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For Vera, John and Richard

REAL LIFE GAMEBOOKS

# THE LAST INVASION 1066

Simon Farrell and  
Jon Sutherland

*Illustrated by Bill Houston*



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# REAL LIFE GAMEBOOKS

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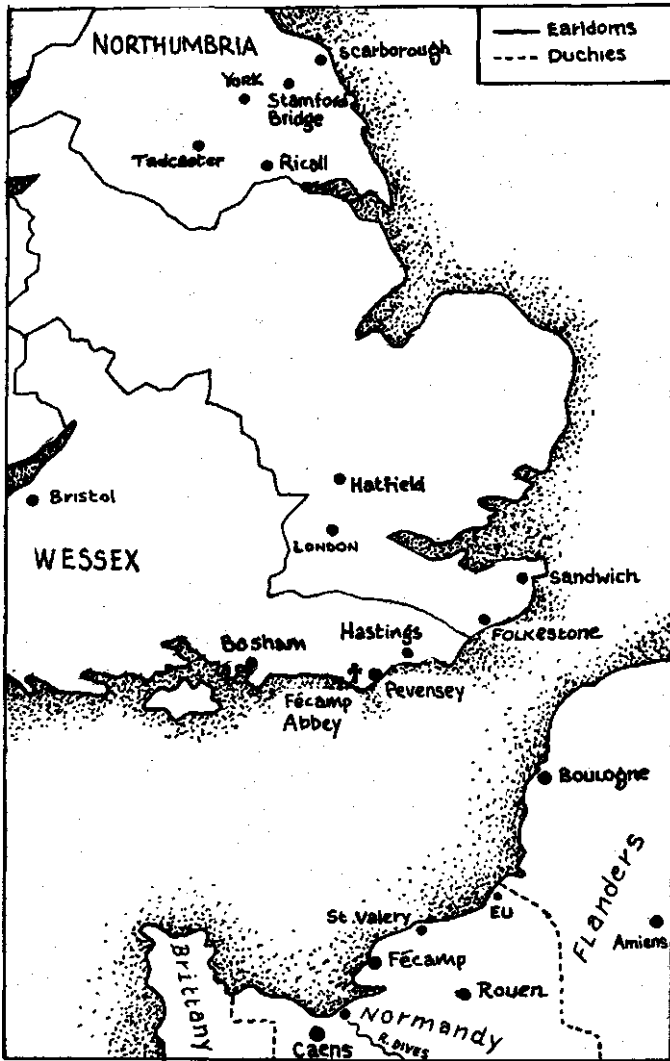
This is a new kind of role-playing gamebook. *Real Life Gamebooks* take you into the past and allow you to experience great moments in history for yourself. You become a character of the time, faced with a series of important decisions which plunge you deep into the events and life of the period. You will meet and talk with major historical figures and become privy to their thoughts and actions, perhaps even influence their decisions yourself!

Think carefully before you make your choices. Danger waits for the unwary in these troubled times and the wrong decision could mean the end of your adventure before it has properly begun.

There are instructions on how to play *Real Life Gamebooks* (you will need a pencil, an eraser and two six-sided dice or the Random Number Table on page 18), a description of the events which are taking place in the world at the time, and a full personal background about your character and what may be expected of you.

You may not complete the story first time; you may wish to go back and try again, seeing what would happen if you made different choices. So fill in the Character sheet on page 16 in pencil, and you can rub everything out when you want to have another try.

## ENGLAND IN 1066



England is ruled by King Edward, an elderly and ailing king, sometimes known as The Confessor because of his piety. It is a prosperous and peaceful land, secure in the knowledge that it is separated from the more troubled mainland of Europe by the English Channel. The King rules with the consent of the people and consults their representatives - the Witan, a council of wise men - about any major decisions. Most Englishmen are content and life, although hard, is not cruel. The average peasant's concern is more with the weather than affairs of state. People do not really think of themselves as part of a nation. All their thoughts and experiences are local ones, restricted to the villages they were born in.

The country is split into Earldoms, which are owned by nobles, and it is these nobles who think about the future of the country. Most prominent of the Earls is Harold of Wessex, who is very popular with the people and who has been virtually running the country since the start of King Edward's illness.

In the rest of Europe, there are two important characters: Duke William of Normandy, and King Harald Hardrada of Norway. Both can lay some sort of claim to the throne of England, through distant relatives, and both are leaders of countries which are fairly quiet and peaceful at the moment - giving them the time and opportunity to think about increasing their power. Neither of these two really understands the system of leadership in England, where the King is 'elected' by a council of wise men. Both are more used to the Euro-

pean system, where the successor should be a relative of the dead king.

Because of this, many people in England are worried about what will happen when King Edward dies . . .

## 1066 Table of Dates

*5 January:* Edward the Confessor dies leaving no heir. There are several claimants to the throne, including William Duke of Normandy, Harald Hardrada from Norway and Harold, Earl of Wessex.

*6 January:* Harold is crowned King of England.

*Spring:* Harold prepares for an invasion from Normandy and raises a large army in the south of England.

*May:* Harold's brother Tostig makes several raids on the English coast with troops of Flemish mercenaries. He is beaten off.

*8 September:* Harold is forced to disband his army due to lack of supplies.

*Early September:* William attempts to cross the Channel with his fleet but is forced back by bad weather. He re-assembles his fleet and prepares to try again.

Harold receives information that a Norwegian force led by Harald Hardrada and Harold's brother Tostig has landed near York. He marches his force of Housecarls to Northumbria and arrives within a week.

*25 September:* The Battle of Stamford Bridge. Harold's army beats the Viking army and Hardrada and Tostig are killed. Harold celebrates with a banquet at York, but it is interrupted by news from London that the Normans have succeeded in crossing the Channel and have landed in the south.

Harold leads his troops back to London in record time and goes to face the Norman army near Hastings.

*14 October:* The Battle of Hastings. The English troops have only time to draw up a defensive position before the Normans advance. The line is gradually worn down, and the death of King Harold settles the outcome of the battle. William wins the day.

*25 December:* William of Normandy is crowned King William I at Edward the Confessor's Abbey in Westminster.

# REAL LIFE GAMEBOOK RULES

## THE SEVEN SKILLS

There are seven main types of skill in which a character would be proficient in these turbulent times. The degree of ability in any one of these skills will fall between 2 (the worst) and 12 (the best).

The choice of skills is entirely up to you. To start the game you are given a pool of 50 skill points which you can allocate amongst the seven skills. You must give at least 2 points to each of them, and you may not give more than 12 to any one.

The skills in *The Last Invasion* are: Strength, Agility, Luck, Persuasion, Javelin, Swordsmanship and Horsemanship. Read the information about each skill below and examine the sample character at the end of this section before you allocate your points and fill in the totals on your Character Sheet on page 16.

**Strength:** - This is your character's basic ability to withstand or inflict damage. When you have chosen the amount you wish to give to Strength and filled in the appropriate box on the Character Sheet, halve it (round up if necessary: e.g. if Strength is 7 then halving and rounding up gives 4) and put the result in the Wounds box on the Character Sheet.

**Agility:** - This skill enables your character to avoid dangerous situations by leaping out of windows, avoiding sword thrusts or diving for cover.

**Luck:** - In certain situations, the only option you will have is to place your character's life in the hands of fate. It is often useful to be very lucky!

**Persuasion:** - In sticky circumstances you will need to be able to talk your way out of a problem. If you are caught cold with no weapon and nowhere to run, a bit of gentle persuasion will often pay off.

**Javelin:** - Slightly shorter than a spear and designed to be thrown, this is the only missile weapon a Norman knight would consider carrying. Javelins are normally used only in battle, but can sometimes make all the difference in such a situation. A mounted man with a javelin and a sword is a dangerous foe indeed.

**Swordsmanship:** - Sword fighting is the most common form of combat in these times. A determined man with a reasonably high skill in sword play is devastating.

**Horsemanship:** - In tricky situations a good rider can always get out of trouble. A bad one will probably fall off. This is your ability to ride hard and fast with the minimum of danger.

## HOW THE SKILLS WORK

### Combat

There will be times in the course of the adventure when your character will have to fight. Although this can almost always be avoided by making the correct choices, it is not always to your advantage to run from

combat. In such cases, the paragraph at which the fight takes place will give you all the information you need. You will be told three things: What weapon you must use (if you have a choice, you will be told so), what kind of opponent you are facing, and which numbered paragraphs to turn to if you are victorious or if you are beaten.

Your opponent will be described like this:

Housecarl      Swordsmanship 7      Wounds 4

Included on your Character Sheet are a number of Combat Boxes. Each time you are about to enter a fight, you should use one of these Combat Boxes to fill in the details about yourself and your opponent. These details include your opponent's weapon skill and his number of Wounds, your own skill (if this is not specified, then you must use the same weapon as your opponent, e.g. if he is using a sword, you must use a sword, as that is the only hand-to-hand weapon acceptable for a Norman knight), your current Wounds total and - most important! - the number of the paragraph where the fight is taking place.

The way you decide the outcome of the battle is simple. Throw two dice, and if the number you roll is *equal to or less than* your own skill score then you have hit your opponent and will wound him accordingly. If you have no dice, use the Random Number Table on page 18 and follow the instructions on its use. With a sword (Swordsmanship skill) or with your bare hands (Strength skill), you inflict one wound every time you successfully hit your opponent. With a javelin you inflict two wounds. Reduce your opponent's Wound total by the amount of damage you have inflicted.

Once you have rolled the dice for your own attack, you must do the same for your opponent. If the number you roll is *equal to or less than* his skill score, he hits you and inflicts the appropriate number of wounds on you. You must then reduce your own Wounds total by the corresponding amount.

The battle continues in this way, with you rolling the dice for yourself and your opponent alternately, until either you or he is killed by taking sufficient hits to reduce the Wounds score to 0.

Either combatant dies instantly their Wounds score is reduced to 0, so it is important to adjust this score immediately after a hit has been obtained.

In most cases you will get the first attack. If you do not, it will be clear from the paragraph.

If at any time in the combat, your character rolls a double-one (i.e. both dice end up with a 1 showing) or you score 2 on the Random Number Table, then you automatically kill your opponent. Unfortunately, the reverse applies also. If you roll a double-one or score 2 on the Random Number Table for your opponent's skill, then you are killed.

If you are fighting at close quarters, either with a sword or with your bare hands, you may take advantage of an optional rule. You may choose at the beginning of your attack to halve your own skill score (round up). This makes it harder for you to hit your opponent, but it means that his own next attack must be halved also, making it more difficult for him to hit you. This can be an advantage if he is better than you.

### Other Skills

In the course of your adventure, there will be times

when you must use some of your other skills. For example, you may need to talk your way past a sentry (Persuasion skill), or you may need to try your luck in a sticky situation.

Whenever you are asked to test any of your other skills, you must throw two dice and try to roll a number *equal to or less than* your score in that particular skill. If you have no dice, use the Random Number Table on page 18 and follow the instructions on its use. If you succeed, you will be asked to turn to one paragraph. If you fail, you will have to turn to a different one.

Sometimes you will have to make rolls to test several different skills to accomplish a task.

### SAMPLE CHARACTER

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<b>Strength:</b>	<b>12</b> Not much is going to be able to stand in this character's way if it comes to a brawl or if he needs to smash a door down.
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<b>Agility:</b>	<b>5</b> Not terribly agile. Do not count on this skill if you are in a fix.
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<b>Luck:</b>	<b>8</b> Reasonably high. Quite a lucky character.
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<b>Persuasion:</b>	<b>6</b> Average skill - might be able to talk his way out of a problem.
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<b>Javelin:</b>	<b>8</b> Not quite an expert, but should hit things more often than not.
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- Swordsmanship:** **7** Average swordsman. Will be able to look after himself in a fight.
- Horsemanship:** **4** Rather low. No leaping on and off horses for this character.
- Wounds:** **6** By having a high strength, this character has a large capacity for taking damage. He should survive a long while.

## CHARACTER SHEET

SKILLS

RATINGS (2-12)

Strength

Agility

Luck

Persuasion

Javelin

Swordsmanship

Horsemanship

WOUNDS (Strength + 2, rounded up)

Fill in your Character Sheet in pencil so that you can rub out the totals and use the sheet again another time.

## COMBAT BOXES

Paragraph you came from:	Paragraph you came from:
Your Skill:	Your Skill:
Opponent's:	Opponent's:
<i>Your Wounds</i>	<i>Opponent's</i>

Paragraph you came from:	Paragraph you came from:
Your Skill:	Your Skill:
Opponent's:	Opponent's:
<i>Your Wounds</i>	<i>Opponent's</i>

Paragraph you came from:	Paragraph you came from:
Your Skill:	Your Skill:
Opponent's:	Opponent's:
<i>Your Wounds</i>	<i>Opponent's</i>

Paragraph you came from:	Paragraph you came from:
Your Skill:	Your Skill:
Opponent's:	Opponent's:
<i>Your Wounds</i>	<i>Opponent's</i>



## REAL LIFE GAME BOOKS RANDOM NUMBER TABLE

If you do not have access to any six-sided dice, you may use this table instead. Simply place the book open in front of you and close your eyes. Point with your pencil until you touch the page and then open your eyes to read what number you have 'rolled'.

If any paragraph asks you for a number between one and six, then repeat the above instructions, but halve the number you 'roll', rounding down.

**RANDOM NUMBER TABLE**

10	7	11	4	7	9	9	5	4	12	10	8
5	5	6	3	6	10	7	7	8	8	7	3
6	8	11	7	9	5	2	4	8	6	6	9
11	6	7	11	8	3	5	7	10	6	12	9
7	9	7	3	10	6	5	4	8	8	7	5
6	6	9	8	2	10	5	4	8	7	4	9
5	4	8	9	7	7	7	8	6	12	5	6
7	11	8	6	4	7	8	3	9	2	8	7
5	6	11	9	9	3	10	4	6	5	10	10

## PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Your name is Hugh deBouard, and you are the second son of a Norman noble. You were born and raised in Normandy and gave your first oath of allegiance to its Duke, William, but some years ago you decided to leave your homeland and take your wife to England, to the court of King Edward, sometimes called The Confessor. He had a reputation for nobility and friendship, and many other of your fellow countrymen were already there.

Arriving in England, you were welcomed by the King and after a few years, in recognition of your loyalty and companionship, he granted you a small estate in Northumbria, a part of the country which you have grown to love. Both you and your wife are happy in peaceful England.

But nothing can last for ever. Recently, the King has fallen ill and it can be only a matter of time before he dies. When he does, your position is unclear. Will his successor look as favourably upon foreigners as Edward has done? You wait for the inevitable with a certain amount of worry. Who will be declared his successor?

Now turn to paragraph 1 to begin your adventure. Good luck!



## 1

You stand amongst a select few in the bedroom of King Edward of England, in his palace on Thorney Island, just outside London. It is the 4th of January, and the year is 1066. Among those gathered with you are the Queen, who refuses to be separated from her ailing husband, Duke Harold Godwinson, Stigand the Archbishop of Canterbury who is the King's priest, and Robert FitzWimark, a Norman like yourself and one of Edward's closest foreign friends.

The Queen, in response to a request from Archbishop Stigand, is trying to awaken her husband, who has lain in a deep sleep for the past several days. It is obvious that he is dying, and you feel that it would be kinder to allow him to just slip away. But that cannot be, for King Edward has no heir, and the Witan - the council of the wisest men in England - awaits a word from him to guide their decision concerning his successor.

The King's eyes open and he begins to mumble. You are too far away from the bedside to be able to hear his weakened voice, but you recognize the ramblings of a dying man in his tone.

The King's death is a matter of some importance to you, more perhaps than to many of the others in the kingdom. As foreigners at the court, you and your countrymen are in a precarious position. If the King dies, it is possible that you will be expelled from the

country without warning by whoever takes his place.

As you watch, the King seems to gain strength from somewhere and his voice rings out.

'Do not mourn for me,' he says, 'but pray to God for my soul and give me leave to go to him.' He beckons his wife closer and speaks to her for the last time. Then, in the hearing of you all, he offers a brief prayer and stretches out his hand to Duke Harold.

'Harold,' he says, 'I commend this woman and all the kingdom to your protection. I also commend to you those men who have left their native land for love of me and served me faithfully. Take an oath of fealty from them, and protect and retain them, or send them with your safe conduct to their own homes with all they have acquired in my service.'

Then he gives instructions for his burial and asks that the news be announced promptly. When he has finished, he lapses back into a coma. You leave the room, dejected at the death of such a great and pious man. It is not long before the news of King Edward's death is announced to all.

You now have a choice. Will you stay on in England and serve the new King as you did the old one (go to **110**) or will you return to Normandy (go to **60**)?

## 2

With a great shout the Saxon host breaks into a run, crossing the scant few yards between the two forces. A terrible crash sounds along the battle line as the two armies smash into each other. Many men die before they can strike a blow.

Before you is a spearman. You must fight him, using your own sword.

Spearman      Spear 7      Wounds 3

If you win, go to **106**. If you lose, go to **122**.

## 3

Despite your desire to stay in Normandy, you feel sure that the Duke wishes you to return and spy for him. You can change your mind. If you decide to go back to England go to **245**. If you still wish to stay in Normandy, turn to **235**.

## 4

As you reach the top of the hill, you pause for a moment to stare at the body of King Harold. Now go to **51**.

## 5

As you ride up to help your fellow knights deal with a group of peasants, you see that Walter Giffard and other Saxon nobles are already trying to escape the battlefield. But before you can pursue them, you must fight two Saxon peasants who confront you.

First peasant	Pitchfork 5	Wounds 3
Second peasant	Axe 6	Wounds 2

If you win, go to **249**. If you lose, go to **11**.

## 6

The housecarl falls to the ground as you run him through. Spinning around, you can see that few Normans still remain locked in battle. The mass of the army is in flight, shouts ring out amongst the fleeing men that William is dead, and that all is lost!

Will you stay and continue to fight (go to **141**) or will you join in the rout (go to **269**)?

## 7

'There are marshes and dense woods to either side of that ridge,' objects William. 'Anyway, I do not have enough troops to maintain a frontal assault and attempt a flanking manoeuvre. Harold would catch such a force before it reached an advantageous position and we would only lose more troops. I think it best to continue with the present tactics.'

Disappointed that William has turned down your plan, go to **193**.

## 8

Breathing heavily, you see that the Norse are fast retreating. Tostig's death has robbed them of their last leader and they feel the need to regain the safety of their boats. Will you chase after the fleeing Norse on foot (go to **97**), try to find a horse and follow them mounted (go to **40**) or rest where you are (go to **268**)?

## 9

As soon as you rejoin Harold, you realize that he wants to parley with the Norse. Will you go with him (go to **265**) or wait in the battle line (go to **158**)?

## 10

The Norseman falls away from the bloody blade of your sword and, dismounting, you run towards the bridge. Glancing around, you see that all the Norsemen on this side of the river have been dispatched. Only one remaining Viking stands defiantly on the bridge, with several Saxons dead and dying around him. None can approach without feeling the bite of his axe. Will you stay out of the fight (go to **146**) or will you scramble



down the bank of the river to see if there is another way across (go to **150**)?

### 11

The peasant leers down at you and spits upon the ground by your head before raising his weapon to dispatch you. Stout Saxon courage has defeated you. Will it defeat William also? You will never know.

Your adventure ends here.

### 12

Some yards away, you can see Tostig's banner flying over a group of Norsemen. In the middle of the group stands Tostig, barking out orders to his men. He is protected by a solid shield wall, but he is not totally safe any more.

Will you try to fight your way through to him (go to **44**) or concentrate on the remainder of the Norse shield wall (go to **227**)?

### 13

You must roll your Horsemanship skill or less with two dice. If you succeed, go to **196**. If you fail, go to **144**.

### 14

'I will go, my Liege,' you say.

'Good man!' He takes your hand and squeezes it. 'When I come to the kingship of this country, I will remember this.'

Leaving the tent with William's message, you find your horse and wearily begin the long ride towards the capital.

Now go to **237**.

### 15

Clapping your heels into your mount, you shout to the others to follow you and the whole party puts on a burst of speed. The peasants fall behind, but before you can breathe a sigh of relief, another group steps out into the road less than fifty yards ahead. They fall upon the riders swiftly. You must fight. Now go to **120**.

### 16

A fine welcome to France! You wipe your sword on the body of your assailant and ride onwards into Ponthieu. The Count of Ponthieu is under fealty to Duke William, so you are greeted warmly and given fresh horses and food and rest. You set off again refreshed, and after many days of weary riding, you approach Rouen. If you have taken any wounds, they will heal during this time. Restore your Wounds total to its original amount. Now go to **203**.

### 17

Reluctantly, you agree. There seems no alternative other than to fight them.

Almost an hour passes before the King's column appears over the crest of the hill. When he sees your predicament he laughs heartily, although he still cannot conceal the worry which lies heavily upon him.

'He is our loyal subject,' he tells the housecarls and they release you. Then he says, 'Perhaps it would be better for you to travel with me from now on, deBouard!'

Grinning ruefully you agree and fall in behind him.

Now go to **205**.

## 18

You reach Harold as he is directing his men to assemble the prisoners they have taken. He proposes to march to Ricall and, providing he can reach an agreement with the surviving Norsemen, he will set them free.

Now go to **221**.

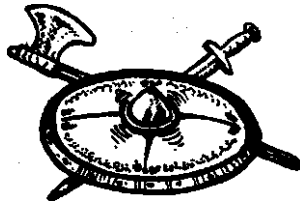
## 19

The ships out to sea could be the vanguard of William's army. Will you ride to meet him (go to **42**) or will you wait and get confirmation first (go to **206**)?

## 20

The first attack smashes into the Norse shield wall. Great cries echo across the battlefield and the ringing of metal upon metal fills your ears.

The deafening noise reaches a crescendo and you can hardly bear the din. Both sides have taken huge casualties, but neither has given an inch. The shield wall remains intact, but bloody. Now go to **292**.



## 21

Harold makes the return journey in four days, arriving

in London on the 5th of October. As soon as you reach the city you decide to visit FitzWimark. If you are a Norman spy go to **81**, if you are loyal to Harold, go to **291**.

## 22

Five Saxons fall upon Tostig and in seconds he lies on the ground, bloody and beaten. The 'Land Ravager' still remains erect, but one of the warriors pulls it down and casts it contemptuously across Tostig's body, then raises his arm in victory. His celebration is short-lived, however. A javelin pierces his armour and it is clear that the battle is not yet won. Will you rest where you are (go to **268**) or will you chase after the retreating Norsemen (go to **183**)?

## 23

Returning to London, you deliver William's reply to your message and prepare to march with Harold. The King spends his first few days back in London dealing with important affairs of state while waiting for a reply to a message which he has sent via a monk to William.

The reply comes on the 11th of October, and the King's mood from that day on takes a turn for the worse. No one is allowed to know what William replied, but Harold immediately begins preparations for an inarch, ignoring all counsel to the contrary.

Now go to **124**.

## 24

The Saxon shield wall is still solid. The English troops are ranked perhaps seven or eight deep behind the front line of housecarls. As the Norman footsoldiers

approach this frightening sight, they are met by a hail of missiles and their line begins to waver. Will you help the officers to rally their men (go to **190**), charge forward in the hope that they will follow your example (go to **61**) or retreat down the hill (go to **224**)?

## 25

'I will ride north!' you insist, and they draw their weapons.

'Not if we can stop you,' grins one and he chops at you with his sword . . .

Fighting on horseback requires a Horsemanship roll every combat round, (that is, before you throw the dice for yourself and your opponents). If you fail it, you may not make any attacks that round. You must conclude the combat on foot, against mounted men who can then add one to their skills because of their mounted advantage.

First housecarl	Axe 8	Wounds 3
Second housecarl	Sword 7	Wounds 3
Third housecarl	Sword 8	Wounds 3

They will not allow you to surrender and you must fight to the death. If you win, go to **68**. If you lose, go to **163**.

## 26

The two soldiers grab you, prodding spears into your stomach to keep you still whilst they take your weapons.

'We'll take this one to Tostig, should be a valuable catch!' one says.

They take you to the beach. It seems that Tostig has no intention of staying here. Sandwich is aflame and his

soldiers are more interested in carrying loot back to the ships than in any possible threat from the English.

Tostig stands on the prow of a large longboat directing the raid. When he sees you, he leaps down and swaggers over with a broad grin across his face. Defensively you smile back, but his smile turns to a snarl.

'A Norman!' he cries. 'Well discovered, men. It would be embarrassing if he lived to witness this, so kill him!'

Before you can utter a word, you feel a sharp pain in your back as one of the Flemings stabs you.

Your adventure ends here.

## 27

Within minutes, all organized resistance has been overcome. The despair which the Norsemen feel at Haradrada's defeat has destroyed their spirit. The prisoners are herded together and the ships are captured. The last remaining Norse noble, Olaf, parleys with the King for his life. The two young Earls of the Orkneys, Paul and Erlend, who have recently married Haradrada's daughters, are also captured.

On the promise that none of them will ever return to set foot on English soil, Harold allows them to take some of the ships and flee. The survivors fill only twenty-four of the more than two hundred ships which landed only a week ago.

Now go to **212**.

## 28

When you arrive at your estate in Northumbria, you plunge immediately into the problems which caused you to make the journey. The major one is a matter of

inheritance and you take pleasure in straightening it out. The problems of your people may seem small when weighed against the problems faced by the whole country, but they are perhaps more important to these common people than the question of who sits on the throne of England.

Two days after your arrival, a messenger rides up to the gates of the estate. He comes from Earl Morkere and tells you that the ships of Tostig's fleet have been sighted again, this time just off the coast of Northumbria, some twenty or thirty miles to the east of you. Earl Morkere and his brother, Earl Edwin, plan to prevent Tostig from making a landing, and they have asked you to accompany them.

Will you go (turn to **289**) or will you remain on your estate with your wife (turn to **161**)?

## 29

'For God and Harold!' screams the bishop as he delivers the killing blow. You have time to wonder wryly whether he will spare the time after the battle to give you a decent burial before you sink into the darkness forever. . .

Your adventure ends here.

## 30

As you enter FitzWimark's chambers, he greets you warmly and offers you wine. When you have made yourself comfortable, he begins to speak in earnest.

'I know that you are an honourable man, deBouard,' he begins. 'And I also know that you have recently refused to spy for the King against our cousin William. For that, I respect you. But I have been in communica-





tion with Duke William, and he desperately needs such good men as yourself. Are you willing to serve your country on his behalf? If so, you should accept the King's offer and go to Normandy, where William will let you know what is required of you.'

FitzWimark is letting you know that William too requires spies, and he is offering you the job. You know that even if you want to, you cannot go to Harold and expose your countryman, for his word is worth more than your own in the King's counsels. You have a simple choice. Will you decide to spy for William (go to **201**) or will you refuse to have any part in such dealings (go to **280**)?

### 31

There, in the distance but rapidly drawing closer, comes a large body of men. They are riding the small, shaggy ponies which the English grace with the name 'horse', but they are making a good pace.

As the column draws abreast of you, you recognize the King at its head. He sees you, too, and waves in spite of his tiredness.

'I want to make fifty miles before we camp tonight,' he cries. 'Join us or go ahead of us, but meet me in Northumbria, deBouard!'

Will you join the column and ride with Harold (go to **205**) or will you decide to ride on ahead of it (go to **172**)?

### 32

As he falls, you look quickly around for the next opponent. But there is none. The Northumbrians have the Flemish on the run and they are scrambling back into their boats. You see the ship which carries the standard

of Tostig already out to sea. The Northumbrians pursue their quarry right up to the water's edge, but many of the mercenaries have managed to escape.

Morkere appears, riding up to you.

'I saw that last combat,' he says. 'Good fight!'

Grinning, you thank him and he pulls you up behind him on his horse and carries you back to your own mount.

That evening there is much feasting and you bask in the warm feeling which always envelops you after a battle. This is what you have been trained for!

The following day, you return to your estate and must decide whether or not to return to London.

If you wish to go back to London, go to **72**. If you wish to stay in Northumbria for a little longer, go to **177**.

### 33

Continuing your patrol, you notice a large group of Ffyrdmen heading for the ridge along the road from Hastings. Will you attack them (go to **152**) or will you ride back to report to William (go to **257**)?

### 34

Diving speedily overboard, you lose sight of your wife amidst the fury of the crashing waves. You start to swim towards where you think she is, and luckily you are successful. As you reach her flailing body, you grasp her arms and she clings to you gratefully. Then you turn to see how far away the ship is ...

The ship has vanished from sight. Not even a piece of flotsam remains to mark its watery grave. Resigning yourself to your fate, you tread water and prepare to

keep your wife afloat for as long as you can. It is not long before your legs and arms grow weary and, still clinging to one another, you sink beneath the waves.

Your adventure ends here.

### 35

The day is wearing on and the men on both sides are getting tired, the Normans perhaps more so than the English, who have had nothing to do but stand and fight. A faint look of concern creeps over William's face, and once more he asks for your advice.

Will you tell him that you have no advice to give (go to **128**), suggest that the archers fire over the shield wall and into the massed ranks of peasants behind it (go to **180**) or advise a retreat (go to **284**)?

### 36

Taking passage aboard the boat to Eu, you spend two uneventful days at sea before landing in Normandy. From there the ride to Rouen is a journey of some fifty miles, which you cover in two days. As the city comes into view before you, go to **203**.

### 37

As he rides to the foot of the hill William removes his helmet. He shouts at the fleeing men to rally around him, and they slow their pace. Further up the hill, several hundred Saxons have broken ranks to pursue the retreating cavalry. Seizing this opportunity William immediately orders a counter-attack. The Norman cavalry rumble forward and you follow close behind William. Now go to **287**.

### 38

The peasants are not mounted, so providing you can break through you can out-distance them quickly. Ordering Pierre to stay close behind you, you spur your horse to a gallop.

As you approach, the peasants scatter and you ride through their ambush unmolested. Breathing a sigh of relief, go to **93**.

### 39

While you are waiting with the King at Bosham, news comes that several English ships have been lost in a strong gale which caught them on their way back to London. Harold leaves for the city on the 13th of September and upon arrival receives messages that Duke William did indeed attempt an invasion only days ago! But the same storm which caught the English fleet unawares drove him to take refuge in the harbour at St Valery. There is rejoicing at the court - William has tried and failed. The King, succumbing to many months of pressure, falls ill with a bad leg and retires to bed.

But only a few days later, on the 19th of September, a messenger arrives from the North with terrible news. King Harald Hardrada of Norway has invaded and is moving south, burning and looting as he travels! The town of Scarborough is already in flames! On hearing this news, the King leaps from his bed and orders his housecarls to prepare to march that very day. Will you wait until the army is ready to head north (go to **240**) or, worried about your wife's safety, will you ride immediately on your own (go to **278**)?

*(illustration on following page)*

A horse stands motionless nearby, held where it is by the frozen hand of a dead Saxon on the reins. You gather the reins from his unfeeling grasp and spur off after the retreating Norse troops. Looking for victims, you see two men running a few yards ahead of you.

You may knock one of them over if you succeed in a Horsemanship roll. If you fail, you must fight them normally, but add one to your Swordsmanship skill to reflect your mounted advantage.

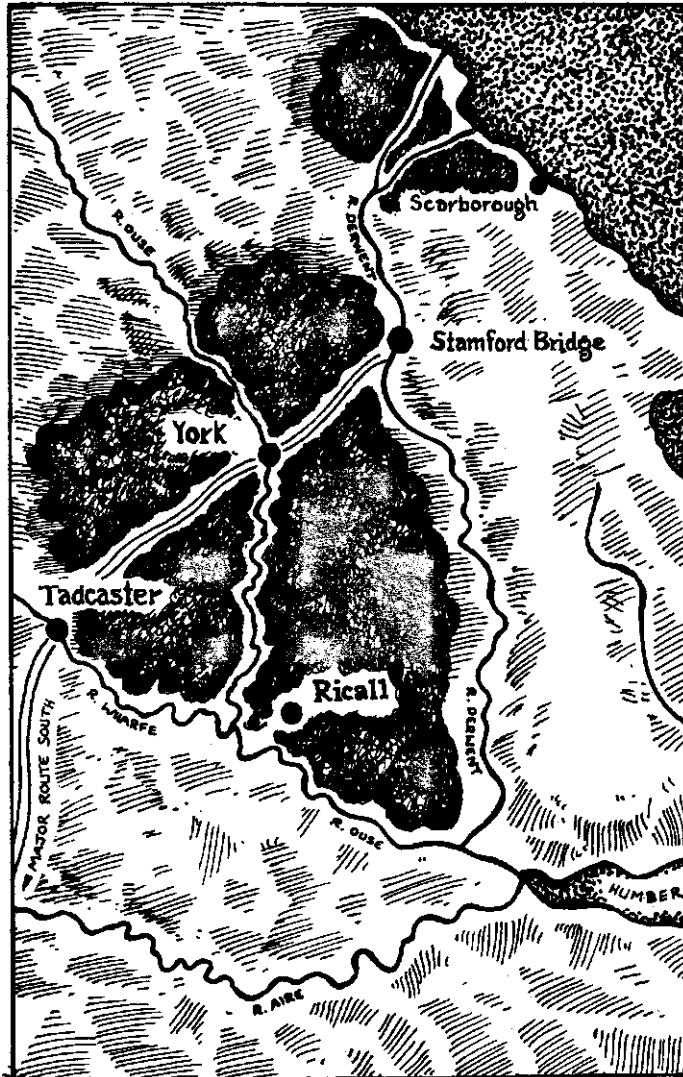
First man	Axe 6	Wounds 2
Second man	Spear 7	Wounds 3

If you win, go to **50**. If you lose, go to **176**.

A risky choice, but if it pays off you will be in Rouen all the sooner. The voyage takes three days and the weather is good for the first two. Then, on the third day, disaster overtakes you. A storm is blowing up from the south west and soon the little boat is rolling dangerously as her captain tries to run for harbour - any harbour. Just as you are beginning to give up all hope of ever seeing land again, the coastline is sighted. A cheer goes up, but the celebration is too soon. A monster wave bears down upon the deck and sweeps you overboard. As you surface, you see that the ship is beginning to break up under the storm's terrific pounding.

Make a Luck Roll. If you succeed, go to **218**. If you fail, go to **58**.

Riding swiftly to Sandwich you can see that part of the



town has already been put to the torch. You soon learn that it is not William but Harold's brother, Tostig. He has been in exile but has now landed to stake his claim to the throne against his own brother, with a troop of Flemish mercenaries as support.

Suddenly two men with short spears appear, one on either side of you. Will you surrender (go to **26**) or will you stand and fight them (go to **251**)?

### 43

Forming up on the other side of the bank, the troops advance towards Hardrada's battle line. The bridge has fallen to Harold, and his men are coming over and closing with the Norse shield wall. Now go to **9**.

### 44

Two large Norsemen spring forward as you start towards Tostig. They mean to stop you reaching him. You must fight them.

First Norseman	Axe 7	Wounds 3
Second Norseman	Axe?	Wounds 2

If you win, go to **155**. If you lose, go to **112**.

### 45

William accepts Aelfwig's banner with a laugh.

'Well done!' he cries, then points beyond the knots of fighting men. 'Is that Harold's banner?'

Turning, you see that it is indeed the 'Fighting Man' standard of the King, and at the same time you notice that a group of Norman knights has managed to break through one of the gaps in the Saxon shield wall and is heading for the King's position. Will you ride to join

them (go to **117**) or will you stay here with William (go to **266**)?

### 46

Impatiently, you wait a few hours for your page, but he does not appear. Then a villager brings the news: he has been found several miles down the road, apparently gored to death by a wild boar in the middle of the day! Remorsefully, you mount your horse and ride towards the north road once more. Now go to **31**.

### 47

Arriving at Thanet, you discover that Tostig has sailed again. He made only a brief stop to take on board an old friend of his, Duke Copsi. His ships were last seen heading northwards along the coast.

Wearily, you wheel your horse and ride back to London. Now go to **168**.

### 48

Panting, you risk a glance to left and right and see that the number of Normans attacking the shield wall is much fewer than you expected. More housecarls are stepping forward to take the place of their fallen comrades, and you must choose whether to face them (go to **239**) or to retreat (go to **269**).

### 49

You reach the top of the hill with the Norman knights all around you and press forward through a milling mass of horse and foot soldiers. The English are fighting like tigers to resist the onslaught of the entire Norman army, but despite their organized defence you can

see that there are gaps opening up in the front line. Will you attack the still-intact portion of the shield wall closest to you (go to **83**), ride towards the place where you have spotted the banner of the Abbot of Winchester (go to **262**) or join a group of knights who have penetrated the Saxon front line and are fighting their way through the peasants who back it up (go to **5**)?

## 50

The two Norsemen lie dead below you. Coaxing the horse around, you thread your way through the piles of bodies and head for Harold, who is only a few hundred yards away. Now go to **18**.

## 51

As you stare down at the mutilated body of the man who was once your friend, at times your political foe, but never your enemy, Duke William appears at your side. He dismounts and stands beside you for several silent seconds.

Curious, you turn to look at his expression. He seems furious at the indignities which have been inflicted on the King.

'Who did this?' he asks quietly, but in a voice of steel, and you name Ponthieu as the culprit.

William curses. 'I will deal with him,' he promises, and it seems to you that he is speaking to the dead body which lies before you.

Tearing your gaze away from the ghastly sight, you remount your horse and ride with William along the road which leads down the other side of the hill. In the distance, the English are fleeing in complete disarray, with the Norman cavalry still in hot pursuit. Closer to



hand, many Normans and their horses lie dead at the bottom of a deep gully which straddles the road.

William looks at the bodies of so many of his noble knights, and catches his breath as he recognizes that of Eustace de Boulogne, his kinsman. He sighs and then looks up.

'Recall the cavalry and collect together the prisoners,' he says to an aide. 'We have won a great battle here, but it is not over yet.'

Now go to **263**.

## 52

The javelin misses the housecarl you were aiming for and fells a peasant behind him. Your target dashes towards you, waving his sword ferociously. Will you fight him (go to **248**) or will you gallop away and report to William (go to **89**)?

## 53

The axeman slips to the ground as you remove your blade from his chest. Glancing left and right, you see that the battle rages on with renewed ferocity. You may either stay where you are and regain your wind (go to **8**) or head for Tostig (go to **44**).

## 54

Reluctantly, you return to the battlefield. A horse stands tethered to a tree and you untie it and mount up. Now go to **18**.

## 55

The servants carry out your orders, packing and preparing for the long journey. As soon as possible, you set



out with your wife and many retainers. The pace is slow, but the weather is good and the countryside through which you pass is beautiful. It is pleasant, riding slowly along and chatting in your native language to your wife and to your retainers, who are more friends than servants.

Three days after you leave London, you are riding along a quiet, wooded section of the road, laughing and talking, when you hear a rustle in the undergrowth by the side of the road. You look in that direction, only to see a number of armed peasants break from cover and charge towards you, waving pitchforks and cudgels and shouting loudly. Perhaps they think you are a Norman invader. You must quickly determine what course of action to take. Will you defend yourselves (go to **120**), shout that you are English (go to **64**) or try to outrun them on horseback (go to **15**)?

## 56

The Norman cavalry has decimated the group of Saxons who charged down the hill. Very few survive. William pulls his troops back to regroup at the foot of the hill. At the top of the ridge, several Saxons are moving forward slightly to reclaim their missiles. Now go to **84**.

## 57

The Saxon trumpets blare out the retreat. Instantly, you respond and fall back. Already, most of the Saxons have begun to reform some twenty yards away and you hasten to join them. Now go to **169**.



## 58

The sea is so rough that even your most valiant attempts to keep your head above water are useless and your lungs begin to fill with water. Soon you have lost the strength to struggle against fate and you sink silently beneath the stormy waters.

Your adventure ends here, with a watery grave.

## 59

Duke William has been here at the Abbey of Fecamp for several days now, but he is willing to wait several days longer if necessary. He spends the next important hours in preparing his defences against Harold and discussing tactics with his brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux at only nineteen. You are given a position in the battle line and told to rest and wait with the other troops. Now go to 96.

## 60

You decide that it would be at least prudent to investigate your position in Normandy. When you left, your lands passed into the hands of your younger brother and he now has sole claim to them. You have heard nothing from your country for almost a year, and now seems as good a time as any to make a visit.

As you prepare to leave a messenger arrives, asking you to visit Robert FitzWimark before you go. Will you do so (go to **137**) or will you ride directly to Folkestone to take ship for Normandy (go to **222**)?

## 61

Encouraged by your advance, the wavering of the Norman footsoldiers is lessened. As you reach the Saxon

line two housecarls step eagerly forward to attack you. You must fight them.

First housecarl	Swordsmanship 8	Wounds 3
Second housecarl	Axe 7	Wounds 3

If you win, go to **165**. If you lose, go to **153**.

## 62

'My Lord, I fear for my life if I visit London again,' you say.

He smiles grimly. 'I understand,' he answers. 'Very well, I will find another.' With that, he dismisses you and you go to find your horse in preparation for the departure of the army.

Now go to **71**.

## 63

Whipping out your sword, you leap towards the retainer and set upon him desperately. The commotion warns others in the Palace and reinforcements arrive quickly. You cannot fight them all, but they press so closely upon you that you do not have a chance to yield. Finally a sword finds your throat and darkness descends.

Your adventure ends here.

## 64

'We are English!' you shout at the onrushing peasants, but they do not hear you. A thrown cudgel knocks one of your retainers from his horse and you must decide now whether to fight (go to **120**) or to spur the horses forward (go to **15**).



## 65

Two men emerge from the bushes on your left. Norsemen! You spring forward to stop them from getting away. You must fight them with your sword.

First man	Axe 6	Wounds 2
Second man	Spear 7	Wounds 3

If you win, go to **173**. If you lose, go to **159**.

## 66

Your clumsy landing leaves you stunned long enough for your enemies to cluster around and deliver many numbing blows. You have no chance to fight back and you expire under the ferocious attacks of too many opponents.

Your adventure ends here.

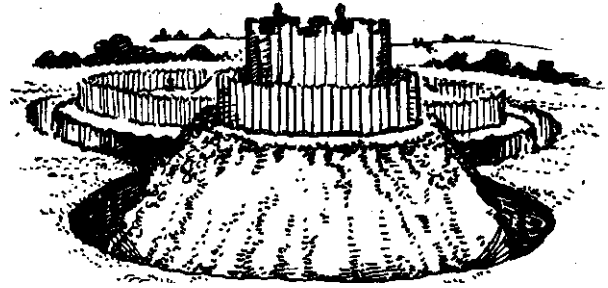
## 67

Several more Flemish troops are running towards you. You turn and flee. Upon seeing their dead comrades they increase their pace. Fortunately none of them have bows, and you begin to outpace them.

Looking around as you run, you see your own horse which must have shied away during the fight. You leap on to it, and gallop off towards Harold's encampment.

As you ride into the camp, you see that Harold is already preparing to ride out to meet his brother. Quickly you recount your actions and what you have seen, then gallop back towards Sandwich with him.

He has a few hundred soldiers with him, but you think this will be enough to deal with Tostig. After all, you only saw a couple of dozen Flemings. Now go to **105**.



## 68

You gaze at the dead bodies of your opponents, wondering if they were really housecarls? It seems that the best course is for you to hide their bodies and pretend that all of this never happened!

Just as you have finished and are remounting your horse, you look back down the road and see the King's column approaching. It would be foolish to ride on now, so you wait by the side of the road.

As Harold draws abreast of you, he grins.

'Decided to wait after all?' he says.

You force a grin and agree with him, then fall in with the rest of the column. It seems that no one suspects anything.

Now go to **205**.

## 69

You surrender without a fight and are conducted to a well-fortified tower in the centre of Boulogne. Here you are separated from your retainers and imprisoned while one of them is sent to Rouen with a ransom demand.

Time passes slowly in the prison and, although you

are not harshly treated, you long to be back on your estate in England. You resolve to return there as soon as you possibly can.

After two months of waiting, the ransom is paid by the generosity of Duke William himself, and you are released to make your way to Rouen. After many weary days of travel you approach William's court. Now go to **203**.

## 70

In the dark, you have little difficulty in evading the Saxon watchmen and you manage to reach William's camp easily. You tell him that you estimate the strength of the Saxon army is less than 10,000 men. William nods when you say that barely a quarter of them are professional soldiers.

'Stay with me and give me the benefit of your experience, deBouard,' he says.

Now go to **151**.

## 71

William sends messengers to London but does not approach the city himself. He has decided to show his strength by subduing many other smaller towns in the area. He captures Dover and rests there for eight days before moving his troops inland in a circle around the capital.

Finally, a message is received from London. The Witan has decided to surrender and Archbishop Stigand has ridden out to offer fealty to the Duke of Normandy.

Sighs of relief are many among the Norman nobles. The army is seriously depleted and it is not certain that

William could have captured the city in a frontal attack. Luckily, that is not necessary. His scare tactics seem to have worked.

The army advances towards London. A fort is built at Tower Hill, inside which William takes up residence.

Now go to **219**.

## 72

Is your wife with you at the estate? If so, go to **274**. If you are preparing for the journey alone, go to **177**.

## 73

You decide that it is hopeless to try to rescue your wife, and cling tightly to the mast as another monster wave hits the ship. For several seconds you are buried beneath tons of water. Then it has passed and you sigh with relief. But too soon! You hear, above you, the tiniest creak, and look up in time to see the top half of the mast descending upon you. . . .

Your adventure ends here.

## 74

Your fears overwhelm you and you rush to your apartments within the palace. Telling your wife to prepare for a journey, you rapidly begin to pack. Before you are half finished, however, there is a knock on the door and one of the King's retainers stands before you, one hand on his sword hilt.

'You are summoned to the King's presence,' he tells you, his eyes taking in your hasty preparations. 'You must come with me at once.'

Will you go with him (go to **114**) or will you attempt to fight and flee the city (go to **63**)?

## 75

As you ride towards the bank of the river, a Viking sailor leaps from the bushes and unhorses you. Make an Agility skill roll. If you fail, he will get the first attack. If you succeed, you may attack first as normal.

Viking sailor    Swordsmanship 6    Wounds 3

If you win, go to **184**. If you lose, go to **132**.

## 76

On April 24th, the sky is lit up with a fiery star. William claims it to herald the fall of Harold, and most people believe him. Under the light of this heavenly body the boats are finally prepared.

The weather in the channel is exceptionally calm, so much so that despite William's eagerness to sail, he cannot. No wind, no invasion. Conditions remain the same for some weeks. By late August, after much persuasion by William, the fleet finally sets sail. Now turn to **226**.

## 77

Gradually, tenacity and strength of numbers begin to work for the Saxons. Great holes appear in the Norse line - the much vaunted shield wall is breaking up under the pressure. Tostig stands defiantly ahead, flanked by picked Norse axemen, with Hardrada's banner fluttering stubbornly in the breeze. Will you launch an attack upon him (go to **44**) or will you concentrate on the wavering Norse shield wall (go to **227**)?

## 78

The appointed hour for the meeting with Hardrada by the people of York is soon after dawn on the 25th of

September. Long before the sun rises, the King is awake and marshalling his troops. As the first rays of the early morning sun touch the walls of the town, he leads his column of mounted men down the road towards Stamford Bridge. You ride proudly just behind him, in a strange way almost looking forward to this battle. Your Norman youth is still strong within you, and war is what you have been trained for.

Your mind, too, is free of worries. The previous night, careful enquiries revealed that the Norse have not been within ten miles of your estate, and so your concern for it has vanished. There is nothing ahead of you now but the forthcoming battle. Now go to **252**.

## 79

The ride to Northumbria is long and hard, and you are glad when the company comes in sight of your own small estate, on the road to York. King Harold accepts your offer of shelter and spends a day there before travelling on to York. In York, he meets with the Earl of Mercia, Edwin, and the Earl of Northumbria, Morcere, two young brothers. Here also are gathered the representatives of the Northumbrian people, and a second Witan of the North is quickly assembled. It takes them only a day to agree with their southern fellows, and Harold is proclaimed King for a second time. A week of feasting follows, during which Harold makes many gifts. To you, he grants an extra thousand acres of land, and waves aside your attempts at gratitude. Finally, it is time for the King to leave for London again. Will you accompany him (go to **213**) or stay in Northumbria and look after your lands (go to **200**)?

*(illustration on following page)*



## 80

Mourning, and damning your own stupidity, you bury your page and set off again. You are soon out of the wood and decide to return to Hatfield. Once there, you hear rumours that the King is coming. You ride out to the North road to see. Now go to **31**.

## 81

FitzWimark is surprised to see you, but welcomes you warmly.

'Duke William is at Pevensey,' he says. 'He will wish to know the strength of Harold's army and what account it gave of itself. Also I have a message for you to give him.'

Will you agree to go to Duke William's camp at Pevensey (go to **100**) or will you refuse (go to **290**)?

## 82

It could be months before a ransom demand brings a reply from Rouen, and even then the outcome would be uncertain. You dislike the idea of spending many weeks in foul-smelling confinement in Flanders. Spurring your horse forward, you ride down the Captain and jump your horse over some barrels to bypass the waiting soldiers. Your retainers follow suit and soon you are galloping out of the town and down the road towards the border.

After half an hour's hard riding, you slow up and scan the road behind you for signs of pursuit. You can see none, and make the rest of the journey at a more leisurely pace. Soon the village which marks the border between Flanders and Ponthieu comes into sight in the distance. You breathe a sigh of relief, but too soon.

Behind you, one of your retainers suddenly spots horse-  
men in pursuit. You spur onwards, but it is clear they  
will overtake you before you reach safety. As they  
approach, you rein up and draw your sword. There are  
three riders, so you will only have to fight one of them.  
Your retainers can handle the other two.

Rider            Swordsmanship 6            Wounds 3

If you win, go to **16**. If you lose, go to **132**.

### 83

Two housecarls face you. You must fight them.

First housecarl    Swordsmanship 7    Wounds 3  
Second housecarl    Axe 6            Wounds 2

If you win, go to **185**. If you lose, go to **163**.

### 84

William orders more arrows for his archers and they are  
soon distributed. The archers move up the hill and  
begin firing again at the Saxons who, in the brief rest  
they have gained, are passing flasks of water and loaves  
of bread among their ranks. As they raise their shields  
to ward off the falling missiles, William orders his foot-  
soldiers forward again. Will you join in the foot attack  
which William has ordered (go to **24**) or will you remain  
with him and watch (go to **188**)?

### 85

William is directing his troops against the pockets of  
stiffer English resistance. There is no shield wall any  
more. Too many of the housecarls are dead and many of  
the peasants are already retreating. Will you decide to

ride on towards King Harold's position (go to **117**) or  
will you stay with William and help direct the attacks  
against Saxon strongpoints (go to **207**)?

### 86

Returning to London, you deliver a message which  
William has given you for Robert FitzWimark. On  
reading it, he claps you on the back and smiles.

'You must act normally,' he tells you. 'Any informa-  
tion you have, send in your regular letters to your  
brother. I am glad to have you on our side.'

Leaving his apartments in the old palace, you return  
to the greetings of your wife. Now go to **280**.

### 87

The King rides back into London and sends for you at  
once.

'My troops are too tired to march again immediately,'  
he tells you, 'and affairs of state require my presence  
here in London. Go to Thanet for me and report on  
events there.'

Unable to refuse a direct command from the King,  
you mount up and ride out. Now go to **47**.

So near and yet so far. As you straighten up after dis-  
patching the last of your opponents, twenty more body-  
guards appear as if from nowhere and fall upon you,  
hacking and slashing until your body is no longer even  
recognizable. If only you had managed to defeat these  
bodyguards you would have had a chance at Harold  
himself. But you cannot fight the Saxon army single-  
handed. No doubt your name will go down in the his-

tory books, if only to record this amazing feat of arms. Bravely fought, but foolishly.

Your adventure ends here.

## 89

Amidst the confusion of the retreat, William rides forward and rallies his men once again. Now go to **186**.

## 90

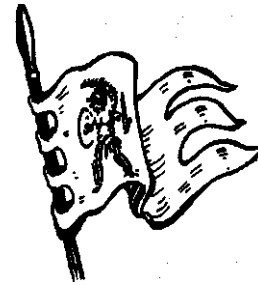
Deciding that you should remain with the King, you stagger off to find somewhere to sleep. All too soon, you are awakened by the sounds of the army preparing to march, and you drag yourself to your horse, grimly looking forward to another day of intense travel.

By mid-afternoon, the column has reached Gainsborough, and here Harold meets with some of the scouts he dispatched the previous night. It seems that Hardrada has indeed defeated Edwin and Morkere in a battle just outside York, at Fulford, but they have survived and taken refuge in the city which has surrendered to Hardrada without any further fighting. He has demanded hostages from within the town.

Harold's only response to this news is to quicken the pace. He orders more scouts to be sent out, and once again you may choose. Will you stay with the King (go to **234**) or will you go with the scouts (go to **189**)?

## 91

The peasants are dead, but you have no time to be satisfied with your victory. More peasants are approaching and you are unwilling to face the oncoming mass of Saxons. You turn and ride back to report to William. Now go to **257**.



## 92

Aware of the possibility that William's plans may meet defeat at the hands of his Barons, you decide to remain in Normandy a little longer.

Talking to many of the Barons, you can piece together what is happening behind the scenes. Many oppose their Duke's plan, but to no avail. Although startled that they should defy him, William has still ordered many ships to be built. Even now workmen are busy felling trees and learning from fishermen how to build boats. The Duke has also sent messengers to the Pope in Rome, to the King of France and to those duchies which border on Normandy, seeking help in his enterprise.

Security is tightened, and several spies of King Harold are discovered. No one is allowed to take ship for England without the Duke's approval, and so it seems that you must remain where you are until William sends you back. Now go to **142**.

## 93

Gradually the flat, wooded terrain gives way to the rolling hills of Northumbria. Your estate is close by and

you send a messenger ahead to inform your servants to prepare a welcoming feast.

An hour or so later, you are happily installed in your favourite place by a roaring fire, soothing the aches of your journey away with a generous flagon of a local brew.

Two days pass as you busy yourself with the affairs of your lands, sorting out a complicated matter of inheritance. On the eve of the third day a messenger arrives at your estate.

He comes from Earl Morkere and tells you that Tostig's ships have been sighted again, this time thirty or so miles off the coast to the East. Morkere and his brother, Earl Edwin, plan to prevent Tostig from landing, and they ask you to aid them.

Now go to **289**.

## 94

'You fool!' you say. 'The enemy is Hardrada of Norway. He is no Norman!'

'Nevertheless,' repeats the leader of this small group of housecarls, 'I think you should wait with us.'

Will you agree and wait for Harold (go to **17**) or will you attempt to ride on (go to **25**)?

## 95

Riding to Bosham, you meet the King and are soon involved with the organization of the Ffyrd. Men arrive from all over England, and each group is assigned a stretch of coast between Plymouth and Dover. The clifftops are alive at night with the light from their watchfires.

In late April, beginning on the 24th, a great light is

seen in the skies - a moving star with a fiery tail. On some days it is even visible while the sun is still up! It is an omen, of course. But an omen of what? Now turn to **238**.

## 96

On the morning of the 14th of October, you ride out from Duke William's camp with a company of Norman scouts. Approaching Senlac Hill, some five or six miles from the abbey, you see that Harold's army has arrived and is beginning to form up on the crest of the hill. Will you continue with your patrol and attempt to find out how many Saxons there are (go to **33**) or will you ride back with the news to the Duke (go to **257**)?

## 97

The Vikings are outpacing you. In the distance, a fresh body of Norsemen have arrived, but they are too exhausted after their long run from Ricall to be of any use. Quickly, the pursuing Saxons have them in flight too. The trumpets sound the recall. Will you ignore them (go to 65) or will you rally to Harold (go to 54)?

## 98

The scout's news is grave. He confirms that Scarborough has been burned to the ground and reports that Harald Hardrada has sailed up the river Humber and made an attack on the city of York. The Vikings have won the battle and it is feared that York has already surrendered to the invaders. There are rumours that Earls Edwin and Morkere have been killed trying to defend the city in a battle at Fulford.

King Harold's face is grim as he listens to the reports.

'I want more scouts to leave at once,' he says. 'I need more information about the size of Hardrada's force and whether it is true that he has captured York. As for the rest of us ... we march at dawn!'

Leaving the King's tent, you have a choice. Will you join with the scouts and go on ahead (go to **138**) or will you stay with the King and the main body (go to **90**)?

## 99

The infantry battle is fierce, but gradually the Normans are beaten back. The ground is thick with the dead and dying, but the line of Saxon housecarls is still intact.

With his infantry in tatters, William commands his cavalry forward. Will you mount up and ride with them (go to **208**) or will you stay with William (go to **187**)?

## 100

FitzWimark gives you the message and you ride at once for Pevensey. What the King will say when he discovers what you have done preys heavily upon your mind, but you could not refuse the request of a fellow countryman.

The ride is uneventful, and you arrive at the Abbey of Fecamp, near Pevensey on the morning of the 8th of October. You are escorted to the Duke by a small party of Breton cavalry, and everything you see on the way shows that William is preparing to meet Harold with all the force he can muster.

Delivering the message to William you tell him of Harold's victory at Stamford Bridge and he thanks you for making the perilous journey from London.

'For your own safety, you must decide at once whether or not you will throw in your lot with me,' he

tells you. 'If you decide against staying here, you should return quickly and without delay.'

Will you stay with William in Fecamp (go to **59**) or will you return to London at once (go to **23**)?

## 101

Your mount shies as the death blow is delivered and you tumble to the grass. The ground is hard and unyielding as your opponent leans forward to deliver the coup de grace.

Your adventure ends here.

## 102

More peasants are arriving every minute and you fear that you will be surrounded if you stay to fight. Shouting to your men, you wheel your horse and ride back towards William's position. Now go to **257**.

## 103

A group of Norman knights have broken through the line a little further along and are heading for the banners of the King. Will you ride to join them (go to **117**) or will you return to William (go to **85**)?

## 104

Gradually the force of the waves pulls you further and further away from the floundering boat. The weight of your armour makes it difficult to stay afloat. Slowly but inexorably the sea drags you down.

Your adventure ends here, in a watery grave.

## 105

As Harold's men approach the burning town, you can





see that Tostig has already fled. Most of the longboats are some yards out to sea.

Harold reins to a halt and gestures for his mounted escort to ride into the town and hunt down any stragglers. He dismounts, walks across to the cliff top and, with his teeth clenched in a furious scowl, shakes his fist at the cowardly Tostig.

The weather is about to break again, so Harold decides to return to London. Willingly you say that you will accompany him.

Now go to **168**.

### 106

Over the sound of the clashing of weapons, a shout goes up: 'Hardrada is dead!'

Will you continue fighting (go to **214**) or will you fall back (go to **169**)?

### 107

Bearing Aelfwig's captured banner in triumph, do you ride back to William (go to **45**) or join a group of knights who have breached the shield wall and are fighting their way through the ranks of the peasants behind it (go to **5**)?

### 108

The English still resist strongly. Ahead of you and beyond knots of fighting men fly the banners of King Harold, fluttering in the breeze. Some Norman knights have broken through the Saxon troops and are heading for the banners. Will you ride to join them (go to **117**) or stay with William (go to **266**)?

## 109

Miraculously, you have managed to defeat your three opponents. But now there are no other Norman soldiers on the crest of the ridge, and you are about to be surrounded. Will you retreat (go to **258**) or continue to fight (go to **133**)?

## 110

Duke Harold is a wise and good man. You have known him for many years and you decide that, since there is little for you in Normandy, you will continue to live in England and serve him. This will please your wife, who has grown fond of the small estate you own in Northumbria.

The following day you attend the burial of the old King and the splendid coronation of the new one. You cannot suppress a tear for the death of the great and good man who extended the hand of friendship to you many years ago.

But life must go on, and politics never pay more than scant respect to the dead. Although the choice of the new King is in the hands of the Witan alone, it is customary to at least consult with as many people in the land as possible. Because of the swiftness of the coronation, many of the inhabitants of Northumbria will be bound to protest and say that they will not accept the decision unless they are formally asked. King Harold determines to ride north immediately, and invites all who wish to go with him. Will you ride with him to Northumbria (go to **79**) or will you stay in London (go to **143**)?

## 111

Riding knee-to-knee with your companions, you smash into the protective wall formed by Harold's bodyguard. It buckles a little, then stiffens and soon you are all engaged in desperate combat. The bodyguard who has singled you out laughs challengingly as he steps towards you, swinging a vicious double-edged axe. You have only your sword to fight with, but must defend yourself.

Harold's bodyguard     Axe 10     Wounds 4

If you manage to defeat him, go to **154**. If you fail, go to **112**.

## 112

Your opponent's axe bites deep, opening an artery and you fall to the ground, your life's blood gushing out of you. Your final thoughts are of your wife and of the quiet estate in Northumbria which you will never see again.

Your adventure ends here.

## 113

Several of those leaving with the King look with disgust at you as they ride out. Your choice may have been a wise one, but there are those who feel that it is close to cowardice. Nevertheless, you return to London to wait, questioning all messengers closely. News comes from Sandwich: Earl Tostig did not wait for Harold to fall upon him, but put out to sea before the King arrived. Harold is now making his way back to London.

Before he arrives, another messenger brings the news that Tostig has been sighted again, this time off the Isle

of Thanet. An expedition is being prepared by those who remained in London. Will you go with them to Thanet (go to **47**) or will you await the King's return in a day or two's time (go to **87**)?

## 114

The guard brings you into the King's presence and whispers in Harold's ear before he departs. When the door has closed, you bow low before the King, but when you look up you see a disgusted expression on his face.

'Do you deny that you were preparing to leave the city?' he asks you bluntly.

You see no point in trying to deny it and admit that your fears had made you nervous.

'I would not wish any man in England to fear me,' says the King. 'Since a mere summons to my presence scares you so much, I will give you an escort to Folkestone. Perhaps Duke William will look upon a coward with more favour.'

There can be no chance of reconciliation. Your rash actions have exiled you from England. Now go to 231.

## 115

Perhaps there is more information to be gained by attacking and capturing at least one. You gesture to your companions and there is a whisper of metal as they all draw their swords. Then you nod your head and your group charges down the hill on horseback towards the party of scavengers.

Surprise is on your side, and five of the Norsemen fall without knowing what hit them. The others drop their sacks of grain or loot and unsling their axes. You will be

at a tremendous disadvantage if you remain on horseback, so you leap lightly from the saddle and prepare to face an opponent. Beside you, the other scouts are doing the same. You will fight with your sword.

Norseman      Axe 8      Wounds 4

If you manage to defeat your opponent, go to **145**. If you lose, go to **112**.

## 116

'I will not do that,' says William stubbornly. 'We must win here, today. I cannot rely on those reinforcements; Harold will have doubled the size of his army by the time they arrive in England, even if it's only two days. I will wager the future of my army on the outcome of this battle. We will never retreat while I live!'

Disappointed that William has turned down your plan, and a little worried lest he think you cowardly for suggesting it, go to **193**.

## 117

Some twenty or so Norman knights are galloping in a tight bunch towards King Harold's banners. Riding down any resistance between you and them, you join with them as they reach the crossroads at the top of the ridge. Now go to **111**.

*(illustration on following page)*

## 118

The Saxon reinforcements arrive, and you lead them across the ford. Roughly a third of the army are with you. Now go to **43**.



## 119

Deciding to find lodgings, you wonder whether the King managed to leave London this same day. You decide to send your page back down the road to check on the progress of the army. He will ride south a few miles, then return to you and report.

Now go to **46**.

## 120

There are over twenty of the peasants and they outnumber you two to one. Although you shout out that you are English, you must fight them. The two who will attack you look like this:

First peasant	Axe 7	Wounds 4
Second peasant	Pitchfork 6	Wounds 4

They will attack you together and you must throw the dice for each of them between your own rolls. After every combat round (that is, when the dice have been rolled for all the combatants), you may make a Luck roll. If you succeed, go to **264**. Otherwise, the combat will not stop until either they or you are dead. If you lose, go to **255**. If you win, go to **167**.

## 121

As the cavalry sweep up the hill they soon pass the foot soldiers and draw rein in front of the shield wall, throwing javelins into the densely-packed Saxon army. The attack has little visible effect, although from the number of bodies which line the ridge, you estimate that perhaps one tenth of the Saxon force has been destroyed. Certainly, the attackers are being met with

fewer missiles this time. Will you stay to watch (go to **271**) or will you ride back to William (go to **186**)?

## 122

The spear pierces deep, wounding you mortally. As you sag upon the shaft the past few weeks flash before your eyes. Is there anything you would have done differently?

Your adventure ends here.

## 123

FitzWimark stares down at you as you gasp your final breath. 'If only things had been different, Hugh,' he mourns. You manage a last smile as darkness enfolds you. . . . Your adventure ends here.

## 124

On the morning of the 12th of October, Harold begins his march from London to Pevensey. The force which rides out from London is strong. It consists of at least 2000 housecarls (the personal bodyguards of the nobles of the land) and the same number of select Ffyrd members. It is not as strong as it could have been, given another few days, but Harold will not wait.

By the time it reaches Caldbeck Hill, near Pevensey, on the 13th, the army has doubled in size, joined by personal detachments of local thegns who have answered the King's summons.

Will you camp here with Harold (go to **139**) or will you take this opportunity to defect to William's camp (go to **70**)?

## 125

Riding back to the column, you make your report.

'It is as I hoped,' says the King. 'The Norse are not expecting us, else they would not have foragers out. With God's help, we shall take them by surprise.'

He thanks you, and you rejoin the column.

Now go to **234**.

## 126

One of the Normans - Montford - strikes at Harold and opens a wound in his leg. He stumbles and falls and you slash at him as he lies defenceless on the ground. The others, among them Ponthieu, join you and the King of England perishes in a flurry of blows. Ponthieu continues to hack and chop at the body long after the King is dead, stabbing and cutting at this once-great man like a butcher. Riding forward, you lean down and strike Ponthieu across the face. He stops and glares at you, but makes no other response.

Montford mounts his horse and sets off in pursuit of the now-fleeing remnants of the Saxon army. Will you join with him (go to **297**) or remain here and wait for William (go to **51**)?

## 127

The troops break completely and begin to run back down the hill. The Norman cavalry sweeps up the hill once more to cover their retreat and reluctantly you wheel your horse to follow the foot soldiers. Now go to **121**.

## 128

William's expression is one of disgust. He walks a little way away from you, staring up the hill at the shield wall, then calls for his captain of archers.

'Fire over the shield wall and into the unprotected peasants behind it,' he says. 'When you have fired every arrow which remains, we will make one more assault with every man we have.'

Turning, he calls for his horse and mounts up. Now go to **225**.

## 129

As you ride away, you see that some Norman foot-soldiers have succeeded in crossing the gully. There is a brief fight before the English take to their heels once more. You ride back to the crest of the ridge, looking for William. Now go to 4.

## 130

Your retainer Pierre lies dead on the ground behind you and there are more peasants closing in. Make another Luck roll. If you succeed, go to **135**. If not, you will be overcome by these Saxon peasants, who are defending their homeland. They will show you no quarter and your foreign blood will stain the soil of England. If you fail in the Luck roll, then your adventure ends here.

## 131

The Normans and English are now mixed all along the ridgeline. Knots of Saxons still hold positions around the banners and standards of their leaders, but the shield wall is in ribbons now. The dead multiply and

the grass beneath your horse's feet is slippery with blood of both Normans and Saxons. William spurs his horse forward for a better view and you ride with him. Now go to **156**.

## 132

The swordsman hacks savagely at your neck and you are unable to parry the blow. You crash to the ground and barely have time to feel the pain before darkness descends upon you for the last time. . . .

Your adventure ends here.

## 133

Despite the fact that you are still mounted, you cannot fend off the blows of your attackers forever. A hand grasps your leg and you are jerked from the saddle. You must make an Agility roll to land successfully. If you succeed, go to **283**. If you fail, go to **66**.

## 134

The troops begin to rally around you, although they are still very reluctant to attack the strong shield wall. You decide it is best not to order them forward, but rather to begin a disciplined withdrawal. Slowly, they begin to fall back. Now go to **121**.

## 135

Over the din of battle you finally get yourself heard!

'I am loyal to Harold!' you shout.

Gradually the peasants back away, seemingly confused by your statement. Presently a large, broad-shouldered man steps forward.

'Loyal to the King, is it?' he enquires.

'Yes!' you reply.

'But you are a Norman, we had been told to waylay any of your kind,' he states.

'I am on the King's business,' you explain, 'bound for my own estate in Northumbria.'

The peasants look satisfied, and despite the several casualties they bear you no ill-will.

Deciding to leave before there are any further delays you continue your journey. Now go to **93**.

### 136

This is a golden opportunity to return to England, but William is a wily bird. If you think that this is a trap and decide to stay in Normandy, go to **235**. If you want to take the chance and return to England, go to **245**.

### 137

Curious to hear what FitzWimark has to say, you follow the messenger to his master's accommodation. He greets you warmly, and mentions that he has heard you are intending to visit Normandy. When you admit this, he laughs and slaps you on the back.

'Then I will give you a message for Duke William,' he says. 'Greetings and, if you wish, a good word.'

Seeing no reason to refuse, you agree and he hands you two envelopes bearing his seal and both addressed to Duke William. He wishes you a safe voyage and ushers you out. Now go to **222**.

### 138

Dismissing the bone-weary tiredness you feel from your mind, you ride out with the scouts along the north road. By dawn, you are about twenty or thirty miles

south of York and as the sun rises above the rolling hills of Northumbria you begin to meet the first survivors from the battle at Fulford. They trudge wearily along the road in ones and twos, the uninjured supporting their stricken comrades. After questioning several, you learn that Edwin and Morkere were defeated, but managed to escape and have taken refuge in the city of York. Hardrada has beached his longships at Ricall, downriver from York, and he is demanding hostages from that city. Scarborough is definitely destroyed, but try as you may you can find no one who knows anything about your own estate and what has happened to it.

Disappointed, you ride on, but now with added caution as you are about to enter enemy-held territory.

Cresting one of the ridges which the road has been following, you see in the shallow valley below a party of strangers. Peering hard, you can make out their different clothing and recognize them for what they are - Norse foragers. There are perhaps ten of them, and your group of scouts numbers half as many. Will you decide to attack this group of invaders (go to **115**) or will you withdraw silently and report to the King (go to **125**)?

### 139

Breaking camp before dawn, Harold orders his army to form up on Senlac Hill, a low ridge which straddles the road from Hastings to London, barely seven miles from William's camp at Fecamp Abbey. The army is still assembling when the Normans first come into view, following the track from the abbey and beginning to form up at the foot of the hill. This could be your last opportunity to change sides, if that is what you wish. If you

decide to stay with Harold, go to **243**. If you wish to see whether William will accept you into his ranks, go to **210**.

## 140

'My lord, I cannot agree,' you say. 'I have given my oath of fealty to the English throne.'

William laughs.

'But before that, you gave your oath to me!' he says. He toys with the hilt of his sword as he speaks more seriously.

'My need of you is great,' he goes on. 'So great that I cannot allow you to refuse. Do not forget that your brother still holds lands under me. It would be unfortunate if he were to lose them ... or his head.'

Unhappily, you see that you have little choice but to agree, whether you mean it or not.

When you have said yes, as he plainly expects you to do, he gives orders for a ship to be made ready and tells you that you may report to him through letters ostensibly addressed to your brother. Then he dismisses you with an evil grin.

You are annoyed that William has not given you any time to visit your brother and his family, but realize that a protest would have little effect.

After an uneventful journey, you are soon standing on the quay at Folkestone once again. It is time to examine your loyalties. Are you truly for King Harold (go to **295**) or are you a 'practical' man, and willing to cast your lot in with Duke William (go to **86**)?

## 141

Ignoring the panic you turn, only to see that the gap





created by the death of your opponent has been filled by two housecarls. Anxious to avenge the death of their comrade, they fall upon you.

First housecarl	Axe 6	Wounds 3
Second housecarl	Axe 7	Wounds 4

If you win, go to **48**, if you lose go to **112**.

## 142

By mid-April reports from the coastal barons say that the boats are almost ready for sailing. The pace of the preparations quickens, soldiers are busy drilling, and members of the cavalry are roaming the Duchy searching for suitable mounts.

Early in the morning a group of riders arrive to see you. The sergeant of the troop greets you and says that Duke William wishes you to accompany them to his palace at Rouen.

Wrapping a cloak about your shoulders, you call for your horse and follow them. The short journey to the palace serves only to confirm your suspicions that William is indeed serious about his claim to the throne of England. The palace grounds are alive with the sound of clashing blades, stands of shields and spears ring makeshift camps, and tethered to all the trees are horses, more than you have ever seen in one place.

Reaching the palace itself, you are instantly ushered in by an armed guard. The once deserted halls and passageways are full of nobles deep in discussion.

The staterooms of the Duke lie ahead and your guide's swift rap on the door is followed by a gruff 'Enter'. The Duke stands alone, staring at an illuminated map of England.

'We are almost ready to move, my friend,' he announces proudly.

Nodding approval you walk the short distance towards him and bow.

'Will you remain here with me, or perform one last mission in England?' he asks.

Will you decide to return to England (go to **136**) or will you decide to remain in Normandy (go to **3**)?

## 143

Deciding that the weather is too bad for a trip to Northumbria, you remain in London. Messengers come with the news that the new King has stopped at your estate, but then you hear nothing until the news reaches the capital that the northerners have accepted Harold as their King with a glad heart. The King spends several more days in Northumbria before he returns to London. Now go to **213**.

## 144

Your horse leaps forward valiantly, but the gully is too wide. Its forelegs barely scrape the far edge of the ditch before you find yourself flung violently from its back. You plunge headfirst towards the bottom of the deep trench and, like so many other bold Norman knights before you, break your neck as you land.

The pain is only momentary before darkness falls upon you. You have fought bravely but you took one risk too many.

Your adventure ends here.

## 145

None of the Norsemen survive. Although your com-

panions call upon several to surrender, they fight to the last man and die bravely. Remounting your horse, you decide to report back to Harold.

The column is making camp for the night by the time you return, and you are once again amazed at the distance it has covered during the day. Now it is preparing to spend the night barely ten miles south of Tadcaster.

After reporting what you have learned to Harold, you stumble on weary legs to the nearest patch of open ground. There, you wrap your cloak about you and sleep the sleep of the exhausted.

Now go to **234**.

## 146

A housecarl,- one of the professional Saxon soldiers, scrambles down the river bank and jumps on to the supports of the bridge. The Norseman is too involved with the Saxons who are attacking him to notice.

A quick sword thrust up through the wooden planks of the bridge dispatches him, and as he falls the Saxons surge forward with a cry of triumph. Now go to **299**.

## 147

William graciously accepts the surrender of the city, but will not enter until a wooden fort has been built for him at Tower Hill. Once established in the city, he meets with the Witan and a date for his coronation is decided upon. He will be crowned on Christmas Day, 1066.

The day approaches and a great crowd gathers in Westminster Abbey. Because William is not of the blood of England, it has been decided that the people must declare him King as well as the Witan, and so the

bishops ask those assembled to declare their wishes, both in French and English.

The crowd roars in agreement. Now go to **229**.

## 148

Breathing heavily, you have no time to look at the body of the man you have killed, because a swordsman is moving rapidly towards you. As you draw your own sword, you recognize his face. It is Duke Copsi, a traitor who has allied with Tostig!

Copsi is an experienced fighter and you must use all your skill to defeat him.

Duke Copsi    Swordsmanship 9    Wounds 3

If you win, go to **32**. If you lose, go to **132**.

## 149

The boar's tusks gore deep into your body and you are tossed aside like a toy as it finishes its charge. Muscle and bone alike have been sundered by the overwhelming force of the wild beast's attack, and you gasp your last upon the sodden grass.

Your adventure ends here.

## 150

A short leap leaves you balanced precariously on the rickety supports of the bridge. Above you stands the Norseman; each swipe of his axe ends another Saxon life. You thrust your sword through the gap between the planks and find his body. The blade cuts deep, and he falls dead. Climbing up on to the bridge, you lead the Saxons across. Now go to **299**.



## 151

The Norman army assembles at the foot of the hill. The Norman contingent forms up in the centre of the line, with the French allies William has persuaded to join him on the left, and the Bretons on the right.

The Saxon army displays a solid wall of shields and glinting spear points at the top of the ridge. The front line consists entirely of housecarls, Harold's professional soldiers.

William sends his archers forward and they loose a flight of missiles at the Saxon line. After a few minutes their quivers are empty and little impact seems to have been made on the Saxon force. The Duke recalls the archers and orders his Norman footsoldiers to advance. Remaining mounted, will you join in the attack (go to 209) or will you remain with William (go to **99**)?

## 152

You have five other mounted men with you. The peasants number twelve, and they are poorly armed compared to the Norman cavalry who ride at your side.

Your five men will each take on two opponents, and you need not worry about their ability to prove victorious. You also will face two opponents. Since you are mounted and they are not, you may add one to your skill with a sword.

First peasant	Spear 4	Wounds 2
Second peasant	Axe 6	Wounds 2

If you kill both peasants, go to **91**. If you wish to break off the fight, go to **102**. If you lose, go to **192**.

## 153

You feel a searing pain as your opponent evades your guard and delivers the killing blow. As greyness begins to rob you of your sight and the world fades into darkness, you wonder if history will show that your side was the winner.

Your adventure ends here.

## 154

As your opponent falls you look around to see that only four of your companions survive. But nearly all of the Saxons are also dead. Harold stands fighting for his life against the other four. Will you join with them in attacking this man who was once your friend (go to **126**) or will you stand aside and watch (go to **279**)?

## 155

As the second Norseman drops, several Saxons join you. Tostig is barely ten yards away now, his bodyguard gone. He stands alone. Will you rush to fight him (go to **220**) or leave him to the other Saxon warriors (go to **22**)?

## 156

William begins to direct his troops through the gaps in the Saxon front line. Will you stay with him to watch the progress of the battle, or will you do what you have been trained to do - fight! If you stay with William, go to **108**. If you ride to join the cavalry, go to **49**.

## 157

The people of York welcome the King with glad cries of amazement. He barely notices as he goes at once to a

meeting with the town leaders. Leaping from your horse, you follow him, intensely curious to find out more about the situation.

The King does not waste time on blame. He accepts the tale of the town's leaders with a nod, then calls for maps as they tell him what Hardrada is doing now.

It appears that Hardrada, wily old Norseman that he is, is not willing to accept the surrender of York without other conditions. He has demanded five hundred hostages, not only from the town, but also from the surrounding shire. The date he has set for his acceptance of the hostages and of the town's surrender, is tomorrow, the 25th of September. The place at which the exchange of hostages will take place is Stamford Bridge, a small village about ten miles east of York, straddling the River Derwent.

Harold laughs hoarsely.

'Hah! We shall provide him with more than five hundred men,' he says. 'If he will not take his ships and leave this place at once, I will offer him five thousand hostages. All he has to do is to take them!'

The King's presence has worked an almost miraculous change upon the people of York. Defeated and dejected, they had been steeling themselves to accept Hardrada's terms. Now that the King is here, they are prepared to fight once more for their lands and for the King.

That night, Harold places guards upon the walls and down each of the approach roads to the town. So far as you are aware, Hardrada thinks that the King is still in London.

For the first time in days you manage to sleep in a real bed, and unconsciousness comes fast. You have no wor-



ries about the following day, so great is your admiration for Harold.

Now go to **78**.

## 158

Harold and a small group of soldiers ride towards the Norse shield-wall. Tostig steps forward, and the two begin to talk out of earshot of their troops. Abruptly, the conversation ends and Harold rides back. The parley must have failed. Now go to **233**.

## 159

As you fall to the ground, your opponent moves forward and kicks the blade away from your feeble grip. Your last sight is of his grim face as he bends forward to deliver the coup de grace.

Your adventure ends here.

## 160

Taking ship back to England, you go at once to the King and tell him what you have discovered. He thanks you and when you leave, you see that he is in a pensive mood. What will be his reaction? Now go to **267**.

## 161

The news reaches you two days later that Edwin and Morkere have beaten off the attempted landing with few casualties. You wish that you had been there - fighting is what you have been trained for since you were a young boy.

The messenger who brought the news to you is taking it on to London. Will you go back with him now that

your business here is finished (go to **72**) or will you remain in Northumbria for a little longer (go to **177**)?

## 162

You do not have time to waste! Ignoring his words, you spur your horse onwards.

Almost at once, you hear hoofbeats behind you. They are following, and your suspicions are aroused. Could they be agents of Hardrada or William themselves? Perhaps they mean to kill you, not take you to the King?

All too soon, the hoofbeats are loud in your ears and you realize that your tired horse cannot outrun them. Turning in the saddle, you see that they have their weapons ready and you draw your own, then rein in your horse and prepare to fight.

Fighting on horseback requires a Horsemanship roll every combat round (that is, before the dice have been rolled for all the combatants). If you fail, you may not make any attacks that round. You must conclude the combat on foot, against mounted men who can then add one to their skills because of their mounted advantage.

First housecarl	Axe 8	Wounds 3
Second housecarl	Sword 7	Wounds 3
Third housecarl	Sword 8	Wounds 3

They will not let you surrender and you must fight to the death. If you win, go to **68**. If you lose, go to **163**.

## 163

Your opponent's blade bites deep and as the last of your life strength ebbs away, you wonder where your loyalties really lay. With Harold, rightful King of England?

Or with your liege-lord by ancient custom, William of Normandy?

Your adventure ends here.

## 164

Fast though you run, it is obvious that the Flemish mercenaries will land before you get there. You draw your sword as you are carried forward by the vengeful Northumbrians. Then, suddenly, a Flemish spearsman is in front of you. You must fight him.

Flemish spearsman      Spear 8      Wounds 3

If you win, go to **148**. If you lose, go to **122**.

## 165

Although you have defeated your opponents, you can see that the battle is getting nowhere. A quick glance over your shoulder shows the cavalry advancing once more to cover a retreat and you begin to pull back with the other foot soldiers. Now go to **121**.

## 166

The cavalry sweeps into the unmounted Saxons like a sword through paper. Suddenly, you recognize two of the Saxon leaders: Gyrth and Leofwine, brothers to the King. Two of your cavalry are already attacking Gyrth and you jerk your horse around to charge at Leofwine. He stands ready, waiting for you.

Leofwine      Swordsmanship 10      Wounds 4

If you manage to defeat him, go to **35**. If you fail, go to **132**.

## 167

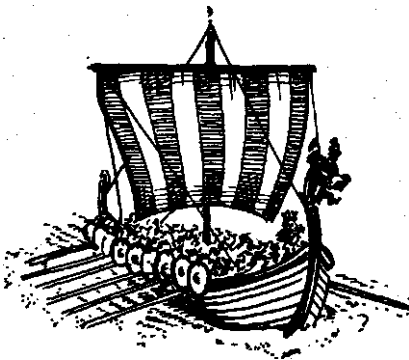
Looking up from the bodies of your opponents, you realize that your party has won. Dead men litter the road -three of your retainers are among them. You cannot help but feel what a pointless battle it was. It shows the tension of the times, though. Every man in England is prepared to meet the Norman invader.

Now go to **182**.

## 168

It seems your presence is required everywhere! When you return to the city, another messenger awaits you with the news that you are needed on your estate in Northumbria. You have a feudal obligation to the people living on the estate and you cannot refuse their call for help. When you tell this to your wife, she asks if you will take her with you, as she is growing tired of London.

Will you take your wife (go to **55**) or will you ride quickly and alone (go to **250**)?



## 169

The two armies back off from each other and once again Harold rides out to speak with Tostig.

Tostig will not surrender and reluctantly Harold returns to his men and organizes another assault. Will you join this attack (go to **12**) or will you remain with Harold (go to **77**)?

## 170

The housecarl you were aiming for sinks to the ground with the javelin in his belly. Will you press forward and attack the shield wall (go to **248**) or will you retreat and return to William (go to **89**)?

## 171

The cavalry plough into the English and amidst the turmoil you see the standard of Harold's brother Gyrth, fall to the ground. It brings home to you the fact that here you are fighting not just against a political enemy but against people whom you have talked with, eaten with, lived amongst for so many years. You mourn Gyrth's death as the cavalry wheel and descend the bloody slope, leaving only bodies in their wake. Now go to **35**.

## 172

Mounting, you canter alongside the column until you have caught up with the King.

'I will meet you at York!' you cry, before digging your heels into your horse.

Several hours of daylight remain, and soon the column is lost to sight behind you. Topping a small hill as daylight is fading, you see three horsemen waiting by

the side of the road up ahead.

As you come up to them, you rein in and give them the news that Harold is coming.

They nod, but the leader looks at you with some suspicion.

'Why are you not with the King?' he asks.

You explain that you have lands in Northumbria and must get there as soon as possible.

He shakes his head.

'That's a Norman accent if I ever heard one,' he says. 'I think you should wait right here for the King instead of galloping on ahead and maybe telling the enemy that we're coming.'

Will you stay to talk to this suspicious man (go to **94**) or will you ride on, ignoring him (go to **162**)?

## 173

The Norsemen lie dead before you, but a further movement in the bushes puts you instantly on your guard. As you see a horse's head poke inquiringly through the leaves, you smile and walk cautiously towards it.

You mount the horse and head back towards the battlefield, picking your way through the piles of bodies. Harold stands some hundred yards away. Now go to **18**.

## 174

When you arrive at Bosham, you see at once that Harold has brought many of the southern leaders and their troops to the area. Everywhere there are soldiers, encampments litter the countryside all around.

Harold has left orders that if you should arrive you are to be brought to him immediately. The King is bus-

ily organizing the local Ffyrd, and discussing tactics with his advisors.

'DeBouard! Come in. Gentlemen, this man is a good friend of your King and loyal to England. We shall ask his opinion of the Norman army and their leaders,' he announces.

Tentatively you offer your advice. You speak of William's preference for cavalry warfare, and of his troubles in Normandy. You suggest that he will try to avoid giving battle early on in the campaign and is by nature somewhat cautious.

The King and his advisors listen with interest to you, nodding or shaking their heads as your words reinforce or disprove their own theories.

Presently you finish, and the King thanks and dismisses you.

Riding on to Arundel, you pass many deserted villages completely devoid of all men of fighting age. Arundel is a major mustering centre and a few hundred local men wait for orders there.

Swiftly you take charge, and begin drilling your ill-armed command, most of the Ffyrd would rather be tilling their fields. Nearly all think it pointless to be waiting for an enemy that may not even come.

The passing days establish a routine for you, and your mind begins to wander, with thoughts of your wife and your home so far away uppermost. August comes and goes, with no news or orders. Now go to **215**.

## 175

Preferring to spend as little time as possible at sea, you take passage aboard the boat to Boulogne. The crossing is swift and takes less than a day. Landing at Boulogne,



you have just mounted up for the long ride southwards when you notice that a troop of Flemish soldiers have arrived on the dock. Their captain approaches you.

'You are Norman?' he asks.

You realize that he must have recognized your emblem - a golden stripe across a blue background which declares your Norman birth - and proudly admit to the fact.

'Good,' he says, and he grins evilly. 'You will fetch a fine ransom from Duke William. Get down from your horse, and order your men to surrender.'

You know that he means what he says. Will you surrender without a fight (go to **69**) or will you try to fight your way free and run for the border, six or seven hours' ride away (go to **82**)?

## 176

As the death blow is delivered, you topple from your mount and fall to the ground. The earth rushes up to greet you with cold, unfeeling arms.

Your adventure ends here.

## 177

A messenger arrives with news that Harold is preparing to face the expected invasion from Duke William. You have no choice now but to return quickly to London and offer your services to him. The messenger tells you that he has moved his headquarters to Bosham, which means an extra day's ride from London.

Harold must think the invasion is imminent to have left the capital and all the pressing business there. Determined to leave at once, you accompany the messenger south. Now go to **174**.

## 178

The next day, before you can begin inquiring about your brother's state of health, you are called before the Duke again. This time a servant leads you along deserted hallways to a small room in which the Duke sits, alone. He greets you warmly and offers you wine. When you are sitting on one side of a wooden table, he leans across it and studies you closely. Then he speaks.

'You have been in England for a long time,' he says, 'but your return shows that you are a true Norman at heart. I have a request to make of you. I have a claim to the English throne myself and Earl Harold was to have helped me gain that prize, but he has broken his oath to me and I have no alternative but war if he continues to lay claim to a title which is rightfully mine.' Duke William pauses and looks piercingly at you.

Prudently, you say nothing, but nod as if in agreement. He continues.

'I desperately need good men in England,' he tells you. 'Men who can inform me of Harold's movements and the state of his army. Will you perform this service for me?'

He is asking you to spy against Harold for him. If you wish to say yes, go to **277**. If you take your oath of fealty to the English crown seriously and refuse, go to **140**.



## 179

You are soon involved with the organization of the Ffyrd. Men arrive from all over the south of England, and each group is assigned a stretch of coast between Plymouth and Dover. The clifftops are alive at night with the light of their watchfires.

In late April, beginning on the 24th, a great light is seen in the skies - a moving star with a fiery tail. On some days it is even visible while the sun is still up!

It is an omen, of course, but an omen of what?

Now go to **238**.

## 180

William studies the Saxon forces for a moment before he replies. When he looks back at you, there is a smile on his face.

'Good man, Hugh!' he says, clapping you on the back. 'We will fire all the remaining arrows into the unprotected peasants and then follow up with every man we have in a charge.' Beaming, he strides away, shouting orders. Feeling pleased with yourself, although apprehensive about the coming assault, go to **225**.

## 181

The Norman attack is failing, and you think it best to retreat down the hill and report your assessment of the situation to William. Now go to **186**.

## 182

Riding away from the scene of the ambush, you do your best to comfort your wife. But your mind has been jerked back to the affairs of state which gave rise to such

suspicion. You mourn your fallen servants and wish with all your heart that Duke William had not taken the decision to invade this pleasant land. Now go to **28**.

## 183

Little by little, resistance is fading. The Norse are scattering and heading back towards their ships at Ricall. You decide to pursue them. Will you follow on foot (go to **97**) or search for a horse (go to **40**)?

## 184

The sailor lies dead at your feet. Remounting, you ride to join Harold. Now go to **27**.

## 185

This part of the shield wall is still strongly held. Will you continue to try to penetrate it (go to **294**) or will you break off the attack here and try elsewhere (go to **103**)?

## 186

William orders the troops back to reform and turns to you, pushing his helmet back from his face.

'What do you think, Hugh?' he asks seriously.

Will you advise him to continue with the same tactics (go to **281**), suggest an attempt at outflanking the Saxon line (go to **7**) or will you advise William to retreat to a place of safety and wait for the reinforcements which he knows are on their way from Normandy (go to **116**)?

## 187

Watching the attack with William, you see that the Breton cavalry do not attack the shield wall, but stand off at a distance and throw their javelins into the densely-



packed mass of Saxons. The javelins bring a similar reply, and the Bretons are thrown into chaos. They begin to retreat down the hill.

As they do so, William spurs his horse forward to stop the retreat turning into a rout. Now go to **37**.

## 188

As the footsoldiers reach the Saxon line, they run into a hail of missiles. Unable to withstand the anger of the defenders, they begin to fall back. Seeing this, William orders the cavalry to prepare once again. Will you ride with the cavalry in an attempt to bolster the Norman attack (go to **216**) or will you remain with William (go to **276**)?

## 189

Deciding to ride ahead with the scouts, you are soon many miles in front of the column, and beginning to meet the sorry survivors of the battle at Fulford. They trudge wearily along the road in ones and twos, the injured supported by their comrades. After questioning several, you learn that Hardrada has beached his longships at Ricall, downriver from York. He is demanding hostages from York. Scarborough has definitely been destroyed, but try as you may you can find no one who knows anything about your own estate and what has happened to it.

Disappointed, you ride on, but now with added caution as you are about to enter enemy-held territory.

Cresting one of the ridges which the road has been following, you see in the shallow valley below a party of strangers. Peering hard, you first notice their unfamiliar clothing and then recognize them for what they are -

Norse foragers. There are perhaps ten of them, and your group of scouts number half as many. Will you decide to attack this group of invaders (go to **115**) or will you withdraw silently and report to the King (go to **125**)?

## 190

Rising in your stirrups, you lift your helmet and wave it at the soldiers. Shouting, you urge them forward. Roll your Persuasion skill or less on two dice to succeed. If you do so, go to **134**. If you fail, go to **127**.

## 191

A shout goes up from the east. The scouts have discovered a ford! Harold despatches a third of his force to cross there, whilst carefully watching for any movement to the west from Hardrada's troops. Now go to **43**.

## 192

As the last sigh leaves your body the amazing thing is the absence of pain. You have fought bravely but, as the Vikings say, no man can escape his fate.

Your adventure ends here.

## 193

William continues with the same tactics for the next few hours. The day wears on with cavalry charge after cavalry charge, and the infantry advance yet again up the hill where so many of their comrades have fallen. After one such advance, the retreating foot soldiers are pursued by a group of Saxons. Will you help to lead the mounted counter-attack (go to **166**) or will you remain with William (go to **171**)?

## 194

The citizens of York are overjoyed to see the return of their victorious King. The joy, however, all too soon turns into a great deal of blame-laying and recrimination as each thegn (landowner) accounts for his actions against the Norsemen and tries to lay the blame for the surrender of the town upon the others.

Harold spends several days in York, feasting with his men, resting and gently repairing the damage which has been done to the pride of these stalwart Northumbrians. If you have taken any wounds over the past few days, there is now time for them to heal. Change the total in the Wounds box on your Character Sheet to its original level.

The King's concern for the safety of his realm temporarily disappears, and for a brief period he is able to relax. This all too uncommon state is shattered by the arrival of an exhausted rider late one night.

The man is ushered into the banquet hall, and the din of table talk and revelry stops abruptly as he begins to speak.

'My Lord, grave news from the south. Duke William of Normandy has landed at Pevensey! By now he could be marching upon London.'

'When did he land and how many men does he have?' replies Harold, ever practical.

'The report says "many ships" landed barely three days ago, on the 28th of September,' he responds.

Harold makes a rough calculation in his head, then rises to his feet. The hall is deathly silent.

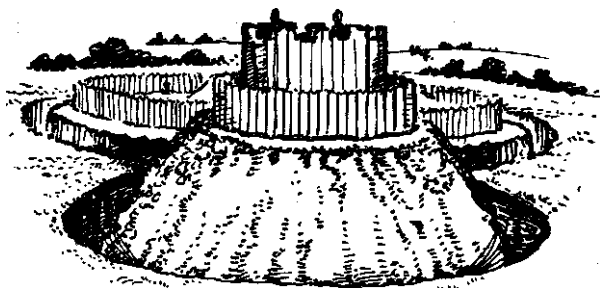
'We march tomorrow. We must beat this Norman to London or all is lost,' he announces.

The gathering breaks up, and you retire for the night.

As you lie awake, your mind races. Will you decide to ride with Harold in the morning (go to **296**) or will you make haste southwards alone (go to **285**)?

## 195

As you ride towards the small knot of figures, you see that Harold is fighting for his life. All his bodyguards lie dead around him and he is assailed by four knights. Will you join them in attacking the King (go to **126**) or will you stand aside and watch the fate of your recent friend (go to **279**)?



## 196

Successfully crossing the gully, you are quickly joined by Norman foot soldiers. The English flee before you and you do not bother to pursue them further. Recrossing the gully you ride back to the top of Senlac Hill in search of Duke William. Now go to **4**.

## 197

One of the Normans - Montford - strikes at Harold and opens a wound in his leg. The King stumbles and falls, and the other three are instantly upon him. Duke Wil-

liam has disappeared somewhere in the melee behind you, and you watch in horrified silence as the Norman knights begin to hack and chop at the body of the King of England.

Montford mounts his horse and sets off in pursuit of the now-fleeing remnants of the Saxon army. Will you join with him (go to **297**) or remain here and wait for William (go to **51**)?

## 198

The King welcomes you and comes straight to the point.

'I want you to take a message to William for me,' he says. 'Tell him that the Witan-our council of wise men - rejects his claim to the throne of England. Such matters are for the English alone to decide.

'Under cover of this message, I wish you to spy out what preparations for war he is engaged in, and report them back to me.'

You have no course but to agree, and the following day you take horse for Folkestone once more. Now go to **244**.

## 199

There are over twenty peasants and two of them approach you ahead of the others. Realizing that they mean to kill you, you must fight off these first two before trying anything else:

First peasant	Axe 7	Wounds 4
Second peasant	Pitchfork 6	Wounds 4

They will attack you together and you must throw the dice for each of them between your own rolls. After

every combat round (that is, when you have rolled the dice for all the combatants), you may make a Luck Roll. If you succeed, go at once to **135**. Otherwise, the combat will not stop until either they or you are dead. If you lose go to **255**. If you win go to **130**.

## 200

Deciding to remain in Northumbria for a few more days, you return to your estate and involve yourself with the problems of a landowner. A few years earlier, when Tostig, a brother of King Harold, was Earl of Northumbria, he savagely oppressed the people of the earldom to the point where they rebelled and forced him to leave. He was exiled by the wise King Edward, but the results of his grasping ways still echo in the region. You must treat the peasants in your area with wisdom and kindness.

After only two days, a messenger from London tells you that your wife is ill and wishes you to return immediately. Fearing the worst, you hurry southwards, overtaking the King on his leisurely way back to the capital. When you arrive, you find to your relief that the illness was nothing more than a slight fever, which has already passed. You settle in your accommodation at the palace to await the King's return. Now go to **213**.

## 201

'I accept,' you say, and FitzWimark claps you on the shoulder.

'I knew that you were a true Norman,' he says. 'Go now to the King and tell him you have changed your mind. I will give you letters to take to William.'

Returning to the King, you tell him of a change of

heart and he gratefully accepts your decision. You decide to pretend that you are visiting Normandy to see your family, from whom you have been separated for several years. Taking leave of your wife, go to **222**.

## 202

As you ride on your way to London, it becomes clear that something is afoot. The countryside is alive with mobilised peasantry, marching down the roads to the coast. Harold must know about the coming Norman invasion! You almost turn back, but decide to discuss this with FitzWimark.

FitzWimark appears calm, and says that he has been trying to warn the Duke.

'You must rejoin Harold, and keep a close watch upon him. Tell me everything you see,' he says.

'Shall I mention what I have seen in Normandy?' you ask.

'Certainly, you know nothing that he does not already know,' he replies.

You ride to Harold's court. The few remaining retainers there tell you that he has already left for the south coast. Confirming this, you ride to Bosham, Harold's headquarters. Now go to **95**.

## 203

As you enter the gates, you are met by an officer who recognizes your colours - a gold bar on a blue background proclaiming your Norman birth. He leads you to the Duke's court.

The following day, refreshed by a large meal and a good night's sleep, you are brought before Duke William. Bowing, you hand him some letters which you



brought from London. He gestures for you to sit and turns his attention to the papers. When he has finished, he welcomes you gravely to Rouen and brushes aside any attempt to thank him.

'Tell me more about the coronation of this Earl Harold,' he commands, and you tell him all you know. When you have finished, he questions you searchingly on the state of England and seems particularly interested in the many court intrigues surrounding the question of Edward's successor.

'We will find accommodation for you here at the court,' he says. 'I may wish to speak further to you.' Then he dismisses you and you leave. Now go to **178**.

## 204

The arrow finds the vulnerable chink in your armour and pierces you to its full length. Bowmen are formidable opponents! The world grows dim about you and you fall to the ground, your last breath slipping from your body.

Your adventure ends here.

## 205

Harold seems like a man possessed. He will wait for no one, and by the evening of the first day the column has reached Thetford, a respectable distance from London. Members of the Ffyrd are rallying to the King every mile along the road, and by now the army has swelled to almost 6,000.

You see to your horse and immediately fall into an exhausted sleep, like so many of the others. Does the King intend to keep up this pace all the way?

Now go to **253**.

## 206

New messengers reveal that the ships which have landed at Sandwich are not those of William, but instead they belong to the exiled Earl Tostig, Harold's brother. He has several boatloads of Flemish mercenaries with him. The King determines to ride to Sandwich immediately. Will you accompany him (go to **105**) or will you remain behind (go to **113**)?

## 207

Watching the events taking place around the King of England, you see that the Norman knights have broken through Harold's bodyguard and fallen upon the King. He is cut down within seconds, but his attackers continue to chop at the body even after they are sure he is dead.

A great cry goes up from all sides. Harold, King of England for only nine months, is dead. His banner is thrown to the ground and that seems to be a signal for the surviving English troops to rout. They turn and run, with the Norman, Montford, leading the pursuit. Will you join him (go to **297**) or stay here and rest your battered and bloody body (go to **51**)?

## 208

The cavalry charge forward, stopping a few feet away to let fly their javelins. Spurring your horse onwards, you probe for a gap in the wall. You sense that, if you can only break through the shield wall, the less experienced peasants who are behind it will offer slim resistance. Now go to **242**.

## 209

As the Norman soldiers hit the solid ranks of Saxon housecarls, you become more and more sure that William has little hope of breaking through in this way. You reach the front rank and, almost at once, a Saxon footsoldier throws his spear at you. You must make a Horsemanship roll to avoid it. If you succeed, go to **242**. If you fail, go to **101**.

## 210

Mounting, you spur your horse forward through startled knots of Saxon soldiers and dash madly down the slope towards the Norman troops. Make a Horsemanship roll. If you succeed, go to **70**. If you do not succeed, an unseen arrow pierces your mail coat and you topple from your steed to the unyielding ground. If you fail the Horsemanship roll, your adventure ends here.

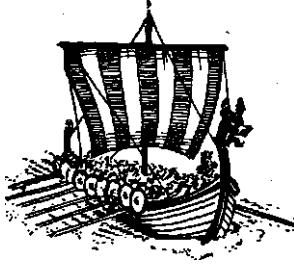
## 211

Robert FitzWimark, trusted advisor to King Edward, and good friend of King Harold of England, lies dead by your hand. As you gaze down at his twisted body, you realize how ironic the situation is. You killed him because you would not deliver a message to Duke William, but now that he is dead there is nowhere in England which will be safe for you except perhaps William's camp. When King Harold discovers you have killed FitzWimark, your fate will be sealed. He will never believe FitzWimark was a traitor.

Rapidly, you leave FitzWimark's apartments and prepare to ride for Pevensey. Now go to **288**.



Harold leaves a small party of men to guard the captured ships, then leads his battle-weary men on a triumphant return to York. Now go to **194**.



When the King has rested after his journey back to London, he calls you into his presence.

'DeBouard,' he says, 'I have a request to make of you.'

'You have only to name it, my Liege,' you reply.

'No,' he says. 'The choice must be yours alone. If you refuse, I will understand and will not hold it against you.'

Mystified, you wait for him to continue.

'I have heard reports that Duke William of Normandy is unhappy at my coronation and is preparing to invade England,' he tells you.

You gasp in shock. Such a thing is unheard of. William would be a fool to attempt the crossing of the English Channel with an army. And even were he to land successfully, he would almost certainly be defeated by the English army, the Ffyrd, made up of every peasant capable of bearing arms and led by the

elite housecarls - the experienced battalions of fighting men maintained by each Earl and by the King himself.

'Nevertheless,' says the King when you blurt this out. 'I need a trustworthy man to act as my agent in Normandy. One who will not be suspected by William. Will you take this position?'

The appointment is a dangerous one, although you do not doubt that you will be rewarded richly by the King. But what use are riches to a dead man? The King is asking you to spy on your own countrymen. Though England is your country now, is it not? Which will you decide? If you agree to the King's request, go to **247**. If you refuse politely, go to **246**.

Gradually, you break through the front rank of the shield wall. Out of the corner of your eye you just catch sight of a bowman nocking an arrow to his bow. You are his target!

Make a Luck roll. If you succeed, the arrow misses and you may go to **230**. If you fail, go to **204**.

As summer turns into autumn, the feast of the Nativity of St Mary on the 8th of September approaches rapidly. This is the date on which Harold has agreed with the members of the Ffyrd they will be allowed to go home, as there seems little chance of William crossing the Channel in the stormy months which follow it. If he has not invaded by then, England will be safe at least until spring.

The day arrives, and with it the first rough weather of the season. Will you return to London by sailing with

that part of the fleet which will make its winter base there (go to **282**) or will you stay on with Harold for a few days before returning to the city in company with him (go to **39**)?

## 216

Charging with the cavalry up the hill, you heft the javelin you have been given and look for a target. They are not difficult to find, and you pick out a large housecarl in the front rank. Roll your javelin skill to hit him. If you do so, turn to **170**. If you fail, turn to **52**.

## 217

The spear thrust misses your violently twisting body by inches. You take advantage of a momentary lull in the attacks upon you to turn your horse and ride away from the line. Now go to **269**.

## 218

As you flounder in the deep swell of the waves, your hand strikes a piece of driftwood and you cling to it desperately. The storm drives you towards the coast, and you come to rest finally on a broad, sandy beach. Exhausted, you stagger into the shelter of a rock and fall unconscious.

When you awake, the storm has passed and you search the beach in vain for any other survivors. Then you begin to walk inland. A few miles bring you to a small village, where you explain your misfortune and are taken in by the villagers. It is several days before you feel able to ride. When you are recovered, you buy a horse from one of the villagers with gold from the pouch you always carry and which, miraculously, was not lost

in the water. You set out for Rouen. As you approach the city, go to **203**.

## 219

William meets with the Witan and they set a date for his coronation: Christmas Day, 1066.

The day approaches and a great crowd gathers in Westminster Abbey. Because William is not of the blood of England, it has been decided that the people must declare him King as well as the Witan, and so the bishops ask those assembled to declare their wishes, both in French and English.

The crowd replies with a roar of agreement. Now go to **229**.

## 220

Tostig thrusts the 'Land Ravager' into the ground by him, draws his sword and braces himself to fight you.

Earl Tostig      Swordsmanship 8      Wounds 4

If you win, go to **8**. If you lose, go to **223**.

## 221

After less than two hours' march you reach the river estuary where it widens and the sails of the Norse fleet can be seen. Nearly a third of Hardrada's army is still intact. These soldiers had been ordered to defend the longboats while the rest of the army went to collect their hostages. Now, even without any notable leaders among them, they are still determined to defend the boats. Harold orders his troops to advance. Will you join them (go to **75**) or will you stay in the rear with Harold (go to **27**)?



## 222

Taking your horse and two of your retainers, you begin the long journey to Folkestone. Despite the bitter weather, the ride is uneventful. When you reach the harbour, your retainers make enquiries and return with the news that there are no less than three ships preparing to leave for France. One is sailing for Eu, in the north-west corner of Normandy. A second is making the shorter and less dangerous trip to Boulogne in Flanders, from where the court of Duke William is a good six or seven days' ride. The third is preparing to make the much longer voyage to Fecamp, but the town is barely a day's ride from Rouen - William's court.

If you decide to take ship for Eu, go to **36**. If you wish to sail to Boulogne, go to **175**. If you wish to risk the voyage to Fecamp, go to **41**.

## 223

Tostig gives a cry of triumph as you fall, mortally wounded. Around you the battle is still going on, and your last thought is of the King. Will he manage to defeat the Norsemen? History will tell the true tale.

Your adventure ends here.

## 224

Despairing of success by attacking on foot against such a determined defence, you wheel your horse and retreat back down the hill. Many soldiers follow your example. But barely have you ridden ten yards when you see William's cavalry charging to support the attack. They are a stirring sight - the best of the Norman knights. Regaining your confidence, you rein in your horse and help to rally the foot. When they have turned back to

face the Saxons once more, you continue on down the hill to report to William. Now go to **276**.

## 225

The bowmen advance partway up the hill and begin to fire. The arrows arch high into the sky before falling vertically into the unarmoured ranks of peasants behind the front line. The effect is devastating - the solid mass of defenders breaks into small groups as each man tries in vain to hide from the merciless rain of death.

William orders a general advance. Will you go forward with him (go to **232**) or will you join the cavalry in this massive attack (go to **49**)?

## 226

The impressive fleet of ships sets sail from the estuary, the wind has picked up, and you all expect a fast journey across the channel.

Two hours out, the wind becomes fiercer and more unstable. Gradually it blows up into a gale. The horses are screaming with fear and the soldiers hang over the side with green faces. The fleet is rapidly breaking up. Some ships head for the coast, others brave the storm and continue. The captain of your ship chooses the former course and sets sail for St Valery.

Nearly a mile from safety, the ship begins to founder. Water cascades over the men and horses as the ship slowly sinks.

Desperately you cling to the mast and hope for the storm to die down. Suddenly a great wave picks you up and tosses you into the crashing waves of the storm. Now go to **104**.



## 227

You have fought so hard and so furiously that you have penetrated the Norse shield wall. There to your left, a small group of Vikings bar the path of the oncoming Saxons. You draw your sword and break into a run, closing the distance before more than one of them can turn and face you. A sole axeman readies himself for your attack.

Axeman      Axe 6      Wounds 3

If you win, go to **53**. If you lose, go to **112**.

## 228

Amazingly, you defeat your four attackers. The number of defeated opponents has now reached ten or more! Through the gap you have hewn in the Saxon front line three peasants advance. They fall upon you eagerly.

First peasant	Axe 6	Wounds 3
Second peasant	Cudgel 7	Wounds 4
Third peasant	Hammer 6	Wounds 4

If you defeat them, go to **275**. If you lose, go to **159**.

## 229

The Norman troops gathered outside the Abbey hear the roar of the crowd and take it the wrong way. Afraid that their duke is being attacked, they enter the rear of the Abbey with drawn swords and try to reach him. For a long moment, the fate of the country hangs in the balance, but William steps forward and shouts in a loud voice, showing himself to them.

The slaughter of the congregation is averted, and the

coronation continues without further interruption. When it is over, the new King of England leaves the Abbey to the cheers of the assembled people of London.

Now go to **293**.

## 230

The bowman stands defencelessly before you. Without mercy, you cut him down. The fighting continues and you search warily for any other attack on you as you step over the archer's corpse. Now go to **57**.

## 231

An armed escort takes you and your wife to Folkestone and you are placed upon the first boat leaving for France. The weather does not look good, and as the first drops of rain fall on deck, you retire miserably below the makeshift canopy which has been erected.

The storm grows worse, and soon the boat is rolling from side to side. Great waves break over the sides and you realize that it is on the point of sinking.

One enormous wave sweeps the length of the boat and before you are fully aware of what is happening, your wife has been pulled overboard by the strength of the torrent. Will you dive after her (go to **34**) or will you cling to the safety of the mast (go to **73**)?

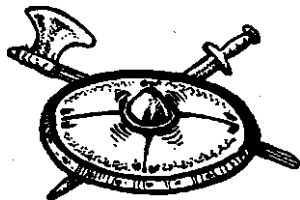
## 232

The first wave of foot soldiers reaches the Saxon shield wall. The casualties are horrendous, but William waves his army onwards and the shield wall begins to sag in places. The cavalry pour into these weak spots and the ferocity of the battle reaches a new height. The Saxons

are still defending vigorously, but they seem more desperate now. Will you remain with William behind the battle line (go to **131**) or will you ride forward to join the cavalry in their attack against the shield wall (go to **83**)?

### 233

The Norse are not prepared to negotiate or surrender. Harold calls for fresh troops, and the line readjusts to accomodate them. He orders a general assault on all flanks. Will you go into the attack (go to **2**) or will you watch the attack from a vantage point (go to **20**)?



### 234

The march continues. By the morning of the 24th of September, barely three days after leaving London, King Harold is at Tadcaster, ten miles from the city of York and a hundred and ninety miles from London.

You can hardly believe it. Such a march has never been heard of before, and yet the evidence is all around you; weary men and horses, happy smiles on the faces of the people of Tadcaster.

Here at Tadcaster, Harold is immediately *in* deep discussion with the inhabitants. A steady stream of reports comes in from his scouts, and he questions closely the crews of several ships which have withdrawn

to this town since Hardrada sailed up the Humber river.

It appears that Hardrada has beached his ships at Ricall, and that the Norse army is camped beside its ships. York has indeed surrendered, and Hardrada is demanding hostages from the city. But there are no Norsemen there yet.

Hearing this, Harold calls for his horse once more and there are sighs from the men as they realize that he intends to march on to York. Soon the column is under way again, with many outriders keeping a careful watch for Norsemen.

As you reach York, go to **157**.

### 235

'I would prefer to stay with you, my Lord. This great crusade against the usurper of your throne is something I would not wish to miss - if there is any way in which I can serve you,' you finally reply.

'Prepare yourself and await my summons. We sail in a few days,' he concludes.

William returns to his map, and with a slight bow, you leave the room. Your horse is tethered outside the palace. You return to your lodgings and ready yourself. Now go to **76**.

### 236

The following morning is marked by the arrival of a Saxon herald. William receives him in a hastily-erected tent and although you are not present at the conversation, the purpose of his visit is obvious. Soon, a party of Saxons is escorted into the camp and led towards the pile of dead bodies. Among them, you see Ealdgyth,

King Harold's wife. Weeping, she examines body after body, supported by her retainers. Then she points to one corpse and collapses on the ground. William gives orders that the King's body be sent to Waltham Abbey for a Christian burial.

As soon as the Saxons have departed, William orders his army to break camp. As they do so, he calls you to his tent.

'Hugh,' he says as you enter, 'we still face several strong English opponents - Edwin, Morkere, Archbishop Stigand and others. My scouts tell me that they are all gathered in London. I need someone to take a message to them. Will you go?'

Knowing the risks, will you agree to carry a message to London (go to **14**) or will you decide against it (go to **62**)?

## 237

On arrival in London, you are met by an armed guard and escorted to meet the Witan. Hostile glares greet you as you deliver William's message, but no one offers violence against you.

The reply is several days in coming, during which time the news of William is confused and contradictory. He seems to be marching towards London one day, then the next he has turned aside to attack Dover. He stays in Dover for almost a week before marching out again, leading his men in a circle around London. A party of horsemen which he sends towards Southwark are beaten off by the citizens and members of the Ffyrd, but they succeed in putting that village to the torch before they retreat.

The mood among the Witan changes day by day as

William continues to circle the city like a wolf sizing up its prey, and finally you are called to meet them. It is Archbishop Stigand who speaks to you.

'DeBouard,' he says, 'we have decided to spare the country any more bloodshed and are agreed upon surrender. You will accompany me to meet Duke William and bear witness to our decision.'

Smiling with relief, you agree and set out the following morning.

Now turn to **147**.

## 238

Barely has the light of the comet - the 'hairy star' - faded from the sky, when messengers arrive at Bosham with the news that a fleet of ships has been sighted off Sandwich. Tensions are high. Could this be the invasion everyone has waited for?

If you are a loyal servant of King Harold, go to **206**. If you are a spy for Duke William, go to **19**.

## 239

You decide to continue your lone assault on the Saxon line. Facing you now are three housecarls, all anxious to avenge the death of their comrades. They move toward you with a dangerous look in their eyes.

First housecarl	Axe 7	Wounds 3
Second housecarl	Swordsmanship 7	Wounds 4
Third housecarl	Swordsmanship 8	Wounds 3

If you wish, you may halve your own Swordsmanship skill and correspondingly reduce one of your opponent's skills.

If you win, go to **109**. If you lose, go to **192**.



## 240

The King was perhaps a little optimistic in saying that he would ride the same day. It is in fact the morning of the 20th of September when you leave the city, clattering out of the Bishop's Gate in the company of 3,000 housecarls and a miraculously-recovered King. Messengers have already been sent, requesting all members of the Ffyrd to meet with the King on the march north.

Now go to **205**.

## 241

The Breton tumbles from his saddle as you pierce his desperate defence with your sword. Looking around it seems that the entire left flank of the Saxon army has joined in the pursuit of the fleeing Bretons and Norman foot.

Suddenly, you hear the ominous sound of drumming hooves. Glancing to your right you can see the remainder of the Norman cavalry begin their charge into the unprotected Saxon left. In seconds the Normans are upon you. Half aware of what is happening you feel the vicious bite of a sword across you.

Your adventure ends here. You have been true to your adopted country but a traitor to your homeland.

## 242

You advance right up to the front line of housecarls, and one steps a pace forward to meet you. You must fight him.

Housecarl      Axe 8      Wounds 3

Being mounted, you may add one to your Swordsmanship skill, but after every combat round



(that is, when you have rolled the dice for yourself and your opponent) you must make a successful Horsemanship roll. If you fail the Horsemanship roll, you may only fight at your normal skill level.

If you win, go to **6**. If you lose, go to **112**.

## 243

The Norman army stands impassively at the bottom of the steep slope. William's archers appear picking their way through the ranks of foot and horse soldiers. They approach to within a hundred yards of Harold's front line and nock their bows. The rain of arrows begins and lasts for a few minutes, but there are few casualties because of the stout, interlocked wooden shields of the Saxon front line. The archers retreat and you see the Norman footsoldiers begin their advance. Standing with Harold, you hear the housecarls in the front line prepare themselves for the onslaught.

Looking down the hill, you see the Breton cavalry spur their horses after the footsoldiers. The two waves of troops, one on foot, the second mounted, climb steadily and swiftly towards you. Itchy for battle, you push your way to the front.

Now go to **273**.

## 244

Upon your safe arrival in Normandy, you go quickly to William's court at Rouen and deliver your message. Many barons and knights are gathered at the court and the gossip is all about the Duke's intentions to invade England. Many think he is mad, although none say so. To ship an army across the Channel requires a favourable wind and skilful navigation to keep the fleet

together. The Norman nobility know little about sailing, and many are loath to leave their own country in the vain hope of overcoming the entire English army on its home ground.

No actual preparations are under way as yet; the invasion is still in the planning stage and William is running into some opposition from many of his barons. Will you decide to stay a little longer in Normandy (go to **92**) or will you decide to report what you have heard already to King Harold (go to **160**)?

## 245

'I will return to England,' you reply.

'Good,' he says. 'Please give my compliments to FitzWimark, I shall see you both soon enough in London myself! You will find it easier from now on to pass information to my people at Fecamp. I wish you well, and ask that you leave from Boulogne immediately. A ship awaits you there,' he concludes.

You bow, but he has already returned to his map, and is deep in thought, tracing lines with his finger along the roads to London from the coast.

You leave the palace and remount. William has provided you with the same small escort. The journey is uneventful, all the more so because your fellow travellers are so silent. Shortly after arriving at Boulogne, you report to the captain of the vessel waiting for you.

The sea is calm and there is only a slight wind. You cannot set sail for several days.

Cursing your luck, will you stay and wait for the conditions to change (go to **286**) or will you ride to Dives, from where William has told you the invasion fleet is to sail (go to **76**)?

## 246

'Very well,' says the King, although he is obviously disappointed. 'I understand your reasons, and I will bear you no ill feeling. Let us forget that this conversation ever took place. But remember, my offer remains open. If you should change your mind, you have only to request an audience.'

He dismisses you and you leave hurriedly, wondering if you have made the right decision. As you walk away from the audience chamber, you are met by a servant of Robert FitzWimark, the other Norman noble at Harold's court. He requests a meeting with you. Will you refuse (go to **280**) or will you accept (go to **30**)?

## 247

You agree and Harold breaks into a broad smile.

'I knew that I could rely on you,' he says warmly. 'When can you leave?'

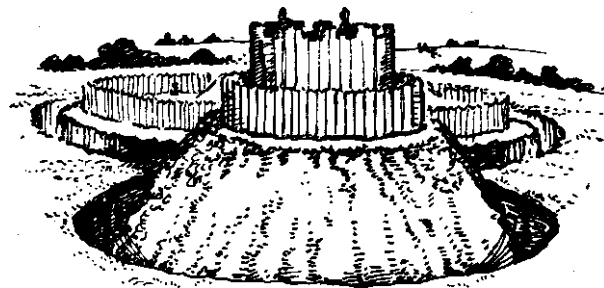
'Immediately, my Liege," you reply.

'Good man. I leave the method up to you. Only do not allow yourself to be captured alive.'

With those sobering words, he allows you to depart.

You decide to pretend to everyone - including your wife - that you are visiting Normandy only to see your brother and other relatives, and make preparations to leave.

As you finish your preparations, there is a knock at the door and you open it to meet a servant of Robert FitzWimark, the other Norman courtier. He bears an invitation for you to meet FitzWimark immediately. Will you accept (go to **137**) or will you take horse at once for Folkestone and a ship to France (go to **222**)?



## 248

A housecarl charges from the wall. You must fight him.

Housecarl      Swordsmanship 8      Wounds 4

If you win, go to **181**. If you lose, go to **132**.

## 249

The remaining peasants take to their heels and flee. Ahead of you fly the banners of King Harold. Will you ride forward to attack him with the other knights (go to **111**) or will you return to William (go to **85**)?

## 250

Deciding that you can travel faster alone, you take with you only one retainer - Pierre, who has been with you for many years. Spurring your horses northwards, you depart from London.

For two days the trip is uneventful. On the third, as you ride your horses along a tree-lined part of the road, you talk in French to Pierre, for it is the only language he can speak. You do not fear bandits, for England is a peaceful country where no man lifts his hand against another. Suddenly, you hear a rustle in the under-

growth by the side of the road, and a group of peasants emerge, brandishing axes and pitchforks. They must have heard you speaking in French and assumed that you are a supporter of William. They charge towards you.

Will you fight them (go to **199**) or will you try to out-run them on horseback (go to **38**)?

## 251

Knowing that, by being mounted, you are at a disadvantage, you leap off your horse and prepare to fight.

First Flemish soldier	Spear 6	Wounds 2
Second Flemish soldier	Spear 5	Wounds 3

You may attack them together. If you choose to do this, halve your skill. If you hit them they both take wounds, but if you fail they will attack you normally and you must throw the dice for each of them. If you win go to **67**. If you lose go to **122**.

## 252

The Derwent lies ahead. Encamped on either side of the river is Hardrada's army. He appears to have made little attempt to post sentries along the road, so your approach is unseen for some miles.

As you cover the last few hundred yards to the crest of a knoll overlooking the river, you can see the fevered activity of the Norsemen. A detachment has been stationed on your side of the bridge, but the main force is forming a solid shield wall on the other side. Hardrada's banner, 'Land Ravager', is distinctive, flying over his bodyguard of axemen. Surprised, you see that Earl Tostig's battle-flag flutters further along the ranks

of closely-packed men. So, the two enemies have joined together!

Harold orders an attack on the Norse ahead, with instructions to capture the bridge and hold it. Will you remain with the main body (go to **270**) or will you ride ahead to attack the bridge (go to **298**)?

## 253

By the end of the second day of the march, the column has reached the banks of the River Welland, almost halfway between London and York. Your admiration for the King has grown hour by hour as he refuses to slow down or rest, relentlessly driving his troops northwards at a speed hardly matched even by official messengers travelling alone. The day was uneventful, apart from the steady stream of men who joined with the King as he made his way north.

As you are preparing to sleep, a scout rides into the camp, coming from the north. He is taken at once to Harold and you wander in that direction, hoping for some news. Now go to **98**.

## 254

Almost shaking with fear of what the King may want of you, you are ushered into his presence and bow deeply before him. He greets you with a nod and a smile.

'Once again, deBouard,' he says, 'I wish to make use of your services, and call upon you to serve me in Normandy.'

You do not pretend to misunderstand him. Face to face with Harold, you must decide. If you are willing to say you will spy for the King against Duke William, go



to **256**. If you want to refuse, go to **267**.

### 255

You topple from your horse and fall to the greensward below. A silly way to die, killed by the very people you are supposed to be protecting!

Your adventure ends here.

### 256

The King gives you a message to deliver to William, under the guise of which you are to assess his preparations for war and sound out the mood of his nobles. Taking ship from Folkestone, you make the crossing safely. Now go to **244**.

### 257

When you reach the Duke, he is already on the march. Other scouts have reported Harold's manoeuvres and William has decided to bring him to battle before more Saxons arrive. You estimate that the strength of the Saxon army is less than 10,000 and William nods when you say that barely a quarter of them are professional soldiers.

'Stay with me and give me the benefit of your experience, deBouard,' he says.

Now go to **151**.

### 258

As you move your mount slowly backwards down the hill, still fending off blows from the Saxon front line, you see a spear being thrust towards you, its point still bloody with the life's blood of its last victim. You must use your Agility skill to avoid it. If you succeed, go to

**217.** If you fail, go to **122**.

## **259**

Heading east for a few hundred yards, you continually scan the river bank for evidence of a crossing. Luckily, you find one. You dismount and order some men back to Harold to report.

Carefully, you cross the river, looking for pitfalls and for any Vikings who might be lying in ambush, but there are none. The main body of their force is screened from you by a small copse. You decide to wait for reinforcements before continuing. Now go to **118**.

## **260**

Deciding to press on, you ride northwards. Taking what seems to be a shortcut, you manage to stray from the road and find yourselves in a dense wood. You lead your horses and follow a narrow trail. You press onwards, determined to reach Northumbria as soon as is humanly possible.

Then, in the silence of the wood, you hear a terrifying noise. A low-pitched grunt, followed by the rumble of hooves on the leafy track. Spinning around, you see a wild boar, charging directly towards you!

Even as you draw your sword, you know that it is too late. The animal is almost upon you. Then your page throws himself between you and the animal, becoming impaled almost at once on its wicked tusks. He lets out a loud cry, then he is still.

The boar backs off and shakes the body from its tusks, giving you time to secure your horse to a tree and draw your sword. Then it charges. ...

You must fight the boar. Its tusks will do two wounds

to you every time they hit, and you cannot parry its attack. Instead of rolling for its attacks, you must make an Agility roll to avoid its charges. If you fail the Agility roll, you will be gored and must take the two wounds. You may attack the boar normally.

Wild Boar      No skill      Wounds 6

If you win, go to **80**. If you fail, go to **149**.

## **261**

Deciding that it is best for you to remain in London, you pass your days following the news from the rest of the country. The Ffyrd has been called up and its members are assembling on the south coast, from Plymouth to Dover. At night, the coast is alive with their watchfires. Constant calls for more help to organize the watch are received in London, but you still decide to remain in the city, at the centre of the country's road network.

Then, in late April, beginning on the 24th, there is a sign in the skies. A fiery star, trailing a bright tail, appears in the night sky. Even in daylight its glowing message can be seen.

Taking this as an omen that you should take more of an active part in the defence of your adopted country, you ride for Bosham, where Harold has set up his command post. Now go to **238**.

## **262**

The guards around Aelfwig, the Abbot of Winchester, are cut down and he faces you steadily as you approach. He raises his sword in salute or blessing before springing to the attack.



If you win, go to **107**. If you lose, go to **29**.

### 263

As night falls, the Norman forces make camp upon Senlac Hill. William has ordered some of his men to collect together all the bodies, but it is difficult to identify many of the dead, because of the looting and stripping of bodies which is the aftermath of such a battle.

Exhausted, you stumble wearily towards a clear patch of ground, tether your horse and fall asleep almost immediately. When you awake, go to **236**.

### 264

One of the peasants finally hears and understands what you have been shouting. He calls to the others and they all draw back. You put up your sword and dismount.

'I am Hugh deBouard,' you say, 'a close friend of the King. Let the fighting stop.'

Once they realize that you are not a Norman invader, the peasants apologize and invite you back to their village, but you decline, looking at the dead bodies of three peasants and two of your retainers. What a price to pay for the suspicion your voices caused!

Now go to **182**.

### 265

Moving forward into the dead ground between the two armies under a flag of truce, you see Tostig emerge from the ranks of his soldiers. Harold has not removed his helm, so no one but you, his retinue and his brother Tostig will know who he is.

'King Harold will give back the earldom of Northumbria to Tostig, if he will forsake Hardrada, the foreign invader, and return to the English fold,' he calls. 'Indeed, King Harold may even be prepared to offer Tostig one third of all England if the restoration of his earldom does not suit him or is not enough for him.'

Tostig looks puzzled, and replies:

'And what will he give Harald Hardrada?'

Harold looks beyond his brother to the Norse King before he responds.

'Seven feet of English ground, or perhaps a little more, since he is taller than other men,' he replies curtly.

Tostig looks at his brother and shakes his head. 'Then tell King Harold that there can be no peace,' he says. 'I, Tostig, will not forsake those who have given me aid and succour in my time of need. Farewell.'

Harold shrugs and reins his horse around. You follow him back to the Saxon lines. Now go to **233**.

## 266

The knights attacking the King have broken through his bodyguard and seem to be fighting with Harold himself. Only four Normans survive, but that is sufficient and you wonder why Harold did not retreat earlier. It is too late now, for he has only one bodyguard left to help him against his attackers. Will you ride forward to be in at the kill (go to **195**) or remain where you are and watch (go to **197**)?

## 267

Your relations with the King continue as normal and, in late spring, the King makes it known that he expects an

invasion from Normandy. He issues a proclamation to all the people that the Ffyrd - the army of England, consisting mainly of peasants - should be assembled and take up positions on the south coast, ready to defend it against a foreign invasion.

Such a task will require much organization. Do you wish to be involved (go to **179**) or will you decide to remain at court, close to news of the kingdom as a whole (go to **261**)?

## 268

The clatter of armour from behind you makes you spin defensively around. It is Harold. He looks saddened, but says, 'Well fought, Hugh. They have taken to their heels finally. I mourn for Tostig, but we gave him every chance.'

'You offered him an honourable choice,' you reassure him.

He nods and you both head off after the fleeing Norsemen. Will you pursue them on foot (go to **97**) or will you search about for a horse (go to **40**)?

## 269

Fleeing with the others back down the hill, you see Duke William riding out to scotch the rumours that he is dead. He removes his helmet and commands you to rally around him. Reining in your horse you risk a glance over your shoulder and see that a part of the Saxon force has foolishly broken ranks and is streaming down the hill. William has seen them also and commands a counter-attack by the Norman cavalry. As the mounted men thunder past you, you wheel your horse and join them. Now go to **287**.

## 270

Harold's army continues forward, fanning out to cover the banks of the river opposite Hardrada's force. There must be another way across, you think. Will you go and search for a ford (go to 259) or will you wait with Harold (go to 191)?

## 271

Once again, the cavalry attack proves a failure. The English shield wall is still solid. Riding back down the hill, you go to report to William. Now turn to 186.

## 272

You ride to the King's residence at Bosham. As you travel, you see that the fields are deserted and the villages populated by women, children and the old. It looks as if every able-bodied man is waiting for William to make his move.

Presently you arrive at Bosham, where the backbone of Harold's army is encamped around his estate. Approaching Harold is difficult; your clothes make you stand out and most people recognize you as a Norman. Luckily one of Harold's brothers knows you and escorts you to the King.

Harold is in a pensive mood, but welcomes you warmly. Quickly you recount your sightings of the Norman army across the channel. He listens to your report gravely.

'At least there is one Norman that I can trust,' he says.

You smile convincingly, and await his orders.

'Will you assist me? I need able men to help in the organization of the Ffyrd,' he asks.





"Of course, my Lord,' you reply.

'Ride to Arundel and take charge of the Ffyrd there,' he continues.

Now go to **179**.

## 273

The Norman infantry begin to waver in the face of such tenacious resistance. Even now, they have begun to retreat. Peering over the shoulder of a burly Saxon, you can see that the Norman cavalry have started forward, and once again you steel yourself for the coming fight. They do not charge the shield wall; but stand off only yards away, and hurl javelins into the packed mass of men. Their volley is returned in kind. A torrent of similar missiles flies towards the mounted men from the ranks of Saxon peasants, and there are many casualties. The Breton horsemen break lines and run back down the hill.

Without thinking, you charge after them with scores of others at your side. Ten yards away, a Breton cavalryman is struggling to turn his horse back down the hill, and as you leap towards him he pulls his sword hurriedly and faces you.

Breton      Swordsmanship 7      Wounds 3

He has no advantage, even though he is mounted, and you may attack normally. If you win, go to **241**. If you lose, go to **132**.

*(illustration on previous page)*

## 274

You had hoped to spend a few more days with her, but events dictate that you must indeed return south. Bid-

ding her farewell, and ensuring that several guards can be expressly posted for her protection, you reluctantly begin your ride back to London.

Thankfully, the journey is uneventful, though you are ever cautious of attack by well-meaning but misguided locals. As a precaution you only speak the common tongue, not that of your native Normandy.

When you report to Harold's palace his steward tells you that he has taken up residence in Bosham, further to the south. Gathering enough provisions, and accepting the offer of a small escort you head towards Harold's headquarters. Now go to **174**.

## 275

The peasants lie dead at your feet and once more you step forward. To your amazement you have penetrated the Saxon shield wall. About fifty yards off King Harold stands, anxiously watching the battle. He is surrounded by his personal guardsmen and four of them move instantly towards you. There is no chance of retreat here and these men are the cream of the English fighting force. Alone, on foot and exhausted you prepare to meet them.

First bodyguard	Swordsmanship 10	Wounds 4
Second bodyguard	Swordsmanship 9	Wounds 5
Third bodyguard	Swordsmanship 9	Wounds 4
Fourth bodyguard	Swordsmanship 11	Wounds 3

If you survive unharmed, go to 88. Otherwise, go to **132**.

## 276

The second cavalry charge of the day is no better than

the first. The mounted knights crash into a stubbornly resistant Saxon front line, and the axes of Harold's housecarls wreak havoc among the horses. William orders another withdrawal and again succeeds in drawing a number of ill-disciplined Saxons after the retreating horses. Once more, those foolish enough to leave the safety of the shield wall are surrounded and cut down. But the attack has still failed, and William has some thinking to do. Now go to **186**.

## 277

Readily, you agree. He nods in satisfaction.

'Good man!' he exclaims and pours more wine. When you have drunk, he gives you instructions on how to report to him through false letters to your brother. Then he calls a servant and tells him to send messengers to prepare a ship for England within the week.

'Be careful,' are his last words. 'Harold is no fool. But, God willing, the rightful claimant to the English throne will soon be sitting upon it.'

He dismisses you and you spend the next several days quietly visiting your relatives in Normandy. All too soon, the boat sails from Eu and it is with mixed feelings you see the harbour of Folkestone loom out of the mist before you.

When you land, you must make a major decision. Where do your loyalties lie? If they truly lie with Duke William, go to **86**. If they lie with King Harold, go to **295**.

## 278

Deciding that you cannot wait for the King and certain that you can travel faster than any army, you take horse



for your estates, accompanied only by a page. The other members of your household are joining the Ffyrd, as is their duty.

By mid-afternoon, you have ridden over 30 miles and have arrived at Hatfield. Will you try to find lodgings here (go to **119**) or will you press on, using every hour of daylight which remains (go to **260**)?

## 279

As you watch, one of the knights - Montford - strikes Harold in the leg, opening a terrible wound. The King stumbles and falls to the ground and the others close in, hacking and stabbing unmercifully. Even after the King is dead, one of the other knights - Ponthieu - continues to stab and cut and chop at his body. Seeing this, you cannot contain your anger and ride forward, slapping Ponthieu across the face. He glares at you but makes no other response.

Montford mounts his horse and sets off in pursuit of the now-fleeing remnants of the Saxon army. Will you join him (go to **297**) or remain here and wait for William (go to **51**)?

*(illustration on previous page)*

## 280

Life at the court continues as usual, and as the weather becomes warmer you hunt and ride with the other courtiers. You are aware that messages are being exchanged between King Harold and Duke William, but of their content you know nothing. However, the glances of the King begin to fall more frequently upon you and your nervousness increases daily. Perhaps he considers you a possible traitor because of your Norman background.

Matters come to a head one day in March, with a summons from the King. Will you obey (go to **254**) or will you try to depart from London as swiftly as you can (go to **74**)?

## 281

'I agree,' says the Duke of Normandy. 'We must continue to wear Harold down. His men are undisciplined and we may be able to tempt more into traps by feint charges. We must not retreat from this battle. Every day we waste means stronger English resistance the next time we meet.'

He seems pleased that you agree with him. Now go to **193**.

## 282

Boarding one of the ships you set sail for the Thames and London. A gale has blown up and many of the ships founder and sink on the brief trip, but yours arrives safely. Once in the capital, your thoughts turn naturally towards your wife and your estates in the north, but you decide to await the King's return before taking your leave of him.

It is as well that you do so. Barely has Harold returned to London when the news arrives that Duke William's fleet has attempted a crossing of the Channel. However, the gale which caused so many English ships to founder has driven him to seek refuge in St Valery harbour. There is rejoicing at the court - William has tried and failed. The King, succumbing to the effect of many months of pressure, falls ill with a bad leg and retires to bed.

But only a few days later, on the 19th of September, a

messenger arrives from the North with terrible news. King Harald Hardrada of Norway has invaded and is moving south, burning and looting as he comes. The town of Scarborough is already in flames. On hearing this news, the King leaps from his bed and orders his housecarls to prepare to march that very day. Will you wait until the army is ready to head north (go to **240**) or, worried about your wife's safety, will you ride immediately on your own (go to **278**)?

### 283

Landing catlike on your feet, you still have hold of your sword and immediately you find good use for it. Four housecarls are almost upon you.

First housecarl	Swordsmanship 8	Wounds 3
Second housecarl	Axe 7	Wounds 3
Third housecarl	Axe 7	Wounds 2
Fourth housecarl	Swordsmanship 9	Wounds 4

If you manage to defeat them all, go to **228**. If you lose, go to **159**.

### 284

William shakes his head violently.

'No, no!' he says. 'We must win this battle. At any cost.' He studies the Saxon line for several minutes while the cavalry make a series of skirmishing attacks to keep the English occupied. Then he sighs and calls for his captain of archers.

'Fire over the shield wall and into the unprotected peasants behind it,' he says. 'When you have fired every arrow which remains, we will make one more assault with every man we have.'

Turning, he calls for his horse and mounts up. Now go to **225**.

### 285

Your journey to London is uneventful. Every mile you ride southwards sees more and more troops preparing to march. You arrive in London on the 4th of October and go immediately to meet FitzWimark. If you are a Norman spy go to **81**, if you are loyal to Harold, go to **291**.

### 286

Abruptly the wind picks up, and the captain thinks it prudent to set sail immediately. The voyage is slow but otherwise quite boring, and soon you can see the cliffs of Dover ahead.

There is an unusual amount of activity at the port, but no one questions you and you make your way out of the town. A horse has been provided for you, and once again you are alone with your thoughts.

Away from the threats and promises of William you are free to make your mind up about what you should do. If you decide to spy for William, go to **202**. If you wish to return to Harold and tell him everything you have seen in Normandy go to **272**.

### 287

Cleverly, William leads the Norman cavalry against the flank of the foolhardy Saxons, and soon he has cut off their line of retreat. All around you, mounted men battle with peasants. Directly ahead of you two peasants move to the attack. You must fight them.

First peasant	Axe 5	Wounds 3
Second peasant	Sword 5	Wounds 2

If you win, go to **56**. If you lose, go to **153**.

## 288

Arriving at Pevensey, in the Abbey of Fecamp where William is encamped, you are greeted and brought before the Duke. He asks after the health of FitzWimark, and you reluctantly admit to having killed him.

At this news, William's brow darkens and he calls for his guards. Before you can draw your sword, you have been overpowered and seized. Your execution is swift and without ceremony.

Your adventure ends here.

## 289

Taking as many men as can be spared from the estate, you ride out to meet Edwin and Morkere. They greet you, and the force they have gathered heads for the coast. Scouts report the position of Tostig's ships and you head for a small bay very close to their last known position. When you arrive, you see that the ships are putting in for a landing.

'Come!' shouts Morkere, rising in his saddle to look back at the men. 'We must prevent this exile from setting foot on English soil!'

The men surge forward - there is not one of them who does not hold a grudge against the exiled Earl who once ruled in these parts. Leaping from your horse, you are swept forward by the front rank to where the ships are coming aground in the shallow water. Now go to **164**.

## 290

'I will not take a message from you to William,' you say firmly.

FitzWimark seems upset by your refusal.

'Can I not change your mind?' he asks.

'No,' you reply.

'I cannot let you leave here if you do not agree to my plan,' he tells you and rises from his seat. You see his hand move to his sword hilt and rise yourself. It seems that you must fight your countryman in order to leave here alive. FitzWimark draws his sword. . . .

Robert FitzWimark   Swordsman 8   Wounds 3

If you win, go to **211**. If you lose, go to **123**.

## 291

FitzWimark is surprised to see you but welcomes you warmly.

'Duke William has landed at Pevensey,' he says. 'I need someone I can trust to deliver a message to him. He should be told that he has little chance of winning a battle against King Harold and should return to Normandy before it is too late.'

Will you agree to go to Duke William's camp (go to **100**) or will you refuse (go to **290**)?

## 292

Above the noise of the battle, you just manage to hear the call, 'Haradrada is dead!' Some Saxons are already falling back in anticipation of a renewed demand for the Norsemen's surrender. Now go to **57**.

## 293

England is by no means conquered. There is a great deal of work ahead for the new King, and many rebellions to put down before he can relax or think about visiting Normandy again. But William plunges into the work with a great deal of energy.

About a week after his coronation, you are summoned to the presence of the new King. He greets you with a smile.

'Welcome, Hugh,' he says. 'I have not forgotten you, and at last I am in a position to reward you for your efforts. Your estate in Northumbria has been doubled in size and I want to make you a baron. Does that satisfy you?'

Happily, you agree, and the next day you depart for your new lands in the north. Your adventure ends here, but to discover what happens to England and to William, turn to **300**.

Congratulations!

## 294

Two more burly housecarls step forward to meet you. You must fight them.

First housecarl	Swordsmanship 6	Wounds 2
Second housecarl	Swordsmanship 8	Wounds 1

If you win, go to **117**. If you lose, go to **132**.

## 295

On your return to London, you go immediately to the King and tell him everything which has passed in Normandy.

For some minutes, he sits, silent. Then he smiles.

'So my cousin is prepared for war,' he says. 'I think the dog has more bark than bite. The Channel is a formidable barrier to cavalry!' He chuckles, then his eyes fall on you and he grows more thoughtful.

'You have done well,' he congratulates you. 'I must think harder on how best I can make use of what you have told me. Return to your normal activities until I send for you.' Bowing, you leave and return to your apartments.

Soon the weather grows warmer and the court begins hunting and hawking as normal. The King is increasingly busy with affairs of state and you see little of him until one day in late Spring when you are called to his presence once again. Now go to **198**.

## 296

As dawn is breaking the march southwards begins. Several of the thegns and their contingents cannot make the journey as quickly as Harold wishes, and he allows them to return to their homes. He sends ahead many riders to warn the towns along the route of his coming, and orders them to prepare their forces to join him.

The first camp is made fifty miles south of York. Will you remain with Harold (go to **21**) or will you ride on alone (go to **285**)?

## 297

With Montford, you thunder away down the other side of Senlac Hill in pursuit of the fleeing tatters of the Saxon army. The ground over which you ride is littered with the dead and mortally wounded.

Eustace de Boulogne joins in your pursuit and rides ahead of you. After only a few hundred yards, you spot



a deep gully which seems to appear as if by magic from the ground just in front of your horse. Ahead of you, Eustace has not seen it in time and although he desperately tries to jump the gap, he fails and falls from his horse as it drops beneath him. Several other knights who were with him also fail to leap the gully, and you notice that the bottom of the ditch is strewn with the bodies of men and horses. Few are moving.

On the other side of the ditch many of the fleeing English have taken advantage of it and are firing arrows or throwing spears at you and the others around you. Will you give up the chase and fall back (go to **129**) or try to jump the gully (go to **13**)?

## 298

The Norse soldiers, although prepared to sell their lives dearly, are ill-equipped. Many seem to have left their heavy mail-coats with their ships at Ricall. They did not expect Harold and his army so soon. Most of the Vikings are cut down in the initial charge, but a tight knot of determined axemen hold the approach to the bridge.

Spurring your horse forward, you crash into them, bowling several over like skittles. In front of you stands a Norseman. You must fight him with your sword.

Norseman      Axe 7      Wounds 3

If you win, go to **10**. If you lose, go to **112**.

## 299

The Norse line adjusts slightly to face your oncoming force. Fanning out, the Saxon army once again becomes whole. The trumpets sound and you stand ready to charge. Now go to **9**.

The next few years are marked with many uprisings by the English, all of which are dealt with severely by the new Norman nobility, led by the King. Some sections of the country try to make alliances with other European powers such as Denmark in an attempt to remove the Norman overlord, but they are all defeated soundly. William, wise ruler that he is, tries to improve the mood of the people by installing many of the Saxon nobility in positions of importance, but it is nevertheless the Normans who hold the real power. To help strengthen his hold on the country, William orders a census to be taken - The Domesday Book, and from the information gathered in it he is able to govern the people more successfully. Despite the many uprisings, he dies peacefully in his bed.

The invasion changes the lives of the people in England. Norman rule imposes a strong set of laws, and a rigid system of government which was unknown to the peasants under Edward and Harold. Although the Normans do their best to maintain the old ways and to make the change as smooth as possible, to any Englishman of the time, the Last Invasion must have seemed a total disaster.

