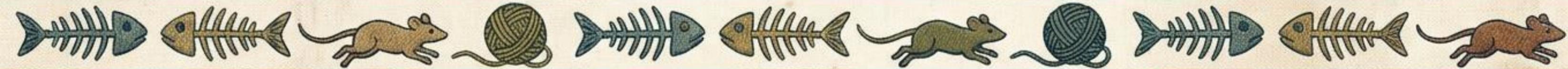


The Meow-eux Tapestry: A Tale of Tails, 1066

The true(ish) story of the Norman Conquest, stitched by the victors (who happen to be cats).

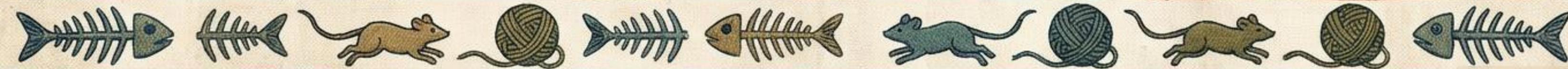


WILLELM DVX ET HAROLD COMES



The Original Artifact

The Bayeux Tapestry is an embroidered cloth nearly 70 meters (230 ft) long depicting the events leading up to the Norman Conquest of England. It is preserved in Bayeux, Normandy, and is a UNESCO 'Memory of the World' artifact.



A Masterpiece of Yarn and History

The Dimensions

This epic is not woven, but **embroidered**—technically making it a terrible scratching post. Measuring nearly 70 meters long and 50 centimeters tall, it was stitched using wool yarn on linen cloth.



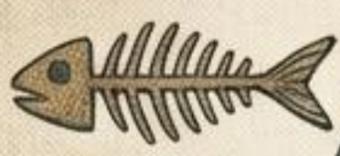
Technical Specs

- * **Technique:** Crewel embroidery (wool yarn) on linen.
- * **Colors:** Terracotta, blue-green, dull gold, olive green, blue (vegetable dyes).
- * **Length:** 68.38 meters (current surviving length).

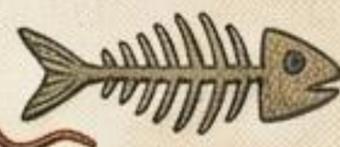
The Survival

Likely commissioned by Bishop Odo (William's half-brother) and stitched by Anglo-Saxon needleworkers, it has survived 900 years, avoiding the sack of Bayeux and even the French Revolution (where it was almost used as a wagon cover).





The Old King Speaks



EDWARD·REX VBI HAROLD DVX ANGLORVM

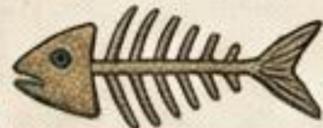
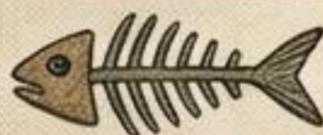


King Edward the Confessor, old and without kittens of his own, summons the powerful Earl Harold God-whisker-son. "Go to Normandy," Edward purrs. "Tell Duke William the throne is his. Also, bring back some of that excellent French soft cheese."



Historical Context

The tapestry narrative begins in 1064. Edward sends Harold to Normandy. Later Norman sources claim this was to pledge loyalty to William as heir, though the tapestry itself remains ambiguous about the specific purpose of the trip.





Captured by the Wrong Cat

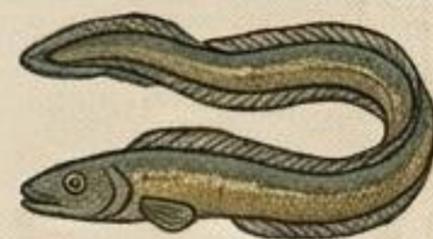


Historical Context

- * Harold lands at the wrong location and is taken prisoner by Guy, Count of Ponthieu.
- * Duke William eventually secures his release, using the situation to place Harold in his debt.



A navigational error—likely caused by a distraction involving a seagull—lands Harold in Ponthieu rather than Normandy. He is promptly captured by Count Guy. Harold is held for ransom, an indignity for a cat of his stature. Messages are hissed back and forth between the territories.





HIC HAROLD TRAHĒBAT EOS DE ARENA

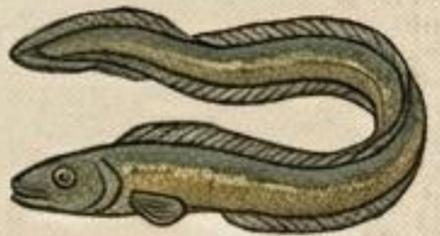


Historical Context

- * The tapestry depicts the campaign against Conan II, Duke of Brittany.
- * The scene of Harold saving men from the quicksand of the river Couesnon is one of the few that portrays Harold as physically heroic.

“The Horror of Wet Paws” in MedievalSharp font

William rescues Harold, and they ride together to fight Conan of Brittany. But near Mont Saint-Michel, the army faces the ultimate feline nightmare: Water and Mud. In a display of immense bravery (or desperation to stay dry), Harold saves two Norman soldiers from the quicksand.



The Sacred Oath (Paws on the Table)



Historical Context

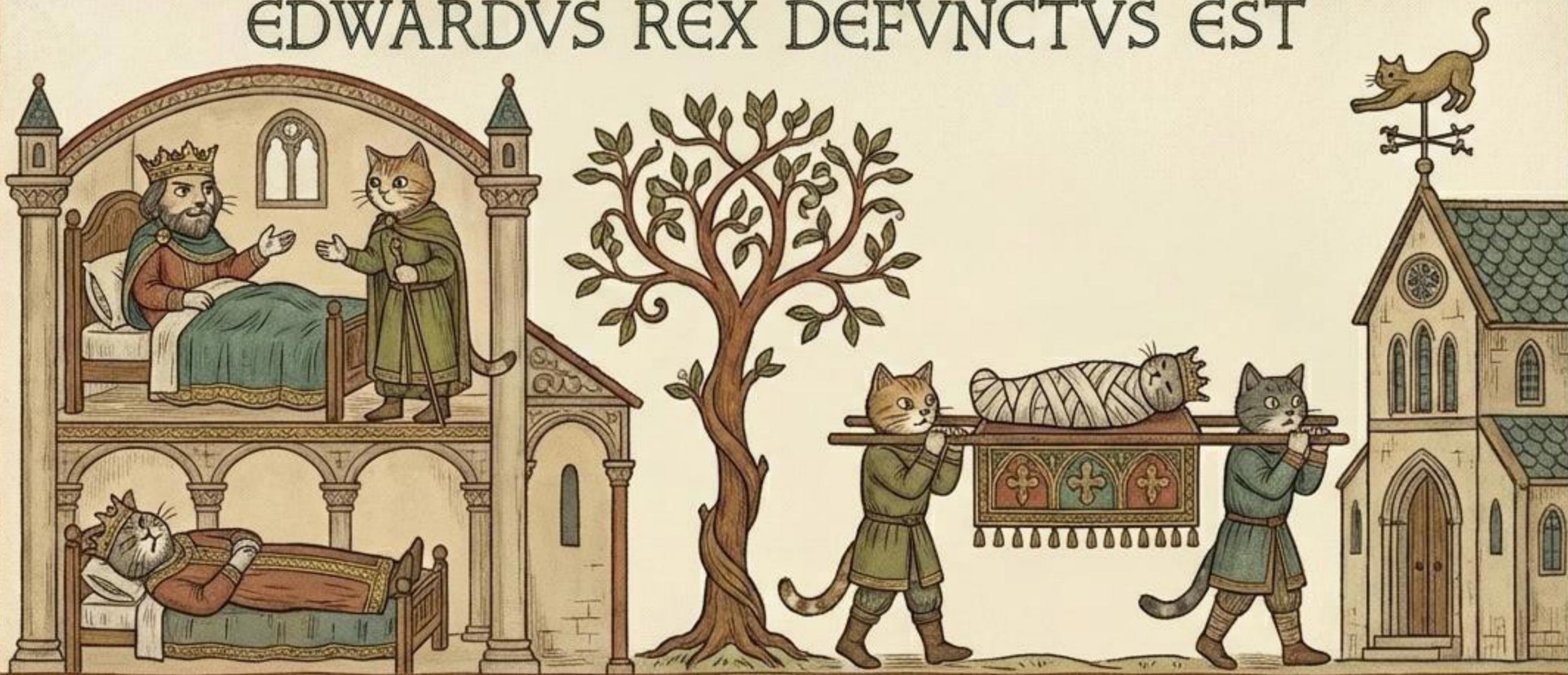
This is the turning point of the Norman claim. Harold swears an oath to William. The tapestry does not explicitly state the terms, but Norman historians insist it was a pledge of succession.

The critical moment: Harold swears a solemn oath on sacred relics.

- The Norman View: He promised William the English crown.
- The English View: He was just trying to get his paws on the shiny reliquary box.



EDWARDVS REX DEFVNCTVS EST

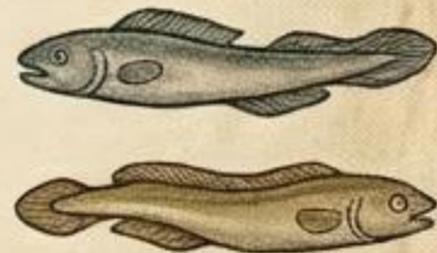


Historical Context

- * The Witenagemot (council) approved Harold's accession.
- * The tapestry shows the funeral procession to the newly consecrated Westminster Abbey.

“The King is Dead (And Buried, Then Dead Again)”

Harold returns to England. King Edward dies on January 5, 1066. In a strange narrative twist common to the tapestry, his burial procession is shown *before* his deathbed scene. He bequeaths the crown to Harold—or perhaps he was just asking for a belly rub.
in EB Garamond.



The Red Dot in the Sky



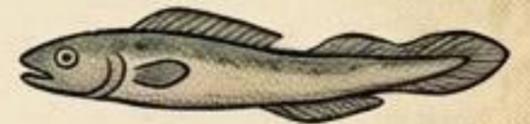
ISTI MIRANT STELLAM
(These men marvel at the star)

Historical Context

This is the first known depiction of Halley's Comet, which appeared in April 1066.

It was widely interpreted as a bad omen for Harold's reign.

Harold is crowned! But the celebration is cut short. A "hairy star" appears—Halley's Comet. To the anthropomorphic cats of 1066, this giant ball of yarn in the sky can only mean one thing: Disaster.



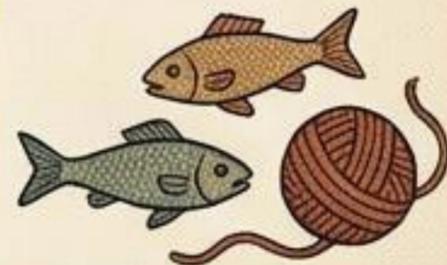
A Thousand Ships (and Scratching Posts)

Furious at the broken oath, William orders a massive invasion fleet. We see the cats felling trees (which they usually just climb) and shaping planks. Bishop Odo directs the logistics, likely because clerics weren't supposed to fight... but they could definitely manage supply chains.



Historical Context

The Normans built a fleet from scratch. The tapestry shows the felling of trees, the shaping of prows, and the loading of supplies, including wine casks and chainmail.



The Great Crossing and The First Supper

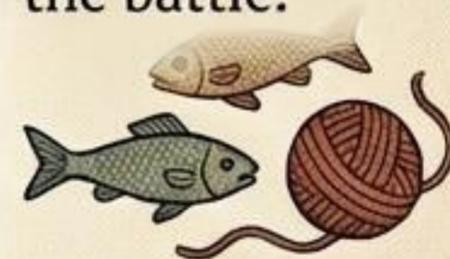


ET HIC EPISCOPVS CIBVM
ET POTVM BENEDICIT

Historical Context

The Normans landed at Pevensey on September 28, 1066. The tapestry devotes significant space to the logistics of the landing and the foraging for food before the battle.

The fleet crosses the Channel. The horses look seasick; the cats look eager to be on dry land. Upon arrival, the first order of business is not war, but dinner. A banquet is prepared. Bishop Odo blesses the food and drink (milk and fish).



The Battle of Hiss-tings

October 14, 1066. The English fight on foot, forming an impenetrable wall of shields and locked paws. The Normans charge uphill. It is a chaotic scene of tumbling horses, flying spears, and hissing warriors.



Historical Context

The English fought in a shield wall formation atop Senlac Hill. The Normans used a combination of archers, infantry, and heavy cavalry to try and break the line.



'I Live! And I Have Treats!'



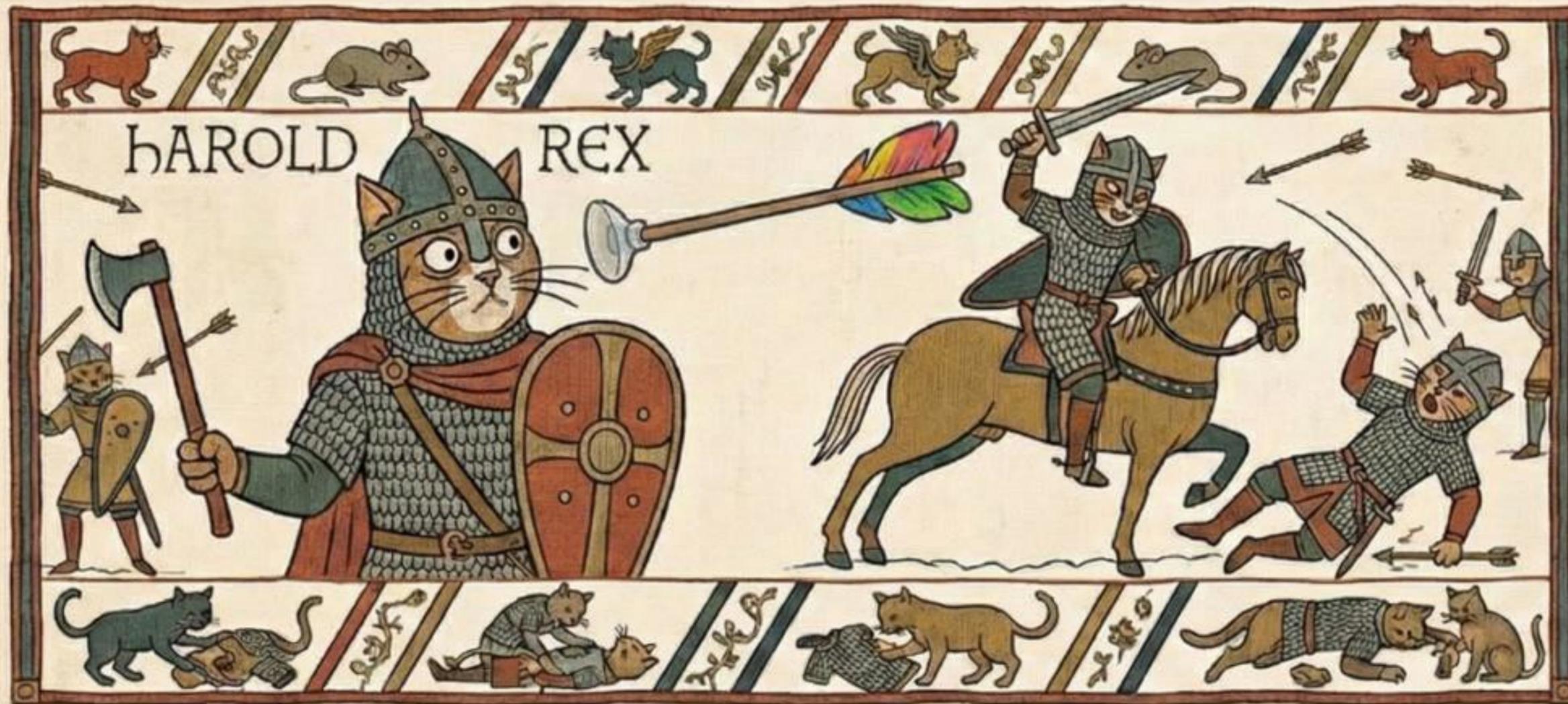
Rumor spreads that William has fallen. Panic ensues! Bishop Odo rallies the troops with a mace (because clerics cannot shed blood, but blunt force trauma is apparently acceptable). William lifts his helmet to show he is alive. "Look at me! I am here! Now go get them!"

Historical Context

This was the turning point. Had the Normans routed here, the conquest would have failed. Odo's mace is a specific detail noted by historians as a workaround for the prohibition against clergy carrying swords.

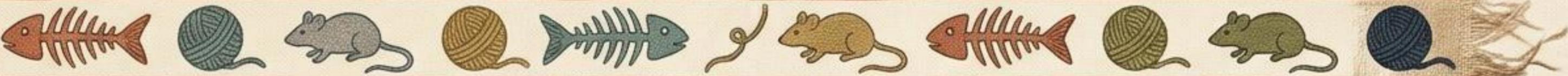
An Arrow to the Eye (or Was It?)

The English line breaks. King Harold is struck. Tradition says he was hit in the eye with an arrow—a divine punishment for the 'perjurer' who broke his oath. (Though some scholars think Harold is actually the cat getting hacked hacked down next to the arrow-guy. The tapestry is confusing that way).



Historical Context

The text *Harold Rex Interfectus Est* spans two figures: one with an arrow in the eye and one being hacked down. Needle holes suggest the arrow may have been a later restoration, but it remains the enduring image of 1066.

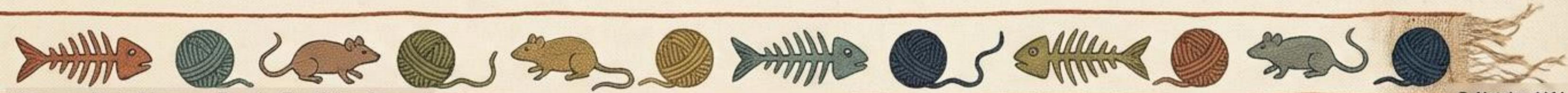


“The English Scamper” in Medieval Sharp



****Historical Context****
The final scenes are lost to history. It is generally assumed the tapestry originally ended with William's coronation in December 1066.

With Harold gone, the English resistance collapses. They turn tail and flee. The tapestry ends abruptly here—the final section is missing. It likely showed William being crowned in London, finally sitting in the biggest box of all: Westminster Abbey.





A Stitch in Time



Credits & Disclaimer

Based on the Wikipedia entry for the Bayeux Tapestry.

No actual 11th-century cats were harmed in the making of this slide deck.

Created by [Your Name/Agency]

The Verdict

Whether commissioned by Odo, Queen Matilda, or a guild of bored felines, the tapestry remains the sole surviving narrative embroidery of the Middle Ages.

Visit the Original

The real (human) tapestry is in Bayeux, Normandy. It returns to England in 2026/27—hopefully, they keep the cats away from it.

