

Anglo-Saxon and Norman England - Revision

Anglo-Saxon England

Society

- Had a hierarchy – King, Earls, Thegns, Ceorls, peasants, slaves.
- The king – Made laws, ordered tax, ordered military.
- The Witan – king’s advisors, king could accept their advice but did not have to.
- Earls – controlled earldoms – enforced laws, collected tax, raised armies.

Legal system economy and religion

- Wergild – compensation paid to a family if they were murdered.
- Tithing – group of 10-12, all had responsibility for each other or they would all get fine.
- Burhs – fortified town where markets would take place.
- Church was important in people’s lives, owned 25% of land and had bishops in charge of a diocese.

House of Godwin

- Most powerful family in England.
- Owned earldoms – Harold – Wessex, Tostig – Northumbria
- Harold put down a rebellion in Wales for Edward the Confessor – rewarded as sub-regulus (deputy king)
- Harold swore oath to William of Normandy as king in 1064.
- Tostig exiled in 1065 – he raised taxes, murdered rivals and was a southerner in the north (the Danelaw)

William in power – securing the kingdom

Submission of the earls and rewarding followers

- William met Edwin, Morcar and Edgar Atheling at Birkhamsted and they submitted to him.
- William let Edwin and Morcar keep their earldoms in return for loyalty.
- William rewarded his Norman followers with land of those killed at Hastings.

Marcher Earls

- 3 earldoms on border with Wales.
- Given to William’s trusted Norman men – to protect the border.
- Special privileges – could build castles without king’s permission to protect the area.

Anglo-Saxon revolts 1068-71

Edwin and Morcar 1068

- 1068 – Edwin and Morcar rebelled – their earldoms had been reduced.
- William marched north, built 2 castles and they surrendered without any fighting.

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- Edgar Atheling had been helping in this rebellion – fled to Scotland!

Edgar Atheling and northern rebellion 1069

- Robert Cumin (Norman earl – spicy guy) was killed by Anglo-Saxon rebels.
- Edgar Atheling came back from Scotland to join in.
- The Danes came to help the Anglo-Saxons.
- Anglo-Saxons/Danes killed 3,000 Normans in York, then split up.
- William paid the Danes off to leave.
- Dealt with the Anglo-Saxons with the ‘Harrying of the North’

Harrying of the North

- Destruction of the North – burnt crops, killed animals, killed people.
- 100,000 deaths – people resorted to cannibalism.
- William removed Anglo-Saxons land after the Harrying.

Hereward the Wake 1070

- Hereward – Anglo-Saxon thegn, Normans had taken his land.
- Took the Isle of Ely
- Joined in rebellion by Morcar and the Danes (Vikings)
- Danes paid off to return home.
- William defeated Hereward and Morcar was captured.

Revolt of the Earls 1075

- Revolt started by two Normans (Roger and Ralph) and Waltheof (Anglo-Saxons)
- Angry about their land being taken by William.
- Expected the Danes to come and support them with some ships – they never came.
- Waltheof informed Lanfranc (William’s regent) who stopped the rebellion.
- Lack of support from other Anglo-Saxons.

Norman England 1066-88

Feudal system

- Social system – in a hierarchy.
- King, tenants-in-chief, knights, peasants.
- Everyone was given land by William but had to give something in return (e.g. fight for the king, swear an oath, peasants working the land/giving food)

Norman Church

- Owned 25% of land in England.
- Stigand (Anglo-Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury) replaced by Lanfranc (Norman)
- Lanfranc removed corruption from the church.
- Churches had their own courts.
- The church was ‘Normanised’

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Changes to government

- Made earldoms smaller – removed Anglo-Saxon earls, replaced by Norman tenants-in-chief.
- Had regents to rule England on his behalf (Odo/William FitzOsbern and then Lanfranc)

Sheriff and the forest

- Sheriff was king's representative in England, collected tax, raised soldiers for army.
- Anglo-Saxon sheriff replaced by Normans.
- William kept 20% of England as his forest land.
- Ordinary people could not hunt in this land, heavy fine for breaking this law.

Domesday Book

- Survey of England
- Wanted to know how much tax he could charge.
- Also who could fight in an army for him.
- Recorded in a Book.
- No more arguments as it was now part of law.

Bishop Odo

- William's half-brother.
- Given large areas of land in England.
- Regent of England
- Tried to become Pope in 1082.
- Taken prisoner by William until 1087, but released on William's deathbed.
- 1088 – Odo key figure in rebellion against William Rufus – William Rufus exiled Odo.

William and his sons

- Robert (eldest son) wanted land in Normandy from William.
- Robert rebelled against William in 1079.
- Peace between them was made in 1080 – Robert made heir to Normandy, William Rufus heir to England.
- William died in 1087- William Rufus becomes king of England.

Defeat of Robert and Odo

- Norman nobles do not want two lords (Robert in Normandy, William Rufus in England)
- Odo thinks Robert can unite Normandy and England.
- Rebellion led by Odo in 1088 – Odo attacks William Rufus' castle.
- Robert does not invade England.
- Rebellion fails – Odo exiled, William Rufus still king of England.