

History of the Monarchy

George IV

Born in 1762

Ascended in 1820

Died in 1830, aged 67

Reigned for 10 years

Married to Mrs. Maria Fitzherbert then Caroline of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel who gave birth to 1 daughter.

George IV's tutor said of him; *He will be either the most polished man, or the most accomplished blackguard in Europe - possibly both*. He was at least correct in the second half of his statement and there were many that felt George was no man by the end of his reign.

George IV was not one of England's best kings: he was more interested in eating, drinking, gambling, and women than in affairs of state. In later life, he complained about gout and other infirmities to an unsympathetic audience. For example, the Duke of Wellington at the time was quoted as saying that there was nothing wrong with the king *except what is caused by the effects of strong liquors taken too frequently and in too large quantities. He drinks spirits morning noon and night"*.

In order to pay off massive debts he had accrued while he was the Prince of Wales he had agreed to marry the king's niece, Caroline of Brunswick. This was despite of the fact that he had already been married to a catholic widow, Maria Fitzherbert, in secret. However, there was no way in which he could be king and father an heir if he were married to her. It is possible that he was in love with his former wife but since his marriage to Caroline of Brunswick he descended into debauchery and it was only a few months before he formally separated from her.

When he came to power she demanded the title of Queen, but he refused to allow her to come to his coronation and accused her in court of adultery. Indeed, she had been openly living with an Italian man, Bartolomeo Pergami, in her exile from Britain. Caroline was acquitted but she died later the following year; her body was taken and buried in Germany with the epitaph *Caroline of Brunswick, the injured Queen of England*. When George died, he left no heir to the throne despite his difficult marriage. The

