

1 Arrival of the House of Wessex

The invaders of the 5th and 6th Centuries famously came from 3 tribes - the Jutes, Angles and Saxons, and each formed kingdoms that eventually became the 7 English Kingdoms - or the Heptarchy.

At first the Britons appealed to Rome to come back and help them. They sent a piteous note to Aetius, the last effective Roman general which read:

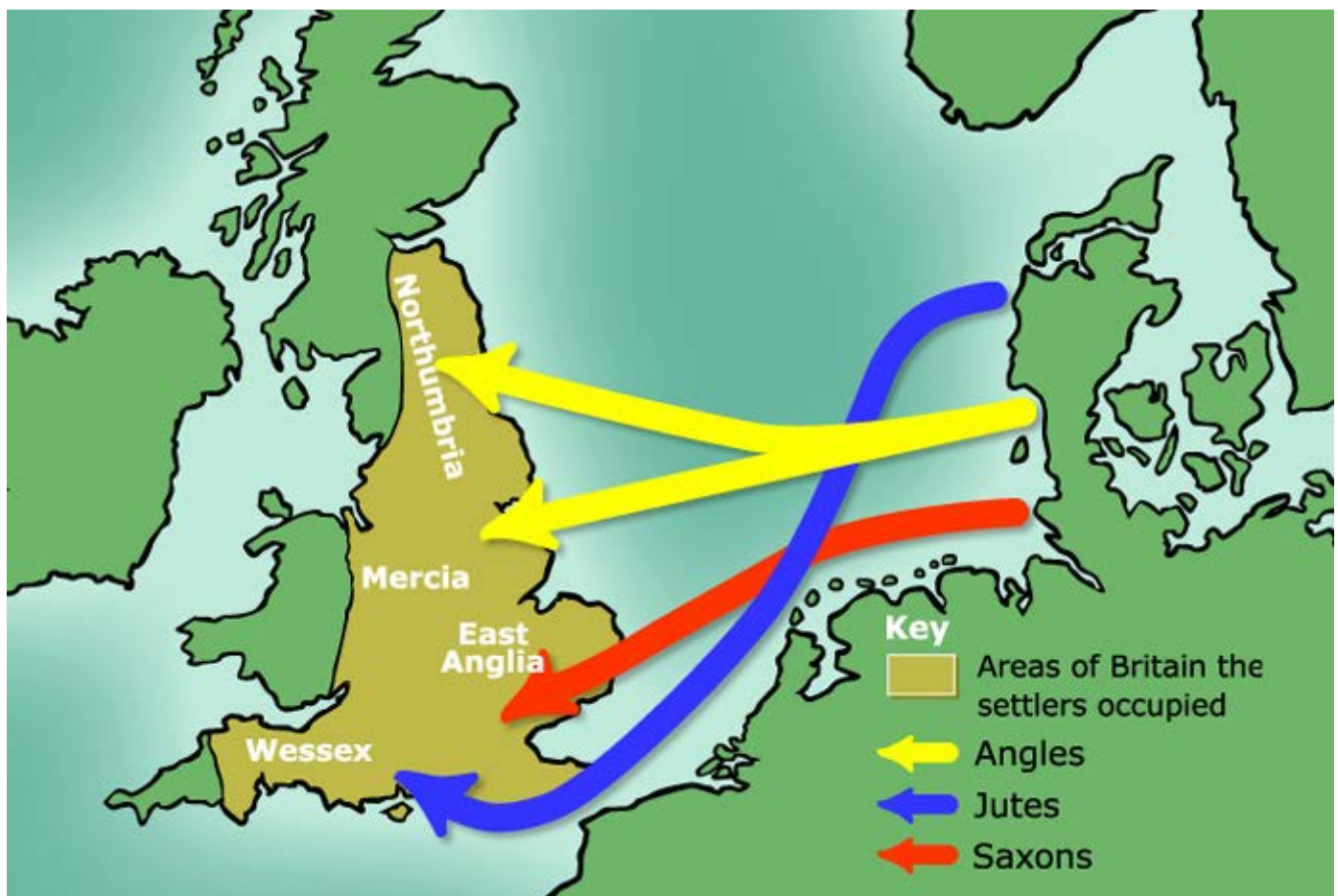
'The Barbarians push us back to the sea, the sea pushes us back to the barbarians; between these two kind of deaths we are either drowned or slaughtered'.

Who was Cerdic ?

The background of the founder of the British Monarchy is not simple. Cerdic is a British name, not Saxon. So who was he ? He may simply have had a British mother - and so be a Saxon with a British name. Or he may have been a local Romano British official. Or maybe he was a British prince come to seek his fortune.

Cerdic arrived at the mouth of the River Test, and over the next 6 years he fought the local British kings, as you can see in the map. These culminated in the battle at Netley Marsh, where he defeated Nathanleod.

Cerdic died in 534, was buried at Hurstbourne Tarrant in Hampshire, and handed the kingdom on to his Grandson, Cynric.



2: The West Saxon Bretwalda

Cynric, King of Wessex 534 - 560

Cerdic's grandson, Cynric, took over the leadership on Cerdic's death. During this time the kingdom of Arthur - or some other British warlord - remained strong. But in the 550's we see a change. Cynric won two very significant battles against the British. He therefore captured two crucial strong points - Old Sarum and Barbury castle, which dominated key trade and communication routes. Here at last was evidence that the British control was slipping.

Ceawlin, King of Wessex and Bretwalda, 560-592

Ceawlin was Cynric's son, and the most successful king of Wessex until Egbert over 200 years later. He first achieved mention with the first recorded battle between Anglo Saxon states, when he beat Aethelbert of Kent. But his big breakthrough came in 571 at the battle of Dyrham in Gloucestershire. There he defeated 3 British kings, and won a large swathe of territory in the South West, and drove a wedge between the Britons of Wales and Cornwall.

Ceawlin's brother Cuthwulf also won a battle at Beacanford, which won 5 towns for the kingdom of Wessex. The men of Wessex, or the Gewisse as their tribe was then known, were now competing for territory north of the river Thames, in land that would become Mercian. By this time, Ceawlin is acknowledged as the overlord of all the Anglo Saxon states - Mercia, Northumbria, Kent, Sussex, East Anglia.

But in 591 he was defeated by his nephew Ceol, and in 594 Ceawlin died in exile. But he had laid the foundation of Wessex.

Ceol (591-597), Ceolwulf (597-611) and Cynegils (611-643)

Over these 50 years, Wessex absorbed its new territory, but lost ground against its northern neighbours Mercia and Northumbria. But in 635, Cynegils was baptised in the then capital of Wessex, Dorchester on Thames, by St Birinus.



3 Wars and Laws

7th Century Wessex continues to grow, but has to fight with its Anglo Saxon neighbours to survive. Christianity spreads throughout England, and Ine, one of Wessex's greatest early Kings, ends his reign in Rome. The History of England podcast looks at the 7th Century as Wessex finds its place amongst the Anglo Saxon nations.

The Anglo Saxon Kingdoms fight for Supremacy

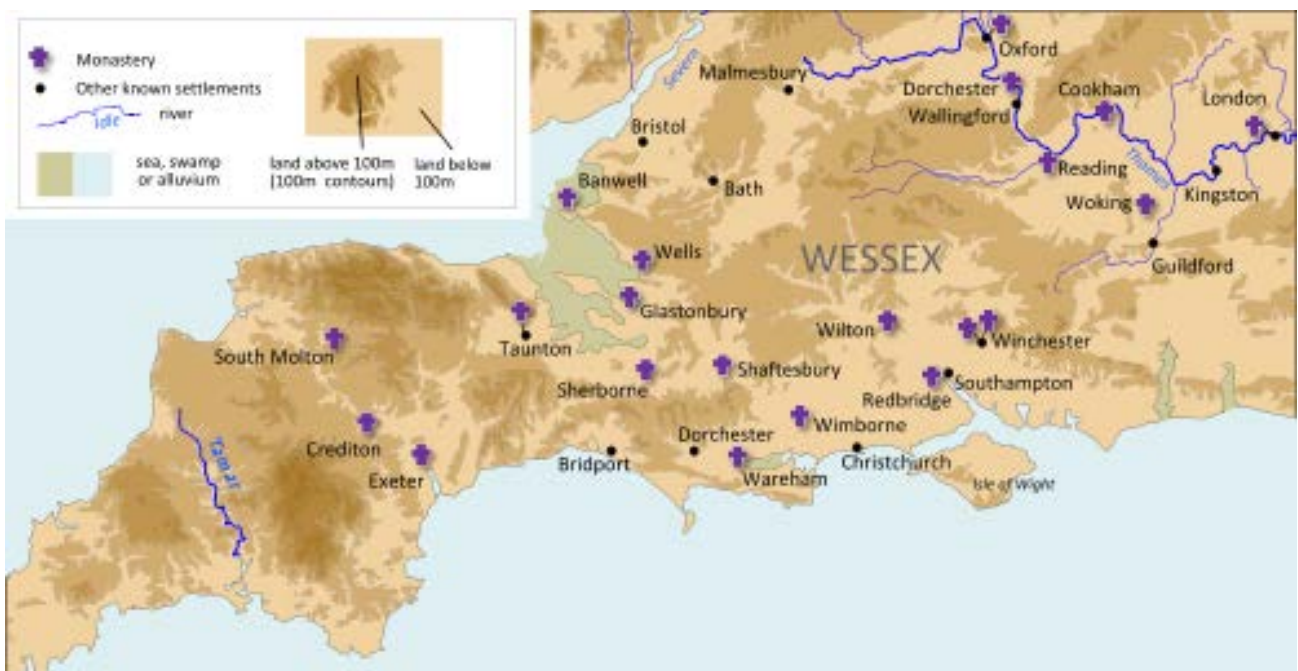
Cynegils was king of Wessex from 611-643. During his reign, Wessex became Christian, but did not do well against its Anglo Saxon Competitors. This meant that Cynegils lost the territory Ceawlin had won north of the Thames. During his reign, Edwin of Northumbria was recognised as the Bretwalda.

Cynegils' son, Cenwalh (King of Wessex 643-674) was married to the sister of the King of Mercia, and the last great Anglo saxon Pagan king - Penda. But he effectively declared war on Mercia by repudiating her, and allied himself with Northumbria. For most of his reign, this was not clever. Penda and his successor Wulfhere basically walked all over Cenwalh and Oswald of Northumbria. As a result, Cenwalh moved the capital of his kingdom to Winchester, further away from Mercia - where it would stay until the Normans arrive. But then in 674, Ecgrith of Northumbria defeated Wulfhere, and gave Wessex some respite from Mercian pressure.

Cenwalh was succeeded by his widow Sexburga and then Aescwine, who himself defeated Wulfhere in battle. Centwine, Cenwalh's brother, ruled from 676-685, and extended the kingdom at the expense of the Britons of the south west. Centwine retired from the throne to become a monk, which may well have had something to do with Cadwalla, who's short reign from 685-688 was full of ambition. Cadwalla was much more aggressive, taking on and briefly overcoming Sussex and Kent.

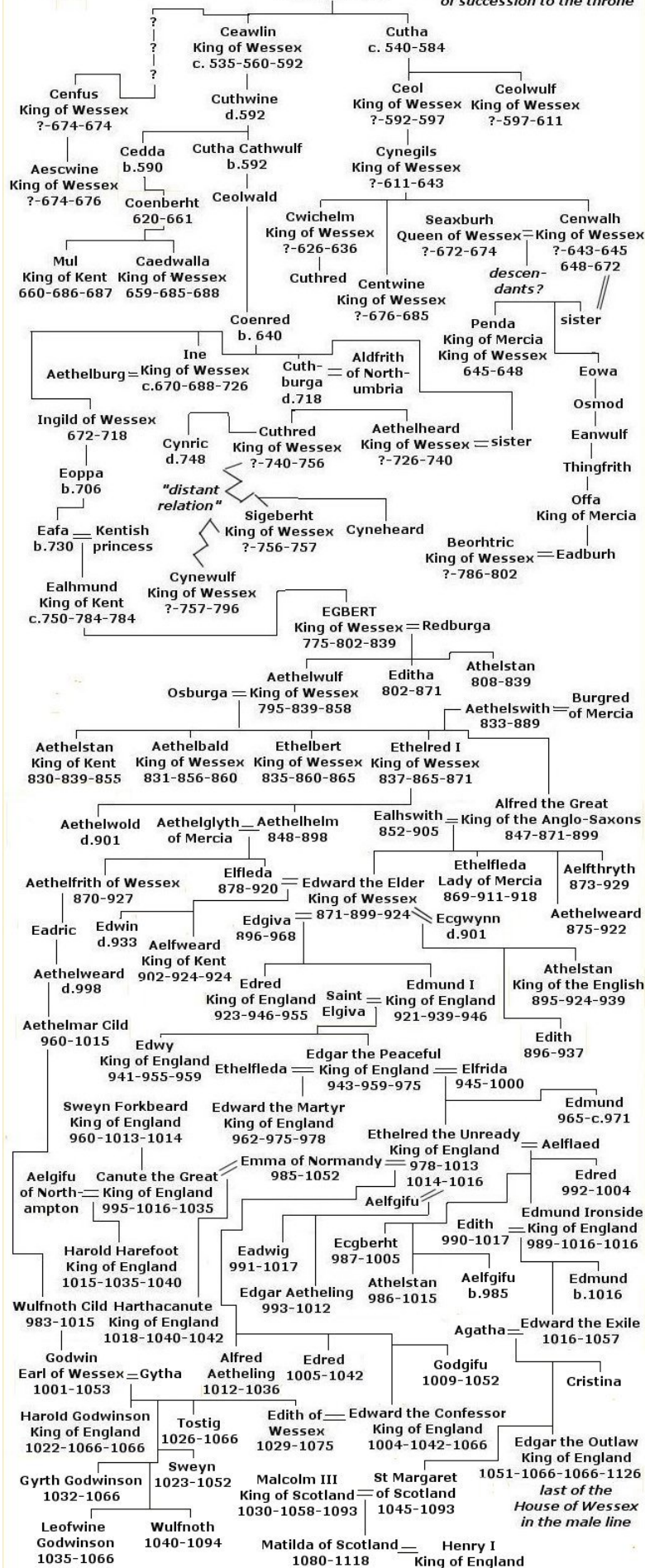
Ine, King of Wessex 688-726

Ine stands out from the early Kings of Wessex. His reign is marked by economic growth, religious re-organisation, and the creation of one of the first surviving Anglo Saxon lawcodes. It gives a fascinating insight into society, and the simple relationship between the king and his people, with no feudal intermediary. Like Cadwalla and Centwine, Ine ended his reign for religion, and died in Rome.



519 - 1126

Intermediate dates are dates of succession to the throne



4 Offa and a Golden Age of Anglo Saxon England

Offa is a lost and forgotten English hero, who presided over a golden age of Anglo Saxon England. The History of England podcast covers the rise of Mercian supremacy, culminating in the reign of Offa.

Penda, the last pagan warrior king (died 655)

Penda of Mercia resisted the spread of Christianity, and fought to establish the supremacy of the Mercian kingdom. To an extent he succeeded in the second, defeating the Northumbrians and Wessex. His eventual defeat at Winwaed did not undermine his real achievement - which was to draw together all the peoples of the midlands into one Mercian kingdom. It laid the foundation for its later supremacy.

Wulfhere (K. Mercia 655-675), Aethelred (K. Mercia 675 - 704), and Aethelbald (K. Mercia 716-757)

Penda's sons Wulfhere and Aethelred extended Mercia's control over the Anglo Saxon nations, defeating Northumbria and Kent. By the time we get to Aethelbald, Mercia is therefore the leading power in England, capable, for example of making sure that his favourite candidate, Cyneheard, became king of Wessex. Cyneheard's reign was almost as long as Aethelbald's and is marked by the first surviving example of Old English narrative prose in the description of his death. Aethelbald lived life in the fast lane, to the disgust of the church, but it caught up with him when in 757 he was murdered by his own bodyguard.

Offa of Mercia (K. Mercia, 757 - 796)

Offa had to fight for his throne, but within a year had seen off his rival Boernred. Offa's long reign is a golden age of Anglo Saxon England. The 8th century saw the flowering of English writing, and a cultural vitality that was the equal of anything in Europe. Offa established hegemony over all of the Anglo Saxon kingdoms south of the Humber. He was a man who could speak to Charlemagne as an equal, and did so.

Like all Anglo Saxon Kings, Offa was deeply involved in the affairs of the Church, and briefly established an Archbishopric at Lichfield to rival Canterbury. He ran an organised and efficient state, able to build his 80 mile dyke along the border with Wales. He even at one stage styles himself *Rex Anglorum*; but generally referred to himself as King of the Mercians. But it was an early signal of the ambition to create a united English state.

Offa died before the great challenge of the Viking Age. But the earliest signs of trouble were there. Below is the 789 entry in the Anglo Saxon Chronicle:

‘ . . . came the first three ships of the northmen from Horthaland. The Reeve rode there, and meant to force them to the King's dwelling, because he did not know what they were; and then he was killed. Those were the first ships of the Danish to seek out the lands of the English. ’



5a The Heptarchy: Anglo Saxon England to 800: A supplementary episode

A brief summary of the history of the other English nations, from the 5th century to 800.



Egbert finally gets to be king of Wessex in 802. By the end of his reign, Wessex is the most powerful English nation. Is this, for the first time, a united England? The History of England podcast looks at how Wessex took over from Mercia to become the leading kingdom of England.

Egbert had to fight for his throne - and at first was beaten to the punch by Beohtric, who had Mercian support from Coenwulf, Offa's successor. It's very clear throughout the first Anglo Saxon centuries that there is no tradition of primogeniture - i.e. the pass of rule to the eldest son. Instead, it chose the best Atheling (member of the royal house) for the job.

But the years Egbert spent at Charlemagne's court probably did him good - and also probably gave him the support of Europe's most powerful leader. In 802 Egbert returned when Beohtric died and claimed his throne - and beat off an invasion from Mercia at the same time.

In Mercia, Coenwulf was having his own problem's maintaining Offa's empire, and this left Egbert free to extend Wessex still further into Dumonia. In 838, Wessex probably finally took over Cornwall - though that's a matter of some debate.

For 20+ years Egbert ruled with almost no comment from the Anglo Saxon Chronicle - no indication that here was a man who would transform the political map of England. And indeed the crisis was probably precipitated by Mercia, not Egbert, when in 825 they invaded Wessex, while Egbert struggled with his own problems in the South West.

The battle of Ellendun was a massive defeat for Mercia from which they never fully recovered. After his victory, Egbert went on the offensive, and established a hegemony over all the kingdoms of the southern English. And the submission of the Northumbrians at Dore in 829 gave him a (tenuous) claim to be the first king of all the English.

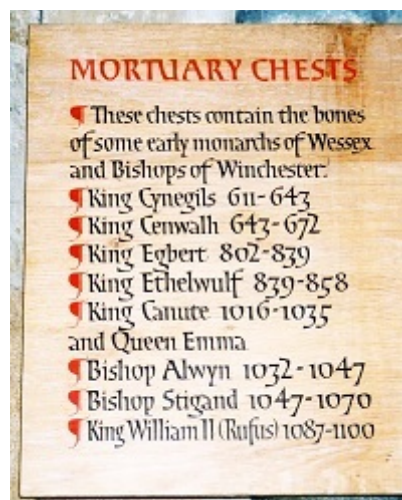
But Mercia soon established their independence, though not their former dominance.

Aethelwulf (king of Wessex 839-856)

Egbert's son was an intensely religious man. He may well have been a reluctant successor to his father, and later in his reign he took time off to visit reign - and came back to find that his son, Aethelbald, had tried to take over his kingdom. A rather remarkable accommodation was reached that allowed them both to stay in power.

Also during his time the intensity of Viking raid increased - and despite his reputation as a religious rather than warlike man, Aethelwulf won a big victory at Acleah Heath.

Aethelwulf's reign came right on the edge of the Viking Great Heathen Army. And at the end of his reign the writing was on the wall when the Vikings occupied the Isle of Sheppey - but that challenge was to belong to his 5 sons.





The Tomb of Aethelwulf

6 Pirates from the North - The Vikings

This week's instalment in the History of England is about the Pirates of the north that changed the course of England's history - the Vikings.

Who were the Vikings?

First of all, the word Viking is probably more something you do than something you are.

To go viking was to go raiding or travelling. The Scandinavians who caused Europe so much trouble were also not just one group - and indeed they spent plenty of time beating each other up, as well as the English, Irish and French.

This handy map shows that the Scandinavians went different places, though it doesn't show the full story. Actually, the Swedes mainly concentrated on Russia and the east. The Norwegians mainly invaded Ireland - and it was the Danes that caused England all the trouble. The Danes and Norwegians also ravaged northern France, including besieging Paris. In 911, a viking called Rollo was granted Normandy by the French King, in a last desperate attempt to find an answer to the terrible raids and destruction.

Why did they come?

The Danes may have gone raiding for a number of reasons - though we don't really know. It could be because they wanted land, and were suffering from overpopulation; they may have been looking for revenge for Charlemagne's bloody attempts to impose Christianity on them; or maybe they just found raiding an easier way to make a buck than farming. Or maybe the death of the strong Danish King Horik I in 854 removed the only central authority that could prevent the departures. Whatever the reason, they kept coming.

The first Danish raids

The first recorded raid was **789**, entered in the Anglo saxon Chronicle: . . . *came the first three ships of the Northmen from Horthaland. The reeve rode there, and meant to force them to the King's dwelling because he did not know what they were; and then he was killed.*

Then in 793 they ravaged Lindisfarne, and raids continued in a sporadic manner until the 840's, gradually increasing in severity. The Kings of Wessex Aethelwulf and Aethelbald fought them, and sometimes won. But the raids, though devastating, did not basically stop the normal operation of the kingdom. And then in 855 the Great Heathen Army came to stay and everything changed.

The Great Heathen Army

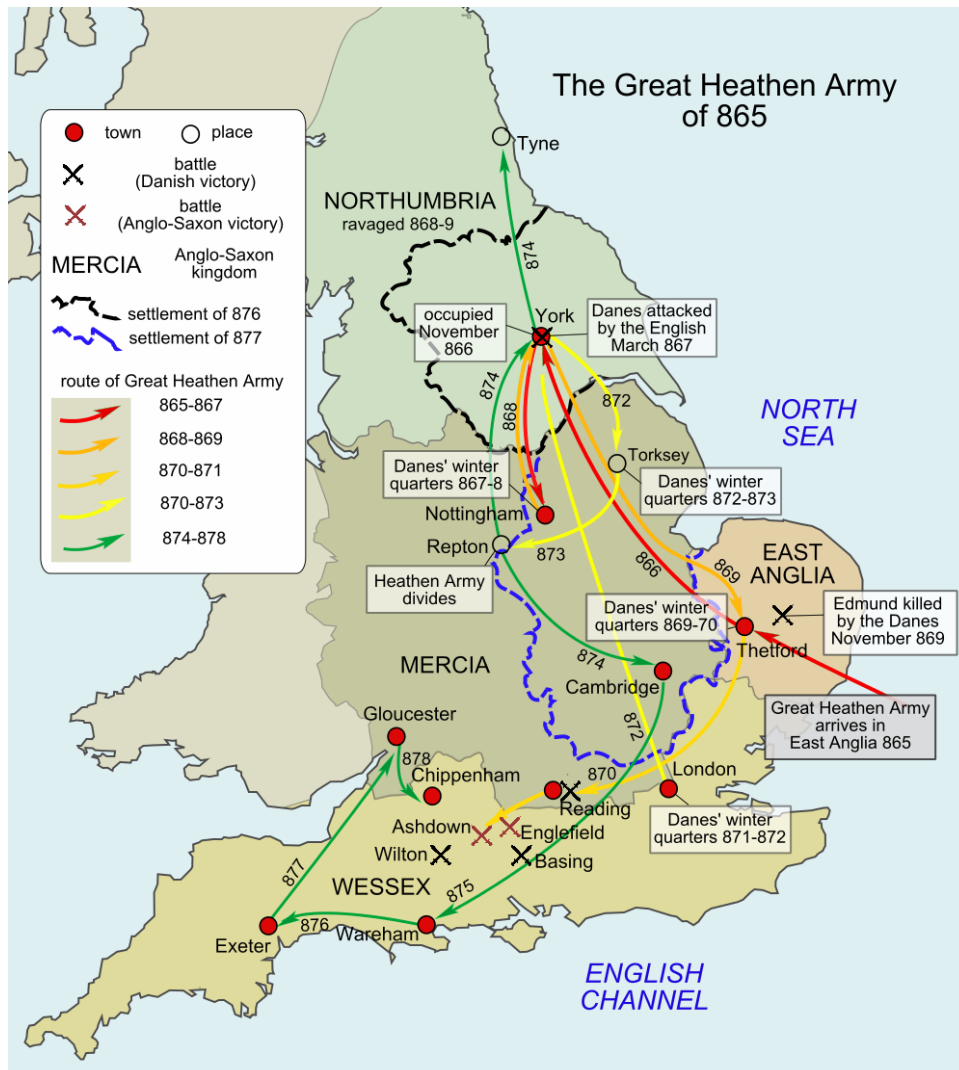
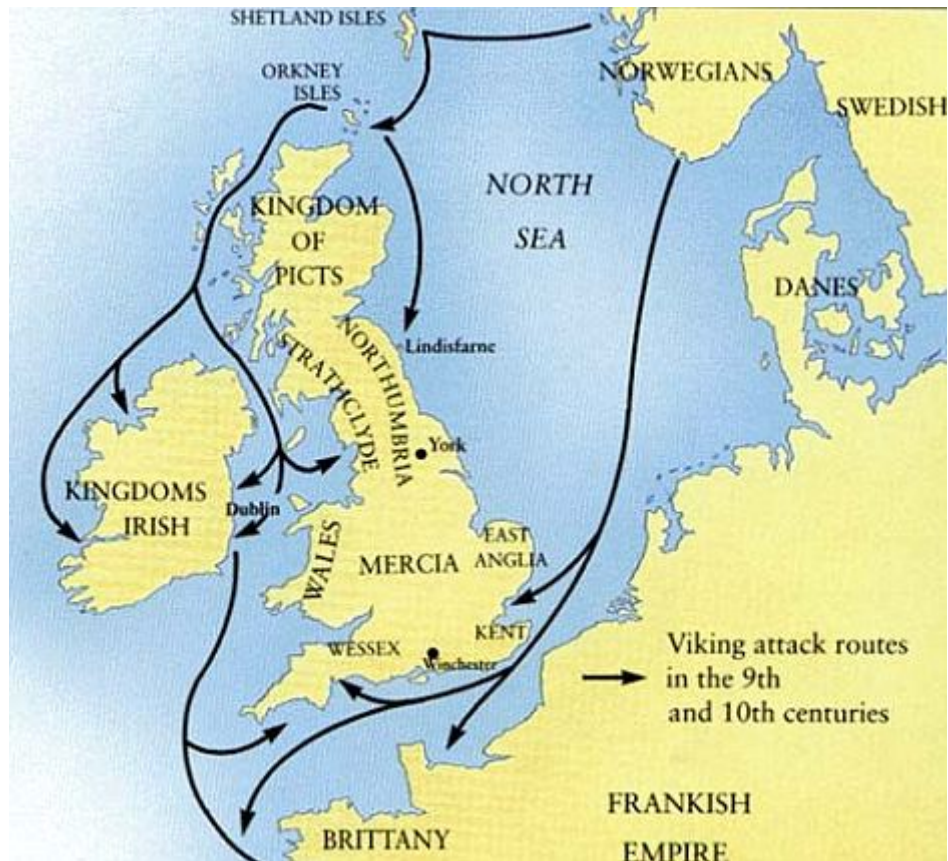
In 866 the sons of Ragnar Lothbrok took York and Northumbria. In 869, they did the same in East Anglia, and martyred its king, Edmund. In 870, it was quite clear that it was time for Wessex and Mercia to fall.

The Anglo Saxon Chronicle

A.D. 843 . *This year King Ethelwulf fought at Charmouth with thirty-five ship's-crews, and the Danes remained masters of the place.*

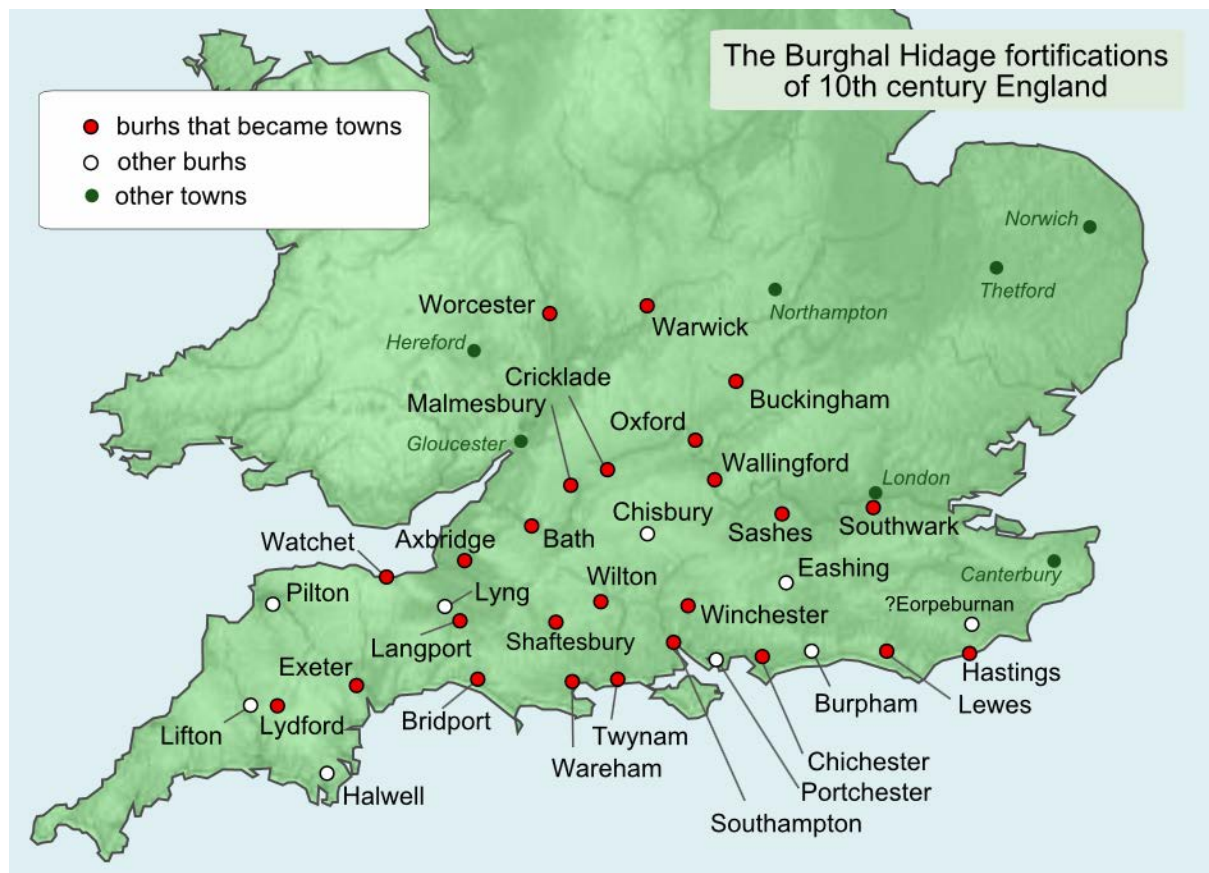
A.D. 845 . *This year Alderman Eanwulf, with the men of Somersetshire, ...fought at the mouth of the Parret with the Danish army; and there, after making a great slaughter, obtained the victory.*

A.D. 854 . *This year the heathen men (34) for the first time remained over winter in the Isle of Shepey.*



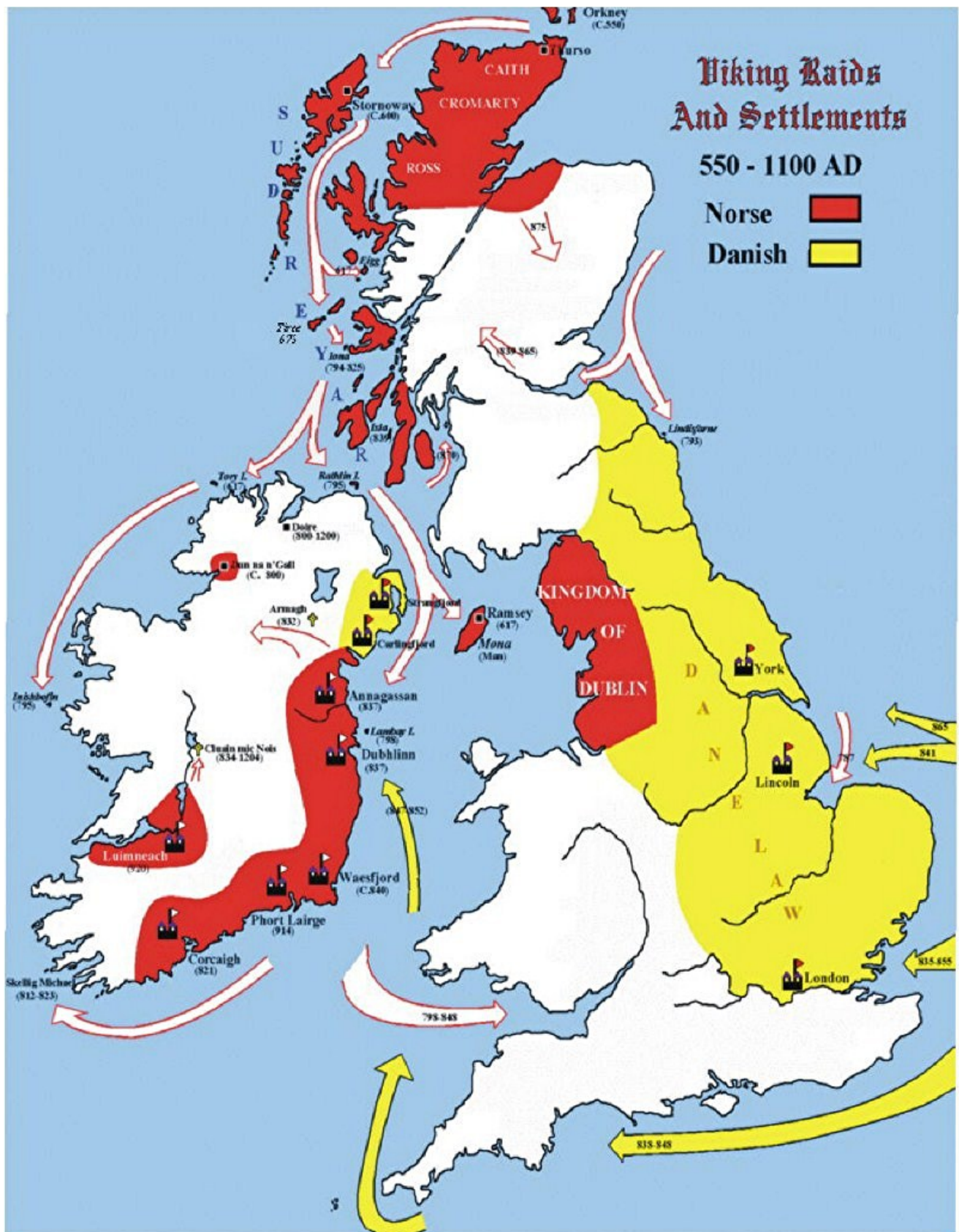
8 Reconstruction and defence

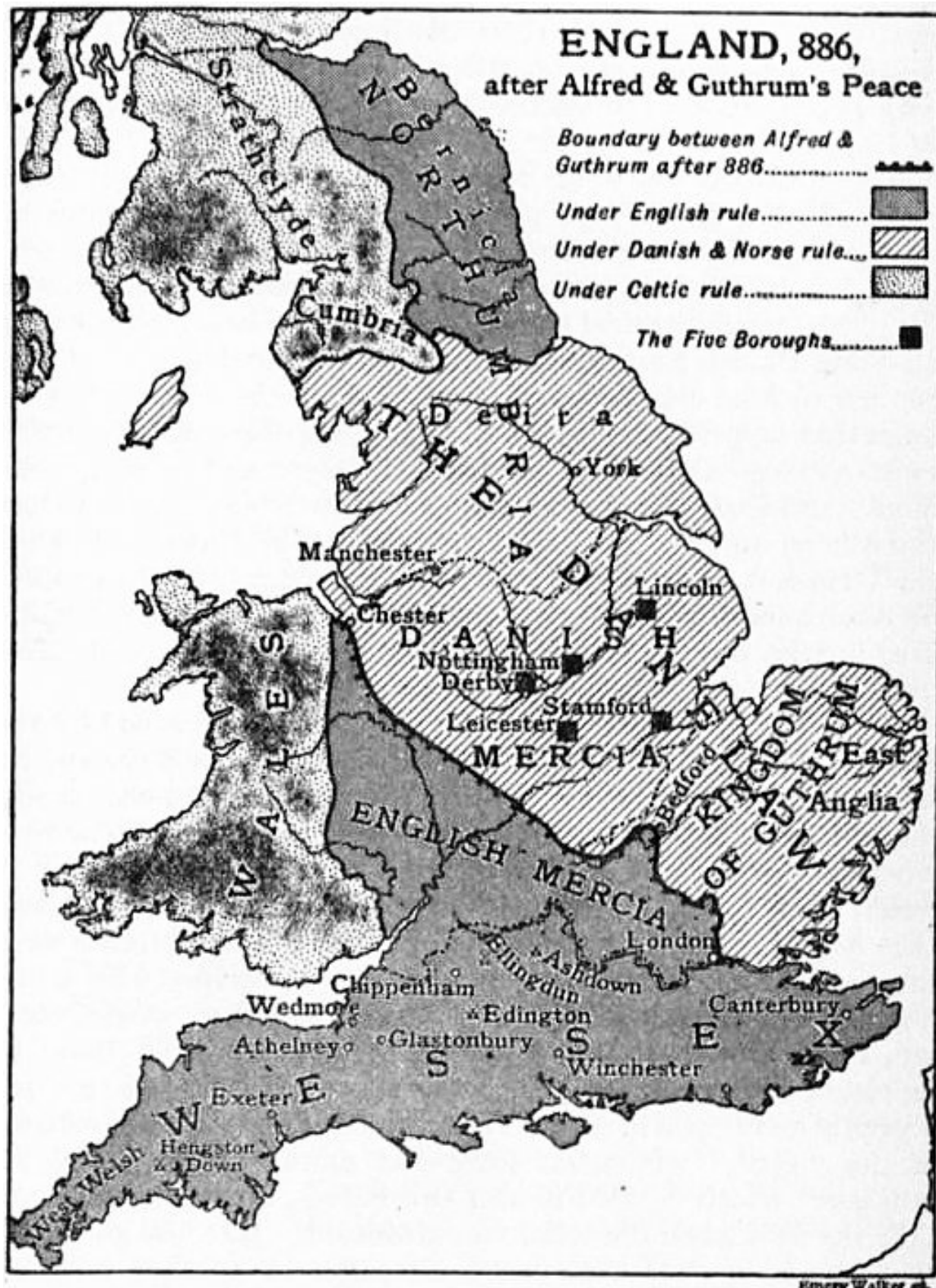
Alfred's victory in 878 bought Wessex and Mercia crucial 14 years to rebuild and prepare for the next Danish onslaught. Alfred's reforms covered all aspects of Anglo Saxon life - the military, learning, religion, and the economy.

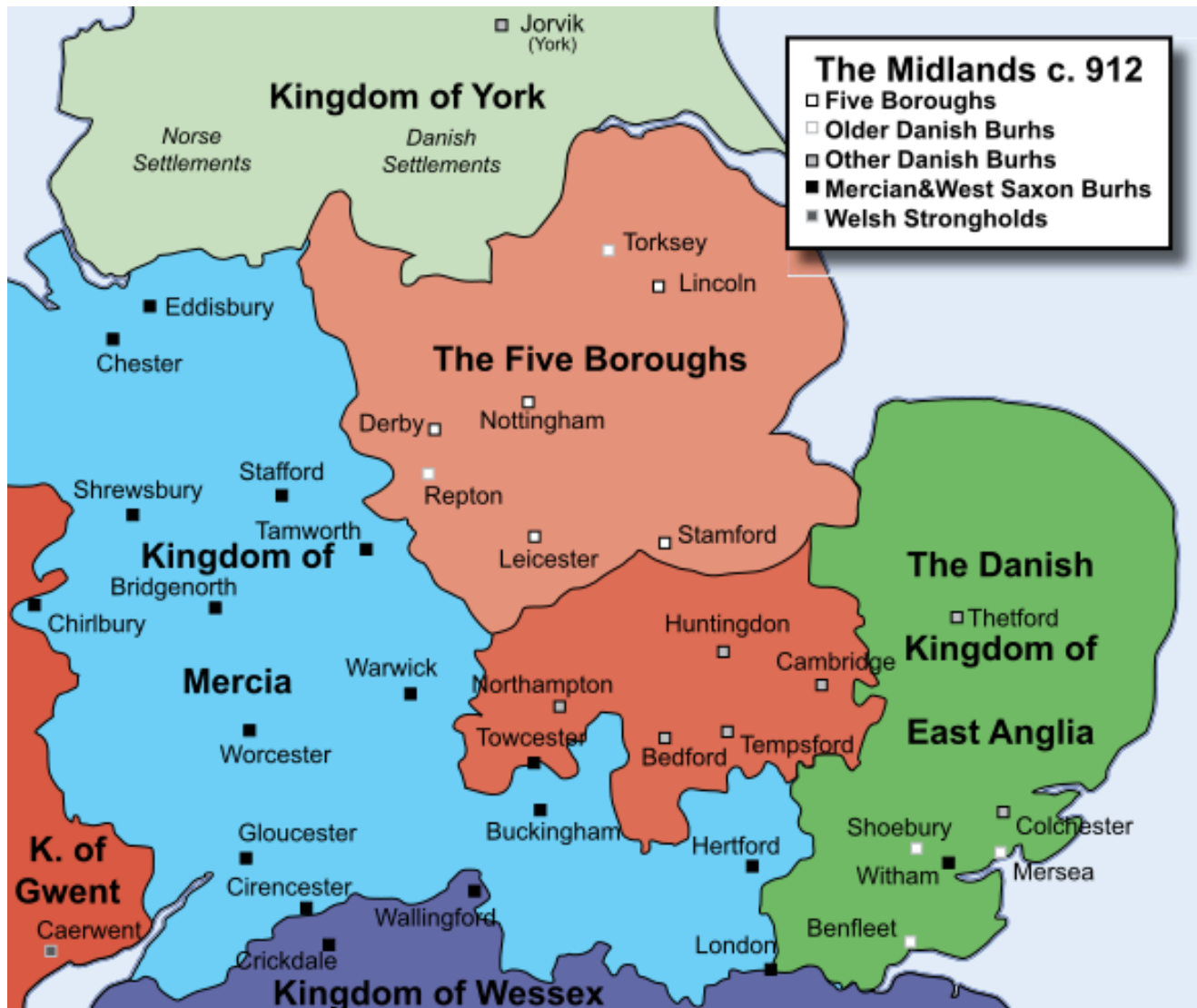


Burgh	Garrison
Lyng	100
Lydford	140
Southampton	150
Halwell	300
Eorpeburnan	324
Pilton	360
Axbridge	400
Twynam (Christchurch, Dorset)	470
Hastings	500
Portchester	500
Watchet	513
Langport	600
Eashing	600
Chisbury	700
Shaftesbury	700
Burpham	720
Exeter	734
Bridport	760
Bath	1000
Sashes	1000
Malmesbury	1200
Worcester	1200
9 Unshakable Pillar of the Western peoples	

One more Danish Army attacked Wessex, in the dying years of the 9th Century. They faced a very different Wessex and Mercia, and a war leader well prepared and at the height of his powers.



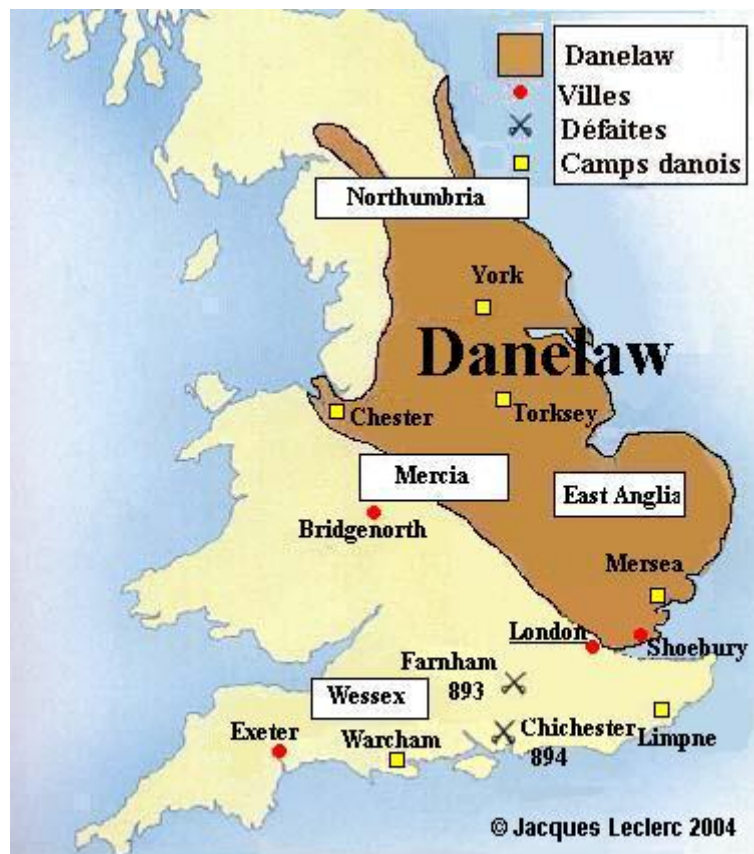




The Bradbury Rings

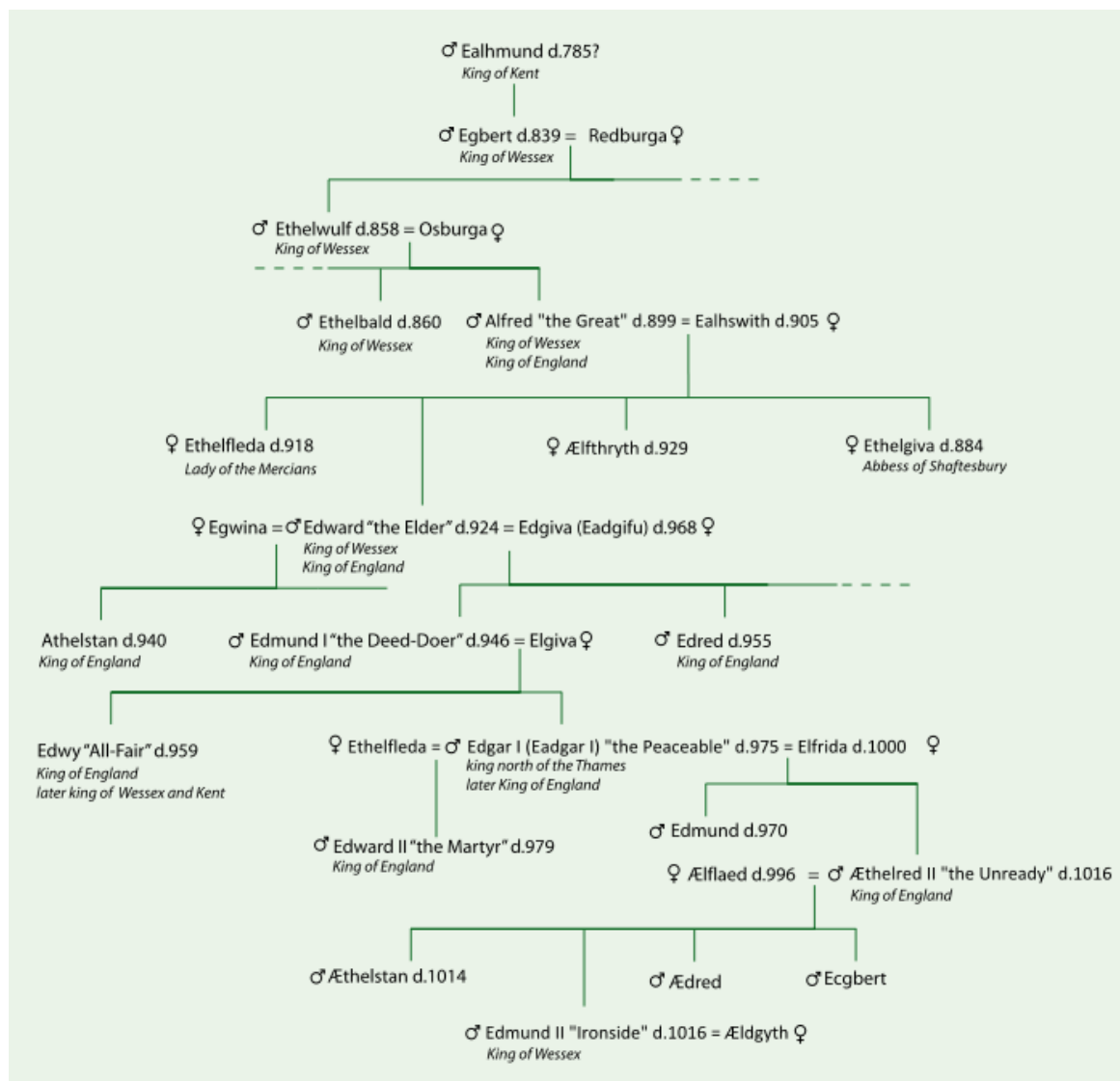
11 His Years though few were full of Glory

Athelstan can reasonably claim to be the first king of England. And he seems like a nice guy as well.



12 The last King in Jorvik

Edmund the Magnificent and Eadred finally defeat Eric Bloodaxe, the last king of Jorvik. But there are some social clouds on the horizon in the History of England.



13 Another and last Golden Age

Edgar the Peaceable's reign was a golden age of peace, prosperity and monastic reform. Unfortunately, once he'd gone his wife stuck a knife into her stepson, and the trouble starts over. But his reign should be remembered as the apogee of the Anglo Saxon state.

Edgar's is the first recorded Coronation oath, and still remains the basis for the coronation oath today.

The Coronation Oath of Edgar the Peaceable, 973

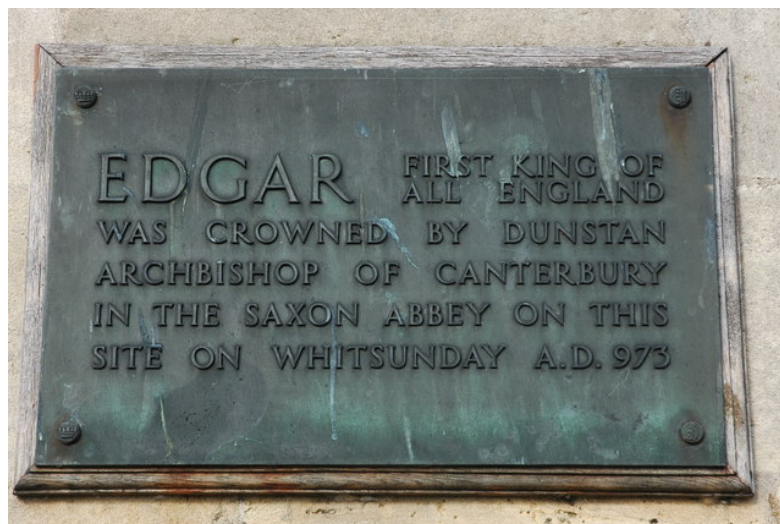
This record has been copied letter by letter from that which Archbishop Dunstan gave to our lord at Kingston on the day that he was consecrated king, forbidding him to give any pledge except this one which he laid upon Christ's altar as the bishop told him:

"In the name of the Holy Trinity, I promise three things to the Christian people subject to me:

Firstly that God's church and all the Christian people of my dominions will be held in true peace.

Secondly I will forbid robbery and all unlawful deeds by all ranks of men.

Thirdly I promise and command justice and mercy in all judgements, in order that the gracious and merciful lord, who liveth and reigneth, may thereby forgive us all through his everlasting mercy."



14 Aethelred the Unready and the Rising Tide

Aethelred's mother gets her son onto the throne at last. But it's not long before the disadvantages of kingship become clear, as the Danes begin to return with increasing force. Aethelred turned 18 in 983, and by 984 has sent his mother away and reigns with his own men. But with three years of raids, 997-999 begins to demonstrate the weakness of the English response. And by 1002, England face a national opponent as Svein Forkbeard joins the party.



15 Aethelred, Svein Forkbeard and the Years of Misery

The Danish threat is notched up a few levels, and Aethelred the Unready and the English state is brought to its knees. The Vikings are too fast, skilful and mobile, and are much better led.

The years between 1002 and 1014 were a relentless and at times monotonous series of English defeats and Danish triumph.

Svein Forkbeard was to prove himself a superb war leader, and more than capable of dealing with anything Aethelred could throw against him. In 1003, he descended on the South West, captured and sacked Exeter, and saw off the army of the Ealdorman Aelfric.

In 1004 it was East Anglia, and they sacked Norwich. But then, for the first and only time until Edmund Ironside, the Vikings met more than they could handle. The English hero was a man called Ulfkell, and for once the Vikings had to run for home.

1006 was the worst yet – the Danes wandered all over Wessex, marching boldly past the English capital on Winchester goading the English with their impotence. So in 1007, Aethelred and his court come up with an innovative strategy – they pay the Danes off with a massive tribute of £36,000.

This gave Aethelred some respite – during which we see the arrival of the arch English traitor, Edric 'the Grasper' Streona. But Edric was basically loyal to Aethelred, and works with him to create a new fleet, ready for the next invasion in 1009. But chaos again ensues. The fleet fought amongst itself, part of it instead raided the English coast – and when the Danes arrive it is nowhere to be seen.

This time, Svein came for conquest. In 1010 he took England's spiritual centre, Canterbury, and the Archbishop was killed – beaten to death by cow bones. This time, even Ulfkell was defeated. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle summed it up:

'When the force was in the east the troops were kept west, and when they were in the south then our troops were in the North. Then the counsellors were all summoned and it was discussed how this land should be defended; but whatever was counselled then it did not last longer than a month. There was no head man who would gather the troops, but each fled as best he might; furthermore no shire would help the other next to it.'

By 1013, Svein controlled all of England except London, and was acclaimed King everywhere with that one exception. Aethelred fled to Richard of Normandy. The game was up.

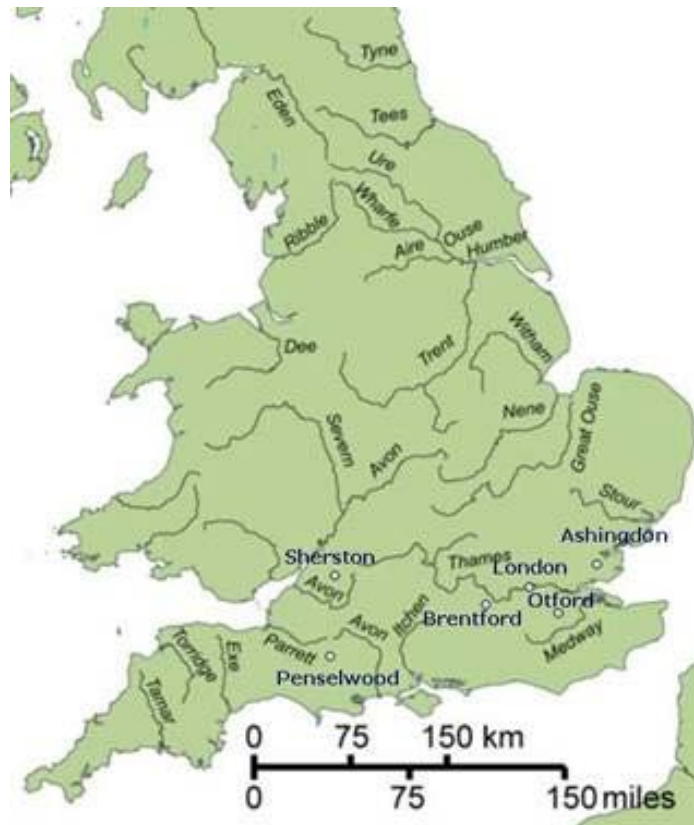
But Svein's only official act as King was to raise a tax – and then he unexpectedly died (everyone who had paid the tax got their money back, by the way). The net result would be 2 more years of war before his son finished what he had started.

Aethelred has had some rehabilitation over the years; he maintained a very efficient administration, we see the start of a modern chancery, he maintained coinage and issued law codes. But he was ultimately a dreadful failure. He was incapable of creating a coherent response to the invasions, was capricious and untrustworthy with his leading men, and hired the wrong men too often.



16 Edmund Ironside and Cnut

In 1012, Aethelred looked down and out. But Svein died, and Edmund Ironside appeared on the scene. Suddenly, Aethelred was a real king and all action, and Cnut was forced to flee. But he came back, and 1016 saw one of the great confrontations of English History, and a great 'what-might-have-been' man in Edmund Ironside, before he got an arrow up his backside.



Penselwood

17 Cnut the Conqueror

Cnut was pretty much the complete king, conqueror of the English, ruler of a Scandinavian empire that spanned 4 countries and a man who knew how to win the peace as well as the war. The History of England podcast this week looks at his reign.

Cnut was probably born around 990, and by 1016 had become the ruler of England. He was to rule for the next 19 years, and in the main his years were so full of boring peace, prosperity and lack of discord that the chroniclers could find little to say about his rule.

Cnut's marriage to Aethelred the Unready's widow, Emma of Normandy, was not only an astute political move but also turned out to be a good personal choice. Astute politically, because he allied himself with the English Queen and astute personally, because he and Emma shared the same aims and values. Emma was a power at court, and helped Cnut get the English Church on his side.

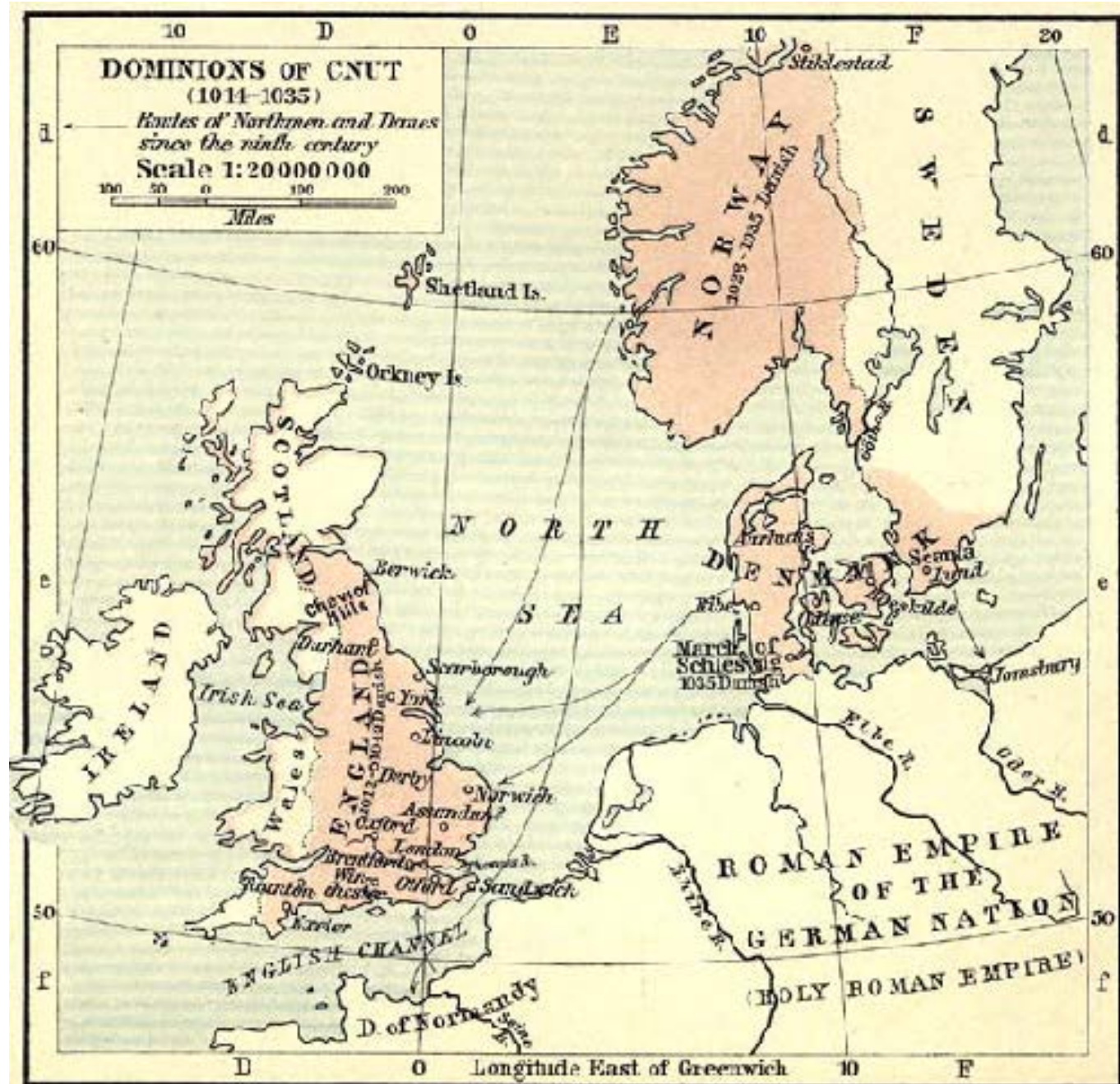
This was important because recognition as a Christian King rather than a pagan warrior was essential a part of Cnut's campaign to be accepted as the legitimate successor to the Anglo Saxon dynasty. He did other things as well. He agreed with the witan to rule by the laws of Edgar. He issued his own law code which very clearly followed his predecessors' codes, and their policy of accepting the different customs of the Danelaw and the rest of England.

But Cnut did have his followers to reward – after all they had fought hard for him and his father for many years. So although we see nothing like the wholesale replacement of English thegns that we will see under William the Conqueror, there is a significant influx. In the early years, Cnut's great men are all Danes – Thorkell the Tall and Eilaf the Viking for example. But over time this changes and Anglo Saxons such as Leofwin and Godwin gain their place in the sun. Cnut also taxed England and maintained a standing army and navy with the proceeds – some indication maybe that he was not secure at least for the first part of this reign.

Cnut spent much of his reign establishing his Scandinavian empire – and for a short period he ruled England, Denmark, Norway and parts of Sweden. But it didn't last long, and was to prove beyond the ability of his sons to maintain.

When he died in 1035, the chroniclers are remarkably deadpan about his passing. But he was a clever and successful man, who gave England a much needed respite after the years of Aethelred's chaos. He died and was buried at Winchester, and should be seen as one of the most successful rulers of England before the conquest.





18 The End of the Danish Dynasty, Edward the Confessor and the Rise of the Great Men

Cnut's dynasty survived him by only 7 years, and in 1042 the house of Cerdic returned in the form of Edward the Confessor. Edward is an enigma - weak man or determined survivor? This week the History of England podcast looks at how he came to the throne and his first 10 years.

This period of history has it all really - the threat of international war, high politics, scheming Queens . . . a real political soup. There are 3 groups with an interest in the English throne:

- Harold - Son of Cnut and Aelgifu of Northampton
- Harthacnut - son of Cnut and Emma of Normandy
- Alfred and Edward - stuck in Normandy, son of Aethelred the Unready

Harold Harefoot (King of England 1036-1040)



Cnut and his wife, Emma of Normandy never intended Harold to come to the throne, since he was Cnut's son by his first wife, Aelgifu of Northampton. They planned for Harthacnut to combine the thrones of England and Denmark. But Harold and Aelgifu had other ideas. While Harthacnut was occupied defending Denmark, Harold and Aelgifu persuaded the English thegns to put Harold on the throne - including the crucial man of power - Godwin. Emma of Normandy was sent packing. Meanwhile Harold starting to get rid of his rivals, having Alfred blinded and killed.

Harthacnut (King of England 1040 - 1042)



Finally Harthcnut was ready in 1040 to fight for his English inheritance - but Harold saved him the trouble by dying. According to the chroniclers, Harthcnut '*never did anything kingly while he ruled*'. But he did bring over Edward (the Confessor) and make him heir.

Edward the Confessor (King of England, 1042-1066)



After Edward took his revenge on his mother, the first 10 years of his reign were dominated by fear of invasion from Scandinavia, and Edward's relationship with Godwin. In 1051, Edward had his chance at last to remove Godwin from the scene - and he took full advantage, though his joy did not last long. Edward can be seen as a weak man, or as a man who carefully planned his vengeance, and was prepared to wait for the right moment.



Edward enjoyed one year of independence in 1051-2, before the return of Godwin forced him into humiliating submission. But after Godwin's death the following year, the rest of his reign was broadly peaceful and prosperous, with the odd local difficulty. The History of England podcast takes us up to 1064.

In 1051, Edward had won because of the support of earls Leofric and Siward. Edward then proceeded to alienate both these men, by employing more French at court, and striking up a friendship with William of Normandy.

Godwin returns - and dies

In 1052 Godwin returned, and in a confrontation in London King Edward is forced into submission. As part of the deal he has to take Godwin back, and get rid of his foreign friends. But within a year Godwin dies - and hands over to his much more affable son, Harold.

The rise of the Godwinssons

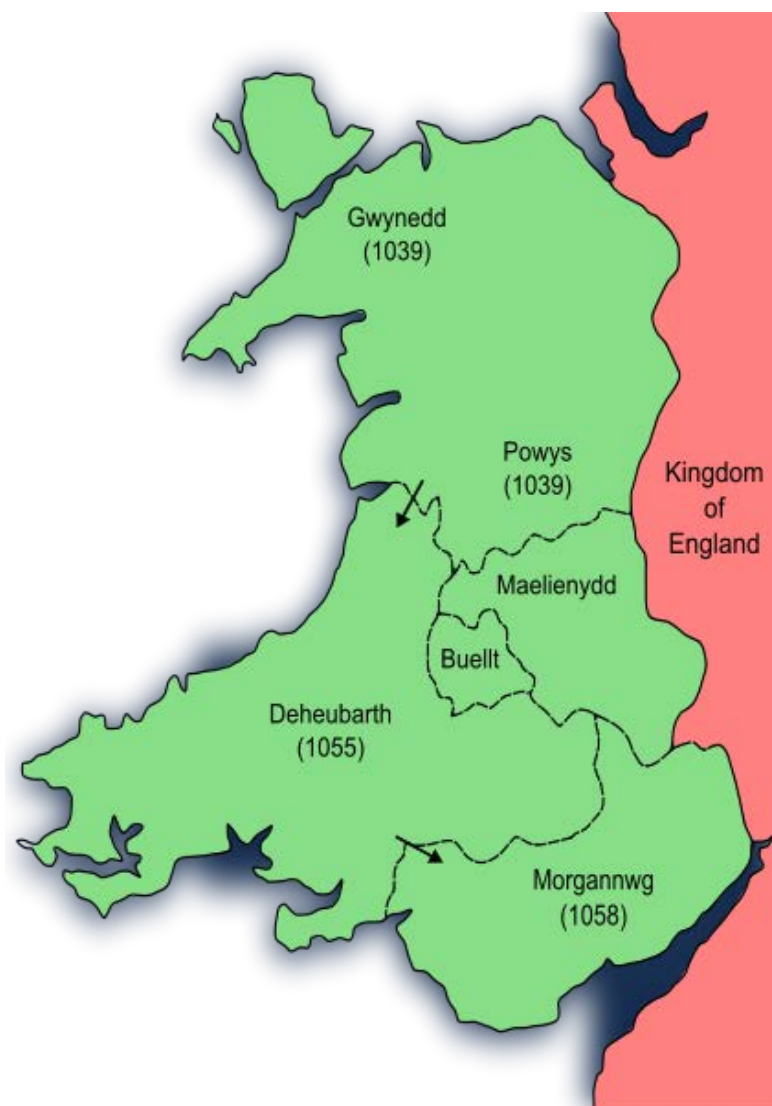
Although the Godwin family are not penalised on the death of Godwin, it's Leofric who gains most as Aelfgar takes over the Earldom of East Anglia as Harold moves to Wessex. But over the next 10 years or so, the Godwinssons are back. The death of Siward and Leofric makes Harold the leading man in England. His brother Tostig is made Earl of Northumbria in Siward's place.

Gruffyd ap Llewellyn and the Welsh wars

Gruffyd ap Llewellyn is the only Welsh leader to unite all the states of Wales. But between 1039 and 1055, that's what he managed to achieve.

He also used the opportunities thrown up by the mysterious relationship between Aelfgar Leofricsson and Edward the Confessor, which meant that Aelfgar was twice thrown out of his earldom. In 1055 and 1056, Gruffyd and Aelfgar sacked Hereford and forced Edward to cede a significant amount of land on the Welsh border.

In 1058 it all flares up again, but in 1063 Harold and Tostig Godwinsson decide that enough is enough, and mount a concerted campaign. The campaign established Harold's reputation as an able military commander, able to make his army move with speed in line with a decisive strategy.



11th Century Wales

London and Westminster Abbey

Meanwhile, Edward the Confessor famously concentrated on building his church. He selected an inhospitable eyelot in the Thames called Thorney, and set about building a church on a massive scale. It gave him the chance to indulge his love of French and Norman culture, and well as demonstrating his piety.

London had become the leading town of Anglo Saxon England, with 10-12,000 inhabitants.



20 Anglo Saxon England in the 11th Century

Anglo Saxon England has been seen by some commentators as a bit of a basket case by 1066 - out of date and ready to be conquered. But actually England had its great strengths that would have been the envy of continental monarch, if they'd spent any time thinking about that small, damp island somewhere off the continental coast. The History of England takes a brief look at the English state in the 11th century.

Law, Government, Agriculture - and Feudalism?

Anglo Saxon England was not so very different from continental Europe, in reality. But there were some differences. Mainly these were around a more communal approach to Government. For example, the position of Earl was a non hereditary job title in England; he was a government official. In Normandy, Earl is a hereditary title. The Army is similar too - the Anglo Saxon Army is still recruited as a public army, rather than raised by the Kings' nobles based on their landholding.

But things had changed since 7th Century. England was moving towards Feudalism; most Thegns held land of their own right, but more held them from a lord in return for military service. And more Coerls had lost their independent land holding than used to be the case, and were therefore less free. A manorial approach to agriculture was much more common - i.e. organised around a village with communal fields, rather than individual farms.

The King's though had mainly retained his rights - although there was a little devolving of his rights of justice to his nobility. And his power had grown - because now he has the added power of the Church and God's approval to add to his mystique. English administration was also relatively advanced, so he could be effective - unless he was himself incompetent of course.

Salisbury

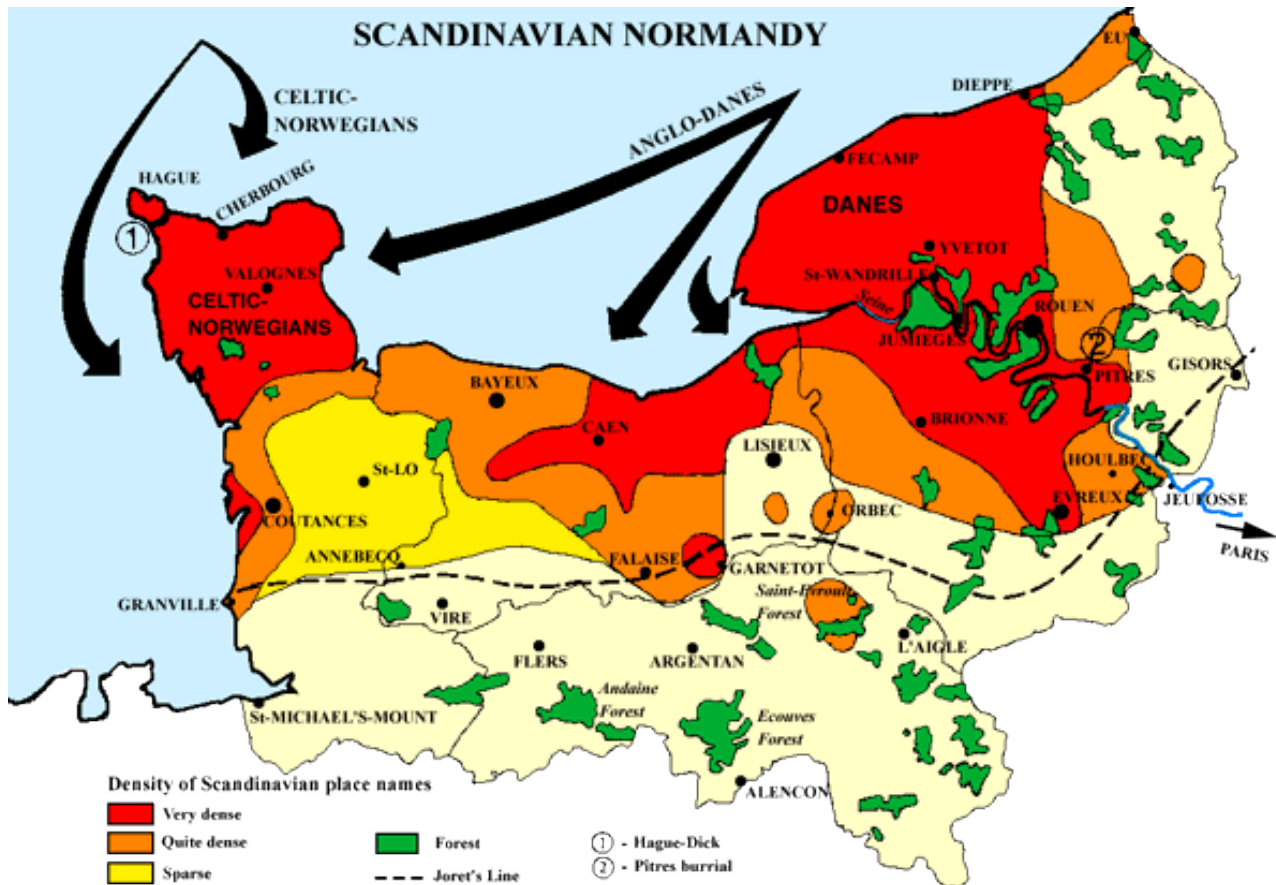
'Fortification at Sorvio (-dunum)', the fortification being the Iron Age hill-fort at Old Sarum. The meaning of the original Celtic name is unknown. The ASC reports a battle in 552 between the Britons and Saxons at Searoburgh, where the first element shows influence of OE searu, 'cunning device, trick, etc'. For a variety of political and environmental reasons, Pope Honorius III authorised the construction of a new cathedral two miles away in 1219. This 'New Sarum' became the modern Salisbu



21 The Normans - a Race Unbridled

The Normans made a massive impact on Europe, not just England. They went on to establish a kingdom in Southern Italy, and lead the Crusades and the resulting state of Outremer. So the History of England looks at where they came from, with a brief history of Normandy before 1066.

Beginnings - Rollo (846-931) and the settlement of Normandy



Charles the Simple, the King of France, managed to defeat Rollo at Chartres, but realised that the Vikings would be back. So he granted Rollo the land of Normandy in 911, on the promise that Rollo would defend the coast and convert to Christianity. And by and large that's what Rollo did.

The settlement of Normandy was not heavy, and was focussed around the coast, as the map shows. Rollo and his successors encouraged the Vikings to go native. Within a hundred years, the Normans were as French as anyone.

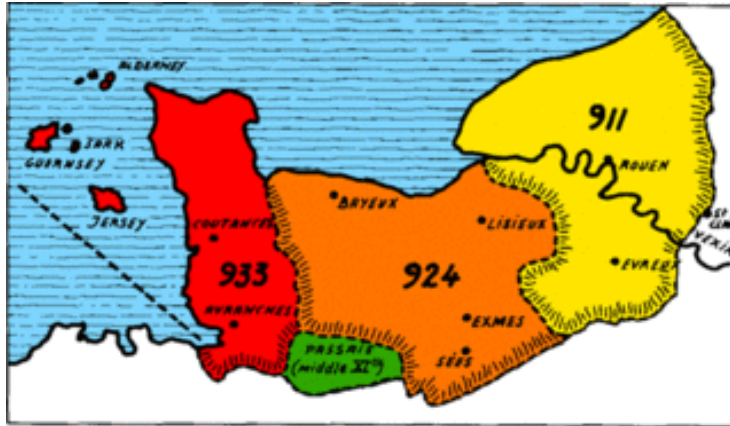
William I Longsword (b. 893, Count of Normandy 931-942)

Rollo's son William had to fight to protect the new kingdom from the Kings of France who regretted their decision, and from jealous neighbours like the Counts of Flanders. In the end they got to him, when Arnulf of Flanders had William assassinated in 942. But by that stage Normandy had grown from the gift of the Contentin and Avranches from Rudolph of France, and by William's marriage.

Richard I 'The Fearless' (b. 933, Duke of Normandy 942-996)

A minority was always a dangerous time, so when William's assassination left 10 year old as his heir there was bound to be trouble. Louis IV of France took advantage, walked in and threw Richard in prison. But 3 years later Richard escaped and enlisted the help of Hugh Capet, the count of Paris and founder of the Capetian dynasty. Hugh helped Richard back to the ducal throne and Richard never looked back. His reign saw the start of the development of the famous Norman heavy cavalry and reform of the church. New religious foundations sprang up and by the time

Richard died, no one would have imagined a world without Normandy - which had not been the case at the start of the reign. Richard was also the first to call himself Duke - and make it stick.



Richard II ('the Good', 996-1026) , Richard III (1026-1027) and Robert the Devil (1027-1035)

Richard II built on the work of his father, fostering the development of the church and maintaining his alliance with the Capetians. And on his death, the succession seemed assured through his son Richard. But Richard died suspiciously quickly. Now early death was not unusual in those days, but tongues will wag and Robert, his brother, was suspected of fratricide. None the less, Robert took over, and set off to have fun and build his wealth by plundering the church. And while he played, his Barons helped themselves too - not just to church lands, but to Ducal powers as well. By the time the Pope stopped Robert's spree with the threat of excommunication, the damage was done, and his son would have to deal with the consequence of very independent nobility. Perhaps by way of contrition, Robert went to the Holy Land on pilgrimage 1034-5, where his ability to throw money around earned him the title of Robert the Magnificent. But he died on the way back.

William the Bastard (Duke, 1035 - 1087)

William was illegitimate and under age when his father died, so he had to contend with a disputed succession. The turning point came in 1047 with the battle of Val es Dune, when Henry of France helped his vassal William defeat his Barons. From then until the death of his rivals, Geoffry of Anjou and a disillusioned Henry of France, William continued to fight for his survival. But from 1060, William could finally go on the offensive, safe at home and ready to take on the invasion of England.



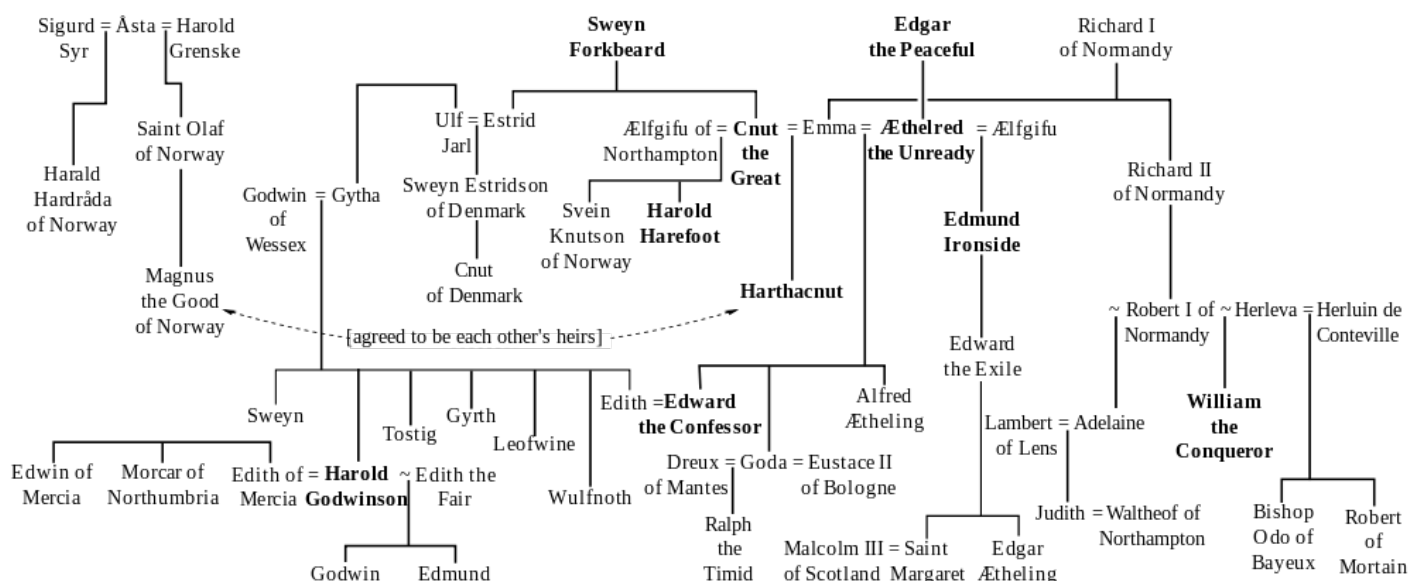
22 1066 and Goodbye to all that!

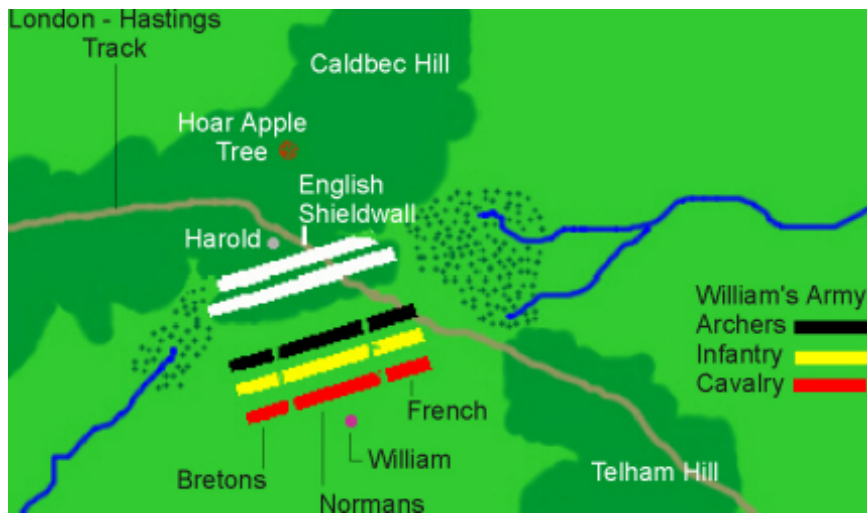
1066 was a year that changed a lot of things - though not as much as you might think. 3 experienced war leaders fought for control of England - and we all know who won, so no need to worry about plot spoilers. The History of England podcast takes us up the coronation of William at Westminster Abbey, Christmas day 1066.

Why William, Harold and Harold claimed the throne

Harold Godwinsson claimed the throne by an ancient elective principle. He was nominated by Edward the Confessor, and appointed king by the Witan. Let's hear it for the power of the people! William the Bastard claimed the throne by hereditary right through his Great Aunt Emma of Normandy. Plus he said that Harold had sworn an oath to help his claim. Harold Hadrada said that Magnus I of Norway and Harthacnut has agreed that whoever died last should get England, back in 1040. But when Harthacnut died first, Edward the Confessor took the throne instead. Here's what happened:

- **6th January:** Harold is hastily crowned King in Westminster Abbey
- **Spring and summer:** Harold gets an army and Navy together and waits for the axe to fall. Nothing happens. William is in Normandy, arguing with his barons, persuading the Pope to help out, building ships and then, once he's done all that waiting for the wind to change so that he can sail over.
- **8th September:** Harold has to disband his army and navy - no more food; everyone needs to go back to the fields. The very same day, Hadrada and Tostig land in Northumbria. Ach, bummer!
- **12th September:** William sails - but gets pushed back into port
- **20th September:** the Battle of Fulford: Earls Edwin and Morcar do their best, but it's not good enough, and they are defeated by Hadrada.
- **?21st - 25th:** Harold absolutely canes it up to the north, about 185 miles in 4 days. The Vikings are luxuriating in their victory, are caught unawares and comprehensively defeated at the Battle of Stamford Bridge. Yay!
- **28th September:** William lands at Pevensey and starts to knock up a castle. Harold absolutely charges down to London with his men, but then, sensibly, waits for a week in London getting himself together, orders the local Fryds to assemble. Then it's off to the seaside.
- **14th October:** The Battle of Hasting. Boo. They think it's all over...
- **October:** The Witan proclaim Edgar the Atheling king.
- **November:** William marches to Wallingford, burning and destroying as he goes. Archbishop Stigand gives in and submits.
- **December:** Edgar and the Anglo Saxon Thegns submit to William the Bastard at Berkhamstead, and now we must start to call him William the Conqueror. William is crowned William I on Christmas Day. ... it is now.



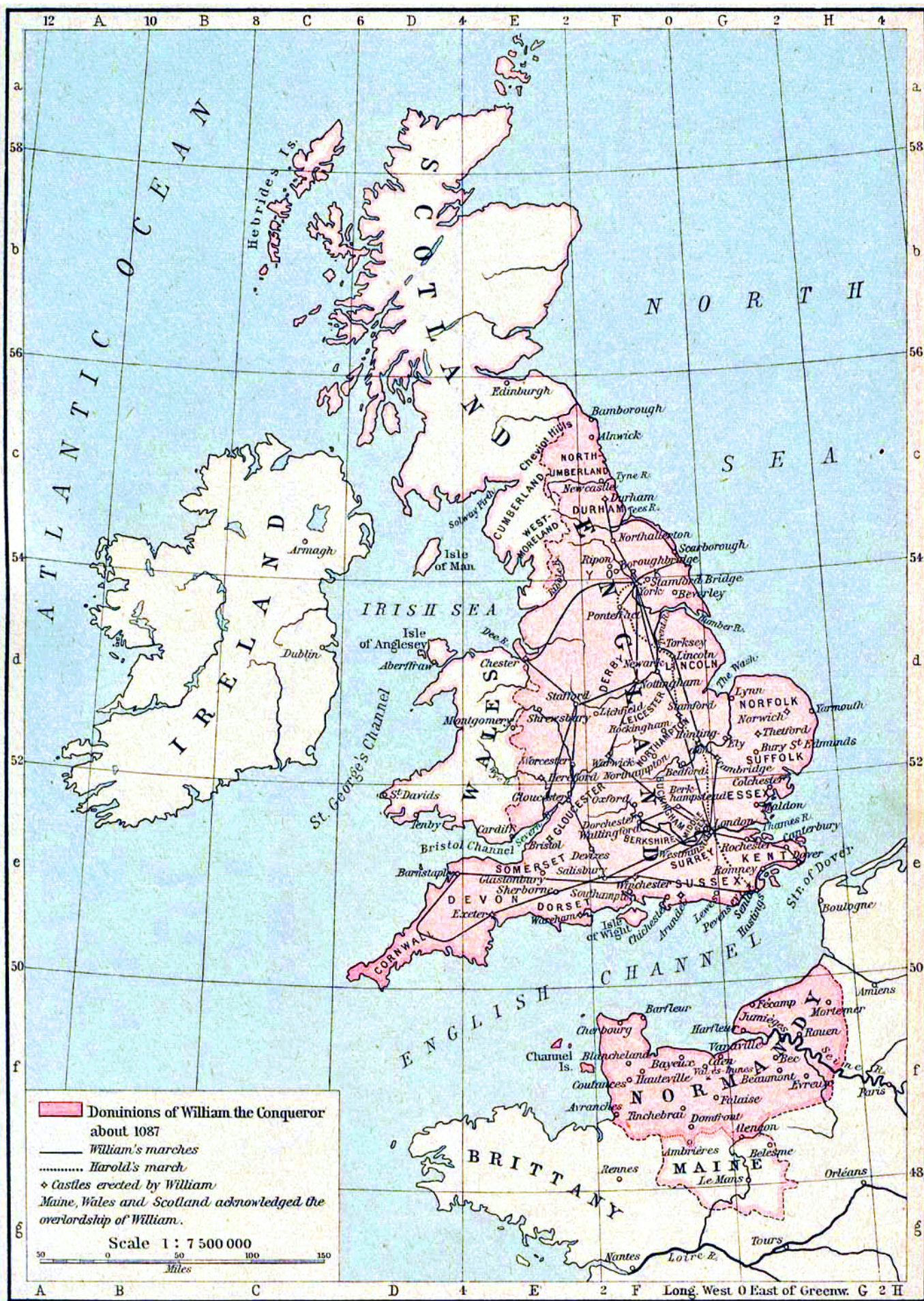


The companions of William the Conqueror

There are 15 people who we are pretty sure were with William on his great adventure. Some of them gained massive rewards for their support. The names we know are:

- Robert de Beaumont
- Eustace, Count of Boulogne
- William, 3rd Count of Évreux
- Geoffrey of Mortagne
- William FitzOsbern
- Aimeri, Viscount of Thouars
- Walter Giffard, Lord of Longueville
- Hugh de Montfort, Lord of Montfort-sur-Risle
- Ralph de Tosny
- Hugh de Montfort
- William de Warenne
- William Malet
- Odo, Bishop of Bayeux
- Turstin FitzRolf
- Engnulf de Laidgle





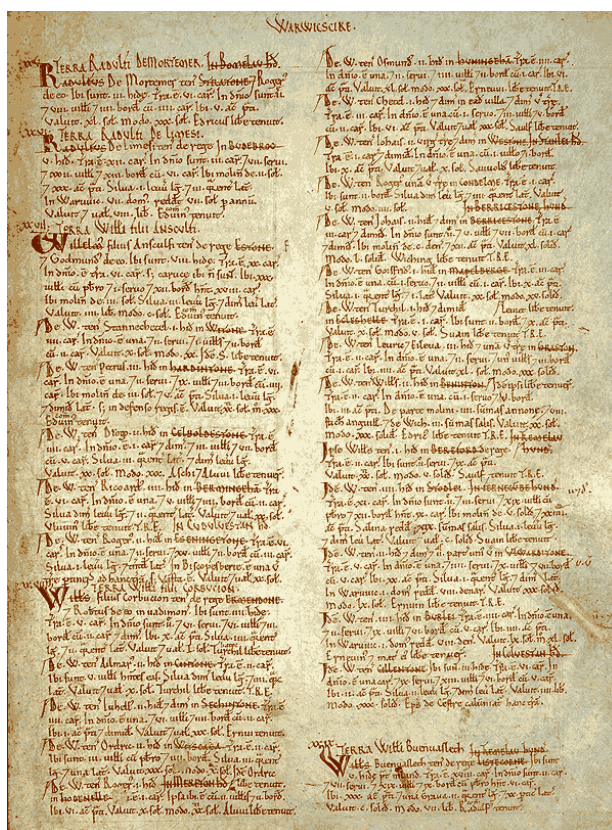
22a Questions about Marriage, Law, Trade and Language

Here's a supplementary episode to answer some questions sent in - they were hard but fun, so keep the questions coming! Sadly, my brother was over so we did it in a different format. It rambles somewhat. But hope it at least answers the questions.

Also let me recommend a book about language - '*The Adventure of English*' by **Melvyn Bragg**. It's a brilliant book, really easy to read.

On a slightly different topic, if you want to understand why the English behave as they do, then there is only one book to read amongst the plethora of books on the subject. It's by **Kate Fox**, and it's called '*Watching the English*'. Suddenly, I understood it all, at last.

English	< Norman	= French
cabbage	< caboche	= chou
candle	< caundèle	= chandelle
castle	< caste(l)	= château
cauldron	< caudron	= chaudron
causeway	< cauchie	= chaussée
catch	< cachi	= chasser
wicket	< viquet	= guichet
plank	< planque	= planche
pocket	< pouquette	= poche
fork	< fouorque	= fourche
garden	< jardin	= jardin
cattle	< *cate(l)	= cheptel (Old French <i>chetel</i>)



Domesday Book

23 William the Conqueror and the subjugation of England

After 1066 William the Conqueror set about ruling his new kingdom. The impression we get is that England rolls over rather easily - where was the heroic struggle we might have expected? This isn't the full story; the Conqueror spent the first years stamping out forest fires all over the place. But there is some truth in it - English resistance lacked the leadership it needed to be effective. We find out what happened in the History of England podcast.

Why did England fall to William so easily?

Well, a few reasons really.

- There were no credible leaders
- The leaders they did have were self serving and not much to write home about
- The Normans built castles - lots of them
- The cream of England's warriors had been decimated by the 3 battles of 1066
- Some of them thought they could work with William. Ha.

The new Aristocracy

By the end of William's reign 54% of the Aristocracy were Norman. In some areas it was almost a total wipe out. There are only 2 Thegns who held significant estates directly from the Conqueror. A white wash!

The Harrying of the North

The consequences of William the Conqueror's rampage lasted for well over 15 years, with the entire vale of York laid waste. I promised some passages from one of the Chroniclers, Roger of Hoveden. By and large, Roger is a dull chap, but the harrying caught his imagination.

'William...swore he would pierce the whole of Northumbria with a single spear... (he) did not cease throughout the whole winter to ravage it, slay the inhabitants and commit many other acts of devastation.

... a famine prevailed to such a degree that...men ate human flesh and that of horses, dogs and cats; some persons went as far as to sell themselves into slavery... some departed from their native country into exile.

It was dreadful to see human corpses rotting in the houses, streets and high roads, and as they reeked with putrefaction, swarming with worms, and sending forth a horrid stench; for...there were not sufficient left to inter them. Between York and Durham there was not one inhabited town; the dens of wild beasts and robbers ...were alone to be seen."

You get the picture. It was a difficult time.





24 Revolt of the Earls

It took William the Conqueror a few more years until he felt safe from the English. But when the Revolt of the Earls collapsed in 1075, the English revolution was over - and we are into the continual cycle of feudal rebellion. This week in the History of England we've also got a bit of church stuff and the pain of trying to rule a cross channel empire.

Hereward the Wake

When I was at school we learnt that Hereward was a folk hero. We heard how he hid in the marshes of the Fens, and how he goaded and outwitted the stupid Normans. Sadly, the Historians then got their hands on it, found out the truth and told us- and it's a bit more prosaic.

However, Hereward did indeed maintain a rebellion in the Fens. His hideout was at Ely, which at the time was an island. You have to work quite hard to make this map work for you, but the darkest brown stuff is water, and Ely is the reddish spot in the middle.

Anyway, Hereward teamed up with Svein Estrithson for a while. Then Earls Edwin and Morcar broke free from William - Edwin was killed by his followers, but Morcar made it to Hereward. This made William look up a noticed. He came with his Army; he built a causeway across the fens to Ely. And Hereward ran for it, and away into legend.



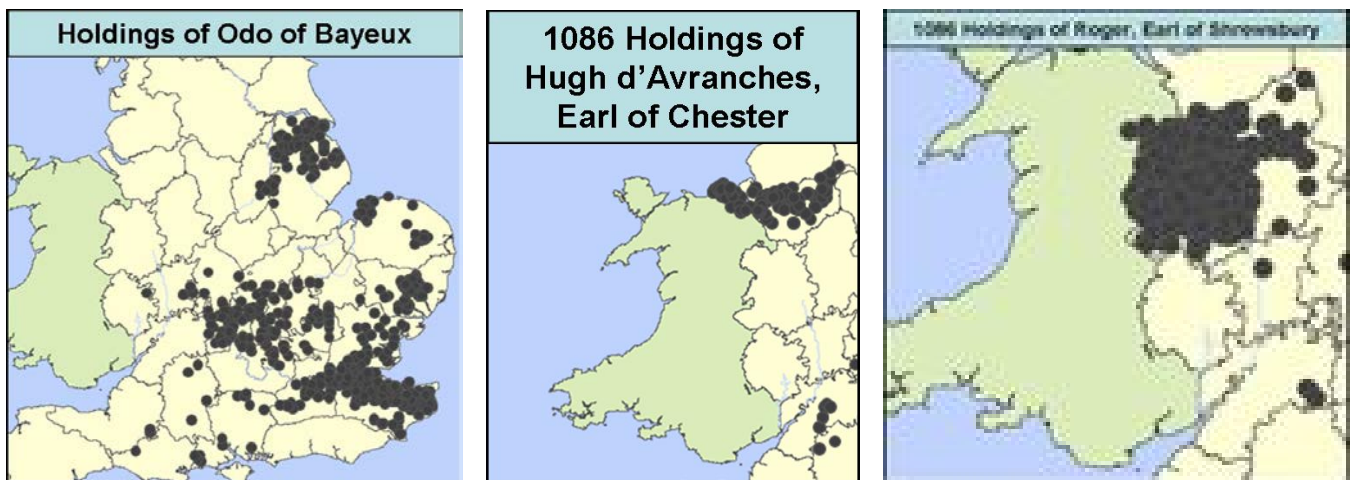
The revolt of the Earls

The Earls concerned are Roger of Montgomery (Marcher lord, Welsh border) and Ralph de Gael, earl of East Anglia. They talked Waltheof, Earl of Northumbria, into joining them - but he then got cold feet, and spilt the beans to William. He would have expected forgiveness - he didn't get any. He was slung into prison and next year had his head cut off. So died the last English Earl.

The revolt fell apart. Ralph de Gael was met and by Odo of Bayeux and he fled, leaving his wife to face the music. They both end up in their Breton lands at Dol, where William tries to capture them, but is fought off. Roger Montgomery is met by Bishop Wulfstan (1008-1095) and Walter de Lacy and he surrendered and was put in prison. So the English have made a choice - they'd rather a Norman king than anarchy.

Lords of the Marches

William normally gave land out in widely distributed holdings, scattered around the country. But along the borders he took a different approach - he created large consolidated land holdings. His aim was to create lords who had the strength and resources both to defend the borders against the Scots and Welsh; and also take the offensive.



Odo's holdings are scattered throughout the Midlands; most of the manors would not adjoin. In Kent, it's slightly different. William saw the route to Normandy as being strategically important. So he gave Odo, as Earl of Kent, consolidated holdings, protecting the route home. The next is the Earl of Chester and then it's Roger of Montgomery. You can see how consolidated their land holdings are.

The strategy works very well in Wales, not quite so well initially in the North. But he does create a group of remarkably powerful lords; he gives all his rights and powers, with the exception of trying men for treason. Effectively these men are mini kings. That will cause some problems for England in the future - but for the moment it's necessary.

24a The Anglo Saxon view of the outside world

The Anglo Saxons seem a very insular bunch - what was their view of the outside world, how much interaction did they have? A good deal more than we might suppose!

The summary is that Anglo Saxon England has a good deal of contact with the western European seaboard. And that it's Kings had relationships as far afield as Rome and the Holy Roman Empire.

But it seems that they had relationships with the Islamic world too. This is a picture of an extraordinary coin - a coin issued by Offa of Mercia very late in the 8th Century for the Pope. It is a copy of an Islamic, Abbasid coin, with the inscription 'there is no god but Allah alone'. Hopefully, the Pope couldn't read Arabic. And of course many English left England in 1066 to serve the Byzantine Emperor in the Varangian guard, to escape the Norman tyranny.

Here also is an 11th century Anglo Saxon map of the world. Louise C of the Historum Forum writes: 'A mappa mundi is a depiction of the world as a place of experiences, of human history, of notions and knowledge. It's more like an encyclopaedia. It's certainly not - and was never intended to be - a chart to be followed by travellers.'



More than likely, a mappa mundi would have been a conversation piece in a rich man's house. A fashionable - and expensive - ornament to prompt after-dinner discussion. For journeys people needed not maps but travel itineraries, and that is what they had.'

Once you get beyond Byzantium it's clear that even traders would have only hearsay to repeat. None the less, it's pretty clear that Anglo Saxon England was a good deal more connected than you might think.

Trade, and trade with the outside world

Trade was based around the local Burghs or Ports; Edward the Elder specifically ordered in his laws that all trade be done there - no doubt so that he could tax it. Trade would not always have been in coin; while English silver coins were relatively high quality, by no means everyone would have had access to coins, so trade in kind was often the way things were done.

And yet there would of course be lots of stuff not available in the neighbourhood, and Merchants took advantage of this. Merchants faced many obstacles; there was no credit - so all stock had to be bought up front. The roads were rubbish, so rivers were preferred where possible. If travelling by road, good protection was a must against the robbers and brigands.

Despite all of this, there is lots of evidence of trade throughout the period. By the 11th Century towns have grown; all numbers are very approximate, but London the biggest probably 10-12,000, York 8,000, Norwich and Lincoln 5,000, Thetford 4,000, Oxford 3,500. Coastal towns with a large amount of external trade - such as Ipswich and Southampton were probably about 1-1,500.

As to what exactly got traded with whom and in what quantity, the evidence is painfully slight. But here are a few things.

External trade

Good old Bede in the 8th Century talks about sending to Gaul for Glassmakers, and the Abbot of Monkwearmouth did the same in 756. There are over 300 glass items in graves from there period, which indicates considerable trade. Most glass came from the Northern Gaul or Rhineland, and there's a grave in Sussex with a vessel from the Eastern Mediterranean.

Swords also sometimes came from the Rhineland - Raedwald's sword at Sutton Hoo, for example. In the same burial, cowry shells, amethyst beads and bronze vessels from Coptic Egypt show similar evidence of widespread trade at this early point.

In the 8th Century, the quality of English coinage indicates strong external trade. Offa has a dispute with Charlemagne, and as a result Charlemagne temporarily banned English merchants from the ports of Northern Gaul, and Offa reciprocated. So clearly there's enough trade to make a ban painful. Later in the correspondence, Offa agreed to ensure that English woollen cloaks traded with France remained the same length - so we are exporting garments, then.

We know that trade with Scandinavia, Frisia and the Rhineland is strong throughout the period, from pottery items found in burials and quernstones. Frisian and Scandinavian traders were probably the biggest carriers of trade, but we do know that there were English carriers too - an 8th century charter exempts the Bishop of Worcester's two ships from duties, for example. And we now that the English had at least some share of trade with the Mediterranean in 1027, Cnut negotiates hard with the Emperor and Pope to get a good deal for English traders.

What did England produce for home use and export?

- England produced Iron for use locally and probably abroad, from mines in the Forest of Dean and Kent.
- Cheese was exported to Flanders
- Pottery, especially in Stamford and Thetford
- Textiles were probably exported - those woollen cloaks, the skills that produced the Bayeux tapestry (made in England).
- Salt making was an important industry around the Wash, the coast of Sussex and in Cheshire
- Lead and silver) was produced in Derbyshire
- Fishing was important for many coastal towns - particularly Dunwich, Southwold and Yarmouth

The oldest and most obvious trade was in Slaves. It's not just the Vikings that raided England for slaves; the Anglo Saxons raided the celtish lands such as Wales and Cornwall and took slaves. Bristol was a centre for slave trading, as it was to be in its later history, sending slaves to Ireland. William of Malmesbury wrote:

'You might well groan to see then long rows of young men and maidens whose beauty and youth might move the pity of the savage, bound together with cords, and brought to market to be sold.'

Slave trading was banned at the Council of Westminster in 1102. But it's clear that for the Anglo Saxons it would have been an important part of their external trade.

The evidence that England was a wealthy trading nation is there in the vast gelds paid to the Danes, and in the continuingly high quality of the English coinage. But it's difficult to see more than glimpses of how that wealth was generated.



25 Death of a Conqueror

The last years of William the Conqueror's reign were mainly the meat and drink of the Norman King - beating off other feudal lords, keeping your nobles down, trying not to let your sons eat you. But plus there was, of course, the super-famous Domesday Book. This week at the History of England podcast we end the reign of the Conqueror.

Family troubles

William had three sons that survived him - Robert, William and Henry. Robert cut up rough - he was bored, and wanted his authority now; he was worried that his Dad preferred William, and might cut him out. In 1079 his rebellions almost led to patricide, but Robert recognised his father at the last moment and drew back. Robert and his father were reconciled, and Robert was again recognised as the Co-Duke of Normandy. But in 1083 Robert took off again, and was not to be reconciled before William's death.

Domesday Book

A lot of ink has been spilt over Domesday Book. So I won't spill a lot. Just to say, that Domesday was probably created because of:

- Money: William wanted to know how much money he could get from taxing his nobles
- War: in 1085, England was threatened with invasion by Cnut of Denmark. William realised he needed to know exactly who owed him men, and how many.
- Landholding: There had been a landholding revolution. Here was a good chance to make sure the King knew who had got what.

Death of a Conqueror

William burst in 1087 while attacking Mantes. He died at Caen, and then he burst again when they tried to squeeze him into his coffin. Before he went he gave Normandy to Robert, England to William Rufus, and £5,000 to Henry to buy himself a place of his own. So what to say about the man who brought my favourite English period to an end? It's impossible not to admire him isn't it? Certainly not a couch potato, anyway. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle again proves it's worth with a very good summary so here are a few snippets:

'The King granted his lands on hard terms . . . the king let it go into the hands of the man who bid the most . . . nor cared how sinfully the reeve got it from poor men. They raised unjust tolls, and many other injustices they did which are hard to recount'

and not just that;

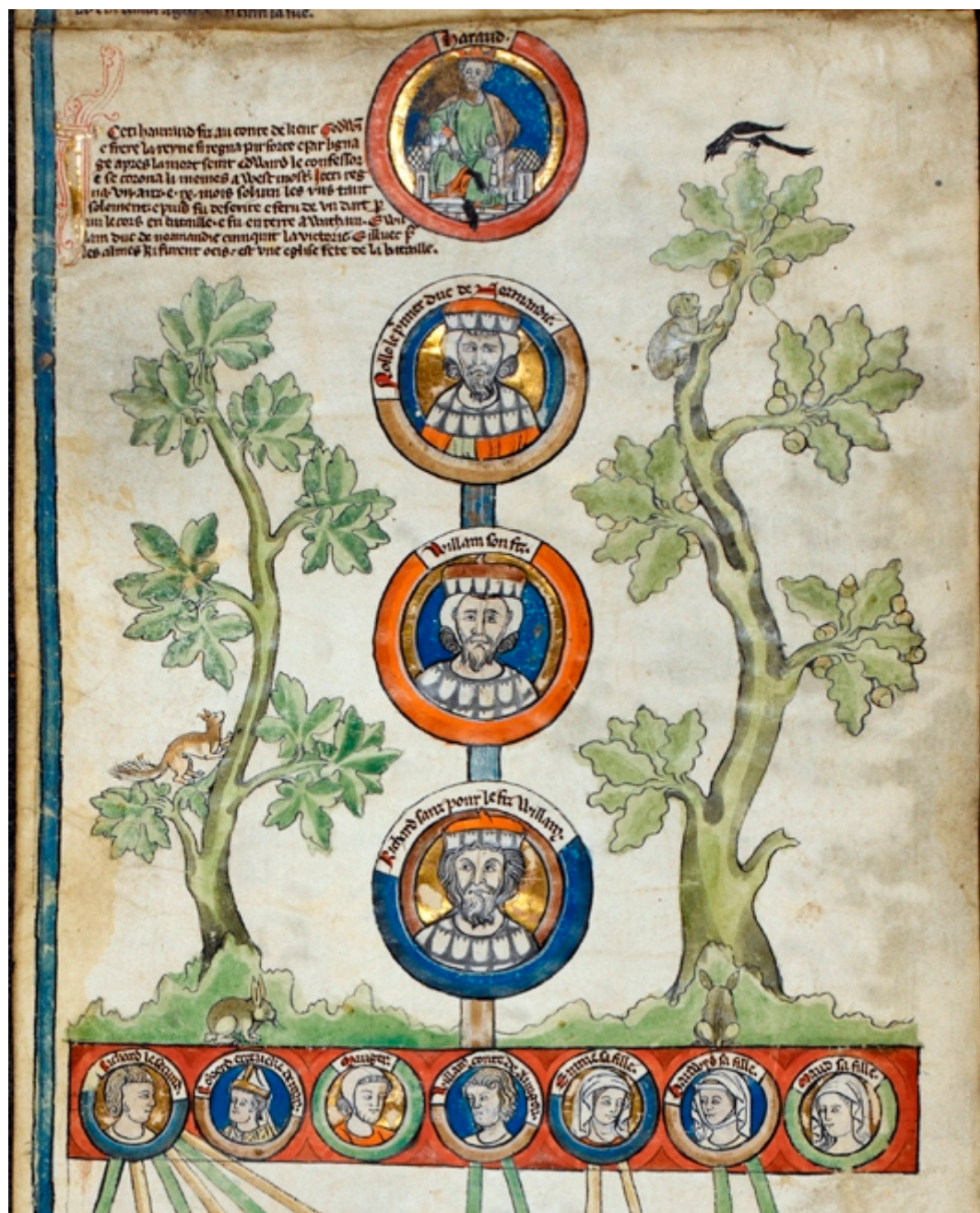
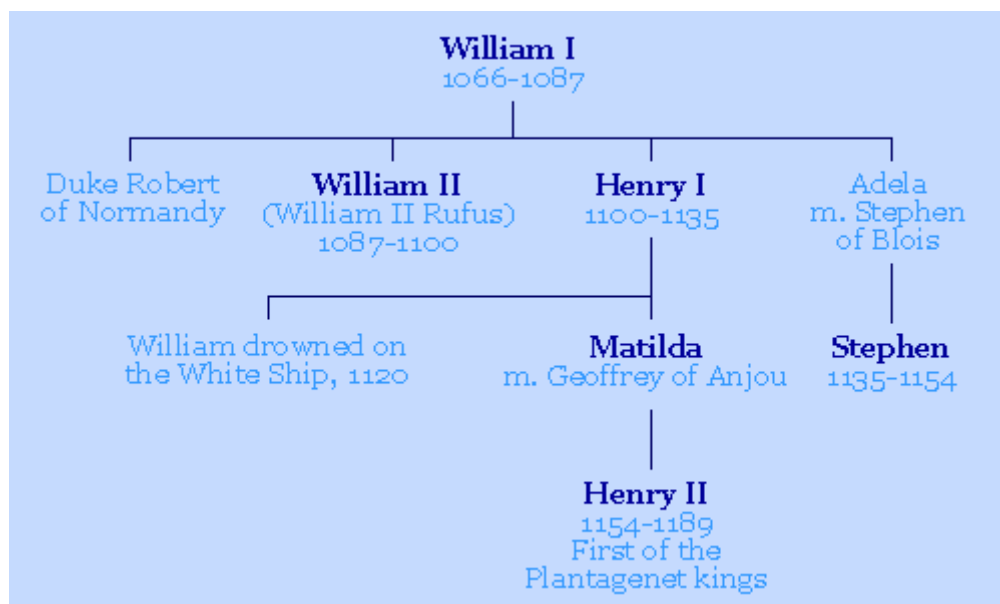
'The king and the head men loved and loved too much the greed for gold and silver and cared not how sinfully it was obtained'.

On the other hand:

'He was mild with good men who loved God and over all measure hard with men who spoke against his will.' ... 'Good peace he made in this land, so that a man of any account might fare over the kingdom with a bosom full of gold unmolested; and no man dared kill another, even if he had done much evil to him.'

Let me leave the last word to my guide and mentor in these years, Frank Barlow. I think he gets it right when he said:

'William never gives the impression of having been born out of the proper time. He was no barbarian leader. Neither was he a statesman. He had learned the art of government in the hardest school, so that a conquered country groaned under his rule but could not withhold a grudging admiration'



26 William Rufus, Normandy and the First Crusade

William Rufus was a flamboyant, red faced, pudgy and irreverent bloke, but none the less his father's favourite son. So Dad tipped him the wink and he left his father's death bed to take the throne of England from his older brother. He spent his reign trying to re-unite England and Normandy again.

William Rufus

William's reign is dominated by 4 themes:

1. William's main aim - get Normandy away from big brother
2. Tax the living daylight out of the English so I can get Normandy back
3. Keep the Scots and Welsh quiet so I can get Normandy back
4. Stop the church from taking away customary royal rights.

This episode we'll talk about the first two. And a bit about the First Crusade, for no good reason.

A brief guide to medieval taxation

Rufus and the first Chief Justiciar of England, Ranulph Flambard, used all the means at their disposal to raise money.

- Raise a geld - the Danes have gone, but that's no reason not to raise a geld or two
- Revenue from the Royal Demesne lands
- Turn the old English dues into cash - raise the Fyrd, then get them to give you money rather than fight
- Feudal dues: Wardships - take under-age orphaned heirs into the Royal care, and make money from their estates. Or sell the wardship to highest bidder.
- Charge your vassals a fee for getting married
- Scutage - get money from your vassals instead of getting them to fight
- Relief - medieval inheritance tax

Norman kings steered a very fine line. Charge too much for all this stuff and you have a baronial revolt on your hands. William got away with it - but was always close to that line.

Getting Normandy back

Rufus first had to fight Robert Curthose off - which he successfully did in 1088. And from then on he was on the offensive. But despite campaigns in 1091 and 1094, he never really had Robert on the run. Until in 1096, Robert heard Pope Urban II's call to the Crusade. William loaned him £10,000, and had control of Normandy until Robert came back. Pretty soon, William had re-asserted Ducal control over the baronage that Robert had lost.

The First Crusade

The First Crusade affected England relatively lightly - though there are records of a fleet of ships that took an active part. But the largest part of the Crusade came from Northern France and Germany.

Alexios Comnenus was in fact probably pretty horrified when 35,000 hairy northerners turned up in Byzantium. And in fact, the Crusades did little for east-west relations. Alexios really fancied a load of gold to pay for mercenaries to regain lands for Byzantium. Instead, he ended up with 4 Frankish kingdoms in the Holy Land, who he understood less than he did the Turks.



The march to the Holy land took the Crusaders first to Nicea, which they regained for the Emperor. At Dorylaeum, the Sultan of Rhum got his taste of western knights, and his arrows simply bounced off their armour. So he stood aside and waved them through.

At Antioch, the Crusaders faced a challenge they looked like losing. Camped in front of walls they couldn't properly blockade, they boiled in the heat, without sufficient food, while a Muslim relief army approached.

But sneakiness won the day, when they bribed a Turkish captain to let them in. They slaughtered the inhabitants, Muslim and Christian alike. Then, inspired by the Holy Lance found within the walls, they put the Muslim army to the sword.

By then many leaders had left - Stephen of Blois for example. Their original army of 35,000 was down to 12-15,000. But on they marched to Jeruslaem. Their chances looked slim. The Turks had denuded the land around of food, and poisoned the wells. Jerusalem was a massive fortress. Another army approached from Egypt. But despite the odds, the desperate Crusader assault worked, and on 13th July 1099 Jerusalem was in their hands. The Crusaders celebrated with another orgy of destruction and murder that was to prevent any chance of working with the local Muslim population. Baldwin was crowned the first King of Jerusalem.

The final stroke was the Battle of Ascalon, where again a Muslim army was defeated, and many Crusaders came on home. Among them was Robert Curthose. Robert had a good crusade, involved in all the major battles, and there was even a rumour that he was offered the crown.

The First Crusade was massively helped by Turkish divisions, and really shouldn't have had much chance of success. It established 4 rather unlikely western kingdoms in the Levant that were to be the focus of 8 more crusades until the final fall of Acre in 1291.

27 Hateful to his People and Odious to God

Rufus fell out big time with Anselm, his Archbishop of Canterbury. Unusually for Medieval Man he was impious and irreverent. Meanwhile, the Welsh struggled for independence against Norman tyranny, and make a better fist of it than the English. This week in the History of England Podcast we get to 1100, the end of William Rufus's reign.

Church and State

"Yesterday I hated him with great hatred, today I hate him with yet greater hatred and he can be certain that tomorrow and thereafter I shall hate him continually with ever fiercer and more bitter hatred"

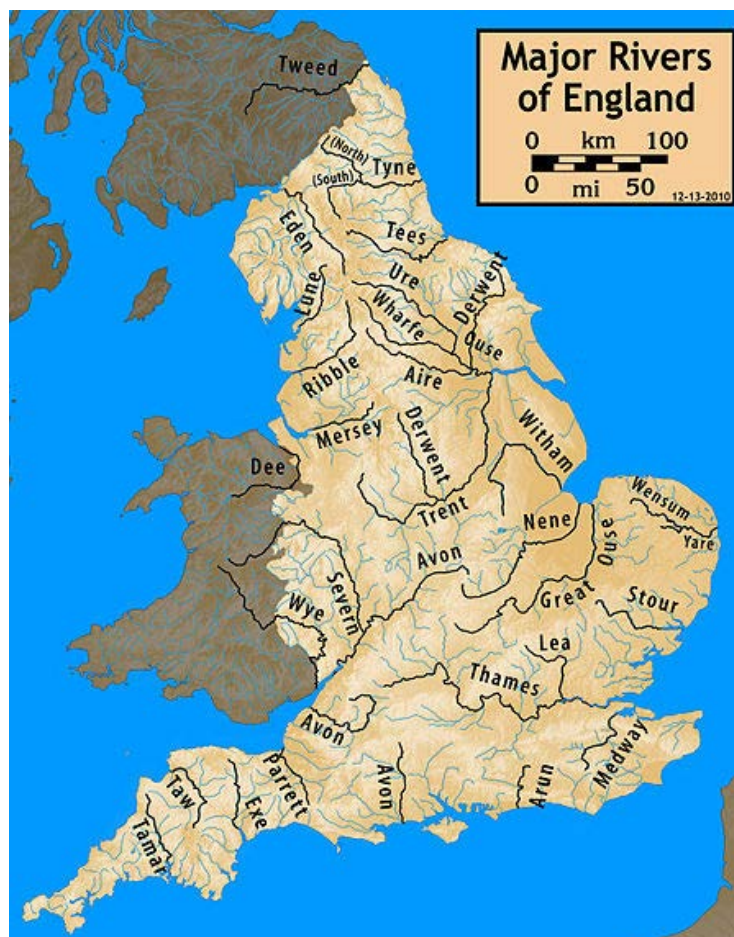
Such are the words attributed to Rufus, talking about his Archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm. Thinking he was on his deathbed, William had forced Anselm to take the job, thrusting the ring onto his finger despite Anselm's objections. They say 'Marry at haste, repent at leisure', and the same might apply to choosing Archbishops. Top tip for you all out there choosing Archbishops!

In the end, Anselm fled into exile, and implored his Pope not to send him back to England; he did not return until Rufus was dead. At its most fundamental, the argument was about the church's desire to have more independence from the state, in accordance with canon law but in stark contravention of English custom. It's the start of a long road.

Scotland

At the start of the reign, Malcolm Canmore was looking to move his border down from the Tweed to the Tyne. After all, the inhabitants on Lothian, Cumbria and Northumbria were very much the same kind of people, both ethnically and linguistically. By the end of the reign, Malcolm had been killed by Robert Mowbray, Earl of Northumbria, and Rufus had restored Malcolm's line in the face of a Celtic backlash from Donald Bane.

It was Rufus also who definitively brought Cumbria into England. He expelled Dolfin, son of Gospatrick, built a castle at Carlisle, and brought English settlers in to cement the deal.



Wales

The Welsh borders were different - when you crossed the border the language and people changed. Up to 1094 the Normans looked as though they were going to take over Wales pretty much as they had England. The Welsh didn't help themselves with constant warfare between the Welsh Princedoms, but in the end they were made of sterner stuff than the English.

In 1093, Robert of Rhuddlan lost his head - it ended up stuck on a spike on a Welsh pirate ship. Then in 1094 a chronicler reported:

'In this year the Britons being unable to bear the tyranny and injustice of the French, threw off the rule of the French and they destroyed their castles in Gwynedd and inflicted slaughter upon them'.

Cadwgan ap Bleddyn and Gruffydd ap Cynan led the uprising that freed Ceredigion, Gwynedd, Powys and parts of Deheubarth. Gwynedd would become the centre of Welsh resistance for the next 200 years.

The revolt of 1094-1099 was the first serious setback for the Normans. Marcher lords such as Hugh of Chester and Phillip de Briouze viewed the Welsh kingdoms with predatory eyes, with conflict never far away.



The Death of Rufus

Famously, William Rufus died in the New Forest just like his older brother Richard. His companion Walter Tirel aimed at a stag and hit a king. William broke the shaft, but toppled forward and in so doing thrust the arrow deep into his lung. Brother Henry took one look, and legged it at full speed to Winchester, to claim the treasury and the Crown before Robert Curthose could return. Walter had run for the continent. So it was left to a bloke called Purkis to load the King's body onto a cart and take it to Winchester for burial. Conspiracy theories abound - was this a plot by Henry to kill William and claim the throne? I think not - I prefer the cock up theory of history by and large.

28 The Lion of Justice

The youngest of William the Conqueror's sons, Henry, wasted no time shedding tears for his brother Rufus. He got himself crowned, anointed and blessed. The next 6 years were to be dominated by the struggle with his other brother for control.

How to get a throne in Norman England

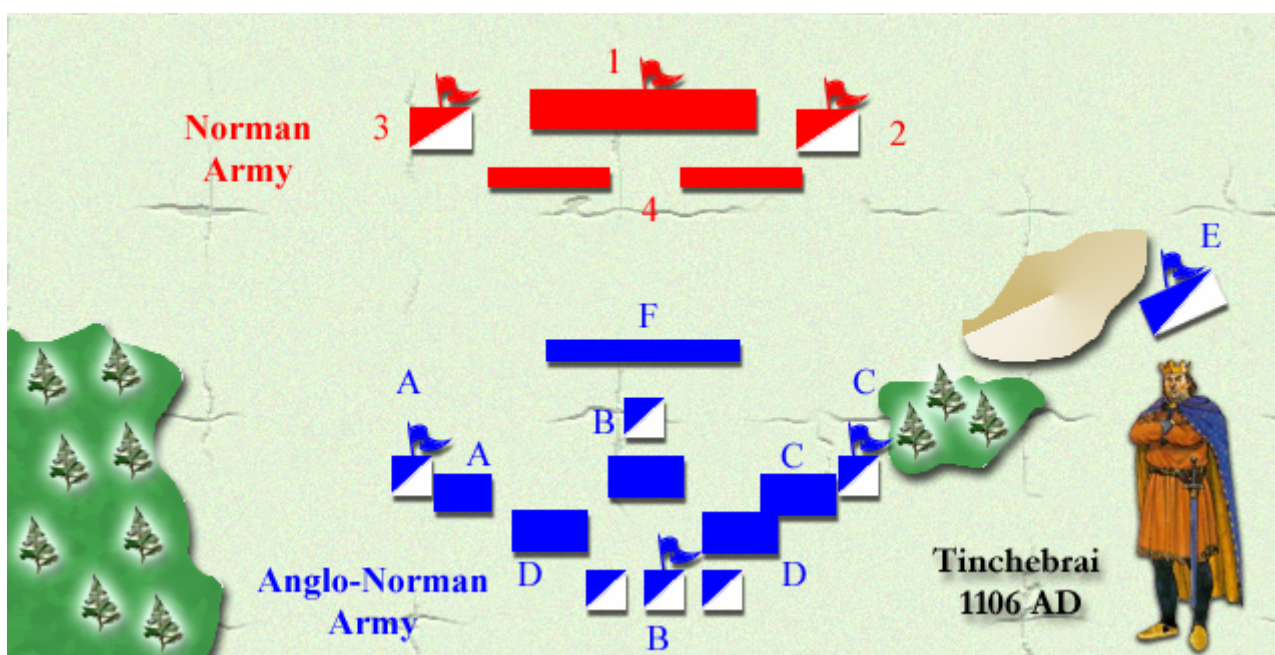
1. Be a member of the royal family
2. Don't worry about your brother's body - someone else will deal with it
3. Take control of the treasury in Winchester
4. Get some big families on your side, find yourself a Bishop and get crowned, anointed and blessed.

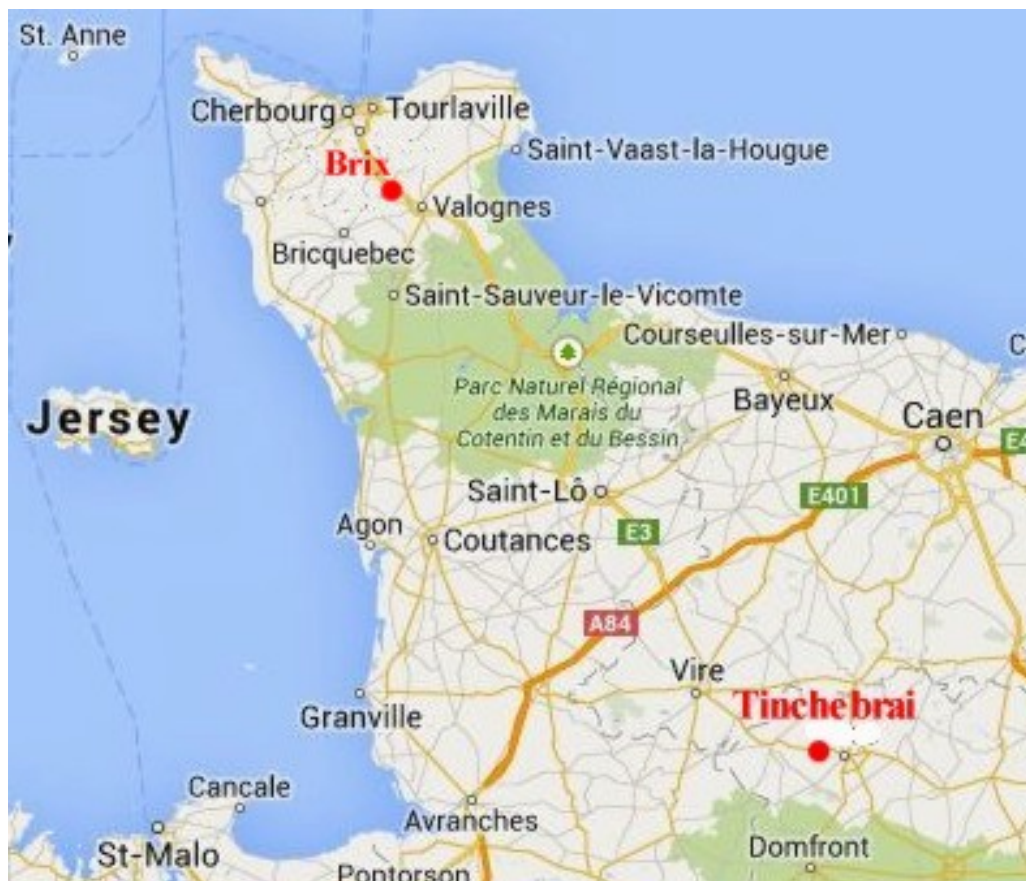
Which is what Henry did. One of the families that helped him was the Beaumonts, who were to become heavily rewarded over his reign.

The Struggle for supremacy

Robert Curthose Vs Henry follows a remarkably similar path to that of Rufus Vs Curthose. But the outcome is rather more decisive and final.

- First Robert has a hack at Henry. He does OK - seduces Henry's fleet, outflanks him, at it means that at the Treaty of Alton Henry comes to terms, including paying an annual stipend of £2,000. Round 1 to Robert.
- Henry attacks Robert's supporters in England - either talking their lands (Robert of Belleme, William of Mortain) or scaring them so they come over to his side (William de Warrene, Earl of Surrey). Henry gets the support of the counties around Normandy - Maine, Flanders, Brittany. Round 2 to Henry.
- Henry gets more aggressive, Robert panics and gives up his stipend. Henry brings an army to Normandy in 1104, 1105 and 1106. And in 1106, the brothers meet at Tinchebrai, outside William of Mortain's castle, for the final showdown.
- The **Battle of Tinchebrai** is an unusual example for the period of a decisive battle. Henry dismounts most of his knights, but places Helias of Maine with a sneaky cavalry contingent out of sight. He has the usual 3 'battles', led by Ranulf of Bayeux, Robert Beaumont and William of Warrene. Robert's 2 captain's are William of Mortain and Robert of Belleme. It doesn't take long - about an hour. Robert orders William of Mortain to attack 'Crusader style' - big cavalry charge, couched lances. But Henry's line does not break. Meanwhile, Helias hears the noise and attacks, hitting Robert of Belleme's flank. Belleme's heart isn't in it - he runs and it is effectively all over. Game, set and match to Henry.





Robert Curthose spent the rest of his life in prison, until his death in 1134. William of Mortain eventually manages to escape, and dies as a monk in Bermondsey. Belleme survives to fight another day. Robert Curthose leaves a son - William Clito, just 4, who has a part to play . . .

Good bye to Edgar Atheling

Our old friend Edgar fought at Tinchebrai on Robert's side. He is immediately pardoned by Henry, and that's the last time he plays a significant role. He appears in Scotland in 1120, and probably dies shortly after 1125. He doesn't seem to leave any family, which is probably a good thing - the succession to the English throne is complicated enough as it is.

29 England in the reign of Henry I

After the initial struggle for succession and baronial revolt, England itself was pretty peaceful during Henry's reign. The church & state debate needed fixing. And Normandy was a constant battle, and so big taxes were needed to pay for war. Henry was an efficient man, and many themes that lead to modern Government start in his reign.

The Lay Investiture Crisis

It was English (and indeed European) custom for the King or Emperor to give a new church leader - Bishop or Abbot - his new job. This meant not only deciding who should get the job, but also to invest them with the symbols of their office - the Ring and Staff. After all, the King was divinely blessed at coronation, and therefore effectively the most important priest. The Pope and Church reformers believed that this was all wrong - only the church could appoint into religious positions.

In 1107, Henry broke the deadlock. Henceforth, the new appointee would do homage for his temporal stuff only - his lands and so on - and the Pope would do the rest. It made little practical difference in the short term. The king still decided who got the job. But Kings had given up their claim to divine right. In 1122, this agreement formed the basis of the Concordat of Worms, which made peace between Pope and Holy Roman Emperor.

Royal Administration, Justice and Common Law

The Royal Household begins to grow, and administration starts the long haul towards modernity. In Henry's reign, we see the use of the Chief Justiciar, one for England and one for Normandy. They are basically a Country Manager for all day to day business.

And we see a more complex royal household, in 4 main departments that would develop into the English Government departments of the future. So there's:

- The Hall: led by the Steward. Deals with all aspects of food and drink for the King and his household
- The Chamber: led by the Chamberlain. All the Kings secret stuff. Also, the treasury's still kept under the bed - so all financial stuff too
- The Chapel: Led by the Chaplain or Chancellor. Also dealt with anything written - writs and so on
- Outside: The Constable - everything military and hunting

The Exchequer makes its first appearance. This is a chequered table, used with an abacus to help complete the accounts of the sheriffs.

And travelling royal justices make their first appearance. They apply royal law that is applied to all, no matter the local custom - i.e. commonly applied - so the start of English Common Law.



The fight with Robert gave Henry a great chance to replace the old conquest families with his own men, particularly in the Welsh Marches. And this week we also do a catch up on what's changed in warfare since Anglo Saxon times, and look at the situation that faced Henry in Normandy.

Wales and England in the reign of Henry

Gruffydd ap Cynan of Gwynedd and Cadwgan ap Bleddyn of Powys, the princes of the Welsh kingdoms mainly held their own through the reign. In Southern Wales, the Norman marcher lords extended their control, while Gilbert fitz Richard conquered land in Ceredigion. Henry made sure that the old marcher lords were replaced by his men; the families of FitzOsbern and Montgomery had gone, replaced by the de Clares and Robert of Caen, the Earl of Gloucester.

The Marriage of Matilda

At the age of 7, Henry's only legitimate daughter was betrothed to Henry V, the Holy Roman Emperor. 5 years later in 1114 they were formally married. It was a brilliant and prestigious match for Henry of England.

The balance of power in northern France



Matilda's marriage completed Henry's series of defensive relationships. In the English corner were:

The Holy Roman Emperor, Henry V: to the east, embroiled in struggles with the Count of Flanders. The relationship delivered less than Henry might have hoped, but did help distract Louis VI of France until Henry V's death in 1125.

Blois: to the south east of Normandy. Theobald of Blois needed English help to avoid being crushed by France to her north. And Theobald's mother was Adela, Henry's sister, so they were family. Theobald had 2 younger brothers; Stephen of Blois was heavily enriched with lands in England and married Matilda of Boulogne, the heiress to Boulogne. Then there was Henry of Blois, Abbot of Glastonbury from 1126 and Bishop of Winchester from 1129.

Brittany: To the south west, the Breton Count Conan III was a vassal of Henry's

Ranged against Henry were:

Louis VI of France (the Fat) (1108 – 1137)

William Clito (1102-1128) son of Robert Curthose

Fulk V of Anjou: To the south Fulk also inherited Maine and refused to pay homage to Henry I in respect of Maine as was traditional. Mainly hostile to Normandy though a bit on-off. Fulk left for a crusade in 1119-1120, and then again in 1127. In 1129 he married Melisende of Jerusalem and became king of Jerusalem. His son Geoffrey would marry Henry's daughter Matilda, and would be the father of Henry II, the first of the Angevin Kings of England.

Flanders: The history of Flanders and their attitude to Normandy is chequered, but is mainly hostile. Baldwin VII (1111-1119) was hostile; then Charles the Good (1119-1127) was less so, before being murdered while at prayer. Then William Clito became Count for 1 year (1127-8), before being succeeded by Thierry, who had no quarrel with Henry I.

Louis The Fat!....that was irresistible...



...well, he did have presence!

31 Henry I - Normandy and the Succession

Henry was a Norman king like any other - Normandy was in his blood. For 30 years, he controlled the diplomatic game to keep Normandy in the Empire. The one thing he couldn't control was the succession. When William the Atheling died in the disaster of the White Ship, William was left with a daughter - and no woman had ever been the English monarch.

The Struggle for Normandy: Round 1, 1109 - 1113

A bit chaotic. Louis VI started it off demanding Gisors. Henry's friend Theobald of Blois organised a distracting raid into Brie, Henry captured and imprisoned Robert of Belleme, and bought off Fulk of Anjou by promising his son in marriage to Fulk's daughter. Left on his own Louis gave in and made peace.



Gisors

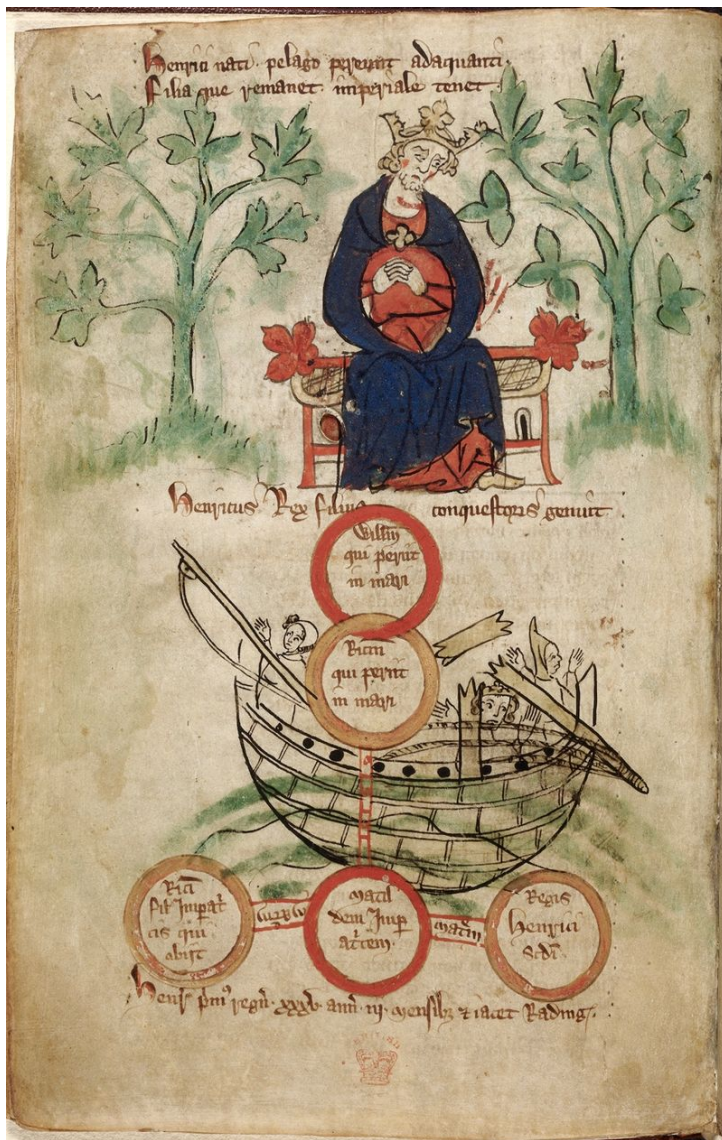
Round 2, 1115 - 1119, and the Battle of Bremule

This time Theobald started the trouble, by killing a friend of the Louis's. Henry had to come to Theobald's aid, and off it all went again. Fulk and Baldwin of Flanders also joined the fight against Henry. This time, a group of Norman nobles also joined in, and William Clito was declared Duke of Normandy. But again, they could make no real headway against the Norman castles. In 1119, Henry was defeated at the battle of Alencon by Fulk, but despite that things turn out well. Because Fulk wanted to go on crusade - and gave up his struggle, in return for Henry's promise observe the peace while he was away.

Louis meanwhile was defeated at the Battle of Bremule. 400 of Louis's household knights were defeated by 500 of Henry's, and William Clito and Louis fled back to France. William captured 140 knights - and ransomed those he could, and blinded (yes, blinded) the rest.

Interruption - The White Ship, 1120

The death of Henry's only son and heir in 1120 was a personal and national tragedy. William Atheling died when his ship hit rocks off Barfleur. No one dared to tell Henry - until a young boy was brave enough to do the task, Henry fell to the ground, until being led away to his personal chambers.



Henri and the White Ship



Fulk

Round 3, 1123-1124 and the Battle of Bourgtheroulde

Fulk stirred up trouble with Henry's Norman barons, in particular Waleran, Count of Meulan. Henry was furious - Waleran was of the Beaumont family, who had been showered with grants of land in reward for the loyalty of the father, Robert de Beaumont. Waleran was defeated by Henry's lieutenants - either Ralph of Bayeux or William of Tancarville - in another battle between household knights. Now for the next 10 years, Henry could relax a little more.

The Succession

Henry's solution was radical - his daughter Matilda. He got his barons to swear allegiance to her as the next monarch in 1127. Then he went even further - marrying her to Geoffrey of Anjou in 1128. This was radical - the Normand and Angevins were fierce enemies. Despite further oath takings, more than a few would have suspected trouble.

Death

Henry died in 1135. He came home from hunting, ate too many lampreys, and so died one of England's most successful monarchs. Not necessarily the nicest, but an effective king and a reformer of justice and royal governance.

31a Anglo Saxon Questions - Church Conversion and Economy

Chris and Matt sent some interesting questions that take us back to Anglo Saxon England. So here's a free, supplementary episode. We talk about:

- How much did daily life really change when Anglo Saxon kingdoms converted to Christianity?
- What differences did the Norman Church bring to Anglo Saxon England?
- How did Alfred and Aethelred keep raising all those armies?
- How did Aethelred keep raising all that silver and gold for Danegeld?



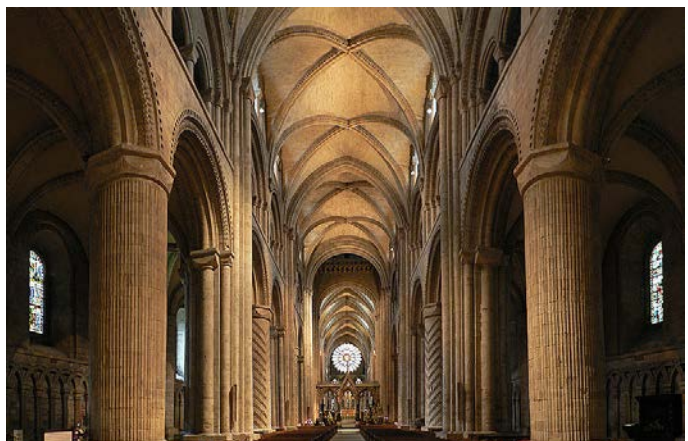
The runestone U 241 in Lingsberg, Uppland, Sweden, was raised by the grandchildren of Ulfríkr circa 1050 in commemoration of his twice receiving danegeld in England.

Mike Ashley writes on this subject, "He [William I] may have conquered them [the English], but he never ruled them." Not all of the Anglo-Saxons immediately accepted him as their legitimate king.

(Mike Ashley, *British Kings & Queens* (Philadelphia, PA: Running Press Book Publishers, 2002) 55-58.)



Anglo Saxon Church 7th Century (Restored) Escomb



Norman Architecture Durham Cathedral

32 When Christ and his Saints Slept

'...they said openly that christ and his saints slept'. This stunning phrase gives us an image of devastation that led to the period being called 'The Anarchy'. In this episode, we look at how Stephen came to power and how the whole thing started.

Henry had made everyone swear allegiance to Empress Matilda. But clearly everyone had their fingers crossed behind their backs at the time, because Stephen really doesn't find it that hard to take the throne. Basically, no one wanted a woman on the throne, and no-one wanted to have anything to do with the Empress's husband, Geoffrey Plantagenet, Duke of the traditional enemy Anjou. And anyway, the Empress is too busy invading Southern Normandy to claim the throne. So Stephen was crowned by The Archbishop of Canterbury in December 1135. Meanwhile, the Norman Barons firstly asked Stephen's brother Theobald to be Duke - and then opt for Stephen when they hear that he's seized the throne in England.



The Early Years

The first few years are actually a good deal smoother than they were for Henry and Rufus. Stephen bases his power on alliance with the Beaumont family, Robert of Leicester and Waleran of Meulan, and removes three bishops who he fears are plotting against him. But Stephen fails to bind two key men to him - Robert of Gloucester and David, King of Scots. And in 1139, things start going wrong. Robert and David declare for Empress Matilda. Geoffrey invades Normandy.



Empress Matilda



Robert of Gloucester



The Battle of the Standard, 1138

Fought outside Northallerton, David King of Scots and 26,000 men invaded England to make Northumbria Scottish and advance the cause of the Empress Matilda. After a victory at Clitheroe, David was faced by an English Army, grouped around a hill, on top of which sat the English Standard. Most of the English knights dismounted and faced the Scots in a mixed line of knights and Longbowmen. The Galweigan charge was broken by the archers, and the resulting English counter attack was unstoppable. The resulting treaty of Durham in 1139 was generous to the Scots - but by this stage, Stephen needed a quiet northern border.

The trouble is, the treaty gives Carlisle to the Scots. The super-powerful Ranulf of Chester felt that belonged to him.

The Empress escapes from Arundel

Robert of Gloucester and Empress Matilda time their revolt poorly. By the time they arrived at Arundel, David had been defeated, and Matilda was trapped by Stephen in Arundel. But like an idiot, Stephen allows his brother Henry to talk him into letting Matilda go. Oh Please.

South West England becomes Angevin

Robert of Gloucester was joined by Miles of Gloucester, Reginald of Cornwall and Brian FitzCount, Lord of Wallingford. Together, their power in the South West was formidable. With revolts by Nigel in Ely, and Dover castle held against the King, the battle lines were drawn.

33 Anarchy II - Matilda's Big Chance

1141 was a turbulent year in England's history. The Civil war had reached an early deadlock, dramatically broken by the capture of the king at the Battle of Lincoln, and the defeat of the Empress at Winchester.

Ranulf of Chester defects to the Empress

Stephen had seriously hacked Ranulf off by giving Carlisle to David King of Scots. He'd granted Lincoln in compensation, but demanded a Royal garrison. Plus, Stephen had built up the power of the Beaumonts, just as a counter-weight to any defection from Ranulf. So in 1141, Ranulf seized Lincoln, and joined the Empress.

The defection made a big change to the Angevin's fortunes - in reality they'd been very disappointed by the number of Barons that had joined their cause. Ranulf gave them a vast block of land in the North West.



The Battle of Lincoln, 2nd February 1141

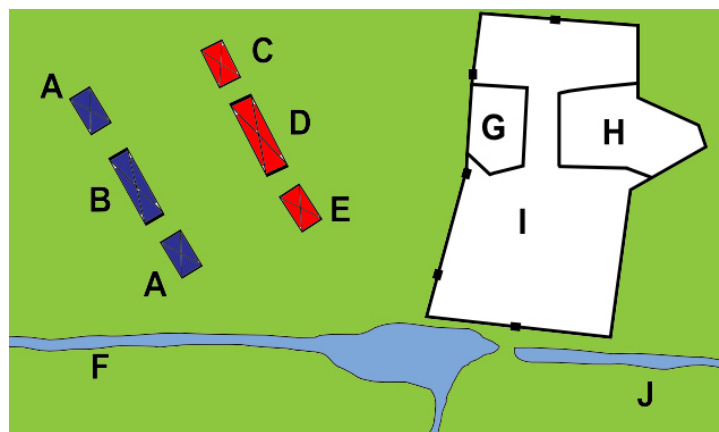
Lincoln is the only straightforward pitched battle of the Anarchy. And if Stephen had more of a brain there wouldn't have been any battles at all. The Angevin party, accompanied by a large contingent of Welsh with Ranulf, was probably considerably larger than Stephen's army. He should have withdrawn. But maybe spurred on by the memory of his father's disgrace, he decided to stay and fight. Despite some early success as the royal cavalry routed the Welsh on the wings, the Angevin counter attack drove the king's supporters from the field. Still Stephen refused to fly, was surrounded and after fighting bravely was overwhelmed and captured.

Matilda Fluffs it.

This was Matilda's big chance. Most barons accept that she's now in control, Henry of Blois comes over to her side, and Winchester opens the treasury to her. But she fails to win over London, and generally alienates everyone she can find. London rises up in fury, and throws her out. She is forced to flee without even having time to finish supper.

The Rout of Winchester

Henry of Blois again transfers his allegiance, back to Stephen, and besieges the Empress's castle at Winchester. And when the Empress comes down with her army to get it back, Queen Matilda and William of Ypres bring Stephen's army down and trap the Empress. Things get desperate. The Empress breaks out, but Robert of Gloucester is not so lucky, and is captured. So at the end of 1141, Stephen is released from captivity in exchange for Robert, and the game is back on.



Battle of Lincoln 1140

A Welsh Forces; B Robert of Gloucester; C Alan of Brittany; D King Stephen; E William of Aumale; F Fosse Dyke; G Lincoln Castle; H Lincoln Cathedral; I City of Lincoln; J River Witham.



Geoffrey of Anjou invades Normandy 1142

34 Anarchy III - Resolution

Stephen and Matilda fought themselves to a standstill, until the Empress tires of the struggle, and essentially leaves the stage around 1149. Many of her key supporters die - Miles of Gloucester and Robert of Gloucester - weakening her resolve and strength. Thereafter her son Henry picks up the baton. But the Treaty of Westminster in 1153 which brings the Anarchy to a close is as much a result of exhaustion as victory.

The Angevins conquer Normandy

Stephen's capture in 1141 had a big impact in Normandy. Most of the Barons decide to defect, and by 1145 Geoffrey is officially and safely the new Duke of Normandy.

The Fall of Oxford

In 1142, the Empress was trapped in Oxford castle, and after 3 months of siege provisions were running low. Matilda managed to escape through a gate with 4 companions and, wearing white against the snow, she escaped to Abingdon. But Oxford fell to Stephen.

Revolt

Stephen doesn't manage his barons well; he arrested Geoffrey de Mandeville and Ranulf without warning, and consequently both revolt. Geoffrey dies in 1144, but Ranulf and Hugh Bigod remain a thorn in Stephen's side

Henry Fitz Empress enters the fray

Henry launched expeditions in 1142, 1147 and 1153. But it's only in 1153 that, now Duke of Anjou and Normandy, he brings a force worth having. Despite this, 1153 is far from a great success for him militarily.

The Treaty of Westminster, 1153

The peace comes about because:

- The barons are sick of war - they make their own peaces with each other, and refuse to prosecute the war as their leaders would like
- Eustace, Stephen's son dies
- Everyone is tired.

Under the treaty, Stephen reigns til he dies - and Henry will be his heir.

Anarchy what Anarchy?

Historians nowadays stress the lack of anarchy rather than the extend of it. It seems that what we are really seeing is a bit of score settling, and then governance simply becomes more distributed, more exercised by the Barons than the King. England is still governed. But in the war zone, life is indeed very probably hell on earth but then hts what war is like. None the less, there are a mass of illegal taxes, such as the '*tenserie*', protection money, and illegal castles that Henry II would have to deal with.



þittene ȝland iſ ehta hund mila lang.
 7 ȝpa hund briad. 7 he ȝind on þis
 ȝlande fif ȝe þeode. enȝliſe. 7 þut
 tȝre. 7 pilȝre. 7 ȝreȝtȝre. 7 pȝhtȝre. 7
 boc leden. Efeſt þe ȝon buȝend þiſeȝ
 landeȝ bȝittet. þa coman of aȝmenia. 7 ȝe ȝetan
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 up. 7 þe ȝe bædo ȝcottaȝ þ̅ hi ðeȝ moſtū ȝunian. ac
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 þe eoȝ maȝon þeah hȝadeȝe ȝad ȝe laȝon. þe ȝitan
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 ȝomana kaȝeȝe mid hund ehtaȝū ȝcipū ȝe ȝolte
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 Cancellar. Universit. Oxon. 1638.

35 12th Century Life - A Knight's Tale

Medieval England thought of its people in 3 estates - those who fight (nobles), those who pray (churchmen) and those who work (peasants). This week in the history of England we look at the life of the nobility, through the life of William the Marshal.



William The Marshall's tomb in Temple Church, London.

William the Marshal

William the Marshal started his career as a penniless knight and ended it as one of the greatest magnates of England. This week we look at his career as a household knight, where he makes his fortune through the Tournament.

Early Life

We first see William lying in the sling of a catapult in front of his father's castle, with King Stephen threatening to turn him into jam unless John Marshal surrenders his castle. John refused, and Stephen was too nice to carry out the deed. We next see William in the *mesnie*, or household, of the Chamberlain of Normandy, William Tancarville, as a squire, where he stayed until asked to move on probably around the age of 20.

William was a younger son; so he had to find a way to make his fortune. He didn't have 2 beans to rub together, but had no desire to hang around his brother's castle as a 'hearth brother' - useless and impotent. So he appealed to Patrick Earl of Salisbury, his uncle, and got a job in his household.

The big break

Patrick had to accompany Eleanor of Aquitaine to Poitou. They were ambushed by the Lusignan brothers, and it was William's courage and tenacity that gave Eleanor time to escape. Patrick was killed, and William captured. But Eleanor must have seen his heroism, and ransomed him, and gave him a job. Then, even better, she gave him a job in the household of Henry, the Young King, son of Henry II.

Henry the Young King

Although he was a rebellious pain in the royal backside, as were most of the Angevins, Henry had a glowing reputation at the time for his good looks and chivalry. He was a big fan of the Tournament, and William the Marshal became his closest friend and almost a team manager. The Tournament was the making of William Marshal. He reckoned to have captured over 500 knights, and toured all over France taking part. He even had a partnership with a Flemish mate, Roger de Gaugy who worked with him in tournaments, and the kitchen clerk, Wigain, who kept the score and sold off the proceeds. The tournament turned William into a poor household knight at the edge of things to the confidante of the heir to the throne and relatively comfortable financially.

The 12th Century Tournament

This image comes from a 14th Century document, but it's still relevant since it shows the main event of the 12th Century tournament, the melee. 2 large groups of heavily mailed men charge at each other on horses and try to capture each other for the ransom. The audience cheers them on and picks it's favourites.

The tournament would be thrown by a lord, who would set up a tournament village on the edge of a town. The lists would be created round the edge - where each combatant's squire would keep 3 extra lances. Hired mercenaries would protect a roped off safe area called the *recet*, where frightened or wounded knights could cower.

A bugle would sound, and both sides would charge at each other. This was the melee. The event could go on all day. Philip of Flanders was notorious for tipping up late and joining in when everyone else was tired, and sweep up loads of captures. William and Henry used a variation of the same trick - they would be there from the start, but would hold back from the shock of the first charge, and so keep themselves relatively fresh.

At this stage the Joust was a relatively small component of the tournament. It was allowed - often the start of the melee was delayed while the younger knights were allowed to joust with each other to win a bit of early glory, before the more experienced knights took them to the cleaners later on.

In the 12th Century, the roots of the Tournament were still strongly based in the military training of young knights, and had not become a defining characteristic of a knight. Henry II banned the tournament on his English land. But by the 14th Century they would become increasingly elaborate and closely linked to the ideals of the perfect knight.



The Melle

36 Magnates and Churchmen

After joining Henry II's household, William's rise was steady - but with the arrival of Richard the Lion Heart it really took off. By the time of his death he was one of the most powerful men of the realm. We also look at the church - the village priest, monasteries, and what went on under a monk's habit.



Eleanor and Henri II



The Young King Henry



The Clergy, The Magnates and Knights and the peasants.

37 12th Century Life - Village, Town and Trade

12th Century England was envied for its fertility and yes its climate. During the 12th century, the population of England and its towns and villages expanded. But by and large, this is expansion without growth, and for many average income falls.

Population growth

...is difficult to calculate. But let's take the higher end estimates:

- 1086: 2.25 million
- 1215: 5.7m
- 1348: 7m

And you know what happens next !

The 12th Century society and village

What defined your status in medieval England was whether you were free or unfree, and how much land you had.

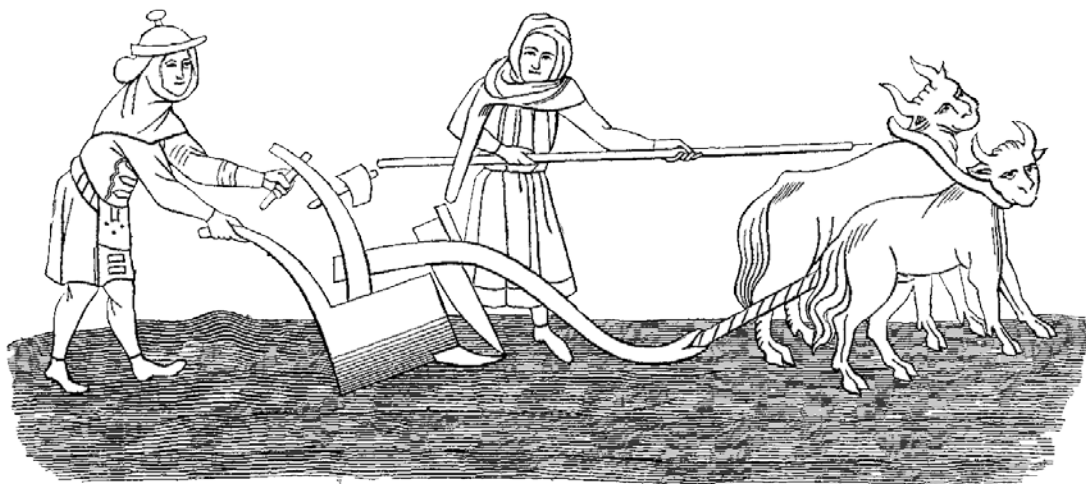
Some rough proportions: About -

- 15% of people were free
- 40% of people were Villani (villeins) - they had substantial land (c. 30 acres) but owed service
- 35% were cottars or bordars - unfree, less land
- 10% were slaves or as near as darn it

Not all villages were the nucleated village that we think of today - but it's far and away the most common model. Each village was composed of a number of tofts (or crofts) - areas of 1/4 - 1 Acre, rented from the lord. each croft held the medieval house - typically 24 x 12 feet, 2 rooms, 5+ people and not a lot else.

An original source - The Manor of Elton

Somewhere between 1154 and 1189, the Abbot of Ramsey had a survey completed of the Manor of Elton in East Anglia. The original text, which compared the people, income and service of the people in time of Henry 1. I thought you might be interested to see it, so I have retyped it, with some notes.



Towns and Trade

The wealth of England was based on wool - something that's not going to change for a number of centuries. During the 12th century the number of towns grows - possibly doubles in fact, as every Norman lord tries to make a bit of cash. Other key trades included the wine trade from Rouen and increasingly Gascony in South West France, and the export of Tin from Cornwall.



A Sheperd



Iron Smelting



A Cog, used in the trade of the Middle Ages.

38 Born of the Devil - the Angevins

Geniuses, devils, spoilt brats, villains, heroes! War, sex, violence, bravery, treachery, peace, reform... the Angevins that founded the Plantagenet dynasty have it all, in spades. Not so much history, as soap opera. This week we kick things off with the arrival of Henry II and Eleanor on the English throne.



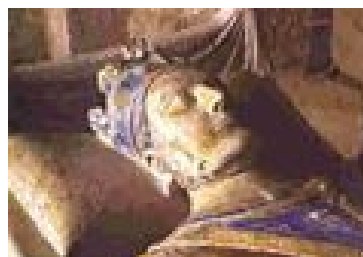
The marriage of the millennium

In 1152, Henry of Anjou and Eleanor of Aquitaine married at the Cathedral of St Peter in Poitiers. The church you see there is not the one - Henry started a new church in 1162.

Eleanor of Aquitaine split opinion across Christendom. One half of them saw the queen of culture and sophistication; the other saw her as irresponsible, wild and undisciplined. Gervase of Canterbury described her as 'an exceedingly shrewd woman... but fickle'. So maybe both sides were right.

Eleanor was married to Louis VII of France in 1137. Louis was wild for her, but he was something of an odd fish. Nice enough you understand, but very affected by the burning by his troops of a church full of women and children - which isn't so very odd. But as he had his head shaved to make him look like a monk and became increasingly devout, Eleanor began to tire. She behaved badly on crusade - taking a gaggle of noble ladies and then suspected of having an affair with her uncle. Plus, the ultimate crime, she only gave Louis 2 girls as children. Louis needed a male heir and to his pain and distress had the marriage annulled by the Pope.

8 weeks later she was married to Henry. She met him in Paris once; she needed a protector to keep all those eager suitors away from her door; and if you were going to jump ship from the King of France and stay at the same level, your options were limited anyway.



The political map transformed

The marriage transformed the political map. In 1150, Louis was the dominant power in western europe. Look at the map here based on the situation after the marriage. Add back all the lands of Aquitaine to the French lands - i.e. everything south of Anjou and Tourraine except Toulouse and you'll see what I mean.

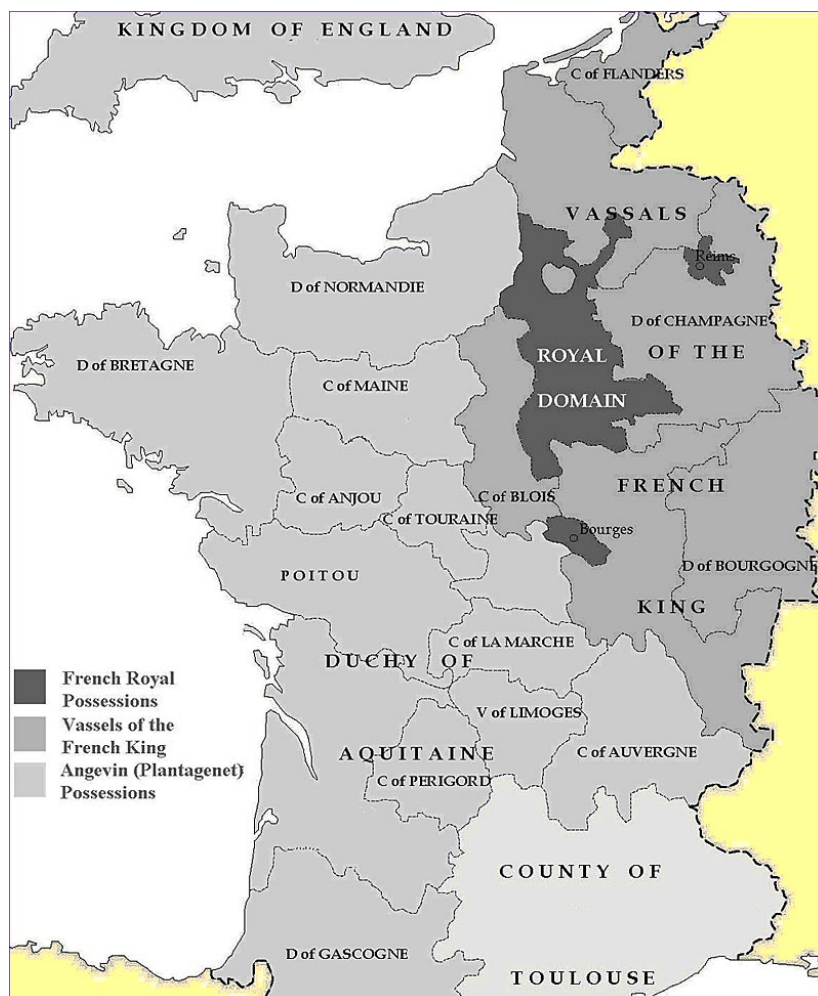
The New Kingdom

Henry was crowned king of England in 1154. He then spent the first few years of his life establishing his new kingdom. This meant this thing really:

1. Getting the English barons back into line - down within a few years
2. Sorting out his brothers Geoffrey and William - likewise
3. Getting even more territory if he could

Coronation Charter

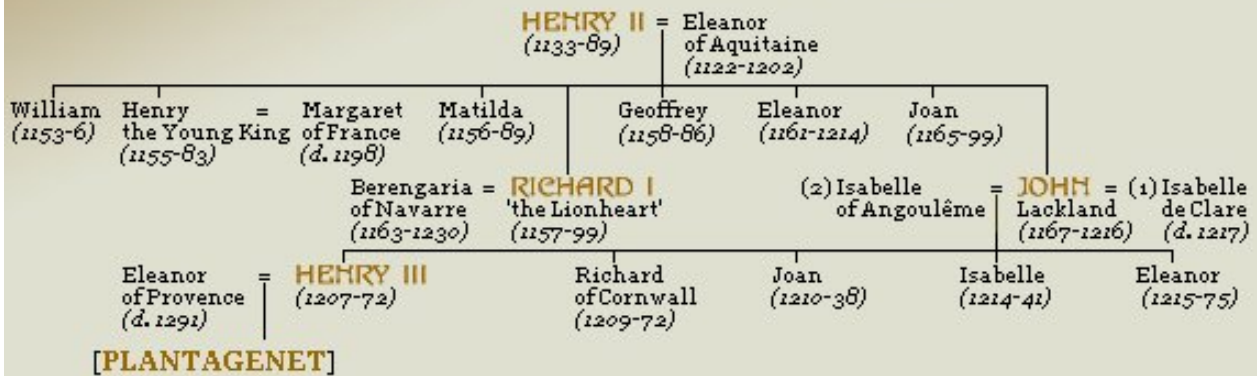
However, that's not what he said on his coronation. Henry was in a strong position when he came to the throne - so he didn't have to give too much away...



A scandalous marriage

Henry and Louis tried to play nice, and Henry's eldest son Henry was betrothed to Marguerite, daughter of Louis. Oh, Henry was 3, Marguerite 6 months old. The dowry was significant - the all-important Vexin, key to Normandy, given away by Geoffrey Plantagenet. But Louis wasn't worried - hey, it was years away. But Henry tricked him - in 1160 he had the Pope allow him to go ahead with the marriage, and took the castles back. Now Henry's empire looked secure and complete.

ANGEVIN FAMILY TREE



Clothing

Lots of rather formless material is the super-summary. Women, long dresses down to the floor, hung from the shoulders, lots of sashes and ties to keep it all together. Hanky (wimple rather) on the head. Blokes, very much the same - soft leather slipper, long tunic covering everything up. Plus fashions didn't change quickly in the way they do today - so it'll take us some time before things get more exciting.



39 Ruling the Angevin Empire

Bear in mind at all times that Henry, while being a Good King, was a tyrant. Still, he was a tyrant who ran a mean administrative system for the time. This week, the nature of the Angevin empire, how it was ruled, and a bit about travel and economy.

The Character of Henry II

We are blessed with many descriptions of Henry and many excellent chroniclers for the period. Here's just one of those descriptions, from a man called Peter of Blois. Peter himself is an interesting character; he probably wrote some of the Latin sequences that are used in Carl Orff's fantastic 'Carmina Burana'. He serves as a diplomat and secretary under William Rufus, Henry II and Eleanor, and died in 1211.

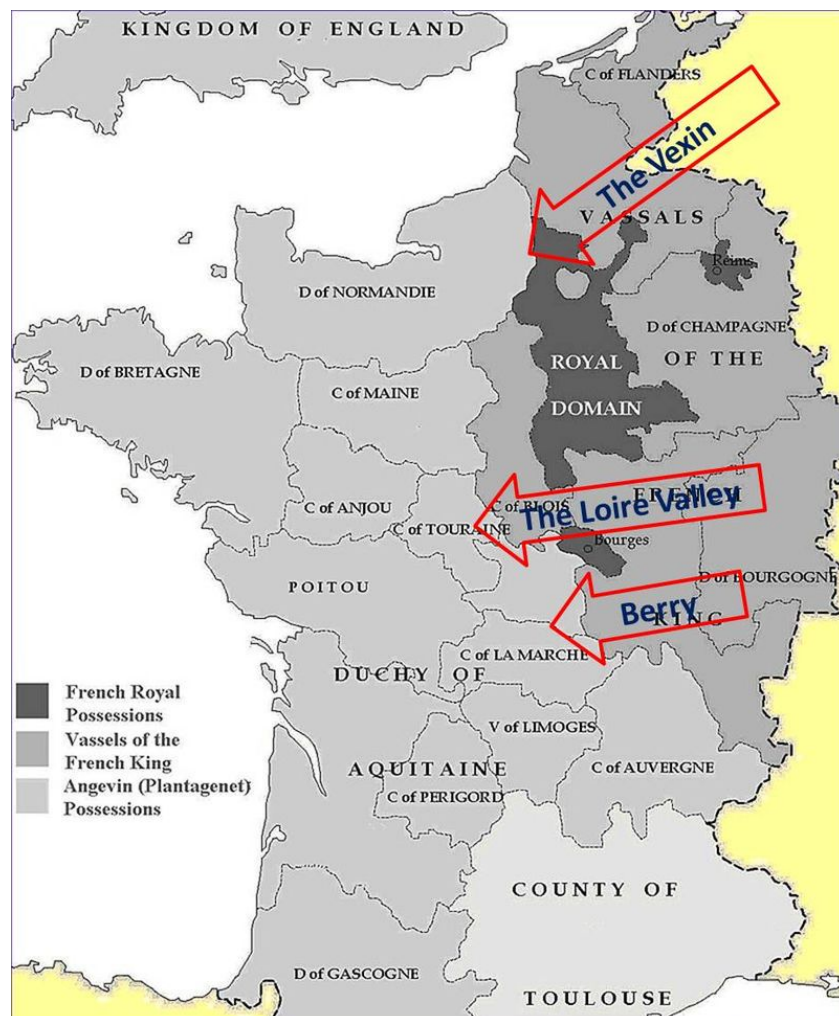
The Nature of the Angevin Empire (Think of it in 4 bits)

The Anglo Norman State: Normandy and England. By and large loyal to Henry, well administered. Key flash point along the river Seine, with French and Norman Vexin being 'badlands' between the French and Norman monarchies.

Anjou: Traditional homeland of the Angevins, and again very loyal to Henry. Three countries, Anjou, Maine and Touraine. The big castles along the Loire - Tours, Chinon - are another flash point.

Brittany: Claimed by Henry as an overlord, and William the Conqueror and his sons had also. But this is not without dispute and engages Henry in frequent trouble.

Aquitaine: A vast inheritance, loyal to Eleanor but only if she leaves them alone to do their thing. Very suspicious of the Angevins in their attempt to impose some order on them. And there are plenty of internal arguments going on between the various counts and families. Key flash point is the county of Berry, which had a critical confluence of roads and which was disputed between the French and Angevin kings.



The Cog

Work horse of the early medieval carrying trade. The Cog replaced the existing Viking style ships during the 12th Century. Its advantages were the stern rudder; the flat bottom which allowed easy loading at low tide; and the high sides which made it easier to defend from pirates. Plus, crucially, it had a greater carrying capacity. The Cog was used for war and trade.



40 Bishop Troubles

The 1160's: A time of consolidation of the Angevin Empire, still ruled by a dynamic, young and aggressive Henry. But mainly remembered for the start of the struggle between church and state - or more accurately, the struggle between Henry and Thomas Becket. We start that well trodden of paths, with a bit about 12th Education and Brittany thrown in for good measure.

The Becket

Gilbert and Matilda Becket were Normans, who came to London to make their fortunes. Gilbert, at first succeeded handsomely, being able to afford a grand house between ironmongers Street and Old Jewry. Young Thomas was given an academic education, but according to all it was the physical life that appealed to him as a young man. He hunted and hawked at the estates of Roger L'Aigle, and he loved all forms of sports.

Thomas's early career

Gilbert's business started to struggle, so Thomas would have to earn his keep. After a stint in the household of a family friend, Thomas was placed in the household of Theobald of Bec, the Archbishop of Canterbury. This was something of a coup, and Thomas made the most of it, rising to become an Archdeacon. Then, Theobald decided he needed a placeman in the household of the king; so when the Chancellorship of England came up, Theobald went and spoke to the king

Chancellor

Henry and Thomas got on like a house on fire by all accounts - giggling and playing like children, Thomas kept a magnificent household, dressed in the grandest of clothes, advocated the most aggressive of foreign adventures - and generally just seemed to be a man of the material rather than spiritual world.



Archbishop

But oh dear, when he put on the robes of the Archbishop he also donned the hairshirt. His appointment was not well received by the Bishops, who knew full well they were getting Henry's man. So Thomas set out to prove his independence, by opposing the king at every turn. It came to a head at Westminster when Thomas led the Bishops in opposing an unconditional oath to support the customs of the realm. Henry was livid.

The Constitutions of Clarendon

Henry wanted to clarify about process of justice and the relationship between church and state. The Constitutions were meant to do this - writing down of the English customs. He also wanted to push Thomas's nose in it, by forcing him to submit. Thomas and the English bishops were subjected to 3 days of abuse and pressure from Henry and the lay barons, but they stood up to it. Then Thomas bottled it, and signed them - leaving his bishops leaderless,

On the road outside, Thomas recanted. I suspect he only signed the thing to get out of Clarendon. Henry was now out to get rid of his Archbishop.

Medieval Education

School: was quite common, but revolved often around there being a local priest or Medieval Education relied on the church monastery with a passion to provide the school. The curriculum was focussed on the acquisition of Latin as its main aim

University: from 1096, Oxford is clearly one of the leading centres of higher education in England. But Universities as we think of them don't yet exist; what we have is towns with a concentration of Masters. The basic curriculum is the trivium, i.e. grammar, logic and rhetoric, and the quadrivium, i.e. arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy. You could keep going and get into law, theology or medicine.



41 Murder in the Cathedral

After Thomas recanted from his signature of the Constitutions of Clarendon, things got really nasty. Before long, Thomas was in exile, and Henry couldn't care less. But by 1167 the political situation had changed - Henry wanted to crown his son, and the Archbishop of Canterbury wasn't around to do it.

Thomas escapes

In 1164, Henry decided the gloves were off, and he seriously needed to get rid of his Archbishop. So he called Thomas into court at Northampton, and brought the great council together to hear accusations against him of embezzlement when a Chancellor. Thomas refused to yield. The Bishops panicked and abandoned Thomas. The Barons declared Thomas guilty, but Thomas fled to France.

Exile

And there Becket stayed for 6 years, supported by King Louis, shielded by the Pope, largely ignored by Henry and even the English Bishops. Until 1167, when diplomatic activity starts again. Henry was under pressure from the vassals of the empire, and he needed to crown his son. And to do that he needed the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Henry and Thomas met 3 times before 1170 - at Montmiral, Monmartre and at Freteval. Basically Henry got nowhere. By the time of this last meeting, at Freteval, Henry had gone ahead and got the Archbishop of York to crown his son, which made Thomas thoroughly resentful. But Henry wanted the dispute finished. So at Freteval he behaved like an old friend, pardoned Thomas and his household and invited him back over. Significantly, Thomas didn't do the same.

Anathema and the End

Thomas arrived back to an unfriendly welcome. And one of his first acts was highly inflammatory - despite Henry's hard work to heal the breach, Thomas excommunicated the Archbishop of York.

This is when Henry, at court in Bayeux, said his famous words:

'What miserable drones and traitors have I nourished and brought up in my household who allow their lord to be treated in this shameful contempt by a low born cleric!'

4 knights - Reginald FitzUrse, William de Tracy, Richard le Bret and Hugh de Morville set sail for England. On 29th December, they burst into the Thomas's palace with their platoon of 12 knights, where the AB was having his supper. They demanded that Thomas go to Windsor to account for his actions before the young king.

Thomas calmly went into the cathedral. He made no attempt at all to avoid confrontation – he didn't bolt the door into the church, he made no attempt to negotiate. These minor household knights were nonplussed and confused. In the church, they tried to manhandle him out, but Thomas was strong enough to resist. He yelled insults at the knights – calling them 'Pimps! It was too much for the knights – nothing was going as planned. One of them hacked at Thomas, cutting through the arm of his attendant and into the crown of Becket's head.

At this point, Thomas is supposed to have resided to the ground saying *"For the name of Jesus and the protection of the church I am ready to embrace death."*

Personally, I doubt it. I think if you've had the crown of your head sliced off, you have little time to do anything more than say 'ouch' and then *crash* to the floor, but I could be wrong. The knights kept at it, just to make absolutely sure – one of them hacked the head right off, another smeared the archiepiscopal brains across the Cathedral floor.



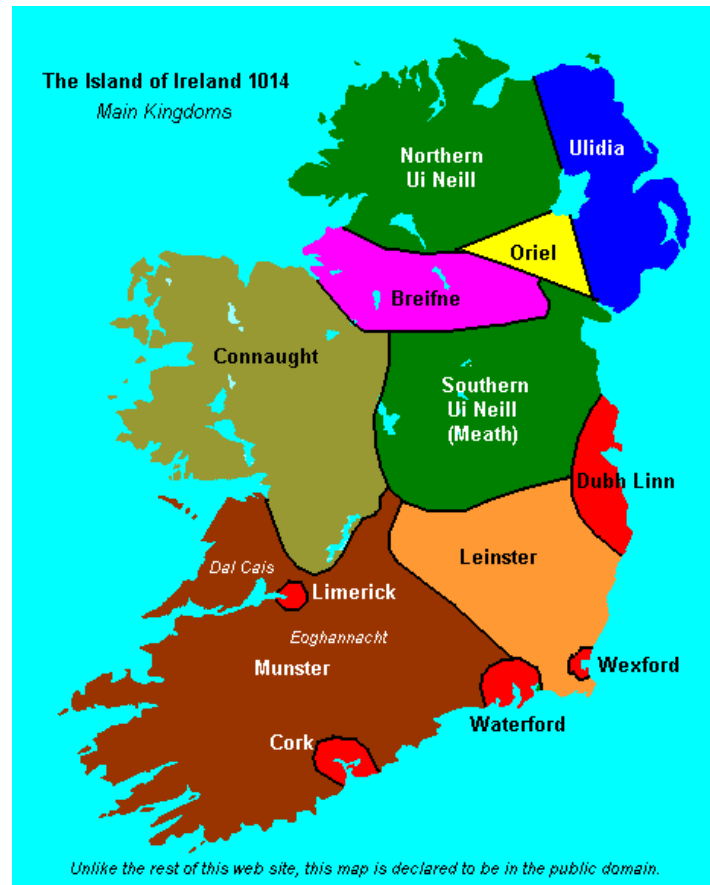
Aftermath

The murder shocked Christendom. And Henry! Thomas was canonised in 1174 and Canterbury became a place of pilgrimage. Henry was forced to lie in front of the altar in a hairshirt being whipped by his Bishops to atone. But in the background, Pope Alexander and Henry quietly agreed 3 changes to the Constitutions of Clarendon, and then that was that. So what had all the fuss been about?

Thomas achieved very little. Yes the 'benefit of the clergy' survives to the 19th century, but most of the Constitutions are implemented. Most of all, Thomas achieved his favourite thing - fame and notoriety.

42 English Justice and The Irish Invasion

So here are two completely unconnected subjects then! Henry is responsible for reforms to the process of English justice that had a long lasting impact on English Justice - including the development of Common law and the Jury system. OK, so he wasn't thinking about the long term future, all he wanted to do was to bring more royal revenue in, and more quickly; but none the less, a long term impact he had. The events of his reign would also have a long term impact on Irish politics and society in 1169. Richard 'Strongbow' FitzGilbert arrived on the coast of Ireland with the Gaelic king of Leinster, and the Anglo Norman invasion was on.



The Norman Invasion of Ireland

The Irish political structure in the early 12th Century was composed of a number of Kingdoms. Kingship was based on the Celtic tribal tradition of fealty, and the kings competed for the political supremacy in the form of the High King. Areas that had been invaded and ruled by the Norwegians now consisted of 5 towns, including Dublin.

In addition to the secular authority of the crown, Irish society was governed by the Brehon, who interpreted a complex system of customary law, and the church - in the form of the Abbots of the major monasteries. The Papacy strongly disapproved of the Irish church, whose custom and practice were not in line with the Gregorian reforms.

In the mid 11th Century, a struggle for supremacy arose between Rory O'Connor of Connaught and Dermot MacMurroch of Leinster and their respective allies. When Dermot lost out, he sought out Henry in Aquitaine in 1166 and asked for help. Henry didn't have the time - but he allowed Dermot to look for men in England to help him.

Dermot found Richard FitzGilbert, Earl of Pembroke and Striguil, head of the De Clare family. He would be known to history as Richard Strongbow. In 1170, Strongbow landed near Wexford, and together they re-captured Dublin by 1171 and defeated the High King Rory O'Connor. At which point Henry arrived to make sure the English king wasn't cut out of the deal.

At the treaty of Windsor in 1175, the basic structure was set; Rory O'Connor was to rule Munster, Connaught, and Ulster, giving fealty to Henry. The English crown was to rule Leinster, the towns and Meath directly through a

Justiciar. It sounded logical but was soon blown apart by Norman aggression in 1177 in Munster and East Ulster that set up further Anglo Irish lordships. Henry had no intention of creating a new empire in Ireland; but the effect of his reign was to set up a partition of Ireland and struggle for control that would have an impact for many centuries.

The Development of English Justice

Henry's reforms had a massive impact on Justice. It's true to say that one of his main motivations was to increase the profits the crown made from justice, but he also believed in greater efficiency and consistency. The biggest impact of the great assizes of Clarendon (1166) and Northampton (1176) were:

- The implementation of a system of Royal Justices in Eyre. These itinerant justices saw the rapid development of English common law, and the move away from Baronial justice of variable quality to a centralised system of royal justice
- The development of the Jury
- A faster, cheaper more effective system of royal writs that drove specific legal processes



43 The Greatest of all Monarchs

Between 1173 and 1185, Henry was on top of his game. He had become the elder statesman of Christendom, courted even by the Emperor of Byzantium. But while Henry was the equal of any monarch, his Achilles heel was his very own family. In 1173-4 he was faced by a revolt by his wife, children and many of his leading barons. 1183 to his death in 1189 were years where Henry was increasingly beset by his enemies until at the age of 56 he died, faced with the treachery and disloyalty of his family.

The Great Revolt, 1173-4

Henry the Young King slipped away from his father's side at Chinon and fled to Louis in Paris. Louis at once recognised him as the rightful king. Eleanor and her teenage sons, Richard and Geoffrey also declared for the young Henry, and rode to Paris to join him. Barons across the empire rose in revolt against Henry's firm control; in Britain, the Earls of Chester, Leicester, Derby and Norfolk were joined by William the Lion of Scotland.

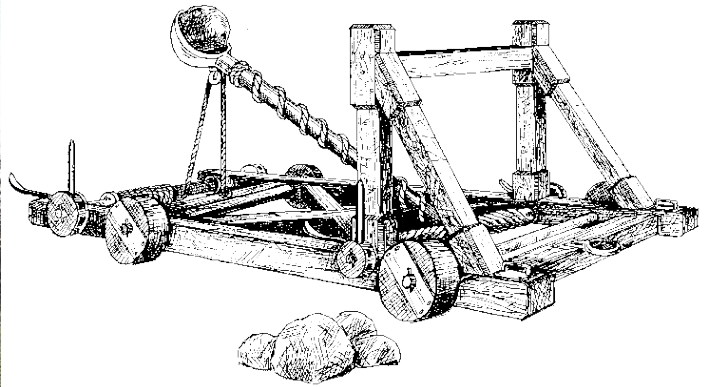
All were outdone by Henry's speed, his small but effective hardened army of mercenaries, and the support from his royal officials such as Richard de Lucy, Justiciar of England. By August 1174, Henry had subdued the English barons and chased away a humiliated Louis from the walls of Rouen.

At the Treaty of Montlouis, Henry was not vindictive; we tried to solve the problems. Henry the Young King was given a pension to maintain himself; Geoffrey given Brittany and Richard Aquitaine. But Eleanor was to remain in prison for 10 years. William the Lion had to accept Scotland back as a fief of the English Crown - just like an English Earl.



New Technology and the siege train

One of the reasons Henry was so successful was that unlike the rebels he had an effective siege train. And one of the reasons for this was the Trebuchet, which comes into regular use at this time. The trebuchet, as opposed to the less powerful Mangonel, used a counterweight to generate its energy rather than torsion. And of course Henry had a team of experts to help him use the technology effectively.



Humiliation and Death

In 1180 Phillip II Augustus came to the throne of France. His 43 year reign was to transform the map of France. Phillip was helped and supported by Henry during his early years - but Phillip had no intention of returning the favour, and schemed for Henry's downfall, exploiting the divisions among Henry's sons. In 1182 Henry the Young King died, and in 1186 Geoffrey died. The person who bears the most to blame for Henry's final defeat was Richard, who conspired with Philip and joined in attacks down the Loire in 1188.

Henry simply refused to fight back. Tired, ill and feverish, Phillip dictated terms to Henry near Chinon. Ill though he was, Henry was furious with his son he whispered in Richard's ear *'May the Lord spare me until I have taken vengeance on you'*.

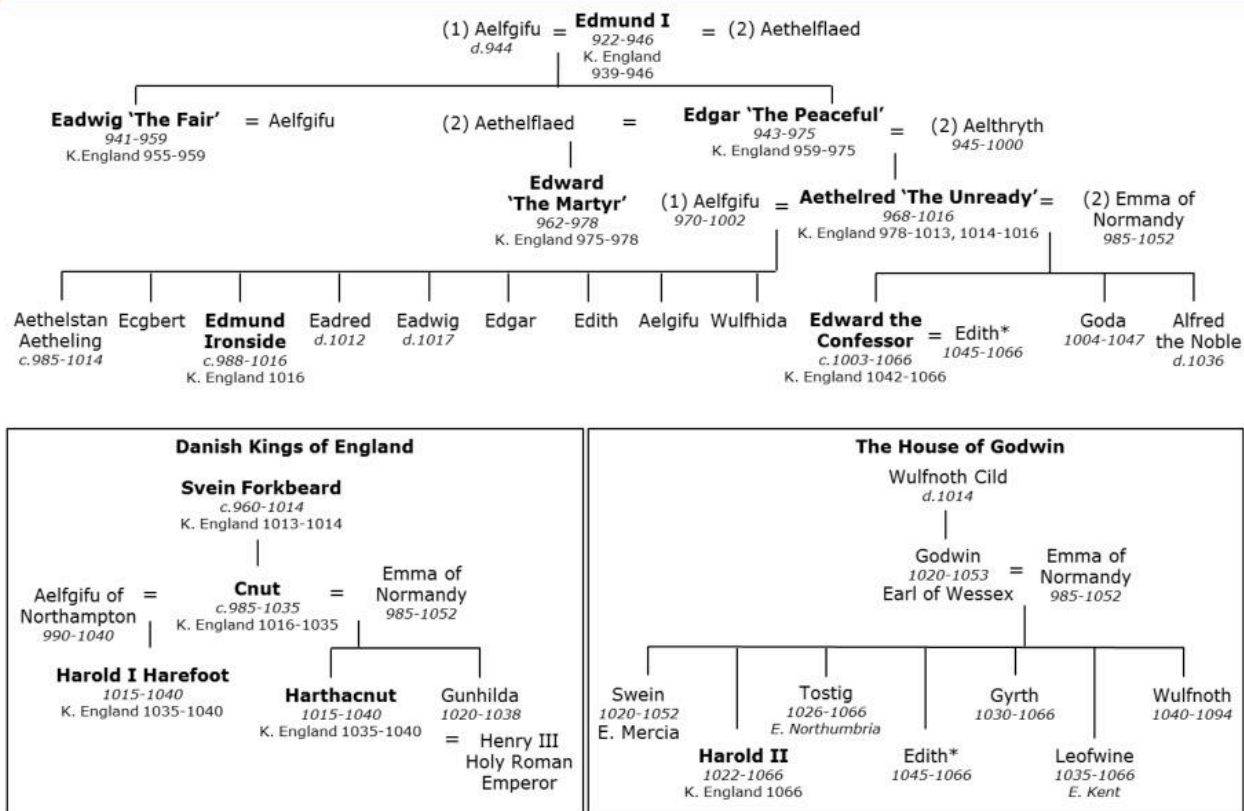
What finished Henry was the news, smugly delivered by Phillip, that his favourite son, John, had joined the revolt against him. Henry died at the age of 56 on 6th July 1189. He had reigned for 34 years and was buried at Fontevraud.



43a Aelfthryth by Melisende of Outremer

Aelfthryth was a controversial figure. Wife of King Edgar, mother of Aethelred the Unready - and possibly murderer of her step son, Edward! Melisende of Outremer looks at the life of a remarkable person.

The History of England Podcast Family Trees Kings of England: from Edmund I to Harold II (946 - 1066)



44 Introducing the Lion Heart

To most contemporaries, Richard I was a hero. Since then his reputation has suffered badly, until even Winston Churchill describes him as the worst of our Richards - which given the other two is going some. So we look at how history has treated the guy, his early years, and what he was like. And we look at how to behave in medieval company.

Richard's Music and Poetry

Richard was steeped in the troubadour culture of South West France; and he is (I think) one of only two monarchs of which we have songs. There are two songs surviving attributed to Richard - sadly I can only find one of them, which is below. Anyone who can send me the other would be very nice.

"No prisoner ever tells his story objectively; rather, it is cloaked in sorrow. To comfort himself, however, he may write a song: I have many friends, but their gifts are few. Dishonour will be theirs if I remain in prison these two winters; my ransom unpaid. My men and my barons, from England, Normandy, Poitou, and Gascony, know that I would never forsake even the least of my friends. I do not say this as a reproach. Still... I remain a prisoner."



The Anointing of King Richard I

Daniel of Beccles

Daniel wrote his courtesy book at the beginning of the 13th Century with some superb practical advice - some jolly sensible 'Do not hunt for fleas on your arms or bosom in front of the patron or in front of the servants in the hall' and some frankly poorly thought through "Don't attack your enemy while he's on the toilet".



Quod nescire velis homines, tua nesciat uxor.

(When there is something you do not want people to know, do not let your wife know it.)

45 Richard I - Packing up

Richard came into the lands of his father and was crowned at Westminster in 1189. For the next 6 months he was packing his bags, cleaning the fridge and getting ready to go. He sets up his administration, makes sure his borders are safe and sets off for Sicily. So was Richard a feckless warrior who had no interest in administration? We talk about this and also about the Jewish communities in England in the 11th and 12th Centuries.

Did Richard strip England bare of money and desert her without a thought?

Yes, yes he did. But he did nothing exceptional, nothing anyone had done before. Take one example; he fires 22 of the 27 sheriffs of Henry's reign, and makes anyone who wants to replace them pay for the job. This sounds bad; but it's all perfectly normal, this is what has happened for ages. And the men who Richard appointed have all been shown to be experienced administrations, not chinless rich fly by nights. So yes he gathered as much money as he could - but then he was raising an army for the greater good of Christendom. But no, he didn't just wander off without making sure the fridge was clean before he left. He left trusted administrators in place.

Defending the borders

Richard makes arrangements to deal with all his external enemies:

- **Philip of France:** Of course I'll marry your sister Alice. And you'll be with me on Crusade anyway, so that's fine.
- **William the Lion of Scotland:** I'll make you happy by giving you your country back
- **Lord Rhys of Deheubarth:** You're trying the stitch things up with my brother John, so do your worst (see the map).
- **Raymond of Toulouse:** I'll marry the daughter of your enemy, Sancho of Navarre, who'll keep an eye on you but not until Philip's left for Crusade, and I can afford to tell him I'm not marrying Alice.
- **My Brother John:** I'll make you Count of Mortain, Earl of Gloucester and give you so much wealth you'll have no desire to make any trouble.



The Jewish communities of England

There were probably no more than 5,000 Jewish living in England at the time of Richard II in 21 cities around England. While the coronation of Richard was going on, the Jewish community came forward to give him a gift. The Christians didn't like this - and riot started. Although the Jews did not live formally in a ghetto, they lived in close communities - and they burned.

Richard was furious. The Jews had a special relationship with the King - they were under his special protection. They enjoyed their own laws and rights under the king. But they paid a heavy price. Richard may or may not have been cross at the bigotry and violence - but mainly he was worried because the Jews were a major source of Income for him. He levied special taxes from them, and used them for credit.



Clifford's Tower, York

So Richard sent stern notes to all the shires warning against any violence, and punished the offenders in London. But none of this prevented the worst of England's pogroms- in 1190 in York. Essentially, 150 Jews took refuge in Clifford's Tower in York. But the mob surrounded the castle, and most of the Jews decided to kill themselves and their families rather than be taken, with hideous echoes of Masada in the 70s AD. The rest were offered safe conduct by the Christians if they came out - and then were slaughtered when they did. Oddly, the mob then moved on to burn all the Jews' documents - including the record of their debts.

The Jewish community was isolated by religion and race and profession, and were terribly vulnerable. For a while they at least had the king's protection - but when the kings had finally sucked them dry their last defence would be gone.

46 Richard and the Road to Outremer

Richard set off from Sicily probably intending to go straight to the Holy Land. But a chance storm enforced a landing at Cyprus, where the locals were not friendly. Richard ended up conquering the place in its entirety, putting its ruler Isaac Comnenus in chains of silver, and selling the island to the Templars.

Well, bringing 25 ships full of soldiers to Messina was probably always going to cause problems - and so it proved, with a series of running battles with the locals. But Richard didn't want trouble on this occasion, so he managed to get things calmed down. He built a wooden castle called Mategriffon - which allowed him to be safe, but also allowed him to stockpile provisions for his army, so they didn't go stealing off the locals. So tempers were eased - though since Mategriffon meant 'Death to the Greeks' I doubt this was the basis for a new, loving relationship...

Sorting out the housekeeping in Sicily

Richard had a few bits of housekeeping to sort out in Sicily when he arrived there in 1190:

- **Get the army ready** - his men spent 4 months building siege engines. They grumbled.
- **Sort things out with Philip of France** - the Treaty of Messina 1190. Richard finally 'fessed up to the fact that he had no intention of marrying Philip's sister Alice; and swore that he could bring any number of witnesses who would prove that Alice had not only been sleeping with Henry, but had had his child. Philip was forced to release him. But he made sure he got off the island before Richard's new betrothed arrived, Berengaria of Navarre.
- **Bring Tancred to book:** Tancred was the ruler of Sicily, usurping the throne after the death of the previous ruler William. Richard had no beef with a bit of usurpation - but as it happens, William had been married to Richard's sister Joan, and Tancred had refused to return her dower. So Tancred agreed to repay.



The conquest of Cyprus

Part of Richard's fleet got lost in a storm, and took refuge in Cyprus. The locals were not friendly; they imprisoned all who landed and took their possessions.

Richard was having none of that. He turned his part of the fleet around, landed with some knights and laid about him until Isaac and his army ran. In for a penny and so on, so Richard then proceeded to conquer all the coastal towns, with the locals deserting the unpopular Isaac in droves.

Isaac though wasn't fussed, because he had a plan. Richard was on his way to the Holy Land - so as long as he could sit things out safely somewhere he could just wait for Richard to leave. Cyprus is blessed with plenty of impregnable mountain castles...



But Isaac had figured without his daughter - she was captured in Kyrenia castle. Now Isaac might have been a vicious tyrant, but he was a big softie when it came to his daughter, so he threw himself on Richard's mercy, and surrendered on condition that Richard didn't clap him in irons. So Richard had a silver chain made for him. How Isaac laughed.

It's not clear if Richard ever planned to conquer Cyprus. But its conquest was a significant part of the success of the Third Crusade. It remained in Christian hands for 4 centuries, and be a vital source of support for Outremer. Initially Richard sold it to the Templars, but later sold it instead to the ousted King of Jerusalem, Guy de Lusignan.

Marriage with Berengaria

Richard and Berengaria were married in May 1191 in the chapel of St George in Limassol, and then she was crowned by the Bishop of Evreux. There's no evidence of any great romance here - and of course no children. But equally there's no evidence to suggest that the couple didn't get on. Berengaria is quoted as being the only queen of England never to set foot in England, since she set up shop in Le Mans. I mean why would she visit? Its wet there after all. It may be that she did visit England after Richard's death... but that means she still qualifies. Good pub quiz question!



47 The Fall of Jerusalem

For 50 or so years after the capture of Jerusalem, Outremer was a part of the political and military dance between Christian and Muslim states. Then in 1144, signs of Muslim unity begin to appear through Nur al-Din when Edessa falls, and by 1150 one of the states is wiped off the map. Outremer has passed its high point. But it's not until the 1170's that Saladin, as leader of unified empire that included Egypt and Syria, was able to really threaten the Christian states. In 1187, after the dramatic battle of Hattin, Jerusalem and most of Outremer falls to the Muslims and what's left is just a few toe holds on the coast. In 1190, Saladin's army is looking to finish the job when Richard and Phillip arrive at Acre.

Outremer at its height

There were 4 Crusader states of Outremer at their height. 3 of the states (the Principality of Antioch, County of Edessa and County of Tripoli) in theory owed allegiance to the King of Jerusalem. According to the Emperor in Constantinople the states owed allegiance to him.

Meanwhile in Cilicia, i.e. the southern edge of Asia Minor, the Armenians had established a kingdom that despite the best efforts of the Empire managed to create a significant level of independence.

Great fortresses such as Karak and Montreal (pictured below) defended the frontiers of all the states.





Montreal



Karak de Chevallier

The Fall of Jerusalem, 1187 and its aftermath

Outremer's existence was made possible by the disunity of the Muslim states, and the strength of the Empire. Slowly these things began to change. In 1144 Zengi took the city of Edessa, and by 1150 the whole county was no more. Nur al- Din arose as a leader that ruled both Syria and Egypt. His nephew, was Salah ed Din, who spent many years consolidating his rule until he was ready to rub out the Christian states in a holy war.

Meanwhile, Manuel Comnenus was defeated at Myriocephalum in 1176, and the strength of the Empire was never to recover.

Despite Saladin's superiority in numbers, the capture of Jerusalem was not a foregone conclusion. At the battle of Montgisard in 1177 for example, Saladin's army was surprised and defeated by King Baldwin IV, and Saladin had many distractions from areas such as Mosul. But the crucial blow came at the Horns of Hattin.

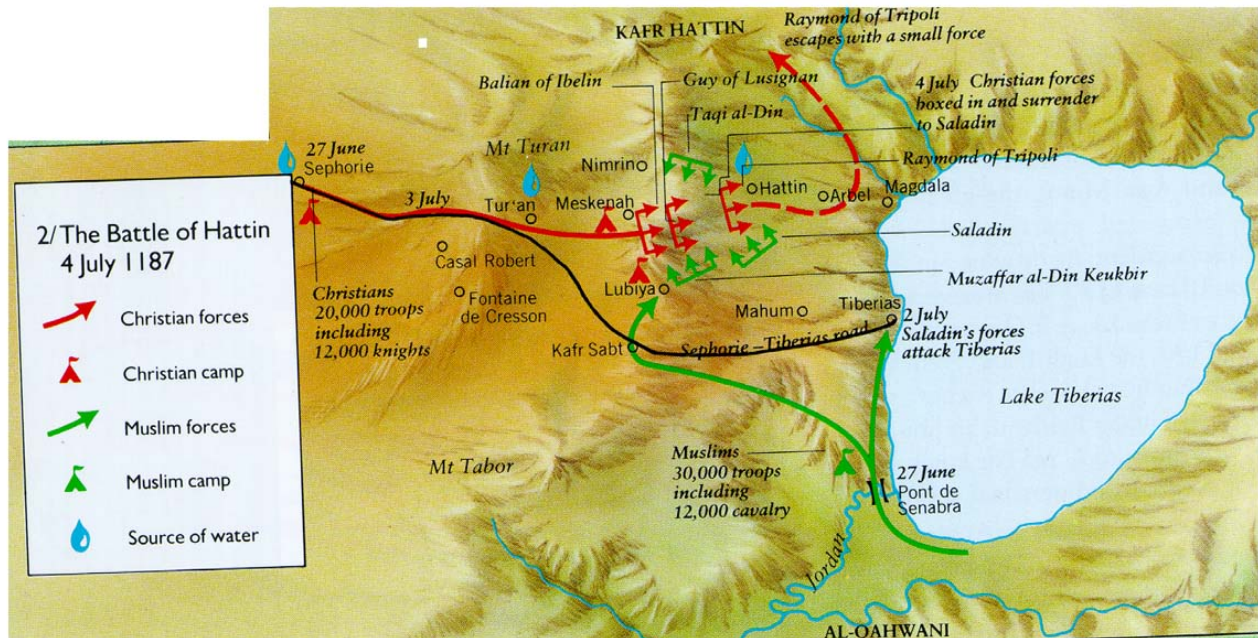
The Horns of Hattin

In June 1187, Saladin's army besieged Tiberias on the sea of Galilee. According to Raymond of Tripoli, the Crusader army should stay safe at Acre, despite the fact that his wife was trapped at Tiberias. The heat would surely eventually force him to withdraw. But Reynald of Chatillon and Gerard de Ridefort (Grand Master of the Templars) persuaded the king, Guy of Lusignan to attack.

On 2nd July, the Crusader army arrived at Sephoria (Saforie on the map). There was water there and a strong position - once again Raymond tried to avoid disaster, arguing it would be madness to go further. But Guy was persuaded to attack.

Constant attack from Saladin's horse archers slowed the march. The wells at Turan were dry. By the afternoon of the 3rd July, the Crusader army had done no more that reach Hattin. The Templars begged for an end to the day's march, and when Guy agreed Raymond cried out that the kingdom was lost.





The army camped at Hattin, where two low hills were called the 'Horns of Hattin'. They expected to find water - but again the wells were dry, and by the morning they were surrounded. In their desperation, discipline deserted the Christian army. Thirst drove the Christian footmen to surge towards the road that led to the Sea of Galilee and water. They were cut to pieces. The knights retreated to a hill, where time and again they drove the Muslim army back until at last they were forced to surrender.

The defeat was catastrophic. Outremer had always suffered from a shortage of men, and now they had been killed or captured - there was no one left to defend the kingdom.



The Horns of Hattin

The Fall of the Kingdom

On 2nd October 1187 Balian of Ibelin was forced to surrender Jerusalem to Saladin. From there, Saladin swept through most of the kingdom and almost all of the great fortresses fell to him - Ahkalon, Montreal, Karak, Safed, Sidon, Beirut. The exception that saved the Kingdom was Tyre, which was held by the newly arrived Conrad of Montferrat.

By 1190, Outremer was reduced to a precarious series of footholds and fortresses - Tyre, Beaufort, Karak des Chevalier, Antioch. Even the leadership was unclear, with Conrad of Montferrat and Guy of Lusignan each claiming the throne.

Remarkably, Guy and Conrad took the initiative, scraped together a force and besieged Acre in August 1189. At first, outnumbered, their position was precarious. But slowly they were joined by men from abroad, and when Richard arrived in June 1191 the siege was already 18 months old.



48 Richard and The Third Crusade

Was the Third Crusade a success or a failure? While it failed to achieve its objective, it was the most successful after the First Crusade. It rescued Outremer from an eradication that looked all too likely in 1190. The Crusade was controversial even at the time - in the eyes of most of Christendom it made Richard a hero - the victor of Acre and Arsuf. But to Philip's friends, Richard had failed, and betrayed Christendom to the Turk. To my mind it gave Outremer another century of life until the fall of Acre in 1291.

The Fall of Acre



The Walls of Acre

It's a bit of a push to give Richard the credit for the fall of Acre - after all, Conrad and Guy had been working on it for the best part of 18 months when he arrived. But Philip and Richard's men did transform the situation, and by 12th July 1190 the city had fallen. The whole event was marred by the massacre of 2,700 of the inhabitants outside the walls of Acre on 20th August. While there's no doubt that Richard ordered the massacre, it's equally clear that Saladin was playing for time in his negotiation, and had missed the deadline for delivery of half the agreed money by 11th August. Richard could not afford to be tied down in Acre.

Richard raised the Royal Standard. We are not sure exactly what it looked like then, but from 1198 it was -

Gules three lions passant guardant in pale Or armed and langued Azure.

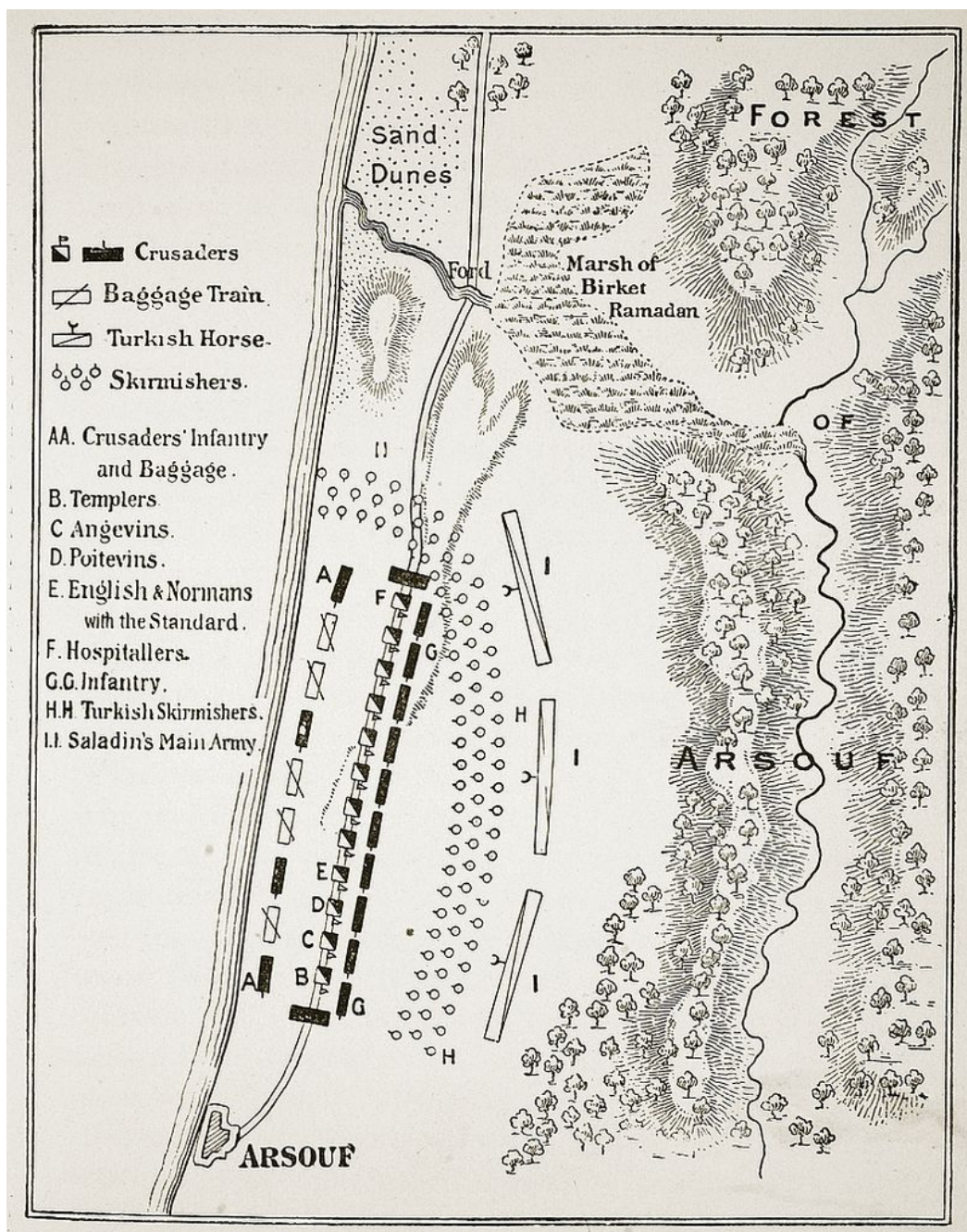


The Battle of Arsuf, 7th September 1191

The objective was to march down the coast and take the port of Jaffa. Throughout the march, Saladin's army harried the Crusaders, trying to get them to break ranks - allowing themselves to be isolated and destroyed piecemeal. But Richard's discipline held, and Saladin knew he had to commit his whole army to stop the march.

He did this at Arsuf. Time and again his mounted archers and skirmishers goaded the Crusader line, time and again Richard refused the pleas to break ranks and commit a cavalry charge. Until eventually at midafternoon, the Grand Master of the Hospitallers lost his patience and ordered the charge with cries of 'St George!'. Immediately Richard ordered a general charge, holding the English and Normans in reserve.

Saladin's army retreated in disarray; but Tariq al Din counter charged with 700 elite bodyguards, only to be met by the English and Normans. The day belonged to Richard, and 700 of the Muslim army were killed.



Success or failure?

Richard left the Holy Land in October 1193. He had captured Acre, Jaffa, Ashkelon (though the fortifications had to be destroyed) and Darum. His treaty with Saladin gave Christian pilgrims access to the holy places. But despite having got within 12 miles of Jerusalem he had failed to capture the city, and that had after all been the objective.

But he left behind a viable state that was able to defend itself, which had been on the point of collapse. The Third Crusade achieved more than any other except the First, and did this against a unified Muslim leader of enormous talent.

In addition of course, he left behind Cyprus, and uniquely important source of resources and support for Outremer, ruled by Guy of Lusignan.

By most standards the crusade was a success and one where Richard had demonstrated both his military and diplomatic talent.



49 Travel Chaos

Richard set off from Outremer right at the end of the sailing season - October. He knew the Duke of Austria, the Holy Roman Emperor, Count of Toulouse and King of France were out to get him, so very sensibly tried to slip across their lands in disguise. Rubbish plan, predictable result. Meanwhile back in England John was making a bit for power, Phillip making his first attempt to bring down the Angevin Empire - and Robin Hood might have been hanging out in Sherwood Forest. Richard eventually arrived home at the start of 1194.

Taken Hostage

Richard's scheme to travel across Europe under disguise sounds like the act of a madman, or of a king suffering from delusional levels of confidence. But in point of fact Richard had little choice, and lots of bad luck. He couldn't just sail straight to England - no one would sail on the Atlantic at that time of year. The Count of Toulouse had a reception party ready for him if he came back the way he went. So really his options were limited. And the odd shipwreck or two reduced any chances he might have had.

Once he'd been caught in a village outside Vienna, Leopold of Austria took him to Castle Durnstein. The legend of the singer, Blondel (Blondel de Nesle? Jean de Nesle?) tells that he toured round all the castles looking for Richard by singing a song only he and Richard knew. At last outside Castle Durnstein, he heard Richard singing the second verse.



Castle Dürstein on the River Danube, Austria

Meanwhile Eleanor strove might and main to get him released, writing to the Pope:

"My guts are torn from me; my family is carried off and removed from me. The young king and the count of Brittany sleep in dust, and their most unhappy mother is compelled to be irremediably tormented by the memory of the dead. Two sons remain to my solace, who today survive to punish me, miserable and condemned. King Richard is held in chains. His brother, John, depletes his kingdom with iron [sword] and lays it waste with fire. In all things the Lord has turned cruel to me and attacked me with the harshness of his hand. Truly his wrath battles against me: my sons fight amongst themselves, if it is a fight where one is restrained in chains, the other, adding sorrow to sorrow, undertakes to usurp the kingdom of the exile by cruel tyranny."

In point of fact there was no secret about where Richard was. Henry VIth, Holy Roman Emperor, was beside himself with joy, and soon Leopold as well. It's a remarkable situation - the most powerful King of Western Europe held to ransom. After a year, Richard was finally released for 100,000 marks, just possibly £2bn in today's money. Throughout the period, Richard was said to be calm and affable.

John's Treachery

Brother John was keen to take control of England, and had 2 goes at it. In 1191, John positioned himself as the leader of baronial England against the upstart Justiciar William Longchamps. So much so, that William is run out of town. The replacement though is not John but Walter of Coutances, who came with letters from Richard and ran the country with Eleanor and a council of the realm.

The second attempt is 1193-4 while Richard is in prison. John makes an agreement with Philip Augustus of France, and raises the standard of rebellion while Phillip attacks into Normandy. Phillip is quite successful, being joined by several barons from the north and East of Normandy, and taking the castle of Gisors. But John is a loser, with no English Barons of note joining him.



Richard's return

Richard comes back in March 1194. He immediately reduces the last of John's castles holding out against him - which is, you guessed it, Nottingham. John had fled to Normandy, and a council of the realm stripped him of all his land as a rebel. Richard focuses on preparing his army and rebuilding Portsmouth as his supply line to France; and then in May sets sail for Normandy and war.

The Legend of Robin Hood

It is entirely possible that there was an equivalent of Robin Hood in the 1190's but we'll probably never know. All that we do know is that the legend has changed and evolved to meet the needs of different centuries, and in that regard all the stories are valid.



