

Western Europe in the Middle Ages

England—Summer, A.D. 1189

A messenger enters the castle at Winchester. He asks to see Eleanor, the queen of England. The messenger brings important news. Henry II, the king of England, is dead.

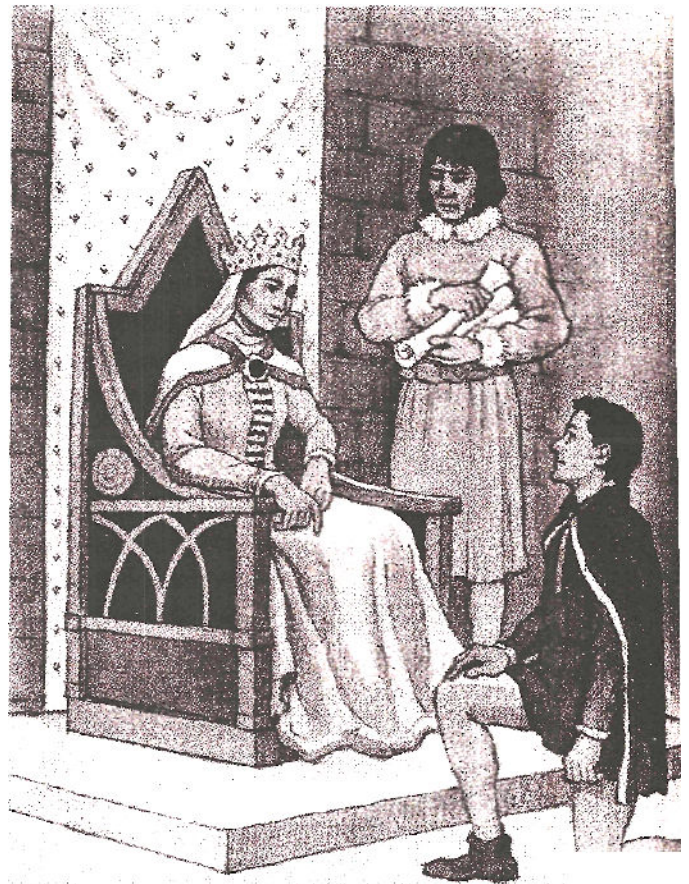
Queen Eleanor has much to do. Soon, her son Richard will arrive from France. He will be England's new king. Richard has lived most of his life in France. The people of England do not know him. Eleanor must make sure the people accept Richard as their king.

For the next few weeks, Eleanor rules England for Richard. She carries out court business. She meets with court officials. She asks the officials to swear loyalty to the new king.

Eleanor travels to towns throughout England. She meets with the people. She listens to their complaints. During King Henry's rule, many people were put in prison unjustly. Eleanor sets those people free. She wins friends for Richard everywhere she goes.

Eleanor orders all of England to use the same coins. Now travelers from one city do not have to change money to buy goods in another city. To show that Richard is behind the change, Eleanor has his face put on the new coins.

In August, Richard arrives in England. Eleanor has done her work well. The people greet Richard as a hero. They accept him as their king.

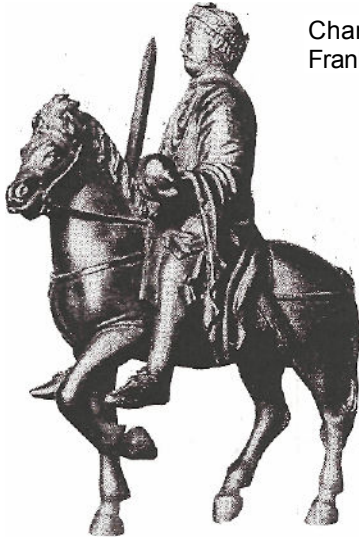


In Our Time

Queen Eleanor was a remarkable leader. During her long life, she was both the queen of France and the queen of England. She was the mother of two English kings. And she herself ruled a large region of France called Aquitaine. Eleanor helped to shape the history of her time.

- Who are some important leaders of our time?
- What qualities make them strong leaders?

The Germanic Kingdoms



Charlemagne was the ruler of a Germanic people called the Franks. He built a large empire in Europe in the A.D. 700s.

You read that for over 500 years Rome ruled much of Europe. Roman legions kept order. Roman engineers built roads. Trade increased. The Latin language and Roman learning spread. Then Germanic peoples invaded the empire. By A.D. 500, they had divided western Europe into many separate kingdoms.

Europe now entered a period known as the **Middle Ages**. The period is called the Middle Ages because it falls between ancient times and the beginning of modern times in Europe around 1500.

- How did life in Europe change after the Germanic invasions?
- Who were the Franks and where did they build their kingdom?
- What peoples settled in Britain in the early Middle Ages?
- Who were the Vikings and why were they feared?

Key Words

You will be using these words in this chapter.

explore
navigate

rural
translate

The Germans

The Germanic peoples who invaded the Roman Empire were fierce fighters. German life centered around warfare. After conquering western Europe, the Germans settled into small kingdoms. Each kingdom was ruled by a king who was usually a great warrior. Other warriors swore loyalty to the king. The king led the warriors in battle. He also provided them with food and weapons.

The Dark Ages

Between A.D. 500 to 800, the Germanic kingdoms were often at war with one another. During that time, civilization declined in Europe. Historians often call that period the **Dark Ages** of Europe.

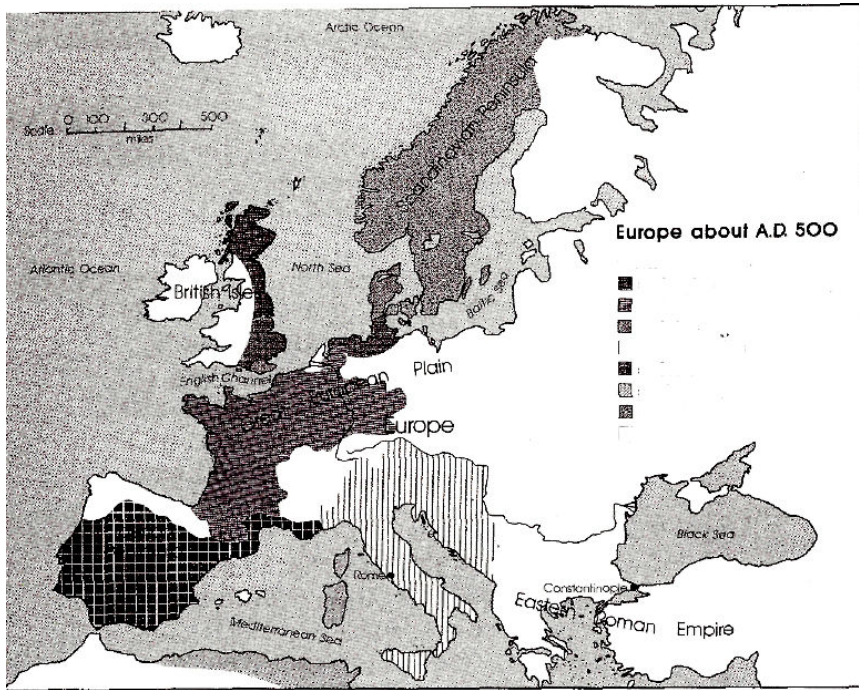
During the Dark Ages, most people had little interest in learning. Schools disappeared. Roman books and works of art were destroyed. Skills such as road building were forgotten.

Trade and travel also declined during the Dark Ages. Many Roman cities disappeared. German life was **rural**. It centered on small farms and villages. The Germans had little use for cities.

Not all Roman culture was lost, however. In time, a new civilization began to take shape in Europe. That civilization was a blend of Roman and Germanic ways of life. It came to be known as Western civilization.

Looking Back

1. How were the Germanic kingdoms ruled?
2. What were the Dark Ages?
3. Describe life during the Dark Ages.



The British Isles lies off the coast of Europe. They are separated from the mainland by a narrow strip of ocean called the **English Channel**.

The Great European Plain "The **Great European Plain** stretches across most of northern Europe. In ancient times, farming on the plain was difficult. Forests covered the plain. The climate was cold and wet. The soil was muddy and hard to plow. Crops that grew well in sunny Italy and Greece did poorly on the plain.

Europe in the Early Middle Ages

The German peoples who conquered the Romans were made up of many tribes. The map on this page shows where each tribe built its kingdom in Western Europe.

Look at the map. Where did the tribe called the Visigoths build their kingdom?

The Land of Europe

The Visigoths built their kingdom on the **Iberian Peninsula**. That is a peninsula that lies to the west of Italy.

Three other peninsulas make up large parts of Europe. You read about two of them, the Italian Peninsula and the Greek Peninsula. The **Scandinavian Peninsula** curves across the top of northern Europe.

North of the Scandinavian Peninsula is the Arctic Ocean. It forms the northern border of Europe. The Atlantic Ocean forms Europe's western border. Europe's southern border is the Mediterranean Sea.

In the early Middle Ages, farmers learned to farm the plains. They cleared the forests. They invented a heavy iron plow that cut through the wet soil. And they began to use oxen to pull their plows. In time, farmers on the plain were able to raise a surplus of food.

Looking Back

1. Why was farming difficult on the Great European Plain?
2. How did farmers learn to farm the plain?
3. *Map Work:* Look at the map on this page. What sea lies between the British Isles and the Scandinavian Peninsula?

The Franks

One of the first people to farm the Great European Plain were the **Franks**. They lived near the Rhine River in present-day Germany. Later, they moved west into what is now France.

At first, the Franks were divided into many kingdoms. One of those kingdoms was ruled by a warrior named **Clovis**. Around A.D. 485, Clovis united the Franks into one kingdom. It was called the **Kingdom of the Franks**. Under Clovis, the Franks expanded their kingdom. By 511, they ruled lands from the North Sea to the Iberian Peninsula.

During his rule, Clovis converted to Christianity. He spread Christianity throughout his kingdom.

Charles Martel and Pepin the Short

After Clovis died, his kingdom was split among his four sons. For the next 200 years, the Franks were divided. Weak kings fought each other for power.

In time, court officials called Mayors of the Palace became more powerful than the kings. Around 714, one of the Mayors united the Franks. His name was **Charles Martel**.

After Charles Martel's death, his son **Pepin the Short** became Mayor of the Palace. In 751, Pepin removed the king and became king himself.

Pepin feared that the people would not support him as king. He asked the pope in Rome to *bless*, or approve, his rule. (You read that the pope is the head of the Catholic Church.) To Christians, the pope's blessing would mean that Pepin was God's chosen ruler.

The pope gave Pepin his blessing. In return, Pepin promised to use his armies to protect the pope.

Charlemagne

After Pepin's death in 768, his son Charles became king. Charles built the largest empire in Europe since the time of Rome. By 800, he ruled most of Western Europe. He became known as **Charlemagne**, which means "Charles the Great."

Like his father, Charlemagne supported and protected the Catholic church. In 800, the pope named Charlemagne "Emperor of the Romans." Europe had not been united under an emperor since the fall of Rome.

A New Interest in Learning

Unlike earlier rulers of the Franks, Charlemagne believed that education was important. He had a scholar named **Alcuin** start a school in his palace. Charlemagne also encouraged churches to start schools.

Alcuin and other scholars collected the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans. They made copies of those works and stored them in safe places. In that way, the scholars preserved the learning of the past.

The Empire Is Divided

Charlemagne's empire did not last long after his death in 814. Soon, his three grandsons were fighting over who would rule.

In 843, the grandsons signed a treaty to end the quarrel. It was called the **Treaty of Verdun**. The treaty divided the empire into three separate kingdoms.

Looking Back

1. How did Christianity spread throughout the Kingdom of the Franks?
2. What did Charlemagne accomplish?
3. How did Charlemagne support learning?



Prehistoric people built this stone monument in England thousands of years ago. It is called Stonehenge, Ancient people may have used the monument as part of their religion. Or they may have used it as a kind of calendar to keep track of the seasons

The Angles, Saxons, and Jutes

You read that the British Isles lie off the coast of Europe. The largest island in the island group is called Britain.

Around 500 B.C., a warlike people called the Celts migrated to Britain from Europe. They conquered the people of Britain and settled into small villages. They were mainly farmers and herders.

In A.D. 43, the Romans invaded Britain. They conquered the Celts. During the next 400 years, the Romans built cities and roads in Britain. They dug tin and copper mines. They made fine wool cloth that was traded across the Roman Empire.

The End of Roman Rule

Like the rest of Europe, Britain was overrun by Germanic invaders in the A.D. 400s. Three groups invaded Britain: the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. They crossed the North Sea in small boats.

By 600, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes

had conquered most of Britain. Almost all signs of Roman civilization disappeared.

In time, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes became known as the Anglo-Saxons. They settled into small kingdoms in southern and eastern Britain. Their land became known as *Angle-land*, or England.

Christianity Comes to England

The Anglo-Saxons were not Christians. They worshiped many gods. In the late 500s, a pope named Gregory set out to convert the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity.

A legend says that Pope Gregory decided to convert the Anglo-Saxons after he saw some Anglo-Saxon boys in Rome. They had been brought there to be sold as slaves. The pope asked who the boys were. He was told they were Angles from Britain.

"They should be God's angels, not Angles," said the pope, "for they have the faces of angels."

In 597, Pope Gregory sent a group of missionaries to England. They were led by a priest named Augustine. The missionaries landed in the kingdom of Kent.

Augustine soon converted the king of Kent and his people to Christianity. From there, Christianity spread to other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. By 700, almost all of England was Christian.

Looking Back

1. Who were the Celts?
2. What happened to Roman civilization in Britain?
3. How did Christianity come to Britain?

Left: Alfred the Great is remembered as one of England's most important kings. His face is engraved on this English silver coin from the A.D. 800s.

Right: This statue of Alfred stands in the city of Winchester, England.

The Danes Invade England

In the A.D. 800s, the Anglo-Saxons faced a great danger. Sea raiders called **Danes** began to attack farms and villages along the English coast. The Danes came from **Denmark**, a land across the North Sea.

In 866, a large Danish army invaded England. The English called it the **Great Army**. The Great Army moved slowly across England. It conquered one kingdom after another. Soon, only the kingdom of Wessex in southern England remained under Anglo-Saxon rule.



Alfred the Great

In 878, the Great Army invaded Wessex. Wessex was ruled by a young king named **Alfred**. Alfred raised an army of Anglo-Saxons and defeated the Danes.

Alfred could not drive the Danes from England. They still held lands in the north and east. But Alfred's victory over the Danes saved Wessex. It also saved the Anglo-Saxon way of life from destruction by the Danes. For that reason, Alfred is known in English history as **Alfred the Great**.

A Wise Ruler

Alfred worked hard to strengthen his kingdom. He built strong forts to protect his people from attack. Many of his forts grew into important cities.

King Alfred also worked to improve learning in England. During their raids, the Danes destroyed most of England's schools. Alfred built new schools.

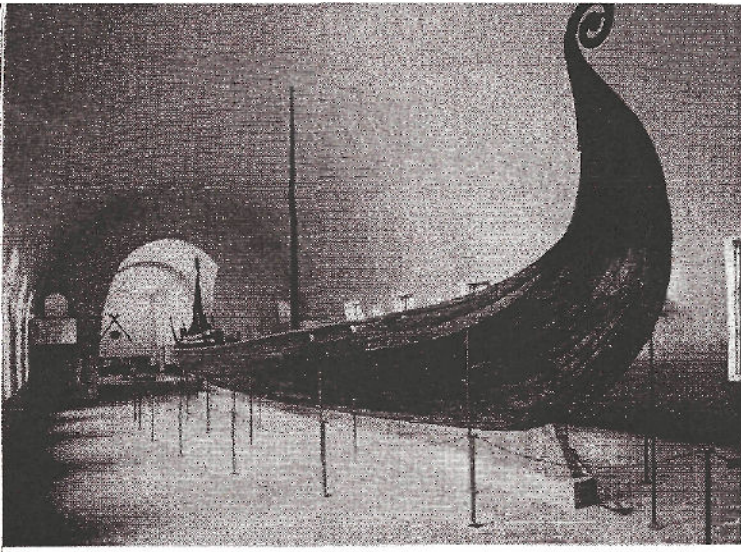
When Alfred became king, most books were written in Latin. But very few people in England knew Latin.

Alfred began to *translate* Latin books into the Anglo-Saxon language. For the first time, his people could read books in their own language. (The Anglo-Saxon language developed into modern English.)

When Alfred died, England was still half Anglo-Saxon and half Dane. Alfred's grandson **Athelstan** drove the Danes out of England. Then, in 928, he made himself ruler of all England.

Looking Back

1. What was the Great Army?
2. What happened when the Great Army invaded Wessex?
3. Why is Alfred called Alfred the Great?
4. How did Alfred improve learning in England?



The Vikings were skillful shipbuilders. Viking ships like this one were made of wood. They were powered by oars or by sails. The Vikings often decorated the front of their ships with carvings of dragons or other ferocious animals.

The Vikings

The Danes who attacked England were part of a group known as the **Vikings**. The Vikings were a Germanic people. They lived in Denmark and on the Scandinavian Peninsula. Today, that area is called **Scandinavia**.

Rocky soil and a cold climate made farming difficult in Scandinavia. Many Vikings turned to the sea for a living. They became skillful shipbuilders and sailors.

The Vikings learned to use the sun and stars to *navigate*, or guide their ships. They sailed far out into the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.

The Vikings became successful traders. They also became dangerous sea raiders.

Viking Raids

In the A.D. 800s, Viking raiders began to attack towns across Europe. In Western Europe, they raided towns on the Atlantic coast and around the Mediterranean Sea. They also sailed up rivers to raid towns far from the sea.

In Eastern Europe, Viking attacks reached as far as the Black Sea and the Eastern Roman Empire. The Vikings even raided Constantinople, the capital of the empire.

Viking attacks were swift, sudden, and terrible. The raiders burned and *plundered*, (robbed) homes and churches. They stole food and all the treasure they could find. Anyone captured in a Viking raid was killed or sold as a slave.

All of Europe feared the Vikings. Each day people prayed, "From the anger of the Vikings, Good Lord, protect us."

Viking Explorers

At the same time the Vikings were raiding Europe, they were also *exploring* the Atlantic Ocean west of Britain. Around 870, Vikings discovered an island, which they named **Iceland**. By 930, thousands of Viking settlers were living in Iceland.

A Viking named **Eric the Red** discovered an even larger island west of Iceland. He called it **Greenland**. In about 985, Eric began a settlement on Greenland.

Around 1000, Eric's son **Lief Ericson** sailed west, from Greenland. He reached the eastern coast of present-day **North America**. Lief called the land he found Vineland. Today, Vineland is known as Newfoundland, a large island off the coast of Canada.

Looking Back

1. Why did the Vikings turn to the sea for a living?
2. Describe a Viking attack.
3. What lands did the Vikings discover?

Church and Manor

A Christian monk named Benedict began one of the first monasteries in Europe around A.D. 500. Benedict is the figure at the left of the picture.



During the early Middle Ages, a new civilization arose in Europe. The Catholic Church played an important role in shaping that civilization. The church gave people a set of rules to live by. In a troubled time, it gave people hope of a better life to come.

Also important in people's lives was the **manor**. That was a large *estate*, or piece of land, on which most people lived. The church and manor were at the center of life in Europe.

- How did the church help to keep learning alive?
- What role did the church play in people's lives?
- What was feudalism and why did it develop?
- What was life like on a manor?

Key Words You will be using these words in this chapter..

castle **peasant**
knight **society**

Mr. Moore's Middle Ages Handouts

Monks and Nuns

You read that a missionary named Augustine brought Christianity to England during the Dark Ages. Like many early missionaries, Augustine was a **monk**.

Monks are men who live in monasteries, or religious communities, apart from others. They *devote* (give) their lives to God. They spend most of their time in work, prayer, and study. Some women also choose to live apart and devote their lives to God. They are called **nuns**. Their communities are called *convents*.

Most monks and nuns live by strict rules. They give up everything they own when they join a monastery or convent. They never marry. And they promise to obey their leaders without question.

Keeping Learning Alive

During the early Middle Ages, Christian monasteries and convents spread across Europe. Monks and nuns converted most of Europe to Christianity.

Monks and nuns also helped to keep learning alive. In many places, they were the only people who could read or write. They set up libraries and schools for training young monks and nuns. They copied and preserved the ancient writings of the Greeks and Romans.

Looking Back

1. What rules do monks and nuns live by?
2. How did monks and nuns help to keep learning alive in the Middle Ages?

Europeans built many beautiful Christian churches during the Middle Ages. Some of those churches are still used today. This church with Roman arches was built in France around A.D. 1130.

The Church in the Middle Ages

By A.D. 1000, Christianity was the religion of most of Europe. There was a Christian church in nearly every town and village. Daily life centered around the sound of the church bells. The ringing of the bells told people when to work, eat, and sleep.

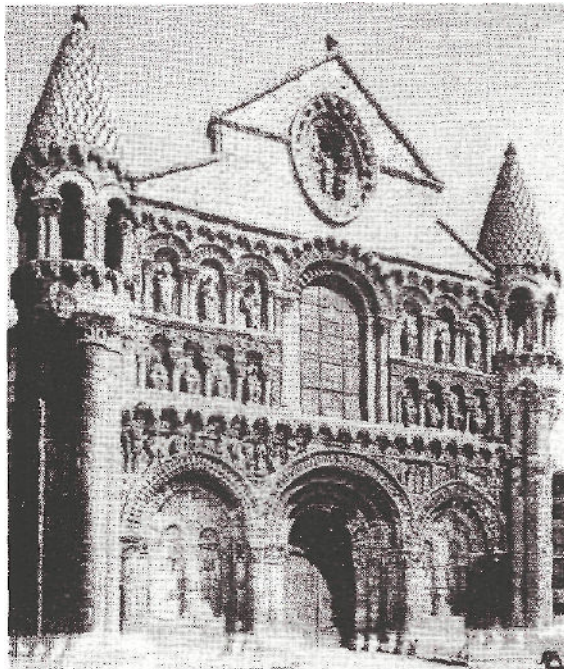
The priest was an important part of village life. On Sunday, he led a worship service called *mass*. He also performed weddings and buried the dead. Some priests ran schools. Priests comforted people in times of trouble. They settled quarrels between neighbors.

Many church officials became powerful in government. Few kings could read or write. They turned to church officials to help them run their governments.

The Power of the Church

Life was hard during the Middle Ages. Christianity gave people hope of a happier life to come in heaven. But to reach heaven, people had to follow the church's teachings. They had to obey its rules. And they had to take part in certain church ceremonies, called the *sacraments*.

If people broke church rules, they might be *excommunicated*, or cut off from the church. For Christians, that was a terrible punishment. It meant that they could not attend mass. They could not take part in the sacraments. All hope of entering heaven was lost.



A Fight for Power

The growing power of the church led to conflict with some rulers.

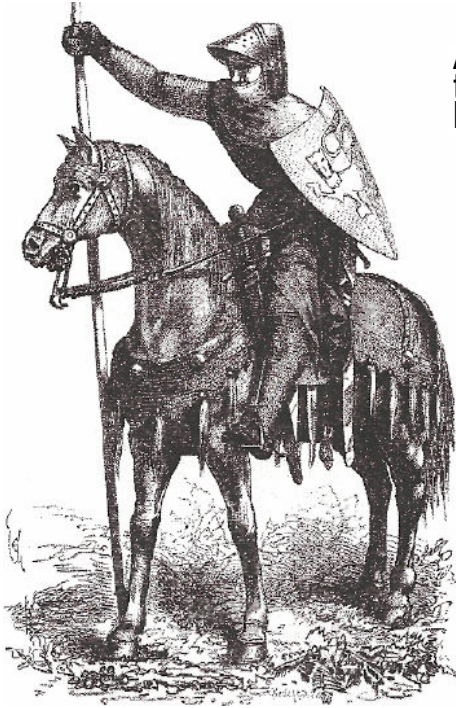
In 1075, a disagreement arose between King Henry IV of Germany and Pope Gregory VII. For years, Henry had been appointing bishops and other high church officials in Germany. Pope Gregory announced that only the pope had the power to appoint church officials.

When Henry refused to obey the pope, the pope excommunicated him. Henry then traveled to Italy to see the pope. For three days, he begged the pope for forgiveness. The pope finally forgave him.

Pope Gregory won an important victory for the church. But the struggle for power between popes and kings was not over.

Looking Back

1. What role did the priest play in village life?
2. What might happen to people who broke church rules?
3. Describe the conflict between King Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII.



A knight wore *armor*, a covering of metal or leather that protected the knight from head to foot. A knight's weapons were a sword and a lance.

Feudalism

During the Middle Ages, a new system of government developed in Europe. It was called **feudalism**. Under feudalism, kings lost power. Local nobles, or landowners, became the rulers of much of Europe.

Feudalism came about like this: After the death of the emperor Charlemagne in A.D. 814, his empire fell apart. Western Europe entered a period of violence and confusion. Rulers fought each other for power. Robbers roamed the roads. Viking raiders burned towns and villages.

Weak kings could not provide the protection people needed. So people turned to nobles for protection and government.

Lords and Vassals

Feudalism was based on agreements between **lords** and **vassals**. A lord might be a king or a powerful noble. A vassal was someone who promised to serve and obey the lord. A vassal also promised to fight for his lord in times of war.

As part of their agreement, a lord gave his vassal a section of land to use. That land was called a **fief**. A fief included all the towns and villages on the land. It also included the **peasants**, or farmers, who lived and worked on the land. In time, Europe was divided into thousands of fiefs.

Many vassals were **knights**. Knights were warriors who fought on horseback. Nobles depended on their knights to protect their land from Vikings. They also called on their knights to fight for them in wars against other nobles.

The Class System under Feudalism

Under feudalism, **society** in western Europe was divided into three social classes. (A society is all the people who live in a place and share the same traditions and beliefs.)

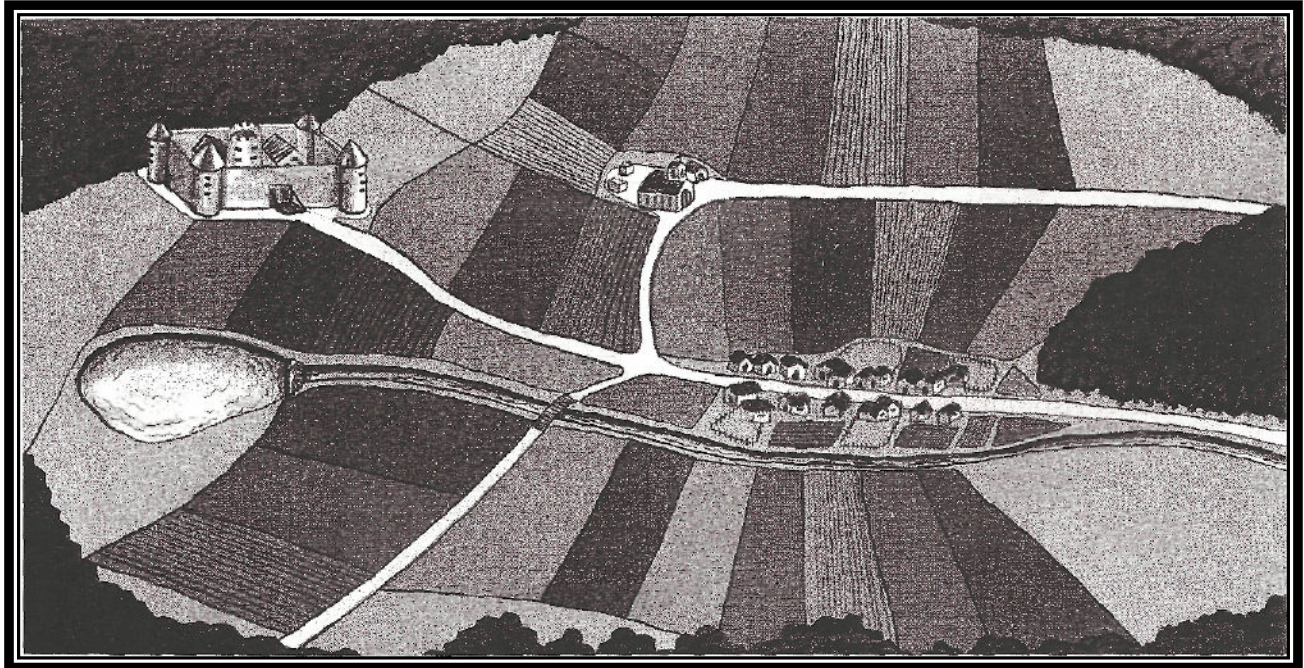
One class was made up of nobles. The noble class was headed by the king. It also included lords and knights. The nobles ran the government, kept order, and protected the people from attacks.

The second class was made up of priests, bishops, and other church officials. Their duty was to help people lead Christian lives.

The third and largest class included townspeople and peasants. It was their duty to work for the other two classes.

Looking Back

1. What was feudalism?
2. What did a vassal promise to his lord?
What did a lord give to his vassal?
3. Describe the three classes that developed under feudalism.



This drawing shows how a manor of the Middle Ages might have looked. The large stone castle was the home of the lord of the manor and his family. Nearby lay farm fields and pastures, a pond, a church, and a village of small huts where the peasants lived.

Life on a Manor

You read that under feudalism Europe was divided into thousands of fiefs. Some fiefs were further divided into large estates called manors. A lord ruled each manor. He usually lived in a large manor house or **castle**,

The **lord of the manor** collected taxes. He also protected the people of the manor from thieves and raiders. When laws were broken, the lord saw that the lawbreaker was punished. In times of war, he led the men of the manor into battle.

A lord's wife was called the **lady of the manor**. The lady watched over her house, children, and servants. She made sure that there was food in the kitchen. She saw to it that clothes were made.

In times of peace, the lady entertained many guests. In times of war, she cared for soldiers hurt in battle. When her husband was away, the lady ran the manor.

The Peasants

The peasants who lived on the manor had hard lives. Most peasants had to remain on the manor. They could not leave without the lord's permission.

As payment for the land they farmed, peasants gave the lord part of their crops. They also did other work for the lord of the manor, such as clearing forests and building roads.

Peasants produced almost everything that was needed on the manor. Men and boys plowed, planted, and harvested crops. Some men worked at a trade, such as barrel-making or shoemaking.

Women and girls cooked, cleaned, sheared sheep, wove cloth, and sewed clothing. Some worked as servants in the lord's manor house or castle.

1. What were the duties of the lord of the manor? of the lady of the manor?
2. What kinds of work did peasants do?

Rise of Nations in Europe

The king and queen of Spain and Christopher Columbus



You read that feudalism developed in Europe during the early Middle Ages. Under feudalism, Europe was divided into many small territories ruled by nobles.

Later in the Middle Ages, some kings gained power over the nobles and built large kingdoms. Those kingdoms were the beginning of the modern *nations* of Europe, (A nation is a large group of people who live in the same area and have the same government and culture.)

- Why did feudalism decline in Europe?
- How did England become a nation?
- How did a war help to unite France?
- How did Portugal and Spain become nations?
- Why did Germany and Italy remain divided?

Key Words You will be using these words in this chapter.

charter
clergy

monarchy
Parliament

The Decline of Feudalism

By A.D. 1100, life in Europe was changing. The Viking raids had ended. New inventions and farming methods helped farmers to raise more food. As the food supply increased, the population grew.

You read that trade was on the rise in Europe because of the Crusades. Trade and Europe's increasing population led to the growth of towns and cities.

Most towns were built on manors, or lands belonging to a noble. Nobles forced townspeople to pay high taxes. They also charged merchants and traders fees to use their roads. But nobles often did not protect traders from robbers on the roads.

Merchants, traders, and other townspeople resented rule by the nobles. They began to look to their king for protection and good government.

Kings Gain Power

Townspeople were willing to pay taxes to a king in exchange for protection from robbers and greedy nobles. With that tax money, the kings built powerful armies. Kings used their armies to gain power over the nobles. Kings often went to war against nobles who refused to obey them.

As kings gained power, their governments grew. More and more people were united under one leader and one set of laws. In time, people began to see themselves as part of something larger than a town or manor. They began to feel they were part of a nation.

Looking Back

1. Why did townspeople resent rule by nobles?
2. How did kings gain power over nobles?



England Becomes a Nation

The first country to unite under a strong *monarchy* was England. (A monarchy is a government headed by a king or queen. The king or queen is called the *monarch*.)

You read that the kings of Wessex began the work of uniting England. (Alfred the Great and Athelstan were two Wessex kings.) In A.D. 1066, the last of the Wessex kings died.

A noble named **Harold** became England's next king. But a cousin of the dead king also claimed the throne. His name was **William**. William was the ruler of Normandy, a state in northern France.

William the Conqueror

In 1066, William crossed the English Channel with 5000 soldiers. William's troops defeated Harold's army in the **Battle of Hastings**. That victory made William the king of England. He became known as **William the Conqueror**.

William built a strong government in England. To help him rule, he set up a council, or group of advisors. It was made up of nobles and *clergy*, or church leaders. It became known as the **Great Council**.

Henry II

The kings who followed William increased the power of the English monarchy. The greatest of those rulers was **Henry II**. He became king in 1154. Henry ruled England and a large part of France. Some of Henry's French land came from his wife, **Eleanor of Aquitaine**.

This picture shows the Norman army sailing for England.

A New System of Law

When Henry II became king, England had many systems of law. Each manor and town had its own laws and courts. So did the Catholic church.

Henry II worked to bring England under one system of law. He made the king's courts the most powerful courts in the land. He sent judges around England to hold trials.

At first, the judges decided if people were innocent or guilty. Later, judges chose a jury to decide each case. That was the beginning of trial by jury in England.

In time, all of England was united under one set of laws. Many of the laws were based on the decisions of the king's judges. Because the laws were common to all of England, they became known as the **common law**.

Common law is still used in Great Britain today. The American legal system is also based partly on English common law.

Looking Back

1. How did William the Conqueror become king of England?
2. What was the Great Council?
3. How did Henry II change the court system of England?



The Magna Carta and Parliament

In A.D. 1199, Henry II's son **John** became the king of England. King John was not a popular ruler. He lost most of England's land in France in wars with the French. He also taxed the English people heavily. When people protested, he put them in jail.

In 1215, England's nobles rebelled against King John. They forced him to sign a *charter*, or agreement, giving them certain rights. That charter became known as the **Magna Carta**, or **Great Charter**.

The Magna Carta said that the king could not collect new taxes unless a "council of the kingdom" agreed to the taxes. The Magna Carta also gave people accused of breaking the law the right to a fair trial.

Most important of all, the Magna Carta put **limits** on the king's power. It **said** that the king was not above the law. Like all English people, the monarch had to obey "the law of the land."

The Beginning of Parliament

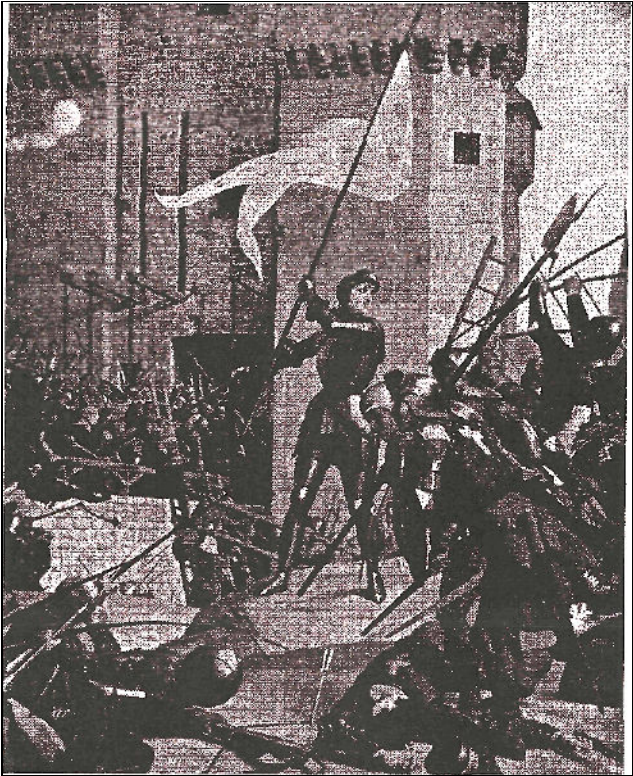
You read that William the Conqueror set up a Great Council of nobles and clergy to advise him. In time, that council came to be called **Parliament**. In 1265, Parliament began to include **representatives** of small landowners and townspeople. (A representative is someone who speaks for others at a meeting.)

Later, Parliament broke into two **houses**, or groups. Nobles and clergy made up the **House of Lords**. Small landowners and townspeople formed the **House of Commons**.

At first, Parliament had little power. But in time, it won the right to approve all taxes. Parliament also decided how tax money would be spent. Later, Parliament gained the power to pass laws for England.

Looking Back

1. Why did nobles rebel against King John?
2. How did the Magna Carta limit the King's Power?
3. What powers did Parliament win?



Joan of Arc is a heroine to the people of France. This pointing shows Joan leading French troops against the English at Orleans during the Hundred Years' War,

France and the Hundred Years' War

The second country to unite under a strong monarchy was France. After the death of Charlemagne, France was divided into many states. The king of France ruled only a small area around the city of Paris.

Beginning in A.D. 1108, a series of strong kings increased the power of the monarchy. The first was Louis VI. Louis built a strong government to rule his lands around Paris.

Louis' grandson, Philip II, added to the king's lands. He went to war with King John of England. In that war, Philip won most of John's lands in France. Later kings won control of lands owned by French nobles. By 1328, the monarchy controlled most of France.

France and England Go to War

In 1328, the king of France, Charles IV, died. Charles had no son to follow him as king. King Edward III of England was Charles' nephew. Edward claimed that he should be the new king of France.

The French would not have Edward as their king. France and England also quarreled over land and other matters. In 1337, the two countries went to war. The war lasted for over 100 years. For that reason, it is called the Hundred Years' War.

In 1346, English soldiers invaded France. The English won victory after victory. By 1419, much of France was in English hands.

Joan of Arc

In 1429, a 17-year-old peasant girl asked to see the French king. Her name was Joan of Arc. Joan claimed that voices from heaven had spoken to her. They had ordered her to save France. She convinced the king of the truth of her story. He put her at the head of an army.

Joan gave her soldiers new hope and courage. She led her troops to a victory over the British at the city of Orleans. But a few months later, Joan was captured. The English accused Joan of being a witch. They burned her to death.

The End of the War

Joan of Arc's death angered the people of France. Across the country, they joined together to drive the British from France.

By 1453, the English held only one city in France. The war was over. And France was more united than ever before.

Looking Back

1. How did French kings increase the power of the monarchy?
2. Who was Joan of Arc? How did she help France?
3. How did the Hundred Years' War end?

Other European Nations

By the late Middle Ages, other nations had developed in Europe. In Scandinavia, descendants of the Vikings built three nations: **Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.**

In southern Europe, two nations arose on the Iberian Peninsula: **Portugal and Spain.**

Portugal

You read that the Moslems conquered most of the Iberian Peninsula in 711. But a few groups of Christians held out against the Moslems. They lived in small kingdoms in the mountains of the northern peninsula.

Around 1050, the Christians began a crusade against the Moslems. By 1139, Christians controlled much of the northern and western peninsula.

The Christians set up kingdoms in the lands they took from the Moslems. One kingdom lay along the Atlantic Ocean in the west. It was called Portugal.

At first, Portugal was controlled by another Christian kingdom. But in 1143, Portugal became an independent nation.

Spain

By 1300, the Moslems held only a small area in the southern part of the Iberian Peninsula. That area was called **Granada.** The rest of the peninsula was divided into several Christian kingdoms. The two most powerful kingdoms were Aragon and Castile.

In 1469, **Prince Ferdinand** of Aragon married **Princess Isabella** of Castile. They united their kingdoms to form Spain. In 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella conquered Granada. Under their rule, Spain became a strong nation.

The Holy Roman Empire

You read that in 843 the Treaty of Verdun divided Charlemagne's empire into three parts. One part became the kingdom of France. Another part became the kingdom of **Germany.**

Like much of Europe, Germany was

divided into many feudal territories.

In 936, **Otto I** became king of Germany. Otto united much of Germany under his rule.

In 951, Otto marched south and conquered part of northern Italy. He became the ruler of a great new empire that included Germany and northern Italy. The empire had close ties with the Catholic church in Rome. It became known as the **Holy Roman Empire.**

Germany and Italy Remain Divided

Later German emperors could not hold the empire together. The Italians constantly rebelled against German rule.

While the emperors were putting down rebellions in Italy, German nobles gained power at home. In time, they broke away from the emperor's rule and set up their own governments.

Germany and Italy became a collection of small kingdoms and city-states. Neither country would become united until the late 1800s.

Looking Back

1. How did Portugal become a nation?
2. How did Spain become a nation?
3. What did Otto I accomplish?
4. Why were German emperors unable to hold the Holy Roman Empire together?