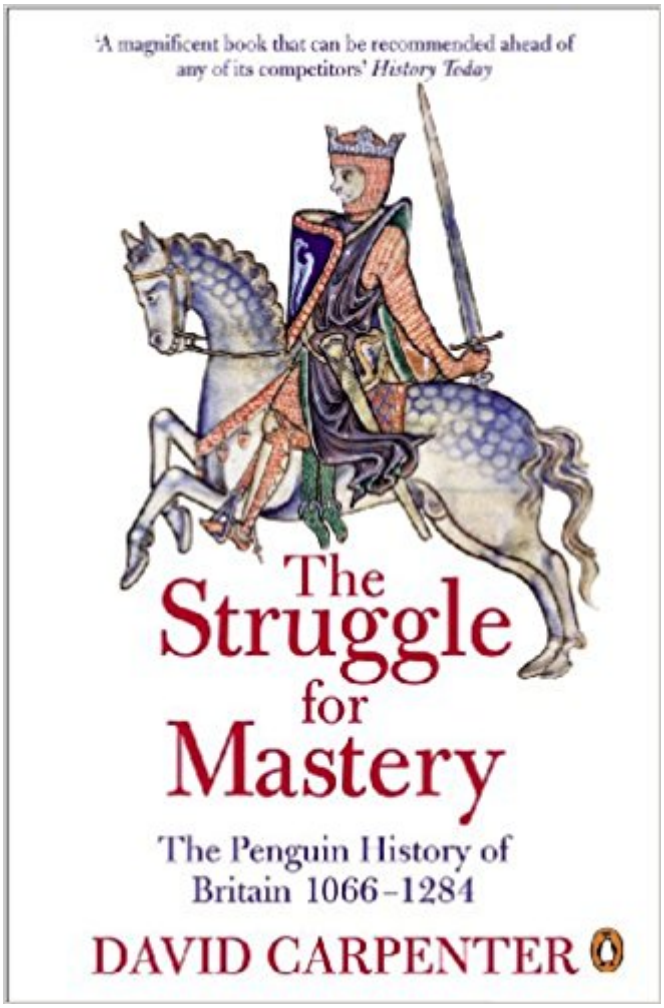
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The Struggle For Mastery: The Penguin History Of Britain, 1066-1284



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Synopsis

The two-and-a-half centuries after 1066 were momentous ones in the history of Britain. In 1066, England was conquered for the last time. The Anglo-Saxon ruling class was destroyed and and the English became a subject race, dominated by a Norman-French dynasty and aristocracy. This book shows how the English domination of the kingdom was by no means a foregone conclusion. The struggle for mastery in the book's title is in reality the struggle for different masteries within Great Britain. The book weaves together the histories of England, Scotland and Wales in a new way and argues that all three, in their different fashions, were competing for domination

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"This is a fine, up-to-date synthesis of a grand subject, now suitably enlarged." —T.N. Bisson, Henry Charles Lea Professor of Medieval History, Harvard University

David Carpenter is Professor of Medieval History at King's College London. He is the author of THE BATTLES OF LEWES AND EVESHAM and THE REIGN OF HENRY III.

This book is very well-written, with text that is not only interesting but easy to follow. I bought it in the hope that it would give me a better understanding of the events that transpired during the two hundred years following the Norman invasion of 1066. I have begun reading a lot of historical fiction during this time period and so I was eager to gain contextual knowledge that would make it easier to distinquish fact from fiction.This book was everything I had hoped for. Not only have I been

educated on the events of these years, but I have also been given a fascinating insight into the changing culture of this time. My favourite chapter has turned out to be one entitled 'The Peoples of Britain' which gives a brilliant insight into regional identities, and how these changed during the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. The Norman invasion of England of course caused a rift between the Norman and the English people, but David Carpenter explores how the two cultures eventually merged into becoming a united English people. He also discusses Scotland and the how the distinct areas of this country considered themselves to be of differing nationalities. Wales was also interesting to read about, as the culture there did not merge with the Norman culture as it did in England, and to some extent as it eventually did in Scotland.David Carpenter has a very fluid writing style that easily draws in the reader. He initially gives his key point and then expands from it, allowing the reader not only to see what happened, but how and why it happened. It is easy to tell that he has a geniune love for the period. I love to read history in the words of some-one who loves it is much as I do.The maps and genealogical tables included in this book are very useful. Whilst reading the text I often found myself flicking to the maps to familiarize myself with the areas.I would recommend this book to any-one with an interest in this period--even if it's only small your interest will be piqued with each page that you turn.

Book In excellent condition and authoritative in coverage.

This book is crammed full of information. If you into Medieval Knights Vikings or the birth of England it a great read. A bit too informative at times.

Typical history textbook, but fairly interesting.

WARNING - My Kindle edition of this book came with most of the index missing. It only went as far as "Duncan". Quite a shame as an index is pretty useful in a history book.

This may well be the most boring history book I ever read. Focuses heavily on legal administration, taxation and revenue. At last I know how much Henry II spent on wine!

I purchased this book, in part, to compare the differences between the Anglo-Saxon migration of the 5th-6th Centuries to the Norman Conquest in the 11th. I was looking for the cultural milestones and other events that led to two different results - the A-S migration led to a complete overthrow and

replacement of the old Romano-Celtic culture while the Norman Conquest led to the invaders being absorbed into the 'English' majority. The book itself does not explore this specific topic but for those who have studied both periods the reasons for the different outcomes become evident enough.As to the main topic of the book David Carpenter has presented a well written scholarly narrative that explains the immediate effects of the conquest and the displacement of the Anglo-Saxon elite, the political development under the new regime and slow assimilation of the Norman/Angevin dynasties into English culture. As time progressed acculturation of the Angevin elite was made easier by the slow (involuntary) disengagement from continental Europe and the collapse of the Norman/Angevin empire in France and by by the influence of more local events as they developed in Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The flow of events that caused these changes are laid out in a clear and concise manner that keeps the pages turning one after the other.The attention paid to Wales, Scotland and to a lesser extent Ireland, is of particular importance to the book. England influenced and was influenced by what was going on in the neighbouring kingdoms. The relationship between the English and Scots was particularly interesting and for those not already aware of the facts, the relationship between the two kingdoms was not always as bloodthirsty as the late 13th and early 14th century histories would suggest (to say nothing of the dreadful representation by Hollywood in 'Braveheart'). Professor Carpenter takes the care needed to explain the most important events in Welsh and Scottish development, including their high and low points, relations with England the how and why England got involved in Ireland in the first place.As the history of Britain was shaped by more than just those at the tip of the societal pyramid the text also explore the changes in the non-elite English, Welsh and Scottish experience and how changes to society, the economy, literacy, the role of the church all played its part in Britain's development during the Norman and Angevin rule.If you are curious about the how and why of Norman/Angevin England and her British neighbours this text is highly recommended. It runs to well over 530 pages and is supplied with suitable maps and genealogical tables to aid the reader in following the actors and events as they parade across the historical stage.

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