

THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY AND THE APPEARANCE OF HALLEY'S COMET IN 1066 AD. A. A. Mardon & E. G. Mardon, Antarctic Institute of Canada, PO Box 1223, MPO, Edmonton, AB, CANADA. mardon@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

The observation of the 1066 comet is recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Worcester Manuscript). This comet is pictured in the Bayeux Tapestry. Who, whom and where the creators embroidered roll of linen is not known. This unique artifact is preserved in the museum at Bayeux, Normandy, France. At the time of the Norman conquest, Odo, who was a half brother of Duke William of Normandy, was the bishop of Bayeux. Legend has it that the project was commissioned by Queen Mathilda, wife of William the Conqueror and the weavers were ladies of the court. The Bayeux Tapestry is a 230 feet long and 20 inches wide roll of linen. It has needlework and is divided into 72 panels. It is filled with vivid, detailed depiction of the Norman Conquest. It is secular in content. It is a unique pictorial historical record of political events as well as the appearance of Halley's comet in the spring, April, 1066. The 11th century workers used seven colors of thread for the embroidery: dark blue, light blue, red, yellow, a light brownish yellow (buff), dark green and light green. This colored stitch work linen roll in its present state depicts 623 persons, 202 horses and mules, 55 dogs, 505 other animals, 37 buildings, 41 boats and ships and 49 trees. The upper and lower borders are decorated with a series of animals, some of which are real, others imaginary. The end portion may have been destroyed. In its present state it appears unfinished. The depiction of the comet in panel 32 is unique. It is a colored representation. Beside the comet in Latin are the words: "ISTIMIRANT STELLA." Translation: (They marveled at the star). Beside the comet in the panel is a crowd of people marveling in fearful wonder at the 'long-haired' star.