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Watch the complete The Hollow Crown series online at pbs.org/thehollowcrown or visit pbslearningmedia.org/collection/thehollowcrown for additional resources.

The Hollow Crown is a Neal Street co-production with NBC-Universal and THIRTEEN/WNET for BBC.
THE PLAYS

Synopses

The Hollow Crown presents four of Shakespeare's history plays:

Henry IV, Part 1, 1398–1413

Henry IV, Part 2, 1402–1413

Richard II, 1399

Henry V, 1415

These four plays were written separately but told a continuous story of the reigns of three kings of England. The play starts in 1398, as King Richard arbitrates a dispute between the Duke of York and the Duke of Clumber. Richard, who has recently married Anne, has just defeated the invading king of France. The play concludes in 1413, after Richard's death, with the battle of Agincourt won by his successor, Henry V. In 1415, Henry V is proclaimed king and establishes his claim to the throne of France. The play ends with his victory over the French at the Battle of Agincourt.

Richard II, 1399

Richard II, the second of the so-called Lancastrian kings of England, is displaced from the throne by his cousin Henry Bolingbroke, who becomes King Henry IV. Richard is exiled to Ireland, where he is murdered. The play begins with Bolingbroke's landing in England, and concludes with his coronation as Henry IV. Richard's character is complex, and he is depicted as a weak and vacillating monarch who is unable to assert his authority over his rebellious barons.

Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2, 1402–1413

These two plays follow the reign of Henry IV, who becomes king after Bolingbroke's death. In Part 1, Henry IV's son, Prince Hal, begins to rebel against his father and his demands for obedience, leading to a conflict between the two. In Part 2, Henry IV's son, Prince Hal, is exiled by his father, and eventually returns to reclaim the throne.

Henry V, 1415

Henry V is proclaimed king and establishes his claim to the throne of France. The play ends with his victory over the French at the Battle of Agincourt.

The Plays

Synopsis

The Hollow Crown presents four of Shakespeare's history plays: Richard II, Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2, and Henry V.

The first three plays are set in 14th-century England, and the fourth is set in 15th-century France. In Richard II, the second of the so-called Lancastrian kings of England, is displaced from the throne by his cousin Henry Bolingbroke, who becomes King Henry IV. Richard is exiled to Ireland, where he is murdered. The play begins with Bolingbroke's landing in England, and concludes with his coronation as Henry IV. Richard's character is complex, and he is depicted as a weak and vacillating monarch who is unable to assert his authority over his rebellious barons.

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Henry V, 1415

Henry V is proclaimed king and establishes his claim to the throne of France. The play ends with his victory over the French at the Battle of Agincourt.

The acts of King Henry V are continued in Shakespeare's Henry VI, Parts 1 and 2, where he is made king of France. These works were not included in the production of the original production of The Hollow Crown, but have been included in this production.

Male characters

King Michael: The plant is well suited and introduces King of England. Richard presents a word that is a talk on stage. He is introduced to the audience by the Narrator. (Richard is)

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, later

Hamlet. Prince of Denmark, later

Henry IV, the Duke of York, and then

Henry IV, the Duke of York, and then

Prince Harry, later King Harry

Prince Harry, later King Harry

Henry Percy, (Hotspur, Percy): Henry Percy

Henry Percy, (Hotspur, Percy): Henry Percy

Prince Hal (Bolingbroke, Bolingbroke): Henry IV, Prince Hal, and Part 2

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Prince Henry (Hotspur, Percy): Henry Percy

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Henry V, 1415

Twelfth Night

Twelfth Night

The earliest English performance of this play was in 1602 at the Blackfriars Playhouse.