

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Copyright Regulations 1969

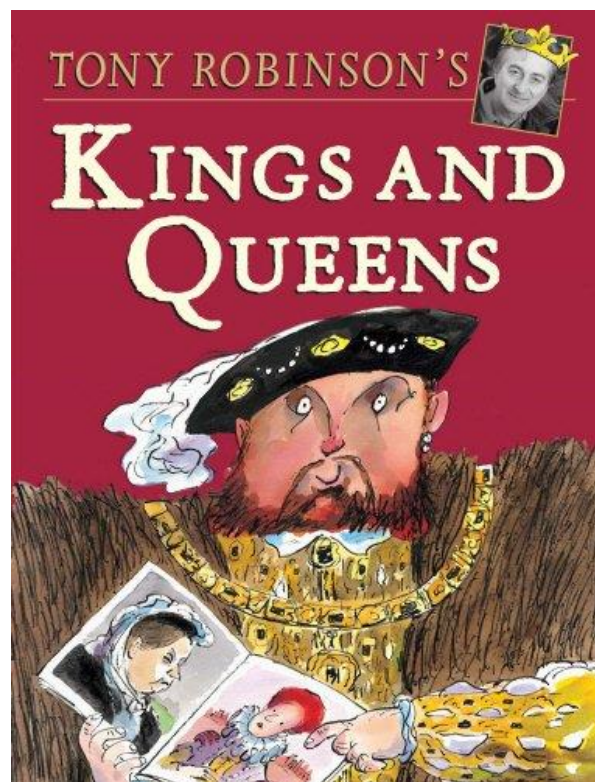
WARNING

This material has been reproduced and communicated to you by or on behalf of Methodist Ladies' College pursuant to Part VB of the Copyright Act 1968 (the Act).

The material in this communication may be subject to copyright under the Act. Any further reproduction or communication of this material by you may be the subject of copyright protection under the Act.

Do not remove this notice.

Robinson, T. (1999). *The Hutchinson book of kings and queens*. London: Hutchinson.



King John

Born 1167 Ruled 1199 – 1216

JOHN WAS RICHARD THE LIONHEART'S YOUNGEST BROTHER and being the baby of the family he was horribly spoilt. His brothers were always fighting with the king, but John was too small to take part so he became the apple of his father's eye. Maybe it's not surprising that he grew up to be a cruel, greedy monarch who thought kings should be able to do anything they wanted.

John loved jewels, fine clothes, rich food and getting his own way. He starved his best friend's family to death just because they annoyed him, and upset everyone by having his young nephew Arthur murdered in case he challenged him for the throne. John won a few battles and sorted out some tricky things like the best way to collect taxes, but he wasn't really a very good king. During his reign England lost nearly all its land in France.

John was constantly demanding money from his barons to fight the French. They got so fed up with this that they formed an army and marched on his palace. Finally, at Runnymede, a meadow by the River Thames, the barons forced him to sign an important paper called Magna Carta. This said that from now on, the king had to ask his barons how the country should be run and he couldn't do just as he liked any more. This was good for the country, but it didn't bring back to life any of the people John had killed. The king's final disaster occurred when he tried to cross an estuary on the way from Norfolk to Lincolnshire. He was so impatient, he didn't wait for the tide to go back and some of his jewels, baggage and even members of his household sank in quicksand. When he died a few days later, and his nine-year-old son Henry became king, no one was really sorry.

