



Edward the Confessor



Edward the Confessor was born around 1003. Edward's father was Ethelred the Unready and his mother was Emma of Normandy

In 1013 the Danes invaded England and Edward, his mother and brother and sister went over to Normandy to live, with his mother's family. Shortly afterwards his father, Ethelred the Unready, had to give up the throne and join them.

The Danish King died however, and his son, Canute, took over the English throne, but he returned to Denmark in 1014 because he was also King there.

Edward's father, Ethelred came back to England to be King again, but he died in 1016 and Canute returned and married Edward's mother. They ruled together until Canute died in 1036.

In 1040, Edward returned from Normandy to England to help his half-brother, Hardicanute, who was now the King, but Hardicanute died in 1042 and so Edward became King of England.

During Edward's reign, the power was held by Godwin, Earl of Wessex and his son Harold, while the king devoted himself to religion - including the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey (consecrated in 1065).

Edward married Godwin's daughter Edith in 1045, but they had no children.

Much of Edward's reign was peaceful and prosperous. When Godwin died in 1053, his son Harold took over as the most powerful noblemen in England and fought battles for Edward with the Welsh in 1063 and the Northumbrians in 1065.

This is probably why Harold was named by Edward as his successor to the throne; but when Edward died in January 1066, his cousin William, Duke of Normandy, claimed the English throne was his. Edward was buried in Westminster Abbey, and is still there today.

In October 1066 William came to England with an army to fight Harold for the English throne. The Battle of Hastings took place and Harold was killed.



The Bayeux Tapestry

William became known as William the Conqueror.