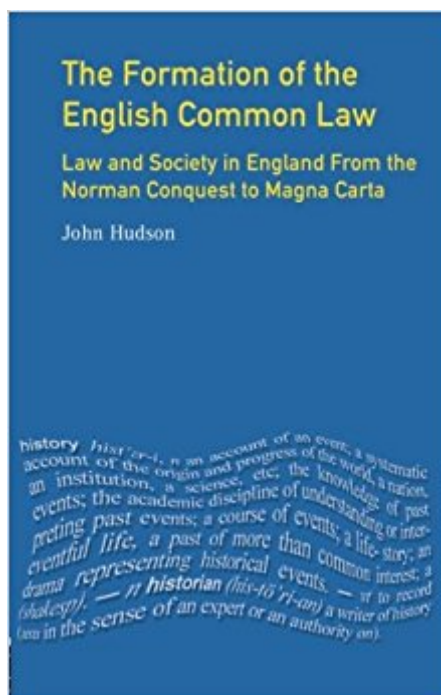


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The Formation Of English Common Law: Law And Society In England From The Norman Conquest To Magna Carta (The Medieval World)



Synopsis

During the Anglo-Norman period a concept of law developed, binding ruler and ruled alike and which was based on custom common throughout the country. This was Common Law and it was from this that subsequent law developed. John Hudson's text is an introductory survey of Common Law for students and other non-specialist readers. Certain aspects of medieval law such as its feuds, its ordeals and its outlaws are well known, this text shows how these aspects fitted in to the system as a whole, considers its Anglo-Saxon origins, the influence of the Norman invaders and later administrative reforms. The events and legal processes also throw light on the society, politics and thought of the times.

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'a welcome introduction to the literature...Hudson writes gracefully, his exposition is exceedingly well-informed' Law and History Review

John Hudson's authoritative but accessible introduction to the formation of the English common law, expressly designed for students and general readers as well as scholars, is assured of a wide welcome. It spans the century and a half from the Norman Conquest to Magna Carta; and, within a strong interpretative framework, it integrates the legal developments with the wider changes in the thought, society and politics of the time. Some manifestations of medieval law will already be known to most readers; its feuds and ordeals, its outlaws, its hangings and mutilations. John Hudson shows

us how these familiar aspects fit into the system of medieval English law as a whole, and how that system relates to what we today call "common law" - the body of custom common throughout England which first moulded, and then defined, people's concept of legal norms, and from which subsequent law developed and against which it has been judged. Dr Hudson explores the role and functioning of law in society; how people used it for their own purposes, and how it was in turn used to control them. Law was a means of settling disputes, of facilitating actions, and of regulating behaviour. Throughout he is able to illustrate and animate these themes by detailed discussion of particular cases, some dramatic, some gruesome. The result is not only to maintain the human interest of a subject which can too easily become aridly technical; it also throws a vivid light on the lives and concerns of the men and women of Anglo-Norman England.

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