

King Edward II

In 1322 Edward II called for Parliament to be held in Ripon to avoid the plague in London, but in the end it was held in York. Edward II's coat of arms can be seen in the medieval stained glass window by the font.



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King Henry VIII

At the time of the Reformation, when Henry VIII broke away from Rome, work was already underway to create Gothic arches beneath the central tower. But the religious upheavals meant that the funds dried up and the work was never completed. Today you can see two pointed Gothic arches and two rounded Norman ones.

Mary Queen of Scots

In the Tudor period the notable link was Mary, Queen of Scots being held in Ripon, possibly in Thorpe Prebend House, on her way south after her attempted escape from Bolton Castle in 1569.

King James I

James I gave the cathedral a new Charter and also created the mayorship of Ripon, granting independent local governance. He has two statues, one of them (8) donated by York Minster in 1810. The James I coat of arms (7) has Jesus' words Beati Pacifici on it, which means Blessed are the Peacemakers.



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King Charles I

Charles I was here in 1640 for the signing of the Treaty of Ripon, a settlement with the Scots. He would probably have been entertained in the Minster and in a Prebendal house. He was here in Ripon again, but this time as a prisoner, in 1646.

King Charles II

Charles II gave permission to take down the spires on the west front after the disastrous collapse of the central spire in 1660.

Queen Elizabeth II

After that, there is little recorded evidence of royal links until more recent times.

Elizabeth II came to Ripon Cathedral for the Royal Maundy service in 1985. The jubilee chairs now set in St Peter's Chapel at the east end of the cathedral were made to commemorate her Silver Jubilee in 1977. Now, they are used in weddings for the bridal couple after the signing of the register.

How you would treat a chair of yours that a king or queen had sat on?



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Christ the King

The ultimate monarch is Christ the King. He is crowned in majesty in the Great West Window, inviting us all to sit at his table.

Can you see Christ the King in the window?

In what ways is Jesus a different kind of king from others?

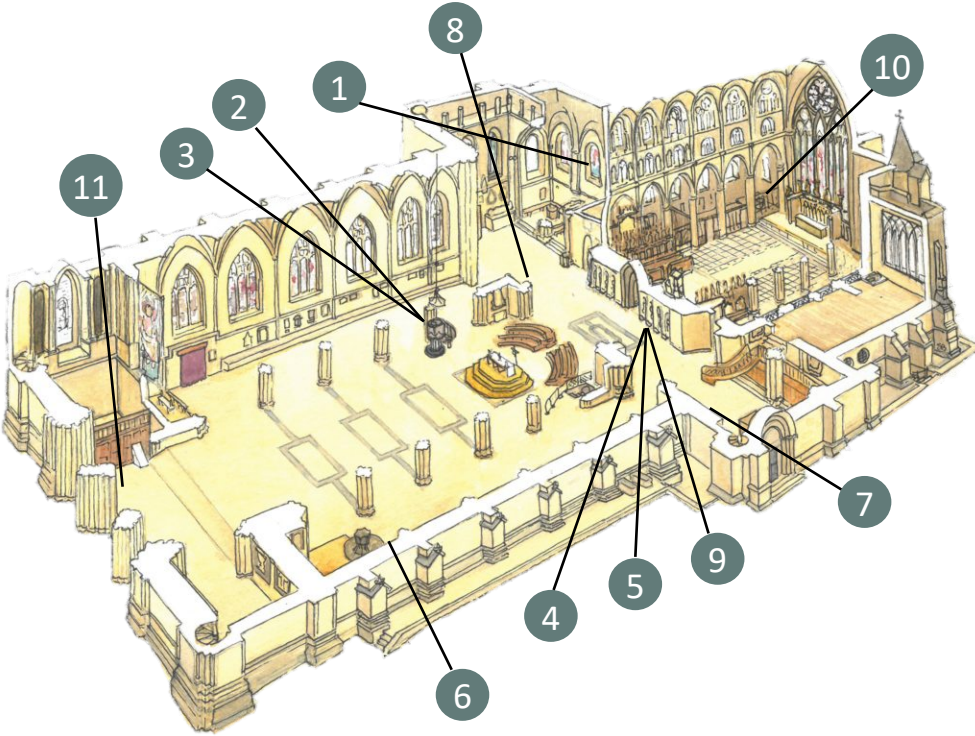


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Royals in Ripon

There are many links between royalty and Ripon. Tradition has it that Alfred the Great visited in 886 and presented Ripon with a hunting horn, beginning the tradition of the Watchman, and subsequently the Hornblower. There are also many links between the royals and the church here on this site. You can explore these links through the windows and statues in the Cathedral. See if you can find each of the royal links by following the map below.



King Alhfrith

Our understanding of royal connections with the Cathedral begins with King Alhfrith. He gave the land of Ripon to Wilfrid to build a monastery, and in the early 670s Wilfrid began building on this site. His church was consecrated in 672 and you can still visit its crypt today.

Queen Eanfled

Queen Eanfled was the wife of King Oswig of Northumbria. She was Wilfrid’s patron when he was a young man, and she helped him make his first journey to Rome c. 655, a journey that inspired his building when he returned. You can see a picture of Eanfled in the bottom left corner of the window in St Wilfrid’s chapel.



St Hild

Hild (or Hilda), was a royal founder and abbess of the great Anglo-Saxon monastery of Whitby. She hosted the Synod of Whitby in 664, where Wilfrid persuaded the Northumbrian kingdom to adopt the Roman rather than the Celtic method for calculating the date of Easter. This brought the kingdom into line with the rest of the western church.

Queen Etheldreda

Queen Etheldreda was married to King Ecgrith of Northumbria. Wilfrid was her spiritual adviser. She founded a double monastery for monks and nuns in Ely in 673, just one year after Wilfrid built his first church here in Ripon. There is a carving of Etheldreda on the pulpit.

This carving is similar to that of Hild. What differences can you see between the carvings of Etheldreda and Hild?

King Athelstan

King Athelstan, grandson of Alfred the Great, was the first ruler of the whole of England. In 926 he established the Liberty of St Wilfrid: an area of one mile radius around Ripon Minster, which offered shelter to all and was outside royal authority.

What do you know about the modern meaning of ‘City of Sanctuary’?



King Eadred

Eadred was another grandson of Alfred the Great and younger half-brother to King Aethelstan. Eadred's greatest achievement was the defeat of the breakaway Eric Bloodaxe, thus regaining the single kingdom of England. In 948, during the fighting to reclaim Northumbria from the Vikings, the church created by Wilfrid was destroyed. Only the crypt survived, and it still survives today.

King Henry II

Henry II was king when Roger de Pont l’Évêque, Archbishop of York, rebuilt much of Ripon Cathedral in the late 1100s. The crossing, transepts and chapter house remain today. It is said that Roger’s report to the king about Thomas Becket is what stirred Henry’s anger, and thus led to Becket’s assassination in 1170.



Timeline

