

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

The Feudal System was introduced into Britain after the Norman Conquest. William I of England (William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy) instituted the French system in which the king essentially owns all of the land. The king simply grants **fiefs** (land leases), allowing others to live and work on the land in exchange for oaths of loyalty. By taking this **oath of fealty**, a baron or bishop becomes a **vassal** (life-long servant) to the king. Barons and bishops, in turn, granted part of their land to knights and lords in exchange for oaths of fealty, and so on.

