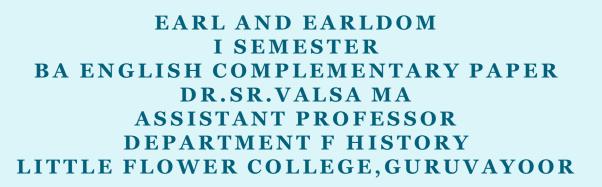
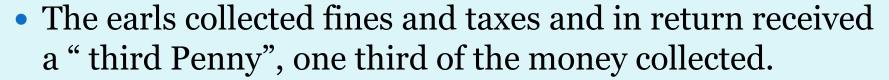
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF BRITAIN:I MODULE I-EARLY HISTORY BRITISH ISLES



- Norman conquest of England introduced the Frankish title of "count" into England.
- This title soon identified with the previous title of Anglo-Saxon "earl" in England.
- An earl is a member of nobility.
- This title originated from the Old English "eorl", means "a man of the noble birth or rank".
- In Anglo-Saxon England earl had authority over their own regions and right to judgment in Provincial Courts, as delegated by the king.



- In war times earls led the kings armies.
- During this period some shires were grouped together into larger units known as earldoms.
- The earldoms were headed by earldom or earl.
- Under Anglo Saxon king Edward the Confessor, important earldoms like Wessex, Mercia, East Anglia and Northumbria much larger reputed one.
- Earls originally functioned essentially as royal governors.



- He made some restrictions to the power of earls and earldoms.
- Most old earldoms disappeared and new ones created such as Hereford, Shropshire, and Chester.
- Their power and regional jurisdictions were minimized.
- Norman king Stephan increased the number of earls to reward those loyal to him in the backdrop of an internal war with his cousins.
- He gave some earls right to hold royal castles or to control the Sheriff.



- But Henry II (1154-1189) curtailed the power of earls and earldom.
- He didn't create new earls or earldom.
- No earls was allowed to remain independent of royal control.
- Following are some imp earldom- East Anglia, Hereford, Kent, Northumbria, Cornwall, Dorset, Chester, Shrewsbury, Surrey, Gloucester, Buckingham.