

**The English Cross-Channel Possessions
since William the Conqueror to the Deposition of Edward II**

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Abstract:

Albeit the Anglo-Saxon England was strife-torn, she never waged outward wars it, rather, only repulsed them. The Norsemen who ransacked the insular Isle plundered France as well. Charles III the Simple (879–929), after incessant encroachments, ceded Rollo (911-27), the Norsemen's leader, the northern region; now Normandy called after them. William happened to be one of Rollo's offspring and kin to Edward the Confessor (c.1003-1066) king of England who promised William the throne should he die without issue. Upon his death, Harold Godwinson (1022–1066) usurped the throne. William pervaded England, killed him at Hasting in 1066 and became king of England while a king-duke of a foothold across the Channel as a vassal to the French kings to whom he should pay homage; a thorny issue and source of trouble between the overlord and his vassal. Under the Angevin, Henry II (1152-1199) ruled over half of France, this, however, much annoyed the Capetians, especially Louis VII and his son Philippe Augustus who spared no efforts to retrieve them. In this regard, and without pretension whatsoever, this humble article aims at shedding some light on the above notes on the basis of : What lands did the English enfeoff, then? How did they happen to retain them or lose them since then through the deposition of Edward II?

Key words: William the Conqueror, Anglo-Norman Realm, Angevin Empire, overseas possessions, Henry II, Philip Augustus, the two Edwards, Saint-Sardos.

الملخص :

بالرغم من أن إنجلترا الأنجلو ساكسونية كانت ممزقة بالصراعات ، فإنها لم تشن حروبًا خارجية أبدًا، بل صدتها فقط. النورمانيين الذين نهبوا الجزيرة المعزولة نهبوا فرنسا كذلك. إضطر تشارلز الثالث (879–929) المكثي "البسيط" للتنازل لرولو (911–927) زعيم النورسمين عن نورماندي وذلك للكف عن تحرشاتهم المتكررة. قبل النورسمين الوضع وتمسحوا بعد أن استقروا بالنورماندي. حدث أن تناهت ذوقية نورماندي إلى أحد أحفاد رولو، والمقرب كذلك من إدوارد (1042–1066) المكثي "المعترف"، وهو وليام (1035–1087). هذا الأخير كان قد وعد من طرف إدوارد أنه سيورثه العرش إذا ما مات دون وريث. عندما مات إدوارد اغتصب العرش من طرف هارولد غودوينسون (1022–1066) أغار وليام على هارولد في واقعة هاستينغ (1066) وقتله واعتلى العرش. أصبح الذوق وليام الفاتح ملكا لإنجلترا كما بقي ذوقا تحت إمرة سيده ملك فرنسا - النظام الإقطاعي - وللإشارة، فقط، فإن فرنسا كانت كلها مقاطعات، وأصغرهم التي بحوزة ملك فرنسا -إل دو افرنس- عندئذ كان ملوك فرنسا في حالة ضعف شديدة. تنافس أبناء وليام الحكم بعده ودخلوا في حروب بينهم وبين أسيادهم ملوك فرنسا. عندما تزوج هانري طليقة لويس ٧، وورث أباه، تربع على ما يزيد عن نصف فرنسا. الأمر الذي أثار حفيظة لويس و فيليب ٢. فتح الباب

بمصرعيه أمام الحروب التوسعية، فتنافسوها الفرنسيون والإنجليز كل يريد التوسع على حساب الأخر. ما هي إذن الأراضي التي استولى عليها النورمان كيف آلت إلى الأنجوفين من بعدهم أو بالأحرى كيف تم الحفاظ عليها وما كانت تداعيتها إلى حين سقوط إدوارد الثاني؟

الكلمات مفتاحية: وليام الفاتح ، الأنجلو نورمان ، إمبراطورية أنجيفين ، ممتلكات ما وراء البحار ، هنري الثاني ، فيليب أوغسطس ، وهما إدواردز ، وسان ساردوس.

Introduction

William king of England by conquest and duke of Normandy by inheritance, this, in effect, much annoyed the French king. The marriage of Normandy to England was the root cause of much tussle among the then kings of France, Anglo-Normans and their progeny to come, for centuries. The feudal bonds during the medieval ages dictated that the vassal had to render homage¹ to his suzerain in return for land tenure and military service. The English kings, excluding, to some extent, William the Conqueror (1066-87), showed great reluctance and most of the time temporized when summoned to swear homage. The French kings however, resorted to the sequestration of the enfeofed lands as a measure to bring their vassals to heels. Powerful as they were, especially the English vassals in Aquitaine, and the ones of Flanders would never, easily, yield. Wars were justified by the vassals' misconducts which, in turn, gave a *casus belli* to justify the royal domains to change hands.

Matrimony², on the other hand played a significant role in acquiring lands as they were given as dowries for women in case of divorce. When Eleanor of Aquitaine³ was repudiated, she brought to Henry II (1154-1189) all Aquitaine (the whole western France as far south as the Pyrenees.)⁴ and Poitiers. King Philippe II (1180-1223) of France, as well, adopted two expedients to retrieve the French lands; marriage and warring. More than that, Philippe and his predecessors spared no pains to justify their ends especially in front of their contemporary powerful rivals, namely Henry II and his son Richard II (1189 –1199). Both Philippe II and his forefathers resorted to intrigues such as playing the sons of their rivals off against their fathers – William the Conqueror and Henry II. Bitter filial wars⁵ were the root cause of bitter rebellions which ended in the redistribution of the appanage. It is noteworthy to notice that the assistance of the pope, by virtue of his legates in France and England and the employ of the church money or the threat of “interdict and excommunication” played a significant role in tipping the balance one way or another. These aforementioned deeds, however, caused territories to change hands at an alarming frequency. Then, what were driving forces behind this territory devolution?

¹ Vassals had to Place their hands in their lord's and sealed the relationship by a kiss; they pledged their loyalty (fealty); and the count invested them with their fiefs. Kibler, William W., *Medieval France: an Encyclopedia of Medieval France*, Garland Publishing Inc, 1995, p., 871.

² William Bolden Button, *Philip Augustus*, Macmillan and Co., Ltd, 1896, London, p., 10.

³ Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122–1204). When Duke William X of Aquitaine died in 1137, he entrusted his fifteen year-old daughter and heiress, Eleanor, to King Louis VI. The king quickly arranged to marry her to his own heir, Louis VII (r. 1137–80). Eleanor brought to the marriage the important duchy of Aquitaine, the southwest quadrant of France, which had long been fairly independent of the king. op., cit., p., 219.

⁴ Fraioli, Deborah A., *Joan of Arc and the Hundred Years War*, Greenwood Press, United States of America, 2005, p., xliii,

⁵ *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History, from Contemporary Writers, the Rolls of Parliament, and Other Public Records*, James Parker And Co., Oxfokd And London, 1876, p., 123.

Beyond any pretention or whatsoever, this very humble work aims at shedding some light on the “English Possessions in France since 1066 through 1324” the last war of the then deposed Edward II in 1327. The unassuming contribution will be prefaced by an en passant look to the Anglo-Norman realm since William (1035-1087) and his progeny’s retention of land, which was limited to Normandy and Maine. A dwell will be assigned to the period of the Angevin Empire (1154-1204). The era marked for its great accomplishments in terms of land. Inquisitively, a conduct of inquiries concerning the demise of the Angevin Empire under John Lackland (1199-1216) and how his successors recovered the lost lands will be taken into consideration. Attention will also be assigned to any possible deterrents or divine providence to restore the overseas possessions. Who then possessed what and how?

THE RISE OF THE NORMAN REALM

William I (r.1066-87) inherited the duchy of Normandy from his ancestors;⁶ and strove all along his reign together with his immediate descendants to maintain it despite the unsuccessful attempts of the then kings of France. Unfortunately, after the male crisis of King Henry I (c. 1068 –1135) Stephen of Blois (1135-1154), grandson of William I (the Conqueror), usurped the throne but failed to *consolidate his power because of civil war which lingered for 15 years during his reign. It was thanks to Henry II’s (1154-1189) father Geoffrey, son of Fulk, and count of Anjou⁷ that Normandy was preserved. When Geoffrey Plantagenet died in 1151, Anjou and Maine, smoothly, devolved to his son later Henry II.*

THE APOGY OF THE ANGEVIN EMPIRE

The advent of the Angevin dynasty in 1154 with the coronation of Henry II (r. 1154- 1189) brought new and varied continental changes. Sharon Turner, decidedly, argued that absolutely no monarch ever had possessed as much continental territory at his ascendancy to the throne of England. Henry II ruled most of western France; from his father he inherited Anjou Maine, and Normandy, and through his marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine In 1152, he received the Duchy of Aquitaine. The provinces between the Loire and the Pyrenees were the dowry of his wife Eleanor countess of Poitou.⁸ In addition to their being Dukes of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Gascony, as well as Counts of Anjou, Maine, and Nantes, the Angevins were seigneurs of Brittany as well.⁹

Henry II’s possession of Aquitaine allowed him to stretch his domain southwards; the power-hungry monarch adopted the stratagem of intermarriages to extend his lands without limits. Besides, the above territories, he married his daughters to the kings of Castile and Sicily, allied himself to the King of Aragon, and gained Toulouse for one of his sons and even thought of becoming emperor. Strong antagonism came to light in 1153. After having had claim to the homage of Toulouse and his intense and selfish desire to get Auvergne, Berry and his alliance to Flanders in addition to his acquiring Brittany through the marriage of his son, Henry stirred Louis VII to action. The latter, though showing

⁶ Rolf, who had been banished from Norway about 875, having embraced Christianity, and married Gisele, daughter of Charles the Simple, governed his province with vigour and wisdom, and formed it into a barrier for the rest of France against the incursions of his former associates. He died in 920, and left his state to his son "William, the fourth in descent from whom was William the Conqueror (Bastard). *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History*, op. cit., p., 82.

⁷ Nolan, Cathal J., *The Age of Wars of Religion, 1000-1650, an Encyclopedia of Global Warfare and civilization*, Volume 1, A–K, Greenwood Press, London, p., 639.

⁸ Louis was displeased at her nuptials with Henry, because he then saw that his two daughters by her would lose her rich inheritance. Sharon Turner, *History of England during the Middle Ages*, Longman, Vol., I, 1853, fifth edit., p., 194.

⁹ <https://www.crisismagazine.com/2013/crusaders-and-kings-the-contrast-between-richard-the-lionheart-and-philip-augustus>

envy for Henry's growing power, proved no match to him; Henry assumed the policy of acquiescence,¹⁰ and acted in the same way as his rival.

After an unsuccessful coalition by the French king to curb Henry in 1154, the two kings were in mutual concordance. Louis VII admitted him as Duke of Aquitaine, and got him back Neuf Marché and Vernon, the handing back had been done following a payment of 2,000 marks.¹¹ Now, Henry ruled over an area covering half of France. Intermittent wars, once again characterised the late 1160's, but were topped by a peace process and a betrothal of Louis's daughter to Richard, son of Henry in 1169.

Henry II, warrior though he was, received a good blow by Louis VII (1137-1180) when, in a serious filial conflict, in 1173, Eleanor and her sons jointly with Louis; plotted to oust him. Louis, time and again, resorted half secretly and half openly, to playing off the sons against their father and provided shelter to their traitorous mother in vain. The Treaty of Ivry in 1177 led to a short-term intermission of skirmishes. After the death of Louis VII in 1180, Henry's sons disputed over succession; Geoffrey and young Henry unexpectedly died.

Philippe (r.1180-1223) waged war on Henry II acquiring of him to recognize Richard as heir whom he would marry Alice, Philippe's sister, or Gisors¹² be restored to him, and John should go on the crusade. Henry II proposed John instead of Richard who would part with the all continent fiefs excluding Normandy which Richard would receive with the crown of England as his due. However, on hearing this, Richard opposed the plan, and in concert with Philippe II took arms against his father. Richard attacked Toulouse and Philip invaded Berry and took Chateauroux.

Richard, who oscillated¹³ back and forth between his father and king Philippe, retaliated and recovered Berry.¹⁴ Philippe, who feared Richard,¹⁵ forced Henry II to concede Berry and the Norman Vexin. Henry II, full of outrage, advanced to Mantes killed the opposing forces and reduced it to ashes. Philippe then offered peace and promised to restore all he took should Richard comply with the prior prerequisites but Henry II refused to give way. John of Anagni, the pope's legate mediated for peace and even threatened to lay France under interdict but Philippe, stubbornly, refused. He attacked Maine and took Le Mans, Tours surrendered and Henry fled. The battle already foreshadowed a bad waiting outcome.

The two kings met at Colombieres near Villandri on the Cher, Henry II, in a humiliating submission, agreed to do homage to Philippe, promised to allow the marriage of Alice and his barons to swear fealty

¹⁰ He took for second wife Constance daughter of Alfonso, king of Castile and Leon. He gave his sister in marriage to Raymond V., count of Toulouse. Thus he did something to counteract the Angevin influence in the south. He made a marriage treaty with his great rival, by which his little daughter Margaret and Henry's eldest boy were betrothed. On his wife's death in 1160 he married Alice of Champagne, daughter of Count Thibault V., whose four brothers, William, an ecclesiastic; Henry, count of V Champagne and Brie; Thibault, count of Chartres and Blois; and Stephen, count of Sancerre, formed the strongest family alliance that could be opposed to the menacing power of Henry II. He maintained a firm alliance with the orthodox pope, Alexander III. He showed himself a constant vindicator of ecclesiastical rights. When his rival's minister, Thomas Becket, the greatest prelate of the age, fled from his dominions, Louis gave him refuge in his own lands, and steadily, in spite of the strongest pressure, maintained his cause against the jealous anger of the English king. Button B. William, op. cit., pp., 7-8.

¹¹ The expenses Louis was compelled to : besieging, manning, and victualling the forts. Ramsay, James, H., *The Angevin Empire: or the three reigns of Henry II, Richard I, and John A. D. 1154-1216*, Swan Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd, London, 1903, p., 2.

¹² Gisors: 'the chief town of the Norman Vexin, the rich plain which was ever a debateable land between the French king and the Norman duke, was the main object of Philip's demand. *Ibid.* Button B. William, p., 38

¹³ *Ibid.*, Button B. William, p., 41.

¹⁴ Richard sent word to his father that all he had done was by Philip's consent Berry was part and parcel of Eleanor's dowry, perhaps to justify Richard's attack., *Ibid.*, Button B. William, p., 41

¹⁵ Kate Norgate, John Lackland, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London, 1902, pp., Norgate. Kate, p., 47.

to Richard, to pay 20,000 marks¹⁶ and to accept crusading. The greatest statesman and warrior of Europe had knelt at his feet; the sickly father succumbed to death in 1189.¹⁷

The late Henry had four male children; Henry the young had been acknowledged titular King, and in 1160 had done homage to Louis VII (r.1137-80) of France for the duchy of Normandy, Anjou and Maine, but died in 1183. Eleanor's duchy of Aquitaine and Poitou had been destined for her second surviving son, Richard, as early as 1159. In 1166, Henry II, in an attempt to secure Brittany to his son Geoffrey, betrothed the heiress of the duchy, he died 1186. Anjou was reserved to young Henry as his due, the nominations of which he received from Louis VII with those of Maine. Brittany was granted to young Henry, to be held by his brother Geoffrey as mesne lord, and under Louis VII as a suzerain.¹⁸ John was not yet born when the Angevin possessions were devised,¹⁹ still he was later, like Richard, bestowed with Cornwall. Following the death of Geoffrey and Henry, the whole appanage devolved to Richard. Now, given the latter's absenteeism in the Levant, how could he preserve the Empire from his power-thirsty French counterpart?

RICHARD AND THE CONTINENTAL POSSESSIONS

Second son of Henry II and Duke of Aquitaine since 1159,²⁰ his alliance to Philippe II of France won him all the Angevin possessions²¹ in 1189. Actually, Richard subjugated Aquitaine by means of sword; it took him some eight years to bring its barons to heels. However, on the death of his father, Richard adopted a hostile policy towards his ally; nonetheless the two kings, later, signed a treaty of peace. Richard spent all his military prowess and huge riches into war on Philippe Augustus II. The latter's alliance against Richard, was stretched to involve Renaud, Count of Boulogne, Baldwin IX of Flanders, and the King Sancho VI of Navarre, his father-in-law, who set upon the French lands in the south.²²

On his return from Palestine, Philippe Augustus conspired with John, Richard's young brother; Philippe offered to help John win all his brother's possessions against his marriage to Philip's Sister. For some reasons, the latter's plot turned into a fiasco; both Eleanor and the seneschal prevented him from crossing to Normandy and the French knights refused to fight with Philippe against Richard the crusader.

When Philippe overheard of Richard's detention in Austria, Philip claimed quite a good range of land.²³ In 1193, he took Aumale and Eu besieged Rouen but in vain. The next year the French King invaded Normandy and besieged Verneuil. Richard was ransomed in the same year, and on his appearing

¹⁶ Ibid., p., 48.

¹⁷ William B. Button, op. cit., pp., 41-44.

¹⁸ Kate Norgate, op. cit., pp., 1, 2.

¹⁹ The one fragment of the continental dominions of the Angevin house which the king of England formally reserved to himself was Touraine. Kate Norgate, Ibid., p., 3.

²⁰ Kate Norgate, Ibid., p., 1.

²¹ Philip could claim Richard the Lionheart both as a nominal subordinate (a vassal who did homage for his continental lands), and as a debtor for his throne Philip Augustus' support had indeed been indispensable for Richard during the latter's off-and-on war against his father. <https://www.crisismagazine.com/2013/crusaders-and-kings-the-contrast-between-richard-the-lionheart-and-philip-augustus>.

²² <https://www.crisismagazine.com/2013/crusaders-and-kings-the-contrast-between-richard-the-lionheart-and-philip-augustus>.

²³ He claimed all Normandy on the right bank of the Seine, except Rouen itself, nearly half the land of Evreux, with the castles of Ivry, Vaudreuil, and Verneuil, and in the Angevin lands, Tours, Azai, Amboise, Loches, Mont-bazon, and Montrichard; and he added to the demand that the Angevin fiefs in Vendome should be transferred to his uncle, the count of Blois. Ibid., pp., 55-62.

on the field, Philippe fled and Evreux was regained. Richard, could, as well, suppress revolts in Aquitaine. In mid 1194, Philippe attempted to destruct Evreux but at the approach of Richard he took flight. By the close of the year, the Normans signed a truce with Philippe who never abandoned his schemes for fresh acquisitions. However, his rival, Richard, was absorbed in smothering strife in the south.

The return of Arthur the Breton²⁴ and his alliance to Richard brought over Brittany, Flanders, and Champagne, a coalition which exacerbated Philippe and led him to restore all he had won in Normandy. Appart for Gisors, Philippe left no stone unturned to wring but a gaining in vain. Subsequently, the two kings met on the Seine, and signed a peace treaty for five years. Richard died in 1199 while putting down a revolt in the Limousine. Conferring the Angevin dominions upon Arthur the boy would be as if entrusting it to Philip thought Richard and his officers. However, to preserve the integrity of the dominions, John will be the appropriate. Richard devised all his realms to his successor John, gave orders that the assembly swear fealty to him.²⁵ No hint was made to his brother's son Arthur because thus was the tradition in England.²⁶ John was recognized king at a council at Northampton and was crowned at Westminster. Once back to Normandy, he leaged with the counts of Boulogne and Flanders for help against France. Philippe II fortified Arthur's possessions, John's nephew, in Brittany, and overran Normandy in 1200. By the end of May of the same year, Philippe made peace with John and recognized his kingship, but despite John's insistence on Philippe to drop Artur's cause was of no effect. Now, would his successor prove fit to preserve the ancestral appanage especially in front of an eager king such as Philippe Augustus?²⁷

THE DEMISE OF THE ANGEVIN EMPIRE

Upon his ascendancy, Philippe was reported to have, categorically, made it clear declaring that "*At the end of my reign I wish that the monarchy of France shall stand where it did at the time of Charlemagne.*"²⁸ During Le Goulet Treaty in 1200, Philippe admitted John as a tenant for all the Angevin lands and abandoned the custody of Arthur while John agreed to pay homage to Philippe and 20,000 marks²⁹ in return for his lands in France.³⁰ Arthur, was supported by Philippe II. and acknowledged in Maine, Anjou, and Touraine, but soon disappiare.

Later, doubt arose around the mysterious passing of Arthur.³¹ entirely persuaded and enraged at the news, Philippe summoned his peers and declared John's French lands forfeit³² and immediately gained control of the whole county of Evreux and overrun part of Maine and the Vexin and took Château

²⁴ Richard's brother, Geoffrey's nine-year-old son, Arthur the Breton.

²⁵ Kate Norgate, *John Lackland*, op. cit., p., 56.

²⁶ In England a nephew had always been passed over in such cases, and John's election was quite lawful. Edward A. Freeman, *A Short History of the Norman Conquest*, Clarendon Press, 1922, p., 151.

²⁷ William B. Button, op. cit., pp. 53-62

²⁸ Neillands Robin, *The Hundred Years War*, Routledge, 2001, p., 19

²⁹ Previous Capetian kings had claimed overlordship of those Norman and Angevin territories held by the English king, they had not dared ask Henry II or King Richard to pay homage. Green David, *The Hundred Years War: A People's History*, Yale University Press, 2014, p., 5

³⁰ Ibid., Green David, p., 5.

³¹ Arthur was taken by John and, there is little doubt, was murdered by him in 1202. A. Freeman Edward, op. cit., p., 151.

³² *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History from Contemporary Writers, the Rolls of Parliament, and other Public Records*, James Parker and Co., London, 1876, p. 138

Galliard. Philip, however, continued his piecemeal policy of conquering Normandy. When king John received the bad tidings from his men asking for succours all he said was "*Let be, someday I will win all back.*"³³ by 1204, all Normandy fell to Philippe Augustus.

The next objective of Philippe was the great Loire fiefs. The two kings signed a peace treaty at Thouars for two years. The treaty stipulated that both kings retain the fealty of their loyal subjects, the lords of Normandy, Maine, Brittany, Touraine, and Anjou north of the Loire could only choose Philippe. The barons of Poitou and Anjou, south of the Loire, would remain with John. A coalition of barons led by Guillaume des Roches subdued Angers, Beaufort, Saumur, Chateaufort-sur-Sarthe, Le Mans and Tours. Late in 1204 Philippe took Poitiers, and the conquest of Normandy was accomplished when Anjou, Maine, and Touraine were subjected.³⁴ In 1205, Loches and Chinon surrendered despite their allegiance to John, because of his lack of determination and constancy. In 1206, John pervaded France with a considerable army, landed at La Rochelle; subdued Montauban, and burned Angers. A two years' truce was later procured, by virtue of which he formally declared his abandonment to all the country north of the Loire.³⁵ Philippe, later, appropriated all his gains. Yet, despite the French upper hand, John did not voluntarily resign.

Apart from internal strife with his barons and the pope, John remained with no particular purpose during the ensuing ten years, a period known by historians as the grave crisis³⁶ of his reign. Following a lack of consensus and approval over the appointment of Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1205, pope Innocent III laid England under interdict, excommunicated King John, and brought him to heels.³⁷

Beset and beleaguered by the headstrong barons, John thought of submission to the authority of the pope and declared himself vassal to the pope. He could no longer levy taxes (Scutage),³⁸ therefore, his inadequate revenues made him quite unable to afford a standing army or to finance any overseas wars of any importance without the assent of the magnates. Henry II, his father, did his utmost to erect the Angevin Empire and expand it, his elder brother Richard ardently and vehemently defended it against Philippe Augustus, a statesman of the first water, as Petit-Detaillis describes him.³⁹ What were the reasons behind its collapse, then? Would John be, wholly, hold culpable for that loss?⁴⁰ Though King John was victorious in Ireland and Scotland and a capable ruler, his failure was, nonetheless, in Wales and France, according to foreign writers, ascribed to the disaffection of his retinue (barons) which, in turns, stemmed from his misgovernment at home, albeit.⁴¹

The two kings called a truce in 1206 but it was not observed by John, both Kings started to look for allies.⁴² Empire and Papacy were to take part in this decisive conflict to come; France, England, the Low Countries and even Germany came to be involved.⁴³ In preparation for the battle, King John mustered an

³³ Button William B., *op. cit.*, p., 70.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Annals, p., 138.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p., 138

³⁶ Petit-Detaillis Charles, *Feudal Monarchy in France and England from the tenth to the Thirteenth Century*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1964, p., 154.

³⁷ *Annals of England an Epitome of English History*, *op. cit.*, p., 138.

³⁸ A tax levied on a vassal or a knight in lieu of military service.

³⁹ Petit-Detaillis, Charles, *op. cit.*, p., 179.

⁴⁰ Button, William B., *op. cit.*, p., 67,

⁴¹ John lackland., *op. cit.*, p., 56.

⁴² Norgate Kate, *John Lackland*, *op. cit.*, p., 202.

⁴³ Charles Petit-Detaillis, *op. cit.*, p., 223.

armed force of mercenaries because the Anglo-Norman nobility refused to accede to his cause. He managed to raise some loyalists in Poitou Anjou and Maine. In 1214, John crossed to France and landed near La Rochelle. The predestined project, after an agreement between Otto IV the Holy Roman Emperor (1209 -1215), of Brunswick John's nephew, and John's half brother, was that John would attack from the south-west while his allies⁴⁴ would attack from the north. In 1214; John crossed to France and landed near La Rochelle, King Philippe was financially backed by Innocent III and others.⁴⁵

Prince Louis, the French king's son, led a force to meet John in the south, while his father Philippe was to intercept the Anglo-Flemish-German coalition in the north. The battle lasted only three hours and the French were victorious. John, on hearing of his brother's imprisonment, recapitulated and fled to England.⁴⁶ The battle of Bovines, in addition to the great number of prisoners,⁴⁷ and their ranks, precipitated the fall of the emperor and forced John to conclude the peace treaty of Chinon where the Angevin, relatively, lost any chance to re-establish their continental domains. The promotion of Frederick II of Sicily, in 1215, gained Philippe's and the papacy's intimacy and a solid alliance with the new emperor in addition to an influence over the Low Countries.⁴⁸

John's breaches and abuses with the Church had come to a deadlock in 1213; Innocent III declared him incapacitated and decided to dethrone him. After being condemned, Philippe's son Louis VIII⁴⁹ was given the green light for his deposition. Disadvantaged and destitute, after excommunication by the pope's legate Pandulph, John succumbed and declared himself liege of the pope, swore homage and bound himself to an annual payment for the Church.⁵⁰ England became a fief of the Roman See by virtue of the homage.⁵¹

In 1215, the infuriated barons managed to exact the Great Charter from John but not as they wished. Once again the nobility appealed to Louis, Philippe's son; however, the realm was still under the protection of the Pope. Louis and his loyal supporters were excommunicated by the Pope. King John died in 1216.⁵² His nine year old son (Henry III 1216-1272) was secured the throne by the new pope, Honorius III (1216- 1227)⁵³ but was left with an impotent ruined England swarming with tumultuous chaos.⁵⁴

THE ENGLISH REVIVAL 1216-1327

Despite the fact that the Angevin were sacked from France they, still puzzlingly, maintain Gascony and the Island of Oléron but no longer "*vassals to the King of France, for the sentence of 1202 had*

⁴⁴ William, earl of Salisbury and half-brother of King John of England; Ferrand of Portugal, count of Flanders and Hainaut; William, count of Holland; and Henri I, duke of Brabant. Also present were the rebellious nobles of France, Renaud de Dammartin, count of Boulogne, and Hugo, the baron of Bovens.

⁴⁵ The prince-bishop of Liège, Hugues de Pierrepont, also sent troops to fight for the French. Kibler William W., op. cit., p., 270.

⁴⁶ *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History*, op. cit., p., 141.

⁴⁷ No less than 131 knights had fallen into French hands, including 5 counts and 25 knights banneret. We have little reliable data for the number of dead, but according to an inscription in the church of St Nicolas at Arras, 300 knights were captured or killed, which would bring the number of dead to 169. Verbruggen J. F., op. cit., p., 255.

⁴⁸ Ibid. J. F. Verbruggen, p., 255

⁴⁹ Louis VIII had married one of John's nieces, and the King of France and his subjects were instructed to take away John's crown for the remission of their sins. Petit-Dutaillis Charles, op. cit., pp., 224-225

⁵⁰ *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History*, op. cit., p., 140.

⁵¹ Norgate Kate, *The Minority of Henry III*, op. cit., p., 62.

⁵² Petit-Dutaillis, Charles, op. cit., p., 226..

⁵³ Norgate Kate, *The Minority of Henry III*, op. cit., p., 62.

⁵⁴ Petit-Dutaillis, Charles, op. cit., p., 227

*broken the feudal ties between Capetian and Plantagenets.”*⁵⁵ When Henry III assumed his regal duties, he made two expeditions to France; in 1230 and 1242 but to no avail. Impressively incredible, Henry III and Saint Louis IX (r.1226-1270) happened to marry sisters, the latter, together with the baronial faction, both lenient and penchant for peace, reached a settlement and made concessions. The two kings came to terms and concluded a peace treaty which was embodied in Magna Charta in 1259. Henry crossed over to France, swore homage for the leftover of the Angevin Empire, cited above, relinquished his claim to Normandy Anjou Main, Touraine and Poitou for a sum of money and was promised Poitou after the death of Louis.⁵⁶ Thus ending the first hundred years war (1154-1159) as some analysts would like to call, and the same time sowing the seed for an ensuing one. Henry relinquished his claim to much of his Angevin birthright as Green put it in his *"The hundred years War: A people's History,"*⁵⁷ Inquisitively, then, why did not the French rid themselves from the English presence forever?⁵⁸ The following quote by William the Breton court-historian will accurately vouch for that:

*"...although the high-souled King Philip, having in his army two thousand knights and more, besides a multitude of other troops, could easily have seized the whole land and the person of the king of England, yet with his wonted benignity he granted a truce."*⁵⁹

The reign of Henry III began in the midst of rebellion to defend Magna Charta, it was characterised by many upheavals and political crises, and nearly ended with the kingdom being ruled by royal opponents.⁶⁰ When Henry III came of age, he spared no effort to retrieve the continental dominions by resorting to force with no avail. Nonetheless, Henry III, later, crossed over to French court, swore homage for Gascony, Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou, but again became the liege vassal of the King of France for the fiefs he retained.⁶¹ This deed predisposed generations to come to serious problems. Edward, Henry's son made attempts to regain Normandy, but he succeeded only in jeopardizing Gascony.

The first Hundred Years' War (1152-1259) thus ended in an act of loyalty according to the standards of Feudalism. It, yet, laid the seeds for the second one, which was doomed to be more incessant and more disastrous.⁶² Would the Plantagenets be able to tip the balance for their favour? To what extent would they, at least, preserve their ancestral overseas fiefs and with what means?

EDWARD I REIGN (1272-1307)

Long before Edward I's assumption, the administration of Gascony did not appeal to him. During the year following his father's death, Edward, reluctantly, paid homage to Philippe III (1270-1285) for

⁵⁵ As soon as the time appointed in the summons was expired, Philip caused John to be condemned for non-appearance, and ordered all his dominions in France to be united to the crown. It is remarkable, that in the sentence there is not a word of the satisfaction due to the Bretons for the death of their sovereign, though they were parties in the affair, and Philip seemed to concern himself in it only upon their account This is a clear evidence, his aim was not so much to do them justice, as to make use of this occasion to dispossess the kings of England. M. Rapin De Thoyras, *The History of England*, Assignment from Mr. Knapton, The Fourth Edition, Vol. II., MDCCLVII. p., 429.

⁵⁶ *The Annals of England: an Epitome of English History*, op. cit., p., 157.

⁵⁷ David, Green, *The hundred years War: A people's History*, Yale university Press, New Haven and London, 2014. p., 4.

⁵⁸ Petit-Dutaillis Charles, op. cit., p., 229.

⁵⁹ Norgate Kate, *John Lackland*, op. cit., p., 205.

⁶⁰ Claire Valente, *The Theory and Practice of Revolt in Medieval England*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2003, p., 67.

⁶¹ Op. Cit., p., 229

⁶² Ibid. p., 230.

Gascony. In fact there were no troubles between the two parties. However, the coming of Philippe IV (1285-1314) and the appointment of the seneschal aggravated the continental crisis between two kings. First, Edward failed to observe his vassalic obligations by not allowing his Gascon subjects to participate in Philippe's wars against Aragon. And on the other hand the French seneschal reported trivial things which had "no grave diplomatic repercussions" to the *Parlement de Paris* which, in turn, summoned Edward to account for them. It is noteworthy to mention here the troubles given by the non-observance of homage swearing. The French kings, as overlords, kept their English vassals in check through the homage ceremony. This, however, required its performance at the ascendancy of every French or English king. This represented a continual irritant to English kings.⁶³

War flared up between the Cinque Ports (Hastings, New Romney, Hythe, Dover, Sandwich) mariners and the Normans; the former routed the latter at St. Mahe, in Brittany. Following three summons,⁶⁴ in effect, the issue involved Edward's feudal status in Gascony, Edward refused to show up; alleging that wars in Scotland and Wales kept him from, forcefully, follow the issue of Gascony. However, following another incident, in 1294, between the crews of English ships and a ship from Bayonne, the incident was deliberately eschewed; the two parties compromised and deferred the issue whereby Edward would be restored Gascony and in return he would marry Philip's sister Marguerite.

The second crisis was claimed to be about the mariners of the Cinque Ports, once again, the mariners seized a Spanish fleet, and ravaged the coast of France; accordingly, Gascony was confiscated and was raided.⁶⁵ Edwards subjects, vehemently, resisted but were overrun, and prince Edmund was killed. Edward, in an alliance with the Flemings⁶⁶ retaliated ferociously and recovered Gascony on his own terms. In 1302, Proposals were made for peace with France, but Philippe refused to treat unless the Scots were included, and also required the king in person to negotiate. The parliament was opposed to the terms judging the demand as an insult.⁶⁷ The pope's interposition, in this Anglo-French war of the 13th century, procured a truce between the two monarchs and ended in Edward's marriage to Marguerite Philip's sister. Historians, attribute the, then, setback to the blow the French sustained at Courtrai (1302).⁶⁸ Noteworthy, the attempt by Philippe to seize the duchy again led to Bordeaux rebellion in 1303, and thus to full recovery of Gascony. After three years, Edward yielded the custody of Gascony and the Agenais⁶⁹ to his son prince Edward II as it was granted to him and died in 1307.⁷⁰

THE REIGN OF EDWARD II (1307-1327)

⁶³ The short reigns of the sons of Philip the Fair - Louis X, Philip V, and Charles IV- called for three ceremonies in twelve years. Fraioli, Deborah A., *Joan of Arc and the Hundred Years War*, Greenwood Press, United States of America, 2005, p., xlv.

⁶⁴ *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History*, Op. Cit., p., 172

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p., 165

⁶⁶ Morris Marc, Op. cit., p., 230.

⁶⁷ *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History*, Op. Cit., p., 175

⁶⁸ Fraioli, Deborah A., op. cit., p., xlv.

⁶⁹ By the Treaty of Meaux in 1229, Raymond VII of Toulouse retained the Agenais. On his death in 1249, it was occupied by his son-in-law Alphonse of Poitiers, brother of Louis IX. The Agenais remained thereafter an object of contention between France and England, where Henry III asserted his claims as duke of Aquitaine. In 1259, the Treaty of Paris conceded the Agenais to England should Alphonse of Poitiers die without heirs. The county was not restored to Edward I of England until 1279. W. Kibler William, op. cit., p., 19.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p., 19.

The generations-old quarrel, of the Plantagenets with the kings of France over the family's French lands, came up to the surface. In an attempt to absorb blood relationship's tensions between the two parties, Pope Boniface VIII (1294 to 1303), in 1308 managed to fix up a marriage between Isabella, daughter of King Philip IV (1285–1314) of France and Edward. However, the common belief that there are no "permanent friends, no permanent enemies in politics" dictated itself as an imperative for society to function as its sole core of power-building. Two happenings sharply led to the deterioration of the French and English relations; the first was about the *parlement de Paris*'s appeals and the insistence of Philip IV (1285-1314) on Edward to pay homage "intimidation policy."⁷¹ The second incident was explained by the rapid turnover of Philip IV and his tacit policy in assisting Scotland to resist Edward. Interventions for reconciliation were of no effect, but the Edward's paying of homage in 1313, brought some relief to last for a decade.⁷² In an unprecedented way the homage became a necessity since Henry III set the "kneeling" before Louis IX. It was confirmed by the Treaty of Paris of 1259 as the most important aspect whereby the English King had to swear homage to the French king.

And for what he shall give us and our heirs, we and our heirs will do him and his heirs, kings of France, liege homage, for Bordeaux, Bayonne and for Gascony and for all the lands that we hold beyond the English Channel... and we will hold of him as a peer of France and as Duke of Aquitaine. (Treaty of Paris, 1259)⁷³

As mentioned above the question of homage became the reason given in justification of a course of any conflict because the king was supposed to be the only one to account for his subjects' deeds in the duchy. In addition to Charles IV the Fair's (1322–1328) despondency about Edward's rendering homage. The reluctant Edward impeded by the Dispensers,⁷⁴ sent two envoys; the earl of Pembroke died in France and Edmund of Kent failed to negotiate peace in his stead.⁷⁵

Similar issues kept on seething down the decades until, finally, things came to a head. By the end of the year 1323, under the reign of Charles IV. A new *bastide* at Saint-Sardos in the Agenais was being built by a French partisan.⁷⁶ In a retaliatory action, the pro-English Gascons demolished the bastide and put it to ashes. Charles IV, in reprisal, promptly sent an army to seize the English bastide at Montpezat. The Gasconers defeated the French army and kept their leader in captivity for ransom. Edward II hurriedly rushed to quieten the Gascons and even make repairs to Charles. The latter blatantly refused any compensation and declared the continental English possessions forfeited.⁷⁷ The English continental holdings were reduced to a coastal strip running from Bordeaux to Bayonne.⁷⁸ A truce was called in 1324 but warring lingered through.

⁷¹ Peroy Edouard, op. cit., p., 79.

⁷² W. Kibler William, op. cit., p.597.

⁷³ Curry Anne, op. cit., p., 12.

⁷⁴ Gaveston and the Dispensers; these men, nothing more than trusted ministers by Edward II, but that age odiously termed "favourites," were, probably, did not tolerate government by deputy. *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History*, op. cit., p., 181.

⁷⁵ Edward was impeded by the Dispensers who felt insecure both in England and France without him. King Edward sent Aymer the earl of Pembroke (c. 1275–1324) to negotiate with the king of France, however, the former died in France. In 1325, Edmund of Kent, (1301-1330) younger half-brother of Edward II, failed to negotiate peace. William Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, M DCCCIII, Vol. II, Fourth Edition. p., 374.

⁷⁶ This was clearly in contravention of the terms of both the Treaty and Convocation of Paris. Neillands, Robin, *The Hundred Years War*, Rev., Edi., the Taylor & Francis e-Library, London and New York, 2003, pp., 30-31.)

⁷⁷ Saint-Sardos (Lot-et-Garonne) in the Agenais was a priory of the abbey of Sarlat. William W. Kibler, op. cit., p., 597.

⁷⁸ Curry Anne, op. cit., p. 14.

In 1325, quarrels over trivial matters and territorial ambitions embittered the two crowns' relations. Charles IV, *per se*, marched down south to Toulouse, took Ponthieu and the Agenais, few places in Gascony and besieged La Réole.⁷⁹ Following the envoys' failure to procure peace, Queen Isabella, under pretext of intercession journeyed to France to her brother's court that drove them off.⁸⁰ Edward II, finally resorted to an intrigue which he thought might release him from his servitude to France; he bestowed the duchy of Aquitaine as an appanage to his son. At least as he thought the young Edward might find the role of French vassal less embarrassing.⁸¹ Edward II, eventually sent his son Prince Edward to pay homage for the conquered lands, and again, Charles refused to concede. Edward II took back the custody of the duchy in 1326. Isabella leagued with her counsellor Roger Mortimer⁸² to overthrow her husband; first she betrothed her son to Philippa, daughter of count of Hainault, who supplied her with a small force and engaged mercenaries to invade England.⁸³

The queen, and her adherents, landed at Suffolk imprisoned the king killed the Dispensers, and Prince Edward was declared "*custos regni*" in 1327.

Conclusion

William the Conqueror managed, in front of the scuffs with the French kings, the filial rebellious wars and lack of consensus with his half-brother Odo, the then, legate and representative of the church, to, ardently, defend his continental possessions. William I for, his power, relied too much on his compliance with the Church and relied, as well, on the system of military fiefs and their administration by the help of certain Anglo-Saxon and Norman institutions which he had amalgamated in his strong hand. After the long troubles in the Duchy which followed the death of the Conqueror, his son Henry I. had re-established unity and order and built the realm up with a strong administration. However, were it not for Matilda's husband, Geoffrey Plantagenet, who assumed, the defence of Normandy; the latter would have succumbed to civil war as was the, then, England during Stephen's reign. Geoffrey handed a pacified Normandy back to his son, Henry II who ran it with his mother awaiting King Stephen to step down in 1154.

Upon his crowning Henry II ruled an empire that stretched from Scotland to the Pyrenees. The great problem for the kings of France had been how to resist his advance. Despite the fact that the Angevins were French in origin, and despite their constant vigilance, they could not preserve their vast domains without resistance, at least, to the Capetians. Their immense holdings and their insatiable ambitions for acquiring more lands alluded to the cosmopolitan political ideas, and tastes of an emperor rather than that of a king and thus the justification for the expression "Angevin Empire" coined by modern historians.

Perhaps the maintenance of the Angevin empire under the reign of the Henry II and his son Richard was due to first the reinforcement of the law in the overseas domains. Again there was the sort of

⁷⁹ Ibid., p., 15.

⁸⁰ Edouard Perroy, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁸¹ Neillands, Robin, *The Hundred Years War*, *op. cit.*, pp., 30-31.

⁸² Roger Mortimer, lord of Wigmore, sentenced to death, later commuted to perpetual imprisonment, escaped to France, returned to England, and in concert with the queen governed the kingdom at his pleasure, being created earl of March, and enriched by vast grants, but was suddenly seized by order of the young king, hurriedly condemned, and hung at Tyburn, in 1330. Fraioli Deborah, *op. cit.*, p., 86.

⁸³ *The Annals of England an Epitome of English History*, *op. cit.*, p., 186.

agreement in terms of succession which played a major role in preventing subinfeudation, hence dismantling. Henry II had taken up his father's advice not to rule Anjou as Normandy and England. Henry could preserve his French territories but his territories could be of no help to him. He died saying "Shame, shame on a conquered king defeated at last." He was succeeded by his son Richard I.

Richard, like his father, built the Angevin Empire up on marriages, in his time, the Capetian monarchy existence, in itself, was threatened. The French king Philippe, on his part, used two means to achieve his goals; matrimony and power. He married Isabelle of Hainault, and received Artois, and when overran Flanders and Burgundy, they both submitted to his rule in 1186. Philippe then, turned to his bitter and powerful enemies the Plantagenets who without Richard's military genius, they proved no match to Philippe.

Genuinely, upon the coming of John Lackland, Philip was resolved to expulse the English from France. **Philippe Augustus recognised Arthur's claim in 1200 Treaty of Le Goulet. The latter besieged John mother Eleanor in Aquitaine prompting the coming of John for her relief and the imprisonment of his nephew. The disappearance of Arthur gave Philip pretence to seize all the English overseas lands. Historians attribute Philippe's chief cause of his success to the defection of the Constable of Normandy William du Hommet in 1204. John, who could not follow his case because of his conflicts with the barons,** missed the opportunity, and above all to his unruly barons.

A decade later, in the year 1214, John allied himself to, his nephew, the German emperor and the count of Flanders but their plans proved a fiasco. They were completely routed at the Bovines. Because of his clash with the pope upon the appointment of his legate, he was, accordingly, threatened of excommunication. Moreover, his dissension led the barons and the nobility to appeal to the French king to reign over England. Louis VIII, Philip's son invaded England but John surrendered and paid homage to the Pope who laid England under interdict. Under baronial threat, John complied and signed the Magna Carta in the ensuing year leaving the crown to his nine years old heir, Henry III, a protégé of the pope.

It's no wonder that the Angevin Empire would collapse and devolve into chaos. From the onset and since his birth John was nicknamed "John Lackland," it portended a bad outcome. It was his father, after all, who gave him this name which has clung to him ever since "Johans Sanz Terre." Now, will John abdicate or bear the ultimate responsibility of the downfall of the vast Angevin and Norman ancestors' continental dominions?

Historians, though inclined, categorically deny that, and ascribe part of the issue to certain other attributes not least of them, the heavy sum of money which had been disbursed on crusades and the ransom of late Richard. The refusal of the barons to support him, as well, much precipitated the fall of the Empire. To this, however, the resoluteness and of Philippe Augustus to undermine the Angevin empire was paramount. Incredibly boring, in the sight of the French, the coming of his son Louis IX (1226-1270) and his restitution of Aquitaine to his brother-in-law Henry III in the Treaty of Paris. Though the whole Duchy was restored in return for concession 'in perpetuity' of Normandy, Anjou, Maine and Poitou, the English regard the transaction as humiliating and void. Ostensibly, Louis, according to Robin Neillands, was of the opinion that having the English King as his vassal would enable them to control their powers and curtail their activities. However, and more significantly, the English did believe their holding to their ancestral overseas domain was an Allod (An inherited family land held absolutely rather than of a lord or monarch.)

Henry III (1216-1272), John successor, after the restitution of the overseas continent in 1259, was in return, compelled to swear homage, and devoted himself to the consolidation of the control over Gascony. Henry III probably regarded the repossession of Aquitaine as one of the highlights of his reign.

He then bestowed the duchy on his heir Edward I, who had already gained some territory in France by his marriage to Eleanor of Castile, the county of Ponthieu, north of the Somme. He, conspicuously, had no time or interest to spare for overseas dominions, and showed more complacency in pursuing his wars in Scotland and Wales leaving the administration of Aquitaine to his lieutenant.

Edward I, identically like Richard I., drained his treasury to subdue Scotland in vain. His nonchalant son Edward II turned out to be a total failure both as a king and as a husband. He contended himself to the same policy of his father which availed him nothing. By the end of his reign he broke into wars with France in 1324 because of his reluctance to swear homage after many summons. His wife who pretended to intercede at her brother's court precipitated his deposition after conspiring with her silent partner Roger Mortimer to oust him in 1327. Now would the sequestration of Aquitaine, in 1324, put an end to the Capetians and Plantagenets antique struggle or would it assume other dimensions? What was really sure was that by the deposition of Edward II., the English extensive cross-Channel fiefs were reduced to some left over in Aquitaine. The French dominion, on the contrary, expanded from the Ile de France to absorb the whole France apart from certain remnants in Aquitaine. It seemed unbelievable that those remnants would be dropped out. They would remain the bone of contention, between the Capetians and the Plantagenets, which, portended a calamitous outcome, yet to come.

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