

King Edward I reigned in England for thirty five years. The authors of medieval chronicles speak about him as magnificent ruler, capable warrior and politician. Modern historians write about many problems and wars he had to resolve or win, mostly with success. England of Edward I had two more outer parts – Wales and Ireland. Wales was divided among powerful barons who had to perform homagium to English kings. Between 1272 and 1307 there were three rebellions led by native princes. After last of them, in 1292, Wales was finally conquered by English. Ireland was supposed to be firmly in English hands; Edward never visited the country nor had to send army to it.

In the thirteenth century there were two kingdoms on the British Isles – England and Scotland. English kings tried to obtain influential position in the northern realm; Scottish kings had to perform homagium to them. Question is whether this was for Scotland or only for lands which Scottish kings held in England. In 1290 the dynasty of Scottish kings died out and Edward I took the opportunity. He chose new ruler and after John Balliol failed in his duties to England, Edward entered Scotland with army. The campaigns, thanks to resist in the northern part of the kingdom, continued until the end of Edward's reign. Scotland was never fully conquered.

The English as well as the Welsh and the Scottish used political propaganda – the English wanted to support their claim for supremacy, the others their right for independence. The relationship with France was very important for all medieval English kings. In the twelfth century Angevin rulers reigned in southern France; at the beginning of the thirteenth century they lost their positions with the exception of Gaskony. The treaty of Paris of 1259 only confirm that reality. Edward I tried to secure his possessions on the continent. He was not successful, in 1294 war broke out between him and Phillip IV.