

## Context of Anglo-Saxon England

### Legal System

No police, could raise hue & cry if witness crime  
Criminals could face trial by jury or by ordeal  
Most punishments based on violence



### Edward the Confessor

- King 1042-1066
- Struggled to control Earl of Wessex
- Had power over law-making, production of money, landownership, taxation & military

### Towns & Villages

10% of population lived in towns - majority lived in countryside

### Church

Archbishop for North & South England  
Bishops controlled Churches and were powerful  
Local priests were usually poor

### Harold Godwinson

- Earl of Wessex
- From a very wealthy, influential family
- Gets shipwrecked and is rescued by William of Normandy
- Harold takes oath to help William become King of England



### Anglo-Saxon Social Order:

1. The King
2. Earls
3. Thegns
4. Ceorls
5. Peasant Farmers
6. Slaves



### Tostig Godwinson

- Earl of Northumbria in 1055
- in 1065 Northumbrians revolted against Tostig
- Harold ignored King's request to revoke him
- Was exiled by King



## 1. ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND & THE NORMAN CONQUEST



Edward left no heir, these were the competitors for the throne:

### Battle of Hastings

On 14th October **1066** William launched an attack

**William won and Harold was killed**

Harold's soldiers had little preparation and were tired

William had element of surprise and tricked the Anglo-Saxons by **pretending to retreat**  
Harold's army was made up of **housecarls** - trained soldiers and the **fyrð** - working men who were called to fight in times of need

### Harold Godwinson

Chosen to be next king by Witan  
Had Anglo-Saxon background  
Edward's brother in law



**Edgar Ætheling**  
Edward's nephew  
Strongest blood claim  
Only 14

### Harald Hardrada

Viking King of Norway  
Supported by Tostig

### William, Duke of Normandy

Harold promised him he could take the throne  
Distant cousin of Edward  
Not English - unfavorable



### Battle of Gate Fulford 1066

Tostig and Harald Hardrada joined forces to attack England

Hardrada's troops crossed the protective River Ure and defeated the Anglo-Saxons

### Battle of Stamford Bridge 1066

Harold marched his army to North to surprise Vikings

Vikings were defeated and Tostig and Hardrada were killed

