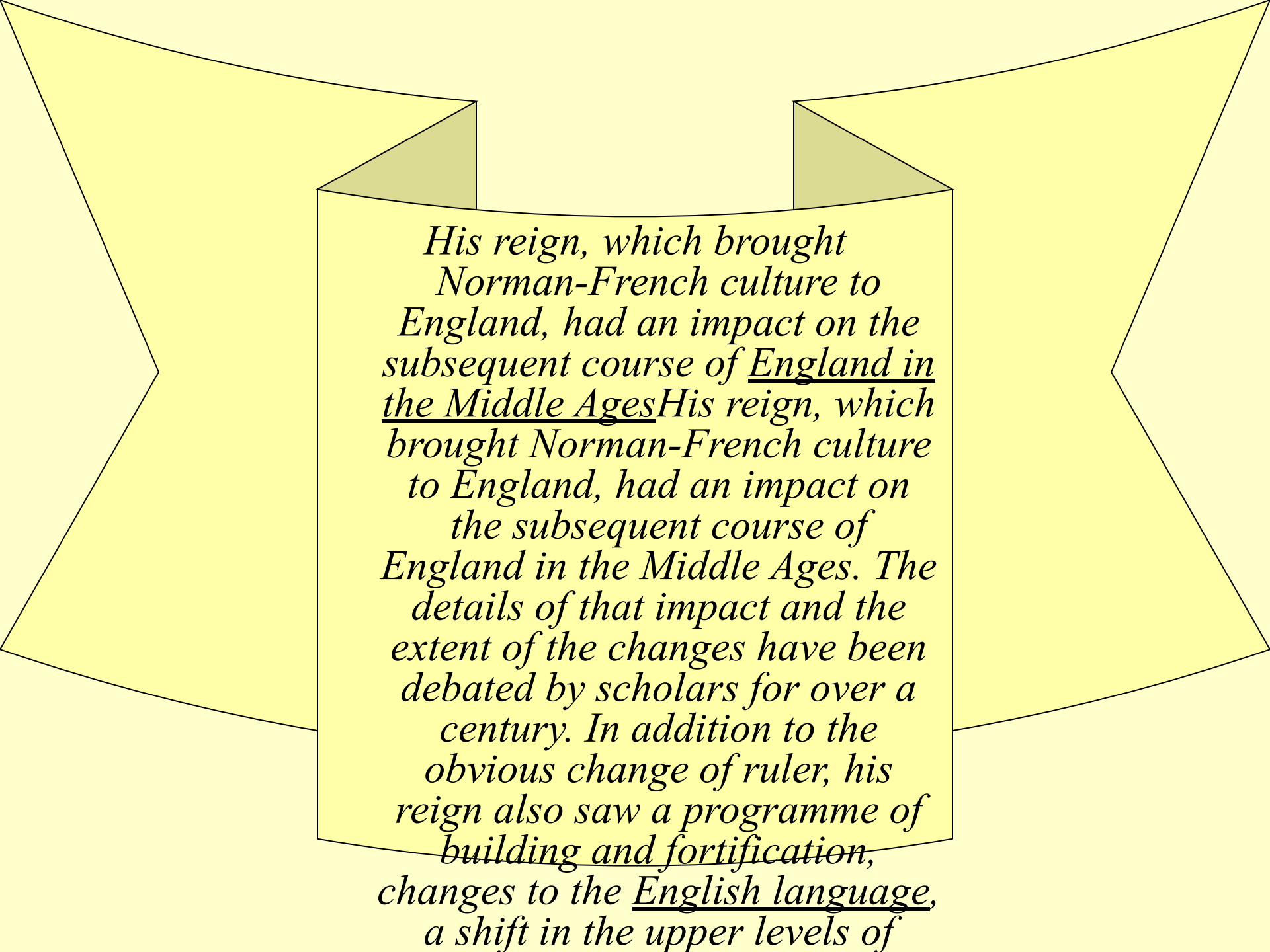


# *William I of England*

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*His reign, which brought Norman-French culture to England, had an impact on the subsequent course of England in the Middle Ages. His reign, which brought Norman-French culture to England, had an impact on the subsequent course of England in the Middle Ages. The details of that impact and the extent of the changes have been debated by scholars for over a century. In addition to the obvious change of ruler, his reign also saw a programme of building and fortification, changes to the English language, a shift in the upper levels of*



- The Battle of Hastings lasted all day. Although the numbers on each side were about equal, William had both cavalry and infantry, including many archers, while Harold had only foot soldiers and few if any archers. Along the ridge's border, formed as a wall of shields, the English soldiers at first stood so effectively that William's army was thrown back with heavy casualties. William rallied his troops reportedly raising his helmet, as shown in the Bayeux Tapestry, to quell rumors of his death. Meanwhile, many of the English had pursued the fleeing Normans on foot, allowing the Norman cavalry to attack them repeatedly from the rear as his infantry pretended to retreat further. Norman arrows also took their toll, progressively weakening the English wall of shields. At dusk, the English army made their last stand. A final Norman cavalry attack decided the battle irrevocably when it resulted in the death of Harold who, legend says, was killed by an arrow in the eye. Two of his brothers, Gyrth and Leofwine Godwinson, were killed as well. By nightfall, the Norman victory was complete and the remaining English soldiers fled in fear.*

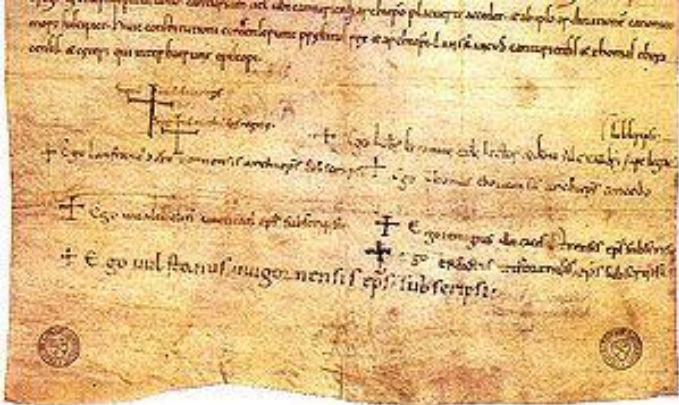
*Battles of the time rarely lasted more than two hours before the weaker side capitulated; that Hastings lasted nine hours indicates the determination of William and Harold. Battles also ended at sundown regardless of who was winning. Harold was killed shortly before sunset and, as he would have received fresh reinforcements before the battle recommenced in the morning, he was assured of victory had he survived William's final cavalry attack.*

*Thus, William's next target was London, inspiring fear in the English. As William I, he was formally crowned on Christmas day Thus, William's next target was London, inspiring fear in the English. As William I, he was formally crowned on Christmas day 1066, in Westminster Abbey. According to some sources, the ceremony was not a peaceful one.*

*Although the south of England submitted quickly to Norman rule, resistance in the north continued for six more years until 1072. During the first two years, King William I suffered many revolts throughout England and Wales. In 1072, he invaded Scotland, defeating Malcolm, who had recently invaded the north of England.*



*•English coin of William the Conqueror (1066–1087)*



[The signatures of William I and Matilda are the first two large crosses on the Accord of Winchester from 1072.]

William initiated many major changes. He increased the function of the traditional English shires William initiated many major changes and he increased the function of the traditional English shires (autonomous administrative regions), which he brought under central control; he decreased the power of the earls William initiated many major changes. He increased the function of the traditional English shires (autonomous administrative regions), which he brought under central control; he decreased the power of the earls by restricting them to one shire apiece. All administrative functions of his government remained fixed at specific English towns, except the court itself; they would progressively strengthen, and the English institutions became amongst the most sophisticated in Europe. In 1085, in order to ascertain the extent of his new dominions and to improve taxation, William commissioned all his counselors for the compilation of the Domesday Book William



- *William also ordered many castles William also ordered many castles, keeps William also ordered many castles, keeps, and mottes William also ordered many castles, keeps, and mottes, among them the Tower of London William also ordered many castles, keeps, and mottes, among them the Tower of London's foundation (the White Tower), to be built throughout England. These ensured effectively that the many rebellions by the English people or his own followers did not succeed.*
- *His conquest also led to French (especially, but not only, the Norman French His conquest also led to French (especially, but not only, the Norman French) replacing English His conquest also led to French (especially, but not only, the Norman French) replacing English as the language of the ruling classes for nearly 300 years. Furthermore, the original Anglo-Saxon His conquest also led to French (especially, but not only, the Norman French) replacing English as the language of the ruling classes for nearly 300 years. Furthermore, the original Anglo-Saxon culture of England became mingled with the Norman one; thus the Anglo-Norman culture came into being.*
- *William is said to have eliminated the native aristocracy in as little as four years. Systematically, he despoiled those English aristocrats who*

- In 1087 in France, William fell off his horse, suffering fatal abdominal injuries from the saddle pommel. On his deathbed, William divided his succession for his sons. William Rufus (his third son) was next English king, as William III*  
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