

The Black Prince at Crécy

At the Telfair Museum in Savannah, Julian Russell Story's enormous painting *The Black Prince at Crécy* draws you into a moment after one of the Hundred Years' War's most famous battles. Painted in 1888, the oil canvas is roughly ten and a half feet tall and sixteen and a half feet wide.

The Battle of Crécy took place in France on August 26, 1346. At the center of Story's painting stands Edward, Prince of Wales, later known as the Black Prince. He was about sixteen when he fought alongside the English army. Clad in dark armor, he turns toward the fallen King John of Bohemia, who fought for the French despite being blind. John died in the battle; Story shows him beneath a white horse.

The painter chose a quiet encounter over a scene of combat. Edward appears to acknowledge the courage of his opponent, giving the vast canvas a reflective mood. A tradition holds that Edward later adopted John's motto, "Ich dien," commonly translated as "I serve," although the story behind that adoption is debated.

Standing before the painting makes its scale part of the experience. Story uses the battlefield and its figures to invite a closer look at courage, loss, and the way later generations remember medieval history.

Artwork reference: Telfair Museums collection, *The Black Prince at Crécy* — <https://collections.telfair.org/objects/5237/the-black-prince-at-crecy>