

I have decided to talk about King John because he earned a bad reputation unfairly and I do not think it was very accurate.

King John inherited lots of problems from his brother Richard loss of money from the treasury due to the crusades. The church also preferred Richard because he went on many crusades and was a great military leader so more people respected Richard so John had large shoes to fill. I am going to talk about how John received this reputation and why it an unfair one. And the things he did and tried to do to prevent them.

Money was one of the biggest problems John faced. John inherited an empty treasury, his brother, Richard, had lost it all in the crusades so his brother had to deal with it. Another increasing money problem was inflation this was not John's fault either but it slowly built up and unluckily landed on John. So John gets the blame for the fact that money was losing its value. Because of the fact that John had no money and the sheriffs were corrupt and taking a lot of the taxes John had to increase taxes which made his very unpopular. This is one of the reasons John received such a bad reputation.

The fact that most of the chroniclers were church men did not help with John's reputation. The Stephen Langton affair. This affair was when John decided to choose his own archbishop of Canterbury like kings have been doing for a century before him, the monks intervened and then the pope chose a completely different candidate, which John refused, which angered the church and gave him a bad reputation.

Tales such as Robin Hood portray John as an evil tyrant, stealing the crown from Richard and taking money from the poor. This is completely inaccurate. John only increased taxes to pump more money into the countries needs. Robin Hood was also a very fictional character and therefore most of the story has to be made up anyway. That movie has destroyed what might have been left of a good reputation and that is unfair because it is barely true.

However John was not all good. He lost a war in France losing England a substantial amount of land. He did not trust his barons and therefore did not respect them and his actions led to civil war. But this does not cover the fact that he put forward the Magna Carta, developed a very good tax system which we still use today and his actions led to a democratic government. I do not think that King John's bad reputation was unfairly earned and not very accurate at all no historians are trying to look past his few mistakes and many people now realise how he was a great monarch maybe even one of the greatest.

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