

The North of England was the most rebellious area, as it saw itself as semi-independent from the rest of the country. There was also a large number of people who were of Danish Viking descent who sympathised with their country of origin. To help secure him against rebellion, King William tried to make alliances with the remaining English earls, Edwin, Morcar and Waltheof, however the English earls refused to be ruled by William.

Earls Edwin and Morcar:

- Fought Hardrada at Fulford Gate
- After Hastings they were the most powerful remaining Anglo-Saxon earls.
- In **1068** they rebelled against William in **Mercia**.
- Edwin and Morcar provided a challenge to William's rule.
- The two earls began to gather allies against William and in Edwin's land in Mercia. William acted as quickly as soon as he realised there was danger. He led an army swiftly northwards, stopping in Mercia ensuring no revolts and then to Northumbria, building castles along the way.
- In **1068**, Edwin and Morcar, with Edgar the Aetheling, fled William's court, and went north. ***This began the Harrying of the North.***

The Harrying of the North and Hereward the Wake!

How did William punish the North?

- William to punish York and the north laid waste to vast areas of land around York, burning and salting the fields and killing any living creature.
- The Domesday Book written in 1086 records that 80% of Yorkshire was known as 'waste' which meant it was uncultivated and unpopulated.

Edgar and the York Rebellion 1068-1069

- Edgar needed allies in order to continue his pursuit of King of England, he flees to the North.
- **King Malcom of Scotland** gave Edgar his support against King William. Malcom had just married Edgar's sister so was now related to him.
- Events spiralled out of control in **January 1069** when the Norman **Earl Robert of Commines** and his men were **murdered** by English rebels.
- Edgar attacked **York** and the North of England became the most rebellious area of England.
- 240 Danish Viking ships invaded in the summer of 1069.
- They joined forces with Edgar and Waltheof. The joint English and Danish army defeated the Norman forces and captured the castle in York.
- William decided to deal with the attack in York himself, and marched North, as he approached the Vikings retreated and William paid them to leave.

What do I need to know:

- Why William punished the North.
- What happened in the Harrying of the North.
- To explain the importance of the Harrying of the North.



Key Words:

- Harrying
- Hereward
- Danelaw
- Edwin
- Morcar
- Salting
- Waltheof



1068 South West

William is once again under attack from King Harold's sons, who landed in Exeter in the South West and attacked it. The Norman soldiers placed at the castle after previous unrest, defeats them and forces them to return to Ireland.

1069 East Anglia

Why did Hereward the Wake rebel?

- After Harrying the North, the English earls Edwin and Morcar continued to cause problems for William in East Anglia.
- They joined forces with King Swegn of Denmark and Hereward the Wake, an English thegn (a person who owned land).
- Hereward had a grudge against William and wanted to dethrone him, the attackers used guerilla style tactics in the marshes in East Anglia.
- They set up a base on the Isle of Ely, where they built up supplies to survive a siege. William was not able to use his usual tactics, so had to develop a new attacking method – siege towers.
- The events at Ely did not all go William's way, however in the end the Monks helped William find a secret rout to Hereward and he disappeared and the rebels surrender to the Normans.