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EDITION ONE

MEDIEVAL WOMEN





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Empress Matilda



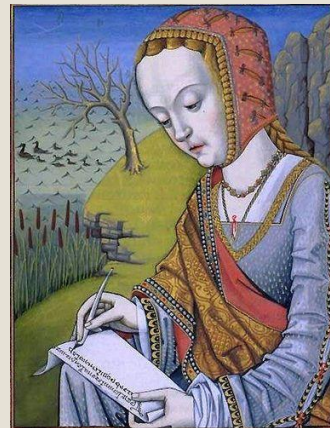
Eleanor of Aquitaine



Julian of Norwich



Margery Kempe



Elizabeth Paston





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Isabella of France



Margaret of Anjou



Matilda of Tuscany



Christine de Pizan



Catherine of Siena





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Isabella of Castile



Caterina Sforza



Joan of Arc



Joanna of Flanders



Abbess Hilda of Whitby





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Name Empress Matilda



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1102-1167
Empress
Matilda

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Matilda was the daughter of King Henry I of England. She was the heir to the throne of England and her father married her to Henry V of France. In 1125 her husband died so her dad married her to Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou. In 1135 her father died and instead of her becoming Queen of England her cousin, Stephen of Blois, claimed his uncle changed his mind on his death bed and saw Stephen as the successor because he was a man.

Why were they remarkable?

Rather than accept another man trying to tell her what her position in life should be Matilda took them on. She defeated, captured and imprisoned Stephen after the Battle of Lincoln. Later Stephens forces came back and captured Matilda in Oxford but by disguising herself as a corpse she managed to escape. Eventually Matilda agreed for Stephen to be King if he agreed that her sons would follow him. She did not win the Battle but she did win the War!

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because sometimes we feel pressure to be something that we are told to be. Instead what we need to remember is that we should fight for what we believe is right, fair and just in the world. All of us will face people in life who want to achieve the things we want - but we will work harder and stronger to make sure we are the ones who get the rewards.



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Name Eleanor of Aquitaine



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1122-1204
Eleanor of Aquitaine

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Eleanor was Queen of two great medieval powers - France and England. She was fierce. She stuck up for herself and her sons. Eleanor had to deal with rules that were different for men and women at the time as well as struggles against the Holy Roman Empire and the Church. Eleanor built up and ruled at court in Aquitaine which was regarded in her lifetime as the most intelligent court as well as giving advice about love and relationships. It is sometimes called the Court of Love.

Why were they remarkable?

Eleanor managed to escape her first marriage to the King of France despite all the rules saying she could only do this if she were a man. She married Henry II of England after giving birth to five sons. She rebelled, with her sons, against Henry II in 1173 where she was imprisoned and disappeared from all records until her husband's death. She then reappeared and helped rule England whilst her son, Richard I, was fighting his crusades

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because she did not accept the world as it was. She believed in equality and there being no difference between males and females over what makes a good leader. She proved she was a great leader in her court in Aquitaine and when she ran England whilst her son was fighting the Crusades. She also serves as a reminder of the oppression that some women can suffer when men used violence to suppress their voice.



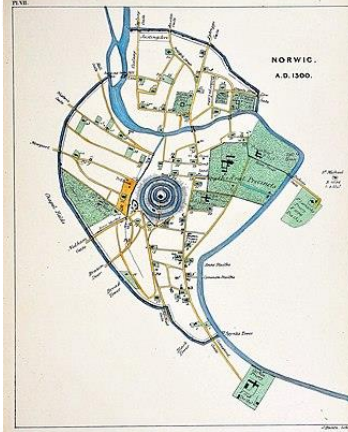
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Name Julian of Norwich



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death
1342-1416
Julian of Norwich

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

During her lifetime, the Black Death reached Norwich; the disease may have killed over half the population of the city, and returned in subsequent outbreaks up to 1387. Julian was also alive during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. After being healed in 1373 after experiencing visions she wrote a book called Revelations which is still seen today as one of the greatest writings about God ever published. At the time less than 10% of the population could read or write.

Why were they remarkable?

Julian of Norwich is remarkable for being one of the first known female authors in the English language and for her profound theological insights. Despite living in a male-dominated and often oppressive society, she was able to gain a reputation as a respected spiritual guide and teacher. Her writings have had a lasting impact on Christian theology, especially in the areas of God's love and the nature of suffering.

Why does their story resonate?

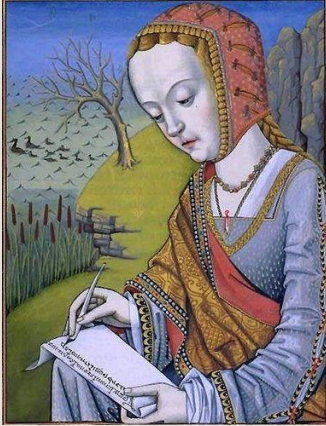
Julian's story resonates with us because of her unwavering faith in the face of adversity and her deep spiritual insights. One of her many quotes that I have taken to heart is the following; "He did not say: You will not be assailed, you will not be belaboured, you will not be disquieted. But he did say - you will not be overcome."



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Name Margery Kempe



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348 Black
Death
1373-1416
Margery
Kempe

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Margery Kempe lived in the 14th and 15th centuries in England. She was a mystic, pilgrim, and author best known for writing "The Book of Margery Kempe," which is considered to be the first autobiography written in the English language. Despite facing criticism and persecution for her outspoken religious views and unconventional behaviour, Kempe remained steadfast in her faith and devotion to God. She embarked on pilgrimages across Europe and experienced mystical visions.

Why were they remarkable?

Margery Kempe is remarkable for her courage in defying societal expectations and norms of her time, especially as a woman expressing her religious beliefs and experiences. She challenged gender roles and paved the way for future female writers and mystics to share their voices and perspectives not win the Battle but she did win the War!

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us today due to her unwavering dedication to her beliefs and her willingness to speak out against injustice and persecution. Her journey of self-discovery and spiritual growth reminds us of the importance of staying true to ourselves and finding strength in our convictions, even in the face of adversity.



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Name Elizabeth Paston



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

1429-1488
Elizabeth Paston

What was life like for them?

She resided in Paston Hall in Norfolk with her husband John Paston, a prominent member of the gentry who were not as important as the nobility but had more money than peasants. They also were striving for more money and power. Despite her privileged upbringing, Elizabeth faced numerous challenges throughout her life, including financial disputes within her family and the pressures of maintaining social status in a tumultuous period of English history.

Why were they remarkable?

Elizabeth is remarkable for her resilience and resourcefulness in navigating the complexities of her time, as well as her dedication to preserving the legacy of her family through the extensive correspondence known as the "Paston Letters."

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because sometimes we all have difficult families! Her story resonates with us today as a reminder of the strength and tenacity of women in history, as well as the enduring power of personal relationships and the written word to connect us across time and space



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Name Joan of Arc



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1412-1431
Joan of
Arc

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Joan of Arc was born in Domémy, a small village in north eastern France. Joan claimed to have received visions from saints instructing her to support Charles VII and help drive the English out of France during the Hundred Years' War.

Why were they remarkable?

Joan of Arc is remarkable for her extraordinary courage, leadership, and faith. Despite being a young peasant girl with no formal military training, she inspired and led an army to crucial victories. She led French troops to several important victories and played a key role in lifting the siege of Orléans. Captured by the English, she was tried for heresy and burned at the stake aged 19.

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because it highlights themes of bravery, faith, and the power of an individual to effect change against overwhelming odds. Her journey from a humble village to leading a nation's army and facing martyrdom illustrates the potential for greatness within each person, inspiring countless generations to stand up for their beliefs and fight for justice.



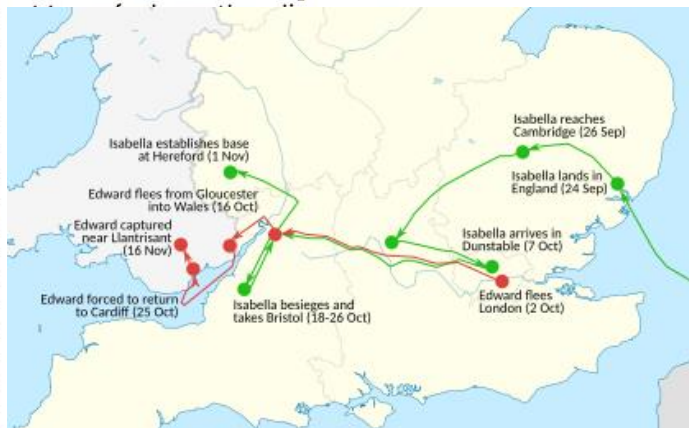
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Name Isabella of France



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death
1295-1348
Isabella of France

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Isabella arrived in England from France aged 12 to be married to King Edward II. Edward was a really bad monarch who was disliked by his Barons, bad at war and who had extra martial relations. Isabella tried to help him to be a better monarch but he didn't listen. In the end she ended up siding with the Barons and her husband was killed. She became Queen Regent between 1327-1330 where she ran England whilst she waited for her son to become 18.

Why were they remarkable?

Isabella was a foreign Queen in England yet through her intelligence, diplomacy and wisdom convinced all of the Barons that she, both female and foreign, would be a better ruler of England than her husband - the son of the former King. She ruled England making it richer and more powerful than when she became Queen.

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates because it shows us that just because things have traditionally happened they don't have to keep happening. In medieval England it was always the son of the monarch who was accepted as King. Isabella proved that despite not being born in England she knew how to be a great monarch and that she, as a female, could rule it successfully. It also shows that after she died people spread lies about her and used words like cruel and manipulative. We know if she was a man this would have been brave and cunning. We know this is wrong and that all females should be comfortable and confident being in leadership positions as it is the quality of the person - not their gender - that defines how successful they will be.



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Name Margaret of Anjou



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066	1215	1348	1430-1482	1485
Battle of Hastings	Magna Carta	Black Death	Margaret of Anjou	Battle of Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Margaret of Anjou lived from 1430 to 1482 in France and England. She was the Queen consort of England as the wife of King Henry VI. Margaret was known for her strong-willed and assertive nature, often taking an active role in politics during a tumultuous period known as the Wars of the Roses. She fiercely defended her husband's claim to the throne, even leading armies into battle. She was known as the Warrior Queen as was the key person in the War of the Roses

Why were they remarkable?

Margaret of Anjou is remarkable for being a powerful and influential female figure in a time when women had little political power. Despite facing numerous challenges and betrayals, she never gave up fighting for her husband and her son's rights to the throne

Why does their story resonate?

Her story resonates with us because she defied societal expectations and showed incredible strength and resilience in the face of adversity. Margaret's determination to protect her family and fight for what she believed in is a timeless and inspiring tale of courage and leadership.



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Name Matilda of Tuscany



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066	1215	1348	1485
Battle of Hastings	Magna Carta	Black Death	Battle of Bosworth
1046-1115			
Matilda of Tuscany			

What was life like for them?

Matilda of Tuscany lived from 1046 to 1115 in Italy. She was a powerful medieval noblewoman and military leader who ruled over a vast territory in central Italy. Matilda supported the papacy in its conflicts with the Holy Roman Emperor, leading armies into battle and defending the interests of the Church. She is remembered for her strong-willed nature, strategic acumen, and fierce devotion to the Catholic Church.

Why were they remarkable?

Matilda of Tuscany is remarkable for defying gender norms of her time and rising to a position of great influence and power in a male-dominated world. Her military prowess and political savvy made her a key player in the struggles between the papacy and the empire, leaving a lasting impact on Italian history.

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because it is a reminder of the importance of courage, determination, and standing up for what we believe in, even in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. Her legacy as a formidable leader and defender of the Church continues to inspire women and men alike to fight for justice and uphold their values in the face of adversity.



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Name Christine de Pizan



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1364-1431
Christine de Pizan

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Christine de Pizan was a medieval writer and philosopher who lived in the 14th and 15th centuries. She was born in Venice and later moved to France, where she became known for her works of poetry, prose, and philosophy. Christine was one of the earliest known female authors in Europe and is best known for her book "The Book of the City of Ladies," which challenged the misogyny and stereotypes of women prevalent in her time.

Why were they remarkable?

Christine de Pizan was remarkable not only for her literary talents but also for her fearless advocacy for women's rights. At a time when women were often marginalized and silenced, Christine used her writing to champion the intelligence, strength, and virtue of women.

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because her struggles and triumphs as a female writer and thinker continue to be relevant in our modern world. Her willingness to speak out against injustice and discrimination serves as inspiration for those fighting for gender equality and social justice.



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Name Catherine of Siena



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1347-1380
Catherine of Siena

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Catherine of Siena was born in 1347 in Italy and is known for her mystical experiences and devout faith. She dedicated her life to serving the poor and sick, and played a crucial role in advising and guiding important political and religious figures during a turbulent time in Italy's history. She is also known for her letters, which were powerful and influential in promoting peace and unity within the Catholic Church.

Why were they remarkable?

Catherine of Siena is remarkable for her unwavering faith and devotion to God, as well as her strong leadership qualities. Despite being a woman in a male-dominated society, she was able to have a significant impact on the world around her through her spiritual teachings and counsel to powerful figures.

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because it reminds us of the power of faith, compassion, and courage in the face of adversity. Her commitment to serving others and promoting peace in a time of conflict is a timeless example of the positive impact that one person can have on the world. Her ability to bridge divides and bring people together serves as an inspiration for us to strive for unity and understanding in our own lives and communities.



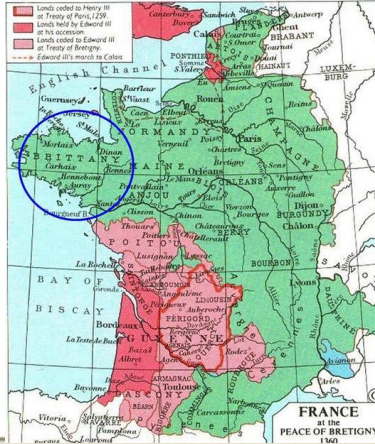
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Name Joanna of Flanders



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1295-1374
Joanna of Flanders

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Joanna of Flanders was a powerful figure in medieval history, known for her intelligence, leadership, and political acumen (skill/the ability to get people to do what she wanted). As the Duchess of Brittany in the 14th century, she played a key role in many important events, including the Hundred Years' War and the Breton War of Succession. Joanna was a shrewd diplomat and military strategist, often negotiating treaties and alliances to protect her territory and assert her authority.

Why were they remarkable?

Joanna's remarkable leadership skills and ability to navigate the complex political landscape of her time set her apart from other rulers of her era. She was known for her determination and resilience in the face of adversity, leading her troops into battle and securing victories against powerful adversaries. Joanna's legacy as a formidable ruler and influential figure in medieval Europe has endured through the centuries.

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because she defied societal expectations and stereotypes of women in her time, proving that gender is not a barrier to achieving greatness. Her legacy serves as a reminder of the importance of perseverance, courage, and intelligence in the face of challenges. We know in our future we can break down the barriers that still exist just like Joanna.



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Name Isabella of Castile



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1451-1503
Isabella of
Castile

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Isabella of Castile was a powerful queen of Spain in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. She played a major role in the unification (joining together) of Spain and the colonization of the Americas, most notably sponsoring Christopher Columbus' voyage in 1492. Isabella was known for her strong Catholic faith and her efforts to promote and enforce religious unity in Spain, she did some bad things such as the expulsion of Jews and Moors (Muslims from North Africa) from the country.

Why were they remarkable?

Isabella of Castile is remarkable for her ability to navigate the complex political landscape of her time and achieve her goals through strategic marriages, alliances, and military conquests. She was a shrewd and intelligent ruler who showed determination and ambition in her quest to establish a unified Spain as a dominant power in Europe.

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because due to her legacy as a powerful and influential female leader in a time when women were typically marginalized in positions of authority. Her achievements and impact on history serve as a reminder of the importance of strong and capable leadership, regardless of gender. It also serves as a reminder that whatever gender you are you can make some harsh and terrible decisions and so you must always question whether you are in the right and treating all people with the dignity and respect they deserve.



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Name Caterina Sforza



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066
Battle of
Hastings

1215
Magna
Carta

1348
Black
Death

1463-1509
Caterina
Sforza

1485
Battle of
Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Catherina Sforza was an Italian noblewoman and regent of Forlì and Imola during the Renaissance. Known for her courage and political savvy, she was a formidable leader who defended her territories against foreign invaders and internal rebellions. Her most famous act is when she famously stood her ground against Cesare Borgia's army during the siege of Forlì, even threatening to kill her own children if necessary to protect her city.

Why were they remarkable?

Catherina Sforzas remarkable strength and determination in the face of adversity set her apart from other women of her time. She was a fierce and independent ruler who defied societal norms and expectations of women in the 15th century. Her political acumen and military prowess made her a respected figure in a male-dominated world, earning her the nickname "Tigress of Forlì."

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because it highlights the power of resilience and courage in the face of overwhelming odds. Her unwavering determination to protect her people and maintain her independence serves as a source of inspiration for us. Her legacy reminds us that strength and bravery know no gender, and that true power lies in one's ability to overcome challenges with grace and determination.



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Name Abbess Hilda of Whitby



Where do they live?



When did they live?

Timeline

1066

Battle of

Hastings

614-840

Abbess Hilda of Whitby

1215

Magna

Carta

1348

Black

Death

1485

Battle of

Bosworth

What was life like for them?

Hilda of Whitby, born in 614, was a noblewoman who became a powerful abbess and saint. After her baptism by Paulinus of York, she joined religious life, founding the double monastery of Whitby. Hilda was known for her wisdom, counsel, and promotion of education. She hosted the Synod of Whitby in 664, where crucial decisions were made about the church's practices. Renowned for her leadership and holiness, Hilda nurtured future church leaders, including Caedmon, the first English poet.

Why were they remarkable?

Hilda of Whitby was remarkable for her exceptional leadership and influence in early English Christianity. This was particularly true because at the time women were not seen to be the equals of men in the Catholic Church. To rise to such an important and prestigious position as a woman was incredible - especially in the foundation of Lindisfarne as a centre of religious thought in the North East and in the pivotal role she played in the Synod of Whitby (664), which aligned English Christianity with Roman practices.

Why does their story resonate?

Their story resonates with us because Her wisdom and mentorship of many figures highlights the lasting importance of nurturing talent. Hilda's decisive role in the Synod of Whitby exemplified her commitment to unity and thoughtful governance. Her dedication to education, community, and faith continues to inspire, demonstrating how strong, wise, and compassionate leadership can leave an enduring legacy that transcends time and culture. For me it tells me that I can be a leader but also I can lead people how I want them to be led - not trying to imitate masculine characteristics.



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This edition has been produced by the
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