English King Edward III Creator of the Order of the Garter Compiled by D. A. Sharpe



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King Edward III was born November 13, 1312 at <u>Windsor</u> <u>Castle, Berkshire, England</u>. He died June 21, 1377 at <u>Sheen</u> <u>Palace, Richmond, Surrey</u>, England. He is related to our family, both on my father's side and on my mother's side of the family.

Edward III is the 10th great grandfather of Edward Carlton (born about 1610), the husband of Ellen Newton (born about *************************

1614), who was the stepdaughter of Danette Abney, the 5th great
 granduncle of <u>my mother</u>, <u>Martha Dixon Chapman Sharpe</u>. King
 Edward III also is the first cousin, 11 times removed of Edward
 Southworth, the first husband of <u>my grandfather Sharpe's</u> 5th
 great grandmother, Alice Carpenter, descended through her
 subsequent marriage to Plymouth Colony Governor William
 Bradford.

In the Bible (John 6:31), people following and questioning Jesus cited the fact that their forefathers, out in the wilderness, had been given manna to eat by God. That was about 1,350 years prior to their discussion with Jesus. That length of time is similar as between us today and when King Edward III was on the throne. It is not often that we think of events that far removed from us today that we cite it in contemporary debate!

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Edward III became king of England in 1327, only at age 15. He
 succeeded his father, Edward II, and belonged to the Plantagenet
 family of English rulers. During the 1330's, Edward invaded
 Scotland. He won victories there, but he could not crush the
 Scottish spirit of independence that had been built up by the
 famous Scotsman, Robert Bruce.

"Edward's forces
won the <u>Battle of</u>
<u>Crecy</u> in what is
now the
Normandy region
of France.
Though his son
offered succor
(help or
assistance in the
battle), his father
declined his help.
This conflict was



the first major battle between France and England in the <u>Hundred</u>
 Years' War (1337-1453). Edward claimed to be the rightful king
 of France, and he conquered much of that country. He paid for
 the war by introducing an efficient system of taxing imports.

"In the last few years of his reign, Edward failed to provide
 vigorous leadership. The French recovered some of their land,
 and Edward's popularity declined. Even so, he was long
 remembered as an ideal king and a fine soldier. Edward was
 born in Windsor, near London."

Source: John Gillingham, Senior Lecturer, London School of content of Economics and Political Science, Univ. of London, World Book Encyclopedia CD1998.

He was said to have three illegitimate children by Alice Perrers.

(Source: http://www.britannia.com/history/monarchs/mon32.html)

"The fifty-year reign of Edward III was a dichotomy in English development. Governmental reforms affirmed the power of the emerging middle class in Parliament while placing the power of the nobility into the hands a few. Chivalric code reached an apex in English society but only masked the greed and ambition of Edward and his barons. Social conditions were equally ambiguous: the export of raw wool (and later, the wool cloth industry) prospered and spread wealth across the nation but was offset by the devastation wrought by <u>the Black Death</u>. Early success in war ultimately failed to produce lasting results. Edward proved a most capable king in a time of great evolution in England.

* "Edward's youth was spent in his mother's court and he was
 * crowned at age fourteen after his father was deposed. After three
 * years of domination by his mother and her lover, <u>Roger Mortimer</u>,



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Edward instigated a palace revolt in 1330 and assumed control of the government. Mortimer was executed and Isabella was exiled from court. Edward was married to <u>Philippa of</u> <u>Hainault</u> in 1328 and the union produced many children; the 75% survival rate of their children - nine out of twelve lived through adulthood was incredible considering conditions of the day.

"War occupied the largest part of Edward's reign. He and Edward * Baliol defeated David II of Scotland and drove David into exile in 2 1333. French cooperation with the Scots, French aggression in * Gascony, and Edward's claim to the disputed throne of France 🖌 (through his mother, Isabella) led to the first phase of the Hundred Years' war. The naval battle of Sluys (1340) gave England control $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Channel, and battles at Crecy (1346) and Calais (1347) $\frac{2}{2}$ established English supremacy on land. Hostilities ceased in the 🕇 aftermath of the Black Death but war flared up again with an English invasion of France in1355. Edward, the Black Prince and $\stackrel{\scriptstyle <}{\scriptstyle \sim}$ eldest son of Edward III, trounced the French cavalry at Poitiers * (1356) and captured the French King John. In 1359, the Black $\frac{2}{2}$ Prince encircled Paris with his army and the defeated French * negotiated for peace. The Treaty of Bretigny in 1360 ceded huge $\frac{1}{2}$ areas of northern and western France to English sovereignty. Tostilities arose again in 1369 as English armies under the king's * third son, John of Gaunt, invaded France. English military 异 strength, weakened considerably after the plague, gradually lost so much ground that by 1375, Edward agreed to the Treaty of - Bruges, leaving only the coastal towns of Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne in English hands.

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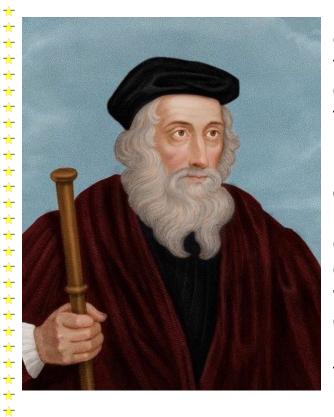
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"The nature of English society transformed greatly during * Edward's reign. Edward learned from the mistakes of his father $\frac{1}{2}$ and affected more cordial relations with the nobility than any 🟅 previous monarch. Feudalism dissipated as mercantilism \star emerged: the nobility changed from a large body with relatively $\frac{1}{2}$ small holdings to a small body that held great lands and wealth. Mercenary troops replaced feudal obligations as the means of $\frac{1}{2}$ gathering armies. Taxation of exports and commerce overtook land-based taxes as the primary form of financing government * (and war). Wealth was accrued by merchants as they and other middle class subjects appeared regularly for parliamentary sessions. Parliament formally divided into two houses - the upper \star representing the nobility and high clergy with the lower ★ \star

★ ★ representing the middle classes - and met regularly to finance
 Edward's wars and pass statutes. Treason was defined by
 statute for the first time (1352), the office of <u>Justice of the Peace</u>
 was created to aid sheriffs (1361), and English replaced French
 as the national language (1362).

"Despite the king's early successes and England's general
 prosperity, much remained amiss in the realm. Edward and his
 nobles touted romantic chivalry as their credo while plundering a
 devastated France; chivalry emphasized the glory of war while
 reality stressed its costs. The influence of the Church decreased



★ ★ ★ but John Wycliff spearheaded an ecclesiastical reform movement that challenged church exploitation by both the king and the pope. During 1348-1350, bubonic plague (the Black Death) ravaged the populations of Europe by as much as a fifty percent. The flowering English economy was struck hard by the ensuing rise in prices and wages. The failed military excursions of John of Gaunt into France caused excessive taxation and eroded Edward's popular support.

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"The last years of Edward's reign mirrored the first, in that a woman again dominated him. Philippa died in 1369 and Edward took the unscrupulous Alice Perrers as his mistress. With Edward in his dotage and the Black Prince ill, Perrers and William Latimer (the chamberlain of the household) dominated the court with the support of John of Gaunt. Edward, the Black Prince, died in 1376 and the old king spent the last year of his life grieving. <u>Rafael</u>

Holinshed, in Chronicles of England, suggested that Edward
believed the death of his son was a punishment for usurping his
father's crown: "But finally the thing that most grieved him, was
the loss of that most noble gentleman, his dear son Prince
Edward . . . But this and other mishaps that chanced to him now
in his old years might seem to come to pass for a revenge of his
disobedience showed to his in usurping against him. . ."

Source: http://www.britannia.com/history/monarchs/mon32.html

On April 23, 1348, King Edward III of England established the Order of the Garter (April 23). A study of the Order is posted for easy access and one can see that it still survives today as a $\frac{2}{3}$ functioning royal order from the cited Internet web site below. $\stackrel{\scriptstyle \star}{}$ The Order of the Garter is the most senior and the oldest British * Order of Chivalry. The Order, consisting of the King and twenty- $\frac{2}{4}$ five knights, was intended by Edward III to be reserved as the 🕆 highest reward for loyalty and for military merit. The origin of the $\frac{1}{2}$ emblem of the Order, a blue garter, is obscure. It is said to have 🟅 been inspired by an incident, which took place whilst the King * danced with Joan, Countess of Salisbury. The Countess's garter $\frac{1}{2}$ fell to the floor, and after the King retrieved it, he tied it to his own leq. Those watching this were apparently amused, but the King 🖌 admonished them saying, 'Honi soit qui mal y pense' (Shame on $\frac{1}{2}$ him who thinks this evil). This then became the motto of the ★ Order.

Source: http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/page490.asp

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