



THE VIKINGS AND NORMANS

LECTURE 3

Plan

- 1. The Vikings Raids.**
- 2. King Alfred the Great.**
- 3. William of Normandy (The Conqueror).**
- 4. Life under the Normans.**
- 5. English Language and Norman Conquest.**



The Vikings Raids

- came from three countries in Scandinavia: Denmark, Norway and Sweden. started in the late 8th century (to be more exact in 793),
- the first attack - Lindisfarne monastery,
- are described as aggressive and evil killers,
- but the aim of coming: searching for better land for their farms and rebuilding their own society,
- firstly targeted for the wealth of the churches, monasteries and coastal communities,
- by 878 they managed to conquer all the England, except for the area of Wessex,
- during 200 years (793-878) the Vikings destroyed much of the society created by Anglo-Saxons,
- English resistance was uncoordinated and often ineffective (several independent kingdoms were often at war with each other).

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The words of the Vikings (Scandinavian) origin are:

- **proper names with suffix** – by *Grimsby, Thurnby* (translated as *farm, village*),
- **war and violence**: *ransack, gun* (Even though the gun wasn't invented until centuries after the Viking era, the word comes from Vikings and can translate as “war” or “battle”),
- **society and culture**: *Hell, husband* (*hús* (house) + *bóndi* (occupier and tiller of soil)), *law, loan, sale, skill, troll, saga*,
- **animals**: *bug, bull, reindeer, wing*,
- **every day verbs**: *to bark, to call, to cast, to choose, to clip, to get, to give, to glitter, to hit, to kindle, to race, to raise, to rid, to run, to take, to seem, to shake, to skip, to want, to whisk*,
- **objects**: *bag, ball, band, bulk, cake, egg, glove, knife, knot, keel, link, loft, mug, plow, plough, raft, scale* (for weighing), *seat, skirt, want, window*,
- **adjectives**: *ill, loose, odd, ugly, weak*,
- **the body**: *freckles, leg, skin*,
- **people** *fellow, guest, kid, lad*,
- **emotions** *anger, happy*.

King Alfred The Great

- by the autumn of 878 the Vikings were prepared to invade **Wessex** (the last independent Anglo-Saxons kingdom),
- At the battle of Ethendun (Edington) in 878 **king Alfred's** forces defeated the Vikings,
- He made a treaty with the Vikings (the east and north of England was given to the Vikings and termed the Danelaw),
- king Alfred** reformed the laws, customs and culture,
- king Alfred** is the only king in English history known as "The Great".

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King Alfred's achievements

•English Language

made English to be developed as a written language replacing Latin. Old English became the official written language.

•Education and learning

insisted that nobles learn to read, and learn the great history and heritage of Christian faith, founded two monasteries and numerous schools, He invited the great scholars to the court.

•Books

learned Latin himself and personally translated many Latin works into Old English so that the English people could read them.

•The arts

activity in building and in art, and foreign craftsmen were attracted to the court.

•A new code of law

issued a new code of laws: selected the best laws of his predecessors, limited the practice of the blood feud and imposed heavy penalties for breach of oath or pledge.

•National defence

instituted a system of fortified posts (burgs) and established a national militia, enlarged the English fleet.

William the Conqueror

The last Anglo-Saxon king, **Edward the Confessor** did not have an heir. Four candidates for the UK throne:

- **Harold Godwinson,**
- **Tostig Godwinson,**
- **Harald Hardrada** and
- **William, Duke of Normandy** (northwest France).

The **English Witan**, the traditional council of nobles, chose **Harold Godwinson** as the new king.

William the Conqueror

- **William of Normandy** won the famous battle of Hastings (1066),
- was crowned king of England in the Westminster Abbey on Christmas Fay, **1066**,
- reigned from 1066 till 1087.

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William the Conqueror

- William the Conqueror was the new King of England and Duke of Normandy in France (ruling one country while serving as a vassal of another)
- conquest of England lasted for 20 years (Scotland in 1072 and Wales in 1081).
- Anglo-Saxon rebellion lasted until 1070.
- gave the UK lands to his Norman nobles for their support and loyalty. (By 1086 only 2 of the greater landlords were Anglo-Saxon, 4,000 Anglo-Saxon landlords were replaced by 200 Norman ones).
- the complex administrative system was organized (England was divided into shires with a royal official called a sheriff.
- by 1086 ordered a full economic survey of England which was called the Domesday Book.

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The Feudal System

The word “*feudalism*” comes from the French word *feu* and means “*property in land*”.

Feudalism is a system of land ownership and duties. It helped to organised stable and controlled society.

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The basic structure of the feudal society was like the chain:

the **king** owned all the land

the **king** gave some land to the **barons**, if they promised to give him money and men for the army

the **barons** gave some of their land to a number of **knights**, if they promised to fight when needed

the **knights** gave a few strips of land to large numbers of **peasants**. For this, the peasants had to work on the lord's land and give him a share of their produce. They were not allowed to leave, and were not free men

William the Conqueror

- ordered many [castles](#), [keeps](#), and [mottes](#) built (the [White Tower](#) in the [Tower of London](#)).
- forced to travel back and forth between the UK and France at least 19 times during his reign.
- never spoke English and was illiterate, but he had more influence on the English language than anyone before or since.

English Language and Norman Conquest

For 300 years, the **Norman** formed the **upper class** of the English society. **Latin replaced Old English** completely as the literary language of government and administrative. As for spoken language, the **Norman nobles spoke French** but the common people hold to Old English.

Naturally that **the lower classes should soon begin to adopt** such of the expressions of the rich as they could catch the meaning. Thus, **70 percent of Modern English vocabulary are the French borrowings.**

The words of the French origin:

- **words relating to government:** *crown, state, government, reign, realm, sovereign, authority, country, minister, chancellor, authority, parliament, people, nation,*
- **words related to feudalism:** *fief, feudal, vassal, liege,*
- **words relating to steps in the scale of rank:** *prince, peer, duke, marquis, viscount, baron,*

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English Language and Norman Conquest

•**words related to military affairs:** *war, peace, battle, arms, armour, buckler, mail, lance, officer, dart, lieutenant, sergeant, soldier, troops, vessel, navy, admiral, enemy, danger, prison, siege, guard,*

•**words related to law:** *justice, just, judge, court, suit, sue, plaintiff, defendant, plea, plead, cause, assize, fee, accuse, crime, traitor, damage, heritage, properly, penalty, injury, privilege, tenure,*

•**words related to church:** *religion, service, trinity, savior, virgin, angel, saint, abbey, cloister, friar, clergy, parish, baptism, sacrifice, orison, altar, sermon, preach, pray, prayer, feast,*

•**words related to the pleasure of life:** *joy, pleasure, delight, ease, comfort,*

•**some of the favourite pastimes were Chase, Cards and Dice, so we find many French words related to them, such as:** *brace, couple, lease, falcon, quarry, warren, scent, track, partner, suit, trump,*

•**words related to dress:** *apparel, dress, costume, garment,*

•**words related to art:** *art, beauty, colour, image, design, figure, ornament*

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English Language and Norman Conquest

By the end of the 13th century French had become almost a foreign tongue in England.

But it was taught to nobles as the language for blue blood.

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ATTENTION!**

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