included in the county, from the date of the Gheld Inquest in 1084 to the second half of the 19th century, when certain minor alterations were made in the county boundary. These have been practically the only changes in the county boundary for 900 years, if we except the exclusion of Bristol from the county jurisdiction in 1373.

At the Conquest Somerset was divided into about 700 fiefs held almost entirely by the Normans. The king’s lands in Somerset were of great extent and importance, and consisted in addition to the ancient demesne of the Crown of the lands of Godwin and Earl Harold and the estates of Queen Edith who died in 1074. The bishop of Winchester owned a vast property of which Taunton was the centre, and about one-tenth of the county was included in the estates of the bishop of Coutances, which were akin to a lay barony and did not descend as a whole at the bishop’s death. The churches of Glastonbury, Athelney and Muchclney still owned vast lands, but Norman spoliation had deprived them of much that they had held before the Conquest. Among the great lay tenants who divided the conquered lands were the count of Mortain (the Conqueror’s half-brother), Roger de Corcelles, Walter de Douai, Roger Arundel and William de Mohun. About this time or a little later many Norman castles were built, some of which have survived. The castles at Richmont (near West Harptree), Nunney, Farleigh, Bridgwater, Stoke Courcy, Taunton and Dunster were probably the most important. Somerset was very rich in boroughs at the time of Domesday, which points to a considerable development of trade before the Conquest; Bath, Taunton, Ilchester, Frome, Milborne Port, Bruton, Langport and Axbridge were all boroughs in 1087, and there was the nucleus of a borough at Yeovil. Somerton, Ilchester and Taunton were successively the meeting-places of the shire court. There were joint sheriffs for Somerset and Dorset until 1566 when a separate sheriff for each county was appointed. In the 7th century Somerset, as part of the kingdom of Wessex, was included in the diocese of Winchester. The new bishopric of Sherborne, founded in 704, contained Somerset until 910 when the see was divided into the dioceses of Salisbury, Exeter and Wells, the latter including the whole county of Somerset. The diocese was divided into three archdeaconries, Bath with two deaneries, Wells with seven and Taunton with four. Disputes between the chapters of Bath and Wells as to the election of the bishop led to a compromise in 1245, the election being by the chapters jointly, and the see being known as the bishopric of Bath and Wells. There has always been a strongly marked division of the bounty into East and West Somerset, a relic of the struggles between the Welsh and Saxons, which was recognized for parliamentary purposes by the act of 1832. Somer­set contained 37 hundreds in 1087, and now contains 41. There have been considerable modifications of these hundredal divi­sions by aggregation or subdivision, but since the 15th century there has been little change. The meeting-place of the hundred courts was at the village or town which gave its name to the hundred in the cases of Bruton, Cannington, Carhampton, Chew, Chewton, Crewkerne, Frome, Glaston Twelve Hides, Huntspili, Kilmersdon, Kingsbury East, Milverton, North Curry, North Petherton, Norton Ferris, Pitney, Portbury, Somerton, South Petherton, Taunton, Tintinhull, Wellow, Wells Forum and Winterstoke. The hundred of Abdick and Bulstone met at Ilford Bridges in Stocklinch Magdalen, Andersfield hundred court was held at the hamlet of Andersfield in the parish of Goathurst, Bath Forum hundred met at Wedcombe, Bemp- stone at a huge stone in the parish of Allerton, Brent and Wrington at South Brent, Catsash at an ash tree on the road between Castle Cary and Yeovil, Hartcliffe and Bedminster at a lofty cliff between the parishes of Barrow Gurnes and Winford, Horethorne or Horethorne Down near Milborne Port, Whitstone at a hill of the same name near Shepton Mallet, Williton and Freemanors in the village of Williton in the parish of St Decumans, and Whitley at Whitley Wood in Walton parish. In the case of Kingsbury the meeting-place of the hundred is not known. The great liberties of the county were Cranmore, Wells and Leigh, which belonged to the abbey of Glastonbury; Easton and Amrill and Hampton and Claverton, which were the liberties of the abbey of Bath; Hinton and Norton, which belonged to the Carthusian priory of Hinton; Witham Priory, a liberty of the house of that name; and Williton Freemanor, which belonged for a time to the Knights Templars.

The chief families of the county in the middle ages were those of De Mohun, Malet, Revel, De Courcy, Montacute, Beauchamp and Beaufort, which bore the titles of earls or dukes of Somerset from 1396 to 1472. Edward Seymour was made duke of Somerset in 1547, and in 1660 the title was restored to the Seymour family, by whom it is still held. The marquess of Bath is the representative of the Thynne family, which has long been settled in the county, and the predecessors of the earl of Lovelace have owned land in Somerset for three centuries. Hinton St George has been the seat of the Poulet family since the 16th century. The De Mohun family were succeeded in the 14th century by the Luttrells, who own great estates round Dunster Castle. The families of Hood, Wyndham, Acland, Strachey, Brokeley, Portman, Hobhouse and Trevelyan have been settled in Somerset since the 16th century.

Somerset was too distant and isolated to take much share in the early baronial rebellions or the Wars of the Roses, and was really without political history until the end of the middle ages. The attempt of Perkin Warbeck in 1497 received some support in the county, and in 1547 and 1549 there were rebellions against enclosures. Somerset took a considerable part in the Civil War, and with the exception of Taunton, was royalist, all the strong­holds being garrisoned and held for the king. Waller was defeated at Landsdown near Bath in 1643, and Goring at the battle of Allermoor in 1645. This defeat was followed by the capture of the castles held by the royalists. Bridgwater and Bath fell in July 1645, Sherborne Castle was taken in August, and after the capture of Nunney, Farleigh and Bristol in September 1645 the whole county was subdued, and very heavy fines were inflicted upon the royalists, who included nearly all the great landowners of the county. Somerset was the theatre of Mon­mouth’s rebellion,· and he was proclaimed king at Taunton in 1685. The battle of Sedgmoor on the 4th of July was followed in the autumn by the Bloody Assize held by Judge Jeffreys.

Somerset has always been an agricultural county. Grain was grown and exported from the 11th to the end of the 18th century. Cider-making has been carried on for centuries. Among other early industries, salmon and herring fisheries on the west coast were very profitable, and mining on the Mendips dated from the pre­Roman period. Stone quarrying at Hambdon Hill and Bath began very early in the history of the county ; and the lead mines at Welling­ton and the slate quarries at Wiveliscombe and Treborough have been worked for more than a century. Coal has been mined at Radstock from a very remote date, but it did not become of great importance commercially until the county was opened up by canals and railways in the 19th century. Sheep-farming was largely carried on after the period of enclosures, and the woollen trade flourished in Frome, Bath, Bridgwater, Taunton and many other towns from the 14th to the 19th centuries. Glove-making was centred at Stoke and Yeovil at the end of the 18th century and became an important subsidiary occupation in many country districts. The county was represented in the parliament of 1290 and probably in the earlier parliamentary councils of Henry 111. In 1295 it was represented by two knights, and twelve boroughs returned two burgesses each. There have been many fluctuations in the borough representation, but the county continued to return two members until 1832, when it was divided into Somerset East and Somerset West, each of which divisions returned two members. Two additional members were returned after 1867 for a third—the Mid-Somerset—division of the county, until by the act of 1885 the whole county was divided into seven divisions.

*Antiquities.—*The great possessions of the bishopric and of the abbey of Glastonbury led to a remarkable lack of castles in the mid part of the county, and also tended to overshadow all other ecclesiastical foundations. Even in the other parts of the county castles are not a prominent feature, and no monastic churches remain perfect except those of Bath and its cell, Dunster. At the dissolution of monasteries Bath was suppressed, the monastery of Glastonbury was destroyed, as were most of the smaller monasteries also. Of those which have left any remains, Woodspring, Montacute (Cluniac) and Old Cleeve (Cistercian)