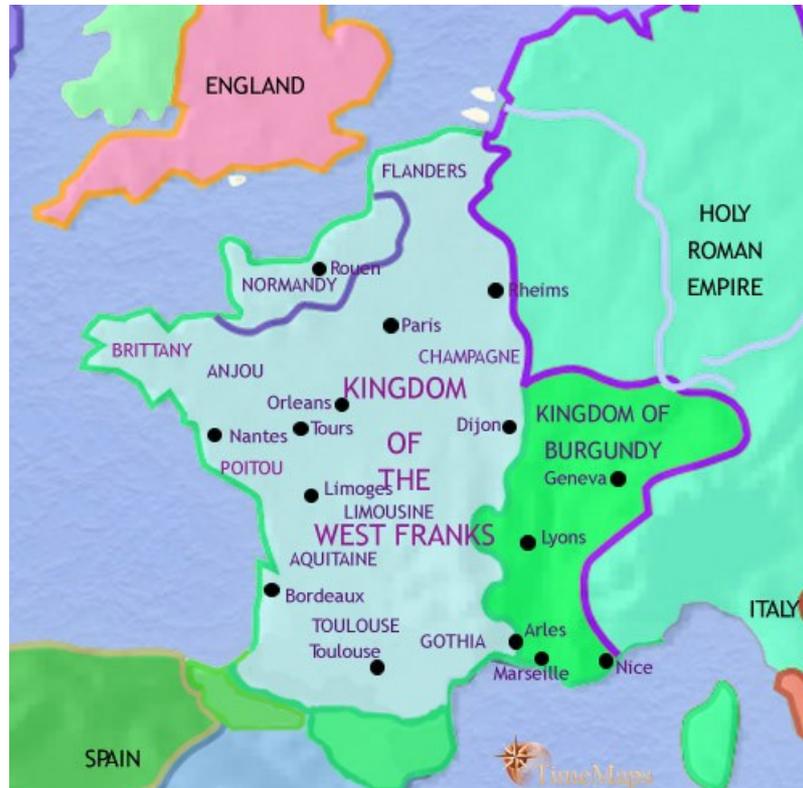


We are back in 1000AD. Let's take a look at what we call today France.



There's an area in the north called NORMANDY. The Normans (North + Men) were of Viking origin. They had established their presence in Northern France for over two centuries.

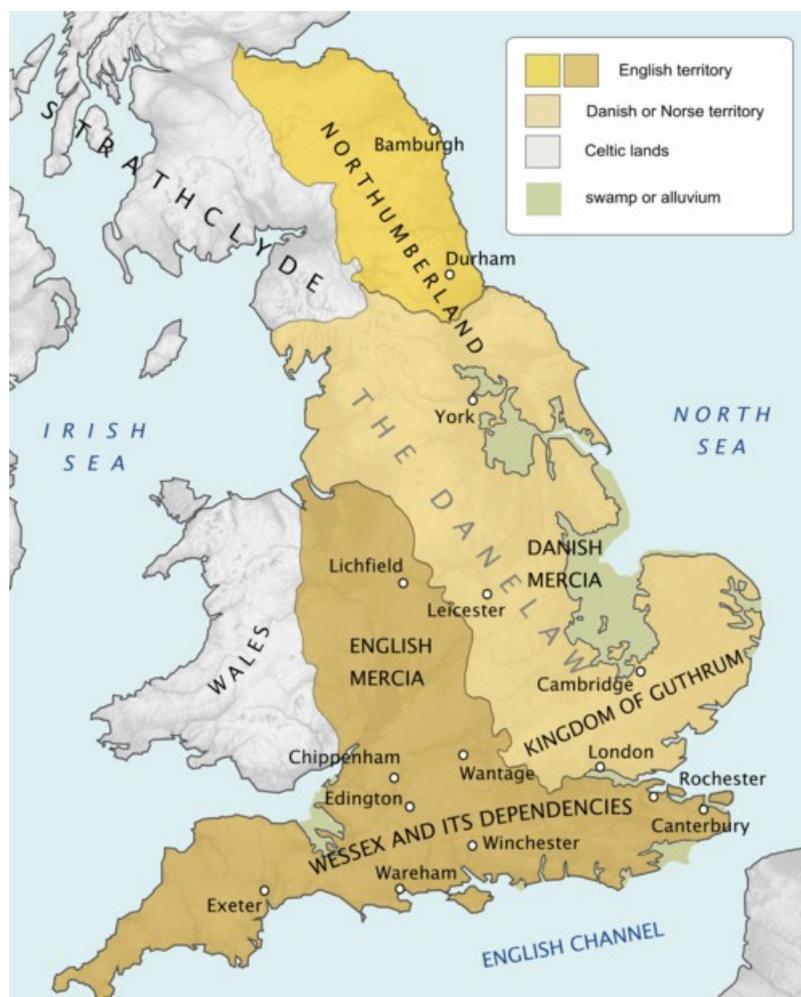
Normandy was not a kingdom. The 'head' of Normandy was a Duke. Still, Normandy had an autonomous administration. However, culturally Normandy was more 'affiliated' with the Kingdom of the Franks.

At the beginning of the 11th century England is a kingdom. (Wales, Scotland and Ireland were separate kingdoms then) The king of England was **Edward the Confessor** (1042-1066).

Edward was a childless king so he had no heir to the throne. Edward was a deeply religious man who had taken a vow of celibacy (sexual abstinence).

Edward's mum was Emma of Normandy. Therefore, **William the Duke of Normandy** was his nephew and he had a hereditary claim to the English throne.

Edward's wife was Edith Godwin of Wessex. The Earl of Wessex was the most powerful English (Anglo-Saxon) nobleman. **Harold Godwin**- son of the Earl of Wessex- was an exceptional leader with unrivaled military skills.



When Edward died (1066) Harold Godwin of Wessex crowned himself king. He had the support of the Anglo-Saxon nobility.

William, however, was the 'legal' heir to the throne by right of blood.

As a result the conflict was inescapable. William prepared an army of approximately 10.000 against 7.000 men that Harold managed to gather.

Norman army: 5.000 infantry (foot soldiers)
2.500 cavalry (on horseback)
2.500 archers (bow and arrow)

The English army composed mainly of infantry and a few archers.

The Bayeux tapestry gives us a graphic account of the line of events from the preparation of the Norman army until the victorious outcome for William following the death of Harold.



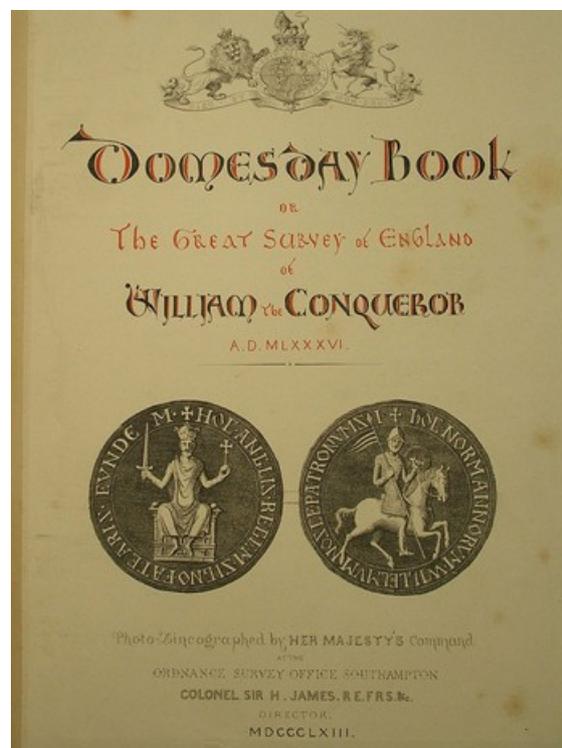
The Bayeux tapestry is a 70 metre embroidered cloth that depicts the line of events like a primitive filmstrip!!
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtGoBZ4D4_E)

The Normans fought the Anglo-Saxons in **the battle of Hastings**. William won the battle and his name has indelibly remained in British history as William the conqueror.

The Norman conquest of England had an enormous impact on the history of Britain.

William was crowned king of England and his rule was set to modify the whole social structure. To a great extent the Anglo-Saxon nobility was replaced by Norman noblemen. With the passage of time they intermarried with the native gentry and they all 'Anglicized'.

William ordered a written detailed account of all English land, property, livestock and population. This detailed account became known as the **Domesday book**.



William reorganised land ownership, tax law and property rights. He established French as the language of the court. He himself died without learning how to speak the Anglo-Saxon language.

French became the language of the nobility and the educated people while the Anglo-Saxon language was looked down as a vulgar vernacular of the peasants (eg. Norman= stomach vs Anglo-Saxon= belly). Eventually, time crafted a fusion of the two languages that gave rise to middle-English the language that produced Shakespeare's masterpieces.

Nonetheless, we can still today trace the origins of certain words back to this tumultuous era.

Norman words
(food & army)

secret
archer
enemy
argument
arrogant
demand
fierce
stable
lettuce
cabbage
custard
penthouse
kennel

Anglo-Saxon words
(animals & farming)

hammer
ladder
stone
shadow
beard
blood
apple
horse
goat
wolf
greedy
sweaty

A Young Person's Guide to the Battle of Hastings:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhqrpTpoGHk>