

Stephen ~ "19 Long winters" 1135-54

Origins of Civil War:

Accession 1135	Come on and listen to the story of Stephen, The nephew of Henry I,	Son of Adela of Normandy William I's daughter
Disputed succession	And how Matilda, Henry's daughter claimed his land; How that "the king was a mild man and did no justice"	
Royal weaknesses	Proved to be England's curse,, How for nineteen years, There was anarchy close at hand?	Henry I had named his daughter Matilda as his successor, but Stephen was proclaimed king with the support of London and the church
Failure of Scottish invasion	For King David brought his Scottish army, To champion Matilda's cause,	
X The Standard Aug'38 Arrival of Matilda & Robert of Gloucester Sep'39	But at Northallerton, the Yorkshire saints' Standards defiantly flew; So Matilda and her brother Robert of Gloucester Crossed the Channel to spark the wars, While Normandy was claimed by her husband, Geoffrey <i>Comte d'Anjou</i> ,	They sailed from Normandy & landed at Arundel

***For "Nineteen Long Winters", "Christ and his saints slept":
While huts burned to cinders and scalded eyes wept
Where screams turned to whimpers and Death coldly crept.
For Nineteen Long Winters, when his saints and Christ slept:***

The Three Sieges:

1. Lincoln Jan-Feb'41	For though Matilda captured Stephen at Lincoln, And went to London to set up court, She was driven out For trying to raise a punitive tax; Then clashed with Stephen's brother, Henry of Winchester, Who denied her church support,	
Failure of Matilda to take London	And though besieging him in Wolvesey castle It remained intact.. But when Robert her brother was captured, And Matilda compelled to retreat, To secure his release, She was forced to let Stephen go; Yet when Stephen besieged her in Oxford, Where Matilda faced defeat, She escaped in a pure white cloak, Over the snow...	The Bishop's castle in Winchester
2. Wolvesey Aug-Sep'41		
3. Oxford Sep-Dec'42		

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The Anarchy? 1143-9

Jan'43	Robert failed to capture Stephen at Wilton, But all authority was undermined, As barons like de Mandeville And Ranulf of Chester rebelled:	
Nov'43-Sep'44 1146-9	The king arraigned them then released them for loyalty But they rendered nothing of the kind, And in the anarchy, the rotting piles of tortured corpses swelled It was then in a bid to claim title, Matilda's son Henry twice sailed to invade, Joining forces with Ranulf, Though Stephen still refused to give in; Until, and when Eustace his son died, At Wallingford, peace was made, By which Henry would rule As the first Plantagenet king...	Geoffrey de Mandeville died 1144 during an attack on Burwell castle, (completed by Stephen)
Jan'44		
1147		
1149		
Aug'53		
Truce of Wallingford confirmed at Winchester Nov'53		

Death of Stephen 25 Oct'54	<i>For Nineteen Long Winters, Christ and his saints slept: While huts burned to cinders and scalded eyes wept Where screams turned to whimpers and Death coldly crept. Till peace terms cooled tempers, and words given kept..</i>
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