

My most worthy majesty,

I write to impress on you the need to establish order in the lands of Sussex. I fear that there is some semblance of rebellion in the air. The people are unhappy with their new ruler, and there have been some minor attempts to rise up and to attack your local armies, who are poorly defended.

Your majesty, I implore you to help us to defend your lands in Sussex and to make your kingdom greater still

Your ever faithful and obedient servant

Guillaume de Briouze



My most worthy majesty,

I must ask you to help to establish order in the lands of Sussex. I worry that we may have a rebellion on our hands. The people are unhappy with their new ruler, and there have been some people who have attacked your local armies, who are poorly defended.

Your majesty, I ask you to help us to defend your lands in Sussex and to make your kingdom greater still

Your ever faithful and obedient servant

Guillaume de Briouze



My most loyal and obedient advisors,

I seek your advice on the matter of the church. You will know that I am a most god-fearing and honourable man, and that I do my utmost to defend the word of the almighty father. He has chosen me as King of this great land and now I must carry out his work. However, it appears to me that the church in England is not following my lead. There are examples of priests in village churches who are not conforming to my orders. They tell my men that the bishops in the cathedrals have told them to act in this way. The bishops themselves claim that they follow the word of the Pope in Rome. It is clear that I cannot offend the great Pope himself, for he is the master of the church on Earth, but I really must have more control of the churches of England.

What do you advise?

William



My most loyal and obedient advisors,

I seek your advice on the matter of the church. You will know am a regular church-goer and I believe in the word of God. He has chosen me as King of this great land and now I must carry out his work. However, it seems that not all of the priests in the churches are following my orders. They tell my men that the bishops in the cathedrals have told them to act in this way. The bishops themselves claim that they follow the word of the Pope in Rome. The Pope is the master of the church on Earth, so I cannot get rid of him, but I really must have more control of the churches of England.

What could I do?

William



The Treasury

Your Majesty - the costs of defending your great realm are great. We have spent many hundreds of pounds on providing weapons and armour for your soldiers, on protecting your kingdom, and on providing the castles and homesteads in which your greatest men live. Now, however, the pot is dry. The King must raise more money. We would advise the king on a fair taxation scheme, but we do not know how many people are in the land, nor how much wealth they have.

The Treasurer

The Treasury

Your Majesty - the costs of defending your kingdom are high. We have spent many hundreds of pounds on providing weapons and armour for your soldiers, on protecting your kingdom, and on providing the castles for your greatest men live. Now we have run out of money. The King must raise more the taxes—but to know how much tax to charge, we need to know how many people there are in England.

The Treasurer

October 1066

We have been attempting to approach London for several days now, but each time we reach the city walls we are beaten back by English fighters. They seem to have lined the southern boundaries of the city ready to defend. We've plenty of supplies to keep going, but unless we can actually get into the city, William will never be crowned king!

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The Chronicles

The armies of King William I are spread widely across the kingdom of England. They are stationed in many areas where there is a history of, or a risk of uprisings. They support the king valiantly throughout the year. Nevertheless, this leaves too few soldiers ready in the case of invasion or attack. If the king is to maintain order, he must maintain a strong, army, but if he is to prevent invasion from overseas, he must also have troops upon which he can call at short notice to defend the land.

The Chronicles

King William's army is spread all across England. They are staying in the areas where there might be trouble from the Saxons. Nevertheless, the king needs even more soldiers ready on stand-by just in case there is an invasion from another country. He won't need these soldiers all the time, but they might need to be called upon at very short notice.

It will surely have come to the attention of the advisors that many of the kings people are men of no worth. They have neither land nor crop from which to profit. Furthermore, they do little to serve the nation. Many of these peasants were formerly serfs. They worked on the land of the earls in return for a small safe place to live. Once more these villeins come to the new Lords of the Manors to seek land for farming – but they can offer little in return. The Lords cannot possibly use all of the peasants as slaves on their land, as they do not need that much food. But if they allow the peasants to keep the food, then they will not have served the Lord or the King.

We seek advice from the King and his advisors.

The Lords of the Manors

The King will of course know that many of the people living in his country are worthless. They don't have any land of their own, and they don't do anything to help the King. Before 1066 these men were slaves for their local earls—they worked on the land of the earls so the earls let them live in their manors. Now the peasants want to keep farming small strips of land, but they cannot afford to buy them, or even to rent them.

We think that they should offer something to the King to be allowed to live on his land—what does his majesty require?

The Lords of the Manors

For the attention of his majesty the King,
William I of England, Duke of Normandy,

As our armies reach new parts of the country it is clear that the rule of your majesty is not yet secure in the furthest reaches of the kingdom. In each of the shires, land is owned by many English earls and barons, and each of these administers the land in his area. The lords are a varied group, but many swore allegiance to King Harold, and yet more swear allegiance even now to your enemies.

All the while your land is in the control of these lords, there is a risk that your hold in your great nation will be toppled from within.

The advisory council



For the attention of his majesty the King,
William I of England, Duke of Normandy,

Your armies are reaching the furthest parts of England, but in some places there is still some trouble. In every county there is an Earl who owns and looks after most of the land. These lords are all different, but many were friends of King Harold, and many of them do not want you to be king.

For as long as these lords are in control of land in England, there is a risk that they will try to overthrow the King. Something must be done.

The advisory council

