

3 England and France Develop

TERMS & NAMES

- William the Conqueror
- Henry II
- Eleanor of Aquitaine
- Magna Carta
- parliament
- Philip II
- Louis IX

MAIN IDEA

As the kingdoms of England and France began to develop into nations, certain democratic traditions evolved.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Modern concepts of jury trials, common law, and legal rights developed during this period.

SETTING THE STAGE By the early 800s, small Anglo-Saxon kingdoms covered the former Roman province of Britain. In Europe, the decline of the Carolingian Empire in the 900s left a patchwork of feudal states controlled by local lords. Gradually, the rise of the burghers, the growth of towns and villages, and the breakup of the feudal system were leading to changes in government and the development of nations.

England Absorbs Waves of Invaders

For centuries, invaders from various regions in Europe landed on English shores. Many of them stayed, bringing their own ways and changing English culture.

Early Invasions In the 800s, Britain was battered by fierce raids of Danish Vikings. These invaders were so feared that a special prayer was said in churches: “God, deliver us from the fury of the Northmen.” Only Alfred the Great, king from 871 to 899, managed to turn back the Viking invaders. Gradually he and his successors united the kingdom under one rule, calling it England—“land of the Angles.” The Angles were one of the Germanic tribes that had invaded Britain.

In 1016, the Danish king Canute (kuh-NOOT) conquered England, molding Anglo-Saxons and Vikings into one people. In 1042, King Edward the Confessor, a descendant of the Anglo-Saxon Alfred the Great, took the throne. Edward died in January 1066 without an heir. A great struggle for the throne erupted, and that led to one last invasion.

The Norman Conquest The invader was William, duke of Normandy, who became known as **William the Conqueror**. Normandy is a region in the north of France that had been conquered by the Vikings. The Normans were descended from the Vikings, but they were French in language and in culture. As King Edward’s cousin, William claimed the English crown and invaded England with a Norman army. William was ambitious, tough, and an imposing figure. An anonymous monk of the time described him:

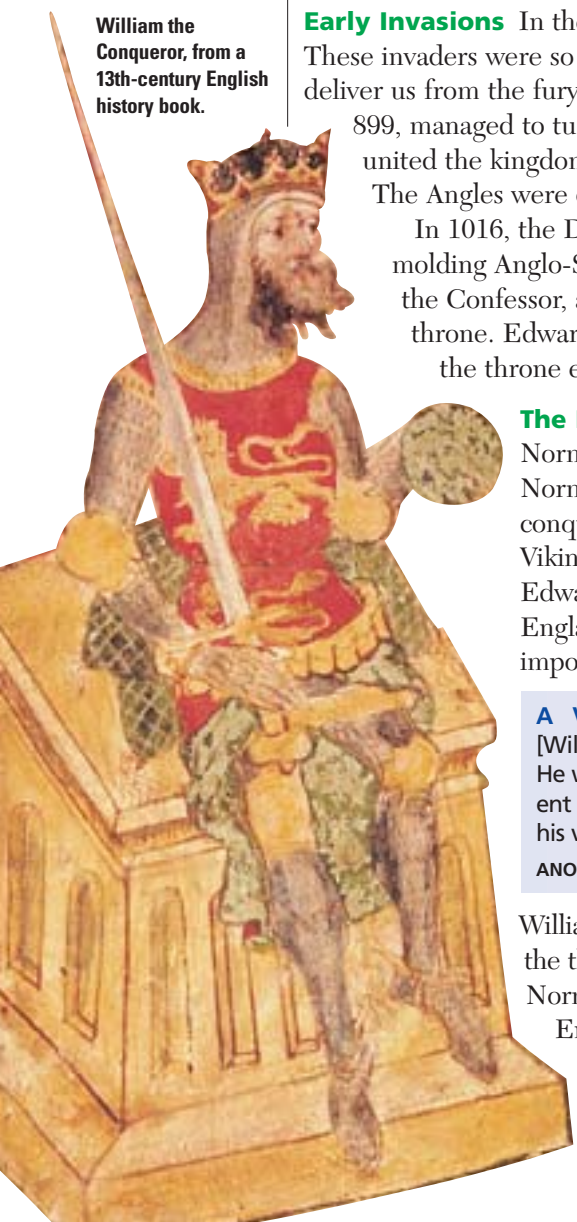
A VOICE FROM THE PAST

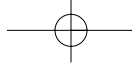
[William was] great in body and strong, tall in stature but not ungainly. He was also temperate in eating and drinking. . . . In speech he was fluent and persuasive, being skilled at all times in making clear his will. If his voice was harsh, what he said was always suited to the occasion. . . .

ANONYMOUS MONK OF CAEN

William’s rival was Harold Godwinson, the Anglo-Saxon who claimed the throne. And he was equally ambitious. On October 14, 1066, Normans and Saxons fought the battle that changed the course of English history—the Battle of Hastings. After Harold was killed by an arrow in his eye, the Normans won a decisive victory.

William the Conqueror, from a 13th-century English history book.





Background

Through William's actions, England suddenly had a new ruling class of French-speaking nobles. William kept about one-fifth of England for himself, a powerful base for any king.

After his victory, William declared all England his personal property. The English lords who supported Harold lost their lands. William then granted fiefs to about 200 Norman lords who swore oaths of loyalty to him personally. In this way he laid the foundation for centralized government.

England's Evolving Government

William the Conqueror's descendants owned land both in Normandy and in England. The English King **Henry II** added to these holdings by marrying **Eleanor of Aquitaine**. She brought with her more lands from France. Over the next centuries English kings tried to achieve two goals. First, they wanted to hold and add on to their French lands. Second, they wanted to strengthen their own power over the nobles and the Church.

Monarchs, Nobles, and the Common Law Eleanor of Aquitaine was one of the most remarkable women in history. She was wife to two kings and mother to two kings. She married Louis VII of France when the Second Crusade began. In 1147, she accompanied him to the Holy Land. Shortly afterward their marriage was annulled. Eleanor then married Henry Plantagenet, who was to become Henry II of England. Their marriage produced four sons. Two became English kings—Richard the Lion-Hearted and John. The marriage also brought Henry a large territory in France called Aquitaine. He added Aquitaine to the lands in Normandy he had already inherited from William the Conqueror. Because Henry held lands in France, he was a vassal to the French king. But he was also a king in his own right.

Henry ruled England from 1154 to 1189. He strengthened the royal courts of justice by sending royal judges to every part of England at least once a year. They collected taxes, settled lawsuits, and punished crimes. Henry also introduced the use of the jury in English courts. A jury in medieval England was a group of loyal people—usually 12 neighbors of the accused—who answered a royal judge's questions about the facts of a case. Jury trials became a popular means of settling disputes. Only the king's courts were allowed to conduct them.

Over the centuries, case by case, the rulings of England's royal judges formed a unified body of law that became known as common law. Today these principles of English common law are the basis for law in many English-speaking countries, including the United States.

The Magna Carta Henry was succeeded first by his son Richard the Lion-Hearted, hero of the Third Crusade. When Richard died, his younger brother John took the throne. John ruled from 1199 to 1216. He failed as a military leader, earning the nickname John Softsword. John lost Normandy and all his lands in northern France to the French. This loss forced a confrontation with his own nobles.

Some of John's problems stemmed from his own character. He was mean to his subjects and tried to squeeze money out of them. John raised taxes to an all-time high to finance his wars. His nobles revolted. On June 15, 1215, they forced John to agree to the most celebrated document in English history, the **Magna Carta** (Great Charter). This document, drawn up by English nobles and reluctantly approved by King John, guaranteed certain basic political rights. The nobles wanted to safeguard their own feudal rights and limit the king's powers. In later years, however, English people of all classes argued that certain clauses in the Magna Carta applied to every citizen. Guaranteed rights included no taxation without representation, a jury trial, and the protection of the law. The Magna Carta guaranteed what are now considered basic legal rights both in England and in the United States.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

A. Summarizing

What is the significance of the Magna Carta?

CONNECT to TODAY



Robin Hood in the Movies

During the time of King Richard and King John, Robin Hood was said to live in Sherwood Forest with his band of merry men. According to the stories about him, he was an outlaw who robbed from the rich and gave to the poor. He attempted to remedy some of the injustices committed under King John.

There have been many film versions of the story of Robin Hood. Douglas Fairbanks starred in a silent *Robin Hood* (1922). Errol Flynn (above right) starred in *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938), a version celebrated for its rousing action. Disney released an animated *Robin Hood* in 1973. Kevin Costner starred in the popular *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991).



The Model Parliament Another important step toward democratic government resulted from Edward I's struggles to hang onto his last remaining French lands. In 1295, Edward needed to raise taxes for a war against the French. Edward summoned two burgesses (citizens of wealth and property) from every borough and two knights from every county to serve as a **parliament**, or legislative group. In November 1295, knights, burgesses, bishops, and lords met together at Westminster in London. This is now called the Model Parliament because its new makeup (commoners, or non-nobles, as well as lords) served as a model for later kings.

Over the next century, from 1300 to 1400, the king called the knights and burgesses whenever a new tax was needed. In Parliament, these two groups gradually formed an assembly of their own called the House of Commons. Nobles and bishops met separately as the House of Lords. Under Edward I, Parliament was in part a royal tool that weakened the great lords. As time went by, however, Parliament became strong. Like the Magna Carta, it provided a check on royal power.

Vocabulary

borough: a self-governing town.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

B. Clarifying What was the Model Parliament and why did it come to be considered a model?

Capetian Dynasty Rules France

The kings of France, like those of England, looked for ways of increasing their power. After the breakup of Charlemagne's empire, French counts and dukes ruled their lands independently under the feudal system. By the year 1000, France was divided into about 30 feudal territories. In 987, the last member of the Carolingian family—Louis the Sluggard—died. Hugh Capet (kuh-PAY), an undistinguished duke from the middle of France, succeeded him. The Capet family ruled only a small territory, but at its heart stood Paris. Hugh Capet began the Capetian dynasty of French kings that ruled France from 987 to 1328.

France Becomes a Separate Kingdom Hugh Capet, his son, and his grandson all were weak rulers, but time and geography favored the Capetians. Their territory, though small, sat astride important trade routes in northern France. For 200 years, Capetian kings tightened their grip on this strategic area. The power of the king gradually spread outward from Paris. Eventually, the growth of royal power would unite France.

Philip II Expands His Power One of the most powerful Capetians was **Philip II**, called Philip Augustus, who ruled from 1180 to 1223. As a child, Philip had watched his father lose land to King Henry II of England. When Philip became king at the age of 15, he set out to weaken the power of the English kings in France. Philip was

crafty, unprincipled, and willing to do whatever was necessary to achieve his goals.

Philip had little success against Henry II or Henry's son, Richard the Lion-Hearted. However, when King John seized the English throne, it was another matter. Philip earned the name Augustus (from the Latin word meaning "majestic"), probably because he greatly increased the territory of France. He seized Normandy from King John in 1204 and within two years had gained other territory. By the end of Philip's reign, he had tripled the lands under his direct control. For the first time, a French king had become more powerful than any of his vassals.

Philip Augustus not only wanted more land, he also wanted a stronger central government. He established royal officials called bailiffs. They were sent from Paris to every district in the kingdom to preside over the king's courts and collect the king's taxes.

The coronation of Philip II in the cathedral of Reims.





The Development of England and France

England

- William the Conqueror, duke of Normandy, invades England in 1066.
- Henry II (ruled 1154–1189) introduces use of the jury in English courts.
- Under pressure from his nobles, King John agrees to Magna Carta in 1215.
- Edward I calls Model Parliament in 1295.

France

- Hugh Capet establishes Capetian Dynasty in 987, which rules until 1328.
- Philip II (ruled 1180–1223) increases the territory of France.
- Louis IX (ruled 1226–1270) strengthens France's central government.
- Philip IV (ruled 1285–1314) adds Third Estate to Estates-General.

SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts

1. What is the significance of the date 1066?
2. Which English king and French king contributed to the growth of a representative assembly?

Philip II's Heirs France's central government was made even stronger during the reign of Philip's grandson, **Louis IX**, who ruled from 1226 to 1270. Unlike his grandfather, Louis was pious and saintly. He was known as the ideal king. After his death, he was made a saint by the Catholic Church. Louis created a French appeals court, which could overturn the decisions of local courts. These royal courts of France strengthened the monarchy while weakening feudal ties.

In 1302, Philip IV, who ruled France from 1285 to 1314, was involved in a quarrel with the pope. The pope refused to allow priests to pay taxes to the king. Philip disputed the right of the pope to control Church affairs in his kingdom. As in England, the French king usually called a meeting of his lords and bishops when he needed support for his policies. To win wider support against the pope, Philip IV decided to include commoners in the meeting.

In France, the Church leaders were known as the First Estate, and the great lords as the Second Estate. The commoners that Philip invited to participate in the council became known as the Third Estate. The whole meeting was called the Estates-General.

Like the English Parliament in its early years, the Estates-General helped to increase royal power against the nobility. Unlike Parliament, however, the Estates-General never became an independent force that limited the king's power. However, centuries later, the Third Estate would be the key to overthrowing the French monarchy. Now, in the 14th century, there was much turmoil. This included religious disputes, plague, and war. This disorder threatened the fragile achievements of England and France in beginning to establish a democratic tradition.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

C. Summarizing

What three estates made up the Estates-General?

Section 3 Assessment

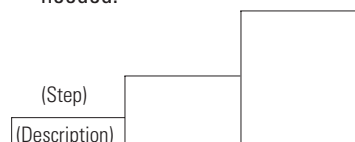
1. TERMS & NAMES

Identify

- William the Conqueror
- Henry II
- Eleanor of Aquitaine
- Magna Carta
- parliament
- Philip II
- Louis IX

2. TAKING NOTES

Using a graphic, name each major step toward a democratic government and describe why it was important. Add steps as needed.



Which of the steps are similar to U.S. practices? Explain.

3. CONTRASTING

Contrast the way in which England and France began developing as nations.

THINK ABOUT

- the character of William, duke of Normandy, versus the character of Hugh Capet
- the rise of the Normans to power in England
- the rise of the Capetians to power in France

4. THEME ACTIVITY

Power and Authority

Imagine that you are an adviser to the king. Write him a letter in which you argue for or against including commoners in the Parliament or Estates-General. Tell the king the advantages and disadvantages of including commoners in the group.