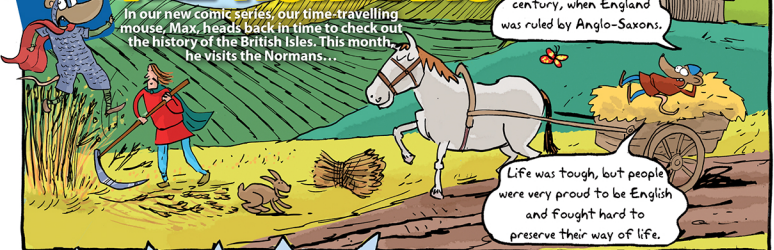


MINI
BRITISH
HISTORY
COMIC

MAX MEETS... THE NORMANS

In our new comic series, our time-travelling mouse, Max, heads back in time to check out the history of the British Isles. This month, he visits the Normans...



Hiya readers! Welcome to the beginning of the 11th century, when England was ruled by Anglo-Saxons.

Life was tough, but people were very proud to be English and fought hard to preserve their way of life.



I've got my eye on you England!

But one man across the English Channel in France, was keen to change this, and impose his tough, strict government on his Saxon neighbours; William, Duke of Normandy!

The Normans of Northern France were direct descendants of the Vikings, also known as Norsemen. When they moved to north France they were known as North Men, then finally Normans.



Norsemen

Northmen

Normans

Gnomes

This evolutionary step may not be true.

A warlike race, the Normans fought many battles with their neighbours, conquering parts of Italy and Africa, as well as Malta and Sicily.



Oooh! This is fun! Where shall we invade next?

William was a powerful leader who gained a great deal of respect amongst his people.

His family were distantly related to the English King, Edward the Confessor and in 1051 Edward promised William he could be the next King of England when Edward died.



Pinky swear?

Pinky swear!

Edward had no children, so the succession to the throne was hotly debated!

But Edward had also promised the crown to his pal, Harold Godwinson. Harold was popular with Anglo-Saxon people, so he would be an excellent choice.



I swear on my best hunting dog's life!

I say! What a jolly wheeze!

Wait, what?

In 1064 Harold was captured by William in France and made to swear an oath on a holy relic that he'd let William be King of England.



Say it!

William then set him free.

Ha, ha! I had my fingers crossed! Bwee!



Edward died in January 1066 and Harold was soon made King. (It wasn't up to Edward after all!)

Woo-hoo! I'm King!

I've got a crown and everything! Yay!

But York was on the Normans' side. Harold had fought and beaten Vikings up in York only days before. The Anglo-Saxons were tired from fighting when they arrived at Hastings to do battle with William.



Woo-hoo! We totally rule!

It was a close fight, but the superiority of the Normans on their horses won over the exhausted Saxons. Harold died in battle, along with his dream of preserving Anglo-Saxon England.

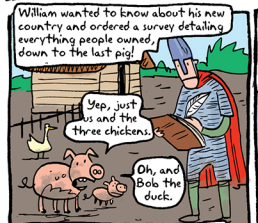


The Normans ruled England with an iron fist and had to build castles to protect themselves from the angry natives!

Go home!

Boo!

You're pretty rotten yourselves!



William wanted to know about his new country and ordered a survey detailing everything people owned, down to the last pig!

Yep, just us and the three chickens.

Oh, and Bob the duck.

This was known as the Domesday Book and still survives today, 925 years later!

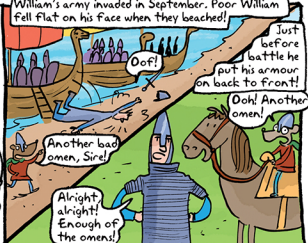


William was outraged! He felt cheated by Harold and began planning an invasion...

Guh! I should've seen this coming!

But the omens are everywhere. Check out the comet of doom!

Halley's Comet was in the sky. People thought it was a messenger of doom!



William's army invaded in September. Poor William fell flat on his face when they beached!

Just before battle he put his armour on back to front!

Dooh!

Another bad omen, Sir!

Alright! Alright! Enough of the omens!

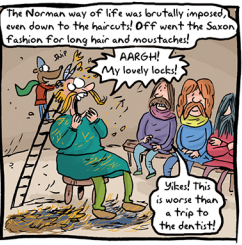
William was crowned on Christmas Day 1066. The congregation fled at the cheering of the rowdy Normans!



Legend has it that Harold was shot in the eye with an arrow, but experts now think he was attacked with swords by William's close allies.

Ha! That's one in the eye for Harold!

William immediately had a huge embroidered hanging made called The Bayeux Tapestry to show of his conquest.



The Norman way of life was brutally imposed, even down to the haircut! OFF went the Saxon fashion for long hair and moustaches!

AARGH!

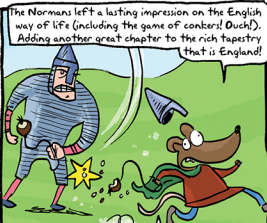
My lovely lock!

Ugh! This is worse than a trip to the dentist!



They introduced many French words into the English language, especially in food, such as 'mutton' for sheep, 'beef' for cow and 'pork' for pig.

Do you want French fries with that?



The Normans left a lasting impression on the English way of life (including the game of conkers! Duck!). Adding another great chapter to the rich tapestry that is England!

Right, I'm off! See you next month!

THE END