

# Earl Marshal: The Anarchy 19 - The Man Who Shaped Medieval England



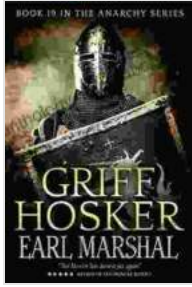
**Earl Marshal (The Anarchy Series Book 19)** by Griff Hosker

★★★★★ 4.7 out of 5

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Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
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Lending	: Enabled



The Anarchy was a tumultuous period in English history that lasted from 1135 to 1153. During this time, England was torn apart by a civil war between the forces of King Stephen and the supporters of Empress Matilda, the rightful heir to the throne. Amidst the chaos and bloodshed, one man emerged as a beacon of leadership and stability: Earl Marshal William the Marshal.

Earl Marshal was a remarkable figure who rose from humble beginnings to become one of the most powerful and respected men in medieval England. He was a skilled warrior, a loyal servant, and a brilliant statesman. His actions during The Anarchy helped to shape the course of English history and left a lasting legacy that continues to inspire and intrigue.

## **Early Life and Career**

Earl Marshal was born in 1146 into a family of minor nobility. His father, John fitz Gilbert, was a knight who served King Henry II. William's mother, Sibyl de Neufmarché, was the daughter of a powerful Norman baron. William received a traditional education, including training in warfare, horsemanship, and courtly manners.

William first came to prominence during the reign of King Henry II. He quickly gained a reputation for his bravery and military prowess. In 1173, he was appointed Marshall of the Royal Court, a prestigious position that gave him responsibility for organizing and commanding the king's army. William served Henry II loyally throughout his reign, and he continued to play a vital role in the royal court after Henry's death in 1189.

## **The Anarchy**

The Anarchy began in 1135 when King Henry I died without a male heir. His daughter, Empress Matilda, was the rightful successor to the throne, but she was challenged by her cousin, Stephen of Blois. Stephen seized the throne and crowned himself king, but Matilda refused to accept his claim. A civil war broke out, and England was plunged into chaos.

Earl Marshal played a pivotal role in The Anarchy. He initially supported King Stephen, but he eventually switched sides and joined the forces of Empress Matilda. William's decision was based on his belief that Matilda was the rightful heir to the throne. He also believed that Stephen's reign was illegitimate and that he was not fit to rule England.

William's defection to Empress Matilda's side was a major turning point in the war. He brought with him a large number of experienced soldiers and his own military expertise. William's forces fought valiantly against Stephen's troops, and they helped to secure several important victories for Matilda.

## **Negotiating Peace**

The Anarchy ended in 1153 with the signing of the Treaty of Wallingford. The treaty was negotiated by Earl Marshal, who played a key role in

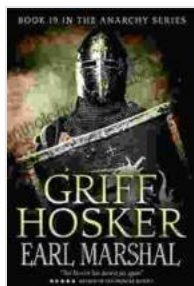
bringing the two sides together. The treaty recognized Matilda's son, Henry, as the rightful heir to the throne. Stephen agreed to step down as king, and Henry was crowned King Henry II in 1154.

William's role in negotiating the Treaty of Wallingford was a testament to his diplomatic skills. He was able to bridge the gap between the two sides and find a compromise that was acceptable to both parties. William's actions helped to end the bloodshed and restore peace to England.

## Legacy and Importance

Earl Marshal died in 1219 at the age of 73. He was buried in the Temple Church in London. William left behind a legacy of service and loyalty. He was a skilled warrior, a brilliant statesman, and a trusted advisor to kings. His actions during The Anarchy helped to shape the course of English history, and he played a vital role in the restoration of peace and stability to England.

Earl Marshal is remembered today as one of the most important figures in medieval English history. He was a man of great courage, loyalty, and integrity. His story continues to inspire and intrigue, and his legacy continues to shape the way we understand medieval England.



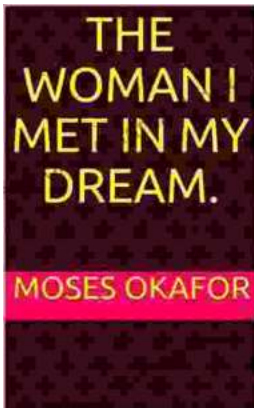
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