Letizia Sicco 3^ALS 01/04/2014

III compito d’inglese

II periodo

Options: C

Edward the Confessor was a king that restored the Royal House of Wessex to the English throne in 1042. He died childless in 1066 leaving his successor to be decided by the sword. Harold Godwineson was his brother in law and he asserted his right to become the new king of England . He crowned himself on the day of Edward’s burial.

William, the Duke of Normandy, asserted that he had earlier been promised the throne by Edward. He gathered his supporters and prepared to invade England. The Normans were descendants of the Vikings that had lived in the north of France.

There was another rival which wanted the English throne: he was Harald Hardrada. Harald Hardrada was the king of Norway. He prepared to invade England but he was defeat by Harold at Stamford Bridge on 25th September 1066.

William crossed the English Channel and landed in Pevensey on 28th September 1066. He stayed there waiting for a reaction from the English. In a confident mood, Harold marched his army quickly down to the south, hoping to destroy the Normans in a decisive clash.

The Battle of Hastings on 14th October is one of the most famous event in British history. William used archers and mounted warriors while Harold used foot soldiers. End result was that the warriors of William were stronger than Harold’s. The battle raged for hours but a crucial moment came when Harold was killed. Harold’s death left the country without a strong leader to oppose William. On Christmas day in 1066, William became king of England.

The Norman conquest in 1066 was the first and the last conquest of England. The battle is the reason why William is called “William the Conqueror”.

Anglo-Saxon aristocracy was replaced by William’s followers, who cemented their position with castle-building. Another visible sign of Norman rule is the creation of numerous churches as a result of the Normans Christianity brought with themselves.

The Norman conquest is the meeting of two cultures. Norman culture met the English culture. Old English met Norman-French. English grew richer with French borrowings.

Old pagan values were replaced by the Norman code of values that was illustrated in the Arthurian legends: the new values were bravery, loyalty to the lord, merge, generosity in victory and courtly manners.

The descendants of William the Conqueror introduced the Magna Carta and the Common Law. The Common Law was introduced by Henry II and is the basis of the modern English jury system. The Magna Carta was signed by King John Lackland and it established the basis of all future constitutional governments.

The Normans conquest is very important because the Norman Rule established the basis for the current European politics.