The Norman Conquest in English Historical Thought

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ABSTRACT

THE NORMAN CONQUEST IN ENGLISH HISTORICAL THOUGHT

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Each chapter in British historiography has produced a diversity of opinion concerning the impact of the Norman Conquest (twelfth century contemporary, Tudor, Stuart, nineteenth century, twentieth century). The closer one comes to modern times the broader and more heated the controversies become. This paper discusses the appropriate works of the prominent historians from each major period. The question is asked: Was the Norman succession merely one event in the constitutional development of England or did it transform the English way of life?
INTRODUCTION

The Norman Conquest of England has been the most debated event in English history. Contemporary chroniclers did not always agree on the nature of the Conquest or the conquerors, and the controversy has grown in spirit rather than diminished over the past nine hundred years. The purpose here, however, is not to evaluate the extent of the impact of the Conquest, but to survey that impact as it has been interpreted by English historians.

In discussing the effects of the Norman Conquest, one must differentiate between those which were the immediate result of William I's accession and those which did not surface until after his death. Discrepancies have arisen among historians concerning the lineal extent of the Norman Age. Many have closed their histories with Henry I, several have gone so far as to include Henry II, and in yet another approach the modern historians have dealt predominantly with William I and the immediate effects of the Conquest. Those who saw fit to include William II and Henry I, for the most part, gave them cursory coverage, and for these reasons this paper covers the Conquest, 1066-1086--the reign of William I.

As for the necessity of another study concerning the Conquest--limited versions of this historiographical approach have been done;¹

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yet, whereas this is by no means an exhaustive effort, this paper is broader in format than any written on the topic to date.
Historical writing in medieval England, as elsewhere, took the form of chronicles and annals. These records supplied meteorological, military, and political information; vital statistics concerning the 'national' and local populace; as well as an abundance of references to ecclesiastical events. The monastic chroniclers were, for the most part, scribes or diarists rather than historians; they judged their past, when there was any judging to be done, by the standards of their own day. By the eleventh century, however, the chronicle was one of the most trustworthy sources available.¹

The eleventh century chroniclers of England had several things in common. Generally speaking, they wrote with little historical depth and were subject to clerical bias. The points they held in common concerning the Conquest were more specific: they viewed it as a major event, disrupting and bringing great hardship upon the kingdom. The chroniclers with the notable exception of William of Malmesbury, believed that the Conqueror's victory was the result of God's Judgement against Harold's perjury. They held the opinion that the Norman Conquest constituted a break in the affairs of the realm and in the constitutional development of the realm, and the chroniclers therefore saw William and his followers as French, foreign invaders. Finally, the monks stressed the changes brought about by the Normans: the new laws and policies which were

imposed upon the people. No mention, however, was made at this time concerning any adoptions, absorptions or general cross-pollinations which may have taken place between the two cultures.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is a collection of nine separate but related chronicles written in the Anglo-Saxon vernacular. Between 1066 and 1154 three of the manuscripts were still in continuation: the "A," or Parker Chronicle (1070); the "D," or Worcester Chronicle (1079); and the "E," or Peterborough Chronicle, also known as the Laud Chronicle (1154). Of these three only the Peterborough was still active through the entire reign of the William I, and it is this one which we shall investigate.

The Peterborough chroniclers, as most contemporary chroniclers, were essentially concerned with those areas of the Norman policy which directly affected themselves and the people. These included ecclesiastic policy as it affected local abbeys and churches, taxation, and military activity. Administrative affairs of state and civil law did not affect the clerical chroniclers and, therefore, were not discussed.

William I's kingdom, as described in the chronicle, was a conquered, but well-ordered state. Peterborough reported that William was so stern and relentless that "no one dared do aught against his will." Even the roads were safe for the passage of wealthy travelers, and murder and rape were dealt with most harshly. The chronicle did not touch upon criminal or civil procedure, neither upon the differences between Anglo-Saxon and Norman law, nor even the differences between an Anglo-Saxon and a

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Norman-French subject in the eyes of the law. While William's "good order" was greatly appreciated, more effort and space was expended on the ecclesiastic policies of the Norman king.

William's first major act toward the Church occurred during the Lenten season of 1070 in a political-economic move to gain control over the Orders and add to the royal treasury. He seized the monies which had been deposited there by the wealthy local barons on the eve of the Conquest. Peterborough's bluntness and brevity seems in itself to be a comment upon the act. "1070...In the spring of the same year, the king had all the monasteries in England plundered."\(^3\)

It is interesting to note that Archbishop Lanfranc, who was most responsible for the Norman reforms and innovations in the English Church, was not discussed in the Peterborough Chronicle. In 1070, the year of Lanfranc's arrival in England, Peterborough was devastated by fire, and the chronicler wrote of those happenings. The only description of Lanfranc to come out of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle came not from the Peterborough, but, rather, from the English entry of the Parker Chronicle (N). The report was followed by a Latin account of the Archbishop and ended with the consecration of Anselm of Bec, Lanfranc's successor.\(^4\) The Parker account was somewhat contrary to the reports from the other chroniclers. There was no discussion of Lanfranc's intellect or piety as seen elsewhere, but rather, we are given a quick view of the primacy controversy between Canterbury and York in which Lanfranc and Canterbury,

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 205.
\(^4\)Ibid., p. 206.
for the time being, won, and Thomas of York took the oath of obedience and received consecration.\(^5\)

In its coverage of Church life the Peterborough account was, for the most part, concerned with clerical replacements and nominations, and the deaths of the various abbots and bishops. There were many such changes in the Church following the Conquest. The unfavorable incidents following or resulting from Norman nominations were also frequently reported. One particularly ugly event resulted in the death of three monks and the wounding of eighteen in the sanctuary of Glastonbury. The attack was instigated by the newly appointed abbot, Thurstan, following a difference of opinion with his monks. Peterborough reported that the monks were ambushed, "when the Frenchmen [of Abbot Thurstan] broke into the choir."\(^6\) Peterborough believed that such disruption and turmoil were the result of Norman replacements imposing their foreign customs upon the English regular and secular clergy.

Winning dominion over England was a long battle for the Normans and one which only began with the victory at Hastings. Most of the chronicles of the period discussed fully William's early battles with invading Danish forces, the unsuccessful rebellions, and the campaigns against the Scottish, the Welsh, and the French of Maine and Normandy. Peterborough was no exception; the chronicler was favorably impressed.

\(^5\) Ibid.
\(^6\) Ibid., p. 215.
Wales was in his domain, in which country he built castles and so kept its people in subjection. Scotland also he reduced to subjection by his great strength. Normandy was his by right of birth, while he also ruled over the county called Maine. If he had lived only two years more he would have conquered Ireland by his astuteness and without any display of force.7

Accompanying the account of a monarch's death, Peterborough usually reviewed the impact of the man's life and reign. For William I, Peterborough did so twice to cover "both the good and the evil."8

If anyone desires to know what kind of man he was or in what honor he was held...then we shall write of him as we have known him, who have ourselves seen him and at one time dwelt in his court. King William, of whom we speak, was a man of great wisdom and power, and surpassed in honour and in strength all those who had gone before him. Though stern beyond measure to those who opposed his will, he was kind to those good men who loved God....

He caused castles to be built Which were a sore burden to the poor. A hard man was the king

And took from his subjects many marks In gold and many more hundreds of pounds in silver. These sums he took by weight from his people, Most unjustly and for little need. He was sunk in greed And utterly given up to avarice. He set apart a vast deer preserve and imposed laws concerning it.

Whoever slew a hart or a hind Was to be blinded. He forbade the killing of boars Even as the killing of harts. For he loved the stags so dearly As though he had been their father. Hares, also, he decreed should go unmolested. The rich complained and the poor lamented,

7Ibid., p. 220.
8Ibid., pp. 219-20.
But he was too relentless to care though all might hate him,
And they were compelled, if they wanted
To keep their lives and lands
And their goods and the favour of the king,
To submit themselves wholly to his will.
Alas! that any man should bear himself so proudly
and deem himself exalted above all other men!
May Almighty God shew [Sic] mercy on his soul
And pardon him his sins...9

This uncomplimentary account of William was the only one to be found in the Peterborough account. The chronicle, in fact, ended its narrative of the Conqueror with the account of his death bed wishes, among which was his desire to have his wealth distributed among the monasteries and churches of the land.10

The Chronicle of Florence of Worcester, agreeing with the Anglo-Saxon Peterborough, believed the Conquest to be a turning point in English history. The Normans brought with them great changes, but also like Peterborough, Florence chose not to cover those areas of English life which little affected the people or the Church.

The exact date of the writing is unknown. The year beyond which it could not have been written is known, however; Florence of Worcester died in 1118. His chronicle was originally grafted to a world chronicle by the Irish monk, Marianus Scotus; Florence both edited and added to the Irishman's extant history. Following his death, Florence's chronicle was, in turn, continued by fellow monk John of Worcester. The annals

9Ibid., pp. 220-21.
10Ibid., p. 222.
are notably accurate; yet, they are equally conspicuous for their lack of imagination.\(^{11}\)

Florence of Worcester was concerned with military and ecclesiastic policy. Rebellions and foreign wars were constant, and much of the warfare was new to England; for these were no longer solely defensive battles against Scandinavian raids, but were internal rebellions as well as wars of conquest. Concerning other aspects of war, Florence alone among the chroniclers made references to William's payment of the Danegeld. In 1069, while occupied with rebellion in Northumbria, William bribed the Danish earl, Asbiörn, to leave England, after granting him the right to forage the coast. Florence of Worcester's scorn, oddly, was aimed, not at William who offered, but at Asbiörn who accepted the payment "to his utter disgrace..."\(^{12}\) One may speculate that perhaps there were several in England who would have preferred Danish to Norman leadership.

Those years of warfare were most difficult on the people of England, and the hardships, when they occurred, were usually blamed upon the king, the foreign conqueror. Florence recorded, for example, that the ravages of the Normans were so great that from 1069 to 1071 England suffered from severe famine. The chief areas of want were the Northumbria and neighboring provinces where "men were driven to feed on the flesh of horses, dogs, cats, and even of human beings."\(^{13}\)


\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 173.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 174.
Ecclesiastic policy was faithfully reported. Agreements between Pope and King, acts of the Lateran Council as well as texts of synodic decrees were quoted extensively, usually including the names of the signatories. Florence of Worcester was not generally enthusiastic about Tom's policies.

At the Synod of 1070, held in Winchester, William I, in one of his first official acts as protector of the Church in England, denounced the former archbishop of Canterbury, Stigand, as well as "a few innocents." In Florence of Worcester's view, the king was doing "his utmost to deprive the English of their dignities," so that he could be free to appoint his own countrymen to the vacant preferments, and, thereby, secure his hold over the kingdom. Several bishops, the chronicle continued, were imprisoned for life on suspicion alone, because they were believed dangerous to William's "newly acquired power."14

Anger at the injustice of the Conqueror was on the other hand, somewhat offset by Florence's acknowledgement of the magnificent reception given to the king's man, Lanfranc. The abbot of Caen wrote, was a man "of unbounded learning... and of the greatest prudence in counsel and the administration of worldly affairs..."15 Florence of Worcester was certainly aware that William's ecclesiastic policy was not a continuation of Edward's. If nothing else, the great changes in the personnel of the Church pointed to a different way. The Worcester monk was displeased with William's methods in securing his dominion over

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14 Ibid.
15 Ibid., pp. 175-76.
the Church, but he expressed unfeigned admiration for the new Archbishop from Caen.

Not all of William's chosen clerics were so well received as Lanfranc. The most unfavorable report concerned the same Thurstan of Glastonbury who had been so derided in the Peterborough account. According to Worcester the conflict arose when Thurstan attempted to do away with the Gregorian chant. 16

Florence of Worcester covered William's economic policies briefly. Like the Peterborough history, the Worcester manuscript discussed the Domesday survey to indicate that it was not well received. In both chronicles the reference was cursory. 17

Eadmer's History of the Recent Events in England (Historia Novarum in Anglia) was written in the final decade of the eleventh century. Regarding the Norman Conquest, the History was restricted to the effects of the Normans upon the Church of Canterbury as seen by a monk in the service of the Archbishop's household.

Eadmer, born around the year 1060, was raised in the monastic community at Christ Church. His English gentry family, reduced to poverty by the Conquest, had been connected with the church at Canterbury before the great upheaval. 18

16 Ibid., p. 183.
17 Ibid., p. 184.
An ambivalence existed in Eadmer's loyalties. On one hand he viewed the Conquest as being God's wrathful Judgement upon England for the false oath of Harold; he could not even bring himself to report the Norman treatment of those English who survived "the great slaughter;" and, as an Englishman, Eadmer resented what he regarded as the post-Norman contempt for English customs. Yet, on the other hand, the Conquest was equally responsible for the introduction of Lanfranc and his successor, the beloved Anselm, to Canterbury. As a close member of Anselm's household, Eadmer was rarely absent from the Archbishop's side, and his History remains a valuable record of Anselm's public life. Eadmer avoided the possible conflict between these two loyalties by omitting much of that which was unpleasant to him.

Though Eadmer did not write about secular matters, he made a general statement concerning William's new customs. The king introduced into England "the usages and laws which he and his fathers before him were accustomed to have in Normandy." On the surface the tone of the statement appears to be neutral; however, since it closely follows an account declaring that the Norman Conquest was the instrument of God's wrath, Eadmer must have realized that the introduction of the foreign customs into England was also a direct result of that harsh Judgement. The Judgement of God, according to Eadmer, was responsible for William's changes within the Church.

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20 Ibid., p. 9.
21 Ibid.
William appointed many bishops and abbots, Eadmer wrote, who were bound by honor to obey his laws and to subordinate every other consideration in favor of this obedience. The monk then gave a cursory report of the "new usages" that the Norman king introduced into England. He was not favorably impressed with the change in policy. Eadmer stated that had the new regulations not been the only reason he had set essential to "the proper understanding of the subsequent events" he would have omitted their discussion altogether. The king required that all communications with Rome pass through his hand, and that no disciplinary or excommunicatory measures be taken against his tenants-in-chief without his permission. Eadmer's opinion of William was not particularly good. Lanfranc, however, was greatly admired. Eadmer had much praise for this active, vigorous churchman: "Nor was it long before the fame of his name and the greatness of his wisdom was raised abroad everywhere so that men thought of him as an illustrious and outstanding figure." Lanfranc, Eadmer emphasized, was William's principal advisor. He had, with William's support, constructed the Church of Christ at Canterbury with its many outbuildings. Outside the northern gate of Canterbury there stood a spacious stone infirmary and large courtyard for the poor. Outside the western gates, "but further away," stood many wooden houses for the exclusive use of and care for lepers. They were segregated according to sex and kindly tended.

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22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., p. 10.
24 Ibid., p. 12.
25 Ibid., p. 16.
When William was gracious to the Church Eadmer gladly made reference to his good works; however, Eadmer stressed, the credit belonged to the good influence of Lanfranc and Anaelm. More than once Eadmer discussed William's restoration of "nearly all" the lands which had belonged to the Canterbury Church and which had been seized by the Normans.\textsuperscript{26} He believed that William would have restored all the lands had he but lived a longer life. The good effects Lanfranc had upon William, as reported by Eadmer, were undeniable. Under their advice and in their presence, he wrote, the king shed some of the "natural harshness" and championed the establishment of monasteries for the sole purpose of observing the religious life.\textsuperscript{27} Eadmer continued to praise William, ending by stating that the king had, however, more regard for the churches in Normandy than England; yet, Eadmer repeated kindnesses spent upon the English churches were due to the efforts of Lanfranc, a Norman as well.\textsuperscript{28}

William of Malmesbury, born around 1095, was of English and Norman parentage. He was raised in the abbey at Malmesbury and there developed his interest in learning. William's \textit{Gesta Regum Anglorum} was a popular standard history in the twelfth century, one reason being the many commentaries and varied legends and tales which were included in the text for the entertainment of the readers. William considered himself an

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., pp. 24-25.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
historian and not a chronicler, and was certainly one of the most notable historians of his age. 29

William had specific ideas regarding the Conquest. He was one of the very few who did not blame the English defeat upon the wrath of God. The Conquest, first of all, was a disaster to England, and secondly, William claimed that had the English fought with military skill rather than "fury" they would not have "doomed themselves and their country to slavery." 30 "This was a fatal day to England," he wrote, "a melancholy havoc of our dear country through its change of masters." 31

There is another point of interest concerning William's lack of adherence to the Divine Wrath theory regarding the Norman victory. It meant that had the English acted decisively the results of the Conquest could indeed have been reversed; to put it inversely the Judgement of God cannot be overturned by the will of men. The effects of such a Divinely-willed conquest could not be turned back, negated, reversed, by the will or the activities of men unless, of course, they were accompanied by a second Judgement of God. Malmesbury's interpretation blamed the loss of England upon the secular failures of men; therefore, had these same men been able to compensate for their weakness--their


*Note that Regnum Anglorum should correctly be translated to read "...of the Kings of the English."

31 Ibid., p. 279.
disorganization—they possessed the potential of reversing the effects of the Conquest and repelling the Normans. This did not happen, and most contemporary chroniclers explain this failure as the Wrathful Will of God. William credits it to the weakness of men.

Edwin and Morcar, ...hearing...the news of Harold's death, solicited the citizens to exalt one of them to the throne: failing, however, ...they departed for Northumberland... The other chiefs would have chosen Edgar, had the bishops supported them; but, danger and domestic broils closely impending, neither did this take place.... Thus, the English, who, had they united in one opinion, might have repaired the ruin of their country, introduced a stranger, while they were unwilling to choose a native, to govern them....

William of Malmesbury included several noteworthy comments concerning William I's royal pleasures, his desire for wealth, and his attitudes toward the Church. The King was fond of dazzling foreign ambassadors with his great feasts and banquets:

He gave sumptuous and splendid entertainments, at the principal festivals;... At these times a royal edict summoned thither all the principal persons of every order, that the ambassadors from foreign nations might admire the splendor of the assemblage and the costliness of the banquets... This mode of banqueting was constantly observed by his first successor; the second omitted it... 

He created the royal forest also for the recreation of himself and his guests. William of Malmesbury was the most vociferous of the detractors of William I's forest:

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32 Ibid., p. 281.
33 Ibid., pp. 308-09.
Desolating the towns and destroying churches for more than thirty miles, [William] had appropriated [this place] for the nurture and refuge of wild beasts; a dreadful spectacle indeed, that where before had existed human intercourse and the worship of God, there deer, and goats, and other animals of that kind, should now range unrestrained, and these not subjected to the general service of mankind.  

To finance these projects, William of Malmesbury claimed, the king was unduly greedy for money; "he cared not how" he obtained it.  

William of Malmesbury is rightfully credited with unusual evenhandedness; he also appears to have held a few frank and uncomplimentary opinions. In his comments on the Conqueror's relations with the Church he summed up his attitude concerning the impact of the Conquest. New is not necessarily better. The Normans, in changing the forms, damaged the substance of the Church in England. 

King William kindly admitted foreigners to his friendship; bestowed honours on them without distinction, and was attentive in almsgiving; ... Thus, in his time, the monastic flock increased on every side; monasteries arose, ancient in their rule, but modern in building: but here I perceive the muttering of those who say, it would have been better that the old should have been preserved in their original state, than that new ones should have been erected from their plunder.  

The life span of Ordericus Vitalis bridged the eleventh and twelfth century schools of chroniclers. Ordericus was born, 16 February 1075, near Shrewsbury, one of the three sons of a French churchman and his English wife. He entered the monastery of St. Erroult, Normandy, at  

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34 Ibid., p. 306.  
36 Ibid., p. 308.
the age of ten. The date of his death is uncertain; it is assumed to have been around the year 1143.37

The Ecclesiastic History of England and Normandy, in spite of its name was not confined to the reporting of ecclesiastical history. Ordericus included political, military, and social events as well as any of the local legends and unusual occurrences which he cared to record. It should be clearly understood at the outset that, among other things, he was noted for his active imagination. He had a tendency to emphasize the drama of an event which may have distorted the accuracy of his history. The History began with the birth of Christ and ended in 1141.38

The history contained much on the political and military affairs of the Norman kings. Writing in Normandy, Ordericus certainly did not have access to as much of the local English Church developments as did Eadmer, Florence of Worcester, or the Peterborough chronicler. The bulk of the ecclesiastical history of England, therefore, rested upon the accounts of William, the activities of Lanfranc, and of Anselm. The activities within the major bishoprics were mentioned as well.

Concerning the Norman Conquest and dominion over the English, Ordericus had much to say. For the early years of William's reign Ordericus depended upon William of Jumièges and William of Poitiers for his materials.39 Whereas those two chroniclers were intensely pro-Norman, Ordericus was split between his pro-William and pro-English biases; that

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38 Ibid., p. 242.
39 Ibid.
is to say, he wrote that the "haughty governors" who subjected the English "to grievous outrages" acted against the expressed injunctions of the king. The English were sorely harrassed by William's followers, but the account of the king was altogether different. On one lone occasion Ordericus censured William for his harshness in handling the rebels of York; however, the praise outweighed the condemnation. Besides being a lawgiver, peace-keeper, and great patron of the Church, William was praised for his good and reasonable taxes. This last reference to good taxes was most unusual.

It is clear from his writings that Ordericus Vitalis believed the Norman Conquest to be a break with the past. The whole tone of the Ecclesiastical History was one of alteration and change. The Normans held dominion over English life with their presence, authority, and culture; and they reshaped many of the English offices, clerical and temporal, whose ranks they had begun to fill. They also introduced their Norman manners and customs, clothing, and architecture into the country. Ordericus was interested in reporting the new laws and policies of the new kings.

In the previous chronicles, of course, feudalism was not an issue. One would suppose Ordericus also to have been too close to that system of tenure and homage to have been able to see it as something new, different from the Anglo-Saxon seignorial system; yet, following a brief

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41 Ibid., p. 28.
report of the Domesday survey, Ordericus discussed the distribution of land. It was divided, he wrote, into knights' fees. \(^{42}\) He claimed that the system was so well ordered that the king, upon command, could at any moment count upon an army of 60,000 men. \(^{43}\) Although obviously inflated, this figure indicated the existence of a very tight system of military tenure, or, at least, one man's opinion of one. The true importance lay in the fact that Ordericus recognized this as new to England and chose to include it in his history.

Thirteenth century English historiography was based solidly upon the annalistic tradition of the twelfth century, and, thus, suffered from the same weaknesses which plagued the eleventh century chronicles who borrowed freely and commented rarely. The illustrious Matthew of Paris adopted the chronicle of Roger of Wendover \emph{in toto}. His \emph{Chronica Majora}, therefore, was his only in the years approaching his own time. \(^{44}\)

A growing tendency of the fourteenth century was toward huge encyclopedic histories. Historical writing declined as a rather crude gluttony for facts replaced the polish of the twelfth century. The meager annals which still existed in the latter fourteenth century were nearly closed altogether by the time Henry IV began his reign in 1399. \(^{45}\)

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\(^{42}\) Knights' fee: a fief granted to a vassal in return for Knights' service.


\(^{43}\) Ordericus Vitalis, \emph{Ecclesiastical History}, II, p. 51.


\(^{45}\) \emph{Ibid.}, p. 405.
The fifteenth century witnessed an historiographical transition between the early achievements and later chivalry of the eleventh through the fourteenth centuries and the new, modern developments of the sixteenth century. The centers of learning had long since moved out of the monasteries and changes were afoot for both the old orders of the Church and of state. 46

46 Ibid.
Tudor Historiography

Historiography in Tudor England was affected by many factors. It was an age of new world discovery, military victory, and economic prosperity. Historical writing was profoundly affected by the break with Rome, for example.

Ecclesiastical history of the period was dominated by the Reformation; many tracts and pamphlets were published concerning the origins of the Church of England and attacking the authority of the Pope. Historical studies often were motivated by political or religious bias. Medieval studies expanded as a basis, not for sincere study of the period, but for evidence which would give historical roots to the Reformation Church. There was much material through which the apologists could sift to find their 'facts,' for the dissolution of the monasteries precipitated the dispersal of many of the monastic libraries, putting the old chronicles and records in the possession of laymen.

Tudor interest in history was not confined to the legitimacy of the Reformation, the Anglo-Saxon roots of law, nor was it used only as an outlet for Henrician, Marian, Edwardian or Elizabethan patriotism. The evidence of this lay in the extraordinary popularity of the historical plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, Bale, et alia. Their dramas concerned the constitutional problems crucial to kingship: legitimacy, succession, politics, power, and corruption. Shakespeare's subtlety, in fact, may be judged of more worth than most of his contemporary
chroniclers' facts. In his literary interpretations he sought to illuminate human motivations and the tragedies and passions of history. It is in this sense that he was among the best of the Tudor historians. Many literary critics have sought to prove that men such as Shakespeare were not concerned with history, but rather they were interested wholly in myth, irony, ritual, comedy, tragedy, sin, and salvation. Even the most determined of these, however, were forced to return to history in the interpretation of history plays--some still choosing to call it myth.\(^1\) Whether the history took the form of chronical, play, or tract, the characteristic aims of Tudor historical writing were to support and justify religion, law, and country.\(^2\)

Robert Fabyan (d. 1513) was a chronicler, cloth merchant, alderman of the ward of Farrington Without in London, and a prosperous political man of the world. In 1494 he held the post of sheriff, and in 1498 was among those appointed to hold Newgate and Ludgate against the Cornish rebels encamped at Blackheath. According to his will, Fabyan died a wealthy man.\(^3\) Robert Fabyan was a post-medieval, but prereformation chronicler, and thus, may represent the transition between the two periods of English historiography. Fabyan's The Concordance of Histories was first printed in 1516 under the printer's title, The New Chronicles of England and France. Fabyan was among the first of the "citizen chroniclers" of London who expanded his diary into a history.

\(^1\) Thompson, History of Historical Writing, p. 231.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 237.
\(^3\) B.N.B., XVIII, p. 13.
As an authority he is of value only as he approaches his own age, but his work is highly representative of early Tudor historiography.⁴

Beginning with the arrival of Brutus, the chronicle continues to the Tudor age. Approaching a system of critical writing he went beyond the mere collection of facts and compared the accounts of the chroniclers. He did not however extend his analysis into the text of his authors.⁵ Fabyan's Chronicle was a compilation of legend and fact as were those before him; yet, he was considered a major chronicler by his contemporaries as well as the more than six generations which followed him.⁶

Regarding the Norman Conquest and the reign of William, Fabyan had nothing new to add to the previous chronicles. "William duke of Normandy surnamed Conqueror baste sonne of Robert the VI, duke of ȝ sayde Dukedome and neuew unto Edwards the confessoure..."⁷ Like the medieval annalists Fabyan did not question William's claims to the throne, ("neuew unto Edwarde...") and like them he felt that the Norman monarchs brought changes to England.

The major alterations either occurred in the Church or were brought about by the instigation of Domesday. Although William filled his

⁴Ibid.


treasury with money seized from the abbys of England Fabyan reminded us that he also built two abbeys in England, Battaile and "Barmonster." His account of the Survey was more thorough than most of the medieval accounts, for he included explanations of the often used terms "hide" and "knight's fee."

In the, XIX, yere of his reign, kyng William then raised a newe maner of tribute for he caused to be gathered through England, of every hide of lande sixe shillinges an hide of land conteineth twentie acres, an acre conteineth, XI, perches of length and fower in breadth, and fower acres make a yarde, and five yards make a hide, and eight hides make a knightes fee. By the which reason, a knightes fee should melde, CIX, acres, and that is demed for a Plough till, a yere.

And not longe after he caused to bee searched, how monch land eche of his Barons held, how many knightes fees, how many tounes, and what number of menne and of beasts wer within his lande: whereof he commanded a Booke to be made, whiche all was doen, for the whiche deede, this land was after greved, with many sonderie plagues, as after shall appere....

The royal forest, as in previous accounts, received harsh reviews from Fabyan. Again, William is credited with the destruction of several churches in the process of the construction of his game refuge.

This manne made the newe forest in the countray of Southampton, the whiche to bryng aboute, he caste doune divers churches by the space of thirtie miles, and replenished it with wilde beastes, and made harde and sharpe lawes for the encreasyng of them, as losying of iyen and other.

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8 Ibid., pp. 309-10.
9 Ibid., p. 308.
10 Ibid., p. 310.
Fabyan, agreeing again with his predecessors, reported that the Englishman's lot following the Conquest was a truly difficult one. "And he [William] helde Englishmenne so low," he wrote, "that in his daies was almost no Englishman, that bare any office of honoure or rule."\textsuperscript{11} William gave the Normans prize land-holdings and constructed castles to perpetuate their domination.

Wylliam exacted the Normans to the chiefe possessions of the lande, so that they greatly increased in great honor + wealth and the Englishman as faste decayed. King Wylliam also made foure strong castles, whereof two be set at York, the thyrd at Lindetingham or Nortingham, + mennd them with Normans, and the iii. at Lyncolne.\textsuperscript{12}

Treatment of the English, however, was not all harsh. In particular Fabyan registered mild surprise at William's good will toward the city of London, and thus his favoring the Englishmen of London, an act we may assume struck Fabyan as being out of character with the monarch. William granted them their first charter, "The firste charter that ever thei had."\textsuperscript{13} It was written in English, "the Saxon tonge."

In summation, Fabyan's William I was guileful, covetous, and greatly motivated to the expansion of his personal wealth.

When William was ded, men spake of him, as thei doe of other Princes, and saied that he was wise and gileful, riche and covetous, and loved well to bee magnified and praised, a faire speaker, and a great dissimlar, a man of skillfull stature, but someadele fatte in the bellie, sterne of face, and strong.\textsuperscript{14} But he passed all other in leuiying of taskes.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 301.
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 309.
Fabyan did not have much good fortune with the publication of his chronicle. The first edition referred to the wealth of the clergy and was, therefore, burnt by Cardinal Wolsey. The second edition, 1533, contained a previously written continuation to the death of Henry VII. The third, 1542, edition was published by Reynes, the fourth published in 1559, and both were heavily edited by the reformers. Remembering that Fabyan was a pre-Reformation Catholic, the 1559 edition's repeated usage of such terms as "Bishop of Rome" indicates only the surface of the philosophical alterations in the text of The New Chronicles of England and France. It also offers some insight into the editing and publishing practices common in the years following Fabyan's death.

Richard Grafton was a man of his times. He was a wealthy London merchant, member of the Grocer's Company, and a printer active in the publication of Reformation literature. In 1537 Grafton printed the famous Whitchurch-Coverdale translation of the Bible. Two years later he printed Cranmer's Great Bible which was so favorably received. In 1540 he printed Erasmus' New Testament, and both the 1549 and 1552 editions of the first Book of Common Prayer were his doing, as well as many of the "Actes of Parliament..." which accompanied them.

In 1569 Grafton published his history entitled: A Chronicle at Large and Meere History of the Affayres of Englande and Kingses of the Same, and dedicated it to Sir William Cecil, Secretary to the Queen and Chancellor of Cambridge. Grafton had correctly judged the desires of

15 D. N. B., XVIII, pp. 113-14.
16 Ibid., p. 310.
the public in the printing of his large-scale history of England,\textsuperscript{17} though there was little which he added that was new. Like many of his contemporaries as well as his predecessors, Grafton depended upon the scholarship of his many sources and was content to sift the relevant from the irrelevant maunderings he found in them. Yet, unlike those writers, he had an occasional opinion which he did not hesitate to air. Whereas other chroniclers listed the changes in policy and life which were introduced by the Normans, Grafton was one of the first to comment directly upon the extent of change which came with William. As brief as the comment was, it was a beginning. "He then as a conqueror altered and chaunged the whole state and gouvernemen thereof."\textsuperscript{18} He did this, Grafton continued, by placing his men in power, voiding previous policy, gaining access to public and private wealth, changing the law, and advancing the French language.

And first by displasing of such as before had borne rule, he advanced the Lordes and people of his owne Nation into the highe and principall offices and dignities thereof, ...that there was skant lieft in England a Lorde that was an English man... And after he caused a Proclamation to be made, that all former grauntees, liberties, and privilages geuen or graunted by any Prince or King of this Realme aforesyme, should be from thence forth utterly voyde to all constructions and purposes, excepte suche as should be renued and confirmed by him, by reason whereof, all degrees of people in the Realme, namely all fraternities, corpora-
tions and bodies politique, were forced to become newe suters to him, and compelled to make newe fines at his will and pleasure: And by this means he gathered into his possession the greatest part of all the ryches and treasure of the lande, as well as of the Clergie, as of the Laytie. That done, he chaunged the lawes of the

\textsuperscript{17} Levy, Tudor Historical Thought, p. 181.

Realme, and made such newe lawes as were profitable
to himself, and grieuous to the people, and he caused
those laws to be set forth in the Norman language to
advance his owne tongue as a worthy and famous spech,
and condemning ours as vile & barbarous: The which
lawes are yet wyth vs in the same tongue.19

There is little doubt concerning Grafton's bias in his view of Anglo-
Norman history. The Normans were the intruders who altered the course
of English affairs, and Grafton did not indicate that the change was for
the better. William was a greedy and covetous man who, along with his
sons, ruled both the Church and the state for the purpose of aggrandiz-
ing himself. Yet, William's reign was not entirely evil.

Grafton recognized that, however harsh his methods, William
brought order to his kingdom. By reviewing the numerous conquests
which England had endured, Grafton felt, in spite of his anti-Norman
bias, that the most beneficial would have to have been the Norman
Conquest. While William of Malmesbury had believed that the Conquest
was too high a price to pay for any Norman innovations Grafton believed
that the ends made the means more palatable.

Thys Islande being firste inhabited by
Brute, was afterwards conquered by the Romaynes,
and then subdued and possessed by the Saxons, &
lastely by the Danes, and so was it never in
perfect state of Governement, vntill the last
conquest of the Normans,... 20

Grafton believed that the first true stability to come to England came
with the Conquest by the Normans.

Little is known concerning Raphael Holinshed's (d. 1580) family
or early life, but in the 1550's he secured employment as a translator

19 Ibid., p. 160.
20 Ibid., p. x.
in the London printing office of Reginald Wolfe. It was Wolfe who, in about 1548, designed the Universal Chronicle which upon his death in 1573 was finally completed by Holinshed. With the help of three successful publishers, George Bishop, Luke Harrison, and John Harrison, Raphael Holinshed's Chronicle was published in 1578.  

The Chronicle is considered by Charles Lethbridge Kingsfold to be the first authoritative, complete, and continuous historical narrative written in the English language. Although he was uncritical in his handling of the earlier portions, Holinshed's patriotic tones influenced much popular sentiment, for example, in favor of Scottish homage to English monarchs. His Protestant bias was evident, but not to the extent of undue interference with the facts; yet, when there arose a need for selection Holinshed chose according to his ideals of morality rather than his dedication to the truth. He felt, essentially, that men, and especially princes, should be taught by history.  

Holinshed praised William's abilities. As his chronicling predecessors before him, however, he did not dig into the extent or the impact of the Conquest. Changes which occurred were reflected in William's new laws, as well as his new Norman manners.

Holinshed began the third volume of his Chronicle with William I--a stranger who not only conquered England, but also assured the succession

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22 Kingsford, English Historical Literature, p. 271.
23 D.N.B., XXVII, p. 132.
24 Levy, Tudor Historical Thought, p. 184.
of his sons to the English throne; an accomplishment which Holinshed felt was truly amazing:

Againe, he a man shall consider that in a strange realme he could make such a conquest, and so exactlie and readilie assure the same to his heires, with new lawes, orders and constitutions (which are like for euer to endure) he would think it a thing altogether void of credit. Yet so it was, and so honourable were his dooings in the sight of the world, that those kings, which succeeded sithens his death, begin their account at him, as from one that had by his prudence renewed the state of the realme, and instituted an other forme of regiment, in atchiung whereof he did not so much pretend a rightful challenge by the grant of his cousine king Edward the Confessor, as by the law of armes and plaine conquest than the which (as he supposed) there could be no better title....

From this passage it is clear that Holinshed believed that the Conquest marked a constitutional break in England. William instituted "an other forme of regiment" and claimed the crown by strength of arms rather than rightful succession.Holinshed's apparent admiration at William's accomplishments did not mean approval.

The Conquest was a punishment visited upon England by the providence of "Almightie" God. Besides pulling all former men of influence "vp by the roots," William changed the whole state, in Holinshed's words, by planting such laws which "stood most for his auaille and securitie, ..." Holinshed also credited William with introducing the first longbows into England. The Bayeux Tapestry does not substantiate this claim, nor do the Welsh who claim the origins themselves. "The use of the long bowe (as Iohn Rous testified) came

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26 Ibid., I, preface, n.p.
first into England with this king William the Conquerour: for the English (before that time) used to fight with axes and such weapons..."  

William was also credited with introducing Jews into England in the following anti-semitic statement: "Among other greeuances which the English sustaine by the hard deling of the Conquerour, this is to be remembered, that he brought Jewes into this land from Rouen, and appointed them a place to inhabit and occupie."  

Holinshed is best known as a major source for the historical plays of William Shakespeare, who adopted the chronicler's facts as well as a few of his phrases. To Holinshed the chronicle of the past should serve as a guide to the future. He even felt that next to the Bible chronicles were most suited to carry on the 'truth,' "Post sacram paginam chronica viuum veritas typum generi."  

**Stuart Historians**  

Historical study, as noted in the Tudor era, has often been motivated by political bias, and in the Stuart age politics were certainly no less volatile than in previous eras of English history. The struggles between James I and Parliament, the Civil War and beheading of Charles I, the Protestant Protectorate of Cromwell, the Restoration or Charles II, the Glorious Revolution and the toppling of James II, the accession of William and Mary and the subsequent schisms of their time—non-juror and convocation controversies for example—and Queen Anne's war  

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28Ibid., p. 24.  
29D.N.B., XXVII, p. 132.  
30Holinshed, Chronicle, I, p. 766.
with France all played a part in inspiring a sharp rise of interest in English history.

The years between 1660 and 1730\textsuperscript{31} were particularly noted for the growth in medieval studies. Many Stuart political activists sought to exonerate their actions by claiming that tradition and precedent were on their side—usually using the action of some medieval monarch to legitimize their claims.\textsuperscript{32} The scholarship was teeming with controversy, and the scholars, while not considered historians by many of today’s standards, were fiercely sincere in their efforts. This was the second wave of medieval revivalists and the fourth, fifth, sixth generation of nonclerical historians, writers, scholars, printers, and lawyers who were very much of this world. In the words of one historian, "their diatribes blew like a fine wind through the fustiness of secluded studies..."\textsuperscript{33} The writing of history and the use of historical source information had gone beyond the age of the chronicler and annalist. The historian began to record and discuss the events of the past purely for the sake of scholarship.\textsuperscript{34}

Stuart historiography was, among other things, affected by the controversy surrounding the origins of English Law. Sir Edward Coke, in fact, when questioned about the similarities between English and

\textsuperscript{31}Queen Anne died in 1714, but the end of the period of medieval historiography came with the deaths of the last of the Stuart mediavalists in the 1730’s.

\textsuperscript{32}David C. Douglas, English Scholars (London: Eyre & Spotiswoode, 1939), pp. 21, 13, 355.

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 22.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.
Norman law came to the stubborn conclusion that William I, upon witnessing the marvels of the English system of law, exported the same to Normandy where he imposed it upon his people. Many lawyers of the age, influenced by Coke, indulged in historical studies concerning the English common law—it being at the time peculiar to England. As Coke's hypothesis of William I and the adoption of English law indicates, these lawyers were rarely troubled with what at first appeared to be historical anomaly. Setting aside his errors in historical fact, however, Coke's influence upon historical writing was great; it was he who gave the growth of English law and legal studies the aura of historical significance which it retains today.35

The seventeenth century and early eighteenth century scholars expanded the field of medieval history. Many invaluable chronicles and charters since destroyed had been transcribed, some edited and some not, and thus preserved by such men as Humphrey Wanley, Thomas Hearne, and John Smith. While often polemic, many of the original works of this age are important and fresh reminders that an age of disputation and conflict will often stimulate the production of scholarship of lasting value.36 Not only was the style of historical writing changing, but also the field itself. Following the Restoration, history had become a discipline in its own right and was not only distinct from the other studies, but also became internally specialized. For example, William Dugdale has been labeled the first true English medievalist, his most reknowned work

being *Monasticon* (1654). This specialization was positive proof of the beginnings of a new age of historical scholarship.\(^{37}\)

Sir Matthew Hale (1609-1676), a Justice of the Common Pleas under Cromwell and Sergeant-at-law, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and Chief-Justice of the King's Bench under Charles II, served both the Protector and the king with notable distinction. A voluminous writer on the law and religion, none of his treatises was published in his lifetime.\(^{38}\) Still, Hale's writings constitute an important reflection of historical philosophies of his times.

Matthew Hale was the first English legal historian to attempt a comprehensive account of the evolution of English law. His book, *The History of the Common Law of England*, is an important mirror to the seventeenth century. The complex alterations in historical attitudes, so recently dominated by Sir Edward Coke, are readily apparent in Hale's attempt to offer the readers of his day an alternative to the Cokean tradition. Ultimately, however, Hale emerged quite clearly as a proponent of Coke rather than his critic.\(^{39}\)

In Hale's *History* fifty out of the one hundred sixty-five pages were devoted to the Norman Conquest, and faithful to the influence of Coke, Hale held that essentially there was no true Conquest of England. The coming of Norman rule was a matter of rightful succession, and there


\(^{38}\) *D.N.B.*, XXIV, pp. 18-19.

was no constitutional break simply because there was no break in succession of government. Hale asserted, therefore, that William I had little or no effect upon English law. 40

The major drawback of Hale's History lay in the absence of an accurate historical framework. Whereas his grasp of the law was excellent, he avoided many constitutional questions concerning the law because he lacked this adequate historical background. The problem was not limited to Matthew Hale. It was, and is, a common problem among lawyers who become legal-historians. Coke, for example, believed, among other things, that Parliament existed in Anglo-Saxon England. 41

In his History Hale set up five guidelines for discussion of the Conquest; these were: the nature of the Conquest, the nature of conquests, English law in 1066, William I's pretensions to the crown, and the *de facto* effect of William I upon Anglo-Saxon law. According to Hale the Conquest of England was an ultimate trial by combat with God as arbiter:

> Because both Parties have appealed to the highest Tribunal there can be, *viz.* The Trial by War, wherein the great Judge and Sovereign of the World, *The Lord of Hosts*, seems in a more especial Manner than in other Cases to decide the Controversy. 42

The Normans took England by *victoria in Regem*, a type of conquest in which William I possessed a claim to the throne. A Conqueror who

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rules by such conquest, a successor by *jure belli*, Hale stipulated, had no rights which were not the conquered prince's.

**Victoria in Regem:** And this is where the Conqueror either has a real Right to the Crown or chief Government of a Kingdom, or at least has, or makes Pretence of Claim thereunto; and, in Pursuance of such Claim, raises War, and by his Forces obtains what he so pretends a title to. Now this Kind of Conquest does only instate the Victor in those Rights of Government, which the conquered Prince, or that Prince to whom the Conqueror pretends a Right of Succession, had; whereby he becomes only a Successor *jure belli*...and therefore has no more Right of altering their Laws...than the conquered Prince.

The laws of Edward the Confessor were in effect in 1066. These laws, Hale stated, were reaffirmed in the coronation oaths of William I and his successors—the most notable example being the famous Coronation Oath of Henry I.

The Laws of Edward the Confessor, were then the standing Laws of the Kingdom.... The English were very zealous for them, no less or otherwise than they are at this Time for the Great Charter; insomuch, that they were never satisfied till the said Laws were reinforced and mingled for the most Part with the Coronation Oath of King William I and some of his Successors.44

William was a pretender to the throne through the promise of the Confessor as well as the favor of the Pope. He was claiming the crown, therefore, *Jure Successionis*, and as successor he could not abrogate the ancient laws. Rather, he joined in a traditional pact with the people.

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43 Ibid., p. 54.
44 Ibid., pp. 55-56.
William, Duke of Normandy, who pretended a Promise of Succession by the Confessor, and a Capitulation or Stipulation by the Pope in Favour of his Pretensions, that he pronounced for William against the others, [Edgar Aetheling and Harold Godwinson].

[If there were any Doubt whether there might be such a Victory as might give a Pretension to him, of altering Laws, or governing as a Conqueror; yet to secure from that possible Fear, and to avoid it, he ends his Victory in a Capitulation; namely, he takes the ancient Oath of a King unto the People, and the People reciprocally giving or returning him that Assurance that Subjects ought to give their Prince, by performing their Homage to him as their King...to be the Successor of the Confessor...] 46

When William took the ancient oath Hale asserted that in so doing he preserved the continuity of the constitution. Hale summed up his ideas thus:

And upon all this it is evident, That King William I could not abrogate or alter the ancient Laws of the Kingdom, any more than if he had succeeded the Confessor as his lawful Heir, and had acquir'd the Crown by the peaceable Course of Descent, without any Sword drawn. 47

Hale further emphasized that William did not alter the laws and did not cause a break in English development because he could not. It was not in his power.

Finally concerning the de facto effects of William I upon the laws, Hale held that the rights, inheritances, and properties of the English were not abolished. William I claimed royal lands and the

45 Where one is in possession of land, and another, who is out of possession, claims and sues for it. Here the pretensed right or title is said to be in him who so claims and sues for the same;" Black's Law Dictionary (St. Paul, Minn: West Publ., 1968), p. 1351.

46 Hale, p. 59.

47 Ibid., pp. 59-60.
properties of those who persisted in opposition to him, "Which is universal in all cases of Victories, tho' without the Pretence of Conquest."\(^{48}\) He introduced Norman French and Norman laws into England in order to bring unity between the two lands. Hale at this point restated his previous contention: William could not alter the law without the common consent in \textit{Communi Councilio Regni}. William's new laws were thus achieved, and were drafted for the purpose of securing peace, particularly between the English and Normans. They included:

\begin{quote}
The Law de Murdro, or the Common Fine for a Norman or Frenchman slain, and the offender not discovered; The Law for the Oath of Allegiance to the King: The Introduction of the Trial by single Combat, which many Learned Men have thought was not in Use here in England before Will.I. And the Law touching Knights Service....\(^{49}\)
\end{quote}

In keeping with the theories of Coke, Hale wrote that more English laws were imposed upon the Normans than Norman laws upon the English, and thus: "the Similitude of the Laws of both Countries did in greater measure arise from their Imitation of our Laws, rather than ours from them,..."\(^{50}\)

Robert Brady was born in Denver, Norfolk. He was physician in ordinary to Charles II and James II, regius professor of physic at Cambridge, and a member of Parliament representing the university in 1681 and 1685. Brady died on August 19, 1700. As an historian Brady wrote \textit{An Introduction to Old English History} (1684); \textit{An Historical}\(^{48}\)

\(^{48}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 67.

\(^{49}\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 67, 69, 70.

\(^{50}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 81.
Treatise of Cities and Burghs or Boroughs, showing their original... (1690; 1704); and An inquiry into the remarkable instances of History and Parliamentary Records used... (1691). Of interest here he wrote:

A/ Complete HISTORY/ of/ England,/ FROM/ the First Entrance of the ROMANS/ under/ the Conduct of JULIUS CAESAR,/ Unto the End of/ The Reign of Henry III./ Comprehending/ the ROMAN, SAXON, DANISH, and NORMAN/ Affairs and Transactions in this NATION during that Time./ Wherein is shewed/ The Original of Our ENGLISH LAWS,/ THE/ Differences and Disagreements between the SECULAR and/ ECCLESIASTIC POWERS/ THE/ True Rise and Grounds of the CONTENTIONS and WARS be/tween the BARONS and our Antient [sic] KINGS./ And Likewise/ An Account of our Foreign WARS with FRANCE,/ The Conquest of Ireland, and the Actions between the English, Scots and/ WeLeh, during the same Time./ All/ Delivered in plain Matter of Fact, without and Reflections or Remarques./ by Robert Brady, Doctor in Physic.

In the writing of his Complete History... the royalist Brady, through intensive research into original documents, sought to prove that all liberties of the people were born of the crown. According to Brady the constant alterations in history were illusory. Following the Conquest many changes occurred, mostly legal; however, the people of England continued to receive their privileges from the king, thus creating a pre-and-post Conquest continuum, a constancy amid change. Pursuing his goal, Brady wrote of the various paths towards personal liberty, the degrees of servitude of English Bondsmen and the rights and responsibilities of the Freeman. Brady ultimately concluded that the grand sum

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51 D.N.B., VI, p. 193.


53 Fussner, Tudor History and Historians, pp. 48-49.
of all of the liberties sought was found in the *Magna Carta*, an instrument given, albeit under duress, from the king and given after the Conquest. This supposed return to the laws of Edward, Brady emphasized, was not a return to the Confessor's laws but a *jus scriptum* of Anglo-Norman law and custom,\(^{54}\) thus it was a continuity with the past as well as a progression. The *Magna Carta*, which to Brady was an ultimate source of feudal liberty, was also the result of the Norman Conquest.

The greater portion of Brady's history dwelt upon Anglo-Norman legal developments. His section on the introduction to the Norman history was wholly concerned with Norman law and its transportation and adaptation in England. Brady was clear in his views. Norman law altered Anglo-Saxon law. Excepting those laws which were altered or introduced either by King and council or Parliament, "the greatest and chiefest part of... the Laws of this Nation... were, "Brady wrote," Norman Laws."\(^{55}\) Just as important to Brady's argument, they were brought to England by William I; thus it was Norman law that was used by the Normans in the courts of England after the Conquest. The court of the Exchequer, which "was here from the very Conquest,"\(^{56}\) functioned with broad enough jurisdiction to be able to handle a wide scope of litigation; adjudicating royal and common-pleas as well as account disputes. Brady's point was that the court's officers were non-English speaking Normans who possessed no knowledge of English


\(^{55}\)Ibid., p. 155.

\(^{56}\)Ibid., p. 160.
Common Law. "How then," Brady asked the skeptics, "could Judgments be made, and sentence given in this court, by any other than Norman Law?" It is an interesting argument.

In Robert Brady we find real opposition to the propositions of Sir Edward Coke and "the Republicans." The broad basis of Brady's opposition to Coke lay in the latter's alleged refusal to admit to Norman influence on English law; Brady's statement of Coke's beliefs is as follows: "This Nation, in the time of the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans was ruled by the same Laws and Customs, and that they were not changed by any of these People, ..." Brady's major argument, however, concerned Coke's assertion that English law was introduced into Normandy by William I, thus explaining the similarities between the two legal systems. Brady labeled the theory as groundless, precarious, and hardly deserving of confutation.

For it would have been a greater difficulty than the Conquest of England, to have imposed the English Laws upon so stubborn a People as the Normans were, especially at that time when the Conqueror had much to do to keep them in subjugation; ..." Brady, again, wondered whether Coke would attempt to claim that William had carried English law into eleventh century "Germany" as well.

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57 Ibid., p. 161. Rebutting Coke's contention further, Brady chides: "It makes me wonder how the Normans learnt it so quickly, as to be Judges of it and judge causes by it immediately upon the Conquest, ...it may be Revelation." (Ibid., p. 180).

58 Ibid., p. 182.


60 Ibid., p. 181.
Robert Brady was equal to the task of opposing Coke. He admitted that "it doth in a great measure appear" that many exact similarities existed between English and Norman law, and the next sixteen pages he devoted to "a very brief Abstract" of old Norman laws and customs designed to emphasize the Norman origins of much of English law. The abstract included an explanation of Norman feudal law and custom; legal jurisdictions; writs: Novelle Disseisines, Mort D'Ancestor, Surdemand, Eschaet [sic], D'arrein Presentment, and so forth; criminal and civil procedure, including hue and cry, jurors, witnesses, and so forth; as well as laws of Sanctuary and the duties of various royal and legal officials. 61 Further forms of the ancient writs of Normandy, he wrote, were to be found in the Grand Customer of Normandy. 62 To solidify his point Brady asserted further that the Anglo-Saxons did not use writs which were, then, a Norman development. The parties in question in any given plea were summoned by messengers known as theics, theons, or thegens meaning ministers or servants and not by writs. 63 Finally, after considering the bulk and content of his arguments, Brady concluded that Norman law was brought to England by William I and it formed a basis for much of English law; therefore, much of English law owed its origins to the crown, through the activities of William I.

A new age in historical writing was emerging, particularly between 1688 and 1714. The Revolution and the 1714 succession of

61 Ibid., pp. 160-78.
62 Ibid., p. 183.
63 Ibid.
George I had split the scholars but had not altered their historical attitudes; a new wave of cultural leaders, however, presaged the new era. Their attitude toward the past and particularly toward medieval scholarship was a reaction rather than a development, and between 1730 and 1800 medieval studies became sterile and developed slowly. By 1760 the study of the past was held in contempt as were those who indulged in its research. The so-called "Age of Enlightenment," or the scientific revival which characterized it, was to a great extent responsible for these changes. Following the Restoration, English medieval studies began to benefit from the same cultural changes which were to render its popularity obsolete. Scientific inquiry introduced more demanding standards of investigation and criticism into historical writing; yet, as the scientific revolution expanded documented proofs and facts were sought over metaphysics, and medieval studies, which for the most part represented the metaphysical, and fell out of fashion. Instead a growing interest developed in the fields of political and physical science. In the later eighteenth century there were no major medievalists, and there would be none for nearly one hundred years.


65 Ibid.
III

The celebrated literary historians of the nineteenth century regarded history as a key to the shape of the future. In the first half of the century these historians were best represented by Thomas Babington Macaulay.¹

Thomas Macaulay was born at Rothley Temple, Leicestershire October 25, 1800. He was the eldest son of Zachary Macaulay and both a happy and precocious child. He studied at Cambridge, and there was converted by Charles Austin from Toryism to Whiggism. Macaulay's career became one of politics and publication. The lawyer, statesman, and historian died on December 28, 1859; he was buried at Westminster Abbey January 9.²

Macaulay was the major exponent of the Whig political philosophy of his time. The early nineteenth century Whig revolution was marked by a new radicalism which gave vent to demands for electoral and philanthropic reform. Among other causes, Macaulay championed extensive social and political reforms in India, the abolition of slavery, and the Reform Act of 1832. Whig historians, according to Herbert Butterfield, were guilty of two basic faults. They judged the past with the standards of their day, and they possessed a gross simplification of historical process. "He is apt to imagine the British constitution as

coming down to us by virtue of the work of long generations of Whigs and in spite of the obstruction of a long line of tyrants and tories. 3 Macaulay was no exception. In fact, Macaulay's Whig philosophy influenced the writing of his History of England to the point, occasionally, of historical error. However, concerning this bias it should be noted that he was not consciously unfair. 4 He was rather enamoured of picturesque and daring portrayals, this colorful history—also characteristic of Whig historians. In spite of, and in some cases because of, this bias The History of England was the most popular history in Britain. Scott's 'Lay of the Last Minstrel,' for example, sold 2,250 copies in the first year; Macaulay's history sold 13,000 copies in the first four months. 6 Macaulay published his views of English superiority and his ideas of universal freedom at a time when Europeans were most receptive, and his popularity soared.

Macaulay's History of England (1848-61) was the English counterpart to the histories of Michelet and Treitschke. It was one of the most celebrated contributions to be made to the body of English historical literature. 7 He achieved in the nineteenth century, by making

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6 Thompson, II, p. 296.
7 Harry Elmer Barnes, A History of Historical Writing, p. 219.
history exciting, what Shakespeare achieved in the sixteenth—popular historical writing.  

To Macaulay the Norman Conquest was a break in the flow of English development. "During the century and a half which followed the conquest," he wrote, "there is to speak strictly, no English history." Macaulay continued his explanation by noting that most of the kings were born in France, ordinarily spoke the language of that land, and habitually placed Frenchmen in high positions. Here, then, more than in almost any other source, the conquerors were considered to be foreign invaders. Macaulay was particularly contemptuous of Henry I, whose marriage to Matilda, niece of Edgar Atheling, was seen in other histories as a unifying act. Macaulay claimed that Henry's contemporaries greeted the event with scorn. In the eyes of Henry's barons, in fact, such a marriage was viewed as the equivalent to, as Macaulay put it, a marital union "between a white planter and a quadroon girl, as it would now be regarded in Virginia." Historically, Macaulay continued, Henry was known as 'Beauclerc.' In his own time, however, he was given a Saxon nickname to reflect the contempt of this Saxon marriage.

Concerning the Norman rule, Macaulay was equally opinionated. The Normans had an impact upon England: they oppressed the whole population

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11 Ibid.

they portioned out the countryside and its offices among themselves; to
oppress further, they developed strong military institutions which were
closely tied to the institution of property; to keep the people subject
they developed a cruel penal code; they received the homage of Scotland;
they introduced the refinements of their language and habits. The
battle of Hastings surrendered the whole population of England "to the
tyrranny of the Norman race." "The subjugation of a nation by a nation
has seldom, even in Asia, been more complete." The kings became so
powerful that they were "the wonder and dread" of their neighboring
kingdoms. "Asia, as well as Europe, was dazzled by the power and glory
of our tyrants." 13

In Macaulay's History, the Normans came to conquer and rule. All
things English they held in contempt. 14 They, therefore, had no qualms
about supplanting English customs and laws. Macaulay wrote that the
virtuous talents of the first six French kings [in England] were a curse
to the realm, while the vices of the seventh were England's salvation.
He believed that John's loss of Normandy saved England by separating it
from the continent. 15 Macaulay's interpretations were not always those
which were widely accepted by his contemporaries; for example, he traced
the House of Commons to the thirteenth century. 16

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12 Ibid., p. 12.
13 Ibid.
14 Looking ahead, Macaulay declared that in the time of Richard I a
Norman gentleman's customary form of indignant denial was "Do you take
me for an Englishman?" Ibid., p. 16.
16 Ibid., p. 17.
As an historian, Macaulay, despite his popularity, was criticized for his lack of analysis. Aside from classical literature, he had little historical knowledge of the developments in England prior to the reign of Elizabeth I. He lacked analytic overviews, was too diffuse, and did not possess a sufficiently tolerant historical spirit. Despite these historical flaws, however, Macaulay's writings were both dramatic and stimulating. The most popular of the English historians was one who possessed rather little scholarly weight.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, British historiography was dominated by the Oxford School of thought of William Stubbs, E. A. Freeman, and J. R. Green. The question of the Conquest in nineteenth century historiography is most classically portrayed by the conflict between E. A. Freeman, as representative of the Oxford school, and his opponent, John H. Round. Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-1892), a student of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew at the age of eleven, was a graduate of Trinity College, Oxford (1845). His first serious historical work was *History of Architecture* (1849). His second was *An Essay on Gothic Window Tracery* (1855). Employed as a book reviewer for the *Saturday Review*, Freeman earned the rather harsh nickname of "Reviler." His reputation as an historian rose in 1863 with the publication of

History of Federal Government; it was established with the six volume publication of the History of the Norman Conquest (1867-1879).  

The quality of Freeman's work was affected by his personal methods of research, his beliefs on the nature of history and the role of the historian, as well as the prejudices of the century in which he lived. Freeman possessed a strange aversion to the use of manuscript sources and archival materials. He was, therefore, unfamiliar with paleography. Yet, he was highly renowned in his day for his learning and intellectual powers. Freeman possessed one particularly admirable quality; despite his patriotic zeal he refrained both from racial prejudice and from personal attacks upon those historical figures for whom he did not care, such as William the Conqueror.

As a pupil of Dr. Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), Freeman adopted the philosophy that history poses a moral lesson for those who care to look for it. According to Arnold, 'history' was the external and internal events of a nation, and the purpose of history was "the setting forth of God's glory by doing His work." The burden of the historian was, therefore, a great one, for a continued ignorance of the past would detrimentally alter the future course of the world. Such righteousness and passion for historical enlightenment was championed in Freeman who believed the historians' role to be one of a moral judge.

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20 Thompson, A History of Historical Writing, II, p. 316.
21 Ibid., pp. 317-18.
Freeman's doctrine of the 'unity of history' also came from Arnold. By 'unity of history,' Freeman meant that he believed in the existence of the unity of the races, religions, languages, and institutions among the nations of Europe dating from the time of the fall of the Western Empire until his own day. England above all nations Freeman asserted, claimed the most direct descent, politically, from the early Teutonic stock. Keeping in mind this unity of history, therefore, Freeman sought to resolve the conquerors' Anglicanization with England's Normanization—all in relation to England's true Teutonic heritage. The sheer bulk of his six volume work was also due to the utilization of this idea of unity. Narrating the Conquest, Freeman covered the history of England from the very first Teutonic "inroads" in the time of the Romans to the thirteenth century, as well as the history of Normandy and the connection of both Paris and Rouen with the Holy Roman Empire,\textsuperscript{23} in short, a history of Northern Europe.

English nationalism was as strong as that on the continent. As a variation on the Aryan and Nordic myths, the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon peoples became a popular nineteenth century concept. The assumption was that Teutonic invaders had destroyed the early Briton and Celtic civilizations and England had been reconstructed with a Germanic population and culture. E. A. Freeman accepted this theory and carried it further to include the origins of political liberty. He saw the origins of English tradition rooted in the folkmoot. This fiction of a

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., pp. 12-13.
Teutonic England ensnared others besides Freeman. Bishop Stubbs and Green were also highly influenced by this theory. 24

Freeman's own interpretation of the Norman Conquest has been termed "gradualist." 25 Although the Conquest was a highly significant event in English history, it was not cataclysmic, and although the Normans improved upon English life and customs, they did not transform them. In Freeman's words "it was much less than a national migration; it was much more than a mere change of frontier or dynasty." 26

In his introduction he discussed the place of the Conquest. This was the great turning point in English history, and yet there was no event whose true nature had been more commonly and more utterly misunderstood. "No event is less fitted to be taken, as it too often has been taken, for the beginning of our national history." 27 It was a turning point and not a beginning. Freeman admitted that the Normans brought an extensive foreign influence into Britain, affecting the blood, language, laws, and arts of the nation. However, "the older and stronger elements" not only survived but "in the long run made good their supremacy." 28 The Conquest, therefore, was a temporary overthrow. "The whole importance of the Norman Conquest," Freeman wrote,

27Ibid., I, p. 1.
28Ibid.
consists in the effect which it had on an existing
nation, humbled indeed, but neither wiped out nor
utterly enslaved, in the changes which it wrought on
an existing constitution, which was by degrees greatly
modified, but which was never either wholly abolished
or wholly trampled underfoot. \textsuperscript{29}

The theme of Freeman's approach, then, was that the effect of the
Normans was one of a catalyst. They accelerated events already in
action and, ultimately, tied England even closer to her old Teutonic
roots. \textsuperscript{30}

Freeman devoted chapters twenty-four through twenty-six to his
interpretation of the effects of the Conquest. The twenty-fourth
chapter covering the political results was divided into six sub-
sections: the effects upon foreign relations, the effects upon kingly
power, the legislation of the Norman kings, the administration of the
Norman kings, the local and social effects of the Conquest, and the
ecclesiastical effects of the Conquest. The next chapter dealt with
the effects upon language and upon personal and local nomenclature.
The last chapter, summarizing the impact of the Normans, was devoted to
the effects upon Art, as seen in secular and clerical architecture.

One topic which Freeman did not include in any specific section of the
book, but which shall also be extracted here, was the impact and intro-
duction of Norman feudalism.

In his introduction to the political results of the Conquest
Freeman discussed the continuity of the English spirit and institutions,
and their revival and preservation as a result of the Norman Conquest.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., I, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., V, pp. 334-35, 342-43, 395, 398, 505, \textit{et al.}
"The final effect of the conquest," he wrote, "was to enable us to preserve more of the spirit and institutions of earlier times, to keep up a more unbroken continuity with earlier times, than fell to the lot of our kinsfolk who never underwent such a momentary scourge." He was saying, then, that other nations, Denmark and Germany specifically, underwent national catastrophes in which they had to build new systems of government. Therefore, the continuity of Teutonic political life was best preserved in England, "not in their Angle and Saxon older land, but in the island which they made their second home." Freeman credited this preservation, in no small degree, to the character, iron will, and "far-seeing wisdom" of the Conqueror. The Salisbury Oath saved England from the worst evils of Feudalism. Through his strength in centralizing the kingdom, William I made England one and he made England Saxon.

The Conquest brought England into a closer connection with the Romance nations, but, as in the other areas, this only served to strengthen forces already in motion. Freeman cited the marriage of Aethelred and Emma, great aunt of William I, as a new beginning, for it led directly to the Norman education of their son. All of those factors which differentiated pre-Norman and post-Norman England, i.e., the promotion of foreigners, building of castles, and the closer connection with Rome,

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31 Ibid., p. 334.
32 Ibid., pp. 334-35.
33 Ibid., pp. 65, 336.
34 Ibid., p. 343.
began, Freeman stressed, in the reign of Edward and simply came into full bloom under William I.\textsuperscript{35}

New to the Norman reigns, however, was England's participation in continental warfare, a prime example being the conquest of Maine. England thereby began to play some part in the quarrels of Western Europe, but only as "an appendage," as Freeman stated, of Normandy, fighting Norman battles and led by a Norman lord.\textsuperscript{36} In the twelfth century these relations changed, England had conquered Normandy and, allied with Germany and opposing the French king, emerged as an Anglo-Norman kingdom with its own continental interests and appendages. Under Henry I, Freeman wrote, the English realm was a major state of Europe.\textsuperscript{37} Drawn deeper into the continental current, England also experienced increased relations with Rome, as well as participation in the Crusades.\textsuperscript{38}

The impact of the Conquest upon the role of the king was equally significant. William made the English monarchy second in power only "to the despots of Byzantium and Cordova!"\textsuperscript{39} "Under the forms of lawful succession, he reigned as a conqueror; under the forms of free institutions, he reigned as a despot.\textsuperscript{40} Yet, in doing so, William preserved England's laws and liberties.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 345.
\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., pp. 345-46.
\textsuperscript{38}Ibid., pp. 352-56.
\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., p. 366.
\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., p. 367.
\textsuperscript{41}Ibid., p. 366.
Freeman stated that English law was modified both in form and spirit by the introduction of Norman law; yet, the changes were gradual. The legendary accounts of William I represent him as the "codifier of the laws of Edward," rather than an innovator. "He nowhere abolishes the old law; he at most sets up something new by the side of it."

Freeman's beliefs concerning the administrative changes brought about by the Conquest were consistent and predictable. The changes of name, for example, from Witenagemot to Great Council to Parliament suggested more of a change, he wrote, than had actually occurred. "It suggests the notion of breaches of continuity which never happened." The names changed as French influence crept into the language, but the institutions gradually evolved and were altered by the Normans toward ends already in view.

Not only was trial by jury not introduced into England by the Normans, Freeman wrote, it was "never ... invented or introduced all." Freeman held that if by 'trial by jury' one meant a system by which a case was decided upon the oaths of sworn men of the community, it was a system "as old as any institution of the Teutonic race." If, however, it is meant as a system by which a trial, controlled and decided by a royal judge, utilizes a sworn body of men from the community to decide the questions of fact, it is no older than the time of Charles II. The development of the system of trial by jury was only fostered,

\[4^2\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 399.}\]

\[4^3\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 412.}\]
Freeman concluded, by the Norman Conquest from the seeds "common to England and other Teutonic lands." 44

Forest law was of particular interest to the English people. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and William of Malmesbury in particular, fuzzed over William's establishment of a royal forest. Such hardships, they claimed, they had never before experienced. However, Freeman pointed out clearly that the laws of Cnut made it plain that in his Cnut day there existed royal hunting grounds—forests in which all encroachments were forbidden. The Normans, therefore, were only continuing an English custom. 45

The social relations in England were left to circumstance. Freeman, however, stressed the absence of any conscious or lasting barriers between Englishmen and Normans. There were no laws and no customs, he declared, which divided the races. The distinction, when there was one, was of rank and not of race. 46

Ecclesiastically the Conquest brought England into the system of Western Christendom. Besides increased relations with Rome, the Church was affected by William I's separation of the ecclesiastical from the temporal legal jurisdiction, granting them separate courts. Ecclesiastically, Freeman stated somewhat strongly, England became a province of a foreign empire. 47

44 Ibid., pp. 451-54.
46 Ibid., pp. 475-76.
47 Ibid., pp. 492-95.
The changes which occurred in the English language were the result, naturally and silently, of circumstance. They were not a sudden result of the Conquest. "Had French never been spoken in England, "Freeman wrote," had no French words intruded themselves into our language, the great change which distinguishes the English of a thousand years back would still have taken place." The Norman arrival gave a boost to sagging English literature; many learned men came to England. By the thirteenth century the two languages had exerted a mutual influence upon each other. Some infusion of French into English was unavoidable, but in many areas, Freeman quickly asserted, "the stain has been gradually and silently, ...wiped out."  

The art of building churches, houses, and castles was greatly affected by the Normans, some improvements of which were an expansion in size and in the usage of stone.

It was the castles which sheltered the devils and evil men who wrought the fearful deeds of the days of anarchy . . . which contained those dens of torment where men pined as no martyrs had pined in the days of old.  

The castle symbolized the changeover from the free community and popular assembly to the stranger lord in his "stone and lime castle." It represented the dominion of the Conqueror. Yet, the earlier works, the

48 Ibid., pp. 508-09.  
49 Ibid., pp. 577, 595-96.  
50 Ibid., pp. 646-47.
mounds of the Britons and Englishmen, Freeman was quick to claim, still remained while William I's castles were few.\(^5\)

To set the tone of Freeman's attitude toward the popular interpretations of the origins of feudalism in England we need only a quotation:

It shows how utterly the history of law has been misunderstood by those whose special business it is to understand it, when we see lawyer after lawyer telling the world that William the Conqueror introduced the 'Feudal System' into England.\(^5\)

Freeman believed that not only did William not initiate feudalism but he was anti-feudal.\(^5\) His argument was that a feudal system by its very nature was characterized by a decentralized state and the near sovereignty of the tenants-in-chief. William's efforts were aimed at securing the allegiance of all men of the realm and of uniting the kingdom. To these ends the king preserved the old institutions and laws which served his purposes. Discussing land tenure, the nature of feudal land holding, Freeman asserted that once again the Conquest only accelerated the changes which had already begun. The thegn was replaced by the tenant-in-chief, merely one name for another according to Freeman.\(^5\)

\(^{51}\) Ibid., p. 648.

Many Norman castles were not built of stone. Perhaps some of those mounds were remnants of Norman works.

\(^{52}\) Ibid., p. 366.

\(^{53}\) Ibid.

\(^{54}\) Ibid., pp. 367-70.
Between 1067 and 1085, greater changes had been made to the behoof of the territorial lords than were ever made in the same number of years before or since. But such changes could not have been made so quickly and so thoroughly, unless there had been changes earlier than 1067 of which these greater changes were only the further carrying out.55

William's reign did not initiate any new laws regarding land tenure, Freeman claimed. "From one end of Domesday to the other" there was no trace of military tenure as Freeman understood it to be. Military tenure, therefore, and its oppressive abuses were the work of the reign of William Rufus.56 In William I's reign there were many evidences of "special" forms of military service; however, archbishops, bishops, and abbots granted their lands to knights, and, thusly, discharged their military duties.57 "This is not," Freeman wrote, "knight-service in the strictest sense; but it is something which would in a short time grow into it."58

The tendency toward secularism which even the Teutonic church had experienced expanded "put on a worse form" following the Conquest. Feudalism, as it developed in England, also grew in the English churches. The bishops became feudal lords, and by the time of William II held land by right of military tenure. They mastered large dioceses as well as palatinates, and on their manors, just as on the manors of the other

55Ibid., p. 464.
56Ibid., pp. 370-71, 377.
57Ibid., p. 372.
58Ibid.
lords, they often built castles. "Even the mild Wulfstan was surrounded in Norman fashion by a following of knights."\textsuperscript{59}

Freeman's \textit{Norman Conquest} was, and is, subject to much criticism. In reaction to the cataclysmic interpretation of such historians as the Frenchman Thierry, Freeman underestimated, exaggerated, and distorted the facts. He tended to underestimate the scope of the disturbances, to exaggerate the rapidity of racial amalgamation, as well as the democratic element in the constitution before and after the Conquest. John Richard Green was moved to write in the \textit{Saturday Review} that the five volume history "is essentially a work of historic reaction."\textsuperscript{60} Depending upon one's interpretation or misrepresentation Freeman was or was not guilty of distortion. He was, however, guilty of indiscrimination. Not being selective, he gave as much printed space, and therefore importance, to the numerous petty skirmishes and rebellions as to the genuinely major events.\textsuperscript{61} Freeman included everything. Of all of Freeman's critics the most vociferous was certainly John Horace Round.

John Horace Round (1854-1928) was educated at Oxford, where he came into contact with, and under the influence of, Bishop William Stubbs. Round became known beyond his immediate circle in 1884 with the publication of a paper attacking E. A. Freeman's \textit{Nature and Origins of the House of Lords}.\textsuperscript{62} After 1885, Round wrote articles for the \textit{Dictionary of National Biography}. His reputation as a scholar began in 1886 at the

\textsuperscript{59}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 496-97.
\textsuperscript{60}Gooch, \textit{History and Historians}, p. 325.
\textsuperscript{61}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 326.
Domesday Commemoration with the reading of three of his papers. Six years later Geoffrey de Mandeville: A Study of Anarchy was published, and Round was accepted by his contemporaries as an historian of merit. He was the first to make use of charters as a basis for historical narrative. In 1895 Feudal England was published, three years after Freeman's death.

John Round, a Tory, admired the nobility and naturally found much fault not only with E. A. Freeman, but also with whiggish history in general. Feudal England reflected both the extent of Round's scholarship as well as the range of his emotions. It is unfortunate that his criticisms were so frequently immoderate, but ill health played a large role in affecting that side of the scholar's personality. He often lost all sense of proportion when pursuing what he held to be error.

Round's positive achievements stood above these faults. He founded the modern study of the Domesday Book, developed the systematic study of genealogy, and made general the practice of using charters in the writing of histories. Round was one of the first English historians to approach historical questions scientifically. Of particular significance to this paper, Round demonstrated the aristocratic charter

63 Thompson, A History of Historical Writing, p. 339.
64 D.N.B., pp. 728-29.
65 C. Warren Hollister, The Impact of the Norman Conquest, p. 23.
66 D.N.B., p. 731.
67 Ibid.
of Anglo-Norman constitutional development. He vigorously and successfully challenged previous assumptions of continuity between Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman government.69

Feudal England (1895) is a collection of essays on eleventh and twelfth century England, a number of which were directed against Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest. To Round, the Conquest proved to be England's salvation,70 and with Round we leave behind the overview approach of the impact of the Conquest upon England and arrive at a topical view.

The orderly, political history of England, Round asserted, began with the Norman Conquest. On one hand, he wrote, it gave them "a strong and purposeful monarchy," and on the other it brought them a fresh group of worthy chroniclers better than the, "treason though it may be to say so," arid and barren Anglo-Saxon Chronicles.71

We thus exchange aimless struggles, told in an uninviting fashion [by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle], for a great issue and a definite policy, on which we have at our disposal materials deserving of study. From the moment of the Conqueror's landing we trace a continuous history...72

The essays of particular interest here are "Mr. Freeman and the Battle of Hastings" and "The Introduction of Knight Service into England." The Battle of Hastings has been described, Round wrote, by the historian in question as well as others, as being the very center of

70 Hollister, p. 23.
71 Round, p. 247.
72 Ibid.
Freeman's History, as Freeman's "greatest achievement." "If he could blunder here," Round said, "... he could blunder anywhere." \(^{73}\)

Round's first argument with Freeman's "Battle" concerned what he termed was "the excruciating name of 'Senlac.'"\(^{74}\) The Battle of Hastings was fought on Senlac Hill, and so Freeman used what he knew to be the more geographically correct name in referring to that battle. While Freeman felt that this was accuracy, to Round it was pure pedantry.

I am reminded of the protest of the Society of Antiquaries on hearing 'with much regret that a fifteenth century pinnacle' at Rochester Cathedral 'is in danger of destruction in order that a modern pinnacle, professing to represent that which stood in the place in the twelfth century, may be set up in its stead.'\(^{75}\)

Round felt that Freeman was seeking "precisely such a 'restoration!'" in this 'Senlac.' Round asserted that in William of Malmesbury as well as the Domesday one may read of Bellum Hastingense, and only Ordericus Vitalis writing two generations later mentioned Bellum Senlacum.\(^{76}\)

His other major criticism concerning the battle was in regard to the "great feigned flight." That the feigned flight occurred Round did not dispute, but rather he felt that Freeman had misinterpreted the nature of the Norman manoeuver. Freeman claimed that when the English troops descended, the main body of Normans "were at last on the hill." Round's counter-argument was devastating. A Norman's squadron cut off

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\(^{73}\) Ibid., p. 258.

\(^{74}\) Ibid., p. 259.

\(^{75}\) Ibid., p. 260.

\(^{76}\) Ibid.
the retreat of the pursuing English. Interceptus et inclusas undique mactaverunt—they were caught between [the Normans] and were cut down. "The supposition that, while this was going on, the main body of the Normans was riding on to the hill is baseless."  

To Round, the most conspicuous institutional modification resulting from the Conquest was the introduction of military tenure, knight service, into England. His sixty-three page essay attempted to prove this, while finding Freeman in error as often as possible. According to Round's theory, English feudal military service was basically a creation of the Normans in England, owing little to the Anglo-Saxon past. Round's findings were contrary to most of the accepted views of the day.

The gradualists' first mistake, Round pointed out, was their basing their arguments upon the negative evidence, that is to say that which was left out of rather than included in the Domesday Book. Therefore, according to those in such error the only link between the Survey and Henry II's 1166 inquest was an assumption, false to Round, that military tenure was devised in England by Ranulph Flambard. Round reasoned that the Domesday Survey, while being "the greatest of all," was similar to other inquests. It was, he emphasized strongly, intended for a special purpose, and, therefore, special questions were asked. Freeman had stated that the Survey did not include the feudal language which was abundant in twelfth century inquests. In that

77 Ibid., p. 293.
78 Ibid., p. 182.
79 Ibid., p. 186.
The Domesday was not a knights' inquest; it was a survey designed to gather information pertaining to tax assessment. The 1166 inquest sought information on knights and their fees; the 1170 inquest sought information concerning the legitimacy of sheriffs, and so forth.

Knights' fees existed, Round asserted, where the Survey did not mention them.

Another problem centered around the criteria for determining the number of knights due from a tenant-in-chief. Some sources claimed that it was determined by the number of hides held by the particular tenant-in-chief, and others said that it was based upon the value of the estate, usually agreed to be one knight for every £20 annual value of the land. Round quoted Freeman's claim that military tenure was based upon "the old service of a man from each five hides of land." Given this fixed proportion, Round argued, it would follow that barons would be constantly losing possession of entire estates in the discharge of duties. His example: If a £100 estate with five knights receiving £20 annual-value-land is considered as customary; what, Round asks, if a baron enfoeoffs more than required? He was, of course, assuming that if one knight was actually due for each five hides of land, these knights were in fact given land worth £20 annually.

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80 Freeman, Norman Conquest..., V, p. 465.
81 Ibid., p. 183.
82 Ibid., pp. 187-88.
In the time of Henry II a fief held more "units of possession" than knights required for service. This led Round to suggest two possible conclusions: either it was that way from the beginning; or, by the time of Henry II fief assessment had been reduced. Round could hardly visualize any monarch depriving himself of service due him. Rounds revolutionary thesis on this point, finally, held that the number of knights due in service was determined by the tenant-in-chief, and suffered no connection with either the annual value of or the extent of his landed estates. While a revolutionary idea in 1891, these proposals were not original to Round, nor were they new to England. Round was restating a seventeenth century theory, either long forgotten or misunderstood. Sir Robert Cotton wrote in 1657:

'To supply his occasion of men or provisions the Conqueror ordered that all those who enjoyed any fruit of his Conquest should hold their lands proportionably by so many knights fees of the crown, and to infeoff [sic] their followers with such part as they pleased of their own portions.'

The question of the introduction of knight-service in England rests on two points: when and by whom was this service initiated? The above quotation as well as the accounts of several past historians and chroniclers held that military service came with William I. Round found reference to what he believed to be Norman familiarity with servitum debitum in Wace's "Roman de Rou!" The figures were inaccurate, but it

84 Ibid., p. 189.
86 Ibid.
gave evidence of knowledge of such tenure in use in Normandy. Round, heartened by his findings, concluded that knight service had long since been customary in Normandy prior to 1066 and, therefore, was naturally instituted in England by William I upon arrival.

The servitum debitum, therefore was a standing institution in Normandy, and 'to the mass of his (William's) followers,' as Mr. Freeman freely admits,' a feudal tenure, a military tenure, must have seemed the natural and universal way of holding land.

Round has often been criticized, both by his contemporaries and his successors, for the violence of his attacks against Freeman. He felt, however, that it was the task of his generation to supplement and correct histories founded upon the chronicles with the evidence of writs and charters. Of his style Round is quoted as saying: "If my criticism be deemed harsh, I may plead with Newman that in controversy I have ever felt from experience that no one would believe me to be in earnest if I spoke calmly."
Frank Merry Stenton first published his *William the Conqueror and the Rule of the Normans* in 1908. He may be considered both gradualist and conservative in his views of the Norman Conquest. He did not discount the shock of the English defeat, but Stenton felt that the Norman Conquest of England began in 1002 with the marriage of Aethelred and Emma—sixty-four years before William I. At least five ports of Sussex were in Norman hands before 1066, Stenton wrote. This Norman influence in England certainly eased the effect of the rapid Normanization which occurred after Hastings.¹

Following an account of the political activities of William I, Stenton turned his attention to the Normanization of the Church in England. William was motivated by two major ideas. He was sincerely dedicated to reform—the extension of the strict observance of the monastic life and so forth. He was sincerely dedicated to the subordination within his dominions of the Church to the state. Secular control had been traditional and necessary in Normandy. The chaotic settlement of Normandy in the tenth century had ruined the ecclesiastical organization of the land. The dukes of Normandy zealously restored and reformed the Church which had grown too lax to make internal reform.

possible. During William's minority in Normandy new monasteries were founded in nearly every diocese.²

As reported by the earlier chronicles and histories, William monitored ecclesiastical communications between England and Rome, judged which of the disputed Popes would be recognized within his realm, retained control over ecclesiastical decrees in the kingdom, and protected his tenants-in-chief from excommunication. It was in the spirit of reform, however, that William passed his most far reaching decree. No person of ecclesiastical status could be tried in the hundred court; laymen could not be tried in the hundred if the matter at hand involved questions of spiritual law. The path had been cleared for the reception of canon law into England, and, thus, for the legal sovereignty of the Pope over the Church in England. These concessions to the ecclesiastics, Stenton pointed out, were granted because they increased the efficiency of the Church in the discharge of its spiritual duties, without in reality unduly limiting William's prerogatives.³

The reform in the Church was basically a program of gradually enforced celibacy. Lanfranc was determined to pass no decrees which he could not at once enforce. The celibacy rule was not accepted by the native clergy as a whole until the twelfth century.⁴

Stenton saw William as a father of the Church in England—a messenger of reform, bringing piety and learning to a blighted and

²Ibid.
³Ibid., p. 395.
⁴Ibid., pp. 396-97.
decaying Church. William, he wrote, was preparing to become England's educator as well as conqueror.5

The art of government in 1066 was not a technical matter. It demanded, Stenton wrote, a strong royal will rather than ministerial guidance. William's administration was developed empirically—"it is from the simple expedients adopted by William that the medieval constitution of England takes its origin."6

Stenton drew two general conclusions regarding the administration of William I. The first is that the revolutionary changes have occurred under a misleading external continuity of form. The second is that William I's achievements were not conclusive. The development of the new Anglo-Norman order was to be accomplished by his descendants. Underneath the vast changes in the higher ranks of the military arts, the old native system of the fyrd continued. A feudal army was introduced by William I, and Henry I initiated scutage, thus trading the Conqueror's host for a healthy treasury.7

Of all of William I's achievements Stenton appears to have been most impressed with the Domesday Survey. He wrote: "It is probable that if due regard be paid to the conditions of its execution Domesday Book may claim to rank as the greatest record of medieval Europe..."8

5 Ibid., p. 381.
6 Ibid., pp. 407-08.
7 Ibid., p. 456.
8 Ibid., p. 457.
No kings before William had the power to collect such an abundance of information.\(^9\)

William's aims were practical. As a financial document represented a characteristic insistence on the part of the Anglo-Norman kings of their fiscal rights. Every piece of information was collected with the purpose of the Danegeld, the 'national' tax of England, in mind. The Norman scribes, Stenton wrote, were "remorseless" in ferreting out all details which were not precisely needed for their task at hand.\(^10\)

For all its uniqueness, Domesday was not the first fiscal record made in England. The oldest, of an unknown date, is called the Tribal Hidage. It is clear that the figures were too even to be anything more than approximations (Peak 1200, Kent 15,000, Hwiccas 7,000, Elmet 600, and so forth). A later accounting, known as the Burghal Hidage, was equally approximate in its findings. It is this latter document that Stenton believed influenced the Domesday Survey. He found several corresponding figures in the two which were "much too close to be the result of chance."\(^11\) The Survey, therefore, was in part based upon a fiscal arrangement which could be traced back to the time of Alfred. It was to this same Survey that counties resorted in the raising of the 1194 ransom of Richard I.\(^12\)

\(^9\)Ibid.
\(^10\)Ibid., pp. 459-60.
\(^11\)Ibid., pp. 462-64.
\(^12\)Ibid., p. 466.
Domesday was representative of William's power. The whole tenor of the Survey seemed to indicate that all Englishmen were disinherited as a result of the Conquest. Domesday, it would seem, was a new covenant between England and its king. All lands were the king's, and the recognition of prior claim depended upon his will. William I, as lawful heir however, wished to conform, Stenton claimed, to the practices of Edward. Therefore, William's scribes made use of several terms in the survey common to the Confessor's day, and, thus, implied a basic social continuity which did not exist.\(^\text{13}\)

The Survey gave evidence that the king could compel local courts to offer sworn verdict to his royal officers. Stenton saw a great significance in this: "The Domesday Inquest is the noble ancestor of the Plantagenet 'assizes,' and through them, by direct descent, of the jury in its perfected form."\(^\text{14}\)

The Survey was primarily a fiscal document; yet, another purpose may account for the twenty-year delay in its inception. In the two decades following the Conquest, death, conflict, and confiscation had taken their toll on the Norman lords in England. If Domesday had been compiled even twelve years earlier, Stenton wrote, the personnel of the records would have been drastically different. By 1086 the Inquest offered a much needed opportunity to record and resolve many conflicting claims.\(^\text{15}\)

\(^\text{13}\)Ibid., pp. 495-97.

\(^\text{14}\)Ibid., p. 499.

\(^\text{15}\)Ibid., p. 500.
The Survey is also of interest socially. It stands witness to the privativeness of the people, and even by its name, is indicative of their annoyance and suspicion when strangers pry. The Book of Winchester was named 'Domesday' by the people. Stenton quotes a twelfth century commentary by a Richard Fitz Neal:

This book was called by the natives 'Domesdei,' that is by a metaphor the day of judgement, for as the sentence of that strict and terrible last scrutiny may by no craft be evaded, so when a dispute arises concerning those matters which are written in this book, it is consulted, and its sentence may not be impugned nor refused with safety.16

In 1932 Stenton's 1929 Ford lecture series was published, The First Century of English Feudalism. It was in keeping with his earlier views that the Anglo-Norman settlement was a unique system established in England by the Conqueror's heirs. The bulk of the study, therefore, dealt with William II, Henry I, Stephen, and Henry II. There were several references to pre-Conquest and post-Conquest England.

The Norman knights who followed William in 1066 were not the first to appear in England. Norman-style castles, implying to Stenton garrisons of Norman knights, had arisen under Edward the Confessor. In the Welsh march a typically Norman military colony had been established at Hereford, also in Edward's time. Technically, however, knighthood was alien to Old English military tradition. England's isolation had left it unaffected by those factors which caused France to develop a trained cavalry.17


their continental counterparts by their failure to acknowledge the idea of specialization of service to their lord. Before the close of the eleventh century, however, the specialized knight geared for war was a central figure. In discussing the development of feudalism in England under William I, Stenton's most frequent phrase is "there is little evidence."18

The impact of the Conquest was twofold: destruction and reconstruction. In summarizing Stenton's views, William I's destruction (the Conquest) was carried out with unprecedented swiftness, order, and thoroughness. "[I]t was inevitable that the process of reconstruction which he began should far outrun the narrow limits of any single life."19 This modified gradualist viewpoint was one outgrowth of twentieth century research on the Conquest. Another major viewpoint came from Frank Barlow.

Frank Barlow, M. A., D. Phil., Fellow of the British Academy and Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, is currently a professor of history and department chairman at the University of Exeter. Among his many publications are two which particularly fit this topic. "The Effects of the Norman Conquest" (1966) and William I and the Norman Conquest (1966).20

E. A. Freeman, Barlow stated, believed that the Conquest did nothing more give a new turn to the gradual evolution of the political institutions already in progress in England's "Teutonic Society."

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18 Ibid., pp. 430-39.
19 Ibid., p. 456.
Barlow found Freeman to be far too broad and vague, and Round, conversely, to be too narrow in his approach. He wrote that students today should assume a certain solid basis of continuity between pre-Conquest England and the Anglo-Norman kingdom. Furthermore, they need to distinguish between true Norman contributions and the Norman influences which only aided to bring about changes already in motion. Frank Barlow represents a compromise between he schools of Round and Freeman in both the breadth and the philosophy of his study.

According to Barlow, the general effects of the Conquest were wide and lasting; yet, in some specific areas they were negligible. Barlow's basic thesis is simple and logical. It may be concluded from his writings that the Normans wholly altered several areas of English life, merely influenced others, and in yet other areas they had little or no effect at all. William I simply did not have the time, Barlow wrote, to create a homogeneous society had he even the desire to do so.

The conquerors were a possessive, exploiting, and aristocratic race. They were excellent organizers, administrators and builders, and paid close attention to their lands and tenantry. In agreement with most other historians Barlow added that the Normans, while not innovators, were able and willing to benefit from the adopted ideas of others. Most importantly, they respected local customs.


22 Ibid., p. 161.

23 Ibid., pp. 160-61.
The Normans were less sophisticated and less cultured than the Anglo-Saxon nobility they replaced. The Anglo-Saxons had enjoyed a rich literary heritage and had advocated the cultivation of social graces; while the Norman society, Barlow pointed out, was based upon the masculine manners of "camp and castle." Norman treatment of women, for example, did not begin to improve until the beginning of the twelfth century. Anglo-Saxon women, on the other hand, had enjoyed a "typical northern respect" due them, including the right to hold land as well as the right to dispose of it in wills. The Normans, then, added little to the cultural life of the English. Courtly love and the French romance were making their way to England. Yet, the Norman contribution to these refinements, Barlow claimed, was solely the medium of their language; even these new ideas, he stated, were actually English in conception and were merely spread, and glamorized perhaps, by the vehicle of the French language. Finding a purely Norman contribution to English gentility, Barlow confessed, would be difficult.24

According to Barlow, William I was a generally disinterested monarch, conquering a nearly equally disinterested population. The manner in which the conquerors succeeded and the direct and indirect results of that Conquest were in fact not always deliberate nor desired. While the people saw William as king of the English he undoubtedly saw himself primarily as the Duke of Normandy. In fact preferring Normandy, William I resided in England, Barlow suggested, solely for the purpose of keeping order. He did not seek to alter English constitutional

24 Ibid., pp. 141-42.
development; he sought only the crown and its revenues. The people were equally remote. Barlow stressed that, contrary to the myths of many of his own predecessors, no national or even truly organized resistance to Norman rule existed. Rebellion and anarchy, when they surfaced, broke out as a direct and natural result of William I's many absences from England. Following the brutal silencing of the major body of the rebel unrest, Barlow wrote, William possessed control over the island kingdom regardless of whether he wanted it or not. This writer finds it improbable, however, that William would have launched his assault and gained control with such severe methods had he not some desire for control.

There were developments in post-Conquest England which were new to both peoples. English feudalism, "the tenurial revolution," Barlow felt, was unique to England. It differed as much, Barlow claimed from the Norman as from the Anglo-Saxon systems in both its conceptual and its structural uniformity. Despite the vast and quickly developing complexities of subinfeudation the chains of homage led directly to the king. Anglo-Norman feudalism was unique; "Anglo-Norman feudalism was feudalism tamed by royal power."26

The feudal system of military service was relaxed under the Norman kings, according to Barlow. This, he wrote, was because as an effective system of warfare it had become anachronistic. By the time of Henry I servitum debitum was transformed by the scutage fee and the

25 Ibid., p. 143.
26 Ibid., pp. 138-39, 150.
king found it profitable to hire mercenaries. A secondary effect of the later developments, however, was the pacification of the English vassals who, as a result, began to lose their military edge; therefore, the Conquest was responsible for reducing the general martial characteristics of the English people.\textsuperscript{27}

The Conquest was also instrumental in the creation of a unique body of law which, while indebted to Norman customs, was developed in England to meet peculiarly English conditions. Yet, Barlow explained that purely Norman contributions to this body of law, except the two principles of duellum and French inpleading, were actually difficult to distinguish. The important twelfth and thirteenth century developments in English law, such as laws of possession, or the indefeasibility of private rights, could not be said to have been more Norman in origin than English, nor could such procedural basics, as original writs or trial by jury.\textsuperscript{28} Like Anglo-Norman feudalism, Anglo-Norman law became unique to England.

The Norman impact upon the monarchy and household was, as in other areas, mixed. The Norman achievement lay in their ability to modify the traditional English customs of kingship. They altered royal offices to fit the new conditions, and yet retained a needed elasticity which enabled the king further to alter his household as situations changed. A major consequence of the Conquest on the monarchy, however, was that the king of the English became a frequent absentee; thus, by the time of

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., pp. 149-50.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., pp. 140-41.
Henry I, Barlow wrote, the justiciar had become a permanent fixture in the royal court. Officials were changed. The thegns, stallers, house-carls, and such were replaced by stewards, butlers, chamberlains, marshals, constables, and chaplains. Two new offices emerged under the Normans: the clerk in charge of the royal treasury and the Chancellor in charge of the writing office. Under the Normans the language of royal writs changed from English to Latin.  

William increased the royal revenues as well as the extent of the royal demesne, and he fully exploited feudal aids and incidents. The very monument to royal interest in royal rights, the Domesday Book, attested to the fact that innovations were being made in the monetary conditions in England. Barlow added that the broad pattern of the royal financial system remained unchanged. William I and his sons were not concerned with financial reforms, but rather with the exploitation of their traditional rights as English kings, and the exploitation of these royal rights was not confined to the revenue.

William I exercised all the rights due him and more in his relations with the Church. He appointed bishops and abbots, demanded the performance of temporal services from spiritual vassals, presided over ecclesiastical councils, and more novel yet, restricted Church jurisdiction over his barons and strictly controlled all relations with Rome. "The English Church," Barlow wrote echoing a spirit not unlike his Tudor predecessors," remained a National Church with the king its effective head."

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29 Ibid., pp. 141, 144.

30 Ibid., pp. 145-47.

31 Ibid., p. 158.
The Church was "by nature resistant to revolution ... and by its character most susceptible to reform." The Conquest altered the vernacular Church of England through the reorganization of the episcopal administration. New bishops were granted rights held by their brethren in Normandy. They enjoyed the monopoly of the "ordeal and spiritual jurisdiction" in their dioceses, possessed their own justiciars and archdeacons, and held their own synods and tribunals. The hierarchy of the English Church became entirely foreign, and not exclusively Norman; yet the monastic communities were only gradually and partially Norman-ized; and the village priests suffered practically no Norman interference whatsoever. The greatest impact, therefore, was in the upper ranks. Barlow asserted, then, that following the Conquest it was not the gulf between the Churchmen and the laity which had widened, but rather it was the gap between the higher and lower clergy, a direct parallel to the widening gulf between the higher and lower classes of the secular society. Basically, William I enjoyed the support of his clergy because he was a religious man and because he demanded Church reform. William Rufus lost the Church because he exploited it, and Henry I, while a reformer, was a victim of changing ideas and, thusly, was nominally defeated by the investiture question.

In overview, Barlow saw the Conquest as a series of events set into motion by the catalyst of the Norman victory at Hastings. The Conquerors reacted to events rather than formulating new policy or

32 Ibid., p. 153.
33 Ibid., pp. 153-56, 158.
consciously channelling those events themselves. Barlow believed that the Normans, in fact, were only partially responsible for the effects of their conquest, the full impact of which would not be felt in their lifetimes. "The union of England and Normandy," Barlow wrote, facilitated the entry of new ideas for which the Normans themselves were not responsible, which, indeed, they often disliked; but the impact of these was delayed by strong Norman kingship, behind which shield most prelates preferred to shelter.\(^\text{34}\)

If Barlow avoided the cataclysmic interpretation of the Conquest, he also avoided the gradualist approach. He believed that the Normans stimulated English life and challenged English constitutional development with new alterations of old ideas and exposure to new cultures:

> Roman culture soon disappeared. The Vikings changed a few place-names, slightly enriched the English language, may have influenced the development of some institutions and improved the physical stock of the people; but we have to search for their contribution. It was the Norman Conquest which decisively changed the pattern evolving out of the fifth-century Germanic settlements, and produced that tension between two cultures—-the Teutonic and Latin—-which has been so creative in England.\(^\text{35}\)

After what begins to appear here as a tribute to the "decisive" impact of the Conquest, Barlow concluded his thoughts.

> At the advent of the Angevin period the new kingdom was diversified, inconsistent, and capable of developing in any of several ways. The Normans, he wrote, for all their reforms and ruthless policing, had not

\(^{34}\)Ibid., p. 160.

tamed and consolidated England. The higher ranks of society suffered from an increasing denationalization, the lesser baronage grew more insular, and the general population retained its own customs. It was, therefore, of little surprise that by 1090 many of William I's achievements were lost. His empire was divided, Normandy fell into anarchy and the border fiefs erupted in revolt. Church reforms not only ceased to move forward but were actually being undone. Normandy, which had been drained of its finest men as a result of the Conquest, was conquered in turn by William II and Henry I. The male line ended with Henry. Yet, as what may seem to be a final paradox, the Normans made a lasting mark. Barlow maintained that William I opened England to influences which would carry the realm into a new age, and this new era, he concluded, was the age of French civilization.

In contrast to Frank Barlow, H. G. Richardson and G. O. Sayles adopted a totally negative interpretation of the Norman Conquest. Henry Gerald Richardson, M. A., B.Sc., Fellow of the British Academy, was educated at the London School of Economics. George Osborne Sayles, M.A., D. Litt., Fellow of the British Academy, was educated at the University of Glasgow. Together they have produced more than fifteen studies of medieval England.

38 Ibid., p. 196.
40 Ibid.
Richardson and Sayles represent the ultimate attack against John H. Round. They are controversial figures whose views are not readily accepted by their peers. Their work The Governance of Mediaeval England from the Conquest to Magna Carta, published in 1963, was written also to supplant the works and influence of Bishop William Stubbs. A companion piece to Governance, Law and Legislation from Aethelberht to Magna Carta, was published in 1966. The pro-English, anti-Norman fervor of these two scholars has rarely, if ever, been matched.

The impact of the Norman Conquest upon England, as seen by Richardson and Sayles, was negligible. The differences which existed between the conditions in 1066 and 1166, they wrote, were no greater than those between 966 and 1066. The persistent usage of English charters and writs into the twelfth century, as well as the continuity of English political institutions, indicated to Richardson and Sayles that English life was not sensibly altered during the fifty or more years following the Conquest.

The Normans came as conquerors with "little statecraft and little foresight." They did not alter the social customs of the English. Not being reformers, they had no intention of interfering with the customs of the conquered. The conquest of Normandy by William's successors, in fact, had a greater effect on English society than did the Norman Conquest.


42 Ibid., p. 29.

43 Richardson and Sayles did not discuss William I's relations with or policies for the Church in England.
of England, which was only "the chance result of the incapacity of Duke Robert." \(^{44}\)

According to several of the historians discussed, the Normans were, if anything, great administrators. To Richardson and Sayles, however, they were barely adequate. The survival of English political and social custom, then, was not due to William I's strong will or great ability as others had held. It was, rather, due to the great and ordered base of English polity which survived in spite of the Conqueror's intrusion simply because it was so strong.

William was a barbarian. The king's faults, they wrote, were numerous; he was egotistic, cruel, greedy, avaricious, and "the very negative of ideal kingship." \(^{45}\) He was "astute without wisdom, resolute without foresight, powerful without ultimate aims." \(^{46}\) His vision was limited as were his goals. He was a narrow man plagued by ignorance and superstition, and on a far lower plane both morally and intellectually than Cnut. \(^{47}\) He had not the intellectual ability to carry out responsible administrative projects.

The accomplishment of the Domesday Survey was a boon to William's personal reputation, but rather than viewing this as a necessary means to a planned fiscal program, it was "a vast administrative mistake." The Survey, they claimed, was the result of personal whim. William had

\(^{44}\) Ibid., p. 92.
\(^{45}\) Ibid., p. 28.
\(^{46}\) Ibid.
\(^{47}\) Ibid.
given no forethought to the extent of work involved in such an undertaking. Richardson and Sayles felt that the Survey was adequate evidence of William's inability to concentrate upon a practical objective. It failed to motivate any subsequent action, for there is no evidence that the figures were ever actually used, whether for good or ill. In fact, no tangible evidence of its use exists at all until later collaboration between Henry I and Roger of Salisbury and even then, Richardson and Sayles remind us, all was lost under Stephen. 48

William's legislative efforts were equally weak.

The typical word used to describe Norman legislation was "barren." 49 This was not because sources were thin, but rather due to the "brutal facts of history," and "inter arma silent leges." England was constantly on the verge of warfare. The writs of the Conqueror in any account, Richardson and Sayles stoutly interject, could never be interpreted as legislation. 50

Consistently with their thesis, Richardson and Sayles saw the Norman contribution to English feudalism to be negligible. 'Feudal' and 'feudalism' are "the most regrettable coinages ever put into circulation to debase the language of historians..." 51 In any attempt to achieve a rational account of the Norman settlement, they continued, we must initially reject the myth that William I introduced 'feudalism' into

48 Ibid., pp. 28029.
50 Ibid., pp. 30-31.
51 Ibid., p. 30.
England by immediately requiring knight-service quotas from his tenants-in-chief. Round, they asserted, who championed this erring view, had based his arguments upon the 'extravagant and untrustworthy' account of Roger of Wendover. A portion of Round's thesis lay in the assumption that William I had redistributed English lands very early in his reign. Richardson and Sayles, however, indicated that this could not have happened, for the Earl Waltheof had not been divested of his vast estates until he was tried and convicted in 1076, ten years after the Conquest. There was, furthermore, no evidence to prove that anyone in the eleventh century connected knight's fees with a standard annual revenue. Round's evidence to the contrary, they felt, proved in fact Round's own inability "to grasp the nature of the problem." Round based his figures on Stubb's opinions and his own dubious statistical calculations.\(^\text{52}\)

Richardson and Sayles admitted that the ceremony of homage was apparently unknown to pre-Conquest England; yet, they qualified their admission by reminding us that appearances are often deceptive. When the Normans came in 1066 the English had a ceremony similar in objectives to the French concept of homage, but there were differences. Homage in England included the servile demonstrations of the vassal, but it involved no oaths. The particulars of the ceremony were not included in the Richardson and Sayles account except the detail that the fealty oath was sworn with the party standing rather than kneeling.\(^\text{53}\) They promoted

\(^{52}\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 30, 62-63, 65, 95-96.}\\
^{53}\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 105, 107.}\)
no strong arguments to advance the possibility that homage was not a new
development. Their essential argument, however, was that English
'feudalism' was fundamentally different from Continental feudalism.
They echoed Freeman in pointing out that feudalism was a decentralizing
political system, and, yet, never had an English king held more power
than when 'feudalism' was introduced into England. Therefore, if we
call England 'feudal,' they wrote, then we must find another adjective
to fit the system in France. 54

Several historians have written of the Conquest's role in
bringing England into the realm of Continental activity. Richardson and
Sayles, however, asserted that in view of the available evidence, England
had never lost contact with continental Europe and was, rather, closer
in its association with Rome than was Normandy. 55

The impact of the Conquest according to Richardson and Sayles was
not revolutionary. We must stress, they wrote, the continuity of the
institutions in England. The peoples' lives were deeply affected only by
the violence and injustice, and it was not long before all desired to
return to the customs of the past—to the days of Edward the Confessor.
In fact: "I return to you the Law of Edward the King Laguna [sic]
Eadwardi regis vobis reddo." Henry I said, and these were not the senti-
ments, Richardson and Sayles claimed, of a man who believed the Conquest
to be irreversible, successful, or even desirable. The Normans came as
conquerors, made inadvertent innovations which were marred by chaos and
bloodshed, but left the English way of life essentially untouched. 56

54 Ibid., pp. 117-118.
55 Ibid., p. 119.
56 Ibid., pp. 116, 26-27.
One of the most distinguished of the twentieth century historians who opposes the views of Richardson and Sayles is David Charles Douglas, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Bristol. Douglas, M. A. Oxford and Fellow of the British Academy, was Vice President of the Royal Historical Society, 1953-1957, and Ford lecturer in English History at Oxford, 1962-1963. Unlike Richardson and Sayles, Douglas believed the Norman Conquest of England to have been a remarkable achievement.57

William the Conqueror: the Norman Impact Upon England was published in 1964. Its thesis is that William I, king of the English, had both altered and preserved the institutions of his new kingdom; and because of that preservation, that genius for achieving reform through the deliberate application of Old English customs, William I holds "a place among the greatest monarchs of the Middle Ages."58 David Douglas represents a strong opposition to the position of Richardson and Sayles.

Douglas saw the Norman Conquest as affecting not only England but the whole of medieval Europe. The coronation of William I was particularly significant. For England it represented the continuance of tradition and racial identity, while for the Continent it meant the emergence of a new political force—the union of England and the powerful

duchy of Normandy. The ceremony symbolized adherence to custom; yet, it was not totally unaffected by Norman influences. The most significant change was made in the litany with the introduction of the Laudes Regiae [sic].

William's utilization of English tradition to further his ends was also evident in his claim to the throne. William claimed de facto and de jure kingship. He claimed hereditary right, jus sanguinis, and in so doing he deferred to ancient Anglo-Saxon and Germanic tradition which placed claims to the throne legitimately within the grasp of all the members of a late monarch's family. The Conqueror seized actual power by force, but claimed it by blood—as stated in his oath "by hereditary right."

"Christ-centered kingship" was generally accepted in eleventh century Western Europe. Douglas stressed that when William assumed the English crown, he was in fact claiming a position which was broadly believed to possess attributes especially delegated to it by God. Eleventh century kings were, among other things, credited with thaumaturgic (healing) powers. Edward the Confessor and Henry I were both thus credited, and William probably also practiced the royal "touch," but the extent of his practice is not known.


60 Ibid., p. 251.

61 Ibid., pp. 253-54.
It was, nevertheless, widely held that William was given England as a gift of God. In a 1067 charter for Peterborough William was described as "...king of the English by the grant of God." According to the Laudes, he was crowned by God, and the predestined nature of the battle of Hastings was, to most at that time, an accepted fact. One advantage, Douglas observed, of the Christ-centered monarchy was that it legitimized the king's control over the Church in his dominions.

One of the major breaks with English tradition came with the reorganization of the ruling classes. Norman power in England was firmly based upon a new feudal nobility, and, therefore, the immediate results of the Conquest were initially aristocratic and ecclesiastical. William had utilized the ancient traditions in Normandy to achieve full ducal powers in the province. He in like manner called upon royal custom to claim the full and traditional powers and responsibilities of English kingship. It was not desirable to William, however, to retain the English earls and upper class Churchmen.

Norman lay and clerical magnates completely displaced those of the Anglo-Saxons, and they were settled in England in a manner which would deliberately increase the power of the king. Each held his land in return for a specified quota of knights in arms. Douglas entered into the knight-service question on the side of J. H. Round, for he said that the requisite number of knights from each tenant-in-chief, lay

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62 Ibid., p. 255.
63 Ibid., p. 259.
64 Ibid., p. 265.
and high ecclesiastic, was negotiated individually with the king. The sum settled upon had no connection with either the expanse or the yearly income of the lands held. Feudal knight-service in England, Douglas claimed, was the product of royal plan. It was, he continued, adopted and enforced by King William in the years immediately following the Conquest.65

One of William's most notable achievements as Conqueror was his successful imposition of tenure-by-service upon his tenants-in-chief. It established a dominant aristocracy in England, while simultaneously creating a healthy solution to the defense needs of the realm. For at no time, Douglas assured us, was the Anglo-Norman kingdom immune from attack; in fact, its preservation had lain upon twenty years of nearly constant warfare. William I's feudal policies, then, were an immediate response to a crucial military need and gave rise to a new aristocracy, geared for war.66 The destruction of the old aristocracy and the substitution of a new class of feudally tenured magnates was, to Douglas, no less than "revolutionary."67

Feudalism in England differed from the system as it worked in Normandy. William inherited a fully mature feudal organization in Normandy; whereas, in England he established a feudal government by administrative acts. Therefore, the Conqueror's personal control was typically higher in England than it was in Normandy. These considerations

65 Ibid., p. 273.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid., p. 280.
of an inherited versus a 'legislated' system, had not been taken into account by Barlow or Richardson and Sayles. To clarify his point, Douglas continued with the claim that the knight-service quotas in Normandy were remarkably low. Norman tenants rarely held tenure of more than ten knights, while Norman lords in England owed from twenty-five to sixty knights, or even more. The imposition of such heavy services was evidence, Douglas declared, of William's remarkable strength as a feudal monarch. 68

Douglas, like Barlow, believed Anglo-Norman feudalism to be unique to England. Douglas realized further that if English feudalism was basically Norman in origin, Norman feudalism, by the end of the eleventh century, had become somewhat English. Both England and Normandy were sharing the same overlord as well as the same tenants-in-chief. When William feudally asserted himself in England it naturally affected his relations in Normandy. While the introduction of a basic feudal organization into England, Douglas wrote, resulted from the Norman Conquest, the completion of the feudal system in Normandy was a product of the impact of the conquest of England upon Normandy. 69

The effect of the Conquest upon the royal household was equally evident. That the household staff of Edward the Confessor corresponded similarly with that of William's Norman duchy can only be conjecture, for the precise duties of the Anglo-Saxon officials remain unknown to us. Many of the Old English titles have no obvious equivalencies in

68 Ibid., p. 282.
69 Ibid., p. 283.
the Norman tongue. There were, however, three positions of honor comparable to the Norman chamberlain, butler, and marshall. Whether the Norman offices differed appreciably from those of Edward the Confessor is not certain, but the personnel was changed completely. By 1087 William I's household was manned with Normans who had served in their traditional offices in the Norman court. Several of the Conqueror's officials, in fact, retained their old titles and duties in the English court, most notably: William fitz Osbern, steward; Hugh of Ivry, butler; Hugh II of Montfort-sur-Risle, constable. 70 William's staff household officers served both the courts of England and Normandy. There seems to have been little or no duplication of posts.

In direct opposition to the opinions of Richardson and Sayles, Douglas wrote that the Domesday Survey was a magnificent achievement. "It is a record without parallel... It was a unique product of a unique occasion." 71 The urgency of the events of 1085, he wrote, gave an equal urgency to the king's desire to gather the most complete information possible concerning his kingdom. When William came to his Winchester court in Christmas of 1085 he was facing a full Danish invasion, and thus was crucially mindful of the need of supply and maintain his host of mercenaries. The result of that court was, in Douglas's words, "the most remarkable statistical record ever produced in any medieval kingdom." 72

70 Ibid., p. 291.
71 Ibid., p. 353.
72 Ibid., pp. 347, 353.
Both England and Normandy possessed fairly well developed economic systems in 1066. There is little or no evidence to indicate that England's methods of assessment influenced Normandy, but after the Conquest as before, the central control of royal and ducal revenues of England and Normandy was housed in William's camera and supervised by the master chamberlain of the house of Tancerville. William's financial administration, Douglas claimed, was both efficient and successful. The preservation of his reign, in fact, was to a large degree dependent upon the great wealth which he was able to amass.73

Douglas believed, however, that the ultimate test of the abilities of a medieval monarch lay within his administration of justice. The curia regis, like the curia ducis, was essentially a feudal court. In Normandy William made use of his vicomtes as "units of local justice," while correspondingly in England he made use of the ancient local courts of the shire and hundred to extend the reach of his curia.74

Nowhere, indeed, in the Conqueror's England traditions to be more apparent than in his utilization of local courts to supplement the jurisdiction of his central curia.75

A major link between the two was, again, the sheriff, who had emerged as the natural executor of the will of the king.76 William paid close attention to the workings of his judiciary, and this included his pragmatic respect for English tradition. Douglas emphasized that few things

73 Ibid., pp. 300, 302, 305.
74 Ibid., p. 305.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid., pp. 305-06.
were more noteworthy in the shire courts than William's desire to maintain the traditional legal customs of the English. 77 "Few conquerors, medieval or modern, have shown more statesmanlike concern for the traditions of countries recently won by the sword." 78

It would be difficult to gauge William's impact upon the daily lives of his subjects--more difficult, for instance, than his impact upon kingship, the courts, the aristocracy because the peasants' lives were not unavoidably affected to the same extent as were the lives of the nobility and upper clergy. English rural life remained essentially unaltered, and the changes which did occur Douglas perceived as moving in two directions. In the reign of Edward the Confessor slavery was a major feature of English village life, encompassing perhaps one out of every eleven persons. Between the years 1066 and 1086 the number of slaves declined rapidly, with many factors affecting the change. Douglas speculated that the new landlords may certainly have discovered that the forced labor of a dependent peasantry proved more profitable than the maintenance of slaves. The newly reformed Church undoubtedly also had an influence; yet, some credit must also be given to William's administration. Pre-Conquest Normandy experienced no widespread slavery. In England William had unsuccessfully attempted to halt the Bristol slave trade, and passed a law forbidding the sale of "one man by another" outside the kingdom. Whatever the reasons for its decline, by the 1130's slavery had essentially disappeared as a factor in English rural life. 79

77 Ibid., p. 308.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid., pp. 310-12.
The second direction of social movement in post-Conquest England was the fall of the freeman. According to Norman law the social status of a given individual was governed not by birthright, but according to the services one performed. The precarious freedoms of the more independent of the peasants were, thereby, cut at the roots. Therefore, as slavery vanished, Douglas wrote, praedial, or agricultural, servitude continued to expand.80

The Conquest brought difficult times to England; yet they could have been harder. William, while "harsh and brutal," was never tyrannical. His administration, Douglas observed, in fact mitigated much of the hardship which could have accompanied such a conquest. The use of existing English institutions and even-handedness of the king's justice helped immensely in the preservation of order. Douglas credits it to William's genius that he, in the chaos prevalent throughout his reign, did not disrupt the administrative framework of the kingdom he acquired.81

Another area in which the changes at least equalled if not surpassed the adherence to tradition was in the Church. The Norman victory brought the three ecclesiastical provinces of Canterbury, York, and Rouen, together under the temporal domination of William I. England and Normandy which had previously responded to two separate influences, were united. Western Christendom was at this time passing through a crisis which would now be felt in the Church in England as it was elsewhere. The struggle between Gregory VII and Henry IV, between the

80 Ibid., p. 312.
81 Ibid., pp. 314-16.
Papacy and the Empire, was gaining momentum. Rome was seeking reform
to bring an end to widespread simony, to enforce celibacy, and curtail
the growing encroachment of secular authorities over the Church, and the
Pope was exerting himself as its supreme head. The investiture clash
on the continent and in England was part of this attempt to free the
church from lay control. The bitter struggle between Gregory and Henry
was being fought during William's reign in England. The story of
William and the Church, Douglas wrote, was also one of conflict—a
contest between the authority of the king in regulating Roman influence
in his kingdom and the authority of Rome.

William's dilemma was eased by the skillful efforts of his arch-
bishop. Douglas wrote that a great king was matched by a great arch-
bishop, Lanfranc, and their association was indeed so close that it was
not easily possible to determine if a given policy were inspired by king,
archbishop, or both. The king's ecclesiastical domination and, in turn,
his close relationship with Lanfranc, made the archbishop's assertion of
primacy essential. The true significance of the case of Canterbury
versus York lay in Lanfranc's utilization of Anglo-Saxon precedent. He
cited Bede, early English Church council acts, and papal letters.
Douglas believed, once again, that this was characteristic of the impact
of the Normans. He wrote:

In order to give effect to an essentially Norman
policy, this Norman prelate of Italian birth utilized
an English tradition to which he gave fresh vitality.
The character of the Norman impact upon England could
hardly be better exemplified.

82 Ibid., pp. 317-18.
83 Ibid., pp. 318-23.
Another feature of William's impact upon the Church was his Normanization of the prelacy. The new prelates were among the king's more important tenants-in-chief and were responsible for enfeoffment of a large number of knights, as had been the policy in Normandy. The imposition of knight-service upon the bishops and abbots was, Douglas felt, one of the most significant, and perhaps noxious, results of his ecclesiastical policy in England. William, therefore, had an obvious and practical need for bishops and abbots who were dedicated to his rule.\(^8^4\)

The influence of the new Norman prelates on the English churches and monasteries was significant. Douglas wrote that they, influenced by Lanfranc's 'constitutions' for the guidance of the Canterbury monks as well as the recent Gregorian reforms, introduced a revitalized observance into the Church. Lanfranc in his 'constitutions' had combined that which he felt to be the best of the newly reformed Norman and Continental usages and adapted them to English needs.\(^8^5\) An approach which was repeated time and time again in the settlement of Anglo-Norman England.

The alterations of and in the English bishoprics were also significant: notably the transference of sees to the cities, from Crediton to Exeter, from Litchfield, Selsey, and Sherborn to Chester, Chichester, and Salisbury, and so forth. Lanfranc introduced two unique modes of organization. The English cathedrals of Canterbury, Winchester, Worcester, and Sherborn were served by monks; furthermore, in several

\(^8^4\) Ibid., p. 326.

\(^8^5\) Ibid., p. 328.
of the cathedrals which had no monks Lanfranc attempted to constrain the canons to follow the communal and celibate life. Lanfranc, who had himself been a monk, enjoyed seeing members of the regular clergy becoming bishops.86

The bishops' position in England had been modified by William I's policies. The Anglo-Norman bishops were under the close supervision of their metropolitan as well as being closely tied to the king through their feudal obligations. The bishops were, however, soon appointing archdeacons, by synodic order, to act as their agents in all matters of discipline and justice; for in 1072 William removed ecclesiastical litigations from the hundred courts, thus separating Church and 'state' in matters of justice.87

William's relations with Rome were also worthy of comment. They were harmonious until 1073 with the advent of Gregory VII. Pope Gregory, reaching the zenith of his prestige four years later at Canossa, sought actively to break down the barriers William had enforced around his Church. Ultimately Gregory requested that William grant England to Rome and retain rule as Papal vassal;--this was not an unusual request, but usually an unwelcome one. In this struggle William had one advantage; he was dedicated to the reform taking place in the Church. Gregory, who was engaged in a bitter struggle with the Holy Roman Emporer, was therefore hesitant to take steps against one so pious and powerful. William, then, not only resisted Gregory's overtures, but actually

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86 Ibid., p. 329.
continued to invest his own bishops, a practice which did not, in fact, become an issue in England during William's reign.  

As king of the English William saw his ecclesiastical duties clearly. He was responsible for securing the welfare of the Church within the lands under his rule. His kingly duties required that he take measures against the development of divided loyalties among his subjects. In the case of disputed Papal election, no pope would be recognized within his kingdom without his permission; there was to be no correspondence with Rome without his leave; no synods or Church councils within his realm were to initiate legislation without royal approval; and no bishops should excommunicate any of his tenants-in-chief without his consent.

William's position was not anti-papal but rather it was traditional. Lanfranc in approximately 1081 had written in a letter to Gregory, "I am ready to yield obedience to your commands in everything according to the canons." In writing thus, he had been sincere. Both Lanfranc and William, Douglas emphasized viewed the canon law from a different angle than did Gregory VII in Rome. William embraced the concept of royal obligation to the Church which was prevalent in the previous century; yet, he was also greatly influenced by the ecclesiastical revival which had so greatly affected the Continent during his

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88 Ibid., pp. 336-42.
89 Ibid., p. 342.
90 Ibid.
early years. Carrying the reform to England, he was so successful that he brought the Church in England into the Continental pattern.  

During these years he [William] carried the revival, which had previously marked the Norman duchy, to its logical conclusion, and he gave to the Church in England the character it was to retain for the remainder of the Middle Ages.

This Continental tie, besides reforming the Church, dealt a fatal blow to English vernacular culture. Douglas wrote that for more than a century following the Conquest Latin prevailed: "...with rare exceptions, what was thought and written by Englishmen were thought and written in Latin." English philosophers and theologians became participants in the common controversies on the Continent. The Conquest brought England into the mainstream of European development in an era of revival and reform. Of great significance to Douglas, England would as a result of this continental tie, be able to take an active role in the twelfth century renaissance, which was "western Christendom at the zenith of its medieval achievement," and, therefore, an additional and highly desirable by-product of the impact of the Conquest of England.

91 Ibid., pp. 342-43.
92 Ibid., p. 345.
93 Ibid., p. 344.
94 Ibid., pp. 344-45.
CONCLUSION

Was the Norman succession merely one event in the constitutional development of England or did it transform the English way of life? There has never been a consensus for either one stand or the other. Contemporary chroniclers were not called upon to edit the events of their day in any but the most cursory manner, and reacted rather than criticized; yet in their annals one may find varied sentiments surrounding the Norman settlement in England. The closer one comes to modern times the broader and more heated the controversies become.

Each chapter of British historiography has produced a diversity of opinion concerning the impact of the Norman Conquest. The political, social, and general philosophical atmosphere of each period has had a great effect upon the writing of chronicles and histories; however, not to the extent of producing a consensus of opinion in any one age. The same general atmosphere which produced Brady also produced Hale. Freeman was the contemporary of Round; and Richardson and Sayles wrote at the same time as Douglas. The basic difference, then, between twentieth-century British historiography on the Norman Conquest and twelfth century historiography is the technique of historical writing, which I have termed annalists versus analysts. The controversy over the Conquest is as heated today as it ever was in 1066. Nine hundred years of discussion have not settled the issues.

Contemporary annalists were Churchmen and, for the most part, had a first hand view of the general effects of the Conquest upon the
Church, if not the kingdom as a whole; yet, they were, by majority, ambivalent in their attitudes toward the Normans in England. Some were predominantly pro-Norman (Ordericus Vitalis) and others were more anti-Norman (Peterborough); yet, they all believed that the Norman's, for good or ill, interrupted the course of events in England and brought about a revolution in the Church in England.

The Tudor period was, generally speaking, an extension of the age of chroniclers. The historians were printers and merchants rather than clerics or monks; however, the histories were little more than copies of the eleventh and twelfth century chronicles. The Stuart historiographical treatment of the Norman Conquest succeeded in abandoning the annalistic style. The emphasis also changed from the Church and military to the origins of English law. This period gave rise to the development of historical discrimination; in this period we also witness the early growth of historical research. Robert Brady, for example, not only acknowledged but also researched and criticized previous interpretations of the Conquest.

By the nineteenth century, British historians finally came to grips with the analysis of the impact of the Conquest. The medieval, or gothic, revival of the Romantic Age plus the patriotic zeal of the Victorian period insured the publication of colorful and vibrant histories. The nineteenth century issues set the groundwork for the issues of the Conquest which are still with us. The debate of the century, so to speak, was between Freeman and Round. They debated "evolution" versus "revolution;" Freeman denied William I's role in altering the kingdom and customs of England, and Round denied Freeman. The emotional
fervor with which the latter of these two, at least, carried out his work was not, however, a quality reserved solely for the nineteenth century. Perhaps the most heated account of all was written in the twentieth century.

 Twentieth century historiography on the Norman Conquest is at once more inflammatory (Richardson and Sayles), more conciliatory (Stenton and Barlow), and approving (Douglas) than in any other period. Twentieth century historians admit that William brought a certain amount of change with him from Normandy. The arguments surround the extent of the change, as well as its true impact and, conversely, the impact of no-change—i.e., the retention of Anglo-Saxon usages.

 British historiography concerning the Conquest of England is rich and varied; even so, we cannot say that the question is at rest. In 1066 the Peterborough monk wrote "William conquered this land, and came to Westminster, and bishop Ealdred consecrated him king."¹ Nine hundred years later the impact of that event is still very much in controversy, and still quite worthy of debate.

¹Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 198.
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