

Kings and Queens

George I

Born in 1660

Ascended in 1714

Died in 1727, aged 67

Reigned for 13 years

Married to Sophia Dorothea (Princess of Celle), bearing 1 son and 1 daughter.

George I was instated as King of England when the politicians eventually decided that the German house of Hanover provided an answer to the succession crisis. This King, second cousin to Anne, was disinterested in British affairs and preferred to spend more time in Hanover. He didn't even speak English, but the Whig government was Protestant and the pretender James Stuart - Anne's half brother - was Catholic and would not renounce his religion even in name only. Later, he fiercely contested this decision and there were minor wars in northern England before he fled into exile, in France, in 1716.

The king left the affairs of England in the hands of his government and so for the first time the country had a Prime Minister as head of state - Sir Robert Walpole. He steadily increased government powers until he left office in 1742 under the reign of George III

George I disliked his wife Sophia Dorothea and soon divorced her in 1694 after only two years. Sophia had had an affair with Count Konigsmarck who was killed when the couple was discovered. Sophia was kept in the castle of Ahlden until she died in 1726 while the King openly flaunted his mistresses in England.