

The Battle of Hastings A2





A reconstruction of the Battle of Hastings for the 950th anniversary in 2016.

1066 was an important year in English history: two kings died and William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, led the last invasion of England.

In 1066, England, contrary to many European countries, was a unified kingdom. King Edward the Confessor had no children. When Edward died in January 1066, three people wanted to replace him:

Edward's brother-in-law **Harold Godwinson**. The English nobles voted and he was crowned King Harold II.

Edward's distant cousin **William of Normandy** said that Edward had promised him the English crown.

King Harald Hardrada of Norway.

Harald Hardrada invaded northern England, near York, in September. So, King Harold marched the English army north and defeated the Norwegians on 25 September. On 28 September, William arrived in the south, near Hastings. So, King Harold marched 400km south.

The Battle of Hastings took place on 14 October.

William had about 15,000 men. Harold only had about 5000 tired men. It was a difficult battle. Harold died and William won. He was crowned King in London on Christmas Day.

French Replaces English

William gave the nobles in his army property in England. French became the language of the court, the legal system and religion for 300 years. Modern English has about 10,000 words which come from French. They include *enemy, peace, religion, service, miracle, beauty, romance... and battle!*



DR



The First Comic Strip

William's brother, Odo, was bishop of Bayeux in Normandy. He ordered the Bayeux Tapestry to show poor illiterate people William's version of the Norman invasion. It was the first comic strip and today most British people's image of the Battle of Hastings comes from the Bayeux Tapestry.

Help

bishop (n) for Catholics, the *bishop* is the leader/chief of the priests in a region

brother-in-law (exp) here, his sister's husband. It can also mean your wife's/husband's brother.

crown (n/v) what a king/queen wears on his/her head

kingdom (n) a country which has a monarch (king or queen)

most (of) (quant) the majority

Norway (n) Scandinavian country, capital: Oslo. The Vikings were from Norway. They were *Norwegian*.

tired (adj) having no energy



Norman soldiers on the Bayeux Tapestry.