

dukes competing for power. Finally, in 987, Hugh Capet [KAY-pit], lord of the Île de France [eel deh-frahns], a relatively small domain stretching from Paris and its environs south to Orléans in the Loire [lwahr] Valley, was selected to serve as king. Hugh began a dynasty of Capetian [kuh-PEE-shun] kings that ruled for the next 350 years. From the beginning, the Capetians concentrated their energies on building a tightly knit administrative bureaucracy. Their most contentious relationship was with the dukes of Normandy, who were fiercely independent, going so far as to claim England for themselves, independent of Capetian influence.

The Normans invaded England in 1066, a story narrated in the famous *Bayeux* [BY-yuh] Tapestry (see *Closer Look* on pages 336–337). England and northern France thus became one country, with one king, William I, the Conqueror, and a small group of barons who owned estates on both sides of the English Channel. To both pacify and defend themselves against the Saxons, the Normans constructed motte and bailey castles (Fig. 10.16). A motte is a raised earth mound, and a bailey is the enclosed courtyard at its base. Archeologists estimate that the Normans built about 500 of them between 1066 and 1086, or one every two weeks. Such fortifications could be built in as little as eight days. In time, elaborate stone castles would replace these fire-prone wooden fortifications.

Fearing an invasion from Denmark, William I ordered a complete survey of the country so that he could more ac-

curately determine how much tax he could raise to provide a new army. Known as the *Domesday* [DOOMZ-day] (or “Judgment”) Book, it measured the population of England at about 1 million, with fully three-quarters of the country’s wealth resting in the hands of the king and 300 landowners. Two hundred of these were French nobles, and only two were English. The other hundred were archbishops, bishops, and the heads of monasteries. The rest of the land was in the hands of small farmers, and 90 percent of the population worked on the land. Some were freemen, but most owed at least partial allegiance to a local lord. Ten percent of the people were serfs, who owned no land at all. The *Domesday Book* gives us a remarkable view of medieval society and of the great gulf between rich and poor upon which it was based.

PILGRIMAGE CHURCHES AND THE ROMANESQUE

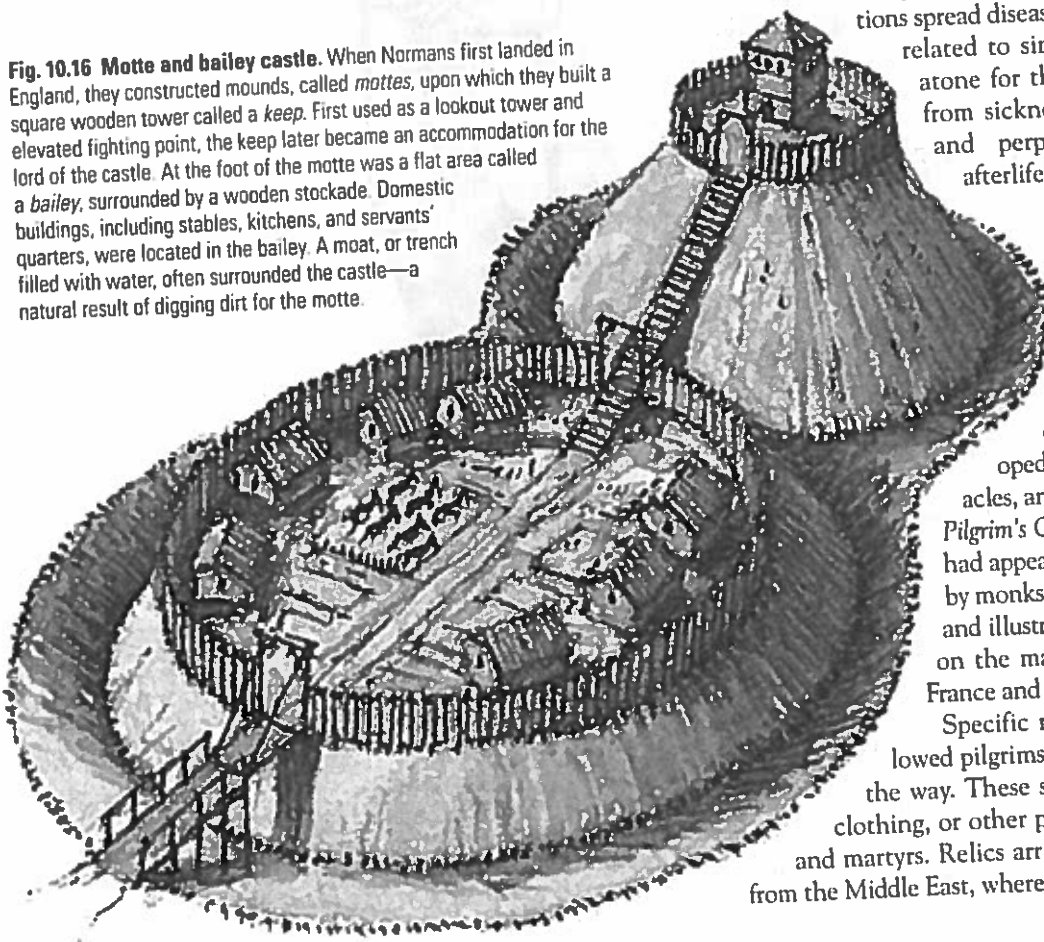
Throughout the Middle Ages, it was customary for Christians to go on religious pilgrimages to holy places or sites containing sacred objects. People believed that their prayers for forgiveness, healing, fertility, or anything else would have a better chance of being fulfilled if they were able to get physically close to a holy object, person, or site. The pilgrimage was also an act of piety, demonstrating the pilgrim’s faith, and, in part, an act of penance. As Europe became increasingly urbanized, worsening hygienic condi-

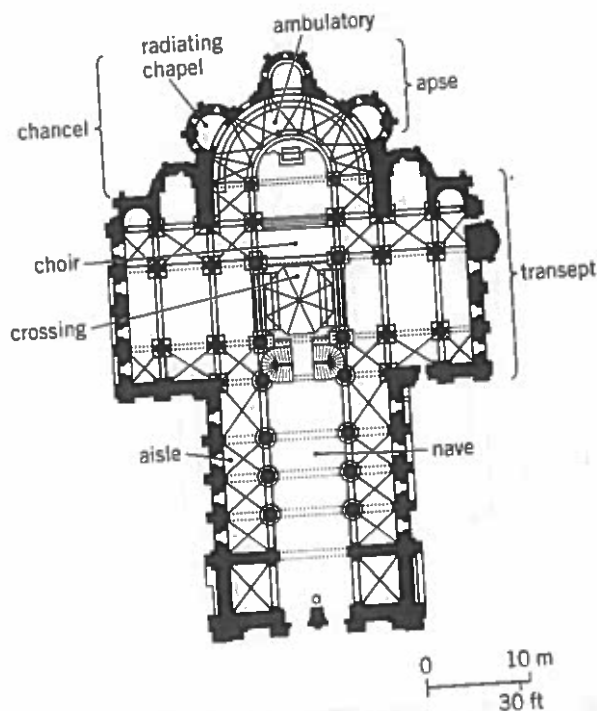
tions spread disease. Believing that disease was related to sinfulness, pilgrims sought to atone for their sins, saving themselves from sickness and contagion on earth and perpetual damnation in the afterlife.

Perhaps because it was close to Northern Europeans than either Jerusalem or Rome, Santiago de Compostela was by far the most popular site of pilgrimages in the eleventh through thirteenth centuries. It had also developed a reputation for repeated miracles, and by the mid-twelfth century *Pilgrim’s Guide to Santiago de Compostela* had appeared. Written in Latin, probably by monks in southern France, it describes and illustrates the towns and monuments on the major pilgrimage routes through France and Spain (Map 10.3).

Specific routes soon developed that allowed pilgrims to visit other sacred sites along the way. These sites housed the relics—bones, clothing, or other possessions—of Christian saints and martyrs. Relics arrived, virtually by the boatload, from the Middle East, where Crusaders, fighting the Mus-

Fig. 10.16 Motte and bailey castle. When Normans first landed in England, they constructed mounds, called *mottes*, upon which they built a square wooden tower called a *keep*. First used as a lookout tower and elevated fighting point, the keep later became an accommodation for the lord of the castle. At the foot of the motte was a flat area called a *bailey*, surrounded by a wooden stockade. Domestic buildings, including stables, kitchens, and servants’ quarters, were located in the bailey. A moat, or trench filled with water, often surrounded the castle—a natural result of digging dirt for the motte.





igs. 10.19 and 10.20 Floor plan and interior of the nave, *Sainte-Foy*, *Conques*, ca. 1050–1120. Some of the innovations of the Romanesque cathedral can be explained, at least in part, by the need to allow pilgrims to pass through the church without disturbing the monks as they attended to their affairs at the main altar in the choir. Thus, an ambulatory extended around the transept and the apse where pilgrims could walk.

quarried locally. The effect is similar to the interior of the Great Mosque at Córdoba [KORD-uh-buh] (see Fig. 9.13), built 300 years earlier, although it remains uncertain if they were influenced by the Islamic mosque. This alternation of brick and stone is a fairly common building technique in Roman architecture, and in fact it may be the case that the architects at Córdoba were themselves imitating Roman models. The effect of the alternating voussoirs at Vézelay, as at Córdoba, is to lighten the visual impact of the arches, giving them an almost airy height.

The pilgrimage churches evidently competed with one another in decorating their basilicas. Writing in the eleventh century, the French Benedictine monk Raoul Glaber [rah-ool-glay-bear] noted, "throughout the world, especially in Italy and Gaul, a rebuilding of church basilicas [is occurring], . . . each Christian people striving against the others to erect nobler ones." The portals to the churches were of special importance. Not only was the portal the first thing the visitor would see, it also marked the boundary between secular and sacred space. The space created under the portal arch, called the tympanum [TIM-puh-num], was filled with sculptural relief.



Fig. 10.21 Interior of the nave, *Church of Sainte-Madeleine, Vézelay, France*, ca. 1089–1206. The nave of this church is extremely long, nearly 200 feet, giving pilgrims a sense of ever-increasing majesty as they moved from the portal at the western, "dark" end of the church toward the choir and reliquary at the eastern end, toward the light of salvation. Vézelay was extensively restored in the nineteenth century.