The Bayeux Tapestry
New Approaches

Edited by

Michael J. Lewis, Gale R. Owen-Crocker and Dan Terkla

The Bayeux Tapestry: New Approaches
Proceedings of a Conference at the British Museum

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Michael J. Lewis, Gale R. Owen-Crocker and Dan Terkla

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For James
(born just in time for the conference)
Emily and Sophie
(Michael J. Lewis)

For Richard
Who has come to know the BT as well as I do
(Gale R. Owen-Crocker)

And for Stacey Shimizu
Who is more important to me than even the Tapestry
(Dan Terkla)

Sadly, Carola Hicks died just before the proofs of this book appeared.
The editors honour her scholarship and special contribution to Bayeux Tapestry studies.

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David S. Spear (Professor of History, Furman University, Greenville) has taught at the university since 1982, and holds the William E. Leverette, Jr., endowed chair. He has published several articles on the Norman Church, including 'Power, Patronage, and Personality in the Norman Cathedral Chapters, 911–1204' (1998), 'The Double Display of Saint Romanus of Rouen in 1124' (2006) and two review essays on the Bayeux Tapestry for the *Annales de Normandie*, 42 (1992) and 57 (2007). His most recent publication is *The Personnel of the Norman Cathedrals During the Ducal Period, 911–1204* (2006).

Patricia Stephenson (Wilton) read Modern Languages at Oxford University and became a teacher. After seven years at the Dragon School, Oxford, where she joined a team teaching French to young children by the Direct Method, she taught at Rugby School, Sherborne School for Boys and Godolphin School, Salisbury. Her special interest in medieval history and literature inspired her to render into English some hitherto untranslated Anglo-Norman texts, including a version of the Tristan legend, *La Folie Tristan d'Oxford*, which, with Marie de France's short *lai*, 'Chevrefoil', gives a moving account of this legend. Further study of Marie de France led to research into the connection between Marie's Fables and those depicted in the borders of the Bayeux Tapestry and to speculation about the provenance and date of the Tapestry.

Dan Terkla (Professor of English, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington) received a J. B. Harley Research Fellowship in the History of Cartography and a British Academy/Newberry Library Fellowship (both 2008) to support his latest work on the creation of the Duchy of Cornwall and Hereford *mappaemundi*. His recent work on the Hereford map appears in *Imago Mundi* (2004), *Geotema* (2007) and *The Art, Science, and Technology of Medieval Travel* (2008). In addition to articles on various medieval topics, he has edited (with Martin Foys and Karen E. Overbey) *The Bayeux Tapestry: new interpretations* (2009). His publications on the Tapestry include 'Cut on the Norman Bias: Fabulous Borders and Visual Glosses on the Bayeux Tapestry' (1995), 'From Hastingus to Hastings: inexorable inevitability on the Bayeux Tapestry' (2009), and a bibliography of Tapestry studies reaching back to 1478 (2009).

Hirokazu Tsurushima (Professor of Kumamoto University) has an interest in medieval socio-economic and constitutional history, especially of England in the tenth to twelfth century. His recent publications include 'The Eleventh Century in England through Fish-Eyes: Salmon, Herring, Oysters and 1066' (2007), and *Medieval Documents in Japan and England* (2008). He is also translator in general and editor of the Japanese version of *Short Oxford History of the British Isles,* 11 vols (2009–ongoing).

Stephen D. White (Candler Professor of Medieval History, Emory University, Atlanta) is a fellow of the Medieval Academy of America. He is the author of *Re-thinking Kinship and Feudalism in Early Medieval Europe* (2005); *Feuding and Peacemaking in Eleventh-Century France* (2005); *Custom, Kinship and Gifts to Saints: the Laudatio Parentum in Western France, 1050–1150* (1989); and numerous articles on medieval French and English politics, law and literature. With Elizabeth Carson Pastan he has been awarded a Grant for Collaborative Research in the Humanities from the American Council of Learned Societies to write a book on the Bayeux Tapestry.

Ann Williams (Senior Research Fellow, University of East Anglia, Norwich) was senior lecturer in medieval history at the Polytechnic of North London. She is author of *The English and the Norman Conquest* (1995); *Kingship and Government in Pre-Conquest England* (1999); *Aethelred the Unready: the ill-counselled king* (2003) and *The World before Domesday: the English aristocracy, c. 899–1066* (2009). She is also Academic editor for the Alecto editions of *Great Domesday* (1986–92) and *Little Domesday* (2000). She has written various other articles, mostly prosopographical in nature.

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Many people have been involved in the publication of this volume, in the organisation of the Bayeux Tapestry conference at the British Museum (16–17 July 2008), where the papers published here were delivered, and in arranging a small exhibition at the Museum (to coincide with the conference) of casts of the Bayeux Tapestry made by Charles Stothard and of a facsimile of a fragment of the Tapestry he removed in 1817.

The editors are particularly grateful to all the contributors for speaking at the conference and submitting papers for publication here (see below for those published elsewhere). We would also like to thank Clare Litt, Julie Gardiner, Tara Evans and colleagues at Oxbow for their help and support over the last few months. We very much appreciate the generosity of the institutions that granted permission to reproduce images for this volume, in particular the City of Bayeux for allowing us to publish a complete black and white facsimile of the Tapestry.

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Michael J. Lewis (London)
Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Manchester)
Dan Terkla (Bloomington)

Foreword

Neil MacGregor
Director of the British Museum

2008 was an exciting year for the British Museum; the most notable success being *The First Emperor* exhibition, which attracted over 850,000 visitors and captured the imagination of both public and press. This was but one of many exhibitions, events, conferences and talks organised at the museum that year, including its conference on the Bayeux Tapestry, 'The BT @ the BM: New Research on the Bayeux Tapestry', which took place between 16–17 July and resulted in this book.

With 28 speakers participating from around the world, including Canada, France, Japan and the USA, this was the largest symposium of Bayeux Tapestry scholars in the United Kingdom in modern times, perhaps ever, and the organisers were particularly delighted to welcome the Curator of the Tapestry and scholars from the University of Caen, Basse-Normandie, the 'heartland' of the Bayeux Tapestry. The conference attracted over 180 delegates from as far away as Australia and Japan, including academics with specific research interests in the medieval period, art or textiles and those with a general interest in this most famous of medieval embroideries.

The conference would never have happened without the dedication of those involved in its organisation or without the enthusiasm and support of those who took part. Here, I would particularly like to thank those who delivered papers at the conference. Some were fortunate enough to get financial support from their home institutions, but others financed the trip to London themselves. This generosity enabled the conference fee to be very low indeed, so that as many as possible could attend.

The conference was organised by the editors of this publication – Michael Lewis (British Museum), Gale R. Owen-Crocker (University of Manchester) and Dan Terkla (Illinois Wesleyan University) – and I would like to thank them for all their efforts in making the conference the success it was, and also for their work in delivering this publication. I would like to extend thanks to colleagues in the Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure, who helped with the administration of the conference and gave much support during the conference itself.

To coincide with the conference, the British Museum organised a small exhibition of objects associated with the Bayeux Tapestry; this included original casts of the Bayeux Tapestry made by Charles Stothard in about 1817 and a facsimile of a fragment of the Tapestry 'removed' by Mr Stothard at about the same time. It was hoped that the original fragment (now in the Bibliothèque Municipale de Bayeux) could be brought to London for the conference, but the costs involved were prohibitive considering the very short period of the loan. Nonetheless the museum is very grateful to Sylvette Lemagnen (Curator of the Bayeux Tapestry) for allowing Chantal James (Bayeux Broderie) to study the original fragment in order to make a facsimile for our display.

Of the 26 papers given at the conference, 19 are published here. Four were committed elsewhere prior to the conference, but I am grateful to Boydell and Brewer for allowing abstracts of those papers to be included in this volume, which surely will be a valuable contribution to Bayeux Tapestry scholarship and research for years to come.

Introduction

Michael J. Lewis

The seeds of the British Museum's conference on the Bayeux Tapestry, and hence this volume, were sown early one Sunday morning at the International Medieval Congress, Kalamazoo. Shirley Ann Brown, Gale Owen-Crocker and I had just presented papers in a session dedicated to the Bayeux Tapestry, 'New Threads on the Bayeux Tapestry', chaired by Dan Terkla. Rather off-the-cuff – no doubt with post-paper euphoria (though the audience were not exactly on their feet screaming for more) – I suggested to Dan and Gale that it 'would be good' to have a conference on the Bayeux Tapestry in London. 'Great!' they replied, 'Organise it!'

The venue (the British Museum) was easy to arrange, but it was clear getting together appropriate speakers and organising funding was going to be more problematic. It was agreed to invite speakers, but also to have a general call for papers that might entice people researching the Tapestry we did not know. Soon we produced a list of about 20 people who had published new and exciting work on the Tapestry and who were invited to speak about it. However, there was a catch. We could offer no funding nor cover any expenses; grant applications were made to both the British Academy and British Museum's Research Board, but neither was successful. Given that many of the people we invited were from overseas, we were not too hopeful that many would accept the offer, but to our surprise most did. In fact, we had enough speakers for two days, and it was clear that we would have to be extremely selective in choosing from those who answered the general call for papers.

With the speakers chosen, it was relatively easy to group them into sessions: history and archaeology, patronage, production and design, people, detail and symbolism, theory and modern. By January 2008 the conference was being publicised. We were keen that as many people as possible would come, so the fee was set as low as possible, and barely covered the cost of refreshments.

The British Museum owns plaster-casts of the Bayeux Tapestry made by Charles Stothard in about 1817, and it was decided to exhibit these during the conference. It was also investigated whether it would be possible to display a fragment of the Tapestry, now in the Bayeux Tapestry Museum, that Stothard removed at about the same time the casts were made: the place from where the fragment was cut had been restored many years before the Tapestry fragment, once owned by the Victoria and Albert Museum, was repatriated. However, the expense of delivering the fragment was prohibitive for such a short loan, and so the creation of a facsimile was organised. Sylvette Lemagnen (the Tapestry's curator) facilitated a meeting between Chantal James (an embroiderer in Bayeux) and myself, so that a full-size reproduction of the fragment could be commissioned. It was this that was displayed at the British Museum during the conference.

By early summer 2008 the conference was capturing the imagination of the popular press. Various participants in the conference were being contacted by newspaper and radio stations for their views on the Tapestry. *BBC History Magazine* (July 2008) featured the Bayeux Tapestry in an article that examined current debates, but also inferred that the Tapestry should be returned to England on the basis that most scholars believe it was made in Canterbury. The media loved it, and ticket sales increased.

The conference was a success, with over 180 people from across the world making the trip to the British Museum. No doubt some dipped in and out of sessions, but the majority ignored the sunny weather and immersed themselves in new work on the Tapestry.

Although the call for papers expressed a hope that the talks given at the conference might be published, there were no firm plans to take this forward at the time. However, the need became increasingly apparent and desirable. Soon after the conference I was contacted by several delegates, and some who could not attend, wishing to have a formal record of the proceedings. It was also the view of the majority of speakers that formal

publication would be useful, and so I was tasked to find an appropriate publisher.

Several were contacted. Whilst most were broadly supportive, the general view was that conference proceedings (in a pure sense) were less desirable than a volume of collected papers brought together for the purpose of publication. The British Museum expressed an interest in publishing the proceedings as a British Museum Research Publication, but felt that since the Bayeux Tapestry was not a British Museum object it was not entirely appropriate. Instead the museum's publications committee recommended Oxbow, and I am extremely grateful they offered a contract to publish this book.

The order of the papers published here differs from that given at the conference, where it was necessary to group papers in sessions (of three or four talks). Invariably some groups worked as cohesive units better than others. In this volume the papers are ordered as follows:

Patronage

It is the view of most scholars that the Bayeux Tapestry was commissioned by Bishop Odo of Bayeux and Earl of Kent, the maternal half-brother of William the Conqueror, for the following reasons: first, the Tapestry highlights Odo's role in events to an extent that greatly exceeds that in any other account of the Conquest; second, besides the major historical characters, only four others are mentioned by name, of whom Turold, Wadard and Vital are believed to be retainers of Odo; third, Odo's bishopric is the setting for a central point (Harold's oath to William) in the narrative; fourth, there is a strong correlation between the Tapestry's imagery and Canterbury illuminations, produced within Odo's earldom, and hence a likely source of inspiration for the Tapestry designer.

Whilst this hypothesis has not been universally accepted, those proposing alternatives (to date) have failed to be persuasive, and two new theories are presented here. Carola Hicks argues that Queen Edith had the Tapestry made at Wilton, perhaps as a gift for William himself. Like her father (Earl Godwin), Edith was politically astute. After the Conquest, she supported the new regime, but also commissioned the *Vita Ædwardi Regis*, which celebrates both King Edward and the Godwins. Who better than Edith to commission the Tapestry (embroidery work, rather than a work in another medium), putting forth 'both sides of the argument'?

In contrast, George Beech argues that the Tapestry was produced at St Florent of Saumur in the Loire Valley. He proposes that the Tapestry was commissioned by William himself for propaganda purposes, and that the project was taken forward by Abbot William of St Florent in gratitude for Duke William coming to the aid of his father, Rivallon of Dol, in 1064. For Beech this helps explain the inclusion of the 'Breton Campaign' in the Tapestry and the designer's (apparent) interest in the buildings and topography of Brittany (although this is disputed by M. Lewis 2007a, and others). Together, both papers challenge the orthodoxy that Odo commissioned the Tapestry and provide new avenues for research.

History

Two very different, but related, studies next consider the history of the Bayeux Tapestry. Shirley Ann Brown examines the Nazi documentation and study of the Tapestry in 1941, which is a reminder that, whether or not the Tapestry had propaganda value in the years after the Conquest (as outlined by Bouet and Neveux, in this volume), it was certainly utilised for such purposes during World War II, as it was when Napoleon planned to invade Britain in 1803. Also evident in this paper is the relationship between the study of history and the socio-political context that influences historians, consciously or unconsciously: history is written by historians, not necessarily the victors.

Richard Burt focuses on two moments (both exhibitions) in the history of the Bayeux Tapestry, and considers how this material object can be viewed differently depending on the viewpoint and training of those who study it. Burt also looks forward to the role of new media in presenting the Tapestry in as many ways as possible. Although he finds problems with traditional approaches to Tapestry studies – those that take positivistic historicist stances, for instance – he does recognise their value. By offering new-media alternatives, it is hoped new technology can open up new lines of research on the Tapestry and other artworks.

Materiality

The next cluster of papers considers the Tapestry as a physical object. Sylvette Lemagnen looks at how the Bayeux Tapestry is exhibited today and outlines the special conditions needed to keep the artefact (and its visitors) safe. She explains the conservation and research work that took place on the Tapestry, in 1982–3, when it was removed from public display prior to installation in its new exhibition. During this conservation work the Tapestry was removed from its backing strip and the reverse photographed for the first time: many of

the images she publishes here have not been previously seen. Consequently, Lemagnen discusses the back of the Tapestry, in the hope of opening new avenues of Tapestry scholarship.

By comparing the surviving Tapestry with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century drawings and engravings of it, David Hill and John McSween highlight the many repairs and alterations that have been made to the embroidery, and assess the relevance of these repairs for scholars examining and interpreting the Tapestry. They thus reveal misinterpretations that have been made of certain scenes and images. Hill and McSween also discuss an old chest, in which the Bayeux Tapestry was stored and preserved, which might hold clues to the Tapestry's original dimensions.

These dimensions are also the focus of Derek Renn's study, in which he highlights inconsistencies in the published measurements of the individual lengths (now known to be nine), and seeks to assess its original length. To this end, he investigates the backing strip (upon which the Tapestry is fixed), speculates about how much has been 'cut' from either end of the embroidery and suggests how long those 'lost lengths' might have been. He also examines the relationship between the Tapestry's scenes and its joins, which is of great importance for understanding its production.

Figures

As part of a group of papers that discuss various and often enigmatic personalities that appear in the Tapestry, Pierre Bouet and François Neveux consider the Tapestry as a source for understanding the succession crisis of 1066. They offer a scene-by-scene analysis of what the Tapestry shows between Scenes 25 and 31, followed by an interpretation of the meaning of these scenes, thereby synthesising their own work and contemporary accounts of the Conquest.

Ann Williams explores status in the late Anglo-Saxon period, with reference to the presentation of Earl Harold in the early scenes of the Bayeux Tapestry, as well as contemporary and near contemporary written sources. She demonstrates that the Tapestry's visual depictions highlight Harold's status, and these can be enhanced through the study of Anglo-Saxon literature, law and works such as Domesday Book.

Patricia Stephenson examines the identity of the Tapestry's enigmatic Ælfgyva, the building in which she is depicted and why she is shown there. Through an examination of various written sources, Stephenson suggests that this Ælfgyva is Harold's sister and the Abbess of Wilton, who was cured of blindness. Stephenson argues that the miracle of her cure is what is shown in the Tapestry. She explains why this is relevant to the Tapestry's account and (like Hicks) argues that the Tapestry was made in Wilton upon the orders of Queen Edith, with the involvement of others.

Most have identified the figure beside Duke William raising his helmet as Eustace of Boulogne, but here David Spear argues otherwise, highlighting weaknesses in the 'Eustace' hypothesis, which was first proposed by Charles Stothard whilst recreating a visual record of the Tapestry for the Society of Antiquaries of London. Spear suggests Robert of Mortain is a better fit, both in terms of the visual evidence of the Tapestry itself and the written sources that discuss Robert's role in the Norman Conquest. Consequently, Spear also asserts that Robert might be depicted elsewhere in the Tapestry, potentially transforming his role in its account of the Conquest.

Hirokazu Tsurushima discusses three figures named in the Tapestry, Turold, Wadard and Vital, in the context of a knight's role at the time of the Conquest. He attempts to identify these three men, all believed to be retainers of Odo of Bayeux, examines their status, landholdings and associations with the Bishop of Bayeux and explains why these men appear in the Tapestry.

Michael Davis explores why Leofwine and Gyrth, brothers of King Harold – the only casualties of the Battle of Hastings mentioned by name – are singled out for special treatment in the Tapestry. He examines contemporary and near-contemporary sources for clues, but finds little explanation. Instead, by arguing that the Tapestry was made during Odo's imprisonment by William (1082–7), he concludes that the Tapestry highlights the deaths of Harold's brothers to emphasise fraternal loyalty. By producing the Tapestry, Odo thus hoped William would forgive him for his transgressions, which clearly did not work.

Detail

The final group of papers explores detail in the Bayeux Tapestry. Often overlooked, such close readings broaden understanding of the Tapestry's sources, production and meaning(s).

Gale Owen-Crocker provides a detailed examination of the Tapestry's faces, in the hope of showing whether or not the work is that of one or more hands, and whether any differences are particular to the Tapestry's nine sections. She highlights variations in the Tapestry's portraiture, including facial features, presentation angles and colouring. She also notes how the artist/s use/s facial

differences to highlight important figures and infuse the visual display with emotion.

It is apparent that several manuscripts produced in Canterbury influenced the Bayeux Tapestry's designer, but one, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11 has received little attention. Michael Lewis considers the relationship between the imagery of the Bayeux Tapestry and Junius 11, highlighting the differences and parallels, arguing that Junius 11 might have been available to the Tapestry designer. His thesis has repercussions both for those studying the design of the Tapestry and for those debating the date and production of Junius 11.

Carol Neuman de Vegvar considers the Tapestry's drinking vessels and explores differences in its feast scenes. She considers parallels in archaeology and literature and examines the evidence for the vessels' use. She hypothesises that the English and Norman choices of drinking vessels imply a moral dimension, which influences interpretation of the Tapestry narrative.

Jill Frederick explores the scene in the Tapestry in which Harold rescues two Normans from the River Couesnon. In the border below this scene an armed man pursues six eels, whilst he himself is chased by a string of animals, one gripping or chasing the other. Frederick examines the meaning of these depictions, and their relevance in the wider Tapestry narrative. She concludes that the eels provide a commentary on Harold's potential for duplicity and his eventual treachery.

Jane Geddes examines a door at Hastings depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry, in light of new archaeological work on an Anglo-Saxon door at Hadstock Church, which is now dated to about the same time as the Bayeux Tapestry. With reference to other early medieval doors and antiquarian drawings of Hadstock Church, she argues that the accuracy of the door in the Tapestry provides evidence that the Tapestry designer did (at times) refer to actual objects for his visual depictions. She also gives (in an appendix) a full assessment and analysis of the door at Hadstock Church.

In the final paper, Linda Neagley explores the relationship between spatial representation, visual experience and oral performance in the Bayeux Tapestry. She explains how the understanding and experience of visual images differed in the medieval period from today, and shows why this is important when attempting to understand the Tapestry's narrative. While situating the Tapestry in a broad representational context, Neagley proposes a provocative new theory that explains how the Tapestry would have physically engaged a medieval viewer and so offers insights into how an eleventh-century audience experienced and used it.

The Patronage of Queen Edith

†*Carola Hicks*

Various candidates have been suggested as potential patrons of the Bayeux Tapestry: Odo, William, Eustace, Turold and Matilda among others. To narrow the field, it might be helpful to suggest three main criteria. Firstly, the Tapestry seems to have been commissioned by someone who wanted to put both sides of the argument, who was concerned with validating the Norman victory, yet still expressed some understanding of the English position. Secondly, the references to contemporary characters and recent incidents suggest manufacture in a period fairly soon after 1066. Thirdly, it is significant that the chosen medium was embroidery rather than, say, illumination, wall painting or carving. These factors create a tentative profile that fits someone not previously considered despite having qualifications as relevant as the other names – someone depicted in the Tapestry, directly concerned in the unfolding events, familiar with the complex historical background, someone with motive, means and opportunity, and an established record as a patron. Edith Godwinson, widow of King Edward, sister of King Harold, friend of King William, fulfills all the requirements and, in addition, had particular expertise in embroidery.

Regarding its sympathetic attitude to the English, the first half of the Tapestry tells Harold's story, and the narrative seems to imply that he was the victim of fate. The winds blew him off course (Scenes 5–6), Guy of Ponthieu arrested him (Scene 7), William rescued him (Scenes 12–10, reversed, Scene 13) and put him under a considerable obligation. Despite Harold's gallant conduct in the Brittany campaign (Scenes 16–21), William did not let him go home until he had agreed to swear on relics (Scene 23). Then he had to obey Edward's deathbed command to succeed him as king: the Tapestry makes it perfectly clear that Harold did not seize the crown illegally but had to choose between keeping an oath made under duress or obeying the final command of his dying sovereign, even though he knew William would take vengeance. The battle scenes (Scenes 48–58) show what a very close call it was, while the mangled corpses in the borders are a poignant souvenir of the losers rather than the victors.

The Tapestry's many ambiguities imply that it was a narrative created for a new order, a court-based audience which included those who might have fought on either side at Hastings. Therefore the patron needed to be someone with a foot in both camps, an English person who lived under the Norman occupation, but who was still concerned to defend Harold's reputation. The Tapestry also records the deaths of his brothers Gyrth and Leofwine (see Davis, in this volume); and earlier in the story, the bearded man (Figure 130) present at Harold's meeting with William at Rouen may be Harold's brother Wulfnoth or nephew Hakon, who were hostages in Normandy. With the additional presence of Edith (Figure 228) in Edward's deathbed scene (27–8), the Godwin family were well represented.

As for chronology, the Tapestry must have been made within a few years of Hastings, a turbulent period when William's position in England was far from secure, and when the Tapestry's role of reconciling English and Normans was most relevant. Intended for display in a great hall, its story reinforced the fellowship of old campaigners, but could also help newer supporters of the Norman cause justify their drastic shift in allegiance.

In the months following his coronation, William demanded surrender and tribute from the cities of the southwest. These included Winchester, which Edith held as part of her widow's dower. Consulted by the city elders, she negotiated a peaceful settlement by offering fealty to William and paying her share of the tribute he demanded. As a result he allowed her to retain her rights of residence there. This contrasts with the fate of her own mother, Gytha, who, together with a group of rebel Englishwomen, fled to exile in St-Omer, Flanders. For Edith, it was evidently preferable to come to terms with the Normans

than to lose her lands and wealth. It also suited William to behave magnanimously to the widow of the anointed king and kinsman who, he claimed, had appointed him his heir. So Edith was one of the few English who retained lands and properties after the Conquest. The Domesday Book records that she continued to hold large parts of Wessex, and also had lands in Buckinghamshire, East Anglia and the Midlands (Williams and Martin 2002). This contrasted with William's general attitude towards the English, according to William of Malmesbury (iii.254): 'he found almost none of them trustworthy – behaviour which so exasperated his ferocity that he deprived the more powerful among them first of their revenues, then of their lands, and some even of their lives' (Mynors *et al*. 1998, 471).

Edith also found favour with the Norman chroniclers. William of Poitiers (ii.8) noted her support for William, alleged that she had backed his claim to the throne in preference to that of her brother and described her as intelligent as a man (Davis and Chibnall 1998, 115). William of Malmesbury (ii.197) agreed that she was 'a woman in whose bosom there was a school of all the liberal arts … [;] you were astonished by her learning' (Mynors *et al.* 1998, 353). She maintained her new role as William's respected kinswoman so successfully that after her death at Winchester in December 1075, William gave her body exceptional honours; according to William of Malmesbury (iii.273), 'there was evidence of … deep feeling in the funeral which he [William] arranged for Queen Edith, who by his care was buried in Westminster Abbey near her husband, and has a tomb lavishly decorated with gold and silver' (Mynors *et al*. 1998, 503). Commissioning the Tapestry for William might have been a contributing factor in all this good will, her distinctive way of professing her loyalty to the new king. The Tapestry also tactfully flattered the almost equally powerful Odo, Earl of Kent and regent when William was out of the country, for he is the third main character; his followers and tenants, Wadard (Figure 366) and Vital (Figure 425) are also featured. At the same time some reinstatement of Harold's reputation would have been beneficial to her as his sister.

Edith had already commissioned an interesting project that celebrated the lives of her family as well as that of her husband, the book subsequently known as the *Vita Ædwardi Regis* (*Life of King Edward*; Barlow 1992). Probably begun in 1065, it seems to have been intended as a history of the Godwins meant to help them retain power in the event of Edward's death: he and Edith had no children, but there were other potential candidates for the succession. The second half of the book, however, was completed after the Battle of Hastings and concentrated on establishing Edward's saintliness.

There was an excellent model for the *Vita* in the form of a work commissioned a generation earlier by Edith's mother-in-law, the formidable Queen Emma, a manipulative woman who had fully grasped the art of self-promotion. Although she died over a decade before the adventures of 1064–6, she helped to mould them. Daughter of Count Richard I of Normandy, grandson of the Viking founder of Normandy, Rollo, her marriage to the English king Æthelred II was a diplomatic triumph, but her life became perilous when he was overthrown by the Danish invader, Swein 'Forkbeard'. She and her children fled to Normandy, but after the deaths of Æthelred and Swein, she left her son Edward with his uncles and cousins (including young William, the duke's bastard son), in order to return to England and marry Swein's son, King Cnut, as a symbolic act of reconciliation. The birth of a son, Harthacnut, seemed to confirm the success of their union.

Cnut's most trusted follower was the Englishman, Godwin, Earl of Wessex, who threw in his lot with the new Danish regime and was rewarded with the hand of a kinswoman of Cnut, a significant match which established a truly Anglo-Danish dynasty: they gave Danish names to their older sons, Swein, Harold and Tostig, and English ones to the younger boys, Gyrth, Leofwine and Wulfnoth. Edith, the eldest daughter, was named after an English royal saint. Godwin's unquestioned loyalty earned him wealth, lands and title, and he became the most important subject in the land.

Cnut's sudden death in 1035 led to a succession crisis, when Emma ignored the claims of Edward, still in Normandy, and campaigned for her younger son, Harthacnut. But Godwin backed another claimant, Harold 'Harefoot', an older son of Cnut by a former liaison with Ælfgifu of Northampton (the Tapestry's mysterious Ælfgyva (Figure 135) in Scene 15 is sometimes identified with her). Emma naturally hated Harefoot and his mother, but he became king after the murder of Alfred, Emma's second son by Æthelred, a murky scandal in which Emma and Godwin were both implicated. She sought refuge in Flanders, where she remained until 1040, when Harefoot died and Harthacnut claimed the throne. Emma's influence as queen-mother seemed assured when she persuaded her sickly, childless son to solve the succession problem by inviting his half-brother Edward to return from Normandy to become co-ruler and king designate.

The book that she commissioned in 1042, the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (*The Praise of Queen Emma*:

Campbell and Keynes 1998), represented Emma's slanted interpretation of recent political events and the actions of people still alive. Even its illustrated frontispiece places her centre stage, queen to two kings and queen-mother to two more, receiving the manuscript from its tonsured author who kneels at her feet, while Harthacnut and Edward merely watch from the side. This work had no precedent because it was not the biography of a long-dead saint, but dealt with recent political events, just as Edith's commission would do a generation later.

Emma's vision of family goodwill masked the reality of what was to come. When Harthacnut died in 1042, Edward became sole king. Within a year, he took long-awaited revenge on his mother by confining her to her estate at Winchester and depriving her of all lands and treasures. Edward's affinities were Norman-French, but his survival depended upon the support of the Anglo-Danish Godwin clan, with whom he became further linked by his marriage to Edith in 1045. Edward tried to free himself from the whole family in 1051 by sending them into exile and banishing Edith to a nunnery. But they returned and Edith was reinstated as queen. Godwin died in 1053, and Harold became the new Earl of Wessex.

The *Encomium Emmae Reginae* inspired the *Vita Ædwardi Regis.* The latter's author dedicated the book to Edith, its patroness, and praised her as the woman who had revived his career and rescued him from poverty by commissioning the work (Barlow 1992, 2–5). Stylistic and literary parallels suggest he was trained at the monastery of St Bertin in St-Omer, a centre of learning whose monks specialised in hagiographical writing. One possible author was Goscelin, who came from St Bertin to England in 1058. He wrote saints' lives for foundations in Wessex, including Wilton, where Edith had been educated, and after whose tenth-century saintly foundress she was named. He became her chaplain there after Hastings, and the *Vita* referred specifically to the place and her connections with it. He was later associated with St Augustine's, Canterbury (where he included a favourable mention of Bishop Odo in his life of Abbot Hadrian).

Although the first half of the *Vita* (i.6) presented Edward as rather less impressive than the splendid Godwins, it was highly flattering to Edith: she was a paragon, 'a woman to be placed before all noble matrons or persons of royal or imperial rank as a model of virtue and integrity' (Barlow 1992, 65). Begun while Edward was still alive, it was completed in the light of the dramatically changed circumstances after Hastings. The second half was devoted to the late king, now described as in a conventional saint's life, performing miracles as proof of his sanctity. The saintliness was a brilliant projection which turned his failure to produce an heir into a positive celebration of his alleged celibacy and therefore of Edith's chastity. The book described her as being more like a daughter to him than a wife, and thus emphasised her ongoing role as a saint's virtuous widow.

The Norman chroniclers adopted this clever gloss: William of Jumièges (vii.9) stated that the marriage was 'only in name. It was said that both actually always remained virgin' (van Houts 1992, 109). So it was her virginity which gave William his lawful claim to the English throne. This was a reputation she was determined to maintain to the end. As William of Malmesbury (ii.197.3) reported, despite scurrilous gossip that 'during her husband's life and after his death, she was not free from suspicions of misconduct', she was determined to die with her reputation intact. 'On her deathbed, she satisfied those who stood round on oath, at her own suggestion, of her perpetual virginity' (Mynors *et al.* 1998, 353).

The second half of the *Vita* (ii.11) gave a detailed account of Edward's deathbed (Barlow 1992, 117–25). He was attended by Harold, Robert fitz Wimarch, Archbishop Stigand and Edith, the dutiful personification of mourning who warmed the dying king's feet in her lap and 'ceased not from lamenting to ease her natural grief'. Edward's last words were an ominous vision of 'fire and sword and the havoc of war', but he praised Edith's zealous care of him: 'she has served me devotedly and has always stood close by my side like a beloved daughter' – and he commended her and the whole kingdom to Harold's protection (Barlow 1992, 125). Although their lack of children meant that she had no chance of retaining power as a queen-mother (unlike Emma), the *Vita* kept her options open by pointing out how like a mother she had been to the young male kinsmen whom Edward brought to court as possible heirs. Most ambitious of all was the underlying attempt to have herself redefined as the king's seeming daughter, and therefore heir in her own right.

An identical scene (27) features in the Tapestry. Edward reclines in bed, surrounded by three men including a tonsured cleric (Figure 230), while a woman (Figure 228) sits at the end of the bed, wiping away her tears with her veil. This is a conventional image, borrowed, as C. R. Hart (2000, fig. 2) has demonstrated, from illustrations of grieving widows in the Old Testament cycles produced at St Augustine's, Canterbury (including *the Old English Hexateuch,* London, British Library, Cotton Claudius B iv, fols 11v, 11r, 12r), manuscripts which provide many other motifs in the Tapestry. Text and Tapestry both make clear that Edith was present as one of the four witnesses to Edward's final decision about the succession. This was one of her functions as queen, as Pauline Stafford (1997,

265–6) has demonstrated, for Edith had a more than ornamental role in her husband's court. She stood in for Edward (for example when he was too ill to attend the dedication of Westminster), she witnessed formal events and ceremonies and she organised the royal household.

Having commissioned a written work that flattered her family, she may have turned, after the Conquest, to a medium she really understood to serve a similar function. Creating an embroidered frieze was just a different way of telling a story, and she had access to all the necessary resources. She lived mainly at Wilton, where her staff and tenants included educated clerics, such as Goscelin, and skilled craftspeople. In her dower city of Winchester, there were trained artist-monks, cloth manufacturers and dyers. The sewing skills of Englishwomen were so admired that the general term *opus anglicanum* (English work) became the specific term for the exquisite vestments and hangings, minutely embroidered in gold thread, silk and precious stones, that were admired all over Europe. Producing fine embroidery was an almost compulsory activity for elite women, whether they were wives or nuns, for it demonstrated industry and virtue, as well as providing textiles of the highest quality for public and private consumption, for display and devotion.

Among renowned aristocratic embroiderers were Cnut's first wife, Ælfgifu of Northampton, who sewed altar-cloths for the abbeys of Croyland and Romsey, and Ælthelsitha, grand-daughter of Earl Byrhtnoth, who rejected marriage and devoted herself to embroidery. Queen Emma herself was renowned for her sewing skills and presented altar cloths and copes to Canterbury, and a whole range of ornate textiles decorated with gold, silver and precious stones, including a crimson and gold altar cloth and a green and gold altar frontal, to the monastery of Ely. Queen Margaret of Scotland ran a whole artistic workshop in her palace and supervised her women in the embroidery of ecclesiastical garments. There were also precedents for sewn narratives of battle scenes, like those from the Trojan War on the cloak that King Wiglaf of Mercia presented to Croyland Abbey, perhaps sewn by his wife, or from more recent history. Ælfflaed, widow of the Earl Byrhtnoth, who was killed by the Danes at the Battle of Maldon in 991, presented to the monastery at Ely a hanging depicting her husband's heroic campaigns, which she may have worked herself (Christie 1938, 31–2; Stafford 1997, 143–5). The *Vita Ædwardi Regis* (i.1) described another set of secular textiles, the purple sails embroidered in gold with scenes of former sea-victories, together with the king's family tree, on the warship that Godwin presented to Edward on his accession to the throne (Barlow 1992, 21).

The *Vita* (i.2) lauded Edith's sewing and painting skills, and emphasised that her household responsibilities included supervising and even making the official wardrobe: 'She clad him in raiments either embroidered by herself or of her choice, and of such a kind that it could not be thought that Solomon in all his glory was thus arrayed … [;] no count was made of the cost of the precious stones, rare gems and shining pearls that were used' (Barlow 1992, 25). The passage goes on to describe his gold-decorated mantles, tunics, boots and shoes, though with its characteristic, slightly snide tone, it points out how the ascetic king was not suitably grateful to Edith, but only wore these trappings for state occasions, when he reluctantly displayed 'the pomp of royal finery in which the queen obligingly arrayed him. And he would not have cared at all if it had been provided at less cost' (*Vita Ædwardi Regis*, i.6; Barlow 1992, 65). In addition to Edward's robes of state, Edith's workshop embroidered textiles for churches.

So, she had a thorough understanding of the techniques and organisation needed to create the Tapestry. She also had access to a suitably trained workforce in the nunneries which were an important source of large-scale embroidery production. This was not only through her immediate connections with Wilton but also because, as queen, she had held general responsibility for communities of nuns. After the Conquest, nunneries remained communities of well-born women, headed by members of noble and powerful families, their numbers now swelled when a nunnery might be the only place of refuge for a landless widow or orphan. Harold's daughter, Gunnhild, for example, was brought up at Wilton. Other nunneries in Wessex included Romsey, Amesbury, Wherwell and Shaftesbury, and there were also major houses for women at Canterbury, Winchester and Barking Abbey, whose nuns were famous for their sewing.

Becoming a nun was not necessarily a vocational calling but could simply provide the means of living in a genteel society without having to be subject to a husband or face the constant risks of childbirth. It could bring the companionship of equals, intellectual stimulation and the opportunity for career advancement by becoming abbess. Nor was virginity a compulsory criterion, for religious communities admitted those who had been widowed or repudiated by their husbands. Many residents of nunneries in the years after the Conquest, whether as committed or pragmatic members, were women from great English families who had been directly involved with the events depicted in the Tapestry and who, as noblewomen, were noted for their sewing skills. Such women, trying to rebuild their shattered lives in a safe supportive community, could easily come together to provide the specialist workforce

necessary to produce the Tapestry. And this meant that there was no problem with the vigorous, secular, masculine subject matter, let alone the exuberantly phallic border figures and war-horses, which caused Victorian viewers of the Tapestry such anguish.

In the cultivated atmosphere of Wilton, the difference between becoming a nun and merely wearing a veil for expediency was made clear when one privileged inmate, Matilda, daughter of King Malcolm of Scotland, could only be betrothed to King Henry I after proving to Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, that she was not a proper nun but had been forced to wear a veil, as Eadmer (iii.122) writes, 'to preserve me from the lust of the Normans, which was rampant and at that time ready to assault any woman's honour' (Bosanquet 1964, 127). Anselm agreed that in the immediate aftermath of the Conquest, William's Norman followers 'began to do violence not only to the possessions of the conquered but also where opportunity offered to their women, married and unmarried alike, with shameful licentiousness. Thereupon a number of women anticipating this and fearing for their own virtue betook themselves to convents of Sisters and taking the veil protected themselves in their company from such infamy' (Eadmer, iii.124; Bosanquet 1964, 129).

Women of Edith's rank were accustomed, and indeed expected, to commission significant works. These included hagiographical writing (such as the *Vita Ædwardi Regis*), bibles and gospel books, the costly embellishment of saints' relics and the construction or refurbishment of buildings. Godiva, wife of the Earl of Mercia, 'lavished all her treasure upon the church: sending for goldsmiths, she gave them her whole store of gold and silver to work into covers for gospel books, crosses, images of the saints and other marvellously wrought ecclesiastical ornaments' (Orderic Vitalis, IV.ii.183; Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 2, 217). Queen Emma was again a role model. She donated a gold cup and a gold-illuminated manuscript to Canterbury, as well as altar cloths and copes. She and Cnut presented a costly gold and silver shrine to Abingdon, a great cross to the New Minster at Winchester and commissioned fine gospel books for religious houses in England and on the continent. Edith's sister-in-law, Countess Judith, commissioned the gospel book whose artist included her image at the foot of the Crucifixion, and she and her husband Tostig Godwinson presented a gold and silver crucifix with figures of Christ, Mary and John the Evangelist to Durham. Edith, too, immersed herself in church patronage, and had a reputation as a predatory collector and donor of relics. She presented her favoured churches with vestments, jewelled gospel books and rich metalwork, sometimes seized from other monasteries (Stafford 1997, 143–5, 148).

It has been argued that the intellectual content of the Tapestry, with its subtle and complex references to classical literature and the Old Testament, let alone recent history, suggests a highly educated patron. However, the detailed subject matter would have been the product of the designer rather than the patron. The author of the *Vita Ædwardi Regis* employed a similar range of references and allusions to create a sort of secular epic in the first half of the book. Edith could well have commissioned a man such as Goscelin on a second major project, this time working in collaboration with someone trained in a monastic scriptorium, for the designs, and with the head of the embroidery workshop, for the execution.

Edith's patronage of the Tapestry cannot, of course, be proved any more than that of Odo or the others. This paper argues that the person who commissioned the Tapestry intended it as a gift for William as a symbol of union and reconciliation between English and Normans. What can be reconstructed of Edith's character, career and skills does not rule her out.

The Breton Campaign and the Possibility that the Bayeux Tapestry was Produced in the Loire Valley (St Florent of Saumur)

George T. Beech

One of the major problems in the study of the Bayeux Tapestry is the uncertainty about its origins due to the fact that the Tapestry itself does not identify who ordered it, nor for whom, nor when and where and by whom it was made. Nor does any other contemporary source give answers to these questions. Thus everything that can be known about its origin, commissioner and date and place of production has to be inferred from the Tapestry itself. Following this approach most scholars (Gameson 1997b, 161) have come to believe that it was produced in England (most likely at St Augustine's abbey, Canterbury), on the basis of its artistic affinities with illuminated manuscripts at that abbey in the early eleventh century. Most (Gameson 1997b, 162) also conclude that Odo, bishop of Bayeux and half-brother of the Conqueror, commissioned it.

Here it is proposed that William the Conqueror ordered the Tapestry for production at the Loire Valley abbey of St Florent of Saumur (see map, **1**; Beech 2005b; 2006a). Little has been written in modern times about the history of this abbey, in part because many of its original records have not yet been published and in part because almost nothing remains today of the medieval abbey church and buildings.

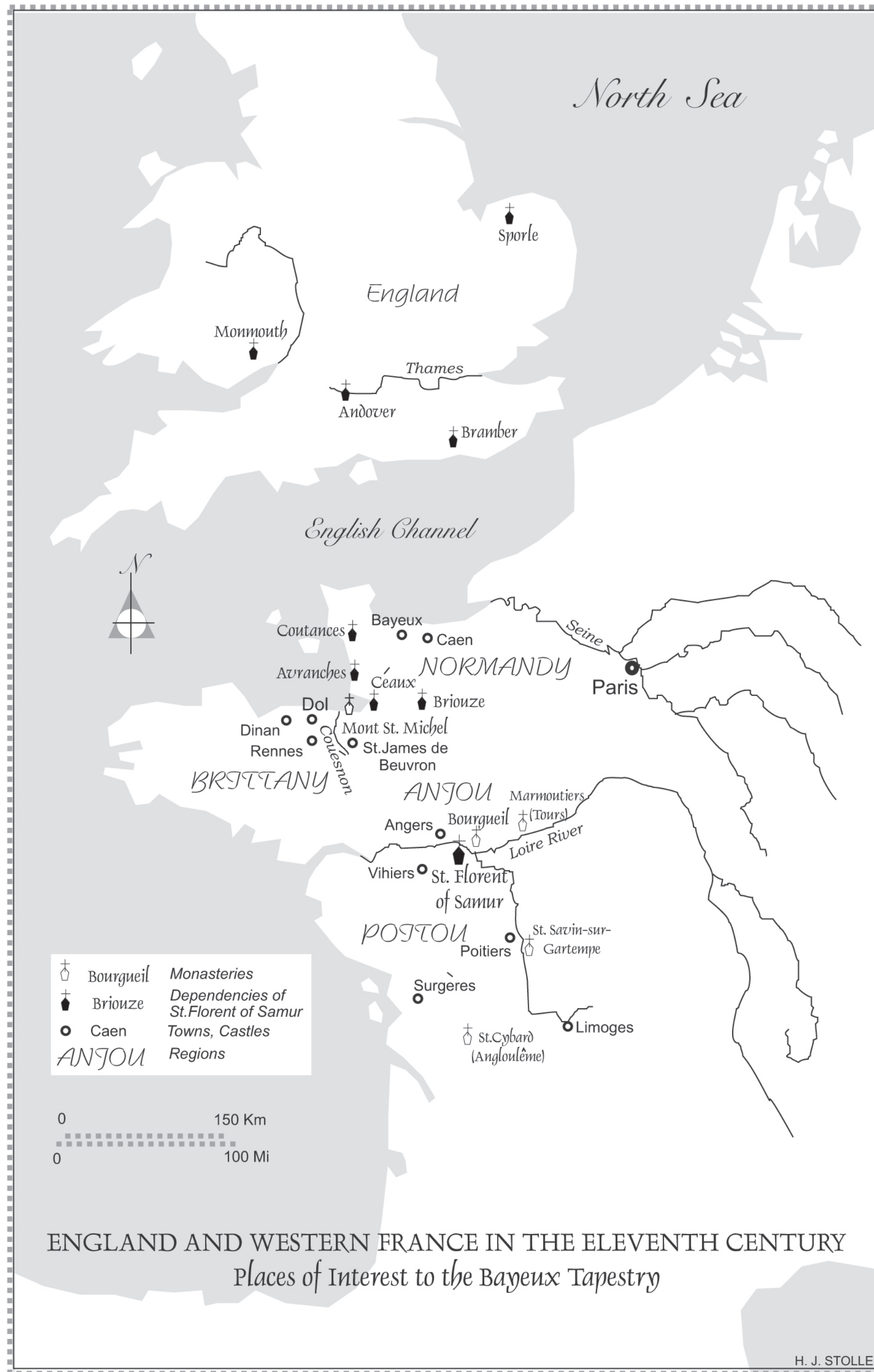
Its history begins with the abbey's foundation at Montglonne in the western Loire Valley in the seventh or eighth century. In the face of Viking invasions in the ninth century its monks moved further inland and settled at Saumur by the tenth century. During its early years at Saumur the abbey remained an institution of essentially local importance, but then from the mid-eleventh through to the thirteenth century it expanded in a quite exceptional manner, acquiring dependant priories, parish churches, lands and rents in England, Wales, Brittany, Normandy, Anjou, Poitou, Berry, the Saintonge, the Angoumois, the Perigord and the Bordelais. By 1300 it owned over 100 priories and had become the centre of one of the greatest monastic networks of the Benedictine order in Western France (Beech 2005b, 4–21).

The first element in this hypothesis regarding St Florent concerns the existence of a textile workshop at the abbey at the beginning of the eleventh century. Everything known about this workshop comes from a 43–line passage in the *Historia Sancti Florentii Salmuriensis* (258–9), a history of the abbey written there late in the twelfth century (Beech 2005b, 10–11). It contains what amounts to an inventory, written in strikingly rich language, of the tapestries, textiles and hangings produced by and in the possession of the abbey under the rule of Abbot Robert (985–1011).

This inventory indicates that the local workers wove textiles of wool, '*magnarum ex lana dossalium cortinarum*' (large woollen wall hangings) – the Bayeux Tapestry is made of wool on plain linen – as well as precious ones of silk and gold thread. It also describes 'others of great length and suitable width with lions of shining appearance against crimson backgrounds, with white borders decorated with red animals and birds'. Likewise the borders of the Bayeux Tapestry are decorated with animals and birds.

According to the St Florent historian, the distinction of its textiles made it famous well beyond the Loire Valley region. He tells how the Capetian King Robert the Pious and Queen Constance showed their admiration for the abbey's collection by making costly gifts of their own to add to it, and he relates that 'two of the finest tapestries have been commissioned by a certain queen from overseas'; in all probability this was Queen Emma of England (1002–35; Beech 2005b, 11–13).

A critical question in the hypothesis presented here is how might a distant Loire Valley abbey, not previously known to have had ties with Normandy, have been chosen to embroider the Bayeux Tapestry? The answer to that question points to the personal relationship which existed between William the Conqueror and the abbot of St Florent, also named William, which, it is suggested here, led the new king of England to commission a Tapestry to be produced at that abbey to celebrate his conquest of England. How did William of Normandy come to know



1. *England and France in the eleventh century.*

an abbot of a monastery on the Loire River far from Normandy? The two men had common interests in the Norman/Breton frontier, namely Mont-Saint-Michel and Dol (see map, **1**). In 1063, in order to protect his eastern frontier, Duke William persuaded the Breton lord of Dol to become his vassal and ally. In 1064 hostilities broke out between Duke William and the Breton count Conan of Rennes (south of Dol: see map, **1**); Rivallon, lord of Dol, supported the Duke of Normandy in what came to be called the 'Breton Campaign'. The Bayeux Tapestry

is one of only two contemporary sources to describe the Breton Campaign. Soon after this campaign Rivallon of Dol died and was succeeded by his son William, who abandoned his lordship shortly before 1066 to convert to the monastic life at St Florent of Saumur. In 1070, while still a young man, he was named abbot of St Florent where he reigned nearly 50 years and became a prelate of great distinction.[1]

During his reign as abbot (1070–1118) St Florent acquired a number of priories, parishes, lands and revenues in Normandy and England for which there was no precedent in the earlier history of the abbey (see map, **1**; Beech 2005b, 21–31). Both William the Conqueror and Abbot William were directly involved in this expansion, the former either as donor or, more commonly, as confirmer of the gifts of his subjects to the abbey. With regard to the personal role of Abbot William in his abbey's moves into England, the author of the *Historia Sancti Florentii Salmurensis* (303) wrote, 'everything that we have in England he [Abbot William] acquired due to the merit of his religious life' (Beech 2005b, 29).

The expansion of this Loire Valley abbey into two new regions where it had never before had possessions inevitably leads one to wonder how this could have happened, and to enquire what might have been the motivating force. It seems plausible that King William was fundamental in this expansion. Wishing to have an embroidery to celebrate his English victory, and having become aware of the St Florent textile workshop through acquaintance with Abbot William, he could have decided to commission the latter to produce it at Saumur. The donations of land and priories in Normandy and England could then have been his way of compensating St Florent for their service in making it. This would not have been an isolated act of the royal family. Queen Matilda's gift of a golden chalice to the abbey sometime before her death (1083) could have been another instance of their gratitude to Abbot William and his textile workers (Beech 2005b, 33–7).

In addition to the St Florent acquisition of properties in Normandy and England, several other kinds of evidence offer support for the possibility that the Bayeux Tapestry was made there. The first of these is a number of affinities between the Tapestry and works of art – sculptured capitals and mural paintings in churches, and manuscript illuminations – from neighbouring regions in western France, the Loire Valley and Poitou/Charente. Since a full scale examination of this subject has not yet been done, this element of the hypothesis supporting the relationship between the Bayeux Tapestry and St Florent is the least developed, and here is only referred to in passing (Beech 2005b, 37–60).[2]

Another piece of evidence supporting the St Florent hypothesis is a Latin poem written between 1099–1102 by Baudri of Bourgueil, a famous poet of his day, which may contain a description of the Bayeux Tapestry. In this poem, dedicated to Adele, Countess of Blois, Baudri describes a tapestry in her castle which portrayed the conquest of England by William the Conqueror. The scholars (S. A. Brown and Herren in Gameson 1997a, 139–55) who provided the most convincing and detailed argument favouring this possibility, proposed that the poet Baudri had come to know the Tapestry in Bayeux where it had been brought after its production in England, the view prevailing at the time they were writing. If their belief that Baudri is in fact describing the Bayeux Tapestry in his poem is correct (this is a matter of dispute), then the Saumur hypothesis would provide a quick and simple answer to the question as to how and where an abbot/poet from western France could have become acquainted with the Tapestry. Baudri's monastery, where he was first a monk and then abbot from the 1060s to 1107, was Bourgueil, just 16 miles from Saumur (see map, **1**). Abbot William of St Florent was his friend and probably had a voice in securing Baudri's nomination to the Breton archiepiscopal see of Dol in 1107. If the Tapestry was produced at St Florent, Baudri would have had ample opportunity to see and study it there at his leisure (Beech 2005b, 89–90).

The most important element in favour of a St Florent origin for the Bayeux Tapestry comes from the Tapestry's presentation of the so-called Breton Campaign of 1064 (Scenes 18–24), which occupies about one tenth of the entire hanging. In this campaign, which occurs early in the Tapestry prior to the Norman invasion of England, Duke William invades Brittany and defeats the Breton count, Conan of Rennes. This episode is of particular interest for the St Florent hypothesis in that the town of Dol, a place of vital concern to both the Conqueror and to Abbot William of St Florent, has a central place in it. The episode has troubled modern scholars in that its version of the events taking place deviates inexplicably from the written account by the Norman chronicler, William of Poitiers, the only historian to treat the subject. Moreover its function in the Tapestry as a whole is not obvious (what could a Norman raid into Brittany have had to do with the Conquest of England?), thus leading to the question: why did the designer decide to include it in his story? Analysis of these scenes suggests that the designer has conceived and presented this sequence from the Breton perspective of William fitz Rivallon, abbot of St Florent, who had earlier been lord of Dol, and that seen this way it becomes comprehensible in a new way (Beech 2005b, 61–9).

The first scene of this episode, which follows the enigmatic portrayal of Ælfgyva and the cleric (Scene 15), begins with the march of the Norman army to Mont-Saint-Michel (Scenes 16–7), and the designer accompanies this with the inscription *HIC WILLELMVS DUX ET EXERCITVS EIVS VENERUNT AD MONTEM MICHAELIS* (Here Duke William and his army have come to Mont-Saint-Michael). Next the Tapestry shows men and horses crossing the River Couesnon (Scene 17), a river flowing into the sea near that abbey, with an inscription explaining what is happening: *ET HIC TRANSIERVNT FLVMEN COSNONIS* (And here they have crossed the river Couesnon). Below this comes a second inscription placed just under the first one: *HIC HAROLD DVX TRAHEBAT EOS DE ARENA* (Here Duke Harold was dragging them from the sand). This is the artist's way of explaining that Harold (Figure 153) is rescuing some Norman knights who had been caught in quicksand while crossing the river, a curious detail in his account. After these scenes (18) armed horsemen are shown riding to Dol (16 miles to the southwest): *ET VENERVNT AD DOL* (And they have come to Dol). A second inscription clarifies the first one: *ET CVNAN FUGAM VERTIT* (And Conan turns to flight). The purpose of this march to Dol was to capture Conan, count of Rennes, but he eluded them and fled. Up until this point the Tapestry artist's portrayal of the Breton campaign agrees reasonably well with the written account of William of Poitiers in his *Gesta Gvillelmi* (i. 43–6; Davis and Chibnall 1998, 71–7).

However this is no longer true after the Dol incident. William of Poitiers makes no mention of the last two stages of the campaign as presented in the Tapestry. In the first of these the Tapestry shows the Norman army marching to Rennes, 34 miles to the south, identified simply by its name: *REDNES* (Rennes), the castle of Count Conan, which it passes by without any fighting. Then, without any inscription to explain what is happening, the Normans reverse direction and march 31 miles to the northwest to Dinan (Scenes 19–20), only 8 miles from Dol. Here the Norman knights are shown attacking and besieging the castle garrison at Dinan. The inscription reads *HIC MILITES WILLELMI DVCIS PUGNANT CVM DINANTES* (Here the knights of Duke William are fighting the men of Dinan). The siege comes to a successful conclusion when Conan (Figure 173) surrenders the keys of the city, held on the end of his spear, to the Normans (Scene 20): *ET CVNAN CLAVES PORREXIT* (Conan has handed over the keys).

How could it have happened that William of Poitiers, who writes about the first part of the Breton campaign, makes no reference to these last events as pictured by the Tapestry designer? Could the sources on whom he relied for his information about the campaign have known nothing about the Rennes and Dinan events? It seems unlikely that if he knew about them he would have considered them so inconsequential as not to be worth mentioning. Nor does it seem conceivable that the Tapestry designer could have simply invented them out of whole cloth. Historians of the Tapestry (Brooks and Walker in Gameson 1997a, 63–92) have long considered its portrayal of the Conquest of England to be a historically accurate account based upon a detailed knowledge of what actually happened. Moreover it is difficult to imagine what might have been the motive for inventing scenes such as those of Rennes and Dinan. It is possible that far from being the designer's invention these two scenes, as well as the Breton campaign as a whole, are his presentation of events based on oral accounts or descriptions given him by people knowledgeable about what had happened. Alternatively, these may have been based on his own personal acquaintance with the events.

In this short sequence, the designer pictures and names five different places – Mont-Saint-Michel, the River Couesnon, Dol, Rennes and Dinan. In the other nine-tenths of the Tapestry he only names six more – Bosham (Scene 1), Beaurain (Scenes 8–10), Bayeux (Scene 22), *ANGLICA TERRA* (England) (Scene 24), Pevensey (Scene 38) and Hastings (Scenes 40, 45, 47). His concentration on this part of Brittany is quite exceptional. Is it plausible that he did this because the English and the Normans, the peoples most likely to be interested in seeing the Tapestry, were ignorant of that region and would, in the designer's view, need special guidance in order to follow the story? Possibly, but more likely these places are depicted as such because he was better acquainted with this region than with any other in the Tapestry. Take for instance his way of referring to Mont-Saint-Michel. In all the rest of the Tapestry he names and pictures just two other churches, both in England, and in each case he adds the word *ECCLESIA* (church) to their names: *BOSHAM ECCLESIA* (Scene 3) and *AD ECCLESIAM S[AN]C[T]I PETRI AP[OSTO]LI* (Scene 26). *MONTEM MICHAELIS* (Scenes 16–17) he leaves unidentified in the inscription as an ecclesiastical structure because he assumes that future viewers of the Tapestry will, like himself, be familiar with it and need no further identification such as they will for the two in England.

It is also striking that in the Tapestry as a whole the designer is indifferent to the presence of rivers in lands where the events are taking place – with the exception of the Couesnon in Brittany. Moreover he knows well

the local topography, placing the Couesnon just where it belongs, close to the abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel, and he is aware of the treacherous quicksands at the mouth of the river, a detail local people would have known but probably not those who lived far away.

Consistent with his close and detailed knowledge of north-eastern Brittany is his careful picturing of buildings in the places he names. The depiction of both the rocky promontory and the artificial foundation added in the early eleventh-century to support the expanded monastic complex at Mont-Saint-Michel suggests that the artist who designed it for the Tapestry knew it well.[3] Also, the presentation of three motte and bailey castles at Dol, Rennes and Dinan, each one noticeably different from the others in construction, along with the artist's detailed depiction of ditches, counterscarps, 'flying bridges' ascending to the mount, gates, palisades, crenellated towers and such like has caught the attention of modern specialists of military architecture (R. A. Brown 1965, 76–87; M. Jones 1981, 157–8; Chedeville and Tonnerre 1987, 194, 414–6). In addition to this there are the three scenes of individuals performing unusual actions; Harold and the soldiers in the quicksand (Scene 17), the man on the rope at Dol (Scene 18) and Conan handing over the keys at Dinan (Scene 20). The designer may here be alluding figuratively to literary texts but he may also be portraying actual events from the perspective of an eye-witness, something unlikely for an historian writing from far away.

Finally an assessment of this sequence as a whole leads to the hypothesis that the Tapestry artist's interpretation of these events as a whole differs unmistakably from that of William of Poitiers (i.43–6; Davis and Chibnall 1998, 71–7). The latter presents them as a general Breton uprising against the Duke of Normandy, what he calls the '*bellum britannicum*' (the Breton War). In contrast to this the Tapestry designer's main objective is to present Conan and his Breton party – but not all Bretons, since their name does not occur in the inscriptions for this episode – as the principle obstacles to Duke William's rule in this region and to show that the Normans established their supremacy there by defeating him in two stages at Dol and Dinan.

What might have prompted the Tapestry artist to picture this episode in such a manner? One person quite likely to have viewed events in this way was the lord of Dol, Rivallon, ruler of the castle at the time of the 1064 invasion. Almost certain to have followed his father was the eldest son William, for a brief period ruler of Dol before becoming a monk then abbot at Saumur after 1070. By supporting Duke William's rule in the border region and thereby refusing to join Conan of Rennes' uprising against the Normans, Rivallon of Dol must have incurred the wrath of the count who presumably viewed him as a traitor to the Breton cause. To punish this insubordination, Conan then attacked Rivallon in his castle at Dol (Scenes 18 in the Tapestry); but the intervention of Duke William broke the siege and his rival escaped. Rivallon's response to the charge of treason was doubtless that the real traitors were Count Conan of Rennes and his supporters who refused to accept the legitimate rule of Duke William of Normandy as earlier Breton counts had done, and thereby brought upon themselves the Norman invasion of Brittany. This reconstruction of Rivallon of Dol's justification of his resistance to Conan of Rennes is hypothetical, but it conforms closely to what the Tapestry designer conveys in his depiction of this episode, namely that the villain of the affair, the one who brought on the war, was Conan (Beech 2005b, 84–7).

The person responsible for the inclusion of this perspective on this episode could well have been Abbot William of St Florent who came from, and had been lord of, Dol before entering the monastery. Here it is not suggested that he was the designer of the Tapestry, but if King William had commissioned its production at the abbey in Saumur, the task of engaging and supervising a designer for the Tapestry would have fallen to him. And he could well have been the designer's source of information on the Breton campaign. Given the experience of his father in 1064, Abbot William might have wanted to see Conan of Rennes portrayed as the villain in order to show his family's support for William of Normandy as just and honourable. He could also have wanted to remind the king that by helping him secure control of the Breton frontier, thus freeing him to concentrate on the impending invasion, the lords of Dol were contributing to the Conquest of England. Thus not only could Abbot William have been the designer's source of information on Breton topography, architecture, place-names and events, he could also have been the person responsible for the inclusion of the Breton Campaign in the Bayeux Tapestry.

Objections to the St Florent hypothesis

A number of objections to the hypothesis presented here were anticipated (Beech 2005b, 91ff) and others have since been published (T. E. M. 2005; S. A. Brown 2006; Coatsworth 2006; Foys 2006; Gameson 2006; Lohrmann 2006; Parisse 2006; Rex 2006; Bloch 2007; Burghart 2007; Classen 2007; M. Lewis 2007b; Spear 2007; Pon 2008); here they are summarised briefly.

Reviews by English scholars have been almost unanimously negative (the exception is T. E. M. 2005) in concluding that this hypothesis is not plausible, although Gameson (2006) saw it as a valuable contribution to the subject. Two reviews by French medievalists (Parisse 2006; Pon 2008) reacted positively, concluding that a compelling case had been made and that the hypothesis merits further study. Though not a review, a third positive French reaction came from the historian of medieval art, Daniele Gaborit, *conservateur* at the Louvre, who included the Bayeux Tapestry among French Romanesque art works in the exhibit she organised at the Louvre (2005, 335). The other reviewers – American, Canadian, German – were divided in their assessments: Bloch (2007), Classen (2007) and Spear (2007) were positive; S. A. Brown (2006) and Foys (2006) negative; Lohrmann (2006) neutral.

With the exception of Pon (2008), those who reacted positively to the Saumur hypothesis did not enter into detailed analyses of the contentions forwarded, but were persuaded that what had been proposed was plausible and worthy of further investigation: ' ... a thesis that is no more or less well documented, no more or less well argued, no more or less credible than anything published on the subject to date. For that reason alone it will have to be taken into consideration' (Bloch 2007, 162). Among those who contested the Saumur hypothesis, some (S. A. Brown 2006; Gameson 2006; Rex 2006; M. Lewis 2007b) analysed the arguments in greater detail and to their criticisms this paper will now turn.

The main criticisms have centred on the contention that a Tapestry workshop was active at St Florent in the 1060s and 1070s, the years when the Tapestry is thought to have been embroidrered, even though concrete evidence of this workshop exists only for the beginning of the eleventh century and the 1120s; the response to this had already been pointed out: 'the existence of an active workshop both prior to and after the 1070's (the 1120's and 30's) would seem to justify the assumption that it continued to function during that interval' (Beech 2005b, 16). One critic (Rex 2006, 56–8) questioned the Saumur proposal on the grounds that there are no contemporary references to tapestry production anywhere on the continent in the eleventh century, maintaining that they exist only for England. In response it is obvious that the 43–line passage from the Saumur history, upon which the hypothesis proposed here is based, refers specifically to hangings woven at that abbey at the beginning of the eleventh century.

The proposal that William the Conqueror commissioned the Tapestry has also drawn criticism (Gameson 2006; S. A. Brown 2006; M. Lewis 2007b) because it calls into question the currently accepted belief that his half brother, Odo bishop of Bayeux, brought this about. The designer is said to have 'stress[ed] the role of Odo in the events portrayed' (Gameson 2006, 1163). Another comment is that William was never portrayed as being the least bit interested in 'the finer things of life' and ' ... was not known as a patron of learning or of art' (S. A. Brown 2006). But the Tapestry is not about Odo of Bayeux, who appears in it only four times. Its central character is William the Conqueror and its main theme is his conquest of England. Who could have had a greater interest in celebrating this than Duke William himself? Surely the Tapestry was not made for a private art collection, whether or not William had any such interests, but as a powerful piece of propaganda justifying his overthrowing the English monarchy.

If no doubts exist about what could have been William's motivation in ordering the Tapestry, the issue is less clear in assuming Odo to have been the commissioner and scholars have disagreed on why he might have decided to launch such an enterprise. Furthermore, nothing in Odo's relationship with the abbot of St Augustine's hints at a transaction of the magnitude of the production of the Bayeux Tapestry. Nor have any of the scenes in the Tapestry been linked in any way with members of the Canterbury community, as was the case with Abbot William and the Breton campaign.

The most important elements in the St Florent hypothesis, the Breton Campaign and the contention that it is presented from the vantage point of Abbot William of St Florent, have been subject to little criticism. One reviewer (S. A. Brown 2006) doubts that an abbot who had no known connections with the Norman invasion could have imposed his own interpretation on an entire episode of that operation, but she offers no alternative explanation for the unusual features of that sequence.

But for Rex (2006), Gameson (2006), S. A. Brown (2006) and M. Lewis (2007b), the ultimate grounds for rejecting the St Florent hypothesis are the evidence favouring the likelihood that the Tapestry designer borrowed artistic elements from illuminated manuscripts which were in Canterbury in the eleventh century, hence the greater likelihood that the Tapestry was made there. It is not questioned that there had been borrowings from illuminations, but it is significant that the Canterbury record contained no hint of a textile workshop at St Augustine's, hence an alternative was proposed. Namely, that after being commissioned by King William to produce a Tapestry, Abbot William of St Florent could have engaged St Augustine illuminators to come and work at his abbey, either bringing their manuscripts with them

or drawings made to serve as models. Under the patronage of the abbot the designer could thus have assembled at Saumur the personnel, the manuscripts and the drawings he needed for the planning of the entire Tapestry. After soliciting initial sketches from his diverse sources – above all from St Augustine's, but also from Saint-Savin, Poitiers, Vihiers, Angoulême as well as elsewhere – he could then have gone through the entire collection to impose his own uniformity of style on the figures and scenes in the Tapestry. All the critics doubted this and one (S. A. Brown 2006) dismissed it as 'too cumbersome to seriously contemplate'.

Thus half the critics conclude that there is a reasonable chance that the Tapestry was embroidered at St Florent and that the theory should be investigated further; the other half come to the opposite conclusion. For them the principle weaknesses are the lack of credible evidence: first, that a textile workshop was active at that abbey in the 1070s; second, that William the Conqueror could have commissioned the Tapestry; third, the unlikelihood that a hanging incorporating artistic elements from Canterbury manuscripts could have been woven at the Saumur abbey. The critics are not entirely negative, however, with several of them commenting that the investigation had been worthwhile. Given the nature of the sources used, it is apparent that proof for the arguments set out was lacking, and that this was only a hypothesis, hence sceptical reactions and adverse criticism are not surprising. Nonetheless, the negative judgments of (mainly English) critics are not enough to prove the St Florent hypothesis false. So how might this hypothesis be shown to be clearly valid, or definitively disproven? Examination of art historical evidence from the Loire Valley and Poitou/Charente could well be decisive. Even more definitive could be scientific testing of the linen in the Tapestry. So also could proof of a textile workshop in Canterbury in the later eleventh century. Hence the question remains open for the present time.

Notes

1. William of Normandy, by 1066 king of England, may have had a role in his appointment as abbot (Beech 2005b, 21–8).
2. A preliminary study is published in Beech (2005a).
3. This is disputed by M. Lewis (2007a, 104–5).

Decoding Operation Matilda: the Bayeux Tapestry, the Nazis, and German Pan-Nationalism

Shirley Ann Brown

This paper will concentrate on determining the nature and context of the study of the Bayeux Tapestry undertaken by the team of researchers associated with the *Ahnenerbe*. It will not attempt to recreate in detail the events of 1939–45 which involved the Embroidery, a study which will result from the further editing of the documents jointly undertaken by Sylvette Lemagnen and the author.

On 8 July 1939, a memorandum (Berlin, BA: NS21/807 3ʋ.a.) proposing a study of the Bayeux Tapestry was addressed to the managing director (*Reichsgeschäftsführung*) of the *Ahnenerbe* (the Ancestral Heritage Bureau), Wolfram Sievers. It provides a clear description of the thinking which would underlie the entire project. The proposal claimed that the early Normans were responsible for laying the foundations of both the medieval and modern German and English empires. It was the victory of Arnulf of Carinthia (King of East Francia) over the Normans at the Battle of Louvain (891) which led to the end of the Viking incursions on the continent. The subsequent settlement of the Viking Rollo in Normandy (911) was the basis which made possible the two later great European states: Germany and England. The Norman kingdoms in Sicily and south Italy led to the flourishing of the Holy Roman Empire in the first half of the thirteenth century under Emperor Frederic II Hohenstaufen (who was also King of Germany, Italy, Burgundy, Sicily, Cyprus and Jerusalem). The German 'mandarin state' (*Beamtenstaat*) could be traced back to the Norman kingdom in Sicily. The establishment of the British Empire can only be understood as the result of the enlivening of Anglo-Saxon traditions brought about as the result of the Norman takeover of England.

The Bayeux Tapestry is the most important document for the events of the Norman Conquest, but it had been published only by the English and the French, in a manner which was unacceptable to current German thinking. The problem was that the French Romance scholars were of the opinion that the Normans had been absorbed into Romance culture very quickly and had lost their Scandinavian character. 'The Bayeux Tapestry which dates from the mid twelfth century [*sic*] provides evidence that the Viking heritage and the traditions of their Scandinavian homeland survived in pure form in Normandy at the time of the Conquest of England. Heraldry experts see the shield decorations in the Tapestry as explaining the origination of modern heraldry usage. The Tapestry also furnishes the best clarification of Norman elements in chivalry. The armour, weapons, costumes and tools are authoritative for the dating and identification of Norman elements. The Tapestry must be photographed and specialised studies undertaken to consider things not investigated in existing publications. Through the mediation of the Comtesse de Manville, Attachée at the Louvre in Paris, it will be possible for Dr Paulsen to undertake the photography and the study of the Bayeux Tapestry'.

This memorandum initiated an episode in the life of the Bayeux Tapestry which until recently has been little-known and under-appreciated. It provides a case-study of how a work of art from the distant past can be transformed into a cultural icon embodying an ideological viewpoint foreign to its original intent.

Almost nothing can be unequivocally ascertained about the origin of the Bayeux Tapestry or its whereabouts for the first four centuries of its existence. Although it is first definitely identified in the 1476 Inventory of the Treasures of Bayeux Cathedral, there are possible earlier references to it in documents associated with King Charles VI of France dated to 1396 and 1422 (Beech 2005a, 1017–27). It is generally agreed that the Embroidery was made as a work of eleventh-century propaganda, meant to create historical memory in the aftermath of the successful Norman invasion of England. Some commentators argue for its importance as Norman propaganda while others see a definite English statement in its images. Whatever its propaganda alliance, the hanging, conceived and

fabricated during the period of the ongoing consolidation of Norman power in England, presented its reconstructed story in visual terms which were meant to be convincing and accessible to its audience, whether that be a self-interested patron, or a wider, more general public. The images themselves are reflective of the artistic conventions of eleventh-century, north-western Europe, an entity including England, Normandy and Scandinavia (Baylé 2004, 303–25).

That very artistic inclusiveness has led to the Bayeux Tapestry being interpreted by much later societies as a monument to their own historical presence. Since its re-introduction to the public in the 1730s, the Tapestry has been appropriated by the French, the English, the Germans and, as has been attested recently, the Danes (S. A. Brown 2009a; 2009b). It provides an unsurpassed example of how art is intertwined with a society's self-identification, and how an object which is several hundred years old can have new life breathed into it when later societies decide to use it to their own advantage.

When Napoleon brought the Tapestry to Paris in 1803, in order to display it at the Musée Napoléon, now the Louvre, it was to bolster public support for his anticipated invasion of England, since the Embroidery was a reminder that the French had conquered the English once before. The exhibition engendered a series of plays, novels, and performances based on 'La Tapisserie de la Reine Mathilde' as a Norman-French creation of the court of William the Conqueror's wife. This blatant use of the hanging as a cultural icon and a piece of modern pro-French propaganda resulted in an immediate English backlash which sought to emphasise that the Tapestry was actually meant to relay an important turning point in English, rather than French, history. A letter, dated to 31 December 1803, published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* during the Paris exhibition of the Tapestry, described the hanging as the work of Englishwomen who were famed for their stitching skills, and concluded with the tirade that England would survive 'in spite of the vain, inglorious tauntings of the ambitiously mad Corsican tyrant, with all his host of myrmidons at his heels' (S. L. 1803, 1226). From then on, the Bayeux Tapestry became a weapon in the ongoing propaganda battles between the French and the English which continued almost to the end of the nineteenth century. In the propaganda campaign during World War I, the English once more effectively employed the Embroidery's images to their own benefit. In 1915 John Hassall, an illustrator who designed posters during the war, created a parody of the Bayeux Tapestry featuring the Germans as the uncouth and unprincipled invaders of Europe. This tradition was revived during and after World War II.

Until the second third of the 1900s, German interest in the Bayeux Tapestry was spotty and scholarly research was limited, as the Embroidery was seen to be concerned with French and English matters. On Wednesday 14 December 1803, a notice in *Die Rheinländische Zeitung*, a biweekly newspaper from Frankfurt-am-Main, announced the Paris exhibition and noted the significance of the Tapestry for the contemporary situation in Europe, likening Bonaparte to William the Conqueror (Dufraisse 1963, 332). There was a 1905 German translation of the Danish guidebook accompanying the photographic facsimile of the Tapestry exhibited at Frederiksborg Castle in Copenhagen (Steenstrup 1905). In the same year, Georg Thiele (1905, 36–7) included the fables and the ploughing scene in the hanging in his study of the transmission of Aesop in the early eleventh century. Wilhelm Tavernier (1911, 117–24; 1914, 171–86) identified Turold (Figure 95) in the Tapestry as the vassal of Odo of Bayeux whose son was Turold of Envermeu, the very man who was both the 'intellectual author' of the Tapestry and the poet of the *Song of Roland*. To accommodate this view, Tavernier dated the Embroidery to the 1090s. The possible depiction of the papal banner was discussed and dismissed by Carl Erdmann (1935/1965, 196–200). In 1939, the art/architectural historian Werner Hager (1939, 45–57) argued that the Tapestry's narrative reflected the medieval practice of linking political ambition with religious values and presented the Norman victory solely as the fulfilment of God's will, rather than functioning as a chronicle. He observed that the Tapestry's designer combined realism of detail and cultural expression in order to appeal to the viewer. Hager's work was to be a foretaste of the attitude toward the Embroidery espoused by those German officials and scholars who were interested in the hanging in the following five years.

The Nazis' appropriation of the Tapestry as a significant monument of Germanic culture and history was facilitated by the occupation of France in 1940 (Hicks 2006, 205–47). Until recently it was difficult to arrive at a verifiable understanding of the research project initiated by the *Ahnenerb*e – there is only one detailed account of the actions concerning the Tapestry written shortly after the events of 1939–45. A relating of the German interest in the Bayeux Tapestry was included in René Dubosq's (1951, 27–74) account of the Embroidery during the years 1939–48. This book, with its rather lurid title, *The Bayeux Tapestry: ten tragic years in its long history. Chased down by the Germans, rescued by the French*, relates that in June 1941, four men were sent from Berlin to implement a detailed, interdisciplinary study of the Bayeux Tapestry. The head of the team, Dr Herbert Jankuhn, an

2. *Photographing the Tapestry (Hartwig Beseler, reproduced courtesy Michael Beseler and Bildarchiv PhotoMarburg).*

archaeologist of prehistoric culture and an expert on Viking settlements, held a post at Rostock University. He was to initiate a detailed description of the Tapestry and to oversee the project. Jankuhn was accompanied by Dr Karl Schlabow (erroneously referred to as Dr Schlobach by Dubosq), a textile specialist and head of the Textile Museum in Neumünster, who scrutinised the fabric and took exact measurements. Herbert Jeschke, an artist who specialised in archaeologically correct drawings, had the responsibility of producing a detailed full-size pen and watercolour facsimile of the Tapestry. Rolf Alber was assigned to take new photographs of the Embroidery, in colour and in black-and-white (**2**). After the first week, Alber was replaced by Frau Ursula Uhland, who was connected to Marburg University. She unstitched a small section of the backing at the *Wido Parabo*... point (Scene 9), so she could photograph the back of the Embroidery. During the last two days allotted to the project, a man named Loeb was given permission to create two films of the Tapestry. The investigation lasted from 23 June to 31 July 1941 and was conducted in the large galleries of the Premonstratensian monastery of St-Martin de Mondaye at Juaye-Mondaye, about 5 miles south of Bayeux.

Dubosq told a compelling story. Although his work has the character of a novel, he insisted it was based, 'even in the smallest detail, on the documents in the archives of Bayeux, as well as in the Ministry of Fine Arts' (Dubosq 1951, 2). In the sections dealing with the early history and nature of the Tapestry, Dubosq meticulously footnoted his sources. But references are lacking in the sections describing the activities surrounding the Embroidery during the War. Much of this latter presentation of events,

3. *German personnel viewing the Bayeux Tapestry 22 June 1941 at the Hôtel de Doyen, Bayeux (Leprunier from Dubosq).*

including lively conversations among the players, was purported to come from eyewitness accounts. Dubosq included several interesting photographs, including two which show a German delegation examining the Tapestry in June 1941 before it was moved to Juaye-Mondaye (3).

Dubosq was not able to relate more than a superficial, albeit lively, account of the German study project, which for him was simply one part of the greater story of the Tapestry's survival. He was not aware of the purpose of the German project, or what was accomplished after the group departed at the beginning of August 1941. His account, the only detailed published source available for the history of the Tapestry during the War, was accepted verbatim by scholars (Bertrand 1957, 88–97; 1966, 313–9). There was only one additional tantalising reference: a three-page article from 1943 which announced the imminent publication of a detailed study of the Bayeux Tapestry carried out at Bayeux by a group of distinguished German academics (Turgis 1943). There was no way to verify the details of Dubosq's report or of the announcement of the book. That could only be accomplished with the help of the official German documentation of the project, and that was lacking.

The Nazi bureaucracy was meticulously organised and required that a detailed written accounting of even minor aspects of their activities be created and filed, often in triplicate. Correspondence which had to be translated into, or from, French was retained in both languages. Bills, receipts, bills of lading, transportation tickets were all carefully filed away. Even with their use as evidence in the post-war trials, much of this documentation was lost in the chaotic aftermath of the War or was sealed away in closed archives. It would take several decades for this paper trail to reappear. In the mid-1980s, thanks to Michael Kater's groundbreaking studies of the Nazis, the author was able to connect the Tapestry project with the *Ahnenerbe*, the Nazi organisation for the study of early Germanic heritage (S. A. Brown 1988, 18–9; Kater 1966, 144, 432, n. 9; 1965–6, 86–7); but detailed documentation specific to the project was still missing.

The first step in obtaining the records was undertaken by Sylvette Lemagnen (Curator of the Bayeux Tapestry). In 1993–4 she managed to locate, with the help of the German Embassy in Paris, the official German files concerning the Bayeux Tapestry which were kept in the archives at Koblenz (Shelf-mark: Bestand NS21/vorl. 807). These have since been transferred to the German Federal Archives (Bundesarchiv, BA) in Berlin, where they exist as original hard copy and are filed along with additional material concerning the Bayeux Tapestry project. There are also individual dossiers concerning the men involved in the scheme in the adjoining Berlin Document Centre (BDC), with microfilmed copies deposited in the National Archives in Washington. The personal documents of Herbert Jankuhn concerning the Tapestry project (consisting of his daily logbook for 4 June to 8 August 1941, his scene-by-scene description of the Embroidery, a bibliography of Bayeux Tapestry studies, correspondence, and 767 black-and-white photographs) were given to the municipal library in Bayeux by the family in 1994 (Lemagnen 2004, 53).

In addition to the German material, French documents exist in the Federal Archives in Paris (Archives nationales AJ40/573, AJ40/1673), in the archives of the Louvre Museum (Sourches R20, 30, 31) and in the municipal archives in Bayeux. The notes of René Fallue, the official custodian of the Tapestry in Bayeux during the War, have been obtained for the municipal library from his family (4). These notes confirm much of Dubosq's account, but also differ in some instances (Lemagnen 2004, 50–1). Altogether, this is a voluminous repository, and much of it is repetitive. Other sources of information are gradually coming to light. References to the Bayeux Tapestry project have been included in the books of Lynn Nicholas (1994) and Jonathan Petropolous (1996; 2000) concerning the Nazis and their art collecting policies. Bringing this material together has made it possible to obtain a clearer view of the purpose and nature of the German project.

The investigation of the Bayeux Tapestry was first mooted as a project for the *Ahnenerbe* as early as July 1939. *Das Ahnenerbe* (*Forschungs- und Lehrgemeinschaft das Ahnenerbe e.V.*), a society for research into and teaching about the anthropological and cultural evidence for

4. *René Fallue with the Bayeux Tapestry on its bobbin (Hartwig Beseler, reproduced courtesy Michael Beseler and Bildarchiv PhotoMarburg).*

German Ancestral Heritage, was founded on 1 July 1935 as a registered society of the National Socialist Party. It was headed by Heinrich Himmler. The *Ahnenerbe*'s search for the beginning of Germanic history in the early Middle Ages was a natural development of the search for national roots that had been manifest in Europe from at least the early nineteenth century (Bloch 2006, 47–74). The establishment of the *Monumenta Germania Historica* in 1819 was perhaps the earliest attempt to locate evidence for early German history in pre-Renaissance written documents. The nineteenth-century Germans were 'out to use the Middle Ages to show that Germany had existed for longer than its current political disunity would indicate' (Bloch 2006, 55). This desire was manifested in the twentieth century with the use of the term *Third Reich*, the official Nazi designation for the regime in Germany from January 1933 to May 1945. Nazi Germany was seen as the successor of the First Reich, the Carolingian and Holy Roman Empires lasting from 800 to 1806, and the Second Reich, the German Empire from 1871 to 1918.

A central function of the *Ahnenerbe* was the publication of materials as part of the effort to investigate and revive Germanic traditions. A quotation from Heinrich Himmler, '*Ein Volk lebt so lange glücklich in Gegenwart und Zukunft als es sich seiner Vergangenheit und der Grösse seiner Ahnen bewusst ist*' (A people lives fortunate in the present and future as long as it is cognizant of its past and the great deeds of its ancestors), was displayed on the first page of each work published in the *Ahnenerbe* series (Maharski 2007, 1). It was natural that a project to study the Bayeux Tapestry would be submitted to the *Ahnenerbe*.

The 1939 memorandum mentioned that a Dr Paulsen would be available and willing to undertake the study. Peter Paulsen was Professor of Archaeology at the University of Berlin and an internationally reputed expert on the Vikings. He was also a dedicated member of the Nazi party, which he had joined in 1927 at the age of 25. He was one of the growing cohort of respected and very well-educated scholars who were recruited to carry out the cultural investigations of the *Ahnenerbe*. His future lay not with the Bayeux Tapestry project, but with plunder of the Polish museums (Pringle 2006, 196–7). It was Herbert Jankuhn who would be chosen to lead the investigation. Jankuhn formulated a plan whereby a team of credible experts from different fields would study the Tapestry from as many different angles as possible (Appendix 1a). The Embroidery was to be photographed both in colour and black-and-white, and a coloured facsimile was to be drawn. These would allow studies to continue after the hanging had been returned to its safe storage. The result was to be a carefully executed complete documentation of the Embroidery in different media, a study which would supersede any other that had ever taken place. This was the first concerted effort to bring together a group of distinguished investigators to scrutinise the Bayeux Tapestry. But they had an agreed-upon goal: to prove that the *Normannenteppich von Bayeux* was an indicator of the Viking, and thus Germanic, heritage of the Normans, which was visibly attested in its images. The study would emphasise the importance of the Bayeux Tapestry as a monument confirming the early Germanic historical presence in north-western Europe, and the seminal role these people played in the formation of the modern nation-states.

Wolfram Sievers and the *Ahnenerbe* took the Bayeux Tapestry study very seriously once it became a possibility, following the official German occupation of France in June 1940. By 1944 the project was sometimes referred to as '*Sonderauftrag Bretagne*' (Special Project Brittany) and the Tapestry was given the codename 'Matilda' (Petropolous 2000, 211–2). It took close to a year to put all the necessary arrangements in place. The *Ahnenerbe* would work in conjunction with, but not under the direction, of the Paris-based *Deutsches Kunsthistorische Forschungs Institut / Institut allemand d'histoire de l'art* (German Institute for Art History). It also had to respect the authority of the *Kunstschutz* (the Art Protection Authority) in Paris, which was headed by Count Dr Franz Wolff-Metternich and was responsible for the protection of culturally important works of art in times of conflict. Permissions had to be sought from the *Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich* (the Military Command for France) for the transport of supplies and investigators, and for domestic arrangements. In due course, the French authorities in the Ministry of Fine Arts and in Bayeux would be apprised of the planned investigation of one of their national treasures.

All of this very involved preparatory work led to a sense of protective ownership of the project. On 10 April 1941, an obviously angry Wolfram Sievers fired off a message (Berlin, BA: NS21 A1/161 B41/f5) to Dr Carl Heinz Pfitzner, the liaison with the *Kunstschutz* in Paris, in response to the notice he had seen of the impending publication of a book by Rolf Roeingh, *Ein Schwert hieb über den Kanal. Die siegreiche Englandfahrt Wilhelms des Eroberers nach den Bildberichten des Teppichs von Bayeux* (A sword stroke over the Channel. William the Conqueror's victorious passage to England, according to the visual report of the Bayeux Tapestry). Sievers asked for clarification as to how permission could have been granted for the publication of this book since it was his understanding that the *Ahnenerbe* had been given exclusive rights to study the Bayeux Tapestry. He complained that this book would undercut his project and its subsequent publication. Pfitzner's response is unknown since a return note does not appear to be in the archives. It can be assumed that Roeingh's book was already in the process of publication when Sievers issued his complaint, since the tome did appear. It followed the party line, which emphasised the Viking roots of the Normans and placed the Norman Conquest in the sequence of the settlement of England by Germanic groups starting in the fifth century and of the Viking movements of the ninth to eleventh centuries. The illustrations were the line drawings that had appeared in Lancelot's publications of 1729 and 1732, so it was immediately obvious that the book did not represent any real competition to the project upon which the *Ahnenerbe* was embarking. Sievers reminded Pfitzner that the military authority had passed on to the *Ahnenerbe* the request of Professors Otto Lienau and Fritz Krischen of the University of Danzig (Gdansk) for permission to use the Bayeux Tapestry's images as a source for a detailed study of early German ships. Their article was published in 1941 for the 875th anniversary of William the Conqueror's crossing of the Channel on 28 September 1066 (Lienau and Krischen 1941, 284). The Tapestry's images were used as a source of exact technical information in the reconstruction of the English and Norman ships depicted. The authors discussed numbers, dimensions, construction, load-capacities, and sailing techniques, as well as the costumes of the sailors, in a very detailed study. They also made reference to a (now unlocatable) 1941 study of the Bayeux Tapestry by Dr Hans Fegers.

The *Ahnenerbe* project set out to prove that the

Normans who had successfully invaded England in 1066 were still strongly attached to their Viking heritage. By following this stance the Nazis were not unique, for they were continuing an earlier preoccupation with reclaiming ancient links between Scandinavia and Normandy. In the nineteenth century, when the boundaries of the Scandinavian countries were constantly changing, romantic nationalism created a nostalgia for the golden age of Scandinavian unity, a time when the Northmen were the most powerful force in Europe (Eydoux 1996, 29–36; Orrling 2000, 354–64). This was when the Viking myth was born. In 1819 Hector Estrup (1911, 38–9), a Danish scholar, described Bayeux as 'the Danish town par excellence in Normandy'. When he visited the Bayeux Tapestry, he was struck by features he associated with the Nordic heritage. This interest was reciprocated by the Normans. The *Millénaire de Normandie* which took place in June 1911 was a celebration of the culture and history of the duchy founded by Rollo (Chaline 1996, 71–8). Centred on a series of public spectacles and other events held in Rouen, it was meant to help create a Norman identity which would acknowledge the special nature of the province, differentiating it from the rest of France by emphasising its Viking roots. In 1933, Phyllis Ackerman (1933, 39–53, 348–51), an American art historian, described the Embroidery as the greatest remaining monument of the art of the Norsemen, claiming that the eleventh-century Normans were still essentially Norse.

In searching for cultural roots and hegemony, *Ahnenerbe* ideology maintained the Germanic nature of Scandinavian culture. This was a natural outcome of ideologies of racial supremacy which had developed both in Europe and North America during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The mid-nineteenth-century theory of Aryanism held that speakers of the Indo-European languages are an innately superior branch of humanity, responsible for most of its greatest achievements. Its principal proponent was Arthur de Gobineau (1855) in his *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Essay on the inequality of the human races). It argued that Germanic people were the best modern representatives of the Aryan race. Nordic theory claimed that the Nordic race, particularly Scandinavians and Germans, would constitute a master race because of an innate capacity for leadership. Aryanism and Nordic thought were a major component in the *Ahnenerbe*'s quest for Germanic origins. Hence, the *Ahnenerbe* set out to prove that the Bayeux Tapestry was a Germano-Scandinavian masterpiece, a work of art which revealed in intimate detail a vitally important foundational event in Germanic history and at the same time furnished a close view of early medieval Germanic culture.

There had been an increasing interest in the Germanic nature of pre-Conquest England in England itself, instigated during the Hanoverian dynasty that began with King George I in 1714 and which was strengthened during the reign of Queen Victoria and her German consort, Prince Albert. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, pre-Conquest 'Anglo-Saxon' England was seen as the bastion of a purely German culture which could be traced back to the reign of Cerdic, king of Wessex in the early sixth century.

The *Ahnenerbe*'s interest in the Bayeux Tapestry may not have been so much because it depicted the subjugation of England and could serve as a propaganda model for Hitler's ambitions. By portraying the Normans as Germanic Vikings, the Norman Conquest could be seen as an encounter between racial brothers. The Tapestry demanded study because it bore witness to the earlier unification of the Germanic cultures of England, Normandy and Scandinavia. It could serve as a precedent for the Nazis' desire to recreate a unified *Germania*, a homeland for all the Germanic *volk.* The Norman takeover of England in 1066 had been the last time that the island nation had been successfully invaded, and the revitalised, unified 'Germanic' state which resulted gave rise to the later British Empire under Victoria. The Bayeux Tapestry was seen by the *Ahnenerbe* as providing a unique visual testimony of the events and people who brought about one of the most important advances in the early medieval Germanic world, a unification which had reverberations in the twentieth century.

Once the documenting of the Bayeux Tapestry had been finished at the end of July 1941, the Tapestry was moved to the Chateau de Sourches, a depot under the direction of Germain Bazin, to which masterpieces from the Louvre had been moved. It was kept in a secure storage spot deep in the lower level of the chateau (Bazin 1992, 106–9). The original project had concentrated on creating a compendium of visual and written materials to support further study without the necessity of the Tapestry being kept on open exhibit. Attention could now be turned to the creation of the publishable study of the Tapestry and additional scholars were brought into the project to write the detailed reports.

When Herbert Jankuhn diverted his attention to the Russian front in August 1941, Dr Hermann Bunjes, an art historian who had been attached to the *Kunstschutz* in Paris in August 1940, became the guiding spirit of the project. He would become the head of the *Institut allemand d'histoire de l'art* (the German Institute of Art History) in 1942. Bunjes was the ideal person for the task – young, intelligent, energetic and ambitious. He

had been educated in Paris, Harvard and Marburg where, in 1935, he submitted a dissertation on the sculpture of the Île-de-France. His further writings included studies of the medieval architecture and monuments of Trier (Petropolous 2000, 209–14). Bunjes made the Bayeux Tapestry project his own special concern and expanded his participation in writing the text. The contents of the anticipated publication were discussed at meetings in 1941 and 1943, arranged by Wolfram Sievers, the functional head of the *Ahnenerbe*. The introduction would be written by Hermann Bunjes. Alfred Stange, Professor of Art History in Bonn, would discuss past scholarship. Professor Herbert Jankuhn would describe the physical details of the Tapestry. The historical authority of the Embroidery would be the concern of Professor Otto Vehse, a medieval historian from the Hanseatic University of Hamburg. Stange and Bunjes would write about its art historical importance. The significance of the Tapestry for the history of Germanic culture would occupy the team comprising Jankuhn, Dr Martin Rudolph, lecturer on settlement history from the Technical University of Braunschweig, and Dr Joseph Otto Plassmann, a cultural historian with the *Ahnenerbe*. The technical study of the fabric and embroidery was the focus for Dr Karl Schlabow, while the analysis of the material and colour would occupy Dr Walther von Stokar, a textile archaeologist and Professor of Prehistory at the University of Cologne. This was a most impressive list of specialist contributors to the project. From 9 June to 31 August 1943, the Tapestry was kept unrolled at Sourches to allow the artist, Herbert Jeschke, time to complete his detailed drawing, a longer period than had been allowed at Juaye-Mondaye.

The project progressed, and in August 1943 an announcement appeared signalling the intention to publish a four-volume, multi-disciplinary study of the Bayeux Tapestry, including a complete full-size colour reproduction, under the auspices of the *Institut allemand d'histoire de l'art* in Paris and its head, Dr Hermann Bunjes (Turgis 1943). The project was never completed, for the War interfered. Jankuhn moved to the Russian front, and Vehse was killed in the Allied bombing of Hamburg in late July 1943. The disparate locations of the scholars made it impossible to assemble them for the required seminars and meetings. But Bunjes had made the project his special undertaking, and his correspondence concerning the publication continued even when it was apparent that the War was lost in Summer 1944 and the *Institut* had been moved from Paris to Potsdam.

What happened after the War to the people involved in the study? Heinrich Himmler committed suicide by cyanide poisoning while in Allied custody in Lüneberg on 23 May 1945. Wolfram Sievers was hanged on 2 June 1948 at Landsberg prison in Bavaria for war crimes and crimes against humanity that had nothing to do with the Bayeux Tapestry. Herbert Jankuhn had a distinguished post-war academic career at Göttingen University, dying in 1989 at the age of 84. Karl Schlabow rebuilt the Neumünster Textile Museum and lived until 1984. Alfred Stange was dismissed from his professorship in Bonn in 1945, was reinstated to emeritus status in 1962 and died in September 1968. Much the same fate was experienced by Joseph Otto Plassmann who was also dismissed from his professorship of Germanic Folklore in Bonn in 1945, but was given emeritus status in 1958, dying in 1964. Walter von Stokar lived until June 1959, Martin Rudolph until 1998.

It was reported, and generally accepted, that Bunjes, when he realised that he had no academic placement to look forward to, shot himself, his wife and his child (Nicholas 1994, 332; Petropolous 2000, 214; Hicks 2006, 245). The truth is that after his arrest in April 1945, Hermann Bunjes cooperated with his interrogators and furnished detailed information concerning the whereabouts of much of the artwork confiscated by the Germans in northern France, in the hope of obtaining an academic posting. When it became evident that this was not forthcoming, he committed suicide on 25 July 1945 by hanging himself in prison in Trier. He was 34 years old. He was survived by his wife and two children (Rayssac 2007, 803, 955, nn.130–1).

There is no evidence that the *Ahnenerbe*'s interest in the Bayeux Tapestry was known outside of Germany and Normandy during the War. The English were not altogether silent during this period. Eric Maclagan (1943) emphasised the Englishness of the Tapestry in its narrative, inscriptions, image style, and manufacture. He likened its narrative organisation to a four-act Shakespearian play and saw Harold as a Macbeth-like character. In a later edition of his work, Maclagan (1945, 6) mentioned the aborted German attempt to remove the Tapestry from the Louvre, but included no reference to their academic study of the Embroidery.

The legacy of the *Ahnenherbe*'s Bayeux Tapestry project is interesting, considering that the documents disappeared immediately after the War. In 1957, when the comprehensive study of the Bayeux Tapestry edited by Frank Stenton and comprising studies by well-known English scholars, along with a new set of photographs, was published, nobody remembered *Sonderauftrag Bretagne*. It is perhaps ironic that the book appeared simultaneously in English and German, with the French version appearing a year later. A comparison of the Table of Contents of the

two studies indicates a remarkable similarity (Appendix 1a, 1b). Was this coincidence, or was there a closer relationship? Could the German project somehow have served as a catalyst for the Stenton study which is still seen today as foundational to modern Bayeux Tapestry studies?

Preliminary versions of some of the individual studies of the Tapestry by the *Ahnenerbe* researchers have survived and are found in the Berlin Archives and in the municipal library in Bayeux. They reveal that the German scholars anticipated several ideas which are being argued in current Bayeux Tapestry studies, devoid, of course, of *Ahnenerbe* ideology. First of all, there has been a remarkable renewal of interest in the Embroidery's Scandinavian connection as manifested in two recent conferences on the theme of the Bayeux Tapestry as a monument of Viking times: at the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen in February 2006 and at the Musée de la Tapisserie in Bayeux in March 2007 (Lemagnen 2009a). There has been much interest in the Scandinavian-type boats depicted in the Embroidery, and its ship-building scenes were useful in determining working methods for recreating replicas of the eleventh-century vessels at the Viking Ship Museum at Roskilde, Denmark, in 1982–4 (Juel 2005). Otto Vehse suggested that the Tapestry was a political document meant to reconcile the Normans and Anglo-Saxons in the aftermath of the invasion. This has lately been suggested by Suzanne Lewis (1999, 73) and Pierre Bouet (2004, 214–5). Hermann Bunjes concluded that the Bayeux Tapestry was the work of an artist associated with northern France, perhaps Bayeux. This is a theme more recently proposed by another German scholar, Wolfgang Grape (1994, 54).

The Bayeux Tapestry continues to intrigue those who are familiar with it, and there are no signs that the rate at which additions are being made to its bibliography will diminish. The Embroidery has become a cultural and artistic icon of historical importance on the one hand, and an object of popular culture and interpretation on the other. The study undertaken by the *Ahnenerbe* scholars during World War II was one part of its cultural evolution which was buried for decades. Surviving documents which help to explain the nature of, and motivation behind, that effort continue to appear and reveal one step in the process whereby a 900–year old art object has achieved relevance and status in our modern society. The Bayeux Tapestry continues to reveal itself to a willing audience.

Appendix 1a: Preliminary Plan for Bayeux Tapestry research project, submitted by Herbert Jankuhn, early 1941 (Berlin, BA NS21/807)

Translated by S. A. Brown

Preliminary Workplan!

Vorläufiger Arbeitsplan!

The Bayeux Tapestry (Scientific Study)
Der Teppich von Bayeux *(Wissenschaftliche Bearbeitung)*

1. Foreword — Editor
   Vorwort — *Herausgeber*
2. Introduction (History of the Scholarship)
   Einleitung (Forschungsgeschichte) — Stange
3. Description of the Picturestrip
   Die Beschreibung des Bildfrieses — Jankuhn
4. Historical Meaning of the Picturestrip
   Die historische Bedeutung des Bildfrieses
   a. The emergence of the Norman state
      Die Entstehung des normannischen Staates
   b. The Norman Conquest of England according to the historical sources and the picturestrip
   Die Eroberung Englands durch die Normannen auf Grund der historischen Quellen anhand des Bildfrieses — Vehse
5. The Art Historical Position of the Picturestrip
   Die kunstgeschichtliche Stellung des Bildfrieses
   a. Picture tapestries of the Middle Ages
      Die Bildteppiche des Mittelalters
   b. The style of the Bayeux frieze
      Der Stil des Frieses aus Bayeux — Stange
6. The Cultural-Historical Meaning of the Images on the Picturestrip
   Die kulturgeschichtliche Bedeutung der Darstellungen auf dem Bildfries
   a. The buildings
      Die Bauten — Rudolph
   b. Costume and weapons
      Tracht und Bewaffnung
   c. Objects for daily life
      Geräte des täglischen Lebens
   d. Ships
      Die Schiffe
   e. Towns and castles
      Die Städte und Burgen — Jankuhn
   f. Ecclesiastical objects
      Die kirchlichen Geräte
   g. National emblems and symbols
      Hoheitszeichen und Sinnbilder
   h. Customs
      Das Brauchtum
   i. German sagas
      Das germanische Sagengut
   j. Representation of daily life
      Die Darstellung des täglichen Lebens
   k. Combat and war technology
      Der Kampf und die Kreigstechnik — Plassman
7. Technical Manufacture of the Tapestry
   Die technische Herstellung des Teppichs
   a. Fabric and embroidery
      Gewebe und Stickerei — Schlabow
   b. Analysis of the materials and colours
      Material und Farbenanalysen — v. Stokar
8. Origin, Dating, and Use of the Picturestrip
   Entstehung, Datierung und Verwendung des Bildfrieses — Stange

Appendix 1b: from Stenton 1957

Contents

The Historical Background
by Sir Frank Stenton, F.B.A., Honorary Professor of Medieval History and sometime Vice-Chancellor of the University of Reading
Style and Design
by Francis Wormald, F.B.A., Professor of Palaeography in the University of London
Technique and Production
by George Wingfield Digby, Keeper of Textiles, Victoria and Albert Museum
Arms and Armour
by Sir James Mann, K.C.V.O., F.B.A.
The Costumes
by John L. Nevinson, F.S.A.
The History of the Tapestry
by Simone Bertrand, Conservateur de la Tapisserie
Select Bibliography
The Plates
Notes on the Plates
by Charles H. Gibbs-Smith, F.M.A., Keeper of the Public Relations Department, Victoria and Albert Museum
The Inscriptions
by Francis Wormald
Index

Backing Up the Virtual Bayeux Tapestries: Facsimiles as attachment disorders, or turning over the other side of the underneath

Richard Burt

The higher the level of a work, the more it remains translatable, even if its meaning is touched upon only fleetingly. This, of course, applies only to originals. Translations, in contrast, prove to be untranslatable not because of any inherent difficulty but because of the looseness with which meaning attaches to them (Benjamin 1996, 262).

If, as Meyer Schapiro (1968) suggests, the signatory is the owner, or, an important nuance, the wearer of the shoes, it might be said that the half-open circle of the lace calls for a reattachment: of the painting to the signature (to the sharpness, the *pointure* that pierces the canvas), of the shoes to their owner, or even of Vincent to van Gogh; in short, a complement, a general reattachment as truth in painting. No more detachment: the shoes are no longer attached-to-van-Gogh; they *are* Vincent himself, who is undetachable from himself. They do not even figure one of his parts but his whole presence gathered, pulled tight, contracted into itself, with itself, in proximity with itself: a *parousia* (Derrida 1987, 279, 369).

Severing Attachments, a case study

Consider two different kinds of 'exhibitions' of related objects concerning the Bayeux Tapestry: the objects, all of them replicas, derive from the same historical moment but have since been detached from each other. The first, in February 2009, displayed online photographs of two conservators restoring one of two faded, hand-coloured photographs of Charles Stothard's 1816–18 earlier drawings of the Bayeux Tapestry; the photographs were taken in 1872 by Joseph Cundall on behalf of the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum, 5).[1]

The second exhibition, organised by Michael Lewis for the British Museum, displayed an exact replica (made by Chantal James, Bayeux Broderie) of one of at least two pieces of the Tapestry that Stothard removed and took back to England; his wife, Eliza, was later blamed for the theft, but was cleared in 1913 and then re-cleared in 2008.[2] Additionally, the British Museum exhibited one of the two (known) casts Stothard made of parts of the Tapestry, which were produced by pouring melted wax directly on to the fabric, which was then peeled off to make a plaster cast (M. Lewis 2007c); the cast in the British Museum shows two images of William and a vivid portrait of the moustached Harold.

Aside from the polite scandal of a theft and accusations twice parried, the story of the proliferation of the Bayeux Tapestry that adheres to these objects is fairly prosaic. Not

5. *Conservation work at the Victoria and Albert Museum on a nineteenth-century photograph of the Bayeux Tapestry (Stuart Frost).*

much to divert us from the thing itself – the original whose forms here are merely multiplied. Such multiplication or doubling and redoubling happens all the time. Before discussing these two independently organised exhibitions, one a museum installation and the other exclusively online, it is important to explain why it is necessary to pause over these facsimiles, one a replica of a replica of a replica (the photograph is a photograph of the original that was then modified and then coloured), another a replica of a fragment, and the last a plaster cast made from a wax replica.

The author finds it particularly interesting to understand the relationship between the redoubling of the Tapestry by a drawing that is photographed (twice) before being hand tinted and then digitally photographed during its restoration, on the one hand, and, on the other, the doublings of the Tapestry in the form of displaying a replica of one of two detached fragments and the displaying of one of two plaster casts. Following Walter Benjamin's (1996, 253–63) figure of translation as always a failed fragmentation of what was already a fragment, the author asks: What is the status of these second-, third-, or fourth-order replicas that litter the passage of the Bayeux-Thing into various media?[3] What magnitude of attachment disorder beckons here? A series of allied questions about the narratives attached both to these exhibitions and to the storage of the Tapestry follow from the way these replicas are modelled here. Why, in the retelling of the Stothard story, do the two fragments become one? How are objects and replicas being related in this narrative that tends to anthropomorphise the object? Are the fragments of the real Tapestry personal mementos? How and where did Stothard store them, and does his storage unit constitute a materialised memory *qua momento* (as memento) device? How is the one surviving fragment (removed by Stothard) stored now in Bayeux? What is to be done with this fragment that cannot be reattached to the Tapestry because it had already been repaired by the time the fragments were returned in 1872?

P/Arting

This essay responds to these questions by considering the Bayeux Tapestry as a material object that may be configured differently depending on how it is viewed, given the training (in different fields of study) of those who study it, and its passing into discourse over time. This essay may therefore be regarded as a prolegomenon to any future study of the Bayeux Tapestry as a virtual object of interpretation. In this sense, it follows a trend in art history in which what were once considered ancillary research tools used to let auctioneers and buyers know exactly what they own have penetrated more and more deeply into criticism itself, even in some cases replacing criticism based on style altogether. The more 'scientific' art criticism has become, the more fetishistic it has become.[4] Fetishism emerges in metaphysical terms, attended by marriage and divorce metaphors, as a focus on physical siding, a putatively 'nitty gritty' kind of microscientific research that first sorts out who painted what in a given collaboration or who overpainted the earlier work of another artist and then proceeded to rematch and reattach missing parts or panels of a now 'complete' work of art.[5] In Michel de Montaigne's (1957) spirit of the 'essay', this discussion raises new questions and does not attempt to answer old ones that might better be answered by others.

The two 'exhibitions' raise larger questions regarding the importance of using facsimiles that have become detached from their originals to study those originals. What can the Victoria and Albert Museum and British Museum exhibitions tell us about the print, electronic and digital reproductions of the Bayeux Tapestry, exhibitions of what we take to be real things and their replicas? How might the attachment of originals to their installations and replications be understood? To what extent do replicas serve as 'backups', sources of evidence to allow conservators to restore previously 'restored' and replicated objects such as the Bayeux Tapestry to their original state? The replicas are hence part of a support system. To what extent does the replication of the Bayeux Tapestry make even the material object into a projection screen, one of an endless proliferation of virtual Bayeux Tapestries on to which scholars project differing accounts of its genesis while drawing on a replica like Stothard's, as if it were identical to the Bayeux Tapestry as it was when Stothard drew it, as if his drawing were the thing itself, not just a snapshot of it? Is there a relation between Stothard's commission (with permission) to draw the Bayeux Tapestry and his 'theft' of two parts of it? Was it that Stothard just couldn't wait for the museum shop to open selling reproductions of fragments? Sadly, exact replicas of the fragment are not for sale in the Bayeux museum shop. The author would love to buy one, perhaps stamped 'made in Bayeux' to authenticate its provenance.

Night at the British Museum

Considered as a physical object of Anglo-Saxon, Norman, or Anglo-French material culture, the Bayeux Tapestry inscribes a metaphysical excess in the gap, a virtualization between the nine sections of the Tapestry, on the one hand, and the sheet of linen on which they were mounted,

on the other.[6] 'Virtualization' does not mean the *ersatz* replacement, the look-alike that is 'virtually' identical to the original Bayeux Tapestry and that can stand in when needed like an actor's understudy, but the process of assembling and attaching it that may leave material impressions of the sort one finds in Books of Hours and other illuminated manuscripts, but that go unnoticed.[7] The Tapestry's linen backing sheet serves several functions, including support for exhibit, protection when it was rolled up for storage, and possibly its reproduction and replacement in case of its destruction. Even the surviving piece Stothard cut from the Tapestry may be regarded as back-up: is it any wonder that the surviving scrap of fabric is shield-shaped?[8]

Coming Unglued

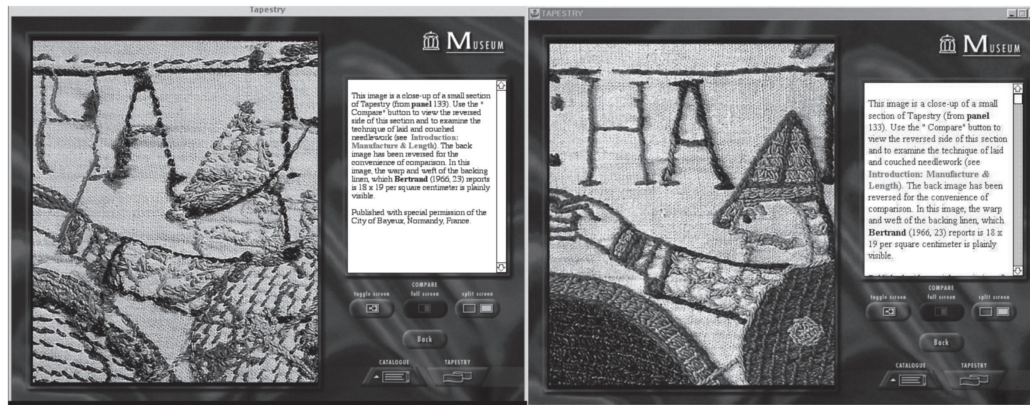
The virtualisation of the Bayeux Tapestry, then, is also its pluralisation. The physical space between the Tapestry and its backing becomes metaphysical, in other words, in that it transforms the Tapestry from what is regularly referred to as a unique object into a double object subject to uncanny spectralising or dematerialising effects that conjure up discursive treatments that are part of the very problem they wish to cure.[9] Thus, it should come as no surprise that Stothard took (at least) two pieces of the Tapestry or that he made plaster casts (now two objects; the British Museum cast consists of three casts put together). The object's proliferation always seems to come in twos, such that even the 'back up' has a 'back up', the replica always already paired up with its identical twin.[10]

There is no Bayeux Tapestry, then, but only an always already virtualised Bayeux Tapestries (forgive the deliberate grammatical error) that present a highly interesting example of what Bruno Latour (2004, 238–9) calls the 'gathering' of things that transform material objects from matters of fact into matters of concern.[11] 'A thing', Latour (2004, 233) writes, 'is, an object out there and, in another sense, an issue very much *in* there, at any rate, a *gathering* ... The same word *thing* designates matters of fact and matters of concern'. A spectacularly huge 'number of things', he observes (2004, 235), 'have to participate in the gathering of an object'. It may be that the thing as a gathering, however sturdy, cannot fully fuse together an object's interiority and exteriority, nor can a gathering endure forever, precisely because attachments are not necessarily secured.

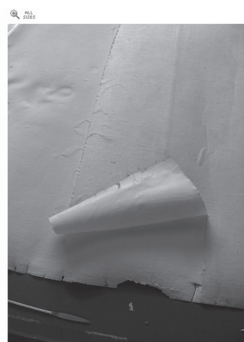
In this sense, the transformation of objects into things is a form of translation, not only because, as any schoolchild knows, something gets lost, but, more crucially, because meaning only partially adheres to the thing. As Walter Benjamin (1986, 73–105) comments, 'translations ... prove to be untranslatable not because of any inherent difficulty but because of the looseness with which meaning attaches to them'. It is reasonable to infer that this looseness of attachment arises from what Benjamin (1986, 105) calls 'virtual [*virtuelle*] translation' of 'the interlinear version of the Scriptures' that he says 'is the prototype or ideal of all translations'. For to some degree, 'all great writings, but above all the Holy Scriptures, contain their virtual translation between the lines', or in the case of the Tapestry, between the sheets.[12] When considered as a form of translation, the virtualisation of the Bayeux Tapestries is thus also its estrangement: its fleetingly and loosely attached meanings and materials give it the status of an untranslatable foreign text, as the apparently endless attempts to domesticate the Tapestry by finding its closest material analogy testify, cathedrals, Byzantine textiles, medieval manuscripts and Torah Scrolls being some of the most recently suggested.[13] The gap within the Bayeux Tapestry works as a kind of coagulating but not congealing blood that is hidden in a never-to-be-revealed wound, detaching unending material and discursive descriptions and interpretations to reattach the object to the 'backups' from which it has been internally and permanently severed. What Georges Didi-Huberman (2008, 71–9, 115–39) calls the 'impression' or print left by casting, covering, or stamping an early modern cloth, coins, paintings, and death masks, was regarded as both a political and a theological aura, an invisible afterburn left by a face or hand through a power as much secular as it is sacred.

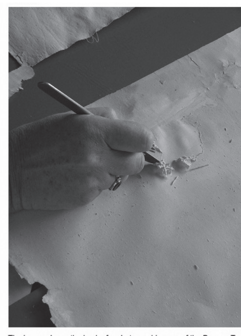
Art History Forensics and The Duh Vinci Code

Conservators and art historians engaged in art forensics tend to exceed the positivistic purposes of providing backup for (re)attachment (re)order in the forms of hard data about the artefact, its restoration, and sometimes its repatriation, inadvertently turning themselves into forgers or novelists of knowledge: by attaching and reattaching the object to its backing, or to the reverse side of a work of art, considered as an empirical material object, conservators and curators end up reproducing the gap discussed above, rather than closing it and so sometimes create what look very much like works of art in their own right even if unacknowledged as such.[14] Additionally, positivist art historians and museum curators are haunted by a parallel proliferation of fantasies that show up across a broad spectrum of canonical European art works, fantasies about undrawings beneath paintings, hidden drawings behind paintings, paintings painted over paintings, and so on, all amounting to what might be called 'Da Vinci Code'



6. *Detail of the Bayeux Tapestry, with instructions on how to toggle back and forth between slides of the Tapestry (Martin Foys).*





7. *Conservation work at the Victoria and Albert Museum on a nineteenth-century photograph of the Bayeux Tapestry, showing the textile and paper backing being scraped off (Stuart Frost).*

effects.[15] Self-identified, positivist, philological criticism of the Bayeux Tapestry is a case study of lost and lost, or lost again and again, rather than lost and found, a case of endless serialisation of missing objects and missed sightings rather than a genetic narrative with a beginning and end, allowing for a before-and-after comparison of the original and its restoration or its replication.[16] It is only to be expected that the discovery that there are nine, not eight sections of the Tapestry will produce speculation that the last section is 'missing three to five feet' (even though all the extant lengths are different sizes, and they generally get shorter) and that this speculation will soon be followed by the concession that 'it is always possible … that major errors were made' and hence nothing is missing at all; it may be easily predicted that a succession of sentences beginning 'we know' will lead to the dead-end conclusion 'again, we will never know' (Bloch 2006, 80, 93).[17]

Seeing Double? Call Back-up

The small gap with major implications between the Tapestry and its backing derails positivist attempts to reduce the hunt for the Tapestry's genesis to an archaeological dig, treating the Tapestry as metaphorical remains located in layers of sedimentation in order to fit it neatly into a linear chronology that defines genetic criticism.[18] The material object known as the Bayeux Tapestry resembles the impossible space and looping temporality of a Moebius strip: backing the nine sections of the Bayeux Tapestry on linen to help exhibit the whole creates, as numerous examples testify, a desire in the viewer to 'back up', as it were, and see its reverse side.[19] Even the Nazis photographed the front and back sides of the Tapestry (Lemagnen 2004, 51–9; Brown, in this volume). Reproductions in books and a CD-ROM of parts of the back were made possible when the entire reverse was photographed in 1982 (**6**).[20]

A similar and even more remarkable fascination is found in the Victoria and Albert Museum's exclusively online 'exhibition' of the two backings of the 1873 photograph, one textile and the other paper. Several photographs of the conservation show the reverse side

of the photograph after the textile backing was removed, and, in one case, of a conservator's hand holding a razor blade to scrape part of the paper (7).[21]

In attaching the Bayeux Tapestry to a linen backing sheet, the back of the Tapestry and its facsimiles go missing, thereby calling up a desire to find the fragment and restore the whole. Consequently, in a classic, fetishistic manner, fragments of the missing reverse side regularly show up, much like the photographs of the textile backing of the Tapestry and the replica of the fragment stolen by Stothard. This desire is not only to find the missing fragment, but involves turning the Bayeux Tapestry over to see, to borrow the title of Jane Arden's 1972 experimental film, 'the other side of the underneath', to under-see, as it were, what cannot be seen rather than to oversee what can be seen.

Here, in brief, is a definition of the 'attachment disorder' produced by the Bayeux Tapestry's virtualisations: the prosaic desire to see 'what lies beneath' the material object, to cite the title of Robert Zemeckis's (2000) supernatural thriller, leads quite predictably to the poetic, perhaps mad, desire to see the unseeable (not to be confused with the invisible in that the invisible may become visible but the unseeable may never be seen), or via double vision become a doubly visionary spectator. Viewing the backside of the Tapestry (or looking at x-ray photographs of layers of oil paintings such as Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*; the painting was lifted off its boards for x-raying) typically involves the literal detachment of the work from its backing as much as its reattachment, in order to back it up more securely, resulting in the dispersal of replicas and images as much as in their unification and collection in a holding cell.[22] What goes missing can never be found, since what is produced is not something that existed but a fantasy about something that once may have existed but which can never be verified. What lies beneath the work of art waiting to be revealed is not necessarily the truth but possibly a mix of truth and deception that goes from just below the surface all the way to the bottom.[23]

Bayeux Tapestry Facsimiles as Fetishistic Threads

In raising a variety of new questions about scattered, proliferating facsimiles of facsimiles of the Bayeux Tapestry, the aim of this essay has not been to stop positivistic historicist scholars either from interpreting it or from bracketing questions about the Tapestry's restorations. It is, rather, to open up new lines of research on the Tapestry by imagining further kinds of facsimiles and exhibitions or other artefacts and works of art. At the moment, the Bayeux Tapestry is only available in the following media of facsimiles: as foldout book, magazine, book with a foldout, and CD-ROM. One obvious possibility would be to create another, at least temporarily, more satisfying facsimile by combining all three formats, upgrading Martin Foys's (2002) pioneering CD-ROM edition to a DVD-ROM or Blu-ray disc accompanying a book; an online edition might be published as well (many print facsimiles of medieval books now come with DVDs attached).[24] Additionally, the book could include a fold-up or 2-D pop-up facsimile of the Tapestry, showing both of its sides and allowing both to be detached from the backing between them and folded down flat onto the other pages. The same could be done with the Stothard drawing and other facsimiles.

The new 'DigiBook' imagined here (money is not a problem!) would also make visible a genetic model of criticism by including plastic sheets forming layers of the Tapestry at different moments in time over a print version of the backing sheet, much like anatomy books show a human body and provide different sheets showing different organs, bones, blood vessels, and so on. A number of other plastic sheets might be included: a sheet showing a lead drawing underneath stitches; another showing holes; another showing the holes repaired, grease stains, and possibly human tears; another showing additions (so called 'restorations', especially to the beginning and ending); another showing the repair done to the pieces ripped off by Stothard; and one showing the cleaning of the actual Tapestry in 1981–2. And, of course, full-scale replicas of the various facsimiles could also be included, along with scaled images of Bayeux-Thing analogues.[25] Finally, a special feature could be devoted to the arrow, if there is one, in Harold's eye.

If based on high-resolution digital images taken by cameras using a CT-Scan, like that used to produce animated 3-D images for Stanford University's exhibition of Jacopo del Sellaio's *Virgin, Child and St John,* transferred to the 1080 dpi Blu-ray Tru3D disc, and packaged with 3D eyeglasses, it would be possible to see a magnificent, three-dimensional, full-scale reproduction of the Tapestry on a 52in. (or larger) flat screen television. Coupled with rotating, scrolling, and zoom, picture-in-picture (an option letting the viewer open a small screen, or picture, while watching the main screen to play another film, say, with a scholarly talking head commenting on the main screen or picture), pop-up text, timeline, U-Control, and BD live options, this edition would eliminate the technical glitches (particularly slowness) resulting from the small scale, degraded image quality on Martin Foys's (2002) otherwise excellent CD-ROM edition.[26] The photographs of the Bayeux Tapestry could also include a colourising option to show what we think the Bayeux Tapestry looked like when it was made, much like dinosaur skins are reconstructed in museums of natural history.

In producing a book edition with Blu-ray disc, or a Warner Brothers-like Blu-ray DigiBook, one could also follow the lead of a recently released interactive DVD entitled *The Chamber of Demonstrations Reconstructing the Jacobean Indoor Playhouse*.[27] The DVD offers the viewer four different angles from which to watch scenes from several Jacobean plays, with a focus on their staging and their lighting, as well as introductions and comments by scholars in the field. A pop-up, Blu-ray, 3-D reproduction of the Bayeux Tapestries could allow the viewer to navigate both sides and its backing in various virtual spaces, including the Centre Guillaume le Conquérant (its early and current versions), as well as in a CGI medieval hall or cathedral with a Bluescreen picture-in-picture option. With 7.1 surround-sound capability, the Blu-ray disc could provide different soundtracks with the full-scale reproduction set, if one wishes, to move at different speeds to match the sound, including religious music, Norman party music, a jongleur's retelling in Latin and Old French (with subtitles in English, French, Old French, German, Old German, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish and Latin), random comments from off-screen museum visitors, and both curatorial and scholarly audiocommentaries that might range in tone from *Perceval le Gallois* (dir. Eric Rohmer 1978) to *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (dir. Terry Gilliam, Terry Jones, 1975). Clips from cinematic citations of the Bayeux Tapestry could also be grouped together and connected in the form of a documentary extra.[28] Similarly, a 'making of' documentary could show the infrared X-radiographs, micrographs, macrographs, digital infrared photographs, infrared reflectogram assemblies, and related technical processes used to create the Bayeux Tapestries Blu-ray disc (digi)book. Furthermore, upgrades to the Blu-ray disc could be added by downloading them from a computer. Pursuing these possibilities likely would not stop people from going to Bayeux to see the 'real' thing, just the reverse. The only thing that might change significantly if such a print book were ever published is that visitors to the Centre Guillaume le Conquérant would be able to find new ways of fetishizing the Tapestries, carding their threads, so to speak, and spinning even newer yarns about them.[29]

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Notes

1. On the restoration of the photograph at the Victoria and Albert Museum, see http://www.flickr.com/photos/medievalandrenaissance/sets/72157612317701436/. On the exhibition of the Stothard fragment replica at the British Museum, see Maev Kennedy (2008) 'A century on, Bayeux Tapestry 'vandal' is Cleared', http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2008/jul/16/heritage.maevkennedy1. The photograph is housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum (previously South Kensington Museum) and the fragment was acquired by the South Kensington Museum (http://www.fulltable.com/VTS/b/bayeux/bayeux.htm) before being returned to Bayeux. Stothard's original drawings of the Tapestry have since gone missing but were reproduced in their entirety as coloured plates in *Vetusta Monumenta* published by the Society of Antiquaries in 1821–3, just a few years after Stothard was tragically killed. The Victoria and Albert Museum owns two copies of the photograph, one a complete roll and the other divided up into twenty-five sections, each of which is comprised of different prints; only a few sections are displayed in photographs on the website referred to above. The website shows two women working on the restoration, of both the front and the back side of the photograph, and several photos show a very sharp knife being used to scrape the backing of the photograph so that it can be remounted, implying that the back side has to be destroyed before a new back side can serve as its support and protection, here by a plastic sheet which presumably covers the photograph when it is not being worked on; sections of the table have the yellow and black sergeant strips that are seen in roadwork constructions and police crime scene investigations.
2. The 1913 clearing in *The Times* 1881 seems to have been forgotten, and scholars continue to act as if Eliza Stothard were still thought guilty even though it seems likely she was not.
3. The complex and often fascinating relation between facsimilies and the discipline of art history goes back quite far, especially concerning the use of slides in art history lectures (Nelson (2000b), 414–34; Fawcett (1983), 442–60; Levin (1988), 77–83; Wölfflin (1941), 82–90). Wölfflin (1941) reproduced in his essay examples of Renaissance paintings and drawings in order to think about what happens when a slide is put in backwards during a lecture. He begins by noting that the response is panic, expressed as 'Turn it around! You've got it backwards!' Quite brilliantly, Wölfflin advises the viewer to pause and ask what this panic is about. His answer is that viewing a painting is like reading a book: it has to be read one way to understand it. In his example of Raphael's painting of the Madonna, the viewer's gaze is directed from left to right, up from the bishop on the left looking up at the baby Jesus, then over to the Virgin Mary, and then down to Johanna on the right, her eyes looking down. If the painting of the Virgin – and here it is possible to begin to grasp the extent to which direction, theology and eroticism are connected – is viewed backwards, the viewer does not know where to look and the image becomes incomprehensible. His other point is that the work of art only becomes irreversible when

it is finished. The possibility of perverting the work of art arises only when it has been perfected, and the technical superiority of one medium over another – in this case, a colour painting as opposed to black and white drawing – will make this relation between perfection and perversion even clearer. Wölfflin's text has to be read between the lines with double vision, however, in order to grasp its politics. Written in 1924, just after he left Munich, but published in 1941, when Wölfflin was Professor at the University of Basel, the title of his essay presents now, even if Wölfflin did not intend it, puns on the words 'right' and 'left'. Both sides of an aesthetic image are also political sides, and how one side, the fascist right or the communist left, can turn an image around to distort it or to clarify it. There are similarly charged words and phrases in Wölfflin's essay. The German word Wölfflin uses for 'turn it around!', when a slide shows up reversed by mistake, is '*Umdrehen*!', a word employed frequently by the Nazis when talking about the wrong turn; which, in their view, Germany had taken after World War I. Similarly, when Wölfflin compares viewing a painting to reading a book, he writes '*unserer Schrift*' (our script), which is to say without saying, our Christian script, not a Jewish one; Hebrew is written from right to left. Finally, he concludes his essay by beginning his sentence about the work of art's completion with '*Das Entschiedende*' (the decision), words used by Carl Schmitt (1985; 1996) in his writings on the state of emergency and sovereignty. Wölfflin's word choices therefore present the reader now, knowing the events in Germany from 1924 to 1940, with a drama of reading its unintended, though nonetheless double, meanings. For a contemporary response to Wölfflin, see Paul Oppé (1944).

4. Here 'fetishistic' is not used in a pejorative sense of a delusional belief in an idol, but in the neutral and psychoanalytic sense of an inescapably perverse fascination with details and a logic of substitution that repeats itself as a need to read whether one wants to or not. The penetration of science involves not just works reproduced shown with the aid of ultraviolet light or details using x-ray photography but details of the materials of the painting itself. For a wonderful example of science as critical fetishism, see Wallert (2007). On fetishism and details, see Schor (1987), Apter (1991), Greg (1992). For examples of art historians and curators engaged in scientific fetishism, see Woollett and van Suchtelen Woollett (2006), 214–7. See also Hand, Spronk and Metzger (2006), Hand and Spronk (2006). See also a *60 Minutes* episode, *The Lost Leonardo*, on the 'discovery' of da Vinci's lost painting *The Battle of Anghiari*: the episode focuses on a gap between a fresco and the wall behind it. See http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/04/17/60minutes/main4023449.shtml. And see also Kemperdinck and Sander (2009), about works by The Master of Flemalle and Rogier van der Weyden that have been (mis)attributed to the other, and David (2007).
5. In a review of the *Prayers and Portraits* (exhibition at the National Gallery, Washington, DC), Miles Unger (2006) writes 'using advanced imaging and analytical techniques like infrared reflectography, binocular microscopy and dendrochronology, they succeeded in conceptually marrying panels that had been thought to be unrelated – and also issuing some "divorces"'.
6. On inscription, as a technology, similar to Jacques Derrida's (1974) notions of writing before the letter, the trace and 'arche-writing', see Cohen (1998, 7–8) and de Man (1996).
7. For a clever use of the more common understanding of the virtual (understood as being opposed to the physical and secondary in status to it), see Foys (2007). 'Impressions' refers to not only the traces of objects such as flowers and insects that might have been inserted into a Book of Hours but the fading effects one sees on all pages caused by the illumination bleeding through the other side of the page or a page rubbing off on the page opposite it. Positivistic historicist scholarship again remains concerned solely with accretions recognised as impressions of inserted materials and the means of attachments such as sewing a badge onto a page or inserting a flower through two parallel cuts in a page. For a discussion of impressions that focuses on the traces of inserts but not on bleedings and rubbings, even when they appear as *trompe l'oeil* effects in manuscript and still life paintings, see Duffy (2006) and Kaufman (1993, 11–48). On 'impression' and artistic formlessness, see Didi-Huberman (1984; 2008).
8. Sylvette Lemagnen, the Tapestry's curator, explained to Michael Lewis that the fragment is used to monitor the condition of the original; the fragment is kept out of the light so it is easy to see whether the original fades (personal correspondence, 7 July 2009).
9. Bloch (2006, 80) maintains that 'the coarser linen backing … most certainly was not there from the start', but offers no evidence to back his assertion (although the backing fabric has been 'tested' and appears to be medieval, but not eleventh century). The concern here is not with what was or was not there 'from the start' but with the way that Bloch's empiricist historicist narrative cannot properly begin but has to take the rhetorical form of excessive, hyperbolic assertion. It is the author's view that the drawing Bloch assumes was used for the Tapestry is yet another back up, a leftover, if it was kept, that was there from before the start. Derrida's account of spectrality (1994) and of graphic materiality (1982) would entail understanding the virtualization of the Tapestry in terms of the achronological temporality of the 'always already', a beginning that does not start at the beginning.
10. Bloch (2006, 88–9) speculates that the probable washings of the Tapestry may have removed sketching in lead or other material beneath the Tapestry: 'it is hard to believe that whoever traced them could have worked without some version of a preliminary sketch'. If Bloch is right, the sketch itself would be an example of proliferation, a 'back up' allowing for a copy to be made. It can be appreciated from his account that the support is not material but virtual. Bloch's conclusion is less about empirical origins than an example of scholarly speculation about what went missing, lead sketching, based on what may have been done, i.e., washing, an act that was thought to be preservative, one assumes again, but that ended up, perhaps, doing damage. Bloch's book provides an excellent case study of scholarship as it is devoted to tracing origins of a material

object that accretes and proliferates what Bloch concedes to be hypothetical (now supposedly missing) marks and a (now supposedly missing) preliminary sketch of the original Tapestry. Later replications of the Tapestry serve a similar protective function through replication. The Bayeux Tapestry was first photographed because of damage done to it over time due to rolling and unrolling. The photograph could thus provide documentary evidence. The linen sheet is an example of what Jacques Derrida (2005, 44; 1996, 52–61; 2000, 59–157) calls the 'subjectile': 'paper echoes and resounds, subjectile of an inscription from which phonetic aspects are never absent, whatever the system of writing. Beneath the appearance of a surface it holds in reserve a volume, folds, a labyrinth whose walls return the echoes of the voice or song that it carries itself; for paper also has the range or the ranges of the voice bearer'.

11. On things versus objects, see Latour (2004, 238–9, 246), who writes, 'things that gather cannot be thrown at you like objects ... Objects are simply a gathering that has failed – a fact that has not been assembled according to due process'. On attachments, see Latour (1999, 20–9). The main problem with Latour's account of attachment is that he sees only accretion and only attachment: nothing gets lost. Derrida's (1987) critique of Meyer Schapiro's critique of Martin Heidegger's account of Vincent Van Gogh's peasant shoe paintings far more trenchantly shows how hyperbolic is the metaphysical drive to attach the painting to its artist, who becomes the painting itself. For Latour (1999, 27, 29), there are only buttons, fastenings, and hence no unbuttoning, no loose screws, no loose cannons: 'we can substitute one attachment for another, but we cannot move from a state of attachment to that of unattachment … Those who know themselves to be fastened by numerous beings that make them exist'. Latour's explicitly iconoclastic desire to smash criticism, as he defines it, especially deconstruction, deconstructs his own conclusion that he has 'gone for good beyond iconoclasm' (248). See also Latour and Weibel (2005). And for a contemporary artwork made up of adhesive tape, see Dillon (2009).
12. Here Carol Jacobs's (1975, 755–66) more literal, word by word, and more accurate translation of these sentences is used (see also Benjamin 1972, 9–21). Also see de Man's (1986, 73–105) discussion of bizarre errors made in the American and French translations and Derrida (1985, 165–207; 2008).
13. On these three analogies and variants of the adjective 'close', see Bloch (2006, 82, 84, 85–6, 93).
14. For an example of the novelisation of positivist knowledge, see Bloch's (2006, 75–95) freewheeling mix of philological 'fact' and speculation presented as genetic criticism of the Bayeux Tapestry. For a more imaginative version of speculative, novelistic genetic criticism that extends to biographical criticism, see Greenblatt (2008), who tells four anecdotes that Shakespeare possibly witnessed about different historical events. See also Greenblatt (2004) and Davis (1987).
15. Here the author refers to Dan Brown's (2003) novel *The Da Vinci Code* and the Ron Howard film adaptation (2006), the latter re-released in an extended cut on both DVD and Blu-ray in 2009 in conjunction with the theatrical release of the film sequel *Angels and Demons* (2009). For a wonderful example of the *Da Vinci Code* effect as autopsy, see the publication of years of scientific investigation of the *Mona Lisa* at the Louvre in 2004–5, in which a series of photos of the *Mona Lisa* look very much like Andy Warhol's serialized portraits of the *Mona Lisa*. The book becomes a kind of coffin for the corpse of the painting as corpus, or a kind of epidermis of the corpus's guts and all. For the *Da Vinci Code* effect in Bayeux Tapestry studies, see Bridgeford (2006). See also 'The Lost Leonardo Da Vinci' (http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/04/17/60minutes/main4023449.shtml), an art detective's quest to find a lost Leonardo Da Vinci masterpiece, and Harr (2005). This kind of detective fiction art history has been wonderfully parodied in Grigely and Gilje (1997); this 'catalogue offers images of both versions of The Musicians as well as x-rays made during the restoration that reveal that the artist had initially painted, then painted over, an extraordinary incident among the three musicians [the incident is "obscene" homosexual sex]'. For a similar story, see 'Michelangelo Drawing Found in Museum Box'(http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/2119099.stm).
16. For a film equivalent of the lost and found story, see Neil LaBute's film adaptation (2002) of A. S. Byatt's novel *Possession* (1991), in which the theft of a discovered document leads to a contemporary heterosexual romance between competing archivists mirrored by a separate plot involving lost love letters exchanged between two, unhappily involved Victorian poets (also a man and a woman). While genetic criticism narratives of the Bayeux Tapestry offering carefully qualified causal explanations and after, first then, then that, discoveries of origins are far from Byatt's novelization of archival research (or from medieval thrillers by writers such as Ken Follet, or from historical romance novels by writers such as Phillipa Gregory), they constitute serialised instalments intended to become chapters of a Victorian novel that will never be published, precisely because it is open to the endless serialisation of genetic narratives that seek to box it in and contain it. For a recent attempt to close down this metaphysical seriality by positing an anteriority and 'speculative materialism' that amounts to a science fiction Victorian novel written by H. G. Wells, to life on earth; see Meillasoux (2008).
17. Bloch does not cite the sources of this discovery: Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, 83–109) and Vial (2004, 111–6).
18. Uncritically adopting an anachronistic Frederick Taylorist mode of assembly-line factory production complete with Tapestry Master as overseeing foreman (and compatible with an equally industrial model of the cinematic auteur), Bloch (2006, 92) imagines that 'the Tapestry was made ... in linear sequence'.
19. For a brilliant critique of a typical misunderstanding of Freudian psychoanalysis in terms of archaeological metaphors see Reinhard (1996, 57–80).
20. Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, 84) write that 'the backing cloth was then partially unpicked, to reveal the reverse side of the Embroidery. We made a study of each third, one at a time, repeating the same operation:

the whole reverse side was photographed …[, and] all information was recorded on to the copy-drawings'. For wonderful photos of various kinds of copies and reverse sides of the Tapestry, see Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, pls 7, 12–3, 19, 24, 26, 30–2, 34, 36) and Vial (2004, pls 4–6).

21. Art restorers now design their work on the painting's surface to be reversible rather than permanent (or to get as close to permanent as possible), so that if the work is restored in the future, the previous restoration can be taken off and replaced without damage to the painting. No such concern is given the backings and frames of restored paintings (see the Stanford University exhibition *Finding Sellaio: conserving and attributing a Renaissance painting* held from 4 August to 28 November 2004: http://news-service.stanford.edu/pr/2004/jacopo-719.html).
22. See also Bruno Latour and Adam Lower (forthcoming) on the digitalization of a Veronese painting, which makes it difficult to say where the work of art is. Attention to facsimiles of the Bayeux Tapestry is important if only because it helps us to recognise the extent to which positivist, scientific, empiricist, historicist criticism of the Bayeux Tapestry always involves cases of attachment disorders: when positivist, historicist scholars think they are talking about the unmediated, material, physical object located in Bayeux, as opposed to the mediated, mediatised, virtual thing that comes with all sort of attachments that (dis)orient and (mis)guide its use, these scholars actually treat the material object as a prop much like the Tapestry's linen backing sheet in order to stage, and on which they attempt to attach, their discursive threads.
23. Latour and Lower (forthcoming); for an earlier questioning of the work of art and its location independent of digital media, see Wollheim (1980).
24. Michelle Brown's (2003) *Lindisfarne Gospels* comes with a CD-ROM, and there is a DVD-ROM edition of the *Book of Kells* authorised by Trinity College Library, Dublin, that includes images of all 340 folios of the manuscript (http://www.bookofkells.com). The trend to attach print books to digital media is by no means confined to medieval facsimiles (see Hartigan *et al.* 2003, a book that comes with a DVD-ROM inserted in the inside of the back cover).
25. On the question of scale in digital reproductions, see Mark Dimunation, 'The Thingness of the Digital Object: a curatorial dilemma' and Jackie Dooley 'The Real Stuff: why original artefacts still matter', presented at the 'Text and Image: from book history to 'the book is history'' conference (1–2 February 2007) and available as podcasts at http://www.humanities.uci.edu/humanitech/textandimage.html.
26. For an example, see the website display 16 billion pixel photographs of Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* at http://www.fullscreenqtvr.com/last_supper/. See also the predictable *Da Vinci Code* secretion by Nicole Martinelli: 'High-res Last Supper Reveals Leonardo's Secrets', *Wired* 29.10.2007: http://www.wired.com/culture/art/news/2007/10/lastsupper.
27. See http://www.bristol.ac.uk/drama/jacobean/iportal1.html. On Warner's DigiBook cases (that replace regular plastic cases), go to http://bluray.highdefdigest.com/news/show/Warner/High-Def_Disc_Packaging/Disc_Announcements/Warner_Previews_2009_Blu-ray_DigiBook_Release_Plans/2143. For a fascinating example of the use of infrared technology to do 'infrareadings' of paintings, see Mohen, Menu and Mottin (2006).
28. For discussion of these films, see Burt (2007, 327–50; 2008, 100–3; 2009, 158–81).
29. For an open invitation to the pleasures of fetishistic reading as a way of getting closer to the object, see the British Library's 'Online Gallery: Turning the Pages: leaf through our great books and magnify the pages': http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/ttpbooks.html. This is not to say that if we were to fetishize the Bayeux Tapestries, that is, if we were to understand that we are talking about the Bayeux Thing (coming with all kinds of detachable attachments) rather than the Bayeux object (understood as the assembled nine sections of embroidered fine linen), that we will have reconciled the deepening split between reading and using, between thinking and 'thinging' that has emerged between literary theory, literature, and philosophy and what propose themselves as replacements: bibliographic work with digital editions, material culture / cultural history / archival data; work on the hard drive, database, interface, and so on in new media theory. Reading the Bayeux-Thing would remain a problem because, as Paul de Man (1986, 3–20) showed so forcefully, reading is the resistance to reading. So if reading and thinking stop when users start thinging, it is not the case that readers can move from objects to Things and then read them instead of using them. The looseness of discursive attachments still remains in the way, forcing questions, not only of where does reading go when we use objects, but also of when do we read Things.

    To be clear, the point is to deconstruct rather than draw a distinction between the genuine object and the original that now hangs in Bayeux, the latter being the reconstructions, restorations, and repairs, as well as the still remaining damages caused by rust, grease, and insects done to the original. The Bayeux Tapestry as object is already strung up by this process of attachment of threads and fragments of cloth, the additions and restorations of the Tapestry's beginning and end being the most obvious parts of a never to be completed yarn (some holes were not sewn back in) (re)bound to an indeterminate object – as those holes that have been to be stitched in with new thread or just tears that have to be sutured shut. Genetic criticism is always already defeated, since what constitutes the genuine object itself is no longer capable of being determined, even with radiocarbon dating: what Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, 103–4) call the 'transfers' leave behind 'impressions', a word they surround with scare quotes as if it needed to be distinguished, perhaps especially because impressions are hidden, from (supposedly) visible theological impressions, like the face of Jesus in the *Shroud of Turin*. Vial (2004, 114) noted that 'some lengths may have served as shrouds', and that the backing strip includes three types of decorations including a scene of Calvary with five crosses. The transfers, including photographs and drawings, enable transferences in the Freudian sense, misapprehensions of the Bayeux Tapestry as integral object by means of the screen/cleaning memory of the

backing strip. As Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, 101–3) comment, 'on the side of the lining next to the embroidered strip, and invisible from the outer side, there are some coloured 'transfer' areas. These consist of colour for colour 'impression', both negative and positive, corresponding to certain sections of the embroidery, and having no correlation with the lining strips themselves. They must be caused by the linen oxidizing as a result of strong exposure to the light'. Note the unintended pun here on physical light and divine light activated by the scare quotes around 'impression', and see pl. 26 Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, 100) accompanying this essay with the caption of 'transfer areas of details from the embroidery on the underside of the lining'.

The Hidden Face of the Bayeux Tapestry

Sylvette Lemagnen

To evoke the hidden face of the Bayeux Tapestry is in its way a tribute to all those artists and artisans of the Tapestry, the master craftsman who created it, his team of draughtsmen and embroiderers, and to all those who have laboured over nine centuries later to ensure the setting which is familiar today (**8**). One has to admit that historians have shown scant interest in this aspect of the Tapestry. A team of German scientists working in Bayeux in 1941, led by Professor Herbert Jankuhn, were the sole investigators into how the masterpiece could have been made. Indeed one has to wonder if any other study would ever have come about had it not been for the removal of the Tapestry to new buildings at the beginning of the 1980s.

The Tapestry was set up in its present facilities after a ten-week study, carried out between November 1982 and January 1983, by a team of scientists[1] nominated by the French Ministry of Culture; the French state being the owner of the work. The first undertaking in 1982 was a microscopic examination of the lining (**9**), which was unstitched along the lower border, but not the upper, just enough to examine the back of the Tapestry with a microscope and a linen-tester (**10**). Every instance of damage or other intervention suffered by the Tapestry was traced out, namely (**11**):

- 681 holes and tears in the embroidered central strip, some only 2 to 3mm long;
- 23 instances of damage in the numbered margin;
- Over 400 pieces of strengthening material, highlighting the importance of the many restorations over the centuries;
- A large number of marks made by wax and rust.

Some samples of the linen and thread were taken to analyse the dye and the spin. Carbon-14 dating has not been permitted as the National Historic Monuments Research Laboratory considers that in the present state of the science, it is not appropriate to sacrifice samples for a result that will be too vague to be useful.

The Tapestry was not restored by the team who examined it on this occasion. They simply removed the dust by means of a gauze filter before entrusting it to the tapestry makers of the establishment in Boulle which trains future artisans. They designed the present backing for the Tapestry, a heavy linen which ensures the rigidity of the back-support. This back-support is treated in such a way as to be resistant to fire, damp and the migration of any chemical substances into the Tapestry itself. It is lined with a pure cotton flannelette, and held rigid by means of tensors on the vertical ends and lengthways by webbing, both in the upper and lower parts of the textile.

The first attempts at hanging the Tapestry on the rail which now holds it up (in its exhibition space) were done not with the masterpiece itself, but with its back-support, which was attached to a continuous, enclosed internal rail. This ingenious design allows the Tapestry, if necessary, to be set well back from the display case glass, in the event, for example, of needing to replace or repair the windows. Teflon hooks are used in the attachments themselves.

The sewing of the Tapestry onto its backing was carried out directly *in situ* (**12**). Only the upper part was attached; it was sewn with a ring-stitch (in French *un point de baguage*) a slow process which takes about one hour per two metres. Once the Tapestry was fixed onto its permanent support and placed behind its display glass, the whole textile was sealed behind a series of panels which prevent the infiltration of any dust (**13**). The Tapestry is set before the public in a specially adapted room designed for its display, with armoured doors, and behind quadruple thickness armoured glazing. The environment is controlled by recording instruments at a temperature of 18°C (to a maximum of 20°C), and its hygrometry at 50%, following the norms laid down for the conservation of textiles. The air conditioning is closely supervised by the maintenance team and quickly corrected should any problem arise. The display area is connected by means of hatches which allow the flow of conditioned air to be

8. *The Tapestry on display in the present gallery (A. Labartette, Ville de Bayeux, Musée de la Tapisserie de Bayeux).*

9. *Examining the lining of the Tapestry (Vincent Cazin, Ville de Bayeux, Photographic archive in the Bayeux Médiathèque municipale).*

10. *Examination of the reverse of the Tapestry (Vincent Cazin, Ville de Bayeux, Photographic archive in the Bayeux Médiathèque municipale).*

11. *Transfer of a tracing showing damage to the reverse of the Tapestry (Vincent Cazin, Ville de Bayeux, Photographic archive in the Bayeux Médiathèque municipale).*

12. *The sewing of the Tapestry onto its backing. The two people in the pink smocks are sewing a ring-stitch, the one in the white smock is levelling up the backing (Vincent Cazin, Ville de Bayeux, Photographic archive in the Bayeux Médiathèque municipale).*

13. *General view of the technical premises in the Centre Guillaume le Conquérant (Sylvette Lemagnen, Ville de Bayeux, Photographic archive in the Bayeux Médiathèque municipale).*

14. *Reverse of the Tapestry: Scene 1 (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

adjusted. The lamps which light the display emit cold light and give an average illumination of 50 lux. The tubes are sealed in units which have their own ventilation flow: the transparent side of these units is made up of anti-caloric and anti-UV glass. Finally the display is equipped with a reservoir of INERGEN® which is diffused automatically upon the outbreak of fire.

The French state and the town of Bayeux are of like mind in guaranteeing the invulnerability of the Bayeux Tapestry. Its convex presentation, in the form of an ambulatory (**8**), has given rise to a number of criticisms, but this architectural bias does have the virtue of ensuring the security of the masterpiece and of its visitors also, who, in the event of a fire alarm, can be quickly evacuated from the U-shaped corridor where they walk along the display. Tapestry scholars sometimes express nostalgia for the former system of display; but the present installation, which is not just dramatic but also highly responsible, is an outstanding achievement.

It is the general opinion of those who have had the privilege to work on the reverse side of the Tapestry that this rarely seen part has faded little.[2] However, even on the reverse, there are places where the red, which was obtained from madder, are darker, the blues, obtained from indigotin, have gone greenish, and the yellows, from weed, have lost some of their lustre.

It is now possible to assess the condition of the reverse side of the Tapestry from the photographs taken in 1982–3 and which have recently been made available.[3] The first scene has suffered considerable damage, owing to the tension it underwent when stretched out for display in the cathedral of Bayeux (**14**). The number of patches covering the back of this section, and their different textures, indicate successive campaigns of restoration. It is fruitless to imagine, as is often said, that a photographic study of the back would reveal the key to the sequence of these restorations: it would be necessary to unstitch the thread to examine the linen backing itself. Where repairs have used pieces of over-thick material, this has led to tearing in places (**15**). The embroidery has also become fragile and worn, owing to the disappearance of the fixing points for threads so that they now flap about without support (**16**). Moreover, the backcloth is marked in a number of places by traces of wax where we suppose it was lit by candles, and by corrosion holes (**17**).

The Research Laboratory for Historic Monuments (*Le Laboratoire de Recherche des Monuments Historiques* (LRMH), Champs-sur-Marne) has selected 50 or so fragile or marked areas which are monitored in a surveillance process which takes place every ten years, using photography (of the front), the most recent being in 2006. No changes have been observed in any of the sample areas.

The Tapestry, including its two margins, is made up of nine lengths of cloth of different sizes. The first seam (**18**) appears to have been stitched after the two first pieces were embroidered, from the evidence of the way the cloth has become detached in the upper border. The other seams do not give rise to any such discontinuity. They are all made in a similar way: the margin and the sides of each length of cloth were overcast before the two stretches of cloth were joined (**19**). It seems that these tasks were carried out as the work on the embroidery advanced, and the quality of workmanship is such that it is extremely difficult, even impossible, to spot with the naked eye the stitching between the seams; the eighth was only discovered in 1982 (**20**).

The pieces of cloth vary in size. The two longest, at the start of the sequence, are around 14m long. The two shortest, at the end, are each under 3m long. In the middle, each piece is *c*. 7m to 8m long. Possibly these disparate lengths arose from the need to remove some important defects, which would have justified cutting the cloth in such a way. Indeed, there are a number of major defects in the weave that suggest it was not very carefully made. Gabriel Vial (1983) of the Centre for Ancient Materials (*Centre International d'Études des Textiles Anciens* (CIETA)), Lyon, has suggested that the cloth may have been woven to a height of 110cm, and then cut in two, lengthwise, before being entrusted to the embroiderers. The traces of selvage which exist in the lower border of five of the cloth strips do not allow any meaningful reconstitution of the cloth to support this theory.[4]

The Tapestry is topped by a numbered strip which facilitated the hooking-up arrangements for display. It is made up of 32 stitched strips, sewn one next to the other. They vary in length from 1 to 2.625m, and in height from 15 to 17.5cm. They are decorated with various random motifs, leading to the theory that they were cut from a wider, longitudinal strip of material. These motifs, all blue in colour, sometimes take the form of bars or stripes, or a cross, and come in various types such as Latin and Greek crosses, but also a recognisable emblem of Calvary with five crucifixes, a banner, and a ladder (**21**). The motifs based upon crosses led Vial (1983) to suppose that the material had been made in a religious institution and may have consisted of design samples with a view to creating a more elaborate décor.

Along the lower border, the Tapestry is edged with braid which is also in a series of pieces. There are three, made of cotton and linen, with some other bits of material to replace lost lengths. They measure between 38 and 48mm

wide and are 18, 22 and 28m long, respectively, running the whole length of the Tapestry. They have never been dated but are apparently more recent than the Tapestry or indeed the numbered strip.

The lining is made up of 64 pieces of linen cloth, sewn very tightly together in an overcast stitch (**22**). No detailed study has ever been made of this lining, but nevertheless palaeographers maintain a signature on it is eighteenth-century; the signature reads H. Leseigneur (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, 100). It is tempting to believe that the signatory was involved in placing the lining in the 1730s, which is the date the archives suggest.

It is unknown how many embroiderers participated in the creation of the Tapestry. However, by examining closely the front of the Tapestry and considering the variations in graphic skill among the different drawings it seems probable that several artisans worked together on the masterpiece. The back does not, as far as can be seen, tell us much more. Too many threads have been taken over the centuries to be able to tell whether one embroiderer was more economical in the use of thread than another in his or her way of working.

It is known that it was commonplace for antiquarians visiting the unprotected Tapestry to walk off with a little thread as a souvenir.[5] Charles Stothard is probably the best-known perpetrator; he was given – or filched – two small pieces of the work. Other thread samples have been taken with scientific purpose in view. Herbert Jankuhn, who led the German mission that examined the Tapestry in 1941, wrote: 'we have taken back a sufficient number of samples of the thread of the Tapestry to be able to carry out an eventual monitoring examination'.[6] The restorers commissioned by the Ministry of Culture to study the Tapestry in 1982 took 220 threads from the embroideries.

The Latin text which runs the length of the Tapestry, apart from one or two rare cases, seems to have been embroidered after the figurative work had been completed. The inscriptions stand out from the figurative elements with no relation to the subject matter. The letters are sometimes more differentiated on the back than on the front. Has there been an abuse here in the taking of threads? All that can be said is it is important to avoid drawing hasty conclusions and that one must study the two sides of the Tapestry in relation to one another.

The purpose of this paper has been to attempt to satisfy the legitimate curiosity of historians who have been interested in the back of the Tapestry,[7] and to open up new lines of research, with the hope that the Tapestry continues to excite curiosity and wonder for many centuries to come.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to William Jordan who has translated my paper and to Elizabeth Lewis who has translated my notes and captions.

Notes

1. Isabelle Bédat, Béatrice Girault, Véronique Meunier, Marie-Madeleine Massé, Naomi Moore, of whom two have published a report on their work (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, 83–109).
2. The author cannot count herself among these privileged observers as she was not holding her present appointment in Bayeux during the winter of 1982–3.
3. I would like to thank Jean-Daniel Pariset, *conservateur général*, *chef du service de la Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine*, for permitting the reproduction of multiple views of the reverse side of the Tapestry for the first time in a foreign publication (only individual plates had been reproduced before and they came from the collection kept by *L'Inventaire général des Monuments et Richesses Historiques de Basse-Normandie*, at Caen). A CD-ROM copy of all the photos of the reverse side may be seen at the *Médiathèque municipale de Bayeux*, by appointment.
4. For an alternative view see Renn, this volume.
5. I would appeal to all those who hold such fragments to make them known, for the sake of more accurate documentation. Would it not be wonderful, for example, to know if the word EUSTATIUS was once truly embroidered as such in Scene 55?
6. Herbert Jankuhn's diary (unpublished, *Bayeux Médiathèque municipale*).
7. For extra information and photographs see Lemagnen (2009b).

15. *Reverse of the Tapestry: detail of Scene 4, the wolf and the lamb (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

16. *Reverse of the Tapestry: Scene 7 (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

17. *Reverse of the Tapestry: Scene 36 (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

18. *Reverse of the Tapestry: Scene 13, 1st seam (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

19. *Reverse of the Tapestry: Scene 43, 4th seam (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

20. *Reverse of the Tapestry: Scene 57, 8th and last seam (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

21. *Reverse of the Tapestry: Scene 25, motifs of the Greek cross, Calvary and banner in the numbered strip (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

22. *Reverse of the Tapestry: the beginning of the linen before being unstitched along the lower part (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Archives photographiques).*

The Storage Chest and the Repairs and Changes in the Bayeux Tapestry

David Hill and John McSween

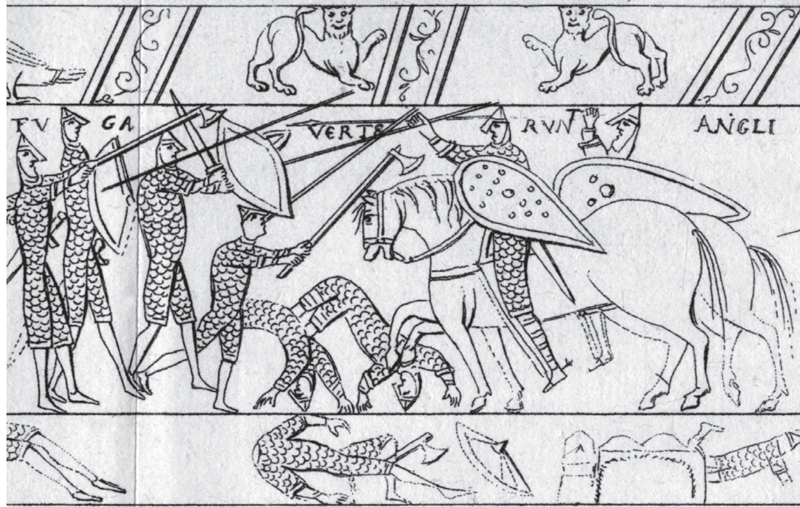
The epic embroidery known as The Bayeux Tapestry[1] is, by consensus, a historical document, yet in spite of the warnings of scholars that it should be approached with a degree of circumspection (Wilson 1985, 10; Ase Luplau 1961, 179–95), it still appears to be treated in a way that no other document would, and there is a marked tendency to regard what appears in the work today as having always been there. This assumption of the integrity of the stitching can lead to a sort of scholarly myopia. For example, when describing Edward's deathbed scene (27–8), J. Bard McNulty (1989, 17) writes 'in an expressionistic touch below the king's ... deathbed, are the Tapestry's only legless birds, which heraldry would later ascribe as martlets, to the shield of Edward', yet the birds are only 'legless' in the Tapestry as it appears from 1871; in the engravings of 1729 and 1819 both birds have legs. Curiously, the work that McNulty uses to illustrate his book appears to be a copy of the 1819 engraving, yet for some reason the birds' legs are missing. Another example from the same work concerns the beasts (A266–7) depicted in the lower border beneath Scene 2, where Harold is seen riding towards Bosham, that are described as a 'winged centaur: at once man, horse and bird' (McNulty 1989, 39). However, just a cursory glance at the 1729 engraving reveals that these 'centaurs' are in fact griffins. What should have alerted the author to the fact that perhaps everything was not as it should be is the repair work that is so clearly apparent in this part of the Tapestry.

The danger is, therefore, that research based on how the Tapestry looks now can be so misleading that, if accepted, it will distort and perhaps even invalidate later studies. As a word of warning, we can do no better than quote Dorothy Whitelock (1951, 1):

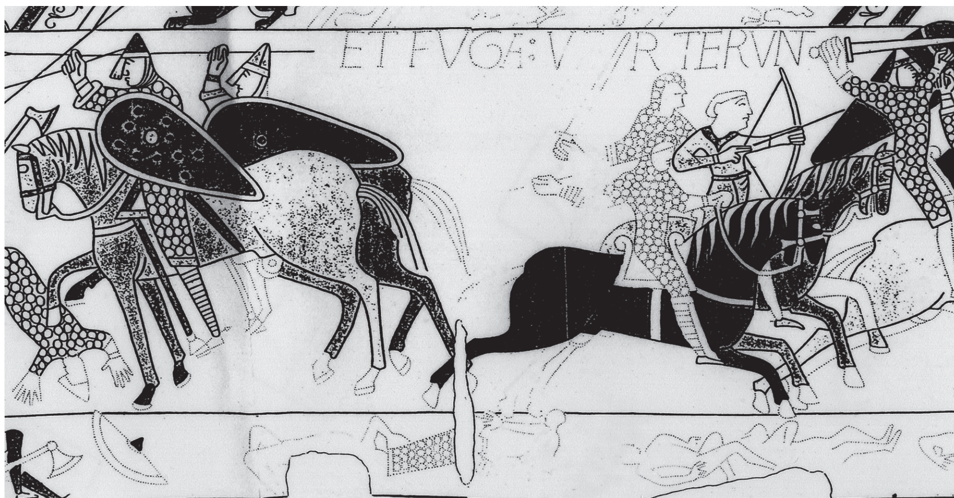
> It sometimes happens that a well argued theory, with the authority of a great scholar behind it, will, after a series of progressive repetitions by others who ignore the safeguards and reservations of the original propounder, acquire an axiomatic quality which that propounder would have been the first to deplore; and then, being handed on as incontrovertible fact, which it is not, it may block the line of advance and stand in the way of the true assessment of new evidence as this comes to light.

Unfortunately, when it comes to the Bayeux Tapestry many of the theories are not always 'well argued'. For example, in 1856 when describing the scene where King Harold (Figure 256) is apparently listening to a messenger carrying intelligence from Normandy, the Victorian historian John Collingwood Bruce (1856, 87) made the almost throw-away remark that 'the nature of it is explained by the dreamy-like flotilla which is shown in the lower border', little knowing that it would trigger an avalanche of articles concerning the meaning behind the dreamy or, as it is sometimes called, 'ghostly' fleet. This theme was taken up by others including Whitelock's mentor Frank Stenton (1957, 19), who spoke of 'five ships in outline on the lower margin of the scene [that] seem to hint at the destiny coming upon him'. Unfortunately, very few commentators ventured the argument that the beached ships may simply be just that, beached ships.[2]

It is not possible to get back to how the Tapestry looked in the eleventh century, but it is achievable to see it as it was in the closing years of the seventeenth century, and therefore assess how much damage, repair and change has overtaken the embroidery since its rediscovery in 1729. To this end, the present authors have looked at the different versions of the record and the 'misunderstandings' that may have arisen over the last two-hundred or so years. The sources examined include the Foucault watercolour (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, f.Ad.102; **32**), created at some time between 1689 and 1721;[3] the 1729/30 drawings and engravings commissioned by Dom Bernard de Montfaucon (1729, Pls. xxxv–xlix; 1730, Pls. i–x) and executed by Antoine Benoît (**33–5**);[4] the 1819 engravings commissioned by The Society of Antiquaries of London, executed by Charles A. Stothard



23. *Engraving of the Bayeux Tapestry by Antoine Lancelot (M. K. Lawson).*



24. *Engraving of the Bayeux Tapestry by Charles Stothard (Society of Antiquaries of London).*

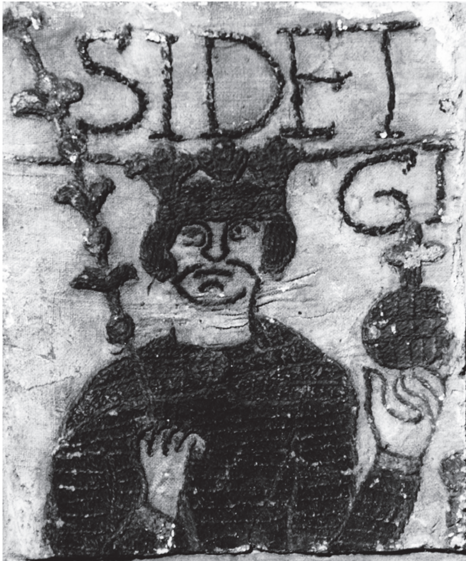
25. *Photograph of the Bayeux Tapestry by E. Dossetter.*

26. *Three riders astride two 'and a bit' horses (Victoria and Albert Museum).*

(**24, 28–9**);[5] and the 1872 photograph commissioned by the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum) and executed by E. Dossetter (**25**). Since extant copies of the Dossetter photograph are in places quite poor, it has been at times necessary to compare them with the surviving glass plates, which are themselves copies of the originals, housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum Photographic Archive. Although some of the surviving, full-sized, hand-tinted photographs are still in existence and in excellent condition, they proved to be unsuitable for comparative purposes, since they were bowdlerized at the time of their production in order to make them suitable for a Victorian audience.[6] The authors also examined the two surviving tinted plaster casts made by Stothard while in Bayeux; the first is a multiple cast of three scenes in the British Museum,[7] while the second is at The Society of Antiquaries of London. These are important because they are mechanical records not dependent on artistic or other interpretation and show the actual state of the Tapestry at the time the casts were made. For example, the cast of the head of Harold (Figure 242) shows that the thread marking the line of the left side of the king's neck was missing at the time Stothard produced his drawing, although the needle holes can be discerned (**27**). As the line is present in the artist's finished engravings, it represents one of his so-called restorations (Stothard 1821, 184; **28**).

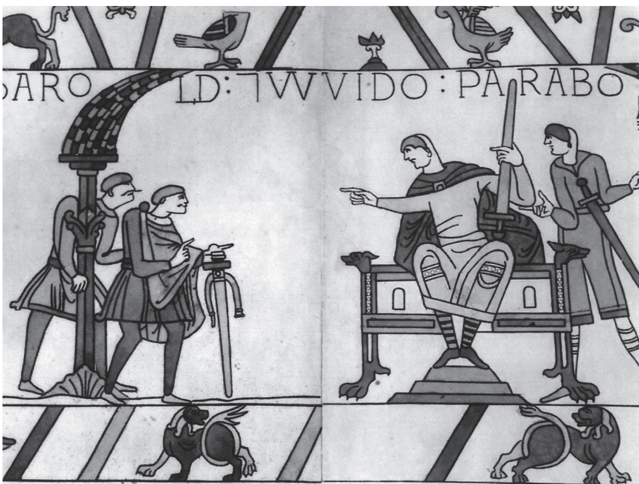
In addition to the above, two copies of the Bayeux Tapestry produced in the nineteenth century have been studied. Although suspected of being copies of the Stothard engraving, they are nevertheless thought by some scholars to contain original observations (Wilson 1985, 10). They are the engraving by Victor Sansonetti (Jubinal 1838; **30**) and the watercolour that appeared among the effects of the English novelist Charlotte Younge, which is presently to be found at Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts. We can, however, show that they are indeed nothing more than copies of the 1819 engraving, since they both faithfully reproduce what has come to be called 'the Stothard error' (**29**). It would appear that the engraver overlapped two sections of the scene (9) where Guy (Figure 85) interviews Harold (Figure 84), so that when the two sections were brought together they created an extra 'V' in the inscription. Therefore, instead of reading *VBI hAROLD 7VVIDO PARABOLANT* (where Harold and Guy converse), it reads *VBI hAROLD 7VVVIDO PARABOLANT* (Hill, forthcoming).

Associated with these early copies of the Tapestry are the three versions of the Latin text recorded before the restoration work completed during the second half of the nineteenth century. They comprise the following: the list prepared by Dom Mathurin L'Archer, prior of St Vigor in Bayeux, in 1729 (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, *Correspondance de Dom Bernard de Montfaucon*, f.182)

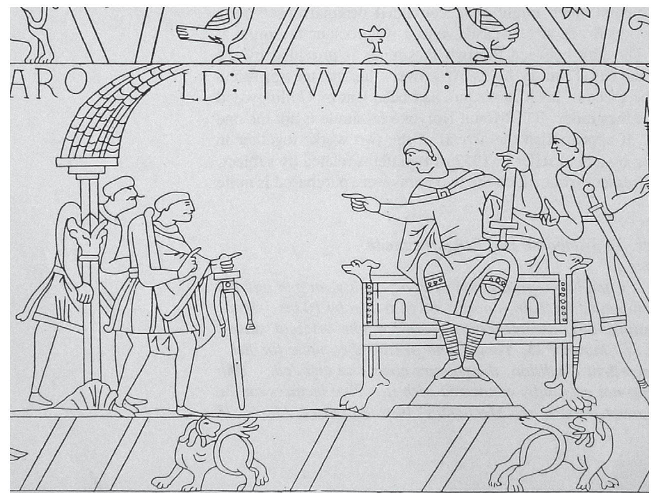


27. *Charles Stothard's plaster cast from the Bayeux Tapestry (Trustees of the British Museum London).*

28. *Engraving of the Bayeux Tapestry by Charles Stothard (Society of Antiquaries of London).*



29. *Engraving of the Bayeux Tapestry by Charles Stothard (Society of Antiquaries of London).*



30. *Engraving of the Bayeux Tapestry by Victor Sansonetti (British Library Board).*

and sent to Montfaucon; the list as it appears in the first two volumes of Montfaucon's work (1729, 27; 1730, 38–40); and the copy of the inscription made by Hudson Gurney (1817). L'Archer seems to have misread or missed parts of the inscription, but the Benoît drawing corrected deficiencies in his text. Montfaucon, on the other hand, does, in places, contradict his correspondent and his artist. For example, in Scene 45 the inscription reads *HIC EST VVADARD* (Here is Wadard), yet with L'Archer's letter and Benoît's drawing in front of him he recorded the more correct form *HIC EST VVADARDVS* (Montfaucon 1730, 5). Surprisingly, the engraving produced by the person that initiated the search for the Bayeux Tapestry, Antoine Lancelot (1729), in spite it being a copy of the Benoît drawing, supplies an extra line of the Latin inscription, although he places it a little earlier than it appears today.

Where the others end the inscription with *HIC HAROLD REX INTERFECTVS EST* (Here King Harold is killed), Lancelot provides *ET FVGA VERTERVNT ANGLI* (and the English fled). Clearly Lancelot's informant, the bishop of Bayeux, was far more observant than either L'Archer or Benoît (**23**). Stothard noticed this part of the inscription, and it is indicated in his engraving by series of dots or needle-marks (**24**). It is also worth mentioning that Lancelot's version of Harold's death scene (57) is faithful to the Benoît drawing, whereas the engraving as it appears in Montfaucon's work replaces the broken line indicating the arrow in Harold's eye with a heavy unbroken line.[8]

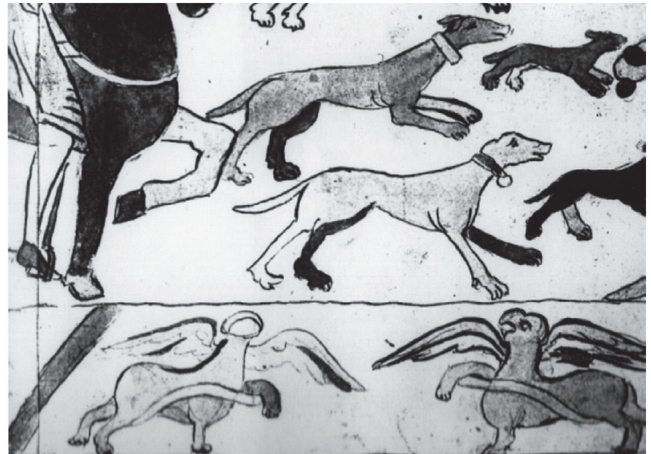
Hitherto, it has been the practice to identify different parts of the Tapestry by scene numbers, but this method describes long sections of the embroidery when what was required was a system that allowed sometimes very small areas of the work to be described with a great deal more accuracy. Therefore, the three major versions of the record (Foucault/Montfaucon, Stothard and Dossetter) were reduced to a common scale (**31**). This scale is entirely arbitrary, although the authors did attempt to measure the Tapestry *in situ* in 1996; for various reasons, this failed. The measurement recorded in 1983 was about 63.38 metres (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, 96–7). Although there is a small variation between each of the three copies of the Tapestry, any anomaly found in one can quickly be identified in the other two. Unfortunately, the Foucault watercolour defied all efforts to make it conform to the reduced scale and the authors were constrained to use the scale against the engraving found in volume one of Montfaucon's work.[9] However, where the Montfaucon version of the Tapestry differs from that of Stothard and/or Dossetter, the matter has been decided by reference to the Foucault watercolour.

An examination of the Tapestry, including its Latin inscriptions, has identified 407 changes or points of interest. They range from the obvious, such as the three riders astride two 'and a bit' horses (Figures 6–8; **26**) and the griffins that metamorphosed into rather strange looking winged centaurs (A226–7; **32**); to the less obvious, such as the discrepancy between the Benoît drawing and the engraving where it seems the engraver interpreted the artist's colour notation as an arrow (Figure 570; **33**). Benoît also records an extra archer in his version of the Tapestry's lower border: where today there are 23 archers Benoît supplies 24 (**34**). Finally, toward the end of the Tapestry there is a mounted archer that may have originally been a rider holding a lance (Figure 612; **35**) (Hill and McSween, forthcoming).

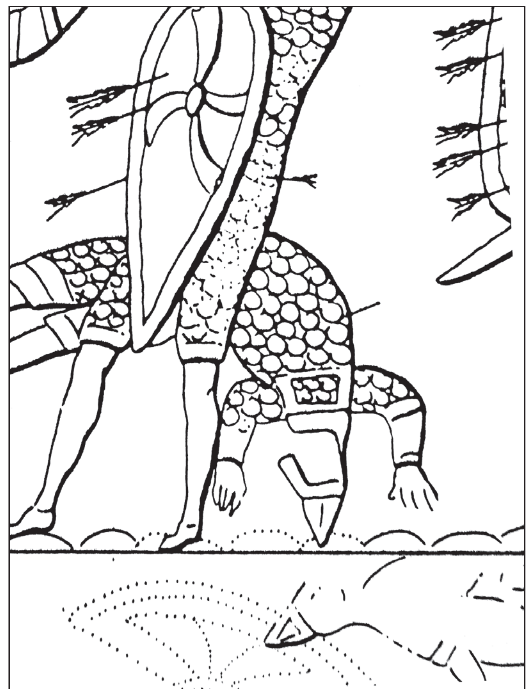
Part of this investigation has also considered the question of the famous (or infamous) fragment that was removed from the Tapestry by Charles Stothard. The many articles and other references concerning the fragment have ignored an important aspect of the whole question: what is the context of the fragment? There are other places in the Tapestry, for example Scene 55, in the upper border above 'Eustace' (Figure 543), where small sections of the Tapestry have been removed. It is also of some interest that the missing fragments are always to be found on the margins of the Tapestry and include a portion of the woollen thread. The authors have identified 21 possible places where early visitors to the Tapestry may have cut away small sections of the fabric as mementos. It should be noted that the first examples listed occur well before the visit by Charles Stothard in 1816 and carried on after his return to England. An analogy might be the visits to Stonehenge in the nineteenth century, where excursionists on the London and South Western railway were taken by coach from Salisbury to Stonehenge and provided with geological hammers so that they could take home a fragment of the monument.[10] It would seem that something similar was going on at Bayeux, and the guardian was well aware of what was happening. It may be that especially favoured (or heavily tipping) visitors were allowed to take away souvenirs.

Also of interest was the matter of the Tapestry's remarkable survival: how did this fragile artefact manage to exist for almost 650 years until its rediscovery in 1729? Attention was turned to the wooden box in the treasury of Bayeux Cathedral that is traditionally said to have housed the Bayeux Tapestry. It consists of a hand-carved chest with lid measuring 100 × 55cms; it is some 46cms deep with the lid open and 54cms when closed. In the box is one iron clamp, which it must be assumed was one of a set was used to hang the Tapestry. If this is indeed the storage chest, then it was only capable of holding the Tapestry before it was lined. The Tapestry with a backing sheet would have been too bulky to fit within this particular chest. The Tapestry was presumably without a backing sheet when the Foucault watercolour was produced, but it was in place by the time of Stothard's work. The 'tacking together' of the tear at the opening scene shown in the Foucault watercolour took place before this drawing was produced. The repair shown in Stothard presumes that there was a backing sheet added to carry the restoration, which in turn means that the bulk of the fabric was increased.[11] Although the Tapestry's survival was clearly increased by it only being on display in the nave of Bayeux Cathedral for just one week in every year, it may have also been protected by the preserving properties of the box itself. Although it is yet to be confirmed by expert examination, the chest seems to be made of cedar. It is reasonable to believe that the

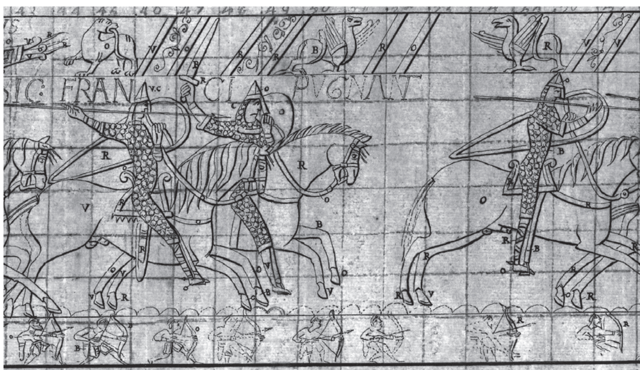
31. *Three versions of the Bayeux Tapestry: Montfaucon, Stothard (University Librarian and Director, The John Rylands University Library, The University of Manchester) and Dossetter.*



32. *Griffins (Victoria and Albert Museum) and Nicholas-Joseph Foucault's watercolour of the 'same' beasts (Bibliothèque nationale, Paris).*



33. *Drawing and engraving of the Bayeux Tapestry by Antoine Benoît (Bibliothèque nationale, Paris; University Librarian and Director, The John Rylands University Library, The University of Manchester).*



34. *Drawing of the Bayeux Tapestry by Antoine Benoît (Bibliothèque nationale, Paris).*

35. *Drawing of the Bayeux Tapestry by Antoine Benoît (Bibliothèque nationale, Paris).*

Tapestry's continued existence was assured by spending the first six hundred years or so of its life carefully folded and pressed into a box impregnated with cedar oil, a natural repellent to moths.

Notes

1. 'To call the Bayeux Tapestry by any other name would be a piece of unpardonable pedantry, although in the narrower sense which the word has acquired it is no tapestry at all, the design being embroidered upon the material and not woven into it' (Maclagan 1943, 5).
2. For an alternative view concerning the five ships see Hill (1998, 23–31). See also Vince (1990, 57).
3. For the identity of the artist see Wilson (1985, 12).
4. The original drawings are part of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, f.Ad.102.
5. The engravings were published by The Society of Antiquaries of London in 1819–23 and re-published in the Society's *Vetusta Monumenta* in 1885. Stothard's original drawings are now lost, as are some of the hand-tinted engravings.
6. The cost of producing modern prints from the Dossetter glass plates is prohibitive and the authors have had to rely on the plates published in Fowke 1898. Because of the high cost of reproducing high quality prints, it is quite possible that the full investigation and findings of this research will never be fully published.
7. This has only ever been on public display once, during the 'The BT @ the BM: new research on the Bayeux Tapestry' conference, 15–16 July 2008.
8. For a discussion on the significance of the dotted lines or stitch-marks see Lawson (2004, 228–9).
9. It may be that, unlike Benoît and Stothard, the artist responsible for Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, f.Ad.102 did not impose a grid on the drawing and executed the work 'freehand'.
10. See, for example, in http://www.twistedtree.org.uk/.
11. For the 'relining' of the Tapestry see S. A. Brown (1988, 7) and Hicks (2006, 77).

How Big is It – and Was It?

Derek Renn

This paper confronts some statements printed in the proceedings of the colloquium on the Bayeux Tapestry held at Cerisy-la-Salle in 1999 (Bouet *et al.*, 2004), together with others on the manufacture and dimensions of the Tapestry.

Measuring the Tapestry

Many works on the Tapestry present a figure for its length (and sometimes for its breadth) rather unscientifically. Single measurements imply that the pieces forming the Tapestry are rectangular, with straight hems and seams, which is manifestly not so. Also, the embroidered surfaces are not flat. None of the published figures specify the points on the linen between which they were measured, their degree of accuracy or whether they are averages, minima or maxima. Neither do they state the nature and reliability of the instruments nor the physical conditions under which they were used. The first piece carries an incoherent border about 10cm wide, and the last piece, varying between 6 and 40cm wide, has 'restored' figures, both on narrow vertical strips of paler linen, which may have been added in 1730 or later.[1] Should they be included in any measurement?

For centuries the embroidery was assumed to be on a single length of linen, which is not the case. In this article the different pieces are numbered I to IX. Until recently it was thought that the Tapestry was made from eight pieces, but the presumed final section is now known to be composed of two pieces joined together (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, 84), here distinguished as VIII and IX. This article will also refer to the scene numbers written on the 'numbered strip' sewn to the embroidery proper, which are printed on the fold-out reduced facsimiles on sale at Bayeux.

The published measurements are inconsistent. Many were listed by David Hill (2004, 385–6) who suggested that varying conditions could explain a difference of up to 10cm in overall length. The shortest figure (65.45m: Bertrand 1960, 199 as translated by Gameson 1997a, 32) is a mistake, since the contemporary note made by Herbert Jankhun (who led a research team that studied the Tapestry during World War II) clearly reads 68.46m (Lemagnen 2004, 52, pl. 4). Although Simone Bertrand (1960) quoted the length as 70.35m, the sum of her eight measurements is only 69.35m. The present official length of 68.38m, measured during the close examination made in 1982–3 (Wilson 1985, 10), was repeated by Isabelle Bédat and Béatrice Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, 86), but the total of the measurements of individual pieces enumerated in their article is 68.58m: 20cm longer than the total they give. Hill's own figure (69.35m) was obtained by scaling-up a fold-out or *dépliant* facsimile. This figure agrees with the sum of those published by Bertrand in 1960, and both are a trifle less than her later figures (Bertrand 1966, 24, as quoted by Wilson 1985, 228, n. 5). The notable differences, of up to a metre, need explanation.

Which figures are right?

A 1/7th scale fold-out facsimile (*Tapisserie de Bayeux*, édition ville de Bayeux, issue 3-254380-006153) was measured, piece by piece, along straight lines between the just-visible seams at the top edge of the image, using a fibreglass tape-measure marked in millimetres, and checking with a second (plastic) tape. After adjusting for one tiny overlap, and for the very slight 'crop' of the Tapestry image at the ends of the paper sheets,[2] a total length of 10.148m was obtained, including the two linen strips described above. Multiplying by 7 gives just over 71m, more than any length yet published, so the 1/7th scale is probably imprecise.

Using a multiplier (of slightly less than 7) of 10.148m, to correspond with Bertrand's 1960 total length of 69.35m, gave piece V as 5.59m long (to the nearer cm), a metre shorter than either of her figures (Table 1). Using a total length of 68.38m gave piece V as 5.51m, very close to Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman's figure. Allowing

Piece	*I*	*II*	*III*	*IV*	*V*	*VI*	*VII*	*VIII*	*IX*	*Actual Total*
Bertrand (1960)										
	13.65	13.75	8.3	7.7	6.55	7.05	7.15	| < 5.2 >|		69.35
Bertrand (1966)										
	13.65	13.75	8.35	7.75	6.60	7.15	?7.15	|< 5.25 >|		69.65
Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004) unrevised										
	13.70	13.90	8.19	7.725	5.52	7.125	7.19	2.8	2.43	68.58
Renn (calculated here)										
	13.69	13.88	8.14	7.74	5.51	7.13	7.21	2.58	2.50	68.38

Table 1. *'Visible' (or published) lengths of the pieces of the Bayeux Tapestry (in metres).*

for rounding-off, the 20cm overall difference between 68.38m and 68.58m is in piece VIII: its dimension (only printed to the nearer decimetre) should be 2.6m rather than 2.8m. This revision results in Bertrand's figures for pieces VIII and IX combined being up to 22cm more than either Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, as revised) or that suggested here. A rough check was made by scaling up Wilson's (1985, 4) facsimile by 100/54, since he says 'the scale of reproduction is approximately fifty-four per cent of the original.'

With the 0.2m correction to piece VIII, the figures printed by Bédat and Girault- Kurtzeman have been used here, assuming them to be the maximum width of the 'visible' pieces as seen from the back, laid on a flat surface and not stretched, and measured to the nearer centimetre (Table 1). If the join illustrated between pieces V and VI (Bédat and Girault- Kurtzeman 2004, pl. 6) is printed life-size, and is typical of others, the ends subsequently overcast in creating hems and joins need about 1 to 1.5cm. Consequently, in the Plates (but not in Tables 1–2) 3cm has been added to each measurement of the 'visible' pieces to arrive at their 'actual' lengths, including the ends doubled over at the seams. These estimated 'actual' lengths have been drawn to scale with uniform 50cm width, the length being reduced (x 1/2 or 1/4) for clarity (**36–9**).

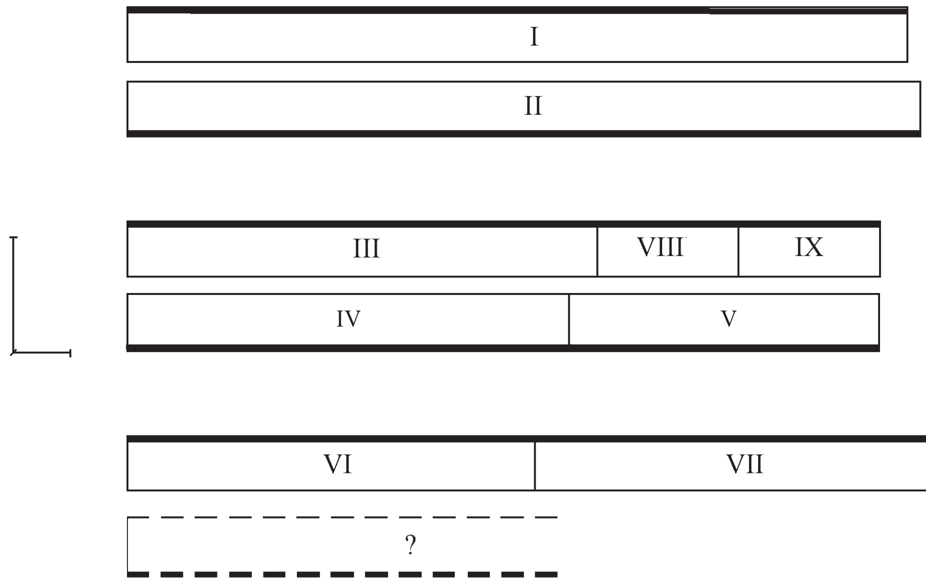
Cutting the cloth

While there must have been a common cartoon source for the design, did all the linen come from a single source of flax and was it woven in a single operation? A. Levé (1919, 148–9) suggested eight workshops and Ian Short (2001, 275–6) three. Gabriel Vial (2004, 111) gave average warp and weft thread counts per cm, but not their ranges nor whether differences are found in different pieces of linen. Further work is required to establish the extent and reasons for any variations in weaving.

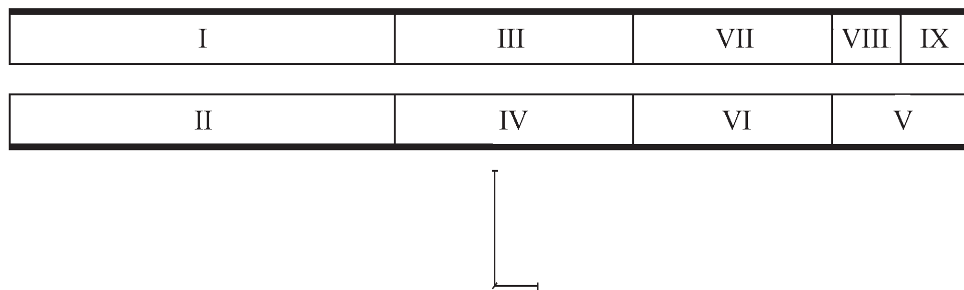
The visible width of the embroidered cloth varies between 45.7 and 53.6cm along its length, according to Wilson (1985, 10). The widest part seems to be at the very beginning of the extant Tapestry, and the narrowest near the start of piece II. This variation suggests a splitting of a wider bolt of cloth, but hemming and lining now prevent any matching. Both Vial (2004, 111) and Carola Hicks (2006, 41, 49) have suggested that a metre-wide linen cloth was split in two, Hicks suggesting this would give a convenient width for embroidery. This implies that five lengths, each about 14m long, were taken; three being then halved in length, one of the three finally being halved again. Here the 'best fit' is given in **36**; the overall lengths being 13.73, 13.93, 13.31 (twice) and 14.38m, one exceeding the others by up to a metre. But splitting in two gives an even number of lengths. What happened to the sixth length of over 13m, shown in dotted outline on **36**?

The 'numbered strip'

Vial (2004, 115–6) demonstrated that the 'numbered strip' attached to the embroidered linen had been cut from a metre-wide bolt of patterned linen which had been divided into six. He dated it to the sixteenth century, assuming that it was only slightly older than the 'lining strip', for which radiocarbon dates were given (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, 99). However, the 'stratigraphy' of the assembly procedures (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, 102) shows that the 'numbered strip' was much older than the 'lining strip'. The grease stains, perhaps from Bishop Odo's candelabrum (Oger 2004, 121; Neveux 2004b, 404), correspond on both embroidered and numbered strips (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, pl. 33). Since there is no trace of a hanging method on the embroidery itself, it seems possible that the 'numbered strip' with the remains of ribbon loops might be the original hanging strip, on which the scene numbers were later marked by two different hands in Arabic numerals. There might once have been evidence of an even earlier hanging method, since the 'numbered strip' has been trimmed (Bédat and



36. *Three lengths of 1m width linen, each split in two (one-metre scales).*



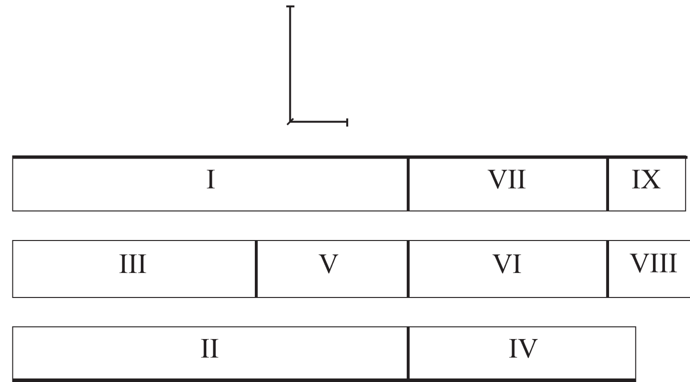
37. *One length of 1m width linen, split in two (one-metre scales).*

Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, 87 and pl. 9). The ring marks on the lining (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, pl. 24) are not evidence of the original hanging method. However, the internal dimensions of the traditional storage chest (Hill and McSween, this volume) seem to preclude the embroidered strip from being stored in it with a 'numbered strip' attached.

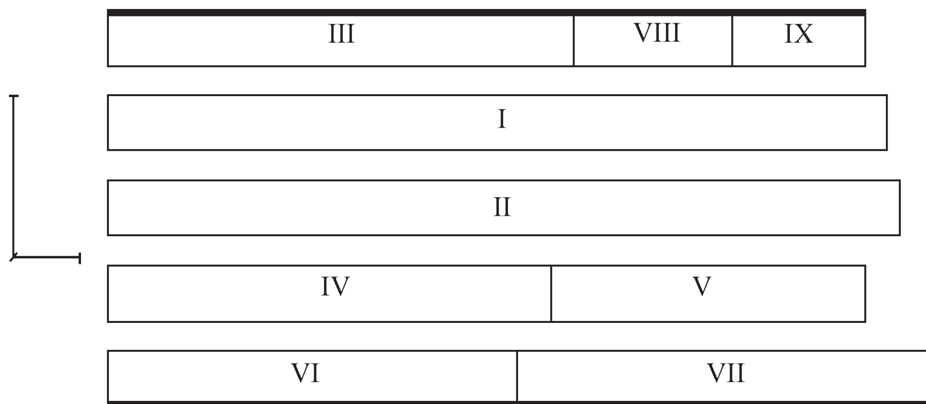
Following Vial (2004, 111), and assuming a metre-wide bolt of cloth (like that of the 'numbered strip') for the embroidery also, then either (a) one length of about 34m was split in width and then each half cut into shorter lengths or (b) four shorter lengths of about 14m, 8m, 7m and 5m were split and one half of the shortest length then cut in two. The former alternative is the more likely, since piece III is almost half a metre longer than piece IV, as is piece V when compared with pieces VIII+IX, although the overall lengths differ by only 14cm (see **37**: 34.26, 34.40m). Perhaps after about 14m had been sewn of pieces I and II, the difference in width between the borders was noted. The decision was then taken to reduce the length of each piece and to leave ends blank for later sewing across the join. This allowed more people to work simultaneously, but at different speeds. So pieces of unequal length were cut off and joined.

The selvage problem

A woven cloth has a selvage on each side, shown as a bold line on **36–9**. Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, 84) and Vial (2004, 111) each say that the selvage only occurs on five pieces, and only on one side. Some selvages might have been cut off, or hidden by hemming, such as on the lower length of **37**, but there is an alternative explanation. A 1.5m wide cloth about 23.5m long might be either (a) split in three and each third then cut into three or four pieces or (b) first cut into lengths of about 14, 7 and 2.5m before splitting. Either could result in five pieces each with a single selvage, plus four pieces from the central third without a selvage (**38**). The overall



38. *One length of 1.5m width linen, split in three (one-metre scales).*



39. *One length of 2.5m width linen, split in five (one-metre scales).*

lengths are 23.41, 23.56 and 21.69m. The first two differ by only 15cm, suggesting a 'lost' piece from the third length about 1.8m long. Alternative rearrangement gives a longer piece (or pieces).

An even wider cloth is possible, with more lost pieces or different surviving selvaged ones. For instance, a five-way split of a 2.5m wide length could produce only five single selvages in either of two ways (**39**, or exchanging the two lowest lengths). This split produces similar totals to that shown in **36**. Such widths were attainable: Stephen Plunkett (2000) has made a working 2.5m wide warp-weighted vertical loom, based on excavated Anglo-Saxon evidence. In the late eleventh century, this 'hanging' loom type was replaced by the horizontal (framed) type, which allowed much longer lengths of cloth to be woven, and increased productivity nine-fold (Nahlik 1965; Wilson 1975, 271; Walton 1991, 324–43). The 1197 Assize of Measures (Connor, 1987, 91; Roger of Houeden IV.34, Stubbs, 1871, 34) specified a width of two ells 'of iron', i.e. two yards (1.83m) between selvages.

Major repairs

The Foucault pen-and-wash sketch of about 1695 (Hill 2004, 391, pl. 2; 400, note 38) shows a bunching of the Tapestry in Scene 1, after the word *REX*, with both a straight row of stitching and a zig-zag one, between the line of the door jamb and the word *DVX*. Three rows of stitching can be seen below the look-out man in the tree in Scene 12 (Figure 101; Stenton 1965b, 115) which Maclagan (1943, 16) said 'was probably due to the Tapestry having been cut'. It looks as though someone cut into the Tapestry from the bottom but did not sever the entire width. The cut occurs just before +*HIC VENIT:* and the first recognised join just before the trees of Scene 14 – *HIC: … VENIT:-*. Was there confusion between these scenes on the cartoon when the linen was cut, caused by the duplication of *HIC VENIT* on the cartoon? The slope of the diagonal bars in the Tapestry borders usually alternate but here form a long 'run', all sloping in the same direction. Such 'runs' occur rarely, and usually before joins (Renn, in preparation).

How big *was* it?

There is evidence that the Tapestry was once longer than it is now, which potentially invalidates all the above diagrams, but supports their indication of lost lengths. In 1818 Thomas Frognall Dibdin (1821, 377–9) described the Tapestry as 'much defaced, little more than linen until Harold going to Bosham' and the far end 'yet more decayed and imperfect'. Dawson Turner (1820, 242) said that it was 'injured at the beginning ... and towards the end becomes very ragged, several figures have disappeared completely. The worsted is unravelling in many of the intermediate positions', a description echoed by Charles Stothard (1821, 184–6).

The beginning

Bertrand (1960, 206) stated that the vertical border at the beginning of the Tapestry was entirely the work of restorers, the only authentic fragment being entirely separate from Scene 1. She wondered, 'could one advance the hypothesis that another fragment is missing?'

It would seem so, and the following observations can also be made:

- The lower border continues leftward below the restored scrolls;
- The diagonal bar across the upper left corner seems an odd finish. It is either an invention by a restorer (to match the following bars) or evidence that this border also continued leftward;
- The 'numbered strip' is oddly cut shorter in length than the embroidered strip at this end and without any compensating extra length at the other end;
- *EDVVARD* is in neither the Foucault drawing nor Benoît's engravings for Montfaucon. Hudson Gurney (1817, 362) stated that in 1814 the caption began *Rex Edwardus* [*sic*]; however, he wrote from memory, and since he wrongly named the building housing the Tapestry, he cannot be considered a reliable witness;
- While King Edward's open hall door connects Scene 1 to Scene 2, the inscription to Scene 1 (even as restored) is simply *EDVVARD REX*. Ambiguity here verges on incomprehensibility. Should it not (at the very least) begin *HIC EST*?

The ending

Although Frank Stenton (1957/1965a, 24, note 9) said that 'the final disintegration of Harold's army was an appropriate termination', Lancelot (1729) had stated that the Tapestry showed William's coronation. Estimates of the lost length range from one to three metres (Bertrand 1960, 204; Brooks and Walker 1979, 2; Cowdrey 1988, 52; Brilliant 1991, 96; Gameson 1997b, 207; Henige 2005, 131–3). Copying the original style and materials, Jan Messent (1999) embroidered a two-scene 'Finale' (English surrender and William's coronation) of 2.4m.

What has been lost?

From about 1300 to 1767 the Tapestry seems to have been kept in a cedarwood chest (Hicks 2006, 68; Hill and McSween, this volume) the interior measurements of which might allow the maximum possible length of the Tapestry to be estimated. Gurney (1817, 359) said that in 1814 it was 'coiled round a machine like that which lets down buckets in a Well' (a drawing of this 'machine', published in Dibdin (1821, 377), is reproduced in Hicks 2006, 119). John Collingwood Bruce (1856, preface, 17) said (rather ambiguously) that he saw it 'extended in eight lengths from end to end of the room ... being covered with glass ... the Tapestry has originally formed one piece'. In 1938–41 the Tapestry was kept on one large wooden spool and displayed by being wound onto another (Lemagnen 2004, 49–50; Hicks 2006, 205–47).

Pieces I and IX may once have been longer, or there may have been more pieces at either end. The possible seam described by Maclagan (1943, 16) might hint at lost pieces in between, designed or even partly-embroidered. The missing 'sixth length' (see above) might have been used for any of these. At the other extreme, the first partly-extant caption might once have read *HIC EST EDVVARD REX*, which could eliminate the present small difference in length between pieces I and II.

Baudri de Bourgeuil (who almost certainly had either seen the Tapestry or knew someone who had) described an imaginary wall hanging showing the story from William's fraught youth to his becoming king (Herren 1988; S. A. Brown and Herren 1994, 57–9). Brian Levy (2004, 331–5) and François Neveux (2004a, 191–3) pointed out examples of internal symmetry in the extant Tapestry. There may once have been a wider overall symmetry, either from William's coronation as duke of Normandy to that as king of England, or from Edward's coronation as king of England to that of William, rather like Maclagan's (1943, 15) simile of a five-act drama.

The Tapestry might have lost up to seven scenes at the beginning: William's creation as duke, Edward's coronation, Harold's creation as earl, Edward's exile in Normandy and friendship with William, Edward's return to England, William's possible visit to England, William being made Edward's heir. At the other end there seems to be another 'double-decker' scene (like Edward's death and enshrouding, Scenes 27–8). The last figure (627)

present in the lower register is seated among branches, as is the figure (624) in the lower border; both are static in contrast to the movement of preceding figures. They could introduce another five scenes: camping and foraging, William addressing his victorious troops, the advance on London, London's surrender and William's coronation.

Using extant quasi-similar scenes as proxy, a possible length of 6.4m could be estimated for the lost scenes at the beginning and 3.7m for those at the end, plus something for a final vertical border, a possible loss of over 10m. Some of these suggested scenes might have been run together or omitted. Most commentators on the Tapestry agree on a finale of just two scenes: the advance on or capture of London and William's subsequent coronation. Since a length of 20m for piece I (50% longer than any other piece) seems improbable, it is tempting to prefer fewer and smaller scenes at the beginning also (Baudri deals with this period very briefly), resulting in nearly equal lengths lost from each end. That is, positing either a lost piece O together with either a lost extension of IX to about 6.1m, or a lost piece X of 3.7m; alternatively, no piece O and minimal loss from piece I plus piece X of 3.7m; a shorter 'Westminster back to Westminster' hypothesis. This is more than previous writers would allow (or is suggested here), unless the advance on/surrender of/coronation in/London were very compressed, as the 'double decking' of scenes on piece IX may indicate. A likely range of 2m to 4m lost from each end is proposed here, although different amounts of loss (or even no loss at all) may be equally likely. The permutations of lengths and pieces extending or modifying **36–9** are infinite.

Early mistakes, editing or revision?

Was the Tapestry begun as a paean to Edward/Harold, but often ambiguous and hence adaptable to a Norman audience? Gale Owen-Crocker (personal communication) has pointed out that the author of the *Vita Ædwardi Regis* altered the plan of his work in response to the events of 1066 (Barlow 1997); the Tapestry designer could have done the same. Pierre Bouet (2004) has considered the evidence of the Tapestry's content, but not whether the message has been physically corrupted. Ian Short (2001, 268, 275) has argued that the embroidery and assembly of the pieces was carried out at three workshops. Gale Owen-Crocker (2002) has pointed out some different embroidery styles, and how joins 2, 4 and 7 (to which might also now be added 8) are concealed by skilful embroidery. Differences between styles, execution and workshops may also have led to accidental or deliberate changes to the original design.

The first design drawings for the Tapestry might have been marked with a grid and then copied or scaled-up as a cartoon. This must have been drawn on many thin skins or cloths, perhaps oiled for transparency, which would have had to be carefully linked before transferring the design to the linen. Some of these tracings may have been misplaced *en route*. A loss of 5% to 10% of the original design, before Foucault's and Benoît's drawings were made (c.1695 and 1729–30, respectively), might have been caused either by wear and tear, accidental damage or by an earlier drastic 'editing', perhaps even during manufacture. Is the 'seam' at Scene 12 such an adjustment?

The shorter pieces toward the end of the Tapestry may be the result of materials running short or of tightening deadlines, with more people working simultaneously; or are these pieces, and the abrupt beginning, the result of a censoring of the first design and a hasty shortened rewrite? Most joins between the pieces of the Tapestry coincide with divisions between scenes on the 'numbered strip', but not always (Table 2). The difference occurs in the long lines of cavalry in Scenes 48 and 51, where Joins 5 and 6 mark a change of pace from a walk to a gallop, and then from a gallop to an abrupt halt in front of the shield-wall.

Brooks and Walker (1978, 2) stated that 'the first few feet of each piece were left unembroidered until the join had been made'. Join 1 is obvious, from the breaks in the border and lines above and below the scenes. Join 3 passes through a blank space between scenes where Bertrand (1960, 201) and Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman (2004, 97) detected a shade difference in the upper border bar. The latter suggest that breaks in the border bar sequences about a metre either side of Joins 4, 5 and 6 mean that embroidery stopped there before pieces IV, V, VI and VII were joined together. However, such 'bar syncopation' could have been easily corrected by a single reversed bar, and a 'marking time' sequence can be seen close to some joins (Renn, in preparation).

Piece V is significantly shorter than those on either

Join	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Pieces	I–II	II–III	III–IV	IV–V	V–VI	VI–VII	VII–VIII	VIII–IX
Scenes	13/14	26/7	37/8	42/3	48	51	55/6	56/7

Table 2. *Relation between Joins and Scenes.*

side. Had it been of similar length to them (i.e. another 1.6 to 2.2m), piece VI would have begun with Scene 50, piece VII with Scene 52, piece VIII with Scene 57. Alternatively, had piece V been about 75cm longer, the seams would not have broken up the scenes or captions. Piece VI would have begun with Scene 49 and included the whole of the long inscription of Scene 51. Piece VII would have begun with the Anglo-Saxons appearing in Scene 51 and ended with Scene 55. Piece VIII would end with Harold being cut down in Scene 57, perhaps explaining why the final *INTERFEC/TVS: EST* of the genuine captions is 'right-justified', like the captions ending pieces II, III and IV.

To echo Maclagan (1943, 15), 'It may be that the embroidery was never finished'.

Notes

1. Hill 2004, 391, n. 23.
2. The *dépliant* and Stenton (1957/1965b) images only extend to the heavy vertical stitching, not to the edge of the linen; this is, however, shown in Wilson (1985).

Edward the Confessor's Succession According to the Bayeux Tapestry

Pierre Bouet and François Neveux

The Bayeux Tapestry is an important source for the events leading to the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, and the history of England and Normandy more generally. Otherwise these events are mostly known through written continental sources, such as William of Poitiers and Orderic Vitalis, and insular sources, including John of Worcester and William of Malmesbury.

It is almost certain that the Bayeux Tapestry was made soon after 1066. Since the eighteenth century, most historians have viewed it as representing the Norman version of events. This point of view is not entirely wrong, but may be refined. A deeper examination of the Tapestry shows that its authors' point of view was much more complex, as this paper will try to demonstrate from a detailed study of Scenes 25 to 31, those concerning King Edward's death, from Harold's return to England until his coronation.

Firstly, this paper will describe this part of the Tapestry, picture by picture, 'word for word'. Secondly, it will consider the significance of these images. Finally, it will compare the result of these investigations with those of eleventh- and twelfth-century Norman and English chroniclers.

Reading 'word for word': Scenes 25 to 31

Scenes 25 to 31 belong to a long sequence of the work, organised around Edward's death. This sequence takes place in England, immediately after Harold's trip to Normandy, and contains a well-known inversion in the narrative: Edward's funeral (Scene 26) is presented before his death (Scenes 27–28).

Scene 25: Harold returns to King Edward

Two men (Figures 205–6) of characteristically English appearance, with long hair and wearing tunics (one is also cloaked), arrive before Edward (Figure 207). The first one is Harold (Figure 206). He appears curiously hunchbacked and his head is down; his attitude could mean deceit. The king is shown inside a building, probably the *aula* (hall) of Westminster Palace. Edward is sitting on a cushioned throne. He wears a crown with three florets, a long green robe and a large red cloak, fastened with a brooch.

The Latin inscription accompanying this scene runs on from the preceding one (Scene 24): *HIC HAROLD DVX REVERSUS EST AD ANGLICAM TERRAM ET VENIT AD EDVVARDUM REGEM* (Here, Duke Harold returned to England and came to King Edward).

Scene 26: Edward's funeral

This scene depicts a Norman style church, similar to Notre-Dame of Jumièges (dedicated in 1067). Two details show that this church was just finished: a man (Figure 209) climbs on a ladder to fix a weathercock on the top of the tower, and a hand (that of God), coming down from the sky, seems to bless the newly-built church.

Then King Edward's funeral cortège is presented. His corpse, placed in a leather shroud and laid in a catafalque, is carried by eight men and accompanied by two little characters (Figures 215–6), probably choir children. Behind are singers. They are tonsured clerks. Some of them hold opened books in their hands.

The Latin inscription reads *HIC PORTATVR CORPVS EADWARDI REGIS AD ECCLESIAM S[AN]C[T]I PETRI APO[STO]LI* (Here, King Edward's corpse is carried to the church of Saint Peter the Apostle). This refers to the abbatial church of Saint Peter of Westminster (Westminster Abbey), which was dedicated on the 28 December 1065.

Scene 27–8: Edward's death

This is a double scene, inside a two storey building, which could be Westminster Palace. On the upper level is the King's bedroom. A dying King Edward (Figure

231) is represented, wearing his crown, lying in his bed on a cushion with a diamond pattern. A long haired man (Figure 232) supports him. At the foot of the bed a woman (Figure 228) wipes her tears with her veil; this is probably Queen Edith. In the middle of the room, a priest (Figure 230) wearing a chasuble lifts his left hand above the king. He has stubble, which shows that he sat up all night long with the dying man. On one side of the bed, towards the front, there is a long-haired character (Figure 229) wearing a cloak; this is probably Harold. His right hand is outstretched towards the dying king's right hand. This important gesture is not commented on in the Latin inscription above: *HIC EADVVARDVS REX IN LECTO ALLOQVIT[UR] FIDELES* (Here, King Edward, in his bed, talks to his faithful friends). The text is purely descriptive and impartial and records nothing specific about what Edward is saying. This will be returned to below.

On the floor level below, the king's corpse is being laid out by two men (Figures 233, 236) on a leather shroud depicted in red and green. Edward's head, without a crown, rests on a cushion. Here again, the inscription only notes the facts: *ET HIC DEFVNCTVS EST* (and here, he is dead).

Scene 29: Harold is chosen king by his followers

This scene shows two characters (Figures 237–8) in profile. They have long hair, which tell us that they are English, and both wear cloaks pinned with brooches. They present to Harold the insignia of royalty, a crown and an axe. The carrier of the crown points with his right hand to the previous scene, that of Edward's death. Harold (Figure 239) is shown facing them. He wears a cloak fastened at the front with a square brooch. His right hand is on his hip. In his left hand he holds an axe.

The Latin commentary reports that he has been given the crown: *HIC DEDERVNT HAROLDO CORONA[M] REGIS* (Here, they give the king's crown to Harold).

Scene 30: Harold's coronation

This scene, which probably takes place in the *aula* of Westminster Palace, is best described by Barbara English (2004, 347–81). Harold (Figure 242) is shown facing frontally, sitting on a raised throne. He is wearing a long yellow robe, a green outer robe and a red cloak pinned at the front with a brooch. He is wearing a crown with three florets. In his right hand he carries a sceptre and in his left an orb with a cross atop it.

To his right are two characters (Figures 240–1) in profile, wearing cloaks pinned at the shoulder. With their right hands they point to Harold. One of them (Figure 241) brandishes a sword. To Harold's left a cleric (Figure 243) with tonsured long hair is standing. The Latin text indicates this is Stigand: *STIGANT ARCHIEP[ISCOPU]S* (Archbishop Stigand). He is wearing liturgical vestments, including a pallium, the symbol of archiepiscopal power, around his shoulders.

Again, the Latin inscription does not add any more information than that given in the image: *HIC RESIDET HAROLD REX ANGLORVM* (Here sits throned Harold, King of the English people). This scene depicts the ritual of the coronation: the cheers of the people, the presentation of the royal insignia, the coronation and consecration by the archbishop.

Scene 31: the English people express surprise

This scene shows five characters (Figures 244–8) standing outside the room where the coronation has taken place, in a roofed yard. On each side of the yard is one high tower. The characters have long hair and wear simple tunics, a modest outfit compared to the characters in the previous scene. They surely represent the people watching the coronation from the outside. They watch the scene with surprise and even disapproval. No commentary explains this curious attitude. In the next scene (Scene 32), the same crowd (it seems) looks into the sky to observe a star (*STELLA[M]*), now known as Halley's Comet, seemingly an evil omen for the English kingdom.

Scenes 25 to 31 are an important part of the Bayeux Tapestry. Although the Latin inscription is minimal, the gestures and body language of the figures make it possible to develop the significance of this sequence.

The significance of Scenes 25 to 31

Here this paper will consider the main events of these scenes in reverse, from Scene 31 to 25, in order to illustrate the legitimacy of Harold's coronation.

The Tapestry shows (Scene 31) that some English people seem to be opposed to Harold's coronation, which could imply that there was Anglo-Saxon opposition to the royal promotion of Godwin's son.

The Tapestry shows (Scene 30) that Harold was consecrated by Stigand, as he is the only prelate shown at the coronation. Stigand is presented as the consecrator prelate, the main character of the coronation, and a legitimate archbishop. However, Stigand was excommunicated. He had received the *pallium* from the Antipope Benedict X (1058–9) and held Winchester and Canterbury in plurality, which was forbidden.

This scene also highlights the main coronation rituals: the acclamation of the people (the election of the king), the presentation of the royal insignia and the coronation and consecration by the archbishop.

Scene 29 shows the 'King's Council' (the *Witan*) giving the royal crown to Harold. They act in accordance with the will of the deceased king, which is highlighted by the gesture of one Anglo-Saxon noble (Figure 237).

Scene 27 shows that in his last breath King Edward outstretched his hand towards a character that only could be Harold. There are two interpretations of what is shown. Perhaps the dying king reminds Harold of his commitments promised in Normandy and entrusts the kingdom to him until William can be crowned. Alternatively, Edward designates Harold as his successor. Iconographic continuity suggests the latter. This scene evidently took place when the king's death was imminent, as evidenced by the servant supporting the king in bed, Edith's crying and the presence of a priest (keeping vigil).

The depiction of God blessing St Peter's church (Scene 26) identifies Westminster as the royal necropolis.

When Harold comes back from Normandy (Scene 25), his gestures and demeanour, as well as the fact that he and his companion are outside the palace, suggest a misunderstanding between Harold and King Edward.

Through all these elements it can be seen that the Bayeux Tapestry promotes the view that: shortly before his death, Edward designated Harold as his legitimate successor; this was confirmed by the Witan; Harold was consecrated king by Archbishop Stigand in a valid way; his coronation did not please everyone.

This version of events is far removed from the Norman vision traditionally assigned to the Bayeux Tapestry. But, like every literary or iconographic work, the Tapestry presents a version which is an interpretation of reality. For the time being, we will not attempt to judge if this version is historically accurate. First it is necessary to compare the Tapestry's account with what we know from contemporary and later sources.

The Bayeux Tapestry and contemporary written accounts

The testimony of English sources, written in Old English or Latin, usually confirms that Edward the Confessor designated Harold as his successor. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (E) for 1066, which was compiled at St Augustine's, Canterbury, states that 'Earl Harold succeeded to the realm of England, just as the king had granted it to him, and as he had been chosen to the position' (Irvine 2004, 86; Douglas and Greenaway 1981, 144). Versions C and D for 1065 are ambiguous: 'Yet the wise ruler entrusted the realm / To a man of high rank, to Harold himself, / A noble earl who, all the time / Had loyally followed his lord's commands / With words and deeds, and neglected nothing / That met the need of the people' (Conner 1996, 35; Douglas and Greenaway 1981, 143).

The *Vita Ædwardi Regis* (ii.II), which was completed around 1066–69, a few years after Edward's death, states that several people were with the king just before his death: 'when those present heard these words [a prophetic dream; see below] – that is to say, the queen [Edith], who was sitting on the floor warming his feet in her lap, her full brother, Earl Harold, and Rodbert [Robert FitzWimarch], the steward of the royal palace and a kinsman of the king, also Archbishop Stigand and a few more ...'. (*auditis his qui aderant, ipsa uidelicet regina terrae assidens eiusque pedes super gremium suum fouens, eiusque germanus dux Haroldus et Rodbertus, regalis palatii stabilator, et eiusdem regis propinquus, Stigandus quoque archiepiscopus cum paucis aliis…* ; Barlow 1992, 119).

According to the *Vita* (ii.II) the king recounted to these people a prophetic dream he had experienced. In it two monks stood before him and addressed him with him a message from God: '"Since", they said, "those who have climbed to the highest offices in the kingdom of England, the earls, bishops, and abbots, and all those in holy orders, are not what they seem to be, but, on the contrary, are servants of the devil, within a year and a day after the day of your death God has delivered all this kingdom, cursed by him, into the hands of the enemy, and devils shall come through all this land with fire and sword and the havoc of war"'. (*Quoniam, inquiunt, hi qui in hoc regno Anglico in culmine prelationis conscenderunt, duces, episcopi, et abbates, et quique sacrorum graduum ordines adepti, non sunt quod uidentur esse, sed econtra ministri diaboli, tradidit Deus post obitus tui diem anno uno et die una omne hoc regnum a se maledictum in manu inimici, peruagabunturque diaboli totam hanc terram igne, ferro, et depredatione hostile*; Barlow 1992, 117).

Then it is recorded (ii.II) that Edward said a few words of comfort to Edith, who was at his feet (*ad reginam uero pedibus suis assidentem*), as she is shown in the Tapestry. After which, he stretched his hand towards Harold (*porrecta manu ad predictum nutricium suum fratrem Haroldum*) to entrust him with Edith and the kingdom (*hanc cum omni regno tutandam tibi commendo*; Barlow 1992, 119). The words *tutari* and *commendare* do not necessarily mean that Harold is made Edward's heir and successor, but instead may signify that the king wanted the earl to take care of the English people, and carry out

his last will (ii.II): 'Then he addressed his last words to the queen, who was sitting at his feet, in this wise: "May God be gracious to this my wife for the zealous solicitude of her service. For certainly she has served me devotedly, and has always stood close by my side like a beloved daughter. And so from the forgiving God may she obtain the reward of eternal happiness". And stretching forth his hand to his governor, her brother, Harold, he said, "I commend this woman and all the kingdom to your protection. Serve and honour her with faithful obedience as your lady and sister, which she is, and do not despoil her, as long as she lives, of any due honour got from me. Likewise I also commend those men who have left their native land for love of me, and have up till now served me faithfully. Take from them an oath of fealty, if they should so wish, and protect and retain them, or send them with your safe conduct safely across the Channel to their own homes with all that they have acquired in my service. Let the grave for my burial be prepared in the minster in the place which shall be assigned to you ..."' (*Ad reginam uero pedibus suis assidentem hoc ordine extremum perorauit sermonem: "Gratias agat Deus huic sponsae meae ex sedula officiositate seruitutis suae. Obsecuta est enim michi deuote et lateri meo semper propius astitit in loco carissimae filiae, unde a propitio Deo uicissitudinem optineat felicitatis aeternae". Porrecta manu ad predictum nutricium suum fratrem Haroldum, "Hanc", inquit, "cum omni regno tutandam tibi commendo, ut pro domina et sorore, ut est, fideli serues et honores obsequio, ut, quoad uixerit, a me adepto non priuetur honore debito. Commendo pariter etiam eos qui natiuam terram suam reliquerunt causa amoris mei michique hactenus fideliter sunt obsecuti, ut, suscepta ab eis, si ita uolunt, fidelitate, eos tuearis et retineas, aut tua defensione conductos, cum omnibus quae sub me adquisierunt, cum salute ad propria tranfretari facias. Fossa sepulchri mei in monasterio paretur, in eo loco qui uobis assignabitur…*"; Barlow 1992, 123–5).

Here it is notable that the *Vita* is ambiguous about who might succeed Edward. The author, probably Goscelin of Saint-Bertin, writes a hagiographic account; its purpose is to highlight the saintliness of King Edward, no doubt upon the instruction of Edith. For people at this time, a person's last testament was considered prophetic. If the king was not of sound mind in the last moments before he died, Harold's designation as the successor could not have been clearly affirmed. Following the account of the *Vita*, Earl Harold may be disqualified as a legitimate choice to succeed Edward, as demonstrated by God's judgement over him in the Battle of Hastings. The author of the *Vita*, therefore, writes his account ensuring that Edward's words are not contrary to divine will.

Similarly, John of Worcester, in his *Chronicon ex chronicis*, written at the beginning of the twelfth century, has an agenda. Harold is presented as Edward's successor, chosen by the king before his death, supported by the nobles and the Witan, but here the consecration is described as undertaken by Ealdred, archbishop of York. In one concise sentence, John of Worcester (1066) describes different elements of the succession that correspond to those shown in the Bayeux Tapestry: the designation of the king, before his death (*ante suam decessionem regni successorem elegerat*), the choice of the nobility to give the crown to Harold (*a totius Anglie primatibus ad regale culmen electus*) and the consecration by the archbishop, in this case the archbishop of York, not of Canterbury (*ab Aldredo Eboracensi archiespicopo in regem est honorifice consecratus*): 'When he [Edward] was entombed, the underking, Harold, son of Earl Godwin, whom the king had chosen before his demise as successor to the kingdom, was elected by all the primates of all England to the dignity of kingship, and was consecrated king with due ceremony by Ealdred, archbishop of York, on the same day' (*Quo tumulato, subregulus Haroldus, Godwini ducis filius, quem rex ante suam decessionem regni successorem elegerat, a totius Anglie primatibus ad regale culmen electus die eodem ab Aldredo Eboracensi archiepiscopo in regem est honorifice consecrates*; Darlington and McGurk 1995, 601).

By the twelfth century, some Anglo-Norman authors, like William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon, increasingly question Harold's legitimacy and see him as a usurper, even a perjurer. William of Malmesbury, in the *Gesta regum Anglorum* (ii.228.7–8), written before 1125 and rewritten *c*. 1140, seems convinced that Edward would never have chosen as a successor a man he had never trusted. Whilst he recognises that Edward designated Harold king upon his death (*articulo mortis*), as this was a rumour in England (*quamuis Angli dicant a rege concessum*), he believed Harold extracted the agreement of the Witan (*extorta a principibus fide arripuit diadema*): 'for while grief for the king's death was still fresh, on that same feast of the Epiphany Harold, who had exacted an oath of loyalty from the chief nobles, seized the crown, though the English say that it was granted to him by the king. This claim, however, rests, I think, more on good will than judgement, for it makes him pass on his inheritance to a man of whose influence he had always been suspicious; although, not to conceal the truth, he might well have ruled the kingdom, to judge by the figure he cut in public, with prudence and fortitude, had it come to him lawfully' (*nam recenti adhuc regalis funeris luctu, Haroldus ipso Theophaniae die, extorta a principibus fide, arripuit diadema, quamuis Angli dicant*

a rege concessum. Quod tamen magis beneuolentia quam iuditio allegari existimo, ut illi hereditatem transfunderet suam cuius semper suspectam habuerat potentiam, quamuis, ut non celetur ueritas, pro persona quam gerebat regnum prudentia et fortitudine gubernaret, si legitime suscepisset; Mynors *et al*. 1998, 419–21).

On the other hand, William of Malmesbury (ii.227) is convinced that Edward's prophetic dream was a reality, and believes that England had been invaded by strangers who pillaged its wealth: 'the truth of this, I say, we now experience, now that England has become a dwelling-place of foreigners and a playground for lords of alien blood. No Englishman today is an earl, a bishop, or an abbot; new faces everywhere enjoy England's riches and gnaw her vitals, nor is there any hope of ending this miserable state of affairs' (*huius ergo uaticinii ueritatem nos experimur, quod scilicet Anglia exterorum facta est habitatio et alienigenarum dominatio. Nullus hodie Anglus uel dux uel pontifex, uel abbas: aduenae quique diuitias et uiscera corrodunt Angliae nec ulla spes finiendae miseriae*; Mynors *et al*. 1998, 414–7).

Henry of Huntington, in his *Historia Anglorum*, composed *c.* 1135–40, states (vi. 25) that Harold, when crossing the Channel to Flanders, was driven by a storm into the province of Ponthieu and captured by Count Guy, who handed him to William. Thereafter, 'Harold swore to William, on many precious relics of saints, that he would marry his daughter and after Edward's death would preserve England for William's benefit. On his return to England, he who had been received with great honour and many gifts chose to commit the crime of perjury' (*Haraldus autem iurauit Willelmo super reliquias sanctorum multas et electissimas se filiam eius ducturum et Angliam post mortem Edwardi ad opus eius seruaturum. Summo igitur honore susceptus et muneribus amplis ditatus, cum reuersus esset in Angliam, periurii crimen elegit*; Greenaway 1996, 381–3). Because of this it is not surprising, so the author writes (vi.27), that 'Harold, relying on his forces and his birth, usurped the crown of the kingdom' (*Haraldus uero uiribis et genere fretus regni diadema inuasit*). It is even suggested that 'some of the English [people] wanted to advance Edgar the atheling as king' (*quidam Anglorum Edgar Adeling promouere uolebant in regem*; Greenaway 1996, 384–5).

The continental sources give differing accounts of Harold's accession to the throne. Some of them fail to mention that Edward may have designated Harold his heir. William of Jumièges published his *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* (*Deeds of the Norman Dukes*) around 1070. He (VII.13) clearly states that Godwin's son was a usurper (*regnum continuo inuasit*) and also blames Harold for acting quickly and betraying his oath of fidelity to William (*cuius regnum Heroldus continuo inuasit, ex fidelitate peieratus quam iurauerat duci*; van Houts 1995, 160).

Guy of Amiens, author of the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio* (the *Song of the Battle of Hastings*), probably composed between 1067 and 1069, does not refer to Edward choosing Harold as his heir. However, he does say (v. 211–2) that William had a visit from an English messenger, who told him that 'the king and also the magnates who have authority in the kingdom order you to leave immediately' (*rex et primates regni quoque iura tenentes / Precipiunt dicto quod cicius redeas*; Barlow 1999, 14–5). This said, the author of the *Carmen* (v.292–4) maintains that Duke William was promised the crown of England: 'King Edward with the assent of his people and the advice of his nobles, promised and decreed that William should be his heir; and you [Harold] supported him' (*assensu populi, consilio procerum / Etguardus quod rex ut ei succederet heres / Annuit et fecit, teque fauente sibi*; Barlow 1999, 18–9). Throughout the poem Harold is described negatively: 'wicked King Harold' (*rex Heraldus sceleratus*; v. 129); 'this false, infamous, and perjured king, this adulterer' (*falsus et infamis periurus rex et adulter*; v. 261).

Later in the twelfth century charges against Harold multiply. For example, in Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Chroniques des ducs de Normandie* (*Chronicles of the Dukes of Normandy*), written soon after 1170, its author does not hesitate to say that Harold took the kingdom 'without telling anyone' and that 'traitor and perjurer, he would have been unfairly crowned, without receiving the unction or religious consecration' (*Heraut, de coveitise espris / Sanz autre conseil quin fust pris / Saisi le renne demaneis / Parjur e faus se fist li reis / Eissi, sanz icele untion / E sanz cele sacratium / Qu'en deit faire a rei saintement / Le jor de son coronnement*; v. 38891–8; Fahlin 1954, 482).

Other writers and poets are convinced of Duke William's legitimacy as Edward's heir, but nevertheless include the fact that the king, on his deathbed, chose Harold to rule the kingdom of England. Such authors include the monk of Battle Abbey who wrote his *Brevis Relatio de Guillelmo nobilissimo comite Normannorum* (*Short Account of William the Most Noble Count of the Normans*) around 1114–20; Orderic Vitalis, who chronicled the Norman Conquest of England around the same time; and Wace, who wrote his *Roman de Rou* around 1160–70. The text of the *Brevis Relatio* reopens the theme of perjury and the belief that Harold usurped the throne promised to William of Normandy: 'Edward's corpse was still lying on the ground, when Harold, the way the witnesses describe it, in his madness and disregarding

his oath took the Kingdom of England's crown ... with the understanding of the citizens and the support of many supporters of his craziness' (*Adhuc autem erat corpus eius super terram, sicut illi postea retulerunt, qui haec se uidere dixerunt, quum Heraldus quasi insanus atque postponens quicquid Willelmo comiti de regno Angliae iurauerat, uidelicet quod ei illud fideliter post mortem Regis Edwardi seruaret, consentientibus sibi ciuibus Londoniae multisque aliis insaniae eius fauentibus, apud Sanctum Paulum in ciuitate Londoniae, contra omnem rectitudinem, coronam regni Angliae arripuit*; Giles 1967, 4).

Even though his mother was English, Orderic Vitalis (III.ii.118) considered the fall of the kingdom of England to be God's punishment of Harold: 'Harold had himself consecrated by Archbishop Stigand alone, whom the pope had suspended from divine service for various misdeeds, without the common consent of the other bishops, earls, and nobles, and so by stealth stole the glory of the crown and royal purple' (*Heraldus ... a solo Stigando archiepiscopo quem Romanus papa suspenderat a diuinis officiis pro quibusdam criminibus, sine communi consensus aliorum praesulum et comitum procerumque consecratus, furtim praeripuit diadematis et purpurae decus*; Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 2, 136–9).

Here then, Orderic makes many accusations against the son of Godwin: first, he says that Harold took advantage of the people's mourning and King Edward's funeral to carry out his crime. Second, he stole the crown (*furtim praeripuit*) without the consent of the bishops, earls or other lords of the kingdom. Third, he was consecrated by Archbishop Stigand, who was condemned by the pope. Fourth and finally, as in the Bayeux Tapestry, Orderic (III. ii.118) ends his story by describing the English people's anger and hostility to the usurpation, made because of pride, and the main powerful lords' decision not to swear allegiance to Harold (*adientes autem Angli temerariam inuasionem, quam Heraldus fecerat, irati sunt et potentiores nonnulli fortiter obsistere parati a subiectione eius omnino abstinuerunt*; Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 2, 138–9).

However, neither author ignores the fact that soon before his death Edward considered, even decided, that Harold would succeed him. The author of *Brevis Relatio* relates the tradition that Harold, disregarding his oath, asked the king to concede to him the crown of England. Edward then said that he could not, because he had promised the crown to Duke William (*dicunt autem quidam tunc quod Heraldus quasi oblitus sacramentorum quae Willelmo comiti in Normannia fecerat, antequam rex Edwardus obiret, ad eum peruenit eumque rogauit ut ei coronam regni Angliae concederet. Quo audito rex Edwardus… respondit Haroldo nullo modo hoc se posse facere, quia Willelmum comitem Normannorum idem haeredem fecerat*; Giles 1967, 4).

Orderic Vitalis (III.ii.118) related a different story: when Harold came back from Normandy, he made Edward believe that William had refused the crown and given it up to him, Harold, because he was supposed to become William's son-in-law by marrying one of the Duke's daughters. Orderic says that the sick king was surprised by that decision, but agreed to this story and gave his approval to the clever tyrant (*Deinde fraudulentis assertionibus adiecit quod Willelmus Normanniae sibi filiam suam in coniugium dederit et totius Anglici regni ius utpote genero suo concesserit. Quod audiens aegrotus princeps miratus est, tamen credidit et concessit quod uafer tirannus commentatus est*; Chibnall 1969, 136–7). It is, therefore, the author's view that Harold was designated Edward's heir, but only because he deceived the king.

Wace (v. 5783–8) outlines in full the developments regarding King Edward's succession. First, he describes that a representative of the nobility advised the king to choose Harold as his heir (*Trestuit te sunt venu preier / E tu lor deiz bien octreier / Des que tuit te vienent requerre / Que Heraut seit reis de ta terre*; Holden 1971, 101). Second, Harold declares (v. 5804–6) to the king, who reminds his people that he promised the land to William of Normandy, '"Whatever you have done, my lord, allow me to be king and let your land be mine"' (*Que que vos, sire, fait aiez, otreiez mei que jo reis seie e que vostre terre seit meie*). Third, Wace says (v. 5823) that Edward complies with the wishes of the English people and 'chooses Harold as his heir' (*Issi a fait Heraut son eir*; Holden 1971, 102). Wace (v. 5821–2) insists that Edward took this decision because of the demands of the nobility, rather than those of Harold: 'That English people make Harold, or anyone, Duke or King, I grant it' (*Or facent Engleis, duc o rei, / Heraut ou altre, jo l'octrei*; Holden 1971, 102).

Another very important author, Duke William's apologist, presents Harold as a legitimate king, even though he also recognises the legitimacy of the Duke of Normandy. William of Poitiers composed his *Gesta Guillelmi ducis Normannorum et regis Anglorum* (*The Deeds of William, Duke of Normandy and King of England*) around 1075. He accepts that Harold had been officially designated as Edward's successor (ii.11). Indeed, he relates Harold's messenger's words, which he could have omitted. This messenger says that whilst Edward had first designated William as his heir to the throne of England, 'he [Harold] knows, however, that the kingdom is his by right, by gift of the same king his lord, made to him on his deathbed' (*Nouit autem iure suum esse regnum idem, eiusdem regis domini sui dono in extremis illius sibi*

concessum; Davis and Chibnall 1998, 118–9; Foreville 1952, 172). According to William of Poitiers, William states that this tradition prevailed in England since the time of St Augustine: 'Any donation, made in the last moments, is alone considered to be valid' (*donationem quam in ultimo fine suo quis fecerit, eam ratam haberi*; Foreville 1952, 172). In his response, Duke William does not dispute this, even if it disqualifies his claim to the crown. Instead, he points out that he had rights over Edward's succession, because the king and the nobility recognised him as a legitimate heir. He insists on the fact that in Norman law, the first designation of succession is the only valid one. It is obvious to William of Poitiers that Harold has been proclaimed by Edward the Confessor heir of the throne of England, and for that reason he is a legitimate king (Foreville 1952, 174–8).

In conclusion, the following ideas have been put forward:

The traditional view, that the Bayeux Tapestry and the *Gesta Guillelmi* of William of Poitiers tell the story of the Norman Conquest of England from a pro-Norman perspective is incorrect. It is obvious that in the first years following the Battle of Hastings the Normans did not dispute Harold's legitimacy as king. Instead, the Norman claim was based on the fact that Harold made a sacred oath on relics, and therefore Duke William could also legitimately claim the crown of England. However, it is uncertain whether or not Harold's oath was made in accordance with the wishes of Edward the Confessor. In any case, what was this oath worth since Edward clearly adopted another position on his deathbed?

An analysis of the story as depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry, when studied in relation to the other contemporary and subsequent sources, tends to prove that Edward really did change his mind on his deathbed and considered his earlier choice of William of Normandy as then invalid. In fact, it is apparent that more than once throughout his reign Edward offered his inheritance to different people. In 1042, when England was threatened by King Magnus of Norway, who claimed the English crown in accordance with an earlier treaty, Edward seems to have declared Swein Estrithson his legitimate heir. In 1051, he promised the crown to William of Normandy, with the Witan's consent. In 1054, the king, following the advice of his nobles, sought Edward Ætheling, his relative, exiled in Hungary, to become his heir, but the Ætheling died soon after his return to London in 1057. In this context, Harold's designation appears to be the fourth made by the king, who acted according to circumstances of his own initiative or under the pressure of his nobles.

According to the Bayeux Tapestry and the *Gesta Guillelmi*, William and Harold are legitimate kings. If this were not the case, then it would have been easy for the patron or designer of the Tapestry to add to the inscription the words '*periurus*', '*periuratus*', '*uesanus*', '*sceleratus*', '*iniustus*', every single time Harold was depicted – the same terms that we find in the Norman chronicles after 1070. However, the Normans, secure in their power and with the support of the papacy, believed that, even if the two aspirants had the same legitimacy according to the law, they were not equal from a theological point of view. Indeed, the whole of human history follows divine providence. After the Battle of Hastings (which God had decided in William's favour) the only legitimate king was the Duke of Normandy. The recognition of Harold's right to the throne, as it appears in the Bayeux Tapestry, is one of the arguments that affirm the view that the Tapestry was conceived and designed before 1069, a time when William and his supporters believed that it was possible to create in England a peaceful society where the English and Normans would collaborate for mutual benefit.

How to be Rich: the presentation of Earl Harold in the early sections of the Bayeux Tapestry

Ann Williams

It may seem that the last thing we need is another paper on status in the Bayeux Tapestry, but there may be some mileage left in its depiction of Earl Harold, which not only reveals his own position in the social hierarchy but also provides an insight into the display of status in eleventh-century England. The first panel of the Tapestry, which deals with events in 1064,[1] opens with King Edward (Figure 3, Scene 1) on his high-seat in a richly decorated hall (probably at Winchester), conversing with two figures, one (Figure 2) shown by the context to be Earl Harold; the gesture between king and earl, the 'touching hands' motif, perhaps indicates the commission of some errand (Wilson 1985, 174; Owen-Crocker 2007b, 151–2). Harold sets out immediately – the door to the hall is shown open – and travels with his men to Bosham (Scene 2). Thence they depart on their ill-fated sea-journey (Scenes 4–6), ending in the party being captured by Count Guy of Ponthieu (Scene 7) and taken to his residence at Beaurain (Scenes 8–9). Word of Guy's prize is brought to Duke William (Scenes 12–10, reversed), who orders him to deliver up his captive (Scene 13). Here begins the second section of the Tapestry, largely concerning Harold's stay with Duke William; the only relevant scenes are those showing William conducting Harold to Rouen (Scene 14), Harold's return to England (Scene 24) and his reception by King Edward (Scene 25).

Social standing in early medieval England was primarily established by birth, but though a thegn's offspring, male and female, were of aristocratic status, their precise place in the hierarchy was affected by other considerations.[2] Wealth, especially landed wealth, was one, but the rank of the lord who held their commendation was also important; a king's thegn had greater standing than a man of similar wealth commended to a lesser lord (Williams 2008, 5–8). In general terms, the closer one was to the king, the higher one's status; one of the criteria for a free man to attain thegnhood was 'a seat and special office in the king's hall' (Whitelock 1955, 432). It is therefore significant that the Tapestry shows Harold very close to King Edward. Whatever the meaning of the 'touching hands' gesture, it must indicate a man high in the king's circle; moreover, at their meeting on Harold's return to England, both king and earl are accompanied by axe-bearing attendants, and though it has been argued that the king is reprimanding the earl, the balance of the scene implies a more equal relationship (Owen-Crocker 2007b, 151).

The standing of the greater lords was also signalled by their ability to attract the commendation of others; the word 'lord' implied someone able to maintain a *hired*, a household of retainers. From the moment of Harold's appearance in the Tapestry, he is accompanied by his men. As he rides to Bosham at the head of his mounted escort, he presents a perfect illustration of the verse in the Old English *Maxims*: '*eorl sceal on eos boge, eored sceal getrume ridan*' (a nobleman goes on the arched back of a war-horse, a troop of cavalry must ride in a body; Shippey 1976, 66–7). In the 990s, Wulfstan of Winchester described an ealdorman 'accompanied by a large mounted retinue', and his lay contemporary, Ælfhelm *polga*, bequeathed half his stud at Troston to '*minan geferan … þe me mid ridað*' (my companions … who ride with me; Lapidge 2003, 530–3; Sawyer 1968, no. 1487).

Gradations of rank are found among retainers as among their lords. At a shire-court in Oxford in 1051–2, the retinue of Earl Harold's older contemporary, Earl Leofric of Mercia, is described as 'Vagn and all the earl's housecarls' (Sawyer 1968, no. 1425; Keynes 1993, 266–7); Vagn, a leading thegn of the central Midlands, was presumably their commander.[3] A similar relationship is implied in *The Battle of Maldon* (lines 198–202, 239–43, 288–94) between Ealdorman Byrhtnoth and Offa, possibly the nephew of Theodred, bishop of London (Scragg 1981, 36; Lockerbie-Cameron 1991, 246). Perhaps we may see their equivalent in Earl Harold's entourage in the Bayeux Tapestry. A second figure (Figure 1) stands beside Harold as he speaks with the king in the first scene, and the

fact that he is the taller is significant, since height and status are linked in the Tapestry's iconography (M. Lewis 2005b, 78–9, 139). Another taller figure attends the earl as he enters the church of Bosham; both are shown in the attitude of genuflection, but only Harold is wearing a cloak, another indication of status in the Tapestry's repertoire (M. Lewis 2007a, 104; Owen-Crocker 2007b, 160–1). When Harold enters the hall of Count Guy at Beaurain, he is again accompanied by a taller man (Figure 83), leaving the rest of his entourage outside, but here the difference in status is shown by the fact that the earl (Figure 84) is allowed to carry his sheathed sword, whereas the similar sword in the hand of one of Guy's retainers (Figure 82) presumably belongs to his companion (Figure 83).[4] The height of the man (Figure 204) who rides with Harold on his return to England cannot be judged, but though both wear spurs, only the earl (Figure 203) has a cloak, and his horse is a stallion, whereas his companion rides a gelding. In the following scene (Scene 25) in King Edward's hall, Harold (Figure 206) is again accompanied by a single retainer (Figure 205) bearing an axe, who balances the axe-bearing retainer (Figure 208) beside the king, each pointing to his own lord. None of these figures is named, and they need not all relate to a single man, but some may portray the leader of Earl Harold's *hired*.[5]

One of the duties owed by a lord to his followers was to provide them with food and drink; the word *hlaford* means 'bestower of bread'. Harold fulfils this obligation by eating with his men in his house at Bosham (Scene 4). The earl (Figure 14), in the centre of the table, drinks from a cup with a decorated rim, while two of his men have drinking-horns with decorated mouths, one of which has a terminal shaped like an animal's head. The table is laid with a bowl of food and what appears to be a loaf, suggesting a simple meal of bread, the staple food, and an accompanying 'relish' (*gesufel*) (Davidson 1997, 20–2).[6] The tenth-century regulations of the London 'peace-guild' record that when a guild-brother died, each of his fellows was to contribute a loaf with its relish (*gesufelne hlaf*) to the funeral feast (Attenborough 1963, 164–5), while the food-rent from Newton, Suffolk, in the time of Abbot Leofstan (1044–65) included 'relish (*syflincge*) for 300 loaves' (Robertson 1956, 192–3). What the 'relish' entailed varied according to the season, as well as the wealth of the provider. Then as now, butter was a common accompaniment to bread, but *smeoru* covered lard, fresh cheese and dripping, and more exotic relishes included black cumin, 'the southern wort that is good to eat on bread' (Hagen 2006, 389–90). Cumin must have been imported; the merchant in Ælfric's *Colloquy* included spices (*wyrtgemangc*) among his wares (Garmonsway 1991, 33).

The room at Bosham in which the meal is eaten is on the upper floor of a two-storied building, entered via what appears to be an external staircase. Since no pre-Conquest domestic buildings survive, except as robbed-out trenches and empty post-holes, it is difficult to interpret the Tapestry's representation, but the royal residence at Calne, Wiltshire, had an upper storey (*upflor*), which in 977 collapsed beneath the weight of a meeting of the king's council (ASC (D, E) 977; see Whitelock *et al*. 1965, 79).[7] In his translation of the *Pastoral Care,* King Alfred envisages a train of thought rising 'as on a ladder … until it stands firmly in the upper chamber (*solor*) of the mind', and such upper rooms may be attested archaeologically (Sweet 1871, 77; A. Reynolds 1999, 115). Whether the Tapestry's representation indicates a first-floor-hall or a two-storied chamber block, the earl's residence at Bosham was evidently a high-status dwelling. It was also associated with an important church, though, like the secular building, the Tapestry's picture cannot be related to any surviving structure; the closest comparison is St Laurence at Bradford-upon-Avon, Wiltshire (M. Lewis 2005b, 2). King Edgar had legislated on the division of ecclesiastical dues between churches built by thegns on their estates (*tunkirkan*) and the minsters into whose jurisdiction they had been intruded (Robertson 1925/1974, 20–1; P. Wormald 1999, 313–7), but Bosham was no mere *tunkirk.* Though its early history cannot be reconstructed, its description in Domesday Book reveals it as 'the richest unreformed minster remaining in southern England' (Blair 2005, 328–9). In King Edward's time, the manor of Bosham, reckoned at 113 hides, had been divided between the minster (held by Edward's chaplains Osbern and Godwin) and Harold's father, Earl Godwin.[8] Godwin's relationship with the community at Bosham resembles that between the minster of Deerhurst, Gloucestershire, and Earl Odda, who appropriated roughly half its endowment and used the southern half of its precinct to establish his own residence, marked by the church of Holy Trinity which Odda built to commemorate his brother (C. S. Taylor 1902, 230–40; Blair 2005, 286, 328; Taylor and Taylor 1965, i. 209–11). That Odda was regarded as 'a good man and pure, and very noble' (ASC (D) 1056; Whitelock *et al*. 1965, 132–3) is a reminder that thegnly acquisition of minsters was not necessarily hostile; many lay proprietors restored and revived ailing communities, even as they appropriated a share of their property (Williams 2002, 20–1). Harold's first action on arriving at Bosham is to visit the church (Scene 3), and the depiction of him genuflecting and crossing himself as he enters suggest an element of piety as well as proprietorship (Owen-Crocker 2007b, 160–1).

There is no point in being rich if no one knows it, and material wealth was demonstrated by personal adornment and expensive possessions. The physical form of the Tapestry makes the portrayal of distinction in dress difficult, but when Harold's party is captured by Count Guy, the earl (Figure 59), barefoot and bare-legged after wading ashore, wears a unique garment whose skirt is decorated with vertical stripes, possibly to indicate his rank (Owen-Crocker 2004, 255). Other items of lordly display are more easily illustrated. On his journey to Bosham, the earl (Figure 9) is the only rider mounted on a stallion, which denotes both his rank and his horsemanship; as the Old English *Rune Poem* says, 'in the hall riding seems pleasant to every warrior, but it is very stressful for the man who sits on the back of a powerful horse covering the mile-long roads' (Shippey 1976, 80–1).[9] Native British horses are small and stocky, but attempts were being made to improve the breed; studs are recorded on the lands of Æthelstan ætheling, eldest son of King Æthelred II, and local magnates like Thurstan Lustwine's son and Ælfhelm *polga* (Sawyer 1968, nos. 1487, 1503, 1531); an 'old stud-fold' adjacent to a royal park (*haga*) is recorded in a tenth-century boundary-clause (Sawyer 1968, no.1370; Hooke 1990, 115–8, 286–7). The ætheling bequeathed a white horse to his father the king, a pied stallion (*anes fagan stedan*) to his *discþen* Ælfmær, and a black horse to Bishop Ælfsige of Winchester, colours which suggest that the animals were Arab stallions from Spain, or bred therefrom (R. Jones 2008, 161–2). The fact that the English *fyrd* did not fight on horseback (except in the pursuit) does not mean that fine bloodstock was not desirable: the *Rune Poem* observes that 'a war-horse (*eh*) is a delight to princes in front of their nobles, a horse that steps proudly (*hors hofum wlanc*) while rich men on horseback exchange talk about it', and according to *The Fortunes of Men*, 'a good man values a good, well-broken horse (*mearh*), familiar, well-tried and round-hoofed' (Shippey 1976, 70–1, 82–3).

The high-stepping horse of the *Rune Poem* reappears in *The Battle of Maldon* (line 189), when the treacherous Godric flees '*on wlancan þæm wicge*' (on the proud steed, line 240) belonging to Ealdorman Byrhtnoth. He both betrayed his lord thereby and also started the flight, for 'too many believed … that it was our lord', being deceived not only by the quality of the horse, but also its opulent tack (*gerædu*, line 190), since horses owned by great lords were decked out to indicate their riders' rank (Scragg 1981, 63; Graham-Campbell 1992, 77–89; Owen-Crocker 1991, 220–37). Ælfric the homilist writes of angelic horses with 'golden trappings' (*mid gyldenum gerædum*), and bequests of saddle-gear in contemporary aristocratic wills suggest that this was no literary conceit (Skeat 1966, 98; Sawyer 1968, nos. 1497, 1503, 1537). Reins and tack (*bridelþwancgas and geræda*) were produced by the shoemaker in Ælfric's *Colloquy,* along with spur-straps and halters (Garmonsway 1991, 35), and in the late tenth century a stolen bridle was valuable enough to provoke an armed conflict (Sawyer 1968, no. 883). Since much of the horse's tack was made of perishable materials, little survives, though at Coppergate, York, was found what might be part of a wooden saddle-bow, decorated with geometric forms and interlace, and studded with silver rivets which once secured strips of horn (Webster and Backhouse 1991, 278–9; Graham-Campbell 1992, 80). Most of what remains consists of decorative mounts and buckles; a fine set of harness-mounts in gilded bronze was found at Velds, Denmark, but is 'either English work or made by a Scandinavian craftsman under English influence' (Owen-Crocker 1991, 233), and a stirrup-iron inlaid in copper and brass-wire, found near Seagry, Wiltshire, may have been of English manufacture (Backhouse *et al*. 1984, 105–6; Graham-Campbell 1992, 87–8). Like the clothing of the riders, the embellishment of the horses' accoutrements is not easily illustrated in the Tapestry's medium, but on the journey to Bosham Harold (Figure 9) is the only member of the party to wear spurs, and the horse he rides on his return to England (Figure 203) appears to have an embroidered headstall and reins and a jewel-studded breastband; there may also be a decorated band on the lower part of the earl's saddle.

Horses formed part of the heriots required in Wessex from earls, king's thegns and thegns commended to lesser lords (Whitelock 1955, 429). Hunting dogs and hawks also appear. According to the Berkshire customs recorded in Domesday Book, the heriot of a 'king's thegn or household warrior' (*tainus vel miles regis dominicus*) included his dogs and hawks (*canes vel accipitres*) if he had any (Erskine 1986, fol. 56v). King Edward's fondness for hunting is well known (Barlow 1992, 62–3, 78–9; Mynors *et al*. 1998, 404–5), but earlier kings seem to have made similar stipulations: the wills of the Kentish thegn Brihtric (between 973 and 987) and the Hertfordshire lady Æthelgifu (from the 990s) both include hounds in their heriots, and Brihtric includes two hawks as well (Sawyer 1968, nos. 1497, 1511). Earl Harold's hunting-dogs, with bells on their collars, run before him as he rides to Bosham (Scene 2), preceded by two smaller creatures interpreted as a brace of hares, though they might be terriers (Wilson 1985, 175; Yapp 1987, 27). The two dogs (A545–6) carried on board ship at Bosham (Scene 4), one in the arms of the earl himself (Figure 21), may be the pair (A553–4) who follow Count Guy's party (in

Scene 7) after their lord's capture and precede the earl as he is taken by William to Rouen (A583–4, Scene 14). They do not appear thereafter. Dogs are connected with the aristocratic pursuit of hunting, and the remains of what are probably hunting dogs have been found at several excavations (M. Lewis 2005b, 90; Hagen 2006, 135). The dogs of Æthelgifu and Brihtric are specifically described as staghounds (*headeorhundas*), used for the pursuit of red deer (*hea[h]deor*), and the earliest life of St Dunstan describes how, in the early 940s, the hounds of King Edmund I plunged to their death in the Cheddar Gorge along with the red deer stag (*cervus*) which was their quarry (Stubbs 1874, 23–4; Lapidge 1992, 247–59). The maintenance of a pack of hunting dogs requires considerable expenditure, and could be undertaken only by the wealthy. Some animals were quartered on the lord's men. *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum*, a tract on estate management, requires each pair of dependent tenants to maintain one staghound, and the Confessor gave a hide at the royal manor of Hendred, Berkshire, to Godric the sheriff's wife, 'because she was rearing his dogs' (Douglas and Greenaway 1953, 814; Erskine 1986, fol. 57v).

Hawks were another sign of status (Owen-Crocker 1991, 220–9, 235–6; Evans 1990, 79–99). They could be taken from the wild; there are numerous references to eyries in Domesday Book, which reveals that Harold himself had 'three nests of hawks in the woodland' (*iii nidi accipitrum in silva*) attached to his manor at Limpsfield, Surrey (Erskine 1986, fol. 34). Native birds were probably released at the end of the hunting season; the wildfowler of Ælfric's *Colloquy* let his birds go every summer, to save the cost of feeding them (Garmonsway 1991, 32). Especially prized, however, and probably therefore retained in a mews, were the imported falcons called 'foreign hawks' (*wealhhafocas*). The royal dues of Worcestershire, recorded in Domesday Book, included £10 for 'a Norwegian hawk' (*accipiter norresc*), probably a peregrine (Erskine 1986, fol. 172), and identical sums were due from Leicestershire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and Wiltshire, although the sources of these birds are not recorded (Erskine 1986, fols 64v, 154v, 219, 230, 238).[10] *The Fortunes of Men* describes the training of such a *wælisca* by its keeper (*hagosteald*, a word implying someone in a lordly household); he puts jesses (*wyrplas*) on it, and feeds it small morsels of food until it learns to return to his hand (Shippey 1976, 60–3). Harold collected books on the art of falconry, later used by Adelard of Bath (Haskins 1922, 398–400), and he probably carries a falcon (Figure 9) on his journey to Bosham. The jesses, apparently terminating in bells, are clearly visible. The bird travelled with him to Frankia, and is seen again on Harold's fist (Figure 74) as Count Guy (Figure 73) conducts his prisoners to Beaurain, bearing his own falcon. Once Harold passes into William's hands, however, the duke (Figure 124) holds the bird, which does not appear thereafter. None of those who carry hawks are depicted with gloves, which, given the size and strength of the creatures' talons, would seem essential; as *Maxims* says, 'a hawk must go on a glove' (*hafuc sceal on glofe*; Shippey 1976, 76–7).

The Tapestry's portrayal of the earl shows him with most of the contemporary indicators of high status: a close relationship with the king, a retinue which he feeds at his own residence in close proximity to an important church, fine clothes, a high-stepping horse suitably caparisoned, hunting-dogs and a hawk.

Clearly, Harold is a person of consequence in his world, but there is something more. The text which accompanies his journey to Bosham reads: *HAROLD DVX ANGLORVM ET SVI MILITES EQVITANT AD BOSHAM*, the *dux* being emphasised by the pointing hand of one of Harold's men (Owen-Crocker 2007b, 148–9). It has been argued that the title *dux Anglorum*, 'clearly inappropriate in an English context', is included to establish an equivalence with William *dux Normannorum* (Short 2001, 279). While it is true that the exact expression does not reappear in pre-Conquest sources – though Ælfgar of Mercia is styled *comes Anglorum* in a charter ostensibly of 1061 (Sawyer 1968, no. 1237; S. Baxter 2008, 267–70) – this is not quite the whole story. From earliest times English ealdormen and earls appear in charters as *duces*, but their spheres of authority are rarely defined; even when describing the complex manoeuvres of 1051–2, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* does not specify territories, referring rather to 'Siward's earldom', 'Leofric's earldom' and so forth. Worcestershire leases of the late tenth and eleventh centuries usually acknowledge the consent of the current *dux Merciorum,* and one surviving royal diploma gives territorial titles for King Æthelred's ealdormen (Sawyer 1968, no. 891), but even here ealdorman and earls appear as lords of people rather than places: Æthelred's ealdormen are Æthelweard *dux* of the Western Provinces, Ælfric of the provinces of Winchester (*Wentaniensium Provinciarum*), Ælfhelm of the Northumbrian Provinces, Leofsige of the East Saxons (*Orientalium Saxonum*) and Leofwine of the Hwiccian Provinces.[11] This usage reflects the fact that tenth- and eleventh-century earldoms were not territorial entities, like the counties and duchies of Frankia. In England there was no tier of local administration higher than the shire, and shires could, at the king's will, be transferred from one earl's authority to another's, or re-combined in new groupings. In 1043 Edward created an earldom

for Swein Godwinson consisting of two 'West Saxon' shires (Berkshire and Somerset) and three 'Mercian' (Herefordshire, Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire), but the constituent parts are recorded only by the post-Conquest chronicler, John of Worcester (McGurk and Darlington 1995, 558–9). The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (E) for 1051 (Whitelock *et al*. 1965, 119) refers merely to 'Earl Swein's district' (*folgoð*), although it does reveal the inclusion of Herefordshire. Earls were figures of national rather than regional importance and could be moved from one earldom to another; both Harold and Ælfgar were successively earls in East Anglia before the deaths of their respective fathers.

From at least the tenth century, there was a hierarchy of earls, partly based on seniority of appointment. Dominant earls frequently acquired quasi-royal bynames: Æthelstan, who presided over most of eastern England between 931 and 956, was called 'Half-king', and his younger contemporary Ælfhere, who tops the lists of ealdormen in royal diplomas from 957 to 983, was described by Byrhtferth of Ramsey as *princeps Merciorum gentis* (Hart 1992, 569–604; Williams 1980, 143–72). In 1007, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (C, D, E; Whitelock *et al*. 1965, 88) records the appointment of Eadric *streona*, widely regarded as the evil genius of King Æthelred's later years, to the *kingdom* of the Mercians (*on Myrcena rice*) and describes a meeting of the witan in 1012 as 'Ealdorman Eadric and all the chief councillors of England' (Whitelock *et al*. 1965, 91).[12] Closer to the title bestowed on Harold in the Tapestry is that accorded his father Godwin, in the *Life* of King Edward, '*totius pene regni … dux et baiulus*' (ealdorman and ruler of almost the whole kingdom; Barlow 1992, 10–1). These words are paralleled in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*'s (D) description of Godwin's fall from power in 1051: 'it would have seemed remarkable to everyone in England if anybody had told them that it could happen, because he had been exalted so high, even to the point of ruling the king and all England' (Whitelock *et al*. 1965, 120). In this context Harold might be described as *dux Anglorum*, as not just any earl, but the senior earl of the kingdom, the closest to the king and the highest in his counsel. The title is not analogous to that of his rival, William *dux Normannorum*. The Frankish equivalent was *dux Francorum*, a title bestowed in the 930s by Louis d'Outremer upon Hugh the Great and inherited by Hugh's son, Hugh Capet, who in 987 displaced the last Carolingian ruler to become the first Capetian king of the Franks (Dunbabin 1985, 47, 68). Perhaps this too was in the mind of whoever commissioned the Bayeux Tapestry.

Notes

1. The date is implied by the depiction of Duke William's Breton campaign. The first panel of the Tapestry may have been made in Normandy (Short 2001, 275).
2. In some cases the mother's rank may have been more important than the father's, for English women kept their rank even if married to men of lower status; e.g., Wulfric Wulfruneson, son of Wulfrun of Tamworth, whose father's name is unknown (Sawyer 1979, xxxviii–xli).
3. Vagn held some 55 hides of land in Warwickshire and Oxfordshire (Erskine 1986, fols 242v, 250).
4. If the sword belonged to Guy's man, he would be wearing it.
5. The bearded man with an English hair-style (Figure 130) who stands immediately behind Earl Harold in Duke William's hall at Rouen, wearing a sword and carrying a spear and a kite-shaped shield, and touching the earl's right hand, has been interpreted as Harold's brother Wulfnoth, held hostage by the duke; a similar spear-bearing figure without a beard (Figure 188) observes the earl in the oath-taking scene (Owen-Crocker 2007b, 151–2).
6. Twelfth-century peasants who did compulsory ploughing-services were entitled to *companagium*, 'something to go with bread' (Stacy 2006, 97).
7. William of Malmesbury (line 6) translates *upflor* as *solarium* (Mynors *et al*. 1998, 265–6).
8. One hide (at Itchenor) had been detached by 1086 (Erskine 1986, fols 7–17v). It is not easy to calculate how the manor had originally been divided. In 1086 the king was holding Earl Godwin's 56½ hides (Erskine 1986, fol.16), which, at half the hidage assigned to the church, suggests a 50/50 split. Before 1066, however, Godwin the priest held 47 hides of the church's share (Erskine 1986, fols 17v, 27), which leaves 6½ hides for Osbern, but Domesday says that he 'received' 65 hides (Erskine 1986, fol.16), a contradiction I cannot resolve. The minster held a further 19 hides at Lavington and Elsted, a total holding of 132 hides.
9. The word translated as 'riding' (*rad*) may in fact refer to the environment of the hall, but the meaning is the same: sitting comfortably at home is better than handling a spirited horse on a long journey (Page 1999, 68–9). For the Tapestry's horses, see further Keefer 2005, 93–108.
10. The seal of Cnut IV of Denmark (d. 1085), the earliest from Scandinavia, shows on its reverse the king on horseback, with a hawk or falcon on his fist (Harmer 1950, 128–9).
11. For Ælfhelm's title see also Sawyer 1968, no. 1380.
12. Eadric is described as *quasi subregulus* in the post-Conquest Worcester cartulary (Hearne 1723, 280–1).

Where a Cleric and Ælfgyva...

Patricia Stephenson

Who was this lady (Figure 135)? Where was she? And why was she included in the Tapestry?

Some have suggested that this Ælfgyva was Harold's sister (Barlow 2002, 23, n. 32, 72; M. W. Campbell 1984, 128; E. A. Freeman 1867–79, vol. 3, 696–8; Gameson 1997b), bearing an English name,[1] alive at the time of Harold's visit to Normandy, known to a contemporary audience and later mentioned in Domesday Book along with other members of the Godwin family.[2] Also in Domesday for Wiltshire is an Ælfgyva connected with the lands of the church of Wilton held by the Abbess of Wilton Abbey.[3]

There was a strong Godwin connection with Wilton Abbey in Wessex. Earl Godwin's daughter, Gunnhild, was a nun there, and it seems very likely that her sister, Ælfgyva, was also a nun at Wilton Abbey (Barlow 2002, 8). What is certain is that an Ælfgyva became the Abbess of Wilton Abbey between the years 1065 and 1067, the very timescale of the events in the Bayeux Tapestry (Nightingale 1906, 27; Gosling 1990; Wilmart 1938, 36–7, n. 6). Whilst this paper proposes that the Ælfgyva in the Tapestry was indeed the Abbess of Wilton, it also suggests that she was Harold's sister. Their eldest sister, Queen Edith, was also at Wilton Abbey at that time, because she was supervising the rebuilding in stone of the abbey church. Her project ran parallel to her husband's rebuilding of Westminster Abbey, which figures so largely in the Tapestry (Barlow 1997, 232–3; 2002, 77).[4]

The Godwin daughters and Harold's daughter Gunnhild were educated at the school for young noblewomen attached to Wilton Abbey (Barlow 1997, 230; 2002, 78). Edith regarded the abbey as her home. Indeed, she made it her home after King Edward's death in January 1066, and she had taken refuge there in 1051–2 when repudiated by her husband (Barlow 1997, 115–6; App. A, 295).

In the Tapestry (Scene 15), Harold (Figure 129) appears to be drawing the attention of William (Figure 128) to Ælfgyva (Figure 135), telling him something about her. Harold seems excited. The cleric (Figure 136), with his sweeping gesture, is drawing attention to Ælfgyva's eyes. Though it may look like it, he is not slapping her face nor making improper advances, as others have suggested (Musset 2005, 126; McNulty 1980, 665–6; Grape 1994, 40). Harold is, it seems, telling William and those present, perhaps including his brother, Wulfnoth, and his nephew, Hakon, who were living at William's court as hostages, about the miraculous healing of Ælfgyva's eyesight by Saint Edith of Wilton Abbey (Bosanquet 1964, 6; Barlow 1997, 301–6).

Ælfgyva's chaplain, the monk Goscelin, tells this story in his *Life of Saint Edith* (II.19), written in 1080 at the request of Ælfgyva's successor, the Abbess Godyva (Wilmart 1938, 294–5).[5] Goscelin says that Saint Edith was the daughter of King Edgar and Wulfrith, whom he had abducted from this very school at Wilton Abbey when staying the night there. Wulfrith later returned to the abbey with her baby daughter, Edith, became a nun there and later its abbess. Edith remained with her mother at Wilton all her life.

Her half-brother, King Æthelred II, together with St Dunstan, encouraged her to build a little chapel next to the abbey church, and when Edith died in 984 aged only 23 years, she was buried in her own little chapel (Horstmann 1883, 1745–52). Those who prayed at her tomb found that their prayers were answered. Archbishop Dunstan had two visions about Edith, and she quickly became a saint in King Æthelred's reign.

Describing the accident which caused Ælfgyva's blindness and how she was cured by the Saint, Goscelin (II.19) says that one day, when in St Edith's Chapel, the Abbess Ælfgyva was lighting an oil lamp (a metal hanging bowl containing too much oil) which then overturned, burning Ælfgyva, resulting in her right eye becoming badly swollen (Wilmart 1938, 86, n. 3, 294).[6] Both eyes were then affected and she lost her sight. It is recorded

that even her life was in danger. But, whilst she slept, she had a vision of St Edith making the sign of the cross over her and telling her that she would soon be well. The abbess awoke, the swelling went down and she regained her strength (Wilmart 1938, 295). This seems to be the miracle healing which Harold is relating to William; certainly a dramatic event in the Godwin family and in life at Wilton Abbey.

But why should the master designer of the Tapestry, recording historical events, show Harold relating what seem to be family affairs to William? Could it be that Harold was pointing out to William that, being a nun, his sister was not of marriageable status, if marriage and his sister were being discussed (Walker 1997, 93; Bosanquet 1964, 6–8)? Or might it be that Harold, now aware of his difficult situation, felt the need of the blessing of Wilton's saint in order to be successful in his mission to Normandy?[7] These are plausible reasons for including Ælfgyva in the Tapestry, but this alone hardly warrants a picture of her in an imposing gateway (for gateway it is). So, where exactly was Ælfgyva?

In October 1065, Queen Edith arranged for her beautiful new abbey church, her gift to Wilton Abbey where she had spent her childhood, to be consecrated by Bishop Herman. Being a chaplain at Wilton Abbey, Goscelin was present and described the occasion (Barlow 1992, 73). In his *Life of Saint Edith* (II.20), Goscelin gives details about St Edith's little chapel and its entrance porch, now rebuilt in lime and stone (Wilmart 1938, 86, n. 3; Barlow 1992, 71, n. 175). This entrance to the chapel is also described in a fifteenth-century poem as having 'little entrance gates with crosses set upon them' (Horstmann 1883, 1171–800).

In the Tapestry, there is just such a little entrance porch from which a cleric is emerging down some steps. Two double doors are depicted, with crosses set upon them. The cleric who is drawing attention to Ælfgyva's eyes is surely Goscelin himself, her chaplain; Ælfgyva is not in Rouen at William's palace. Why should she be? Instead, she is standing in her own splendid gateway at Wilton Abbey, as the Abbess of Wilton appears on her Anglo-Saxon seal.[8] The gateway was close to the newly rebuilt abbey church. When telling his story about Ælfgyva to William, Harold points rather generally outwards in her direction to draw the viewers' attention to what he is saying. As for the naked figure (Figure 137) in the border of the Ælfgyva scene, there is a possible explanation for his presence, also connected with Wilton Abbey but not with Ælfgyva.

Ælfgyva is the only woman named in the Tapestry, so this was obviously an important scene for those involved in its making. The embroiderers have even managed to convey, very realistically, the typical Wilton chequer-board style of architecture which can be seen all over Wilton today: not diamonds as in Rouen or circles here, but squares. They are made of local flint and stone.

Wilton Abbey's curate, Goscelin, chaplain to the Abbess Ælfgyva, and to Queen Edith who had chosen him (it is thought) to compose the *Vita Ædwardi Regis* (The Life of King Edward; Barlow 1992), was present at the consecration of Edward's new church at Westminster (Westminster Abbey) in December 1065. He leaves a careful description of it, as it appears exactly half-way though the Bayeux Tapestry (i.6; Barlow 1992, 69–71).

Goscelin remained at Westminster and was there when the king died on 4 January 1066. He has written the most detailed account of the deathbed scene, of who was present and what was said, which also seems to have been transposed onto the Tapestry (Scenes 27/8). This shows Edith (Figure 228) weeping at the foot of the bed. Goscelin explains that she is so placed to warm her husband's cold feet in her lap (Barlow 1992, 119–25).[9]

As Queen Edith was an accomplished needlewoman, is it not likely that she would be involved in the making of a Tapestry, the first part of which is in praise of her family? It shows her brother, Harold (Figure 9), with his hawk and hounds riding to Bosham, praying first in Bosham church (Figure 11); and the arch in the Tapestry resembles the chancel arch at Bosham, which with other features are recognisable today. It shows Harold (Figure 14) eating and drinking in the Godwin manor hall at Bosham, before leaving for Normandy from the harbour (Scene 4), details which do not figure in other accounts of these events. It shows Edith's husband's death and burial (Scenes 26–8) and her three brothers' heroic deaths at Hastings (Scenes 52, 57). One might say that, so far, the Tapestry was a Godwin family memorial.

It is known that Edith embroidered her husband's robes, examples of which can perhaps be seen in the Tapestry; she had even designed the trappings for Edward's horse. A team of embroiderers from Wilton Abbey might have wished to show a portion of Queen Edith's new building, as well as portraying her husband's at Westminster, even though hers was modest in comparison.[10] There may have been some rivalry between husband and wife over their building works, both of which were being celebrated in the Tapestry.

But if the first part of the Tapestry suggests the involvement of embroiderers from Wilton Abbey, and also perhaps from nearby Shaftesbury Abbey, which could have shared the work to hasten the progress, what possible connection with these two abbeys could the second part of

the Tapestry have? The justification for William's invasion of England and his subsequent victory is portrayed here for posterity. Why should Bishop Odo, considered by many (including the author) to have been the patron of the Tapestry,[11] commission it to be made in workshops in Wessex rather than in his earldom of Kent, near St Augustine's monastery, where connections with design in the Tapestry are so very strong?

The answer to this question may lie with another resident at Wilton Abbey in 1066. Her name was Muriel; in the eleventh century it was a rare name, of Norman origin, written variously, sometimes as Murieli. This Muriel was well known for her poetry, admired by the poet Baudri de Bourgueil who visited her at Wilton Abbey (Delisle 1872, 23–50) and addressed a poem to her (Abrahams 1926, 256–7). She may even have been Odo's sister Muriel.

Like the Godwin girls, this Muriel had been educated in the school for young noblewomen at Wilton Abbey, far from her native land. It was there that she began to write and became a respected poet. In spite of being warned against an arranged marriage in a poem by Serlo, a monk and canon of Bayeux Cathedral (Wright 1872, II, 233–40), which he sent to her at Wilton – '"far better to remain a virgin in your nunnery", he wrote, "than have to take a lover"' – it is very likely that this Muriel did marry (Tatlock 1933, 317–21).

In the *Roman de Rou* (6025–8), written in about 1160, the historian Wace, a canon of Bayeux Cathedral, recounts that Odo's sister, Muriel, married Yon, whom William summoned to his first council, along with his closest relatives and friends, to give him their advice, and funds, on the eve of his decision to invade England (Andresen 1877–9, 269; Burgess 2004, 158).[12] Yon may have been represented in the Tapestry, perhaps seated at the feast at Hastings (Figure 382). A certain Muriel returned as a widow to Wilton Abbey in 1066 (Barlow 1992, App. C, 137) and became a nun (Tatlock 1933, 320). If this is the poetess, it is possible that her husband also fell at Hastings. Whether or not Muriel the poetess was Odo's sister Muriel, there is no doubt that Odo would be acquainted with a celebrated Norman poetess of noble family, established at Wilton Abbey.[13]

This Muriel was in mourning at Wilton Abbey in 1066. Like the Godwin sisters, her need to contribute to a memorial for the dead was as real as theirs; she, of course, had a Norman victory to celebrate, perhaps as a relation of William the Conqueror, whose brothers Odo and Robert of Mortain had supported the invasion, just as Leofwine and Gyrth had supported their brother Harold in his defence of the kingdom. The Norman story in the second part of the Tapestry nicely restores the balance of this beautifully constructed epic history in pictures: no longer is it Godwin orientated.

It is well known that Odo plays a more prominent part in the Tapestry than in any other account of these events: if it were made in Muriel's nunnery, of which William the Conqueror was a benefactor, this would provide Odo with an opportunity for self-promotion. As William's deputy in the south of England in 1067, his itinerary would certainly have brought him to Sarum Castle in Wessex,[14] a mere three miles from Wilton Abbey.

Other named persons in the Tapestry had connections with Wilton Abbey and Shaftesbury Abbey. There is Wadard (Figure 366), who was Odo's tenant in Dorset and Wiltshire;[15] and Archbishop Stigand (Figure 243), who was Queen Edith's friend. There is also Eustace of Boulogne (Figure 543), in disgrace in Kent for leading a revolt in Dover in 1067 against William (Stenton 1971, 599, n. 26), so needlewomen there would be unlikely to honour him in the Tapestry. However, Eustace was Queen Edith's brother-in-law through marriage,[16] and he had been William's standard bearer; therefore, Edith and Muriel had reasons for including him in the Tapestry, if it was made at their abbey in Wessex.

A final point worth making about Ælfgyva's presence in the Tapestry is that other remarkable medieval works of art have had their creators' names inscribed upon them for posterity. Scribes and sculptors could sign their work. Gifted artists left portraits of themselves.[17] It is therefore suggested that the Ælfgyva scene was included in the Tapestry because it was under Ælfgyva's abbacy that the work was begun; a collective undertaking by many hands, male and female, proud of their work, promoting Christian values, the power of the Church, three great ecclesiastical foundations,[18] and an Anglo-Saxon saint.

Alas, no miracle by Wilton's saint could save Harold's right eye or his life, because his tragedy, told in the Bayeux Tapestry, was to break his oath, sworn upon the relics of Bayeux Cathedral. Perhaps the master designer of the Tapestry also used the Ælfgyva scene to foretell the way in which Harold would die, by an arrow in his right eye, which caused his blindness and led immediately to his slaughter; just as Roland's death was foretold, early on in the *Chanson de Roland* (Song of Roland; 833–8), in Charlemagne's vision (Whitehead 1980, 25).

No longer mysterious, Ælfgyva is perhaps the key to a fuller understanding of the Tapestry and its place of origin. A contemporary audience, used to miracles and visions, would have known why she was there: *VBI* (where), denoting the place where a cleric and Ælfgyva are proclaiming a miracle.

Notes

1. Of the Anglo-Danish Godwin children, the last three, including Ælfgyva/Ælfgifu, were given English names.
2. Robert of Mortain inherited the ancestral lands of the Godwins in Wessex which had been held by King Edward, Queen Edith, Earl Godwin, Earl Harold and Ælfgifu who held her land of King Edward. This Ælfgifu, named among the Godwins, may refer to Godwin's daughter Ælfgyva: see *Domesday Book* (Williams and Martin 2002) Walron, Sussex (53.x). An Ælfgyva/Ælfgifu also held land in Stourton Caundle, Dorset (213.xxvi), Lyme Regis, Dorset (229.lvii) and East Knoyle, Wiltshire (164.i). Ann Williams believes that the reference to an Ælfgyva as Harold's sister in the Buckinghamshire entry in Domesday (397.iv) is an error; I am grateful to Ann Williams for allowing me to read her forthcoming article, 'Cautionary Tales', prior to publication.
3. See *Domesday Book* (Williams and Martin 2002), Bowerchalke and Broadchalke, Wiltshire (172.xiii).
4. The *Vita Ædwardi Regis* (i.6) gives an indication of how long the building work at Wilton took: 'and when a few years had slipped by it was finished' (Barlow 1992, 67–73).
5. Wilmart (1938, n. 6, 36–7) describes Godyva also as Ælfgyva's sister.
6. An Anglo-Saxon metal hanging bowl was dug up in Wilton in 1860 when the Victorian drains were being laid. It was found between the former abbey and the present Kingsbury Square. It is now in Salisbury Museum (Nightingale 1906, 5).
7. The reason for Harold's trip to Normandy in 1064 or 1065 is unknown (for a possible explanation see Beech, this volume). The Tapestry is cleverly ambiguous to suit everyone: the Godwinist version, to gain the release of the hostages; or the Norman version, to confirm the promise of the English throne to William (Barlow 1997, 301; Barlow 2002, 74; Burgess 2004, 153).
8. See Nightingale 1906, 14, for seals of the abbesses of Wilton Abbey. The records of the monastery with the names of all the abbesses and Anglo-Saxon seals are preserved in the Wilton House documents, Wiltshire County Library's Records Office.
9. Goscelin wrote down his observations very carefully: see the introduction to Goscelin's *Liber confortatorius* (Talbot 1955, 20–2).
10. Goscelin (VI.20, IV.16) spoke of the 'wonderful needlework displayed by the nuns in their making of vestments and tapestries' (Wilmart 1938, 87, 79. For Goscelin's descriptions of tapestries see Talbot 1955, 19–20. Even William of Poitiers praised the embroidery of Englishwomen (Foreville 1952, 256–8). Of the robes which Edith embroidered for her husband, Goscelin writes 'not even Solomon in all his glory was thus arrayed' (*Vita Ædwardi Regis*, i.2; Barlow 1992, 25).
11. It is the traditional view that Bishop Odo commissioned the Tapestry for display in his newly-built cathedral at Bayeux for its consecration in 1077 (Grape 1994, 54; Musset 2005, 16; Wilson 1985, 202).
12. Wace (line 6029) says that as far as he knows, they had no children (Andresen 1877–79, 269; Burgess 2004, 158).
13. There is some confusion about the identity of Bishop Odo's sister Muriel's husband. See G. H. White 1953, App. K., 30–4 and Le Cacheux 1974, 1–3, where it is recorded that Eudes au Capel, also known as Odo, is son of Turstin Haldup, Baron of La Haye-du-Puits, who, with Emma, his wife, founded the Benedictine abbey of Lessay in the Cotentin in 1056. Eudes was also a benefactor of the abbey and built the abbey church. He died in 1098 and was buried in the choir of his church in the place reserved for its founder. Charter evidence says that Eudes' son, Robert de Haie, is grandson of Turstin and nephew of Yon, which implies two brothers with the title 'al Capel'. This title refers to the wearing of a crown of flowers and processing to the choir stalls at the head of the choir on the Feast of the Holy Trinity. Muriel, sister of Bishop Odo and of Robert of Mortain and half-sister of the Conqueror, certainly married into this family.
14. Sarum Castle was of such strategic importance in the kingdom that in 1070 William summoned his victorious army there to reward and dismiss them. In 1085 he summoned all the principal landowners there to swear an oath of fealty.
15. Hides at Rampisham, Dorset, formerly belonging to Shaftesbury Abbey, were held by Wadard of Bishop Odo. Wadard also held Swindon, Wiltshire, of the Bishop (Williams and Martin 2002, 166, 203).
16. Eustace was married to King Edward's sister, Godgifu, youngest daughter of Emma and Æthelred (Barlow 1997, 30).
17. The Alfred Jewel, an *æstel* in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, is inscribed with the words, 'Alfred had me made'. The town of Shaftesbury bore a similar inscription upon a wall: 'King Alfred built this town in the eighth year of his reign AD 880' (Chandler 2003, 7). Matthew Paris, author of the *Chronica Majora* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 26, fol. 6), left a portrait of himself, kneeling. John Sifweras drew portraits of himself and his scribe, John Whas, in the glorious *Sherborne Missal* (London, British Library, Additional 74236).
18. These being Westminster Abbey, dedicated to St Peter; Wilton Abbey, rededicated to St Benedict; and Bayeux Cathedral, dedicated to Notre-Dame.

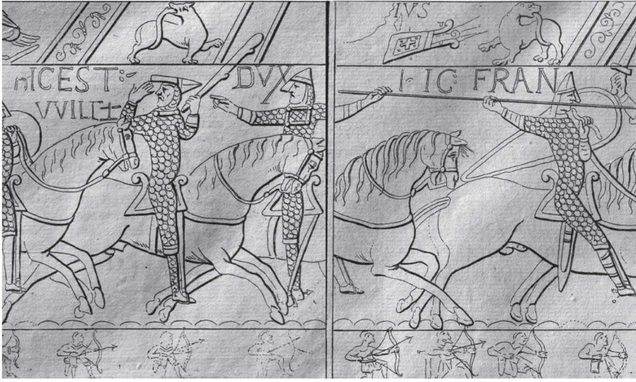
Robert of Mortain and the Bayeux Tapestry

David S. Spear

So accustomed is the viewer of the Bayeux Tapestry to seeing Eustace of Boulogne (Figure 543) – pointing to William the Bastard (Figure 542) at the very height of battle, indicating that the Duke was still alive – that it comes as something of a surprise to learn how tentative that identification might be. Charles Dawson expressed reservations as early as 1907, believing that the English 'historical draughtsman' Charles Stothard had tampered with the scene in the 1810s, but his warnings were ignored (Hicks 2006, 292–4). Then in 1994 Wolfgang Grape (23–4) raised doubts about the figure's identity, advising that 'we must not exclude the possibility that another name originally appeared in [place of Eustace]'. In 2004 David Hill (398) re-assessed this particular scene and magnified the concerns of Dawson, cautioning that 'our present image would appear to owe much to the restoration of Stothard'. Although there has been a recent argument for increased involvement of Eustace, arguing that he not only appears in Scene 55 but was also the patron of the Tapestry itself (Bridgeford 1999; 2005), it seems these earlier doubts have not really been put to rest.

What reason is there to doubt that the standard bearer who points at Duke William is to be identified as Eustace? First, the name *E[USTA]TIVS* (seemingly written above Figure 543) itself is by no means a certainty. Much of the name was torn away in the distant past, and although today the letter *E* can be seen on the one side of the replacement patch and the letters *TIVS* on the other, even these letters may be problematic. To quote Hill (2004, 397–8), 'close examination of the "modern" image [shows] that the initial [letter] *E* is restoration … [while the original] letter would appear to [have been] cramped and curvilinear'. Moreover, in the eighteenth-century drawing of the Tapestry commissioned by Montfaucon, there is no *TIVS* but only *IVS*. Further, Stothard's subsequent *modus operandi* is open to question. He relied on the appearance 'of the holes where the needle had passed', and on the 'minute particles of the different coloured threads [which] were still retained', from which he 'succeeded in restoring nearly all of what was defaced' (Stothard 1821, 1). But whose pin holes was he actually following? How do we know they are from the eleventh century and not from later centuries? How do we know if all the pin holes were discovered? If some were overlooked then the original letter *T*, for example, could be falsely restored to the letter *I*. Stothard's impressionistic approach is fraught with uncertainty and leaves much room for error. As regards the letters of Scene 55 in particular, Stothard (1821, 2) wrote, 'on carefully examining the torn and ragged edges which had been doubled under and sewed down, I discovered three other letters, the first of the inscription an *E*, and *TI*, preceding *VS*, a space remaining in the middle but for *four* letters, the number being confirmed by the alternations of green and buff in the colours of the letters remaining'. It is difficult to say so precisely that four letters only would fit in the space available. And it is troubling that no hint of the green and buff colouring remains: today the *E* is dark blue or black while the *TIVS* is green. It is puzzling, too, that the eleventh-century sources – including the *Carmen de Hastingae Proelio*, William of Poitiers, Orderic Vitalis, Domesday Book and Latin charters – seem to prefer the spelling as '*EUSTACHIUS*'. Indeed, the author of this article has been unable to find an instance, outside the Tapestry itself, of Eustace II's name being rendered *EUSTATIUS*.

Second, as noted by Bridgeford (2005, 192–3), Eustace's nickname was '*al gernons*' (the moustachioed), and the figure pointing at Duke William does indeed sport a prominent moustache. But the engraving of this scene published by Montfaucon in the eighteenth century, again before Stothard's own paintings and restorations, shows a man with no moustache (**40**). It should be noted that the actual sketch by Benoît, upon which Montfaucon relied for his printed edition, does show a thinly moustachioed figure. Yet we know that Montfaucon was not in principle averse to depicting facial hair, for numerous examples of



40. *Stothard's drawing of 'Eustace' (Society of Antiquaries of London).*

41. *A coin of William I/II showing a 'cross formy cantonned by four disks' (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge).*

moustaches are to be found throughout his edition of the Tapestry. Thus, the omission of Figure 543's moustache by Montfaucon begs for an explanation, and at the very least adds a modicum of doubt. Moreover, Shirley Ann Brown (1988, 11, n.11) wryly observes that Eustace's moustache has grown since 1730 when he had none, into the prominent handlebar that he now has. She wisely warns that this phenomenon makes 'one aware of the difficulties of relying upon small visual details, such as haircuts and mustachios, to prove points about the Bayeux Tapestry'. Photography of the reverse side of this scene shows Brown to be correct: it is dangerous to place too much emphasis on any single detail of Scene 55 (or of any scene), at least until a chemical analysis of all the threads is undertaken and there is a full scientific study of the front and back of the Tapestry in tandem (see Lemagnen, this volume). There is also something vaguely disquieting in having the first person to propose Figure 543 as Eustace being the same person who has restored the Tapestry in support of his own proposition, reconstructing letters and augmenting moustaches.[1]

Third, Catherine Morton (1975, 367) has asserted that the standard carried by Figure 543 is 'the only banner depicted in the Tapestry for which there is a probable identification [namely that of] Eustace II of Boulogne. Its design of a cross formy cantonned by four disks is that found on the coins of his son, Eustace III, and almost certainly on his own coins as well'. Further, Morton notes, the four balls, or boules, which surround the cross in the standard are a rebus for Boulogne. But this is unlikely. It is clear that the 'cross formy cantonned by four disks' is found also on the coinage of several Norman dukes at least as early as William Longsword, including the '*PAXS*' coinage of William the Conqueror as King of England (Dieudonné 1926, 301–8; North 1963, 140–1, pl. XIII, nos. 9–14; **41**).[2] Against Morton, Derek Renn (1994, 177–98) sees no special links between this banner and Eustace of Boulogne; Adrian Ailes (1990, 2) observes that for this period 'shields and later lance flags were decorated with random and unsystematic designs for purely aesthetic or bellicose reasons'; and David Crouch (1994, 66) writes that heraldry arose 'in north-west France in the later eleventh century [and] spread outwards to northern France and England [only] early in the twelfth century'. In short, there is no certainty that the banner in Scene 55 belongs to the House of Boulogne. Rather, it is equally likely to be associated with the Norman duke, with a different lordship altogether, or even to be merely a generalised version of a mid-eleventh-century standard.

Since there is a reasonable doubt about attributing the role of standard bearer to Eustace, this paper proposes an alternative figure, namely Count Robert of Mortain. He was, in brief, the younger brother of Bishop Odo of Bayeux, and the half-brother of William the Conqueror. Robert held family lands at the mouth of the River Risle in central Normandy, and, of course, the county of Mortain in southwest Normandy. And in England, according to Brian Golding (1990, 119), to whose articles this paper is indebted, 'he held estates in twenty counties. He dominated feudal society in the south-west, especially in Cornwall; he held the important rape of Pevensey; he had a number of strategically-placed manors round London; his lands in Northamptonshire and Yorkshire were extensive' (see also Keats-Rohan 1993, 30–46; Golding 2004). To date, as far as is known, no one has tried to link Robert so closely with the Bayeux Tapestry.[3]

What arguments can be made for the proposition that Robert of Mortain is the standard bearer who points back at Duke William? First, the letters in the legend about the figure could quite easily accommodate the name *ROTBERTVS*. *EUSTATIVS* and *ROTBERTVS* have the same number of letters and therefore take up

about the same amount of space. Indeed, the initial *R* fits David Hill's (2004, 398) description of the letter being 'curvilinear' better than does the *E* of Eustace. Second, the standard in the scene could be that of William the Conqueror, in which case the identity of the standard bearer might simply be someone close to William on the battlefield. Or it could be the banner of Mont-Saint-Michel. There is a charter of Robert of Mortain in which he grants to that famous Norman monastery the priory of St Michael's Mount, Cornwall, as well as certain English lands, and the right to hold a market (Bates 1998, no. 213). In this grant Robert notes his devotion to Mont-Saint-Michel, because he had carried the standard of St Michael at the Battle of Hastings (... *habens in bello sancti Michaelis vexillum quoniam* ...). The charter, approved and attested by William the Conqueror, was drawn up at Pevensey sometime between 1070 and 1085. Although the document is not without its complications in terms of dating and recensions, it would seem unlikely that a forger would simply make up the fact that Robert had carried St Michael's banner into battle. It should be remembered, moreover, that Mont-Saint-Michel is one of the few places both shown and labelled on the Tapestry (Scene 16). By extension, therefore, it is not inconceivable that one of the men on the Breton expedition was Robert of Mortain. The expedition (Scenes 16–20) which passes by Mont-Saint-Michel would likely have traversed the county of Mortain as the entourage of William and Harold moved into Brittany (see map in Boussard 1952, 270). Why Robert of Mortain was devoted to St Michael is difficult to determine, but it is possible that it was in remembrance of 'the festival of St Michael (29 September) [which] was about to be celebrated throughout the world when God granted' to William the Conqueror a change of winds that finally allowed his fleet to cross the Channel (*Carmen de Hastingae Proelio*, lines 76–7; Barlow 1999, 7). Also of note is the fact that the fleet landed at Pevensey, which became one of Robert of Mortain's key English possessions and which was where his charter on behalf of Mont-Saint-Michel was drawn up.

Third, there is no doubt that Robert of Mortain fought at the Battle of Hastings. According to William of Poitiers he was among the pre-invasion counsellors (*Gesta Guillelmi*, ii.1; Davis and Chibnall 1998, 100); in the *Ship List* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, E Museo 93, fol.8v (p. 16)) Robert provided far more ships than any other Norman for the invasion fleet (van Houts 1988, 169, Appendix 1); and, according to Wace (line 8635), Robert was in the thick of the fighting at Hastings: 'Count Robert of Mortain was not far from the duke; he was the duke's brother through his mother and he rendered his brother great assistance' (Holden 1971, vol. 2, 207; Burgess 2004, 188). While it is true that Wace wrote nearly a century after the battle, recent work by Elisabeth van Houts (1997a; see also Bennett 1983) reminds us that Wace had intimate and unique information about Duke William's family, which of course would include Robert of Mortain. While Wace (line 8674) places Robert in the middle of the battle, it should in fairness be pointed out that he identifies Duke William's standard bearer as one Turstin, son of Rollo the White, so that *TVRSTINVS* is yet another possibility for the knight in Scene 55 (Holden 1971, vol. 2, 208; Burgess 2004, 188–9).

Fourth, the battle scene is not the only place in the Tapestry where Robert of Mortain appears. The possibility has already been raised that Robert is one of the riders who accompany William and Harold into Brittany. And it is almost certainly Robert of Mortain (Figure 386) who sits together in council at Hastings with Duke William and Bishop Odo (Scene 44). All three men are named, although Robert is called only by his first name. It is therefore conceivable that this could be Robert Count of Eu who was known to have been important to William and a part of the invasion army (or perversely any of dozens of 'Roberts', it being an extremely common name in the Norman world). Still, the assumption that this figure is Robert of Mortain has held universal sway among commentators on the Tapestry. The three brothers sit in what seems to be a building (as opposed to, say, a field tent), its solidity implied by the shingled roof and refined capitals. They are engaged in vigorous dialogue or debate as Odo (Figure 384) gestures with his hands, William (Figure 385) brandishes his upright sword and Robert unsheathes his weapon. Robert's sword points to the next scene where workmen have assembled to build or to shore up the castle at Hastings. At least one historian, Lucien Musset (2005, 214), has implied that it is Robert (Figure 387) himself who supervises the construction project. Musset reads *ISTE* not as 'this man' but as 'the latter', meaning the figure in the previous scene, that is to say Robert of Mortain; and this is an interpretation also supported by Frank Barlow (1999, lxv). This image of Robert as castle builder coincides with that developed by Brian Golding (1990, 121, 133), citing Robert's numerous fortifications, as for example at Mortain, St Hilaire-du-Harcouët, Le Teilleul, Tinchebrai and Gorron in Normandy; and Pevensey, Montacute, Launceston, Neroche and Berkhamsted in England.

François Neveux (2004a, 181) has recently raised the possibility that, in Scene 35, the two figures with Duke William (Figure 263) are Odo (Figure 264), the tonsured figure on the right, and Robert of Mortain (Figure

262) on the left. Neveux's thinking is that they could be discussing the building of the fleet which appears in the next scene, and that Robert and Odo were star providers of ships for the invasion fleet. Although most interpreters have seen Figure 262 as a messenger bearing news from England of Harold's coronation, there is at least the possibility, based on the figure's posture, that he is pleading with William to build a fleet, an idea emphatically endorsed by Bishop Odo. In yet another example, David Wilson (1985, 190) has suggested that it may be Robert (Figure 423) who trails Duke William (Figure 424) on horseback in Scene 48, as William waits to debrief Vital about the disposition of the Anglo-Saxon army. Wilson allows for the possibility that the second horseman is Odo, but since the Bishop does not seem to wear mail elsewhere in the Tapestry, perhaps the armoured figure is indeed Robert.[4]

That Robert of Mortain appears in the Tapestry itself is therefore not new, but the possibility that he is shown on multiple occasions including in the important battle scene shifts the relationship of Robert to the Tapestry. Robert's new relationship, it is proposed, is both artistically and historically satisfying, for it goes almost without saying that the Tapestry is at once an artistic statement, sometimes likened to a visual epic, and compared to the *Song of Roland* (Dodwell 1966; S. A. Brown 1979), and a historical account of the events of 1066, often compared to the more traditional historical texts such as the *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* of William of Jumièges or the *Gesta Guillelmi* of William of Poitiers.

As an artistic statement, the animating force of the Tapestry has long been recognised as the divine punishment of Harold Godwinson for his perjury at the hands of William the Conqueror. The increased role of Robert of Mortain, coupled with the already ubiquitous role of his brother Odo of Bayeux, seems to expand the story line to include not just Harold and William, but their immediate families as well: the fall of the House of Godwin and the rise of the House of Duke William. If Scenes 52 to 57 are seen in panoramic unity, what we might call the final assault, then it might be read as follows: the Normans attack from the viewer's left, Harold's brothers Leofwine and Gyrth die (and note that they are explicitly called Harold's brothers in the legend), the attack is renewed, Odo rallies the troops, William lifts his helm, Robert points to his brother and finally Harold is slain. As figures singled out for emphasis, it is three brothers versus three brothers at the battle's artistic crescendo. Others have previously noted the importance of a deadly fraternal rivalry, Gale Owen-Crocker (2005a) and Brian J. Levy (2004), for example, but placing Robert with his two brothers at the height of the battle certainly allows this theme its maximum visual impact.

As a historic statement, Robert of Mortain's newly raised prominence in the Tapestry is consonant with what we know from other sources. It is not simply a question of Robert's war counsel, his ships, his presence at the Battle of Hastings, his connection to Mont-Saint-Michel, or his reputation as a castle builder. There is also Robert's connection to Pevensey, for very shortly after 1066 Robert was awarded control of the rape of Pevensey, which has already been mentioned as the place of issue of Robert's charter to Mont-Saint-Michel. And Golding (1990, 130) has noted that 'most of these estates (at Pevensey) had been held by Harold and other members of the Godwin clan', which adds a historical dimension to the family rivalry mentioned above. Pevensey is named in the Tapestry as the landing site of the Norman fleet (Scene 38), and most commentators think the site was chosen in advance and not simply left to chance (Barlow 1999, lxviii). Pevensey was a strategic holding on the south coast of England and had been so since Roman times. Moreover, since Robert's earliest pre-Conquest holdings were at the mouth of the River Risle in central Normandy, Pevensey made a convenient port for Robert's numerous Channel crossings. Golding (1990, 131), has observed that Robert's 'four most valuable manors [at Pevensey] (excluding the borough of Pevensey itself) all lay on, or near the coast'.

Moreover, the image of the three brothers working in concert is not just an artistic convention played out in the Tapestry, but is also corroborated by the historical record. From Domesday Book we know that Odo was the greatest tenant in chief in England and that Robert of Mortain was number three (Hollister 1987, 242; Fleming 1991, 215–31; Green 1997). David Bates (1997, 96–100) has previously mentioned the important role of Odo and Robert in royal administration. They were among the small group of magnates upon whom William constantly relied, and at whose court they were in frequent attendance. Further, they were quite often overlapping as witnesses of William's charters, implying a physical proximity and collective presence over a wide span of territory and a long span of time, both before and after 1066. Although Brian Golding (1990, 123) is unimpressed by Robert of Mortain's frequency at William's court, claiming Robert witnessed only between 30 and 40 royal *acta*, he is relying on the old version of King William's *Regesta*. David Bates's new version (1998) shows Robert attesting more than 60 royal charters. To paraphrase Bates (2001, 34, 122–30), Odo and Robert were closely associated with William's entire adult career.

Of course William, Odo and Robert each had his own

personal agenda. In 1082, for example, William had Odo arrested (Bates 1975, 15–20). Yet it is striking how in unison the three brothers were from *c.* 1050 when Odo first became bishop until Odo's arrest, some 30 years later. Indeed, Eleanor Searle (1988, 224–5) argues that the final act of consolidation of all of Normandy under William the Bastard's control involved the transferral of western Normandy from the hands of his paternal kinsmen into the hands of his maternal family, namely Odo and Robert. Along these same lines, it is telling that on William's deathbed, Orderic Vitalis (VII.iii.247) singles out Robert of Mortain as the most important voice in appealing for Odo's release from prison (Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 4, 98). Even more to the point, the author of the *De Obitu Willelmi* (line 25), again at the deathbed, calls Robert 'the king's brother, whom he trusted in everything as befitted their close kinship' (van Houts 1995, 187). The sentiment may have been formulaic, but it was unlikely to have been a lie.

Doubtless the most visible co-fraternal action was the foundation of Grestain Abbey (Golding 1990, 141–2; 2001, 213–7). The foundation charter of the abbey was published by Bates (1998, no. 158) and discussed by Bates and Gazeau (1990), who have highlighted the degree to which this was a family venture. Grestain, strategically located quite near where the River Risle empties into the mouth of the Seine, had been founded originally in 1050 by Herluin de Conteville, the father of Odo and Robert. In 1070 the abbey was impressively revitalised by Robert of Mortain, and further supplemented with lands and gifts in 1082. Robert made the bulk of the donations, but William and Odo contributed as well and attested to Robert's gifts. Moreover, their mother, Herleva, the one parent they had in common, was buried at Grestain, as were both of Robert's wives, and in 1095 Robert himself. It was clearly meant to be a family centre (Golding 1990, 141–4). We can also note in passing a family connection at Robert of Mortain's other major religious foundation, the collegiate church of St Evroul at Mortain: the foundation was assented to by William the Conqueror and attested to by Bishop Odo (Golding 2001, 217–8).

By reading *ROTBERTVS* in place of *EUSTATIVS*, several difficulties in the story line of the Bayeux Tapestry can be removed. Eustace's actions, known from other sources and always hard to reconcile with the Tapestry, can be severed from it.[5] There is also no need to try to reconcile William of Poitiers' account of the Battle of Hastings, which includes the so-called Malfosse incident where Eustace turned tail, with what is depicted in Scene 55. There is no need to try to explain the date of the Tapestry in light of Eustace's awkward invasion of Dover in 1067, and his concomitant exclusion from William's court until 1077 (Tanner 1992, 270–4; 2004, 99–111). Eustace doubtless played a role at the Battle of Hastings, but his relationship to the Bayeux Tapestry may be based on a misreading.

Here, it is implied that Odo remains the most likely candidate as the patron of the Tapestry (Bernstein 1986, 136–43; S. A. Brown 1990). However, it is not necessarily the Odo who merely plumps his own role in the events of 1066, but one who also calls attention to the role of his brothers: William is firmly in charge, Robert dutifully provides counsel, ships, and muscle, and perhaps even a galvanising presence at the turn of the battle itself (Pastan and White 2009). This interpretation also implies that the Tapestry could have been produced anytime between 1066 and 1082, the year of Odo's arrest, although the arguments for an early date seem more persuasive.

In conclusion, given a degree of doubt about the presence of Eustace of Boulogne in the Tapestry, it seems that the most reasonable substitute is Robert of Mortain. Seeing Robert as the figure who points to Duke William at the height of battle merely consolidates themes already latent in the Tapestry. Robert is already shown in the Tapestry, perhaps several times, as an active participant in the Norman Conquest, and his important role is corroborated by other sources. He has connections to sites named in the Tapestry, Mont-Saint-Michel and Pevensey, and his close links to his brothers are found both within the Tapestry and in the historical record.

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Notes

1. A full study is needed of Stothard's relationship to the Bayeux Tapestry. While it is right to admire Stothard's love of the work, his artistic abilities and his perseverance in drawing the entire embroidery, it should be noted that his reputation with respect to the Tapestry is not without blemish: it has been proposed that he cut off and kept two fragments of the Tapestry, one of which was later returned to Bayeux. For a tantalising introduction to Stothard's sojourn in Bayeux see Hicks (2006, 121–39; 2008) and M. Lewis (2007c, 400–6).

2. Generally the *PAXS* coinage is ascribed to William I, but it may have been the earliest issue of William II (Archibald 1984, Cat. 396).
3. An obscure guide book to the city of Bayeux (Le Lièvre undated, 44–5), asserts without any supporting documentation, that '*Il est certain que nombre de détails n'ont pu être connus que par des amis intimes et familiers du Duc-Conquérant: ils n'ont pu être retenus, racontés et retracés que par des témoins oculaires tels que Robert comte de Mortain,* Odon de Conteville, *évêque de Bayeux, frères utérins du duc et la princesse* Mathilde *elle-même. Ces trois personnages ont pu concevoir l'idée de ce travail original, en arrêter le plan et en confier l'exécution à l'aiguille des dames de la cour*' (It is certain that a number of details could not have been known except by close friends and associates of the Conqueror. These could have been retained, recounted, and recalled only by eye witnesses such as Robert count of Mortain, Odo de Conteville bishop of Bayeux – half-brothers of the duke – and the Princess Matilda herself. These three people were able to conceive of the original idea of the work, to draw up the design, and to assign its execution to the needles of the ladies of the court). R. Howard Bloch resurrected this long-lost reference in 2006 (44). For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that one scholar has proposed that Richard fitz Turold was the donor of the Tapestry, partially on the grounds that he was an English subtenant of Robert of Mortain (Drake 1881).
4. At least one modern author has imagined the missing final scene to include Robert of Mortain, i.e., 'with William and his trusty half-brothers' (Owen-Crocker 2002, 273).
5. One example of Eustace as an impediment can be found in Freeman (1991, 133–4).

Hic Est Miles: Some images of three knights: Turold, Wadard and Vital

Hirokazu Tsurushima

In the Bayeux Tapestry three knights (*milites*) are depicted: Turold, Wadard and Vital (*Vitalis*). They have usually been counted as vassals of Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and it is assumed that all of them belonged to the same class of lowly knight. For the eleventh century, however, this categorisation is over simplified. The word *miles* could imply a social function, such as a man-at-arms, and some people are so described in some contexts in historical sources.[1] Although professional soldiers certainly existed, social function does not necessarily specify either a profession or a specific social standing.[2] Nor did the word *miles* necessarily mean an *eques* (a man-at-arms on horseback; S. Reynolds 1994, 352). This paper seeks to reveal some aspects of the nature of a *miles* through the three knights depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry,[3] since they were the only visible living witnesses of ordinary men-at-arms in this historical source.

The Bayeux Tapestry was almost certainly commissioned by Bishop Odo of Bayeux, a half-brother of Duke William (Freeman 1867–79, vol. 3, 481–2; Gibbs-Smith 1973, 4; Bates 1975, 6; Bernstein 1986, 30–6).[4] Odo fulfilled his role in governing England immediately after the Norman Conquest, when King William was absent in Normandy (Bates 1975, 6–7; Loyn 1984, 179). It is believed that he was made earl of Kent in 1067, the office of earl being more English than continental (C. P. Lewis 1991, 207–23). His preeminence among the aristocracy is borne out by the extent of his lands in England. 'Domesday lists estates in twenty-two counties, mainly concentrated south east of a line drawn from the Humber to the Severn' (Bates 1975, 10), in three zones; that is Kent, the central Midlands and Lincolnshire. The value of these widely distributed estates is estimated to have been about £3,050 in 1086 (**42**). Although this valuation is artificial and does not necessarily reflect the real productivity of the lands concerned, it provides a rough idea about their richness. Kent in particular was Odo's main reservoir of wealth and manpower.[5] The value of his lands in Kent ran to £1,813 and accounted for 42% of the total. In Kent he was the greatest landlord, even more powerful than the Archbishop of Canterbury (**Chart 1**).

David Bates (1975, 10) says that Odo's 'lands in Kent were certainly granted shortly after 1066, while those in the counties which form a semi-circle from west to east of London followed as soon as military success permitted'. It seems that, immediately after October 1066, his lands in Kent were based upon confiscations from the Godwin family and their local followers. 'The Lincolnshire lands seem to have been acquired before 1075', and were given to his vassals who took part in his campaign to the north (Bates 1975, 10). His fall from grace in 1082 presents some difficulties in interpreting Odo's Domesday lands, but this is not of concern here.

Turold

Of the three knights, Turold is the most difficult to identify. The Tapestry shows William (Figure 106) sending two messengers (Figures 98–9, 103–4) to transmit his order for Guy of Ponthieu to bring him Harold. The name *TVROLD* is embroidered in Scene 10, and the location of the inscription (to the right of Figure 94 and above Figure 95) has caused scholarly disagreement regarding which figure it refers to, the taller messenger (Figure 94) or the dwarfish groom (Figure 95). The dispute goes back to the days of Freeman (1867–79, vol. 3, 364) and Round (1903, 342). Freeman, an adherent of Prime Minister William Gladstone, emphasised the role of the common people, while Round, an aristocratic Conservative, concentrated his efforts on demonstrating the great part played by the noble Turold, the 'true knight', on the stage of 'History'. But the historian must be free from such political ideologies (Aird 2007; Tsurushima 2007b). As a general rule, the designer of the Tapestry placed inscriptions or legends over the heads of figures (Grape 1994, 39), although in the present instance the

42. *Lands of Odo in Domesday Book.*

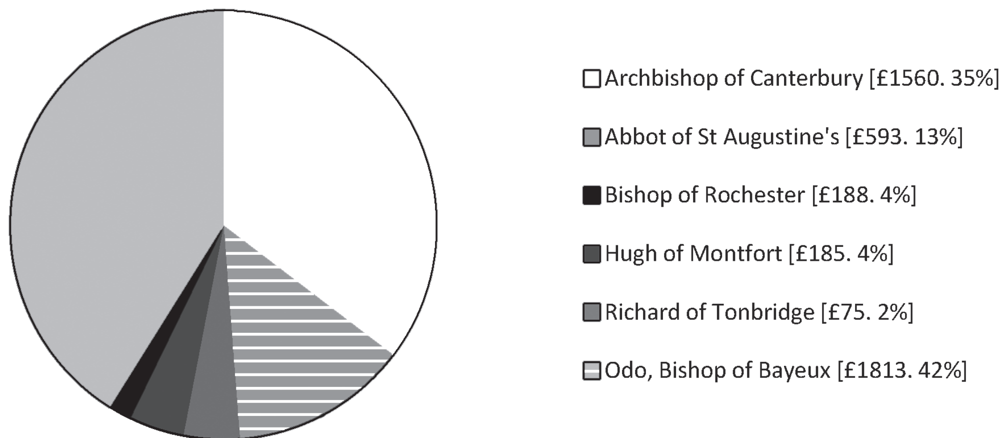


Chart 1. *Major Landholders in Domesday Book for Kent.*

messenger is too tall and this 'error of perspective' perhaps resulted in an unusual placement. The name of Turold was not rare, for Musset (2005, 112) shows at least 29 Turolds in pre-Conquest Normandy. If, *ad extremum*, the inscription of the name was placed in the only blank space, it is impossible to say which figure is Turold. All that can be asserted is that Turold is depicted here, and it is this which is important.

Who was Turold? There are various candidates: Turold, Constable of Bayeux, a vassal of Duke William; a close associate of Count Eustace; a later chaplain of King William II; a close relative of the abbot of Peterborough; and the Tapestry's designer and author of the Norman version of *The Song of Roland* (Lejeune 1966, 342–7; S. A. Brown 2005, 155 and n.35). Many historians, however (Freeman 1867–79, vol. 3, 571; Stenton 1957, 24; Bernstein 1986, 33), have identified him as Turold of Rochester, the only candidate connected to Odo, bishop of Bayeux, as are the other two minor characters depicted in the Tapestry, Wadard and Vital, both tenants of the bishop in Domesday Book. Historical context must carry greater weight here than details gained from isolated guesswork; therefore, considering the context of his appearance in the Tapestry, Turold was probably a vassal of Odo.

Turold followed his lord and fought in Kent as well as at Hastings. On his march to London, Duke William confiscated properties of the Godwin family and their followers, and gave them to his own followers, in particular, Bishop Odo. In turn, Bishop Odo granted confiscated lands to his own vassals and followers, but he also might have allowed them to appropriate land for themselves. Tenurial relationships before 1066 were complicated by *laenland*, and many ecclesiastical lands had been appropriated by the lay aristocracy. In Kent, lands belonging to the cathedral churches of Canterbury and Rochester and the Abbey of St Augustine's had been secularised by the Godwin family and their followers. For Norman newcomers, these lands seemed to belong to their enemies, so that they were rightfully forfeited. These forfeitures caused many disputes. Archbishop Lanfranc asked King William to issue a writ directing the settlement of these land disputes in the county court. In the Penenden Heath trial (25 March to 28 August 1072 or 29 August 1072 to 25 March 1073), Turold of Rochester is among the defendants: 'During these three days Lanfranc, the archbishop, proved his title to many lands which were then held by men of the bishop, to wit: Herbert son of Ivo, Turold of Rochester, Ralph of Curbepine, and the other vassals … . These were the lands in question: Detling; Stoke; Preston; and many other smaller estates' (Douglas and Greenaway 1953, 450; Bates 1998, 313–26).

Turold had confiscated Preston from Æthelnoth Child (whose family had followed Godwin), who had farmed land he received from the archbishop; 'Æthenoth Child held Preston from the archbishop and rendered the farm when the king crossed the Channel; and now Turold holds [it] from the bishop' (*Prestitun Alnod Child ab archiepiscopo tenebat quando rex mare transiuit et firmam reddebat. Et modo Turoldus ab episcopo habet*; Douglas 1933, 52). Æthelnoth Child was the one of the wealthiest aristocrats in pre-Conquest England. His lands were spread over seven counties (Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire) and were valued at about £250.[6] He was known as 'the Kentishman' or 'Æthelnoth of Canterbury', which suggests that he was the city's port-reeve. John of Worcester describes him as 'a noble military officer of Kent' (*nobilem satrapam Aelnothum Cantuariensem*; Thorpe 1848–9, ii, 1). He might have been the leader of the Kentish contingent of the English *fyrd* at the Battle of Hastings, captured near Canterbury. In March 1067, he was taken to Normandy as a hostage and never returned to England.

Turold might well have died after the settlement of the Penenden Heath dispute and before 1086, since in all the entries in the Essex folios of Domesday Book he is described in the past tense as having usurped lands,[7] some of which, like Fobbing and Mucking, belonged to the bishop's fief in 1086.[8] Mucking and Fobbing face the Thames, across from Gravesend in Kent, and lie near to Milton, which was held by Ralph, son of Turold, from Odo. It is possible that Turold not only had an important defensive role as guardian of the city of Rochester, the most important crossing point on the Medway, on the major route from Dover to London, but also that he supervised the major and important bridge over the Medway. He had appropriated those lands of English warriors who died in the Battle of Hastings or subsequently fled. In South Hanningfield, Ely Abbey claimed two hides and three virgates of the seven hides which Turold of Rochester allegedly misappropriated. It is recorded that the previous tenants, two men who had held the land freely, were nevertheless under the Abbot of Ely's patronage, and, because of this relationship, Turold's occupation was described as misappropriation. He also annexed lands around Brightlingsea, on the waterway which led to Colchester (Gardiner 2008, 104). Despite the complaint brought by the abbot, Ralph, son of Turold, took over the lands in Essex and appeared as a knight of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[9] Preston was perhaps granted to Helto, his uncle, Turold's brother.[10] Ralph's estates were concentrated in Kent and Essex, and comprised holdings around Rochester, along the Medway in Kent and, crossing the Thames, going straight up northwards in Essex, making

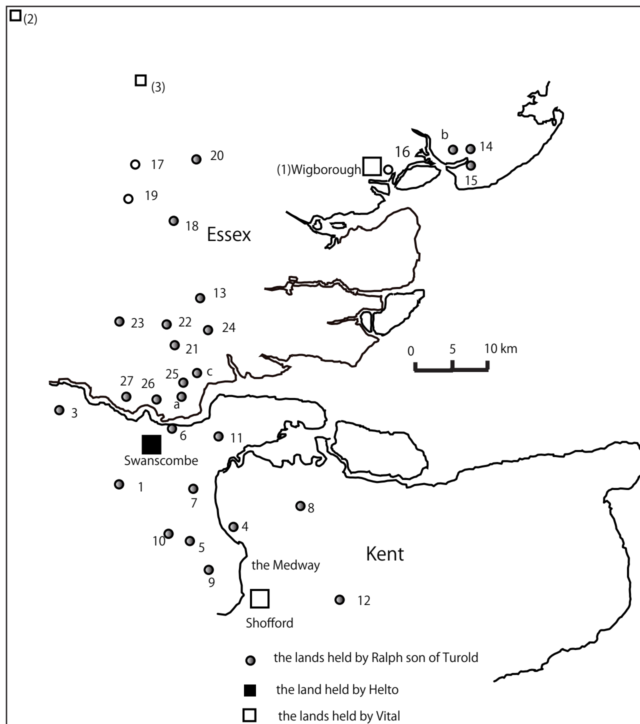
		1086				1253/4		
		Lands	Lord	Ass.	Value	Tenant	Lord	Kf
Kent	Ralph son of Turold							
	1	Hartley	Odo	1	5	Warin of Munchesny	King	*baronia*
	2	*Eddintone*	Odo	0.5	4	—	—	—
	3	Wricklesmarsh	Odo	1	5	—	—	—
	4	Eccles	Odo	0.75	4	Richard of Ruxley	Earl Insula	0.5
	5	Addington	Odo	2.5	6	Galiena of Gournay	Warin of Munchesny	1
	6	Milton	Odo	1.75	6	Warin of Munchesny	King	*baronia*
	7	Luddesdown	Odo		8	Roger of Luddesdown	Warin of Munchesny	0.5
	8	Stockenbury	Odo		1	Nicholas of Criol	King	1+ 1/6
	9	Wateringbury	Odo		6	Bartolomew of Wateringbury	Haimo of Crevequer	1.5
						Robert son of Gilbert	Bartolomew of Wateringbury	1+1/16
						William of Parco	Haimo of Crevequer	1..5
						Prior of Leeds	—	
	10	Little Wrotham	Odo		60s 54d	Bishop of Rochester	King	—
	11	Oakleigh	Odo	1	4	—	—	—
	12	Boughton Malherbe	Abp		2	Robert Malherbe	Abp	—
		sub-total			£54. 4s 6d			
	[Helto]							
		[Swanscombe]	[Odo]	[10]	[32]	Warin of Munchesny	King	*baronia*
						Michael of Stiford	Warin of Munchesny	5/8
		1086						
		Lands	Lord	Ass.	Value	Reference		
Essex	13	South Hanningfield	Odo	9	7	Turold of Rochester misappropriated these hides. Ely Abbey claims 2 hides and 3 virgates, which 2 men held; the Hundred testifies that they held their land freely and were nevertheless under the Abbot of Ely's patronage		
	14	Thornington	Odo	4	4	Turold of Rochester annexed this land.		
	15	Brightlingsea	Odo	0.5		The Bishop of Bayuex holds 1/2 hide which Ralph son of Turold holds under him.		
	16	Sampson's Farm	Odo	1+35a	2			
	17	Lawn Hall	Odo	2.5+6a	3			
	18	Walter Hall	Odo	1.5	1.5			
	19	Patching Hall	Odo	2+30a	2			
	20	Moulsham Hall	Odo	2.5+30a	2			
				1+40a	1			
	21	Vange	Odo	5.5	8			
	22	Barnstable Hall	Odo	5.5+30a	5			
	23	Ingrave	Odo	2	2			
	24	Wickford	Odo	2+48a	2			
	25	Hassenbrook Hall	Odo	12+13.5a	10			
	26	Chadwell	Odo	1.5	1.5			
	27	Stifford	Odo	1.5	1.5			
		sub-total			£52. 10s			
	Turold of Rochester							
	a	Mucking	Odo	30a		Turold of Rochester took 30 acres away from it and they belong to the fief of the Bishop of Bayeux.		
	b	Alresford	Odo			Turold of Rochester annexed this land.		
	c	Fobbing	Odo	30a		From this land Turold took 30 acres which are in the Bishop of Bayeux's fief:		
		Total			£106. 14s 6d			

Key
Ass(essment) Kent: sulung
1 sulung= 4 yokes
Essex: hide
a(cre)
Value: pound s = shilling d = pence
Abp = Archbishop of Canterbury
Kf = knight fief

Chart 2. *The Lands of Ralph son of Turold*.

a roughly rectangular shape. His estates were estimated as approximately worth £106. 14s. 6d in 1086 (**Chart 2**).

It is evident that Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, initially trusted Turold to guard Rochester, its hinterland and the connecting route into Essex. At a very early stage after the Conquest, King William built a castle in Rochester in order to defend this strategic position.[11] He entrusted the guardianship of Rochester Castle, like that of Dover, to Bishop Odo, who in turn entrusted the castle to Turold. Turold and his family had no toponymic in Normandy.



43. *Lands of the son of Turold and their location (with some lands of Helto and Vital).*

Once Rochester came to be his powerbase, Turold was called 'of Rochester'. After his death, Odo may have entrusted Turold's son Ralph with the constableship of the castle. Ralph held some enclosures (*hagae*) in the city of Rochester.[12]

In the revolt of 1088, Odo and his forces were entrenched in the city and castle of Rochester (Orderic Vitalis, VIII.iii.272–3; Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 4, 126–32). Ralph probably took his part among the besieged. After Odo's surrender, the bishop, his vassals and companions returned to Normandy. The lands of Ralph and his uncle, Helto, were confiscated and granted to Geoffrey Talbot.[13] The name Ralph is not mentioned in the list of the Archbishop of Canterbury's knights for 1093/6.[14] The descendants of Turold of Rochester retained their English toponym after their expulsion from England in 1088 and held a fief of Bayeux cathedral in the honour of Plessis-Grimoult, which had been granted to Odo in 1074.[15] Helto also took an active part as the bishop's vassal in Normandy (Round 1899, no. 1435). In the 1133 inquest of the names of knights of Bayeux Cathedral, Ralph of Rochester and Helto the constable appear among the 'aged jurors in the diocese of Bayeux [who] testified to conditions which had there existed in the time of Bishop Odo' (Douglas 1944, 31, n. 6; *Red Book of the Exchequer,* Hall 1896, 1965, 647; cf. Round 1930, 204). Their lands were still charged with castle guard in the middle of the thirteenth century (*List of Rochester Castle Guard*, Public Records Office E198 1/6).

Wadard

Part of the inscription in Scene 41 of the Bayeux Tapestry reads *HIC EST VVADARD* (Here is Wadard). Most scholars identify him as a vassal of Bishop Odo. Frank Stenton (1957, 21) notes that such an association is warranted because Wadard is such a rare name. According to Lucien Musset (2005, 208), 'he is remarkably named in the cartulary of the Abbey of Saint-Pierre de Préaux [near Pont-Audemer] … . [T]he link between Wadard and Odo could well have been forged not far from Préaux, in the Basse-Risle area, the patrimony of Viscount Herluin de Conteville, Odo's father'. He was an officer in the bishop's household, perhaps a chief cook or provisions officer. Frank Rede Fowke (1913, 103) thought the name Wadard was another form of *waard*, *weard* or *ward*, whose name implies a ward. The scene in the Tapestry depicting Wadard (Figure 366) shows a small military unit plundering, seizing provisions and destroying houses.

Wadard was not an independent knight (a soldier on horseback) but a household knight attached to Odo as a provision officer, who followed the bishop's moving household. After the victory at Hastings, Duke William marched his army along the coast line from Sussex to Kent and plundered naval bases on the Channel, especially at Dover, in order to secure a passage from Normandy to England. He entrusted Dover Castle to Odo and Hugh of Monfort.[16] Wadard was one of those obliged to defend the castle; his name is among the first knights who were given houses in the town of Dover for this purpose.[17]

Wadard held lands from Odo in seven counties: Kent, Surrey, Wiltshire, Dorset, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and Lincolnshire, estimated at a total value of £143. 6s. 8d in 1086. His main estates were concentrated in Kent, Oxfordshire and Lincolnshire (**Chart 3**; **44**).

This pattern is similar to that of Bishop Odo's lands (**42**). This comparison suggests that Wadard accompanied Odo on his expedition to the north. He seems in part to have been a warrior who actually fought on the battlefield and in part an officer who concentrated on providing his lord and fellow knights a stable supply of food. He might well have had his own vassals.

Wadard's estates give some clues as to the nature of lordship immediately after the Conquest. He may have not settled down in any particular place, even in Dover. Domesday's descriptions of Coombe, Kent,[18] and Thames

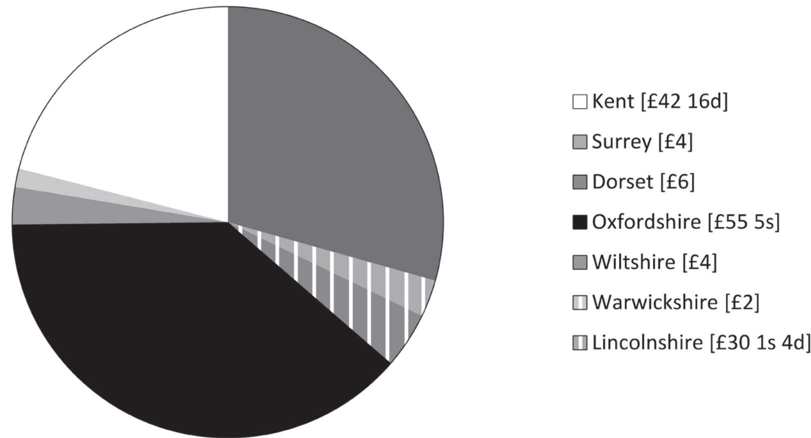
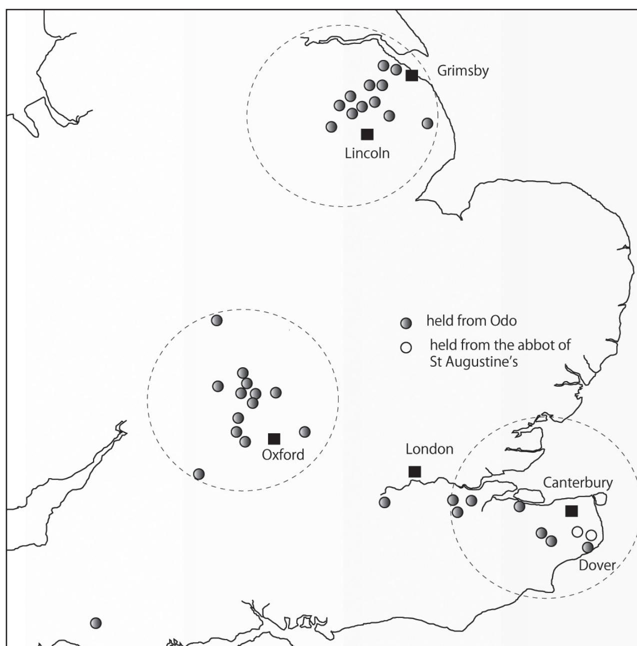


Chart 3. *Lands of Wadard (total value: £143 6s 8d)*.



44. *Lands of Wadard in Domesday Book.*

Ditton, Surrey, show that Wadard probably required local landlords to provide military service and payment. Thames Ditton was held before 1066 by Leofgar, who 'held it from Harold and served him'. He was probably one of Earl Harold's thegns, but he was also an independent local aristocrat who had the right of commending himself with his own property (*allodium*) to a lord of his choosing. Thames Ditton was confiscated by Odo and granted to Wadard. Domesday Book adds that 'whoever holds it from Wadard pays him 50s and the service of one knight'.[19] The unnamed sub-tenant might have been one of Leofgar's sons, serving Wadard as his soldier in return for holding land. From the point of view of local English figures, it was worth forming vassalic relationships in order to survive. Wadard, in his turn, established close connections (it might be said, feudal relations) with local landlords such as Leofgar and his family or their descendants. It was they who *de facto* controlled the local community and could levy services and rents, and without them it was very difficult for Norman newcomers to dominate local society in the first generation after the Norman Conquest (Tsurushima 1992, 313–7; Williams 1995).

Wadard was also an important tenant of the abbot of St Augustine's. The *Chronicle* of William Thorne describes how, around 1079, Abbot Scotland assigned Wadard, a knight, land of five sulungs at Northbourne, 'on condition that the knight himself should pay every year on the feast of Pentecost 30s to St Augustine's and give tithes .... [A]nd after the death of Wadard it should return to the demesne [*ad dominicum*] of St Augustine's for ever' (*De rebus gestis Abbatum Sancti Augustini Cantuaria*; Twysden 1652, col. 1789). The Domesday description of Northbourne records Wadard holding 'three sulungs less 60 acres of the villagers' land [*terra villanorum*] of this manor … but he himself renders no service to the abbot except 30 shillings which he pays in full each year' (Erskine 1986, 12v; cf. Ballard 1920, 22). The other land which he held from the abbot lay in Mongeham. The Domesday record of this manor shows that the manor was composed of the land of villagers and of the monks. The monks' land never paid *geld*, that is, it was inland. The villagers' land, the outland, which Wadard held, always paid *geld* and also a farm of about £10 to the monks. But Domesday Book also says that Wadard 'pays no service from it except 30 shillings a year to the Abbot' (Erskine 1986, 12v). The knight's fief granted to Wadard by the abbot was *laenland*

(usufruct of land) held for a life tenancy with payment of part of the farm as service. There is good evidence to show that his tenure of this land reflected some aspects of the realities of a knight's fief in the eleventh century (Tsurushima 1995, 97–115).

In 1088, Wadard chose the same course which Ralph son of Turold took and returned to Normandy. He seems to have had a son, but he is never heard of again.[20] His main estates were granted to Arsic, but knight fiefs in Kent and Oxfordshire were still charged with the obligation of castle-guard in Dover in the thirteenth century (*The Red Book of the Exchequer*, Hall 1896, 709).

Vital

Scene 49 shows Duke William asking a fully-armed knight named *VITAL* (Figure 425) if he has seen Harold's force (Tsurushima 2007a, 207–12). William of Poitiers claimed that the strongest knights scouted by the Duke's order and reported the raids of the enemy (Davis and Chibnall 1998, 122).

Lucien Musset (2005, 224) writes that Vital was a Norman and probably, like Wadard, a vassal of Odo, for Vital of Canterbury held a substantial estate and some salt marshes from the bishop. However, the lands of Vital which, like those of Turold, lay only in Kent and Essex, were estimated at only £38. 6s. 6d, unlike the substantial estates of the others: Ralph, son of Turold, £102. 11s. 4d; Wadard, £143. 6s. 8d. His lands in Kent were held of three lords: Odo, Bishop of Bayeux; Scotland, abbot of St Augustine's and Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, while in Essex he held land of Haimo the sheriff of Kent and of Ranulf of Peverel (**Chart 4**).

Vital's major lord was not Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, but Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury. The Canterbury list of knights for 1093/96 (Douglas 1944, 105) shows that he owed the service of three knights to the archbishop. Moreover, he was a tenant of importance to Haimo the sheriff and the Abbot of St Augustine's.

Vital's lands in Kent were concentrated in the area east of the city of Canterbury, except for Sifleton, which he held from Odo. His main manor was Stourmouth, located at the mouth of the Stour. He also held some messuages (*mansura*) outside the city of Canterbury of the bishop's fief (*de feodo episcopo Baiocensis*) with Ranulf of Colombières (Ballard 1920, 10); however, Domesday only recognises Odo as Ranulf's warrantor (*ad protectorem episcopum Baiocensem*; Erskine 1986, 2r). He was called Vital of Canterbury and lived somewhere around the Ridingate and Dover road, for the early thirteenth-century cartulary of St Laurence recorded that Haimo fitz Vital of Shofford built St Edmund's Church at Ridingate, and his son William of Shofford, a knight of the earl of Gloucester, built the church of St Maria at Bredin (Urry 1967, 52).[21] The Earl of Gloucester was successor to half of the honour of Haimo the sheriff. Around 1200, the Vital family was still holding lands in the same place (Urry 1967, 53).

In Essex, Vital held seven hides in Little Wigborough from Haimo the sheriff, which was his main estate. The other tenements seem to be hinterlands supporting economic activity in Wigborough (**Chart 5**).

The lands of Debden and Stebbing might have been exploited as woodland.[22] Taking the eleventh-century coastline into consideration, nearly all the manors of Vital in Kent are located on the coastline surrounding the Wantsum Strait and are closely connected with two main roads, the one from Canterbury to Dover and the other to Thanet (**45**). Their population was composed only of smallholders (*bordarii*) and cottars (cf. Dyer 1985), and contained seven salt-houses. These were settlements of seamen without any major agricultural base (**Chart 6**); they were perhaps fishermen, who needed a vast amount

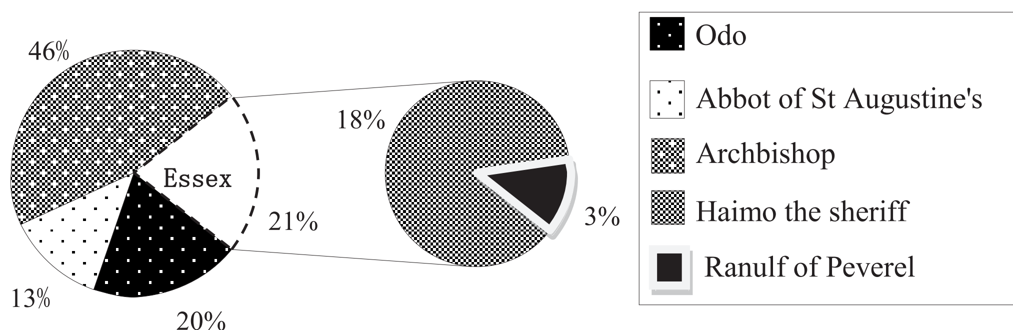


Chart 4. *Lands of Vital of Canterbury.*

	Land	Lord	Hidage	Value	Reference
[1]	Wigborough	Haimo the sheriff	7 hides	7 pounds	LDB 55b
[2]	Debden	Ranulf Peverel	15 acres	10s.	LDB 73b
[3]	Stebbing	Ranulf Peverel	35 acres	10s	LDB 74a

Chart 5. *Lands of Vital in Essex.*

	Land	Lord	Population	Salt-house	Reference
1	Swalecliffe	Odo	8 cottars paying 4s 6d		GDB 10a
2	Preston	Abbot of St Augustine's	17 bordars		GDB 12d
3	Whitstable 3a Sarre 3b Makinbrook 3c Stourmouth	Archbishop	29 bordars, 5 slaves	7 salt houses at 25s 4d	GDB 3c *DM*, 84
4	Hopland	Odo	4 bordars paying 6s		GDB 10a

Chart 6. *The Population of the Coastline Estates of Vital in Kent.*

of salt to cure their fish. Moreover, Wigborough, Vital's sole estate in Essex, was also located on the coastline (**43**). Therefore, it seems evident that Vital was a lord of seamen.

According to Goscelin of St-Bertin's *The Miracles of St Augustine* (London, British Library, Vespasian B.xx, fols 61r–70v):

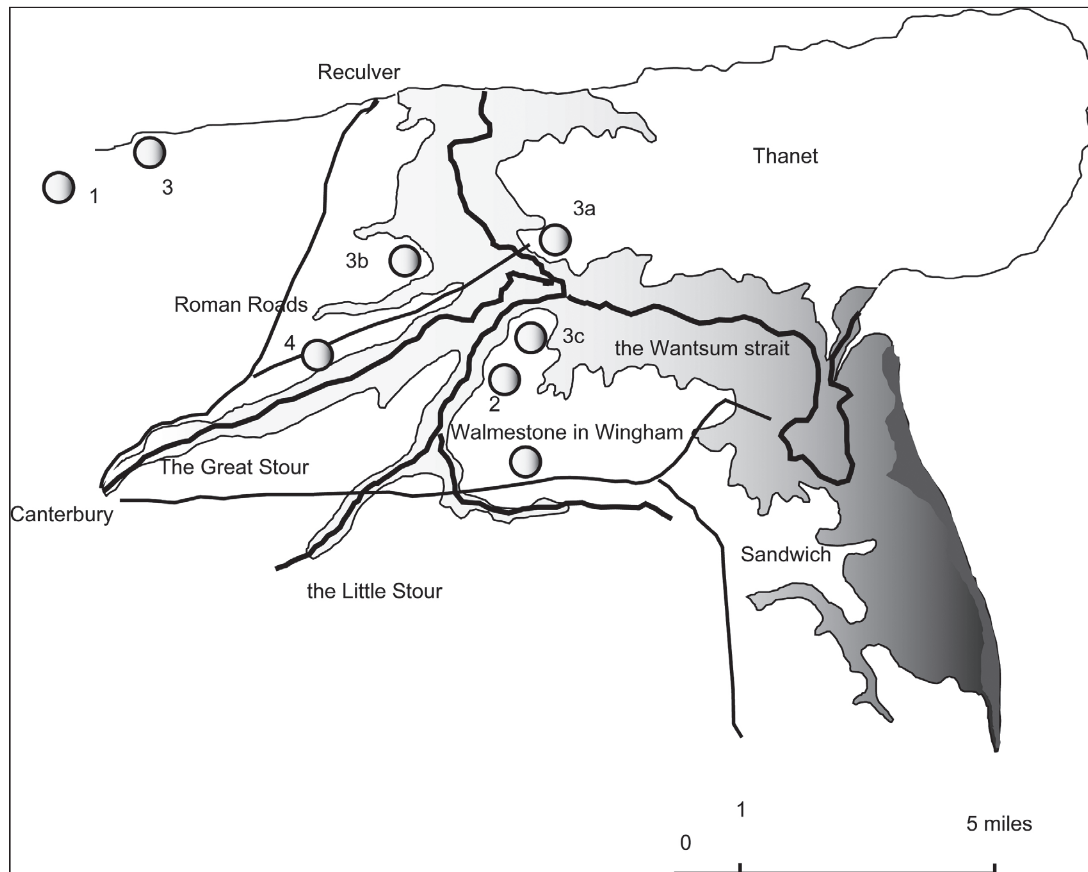
> Under the first Norman king of the English, men from England, on business with fifteen ships landed at the market town of Caen. There, having completed their trading, they were preparing to return, conveying stone to the king's palace of Westminster – for they were under contract to the Royal superintendent. This office was held by an upright man named Vital who, having been received into fraternity by the Lord Abbot Scotland, was proving himself most effective in conveying stone for the monastic building work of St Augustine's. Thus Vital, very faithfully, persuaded one of the masters of the fifteen ships already mentioned to give himself to the sacred service of St Augustine … so that a reward, both present and perpetual, might accrue to him …Vital gave him sealed letters of agreement, addressed to Abbot Scotland, for the ship and stone, after the manner of the other ship masters … [this faithful shipmaster then escaped from shipwreck by divine protection through the intercession of St Augustine] … coming to Canterbury … the famous abbot … gave more than the price of the stones agreed in the letter (Gem 1987, 83–5).

This happened sometime between 1073 and 1087.

This Vital was accepted into confraternity with St Augustine's, Canterbury. He could speak on maritime matters with the shipmaster, probably in English, and could read and write or (at least) understand a Latin contract, which seems to be the first medieval written contract in north-west Europe. It therefore is quite possible that this Vital is the one in the Tapestry. He must have been not only a knight when necessary, but also a leader of seamen, an active administrator and a merchant. He married his daughter, Mathilda, to William Cauvel, who was a great merchant and the first Norman port-reeve of Canterbury (Urry 1967, 63). Vital might well have been a cross-Channel figure even in 1066, and certainly afterward, using his linguistic talents in French, English and Latin.

Vital probably gave homage to Archbishop Lanfranc and Haimo the sheriff. In Wingham he held the hamlet of Walmestone and was described as one of five men of the archbishop (*homines archiepiscopi*; Erskine 1986 3c, 3d; Douglas 1944, 81, 83). In 1088, he might have fought against Bishop Odo, following Robert fitz Haimo, the son of Haimo the sheriff. Haimo, son of Vital, made an agreement with Bishop Gundulph of Rochester in the presence of Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury for his soul, and that of his father and mother, for making one of his brothers a monk of St Andrew's, Rochester, and for giving a church of Stourmouth and demesne tithe and so on (*Textus Roffensis,* fol. 185v; cf. Tsurushima 1992, 334, n.107). Vital appears in the list of the knights of the archbishop (1093–6). Therefore he died sometime between 1093 and *c*. 1110 when his son Haimo succeeded him.

Soon after Vital died, the archbishop granted Haimo fitz Vital Shofford near Siffleton, so that the family would owe the service of four and three quarter knights to the archbishop (Douglas 1944, 105). The family had three toponyms, first 'of Canterbury', then 'of Stourmouth', and, at last, 'of Shofford'. Three manors which Vital held from Odo were given to Haimo the sheriff and then granted to Vital and his son, Haimo. Haimo fitz



45. *The coastline estates of Vital.*

Vital was a faithful vassal of Haimo II the sheriff, and in 1111, when Haimo II granted Fordwich to St Augustine's, Haimo fitz Vital was among the witnesses on the sheriff's side (Urry 1975, 136–8). There was a long-term conflict between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Abbot of St Augustine's over the rights of toll-charge and of ferryboat transportation (Robertson 1956. no. 82; Gem 1997, 60–4). Between 1116 and 1118, William the king's son sent William [of Eynesford], Sheriff of Kent, his directions to order Haimo fitz Vital and the neighbouring 'goodmen' (*probi vicini*) of Sandwich to declare the truth about the ship of the Abbot of St Augustine, when the tenants of the archbishop held up the abbot's ship and her cargo (Thomas of Elmham, Hardwick 1858, 353–4; Johnson and Cronne 1956, no. 1189). Even the central government recognised the family's influence over, and leadership of, the local seamen. Haimo fitz Vital was the leader of local people and fulfilled his role in the settlement of local dispute.

In the twelfth century, the group of estates around Stourmouth began to be broken up. The heirs of Vital had been losing lands around Canterbury and came to be local and inland gentry in Shofford in the western part of Kent (Tsurushima 2007a, 212; 43). These processes reflect the specialisation of social functions. Knight and gentry became forms of social standing, whereas merchants and seamen became more professional. This process was the other side of the formation of tenure by knight service, defined and protected by the king's court. Social standing came to be partly defined by tenure. The knight came to mean the holder of tenure by knight service and the burgesses the holder of burgage tenure (Thorne 1959, 193–209; Tsurushima 1995, 109–12). At the time of the Bayeux Tapestry's creation, however, these distinctions had not been drawn; the world of the man-of-all-work lies behind all three of these knights, who all share common characteristics.

So why were these three men, in particular, depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry? As R. H. C. Davis (1978) notes, these three men never appear in other narratives, such as the *Carmen de Hastingae Proelio*, William of Jumièges, William of Poitiers, or *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but

only in the Bayeux Tapestry and in Domesday Book as vassals of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. Not only were they members of the Norman aristocracy but also local figures or talented freeman, who built their futures by their own ability as well as by the patronage of Odo.

The accuracy of the depictions in the Tapestry could be different from scene to scene. Some might be derived from pre-existing sources, others not. However, the depiction of the castle of Beaurain (Building 6),[23] the operation of the ships[24] and the fleet crossing the channel, as well as the manoeuvres immediately after landing at Pevensey, are all vivid and convincing enough that it is possible to believe that these three men might have been informants for the designer of the Tapestry: Turold for Beaurain castle, Vital for the operation of ships and Wadard for the scenes (40–1) showing foraging for food, as if the viewer is watching supporting actors in a film.[25] This hypothesis may strongly support the theory that the Tapestry was made in Canterbury, although this is clearly conjecture.

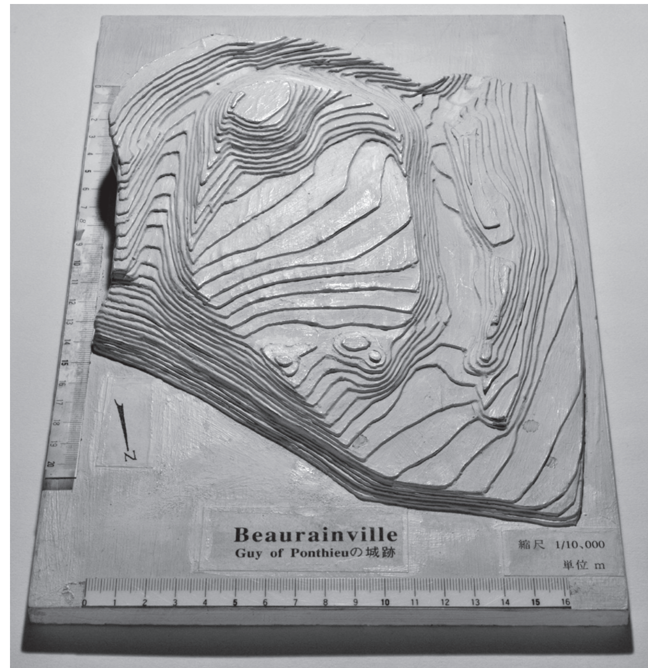
Wace described the men of Kent and Essex fighting marvellously well at the Battle of Hastings (Burgess 2002, III. 8748). Wace collected information for the *Roman de Rou* partly from the oral memories of knightly families around Caen and Bayeux (van Houts 1997a, 113–4; Bennet 1983, 21–39; van Houts 1997b, 167–79). Did Wace also collect information from the descendants of Turold of Rochester? Turold and his son held their estates only in Kent and Essex, but they might have made friends with local 'thegnly' families who still would have had memory of the Battle. To inquire further into the matter would lead beyond the scope of this paper ... .

Notes

1. The word *miles* is used in Domesday Book about 400 times. It is used to designate military service itself, applied to both men belonging to the aristocracy and to peasants: 'Vitalis, III' (the service of three knights) in the list *De Militibus Archiepiscopi* (Douglas 1944, 105); the count of Eu was included among the tenants in the *militum* of the archbishop (Erskine 1986, 4r); 'William of Arques has 'iii villagers and a man-at-arms with one plough' (Erskine 1986, 3v:); Helto held Swanscombe from Odo, bishop of Bayeux, where a *miles* and 10 slaves were recorded beside 33 villagers with three smallholders (*bordarii*) (Erskine 1986, 6r).
2. Frank Stenton (1961, 142) has noted that 'although knighthood in the eleventh century implied military proficiency, it carried no social distinction … the ordinary knight of the eleventh century was a person of small means and insignificant condition'. C. Warren Hollister (1965, 71, 115) remarked that some knights were no better off than the more prosperous peasants. Sally Harvey (1970) divided English knighthood into two distinct strata, the influential knightly sub-tenants and professional knights; her conclusion has been accepted by some but not others.
3. This is a revised chapter of my MA thesis submitted to Tohoku University in 1980. I would like to express my thanks to Michael Lewis for the chance to reconsider this research at the British Museum; the original paper was published in Japanese (Tsurushima 1983–4).
4. Andrew Bridgeford (1999, 155–83) proposed Count Eustace II of Boulogne as an alternative candidate, although he failed to explain why the three knights are depicted. The theory is developed in Bridgeford 2004.
5. He was 'a most influential earl palatine of Kent' (*palatinus Cantiae consul*; Orderic Vitalis, IV; Chibnall 1969–80, 4, 124).
6. Erskine 1986, 2r, 6r, 6d, 7rv, 8r, 8v, 9v, 10v, 17v, 31r, 46r, 144v, 155v, 220r (*cf.* Duncombe 1967, 40).
7. Jurkowski 2000, 25r.
8. 'Turold of Rochester took 30 acres away from it and they [now] belong to the fief of the Bishop of Bayeux' (*xxx acras inde* [7 hides of Mucking] *abstulit Tudoldus Rouecestra et jacent ad feudum episcopi Baiocensis*; Jurkowski, 2000, 17v); 'Turold took away 30 acres from this land, which are in the fief of the Bishop of Bayeux' (*Ex hac terram* [Fobbing] *tulit Turodus xxx acras quae sunt ad feudum episcopi Baiocensis*; Jurkowski 2000, 26r).
9. Erskine 1986, 4r.
10. 'Helto the steward and his nephew' (*Heltus dapifer et ejus nepos*; Erskine 1986, 2v).
11. 'Also the Bishop of Rochester holds as much of this land as is worth 17s. 4d. in exchange for the land on which the castle stands' (*Episcopus etiam de Rovecestra pro excambio terre in qua castellam sedet tantum de hanc terra tenet quod xvii solidos et iiii denarius valet*; Erskine 1986, 2r). The city was called *oppido* by Orderic Vitalis (VIII.iii.273; Chibnall 1969–80, 4,128).
12. Erskine 1986, 8v.
13. Geoffrey Talbot held land in Liston, Essex, from Hugh de Gournay, father of Gerard of Gournay. Gerard was a strong supporter of William II, and his wife, Edith, was a daughter of William of Warenne, who was a leader of William's army, which besieged the city of Rochester (Chibnall 1969–80, 4, 284, n. 1). In the middle of the thirteenth century, most of the lands held by Ralph and Helto were handed over to Warin of Munchesny through Sibyl, granddaughter of Geoffrey Talbot. In 1171 Preston, the land in dispute in Penenden Heath, was held by Walter of Mayenne as one knight fief of the honour of Talbot. Geoffrey of Talbot was also the lord of Swanscombe, which was held by Helto in Domesday Book. He died in 1129–30. His other granddaughter married Walter of Mayenne (Douglas 1944, 48–50; Hunter 1833, 67; Sanders 1960, 144; Greenstreet 1878, nos. 282, 284, 392, 393, 385, 449; Du Boulay 1966, 364).
14. Instead Talbot owed one knight service to the archbishop (Douglas 1944, 105).
15. Bates 1998; Bourrienne 1902–3, no. 3. Le Plessis-Grimoult is a commune in the *département* of Calvados in the Basse-Normandie region of France. The fortified site of Plessis-Grimoult survives in the form of an oval curtain wall 50 to 60 metres in diameter, made of earth ramparts

at the top of which stand the remains of a fortified gate and a small masonry tower. During the eleventh century, this was the property of Grimoult du Plessis who took an active role in the uprising of the barons against William. After his victory at the battle of Val-es-Dunes in 1047, the Duke made a gift of this confiscated property to Bayeux Cathedral. Archaeological excavation carried out between 1967 and 1971 showed signs of occupation of the site between the beginning of the tenth century and the mid-eleventh century. Artefacts found, although rare, were characteristic of a castle site, and this creates a picture of the standard of living of the lower and middle-ranking aristocracy of the Duchy.

16. He was granted six messuages (*mansurae*); Erskine 1986, 1r.
17. Erskine 1986, 1r.
18. 'Wadard holds COOMBE [Grove] from the Bishop … Value … now £4 and the service of 1 man-at-arms. Leofred of Ruckinge held it from King Edward' (*Modo iv libras et servitium unius militis*; Erskine 1986, 10v).
19. 'Wadard holds [Thames] DITTON from the Bishop. Leofgar held it from [Earl] Harold and served him, but he could go where he would with the land. When he died, he divided this land between his three sons, before 1066 'Value ' now £4. Whoever holds it from Wadard pays him 50s, and the service of one man-at-arms' (*Ille qui tenet de Wadardo reddit ei L. s. et servitium unius militis*; Erskine 1986, 32r).
20. He was a tenant of Roger of Ivry in Oxfordshire (Erskine 1986, 156d, 159a). A Walchelin Wadard appeared in 1130 (Hunter 1833, 1, 4, 6 [Oxfordshire]). It is not clear what their relationship might have been.
21. The hospital of St Laurence, Canterbury, located by Dover Road was founded by Hugh, abbot of St Augustine's in 1137 (W. Page 1926, 212).
22. One hide of woodland of Wigborough was held in Ralph Baynard's fief (Jurkowski 2000, 55v, 71v).
23. The Bayeux Tapestry (Building 6) shows the castle which most scholars regard as William's Palace at Rouen, although it seems to have a motte, a gate with two towers and palisade. However, Arnold Taylor (1992) identified this building as Beaurain Castle in his persuasive argument. **46** is a model made by the author, based on a contoured survey of the castle (1989) by the Section *Geo-topo* of Armentières School of Technology. Note the remains of the motte and small two mounds for the gate towers.



46. *Model of Beaurain Castle.*

24. An experiment conducted by David Jones on the sails depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry can be seen at http://youtube.com/watch?v=Zsp25SDUXiEv.
25. Andrew Bridgeford (1999, 170) may be wrong in saying that the remnant of the garrison at Dover Castle was led by Wadard and Vital. First, Wadard could have been away with Odo, to the north of the Thames. Second, Vital had no connection with Dover Castle. The most probable candidate as leader of the garrison is Ralph of Curbepine. He had a motte and bailey castle at Coldred for logistic support to Dover castle. His estates were mainly distributed in Kent and in particular along the Pilgrim's Way, which seemed to protect the route to London, through Canterbury and Maidstone (Erskine 1986, 1r, 2rv, 7v, 8r, 9d, 10v, 11r, 12v, 13r). Third, not all the lands of Arsic owned the castle guard. Last, he fails to explain the appearance of Turold.

Leofwine and Gyrth: depicting the death of the brothers in the Bayeux Tapestry

Michael R. Davis

> There, Harold and Leofwine and Gyrth
> Stand like a triple Thor, true brethren in arms as in birth:
> And above the fierce standards strain at their poles as they flare on the gale.
>
> (Palgrave 1889, 28)

The Bayeux Tapestry (Scene 52) singles out and literally celebrates the deaths of Leofwine and Gyrth as warriors in graphic detail (Bouet 2004, 206). Leofwine (Figure 494) is portrayed in knee-length mail swinging his massive two handed axe, just as a spear is thrust into his exposed back. As the Tapestry sometimes tries to portray action by repeating characters, it is possible that it is also Leofwine (Figure 496) that is shown tumbling over immediately afterwards. It is unclear whether Gyrth is the figure holding the sword (Figure 497) or the spear (Figure 498), but since the word *GYRÐ* is written over the latter figure (also shown with a prominent moustache) it is usually accepted that Gyrth is the figure closest to the horse. The Tapestry portrays Gyrth being speared through the mouth.

The lower border shows two dead men, the one on the left (Figure 495) decapitated, and the one on the right (Figure 502) depicted with the spear having been completely shoved through the cranium and protruding out through the back of the head. The two men are separated by a broken sword. It is possible that those figures are also representations of Leofwine and Gyrth, or possibly just English dead.

Not surprisingly, there are quite a few accounts of the principal protagonists, Harold and William; however, the sources are contradictory, derivative and generally one-sided. In contrast, the information on Gyrth is sparse and is nearly non-existent for Leofwine.

The approximate date of Gyrth's birth was 1032 and that of Leofwine 1035, making them both in their early thirties by the time of Battle of Hastings. They are first mentioned in 1051 during the Godwin clan's *annus horribilis*, when they fled England after their abortive conflict with King Edward. Leofwine, who was a teenager, went with Harold to take refuge with King Dairmait mac Maíl na mBó of Leinster, Ireland, and Gyrth went with his father and brother, Tostig, to Flanders, for sanctuary at the court of Tostig's father-in-law, Count Baldwin V (*Vita Ædwardi*, i.4, Barlow 1992, 39–41; ASC (C) 1051, ASC (D) 1051, Swanton 2000, 175–6; Roger De Hoveden, 1052, Riley 1853/1996, 118; Wace, 4663, Burgess 2004, 143). Leofwine was singled out for mention when he returned, with Harold, to England and sailed up the mouth of the River Severn (Roger De Hoveden, 1052; Riley 1853/1996 118).

Gyrth is mentioned along with Harold and Tostig as having carried the dying Earl Godwin from the king's banqueting hall into a private chamber following the old earl's collapse during the meal (Florence of Worcester, 1053; Forester 1854, 155). He is also mentioned when he is given the earldom of East Anglia (*Vita Ædwardi*, i.5; Barlow 1992, 50–1) and then again when he accompanies Tostig on pilgrimage to Rome in 1060 (*Vita Ædwardi*, i.5; Barlow 1992, 52–3). It is known that between 1055 and 1057 Leofwine became earl of a territory combining portions of Kent, Surrey, Essex, Hertfordshire, Middlesex and Buckinghamshire. However, until just before the Battle of Hastings all sources remain silent about these younger brothers, although Stubbs (1861, cap. 20) says that Gyrth was with Harold at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, which was entirely possible.

Orderic Vitalis wrote of an episode just before the Battle of Hastings where Gyrth is portrayed as an astute leader and a man of sensible advice. According to this account, Gyrth and his and Harold's mother, Gytha, tried to persuade Harold not to engage Duke William in battle. Gyrth urged Harold to allow him to lead the battle, reminding Harold that he and his housecarls were exhausted after the Battle of Stamford Bridge. Gyrth reminded Harold that he was placing himself and his troops in jeopardy because he was an oath breaker.

Harold, angered by this advice, flew into a violent rage and gave his mother a kick when she tried to restrain him (Orderic Vitalis, III.ii.146; Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 2, 170–3). Certainly the Godwin family were aware of the dubious circumstances of the infamous 'oath', and, as Marjorie Chibnall (1969–80, vol. 2, 171–2) wisely observed, the whole story reads like a popular romance. This highly suspect episode enjoyed a popular retelling and was repeated in the *Chronicles of Hyde Abbey* (1066; Edwards 1866, 283–321) and by Roger of Wendover (1066; Giles 1994, vol. 1, pt. 2, 331) and William of Malmesbury (iii.239; Mynors *et al.* 1998–9, vol. 1, 451–3), all of whom decorously leave out the English king's booting of his mother!

It is the Plantagenet historian, Wace, who takes this 'popular romance' further and weaves a much more involved picture of Gyrth and Harold's relationship. Wace's version starts with Harold threatening an emissary of Duke William's, Hugh Margo. Gyrth jumps in to stop his brother before he can strike the emissary and sends the emissary safely back to Duke William (Wace 6797; Burgess 2004, 167). Gyrth then counsels Harold to remain in London to recruit more men while he goes and does battle with William. Gyrth also proposes a 'scorched-earth' policy in Sussex to deprive William's men of resources and sustenance. Harold refuses both proposals (Wace 6929; Burgess 2004, 168). Once the troops have encamped in Sussex, the brothers ride away from the camp to take counsel. Harold then seeks to take Gyrth's original advice to return to London and raise further levies. Gyrth rounds on Harold, calling him a coward, and tells him that the time for following that counsel has passed. This leads to a physical quarrel, with Gyrth and Harold ineptly trying to strike each other whilst on horseback. In the meantime, an alarmed Leofwine notices that his brothers are not in camp and begins to believe that they have been captured. He is in the process of going to look for them when they are found on the road returning to camp (Wace 6949; Burgess 2004, 169–70). Gyrth is also credited with a long speech where he tells the assembled thegns that Duke William is full of trickery and is not to be trusted (Wace 7295; Burgess 2004, 172). Gyrth and Harold then ride out together in order to scout the placement and numbers of the Norman troops. Gyrth is alarmed by the number of men and variety of weapons, and again chides Harold for his choice of the day of battle (Wace 7821; Burgess 2004, 179–80).

Wace (7949–88; Burgess 2004, 180) provides a dramatic account of Gyrth at the beginning of the battle:

> He [Harold] drew his brother Gyrth to him; they positioned themselves beside the standard. Each of them prayed for God's protection; all around them were their relatives and the barons whom they knew. They had urged them all to perform good deeds; no one could escape from there. Each man had donned his hauberk and had his sword girded on and his shield around his neck. They held shoulder high great axes with which they intended to strike great blows. They were on foot and in close formation; they behaved very fiercely, but if they had been able to foretell the future they ought to have been weeping and wailing at the sorrowful adventure which was upon them, wretched and harsh.

The deaths of Gyrth and Leofwine are mentioned by nearly all of the contemporary (or near-contemporary) chroniclers (ASC (D, E) 1066, Swanton 2000, 198; William of Poitiers ii.23, Davis and Chibnall 1998, 136–7; Orderic Vitalis III.ii.150, Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 2, 176–7; Florence of Worcester 1066, Forester 1854, 170; Simeon of Durham, 1066,1853–8/1987, 132; Ingulf 1066, Stevenson 1834, 665), but rarely with any details regarding the time, location or manner of their deaths. There is continuing disagreement amongst modern scholars about when in the order of battle the brothers died. David Douglas (1964, 200) argues that the brothers died during the first wave of the assault, whereas Shirley Ann Brown (1990, 15) and Stephen Morillo (1996, 224) believe, based on the Tapestry evidence, that they died after the first wave of attack. Ian Walker (1997, 176–7) opts for the interpretation that the brothers were possibly killed during a counter-attack against the invading forces. However, no glorious deeds or acts of heroic valour are recorded to shed any light on their final moments. *The Carmen de Hastingae Proelio* (471; Barlow 1999, 29) alone singles out Gyrth for special recognition, giving him credit for spearing Duke William's horse:

> Gyrth, born of royal stock, was not frightened by the lion's face. Brandishing his spear, he hurls it from afar with his quick strong arm, and it wounds the duke's mount, forcing him to fight on foot.

Though it must be noted that Wace (8826; Burgess 2004, 190) was inspired by the duel between Achilles and Asteropaeus and Achilles and Hector (Rouse 1938, 420–1, 476–9; Mason 2004, 171), he gives Gyrth the distinction of being charged and at least wounded, if not killed, by Duke William:

> Gyrth saw that the English were thinning out and that there was no way of escape; he saw his lineage falling and had no hope of protecting himself. He wanted to flee, but could not, for the throng was increasing all the time. Then the duke spurred his horse and reached him pushing him forward very violently; I do not know whether his blow killed him, but it was said that he lay there for a long time.

Gyrth is also mentioned by the author of the early fourteenth-century fictional *Vita Haroldi* (XVIII; Swanton 1984, 34–5), who has Gyrth, who would have been at least 122 years old, reappearing in King Henry II's reign. Here it is related that Abbot Walter of Ghent interviewed Gyrth at a royal court at Woodstock about Harold's burial; Gyrth, both then and later at Waltham, denied that Harold was buried there.

Once the 'popular romance' of Orderic Vitalis is stripped away, and further perpetrations by Wace and others, as well as the illusions to the *Iliad* in the *Carmen*, there is no substantive information about the characters of Gyrth and Leofwine. With this scant amount of information about the two brothers, it is necessary to search for other reasons why they are so prominently shown in the Tapestry. Lucien Musset (2005, 202, 238) claims the Tapestry focuses on the fourth and fifths sons of Earl Godwin to emphasise that they were next in line to the throne, but this was not the case. Lest we forget, Edgar Ætheling was still alive and taking refuge with King Malcolm III of Scotland. He remained not only a symbol of resistance for the Anglo-Saxons but was of the direct Wessex bloodline of his grandsires Alfred, Æthelred II and Edmund Ironside. Further, even with the deaths of Harold, Gyrth and Leofwine, the Godwinson bloodline was in no danger of being extinct. Harold's grown sons, Godwin, Edmund, Magnus, Wulf and Harold still lived. Even Tostig is recorded as having two sons, Skuli and Ketil Hook, who returned to Norway with King Olaf after the Battle of Stamford Bridge (Magnusson *et al.* 1996, 98). Harold's nephew, Hakon (Swein's son), was still alive, as was Harold's youngest brother, Wulfnoth, who had been taken to Normandy in 1051 by Robert of Jumièges and delivered to William as a hostage.

Instead, the Tapestry's patron – generally believed to be Bishop Odo of Bayeux – might explain the inclusion of Gyrth and Leofwine. Odo, half-brother of William, Bishop of Bayeux and, after the Conquest, Earl of Kent, was ludicrously rich; as adduced from Domesday Book evidence, he had an annual income of over £3,000 (Williams and Martin 2002). This was in addition to whatever income was being generated by his episcopal see. Further, it seems that Odo would not hesitate to resort to extortion, robbery and outright deceit to increase his wealth and power (Bates 1975, 51–2). The teachings of St Benedict or the peaceful call of the cloister were ignored by this rapacious, avaricious and entirely secular prelate. However, despite his greed, it has been the considered opinion of most twentieth-century historians that Odo was the patron and commissioner of the Tapestry and that its creation dates from between about 1077 and 1082.[1]

In 1082, according to Orderic Vitalis (VII.iii.189; Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 2, 38–41), Odo was caught raising a private army, ostensibly for an attempt to claim the papal tiara. However, his failure to consult with his brother, the king, as well as leaving England (for which he was in part responsible for managing while William was in Normandy) brought about his downfall. Odo's protestations that he was a bishop fell upon William's deaf ears, and the king informed him that he was being arrested as the Earl of Kent and his vassal, not as the Bishop of Bayeux. Odo was then imprisoned for the remainder of William's reign. It is because of Odo's imprisonment that most historians date the Tapestry to before 1082. Shirley Ann Brown (1990, 25–6) argues for the Tapestry being constructed during Odo's period of imprisonment (1082–7), and her assessment seems reasonable. If so, it may have been the case that it was Odo's imprisonment that prompted the inclusion of the deaths of Gyrth and Leofwine in the Tapestry.

Prior to 1082, Odo was in full spate of ecclesiastical and baronial power and had no need to curry favour with his brother and, unless the Tapestry was purely ostentatious, which is possible, there was no reason for its construction before 1082. However, once Odo was imprisoned at Rouen, he would have chafed at his inactivity and strived for his freedom. He may have been deposed as Earl of Kent, but he still retained his ecclesiastical title, and there is no reason to suppose that his imprisonment was anything but honourable confinement. Accordingly, he would be capable of receiving and sending messages from his supporters and vassals, perhaps even, as suggested by Shirley Ann Brown (1990, 26), messages from his vassals, Vital and Wadard, who are named and explicitly portrayed in the Tapestry (see Tsurushima, this volume). It is certainly not out of the realm of belief that his messages included a commission for a work of embroidery in an effort to try to sweeten his brother's hostile attitude toward him. It was not as if Odo did not have supporters. Orderic Vitalis (VII.iii.246; Chibnall 1969–80, vol. 2, 98–101) reported that Odo's brother, Robert, Count of Mortain, and others petitioned for his release when William was on his deathbed and even offered surety for his good behaviour.

Odo appears in the Tapestry at least four times and is specifically named twice. In Scene 43 Odo (Figure 380) is merely mentioned as *episcopus*, 'bishop', but he takes centre stage, blessing the food, in an allusion to the Last Supper (Loomis 1927; Dodwell 1976; Brooks and Walker 1978), and emphasises his ecclesiastical position. Odo is also portrayed in the company of his brothers, William and Robert of Mortain. For example, in Scene 35, Odo (Figure

264) and William discuss the building of the invasion fleet, and in Scene 44 Odo (Figure 384) is named, along with William and Robert, when the men discuss tactics before Hastings; the bishop is seated to William's right, a place of singular importance, and appears to be giving advice. In Scene 49, Odo (Figure 423) seems to be shown; although he is not named, his baton helps identify him (Bertrand 1966). Odo's last appearance (Figure 534) is in Scene 54, after the deaths of Gyrth and Leofwine; he is named and holds his baton aloft encouraging the soldiers. In this scene, while it may seem that Odo is by himself, he actually frames the left hand part of the scene where 'Eustace' (Figure 543) points to William (Figure 542). Effectively, Odo and Eustace are working in concert to rally the troops after the false report of William's death. Shirley Ann Brown (1990, 25–6) argues that Eustace was included in the Tapestry to remind William that he had been reconciled with Eustace, after the count had risen against him and invaded Dover in 1067. Looking at the Tapestry this way, it is apparent that secondary themes of brotherly loyalty and redemption run throughout the story. It is the theme of brotherly loyalty which may explain the relevance of the depiction of the deaths of Gyrth and Leofwine.

There has been much debate about the extent of English propaganda in the Tapestry (Bouet 2004; Bridgeford 1999; 2004; Bernstein 1986; Wissolik 1979b). While the deaths of Gyrth and Leofwine in the Tapestry may have given the Canterbury seamstresses an opportunity to embellish a 'pro-English' reading of the Tapestry, it would seem that such an important event would not have been included without express approval of the patron. The Tapestry tells a story, and all the events in the Tapestry are subservient to that story, thus Odo, to some extent, is limited in the number of times he can appear. Further, good taste and common sense dictate that there is a fine line between sending a message and further antagonising the king. The images of Odo in the Tapestry would have consistently reminded William that, throughout his journey from duke to king, his half-brother Odo was there giving advice and assistance.

Shirley Ann Brown (1990, 15) suggests that the 'librettist' of the Tapestry included the deaths of Gyrth and Leofwine to illustrate the punishment of a family for treason. However, such a reading weakens the argument for the Tapestry being commissioned during Odo's imprisonment; the last thing Odo would have wanted to do was remind his brother that the penalty for treason was death. Instead Gyrth and Leofwine may have been included in the Tapestry to support the secondary theme of fraternal loyalty. This allows once again the images of steadfast brothers to convey the message without actually picturing Odo. While not many details of Gyrth and Leofwine's life and death are known to us today, they were certainly honoured for their loyalty in supporting, fighting and dying for their brother, who was also their king. Their self-sacrificing example is certainly a far cry from being locked away in Rouen, the fate suffered by the Bishop of Bayeux. From Odo's self inclusion in the Tapestry, the image of the past pardoned in Eustace of Bolougne and the deaths of Gyrth and Leofwine, the Bishop of Bayeux and erstwhile Earl of Kent was trying to remind William that his prior loyalty and support was a debt which forgave his multitude of sins.

Details of the lives of Gyrth and Leofwine will be forever shrouded in the mists of history, and historians perhaps will never know the real reasons for their inclusion in the Bayeux Tapestry. However, because of their presence there, these scions of the House of Godwin will forever be remembered as loyal brothers who died protecting their country from a foreign invader:

> Lion-like leaps on the standard and Harold:
> but Gyrth is before!
> 'Down! He is down!' Is the shout:
> 'On with the axes! Out, Out!'
> He rises again; the mace circles its stroke;
> Then falls as the thunderbolt falls on the oak.
> Gyrth is crush'd, Leofwine is crush'd;
> yet the shields hold their wall.
>
> (Palgrave 1889, 30)

Note

1. Andrew Bridgeford (1999; 2004) lobbies for Eustace of Boulogne as patron of the Tapestry.

The Bayeux Tapestry: faces and places

Gale R. Owen-Crocker

Scholarly publications on the Bayeux Tapestry refer to 'the artist' with an underlying assumption that there is a single hand at work. However, although the Tapestry convincingly presents itself as a single continuous frieze, it in fact consists of nine different pieces of linen, joined by barely visible seams. In two cases there are clear disjunctions in the design which suggest that the lengths of linen were worked independently.[1] This paper looks closely at the faces in the Tapestry to see if it can be determined whether they were indeed the work of a single artist, and, if not, whether the differences correspond to the sections of linen.

There are certain factors about the medium of needlework which should be borne in mind:

- One must not be deceived by repairs.
- As far as the original work is concerned, it is not easy to depict a face in embroidery, even when following a cartoon, since every stitch is straight, while the face is a series of curves.
- Especially for the embroiderer working the design upside down – as would be necessary to stitch the upper part of a frieze 50cm wide (Didier 2004, 77) – a face would be constructed rather mechanically by following the lines of the cartoon, without emotional involvement on the part of the person stitching it.
- One must be conscious that the practices of different embroidery workshops and the stitching of different hands might result in variety, just as different scriptoria and scribes produce different manifestations of a script. However, while there are many extant manuscripts and there has been considerable research on their origins and provenance, the Tapestry is unique and itself is the sole artefactual evidence for different embroiderers and embroidery workshops in the later eleventh century.

The Tapestry was evidently produced according to certain principles of style which give coherence to the entire frieze. Its 'Master Designer' must have decreed that only the outlines of faces and hands, and the features of faces, should be embroidered, leaving the cream linen backcloth to represent flesh. This was a book illuminator's device, one already used effectively at St Augustine's, Canterbury, in manuscripts such as the *Old English Hexateuch* (London, British Library, Cotton Claudius B. iv), which has long been recognised as a source for images in the Tapestry (F. Wormald 1957, 28–32; Bernstein 1986, 39–46; Owen-Crocker, 2005b). This outline technique distinguishes the Bayeux Tapestry from extant tenth-century English embroideries with figures, such as the stole and maniple preserved in Durham Cathedral among the relics of St Cuthbert (Plenderleith 1956), which delineate human features in dark thread but fill the facial area with light-coloured split stitch. Later embroidery of the kind known as *opus anglicanum* (English work), which continued the tradition of the silk and spun-gold Durham vestments, would achieve convincing naturalism in the portrayal of the body, as for example in a scene from an early fourteenth-century orphrey (King 1963, nos. 58, 33, colour plate facing 16).

There may have been technical and practical reasons for the choice of stem stitch outline and facial features: wool, the fibre chosen for the embroidery, does not split as cleanly as silk; while the technique of surface couching, which is used extensively in the Tapestry, and works successfully on small areas of many birds and beasts in the borders as well as large zones in the main register, is perhaps not well suited to depicting the contours of the human face. The massed stem stitch sometimes used as filler in the Tapestry might have been more suitable for faces, but the restricted palette of ten colours (Bédat and Girault-Kurtzeman 2004, 91) lacks a convincing skin tone. Whether it was because of the choice of fibre, limitation of colours, economy of time and materials, or simply because this was Canterbury House Style, the outline and features method was chosen.

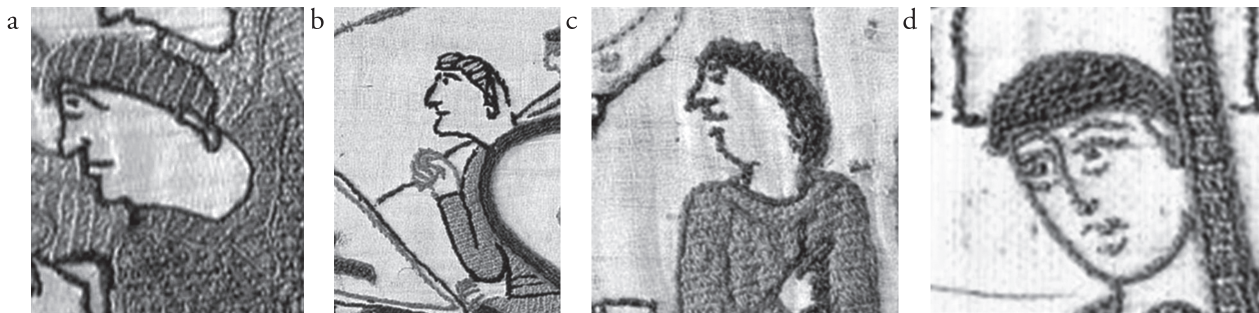
An artist working with this directive had a number of alternatives: profile, three-quarter face, full-face; and the presence or absence of directional gaze. For instance,

a rider (Figure 5, **47**) near the opening of the Tapestry points with his finger for the benefit of the audience to the caption identifying Harold, but he does not look at it – in his world it does not exist – in contrast, mariners handling the sails of ships (**61a, b**) engage fully with their task.

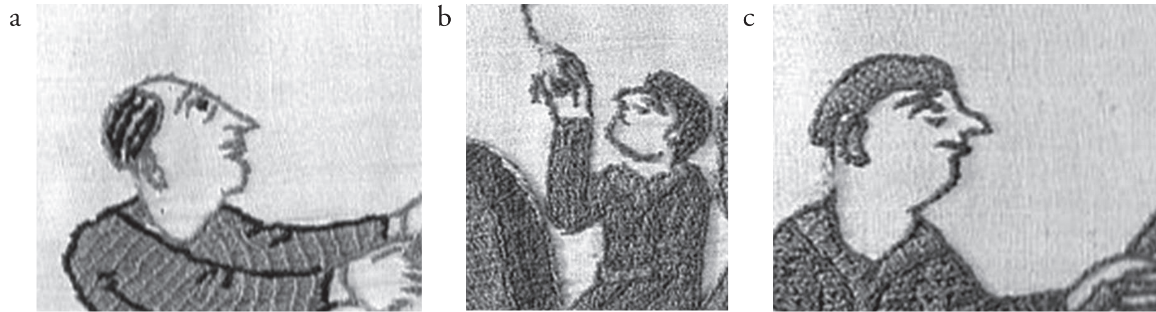
When a profile view of the face is chosen, which it is in a majority of cases, the shape of the chin can vary (**48a–c**): there are neat, firm chins; sharper, pointed chins and almost vertical chins. Some of the chinless profiles are quite crude, and this shape is never used for major characters; other profiles are relatively naturalistic. For three-quarter faces (**47, 48d**), the length of the chin line is one indicator of the angle of the face, and the shape of the chin is sometimes marked by a U-shape or an inverted U. Noses also exhibit variety, though with both nose and chin it is important not to be misled by repairs, detectable by changes of colour, often to a modern, chemical-dyed thread which has subsequently faded. Figures show very different profiles (**49a–c**): for example a pointed nose and an aquiline nose, both developing from the brow line so there is no forehead as such; and a prominent nose beneath a well developed forehead. Eyes are quite versatile, with the artist having the potential to include several details: brow, upper lid, pupil and a curve, which may be the lower lid or the lines beneath the eye (**48d**); or to simplify the eye into a dot (**48b**) or a line or two (**48c**) beneath the eyebrow. What might be called the 'bulbous' eye (**48a**) – placed on a profile face very close to the nose, with a dot for the pupil and a prominent line conveying both upper lid and brow – appears like a caricature as opposed to eyes set further back. The mouth may be a Cupid's bow (**48d**) or a line (**48a–b**), or it may be open, indicating that the figure is speaking or chanting (**48c, 58a**), or shouting. There are differences in ears (**49a, 50a–d**) with height, shape and detail all variable, some having more prominent lobules, some with more attention to the upper cartilage, both the helix, which is the rim of the ear, and the antihelix which is the contouring inside the rim. Some are depicted quite crudely, others are shaped carefully (compare the ears of the brawling workmen (Figures 390–1, **50d**) with that of Bishop Odo (Figure 384, **60b**).

47. *Harold and his men ride to Bosham (City of Bayeux).*

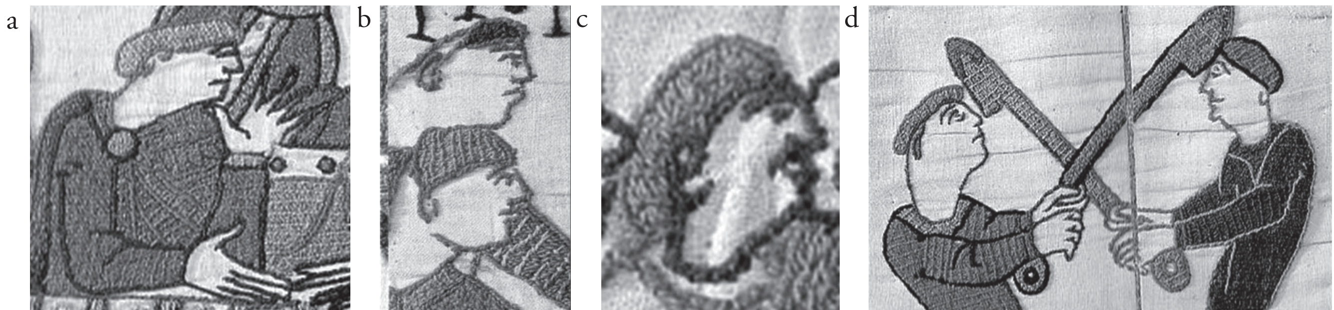
Hair is generally indicated by a solid block of colour edged with a contrasting line, but there are varieties – two-tone hair (**51a**), curly hair (**51b**, **56a**) and, of course, different hairstyles: the bob of the English (**50a**); the shaved neck of the Normans (**50b**), which is sometimes accompanied by a menacing lock of hair at the forehead; the tonsure of the cleric (**55a–b**, **58a–b**, **60b**) and the occasional bald head (**49a**, **58a**). There are moustaches, both the thin version which distinguishes Harold and some of the English – but by no means all of them – at the start of the Tapestry (**42, 53**), and the flowing handlebar worn by a few at Hastings (**52a**). There are beards, both straggly (**52b**) and neat (**52c**). Some beards are perhaps included to suggest age and hence experience, such as the most prominent shipwrights (Figures 273–4) in Scene 35 or the steersman (Figure 297) testing the wind in Scene 37. King Edward, the elderly monarch, is characterised by his beard (Figures 3, 207, 231, 235; **53–4c**). There may be deliberate identification also, of the man (Figure



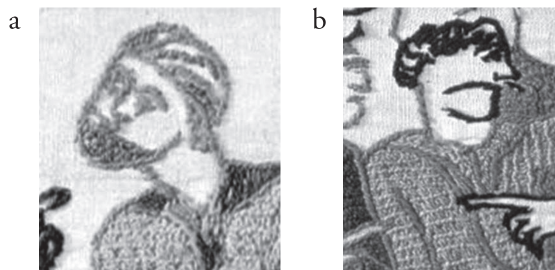
48. *a) Neat, firm chin, bulbous eye; b) Pointed chin, dot for eye, ear with dangling lobule and small helix; c) Almost vertical chin, linear eye; d) Three-quarter face, detailed eyes, cupid's bow mouth (all City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*



49. *a) Pointed nose and bald head, ear with dangling lobule and small helix; b) Aquiline nose; c) Prominent nose beneath well-developed forehead (all City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*



50. *a) Open lines of ear with helix and lobule (; b) Low-set ears which are mainly lobules; c) Ear with prominent antihelix; d) Fully enclosed ear with additional lobule (all City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*



51. *a) Two-tone hair and beard; b) Curly hair (both City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*

130) who stands close behind Harold, watching the animated discussion between the English Earl and Norman Duke (**51a, 57a**), and who is distinguished by a rather implausible beard. This is perhaps Harold's brother, Wulfnoth, William's hostage. Other beards may simply be included for variety.

The shape of the face is embroidered in blue-black, red, or, less frequently, green; often the features are the same colour as the outline. There are places where groups of faces are basically delineated in the same way but are saved from being identical by different colours: the outline of face or neck or the block of hair is deliberately varied. The hands are quite often embroidered in a different colour from the face outline, sometimes the two hands in different colours, one matching the face, the other not.

The effect, today at least, is to make faces and hands outlined in *black* appear more prominent than those in red or green. While it is possible that other colours have faded, the black does, on occasion, seem to have been employed for emphasis. For example, in the opening scene (1; **53**), the face of the king (Figure 3) is delineated in black, while the other figures, subordinate in this context, are in red. The left hands of both King Edward and Harold (Figure 2) are in red; but the right hands, the hands that meet in a significant gesture, are black, focusing attention on the communication between the two. In another case, the scene (35) in which the invasion is planned (**55a**), the whole focus of the picture turns to the tonsured figure of Odo (Figure 264), who, although seated behind William (Figure 263), rises higher and is pointing onwards. His face is outlined strongly in black. The faces of William and the standing figure (Figure 262) on the left, apart from the pupils of their eyes, are in red and, to the twenty-first-century eye at least, are less prominent. In the Ælfgyva scene (15; **55b**), the faces of both the woman and the *clericus* are in red and green. This makes their faces less prominent than their hands:

52. *a) Handlebar moustache; b) Straggly beard; c) Neat beards (all City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*

hers imitating the gesture of the allegorical figure *Spes*, 'Hope', in a manuscript of Prudentius's *Psychomachia* (London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra C. viii, fol. 17r; Owen-Crocker 2007b, 167, fig. 7); his large right hand touching her small face. The relative colouring of hand and face may be a deliberate effect to focus attention on significant gestures.

Throughout the Tapestry leading characters are designated by prominent positioning and the inclusion of names in the captions. However, subtle distinctions of visage may also mark out major players. In the early episode where Harold's party ride to Bosham (Scene 2), facial differences direct the viewer to the important figure. Some of the other riders' eyes (**47**) are designated with three lines – brow, pupil and eyelid – but Harold's face (Figure 9) has four – brow, upper lid, pupil and lower lid (or lines beneath the eye). Alone of the riders, his ear is in a different colour from his other features. In the Bosham feast scene which follows (**56a**), the two central figures (Figures 14–5) are not only larger than their companions, they also have more facial features: moustache, eyebrow and pupil, upper and lower lip (their mouths are open as they drink and speak), ear and hair delineated by a contrasting outline that continues right round. All these features are found in some of the companion figures, but none have all of them. Similarly, Guy of Ponthieu (Figure 63), arresting Harold (Figure 59, Scene 7), has more detailed delineation than either Harold's party or his own, and his black outline makes him more prominent.

In the use of colour contrast there are distinct variations between practice in different parts of the Tapestry. The embroiderers of the first piece of linen (Scenes 1–13), in general, do not use contrasting colours for features. The exceptions are Harold's ear (Figure 9) in the ride to Bosham (Scene 2); Guy of Ponthieu (Figure 85), seated as Harold surrenders his sword, who has a black eyebrow and eye dot in a red-outlined face; and an anonymous oarsman (Figure 26, Scene 4), whose facial outline and features are green, other than red dots representing his eyes. The occurrences, then, are rare, intermittent and not confined to the principal actors. The second section of linen (Scenes 14–28) makes more use of colour contrast, but still intermittently. Again, leading characters do not always have it, while supporting players sometimes do. Ælfgyva and the *clericus* (Figures 135–6) have contrasting pupils; so do two figures approaching the quicksands near Mont-Saint-Michel (Scene 16): a man in what looks like a patchwork costume (Figure 143) generally assumed to be William, though it seems likely he may be Odo, who undeniably wears a similar garment in the battle at Hastings (Owen-Crocker 2005a, 113), and an adjacent onlooker (Figure 144). As figures in helmets begin to appear from this point onwards, a coloured eye intermittently distinguishes between the faces beneath them. The heroism of Harold (Figure 153, Scene 16) at the quicksands is effectively highlighted, not only by his face's three-quarter angle amongst profiles, but also by its colour and detail: a double outline of green and red; red ear, eyebrows, nose, mouth and chin; black moustache, upper and lower eyelids and pupil.

The third section of linen (Scenes 27–37) contains a complex frontal view of Harold at his coronation (Figure 242; **56b**), where his facial outline, eyebrows, moustache, mouth and chin are black; his eyes (both lids and pupil) are brown; his hair is dark green; the outline of his hair and crown is red; and the crown on his head is depicted in yellow and the (now) pale green which has faded from its original light blue, representing, perhaps, gold and silver metal respectively. Archbishop Stigand (Figure 243) is also full-face but less colourful: the features are all present and are in black, while the facial outline is red. Although extreme examples, the crowned king and the archbishop are not the only faces in this part of the Tapestry to make use of colour contrast. Onlookers to the offering of the crown and the coronation have it, and it reappears in subsequent scenes: the central figure in the

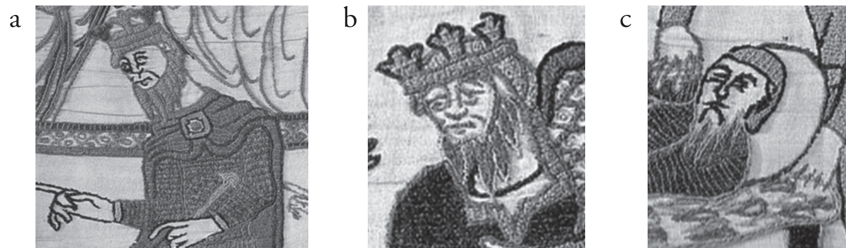
messenger's boat (Figure 259, Scene 34), the ship building (Figure 274, Scene 35) and the preparations for invasion (Figures 278–9, 289, Scenes 36–7).

The fourth section of linen (Scenes 37–42) starts off with colour contrast (see Figures 292–6), but this is dropped almost completely. It reappears intermittently on crewmen (Figures 328, 352, Scene 38), a groom and soldiers (Figures 357–9, Scene 39), pillagers and a man with a cooking pot (Figures 365, 367–8, Scenes 40–1).

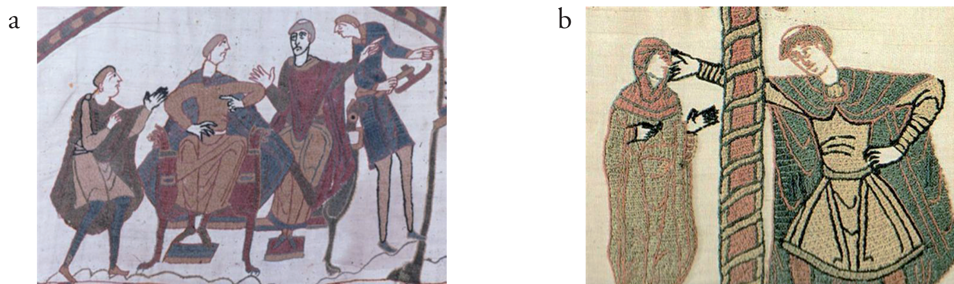
The fifth section (Scenes 42–8) makes much use of colour contrast in the faces of servants and feaster (Figures 373–4, 376, 379, Scenes 42–3) and William and Robert (Figures 385–6, Scene 44). Almost all the subsequent figures have some contrasting feature, either the outline/features or the pupil of the eye: soldiers, men with spades, fortification builders, arsonists, fleeing woman and child, William and the messenger and some of William's army, right up to the fifth seam, the exceptions being in the group of soldiers immediately before the seam (Figures 408, 411, 414–5, Scene 48). It is probable that a different artist was responsible for material in the fourth and fifth sections and that these scenes were additional to the original design (Owen-Crocker 1994; 2009, 92–6). There are stylistic differences, and the artist evidently used additional sources, derived, probably second-hand, from Roman sculpture as well as the Canterbury manuscripts used elsewhere in the Tapestry. It is interesting to find that these same areas use more colour contrast than the rest of the embroidery.

The sixth section (Scenes 48–51) does not use facial colour contrast in the continuation of the group of soldiers which bridges the fifth seam, only bringing in this device at the appearance of William interrogating Vital (Figure 425), where the Duke (Figure 424) – but not Vital – is marked by a contrasting pupil of the eye (Scenes 48–9). Subsequently, the device is used almost routinely, continuing right through sections seven, eight and nine (Scenes 51–5, 55–7, 57–8). It appears that the embroiderers here kept to a consistent practice across two seams to the present end of the Tapestry, as far as one can distinguish original work from repairs. In Section 7, when William (Figure 542) raises his helmet in the thick of battle to show he is still alive (Scene 55), the

53. *Harold and companion take leave of King Edward (City of Bayeux).*



54. *a) King Edward aged; b) King Edward dying; c) King Edward dead (all City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*



55. *a) Planning the invasion; b) Ælfgyva and the clericus (both City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*

face outline, like the hands, is in brown, the pupil is red and the brow and eyelids are in black. This is very emphatic. Despite the climactic nature of Odo's (Figure 534) galloping onto the battlefield in the previous scene (54), there is less contrast in the portrayal of the bishop's face; his costume was probably colourful enough to create the desired impact. Its densely-packed red and blue-black triangles, outlined in yellow and divided by lines of green, are very different from the depiction of mail suits of other riders: monochrome circles set against the cream of the linen background.

Different sections of the Tapestry demonstrate different uses of the profile and three-quarter angle. The opening scene (1, **53**) depicts Harold (Figure 2) and his companion in profile and the king at three-quarter angle, one of several indicators of the relative status of the protagonists; yet this first section of the Tapestry does not exploit contrast of angle again to show rank. Conversely, there are several profile encounters in this section where superiority of status is sometimes evident, but shown by different means (Scenes 9, 12, 13).

The second piece of linen has two striking scenes (14, 23) which sandwich a profiled Harold between three-quarter face figures (**57a–b**), and the same section effectively uses facial direction in the funeral scene (**58a**) to suggest the procession winding across and towards the viewer's line of sight. It is the third section which subtly uses the three-quarter profile to contribute to the prominence of Odo (Figure 264) in planning the invasion (**55a**) and subsequently goes on to make great use of three-quarter angles, as does the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth section, that area which has already been identified as making much use of colour for facial features. There is no attempt to convey helmeted heads at any angle other than profile, and indeed in the latter part of the Tapestry all faces are in profile, whether or not the figures wear mail and helmets. This uniformity of angle may have contributed to the decision to give the figures contrasting eyes. The only mail-clad men in the Tapestry depicted at three-quarters angle lack helmets (Figures 360–1, 366, Scenes 39–40). The three awkwardly drawn figures appear in Section 4, in the pillaging episode, not in the battle.

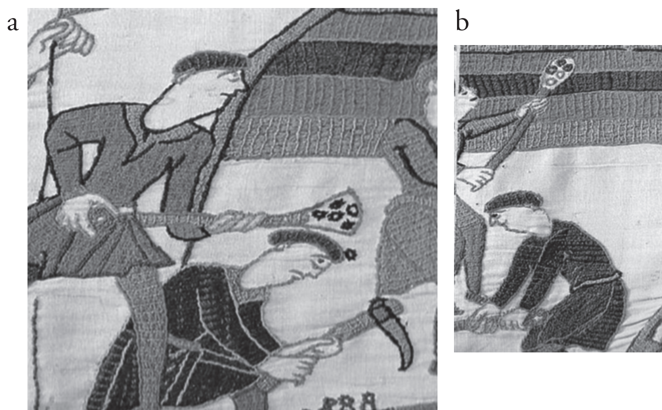
Full-face images are rare. The intention perhaps was to confine them to the Lord's anointed (Figure 242), and to other spiritual figures: the archbishop (Figure 243) who had crowned the king; and Bishop Odo (Figure 380), blessing the pre-battle feast (**58b**), the latter image taken from the iconography of Jesus at the Last Supper (Loomis 1927; Brooks and Walker 1978, 15), which appears in the *Gospels of St Augustine* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi

56. *a) Bosham feast scene; b) Harold's coronation (both City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*

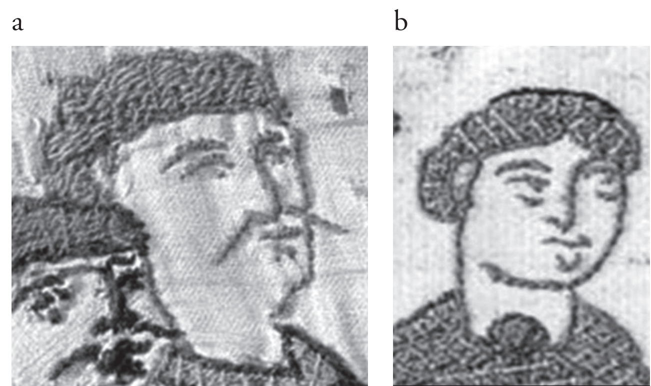
57. *a) Harold argues with William; b) Harold's oath (both City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*

College 286). There is, however, one rogue full-face image (**58c**). The server (Figure 374) at the centre of the makeshift sideboard could be an error, a mismanaged three-quarter profile like the man (Figure 373) on the left of him; but let us note that the artist drawing this section was something of a joker: the drinking horn of the Bosham feast (**56a**) is here inverted and parodied by a horn blown in somebody's ear (Owen-Crocker 1998, 53). It was probably the same artist who, further on in the Tapestry, misunderstood an image from Trajan's Column of soldiers building fortifications, turning it into

58. *a) Edward's funeral procession; b) The pre-battle feast; c) Servers at the makeshift sideboard (all City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*



59. *a) A clod of earth drops on a shoveller; b) A fellow-shoveller is amused (both City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*



60. *a) Individual face from the first section; b) Individual face from the fifth section (both City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*

a ludicrous fight between workmen (Figures 390–1) with spades (**50d**; Werkmeister 1976, 540; Owen-Crocker 2009, 84, 86–7). It is conceivable that the full-face servant could be an intentional parody of Odo at the feast. Waiter and bishop grasp vessels in a similar way. If so, this could be a manifestation of a subversive attitude in the English designers which is sometimes claimed for the ostensibly Norman-glorifying Tapestry (Bernstein 1986, *passim*); but perhaps the explanation is simply that a subcontracted artist was not aware of the stylistic rules governing the use of full-face images in the Tapestry.

There is no attempt at consistency in presenting the major protagonists, apart from King Edward, who appears in three sections of linen, progressively old, aging, dying and dead (**53a–54c**). There is individualism, however: the stubble on the face of the priest at Edward's deathbed (Figure 230, Scene 27), which shows clearly that the man has been in attendance through the night hours; the bearded man (Figure 378) who lounges so rudely across the table at the Hastings feast (**52b**); the bald-headed, pointy-nosed arsonist (Figure 400; **49a**) which is so distinctive an image that it could be a portrait, or caricature.

No-one ever looks *happy* in the Bayeux Tapestry, but emotion is not absent. At the oath ceremony (**57b**) William's (Figure 186) straight mouth indicates his ruthlessness and Harold's (Figure 187) down-turned moustache his discomfiture. Notice too (**59a**) dismay on the face of a man (Figure 394) constructing fortifications, on whom a clod of earth is dropping. The shoveller opposite him (Figure 396; **59b**), who has the nearest thing to a smile in the Tapestry, is evidently amused by his colleague's misfortune.

It is clear that the Tapestry does not repeatedly use the same face. In demonstration, first compare two heads which are among the most naturalistic in the Tapestry, one from the first section of linen and one from the fifth. The first belongs to a rider (Figure 5; **60a**) accompanying Harold to Bosham; he has the hairstyle and thin moustache found on many Englishmen in the earlier part of the Tapestry. The other (Figure 384; **60b**) is named in the caption as Bishop Odo; he has a centre parting beneath the ecclesiastical tonsure and is clean-shaven. Apart from these differences of hair, the two faces are executed in a similar way: both three-quarters

angle, and entirely depicted in red stem stitch, without colour contrast. Yet they are very different. The first face is narrow, its profile angular; the second is rounder, with the chin line going right across the neck so that it is very nearly full-face. The rider's face has eyebrows, upper eyelid and pupil, but Odo's also has a lower eyelid. The first face has a more prominent nose and small mouth. Odo has a rounded nose and wider mouth. The rider's chin is indicated by an inverted U, Odo's by an upright U.

The same test might also be applied to two ostensibly similar images (**61a–b**) of crews navigating the English Channel. Close examination suggests that in each case the artist was drawing to a formula: we find the same *dramatis personae* – a man standing in the prow and another beside the mast with his arm raised – and there is in both cases a variety of body angles and the suggestion of interaction between men facing one another; the same device of an overlapping foreground motif is manifested by the shields in the English ship and the horse heads in the Norman. Yet the *faces* of the men are not alike. Both show a variety of chin shapes, but the Norman crew, being more widely spaced, can be drawn in greater variety and detail. In particular, an extra line under the eye gives them more individualism and vitality than the English crew.

a

b

61. *a) Englishmen cross the Channel; b) Normans cross the Channel (both City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*

62. *Two adjacent groups with bulging eyes (City of Bayeux, Thames and Hudson and David Wilson).*

Even though there is compliance with stylistic principles, the fact that faces are clearly depicted in contrasting ways, with different angles, features and varying degrees of detail, certainly suggests that the drawing of the Tapestry cartoon was sub-contracted to different artists. In certain cases, however, it is colour contrast rather than graphic detail that individualises faces. It is impossible to know if that colour contrast was supplied by the embroidery workshop or directed by the artist. If the Tapestry's cartoon – now concealed or obliterated – were drawn in coloured inks, just as in Canterbury manuscripts such as the *Harley Psalter* (London, British Library, Harley 603), the colour contrasts might have been entirely directed at the drawing stage.

Given that the differences in faces suggest different artists' hands at work, it is an obvious step to consider whether these different artists were working on separate sections of linen. However, the result of the investigation suggests a more complex work pattern than a simple division of labour of the one-artist-per-section kind. To some extent there are indeed differences in the depiction of faces between some sections of linen. Section 2 differs from Section 1. In Section 3 the potential of facial angle and colour are very effectively exploited, and it is this conjunction of graphics and colour which suggests that colour contrast, at least at this point in the Tapestry, was initiated by the artist. The end of Section 4 and beginning of Section 5 are also distinctive for these points, as well as the artist's humorous, possibly subversive, attitude, and, incidentally, some clumsiness in the embroidery (Owen-Crocker 2009, 77–9). An examination of faces in the last three sections of the Tapestry suggests they might have been by the same hand.

Often, though, the subdivision of graphic work relates to smaller parts than whole strips of linen – there are, for example, two adjacent groups with bulbous eyes (see **48a**, **62**) – but we do not find this facial feature elsewhere. This might be the work of a different artist or might represent an existing artist responding to the drama of the situations he was illustrating; for example, human responses to the coronation of Harold and the appearance of what we now know to be Halley's Comet (Scenes 31–2). A sequence of men with similarly large, high, detailed ears is interrupted at the Bosham feast (**56a**) by some figures with small, low, hooked ears – for extreme examples compare the high, detailed ear of Figure 12 with the low, hooked ear of

Figure 16 – before the previous type of ear, and perhaps the previous artist, is found in sequence again (Figures 18–21). The first two scenes of the Tapestry are perhaps the work of an artist we do not meet again. The hand of the artist with the clownish sense of humour overlaps two strips of linen. The irreverent episodes of this artist, however, are interspersed with scenes containing some of the most detailed and famous faces in the whole Tapestry, scenes of complex ancestry in terms of the models used and equally complex potential significance (Owen-Crocker 2009, 57–84). This juxtaposition suggests two contrasting possibilities: that the same hand which drew the slapstick comedy of the spade fight and the falling clods of earth also depicted Odo-as-Christ and the Norman brothers at council; or that different artists were commissioned to create drawings which were then juxtaposed to fulfil the master design.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Thames and Hudson and Sir David Wilson for permission to use scans of the images in Wilson 1985 for the very detailed views needed to illustrate this paper.

Note

1. At the first seam (Scene 13) the misalignment of the upper border and abandonment of the ground line suggest independent embroidery teams worked on the different sections, though the clever addition of an animal and a tree disguises the misfit in the bottom border; while at the third seam (Scene 37) the artists who set out the inscriptions on either side of the join were clearly working independently of one another, one carefully justifying the right edge of his concluding inscription against some boundary now invisible to us, and the other beginning his inscription with a cross, which shows that in his own mind he was commencing, rather than continuing, the caption.

The Bayeux Tapestry and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11

Michael J. Lewis

It is generally accepted that Canterbury manuscripts had a significant impact upon the designer of the Bayeux Tapestry. Francis Wormald (1957, 31), in particular, noted that 'a study of both faces and figures [in the Tapestry] shows a number of similarities to English manuscripts of the second half of the eleventh century', particularly those from Canterbury. This type of drawing – influenced by the ninth-century *Utrecht Psalter* (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek 32) – appears in some late Anglo-Saxon and early Anglo-Norman manuscripts, such as the *Harley 603 Psalter* (London, British Library, Harley 603). Wormald observed that 'heads executed in this style have rather round features and big jaws' and also highlighted the 'extraordinary vigour of facial expressions' in the Bayeux Tapestry, which is also found in manuscripts such as (London, British Library) Cotton Caligula A. xv.

Besides style, it is the striking parallels between the Tapestry's images and (apparent) models – including groups of figures and even associated buildings – in illuminations from Canterbury, that are particularly revealing. Wormald (1957, 32), for instance, highlighted the similarities between Figure 364 in the Tapestry who carries a 'coil of rope' and a man in (London, British Library) Cotton Cleopatra C. viii (fol. 27). Similarly the Norman feast scene in the Tapestry (Scene 43) resembles one in the *Gospels of St Augustine* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 286, fol. 125r), a late sixth-century Italian gospel book, which was in Canterbury in the eleventh century.

However, of all the extant Canterbury manuscripts, it seems the imagery of the *Old English Hexateuch* (London, British Library, Cotton Claudius B. iv) had a particular impact upon the Tapestry designer. For example, the scene showing a Jew escaping from Jericho in the *Hexateuch* (fol. 141v) can be likened to Conan's escape from Dol in the Tapestry (Scene 18; Hart 2000, 151, 154; Bernstein 1986, 41). Ships' figureheads in the *Hexateuch* (fols 14r-15r) compare well with those in the Tapestry (Scenes 4–5, 25, 34, 36, 38–9). Similarly, the Tapestry's 'trees are particularly close in treatment' to those in the *Hexateuch* (F. Wormald 1957, 30), although there are parallels in other manuscripts, such as the *Tiberius Psalter* (London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius C. vi, fol. 7) and the calendar in (London, British Library) Cotton Julius A. vi (fol. 5v). Likewise, the deathbed scenes of a number of Adam's descendants in the *Hexateuch* (Jared, fol. 11r; Malaleel, fol. 11r; Methusaleh, fol. 12r and Lamech, fol. 12r) are similar to that of King Edward in the Tapestry (Scenes 27–8; Hart 2000, 129–30). Also of note is border Figure 97, who scares birds, a scene which mimics a depiction of Abraham in the *Hexateuch* (fol. 26v). F. Wormald (1957, 32) noted that 'the gesture of the hands and the shape of the sling with a small tassel on the end are identical'.

Besides these comparable images, it is apparent that there are also general similarities between aspects of material culture (including buildings, arms and armour and clothing) and the natural world (animals and vegetation) shared by the Tapestry and many late Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, especially those from Canterbury, but which are too numerous to list here (see M. Lewis 2005b; 2008).

Although it is apparent that Canterbury illuminations had a profound influence upon the Tapestry designer, one manuscript has undeservedly had less scholarly attention than most: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11, also known (inaccurately) as the 'Cædmon manuscript', and, to Old English specialists, as the 'Junius Manuscript'.

Junius 11

Junius 11 survives as a unique example of an extensively illustrated, though incomplete, book of Christian poetry (see Muir 2004 for a full discussion and colour facsimile). Initially it comprised three poems, *Genesis* (a composite of two texts now known as *Genesis A* and *Genesis B*, the

latter embedded in the former), *Exodus* and *Daniel*, but was enlarged (soon after the completion of the first poems) to include a fourth, known as *Christ and Satan*.

The extant book (several pages of the manuscript have been lost or destroyed since its creation) consists of 116 vellum leaves, paginated i–ii and 1–229, in 17 gatherings. 100 pages are illustrated, including 51 coloured line drawings and 'doodles', and 50 initials, of which 29 are plain. The original drawings continue only up to p. 88; thereafter there are blank spaces which were once intended to be illustrated.

Junius 11's text is written in Anglo-Saxon minuscule script by three scribes known as A (who copied the first three poems in the manuscript up to and including p. 212), B (pp. 213–15) and C (pp. 216–29). Two artists were responsible for most of Junius 11's illustrations, though a third added drawings in the twelfth century. Artist A was responsible for the illustrations down to p. 72 (the last full drawing by this artist is on p. 68), the portrait of Ælfwine (p. 2), the ornamental initials (to p. 79) and the initial on p. 143. Artist B drew the illustrations on pp. 73 to 88, a human head and torso added to p. 7, the binding design on p. 225, the initial on p. 226 and the two metalwork designs on the verso of the last unnumbered leaf (p. 230). Artist C added the unfinished etchings on p. 31 and p. 96. Initials (pp. 83–136, 159–209) were mostly made by the scribe; space was left for initials that were never drawn (pp. 146, 148–9) (Muir 2004; Raw 1976, 134). It is generally considered that Artist B, who uses colour more extensively, was more skilled than Artist A (Muir 2004).

There seems not to have been a close working relationship between the two pre-Conquest artists of Junius 11 and Scribe A, as pictures often do not appear with the text that they illustrate, and sometimes the artists choose not to fill [illustrate] blanks left by the scribe for illustrations. In fact, the lack of synchronisation between the text and images has suggested to some commentators, such as Henderson (1975, 130–1), that the artists could not read the Anglo-Saxon text, and so placed images where they thought best (Muir 2004).

Junius 11 has been traditionally dated to *c*. 975–*c*. 1010 (Temple 1976, 76–7),[1] but Leslie Lockett (2002, 141–73) has convincingly argued that it dates to *c*. 960–*c*. 990. It is generally accepted on the grounds of codicological and art historical evidence that the manuscript was produced at either Christ Church or St Augustine's, Canterbury (Muir 2004; Raw 1976, 133–4), though Malmesbury has also been suggested (Lucas 1994, 2–5).

Parallels between the Bayeux Tapestry and Junius 11

In the text to accompany the Bodleian Library's excellent digital facsimile of Junius 11, Bernard Muir (2004) states that 'although there are a number of similarities between the Junius images and those found in other manuscripts … there is no demonstrable source for the complete cycle, and many aspects of the illustrations have no parallels'.[2] While this might be true, there is certainly evidence to suggest the designer of the Bayeux Tapestry may have known Junius 11 and was perhaps inspired by its imagery. Of course, the differences in medium – embroidery versus vellum – makes drawing exact parallels difficult; however, it is hoped the following, necessarily selective examples will give weight to the hypothesis presented here.

Clothing

In contrast to the Bayeux Tapestry, many male characters in Junius 11 (unsurprisingly so) wear the classical-style *pallium* and *tunica*. Gowns, though rare, are depicted in the Tapestry, though most are of a form different from those in Junius. In the Tapestry they are used to highlight high-status individuals (M. Lewis 2007a, 104), who are shown sitting in positions associated with rule or authority. Common to both works is the fact that some of the gowns have diagonal folds (Junius 11, pp. 2, 62; Tapestry, Figures 384–5).

Most of the Tapestry's characters depicted in civilian dress wear a tunic with tight-fitting trousers, a form of dress common in Junius 11. A distinctive feature of the Tapestry's tunics is their rounded neck-line, slit front and v-shaped braided border (e.g. Figure 374). This style is uncommon in contemporary manuscripts, mostly appearing in non-Canterbury-produced illuminations, such as (London, British Library) Cotton Tiberius B. v (e.g. fol. 6v) and the *Tiberius Psalter* (e.g. fols 9, 11). In fact the only Canterbury-produced manuscripts which seem to have this feature are (London, British Library) Arundel 155 (fol. 93) and Junius 11 (pp. 53, 59; **63**).

Women are more numerous in Junius 11 than in the Tapestry.[3] Nonetheless, it is interesting to observe the general similarities in costume and pose between Eve in Junius 11 (p. 46; **64**) and Ælfgyva (Figure 135) in the Tapestry, although Ælfgyva's dress appears to have longer sleeves. Indeed, aspects of the Tapestry's female costume, such as flared sleeves (see Figure 402), which do not appear in Junius 11, seem to reflect post-Conquest fashion (M. Lewis 2005b, 85).

63. *Neckline of tunic in Junius 11, p. 53 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*

Architecture

Junius 11 does not offer exact models for buildings in the Bayeux Tapestry, though both works share similar architectural forms. In this respect it is interesting to compare the building depicted on p. 3 of Junius 11 (**65**) and Building 32 in the Tapestry. Both structures are double storey, with trapezoidal pitched roofs, and they have other architectural features in common. Elsewhere in both works we see similar types of pointed and domed roofs, towers, columns and capitals, scaled roofing fabric, masonry, arches and arcades, doors and doorways as well as battlements (M. Lewis 2005b, 38). However, it would be wrong to imply that because of these features there is an exclusive relationship between the architecture of the Tapestry and Junius 11, as similar architectural elements could be identified in numerous other manuscripts from Canterbury and elsewhere (M. Lewis 2005b, 27–40). Indeed, there are differences in the architecture of both

64. *Eve in Junius 11, p. 46 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*

65. *A building in Junius 11, p. 3 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*

works. For example, the artists of Junius 11 rather unsuccessfully attempt a degree of three-dimensional perspective not as apparent in the Tapestry. Also, some of buildings drawn by Junius 11's Artist B have distinctive cruciform windows (pp. 81–2, 87–8), not observed in the Tapestry.

Although some scholars have attempted to parallel the Tapestry's named buildings with actual structures (Pollock 1996; Taylor 1992), it makes better sense to see the Tapestry's architecture as being founded in art. In this respect it is crucial that Junius 11's architecture would probably have been available to a designer working at Canterbury – assuming that both works were made there.

Weapons

As might be expected (given the subject matter), weapons are less abundant in Junius 11 than in the Bayeux Tapestry, with only swords, spears and one round-shield being depicted. The round-shield in Junius 11, shown convex with a pointed boss (p. 57), is of a similar, but not exact, form to those in the Tapestry (e.g. that held by Figure 497).

On the other hand, spears in both Junius 11 (**66**) and the Tapestry are commonly leaf-shaped or barbed. Intriguingly, they often appear with single or double wings. Barbed spears with wings would have been of restricted function, as the wing would have limited the depth to which the spear could be thrust, whilst the barb would have inhibited its removal from the victim (M. Lewis 2005b, 52). Such spears are also common in other late Anglo-Saxon illuminations, including the *Bury Psalter* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. Lat. 12, fol. 36r) and a Canterbury manuscript of Prudentius's *Psychomachia* (London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra C. viii, fols 10v–11r).

Swords in Junius 11 and the Tapestry differ. Those in Junius 11 all have 'three-lobed' pommels (p. 57), a type popular in the ninth and tenth centuries, but going out of fashion by the eleventh (Mann 1957, 65). Only one of these, though a rather poorly executed example, appears in the Tapestry (in the scabbard of Figure 582), its designer preferring to depict 'tea-cosy' and 'disc' pommels, which are of a later type. Hence, it is unlikely that Junius 11 was the model for the Tapestry's swords, given that three-lobed pommels are relatively common in other late Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, including Cotton Cleopatra C. viii (fol. 11) and the *Harley 603 Psalter* (fol. 72v).[4]

Ships

There are notable similarities between the ships in Junius 11 and the Bayeux Tapestry. Ignoring the superstructure of Noah's Ark – the only vessel shown in Junius 11 – which has more in common with the architecture of both works, Junius 11 and the Tapestry appear to show similar clinker-built ships, typical of the early medieval period.

However, there are some particular details common

66. *Spears in Junius 11, p. 81 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*

67. *Ship's figurehead in Junius 11, p. 68 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*

to both works. The ships in both the Tapestry (Ships 4–5, 7, 11, 14, 17, 19, 22–3, 25) and Junius 11 (pp. 66, 68; **67**) share similar zoomorphic figureheads, which, as mentioned above, also appear in the *Hexateuch*. Likewise, a gap in the gunwale plank of the first six ships in the Tapestry also appears in the Ark in Junius 11 (p. 68), where a doorway is cut through the upper strake; again this feature also occurs in the *Hexateuch* (fol. 14r).

The similarities between Noah, who steers the Ark in Junius 11 (p. 66; **68**), and Harold (Figures 29, 44) in the Tapestry are also of interest, as both men have a similar pose. Such parallels should not be overlooked, when examining the sources that might have influenced the design of the Tapestry, as ships are relatively rare in late Anglo-Saxon manuscripts.

Animals

Birds and beasts are relatively common in both Junius 11 and the Bayeux Tapestry, and there are a number of notable similarities in the animal drawings of both works. For example, it is possible to compare the form of a deer in Junius 11 (p. 7) to one in the Tapestry (A286), though that in Junius 11 is lying down. Likewise, on p. 11 of Junius 11 (**69**) there are several beasts, of which the goats (A295), peacock (A61) and lions, which are common (e.g. A175, A486), can be paralleled in general with animals in the Tapestry.

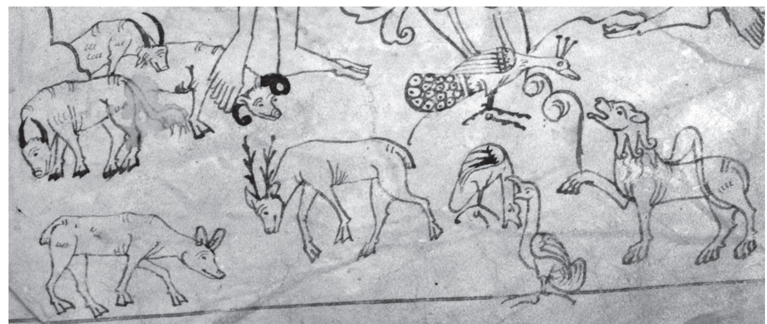
Even though these parallels exist, it is apparent that many of the birds and beasts in both works can be found elsewhere in art (M. Lewis 2005b, 94–6, 98–103). Likewise, there are many instances where the animals in Junius 11 and the Tapestry are clearly distinct from one another, even where the same species is depicted; for instance, the horses in the Tapestry are unlikely to have been modelled on those in Junius 11 (e.g. p. 81). This said, where parallels exist it is apparent that Junius 11 and the Tapestry are of the same Late Anglo-Saxon artistic tradition.

Vegetation

Vegetation in the Bayeux Tapestry closely parallels that of Junius 11, although the trees in Junius 11 are stockier and less fluid than those in the Tapestry. Common details include the gentle intertwining of a tree in Junius 11 (p. 11) and an example in the Tapestry (Tree 6). Although interlace is relatively common in the Tapestry (Trees 1–3, 5–7, 15, 17–8), it is less so in Junius 11 (pp. 24, 39). The Tapestry's style of interlace is also found in the architecture of Junius 11 (e.g. p. 57).

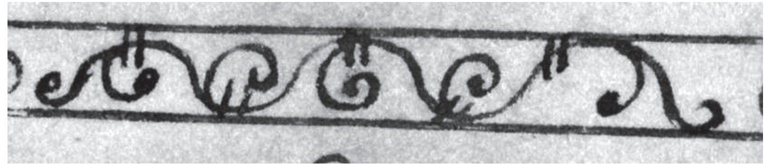
Acanthus forms, which dominate the vegetal ornament in Junius 11 (pp. 7, 78), also appear in the Bayeux Tapestry (V1–2, 150–1), though embroidery work does not necessarily lend itself to the delicate forms found in manuscript art. For example, the Tapestry's border acanthus leaf-work is chunky and clumsy, while acanthus is generally more refined in illuminations. In general,

68. *Noah steering the Ark in Junius 11, p. 66 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*



69. *Various animals in Junius 11, p. 11 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*

70. *Cruciform vegetal ornament in Junius 11, p. 7 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*



71. *Scrolled vegetal ornament in Junius 11, p. 45 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*

72. *The death of Noah in Junius 11, p. 78 (Bodleian Library, University of Oxford).*

leaf forms and fruit are more diverse and extensive in the Tapestry, but some types, such as multi-lobed fruit, are common to both works (Junius 11, pp. 11, 20, 39; Tapestry, Tree 21).

The closest parallels for Junius 11's vegetal ornament are found in the Tapestry's borders. For example, the symmetrically-formed plant on p. 7 of Junius 11 (**70**) is similar to some of the Tapestry's cruciform-shaped vegetal ornament (V96). Likewise, vegetal scrolls found in Junius 11 (p. 45; **71**) also appear in the Tapestry (V381). Similarly, stringy plant types in Junius 11 (pp. 11, 46, 66) also occur in the Tapestry (V113).

Other

There are also various miscellaneous details common to both Junius 11 and the Bayeux Tapestry. An example is the scene depicting the death of Noah in Junius 11 (p. 78; **72**) and that showing the death of Edward in the Tapestry (Scenes 27–8). In both, the dying figure is shown in a scene placed above the same character shown dead. Likewise, the gestures of Ham and Harold (Figure 229) are similar, but reversed. Noah and Edward also expire on matching pillows. This noted, it is apparent that the death scene in Junius 11 was not an exact model for that in the Tapestry.

It is also the case that the general postures of seated figures in Junius 11 match those found in the Tapestry (e.g. Junius, p. ii, and Tapestry, Figure 186; p. 47 and Figure 207; p. 53 and Figure 384; p. 57 and Figures 106, 186; p. 62 and Figures 128, 384; p. 63 and Figures 207, 384), although similar examples are widespread in contemporary art.

Also of interest are the seats of characters depicted sitting. Firstly, the cushions of seats are similar (Junius, pp. 17, 47, 53, 62–3; Tapestry, Figures 3, 186, 207, 384–6, 398). Likewise, seats in both works have 'windows' (Junius, pp. 47, 53; Tapestry Figures 85, 106, 128, 242). Similarly, many of the characters in both Junius 11 (pp. 17, 53, 57, 62) and the Tapestry (Figures 3, 85, 106, 128, 186, 207, 256, 263–4, 384–6) share the same form of foot-stands.

Scenes of agricultural work are found in both Junius 11 (pp. 54, 77) and the Tapestry (Scene 10), and there are general similarities between the plough worked by

73. *The hand of God on a coin of Æthelred II (LVPL-879CB0, Portable Antiquities Scheme).*

Tubal-Cain in Junius 11 (p. 54) and by Figure 88 in the Tapestry, though they are pulled by different animals. It is probably the case that these plough illustrations in both Junius 11 and Tapestry ultimately derived from calendar illustrations.

To illustrate the point that minor details are shared by both works, it is of interest that spades depicted in Junius 11 (pp. 45–6, 49) and the Tapestry (Figures 90–1) are of a similar form, that of a single-sided wooden spade with a metal shoe. Likewise, several characters in both Junius 11 and the Tapestry use the T-axe; Noah in Junius 11 (p. 65) and Figures 265 and 269 in the Tapestry use this type of axe for boatbuilding.

Finally, God is depicted in both works, though it is only His hand that is shown in the Tapestry (Scene 26). God's hand, coming down from above in benediction, is also illustrated in Junius 11 (p. 49). However, this motif is common elsewhere in art, including the 'hand type' coinage of Æthelred II (North 1994, nos 766 768; 73).

Conclusion

Although there is no evidence that the Bayeux Tapestry designer borrowed complete scenes from Junius 11, this paper has attempted to demonstrate that there are enough elements common to both works that it is reasonable to deduce that Junius 11's imagery influenced the Tapestry designer. If the Tapestry was made in Canterbury, and if the designer referred to the illuminations of its scriptoria, then this is eminently possible – but only if Junius 11 was produced there.

Most commentators believe that Junius 11 was probably written and illustrated at Christ Church Cathedral (Temple 1976, 76–7). This is significant, since it is generally believed that St Augustine's Abbey manuscripts had the greater impact upon the Tapestry design. The evidence presented here might suggest the Tapestry's designer referred to the manuscripts of both scriptoria (M. Lewis 2005b, 131). Although Odo of Bayeux was in litigation with Christ Church over land in 1072/3, this seems unlikely to have restricted the Tapestry designer's access to the manuscripts of both scriptoria.

Even if the Tapestry designer borrowed from, or was at least influenced by, Junius 11, it was clearly not his only source. Indeed, it is probable the designer worked from an array of manuscripts and may have also worked from sketches compiled in a model book. One of the manuscripts it is almost certain the designer knew is the *Old English Hexateuch*. This paper has highlighted several motifs only found in the Tapestry, Junius 11 and the *Hexateuch*, and consequently it would be worth exploring the relationship between Junius 11 and the *Hexateuch* further. The fact that Junius 11 was probably produced at least 35 years before the *Hexateuch*, the only other Old Testament picture cycle among surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, is also significant in this respect.

In terms of further understanding the Bayeux Tapestry, it might also be worth trying to see whether the Biblical characters depicted in manuscripts that serve as models for those in the Tapestry have any relevance. For example, if the Tapestry designer was influenced by a manuscript illustration of Noah for a depiction of King Edward, this might also have a symbolic or iconographic purpose. Gale Owen-Crocker (2006, 264) has suggested that 'different artists may have used different models for different purposes, and any one artist may have varied his practice, sometimes merely copying a pleasing image, at other times drawing something with a strong consciousness of what it represented in context'.

These questions aside, the main purpose of this paper has been to highlight the relationship between the Bayeux Tapestry and Junius 11. On the basis of the examples cited, it seems there is compelling evidence that Junius 11 should be added to the corpus of Canterbury material that influenced the designer of the Bayeux Tapestry.

Notes

1. Barbara Raw (1976, 134) dated Junius 11 to 'the second quarter of the eleventh century', on the basis of 'a number of Scandinavian elements in the work of both artists [A and B]'.
2. This is contrary to Barbara Raw (1976, 138–48), who argued that some of the drawings in Junius 11 were 'closely connected with the illustrations' in ninth-century manuscripts from Tours, Aachen and Rheims, which may have found their way into Junius 11 via an 'Old Saxon' original imported in the ninth century.
3. In this respect it is interesting that Catherine Karkov (2001, 153) suggests that Junius 11 might have been 'produced for a woman, or at least for an audience that included aristocratic women'; she also notes (149) that whilst 'the illustrations [of Junius 11] do serve to keep women tied to biological function and domestic space', their iconography 'links them to Mary, ideal mother and queen of heaven, and beyond that to images of contemporary Anglo-Saxon queens for whom Mary served as a model'.
4. The origins of the Tapestry's swords are discussed in M. Lewis 2005b, 51–2.

Dining with Distinction: drinking vessels and difference in the Bayeux Tapestry feast scenes

Carol Neuman de Vegvar

In the past few decades, much has been made of the use in the Bayeux Tapestry of visual markers to distinguish Norman victors from Anglo-Saxon vanquished: Norman men have short haircuts and shave their faces and often also their napes, while their Anglo-Saxon counterparts sport longer hair and moustaches; Normans wear distinctive armour, and so on (M. Lewis 2007a, 100–20). To these identifiers may be added the choice of drinking vessels in the Tapestry's two feasting scenes: at Bosham, the Anglo-Saxons drink from horns as well as cups, while the Normans at their banquet before the Battle of Hastings drink exclusively from palm cups. These choices are not random, nor are they, as has often been suggested, simply a reflection of the realities of material culture (Musset 2005, 96; Cholakian 1995, 99–125) or of social values reflected in textual sources (Gautier 2006, 21, 48, 83–4). Rather, like so much else in the Tapestry, these objects are deployed as part of a social discourse of difference, not only helping to define the Anglo-Saxons and Normans as profoundly and essentially distinct from each other in identity and history, but also marking the Anglo-Saxons as the moral inferiors of the Normans, whose victory is as much a matter of divine will and favour as of battlefield skill and valour.

At Bosham (Scene 3), Harold (Figure 14) and his immediate associates dine in a first-floor chamber, accessed by a staircase to the right, above an arcaded porch (Musset 2005, 66–7; Gautier 2006, 145–46; Cagiano de Azevedo 1969, 446). The five men are seated at a long table. Food is minimally represented: a bowl with indefinable contents and a round object, possibly a loaf of bread. The men are engaged in lively conversation, as indicated by their hand gestures; the diner at the right end of the table (Figure 16) points diagonally upward to the right, toward the inscription, which begins *HIC HAROLD*, thereby both identifying the host of the banquet as well as the following scene (Scene 4) of embarkation. The marginal figures above and below may refer to the feasters' character. Above, a bird with a peacock's crest (A11) swallows a whole fish, suggesting both pride and greed (Owen-Crocker 2005b, 248–9, 253), while another, possibly a crow or magpie (A12), opens its beak in full-throated cawing, suggesting both boastfulness and, if a magpie, thievishness; its extended wings roughly parallel the pose of the fourth diner from the left (Figure 15). Below, two wolves (A270–1) bite their paws, signifying their stealth and deviousness as hunters (Yapp 1987; Hicks 1992, 264; Cowdrey 2005, 4).[1]

Of the diners at Bosham, the central figure (Figure 14), identified as Harold both by his central placement and slightly larger scale, and by his blond hair and moustache also seen elsewhere in the Tapestry, drinks from a yellow-brown cup with contrasting red rim. The shape of the vessel is analogous to the palm cups from which the Normans drink in the later banquet scene in the Tapestry, with the rounded and footless base that would make the vessel impossible to set down whilst filled. However, the colour scheme here suggests that what the embroiderer had in mind was a wooden skeuomorph of a palm cup, possibly with a metal rim of gilded silver or copper alloy (Musset 2005, 96). Evidence of wooden drinking cups with metalwork fittings is widespread on the Continent as well as in Anglo-Saxon England, and numerous gilded rim mounts have been found with traces of wood still preserved inside them (East 1983, 390, fig. 282; Haas 1996, 972, Abb. 448). The material evidence dates largely from the Merovingian and early Anglo-Saxon period, when such vessels were deposited as grave goods, but there is no reason to assume that the practice of adding prestige to wooden drinking vessels with gilded metal rim mounts faded from use with the end of grave goods deposition. Meanwhile, the men at either end of the table (Figures 12, 16) drink from or hold horns. Michael Lewis (2007a, 106) has pointed out that drinking horns are among the Tapestry's large number of designators of groups that are used consistently by all members of those groups. In scale,

74. *Drinking horns from Mound 1, Sutton Hoo; reconstruction with original seventh-century silver-gilt fittings (Trustees of the British Museum).*

the horns used for individual drinking in the Bosham feast scene are likely to be the horns of domestic cattle, with a capacity estimated for the early medieval period at about half a litre (Ellmers 1965–6, 39). Horn is fugitive in the ground: most of the archaeological evidence of drinking horns is in the form of their metalwork fittings, which typically consist of a terminal at the point, often zoomorphic, plus a rim mount and sometimes a point of attachment for a suspension cord mounted about halfway along the horn's curvature. In these details the Tapestry's horns are quite accurate, albeit lacking suspension attachment or chain. Of the horn fittings discovered to date in Britain and Ireland from the Roman period to that of the Normans, the vast majority, about 60 examples in all, are from small horns of domestic cattle like those shown in the Bayeux Tapestry. The Tapestry horns and their archaeological cognates share the placement but not the lavish array of metalwork ornament at rim and terminal with the significantly larger, multi-litre horns made from the imported horns of the by then extinct aurochs or wild cattle of continental Europe and found in princely contexts in Mound 1 at Sutton Hoo, Suffolk (74), Taplow, Buckinghamshire and Prittlewell, Essex, where such larger horns served most probably as indices of hospitality as a function of leadership. In the Bosham scene, the casual manner with which the diner at right (Figure 16) holds the horn while carrying on a conversation is a primary item of evidence that the contents of horns were not always consumed at a single draft.

By contrast the diners at the Norman feast before the Battle of Hastings (Scene 43) sit at a curved table, on which are scattered round objects, probably loaves of bread, footed and footless cups or bowls, fish and knives. A serving man (Figure 383) at the front of the table approaches with a larger bowl and a towel, possibly for preprandial hand washing. The two diners (Figures 377–8) at the left end of the table hold palm cups. Palm cups with their typically rounded underside are part of a range of vessel types in glass, clay, and wood produced from the fourth century onward that, like drinking horns, could not be set down when even partly filled. Robert Charleston (1984, 4) ascribed this tendency to the circulation of beverages among multiple drinkers at feasts, but palm cups are generally far too small for such use. In contrast, Anna Roes (1953, 14–5) suggested that these vessels were to be drained at a single draft and then set down on their rim, but if the evidence of the Tapestry is to be believed, here again drinkers hold vessels while conversing. Those in use at the Norman feast in the Tapestry are similar in shape to that used by Harold at Bosham, except that the rim is not a contrasting colour. One of the bowls held by a diner (Figure 378) here is the pale green common to untinted early medieval glass, as are two footed and one footless bowls on the table; another held by the leftmost diner (Figure 377) is red, perhaps to signify the colour of the wine it contains. Glass palm cups (75) were manufactured mostly in the Rhineland, and possibly also in other areas under Frankish influence (Rademacher 1942, 301–7;

75. *Sixth-century palm cup from King's Field inhumation cemetery, Faversham, Kent (Trustees of the British Museum).*

Harden 1956, 146–7; Stern 2001, 335–7; Evison 2000, 68, 79–80; 2008, 7). They are distributed across the northern Continent, in England and in Scandinavia in sixth- to eighth-century contexts (Harden 1956, 164–5; Nasman 1990, 100; Hunter and Heyworth 1998, 4–14, 56–61; Evison 2000, 75–6). The overall number of vessel finds in England is reduced with the decline of furnished graves in the seventh century, but evidence of glass vessels continues in settlement archaeology until around 1000, when glass producers moved from soda to potash as a fluxing agent. Potash glass dissolves into a black powder in damp soil; consequently, little is known about the availability and popular forms of glassware in England or on the Continent in the era of the Tapestry (Charleston 1984, 18; Evison 2000, 89–90). However, the palm cups in use at the Norman feast in the Tapestry are the wide and shallow plain-palm type without a foot and with outward folded rim that came into widespread use beginning in the seventh century, but were replaced in the eighth by the steeper walled bell tumblers, which in turn led to the later funnel beakers (Harden 1956, 142; Hunter and Heyworth 1998, 6; Evison 2000, 79–80; E. Campbell 2007, 62). It is consequently very unlikely that the Normans of 1066 actually used the type of cup shown in the Tapestry. Here, as elsewhere in the Tapestry (M. Lewis 2005a, 191–3), elements of the Tapestry's depictions of material culture can be reliant on archaic types, in some cases preserved in manuscript imagery. A wide range of antique vessel types such as classical footed *kantharoi* are depicted in feasting scenes in the deliberately archaising art of the ninth-century *Utrecht Psalter* (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek 32, Script. eccl. 484) and its various eleventh-century Canterbury descendants, as in the illustration to Psalm 103 in the *Harley Psalter* (London, British Library, Harley 603, fol. 51v; **76**). Similarly, the palm cups in the feasting scene may be derived from manuscript imagery, possibly Frankish in origin, rather than from contemporary usage.

The choices of drinking vessels in the two banqueting scenes are first and foremost markers of identity. In Anglo-Saxon England, drinking horns were associated with the power and prestige of the pre-Conquest elite. They not only figure as specific bequests in later Anglo-Saxon wills (Whitelock 1930, 12, line 12), but are also associated with land grants. In the latter context, horns served both as part of the reciprocity between ecclesiastics and their royal patrons, as in the gift of treasure including two horns from Bishop Heahberht to King Berhtwulf of Mercia and his queen in 840 in response to a grant of land to Evesham (Bullough 1991, 21), and more directly as symbols of the transfer of property, as with the donation of Ulphus to York Minster, signified by the deposition of Ulphus' ivory oliphant, which also served as a drinking horn, on the high altar (Gale 1770, 187–202; Davies 1869, 1–11; MacMichael 1892, 251–62; Kendrick 1937, 278–82). For the Normans, on the other hand, horns were not associated directly with their own power but with the Anglo-Saxon past. William of Poitiers' (ii.44) mention of the use of captured Anglo-Saxon horns at a Norman Easter feast at Fécamp is more likely to signify the display of the

76. *Harley 603 Psalter, fol. 51v, detail of illustration for Psalm 103 (British Library Board).*

spoils of war than standard Norman dining practices, as the writer takes special care to describe them in detail and to suggest that such vessels were unusual in the Norman context (Oman 1944, 20; Dodwell 1973–4, 85): 'they marvelled, too, at the gold and silver vessels and, in truth, the account of their number and beauty would strain credulity. A huge banquet of people drank only from these or from ox-horns decorated with the same metal round both ends. Then, they noted several treasures of this kind, appropriate to royal magnificence, so that they might speak of them when they returned home because of their rarity' (Davis and Chibnall 1998, 180–1).

A reference to 'a silver drinking horn worth one hundred shillings' in an inventory of plunder taken by William from the Church of the Holy Cross at Waltham Abbey indicates that such horns were taken from English ecclesiastical communities as well as from the pre-Norman secular elite (Dodwell 1973–4, 87). But the loot of the Conquest does not seem to have given the Normans in England a taste for horns to the extent of having them produced for themselves in quantity; instead, they were increasingly seen as markers of Englishness and antiquity. In post-Conquest literature produced in England, drinking horns appear as an index of connection to a distant pre-Norman past, as in Gervase of Tilbury's thirteenth-century *Otia Imperialia* (3.60; Banks and Binns 2002, 674–5), where a drinking horn is referred to 'as customary among the most ancient English' (Oman 1944, 21). In post-Conquest England, both old and occasionally new drinking horns (77) were increasingly provided with legs, helpful for their display as treasured antiquities and symbols of institutions, associations and land grants, but inconvenient for their use as drinking vessels. At the same time, mazers, wooden bowls often with metalwork ornamentation, emerged as the more popular ceremonial drinking vessel of the elite (Henisch 1976, 169).

By contrast, the use of glass palm cups in the Norman banqueting scene may reflect the usefulness for the Norman elite of selective identification with the Franks. Although glass vessels were widely used in pre-Conquest northern Europe, many of these were produced in the Rhineland, and the medium may consequently have had Frankish associations; further, in the Merovingian period the Franks had been the premier users of glass vessels in Northern Europe. Hence the medium may have carried long-term Frankish identities. Similarly, the manuscript tradition that conveyed the form of antique palm cups to eleventh-century makers and viewers of the Tapestry

may also have been Frankish in origin and connections. Much has been made of the Normans' assimilation of not only the Christian faith but also many institutional and cultural ideas from their Frankish neighbours (Musset 1942–5; R. A. Brown 1968, 23–4; Crouch 2002, 16–7, 37–9). Hugh Thomas (2003, 38–9) has demonstrated the ambiguities of the Normans' relationship with the Franks; the strong Norman assimilation of aspects of Frankish culture were paralleled by an entrenched and enduring separate Norman identity and ethnic tensions between Normans and French that Thomas traces as late as the 1100s. However, David Crouch (2002) suggests that while tensions between French and Normans were exacerbated for the period of the Tapestry by the breaking of the Capetian alliance in 1052 (75), there was also a continuing tradition of comparing Norman leaders with the great Franks of the past, most notably Charlemagne (97, 199). The Normans are widely referred to as *Franci,* both in Continental sources (Davis 1976, 54 n. 4) and in early post-Conquest English documents (Chibnall 2000, 110). This appellation is used twice in the inscriptions in the Tapestry itself, notably in Scene 53 – *HIC CECIDERVNT SIMVL ANGLI ET FRANCI IN PRELIO* – and Scenes 55–6 – *HIC FRANCI PVGNANT ET CECIDERVNT QVI ERANT CVM HAROLDO* (Crafton 2007, 24). The choice of glass vessels in the Norman banqueting scene may further express the connection between Norman elite culture and its Frankish sources, as may the absence of horns in this context.[2] In the early Merovingian period, the Frankish elite, like those of other northern European groups, had used drinking horns, as attested by the discovery of horns in the princely graves under Cologne Cathedral (Doppelfeld 1959, 71–2, Taf. 9; Doppelfeld 1960, 105; Doppelfeld 1964, 178–80; Werner 1964, 204–5). However, horns disappear from Frankish material culture in the Carolingian period, perhaps as signifiers of un-Romanized barbarity. The absence of a later Frankish tradition of horn use may explain their absence at the Norman table in the Tapestry, despite the Normans' own origins in horn-using Scandinavia. Not only does the choice of vessels here allude to assimilation of Frankish traditions, but the use of an antique vessel type may also be intended to suggest connection to the rich historical and religious legacy of the Franks of earlier eras.[3]

77. *Corpus Christi College drinking horn (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).*

Although the distinctions in drinking vessels between the two feast scenes of the Tapestry may serve as coded identity markers, they are also potentially indicators of differences of moral probity and divine blessing. By the

78. *London, British Library, Cotton Julius A.vi, fol. 4v, calendar scene for April (British Library Board).*

date of the Tapestry, drinking horns had accumulated multiple potential meanings in manuscript illumination, not only as an index of secularity but also of the vanity of earthly wealth; they were also often shown in the hands of morally weak or evil characters (Neuman de Vegvar 2003, 238–44). A servant refills a horn for a feast in the calendar scene for April in (London, British Library) Cotton Julius A. vi (fol. 4v; **78**) and in its parallel in (London, British Library) Cotton Tiberius B. v (fol. 4v), as an indicator of the secularity of the feast (East 1983, 394; McGurk *et al*. 1983, 42–3). Similarly, in the *Bury Psalter* (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Reg. lat. 12, fol. 107v), an eleventh-century Canterbury manuscript, Psalm 103:15, 'that wine may cheer the heart of man', is illustrated by a man drinking from a horn ornamented with an animal terminal (Ohlgren 1986, 210; Temple 1976, 100–2, no. 84). However, in the same period, under the monastic reform movement, horns also begin to appear as *vanitas* symbols. In the Third Temptation of Christ in the *Tiberius Psalter* (London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius C. vi, fol. 10v; **79**), Christ in confronting Satan rejects an array of earthly wealth, including a horn (F. Wormald 1962, 9, Temple 1976, 115–7, no. 98; Ohlgren 1986, 265–270, no. 203; Openshaw 1990, 212–4). Horns similarly appear in the illustrated Prudentius manuscripts among the riches of *Avaritia* (London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra, C. viii, fol. 29r) and the treasures of *Luxuria* (fol. 23r and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 23, fol. 23v; Temple 1976, 69–71, nos. 48–9; Budny 1997, vol. 1, 375–7, no. 45, vol. 2, pl. 260; Ohlgren 1986, 117, 124–5; 1992, 84, 86, pls. 505, 515). These horns as *vanitas* symbols may be understood either as drinking horns or as oliphants, ivory blast horns (Shalem 2004). However, the illustrated *Old English Hexateuch* (London, British Library, Cotton Claudius B. iv) shows more clearly identifiable drinking horns in the hands of morally questionable characters (Dodwell and Clemoes 1974; Temple 1976; Ohlgren 1986, 212–48, no. 191). In the scene of Potiphar honouring Joseph (fol. 57v; **80**), Potiphar, seated beside his wife, drinks from a horn while Joseph administers his property. Potiphar, an untrustworthy master, is made the agent of the malice of his wife whose advances Joseph has scorned. Similarly, horns lie unused at the outer edges of the table at the entertainment of angelic visitors by Lot (fol. 31v), who later commits incest while intoxicated; Joseph's untrustworthy brothers present horns as gifts to Joseph and use them as vessels at the ensuing feast (fol. 63v) and the Israelites in the desert, subsequent idolaters, use horns to drink when Moses strikes the rock (fol. 122v). Horns are consistently associated in this manuscript with sinners of the pre-Christian past.

79. *Tiberius Psalter, fol. 10v, Third Temptation of Christ (British Library Board).*

80. *Old English Hexateuch, fol. 57v, Potiphar honours Joseph (British Library Board).*

In the late Anglo-Saxon illustrated *Marvels of the East* (London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius A. xv, fol. 101v; London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius, B. v, fols 81r, 84r) drinking horns are associated with monstrous races beyond the reach of salvation: the two-faced giants who travel to India to reproduce, and the island-dwelling 'man whose eyes shine at night like lamps' (James 1929, 17, 20, 27, no. 12, 54, 57–8). Thus, in the era of the Tapestry, horns may be purely secular, but they may also be signs of vanity, sinfulness and barbarity, of distance from Christian salvation.

The choice of drinking horns as the vessels shown in the hands of the Anglo-Saxons at Bosham in the Tapestry may similarly be more than a statement of the secularity of the feast. A feast preceding Harold's ill-fated journey to Normandy is not recorded in any primary text, and its location at Bosham may also be more symbolic than historically factual – a reminder of the ethically flawed history of the Godwins. As McNulty (1989, 68) suggested, the Godwins may have confirmed their claim to Bosham, one of the richest manors in Sussex according to Domesday Book, by the 1052 ousting from England of Robert, the pro-Norman Archbishop of Canterbury (Fisher 1962, 370; Williams and Martin 1992, 37). Further, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (C, D, E) notes that in 1049 Bosham had been the site of deceit as a prelude to murder within the Godwin clan, when Swein, Harold's brother, having invited their cousin Beorn there, seized him and took him on board ship where he was killed (Garmonsway 1975, 168–9; Walker 1997, 24–5). The borders reinforce the message of the banquet site: paw-biting wolves and greedy or cawing birds, including what may be a thieving magpie. The use of horns here may be read to complement these suggestions of greed, predatory stealth and ill-gotten gains, which in turn may foretell Harold's greater sin, the repudiation of an oath taken over relics in his assuming the English throne. Although the first half of the Bosham scene shows Harold and his feasting companion (Figures 10–11) at the doorstep of the church, the apparent piety of this act, and even the attendance at Mass that it may

81. *St Augustine Gospels, fol. 125r, Last Supper (Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).*

imply, are contravened by the negative hints in the borders and the details of the feast scene.[4]

By contrast to the secularity and negative moral markers of Harold's feast at Bosham, the feast of the Normans before the Battle of Hastings takes on overtones of the sacred, and not just by the blessing of the food and drink by a bishop, possibly Odo (Figure 380).[5] Laura Loomis (1927, 7–90) was the first of many commentators to note the similarity of the Norman feast at its semi-circular table to imagery of the Last Supper, with particular allusion to the sixth-century *Gospels of St Augustine* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 286, fol. 125r; **81**), one of the chief treasures of Canterbury. More recently, Wolfgang Grape (1994, 30–2) has rightly pointed out the variations between the Tapestry feast and extant Last Supper compositions, and also the links of the Tapestry scene to earlier imagery of the Wedding at Cana. This broadening of the range of associations suggests that the scene may have been intentionally open to multiple readings by contemporary viewers. Regardless of the source's specific subject, the imagery of palm cups may well have been borrowed from the source along with the overall composition. Further, whichever of these biblical narratives the Tapestry image may have brought to mind for its medieval audience, Christ was present at both events. The allusions confirm the same divine presence at the Norman feast adduced by Odo's blessing, whether or not this event refers to William's reception of communion before the battle as stated by William of Poitiers (2: 14; Davis and Chibnall 1998, 124–5). Christ's presence, further indicated symbolically by the vertical stacking of fish, loaf and plate directly in front of Odo, provides divine affirmation of the Conquest to follow. The cup blessed by Odo is a golden tan, as is the plate below the fish and loaf before him, possibly alluding to the requirement that chalices and patens be made of metal (Neuman de Vegvar 2003, 231). The Norman banquet starkly contrasts with the secularity of Harold's feast at Bosham; from a medieval viewpoint, where divine will and the effectiveness of the holy were operative factors in human events, the Norman victory at Hastings is presented as a foregone conclusion.[6]

The comparison of the two feast scenes not only makes a clear ethnic distinction between Normans and Anglo-Saxons, but also identifies the Anglo-Saxons with secularity and sin, while the Normans dine in the metaphoric presence of Christ. The intended display of the Tapestry in a square space with the two feast scenes directly opposite one another, as recently argued by Gale Owen-Crocker (2005a, 115–6, and figs 7–8) and Chris Henige (2005, 133–4), would have made the comparison of these scenes not only unavoidable but also more obviously critical in the unfolding of the Tapestry's overall meaning. However, in a cultural environment and possibly even in a physical setting, a secular hall, where feasting served as a marker of social identities and a performance space of roles and relationships, a medieval viewer would not necessarily have to depend upon such spatial opposition to perceive the distinctions between the two scenes and the several ways in which such details as the choice of drinking vessels evoke both ethnic and ethical differences between the English and the Normans. Gale Owen-Crocker (1998, 40–59) has rightly pointed out the binary patterning inherent in the Tapestry, which helps to bring this underlying opposition to the viewer's attention.[7] Far from being a declaration of peace, as both Howard Bloch (2006) and John Micheal Crafton (2007, 106–7) have suggested, the Tapestry broadcasts distinctions between the opposing parties in essentialist terms, as both ethnic and moral, and makes their final confrontation and its outcome the inevitable consequences of divine will.

Notes

1. Gale Owen-Crocker (2007a, 247) offers an alternative reading for these quadrupeds as dogs that are seen eating in mimicry of the feasters above. She interprets this imagery as gentle mockery of the diners' material wealth, but it could as easily be understood as a reference to greed.
2. Thomas (2003, 52) argues that the 'ale/wine line' distinguishing the drinking habits of the English from their Norman overlords is more a matter of Norman essentialist ethnic discourse than of real practices. The choice of vessels at the two feasts in the Tapestry may also reflect this line of Norman propaganda.
3. Although Roman and most Frankish glassware was secular, archaeological finds attest the production of Frankish glass vessels with Christian inscriptions as well as Chi Rhos and crosses, some of which were clearly intended for use as chalices or patens (Owen-Crocker and Stephens 2007, 131–141). I thank Gale Owen-Crocker for this reference. However, it is unclear whether any such vessels would have survived in liturgical use into Norman times, so the memory of palm cups was probably passed down though secular imagery in manuscripts.
4. Suzanne Lewis (1999, 48) sees Harold and his companion as kneeling outside the church, possibly as an indicator of 'a less than perfect spiritual state', although she thinks it more probable that the placement of the two figures outside the church is so as not to block the interior view of the chancel arch, which she considers to be an identifying marker of the Church of the Holy Trinity at Bosham. More recently Tim Tatton-Brown and Bernard Worssam (2006, 133, 142) have argued that the finely cut Quarr stone used for Bosham's chancel arch indicates that it is part of a post-Conquest refurbishing of the church probably in the 1090s, which may well postdate the Tapestry. Impressive chancel arches are however a shared feature of a significant number of earlier Anglo-Saxon churches, and the arch here may serve along with the inscription *ECCLESIA* to identify the building as a church. In an

entirely different reading that would nonetheless convey the same message, Michael Lewis (2005a, 187–90) has identified the image as an exterior south view of a typical later Anglo-Saxon church. Gale Owen-Crocker (2007b, 160–61) has noted that Harold's companion at the church (Figure 11) has his arms outstretched in the classic *orans* pose and argues that as both he and Harold (Figure 10) are shown with knees bent, in the process of kneeling down, they are understood as entering the church to pray; she reads Harold's pose, with his hand at his side, as crossing himself while genuflecting. However, genuflection by the laity is a later medieval development in the western Church; Harold's gesture is more likely to presage prayer inside the church rather than to represent genuflection at the doorstep.

5. The identification of the blessing bishop as Odo is based on the attention brought to Odo's name in the inscription of the next scene by the pointing figure (381) who sits to the right of the bishop at the table (Werckmeister 1976, 579, note 237).
6. Martha Rampton (1994, 33–53) has further expanded Loomis' (1927) reading of the Norman feast as a statement of divine sanction of the Norman invasion. However, drawing on the work of Richard Wissolik (1979a, 1979b, 1982) and David Bernstein (1986), Rampton then reads the scene and the Tapestry in general as having an encoded meaning of eventual redemption for the English, an argument that the evidence presented in the present paper does not support.
7. Suzanne Lewis (1999, 120) suggested that the opposition of the feasts is political, intended to show Odo's legitimate succession to Harold as a leading English earl.

Slippery as an Eel: Harold's ambiguous heroics in the Bayeux Tapestry

Jill Frederick

Roughly a third of the way through the visual narrative of the Bayeux Tapestry, in the midst of Duke William's Breton campaign, Harold Godwinson (Figure 153) is presented pulling not one but two men out of the treacherous sands of the River Couesnon (Scene 17). One he bears on his back, the other he clasps tightly at the wrist. In his left hand he grasps his shield. Beneath his feet, in the lower border, six eels (A352–7) swim from right to left, pursued by a man (Figure 154) who reaches for the tail of one eel (A356) with his left hand and holds a weapon with his right. Gnawing on the man's feet is some sort of animal (A358) pulled at by a bird (A359), itself under assault by another quadruped (A360). The final figure in this string seems to be a centaur (A361) who holds the second animal by the tail. In addition to this chain of figures, to the immediate left of the eels and separated from the rest of the tableau, two fish (A349 and A351) appear connected to one another by a cord from one mouth to the other (A350). This entire lower scene is bordered by opposed diagonal lines creating something of a dog-tooth effect.[1]

This moment in the Tapestry's narrative has been the focus of some attention: scholars have commented on the arrangement of the paired fish, questioned the exact nature of the serpentine shapes and suggested a gloss on the idea of eels. The consensus view argues that the scene comments on Harold's character: while he appears to be brave and virtuous, he is nevertheless not to be trusted. He is as slippery as an eel. Despite its careful composition, however, the overall configuration of the lower border scene within its boundary of diagonals has received very little attention. Terkla (1995, 276) refers to it simply as 'a curious aquatic scene'. F. Wormald (1957, 25–36) argues for a decorative sequence of constellations: Pisces, Serpens, Boötes, Arctus Major, Aquila, Lepus and Centaurus. McNulty (1989, 42) suggests that 'the chain of beasts with the centaur tugging at the tail suggests parody, a comic analogy of Harold's hauling men from the quicksands in the main panel'. More recently, Owen-Crocker (2006, 262) has addressed this scene and supports McNulty's idea of parody, even as she notes, 'it is unclear who is the target of the wit'. While she attends to each figure in greater detail than any critic, like other scholars she provides no comprehensive reading for their arrangement.

This omission is unfortunate, for the elaborate string of figures here creates an arrangement that demands to be read as a whole. Quite unlike this extended sequence, most of the Tapestry's lower border consists of paired animals, brief representations of fables, or so-called genre scenes. Very few of these moments continue much beyond two figures, whether vegetable, animal or human. Only four other places in the lower border (and all of them in the earliest section of the Tapestry) contain such extended moments bounded by diagonals: Scene 4, a representation of the fable, 'The Lion [or Wolf] King', in which the lion faces a menagerie of eight animals (A283–91) in addition to a naked human figure (Figure 40); Scene 5, containing a multiplicity of smaller moments (A294–308) that seem to be subcategorised by trees within their outer boundary of diagonals; Scene 9, a sowing scene taken from a calendar's labours of the months; and Scene 11, a hunting scene. The very infrequency of such extended moments sets up a heightened awareness on the part of an audience and assigns considerable significance to these moments.

The Bayeux Tapestry, like any narrative, includes episodes carefully selected to tell a story with a particular slant to a particular audience (or audiences); so the key question here, as with any narrative, is why include this moment and not another? In William's Breton campaign, many moments might have had significance and narrative force, so why devote so much space to a heroic picture of Harold in the sands? McNulty's suggestion of parody seems strained because it lacks the more direct references to – or straightforward parallels with – the main panel, references that are found elsewhere in related main and border panels, for instance, the naked figure (Figure 137)

below the Ælfgyva scene.[2] This border section presents too many extraneous pieces that are unrelated to the main panel. Nor do they seem merely to represent constellations, although, as Hart (2000, 155) has demonstrated, the figures were modelled on those of the planisphere, a circular map of the sky, contained in London, British Library, Harley 647. Owen-Crocker's (2005c, 261–3) analysis, while thoughtful, does not provide an inclusive interpretation. And finally, no one seems to have identified an appropriate fable for this lower border scene, though Herrmann (1964, 10) suggests 'The Serpent Familiar' for the upper border.

Another interpretive framework may explain this arrangement. These creatures seem deliberately chosen and arranged using the moralised traits and values assigned by the bestiary tradition. It is this traditional lore that informs the gloss provided by the border scene.[3] The earliest manuscripts containing texts now defined as bestiaries were produced in England and date to the first quarter of the twelfth century.[4] If the Tapestry's date of production falls in the last quarter of the eleventh century, as scholarly consensus suggests, these manuscripts would be too late to provide a direct source for its designer. Nevertheless, other earlier sources of moralised animal literature would certainly have been available to the Bayeux Tapestry's designer. The most important sources include the second-century text, *Physiologus*, which provided a model for animal allegory;[5] St Ambrose's *Hexameron*, from the fourth century, which offers commentary on the Creation as it appears in Genesis; and the encyclopaedia found in Isidore of Seville's seventh-century *magnum opus*, *Etymologiae*.[6] All three of these texts can be found in English manuscripts with a Canterbury origin or provenance, suggesting that both the Tapestry's designer and his potential audiences would have had access to their content in some form or other.[7] Consequently, because the twelfth- and thirteenth-century bestiarists drew on and quoted from these same sources, passages from the Second-family bestiary provide appropriate support for the argument offered here.

Such a moralised animal tradition, as expressed in Second-family bestiary texts, would indicate that every figure in the border panel, not just the eels, comments on Harold's potential for duplicity, and ultimately on his treachery in claiming the throne for himself. It is no accident, as McNulty (2003, 45) points out, that two *amphisbaenae*, double-headed serpents (A69, A70), decorate the upper border at the point at which William (Figure 143) and his army, including Harold (Figure 153), set out for Mont-Saint-Michel. This entire scene, then, has greater significance than has previously been acknowledged, particularly since it is the moment when Harold seems to prove himself worthy of receiving arms from William (Scene 21), leading to the scene in which he is pictured touching two reliquaries (Scene 23). This scene, which has been assessed as doubling the strength of Harold's oath, also may be read as a physical representation of his double nature.[8]

The Fish (A349–51)

As Hart (2000) has established, this representation of fish (appearing just to the right of a left-hand boundary diagonal) depends on the illustration of Pisces in London, British Library, Harley 2506; he bases his argument on the fact that the cord linking the pair runs from mouth to mouth rather than the more usual tail to tail. Despite their dependence on zodiacal illustrations, the fish have no chronological significance here; little, if any, evidence exists that the Breton campaign occurred in the early spring, between February and March.[9] However, Chapter 119, *Various Kinds of Fishes*, of the Second-family bestiary provides evidence that the fish offer moral commentary on Harold (Figure 153) in the main panel above them:

> It is true that <fishes> cannot avoid the violence of power from their own kind, and everywhere the smaller <fish> are the object of the greed of the stronger ones; the weaker <the fish> is, the more it is open to predation … . [T]here are those who consume each other, and are fed by their own flesh: the smaller among them is food for the greater ... . And so it usually happens that when one fish eats another, it is eaten by yet another, and in one belly simultaneously preditor [*sic*] and prey come together and are consumed by one bowel, a community of prey and vengeance.
>
> (*Sane nec ipsi a suis potentiae evasere violentiam, et avaritiae potentiorum subiectum ubique inferiores sunt, quo quisque infirmior eo praedae patet... . Sunt tamen qui invicem se devorent, et sua carne pascuntur: minor apud illos esca maioris est… . Itaque usu venit ut cum ipse alium devoraverit, ab alio devoretur, et unun ventrem utrumque conveniat cum devoratore proprio devoratus sit que simul in uno viscere praedae vindictaeque consortium*).
>
> And as it happens, this violence increased spontaneously <in fishes>; as in us, it arose not from nature but from greed. Or else because <the fishes> are provided for men's use, and made into a sign, so that we would see in them the sins of our ways and avoid their examples, lest someone stronger, to be offered as a living example of the violence of one who is more powerful, should attack someone weaker. And so he who injures another sets for himself a snare into which he falls … . Take care that, while you pursue another, you do not encounter someone stronger, and that he who avoids your snares not divert you into <the snare> of another … .
>
> (*Et ipsis sponte forte haec accrevit iniuria; sicut in nobis non ex natura coepit, sed ex avaritia. Aut quia ad usum hominum dati sunt, in signum quoque facti sunt, ut in his nostrorum*

morum vitia videremus et eorum caveremus exampla, ne quis potior inferiorem invaderet, daturus in se potentiori exemplum iniuriae. Itaque qui alium laedit sibi laqueum parat in quem ispese incidat… . Cave ne, dum alium persequeris, incidas ipse validiorem, et deducat te in alienas insidias qui tuas vitat … ; Clark 2006, 209–10).

In this section, then, the duplicity of Harold, his foolish attempt to prey on William, is revealed by the images of the fish. Their pairing signals that doubleness visually, and serves as a kind of abstract for the entire scene.

The Eels (A352–7)

This aspect of the border scene has received the greatest interpretive attention, although from a limited perspective. Making a case that their appearance comments on Harold's character, McNulty (1989, 41) points out that at least as early as Plautus in the third century, eels have been associated with duplicity; the phrase 'slippery as an eel' is not a recent coinage. Chapter 119, *Various Kinds of Fishes*, also includes a small section describing the eel:

> The similarity of the snake (*anguis*) to the eel (*anguillae*) gives the former its name. The eel's origin is in the mud. Wherefore, when it is seized, so smooth is it that the more you tighten your grip on it, the quicker it slips away.
>
> (*Anguillae similitude anguis nomen dedit. Origo eius ex limo. Unde et quando capitur, adeo lenis est ut quanto fortius presseris, tanto citius elabitur*; Clark 2006, 210).

Not only does Harold embody the slippery quality of the eel, but his character is further impugned by its link with the eel's genesis in the slime of the seabed. His character is both literally and figuratively muddied.

Narrowing the focus of this larger category, Chapter 119 discusses a species of the genus, the moray eel:

> The Greeks used the word *mirina* for the moray eel *murena*, because it draws itself up in loops. They say its only gender is female, and that it is impregnated by a serpent. On that account it is summoned with a whistle by fishermen, as if by a serpent, and seized. Further, it is killed with difficulty by a blow from a club, <but> at once by a whip. It is established that their life force is in the tail, for they are killed with difficulty by a blow on the head, but immediately by one to the tail.
>
> (*Muraenam Graeci mirinam vocant, eo quod complicet se in circulos. Hanc feminini tantum sexus esse tradunt et concipere a serpente. Ob id a piscatoribus tamquam a serpente sibilo evocatur, et capitur. Ictu autem fustis difficulter interimitur, ferula protinus. Animam in cauda habere certum est, nam capite percusso vix eam interimi, cauda statim exanimari*; Clark 2006, 210).

It may be that this notion is represented in the scene of Harold's death (Scene 57): an arrow in the head would not have been enough to kill an eely man; he has to be chopped apart, as in the account of Harold's death given by Guy of Amiens in the *Carmen de Hastingae Proelio* (Barlow 1999, cf. Foys 2002).[10]

Eels are more than simply devious; in fact they can suggest deviance. Information about the nature of the eel appears in other descriptions underscoring details that expand on the unnaturalness of Harold's treachery. Chapter 94 of the Second-family bestairy, *Viper and Moray Eel*, declares that the viper, which is 'more cunning than all which are of the race of serpents' (*super omnia quae serpentini sun generis astutior*; Clark 2006, 195), will seek out the moray eel for coitus: 'And having proceeded to the beach and having announced his presence with a whistle, he summons <the eel> to a conjugal embrace. Moreover, the eel that is summoned does not flee, and bestows the desired enjoyment of her intimacy on the poisonous serpent' (*Progressaque ad litus, sibilo testicata praesentiam sui, ad coniugalem amplexum illam evocat. Muraena autem invitata non deest, et venenatae serpenti expetitos usus suae impertit coniunctionis*; Clark 2006, 195–6).

Amid the extended commentary that follows this description, this assertion appears: the 'embrace of the moray eels and the viper is not according to the law of kind' (*muraenae et viperae non iure generis*; Clark 2006, 196–7). It may well be that at least one of these eels is meant to represent a serpent, a connection that seems to support the feminisation of Harold for which Suzanne Lewis (1999, 171) argues.

The Recumbent Man (Figure 154)

This figure is unmistakably Anglo-Saxon, identifiable both from the style of his hair and moustache,[11] and the weapon he carries in one hand is more than likely an Anglo-Saxon *seax*, a short curved knife. While Chefneux (1934, 16) believes that the man represents Beowulf with Hrunting, such an identification is unlikely. Given the scene above, this man must represent Harold, and the knife, an offensive weapon, contrasts with the defensive weapon, the shield, in the main panel. Although Chefneux asserts that the eels are attacking the man, they are obviously facing away from him, apparently in flight from his knife. Stretched out between the eels and the first mammal (A358) of the scene, he pursues them, rather than *vice versa*, motion that implies an active search for the duplicity they represent. The Tapestry presents his treachery here as purposeful, then, not accidental or a product of circumstances. He is set among the animals, linked by touch to all of them, all of them reflecting facets of his character.

The First Quadruped (A358)

Neither of the animals in this scene is readily identifiable; the jaws and claws of the first animal (A358) suggest ferocity, and its generic contours suggest a lion, a wolf, a dog, a fox or a bear. However, even though images of bestiary animals often are not physically specific, a comparison of its shape with other, more readily identifiable, quadrupeds elsewhere along the panels, strongly suggests a wolf. It has no mane; the representations of the fox in the Tapestry picture a smaller, more delicate animal; a number of scenes render various breeds of dog, none of which resembles this animal; and the bear-baiting scene in the border of Scene 11 demonstrates that the long tail of the animal precludes an ursine nature. Although its visual characteristics are finally too vague to make a definite identification, symbolically, a wolf makes good sense in this context. As the bestiary tradition explains:

> In our language 'wolf' (*lupus*) derives from the Greek, for <the Greeks> call wolves *licos*. Moreover, in Greek *licos* are so called from 'bites', because whatever they find they slaughter with a frenzy of rapaciousness. Others say wolves (*lupos*) are so called as if lion-foot (*leopos*), because, as with lions, their strength is in their paws. Wherefore, whatever they attack does not survive.
>
> (*Lupus graeca derivatione in linquam nostram transfertur, lupos enim dicunt illi licos. Licos autem Graece a morsibus appellantur, quod rabie rapacitatis quaeque invenerint trucidant. Alii lupos vocatos aiunt quasi leopos, quod quasi leonibus ita sint illis virtus in pedibus. Unde et quicquid presserint non vivit*; Clark 2006, 142).

Moralised, the wolf is

> [t]he Devil, who always looks malignly at the human race, and constantly circles the sheepfolds of the Church's faithful in order to afflict and destroy their souls … .
>
> (*Lupi figuram Diabolus portat, qui semper humano generi invidet ac iugiter circuit caulas ecclesiae fidelium, ut mactet et perdat eorum animas* … ; Clark 2006, 143).

Further,

> that <the wolf's> strength is in its front end and not in its hindquarters signifies that the same Devil was at first an angel of light in Heaven, but is now cast down an apostate. <The wolf's> eyes shine in the night like lanterns, because certain of the Devil's works appear beautiful and wholesome to blind and foolish men.
>
> (*Quod autem in anterioribus membris vires habet et non in posterioribus, eundem Diabolum significat prius in caelo angelum lucis fuisse, nunc vero deorsum apostatum factum esse. Oculi eius in nocte lucent velut lucernae, quia quaedam Diaboli opera caecis et fatuis viris videntur esse pulcra et salubria*; Clark 2006, 143).

Again, both the literal and figurative descriptions here criticise Harold, implying that his heroic actions and demeanour in the central panel hide his grasping treachery.

The Bird (A359)

In the same way that the vague contours of the first quadruped make it difficult to identify with certainty, the physical contours of the bird in this scene make its species ambiguous: it might be an eagle or a lesser raptor like the kite. Chapter 51, *The Natures of Birds*, points out that a salient quality of the kite is that it is 'eager for prey' (*rapinis intendunt ut milvus*; Clark 2006, 165). Such a trait especially reinforces the wolfish quality of the adjacent quadruped, but the bird in this scene seems most logically an eagle. Both the upper and lower borders of the Tapestry contain a multiplicity of eagles, and the association with royalty asserted by the bestiary tradition would work well to denote Harold's right to the English throne.[12] One might argue against this interpretation because the eagle, a recognisable symbol of royalty, is out of place in a scene meant to insinuate Harold's deceit. The ambiguity of the bird's identity, however, may well be purposeful, a necessary component in the double message offered about Harold. Harold cannot be presented as utterly debased, since such a foe would be unworthy of William's attention: no matter how foreordained William's victory and no matter how carefully structured the narrative of the Tapestry, it is in the Norman interest to acknowledge that Harold fought a brave fight at Hastings. In addition, if the bird is indeed an eagle, it may also suggest Harold's potential, subverted.

The Second Quadruped (A360)

This second animal is even more problematic to identify than the first because its head is obscured by the raptor's wing. In a right-to-left direction, the raptor's beak is touching the tail of the wolf, not holding on to it; it watches the wolf seize the man's foot in its mouth as it hides with its wing the animal to its immediate right. This second quadruped has some affinities with the Tapestry's lion motifs by virtue of its colour, but colour is not a reliable criterion by which to judge the figures on the Tapestry. One significant detail that suggests it is not a lion is the creature's tail: figures throughout the Tapestry more easily identifiable as lions have a tail tip closely resembling the *fleur-de-lys*, a three-part tuft. In addition, the stripes on its back do not appear on the other lion figures.

However, that the raptor seems to be hiding or

restraining it suggests that it is yet another emblem of rapaciousness, like the wolf, and indeed it could well be another wolf. Whatever its designation, however, ultimately the audience understands, as the designer meant to suggest, that this attempt to restrain Harold will be fruitless; he will break his oath to William, thereby setting up the devastation created in their final battle and subverting his own cause. The scene completes its gloss on Harold's character with another symbol of duplicity usually identified as a centaur.

The Centaur (Onocentaur) (A361)

Only Owen-Crocker (2006, 263) has attempted to make sense of a centaur's placement in the scene. She offers a reading that suggests the centaur Chiron's accidental death by an arrow, which in turn foreshadows Harold's death by arrow. In fact, however, this figure is not half man, half horse but rather half man, half donkey: not a centaur, but an onocentaur. The creature is not depicted with a bow, as centaurs usually are. In addition, onocentaurs are a part of the larger bestiary tradition: while Clark's (2006) edition of the Second-family bestiary does not include an entry on the onocentaur, *Physiologus* manuscripts do include this fabulous creature, arguing that its two-part nature represents the hypocrisy of a person who claims to do good but does evil. Travis (2002, 37) summarises an entry from the fourth-century 'B-version' of the *Physiologus*: 'Onocentaurs are half-man, half-wild; hybrid creatures, they are *uecordes* ("deranged, frenzied"), *bilingues* ("Double-tongued, treacherous"), and *informes* ("deformed, formless"), a characterisation brought home by references to 2 Tim 3.5 [*Habentes autem promissionem pietatis, uirtutem autem eius abnegantes*] and Ps. 48:21 [*Homo cum in honore esset, non intellexit: comparatus es iumentis insipientibus, and similis factus est illis*]'. It is also worth noting that Chapter 42 of the Second-family bestiary, 'Ass', in describing one half of the creature, asserts that 'whenever he wishes, man tames the animal, <which is> naturally slow and obstinate for no reason' (*Animal quippe tardum et nulla ratione renitens, statim ut voluit sibi homo substituit*; Clark 2006, 155), yet another slight to Harold's character. While a great deal of textual information on the onocentaur exists (Travis 2002, 32–40), information the designer may have known, it is not necessary to attach it to the visual effect of the Tapestry; the audience could easily have seen and noted the duality of the rational and the bestial without knowing the details of the scriptural and classical components of the legend.

Finally, in terms of the arrangement of figures, their movement from right to left is very important to acknowledge, since it reverses the usual process of reading from left to right. This reversal appears in only in one other border scene[13] and only infrequently in the main panels, usually in tableaux featuring opposing forces.[14] Suzanne Lewis (1999, 90) asserts that this movement in the opposite direction creates a pause 'so that the viewer can absorb the impact of Harold's action before going on'. Her point is apt, but the reversal of direction has a thematic quality as well, as the border Harold, the shadow Harold, goes against the orders he presumably has been given by Edward, as he goes against William's magnanimity in rescuing him from Guy of Ponthieu, as he moves against God's will.

Conclusion

Understanding the details of this long gloss on the main narrative still leaves unanswered the question of why this moment is so important to the long process of William's acquisition of England. It has a two-fold purpose: it provides a comment not only on the significance of Harold's actions in the quicksand of the River Couesnon but also prepares for the moment in Scene 23 where he swears his oath on two reliquaries. While the placement of two reliquaries underscores the serious implications of the oath, it also demonstrates vividly the duality of Harold's position: with his arms outstretched, his hands placed on the reliquaries, Harold is a man torn between allegiances and ambitions. Despite his ostensible heroism and the necessity of presenting him as a worthy rival, Harold must be seen in this narrative as a devious man of ambiguous intention and duplicitous character. William's rescuing him from Guy of Ponthieu ought to have sealed Harold's allegiance to the Duke of Normandy: as the episodes in the main panel continue, they show William's beneficence and trust in Harold; they show Harold's presumptive bravery and merit; they show the end of their relationship, the oath on the reliquaries. And yet, the Tapestry's border continues to allude to Harold's ambivalence and ambiguity, continues to remind the audience that Harold is slippery as an eel.

Despite the importance of the textual information this border scene contains, acknowledgement should be made of the fact that modern critical study of the Bayeux Tapestry has, over time, tended to privilege written tradition over visual quality and arrangement. Foys (1999, 89) rightly offers the reminder, that 'through … interpretation the material textile has been … disconnected from the physical and spatial contents of its narrative operation'. His assertion emphasises an important point: the visual relationships in the registers are primary; they should not be obscured or superseded by overly elaborate textual links

or sources. It is often assumed that there were multiple audiences for the Tapestry, of varying degrees of literacy and learning, a notion that the designer of the Tapestry would surely have taken into consideration. No doubt he himself was exceptionally learned, well aware of the texts and the textual traditions found in the collections at Canterbury. But the Tapestry, as a visual production, was designed to be seen and 'read' differently from the manner in which a manuscript would have been perused. Consequently, the broadest attributes of the moralised animals would have been immediately available to most of the viewers, with the more arcane details left to those with greater learning. The animal symbolism throughout the Tapestry, including the scene of Harold in the quicksand of the Couesnon, is crucial, illuminating the issues and motivations behind William's conquest and Harold's loss, but its textual tradition should not replace the visual sweep of the Bayeux Tapestry's epic story.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Willene B. Clark for reading an earlier version of this article and offering much needed guidance through and advice about the bestiary tradition. Any errors or misreadings are, of course, my own.

Notes

1. Terkla (1995, 264) provides an interpretive program that depends on the appearances of the Norman chevrons to provide an 'inclusive reading'.
2. Much has been written on the relationship between the main panel and the border figures, based on '[t]he proximity of the nude male in the lower border to Ælfgyva above, and the fact that his posturing mirrors that of the *clericus*', as Martin Foys (2002, Panel 39) enumerates. Among the many studies he cites, Foys particularly notes that a number of scholars find the naked figure's connection to the main panel 'obvious', 'distasteful', 'integral', and 'clearly shown' (respectively Gibbs-Smith 1973, Pl. 12; Wilson 1985, 18; Bernstein 1986, 86; Hicks 1992, 254).
3. The essential study of bestiaries and the bestiary tradition is found in Clark's (2006) critical edition of the Second-family bestiary, which provides a new translation based on the late twelfth-century London, British Library, Add. 11283, with text, commentary and illustrations. This summary derives primarily from her first two chapters outlining the complicated development of the Latin bestiary tradition, and obviously cannot do justice to Clark's own analysis. Earlier, more popularised, translations of Second-family bestiaries may be found in T. H. White (1984), a rendering of Cambridge, University Library, Ii.4.26 and R. Barber (1993) which translates Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 764. A recent study of bestiaries and their audiences may be found in R. Baxter (1998).
4. Clark (2006, 10–1) asserts that the Latin bestiary is an English invention and considers Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 247 and London, British Library, Stowe 1067 to be the first texts that can be defined as true bestiaries, i.e. 'animal texts that descend from the *Physiologus*'.
5. See Clark (2006, 8–9) for a survey of the *Physiologus* tradition; Curley's (1979) edition of *Physiologus* provides a modern translation and commentary on the work.
6. See Clark (2006, 98–113) for a discussion of the use of the Second-family bestiary in medieval education.
7. Gneuss's (2001) *Handlist* shows that London, British Library Royal 6.C.1, originating at St Augustine's, Canterbury, in the first half of the eleventh century, contains Isidore's *Etymologiae*; Ambrose's *Hexameron* is contained in Cambridge, University Library, Kk. 1.23, a late eleventh-century manuscript of Canterbury, Christ Church. Clark (2006, 110) observes, 'surprisingly enough, there are few *Physiologus* manuscripts surviving or recorded in England. Of the unusual number of beast books listed in the libraries of the two great abbeys of Canterbury and of Dover Priory, not one title is recorded as *Physiologus*, although the lack of that title on some beast book does not, of course rule out the ancient work.' Gneuss, however, does record two partial texts of *Physiologus* in Old English: the late tenth-century *Exeter Book* [Exeter Cathedral Library, Exeter Dean and Chapter MS 3501] (panther, whale, partridge in addition to the Old English poem titled 'The Phoenix'), of unestablished origin, and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 448 (lion, unicorn, panther), which is late eleventh-century, southern English. Elaine Treharne (pers. comm.) has pointed out that the twelfth-century London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian D. xiv, from Canterbury, Christ Church, contains a homily on the Phoenix (ff. 166v-168r). Although post-dating the Conquest, the manuscript's texts are mostly copied from earlier exemplars, so that the presence of a text based on this *Physiologus* entry strengthens the argument that beast lore was known in the Canterbury libraries, and by extension the argument for the Bayeux Tapestry's Canterbury connection.
8. Terkla (1995, 264) notes that of the representations of historical occurrences in the Tapestry, there are a 'good number that are best categorized as historical fiction, that is, historical events which are elaborated on by the Tapestry's designer', among them the scene of Harold's oath.
9. Keats-Rohan (1991, 166) points out that William of Poitiers's account describes the grain in the fields as still green at the time of the battle, suggesting a time in late May or early June.
10. See Foys (2009), for an argument refuting the traditional account of Harold's death by arrow (a summary is given in this volume; see 'Abstracts of Conference Papers Published Elsewhere', below).
11. Until about half-way through the Tapestry, Normans are clearly identified by their short haircuts and shaven necks, and lack of facial hair, in contrast with the Anglo-Saxons' long hair and moustaches.
12. In a footnote, Clark (2006, 166) observes that 'the *titulus* in Brit[ish] Lib[rary], Harley 3244 for the eagle calls it the king of the birds (*De aquila rege avium*)'.
13. In Scene 12, in the border under the figures of Guy of Ponthieu (Figure 117) and his men (Figures 122, 123, 111, 112) appears a man on horseback (Figure 113), holding a cudgel, following two dogs, moving from right to left.
14. The two most significant moments in the main panel occur as William's messengers (Figures 98–9) race from right to left in order to effect Harold's release from Guy, and the seemingly out-of-order arrangement of Edward's death scene (Scenes 26–8).

The Bayeux Tapestry, Dendrochronology, and Hadstock Door

Jane Geddes

Anglo-Saxon artists are renowned for their exuberant interest in depicting daily life. Particularly within the tradition of copying manuscripts, this led to a fresh and innovative approach to narrative, frequently breaking away from traditional models in order to create entirely new compositions. The Bayeux Tapestry is often held up as an exemplar of this characteristic, because it is concerned with a recent event for which there had been no narrative or pictorial precedents. Dodwell (1993, 117–20) comments: 'if the Tapestry were to offer no more, it would provide us with one of the most extended visual observations of contemporary society to be handed down by the Middle Ages'. However, scholars have approached the issue of verisimilitude in the Tapestry with caution, with the result that one's initial impression of real life observation is gradually tempered by an increasing awareness of either conventional forms or frustratingly schematic designs. Thus, Michael Lewis (2005b, 144) writes, 'its artefacts were influenced more by artistic convention than by the contemporary scene'; Grape (1994, 27–8), who, on the whole, considered the designer of the Tapestry to have a 'catholic interest in the contemporary scene', noted, 'there is, however, one department of imagery ... in which the artistic imagination runs riot. There are numerous architectural settings, but in them, as a rule, no attempt ... to depict anything that actually existed at the time'; Hart (2000, 133) stated that 'few of the buildings in the Tapestry can represent contemporary structures with any degree of accuracy'. And, as Lewis (2005b, 39) concludes, 'if it is the contemporary elements that are the most interesting elements of the architecture in the Tapestry, they must still, evidently, be approached with circumspection'. By contrast Holmes (1959, 179) wrote, 'I believe that the designers of the Tapestry had actual buildings in mind and that careful attention should be paid to all these priceless representations of wooden structures of the Romanesque era'. Concerning the carpentry of boat building, which is also relevant in this discussion, Lewis (2005b, 68–70) accepts that the tools depicted in the Tapestry 'are consistent with the archaeological evidence', but 'there is little to suggest [the designer] had in-depth knowledge of contemporary boat-building practice'.

This study aims to evaluate the accuracy of the embroidered door at Hastings (Scene 46, B33; **82**) by comparing it with the door of Hadstock Church in Essex (**83**). The significance of this comparison has been enhanced by dendrochronological dating which has established that the church door is a near contemporary of the Tapestry. Not only did the artist create a valid and accurate image of a mid-eleventh-century door, but exceptional care was taken to depict technical details which were thoroughly understood and considered important to define. It is also a rare depiction of an early medieval door showing its interior, the carpentry details of its framing, instead of the more flashy decorative aspect of its exterior.[1] Thereafter, early antiquarian accounts of the Hadstock door will also be explored, providing a much later calibration for the Tapestry achievement.

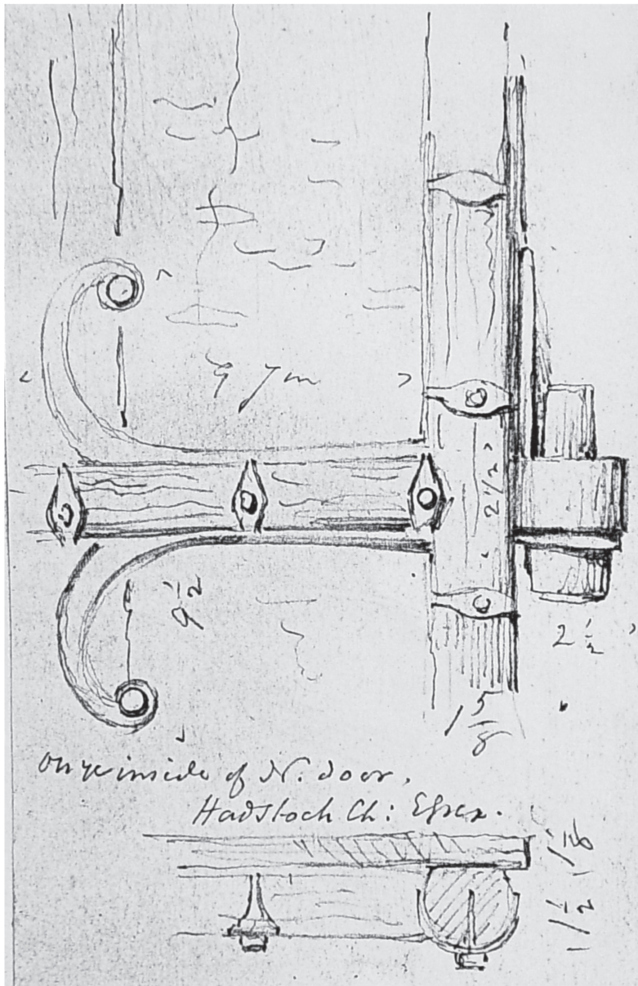
The Hastings door is shown open, disproportionately large for the elaborate tower in which it hangs. Its doorway has a flat lintel, whereas the door is designed for a taller round arch. The outward opening arrangement thus allows the larger door to function in its doorway. The door has an edging frame which goes the whole way around the boards, even curving around the top. This orange band is a genuine frame rather than a thick outline because it is edged with wool in blue or white, to emphasise its width. The door is held by four horizontal ledges and a framing band across the bottom. The ledges are represented by pairs of parallel lines with the nails in the white space between. Each pair of lines represents a single piece of wood because the nails in between are clearly intended to be fastening them to the planks. The nail heads are shown surrounded by a circular washer called a rove. The rove was frequently used in boat building and on some

82. *Hastings door in the Bayeux Tapestry (City of Bayeux).*

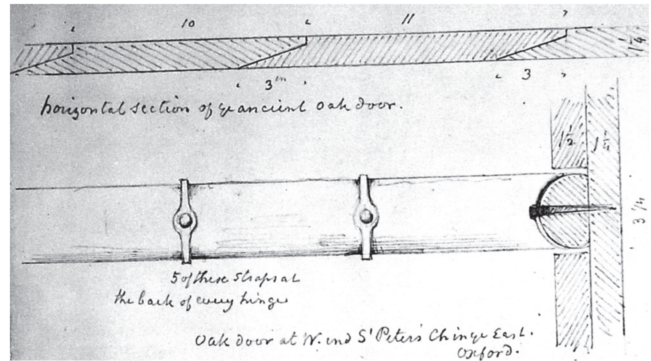
83. *Interior, north door, Hadstock church, Essex (Jane Geddes).*

medieval doors to spread the pressure of the nail and prevent the wood from splitting (McGrail 1974, 42–7). Whereas ledges 1 and 3 (from the top) butt straight up against the frame, ledges 2 and 4 are intercepted by grey Y-shaped scrolls on the opening edge and a less clearly defined intrusion on the hinge side.

If an Anglo-Saxon artist had tried to draw the north door of Hadstock parish church in Essex, he could not have done a better job than the illustration found embroidered on the Tapestry (**82**). On the inside, the Hadstock door has a complete edging frame which curves around the top. There are four slender ledges. The frame is elegantly constructed with three-quarter round braces. They are held by nails seated on top of elongated roves which clasp the ledge (**84**). On the hanging edge, the iron strap hinges curl around from the front of the door, terminating in slender Y-scrolls seated under the frame. On the Tapestry, the iron scrolls spring from under the edging frame in the same way as at Hadstock (**82, 84**). Perhaps the artist's only irregularity is that he shows two opposing sets of scrolls, the smaller ones on the hanging edge, and these larger ones on the opening edge. It is not very practical to have scrolls wrapping around the opening edge and in fact it does not occur on medieval doors. Apart from that, the designer of the Tapestry clearly had an accurate idea of what the interior of a door looked



84. *Interior, central hinge, North door, Hadstock church, by John Buckler before 1851, British Library, Add. 36433, no. 601 (British Library Board).*



85. *Frame, St Peter in the East, Oxford, by John Buckler, British Library, Add. 36433, no. 668 (British Library Board).*

like, and was also fascinated by the technical details of its construction.

The visual comparison with Hadstock is even more compelling due to the dendrochronology carried out in 2003 by Dan Miles and Martin Bridge of the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory, with a grant from the Society of Antiquaries of London. The mighty door, 2.87m high and 1.45m wide, was taken off its hinges and carefully laid across the pews on padding to allow access for sampling. This was accomplished with the aid of the micro borer, which extracts a 5mm diameter core. Thus, four samples were taken, and all were found to match so well that it was concluded that they all came from the same majestic oak which was over 400 years old when it was felled. The latest ring was dated to about 1025, but as no sap wood was present, the earliest possible date of felling was 1034, although the 1060s are more likely, a date contemporary with the portal in which it still hangs. It is therefore either late Anglo-Saxon or early Norman, while the tree had started growing around the time of the Sutton Hoo burial in the early seventh century. Full descriptions of the north and west doors are provided in the Appendix to this paper.

Obviously, the tools and techniques available for making this door were much the same as those illustrated in the Tapestry (held by Figures 268, 268–9, 271–4 in Scene 35). A champion oak was selected and felled in the forest using axes. The green oak trunks were riven into planks. The edging frame was steamed to make it curve around the top, in the same way that ship builders steamed the curving strakes. Craftsmen fixed the nails with roves just as they would on the boats. Lastly, blacksmiths fastened the hinges to the wood, a detail illustrated in the *Old English Hexateuch* (London, British Library, Cotton Claudius B. iv, fol. 19), where smiths are constructing the Tower of Babel (Dodwell and Clemoes 1974; Geddes 1999, 51).

One question has cropped up frequently in discussions on dating the Tapestry, and that is how long did various motifs survive in use: are they depictions that have been fossilised or are they really up to date? In the case of the Hadstock construction, Cecil Hewitt (1980, 21) claimed it was a distinct Anglo-Saxon method which was superseded by coarser Norman methods after the Conquest. Surviving doors suggest this was generally the case, but the meticulous drawing of a lost door shows the skill and elegance achieved at Hadstock survived well into the twelfth century. John Buckler (undated; London, British Library, Add. 36433, nos 601, 668) drew both Hadstock and St Peter in the East, Oxford, some time in the middle of the nineteenth century, before St Peter's door was cleared away during restoration (**84–5**; Geddes

86. *North door, Urnes church, Norway (Leif Anker; hinges enhanced: Nini Anker).*

87. *Interior, west door, Hadstock church, Essex (Jane Geddes).*

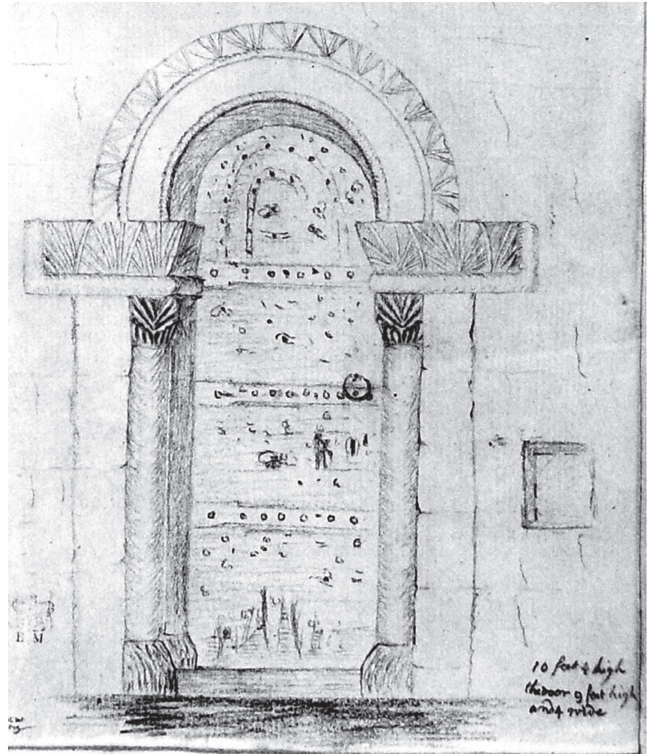
1999, 20, 358). The Romanesque St Peter's shares with Hadstock boards which overlap with a slightly off-set splay, three-quarter round ledges and clasping roves.

There are very few surviving doors with this same Y-scroll design, although it is the simplest convention found in manuscripts. One is the magnificent door from Urnes stave church in Norway, which even has both the long and short types shown on the Tapestry (**86**). Dendrochronology has established that the portal and door were made around 1064–70 (Storsletten 2002, 91–100), but traces of nails and ghosts on the wood indicate that it was re-hung, with the hinges moved from the left to right side when the entire portal was moved, around 1130–40 (Hohler 1999, I, 234–5).

The only other example (known to the author) of very similar Y-scrolls attached to the back of a door is problematic but relevant. They are found on the west door at Hadstock (**87**). These scrolls are almost identical to those on the north door, but the west door and doorway are part of the fifteenth-century tower. In order to explain the existence of such similar ironwork on doors made 400 years apart, it is necessary to examine their outer faces.

The north door hangs in a doorway made some time after the 1060s. The presence of an angle-roll moulding on the arch marks a recent stylistic innovation from Normandy (Fernie 1983, 62–73). The outer face is initially disappointing because all the ironwork is nineteenth-century or a more recent replacement (**88**). However, this door has held a fascination for antiquarians almost since the recording of historical monuments began in England. Their accounts demonstrate essentially two types of response: amazement at the skin fragments attached by big nails, and a curious examination of the structure. Although their structural remarks are useful, with several observers there is vagueness in definition, as though the writer was not sure how to describe what he saw. William Stukeley (1724, 75) remarked 'at Hadstok [*sic*] they talk of the skin of a Danish king naile'd [*sic*] upon the church doors'. William Cole (1746; London, British Library, Add. 5836, p. 17/19r) remarked on the skin being held to the door by 'curious plates of iron'. P. Muilman (1769, II,

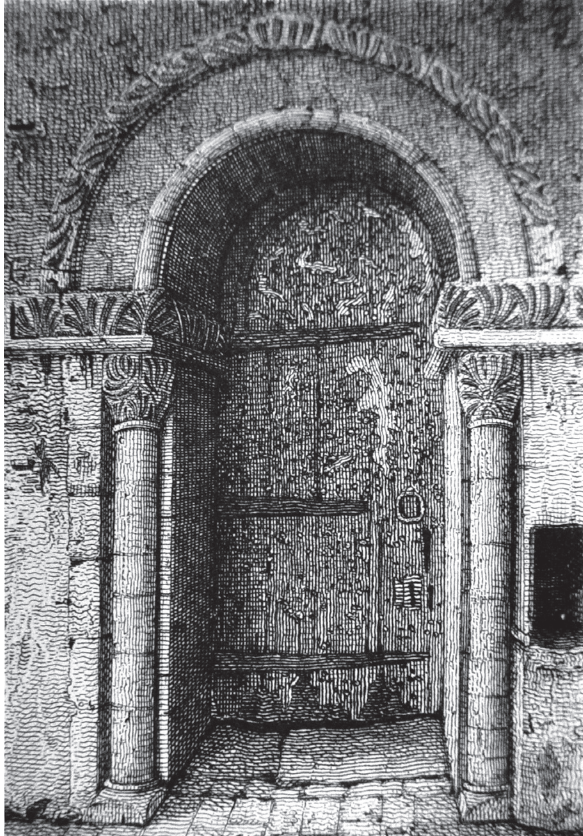
88. *Exterior, north door, Hadstock church, Essex (Jane Geddes).*



89. *North door, Hadstock church, Essex, by James Essex in c.1775. British Library, Add. 6744, p. 3 (British Library Board).*

324) noticed the door 'is much adorned with thick bars of ironwork of an irregular form'. In the late eighteenth century, James Essex (collected 1797; London, British Library, Add. 6768, pp. 89–90) observed 'the door is plated with iron in a sort of scroll work and foliage which was laid upon a sort of vellum or skin which the people of the village say was the skin of a Dane'. A. Way (1848, 185–92) comments on the 'woodwork with massive nails' for attaching the skin. From the changes in these descriptions, it is possible that between 1746 and 1848 genuine ornamental 'plates' of iron were gradually decaying and being picked away until at the end they resembled unusually expansive nail heads. William Cole (1746; London, British Library, Add. 5836, vol. 35, 16–7/18v-19r) mentions the deliberate destruction of the skin by souvenir seekers: 'through the length of years of peoples [*sic*] curiosity in cutting off pieces from it, except what is covered by the aforesaid plates'.

The drawings provide important evidence about the evolution of the door. William Cole (1746; London, British Library, Add. 5836, vol. 35, 16/18v) records that on 1 May 1775 James Essex had given him 'a very neat Draft of this North door'. The drawing by Essex (undated, before 1784; London, British Library, Add. 6744, p. 3; **89**) shows three ragged horizontal straps and a plain circular ring handle. Below the ring is a key hole with rectangular escutcheon. At the top of the door are two concentric half-circle flat iron bands, one larger than the other. The lower part of the door is starting to rot, especially on the left side. Lots of random dots and dashes over the door surface indicate all the nails and flakes of skin. Some, towards the top, look like broken scrolls. The illustration of 1819, drawn and engraved by J. Greig shows the process of decay (**90**; Cromwell 1819, II, 131). The two upper straps are now partly broken. The ring, keyhole and escutcheon are still there. The bottom of the boards is more decayed. This version shows a dense mass



90. *North door, Hadstock church, Essex, engraved in 1819 by J. Greig (Society of Antiquaries of London).*

91. *North door, Hadstock church, Essex, drawing of 1883 by Guy Maynard (Saffron Walden Museum).*

of nail heads, all over the door but particularly below the top hinge. Over the upper part of the door are random patches of skin. Part of the outer semicircular iron band survives, and a strip of skin still follows the outline of the broken half.

The final view in 1883 by Guy Maynard (**91**; Saffron Walden Museum) shows the three straps complete again, a complete semicircular band around the top, and the door ring still in place. However, the rotten bottom of the door has been poorly patched with a crude horizontal board. J. Buckler (undated; London, British Library, Add. 36433, no. 601) examined the rear of the door (**84**). Given his commendable interest in medieval hinges, it is a pity he did not record the exterior of the door at the same time. He was particularly motivated to record ornamental forms, so, perhaps by the time he arrived, the decoration was reduced to plain straps.

The lugubrious account of the flayed Dane on the door was a distraction. Modern analysis (Gilbert and Cooper 2001) has shown it to be cow skin with traces of brown/red sealant on the surface, but these old accounts clearly indicate there was some interesting ironwork on the front: plates, scrolls and foliage. In the Saffron Walden Museum is a small fragment of these old scrolls, under which the skin was preserved (**92**).[2] It shows the potential for quite a decorative display in iron. Moreover, the scrolls are remarkably similar to those preserved on the outside of the west door, where the strap hinges remain intact. The west door also has an iron arc around the upper edge, like that originally illustrated on the north door (**89, 93**). A comparison of the north and west door scrolls (**92–3**), combined with their similar Y-scrolls on the inside (**84, 87**), suggests they are of the same date, and the 1060s west iron arc was recycled on the early fifteenth-century door. An explanation of the building sequence is found in the Appendix to this paper.

Given these tantalising fragments, is it possible to visualise what a decent Anglo-Saxon door looked like on the outside? Various contemporary manuscript illuminations indicate that door decoration was significant. In the *Hexateuch* (fol. 14) scrolls illustrated on Noah's Ark, perhaps growing like the 'Tree of Life', are quite

92. *Skin and fragment of iron scroll from the north door, Hadstock church, Essex (Saffron Walden Museum).*

plausible (Dodwell and Clemoes 1974). This illustration also reminds us that it was quite normal to paint a door red, or cover it in leather stained red as at Hadstock. Theophilus, the twelfth-century monk, indicates that colouring a door red or covering it with leather was a regular form of embellishment (Hawthorne and Smith 1979, 26–8). The upper hinge of the old door at Steyning church in Sussex uses the same design of strap as we see on the eleventh-century *Lanalet Pontifical* (Geddes 1999, 52). The description of Hadstock door covered in curious plates of iron could even refer to broken fragments of pictorial designs like those found at Staplehurst, Kent, and Runhall, Norfolk, from the early twelfth century (Geddes 1999, 61).

So in terms of the Bayeux Tapestry what can we conclude about this archaeological and artistic evidence? The artist who designed the door of the great edifice at Hastings was acutely aware of contemporary methods of door framing and the design of decorative ironwork. As the closest parallel comes from Essex, one might conjecture that this was a localised technique and that the artist came from south-east England. The somewhat similar construction found from the twelfth century in Oxford still leaves the locality in south England, although potential evidence from Normandy has not been explored. Although it is likely that the stitching was probably carried out by the renowned Anglo-Saxon embroideresses, only someone with an acute passion for technical *minutiae* could have made this design. The obsessively accurate depiction of the roves beneath the nail heads and the frame overlapping the hinge strap were surely observed by someone very familiar with the best of Anglo-Saxon carpentry. Of the antiquarians who examined the door, only J. Buckler (undated; London, British Library, Add.

93. *Exterior, west door, Hadstock church, Essex (Jane Geddes).*

36433, no. 601) had sufficient interest and awareness to record the unglamorous rear frame with the understanding and diligence of the Tapestry designer.

Notes

1. One other significant door is shown on the Tapestry: the exit door beside King Edward in Scene 1 (B1). This is shown with neither the same detail nor logic. It does not have a frame on all four sides, eliding into the tower on the left without a jamb. The hinges, shown illogically on the opening edge, are two straps ending in a trifid terminal. Throughout, the artists were at liberty to include more or less detail. In addition, there may have been different artists at work on different strips of the linen, so this door may not be designed by the same artist as B33.
2. The Saffron Walden Museum Accession Register for 1847 records a piece of skin taken from the church door at Hadstock: 'this piece was taken therefrom in 1791 also a portion of the ironwork by which the skin was attached to the door – the latter obtained when the door was repaired in 1830'.

Appendix

The North and West Doors of Hadstock Church

When the north door was removed from its hinges and laid on the pews, it was possible to examine its construction in detail. This allowed a completely new assessment of the authenticity of the wood and ironwork.

The North Door (2.87m high × 1.45m wide)

Carpentry

The door is made of four slender boards, only 30mm thick. Examination of the upper edge showed clearly that the boards butt with a delicate off-set splay. The splay is 60mm long. Around the upper edge is a series of dowels about 50mm apart, plugged into the upper edge. These may have been used to fix the skin. The frame consists of four horizontal 3/4-round oak ledges and an edging frame that was steamed to bend around the top of the door. The frame is fixed by a large number of nails fitted through roves. Some of the lower boards have been carefully replaced in modern times.

Ironwork on front

The door hangs from three hooks on the east jamb. The iron straps forming the hinges stretch across the front of the door, form a hoop or eye at the hanging edge and continue around the back. Here they terminate in Y-scrolls, 320mm long. These scrolls are fixed behind a slot in the upper three ledges, but the slot is 150mm longer than the strap and scrolls. Three strap hinges now end in trifid terminals, not unlike those on the Tapestry (Scene 1, B1). The straps are distinguished by a repeating pattern of three diagonally placed nail holes. The centre hole is used for fixing the strap to the door with a bolt with projecting head. The strap swells slightly just before it turns into the hoop, thickened at a weld point. The hoop is thicker and narrower around the pintle; the eye hole continues around the back to form the Y-scroll, which is wider and thinner than the hoop. Where they lie behind the jamb, the straps are fixed by round, slightly domed nails. For the rest, they are attached by the same pyramidal nails as the edging band.

Around the outside of the door is an edging band, fixed with square slightly pyramidal-headed nails. This band is clearly post-medieval, and lies under the hinge straps. Placed under the band and hinge straps is a square sheet scutcheon plate for the plain circular door ring. The ring does not appear particularly worn. The entire surface of the door is pockmarked with nail holes, within the perimeter of the edging band. Ghosts of former iron 'scrolls' are visible in raised portions of the surface, especially centre left.

Iron Restoration

The sketches of *c*. 1775 and 1819 (**89–90**), discussed above, show the gradual decay of the ironwork and skin. At Saffron Walden Museum is a box containing hide and a scroll fragment from the door, with a label of 1883. This mentions the door was repaired in 1830. Neville (1847, 34–5) then mentions the 'ancient portal, removed last year [1846] to make way for one at least weather tight'. At that point, 1845/47, the sample of skin and iron hinge were presented to Saffron Walden Museum (Museum Accession Register, 406, and entry for 1847). The original door must have been returned in due course, because the drawing of 1883 shows a clumsy repair to the bottom of the old door, with a horizontal plank slapped across it (**91**). It also shows the iron straps and edging band complete once more, after their dereliction in 1819. This might suggest that the iron was neatly restored before 1883 while the woodwork remained poorly patched, or the drawing might be a tidied-up version of the evidence. The church received a drastic overhaul in 1884, when William Butterfield tore down the chancel with its Anglo-Saxon north doorway, but it is not clear what, if anything, happened to the north door at this date.

In fact, the last restoration (whenever it took place, and the likelihood is after 1883) was very careful indeed, aiming to respect the integrity and authenticity of the original construction. At this stage, new boards were inserted at the bottom and, as part of the same treatment, some framing and any necessary contiguous iron fittings were inserted in the lower section. All the iron on the front is a relatively modern replacement. However, some of the nails on the back and roves are original, and there is evidence that all the Y-scrolls are welded on to the front straps, just at the front edge of the hoop. Evidence that some original iron remains is as follows:

- J. Buckler's pre-restoration drawing shows the Y-scrolls exactly as they are today (**84**).
- The existing iron straps with their trifid terminals, on the front, were welded to the Y-scrolls, just in front of the hoop. The 1819 drawing shows that the three strap hinges were all broken. They must have been very carefully prised off and the hoop and Y-scrolls slipped out from under the battens on the back in order to make the weld.
- In order to ease out the Y-scrolls from under the frame, roves on either side of each hoop and on top of each Y-scroll were removed, replaced by modern copies. The replacement roves are distinguished by nails with raised round heads. The old nails have no head projecting above the rove. In addition some of the replacement roves are patently for show: they do not have a nail hole in their

centre and are simply squeezed around the ledge (perhaps they have a hidden pin welded to the underside of the rove). The newly-made roves are good copies of the original, and they are slim, long and clasping. However, on most of them it is possible to see a fairly fresh chiselled edge. Slipping the Y-scrolls in and out was eased by carefully cutting a scarf joint in the edging frame just above the top strap, and just above the central strap.

The West Door (2.42m high × 1.39m wide)

The doorway is pointed and moulded, part of the fifteenth-century tower (**93**).

Carpentry

The door is made of four boards. Splits in the wood and grain patterns show that the inner two and outer two boards are pairs, each pair cut from the same piece of wood. The stages of construction appear to be:

- Cross boarded frame (vertical planks on the front, horizontal planks on the back). The boards are fixed with the same raised nail heads as the strap hinges. The front straps curl around the pintle and continue to form the Y-scrolls on the back.
- Chamfered battens were added as extra brace, between and on top of the Y-scrolls (**87**).

Ironwork

The iron straps forming the three hinges stretch across the front of the door, form a loop at the hanging edge and continue around the back. Here they terminate in Y-scrolls, just like those on the north door. The straps are distinguished by a repeating pattern of nail holes, two vertical, one in the centre. The centre hole is used for fixing the strap to the door with a nail with projecting head. In several instances the central hole has no nail and no mark in the timber beneath, suggesting the iron has been rehung on later wood.

The bottom strap ends in part of a fish-tail splay, cut short across the bottom in order to fit the base of the door. The central strap has an elegant drooping scroll on its lower terminal, but the scroll on its upper side is broken. The upper scroll could never have fitted in this location because of the adjacent key hole. Between these two scrolls, the central part of the strap appears to be broken off, too long to fit across the door. The upper strap ends in a symmetrical fishtail.

Above the central strap is part of a broken flat key plate, and a slender rusted door ring. There is a semicircular iron arc at the top of the door.

Because the straps are too long and the arc is rounded, the ironwork was clearly reused from another doorway, contemporary with the north door. William Cole's eighteenth-century drawing (1746; London, British Library, Add. 5836, fol. 18v) shows a late fourteenth-century chancel with a blocked early Romanesque doorway on the north side. The ironwork from this old chancel doorway could have been transferred to the tower which was being built at about the same time. The chancel was totally replaced by William Butterfield in 1884 when he rebuilt the east end (Rodwell 1976, 64–6).

Portals of the Bayeux Tapestry: visual experience, spatial representation and oral performance

Linda Elaine Neagley

> The wealth of the king, his glory, his wars and triumphs, each could be seen and read on the tapestry. I would believe that the figures were real and alive, if flesh and sensation were not wanting in the images. Letters pointed out the events and each of the figures in such a way that whoever sees them can read them, if he knows how.
>
> (Baudri de Bourgeuil, *Adelae Comitissae*, lines 561–666; trans. Michael Herren, in S. A. Brown 1988, 177).

Baudri de Bourgeuil's panegyric to Countess Adèle, the daughter of William the Conqueror, describes scenes from the Norman Conquest depicted on the wall hangings of the countess's bedroom. Similar episodes of battle and triumph appear in the contemporary work of the Bayeux Tapestry, and Baudri's picture poem provides rare insights into how eleventh-century narrative images were perceived. It is unlikely that anyone today would look at the Bayeux Tapestry and imagine that the representations of architecture, people, trees and animals seemed so real and alive that only flesh and sensation were wanting. To us the landscapes appear schematic, the human figures almost cartoon-like, and the architecture fragmented and spatially ambiguous. It is clear that in the eleventh century visual images were understood and, more importantly, experienced, in a way quite different from that of the modern viewer. Baudri writes that these images could be read by the observer 'if he knows how', suggesting that some skill, instruction or training was required to view the images as they were intended. There is a profound 'experiential gap' between a modern viewing of the Bayeux Tapestry and that of the eleventh-century viewer. The modern viewer is unconsciously conditioned by certain assumptions about the visual cues conveyed by a two-dimensional narrative scene. Reinforced by the western habit of reading texts, visual narrative is instinctively read from left to right, with each scene representing a sequential moment in time. The modern recognition of objects in two-dimensional works is deeply rooted in a visual conditioning, which is based on a perception of post-Renaissance perspectival space and linear time (Greenstein 1997). Visual cues are ordered within a recessive space reconstructed behind a picture plane that separates the viewer from the pictorial world. Perspectival viewing of two-dimensional art works is reinforced by constant exposure to television, films, photographs and computer screens that situate the viewer in a single, fixed position in front of picture plane. But Baudri's comment underscores the radically different reception of images in the eleventh century. By setting aside modern assumptions of left-to-right sequential reading, a prejudice for perspectival viewing as the norm and by re-examining the conditions that shaped an alternate visuality and the unique visual cues present in the Tapestry, it is possible to begin to understand the visceral and instinctive impact the Tapestry had on medieval audiences.

Visuality, or the study of vision as a cultural construction, a learned way of seeing, has frequently engaged art historians of the last generation. Cynthia Hahn (2006, 44–64) summarises the contribution of medieval scholars, particulary Michael Camille, Jeffrey Hamburger, Herbert Kessler, Hans Belting and Robert Nelson. They have convincingly argued that art historians are obligated to attempt to understand what Michael Baxandall (1972, 29–108) called 'the period eye'. Robert Nelson (2000a, 8–9), in his short history of visuality, writes, 'every viewer belongs to a society and subscribes to conventions and practices of that society. Seeing, while a universal act, is socially controlled and domesticated'. Nelson also raises crucial questions about the limits of the modern viewer's ability to read and experience works as the original viewer did and notes that it is nearly impossible for us to recover alternative viewings.

A re-examination of spatial representation in the Bayeux Tapestry, especially the creation of architectural space and its relationship to the oral performance of the narrative, may provide new insights into the visual experience of the medieval viewer. Despite the vast

literature on the Tapestry and frequent discussions of the form and function of architecture represented in it, little attention has been paid to a prominent feature of this architecture: a portal opening directed to the viewer. These gaping rounded arches frame blank spaces of white linen, are the dominant architectural detail of many buildings, and in some cases constitute stand-alone structures. It is possible to understand these portals as sites of visual access not recognised by the modern viewer but crucial to the medieval viewer's experience. The placement of the portals throughout the Tapestry and their function – not as props, but as openings for visual transgression – directed to the medieval viewer create a unique viewer/image relationship. The performability of the Tapestry's narrative was a primary concern that dictated these visual cues, and its imagery can best be understood within the context of contemporary vernacular drama. Thus, an examination of the medieval viewing conditions, the placement and form of these portals within the Tapestry's narrative and the staging of vernacular drama as a parallel visual context for the Tapestry provide glimpses of an alternate visuality suggested by Baudri.

The Medieval Visual Experience

In today's world of visual and audio saturation, viewers have become dramatically desensitised to images as well as texts. Before being replaced by silent reading, a text read aloud carried a powerful authority because it was a singular experience, seldom encountered by the medieval audience (Keating 2001, 5). Viewing any monumental work in the eleventh century, including the Bayeux Tapestry, like hearing texts, was rare and must have inspired a wonderment and awe that we can only guess at. Only within the context of the neighbouring church or palace would even aristocratic viewers of the Bayeux Tapestry have encountered monumental pictorial images. While it is intellectually possible to understand the impact that images had on the viewer of the eleventh century, it is difficult to experience fully the awe and wonderment of the visual encounter so clearly expressed by Baudri.

Secondly, since the Renaissance, the spatial relationship between viewer and image has changed. Images are generally viewed from a fixed point of view, seated or standing in front of the television or movie screen, the computer screen, a photograph or even paintings hanging in a museum. The majority of viewing occurs from the single vantage point thought necessary to make sense of the image. Viewing generally does not demand bodily movement and does not require kinetic or physical engagement. However, the 68.38 metre long Bayeux Tapestry, most likely hung on a wall at eye level for close scrutiny, could only be visually absorbed by walking its length.[1] It physically engaged the viewer in a way that modern cinematic narratives, book and CD-ROM reproductions of the Tapestry do not.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, modern perception of time and space is dramatically different from the viewer of the eleventh century. Despite postmodern efforts of abstract expressionist painters and quantum physicists, the modern viewer is still tied to the idea that pictorial space, particularly in historical narratives, should be rationally organised around the rules of perspective and that time is a string of moments with clear references to the past, present and future. This experience of time and space is rooted in the profound cognitive shift that took place in the fifteenth century with the quantification and measurement of all aspects of the visible world (Crosby 1997, 21–47). Only at this time, when artists used scientifically constructed, one-point perspective did the picture panel become a window through which a painted world, spatially divorced from the viewer, was seen. The viewer was further alienated from the object, when new optical theories suggested that vision resided in the brain and was not the result of an active relationship between object and eye. Robert Nelson (2000a, 4) writes that 'ancient and medieval writing about vision is more active, for seeing itself was performative. Seeing was doing, and hence the fear that someone could bewitch by a glance and the transformative effects upon a pilgrim of viewing a holy site or person and a believer of praying to an icon by voice and sight… . For viewers of religious images in the Middle Ages and before, seeing was connective and embodied'.

Unfortunately, the historical differences in culturally constructed vision have usually not been considered when discussing the Bayeux Tapestry. It is not surprising then that the architecture in the Tapestry has often been described as inadequate, naïve, confusing or fantastic. Assumptions that perspectival space is the norm and the standard to which the architectural representations of the Tapestry have been compared blind the viewer to what is actually depicted. The discussion of architecture in the Tapestry usually falls into two camps, those who argue for the verisimilitude of the represented structures and those who claim that the representation of architecture is conventional.[2] For instance, most scholars agree that the depiction of Westminster Abbey clearly refers to the newly completed Anglo-Saxon church. Others claim that the architecture provides a pictorial device to control the pace and character of the narrative and to create different kinds of spaces for conversation versus activity, iconic images

94. *Palatium Mosaic, Church of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, before 527.*

versus narrative images, and so on. But what other kinds of spaces are there, what is their meaning and how are they experienced if they are not rational and perspectival?

Fortunately, a few revealing medieval examples make it possible to imagine an alternative pictorial space in the Tapestry. An overt expression of the representation of embodied space is easily understood in the well known processional mosaic on the nave wall of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna. Attributed to Theodoric and made sometime before 527, the mosaic depicts male saints processing in single file from the palace of Theodoric to an image of Christ enthroned near the apse. Sacred history is folded into real time for the viewer who occupies the space of the nave between processions on both sides of the nave walls. The palace mosaic, carefully labelled as *palatium* (**94**), is a portrait of Theodoric's own palace and underscores the importance of Sant' Apollinare as a palatine chapel. Before its effacement after Theodoric's death, the mosaic depicted the culmination of an *adventus* or an appearance of the emperor before the arcuated pediment, as was customary in imperial representations like the fifth-century Missorium of Theodosius (Duval 1978, 93–122; Johnson 1988, 73–96; MacCormack 1981, 237).[3] The emperor would appear to his people, who would be standing in the space before the façade. In the mosaic image, the palace stretches out in long arcades on either side of the pedimented façade in a flat picture plane. Theodoric, who saw himself as a custodian of imperial power, most likely based his palace on that of Diocletian in Split, as scholars have frequently suggested (Johnson, 1988, 89; **95**). But in Diocletian's palace, the arcaded porticoes of the pedimented façade project into a courtyard framing the space in front of the pediment, the space in which the viewer stands. It is reasonable to assume that the mosaicist intended this kind of projected space as well. He provided all the pictorial information for the viewer who was to imagine himself in front of Theodoric but turning in space before the emperor to see the wings of the enclosing atrium. Imagined movement was required by the viewer to reassemble all the pieces of the architecture that were provided pictorially; through the viewer's imagined movement a recognisable and experiential space was reconstructed in the mind's eye. With this imaginary reconstruction of the architecture in three dimensions, the viewer possessed all the visual information necessary to place himself in the centre of the scene.

The projection of space in front of the picture plane encompassing the viewer is suggested in many Carolingian narrative works that depict figures before architecture. The panel of the *Annunciation* from Bernward's doors at St Michael's, Hildesheim, presents the modern viewer with figures of the Virgin and Gabriel joined by the outline of an arch in the centre of the composition and the architectural components lined up on either side (Butzkamm 2004; **96–7**). The artist provides the visual cues that enable the viewer to imagine himself within a small groin-vaulted

95. *Peristyle, Palace of Diocletian, Split, 295–305.*

chapel with the Virgin standing in front of her chair along the left wall, in front of a magnificent open hinged portal, and the Angel having entered the room through an arched opening on the right.[4] The imagined chapel frames the scene and the viewer at the same time; the viewer is truly present at the sacred scene taking place before him. The relief sculpture presents all the views the beholder would see in his imagination as he turned around in this small space. The carefully articulated gapping arch behind the angel suggests how Gabriel and perhaps the viewer entered into this sacred space.

More revealing of the viewing experience as combination of projection into and movement through the scene is suggested by the famous architectural drawing of the waterworks at Canterbury, dating to the mid twelfth century and inserted into the *Eadwine Psalter* (Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.17.I, fols 284v, 285r; Woodman 1992, 168–77; **98**). The image of architecture characterised as a 'bird's-eye view' appears as a conflation of elevation and plan, has no top or bottom or up or down and yet, because of its presumed practical function, needed to be an accurate description for locating water conduits around the monastery. The beholder could place his mind's eye in the cloisters and look south to see the exterior elevation of Anselm's choir, he could turn his body east and see the Treasury building or he could walk north through an arcade and see the Lavatory tower. Once again, the image provides the information for the beholder to imagine himself within and moving through three-dimensional space. While the drawing makes little sense according to the rules of one-point perspective, it makes perfect sense from the position of continuous space through which the viewer moves. The emphasis on massive doors, some open and some closed, suggests varying degrees of access and conveys spatial hierarchies. Peter Ferguson (2006, 50–67) describes the prominent multiple doors of the Canterbury waterworks plan as 'visual signs of bodily access'.

Thus, images from the Middle Ages demanded a kinetic engagement on the part of the viewer; they were participatory. To make sense of the architecture, the viewer needed to reassemble the visual cues into a three-dimensional space that could be occupied. Although the Bayeux Tapestry's images are frequently compared to those of manuscripts, the Tapestry is a monumental work to be hung in a great hall and therefore has more in common experientially with sculpture, wall painting and mosaics. All other forms of monumental art involve the viewer moving through discursive space. Architectural sculpture of the early twelfth century was grouped around the liminal space of the Romanesque portal. At Saint-Pierre in Moissac, as Meyer Schapiro (1985) and Ilene Forsyth[5] have shown, the viewer would pass through the portal with deep embrasures that required antiphonal readings between the right and left jambs, thereby obligating the viewer to move his attention from one side to the other and back again. Complex relationships of narrative scenes

96. *Annunciation panel, doors from St Michael's, Hildesheim, 1015 (Marburg/Art Resources, New York).*

97. *Drawing of reconstructed space of Annunciation panel, doors of St Michael's, Hildesheim (K. Broker).*

were established visually and often required an interlocutor to illuminate the nuanced meanings as viewers stood within the object's space. Apse mosaics of the same period, inherited from their early Christian prototypes, imply the same exchange of meanings between the theophanic images of Christ and the celebration of the Mass at the altar below. The apse and its decoration spatially frame (in a real and three-dimensional way) the active space below. Although manuscript images were seen from a single and fixed position, Suzanne Lewis (2006, 91) describes an activated viewer space between facing verso and recto images of some manuscript pages. She notes, 'the open space between facing pictures on opposing verso and recto pages in medieval manuscripts enlists the beholder's imagination in linking and transferring them into a single idea through a technique known as parataxis' and states that 'ultimately, the viewer must "leave time behind" and that narrative involves reading more than one scene at a time, whether they are widely separated in space and time or not'. Thus, reading is not exclusively experienced in a rational and linear time sequence in which events unfold from left to right; rather, scenes unfold around the viewer who witnesses those events happening around him or her. The full meaning of the works is only realised when the continuity between real and fictive spaces is recognised.

If the spatial images in the Bayeux Tapestry are examined with fresh eyes, it is possible to begin to understand them within the visual norms of the period. The Tapestry designer provides frequent clues to assure the viewer that he is witness to or even a participant in the events depicted. While there is an inevitable left-to-right movement of the narrative over the entire length of the Tapestry, its creator controls the viewer's access to events by providing specific points of entrance to clusters of scenes that then unfold around him. These points of entrance and exit, of movement in and out of the many episodes or vignettes, would have been essential to what must have been a lengthy performance of the narrative by an interlocutor or jongleur (Brilliant 1991, 102). These visual portals also link episodes into what might be called 'long views', similar to acts within a play; put another way, just as more than one scene may take place during a given act or performance, more than one Tapestry scene may be witnessed through a given portal.

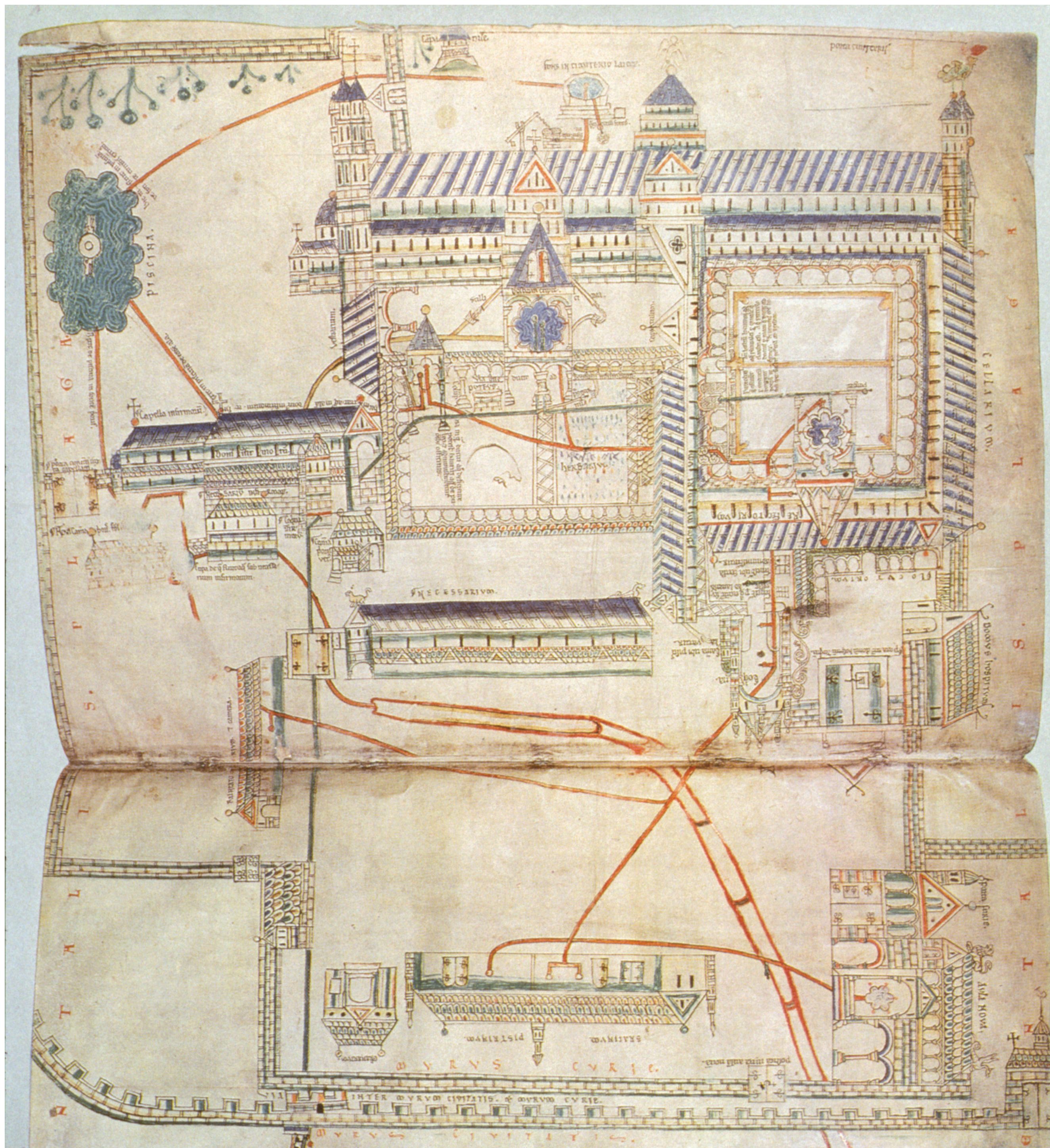
Spatial Representation and Sites of Visual Access.

In the Ravenna mosaic, the *Annunciation* scene of Bernward's doors and the Canterbury waterworks drawing, architecture embraces the viewer and creates a space that the mind's eye traverses. The architecture of the Bayeux Tapestry serves the same role, with the addition of one important pictorial device essential for a lengthy continuous narrative. The designer of the Tapestry created portals directed to the viewer. The rounded arches framing blank spaces invite entry into scenes. They are strategically placed throughout the narrative to access clusters of events that can be witnessed in a three-dimensional occupied space like a stage set, where a strict left/right reading of moments is suspended in favour of a more complex layered reading of events.

The Tapestry begins, not with a depiction of Harold standing before the enthroned Edward in Winchester Palace (Scene 1), but with a spectacularly depicted building façade (Building 1). Towers frame a two-storey structure with an upper gallery surmounted by three windows, aisle roofs and a prominent door or opening preceded by three steps placed in the centre of the lower level. The rounded, arched portal carefully articulated with columns, capitals and bases frames a gaping blank space of white linen that invites the viewer to enter and witness events within (**99**).[6] A church portal, a triumphal arch before an apse or a city gate were potent sites of transformation in the Middle Ages. They were liminal spaces or thresholds between different kinds of realities. Here, the viewer mounts the staircase and passes through the portal, enters the pictorial world and stands with Harold (Figure 2) before King Edward (Figure 3) as the story begins. The carefully articulated portal that exits the palace operates within the narrative space and draws the viewer, already within the pictorial space, along on the narrative journey. More than a monumental decorative buttress, this prominent opening to the narrative is the first visual cue that allows the viewer to pass from real to fictive space in order to bear witness to the subsequent events. The viewer is asked to imagine a layered space as he moves into and then along the narrative road.

Although the architecture on the whole is rather schematic, great attention is paid to these portals of visual access as well as to doors, windows, steps and ramps leading into and out of buildings. These seem to be more than just devices to move the narrative along, to suggest the next event or the passage of time; they situate the viewer in the narrative and provide the road map to mark the measured footsteps of the beholder as he experiences or witnesses the events of the story. At key places, access to the subsequent scene is denied by the absence of a portal. In those instances, the viewer is expected to step out of the narrative and re-enter it at a different place and time.

Twice in the Tapestry, uninhabited architectural pavilions with triple openings appear (Buildings 5, 24;



98. *Waterworks drawing of Christ Church, Canterbury, fols 284v, 285r (Trinity College, Cambridge).*

Lampl 1961, 6–13). Bernstein (1986, 44) identifies these as circular pavilions based on the classical structures like those of the *Harley 603* (London, British Library, Harley 603) or *Utrecht Psalters* (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek 32). They are enigmatic but dominant features inserted into the centre of scenes that do not seem to have a clear function and have never been fully explained. They do not indicate place, they do not frame an event, they do not anchor the beginning or end of an episode nor do they suggest a pause or shift in time. The first pavilion (Building 5) divides the famous reversal scene of William's messengers riding to Guy to secure the release of Harold

99. *Drawing of reconstructed space of Scene 1 of the Bayeux Tapestry (K. Broker).*

(Scene 10). On the right of the pavilion, two horsemen (Figures 98–9) ride to Ponthieu and on the left of the pavilion have dismounted (Figures 93–4) and stand before Guy (Figure 91). According to conventional interpretations, an architectural structure at this juncture is obtrusive and puzzling. If the visual experience is one of layered space, then this structure functions as a bi-directional portal of visual access. The three openings suggest that, once through the portal, the horsemen to the left and right are part of the same brief episode. The pavilion offers visual ingress to the scene through which the viewer passes in his mind's eye to inhabit a scene unfolding onstage left and right.[7]

The second bi-directional portal functions in a similar way. A triple-arched pavilion (Building 24) with three blank openings is placed in the centre of a series of activities involving the preparation for the invasion of England (Scenes 36–7). From left to right men are shown chopping trees for the wood to make ships, building ships and loading armour and provisions onto the ships. There is no reasonable explanation within the context of this narrative to include an architectural structure. However, if it is thought of as a portal of visual access to the space to left and right, the architecture becomes a fundamental cue to creating a particularly eleventh-century visual experience that includes structuring an embodied space for the viewer to occupy. Both of these examples indicate that the 'long view', the clusters of individual activities, are to be understood and experienced together.

A third bi-directional portal may function as the pivotal event around which the Tapestry's whole narrative revolves. The only occupied building (20) that is framed by open portals on both sides is found in the scene (27–8) of the death of Edward (Figure 231). This scene is also the centre of the second temporal reversal in the Tapestry. As the wings of Edward's palace wrap around the viewer, in much the same way they do in Bernward's *Annunciation,* Edward's death is witnessed first hand, and the viewer is invited to see events unfold both to the left and right that are precipitated from the moment (**100**). Standing in the space in front of Edward, the viewer may choose to move left to participate in his funeral or to the right to witness the political repercussions of illegitimate succession. As in the Canterbury waterworks drawing, the viewer is kinetically engaged in the pictorial space, moving about Edward's funeral procession, first seeing the exterior profile of Westminster Abbey and then the interior elevation (Building 19). Multiple points of view and multiple moments in time are overlain in an ingenious portrait of the abbey. The cluster of events or long view is bracketed by an architectural structure inhabited by the enthroned Edward (Figure 207) receiving Harold (Figure 206) to the far left (Building 18, Scene 25) and the scene of Harold (Figure 256) enthroned above the 'ghost ships' (Building 22, Scene 33) to the far right. The literal brackets of an impermeable tower (Building 17) and tree (6) prohibit horizontal access before and after this cluster of events. However, the architectural structures of the far right and far left have portal openings that lead back into the central scene. This is a large polyscenic stage set for

100. *Drawing of reconstructed space of Scenes 27–8 of the Bayeux Tapestry (K. Broker).*

a cohesive series of events.

The battle scenes of the second half of the Tapestry take place in an unspecified landscape setting with no architectural walls or towers to embrace viewer space and no gaping portals to enter. What then, are the visual cues for the construction of an embodied space? As the battle intensifies, the action violates the lower border, which fills with the carnage of war, the dead and dismembered bodies of men and horses. Much has been made of the 'foreshortening' of the fallen horse (A531; Grape 1994, 29), depicted in the border beneath the pile of collapsing chargers (Scene 53). Just as architecture can embrace the viewer to the left and right, the border can form a ground under the viewer's feet. In this case, the horrified witness to the battle walks among the dead and dying, making the scene more 'real and alive' than can be imagined.

Oral Performance and Pictorial Narrative

In a quest for the origin of the lengthy horizontal format used in the Bayeux Tapestry, scholars have compared it to Scandinavian textile traditions, Roman triumphal columns, Byzantine biblical rolls and illuminated manuscripts (Bernstein 1986, 90–101). But what distinguishes the Tapestry from these pictorial traditions is the performability of its narrative. A mediator – an interlocutor, a jongleur or a speaker – most likely told the story using the imagery of the Tapestry as mnemonic cues for recalling the story and as visual proof of the events.[8]

Thus, the closest parallel to this visual experience is found in the emerging world of eleventh- and twelfth-century Anglo-Norman vernacular drama. Emile Mâle (1978, 129–53) first pointed out the connection between new iconographies in eleventh- and twelfth-century painting and sculpture and the performance of plays within churches. Otto Pächt (1962) attributed specific compositions and gestures in manuscripts to liturgical dramas. In describing the Tapestry, Suzanne Lewis (2006, 20) uses such terms as 'staginess' of the scenes, the 'exaggerated gestures of actors', 'a scripted performance', 'set pieces' and 'objects like props'. Like vernacular drama, the key vehicles for storytelling in the Tapestry are gestures and facial expressions, sets and props. Most importantly, the staging of liturgical and vernacular drama provides a visual context for temporal and spatial representation in the Tapestry narrative.

By the end of the eleventh century, liturgical plays performed inside of Anglo-Norman churches were well

established. The oldest extant full play from the Middle Ages, the *Visitatio Sepulchri,* found in the *Regularis Concordia* from the tenth century, was performed in Winchester and Canterbury. It was episodic, and involved processing from and between various locations in the church to sites of liturgical performance before an altar or chapel sepulchre (Ogden 2002, 19–35). Sung in Latin, with rubrics as stage directions, the text pays attention to acting, gives indications of gesture and facial expression and methods of line delivery. Early liturgical plays blossomed into complex episodic performances with more elaborate staging at the time of the Norman Conquest (Ogden 2002, 38). At this same time, the first vernacular plays performed outside the church in public spaces appeared. Primarily instructional and by necessity entertaining, they have been described as 'informative picture books [which] brought a new psychological realism to drama not present in liturgical plays inside the church' (Harris 1992, 47). The intersection of imagery, performance, story telling and spatial experience forms a parallel to those aspects of the Bayeux Tapestry.

Two Anglo-Norman vernacular plays in particular, the *Play of Adam* (*Le mystère d'Adam* or *Le Jeu d'Adam*) and the *Holy Resurrection* (*Seinte Resurrection*), provide a three-dimensional visual counterpart to the drama of the Tapestry. The *Play of Adam* is written in Norman French with Latin stage directions and is episodic (including scenes of the Fall of Adam and Eve, the murder of Abel by Cain, a Procession of Prophets). Likewise, the Latin inscriptions of the Bayeux Tapestry may well have been cues to the interlocutor who most certainly would have been telling the story in Norman French. The play gives instructions for gestures, costumes, props (such as trees with real fruit, tables and chairs), symbolic objects (the flaming sword of the angel and the rake of Adam outside paradise) and stage sets with movement of the actors from place to place.[9]

Played either in the *parvis* before the west façade of a church or on a thrust stage outside the south transept, the performance space included a two-tiered stage linked by a staircase or ladder indicating earthly paradise below and heavenly paradise above. It explicitly indicates that the actors on the upper platform should only be visible from the waist up. An identical composition is evident in the depiction of the banquet at Harold's manor house (Building 3), where he and his guests appear only partially visible on the second storey. Likewise, the two-storey structure of Edward's death scene (Building 20) shows figures on the upper level cropped at the waists. The play's instructions also seem to indicate that Hell was to be placed in the *platea* (an open playing area at the foot of the steps and occupied by the audience). This was also the location to which Adam and Eve were condemned. The devil would leave Hell and wander among the audience on his visit to Eve. The viewer then witnessed the episodes in layered spaces as his attention moved in and out of the acting space. The *platea* was associated with earthly and diabolical activities, while behind and above heavenly paradise surmounted earthly paradise. There was no left/right performance of the narrative, and the audience was embodied in the acting space. A vertical hierarchy seems to have been the only criterion for spatial juxtaposition and differentiation.

Even more intriguing are the visual similarities between the staging of the *Holy Resurrection* and the 'staging' of the episodes of the Bayeux Tapestry. The instructions at the beginning of the manuscript describe in detail the locations or stage sets to be prepared for the actors. A polyscenic method of simultaneous staging provided multiple locations for the actors, all present at the same time (Harris 1992, 51). As many as 42 actors were used, and they moved from location to location. The playing area consisted of three types of locations: places (*lius*), where things happened; stations (*estols*), where groups of characters stood; and houses (*mansions*) or buildings or structures. Five mansions were arranged in a curve at the back of the playing area or *platea* and encircled the audience who stood in the centre of that curve. Directly in front and in the centre was the Cross. To the right of the Cross was a stage for the prison and a stage for Hell, while to the left was the sepulchre stage and the mansion for Heaven. In front of each mansion (other than the Cross) was a station for additional events. For instance, before the mansion of Heaven was a play area for Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and in front of the play area of Hell was an area for Pontius Pilate and the knight. The arrangement of the mansions was not based on a linear and temporal unfolding of a narrative from left to right. It depended on traditional medieval spatial hierarchies, with the most important place reserved for the Cross, in the centre, while Heaven appears on the viewer's left or Christ's dexter side and Hell on the viewer's right or Christ's sinister side. Horizontal movement took place between the mansions as the narrative unfolded but also in and out through layered stage spaces. Once again, the audience mingled in the space occupied by the actors. If the death of Edward is considered the pivotal scene of the Tapestry and the only occupied bi-directional portal, it is in the centre of a 'long view' bracketed by a scene of Harold (Figure 206) addressing Edward (Figure 207) in his palace on the left and ending with Harold (Figure 256) enthroned over the 'ghost ships' on the right. Following

medieval spatial hierarchy, the privileged position to the viewer's left of the pivotal moment is assigned to Edward enthroned and Edward's funeral, while the folly of Harold's claim and illegitimate coronation is assigned to the viewer's right side.

The dating of these two plays is somewhat problematic in relationship to the date of the Bayeux Tapestry. The earliest extant manuscript of the *Play of Adam* is from southern England or northern France and is dated to 1146 (Tydeman 1978, 121), while the earliest surviving *Holy Resurrection* play dates to the third quarter of the twelfth century, both well after the creation of the Bayeux Tapestry. However, scholars of medieval drama have suggested that because of the polished and sophisticated form of both plays and the small sampling of surviving manuscripts, it is highly likely that prototypes for both plays existed. A strong case has been made by music historians for the tremendous expansion and invention of music drama after the Norman Conquest, at the same time the Tapestry was being envisioned (Ogden 2002, 38).

The visual context for the Bayeux Tapestry existed somewhere between the liturgical dramas of the eleventh century and the vernacular plays of the twelfth century. It was a visual world where medieval notions of hierarchic, layered and embodied space were deployed to make the story come alive. Is it possible to think of the architectural structures of the Bayeux Tapestry hung around the walls of a room like a series of mansion stage sets, linked by the movement of actors and audience in a shared space? If so, then one might envision the viewer's imagination being cued by an interlocutor taking the place of the actors, instructing the audience to pass in and out of the Tapestry's permeable portals and so to move between real and fictive worlds.

Kinetic movement through an embodied space shared by both viewer and image made the visual experience of the eleventh-century beholder profoundly different from that of the modern viewer. The sophisticated interrelationship of oral performance, memory and spatial representation established a pictorial language equally distant from today's pictorial narratives. The key to seeing the stories of the Bayeux Tapestry as 'real and alive', as Baudri suggests, lies in the viewer's ability to envision himself as a witness to an event in real time and space. The architectural cues in the Tapestry provided the information to construct that embodied vision. In addition, Baudri's comment that the images could be read 'if he knows how' suggests the degree of visual sophistication that this type of viewing might require, a skill most certainly nurtured in the act of storytelling by an interlocutor who could use the Tapestry's doors and windows as points of ingress and egress and so direct viewers to distinct vignettes during what must have been an exceeding long oral performance.[10] Thus, the viewer today must be cautious, indeed suspicious, of using contemporary norms of vision to explain the reception of these images and their sophisticated, if not alien, mode of representation.

Notes

1. Richard Brilliant (1991, 98–126) makes a strong case for the display of the Tapestry in a rectangular Anglo-Saxon hall, while Gale Owen-Crocker (2005a) and Chris Henige (2005) argue for a square secular room. All three scholars place the viewer in the centre of the encircling images and discuss an antiphonal reading of scenes across the viewing space.
2. A good succinct summary of the architecture in the Bayeux Tapestry is most recently provided by M. Lewis (2008, 101–3).
3. Johnson (1988) summarises the various interpretations of the *palatium* mosaic, including a courtyard at Ravenna similar to that found in Diocletian's palace, the *palatium* as a conflation of multiple interior and exterior views of a throne room, or as a representation of the Chalke gate providing access to the palace complex. In any case, they are all three dimensional spaces that place the viewer in the centre.
4. Ironically, **97** is a perspectival drawing intended to convey the idea of embodied space. It is inadequate but the visual language is more familiar. This drawing can only suggest a space before the picture plane occupied by the viewer.
5. I. Forsyth, 'Narrative at Saint Peter's, Moissac: the portal sculptures', lecture given 15 November 2005 at Rice University.
6. S. Lewis (1999, 32) comes closest to recognising the importance of the structure by equating it with the elaborately carved portals of churches, but she does not suggest that it is actually a portal of imaginative entry.
7. S. Lewis (2006, 76) describes these scenes as radiating out from the centre, which implies a non-directional reading of the narrative. Other scholars have considered the reversal of left/right narrative flow as an example of a 'flashback' (Parisse 1983) or as evidence of near simultaneous action (Grape 1994, 71). In an in/out experience of the narrative, the directional flow of individual scenes is irrelevant.
8. The performative nature of the Tapestry is best argued by Richard Brilliant (1991).
9. The verse prologues describing the staging of the *Holy Resurrection* are found in two twelfth-century manuscripts and have been published in Meredith and Tailby (1983, 76–7).
10. Graham Runnalls (2004, 6) suggests that given the length of some plays, their performances were exceptional public events that must have taken place over several days.

Abstracts of conference papers published elsewhere

Michael J. Lewis

Four of the papers given at the conference on the Bayeux Tapestry at the British Museum, The BT @ the BM: new research on the Bayeux Tapestry, have been published in M. Foys, K. E. Overbey and D. Terkla, ed. (2009) *The Bayeux Tapestry: new interpretations* (Woodbridge, The Boydell Press).[1] With the kind permission of Caroline Palmer, Boydell and Brewer, abstracts of these papers are published below.

Harold's Death by Arrow: A twelfth-century event

Martin Foys (2009)

Despite the considerable scholarship to the contrary, all evidence indicates that the Bayeux Tapestry has never shown King Harold dying by an arrow (see Scene 57). No literary source close to the events of Hastings includes such a detail, and so the Bayeux Tapestry, manufactured a few scant years after 1066, remains the linchpin that keeps this iconic detail from being consigned to the apocryphal cut-out bin. While the legend of Harold's death by arrow eventually found support, or possibly its origin, in the Bayeux Tapestry, the evidence of the contemporary literature, the formal elements of the Tapestry itself, and the nature of its later 'restorations', suggests that this tradition only arose in the second and third generations of accounts of Hastings, and was then embraced by modern scholars. The current form of (and scholarship on) the Tapestry has engaged in a bit of time travel through prolepsis, as the traditions of later periods have journeyed back, not to restore, but rather to construct the content of the earlier. To deny the rather explicit form and function of the Tapestry's visual layout is to privilege the word, whether it is woven inscription, twelfth-century legend or twentieth-century scholarship, over the design of the original image.

From Hasting to Hastings: Inevitable inexorability on the Bayeux Tapestry

Dan Terkla (2009)

Between November 1803 and February 1804, first consul Napoleon Bonaparte had the Bayeux Tapestry displayed in Paris, at the Musée Napoléon, previously and once again the Louvre. Napoleon recognised the propagandistic potential of this artwork and seems to have done his utmost to link his public image with that of William the Conqueror. Between June 1941 and the end of 1943, a group established by SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, *Das Ahnenerbe, Studiengesellschaft fur Geistesurgeschichte*, took a deep interest in the Tapestry. The members of Himmler's ancestral heritage research bureau produced, among other things, a log of activities for the period June to August 1941, a 95-page description of the Tapestry, 767 black-and-white photographs, two documentary films and watercolours of particular scenes.

Asking what about the Bayeux Tapestry attracted these megalomaniacs leads to questions that send us back to the Normans and their Tapestry: what does the attraction that Napoleon and the Third Reich felt tell us about *Normannitas*, Norman self-conception and myth-making, and about ways in which they used the/their past to create their future? On a more abstract scale, what does such retrospective linking tell us about the insistence of the will to power? To answer these questions, this essay examines 'the inevitability topos', which the Tapestry exemplifies. Its design, layout, and socio-cultural context generate an inexorable narrative that can have but one outcome, the inevitability of which soon becomes apparent, even to a viewer unfamiliar with the events it represents. Certain elements of *Normannitas* – the cultural quintessence that defined the male Norman aristocrat, in particular the ducal line stretching back to Rollo – determined the Tapestry's design, create and sustain its narrative and produce a kind of ducal foresight born of mediated hindsight.

This essay illustrates how that quintessence underpins and drives the inevitability of the Tapestry's narrative and how the design links rightward inexorability to imperial inevitability. It shows how human gestures and postures, along with ground- and water lines, link discrete narrative modules into seriality, thus allowing us to see how the Tapestry encourages viewers to extrapolate from its narrative a larger culturo-historic one. Viewing the Tapestry in this way enables us to conceive of it, with its opening in *medias res,* as but one historical module in a series of chronicled modules that looks back to Hastingus, the first real leader of Viking incursions into Francia, forward to Hastings in 1066 and beyond to inevitably grander accomplishments.

Benefactor or Designer? Bishop Odo's role in the Bayeux Tapestry

Elizabeth Carson Pastan (Pastan and White 2009)

The examination of familiar arguments that Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, was the patron of the Bayeux Tapestry raises the question of what role, precisely, he played in its creation. Studies that impute a micromanaging, authorial role to Odo cannot easily explain why the Tapestry unfolds as it does, whether because of its 'even-handed' view of the Conquest or its depiction of events in which Odo had no stake. This paper argues that the chief weakness of the conventional view of Odo as patron is a failure to look critically at the particular model of patronage that has long been built into studies of the Tapestry. For one example of a different model of patronage in which the benefactor commissions and funds a work of art on a particular theme but leaves the overall design and iconographic detail to others, we can turn to George Wingfield Digby's (1957, 43–4) discussion of the tenth-century life of Saint Dunstan and a fifteenth-century work from France. Together these accounts allow us to imagine a collaborative process involving several different people, including not only the benefactor, but also an iconographer and/or author, a visual designer, artists, and embroiderers. The multi-stage production process described in these medieval documents differs considerably from the prevalent view of how the Tapestry was created, in which interventions imputed to Odo resemble the detailed engagement of a 'patron-client' in Florentine painting contracts.

The case for assigning Odo a more limited role in the Bayeux Tapestry's creation is also supported by the analysis of the Tapestry itself. Despite the many 'Odo sightings' reported in various scenes of the Tapestry, Odo is identified securely only in two inscriptions and three scenes demonstrably linked to those inscriptions, all of which are set in England on the eve of and during the Battle of Hastings. Finally, there are a number of scenes where the editorial perspective does not resemble an 'Odonian view of the Conquest' (McNulty 1989, 76–7). For example, in the opening interview (Scene 1) it is wholly unclear whether or not Harold is being sent on a diplomatic mission to Duke William, as Norman sources consistently contend. Yet there are contemporaneous examples of text and imagery that the designer, working under the direction of the kind of micromanaging Norman patron Odo is portrayed as being, could have used to explain the nature of opening interview and underscore the Norman case, if he had desired to do so. Here as elsewhere, the Bayeux Tapestry eschews clarity on key elements of the Norman case and this fact must be reconciled with the kind of patronage invoked.

The issues of the verifiable number of appearances of Odo in the Tapestry and the editorial perspective of key scenes within it underscore the point that the model of patronage scholars have adopted to portray Odo's role is inadequate. For this reason, a fruitful approach to understanding the Bayeux Tapestry would involve focusing less on Odo as 'patron' and more on the collaborative creative process at the monastery of St Augustine's, Canterbury, where scholarship has consistently pointed for the style and motifs of the Tapestry's iconographic plan.

The Bayeux Tapestry and the 'Fratres' of St Augustine's, Canterbury: Odo of Bayeux, Wadard and Vital

Stephen D. White (Pastan and White 2009)

Scholars have long cited the Bayeux Tapestry's inclusion of several images of Odo of Bayeux and one each of men called Wadard and Vital, who both held land in Kent from the bishop, to support the view that Odo not only commissioned the Tapestry but micromanaged its production by commanding the designer to cast him in a starring role in the Norman invasion of England and give bit parts to two of his so-called 'vassals'.

This paper challenges two of the main assumptions on which this hypothesis rests: first, that the only person who would have wanted the Tapestry to depict Odo prominently was the bishop himself; and, second, that Wadard and Vital were so inconsequential and so exclusively tied to Odo that their appearances on the Tapestry must be attributed to his personal intervention. The first assumption cannot easily be reconciled with

recent work on the bishop or with evidence of his enduring relationship as benefactor and beneficiary of monastic prayers with the monks of St Augustine's, Canterbury, where, many scholars believe, the Tapestry was designed.

The second assumption is inconsistent, not only with the well-known finding that Scolland (also known as Scotland), abbot of St Augustine's, granted Vital the privilege of confraternity at the abbey but also with evidence from a previously unknown charter indicating that Wadard agreed to serve Scolland and his monks 'faithfully' as their '*miles*' and, in return, would be buried in the monks' cemetery and gain the benefit of their prayers. In fact, the list of people depicted by name on the Tapestry and remembered by name in prayers at St Augustine's is not limited to Odo, Wadard and Vital. It also included Edward, Harold, William and Stigand; and possibly Eustace, Leofwine and Gyrth and perhaps even Ælfgyva. Moreover, since the monks of St Augustine's evidently assumed the obligation to pray for many other '*fratres*' of theirs who died at Hastings, it is conceivable that some of the nameless dead represented on the Tapestry were considered to be the monks' brothers. If fewer than ten images said to relate to Odo of Bayeux can make a case for the Bishop's micromanaging patronage of the Tapestry, then a much larger number of images of English and Norman beneficiaries of prayers by the monks of St Augustine's should make a case for the hypothesis that this monastic community consistently played a more directive role in the Tapestry's design than previous scholarship has allowed for.

Notes

1. Elizabeth Carson Pastan and Stephen D. White delivered separate papers at the Bayeux Tapestry conference.

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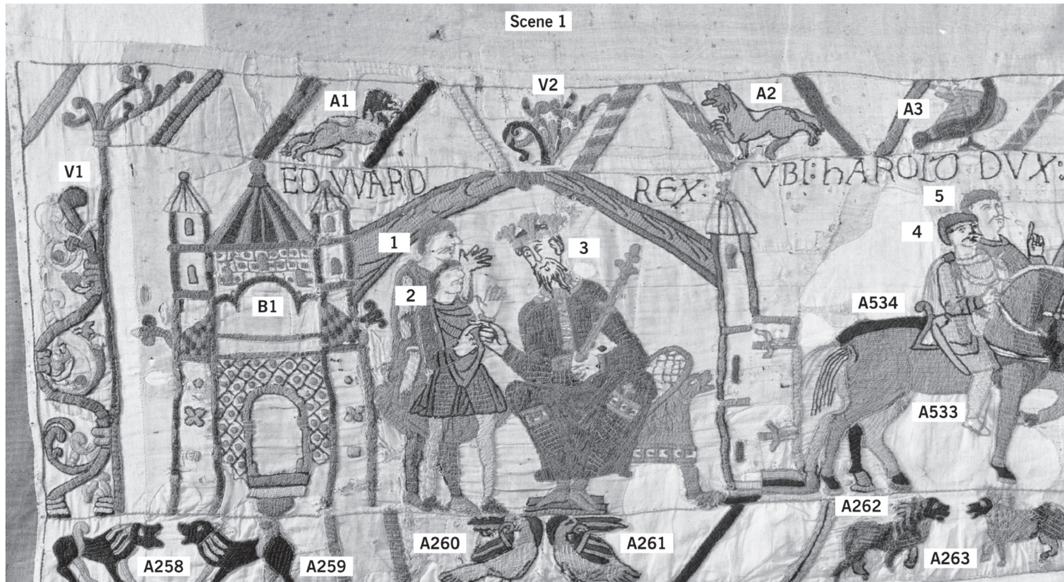
Facsimile of the Bayeux Tapestry
(by special permission of the City of Bayeux)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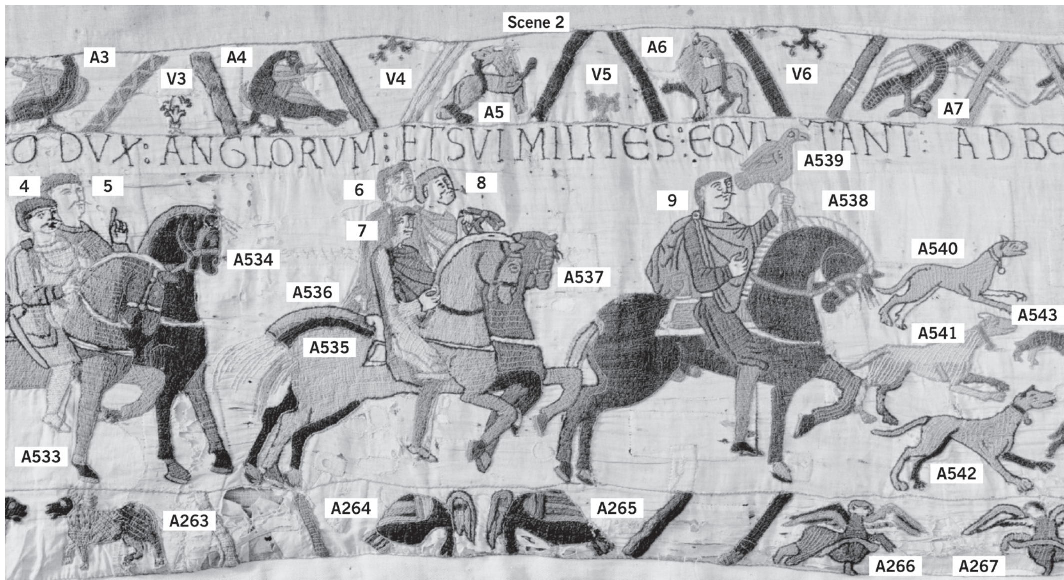
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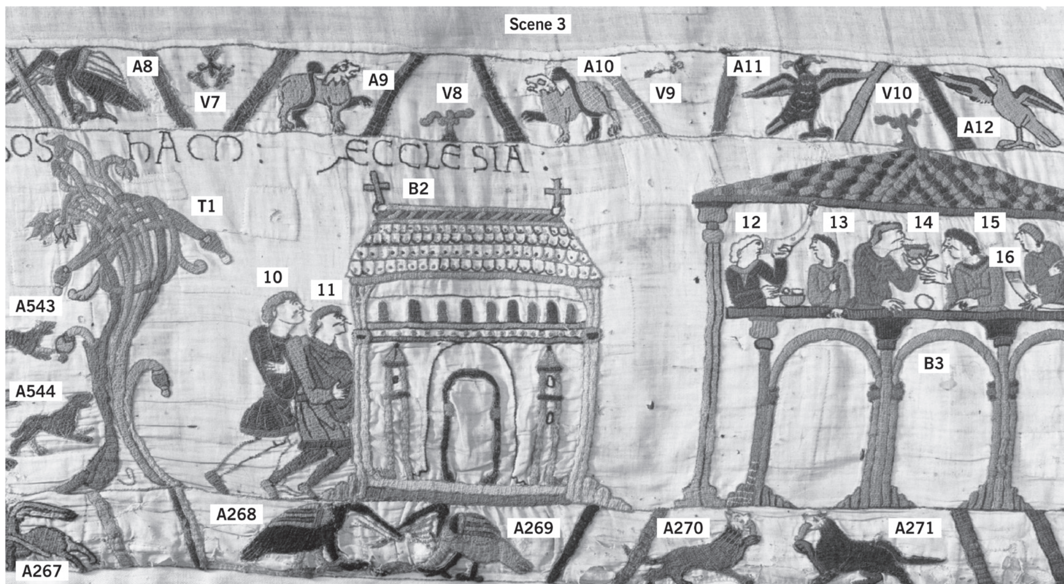
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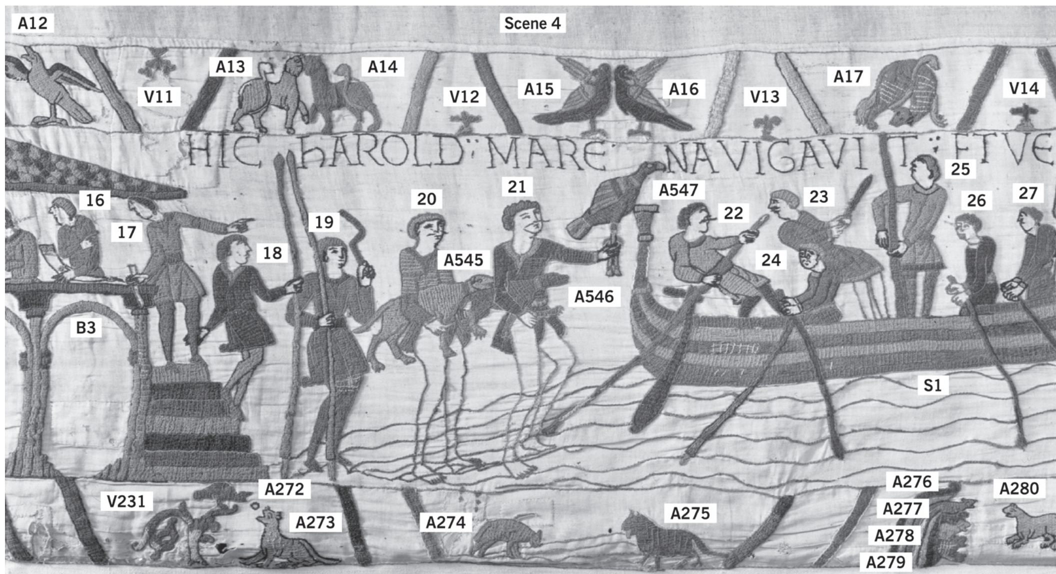
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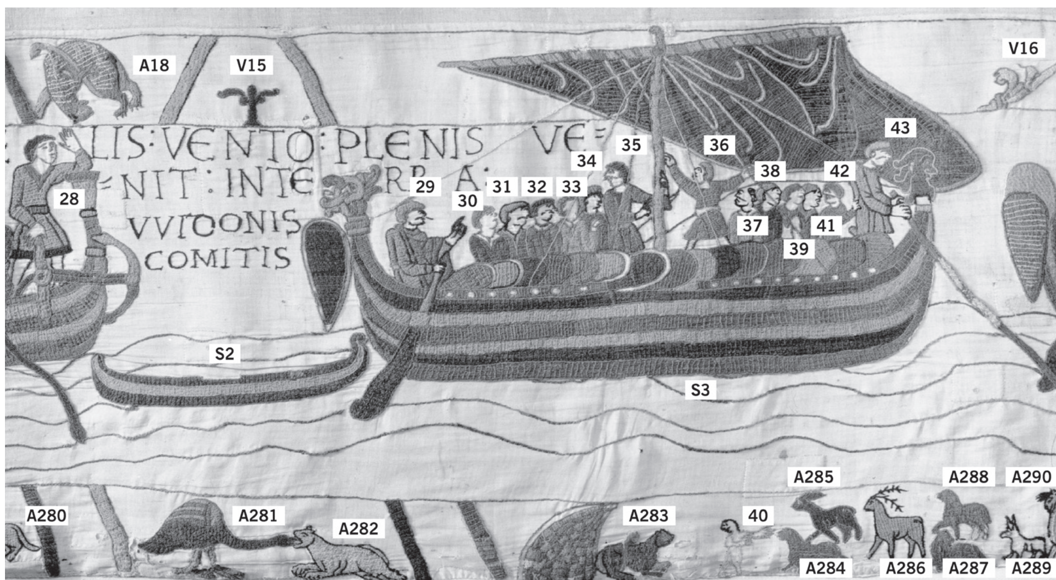
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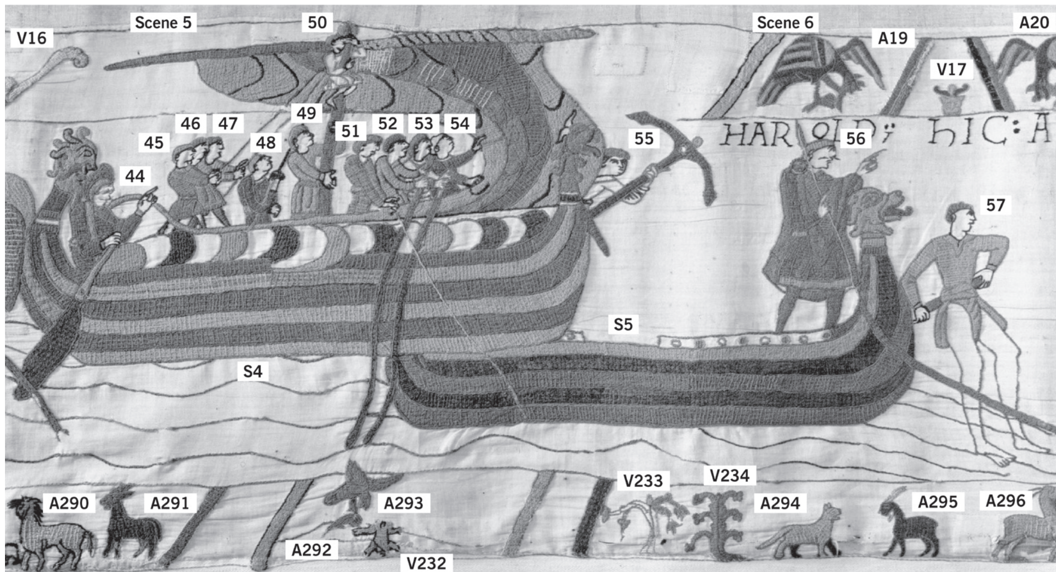
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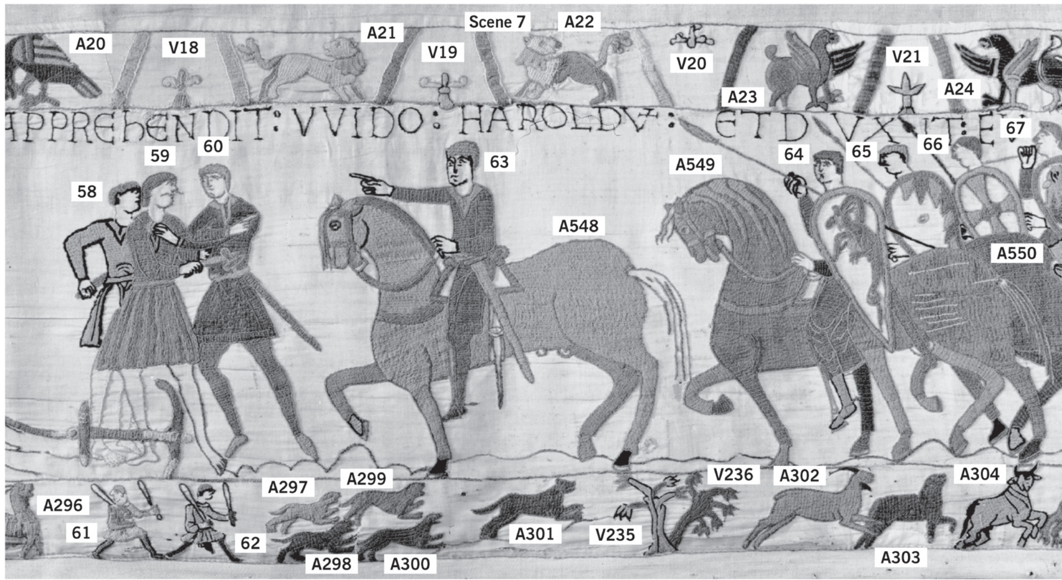

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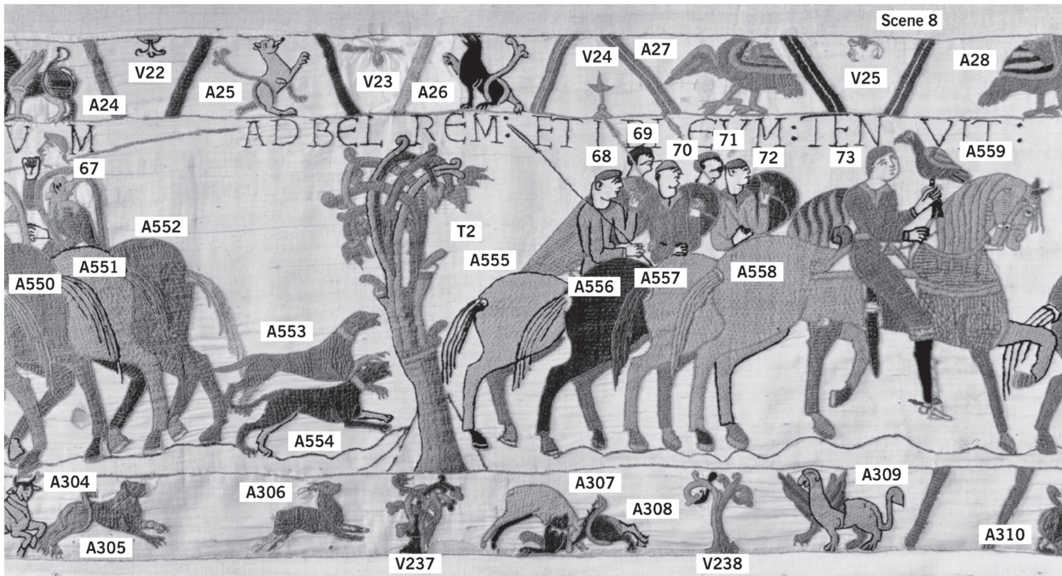

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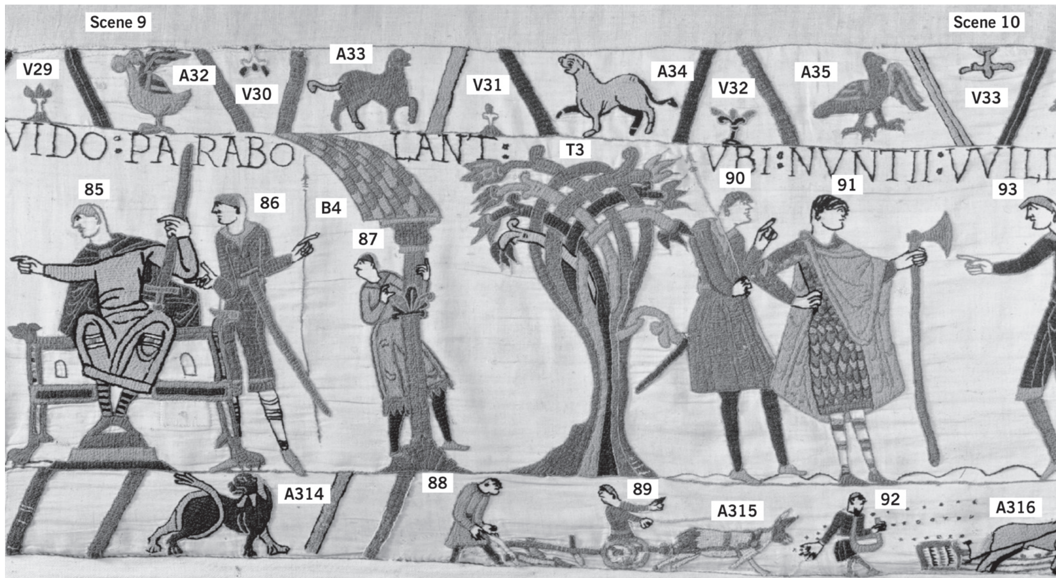
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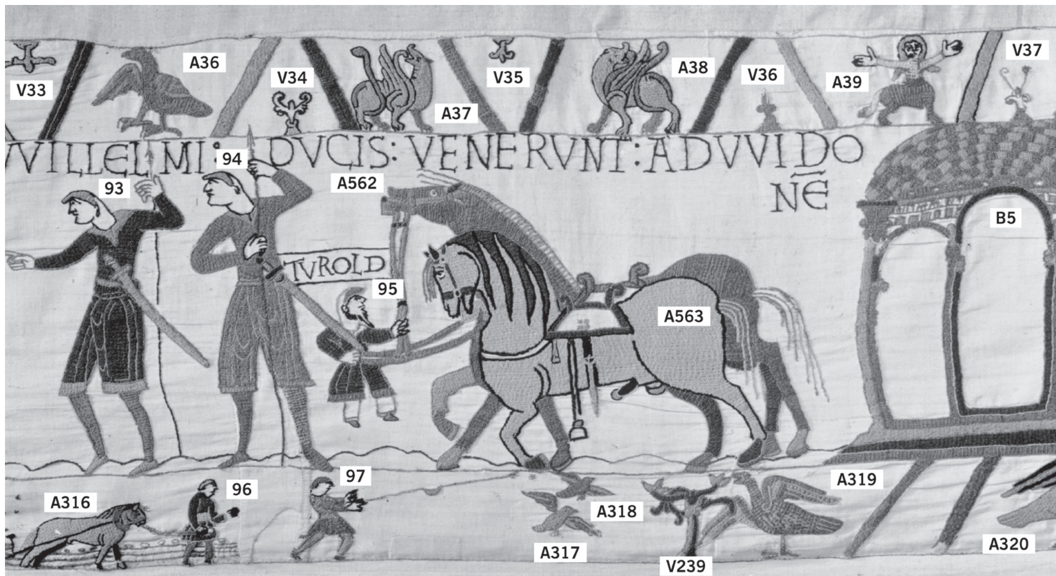
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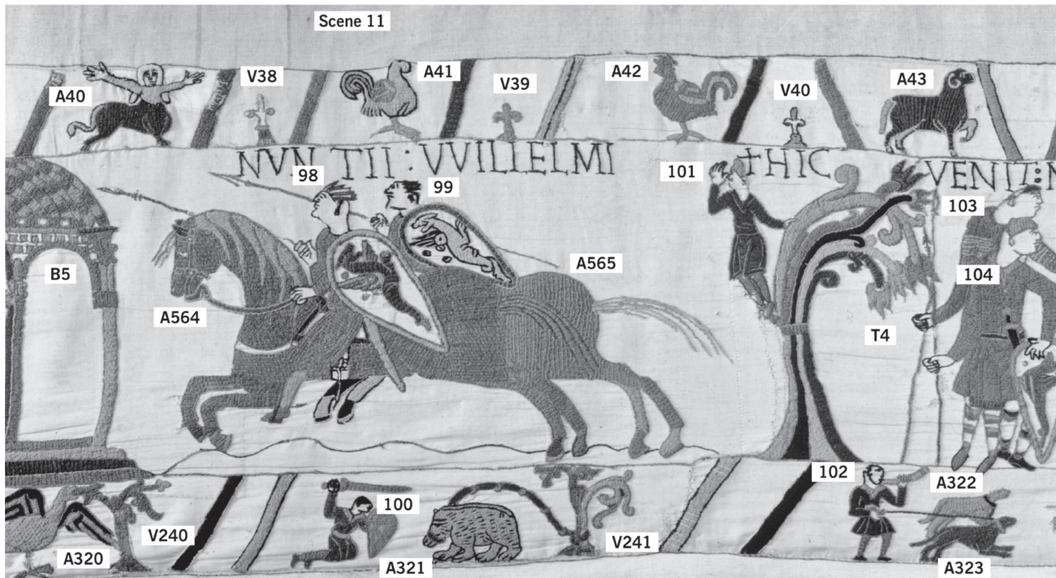
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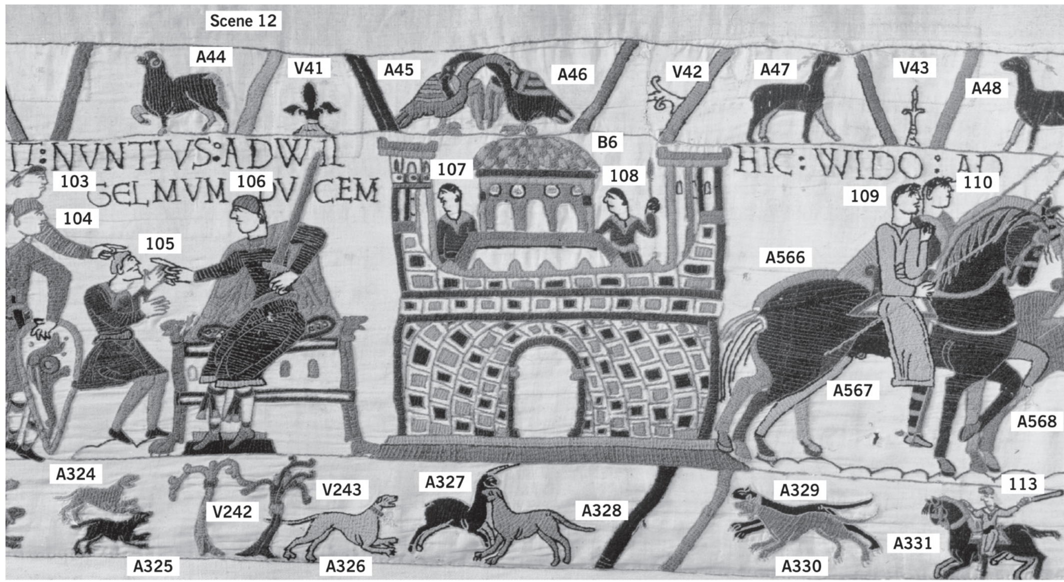
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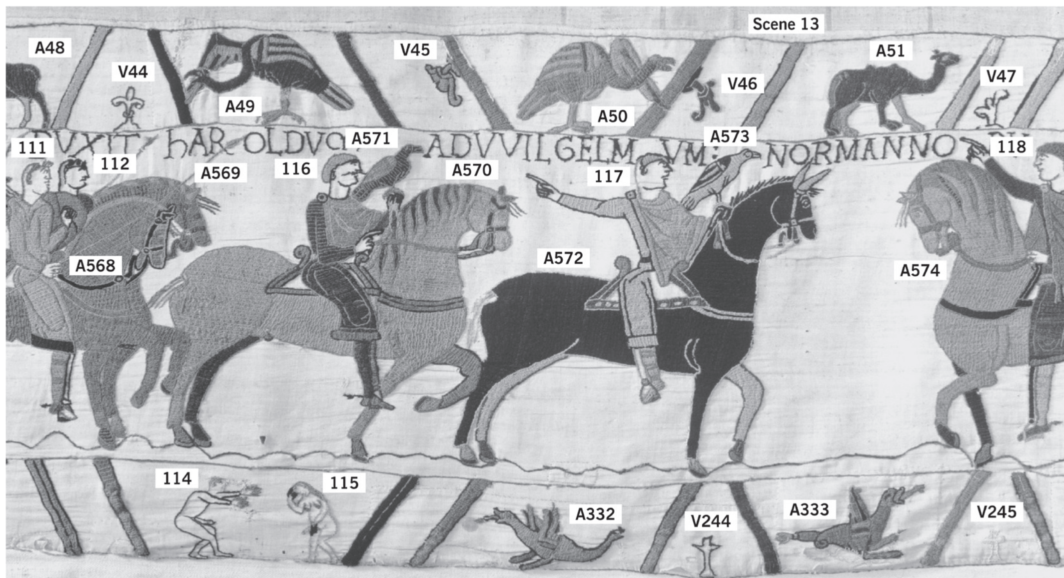
Scene 13
A48
V44
A49
V45
A50
V46
A51
V47
ADVVILGELM VM: NORMANNO
111
112
A569
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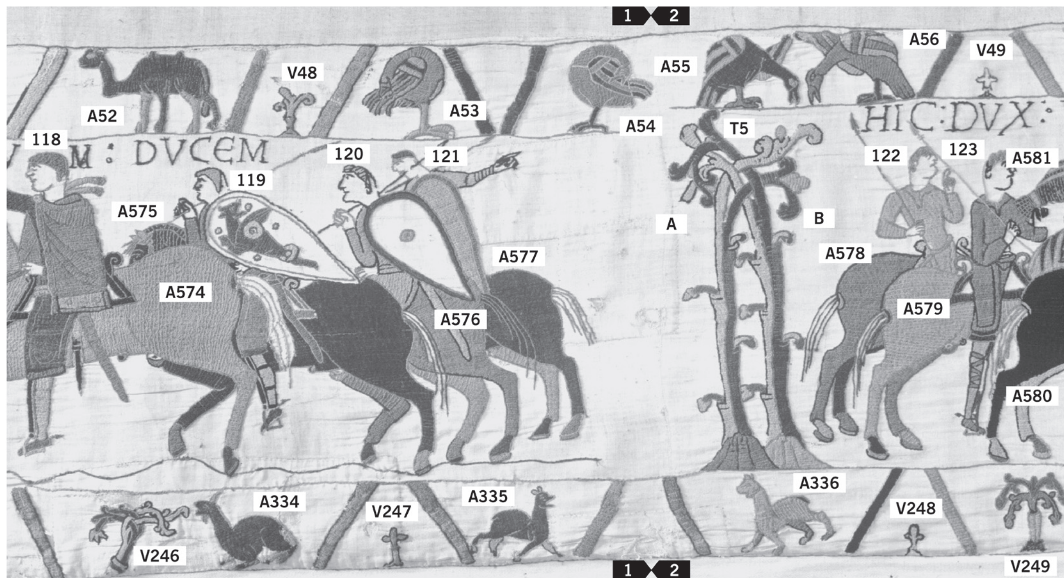
A571
A570
117
A573
118
A568
A572
A574
114
115
A332
V244
A333
V245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A52
V48
A53
A55
A54
A56
V49
T5
HIC:DVX:
M: DVCEM
118
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A575
A574
A576
A577
A
B
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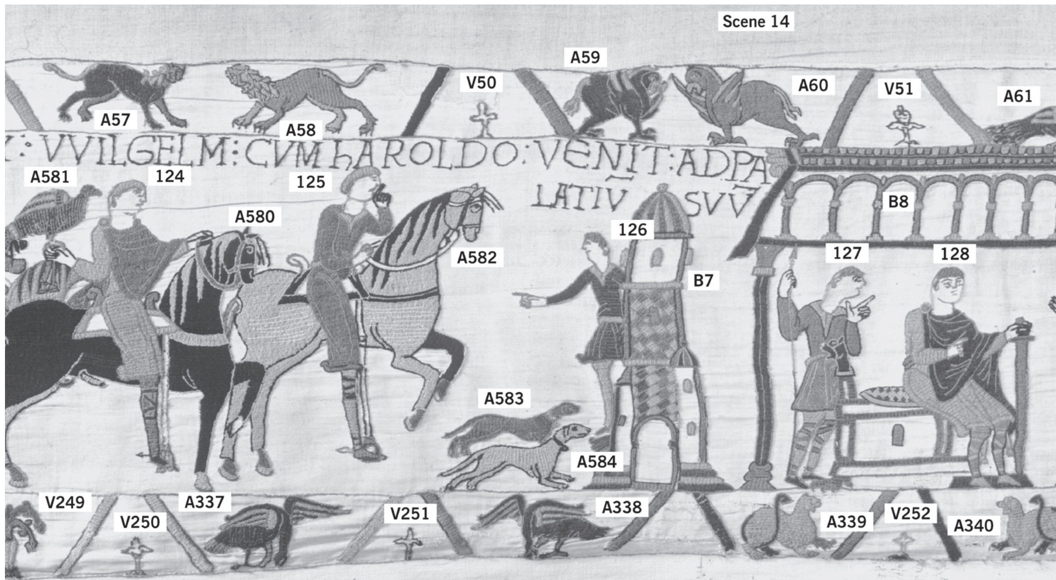
123
A581
A578
A579
A580
V246
A334
V247
A335
A336
V248
V249
1
2


Scene 14
A57
A58
V50
A59
A60
V51
A61
VVILGELM: CVM HAROLDO: VENIT: AD PALATIV SVV
A581
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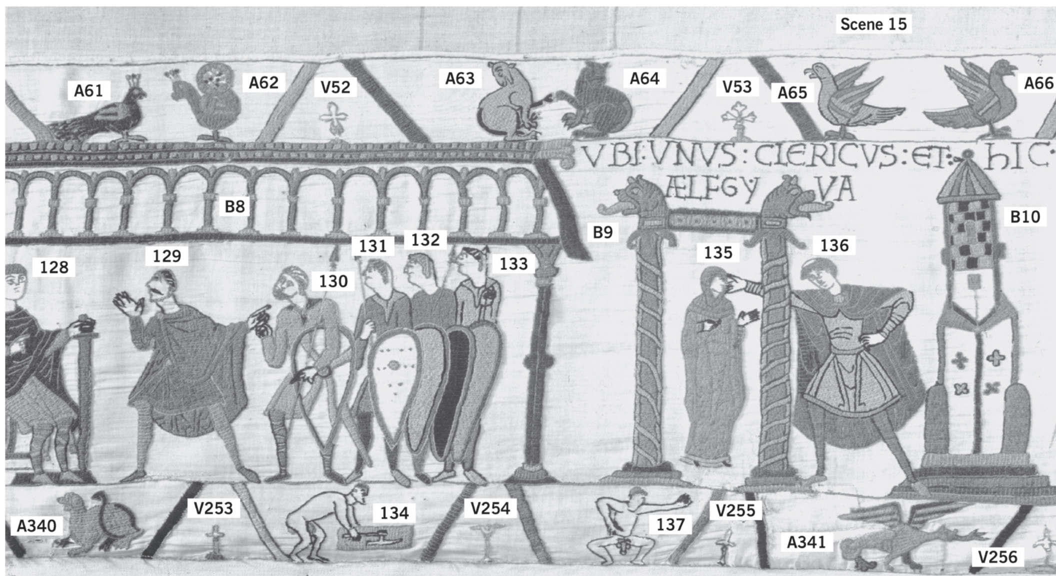
A580
A582
126
B7
B8
127
128
A583
A584
V249
V250
A337
V251
A338
A339
V252
A340


Scene 15
A61
A62
V52
A63
A64
V53
A65
A66
VBI: VNVS: CLERICVS: ET: ÆLFGYVA
B8
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B10
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135
136
A340
V253
134
V254
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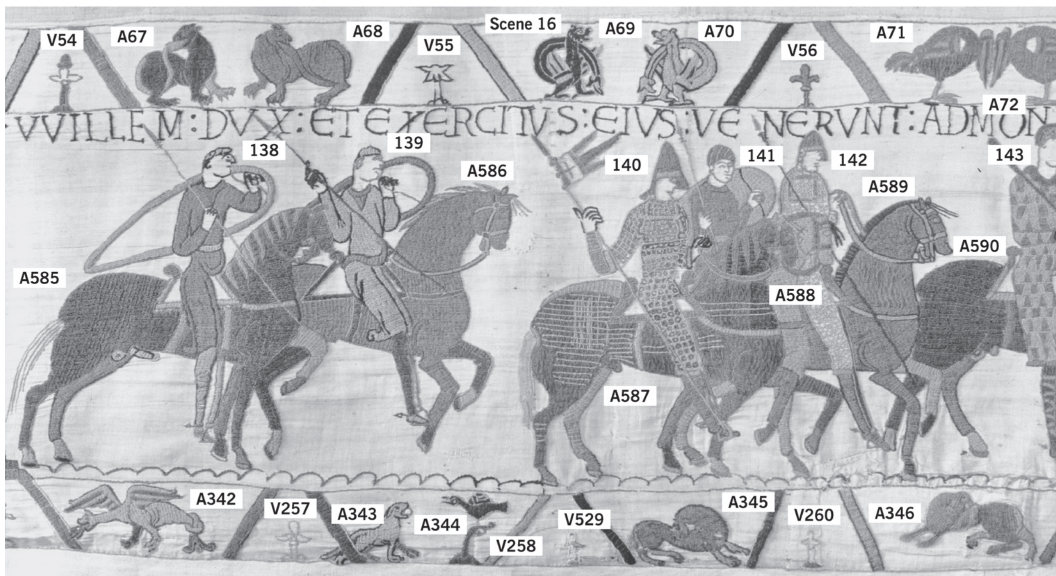
V255
A341
V256


V54
A67
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V55
Scene 16
A69
A70
V56
A71
A72
VVILLEM: DVX: ET EXERCITVS: EIVS: VENERVNT: ADMON
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A589
A585
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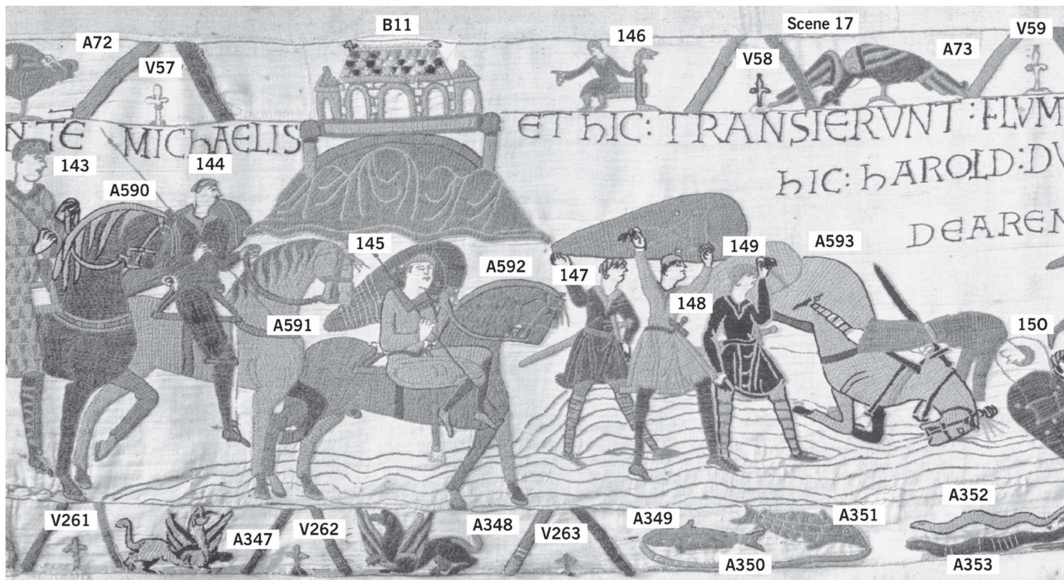
A588
A587
A342
V257
A343
A344
V258
V529
A345
V260
A346


A72
B11
146
Scene 17
V59
V57
V58
A73
NTE MICHAELIS
ET HIC: TRANSIERVNT: FLVM
HIC: HAROLD: DV
DEAREN
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A590
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A592
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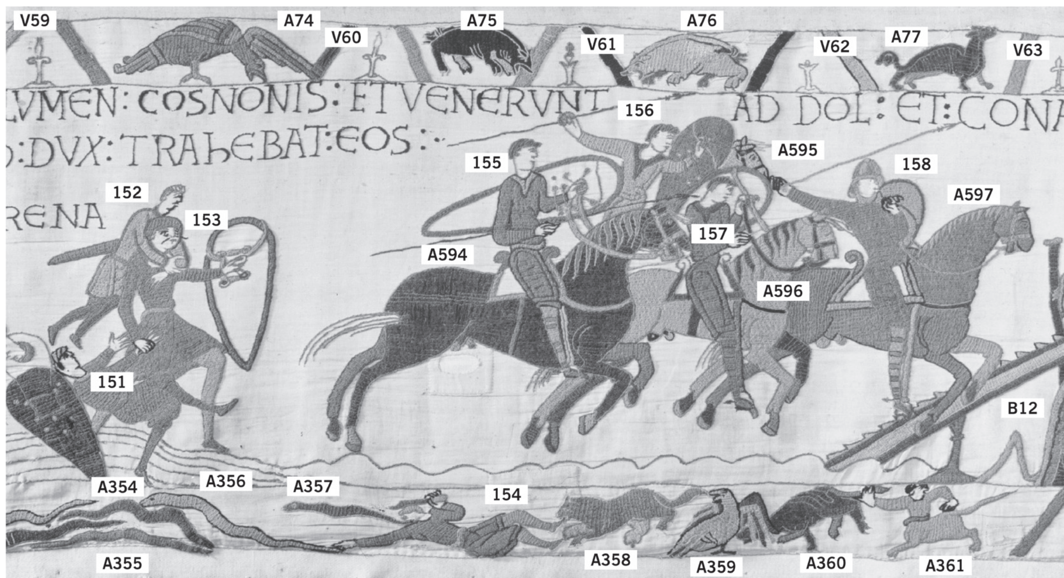
A593
148
A591
150
V261
A347
V262
A348
V263
A349
A351
A352
A350
A353


V59
A74
V60
A75
V61
A76
V62
A77
V63
LVMEN: COSNONIS: ET VENERVNT
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AD DOL: ET: CONA
D: DVX: TRAHEBAT: EOS:
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A595
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A597
RENA
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A596
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B12
A354
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A357
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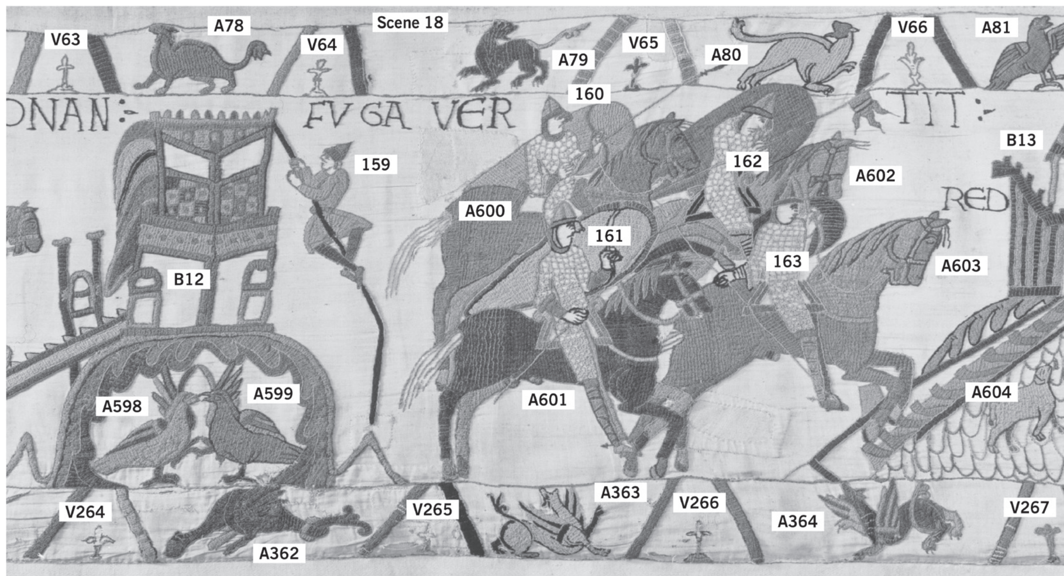
A360
A361


V63
A78
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Scene 18
V65
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A80
V66
A81
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B13
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A600
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A603
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A363
V264
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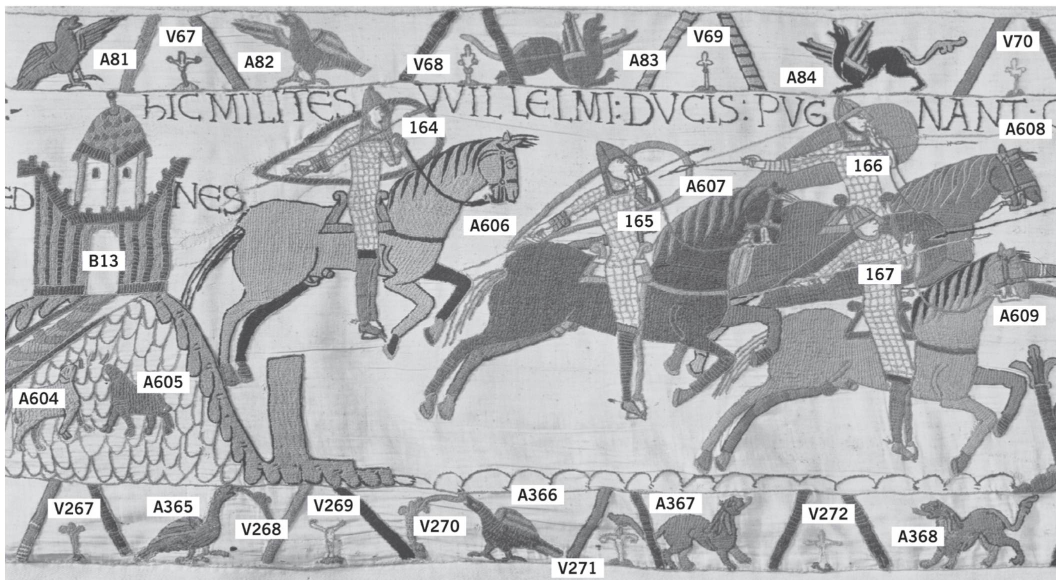
V267
A362


HIC MILITES VVILLELMI: DVCIS: PVG NANT:
ED NES
A81
V67
A82
V68
A83
V69
A84
V70
A608
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A606
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A609
B13
A604
A605
V267
A365
V268
V269
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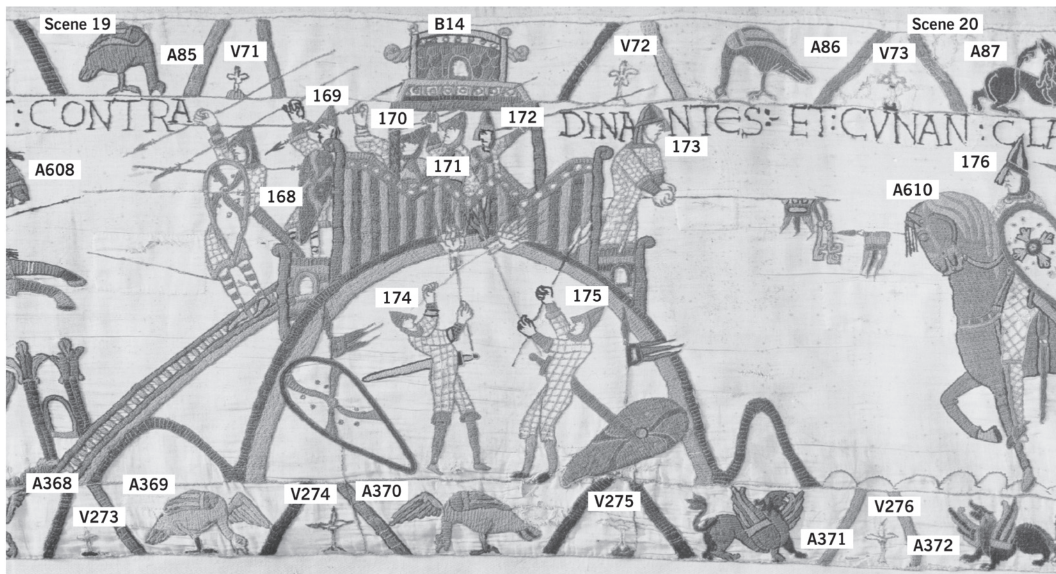
A366
V271
A367
V272
A368


Scene 19
Scene 20
B14
A85
V71
V72
A86
V73
A87
:CONTRA
DINANTES:- ET:CVNAN:
A608
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175
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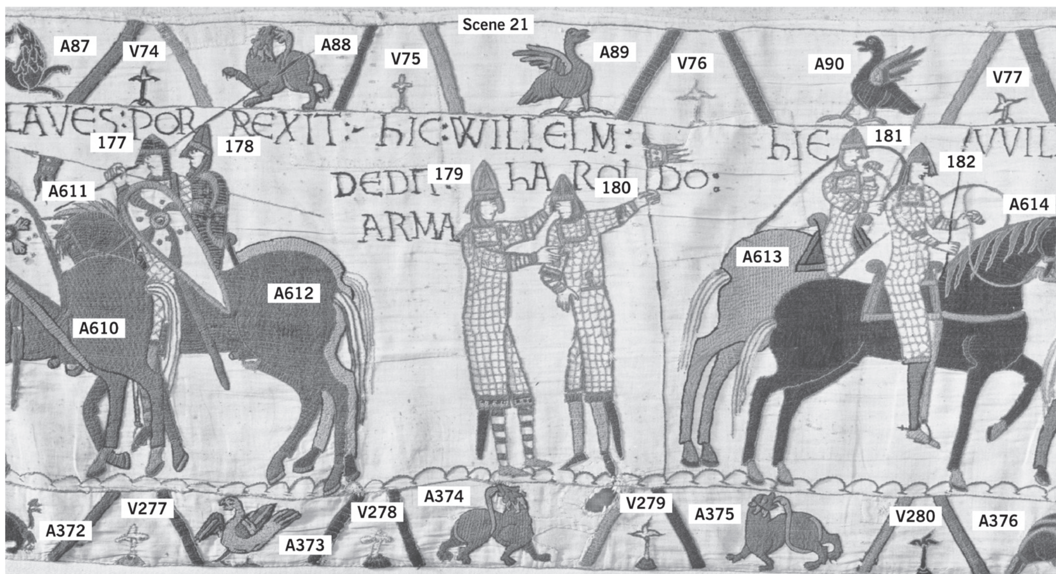
A610
A368
A369
V273
V274
A370
V275
V276
A371
A372


Scene 21
A87
V74
A88
V75
A89
V76
A90
V77
LAVES:POR REXIT:- HIC:WILLELM:
DEDIT HAROLDO:
ARMA
HIE
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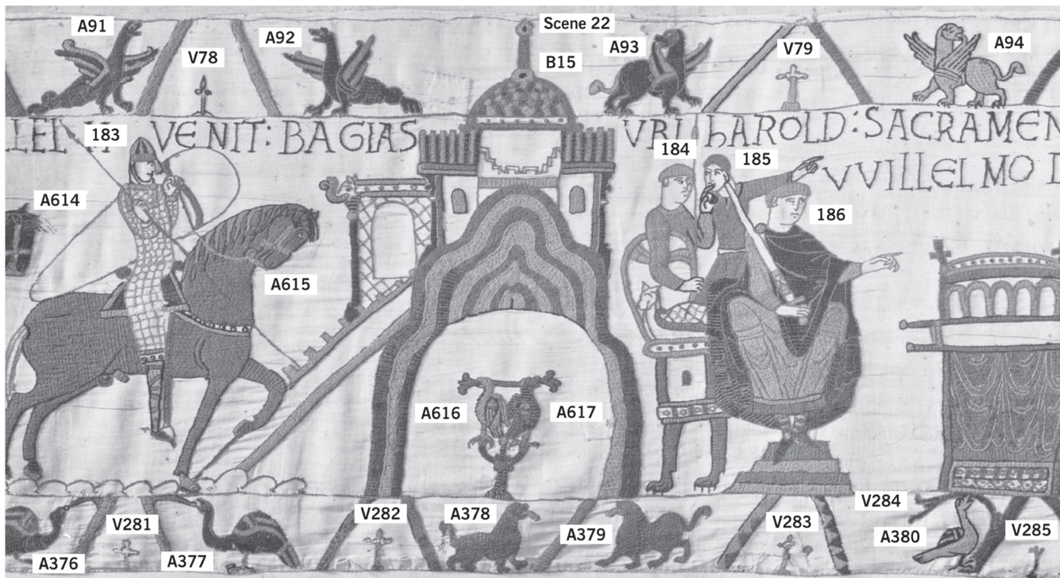
A611
A610
A612
A613
A614
A372
V277
A373
V278
A374
V279
A375
V280
A376



A91
V78
A92
Scene 22
B15
A93
V79
A94
VENIT: BAGIAS
HAROLD: SACRAMEN
VVILLELMO
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A614
A615
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A617
V281
V282
A378
A379
V283
V284
A380
V285
A376
A377

Scene 23
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V81
A96
V82
A97
V83
A98
ENTVM: FECIT: HIC HAROL D: DVX:
O DVCI:
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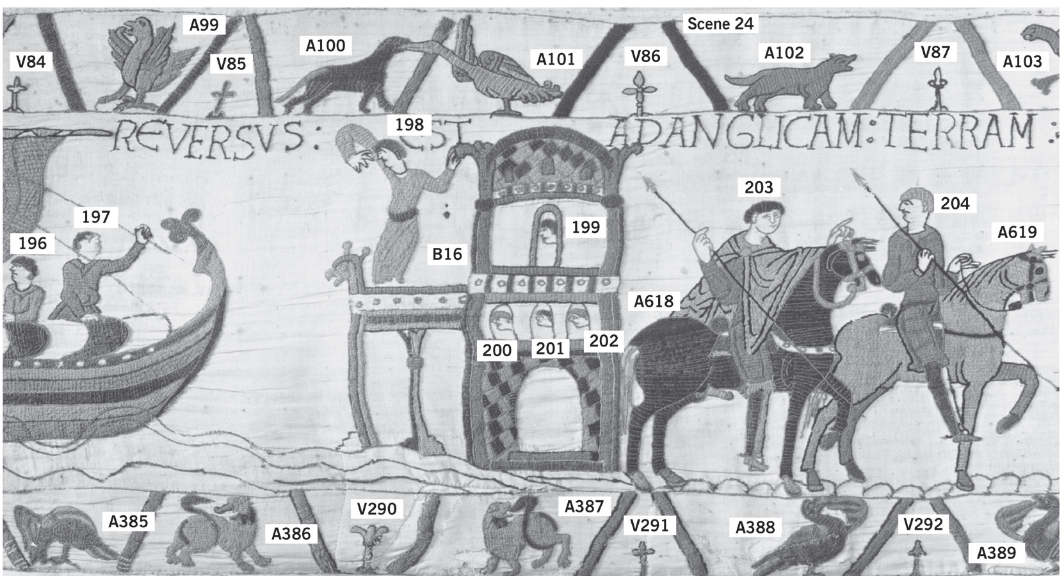
194
195
S6
V285
V286
A381
V287
A382
A383
V288
A384
V289



V84
A99
V85
A100
A101
V86
Scene 24
A102
V87
A103
REVERSVS: EST
AD ANGLICAM: TERRAM:
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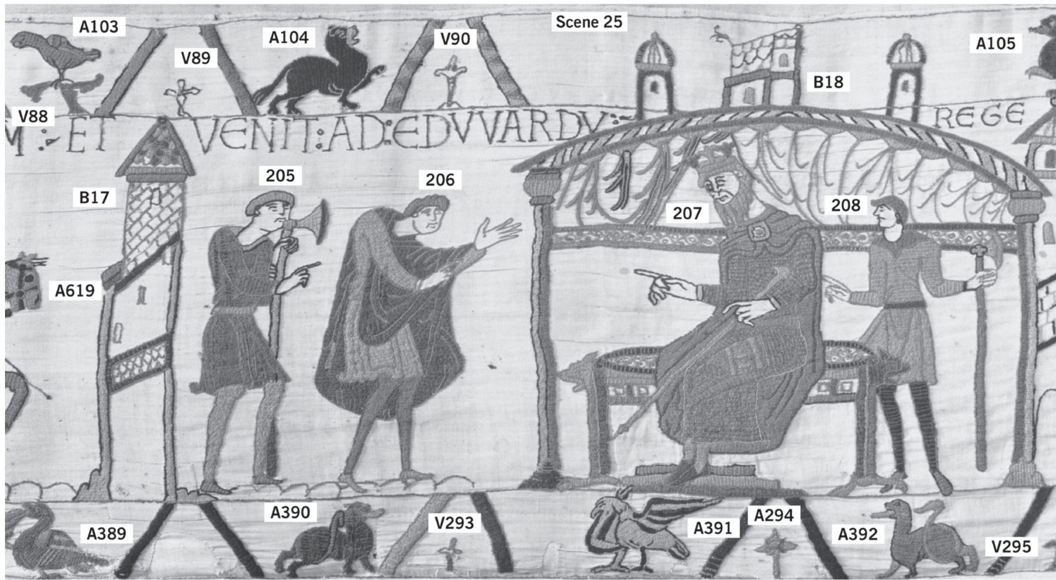
204
B16
A618
A619
A385
A386
V290
A387
V291
A388
V292
A389


Scene 25
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V89
A104
V90
B18
A105
V88
M:-ET VENIT:AD:EDVVARDV
REGE
B17
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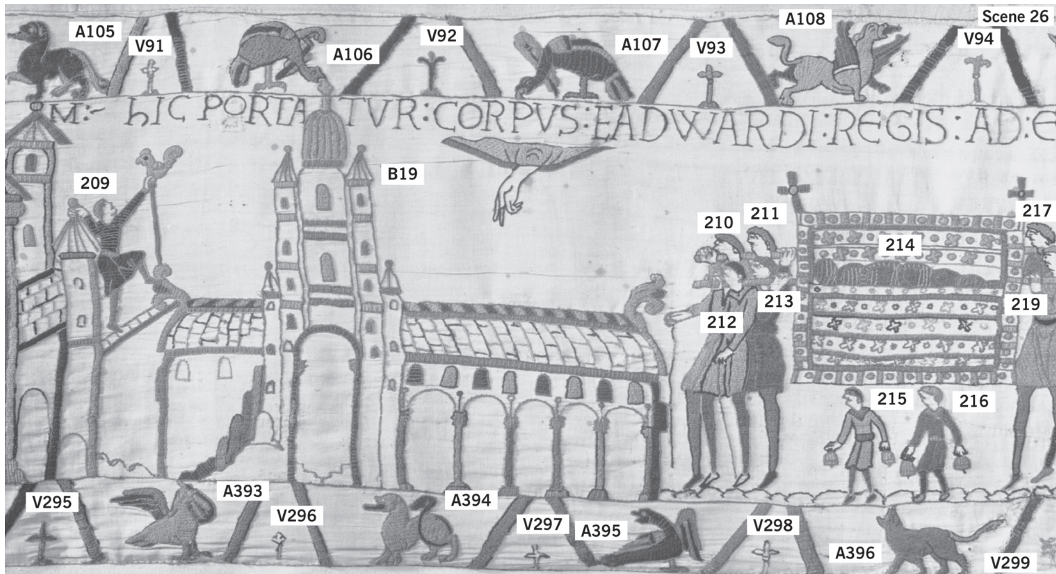
207
208
A619
A389
A390
V293
A391
A294
A392
V295


Scene 26
A105
V91
A106
V92
A107
V93
A108
V94
M:- HIC PORTATVR:CORPVS:EADWARDI:REGIS:AD:E
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B19
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215
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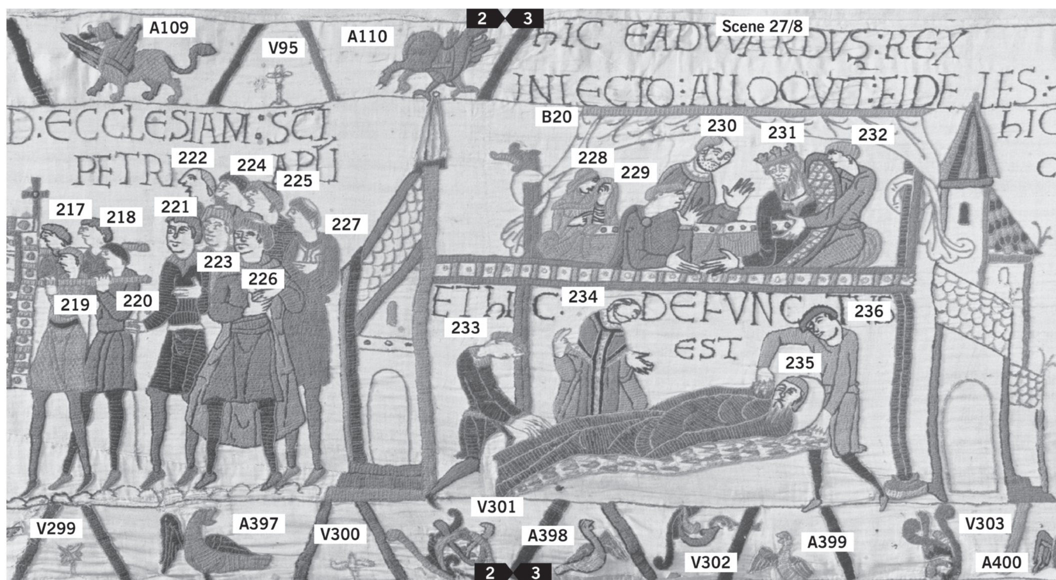
V295
A393
V296
A394
V297
A395
V298
A396
V299


Scene 27/8
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A109
V95
A110
HIC EADWARDVS:REX
IN LECTO:ALLOQVIT:FIDE LES:-
D:ECCLESIAM:SCI
PETRI APLI
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232
ET HIC DEFVNCTVS
EST
233
234
235
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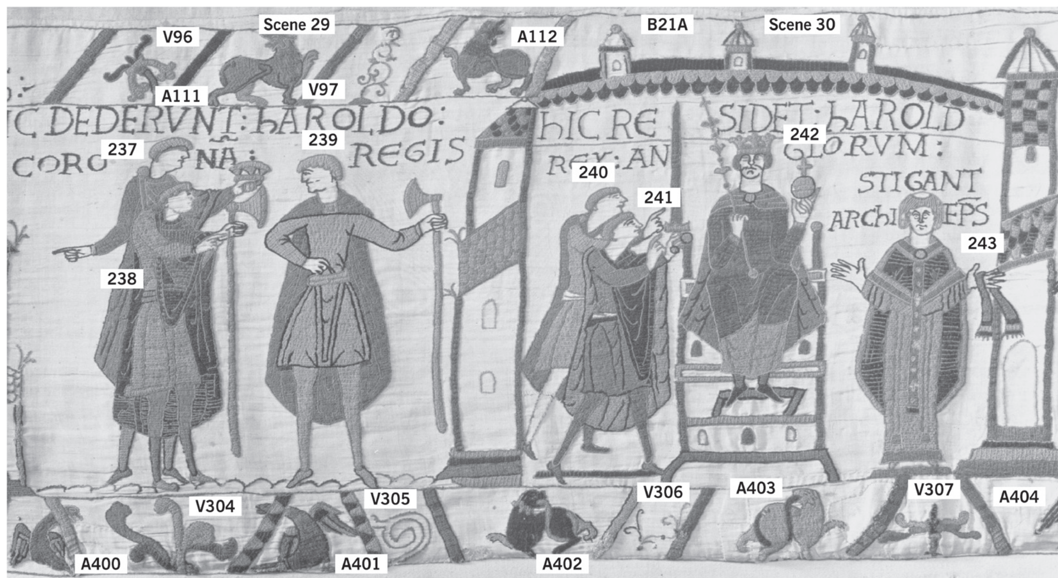
V299
A397
V300
V301
A398
V302
A399
V303
A400


V96
Scene 29
A112
B21A
Scene 30
A111
V97
HIC DEDERVNT: HAROLDO:
CORONA: REGIS
HIC RESIDET: HAROLD
REX: ANGLORVM:
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241
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V304
V305
V306
A403
V307
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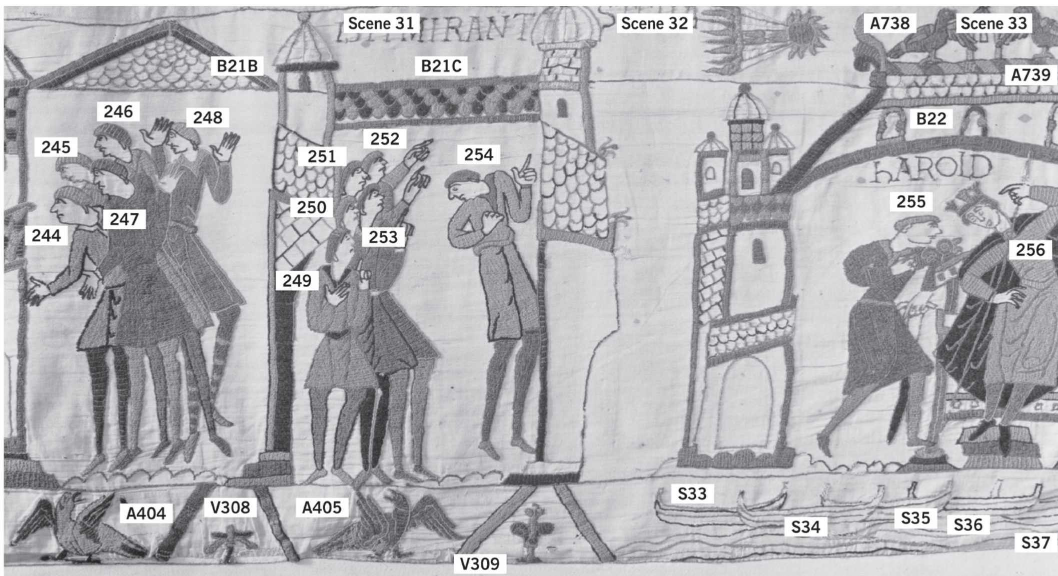
A401
A402


Scene 31
ISTI MIRANT
Scene 32
A738
Scene 33
B21B
B21C
A739
B22
HAROLD
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255
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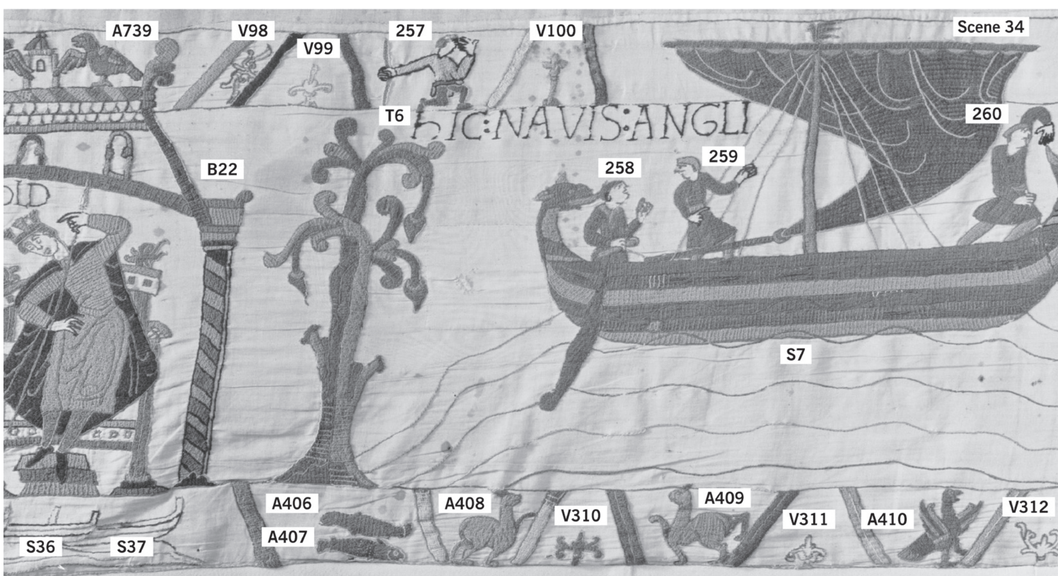
249
S33
S34
S35
S36
S37
A404
V308
A405
V309


A739
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V99
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V100
Scene 34
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HIC NAVIS ANGLI
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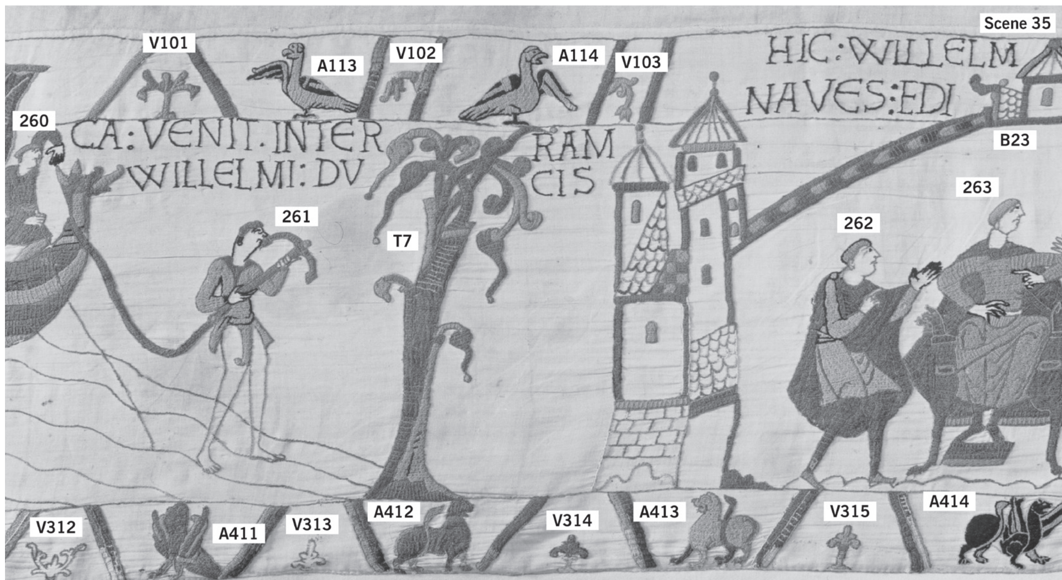
A406
A407
A408
V310
A409
V311
A410
V312
S36
S37



Scene 35
V101
A113
V102
A114
V103
HIC:WILLELM
NAVES:EDI
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CA:VENIT.INTER
WILLELMI:DU
RAM
CIS
261
T7
B23
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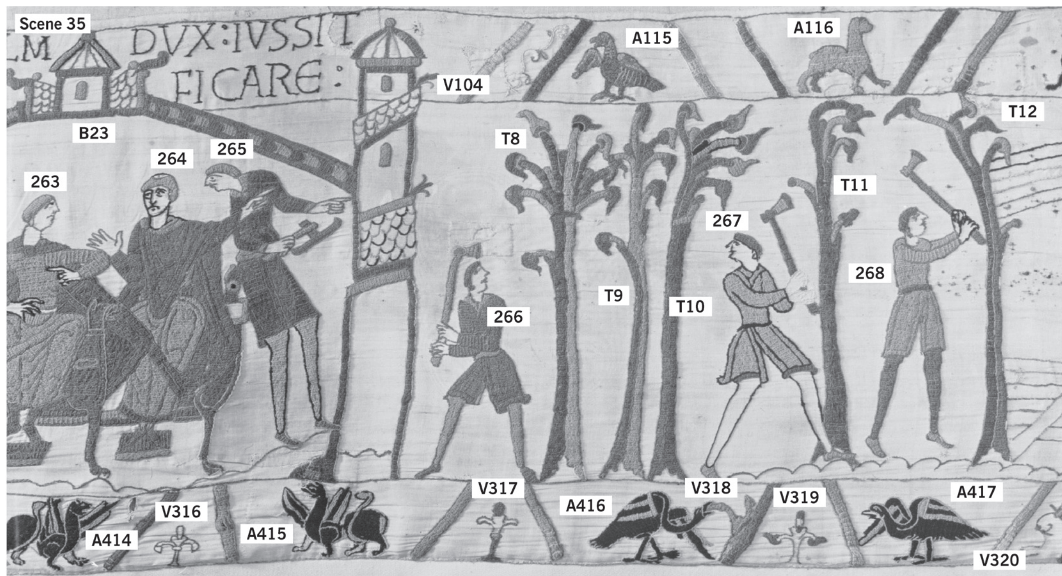
262
V312
A411
V313
A412
V314
A413
V315
A414



Scene 35
LM
DUX:IUSSIT
FICARE:
V104
A115
A116
T12
B23
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T8
T11
267
268
T9
T10
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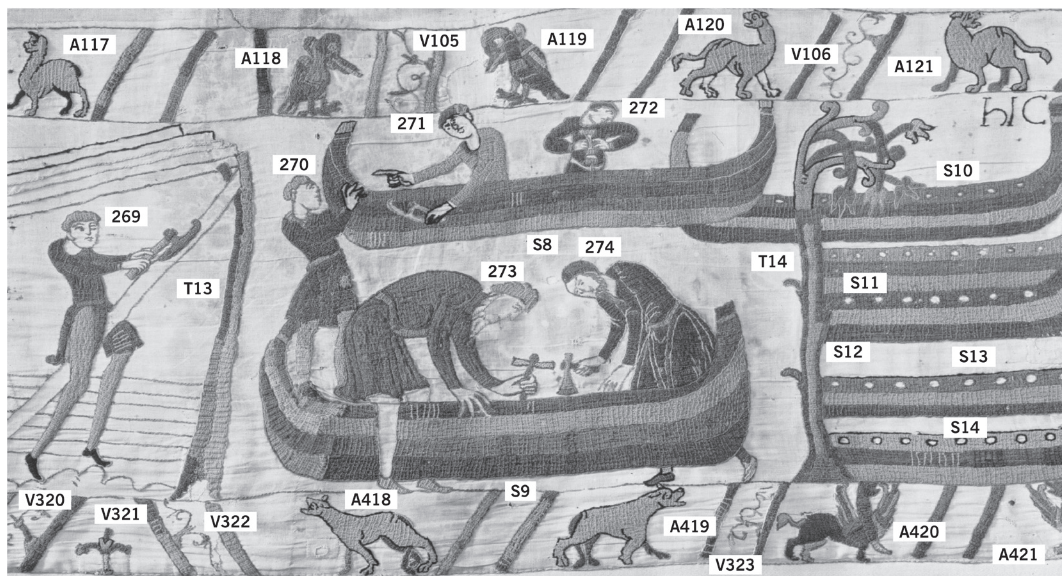
V317
A416
V318
V319
A417
A414
V316
A415
V320



A117
A118
V105
A119
A120
V106
A121
HIC
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272
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S10
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S8
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273
T14
S11
T13
S12
S13
S14
V320
V321
V322
A418
S9
A419
V323
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A421

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V107
Scene 36
V108
A124
A122
A123
HIC TRAHVNT:NAVES:ADMA RE:-
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S11
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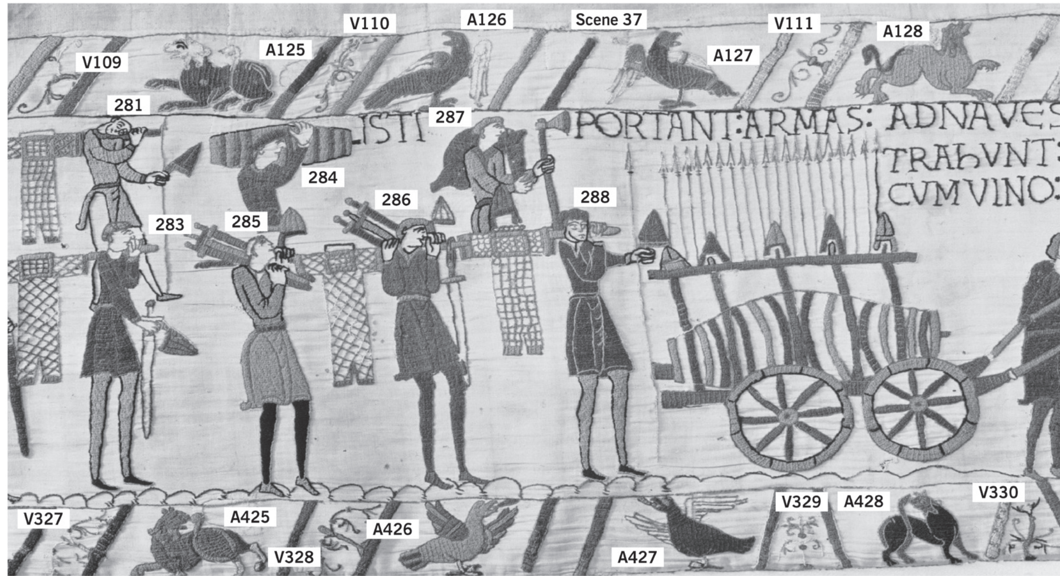
277
S12
B24
282
S13
275
S14
A421
A422
A423
V326
A424
V324
V325



V110
A126
Scene 37
V111
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V109
A125
A127
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PORTANT:ARMAS: ADNAVES
TRAHVNT:
CVMVINO:
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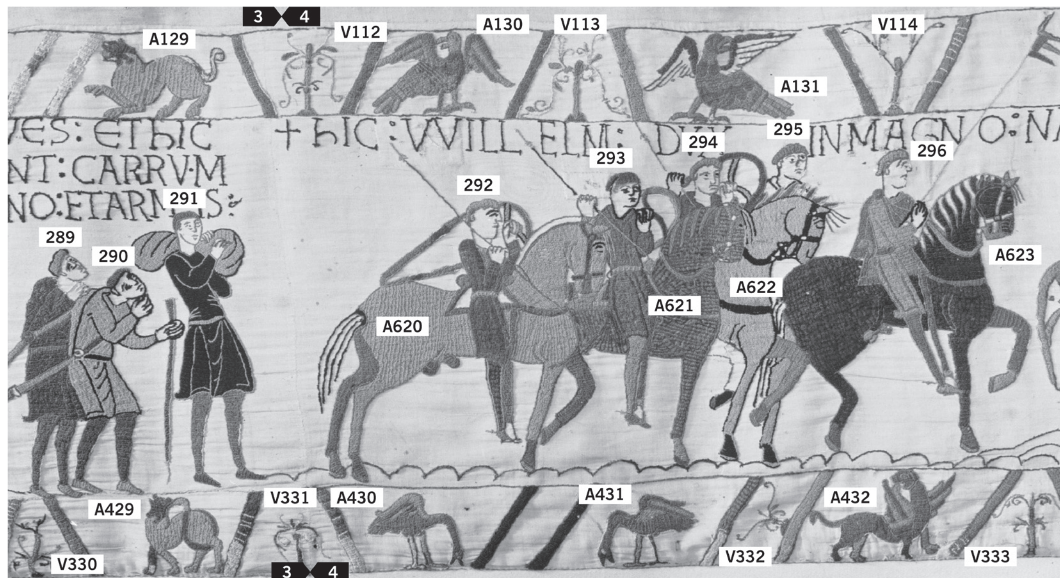
V327
A425
A426
V328
V329
A428
V330
A427



3 4
A129
V112
A130
V113
V114
A131
VES: ETHIC
NT:CARRVM
NO:ETARM S:
+HIC:VVILL ELM: DV
INMAGN O:NA
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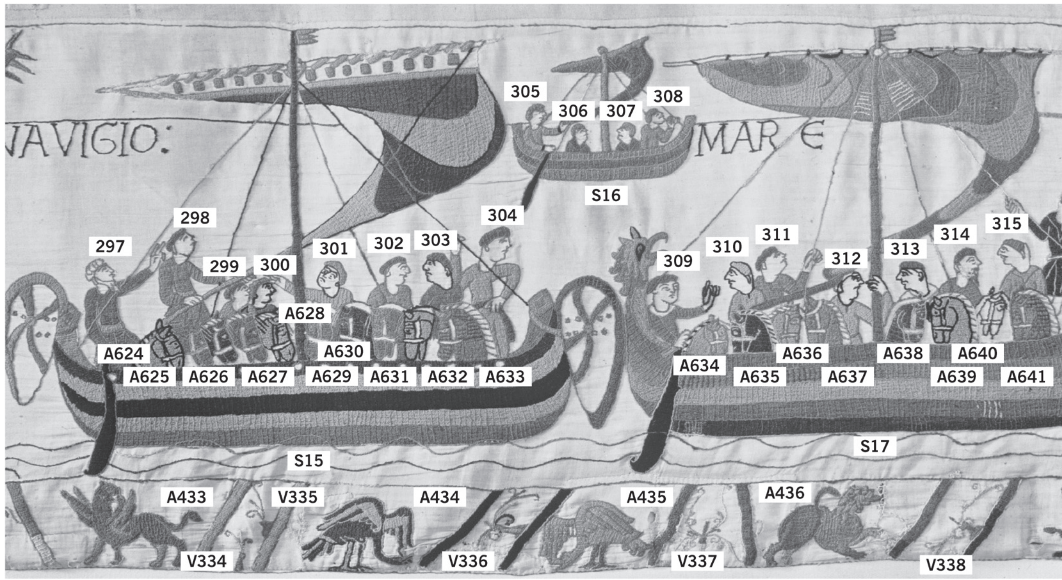
A623
A620
A621
A622
A429
V331
A430
A431
A432
V330
V332
V333
3 4


NAVIGIO:
MAR E
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S16
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A624
A630
A634
A636
A638
A640
A625
A626
A627
A629
A631
A632
A633
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S17
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A435
A436
V334
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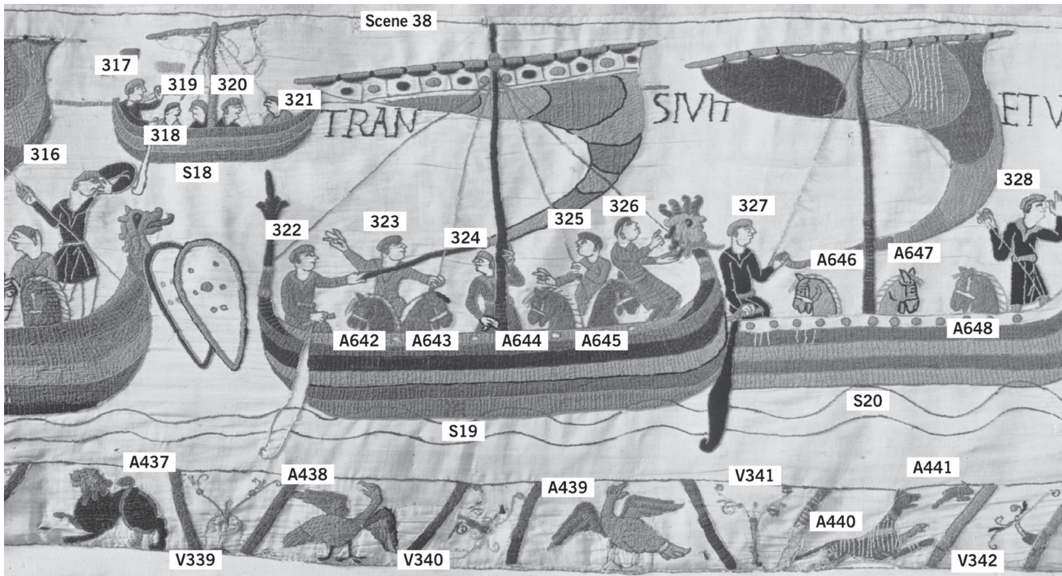
V338


Scene 38
317
319
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318
S18
316
TRAN
SIVIT
ETV
322
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324
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328
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A643
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A648
S20
S19
A437
A438
A439
V341
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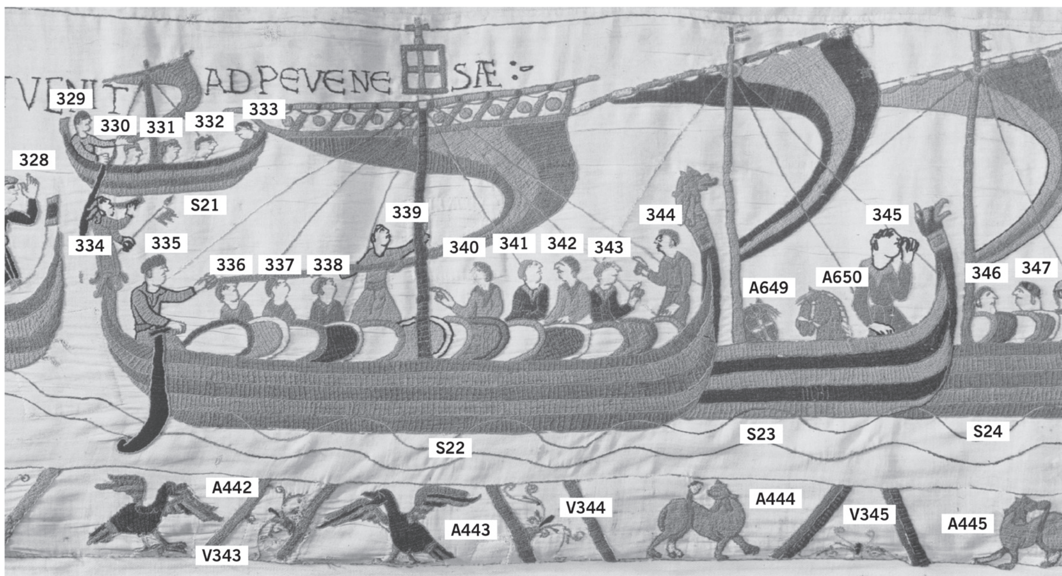
A440
V339
V340
V342


VENIT
AD PEVENE SÆ:-
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S21
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A649
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S22
S23
S24
A442
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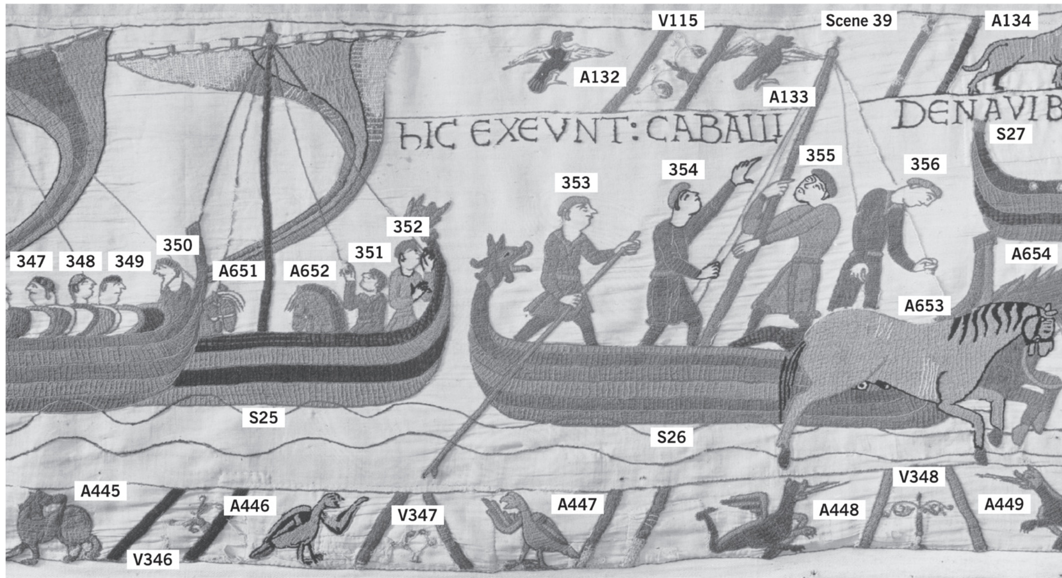
V345
A445


V115
Scene 39
A134
A132
A133
HIC EXEVNT: CABALLI
DENAVIB
S27
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A651
A652
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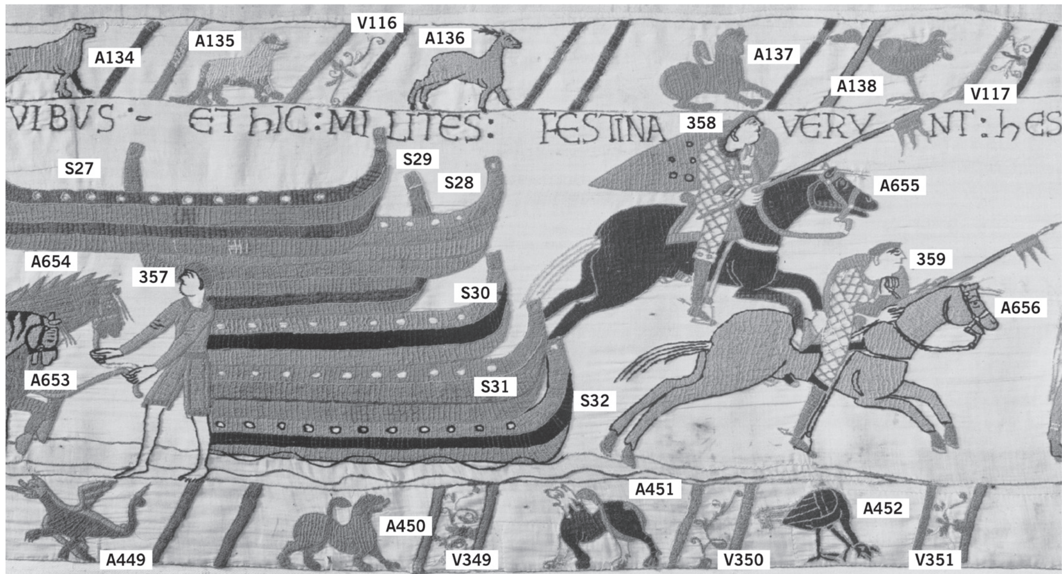
A654
A653
S25
S26
A445
A446
V347
A447
V348
A448
A449
V346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A134
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A136
A137
A138
V117
VIBVS - ET HIC: MILITES: FESTINA VERVNT: HES
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S27
S29
S28
A655
A654
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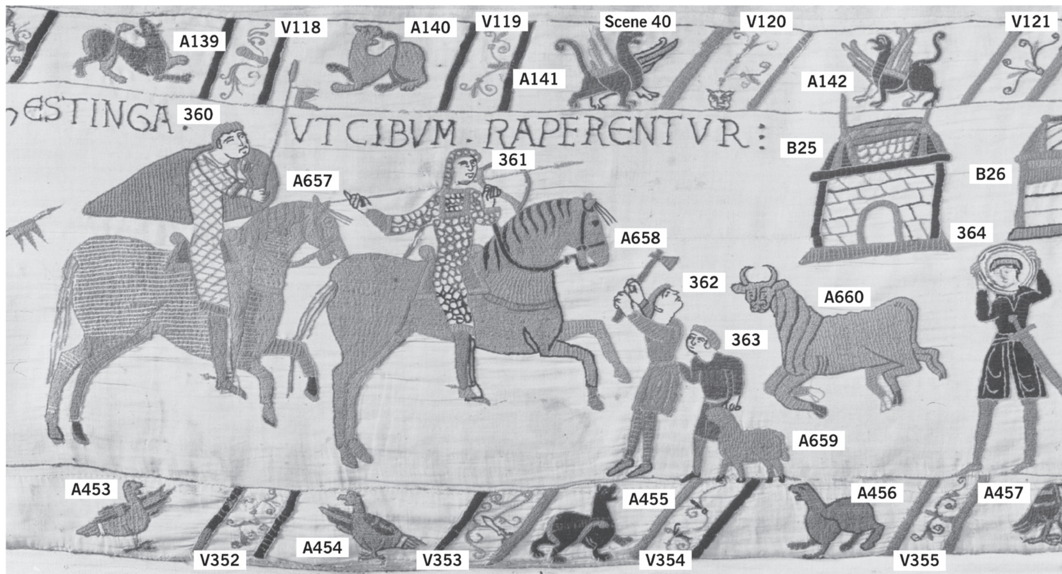
S30
A656
A653
S31
S32
A451
A452
A449
A450
V349
V350
V351


A139
V118
A140
V119
Scene 40
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V121
A141
A142
ESTINGA:
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VT CIBVM . RAPERENTVR:
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A454
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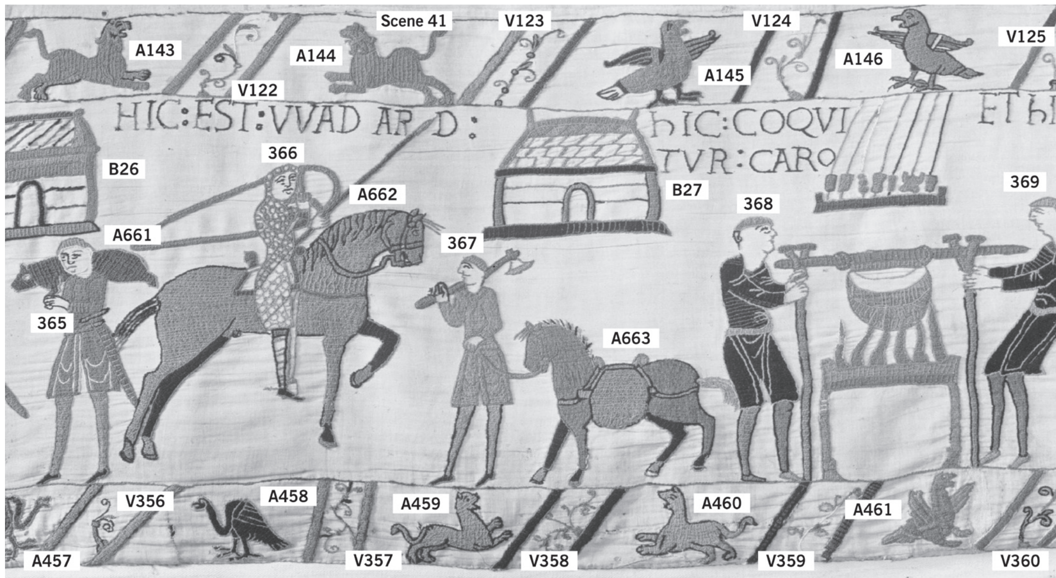
V355


Scene 41
A143
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V122
V123
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A145
A146
V125
HIC:EST:VVAD AR D:
hIC:COQVI TVR:CARO
ET hIC
B26
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A662
A661
B27
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A663
V356
A458
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A461
A457
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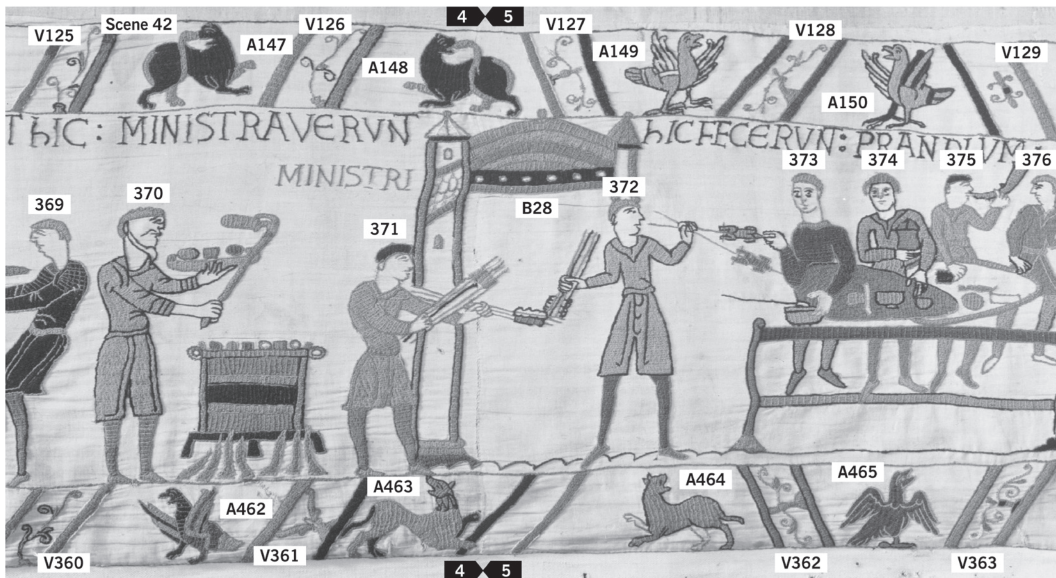
V358
V359
V360


V125
Scene 42
A147
V126
4 5
V127
A149
V128
V129
A148
A150
T hIC: MINISTRAVERVN
MINISTRI
hIC FECERVN: PRANDIVM
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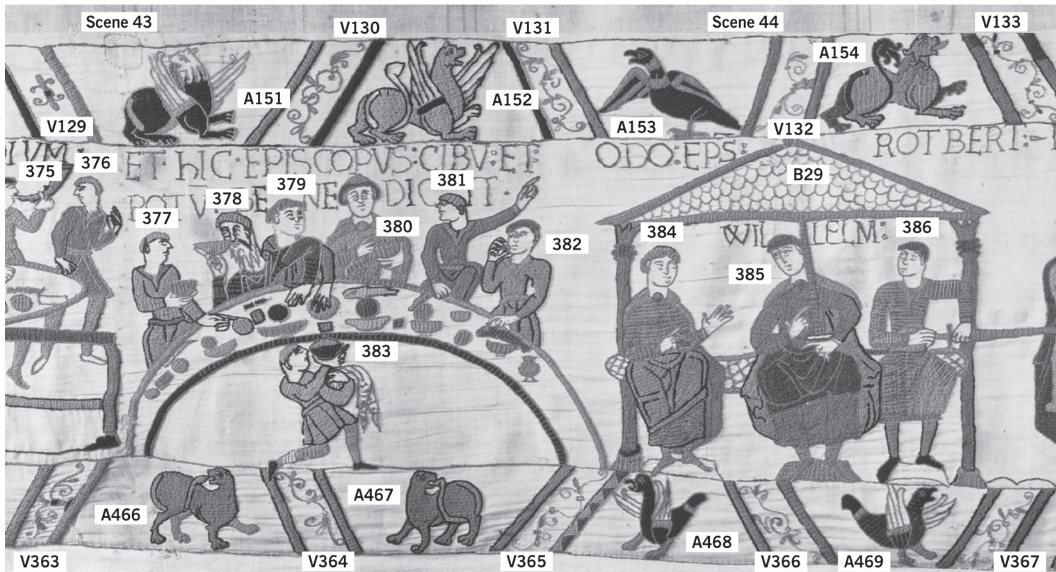
372
B28
A462
A463
A464
A465
V360
V361
V362
V363
4 5


Scene 43
V130
V131
Scene 44
V133
A154
A151
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A153
V129
V132
ET hIC EPISCOPVS:CIBV:ET POTV:BENEDICIT
ODO:EPS:
ROTBERT
WILLELM:
B29
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A466
A467
A468
A469
V363
V364
V365
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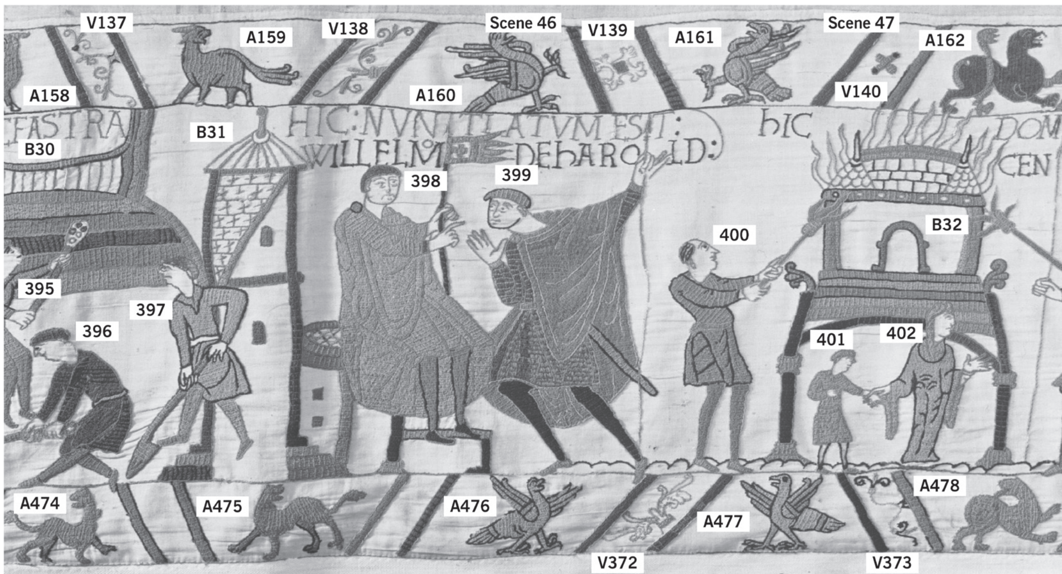
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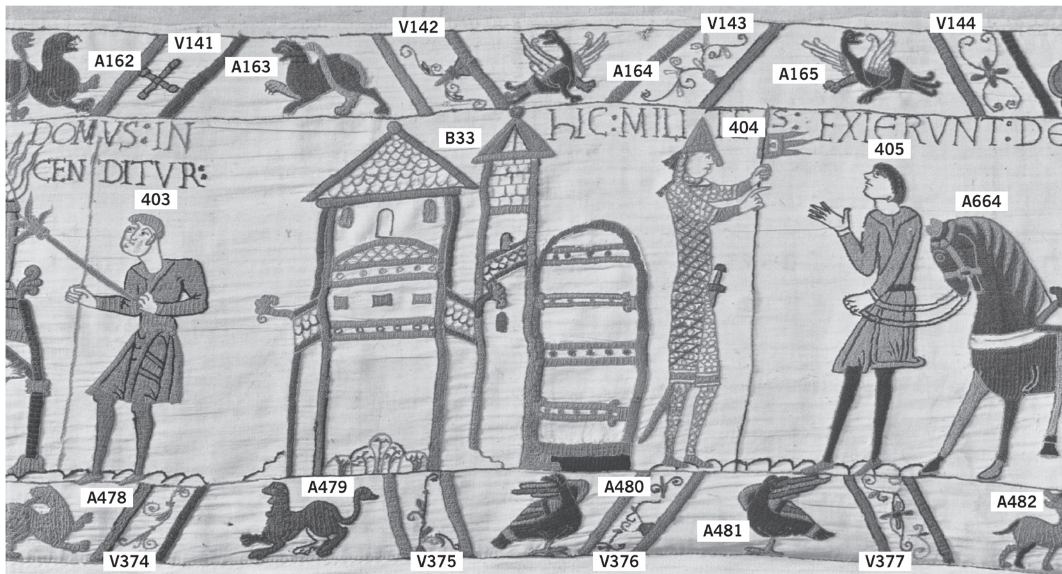
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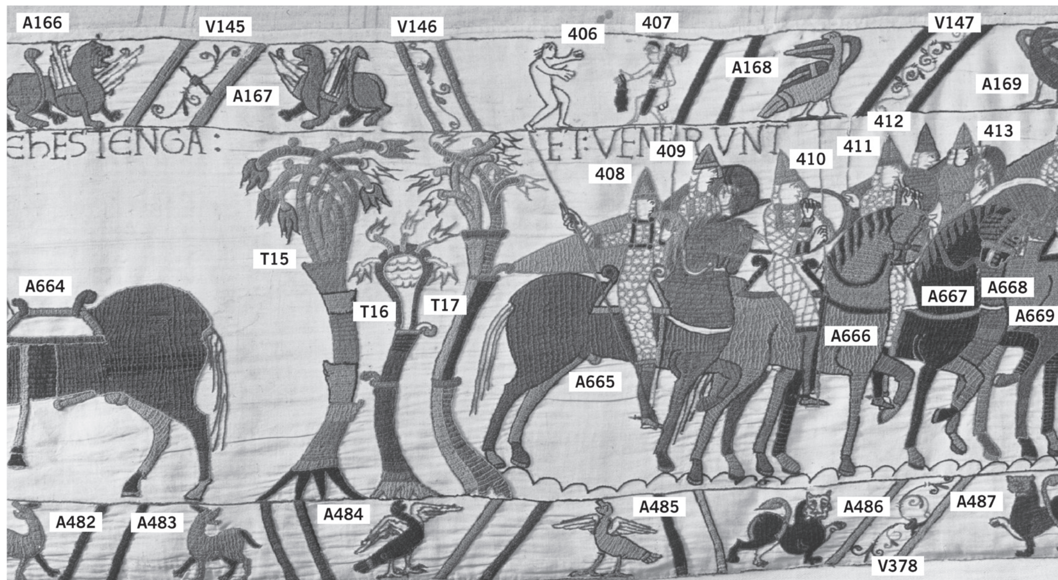
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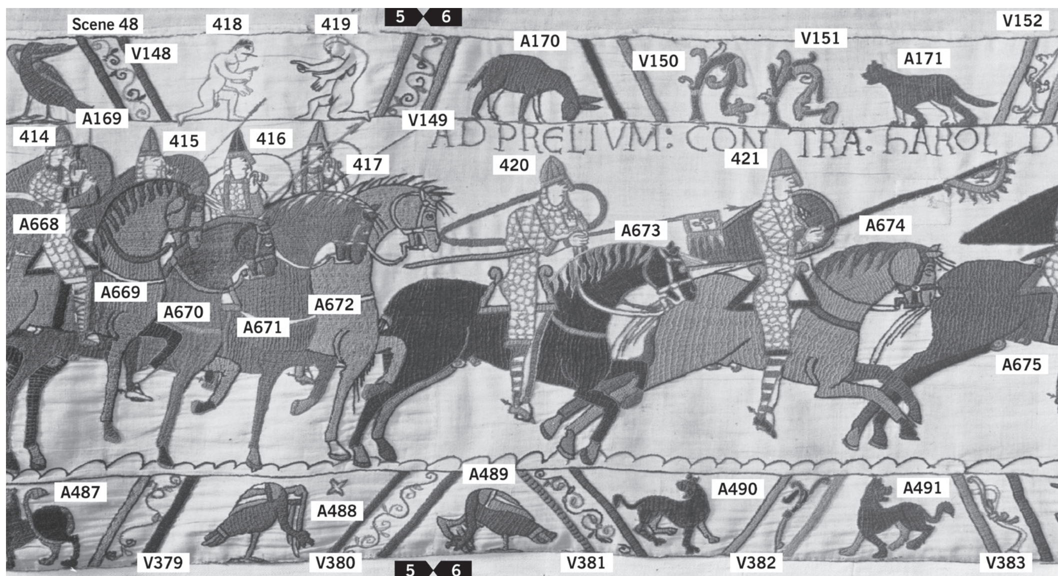
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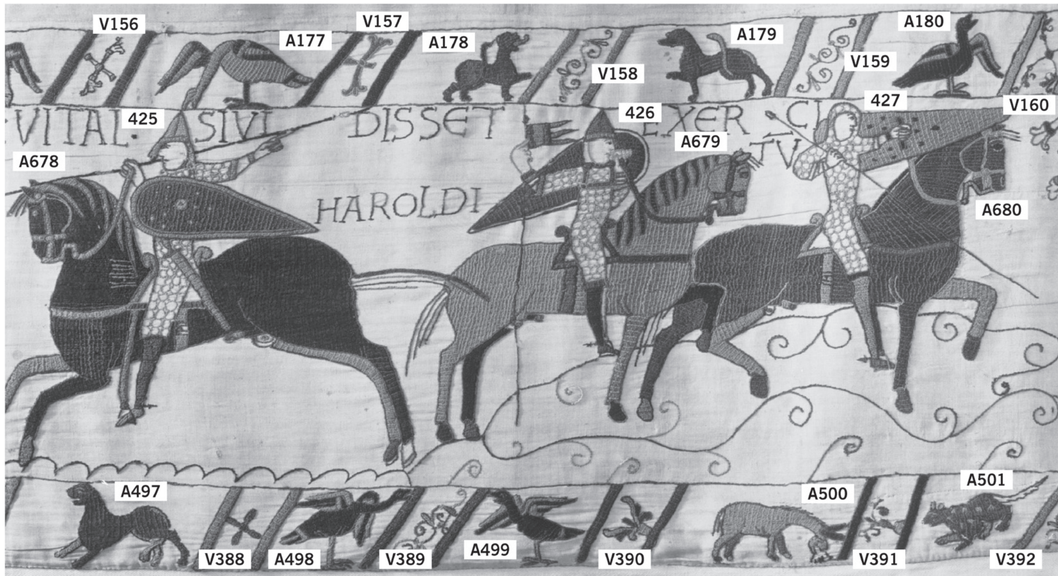
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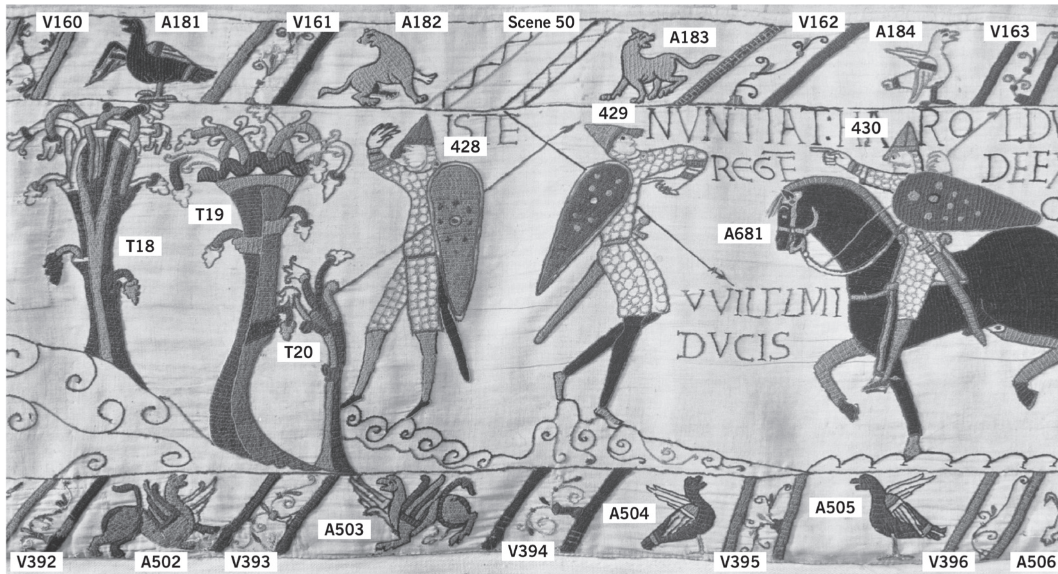
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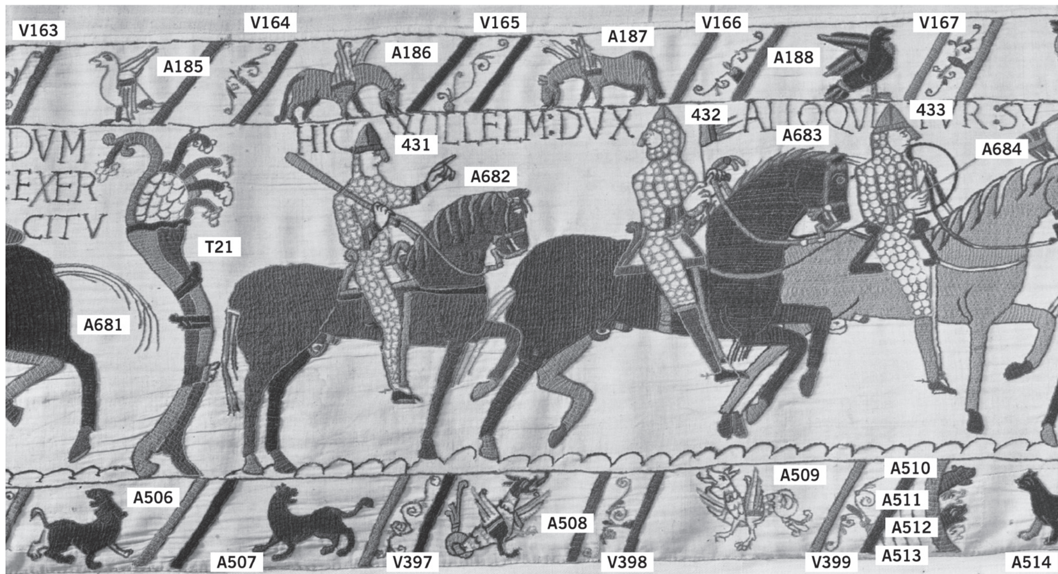
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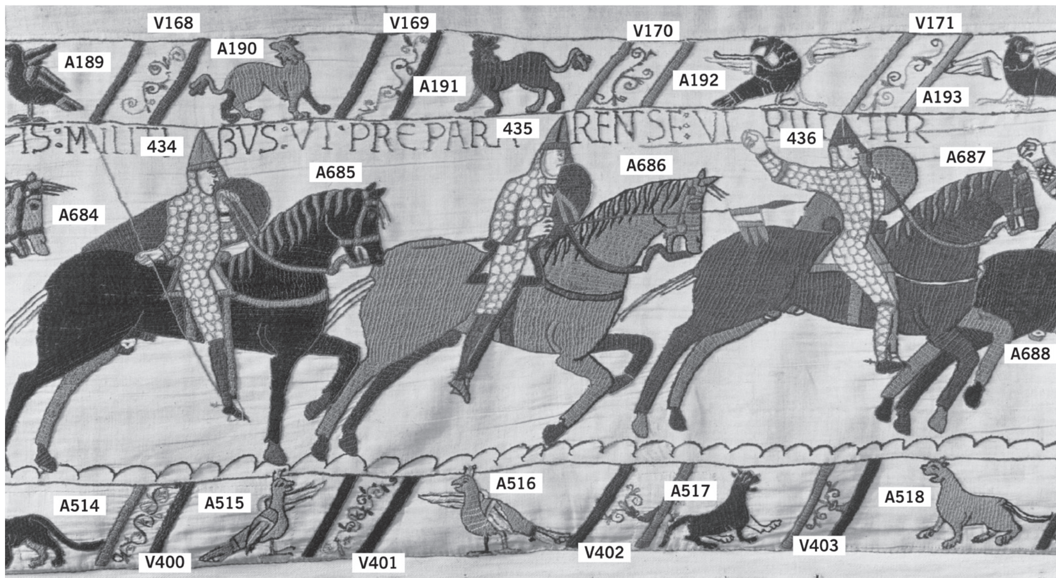
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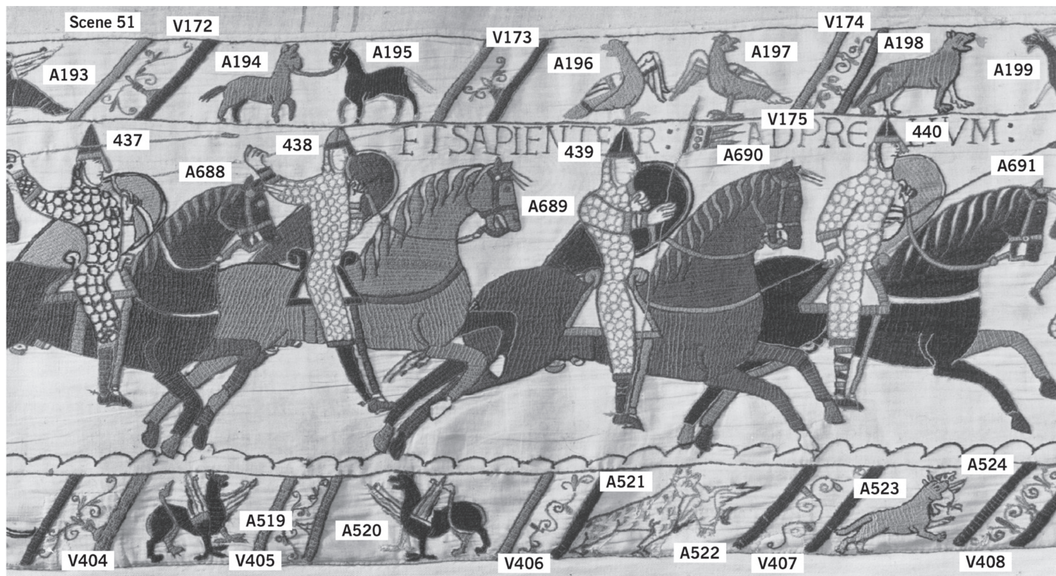
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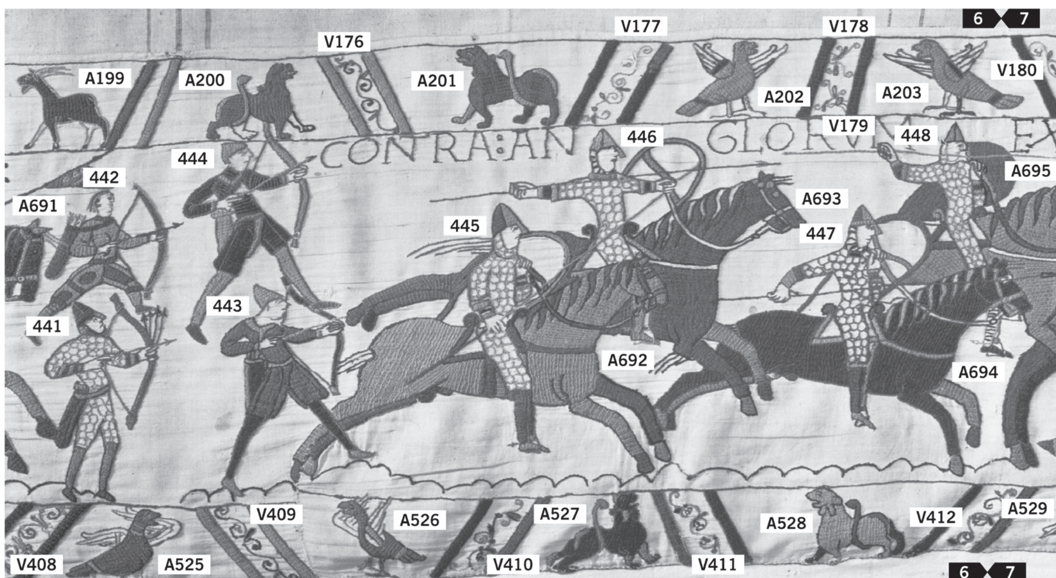
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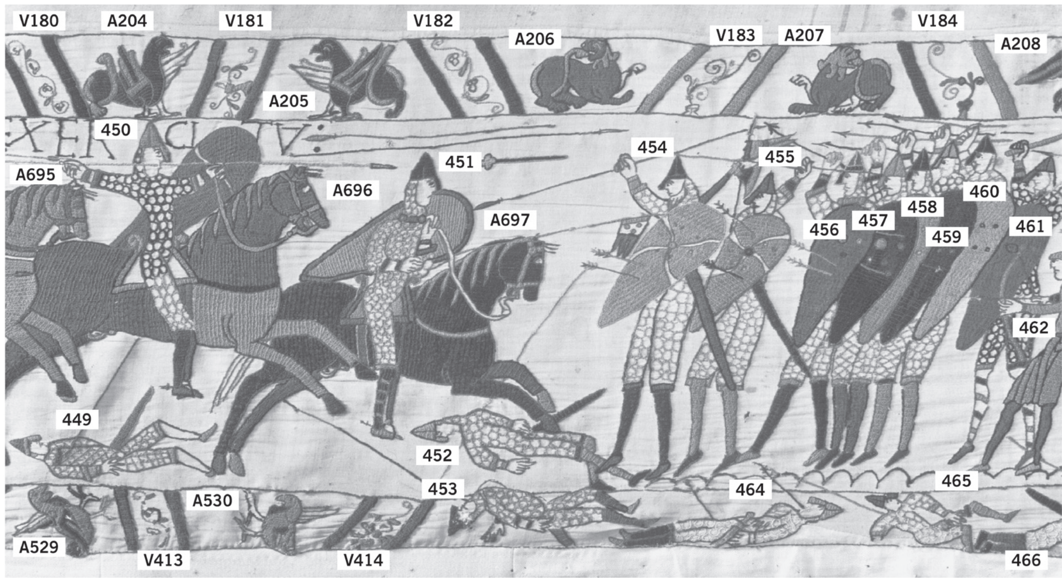
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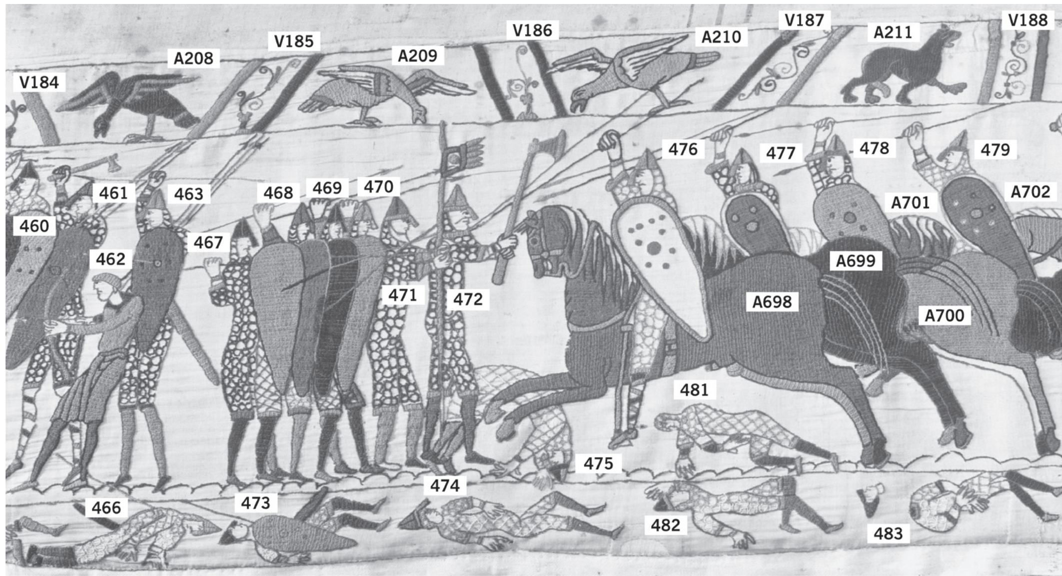
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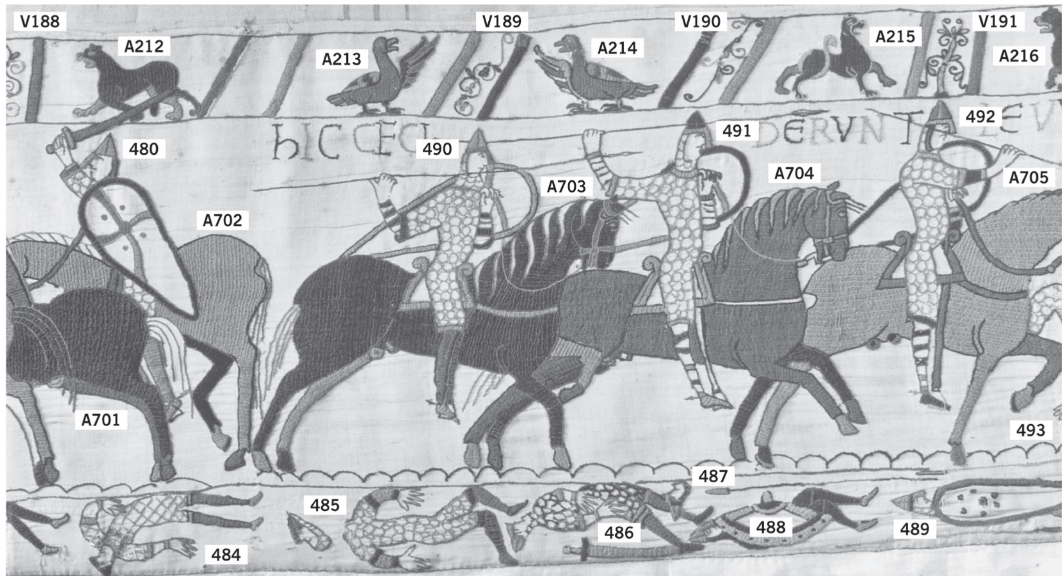
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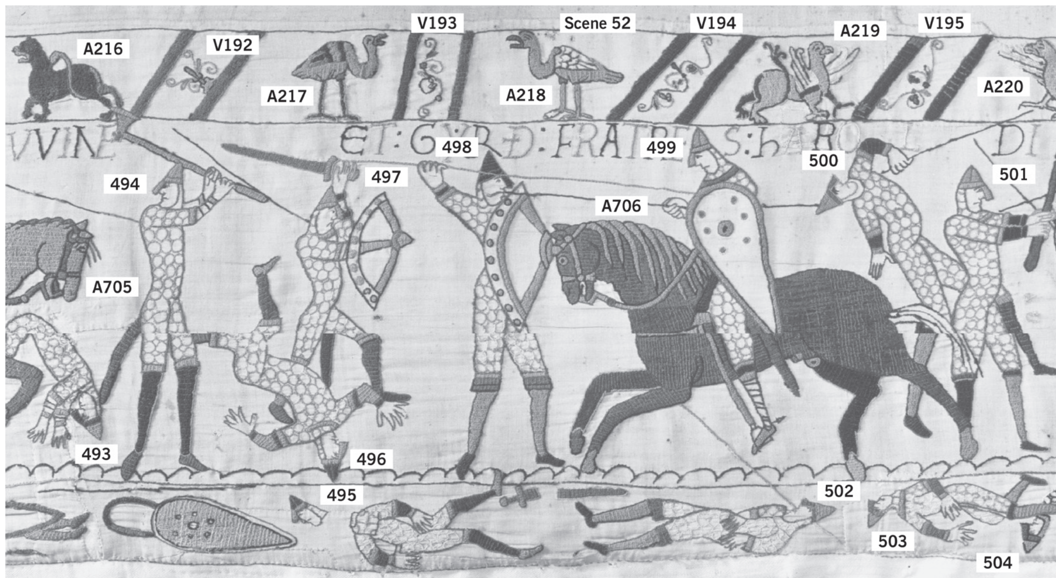
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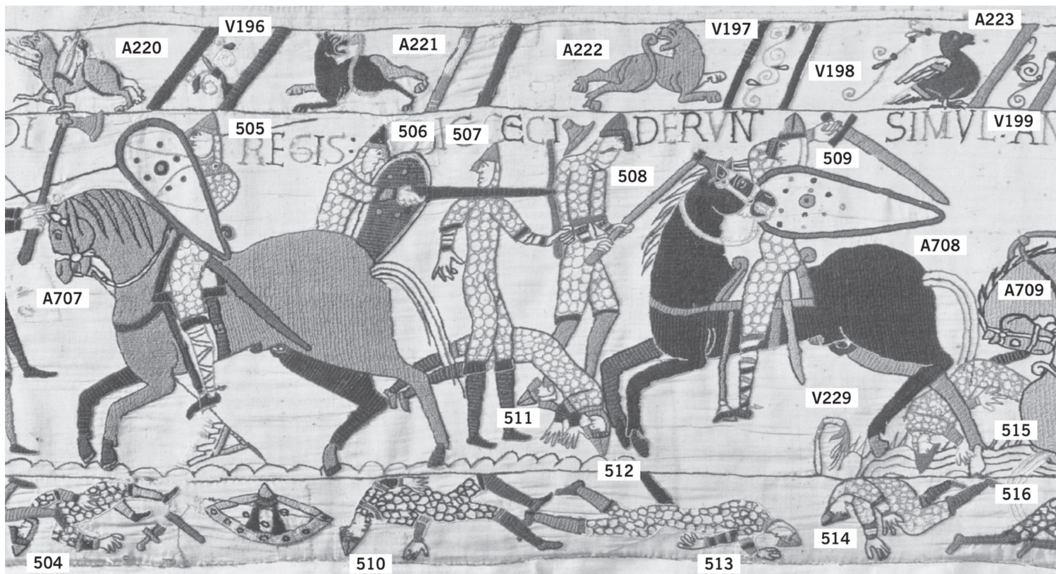
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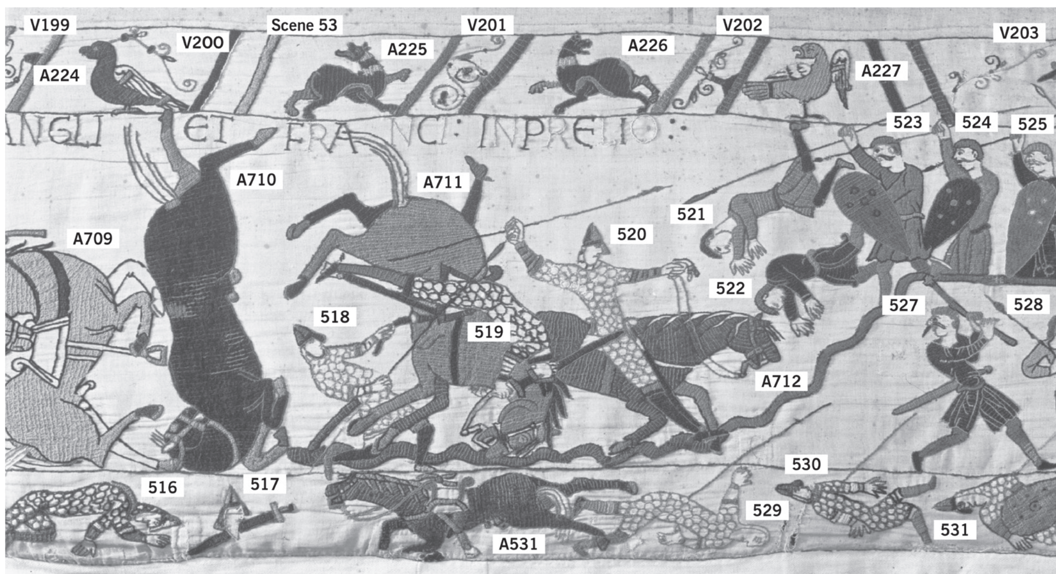
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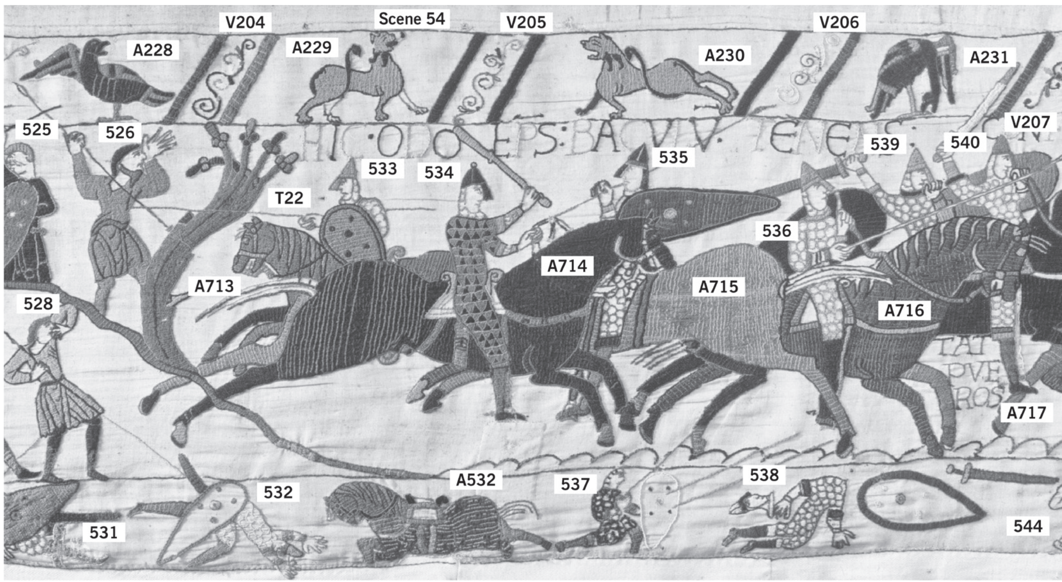

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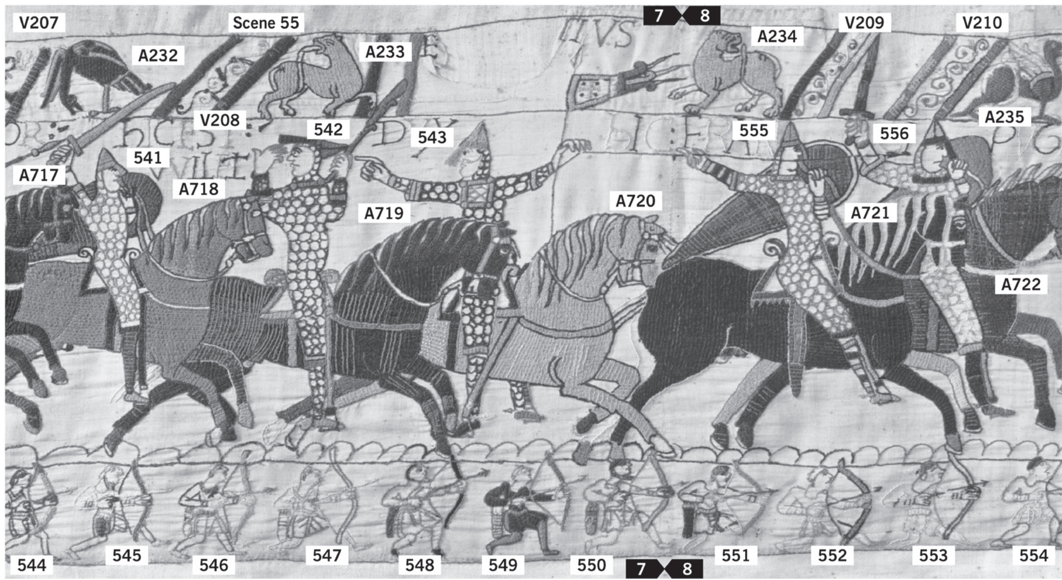

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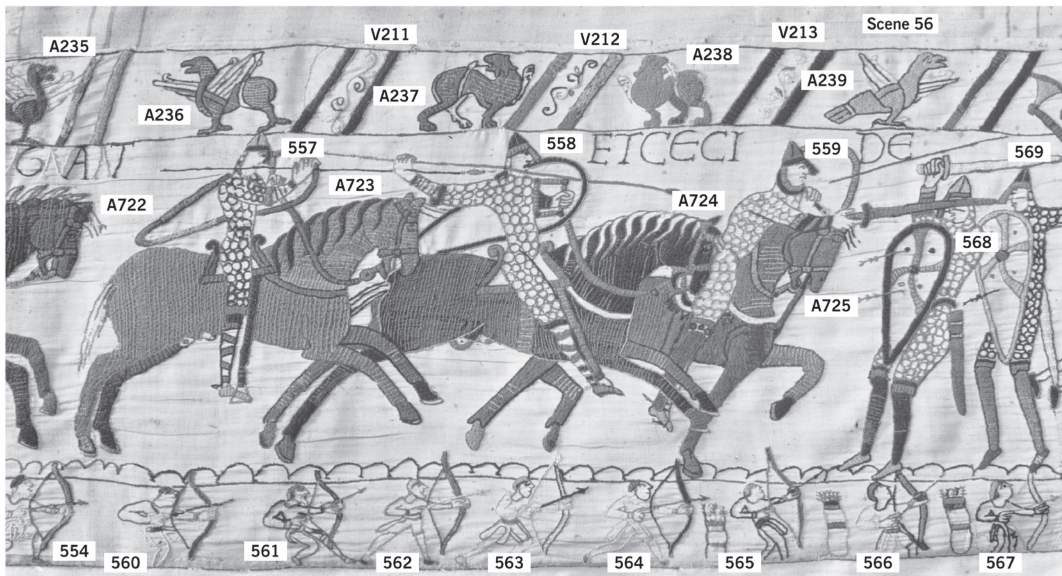

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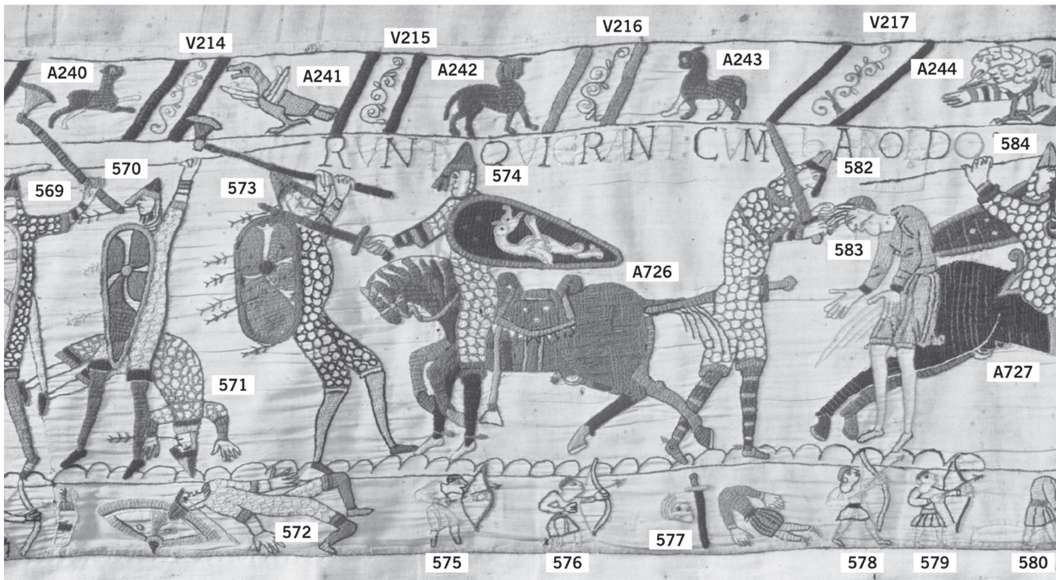
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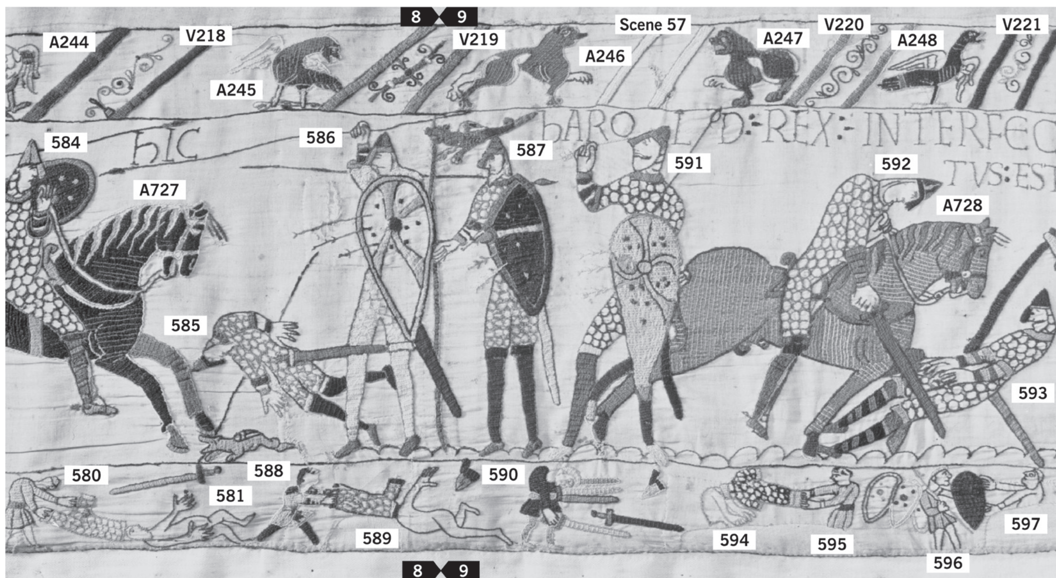
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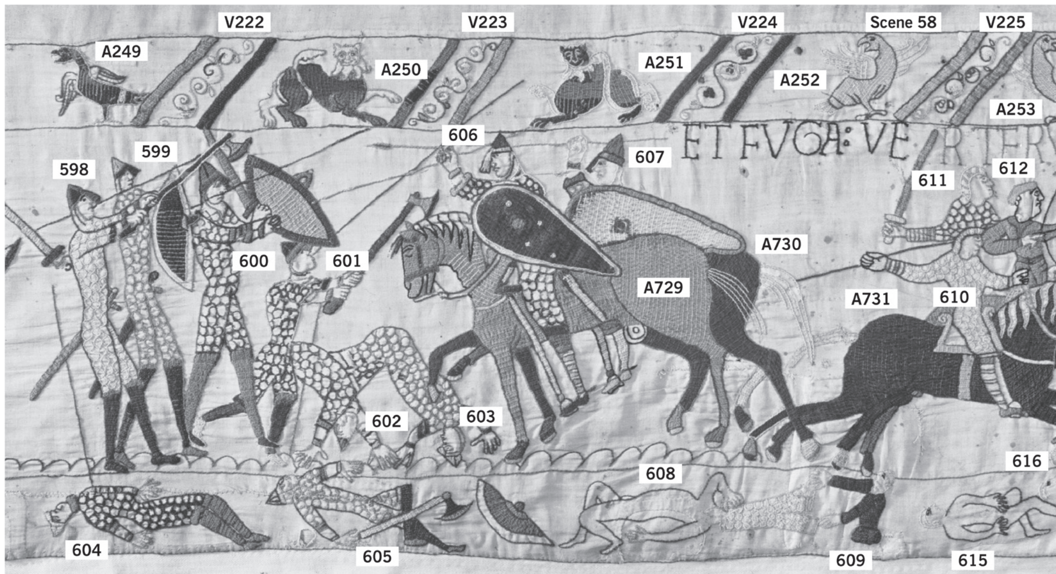
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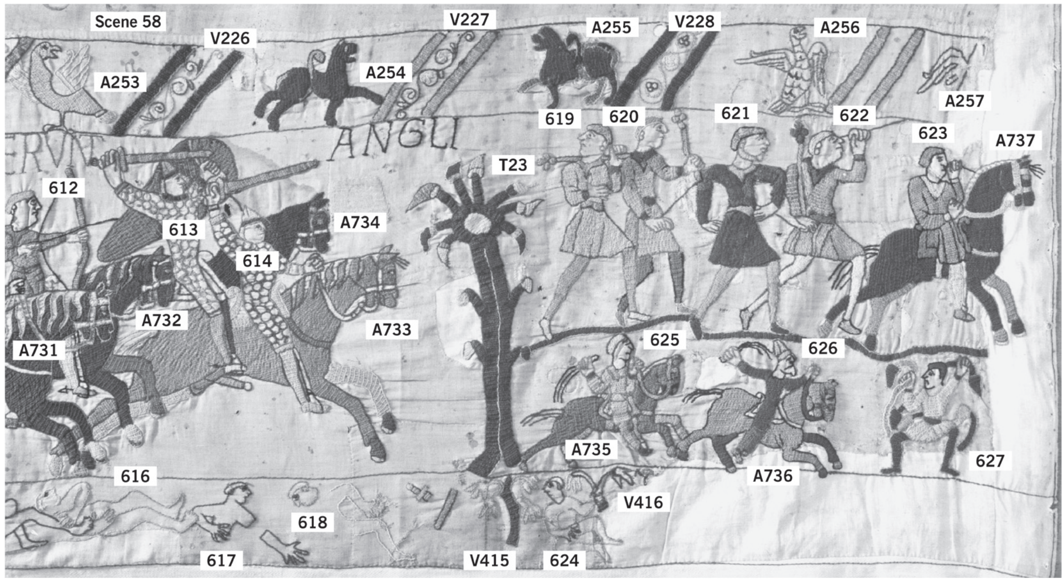
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