



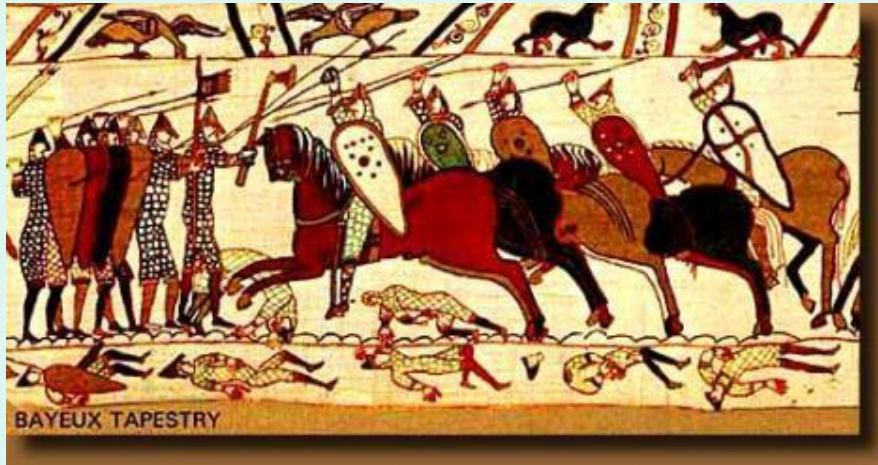
**THE NORMAN PERIOD  
IN BRITISH HISTORY  
(XI – XIII CENTURIES)**

# England in 1066



As soon as **Harold II** became king of England he was challenged by two powerful rulers: **Harald, King of Norway**, and **William, Duke of Normandy**. The English defeated the Norwegian in the north of the country and then moved to the south to meet the Normans.

# The Battle of Hastings



The Normans and the Saxons  
(Bayeux tapestry)

At the **Battle of Hastings** (October, 14, 1066) Harold was killed, and the English army was defeated.

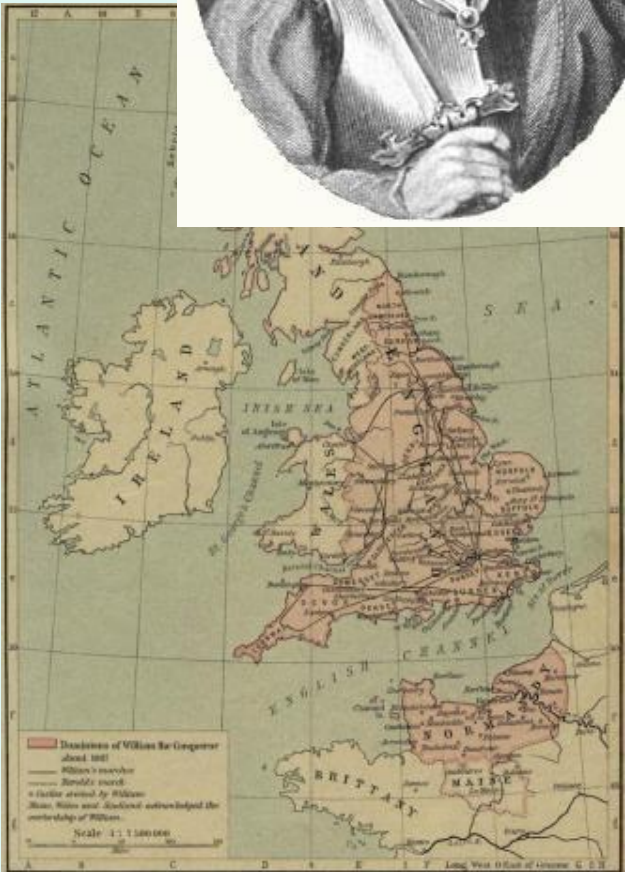


The **Battle Abbey at Hastings**



**William I** was crowned King of England but the English people remembered him as **William the Conqueror**.

The result of the Norman conquest was the establishing of a **strong centralized monarchy** in England and the development of **feudalism**.



Most common people in England lost all their rights and came to be regarded as mere property belonging to **a manor** – a large estate owned by a Norman landlord.

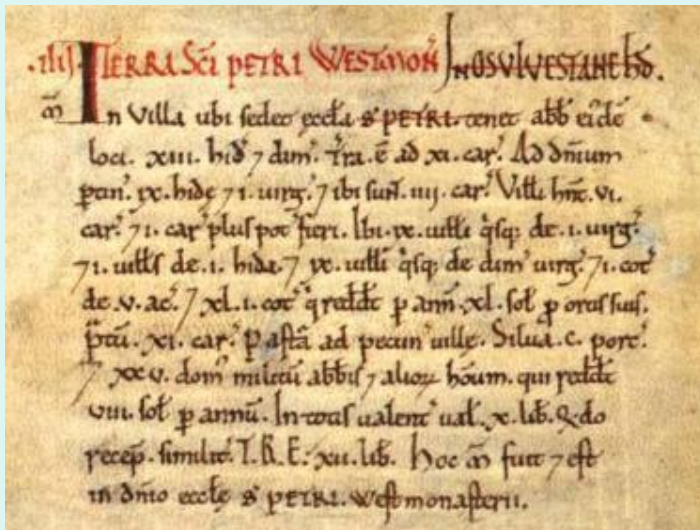
**Norman French** became the official language of the country.



# The Domesday Book



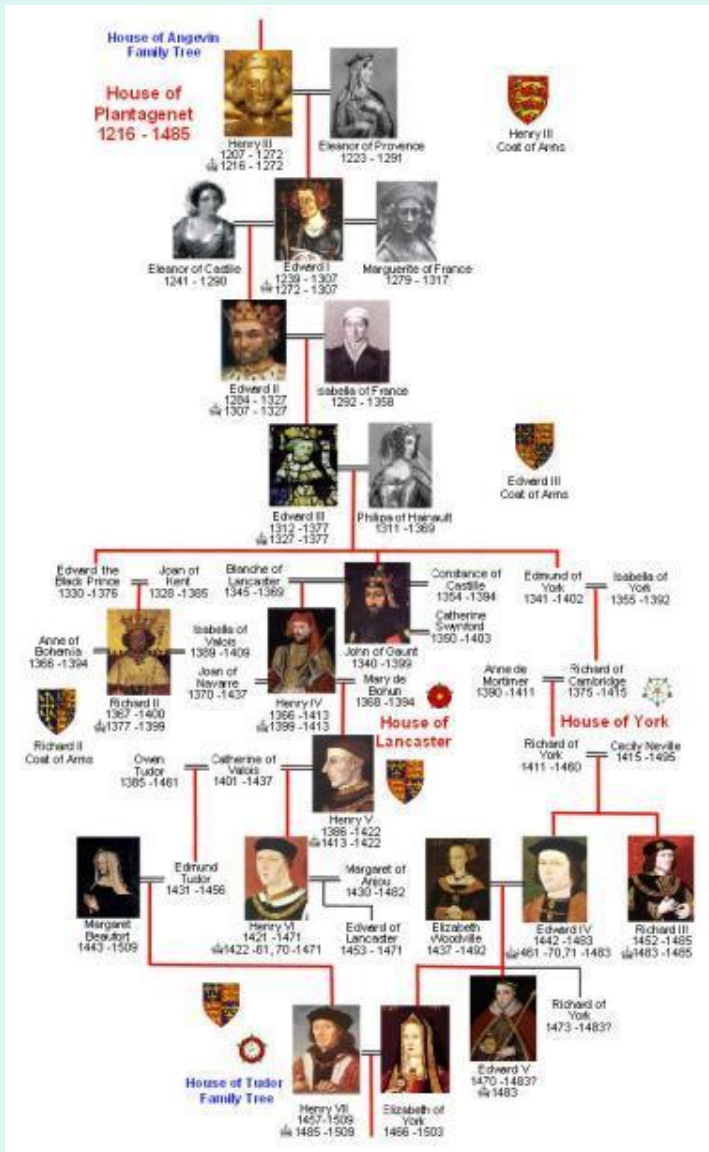
In 1086, William ordered to make a **register of people and land holdings** in the whole country. This unique document is known today as **the Domesday Book**.





According to the Domesday book, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century there were **32 towns** in England, **London** being the largest with population of 15,000 people. Different **crafts** developed in towns, but the economy of England was based primarily on **agriculture**.

# The Plantagenets



After the death of William the Conqueror the throne passed first to his sons, and then to the Norman dynasty of the Plantagenets which ruled England till the end of the XV century.



# Henry II Plantagenet (1133 / 1154 – 1189)



Henry II was the founder of the dynasty and a ruler of a huge empire. He took steps to **reduce the power of barons** and cope with the feudal anarchy. He turned the complex and ineffective English system of law into an **efficient legal system** presided over by the royal court. He encouraged the **growth of new towns**.



Henry II was also the first English king to be proclaimed as **King of Ireland**.



The murder of Thomas Becket at  
Canterbury Cathedral

Henry II also tried to curb the power of the Church. But it failed because of the clash with **Thomas Becket**, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

# Richard I the Lionhearted (1157 / 1189 – 1199)



Henry II was succeeded by his son **Richard I the Lionhearted** who showed little of his father's administrative capacity and preferred to demonstrate his talents in battle.



# John Lackland (1167 / 1199 – 1216)



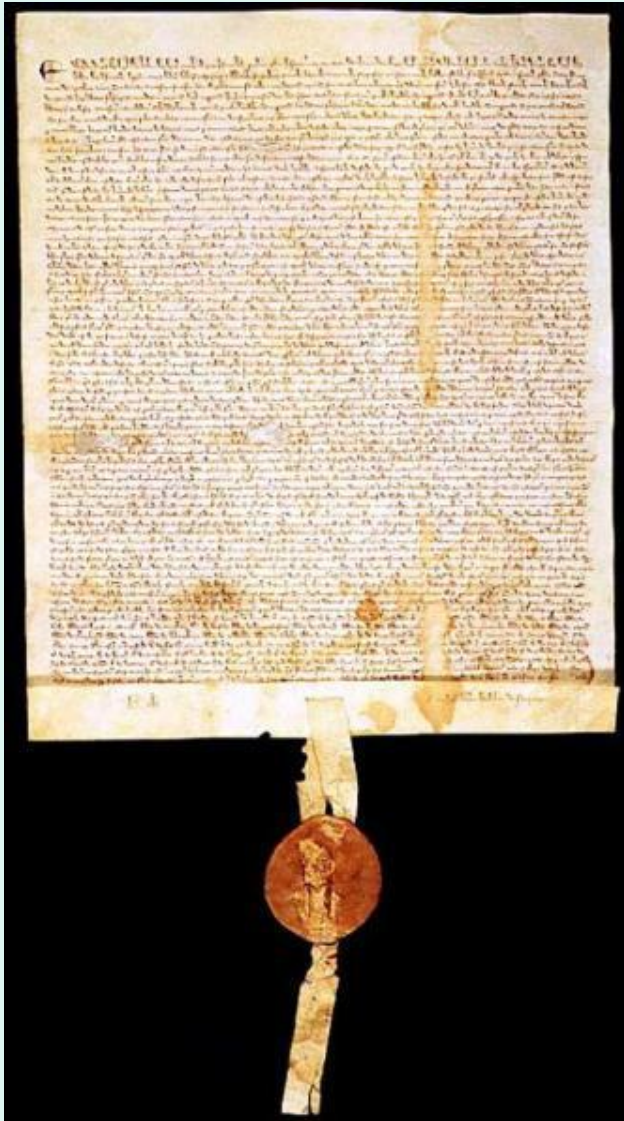
King **John the Lackland**, the younger brother of Richard, became the next monarch but he didn't have the military abilities of his brother. During his reign almost all the vast Plantagenet **possessions in France** were lost. John tried to rule as a **tyrant**, and became rather unpopular with both nobility and the common people.

# Magna Carta

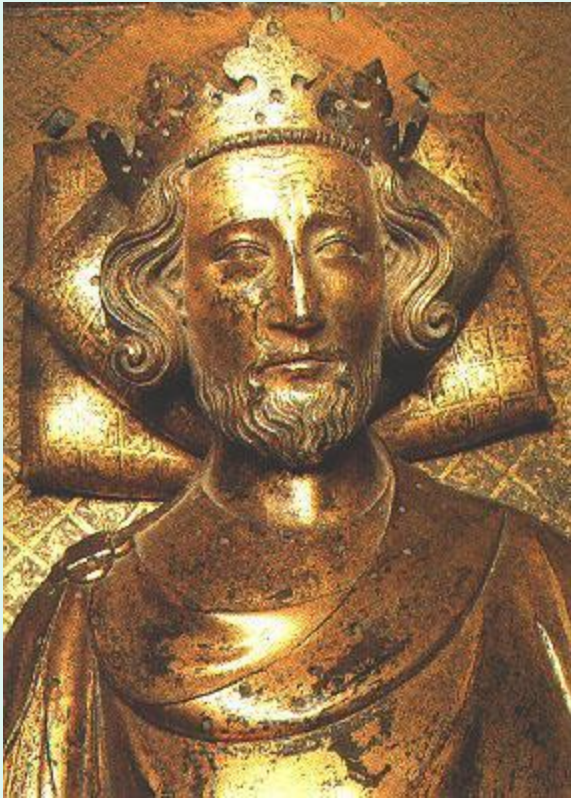


In **1215**, the barons seized the capital and made king John sign a historic document, known as **Magna Carta** (Great Charter). This document laid the earliest principles of English **democracy**.

# Magna Carta (1215)



- The king was to guarantee and protect the **freedom** of his subjects
- No one was to be punished for any wrong-doing without a **proper trial** according to the law of the land
- The permanent committee of 25 barons was set up to control the situation, and the king was **to govern only with this Council's advice and permission**
- The king was not to make the people pay **taxes** without the consent of the Council



Henry III

King John had to sign the Charter, but as soon as the barons left London he **denounced it** and gathered an army. The war continued during the reign of John's son and heir **Henry III**.

# The birth of Parliament

Led by **Simon de Montfort**, the barons captured Henry III, and set up de Montfort as temporary ruler. In **1265**, to help him in the task of government, de Montfort summoned the first **parliament** in English history. Besides **knights** and **the clergy**, two **representatives of each town** were invited to take their places in parliament.



**Simon de Montfort**



# Parliament

Later the opposition of Montfort and the barons was ultimately defeated, but English kings kept **summoning parliament on a regular basis**. It was regarded as a good means to curtail the power of feudal barons.



# Conquering of Wales



Edward I  
(1239 / 1272 – 1307)

At the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, **Edward I** established English rule in **Wales**. In 1300, Edward made his son **Prince of Wales**, thus introducing the title which the heirs to the English crown continue to keep today.



Conway



Carnarvon



Caerphilly

# Cultural development



As a result of the Norman invasion, England became part of the **European culture**.

**Court literature**, written in Norman-French, began to develop in England. The **troubadours**, the composers of lyric poetry and songs, enjoyed great popularity.

# Norman architecture



The Tower of London

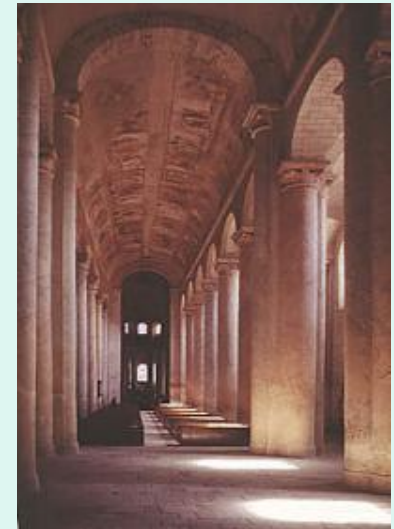
The Normans constructed a variety of **forts** and **castles** all over the country. Their purpose was military. William the Conqueror began building **the Tower on London**.

# Romanesque cathedrals

In the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries the Normans built monumental cathedrals with thick walls, heavy arches and huge columns. This style is known as **Romanesque**.



Durham cathedral

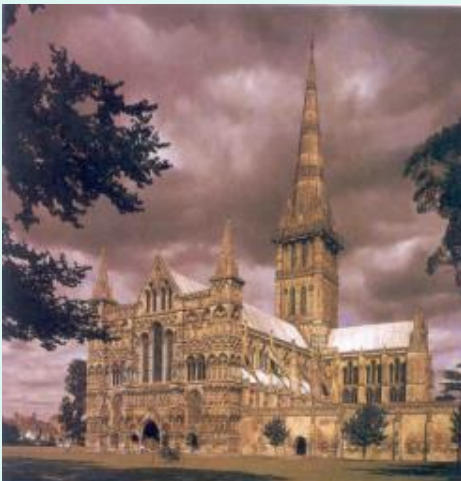


# Gothic cathedrals

From the 12<sup>th</sup> century on high graceful **spires** and **pointed arches** marked the development of the **Gothic style**.



**Bath**



**Salisbury**



**Canterbury**

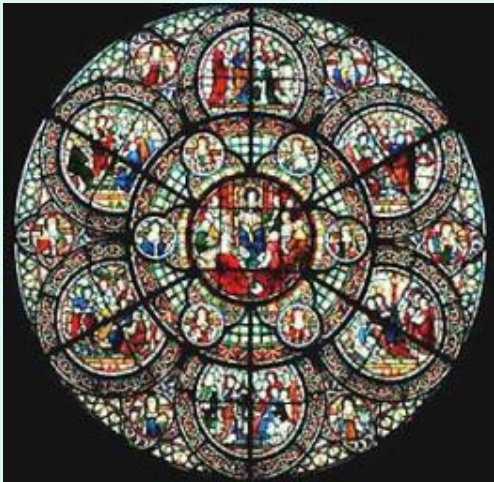


**York**

# Gothic cathedrals



The walls were decorated with **sculpture** and elaborate ornaments, **stained glass** was used for windows.



# Education

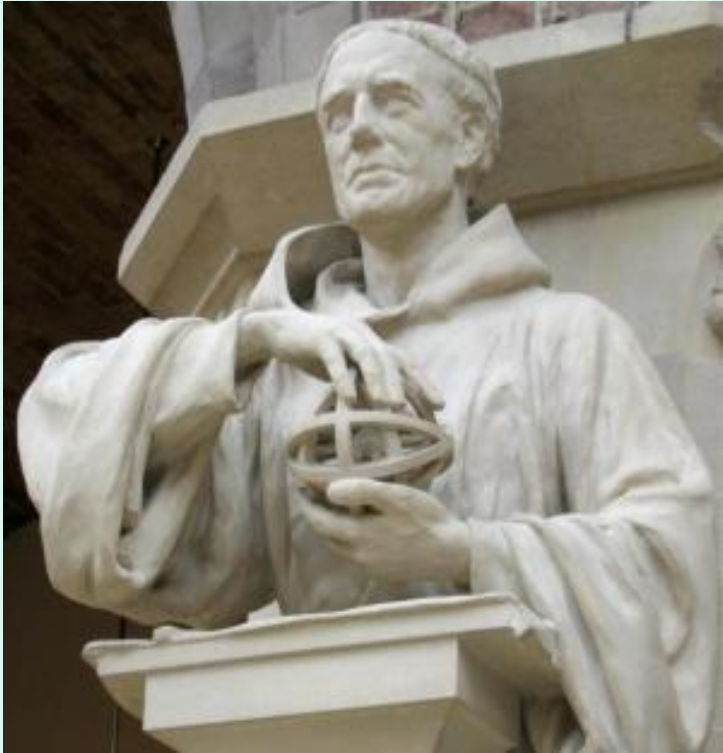


**Oxford**

Great progress was made in the sphere of education. **Oxford**, the first English university, was founded the 12<sup>th</sup> century. **Cambridge** University appeared in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.



# Roger Bacon (1214 – 1294)



One of the most famous scientists of the 13<sup>th</sup> century was **Roger Bacon**. He taught at Oxford and wrote books. He was the founder of English **philosophy** and was deeply interested in **natural sciences, mathematics and physics.**