THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PODCAST
TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE 99:
THE SECOND FRENCH INVASION

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Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 99: The Second French Invasion. In this episode, we're going to look at an important development that took place in England in the first half of the 1200s, and that was the arrival of a new wave of French influences from across the Channel. William the Conqueror had brought Norman French to England in 1066, but with the loss of Normandy in 1204, that Norman culture was starting to wane. The written evidence suggests that fewer and fewer English nobles spoke French as their first language, and when they tried to learn French, they preferred to study the French of Paris rather than the Norman French of their ancestors. But at a time when Norman culture was in decline in England, a new round of French influences came in from central and southern France. These influences came in the form of military troops, and nobles, and courtiers, and they also came in the form of the central French dialect spoken around Paris. This second invasion reinforced the French influences that were already present in England, and it ensured the survival of French as an official language of England for several more generations. So this time, we'll look at those developments, and we'll see how they influenced Modern English.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast at Patreon.com/historyofenglish. And as always, you can reach me by email at kevin@historyofenglishpodcast.com

Now this time, I want to look at the period from the end of King John's reign through the first half of his son's reign. This is the period from 1215 through the early 1250s. In terms of language, this is a fascinating period because it was a time during which English manuscripts were starting to reappear. Last time, we looked at the Owl and the Nightingale. And a few episodes back, we looked at Layamon's Brut. Up to this point, the documents we've examined have shown relatively little French influence. A few French words were used, but for the most part, the vocabulary was still mostly from Old English. But that started to change around the current point in our story. By the mid-1200s, French words were becoming much more prominent in English documents.

Part of the reason why this is so fascinating is because this was a period when Norman French was actually in decline in England. We've seen that scribes and writers were starting to use English again. And there is increasing evidence that the children of English nobles were now speaking English as their first language. Textbooks started to appear that were designed to teach children how to speak French. And those textbooks were almost certainly designed for the children of nobles and the well-to-do. I'll look more closely at some of this evidence in an upcoming episode. But all of that raises an interesting question. If Norman French was in decline, why did English borrow so many French words over the next two centuries?

Well, part of the answer lies in the fact that Norman French was about to be overtaken by a new type of French – the French of Paris and central France. There were many reasons for this second French invasion. Paris itself was enjoying a period expanding influence thanks to the growing power of the royal court there. The French king Philip had enjoyed a great deal of military and political success, and had essentially destroyed the rival Angevin Empire that had been established by Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine. The royal court at Paris had not enjoyed that much influence and power since the days of Charlemagne. And at the same time, the University of Paris was one of the most important universities in Western Europe, and it was producing a lot of scholars. French literature was also being composed in the dialect of Paris. Parisian French was quickly emerging as the new standard for the French language. And that meant that the old Norman French dialect was losing a lot of its old prestige. As we'll see in future episodes, Norman French speakers in England were becoming self-conscious about their form of French, and they were starting to apologize for their 'poor' French.

These trends were reinforced by the political events in England in the early 1200s. The loss of Normandy weakened Norman influences in England. And then a series of developments led to the arrival of a lot of new Frenchmen from central and southern France. This second French invasion meant that the French influences in England were becoming much more diverse. Normandy no longer had a monopoly on the version of French that was spoken in England.

As we move into the middle part of the 1200s, there was a distinct shift toward Parisian French. And we can see evidence of this shift in the history of English. When we look at French loanwords from the early and mid-1200s, we can see that Parisian words were being borrowed alongside Norman words. In many cases, those words were identical. But since the Parisian dialect was different from the Norman dialect, that meant that English sometimes borrowed two different versions of the same French word. One version was from Normandy and reflects a northern French pronunciation, and the other version was from Paris or some other part of central France, and it reflects a central French pronunciation. English scholars can use those dialect differences to determine the actual source of many French words that were borrowed during this period.

For our purposes, it isn't really important whether the word came from Normandy or Paris. What is important is that we see loanwords from both regions during the early 1200s. That suggests that the French influences in England were becoming more and more diverse. And the political developments confirmed and reinforced that trend.

Before I go any further, let me make a quick comment about terminology. For the most part, I am going to refer to the Norman dialect versus the Parisian dialect, but what I am really talking about are northern French dialects versus central French dialects. The Norman dialect was the most important and influential dialect in the north of France, and it was certainly the most influential in England. But there were other dialects in northern France that had similar features. Along the same lines, the French dialect spoken around Paris was one of many similar dialects spoken in central France. But as I noted, the dialect of Paris was emerging as the national standard during this period. So very often, when I refer to the Parisian dialect, I am also including the other central French dialects within that term

Now we've actually looked at some of the differences between the Norman and Parisian dialects before. You might remember that the Norman dialect preserved the traditional C-A – or /ka/ – sound that was used in Latin. But in Parisian French, that sound became a C-H-A – or /cha/ – sound. And then in later French, it evolved into a /sha/ sound. One of the classic examples of this was the Latin word ***cappa*** which meant a cape or cloak. Of course, it gave us the words ***cape*** and ***cap*** which both preserve that Latin C-A – or /ka/ – sound.

And you might remember that St. Martin's famous ***cappa*** or cloak was housed in a building which was called a ***cappella***. But in Parisian French, the /ka/ sound became a /cha/ sound, and ***cappella*** became ***chappella*** – which later became ***chapel***. Then during the 1200s and 1300s, that sound started to change again within the Parisian dialect. It went from /cha/ to /sha/. So this type of head covering came to be called a ***chapeau*** which was also borrowed into English. A specific type of head covering was also called a ***chaperon*** from the same root word. And since a ***chaperon*** protected the head, the word came to mean a protector. And from there, it came to mean a person who protects or guards another person. And today we use it to refer to a person who accompanies another person. So from ***cape*** and ***cap*** – to ***chapel*** – to ***chapeau*** and ***chaperon*** – we can hear how English has preserved that sound change within French. It all depends on when the word was borrowed into English, and how it being pronounced at the time it was borrowed.

Now that word ***cappa*** meaning 'a cloak or head covering' is derived from the Latin word ***caput*** which meant 'head.' We actually have that Latin word in a term like ***decapitate*** meaning 'to remove the head.' Well, the head of a command – so the person in charge of a group of people – was called a ***captain***, again preserving that original 'C-A' – or /ka/ – sound. But in Parisian French, a ***captain*** became a ***chieftain*** or ***chief*** – with a 'C-H' sound. And then in later French, the chief of a kitchen became a ***chef*** with an S-H sound. So again, from ***captain*** – to ***chief*** – to ***chef***. We can hear that sound change.

I've given those examples before, but I'm going to give you a lot more examples of that sound change throughout this episode.

Also, we've seen before that Parisian French speakers had a problem pronouncing the 'W' sound at the beginning of words. They usually pronounced those words with a 'G' sound instead. But the Normans didn't have that problem. An initial 'W' sound was common in Germanic languages. And remember that the Normans were originally Vikings who spoke a form of Old Norse. So when they adopted French, they continued to pronounce that initial 'W' sound in a lot of Germanic words that came from the Franks. So this emerged as a clear marker of a Norman dialect. The Normans pronounced the initial 'W,' but the Parisians used a hard 'G.' So we ended up with the Norman name ***William*** – and Parisian name ***Guillaume***.

And we might 'wage' war with the Norman word ***wage***, or we might 'engage' the enemy with the Parisian word ***engage***. ***Wage*** and ***engage*** are really just two different versions of the same root word. So again, this 'W' versus 'G' pronunciation is a clue as to which dialect produced the borrowed word. There were a few other dialect differences which I'll discuss at the end of the episode, but I'm mostly going to focus on those two traditional differences.

Now as I return to the political developments in England, I want you to notice that it wasn't just words that were coming in from other parts of France in the early 1200s. It was also people. Throughout this period, there were several waves of new French arrivals in England. And almost all of these new arrivals were from central and southern France – not Normandy. These immigrants brought their words and their pronunciations with them. So as we'll see, this second French invasion expanded and diversified the French influences in England.

So let's pick up our overall historical narrative where we left off last time – with the civil war that erupted in England after the collapse of Magna Carta. As I noted last time, King John had been forced to agree to Magna Carta, but as soon as his seal was attached to it, he started to look around for ways to nullify it. John soon convinced the Pope to declare the Charter to be illegal and invalid, and with Papal backing, John rejected the Charter and prepared for war against the rebel barons. The civil war that erupted late in the year 1215 really began as a war over Magna Carta.

John moved first against the rebels by heading down to Dover on the southeastern coast to meet up with some mercenaries he had paid to fight on his behalf. He then moved up and captured Rochester Castle between Dover and London. This was John's first strategic victory. And it affords us a good example of an early Norman loanword. We've seen before that the word ***castle*** was used in the Peterborough Chronicle. As we would expect from such an early loanword, it has the initial 'C-A' – or /ka/ – sound associated with the Norman dialect. But in the 1700s, this word was borrowed again as ***chateau*** with the later French 'S-H' sound. That original Norman word ***castle*** survives alongside central French ***chateau***. And that castle at Rochester gave John a foothold in the southeast of England.

The rebels continued to hold the city of London. And it soon became apparent that they had a problem in trying to take on the King of England. They didn't really have a good alternative. The country had fought civil wars before, but they were always wars between two rival claimants to the throne, like the period of anarchy when Stephen and Matilda fought each other. But this time, the barons were really fighting for principle – not a rival claimant. And it soon became apparent to the rebels that they needed to come up with an alternative to John – someone they could rally around and someone who could lead the rebellion and fill John's shoes when he was gone. They needed a rival claimant, and they found one across the Channel in Paris.

As we know by now, the French king was Philip. Philip had repeatedly defeated John's forces, and he had deprived John of Normandy and most of his other lands in northern and central France. And now, the rebel barons looked to Philip's court in Paris to lead the rebellion in England. Philip himself didn't take the bait. Since John had the Pope's support he didn't want to risk excommunication and interdict in France. However, he had no problem with his son Louis taking part in the rebellion in England. So the English barons approached Louis and offered him the English crown if he would join with the rebels to defeat John. Louis accepted the offer, and 150 years after the Norman Conquest, a second French invasion of England was planned.

Late in the year 1216, Louis assembled a force of 7,000 men – including 140 knights. They were sent to England with plans for Louis to follow with a second contingent of Frenchmen a few months later. This first wave of French troops crossed the Channel and headed to London which was still a rebel stronghold.

Now when I say that the troops crossed the Channel, obviously I'm referring to the English Channel. The word ***channel*** is another word borrowed from French during the Middle English period. And in case you never realized it, the word ***channel*** shares the same Latin root as the word ***canal***. The Latin root was ***canalis***. So the word ***canal*** retains that initial Latin /ka/ sound and was actually borrowed into English from Latin. But the word ***channel*** – with its 'C-H' sound – shows the influence of the central French dialects around Paris. ***Channel*** first appears in English in the late 1300s. So again, this word ***channel*** shows that English speakers were borrowing from the central French dialects during this period.

And by the way, since English didn't have the word ***channel*** until the late 1300s, you may be wondering what English speakers called the English Channel before them. Well, one term was the 'French Sea.' And in late 1216, a contingent of Frenchmen cross this French Sea to support the rebels in England.

At this point, John turned his attention to the rebel bases in the north of England. He traveled to the north and ravaged the countryside and rebel bases. For a while, it looked like John had the upper hand, and several prominent rebels abandoned the cause and came back to John's side. In doing so, they had to swear the allegiance to John, and they also had to renounce Magna Carta.

By this point, the rebels were in desperate need of Louis's full French army. And in May of 1216, the rebels finally got the boost they needed when Louis arrived in England with reinforcements. They joined with the troops that Louis had sent earlier. It was the lift that the rebels needed. They recognized Louis as the new king and did homage to him.

At first, Louis advanced with very little opposition. He proceeded to Rochester and took Rochester Castle back from John's supporters. He then headed to London where he was welcomed by the rebels. Four days later, he headed down to Winchester to confront John, but John had already fled. The barons in London took the opportunity afforded by John's retreat to head east and capture territory throughout the southeast of England. By this point, about two-thirds of the English barons had abandoned John. And Louis soon controlled most of the eastern counties of England.

At this point, it looked like a repeat of William the Conqueror's campaign of 1066. And it looked like the French king's son was about to become King Louis I of England. In fact, as far as the rebels were concerned, he was already the king. A second French conquest was underway, but this conquest was centered in Paris – not Normandy.

Up to this point, everything had gone according to plan for Louis. But then he started to get bogged down. He tried to attack John's strongholds at Dover and Windsor, but after two months, the sieges had accomplished nothing. Louis's momentum soon came to an end.

In September of 1216, John decided to head east to confront the rebels in eastern England. But while he was there, he became violently ill with dysentery. He then headed back west and pressed on despite being in excruciating pain. While trying to cross a river, part of John's baggage train was lost in the water and quicksand. In the process, John lost most of his household belongings, including a huge collection of valuables including holy relics, goblets, jewels and all of the regalia used for coronations.

The valuables were in a carriage that was lost, and ***carriage*** is another French word that was borrowed from northern France. It first appeared in the 1400s, but before that – in the early 1300s – we find the word ***car*** which is really just another version of the word ***carriage***. Both words were derived from the Latin root word ***carrus*** which meant 'a vehicle.' Notice that we have a ***car*** and ***carriage*** – not a 'char' and a 'charriage.' So that suggests that these words came in from the Norman dialect or another northern French dialect where those words were still pronounced with a 'C-A' – or /ka/ – sound. We also have the words ***carry*** and ***carrier*** which are also derived from that same root. You use a ***car*** or ***carriage*** to ***carry*** things, so that makes them a type of ***carrier***. Again, all of those words were borrowed from French, and they all appear for the first time in English documents in 1300s and 1400s. They all start with a 'C-A' – or /ka/ – sound, so they all represent northern French forms.

But mixed in with those northern French forms, we also have central French forms used in the Parisian dialect. At the same time that words like ***car*** and ***carry*** and ***carriage*** were coming in, English also borrowed the word ***chariot***. And ***chariot*** is another French word derived from that same Latin root. But in this case, the word ***chariot*** has the initial 'C-H' sound that was common around Paris. That suggests that it came in from central France.

And ***chariot*** is not the only version of the word to come in with a 'C-H' sound. In the early 1200s – around the current point in our overall story – we also got the word ***charge***. Now at first glance, it may be hard to see how ***charge*** is connected to words like ***chariot*** and ***car*** and ***carry***. But the connection has to do with what happens to a carriage or other vehicle when its loaded down with goods. That was the original sense of the word ***charge*** in the early 1200s. It referred to a vehicle loaded with goods or other items. So it came to refer to a heavy load or burden. From there, it came to mean any type of load or burden, so anything you might be responsible for. You might be ***charged*** with taking care of someone. In that case, you were put ***in charge***. Sometimes you had the burden and responsibility to lead a group of people. You had to ***take charge***.

Sometimes that left you with a heavy financial burden. And that sense of financial obligation led to the financial sense of the word ***charge***. A merchant might charge you a certain amount of money for his goods. And in later English, you could pay on the spot or ***charge it*** and have the burden of paying for it later. So we use the word ***charge*** in many different ways today, but they are all related to that original sense of the word as a vehicle that carried goods or people. And since the word ***charge*** begins with a 'C-H' sound, we know that it came in from the central French dialect spoken in places like Paris.

So in the words ***car***, ***carriage***, ***carry***, ***carrier***, and ***chariot*** and ***charge***, we can see how English borrowed liberally from both French dialects.

Now I noted that John lost a lot of valuables when part of his carriage train was lost in water and quicksand, and that included much of his royal wardrobe. And that brings us to another Norman French word – ***wardrobe***. The 'W' sound at the beginning is a giveaway. The word is actually a compound word – combining the words ***ward*** and ***robe***. The ***robe*** part is pretty straightforward, but it's the ***ward*** part that indicates the origin of the term.

The word ***ward*** meant someone who oversees or keeps guard. It's a Germanic word that passed into French, and the Normans retained the Germanic 'W' sound at the front. The word eventually passed into English as ***ward*** and ***warden***. And it came in as part of this compound word ***wardrobe***. But as we've seen, people in Paris and central France had a problem with that initial 'W' sound. So they used a 'G' sound in its place. In that dialect, ***ward*** became ***guard***, and ***warden*** became ***guardian***. Again, all of those words passed into English, so we see how English borrowed from both dialects.

That etymology indicates that a ***wardrobe*** is literally the place where robes or other clothing are guarded and protected. But here's the thing. If we were to return to the Middle English period, we would find that Middle English had both ***wardrobe*** and ***garderobe***. So it had both the Norman version and the Parisian version. And in fact, ***garderobe*** was still in common use throughout the 1800s, and can still be found in some places even today.

During the time of King John, there was a special royal department called the Wardrobe that was responsible for maintaining the king's clothing and other valuables. The Wardrobe officers traveled with the King. And it was presumably some of those officials who perished when the carriages carrying John's valuables were lost in the waters of eastern England.

Needless to say John was very upset at the loss of so many valuables, apparently including his crown and many other important objects. To sooth his grief, John decided to have a dinner of peaches and new cider, which was a horrible choice for someone suffering from dysentery. Following the dinner, John's condition quickly deteriorated, and it soon became apparent that he was dying. On his deathbed, John named his 9-year old son Henry as his heir, and he designated William Marshall as regent and guardian of the young boy. John died a short time later on October 18, 1216. A well-known chronicler of the time named Matthew Paris wrote the following about John's death. He wrote, "Foul as it is, Hell itself is defiled by the foulness of John."

Now I mentioned that William Marshall became the regent and guardian of John's young son. That name may sound familiar because I've mentioned Marshall before. In fact, if this was a proper history of England, I would have probably mentioned him a lot more. He had been an important figure in the background of English politics for several decades. I mentioned Marshall way back when I talked about knights in Episode 80. I noted in that episode that William Marshall became the most famous knight in England because of his success in various tournaments around France and England. That was way back in the mid-1100s.

He later became an important noble and baron. He was a supporter of John's father, Henry II, and John's brother, Richard. When Richard died, you might remember that the crown was disputed between John and John's nephew Arthur. Well, Marshall was a key figure in supporting John's claim to the throne. That's not to say that he and John always saw eye-to-eye. But, ultimately, Marshall remained loyal to John and didn't join the rebellion. By this point, he was nearly 70 years – a very advanced age for the 1200s. Despite his age, John's supporters trusted Marshall, and they knew that he could effectively rule England in the name of John's young son.

Ten days later, the young boy was anointed and crowned as the new king at a makeshift ceremony. He thereby became Henry III. At only 9 years of age, he was the first child to inherit the throne since Aethelred the Unready. And given his age, he was really just a figurehead. Marshall and several close advisors were now in charge, and they decided to make an overture to the rebels to try to end the war. The first thing they did was to re-issue Magna Carta. It was a slightly scaled-back version of the Charter, but it was an olive branch, and it was a major reversal from John's refusal to recognize the Charter.

Ultimately, the war had been fought over the king's refusal to recognize Magna Carta. So by re-issuing the Charter in young Henry's name, it was an attempt to reconcile the two sides. At the very least, this move undercut much of Louis's support. Why support a French king when there was a young English king willing to uphold a version of the Charter? Most of the rebels' anger had been aimed at John, and with John's death, the source of much of that anger was gone. Many of the rebel barons started to abandon Louis, but Louis pressed on.

In the spring of the following year, Louis's troops had set up camp in the town of Lincoln in the East Midlands, and they were besieging Lincoln Castle. Marshall and his allies decided to confront Louis's troops in the town, and he caught the French troops completely by surprise. Louis's forces were soundly defeated at what became known as the Battle of Lincoln. Louis's forces had set up camp, but William Marshall defeated them and became the champ. ***Camp*** is a Norman word for a place where troops are stationed, but the person who controls the battlefield is the ***champ*** – or ***champion*** – using the Parisian form of the word. ***Champion*** actually appeared in English for the first time around the current point in our story.

With Marshall emerging as the champion at Lincoln, Louis's campaign largely came to an end. French reinforcements were soon sent to England, but the fleet was intercepted and defeated before they could reach the English shores. That sealed Louis's fate. Louis cut his losses, and left England for good in September of 1217.

With the civil war over, the decision was made to re-issue Magna Carta yet again. This version – the 1217 version – more or less followed the version issued the prior year with only a few minor changes. For example, the provision that allowed a committee of twenty-five barons to enforce the Charter was removed. The provision that gave the Barons the right to consent to taxation had been omitted the year before, and it was omitted again. But despite that omission, it became a standard practice going forward for the king's council to consult with the barons when most taxes were levied.

There was another important change to this 1217 version of the Charter. The original charter had several provisions dealing with the royal forest. This was such a concern for the barons that it was decided to pull those provisions out of the main charter and put them in a separate, smaller charter called the Charter of the Forest.

This was actually a big deal because it explains how Magna Carta got its name. The Charter of the Forest was the smaller of the two charters going forward. The main charter was the bigger of two charters. So it became known as the big charter – or in Latin – the Magna Carta. So it was only at this point that the charter started to be called Magna Carta.

Now as we know, ***carta*** is a Latin word, and ***charter*** is the French and English version of that word with a 'C-H' sound. That 'C-H' sound indicates that the word was borrowed from the dialects of Paris and central France. The word ***charter*** – or ***chartre*** – first appeared in English around the current point in our story in the mid-1200s. But English also had the Norman version ***cartre***. By the 1300s, the Parisian form ***charter*** had won out.

I should also note that we have the words ***card*** and ***chart*** which are also two variations of the same word and which are both derived from the Latin word ***carta***. And it would be tempting to assume that ***card*** in the Norman version and ***chart*** is the Parisian version. But actually, both forms came from Paris and the surrounding regions of central France. ***Chart*** is clearly a Parisian form with its 'C-H' form. But that dialect also borrowed the word ***carte*** from Italian. Italian maintained the original 'C-A' – or /ka/ – sound of Latin. So that gave Parisian French ***chart*** and ***carte***. And both words meant 'a piece of paper.' In Modern French, the word ***carte*** usually refers to a menu. And even in English, we might order something 'a la carte.' Eventually, both forms of the word were borrowed into English. And that gave Middle English ***chart*** and ***carte*** with very similar meanings. Over time, ***carte*** became ***card*** in English. So today, we have ***chart*** and ***card***. But again, those are really just two different forms of the word, and both can be traced back to the standard French of Paris.

So at this point, we have the big charter – also known as Magna Carta . And we have the small charter – called the Charter of the Forest. And before I move on, let me mention a couple of things about that smaller Charter of the Forest. Up to the time of these charters, the king had complete control and say over the royal forests. Remember that the royal forests were to be preserved for deer and other wild animals. Anyone who hunted without the king's permission or cut down trees for firewood was subject to severe punishment – even blinding, castration or death.

As we've seen in earlier episodes, hunting was one of the favorite pastimes of kings. ***Hunt*** is an Old English word. The French word was ***chacier*** or, as we know it today, the ***chase***. That word also became a verb – ***to chase*** – meaning to pursue something vigorously. ***Chase*** with its initial 'C-H' is the Parisian form of the word. But we also have the word ***catch*** from the same root. And ***catch*** is the Norman form of the word with its initial 'C-A' – or /ka/ – sound. So you might 'chase' a deer using the Parisian word, and you might 'catch' a deer with the Norman word.

And when you catch a small animal, you might need to put it in a bag or other container. That container came to be called a ***case***. So ***chase*** and ***case*** are also two variations of the same word. ***Chase*** is the Parisian version and ***case*** is the Norman version.

So kings loved the chase – or the hunt. And that meant they needed a lot of forest land. And over time, more and more land in England had been designated as royal forest land. During John's reign, nearly one-third of England was considered royal forest. So this was what the barons were trying to address with they carved out the forest provisions from Magna Carta and established that new forest charter.

The new charter basically said that all forest land should be rolled back to the time of Henry II about 30 years earlier. So any forest land created by Richard or John was revoked. But this actually had little effect because Richard and John didn't really add much new land to the forest. It was their father Henry who had created so many new forests. So going back to his time didn't provide much relief.

However, other provisions did provide some relief. For one thing, the most severe punishments like blinding, castration and death were no longer allowed for violations of the forest law. Violators could only be punished with a fine or, if they failed to pay, with imprisonment. Just as importantly, if a person held land in a forest, that person could gather wood and exploit the natural resources as long as he or she didn't harm the rights of any neighbors.

And that was a big change, and it was related to a traditional ancient right that people had over common lands. Prior to the Norman Conquest, a lot of land was held by the commons or the community. And a peasant could take limbs and wood from the commons as long as he didn't damage the land. So a peasant was not allowed to take an ax and chop down trees, but he could remove damaged limbs and brush.

So you may be wondering how a peasant or farmer collected the limbs and branches if he couldn't use an ax? Well, he was permitted to use a hook-shaped tool to reach up and pull down damaged limbs or branches. As long as he could reach them with his hook and pull them down, he was fine. Well ***hook*** is an Old English word. But around the current point in our story, the Norse word ***crook*** started to appear in English documents for the first time. ***Crook*** also referred to a hook-shaped tool – especially the type used by shepherds. So a peasant was entitled to collect all that he could gather with a hook or a crook in the common lands or on the lands of his landlord. And this is the most popular explanation for the phrase "by hook or by crook" to mean 'by any means necessary.' A version of that phrase appears as early as the late 1300s. There are some other theories about the origin of that phrase, but this connection to forest land appears to carry the most weight.

Now as with any charter or agreement, there needed to be a way to enforce the provisions. And the Charter of the Forest had a specific provision requiring certain officers to inspect the forest to make sure that there were no violations or encroachments. These officers were called ***regarders***. The word appears in Latin in these early charters, but it was soon borrowed into English. The regarders were twelve knights who were chosen as officers of the forest. The inspection of the

forest was called a ***regard***, and the area under the jurisdiction of a regarder was also called a ***regard***. So the regarders were inspectors who guarded and protected the respective rights of the king and the people in the forest. And that helps to explain the etymology of the word ***regard***. ***Regard*** is a combination of the prefix ***-re*** and the word ***guard*** meaning 'to protect.' The word also had a broader sense meaning to inspect or consider something. And this is sense that still survives in Modern English. When we ***regard*** something today, we take it under consideration.

So ***regard*** is really just a variation of the word ***guard***. And I mentioned that word ***guard*** earlier in reference to the term ***wardrobe***. As we saw, ***guard*** and ***guardian*** are the Parisian forms of the word with their initial 'G' sound. And ***ward*** and ***warden*** are the Norman versions of the word with their initial 'W' sound. And notice that today, a modern officer of the forest is sometimes called a ***game warden***, especially in the US. So a medieval ***regarder*** is a modern ***game warden***. ***Regarder*** is the Parisian form of the word, and ***game warden*** is the based on the Norman form.

By the way, as we might expect, the Norman word ***warden*** appeared in English first – around the current point in our story in the early 1200s. But the Parisian forms ***guard*** and ***guardian*** and ***regard*** appeared about a century later in the 1300s. So once again, the Parisian forms joined the older Norman forms over time.

So if ***guard*** and ***ward*** are ultimately the same word, does that mean that ***regard*** and ***reward*** are also two different versions of the same word? Well, yes. The words ***regard*** and ***reward*** once existed side-by-side in English, and they had the exact same meaning. One was the Parisian form, and one was the Norman form. Both words meant 'to regard or consider or determine something.' But over time, English started to distinguish the two words.

Regard was used to refer to the process of considering or inspecting something, and r***eward*** was used to refer to the consequences of that inspection. So if you were in violation of forest laws or any other laws, you might be punished. But if you were in compliance, you might receive some benefit or token of appreciation. Believe it or not, ***reward*** could be used both ways in Middle English. If you were fined or imprisoned or punished for a violation, that was sometimes called a ***reward***. But that negative sense of the word died out over time. Obviously, the positive sense survived. And today we associate a ***reward*** with good behavior and as a benefit for some accomplishment.

So returning to our overall narrative, we find ourselves in the year 1217. The civil war has been brought to an end. A new version of Magna Carta has been issued, together with a separate smaller charter called the Charter of the Forest. And we have a new boy king named Henry III whose affairs were being managed by an elderly regent named William Marshall. Again, 'William' Marshall using the Norman version of the name, not the Parisian form 'Guillaume.'

I've noted before that English was starting to make a comeback during this period. And we have more evidence of this from the following year – the year 1218. As we know, Latin was the language of the Church. But around the year 1218, the diocese of Salisbury issued a set of rules related to the baptism of children in the case of an emergency where no traditional priest was available. The rules allowed laymen to baptize children in those cases, and they were permitted

to conduct the baptism in 'either French or English.' The rules also dealt with wedding ceremonies. They ordered the words of the wedding service to be taught to the bride and groom in either French or English. This shows that English was acquiring an acceptance in certain formal situations – even some church proceedings. But it also shows that French was being used side–by-side with English. This was a trend that would continue for the next few centuries. French was increasingly used in place of Latin in many government and legal proceedings. And eventually, English would also be used in those proceedings, but that would take a while longer.

In the following year – 1219 – William Marshall died. So that left young Henry without a regent or guardian. The next few years witnessed a power struggle between two different men who wanted to take control of the English government while Henry was a child. On one side, there was Hubert de Burgh who held the position of Justiciar, and he controlled the judiciary and the Exchequer. On the other side, there was a bishop named Peter des Roches who I have mentioned in earlier episodes. He was the one bishop who remained loyal to King John during the Interdict when all the churches were closed. He was a Frenchman and he had remained loyal to John throughout his struggle with the barons. As a result, many of the English barons resented him and favored the other official, Hubert de Burgh. Meanwhile, most of the Frenchmen in the English government favored the bishop, Peter des Roches. So an English and French division started to emerge within the government.

Initially, the Justiciar Hubert de Burgh won the power struggle and, by the year 1224, he was firmly in control of the government. The bishop, des Roches, lost his position at court. He left England for a while to join the Holy Roman Emperor on a crusade.

By this point, the old French king Philip had died, and his son Louis finally succeeded him as King of France. So even though Louis failed to become King of England, he had finally become King of France. During this period, Louis had tried to seize the northern part of Aquitaine called Poitou. That region was still claimed by England, so as the effective head of the English government, Hubert de Burgh launched a military campaign in France to try to secure Poitou. But over the next three years, his forces were defeated and the whole mission largely fell apart.

In 1227, young Henry had reached 20 years of age. So he finally declared himself to be of age, and he started to rule England in his name without de Burgh. A truce was reached with France, but Henry was not at all happy with de Burgh. Henry apparently blamed de Burgh for the failed expedition in France. When Henry tried to launch his own campaign in France to recover the lands that had been lost there, de Burgh objected. DeBurgh felt that the French lands were lost for good. And another protracted war in France would just re-create the situation that had existed in John's time. The English barons didn't want to fight in France, and they certainly didn't want to pay the taxes that were required to support another campaign. De Burgh felt that another war would lead to another revolt by the barons.

But in many ways, Henry was truly his father's son. He didn't have his father's cruelty, but he was prone to making bad decisions, and he really wanted to be a major player in European politics and society. He wanted to be seen as a leader in France, as well as England. He wanted to piece back together the great empire that had been lost by his father. And that is really the key

to understanding what happened over the next few years. Time and again, Henry courted and favored Frenchmen who might help him establish a prominent role in French politics. And as we'll see, he brought many French nobles to England over the next few decades.

In 1230, Henry ignored the advice of de Burgh, and he launched his own expedition in France to recover Poitou. Several months passed without any major victories, and eventually his army dissolved. Henry returned home bankrupt and humiliated. He was able to maintain his control over the far southern part of Aquitaine called Gascony. But that was the only French province still under English control.

Henry continued to blame de Burgh for all of these failures. So after he returned home to England, he dismissed de Burgh and recalled Peter des Roches – the French bishop who had been so loyal to his father. The bishop and the bishop's nephew soon took control of the administration of England. They proceeded to dismiss most of the native English officers – who had supported DeBurgh. They then brought in Frenchmen to take their place – especially men from Poitou. About 2000 knights and soldiers where imported from Poitou and Brittany. A contemporary chronicler named Roger of Wendover wrote an account of the period in Latin. He wrote that King Henry "invited such legions of people from Poitou that they entirely filled England, and wherever the king went he was surrounded by crowds of these foreigners; and nothing was done in England except what the bishop of Winchester and his host of foreigners determined."

Roger also wrote that the new Frenchmen took control of counties and baronies and castles throughout England, and they oppressed the native Englishmen. Many of the English nobles who had supported DeBurgh had their lands confiscated without legal process. The common perception among many of the English barons was that young Henry was following his father's path and had no intention of honoring Magna Carta. They also felt that he was only interested in French politics and had no interest in England or the concerns of the English barons.

One consequence of these developments is that there were more and more French-speaking nobles and officials who spoke a form of central and southern French. They didn't speak Norman, so Norman French continued its decline. This may help to explain why English started to borrow so many French words from other parts of France during this period.

In fact, the renewed French influence in England may be revealed in a Charter that was issued in 1233 – the same year that des Roches and his nephew were recalled to England. That royal charter stated that all English laws had been translated into French so that "everyone will understand." Now, by 'everyone,' the Charter presumably meant all of those French nobles because it doesn't say anything about English. And maybe that comment was a reference to the fact that fewer people were speaking Latin which was the traditional language used for Norman laws. So this charter shows that French was starting to be used as a legal language in place of Latin. But it is interesting that the laws were written in French to make them more understandable – not English. That suggests that the people in charge of enforcing the laws still spoke French and had no need for a version in English.

Later in that same year, William Marshall's son, Richard, led a revolt against Henry in the Welsh Marches. Richard was eventually killed in the uprising. And this was apparently a breaking point for many of the native Englishmen. The English bishops and the archbishop-elect of Canterbury threatened to excommunicate Henry if he didn't get rid of des Roches and all the Frenchmen in his court. Henry eventually bowed to the pressure and dismissed des Roches and his nephew.

But Henry just couldn't resist the allure of Frenchmen. A couple of years later, in 1236, he married a French woman named Eleanor of Provence. She was second daughter of the count of Provence, and her older sister was married to the French king Louis. So Louis and Henry now became brothers-in-law. With this marriage, a new influx of southern Frenchmen started to arrive in England. They were Eleanor's relatives and courtiers, and they were given offices and lands throughout England. One of her uncles was given the earldom of Richmond. Another uncle was made the archbishop of Canterbury. Another Frenchman in her court was named the bishop of Hereford.

Earlier, I mentioned a well-known chronicler of the period named Matthew Paris. He wrote the following about this situation: "Our English king ... has fattened all the kindred and relatives of his wife with lands, possessions, and money, and he has contracted such a marriage that he cannot be more enriched, but rather impoverished."

And Henry wasn't done. After his father John died, his mother had returned to southern France where she was from. And she soon married a local noble there. When she died a few years later, Henry invited many of her second husband's relatives to England. They were also given land and titles in England. One was made bishop of Winchester. Their daughters were married to English nobles.

All of this culminated in another revolt by the barons in the mid-1250s, and that revolt led to the creation of an early version of Parliament. But we'll deal those developments in an upcoming episode. For now, the important point is that England was experiencing a second French invasion. It wasn't a military conquest like the Norman invasion. It was a gradual influx of Frenchmen from central and southern France, and they were taking a prominent position throughout the English nobility. They also reinforced the French influences that were already on the ground in England. So I want to focus on the linguistic consequences of all of this renewed French influence.

As we've seen, England was increasingly exposed to a variety of French dialects – not just the Norman dialect to which it had become accustomed over the prior century and a half. So French words continued to pour in, but they increasingly came in from central France with slightly different pronunciations.

So far, I've focused on two of the most obvious distinctions between the traditional Norman dialect and the dialect of Paris. We've looked at the 'C-H' sound of Paris versus the 'C-A' sound of Normandy, and the 'G' sound of Paris versus the 'W' sound of Normandy.

Those distinctions can also found in a few other words that I haven't mentioned in this episode, but I have mentioned in other episodes. For example, we have the Norman word ***cattle*** and the Parisian word ***chattel***. As we might expect, the Norman version ***cattle*** is attested first – around the year 1200 – when John was King. The Parisian version ***chattel*** came in a few decades later in the mid-1200s – around the time that Henry was inviting in all of those new Frenchmen.

I noted in an earlier episode that the Latin word for lattice work was ***cancellus***. The court official who worked behind a lattice barrier was called a ***cancellarius*** in Latin, and in the Norman French dialect, that title become the ***canceler***. But in the central French of Paris, it became ***chancellor***. Throughout the 1200s, both versions were used in England. But by the end of the century, the Parisian form ***chancellor*** had won out.

This sound change tended to happen at the beginning of words, but sometimes it was found in the middle. So you might go to a ***market*** using a northern French word with a 'K' sound in the middle, and while you are there, you might encounter a ***merchant*** using a Parisian word with a 'C-H' sound in the middle. The ultimate origin of ***market*** is not certain, but it does follow a form used in northern France, and it first appeared in the Peterborough Chronicle at a time when Norman influence was very strong. ***Merchant*** appeared for the first time around the current point in our story in the early 1200s at a time when other French dialects were pouring in.

So those are just a few examples of Norman and Parisian pairs – or doublets – that entered English during the early Middle English period. Now I've focused on those two common sound differences – the Norman 'C-A' versus the Parisian 'C-H' and the Norman 'W' versus the Parisian 'G.' But there are actually a couple of other sound differences that distinguish those dialects. So let me conclude by mentioning those.

The first difference has to do with the assibilation of the 'K' sound in French. Remember that? That was one of the first sound changes I discussed in the podcast way back in Episode 5. In the standard French of Paris, the hard 'K' sound switched to an 'S' sound before the front vowels – E and I. That explains why English has so many words where the letter C represents the 'S' sound – like ***center*** and ***civil***. When a C appears before an E or an I in English, it is usually pronounces as an S because that's what happened in standard French, and those rules were imported to English.

Well, in the Norman dialect, the hard 'K' sound tended to shift to 'C-H' sound before an E or an I. That was actually the same change that happened in Old English. Anyway, all of that means that Norman words tended to have a 'C-H' sound where many Parisian words had an 'S' sound. So I gave the classic example of ***catch*** and ***chase***. ***Catch*** is the Norman word and ***chase*** is the Parisian word. And in that earlier discussion, I focused on the sounds at the beginning of those words. But let's look at the end of those words. The Norman word ***catch*** ends in a 'CH' sound whereas the Parisian word ***chase*** ends in an 'S' sound. So once we put this sound change together with that earlier change, we can see exactly how those two words developed.

Let's also compare the word ***launch*** and ***lance*** which are variations of the same word. ***Launch*** is the Norman version of the word with the 'C-H' sound at the end, and ***lance*** is the Parisian word with the 'S' sound at the end. Both words were recorded around the same time in the late 1200s and 1300s. ***Launch*** literally meant to wield a lance, but today we use it more specifically to refer to the process of throwing or hurling something.

Another good example of this sound difference can be found in the words ***chisel*** and ***scissors***. Believe it or not, these are two variations of the same Latin root word. And the difference between the Norman and Parisian dialects can be heard at the beginning of those two words. Latin had the word ***caedere*** meaning to cut. In the standard French of Paris, the initial 'K' sound eventually shifted to an 'S' sound and produced the word ***scissors***. But in Normandy, the 'K' sound shifted to a 'C-H' sound and produced the word ***chisel***. Both words appeared in English for the first time in the late 1300s and early 1400s.

Now there is one last sound difference that I want to discuss, and it helps to explain a lot of other word pairs that we have in Modern English. When late Latin evolved into early French, a new vowel sound was created within very early French. It was actually a diphthong, so it was two different vowel sounds squeezed together. It was pronounced something like /ei/, and it was often spelled 'EI.' It was similar to the sound we have in words like ***vein*** (V-E-I-N) and ***reign*** (R-E-I-G-N) which both entered English from French in the 1200s.

This sound remained unchanged in the Norman dialect. But in the prior century, in the 1100s, the sound had changed in the central dialects spoken in places like Paris. There, the sound became /oy/ – typically spelled either O-I or O-Y. Now this sound didn't exist in English. But in the early 1200s, some of these Parisian words started to come in – and this new sound was introduced to English.

I actually mentioned this when I went through Layamon's Brut. In that episode, I pointed out the word ***Babylon*** which was rendered as ***Babiloine*** (spelled B-A-B-I-L-O-I-N-E). I noted that that was one of the first words to enter English with that /oy/ sound.

Well that /oy/ sound had developed within those central dialects of France like the dialect of Paris. But it wasn't as common in Normandy or in the south of France. So this helps to explain the difference between word pairs like ***regal*** and ***royal***, and ***legal*** and ***loyal***. ***Regal*** is based on the Latin root word ***regalis***. Norman French had the word as ***real***, which is unrelated to our modern word ***real***. But Parisian French had this sound change, and the word was rendered as ***royal*** in that dialect thanks to that sound change. So English originally had the Norman form ***real*** which first appeared in the early 1300s. Then in the late 1300s, the Parisian form ***royal*** came in, as did the Latin form ***regal***.

The same thing happened with the words ***legal*** and ***loyal***, which are also separate versions of the same word. The original Latin version was ***legalis***, and that ultimately produced the word ***legal***. The Norman version was ***leal*** , and the Parisian version was ***loyal***. A vassal who met his obligations to his lord was in compliance with the law. So he was ***legal***. And by meeting his obligations, he was also ***loyal*** to the lord. When the vassal swore an oath to his lord, it was a

legal oath and it was an oath of loyalty. So that helps to explain the connection between the words ***legal*** and ***loyal***. Again, ***legal*** is the Latin form, ***leal*** is the Norman form, and ***loyal*** is the Parisian form with the /oy/ sound. By the way, the Norman version ***leal*** disappeared from standard English, but it still exists in the English dialects of Scotland.

This Parisian sound change from /ei/ to /oy/ also helps to explain the difference between ***display*** and ***deploy***. Again, these are both derived from the same word. They both originally meant 'to roll out.' So you might roll out or ***display*** a flag, or you might roll out or ***deploy*** troops on a military campaign. ***Deploy*** is the Parisian verison of the word with the /oy/ sound And ***display*** represents the form found in Normandy and other parts of France.

This sound change also accounts for the difference between ***feeble*** and ***foible***, which also share the same root. And also the difference between ***convey*** and ***convoy***. Both of those words originally meaning to travel together. ***Convey*** came to refer to transportation, and then the general act of transferring something from one person to another. ***Convoy*** is the Parisian version of the word, and it retains more of the original meaning as a group of people traveling together.

Now I should note that the /oy/ sound continued to evolve within the standard French itself. If you are familiar with French, you probably know that words spelled with 'OI' are not pronounced /oy/. They're pronounced as /wa/ with an aspirated 'W' sound. Compare the Modern English and French versions of the word ***royal***. The French word is spelled like the English word, except the French version has an extra 'E' on the end. The English word is pronounced /royal/, but the French word is /wa-yell/. Also, think about more recent loanwords from French like ***patois***, ***soiree***, and ***foie gras*** and ***film noir***. All of those are spelled with an O-I, but because they are recent loanwords, they have the modern French pronunciation as /wa/ instead of /oi/. So when we come across a word spelled OI or OY, and pronounced as /oy/, it is usually a word borrowed from standard Parisian French during the Middle or early Modern English period. When words with that spelling are pronounced as /wa/, it usually represents a more recent French loanword. But both of those pronunciation are the product of the standard Parisian dialect. Old words from neighboring French dialects didn't tend to have those sounds.

I think the important point to take from all of this is that English has borrowed a lot of words from French over the centuries. But they didn't all come from a single, uniform dialect. They came from a variety of dialects. The earliest loanwords were mainly from the Norman dialect, which was the speech of the Norman conquerors. But around the current point in our story in the early to mid 1200s, a lot of words started to come in from other parts of France, especially the Parisian dialect of central France which was emerging as a national standard. And Modern English preserves a lot of that history in the words we use all the time.

I'm going to conclude on that note. As we move forward with the story, we are going to focus more and more on those French words that were starting to pour in. I've talked a lot about that influx, but we've only seen a few French words in the documents we've looked at so far. As we move into the mid-1200s, that is going to change. The entire vocabulary of English is about to experience a major shake-up. So as we move forward, we'll explore how the English language abandoned much, but not all, of its Germanic roots.

Until next time, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.