

University of Wisconsin  
Department of History  
Semester I, 1985-6

History 123

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English History to 1588

History 123 sprinks through English history from Roman times to the English Revolution. The first half of the course considers the formation of medieval England. The early history of England is a tale of invasion and conquest: the country was occupied and colonized by Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Scandinavians and Normans. And yet by the high Middle Ages, England was a highly unified country, culturally and politically. Cultural unification was in great measure the achievement of the Catholic church, which absorbed and transformed indiginous religious traditions. Political unification was the work of the monarchy, which expanded the territory that the government dominated militarily and developed some of the most sophisticated institutions in Europe.

The medieval accomplishment was demolished by pestilence and political strife in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The second half of the course considers the decline of medieval institutions and the creation of new ones. Under the Tudors and distinctively different nation emerged, a Protestant country with a unique constitution that was based on a compromise between the power of the king and the landowning classes. The reign of Elizabeth I was one of the most creative phases in the history of England. The Stuart kings who followed Elizabeth were disappointing by contrast. Quarrelling between the government of Charles I and Parliament led in 1640 to the first great revolution in modern European history.

The focus in this course will inevitably be mainly on the principal events in this very long span of English history. Although we will turn our attention to social and economic developments from time to time, we will be preoccupied with political, constitutional and religious change.

Required textbooks:

G. Warren Hollister, The Making of England  
Lacy Baldwin Smith, This Realm of England  
W.L. Warren, King John  
The Pastons, ed. Richard Barber  
Lacy Baldwin Smith, Elizabeth Tudor  
Alan Macfarlane, The Family Life of Ralph Josselin

Features:

There will be three lectures a week, Wed-Fri at 9:50. All students will be expected to attend regular discussion sections and activities supplementary to the lectures.

written assignments:

Three-unit students will take two hour-long examinations in addition to the final; four-unit students will take two hour-long examinations, sit for the final, and write two brief papers (five pages each) analyzing topics that illuminate the main themes of the course.

Course schedule:

You are responsible for keeping up with the readings and preparing for discussion sections. If you follow the reading schedule outlined below, you will find the lectures and discussions far more rewarding.

Week	Lecture Topics and Readings
I. 9/4-6	The Formation of England Hollister, chs. 1-2
II. 9/9-13	Anglo-Saxon England Hollister, chs. 3-6
III. 9/16-20	The Norman Conquest Warren, pp. 1-173
IV. 9/23-27	Kings and Barons Warren, pp. 174-259
V. 9/30-10/4	Medieval Government Hollister, chs. 7-12
VI. 10/7-11	The Black Death Smith, <u>Realm</u> , chs. 1-5
VII. 10/14-18	The Waning of the Middle Ages <u>The Pastors</u>
VIII. 10/21-25	The Tudor Regime Smith, <u>Realm</u> , chs. 7-10
IX. 10/28-11/1	Henry VIII and the Reformation Smith, <u>Elizabeth</u> , pp. 3-117
X. 11/4-8	Catholics and Protestants Smith, <u>Elizabeth</u> , pp. 118-219
XI. 11/11-15	Elizabethan England Smith, <u>Realm</u> , ch. 11
XII. 11/18-22	James VI and I Smith, <u>Realm</u> , chs. 12-14

XIII. 11/25-29

English Society  
Macfarlane, pp. 1-78

XIV. 12/2-6

Crown and Parliament  
Macfarlane, pp. 21-223

XV. 12/9-13

The English Revolution  
Smith, Reaim, chs. 15-16

Important Dates:

Four-long examinations will be held on October 7 and November 15. Papers for four-unit students will be due on October 18 and December 9.

Grading system:

Grades will be calculated according to the following formulae and then adjusted where appropriate. THREE-UNIT STUDENTS: discussion sections 30%, mid-term exams 30% each, final exam 40%. FOUR-UNIT STUDENTS: discussion sections 15%, mid-term exams 15% each, papers 25%, final exam 30%. While every effort will be made to award marks as objectively as possible, students who display great improvement will be rewarded in a manner that the instructor deems fair to them and to the rest of the class. (A poor grade on the first mid-term, for example, might simply be disregarded in some circumstances.) On the other hand, students who show a marked decline in effort and performance will not receive the benefit of the doubt if their grades, when calculated according to the formulae above, are on a borderline.