

Year 7 history knowledge organiser

Medieval	The period between 1066-1500
Chronology	Putting events in the order that they happened
Century	100 years
Anglo-Saxons	People that lived in England before the Norman Conquest
Normans	People from the Normandy region of France, led by King William
Bayeux Tapestry	An embroidery telling the story of the Norman Conquest
Conquest	Taking an area by using force
Cavalry	William's soldiers that fought on horses
Harrying	To completely destroy
Pope	Head of the Catholic Church

Britain before 1066

Anglo-Saxons: People who lived in Britain from the 5th century. They included people from Germanic tribes who migrated to the island from Europe.

Heir: a person who is legally allowed to take the rank and property of someone who has died.

Witan: Kings Council, made up of powerful Bishops and Earls, helped the king run the country

Edward the Confessor: 1042-1066

- Edward became king of England in 1042 after his half-brother died. Before this he had been living in Normandy.
- Edward married but had no children. It was not clear who Edward wanted to be king after him. **For a king to die without an heir was a disaster!**

Potential heirs to the English throne in 1066: Who should become king?

William of Normandy

Duke of Normandy, France. William came from a fighting family. He was a brave soldier. Edward's cousin. Edward had lived in Normandy from 1016-1042. Edward had supposedly promised that William should become King of England when he died.

Harold Godwinson

Anglo-Saxon. Earl of Wessex, one of the most powerful men in England. Harold's sister was married to King Edward. Harold was a brave and respected soldier with a tough streak. The Witan wanted Harold to be the next king.

Harald Hardrada

Viking King of Norway. Vikings had ruled Britain before. The most feared warrior in Europe. Harald was supported by Tostig, Harold Godwinson's brother, who wanted revenge.





The Battle of Hastings: 14th October 1066

William's army

His soldiers were well trained and well equipped. They wore chain mail armour which gave them lots of protection. His army was made up of infantry, archers and cavalry. His cavalry rode specially horses that were bred to carry the weight of these soldiers and still ride at speed. They were the elite of William's army.

Harold's army

Harold's army was made up of professional soldiers and conscripts, peasant farmers who were forced to join the army and fight. Harold's best professional soldiers were the Saxon Huscarls. They were the king's elite bodyguard. They fought with large axes and round shields.

Why did William win the battle of Hastings?

Preparations

William had well trained and professional soldiers. Many of Harold's soldiers were untrained and made up of farmers. Many of Harold's men had left the army to collect the harvest in. Harold was not prepared for the battle. William's army was fresh and well rested. He had lots of supplies. Harold's was tired and reduced in size following the Battle of Stamford Bridge.

Luck

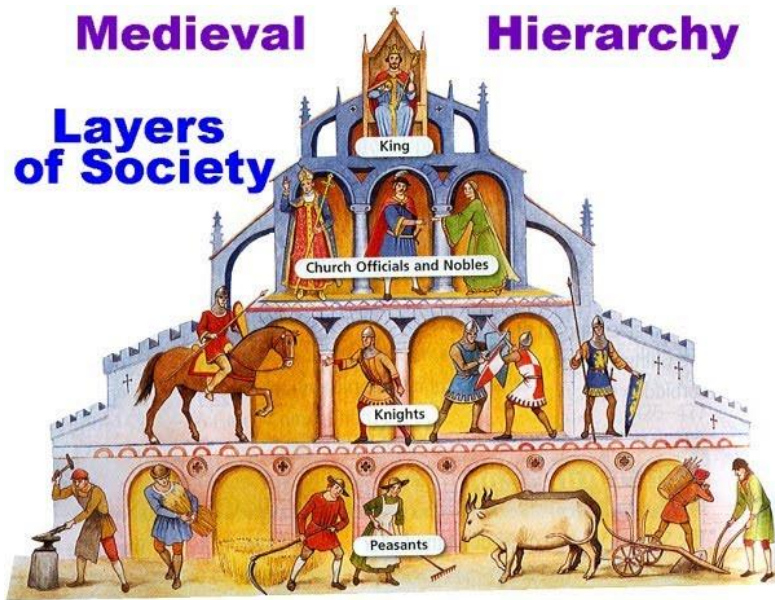
The weather changed when William was trying to sail Harold had to fight the Vikings first- this gave William the advantage. The Saxons left the shield wall to chase the Normans down the hill. At a key moment in the battle Harold was killed.

Leadership

William was very brave and led his men very well. William showed his face during the battle to keep his soldiers from running away.



The Feudal System



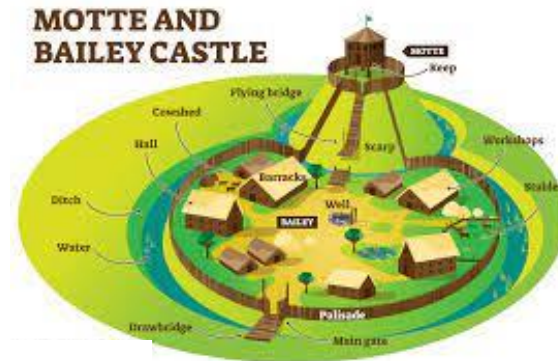
The Feudal System was designed to keep the King strong. He loaned out his land and in return he would receive things back for it.

- **Bishops/Lords** - they would swear loyalty to the King, give him money and give him an army if needed.
- **Knights** - they would receive a large amount of land to be lord of, however, they had to promise to fight for the King if he needed them to.
- **Peasants** - They receive a small amount of land to farm and in return they had to work on their lords land for free.

Castles

Motte and Bailey Castles were built by William to keep him and his people safe.

They were **quick to build** and made of mud and wood. However, they were also **weak against attack**.



Key parts of a castle:

Keep - the strongest part of the castle

Moat - River or water filled ditch around the castle

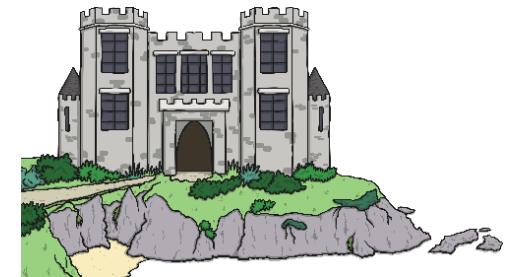
Bailey - a defended area inside the walls, people usually lived there

Motte - the hill that the Keep is on top of

Palisade - strong fence around the whole castle

Drawbridge - A bridge across the moat that can be lifted if attacked.

Eventually the castles were made out of stone. This took so long that hardly any were finished when William died.



The Harrying of the North 1069-70

The English were not very happy with William as their new King. He was French, couldn't speak English, took all the best land and gave it to his friends. Some decided to fight back against him.

Two Earl's named Edwin and Morcar decided they didn't want to pay William tax anymore and so gathered an army of Vikings and northern peasants and attacked York. They killed all the new Norman settlers there and made William very angry.

He marched his army north, killed the rebels at York and then attacked towns and villages all across the north of England as a way to showing the people what happened if you betrayed him. This is the **Harrying of the North**.



It worked as the people were too hungry and sick to fight. It is estimated that **100,000 innocent English people died** as a result of the Harrying of the North.

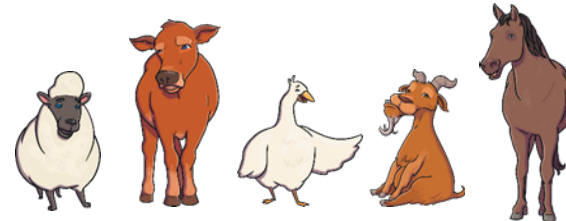
The Domesday Book

In **1086**, William was worried that England was going to be attacked by Vikings again. He needed to raise money to pay for an army.

He had a **survey** carried out across the whole of England to find out how much all of his **people were worth**, and therefore, how much he could tax from them.



The people were asked how much land they had, what job, how many children, their pay, their animals, what crops they grow and many other things. Everything had a value.



All of the information was **written in the Domesday Book**. This is the very first census of England. We now do them every few years. It turned out, **William was a rich man!**