



# William the Conqueror

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(mcr)

A stylized, layered silhouette of a mountain range in shades of teal and blue, located at the bottom right of the slide.

# Contents

- ◆ Introduction
  - ◆ Physical appearance
  - ◆ Early life
  - ◆ Duke of Normandy
  - ◆ Conquest of England
  - ◆ Reign
  - ◆ Death, burial and succession
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# Introduction

- ◆ born about 1028 in Falaise, died on
- ◆ 9 September 1087 in Rouen
  
- ◆ Duke of Normandy from 1035 to 1087 (William II)
- ◆ King of England from 1066 to 1087 (William I)
- ◆ Known as William the Conqueror, William the Bastard



# Physical appearance

- ◆ No authentic portrait was found, but he was described as a man of fair stature, with very strong arms but with he was quite fat
- ◆ His enemies commented, that he stinked like a tanner shop (occupation of his mother's family)



*Wax figure of William the Conqueror  
in Madame Tussaud's, London.*

# Early life

- ◆ Born in Falaise, Normandy
- ◆ Illegitimate and only son of Robert II, duke of Normandy
- ◆ His mother was Herleva, daughter of Fulbert, most likely a local tanner



Tannery workers

# Duke of Normandy


- ◆ William succeeded his father as Duke of Normandy at the age of seven in 1035
  - ◆ The Norman noblemen were trying to take his place, and three of William's guardians were killed
  - ◆ In 1047, he defeated rebelling Norman barons in the battle of Val-ès-Dunes and united the Normandy
- 1053, he married his cousin Mathilda  
(4 sons and 6 daughters)



# Conquest of England

- ◆ English succession
- ◆ 1066, after the death of Edward the Confessor, there were three men, who wanted England:
- ◆ **Harold Godwinson** – earl of Wessex, by the last will of Edward, he was crowned in January 1066
- ◆ **William I** – duke of Normandy, he thought he is the rightful king of England (Edward was cousin of his father), Harold promised him the throne in 1064
- ◆ **Harald III** – Viking king of Norway
- ◆ Harold raised the army immediately after he took power and was awaiting the attack

# Conquest of England

- ◆ Norman Invasion
  - ◆ William began to create a new army (Normans, French mercenaries, many foreign knights)
  - ◆ The army (600 ships and 7000 men) was waiting, the English channel was well-guarded by Harold
  - ◆ September 8, Harold withdrew his army, because of falling morale and supplies
  - ◆ September 25 – slaughterous battle of Stamford Bridge (Harold defeated Harald III with Tostig Godwinson)
  - ◆ September 28 – William landed in England and moved to Hastings
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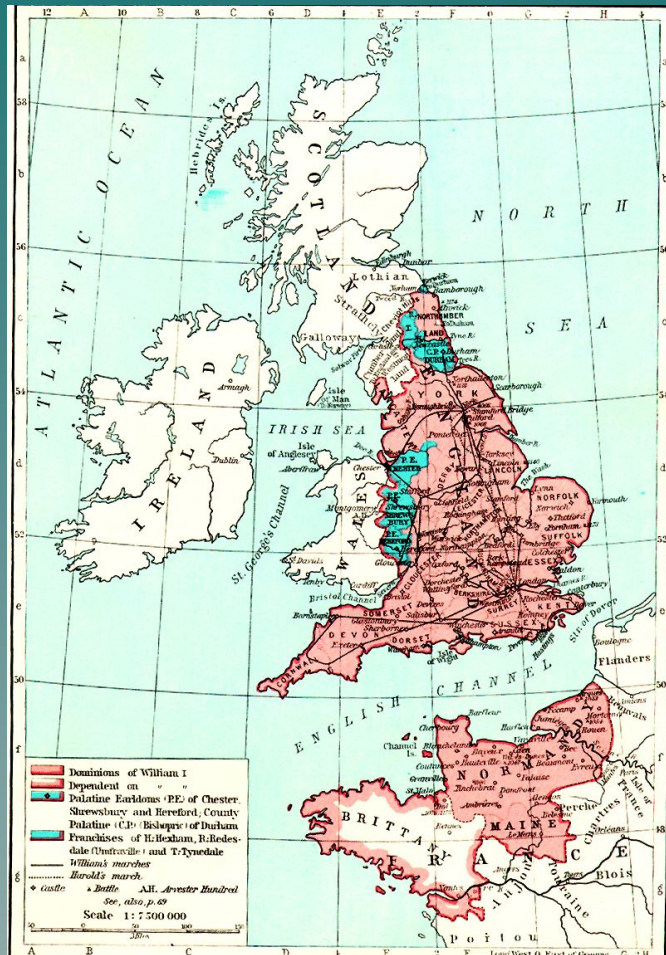


# Conquest of England

- ◆ Battle of Hastings
- ◆ October 14 – it lasted all day
- ◆ William defeated the English army (Harold was shot by an arrow into his eye and died)
  
- ◆ March to London
- ◆ The english council Witan refused to surrender (Edgar Etheling), William marched to London, plundering the cities in his way
- ◆ On December 25, Etheling escaped and William was crowned in Westminster Abbey



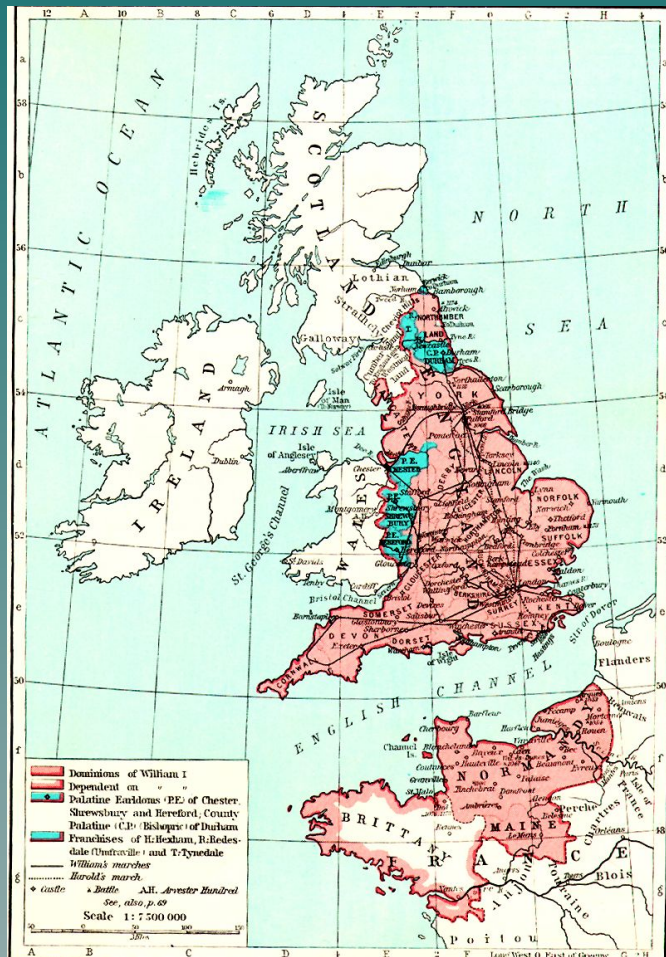
# Conquest of England



- ◆ Against English resistance
- ◆ The south capitulated quickly to the Normans, but in the North the resistance continued until 1072
- ◆ The worst crisis came in 1068, Northumbria and Mercia, led by Etheling, revolted and the Scots and the Danes joined them
- ◆ The rebels besieged and captured York and the rebellion was spreading in whole England



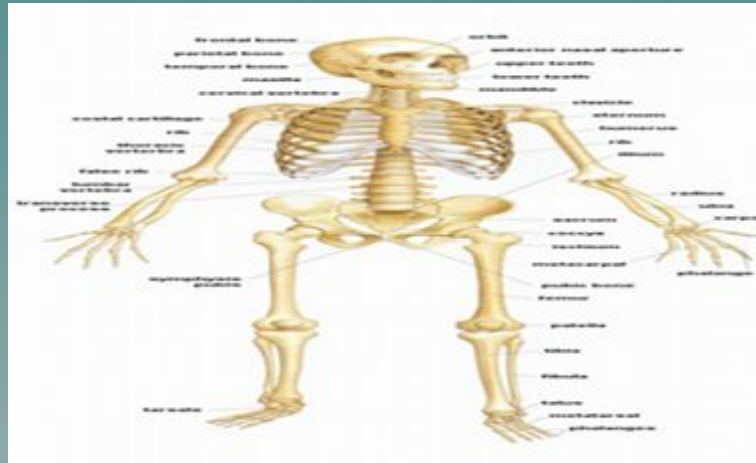
# Conquest of England



- ◆ Harrying of the North
- ◆ William dealt with the new waves of revolts in the West and moved to North
- ◆ He defeated Etheling, but he was very angry, so he decided to devastate Northumbria completely
- ◆ Burning houses, killing English men and animals
- ◆ Northumbria never rebelled again

# Reign

- ◆ Reforms
- ◆ In 1086, the Domesday book was published (the first complete English land register)
- ◆ Many castles and keeps (helped with revolts) throughout England, foundation of Tower of London
- ◆ The French replaced English for nearly 300 years
- ◆ He eliminated the English aristocracy in 4 years



*Domesday book*

# Death, burial and succession

- ◆ When William was besieging Mantes in 1087, he fell from a horse and cut his colon
- ◆ After a few weeks , he died at the convent of St.Gervaise
- ◆ Before his death, he divided his succession between his 3 sons:
- ◆ **Robert III** – the oldest son got Normandy
- ◆ **William II** – England
- ◆ **Henry I** – he received 5000 silver pounds, after William's death he became the English king
  
- ◆ William was buried in Caen, but his grave was defiled twice (French wars of religion, the French Revolution)
- ◆ Nowadays, only his left femur remains in the tomb



# Sources



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