

Extract from *The Norman Conquest* by Marc Morris)

"According to the Carmen he (William the Conqueror) stayed there for a fortnight, but no surrender came. 'When he realized that none were willing to come to him', says the Chronicle, 'he marched inland with what was left of his host.' William began his march by heading east along the coast. His first stop was the town of Romney, where," says Poitiers, 'he inflicted such punishment as he thought fit for the slaughter of his men who had landed there by mistake' – an interesting, belated indication of the dangers the Normans had risked by crossing the Channel at night. Presumably leaving the charred remains of Romney behind him, the duke proceeded further along the coast to Dover.

'A great multitude had gathered there', says Poitiers, 'because the place seemed impregnable', and both he and the Carmen devote several lines to describing the defensive advantages of the rocky headland on which Dover Castle now stands. As the Normans approached, though, the defenders lost heart and surrendered. More burning followed when the town was occupied, which Poitiers insists was accidental, and blames on the lower ranks of the duke's army, greedy for plunder."