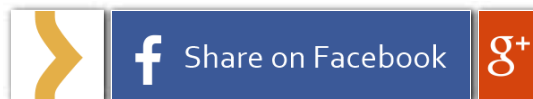
[Home](#)[Ancestry – Genealogy & DNA](#)[History – Ancient, Medieval & Modern](#)[History in Colour – Vintage Images Colourized](#)[Privacy Policy](#)

Real King of England dies in Australia – the true royal lineage which would have changed British history

by Lee Rimmer for Ancestry - Genealogy & DNA



The recent death of 71-year-old Mike Hastings in a quiet town in New South Wales highlights the genetic lottery of monarchy and how dynastic fortunes hang by a thread.

The unassuming Mr Hastings, who had worked variously as a forklift driver, a door-to-door encyclopaedia salesman and an agronomist, shot to fame in 2004 when he was tracked down by actor Tony Robinson for the Channel 4 documentary, Britain's Real Monarch.

The genealogical research presented by the documentary provided strong evidence that Mike Hastings should rightfully have been: *His Majesty Michael I, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of His Other Realms and Territories King, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.*

His claim to the throne, which he cheerfully rejected when he discovered it, goes back to medieval England and the reign of King Edward IV. Edward ruled England from 1461 to his death in 1483, a period marked by the Wars of the Roses. These were a series of violent dynastic squabbles between two rival branches of the Plantagenet

family – the houses of Lancaster and York (whose heraldic symbols were the red and white roses) for the English Crown.

Edward was born 28 April 1442 in Rouen, France, where his father, Richard of York, was on campaign. The documentary presented doubts that Richard was Edward's biological father. Those doubts were nothing new. Even during Edward's own lifetime it was noted that he showed little resemblance to his father; Edward had a large round face and lantern-jaw, whereas Richard of York had thinner, pointed facial features. Edward, at over 6 feet, was also exceptionally tall for the period, which was unusual for the House of York. The documentary cited records found in Rouen Cathedral's archives which revealed that, from 14 July to 21 August 1441, the 5-week period in which Edward must have been conceived, Richard was away fighting at Pontoise, several days' march from Rouen (where Edward's mother Cecily of York was based). It is unlikely that Edward was born premature, as there is no evidence from the time to suggest that he was (premature babies with a claim to the throne were a risk and therefore almost certainly would have had their births recorded). Also, the christening of Edmund, Earl of Rutland, Richard and Cecily's second son, was a lavish public celebration in Rouen Cathedral, whereas Edward's christening was a low key and private ceremony in a side chapel, despite being the firstborn son.



It is possible of course that Richard could have returned to Rouen from Pontoise, or that Edward could have been born premature. Richard never contested his paternity. However, the documentary considered that, if Edward was indeed illegitimate, then every single monarch who came after him followed the wrong bloodline to the throne.

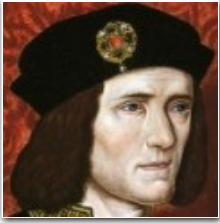











The crown should have gone to Edward's younger brother George, the Duke of Clarence. As George was the direct ancestor of Mike Hastings then, under the strict rules of succession, Mike should have been on the throne, not Elizabeth II.







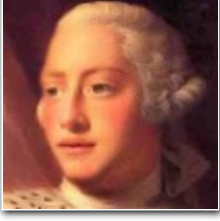
Instead of the Tudors, Stuarts, Hannoverians and Windsors, this intact Plantagenet lineage, whose fortunes waxed and waned over the centuries, would have thrown up some interesting alternative Kings and Queens of England.













The Plantagenet 'Henry VIII', Henry Hastings, was a key political player in the courts of Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I, where the stakes were very high; he was imprisoned in the Tower of London by Mary I for his support for Lady Jane Grey's 9 day 'reign', and Elizabeth I, who was aware of Henry's own genuine claim to the throne, never fully trusted him either. However, he was politically useful to all of them and garnered titles, honours and influence as a result. The exotically named Ferdinando Hastings ('Ferdinando I') saw his family seat, Ashby de la Zouch Castle, destroyed by Oliver Cromwell's troops in the English Civil War in 1646. Francis Rawdon-Hastings ('Francis II') found fame as a soldier in the American War of Independence and the French Revolutionary Wars and went on to become Governor-General of India from 1813 to 1823. His son, George Rawdon-Hastings ('George IV') continued the family's uneasy relationship with the 'official' royal family when he publically denounced the young Queen Victoria and her courtiers for insulting and disgracing his unmarried sister, Lady Flora Hastings, in 1839 by concocting a rumour that she was pregnant, when she was in fact seriously ill with liver cancer. A generation later the habitual drinker and compulsive gambler, Henry Rawdon-Hastings ('Henry X'), blew the family's considerable fortune, on a mind-boggling scale, on horse racing.

The 'official' and 'alternate' royal lineages look like this:

	Monarch	Reigned		True claimant	'Monarch'	'Reigned'
	<u>Edward IV</u>	1461 - 1483		George Plantagenet, 1st Duke of Clarence	<u>George I</u>	1460 - 1478

	Monarch	Reigned		True claimant	'Monarch'	'Reigned'
	<u>Richard III</u>	1483 - 1485		Edward Plantagenet, 17th Earl of Warwick	<u>Edward IV</u>	1478 - 1499
	<u>Henry VII</u>	1485 - 1509		Margaret Pole, 8th Countess of Salisbury	<u>Margaret I</u>	1499 - 1541
	<u>Henry VIII</u>	1509 - 1547		Henry Pole	Henry VII	1541 - 1542
	<u>Edward VI</u>	1547 - 1553		Catherine (Pole) Hastings	Catherine I	1542 - 1576
	<u>Mary I</u>	1553 - 1558		Henry Hastings, 3rd Earl of Huntingdon	<u>Henry VIII</u>	1576 - 1595
	<u>Elizabeth I</u>	1558 - 1603		George Hastings, 4th Earl of Huntingdon	<u>George II</u>	1595 - 1604
	<u>James I</u>	1603 - 1625		Henry Hastings, 5th Earl of Huntingdon	<u>Henry IX</u>	1604 - 1643
	<u>Charles I</u>	1625 - 1649		Ferdinando Hastings, 6th Earl of Huntingdon	<u>Ferdinando I</u>	1643 - 1656

	Monarch	Reigned		True claimant	'Monarch'	'Reigned'
	<u>Charles II</u>	1660 - 1685		Theophilus Hastings, 7th Earl of Huntingdon	<u>Theophilus</u> ↓	1656 - 1701
	<u>James II</u>	1685 - 1688		George Hastings, 8th Earl of Huntingdon	<u>George III</u>	1701 - 1704
	<u>William III and Mary II</u>	1689 - 1702		Theophilus Hastings, 9th Earl of Huntingdon	<u>Theophilus</u> ↓	1704 - 1746
	<u>Anne</u>	1702 - 1714		Francis Hastings, 10th Earl of Huntingdon	<u>Francis I</u>	1746 - 1789
	<u>George I</u>	1714 - 1727		Elizabeth Rawdon, Countess of Moira	<u>Elizabeth I</u>	1789 - 1808
	<u>George II</u>	1727 - 1760		Francis Rawdon- Hastings, 1st Marquess of Hastings	<u>Francis II</u>	1808 - 1826
	<u>George III</u>	1760 - 1820		George Rawdon- Hastings, 2nd Marquess of Hastings	<u>George IV</u>	1826 - 1844
	<u>George IV</u>	1820 - 1830		Paulyn Rawdon- Hastings, 3rd Marquess of Hastings	Paulyn I	1844 - 1851

	Monarch	Reigned		True claimant	'Monarch'	'Reigned'
	<u>William IV</u>	1830 - 1837		Henry Rawdon-Hastings, 4th Marquess of Hastings	<u>Henry X</u>	1851 - 1868
	<u>Victoria</u>	1837 - 1901		Edith Rawdon-Hastings, 10th Countess of Loudoun,	<u>Edith I</u>	1844 - 1874
	<u>Edward VII</u>	1901 - 1910		Charles Rawdon-Hastings, 11th Earl of Loudoun	<u>Charles I</u>	1874 - 1920
	<u>George V</u>	1910 - 1936		Edith Abney-Hastings, 12th Countess of Loudoun	<u>Edith II</u>	1920 - 1960
	<u>Edward VIII</u>	1936		Barbara Abney-Hastings, 13th Countess of Loudoun	<u>Barbara I</u>	1960 - 2002
	<u>George VI</u>	1936 - 1952		Michael Abney-Hastings, 14th Earl of Loudoun	<u>Michael I</u>	2002 - 2012
	<u>Elizabeth II</u>	1952 -		Simon Abney-Hastings, 15th Earl of Loudoun	<u>Simon I</u>	2012 -

Mike Hastings himself, while unaware of his claim to the throne, was well aware of his aristocratic background. He was born Michael Edward Abney-Hastings, Lord Mauchline, in 1942 and grew up in his mother's ancestral hometown of Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire. He inherited the title the 14th Earl of Loudon on the death of his mother in 2002. However, he effectively rejected the British class system, and his double-barrelled name, when he emigrated to Australia as a young man in 1960. He lived out a very contented life with his family as plain old Mike Hastings in the small outback town of Jerilderie for over 48 years. He confined any taste for power to serving as a shire councillor and as chairman of the local historical society. The only other 'honour' he accepted was his appointment as a life member of the Jerilderie (Aussie rules) Football Club.

The discovery of his true birthright in 2004 left him a bit shocked, but he said, "I've no intention of chasing over there and laying claim to palaces and crown jewels." In fact, he believed that Australia should be a republic and had voted against the monarchy in the nation's referendum in 1999. He thought being a royal would be, "a shit of a job. I wouldn't take it for quids. What a terrible way to live. They can't even pick their noses without someone writing about them. I'm quite happy in Jerilderie. There's no pressure, everybody knows everybody and the people are friendly."

Mike's funeral service was held in Jerilderie last week. He is survived by 2 sons and 3 daughters. His eldest son, Simon Abney-Hastings, who becomes the 15th Earl of Loudon, has no desire to pursue his claim to the throne either. He said, "It does make you think about how things could be different. I am quite happy with how things have turned out. I have made my own life."



The genetic lottery of monarchy – two royal families

