

## History Knowledge Organiser HT1 - Sacre Bleu: How did the Normans gain power in England?

### What was England like before 1066?

#### Religion:

Mainly Christian (Catholic) and bishops ran the church. Peasants were very religious. Monks were educated and kept records and wrote chronicles.

#### Society:

Population of around 1.5-2 million and ancestors were a mixture of Germanic, Viking, French and Saxon people. Most people lived in villages as towns were very small. Most were peasants who worked on the land farming.

#### Economy:

England traded with Normandy and Scandinavia. There were lots of natural resources to sell. Most people were poor - only 2 in every 100 were rich. England made her own coins.

#### How England was ruled:

The King ruled all the land helped by his earls. The church played an important role and owned lots of land. Society was on a hierarchy from most to least important.

In 1066 Edward the Confessor died without having a child. This meant there was no heir to the throne. 4 men thought they should have the throne:

#### Harold Godwinson

Most powerful earl in England and commander of the army. Was Edward's brother-in-law. Acted as 'sub-regulus' deputy King for Edward. Supposedly promised to help William become King.



#### William of Normandy

Fierce fighter from France who claimed Edward promised him the throne. Was friends with Edward. Already Duke of Normandy but no relation to Edward.



#### Edgar the Aetheling

Edward's nearest relative. Had lived with Edward for many years. Only 14 however.



#### Harald Hardrada

Viking ruler from Norway whose ancestors had been King of England previously. Was a fierce warrior who many feared? Many in England did not want another Viking ruler.



In 1066 the Witan crowned Harold Godwinson King. This led to the **Battle of Stamford Bridge in September 1066:**

Harald Hardrada invaded England with the help of Godwinson's brother Tostig. Harold Godwinson defeated Hardrada and forced the Vikings to leave on only 24 ships having arrived on 300. His men had marched 190 miles to the battle. At the time they were fighting William of Normandy invaded.

### The Battle of Hastings October 1066:

Harold Godwinson	William of Normandy
Housecarls and fyrd. Protected by shield wall at top of Senlac Hill Harold was the leader of the English army	Knights on horses, archers and foot soldiers Clever tactics to confuse the English Strong leadership

### Why did William win?

#### Luck:

William arrived when Harold was in the north (wind changed) and Harold's troops were tired. Harold died in the battle. Happened during harvest season.

#### Harold's mistakes:

Didn't wait for reinforcements, lost his best men at Stamford Bridge, didn't discipline troops so they ran down the hill,

#### Williams leadership and tactics:

'Feigned retreat' so the English thought they'd won, commanded from horseback, brought different types of soldiers, chose the battle site.

### How did William gain control of England?

**Negotiated** - Oaths of loyalty from earls, Archbishop of York's loyalty

**Violence** - Burnt Southwark and around London, threatened death on those who challenged him

**Strengthened areas** - Asked loyal knights to rule certain areas, gained control of treasury.

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