.[280]

Each Coronation represented a sacrament at which the nation celebrated its origins, reaffirmed its purpose, and rededicated itself to the future. The crowning of a monarch also reminded the subjects of the coronations of all those other monarchs who had come before. The ideal of hereditary monarchy may be viewed as a unifying one, binding together the current nation with those who lived before and those who will come after. The institution of monarchy does not die with the death of the monarch, and instead continues its binding function from age to age. Riding a wave of popularity after his victory over Simon de Montfort and his recent participation in crusade, Edward I found himself in an ideal position to parlay his already powerful role into his reign. The coronation presented an opportunity to display all of the solemnity, sacredness and trappings of kingly power to capture the imaginations of his subjects, as well as his nobles, whose assistance he would need as he sought to conqueror Wales and Scotland and implement major legal reforms during his thirty-six-year reign.

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[280] http://www.londononline.co.uk/monarchy/Ancient_Coronation_Services/, accessed March 5, 2012.

Conclusion

Over seven centuries after his death, Edward I remains one of England's greatest
and most successful kings owing in large part to his appreciation for and implementation
of ritual and ceremonial, and to his great benefit, he incorporated those elements into his
vision of medieval English kingship. Because of his careful stewardship of his office, at
the end of his reign, England's Edward I was able to pass to his son a better England than
he had inherited thirty-six earlier. It was no coincidence that, as Morris asserts, for the
first time since the Norman Conquest, "England had a government that was perceived to
be working in the interests of the majority of its subjects."[281] Edward managed to strike a
balance between lofty kingship and relatability. He routinely traveled about the kingdom,
participating in event all over the realm and being seen by the people, the living
embodiment of divinely ordained kingship in the midst. Whether on pilgrimage or
marching to war or on royal progress or presiding over parliaments or participating in
state occasions, Edward captured the imagination of his people by the symbolic use of
ritual and ceremonial and spectacle.

Even Edward's contemporary subjects appreciated his great skill in shaping his
image of benevolent power within his own realm. It is a testament to the great respect
England held for its first King Edward that throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth
centuries, the English Exchequer paid to keep candles burning "round the body of the
lord Edward, formerly King of England, of famous memory."[282] "Edward's kingship was
based on a tradition of royal gesta (deed). The emphasis was on valor and courage in

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[281] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 371.
[282] John Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy* (London: Routledge. 1999), 55.

action, quite unlike the reflectiveness of Edward the Confessor, mirrored, to some extent,[283] in the kingship of Henry III." The character of a great king was one of bravery, wisdom, eloquence, justice and piety.[284] In focusing upon Edward's intuitive use of ceremonial in order to garner and consolidate power, it could seem that he was nothing but a manipulative power-hungry despot. To assess only this one aspect comes at the expense of the king's other considerable attributes: his ability to identify talent, his sound judge of character, his wisdom, his political astuteness, his intelligence, his care of his family, his persuasiveness and his negotiating skills.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of his success is the fact that some of the ceremonies and rituals instituted by Edward are still practiced today by the current royal family. The most obvious is the most sacred coronation service, whereby the king was invested by the Archbishop of Canterbury as God's anointed, like the kings of Israel before him, a ritual which has changed very little since 1274 when Edward I was crowned. The regalia, though refashioned for Charles II after the revolution, remain consistent with the sacred items handed to Edward almost 740 years ago. Tens of thousands of Edward's subjects flooded into London for his coronation, just to catch a glimpse of their new king. The magic of that experience has not faded, as Queen Elizabeth's coronation drew hundreds of thousands of people to the capital, and millions more watched on television for the first time. Even the ancient duties survive, as it is still the Duke of Norfolk who serves as Lord Marshall. And of course, the coronation church

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[283] Jeffrey H. Denton, "From the Foundation of Vale Royal Abbey to the Statute of Carlisle," in *Thirteenth century England IV: proceedings of the Newcastle Upon Tyne conference 1991* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1991), 123.
[284] Marc Morris, *Edward I, A Great and Terrible King* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 370.

of Westminster Abbey stands today, an enduring symbol of the consistency of the English monarchy. The investiture of the Prince of Wales is another practice that continues to be held. King Edward VII resurrected the medieval ceremony for the installation of his son, the future Edward VIII, at Caernarfon Castle. Queen Elizabeth continued this tradition in 1969 when she placed the gold coronet upon the head of her heir, Prince Charles within the walls of the mighty Welsh castle erected centuries before.

Edward was not afraid to use brute force when he deemed it necessary. But perhaps he realized, particularly during his early experience with the Baron's War, that spectacle, ceremony and ritual could be a far better option. After all, it is far less expensive in terms of lives and treasure, the people much prefer and enjoy it, the nobles are not compelled to provide men and arms, the church is not obliged to dig into its own pockets, parliament is not forced to levy outrageous taxes, there is no risk of defeat with the consequences thereof, and the king still enjoys a secure position of power and strength, free to pursue his own objects for his reign.

Scholars tend to think of Henry III and his son as two very different rulers, but in one respect, they were very much alike, and that was in their understanding of the role and importance of royal spectacle. Their purposes for utilizing ceremony differed, but their skill in doing so was equally well-honed. From birth, Edward established himself as the first truly English king, one with an English name who actually spoke the language of his people. His father proved an able mentor in this respect. While Henry had Edward the Confessor, Edward I had King Arthur. And both deftly negotiated very advantageous marriages for their children and thus for their kingdom. However, Henry sought solace in

his rituals and ceremony, while Edward harnessed its considerable ability and compelled it to work for him to augment his standing.

It is difficult to discern whether Edward was aware of the transitional nature of his reign. However, Edward was deliberate in his application of ritual and ceremonial, and he knew from experience as well as instinct, that those elements would help to reinforce his position and solidify his hold on power. His frequent shows of power were conscientious and intentional, his use of ritual, ceremony and spectacle purposeful. He was the last king to undertake a crusading mission, the first to subjugate Wales, the last to found an abbey that rivaled the immense size of Westminster Abbey, the first to regularize Maundy money, the last to touch for the king's evil, the first to proclaim an English Prince of Wales, and the only king to erect a permanent series of crosses to commemorate his consort's death. Edward placed his imprint upon the rituals and ceremonies of the English monarchy by proving a master of the arts of ceremony and ritual, using them to enhance his profile amongst his royal peers, to bind himself to his subjects, to reinforce his piety and to sustain his extensive authority.

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Biographical Information

After earning a BS in Journalism in 1990, I worked in the corporate world for 18 years selling radio and television broadcast airtime. However, when it became apparent that I would be replaced by a website long before retirement, I took a leap of faith and decided to follow my passion, which has always been history, specifically English history. While pursuing my MA degree, I have worked full-time at the university.

Topics of interest are the concepts of sovereignty and power in relation to the monarch and his people, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the papacy. The period upon which I would like to concentrate is the 160 or so years between the reigns of Henry III and Edward III. The Empress Matilda also holds a fascination, and her unique circumstances make for a wide-ranging field of study. In addition, a psycho-sociological examination of the phenomenon of incompetent sons succeeding over-achieving fathers also holds attractive promise. And finally, I am interested in Edward I's infatuation with King Arthur and the ways in which that shaped his reign. For my PhD dissertation, I want to write about the transportation of royal mortal remains to their final resting places.

My ultimate career goal is to become a Medieval History Professor and teach on the university level. As such, I will seek a PhD, either in the UK or at a university in the United States. My hope is for history to come alive for my students, to show them that it is so much more than a recitation of endless dates and a litany of dry facts. History is about people and stories, both of which are infinitely fascinating and engaging.