



Edward II

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Places Discussed

*London. Center of English political power and of King Edward's monarchy. Several locations within London are settings for important scenes, including the royal palace, the new temple (a center of legal authority), and the Tower of London, the traditional place of detention for important political prisoners. The first scene of the play is set on a London street and the last at the royal palace.

*Paris. Capital of the French monarchy and home of Edward II's queen Isabella, sister of the French king. It is in Paris that Isabella meets Kent and the younger Mortimer, with whom she plans to invade England and make war against her husband.

*Neath Abbey. Church in Glamorganshire, Wales, where King Edward is arrested by his enemies after failing to escape to Ireland. Edward II was born in Carnarvon Castle in Wales and was England's first Prince of Wales.

*Berkeley Castle (BAHRK-lee). Castle in Gloucestershire that is the place of Edward's final incarceration and murder.

Bibliography:

Levin, Harry. *The Overachiever: A Study of Christopher Marlowe*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952. Discusses how in Marlowe's plays men's passions ultimately betray them. Asserts that whereas Shakespeare deals with the well-being of the state, Marlowe focuses upon individual tragedies.

Marlowe, Christopher. *Edward the Second*. Edited by Charles R. Forker. Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1994. Contains an excellent 136-page introduction. Considers the relationship between *Edward II* and Shakespeare's histories.

Ribner, Irving. *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957. Describes *Edward II* as the first fully developed Elizabethan history play and tragedy of character. Discusses the personalities of Edward and Mortimer and the theoretical underpinning of political issues.

Sales, Roger. *Christopher Marlowe*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991. Considers the Elizabethan mentality as revealed in Marlowe's life. In the analysis of *Edward II*, the emphasis is on Mortimer and the difficulties posed by deposing and executing a monarch.

Weil, Judith. *Christopher Marlowe: Merlin's Prophet*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1977. A study of Marlowe's satiric and tragic irony, examining the playwright's relationship to his public. Argues that Edward becomes sympathetic, one in whom reason is reborn between his defeat and his death.

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