

# Year 7 Review 3 History Revision Resources

Date	Sandbach School Events
1677	The school was founded in 1677 when Richard Lea and Francis Welles of Sandbach gave a piece of land for a schoolhouse on Middlewich Road. Dr. Ward left money to the school to fund the education of pupils.
1815	60 boys in the school. Hours were long - school started at 7.30am and finished at 5pm, Boys had to go to school on Saturday mornings as well. There was no school uniform but discipline was strict. Boys who were naughty or lazy were caned.
1840s	The school was decided to be built in Crewe Road. A young architect called Gilbert Scott designed the new school.
1851	The new buildings were opened, having cost £7,000. School fees were £2 a year. 38 boys attended with two teachers. Half were "boarders". They all had to wear short jackets and big collars and mortarboard hats.
1857	The school was flourishing with about 60 boarders in three houses. There were no organised sports in school with the Headmaster using the front field to graze cows and horses.
1888	A new Headmaster, Mr. Heslop, was appointed who introduced Football and Cricket. In 1894 an open-air swimming baths was constructed. He gave the school its crest and motto: "Ut severis seges" which means you get out what you put in.
1908	Under the new head Mr. Finn, the school had 81 pupils but when Mr Finn retired in 1926, there were 114, more than ever before.
1914	33 Old Sandbachians died in the Great War.
1926	A new headmaster is appointed, Mr. Crockett.
1927	The Pavilion is erected to coincide with the 250th anniversary of the founding of the school and to commemorate those who died in the Great War. It was also used as a cricket pavilion.
1930s	The Houses were renamed Welles, Lea, Ward and School House. School House was for the boarders, however when pupils stopped living here, the house was renamed Craig House after Sir Ernest Craig, the MP for Crewe who was an Old Boy of the school and a governor.
1939-1945	Many Masters joined the Armed Forces. Air Raid shelters appeared on the back field.
1947	345 boys in the school, which now had a 6 <sup>th</sup> form. The uniform was very similar to the present. The main difference was that many boys still wore shorts, the tie was green and caps were compulsory. There was still Saturday school and the cane was used.
1955	The school becomes an independent school. Entry exams are required.
1962	760 boys attending. The Cubbon Bronner building was built.
1968	Swimming pool and sports hall were built.
1977	School accepted fee paying boys nominated and paid for by the local authority in line with the comprehensive School system, whilst still remaining an Independent School.
1979	School is no longer independent. Entry exams were gotten rid of.
1980s	The Headteacher, Reverend John Francis, renewed the focus on the House system. There were four houses as there are today, Welles, Ward, Lea and Craig.
2008	The first female Headteacher was appointed.
2014	The decision is made to allow girls to enroll in the Sixth Form.
2016	Gina Kelly was appointed Deputy Head on the Head boy and girl team, with Chloe Esegbona and Katie Hadfield as team members.

## SANDBACH SCHOOL - A BRIEF HISTORY



### Early years

In the year **1677**, a group of local people set up a school for the boys of Sandbach. The two most important were called **Richard Lea and Francis Welles**. The school was built in **Middlewich Road**. Dr Ward of Bradwall left money to the school in 1718 to help boys who wanted to do this.

By **1815**, there were about **60 boys** in the school. Hours were long - school started at **7.30am** and finished at **5pm**, with two hours for lunch. Boys had to go to school on Saturday mornings as well. There was no school uniform but **discipline was strict**. **Boys who were naughty or lazy were caned**.

### The move to Crewe Road

By the **1840s**, the old school building was falling down. The school was decided to be built in **Crewe Road**. A young architect called **Gilbert Scott** designed the new school.



*This print appears to date from the building of the present school in 1849*



**Gilbert Scott - architect**

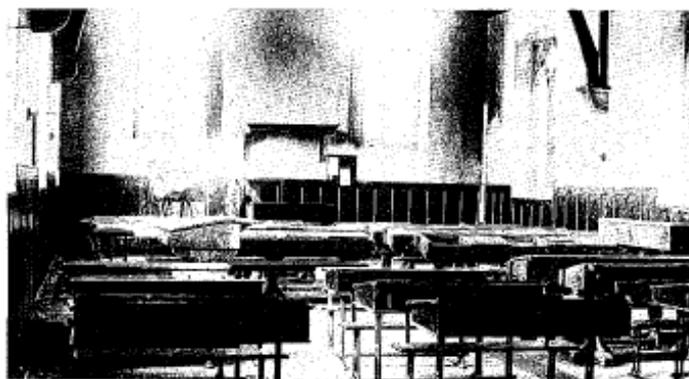
When the school opened in **1850**, it had just **38 pupils** and **two teachers**. Pupils had to pay, but the fee was only **£2 a year**. About half of them were "boarders", who lived at the school except in the holidays. **They all had to wear short jackets and big collars and mortarboard hats**. The boarders slept in dormitories at the top of School House (where the computer rooms are now). **By 1867 there were 94 pupils** at the school, all of whom were taught in the theatre space which was then called "**Big School**".

The boys all studied History, Maths, Science, Geography, "Divinity" (RS), and English. Some took French or German, and book-keeping.

There were no organised sports in school with the Headmaster using the front field to graze cows and horses.

### Early 20<sup>th</sup> century - new headmasters

**Mr Heslop - 1888**. He started the playing of regular games against other schools in **cricket and football**. He gave the school its **crest and motto: "Ut severis seges"** which means you get out what you put in. In his time, the present LRC buildings were built as a gymnasium and a science lab.



*"Big School," now the east end of the School Hall in which one of these master's desks is in daily use*

**Mr Finn** introduced the House system. In **1908** the school had **81 pupils** but when **Mr Finn** retired in **1926**, there were **114**, more than ever before.

Between 1914 and 1918 **33 Old Sandbachians** died in the Great War.

Mr Crockett - 1926 to 1946. In 1927, the Cricket Pavilion was built for three reasons. One was obviously to be used as a cricket pavilion. The others were to commemorate 250 years of the school and as a memorial to the Sandbach boys who died in WW1. Cricket continued to be popular but rugby replaced football.



THE WAR MEMORIAL PAVILION.

The Houses were renamed Welles, Lea, Ward and School House. School House was for the boarders, however when in the 1930s pupils stopped living here, the house was renamed Craig House after Sir Ernest Craig, the MP for Crewe who was an Old Boy of the school and a governor.

A new block was built in the 1930s to provide more science rooms - these were rooms 8 to 11 and the ones above. The Front field was levelled by the boys themselves for more sports facilities. The number of pupils rose and by 1947 there were 345 boys in the school, which now had a 6<sup>th</sup> form. The uniform was very similar to the present. The main difference was that many boys still wore shorts, the tie was green not red and caps were compulsory. The boys had to still go to school on Saturdays. Discipline was very strict, with the cane being a normal punishment.

### Grammar or comprehensive?

In the middle of the 1950s, the local council decided that boys would have to pass an exam to get into Sandbach School. This meant a big rise in numbers because parents wanted their sons to come here because it was teaching the best pupils. By 1962 there were 760 boys attending. The Cubbon Bronner building was built. The dormitories became art rooms. The old dining room became the current chapel. The main hall was built onto the end of the theatre space and the Refectory was built.

In the later 1960s, the present (indoor!) swimming pool and the sports hall were built. During the 1960s, although rugby remained the main winter game, football and hockey were also popular. The subjects studied by the boys were English, Maths, French, Art, Music, Science, Technology, RS, History, Geography, PE and, for some, Latin or German.

In the later 1970s, it was agreed that Sandbach School should become a comprehensive school. This meant that boys from all over the local area could attend without taking an exam. The Rigby Block was built. The Library moved into its current place. The Art rooms became IT rooms. The Maxwell Davies Centre was built for Music in the 1980s. Also during the 1980's Headteacher, Reverend John Francis, renewed the focus on the House system. There were four houses as there are today, Welles, Ward, Lea and Craig.

### Into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century...

In 1997, the Peter Doughty Building was opened which provided a sixth form area. New tennis courts were opened in 2000 and an all-weather pitch was built in 2002.

In 2008, the first female headmaster Sarah Burns was appointed. The school opened the Lonsdale Centre and the new Maths rooms. This was to cope with the growing number of pupils at the school. There are currently approximately 1200 pupils attending Sandbach School. In Spring 2012, the Peter Doughty Building was extended to improve the common room and add two new teaching rooms.

In 2010, the Sandbach secondary schools decided to allow access to their 6<sup>th</sup> forms for both boys and girls. Initially it was just for individual subjects however in 2014, girls could enrol at Sandbach School 6<sup>th</sup> form. In September 2015, 22 girls joined Year 12 and in 2016 Gina Kelly was appointed Deputy Head on the Head boy and girl team, with Chloe Esegbona and Katie Hadfield as team members.

# Timeline of Saxon, Viking and Norman raiding, invading and settling

This timeline shows you the sequence of raiding, invading and settling events. Refer to it whenever you have a concern about where something fits in.

406

Roman army leaves Britain



477-95  
Saxons settle in  
Sussex and Wessex



620s

Sutton Hoo burial



871  
Alfred  
becomes King  
of Wessex



664  
Synod of  
Whitby

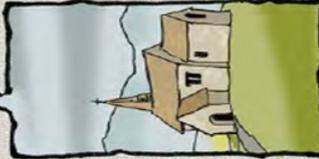
## SAXONS

## VIKINGS

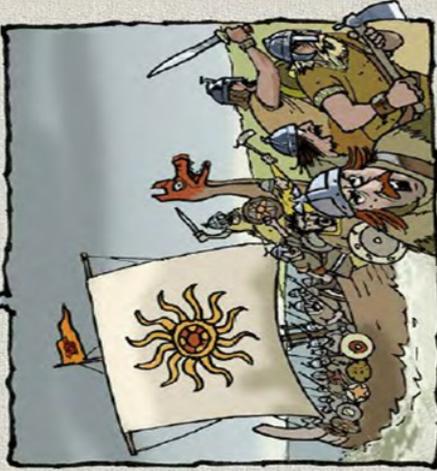


440s

Saxon raids begin



597  
St Augustine's  
Christian mission  
arrives in Kent



793-5  
Vikings raid Lindisfarne,  
Jarrow and Iona

865  
Viking 'Great Army'  
arrives

878

Alfred defeats Danes  
(Vikings) at Edlington  
and Guthrum the Dane  
is baptised



1016

Cnut the Dane  
becomes King  
of all England



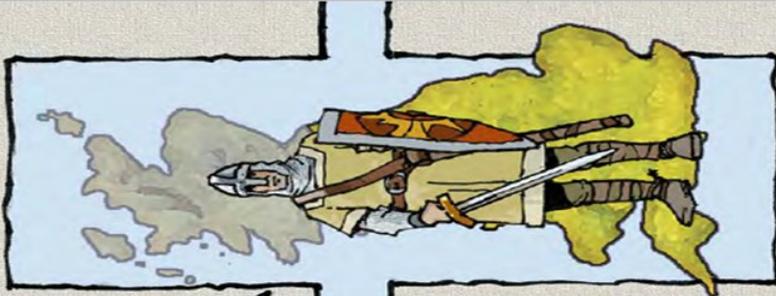
1066

William of Normandy invades  
England and defeats Harold of  
Wessex



1070

Resistance of  
Hereward the  
Wake



1100

Entire Saxon ruling class  
has been replaced by  
Normans

## NORMANS



899  
Death of Alfred



1042  
Edward the  
Confessor  
becomes  
King of  
England



991

First Dane geld paid



1069

Harrying of the North by  
the Norman army

# Who were the Vikings?



**Viking travels:** The Vikings were great explorers and travellers. Viking ships reached **Britain, France, Spain, Italy and North Africa.**

Traders made long journeys overland through **Russia**, reaching as far south as **Constantinople** in modern-day Turkey. Some merchants travelled further east to **Baghdad** in Iraq.

A few daring explorers made voyages to Iceland and beyond, travelling across the Atlantic Ocean to **North America.**

**Viking Ships:** The Vikings built fast 'dragon-ships' and 'long ships' for **raiding and war.**

They also had slower passenger and cargo ships called '**knorr**s'. They built smaller boats too, for fishing or short trips. A ship carried everything needed at sea - drinking water, dried meat to eat, tools, weapons, and furs to keep warm.

Viking **longships** could sail in **shallow** water so they could travel up rivers as well as across the sea. In a raid, a ship could be hauled up on a beach. The Vikings could jump out and start fighting, and then make a quick getaway if they were chased.



This is the kind of balance scale a Viking trader used. They put the little weights



The name 'Viking' comes from a language called 'Old Norse' and means 'a pirate raid'. People who went off raiding in ships were said to be 'going Viking'. But not all the Vikings were bloodthirsty warriors.

The Vikings originally came from Norway, Denmark and Sweden but they were each very different from the other group and very independent of each other.

## The Vikings were great sailors:

Vikings sailed close to the coast whenever possible, watching for **land marks.**

Out of sight of land, they looked for **the sun:** west (towards the sunset) meant they were headed for England; east (towards the sunrise) meant home to Denmark or Norway.

The Vikings invented a kind of **sun compass** to help find their way. At night they watched the skies and could use the position of the stars to determine which direction they were heading.

Seamen knew a lot about **winds** and **sea currents.** By watching birds or even the colour of the water, an experienced sailor could tell when land was close.

**Viking traders:** The Vikings traded all over Europe and as far east as Central Asia.

They bought goods and materials such as **silver, silk, spices, wine, jewellery, glass and pottery.**

In return, they sold items like honey, tin, wheat, wool, wood, iron, fur, leather, fish and walrus ivory. Everywhere they went, the Vikings **bought** and **sold** slaves too.

Viking traders carried a set of **folding scales** which they used to weigh coins to make sure they got a fair deal.

**Life as a Viking:** Many Vikings worked as **farmers**. Everything had to be done by hand on a Viking farm, so life was tough. Farmers grew oats, barley and wheat. Then they ground the grain to make flour, porridge and ale. They planted vegetables too, and kept animals like cows, sheep, pigs and chickens.

Other Vikings were **craft workers**. They made the things that people needed. Woodworkers and leatherworkers made plates, cups, belts and shoes. Jewellers made rings and brooches from precious metals. Blacksmiths hammered and twisted red-hot iron into tools, knives and swords. Potters baked clay pots in an oven heated by wood fires.

People took these goods to market to sell. Here a family could buy anything from amber beads and apples, to walrus tusks and wolf-skins. Viking traders sold their goods even further away. They sailed the seas to buy silver, silk, spices and furs to bring back home.



**Viking attacks:** The Vikings did use raids from the sea as a tactic. They would send a few ships to make surprise attacks on places in order to steal treasure, weapons, animals, and even capture slaves. They then used their fast dragon ships to escape before any resistance could be organised.

They also did get together in big armies to carry out wars but this was far rarer than raiding.

They would go raiding twice a year in between their normal everyday tasks and jobs like farming or fishing



**Viking warriors:** Viking warriors fought using **long swords** and **axes**. A good sword was handed down from father to son, but Vikings also **buried** weapons with their owner when he died.

Vikings did not wear much armour. Some chieftains wore chain mail coats, but most relied on a round wooden shield for protection.

Some Viking warriors went into battle wearing wolf or bear skins. These warriors were called '**berserkers**' because they went 'berserk' (out of control) and charged fearlessly into battle. Berserkers believed that Odin, the god of war, gave them superhuman powers and that they didn't need to wear battle armour for protection.

They were farmers, and kept animals and grew crops. They were skilful at crafting, and made beautiful metalwork and wooden carvings. They were also skilled fishermen and sailors. Viking men (and in some cases women) trained to fight from an early age.



**Viking homes:** Many Viking families lived together in a longhouse. This was built from wood or stone and had a thatched or turf roof on top. With just one room for all the family to share with their animals, a longhouse would have been a crowded and smelly place to live. There was no bathroom inside, but the Vikings kept clean by washing in a wooden bucket or beside a stream. Instead of toilets, people used a cesspit, which was a hole outside dug for toilet waste.

Everyday life in **Anglo Saxon England** was hard and rough even for the rich. Society was divided into three classes. At the top were the thanes, the Anglo Saxon upper class. They enjoyed hunting and feasting and they were expected to give their followers gifts like weapons. Below them were the churls. Some churls were reasonably well off. Others were very poor. However at least they were free. Below them were a class of slaves called thralls. Their lives were very hard.

Some churls owned their own land but many 'rented' land from a thane. They 'paid rent' by working on the thane's land for part of the week and by giving him part of their crops.

In early Anglo Saxon Times England was a very different place from what it is today. It was covered by forest. Wolves prowled in them and they were a danger to domestic animals. The human population was very small. There were perhaps one million people in England at that time. Almost all of them lived in tiny villages - many had less than 100 inhabitants. Each village was mainly self sufficient. The people needed only a few things from outside like salt and iron. They grew their own food and made their own clothes.

By the 11th century things had changed somewhat. The great majority of people still lived in the countryside but a significant minority (about 10%) lived in towns. Many new towns had been created and trade was flourishing. England had grown into a stable, civilized state with an efficient system of local government. In the monasteries learning and the arts flourished.

The Anglo Saxons also gave us most English place names. Saxon place name endings include: ham, a village or estate, tun (usually changed to ton), a farm or estate, hurst, a wooded hill and bury, which is derived from the Saxon word burh, meaning fortress or fortified settlement. The Anglo Saxons called groups of Roman buildings a caester. In time that word evolved into the place name ending chester, caster or cester.

#### A Lord's Life

We know little about how most people lived, for so little remains. The richer lords lived on estates, with a main rectangular hall surrounded by outlying buildings for various living, working, and storage purposes. Inside the hall a lord might mark his prestige by expensive wall hangings or even paintings. The hall was the scene of feasts for the lord's followers, and a lord was expected to be a lavish host.

Society was divided into several social classes, which might vary from place to place. At the top was the king. He was essentially a war leader. He was expected to provide opportunities for plunder and glory for his followers. The king who did not provide land, slaves, or plunder might wake up dead one fine morning.

Below the king there were two levels of freemen, the upper class thanes and the lower class ceorls (churls). The division between the two was strictly in terms of land owned. A man could only be a thane if he owned at least five hides of land (a hide was defined as the amount of land necessary to provide a living for one family). Aside from the ownership of land, a ceorl could actually be a richer man than the thane.

Below the thanes and ceorls were the slaves. Slavery was one of the biggest commercial enterprises of Anglo-Saxon life, and much depended on this involuntary labour force.

#### Clothing

The robe or tunic gathered at the waist was the common garment for a man, completed by hose and soft shoes. For a woman the robe or dress extended to the feet. The usual materials were linen and woollens, the more expensive outfits being marked by colourful dyes and exotic borders. Brooches were used to fasten clothing by rich and poor, and amulets of stones were worn for luck.

#### Weapons

In war the common weapon was the spear made with a seven foot long ash shaft and an iron head. It was both thrown and used to jab. Shields were round, made of wood covered with leather, and had an iron boss in the centre. Only the nobility used swords, which were about thirty inches long, made of iron with steel edges. The hilt was often elaborately carved and jeweled, and could be inscribed with good luck symbols.

#### Leisure

When they weren't fighting (one wonders when that was) the favourite pastimes of the Anglo-Saxon period were dice and board games such as chess. Elaborate riddles were popular, as was horse racing and hunting. At feasts the most common entertainment was the harp, which was also used in church music. In addition to the harp, scenes of juggling balls and knives have been found illustrating books of the period.

#### Travelling

Travel was not uncommon, and the main trade routes, often along the old Roman roads, were used frequently. However, off the main routes travel could be a risky business. Travellers were advised to shout, blow horns, and make lots of noise. Otherwise any strangers were assumed to be outlaws, and could be killed out of hand.

#### Administration

The land was divided into shires, mainly according to the territory of the first tribes. The shire was divided into hundreds. These were the basic units of administration and the court system.

To look after the king's interests (see that all the taxes were collected) and administer justice, were the ealdormen and shire-reeves (sheriffs). Within the shires were the towns, or burhs, which ranged in size from 5000 people at York to 500 at St. Albans. Initially only some of the towns were walled, and those often with earthworks reminiscent of the Bronze Age.

#### Farming

In the countryside the vast majority of the people lived by farming. At first most of the farms were owned outright. The ceorls worked co-operatively, sharing the expense of a team of oxen to plough the large common fields in narrow strips that were shared out alternately so that each farmer had an equal share of good and bad land.

Later much of this land was consolidated into the large estates of wealthy nobles. Ceorls might work the land in return for service or produce, or they might work the lord's land a given number of days per year. As time went on more and more of these large estates were established as integrated commercial enterprises, complete with water mill to grind the grain.

#### Food

The crops most frequently grown were wheat, oats, rye, and barley (both as a cereal and as the base for beer). Peas, beans, and lentils were also common. Honey was the only sweetener in use, and it was used to make the alcoholic beverage mead. Pigs were a major food animal, as were cattle, goats, and sheep. Horses and oxen were raised for heavy farm labour and transportation, though the stirrup had yet to make an appearance from the far east.

# What did the Anglo-Saxons do all day?

## Learning objectives

- Learn how people lived in Anglo-Saxon England.
- Know the ways in which Anglo-Saxons made England prosperous.

## Did you know?

In 1065, Anglo-Saxon villagers used vegetable dyes to make their clothes brightly coloured. They hadn't invented buttons and they used moss or grass as toilet paper.

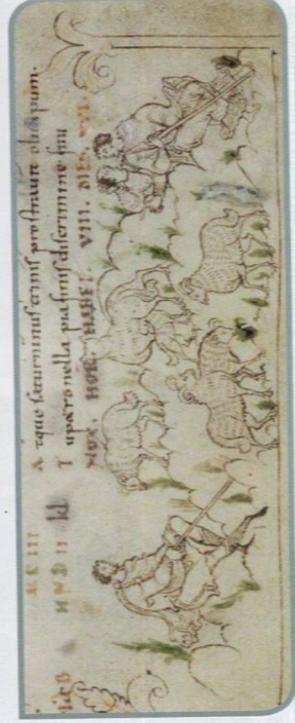
## Key term

**Hide\*:** The amount needed to support a family.

## Working on the land

Most Anglo-Saxons lived in villages and worked on the land. There were ceorls, who were free men, and thralls, who were slaves. Each ceorl worked at least one hide\* of land in the great open fields that surrounded the villages. They grew barley, rye and wheat, along with peas, beans and flax. Barley was used in brewing beer, rye and wheat in bread-making, and flax was spun and woven into cloth. Sheep, pigs, hens and cows provided wool, meat, eggs and milk, while honey from bees was used for sweetening.

Most villages had a lord, usually a thegn (see page 20) who the villagers looked to for protection in times of trouble. In return for this protection, the village ceorls and thralls worked the lord's land for him and gave him 'food rent' – eggs, meat, peas or milk – whatever it was that they produced.



**Source A:** In about AD 1000, an unknown monk produced a chronology. This was a calendar with one page for each month. At the bottom of each page the monk drew a picture of the work villagers did in that month. These are two of those pictures.

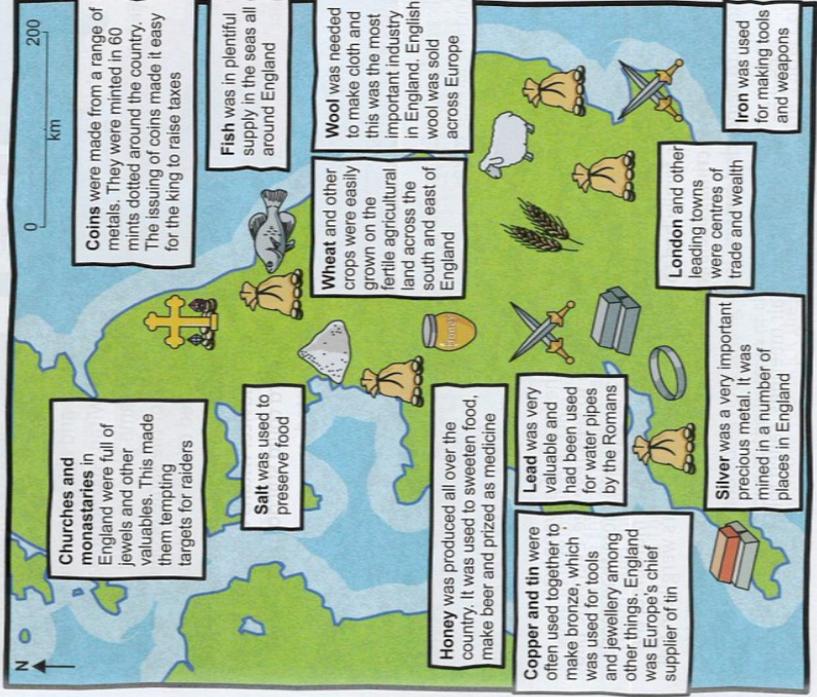
## Working in towns

Some villages grew into towns, and in AD 1000 about 10 per cent of the population of England lived in a town. Towns grew from markets where people from the surrounding countryside came to buy and sell; some towns specialised in, for example, leather-work or weaving or soap-making. Towns on the coast became busy ports. Ships would carry goods to other ports on the coast of England, or across the seas to Europe. By the 11th century, England was a prosperous country – a rich prize for any invader.

## Your turn!

1 Look at Source A.

- What work is being done in these pictures?
  - Why do you think a monk bothered to draw pictures of people working on the land?
- Can you solve the riddles in Source B?
  - Write your own Saxon riddle and see if anyone in your class can solve it.
  - Put together a class riddle book.
- Look at the map in Figure 1.1. With a partner, discuss why people would want to invade England. Put these reasons on a spider diagram with a centre labelled 'Pull factors'.
  - Write a paragraph to explain why, by the 11th century, England was attractive to invaders.



**Source B:** Anglo-Saxons were fond of jokes and riddles. Here are two of them.

Multi-coloured, I flee the sky and the deep earth.  
There is no place for me on the ground, I make the world grow green with my tears. What am I?

I grow tall and am hairy underneath. Sometimes a beautiful girl grips me, rips off my head and puts me in a pan of water. I make her cry. What am I?

(Answers on page 203.)

**Figure 1.1:** Map showing England's prosperity in the 11th century.



Source C: Anglo-Saxon painting of a Witan.

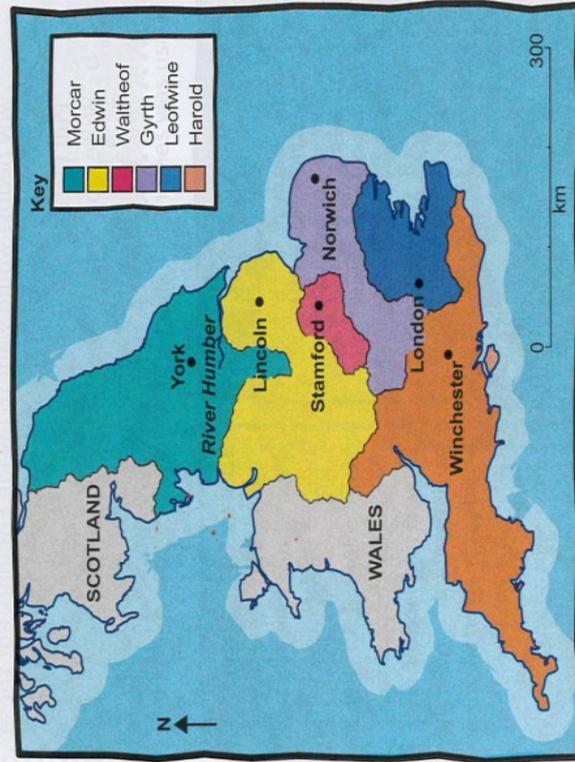


Figure 1.2: Map showing the six earldoms of England in 1065, the earls who ran them and the largest towns.

### Running the country

In 1043, Edward the Confessor was crowned king of England. He ruled England with the help of the Witan.

#### Witans

The Witan was an assembly of 'wise men'. Edward could invite whoever he wanted to come to a Witan. However, it made good sense to invite the most powerful men in the kingdom. These were the earls, who helped Edward run large areas of England (see the map in Figure 1.2) in return for promising him military help if he needed it. To involve the earls meant they would be likely to support any decisions he made and there would be no rebellions. As well as earls, Edward sometimes invited thegns, bishops and abbots to come to a Witan. Witans did not always meet in the same place and did not always consist of the same people. It all depended on where Edward was and on what problem he was asking for their advice. Witans only gave advice: Edward could still do exactly what he wanted.

### Reconstructing the past

Anglo-Saxon houses that were lived in by ordinary people have not survived, and there are no drawings or paintings to tell us what they looked like. So how can we find out?



Interpretation 1: A reconstruction of 11th-century Anglo-Saxon houses in Norwich, Norfolk.

## What was England like before the Battle of Hastings?

- Work in groups of five. On a large piece of paper, draw a diagram on the right. Write labels or draw pictures of thegns and thralls in the correct sections on the top and the least powerful at the bottom.
- Divide the five roles on the triangle between members of a slip of paper, and add a note saying what you expect your role is the one at the bottom of the triangle, and what you do for the role above you. Stick these slips of paper on the diagram.

#### Justice

Anglo-Saxon justice was based on the family. If anyone was wronged, their family was expected to seek revenge. Everyone had a life-price, called a 'wergild'. Thegns were worth more than ceorls, who were worth more than thralls. If a person was murdered, the murderer's family had to pay the murdered person's wergild in full. For lesser crimes like injuring someone, proportions of wergild had to be handed over. Saxons held regular open-air meetings, called folk-moots, which dealt with people who broke the law.

## How did the Anglo-Saxons go to war? The Fyrd

Anglo-Saxon Kings had their own highly trained and professional household guard – the **Housekarls**. **Earls** also had their own household troops (as did richer **thegns**). **Thegns** (local landowners) were responsible for raising (levying) an army from the peasants on their lands and leading them into battle. This army was called the **Fyrd**. They were not well trained or professional soldiers on the whole although many of the passtimes of the Anglo-Saxons were based around training to fight.

**Ceorls** were liable for military service in the *fyrd* (army) (but by the 8th Century kings seem to have preferred to levy thegns who were better trained and equipped).

The Fyrd were called up when they were needed and the Ceorls returned to farming their land when they were not needed. Later laws meant that Ceorls had to have their own spear, shield, helmet and/or axe and sword.



The main tactic was the Shield Wall. This could be a very effective tactic and was very, very difficult to breakthrough as all warriors interlinked their shields and poked their spears, swords and knives through the gaps in the shields. Everyone had to be very strong to fight in the shield wall – it was terrifying and relied on coordination and bravery.

In war the common weapon was the spear made with a seven foot long ash shaft and an iron head. It was both thrown and used to jab. Shields were round, made of wood covered with leather, and had an iron boss in the centre. Only the nobility used swords, which were about thirty inches long, made of iron with steel edges. The hilt was often elaborately carved and jeweled, and could be inscribed with good luck symbols.

## Armor and weapons

Warriors wore pointed metal helmets, with a panel to cover the nose. They dressed in chain-mail tunics and had wooden shields that were usually round in shape.

In battle, a line of soldiers often used their shields to form a wall to protect them.



Javelins and bows and arrows were used for long-range attacks, while soldiers relied on their spears, swords and axes in the heart of battle. The most feared weapon was the two-bladed battleaxe, which could do terrible damage, sometimes splitting a man's skull in half. Swords were highly prized and usually decorated with fine carvings. Some swords even had spells carved on them to protect the sword-bearer and bring him luck in battle.

# Sutton Hoo



## Clue B

## Where did this all happen?

This excavation took place over 70 years ago, in 1939.

There was a large mound close to the River Deben at a place called Sutton Hoo in Suffolk.

The archaeologists dug a long trench into the mound.

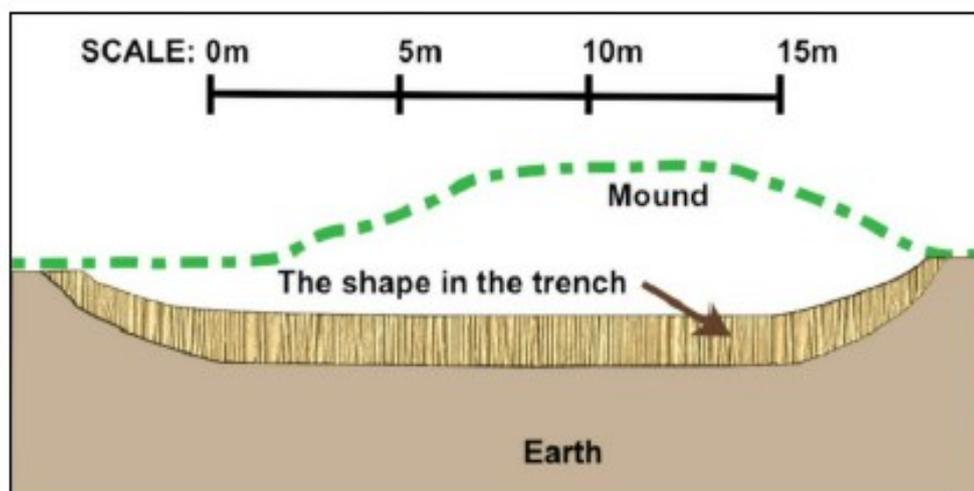
Clue A showed you a picture inside the trench.

The soil in the trench was a different colour from the surrounding soil because it contained rotted wood.

The long rows of 'dots' you saw in Clue A were iron rivets (a kind of nail).



**This is a lengthways section of the trench.**



## Clue C What did they find at Sutton Hoo?

Here are three objects found in the trench. Many objects were in pieces and were put together again carefully.



They also found:

- A shield, spears and a sword decorated with jewels and gold
- Drinking horns
- An iron axe and chain-mail armour
- Silver bowls and dishes
- A golden shoulder clasp decorated with jewels
- A stringed musical instrument like a harp



## Clue D      **Beowulf – the burial of a hero**

‘On a spot overlooking the sea, the lords of the people began to build Beowulf’s funeral fire, hanging on it his helmets, battle-shields and shining armour. In the centre they laid Beowulf’s body and all the time they were weeping at their hero’s death.

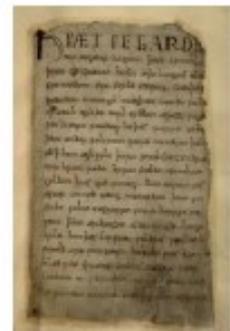
Black wood smoke began rising from the fire and then the sound of roaring flames and weeping men.

Then the lords built a burial mound, high and broad so it could be seen out at sea. It took ten days to finish this monument to their hero. Inside the mound they put rings and jewels and ornaments and all his gold and treasure.

Finally they rode round his grave mound, praising his greatness and all his brave deeds.’

**These lines come from a poem called ‘Beowulf’, a story written around 700-750AD. They describe the burial of Beowulf.**

**This is a fictional story but the writer probably based this description on events he had seen.**



## Clue E

## Discoveries in other places

In 1862 archaeologists found a ship buried under a mound at Snape, about ten miles north of Sutton Hoo. In the ship were spearheads, a gold ring, a glass beaker and coloured glass.

These things were often buried with wealthy people but there was no body in this ship burial at Snape.

Then, in 1904 a ship was found buried under a mound in Oseberg in Norway. It contained the bodies of two women. One may have been Asa, a Viking queen.

Alongside the bodies were many objects – beds, lamps, a cart, sledges and tapestries. Jewels and treasure had probably been buried too but they had been stolen sometime in the past.



## Clue F

## More finds at Sutton Hoo

37 gold coins and pieces of gold were found at Sutton Hoo. They came from the country we call France.



The pictures and faces on the coins help archaeologists work out how old they are. They come from the early 600s AD and must have been buried sometime between 610 and 635 AD.



## Clue H

## Who was buried there?

Here is some information about four kings of East Anglia, the Anglo-Saxon kingdom which included Sutton Hoo:

Most likely king buried at Sutton Hoo

1. **Raedwald:** king from 599 to 625 AD

Raedwald was a very rich and powerful king. He was overlord of all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the most powerful king in England.

2. **Eorpwold:** king from 625 to 627 or 628 AD

Eorpwold was Raedwald's son. He only ruled for a very short time before he was murdered.

3. **Sigebert:** king from about 630 to 637 AD

Sigebert really wanted to be a monk and shared the kingship with Ecric, his cousin. Sigebert was probably buried near Ely, over 50 miles from Sutton Hoo.

4. **Ecric:** king from 634 to 637 AD

Soon after Ecric became king East Anglia was attacked by other kings. Ecric and Sigebert were killed in battle in 637.

# The Vikings – murderous invaders or peaceful settlers?

## Learning objectives

- Learn who the Vikings were, and where they came from.
- Understand the impact the Vikings had on England.
- Learn how the Vikings explored and settled other countries.

## What do you think?

What do you already know about the Vikings?

## Key term

**Danelaw\*:** The areas of Anglo-Saxon England that were populated by the descendants of Vikings. These areas followed Viking laws and customs.

In AD 793, monks working peacefully at their monastery in Lindisfarne, Northumbria, were surprised by the appearance of sails on the horizon. The ships drew closer and hordes of warriors came ashore. They ransacked the monastery, stole its gold and jewels, and killed its inhabitants. The monks, who carried no weapons, were defenceless.

Some at the time described the invaders as 'pagans', or people without religion. Others called them 'Danes' or the 'Northmen'. It wasn't until the 11th century that they received the name 'Vikings', which means 'pirate raiders'. The raid on Lindisfarne was only the first of many; soon, the Vikings attacked other targets, and in larger numbers. For the next 250 years, Britain faced repeated attacks from the Vikings.



Figure 6.8: Viking raiders.

## Who were the Vikings?

The Vikings were different groups of people who came from the modern-day countries of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Life at home was probably very hard, with too many people and not enough land. It's possible that merchants who had traded with the Anglo-Saxons returned home to the Viking homelands and spoke of the fertile lands and riches to the west. It's not surprising that many chose to risk the journey across the sea to Britain.

## What made the Vikings such effective raiders?

The Vikings were highly effective sailors. Their ships used a combination of sails and oars, allowing them to travel long distances. They were also able to navigate rivers that were too shallow for most ships, allowing them to penetrate deep inland where people least expected it.



Figure 6.9: A Viking longboat.

## Did you know?

One recent study suggested that one million people in Britain today are direct descendants of the Vikings. In some areas, such as the Shetland Islands, as many as 30 per cent of the population are descended from Vikings.

## The Viking invasion

In AD 865, the Vikings changed tactics. Instead of small hit-and-run raids that aimed to carry away loot and plunder, the Vikings launched a full-scale invasion. One by one, the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were defeated, until only the kingdom of Wessex, ruled by Alfred, was left.

However, Alfred proved to be an impressive military leader and defeated the Viking army, forcing their leader to convert to Christianity. Because of his victory, Alfred gained the title by which he is commonly known – Alfred 'the Great'. However, he was unable to drive the Vikings completely from Britain. Instead, he divided the land into two kingdoms. The Anglo-Saxon kingdom covered most of southern England, while the Viking kingdom included much of northern England and East Anglia. This became known as the 'Danelaw\*'. Many Vikings settled there and, over time, became part of the general population, until it would have been difficult to tell who was a Viking and who was 'English'.

In Britain, the Vikings have had a lasting impact. The Viking city of Jorvik (modern-day York) had 10,000 inhabitants at its peak and was a major trading centre. You can still see the impact of the Vikings on place names today. Places with the suffixes '-by' or '-thorpe' (e.g. Whitby, Derby, Scunthorpe) were probably founded by the Vikings.

## Your turn!

- 1 Draw a 'push' and 'pull' diagram to show why the Vikings came to Britain. For 'push', include the reasons that made them want to leave their homeland. For 'pull', include what attracted them to Britain.
- 2 Read Source A. Suggest a reason why this source is useful to historians wanting to find out about the impact of the Vikings in Britain.
  - 3 What else can you learn from Source A about:
    - a Alfred as a leader
    - b agreements Alfred made with the Vikings?
  - 4 What evidence is there in Source A that the Vikings were not just raiders and plunderers, but instead settled in Britain? Pick a quote and explain it.
  - 5 Explain how evidence such as place names and the remains of Jorvik also suggest that the Vikings eventually settled down.

**Source A:** An extract from the Peterborough Manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. This was written by monks from the ninth to the 12th centuries AD.

[Alfred]... made peace with the raiding-army, and they granted him as hostages the most distinguished men who were next to the king in the raiding-army, and they swore him oaths on the sacred ring, which earlier they would not do to any nation, that they would quickly go from his kingdom... And that year Halfdan divided up the land of Northumbria; and they were ploughing and were providing for themselves.

# The Vikings as empire-builders

## Did you know?

Until recently, it was thought that Christopher Columbus was the first European to discover the Americas in 1492. However, the Vikings had arrived first, some 500 years earlier.

The reputation of the Vikings is of violent warriors who raided and pillaged the British Isles. However, the reality is more complicated; as you have already learned, many Vikings peacefully settled in Britain and became part of the general population over time.

Also, it's important to remember that England was just one of many places that the Vikings travelled to. They were fearless explorers and traders who managed to build a large empire. Below are some examples.

### The Vikings as explorers and state-builders

The Vikings colonised large parts of Scotland, the Orkney Islands and the Isle of Man, and founded the city of Dublin. They also took control of northern France. As they came from the north, they were known as the 'Nor(th)men', so this part of France became known as 'Normandy'. William the Conqueror was a descendant of Viking settlers. Therefore, in turn, the Norman invasion and conquest of England in 1066 can be seen as a further expansion of the Viking empire.

### The Vikings as traders and craftsmen

The Vikings did not just attack neighbouring settlements; they also traded with them. There is evidence of extensive trading networks, which exchanged goods such as silver, silks, spices, wine, jewellery, glass and pottery. Excavations have revealed that some Vikings were talented craftsmen, making sophisticated metalwork and wooden carvings.



Figure 6.10: A map of Viking exploration.

**Interpretation 1:** From *The Age of the Vikings* by Anders Winroth, a historian who has aimed to change public perception of the Vikings.

The Vikings were violent, even ferociously so. They hunted slaves, killed, maimed and plundered over much of Europe... [but] the Middle Ages were a violent time overall... the Viking Age was also a moment of great cultural, religious and political achievement... Literature flourished... Scandinavians experienced a great boom in decorative art... trade and exchange, bought not only untold riches... but also all kinds of exotic trade goods. Chieftains impressed people by drinking [German] wine from Egyptian glasses, by [gaining] the strongest steel in the world for their swords from central Asia and India, by wearing Chinese silk and Indian gems, and by offering those they counted as friends a share in all that wealth.

## Your turn

Read Interpretation 1 and answer these questions.

- 1 Summarise in a few sentences what interpretation the historian gives about the Vikings.
- 2 Using the information on these pages, and your notes, provide evidence both to support and to challenge the viewpoint of the historian.
- 3 How convincing do you find Interpretation 1? Explain your view, giving evidence to support your opinion.

## Checkpoint

- 1 Where did the Vikings come from?
- 2 Who was Alfred, and how did he help to manage the Viking threat?
- 3 What was the 'Danelaw'?
- 4 Explain how you think the Vikings should be remembered – as ruthless warriors or as settlers and explorers.

# Who were the first English people?

As you can see, it's hard to establish who really were the first English people. Who do you think has the best claim to the title? Is it about who was there first, or who had the greatest impact?

In your class, divide into groups of four. Each person in the group should take on the role of one of the groups of people you have learned about – either the Celts, Romans, Anglo-Saxons or Vikings. Each person should think about the following.

- Why you came to the British Isles.
  - What important contributions you have made to this part of the world.
  - Why you deserve to be remembered as part of the story of England.
- When you have prepared, discuss the points above in your groups. Can you come to an agreement on who deserves the title?

### The invasion of the Great Heathen Army, 865

The **Great Heathen Army**, also called the **Great Danish Army** or **The Great Viking Army**, was a large force of Danish Vikings that attacked Anglo-Saxon England. This army appeared in East Anglia in 865. Unlike earlier Vikings who made brief raids on England and returned to their homeland, the Great army stayed for many years in an attempt to conquer all of England. The army was led by the sons of Ragnar Lothbrok – Ubba, Halfdan and Ivar the Boneless.

In 865 a large viking army made up of many smaller bands landed in East Anglia. For over a decade they remained in England destroying entire kingdoms as they went. The Danes spent the winter of 865 in East Anglia. The local people bought peace with the Vikings by supplying them with horses.

After a year, they moved northwards to Northumbria now a mounted army (866). They captured York and defeated two rival Northumbrian kings, Aella and Osbert, who had joined forces to try and repel the Danes. Both kings were killed.

In 867 they appointed a puppet-king named Egberht over the Northumbrians. In the fall of that year they moved south into Mercia. The Danes made their winter camp at Nottingham.

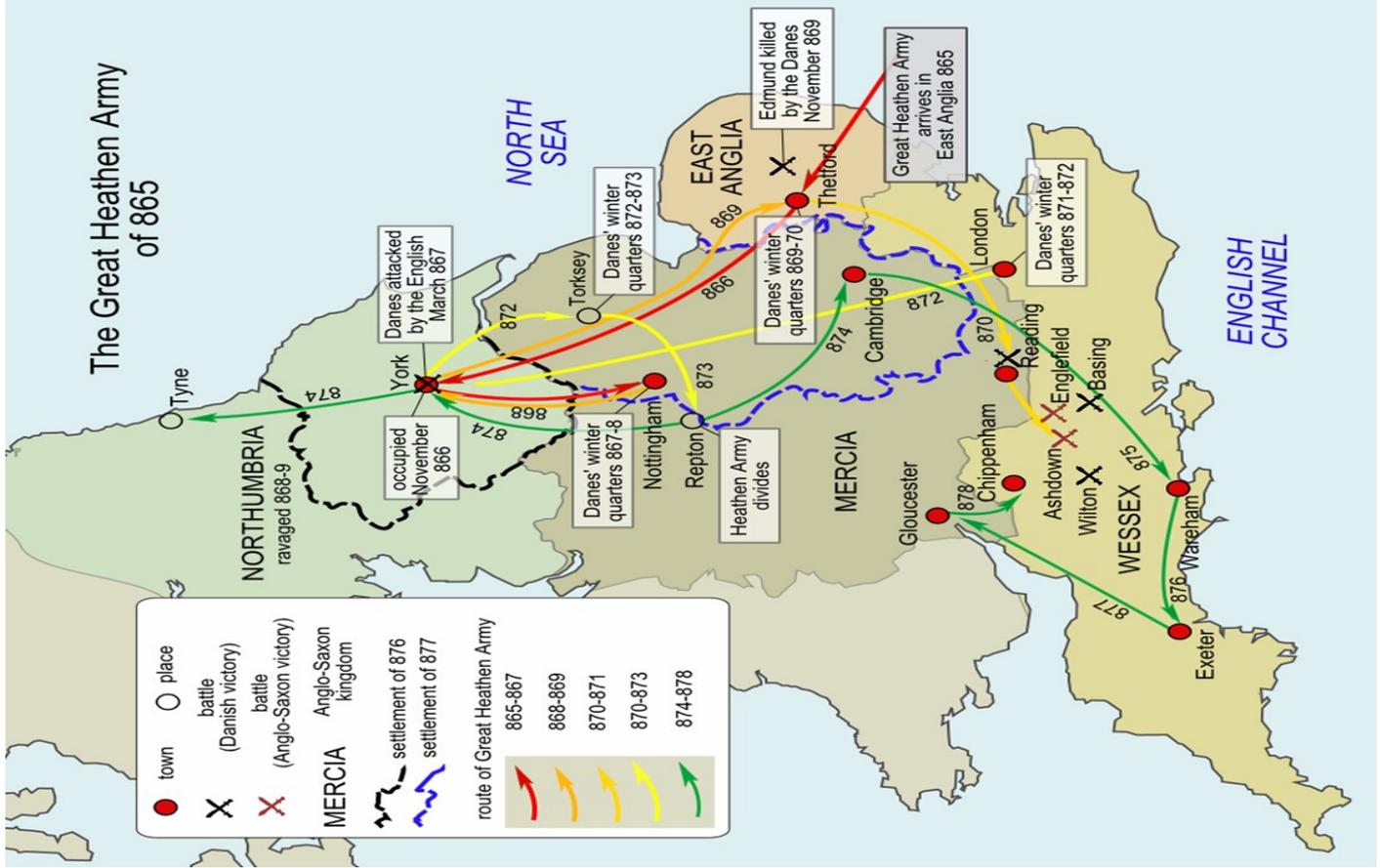
In 868 Burgred, the king of Mercia, asked King Ethelred of Wessex and his brother Alfred for their help against the Danes. The Danes did not fight but allowed the Mercians to pay them off for peace. The Vikings withdrew to York.

The next year, 869, the great Viking army grew much larger. After twelve months in York, the great army moved south again into East Anglia, where they defeated King Edmund of East Anglia.

In the autumn of 870 they moved to Reading and built defences. Athelred with his brother Alfred arrived with their army to meet the new threat. They Danes were victorious but later Wessex won a decisive battle at Ashdown.

By 870 the only one of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms that had not been defeated and conquered by the Viking army was Wessex - Athelred, his brother Alfred and their army was all that stood between the Great Heathen Army and total domination of England.

During April 871, Athelred died and Alfred his brother replaced him. The defence of Wessex and the future of England hinged on King Alfred of Wessex, who over the next year went on to fight 9 more battles against the Danes. Alfred was doing well but the Danes were not beaten for good....



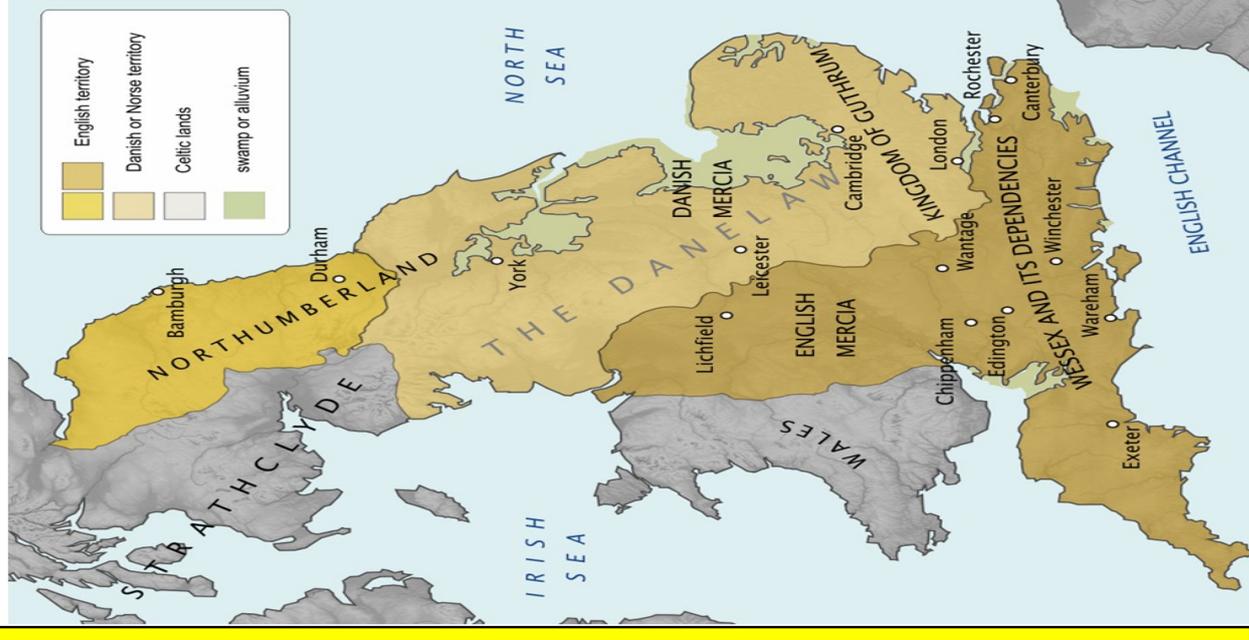
In 886 Alfred entered London where he was acclaimed as the sovereign lord **'all the English people not under subjection to the Danes'**.

He became the most important ruler of the Anglo-Saxons and the 1<sup>st</sup> to call himself 'King of the Anglo-Saxons'.

However by the 890s the Vikings had returned. Alfred continued to fight them off and many settled relatively peacefully. The area controlled by the Vikings became known as the *Danelaw* and covered an area roughly east of a line on a map joining London and Chester. There were three main areas where Vikings lived. These areas were **Northumbria (which included modern Yorkshire), East Anglia, and the Five Boroughs (a borough was a town)**. The five towns were **Leicester, Nottingham, Derby, Stamford and Lincoln**. In the Danelaw people followed Viking laws (Dane Laws), spoke Norse, and lived in much the same way as Vikings in Scandinavia. Most people were farmers.

**How English was England at this point?**

## Danelaw



## **King Alfred of Wessex**

Alfred was born at Wantage in Oxfordshire in 849, fourth or fifth son of Aethelwulf, king of the West Saxons. Following the wishes of their father, the sons succeeded to the kingship in turn. At a time when the country was under threat from Danish raids, this was aimed at preventing a child inheriting the throne with the related weaknesses in leadership. Alfred was deeply religious and had accompanied his father on pilgrimage to Rome when he was a boy. He also learned to read before his much older brothers after his mother set her sons a challenge – the 1<sup>st</sup> to learn to read would receive a poetry book. Alfred was an enthusiastic hunter with incomparable hunting skills. He carried around a small pocket book of prayers so that he could always read from it – he was a deeply Christian man.

In 870 the Danes attacked the only remaining independent Anglo-Saxon kingdom, Wessex, whose forces were commanded by Alfred's older brother, King Aethelred, and Alfred himself.

In 871 AD, Alfred defeated the Danes at the Battle of Ashdown in Berkshire. Later that year, he succeeded his brother as king. Despite his success at Ashdown, the Danes continued to devastate Wessex and Alfred was forced to withdraw to the Somerset marshes, where he continued guerrilla warfare against his enemies. This is when the famous story of Alfred burning cakes occurred. Travelling in disguise, he was asked to watch the bread which was cooking in the fire of a house he stopped at. He burned the bread of a peasant woman as he was so engrossed in thought about what to do about the Vikings.

In 878 AD, he again defeated the Danes in the Battle of Edington. They made peace and Guthrum, their king, was baptised with Alfred as his sponsor. In 886 AD, Alfred negotiated a treaty with the Danes. England was divided, with the north and the east (between the Rivers Thames and Tees) declared to be Danish territory – later known as the 'Danelaw'. Alfred therefore gained control of areas of West Mercia and Kent which had been beyond the boundaries of Wessex. The Danelaw was an effect way to achieve peace which was important during his lifetime and largely kept the Vikings out of Wessex. Alfred had a dream of expanding Wessex to take over all of England under one king.

Alfred built up the defences of his kingdom to ensure that it was not threatened by the Danes again. He reorganised his army and kept a standing army. He built a series of well-defended, fortified settlements across southern England called *burghs*. He ensured that no-where in Wessex was more than 20 miles from a burgh. He gave the people land so they could set up business and could trade. This encouraged greater wealth and the Wessex economy to grow.

He also established a navy for use against the Danish raiders who continued to harass the coast, designing his own long-ships and hiring Danish mercenaries to man them.

As an administrator Alfred advocated justice and order and established a code of laws and a reformed coinage. He re-planned Winchester, his capital in a grid pattern along the same lines as a Roman city. He had a strong belief in the importance of education and learnt Latin in his late thirties. He then arranged, and himself took part in, the translation of books from Latin to Anglo-Saxon. He invited scholars from Europe to come to England and half of the nobles went to church schools. He did much to encourage the spread of the written language in England. Alfred kept extensive records and was a very learned man.

By the 890s, Alfred's charters and coins were referring to him as 'king of the English'. He died in October 899 AD and was buried at his capital city of Winchester.

Alfred's grandson, Athelstan was the 1<sup>st</sup> King of England after he united the old Saxon kingdoms under his crown – he was crowned 'King of the English' after he defeated the Viking Kingdom of Jorvik and then later a combined Scottish and Viking army in the Battle of Brunanburgh. His daughter, Etheelfed, was a warrior in her own right and ruled in Mercia on the death of her husband. She was nicknamed the 'Lady of Mercia' and built a series of hill forts across Mercia to defend against the Vikings including along the Sandstone ridge of Cheshire.

Details and stories from Alfred's life were written down by his biographer, a Welsh monk called Asser in Alfred's lifetime. He was the first king to have this done.



## When did the Viking threat to England stop? Alfred's children and grandchildren

King Edward the Elder was well trained by his father, Alfred the Great.

He was a bold soldier who won large portions of land from the Danes in the east and the north.

Much of his success was thanks to the help of his sister, the mighty Aethelflaed.

Edward set up his court in the city of Winchester and built a fine cathedral there. He was married three times and had at least fourteen children.

Some say he was a great supporter of the Church. Others say he was scolded by the Pope for neglecting his faith.

Edward died as he would have wished - at the head of his army, leading his men into battle against a band of rebels. He was laid to rest in his new cathedral at Winchester.

Edward proved he was a fearless soldier and strong leader. With the help of his sister, Aethelflaed, he defeated the Vikings to conquer lands in the southeast and Midlands of England.

Aethelflaed was the eldest child of King Alfred . She jointly ruled Mercia with her husband, leading the battle against the Danes in the Midlands and the North and working to unite England. After her husband's death in 911, she became the sole ruler of Mercia and became known as 'The Lady of the Mercians'.

She personally led expeditions against the Vikings. The threat that the Danes would take over all of Mercia and Wessex was very real and, without her input, all could have been lost. The military alliance between Aethelflaed and her brother King Edward was an outstanding success.

Like her father, she proved to be an objective and discerning leader, raising fortifications, redefining crumbling Roman strongholds and building a number of fortified towns along the border. The association of Aethelflaed and her brother Edward saw the Saxon forces push further into Danish-held territory, until little of Mercia remained under Viking control.

She was not only a great warrior but also a clever tactician and negotiator. Formidable and warrior-like but just and fair, she won the admiration and respect of the people of Wessex and Mercia. Both English and Danes mourned her death.

**King Athelstan** was Edward's oldest son (Alfred the Great's grandson). He reigned between AD925 and AD939 and was the very first 'King of all England'.

Athelstan was a daring soldier who fought many battles. But his greatest triumph was the Battle of Brunanburh, when he was faced with an army of Scots and Welsh and Danes.

After this great victory, he seized control of York - the last of the Viking strongholds. Then he forced the kings of Scotland and Wales to pay him large sums of money.

Athelstan wasn't just a soldier. He worked hard to make his kingdom strong, writing laws and encouraging trade.

Athelstan was buried at Malmesbury. At the time of his death he was recognised as the very first King of All England.

## Harold Sigurdson, Harald III, Harald Hardrada

Harald was born in 1015 AD, the youngest half-brother of the recently elected King Olaf II of Norway. His brother's rule was unstable, since these were changing times for the Scandinavian Lands. Olaf was trying to convert his subjects to Christianity, and meanwhile the Danes, losing ground in England, were looking to lands closer to home for conquest. In 1028 AD the alliance of the King of Denmark, Cnut the Great, with rebellious nobles in Norway forced Olaf and his brother into exile. Not until 1030 did he return, making a last effort to reclaim his throne. The effort came to war, and at the Battle of Stiklestad in 1030, Olaf was killed. Harald, only a boy of barely fifteen, fought alongside his brother in the battle too and was badly wounded.

Harald barely escaped with his life, and with the scattered warriors still loyal to him, he fled to the land of the Kievan Rus (what would later come to be called Russia). Harald and his retinue served the Grand Prince in his wars against Poland as hired mercenaries for several years, before their wanderings took them South, to Byzantium and the Byzantine Empire. The Emperor, mistrusting his own Greek bodyguards, who had felled many a ruler before him when they felt their pay was inadequate, formed a new guard composed of exiled northerners from the Viking and Saxon realms. This would later become the feared élite corps of the Byzantine army, the Varangian Guard. Harald and about five hundred survivors came before the Emperor Michael IV and the Empress Zoe and pledged their service. The Empress accepted immediately the pledge of so noble a man. His charisma, valour and ingenious stratagems soon won the admiration of the Varangians (and Roman chroniclers), and before long, Harald himself had risen in the Byzantine court to a command of the Guard. Again and again he proved his bravery, in campaigns as far away as Sicily, Italy and Bulgaria in the Emperor's service. Soon Harald was a wealthy man, and could at last try to reclaim his rightful place as King of a faraway land.

In 1042, Harald appealed to the Emperor for release from service. The Empress Zoe was angered, as she had hoped that Harald would have wed her, and tried to prevent his escape. But with the loyalty of the Varangians, Harald was not to be stopped. He stole away from Byzantium, sailed up the Bosphorus and travelled back to Scandinavia through the Eastern Kingdoms. He found Norway under the rule of his illegitimate brother, Magnus the Good. The two shared power, until in 1047, Magnus died and Harald was at last crowned King Harald III of Norway.

The next fifteen years passed with constant war with Denmark, until Harald at last gave up his claim on the Danish throne in 1062. But not long after, suddenly, a new opportunity presented itself. Arriving in Harald's court, a man by the name of Tostig brought news of the death in England of King Edward the Confessor. Tostig revealed to Harald that he was brother to the new King Harold Godwinsson, and pledged his support and that of the majority of the chieftains of England should Harald seek the English throne. It transpired that Tostig had actually put the same offer to King Svein of Denmark, only days before, but was turned down. Harald, initially uneasy about the venture, soon gave in to Tostig's persuasion, and agreed to once again open Norway's claim on the throne of England.

## Anglo-Saxon England at the start of 1066

By the 1060s England was 1 kingdom with just 1 king. His name was Edward the Confessor. He was born in around the year 1003.

Edward's father was the Saxon king Ethelred the Unready and his mother was Emma of Normandy across the Channel.



### Edward's early life

Edward's father Ethelred had to struggle to keep control of his country from the continued Viking invasions and was forced to leave the country but later returned as king. When Ethelred died in 1016, Edward and his mother were forced to leave the country and flee to Normandy where Edward grew up as the Danes took over the throne of England.

<u>Task 1 - Read and answer</u>	<u>Edward's England</u>
1) What was Edward's nickname as king?	Eventually, Edward returned to England and was crowned king after his half-brother Hardecanute died in 1042.
2) Who was Edward's father?	Much of his reign was peaceful and England was doing very well in terms of trade and farming which was the main business of most people. About 2 out of every 100 men were rich, many had made their fortune from the international wool trade. For poor people, life was a struggle. If their crops failed, they starved. They had to work on their earl's land for free and had to fight for him when called upon. People were also very religious - most of the largest buildings were very expensive churches and monasteries.
3) Who made Edward's family flee to Normandy when Edward's father died?	Most people lived in the countryside in small villages. There were only probably about 1.25- 2 million people living in England at this time. Most of the country was covered in forest and some land had been cleared to grow crops around the small villages.
4) Why do you think Edward fled to Normandy?	There were only about 20 towns with more than 1000 people and only 7 that had over 2,500 people. These were: York, Stamford, Norwich, Thetford, Wallingford, London (the largest) and Winchester. The capital of England was Winchester which was in Wessex. There was still a threat from Viking invasion but England had no standing army - instead the king relied heavily on the local land owners the earls to provide men to defend England.
5) Roughly how long did Edward spend in Normandy before he became king?	
6) What sort of impact did it have on him?	

By the time of Edward the Confessor, England was divided into earldoms. Each earldom was ruled by an important man called an earl. These men came from rich and important families. Their job was to look after their section of the country, keep it safe and secure, be loyal to the king, to advise the king and provide troops from their lands in time of trouble.

The powerful Earls in 1066 were:

*Harold*

*Leofwine*

*Gyrth*

*Edwin*

*Morcar*

*Waltheof*



**Task 3 - List the things an earl had to do in 1066:**

**Task 4 colour  
in the Earl-  
doms of Eng-  
land**

#### Edward and his Earls

The earls were very powerful men in England. They pretty much ran the country and became very rich due to the farming and rent from their land. The most powerful earl at the start of Edward's reign was Earl Godwin of Wessex. Edward married the daughter of Earl Godwin, Edith. However, they had no children, so therefore no heir to the throne.

Edward surrounded himself with Norman advisors and churchmen in the early part of his reign which upset many of the people of England, especially the earls, who thought he was trying to make England too French. He even tried bring over some French castle builders to build some castles in Wessex which made people very angry - they soon left and the castles were knocked down.

Edward tried to wrestle power from the powerful Saxon Earls, especially Godwin who he had fallen out with. He banished Godwin and his family from England and took away their lands. The next year, they returned with a strong army and navy, and sailed up the Thames to threaten war against Edward. The other earls would not go to war for Edward against Godwin - Edward had lost. Godwin had won and regained his land and even more power.

Edward had failed to secure his position and spent the rest of his reign in the shadow of the Godwin Family with little power. He spent much time in prayer asking for forgiveness, which is where he got his nickname from. When Godwin died in 1053, he was replaced by his son Harold Godwinson who became Earl of Wessex. Godwin's other sons became Earl Tostig Godwinson of Northumbria, Earl Gyrth Godwinson of East Anglia and Earl Leofwine Godwinson of Kent. Harold Godwinson ran the country and became popular and powerful.

# Rivals for the Throne of England 1066

## Harold Godwinson, Earl of Wessex



### Background

- He was a tall, lean man
- Saxon, 44 years old
- Wessex was the most powerful Earldom
- Most powerful man in England (even more than the King)
- Virtually ran the country
- Got on fairly well with Edward the Confessor in 1060's
- His sister was married to Edward the Confessor (he was brother-in-law to the King)
- Very popular
- Related to most of the other Earls
- He had supported Earl Morcar against his own brother Tostig over the Earldom of Northumbria
- He was a good leader in battle
- He had experience of running the country
- Very wealthy

### His Claim

- He claims that Edward the Confessor said to him on his death bed in 1066 that:  
**'I commend my wife and all my Kingdom to your care!'**
- If this is true this would cancel all other promises and wishes.
- The only other witness was Edward's wife and Harold's sister, Edith.
- He was the most powerful man in England

## William, Duke of Normandy



### Background

- Short, stocky man
- Norman, spoke no English
- Illegitimate son of Duke Robert of Normandy, 38 years old
- He was a distant cousin of Edward the Confessor
- Normandy was a very powerful and wealthy
- The Normans were very ambitious and wanted to expand their territory
- Successful Leader of the Norman Army and good warrior
- Successful ruler of Normandy
- Had good connections with other Norman nobles
- William sent an envoy to the Pope in Rome to seek his support for his claim to the throne of England. The Pope gave them a special banner to carry.

### His Claim

- In **1051** William came to England to visit Edward the Confessor. William claims that Edward promised to make him his heir.
- In **1064** William claims that Harold Godwinson swore an oath on holy relics, to support his claim to the throne of England when he was on a hunting trip to Normandy
- Harold however claims that he was shipwrecked in Normandy, held as a prisoner and forced to swear an oath to William in order that he would be released.
- Normandy had looked after Edward when he had been forced out of England when he was younger.



	<b>Edgar the Aetheling</b>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saxon.</li> <li>• 14 years old when Edward the Confessor died.</li> <li>• Born in Hungary.</li> <li>• 'Aetheling' means throne-worthy.</li> <li>• Returned to England in 1054.</li> <li>• Raised in the court of Edward the Confessor.</li> <li>• Not very powerful or wealthy</li> <li>• Some support among the nobles in England.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>His Claim</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He was the grandson of Edmund Ironside, King of England in 1016.</li> <li>• He was the great-nephew of Edward the Confessor.</li> <li>• Edward the Confessor said that Edgar would be his heir after his father died in 1057.</li> <li>• Royal Family member</li> </ul>

	<b>Harald Hardråde (Hardraada), King of Norway</b>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viking, 51 years old</li> <li>• 'Hardråde' means hard ruler</li> <li>• Most famous and powerful warrior of the era</li> <li>• Large Viking army</li> <li>• Wealthy</li> <li>• Very fierce in battle</li> <li>• A number of powerful Viking families lived in the north of England in the former Viking held lands</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>His Claim</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He claimed that his father had been promised the throne by King Cnut the Great</li> <li>• Aimed to recreate Cnut's empire including England</li> <li>• Had the support of Tostig (Godwinson's brother) who had offered him the throne of England</li> </ul>

	<b>King Sweyn of Denmark</b>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tall, powerful, man who walked with a limp</li> <li>• Viking, 47 years old</li> <li>• He had fought a long war with Harald Hardråde over the throne of Denmark.</li> <li>• Strong fleet of ships</li> <li>• Preoccupied by defending Denmark</li> <li>• He was a cousin of Harold Godwinson and had help from Godwin, Haraold's father in claiming his throne in the past</li> <li>• Tostig visited Sweyn and offered him the throne of England</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>His Claim</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His uncle was King Cnut (who had ruled England from 1016 until 1035). Therefore he has the blood of a English King in his family.</li> </ul>

# The story of 1066

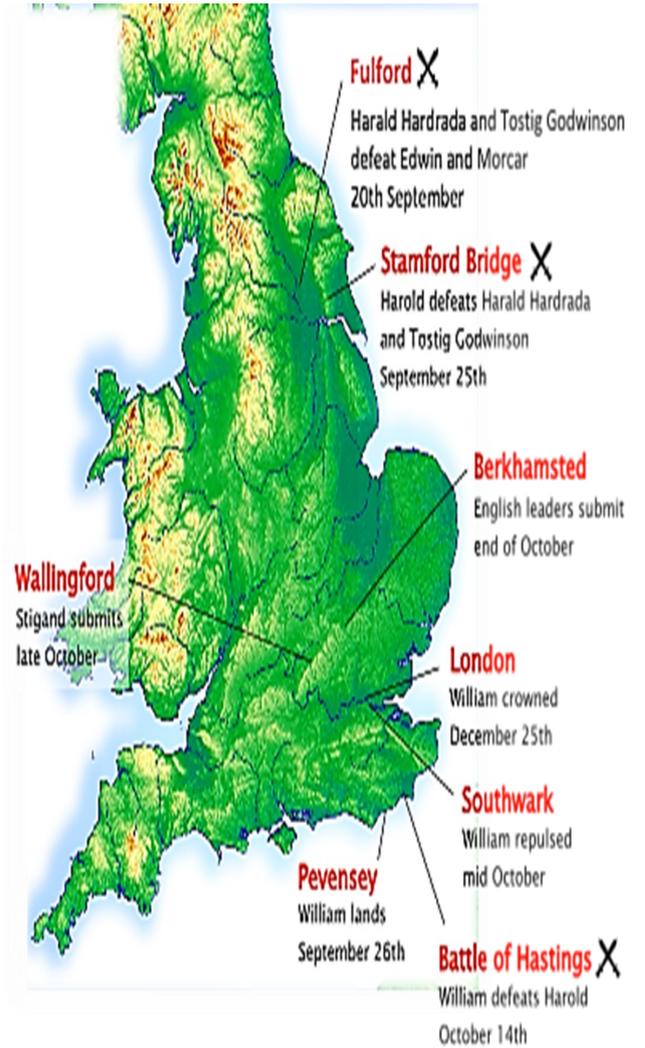
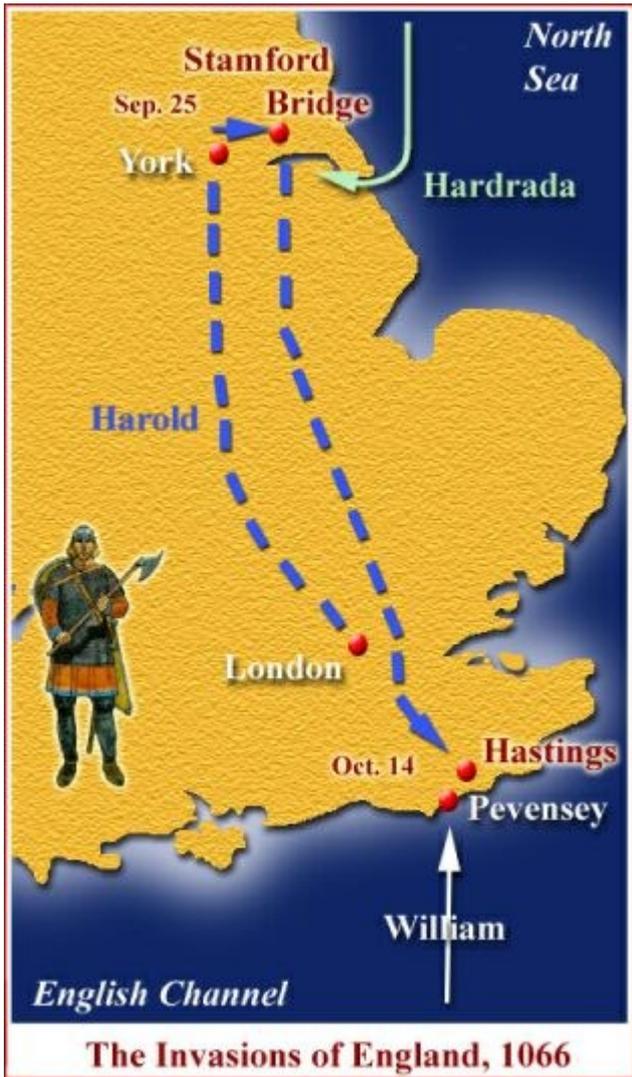


1st October - 6th October 1066  
Harold, with his remaining Housecarls and the Fyrd had covered 320kms in 6 days to arrive in Wessex ready to fight

6th October 1066  
Harold stops briefly in London to gather a few fresh troops but fails to wait and gather the full strength of the southern Fyrd. He marches towards Has-

12th October 1066  
King Harold organises his Saxon army across the road from Hastings to London along Senlac Ridge

## Battle of Hastings, Senlac Hill, 14th October 1066



**Which was the key event in 1066 for the King of England?**

**Hints:** Why was something important? Which king are we talking about? What makes an event more important than another? How are



**The Fyrd**

Peasants and Volunteers  
(untrained and poorly armed)  
Fight on foot  
5500 men



**Thegns**

Local Lords and Landowners  
(expected to arrive with men from their lands)  
Ride to battle but fight on foot



**Housecarls**

(Professional Soldiers and King's Body Guard)  
Ride to battle and fight on foot  
2000 men

**The Anglo-Saxon Army in 1066**



Led by King Harold II, of Wessex

Saxons rode to the battle on horse but fought on foot. They formed a shield wall which was very strong in defence.



Archers and Crossbowmen

1,700 men



Knights - Cavalry soldiers on horseback  
2,200 men



Infantry (foot soldiers)

4,500 men

**The Norman Army in 1066**



Led by William, Duke of Normandy  
Army contained Breton, French and Flemish soldiers

In battle archers fired first, then infantry charged the enemy when they have been softened up by the arrows. The Cavalry charge in last on their big war horses to mop up the weakened enemy.

# King Harold II, Godwinson



- Powerful and wealthy Earl of Wessex before becoming King
- Married to Edith *Swan Neck* daughter of an Earl of Mercia
- Well connected to the other Saxon Earls
- He was part of a campaign against the Count of Flanders on behalf of the Emperor of Germany where he led a ship or ships
- Assisted his father in the 1050s when they tried to return to England having been exiled. They returned with a large force and many ships and forced Edward the Confessor to give them their lands back
- As King he led his army to the north to defeat the invading Viking army in late 1066 in the Battle of Stamford Bridge
- After learning of William's invasion he raced south and failed to gather fresh troops or to wait for reinforcements or to wait for William to come to him which may have given him more military advantage.
- He was regarded as a good military leader in battle.
- He relied on the old Saxon fighting methods of the Fyrd, the Shield Wall, Housecarls

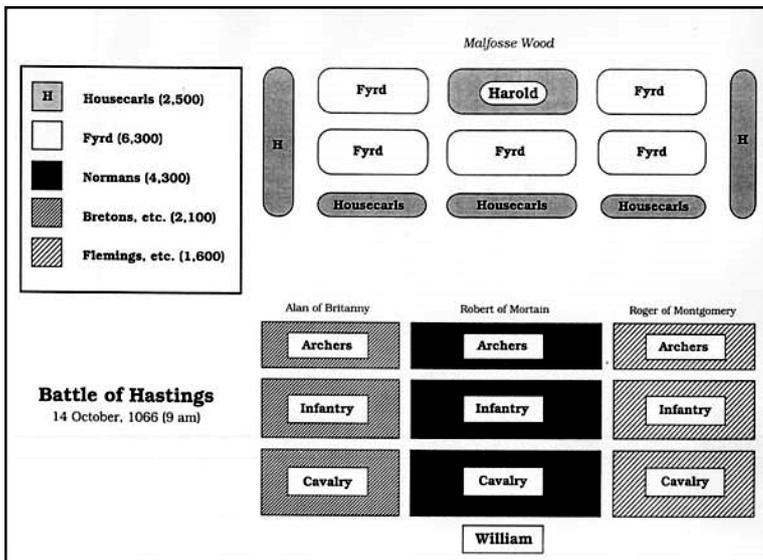
# William, Duke of Normandy



- Known as *William the Bastard*, partly because he was so tough and ruthless
- Use Motte and Bailey castles to control his Norman lands
- He used a mixture of archers, infantry and cavalry in battle
- Experienced in the use of sieges
- Experienced in repelling invasions of his Normandy territory
- He was a very experienced military campaigner and regarded as a great leader in battle
- He was described at the time as a 'fighter and a horseman without equal'.
- He gathered an army that contained men from neighbouring French lands, from Brittany and Flanders
- He gathered or built a large fleet of ships to cross the Channel
- William waiting for the sea and weather conditions to be right during his invasion of England in 1066 before crossing the Channel.

# Battle of Hastings 14th October 1066 (read A box first)

TIME	What did the Saxons do in the battle?	What did the Normans do in the battle
9am	A) King Harold positioned himself at the back of his men at the top of Senlac ridge, a steep hill. His best trained troops, the Housecarls were at the front of the shield wall which stretched for more than a mile.	B) William spoke to his men and reminded them he had never lost a battle. At 9am he sent his archers up the hill - not far from the enemy they started to shoot their arrows. They fire all their arrows - none are fired back as the Saxons have no bowmen of their own. The Normans ran out of arrows very quickly.
	A) The Housecarls used their big battleaxes whilst the Fyrd used slings, pitchforks and scythes and any weapons they could find.	B) They thought that the Saxons had been softened up by the arrow fire. Most of the arrows hit the Saxon shields.
	A) Using their shields, they blocked the arrow fire of the Normans. The Saxons throw spears and stones at the Norman Infantry. The Saxon force held their	B) Norman infantry marched up the hill thinking that the Saxons had been weakened by the arrow fire.
9.20 am		A) The Normans retreated.
11 am	B) The shield wall stood firm again.	A) William was forced to send his cavalry into the attack. They failed to breakthrough the shield wall
	B) 1000 English Fyrd were too tempted by this, broke away and started to charge at the Normans on the left flank of the army.	A) The Cavalry turned around and began to retreat. Some said that this was part of William's plan, some say that they panicked and tried to run away.
	B) Losses were heavy and few returned up the hill. Harold's brothers were killed. The shield wall was now much weakened.	A) The Cavalry turned and attacked the Saxon warriors who had broken their shield wall and slaughtered them.
12 noon	B) There was a break in the fight at noon - to remove the dead and wounded.	A) In the attack William's horse was killed and he fell to the ground. A rumour went around the Norman army that he had died. He rode out and pulled back his helmet to
3pm	A) The shield wall now had many Fyrdmen in the front rather than the well trained Housecarls. It was weakened but still quite strong.	B) The Normans realised that the tactic of pretending to retreat to try to make the Saxons leave their shield wall had worked once, so they tried it again and again.
		A) More arrows are brought up to the battlefield for the archers to fire. William ordered his archers to fire high over the shield wall to the squashed in Fyrdmen
	A) At this point the legend has it that Harold was struck down by an arrow in his eye.	B) The Cavalry attacked again and many horses and men were killed. The archers continued to fire with their new arrows
4pm	A) The shield wall began to weaken. It had become very short.	B) The Normans attacked both sides and also began to find gaps in the shield wall. William and his knights on foot by now began to break through and get behind the
5pm	A) The remaining Housecarls surrounded the King	B) William's knights struck down the King and hacked at his body
	A) With the King dead as well as his brothers there was no leaders left to direct and motivate the Saxon warriors. The untrained, unpaid Fyrd ran into the forest	B) The Normans follow them but were ambushed by some of those that ran away.
Sun Set	A) The Housecarls and the Thegns remained on the battlefield and many fought	B) The Normans knew that the battle was won.



"King Harold is dead!"

The Aftermath of the Battle - Most of the Saxon land Lords (the Thegns) had died in the battle. Most of the best Saxon warriors (the Housecarls) died in the battle. The Saxon Witan in London quickly made Edgar the Atheling King after news arrived of Harold's death. More Norman Troops came over the channel in the next few months to replace those who had died in the battle and from disease. The Normans attacked London, Edgar was forced to resign as King. William was crowned King of England on Christmas Day 1066 in Westminster Abbey. William had only about 10,000 Norman soldiers to control a Saxon population of over 2 million in England.



## 2 AFTER THE CONQUEST – KEEPING CONTROL

### THIS CHAPTER ASKS

What problems did William the Conqueror face in controlling England?  
How did he deal with these problems?  
How and why did castles change and develop during the Middle Ages?

On Christmas day, 1066, William was crowned king of England in Westminster Abbey, London. At his coronation Norman soldiers mistook cheering crowds for rioters and killed many of them. Other Normans, inside the abbey, saw William trembling with fear as he listened to the fighting. He knew he did not really control England.

### WILLIAM'S PROBLEMS

Most English people did not support William and would be happy to remove him as ruler.

- There was a threat of invasion from Denmark. After the death of Harald Hardrada, the king of Denmark claimed that he should be king of England. In 1067 and 1069 he sent help to William's English enemies.
- In the north of England many English people had always tried to stay independent of the kings who ruled the south of the country.
- William rewarded his followers with gifts of land, but he needed to keep track of who owned what land.

### KEEPING CONTROL – BUILDING CASTLES

When an area was brought under Norman control a castle was built to keep it that way. These castles were called 'motte and baileys'. A wooden tower was built on a mound of earth (the 'motte'). A ditch was dug around the mound. Next to the motte was a flat space where the people in the castle lived. This was the 'bailey'. The bailey was protected by a wooden fence and a ditch. If enemies broke into the bailey, the Normans inside could find shelter on top of the motte. These castles were quick to build. Between 1066 and 1100 the Normans built about 200 castles.

### NEW WORDS

**ARISTOCRACY:** rich landowners.

**FEUDAL HOST:** the knights sent to fight for William in return for land given to them.

**FYRD:** local people called to fight for the king in an emergency.

**GELDS:** tax on the amount of land a person owned.

**MERCENARIES:** soldiers who fight for anyone who will pay them to fight.

**SHIRES:** areas of England divided into hundreds.

### SOURCE A

Though William replaced the Old English aristocracy he kept most of the system of government. The shires and hundreds remained with their courts. William raised gelds and so did his sons. He used the system of Anglo-Saxon military service, the fyrd, to add to his mercenaries and his feudal host.

▲ *Historian, James Campbell, in The Anglo-Saxons, 1982. This well organised government helped William keep control.*

### AFTER THE CONQUEST – KEEPING CONTROL

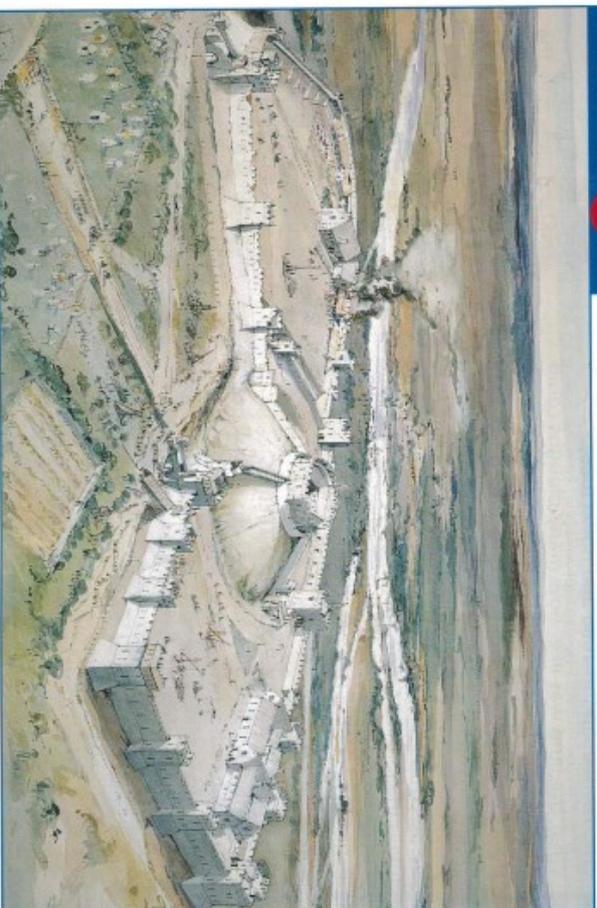
#### KEEPING CONTROL – DEFEATING REBELS

In 1068 William returned to England from Normandy because there had been rebellions against his rule. At Exeter William was not amused when an Englishman barred his bottom over the walls! The Normans defeated the rebels.

In 1068 there was a rebellion in the north. William marched to York, crushed the rebellion and built a castle there. The next year there was a more serious rebellion in the north. Robert, the Norman Earl of Northumbria, and his knights were massacred at Durham, other Normans were killed at York. William defeated the rebels but was so worried he sent his wife, Matilda, back to Normandy for safety. Later in 1069, a Danish fleet helped more English rebels, who killed almost all the Normans in York.

William marched north again. That winter the Norman army destroyed all the farms in Yorkshire, Cheshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire. Thousands of English people starved to death. New castles were built to keep control of these areas. By the spring of 1070 William was in control. Although there were other rebellions, none of them were as serious as these.

### SOURCE B



▲ A modern artist's reconstruction of the first motte and bailey castle at Windsor. It had two baileys.



- Look at the problems William faced in controlling England. For each of his 'problems', explain how well he solved them?
- Look at Source A. How might a historian use this to show that it was not just William's skills and brutality that helped him control England?
- From all you have seen explain how far you think William was really in control of England by 1070.



### KEEPING CONTROL – THE DOMESDAY BOOK

William the Conqueror spent a lot of money fighting wars. In 1071 he crushed a rebellion against him by an army of Danes and Englishmen in East Anglia. One of the rebels, Hereward the Wake, later became famous in legends for holding out against the Normans in the marshes at Ely. He eventually surrendered and was pardoned. In 1075 three of William's earls got drunk at a wedding and plotted a rebellion, which was crushed by the king.

In 1085 the king of Denmark planned a great invasion of England. In the end he never sailed, but the danger forced William to pay for a huge army, which he brought from Normandy to England. Then there were wars against the new king of France. Who was going to pay for all this?

### THE KING'S GREAT SURVEY

At Christmas 1085, in Gloucester, William put together a plan to find out exactly who owned what land in England. This would make it easier to tax them and control the country. During the first six months of 1086 William's men went out across England. They visited every shire in England. They made a record of:

- Who owned land in 1066 and now (1086).
- What the land was like, how many ploughs could work on it, what kinds of people lived there.
- How much the land was worth in 1066 and 1086.

The great survey was finished in the summer of 1086. It was then put together in a great collection, which came to be called the 'Domesday Book'. This means 'judgement day', as it was thought the king had found out everything there was to know about people. This reminded people of the Christian belief in the Day of Judgement, when God will examine what everyone has done with their lives.

### WHAT THE DOMESDAY BOOK CAN TELL US

Domesday Book is like a window to help us look back in time. It tells us who owned land, what different kinds of people lived in the country, what the land was like and how farming was organised. It shows what land was worth.

As importantly, it shows how powerful and well organised William's government was. He made sure England was more under the control of the king than it had ever been before. But he could not have carried out his great survey without using the well organised Anglo-Saxon government of the local areas. Domesday Book shows how William took over the English way of running the country and made it even better organised. Later kings would take this further and make themselves even more wealthy and powerful.

### NEW WORDS

**EARLS:** rich and powerful landowners who were responsible for running large areas of the country.

**HIDE:** an area of land big enough to supply food for a whole family. (In the north of England and in the east Midlands these were called **CARUCATES**.)

### SOURCE A

He [William] sent his men all over England into every shire. He had them find out how many hundred hides there were in each shire, or what land and cattle the king had in the country or what taxes he ought to have in a year. Also he had a record made of how much land his archbishops had, and his bishops and his abbots and earls and how much money it was worth. There was no single hide nor a yard of land, nor indeed (it is a shame to tell it but he was not ashamed to do it) one ox, one cow, or pig which was left out and not put down in his record.

▲ *Written in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 1086. The writer of the Chronicle thought William was wrong to carry out the great survey.*

Here is a part of the Domesday Book in modern English. It is about land at a place called 'Tateshalla', in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Today this is an area of the modern town of Pontefract, called Tanshelf.

Domesday Book contains 2 million words, mentions 13,418 places, is made from the skins of as many as one thousand sheep and was written by only one man!

1 This shows how much ploughing could be done there. All the money from this land went to the lord.

2 This shows it had belonged to King Edward in 1066 but King William has given it to one of his Norman supporters.

3 These are townspeople. In Tateshalla there are 16 carucates of land which do not pay tax, where 9 ploughs could work. 1 The king owned this manor. Now Ilbert has 4 ploughs there 2 and 60 small burgesses 3. 16 cottagers 4. 16 villagers 5. and 8 smallholders 6 who have 18 ploughs. A church is there and a priest. There is a place for fishing, 3 mills worth 42 shillings, 5 acres of meadow and woodland pasture. The value before 1066 was £20, now £15. 7 Within the manor there is land for the poor 8.

4 These are poor farmers, who own a cottage but no land.

6 These own more land than a cottager but less than a villager.

5 These are better off farmers. There is land for the poor 8.

7 This shows what it used to be worth and what it was worth in 1086.

8 Domesday Book sometimes has other interesting information too. This shows that money from some land was spent on poor people.



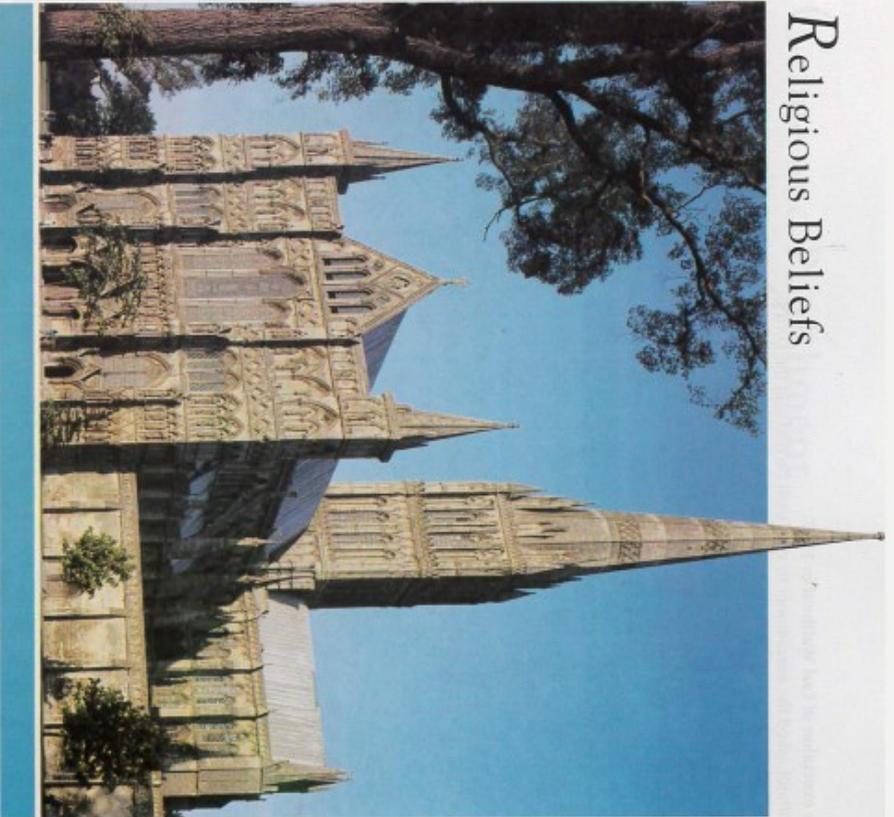
1. Look at **Source A**. The writer of this was an English person living at Peterborough. Why might he have been so against King William carrying out his great survey?
2. Look at the kinds of things King William's men wanted to find out about each landowner's land. What answers would they have found to these questions when they examined Ilbert's land at Tateshalla?
3. Write a brief report on the Domesday Book. In it explain what problems William faced; why and how he carried out the great survey; what kinds of things it would tell him. Conclude by saying how it helped to solve his problems.

## 4.3 Religious Beliefs



**A**

### SOURCE



Salisbury Cathedral, one of the most magnificent of medieval cathedrals. It was built between 1220 and 1258.

In medieval times everyone believed in God and the Devil, in heaven and hell. Christians were Catholics, and felt that non-Catholics were doomed to hell. There were some Christians who worshipped God in a different way, such as the Lollards (who believed in much more simple worship). Most people felt the Lollards were wrong, and should change their ways. People like the Lollards were often persecuted for their different views.

Most medieval people believed that they might end up being tortured in hell for ever. They thought about this all the time, and it had a big effect on their actions. They tried to show God they were good and tried to avoid the Devil's temptations. How they did this depended on how rich they were, and how they believed it was best to worship God.

Some people gave money to the poor. Some people were too poor to do anything but try to be kind to others. Many people believed that by serving God as a priest, or a monk, or by going on pilgrimages they would prove that they were good. Many knights fought in the Crusades to fight for God, although there would have been knights who were there just for the fight or to win loot.

People felt the Church had a special relationship with God. Priests carried out services, heard confession and told you what you had to do to be forgiven for the sins you had confessed. Many people gave money to the Church as a way of pleasing God. Cathedrals like Salisbury were built to please God. They were probably also built, like castles, to remind people of the power of the king and nobility.

**B**

### SOURCE



A medieval painting showing what people thought hell was like. From the 'Bedford Missal' which was made for John, Duke of Bedford in 1430.

### Activities...

- 1 Here is a list of what some people in medieval times did to avoid going to hell:
  - fought in the Crusades
  - went on pilgrimages
  - gave money to do good things
  - built churches.

**a** What would be the advantages and disadvantages of each method?

**b** Do you think that people did these things just to avoid going to hell? Explain your answer.
- 2 The drawing below is a key to Source B.
 

**a** Who is shown as 1, 2, and 3.

**b** What do you think is happening in the top half of the picture?

**c** What is 6?

**d** What is happening in 7?

**e** Who is shown in 4 and 5?
- 3 Which Source, A or B, tells us most about people's attitude to religion in the Middle Ages? Give reasons for your answer.

## Why was the Church so important in people's lives?

Most medieval people led short lives, dying at the age of around 35. As a result, they thought a lot about what would happen after they died. Fear of the terrors, and possible rewards, of life after death drove their actions. Would they be rewarded in heaven or face eternal tortures in hell? What could they do to affect this fate? Many would go to church once a week; some would dedicate their lives to the Church as priests, monks or nuns, while others were prepared to kill for it.

But why was the Church so important in people's lives? This section of the book will look at:

- the medieval Christian belief in life after death (the afterlife)
- individuals who dedicated their lives to religion, including priests, monks and nuns
- the influence of religion on medieval ideas.

## Journey to the afterlife

### Learning objectives

- Understand the key features of medieval Christian belief.
- Learn how to use evidence to make claims about the past.

**Source A:** A description of people being tortured in purgatory from the story of the knight Owain. It was written in 1184 by an English monk.

Some were hanging from blazing chains by the feet with their heads turned upside down in flames. ... Others were burning in furnaces of sulphur; yet others were frying as if on pans; others were placed on blazing spits which were turned by demons. They were all beaten with whips by demons running in every direction. There one could see all the kinds of torture that one could imagine.

### What do you think?

What do you think most medieval Christians knew about their religion?

A popular medieval story tells of the knight Owain, who had done many bad deeds in his life. He was worried he would go to hell after he died, so he went to his bishop for help. Owain wanted to do something so challenging that it would make up for all his bad deeds. He chose to visit the afterlife\* to find out what awaited him once he died.

He began his journey on a small island, where there was a door to the afterlife. From there, he walked through a dark cave to a place called purgatory\*, where he met some angels. They told him he would meet many demons on his journey through purgatory, but if he prayed to Jesus Christ he would survive. If he gave up, he would die and disappear forever.

On his journey, Owain passed through many places of torture (see Figure 2.1), but he asked for Christ's help and survived. Eventually, he reached a bridge that took him over hell to an earthly paradise. Here, he met others who had survived purgatory and told him of heaven. After he had seen the beauty of this paradise, he promised to lead a holy life so that he could return there after death.

### The afterlife

Today, many people do not believe in the afterlife described in Owain's story, but the story was often retold in medieval times to explain what happened when people died. This means it can tell us something about medieval beliefs. The character Owain saw the afterlife, where most people thought their souls\* would go when their bodies died.

Their soul was damaged if the person committed a sin, like theft, jealousy or eating too much. However, sins were forgiven by God if the person wanted forgiveness and performed a punishment to make up for them. As a result, the way a person lived their life affected where their soul went after death. They would end up in:

- hell if they had committed a mortal sin, like murder, and did not think it was wrong
- heaven if they had made up for all their sins during their lifetime
- purgatory if they had not yet been forgiven for all their sins.

Most people expected to go to purgatory first, waiting until they had been tortured enough to make up for their sins. After that, they would go to heaven.

### Key

- 1 Owain began his journey to purgatory here.
- 2 Owain travelled through a pitch-black cave to the Magnificent Hall.
- 3 Angels warned Owain to protect himself by praying to Christ but demons tried to burn him on a fire.
- 4 The demons showed Owain how they tortured people.
- 5 The demons strapped Owain to a wheel of fire, then threw him into baths of flame and a well of fire but he escaped.
- 6 Owain had to cross a thin, slippery bridge to reach paradise, a resting place before heaven.
- 7 A churchman showed Owain the gateway to heaven.

### Your turn!

- 1 Figure 2.1 retells a popular medieval story. List two things you can learn from it about the afterlife.
- 2 Source A is a small part of the story. Write a short explanation of why a contemporary source like this is helpful to a historian.
- 3 Create a question and answer guide for historians about the afterlife. It should include points from the story of Owain's journey.

### Key terms

**Afterlife\*:** The experience some people believe they will have after death.

**Purgatory\*:** A place where medieval Christians believed they would be tortured until they had made up for their bad deeds and thoughts. After this, they would go on to heaven.

**Soul\*:** Christians believe this is a part of a person that can exist after death. The idea exists in some other world religions too.



Figure 2.1: Knight Owain's journey through purgatory.



**Source B:** A 15th-century image of Saint Patrick in purgatory. He is said to have been shown purgatory by God.

### Getting to heaven

To get to heaven Christians believed they had to be forgiven for their sins. This involved confession of their sins to a priest, who would forgive them and give the sinner a penance\* to make up for them. The most common penances were fasting\*, giving to charity or reading parts of the Bible over and over again.

These penances were supposed to clean their soul of sin, but many worried that they had not done enough, and would spend years being punished in purgatory. To avoid this, they would do good works, giving food to the poor, helping the sick and burying the dead.

Many also went on pilgrimages, which involved a journey to a holy place. Some sites were fairly easy to get to, like Canterbury Cathedral in England, while others were far more difficult. The journey to the monastery\* at Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments\*, required a difficult trek through the Egyptian desert.

### Power of prayer

Medieval Christians also believed that prayer and religious services could help them. They were expected to attend mass\* on Sundays and, if they were rich enough, could pay a priest to say mass for them. Again, it was thought this would help them get to heaven.

#### Key terms

- Penance\*:** A punishment for sin.
- Fasting\*:** A commitment not to eat for either an entire day, or part of the day, or to avoid eating certain foods like meat.
- Monastery\*:** The collection of buildings that monks live in.
- Ten Commandments\*:** A list of rules given to Moses by God, which Jewish and Christian peoples are expected to obey.
- Mass\*:** A Christian religious service performed by a Catholic priest.

<p><b>A saint:</b> ask a saint to protect you from evil.</p>	<p><b>A pilgrimage:</b> visit a holy site linked to Christ's life, like Jerusalem, or a saint's life, like Canterbury cathedral.</p>
<p><b>A relic:</b> buy a relic of a saint or biblical figure, or visit the place where one is kept.</p>	<p><b>Seven Works of Mercy:</b> these include giving to charity, offering shelter, caring for the sick and helping prisoners.</p>
<p><b>A prayer:</b> regular communication with God or a saint.</p>	<p><b>A votive mass:</b> pay a priest to perform a religious service and pray for you.</p>

Figure 2.2: Getting to heaven catalogue.

However, people also wanted help on a day-to-day basis. If they were ill, or their crops would not grow, they turned to prayer. Usually, they would pray to a saint for help. These were people who had led holy lives or died for a religious cause. Medieval Christians hoped that, if you could get a saint to pray for you, then God might help by performing a miracle.

### Everyday life

People's beliefs changed the landscape. The desire to go on a pilgrimage meant churches, chapels and shrines\* were built for pilgrims to visit. The need to do good works led rich Christians to set up alms\* houses for the old and hospitals for the poor and sick. Finally, to ensure support from the local priest, churches were extended or improved using money donated by villagers.

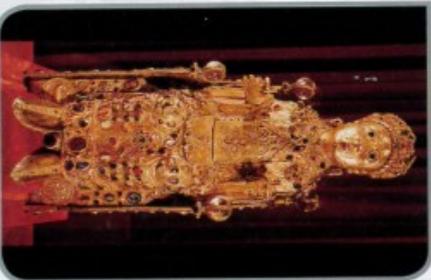
- Christian belief also affected people's behaviour. They would:
  - attend church** each week and on holy days; during the service, they heard mass, taking part in an act of worship with their community
  - visit or buy **relics:** pieces of a dead saint's body or something they had used, often stored in a reliquary\*, which could help to contact the saint
  - leave money or land to the church:** often in exchange for priests praying for them after they had died.

**Source C:** A charm for curing toothache from *Rosa medicinae*, written by a doctor, John of Gaddesden, between 1305 and 1317.

Also, on any day while the Gospel is being read at mass, as someone listens to the mass he should sign the [sore] tooth and his head with the sign of the cross. And let him say an Our Father and a Hail Mary for the souls of the father and mother of St. Philip. [If he prays] this continuously [as the Gospel is read] it preserves him from future toothache and cures the current one according to trustworthy men.

#### Key terms

- Shrine\*:** A place dedicated to a saint. Pilgrims would visit shrines, hoping for a miracle or help after death to reach heaven.
- Alms\*:** A charitable gift to poor people, including money, food or a place to rest.
- Reliquary\*:** A container in which relics were kept.



**Source D:** A reliquary of Saint Foy in Conques, France. Medieval pilgrims who visited her relics believed that she could cure vision problems.

#### Checkpoint

- 1 What did medieval Christians believe would lead them to end up in purgatory?
- 2 Describe two methods Christians used to help them get to heaven.

# Church career options

## Learning objectives

- Understand why priests, monks and nuns were important to medieval people.
- Learn how to use sources to test claims about the past.

## What do you think?

What do you think the main difference was between a priest and a monk?

### Source A: From a handbook for parish priests written by a priest called William of Pagula in the 1320s. A cut-down version was written and widely distributed after 1385. It contains a set of instructions for priests.

First he should teach his parishioners the way to baptise infants without a priest if it becomes necessary.

Also he should teach them that no one should marry except in the presence of a priest.

Also he should ask anyone over the age of 14 to confess all his sins to his own parish priest at least once a year and to do the penance given him for his sins.

Also one day during Lent he should publicly preach the key features of Christian belief.

In the modern world, there are hundreds of career options for people who want to help others. If you want to help the sick, you could become a doctor. If you want to help people with their problems, you could become a counsellor. If you want to help the poor, you could join or run a charity.

A thousand years ago, if you wanted to help you had fewer options. You could work for your local church as a priest, or you could join a religious order\* as a monk or nun.

### Option 1: Priests

Most villages had a priest. He ran the local church and dedicated his life to helping his parishioners\*. His primary job was to deliver sacraments\* (some are shown in Table 2.1), helping his parishioners get to heaven.

All of these duties made a priest a very important person in his village. As such, people came to him for advice and he was expected to help them lead Christian lives (see Source A).

Job	Details
Baptising children	A ceremony performed on a child, which meant they would go straight to heaven if they died in their early childhood.
Performing marriage ceremonies	Priests made sure that a wedding between a man and a woman obeyed Church law.
Performing mass	The main religious service was given on Sundays and parishioners were expected to attend.
Hearing confession	A priest would give a penance for the sins committed by a parishioner.
Delivering last rites	If a person was close to death, a final ceremony was performed to help them through the afterlife.

Table 2.1: The main duties of a priest, called sacraments.

## Key terms

**Religious order\*\*:** A group of monks or nuns, who live their life according to guidance written by their founder.

**Parishioner\*\*:** A person who lived in a priest's parish (the area for which he provided services).

**Sacraments\*\*:** The ceremonial actions of a priest or bishop. There are seven sacraments, including baptism and marriage.

### Option 2: Monks and nuns

Some men chose to become monks and some women chose to become nuns. They made vows of:

- **poverty:** individual monks and nuns did not own property
- **chastity:** they could not marry or have sex
- **obedience:** they had to obey the abbot or abbess and the rules of their order.

Most also had to make a vow of stability, staying in the same monastery or convent (for nuns) for their entire life.

Figure 2.3 shows some of the different religious orders people joined. They did so for many reasons, but the most important were:

- **to live a religious life** and stand a better chance of getting to heaven
- **to get a comfortable job:** rich people would pay monks and nuns to pray for them
- **to have a safe place to live:** the children of nobles were sometimes taken in and educated at convents and monasteries.

	<b>Benedictine</b> Type: Men and women of all ages. Lifestyle: Most of the day spent in prayer, but plenty of time for eating, resting and reading.		<b>Anchoress</b> Type: Mostly older women. Lifestyle: Lived in a small building attached to a church, praying and reading.		<b>Franciscan</b> Type: Mainly adult men, but non-preaching women allowed in separate convents. Lifestyle: Walked around towns to preach. Begged for food and shelter.
	<b>Gilbertine</b> Type: Women in charge, but men allowed to live separately. Lifestyle: Similar to Benedictines, but spent more time on education for the nuns.		<b>Glastonian</b> Type: Mainly adult men, but some women were allowed later in its history. Lifestyle: A very simple life, with most of the day spent farming or praying.		<b>Carthusian</b> Type: Mostly adult men, but some women. Lifestyle: Lived mostly alone in a cell, spending their day working on their own projects.

Figure 2.3: Types of monks and nuns.

## Your turn!

- Use Source A to sum up in two words the main jobs a parish priest did for their community.
  - Listed below are some different reasons why individuals chose to become a monk or a nun:
    - 'My children have grown up and I want to dedicate my last years to God.'
    - 'My family are rich merchants, but I'm worried being rich will encourage me to sin.'
    - 'I am the son of a nobleman, but my older brother will inherit all the land. I want a comfortable life.'
    - 'I am a quiet person and want to dedicate my talents to God.'
- Copy the list and match each point to an appropriate religious order (see Figure 2.3) and give reasons for your choice.

**Key terms**

**Lay brother\*:** A man who joined a religious order to work on the farm land or make things. He took monastic vows, but did not take part in the same services as the other monks.

**Lay sister\*:** A woman who took monastic vows, doing jobs for the nuns. The Gilbertines were the first order to have lay sisters, who helped in their hospitals and alms houses.

**Your turn**

Look at Figure 2.4. List the sorts of things that happened in a monastery.

**Life in a monastery or convent**

Most monks and nuns spent their day in silence and within the walls of their order, getting up at midnight to read the first prayer of the day. The rest of their day was organised around eating, sleeping, studying and reading more prayers.

Monks and nuns used their spare time to do jobs, like growing food or writing religious and historical books (see page 15). They were also expected to help the sick and look after travellers. However, as more and more people expected monks and nuns to pray for them and look after them, they had to get lay brothers\* and lay sisters\* to do some of these jobs.

**Helping the local community**

By the end of the medieval period, monks spent most of their time saying masses for the dead. It was believed this would help shorten their time in purgatory. Although women were not allowed to do this, both monks and nuns did do two other important jobs.

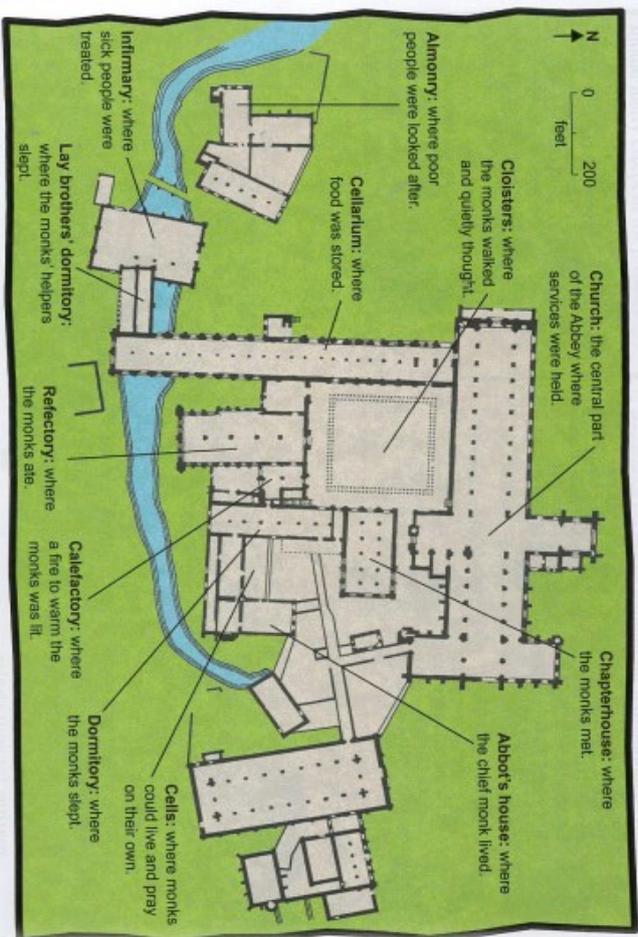


Figure 2.4: Plan of a medieval Cistercian monastery called Fountains Abbey, outside the city of York.

- Firstly, they provided care for the sick, elderly and terminally ill. These were not like modern hospitals, where doctors give prescriptions and pharmacists make medicines. Instead, they were more like places of rest, where some people recovered and others died.
- Secondly, monks and nuns performed good works. They were expected to treat the poor and travellers as if they were Jesus Christ. As a result, they gave food to the poor who came to their gates and they provided a bed for the night to travellers who were far from home. Figure 2.5 shows some of the other services they provided.

Please tick the service you require ~

- Place to stay for the Night
- Religious teaching
- Bread for the poor
- Book copying
- Place to Recover from illness
- Schooling
- Prayers for the dead
- Advice for Nobles/Kings

Figure 2.5: Services provided by monks and nuns.



Source B: A 13th-century picture of monks, from a Spanish monastery, offering a traveller a place to stay.

**Interpretation 1:** From *The Medieval Realm*, written by Nigel Kelly and published in 1991.

The monks could read and write. They produced most of the books. Books were written, or copied, by hand and decorated. Many monasteries had schools, mostly for the children of the nobility. So they could influence powerful people from an early age. Also, many monks were from rich families; they could influence their relations. There were no hospitals at the time. Often it was the monks who cared for the sick. They grew herbs, and kept records of cures that worked. They also helped the poor and sheltered travellers.

**Your turn**

- 1 The historian who wrote Interpretation 1 gives a reason why monasteries were important. Write down what you think it is.
- 2 Make a bullet-point list of contemporary sources that a historian might use to support or challenge your previous answer.

**Checkpoint**

- 1 Who performed sacraments for their local community?
- 2 Which religious order gave women the most important roles?
- 3 What jobs did monks and nuns do for their local community?

# Religion and ideas

## Learning objectives

- Understand how religion influenced ideas about crime, science, medicine, warfare, society and architecture.
- Learn how to use a source to make an inference.

## What do you think?

What do you think medieval people wanted God's help for?

## Did you know?

### A famous trial by ordeal

One story tells of Queen Emma, the mother of Edward the Confessor, who was not popular with the king's advisers. To get her out of the way, an earl accused her of adultery and Edward agreed to put her on trial. To prove her innocence, she chose a trial by iron, walking across nine red hot irons. She did so without even noticing. Edward was convinced of her innocence, fell to his knees and begged her forgiveness.

The way medieval people saw the world was different from today. If you committed a crime, God would judge you. If you became ill, God might cure you. And, if you went to war, God might help you. As a result, it was important to get God's support. This is why people prayed, went on pilgrimages and paid for the building of magnificent churches.

## Crime

Sometimes medieval people asked God to judge a criminal in a trial by ordeal. The accused had to take part in a physical test to prove their innocence. During the trial, God would show his verdict in different ways. For example, in a trial by combat, he would help the innocent or weaken the guilty.



Figure 2.6: Common types of trial by ordeal.

## Science

Medieval Christians believed that God created the world. When he did so, he set up natural laws for the world to follow. Chickens would lay eggs, sheep would grow wool and apple trees would grow apples. A medieval scientist would not ask how they did this but, instead, asked why. Christians would look for the purpose God had given a plant or animal. For instance, a sheep might grow wool for people to wear and a tree would grow apples for them to eat.

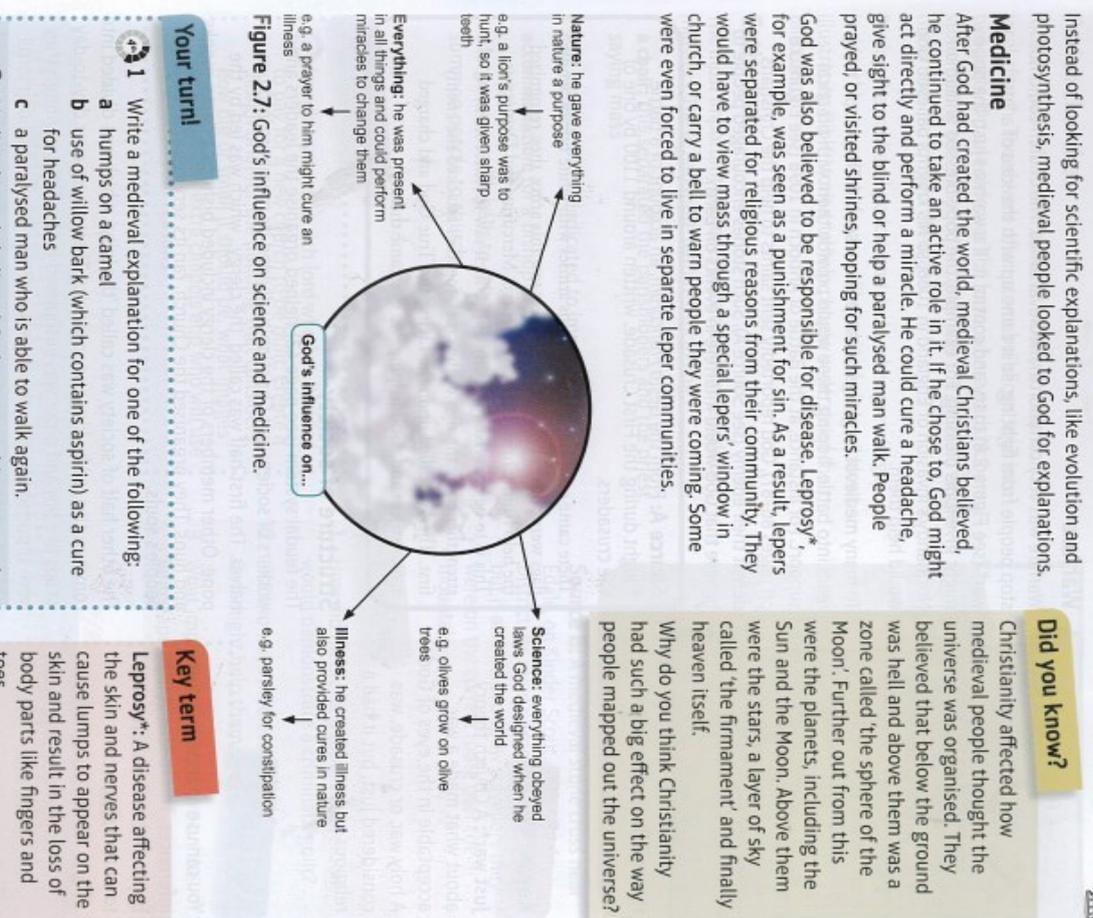


Figure 2.7: God's influence on science and medicine.

## Did you know?

Christianity affected how medieval people thought the universe was organised. They believed that below the ground was hell and above them was a zone called 'the sphere of the Moon'. Further out from this were the planets, including the Sun and the Moon. Above them were the stars, a layer of sky called 'the firmament' and finally heaven itself.

Why do you think Christianity had such a big effect on the way people mapped out the universe?

## Medicine

After God had created the world, medieval Christians believed, he continued to take an active role in it. If he chose to, God might act directly and perform a miracle. He could cure a headache, give sight to the blind or help a paralysed man walk. People prayed, or visited shrines, hoping for such miracles.

God was also believed to be responsible for disease. Leprosy\*, for example, was seen as a punishment for sin. As a result, lepers were separated for religious reasons from their community. They would have to view mass through a special lepers' window in church, or carry a bell to warn people they were coming. Some were even forced to live in separate leper communities.

## Your turn!

- 1 Write a medieval explanation for one of the following:
  - a humps on a camel
  - use of willow bark (which contains aspirin) as a cure for headaches
  - a paralysed man who is able to walk again.
- 2 Medieval people believed God set some things up so that they continued without his interference, while at other times he took an active part in the world.
  - List two examples of things medieval people thought God had set up.
  - List two examples of the belief that God acted directly in the world.

## Key term

**Leprosy\*:** A disease affecting the skin and nerves that can cause lumps to appear on the skin and result in the loss of body parts like fingers and toes.

Is it the enemy's fault? Have they done you harm? Yes/No  
Is it approved by your monarch or pope? Yes/No  
Are you doing it to help others? Yes/No  
If you answered 'Yes' to all of the above, then the Church approves of your war.  
[Terms and conditions: you may still have to do penance for any violence used during the war.]

**Figure 2.8:** Church checklist for war.

**Key term**

**Just war\*:** A Church theory about what made a war acceptable in the eyes of God. A holy war or crusade was considered just, but it had a religious purpose too.

**Your turn!**

You can use sources to make inferences. This means you go beyond what the source says to what it suggests.

- 1 Read Source A. Sum up what it says in one sentence.
- 2 Explain what you could learn about what medieval people thought about God's role in a battle from the source.

**Warfare**

Warfare was very common in medieval times. The Church could not stop people from fighting, so it came up with the idea of a 'just war\*' (see Figure 2.8) to try and control it. If a war was just, the pope might give it his blessing. For example, the pope blessed William of Normandy's invasion of England in 1066, so his knights believed God would help them.

To many medieval knights, such help was essential! They would carry relics into battle, hoping these would provide them with practical support. For instance, at the Battle of Antioch in 1098 (see Figure 3.8 on pages 86–87), God reportedly sent saints to help the Christians defeat their enemy (see Source A). Such stories encouraged people to believe that God would interfere in events on Earth.

**Source A:** From the *Gesta Francorum*, an account of a battle fought during the First Crusade, written around 1100 by one of the crusaders.

There came out from the mountains armies with white horses, whose flags were all white. When our leaders saw this army, they recognized the help from Christ, led by St. George, Mercurius and Demetrius. This is to be believed, for many of our men saw it. These men, strengthened by the sign of the cross, together attacked the enemy first. Then we called upon the Living and True God and charged against them and, God helping, we overcame them.

**Structure of society**

The feudal system (see page 42) helped organise the leaders and workers of society, but Christianity divided its members into two halves. The first half was called 'the clergy', which was led by the pope. Other members of the clergy included bishops, priests, monks and nuns. They organised the Church, ran its services and prayed for people's souls.

The other half of society was called 'the laity', which was divided into communities led by kings or emperors. Their power over day-to-day issues like law and order was authorised in the Bible, although they were supposed to obey the pope too. Other laymen included lords, who led, knights, who fought, and peasants, who worked.

**Religious architecture**

Examples of Christian architecture can still be found across the landscape today. For example, simple stone crosses (see Source B) were built as waymarkers, pointing out the path for travellers, while at the same time reminding them of their faith. Around 350 examples can still be found in England today.

**Parish churches**

Rich and poor Christians donated money to help build a local church. These were often stone buildings split into two parts. On one side was the nave, where parishioners stood during services. On the other was the chancel, where the priests performed the mass.

During the medieval period, parish churches grew larger. Inside, they contained features like stained glass windows illustrating Bible stories, to help people understand their faith better.

**Cathedrals**

The most important churches were called cathedrals or minsters. These had more features, including:

- a **choir**: this separated the parishioners and the priest saying mass
- **side chapels**: often dedicated to important saints
- **accommodation**: for a bishop or other cathedral clergy
- a **large tower**: with bells to celebrate services and summon people to church.

**Your turn!**

Imagine you are a rich lord who has decided to pay for a new church to be built. Create a design brief for the building that considers: how big or small it should be, what images you want, any extra chapels and who will use it. Explain your reasons.

**Checkpoint**

- 1 How did medieval people believe God would demonstrate a criminal's guilt?
- 2 List two ways medieval people thought God might help them.
- 3 What impact did religion have on the landscape of England?



**Source B:** A medieval stone cross near Edale, on Kinder Scout, in the Peak District. Its main purpose was religious, but it also helped show travellers they were on the correct route over the mountain.

Why was the Church so important in people's lives?

**Why was the Church so important in people's lives?**

In a group, divide up the following roles between you: peasant, monk/nun, knight, criminal and architect. Write a one-sentence answer to the enquiry question from your chosen point of view.

Read out your sentences to each other. Then write an explanation for why the Church was central to a range of people's lives.

# What were the Wars of the Cross?



- ▶ Why did people want to join the crusades?
- ▶ When did the four main Crusades take place?

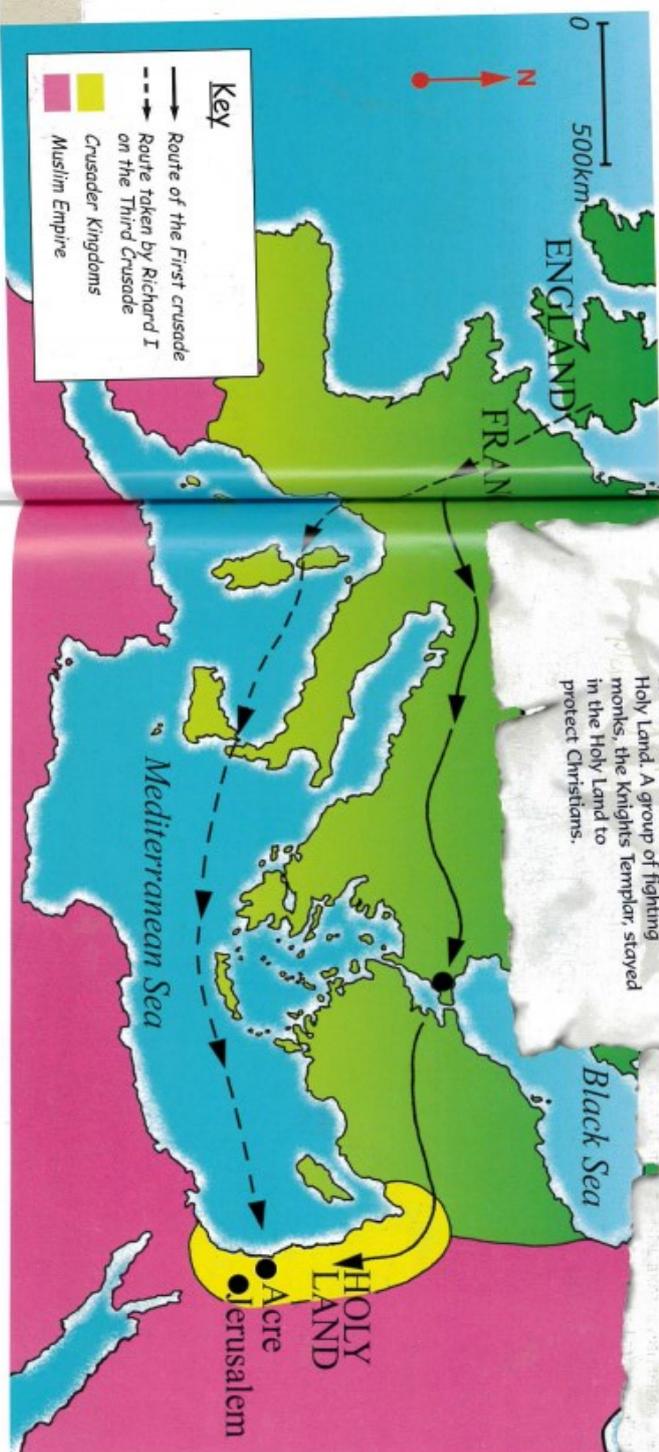
The people of Europe all had one thing in common – their religion. They were all Christians and their religious leader on earth was the Pope.

For medieval Christians, Jerusalem was the most important city on earth. Jesus had lived there, and was crucified and buried there. Naturally, Christians wanted to visit Jerusalem to say they had been to a place so important in the life of Jesus. These travellers were known as pilgrims. They also enjoyed visiting places linked to the life of Jesus. The whole area became known as the Holy Land.

This area was an important place for **Muslims** too. Their great leader, the **Prophet Muhammad**, is said to have visited heaven from Jerusalem. In 1070 Arab Muslims controlled the Holy Land and allowed Christians to visit freely. However, things were about to change.

A fierce fighting tribe from the east called the **Turks** took over Jerusalem and the Holy Land. These Turks were also Muslims, but they believed that no one but Muslims should set foot in the Holy Land. Christians who returned home from the Holy Land told stories of how they had been beaten and tortured by the Turks. Some pilgrims were even killed. In 1096 Pope Urban II urged all kings, lords, soldiers and ordinary people to go and fight the Muslim Turks. He promised that anyone who died fighting would go straight to heaven. Thousands of people decided to go. They sewed crosses, the sign of Christianity, on to their clothes. These journeys became known as the **Crusades**, which means 'Wars of the Cross'. Between 1100 and 1250 there were seven Crusades against the Muslim Turks.

Source A ▶ The routes taken by those on the First and the Third Crusade



**Source B** ▶ Pope Urban II urged Christians to go and fight the Muslim Turks

The Turks, a race alien to God, have invaded the land of the Christians. They slaughter and capture many. They tear out their organs and tie them to a stake. They tie the some to posts and shoot them full of arrows. They cut off their heads. The days of the Devil are here.

## The First Crusade

**Date:** 1097.

**Leader:** Robert of Normandy, son of William the Conqueror.

**Who took part?:** Mainly well-trained, well-armed French knights.

**What happened?:** They travelled 1,500 miles and were exhausted when they got to the Holy Land. Many died from disease as well as fighting. Battles were won at Nicea, Antioch and they finally captured Jerusalem in July 1099.

**Result:** A Christian victory. Jerusalem stayed in Christian hands for over 80 years. Some Christians built castles and settled in the Holy Land. A group of fighting monks, the Knights Templar, stayed in the Holy Land to protect Christians.

## The People's Crusade

**Date:** 1096.

**Leader:** A monk called Peter the Hermit.

**Who took part?:** A few thousand peasants, including some knights, women and children.

**What happened?:** The 'army' was poorly trained, had few proper weapons and was soon short of food. After a long and dangerous journey to the Holy Land, they were slaughtered by the Muslim Turks.

**Result:** An easy Muslim victory.



# 3.1 The Church and Christendom

The spread of Christianity



Christianity first came to Britain when it was part of the Roman Empire. When the Romans left, many Christians went back to worshipping their old gods. But there were some Christians left in Britain, particularly in Wales and Ireland. They worked to convert the British people back to Christianity. The Pope also sent missionaries from Rome to try to make the British Christian again.

By the beginning of the medieval period Britain was fully Christian once more. It was part of **Christendom**. This means that it saw itself as part of the Christian community in the wider world. It was a bit like being in a club together. All Christians believed that the Pope was head of the Church.

Of course when we say 'Church' we don't mean the building where you say your prayers! Head of the Church meant being in charge of the whole organization responsible for looking after religion. Today we have many different types of Christian Church (like the Church of England or the Methodist Church). In medieval times the Church was called the 'Catholic' church, because Catholic meant everyone belonged to it.

## SOURCE

**A** As the Pope was God's representative on earth, and emperors were subject to him. In the interests of the Church as a whole, the Pope could order one king to invade and conquer another's country. A king who defied or offended the Pope could be excommunicated – that is expelled from the Church. As he was no longer a Christian his subjects need not obey him and were entitled to rebel.

The importance of the Pope. From 'History Alive' by Peter Moss, 1977.

People who had important jobs in the Church often helped the king run the country. For example, Bishop Roger of Salisbury was one of King Henry I's best government officials. Of course bishops and abbots were also important because they controlled large areas of land, and this made them wealthy and powerful. So kings tried to make sure that only people they could trust became abbots or bishops. But this was not always easy. Sometimes the Pope did not agree with the king about who should have the top jobs in the Church.

During the reign of William the Conqueror there was no problem. He was a very religious man who founded several abbeys, including one on the site where the Battle of Hastings had taken place. William appointed **Lanfranc**, an abbot from Normandy, as **Archbishop of Canterbury**. This was the most important job in the English Church. Lanfranc said that priests must not marry and made sure that monks stuck more closely to their vows. The Pope agreed with these measures. But William also cleverly increased his own control over the Church. All the English bishops and priests were replaced by Norman ones who were guaranteed to support him.

**William Rufus**, who was king after the Conqueror, was not such a religious man. When Lanfranc died in 1089, the king didn't bother to appoint a new Archbishop for four years. Then William quarrelled with the new Archbishop, who was called Anselm. In the end Anselm left the country and did not return until William's death in 1100.

Anselm also argued with the next king, Henry I. This time the dispute was over who should choose new bishops and abbots. Henry thought he should decide, but the Pope and Anselm said it was their right, not Henry's. Neither Henry nor the Pope really wanted to quarrel, so they patched up their differences. But the next disagreement between a king and the Pope proved to be much more serious.

**B** Tell the Archbishop that I hated him yesterday, and I hate him more today, and I shall hate him even more tomorrow.

## SOURCE

A message sent to Anselm by William Rufus.

**C** Then he sent for some knights who came into the abbey fully armed. Some of the monks went into the church and locked the doors. But the knights broke in. They killed three monks and wounded eighteen in the church. Their blood flowed from the altar onto the steps, and from the steps onto the floor.

## SOURCE

How the abbot of Glastonbury dealt with monks who would not sing Norman prayers.

## Activities...

- 1 Explain what each of these words mean.
  - a missionary
  - b Christendom
  - c the Church
  - d catholic.
- 2 Read Source A. Why do you think kings in medieval times were so keen to be on good terms with the Pope?
- 3 Why were medieval kings so bothered about who had the best jobs in the Church?
- 4 a What does Source B tell you about what sort of person William Rufus was?
  - b What does Source C tell you about what sort of person the abbot of Glastonbury was?

# 3 THE CHANGING POWER OF THE KING

## THIS CHAPTER ASKS

How and why did kings become more powerful?  
 What problems did some kings face?  
 Why did parliament become so important?  
 How bad was 'bad King John'?  
 Did Magna Carta really protect English freedom?

## HOW DANGEROUS WAS IT TO BE A KING?

The title of this BIG PICTURE sounds rather sexist. After all, what about the queens? Well, with the exception of the Empress Matilda in the Twelfth Century, every ruler in the Middle Ages was a man. And even Matilda had to fight a civil war, because a man – her cousin Stephen – had made himself king before she could be crowned!

Between 1066 and 1500 there were 18 English kings. Of these four were overthrown and murdered. Another one, William II, was killed in a hunting accident in the New Forest which might not really have been an 'accident'. Kings had power and wealth and sometimes other people wanted to take it from them. But most kings did not die this way. Most ruled the land and died in their beds. In fact, by the end of the Middle Ages most kings were more powerful than those at the beginning.

## IN WHAT WAYS WERE KINGS STRONGER?

Kings improved the way they collected taxes. Around 1110 an organisation called the Exchequer was set up by Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, a trusted friend of King Henry I. Henry liked him because his church services were short. The Exchequer checked all the money that should be paid to the king and kept records of who had paid. This made the king wealthier. More money helped kings to build castles and fight wars. Henry II spent £21,000 on castles. Today this would be worth about £33 billion. This helped kings defeat rivals and rebels and stay in power.

Royal law became better organised. Judges travelled and tried people accused of crimes at county courts called assizes. Records were kept of cases and sentences. Other courts were set up in London to decide on disagreements about land. This meant kings were more in control. And money paid in fines went to the king.

In 1199 King John began keeping a record of all his official letters. This grew into an organisation called the Chancery. This made it easier to know what was going on in the country and to check decisions kings had made.

## SOURCE A



**Henry II, 1154-89.**  
 Clever soldier, built many castles. Government well run.



**John, 1199-1216.**  
 Short of money, lost wars in France, fell out with Church and barons.



**Edward I, 1272-1307.**  
 Clever soldier, punished rebels, built castles. Conquered Wales and invaded Scotland.



**Henry VI, 1422-61, 1470-71.**  
 Defeated by French, mentally ill, beaten by rivals twice in Wars of the Roses. Murdered.

Some strong and weak kings.

## THE CHANGING POWER OF THE KING

### WHAT THINGS HELPED INCREASE THE POWER OF KINGS?

Changes in the way the Christian Church was run improved the education of priests. The Church encouraged the setting up of universities such as Oxford and Cambridge. Better educated people were given jobs by the king and helped improve the way the government was run. When kings respected the Church, it supported them and said it was a sin to rebel because God had given the king his power. This did not always work. Henry II fell out with his friend Thomas Becket, when Thomas became Archbishop of Canterbury. Henry wanted to have more control of the church and, in 1170, Thomas was murdered.

But trouble like this did not happen very often. Success in war helped a king too. He could reward his followers with land and property taken from a defeated enemy. Even if some of the king's barons opposed him it was hard to defeat a king who was a skilful soldier.

### NEW WORDS

**BARONS:** the most powerful landowners.  
**CIVIL WAR:** when people from the same country fight each other.  
**TAXES:** money paid to the government.

At Christmas, 1124 the men who made coins for Henry I were accused of stealing silver that should have gone into the coins sent to his army fighting in France. They all had their private parts and right hands cut off.

## SOURCE B

**Bishops crown him. The Church supports him.**  
 The 'orb' shows he has authority over all his people.



The sceptre shows he has power to carry out justice.

The barons support him.

Picture of King Edward III at his coronation in 1327. It shows what the artist thought made a king 'strong'.

## Q

1. Make a Spidergram to show ways in which Kings became more powerful.
2. Colour code it to show which ways were religious (to do with God and the Church), economic (to do with money), political (to do with how the government worked).
3. Look at Source A. Choose two 'strong kings' and explain why they were strong. Then do the same for two 'weak kings'.
4. Does Source B show all the things that made a king strong?
5. Using all the evidence, explain how and why Medieval kings became more powerful.

# Henry II and Becket

## WHAT HAPPENED?

In 1154, King Henry II appointed Becket as his Chancellor.

They became great friends. They worked well together.

The church courts which tried monks and priests were unfair. Their punishments were not harsh enough.

In 1161, Henry asked Becket to become the new Archbishop of Canterbury.

Henry announced all serious church court cases could be tried in the king's courts.

Becket refused to help Henry reform the church courts. He would not change his mind.

Becket changed - he worked just as hard, but now for his new master - God!

Henry hoped Becket would be able to control the church courts. He got a shock!

Becket at first agreed, but in 1164 changed his mind. Henry was furious

Sensing danger, Becket fled to France.

In 1170, Henry ordered the archbishop of York to crown the next King.

This was meant to be the archbishop of Canterbury's job! Becket was furious.

Four knights heard this, and decided to carry out the King's wishes.

Henry flew into a rage shouting, "Who will rid me of this troublesome priest?"

However, Becket soon began excommunicating all Henry's supporters!

Henry and Becket met in France in summer 1170. They patched up their quarrel.

On 29th December 1170, four knights burst into Canterbury Cathedral. They demanded Becket take back the excommunications. Becket calmly refused. The knights tried to drag Becket from the Cathedral. Becket could not be moved. They cut and killed him with repeated sword blows.



# Why was the Archbishop of Canterbury murdered?

King Henry II (reigned 1154–89) and Thomas Becket were close friends, but their friendship was destroyed by an argument over the Church when Henry appointed Thomas to be Archbishop of Canterbury. Henry wanted the state to have more power to control the Church and thought his friend, Thomas, would help. However, Thomas refused. It was a refusal that ended in his murder, shocking Christians throughout Europe.

But why was Thomas murdered? This section of the book will look at:

- the breakdown of the relationship between Henry II and Thomas Becket
- the story of Thomas Becket's murder and the reasons for it.

## Henry and Thomas argue

### Learning objectives

- Understand how the relationship between Henry II and Thomas Becket changed over time.
- Learn how to identify a number of causes and begin to categorise them.

### What do you think?

Why do you think the king would want to control the Church?

### Key term

**Chancellor\*:** The king's chief servant. The chancellor had many jobs, including writing important documents, managing royal finances and judging some legal cases.



**1154:** Thomas is appointed royal chancellor. The two men become close friends.

**1154–1162:** Thomas lives a luxurious lifestyle working for the king. He even fights for him in France.

Look at Source A. It is a reliquary containing the remains of Thomas Becket. It is a beautiful box, showing just how important he was. But how did Thomas end up in such a box?

### Becoming archbishop



**1162:** Henry asks Thomas to become Archbishop of Canterbury. Thomas begins to live a more holy lifestyle. He studies religion and wears a hair shirt under his clothes.



**1162:** Thomas resigns as chancellor without asking Henry's permission. Henry is angry.

**1163:** Henry and Thomas begin to argue, first about a new tax Henry wants to raise.

**Figure 2.9:** The relationship between Henry II and Thomas Becket.

Thomas Becket's story begins at Christmas 1154. Around this time, King Henry II of England made Thomas his chancellor\*. The pair quickly became close friends and Thomas, the son of a merchant, enjoyed a lifestyle beyond his wildest dreams. He had six ships kept ready to transport his personal belongings and even had his own travelling zoo.

As chancellor, Thomas had an exciting job. He helped manage the king's lands and fought in battle for him.

These actions proved to Henry that Thomas was very talented. As a result, Henry decided to use him to take control of the Church, which had powers Henry wanted to limit. When the Archbishop of Canterbury died in 1161, Henry asked Thomas to take on the role, but it took him months to give an answer. In the end, he accepted the job, but made it clear he would not be Henry's puppet.

### Early signs of trouble

Right from the start, there were signs that Henry and Thomas's friendship was in trouble. Henry had a fierce temper, expecting complete loyalty from his men. In contrast, Thomas was calmer but refused to do anything he disagreed with. For example, five months after becoming archbishop, Thomas gave up the chancellorship, believing he could not do both jobs. Henry disagreed and was furious, but Thomas did not change his mind.

**Source B:** From the chronicle of William Fitzstephen, a clerk who worked for both Henry II and Thomas Becket. It was written in 1173–74.

Thomas and the king would play together like young boys of the same age, in the hall, in church, in court and out riding. One day they were riding together through the streets of London. At a distance the king saw a poor old man and he said to Thomas, 'Wouldn't it be a great act of charity to give him a warm cap?' To be sure, this great act of charity will be yours', and taking hold of his hood, the king tried to pull off [Thomas's] fine new [cloak]. Eventually, Thomas gave up and let him take it.



**Source A:** A reliquary from around 1190, containing the remains of Thomas Becket.

### Your turn!

- 1 In groups of four, take the following roles: Henry II, Thomas Becket, Henry's inner voice and Thomas's inner voice. Plan and perform a role play in which Henry asks Thomas to become archbishop. The inner voice characters should say what Henry and Thomas are really thinking.
- 2 Create a table with two columns: 'Signs of a strong relationship' and 'Signs of a weak relationship'. Study Source B. Use the information in this source and on pages 62–63 to provide examples that show each type of relationship.
- 3 Based on your table, predict what Thomas and Henry may argue over in the future.

## Key terms

**Anoint\*:** To give spiritual power to a monarch or priest by pouring holy oil on them.

**Criminous clerk\*:** Any churchman, including priests and their assistants, who had committed a crime. They could claim the right to be tried in a Church court.

**Excommunication\*:** When a person is banned from church services and Christian burial. A medieval person believed they were at greater risk of going to hell if they died as an excommunicant.

**Legate\*:** A representative of the pope, with a lot of power. A legate could remove a bishop from their job and issue sentences of excommunication without asking the pope.

## Church and state

In medieval times, England was run by two separate powers: the Church and the state. The Church was led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who ruled over bishops, priests, monks and nuns. The archbishop was responsible to the pope, but had a lot of money and power of his own because the Church owned so much land in England.

The other major power was the state. This was led by the king, who had barons to help him run the country. In theory, the king was answerable to no one except God. He also owned a huge amount of land, which provided him with some of the money he needed to run the country. Figure 2.10 shows the main rights and powers the Church and state each had.

The Church and state were also closely related. For example, the Church had the power to crown and anoint\* the king of England and the king usually chose people for the most important jobs in the Church. This overlapping power is what led to Henry and Thomas's biggest fall-out.

### Argument over the power of the Church

Henry and Thomas's argument was about power. Henry wanted more power over the Church, but Thomas would not give it to him.

Job:	head of state
<b>Role:</b>	to run the country
<b>Rights:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to try criminals</li> <li>to make laws</li> <li>to tax people</li> <li>to wage war</li> <li>to choose officials for powerful and well-paid jobs, including the archbishop.</li> </ul>
<b>Power:</b>	use physical force, for example using armed knights, to get own way
<b>Job:</b>	head of the Church
<b>Role:</b>	to run the Church and its lands
<b>Rights:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to try Church criminals</li> <li>to enforce religious law, for example over marriage cases</li> <li>to make money from Church lands</li> <li>to decide if a war is just</li> <li>to choose who gets powerful and well-paid jobs in the Church</li> </ul>
<b>Power:</b>	use religious force, like excommunication, to get own way

Figure 2.10: The relationship between Church and state.

Henry and Thomas argued over:

- who should **appoint churchmen**: Thomas thought the archbishop and pope should decide, Henry thought he should choose
- the right to **judge criminous clerks\***: Henry wanted churchmen to be tried in the royal court, rather than the Church court; he thought their punishments were not harsh enough
- sentences of **excommunication\***: Henry wanted the power to stop an excommunication of his barons, which could be issued by the pope, or his legate\*

The timeline shows how this argument developed between 1164 and 1170, destroying the friendship between Henry and Thomas.

## Timeline

<b>January 1164</b> Henry proposes limits on church power. Thomas agrees, but refuses to sign the documents.	<b>October 1164</b> Henry puts Thomas on trial for treason, but Thomas flees to France before the sentence is delivered.
<b>November 1164</b> Thomas meets the pope and is permitted to break his January promises.	<b>May 1166</b> The pope gives Thomas the power to excommunicate people. Thomas uses this power against some of Henry's supporters.
<b>March 1170</b> Henry has his son crowned without Thomas conducting the ceremony.	<b>July 1170</b> After the threat of excommunication, Henry finally makes peace with Thomas.

## Your turn!

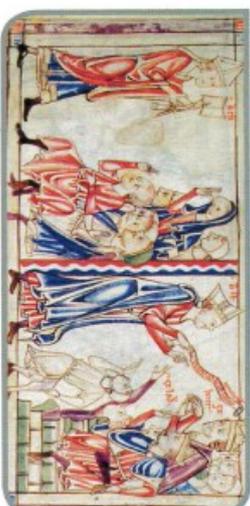
- Imagine it is now July 1170. Add a second scene to your role play from the activity on page 63.
- After you have performed and watched the role plays, write a summary of what Henry and Thomas argued over.

## Checkpoint

- What job did Henry want Thomas to accept in 1162?
- Who was head of the Church and who was head of the state?
- How did the pope help Thomas gain power over Henry?
- What was the main reason Thomas and Henry fell out, and why was it important?



Figure 2.11: The argument between Henry and Thomas.



**Source C:** An illustration from a biography of Thomas Becket. It shows Thomas issuing a sentence of excommunication and arguing his case to Henry II and the French king, Louis VIII.

# Murder of Thomas Becket

## Learning objectives

- Understand the events of Thomas Becket's murder and the reasons that led to it.
- Learn how to plan and write up a narrative with supporting factual information.

## What do you think?

What do you think would cause four knights to murder Thomas Becket?

## 1170: the year of the murder

On 24 November 1170, Thomas made the decision that would lead to his murder: He excommunicated the three bishops who had crowned and anointed Henry II's son, Prince Henry. If the king found out, he would be furious, as the bishops were acting on his orders.

However, in the short term, Thomas was safe in his palace at Canterbury. The bishops had chosen not to tell Henry straight away. Instead, they tried to have Thomas arrested in England for a made-up crime of planning a revolt against Prince Henry. When this plan failed, due to Thomas's popularity with the people of England, the three bishops set sail for France to speak to Henry II directly.

As soon as they arrived, on 21 December, they told the king that they had been excommunicated and that Thomas was planning a revolt. A day later, the king met with his barons and other knights and went into a rage. Legend says that he shouted 'Who will rid me of this turbulent priest?' and that four knights overheard him. Although we do not know for sure what he actually said, the four knights misunderstood his words. They thought he wanted Thomas murdered and set off to England.

**Source A:** From a biography of Thomas Becket written by Garnier of Pont-Sainte-Maxence, a travelling poet, in 1174. In this part of the story, Henry has just been told that Thomas has suspended his bishops.

'A man', the king said to them, 'who has eaten my bread, who came to me poor, and I have raised him high – now he draws up his heel to kick me in the rear! He has shamed my family, shamed my kingdom: the grief goes to my heart, and no one has avenged me!' Then the whole court stirred and murmured; they began to blame themselves severely and to utter fierce threats against the holy archbishop. Several men started to join together by oath to take vengeance for the king.

## Murder in Canterbury Cathedral

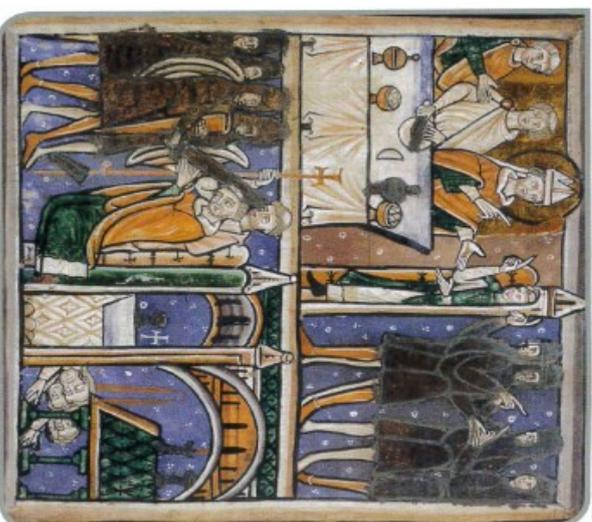
On Tuesday afternoon, 29 December 1170, four knights burst into the Archbishop's Palace in Canterbury. Finding Thomas at his dinner table, they demanded he leave England forever. Thomas refused and the knights stormed out in anger.

Once outside, they began to arm themselves. At the same time, Thomas headed into the cathedral for a service. The monks, fearing that Thomas's life was in danger, tried to block the door, but the archbishop ordered it to be left open.

A few minutes later, the knights rushed in. Seeing their weapons, Thomas insisted that they leave his monks and clerks alone. In reply, they commanded him to go outside, but he refused, clinging on to a pillar. Realising he would not leave, the knights struck him five times, cutting off the top of his head. Then, as they left, one scooped out his brains and smeared them on the floor.

**Source C:** An eyewitness account of the murder by Edward Grim, a clerk who was visiting Canterbury at the time. It was written between 1171 and 1172.

As he lay on the floor, the third knight struck Thomas with his sword. With this blow the crown, which was large, was separated from the head, so that the blood brightened the floor. The fourth knight held off those arriving on the scene so that the others could continue the murder. But the fifth, not a knight but a clerk, put his foot on the neck of the precious martyr, and scattered the brains with the blood over the pavement. 'Let us go, knights,' he called out, 'this fellow will not get up again.'



**Source B:** An illustration from the *Life of St. Thomas Becket*, c. 1180. It shows the arrival of the knights (top), the murder (bottom left) and the knights praying for forgiveness (bottom right).

## Your turn!

- 1 In groups of three, recreate one of the three scenes in Source B. Each person should take on a different role and plan a short speech, explaining what they are thinking in the snapshot.
- 2 Join up with two other groups (covering the other two scenes) and present your snapshots to each other. Each character should take it in turns to come to life and give their speech.
- 3 Draw an earlier scene, using page 66 to help, showing another event leading to the murder.

**Key term**

**Council\*:** A meeting of important officials. In medieval times, a council might include the king, members of his household, the barons and the bishops.

**Why was Thomas murdered?**

The short-term cause of Thomas's murder was a misunderstanding. Henry was furious that his bishops had been excommunicated and held a council\* to discuss Thomas's future (see Figure 2.12). During the meeting, four ambitious knights misinterpreted Henry's words as an order to kill Thomas.

However, this was only the immediate trigger for the murder. In the longer term, it was the argument between the Church and state that had led to it. Thomas's attempt to try and stop the king from taking power from the Church had resulted in Thomas fleeing to France, meeting with the pope and deciding to excommunicate the bishops. Without this background argument, Henry would have had no reason for his angry rant in December 1170.

**What happened afterwards?**

The news of Thomas's murder shocked Europe. When Henry found out, he was stunned, locking himself in his room for three days. He knew his words had led to the murder and thought that everyone would blame him, so he asked the pope for forgiveness. To receive this, he had to promise to go on a crusade and give up his fight with the Church. Henry agreed, but he still had to convince his people he was sorry.

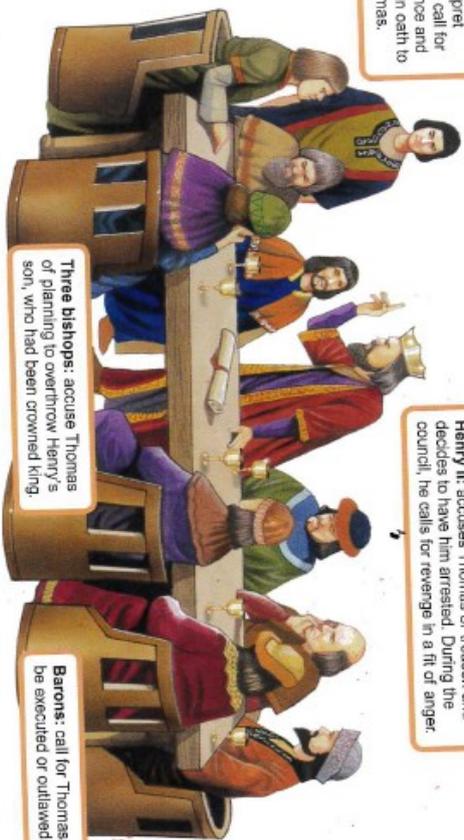
To do so, he went on a pilgrimage to Canterbury Cathedral in 1174, walking barefoot into the city.

Once inside the cathedral, Henry approached Thomas's tomb and begged forgiveness. As a penance, the monks and bishops present took it in turns to whip Henry.



**Source D:** An early 14th-century picture of Henry II and Thomas Becket arguing.

**Four knights:** misinterpret Henry's call for vengeance and swear an oath to kill Thomas.



**Henry II:** accuses Thomas of treason and decides to have him arrested. During the council, he calls for revenge in a fit of anger.

**Three bishops:** accuse Thomas of planning to overthrow Henry's son, who had been crowned king.

**Barons:** call for Thomas to be executed or outlawed.

**Figure 2.12:** Events of 22 December 1170.

Once the beatings finished, Henry spent the whole night in prayer, leaving orders that pilgrims should be allowed inside to witness his act of penance. However, Henry was not the only one to be blamed for the murder (see Figure 2.13). There were consequences for the others involved.

- **Knights:** Henry encouraged the four knights to leave England and visit the pope. After that, they went to the Holy Land to live out their days praying for forgiveness.
- **Bishops:** the three bishops whose words had led to Henry's angry rant had to visit the pope and beg for forgiveness. The pope eventually forgave them.

• **Thomas Becket:** he died as a martyr\* and miracles began to be reported at his tomb. As a result, the pope made him a saint in 1173.

- King Henry II**
  - Made Thomas archbishop.
  - Tried to take power from the Church.
  - Called for revenge, leading to the knights' actions.
- Four knights**
  - Killed Thomas in his own cathedral.
  - Did not act on direct orders from the king.
  - Misunderstood the king.

**Who was to blame for Thomas Becket's murder?**

- Thomas Becket**
  - Did not ask the king before taking action.
  - Refused to back down and give the king more power.
  - Took actions that he knew would anger the king.
- Three bishops**
  - Helped crown young Prince Henry without Thomas's permission.
  - Led about Thomas's plan to revolt.
  - Refused an offer of a pardon from Thomas.

**Figure 2.13:** Who was to blame?

**Key term**

**Martyr\*:** A person who dies for their faith. A martyr could become a saint; if the pope approved and miracles were linked to them.

**Your turn!**

- 1 Create a sequence of labels arranged like a timeline: Thomas becomes archbishop, Thomas flees to France, Thomas returns to England, Thomas is murdered and Henry goes to Canterbury.
- 2 Fill in the gaps between these labels with any events from pages 62–68. There is no need to include specific dates.
- 3 Use your sequence to write the story of Thomas Becket's murder.

**Checkpoint**

- 1 What does 'excommunicate' mean?
- 2 Where was Thomas murdered?
- 3 Who misunderstood Henry's demand for vengeance?
- 4 Who was most to blame for the murder and why?

**Why was the Archbishop of Canterbury murdered?**

Imagine you could interview Henry II about the murder of Thomas Becket. In a group, think of three questions you would ask Henry to find out why the murder took place.

Swap your questions with another group. Try to guess what Henry II might say. Use your answers to write a brief judgement to explain why you think Thomas was murdered and send it back to the other group.

## Richard I, 'Lion-Heart'

Richard was a king of England, later known as the 'Lion Heart', and famous for his exploits in the Third Crusade, although during his 10-year reign he spent only six months in England.

Richard was born on 8 September 1157 in Oxford, son of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine. He possessed considerable political and military ability. However, like his brothers, he fought with his family, joining them in the great rebellion against their father in 1173. In 1183 his brother Henry died, leaving Richard heir to the throne. Henry II wanted to give Aquitaine to his youngest son, John. Richard refused and, in 1189, joined forces with Philip II of France against his father, hounding him to a premature death in July 1189.

As king, Richard's chief ambition was to join the Third Crusade, prompted by Saladin's capture of Jerusalem in 1187. To finance this, he sold sheriffdoms and other offices and in 1190 he departed for the Holy Land. In May, he reached Cyprus where he married Berengaria, daughter of the king of Navarre. Richard arrived in the Holy Land in June 1191 and Acre fell the following month. In September, his victory at Arsuf gave the crusaders possession of Joppa. Although he came close, Jerusalem, the crusade's main objective, eluded him. Moreover, fierce quarrels among the French, German and English contingents provided further troubles. After a year's stalemate, Richard made a truce with Saladin and started his journey home.

Bad weather drove him ashore near Venice and he was imprisoned by Duke Leopold of Austria before being handed over to the German emperor Henry VI, who ransomed him for the huge sum of 150,000 marks. The raising of the ransom was a remarkable achievement. In February 1194, Richard was released. He returned at once to England and was crowned for a second time, fearing that the ransom payment had compromised his independence. Yet a month later he went to Normandy, never to return. His last five years were spent in intermittent warfare against Philip II. While besieging the castle of Châlus in central France he was fatally wounded and died on 6 April 1199. He was succeeded by his younger brother John, who had spent the years of Richard's absence scheming against him.



His mother was too influential over him - he was her favourite son	He was <b>King of England, Duke of Normandy, Duke of Aquitaine, Duke of Gascony, Lord of Ireland, Lord of Cyprus, Count of Anjou, Count of Maine, Count of Nantes and Overlord of Brittany</b>	More French than English. Richard claimed that England was "cold and always raining," and when he was raising funds for his Crusade, he was said to declare, "I would have sold London if I could find a buyer."	He spoke no English
Left his mother Eleanor of Aquitaine in charge of England when he went on Crusade	He had the respect of Saladin who sent him a horse when Richard's died in battle against him	He was a good Christian king who answered the call and went on Crusade	Abandoned England to go on Crusade which was tremendously expensive
<b>Buried in France</b> —brain in Poitou, heart in Rouen and the rest of his body in Anjou	Produced no heirs to the throne	Led an army at 16	Born in Oxford, England
Imprisoned in Austria on way home from the Crusade	He was regarded as a strong leader who made tough decisions	Executed over 3000 Muslims in one go after one battle in the Holy Land so that his army could move faster and avoid capture themselves	Tried to overthrow his father Henry II with his brothers and the King of France
Regarded as a great and powerful warrior	Won a number of battles on Crusade including defeating Saladin at the Battle of Arsuf	Captured Cyprus which enabled the Holy Land to be supplied by Europe	Decided against attacking Jerusalem as he calculated that his army couldn't hold it against the Islamic army.
He negotiated a 3 year peace treaty with Saladin that guaranteed Christians could visit and live in Jerusalem	Died age 41 of gangrene during a siege in France after being shot by a boy with a crossbow. He forgave the boy, set him free and gave him 100 gold coins	Forgave his brother John who had tried to make himself King while he was away on Crusade	He was brave and was nick named 'Coeur de Lion' - 'Lionheart'
Never recaptured Jerusalem on his Crusade	The money used to pay the ransom money made England bankrupt (it was 2-3 times the amount England usually made in a year) - £70,000	He ruled England for 10 years but only spent 6 months in England as King	He was an educated man who wrote poetry

**Richard claimed that England was "cold and always raining," and when he was raising funds for his crusade, he was said to declare, "I would have sold London if I could find a buyer."**

**Richard once said "I wish I may forget John's injuries to me as soon as he will forget my pardon of him."**

**"I am born of a rank which recognises no superior but God" Richard I**

**"...he was in reality a masterful and businesslike ruler.... the fierce king, the extraordinary king"**

**J.Gillingham, modern historian**

"Richard was not a good king. He cared only for his soldiers. But he was brave, and loved a brave man."

**This was written in 1965 by L Du Garde Peach**

**"he was a bad son, a bad husband, and a bad king, but a gallant and splendid soldier." Steven Runciman, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Crusades Historian**

**"the king [Richard] was indeed a man of wisdom, experience, courage, and energy...[and] his arrival (in the Holy Land) put fear into the hearts of Muslims".....a very powerful man of great courage.....a king of wisdom, courage and energy.....brave and clever." Bahā' al-Dīn, Arab Writer**

"Richard of England, a red-haired giant, generous, incredibly brave, hot-tempered and tactless, won a great reputation in the capture of Acre, but quarrelled with his allies who left him and went home." **This was written in 1962 by R Unstead**

**"an able as well as a heroic king," Michael Clanchy, Modern Historian**

**"The King was indeed worthy of the name of King...so great was this man's devotion (to God) and thus quickly, thus speedily and hastily he ran, or, rather, flew to avenge Christ's injuries (on Crusade as soon as he became king)." John Appleby, Modern Historian**

"Richard was a flawed hero, yet he possessed heroic qualities which appealed to successive generations of Englishmen" **George Holmes, Modern Historian**

**"a bad son, a bad husband, a selfish ruler, and a vicious man" Bishop William Stubbs, 19<sup>th</sup> century**

**Roger of Howden, writing in the 1190s, describes the extent of Richard's fund-raising for this Crusade: 'He (Richard) put up for sale all that he had - offices, lordships, earldoms, sheriffdoms, castles, towns, everything'**

**"This king was of terrible strength, proven bravery and indomitable character; he had already gained a great reputation by his past wars: in dignity and power he was inferior the King of France, but he was richer than he and braver, and of greater experience in war. His fleet was composed of twenty-five large ships full of warriors and munitions of war." Bahā' al-Dīn, Muslim writer from the Crusades**

## How powerful were English monarchs?

Monarchs, in order to become strong, needed the support of their nobles, a strong army and a contented population. This combination was not always easy to achieve. A strong monarch could then exercise their power, often by defeating enemies and gaining land. This increased their strength and made them even more powerful.

In this section, you will look at two monarchs: one who tried to exercise his power and failed, and one who tried to exercise his power and succeeded.

This section of the book will look at:

- the failures of King John and the reasons for them
- the successes of King Edward I and the reasons for them
- the limitations of the power of English monarchs.

### What do you think?

What do you think stopped medieval monarchs becoming all-powerful?

## King John: unlucky or useless?

### Learning objectives

- Learn about what King John did to make himself so unpopular that the barons rebelled against him.
- Understand the significance of Magna Carta.

In 1199, King John inherited the Angevin Empire from his brother, Richard I. The empire was prosperous and flourishing. It included rich farming land, busy ports and trade routes, prosperous towns and a growing population.

What could possibly go wrong?

- In order to take possession of his French lands, John had to promise to be loyal to the king of France. But the king of France didn't want John to be king. He and the French barons wanted Arthur, John's nephew.

- John's brother, Richard I, had left huge problems for John to sort out. Richard had been away from England a lot, fighting in the crusades (see page 100), and leaving the barons and the Church to run the country for him. Now they didn't want to give up their power.

- Richard's crusades had been expensive and he had run up big debts paying for them. Somehow, John had to pay back the money Richard had borrowed.

**Source A:** From the *Barrwell Chronicle*, written by monks in Barrwell Abbey, Cambridgeshire, at the end of the 1220s.

[John] was a great prince but hardly a happy one, and he experienced the ups and downs of fortune. He would have thought of himself as happy and successful had he not lost his continental possessions and suffered the Church's curse [excommunication].

**Source B:** Written by Matthew Paris in 1235. Matthew was a monk based in St Alban's Abbey, Hertfordshire.

John was a tyrant, not a king; a destroyer, not a governor, crushing his own people and favouring foreigners. He lost the duchy of Normandy and many other territories through laziness. As for Christianity, he was unstable and unfaithful. Foul as it is, hell itself is defiled by the fouler presence of King John.

He married Isabella of Angoulême. This should have helped secure his lands in France, but it upset the king of France because Isabella had been promised to one of his nobles.

He taxed his barons heavily in order to pay for his wars. They had to pay more tax to him than they had to any other king. This upset them, particularly since he was defeated.

He tried to run the country without the barons. Instead of appointing the most powerful ones to important positions, he ignored them and their advice.



Figure 4.7: How King John became unpopular.

He ordered the murder of his nephew, Arthur. This should have removed any possible threat to his throne, but it disgusted barons in Britain and France. French barons were happy to support the French king in his wars against John.

He went to war twice against France in order to defend his French lands, and lost both times. By the end of his reign, he had lost almost all England's lands in France.

He quarrelled with the pope about who was to be the next archbishop of Canterbury. The pope banned all church services in England. People were afraid they would go to hell. John was excommunicated, which meant that all his nobles were absolved from their oaths of loyalty to him, allowing them to rebel.



Figure 4.8: Map of the Angevin Empire in 1199.

### Your turn!

- 1 Look at all the reasons why John became unpopular. List them in order of importance. Write a sentence to explain which, in your opinion, was the most important and a sentence to explain which was the least important.
- 2 Read Sources A and B. Work in a small group. Imagine you are going to interview both Matthew Paris and the monks who wrote the *Barrwell Chronicle*. Write down a list of questions to ask them about why they held the views they did about John. Swap your list with the group next to you. Each group should then try to work out the answers that might have been given. You could act out a question and answer session.



# Barons hit back: Magna Carta 1215



**Interpretation 1:** A 19th-century painting of King John putting his seal on Magna Carta. Today, this painting hangs in the Houses of Parliament.

### Did you know?

The barons called the charter the 'Charter of Liberties'. This was later called Magna Carta, which is Latin for 'Great Charter'.

### Key term

**Great Council\*:** An assembly of church leaders and wealthy landowners who met with the king from time to time to discuss national affairs.

By 1215, the barons had had enough. They believed that John was ruining the country and was being disrespectful to them and to their position in his kingdom. About 40 barons met in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. They chose Robert Fitzwater to lead them and marched with their armies on London. They did not intend to overthrow the king – they simply wanted John to negotiate with them. Since John couldn't raise an army without the support of the barons, he was forced to negotiate. Finally, on 15 June 1215, John met with the barons at Runnymede, close to the River Thames, near Windsor. The barons presented him with a charter that listed all their demands. Reluctantly, John agreed to them all and put his seal on the charter. He had no choice. In return, the barons promised to be loyal to King John.

### What did the charter say?

The charter contained 63 promises.

- The English Church shall be free to choose its own bishops and archbishops.
- No freeman can be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, except by the law of the land.
- No freeman shall be imprisoned without a proper trial by a jury.
- Justice will not be refused to anyone, nor will it be delayed or sold.
- All merchants shall be free to buy and sell goods in England without paying extra taxes.
- The advice of the Great Council must be sought before the king raises taxes.
- A baron's son shall inherit his lands on payment to the king of £100 and no more.
- 25 barons are to be elected by the other barons to keep the peace and liberties granted by this charter.

**Figure 4.9:** Some of the most important promises within the charter presented by the barons, written in modern English.

### What happened next?

John may have put his seal on Magna Carta, but he didn't like it one little bit. He particularly hated having to call the Great Council\* whenever he wanted to raise taxes. He had no intention of keeping the promises he had made to the barons.

He got the pope to agree that no one could force a monarch to do anything. This was because people believed monarchs were chosen by God, and so were above the law.

Civil war broke out and John was successful in defeating the rebels.

In desperation, London rebels offered the throne of England to the king of France. In 1216, he landed in England with his armies, and many English barons joined him.

At this critical moment, in October 1216, John died. There was no mystery about his death: it was from natural causes. John was succeeded by his son, who became King Henry III. Henry was nine years old when John died, so until he was 18 he was guided by his guardians, William Marshal and Hubert de Burgh. There were two problems that needed to be dealt with quickly.

**Problem 1: end the civil war.** The rebel barons were defeated at Lincoln in 1217 and the French fleet destroyed at the Battle of Sandwich. The French king went back to France.

**Problem 2: Magna Carta.** The pope, who had told John he didn't have to carry out the Magna Carta agreement, had died. The charter was discussed and agreed to by the barons, the king and the pope, and reissued in the name of Henry III.

The new reign had started well. The troubles of King John's reign were over, and the fact that they were over so quickly shows just how far King John had overstepped what had become acceptable in a monarch.

### Your turn!

- 1 Look at Interpretation 1.
  - a What impression has the artist given of the scene at Runnymede in 1215?
  - b Use what you know about the events surrounding Magna Carta to write a few sentences to explain whether you think the artist got it right.
  - c Have a class discussion on why the painting hangs in the Houses of Parliament today.
- 2 Write two or three sentences to explain how the following people would have been affected by Magna Carta. Wulf, a peasant who worked for his lord as a shepherd; Mary, a widow who had taken over her husband's woolen business; Richard, a priest; Joan, who brewed ale and had never left her village; Thomas, the son of a nobleman.
- 3 Magna Carta was written to put right bad things that were happening. For example, saying that no freeman should be imprisoned without a fair trial indicates that some were being imprisoned without a fair trial. Look at the examples given and write a paragraph to say what England was like before Magna Carta.

### Checkpoint

- 1 What were the dates of King John's reign?
- 2 Give one problem Richard I left for John to sort out.
- 3 Name two things John did that made him unpopular.
- 4 Name the baron who led opposition to King John.
- 5 Where did John and the barons meet?
- 6 What is the date of Magna Carta?
- 7 Give one way in which Magna Carta affected freemen.
- 8 What happened to Magna Carta after John's death?

# HISTORICAL ENQUIRY WHO RULES?

King John died in 1216, just a year after he had agreed to the Magna Carta. His nine-year-old son Henry became King Henry III of England. The boy-king was helped by **advisors** to run the country and they promised the barons that they would stick to the laws of the Magna Carta. But Henry did not stay a boy forever. What did he do to fall out with the barons? How did the barons react to their new king's changes? And what did all this mean for the country?

## 4: The Crown versus the State: The struggle against the barons – a son's revenge?

### MISSION OBJECTIVES

- To understand why Henry III became as unpopular as his father.
- To know how the barons reacted to Henry III's rule.
- To understand how this led to the first Parliament.

### The young king comes of age

In 1234, Henry took over from his advisors and ran England by himself – and that's when all the problems started!

**Mistake number 1!**  
Henry gave all of the best jobs to his friends! One of his mates, Peter des Rivieux, had the jobs of treasurer, keeper of the king's wardrobe, Lord Privy Seal and Sheriff of 21 counties – all at the same time!



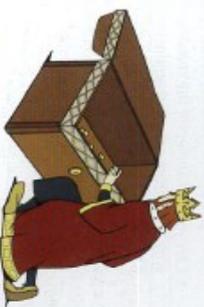
**Mistake number 2!**  
He lost wars! Henry tried to win back the land in France that his father had lost. Unfortunately, he wasn't a very good soldier and the wars were a disaster.



**Mistake number 3!**  
His wife Eleanor! She begged Henry to make her uncle the Archbishop of Canterbury, even though he wasn't meant to interfere with the Church. The monks were not happy and Eleanor was once palled with rubbish!



**Mistake number 4!**  
He asked for high taxes! It wasn't just the failed wars in France that needed paying for, Henry was quite wasteful with money and even tried to buy the Italian island of Sicily for his young son Edmund.



**Mistake number 5!**  
He wasn't very nice to people! It wasn't just the monks he upset. When his first son Prince Edward was born, Henry demanded that Londoners bring him expensive gifts to celebrate. He didn't say thank you, and even sent back gifts he didn't like!



To many of the barons, it looked as if King Henry was trying to regain the power that his father had lost, so in 1258 seven of the most angry and powerful barons forced him to sign the Provisions of Oxford. Henry now had to meet with a council of barons every three years to explain his decisions. Henry felt he had no choice but to sign it. His son, Prince Edward, was furious and swore revenge!

### De Montfort in da house!

Young Prince Edward decided to confront the barons and personally led the king's army into battle at Lewes in Sussex. Unfortunately for Edward, the barons' army, led by Simon de Montfort, won the battle. Edward was taken prisoner as de Montfort saw his chance to reduce the king's power even more and, in 1265, he set up the first **Parliament**.

The word 'Parliament' comes from the French word 'parler', which means to talk. And that is exactly what happened at Parliament – the king talked about how best to run the country. De Montfort's Parliament didn't just involve the rich, important bishops and barons. There were also two knights from each county and two from each large town. These people became known as **commons**, and later the **Commons**. For the first time, ordinary people had some say in how England was run. The lords and the Commons helped the king run the country and they met in separate buildings or **Houses**. The British Parliament, made up of the House of Lords and the House of Commons, still meets like this today.

### De Montfort in distress!

Simon de Montfort was to pay a heavy price for his Parliament. Edward escaped from capture and defeated de Montfort's army at Evesham in August 1265. Simon's body was hacked to pieces and his testicles were cut off and hung around his nose!

**WISE-UP Words**  
advisors Commons  
Commons Houses Parliament

### Work

- Which mistakes did Henry III make that his father King John also made? Which of these mistakes do you think upset the barons the most? Put them in order of importance.
- Explain what happened in the following years:
  - 1216
  - 1258
  - 1264
  - 1265
- What do you think was the most important thing about de Montfort's Parliament? Give reasons for your answer.

### The power of Parliament

When Henry III died in 1272, Prince Edward became King Edward I. He didn't want to risk more fights with the barons by scrapping Parliament. Also, if Edward wanted money (which he certainly did) he knew he needed Parliament to get it for him. In return, Parliament would ask the king for permission to introduce new laws. Although it couldn't tell the king what to do, it could certainly make things difficult for him. Power was now firmly with Parliament!

**SOURCE A:** A medieval document showing a diagram of King Edward I's Parliament.



### MISSION ACCOMPLISHED?

- Can you explain which mistakes Henry III made that his father also made?
- Do you know what Simon de Montfort did about it?
- Can you explain what important changes de Montfort made to the country that we still have today?

## HISTORICAL ENQUIRY ENGLAND AT WAR

After conquering Wales, Edward I looked north to Scotland. Like Wales, Scotland is a mountainous land that was never controlled by either the Romans or the Normans. During the Middle Ages, the Scots in the **Highlands** lived in tribes or clans, each with a clan chief. There was, however, an overall King of Scotland who often fought with the King of Norway to the north and the King of England to the south. So, what made Edward I interfere with Scotland? Did he manage to gain control of it? And how does this effect how Scottish people view their country today?

### 2: Did Edward hammer the Scots?

#### MISSION OBJECTIVES

- To understand why Edward I invaded Scotland.
- To decide whether Edward I deserved the title of 'The Hammer of the Scots'.

#### Scottish homage

In 1286 the Scottish King, Alexander III, died without a clear heir. Thirteen men all claimed to be the rightful King of Scotland! In order to sort out the mess, the Scots asked the King of England, Edward I, to choose for them. He picked John Balliol, who agreed to pay homage to Edward. But in 1294, England went to war with France and Balliol saw his chance to break free from English control. This was not something that Edward was prepared to accept, and it meant only one thing – war! By 1296, Balliol was captured and thrown in jail. Like Wales, Scotland was now in the hands of Edward I... or was it?

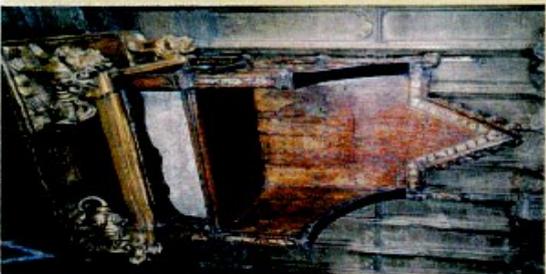
#### Braveheart?

In 1297, a Scottish knight named William Wallace started a rebellion against English rule. He won a famous victory at Stirling Bridge. Edward again marched north to deal with the rebels and Wallace and his men fled to the mountains. In 1305, Wallace was finally caught and taken to London. He was hung, drawn and quartered in front of a large crowd and his head was put on a spike on London Bridge.

## FACT

### A famous stone

Scottish kings had long been crowned at the Stone of Scone or Stone of Destiny. In 1296, Edward I stole the stone and took it to London where it was placed underneath his Coronation Throne. Only in 1996 was it returned to Edinburgh Castle. However, every time a new monarch is crowned, the stone will be borrowed and placed under the Coronation throne in London.



'You seized my castles and land without any excuse. You robbed me and my subjects. You took Scotsmen off to England to be prisoners in your castles. Things just go from bad to worse. Now you have crossed the border with a great army and have started killing and burning.'

↳ SOURCE A: Part of a letter from John Balliol to Edward I in 1296.

'John Balliol, the King of Scotland, promised to obey me. Then he and some of his nobles began a plot against me. English ships that were in Scottish ports were burned, and the sailors were killed. An army of Scots invaded England. They burned villages, monasteries and churches. In one place, they set fire to a school with the children still in it. I could stand it no more. So I declared war and invaded Scotland.'

↳ SOURCE B: Part of a letter from Edward I to the Pope in 1301, explaining his actions.

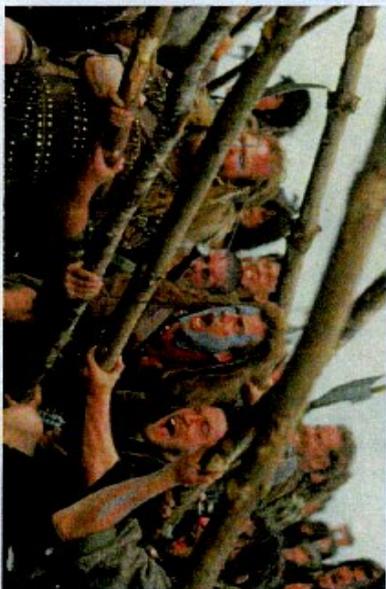
SOURCE C: The Scottish national anthem 'Flower of Scotland'

O Flower of Scotland,  
When will we see  
Your like again,  
That fought and died for,  
Your wee bit Hill and Glen,  
And stood against him,  
Proud Edward's Army,  
And sent him homeward,  
Tae think again.

### The War of Independence

Wallace's rebellion had completely failed but he had aroused **patriotic** feelings in Scotland. In 1306, the Scots united behind a new leader, Robert Bruce, who was both a general and king. Edward went north to face him but died on the journey before he could fight Bruce. He was 68 years old and left clear instructions for what he wanted on his grave: 'Here is Edward I, the Hammer of the Scots.'

The invasion continued under the new king, Edward II, but he was a weak king and a poor leader. Bruce won battles and captured many English castles between 1307 and 1314. Edward forced a final showdown in June 1314 and sent an enormous army of 25 000 to crush Bruce's 7000 soldiers. The two sides met at Bannockburn near Stirling and, despite being massively outnumbered, the Scots crushed the English in a single day. Edward II returned home with what was left of his army. Robert Bruce remained king and Scotland was to remain a completely separate country from England for the next 300 years.



**+** **Hungry for MORE**  
In the 1990s, the Hollywood star Mel Gibson made a film about William Wallace called Braveheart. Many historians criticised the film because parts of the story were invented to make it more exciting. Others praised the film as it got people interested in history.

## WISE-UP Words

clans  
Highlands  
patriotic

#### MISSION ACCOMPLISHED?

- Can you explain why Edward I marched his armies in to Scotland on two separate occasions?
- Do you know why Edward I called himself 'The Hammer of the Scots' and have you decided if he deserved the title?

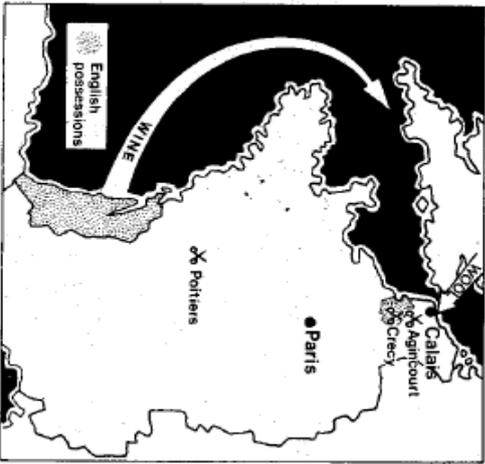
## Work

- 1 a Read Source A. What can you learn from Source A about how Edward treated Scotland?
- 2 b Now read Source B. What can you learn from Source B about Edward's reasons for invading Scotland?
- 3 Why do you think Edward placed the Stone of Scone under his throne in England?
- 4 Write a fact file on the following three figures from Scottish history:
  - John Balliol
  - William Wallace
  - Robert the Bruce
 You must explain:
  - their role in Scottish history;
  - what happened to them.
 Give them a thistle rating. 5 thistles – a Highland legend, 1 thistle – a lowland loser. Give reasons for your thistle ratings.
- 5 Read Source C. Why do think Edward's invasion is mentioned in Scotland's national anthem?
- 6 Do you think Edward I deserves his title of 'Hammer of the Scots'? Give reasons for your answer.

## 24 The Knights Go to War: The Hundred Years War



cannon  
gunpowder  
heretic  
crossbowmen  
heir



English lands in France at the start of the wars.

In 1337, war had broken out between France and England. There was a number of reasons why fighting started. One of them was very simple. Some of France was ruled by the French; some was ruled by the English. Each side also wanted the land owned by their enemy. And they went to war to get it.

The King of England at the time was Edward III. His mother was a French princess, so he claimed that he had a right to be King of France. The French disagreed. The English merchants supported Edward III. They were worried about their wool and wine trade with France.

In 1340, they began fighting. They continued fighting, off and on, until 1453. So the wars have become known as The Hundred Years War.

The English won some dazzling victories at the beginning. Edward himself led the English to win a battle at Crécy in 1346. His son, the Black Prince, won a fine victory at Poitiers in 1356. He even captured the French King.

But a country must do more than win a few great battles if it is to win a war. It must hold on to the land it has won. This was what the English could not do.

By this time, **gunpowder** had been discovered. Cannon had been invented. The French used both to capture English castles in France.

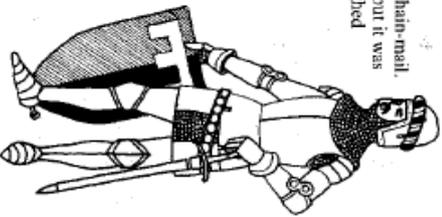
Defending them became very expensive for the English. Extra taxes had to be introduced. One of these was the tax which helped to start the Peasants' Revolt.

As the war dragged on, it got more brutal. On each side, ruthless professional soldiers formed themselves into 'companies'. These men made their living by robbery and violence.

They stole food and raided houses for valuables. It did not matter to them whether the countries were officially at war or not.

After one interval of nearly twenty years, Henry V began the war again. In 1415, he won a great victory at Agincourt and it seemed as if he was close to success. In 1420, the French accepted him as heir to the French throne. He even married a French princess.

Plate armour replaced chain-mail. It protected you better but it was heavier. A full suit weighed at least 27kg.



A Sir John Froissart described the Battle of Crécy:

The French troops did not advance in any proper order. As soon as their king came in sight of the English, his blood began to boil, and he cried out, 'Order our Genoese crossbowmen forward and begin the battle.'

There were about 15 000 crossbowmen but they were worn out because they had marched about 26 kilometres that day, fully armed. They said they would not be able to do very much in battle. At that moment, heavy rain fell and it thundered.

Soon afterwards, it cleared up and the sun shone very brightly, but the French had it shining in their faces.

The crossbowmen got themselves roughly in order and approached the English. They shouted loudly, to frighten the English, but the English paid no attention to it. They hooped twice more and advanced further, then began to shoot.

The English archers took one step forward and shot their arrows with such force and speed that it looked as if it were snowing. These arrows cut through armour and cut the strings of the crossbows. All the crossbowmen turned round and retreated.

The English carried on shooting, and some of their arrows fell on the French knights, driving them into the crossbowmen, causing great confusion.

B This picture of the battle was made in the second half of the 14th century.



Then, it all went wrong for the English. Henry V died. His baby son, Henry, became the new king. There were quarrels between his advisers. More important, a French peasant girl arrived on the scene. Her name was Joan of Arc. She was just seventeen when she led the French army and saved the town of Orleans from the English. The English later accused her of being a **heretic** — an enemy of God. She was found guilty and burned at the stake, but not before she had put new courage into the French army.

Within thirty years, the English were almost pushed out of France. All they had left was the port of Calais.

- 1 Write each of these dates on a separate line in your book: 1337; 1346; 1356; 1415; 1420; 1453. Beside each, write what happened in that year.
- 2 Write down two reasons why England went to war with France.
- 3 Draw the map on page 80. On your map, underline the one place which England still had at the end of the wars.
- 4 Draw a knight wearing plate armour. Write down at least one problem of wearing such heavy armour.
- 5 Read evidence A and look at evidence B. Work out whether the English are on the right or the left in the picture. Then, list as many reasons as you can why the English won.

## HISTORICAL ENQUIRY

### ENGLAND ABROAD

Towards the end of the Middle Ages, England started to interfere in the affairs of neighbouring countries, in particular France. In fact, between 1337 and 1453, the English King also claimed he was the King of France! English armies invaded France and won famous victories in what became known as the Hundred Years' War. This marathon war gave both France and England some of their best known heroes and greatest victories in battle. Indeed, it was only after these wars that people in England thought of themselves as English. Beforehand, they were loyal only to their local baron or area.

## I: Why was there a war that lasted for 100 years?

### MISSION OBJECTIVES

- To know why England and France went to war in the fourteenth century.
- To understand why it became known as the Hundred Years' War.
- To know the chronological order of the battles that were fought.

In 1337 Edward III started a war with the French king, Philip VI. Neither of them was alive to see who had won when the fighting finally stopped. In fact, the wars were too long, with some long breaks in between, for the next 116 years.

Historians chose to call this: 'The Hundred Years' War. So what were the two countries fighting about? What made these two countries fight for so long? And who finally came out on top?

**1340**  
England win the Battle of Sluys. The English surprise the French ships while they are docked. Although the battle takes place at sea, it is fought by soldiers jumping from ship to ship who fight as if they are on land. The French defeat means England controls the Channel and can invade France whenever they feel like it.

**1346**  
Edward enjoys another crushing victory on land. At the Battle of Crécy, his 12,000 archers and 2,400 knights smashed 12,000 French knights, 6,000 crossbowmen and 20,000 militiamen. The English archers had proven that they were far superior to the crossbowmen.

**1347**  
Edward makes it a hat-trick of victories by capturing the French port of Calais. This is the closest port to England and was to remain in English hands for over 200 years.

**1356**  
English victories continue at the Battle of Poitiers, led by Edward's son, The Black Prince. Philip VI was captured and held to ransom for £500,000. That's five times more than Edward normally earned in a year!

**1370**  
The French start to fight back and, when the Black Prince falls ill, they win back some of their land.

**1377**  
The Black Prince dies in 1376 and his father dies the following year. The French take advantage of the lack of English leaders and use cannon to recapture English castles in France.

**1415**  
The English king, Henry V, decides to renew the English claim to the French throne. He invades France and wins a famous victory at Agincourt (see next page). The French king lets Henry marry his daughter, and agrees that Henry should be the next king of France when he dies.

**1422**  
Disaster! Henry V dies before becoming king of both England and France! His son is only nine months old and the French strike back under the leadership of a 15-year-old peasant girl called Joan of Arc. (Find out more about her on the next page.)

**1453**  
The French regain all land except for the tiny area around Calais.

**Best of friends – worst of enemies!**  
The rulers of France and England had been linked since 1066. They shared the same ancestors and language, they traded with each other and they went to war in the Holy Land together. By the end of the Hundred Years' War, they were very different nations who were very suspicious of each other. When the French King Charles IV died without leaving behind any sons, the King of England, Edward III,

claimed he should now be ruler of both nations. He was the nephew of Charles IV. The French weren't prepared to have an Englishman in charge and put Philip VI on their throne. Philip then further angered Edward by helping Scotland fight against England. The final straw came when Philip claimed that Edward's land in France, known as Aquitaine, was not rightfully Edward's. For Edward this could mean only one thing – war!

## Work

### 1 Chronology task

Place these years in order and explain what happened in each key year.

- 1453 • 1340 • 1370 • 1346 • 1422 • 1415 • 1347 • 1377 • 1356

2 Which three battles do you think were most important? Give reasons for your choices.

### 3 Causation task

a Give three reasons why the Hundred Years' War started.  
b Which of the reasons do you think upset Edward III the most? Give reasons for your answer.

4 How many years did the Hundred Years' War actually last? Why was it given its nickname?

### MISSION ACCOMPLISHED?

- Do you know why the King of England and the King of France went to war in 1337?
- Could you tell someone why it became known as the Hundred Years' War?
- Have you placed the battles in the correct chronological order?

# Taking over Wales

**Source B:** Written by Gerald of Wales in 1194, He was a priest who worked as a royal clerk and for two archbishops. His father was a Norman and his mother a Welsh princess.

They [the Welsh] may not shine in open combat and in fixed formation, but they harass their enemy by ambushes and night-attacks. In a single battle they are easily beaten, but they are difficult to conquer in a long war. They are not troubled by hunger or cold, and fighting does not seem to tire them. They do not lose heart when things go wrong, and after one defeat they are ready to fight again and face once more the hazards of war.

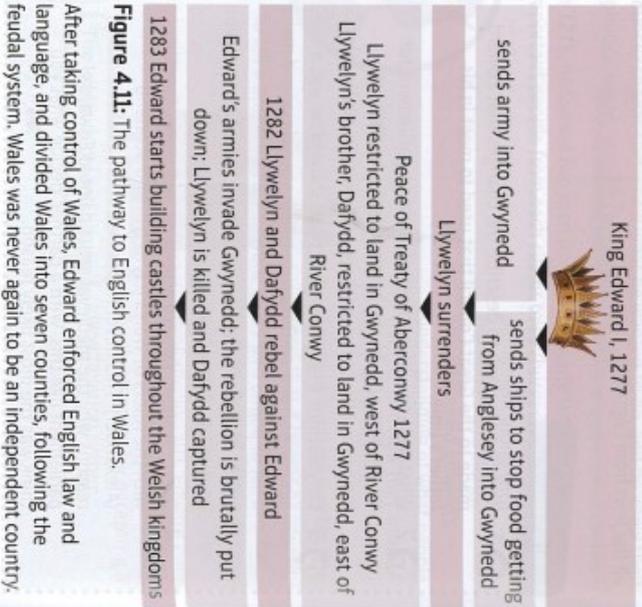
**Source C:** *The Chronicle of Llanercos*, written by monks at the time, describes the death of Dafydd ap Gruffydd.

Dafydd had his entrails cut out of his stomach for being a traitor. He was then hanged. His arms and legs were cut off, for being a rebel. They were then sent to four parts of England as a warning and a celebration. The right arm was sent to York, the left arm to Bristol, the right leg went to Northampton and the left to Hereford. His head was bound with iron to stop it falling apart as it rotted. It was sent to London and put on show on the city walls.

William I (1066–87) wasn't particularly interested in conquering Wales. He was more worried that Wales would attack England. In 1066, Wales was a country almost entirely different from England. It had its own language, laws and customs, and was run by a number of princes who each controlled different regions. In order to keep the Welsh princes inside Wales, William chose strong, loyal lords to run the lands along the Welsh border. They were known as the Marcher Lords. Unlike other lords, they had the right to build castles and call up armies. Gradually they extended their control into south Wales. They didn't attempt to take over Gwynedd, a region of rugged mountains, in north Wales. There, the princes were determined and strong, and never swore loyalty to the English kings as other Welsh princes had done.

## Enter Edward I

Edward's father, Henry III, had allowed the most powerful prince in Gwynedd, Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, to call himself 'Prince of Wales'. When Edward became king, Llywelyn refused to do homage to him. Edward called a meeting of parliament and got their agreement to raise money for a war with Llywelyn.



**Figure 4.11:** The pathway to English control in Wales.

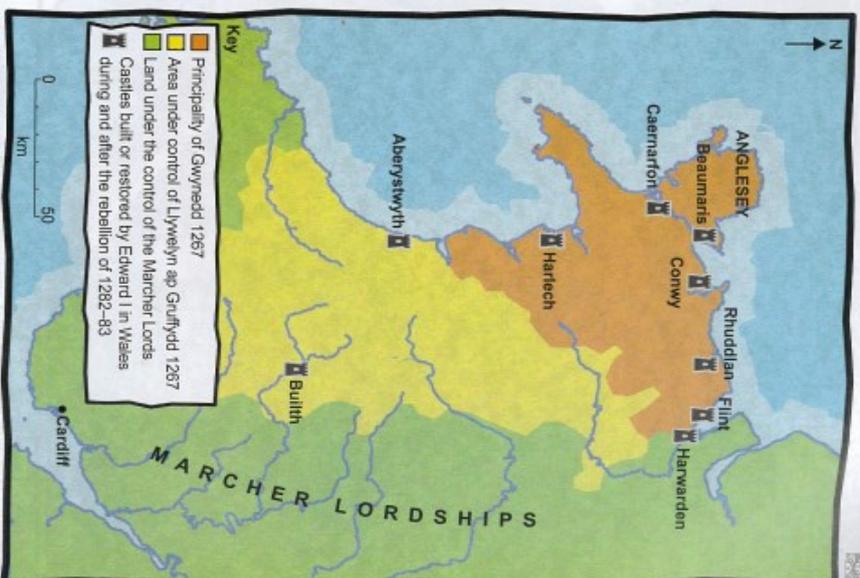
After taking control of Wales, Edward enforced English law and language, and divided Wales into seven counties, following the feudal system. Wales was never again to be an independent country.

## Owain Glyndwr (1359–1415)

Many Welsh people resented being ruled from England, but could do nothing about it because English kings were too powerful. However, their chance came in 1400 when a dispute between two great landowners in Wales led to one of them, Owain Glyndwr, leading a revolt against Henry IV. By 1403, Owain, who called himself the Prince of Wales, had gained control of most of Wales. He called a Welsh parliament and invited the Irish and Scots to join with him in a Celtic alliance. He asked France for support and, in 1405, around 2600 French soldiers landed on the coast of Wales to support Owain. Gradually, however, English armies defeated the rebels and by 1410 Owain was a fugitive on the run. England was once again in control.

### Checkpoint

- 1 When did Edward I's reign begin?
- 2 Give two changes Edward made to his father's Great Council.
- 3 What did the pope want the clergy to do in 1296, and how did Edward stop this happening?
- 4 When did Edward expel the Jews from England?
- 5 Name the leaders of the Welsh revolts against Edward in 1277 and Henry IV in 1400.
- 6 Give two reasons why Wales failed to gain independence.



**Figure 4.12:** Wales at the time of Edward I's conquests.

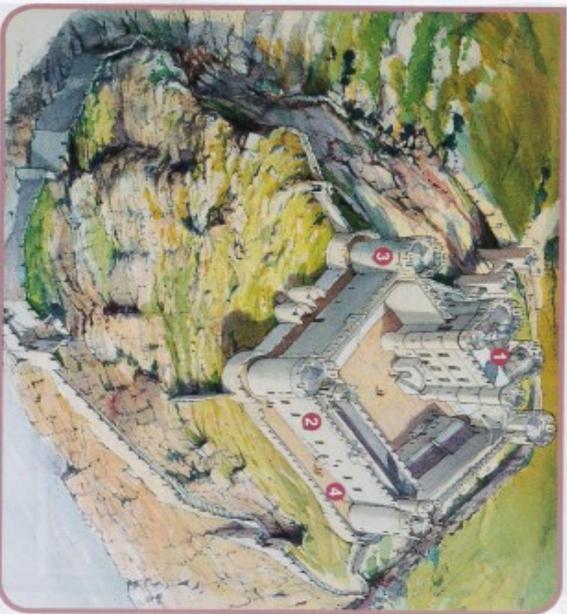
### Your turn!

- 1 Draw a timeline to show how English monarchs had tried to control Wales. Write a paragraph to explain whether or not their methods had changed between 1066 and 1410.
- 2 Why were neither Llywelyn ap Gruffydd nor Owain Glyndwr able to keep Wales independent of England? Write three or four sentences in explanation.
- 3 Read Sources B and C. Discuss in your class whether Source B explains why Edward I went to the trouble of having Dafydd ap Gruffydd hanged, drawn and quartered.

# Changing castle designs

## Learning objectives

- Learn about the ways in which Edward I's Welsh castles were designed for defence.
- Understand why the ways in which castles were used changed over time.



1. Gatehouse with three portcullises.
2. Arrow slits letting archers fire at attackers while staying protected.
3. Round towers, which are stronger than square ones.
4. The killing ground where trapped attackers could easily be killed.

**Interpretation 1:** A modern reconstruction of Harlech Castle, painted by Terry Ball.

## Did you know?

Edward's colossal new stone castles of Conwy, Harlech, Caernarfon and Beaumaris were known as the Iron Ring of Snowdonia.

## Edward I's castles

Harlech was a fantastically strong castle built in 1282–89 as part of Edward I's strategy for taking over Wales. In the 200 years since William I built the first motte and bailey castles, stone had taken over from wood as the favoured building material. Wooden motte and bailey castles were quick to build and helped William I establish Norman rule in England (see pages 40–41). They were replaced by stone keep and curtain wall castles, which took longer to build, but lasted far longer and were more difficult to attack.

Edward only built castles in Wales. He employed one of the greatest castle architects of the Middle Ages, James of St Georges d'Espèranche, to come over from Europe to design the most up-to-date castles in the western world. Edward inspected every site personally, and was usually there when building began. Although the Welsh castles designed by James were all very different, they had some features in common.

- All were near the sea or tidal rivers to take advantage of Edward's sea power.
- They were so well designed that they could be defended by very few men.
- They were built to fit the geographical features of their sites perfectly.

## Beaumaris Castle

Beaumaris Castle, started in 1295 and finished around 1330, was the last castle built by James in Wales. Although never fully completed, it is a perfect example of a symmetrical, stone concentric castle: that is, one featuring walls within walls. Labour costs were enormous, as building stone castles needed skilled workers. These workers were brought in from all over England.

## Your turn

- 1 Look back at the picture of the motte and bailey castle on page 40 and compare it with the picture of Harlech Castle on page 126. How many similarities and differences can you find? Make two lists.
- 2 Imagine you are a Welsh spy. You have managed to get into Harlech Castle. Your task is to advise Welsh rebels as to how they could attack the castle. Make notes telling them what they should, and should not, do.
- 3 James was an architect who was always working to improve his designs. In what ways is Beaumaris Castle an improvement on Harlech Castle? Discuss this in your class.

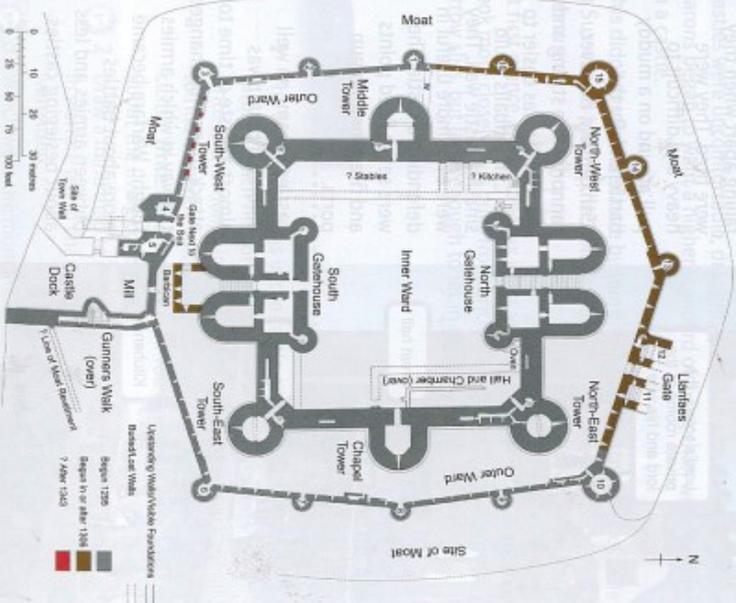


Figure 4.13: A plan of Beaumaris Castle.

## Source A: Part of a letter

written by James to the Treasurer and barons of the Exchequer in February 1296.

In case you should wonder where so much money went in one week, we would have you know that we have needed, and shall continue to need, 400 masons, both cutters and layers, together with 2000 less skilled workmen, 100 carts, 60 wagons and 30 boats bringing stone and sea coal; 200 quarrymen, 30 smiths and carpenters. The men's pay has been and still is very much in arrears and we are having the greatest difficulty in keeping them because they simply have nothing to live on. And, Sirs, for God's sake be quick with the money.