

SOCIAL STUDIES 1003 THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

CONTENTS

THE MIDDLE AGES: AN INTRODUCTION	2
The Roman Empire	3
Roman Culture	5
Christianity and the Empire	6
I. THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES	10
Barbarian Invasions	11
Eastern Empire	15
The Catholic Church	16
Arab Invasions	18
II. THE MIDDLE AGES IN TRANSITION	21
The Continent	21
New Invasions	25
England	26
The Byzantine Empire	28
The Church	28
The Islamic Empire	29
III. THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES	33
The Setting	33
Rise of the Monarchies	40
The Church	44
The Decline of the Byzantine Empire	46
Other World Powers	47
GLOSSARY	52

2017 Printing

The material in this book is the product of the Lord's blessing and many individuals working together on the teams, both at Alpha Omega Publications and Christian Light Publications.

Original material copyright © 1978 by Alpha Omega Publications
All rights reserved. Revised by permission.

CLP Revision copyright © 1980

Christian Light Publications, Inc.

Harrisonburg, Virginia 22802

Tel. 1-540-434-0768

Printed in USA

Copyrighted material. May not be reproduced without permission from the publisher.

II. THE MIDDLE AGES IN TRANSITION

The eighth through the eleventh centuries present many more changes in European politics, economics, culture, and religion. Invasions were less frequent and more highly concentrated, individual kingdoms began to emerge as leaders, a new empire was being established on the continent, and the feudal system began to take hold and

to grow throughout medieval Europe.

In this section you will study some of the key men and events that participated in, and at times caused, these changes. You will study the rise and fall of Charlemagne's empire, the England of King Alfred the Great, and the new wave of invasions that threatened Europe.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Read these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able:

9. To explain why Charlemagne and Alfred the Great were the best leaders of their time.
10. To describe the effects of Charlemagne and Alfred's attempts to renew and preserve learning.
11. To trace the beginnings of modern European countries.
12. To identify the effects of the Viking invasions.
13. To explain the state of the Byzantine Empire, and the Islamic Empire at this time.
14. To describe the role of the Catholic church and the developments that led to the break between the Eastern and Roman sections.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

Carolingian	icon	Papal States
count	illuminated manuscript	scriptorium
duke	march	thegn
dynasty	margrave	wergild
fresco	mosaic	

THE CONTINENT

The most important European development on the continent at this time was the rise of Charlemagne and his empire. During his reign the Frankish empire was expanded, government was stabilized, education and learning were encouraged, and the power of the Catholic church was strengthened and extended.

At the same time, culture and learning were flourishing in the monastic centers in England. The political situation was relatively stable because the king, Alfred the Great, was a strong and able king.

Rise of Charlemagne. After the death of Clovis in 511, the Frankish kingdom had been divided among his four sons. Constant disputes and civil wars resulted in a three-way division of the kingdom in the seventh century. This division established the kingdoms of Neustria, Austrasia, and Burgundy. The Frankish kings of the seventh century did very little. For this reason, they became known as the Do-Nothing-Kings. The real power in each kingdom was the Mayor of the Palace.

Pepin, Mayor of the Palace in Austrasia,

reunited Austrasia and Neustria and gave himself the title of "leader and prince of the Franks." Pepin's son, Charles Martel, sometimes called "the Hammer," ruled from 714 to 741. He strengthened the frontiers, put down the Moslem attacks, and protected Catholic missionaries from the barbarians.

Charles' son, Pepin the Short, ruled from 747 to 768. He ruled as Mayor of the Palace until 752 when he was elected king by the nobles. Pepin asked the Pope to anoint him king and officially declare the end of the reign of the Do-Nothing-Kings. The Pope agreed and in 754, Pepin the Short was anointed king. Pepin defeated the Lombards in Italy in 754 and 756 and gave some of the lands to the Pope. This land gift is known as the Donation of Pepin and became the **Papal States**.

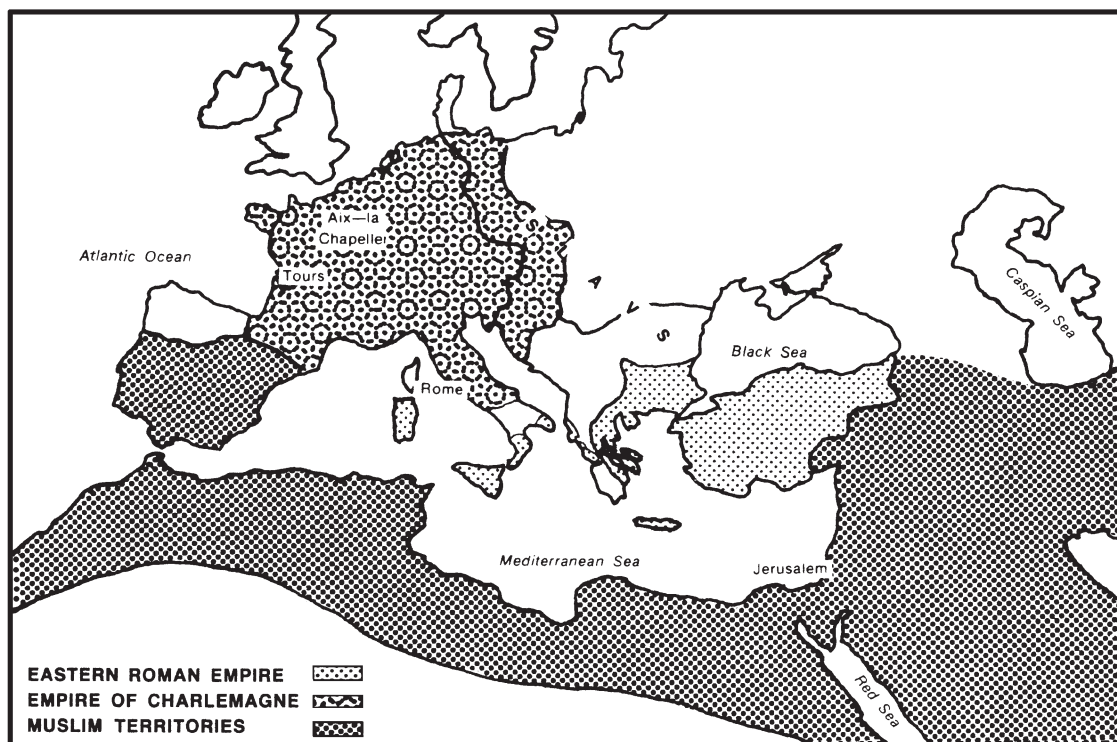
In 768, Charles and Carloman, the two sons of Pepin the Short, took the throne. By 771, Charles was the sole ruler and reigned over his Frankish empire until 814. Charles was the first and greatest of the **Carolingian** kings. He became known as Charles the Great or Charlemagne.

Charlemagne was an able military leader. His military and religious goal was to unite the Germanic tribes into a single Catholic state. Charlemagne battled the Lombards, annexed their land

at the Pope's request, and gave himself the title King of the Lombards in 774. In 788, he annexed Bavaria, now part of southern Germany. He battled the tribes between the Rhine and the Elbe Rivers for nearly thirty years. The captured tribes were given the choice of becoming Catholics or being put to death. He also conquered the Avars in the east and captured the northeast part of Spain from the Moslems.

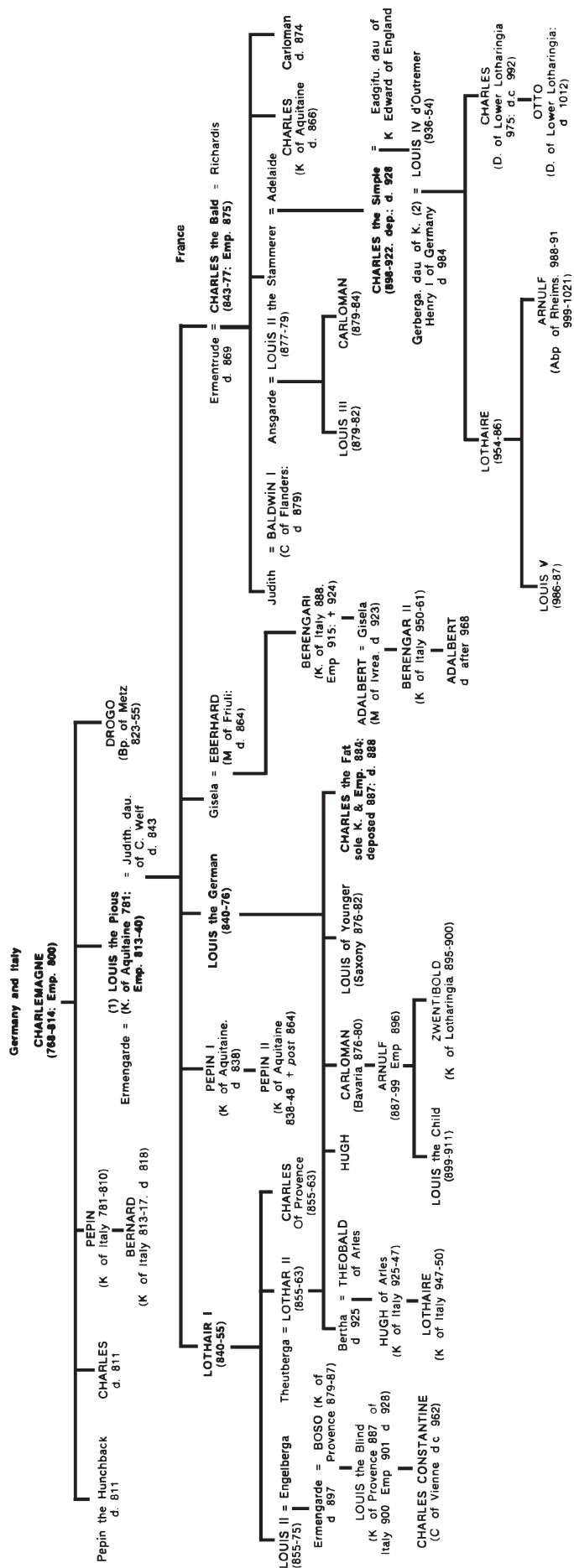
In the year 800 a significant event in European history took place. On Christmas Day of that year, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne the "Emperor of the Romans." This event reestablished the Roman Empire with Charlemagne as its emperor, with the full support of the Roman Church behind him. This angered the Byzantine Empire in the east which believed it had a claim to Rome as the remaining part of the original empire. This event also reinforced the power of the church in government affairs. In effect, the church had crowned and approved Charlemagne. This question of political power of the church over temporal rulers became more serious in the centuries to follow.

Reign of Charlemagne. Charlemagne's government was well organized and stable because of a carefully planned check system. Charlemagne appointed **counts** who were usually wealthy men of



Charlemagne's Empire
about A.D. 814

The Carolingian Dynasty



noble families. The count, together with a bishop or an archbishop, ruled over an area known as a county. Charlemagne appointed **dukes** to rule over a group of counties. Finally, Charlemagne appointed agents known as *missi dominici*, "messengers of God," who went out in pairs to visit the counties each year. These messengers checked the local courts and reported the state of the empire to Charlemagne. The frontier areas, or **marches** as they were called, were ruled by **margraves** who were counts and military men. These buffer zones surrounded most of the empire.

Charlemagne's capital was at Aix-la-Chapelle, (the modern city of Aachen). The legal system of the empire was primarily the ancient Germanic law that retained the compensation or **werild** and the trial by ordeal. Some Biblical principles (corrupted by Catholic interpretations, however) influenced their laws and their interpretation.

Europe and Charlemagne's empire were isolated economically. Charlemagne restored roads and bridges, but very little trade passed over them. The Moslems controlled the trade routes to the East and the shipping routes of the Mediterranean, making an economy based on trade impossible. Minimal trade was carried on between provinces. Little money was coined because little was used.

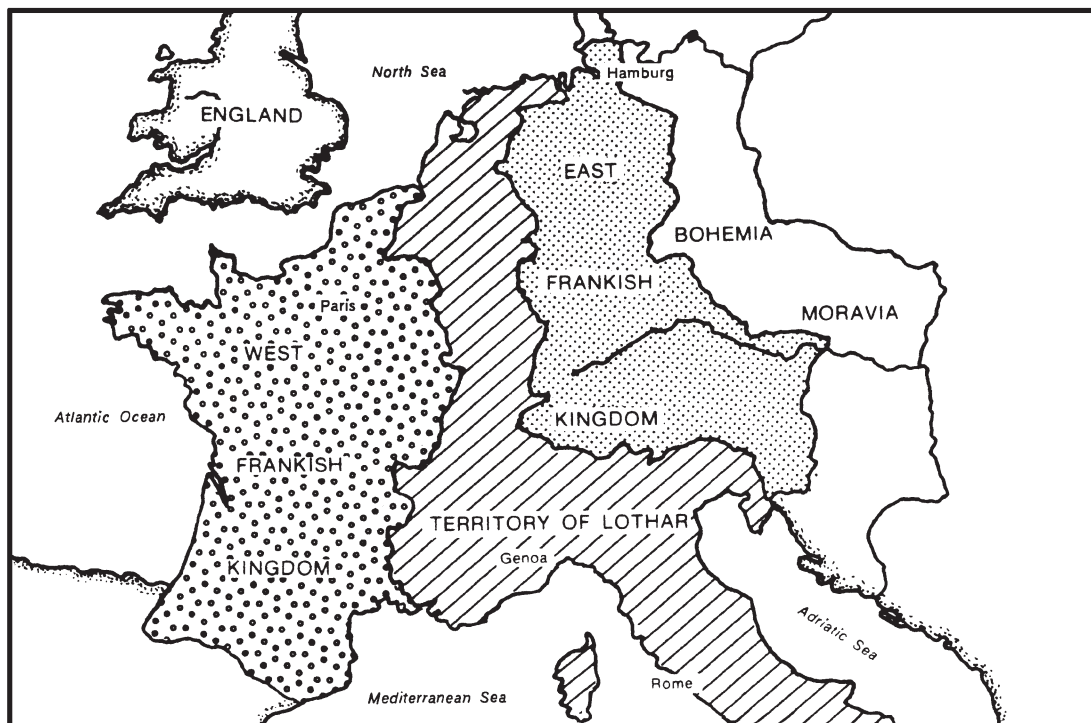
Landowners were warriors first, and they thought of their lands only as a means of financing

wars. This attitude led to the decline of agricultural methods and to poor living and working conditions for the lower class.

The reign of Charlemagne is distinguished as a time of culture and learning; therefore the term Carolingian Renaissance is sometimes applied to Charlemagne's reign. The buildings and churches of the capital city at Aix-la-Chapelle reflected both Roman and Byzantine influences. For some structures, he imported columns from Rome and Ravenna.

Charlemagne established centers of learning and sought out famous scholars to teach the secular clergy and laity as well as the children. He also established libraries and a famous **scriptorium** at Tours so that ancient manuscripts could be preserved and copied by monks. The greatest scholar in Charlemagne's court was the English monk, Alcuin of York (735-804), who established a palace school, the *scriptorium* at Tours, and who directed most of the educational activity of the empire.

Charlemagne issued laws ordering the monastic and cathedral schools to provide better education for the clergy. He also established parish schools where none had existed. To insure observation of these laws he sent out the *missi dominici* to report on the progress of the schools. Some of these schools survived and became the basis of medieval universities.



Division of the Empire
Treaty of Verdun 843

Decline of the Empire. Before his death in 814, Charlemagne had his son, Louis the Pious, crowned emperor. As soon as Charlemagne died the empire began to collapse. Louis, a weak leader, divided the empire among his three sons who immediately began to fight over their allotted lands. The two younger sons, Louis the German and Charles the Bald, joined forces against their elder brother, Lothair, who was then emperor.

In 843 by the Treaty of Verdun, the empire was redivided into three kingdoms. The western kingdom, or West Frankland, went to Charles the Bald. The eastern kingdom, or East Frankland, went to Louis the German. These two kingdoms formed the basis for what would become modern

France and modern Germany centuries later. The middle kingdom, which was a narrow strip of land extending from the North Sea to the middle of Italy, went to Lothair. This narrow strip between the two other kingdoms was a source of constant warfare. Sections of this strip have been the source of conflict between France and Germany since that time.

Civil wars and poor leadership weakened the empire to such an extent that it could no longer resist foreign invasions. The last Carolingian emperor, Charles the Fat, son of Louis the German, was deposed in 887 because he had not been strong against the Viking raiders. Charles the Simple, the last Carolingian king, died in 987.



Complete these statements.

- 2.1 The Frankish kings of the seventh century were called _____.
- 2.2 Charlemagne was crowned emperor on a. _____ in the year b. _____ by Pope c. _____.
- 2.3 Charlemagne's *missi dominici* were given the responsibility to _____.
- 2.4 The Treaty of Verdun divided the Frankish empire into a. _____, governed by Louis the German, the territory of Lothair, and b. _____, controlled by c. _____.
- 2.5 The _____ was a period of flourishing architecture, culture, and learning.



Choose the appropriate answer. Place the letter in the blank.

- 2.6 Charlemagne's capital city was _____.
a. Paris b. Rome c. Aix-la-Chapelle
- 2.7 The greatest scholar brought to Charlemagne's court came from _____.
a. England b. Ireland c. Rome
- 2.8 _____ was the father of Charlemagne.
a. Charles Martel b. Pepin the Short c. Carloman

NEW INVASIONS

The decline of Charlemagne's empire opened the way for new barbarian invasions, just as the decline of the Western Roman Empire opened the way for the earlier barbarian invasions. Slavs and Magyars from the east began to move westward, and Germanic Scandinavian tribes from the north pushed southward. The Moslems also continued their invasions from the south.

The Vikings. The Germanic invaders, the Vikings or Norsemen, had the greatest impact. The Vikings from the areas now known as Norway, Sweden, and Denmark invaded coastal territories from Russia to England, down the Frankish coastal areas, around the Spanish peninsula, and into the Mediterranean as far as Rome. Evidence has been found showing Vikings passed through Russia by land to