

GCSE HISTORY

Paper 2 Section B/A: Norman England, c1066–c1100

Interpretations Booklet

Interpretation A for use in answering Question 01



Interpretation A An interpretation of English village life after the Norman Conquest.

Adapted from an article by Arthur Bryant in 'History Today', in 1953.

William the Conqueror did not greatly change the way English villages worked. He left them alone with their communal fields divided into strips, and ancient rights. This was sensible as it meant that neither the Normans nor the English starved. However, William replaced English Lords with Norman Lords who left no one in any doubt that they were masters of the village and saw the English as a conquered race. William was merciless at taxing the rich who in turn taxed the peasants in the villages and demanded more work from them. The King's Forest Law was hated by many peasants. All this made their lives even harder.

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END OF INTERPRETATIONS

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