

## Who was he?

Harold Godwinson was an Englishman with the important title of the Earl of Wessex. He was one of the most powerful men in the country.

## Links to Edward the Confessor:

- He was Edward's brother-in-law; his sister was married to the king.
- His father, Godwin, did not get on well with Edward. At one time, Harold and his father were banished from England for a year.
- Harold was a brave and respected soldier and leader, who commanded the king's army.
- It is thought that, on his deathbed, Edward promised the throne to Harold.



Harold  
Godwinson

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## Who was he?

Harald Hardrada was a Norwegian viking who had taken part in several raids on the English coast, before becoming the King of Norway. His reputation was fierce - Hardrada means 'hard ruler' and he was nicknamed 'the ruthless'.



Harald  
Hardrada

## Links to Edward the Confessor:

- He had no link to Edward the Confessor, but a Viking called Cnut had ruled both Norway and England from 1016 to 1035.
- Harald's claim was supported by Tostig, who was Harold Godwinson's brother. The two brothers had fallen out and this was Tostig's way of getting revenge.

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## Who was he?

William was the Duke of Normandy, a part of France. He had been in control of Normandy since he was seven years old, and was used to fighting to keep his land.

## Links to Edward the Confessor:

- William knew the king well - Edward had lived in Normandy from the age of 13 until he returned to England to be crowned king in 1042.
- William had sent soldiers back to England with Edward to support him. Because of this, William claimed that in 1051, Edward had promised him the throne when he died.
- It is also claimed that in 1064, when Harold Godwinson went to visit William in Normandy, he promised to support him when the time came to take the throne.



William, Duke  
of Normandy

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