

Domesday Book Evidence Activity

I understand what the Domesday Book and survey were.

The Domesday Book was drawn up in 1086, twenty years after the defeat of the Anglo-Saxons by the Normans. It was written up by one man and it is believed it took him 12 months to write. It was commissioned by William the Conqueror, who wanted to find out information about where people lived, how much money they had and what they owned.



Word meanings from the extracts:

Carucate	In theory about 120 acres of land (the space needed to feed one peasant household).
Bovate or oxgang	Between 15 and 20 acres, the area of land requiring one ox to plough it.
Demesne	Land kept for the owner of the land.
Villein	Highest class of dependent peasant.
Sokeman	Farmer who farmed land that was attached to a manor to whom they owed service or rent.

Other words used throughout the Domesday Book:

Freeman	A man who could owe rents or duties to a lord but made personal decisions.
Cottar	Lowest level of peasant, often called cottagers, who farmed about four acres of land.
Serfs	People owned by the lord of the manor.

Extract from the Domesday Book

Cockerington, Aschil and Ulgrin has three carucates of land and one bovate...

There is land for six teams. Ilbert, the bishop's man, had two teams, there is demesne and 7 villeins ... and 27 sokeman, having 3 teams. There are 80 acres of meadow there, and 60 acres of wood, and 2 parts of a mill rendering two shillings. Then [in the time of King Edward, the Confessor] it was worth 60 shillings; now the same.

Rewrite the extract in modern English. You may want to use dictionaries to help with some words.

[illegible]

Now try this extract...

The land of Robert Malet.

Fredrebruge Hundred and half Glorestorp. Godwin, a freeman, held it. Two carucates of land in the time of king Edward. Then and afterwards 8 villains; now 3. Then and afterwards 3 bordars; now 5. At all times 3 serfs, and 30 acres of meadow. At all times 2 carucates in demesne. Then half a carucate of the men, and now. Woods for 8 swine, and 2 mills. Here are located 13 socmen, of 40 acres of land. When it was received there were 2 r., now 1. At all times 8 swine, then 20 sheep, and it is worth 60 shillings.

There is situated there, in addition, one berewick, as the manor of Heuseda. In the time of king Edward, 1 carucate of land; then and afterwards 7 villains, now 5. At all times 12 bordars, and 3 serfs, and 40 acres of meadow; 1 mill. Woods for 16 swine and 1 salt pond and a half Then 1 r., and now and 14 swine, 30 sheep, and 50 goats. In this berewick are located 3 socmen, of 10 acres of land, and it is worth 30 shillings. The two manors have 2 leagues in length and 4 firlongs in breadth. Whosoever is tenant there, returns 12 pence of the twenty shillings of geld.

In Scotessa Ulcetel was tenant, a free man commended to Edric, in the time of king Edward of 30 acres of land. At that time 1 bordar, afterward and now 2. Then half a carucate, none afterward nor now. It was at all times worth 5 shillings and 4 pence; the same.

[illegible]

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