

Explain how William I secured control of England after 1066?

(10 marks)

SYK paragraph

William may well have defeated Harold II at Hastings, but England was far from under his control. As he was crowned king on Christmas Day 1066, ahead he faced many challenging years before he could safely say that England was under his control. So how did William subjugate the English?

SWYG paragraph

There were four main ways in which William did this. They were the use of terror, the building of castles, the introduction of the feudal system and the compiling of the Domesday Book

Paragraph 1

After defeating Harold, William had to deal with the surviving, important Saxon land holders. Those who co-operated retained their land, those who rebelled were dealt with firmly and their land's seized. Rebellions were ruthlessly crushed to discourage further unrest.

Paragraph 2

William's second strategy was an impressive programme of castle building. William ordered castles to be built as his soldiers needed protection from rebellion and also a base from which to control the surrounding countryside. It was also a show of his power and a constant reminder to the English that the Normans were here to stay.

Paragraph 3

The third strategy was the creation of the Feudal System. At the top of the system was William. William gave some of his land to his barons who swore to be loyal to the king and provided him with soldiers. The barons gave some of their land to knights who swore to provide soldiers for the king. But the knights needed food and a castle to live in and so the knights gave the peasants land in return for loyalty and working on the knights' land.

Paragraph 4

The final strategy was in the compiling of the Domesday Book. William's officials visited 13,000 villages in England, forcing the inhabitants to answer a series of probing questions. This survey was published in the Domesday Book which gave William powerful and controlling information on what was going on in England.

Conclusion

As William lay dying in early 1087, he felt remorse for the way he had treated the English. However, there is no doubt that he had succeeded in his objective and England was very much under his control.