Н.В. Говорун

ВІД БУДІКИ ДО БЕСС:

Навчальний посібник
з історії та культури Великої Британії
для самостійної роботи
з країнознавства

Частина І. З ГЛИБИНИ ВІКІВ

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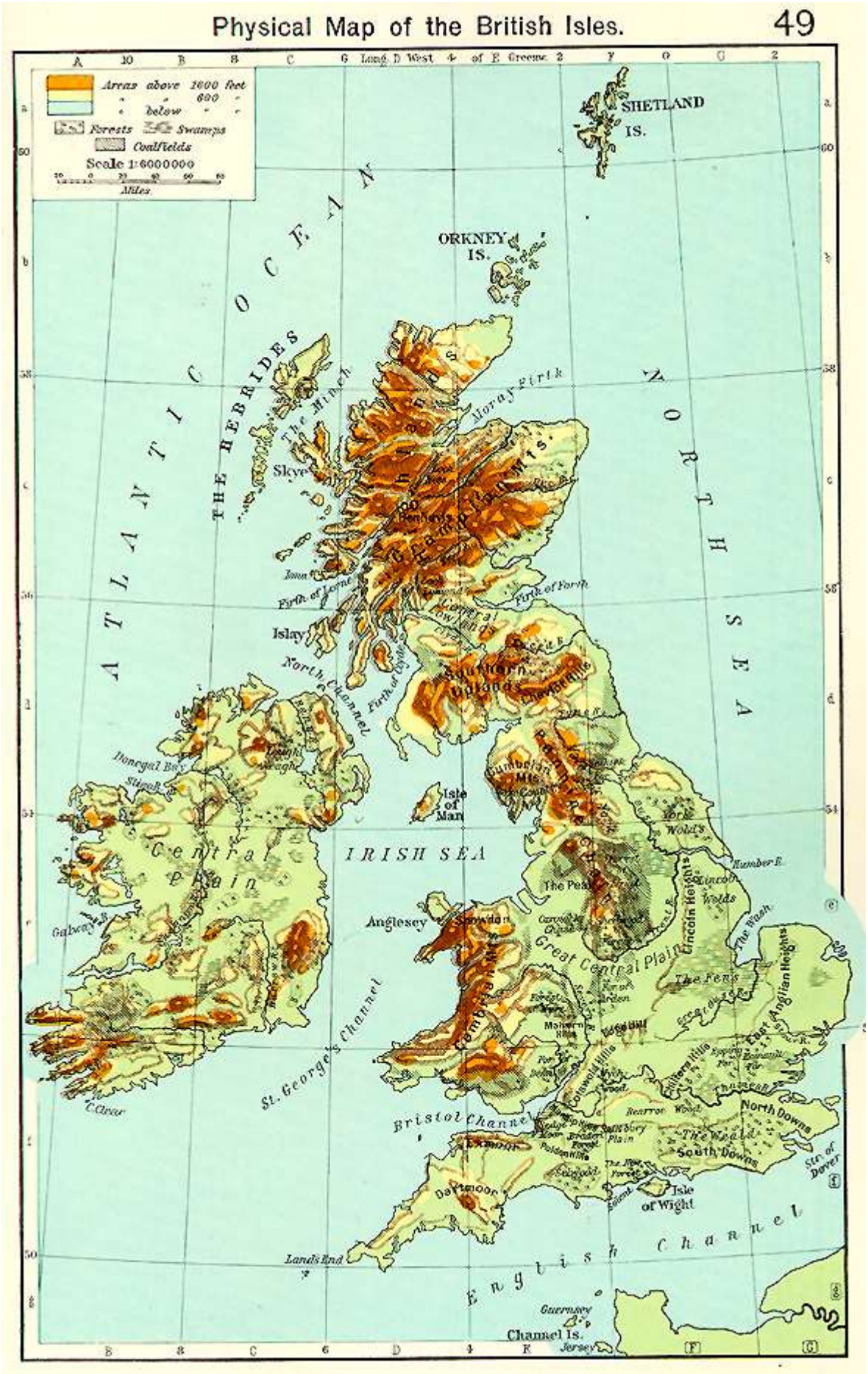
Dear students and colleagues!
This book is the result of the profound search into the historical factors that influenced the formation of modern British character, traditions, superstitions and mode of life. It is intended to help English-learners better understand the phenomena of the target language and the culture of people speaking this language. The book comprises two parts. The first book deals with the earliest peoples who inhabited Britain, describes how they lived, what they did and how they influenced British civilization. It also gives an account on unification of Britain and its conversion to Christianity, the effect of the Norman Conquest and French culture, and the formation of the medieval feudal society on the British Isles. The pictures, maps and assignments will help in your reading.

The first book consists of six chapters each subdivided into smaller logical units with the basic information and provided with student pages and sections with additional material for pleasure reading. A student page comprises a short compendium of the chapter information, essential vocabulary and questions for comprehension check. The book is intended for the students of the philological departments to help them prepare for the seminars, individual and self-work on the country-studying courses. Consolidation exercises with keys are designed for self-control in the process of learning the material.

Шановні студенти та колеги!
Ця книга – результат ретельного дослідження історичних факторів, які вплинули на формування менталітету, традицій, забобон та інших аспектів життя сучасного британця. Призначення даного посібника – допомогти тим, хто вчить англійську мову, краще розуміти деякі явища мови, що вивчається, та особливості культури носіїв цієї мови. Посібник складається з двох частин. Перша частина містить відомості щодо найдавніших поселенців на території Британії, як вони жили, що робили і як вплинули на подальший розвиток британської цивілізації, описує об'єднання та християнізацію Британії, наслідки норманських завоювань, вплив французької культури та формування середньовічного феодального суспільства на теренах Британських островів. Малюнки, карти та завдання допоможуть у сприйнятті прочитаного матеріалу.

Перша частина складається з шести глав, кожна з яких поділена на логічні підрозділи, що містять ключову інформацію, і супроводжується сторінкою студента та цікавими додатковими матеріалами для самостійного читання. Сторінка студента містить короткий конспект глави, словник основних понять та питання для самоперевірки. Книга призначена для студентів філологічних факультетів як джерело інформації, що може бути використане для підготовки до семінарів, індивідуальної та самостійної роботи з країнознавчих курсів. Вправи на закріплення (з ключами) дозволять самостійно проконтролювати засвоєні знання.


Physical Map of the British Isles.
49
Areas above 1000 feet
" " 600 "
" " below " "
Forests
Swamps
Coalfields
Scale 1:6000000
Miles
SHETLAND IS.
ORKNEY IS.
THE HEBRIDES
ATLANTIC OCEAN
NORTH SEA
Skye
Ben Nevis
Grampian Mts.
Moray Firth
The Minch
Firth of Forth
Firth of Clyde
Firth of Lorne
Islay
North Channel
Southern Highlands
Donegal Bay
Sligo B.
Isle of Man
Central Plain
IRISH SEA
Anglesey
Snowdon
The Peak
Lincoln Heights
Lincoln Wolds
Humber R.
The Wash
Great Central Plain
The Fens
East Anglian Heights
Galway B.
Connemara
Cambrian Mts.
Malvern Hills
Cotswold Hills
Chiltern Hills
North Downs
The Weald
South Downs
Strait of Dover
St. George's Channel
Clear
Bristol Channel
Exmoor
Salisbury Plain
Isle of Wight
Dartmoor
Land's End
English Channel
Guernsey
Channel Is.
Jersey

FACT FILE

	United Kingdom	**Ukraine**
Official name	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK)	Ukraine (UA)
Form of government	Constitutional monarchy with two-chamber parliament	Republic with single legislative body (Supreme Council)
The Head of the state	Queen	President
The Head of the government	Prime Minister	Prime Minister
Capital	London	Kyiv
Adminisntrative division	4 constituent units: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland (47 counties)	24 regional districts and Autonomic Republic of Crimea
Area	244,035 sq.km	603,700 sq.km
Population	58 mln	47 mln
Official language	English	Ukrainian
Ethnic groups	Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Scottish	Ukrainians 73%, Russians 22%
Religions	Protestantism 65%, Catholicism 25%	Predominantly Orthodox Christian
Currency	Pound sterling	Hryvnia
Climate	Mild temperate warmed by the North Atlantic Drift	Temperate, subtropical on the Black Sea coast
Highest point	Mount Ben Nevis 1,343m	Hora Hoverla 2,061m

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1
THE FOUNDATION STONES

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

However complicated the modern industrial state may be, land and climate affect life in every country. They affect social and economic life, population and even politics. Britain is no exception. It has a milder climate than much of the European mainland because it lies in the way of the Gulf Stream, which brings warm waters and winds from the Gulf of Mexico. Within Britain there are differences of climate between north and south, east and west. The north is on average 5ºC cooler than the south. Annual rainfall in the east is on average about 600 mm, in other parts it is more than double that. The countryside is varied also. The north and west are mountainous and hilly. Much of the south and east is fairly flat, or low-lying. This means that the south and the east have better agricultural conditions, and it is possible to harvest crops in early August, two months earlier than in the north. So it is not surprising that southeastern Britain has always been the most populated part of the island. For this reason it has always had the most political power.

Britain is an island, and at the moments of danger it has been saved by its surrounding seas. Britain's history and its strong national sense have been shaped by the sea.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is located on the British Isles – a large group of islands lying off the northwestern coast of Europe between the Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea and separated from the continent by the Strait of Dover and the English Channel, 34 km wide. The British Isles consist of two large islands – **Great Britain** and Ireland – separated by the Irish Sea, and a lot of small islands, the main of which are the Isle of Wight in the English Channel, Anglesey and the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea, the Hebrides – a group of islands off the northwestern coast of Scotland, and two groups of islands lying to the north of Scotland: the Orkney Islands and the Shetland Islands.

The coastline is long and rugged. The seas surrounding the British Isles are shallow, less than 90 m. The distance from the southern coast to the extreme North of Scotland is under 1000 km, and the widest part is under 500 km. No place is more than 120 km from tidal water.

Historically the territory of the United Kingdom is divided into four parts: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

England occupies an area of 131,8 thousand sq. km. It is bordered by the Cheviot Hills and the Pennine Range, main area consisting of fertile valleys lower than 305 m. The highest part of England is in the west, from where the land gradually slopes down to the east. The white chalk cliffs of the south coast can be seen from many miles out at the sea. The longest rivers flow from the Central Highlands to the sea: the Severn (338 km) and the Thames (332 km).
Scotland occupies an area of 78,8 thousand sq. km and has 3 topographical regions: the Northern Highlands, the Central Lowlands and the Southern Uplands. The Highlands are the highest mountains on the British Isles. The coastline is greatly indented with deep fiords penetrating very far inland.
Wales is the country of hills and mountains. Its territory is 20,8 thousand sq. km. The Cambrian Mountains occupy almost the entire area, with small lowland areas in the north and coastal plains in the south and in the west. It is an area of high mountains, deep valleys, waterfalls, lakes and heavy rainfall.

Northern Ireland consists of low-lying plateaus and hills of volcanic origin from 152 to 183 m high. In the centre the largest lake in the kingdom, Lough Neagh (153 square miles), lies. In the south-west Northern Ireland borders on **the Irish Republic (Eire)**.

A Student's page 1.1 *(photocopiable)*

Vocabulary notes:

ancestor – a person in your family who lived a long time before, from whom you are descended
annual – happening once a year
fertile – able to produce crops, fruit or the young
flint – very hard grey stone that produces small flames when struck against another
rugged = indented – uneven, with numerous cliffs, fiords and bays
tidal (water) – connected to the sea tides

Compendium

Geographical feautures

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Prehistory

"insula sacra"- the place of giants and spirits, fishermen and shadows of death
up to 10,000 BC – the Ice Age, Britain is a part of the continent
about 250, 000 BC – the first inhabitants, tools of flint
50,000 BC – the first ancestors of modern British
10,000 BC – Britain was peopled by hunters, following herds of deer
5,000 BC – Britain becomes a heavily forested island
3,000 BC – the start of Neolithic (New Stone) Age

STONEHENDGE (Megalith – large stone)
Fill in the gaps with one of the words below:

1. Stonehenge is the remains of a large group of standing ----- on Salisbury plain.
2. When complete, Stonehenge consisted of 2 concentric circles of ---- stones.
3. They surround 2 concentric ---- - shaped groups.
4. The whole construction was surrounded by a circular ---- 300 ft in diametre.
5. It seems to be a sanctuary for the worship of the ---- or the observatory.
6. The monument is surrounded by Bronze Age -----, and may well have been connected with burial ceremonies.

barrow horse-shoe thirty ditch sun stones

BRITAIN'S PREHISTORY

Britain has not always been an island. It became one only after the end of the last ice age. The temperature rose and the cap melted, flooding the lower-lying land that is now under the North Sea and the English Channel.

The Ice Age was not just one long equally cold period. There were warmer times when the ice cap retreated, and colder periods when the ice cap reached as far south as the River Thames. The first evidence of human life is a few stone tools, dating from one of the warmer periods, about 250,000 BC. These simple objects show that there were two different kinds of inhabitants. The earlier group made their tools from flakes of flint, similar in kind to stone tools found across the north European as far as Russia. The other group made tools from a central core of flint, probably the earliest method of human tool making, which spread from Africa to Europe. Hand axes made in this way have been found widely, as far north as Yorkshire and as far west as Wales.

However, the ice advanced again and Britain became hardly habitable until another milder period, probably around 50,000 BC. During this time a new type of human being seems to have arrived, who was the ancestor of the modern Britain. These people looked similar to the modern British, but were probably smaller and had life span of only about thirty years.

Around 10,000 BC, as the Ice Age drew to a close, Britain was peopled by small roving groups of hunters, gatherers and fishers, who lived on the wild animals they could trap and kill, the fish they could catch in the rivers, or the wild plants they could pick. They grew no crops and had no livestock. Few had settled homes, and they seemed to have followed herds of deer which provided them with food and clothing. By about 5000 BC the mighty prehistoric river, which joined the present-day Thames with the Rhine, had formed the English Channel and Britain had finally become an island, besides heavily forested. For the wanderer-hunter culture this was a disaster, for the cold-loving deer and other animals on which they lived largely died out. For a long period no attempts to migrate on the newly-formed island had been made, and continental inhabitants believed Britain to be a mysterious island (Lat.*"insula sacra"*) of giants and dead souls transported from the continent by special ferrymen every night.

Then, about 3000 BC, the survived Stone Age hunters were joined by other peoples, immigrants from the Continent, **Neolithic (New Stone Age) people**, small, dark, long-headed men and women, rarely more than 5 ft 6 ins in height. In the period immediately after its formation the Channel was too stormy to cross it by the nearest route from the continent, so they crossed the sea to the west in little skin boats, dug-out canoes and log ferries with leather sails, bringing with them a different way of life. They probably came from either the Iberian (Spanish) peninsula or even the North African coast thus are often referred to as **the Iberians**. The Iberians settled in the western parts of Britain and Ireland, from Cornwall at the southwestern end of Britain all the way to the far north. Not much is known about these early people because they lived in Britain long before a word of their history was written, but we can learn something from their skeletons, their weapons and the remains of their dwellings which have been found.

They made clearings in the forests for their animals, grew crops, fashioned themselves axes and other tools from flint and decorations from gold and amber, baked pottery, and established meeting places and tribal centres such as that at Windmill Hill near Avebury, the summit of which was crowned by three concentric lines of earthworks. Followed by other immigrants, they developed the custom of burying their dead in stone tombs known as memorials of **Megalithic Culture** (Mega" - big, "lithos" - stone). Many megalithic structures have survived; it is estimated that there are over 40,000 in Northern Europe alone. The form of the tomb is usually

that of a long barrow with megaliths forming the tomb chamber(s) and/or placed upright about the entrance.

Believing in the afterlife, the Iberians also provided the deads with food and household items. Some corps were found with the flesh peeled off, wrapped up in dyed red skins, so that we can suggest a kind of specific rituals similar to the mummification in Ancient Egypt.

After 2400 BC new groups of people known as **the Beaker Folk** arrived in southeastern Britain from Europe. They were round-headed and strongly built, taller than the Iberians. It is not known whether they invaded by armed force or were invited by the local tribes because of their military or metal-working skills. Prior to that time they had come into close contact with a Russian tribal culture known as the **Battle Axe people**, with whom they soon merged to form a single population. The Battle Axe culture is believed to have radically influenced the speech of the Beaker Folk, both those who migrated into Britain and those who remained on the European mainland, effectively ensuring the spread of an **Indo-European language** into eastern Europe and beyond.

Early in their development as a society, the Beaker Folk had already learned skills in metalworking, first in gold and copper and later in bronze. At any rate, it is important to understand the Beaker Folk's interest in metals, because it was their search for alternative sources of gold and copper that brought them into Britain and then convinced them to stay.

Once established in Britain, the Beaker Folk seized more and more land, for they were also farmers and herders for whom land ensured prosperity. Their warlike natures enabled them to expand territories quickly, and soon they were grazing cattle in much of Britain. They formed warrior-king societies, which brought change to Britain after the community-based lifestyle of earlier Neolithic populations.

They built burial barrows, in which a single individual was buried with a supply of grave goods, including gold and copper jewellery, daggers, cups, and sceptres inlaid with precious stones. They also buried their dead with pottery beakers of a distinctive horizontal design; it is from these unique objects that the name "Beaker Folk" was coined. Barrows were clustered in circles to accommodate different members of a family group. Many of these practices would suggest the presence of a form of spirituality in the Beaker culture that suggested a belief in the afterlife.

Both men and women were granted burial in barrows, but in many instances the orientation of the bodies were different. Men were often placed with their heads directed east, and women with their heads directed west. The reason for this is not known, but we can speculate that they may have attributed gender-specific qualitites to physical direction or certain natural phenomena, or that they believed the dead should be able to see the sun at different times of the day, based upon gender.

The Beaker Folk were accomplished archers, and are believed to have been among the first to use metal and stone wrist guards to protect archers' arms from injury. Copper daggers and spearheads were also used in warfare, which is another testament to the level of the skill attained in metalworking.

The Beaker Folk are also credited with the introduction into Britain of the first alcoholic drink - a tasty, honey-based mead.

A Student's page 1.2 *(photocopiable)*

Vocabulary notes:

accomplished - skilled
archer – a person who shoots with a bow and arrow
amber – a hard clear yellow-brown substance, semi-precious stone
barrow – a burial mound (hill)
beaker – a tall cup for drinks
copper – a common redish-brown metal
foot (ft) -12 inches, 38.48 centimetres, *inch (in)* – 2.54 centimetres
grind – crush into small pieces or powder between 2 hard surfaces
log ferry **–** a boat made of bound tree trunks
nomadic – moving around instead of living in one place

Compendium

	The Iberians – Neolithic Britons	**The Beaker Folk**
Origin	norhwestern coast of African continent, Iberian Peninsula (Pyrenees, modern Spain)	northern Europe, close contact with a Russian tribal culture known as the Battle Axe people
Arrival	3000 BC, reached the British Isles by ocean in the log ferries with leather sails in a search of gold and amber	2400 BC, in a search for alternative sources of gold and copper
Appearance	small, dark, long-headed, rarely more than 5 ft 6 ins in height	tall, round-headed and strongly built
Way of life	nomadic tribes, used stone weapons and tools, were aware of the art of grinding and polishing stone, gathered or hunted food	farmers and herders, accomplished archers, learned skills in metalworking: in gold, copper and later in bronze
Social system	community-based societies	warrior-king societies
Beliefs	pagans, the cult of death, belief in the afterlife	pagans, the cult of death, belief in the afterlife
Relics	most of earth or stone barrows (megaliths) were found on the chalk uplands of the south	individual burial barrows clustered in circles, pottery beakers of a distinctive horizontal design

Comprehension check:

1) How do geographical peculiarities influence the development of the British Isles?
2) Where is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland located?
3) Which waters wash the British Isles?
4) What islands do the British Isles consist of?
5) Which four parts is the territory of the United Kingdom historically divided into? Give brief characteristic of their location and relief.
6) Give an account of the first traces of civilization on the *"insula sacra"*.
7) What do we know about the Iberians, their origin and way of life?
8) What do we know about the Beaker Folk, their origin and way of life?

Uffington White Horse

The White Horse
The White Horse of Uffington, with its elegant lines of white chalk bedrock alongside the Ridgeway, is thought to be the oldest hill figure in Britain. The image is a stylised representation of a horse (some would say dragon) some 374 feet in length, and is thought to date back as far as 1000BC in the late Bronze Age. Similar images have been found depicted on coins from that period, and it is thought that the figure represents a horse goddess connected with the local Belgae (Celtic) tribe. The goddess is generally believed to be one form of Epona, worshipped throughout the Celtic world.

The horse was ritually worshipped every seven years under the jurisdiction of the local Lord, who had to fund the event. The festival could last for over three days and consisted of fun and games, traditional cheese rolling, wrestling and other pastimes. The cheese rolling was held on the steep sided valley known as the Manger, the place where the horse was said to feed on moonlit nights.

Traditionally the horse is attributed to a number of famous figures, one of these is King Alfred, who is said to have had it constructed to commemorate his victory over the Danes in 871. The horse is also said to been cut by Hengist, the leader of the Anglo Saxon horde in the 5th century AD. Another piece of folklore suggests that the figure is actually a representation of the dragon killed by St George, an event thought to have taken place on nearby Dragon Hill.

The Ridgeway
The Ridgeway is one of Britain's most ancient roads. As its name suggests, it differs from most modern roads in that it runs along a ridge of hills. Originally it would probably have been used for driving sheep, and so on; above the surrounding land for much of the way, it avoided the dangerous forests below.

Dragon Hill
Dragon Hill is a low flat-topped mound situated in the valley below the White Horse. In legend it is the place where St George slew the dragon, its blood spilling on the hilltop and leaving forever a white patch where no grass can grow. Some suggest that the horse is a representation of St

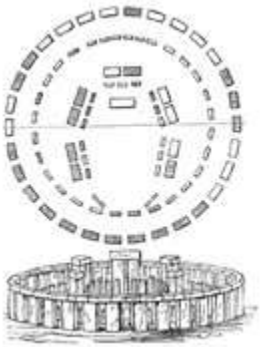
George's steed or even of the slain dragon itself.

The Manger
The manger is a strangely shaped valley, which is thought to have been formed by the melting of ice in the last Ice Age. Cheese rolling was held down the side of the valley during “The Scouring of the White Horse” every seven years. Folklore suggests that the manger is the supernatural feeding place for the White Horse.

Uffington Castle
The castle is an impressive Iron Age hillfort, once protected by timber walls on top of the surviving banks and ditches, and faced with sarsen stones. It is likely that the tribe who created the White Horse once lived within this hill fort. The entrance to the hill fort was via the Northwest, protected by an earthen passageway that would have been further protected by wood. The castle was excavated in 1850 when evidence of the wooden structure was found, along with an Iron Age coin of the Dobunni tribe.

Some researchers believe that the castle marks the site of the battle of Badon, Arthur's great victory over the Saxons. This is probably due to the important strategic position of the castle.

Stonehenge



Stonehenge is a prehistoric and mysterious circle of upright stones on Salisbury plain in southern England. Construction on the great monument began 5,000 years ago; the famous stones that still stand today were put in place about 4,000 years ago. The name “Stonehenge”

comes from the old English “hengan”, meaning hanging stones. The great age, massive scale and mysterious purpose of Stonehenge continue to draw hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

The stones are aligned almost perfectly with the sunrise on the summer solstice, and it is almost unquestioned that Stonehenge was built as a spectacular place of worship. Stonehenge attracts over 800,000 visitors per year and several thousands gather on the summer solstice to watch the sunrise at this ancient and mystical site. Visitors from a variety of religious backgrounds have reported a strong sense of mystery and spiritual energy at the site.

The modern account of the construction of Stonehenge is based primarily on excavations done since 1919 and especially since 1950. Archaeologists believe the construction of the site was carried out in three main stages, which have been labelled Stonehenge I, Stonehenge II and Stonehenge III.

Stonehenge I

The native Neolithic people of England began construction of Stonehenge I by digging a circular ditch using deer antlers as picks. The circle is 320 feet in diameter, and the ditch itself was 20 feet wide and 7 feet deep.

Next, they used the chalky rubble taken from the ditch to built a steep bank circle just inside the outer circle. Inside the bank circle, they dug 56 shallow holes known as the Aubrey holes (named after their discoverer, 17th century scholar John Aubrey).

Finally, two parallel stones were erected at the entrance to the circle, one of which, the Slaughter Stone, still survives. Also surviving are two Station Stones, positioned across from each other on opposite sides of the circle, which may also have been erected during this time. Stonehenge I seems to have been used for about 500 years and then abandoned.

Stonehenge II

Construction of Stonehenge II began around 2100 BC. In this phase, a semicircle of granite stones known as bluestones (from their original colouring) was assembled within the original bank and ditch circles. Several aspects of this phase are intriguing.

First, the bluestones come from the Preseli Mountains in South Wales, nearly 250 miles away. There were about 80 of them, weighing up to 4 tons each. How they were transported is not known, although scholars don't regard the feat as impossible and various theories have been presented.

It is intriguing to wonder, however, what makes the Stonehenge site so special that so much effort would be expended to drag the giant stones 250 miles instead of constructing the monument near the quarry.

Second, the entranceway to the semicircle of bluestones is aligned with the midsummer sunrise. The alignment was continued by the clearing of a new approach to the site, "The Avenue," which has ditches and banks on either side like the original outer circle. Two Heel Stones (so-named from the shape of the one that remains) were placed on the Avenue a short distance from the circle (and, today, very close to Highway A344).

Stonehenge III

Stonehenge III is responsible for the stone circle that is still visible today. During this phase, which was started in about 2000 BC, the builders constructed a circle of upright sarsen stones, each pair of which was topped with a stone lintel (horizontal capstone). The lintels are not rectangular, but curved so as to create a complete circle on top.

There were originally 30 upright stones; 17 of these still stand. These stones came from the Marlborough Downs, 20 miles to the north, are 7 feet tall and weigh 50 tons each. The outside surfaces of all these stones were pounded smooth with hammers, and dovetail joints fasten the lintels to their uprights.

Within this stone ring was erected a horseshoe formation of the same construction, using 10 upright stones. Here the trilithons (set of two uprights plus the lintel) stand separated from one another, in 5 pairs. Eight of the original ten stones remain. The horseshoe shape opens directly towards the Slaughter Stone and down the Avenue, aligned with the summer solstice sunrise.

About a century later, about 20 bluestones gathered from Stonehenge II were placed in a horseshoe shape inside the sarsen horseshoe. Less than half of these remain. Some shuffling around of the bluestones and digging of holes (probably in preparation for placing the bluestones, which was not completed) occurred around 1500 BC. The Altar Stone is the biggest of these newly-arranged bluestones that remains. Around 1100 BC, the Avenue was extended all the way to the River Avon (over 9,000 feet from Stonehenge), suggesting that the site was still in use at that time.

THE CELTS: MYSTERY YET UNSOLVED

"The whole nation is war-mad, both high-spirited and ready for battle, but otherwise simple, though not uncultured."
Strabo, 1st century A.D. geographer

"Golden is their hair and golden their garb. They are resplendent in their striped cloaks, and their milk-white necks are circled with gold."
Virgil, 1st century B.C. poet

Celtic Beginnings

The main root of the majority of Scottish, Irish and Welsh ancestry lies with the ancient **Celts**. Their traditions and beliefs are still evident today amongst these groups, and can be found in superstitions, geographical names and language. The Celts first burst into recorded history in the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans in about 500 B.C. The Greeks discovered that the area of central and northwestern Europe was dominated by a huge number of tribes who, although independent and often even at war with each other, possessed a common culture and common origins. Perhaps because of their great skills, as warriors, orators and artists, around 517 BC the Greek explorer, geographer and historian Hecateus de Miletus, in his *Geography*, was drawn to describe these transalpine people as *"one of the four great barbarian peoples"*, along with the closely related Scythians from the steppes of southern Ukraine, the Persians and the Libyans. Among various reporters, the fifth century B.C. Greek historian Herodotus recorded that the Celtic lands stretched from the headwaters of the Danube to all but the west coast of Iberia. The Celts, then, were already a mighty and widespread people when they appeared in the recorded history. The word that Herodotus initially used to describe them was ***keltoi*** - a term similar to one which they themselves may have used to describe themselves as "*hidden people*". This phrase may have arose simply because the Celts, although literate, avoided committing their customs into a written form. *"The Druids believe that their religion forbids them to commit their teachings to writing"* (Julius Caesar, Roman general, statesman and writer).

It is due to the testimony of the early classical historians that we know that the Celts were literate people by the 1st century AD, with well-organised social structure and religion (**the Druids** being the most important members of their society, outranking even kings) and had strongly enforced laws on social and anti-social behaviour.

The Ancient Legends of Celtic Origins

According to some classical authors such as Herodotus, the Celts received their name from **Celtus**, a son of **Hercules**. The following story had support among the people and was seen inscribed on the monuments:

"Hercules made a journey to defeat the cruel tyrants Geryon and Tauriscanus, who were oppressing Spain and Portugal, and when he had overcome them both, he formed unions with women of good birth by whom he had several children, who gave their own names to the territories which they ruled".

The god described as Hercules is usually interpreted as the Gaulish god **Ogmios**. This god is often portrayed wearing lion skins and carrying a club, making him similar in appearance to the Romano-Greek figure of Hercules. In the Irish Celtic tradition Ogmios would be equatable to the

Dagda ("Good God") so called because of his outstanding ability over a number of crafts. **Tauriscanus**, otherwise known as Tauranus, is identifiable as the bull like figure found in many Celtic symbol stones across Europe, though Geryon is a rather more obscure figure.

The Ethnology of the Celts

Historically the original habitat of the Celts seems to have been central Germany, around the region of the Danube. During the first millenium BC, their territories seem to have expanded to a substantial size, no doubt absorbing many aboriginal cultures, across the whole of Western Europe. Hecateus de Miletus stated that they lived in the land of the Ligurians around 517 BC - **Liguria** being a nation at the west of Italy, bordered by the Mediterranean sea and the rivers of the Macra, Var and Po. There is a claim in the classical sources that the ancestors of the Ligurians were **Gauls** (Gaels) or Germans. Herodotus, writing around 445 BC, mentions that the River Danube had its source in the land of the Celts. By the start of the sixth century B.C. the pressure of population led to rapid expansion to the west. The whole centre of the Celtic domain shifted into the Upper Rhine, southwest Germany, Switzerland, and Burgundy.

Celtic Invasions of Britain

Soon after 700 BC the first Celtic tribes invaded the British Isles. The commonly accepted theory of their invasions is that they came in three distinct waves. The first group was called **the Goidels** or Gaels. These Celts were driven by later invaders into the less fertile and more mountainous western and northern regions. There they preserved their language and some traditions. These tribes later divided into two – the Picts and the Scots. Some of them crossed over to Ireland and settled there. Their language later formed the original language of Ireland and northwest Scotland, which is thus called Goidelic Celtic (Gaelic).

The second wave of Celtic tribes, the Brythonic Celts or **the Brythons**, arrived in Britain between 600 and 500 BC and settled in the south of England, in Wales and in northwest England and southwest Scotland. Their language developed into the Celtic language of modern Wales. Some of the Celtic words can also be found in modern English in the names of rivers, forests and hills. There are rivers called *Avon, Davon*, which in Celtic means “a river” and *Dervent*, which means “clear water”. *Thames, London, York, Kent* are the names of Celtic origin, too. Such Celtic elements as *tor* – “a hill”, *comb* – “a valley”, *carr* – “a rock” appear in place-names in the lowland zone.

The third wave of invaders, **the Belgae** from Northern Gaul, containing many people of Teutonic origin, arrived about 100 BC and occupied the greater part of what are known as **the Home Counties** (the central part of Great Britain). They pushed part of Brythons to Wales, taking possessions of the south and east, other Brythons merged with the Belgae. This mixture was called **Britons** or Britts.

The earliest Celts were in the bronze age of development, but later Celtic invaders brought with them knowledge of iron working.

Recording Events

We know more about the Celts than about the earlier inhabitants of the island because of the written account of other peoples that exist. The Greeks were the first to mention the British Isles. It is from the Greek books that we know about **the Phoenicians**, great sailors and traders from the coast of Syria, at the eastern end of Mediterranean. Herodotus wrote that the Phoenicians

would come to the British Isles for tin, which was used in making bronze. They called the islands the Tin Isles.

The earliest writer to inform us a lot about the country and its inhabitants was Julius Caesar. In his *Commentaries on the Gallic War* he describes the island and the Celts against whom he fought.

Clothes and Appearance

The Celts were tall and blue-eyed, wore long flowing moustaches but no beards. They used to dye their hair and moustaches red or sandy. Both men and women wore brightly coloured woven clothes, red being a favourite colour, the material being dyed with a substance extracted from berries and plants. They had shoes and sandals of leather; and those who could afford them wore finely crafted ornaments and jewellery, brooches, bracelets, necklaces and rings, some of them made by their own people, others imported — together with glassware and wine — from foreign lands to which hides and slaves, cattle, dogs and minerals, tin from the mines of Cornwall, iron from Sussex, as well as gold and silver, were sent in return.

Not only did the Celts like brightly coloured clothes - the Romans tell us that some of them painted patterns all over their bodies with blue woad made of a special plant.

The Celts' clothes showed their status and importance within the tribe. Men would wear a tunic with a belt, a cloak and trousers. Women wore dresses fastened with brooches.

Any important member of the tribe would wear a neck torc of gold, silver or iron, decorated with patterns. The Celtic craftsmen loved symmetrical designs and patterns, often with animal shapes and faces.

The Celtic soldiers had white spiky hair. They used lime to style their hair and sometimes tied it up in a ponytail. Their faces, arms and legs the warriors painted with a blue dye to make themselves look fierce.The most famous soldiers wore bronze helmets on the head to show how important they were. Often there were model birds, animals or horns on the helmets which made them even more special. They carried huge shields decorated with signs or patterns.

The Celts often fought naked or in animal skins. Their main weapons were the sword and spear, they sometimes fought in horse-drawn war chariots. Their war-chariots were made of wicker and scythes of bronze were attached to the wooden wheels. The Celts rushed along the enemy's line, weaving their spears, uttering loud cries and driving the scythes against all who came within reach.

Social Structure

In the Celtic society the tribal form of government prevailed. People lived in clans, the clans were united into large kinship groups, the groups were united into tribes. A tribe was governed by a council of elders, which later was chaired by chiefs. The chiefs were military leaders and some of them were very powerful, skilled administrators, patrons of artists and craftsmen. They were sometimes called kings or queens. The women in the tribe had the rights equal to the men's. They could become warriors in wartime, divorce husbands and rule the tribe.

The Celts learned about gods and the transmigration of souls from the wise men, astrologers and prophets known as **the Druids** who worshipped and performed their rites in woods by the light of the moon beneath bunches of mistletoe clinging to the branches of oaks. Both plants were special for Celtic mythology as the immortality symbols. The Druids were the Celts' priests, responsible for all sorts of religious ceremonies. They were educated and powerful members of the tribe, an intellectual class of philosophers, judges, teachers, doctors, astronomers and astrologers, and were well respected by the other Celts, as they advised them in all difficult matters. The main centre of the Druids in Britain was Anglesey. The word "Druid" is of Celtic origin, it has common roots in many Indo-European languages (e.g. "дерево" in Ukrainian and "древо" in Russian). Modern linguists think that the name itself emerged from the combination of "drus" (meaning a tree, usually an oak) and "wid" (meaning knowledge or wisdom). So in the Celtic social system, "Druid" was a title given to learned men or women possessing "oak knowledge". Though the sources of this knowledge are obscure, the education of the Druids in mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, anatomy and languages is so profound that impresses even modern scholars. The Druids were believed to be able to fortell future and often acted as prophets. As they often rhymed their prophecies to make themselves clear for their illiterate tribe-fellows, the Druids are also referred to as the bards, the most famous being Taliesin (Merlin or Myrddin in Ireland). The Druids lived near oak groves, where no one was allowed to come without permissions. They scarcely shared their knowledge. If they did accept the students, the period of training could last up to twenty years.

Mode of Life

The Celts were practised farmers, dividing the land into square fields separated by banks and working the earth with small ploughs drawn by oxen. They grew oats and rye, wheat and barley. Corn was ground in handmills for bread; and the alcoholic drink known as mead was made from water and fermented honey. Farmers lived on the land they farmed. Sometimes farms would be built in spots with a good source of water, or fertile ground of good pasture for the animals. The

Celts kept cows, pigs, horses, goats and sheep. They lived in round huts of wood and clay-covered wattle with thatched roofs and a fire in the middle for cooking and heating. Often non-family members were not allowed to approach the hearth. Archaeological evidence of elaborately decorated hearths and fire-related tools indicates that the domestic cult of the Celts was centered here. Each family would have had its rites, sacrifices to the house deity, protections for the house and family. There are elaborate eating utensils present in the archaeological record. The Celts sat on hay and had their meals served up on wooden tables raised slightly above the earth. Their food consisted of a small number of loaves of bread together with a large amount of meat, either boiled or roasted on charcoal. When a large number dined together they sat around in a circle with the most influential man in the centre. Beside him the host sits and next on either side the others in order of distinction. The interesting evidence of the importance of feasting to the Celts are burial goods which indicate the belief in the Otherworld feast, many of which are also known from Irish and Welsh mythology, such as Manannan's Feast of Wisdom and Age, the feast of Bran's head with his companions. The Otherworld feasts generally feature an ever filled cauldron so that food never runs out, or animals who rise up ready to be slain again the next day. Grave goods include flagons of wine, drinking vessels, animals and hearth implements.

The chief and his family, soldiers and craftsmen lived in hillforts because they were easy to defend. There are over 1000 Iron Age hillforts in Wales. Steep slopes, a high wall and deep ditch helped keep the Celts safe in their homes.

Religion & Belief

All Celtic peoples who invaded the British Isles were polytheistic – they believed in many gods. The Celtic religion was closely tied to the natural world and they worshipped gods in sacred places like lakes, rivers, cliffs and bushes. The moon, the sun and the stars were especially important - the Celts thought that there were supernatural forces in every aspect of the natural world.

According to Julius Caesar, the Druids offered up human sacrifices to their gods, sometimes single victims, at other times groups of men in immense wicker-work cages, criminals when these were available, slaves or poor men when they were not. Among sacrificial animals horses, cattle, lambs, pigs, dogs, also stags, hares, birds and wild pigs as well as other wild animals were found.

Most Celtic deities were accompanied by birds or other animals. There were certain places the Celts went if they wanted to worship a god. Springs, rivers, and other bodies of water were among the most popular. Hilltops and clearings in forests were also favourites.

The Celts also sacrificed weapons to the gods by throwing them into lakes, rivers and bogs - places they considered special.

The Celts paid great respect to the human head. Roman historians say they cut off the heads of their ancestors, and even their enemies, and worshipped the skulls.

Unlike earlier peoples on the British Isles, the Celts were afraid of death and evil forces and tried to avoid them or scare them off. Thus bad weather conditions together with criminals were embodiment of those forces.

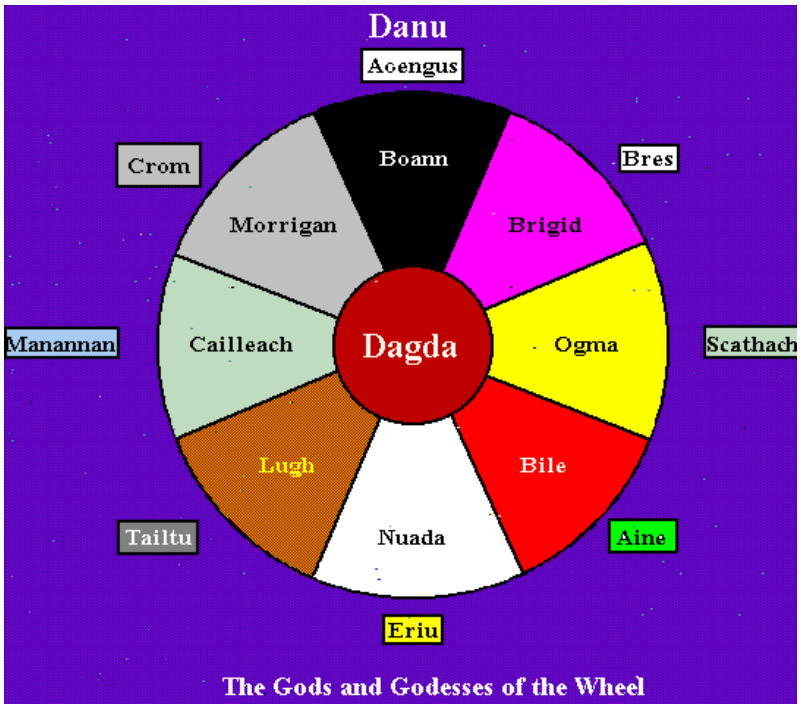
The Celts believed that the soul was immortal. After a person died, he/she was believed to go to "heaven". The Celtic version of heaven was a better earth, with no sickness, calamity, or old age. All people (especially women) were beautiful. The sun was always shining, and the birds were

always singing. No one was ever hungry or thirsty because food and drink appeared magically. The way to the better world was, though, not short and easy. A dead soul was believed to say farewell to the native tribe flying over as a multi-coloured butterfly for some days. Then the soul had to be purified being transformed into an elf. Elves lived deep in the forest and invisibly helped those in need. The more sins a living person committed, the longer “elf-mission” a dead soul had. Only then the "heaven" was open. Another alternative was resurrection in a body of a new-born baby.

Religion was very important to the Celts. So important that they divided their year into four seasons according to religious festivals. The first festival began on February first, and was called **Imbolc.** The people prayed to Brigid (goddess of flocks and fertility) for the birth of spring lambs and for ewes rich with milk. The second festival began on May first. This festival was to honour the Druids and to pray to the god Belenos (Bile) for the fertility of crops and cattle. The third festival began on August first and was called **Lugnasa**. This festival was to thank Belenos for a good harvest. The final festival marked the new year and began on November first. The actual festival was on October thirty first. Here, the Celts remembered the time chaos turned to order. During this festival, called **Samhain**, the dead were believed to have come back to the land of the living. It was considered a very dangerous time, when demons and ghosts stalked the living and chased the children.

The Wheel of the Year

The Wheel of the Year (Celtic Zodiac) is ruled by sixteen Gods and Goddesses. Each of the eight major divisions of time and space are associated with at least a pair of Deities in this divination system. These pairs of Deities are usually in the form of Mother-Son or Husband-Wife.



Danu

Danu, Mother of the Gods and patroness of wizards, rivers, water, wells, prosperity and plenty, magic and wisdom. Sometimes she is Dagda's wife; othertimes his daughter.

Dagda

Dagda, The All Father, Lord of Occult Knowledge, Dagdha Many Talented and Powerful, master of the harp and possessor of a dreadful double ended club.

Morrigan

Morrigan, the Battle Goddess, the Goddess of Death, also Queen of the Witches and Goddess of Magic, marries Dagdha at Samhain.

Crom

Crom, the God that delivered the grain from the fields and the bounty of the harvest from the Underworld. He was called the "Bent One" because he carried the first sheaf of the wheat harvest on his back from the fields to the table. Crom is sometimes said to wrestle Lugh or Finn for the gold of the harvest and the rays of the Sun. During the Fall and after the Harvest, bull sacrifices were made to him to insure a good harvest. Crom possessed a bull that was said to be immortal.

Boann

Boann, "She of the White Cattle", Goddess of fertility and the stars.

Oenghus

Oengus, Dagda's son, God of Love and Life, also associated with dreams and the soul. He has the gift of life within his breath and can restore the dead to life.

Brighid

Brighid, Dagdha's daughter, Goddess of poets, feminine crafts, the hearth, martial arts, healing and inspiration. "She Who Gives Hope and New Beginnings". The Celtic Church absorbed her as the "foster-mother" of Christ, St. Brigit.

Bres

Bres, God of Fertility and Agriculture, a husband of the goddess Brighid. His mother was Eriu (or Brighid in some tales), the Goddess of Sovereignty. He possessed great beauty ("As beautiful as Bres" was a common saying). He is responsible for the flow of milk from cattle as well.

Scathach

Scathach, "She Who Strikes Fear", Goddess of Martial Arts. A great sword warrior and instructor. Patroness of martial arts, prophecy, blacksmiths and magic.

Ogma

Ogma, The "Sun Faced" One, so called because he was God of Wisdom and Speech. He invented the Ogham and was also a great Warrior. Sometimes associated with the Greek Hercules. Also Irish God of Music, Spells, Arts and Eloquence.

Aine

Aine, lush green Mother Goddess, Goddess of Love and Ferility.

Bile

Bile, God of Fire and the Sun. His festival was Beltaine on May 1. At this time, cattle were driven through the "fire mouth" to purify them from disease and to prepare them for the summer pastures. Belenus (Bile) was identified with Apollo by the more Romanized Gauls. As Beli he is the Welsh God of Death.

The Goddess of Sovereignty

The Goddess of Sovereignty (Banbha, Fodla, Eriu). The favour of the Goddess could be granted by some heroic act or by being magically chosen. Women who held the sovereignty of the land were often referred to as the Goddesses (Medb, Boudicca).

Nuada

Nuada, the king and battle leader, Possessor of the Magic Sword.

Tailtu

Tailtu, daughter of the King of Spain, Magh Mor and the foster mother of Lugh. She died clearing the forest of Breg so that the fields could be used for agriculture. She is a primal earth Goddess and a patroness of the crops and herds.

Lugh

Lugh Many Skilled. This is the Celtic Mercury. His feast is Lughnasadh, a celebration of the death of his "foster mother", Tailtiu. He also has attributes of a carpenter, mason, poet, Druid, physician and a goldsmith. He can be considered the Irish God of just about everything. He was also the father of the great Irish hero, Cuchulainn.

Cailleach

Cailleach, the "Old Woman" who went through seven youthful periods. She was said to be a giantess and to have dropped many large boulders from her apron as she walked across the land. Another name for her was Bui ("yellow") as she represented Fall Equinox.

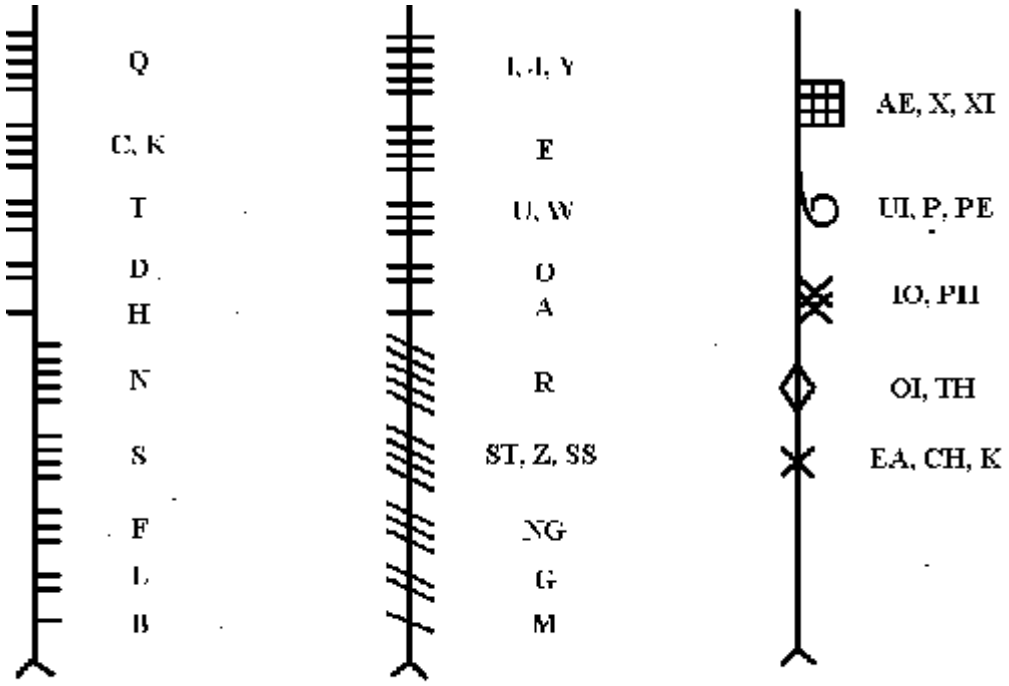
Manannan

Manannan Mac Lir, God of the Sea. He preferred to roam among the people in disguise and aid their exploits. He could change his shape at will. Despite his antics, he was an extremely powerful God and was usually associated with fertility, rebirth, weather, sailing and magic. He also had a magical ship that moved without sails and was directed by the mind.

Balor

Balor, God of Death. Balor had one eye which had the power of striking dead anyone who looked upon it.

Ogham Knowledge



TREE OGHAM

The knowledge of the Druids is based upon the Earth and its power. The knowledge of the Ogham is tree knowledge applied as symbols in the use of Magic and Divination.They carried the history, the culture and the geneologies of the clan in their memories. To aid themselves in remembering this multitude of information, Ogham were used, each Ogham being associated by its beginning sounds and colours with the item to be remembered. This is similar to the use of alliteration in today's writings. This practice led to and developed an entire series of different types of Ogham. Each Ogham is listed by its ancient Gaelic name, then its modern Irish name and then its Welsh counterpart.

B

Beth Beith Bedw Birch - The White Tree of Purification, protection against harm, both physical and spiritual. Deal with/clear away the bad things of life. A new begining. 24 December-20 January. White.

L

Luis Caorthann Criafol Rowan - Tree of Life Protection against psychical attack. Develop powers of protection and foretelling. 21 January-17 February. Liath (grey). (also luisne or "red glare").

F

Fearn Fearno'g Gwernen Alder - "The Red Man", used in fires to make swords. Frees the Earth from water. Used in building foundations because of this fire aspect. Protection in conflicts. Freedom from binding magic. 18 March-14 April. Crimson or blood red.

S

Saille Saileach Helgen White Willow or Sally Tree - The growth of lunar power and water. Linking and harmonizing. It's power is greatest at night unless the Moon is visible during the day. Tied to the Moon phases. Protection against diseases.15 April-12 May. Sodaith (bright).

N

Nuin Fuinnseog Onnen The Black Ash - The Tree of Rebirth, links the world of spirit to the physical. The passage way between the inner world and the outer realms. The keys to the future but only in time. 18 February-17 March. Necht or clear in colour.

H

Huath Sceach gheal Ysbyddaden - The Hawthorn or Whitethorn, The May Tree. The name means "terrible", referring to the destroying aspect of the Goddess. Unlucky (especially to cut or bring the blossoms in the house). Rags are tied to its branches as offerings. Protection against all deseases. 13 May-9 June. Purple (For the Underworld).

D

Duir Dair Derwen Oak - The King of Trees, The Oak King. Magical strength.The doorway to inner knowledge.The ability to see the invisible or be invisible.The ability to bar or open the ways.10 June-7 July. Black. Planted in Sacred Groves by the Druids.

T

Tinne Cuileann Celyn Holly - "Fire", The Holly King. Balanced Strength and Power.Unification, Fatherhood, Rebirth. Fire, strength, boldness.Temen (grey-green).

C

Coll Coll Collen Hazel - "By the Power of Three Times Three", used as Magic Shield in warfare. Nut-Brown.

M

Muin Muine Vine - "The Vernal Equinox", "The First Harvest". 2 September- 29 September. Mbracht (variegated). The magical ability to roam widely and to gather. Assimilation leading to inner development.

G

Gort Eadhne'an Eiddew Ivy - "The Second Harvest". 30 September - 27 October. Gorm (blue). Changes necessary for growth. All things are tied to the Earth. Transformation by being rooted in the Earth.

NG

Ngetal Giolcach Cawnen Reed - "The Tree of Scribes", used to make pens, Welsh paper, thatching, mats, baskets. Preserver of Knowledge, Maintainer of Order. 28 October - 24 November. Nglas (glass green or yellowish-green).

ST

Straif Drai'on Draenenwen Blackthorn - "Tree of Punishment and Strife". Power in Visible and Invisible Worlds. Used to overcome resistance to one's will. Sorcha (bright coloured) or purple-black.

R

Ruis Trom Ysgaw Elder - Rescue of a violent attack, a blow. Irish witches rode elder sticks instead of brooms. Three fold aspects of Time, Existence, Goddess. Ogham of Timelessness or unity of all time. Rocnat (roebuck red).

Celtic Sagas

Like all the ancient peoples the Celts made up many legends about their gods and heroes. The chroniclers and writers translated the Celtic legends into Modern English and called them the "Celtic Sagas". The heroes of the sagas and their adventures were imaginary. However, they give an idea of the Celts' way of life, their occupations, tools, weapons, customs and religion. The Roman books tell us about the Celts of southeastern Britain. The Romans knew very little about the Celts who lived in Wales and the Northern Celts who lived in Scotland and in Ireland. That is why Celtic mythology is a valuable source of information about the early inhabitants of the British Isles.

The greatest hero of the Celtic heroic sagas was **Cuchulainn**. He lived in Ireland which was divided among several tribes. The tribes that lived in Ulster were ruled by the legendary King Conchobar. Many warriors gathered round the King of Ulster and there was not one among them who was not a hero. Their exploits were those of giants. With one stroke of their favourite swords they beheaded hills for sport. When they sat down to meat, they devoured the whole oxen. The gods themselves could hardly do better than the heroes of Ulster. But Cuchulainn was the greatest champion of them all. He was a demigod. When he was at the zenith of his strength, no one could look him in the face without blinking, while the heat of his body melted the snow round him even thirty feet away. He turned red and hissed as he dipped his body into the sea. Cuchulainn was invincible in battle, and his life was a series of wonderful exploits. While still a child, Cuchulainn's actions were already superhuman. Having overcome many difficulties, he reached a far-away island in the east of Scotland to become the pupil of the woman warrior Scathach. She taught him all her war-craft. She also taught him how to use the terrible spear that no one else could use. No living man could overcome Cuchulainn now. Series of sagas describe a variety of his exploits similar to those of Greek heroes Heracles and Achilles.

"The way to castle of Scathach" (A. Fantalov 1999)

A Student's page 1.3 *(photocopiable)*

Vocabulary notes:

ash – a type of olive-like tree with long narrow leaves
birch - a type of of tree with smooth white trunk and thin branches
chariot – an open vehicle with two wheels pulled by horses
dagger – a type of knife used as a weapon
equality – the situation in which everybody has the same rights and advantages
gender – the classification of people into male and female sexes
mistletoe – an evergreen plant with white or red berries parasitizing on trees
mountain ash - a type of tree with long narrow leaves and clusters of bright orange berries
prophet – a person who claims to give people messages of gods or fortell the future
resurrection – the return of the dead to life
tin – a soft whitish metal

Compendium

The Celts (6th-3rd centuries BC)/the Gauls

Origin: the Germanic tribe, invaded the North of France (Gaul), spread across Europe, invaded Britain: the Picts absorbed with Scots and settled in Ireland, the Britons held the most of the country.
Description (by Romans): tall, blue-eyed, with long moustaches, dyed red, in war-time painted faces and legs blue.
Way of life:

- lived in tribes, ruled by chiefs who were military leaders
- lived in the villages, in round huts of wood and clay-covered wattle with thatched roofs and a fire in the middle for cooking and heating, kept large herds of cattle, horses, goats and sheep, cultivated crops in small square fields
- were aquainted with the use of copper, tin and iron (the Phoenicians who came from the coast of Syria in search of tin taught to use it to make bronze)
- made clothes of wool, woven in many colours
- in war-time wore skins and bronze helmets, were armed with metal spears, swords, daggers and axes, used chariots on the battle-field
- had gender equality, some women became warriors, queens and prophets

Beliefs: worshipped Nature, believed in many gods, different in names in various places (e.g. Danu, Mother of the Gods, Dagda, The All Father, Bile, God of Fire and the Sun, Manannan Mac Lir, God of the Sea, Ogma, God of Wisdom and Speech, Brighid, Goddess of Poets) and nameless spirits, sacrified animals and human beings, believed in life after death and resurrection in a new body (dead man – butterfly – elf – new life), holly symbols: oak-tree, mistletoe

Druidism

The druids lived near oak-tree groves and were believed to have magic power and fortell future, acted as prophets, chiefmen's advisors, teachers, doctors, learned Greek letters, basic astronomy, physiology.
Celtic sagas: legends about gods and heroes, passed down by generations and written down in the Middle Ages, give an idea of the Celt's way of life, occupations, tools, weapons, customs, religion. Main character is Cuchulainn, a demigod, pupil of woman-warrior Scathach.
Alphabet: *Ogham/ Betluisnuin* (birch, mountain ash, ash) – by names of trees, 34 letters in the form of short bars or arrows on dividing line (on stones or sticks).
Celtic words: geographical names, e.g. Avon (river), Derwent (clear water), the Downs (open highlands).

Comprehension check:

1) Describe the occupations of the Celts, their arms, social system.
2) The meaning of the name "Briton" is uncertain; most probably it is derived from: - a Celtic word meaning *painted*, - a Phoenician word meaning *tin*, - a Celtic word meaning *clothed*. What facts explain these possible meanings?
3) Prove that the Celts were at a higher stage of social development than the Iberians.
4) How was a tribe governed?
5) What conclusion do the Celtic sagas allow us to draw about the main occupation of the Celts and wars among tribes?
6) Dwell on the role of druids and religious beliefs of the Celts.
7) What do we know about the first Celtic alphabet? Name some Celtic words used in Modern English.

Samhain marks one of the two great doorways of the Celtic year, for the Celts divided the year into two seasons: the light and the dark, at Beltane on May 1st and Samhain on November 1st. Some believe that Samhain was more important festival, marking the beginning of the whole new cycle, just as the Celtic day began at night. The most magical time of this festival is November Eve, the night of October 31, known today, of course, as Halloween.

Samhain (Scots Gaelic: *Samhuinn*) literally means "summer's end". With the rise of Christianity, Samhain was changed to Hallowmas, or All Saints' Day, to commemorate the souls of the blessed dead who had been canonized that year, so the night before became popularly known as Halloween, All Hallows Eve, or Hollantide. November 2nd became All Souls Day, when prayers were to be offered to the souls of all who had departed and those who were waiting in Purgatory for entry into Heaven. Throughout the centuries, pagan and Christian beliefs intertwine in a mixture of celebrations from October 31st through November 5th.

In the country year, Samhain marked the first day of winter, when the herders led the cattle and sheep down from their summer hillside pastures to the shelter of stable and byre. The hay that would feed them during the winter must be stored in sturdy thatched ricks, tied down securely against storms. Those destined for the table were slaughtered, after being ritually devoted to the gods in pagan times. All the harvest must be gathered in - barley, oats, wheat, turnips, and apples - for come November, the fairies would blast every growing plant with their breath, blighting any nuts and berries remaining on the hedgerows. Wood for winter fires was stacked high by the hearth. It was a joyous time of family reunion, when all members of the household worked together baking, salting meat, and making preserves for the winter feasts to come. The endless horizons of summer gave way to a warm, dim and often smoky room; the symphony of summer sounds was replaced by a counterpoint of voices, young and old, human and animal.

At all the turning points of the Celtic year, the gods drew near to Earth at Samhain, so many sacrifices and gifts were offered up in thanksgiving for the harvest. Personal prayers in the form of objects symbolizing the wishes of supplicants or ailments to be healed were cast into the fire, and at the end of the ceremonies, brands were lit from the great fire to re-kindle all the home fires of the tribe. As they received the flame that marked this time of beginning, people surely felt a sense of the kindling of new dreams, projects and hopes for the year to come.

The Samhain fires continued to blaze down the centuries. In the 1860s the Halloween bonfires were still so popular in Scotland that one traveller reported seeing thirty fires lighting up the hillsides all on one night, each surrounded by rings of dancing figures, a practice which

continued up to the first World War. Young people and servants lit brands from the fire and ran around the fields and hedges of house and farm, while community leaders surrounded parish boundaries with a magic circle of light. Afterwards, ashes from the fires were sprinkled over the fields to protect them during the winter months, and, of course, they also improved the soil. The bonfire provided an island of light within the oncoming tide of winter darkness, keeping away cold, discomfort, and evil spirits long before electricity illumined their nights. When the last flame sank down, it was time to run as fast as you could for home, raising the cry, "The black sow without a tail take the hindmost!"

Even today, bonfires light up the skies in many parts of the British Isles and Ireland at this season, although in many areas of Britain their significance has been co-opted by **Guy Fawkes Day**, which falls on November 5th, and commemorates an unsuccessful attempt to blow up the English Houses of Parliament in the 17th century. In one Devonshire village, the extraordinary sight of both men and women running through the streets with blazing tar barrels on their backs can still be seen. Whatever the reason, there will probably always be a human need to make fires against the winter's dark.

Divination at Halloween

Samhain was a significant time for divination, perhaps even more so than May or Midsummer's Eve, because this was the chief of the three Spirit Nights. Divination customs and games frequently featured apples and nuts from the recent harvest, and candles played an important part in adding atmosphere to the mysteries. In Scotland, a child born at Samhain was said to be gifted with *an da shealladh,* commonly known as "second sight," or clairvoyance.

Apple Magic

At the heart of the Celtic Otherworld grows an apple tree whose fruit has magical properties. Old sagas tell of heroes crossing the western sea to find this wondrous country, known in Ireland as Emhain Abhlach, *(Evan Avlach)* and in Britain, Avalon. At Samhain, the apple harvest is in, and old hearthside games, such as apple-bobbing, called apple-dookin' in Scotland, reflect the journey across water to obtain the magic apple.

Dookin' for Apples

Place a large tub, preferably wooden, on the floor, and half fill it with water. Place there plenty of apples, and have one person stir them around with a long wooden spoon or rod of hazel, ash or any other sacred tree.

Each player takes their turn kneeling on the floor, trying to capture the apples with their teeth as they go bobbing around. Each gets three tries before the next person has a go. Best to wear old clothes for this one, and have a roaring fire nearby so you can dry off while eating your prize! If you do manage to capture an apple, you might want to keep it for a divination ritual, such as the one below.

The Apple and the Mirror

Before the stroke of midnight, sit in front of a mirror in a room lit only by one candle or the

moon. Go into the silence, and ask a question. Cut the apple into nine pieces. With your back to the mirror, eat eight of the pieces, then throw the ninth over your left shoulder. Turn your head to look over the same shoulder, and you will see an image or a symbol in the mirror that will tell you your answer. (When you look in the mirror, let your focus go "soft," and allow the patterns made by the moon or candlelight and shadows to suggest forms, symbols and other dreamlike images that speak to your intuition.)

Dreaming Stones

Go to a boundary stream and with closed eyes, take from the water three stones between middle finger and thumb, saying these words as each is gathered:

I will lift the stone
As Mary lifted it for her Son,
For substance, virtue, and strength;
May this stone be in my hand
Till I reach my journey's end.

Carry them home carefully and place them under your pillow. That night, ask for a dream that will give you guidance or a solution to a problem, and the stones will bring it for you.

CHAPTER 2

ROMAN BRITAIN

“Veni, vidi, vici” **Julius Caesar**

The Roman Conquest

The name “Britain” comes from the word *“Pretani”*, the Greco-Roman word for the inhabitants of Britain. The Romans mispronounced the word and called it “Britannia”. By some sources, though, the Romans tried to persuade the Celts in their Greek origin and created a myth that the land of Britain had been named after the Trojan warrior Brutus.

BC

55 - **Julius Caesar**'s first invasion of Britain. The Celts used cattle to pull their ploughs and this meant that richer, heavier land could be farmed. Under the Celts Britain had become an important food producer because of its mild climate. It now exported corn and animals, as well as hunting dogs and slaves, to the European mainland. The Romans could make use of British food for their own army fighting the Gauls, who inhabited the territory of present-day France. Moreover, the Britons were in close relations with the Gauls and supported them in their struggle. **Julius Caesar** was the first to discover it. He landed on the island and tried to conquer the Britons but soon withdrew as the local opposition was strong. The Britons attacked the Romans on chariots and on foot and the better trained Romans could not subdue them.

54 - Julius Caesar's second invasion of Britain. Together with 2 legions of 25,000 men Caesar penetrated to where London now stands and defeated the Celtic tribesmen. After the agreement with the Celtic chiefs on a tribute, Caesar went back to Gaul to complete his conquest on the continent. Caesar's first two expeditions to Britain were only exploratory in nature, and were never intended to absorb Britain into the Roman sphere at that time. Later he described the Britons in his “Commentaries on the Gallic War”.

54 BC-43 AD - Roman influence managed to increase in Britain during this time, even though Roman troops were absent, as a direct result of trade and other interaction with the continent.

AD

43 – Roman Emperor **Claudius** sent the army to Britain. The Romans landed at Richborough (Kent) for a **full-scale invasion** of the island. They established a Romano-British culture from the River Humber to the River Severn. The total Roman army in Britain was about 40,000 men.

61 - **Boudicca** (Boadicea), queen of the Iceni, led uprising against the Roman invaders, destroyed Londinium and some other towns but was defeated and killed by the Roman governor.

63 - **Joseph of Arimathea** came to Glastonbury on the first Christian mission to Britain.

c.75-77 - The Roman conquest of Britain is complete, as Wales is finally subdued; **Julius Agricola** is an imperial governor (till 84).

122 - Construction of **Hadrian's Wall** ordered along the northern frontier from the Tyne to the Solway Firth, for the purpose of hindering intrusions of the aggressive tribes there into Britannia.

209 - **St. Alban**, first British martyr, was killed for his faith in one of the few persecutions of Christians.

303 - **Diocletian** orders a general persecution of the Christians.

306 - **Constantine** (later to be known as "the Great") was proclaimed Emperor at York.

311 - Persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire ends.

312 - Constantine realizes Christian God may be a powerful ally and decides to attempt to co-opt him for his own purposes.

313 - Edict of Toleration proclaimed at Milan, in which Christianity is made legal throughout the empire.

324 - Constantine finally achieves full control over an undivided empire. He was a skillful politician who is popularly believed to have made Christianity the official religion of the empire because of his personal convictions. He re-located the imperial headquarters to Byzantium, whose name he then changed to Constantinople.

Despite his outward enthusiasm for Christianity and its powerful God, he didn't close many pagan temples during his reign. He did, however, deprive them of their former wealth, which was then shifted to various Christian churches. Early Christianity had no official hierarchies and functioned best as a series of small church groups caring for their own members while spreading the religion in their local areas.

337 - Constantine received "Christian" baptism on his death bed. Joint rule of Constantine's three sons: Constantine II (to 340); Constans (to 350); Constantius (to 361).

360's - Series of attacks on Britain from the north by the Picts and the Scots, requiring the intervention of Roman generals leading special legions.

369 - Roman general Theodosius drives the Picts and Scots out of Roman Britain.

383 - Magnus Maximus, a Spaniard, was proclaimed Emperor in Britain by the island Roman garrison. With an army of British volunteers, he quickly conquered Gaul, Spain and Italy.

388 - Maximus occupied Rome itself. Theodosius, the eastern Emperor, defeated him in battle

and beheaded him in July, 388, with many of the remnant of Maximus' troops settling in Armorica.

395 - Theodosius, the last emperor to rule an undivided empire, died, leaving his one son, Arcadius, emperor in the East and his other son, the young Honorius, emperor in the West. At this point the office of Roman Emperor changed from a position of absolute power to one of being merely a head of state.

406 - In early January, 406, a combined barbarian force (Suevi, Alans, Vandals & Burgundians) swept into central Gaul, severing contact between Rome and Britain. In autumn 406, the remaining Roman army in Britain decided to mutiny. One Marcus was proclaimed emperor in Britain, but was immediately assassinated.

407 - In place of the assassinated Marcus **Constantine III** was hailed as the new emperor by Roman garrison in Britain. He proceeded to follow the example of Magnus Maximus by withdrawing the remaining Roman legion, the Second Augusta, and crossing over into Gaul to rally support for his cause. Constantine's departure could be what was called "the end of the Roman Empire in Britain".

408 - With Roman legions withdrawn, Britain endures devastating attacks by the Picts, Scots and Saxons.

Roman Empire

Two thousand years ago, the world was ruled by Rome. From England to Africa and from Syria to Spain, one in every four people on earth lived and died under Roman law. While the Celts were still living in tribes, the Romans were the most powerful people in the world. In the first century BC, Rome was a republic. Power lay in the hands of the Senate, elected by Roman citizens. But the senators were fighting for power between themselves. Order had given way to anarchy and only might was right. Julius Caesar was convinced something had to change. Rising through the political ranks, he eventually became governor of Gaul. This gave him the chance to make lots of money, while his abilities as a general brought him power and respect.
By 50 BC, Caesar had made many powerful enemies. With his life under threat, he invaded Italy. Over the next few years, he defeated his enemies and seized power for himself. But his rule would be brief. After just two years, he was murdered by senators who were fed up with his autocratic style. Rome was again threatened with chaos.

Augustus, Caesar's nephew and heir, was an ambitious man from an average family. This was Augustus' big chance. With his ally, Marc Antony, he fought and killed Caesar's old enemies. Victorious, he divided the spoils: Augustus took Rome and Antony got Egypt. The peace did not last long. Antony was quickly seduced by Egypt's queen, Cleopatra. Augustus suspected that the two wanted Rome for themselves. Before they could threaten him, Augustus attacked. The Battle of Actium was a huge victory. Around three-quarters of the Egyptian fleet were destroyed and both Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide before they could be captured. In Rome, Augustus was a hero. In 31 BC, he became Rome's first emperor. The transformation from republic to empire was complete.

Roman society differed greatly from that of the Celts. It was a slave society divided into antagonistic classes, slaves and slave owners. Slavery had a long history in the ancient world and was practiced in Ancient Egypt and Greece, as well as Rome. Most slaves during the Roman Empire were foreigners and, unlike in modern times, Roman slavery was not based on race.

Slaves in Rome might include prisoners of war, sailors captured and sold by pirates, or slaves bought outside Roman territory. All slaves and their families were the property of their owners, who could sell or rent them out at any time. Their lives were harsh. Slaves were often whipped, branded or cruelly mistreated. Their owners could also kill them for any reason, and would face no punishment. Slaves were sold at the slave-markets and were so cheap that all the Romans except the poorest had one or more. Slaves worked everywhere – in private households, in mines and factories, and on farms. They also worked for city governments on engineering projects such as roads, aqueducts and buildings. As a result, they merged easily into the population. In fact, slaves looked so similar to Roman citizens that the Senate once considered a plan to make them wear special clothing so that they could be identified at a glance. The idea was rejected because the Senate feared that, if slaves saw how many of them were working in Rome, they might be tempted to join forces and rebel. Roman owners freed their slaves in considerable numbers: some freed them outright, while others allowed them to buy their own freedom. The prospect of possible freedom encouraged most slaves to be obedient and hard working. Once freed, former slaves could work in the same jobs as plebeians (poor freemen) – as craftsmen, midwives or traders. Some even became wealthy.

The social structure of Ancient Rome was based on heredity, property, wealth, citizenship and freedom. It was also based around men: women were defined by the social status of their fathers or husbands. Women were expected to look after the houses and very few had any real independence. The boundaries between the different classes were strict and legally enforced: members of different classes even dressed differently. Only the emperor was allowed to wear a purple toga, while senators could wear a white toga with the broad purple stripe along the edge.

Although the classes were strictly defined, there was a lot of interaction. Slaves and some freemen worked in the homes of the upper classes, like the senators and patricians. Soldiers also mixed with their officers.

Roman society also involved a system of patronage. Members of the upper classes – the patroni – offered protection to plebeians, who became their "clients." Patronage might consist of money, food, or legal help. Traditionally, any freed slaves became the clients of their former owner. In return, patroni received respect and political favours. During the empire, clients were required to offer daily greetings to their patroni, and the number of these greeters helped determine social status. On the frontiers of the empire, Roman generals served as patroni for the people they conquered, while Roman provinces or cities often sought out an influential senator to act as patroni and oversee their interests in Rome.

Roman Mode of Life

When the Romans arrived in Britain in 43AD, they took over a country that was disorganised, fragmented, and divided into sections, each occupied by a different race of people. There was no central administrative centre, no road network, no law or order. There wasn't even a single currency in use throughout the land. It was clear that there had to be a massive rebuilding programme from the roots up. Not just in building terms, but also in educating the natives to accept a new way of life.

As the Romans moved further inland, great tracts of forest were cleared, swamps were drained, the effective roads and grand, impressive buildings were built, the strategic centres were established, both civil and military in the form of the **Roman town**. Within 17 years of the invasion, they had several major towns in place, connected by the famous Roman roads. The three largest we now know as London, Colchester and St. Albans. Even though towns were built across the country, they all had several factors in common both physical and structural. Broadly,

there were three different kinds of town in Roman Britain, the *coloniae*, towns peopled by Roman settlers, the *municipia*, large cities in which the whole population was given Roman citizenship and the *civitas*, which included the old Celtic tribal capitals, through which the Romans administered the Celtic population in the countryside.

The town would have two main roads. One heading North-South and the other East-West. The directions were not always spot on, they may have been several degrees either way. But the general direction was constant. At the point where these roads met there was the town centre and it was here that the administrative centre, the forum and the market could be found. From here the town would radiate outwards with new roads being built as needed. The roads would be at right angles to each other and parallel with one of the two main roads. In the central portion of the town there would be the main businesses, with the homes and dwellings of the citizens further towards the edges of the town.

Even in Roman times, traffic congestion was a major problem with merchants arriving with goods for the shops, travellers passing through, service workers moving to their next appointment and pedestrians going about their business. In the larger towns this congestion was so bad that the council had to place traffic controllers at main junctions. This was normally a Roman soldier who had been seconded to civil duties.

Depending on their use and importance to the community, the roads were between 16 to 26ft (5m to 8m) wide and constructed with a surface of several layers of stones, lime, mortar and gravel which was cambered to allow for rainwater drainage. Due to the heavy use, the roads needed to be repaired regularly and they were completely relaid every 25 years. The constant resurfacing work meant that the road surface increased in height over the years, and many roadside shops eventually had entrances below road level. Stone bridges across the rivers were built so that the legions might march quickly to any part of the country.

At the heart of the town there were the two most important buildings, the Basilica and the Forum, both of which stood on the main crossroads.

The Basilica was a great hall with offices and chambers to the rear. The hall, about 30ft (9m) was divided by two rows of columns into a nave and two aisles. The Basilica was the town hall and local court where minor cases and disputes were settled. Jail was unknown in Roman Britain, since the Romans believed that locking someone away would deprive the community of a worker. The remainder of the building was taken by offices dealing with local government affairs.

Shopping malls are not as new as may be assumed. They existed in Roman times in the larger towns as vast halls filled with shops leased from the local council. Each hall was designed to be filled with shops selling one type of product. This ensured competition and value for the customer. One hall would contain meat products, another fruit and vegetables, another clothing, and so on.

Every Roman town had a drainage system and a good supply of pure water. The houses were built of stone, plastered and painted, with roofs made of large red tiles. The most luxurious houses contained many rooms with mosaic floors and central heating.

The social centre of every Roman town was the great building of the baths. This building usually occupied one side of the main square and contained, in addition to the cold and hot baths, the law courts, the municipal offices, the school building and the gymnasium. The Romans used baths two or three times a day. After the bath the young Romans went into the large high gymnasium

to practise boxing, wrestling and all kinds of gymnastics. At the same time, the Roman gymnasium was much more than just a place for physical exercise. Many business operations were done in it. People could also buy food and drinks in the baths. In fact, a Roman citizen could go to the baths in the morning and spend the whole busy day there, without wasting a moment.

The Romans left about twenty large towns of about 5,000 inhabitants and almost a hundred smaller ones. London with the population of about 20,000 people became a capital and a very important trading centre of northern Europe.

Outside the towns, the biggest change during the Roman invasion was the growth of large farms, called **"villas"**. These belonged to the richer Britons. Each villa had many workers. The villas were usually close to the towns so that the crops could be sold easily. The province of Britain became one of the granaries of the Roman Empire. A constant trade was carried on with other parts of the empire. The chief exports were corn, lead, tin and building tiles. Britain imported luxury goods, especially fine pottery and metalware.

Together with a high civilization the Romans brought exploitation to the British Isles. The free Celts were not turned into slaves but they had to pay heavy taxes to the conquerors and were made to work for them. Among the Celts inequality began to grow – the tribal chiefs and nobility became richer than the other members of tribe. Those who submitted to Romans were appointed to rule their people as before, but now they acted in the name of the Roman Emperor. The noble Celts adopted the mode of life of their conquerors. They lived in rich houses and dressed as Romans. They spoke Latin, the language of the Romans.

Family Life

The average Roman family consisted of father, mother, children, married sons, their families, and slaves. If you didn't get married by the age of 15-16, you were punished. The person who decided who his children would marry was the head of the house, the father (PATERFAMILIAS). The family was very important to the Romans. Women were under control of their husbands but controlled how the house was run and were known as MATERFAMILIAS.

Roman Schools

Rome didn't have any public schools. Most children went to private school or studied at home.Their subjects were Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. In many homes, the slaves taught the children. Before the age of fourteen, they studied Latin and Greek. Most private schools had only one room and only one class. There were about twelve pupils.

The Romans had a kind of paper made from reeds, and wrote on animal skins, but this was too expensive for children to write on. Schoolboys would write on wax tablets with a pointed stick called a stylus. They then rubbed the wax smooth and started again. A school would only have a few books. Books had to be written by hand. They were usually made from one long piece of paper rolled around a stick. This was called a scroll.

Clothes

Men wore a knee-length **tunic** (chitton), either sleeveless or short-sleeved. Roman men wore a cloak over their tunic, which was like a wide shawl that was draped over the shoulder and carefully wrapped around the body. Important Romans dressed in a long robe called a **toga**. Only men who were Roman citizens could wear a toga. They wore it when they wanted to look smart, like wearing a suit today. The toga was made from white wool or white Egyptian linen. It was square or rectangular in shape and was worn draped around the body. A tunic was always worn under a toga. Colours were used for special occasions or to show peoples rank. Only the Emperor was allowed to wear a purple toga. Purple dye was very expensive and so by wearing the colour, an Emperor would be showing off how important he was.

Women wore a longer tunic which was often knee-length. Over this the women wore a **stola** which was a full length from neck to ankle, high-waisted and fastened at the shoulders with clasps.

Rich women wore long tunics made from expensive cotton or silk. They also wore lots of jewellery and make-up, strong scent and elaborate hairstyles. They had specially trained slaves to help them dress, arrange their hair and put make up on their faces.

Boys wore a tunic down to their knees and a cloak if it was cold. Rich boys wore a toga which had a purple border. Girls wore a tunic with a woolen belt tied around their waists. Children wore a special charm around their neck called a bulla. It was given to them when they were a few days old.

Roman Food

The rich Ancient Romans enjoyed their food. Expensive food was an obvious way of showing off your wealth to others. If you hosted a banquet at your villa to which other Roman worthies had been invited, it had to go well if your social standing was to be maintained - hence why elaborate and expensive foods (roast peacock and ostriches and the like) would be provided.

Breakfast (the Romans called this *jentaculum*) was taken in the master's bedroom and usually consisted of a slice of bread or a wheat pancake eaten with dates and honey. Wine was also

drunk. Lunch (the Romans called this *prandium*) was eaten at about 11.00 a.m. and consisted of a light meal of bread, cheese and possibly some meat. In many senses, everything was geared up towards the main meal of the day - *cena*. This was eaten in the late afternoon or early evening. If the master of the house had no guests, cena might take about one hour. If he did have guests, then this meal might take as long as four hours. A light supper was usually eaten just before the Romans went to bed, consisting of bread and fruit. The Romans were usually not big meat eaters and a lot of their normal meals involved vegetables, herbs and spices together with a wheat meal that looked like porridge.

However, for a rich man's banquet anything exotic that could be purchased was served. Many meals were served with sauces. The Romans seemed to be particularly fond of sauces as it gave a cook the opportunity to make a dish seem a little bit more exciting that it may have been without the sauce. One particular favourite was *garum* which was made by mixing up fish waste with salt water and leaving it for several weeks until it was ready for use. Sauces made from vinegar, honey, pepper, herbs and spices were also popular. The Romans seemed to be very keen on sweet food and drink. One of the favoured drinks was called *mulsum* which was a mixture of boiled wine and honey.

One sign that a meal or a banquet had gone down well was if guests asked for bags to take home dishes that they had enjoyed. This in particular pleased a master as it showed to everyone who was there that at least some of the courses on offer had been well received.

Most food was either boiled or fried in olive oil. Very few homes needed an oven as so little food was roasted.

Roman receipes:
Baked dormice: "Stuff the dormice with minced pork or the meat of other dormice chopped up with herbs, pepper and pine nuts. Sew up the dormice and cook in a small oven"

A sweet: "Take the crusts from a white loaf and break the bread into largish pieces. Soak them in milk. Fry them in hot oil or fat. Pour honey over them and serve."

The writer Petronius wrote about his eating experiences in around AD 60: *"After a generous rubdown with oil, we put on dinner clothes. We were taken into the next room where we found three couches drawn up and a table, very luxuriously laid out, awaiting us. We were invited to take our seats. Immediately, Egyptian slaves came in and poured ice water over our hands. The starters were served. On a large tray stood a donkey made of bronze. On its back were two baskets, one holding green olives, and the other black. On either side were dormice, dipped in honey and rolled in poppy seed. Nearby, on a silver grill, piping hot, lay small sausages. As for wine, we were fairly swimming in it."*

Roman Gods and Religion

Religion was an important part of Roman daily life. The Romans believed in many different gods and goddesses. If the gods were angry, terrible things could happen. To keep the gods happy, animals such as bulls, sheep and pigs were sacrificed as offerings.

People worshipped the gods in temples where they made sacrifices of animals and precious things. The Romans believed that blood sacrifices were the best way to communicate with the gods. Sometimes a temple was built to only worship one of the gods. A temple to all gods was known as a ***pantheon***. Many people had shrines in their houses with a figure of their favourite god. They believed it was important to keep the gods happy with gifts or statues.

The Romans thought that their gods were all part of a family and people told stories or myths about them. The most important gods to the Romans were the Greek gods from Mount Olympus. The Greek gods were given Roman names.

Their gods included:

Jupiter: God of the Sky, he was the most important god.

Juno: Jupiter's wife, who looked after women.

Neptune: Jupiter's brother, who was the God of the Sea.

Mars: God of War. Soldiers believed that Mars decided who would win, who would lose and who would die in battle. They prayed to him to ask him to keep them safe from harm and to allow them to win in battle.

Venus: Goddess of Love, who was the lover of Mars.

Cupid: God of Love.

Apollo: God of the Sun.

Pluto: God of the Death.

Saturn: God of Time.

Janus: God of Doors.

The Romans believed that your spirit (soul) went to the underworld when you died. To get there the dead needed to cross the river Styx. The dead person's family would give them a coin to pay the ferryman, Charon.

The Romans celebrated special days for gods by holding festivals, which included processions and parties. There were thirty-two Roman religious festivals in January alone. These festivals included horse racing in honour of Mars.

Roman Names in English

Though the relics of Roman occupation in Britain were completely destroyed, today they can be seen in a number of names, which were preserved in the Englih language. These names can be divided into two distinct groups – historical and poetic names and names of the places.

The names of the *first group* were used by the Romans in eveyday speech, with the course of time they lost their importance and got new shadows of meaning. To this group belong:

Albion – a word used to refer to England in poetic context. The Romans took this name from the Greek language and said that it meant “white”, because the first view for most visitors crossing the Channel was the white cliffs of Dover.

Britannia – the name used by the Romans to refer to the occupied territory. Later this name was given to the female embodiment of Britain, who is always shown wearing a helmet and holding a trident – a symbol of the sea power.

Briton – the name given to the Celtic tribe, who lived in England before and after the Roman occupation. Today this world is used in official contexts to describe a citizen of Great Britain.

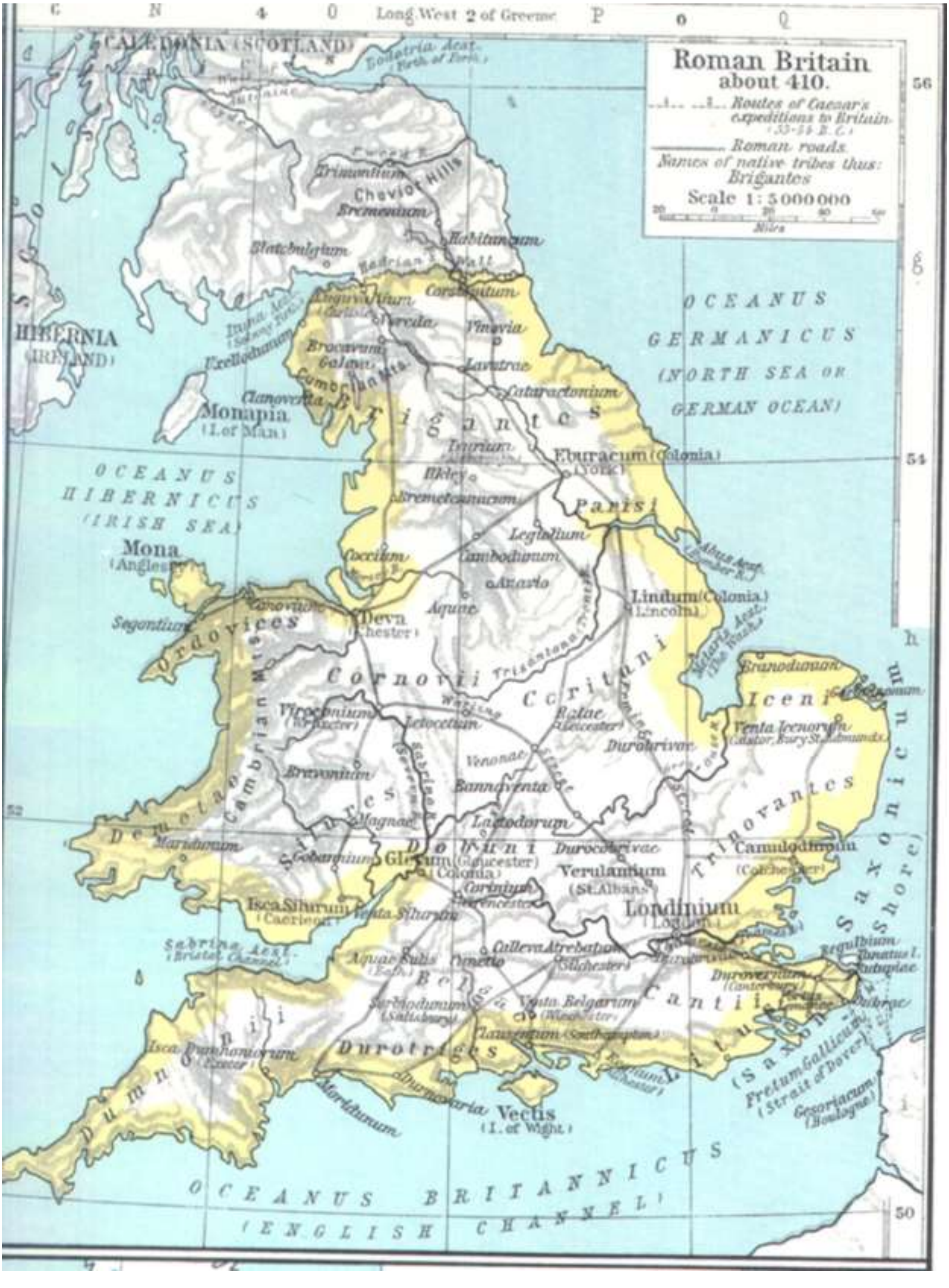
Caledonia – the Roman name of Scotland.

Cambria - the Roman name of Wales.

Hibernia - the Roman name of Ireland.

Today these names are often used in scholarly classifications and for the names of organisations.

The names of the *second group* were used by the Romans to call towns and roads. The Roman towns were strongly fortified and were called *castra* which means "camps". This word can be recognized in various forms of such names as Chester, Manchester, Leicester, Lancaster. The town-name Lincoln comes from the Latin word *colonia* which means a "colony"; and Colchester from both *colonia* and *castra*. The words which Romans left in the language of Britain as common names are for the most part the names of the things which they taught the Celts. For example, the word **street** came from the Latin *strata* which means "road", **port** from the Latin *portus*, **wall** from *vallum*.


Roman Britain
about 410.
Routes of Caesar's expeditions to Britain (55-54 B.C.)
Roman roads.
Names of native tribes thus: Brigantes
Scale 1: 5000000
Long. West 2 of Greenw.
OCEANUS GERMANICUS
(NORTH SEA OR GERMAN OCEAN)
OCEANUS HIBERNICUS
(IRISH SEA)
OCEANUS BRITANNICUS
(ENGLISH CHANNEL)
HIBERNIA
(IRELAND)
Monapia
(I. of Man)
Mona
Eburacum (Colonia)
(York)
Lindum (Colonia)
(Lincoln)
Deva
(Chester)
Londinium
Verulamium
(St. Albans)
Camulodunum
Vectis
(I. of Wight)
Brigantes
Parisi
Iceni
Coritani
Cornovii
Ordovices
Trinovantes
Cantii
Durotriges
Dumnonii
Demetae
Silures
Belgae
Dobuni
Cheviot Hills
Hadrian's Wall
Cambrian Mts.
Segontium
Isca Silurum
(Caerleon)
Aquae Sulis
Isca Dumnoniorum
Saxon Shore
Gesoriacum
(Boulogne)

A Student's page 2 *(photocopiable)*

Vocabulary notes:

overseer - a person watching the slaves to do their work properly

peasant – a person owning or renting a field and working on it to grow some food

lime - a white substance used in cement, *mortar* - a mixture of cement, sand and water, *gravel* – very small stones, *plaster* – a soft mixture of sand, lime and water, hard when dry, *tiles* – flat, squre objects arrange in rows to cover roofs

drainage system – a system used for making any liquid (e.g dirty water, wastes) flow away

Compendium

The Roman Empire

A slave society divided into classes:

- Slave-owners made up a minority of the population owning land, tools, buildings and slaves, supplied slaves with dwellings, clothing, food appropriating the results of their labour
- Slaves, mostly prisoners of wars, the property of the slave-owners, could be bought, sold and exchanged,engaged chiefly in agriculture
- Freemen: noblemen, soldiers, priests, overseers, citizens, peasants

Governed by the Senate and the Emperors

The Romans conquered all the countries around the Mediterranean Sea, Gaul was the last to be conquered

The Roman Conquest of Britain

55 B.C. – Julius Caesar lands in Britain, driven off by the Celts

54 B.C. – The second invasion of the Romans

43 A.D. – The Romans begin to conquer the south of Britain

1st-5th centuries A.D. – Britain is a Roman province consisting only of the southern part of the island. Romans were unable to become masters of the whole land. Constant raids of the Picts from the North, revolts of the local population (e.g. 61- 62 A.D. led by the last Celtic queen Boudicca, burnt Londinium)

407 A.D. – The Romans leave Britain

Roman Influence in Britain

Roads, camps and walls

To defend their province the Romans stationed their legions in Britain, they had to set up many camps in the north and in the west. Straight roads of several layers of stones, lime, mortar and gravel and stone bridges across the rivers were built so that the legions might march quickly to any part of the country. The "Hadrian's Wall" guarded the province in the north (Emperor Hadrian reigned 117-138 A.D.)

Towns

- The Romans were city dwellers, built about 50 towns in Britain. The towns grew up as markets and centres of administration and trade
- The houses were built of stones, plastered, painted, with tiled roofs and central heating, rooms with mosaic floors
- The Roman towns were military stations surrounded by walls guarded by the warrors for defence
- Every town had a drainage system, a supply of pure water, market-places, shops, temples, public bathes

Mode of life

- The Romans brought slavery, had large estates worked by slaves
- The Celtic tribal chiefs who submitted were appointed to rule in the name of the Roman Emperor, the noble Celts adopted Roman clothes, the way of life, Latin language, the others had to work for the conquerors and pay taxes
- Cleared forests, drained swamps for corn-fields
- A constant trade was carried on with other parts of the empire: chief export – corn, tin, lead, tiles, imports – luxury goods, metalware, pottery, glass

Traces in language

strata – street, road, *colonia* – colony (Lincoln, Colchester), *portus* – port, *castra* – camp (Lancaster, Chester), *vallum* – wall

Comprehension check:

1. How did the way of life in the Roman Empire differ from the life of the Celts in the 1st century A.D.? What were the main differences between the slave-owning system and the primitive communal social system?
2. Why did the slave-owners need a state system, an army, government bodies?
3. Give an account of the Roman invasions of Britain in the 1st century A.D. and the 1st century B.C. Compare the results.
4. By what means did the Romans secure their positions in Britain?
5. How did the Roman way of life influence the life of the Celts?
6. Describe a Roman town in Britain.
7. Give reasons for the weak influence of the Romans over Britain. Why did the Roman Empire fall?
8. What traces of Roman rule are there in Britain? Name some English words of Latin origin which reflect the rule of Rome in Britain.

Boudicca's Revolt

Boudicca (Boadicea) and Roman Britain

Boadicea is often regarded as the first British patriot. Her revolt in 60 AD struck fear into the occupying Roman forces. She was very tall. Her eyes seemed to stab you, her voice was harsh and loud. Her thick, reddish-brown hair hung down below her waist. She always wore a great golden torc around her neck, and a flowing tartan cloak, fastened with a brooch.

Trouble in Anglia. In 60 A.D. trouble arose in East Anglia. To understand what happened, you have to go back to the idea of client kingship. The **Iceni tribe**, centred in the modern Norfolk, had reached an accommodation with the Romans, keeping their own territory in exchange for not making a fuss.

Beginnings of the Revolt. The Iceni king, **Prasutagas**, decided that it would be prudent to make his will assigning half of his personal property to the Roman emperor. When he died the Roman officials decided to interpret his will as a submission to the Roman state, so they moved to appropriate all of the Iceni lands and disarm the tribe. Prasutagas's widow, **Boudicca** (or Boadicea as she is sometimes known) protested. The Romans had her flogged and her daughters were raped. This high handed treatment of an ostensible ally had predictable results. Queen Boudicca raised the Iceni and the neighbouring Trinivantes tribe in revolt against Roman rule.

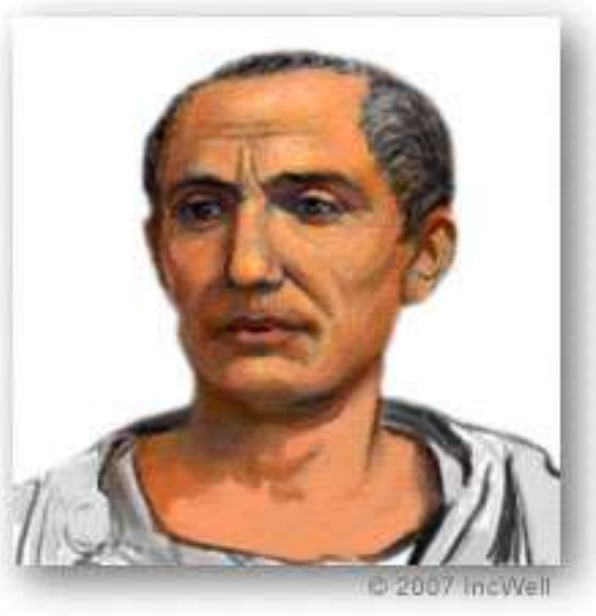
The Course of the Conflict. The Roman army was far away fighting in North Wales, when Boadicea, with 100,000 warriors, rushed into the biggest towns. The capital at Colchester was burned, as were London and Verulamium, near modern St.Alban's. Boudicca's treatment of her enemies was fierce and she must have given the Romans a terrific scare. One legion was so terrified that they refused to move against her. She was eventually brought to bay at an unknown site by a much smaller force of Roman troops. The battle turned against her when the Celts became entangled with their own camp followers and were massacred. Boudicca herself took

poison not to face capture.

Consequences of the Revolt. The upshot of the Boudicca's revolt was that Icenai territory was ravaged and much of the province was put under military rule. Colchester had never gained its previous power and the capital soon moved to rebuilt and fortified London.

Julius Caesar

Veni, vidi, vici. 'I came, I saw, I conquered.' These are the words of the man who changed the course of Greco-Roman history.



Make questions to find out the missing information.
Ask your partner and fill in the gaps.

Student A

Julius Caesar was born in Rome on 1)_____. His father Gaius Caesar died when Caesar was 16 years old, and it was his mother Aurelia, who proved to be quite influential in his life. Caesar's family was part of Rome's original aristocracy, 2)_____, although they were not rich or particularly influential. At the time of Caesar's birth, their number was small, and their status no longer provided political advantage.

To obtain distinction for himself and his family, a Roman nobleman sought election to public office. In 86 B.C., Caesar was appointed *flamen dialis* with the help of his uncle by marriage, Gaius Marius. The position was a kind of priesthood and held no power. Nevertheless, it

identified Caesar with extremist politics. Ceasar committed himself further to the radical side when he married Cornelia, daughter of Lucius Cornelius Cinna in 84 B.C. In 82 B.C., Caesar was ordered to divorce his wife by Lucius Cornelius Sulla, an enemy of the radicals. Caesar refused and left Rome 3)_____ in Asia and Cilicia. He returned in 78 B.C. when Sulla died and began his political career as a prosecuting advocate. Caesar then travelled to Rhodes to study 4)_____ and did not return to Rome until 73 B.C. During his journey to Rhodes, Caesar was captured by 5)_____. While in captivity, Caesar convinced his captors to raise his ransom, which increased his prestige. He then raised a naval force, overcame his captors, and had them crucified.

In 69 or 68 B.C., Caesar was elected *quaestor*. His wife died shortly thereafter. In a purely political maneuver, Caesar seized the opportunity to praise his uncle, Cinna and father-in-law, Marius during the funeral orations for his deceased wife. He then married Pompeia, a relative of Pompey. Caesar was elected *curule aedile* in 65 B.C., *pontifex maximus* in 63 B.C., and a *praetor* in 62 B.C. By this time, Caesar was making a name for himself as a political figure. He divorced Pompeia after a scandal.

Caesar was made governor of Farther Spain in 61 B.C. When he returned to Rome the next year, he joined forces with Crassus and Pompey and formed the first triumvirate. The alliance between Pompey and Ceasar was solidified further when Pompey married Julia, Caesar's only child.

Caesar's next step up the political ladder was to be elected consul in 59 B.C. During that year he also married Calpurnia. The following year, Caesar was appointed 6)_____. During the next 8 years, Caesar successfully conquered Gallic Gaul to the north. In 49 B.C., Caesar was instructed by the Senate to lay down his command. Roman politics had changed and Pompey was appointed sole consul in 52 B.C.. In addition, Pompey's wife Julia died in 54 B.C., breaking the family ties between Pompey and Caesar.

On January 10-11, 49 B.C., Caesar crossed 7)_____, a small river separating Gaul from Italy, signifying the start of the Roman Civil War. Pompey fled and within three months, Caesar ruled all Italy. He then took Spain and continued to pursue Pompey all the way to Egypt. In 48 B.C., Pompey was murdered by an officer of King Ptolemy. Caesar remained in Egypt throughout the winter and dallied with 8)_____ .

In 48 B.C., Caesar assumed the title of dictator. He returned to Rome for a short time in 47 B.C. but then left for Africa to crush his opponents. Caesar departed for Farther Spain in 46 B.C. to put down resistance there. In 45 B.C., Caesar returned to Rome to put his empire in order.

On March 15, 44 B.C., a day known as 9)_____, Caesar entered the Senate House. An assassination plot had been hatched by a group of 60 senators, including Gaius Cassius and Marcus Junius Brutus. As Caesar entered the Senate, he was stabbed 23 times. After Ceasar was assassinated, Rome experienced another 10)_____ of civil war.

Student B

Julius Caesar was born in 1)_____ on July 12 or 13, in the year 100 B.C.. His father Gaius Caesar died when Caesar was 16 years old, and it was 2)_____, who proved to be quite influential in his life. Caesar's family was part of Rome's original aristocracy, called patricians, although they were not rich or particularly influential. At the time of Caesar's birth, the number of patricians was small, and their status no longer provided political advantage.

To obtain distinction for himself and his family, a Roman nobleman sought election to public office. In 86 B.C., Caesar was appointed *flamen dialis* with the help of his uncle by marriage, Gaius Marius. The position was a kind of priesthood and held no power. Nevertheless, it identified Caesar with extremist politics. Ceasar committed himself further to the radical side when he married Cornelia, daughter of Lucius Cornelius Cinna in 3)_____. In 82 B.C., Caesar was ordered to divorce his wife by Lucius Cornelius Sulla, an enemy of the radicals. Caesar refused and left Rome for military service in 4)_____. He returned in 78 B.C. when Sulla died and began his political career as a prosecuting advocate. Caesar then travelled to Rhodes to study rhetoric and did not return to Rome until 73 B.C. During his journey to Rhodes, Caesar was captured by pirates. While in captivity, Caesar convinced his captors 5)_____, which increased his prestige. He then raised a naval force, overcame his captors, and had them crucified.

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On January 10-11, 49 B.C., Caesar crossed the Rubicon, a small river separating Gaul from Italy, signifying 8)_____. Pompey fled and within three months, Caesar ruled all Italy. He then took Spain and continued to pursue Pompey all the way to Egypt. In 48 B.C., Pompey was murdered by an officer of King Ptolemy. Caesar remained in Egypt throughout the winter and dallied with Queen Cleopatra.

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On March 15, 44 B.C., a day known as the Ides of March, Caesar entered the Senate House. An assassination plot had been hatched by 10)_____. As Caesar entered the Senate, he was stabbed 23 times. After Ceasar was assassinated, Rome experienced another 13 years of civil war.

A Consolidation Page 1 *(photocopiable)*

1. Sort out the words and complete the chart:

flint, nomadic, amber, copper, equality, tin, prophet, lime, overseer, peasant, plaster, skin, tribe, bronze, warrior, iron, druids, clay

Natural resources and materials	**Social system**

2. Find true and false statements.

1) The river Thames in prehistoric times was joined to the river Rhine in France.
2) The Beaker Folk could produce different cups and pots of clay.
3) Stonehenge was used as a burial place.
4) The Celts arrived at Britain from the territory of today's France and Belgium.
5) The later Celtic invaders drove the earlier comers to wilder unsettled territories.
6) The Celts lived in large tribal groups united into kingdoms.
7) The Celts learnt iron working before they began to work with bronze.

3. Match two statesments from columns A and B into a compound sentence with the conjunction "so".

A	**B**
1. The hilly districts in the north of Britain were difficult to live in	a) straight roads were built for the legions to march quickly to any part of the country
2. The Celts kept fighting against the Romans	b) the Roman influence in Britain was weaker than in other provinces
3. The main forces were settled in the south of the country	c) they built towns with splendid villas and public baths as in Rome itself
4. The civilised Romans were city dwellers	d) the Romans were unable to conquer these areas
5. The province of Britain was separated from the mainland of Europe by the Channel and the North Sea	e) the Romans needed legions to supress the Picts and the Scots

CHAPTER 3
GERMANIC RULE

ANGLO-SAXON INVASION

The Fall of Britannia

In the 3rd-4th centuries the power of the Roman Empire gradually weakened. The unproductive labour of the slaves led to the economic decline of the empire. Neither new methods of land cultivation nor new technical inventions were introduced. Slavery became an obstacle to technical progress. Poor cultivation exhausted the fields, the harvests became poorer from year to year. The end of the 4th century found the Germanic tribes invading the Western Roman Empire and the slaves were joining them by the thousand. In **407** the Roman legions were recalled from Britain to defend the central provinces of the Roman Empire from the attacks of the barbarian tribes. They did not return to Britain, and the Celts were left alone in the land. During the 5th century the Germanic tribes overrun the empire and settled in all parts of it. The fall of the Roman Empire, the largest slave owning state in the ancient world, in 410 is regarded as the end of ancient history.

The Conquest

The Romanised Celts were left to their own resources. They had foes both within and without: the Picts and Scots in Scotland and Ireland and barbaric German tribes of Europe. The Gaels of Scotland and Ireland rushed over undefended walls and left the civil districts of South Britain waste. The Britons had to take refuge in the caves after their homes had been destroyed. In 446 the Britons made a final plea for help from Rome. They wrote a letter to Rome called "*the Groans of the Britons"*, asking soldiers to come back and help them. *"The barbarians draw us to the sea",* it goes, *"the sea drives us back to the barbarians. We shall be either killed or drowned"*. Since no help was forthcoming, they turned, at least according to the confused and incomplete records of those times, to a powerful chieftain, Vortigern, who offered to bring over as mercenaries a strong Saxon war party. These men, led apparently by two **Jutish chiefs** named Hengist and Horsa, established themselves on the Isle of Thanet, an area of rich farmland off the Kentish coast. Vortigern agreed to marry Hengist's daughter Ravenna. But as the lessons of history, which are apparently never learnt, prove, the foreigners called for in order to help one of the parties in a feud inevitably conquer both allies and their enemies and seize their lands never to leave. Thus after the wedding party the Jutes killed the Britons and seized Kent. Then the settlers, calling over friends and reinforcements, demanded more and more land and generous payments until at length the quarrels between them and the Britons flared into an open war. In 477 the **Saxons** crossed modern Strait of Dover and settled on the south coast of England. In 540 the **Angles** settled to the north of the Thames. Only the northwestern territories remained Celtic. The British natives fought fiercely against the invaders and it took more than a hundred and fifty years for the Angles, Saxons and Jutes to become masters of the greater part of the land. Other

Germanic tribes conquered the Roman provinces on the continent without any serious resistance as the bulk of the population in the provinces occupied by the Romans welcomed the Germanic conquerors as their liberators. But the Celts were free at that time and their resistance was often stubborn and prolonged. The invaders, though, greatly advanced in power and tactics, and the Britons were defeated. In 577 the Germans reached the Irish Sea separating Celtic lands. In the course of the conquest many of the Celts were killed, some were taken prisoners and made slaves or had to pay tribute to the conquerors. According to Venerable Bede, the Northumbrian monk whose *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* is our chief source of knowledge for this period, the countryside and towns were alike devastated: *"None remained to bury those who had suffered a cruel death. A few wretched survivors captured in the hills were butchered wholesale, and others, desperate with hunger, came out and surrendered to the enemy for food, although they were doomed to lifelong slavery even if they escaped instant massacre. Some fled overseas in their misery; others, clinging to their homeland, eked out a wretched and fearful existence".*

Several families escaped across the Channel to the old Roman province of Armorica which eventually gave Celtic language as well as the name of Brittany to this Atlantic peninsula of France. In comparison to that *small homeland (Britania Minor),* their native land was later called **Great Britain** *(Britania Major).* Other families apparently escaped to the west of Britain where a tribal leader named Ambrosius offered shelter to the fugitives and to all those prepared to take up arms in defence of the old culture. To protect themselves from the foreign marauders, and their cattle from raids by other British tribes, they built a series of earthworks, among them the Wansdyke, a massive ridge that stretches fifty miles in what is now Berkshire; and, behind this earthwork, they seem to have withstood attacks and even to have won the occasional battle. The Germans called all the Celts "**the welsh**", which means *foreigners*, their last bulwarks were thus called "Wealhas (Wales)", the country of foreigners and "Cornwealhas (Cornwall)", the country of land foreigners. It was at that time that there arose the legend of the mighty **King Arthur**, champion of the British, noble knight and courageous warrior, who, as Ambrosius 's successor, stood firm against his people's enemies. He won twelve great battles against the Saxons.

As the result of the conquest the Germanic tribes of the Jutes, the Angles and the Saxons made up the majority of the population in Britain and their customs, religion and languages became predominant. By the beginning of the 7th century seven kingdoms were formed on the conquered territory. **Kent** was set up by the Jutes in the south-east. In the southern and eastern parts of the country the Saxons formed a number of kingdoms – **Sussex** (the land of the South Saxons), **Wessex** (the land of the West Saxons) and **Essex** (the land of the East Saxons). Farther north there were settlements of the Angles, **Northumbria**, **Mercia** and **East Anglia**. These kingdoms were hostile to one another and they fought constantly for supreme power in the country.

Until the late 7th century, a series of warrior-kings in turn established their own personal authority over other kings, usually won by force or through alliances and often cemented by dynastic marriages. According to Bede, the most famous of these kings was **Ethelberht**, king of Kent (reigned c.560-616), who married Bertha, the Christian daughter of the king of Paris, and who became the first English king to be converted to Christianity. Ethelberht's law code was the first to be written in any Germanic language and included 90 laws. His influence extended both north and south of the river Humber: his nephew became king of the East Saxons and his daughter married king Edwin of Northumbria (died 633).

In the 8th century, smaller kingdoms in the British Isles continued to fall to more powerful kingdoms, which claimed rights over whole areas and established temporary primacies: Dalriada in Scotland, Munster and Ulster in Ireland. In the north the kingdom of Nortbumbria — one of the seven kingdoms, or **Heptarchy**, established by the Angles and Saxons — extended its boundaries to the west; while, in the Midlands, the kingdom of Mercia assumed control over

tracts of land so vast that by the end of the eighth century its ruler **King Offa** (757 – 796), who built the great earthwork known as Offa's Dyke along his western borders to keep out the Welsh, controlled for a long time virtually all central, eastern and south-eastern England. He established trading relationships with France and introduced gold and silver Arab-type coins showing his portrait and words "*OFFA REX*". In the south the kingdom of Wessex took control of Devon and Cornwall as well as the lands of the South and East Saxons; and, at the beginning of the ninth century, under their King, **Egbert**, the West Saxons defeated the Mercians and even laid claim to authority over the lands north of the Trent. When the Northumbrians submitted to him and took him for their master in **829**, Egbert could reasonably consider himself overlord of all the English.

The Ethnology of the Germanic Invaders

The Jutes and the Angles came from what is now the Jutland Peninsula.The **Jutes** were a Frankish tribe from Lower Rhine reaches, who were good warriors and used to serve as hired soldiers in the Roman army. The Angles and Saxons were Teutonic tribes. **Saxons** means *"men of long knife"*. The Saxons came from the territory lying between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers which was later on called *Saxony*. **Angles** took their name from *"angular"* – a hooked-shaped district now called Shleswig. The Jutes, the Angles and the Saxons were closely akin in speech and customs, and they gradually merged into one people. The name *"Jute"* soon died out and the conquerors are generally referred to as the *Anglo-Saxons*.

Society and administration

Society was divided into several social classes, which might vary from place to place. At the top was the king. He was essentially a war leader. He was expected to provide opportunities for plunder and glory for his followers. The kings became the greatest landowners and they granted lands in the conquered country to the their warriors. The king who did not provide land, slaves, or plunder might wake up dead one fine morning.

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

Below the thanes and ceorls there were the slaves. Slavery was one of the biggest commercial enterprises, and much depended on this involuntary labour force. War was the most frequent source of slaves. Many conquered Celtic Britons would have become slaves. People could also become slaves if they were unable to pay a fine. In some cases a family would sell a child into

slavery in time of famine to ensure the child's survival. Slavery was not necessarily a lifetime sentence, however. A slave could be ransomed by his or her relatives or granted freedom in an owner's will. If a person became a slave because they were unable to pay a debt, they might be freed when the value of their labour reached the value of the original debt.

The land was divided into **shires**, mainly according to the territory of the first tribes. The shire was divided into **hundreds**. These were the basic units of administration and the court system. Local rules were made by the "**moot**" ("Galimot") – a small village meeting which planned the life of the village community and judged cases among the people of the village. Each hundred had an open-air court ("hundred-moot") presided by an elected elder – **Alderman** (eoldorman). At the hundred-moots the men elected as representatives were sent to a shire-moot. The shire-moots, presided by shire-reeves (**sheriffs**), were held two or three times a year.

In the 9th century, the hundred-moot was administered by the most influential landlords of the hundred – the representatives of the central power. The sheriff became the king's official in the shire, the king himself became a supreme judge. Gradually the moots lost their importance and the king's council called "the **Witenagemot**" ("Witan") appeared. The Witan could make laws, choose or elect new kings. The Witan established a system which remained an important part of the king's method of government. Even today, the king or queen has a *Privy Council*, a group of advisers on the affairs of state.

Trial by Ordeal

During a lawsuit, the accused would be allowed to give an oath with the aid of twelve oath-helpers to prove his innocence. The Anglo-Saxon villages were so small that many of the villagers would have been aware of the circumstances of the crime. If the accused were actually guilty, oath helpers would have been difficult to find. If the defendant maintained his innocence, but was not able to gather enough oath helpers, he would be allowed to prove his innocence through "**trial by ordeal**".

The ordeal was administered by church officials, and before the trial began, the accused was given the opportunity to confess. If he did not confess, he was given the choice between two ordeals: water or iron. For the cold water ordeal, the accused was given holy water to drink and was then thrown into the river; the guilty floated; the innocent sank. During the hot water ordeal, the accused placed his hand into boiling water and retrieved a stone. For the iron ordeal, the accused carried a glowing iron bar nine feet. After the hot water and iron ordeals the defendant's hand was bandaged. If the wound healed without festering, the guilty was presumed innocent.

As there were no jails or prison officers, there were only three options when passing sentence: fines, mutilation, or death. For crimes such as arson, obvious murder, and treachery to one's lord, no compensation could be offered. For these crimes, the only punishment was death and forfeiture of one's property to the king.

Anglo-Saxon Villages

The Anglo-Saxons disliked towns preferring to live in small villages. In the course of the conquest they destroyed the Roman towns and villas. All the beautiful buildings, baths and roads were so neglected that they soon fell in ruins. Sometimes the roads were broken up, the stones being used for building material.

The Anglo-Saxon villages were small. A village which had twenty-five families was considered a large one. Great stretches of forest separated one village from another. Each village with the land belonging to it was surrounded by a thick hedge. When the hedge was well grown, it kept wild animals out of the village, and in those parts of England that were fully inhabited the hedge separated the land of one village from that of the next.

The main occupations of the villagers were **arable-farming**, **cattle-breeding** and some primitive crafts. Oxen, sheep, goats and poultry belonging to the village grazed on the common pastures. Pigs were turned into the woodland to feed on nuts and acorns. The animals were much smaller than those of today and did not weigh as much.

Each village was self-sufficient, most of the necessities of life were produced in it. Arable-farming and cattle-breeding satisfied the needs of the people in the way of foodstuffs, clothing and footwear. The trees provided wood, which was used in the building of houses and in making furniture and wagons. In the village there was a forge where a blacksmith made and mended tools and weapons. There was also a wheelwright's workshop and a mill. Occasionally a travelling pedlar called at village. Everybody would gather round him eager to see what he had in his pack. Nails, needles and thread, salt and tar could be bought from the pedlar. Sometimes he had toys for children. If the people had no money they would give some of their produce in exchange for what they wanted. The pedlar would also bring news of the outside world.

Farming

In the countryside the vast majority of the people lived by farming. All the arable land of the village was divided into two or, sometimes, three fields. Under the **two-field system** the land was given a rest every second year – crops were grown on one field, while the other field lay in fallow; in the following year crops were grown on the second field, and the first field had its turn of fallow. Round the field in which crops grew the villagers place movable wattle fences. The fallow field had no fence round it and the cattle and sheep grazed there all the year round. The most common crops were wheat and barley. The ceorls worked co-operatively, often sharing the expense of a team of 2-4 oxen to plough the large common field. The plough was made of wood, but the cutting parts were covered with iron.

Each village family had a land plot called "hide" (more than a hundred strips of land of one acre). Since it was not easy to turn the heavy plough, these strips were narrow. Each strip was 220 yard long as a rule – the distance the ox-team could pull the plough without stopping for a rest. The strips were shared out alternately all over the field so that each farmer had an equal share of good and bad land.They were separated from one another by low banks of uncultivated earth or by furrows made by the plough to carry off water. The strip owners cultivated their fields in a certain order according to a custom of the village. There were fixed dates for

ploughing, sowing and harvesting. It was a custom for every strip-owner to grow the same crop as others grew in the big field.

There was a great stretch of land that was not cultivated. This was called waste land and was always covered with trees and bushes, it surrounded the village on every side. There was also a large stretch of pasture land as well as a meadow where grass was grown and cut for hay. The crop of hay was divided among the villagers. As a rule, there was not much hay, and it was not easy to keep the animals alive and healthy throughout the winter.

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

Dwellings

The Anglo-Saxon village was made up of small groups of houses built around a larger hall in the valley of some river, where the soil was good and there was a good water supply. The houses were built of wood and had thatched roofs. The houses had only one room and a hearth for cooking, heating and light. Anglo-Saxon families were large. Everyone from young babies to the elderly lived under one roof. The richer lords lived on estates, with a main rectangular hall surrounded by outlying buildings for various living, working, and storage purposes. Inside the hall a lord might mark his prestige by expensive wall hangings or even paintings. The hall was the scene of feasts for the lord's followers, and a lord was expected to be a lavish host.

Appearance and Clothes

The Anglo-Saxons were tall, strong people with blue eyes and long blond hair. The robe or tunic gathered at the waist was the common garment for a man, completed by hose and soft shoes. The usual materials were linen and wool, the more expensive outfits being marked by colourful dyes and exotic borders. He would wear a belt at his waist which would have his knife and pouch hanging from it. Broaches were used to fix clothing by rich and poor, and amulets of stones were worn for luck.

Anglo-Saxon women wore long under-dresses made of linen. On top of this they wore over-dresses made of wool and held together by pairs of brooches at the shoulder. Women wore

jewellery, especially if they were very wealthy or important. Like the men, they also wore leather shoes.

Food

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

Weapons

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

Leisure

When they weren't fighting, the favourite pastimes of the Anglo-Saxons were dice and board games such as chess. Elaborate riddles were popular, as was horse racing and hunting. For example, one of the riddles said, *"I appeared on the ground like a blanket, and melt in the midday sun" (dew).*

At feasts the most common entertainment was the harp, which was also used in church music. In addition to the harp, scenes of juggling balls and knives have been found illustrating books of the period.

Travelling

Travel was not uncommon, and the main trade routes, often along the old Roman roads, were used frequently. However, off the main routes travel could be a risky business. Travellers were advised to shout, blow horns, and make lots of noise. Otherwise any strangers were assumed to be outlaws, and could be killed out of hand. In less populated regions there was seldom anything better than a muddy track between one village and the next. The person was likely to be born in a village, live in it all his life and die in it without ever leaving it.

Religion and Culture

The Anglo-Saxons were pagans when they came to Britain. They worshipped gods of nature and held springs, wells, rocks, and trees in reverence. Religion was not a source of spiritual revelation, it was a means of ensuring success in material things. For example, you might pray to a particular goddess for a successful harvest, or for victory in battle. A few of the main Anglo-Saxon gods were Tiw, Wodin (Odin), Thor, and Freya, whose names are remembered in English days of the week Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Religious observance consisted of invocations and charms to ensure the gods' help in securing a desired outcome in the material world, though the presence of grave goods indicates a belief in after-life. There is a possibility that female slaves may have been sacrificed on the death of a male owner and included in the grave to accompany him in the next world.

In 1939 a very important archaeological discovery called "**the Sutton Hoo burial**" was made in Britain. Sutton Hoo is the name of a private estate in south-east Suffolk on which the discovery was made. It is believed that the treasure that was found in the grave belonged to one of the Anglo-Saxon kings of East Anglia who had probably died around the year 650. Archaeologists never found the body of the king, but chemical tests on the soil proved that the body had once been there. Articles that were considered necessary for the after-life were buried in a very large ship. There were found various arms and armour: a sword, a shield, a helmet, a coat of mail, four spears, an axe with a long iron handle and a golden harness. The grave also contained many things used for feasts, ceremonies and entertainment in the king's hall. There were numerous silver vessels for food and drinking-horns, gold jewellery, an iron standard, a small six-stringed harp etc.

Early Anglo-Saxons wrote using letters called **runes**, which they carved on stone and wood. They believed runes had magical powers.

The new settlers of the British Isles spoke different dialects commonly referred to as **West Germanic languages**. Gradually all the dialects merged into one language, known as **Old English**, with the predominance of Mercian Anglican.

Beowulf

As they ate and drank, the Anglo-Saxons listened to songs and stories about brave warriors and their adventures. Storytellers could not read or write so they had to recount long poems from memory. One of the Anglo-Saxons' favourite stories was about **Beowulf**, a heroic prince who killed several monsters.

Beowulf was first written down in the 8th to 9th centuries, many years after it was first told. The poem may be called the foundation stone of all British poetry. The scene is set among the Jutes and the Danes, their neighbours across the strait. Hrothgar, a king of the Danes, built a large and expensive palace decorated with gold and antlers of stags (deer). The palace was called Heorot (Stag-hall). Hrothgar would feast there with his kinsmen and warriors. Their joy, however, did not last long. In the dark fens nearby there lived a fierce sea-monster Grendel, who got envious of the festive noise and wanted to destroy Heorot. Grendel looked like a man but was much bigger, and his whole body was covered with long thick hair. He used to come every night and seize the warriors in Heorot, who could not defend themselves as their swords could not even hurt the monster. From that time no one dared to come to Heorot. For twelve years the palace stood deserted.

The news of the disaster reached Beowulf, nephew of Higelac, a king of the Jutes. Beowulf was the strongest and the bravest of all the warriors. He was said to have the strength of thirty men. He decided to help Hrothgar. With fourteen chosen companions he sailed in Heorot. A banquet was given the same night to honour him. Late at night after the feast, when all except for Beowulf were fast asleep, the ogre broke into the hall. In desperate hand-to-hand battle Grendel was mortally wounded by Beowulf and retreated to his den to die. But the next night Grendel's mother, water-witch, came to Heorot to avenge her son's death. While Beowulf was asleep, she snatched away one of Hrothgar's favourite warriors. So the next morning Beowulf in full armour plunged into the waters full of hissing serpents. There he found a magic sword and killed the witch with it. He cut off the heads of Grendel and his mother and carried them to the surface as a proof of his victory. Hrothgar poured treasures into Beowulf hands, the bards made up songs about his prowess. Beowulf arrived in his own land as a hero, admired and honoured by everybody.

After the death of Higelac Beowulf became a king of the Jutes. For fifty years he ruled his country wisely and well until one day a great disaster befell the happy land: every night there appeared a fire-breathing dragon who came and destroyed the villages and the crops of the kingdom. The dragon was the guardian of ancient treasures stored in a cave. Burning the crops was his revenge for a jewelled cup carried away by a passing traveller. Beowulf decided to fight the dragon and save his people, but of all his earls only Wiglaf, a brave warrior and heir to the kingdom, had the courage to help him. In a fierce battle the dragon was killed, but his flames burnt Beowulf, who now was dying of his wounds. Before his death he ordered Wiglaf to take as much treasure as he could carry and give it to the Jutes. The memory of Beowulf was honoured by a high mound visible from a great distance, so that passing seamen might constantly be reminded of his prowess. Beowulf's victory over the monsters symbolizes the triumph of man over the powers of darkness, evil, and death.

The merit of the poem lies in the vivid description of the life of that period and in the beauty of the language. The Anglo-Saxon verse had no rhyme and no regular number of syllables in its lines, but it was necessary that each line should have three stressed syllables usually beginning with the same consonant ("alliteration").

[b] *Bore it bitterly he who bided in darkness [Grendel]*

[t] *Twelve-winters' time torture suffered*
[k] *Sat the King in his council; conference held they*
[h] *Heard in his home: of heroes then living*

Many nouns and names of people are accompanied by one or even two descriptive words. Based on certain likeness between two subjects or two ideas, the descriptive words ("metaphors") show the subject in a new light:

salt-streams, wave-deeps, sail-road (for the sea);
wave-goer, broad-bossomed bark (for the ship);
the cased-in-helmets, folk-troop defenders, foot-going champions, the famous-for-prowess (for warriors);
sword-hate, hot-burning hatred (for a quarrel).

Anglo-Saxon Influence

The six centuries of Anglo-Saxon rule have had a lasting influence on England. Many places are still called by their Anglo-Saxon names, and many Anglo-Saxon words are still used today. British system of law is also based on ideas that can be traced back to Anglo-Saxon times.

Soon after the Germanic invasions, the inhabitants gave their settlements new names. The most common Saxon place names are those ending in *-ton* (fenced area), *-wick* (dwelling, farmstead), *-ham* (home), *-worth* (homestead), *-den* (pasture), *-hurst* (wooded hill), *-ford* (river crossing), *-burn* (stream), *-burgh/bury* (hide), *-field* (open country) and *-ing* (family). Some settlement names began with more than one word which either stated personal possession or described a physical description of the area and would later evolve into one word. One example of this evolution would be the word Chatham which was originally Ceatta's Ham (Ceatta's home).

Other words used today are *faether* – father, *sunu* – son, *dohtor* – daughter, *chese* – cheese and some others.

English Surnames. Anglo-Saxons distinguished between two people with the same name by adding either the place they came from or the job they did to their first name. Modern surnames such as Baxter, Baker, Weaver, Fisher, Fowler, Hunter, and Farmer are Anglo-Saxon in origin.

The Map of Heptarchy

CONVERSION INTO CHRISTIANITY

"*When you are sitting in winter with your lords in the feasting hall, with a good fire to warm and light it, a sparrow flies in from the storms of rain and snow outside. It flies in at one door, across the lighted room and out through the other door into the darkness and storms outside. In the same way man comes into the light for a short time, but of what came before, or what is to follow, man is ignorant. If this new teaching tells us about something more certain, it seems worth following".*

Venerable Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English People

Christian Missions

We cannot know how and when Christianity first reached Britain, but it was certainly well long before Christianity was accepted by Roman Emperor Constantine in the early 4th century AD. The new religion was apparently brought to Britain by Christian refugees from Rome in the 3rd century AD. As Christianity was made the Roman national faith, it was brought to all dependent countries. In the 4th century St. Patrick came to northern Ireland and other missionaries – to the southern part of the country. Throughout Europe this new religion was called the **Catholic Church** ("*catholic*" means "*universal*"). In the last hundred years of Roman government Christianity became firmly established across Britain, both in Roman-controlled areas and beyond. However, the Anglo-Saxons belonged to an older Germanic religion, and they drove the Celts into the west and north. In the Celtic areas Christianity continued to spread, bringing paganism to an end. The map of Wales shows a number of place-names beginning or ending with *llan*, meaning the site of a small Celtic monastery around which a village or a town grew.

Towards the end of the sixth century, Aethelbert, King of Kent, had ridden from his capital to the coast to meet **Augustine**, the Prior of St Andrew's Monastery in Rome, who had been sent by the Pope to convert the English into Christianity. By legend, Pope Gregory the Great saw some slaves on the slave market in Rome. Their blond hair and rosy cheeks attracted his attention, and he asked where they had come from. They answered they were Angles. "*Not Angles but angels*", the Pope's reply was. Since then the land became known as the country of Angles, or **Anglia** (later **England**), though Saxon kingdoms, in fact, dominated. The Pope sent missionary Augustine to convert the beautiful pagans into Christianity. But actually he did not risk to intrude deeply into pagan lands and landed in Kent accompanied by forty monks. Aethelbert was chosen to meet them because he was married to Bertha, a Frankish Christian princess, whose support was essential. The story goes that Aethelbert, unsure of the intent of the Christian magicians, chose to greet them in the open air to ensure that they couldn't cast a spell over him. But soon, persuaded by Augustine's sincerity, he had allowed him to preach to his people and within a few months Aethelbert had become a Christian himself. He provided Augustine with a house for his followers in Canterbury, the capital of Kent, and in **597** allowed him to be consecrated the Bishop of the English.

Seven years later another missionary from Rome, Meltius, had been established as the Bishop in London, where King Aethelbert had built for him a church which was dedicated to St Paul. But after the death of his royal patron, the men of London had driven their Bishop out of the city gates and had returned to their old religion and their former priests.

Christianity, however, was gaining a strong hold elsewhere in England where the gospel was spread not only by missionaries from the Continent and their followers but also by Celtic missionaries from Scotland and Ireland. The missionaries who came from Rome held that the Pope's authority was supreme, the Celtic missionaries claimed that Christian belief did not require a final earthly arbiter. There was little agreement between the two fractions who differed even upon the calendar that sealed the date for Easter; so in **664** a conference was held at Whitby in Yorkshire where a house for monks and nuns had been founded a few years before by St Hilda, great-niece of the King of Northumbria. This Synod of Whitby decided in general favour of the Roman missionaries, mostly for economical reasons. Many bishops and monks in England were from the Frankish lands and from churches and monasteries along Europe's vital trade routes. In this way close contact with many parts of Europe was encouraged. In addition, they all used Latin, the written language of Rome, and this encouraged English trade with the continent. Increased literacy itself helped trade. Anglo-Saxon England became well known in Europe for its exports of woollen goods, cheese, hunting dogs, pottery and metal goods. It imported wine, fish, pepper, jewellery and wheel-made pottery.

Christian leader **St Theodore**, Greek by origin, was appointed the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Pope in 668 and called the first Council of a united English Church in 672 at Hertford, a demonstration of ecclesiastical unity that served as a model for a political unity not yet achieved.

Saxon churches

As Christianity spread in England, churches were built all over the island. Most were constructed of split tree trunks which have long since disappeared but some were of stone, among them the original Church of All Hallows by the Tower of London. Monasteries and abbeys were also being built as well as minsters, chapels and oratories; and as the Church received grants of land from the kings, its riches and influence grew year by year. The church was a very important force in society; the only truly national entity tying together the different Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. The Anglo-Saxon kings helped the Church to grow, but the Church also increased the power of kings. According to Roman Christianity the king was no longer a tribal chief – he was a representative of God on earth and was entitled to have his murders punished by death penalty. The religion, which taught poor people to be patient and obey their masters, justified the power of big landowners. The new religion controlled the most important events of people's life – baptism, marriage and burial. It brought greater humanity to the laws and people's conduct.

Church education

Most of the early work of spreading the Christian gospel was done from monasteries. The monks of the 7th and 8th centuries were not confined to a closed monastic community, but carried the responsibility of travelling, usually on foot, throughout the surrounding countryside to preach and convert in the villages. This was especially true of monks from the Celtic monasteries. Regional, or district, monasteries were established to better serve an area. These were designated "*minsters*", and the term lives on in many place names, such as *Westminster*, *Warminster*, and *Axminster*.

Churches were almost the only forum for education. The early monasteries were vital centres of learning and the arts, church schools were encouraged, and many Latin works were translated into English. The higher church officials also played important secular roles; advising the king, witnessing charters, and administering estates of the church, which could be exceedingly large. The Roman monks brought the books to England, which were all written in Latin. English poets and writers imitated those Latin books about the early Christians and made up their own stories

about saints. The names of only two of those early poets have reached our days: Caedmon and Cynewulf.

Caedmon lived in the 7th century. He was a shepherd at Whitby. He composed in his native Northumbrian dialect. Caedmon was no longer young when the gift of song came to him. The monks took him to the abbey and he spent the rest of his life in making up religious poetry. He composed hymns and the poem "Paraphrase". It retells fragments from the Bible in alliterative verse.

Cynewulf was a monk who lived at the end of the 8th century. His name was not forgotten, as he signed it in runes in the last lines of his works. Two of his poems, "Elene" and "Juliana", are notable because they are the first Anglo-Saxon works to introduce female characters.

Along with religious poetry, folk-tales were written down at the monasteries and put into verse by poets. These were wedding-songs, war-songs, death-songs, ploughing-songs and even riddles. In the 11th century they were prohibited by the Church.

The Venerable Bede (673-735). Anglo-Saxon England's most famous writer, the monk Bede, lived most of his life at the monastery of Jarrow, in Northumbria. He received the best education of the time and wrote mostly in Latin. His books on natural history and astronomy were a collection of all the learning known in the Middle Ages. Not only did Bede suggest that the Earth was a sphere and that tides were influenced by the Moon, he also was the first to calculate the dates from Christ's birth. His greatest book "Ecclesiastical History of the English People" is still valued as an important source of information about England in the early Middle Ages.

Another early-medieval scholar **Alcuin** (735-804) was also a monk from Northumbria. He got education in the monastic school of York where later on he himself began to teach. As a teacher he became famous all over England. Many young monks would come to the school in York from faraway places to be taught by Alcuin. He was the author of the school text-books that were popular not only in England but on the Continent too. For more than twenty years Alcuin lived on the Continent where he organized monastic schools and many of his pupils became well-known teachers.

A Student's page 3(*photocopiable)*

Vocabulary notes:

akin – similar
customary – usual
folk-moot – council of elected people's representatives
forge – a workshop where metals are melted
ordeal – judgement depending on "gods' will"
pedlar - a travelling salesman
plunder – steal things from a place, esp. during war
self-sufficient – able to provide all necessities without help
tar – thick sticky liquid, becomes hard when it is cold
wheelwright - a craftsman making wheels and wooden objects

Compendium

MAIN EVENTS OF THE ANGLO – SAXON PERIOD

5th (449) – 7th centuries – The Anglo-Saxons conquer Britain
6th (597) - 7th centuries - Conversion to Christianity, Augustin's mission, establishment of Roman Catholic ("universal") church
560-616 – reign of Ethelberht, king of Kent
7th century – Heptarchy is found
757 – 796 - reign of King Offa, rise of Mercia
9th century (829) – Unification of the Anglo – Saxon kingdoms into the kingdom of England

Origin: the Germanic tribes, closely akin in speech and customs (the Angles, the Jutes – Jutland Peninsula, the Saxons – the territory between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers later on called Saxony)
5th century – first plunder raids
449 – the Jutes invaded Kent
the end of 6th – beginning of 7th centuries – the territory of Britain was conquered by the Germanic tribes, several kingdoms were formed: Sussex, Wessex, Essex (Saxon kingdoms), Northumbria, East Anglia, Mercia (Angles), Kent (Jutes). Mercian dialect developed into Old English. Some of the Celts remained in Ireland, northern Scotland and Wales, the others settled on the North-West of France.

Mode of life

- preferred living in small villages (up to 25 families), destroyed the Roman cities and towns, neglected all the roads
- the villages were built in the river valleys, separated by stretches of forest and surrounded by a thick hedge to protect against wild animals (a great number of modern village and town names are of Anglo-Saxon origin, meaning "hedge" – *ton: Brighton, Preston*, "to hide" – *bury, burgh: Canterbury, Edinburgh*, "home" – *ham: Birmingham*, "open country" – *field: Chesterfield*)
- the land of the village belonged to the whole community, each villager had a right to a share of the harvest
- all the disputes were settled at the folk-moots presided over by the elected elder (hundred-moots, shire-moots) The *Witanagemot* (council of the most powerful men) gave advice on all important matters.
- Trial by Ordeal: the accused of a crime got 12 well-known people to prove his innocence, in the other case he was sent to the ordeal (water or iron trial)
- Natural economy. Each village was self-sufficient producing most of the necessities of life. Arable-farming and cattle-breeding satisfied the needs of foodstuffs, clothing and footwear, in the village there was a forge, a wheelwright's workshop and a mill, the artisans produced and mended goods to order. The villagers had little or no money and no trading except travelling pedlars selling nails, needles, thread, salt and tar. All the arable land was divided into 2 fields, each cultivated every 2nd year, the other being used as a pasture for oxen, sheep, goats and poultry. The land was cultivated in small strips (a "hide" – 50 hectares in different parts for every family) and all the strip-owners ploughed their fields at the same time and sowed the same crops, mostly wheat and barley.

Religion

- Initially pagans (e.g. Tu/Tuesco – the god of Darkness, Woden – the god of War, Thor – the god of Thunder, Freya – the goddess of Peace and Plenty). Buried deads in the ships filled with armour, arms, things used for feasts, ceremonies, entertainment, jewellery, musical instruments.

Comprehension check:

1) Where did the Jutes, Angles and Saxons live before their migration to Britain?
2) Why did it take more than 150 years for the Germanic tribes to conquer Britain?
3) What was the fate of the Celts as a result of the Anglo – Saxon conquest?
4) Describe the Anglo – Saxon village. Prove that it was self-sufficient in the Early Middle Ages.
5) What were the customary methods of cultivating land among the Anglo – Saxons?
6) Describe the punishment system of the Anglo – Saxon community.
7) Tell the story of "Beowulf". What is the merit of the poem?
8) How did the conversion to Christianity influence the economical, social and cultural development of Britain?
9) Give an account on any educated person of that period.

A Cultural Reader

King Arthur, the Round Table and the Holy Grail

Arthur is the name that inspired people to think of the Age of Chivalry, where tall castles overlooked the field of combats, a clash between two opposing armies or tournaments between jousting knights, or where the romanticised armoured knight embarked on a perilous journey to prove his prowess and worth.

Arthur was the first born son of King Uther Pendragon and heir to the throne. However these were very troubled times (See **Germanic Invasions**) and **Merlin**, a wise magician, advised that the baby Arthur should be raised in a secret place and that none should know his true identity. As Merlin feared, when King Uther died, there was a great conflict over who should be the next king. Merlin used his magic to set a sword in a stone. Written on the sword, in letters of gold, were these words: "He who pulls out this sword of this stone is the rightwise born king of all England". Of course, all the contenders for the throne took their turn at trying to draw the sword, but none could succeed. Arthur, quite by chance, withdrew the sword for his foster brother to use in a tournament. Following this he became King.

He gathered Knights around him and fought back against the Saxons who, since the Romans left Britain, were slowly but surely taking the country over. After many great battles and a huge victory at Mount Badon the Saxons' advance was halted.

Arthur's base was at a place called **Camelot**. Here he built a strong castle. His knights met at the **Round Table**. The Round Table was adopted by medieval writers of Arthurian Romance because of the tradition that Christ and the Apostles sat at a circular table during the Last Supper. Its origins, however, are probably much older. Celtic warriors often met in circles, perhaps in order to prevent quarrels over seating precedence, as a circular table had no head. The names were said to have been written by Merlin in magical gold paint which miraculously changed along with the occupants. Notable amongst the seats around the table was the **Siege Perilous,** placed there by Merlin as an aspiration for those who would be the most pure of knights.

The noble knights carried out acts of chivalry such as rescuing damsels in distress and fought against strange beasts. They also searched for a lost treasure, which they believed would cure all diseases and wounds - this was the “Quest for the Holy Grail”. Under the guidance of Merlin, Arthur had obtained a magical sword from The Lady Of The Lake. This sword was called **“Excalibur”** and with this weapon he vanquished many foes. Arthur’s other weapons were also given names. The lance was called *Ron*, while his helmet was named *Goosewhite* and his shield was called *Pridwen*, which depicted the Virgin Mary. His horse was called Passelande.

Queen Guinevere, Arthur's beautiful wife, brought romance to the story while his equally

beautiful half-sister **Morgan le Fay** added a dark side having created a pretty popular witch character in British folklore.

Unfortunately, as peace settled over the country things turned sour within the court of Camelot and civil war broke out. In the final battle at Camlan both Arthur and **Mordred**, Arthur's traitorous nephew, were mortally wounded. Arthur was set upon a boat and floated down the river to the **Isle of Avalon.** Here his wounds were treated by three mysterious maidens. His body was never found and many say that he rests under a hill with all his knights - ready to ride forth and save the country again.

The Holy Grail was a vessel used by Christ at the Last Supper. Given to his grand-uncle, **St. Joseph of Arimathea**, it was used by him to collect Christ's blood and sweat while Joseph tended him on the Cross. After Christ's death, Joseph was imprisoned in a rock tomb. Left to starve, he was sustained for several years by the power of the Grail which provided him with fresh food and drink every morning. Later, St. Joseph travelled to Britain with his family and several followers. He settled at Glastonbury, but the Grail was taken to **Corbenic** where it was housed in a spectacular castle, guarded always by the Grail Kings, descendants of Joseph's daughter Anna and her husband, Brons.

Centuries later, the location of the Great Castle of Corbenic became forgotten. At the Court of King Arthur, however, it was prophesied that the Grail would one day be rediscovered by a descendant of St. Joseph, the best knight in the land, the only man capable of sitting in the mysterious Siege Perilous. When such a man arrived in the form of Galahad, a quest to find this holiest of relics began. Through many adventures and many years, the Knights of the Round Table crossed Britain from one end to another in their search. Perceval (Peredyr) discovered the castle in a land that was sickly like its spear-wounded King. When entertained by this "Fisher" or "Grail King", however, he failed to ask of the grail and left empty-handed. Lancelot next reached Corbenic, but was prevented from entering because he was an adulterer. Finally Galahad arrived. He was permitted entry to the Grail Chapel and allowed to gaze upon the great cup. His life became complete and together grail and man were lifted up to heaven.

Ancient Origins. The quest for a divine vessel was a popular theme in Arthurian legend long before medieval writers introduced the Holy Grail to British mythology. Arthur and his warriors sail off to the Celtic Otherworld to capture the pearl-rimmed Cauldron of Annwfn: like the grail it was a giver of plenty, but also of prophecy. It was at last discovered at Caer-Siddi (or Wydyr), an island bound castle of glass, where it was guarded by nine divine maidens; but the ensuing perils were too much for even Arthur's men. The mission was abandoned and only seven of their number returned home.

Celtic Cauldrons were used in ceremonial feasting as early as the Late Bronze Age. Ritual deposits included such vessels; highly decorated with portraits of many Celtic deities, this vessel would once have held up to twenty-eight and a half gallons of liquid. These finds clearly point to the religious importance of cauldrons, as found in the Arthurian stories and even older Celtic mythological parallels.

The magic Otherworld vessel was the Cauldron of Ceridwen, the Celtic Goddess of Inspiration. She is remembered today in the archetypal cauldron-stirring witch. She once set about brewing a drink of knowledge and wisdom for her son, but her kitchen-boy, Gwion, accidentally tasted the concoction, preventing anyone else from benefitting from its affects. A great battle of wills

ensued, for Gwion now held all the knowledge to escape the Goddess' wrath. The two changed themselves into various animals in an attempt to outwit each other before Gwion was swallowed whole as a grain of wheat. He was eventually reborn as the great bard Taliesin.

The cauldron then reappears in the story of Bran Fendigaid (the Blessed), not only as a vessel of knowledge and plenty, but also of rebirth. The great Celtic warrior God, Bran, obtained his life-giving vessel from Ceridwen, who had been expelled from Lake in Ireland. The Emerald Isle here personifies the Celtic Otherworld. The magic vessel would restore to life the body of any dead warrior placed within it. Bran's sister marries the King of Ireland and they are given the cauldron as a wedding gift. However, when hostility between the two countries breaks out, Bran travels across the ocean to regain this dangerous prize. He is eventually successful but is wounded by a poisoned spear and, like Arthur, only seven of his men return home. The name, the castle, the wound, the mystic vessel, the journey: Bran Fendigaid is clearly Brons, the Grail King, son-in-law of Joseph of Arimathea.

The descriptions of the following sacral Celtic cauldrons have been found:

The Cauldron of Warming

The Cauldron of Warming is the wellspring of Life for each of us. It is placed upright at birth and remains that way throughout our lives. This cauldron represents the fires of emotion, vitality and power that sustain all of our activity within the Three Worlds. The Cauldron of Warming is warmed by the Breath of our Spirits. It is empowered by the vitality of our Blood. The Mind is the well from which Spiritual focus flows to regulate and control the nature of our inner fires. These three fundamental characteristics of the Cauldron of Warming are the Breath, the Blood, and the Mind. Within the threefold Cauldrons we see a threefold division of the Self.

The Cauldron of Vocation

The Cauldron of Vocation seems to be inverted in unskilled people, though it too can be turned by joy or sorrow. A person need only become aware of their "gifts" to turn this cauldron on its side. Within such people, there is a giving and receiving of vocation. These people are very active within the physical world. One might say that the evidence of their gifts is very fluid. The Cauldron of Vocation represents the connection between the Self and the Middle World of Land. Before we can fill the Cauldron of Wisdom, we must train ourselves in Vocation. We must experience the many flows of the world around us. Our physical bodies must be made healthy to support the higher aspects of the Self and to allow us to be able to exist as both creatures of Thought and Spirit.

The Cauldron of Knowledge

The Cauldron of Knowledge was said to be upside down in a person at birth. This is understandable, since we normally forget our previous lives from passing through the Otherworld. A person could spend an entire lifetime refilling and changing the position of this particular cauldron. It was thought that the cauldron would become upright after some sort of major emotional event, such as, extreme sorrow or extreme joy. In such an "upright" person / position, the Cauldron of Knowledge was capable of holding much more knowledge and wisdom. The Cauldron of Knowledge represents the connection between the Skyworld of the Gods and the Mental / Spiritual / Physical aspects of the Self.

Days of Week and Their Patron Saints

	Saxon patron	**Function of the god**	**Roman patron**	**Greek patron**	**East Slavic patron**
Sunday	Sunne	God of the sun	Apollo	Phoebus/ Apollo	Dazhbog
Monday	Mona	God of the moon	Diana	Artemis	Hors
Tuesday	Tiu (Tyr)	God of war, son of Odin	Mars	Ares	Ares/Chernobog
Wednesday	Odin (Woden)	The Cunning God	Mercury	Hermes	Veles
Thursday	Thor	God of thunder	Jupiter/Jove	Zeus	Perun
Friday	Freya	Goddess of love and plenty	Venus	Aphrodite	Mokosh
Saturday		God of time	Saturn	Cronos	Chislobog

Anglo-Saxon Pantheon

Odin was the chief and father of the gods. He had drunk from the spring of Mimir which had made him very wise. He invented Runes, the secret writing of the Saxons and Vikings, which not only stored knowledge, but could be used for magic. He was born from Ymir, the creation giant, and made Middle Earth from his body. He also built Asgard.

He had a wonderful horse called Sleipnir, which had eight legs, and could travel over land and water. He had two ravens, who brought him news from far away.

When Odin made Middle Earth, he set the **Sun** and the **Moon** in the sky. The Sun is a girl and the Moon is a boy, and they drive their chariots drawn by swift horses across the sky each day. They are chased by wolves. At Ragnarok, the end of the worlds, the wolves will catch the Sun and Moon, and there will be no more day and night.

Loki was a blood brother of Odin and his antagonist. He was an embodiment of all dark forces and had many horrible children, the most terrible being the wolf Fenrir. It grew up in Asgard, but it became so huge and fierce, that eventually only **Tyr** was brave enough to feed it. When the wolf opened its mouth, its jaws stretched from sky to earth.

The gods decided to chain Fenrir, so they got the dwarves to make a magic chain of secret things like the noise of a moving cat, the roots of a mountain and the breath of a fish. It seemed like a cord made of silk, but nothing could break it.

The wolf was suspicious, and wouldn't allow anyone to go near it, unless Tyr, the only god it trusted, put his hand in the wolf's mouth. The gods quickly tied the wolf up. Fenrir snapped shut its mouth in anger, and Tyr's hand was bitten off. So Tyr lost his hand, but at least the gods were safe from the wolf. Fenrir, the wolf, will not break free until Ragnarok.

Thor was the Thunder god. His enemy was the World Serpent, another one of Loki's horrible children. It was an enormous snake which wrapped itself round the whole world, and bit its own tail. Thor meets the serpent three times.

The first time was at a giant's hall. The giant sneered at Thor for being weak, and challenged him to pick up the old cat sitting in front of the fire. Thor, who was the strongest of the gods, grabbed the cat by the middle and tried to lift him. The cat didn't budge. So Thor tried as hard as he could, and managed to lift the cat a few inches from the floor. The giant gasped, and hastily told Thor to drop the cat. It was really the World Serpent in disguise, as big as the world, and Thor had lifted it up.

Another time, another giant and Thor went out fishing in a boat, using an ox's head as bait. The World Serpent took the bait, and Thor nearly hauled it aboard. The frightened giant cut the line, and the World Serpent escaped.

The last time Thor and the Serpent will meet is at Ragnarok.

Thor is always depicted holding his famous hammer. One day, Thor's hammer was stolen. Loki searched for it, and found that the giant Thrym had hidden the hammer, and refused to give it back unless the beautiful goddess **Freya** became his wife. The gods worked out a plan to get the hammer back while keeping Freya safe. Thor was dressed up as Freya, as a beautiful woman, and sent to the giant as his bride. (Thor had a bristling red beard!) Loki went with him. At first the giant was worried about his bride's enormous appetite and fierce eyes, but Loki convinced him to accept her. Finally, the giant brought out Thor's hammer, and gave it to his new bride. Thor gave an enormous roar, tore off his wedding dress, and killed the giant with his hammer.

Roman Pantheon

Diana was the goddess of the moon. Her twin brother **Apollo** was the god of the sun. Diana carried a bow and arrows. She was the goddess of hunting. Once she was bathing in a forest pool. A hunter called Actaeon spied on her. So Diana turned him into a stag. She helped women in child-birth, because her mother Leto gave birth to her and her twin brother so easily.

The Romans were great soldiers and thought **Mars**, the god of War, was very important. They said that he was the father of Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome. When Romulus and Remus were babies, they were left to die. But they were found by a mother wolf, who suckled them. The Campus Martius, or field of Mars, was next to the river Tiber in ancient Rome. It was used to train soldiers and hold horse races.

Mercury was the god of travellers. He had a winged hat and sandals, so he could fly. He carried a staff with two snakes winding round it.

He was also the god of thieves. When he was only a few days old, he stole the cows of Apollo. Mercury made special shoes for the cows and made them walk backwards, so no-one could follow their tracks. Eventually Apollo noticed that Mercury was playing a new musical instrument called a lyre, strung with cow-gut. Apollo was furious with Mercury, but thought the lyre was wonderful. So they agreed that Mercury could keep the cows and Apollo would get the lyre. Mercury was also the god of science and business.

Venus was born in the sea and first came to shore at Cyprus, floating on a scallop shell. There was a Golden Apple with "For the Fairest" written on the side. Venus, Juno and Minerva all wanted it. They decided to let a man, Paris, judge between them. They were all so beautiful that he couldn't make his mind up. So Juno said she would make him powerful. Minerva said she would make him wise. Venus offered him Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world. He chose Venus, and Helen. Unfortunately, Helen was married to someone else, and when Paris carried her off to his home at Troy, her husband came with his allies to get her back. Paris and all his family were killed and Troy was destroyed.

Saturn was god of Time and his weapon was a scythe. He ruled the gods before Jupiter. He is called Old Father Time.

Jupiter, **Neptune** and **Pluto** were his children. They represent Air, Water and Death, the three things that Time cannot kill.

The Romans had a mid-winter festival in honour of Saturn, called the Saturnalia. It lasted seven days, and there was much merrymaking. Public business was suspended and schools were closed. Parents gave toys to their children and there was a public banquet.

Slavic Pantheon

The analogue of Olympus in Slavic mythology was **Vyriy**. There was an oak in the middle of Vyriy, on which the main God **Rod** was sitting. Rod was imagined as a falcon. He was the creator of the world and father of **Svarog**, the god of fire and the sky, who completed the work of his father.

Perun is the highest god of the pantheon and the god of thunder and lightning. Perun is described as a rugged man with a copper beard. He rides in a chariot pulled by a he-goat and carries a mighty axe, or sometimes a hammer. The axe is thrown at evil people and spirits and will always return to his hand.

Dazhbog is the Sun god who lives in the Palace of the East; the land of eternal summer and plenty. Each morning he emerges from the arms of the **Zorya** to ride his chariot drawn by three horses: one is gold, one is silver, and one is diamond.

Hors is the god of the winter sun**.** Hors represents the old sun which, in Slavic mythology, becomes smaller as the days become shorter in the Northern Hemisphere, and dies on Korochun, the winter solstice. It is said to be defeated by the dark and evil powers of **Chernobog**. On December 23rd Hors is resurrected and becomes the new sun, **Koleda**. Because of his transformation, Slavs worshipped Hors as the god of healing, survival, and the triumph of health over illness. He was seen as the master of herbs, a medicine-man and a man of knowledge. At the winter solstice, in honour of the god Hors, Slavs danced a ritual chain-dance which was called the horo. In Russia and Ukraine, it is known as khorovod. In Polish sources, Hors (spelled Chors and pronounced "hors") is considered to be the god of the moon rather than the sun.

Chernobog (Ares) is the god of war and dark forces.

Mokosh is the goddess connected with female activities such as shearing, spinning and weaving. She is also seen as the goddess of fertility, bounty, health with marriage, as well as occult knowledge and divination.

Veles is the God of cattle, music, poetry, and art. He was the patron of oaths, death, divination, underworld, domestic animals and beasts, and afterlife.

Chislobog is the God of time and calendar.

CHAPTER 4

SHAPING OF A NATION

DANISH RAIDS

In **829** Egbert, King of Wessex, was acknowledged by Kent, Mercia and Northumbria and became the first king of one unified kingdom called **England**. The clergy, royal warriors and officials supported the king who granted them land and the right to collect dues and hold judgement. The political unification was sped up by the urgent task of defending the country against the dangerous raids of the new enemies. Western Europe was troubled by a new wave of barbarian attacks. These barbarians came from the North (Norway, Sweden and Denmark) and were called the **Northmen** (Norsemen). In different countries the Northmen were known also by many names, as the Vikings, the Normans, the Danes.

The word "**Viking**" has come to describe a whole new age in Europe between about 800 and 1150. This is despite the fact that the Vikings were not just pirates and warriors but also traders and colonists. But at the start of the Viking Age in the last decade of the 8th century, adventure was the main goal of the Norwegians who raided in Scotland and Ireland and of the Danes who attacked England. Gold and silver treasures accumulated by the great monasteries could be converted into personal wealth, and thus power, and captives could be sold as slaves. What better way for the young sons of good families to earn their way and see the world?

The Vikings were a terror to all their neighbours; but the two regions that suffered most from their attacks were the Island of Britain and the Empire of Franks. Nearly fifty times in two hundred years the lands of the Franks were invaded. The Vikings sailed up the large rivers into the heart of the region which we now call France and captured and pillaged cities and towns.

In the year 860 the Vikings discovered Iceland and made a settlement upon its shores. A few years later they sailed as far as Greenland, and there established settlements which existed for about a century. Ancient books found in Iceland tell the story of the discovery. It is related that a Viking ship was driven during a storm to a strange coast, which is thought to have been the part of America now known as Labrador. When the captain of the ship returned home he told what he had seen. His tale so excited the curiosity of a young Viking prince, called Leif the Lucky, that he sailed to the newly discovered coast. Going ashore, he found that the country abounded in wild grapes; and so he called it Vinland, or the land of Vines. Vinland is thought to have been a part of what is now the Rhode Island coast.

The Vikings were not aware that they had found a great unknown continent. No one in the more civilized parts of Europe knew anything about their discovery; and after a while the story of the Vinland voyages seems to have been forgotten, even among the Vikings themselves. So it is not to them that the world owes the discovery of America, but to Columbus; because his discovery, though nearly five hundred years later than that of the Norsemen, actually made known to all Europe, for all time, the existence of the New World.

In **789** three Viking ships arrived on the Wessex shore. In **793** the Vikings carried out their first raids on Northumbria and East Anglia.The intruders made these raids from Denmark and came to be known in English history as **the Danes**. The Danes were of the same Germanic race as the Anglo-Saxons. But unlike the Anglo-Saxons whose way of life had changed greatly ever since they came to Britain, the Danes were still pagans and lived in tribes. The Danes were skilful well-armed seamen. Their ships were long and swift. In the centre there was a single mast, which carried one large sail. The sails were often striped red, blue and green. For the most part, however, the Danes depended on rowing, not on the wind, as their ships were provided with oars and sometimes there were twenty rowers in one vessel. At the prow of the shop there was usually a carved dragon's head which rose high out of water.

The first Viking raids were hit-and-run affairs. There was no co-ordination and no long-term plan behind them. The raiders came in three or four ships with a hundred men on board of each. They came in spring or summer, and when the ship was loaded with plunder, they returned home for the winter. In later years large Danish fleets (more than 300 ships) brought larger armies to conquer and settle in the new lands. They made large well-guarded camps to make raids upon the villages in the area. The kingdom of England had neither a regular army nor a fleet to meet them. There were no coastguards to watch the coast and this made it possible for the raiders to appear unexpectedly. Besides, there were very few roads, and large parts of the country were covered with pathless forests or swamps. It took several weeks sometimes before a messenger could reach the nearest powerful noble to ask for help. So during a decade all England north of the Thames (Northumbria, Mercia and East Anglia) was invaded. In 795 the Danes crossed the Irish Sea and settled in Ireland. In **840** Dublin was founded as the millitary outpost of the Danes.

Only Wessex was left to face the enemy. It was not easy to devastate Wessex as it had united the small Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and became the centre of resistance against the invaders. During the years 835 – 871 numerous Danish attacks were defeated by Wessex king Egbert, his son Ethelwulf and elder grandsons Ethelbald, Ethelbert and Ethelred.

ALFRED THE GREAT (871-899) AND THE DANELAW

In 871 a remarkable young man had come to the throne. This was **Alfred**, the youngest grandson of Egbert, scholar, lawgiver, warrior and king, the first great statesman to emerge clearly from the mists of early English history. Of his physical appearance little can be said with confidence, but his biographer and friend, Asser, Bishop of Sherborne, painted a portrait of a man of exceptional gifts, devout and humane, devoted to the welfare of his people, as brave in battle as he was eager to study, always careful to make the best use of his time so that he could continue with his studies and translations without neglecting the cares and duties of government, even inventing a water clock to help him in this endeavour.

In battle against the Danes at Ashdown in the Berkshire hills Alfred fought "*like a wild boar*". But, although his enemies were then defeated, the Danish incursions into England were soon resumed. Some of Alfred's allies found it more expedient to cooperate with the Danes, and in 877 he was pushed back to a small corner of the marshes around Athelney, in Somerset. It is this time that is commemorated in the folk tale of Alfred and the griddle cakes. The story goes that Alfred was so low in his fortunes that he was forced to travel anonymously and seek lodging in a peasant woman's hut. Told to mind the cakes cooking on the fire, Alfred let his thoughts wander to his troubles. The cakes burnt, and the peasant woman gave her king a good scolding for his carelessness. True or not, the story illustrates the depth to which the young Alfred had sunk in his battle with the Danish invaders. Another legend says, though, that Alfred did not waste the time and came directly to the camp of the Danes where entertained them dressed as a minstrel and studied at the same time Danish military tactics and strategy.

Gradually the number of his supporters increased; and by 878 Alfred came out of the Athelney marshes and surprised the Danes under Guthrum at Edington, in Wiltshire. He was able to bring the Danes to battle once more and to defeat them decisively. After a thorough victory for Alfred, Guthrum was chased back to his base at Chippenham, where he was besieged for two weeks. Eventually Guthrum surrendered, and agreed to retreat from Wessex, and also to accept baptism as a Christian. Alfred did not risk to kill Guthrum as he was afraid that the revenge from the Continent would follow. Instead he obliged him to sign the treaty in 886. In the treaty the Danes promised to leave Wessex and a part of Mercia. They settled in the north-eastern part of England (Northumbria, East Anglia and a part of Mercia), a region which was from that time called the **Danelaw**, because it was ruled according to the law of the Danes. The great Roman road, Watling Street, was the boundary that separated the Danelaw from Wessex. The Danes submitted to the power of the Anglo-Saxon kings and never tried to make the Danelaw into a separate kingdom. They gave up piracy and in the course of time became peaceful peasants and traders, adopted Christianity, learnt the language of their neighbours and assimilated gradually with them. Many Scandinavian words came into English language at that time and are even used today. Such adjectives as *happy, weak, ill, ugly, low*, such verbs as *to take, to die, to call*, nouns like *law, sister, husband, sky, window, leg, wing*, geographical names ending in *by, toft (Derby, Lowestoft*) are examples of Scandinavian borrowings. The whole country was divided into shires

with the Danish market towns as their centures. That is the reason why the midland counties are nearly all named after their county towns (*Lincolnshire, Yorkhire, Derbyshire* and others).

Alfred was an innovator and a thinker, as well as a successful warrior. Taking advantage of the temporary peace, he began a policy encouraging the formation of fortified towns, or burhs, throughout his lands, such that no place in Wessex was more than 20 miles from a town. In exchange for free plots of land within the towns, settlers provided a defence force. The burhs were also encouraged to become centres of commerce and local government.

A levy of infantrymen made up of free peasants and an army of knights consisting of armoured landlords on horsebacks were formed. Only half of the infantrymen of the shire served in the army at a time, the others were occupied with their work at home. Thus all the free peasants were trained to fight. The places which could be easily attacked were fortified, and a strong navy was built to patrol the English Channel and to better meet the sea-faring Danes on their own terms. It forced many would-be invaders to turn their attention to northern France where their settlements became known as **Normandy**, the land of the men from the north.

In time of peace Alfred turned his attention to the restoration of English Christian culture, repairing pillaged churches, founding schools, setting scholars to work on the compilation of histories and the translation of texts, himself translating Bede's History. He sent for artisans, builders and scholars from the continent. Alfred demanded that all the priests and state officials should learn Latin, as the Bible and service-books were all in that language. Schools were set up in the monasteries and palaces. The books translated from Latin taught men about the history and the geography of the continent. Alfred ordered to write the history of England and to keep a record of the outstanding events of each year. Thus was written the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle which was continued for 250 years after Alfred's death. It is mainly from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that the books of today get their information of the events of English medieval history. Many Latin words came into Anglo-Saxon: *spade, mill, mable, chalk, school, paper*. Alfred also ordered to collect the old customs and laws followed by the Anglo-Saxons in Wessex and Mercia. New laws were added to the collection, the Code of English Law was drawn up. Everybody had to follow the laws of the kingdom.

From the depths of despair in 877, Alfred brought Anglo-Saxon England into a golden age of social stability and artistic accomplishment. He was one of the first kings who seems to have looked beyond his own personal glory to a vision of the future well-being of the nation he ruled. He has every right to be remembered as Alfred "The Great".

In the Footsteps of Alfred the Great

Following the death of Alfred the Great in 900 his son **Edward the Elder** and grandsons **Aethelstan** and **Edmund** won a series of victories that extended the power of Wessex north as far as present day Scotland. Edward the Elder, as skilled a soldier as his father though not so dedicated a scholar, and his daughter **Ethelfleda**, wife of Ethelred of Mercia, who ruled that kingdom after her husband's death as "*Lady of the Mercians*", kept the Danes at bay and constructed a system of defences by building fortified settlements at strategic points, including Bakewell in Derbyshire, Tamworth and Stafford, Hertford and Warwick. The Danelaw was reconquered and England was united as never before. Aethelstan could afford to call himself "*king of the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes*".

In **973** Edgar was not only accepted as King of the English by Saxons and Danes alike, but also acknowledged as their overlord by kings in Scotland and Wales. During the reign of King Edgar, '*the Peaceable'*, between 959 and 975 there was a late flowering of Anglo-Saxon art and culture

as well as an increase in the number of monastic houses for both men and women under the direction of **St Dunstan**, the scholar, musician and craftsman, maker of organs, bells and metal-work, who became the Abbot of Glastonbury in 940 and the Archbishop of Canterbury twenty years later.

Unfortunately, this was still a time when personal loyalty to a successful warrior king counted more than anything else. Dynasties were rare, and no realm was strong or stable independent of its leader. England was about to be saddled with a weak leader at just the wrong time. King Edgar's descendants were ill-suited to the task of defending England from renewed Viking invasions. His eldest son, Edward, was stabbed to death while he was still a boy; another son, **Ethelred**, who was crowned by St Dunstan when he was barely ten years old, was to be nick-named "**the Unready**" or "the Ill-advised" after the quarrel with Dunstan and the exile of the latter. Ethelred came to the throne when his mother had his half-brother Edward murdered, and things went downhill from there. In the **980**'s a new wave of Danish raids from the continent began. London was attacked and survived, but the surrounding countryside was hit hard. In 991 the fateful decision was made to buy off the raiders with a large payment. This payment, or **Danegeld** as it came to be known, set a dangerous precedent. Now the Danes knew that there was good money to be paid just for showing up. And each time the payment got bigger, from 10,000 pounds in 991 to a high of 82,500 pounds in 1018. This willingness to buy off the invaders with bribes angered the people, who were heavily taxed to meet the cost of the payments. The Danes, under Swein Forkbeard, were still a constant threat. In 1013 they became more than a threat. They sailed up the Trent and established a base at Gainsborough. From there Swein forced the submissions of first the north, then the southern kingdoms.

CANUTE THE VIKING (1017-1035)

"***Let all men know how empty and worthless is the power of kings. For there is none worthy of the name but God, whom heaven, earth and sea obey."***

So spoke King **Canute the Great**, the legend says, seated on his throne on the seashore, waves lapping round his feet. Canute had learned that his flattering courtiers claimed he was "*so great, he could command the tides of the sea to go back*". Now Canute was not only a religious man, but also a clever politician. He knew his limitations - even if his courtiers did not - so he had his throne carried to the seashore and sat on it as the tide came in, commanding the waves to advance no further. When they didn't, he had made his point that, though the deeds of kings might appear great in the minds of men, they were as nothing in the face of God's power.

Who was this man, who started his adult life as a Viking warrior and went on to become the ruler of an empire which, at its height, included England, Denmark, Norway and part of Sweden?

Canute (who is known as Knud in Denmark and Knut in Norway) was the son of Swein Forkbeard. Canute's grandfather was Harald Bluetooth and his great-grandfather was King Gorm.

In England, in the year 1000, the Saxon King Aethelred plundered the Isle of Man and parts of the Danelaw, to try to crush the independently-minded Scandinavians living there. Aethelred always feared a restoration of Viking power in England. In 1002 he married Emma, sister of Duke Richard of Normandy. This marriage was probably a political one. But Aethelred's fear of the Scandinavians caused him to make a serious mistake. In the year of his marriage to Emma, perhaps feeling more secure in his new links with the Norman ruling dynasty, he ordered the massacre of "*all Danish men*" in England. Swein Forkbeard's sister and his brother-in-law, Pallig, were amongst those killed and this brought Swein to England to avenge their deaths. Swein raided south and east England throughout the years 1003 and 1004, but took his army back to Denmark in 1005 when they could no longer support themselves because of a great famine in England. In 1013 he returned with his son Canute. This time he intended to conquer England. Though he landed his forces in southern England, he made the Danelaw his first objective, probably recognising that this province would accept him without too much resistance. He went on to conquer the rest of the country and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle recorded that *"...all the nation regarded him as full king*". Aethelred fled to Normandy. Swein, though, died the next year and Aethelred saw a chance to regain his kingdom. He returned from Normandy and managed to expel Swein's army, now under Canute's leadership.

In 1016 Canute returned and was victorious at the Battle of Ashingdon over Edmund 'Ironside', Aethelred's eldest son and successor. Canute and Edmund drew up the Treaty of Olney, which allotted the Danelaw and the English midlands to Canute, while Edmund retained control of southern England. This was almost a repeat of what had happened between King Alfred the Great of Wessex and the Vikings in the ninth century. Edmund died shortly after this treaty and so Canute found himself the first Viking king of all England.

In 1017 Canute married Aethelred's widow, Emma. But her two sons by her first marriage remained in Normandy. Emma had two children by Canute, Harthacnut and Gunhild. Canute was a Christian and very religious-minded.

Canute's brother, Harald, King of Denmark, died in 1018 and Canute went to Denmark to secure his hold over that realm. Two years later, Canute started to lay claim to Norway, eventually capturing it. Scotland also submitted to Canute and, by the late 1020s, Canute was able to claim to be "*king of all England, and of Denmark, of the Norwegians, and part of the Swedes"***.** He was perhaps the first king to successfully rule over a truly united realm of England, free from internal and external strife. Because he also ruled the Viking homelands, he was able to protect England against attacks, maintaining twenty years of peace during which trade, Anglo-Scandinavian art and Christianity were able to flourish. Canute had great respect for the old English laws, to which he brought a keen sense of justice and a regard for individual rights. He made England the centre of his power and divided it into four parts called earldoms: *Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria* and *East Anglia*. He continued to collect the Danegeld tax and used the money to support a bodyguard of thousands professional fighting men and a large fleet. The old laws and the rights of the Anglo-Saxon lords were preserved. Most people still lived in country villages. But perhaps as many as ten per cent were now town-dwellers; and several towns, notably *Winchester, Norwich* and *York*, were growing fast, as were ports like *Southampton* from which the English exported their textiles, metalwork and foodstuffs, as well as the slaves and the hunting dogs for which they had long been celebrated. London's population had risen to about fifteen thousand.

Canute died in 1035, a relatively young man by today's measure, aged about forty. He was buried in Winchester, the former capital of the Saxon kingdom of Wessex and a town where he was often in residence.

Canute's sons, unfortunately, were not made of the same stuff as their father, so on his death, the Anglo-Scandinavian empire he had acquired began to break up. Harald, son of Canute's mistress Aelfgifu, became king of England but died in 1040. Harthacnut then ruled for only two years before he, too, died, leaving behind little to remember him by other than the huge taxes he imposed. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle said of him, "*He did nothing worthy of a king as long as he ruled*".

None of Canute's children produced any heirs and it was one of Emma's sons by Aethelred, Edward, who returned from Normandy to ascend to the English throne in 1042.

THE LAST ANGLO-SAXON RULE

Edward, later to be called "**Edward the Confessor**" for his religious bent, had lived in Normandy for 25 years in exile. He was Norman in his outlook and he appointed Norman councillors and church leaders. Edward the Confessor was an extremely religious man, and he made it his dream to build a vast monastery and church at an island on the Thames just upriver from the city. He is chiefly remembered as being the founder of **Westminster Abbey**. The site of the abbey is now a part of Greater London, but it was then an isolated patch of land beside the Thames. The court was moved to Westminster to be close to the works. This separation of court and city became a problem in later years when London tended to be in the forefront of insurrection and anti-royalist movement.

Edward approached old age without a son to succeed him. In the interests of continuity he was expected to name an heir. As soon as it was learned that Edward was dying no fewer than four men laid claim to the English throne, the King of Norway, the Duke of Normandy, and two brothers of Edward's Queen, Edith, one of whom, Tostig, the deposed Earl of Northumbria, was living in exile in Flanders. The two chief candidates were **Harold Godwinson**, a prominent earl of Wessex and the second brother, and **William, Duke of Normandy**. It may have happened that Edward named Harold as his heir, who immediately took advantage of his rivals' absence from the country to have himself crowned in the new Abbey of Westminster on the very day that its founder was buried there on January 5,1066.

The Battle of Hastings

When October 14, 1066

Where Battle, north of Hastings, East Sussex

Who Saxons under Harold, King of England vs. Norman French under Duke William of Normandy

Why When Harold was crowned king, William was furious, claiming that in 1051 Edward, a distant cousin, had promised him the throne and that Harold himself had later sworn a sacred oath to relinquish his claim in William's favour. William prepared an invasion fleet and, armed with a papal bull declaring his right to the throne, he intended to cross the English Channel to land near Pevensey. Harold was ready. As luck or providence would have it, a spell of bad weather kept the invasion fleet from sailing for so long that Harold had no choice but to send home his levied troops, who owed him only a limited amount of service, and put his own fleet into port in London. Shortly afterwards Tostig's men invaded Kent, then sailed up the east coast to pour ashore in Lincolnshire. Defeated by local levies, Tostig retreated north. Then word came of an invasion in the north by **Harald Hardrada**, the King of Norway and a son-in-law of Kievan Prince Yaroslav the Wise. Scandinavian warriors were soon sailing up the Humber towards York to help Tostig. Informed of this second invasion, King Harold rushed north, won a brilliant victory at **Stamford Bridge** and, leaving both his brother, Tostig, and the King of Norway dead, brought his exhausted troops back to the Sussex to face the army of the Duke of Normandy which, as the wind had subsided, was able to make an unopposed crossing to the English shore near Hastings. On 14 October 1066 the two armies clashed in a hard-fought battle at Battle.

The Battle

The Normans were superior in forces and military tactics. The Norman army was drawn up in a different formation: in front there were the footmen (archers, pikemen, swordmen) followed by

the horsemen. In front of the cavalry rode a singer, who sang songs of battle and victory. William himself led the centre of the Norman army, and it is said that he carried into battle some of the holy relics upon which Harold had sworn to cede the crown to him.

The Normans began to attack with flights of arrows, then followed the attacks of the cavalry. The Anglo-Saxon earls were ready to join with any victor and moved slowly towards Hastings. Harold had only the men of Wessex under his command. They took the defensive position inside the palisade on a hill-top with the king's bodyguard in the centre and other troops on the flanks. Standing shoulder to shoulder with their shields they made a wall in front. Stakes were driven into the ground so that the horsemen could not break the ranks of the infantry. But when some of the Norman horsemen turned and fled pretending to retreat, a large group of Saxons left their position to chase them. It was a fatal mistake, as William rallied his men and routed the unprotected attackers. The Saxon lines quickly closed, but they had not learned their lesson, and they repeated the same folly of chasing an apparently fleeing enemy twice more as the day wore on. The Normans killed many of the Anglo-Saxons in the pursuit. Most of those who remained inside the palisade were slain by the arrows shot in the air. It is then that the most famous arrow in English history was released by an anonymous Norman archer. The arrow took King Harold in the eye and killed him where he stood. Anglo-Saxon England perished with Harold's death.

After the victory at Hastings the Normans encircled London and the Witenagemot had to acknowledge **William I the Conqueror** as the lawful king of England. On Christmas Day 1066 he was crowned in Westminster Abbey. In 1068 the Normans conquered the West, in 1069 they subdued central and northern England. But the free peasantry of the North-East still resisted to the invaders. In 1071 the subjunction of the country was completed. All the uprisings were put down, the rebelious villages being completely destroyed. Norman aristocracy became the new governing class and English bishops were replaced with Norman ones.

A Student's page 4(photocopiable)

Vocabulary notes:

earldom - domain controlled by an earl, a nobleman of high rank
infantrymen - soldiers who fight on foot
levy – a group of armed people purposely organized to protect the settlement against the possible attacks
oar – a long pole, flat at one end, used for moving a boat along the river

Compendium

DANISH RAIDS

Who? The Northmen from Norway, Sweden and Denmark known also as the Vikings or the Danes. They were still pagans and lived in tribes. The Danes were skilful well-armed seamen on sailing-boats provided with oars.

Dates

793 – first plunder raids
871 - The Danes invade Wessex
871-899 – Reign of Alfred the Great, the Danes are defeated
886 – Treaty, fixing the boundaries of Danelaw. The whole country is divided into shires with the Danish market towns as their centures.
1017-1035 – Reign of the Danish king Canute
1042-1066 - Reign of the last Anglo-Saxon king Edward the Confessor
1065 – Westminster Abbey is blessed
1066, October 14 – the Battle at Hastings, William, Duke of Normandy, kills Edward's heir Harold, gains the British crown

Personalities

Alfred the Great (871-899), Egbert's grandson.
Contribution:
1) *military* - new rules for the army, levy of infantrymen of free peasants (half of the shire at a time), an army armoured landlords on horsebacks, -the first British Navy, -the places which could be easily attacked fortified;
2) *cultural* - artisans, builders and scholars from the continent, -all the priests and state officials ordered to learn Latin, -schools set up in the monasteries and palaces, -the books translated from Latin, -the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (record of the outstanding events of each year) and the *Code of English Law* (collection of customs and laws) drawn up.

King Canute (1017-1035) became king of Denmark, Norway and England.
Contribution:
-divided England into 4 parts called earldoms: Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria and East Anglia, -supported a bodyguard of thousands professional fighting men and a large fleet, - preserved old laws and the rights of the Anglo-Saxon lords, - protected monasteries and education.

Language

Latin words: *spade, mill, mable, chalk, school, paper*.
Scandinavian words: *law, sister, husband, happy, weak, ill, ugly, low, sky,* geographical names ending in *by, toft: Derby, Lowestoft*.

Comprehension check:

1. Speak about the raids on Britain by the Danes. What territory of Britain did the Danes manage to conquer?
2. What measures were taken by Alfred's government to strengthen the defence and to raise the level of culture in the country?
3. What were the conditions of the treaty concluded in 886?
4. How did the Danish settlers in England influence the development of the country in the 10^{th} – 11^{th} centuries?
5. How did Canute secure his power in England?
6. What were the reasons and the pretext for the Norman invasion?
7. Describe the battle of Hastings. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the positions of Anglo-Saxon and Norman armies. What were the reasons for the defeat of the Anglo-Saxons?

A Cultural Reader

Scan the texts and fill in the chart:

	Westminster Abbey	**Saint Sophia Cathedral**
History of building		
Reasons for building		
People contributed to its history		
Connection to royal/prince family		
Interior		
Attractions		

Westminster Abbey, London (formal name is the **Collegiate Church of St Peter, Westminster**) is a Gothic monastery church that is a traditional place of coronation and a burial site for English monarchs. Neither a cathedral nor a parish church, Westminster Abbey is a church owned directly by the royal family.

North entrance of Westminster Abbey and St. Margaret's Church

The tomb of Sir Isaac Newton

The historic coronation throne

A shrine is believed to be first founded in 616 on the site then known as Thorney Island. It was said to have been miraculously consecrated after a fisherman on the River Thames saw a vision of Saint Peter. While the existence of this shrine is uncertain, the historic Abbey was built by

Edward the Confessor between 1045-1050 and was consecrated on December 28, 1065. Its construction originated in Edward's failure to keep a vow to go on a pilgrimage; the Pope suggested that he redeem himself by building an Abbey.

The original Abbey, in the Romanesque style that is called "Norman" in England, was built to house Benedictine monks. It was rebuilt in the Gothic style between 1245-1517. The first phase of the rebuilding was organised by Henry III, in Gothic style, as a shrine to honour Edward the Confessor and as a suitably regal setting for Henry's own tomb, under the highest Gothic nave in England.

The work was largely finished by the architect Henry Yevele in the reign of King Richard II. Henry VII added a Perpendicular style chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary in 1503 (known as the Henry VII Lady Chapel).

Although the Abbey was seized by Henry VIII during the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1534, and closed in 1540, its royal connections saved it from the destruction. The expression "*robbing Peter to pay Paul*" may arise from this period when money meant for the Abbey, which was dedicated to St. Peter, was diverted to the treasury of St. Paul's Cathedral.

It suffered damage during 1640s, when it was attacked by Puritans, but was again protected by its close ties to the state during the Republican period. Oliver Cromwell was given an elaborate funeral there in 1658.

The Abbey was restored to the Benedictines under Queen Mary, but they were again ejected under Queen Elizabeth I in 1559. In 1579, Elizabeth re-established Westminster as a church responsible directly to the sovereign and made it the Collegiate Church of St. Peter, (i.e. a church with an attached chapter of canons, headed by a dean).

The abbey's two western towers were built between 1722 and 1745 by Sir Christopher Wren and Nicholas Hawksmoor, constructed as an early example of a Gothic Revival design. Further rebuilding and restoration occurred in the 19th century under Sir George Gilbert Scott.

Until the 19th century, Westminster was the third seat of learning in England, after Oxford and Cambridge. It was here that the first third of the King James Bible Old Testament and the last half of the New Testament were translated. The New English Bible was also put together here in the 20th century.

Since the Christmas Day coronation of William the Conqueror in 1066, all English monarchs (except Lady Jane Grey, Edward V and Edward VIII, who did not have coronations) have been crowned in the Abbey. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the traditional cleric in the coronation ceremony. St. Edward's Chair, the throne on which British sovereigns are seated at the moment of coronation, is housed within the Abbey.

Henry III rebuilt the Abbey in honour of the Royal Saint Edward the Confessor, whose memorial and relics were placed in the Sanctuary. The **Shrine of St. Edward the Confessor** has been the focus of pilgrimages to Westminster Abbey since the Middle Ages.

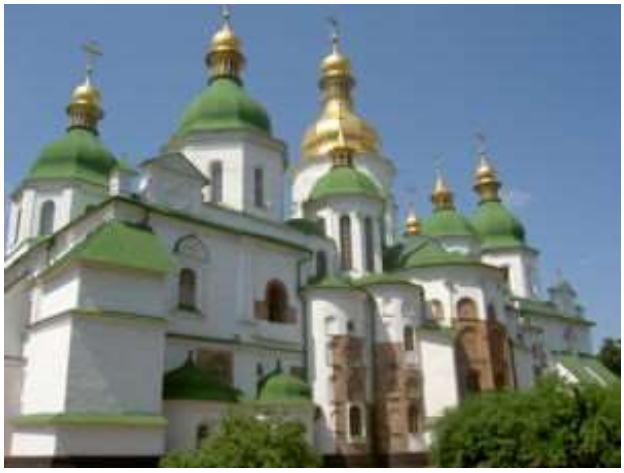
Henry III was buried nearby as were the Plantagenet kings of England, their wives and relatives. Subsequently, most English kings and queens were buried here. However, Henry VIII and Charles I are buried at St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, as all royals have been since George II.

Aristocrats were buried in side chapels of Westminster Abbey and monks and people associated with the Abbey were buried in the cloisters and other areas. One of these was **Geoffrey Chaucer**, who was buried here because he had apartments in the Abbey as he was employed as master of the Kings Works.

Other poets were buried around Chaucer in what became known as ***Poets' Corner***. Abbey musicians such as Henry Purcell were also buried in their place of work. Subsequently it became a great honour to be buried or memorialized here. There are memorials to Chaucer, Shakespeare, Walter Scott and Shelly. The practice spread from aristocrats and poets to generals, admirals, politicians, scientists, doctors, and others.

The **interior** of the Abbey is one of the finest achievements of English architecture. Built with the use of green, grey and purple marble, it has the tallest Gothic nave in the country. In the **Museum of Abbey Treasures** you can see models of the Crown Jewels, used for coronnation rehearsals. There are also lifelike models of famous people made after their death including Elizabeth of York, whose face is traditionally copied to picture the queens on playing cards.

Saint Sophia Cathedral, **Kiev,** is an outstanding architectural monument of Kievan Rus. Today, it is one of the city's best known landmarks and the first Ukrainian patrimony to be inscribed on the World Heritage List.



The complex of the Cathedral is the main component of the National Sanctuary "Sophia of Kiev", the state institution responsible for the preservation of the Cathedral complex along with several other historic landmarks of the city.

The legend goes that, when Prince Vladimir set out to choose a faith for Kievan Rus, he sent emissaries to collect information about various existing religions. When the emissaries returned from Constantinople, they were so awed by the Byzantine architecture and design of the *Hagia Sophia* that they did not know if they were "*in Heaven or on Earth*". So the cathedral's name comes from the Hagia Sophia cathedral. According to a less popular theory, its model was the 13-domed oaken Saint Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod, which Yaroslav I the Wise determined to imitate in stone as a sign of gratitude to the citizens of Novgorod who had helped him secure the Kievan throne in 1019. Whatever the case, St. Sophia’s Cathedral remains an important historical, cultural, and religious symbol for Kiev, Ukraine, and Orthodoxy. The first school and library with more than a thousand books were situated there.

The first foundations were laid in 1037 but the cathedral took two decades to complete. The structure has 5 naves, 5 apses, and 13 cupolas. It is surrounded by two-tier galleries from three sides. Measuring 37 by 55 meters, the exterior used to be faced with plinths. On the inside, it retains mosaics and frescos from the eleventh century, including a dilapidated representation of Yaroslav's family. The family portrait is made of 25 figures on the southern, northern and western walls. The mosaic of the **Goddess Oranta** is 5.45 metres high.

Originally the cathedral was a burial place of the Kievan rulers including Vladimir Monomakh, Vsevolod Yaroslavich and the cathedral's founder Yaroslav I the Wise, although only the latter's grave survived to our days. After the pillaging by Mongolian Tatars in 1240 the cathedral fell into disrepair.

Following the 1595-96 Union of Brest, the cathedral of Saint Sophia belonged to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church until it was claimed by the Ukrainian Orthodox metropolitan Peter Mogila in 1633. Mogila commissioned the repair work and the upper part of the building was thoroughly rebuilt, modelled by the Italian architect Octaviano Mancini in the distinct **Ukrainian Baroque style**, while preserving the byzantine interior, keeping its splendor intact. The work continued under the Cossack Hetman Ivan Mazepa, and in 1740 the Cathedral was completed to its present form. The four-storeyed, azure and white, stone Bell Tower (16 metres high) and Refectory, which now houses archeological and architectural displays.

After the Russian Revolution of 1917 and during the Soviet antireligious campaign of the 1920's, the government plan called for the cathedral's destruction and transformation of the grounds into a park "*Heroes of Perekop*" (after a Red Army victory in the Russian Civil War in Crimea). The cathedral was saved from destruction primarily with the effort of many scientists and historians. Nevertheless, in 1934, Soviet authorities confiscated the structure, including the surrounding seventeenth–eighteenth century architectural complex and designated it as an architectural and historical museum.

On August 21, 2007, the Saint Sophia Cathedral was named one of the Seven Wonders of Ukraine, based on a voting by experts and the internet community. The complex now remains a museum of Ukraine's Christianity, with most of its visitors being tourists.

A Consolidation Page 2 *(photocopiable)*

1. Fill in the chart with the necessary informartion:

	Celts	Romans	Anglo-Saxons
Appearance			
Clothes			
Favourite food			
Dwellings			
Basic occupations			
Social structure			

2. Match two statements from columns A and B into a compound sentence with the conjunction "so":

1

A	B
1. Brythons fought fiercly against Anglo-Saxon invaders	a) in the course of time the Roman towns and villas were destroyed
2. The invaders managed to conquer the greater part of the island	b) soon Anglo-Saxon nobles became great landowners
3. The Anglo-Saxons preferred to live in small villages	c) the Romanised Celts had to escape to the mountainous western and northern parts of the country
4. The tribal nobility took possession of large tracks of land	d) the Archibishop of Canterbury is now Head of the Church of England
5. The first Christian church was built in the capital of Kent, Canterbury	e) it took more than 150 years for the Angles, Saxons and Jutes to conquer the country
6. The synod of Whitby in 664 decided in favour of the new Roman form of Christianity	f) the new contacts with European civilisation were established

2

A	B
1. The Anglo-Saxons had to stop constant attacks of the Danes	a) they signed the peace treaty, which divided the country into 2 parts
2. The Danes went to different places every year	b) today many counties on the former Danelaw territory have similar names to the main city
3. Alfred the Great failed to push the Danes away from Britain	c) they paid the tribute called Danegeld
4. The Anglo-Saxon villages were fortified and secured	d) they had to unite in order not to lose their independence completely
5. Each Danish shire had a market town	e) he soon lost control over its biggest part
6. In 991, the Anglo-Saxons were unable to resist the Danes	f) they made the basis for the first English towns
7. The empire of Canute included three distant countries	g) all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms experienced Danish raids

3. Explain the origin of the following descriptions of King Alfred. Choose the variant which characterises him best of all. Prove your choice: - *the founder of the English fleet,* - *the king who burnt cakes,* - *the king who stopped the Danes,* - *the first English translator from Latin,* - *many-sided genius*.

4. Rank the following events of 5th-11th centuries to their importance. Discuss your choice in groups.

1. Conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity.
2. Political unification of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.
3. "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" was started by King Alfred.
4. The Code of English law was drawn up.

CHAPTER 5
NORMAN RULE (1066 – 1154)

"He had castles built
And the poor men hard oppressed.
The king was very stark
And took from his subjects many a mark
Of gold and more hundreds of pounds of silver,
Into avarice did he fall
And loved greediness above all ...
... Powerful men complained of it
And poor men lamented it.
But he was so ruthless that he minded not their hatred.
And they had to follow out
The king's will entirely
If they wished to live or hold their lands."
From the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle about William I

THE HOUSE OF NORMANY

The turning point in European history was the Norman invasion of England in 1066. England had seen Scandinavian invasions before; these invasions and the subsequent emigrations had carved out an entire Danish kingdom in the north of England, the Danelaw. When the Norman descendants of Scandinavian raiders returned in the eleventh century, they gained control over Anglo-Saxon England and would eventually be responsible for English supremacy over most of Britain.

In the 9th century, while the Danes were plundering England, another branch of Northmen who were related to the Danes were doing the same along the Northern coasts of France. They came to be called the **Normans**, a variation of the word "Northmen". In 911, a group of Scandinavian raiders under the leadership of Rolv the Ganger (Rollo) sailed up the Seine and forced the French king to cede French territory. The price the king asked was for Rollo to become a subject of the king and swear loyalty. This he did, and the Norsemen settled a very small area in the north of France. The territory is still called Normandy after the Normans.

Rollo, however, considered himself to be an independent ruler and aggressively set about increasing the territory under his control. This constant expansion of territory would become the hallmark of the Norman experience in history.

Many changes came about in the life of the Normans and the Danes after the 9th century. By the 11th century the Danes had finally settled down as subjects of the English kings. As time went on, they gradually mixed with the Anglo-Saxons among whom they lived. Thus they retained their Germanic language and many of their customs that were very much like those of the Anglo-Saxons. But the Scandinavians who settled Normandy were now quite different from their Germanic forefathers. The Normans lived among the French people, who had different manners, customs and language. They very quickly adopted the religion, customs, and language of the surrounding French populations. Rollo converted to Catholicism, but the adoption of French culture and language did not immediately alter the social structure of the Norman lords. From 911 until 980, the history of the Normans is one of constant blood-feuds and territorial battles, a history similar to that played out in early Scandinavia, the Danelaw in England, and Iceland.

Around 980, however, the Normans began to develop a unique set of institutions that would rise them up into the front rank of European power and cultural influence. Normandy was in name a **duchy of France**, but the Norman dukes ruled the area as if it were an independent kingdom with little interference from the French king. The most significant event in early Norman history was the placing of Hugh Capet on the throne of France—the Capetians only gained the throne through the help of the Normans and in gratitude, they allowed the Normans to operate independently.

Once free from monarchical intrusion, the Norman dukes began to solidify an administrative system over their territories. This system became the model for subsequent medieval government: the **feudal system**. The word *"feudal"* comes from the word *"feud"*. A feudal obligation, then, was essentially built off of clan or tribal protection. For the early tribal Scandinavians, the only way to enforce law was through clan protection and blood-feuds. Should a crime be committed against a member of the clan, it was the job of the entire clan to either seek retribution or enforce a penalty. It was on this ground that the dukes of Normandy built their feudal system. Under this system, lay nobility were allowed to control a certain amount of territory. They were required, however, to enter into oaths to the duke; these oaths demanded their military service should the duke require it. The feudal system allowed the Norman dukes to control a vast amount of territory independently of the Capetian kings. It gave the dukes large military resources guaranteed through a network of loyalties. From Normandy, the feudal system spread rapidly first to Italy and then France—with **Duke William II, the Bastard**, this new and powerful form of government would cross the channel to England.

By the 11th century the dukes of Normandy had greater domains than the kings, they coined their own money, made their own laws, held their own courts, built their own castles. They could wage wars against other dukes and even against the king himself. As a well-armed and well-trained cavalry, the Norman knights were the best in Europe. They were formidable fighters and would wage wars in order to seize new lands and serfs.

The dukes maintained relations with foreign kings, especially the king of England. Emma, sister of the Norman Richard II, married King Ethelred II of England. Norman dukes appointed family members to positions as counts and viscounts. They held on to some territory in Scandinavia and the right to enter those lands by sea. The Norman dukes also ensured that their vassal lords did not get too powerful. The Norman dukes thus had more authority over their own domains than other territorial princes in Northern France.

William's conquest of England opened up more land to the dukes. The aristocracy was composed of a small group of Scandinavian men, while the majority of the Norman political leaders were of Frankish descent. With a growing scarcity of land in the eleventh century, some Norman lords also migrated to Italy where they carved out their own independent Norman duchies. Italy had remained a largely non-urbanized country since the sixth century. The establishment of Norman duchies and the feudal system in Italy was the primary reason for the recovery of Italy in the later middle ages.

In 1027 - 1035 the Duke of Normandy was **Robert the Magnificent** (1000 – 1035), also called Robert the Devil and Robert I or II. He was the son of Richard II of Normandy and Judith, daughter of Conan I of Rennes. When his father died, his elder brother Richard succeeded. When Richard died a year later, there were great suspicions that Robert had Richard murdered, hence his other nickname, *"Robert le diable"* ("the devil"). He is sometimes identified with the legendary Robert the Devil. According to a legend of medieval origin, Robert is the devil's own child, for his mother, despairing of heaven's aid in order to obtain a son, has addressed herself to the devil. From the moment of his birth, the boy shows his vicious instincts, which urge him, when grown to manhood, to a career of monstrous crime. At last the horror which he inspires everywhere causes him to reflect, and, having found out the awful secret of his birth, he hastens to Rome to confess to the pope. He undergoes the penance, living in the disguise of a fool at the emperor's court in Rome. Three times he delivers the city from the assault of the Saracens, but, refusing all reward, he ends his life as a pious hermit. According to another version he marries the emperor's daughter, whose love he has won in his humble disguise, and succeeds to the throne.

King Robert aided King Henry I of France against Henry's rebellious brother and mother. He also intervened in the affairs of Flanders, supported Edward the Confessor, who was then in exile at Robert's court, and sponsored monastic reform in Normandy.

By his mistress, Herleva of Falaise, he was father of the future William I. After making his illegitimate son William his heir, he set out on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He travelled by way of Constantinople, reached Jerusalem, and died on the return journey in 1035. Some sources attribute his death to poison. His son William, aged about eight, succeeded him.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR (c.1028 - c.1087) AND THE SUBJUGATION OF ENGLAND

William, Duke of Normandy, the Conqueror, was born in around 1028, in Falaise, Normandy, the illegitimate son of Robert I, Duke of Normandy. He was thus known as "William the Bastard" to his contemporaries. On his father's death in 1035, William was recognised as heir, with his great uncle serving as regent. In 1042 he began to take more personal control. From 1046 until 1055 he dealt with a series of baronial rebellions. William's political and military successes helped him in negotiations to marry Matilda, daughter of Count Baldwin of Flanders in 1053. William was then nearly forty years old. He is known to have been about five feet ten inches in height, far taller than his minute wife, very strong and rather fat with reddish hair and a harsh voice. He was violent, domineering, calculating and avaricious, a man to fear. But he was a faithful Christian and husband.

The first years of his reign in England were spent crushing resistance and securing his borders, which he did with ruthless efficiency. He invaded Scotland in 1072 and concluded a truce with the Scottish king. He marched into Wales in 1081 and created special defensive "marcher" counties along the borders. The last serious rebellion, the Revolt of the Earls, took place in 1075. All the uprisings were put down and the rebels were punished severely. William showed no mercy: great tracts of countryside were laid waste, and towns as far apart as Exeter and Durham were made to suffer his wrath. The Normans introduced the Law of Englishry which decreed that any corpse was presumed to be that of a Norman unless it could be proved to be that of an Englishman and, on that presumption, a heavy fine was to be paid by the village nearest to the place where the body had been found. No fines were levied for dead Englishmen.

William I declared that all the lands of England belonged to him by the right of conquest. The estates of all the Anglo-Saxon lords who had supported Harold or acknowledged as king were confiscated. One-seventh of the country was made the royal domain, which consisted of 1420 estates. The forest lands, which made up one-third of the country, belonged to the king too. Large forests were turned into reserves for the royal hunting. Special Forest Laws about hunting were issued. Anyone who dared to hunt in the royal forests without the king's permission was threatened with severe punishment. William himself was very fond of hunting. He chose a place near Salisbury in order to make it an enormous hunting ground. Sixty villages were destroyed, houses and churches were burnt to the ground, hundreds of Anglo-Saxon peasants were driven from their lands. The wide space was called the New Forest.

By the time of the conquest, system of land tenure known as **feudalism**, already developing in Anglo-Saxon times, had become an accepted way of life. In accordance with this system,

William had given his followers — Bretons and Flemings as well as Normans — large estates in England, all of which he was deemed to own personally, scattering the estates far and wide over the country, so that those who held them could not easily unite to rebel against the king. The more powerful barons were granted from 100 to 400 estates and some of them still more. The monasteries were granted 1700 estates and became the chief owners of the English lands. Those granted the land became tenants-in-chief of the King, to whom they were obliged to swear loyalty and for whom they were required, when necessary, to perform military service with an appropriate number of knights. They were also required, when summoned, to serve **on the Grand Council** — the successor of the Witan, the council of the Anglo-Saxon kings — from which Parliament was eventually to develop. One of the functions of the Great Council was to act as the king's Supreme Court and it presided over all serious trials.

The tenants-in-chief retained as much of the land granted them as they wished, distributing the rest to knights as sub-tenants, who in turn allocated parts of them to the men who actually worked in the fields, either as freeholders or as serfs. These workers at the bottom of the feudal scale paid for their respective shares by serving their master when called upon to do so and by working in their own fields for stipulated periods. The freehold tenants were allowed to leave the land if they wished and to settle elsewhere; but the far larger number of serfs or villeins were tied to the land of their lord and, in most cases, could gain their freedom only by paying for it or by running away to a town where, provided they had not been recaptured within four days, a court order would be required to bring them back into servitude.

William the Conqueror made not only the great landowners but also their vassals swear allegiance to him directly. In 1086 at a great gathering of knights in Salisbury, William made all of them take a special oath to be loyal to him against all his enemies. Thus a knight who held a land from a great baron became the king's vassal. If a great lord rebelled against the king, the lesser vassals were to fight for the king, against their immediate overlord.

Another change which William I introduced to reduce the power of the great lords was the abolition of the great earldoms – Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex, that had been established in the reign of the Danish King Canute. The country was divided into shires (*counties* in French). William appointed a royal official in each shire to be his **"sheriff"**. Through the sheriffs the king exercised control over all his vassals. The sheriff administered justice in the shire, he presided in the king's name over the shire-courts. The sheriff also collected taxes paid to the royal treasury and his duty was to see that all the royal dues were paid in full and in time. Besides, the sheriff was responsible for the gathering of an army for the king. It was his duty to see that they were ready to perform military service when they were called up. If necessary, the sheriff could call up an army for the king in two or three days. The landlords, on the other hand, needed a much longer time to collect their vassals from all the scattered estates.

In the reign of William the Conqueror there was more trade and travelling than before. William took severely measures to establish peace in the country. More merchants and travellers could move about without fear of losing their goods, being robbed or murdered. Trade connections with Normandy permitted the extension of trade on the Continent: trading was no longer limited to England. Towns began to grow and the townspeople paid high taxes to the royal treasury. However, they gave William their full support for granting them certain privileges and for protecting trade.

The Domesday Book

In order to have a reliable record of all his lands, his tenants and their possessions and to discover how much they could be called upon to pay by way of taxes, William ordered the compilation of the inventory of his assets known as **Domesday Book**, now to be seen in the Public Record Office. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle says: *"In 1086 William the Conqueror sent his men all over England, into every shire to find out what property every inhabitant of all England possessed in land, or in cattle and how much money this was worth ... and then all these writings were brought to him"*. Before the arrival of the royal officials a special comission prepared the necessary information in each shire. The comission consisted of the sheriff, the lord of the state, the priest, the hundred-elder and six peasants. They would write down the name of the village owner and the number of the village dwellers, measure plough-land, meadows, pasture, woodland, fishponds, count mills, ploughs, oxen in the village. Then the royal officials would arrive with a number of warriors. One of the officials knew both the English and the Latin languages and could act as an interpreter. The villagers would give their answers in English but the official would have to write them down in Latin. After the members of the comission had taken a solemn oath to tell "the whole truth", the royal official began to ask questions. As each question was answered and interpreted into Latin, another official wrote it down on a sheet of parchment. The Anglo-Saxons were afraid of the registration and hated it. The villagers were threatened to be punished on doomsday in case they did not tell the whole truth. That is why probably the book in which all these accounts were written was called the Domesday Book. All the king's vassals were registered in the Domesday Book. William I knew the exact number of their estates, and he demanded that when he called upon them, they should bring a certain number of their retainers in proportion to the value of their estates. From this it appeared that in 1086 about half the cultivated land in the country was in the hands of 170 tenants-in-chief, only two of whom were English barons. Thus the registration consolidated the position of the conquerors. Moreover, a heavy property tax was imposed on the population of England.

The Norman Castles

The new masters were strangers in the country. They had different manners, customs and laws from those of the conquered people. They spoke a foreign tongue and the Anglo-Saxon peasants

could not understand their speech. The Anglo-Saxons felt great hatred towards their new masters. The Normans did not feel safe in the conquered country. They were few in number but they were harsh and cruel rulers. They punished those who dared to disobey severely, intimidated and suppressed the conquered people. The Norman noble considered war his chief occupation. Each noble was a knight, or a fully armed mounted warrior. They could fight skillfully on horseback, but they were coarse and ignorant. They were not taught to read and write. They spent their childhood and youth in military training and as they grew up, they spent their time in wars or feasting with the guests in the halls of their castles. To the English serfs the most obvious symbols of the power of their new landlords and masters were the castles that appeared all over England, no fewer than five hundred of them within a generation of the Normans' coming. The great castle of Durham was built to protect northern England from the raids of the Scots. Another fortress was built on the river Tyne and was called Newcastle. Others were to be built with every passing year. They were nearly all royal castles. No other person was allowed to build a castle without the king's permission. The earliest castles were usually of wood and quite simple in design. Constructed on an earthen mound, surrounded by a ditch, they comprised a tall tower enclosed on all sides by a palisaded rampart. The ditch was usually filled with water, and a drawbridge led across it to the castle's single gate. The great Windsor Castle and the Tower of London were first built in this way. As time passed, however, castles were required to serve not only as garrisons, supply bases and fortified centres of administration, but also as noble dwellings. They still had to be formidable fortresses with immensely thick walls, high towers and moats, with a staircase on an outside wall leading to a heavy, well-protected door on an upper floor. But there also had to be sleeping chambers on the upper storeys, dining halls, chapels and, in the larger castles, series of rooms known collectively as the wardrobe where clothes were kept and valuable household stores, including expensive spices, were deposited in locked chests with jewels and plate.The chief tower where the baron and his family lived was called the keep. Between the keep and the outer massive wall there was a court where stood the stables for horses and houses for servants. Such castles, ruined, restored or rebuilt, can be seen in every county.

The Church of England

William took a deep interest in the development of the Church in England, encouraging the efforts of the Italian-born Lanfranc — whom he had summoned from Normandy to install as the Archbishop of Canterbury — to bring a characteristic Norman efficiency into the administration of ecclesiastical affairs and to take the English Church closer to Rome. The Church of England became not only the greatest feudal lord in the country with special privileges, but also assumed certain state functions. William established separate churh courts which decided all cases that concerned marriages, wills and accusations against the clerics. Many new churches and cathedrals were built all over the country. And the clergy preached up William's power and

threatened anyone who dared to disobey the king with God's punishment. Much gold, silver and precious stones were sent as gifts to Rome. Yet the King, for all his professed regard for the Pope and the Roman Church, took care to maintain his own independence: no bishop might visit Rome or even write to the Pope without his permission; no excommunications might be imposed in his large realm without his express consent. Although William's determination to be supreme in Church as he was in State often brought Lanfranc into dispute with the Pope, the Archbishop remained as loyal as he was devoted to the King; and when news of the death of the Conqueror was brought to him, he was so prostrated by grief that his monks thought that he too might die.

With the kingdom increasingly settled, William spent most of his last 15 years in Normandy, leaving the government of England to regents, usually clergymen. He spent the last months of his reign fighting the French king Philip I. He died on 9 September 1087 from injuries received when he fell off his horse at the Siege of Mantes. Before his death William divided his property amongst his three sons. William II Rufus got England, Robert got Normandy, and Henry got money.

In the Norman town of Bayeux, in the museum, one can see a strip of canvas about 70 metres long and half a metre wide embroidered with very well-defined pictures which tell the whole story of the Norman Conquest. That is the famous **Bayeux Tapestry**. It is said that William's wife and the ladies of the court made it to hang round the walls of the cathedral. The Bayeux Tapestry shows the preparations made for the invasion of England – men felling trees or shaping the rough timber into ship, scenes depicting the subjugation of the country and other details pertaining to the battle of Hastings, the armour and weapons used, are all very well represented. The tapestry gives us very valuable information about the life of the people at that time.

THE HEIRS TO THE THRONE

William II (1087-1100)

The son whom William had chosen to succeed him was wholly unfitted for kingship. This son, also William and known as Rufus because of his florid complexion, was a short, fat, bull-necked man with a bitingly sarcastic tongue and a savage, bullying temper. William II was unpopular, greedy, self-centred, and a poor administrator. He mocked the piety of churchmen, insulted foreign envoys and flaunted his homosexual tastes. When Archbishop Lanfranc died in 1089, William delayed appointing a replacement for four years, keeping the revenues of Canterbury for himself. When Anselm, the leading theologian of his day, became Archbishop in 1093, he fought with William over the powers of church and lay courts.

While accepting money from malefactors who could afford to pay bribes to evade justice, William inflicted punishments on those who had offended him with even greater severity than his father had done, blinding and castrating the rebels. But to no malefactors was he more severe than to those who offended against the Forest Laws. His father had earned widespread hatred for these fierce laws and for extending the boundries of the royal forests which included tens of thousands of acres of land over which the King and his friends could hunt deer. In creating the royal game preserve known as the New Forest in Hampshire, which still today encompasses over 90,000 acres, he demolished dwellings and entire villages. By the time of William I's grandsons, the royal forests had become so extensive that they may have covered almost a third of the country. A sizeable proportion of the rest of the land in England was enclosed as game preserves by the King's tenants-in-chief. Some of these preserves are still in private hands like Knowsley Park, the property of the eighteenth Earl of Derby.

In August 1100 King William II was hunting in the New Forest when he was killed by an arrow, shot either accidentally or on purpose. His companions disappeared and his body was taken by local serfs in a cart to Winchester where it was buried.

"All things that are loathsome to God and to earnest men were customary in this land in his time," wrote an English chronicler; *"and therefore he was loathsome to all his people, and abominable to God, as his end showed, for as much as he departed in the midst of his unrighteousness, without repentance and without expiation."*

Technically, William's death left the throne to Robert, who was in Normandy. However, Henry, who had also been hunting in the New Forest that day acted quickly to seize the royal treasury at

Westminster and proclaim himself the King of England. He later defeated Robert at Tinchebray and added Normandy to his domains as well. Robert spent the rest of his life in prison.

Henry I (1100-1135)

Henry I seems to have made a much better king than his elder brother William. A severe man like his father, he was avaricious, crafty, cold-hearted and had a passion for slaying deer. But he was anxious to persuade the English people that the lawless days of his brother's time were over. Able to read and write, he acquired a reputation for scholarship as well as for firmness of hand: men called him Henry Beauclerc. He imprisoned the detested Rannulf Flambard, the Bishop of Durham, William's deeply unpleasant chief adviser, in the Tower of London; he called Anselm back to Canterbury from France where he had been exiled by William. In 1128, during Henry's reign, a new wave of monastic settlements began. Many of the great monasteries, now ruined, are from this time period. One of the easiest ways of identifying buildings from this early Norman period is by the shape of their window, door, and arch openings, which are smoothly rounded.

Henry I issued a proclamation to the people promising to observe their rights. The royal administration was expanded and the rule of law solidified. The King himself frequently visited as many parts of his kingdom as he could and kept a sharp eye upon the barons whose loyalty to the Crown was not to be taken for granted. *"Great awe there was of him,"* recorded a chronicler, *"No man dared misdo another in his time."* The **Court of the Exchequer** was formed to handle financial matters. It took its name from the checkered cloth or table on which the accounts were handled. One of the ways Henry raised money was by selling **charters** to towns. Charters were a special grant that enabled towns to build walls, raise local taxes and elect their own local administrators.

He won much goodwill by setting an example, soon to be followed by other Normans of high rank, by taking an English wife, Matilda, who was descended directly from Alfred the Great. Already the father of numerous children by a succession of mistresses, he had a son by Matilda, a boy of whom he held high hopes. But his beloved son and heir, also named Henry, died in the wreck of the "White Ship", the fastest vessel in his fleet, while returning from France. The King is said to have fallen unconscious to the ground and never smiled again. The boy's mother had by then died herself. The King married again; but by his second wife he had no children, so he settled his inheritance on **Matilda (Maud)**, his daughter. This young woman was nineteen at the time of her brother's drowning. She had been married to the Holy Roman Emperor at the age of twelve and after his death had married Count Geoffrey of Anjou. Many barons, disliking the idea of being ruled by a woman and almost a foreigner, or perhaps trying to expand their own power,

preferred the claims of Matilda's cousin, Stephen, whose mother was William the Conqueror's daughter, an easygoing and generous man who made many promises to his potential supporters, offering them splendid rewards when he became King.

Stephen vs. Matilda

Stephen rushed over to England upon King Henry's death and was welcomed into London where his brother, Henry of Blois, the most powerful of the English bishops, persuaded the Archbishop of Canterbury to crown him at Westminster shortly before Christmas 1135.

Outraged by her cousin's breach of faith, Matilda, who was still in Normandy, appealed unsuccessfully to the Pope; then, having done her best to make trouble for Stephen in England, she landed in Sussex, travelled to Bristol, where the barons rallied to her support, and entered London in triumph. By then the English people had grown to resent Stephen's weak and erratic rule and the violence of his Flemish mercenaries. But Matilda was no better liked than Stephen. She took the title of Queen without being crowned, appropriated lands to which she had no right, and when a deputation of the citizens of London petitioned for the observance of ancient laws, she swore at them and drove them from the room.

Stephen and Maud played cat and mouse with the throne for 19 years of the civil war. At one point Stephen was captured but had to be exchanged for Maud's military commander. Maud actually gained the seat of power in London, but she so enraged the inhabitants by her arrogance that the city rose in arms and she had to flee.

Maud had a couple of thrilling escapes from Stephen's men during the fighting. In 1141 she escaped from Devizes tied to a funeral bier as a corpse. The next year she escaped from besieged Oxford Castle, being let over the walls on a rope. Her white cloak blended with the snow and she was able to slip through Stephen's troops to safety.

The years of the civil war were the period of complete anarchy and destruction. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle provides some insight into the life of the time:

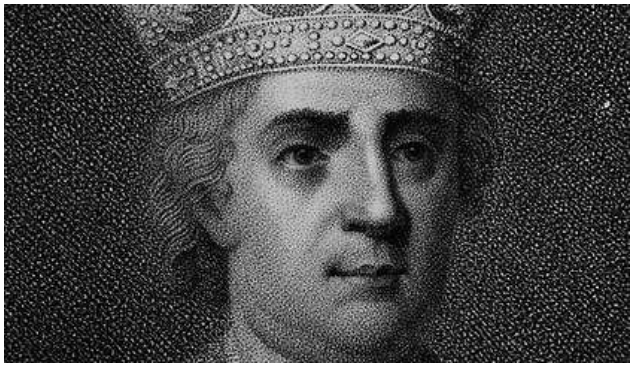
"When King Stephen came to England he held his council at Oxford, and there he took Roger, bishop of Salisbury, and Alexander, bishop of Lincoln, and the chancellor Roger, his nephews, and put them all in prison till they surrendered their castles. When the traitors understood that he was a mild man, and gentle and good, and did not exact the full penalties of the law, they perpetrated every enormity. They had done him homage, and sworn oaths, but they kept no pledge; all of them were perjured and their pledges nullified, for every powerful man built his castles and held them against him and they filled the country full of castles. They oppressed the wretched people of the country severely with castle-building. When the castles were built, they filled them with devils and wicked men. Then, both by night and day, they took those people that they thought had any goods - men and women - and put them in prison and tortured them with indescribable torture to extort gold and silver - for no martyrs were ever so tortured as they

were. They were hung by the thumbs or by the head, and corselets were hung on their feet. Knotted ropes were put round their heads and twisted till they penetrated to the brains. They put them in prisons where there were adders and snakes and toads, and killed them like that. Some they put in a 'torture-chamber' - that is in a chest that was short, narrow and shallow, and they put sharp stones in it and pressed the man in it so that he had all his limbs broken. In many of the castles was a 'noose-and-trap' - consisting of chains of such a kind that two or three men had enough to do to carry one. It was so made that it was fastened to a beam, and they used to put a sharp iron around the man's throat and his neck, so that he could not in any direction either sit or lie or sleep, but had to carry all that iron. Many thousands they killed by starvation. They levied taxes on the villages every so often, and called it 'protection money'. When the wretched people had no more to give, they robbed and burned the villages, so that you could easily go a whole day's journey and never find anyone occupying a village, nor land tilled. Then corn was dear, and meat and butter and cheese, because there was none in the country. Wretched people died of starvation; some lived by begging ... some fled the country.

There had never been till then greater misery in the country, nor had heathens ever done worse than they did. For contrary to custom, they respected neither church nor churchyard, but took all the property that was inside, and then burnt the church and everything together. Neither did they respect bishops' land nor abbots' nor priests', but robbed monks and clerics, and everyone robbed somebody else if he had the greater power. They said openly that Christ and his saints were asleep. Such things too much for us to describe, we suffered nineteen years for our sins."

Eventually a sensible compromise was reached between the two parties. Stephen was to have the throne for the rest of his life after which it would revert to Maud's son, Henry. This time of anarchy was, curiously, also one of tremendous ecclesiastical building, and many surviving parish churches date from the period of Stephen's reign.

The Founder of the Plantagenet Dynasty



Broom (plant a genet) in blossom

Henry II (1154-89) was the son of Queen Maud and Geoffrey of Anjou. He took as his emblem the "sprig of broom" of the House of Anjou, which in the French of the day became "*plant a genet"*, or **Plantagenet**. Henry was a good administrator, but he had a terrible temper, which would get him into trouble. He reclaimed many of the rights and powers of the crown that had laxed.

Henry introduced several major reforms. Prior to 1166 trial by ordeal was a common way of determining guilt or innocence in criminal cases. Henry replaced this rather painful system with a jury of 12 men and the Supreme Appeal Royal Court. He also introduced the first personal property tax and allowed lords to pay taxes instead of military service, the money was used to

hire professional knights. At the same time Henry widened English borders, he forced Wales to at least nominally acknowledge the sovereignty of the English crown, obtained Anjou lands of France by the right of inheritance, conquered Irish tribal chiefs and captured the Scottish king forcing him to recognise English overlordship.

Henry's chief administrator was a cleric by the name of **Thomas a Becket**. In 1162 Henry convinced a very reluctant Becket to become the new Archbishop. Henry, of course, assumed that his friend would be sympathetic to the royal cause in the escalating battle between church and state. But Thomas underwent a change of character as the Archbishop. He was strict in his observance of church law and opposed Henry over the question of the supremacy of ecclesiastical courts. At that time anyone in orders could only be tried in church courts. In practice, the number of clerics was huge, including several levels of lay priests and clerks. Henry, anxious to assert the power of royal justice, claimed that the "criminous clerks" should be tried in royal courts. Becket refused to agree. The Archbishop fled to France after defying Henry. Soon he returned with the aid of the Pope. He immediately infuriated Henry by excommunicating those bishops who had supported the king during Becket's exile. Henry flew into one of his famous rages. Four knights, perhaps seeking the favour of the king, rode from Westminster to Canterbury and killed Becket in front of the main altar of the Cathedral when he refused to relent. Henry, full of remorse, did penance imposed by the Pope. He walked to Canterbury Cathedral in sack cloth and ashes and allowed himself to be flogged by the monks there. He also gave way for the moment on the question of court authority. Becket's shrine in Canterbury became one of the most visited pilgrimage sites in western Christendom.

Henry was not lucky in his family life. He was married to the forceful Eleanor of Aquitaine, and in their squabbling she turned his sons Richard, John, and Geoffrey against him. The **"Devil's Brood"** intrigued, fought and rebelled against their father. In the end, the crown went to Richard while John "Lackland" received nothing. Geoffrey received even less; he died before his father.

THE CHIVALROUS AGE

Chivalry is the generic term for the knightly system of the Middle Ages and for virtues and qualities it inspired in its followers. The word evolved from terms such as *chevalier* (French), *caballero* (Spanish), and *cavaliere* (Italian), all meaning a warrior who fought on horseback.

Chivalric orders first appeared with military activities against non-Christian states. During the Middle Ages, Western Europe aggressively sought to expand its area of control. The first orders of chivalry were very similar to the monastic orders of the era. Both sought the sanctification of their members through combat against "infidels" and protection of religious pilgrims, and both had commitments that involved the taking of vows and submitting to a regulation of activities.

The 13th Century conventions of chivalry directed that men should honour, serve, and do nothing to displease ladies and maidens. **Knights** were members of the noble class socially as bearers of arms, economically as owners of horse and armour, and officially through religious-oriented ceremony. While some were knighted on the battlefield, most spent long years as a squire, practicing the art of war while serving his master. People during the Middle Ages heard of the exploits of knights both mythical and real in epics like *La Chanson de Roland* and *Le Morte D'Arthur*. After the Crusades, knights continued to show their prowess and skills in medieval tournaments.

Becoming a Knight

The knight was one of three types of fighting men during the middle ages: Knights, Foot Soldiers, and Archers. The medieval knight was the equivalent of the modern tank. He was covered in multiple layers of armour and could plow through foot soldiers standing in his way. No single foot soldier or archer could stand up to any knight. Knights were also generally the wealthiest of the three types of soldiers. This was for a good reason. It was terribly expensive to be a knight. The war horse alone could cost the equivalent of a small airplane. Armour, shields, and weapons were also very expensive. Becoming a knight was a part of the feudal agreement. In return for military service, the knight received a fief. In the late middle ages, many prospective knights began to pay "shield money" to their lord so that they wouldn't have to serve in the king's army. The money was then used to create a professional army that was paid and

supported by the king. These knights often fought more for pillaging than for army wages. When they captured a city, they were allowed to ransack it, stealing goods and valuables.

There were only a few ways in which a person could become a knight. The first way was the normal course of action for the son of a noble. When a boy was eight years old, he was sent to the neighbouring castle where he was trained as **a page**. The boy was usually the son of a knight or of a member of the aristocracy. He spent most of his time strengthening his body, wrestling and riding horses. He also learned how to fight with a spear and a sword. He practiced against a wooden dummie called a *quintain*. It was essentially a heavy sack in the form of a human. It was hung on a wooden pole along with a shield. The young page had to hit the shield in its center. When hit, the whole structure would spin around and around. The page had to maneuver away quickly without getting hit. The young man was also taught more civilized topics. He would be taught to read and write by a schoolmaster. He could also be taught some Latin and French. The lady of the castle taught the page to sing and dance and how to behave in the king's court. At the age of fifteen or sixteen, a boy became **a squire** in service to a knight. His duties included dressing the knight in the morning, serving all of the knight's meals, caring for the knight's horse, and cleaning the knight's armour and weapons. He followed the knight to tournaments and assisted his lord on the battlefield. A squire also prepared himself by learning how to handle a sword and lance while wearing forty pounds of armour and riding a horse. When he was about twenty, a squire could become a knight after proving himself worthy. A lord would agree to knight him in a dubbing ceremony. The night before the ceremony, the squire would dress in a white tunic and red robes. He would then fast and pray all night for the purification of his soul. The chaplain would bless the future knight's sword and then lay it on the church altar. Before dawn, he took a bath to show that he was pure, and he dressed in his best clothes. When dawn came, the priest would hear the young man's confession, a Catholic contrition rite. The squire would then eat breakfast. Soon the dubbing ceremony began. The outdoor ceremony took place in front of family, friends, and nobility. The squire knelt in front of the lord, who tapped the squire lightly on each shoulder with his sword and proclaimed him a knight. This was symbolic of what occurred in earlier times. In the earlier middle ages, the person doing the dubbing would actually hit the squire forcefully, knocking him over. After the dubbing, a great feast followed with music and dancing.

A young man could also become a knight for valour in combat after a battle or sometimes before a battle to help him gain courage.

The Code of Chivalry

Knights believed in the code of chivalry. They promised to defend the weak, be courteous to all women, be loyal to their king, and serve God at all times. Knights were expected to be humble before others, especially their superiors. The code of chivalry demanded that a knight give mercy to a defeated enemy. However, the very fact that knights were trained as men of war belied this code. Even though they came from rich families, many knights were not their families' firstborn. They did not receive an inheritance. Thus they were little more than mercenaries. They plundered villages or cities that they captured, often defiling and destroying churches and other property. Also the code of chivalry did not extend to the peasants. The *"weak"* was widely interpreted as *"noble women and children"*. They were often brutal to common folk. They could sometimes even rape young peasant women without fear of reprisal, all because they were part of the upper class.

The Knights Code of Chivalry was part of the culture of the Middle Ages and was understood by all. The **'Song of Roland'** (1098-1100) describes the 8th century Knights of the Dark Ages and the battles fought by the Emperor Charlemagne. The code has since been described as

Charlemagne's Code of Chivalry. Roland was a loyal defender of his liege Lord Charlemagne, and his code of conduct is an excellent representation of the Knights Codes of Chivalry:

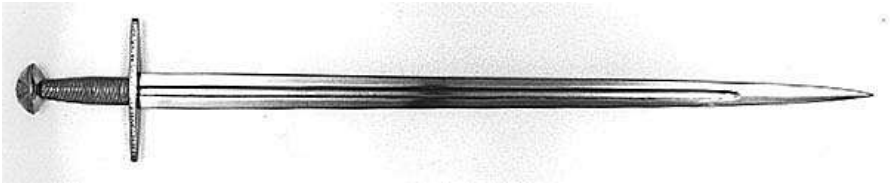
- To fear God and maintain His Church
- To serve the liege lord in valour and faith
- To protect the weak and defenceless
- To give succour to widows and orphans
- To refrain from the wanton giving of offence
- To live by honour and for glory
- To despise pecuniary reward
- To fight for the welfare of all
- To obey those placed in authority
- To guard the honour of fellow knights
- To eschew unfairness, meanness and deceit
- To keep faith
- At all times to speak the truth
- To persevere to the end in any enterprise begun
- To respect the honour of women
- Never to refuse a challenge from an equal
- Never to turn the back upon a foe

Armour and Weapons

A knight was armed and armoured to the teeth. He had so much armour and weapons that he depended on his squire to keep his armour and weapons clean and in good working condition. At first the armour was made of small metal rings called chain mail. A knight wore a linen shirt and a pair of pants as well as heavy woolen pads underneath the metal-ringed tunic. A suit of chain mail could have more than 200,000 rings. However, chain mail was heavy, uncomfortable, and difficult to move in. As time passed, knights covered their bodies with plates of metal. Plates covered their chests, back, arms, and legs. A bucket-like helmet protected the knight's head and had a hinged metal visor to cover his face. Suits of armour were hot, uncomfortable, and heavy to wear. A suit of armour weighed between forty and sixty pounds. Some knights even protected their horses in armour.

A knight also needed a shield to hold in front of himself during battle. Shields were made of either wood or metal. Knights decorated their shields with their family emblem or crest and the family motto.

A knight's weapon was his sword, which was about thirty-two pounds. It was worn on his left side in a case fastened around his waist. A knife was worn on the knight's right side. Knights used other weapons in combat as well. A lance was a long spear used in jousts. Metal axes, battle hammers, and maces were also used to defeat the enemy.



Tournaments

Tournaments provided a means for knights to practice warfare and build their strength in times of peace. Tournaments were essentially mock battles with audiences. The audience was usually made up of "fair damsels". This was another way in which a knight was expected to act chivalrously. The tournaments had different rules that had to be followed. They were judged by umpires that watched for dishonest play. Tournaments were usually fought between either two people or two teams. If two people fought a tournament, it was usually by jousting. The two knights would gallop across the playing field at each other. They carried long, blunt poles and shields. The objective was to knock the other person out of his saddle. Team play was conducted with fierce mock combat between two bands of fighters. They fought with wooden or blunted weapons so as to reduce the risk of getting hurt. However, this was often not the case. Many people did get hurt or die by accident.

Chivalric Orders

Knights belonged to a multitude of specific Orders, each established for one purpose or another. Most orders emphasized components of piety, faith, humility, chastity or some other worthy ideals. Colourful names for these orders emerged. The Angelic Knights, the Golden Shield, the Palatine Lion, the Thistle of Bourbon, the White Falcon and the Wing of St. Michael are but a few of the knightly orders that existed during the Middle Ages.

Some had curious names such as: the Dog and Cock; the Fools; the Scarf and the Broom Flowers; the Slaves of Virtue and Neighbourly Love; the Palm and the Alligator. An order of female knights defended Tortosa in Spain from invading Moors in 1149.

Three of the most well-known, were the Hospitallers, Templars, and Teutonic knights.

Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, were the first great orders of monastic knights to appear. These knights took monastic vows and wore black habits with white crosses. They lived in a monastery that could accommodate more than 2,000 guests and still have room to care for the sick and injured. These knights formed many communities in several European countries. Hospitality was the first obligation of the order.

Templars, the second of the great military orders, was founded in the early 12th century to protect pilgrims. These knights adopted Benedictine monastic rules and wore white tunics with red crosses. Like the Hospitallers, they rose to great power in medieval Europe and established communities throughout the continent. But by the beginning of the 14th century, rumours of corruption and heresy caused King Phillip of France to command all members of the order to be jailed. Most were put to torture and burned at the stake. Grand Master Jacques de Molay was crucified. There is a theory that the Shroud of Turin is, in fact, the burial cloth of de Molay.

Teutonic Knights formed the last great chivalric order. These knights were Germanic in origin, took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and wore white tunics with black crosses. After battling in the Crusades, this order turned its attention to the conquest of Prussians and conquered the territory between the Vistula and the Memel. They were virtually destroyed by Poles and Lithuanians during a battle at Tannenberg in 1410.

The Crusades

The Crusades were a series of religion-driven military campaigns waged over nearly 200 years, between 1095 and 1272, by much of Latin Christian Europe. The campaigns were waged against both external and internal opponents. They were fought mainly against Muslims, though campaigns were also directed against pagan Slavs, Jews, Russian and Greek Orthodox Christians, Mongols, Cathars and political enemies of the popes. Crusaders took vows and were granted an indulgence for past sins.

The Crusades originally had the goal of recapturing Jerusalem and the Holy Land from Muslim rule and were launched in response to a call from the Eastern Orthodox Byzantine Empire for help against the expansion of the Muslim Seljuk Turks into Anatolia. The term is also used to describe the campaigns conducted through to the 16th century in the territories outside Levant, usually against pagans, heretics, and peoples under the ban of excommunication for a mixture of religious, economic, and political reasons.

The Crusades had far-reaching political, economic, and social impacts, some of which have lasted into contemporary times. Because of internal conflicts among Christian kingdoms and political powers, some of the crusade expeditions were diverted from their original aim, such as the Fourth Crusade, which resulted in the sack of Christian Constantinople and the partition of the Byzantine Empire between Venice and the Crusaders.

Medieval Literature

The Middle Ages saw the beginnings of a rebirth in literature. Early medieval books were hand-copied and illustrated by monks. Paper was a rarity, vellum, made from calf's skin, and parchment, made from lamb's skin, were the media of choice for writing. Students learning to write used wooden tablets covered in green or black wax. The greatest number of books during this era were bound with plain wooden boards, or with simple tooled leather for more expensive volumes.

Wandering scholars and poets travelling to the Crusades learned of new writing styles. Courtly Love spawned a new interest in romantic prose. Troubadours sang in medieval courtyards about epic battles involving Roland, Arthur, and Charlemagne. Literature exploded from the universities as scholars began to question convention and write social commentary, as well as poetic fiction.

Troubadour is the generic term for poets and *minstrels* who flourished in southern France and in Northern Italy from the 11th through the 13th centuries. Called *trouveres* in northern France and *meistersingers* in Germany, these artists elevated storytelling as an art, and often entertained huge crowds at fairs, weddings and other medieval celebrations. These new stories were sang, while music was played on strange, new musical instruments, brought back to Western Europe from the Crusades. Verses became quite complex in style and ranged in topics from satire, love, and politics, to debates, laments and spinning songs.

French lords wanted to hear tales of bravery about their own countrymen, and ladies were being swept away with epic love poems, as they practiced the rituals of Courtly Love. Professional singers who performed work penned by a troubadour were called *jongleurs*, and they might be accompanied by *ioculators* (jesters) and *ystriones* (actors). Minstrels were found in every social class, with wealthy or noble troubadours travelling like royalty from town to town.

The most popular medieval folklore works were the **fabliaux** and **fables**. These humorous short stories, penned by authors from varying classes, enjoyed an immense audience. While most of these stories developed from earlier folk tales, social commentary was woven into the fabliaux. Most fabliaux were quite humorous. Recurring characters were visible in everyday life - merchants, students, lecherous husbands, and lusty, unfaithful wives. Fables were short stories with animal characters conveying a moral.

Romances blossomed in the 12th century from authors such as Chretien de Troyes and Marie de France. Some stories deal with star-crossed lovers who eventually find happiness together. Military themes can be found in other tales, where a knightly hero has both amourous and martial adventures.

A popular religious book was called the "Book of Hours" ,which had a bible verse for each hour of the day, and a calendar showing all the Church's feast days. Scribes also copied surviving Greek and Roman texts, though care would have to be taken to ensure these documents were not found to be heretical, and land the monk in jail, or be executed. Most early medieval works were penned by authors who remain virtually anonymous.

Scribes were responsible for creating much of the printed material during the Middle Ages. Some began experimenting with ways to make books easier to reproduce, and eliminate human errors made in the copying process.

Medieval craftsmen, using ideas borrowed from the Chinese, carved entire scenes and stories into page-sized wooden blocks. These "block books" were much cheaper to make than hand-copied versions, and they became very popular. One of the best-known block books was the Biblia Paupernum (*the Bible of the Poor*). The problem was, the blocks tended to wear out, and another would have to be carved in its place. These design flaws limited the pages counts of most books.

John Gutenberg, from Mainz, Germany began another experiment in the middle of the 15th century that would change the course of human history. His idea was to create individual letter blocks that could be organized to form a page, then re-used on another completely different page.

Gutenberg's first letter sets were made of wood, and deteriorated much too quickly. Also, inks used for quill pens would not work on his printing press. He tried making the letters out of lead – the metal was too soft. He tried iron - the metal was too hard. He finally decided on creating molds for each, and melted a combination of metals to form the characters. Gutenberg tried inks used by Italian painters, made from lampblack and linseed oil, and finally was close to success. After exhausting his own fortune, Gutenberg enlisted the aid of partners to help him continue the project. He continued for years until 1456, when the first printed Bible was produced. But there was one other important development that made the printing press feasible. Vellum and parchment were fairly expensive, but larger quantities of paper were becoming available. This was another by-product of the Crusades, with Europeans learning this skill from the Arabs, who had learned it from Chinese.

In 1476 the first English printing press was set up in Westminster by **William Caxton** (1422-1491), an apprentice to a company of London silk and woolen dealers, who lived in Flanders and worked as a hand-copier for the royal family. He established a kind of publishing house and printed 65 books during his lifetime.

A Student's page 5 *(photocopiable)*

Vocabulary notes:

bishop - a senior person in the Christian Church, who is in charge of the churches in the district
chivalry (Fr. *chevalier*, Sp. *caballero:* a warrior who fought on horseback) – the general term for the knightly system of the Middle Ages and for virtues and qualities it inspired in its followers
convey – to make ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc. known to sb.
devastation – destroying or damaging badly
drawbridge – a movable bridge
keep – a central tower of a castle
minstrel(trouver) – a strolling singer (often a bard) who became popular in the medieval society performing romances, ballads and other folklore pieces with an accompaniment of musical instruments
moat – a deep ditch with water dug around the castle in order to protect it
treasury – the government department that controls public money
truce – an agreement to stop fighting for a period of time

Compendium

Dates:

911 - a group of Scandinavian raiders under the leadership of Rollo sailed up the Seine and forced the French king to cede French territory
1066 – the beginning of the Norman Conquest of England
1072 - a truce with the Scottish king
1075 – the last serious rebellion, the Revolt of the Earls, was suppressed
1086 – William I gathered the knights in Salisbury and made them take a special oath to be true to him against all his enemies; the first registration was held in England, the book with the accounts was called the Domesday Book
1095-1272 – military campaigns of Latin Christian Europe against Muslims known as crusades
1135-1154 – the civil war of the heirs to the throne
1476 – the first printing press was set up in England

Personalities:

1. William I (1066-1087)	- got the name Conqueror for successful invasion of England - strengthened royal power, imposed feudal system and became the geatest landowner and landlord of England possessing 1/7 of the country's arable land - issued Forest Laws declaring forests a royal domain - abolished great earldoms and divided the country into shires (counties) - replaced the Witenagemot by the Great Council of bishops and barons - started a century-long dispute for English possession of the French lands
2. William II (1087-1100)	- got the name Rufus for the colour of his hair - began the struggle for lands in France with his brother - increased the quit-rent and strickened Forest Laws, caused devastation of many Anglo-Saxon villages
3. Henry I (1100-1135)	-got the name Lion of Justice - brought up government reforms, strengthened the role of the Royal Court, reorganised English judicial system - established the Court of the Exchequer (State Treasury) controlling tax collection and other financial matters
4. Stephen (1135-1154)	- was a participant of the cruel civil war with his cousin Matilda (Maud), Henry I's daughter

The Norman nobles built large stone-walled castles for defence of their families on the foreign land. The castles were built on hill, surrounded by thick walls with watch-towers and moats with drawbridges. The strongest part was the keep where the baron and his family lived. Between the keep and the outer wall there was a court with stables for the horses and houses for the servants. War was the chief occupation of the Norman knights trained in warfare since childhood. Their leisure time the knights spent feasting and hunting.
The sheriffs were appointed as royal officials in each shire to preside in the king's name over the shire-courts, collect taxes to the royal treasury and gather an army for the king.

The chivalrous culture

The knight was one of three types of fighting men during the middle ages: Knights, Foot Soldiers, and Archers. Knights were members of the noble class. Chivalric orders first appeared with military activities against non-Christian states. Three of the most well-known orders were the Hospitallers, Templars, and Teutonic knights. Knights believed in the code of chivalry. They promised to defend the weak, be courteous to all women, be loyal to their king, and serve God at all times.

The genres of the medieval literature:

Fables – short stories with animal characters conveying a moral.
Fabliaux – funny stories about human affairs and practical attitude to life.
Ballads – historical, heroic or romantic poems, expressed sentiments and thoughts of people, often accompanied by musical instruments and dancing.
Romances – lyrical poems praising bravery and gallantry of noble knights, brought from France by ministrels.

Comprehension check:

1. Prove that William I became the greatest feudal lord of England. How did he strengthen his power over the conquered lands?
2. What were the functions of a sheriff?
3. What was the Domesday Book? What useful information does it give us about England in the 2nd half of the 11th century? How did the registration consolidate the position of the conquerors?
4. Describe the way of life of a Norman noble.
5. What type of literature did the Normans bring to Britain? What were the popular folk genres?

The Order of the Garter

Origins. The Order of the Garter was the first, and remains the most prestigious, British order of chivalry. It was begun in or around 1348 by Edward III, and initially included the monarch and 25 knights. Membership in the order was intended as a mark of royal favour and a reward for loyalty to the sovereign and for outstanding military service.

The legendary beginnings of the Order centre around the figure of Joan, Countess of Salisbury. The story goes that while the Countess, a notable beauty who was rumoured to be the king's mistress, danced at a court function, she chanced to lose a garter. King Edward gallantly picked it up and tied it to his own leg. When he observed the snickers of those around him, Edward remarked *"Honi soit qui mal y pense"* (*Shame on he who thinks evil of this*). This offhand remark became the motto of the order.

Some modern scholars have suggested that the garter may have originated with the leather straps used to fasten pieces of armour. Given the military focus of the Order that seems a likely, if less romantic, possibility.

Variations on this story have the woman in question being Queen Philippa or Joan, the "Fair Maid of Kent", later the wife of the king's eldest son, Edward the Black Prince.

There is nothing to specifically disprove the above story, but it seems equally likely that the Order was a considered attempt by Edward to provide a focus for loyalty towards the monarch among his leading nobles. Edward was well aware of the growing cult of St. Denis in France, and thought that providing his own realm with a national saint tied to the monarchy, would only benefit his own position and solidify the loyalty of his nobles.

Insignia of the Order. Thus, at roughly the same time that the Order of the Garter was founded, Edward proclaimed Saint George as the patron saint of England and the Order. Aside from a blue garter, worn below the left knee, the first insignia of the Order was "the George", a badge

depicting St. George slaying a dragon. St.George's Chapel at Windsor Castle was named the spiritual home of the Order.

As the years went by, further insignia were added to the official apparel of Order members. During the 16th century a collar was added to the garter and George badge. The collar could not feature precious stones, but could otherwise be freely adorned according to the tastes and budget of the owner.

In the 17th century a broad red ribband was added, and the familiar silver star badge with the red cross of St. George set within radiating beams of silver. Blue velvet robes complete the picture.

Membership in the Order. Members were appointed by the monarch alone until the 18th century. Then the government in Parliament "suggested" members to the monarch. In 1946 the power to name members was returned to the sovereign without government interference. The membership in the Order today thus fills its original role as a mark of royal favour.

English subjects can be named Knights of the Garter in exchange for outstanding public service, contributions to the nation, or simply as reward for personal service to the monarch.

Over the centuries a number of changes have been made in membership requirements; during the Middle Ages women were named to the order, though not as full members. From 1509-1901 the order was exclusively male, with the exception of reigning queens. After 1987 women were accorded full membership privileges.

Numerous foreign nobles have been named to the order over the years. The distinction of membership helped cement foreign treaties and alliances. Foreign monarchs are known as "Stranger Knights" and their numbers are in addition to the normal quota of 24 knights (plus royals) in the order.

Obligations. Though the Order today is purely ceremonial, members are obliged to display their "achievements" in St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. These "achievements" include a banner depicting their heraldic coat of arms, an enamelled stallplate, sword, crest, and helmet. When a member dies, the insignia are returned to the monarch, but the stallplates remain in place, providing a memorial and heraldic record.

Every June an official gathering of the Order is held at Windsor Castle, and at that time any vacancies are filled with new members. The monarch and royal members of the order attend an official luncheon at the Waterloo Chamber, after which they walk in procession to a service at the Chapel. At the moment royal members of the Order include Queen Elizabeth, Prince Phillip, The Queen Mother, Prince Charles, and Princess Anne.

CHAPTER 6.
THE MIDDLE AGES

"Know you that we have granted to our citizens of our city London that they may elect for themselves a mayor of themselves every year who shall be faithful to us ... and that shall be lawful to them to remove him at the end of the year, and substitute another if they so wish, or retain the same man."

The Charter of London (1215)

CROWN AND PEOPLE (1215 – 1399)

Richard Lionheart (1189-1199) and John Lackland (1199-1216)

Richard Lionheart

John Lackland

Richard is known to history as "Coeur de Lion", or Lionheart, because of his bravery in battle. He was without a doubt a great warrior, but he was a very poor king for England. In his ten-year reign he spent only ten months in England, and that only to raise money for his foreign wars. He

fought brilliantly and cruelly in the Third Crusade, and was captured on his way home by a personal enemy, Leopold of Austria.

Prince John was reluctant to pay the ransom, and it was left to the Dowager Queen Eleanor, and Hugh Walter, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to raise the required £60,000 to free Richard from his captivity. Richard was freed only to die a short time later fighting in France. Richard's later popularity rests as much on romantic wishful thinking as it does on facts. During his reign, however, the first known merchant guild was founded, in 1193. The guilds were to play a major role in the medieval society.

Whereas Richard exhibited little interest in his responsibilities as a king, John exhibited too much. He was greedy, a poor administrator, and a poor warrior. In 1204 he lost all the lands north of the Loire to Philip of France. This had the effect of severing the Norman aristocracy of England from their continental possessions. They were forced to turn all their energies and attention to England. The rebellious attitude of the great barons led to inevitable confrontation with John. In 1215 the barons were powerful enough to force John to sign **Magna Carta (Great Charter)**. It was a document which bound the king to observe common law and tradition, particularly where it affected the rights and privileges of the nobility. It is regarded as the basis of the modern English constitution, but at the time the document was less the declaration of human rights than a statement of the feudal and legal relationship between the Crown and the barons, a guarantee of the freedom of the Church and a limitation of the powers of the King. It was based on the laws established by Henry II, Edward the Confessor and Alfred the Great. There are clauses in the Charter which promised more general rights. One in particular proclaimed that *"to none will we sell, to none will we refuse or delay right or justice"*; another declared, *"No freeman shall be arrested or imprisoned ... or outlawed or exiled ... except by the lawful judgement of his peers and the laws of the land."* In general, Magna Carta was the first step in the long struggle, which led to the limitation of the King's power and establishing constitutional monarchy in England.

As soon as he was out of the barons' control, King John immediately denied the validity of the Charter, he prepared to fight the barons, while they, pretending to hold a tournament at Staines, assembled their own army and called upon the King of France to assist them. A French army landed in Kent and marched towards London; John withdrew northeast into East Anglia. While his army was crossing the neck of the Wash, the tide came in and all his treasures were lost. Distraught by this misfortune he went to the abbey of Swineshead, which had been founded by the Cistercians, one of the several monastic orders which had established abbeys in England since the end of the sixth century. Here, after finishing one of his habitually heavy meals with a dessert of peaches and sweet ale, John contracted dysentery, became feverish and died at Newark on 19 October 1216 at the age of fifty. His nine-year-old son and heir was taken to Gloucester to be crowned as King Henry III under the tutelage of Hubert de Burgh, the principal minister in the kingdom. After a notable naval victory in the Channel against a far greater number of French ships Hubert de Burgh made the French King agree to withdraw from England and (the promise not to be fulfilled) return Normandy to the English Crown. After the withdrawal of the French Hubert de Burgh administered the kingdom in the name of the young King.

As he grew up, however, Henry became more inclined to take the advice of the foreign advisers in whose company he felt more at ease than he did with Englishmen. By the time of Hubert de Burgh's death in 1243, Henry was as much at odds with his barons as his father had been.

The Years of Social Unrest

Henry III

Edward I

Edward II

Simon de Montfort

Henry III (1216-1272) had grown into an extravagant man, incompetent as a soldier and politician. He was extremely religious, attending Mass three times a day, taking great pleasure in religious ceremonies and lavishing money upon religious foundations. Westminster Abbey was largely rebuilt in his reign.

Henry tried and failed to regain Aquitaine from France. This and other unsuccessful ventures abroad alienated him from his subjects. He filled the English church with Italian appointees and the civil offices with French bureaucrats. For a time one of his particular favourites was Simon de Montfort, a Norman nobleman who had inherited the earldom of Leicester and had married the Queen's sister. Simon soon annoyed the King, however, by pressing for the reforms and advocating the rights of less privileged classes. The King's demands for money to enable his son to be crowned King of Sicily and his brother to become King of the Romans brought matters to a head. The barons, under the leadership of Simon of Montfort, called the "Mad Parliament" in 1258 and forced Henry to be accountable for his actions and sign **the Provisions of Oxford**. The Provisions of Oxford was a document outlining reforms to English Common Law. The reforms reinforced and refined many of the principles laid down in the Magna Carta, granting greater rights and freedoms for free men under the laws of the kingdom. Under the Provisions, royal authority was limited, foreign advisors expelled, corrupt officials exposed, and a system of advisors set in place to "assist" the king in governing the realm. The Provisions called the

establishment of a number of advisory councils and committees to oversee political administration. There was appointed a new Great Council of 24 members, half of whom were to be nominated by the barons themselves. A smaller Council of 15 nobles and bishops was appointed by the recently created Great Council, with the power to veto the king's decisions.

Encouraged by his wife and the Pope to defy the barons, Henry claimed that the Provisions of Oxford, which were a clear usurpation of royal power, had been forced upon him and tried to back them out. Ultimately, the struggle for control of the government polarized the nobility into those who supported the king and those who supported Simon de Montfort. The struggle ultimately led to the outbreak of the Baron's War in 1264.

Simon de Montfort captured Henry and his son Prince Edward following the Battle of Lewes in 1265 and summoned a "Parliament" (from the French "*parler"*, to talk). Simon's Parliament drew two knights from each shire and two burgesses from each borough. This was the first summoning of townsmen in the Parliamentary history. It was also a sign of the growing wealth and influence of the merchant classes.

Prince Edward was soon able to escape from his captors and raise a royal army far larger than that which Simon could bring against it. The two armies met at Evesham in August 1265. Simon de Montfort was defeated and died. Prince Edward, now twenty-six years old, took over the administration of the realm from his father, who had been wounded in the shoulder, and became de facto the ruler, although he wasn't crowned until his father's death in 1273.

Edward I (1273- 1307), called Longshanks because of the slenderness of his legs, was a good administrator and a very good warrior. He frequently consulted his knights and townsmen about his decisions. Edward had gained a reputation for courtesy and fair dealing, high intelligence and untiring energy. Devoted to his wife, he was deeply distressed when she died in Nottinghamshire and having ordered that her body should be brought south to Westminster for burial, he asked that memorial crosses should be erected in all the towns in which the funeral cortege rested on the way.

In 1282 **Llewellyn**, a Welsh chief, raised a rebellion in that country. Edward subdued Wales, killed Llewellyn and built a series of castles there, the glories of medieval military architecture. He improved the Welsh laws and established order in the country. His son, Edward, was born in Caernarfon in 1284. The people of Wales believed in the legendary prophet Merlin who had long before predicted that when English money became round, a Prince of Wales, who *"would be a man born in Wales and not speaking English"*, would be crowned in London. King Edward introduced round coins, which became one of the reasons of Welsh rebellion. When Edward's son was born, he showed him in the cradle to Welsh people and called him the Prince of Wales saying that he was born in Wales and did not speak English, everything being true. Edward was the second child of King Edward, but as the first child quickly died, he soon became the heir. Since that time a male heir to the throne of England bears the title of the Prince of Wales.

Edward I also did numerous attempts to conquer Scotland. In 1291 he was asked to arbitrate between three rival claimants for the vacant throne of Scotland. He chose John Baliol, who did homage to England for Scotland. However, the refusal of John de Baliol to accept the overlordship of England gave Edward an excuse to march against the Scots. In 1296 he invaded Scotland, defeated Baliol, and took the crown for himself. He also took the Stone of Scone, upon which Scottish kings had traditionally been crowned, and brought it back to Westminster, where it can be seen today beneath the Coronation Throne in Westminster Abbey. The Scots, however, were not yet subdued. First under **Sir William Wallace**, who declared himself Guardian of Scotland and was hanged, drawn and quartered after his defeat, then under **Robert Bruce**, who

was crowned King of Scotland by the Bishop of St Andrew's, resistance continued long after the death of Edward I who requested in his last hours that his bones should be carried from place to place wherever his army marched against the Scots so that he might, even in death, be said to have led it to victory. He asked also that beside his motto *Pactum Serva, Keep Faith*, there should be inscribed on his tombstone the words *Scotorum Malleus, the Hammer of the Scots*.

Meanwhile, in 1295 Edward's expensive campaigns necessitated his summoning his Council, later known as **the Model Parliament** because it was more representative than any of the previous parliaments. It contained bishops, abbots, earls, barons, knights, burgesses, and representatives of church chapters and parishes. Petitions to Parliament were encouraged, and it began to sit much more frequently. Responsibilities of the various Courts of Law became more clearly defined. The Court of King's Bench handled criminal and crown cases, the Court of the Exchequer dealt with royal finance, and the Court of Common Plea with cases between subjects. To keep these various courts running smoothly required a trained and efficient legal profession. Edward took the profession of law out of the hands of the clergy, putting lawyers under the control of the judges. This led to the establishment of the Inns of Court, great mansions where students and barristers lived together, establishing a continuity of legal tradition and practice. The barristers taught the students English Common Law, along with necessary social skills such as music and dancing.

Edward I's son and heir, **Edward II** (1307-1327), was crowned at Westminster at the age 23 when his father died. Ill-educated and indiscreet, Edward II affected the manners of the grooms of his stables whose company he preferred to that of his father's ministers, most of whom he dismissed from office. An excessively heavy drinker, he would often strike across the face members of his household who offended him. He was frequently to be found engaged in amateur theatricals when affairs of state awaited his attention or in the company of his intimate friend and presumed lover, Piers Gaveston, whom he created Earl of Cornwall to the fury of the English barons. In 1312 a group of the barons carried Gaveston away a prisoner and cut his head off. Actually, Edward II's twenty years reign was marked by the constant struggle with the Parliament. In 1313 the lords chose a board of seven bishops, eight earls and six barons (the prototype of the future House of Lords) to draw up Ordinances for the control of the King. According to these Ordinances, the King had no right to choose ministers, start war, leave the country or make gifts without the consent of the barons. Charters were to be kept, and the Parliament was to be held annually. King was unable to control the lords, the country was practically governed by the Earl of Lancaster.

The problem of Scotland could not be settled so successfully. Robert Bruce was still at large in command of a formidable army north of the border, capturing one by one the castles still in English hands; and when a large English army, at least three times the size of his own, marched against him, he skillfully outmanoeuvred it, trapped in a bog beside the Bannock Burn and defeated on 24 June 1314. As a result, Scotland maintained its independence for the next three centuries.

The history of the rest of Edward's reign is a tale of blood and betrayal. The barons rose up against the King and were defeated in 1322 in Yorkshire, where the Earl of Lancaster was taken prisoner and later beheaded. Edward's wife left him and took their son to France, where the rebel exile Roger Mortimer became her lover. He and the Queen returned to England in 1326 with a force of mercenaries, soon to be joined by numbers of English supporters of all classes. They defeated the King's forces and forced him to abdicate in favour of his son, now fourteen years old. Edward was imprisoned in Berkeley Castle north of Bristol and later murdered.

The Outbreak of the Hundred Years War

Edward III *Richard II*

Edward III (1327-1377) seemed to be in many ways the very antithesis of his father. He thought of himself as an Arthurian knight, living in a lost world of romantic chivalry. After brief raids into Scotland, he turned his attention to France, partly to provide exciting and profitable adventures for those who might otherwise make trouble at home, partly because the Scots were turning increasingly to France for help against the English, and partly to prevent French moves against the cities of Flanders with which the by now extremely prosperous English wool trade was so closely connected. Claiming the French throne through his mother, Isabella, daughter of Philip IV, he declared a war that was to last for 116 years (1337 – 1453). At first the struggle known as the **Hundred Years War** was brilliantly successful for England. The English had certain advantages over the French. They had cannons, which had just been invented and which the French army did not have. Besides, the English archers could shoot their arrows from a distance, whereas the French knights, armed with swords, could only fight in hand-to-hand battle. When the thunder of the first cannons had scared the horses of the enemy, the arrows of the English archers reached the French knights before they could use their broad swords. The English won a great naval victory at Sluys on 24 June 1340, then an equally decisive land battle near Calais where Edward's sixteen-year-old son, soon to be known as **the Black Prince** because of his unusually dark armour, greatly distinguished himself and, so it is said, by adopting as his own the crest of three feathers and the maxim *'Ich dien' ('I serve'*) of the blind King of Bohemia, who had been slain in the opposing army, provided a badge and motto for all future Princes of Wales.

The King went on to take Calais; and in 1356 at Poitiers his son, the Black Prince, won another victory over the French King, who was taken prisoner and held to ransom. By **the Treaty of Brétigny**, Edward III gained absolute control over great territories on the south-west and on the north of France. After his earlier victories Edward III had returned home in triumph. It was said that *"all England was filled with the spoils of the King's expedition, so that there was not a woman who did not wear some ornament, or have in her house fine linen or some goblet, part of the booty brought home"*. In the Upper Ward of the Windsor Castle, the King ordered the construction of a magnificent circular stone feasting hall in which the meetings of the knights of a new *"Round Table in the same manner and conditions as the Lord Arthur, formerly King of England, appointed it"* would be held.

A cannon

Windsor Castle

The heraldic badge of the Prince of Wales

The summer of 1348 was abnormally wet. Grain lay rotting in the fields due to the nearly constant rains. With the harvest so heavily affected it seemed certain that there would be food shortages. But a far worse enemy was set to appear. In 1347 a Genoese ship from Caffa, on the Black Sea, came ashore at Messina, Sicily. The crew of the ship carried with them a deadly cargo, a disease called **the Black Death** (or plague) that could kill in a matter of hours. It is thought that the disease originated in the Far East, and was spread along major trade routes to Caffa, where Genoa had an established trading post. When it became clear that ships from the East carried the plague, Messina closed its port. The ships were forced to seek safe harbour elsewhere around the Mediterranean, and the disease was able to spread quickly. The speed with which the disease could kill was terrifying to inhabitants of the medieval world. Few who were infected escaped death. When the summer of 1348 gave way to colder weather, the spread of the plague was halted for a time, but when spring came, it renewed its course. The effect was at its worst in cities, where overcrowding and primitive sanitation aided its spread; but small villages did not escape and in some the inhabitants were entirely wiped out. Only the remote areas of the north-west, the mountainous regions of Wales and Scotland and west Cornwall, remained immune.

On November 1 the plague reached London, and up to 30,000 of the city's population of 70,000 inhabitants succumbed. Over the next 2 years the disease killed between 30-40% of the entire population. Given that the pre-plague population of England was in the range of 5-6 million people, fatalities may have reached as high as 2 million dead.

One of the worst aspects of the disease to the medieval Christian mind is that people died without last rites and without having a chance to confess their sins. Pope Clement VI was forced to grant remission of sins to all who died of the plague because so many perished without benefit of clergy. People were allowed to confess their sins to one another. The death rate was exceptionally high in isolated populations like prisons and monasteries. It has been estimated that up to two-thirds of the clergy of England died within a single year. Peasants fled their fields. Livestock were left to fend for themselves, and crops left to rot. The monk Henry of Knighton declared, "*Many villages and hamlets have now become quite desolate. No one is left in the houses, for the people are dead that once inhabited them."*

By the end of 1350 the Black Death had subsided, but it never really died out in England for the next several hundred years. There were further outbreaks in 1361-62, 1369, 1379-83, 1389-93, and throughout the first half of the 15th century. It was not until the late 17th century that England became largely free of serious plague epidemics.

It is impossible to overstate the terrible effects of the Black Death on England. With the population so low, there were not enough workers to work the land. As a result, wages and prices rose. The Ordinances of Labourers (1349) tried to legislate a return to pre-plague wage levels,

but the overwhelming shortage of labourers meant that wages continued to rise. Landowners offered extras such as food, drink, and extra benefits to attract labourers. The standard of living for labourers rose accordingly. The nature of the economy changed to meet the changing social conditions. Land that had once been farmed was now given over to pasturing, which was much less labour-intensive. This helped boost the cloth and woolen industry. With the fall in population most landowners were not getting the rental income they needed, and were forced to lease their land. Peasants benefited through increased employment options and higher wages. Society became more mobile, as peasants moved to accept work where they could command a good wage.

It has been estimated that 40% of England's priests died in the epidemic. This left a large gap, which was hastily filled with underqualified and poorly trained applicants, accellerating the decline in church power and influence that culminated in the English Reformation. Many survivors of the plague were also disillusioned by the church's inability to explain or deal with the outbreak. The short-term economic prosperity did not last; the underlying feudal structure of society had not changed, and by the mid-15th century standards of living had fallen again. Yet for most levels of English society the Black Death represented a massive upheaval, one which changed the face of English society in a profound way.

The Black Prince had died in 1376, and Edward allowed the government to fall into the hands of his fourth son, John of Gaunt (Ghent, in modern Belgium), Duke of Lancaster, who was thought to be intent on gaining a controlling influence over the King's grandson (the son of the Black Prince), later Richard II. In Edward III's dotage John of Gaunt was a virtual ruler of England. He continued as regent when **Richard II** (1377-1399), aged 10, inherited the throne. Four years later **a poll tax** was declared to finance the continuing war with France. Every person over the age of 15 had to pay one shilling, a large sum in those days. This, combined with continuing efforts by land owners to re-introduce servility of the working classes on the land, led to **the Peasant's Revolt**. The leaders of the peasants were John Ball, a poor priest, Jack Straw, probably also a priest, and **Wat Tyler**, a man supposed to have been either an ex-soldier or a highwayman. Their spiritual inspirer was **John Wyclif** (1320-1384), a former Oxford student who translated the Bible into English (1377), discussed political questions with common people and initiated "Lollard movement" of poor priests teaching people "the truth". The revolt is sometimes called Wat Tyler's Rebellion. The leaders led a mob of up to 100,000 people to London, where the crowd murdered the Archbishop of Canterbury and burned John of Gaunt's Savoy Palace. Manors and religious houses were attacked; lords and priors murdered; prisons broken and open; and the cry went up, *"Death to all lawyers. John Ball hath rungeth your bell!"* Eventually the rebels forced a meeting with the young king in a field near Smithfield. They demanded common property of forests and water basins, fixed money rent for land of 4 pence for acre, cancelling of villein bondage, and pardon and freedom for themselves. Yet Tyler's arrogant disrespect so enraged the Lord Mayor, William Walworth, a fishmonger, that he drew his sword and killed him. At this point Richard, then only 14, showed great courage, shouting to the peasants to follow him. He led them off, calmed them down with promises of reforms, and convinced them to return to their homes. His promises were immediately revoked by his council of advisors, and the leaders of the revolt were hanged, although the poll tax was abandoned and the survivors of the revolt returned to their homes to resume their lives.

In 1399 Henry Bolingbroke, exiled son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, landed with an invasion force while Richard was in Ireland. He defeated Richard in battle, took him prisoner, and probably had him murdered. Henry's claim to the throne was poor. His right to rule was usurpation approved by Parliament and public opinion. The archibishops of Canterbury and York seated him on the throne. So Lancaster had supplanted Plantagenet.

A MEDIEVAL VILLAGE

At the beginning of the 12th century England had a population of about 1,500,000 people. More than nine-tenths lived in villages and were engaged in agriculture.

The church was the centre of the village. The church would be made of stone, with very thick walls and a tower. In the life of the villagers the church was of great importance. The church bell regulated their working day in the fields. The villagers spent their spare time for the most part in church. The religious services were held not only on Sundays, but also on all feast days or holy days. The people did not work on these days, and that is how a *"holy day"* became a *"holiday"*. The church was used not only for the worship of God but also as a store-house, sometimes as a prison. As the church was the strongest building in the village, in times of danger it was used as a fortress.

The houses clustered round the church. Fifty houses were considered a very large village. The largest dwelling in the village belonged to the lord of the manor and was called the **manor-house**. The lord's court was held once a fortnight in the hall of the manor-house and all the villagers were obliged to attend it. There all disputes and quarrels were settled. Since a rich Norman lord had other houses and estates in different parts of the country, he spent his time travelling from one estate to another. His manager, or **steward**, looked after the estate and acted as a judge in his absence, a steward often lived in the manor-house himself when the lord was away. The most important Norman nobles lived in castles from which they ruled the village. The manor-court was held in the castle, which was also used as a prison.

The castle dominated over the small miserable **dwellings of the peasants**. They were rough little huts with thatched roofs. They were dark, cold and uncomfortable. The only light came from the door when it stood open, and from very small windows that had no glasses in them. The peasants' huts were very smoky because they had no chimneys. The smoke of the fire could get out through the doors or windows, or through holes in the thatched roofs. The peasants kept their livestock in their houses. Sometimes the whole family lived and slept in one room with their hens, pigs, dogs and all. Inside these houses there would be very little furniture, a wooden table, one or two stools, a few earthen pots, and some straw or dry leaves for bed on the floor.

Very few changes came about in the village in England after the Norman Conquest. The village **arable land** was divided into two or three great fields; one of the fields was still fallow every

year; each field was still divided into strips and the village was still self-sufficient. The peasants tilled the land and kept sheep and oxen in the same way as their fathers and grandfathers had done. But now the village lands and the villagers themselves belonged to the lord of the manor. Most of the villagers were serfs and they were forced to work for their lords.

The Domesday Book, alongside with other valuable information, contains the number of peasant families of each manor, the different categories the peasantry was divided into and the amount of land they held. The most numerous category of the English peasants were **villeins**. The villeins were part of the manor and had no right to leave it. If the manor was given or sold to another lord, the villeins remained on it. They could not be sold away from the manor. They were kept in villeinage, as it was called, and they were obliged to remain in the village and work for the lord. If the villein ran away and was caught, he would be brought back in chains and punished severely for trying to escape. The average holding of the villein was thirty acres. The villeins had to work on the lord's domain three or even more days a week all year round. They had to perform corvée-work that meant mainly the work in the fields. They ploughed and sowed the lord's land, reaped the harvest and carried it to the lord's barns. The villeins had to use their own carts and ploughs drawn by their own oxen. They could also be ordered to do any kind of work: to repair the manor-house, built barns, gather fruit. At harvest time the villeins had to do extra work, called boon-work, so that the lord's harvest could be gathered in during fine weather. The villeins had no right to cut their own corn until the lord's harvest was reaped, and if the weather changed it would be their corn, and not their lord's, that would be spoiled. Moreover, not everything produced by the villeins on their holdings belonged to them. A part of the produce of their farms was paid as quit-rent to the lord of the manor, another part was paid as the tithe to the Church, that is one-tenth of their harvest as well as of their wool, their cattle, and other products such as butter, meat, leather. The villein had no right to sell his ox or his horse without first asking his lord's permission. He could not marry or let his sons and daughters marry without asking his lord's permission either. And he had to make special payments to get such permission. When he died, his son or daughter who succeeded to his strips had to give the lord an ox or a cow. It was the lord's privilege to own a mill and an oven in the village. In this way the villein was compelled to bring his grain to the lord's mill to be ground and he left a part of the flour to pay for the grinding; he had to take his bread to be baked in the lord's oven and left a loaf in payment. The lord and his steward made sure that every single villein paid for the use of his property.

The free peasants (**freeholders**) were owners of land. They lived mainly in the counties of the old Danelaw and some in other counties. But after the Norman Conquest the freeholders became subject to trial by the lord's court. They had to perform a number of duties and make some payments to the lord.

The English village also had **cottars**. A cottar possessed a very small hut called a cottage and only three or four acres of land. The cottars kept poultry, cattle and sheep. Like the other villagers, they used common pastures, forests, rivers and lakes. Some of the cottars were villeins and had to work for the landowner in return for their small land-holdings; others were freeholders. But since their plots of arable land were too small to live on, both free cottars and serf cottars had to do various jobs on the manor to make ends meet. They worked either in the lord's fields or as herdsmen, blacksmiths, wheelwrights and so on.

Although the establishment of feudalism had already begun in England during the Anglo-Saxon period, it was completed, in the main, by the beginning of the 13th century. Now, there were the serf peasants who made up the bulk of the population in the country. They performed their duties which were fixed by custom, and the powerful lords managed to keep them in obedience. One-third of the lords were clergymen and could rely on the religiousness of peasants. But the

Norman lord of the manor remained a foreigner to the Anglo-Saxon peasants. The peasants looked with hatred at the high towers of the castles which were the scenes of cruelty and tyranny of the Norman lords. When the feudal lords broke the old customs and increased the quit-rent and the corvée-work, very often the whole village would resist and refuse to pay dues or to work for the estate-owner. The bravest peasants ran away from their manor-lords. They lived in the forests or mountainous regions and hunted game in the royal forests fearlessly breaking Forest Laws. Now and then a tyrant steward would be found murdered in the forest. On holidays people sang or recited **ballads** about life and adventures of such heroes. The most popular and favourite hero of the English ballads was **Robin Hood**. History does not have exact information about Robin Hood and probably the man who is described in the popular ballads never existed. But the English peasants believed that Robin Hood was a free Saxon who actually lived in the 12th century. The ballads describe Robin Hood as a strong, brave and skilful archer. (The bow was the traditional weapon of the English peasants in the Middle Ages.) Together with his companions he hid in the woods and fought against the bishops and monks, against the sheriffs and the cruel barons. They swore an oath to take revenge on those who oppressed them: *"I swear to help the weak and fight the strong, to take from the rich and give to the poor."* Like all the peasants in the Middle Ages, Robin Hood believed in "the kind king" but at the same time he was a sworn enemy of the Norman oppressors who deprived the Anglo-Saxons of land and freedom.

104 **Plan of a Mediaeval Manor.**

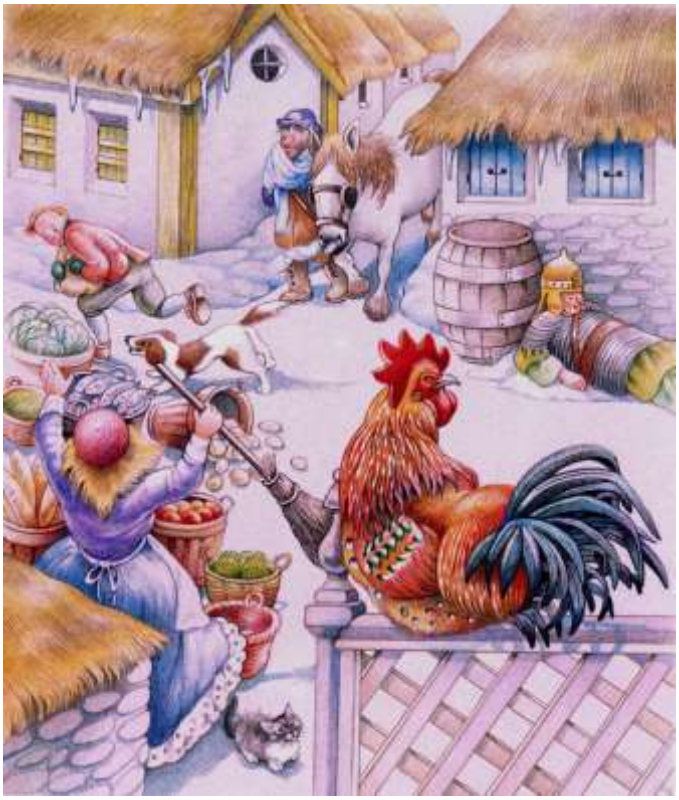
The Demesne

The glebe (i.e. strips in the open fields held by the parish church)

Later enclosures for farming and sheep-raising

This plan of a manor is wholly conventional. It is intended to show: (1) the various features that might be found in English manors (or vills) of the mediaeval period; (2) the more important changes in the agricultural system which occurred in England from the fourteenth century onward. Many of these manorial features, of course, appeared in similar domains on the continent.

A MEDIEVAL TOWN



In the course of the Anglo-Saxon conquest the few Roman towns and villas that had been in Britain were mostly destroyed and abandoned. Since then the Anglo-Saxons lived in villages. Blacksmiths, wheelwrights, weavers and other **craftsmen** were engaged in agriculture together with all villagers. Only in their spare time could they produce goods for themselves, their lords and neighbours. They paid quit-rent with the produce of their agriculture and their handicraft wares.

In the 10^{th} – 11^{th} centuries both agriculture and crafts gradually developed and became more productive and, as a result, required much more time and special knowledge and skill. The craftsmen could spend very little time on agriculture. Most of their time they devoted to their craft. The greater portion of their produce was paid to the lord of the manor, the surplus was exchanged for agricultural products. The serf craftsmen wanted to make goods to order and for sale and many of them would run away from the manor and settle in places where they could sell their articles and buy raw materials and necessities of life. The settlements of runaway serfs gradually were protected by earthern walls and grew into towns. Such towns sprang up at cross-roads where people would come from the surrounding countryside to buy and sell their goods. The runaway peasant craftsmen would also settle near a monastery or a famous cathedral and carry a brisk trade with clergymen and their servants. Merchants would build their dwellings there too as trade was always good where many people gathered. In time of danger many settlers could seek protection behind the stone walls of monasteries. Towns grew up at places like Bury St. Edmunds, Canterbury and Durham where there were great monasteries, cathedrals and castles.

Almost all the towns were built on rivers which supplied the inhabitants with water and were important means of communication. The town was built at some distance from the mouth of a river: a river-port was safer from attack than a port on the coast. Dover, Southampton, Plymouth, Boston grew up as ports, Grinsby, Scarborough and Yarmouth grew up as fishing centres. Many towns spang up near bridges (Bristol, Cambridge) or fords (Oxford, Bedford).

Thus as a result of economic development the crafts began to separate from agriculture, and new towns became the centres of crafts and trade. By the 13th century there were already more than 160 towns in England. By the 14th century London had 40,000 people, York and Bristol had 12,000. Unlike many towns on the continent of Europe which gained their independence by means of bloody uprisings, in England the townspeople came to terms with the king. In return for the money paid by merchants and craftsmen, the king would grant them a **charter**. This was a written agreement listing the things the townspeople could do without asking permission from the king. Town charters became a major source of royal revenue. Some towns paid a large sum of money for the chart only once, others had to make a certain payment every year. The charter granted that the townsmen were free from their former lords and the services they formerly rendered, and this provided some incentive for serfs to run away to the towns. If they could remain there for a year and a day they were considered free and could not be compelled to return to the manor. They also had the right to choose their own **council** with a chairman at the head who was called the **mayor**. The town council made laws and executed punishments. The towns had their own judges and their own officials who collected the dues for the king. The townsmen were also released from military service, granted the right of free trade throughout England and allowed to hold markets and fairs. By the end of the 13th century almost all towns of any size, exept a few under monatic rule, had charters and exercised self-government.

The elite of towns were the **merchants**. The growth of trade and the merchant middle class went hand in hand with the growth of towns. Town populations swelled during this period, particularly after the Black Death. Trade routes grew, though roads remained poor and dangerous, so most goods were transported by water. Merchants needed stability for trade, so they supported the king and the establishment of a strong central government against the rule of individual nobles. The king, for his part, encouraged the growth of towns and trade. Eventually the growth of towns and guilds led to the breakdown of the manor-centred feudal society.

Of all trades the most important was the **wool trade**. From early times wool was exported from England to be woven in the towns of Flanders. The Flemish artisans were the greatest of all the cloth-artisans in the world and they depended largely on England's high-quality wool for their work. Already in 1102 and 1103 England concluded the first trade agreements with Flanders and from that time on throughout the Middle Ages the best wool was exported to them. Many strains of sheep were bred in England, and in the 12th century it began to export forty-five varieties of raw wool to other countries. England established commercial contacts with the trading towns of the Mediterranean which was a link in the trade between Western Europe and the eastern countries. After the crusades began, people learned more about the products of the East, and trade with the oriental countries grew rapidly. At the end of the 12th century England established direct and permanent connections with the north Italian towns of Venice and Genoa, which dominated over the Mediterranean Sea. Every year a fleet of Venetian galleys laden with spices and silk of the East sailed from Venice through the Strait of Gibraltar and up to the English Channel to Flanders. On their way the Venetian ships called at ports on the southern coast of England. English merchants bought oriental articles of luxury and sold them again at high profit to the feudal lords and rich townspeople. The trade in spices was particularly profitable. Spices were weighed out very carefully and sold in small quantities at enormous prices. Often they cost their weight in gold. An important sea route ran across the North Sea and the Baltic. England carried on a brisk trade with the Baltic and Scandinavian countries. The towns situated on the banks of navigable rivers or close to sea harbours increased their trade rapidly. London, Dover, Newcastle, Southampton, Ipswich had become important trade centres already in the 12th century. Closer contact with the continent of Europe made more articles available for exchange. The list of imports considerably increased: from France – wine, salt and building stone for

castles and churches; a greater quantity and variety of fine cloth and spices from the East. Besides wool, England exported tin, lead, cattle. Through commercial contacts the English could learn more about economic and cultural achievements of other countries.

Each craft had its own **guild**.The right to organize a guild was granted to the first towns by the owner of the land. The master-craftsmen elected the elders who headed the guild and controlled that all the guild-members followed the rules and produced goods of the right quality. The power of the guilds was absolute in their domain, and to be expelled from a guild made it impossible to earn a living. Each guild had a patron saint, celebrated religious festivals together, arranged religious plays, and looked after the health and welfare of the members and their families. It had a special fund to help sick or needy craftsmen and take care of their parents, wives and children. The guild was also a military organization as each guild formed its municipal guard detachment and a levy of guildsmen fought together against the enemies of the town. Merchant guilds controlled the trade in a town, regulated prices, quality, weights and measures, and business practices. Separate from the merchant guilds were the craft guilds, which regulated the quality, working hours and conditions of its members.

There were three levels of craftsmen: masters, journeymen, and apprentices. Parents paid a fee to place a boy with a master craftsman as an **apprentice**. There he received food, lodging (often sleeping under the counter in the shop), clothes, and instruction in the craft. The apprentice had no right to leave his master before completing the term of his apprenticeship. He did less skilled work in the workshop and had to help with the housework in his master's home. If the apprentice protested and refused to serve his master, he was tried by the town court. The period of apprenticeship lasted for 2-7 years, after which time the apprentice became a **journeyman**. The term has nothing to do with travelling; it comes from the French "*journee*", (*day*), and meant that the journeyman was paid by the day for his work. After several years as a journeyman the craftsman would submit a piece of his best work to the guild for approval. If this "*master-piece*" was accepted he could become a **master craftsman** and own his own shop.

The **medieval workshop** was a small-scale enterprise where there was no division of labour and only manual labour was used. The customers of a master-craftsman ordered what they wanted from him, and the work was done to order. But there were also some ready-made articles in the workshop. Any customer who called could see them and buy if he wished. In this way the workshop became a kind of shop for the sale of goods. It had a great shutter which let down in the day-time, so that the goods could be displayed on it. The goods were also hung out on display round the open window and the door, a bright sign such as a big wooden boot or horseshoe was hung above the door. The journeymen could be seen working inside, the apprentice boys stood by the shutters outside to see that nothing was stolen and to shout and attract customers.

Most of the early towns did not differ very much from the villages. They were surrounded by walls which had a number of gates, guarded by gate-keepers, who opened them at dawn and locked them at sunset. Outside the town there were fields which came right up to the walls of the town. There were common pastures and meadows where the townspeople fed their cattle and geese. Inside the walls there were also a good many of kitchen-gardens and orchards. The buildings were crowded together. Many houses had two or three stories. The workshop and the shop were on the ground flour, the owner and his family lived upstairs. The upper stories projected above till the houses of the opposite sides of the street nearly met which made the downstairs rooms very dark. There were many dark corners and backyards. The streets were not lit at night and the robbers would attack any passer-by who dared to be out late. It was the duty of the watchmen to go through the streets at night and ring a bell, calling out the time and the state of the weather – e.g. *"past two o'clock and a fine night"*.

Before Edward I all repairs to streets were the responsibility of adjacent householders. After Edward's time town councils began to take over more responsibility. New roadway was often built directly on top of the old one with little attempt to clear it away. Thus repairs never lasted long. There was also the possibility that a citizen would build his section higher than his neighbour. Because of this practice street levels rose and rose. In London the original Roman roads are buried up to 20 feet beneath the street level of today. Streets and roads were narrow. There were no pavements at their sides. Traffic moved slowly, not least because tolls at the town gates were often paid with goods rather than money, causing delays and long lineups.

Sanitation was a constant concern. Very few houses had their own water supply. Water was fetched from the nearest well or stream. There was no collection of house refuse and other rubbish and proper drainage system. Open drain channels ran along the sides or down the centre of streets. People often threw dirty water out of windows in the general direction of the drains. Again the was problem of the individual householder to keep the space in front of his house relatively clean. In practice the only real incentive to do so was an outbreak of the plague or a visit of the King. Pigs were another nuisance in the streets. Most people kept pigs. They were cheap, and a good source of food. However, houses were small and gardens even smaller, so pigs were often let out into the streets to forage. Stray pigs were such a nuisance that they were liable to be killed and the owner charged for the return of the dead animal.

Law and order in the town was enforced by the **constables**, who could call on citizens to form a night watch. If an alarm signal was raised to chase a criminal, all citizens had to join in or risk being fined. The penalty for the criminal was much higher. A thief found in possession of stolen goods was hanged. If a fugitive managed to reach a church they could claim the right of sanctuary there for a period of 40 days. This meant that someone would have to stand watch outside the church for the entire time to ensure that the fugitive did not escape, a duty that no one wanted. Towns could even be fined if the felon escaped. At any one time in the Middle Ages it has been estimated that there were as many as 1000 people in sanctuary throughout England.

Curfews were imposed in towns to keep peace. Originally the "curfew bell" was rung at 8 or 9 o'clock in the evening to indicate that it was time for smiths, brewers, and taverners to cease their working day. It became the custom that anyone abroad after that had to carry a light and have a good excuse for being out. The carrying of weapons was carefully regulated, especially where foreigners were concerned. There were also laws prohibiting the wearing of masks in the street; this after an attempt on the life of Henry IV by some nobles disguised as Christmas mummers.

Fire was the constant fear of town dwellers. Due to closely packed wooden houses and inadequate water supply, fires were difficult to control and could produce widespread damage. There were other factors that increased the risks of fire. Beds were of straw and were commonly kept close to open hearths for warmth. Roofs of reeds, rushes and straw were common. It was only after 1213 that these materials were forbidden in London in favour of tile and shingles. Other places were slow to follow London's lead.

Although stone building was encouraged, expense meant that most houses were built of wood up until the 16th century. Then, the flourishing new brick industry and a rapidly falling timber supply swung the tide away from wood as the material of choice for most domestic building. Cooks, barbers, and brewers were heavily regulated because of the risk their fires posed. Their premises had to be whitewashed and plastered inside and out. Each householder was required to keep a full vessel of water outside his door in summer, due to fire risk. When fires did occur, it was every citizen's duty to come running with whatever equipment they had. Often firehooks were used to haul burning thatch off a roof, and also to pull down adjacent buildings to provide a firebreak.

Bells were the main medium of telling time and making announcements. A Common Bell was rung to summon civic meetings, courts, and as an alarm in case of fire or attack. The town crier rang a hand bell when he walked throughout the town declaiming news and proclamations. The criers were the main source of news for town dwellers. They also had the task of ringing their bells to solicit prayers in memory of people who had paid for the privilege.

The town day officially began with the ringing of the church bell at 4 or 5 o'clock. It announced the first mass of the day and the end of the night watchman's duty. Most shops opened at 6 a.m., providing plenty of early morning shopping before the first meal of the day at 9 or 10 a.m. Things calmed down after noon, and most shops closed at 3 o'clock. Some kept open until light faded, and others, such as the barbers and blacksmiths, were open until the curfew bell sounded. Saturday was early closing day for shops. Usually noon was the close of business. On Sunday, however, the *"Lord's day of rest*", some trades were allowed to work after Mass, and some field work was allowed to be done before it. A few places even had the privilege of Sunday markets.

The town **market** was held on a certain day of the week. On a market-day stalls were put up in the market-place, which was in any open space near the centre of the town. The king sold the permission to hold a market to the town council. The stalls in the market-place were then rented to the traders. Usually all the ordinary shops were closed for market-day and most of their owners would rent a market stall for themselves too. People from the country would come to the town markets to sell their surplus produce and to buy the townsmen's goods.

Before the market opened, the quality of the goods and their prices were announced. Judges sat in a special court all day long ready to hear complaints and settle disputes. Special officials tested the weight and quality of goods. If a merchant or a craftsman was caught cheating, he was driven through the town in the cage, so that everyone could see that he had deceived the townspeople. Every market-place had its stocks in which the guilty were forced to sit and a pillory in which they were compelled to stand with their heads and hands fixed while people threw mud and food refuse at him. Dishonest traders got bad record and customers avoid buying goods from them.

A pillory

A stock

Fairs were held in some towns once a year and lasted a week, or even two or three weeks. The same preparations went on as for markets, but on much greater scale. Whole streets of stalls were

put up and fenced. English mercants from all parts of the country came to the fair. Among the best known were the fairs in London, Boston and Winchester. Some fairs were specialized (horse fairs, cheese fairs, wool fairs and others). Some of the fairs were famous in foreign countries as well. Foreign merchants were heavily regulated. They had to wait two or more hours before they could enter the market, giving the locals the best of the business. However, they brought to the fair goods which were in high demand (furs, wax, spices, wine, silk, pearls) and sold them wholesale.

Between the rows of fair stalls there were usually small tables of money-changers. They determined the real value of foreign coins and exchange one currency for another. A certain sum of money had to be paid for those transactions. Gradually money-changers managed to accumulate great sums of money and began lending it under certain interest for a definite time limit. The money was lent for use and so the money-changers became known as **usurers**.

At every fair there were all sorts of amusement: puppets, clowns, jugglers, acrobats and performing animals were always a great attraction.

A Student's page 6.1 *(photocopiable)*

Vocabulary notes:

apprentice – a person who works for sb. for low wages, in order to learn an occupation or skill
artisan – a skilful craftsman
bondage – absolute dependency
charter – an official written statement of the rights, beliefs and purposes of a particular group of people
fair – a large exhibition and sale of commercial goods
guild – an organization of masters of the same craft
manual – operated by hand
merchant – a person whose job is to buy and sell goods of particular type in large amount
plague – a disease that spreads quickly and kills people
quit-rent – an obligatory sum of money paid as a tribute or to obtain some privileges
usurer – a person whose job is to lend money charging certain interest

Compendium

Dates:

1215 - Magna Charta of Liberties (the Great Charter) was adopted – a feudal constitution consisting of 63 articles which legalised the right of the Royal Council of barons and clergymen to control all taxes and royal spendings, confirmed town charters and granted foreign traders the right of free entrance and stay in England.
1258 - "Oxford Provisions" were signed - an agreement according to which the legislative power belonged to the council of 15 barons and special 24-member committee meeting 3 times a year; 4 knights of every shire were responsible of choosing a sheriff and controlling his work.
1263-1267 - the civil war between king's supporters and barons lead by Simon de Monfort who captured king and his son in 1264 at Lewes and ruled England for 15 months. Simon de Monfort was defeated and killed in 1265.
1282 - the conquest of Wales was completed.
1295 - the Model Parliament was called, it consisted of king's vassals, 2 representatives of every big town and 2 knights of every shire.
1313 –oficial division of parliament into the House of Lords (barons, archibishops, abbots of big monasteries) and the House of Commons (representatives of knights and townspeople); the Ordinances for the control of the King were drawn up (the King had no right to choose ministers, start war, leave the country or make gifts without the consent of the barons).
1337-1453 - the Hundred Years' War.
1348 – the epidemic of plague.
1377 - John Wyclif (1320-1384) translated the Bible into English.
1381 – Walt Tyler's Revolt, 60,000 people from 25 counties, captured London for 3 days, demanded to cancel villein bondage and set fixed money rent for land, Walt Tyler was killed by London mayor, revolt suppressed.

Personalities:

Henry II (1154-1189)	- a founder of Plantagenet dynasty - forced Wales to acknowledge the sovereignty of the English crown, conquered Irish tribal chiefs, forced the Scottish king to recognise English overlordship - obtained Anjou lands of France by the right of inheritance - replaced trials of ordeal with a jury of 12 men and the Supreme Appeal Royal Court - introduced the first personal property tax, allowed lords to pay taxes instead of military service, the money being used to hire professional knights
Richard Coeur de Lion (1189-1199)	- spent more time abroad than at home and died fighting against Moslems
John the Lackland (1199-1216)	- lost all English possessions in France and let the barons produce Magna Carta
Henry III (1216-1272)	- struggled with barons for power, signed Oxford Provisions
Edward I (1273-1307)	- united England and Wales, led wars with the Scottish kings
Edward II (1307-1327)	- let the Parliament summon, was unable to control the lords, the country was practically governed by the Earl

	of Lancaster - lost the war with Scotland
Edward III (1327-1377)	- started the Hundred Years' War - gained absolute control over great territories on the south-west and on the north of France.
Richard II (1377-1399)	- suppressed the Peasants' Revolt

The mode of life

	Villages	**Towns**
Origin	former Anglo-Saxon villages with few changes, were mostly in possession of the Norman lords	settlements of runaway craftsmen at the crossroads, on the coast, near rivers or monasteries, townspeople had to pay for the use of land, in return they were granted charters
Dwellers	- villeins (bondagers) were obliged to remain in the village and work for the lord in the fields and in the manor, a part of their harvest was paid as quit-rent, 1/10 (a tithe) was given to the church - freeholders owned land but were subject to the lord's trial, it was the lord's privilege to own a mill and collect payments for grinding their grain - cottars had very small huts and land-holdings and had to do various jobs in the manor - stewards – lords' managers, looked after the estate and acted as judges	- masters – the owners of workshop, materials and instruments - apprentices lived with masters for 2-7 years, learnt a craft, did primitive work and housework, had no money but food and clothes - journeymen (Fr. *day*) worked for a few years in the workshop, were paid by the day, were free to to change masters - merchants – the elite of the town, established trading relationships with different towns and countries - usurers – exchanged currency and lent money
Daily life	- the village consisted of about 50 huts with thatched roofs, the lord's manor and the church - the villagers cultivated fields and spent all spare time in churches	- the artisan's workshop was a small enterprise with no division of labour based on manual labour - the craftsmen of the same trade in the town were unitied into guilds, which had an exclusive right to produce and sell goods in the town; guilds formed levies, built chapels, had patron saints, organized special funds to held needy craftsmen - town markets and fairs were held on certain days with a king's permission, the stalls in the market-place were rented to the traders by the town council, special officials tested the weight and quality of goods, market courts settled the disputes

Comprehension check:

1. What caused an open rebellion of barons in 1215? Why was Magna Charta important?
2. Give an account on the formation of the first parliament.
3. What were the reasons of the Hundred Years' War?How did its 1st period end?
4. What caused the name "Black Middle Ages" for the 13th -15thcenturies?
5. What were the reasons and the results of the revolt in 1381?
6. In what way did the English village after the Norman conquest differ from that in Anglo-Saxon times? Compare the position of villeins and freeholders.
7. What caused the rise of the first towns in the 11th century? In what way did medieval towns differ from villages?
8. What did town charter guarantee? How did privileges influence the development of town crafts and trades?
9. Describe the medieval workshop. What was the the role of guilds?
10. Describe a market and a fair. Dwell on the increasing role of money and development of foreign trade.

Medieval London


In some ways the medieval history of London can be said to have begun on Christmas Day, 1066, when William the Conqueror was crowned king of England in a ceremony at the newly finished Westminster Abbey, just three months after his victory at the Battle of Hastings.

William granted the citizens of London special privileges, but he also built a castle in the southeast corner of the city to keep them under control. This castle was expanded by later kings until it became the complex we now call **the Tower of London**.

Around the year 1240 King Henry III made the Tower of London his home. He whitewashed the tower, widened the grounds to include a church, and added a great hall and other buildings. The Normans called the tower *'La Tour Blanche'* (*White tower*). The White Tower formed the basis of a residential palace and fortress suited for a king or a queen. It has been used as a fortress, a prison, a home for kings and queens, and as a royal mint and treasury. It was Henry III that renamed the entire area the Tower of London to White Tower. Although he used it as a prison, he continued to use it as a palace and entertained guests, and many of them came with gifts of animals. These gifts were kept near the drawbridge where he built Lion Tower, a zoo where visitors would be greeted by roaring beasts.

Today the official title of the Tower is still *"Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress the Tower of London"*. It houses the Crown Jewels and is a keeper to the Royal Ravens. The ravens are flightless birds due to the fact their wings are clipped and this tradition points to the superstition that the English still believe dating back from time of Charles II that when there are no longer ravens in the Tower, both the White Tower and the Commonwealth of England would fall.

In 1097 William II began the building of Westminster Hall, close to the abbey of the same name. The hall was to prove the basis of a new **Palace of Westminster**, the prime royal residence throughout the Middle Ages. On William's death his brother Henry needed the support of London merchants to maintain his dubious grip on the throne. In exchange, Henry I gave city merchants the right to levy taxes and elect a sheriff.

By the early 12th century the population of London was about 18,000 (compare this to the 45,000 estimated at the height of Roman Britain). In 1123 St. Bartholomew's Priory was founded in the city, and other monastic houses quickly followed. At one point in the medieval period there were 13 monasteries in the city. Today, these houses are remembered only by the names they gave to their area, such as *Greyfriars*, *Whitefriars*, and *Blackfriars*.

The city played a role in the outcome of the struggle between Stephen and Maud for the crown in the 12th century. Although they initially supported Maud, her arrogant behaviour when she occupied Westminster so angered the citizens that they rose in revolt and Maud was forced to flee London.

In 1176 the first stone **London Bridge** was built, mere yards from the original Roman bridge across the Thames. This bridge was to remain the only one in London until 1739. Because the passage across this one bridge was narrow and clogged with traffic, it was much quicker and easier for travellers to hire waterboatmen to row them across the river, or transport them up or down river.

In 1191 Richard I acknowledged the right of London to self-government, and the following year saw the election of the first Mayor. This right was confirmed by later monarchs.

In 1245 Henry III began his lifetime work of rebuilding Westminster Abbey, which was reconsecrated in 1269. The other major building project of the medieval period was Old St. Paul's. The cathedral was finished in 1280.

Daily Life

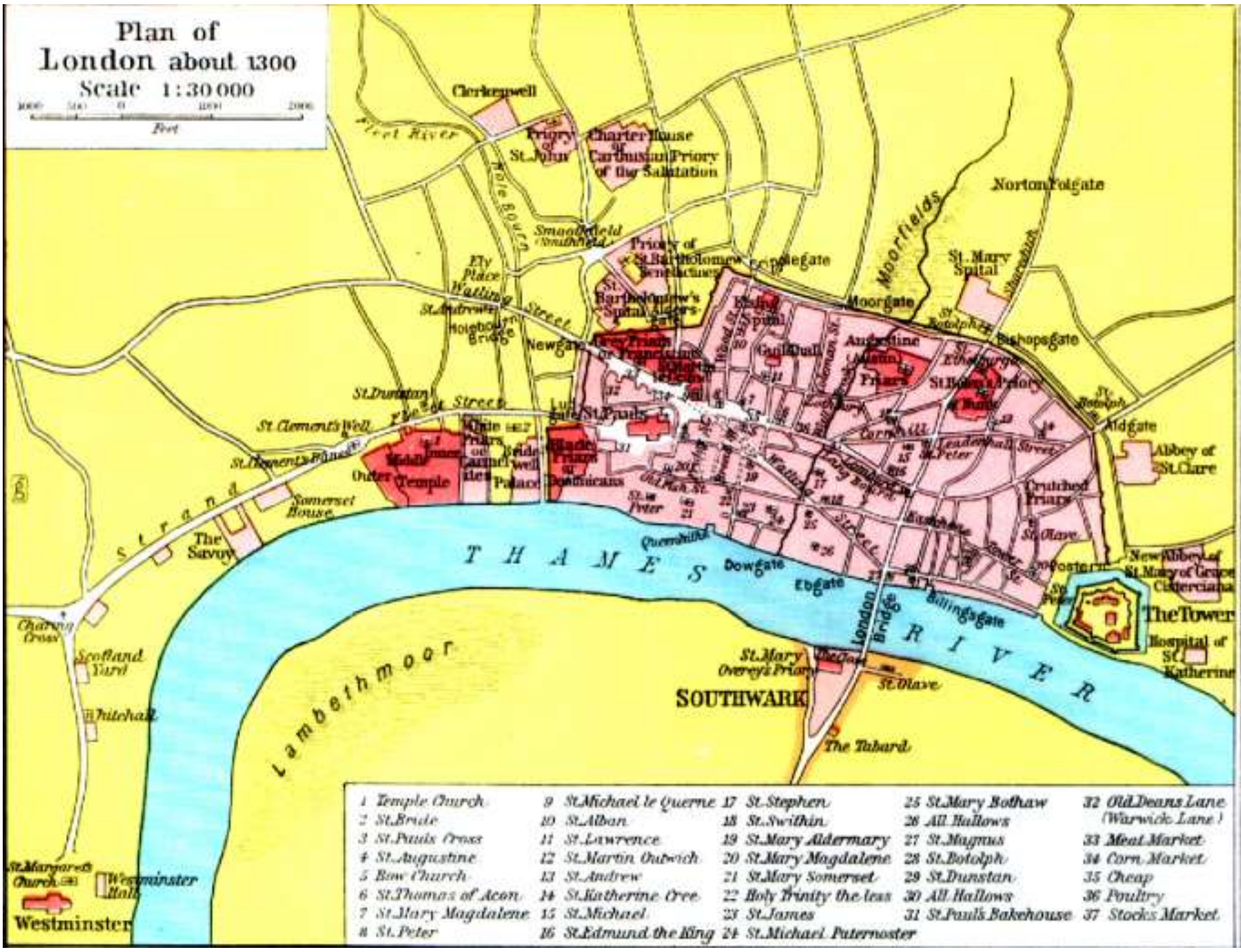
Medieval London was a maze of twisting streets and lanes. Most of the houses were half-timbered, or wattle and daub, whitewashed with lime. The threat of fire was constant, and laws were passed to make sure that all householders had fire-fighting equipment on hand. A 13th century law required new houses to use slate for roofing rather than the more risky straw, but this seems to have been ignored.

The government of the city was by a **Lord Mayor** and council elected from the ranks of the merchant guilds. These guilds effectively ran the city and controlled commerce. Each guild had its own hall and their own coat of arms, but there was also **the Guildhall** (1411-40) where representatives of the various guilds met in common.

Many of the streets in the city were named after the particular trade which was practised there. For example, Threadneedle Street was the tailor's district, Bread Street and Baker Street had bakeries, and on Milk Street cows were kept for milking. There was also a very active livestock market at Smithfield.

Plague was a constant threat, particularly because sanitation was so primitive. London was subject to no less than 16 outbreaks of the plague between 1348 and the Great Plague of 1665.

The prime real estate in London was the Strand, where many rich landowners built homes. Lawyers settled at the Temple and along Fleet Street. The Fleet River (which was called the Holborn) was navigable by boats, and docks were set up at what is now Farringdon Street. The Fleet River was covered over in the 18th century.


Plan of
London about 1300
Scale 1:30 000
Feet
Clerkenwell
Fleet River
Priory of St. John
Charter House
Carthusian Priory of the Salutation
Holeborn
Smoothfield
Ely Place
Watling Street
Holeborn Bridge
Newgate
Aldersgate
Moorfields
Moorgate
Norton Folgate
St. Mary Spital
Bishopsgate
Guildhall
Aldgate
Abbey of St. Clare
Crutched Friars
St. Dunstan
Fleet Street
St. Clement's Well
Middle Temple
Outer Temple
White Friars
Bride well Palace
Black Friars
St. Pauls
Strand
Somerset House
The Savoy
Queenhithe
Dowgate
London Bridge
Billingsgate
The Tower
New Abbey of St. Mary of Grace Cistercians
Hospital of St. Katherine
T H A M E S R I V E R
Charing Cross
Scotland Yard
Whitehall
Lambethmoor
St. Mary Overey's Priory
St. Olave
SOUTHWARK
The Tabard
St. Margaret's Church
Westminster Hall
Westminster
1 Temple Church
2 St. Bride
3 St. Pauls Cross
4 St. Augustine
5 Bow Church
6 St. Thomas of Acon
7 St. Mary Magdalene
8 St. Peter
9 St. Michael le Querne
10 St. Alban
11 St. Lawrence
12 St. Martin Outwich
13 St. Andrew
14 St. Katherine Cree
15 St. Michael
16 St. Edmund the King
17 St. Stephen
18 St. Swithin
19 St. Mary Aldermary
20 St. Mary Magdalene
21 St. Mary Somerset
22 Holy Trinity the less
23 St. James
24 St. Michael Paternoster
25 St. Mary Bothaw
26 All Hallows
27 St. Magnus
28 St. Botolph
29 St. Dunstan
30 All Hallows
31 St. Paul's Bakehouse
32 Old Deans Lane (Warwick Lane)
33 Meat Market
34 Corn Market
35 Cheap
36 Poultry
37 Stocks Market

MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE

Art in the Middle ages was inseparable from religion. It was infused with spiritual symbolism and meaning. The purpose of art was to awe and inspire the viewer with the grandeur of God. It also served to symbolize what people believed. Pope Gregory the Great said, "*painting can do for the illiterate what writing does for those who read.*" He might have added that sculpture could serve the same purpose.

Church Sculpture. The mission of the sculptor, whose work was seen almost exclusively adorning church buildings, was to educate as well as decorate. He brought Biblical tales and moral lessons to life in stone. Carvings were not just religious, there are evidences of pre-Christian symbology in church sculpture: animals real and fanciful, scenes of everyday life. Sculpture burst forth gloriously in the Romanesque era, with little regard for classical conventions of proportion of figures.

The Romanesque Period. At the beginning of the Norman era the popular style of architecture was known as Romanesque, because it copied the pattern and proportion of the architecture of the Roman Empire. The chief characteristics of the Romanesque style were barrel vaults, round arches, thick piers, and few windows. The easiest point to look for is the rounded arch, seen in door openings and windows. In general the Romanesque churches were heavy and solid, carrying about them an air of solemnity and gloom.

These early Norman churches were not always so stark as they seem today, however. In their heyday the church walls were hung with tapestries or painted richly. The statues of the saints were gilded (on some the traces of the paint can still be seen), and the service books were inlaid with gold, jewels, and ivory. Chalices and reliquaries were encrusted with gems.

The Gothic Style. Beginning in 12th century France a new style of architecture and decoration emerged. At the time it was called simply "The French Style", but later Renaissance critics, appalled at the abandonment of classical line and proportion, called it "Gothic". This was a reference to the imagined lack of culture of the barbarian tribes, including the Goths, which had ransacked Rome in the twilight of the Roman Empire.

Gothic architecture is light, spacious, and graceful. Advances in architectural technique learned from contacts with the Arab world during the Crusades led to innovations such as the pointed arch, ribbed vault, and the buttress. Heavy Romanesque piers were replaced by slender clusters of columns. Window sizes grew enormously, as did the height of vaults and spires.

Sculpture became free standing rather than being incorporated in columns. The new expanse of window space was filled with gloriously rich coloured glass. The easiest point of reference to look for in a Gothic church is the pointed arch, seen in window openings and doors. Also, the

later Gothic churches had very elaborate decoration, especially the stonework supporting the stained glass windows.

Church Building. Churches were a point of civic pride, and towns tried to outdo each other in the glory of their churches. Money for the church was raised by the sale of indulgences, fund raising caravans of relics, parish contributions, and donations from nobles. Many times a guild would pay for a stained glass window depicting their trade. Often people would volunteer their labour to the construction, though much of the work was carried on by skilled workmen under the watchful eye of the head mason and the architect. Churches were often sited on pre-Christian sites of spiritual importance, taking advantage of peoples' existing devotion to a particular place. Worship was carried on in the same place, just with a Christian orientation. Churches are nearly always oriented so that the main altar is at the east end of the church, facing Jerusalem and, not coincidentally, the rising sun. Even if the altar end of the church is not literally in the east, that end is still referred to as the east end. In theory, then, the east end of an English church could face west.

In nearly every English county churches were being built and reconstructed in the style known as **Perpendicular**, the last stage of Gothic, a style distinguished by large windows with a predominance of vertical lines in their stone tracery and regular horizontal divisions. Beautiful examples of Perpendicular churches can be seen, for example, in Wiltshire, in Somerset, in Norfolk and in Suffolk.

Most houses were still of timber or stone. So were most late medieval bridges, several of which still survive over the Camel in Cornwall and over the Thames in Oxfordshire. Bricks were not a new building material. Imported from the Continent and known as Flanders tiles, they had been used since the beginning of the thirteenth century. But the English word ‘brick’ from the French *‘brique’* did not enter the language until 1416. Thereafter brick became much more commonly used. Two and a half million bricks were used in the building of Eton College in ten years after its foundation in 1440.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

The Norman invasion had a profound effect on English language. The Norman French spoken by the invaders became the language of the ruling class of England. The lower classes, while remaining English-speaking, were influenced, nevertheless, by the new vocabulary. French became the language of the affairs of government, court, the church, the army, and education where the newly adopted French words often substituted their former English counterparts. The linguistic influence of Norman French continued for as long as the Kings ruled both Normandy and England. When King John lost Normandy in the years following 1200, the links to the French-speaking community subsided. English then slowly started to gain more weight as a common tongue within England again. A hundred years later, English was again spoken by representatives of all social classes, this new version of the English language being strikingly different from the Old English used prior to the Norman invasion. The English spoken at this turn of events is called **Middle English**.

About ten thousand French words had been taken over by English during the Middle English period, and most of them have remained in the language until the present day. Aside from the already mentioned new vocabulary pertaining to the affairs of government, court, the church, the army, and education, many words relating to food and fashion were introduced as well. In some fields an original English terminology did not exist. Therefore, many French terms were borrowed. One example is the names of animals and their meat. Whereas the names of the animals remained the same, their meat was renamed according to the Norman custom.
This correlated to the sociological structures: the farmers that raised the animals were predominantly English natives and could afford to keep using their own vocabulary while farming - those serving the meat at the dining-room table to the mainly French upper classes had to conform to the French language.

ANIMAL	MEAT
sheep	mutton
cow	beef
swine	pork

The English language also has doublets - these are pairs of words that have the same source, but that differ in meaning because they had been introduced into the English language by two separate languages. The Latin and French influence, for instance, made for many of such word pairs. Latin vocabulary adopted by the Celts directly became a part of English. The same vocabulary was sometimes adopted by the Gauls and introduced to English via Norman French.

DOUBLETS	MEANING
adj. urban urbaine	 (area) having qualities of a large settlement (person) having a certain sense for culture
noun curtsy courtesy	 female gesture of respect (bending the knees) politeness

As far as grammar is concerned, a reduction of inflections began. The grammatical gender disappeared and inflections merged. As the inflections of the Old English disappeared, the word order of Middle English became increasingly fixed. This change made for a great loss of strong verbs. At a time when English was the language mainly of the lower classes and largely removed from educational or literary domains and influence, it was natural that many speakers applied the

pattern of inflecting weak verbs to verbs which were historically strong. The exclusive use of the pattern SVO (subject - verb - object) emerged in the twelfth century and has remained part of English ever since.

Middle English was one of many languages spoken in England at that time. Though never the language of the Roman Catholic Church, which was always Latin, it lost status as a language of courtly life, literature and documentation and became the spoken language of the majority, and may be regarded as the only true vernacular language of most English people after about the mid-12th century, with Latin still being a learned tongue of the court. Welsh and Cornish were used as spoken vernaculars in the west; the Celtic Cumbric Language spoken in the northwest had become extinct. **The Middle English (ME) period** lasted from about 1100-1500.

MEDIEVAL SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

There were many different kinds of schools in medieval England, though few children received their sometimes dubious benefit. There were small, informal schools held in the parish church, song schools at cathedrals, schools attached to monasteries, guild schools, preparatory and full grammar schools. The curriculum of these schools was limited to basics such as learning the alphabet, psalters, and religious rites and lessons such as *the Ten Commandments* and *the Seven Deadly Sins*. The grammar schools added to this Latin grammar, composition, and translation.

In addition, there were also private schools like Winchester and Eton. The most famous public school, Eton, was founded by Henry VI in 1440. The term "public school" refers to the fact that the school drew its students from all over the country rather than just the local area. In reality "public schools" are anything but public. They were, and still are, elite boarding schools for the rich or ambitious.

Most schools had no books and the students were taught by the skill of individual masters. Most masters were minor clergy, who themselves were often indifferently educated. Classes at some of the larger schools could be as large as 100 or more boys (no girls, though they were accepted at some of the small local schools), and the school day lasted as long as 13 hours with breaks for meals. The students could expect to be beaten regularly with a birch rod.

Legend has it that **Oxford University** was founded by King Alfred in 872. There may have been a grammar school there in the 9th century. The University as we know it actually began in the 12th century as gatherings of students around popular masters, a group of professors who came from France in 1168. The university consisted of people, not buildings. The buildings came later as a recognition of something that already existed. In a way, Oxford was never founded; it grew. **Cambridge University** was founded by students fleeing from Oxford after one of the many episodes of violence between the university and the town of Oxford. University students chose their own course of studies, hired their own professors, and picked their own hours of study. They were free to leave one professor if tired of him, and join another, attending several lectures before deciding whether to pay him or not. The only books were the professors, and students wrote notes on parchment or, more commonly, on wax tablets. The first educational establishments had four faculties: Theology, Canon Law, Medicine and Art, which included Latin grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. After successful completing of certain courses the students were awarded the corresponding degrees: the Bachelor of Arts, the Bachelor of Science, the Master of Arts and the Master of Science.

Geoffrey Chaucer

The poetry of the alliterative revival, the unexplained reemergence of the Anglo-Saxon verse form in the 14th century, includes some of the best poetry in Middle English. The Christian allegory *"The Pearl"* is a poem of great intricacy and sensibility that is meaningful on several symbolic levels. *"Sir Gawain and the Green Knight"*, by the same anonymous author, is also of high literary sophistication, and its intelligence, vividness, and symbolic interest render it one of the best poems of Arthurian Circle in English. Other important alliterative poems are the moral allegory *"Piers Plowman"*, attributed to **William Langland**, and the poem *"Morte Arthur"*, which, like nearly all English poetry until the mid-14th century, was anonymous.

WILLIAM LANGLAND (?1332 - ?1386), the supposed English poet, generally regarded the single author of the remarkable 14th-century poem "*Piers the Plowman"*. Its full title is "*The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman, together with Vita de Do-wel, Do-bet, et Do-best, secundum Wit et Resoun"*. Nothing is known about William Langland except from the supposed evidence of the poem and the text itself. Apparently, his father was a free peasant who could afford to give his son some eduction. In 1362, at the age of about thirty, the author found himself wandering upon the Malvern hills, he fell asleep beside a stream and saw in a vision a field full of folk and many other remarkable sights which he duly records. From this supposed circumstance he named his poem *"The Vision of William"*, though it is really a succession of visions, since he mentions several occasions on which he awoke, and afterwards again fell asleep and describes some adventures which befell him in his waking moments. In some of these visions there is no mention of Piers the Plowman, but in others he is described as being the coming reformer who was to remedy all abuses, and restore the world to a right condition. It is remarkable that his conception of this reformer changes from time to time. At first he is no more than a ploughman, one of the true and honest labourers; but at last he is identified with the regenerator of the world in the person of Jesus Christ.

Langland re-wrote the poem twice: the earliest copy (A-text) was written in about 1362, the latest form (C-text) was written in about 1393. The general contents of the poem may be gathered from a brief description of the C-text. The author's object was to describe the life and manners of the poorer classes, to represent the miseries caused by the great pestilences and to

denounce lazy workmen and beggars, the corruption and bribery then too common in the law courts, and all the numerous forms of falsehood which are at all time the fit subjects for satire. In describing, for example, the seven deadly sins, he gives so exact a description of Glutton and Sloth that the reader feels them to be no mere abstractions, but drawn from the life. There are numerous other allegorical personages, such as Scripture, Clergy, Conscience, Patience.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340/44 - 1400) is remembered as the author of *"The Canterbury Tales"*, one of the greatest epic works of world literature. Chaucer made a crucial contribution to English literature in using English at a time when much court poetry was still written in Anglo-Norman or Latin.

Geoffrey Chaucer was born in London. He was the son of a prosperous wine merchant and deputy to the king's butler, and his wife Agnes. Little is known of his early education, but his works show that he could read French, Latin, and Italian.

In 1359-1360 Chaucer went to France with Edward III's army during the Hundred Years' War. He was captured and returned to England after the treaty of Brétigny in 1360. Between 1367 and 1378 Chaucer made several journeys abroad on diplomatic and commercial missions. In 1385 he moved to Kent where he was appointed as justice of the peace. He was also elected to the Parliament. This was a period of great creativity for Chaucer, during which he produced most of his best poetry, among others "*Troilus and Cressida"*, based on a love story by Boccaccio.

Chaucer took his narrative inspiration for his works from several sources but still remained an entirely individual poet, gradually developing his personal style and techniques. The works of Geoffrey Chaucer mark the brilliant culmination of Middle English literature. Chaucer did not begin working on his masterpiece *"The Canterbury Tales"*until he was in his early 40's. The book, which was left unfinished when the author died, depicts a pilgrimage by some 30 people, who are going on a spring day in April to the shrine of the martyr, St. Thomas Becket. On the way they amuse themselves by telling stories. Among the pilgrims —who comprise a very colourful cross section of 14th-century English society—there are a knight, a monk, a prioress, a plowman, a miller, a merchant, a clerk, and an oft-widowed wife from Bath. The stories are interlinked with interludes in which the characters talk with each other, revealing much about themselves. The tales are cast into many different verse forms and genres and collectively explore virtually every significant medieval theme.

Chaucer's other important works include *"The House of Fame"* and *"The Parliament of Birds"*. After his death Chaucer was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the part of the church, which afterwards came to be called Poet's Corner. A monument was erected to him in 1555.

SIR THOMAS MALORY (?-1471), the suposed English author of *"Morte d'Arthur"*, was knighted in 1442 and served in the Parliament of 1445. He was evidently a violent, lawless individual who committed a series of crimes, including robbery, rape, and attempted murder. Most of his life from 1451 on was spent in prison, and he probably did most of his writing there. Malory's original book was called *"The Book of King Arthur and His Noble Knights of the Round Table"* and was made up of eight romances that were more or less separate. William Caxton printed it in 1485 and gave it the title of *"Morte d'Arthur"*. This work is generally regarded as the most significant accomplishment in English literature in the two centuries between the works of Chaucer and those of such masters as Spenser and Shakespeare. The last medieval English work of the Arthurian legend, Malory's tales are supposedly based on an assortment of French prose romances. *"Morte d'Arthur"* is noted for its excellent dramatic narrative and the beauty of its rhythmic and simple language. It remains the standard source for later versions of the legend.

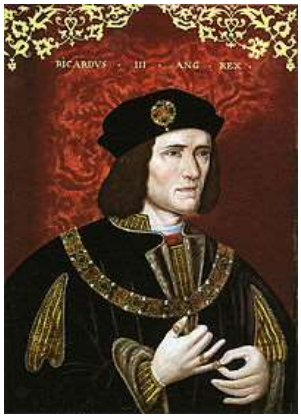
Henry IV

Henry V

Henry VI

Edward IV

Edward V



Richard III

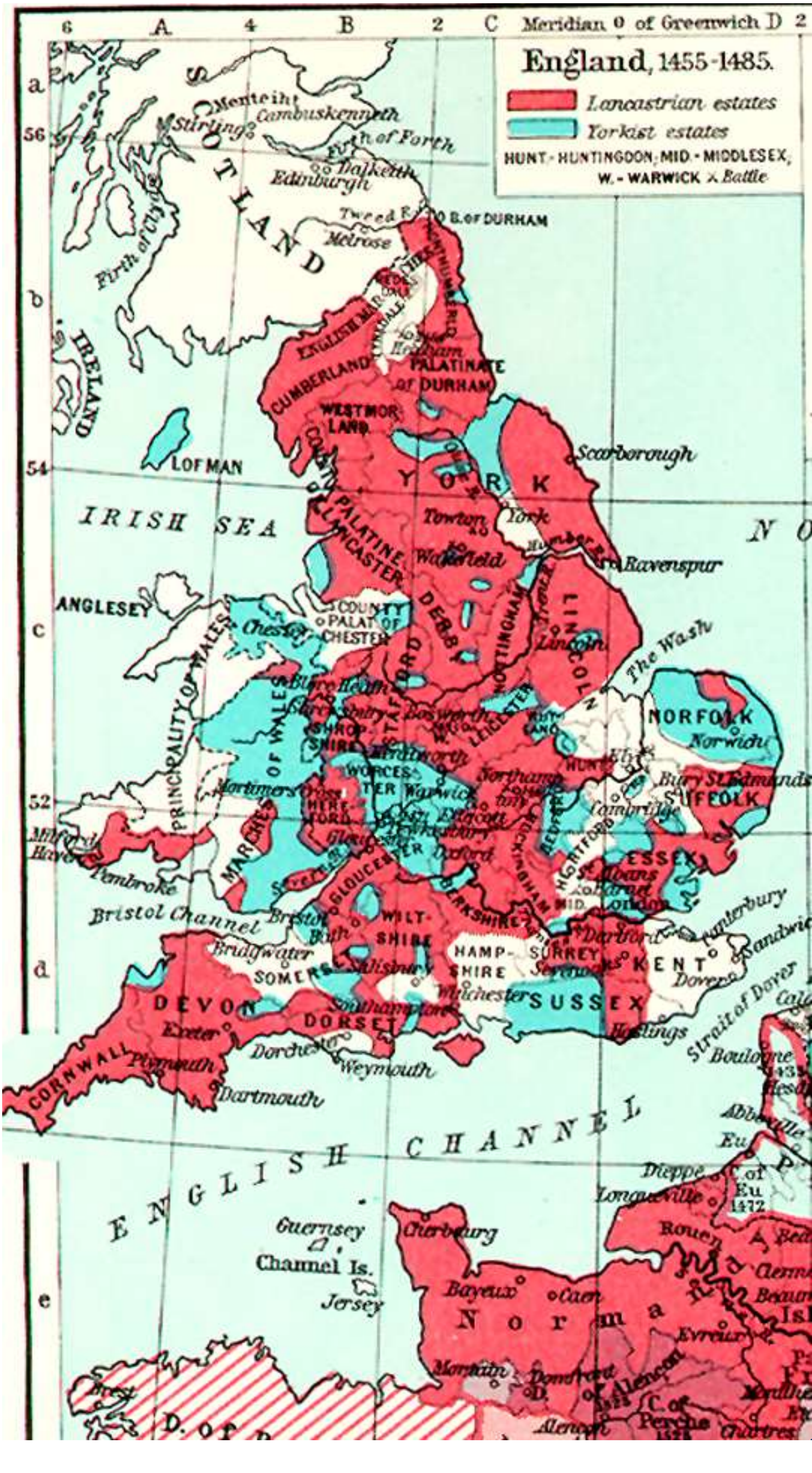
Henry IV (1399-1413) had a reign notable mainly for a series of rebellions and invasions in Wales, Scotland, and northern England. In his reign the Parliament actively participated in the life of the state. The annual sittings became its permanent feature, the elections in the shires were controlled by the gentry. The House of Commons became an influential chamber, with the Speakers being allowed to represent the House collectively. In 1411 Henry decided to intervene in France, which was torn by the civil war. He fought in alliance with the Duke of Burgundy, and they gained several victories. When in 1413 Henry IV died, the relations with France were uncertain and the internal matters of England were in confusion.

He was followed by his son, **Henry V** (1413-1422), who also resurrected claims to the throne of France. After spectacular success at the Battle of Agincourt (1415), Henry made alliance with Burgundy and conquered Normandy. By the Treaty of Troyes, Henry became regent of France and married Katherine, daughter of the insane Charles VI of France. Henry died young, leaving the nine-month old **Henry VI** (1422-1461) to inherit the throne and become the King of England and France. His uncle, the Duke of Bedford, became the Head Council of Regency. He made alliance with the Duke of Brittany and conquered Northern France. In 1428 the French had only one important stronghold left – it was Orleans. At the most critical for France moment the country found a leader in Joan of Arc, a peasant girl from Domremi. She believed to be appointed by the God to save France. Her arrival in the full armour at the battlefield encouraged the French to break the English line of forts and save Orleans. The Dauphin, son of Charles VI,

was crowned as King of France Charles VII in 1430. Less than a year later Joan was captured and burnt as a witch by the English at the Rouen market place. But her spirit supported the French. In 1436 Charles VII captured Paris, in 1449 the French won back Normandy.

In 1453 King Henry VI became ill with mental disease, during the bouts of which the country was ruled by regents. The regents didn't do any better for England than Henry did, and the long Hundred Years War with France came to an end with England losing all her possessions in France except for Calais. In England itself anarchy reigned. Nobles gathered their own private armies and fought for local supremacy. The struggle to rule on behalf of an unfit king was one of the surface reasons for the outbreak of thirty years of warfare, called by historians **the Wars of the Roses** (1455-1485), fought between **the Houses of York** (with a white rose in their coat of arms) and **the Lancaster Dynasty** (red rose). The whole nation was separated into two parties, there were a lot of battles fought by professional soldiers.

Henry VI was eventually forced to abdicate in 1461 and died ten years later in prison, possibly murdered. In his place ruled **Edward IV of the House of York** (1461-1483), who inherited the claim to the throne through his mother and managed to get his dubious claim legitimized by the Parliament. Edward was the first king to address the House of Commons, but his reign is notable mostly for the continuing saga of the wars with the House of Lancaster and unsuccessful wars in France. When Edward died in 1483 his son, **Edward V**, aged twelve, followed him. Edward's uncle **Richard, Duke of Gloucester**, acted as a regent. He was named Protector of the State. Being a sly and experienced politician, Richard decided to get the Crown for himself. He declared Edward and his younger brother illegitimate. They were put in the Tower of London. Richard declared himself a new monarch and was crowned twice – in London and in York. He may have been right, and certainly England needed a strong and able king. But he became immediately unpopular when the princes disappeared and were rumoured to have been murdered by his orders. In the 17th century workmen repairing a stairwell at the Tower found the bones of two boys of about the right ages to be the Princes of the Tower. The person with the most to gain by killing the princes was not Richard, however, but **Henry, Earl of Richmond**. Henry also claimed the throne, seeking "legitimacy" through descent from John of Gaunt and his mistress. Henry defeated and killed Richard at the Battle of Bosworth Field (1485). The crown is said to have been found hanging upon a bush, and it was placed on Henry's head there on the field of battle. Bosworth marked the end of the Wars of the Roses. There was no one else left to fight. It also marked the end of the feudal period of English history. With the death of Richard III the crown passed from the Plantagenet line to the new **House of Tudor**, and a new era of history began. Kings were gaining the upper hand in the struggle with the barons. They encouraged the growth of towns and trade. They took more advisors and officials from the new merchant middle class. This eroded the power of the land-based nobility. Further, kings established royal courts to replace local feudal courts and replaced feudal duties (which had been difficult to collect in any case) with direct taxation. They created national standing armies instead of relying on feudal obligations of service from vassals. Feudal kingdoms moved slowly towards becoming nations.


England, 1455-1485.
Lancastrian estates
Yorkist estates
HUNT.-HUNTINGDON; MID.-MIDDLESEX;
W.-WARWICK × Battle
Meridian 0 of Greenwich
SCOTLAND
IRELAND
I. OF MAN
IRISH SEA
ANGLESEY
PRINCIPALITY OF WALES
ENGLISH CHANNEL
YORK
CUMBERLAND
WESTMORLAND
PALATINATE OF DURHAM
PALATINATE OF LANCASTER
COUNTY PALAT. OF CHESTER
DERBY
NOTTINGHAM
LINCOLN
LEICESTER
NORFOLK
SUFFOLK
ESSEX
KENT
SUSSEX
SURREY
HAMPSHIRE
WILTSHIRE
SOMERSET
DORSET
DEVON
CORNWALL
Edinburgh
Scarborough
Towton
York
Wakefield
Ravenspur
Chester
Lincoln
The Wash
Bosworth
Norwich
Cambridge
Bristol Channel
Pembroke
Bristol
Bath
Bridgwater
Salisbury
Winchester
Exeter
Plymouth
Dartmouth
Dorchester
Weymouth
Hastings
Dover
Strait of Dover
Boulogne
Guernsey
Channel Is.
Jersey
Cherbourg
Bayeux
Caen
Rouen
Dieppe
Normandy

Student's page 6.2 *(photocopiable)*

Vocabulary notes:
barrel – a large round wooden container with flat top and bottom, wider in the middle; a form of a barrel
carve – to cut wood or stone in order to put a pattern on it
cluster – a group
stained glass – pieces of coloured glass that are used in windows
vault – a ceiling made from a number of arches joined together at the top
vice – evil or immoral actions
virtue – behaviour which shows high moral standards

Compendium
Personalities:

The House of Lancasters	Henry IV (1399-1413)	- was not generally recognised as a lawful king, being a king by election, in his reign the Parliament actively participated in the life of the state
	Henry V (1413-1422)	- managed to control half of France and was declared the heir of the King of France
	Henry VI (1422-1461)	- lost the lands in France controlled by the English and finished the Hundred Years' War, participated in the War of the Roses with the House of York (1455-1485)
The House of York	Edward IV (1461-1483)	- killed Henry VI and his son, continued the civil war and the war with France
	Edward V(1483)	- was in power for a very short period, presumably killed in the Tower with his brother
	Richard III (1483-1485)	- seized the power, imprisoned and probably killed his nephews, was killed himself at the battlefield

Medieval architecture
The Romanesque style copied the pattern and proportion of the architecture of the Roman Empire. The chief characteristics of the Romanesque style were thick walls and columns, barrel vaults, round arches, thick piers, few narrow windows, underground rooms.
The Gothic style is light, spacious and graceful, based on architectural technique learned from contacts with the Arab world during the crusades, led to innovations such as the pointed arch, ribbed vault, slender clusters of columns, glass-stained windows, carved ornaments and sculptures.
The Perpendicular style - the last stage of Gothic, distinguished by large windows with a predominance of vertical lines and regular horizontal divisions ("cages").

Middle English
During the following 200 years after the conquest communication went on 3 languages: - Latin at the monasteries and churches, - Norman French at courts and in official institutions, - old English among the common people. Influence of French: - change in pronunciation (diphthongs) and spelling (Runes substituted by Latin letters), - use of French suffixes *–ment (government), -age (marriage), -able (capable),* prefixes *–dis (distrust),* - an indefinite article, - a large store of synonyms *(come in – enter, swine – pork).*

Medieval education
Parish and guild schools taught basics such as learning the alphabet, psalters, and religious rites.
Grammar schools added to this Latin grammar, composition, and translation.
Universities (Oxford (1168), Cambridge (1209)) had four faculties: Theology, Canon Law, Medicine and Art, the students were awarded the degrees: the Bachelor of Arts, the Bachelor of Science, the Master of Arts and the Master of Science. University students chose their own course of studies, hired their own professors, and picked their own hours of study.

Pre-Renaissance literature

WILLIAM LANGLAND (?1332 - ?1386)
A poor priest from peasant family, critisized rich churchmen, believed that everybody was obliged to work "*The Visions of William Concerning Piers the Ploughman*" – a dream allegory written in alliterative verse. One day the poet William fell aseep in the Malvern Hills and saw a peasant Piers the Ploughman in his dream who told about hard life of people. Vice and Virtue are presented as human beings: a young maiden Truth, an old witch Greed, etc.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340/44 - 1400)

A son of London wine merchant, served in the royal court, travelled a lot with different missions, was appointed a knight of Kent

1 period - immitation of French romances, translated *"The Romance of the Rose"*, an allegorical poem about a young man seeking a Rose from his dream helped by Beauty, Wealth, Hospitality, hampered by Pride, Poverty, etc.

2 period – under Italian influence, satirical and didactic poems, psychological novel *"Troilus and Cressida"*

3 period – "The Canterbury Tales"

Contribution:

- sums up all types of stories existed in the Middle Ages: a romance, a story of a saint, a fabliau, a fable;
- shows all ranks of society, typical representatives of different classes, men of different epoches and ethics;
- a creator of a new literary language based on London dialect, invented many words:daisy (day's eye), snow-white.

Comprehension check:

1. Describe the course of the War of the Roses. Who won it?
2. Give an account on the most important personalities of 14th -15thcenturies and their role in political and cultural life.
3. In what way did the language develop after the Norman conquest?
4. Where could a boy get an education in the Middle Ages? How were Oxford and Cambridge Universities opened?
5. What was the contribution of Geoffrey Chaucer? What types of stories did he collect?

The Canterbury Tales

Written sometime in the 1380s, *"The Canterbury Tales"* - the first selection of short stories in English - is about a group of pilgrims who agree to tell stories while they travel together to Canterbury, the seat of the English Church (still Catholic) and the site of the shrine dedicated to Thomas Beckett, who was martyred for his faith.

The language of Chaucer is London dialect of Middle English.

The idea of a frame story (story within a story) comes from a long tradition: *"The Arabian Night"* and *"The Decameron"*. Chaucer read *"The Decameron"* when he visited Italy.

Originally, he proposed 124 stories; he actually wrote 24.

"The Canterbury Tales" is a cross section of medieval society: feudal, ecclesiastical, urban; Chaucer's interest in middle class characters, such as a cook, carpenter, miller, priest, prioress, pardoner, lawyer, merchant, clerk, physician reflects the rise of the middle class in the 14th century.

Literature is moving away from the questions of the genre, romance, to a more personal vision, a domestic vision. Chaucer is interested in individuals, their foibles and individual differences, in middle class people, the merchant class, peasants, etc., who reflect the rise of the middle class in the fourteenth century.

The subject matters of the *"The Canterbury Tales"* are sex, lust, greed, jealousy, native cunning (tricksters), the credulousness of the stupid, marital problems, infidelity, corruption of the church.

The most popular part is the General Prologue, which has long been admired for the lively, individualized portraits it offers. More recent criticism has reacted against this approach, claiming that the portraits are indicative of social types, part of a tradition of social satire, "estates satire", and insisting that they should not be read as individualized character portraits like those in a novel. Yet it is sure that Chaucer's capacity of human sympathy, like Shakespeare's, enabled him to go beyond the conventions of his time and create images of individualized human subjects that have been found not merely credible but endearing in every period from his own until now.

It is the General Prologue that serves to establish firmly the framework for the entire story-collection: the pilgrimage that risks being turned into a tale-telling competition. The title *"General Prologue"* is a modern invention, although a few manuscripts call it *prologus*. There are very few major textual differences between the various manuscripts. The structure of the General Prologue is a simple one. After an elaborate introduction in lines 1 - 34, the narrator begins the series of portraits (lines 35 - 719). These are followed by a report of the Host's suggestion of a tale-telling contest and its acceptance (lines 720 - 821). On the following morning the pilgrims assemble and it is decided that the Knight shall tell the first tale (lines 822 - 858).

Nothing indicates when Chaucer began to compose the General Prologue and there are no variations between manuscripts that might suggest that he revised it after making an initial version. It is sometimes felt that the last two portraits, of Pardoner and Summoner, may have been added later but there is no evidence to support this. The portraits do not follow any particular order after the first few pilgrims have been introduced; the Knight who comes first is socially the highest person present.

The Knight is the picture of a professional soldier, come straight from foreign wars with clothes all stained from his armour. His travels are remarkably vast; he has fought in Prussia, Lithuania, Russia, Spain, North Africa, and Turkey against pagans, Moors, and Saracens. The variety of lords for whom he has fought suggests that he is some kind of mercenary, but it seems that Chaucer may have known people at the English court with similar records.

His son, the Squire, is an elegant young man about court, with fashionable clothes and romantic skills of singing and dancing.

Their Yeoman is a skilled servant in charge of the knight's land, his dress is described in detail, but not his character.

The Prioress is one of the most fully described pilgrims, and it is with her that we first notice the narrator's refusal to judge the value of what he sees. Her portrait is more concerned with how she eats than how she prays. She is rather too kind to animals, while there is no mention of her kindness to people. Finally, she has a costly set of beads around her arm, which should be used for prayer, but end in a brooch inscribed ambiguously *Amor vincit omnia* (Virgil's *"Love conquers all"*). She has a Nun with her, and "three" priests. This is a problem in counting the total number of pilgrims as twenty-nine: the word 'three' must have been added later on account of the rhyme, while only one Nun's Priest is in fact given a Tale and he is not the subject of a portrait here.

The Monk continues the series of church-people. He has many horses at home; he does not respect his monastic rule, but goes hunting instead of praying. The narrator expresses surprisingly strong support for the Monk's chosen style of living.

The Friar follows, and by now it seems clear that Chaucer has a special interest in church-people who so confidently live in contradiction with what is expected of them; the narrator, though, gives no sign of feeling any problem, as when he reports that the "worthy" Friar avoided the company of lepers and beggars. By this point the reader is alert to the narrator's too-ready use of 'worthy' but critics are still unsure of what Chaucer's intended strategy was here.

The Merchant is briefly described, and is followed by the Clerk of Oxenford (Oxford) who is as sincere a student as could be wished: poor, skinny like his horse, and book-loving.

The Sergeant at Law is an expert lawyer, and with him is the Franklin, a gentleman from the country whose main interest is food. Then Chaucer adds a brief list of five tradesmen belonging to the same fraternity, dressed in its uniform: a Haberdasher, a Carpenter, a Weaver, a Dyer and a Tapestry-maker. They have brought their Cook with them, he is an expert, his skills are listed, as well as some personal details. The Shipman who is described next is expert at sailing and at stealing the wine his passengers bring with them; he is also a dangerous character, perhaps a pirate.

The Doctor of Physic is praised by the narrator, and there follows a list of the fifteen main masters of medieval medicine; the fact that he *"loved gold in special"* is added at the end.

The Wife of Bath is the only woman, beside the Prioress and her companion Nun, on this pilgrimage. Again the narrator is positive, he glides quickly over the five husbands that later figure in such detail in her Prologue, where also we may read how she became deaf. She is a business woman of strong self-importance, and her elaborate dress is a sign of her character as well as her wealth.

From her, we pass to the most clearly idealized portrait in the Prologue, the Parson. While the previous churchmen were all interested in things of this world more than in true christianity, the Parson represents the opposite pole.

He is accompanied by his equally idealized brother, the Plowman, a hard-working man *"Living in peace and perfect charity"*. If the Parson is the model churchman, the Plowman is the model christian, one who is always ready to help the poor.

The series then ends with a mixed group of people of whom most are quite terrible: the Miller is a kind of ugly thug without charm. The *Manciple* is praised as a skilful steward in a household of lawyers; they are clever men but he is the cleverest, since he cheats them. The Reeve is the manager of a farm, and he too is lining his own pocket.

Last we learn of the Summoner and the Pardoner, two grotesque figures on the edge of the church, living by it without being priests; one administers the church courts, the other sells pardons (indulgences). Children are afraid of the Summoner's face, he is suffering from some kind of skin disease; he is corrupt, as the narrator tells us after naively saying. But it is the Pardoner who is really odd. With his collection of pigs' bones in a glass, that he uses as relics of saints to delude simple poor people, he is a monster in every way, and he concludes the list of pilgrims.

The narrator of this Prologue is Chaucer, but this pilgrim Chaucer is not to be too simply identified with the author Chaucer. He explains that in what follows, he is only acting as the faithful reporter of what others have said, without adding or omitting anything; he must not then be blamed for what he reports. Neither must he be blamed if he does not put people in the order of their social rank.

In the conclusion of the Prologue the Host of the Tabard Inn (Harry Bailey, a historical figure) decides to go with them and ironically it is he, not Chaucer, who proposes the story-telling contest that gives the framework of the Tales. He will also be the ultimate judge of which is the best. He is, after all, well prepared by his job to know about the tales people tell.

A Consolidation Page 3 *(photocopiable)*

1. Select the key words to each culture:

1. Iberians and Celts 2. Romans 3. Anglo-Saxons 4. Danes 5. Normans

Key words: a) duke; b) druids; c) slave-owners; d) earldom; e) pirates; f) arable-farming; g) hedge; h) tiled roof; i) drawbridge; j) knight; k) mistletoe; l) megalith; m) pedlar; n) armour; o) dranage system; p) dragon head; q) sheriff; r)moot; s) tin; t)ordeal

2. Match two statements from columns A and B into a compound sentence with the conjunction "so":

1

A	B
1. Edward the Confessor was brought up in Normandy	a) a strong state machine was created
2. William, as the King of England and Duke of Normandy, preserved his lands in France	b) the monks and counsellors brought with the King prepared ground for the Norman conquest
3. The Norman kings established strong centralised state in England	c) none of the barons was so strong as to fight with the King
4. The barons' lands were scattered throughout the country	d) the development of the English state was unique in Europe as the state power was greater than the power of feudal nobility
5. The Norman conqeurors tried to defend their privileges	e) the rivalry between English and French kings lasted for more than 400 years

2

A	B
1. Henry II reestablished the system of royal court and government	a) the Irish people started a struggle for independence
2. Henry II was recognised as Lord of Ireland	b) his subjects rebelled and started a civil war
3. John the Lackland needed great money for fruitless wars in France	c) they rebelled against the English
4. The Welsh believed in prophesied crowning of the Prince of Wales in London	d) Scotland remained independent for the next three centuries
5. Edward II died in the course of the war with Scotland	e) he restored the order in the country
6. The Black Death killed one third of the population in England	f) the war shook the two countries for more than 100 years
7. Edward III invaded France in 1337	g) the serfs were becoming free peasants and wage labourers
8. The serf system collapsed	h) the land was not cultivated and in many places traditional agriculture was displaced by sheep-farming

3. Replace all the pronouns by appropriate names or common nouns:

What?

1) it resulted in cancelling of villein bondage,
2) it killed over 1/3 of English population,
3) it confirmed town charters and granted foreign traders free entrance to England,
4) it was held by sheriffs and special committees to find out the exact number of king's vassals, Anglo-Saxon villagers and their property,
5) it killed the last Anglo-Saxon king at Hastings,
6) it is written in alliterative verse and describes the heroic deads of a Jute warrior,
7) it was the collection of old practices and new laws issued in the 9th century,
8) it was blessed in 1065 and its creator died a week later,
9) it controlled crafts, trade, military and religious duties in the town.

Who?

10) he set up the first printing press in Westminster and printed 65 books,
11) he translated the Bible into English and inspired "Lollard movement",
12) he introduced obligatory military service and built a fleet to protect English borders,
13) he summed up all types of medieval stories and showed all ranks of society in his famous book,
14) he was a leader of 25 knights searching for the Holy Grail,
15) he cancelled ordeals and introduced the Supreme Royal Court with the jury,
16) he fought with Nottinghamshire sheriff to protect the rights of Anglo-Saxons,
17) he made 2 unsuccessful raids to Britain and called it Albion,
18) he issued Forest Laws and made all his vassals take a special loyalty oath to him.

4. Write an essay on one of the following topics (200-250 words):

1. You're a Celtic woman. Describe your tribe, your way of life and impressions made by the Roman invaders.
2. You're a member of a hundred-moot (6^{th} century). Describe the system of government and punishment in your village.
3. You're a chronicler. Make a report on the history of the conquests of Britain from the earliest times to the 11^{th} century.
4. You're chosen into the registration committee. Describe your impression of the Anglo-Saxon village and its inhabitants.
5. You're a Flemish merchant visiting a fair in London. Write down what you've found out about the medieval English town and the fair itself.
6. Sum up everything you know already about the history of English language.
7. Sum up what you know about the origin of some English town- and village-names.

Keys

p. 7

Stonehenge

1. stones
2. thirty
3. horse-shoe
4. ditch
5. sun
6. barrow

p. 47

Ex.2

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. T
5. T
6. T
7. F

Ex.3

1. d)
2. e)
3. a)
4. c)
5. b)

p. 84

1

1. e)
2. c)
3. a)
4. b)
5. d)
6. f)

2

1. d)
2. g)
3. a)
4. f)
5. b)
6. c)
7. e)

p. 147

Ex. 1

1. b) k) l) s)
2. c) h) o)
3. f) g) m) r) t)
4. d) e) p)
5. a) i) j) n) q)

Ex. 2

1

1. b)
2. e)
3. d)
4. c)
5. a)

2

1. e)
2. a)
3. b)
4. c)
5. d)
6. h)
7. f)
8. g)

Ex. 3

1) peasants' revolt 2) plague 3) Magna Carta 4) registration 5) an arrow 6) epic poem "Beowulf" 7) "The Code of English Law" 8) Westminster Abbey 9) guild 10) Caxton 11) Wycliff 12) Alfred the Great 13) J. Chaucer 14) King Arthur 15) Henry II 16) Robin Hood 17) Julius Caesar 18) William I

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