

History Knowledge organiser: The Norman Conquest

1066

- **5th January**- death of Edward the Confessor
- **6th January**- coronation of Harold Godwinson
- **20th September- Battle of Gate Fulford**- Tostig and Hardrada had invaded England and taken the city of York. Crushing defeat for Earls Edwin and Morcar.
- **25th September- Battle of Stamford Bridge**- A crushing defeat for the Vikings. Tostig and Hardrada were killed. Only 24 ships (out of 300) were needed to take the surviving Vikings home.
- **28th September**- William, Duke of Normandy invaded England and intended to claim the throne.
- **14th October- the Battle of Hastings**

The Battle of Hastings- what happened?

- Harold did not achieve surprise but did start at the top of the hill (normally an advantage).
- The sides were evenly matched (about 7000 troops)
- Harold's elite troops were the housecarls who made up the shield wall. William had mounted knights.
- The shield stood firm for most of the battle.
- There was a rumour in William's army that he had been killed. William lifted his helmet to show he was still alive
- The Normans used the tactic of the feigned retreat.
- Harold's army was slaughtered when it broke ranks and chased the Normans down the hill.

The Battle of Hastings- why did William win?

Tactics- William used a variety of tactics during the course of the battle, including the feigned retreat. Harold's use of the shield wall was only effective until it lost discipline and broke ranks

Leadership- William's strong leadership was crucial to victory in the lead up to and during the battle

Luck- William was lucky with the timing of his invasion and that his fleet was not destroyed crossing the English channel. It was unlucky for Harold that he had just fought a major battle and had disbanded his army earlier in the year.

Motte- a mound that the keep (castle) was built on.

Keep- the main castle building.

Bailey- the courtyard within the castle walls

Excommunicate- to cut someone off from the Church.

Feudal system- system of rewards (of land) in return for loyalty and duties (such as providing soldiers) to the king

Domesday Survey- A comprehensive record of the extent, value, ownership, and liabilities of land in England, made in 1086 by order of William I.

Harrying- means to lay waste to (destroy) something.

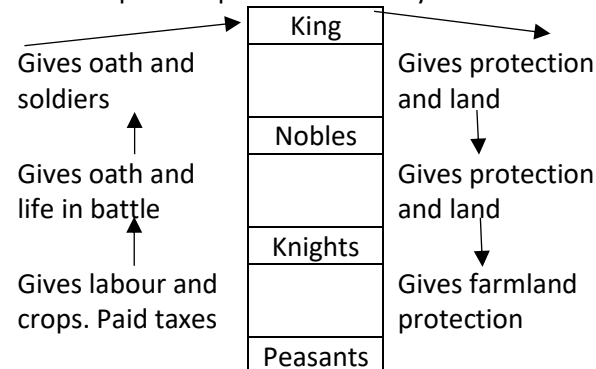
William's problems

William faced 5 main problems after he won the Battle of Hastings and became king.

1. Threat of invasion by Vikings from Scandinavia and of rebellion in the North of England
2. Needed money but did not know how wealthy England was.
3. Needed to take control of London but there were troops and people who had been loyal to Harold there.
4. There was a castle full of soldiers at Dover.
5. Many English lords do not want William as king. He could not trust them to keep their parts of the country under control.

The Feudal System

Unlike the Anglo-Saxon social system you could not 'move up'. Your place in hierarchy was fixed.



Motte and Bailey Castles

Key Features:

Motte- a mound about 15 metres high

Keep/ castle- was built on top of the motte

Bailey- courtyard with store rooms, kitchen, stables and a guard room

Palisade- wooden fence around the bailey and castle

Moat- a ditch, filled with water, around the whole castle

Drawbridge- let down to let people in/ raised if there was an attack

Strengths	Weaknesses
Quick to build	Wood is a weak building material
Big enough to house soldiers	Wood can rot and burn
Advantage of height	Motte can collapse or be tunnelled under
Keep animals inside as a food source	
Local peasants could see them	

The Domesday Survey

- 1086 King William ordered his men to survey and record the land he had conquered.
- The king sent his officials out across the country to write down a huge list of every person, household and even livestock (animals) that they found.
- This became a huge book called the Domesday Book

Rebellions

- 1069 - 1070 William faced several rebellions.
- The biggest rebellion was in the North of England in 1069. It was led by Edgar the Atheling.
- William defeated the rebellion. Then he ordered villages to be destroyed and people to be killed. Herds of animals and crops were burnt. Most people who survived starved to death. Not only was the population reduced by 75% but land was salted (poisoned) to prevent people growing crops in the future. This is called the Harrying of the North.