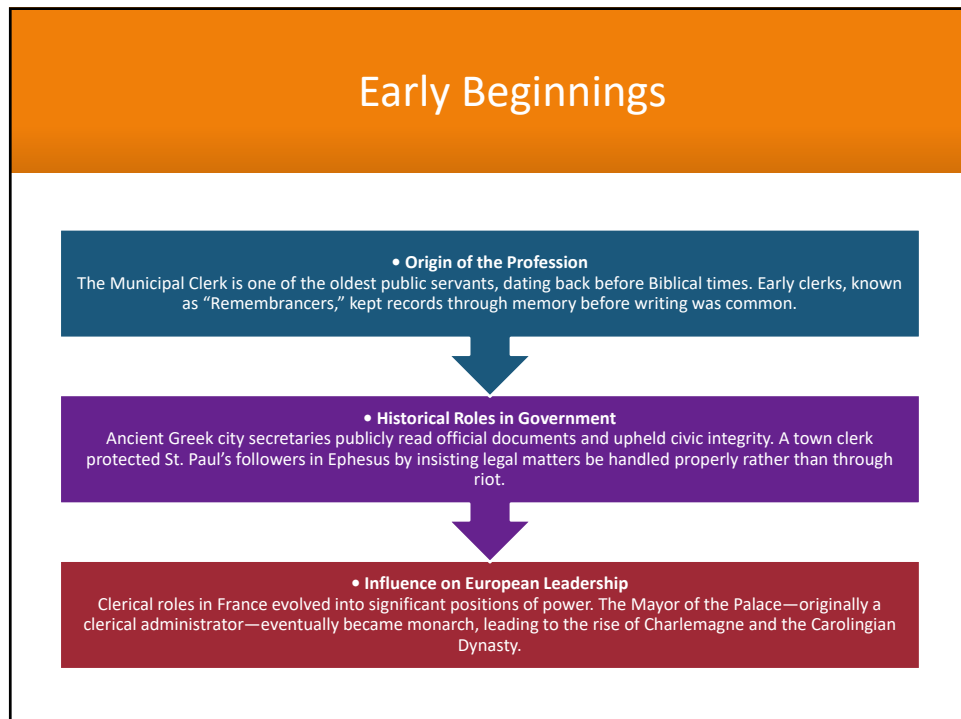


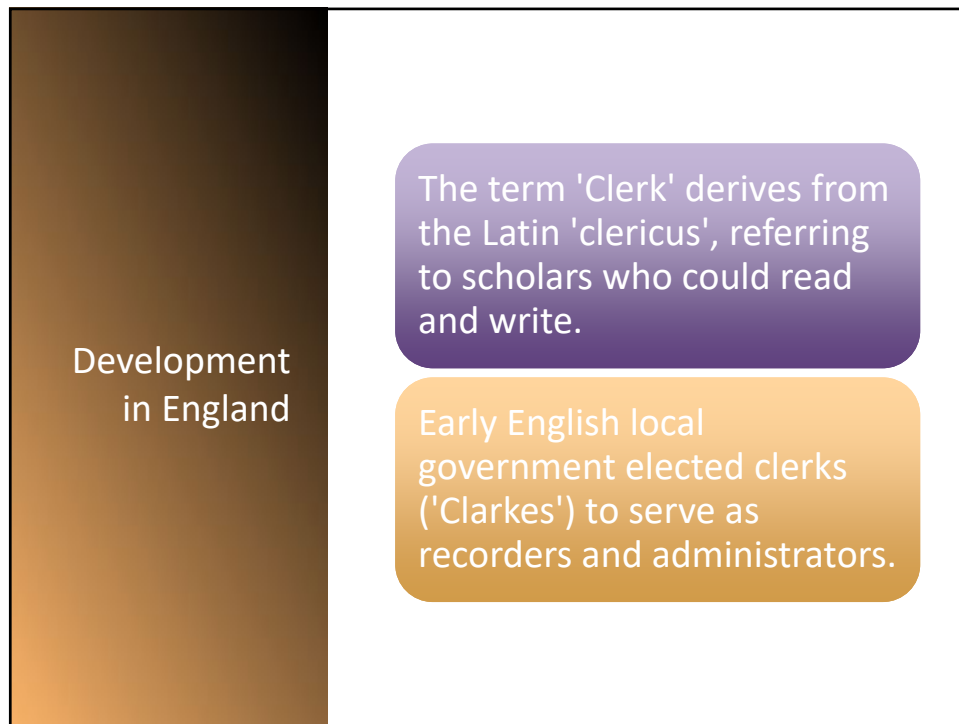


History of the Municipal Clerk

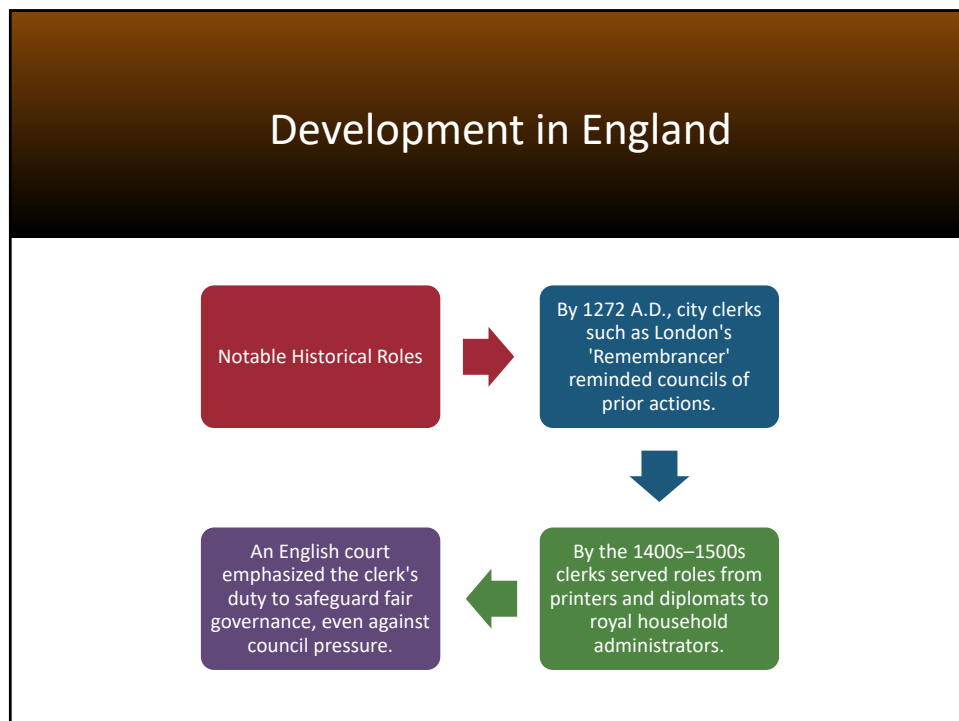
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Development in England



Perhaps the strongest statement of the unique position occupied by the Municipal Clerk is by an English Court in the Middle Ages ruling in the case, *Hurle-Hobbs ex parte Riley* and another.



Concerning this case, Chief Justice Lord Caldecote, observed:

5

Development in England

- "The office of town clerk is an important part of the machinery of local government. He may be said to stand between the local Council and the ratepayers. He is there to assist by his advice and action the conduct of public affairs in the borough and, if there is a disposition on the part of the council, still more on the part of any member of the council, to ride roughshod over his opinions, the question must at once arise as to whether it is not his duty forthwith to resign his office or, at any rate, to do what he thinks right and await the consequences."

6

Colonial Development

Colonists established the clerk as one of the first local government offices, responsible for recording vital records and town actions.

By the 17th century, town clerks-maintained land records, meeting votes, taxes, and official oaths as duties expanded through statute.

Early clerks in colonies such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York recorded deeds, managed town business, and often held unique forms of compensation.

7

Summary



Municipal Clerks have become the hub of local government.



They serve as the direct link between community residents and their government.



The Clerk is the historian of the community.



All recorded history of the town or city is maintained in the Clerk's care.

8

Summary

- The eminent political scientist, Professor William Bennett Munro, writing in one of the first textbooks on municipal administration (1934), stated:
- "No other office in municipal service has so many contracts. It serves the mayor, the city council, the city manager (when there is one), and all administrative departments without exception. All of them call upon it, almost daily, for some service or information. Its work is not spectacular, but it demands versatility, alertness, accuracy, and no end of patience. The public does not realize how many loose ends of city administration this office pulls together."
- These words, written more than 80 years ago, are even more appropriate today.



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Questions?

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Thank you

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