

2025 Wesley & Methodism Heritage Tour to Great Britain

STUDY SESSION #1

Sun., Dec. 8, 2024 12:15-2:15p (Zoom)

A. Welcome

Overview

B. Study session #1: History of England (Pre-history through the Middle Ages)

1. History time line
2. Pre-Roman Empire
3. Roman Empire
4. Dark Ages (Anglo-Saxons, Conversion to Christianity, King Arthur, Celtic vs Roman Christianity, Vikings)
5. Norman Conquest (AD 1066 Battle of Hastings)
6. Medieval Britain

C. Introductions

1. Name
2. Town and Local Church
3. If you have been to Great Britain before: What was a highlight before?
4. What are you looking forward to on this tour?

D. Orientation:

1. Tour dates & developments
March 18-31, 2025
Cost Estimate: \$3,700.
2. Study Sessions:

An important part of our Study Tour will be our study of English history and culture, the Wesleys and Methodist history, and Methodist theology. Please take all the reading seriously. This includes our texts and handouts. Everyone is encouraged to learn all you can on your own regarding our trip. The more you know, the more meaningful this trip will be. We will also offer shared resources to be passed among the travelers.

4 Zoom Study Sessions: Monthly, first Sunday of the month: Dec. 8, Jan.-March.

Including handouts and itinerary sights explanations (paper and/or digital)

Reading: 2 Books: Wesley, Three Simple Rules

Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living by Bishop Rueben P. Job

John Wesley: His Life and Thought by Timothy J. Crutcher (2015)

Radicle Methodism (optional): 4-module course offered by the GCAH of the UMC

Intro plus 4 study sessions: By Zoom or individually.

Weekly, Jan. 20 - Feb. 16

Approx. one hour each - with reading downloads homework

3. Logistics:

Passports

Travel Insurance

Travel Medical Insurance

Medical Planning & Prescriptions (No shots required to travel to GB)

Credit Cards

Spending \$ - Cash and credit card; what is not covered in price of tour.

British Pounds Sterling (“GBP” or £) is the currency for all of Great Britain.

Cell phone plans

Scheduling: transport to and from airport

Flights: **Departing:** Tues., March 18 from Minneapolis (MSP) Lindbergh at 6:00 p.m. on Delta #010.

Return: Mon., March 31 into Minneapolis (MSP) Lindbergh at 3:05 p.m. from London Heathrow (LHR) on Delta #009.

Electronics planning: The electronic circuit in Britain is 220-240 volt (compared to 110-120 in the US). *Be careful when choosing plug-in adapters!* Most recharging devices can handle either, but you will need an adaptor to the 3 FLAT prong British adaptor (two horizontal and one vertical prongs).

Weather and Packing: Chilly spring days (temps in 50s); dress in layers; rain likely.

Next payment due for the tour: Dec. 31: \$1,500

Additional travelers: Yes, but will pay more for airfare

E. Worship

1. Christmas with the Wesleys

2. “Hark, How All the Welkin Rings!” For Christmas Day by Charles Wesley

Hark, how all the welkin rings,
 “Glory to the King of kings;
 Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
 God and sinners reconcil’d!”

Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
 Join the triumph of the skies;
 Universal nature say,
 “Christ the Lord is born to-day!”

Christ, by highest Heaven ador’d,
 Christ, the everlasting Lord:
 Late in time behold him come,
 Offspring of a virgin’s womb!

Veil’d in flesh, the Godhead see,
 Hail th’ incarnate Deity!
 Pleas’d as man with men to appear,
 Jesus, our Immanuel here!

Hail, the heavenly Prince of Peace,
 Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
 Light and life to all he brings,
 Risen with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by,
 Born that man no more may die;
 Born to raise the sons of earth;
 Born to give them second birth.

Come, desire of nations, come,
 Fix in us thy humble home;
 Rise, the woman's conquering seed,
 Bruise in us the serpent's head.

Now display thy saving power,
 Ruin'd nature now restore;
 Now in mystic union join
 Thine to ours, and ours to thine.

Adam's likeness, Lord, efface,
 Stamp thy image in its place.
 Second Adam from above,
 Reinstate us in thy love.

Let us thee, though lost, regain,
 Thee, the life, the inner man:
 O, to all thyself impart,
 Form'd in each believing heart.

3. Prayer

F. Closing: Usual "grace" used among British Methodists

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
 be with you all. Amen."

Study Session #2: Sun., Jan. 5 (Epiphany!) from 12:15 - 2:15p by Zoom. "See" you then!

Study session #2: History of England (Norman Conquest through Present)

Middle Ages: 3 Countries

Roman Britain

Robin Hood

Crusades

Tudor England & the Protestant Reformation (Henry VIII & Elizabeth)

Battle for Wales

Battle for Scotland

Magna Carta

Civil War (Charles I and Cromwell)

War of the Roses

Exploration and Colonization

Imperial England (1688 defeated the Spanish armada)

Charles Dicken's England (and Wesley!)

Georgian England (1700s)

Industrial Revolution

Victorian Empire ("The sun never sets on the empire.")

20th Century - 2 world wars, British Commonwealth

Today

Study Session #3: History of Methodism & the Wesleys

Study Session #4: John Wesley's Theology

INTRODUCTION TO GREAT BRITAIN



DEFINITIONS:

BRITISH ISLES: All of the islands associated with England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and the Irish Republic (South Ireland).

GREAT BRITAIN: The one major island containing Scotland, Wales and England, as well as all the smaller islands that are part of these countries.

BRITAIN: Synonymous with Great Britain.

IRELAND: The island west of the Isle of Britain, now containing North and South Ireland.

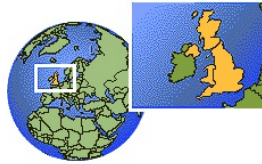
UNITED KINGDOM: The official state including England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. It's capital is London.

SOUTHERN IRELAND: The country on the southern half of the Island of Ireland.

TIME LINE OF BRITISH HISTORY

BC:	Note: many dates are approx.	1054	Christian Church splits into East & West
4004	Biblical creation of the world	1066	William the Conqueror takes England
3100	Egypt civilization begins	1154	Henry II begins Plantagenet Line
3000	Castlerigg Stone Circle in Cumbria, Engl.	1189	Richard Lionhearted launches crusades
2700	Pyramids in Egypt	1215	King John signs Magna Carta
2670	Ur established	1250?	Oxford University founded
2335	King Sargon I in Mesopotamia	1280	Edward I builds castles in Wales
2200	China civilization begins	1337	Begin 100 Years War in France
2000	Aubery Circle at Stonehenge	1455	Begin War of the Roses
1900	Abraham	1492	Columbus "discovers" America
1700	Ancient Babylon	1509	Henry VIII
1500	Sarsen stones at Stonehenge	1517	Martin Luther begins Reformation
1400	Moses	1600	Shakespeare
1000	King David in Israel	1603	James I (James VI of Scotland)
776	Greek civilization begins	1611	King James Version of the Bible
753	Rome founded	1649	Charles I beheaded
722	Israel falls to Assyria	1653	Oliver Cromwell is Lord Protector
586	Judah falls to Babylon	1660	Monarchy restored
323	Alexander the Great dies	1689	Glorious Revolution w/William & Mary
200	Great Wall of China	1690	Steam engine invented—beginning of the Industrial Revolution
150	Macabees in revolt in Israel	1703	John Wesley born
146	Roman Empire begins (Corinth defeated)	1707	United Kingdom established joining England, Wales and Scotland
55	Julius Caesar invades Britain	1727	Sir Isaac Newton dies
44	Julius Caesar killed	1776	American Colonies declare independence
4	Jesus Christ is born in Bethlehem	1784	Methodist Episcopal Church in America
0 AD	From now on, most dates are exact	1791	John Wesley dies
30?	Jesus crucified	1800	French Revolution
43	Claudius I conquerors England	1812	Napoleon defeated at Waterloo
79	Romans subdue Wales	1837	Queen Victoria begins reign
122	Hadrian's Wall	1861	American Civil War
325	Council of Nicea	1907	First English car: Rolls Royce
410	Visigoths sack Rome	1914	WWI begins
426	Roman legions recalled to Rome	1936	WWII begins
449	Anglo-Saxons raid Britain	1939	Methodist churches in America merge
452	Council of Chalcedon	1946	E.U.B. Church formed
500	Setting for King Arthur	1953	Queen Elizabeth II begins reign
563	St. Columba establishes Iona, Scotland	1968	UMC formed
596	Augustine brings Xnity to S England	1994-5	David & Reese live in England
632	Muhammad dies	2022	Elizabeth II dies, Charles III reign
635	St. Aidan establishes Lindisfarne Priory	2024	Wesley Heritage Tour of Britain
800	Charlemagne in Germany		
870s	Danish Vikings invade Britain		
871	Alfred the Great begins rule		

A HISTORY OF BRITAIN



I. PRE-HISTORIC TIMES (Before written history)

Generally, Britain developed later than in the Middle East and Africa. What is provided here is an approximation of civilization in Britain.

A. The Stone Age (Ice Age): The beginning of human culture until about 3,000 BC.

II. ANCIENT TIMES (From the beginning of written history until the rise of Greece.)

A. The Bronze Age: About 3,000 BC until about 1000 BC. *The time of Abraham and Moses.* *Things we will see from this period on our tour include Stonehenge, Egyptian, Nimrodian and other artifacts of Ancient civilizations in the British Museum.*

Before the Roman conquest of Britain in the 1st century AD, the island was not significant in the history of Western civilization. Virtually nothing is known of the original inhabitants of the island. Little trace has been left of their language or civilization of the original inhabitants, other than megalithic monuments, such as Castlerigg Stone Circle in Cumbria (Lake District, northern England, dating from about 3,000 BC) and Stonehenge, which dates from the Bronze Age (it was begun about 2000 BC). These original inhabitants are known as the Picts.

B. The Iron Age: About 1000 BC until 336 BC. *The time of King David*

Things we will see from this period on our tour include the remains of the human sacrifice, as well as Syrian, Babylonian and Persian artifacts, all in the British Museum.

Beginning in about the 6th century BC up until about the 1st century BC, the Picts were invaded regularly by European Celts, who intermarried with the Picts. These ancient peoples were clan-based, warriors and lived in fear of weather, nature and their chaotic gods.

III. CLASSICAL TIMES (Including the Greek and Roman Empires.) *The time of Jesus Christ.*

A. Hellenistic Period (Greek Civilization) 336 BC until 146 BC.

Things we will see from this period on our tour include Greek vases, statues and other artifacts in the British Museum.

European Celts continued to invade and settle among the Picts in Britain. There were remains of Greek tools unearthed during excavation of Stonehenge.

B. Roman Period (Roman Empire) 146 BC – 410 BC.

Things we will see from this period on our tour include Roman walls, Multangular Tower and the column by the Minster in York; Hadrian's Wall; Roman Baths in Bath and artifacts in the British Museum.

The name Britain comes from the Latin adaption of the Celtic name "Priton." In Latin it became Britannia ("land of the Britons"). The name Britain is still widely used to mean Great Britain or even all of the British Isles.

Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55 BC and returned the following year to defeat the native Pict/Celtic forces. The inhabitants, referred to collectively as Britons, maintained political freedom and paid tribute to Rome for almost a century before the Roman emperor Claudius I systematically conquered Britain in AD 43. In AD 61 the last rebellion was crushed, and Britain became an imperial province of Rome, called Britannia, administered by Roman governors (just like the Holy Land). About AD 79, Roman legions subdued the tribes in Wales, and then moved through the northern section of the island, completing their conquest up to what is today Scotland. The Scottish border, however, remained disputed territory. There the Picts/Celts retained their independence.

Roman emperor Hadrian visited Britain in AD 122 and began the construction of a rampart 73 miles long to secure safety to northern Roman Britain from the Picts/Celts of what is today Scotland. Fragments of this wall, called “Hadrian’s Wall,” still stand. The wall marked the northern Roman frontier during the next 200 years, a period of relative peace.

During the period of conquest and military campaigns, Britain was a military stronghold of the Roman army, but the people of Britain benefitted from Roman technology and cultural influences. The Romans were appalled by the barbaric way of life on the island (including human sacrifice) and launched a campaign to “civilize” them. The native tribes became familiar with many features of Roman civilization, including its legal and political systems, architecture, and engineering. Numerous towns were established, and these strongholds were linked by a vast network of military highways, many remnants of which survive. Archaeological evidence from the occupation period indicates that the Romans brought their entire culture to Britain. In general, however, only the native nobility, the wealthier classes, and the town residents accepted the Roman language and way of life, while the Britons in outlying regions retained their native Pict/Celtic culture.

At the end of the 3rd century, the Roman army began to withdraw from Britain to defend other parts of the weakening Roman Empire. After AD 410, when the Visigoths invaded Rome, the last of the Roman legions were withdrawn from the island. Celtic culture again became predominant, and Roman civilization in Britain rapidly disintegrated.

IV. THE DARK AGES: ANGLO-SAXON BRITAIN

The history of each of the three countries on the Island of Britain begins with the Anglo-Saxon invaders, Germanic invaders from the continent. We will now focus on England, as the history of Wales and Scotland will be found in your itinerary.

A. Anglo-Saxon England

Things we will see from this period on our tour include the two out of the three original Greek codices of the Bible, illuminated manuscripts, the Lindisfarne Gospels and other artifacts, all in the British Library.

Shortly after the Roman soldiers were recalled to Rome, in about AD 449, Germanic tribes from northern Europe began to invade Britain. The native Picts/Celts retreated back into Wales and Scotland before the oncoming Angles and Saxons. Thereafter the culture of the Angles and Saxons spread through what is now England. The Angles and Saxons, being so similar in race and culture, intermarried and settled down together, becoming the Anglo-Saxons. They called their new “home” Angle-land, or England.

Local warlords ruled small, unstable kingdoms and continued some Roman traditions of governance. Any man of noble birth and success in war could organize an army of warriors loyal to him personally and attempt to conquer and establish a kingdom. They were turbulent states, but all Anglo-Saxon societies were characterized by strong kinship groups, feuds, customary law, and a

system of money compensations (wergeld) for death, personal injury, and theft. They lacked written language and depended on mixed economies of agriculture, hunting, and animal husbandry. Later legends about a hero named Arthur were placed in this period of violence.

It was during this time that Christian evangelization of the Island took place. In AD 563 an Irish monk, St. Columba went to Iona, a small island off the west coast of Scotland, and set up a monastery there. Iona became the center of Christianity in northern Britain, and the monks acted as missionaries to the local peoples. One of the Irish monks at Iona, St. Aidan, traveled southeast into present day England and established a second monastery, Lindisfarne, on Holy Island in AD 635. From this monastery, Christianity spread into northern England. In AD 596, Pope Gregory I sent a group of missionaries under a monk named Augustine to southern England. King Ethelbert of Kent was baptized and Augustine became the first archbishop of Canterbury. Roman Christianity in the South was different in organization from the Celtic Christianity of the North. At the Synod of Whitby in AD 664, Northumbria's King Oswy chose to go with Rome, and thus all of England was structured under one organizational church. The Anglo-Saxons mostly became Christians, and many of the oldest monasteries and churches were first founded during this time.

B. Viking England

Things we will see from this period on our tour include York and artifacts in the British Museum.

Danish Vikings began to raid the English coasts in the late 8th century, but soon gave up their primary goal of plunder and set on conquering England for themselves. They gained massive victories over the local Anglo-Saxon kingdoms scattered over England. They established their capital in York and moved south. Soon they captured all of England except the south-western part, namely the kingdom of Wessex. Wessex withstood the Viking attacks and maintained their own culture. Yet even Wessex was threatening to fall, when Alfred became King of Wessex.

V. THE DARK AGES: THE UNITED MONARCHY

Things we will see from these periods on our tour include Bath Abbey, which contains a memorial stone to King Edgar, as well as artifacts in the British Museum.

A. Anglo-Saxon Monarchy

Alfred the Great (871-899) became King of Wessex (indeed of all the unconquered "English" remaining!) during a bleak time. The Danish Vikings were threatening to overrun Wessex. Alfred first bought respite, but then he attacked against the Vikings. He won a great victory at Edington in 878, after which he forced the Danish king Guthrum to accept baptism! England was then split in two: Wessex and Danelaw (Viking England). Alfred then continued his campaign against the Vikings. He created an English navy, reorganized the Anglo-Saxon *fyrð*, or militia (allowing his warriors to alternate between farming and fighting) and built strategic forts. Alfred captured London and began to roll back the Danish tide. After peace, he founded schools and restored monasteries. The first books were translated in the then primitive English language. He framed laws and civilized the people.

For his many accomplishments, Alfred was called The Great, the only English king so acclaimed. Since all the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were conquered by the Vikings, Alfred's kingdom was the only remaining "English" kingdom. As he began the re-conquering of England from the Vikings, his empire spread over all of England. Thus Alfred is considered the first king of all the English. King Charles III, the current king of England, can trace his ancestry all the way back to him!

The conquest of the Danelaw was completed by Alfred's son, Edward the Elder (899-924), and by his grandson Athelstan (924-939), who destroyed the Viking capital of York in 937. At his death, England is roughly the area it is today. Under the next three monarchs, Edmund the Elder (939-946) (son of Edward), Edred (946-955) (son of Edward), and Edwy (955-959) (grandson of Edward), the gains Aethelstan made were strengthened.

Edgar the Peaceful (959-975) (grandson of Edward) was the first king who did not have to spend time fighting wars. He began his rule at the age of 13. He furthered the revival of education and religion. Illuminated manuscripts became prevalent, and abbeys with stained glass windows were built. In 973 he was finally crowned at Bath Abbey.

Edward the Martyr (975-978) (son of Edward) was murdered at the age of 16, apparently by his stepmother, who wanted *her* son, Aethelred (age 10) to be king. Aethelred the Unready (978-1016) (son of Edgar) then did become king. "The Unready" meant "ill-advised." Under his weak rule England was raided viciously by Vikings. In 1003 the Viking King Sweyn of Denmark drove him into exile in Normandy and proclaimed himself King of England, although he was never crowned. Sweyn died in 1014 and the English nobles invited Aethelred back, as long as he ruled more competently. In 1015 Canute, Sweyn's son, invaded England and waged devastating war. Aethelred died while war tore his country.

Aethelred's son, Edmund Ironside (1016), waged effective war against Canute, to the degree that Canute agreed to share England with him. Yet he suddenly died (murdered?) before he was crowned. Thus the Viking Canute became King of England.

B. Viking Rule

At the death of Edmund Ironside, the Viking Canute became king of England (1016-1035). In his life he conquered three kingdoms: England (1017), Denmark (1019) and finally Norway (1028). He was a powerful ruler and maintained good order in England. He was also a devout Christian. Canute's two sons, Harold I (Harefoot) (1035-1040) and Hardecnute (1040-1042), however, were worthless and incompetent. Hardecnute left no heirs.

C. Anglo-Saxon Rule Resumes

On Hardecnute's death in 1042, Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) (son of Aethelred the Unready) was proclaimed king. He was a devout Christian, religious and peace loving. (In 1161 was canonized (made a saint)). He built the first Westminster Abbey, in which he is now interred. Because he was unmarried, he left no heirs to the throne. During strife with the Godwin family, the next premiere family in England (distantly related to the royal Viking family of Canute), he offered the crown to his cousin Duke William of Normandy (France). He then gave many important posts to his Norman friends. Later, when the quarrel with the Godwins was resolved, he requested that Harold Godwin be made king.

D. Godwinson

Harold II (Godwin) was king for only one year: 1066. He was elected king by Edward's request upon his death. He was a good soldier and won a glorious victory over the Norwegians who invaded northern England. But the same moment of his victory, William the Conqueror of Normandy invaded England to take the crown offered him by Edward many years earlier. Without rest, Harold marched south to meet William, but he and his army were too exhausted to gain victory. William defeated and killed Harold at the Battle of Hastings, in southern England, in 1066.

VI. THE MIDDLE AGES

A. Norman (French) Rule

Things we will see from this period on our tour include Clifford's Tower in York, Durham Cathedral, Lindisfarne Priory, and The White Tower in the Tower of London.

The year 1066 was a turning point in English history. William I, the Conqueror, and his sons gave England vigorous new leadership. Norman feudalism became the basis for redistributing the land among the conquerors, giving England a new French aristocracy and a new social and political structure. England turned away from Scandinavia toward France, an orientation that was to last for 400 years.

William the Conqueror (1066-1087) (cousin to Edward the Confessor) was a hard ruler, punishing England, especially the north, when it disputed his authority. He brutally crushed all English (Anglo-Saxon) rebellion and imposed the medieval feudal system. He replaced Anglo-Saxon nobles with Norman barons, and subjected the English (Anglo-Saxons) as peasants (fiefs) under the Norman lords. He introduced the Norman style of castles (motte & bailey) and architecture. He also built the White Tower of the Tower of London. Further, he promoted church reform, especially by the creation of separate church courts, but retained royal control.

William II (Rufus) (1087-1100) (son of William the Conqueror) was a ruthless and harsh ruler, and also was not a Christian as his father had been. He often left bishoprics vacant and pocketed the income. However, once when he was ill and thought he was dying, he did appoint the pious Anselm to be archbishop of Canterbury, with whom he continually quarreled. William was then mysteriously killed by arrow while hunting in 1100.

Henry I, known as Beauclerc (1100-1135) (son of William the Conqueror) was a nasty, greedy, cruel and ambitious—not to mention treacherous toward his brothers. He was suspected of murdering his brother, William II, and then made war on his other brother, Robert Duke of Normandy. He defeated him and kept him in prison until his death 28 years later. He did manage to keep peace in the kingdom, and introduced a fair tax counting method: the chequerboard (hence “exchequer”—the royal treasury). He also created the King’s Court to try legal cases in an official manner. Henry I used his feudal court and household to organize the government.

Henry wanted his daughter, Matilda, to succeed him, but in 1135 his nephew, Stephen of Blois (grandson of William the Conqueror) seized the throne (but he was too kind to punish or imprison his cousin Matilda). His reign (1135 to 1154) was marked by civil war and strife. The royal government Henry had built fell apart, and the feudal barons asserted their independence. The church, playing one side against the other, extended its authority.

B. The Plantagenet Line

Things we will see from this period on our tour include the Inn in Nottingham, Caerphilly Castle in Wales, York city walls and The Tower of London. Also, the Gothic cathedrals, including York Minster and Wells, Westminster Abbey, and other Gothic churches were built during this time. Oxford University was founded then as well.

The Plantagenets get their name from Geoffrey of Anjou, the father of Henry II and his wife of Matilda (the daughter of Henry I). Geoffrey wore a sprig of broom in his hat. Its Latin name *Planta genista*, gave rise to the nickname Plantagenet, which was adopted by later monarchs.

Henry II (1154-1189) (Henry I’s grandson) became king of all England and most of France. He ended the anarchy of Stephen’s reign, banishing mercenaries and destroying private castles. He strengthened the government created by Henry I. Most important, he developed the common law, administered by royal courts and applicable to all of England. It encroached on the feudal courts’

jurisdiction over land and created the grand jury. He abolished the barbarous “trial by ordeal,” in which people plunged their hands into boiling water or grasped red-hot iron bars to prove their innocence.

When the Church refused to bow to his legal system, he appointed his close friend, Thomas Becket, as archbishop of Canterbury. Unexpectedly, Becket fiercely defended the church’s rights to its own lawcourt. In desperation, the king yelled in a fit of fury, “Oh how I wish to be rid of that troublesome bishop.” Four of his attending knights, misunderstanding this as an order, immediately went and killed the Archbishop (1170). Becket became England’s most famous martyr.

Richard I, the Lionheart (1189-1199) (son of Henry II) is one of England’s most romantic kings. He was a great crusader, embarking on Crusades to recapture the Holy Land from the Arabs. (Note: The surcoat covering the knight’s horse as well as the famous white Crusader tunic with a red cross were introduced to reflect the hot sun off the knight’s armor and horse in the deserts of the Holy Land.) Yet he was rarely in England. On his return from one of his crusades he was captured in Germany and was held in prison until a huge ransom was paid. During his absence on the Third Crusade (1189-1192), Prince John attempted to usurp his power. This was also the time of the legendary Robin Hood. Even during Richard’s absence, however, the government built by Henry II continued to function, collecting taxes to support his wars and to pay his ransom.

Ironically, Prince John became king of England (nicknamed Lackland) (1199-1216) (son of Henry II) on Richard I’s death. He was treacherous, greedy and cruel—he enjoyed having his enemies tortured and starved. He quarreled with and robbed the Church. In battle, he lost most of his father’s kingdom in France. The barons of England lost patience and forced him to sign the famous Magna Carta—a list of their rights, privileges and land ownership—in 1215. By signing the Magna Carta, or Great Charter, he admitted his errors and promised to respect English law and feudal custom. He died the next year, still at war with the barons.

Although the loss of Normandy seemed a disgrace at the time, it left England free to develop its unique institutions without outside interference. England prospered in the 12th and 13th centuries. Land under cultivation increased; sheep raising and the sale of wool became extremely important. London and other towns became vital centers of trade and wealth, and by royal charters they acquired the right to local self-government. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge were established. The population probably doubled from about 1.5 million to more than 3 million.

The monasteries, especially those of the Cistercians, led the rural expansion and became wealthy in the process. More than a dozen cathedrals were built, as well as scores of abbeys and parish churches, all attesting to the wealth of England and of its church. In the 1220s the friars, Franciscans and Dominicans, arrived in England, improving the quality of preaching and becoming the leading scholars in the universities. Gothic architecture was introduced from France, and became the dominant style for churches until the 1600s.

When John died in 1216, the barons accepted his nine-year-old son as King Henry III (1216-1272). They assumed control of the government and confirmed the Magna Carta in 1225, thus establishing the idea that it was the fundamental statement of English law and of limited government. Henry III was not an able king, however. He quarreled with the barons, who thought that they, rather than his favorites, should have the major offices. Civil war broke out in 1264 during which time power briefly came to the baronial leader Simon de Montfort, who was subsequently killed in battle in 1265, and power returned to Henry. The barons then continued to fight among themselves for power during the rest of his reign, while he tended one of his favorite projects, the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey as a proper shrine for his favorite saint: Edward the Confessor.

Edward I, nicknamed Longshanks (1272-1307) (son of Henry III) restored royal control and made several reforms: He limited the barons’ right to hold their own courts of law; he curtailed the

vassals' right to dispose of land to the detriment of their feudal lords; and he gave English common law the direction it was to take for centuries to come. Most important, he used and developed Parliament, which was essentially the king's feudal council with a new name and an enlarged membership. In 1297, to get money for his wars, Edward agreed that taxes levied must have assent in Parliament. In the following century, Parliament divided into two houses, Lords and Commons, and made good its claim to control taxation and to participate in the making of statutes.

He waged war against Wales (1277-1282) and Scotland (1296-1307), to secure all of Britain under his reign. He successfully conquered the Welsh, ending the rule of its native princes, and maintained peace by a chain of massive castles. His son, Edward II, was born at Caernarvon Castle, whom he named the Prince of Wales (the first-born son of the king ever since has been the "Prince of Wales"). He also adopted the Welsh longbow as an English weapon, which became so effective against the French for years to come.

He intervened in Scottish affairs, even claiming the Scottish throne. He died fighting Scotland, waging such a ferocious campaign that he came known as "the hammer of the Scots." (Note: This is the time setting of the movie *Braveheart*.) Even so, he died in 1307 without gaining victory over the Scots. One cost of the war was the long-lasting enmity of Scotland, backed by its alliance with France.

His son, Edward II (1307-1327), gave up the campaign against the Scots. He preferred the luxuries of court life rather than the rule of the crown. As a homosexual, he spent much time with his favorite, Piers Gaveston, to the extent that he neglected his wife. The barons finally had Piers murdered, but Edward's new favorite, Hugh Despenser, helped him break the power of the barons. Edward's wife, Isabella of France, went to France and plotted with Hugh's enemy, Roger Mortimer, who became the queen's lover. They invaded England and conquered the Despenser and the King's armies. Edward was put into prison and was finally murdered with a hot iron at Berkeley Castle.

Edward III (1327-1377) (son of Edward II) seized power from his mother, Queen Isabella, and her greedy, ambitious lover, Roger Mortimer. He set up a magnificent court ruled by ideals of comradeship and chivalry. He modeled his court after the legendary court of King Arthur. He introduced plate armor as the standard armor, rather than chain mail that had been used since early times. Edward III got on well with the barons by keeping them busy in France, where England continued to hold extensive territory. He and his son, The Black Prince (named for the black armor he wore) were very successful in battle, and in 1337 he initiated the Hundred Years War with France to vindicate his claim to the French throne. The English had some initial success at Crécy (1346) and Poitiers (1356), where they used the English longbow with deadly effect against the French, (who outnumbered them at times 4 to 1). This war literally decimated France, and suffering was great there.

In 1347 the Black Death (bubonic plague) ravaged Europe and left one third of the population of England dead. The Statute of Laborers (1351) tried to freeze wages and prevent serfs and workers from taking advantage of the resulting labor shortage. The Peasants' Revolt in 1381 reflected the continuing unrest (*see* Tyler's Rebellion). It was a time of economic and social change—manorial service was being commuted to cash payments, and serfdom was on the way to its demise in the following century.

The move of the popes from Rome to Avignon in France (1309-1376) and the Great Papal Schism (1378-1417), in which rival popes opposed one another, caused a loss of English respect for the papacy. Statutes were passed that limited the power of the Pope to appoint church officers in England. John Wycliffe (of Wycliffe Bible Translators), an Oxford professor, criticized corruption in the church and had ideas similar to those of the later Protestant reformers. In 1382 he was

removed by an ecclesiastical court to the country parish at Lutterworth, and his ideas were declared heretical. His followers, the Lollards, were persecuted but not stamped out.

Charles V of France waged war against the English in France, and he regained almost all of the English victories. The expense of the war repeatedly forced Edward to go to Parliament for taxes, enabling it to bargain for concessions and to establish its rights and privileges.

Sadly, the famed Black Prince died one year before his father.

Richard II (1377-1399) (son of the Black Prince and grandson of Edward III) devoted himself to his court favorites and treated the great men of his kingdom with contempt. He believed that kings were appointed by God and could do as they pleased. He demanded that anyone who caught his eye had to kneel to him. When his uncle, John of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster, died, King Richard seized his lands that rightfully belonged to the Duke's exiled son, Henry Bolingbroke. In 1399 Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster, invaded England and not only retrieved his lands but also seized Richard's throne, forcing him to abdicate and leaving him to starve in Pontefract Castle. Henry Bolingbroke then became king in his place as Henry IV.

C. The War of the Roses (The Lancastrian and Yorkist Kings)

Things we will see from this period on our tour include Warwick Castle, the Tower of London and St. Giles in Edinburgh.

Since 1216 the royal succession had always gone to the king's eldest son. By this rule Henry IV, who was Edward III's grandson via Edward's FOURTH (son John of Gaunt), *had no claim to the throne*. The rightful heir was Edmund, Earl of March, who was descended from Edward's THIRD son.

Because of the irregularity, Henry IV (1399-1413) (grandson of Edward III, son of John of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster) and his successors (known as the House of Lancaster, or Lancastrians) were not secure in their claim to the throne. Because of this weakness, he had to make concessions to Parliament and to the church as well as in his wars with powerful and rebellious families in Wales and the north to maintain his claim to the crown. He was plagued by rebellion in Wales, wars in Scotland, monetary struggles with Parliament, plots against his life and local revolts. He was struck by a paralyzing illness.

Henry V (1413-1422) (son of Henry IV) was a magnificent warrior-king. He continued the 100 Year War in France, of which he claimed to be the rightful heir. Through the use of famous English archers (longbow men), he won smashing victories. French king Charles VI (who slipped in and out of madness) was forced to recognize Henry V as his heir, and he even gave his daughter to Henry V in marriage. Thus Henry V assumed control of the French government, although not the entire country, and could expect a son of this marriage to inherit both kingdoms.

In 1422 both Henry and Charles VI died, bringing the nine-month-old Henry VI (1422-1461 & 1470-1471) (son of Henry V) to the throne of both countries. For a time, Henry's able uncles held things together in both England and France. In 1429, however, Joan of Arc appeared in France and inspired French resistance to English rule. Although Joan was captured and burned (wrongly) as a heretic in 1431, the English position in France became increasingly precarious.

Henry VI was not capable of ruling; during his reign, control of the kingdom passed from one noble faction to another. The war in France only emphasized Henry's inability at home. The loss of Normandy and the corruption of the government incited an abortive popular rebellion. The loss of everything in France, except Calais, in 1453, was a prelude to the dynastic conflict soon to break open, called, the Wars of the Roses (1455-1485).

In 1453, Henry's wife gave birth to a male heir to the throne. Henry VI, peace loving and religious, also went mad in 1453. Richard, Duke of York, took this opportunity to lead rebellion against Henry VI as the rightful heir. To long had his family been the rightful heirs to the throne

while the Lancastrians possessed it. Richard Duke of York was the great-grandson of Lionel Duke of Clarence, 3rd son of Edward III, whereas Henry VI was the great-grandson of John of Gaunt, 4th son of Edward III. Rightfully, the throne belonged to Richard Duke of York, but Parliament, the Church and many nobles acknowledged Henry VI as their king. Richard's rebellion exploded into civil war, known as "The War of the Roses" (1455-1485): the white rose of York against the red rose of Lancaster. The Duke of York was victorious and imprisoned Henry VI, who was very content to let the Duke run the country as he slipped in and out of bouts of madness. Henry VI's courageous Queen, Margaret, however, raised an army and in 1460 defeated the Yorkists, killing the Duke of York. Henry VI was released from prison.

Richard's son, Edward, assisted by his cousin, the powerful Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, routed Margaret's forces in 1461 and took Henry VI captive. Margaret fled to France with her son, Prince Edward. Henry VI returned to prison, much to his relief, in the Tower of London. Edward so overawed Parliament that it acclaimed him king as Edward IV (1461-1470 & 1471-1483) (great-great-grandson of Edward III).

Richard Earl of Warwick, "Kingmaker," became enraged when Edward IV did not marry the French princess the Earl had chosen but rather married an Englishwoman. Richard turned traitor and joined forces with Queen Margaret when she invaded from England. They were successful, and Henry VI was restored to the throne in 1470. Edward IV, however, fought back and soon smashed their army, and the great Earl was killed, along with Margaret's son, Prince Edward. The same night Margaret was sent to the Tower of London, King Henry VI was murdered, possibly by Edward IV's brother Richard Duke of Gloucester (later Richard III).

With the War of the Roses now over, at least officially, Edward IV again resumed the throne and built his riches and royal estates until he owned no less than one-fifth of England! He restored some degree of sound government.

When Edward IV died in 1483, the throne went to his 12-year-old son, Edward V (1483). His reign was immediately contested in that his parent's marriage had been illegal. Three months later, the crown was given to Edward IV's brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who became king as Richard III (1483-1485). The month after he was crowned, Edward V and his brother, the Duke of York, suddenly disappeared. Were they killed? Did Richard III kill them, or did Henry Tudor Earl of Richmond, now the Lancastrian leader? (In 1674, the bones of two children were found in the Tower of London, and presumed to be the young princes. The Tower then came to be known as "The Bloody Tower.") The mystery was never solved. Richard III justly operated the courts and respected the Church. Yet he was not trusted for he was suspected of murdering two kings (Henry VI and Edward V). Henry Tudor, asserting a weak Lancastrian claim, led rebellion against him. Lord Stanley suddenly in battle deserted Richard to Henry. Richard died in the battle. Legend has it that Lord Stanley then found Richard's crown hanging from a thorn bush and gave it to Henry Tudor, who became Henry VII.

The 15th century was a time of trouble and change. The country was ravaged by war and plague, and the population did not begin to increase again until near the end of the century. The weakness of the royal government allowed a breakdown of law and order. Feudal barons with their retainers became powerful unto themselves, a condition often called bastard feudalism. The once great export of wool declined sharply but was gradually replaced by woollen cloth, the product of a new cottage industry. Landlords exploited the demand for wool by enclosing land and raising more sheep, disrupting the age-old economy of the countryside but laying the foundation for growth. All that England needed was a king who could restore efficiency to the royal government and bring law and order to the countryside. Henry VII in 1485 appointed himself to do just that. Seldom have a man and his mission been more happily matched.

Next time: Tudor England (1500) - Present!