

# Paper 2

## British Depth Study:








# Anglo-Saxon and Norman England

c.1060-88



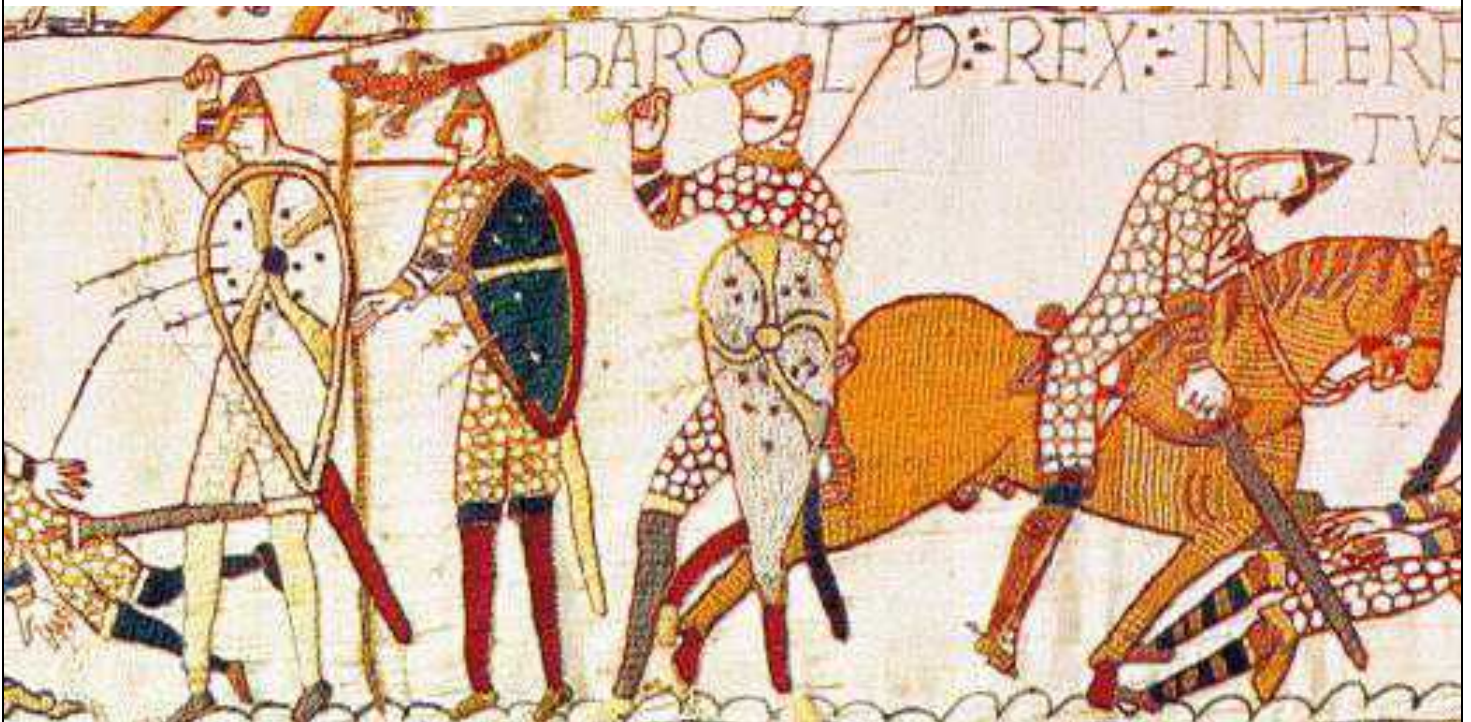
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## Anglo-Saxon and Norman England – Revision Checklist

<i>How well do I know each topic?</i>				
<b>3</b>	<b>Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest</b>			
4	What was England like in Anglo-Saxon times?			
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## Theme 1:

# Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest, 1060-66

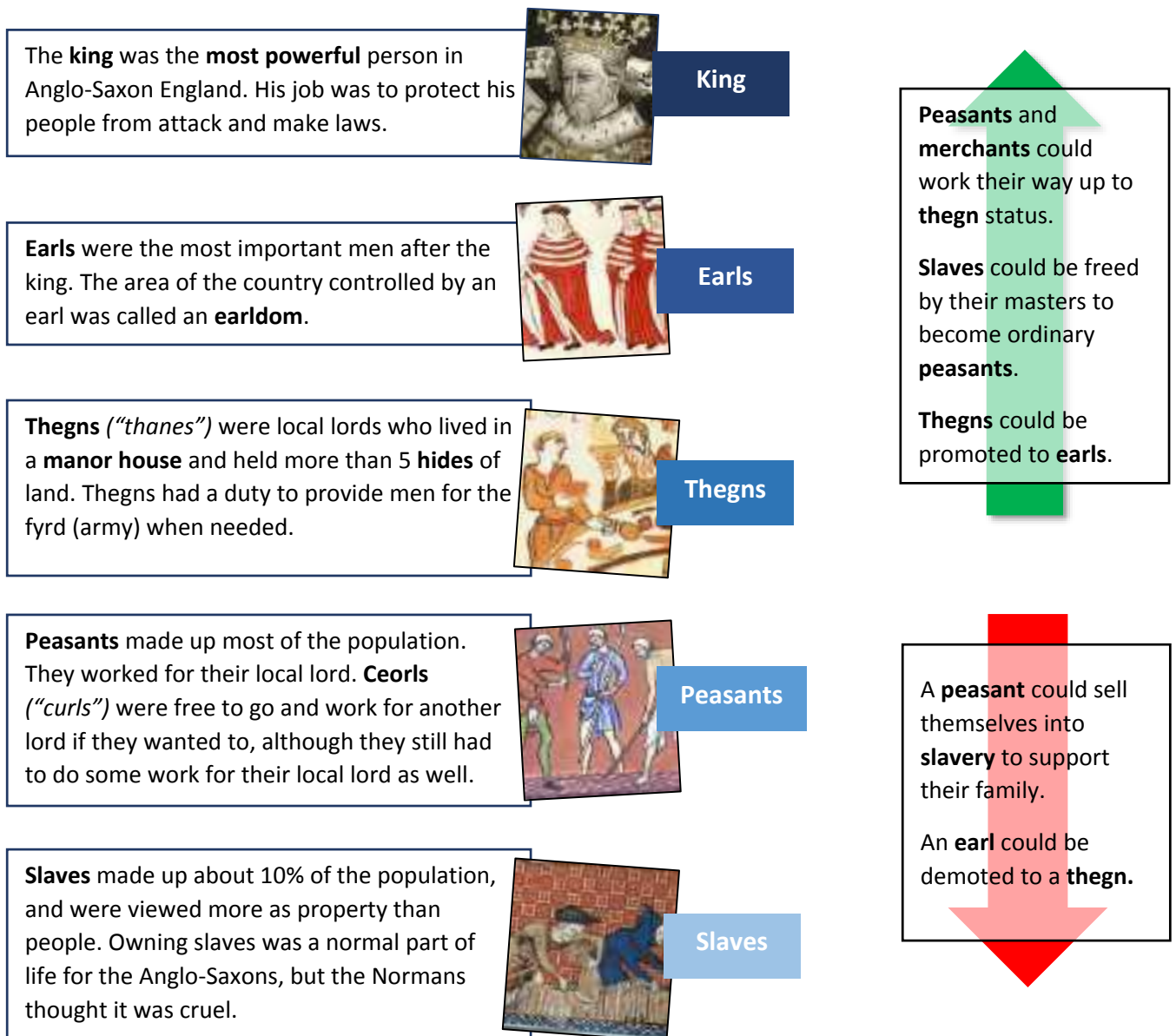


## What was England like in Anglo-Saxon times?

- England had a population of about 2 million people (less than half of London today!)
- Almost everyone farmed land.
- England was a Christian country, and religion played a large role in everyday life.
- For centuries England had been under threat from the Vikings, and parts of northern England had Viking settlers.
- Edward the Confessor was king from 1042 to 1066, but the kings before him (Cnut and his two sons) had been Vikings.
- England had a very well-organised government.

### The Social System

At the top of Anglo-Saxon society were the King and the elite aristocracy, and at the very bottom were slaves.



## The Monarchy

### Edward's strengths

- A powerful king was one who had success in battle and led a strong army.
- Edward was not a warrior king himself, but his earls and thegns were a **powerful military force**.
- He was a **respected law-maker** – someone who kept things peaceful.
- He was **pious (very religious)**. Kings claimed to have a special link to God.



**Edward the Confessor** was king from 1042 to 1066. Every boy swore an **oath** to the king when they reached 12 years old. The king controlled law-making, money, land ownership, the military and taxation.

### Limits to Edward's power

- Half of the country, the **Danelaw**, still had strong Danish links from previous Viking invasions. These people wanted to live by their own laws and customs.
- The **Earl of Wessex, Earl Godwin**, was very powerful. He could put pressure on Edward to do things his way.
- Edward and Godwin fell out in **1050**. Edward forced Godwin into exile, but he returned in 1051 with an army, and Edward gave him his earldom back to prevent a war.

King

Earls

Thegns

Peasants

Ceorls

Slaves

Making up most of the population, these people were farmers and worked for their local lord.

These people were at the bottom of society. They were seen more as property than people.

This was the most powerful person in the country. He made laws and could raise an army.

These people were local lords, controlling the land in their area. They lived in the local manor house.

These were peasants who were free to move and work for another lord if they wished.

These were the most important men after the king. They competed for rewards from the king.

## Government

### The Witan

The **Witan** was a council of advisers to the king, made up of important people like earls and archbishops. It discussed threats and disputes, and had a large role in choosing a new king.



The king decided who was on the Witan and when it met. He did not have to follow its advice.

## Earldoms

The earls were given many of the king's powers in order to help run the country.

- **They collected taxes.** Earls kept a third of what they collected, so were very rich.
- They were in charge of **justice and legal punishments** in their earldom.
- They had great **military power**. Each earl had a group of highly-trained bodyguard soldiers called **housecarls**.

Earls depended on the support of the thegns in their earldom.



## Local government

The country was divided into **earldoms**, controlled by an earl.

Each earldom was divided into **shires**, overseen by a **shire reeve**.

Each shire was divided into **hundreds** (equal to 100 hides in some areas).

Each hundred was divided into **tithings** (groups of 10 households).

A **hide** was a measurement of land equal to about 120 acres.

The **fyrd** was the army, made up of one man from every five hides.

The **select fyrd** was made up of well-equipped thegns and their followers. Their service was fixed at a period of 40 days, because they couldn't leave their farms for too long.

**Shire reeves** carried out the king's instructions in each shire.

They **collected fines, enforced the law**, provided men for the **fyrd** and maintained **roads and defences**.

They also collected the **geld tax**. This was a tax on land originally to pay off the Vikings.

## The legal system

Justice was based on **collective responsibility** – if someone refused to join the fyrd, there would be consequences for the whole tithing.

**Blood feuds** were grudges between families which often lasted generations. If someone was killed, the victim's family had the right to kill someone from the murderer's family.

The **Wergild** system meant that instead of taking revenge, the victim's family received compensation from the murderer's family. A ceorl was worth 20 shillings, a thegn 1200 shillings and an earl or archbishop 3600 shillings.





### Who was responsible for...

- a) Collecting taxes? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Choosing a new king? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Making laws? \_\_\_\_\_
- d) The upkeep of roads and defences? \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Deciding who was on the Witan? \_\_\_\_\_
- f) Enforcing the laws in each shire? \_\_\_\_\_

### The economy

England was well suited to growing crops, and likely traded wool and cloth too. The Anglo-Saxons traded with other countries (e.g. silver for coins came from Germany).

The biggest cities were **London** and **York**, and important towns included Norwich and Lincoln.

Each shire had a main town called a **burh**. These were well-fortified and linked by roads. The king's laws said that more valuable trade had to take place in a burh, so that trade tax could be paid.



**Villages** consisted of a few houses scattered in the countryside. Houses were made of wood and straw. Lots of relatives lived together. Thegns also lived in the countryside, but their houses were bigger and better-built than peasant huts.

### The Influence of the Church

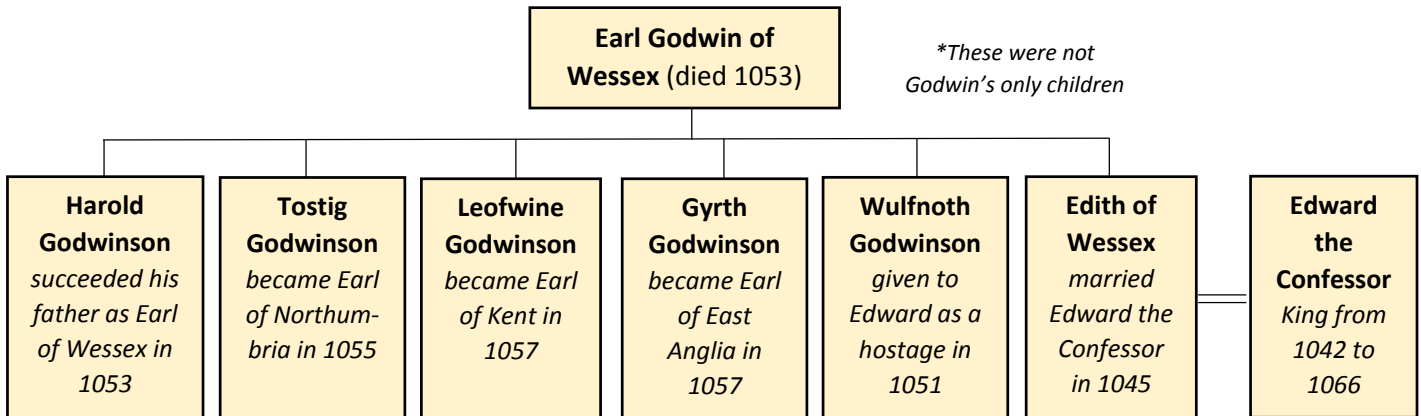
- The English Church was organised into large areas controlled by **bishops**, who were rich, important people.
- Local **priests** were often quite ordinary people and not especially well-educated.
- **Abbots** and **abbesses** ran monasteries and nunneries, though the number of these was shrinking.
- Religion was an important part of everyday life because people worried about what would happen when they died. For example, Edward devoted time to rebuilding Westminster Cathedral.



## Edward the Confessor's Last Years

### The Godwin Family

**Earl Godwin** had been made Earl of Wessex by King Cnut in 1018. Godwin helped Edward the Confessor become king, and Edward was married to Godwin's daughter Edith.



The Godwins' strength would help England against any Viking invasion, but it also **weakened the king's power.**

### Why were the Godwins so powerful?



#### LAND

The Godwins had lots of land, making them almost as rich as the king.

#### LEADERSHIP

The Godwins were lords to many hundreds of thegns. This made them powerful war leaders.



#### CHURCH INFLUENCE

The Godwins convinced Edward to appoint bishops who were loyal to them.

#### DEFENSIVE IMPORTANCE

Wessex was England's defence zone attack against attacks from across the Channel. Harold also controlled the area around Hereford, often attacked by Wales.



#### MILITARY SUCCESS

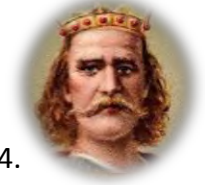
The Godwins' only main rival by the 1060s was **Aelfgar, Earl of Mercia**, who teamed up with the Welsh king **Llywelyn**. After Aelfgar died in the early 1060s, Harold and Tostig swiftly defeated Llywelyn. Harold's second wife was Llywelyn's widow (who was also Aelfgar's daughter!).



#### POLITICAL LINKS

Political marriages gave the Godwins power – e.g. Edith Godwin to King Edward, and Harold Godwinson to Edith of Mercia.





## Harold's Embassy to Normandy

Harold Godwinson went to Normandy on a mission for the King (an **embassy**) in 1064.

### WHAT HAPPENED?

- Harold landed in Ponthieu, where Count Guy of Ponthieu took him prisoner.
- William of Normandy rescued Harold.
- Harold then spent time in Normandy, helping William in two military campaigns.
- Harold made an oath to William – possibly swearing to support William's claim to the English throne.

### WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

- It shows that Harold was Edward's **trusted adviser**, as it was clearly an important embassy.
- The Normans used it to **boost William's claim** to the English throne.
- After Harold took over as king from Edward in 1066, the Normans used this embassy to portray Harold as an **oath-breaker**.



*Which Godwin is each statement talking about?*

	Harold	Tostig	Gyrth	Leofwine	Edith
Succeeded the elder Godwin as Earl of Wessex	✓				
Married to Edward the Confessor					
Defeated the Welsh king Llywelyn in 1063					
Went on an embassy for King Edward in 1064					
Earl of East Anglia					
Earl of Kent					
Earl of Northumbria					



### The Rising Against Earl Tostig

In **1065** there was an **uprising** against Tostig, the Earl of Northumbria. It was led by important Northumbrian thegns.

The rebels invited **Morcar**, brother of the Earl of Mercia, to be their earl. Harold Godwinson's second wife was Morcar's sister, Edith of Mercia. Harold was given large amounts of land in Mercia.

By November 1065 Tostig was **exiled**.

### Reasons for the uprising:

- Tostig was a southerner, but Northumbria had strong Viking links.
- People felt he abused his power – e.g. he had killed powerful rivals.
- Tostig taxed Northumbria heavily.
- He didn't defend Northumbria from an attack by Malcolm III of Scotland in 1061.

### The response to the uprising:

- Harold agreed that his brother Tostig had pushed Northumbria too far.
- King Edward ordered an army to put down the rising, but Harold and other earls didn't follow his order. **This shows weakness in the king's power.**
- Edward was forced to accept the rebels' demands.

Edward was old and ill by this point, and Harold wanted to be king. **By getting rid of his brother, he removed a potential rival for the throne.**

### Edward the Confessor's Death

Edward died on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 1066. He had no children, which meant there was a **succession crisis**.

The Bayeux Tapestry shows Edward on his deathbed, holding out his hand to Harold.

The Witan met quickly and Harold was crowned the same day as Edward's burial, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1066.



In \_\_\_\_\_ there was an uprising against Tostig, the Earl of \_\_\_\_\_. There were several reasons for this: Tostig had taxed his earldom heavily, people thought he abused his power, and he had failed to prevent an attack from \_\_\_\_\_ in 1061. Tostig also clashed with Northumbria because he was a southerner, whereas they had strong \_\_\_\_\_ links.

King \_\_\_\_\_ ordered his earls to put down the rising, but this order wasn't followed. The rebels invited \_\_\_\_\_, brother of the Earl of Mercia, to be their new earl. Even Tostig's brother \_\_\_\_\_ agreed that he had pushed his people too far, and Tostig was exiled. The king died shortly after, in January \_\_\_\_\_, and triggered a \_\_\_\_\_.



Northumbria  
Edward  
1065  
Scotland  
Morcar  
succession crisis  
Harold  
Viking  
1066

## 1066 & the Rival Claimants for the Throne

### Harold Godwinson

**Claim:**

Appointed by Edward on his deathbed. Family connection (brother-in-law). Proven military success and influence with the earls.

**Strength of claim:**

**Good** – supported by witnesses (though ones loyal to him). Good chance of success.



### William, Duke of Normandy

**Claim:**

An agreement supposedly made with King Edward in about 1051, and confirmed during Harold's 1064 embassy.

**Strength of claim:**

Backed by the Pope, but no real evidence. **Good** chance of success – the Normans were strong warriors.



### Harald Hardrada

**Claim:**

Complicated – he had essentially inherited the claim from previous Viking kings.

**Strength of claim:**

**Weak**, though the Danelaw may have welcomed a Viking king. The exiled Tostig went to Harald for support – together they had a strong army and fleet.



### Edgar Aethling

**Claim:**

Royal blood – Edward's nephew and natural heir ("Aethling" = prince of royal blood).

**Strength of claim:**

**Weak** – he was a blood relation, but the Witan wanted a strong king to see off threats from Scandinavia and Normandy.



## Harold's Coronation and Reign

Harold was crowned quickly because the Witan feared an attack by William. He faced several challenges as king:

- **Challenges from powerful earls** - including old rival the Earl of Mercia
- **The north** – would they accept Tostig's brother as their new king?
- **Tostig** – was looking for allies in Europe
- **William** – was reportedly getting ready to invade

Harold met with other Witan members at **York**, Northumbria's main city, to get their support.

He positioned an army along the **south coast**, expecting an invasion attempt by William. They eventually stood down when the Norman invasion had still not come by September.

Tostig sailed to England in May 1066, but he was put off by Harold's strong defences. A fight with the Mercians at Lincoln left him with only 12 ships.



Battle

#1

The Battle of Gate Fulford – 20<sup>th</sup> September 1066

Harald Hardrada and Tostig attacked in September 1066. They were blocked just outside York by the new Earl of Northumbria **Morcar** and his brother **Edwin** (Earl of Mercia) at **Gate Fulford**.

**The battle was a defeat for Morcar and Edwin.** Their mistake was fighting just outside York, rather than within the city walls.

Harold heard about the invasion and marched north. He must have been confident that William would not attack the south any time soon.



Battle

#2

The Battle of Stamford Bridge – 25<sup>th</sup> September 1066

Harold surprised Hardrada and Tostig at Stamford Bridge. Both Hardrada and Tostig were killed. **Harold won** because:

- The Vikings had left their armour on their ships
- He had the element of surprise
- Hardrada and Tostig had fought at Gate Fulford 5 days before
- The Vikings were (wrongly) under the impression that the English hated Harold
- Harold’s men broke the Viking shield wall

Were the battles significant?

YES	HOWEVER...
Hardrada and Tostig’s invasion distracted Harold from the south.	<i>Harold had already stood down the southern fyrd anyway.</i>
Edwin and Morcar made strategic errors at Gate Fulford.	<i>Harold expected they’d need help – he was already on his way north to help them before they were defeated.</i>
Harold’s march south again made his troops less battle-ready than William’s.	<i>Morale would have been high though – they had just won at Stamford Bridge.</i>
His Stamford Bridge success may have made Harold over-confident. He rushed to fight William.	<i>Harold and the Witan had been preparing for a battle with William for months.</i>
Edwin and Morcar were unable to fight with Harold at Hastings.	<i>The only evidence for this is the fact they aren’t mentioned in sources on Hastings.</i>

1066

**5<sup>th</sup> January:** Edward the Confessor dies, causing a succession crisis.

**6<sup>th</sup> January:** Harold Godwinson is crowned king of England.

Harold Godwinson puts troops along the south coast, fearing a Norman invasion.

**May:** Tostig sails to England but leaves when he sees Harold’s army.

**8<sup>th</sup> September:** Harold stands his army down and returns to London.

Harold hears that Harald and Tostig have invaded and heads north.

**20<sup>th</sup> September:** Harald Hardrada and Tostig defeat Morcar and Edwin at **Gate Fulford**.

**25<sup>th</sup> September:** Harold defeats Hardrada and Tostig at **Stamford Bridge**.

**28<sup>th</sup> September:** The Normans land at Pevensey Bay on the South Coast.

**2<sup>nd</sup> October:** Harold leaves York, stopping at London from the **6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>**.

**14<sup>th</sup> October:** Harold is defeated by the Normans at the **Battle of Hastings**.



Match each speech bubble with the correct claimant to the throne.

Harold: \_\_\_\_\_

William: \_\_\_\_\_

Edgar: \_\_\_\_\_

Harald: \_\_\_\_\_

a. There are treaties and deals by other kings to support my claim!

b. I'm a blood relative of the previous king.

e. I'm already an Earl, which proves I'm a good leader.

h. Harold agreed to support my claim in 1064!

c. My claim is backed by the Pope.

f. Edward said I could be king back in 1051.

g. The Danelaw would welcome a Viking king like me.

d. Edward appointed me on his deathbed.

## The Norman Invasion

Battle

#3

### The Battle of Hastings – 14<sup>th</sup> October 1066

After leaving York, Harold stopped in London for around 5 days to gather troops. He then continued south and met William at **Senlac Hill, near Hastings**.



- The battle began in Harold's favour, but his strong **shield wall** gradually broke down.
- At one point a rumour went round that William had been killed, so he tipped his helmet to show he was still alive.
- Harold Godwinson and his brothers Gyrth and Leofwine held their position on the top of the hill. Eventually they were killed, but their housecarls fought on to the last.

### **Why did William win?**

#### **William's tactics and leadership:**

- William used **cavalry** to break up Harold's shield wall.
- The Normans tricked the English into false security by **pretending to retreat**.
- William **delayed his invasion** until Harold had disbanded the southern fyrd.
- Horses were specially bred and shipped over for the battle.
- The Normans stole food and destroyed houses when they arrived in England.
- William quickly adapted an Iron Age fort at Hastings into a defensible castle.

#### **Harold's leadership and bad luck:**

- Harold's army had been out since May.
- He rushed south to fight William. He could have stayed in London.
- His men were poorly disciplined, which caused the shield wall to break up.
- He didn't have the element of surprise.
- Harold's men were tired after fighting up north and then marching back south.
- William sailed over during winter storms, so he was lucky to make it.
- *The bad luck suffered by Harold could so easily have been William's!*

Both armies had specialist well-trained elite troops (**knights and housecarls**).



**NORMAN KNIGHTS**

- Charge at the enemy
- Mounted knights could strike downwards
- Well-trained on horseback
- Saddle held the rider firmly in place, meaning they could use their arms freely

- Horses vulnerable to attack
- More difficult to charge effectively up hill
- Cavalry and archers were only effective once the shield wall had been weakened

**ANGLO-SAXON HOUSECARLS**

- Shield wall was hard to break
- Heavy axes took down horses and caused severe injuries
- Housecarls were well-trained

- A strong shield wall needed discipline and endurance
- Once the shield wall was broken it was no longer effective



However, most fighters were ordinary soldiers. William’s foot soldiers were a mixture of Normans and hired soldiers from around Europe.

Harold’s ordinary soldiers were raised from the **fyrð** on his journey south. Many of the men levied to fight did not arrive in time and Harold went ahead without them.

a. Harold crowned King of England

c. Harold stands his southern troops down

e. Battle of Hastings

b. Battle of Stamford Bridge

d. Death of Edward the Confessor

f. Harold positions troops on the south coast

g. Normans land at Pevensey Bay

j. Tostig sails to England, but is put off by Harold’s strong defences

h. Battle of Gate Fulford

i. Harold returns south

Put the events of 1066 into the correct chronological order below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

**S** • Everyone in Anglo-Saxon society had duties and obligations to someone higher up.  
**U** • Local government and justice was overseen by local people and officials.  
**M** • The powerful Godwin family had become the real power behind the throne.  
**M** • Harold Godwinson’s embassy to Normandy and the uprising against Earl Tostig had major consequences.  
**A** • When king Edward the Confessor died in 1066 it caused a succession crisis.  
**R** • Harold succeeded Edward, but there were 3 other claimants to the throne: William, Harald and Edgar.  
**Y** • There were 3 major battles in 1066: Gate Fulford, Stamford Bridge and Hastings.  
 • Harald Hardrada and Tostig invaded northern England but were defeated.  
 • William defeated Harold at the Battle of Hastings, beginning the Norman Conquest.

**Topic Test 1: Anglo Saxon England and the Norman Conquest**

1. Who was king of England before Harold?

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2. What was the key difference between a regular peasant and a ceorl?

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3. In your own words, explain what the following mean:

▪ *Burh*

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▪ *Earl*

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▪ *The Witan*

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▪ *Succession crisis*

---

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4. Who were the four main claimants to the English throne in 1066?

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5. Which family was the most powerful in England by the 1060s?

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6. Name three of Harold Godwinson's brothers.

---

7. Who did Harald Hardrada and Tostig defeat at Gate Fulford?

---

8. Who won at Stamford Bridge?

---

9. Name one tactic used by William at the Battle of Hastings.

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10. Describe one piece of bad luck for Harold at the Battle of Hastings.

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## Theme 2:

# William in Power: Securing the Kingdom, 1066-87





## Establishing Control

### The Submission of the Earls, 1066



#### What happened after Hastings?

The Witan elected **Edgar Aethling** as king.

William sent troops to seize **Winchester** and marched towards London. He needed control of the south coast to get supplies over from Normandy. The Normans forced people to submit by destroying homes and farms as they went.

However, William and many of his troops fell ill at Dover.

At **Berkhamstead** (near London) Edgar, archbishops Ealdred and Stigand, Edwin and Morcar **submitted** to William. They swore an oath to obey him.

#### THE EARLS' ADVANTAGES

- London was fortified, so hard for William to attack
- Edgar had a better claim to the throne, and had been elected by the Witan
- William had control of Wessex, but the earldoms of Mercia (Edwin) and Northumbria (Morcar) supported Edgar
- William's army was tiny compared to a fyrd levied from the earls. Also, many of William's men were ill

#### WILLIAM'S ADVANTAGES

- William had control of the **treasury** at Winchester, so he could reward his followers
- William was a strong leader, whereas the teenage Edgar was unprepared
- England's best warriors had been killed at Hastings
- William's strategy of destruction meant people submitted easily
- William's route threatened to cut London off from the north



William was crowned on **Christmas Day 1066**. He swore an oath that he would rule England like the best Anglo-Saxon kings had, if the English would be loyal to him.

## Rewarding Followers

#### Rewarding Anglo-Saxons

- William wanted a trouble-free takeover.
- Earls like Edwin and Morcar kept their earldoms.
- Archbishops like Ealdred (York) and Stigand (Canterbury) kept their positions.
- He promised that Edwin could marry his daughter.

#### Rewarding his own followers

William had promised land and money to the people who had helped him invade.

- **He sent rich gifts** to the pope and Church supporters in Normandy.
- **He introduced a heavy geld tax** to raise money to pay mercenaries (fighters hired from other countries).
- **He gave land** to family members and advisers. His half-brother, Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, was given all of Kent. **Gospatric** was made Earl of north Northumbria.

## Establishing Control of the Borderlands

William wanted to make the border between England and Wales more secure.

He established the **Marcher earldoms** – three new earldoms centred on **Hereford**, **Shrewsbury** and **Chester**. (*March was an Anglo-Saxon term for border*).

All three earldoms were given as **rewards** to people who had been loyal to William.

**Earldom of Chester**  
Given to Hugh d'Avranches. *His father had provided 60 ships for the invasion.*

**Earldom of Shrewsbury**  
Given to Roger Montgomery. *He had governed Normandy while William was away.*

**Earldom of Hereford**  
Given to William FitzObern. *He was William's right-hand man in the invasion.*



The Marcher earldoms were different to other earldoms:

They were **much smaller than other earldoms**. This made them easier to control.

The Marcher earls had **special rights** that usually only the king had, e.g. they could create towns and establish churches.


The Marcher earls had **almost full control of the legal system** in their earldom.

The Marcher earls **did not have to pay tax** on their lands.

Marcher earls were **free to build castles** without applying to the king.

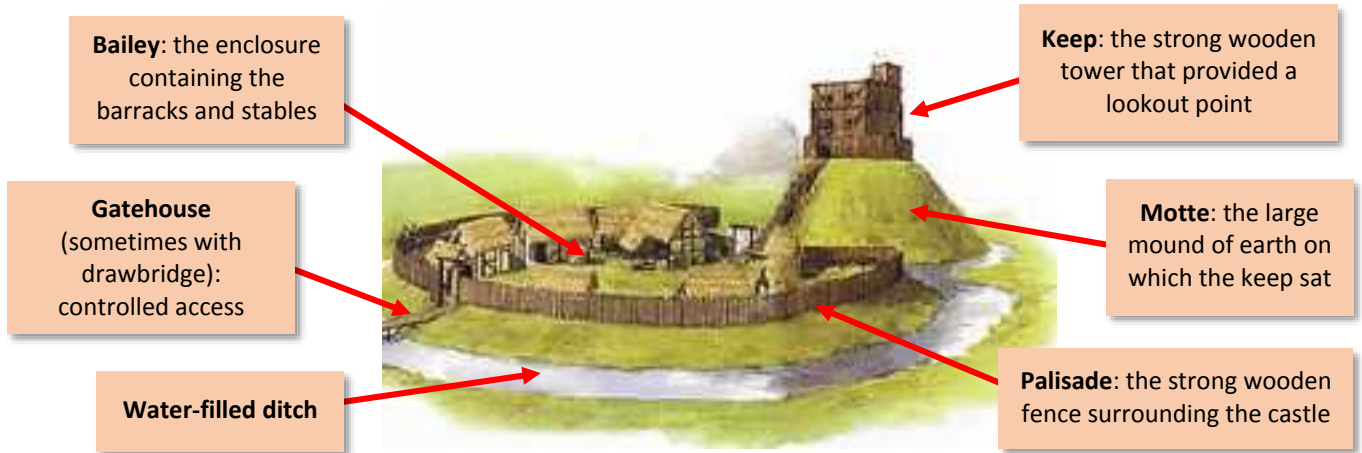
These features meant the king and earls could **control** the border areas and quickly **put down any unrest**. The special rights also attracted people from Normandy to come and settle the regions (**colonisation**).

After the Battle of Hastings, the Witan elected \_\_\_\_\_ as king. The Normans \_\_\_\_\_ houses and farms on their journey towards London, and the Anglo-Saxon nobles submitted to William at a place called \_\_\_\_\_. Though some important Anglo-Saxons got to keep their positions, William also gave lots of \_\_\_\_\_ to his own family and supporters as a \_\_\_\_\_ for their loyalty. He created the \_\_\_\_\_ earldoms in order to protect the border between England and Wales, and gave special privileges to their earls. These included control of the legal system, the freedom to build \_\_\_\_\_, and not having to pay \_\_\_\_\_ on their land.

- 
- Berkhamstead
  - land
  - tax
  - castles
  - Edgar Aethling
  - reward
  - destroyed
  - Marcher

## Building Castles

William built around 500 castles to establish his control around the country.



They were built in **strategic places**, such as near rivers or mountain passes. The Marcher earls built castles all along the English-Welsh border.

They were used as a **base** by the local lord and troops would be based inside.

Castles were different to the burhs (Anglo-Saxon fortified towns).

- Burhs were public, whereas castles were generally **private**.
- Castles were much **smaller** and easier to defend.
- Castles were much **harder to burn down** because they were protected by earthworks.
- Castles were designed to **control** people; burhs were meant to protect people.



Local people were made to build the castles, and in many cases houses would be demolished to make way for them.

Castles dominated the local skyline and were a **symbol of Norman power**.



<b>SALAD PIE</b>	<i>The strong wooden fence surrounding the castle.</i>	
<b>TETMO</b>	<i>The large earth mound on which the keep stood.</i>	
<b>PEEK</b>	<i>The strong wooden tower on top of the motte.</i>	
<b>LAYBIE</b>	<i>The enclosure below the motte, containing the barracks and stables for the troops.</i>	
<b>GOATEES UH</b>	<i>The building that controlled access to the castle.</i>	
<b>DRAB RED WIG</b>	<i>A wooden walkway over the ditch, which could be raised to prevent access to the castle.</i>	

## Anglo-Saxon Resistance, 1068-71

### The Revolt of Edwin and Morcar, 1068

William went back to Normandy in spring 1067. He took with him Edgar Aethling, Earl Edwin, Earl Morcar and Earl Waltheof.

When he came back in December, Norman control was under threat.

In **1068**, Edwin and Morcar fled north and began a **rebellion** against William. They went north, where they were joined by others including Edgar, Waltheof and Gospatric.

#### Reasons for the revolt:

##### **Morcar's anger:**

William had given parts of Morcar's earldom (Northumbria) to other people.

##### **Edwin's anger:**

William had gone back on his promise that Edwin could marry his daughter, and had made Edwin's earldom smaller.

William's heavy **geld tax** was hated.

Castles were hated because they were a symbol of Norman control.

William **gave away even more Anglo-Saxon land** when he returned in 1067.

Odo of Bayeux and William FitzObern had **seized land illegally**.

William and his forces headed north, building castles as they went. When William took control of **Warwick**, Edwin and Morcar **surrendered**.

- William pardoned Edwin and Morcar, but kept them as 'guests' at his court.
- Edgar and other rebels fled to Scotland, creating a new centre of resistance there.
- William's strength would have convinced many that further revolt was useless.
- Edwin and Morcar may just have been testing William's response – this would explain why they surrendered so quickly.

### The Rebellions in the North, 1069

#### Robert Cumin

After being betrayed by Gospatric in the 1068 rebellion, William chose a new Earl of northern Northumbria: **Robert Cumin**. Cumin violently attacked towns and villages as he went north, and a group of angry Northumbrians retaliated by killing him in **Durham**.

#### The uprising in York

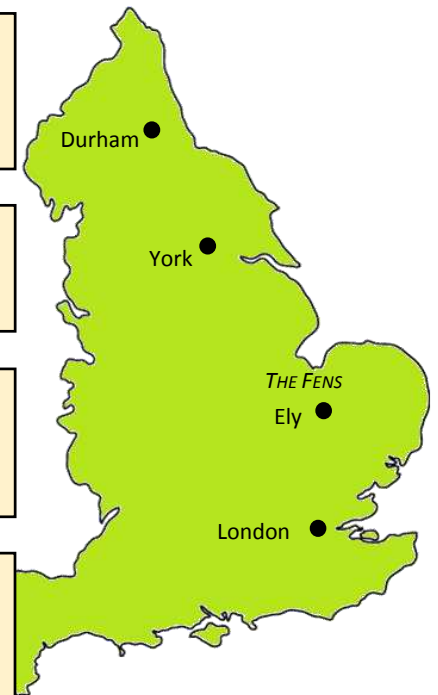
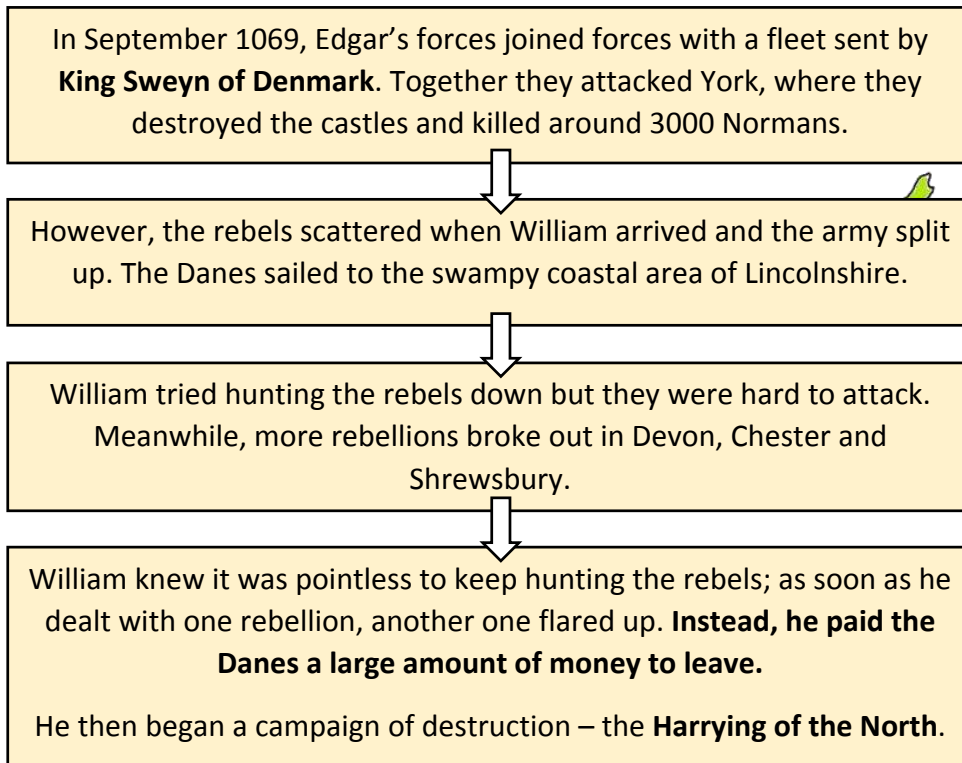
An uprising began in **York** in around February 1069, and Edgar Aethling came down from Scotland to join the rebels.



William put down the rebellion and Edgar escaped back to Scotland. William had a new castle built at York and put William FitzObern in charge of it. He then returned to Winchester for Easter – **carrying out royal ceremonies was important for William to be seen as a 'real' king.**

### The Anglo-Danish attack on York

William's control came under more pressure throughout 1069.



### Hereward the Wake and Rebellion at Ely, 1070-71

The Danes returned in **1070**, this time led by King Sweyn himself. He set up on the **Isle of Ely**, in the middle of the **Fens**.

Sweyn made alliances with locals, including **Hereward the Wake**, a thegn whose land had been given away to Normans. The Archbishop of nearby Peterborough had also been replaced by a Norman.

Hereward was fighting a **guerrilla war** against the Normans in the swampy fens.

Hereward and the Danes raided Peterborough Abbey to stop the Normans getting its riches – but the Danes made off back to Denmark with the treasure. Hereward was helped by Morcar, but William captured Ely - Hereward escaped, while Morcar was imprisoned.



The defeat at Ely marked the end of large-scale Anglo-Saxon rebellion.



	How did William deal with it?	What happened to the rebels?
The revolt of Edwin and Morcar, 1068	William headed north, building castles as he went. The rebels surrendered.	Edgar fled to Scotland. Edwin and Morcar were kept at William's court, where he could keep an eye on them.
The uprising in York, 1069		
The Anglo-Danish attack on York, 1069		
The rebellion at Ely, 1070-71		

## The Legacy of Resistance to 1087

### The Harrying of the North, 1069-70

After the attack on York in 1069, William began the **Harrying (devastation) of the North**. This involved burning crops, killing livestock and destroying villages.

#### SHORT-TERM IMPACTS

Around 100,000 people died and the region was totally devastated.

- People had no food or shelter. **They starved or froze to death.**
- Thousands of **refugees fled the region.**
- People resorted to **cannibalism** or selling themselves into **slavery**.

#### LONG-TERM IMPACTS

The Harrying of the North was intended to remove Northumbria as a threat for good.

- William's troops salted the earth, so that nothing could grow again. This meant the area would be wasted for years to come. When the Domesday survey was produced in 1086, **60% of Yorkshire was still classed as waste, with no economic activity.**
- Removing many Anglo-Danes from Northumbria **reduced the threat of future Danish invasion.**
- William now decided to **replace Anglo-Saxon nobles**, rather than win them over.
- William **regretted** the Harrying – he later gave money to the Church to make amends.



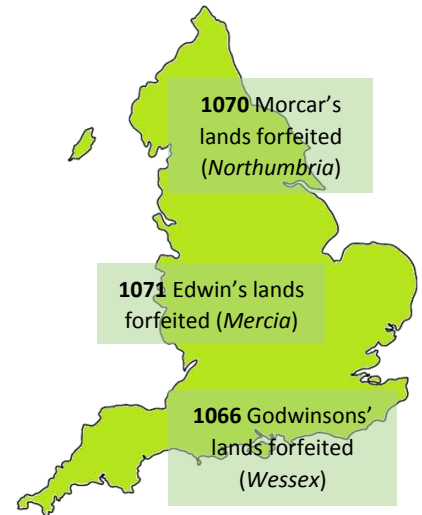
## Changes in Landownership, 1066-87

**Between 1066-1087, William replaced the Anglo-Saxon landholders with Normans. The rebellions had showed that he could not trust the Anglo-Saxon nobles.**

By 1087, less than 5% of the land was held by Anglo-Saxon aristocrats. Only two of England's **tenants-in-chief** were Anglo-Saxons. (Tenants-in-chief were the large landholders who held their land directly from the king.)

### How did Anglo-Saxons lose their land?

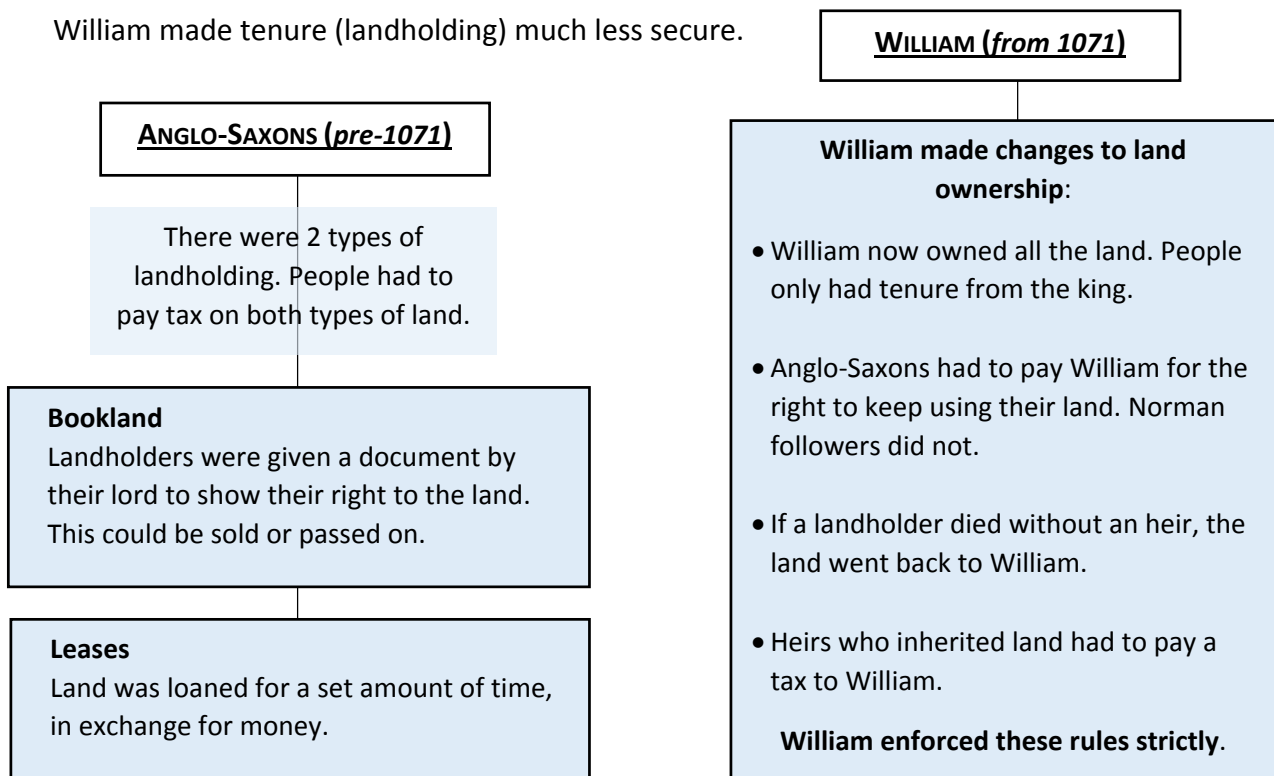
- **Forfeit** - Landowners simply lost their land as a punishment. William took it and gave it to Normans instead.
- **New earldoms** - William made new earldoms, e.g. the Marcher earldoms, and gave them to his followers. They were created to defend trouble spots.
- **Land grabs** - This way was illegal – Normans either seized land, or took it through corrupt dealings which left Anglo-Saxons with less than before. Norman sheriffs were known for doing this.



After 1071 William **combined** blocks of territory to form large blocks, rather than earls having pieces of land all around the country.

### William's changes to landholding:

William made tenure (landholding) much less secure.





William's tenants-in-chief, the new lords, now had power over the thegns:

- They could reallocate land when a thegn died.
- They could replace thegns who acted against them.

Thegns had to be obedient **vassals** and follow their new lord.

Peasants' lives became harder, as the new tenants-in-chief wanted to get more money from their land. Ceorls (free peasants) became rarer.

**All of these land changes made William's power stronger, and resistance less likely.**

Write a definition for each of these:



*Harrying of the North*

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*Tenants-in-chief*

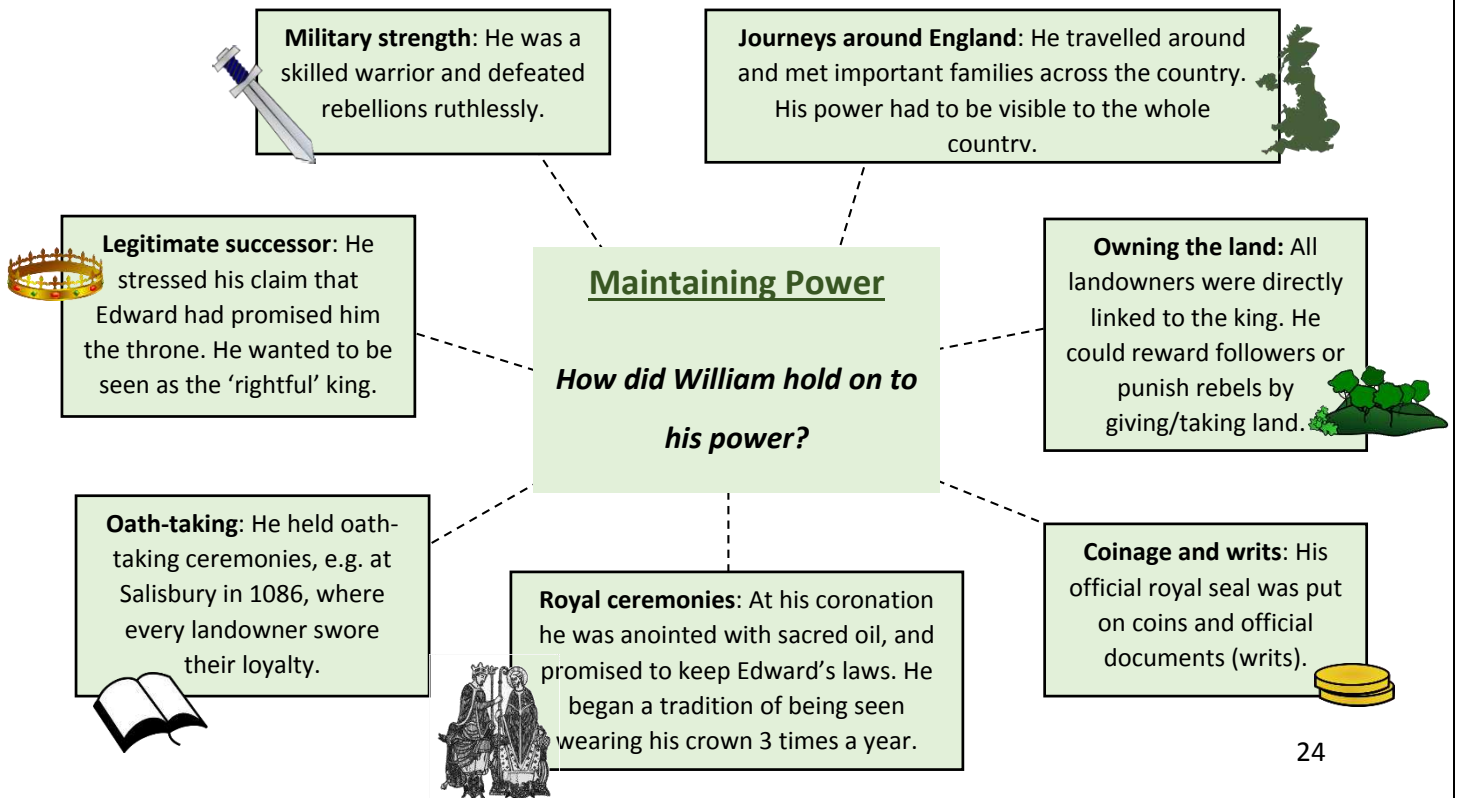
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*Land forfeit*

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## The Revolt of the Earls, 1075

There was another revolt in 1075, but this time it included Normans rebelling against William, and Anglo-Saxons defending him.

### Who was involved?

<p><b>Ralph de Gael (NORMAN)</b></p> <p><b>EARL OF EAST ANGLIA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ralph's father had been given land in East Anglia by William in 1066.</li><li>▪ Ralph succeeded his father in around 1069.</li><li>▪ In 1075 he married Roger de Breteuil's sister.</li></ul>	<p><b>Roger de Breteuil (NORMAN)</b></p> <p><b>EARL OF HEREFORD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The son of William FitzObern.</li><li>▪ Succeeded his dad as Earl of Hereford in 1071.</li></ul>	<p><b>Waltheof (SAXON)</b></p> <p><b>EARL OF NORTHUMBRIA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Previously Earl of Northamptonshire, before being given Gospatric's land in Northumbria in 1072.</li><li>▪ The son of Siward, who had been Earl of Northumbria before Tostig.</li></ul>
<p><b>Reasons for revolt:</b></p> <p><b>Loss of power and wealth.</b> His landholdings had been made smaller than his father's.</p>	<p><b>Reasons for revolt:</b></p> <p><b>Loss of authority and land.</b> William had introduced his own sheriffs into the Marcher earldoms.</p>	<p><b>Reasons for revolt:</b></p> <p><b>Unclear</b> – he may have played both sides, choosing to inform when the revolt's success looked unlikely.</p>

The leader of the revolt was **Ralph de Gael**. He plotted with **Roger de Breteuil** and **Waltheof** to overthrow William and split the country between them.

### Reasons for the revolt

The men were angry about their **loss of land, loss of privileges** and **loss of power**.

William had been in Normandy since 1073, leaving **Archbishop Lanfranc** in charge of England. His absence gave the conspirators an ideal opportunity to rebel.

### Planning the revolt

Ralph and Roger first discussed their plans with Waltheof at the wedding feast of Ralph and Emma (Roger's sister). Lots of important earls and bishops were there.

Waltheof was the last surviving Anglo-Saxon earl and had good contacts with King Sweyn of Denmark. The men expected Danish support for their plan.

### What went wrong?

1. Most Anglo-Saxons supported William.
2. Waltheof changed his mind and told Archbishop Lanfranc what was going on.
3. Lanfranc wrote to Roger, trying to convince him not to revolt. He threatened to **excommunicate** him (cut him off from the Church).
4. Lanfranc organised counter-measures. Norman and Anglo-Saxons worked together to prevent Roger and Ralph from breaking out of their earldoms.
5. By the time the Danish fleet finally arrived, William was back in England. The Danish leaders dared not fight him. They simply raided the east coast then went home.

### The defeat of the revolt



**Ralph** escaped to Brittany, while his wife Emma held out in Norwich castle.



**Roger** was imprisoned for life (like Morcar).



**Waltheof** fled abroad, then returned thinking he would be forgiven. William had him executed in 1076.

William then tried to attack Ralph's castle in Brittany – however, he had to retreat because there was so much resistance.

### The significance of the revolt

William now had to be careful of his own earls, who resented his power. From this point on, rebellion against William came from Normans.

The Danish threat seems to have shaken William. When there was another Danish invasion threat in 1085, he went to extreme measures to boost England's defences.

Anglo-Saxons helped to stop the revolt – this suggests some Anglo-Saxons now supported William. However, the execution of Waltheof shows that William continued to come down hard on Anglo-Saxon rebels.

Ralph de Gael

Earl of Northumbria, and the last remaining Anglo-Saxon earl. He was executed for his part in the revolt.

Roger de Breteuil

The leader of the revolt, who escaped to Brittany afterwards. The revolt was planned at his wedding feast.

Waltheof

The man left in charge of England while William was in Normandy. He tried to convince Roger not to revolt.

Archbishop Lanfranc

One of the Marcher earls, and the son of William FitzObern. He was imprisoned for life after the revolt.

- S**  
**U**  
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**M**  
**A**  
**R**  
**Y**
- The Anglo-Saxon earls submitted to William in 1066.
  - William rewarded followers and supporters with land and money.
  - He built castles and created the Marcher earldoms to establish control over England.
  - There were several rebellions in the years 1068-71, mainly due to resentment over land.
    - The revolt by earls Edwin and Morcar in 1068 was defeated quickly.
    - Rebellions in the north (1069) and east (1070-71) were serious because Danish support was involved.
    - William used brutal tactics, such as the Harrying of the North, to end the Anglo-Saxon rebellions.
  - After the rebellions, William changed landownership to make thegns more dependent on their new Norman lords.
  - William’s skill and strength helped him to maintain power.
  - The Revolt of the Earls in 1075 was a serious threat because it involved 3 powerful earls and a large Danish force, but it failed due to Anglo-Saxon support for William.

**Topic Test 2: William in Power: Securing the Kingdom**

1. Who did the Witan name as their king after Harold’s death?

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2. Where did the earls submit to William?

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3. Name 2 ways in which William rewarded his followers and supporters.

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4. Name the 3 Marcher earldoms.

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5. Name one way in which the Marcher earldoms were different to other earldoms.

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6. Name 2 features of a Norman castle that made them difficult to attack.

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7. What happened to Edwin and Morcar after their 1068 revolt?

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**8.** How did William deal with the Anglo-Danish attack on York in 1069?

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**9.** Describe what happened during the Harrying of the North.

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**10.** Name 2 of the 3 ways in which William transferred land from Anglo-Saxons to Normans.

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**11.** Name one change that William made to landholding after 1071.

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**12.** Name 3 factors that allowed William to maintain control over England.

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**13.** Name the 3 earls who plotted against William in 1075.

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**14.** What happened to the 3 earls after the revolt was defeated?

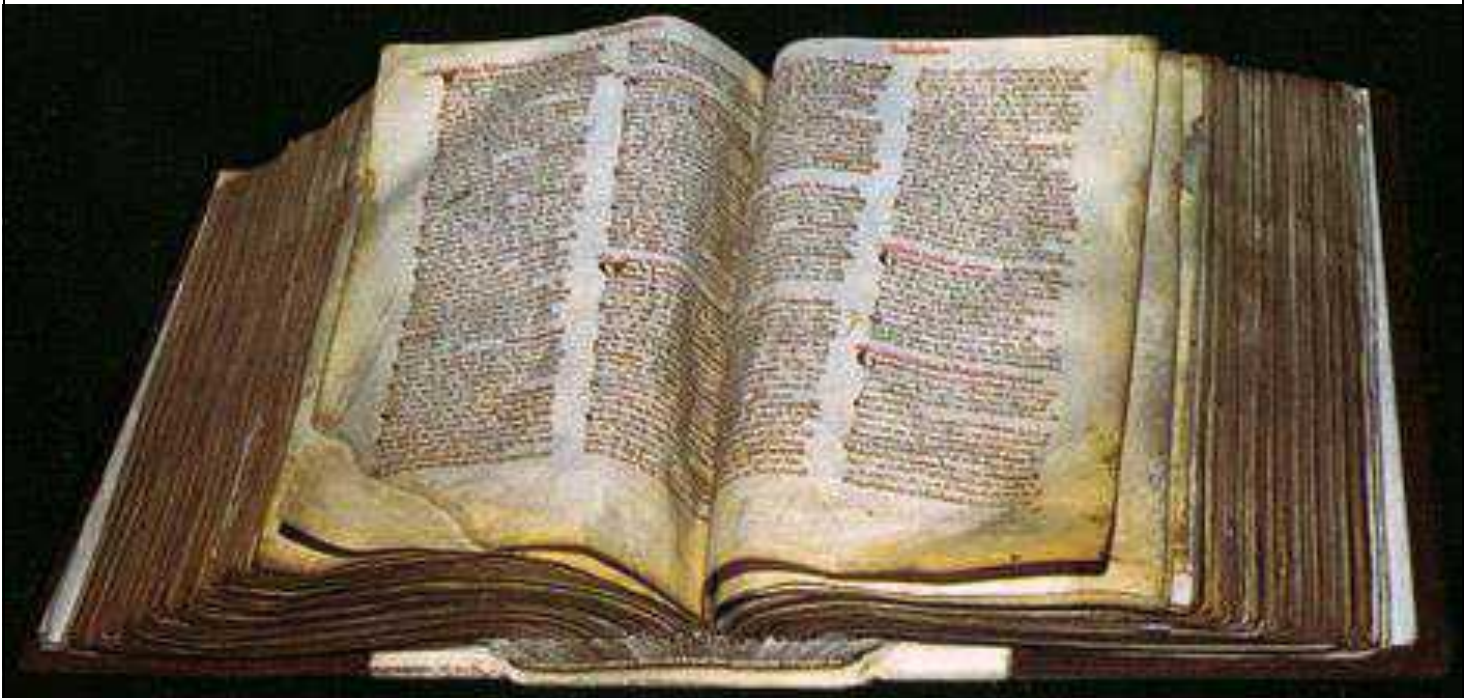
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## **Theme 3:**

# **Norman England, 1066-88**

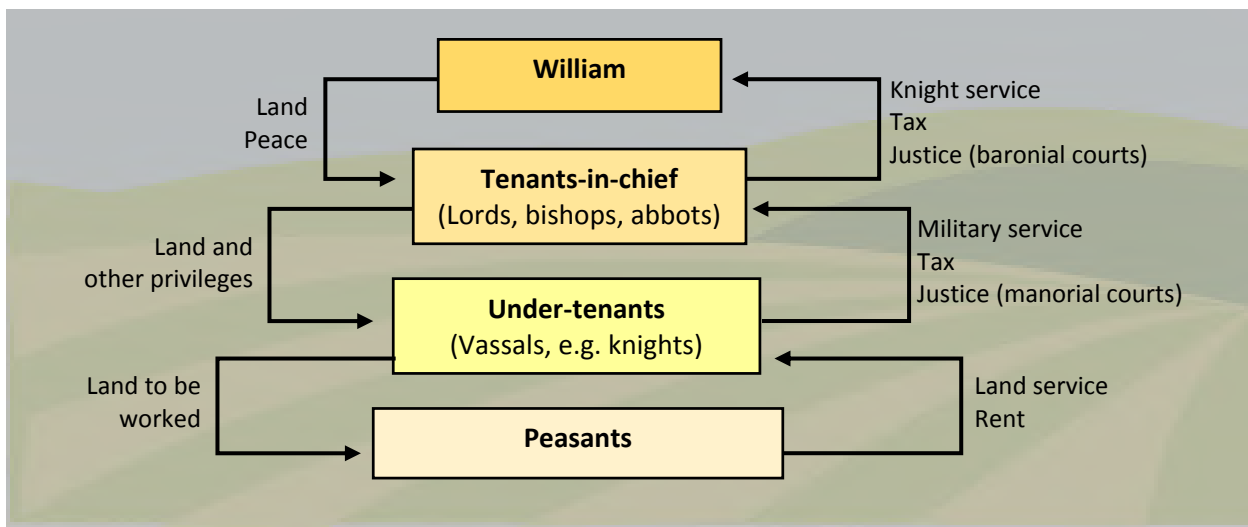


## The Feudal System

The **feudal system** was the system of landholding, and the duties and obligations that came with it.

William gave land to his tenants-in-chief, but they had to provide him troops when needed. Land with this obligation was called a **fief** (or *feud*).

Some landholders also had to provide **knights**. **Knight service** was for 40 days, and was unpaid – the tenant-in-chief had to provide money, weapons and equipment for them. Essentially, this ensured that William had troops without having to pay for them himself.



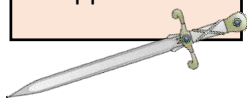
The king was the most powerful person in the feudal hierarchy, followed by the tenants-in-chief. Vassals were not as powerful, and answered to the tenants-in-chief.

### Tenants-in-chief

Tenants-in-chief held their fiefs direct from the king. They were important people like **barons**, and some were Church leaders (e.g. bishops). They had several important roles:

#### Military:

Expected to fight with the king and put down any local opposition.



#### Social:

- Provide knights for the king
- Organise the transfer of landholding from Saxons to Normans
- Provide courts in each **barony** (area of land held by a baron)



#### Political:

Gave advice to the king, and food and shelter when he travelled around the country.



#### Economy:

They gave the king a share of the revenue earned in their fief. They also kept a share themselves.



### Knight service

There were probably around 6000 knights in Norman England. Their job was to guard their lord's property, help defeat any threats and provide up to 40 days' knight service when needed.

Knights were superior soldiers. They used **cavalry charges** and **couched lances** effectively against their enemies, and were often based in castles.

Knights replaced thegns as the under-tenants; the lords of the manor. They dealt with minor court cases in **manorial courts**.



### Landholding

Under William, when a landholder died their heir did not automatically inherit the land. They had to prove their loyalty to William, and pay him to use the land. This payment was called a **relief**.

William could reward loyal followers with low reliefs, or threaten difficult landholders with high reliefs.

This was a new system, which even Normans hadn't had before. It was designed to **encourage loyalty to the king** and **reduce the power of potential challengers**.

### Homage

Landholders had to carry out a ceremony of **homage** to William. They promised on the Bible to remain loyal to him, saying "I become your man".

Tenants-in-chief would perform similar ceremonies with their under-tenants.

### Labour service

**Labour service** was the work that peasants did in return for using the land. It involved farm work (e.g. ploughing the lord's fields) or providing produce.



### Forfeiture

Forfeiture was the punishment for breaking the agreement between landholder and tenant. If the land-user didn't provide the service required of them, they would **forfeit their land** or **pay a fine**.



Match each speech bubble with the correct person in the feudal system.

I hold my land directly from the king. In return I must pay taxes and provide him with knights when needed.

I'm at the bottom of the feudal hierarchy. I farm the lord's land. The person in charge of me is an under-tenant.

I'm a soldier, and I answer to my tenant-in-chief. I give 40 days' military service to the king when required.

I'm the most powerful person in society. Nobody gets land without paying and showing their loyalty to me.

Knight

Peasant

King

Tenant-in-chief

The Church

The Church was a **major landholder**. Church officials collected taxes and kept written records of what was owed.

Church leaders **kept laws and legal documents**. Bishops and abbots were often judges in shire courts.

Bishops were the **heads of cathedrals**, controlling an area called a **diocese**.

Church leaders owed William knight service. This meant they had a **military role**.

Church clerks **issued the king's writs**. Many bishops started out as clerks to the king.

Bishops and abbots were well-educated. They often **gave advice** to the king.

Archbishops sometimes represented the king in negotiations. Archbishop Lanfranc was William's **regent** while he was away in Normandy.



The last Anglo-Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury was **Stigand**. He was replaced in **1070** by **Lanfranc**. There were some key differences between them:

Stigand had been appointed because he was a close ally of Earl Godwin.

Lanfranc thought that appointment should be from God.

Stigand didn't have control over the Church outside his area.

Lanfranc was made the head of the Church in England.

Stigand was a **pluralist**: he was bishop of 2 areas (Canterbury and Winchester) so he had more land and money. He was also accused of giving top jobs in return for money (**simony**).

Lanfranc was against this: he thought the Church should stand above corruption and money.





## Lanfranc's Reforms

Lanfranc was an Italian monk who had run St. Stephen's monastery in Normandy. He was heavily involved in changes to the Church.

He wanted priests to live **spiritual lives**. He banned marriage and made celibacy (no sex) compulsory for priests.

From 1076, priests were tried in special **Church-only bishops' courts**.

There were **more monasteries** – places dedicated to a spiritual life.

Lanfranc introduced Norman **guidelines for following and creating new laws**.

Anglo-Saxon **cathedrals in rural locations were knocked down and rebuilt** in market towns (e.g. Thetford to Norwich)

There were **more archdeacons** (below bishops, but above priests). They looked after Church courts.

Within about 50 years, every English church and cathedral had been **rebuilt in Norman style**.

Although most priests were still Anglo-Saxons, after 1070 there was only one Anglo-Saxon bishop left (Wulfstan of Worcester).



*Lanfranc's reforms*

### Normanisation

The Church was "Normanised":

- Norman bishops and archdeacons influenced the messages people heard about the king and God.
- A quarter of all land was held by the Church. Putting Normans as bishops and archdeacons reduced the risk of Anglo-Saxon rebellions.
- Parish priests came under stricter control. They had to follow Norman procedures.

### **Normanisation of the Church strengthened William's power in 3 ways:**

New bishops did **homage** to the king. Church leaders could forfeit their lands if they failed their duties.

When a bishop died, William chose his successor. He also received the revenue from that land until the replacement bishop arrived.

William controlled communication between the Church leaders and the pope. This stopped people obeying the pope over him.





The most important people in the Church were \_\_\_\_\_, who often held large areas of land. These areas were known as a \_\_\_\_\_.

The last Anglo-Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury was \_\_\_\_\_, who was replaced by \_\_\_\_\_ in 1070. Lanfranc made a number of changes to the Church to make it a more spiritual organisation, dedicated to serving God. For example, priests had to remain \_\_\_\_\_; more monasteries were set up; and more \_\_\_\_\_ were appointed.

To increase their control, the Normans replaced Anglo-Saxons bishops with Normans, made bishops perform \_\_\_\_\_ to the king, and controlled communication with the pope. This process is known as \_\_\_\_\_.

- Stigand
- homage
- archbishops
- celibate
- Normanisation
- Diocese
- Lanfranc
- archdeacons

### Changes to Society

#### CHANGES

#### CONTINUITY (STAYED THE SAME)

##### King

William built castles and cathedrals as a symbol of his power. He introduced the feudal system so that he had ultimate control over society.

The roles in the royal household (the king's servants, troops, advisers) didn't change; William just replaced Anglo-Saxons with Normans doing the same job.



##### Nobles

Earls became tenants-in-chief. The earldoms were made smaller to reduce their power. The nobles were no longer in a position to challenge the king's power.

Just like Anglo-Saxon earls had sworn loyalty to Edward, tenants-in-chief had to pay homage to William.

##### Warriors

Thegns were destroyed as a class and replaced by knights. Knights had less power than thegns had had.



Similar to how thegns owed Edward military service, Norman knights owed the king knight service.

##### Peasants and slaves

The number of free peasants (ceorls) went down. Peasants came under more pressure because William wanted more revenue from the land. Normans thought slavery was wrong, and freed some slaves.

Day to day village life for most peasants was much the same as before – they still farmed for their lord.



##### Economy

William stopped trade with Scandinavian countries (this especially impacted the Danelaw areas). Trade with Normandy increased. Large cities grew rapidly.

Towns kept the trading rights given to them by Anglo-Saxon kings.

## Norman Government

### Changes to Government

The existing Anglo-Saxon government was more advanced than government in Normandy, so William kept and improved what worked.

- William **centralised power** so that he had total control. He owned all the land and no one was powerful enough to challenge him.

#### *Ways in which power was centralised:*

- The **power of the earls was reduced**, and some earldoms were phased out completely.
- William used **regents** (e.g. Lanfranc) to run either England or Normandy while he was away. He usually returned whenever there were signs of trouble.

**Knight service:** troops loyal to the king

William earned money through **reliefs** and the **geld tax**

**The Church** was Normanised under Lanfranc



**The Domesday Book** recorded how much areas were worth, and how much they should pay

**All land** was owned by William

**Demense:** Land kept by William for himself

**The feudal system:** all land users depended on the king

### Sheriffs

The role of the sheriff (aka shire reeve) stayed mostly the same as in Anglo-Saxon times; William just replaced the Anglo-Saxons with Normans.

#### **The key differences of Norman sheriffs were:**

##### POWER

Norman sheriffs were more powerful than Anglo-Saxon sheriffs. They answered only to the king.

##### LAW

Some of the sheriffs' legal responsibilities were taken over by baronial, manorial and Church courts.

##### DEFENCE

The sheriff's military role now ran alongside knight service. Sheriffs looked after castles in their shire.

Sheriffs were often unpopular with local people:

- They were **entitled to a share of the revenues** they collected from their shire. This meant they could make themselves very rich.
- A lot of **land-grabbing** was done by sheriffs. Because of their power, people had nobody to complain to.

## The Forest

William liked hunting and kept much more land as **royal demesne** than Edward had. Demesne was the land that the king kept for his own use.

He made new areas into **forest** – this was not necessarily covered in trees; it meant that it was protected land reserved for hunting.

Many landholders lost land to forest. Entire areas were turned into forest, such as the New Forest in southern England.

### Reasons why the 'forest' was significant:

- It showed that the **power of the king** was above everything else.
- Extending the forest **increased the amount of land William controlled directly**.
- Taking areas for forest was basically land-grabbing – William doing this **made land-grabbing by sheriffs and barons look more acceptable**.
- There were **harsh punishments** for breaking forest laws, which showed how brutal Norman rule could be.
- William earned more **money** from the forests – from fines and the sale of hunting rights.

Animals were protected; especially William's favourites, deer and boar



Hunting weapons were not allowed into the forest



Restrictions on cutting wood, buildings and clearing land in the forest



Hunting dogs were not allowed into the forest



Damage to the vegetation (needed by the animals) was forbidden



Write a definition for each of these:

*Centralised power*

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*Demesne*

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*Forest*

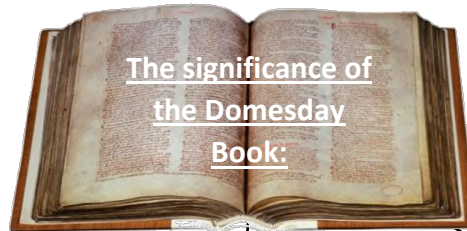
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## The Domesday Book

At Christmas 1085, William ordered a survey of England. He wanted to find out who held what land, what taxes they owed and whether they could pay more.

The results of the survey were written up in the **Domesday Book** in **1086**.



### The significance of the Domesday Book:

#### **Financial**

William wanted to find ways to get more money out of his tenants. There were heavy geld taxes in 1084 and 1086.

#### **Legal**

The survey helped to solve land disputes (many Anglo-Saxons claimed land had been taken from them). This boosted the image of William as a fair king.

#### **Military**

There was an invasion threat from Denmark in 1085, though it never happened. The Domesday survey may have been linked to seeing how many soldiers each tenant could provide.

The council that met to discuss the Domesday survey was called mainly to discuss a possible new Viking attack in 1085. The invasion never happened, but William took it seriously – he brought thousands of soldiers over from Normandy.

## Norman Aristocracy

### Culture

The Norman **aristocrats** (nobles/important people) liked to show off their power, wealth and superiority over the English.

- **They built huge, more experimental cathedrals, churches and castles.** Winchester Cathedral was the longest in Europe; Westminster had Europe's biggest hall; the Tower of London was the largest stone keep in Europe.
- **Male aristocrats shaved the backs of their heads.** Spending time on your appearance showed you were rich because it was a luxury few could afford.
- **They introduced a complicated ceremonial method of butchering animals they hunted.** Hunting was their favourite leisure activity.



- **They brought the culture of chivalry.** This was a kind of moral code about looking up to knights, and treating your enemies in a certain way – William was merciful to enemies, putting them in prison rather than killing them.
- **They were very religious.** They believed in penance – everyone who fought against the English at Hastings had to atone for their sins by praying or giving money to the Church. Each man they wounded was 40 days' penance.
- **The Normans threw out many Anglo-Saxon saints' relics and destroyed tombs.** They thought they were superior to the Englishmen they had conquered.
- **They introduced family names based on where they lived.** They liked to pass estates onto a single heir, rather than giving pieces to different family members.



### Language

William tried to learn English, but gave up because he didn't have the time. Lanfranc also couldn't speak English when he was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1070.



All legal and Church documents were written in **Latin**. The Norman aristocracy spoke **French** though their children would probably speak both French and English.

Many Normans did not learn to read. Youngsters were often whipped when witnessing land grants to make sure they remembered the details.

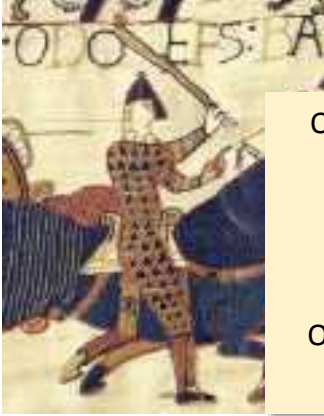
**English** became a **vernacular language** – spoken only by the common people.

### *True or False?*



The Norman aristocrats generally thought they were better than the English.	T	F
Norman aristocrats shaved their whole heads to symbolise their luxurious lifestyle.	T	F
The Normans were not very religious.	T	F
Normans gave family names, named after the area they lived in.	T	F
Important documents were written in French.	T	F
Most Normans – including William – did not speak English.	T	F

## Bishop Odo of Bayeux



Odo was William's half-brother. William had made him Bishop of Bayeux in 1049, and Odo helped William in his invasion of England.

He was rewarded with the earldom of Kent (forfeited from Leofwine Godwinson). He became the second largest landholder after the king.

Odo was **co-regent** of England (along with William FitzObern) while William was away in 1067.

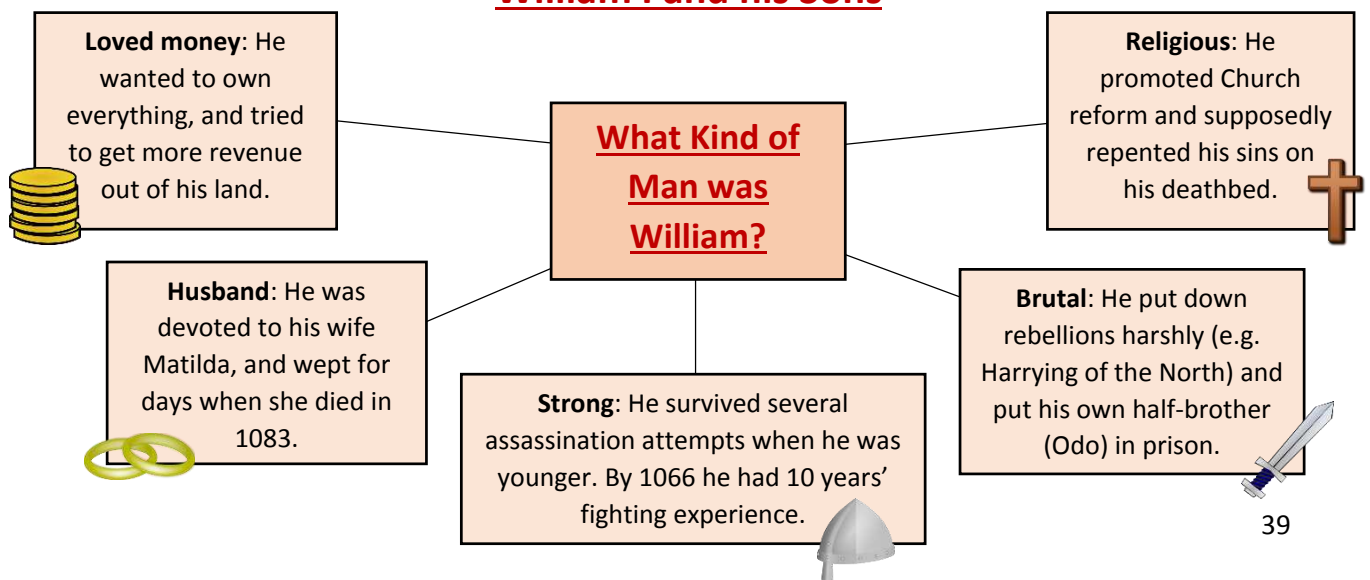
### Odo in trouble:

Odo got into trouble with William due to his corrupt behaviour. He seems to have had ambitions for power.

- The Domesday Book records many complaints against Odo for **illegally taking land**, including from the Church. Lanfranc complained to William and Odo was made to give land back in 1076.
- William sent Odo to deal with trouble in Northumberland in 1079. While he was there, Odo **damaged the region, robbed people and took cathedral treasures**.
- **Odo tried to take some of William's knights with him on a trip to Rome**. This went against William's power because knights were loyal to the king, not the personal troops of their tenant-in-chief.

In 1082, William had Odo put in prison. William was only persuaded to release him on his deathbed in 1087; he had freed other prisoners (e.g. Morcar) with much less persuasion.

## William I and his Sons



## Relationship with his Son, Robert

William's eldest child was **Robert**. He was given the mocking nickname Robert Curthose ('short stockings'/'dumpy legs'), probably by William.

They had a difficult relationship.

*Robert's revolt shows a common problem – princes who wanted power before their fathers were ready to let go of it*

In **1077**, Robert started a fight with two of his younger brothers after they played a prank on him. He felt that William didn't punish them enough, and tried to take control of his castle.

William wanted Robert and his supporters arrested. Robert fled and was taken in by King Philip of France. He began to launch raids from a castle in Normandy.

Unknown to William, Matilda was sending money to Robert. She explained to William that she was just looking after her son.

In **1079**, Robert knocked William off his horse during battle. Robert gave his defenceless father his own horse and ordered him to retreat - William was humiliated.

William and Robert made up at Easter **1080**, a reunion organised by Matilda. Robert was once again the chosen heir for Normandy.



## William's Death

William was injured in July 1087 when he was thrown from his horse during a raid in France. He suffered in pain for weeks before he died on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September.

People thought his death was full of bad omens:

- When he died, his panicked servants stole everything they could, leaving his stripped corpse on the floor.
- At his funeral, his fat corpse burst when it was being squeezed into the tomb. It caused a horrible smell which drove everyone out of the cathedral.

William had said that Robert should inherit Normandy, while William Rufus (his favourite son) should inherit England.

**However, he was filled with guilt for his sins on his deathbed, and said he would let God choose the next king of England.**

▪ Odo was William's...

brother

half-brother

son

▪ William's eldest son was...

William Rufus

Odo

Robert

▪ Matilda was William's...

daughter

sister

wife

▪ Robert was heir to...

Normandy

France

England

▪ William's favourite son was...

Robert

William Rufus

Henry





## William Rufus v. Robert and Odo

Lanfranc crowned William Rufus king William II in September 1087. But -



**Odo – recently released from prison – started a rebellion against William II in 1088.**

- Odo and many barons thought it made sense for the same person (Robert Curthose) to be in charge of both England and Normandy.
- Odo was joined by his brother Robert of Mortain (*another Robert*).
- Other smaller rebellions also broke out in places such as Norwich, Leicester and the Marcher earldoms.

However, most of the Norman aristocrats and English population were **against** the revolt. William Rufus caught both Odo and Robert of Mortain at Pevensey Castle, using local fyrd troops. Odo escaped to Rochester Castle, but eventually surrendered after Robert Curthose didn't come to support him.

**William was popular after Odo's defeat, and made promises to overturn many of the hated parts of Norman rule (e.g. high taxes, the forest). However, he went back on all of them!**

- The Anglo-Saxon social system was replaced by William's feudal system.
- The Church was reformed and "Normanised" under Archbishop Lanfranc.
- William kept many Anglo-Saxon elements, but centralised power so that he was the most powerful.
- The authority of the sheriff/shire reeve was strengthened.
- The Domesday Book recorded details of all tenants and landholders. This helped William to maintain his control of the country.
- Anglo-Saxon aristocratic culture was replaced by Norman aristocratic culture. Aristocrats now spoke French, while English became a vernacular (local/common) language.
- Odo, William's half-brother, was untouchable until he began to challenge William's power.
- William's strong personality influenced the success of the Norman Conquest, but caused tensions with his sons, one of whom (Robert) rebelled against him.
- After William died in 1087, there was a dispute over who should succeed him. His son William Rufus successfully defeated a rebellion by Odo, and was supported by most of the population.

### Topic Test 2: William in Power: Securing the Kingdom

1. What word describes land held in return for a service to someone higher up?

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2. What was a relief?

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**3.** What was knight service? How long was it for?

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**4.** Who was the last Anglo-Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury?

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**5.** Name two changes that Lanfranc made to the Church.

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**6.** Name one way in which William centralised power.

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**7.** Name one feature of the role of a Norman sheriff.

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**8.** What was the demesne?

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**9.** When was the Domesday Book produced?

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**10.** What language replaced English for written documents?

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**11.** Name 3 characteristics of William's personality that helped the success of the Norman Conquest.

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**12.** Which of William's sons rebelled against him in 1077?

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**13.** Which son succeeded William as king?

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**14.** Who unsuccessfully rebelled against the new king in 1088?

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