

## Invasion, Conquest and Unity

### -- The Formation of the English Nation from the Perspective of War

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#### Abstract

**Before Roman times, Celts lived in the British Isles. Under the rule of the Romans, the English in England, the British replaced Celtic. With the fall of the Roman Empire, the Anglo Saxons, an important part of the British nation, entered England. The emphasis of this study lies in the Formation of the English Nation from the Perspective of war. The author's pioneer work has contributed to our present understanding of the the state of the English nation before the Norman conquest and the fuse of the Hundred Years' War and the end of the dispute.**

#### Keywords

**English Nation; Nationalism; Englishization.**

### 1. The State of the English Nation before the Norman Conquest

Beginning in 449 AD, the history of the Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain lasted at least 150 years. They first entered Britain as pirates, then as mercenaries, and finally as colonists. These Germanic mercenaries not only stationed in England, but also colonized this land, and successively attracted more of the same kind. This period is called the age of colonization. The invaders came mainly from three powerful tribes: the Anglo, the Saxons and the Jutes. Roughly speaking, the Anglo settled in the north of England, the Saxons in the south, and the Jutes lived in the Isle of Wight and Hamptonshire. The Anglo came from Angeln, and the countries they established mainly included East Anglia, Mercia and Northumbria. The Saxons came from the ancient Saxon region, and the kingdoms they established were mainly Sussex, Wessex and Essex. The Jutes who first arrived in Britain were mainly distributed in Kent, the Isle of Wight and West Saxon. They established the Kingdom of Kent. As a result, England entered the "Seven Countries Era", and these countries have also experienced the rise and fall of power.

Among the seven countries, Mercia first established hegemony in England under the leadership of Offa. After Offa's death, Mercia began to decline, Wessex began to rise under Egbert's rule, and basically realized the rule of Mercia. During his reign, Egbert waged two wars against Mercia. In September 825, Egbert launched the first war against Mercia, known as the Battle of Wroughton. In this battle, Egbert defeated the King of Mercia Beornwulf. In 826, after the death of King Beornwulf of Mercia, Egbert sent Wessex troops to attack Kent, drove away Mercia's

puppet King Balthere, and took control of Kent. According to the "Anglo-Saxon" chronicle, after Kent, Essex, Sussex, and Surrey were successively occupied by Wessex. After Ethelwulf succeeded to the throne, the eldest son Ethelstan was named the common king of Kent, Essex, Surrey and Sussex. In the face of Mercia, on the one hand, he constantly eroded Mercia's territory, and on the other hand, he demonstrated his power over King Mercia through marriage.

By the time of Alfred and Edward, the King of Wessex had become the fact King of Mercia. By 883 at the latest, Ealdorman Ethelred of Mercia has recognized the dominance of Alfred and his heir Edward in Mercia. By the time of Alfred, he abandoned the title of "King of the West Saxons" and adopted the title of "King of the Anglo-Saxons". And, this title continues to the third year after his grandson Ethelstan succeeded.

The unification of Wessex made the formation of the English country rudimentary, creating a central government headed by the king and a three-level local management system, forming a set of political and legal systems that began to take shape. However, royal power arose in the secular and church management, and was subject to many restrictions during the rise. At the same time, government institutions at all levels were still very imperfect, and various systems were extremely imperfect, so it was difficult to develop in the direction of totalitarianism. The true unity of England is related to the complete conquest of Northumbria, Mercia, and East Anglia by the Vikings. On the one hand, the intrusion of external forces broke the original borders of the tribal countries and formed an integrated Danish district, which has the significance of political unity; on the other hand, due to the Danish conquest and constant threats to the northeast of England, in turn it also made Kent, Sussex, and Essex in the southeastern part of the country support the leadership of the Wessex kingship because they were frightened by the weight of alien rule.

Although Wessex unified England, Wessex was in fact only the nominal supreme ruler of various tribal countries, and each country merely submitted to the suzerainty of the King of Wessex. With changes in internal and external situations, the kings of various tribal countries often opposed the authority of the King of Wessex. Therefore, this unity is only short-lived and unstable. This also allowed the Danes to see an opportunity to invade England.

As Scandinavia and Jutland were infertile and the conflict between people and land was serious, the Danes began to invade England from the 8th century. By the 930s, the Danes began to invade England on a large scale. In the 960s, there was the first peak of settlement. Beginning in the nineteen sixties, the Danes further penetrated into the interior and gradually settled in England. In the late 970s, due to the conclusion of the "Treaty of Wedmore", the Danes obtained a large-scale "legal" settlement opportunity, and the Danish Area was initially formed.

The establishment of the Danish area is undoubtedly a provocation to the Anglo-Saxons, so the successive kings at that time set out to recover the Danish Area.

Emperor Alfred carried out military reforms, formed a navy, and improved the defense system. After his death, his eldest son Edward used his fortress system to restrict the direction of the invading army by building castles and regained all the territory south of the Humber. During the reign of Athelstein, England annexed Northumberia, thus pushing the border of Wessex forward to Scotland. Athelstein also became the common king of the English and the Danes, but after his death, England immediately lost control of the Danish Area. It was not until the reign of Edmund that England regained control over the entire Danish Area. When Edgar took the throne, Wessex basically completed the recovery of the Danish Area. The Vikings who settled in England gradually merged with the Anglo-Saxons due to the acceptance of Christianity, and regarded Edgar as theirs. Ruler, Wessex also agrees with the laws, customs and customs of the Danish Area. Thus, a truly united Christian England dynasty was born. The dynasty is a

relatively mature "a more complex ethnic entity composed of Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria, and East Anglia."

The formation of the Danish Area further promoted the political unity of England. With the Danish conversion to Christianity, the relationship between the Danish people and the English people in the Danish Area has changed from the original opponent to a commoner in thought and emotion, which laid the foundation for the unification of the Danish and non-Danish areas.

## **2. The Reshaping of the English nation by the Norman Conquest**

The Norman conquest was another important event that influenced the formation of the English nation. Edward "the Confessor" promised to pass the throne to William a hundred years later, but later passed the throne to Harold, Earl of Wessex, which aroused strong dissatisfaction with William, so William initiated an attack against England with a strong force in late September 1066. When the war hit Huntington, Harold was seriously injured and died. On December 25 of the same year, William was crowned King of England at Westminster Abbey, known as "Norman the Conqueror" in history. Thus, the Anglo-Norman Kingdom across the strait was established. The establishment of the Norman dynasty by William was a milestone in British history. With the establishment of the national political structure, the feudal process of Britain was accelerated. Many historians regard this period as the beginning of British orthodox history. As a great conqueror, William carried out a series of political, economic, and cultural reforms in England. The influence involved the social process of the entire England, and the language and culture also showed significant differences from the previous ones.

After the Normans established their rule over Britain, they did not try to impose their own language on the British at first, nor did they bother to accept the lifestyle and culture of the defeated. Instead, they affected the cultural orientation of England in every subtle aspect of life. French culture was gradually recognized by the upper Saxons, who sent their sons to French monasteries to receive education and learn French. Therefore, for a long time after the conquest, French and English coexisted, because the British still regarded the Norman culture as a foreign culture. However, as time went by, the new social order was accepted and ethnic relations eased. French is no longer regarded as a foreign language, but as a symbol of identity or learning. The British upper class prides itself on being able to speak French, but not being able to speak French is a vulgar fashion. At the same time, the contacts between the Normans and all levels of British society increased with the changes in ethnic relations, and some even learned to speak English. However, English fell into a spoken language at the beginning of the Norman Conquest, and has been in a subordinate position for a century and a half thereafter. After 1085, it seems difficult to see the writs issued in English. It was not until 1295, when Henry III was reigning, that English gradually gained a place in upper politics.

## **3. Transformation From Franco-Norman to Anglo-Norman and the Loss of Normandy in King John's reign**

### **3.1. Transformation from Franco-Norman to Anglo-Norman**

After the Norman Conquest, former Anglo-Saxon aristocrats were replaced by Normans. Even though the conqueror William called himself King of England instead of Norman King, Normans view the land of England simply as their colony. Much French Normans crossed the channel to England, joining the local English population. For instance, twenty years after the Conquest, Norman magnates and their tenants crowded into Leicestershire and Warwickshire. (England and Normandy in the Middle Ages, edited by David Bates and Anne Curry, Published by The Hambleton Press 1994 102 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 8HX (U.K.) P.O. Box 162, Rio Grande, Ohio 45674 (U.S.A.), Chapter 4, David Crouch, Normans and Anglo-Normans: A Divided

Aristocracy, pp. 55) When the earldom of Warwick was created by King William, Earl Henry was himself a cross-Channel magnate. The castle of Le Neubourg was in his possession. (For the creation of the earldom of Warwick, D. Crouch, *The Earliest Earls of Warwick*, forthcoming) During Henry I's reign, tiny friction broke out in Warwickshire when the king sent his courtier Geoffrey de Clinton who imported Franco-Normans to Warwickshire to the Earl's territory. But the conflict remained at a small scale. Meanwhile, the attitude of repelling Franco-Normans reflects no national identity, since those conflict demonstrated simply tension between the English king and regional magnates such as earls. (For a reconstruction of the Clinton-Warwick confrontation, D. Crouch, 'Geoffrey de Clinton and Roger, Earl of Warwick: New Men and Magnates in the Reign of Henry I', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 55 (1982), pp. 113-24) After 1135, Norman colonization in England was slackened. New Franco-Norman comers in Leicestershire and Warwickshire were rare compared to Stephen's reign. Only one new Norman family, the Sainneville, establishing themselves in Leicestershire. (Sainneville (Seine-Maritime, cant. Saint-Remain de Colbosc) was held by one William in 1195, *Magni Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniae sub Regibus Angliae*, ed. T. Stapleton, 2 vols (London, 1840-44), i, p. 58. It is probable that this William was the William de Sainneville who became a household knight of Earl Robert III of Leicester and who was granted the earl's manor of Lockington (Leics.) by Earl Robert IV between 1199 and 1204, PRO, E13/76, m. 72d. William de Sainneville abandoned his ancestral Norman fee in 1204; see also J. Le Maho, 'L'apparition des seigneuries chatelaines dans le Grand-Caux a l'epoque ducale', *Archeologie Medievale*, 6 (1976), p. 41) By the time Norman colonization in England slackened, Norman magnates who possessed estates on both sides of the English Channel gradually lost their Norman estates. One direct cause is the conflict between the English king and the French king. In France's affair, the English king is France's vassal since Normandy is a fief from the French King. When conflict broke out between England and France, Normandy (and other France estates hold by the English king) magnates must decide to swear allegiance to either English or French king. Under Henry I's reign, in King Henry's power struggle with his nephew William who had support from the French king, most Norman magnates who own cross-channel estates chose King Henry, while William's supporters were mainly 'pure' Norman magnates. One Norman magnate, Richer de L'Aigle, can serve as an example. Richer's father secured estates on both England and Normandy-Pevensey in England and L'Aiglein on the Norman border. As Richer chooses to ally with the French king Louis VI against Henry, Henry threatened Richer to take up the claims of Richer's younger brother to Pevensey. Fearing the loss of Pevensey, Richer gives up his alliance with Rebellion leader Clito and French King in an attempt to secure his England estate. (Orderic, vi, pp. 196-98) Those families of Norman magnates gradually lost their estate in Normandy. In the twelfth century, seven great magnate family held estates on both sides of the Channel: Clinton, Burdet, du Bois, Montfort of Beaudesert, Tourville, Butler of Oversley, and Curli of Budbrooke. Butlers and Clintons lost their connection with Normandy long before 1204, while the other five families, the Montforts, Burdets, Tourvilles, and Curlis gave up their Normandy interest at the end of the twelfth century at last. (For the Clinton castle of Semilly (Manche, cant. Saint-Clair-sur-Elle), see Bod Lib, MS Dugdale 13, p. 149, and Crouch, 'Geoffrey de Clinton', p. 119n. For the Burdets, see above, n. 10. For the du Bois, above, n. 19. For the lands of Montfort of Beaudesert at Pithienville (Eure, cant. Evreux Nord et Sud, comm. Bernienville), Gauville and Claville (Eure, cant. Evreux Nord et Sud), Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Middleton, Historical Manuscripts Commission (1911) pp. 35-36; they were granted by Henry de Montfort, lord of Beaudesert to his younger brother Hugh in the later twelfth century. For the Tourville lands in Normandy, Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, pp. 116-17, 119n. The Butler family had rents at Beaumont-le-Roger (Eure, cant. Beaumont) in the early twelfth century, cartulary of Beaumont priory, Bibliotheque Mazarine, MS 3417, fo. 2r. The Curli family of Budbrooke, Warwicks, held unknown lands in Normandy until the late twelfth century, *Book of Fees*, ii, p. 1280.) Unloading their Normandy

estates, those Norman magnates were transformed from Norman-Franco magnates to Norman-Anglo magnates. The national identity for English people continued to grow. Under King Stephen's reign, English communities were furious about roaming foreign mercenaries. The resentment for foreign mercenaries was removed when Henry II ousted them from England. This move was Henry II's most popular action after attaining power. (Gervase of Canterbury, *Opera Historica*, Rolls Series, 2 vols (1879-80) i, p. 161) Until King John lost Normandy, English Anglo-Norman magnates had lost most of their connection to their former continental estates in Normandy.

On the civilian level, national identity emerged in England in the post-Norman Conquest period as well. The Angevins king, Richard I, is one specific example of those English kings who have ignored England affairs since he spent only 6 months in England in his ten-year-long reign. However, particular events that took place in his reign reflected signs of English identity among Anglo-Norman civilians. Spending most of his time in crusading, Richard put William Longchamp in charge of London and England affairs. This proved to be a terrible move because Longchamp was later removed from power. (England and Its Rulers 1066-1307, M. T. Clanchy, fourth edition, published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK, Part II The Angevins (1135-99), 6 Struggles for the Kingdom (1135-99), Richard I, pp. 123) With John and other magnates' leading, London citizens held two meetings. Londoners formed themselves into communes, they met in the chapter house of St Paul's cathedral and in the open air near the Tower. According to Richard of Devizes, ten thousand people attended these meetings. The citizens were furious about Longchamp largely because he is a foreigner. Backed by magnates, Londoners' action even gained support from the bishop of Coventry. In his propaganda letter against Longchamp, the bishop wrote that ALL England had to bend its knee to his French pride. Londoners' action against Longchamp for his foreign identity marked their awareness of their English identity.

### 3.2. The Loss of Normandy in King John's Reign

Controlling Poitiers and Aquitaine, the English king had always been trying to connect these two estates. Lying between the two crucial estates, Angoulême was the strategic key position in which both the English and French king imposed great efforts to secure this key point. Upon his death, King Richard tried to gain control over this territory but failed as a result. On August 24th, 1200, John married Isabella of Angoulême, daughter of Aymer Taillefer, Count of Angoulême Aymer of Angoulême. Though the marriage could make John the controller of Angoulême (and fulfilled his desire for Isabella's beauty), a larger crisis would break out afterward. Hugh de Lusignan, the count of Lusignan, made an engagement with Isabella in 1200. John's marriage with Isabella broke Hugh's dream to expand his estates in Angoulême.

Opposed by Hugh and his brother Raoul, John confiscates several fiefdoms of Raoul and Hugh's fiefdoms as the direct overlord of the two brothers. At this point, a diplomatic crisis is inevitably triggered. In the autumn of 1201, Hugh and his younger brother Raoul sued John to Philip. At that time, the king of France had been trying to establish a strong lordship, and the English King's huge fiefs in France had always been the biggest obstacle in the process of centralization of French center power. Since Henry II, the French king has been trying to recover the English fiefs under various pretexts. The two brothers' prosecution provided an excuse for the king of France to interfere with the English fiefs in France. The king of France summoned John as his overlord and ordered him to go to Paris in April 1202 to answer the charges of the brothers. However, the king's order was rejected by John. John stated that, as the Duke of Normandy, his obligation is limited to meeting his lord on the eastern border of the territory. On April 28, 1202, Philip seized all the French fiefdoms of John on the ground of disobedience. Arthur, John's nephew, was allocated Aquitaine, Maine, and Anjou while Philip took control over Normandy himself.

The war broke out between King Philip and King John. A few months later, when Elena of Aquitaine entered Chateau Mirebeau, John was stationed in Le Mans, Maine's capital, 80 miles north of the site. Elena plans to go north to join John in the next two weeks. But before she left, her grandson Arthur came to the city trying to arrest her grandmother or force her to surrender by starving her. After hearing the news, John immediately led the army to raid Chateau Mirebeau. On August 1st, John defeated Arthur's army and captured a large number of French nobles. John wrote, 'We have captured our nephew Arthur, Geoffrey de Lusignan, Hugh le Brun, Andrew de Chauvigni, the viscount de Châtellerault... and all our other Poitevin enemies who were there, about 200 knights or more, so that not one of them escaped,' He asked his men to give thanks to God and rejoice in their successes. (Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon (RS 66), p. 138. W.L. Warren, King John (Penguin edition, 1966), p. 95) John's success in Poitevin brought him success in the initial stage of warfare, but his strategic mistakes eliminated his advantage. In the spring of 1203, John escorted Arthur from fares to Rouen. On April 3, Arthur suddenly disappeared in extremely mysterious circumstances. He was apparently killed, but the manner and location are still unknown. Arthur's death made the Britanni who stayed neutral before this to turn to the king of France. This event further highlighted the integrity and justice of king Phillip. Because of Arthur's death, William de Briouze, the great English aristocrat who had been supporting John before, decided to give up his support for John, which was also a heavy blow to John.

Gaining victory in Poitevin, John deployed few troops in Normandy, causing Normandy to make a few resistances to French occupation. In the early summer of 1203, Philip began to attack Normandy. In June, Château Vaudreuil, which guards the western border of Rouen, surrendered to Philip. In August 1203, Philip began to besiege Château Gaillard. This was the most powerful fortress in Western Europe at that time. As long as the English maintained control of Château Gaillard, they could continue to control Normandy. However, after the rescue of Château Gaillard failed, John did not provide any assistance to Château Gaillard and returned to England on December 5. On March 6, 1204, Château Gaillard surrendered. The fall of the castle meant that the English people's days in northern France were numbered. On June 24, 1204, the English garrison in Rouen had to surrender to Philip the French king. Soon, with the fall of Arques and Verneuil, all Normandy fell into Philip's hands.

On April 1, 1204, John's mother Eleanor of Aquitaine died. As she is highly respected, Eleanor's death naturally had a negative impact on John. After Eleanor's death, many lords and towns of Poitiers turned to Philip one after another. In 1204, Philip led his army into Poitier, marking the fall of all the territory of Poitier. At the same time, Alfonso VIII of Castile, King of Castile, claimed that before Henry II's death, he had promised Eleanor, the second daughter of England, to take Gascony as her dowry after her mother's death. Therefore, after the death of Aquitaine Eleanor, Alfonso VIII immediately claimed sovereignty over Gascony as Eleanor's husband in England and sent troops to occupy Gascony.

On October 13, 1206, John signed a two-year truce agreement with the French king. Except for Angoulême, Aunis, and Saintonge which the French king was not interested in, John lost all his fiefs in France.

#### **4. The Englishization of the Norman Aristocracy**

The fall of the French fiefdom, the Battle of Bouven, and the failure of the Anti-French alliance aggravated the political crisis of King John's rule and became one of the fuses of the aristocratic rebellion in King John's last years, and the "magna charter" was born during the aristocratic rebellion. Many clauses can be used as evidence for the Englishization of the Norman aristocracy.

After the loss of Normandy, King John experienced exchanges and reconciliation with the Pope, and had fierce disputes with the nobles (In the early summer of 1203, Philip began to attack Normandy. In June, the castle of Vaudreuil, guarding the western border of Rouen, surrendered to Philippe. In August 1203, Philip began to besiege Château Gaillard. On March 6, 1204, Gaial Castle surrendered. On June 24, 1204, the British defenders in Rouen had to surrender to King Philip. Soon, with the fall of Arques and Verneuil, all of Normandy fell into the hands of Philip). When John went to war with France, he ordered an unprecedented exemption of military service tax of 3 marks from every knight without consent or prior notice, and finally broke through the bottom line of patience of the nobles (Round, John Horace (1911). "Scutage". In Chisholm, Hugh (ed.). Encyclopædia Britannica. 24 (11th ed.). Cambridge University Press. pp. 517–518). When John retreated from France on October 15, 1214, he was forced to negotiate with the rebels at Bury St. Edmunds (November 4). Reconciliation is no longer possible, John urges taxes, but the nobles flatly refuse. After John left, the nobles quietly convened a more private meeting in the name of going to the monastery for religious service, during which people swore to rebel against John. Roger of Wendover has a vivid account of this: the powerful gathered together "it seems to be praying, but in fact there are other plans, because after a secret conversation, someone in the crowd took out The Charter of King Henry I, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Longton, handed over to the nobles in London" (William Sharp McKechnie. A historical guide to the Magna Carta[M]. Beijing: China University of Political Science and Law. Press. 2016:20). People solemnly swear to withdraw allegiance to the king and declare war on the king. The king also realized that it was imminent to resort to fighting. On the one hand, he recruited mercenaries, and on the other hand, he tried to obtain the support of the church by promising free elections for vacant bishops, but he failed in the end.

On January 6, 1215, a delegation from the rebels met with the king and asked the king to confirm the laws of the Edwardian period and the freedoms set forth in the Henry Charter. The archbishop and Marshall as mediators proposed a truce until Easter. In April, the northern nobles marched south and made formal demands to the king. But John was furious when he read these requests: "These nobles who offered unreasonable extortion, why don't you just ask me to give up the kingdom?" (William Sharp McKechnie. A historical guide to the Magna Carta[M]. Beijing: China University of Political Science and Law. Press. 2016:20) On May 5, the nobles held a renunciation ceremony and officially announced their renunciation of allegiance to the king, Elected Robert Fitz-Walter as its commander, known as "the commander of the teacher of God and the Holy Church." On May 9, John issued a new charter to London residents in exchange for their support, but failed again. The next day, perhaps out of consideration of delay, he asked the nobles for arbitration, but the arbitration request was rejected contemptuously. On May 12, John strongly demanded that the sheriffs take violent measures against the rebels without waiting for the "peer trial." The nobles rejected all the proposals and continued to march towards London. On May 17, the gate of the City of London opened. At this moment, John realized that he was powerless and had to agree to the talks (William Sharp McKechnie. A historical guide to the Magna Carta[M]. Beijing: China University of Political Science and Law. Press. 2016:20).

Beginning on June 15, 1215, the king and the nobles had a five-day meeting on a lawn called Lenny Mead between Steines and Windsor (William Sharp McKechnie. A historical guide to the Magna Carta[M]. Beijing: China University of Political Science and Law. Press. 2016:20). On the same day, the nobles provided an "Articles of the Barons", and John was asked to stamp it for confirmation. By the 19th, an agreement had been reached on the final text, and many copies had been transcribed with seals. At the same time, in accordance with Chapter 61, nominated by the rebels and acquiesced by the king, 25 nobles were elected as "executors", solemnly sealed with seals, and submitted several final originals of the charter. All parties swore to accept the provisions. It was also on this day that the nobles restored their pledge of allegiance and

submission to King John. At this point, the two sides have completed negotiations and signed the Magna Carta.

Many clauses in the Magna Carta reflect the Englishization of the Norman aristocracy. For example, Chapters 6, 7, and 8 of the Magna Carta are actually intended to restrict the lord's abuse of the right to designate vassal's marriage, referring directly to John's marrying vassal's heiresses, including widows, to foreign favorites with lower social status (Translated by Chen Guohua. Magna Carta[M]. Beijing: The Commercial Press. 2016:31-32).

"Heirs may be given in marriage, but not to someone of lower social standing. Before a marriage takes place, it shall be made known to the heir's next-of-kin"; "At her husband's death, widow may have her marriage portion and inheritance at once and without trouble. She shall pay nothing for her dower, marriage portion, or any inheritance that she and her husband held jointly on the day of his death. She may remain in her husband's house for forty days after his death, and within this period her dower shall be assigned to her"; "No widow shall be compelled to marry, so long as she wishes to remain without a husband. But she must give security that she will not marry without royal consent, if she holds her lands of the Crown. or without the consent of whatever other lord she may hold them of".

Chapter 6 should be based on the fact that the lord appoints heirs to marry people of lower status. The seventh and eighth chapters correspond to the social reality of the lord's forced remarriage of widows. The right of marriage designation is a kind of feudal subsidiary right, derived from the unfixed income obtained by the lord regardless of the interests of vassals. This right has gradually expanded from its original meaning to an absolute right to dispose of the land and person of the woman: this reward may be a bribe to some brazen prosperous, so that they can exert their strength for the king; or they may be rationed to those bidders with the highest bids. These people are often born in foreign countries.

For example, Peter Maori was a Frenchman from humble background, and he was favored by John. In 1214, Maori paid 7000 marks to John, thus marrying Isabel and acquiring the land she inherited. Isabel is the only heir to Robert of Sanham (Vincent "Maulay, Peter (I) de" Oxford Dictionary of National Biography). Through this marriage, Maori became the nobleman of Yorkshire (Sanders English Baronies pp. 66-67). In order to prevent such acts that harm the interests of the nation from happening, the nobles made explicit restrictions on this in the Magna Carta: heirs must get married without detracting from their status; after the death of the husband, the widow should immediately obtain her dowry and inheritance. They must not be forced to remarry.

In addition, Chapter 50 and Chapter 51 of the Magna Carta directly point out the aristocracy's dissatisfaction and resistance to John's massive use of foreign mercenaries (Translated by Chen Guohua. Magna Carta[M]. Beijing: The Commercial Press. 2016:49-50). "We will remove completely from their offices the kinsmen of Gerard de Athee, and in future they shall hold no offices in England. The people in question are Engelard de Cigogne, Peter, Guy, and Andrew de Chanceaux, Guy de Cigogne, Geoffrey de Martigny and his brothers, Philip Marc and his brothers, with Geoffrey his nephew, and all their followers." "As soon as peace is restored, we will remove from the kingdom all the foreign knights, bowmen their attendants, and the mercenaries that have come to it, to its harm, with horses and arms."

Due to flaws in the legitimacy of the succession to the throne, Henry I began to reuse some grass-roots but capable people instead of relying solely on the traditional Norman nobility. This practice was continued later, especially by John. Because of the extensive use of mercenaries, some mercenary leaders have been favored by John. In order to grease these people's palm, he often marry those widows of noble origin to these reckless men by exercising the right of marriage designation. These upstarts have also become John's Diehard followers, as John's few supporters during the signing of the Magna Carta. They were entrusted with heavy



responsibility and power by John, and in the process of exercising their power, they were domineering and reckless, earning a lot of illegal gains for themselves, which aroused widespread dissatisfaction among the people. Among them, Gerard de Athis was an officer hired by King John in Normandy. At first he served for John in France. Later he was ordered to conquer southern Wales and served as the Sheriff of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire (High Sheriff, 1208-1210). Magna Carta and two Sheriffs of Gloucestershire ~ By Russell Howes(1209), became a powerful man. His rapid promotion caused dissatisfaction among the English barons (Magna Carta and two Sheriffs of Gloucestershire ~ By Russell Howes). Therefore, the nobles formulated relevant clauses in the Magna Carta to combat these foreign favored subjects under John's tyranny, and the Magna Carta was also regarded as the end of these abuses of power and anomie.

The Magna Carta marks a new stage in the development of national unity or nationality. Its moral influence has also promoted the development of national spirit and therefore the development of national freedom. From some articles of the Magna Carta, it is sufficient to show that the aristocracy opposed the unanimous stand of King John's foreign favorites and determined to safeguard national interests. The Norman aristocracy became English.

## 5. The fuse of the Hundred Years' War and the end of the dispute

### 5.1. The Fuse of the Hundred Years' War

On 31 March 1327, a humiliating treaty was sealed with France: not only was Charles IV allowed to remain in control of extensive sections of the duchy of Aquitaine occupied by his forces since 1324, but the English were also required to pay reparations of 50,000 marks for the damages inflicted in those territories during the intervening period. Then, on 31 January 1328, Charles IV of France died without a direct male heir; when his pregnant wife gave birth to a daughter, Charles's cousin Philippe de Valois immediately had himself proclaimed king as Philippe VI. It was important that Edward III's own claim to the French throne should not be allowed to fall into abeyance, and in May the bishops of Worcester and of Coventry and Lichfield were dispatched to register the claim in Paris. Philippe, who was duly crowned at Rheims on 29 May, lost no time in demanding that Edward render homage for his lands in France, backing this up with military threats when the English prevaricated.

On 24 May 1337 Philippe VI formally confiscated the duchy of Aquitaine and the county of Ponthieu on the grounds that Edward III was harbouring Philippe's cousin, brother-in-law, and mortal enemy, Robert, count of Artois. In fact, larger issues had already made war more or less inevitable: the talks over contested lands and rights in the Agenais. (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.p.237)

"Like any war leader, Edward III's public declarations and publications are more to hide the true motives of the war." (The Wars of Edward III: Sources and Interpretations Clifford J. Rogers - 1999.p.237) It is also one of the real goals, of course, to improve overseas interests for the country's subjects. This is why it can be supported by the civilian class. It can be seen that in this historical period, the British nation began to build a country under the leadership of the king to expand the space for national living and deal with foreign competition.

During 1349-1357, although the war with France continued in Brittany and Aquitaine, Edward himself undertook no further campaigns in France until 1355. During the ensuing years the king was more actively occupied in diplomacy. In 1351 an alliance was effected with Charles II (Charles the Bad) of Navarre, who himself had a claim to the throne of France and was an important political figure in Normandy; in 1353 Edward also came to terms with his captive Charles de Blois and seemed about to renounce his support for the Montfort party in Brittany. Charles of Navarre subsequently defected from Edward's cause and was reconciled with Jean II. This serious setback for the English may explain why Edward III was prepared to consider

Jean's proposals for a final settlement to their own dispute in the draft treaty of Guînes of 1354, by which the king of England would have obtained Aquitaine, the Loire provinces, Ponthieu, and Calais, all in full sovereignty, on condition that he renounce his claim to the French throne for ever. ((Ormrod, W. (2006, May 25). Edward III (1312–1377), king of England and lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitaine. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.))

## 5.2. Ended the Complicated Relationship Between Britain and France

The treaty of Brétigny was signed four years after John was taken as a prisoner of war at the Battle of Poitiers (19 September 1356). By virtue of this treaty, Edward III obtained, besides Guyenne and Gascony, Poitou, Saintonge and Aunis, Agenais, Périgord, Limousin, Quercy, Bigorre, the countship of Gauré, Angoumois, Rouergue, Montreuil-sur-Mer, Ponthieu, Calais, Sangatte, Ham and the countship of Guînes. The king of England was to hold these free and clear, without doing homage for them. Furthermore, the treaty established that title to 'all the islands that the King of England now holds' would no longer be under the suzerainty of the King of France. The title Duke of Aquitaine was abandoned in favor of Lord of Aquitaine.

On his side, the King of England gave up the duchy of Touraine, the countships of Anjou and Maine, the suzerainty of Brittany and of Flanders. He also renounced all claims to the French throne. The terms of Brétigny were meant to untangle the feudal responsibilities that had caused so much conflict and promote the awakening of national consciousness. Before this, due to the influence of feudalism and frequent royal marriages between Britain and France, it was only a traditional "political community" in the Middle Ages, rather than a country in the strict sense. There was only roughly divided possession between the two sides. Geography, without strict national concepts and boundaries, the ruling class and the general public have not yet formed a clear political identity with the nation and the country. (Ormrod, W. (2008, January 03). Edward III (1312–1377), king of England and lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitaine. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography)

In 1420, the treaty of Troyes was formally ratified; by its terms Henry was recognised as heir to the French kingdom on the death of Charles VI and as regent during the king's life; he was to govern with the aid of a council of natives and to preserve all ancient customs; he undertook to recover for Charles all the territory then held by the dauphin; Normandy was to be his in full sovereignty, but on his accession to the French throne was to be rejoined to France; during the life of Charles his title was to be 'Henricus rex Angliæ et hæres Franciæ.'. (The Dictionary of National Biography, p.52)

The war promoted the development of national feelings. In the war between Wales and Scotland, especially the war in France, the king of England began to rely on the taxation of all liberals, not just the army of their feudal vassal.

"Common service in warfare made men aware that they were part of some thing larger than their local community, and stimulated emotional attachment to the king and the country" (The Making of English National Identity, Krishan Kumar, Jeffrey C. Alexander, Steven Seidman, p.54)

## 5.3. The End of the Dispute

The treaty ended the political structure of the British king's "ruling across the sea" since the Norman Conquest, and also ended the British king's vassal status and the covering of the French throne, and instead focused on operating England and even Britain.

At the same time, this also enabled the British feudal aristocracy and the general public to gradually cultivate a strong local consciousness and national concept, and increasingly demonstrated their own uniqueness in language and culture. Although in the Hundred Years' War, Britain lost a large number of mainland territories, it "made the English aware of their identity, unity, and common tradition and history" (The Oxford History of Britain, 1993,

Kenneth o. Morgan) and contributed to the formation of the British national consciousness, from the perspective of the formation of a nation-state.

The rupture between state and people was healed. Some signs can be traced back to the thirteenth century, and some are more fully manifested in the fifteenth century. But there is an impressive body of opinion that finds in these late medieval centuries clear evidence for the formation of something like an English national identity. Geoffrey Elton speaks for them all when he says that "in these years an English nation, across all its ranks, became a reality." (The Making of English National Identity, p.53)

## 6. Conclusions

Even before the age of Roman, isles of Britain was populated by Celts. Under the Romans' rein, Romans in England, Britons, replaced Celts. With the downfall of Roman Empire, the crucial part of English nation, Anglo-Saxons, entered England. As pirates and mercenaries, they gradually colonized land of England. The history of feudalism initiated in England as Anglos, Saxons and Jutes established their kingdoms of Mercia, Northumbria, Sussex and so on, launching the "Seven Countries Era". Mercia initially managed to establish its supremacy over other kingdoms, while Wessex followed. Alfred, as he secured Mercia's dominance, officially announced himself as "King of the Anglo-Saxons". Wessex was only nominal supreme ruler after the unification. Its loose power made it a chance for Danes to invade. From 8th century, Danes infiltrated England, and after the Treaty of Wedmore in 970s, Danish Area was legally created in England. In an attempt to recover lands, Emperor Alfred implemented military reforms. In Edmund's rein, England regained Danish Area. With the acceptance of Christianity, Viking in Danish Area merged with Anglo-Saxons. In 11th century, Due to King Edward's changing of successor, William, the original successor waged war against England. Defeating Harold in battle of Huntington, William finished the Norman Conquer and crowned as king of England. The Norman Conquest brought French language into England. Initially, Normans view England as their colony, English people view French as an alien language as well. As Normans moved into England, French gradually became the language for upper class. England, which has newly been in Normans' possession, has not formed a sense of English nation. Part of earldom repelled new king, but those conflicts reflected nothing but friction between king and magnates. Norman magnates, now acquiring English lands, became cross-channel magnates, holding either English and France lands. As time went by, however, those cross-channel magnates lost their Normandy fiefs. In conflicts between English and France kings, cross-channel magnates must choose one to ally with. As their family divided, their lands restricted to single shore of the channel. English nation started to emerge among civilians, as Londoners managed to overthrow Longchamp, who was in charge when king Richard was on his crusade, for Longchamp was a foreigner. In king John's rule, he married Isabella to take Angoulême. This angered Hugh de Lusignan, forcing him to fight against John. To centralize power, French king Philip grabbed chance to opposed John, seizing French lands under English king's control. As war situation favored John, he executed Arthur upon capturing him. This made his former ally turned against him. In 1206, John surrendered, losing all fiefs in France. The war consumed John's financial stockpile, making English nobles unsatisfied. John has to deal with rebels at St. Edmunds while retreating from France. Rebels asked the king to confirm the laws of the Edwardian period and the freedoms set forth in the Henry Charter, but was refused by John. John tried violent suppression, but failed. Finally, John agreed to talk and sign the Magna Carta. This reflected Anglicization of the Norman aristocracy, as king's abuse of the right to designate vassal's marriage, referring directly to John's marrying vassal's heiresses, including widows, to foreign favorites with lower social status is restricted. Furthermore, usage of foreign mercenaries is also banned. The Magna Carta, besides making a balance between king and aristocrats, reflected growing English

nationality after the loss of French territories. In 1327, Charles IV kept duchy of Aquitaine under France control while humiliated English in the treaty that imposed 50,000 marks of penalty. When he died one year later, Philippe VI took the place of France king, demanding English king, Edward III's obedience while he still kept claim for French throne. Confiscating duchy of Aquitaine and Ponthieu in 1337, conflicts on a larger scale seemed inevitable. Edward III launch war for English rights in France. War continued in Brittany and Aquitaine, and Charles II of Navarre was allied with Edward. In treaty of Guînes of 1354, the king of England would have obtained Aquitaine, the Loire provinces, Ponthieu, and Calais, all in full sovereignty, on condition that he renounce his claim to the French throne forever. The treaty of Brétigny was signed four years after John was taken as a prisoner of war at the Battle of Poitiers (19 September 1356). By virtue of this treaty, Edward III obtained, besides Guyenne and Gascony, Poitou, Saintonge and Aunis, Agenais, Périgord, Limousopn, Quercy, Bigorre, the countship of Gauré, Angoumois, Rouergue, Montreuil-sur-Mer, Ponthieu, Calais, Sangatte, Ham and the countship of Guînes. Meanwhile, King of England gave up the duchy of Touraine, the countships of Anjou and Maine, the suzerainty of Brittany and of Flanders. He also renounced all claims to the French throne. The treaty untangled the feudal responsibilities, replacing it with the waking of nationalism.

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