

## XI

# John Collingwood Bruce and his Bayeux Tapestry Facsimile

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### SUMMARY

**J**ohn Collingwood Bruce was a nineteenth-century antiquarian well known for his work on Roman artefacts. He is also the author of a major work on the Bayeux Tapestry, the 70m long embroidery created 1067–70 which depicts the Norman Conquest. Only 4 full-scale reproductions of the Tapestry have ever been made. One is a water-coloured drawing which was the personal copy of Collingwood Bruce, and which he donated to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1884. This facsimile had long been thought to have been lost, but was rediscovered in the early 1990s in the Black Gate Library. An initial account appeared in *Archaeologia Aeliana* in 1997; the present article provides a detailed report on all the extant panels and suggests an important new line of enquiry for Bayeux Tapestry scholarship based on this information.

### INTRODUCTION

Europe has few more spectacular relics from the Middle Ages than the Bayeux Tapestry. Designed and executed within a very short period of time after the Norman Conquest, whose events it portrays, the Tapestry provides both a visual alternative to the written accounts of the events leading up to and during the Conquest and a vital record of eleventh-century life. It is also an important historical artefact in itself, although no record of it exists before the late fifteenth century. This leaves the origins of the 70m long embroidery of wool upon linen open to lively debate. Some of the main questions scholars return to are: where the Bayeux Tapestry was made; who commissioned,

designed and executed it; how long it was when first completed and what the now missing end portion depicted; and finally, where and how it was intended to be displayed.<sup>1</sup>

Whether the Bayeux Tapestry was designed for the cathedral or a seigniorial hall, its length argues for a space large enough to permit an unbroken display. There were few such halls or buildings in the eleventh century, and suitable venues are scarcely more common today. The problems inherent in displaying the 70m of the Bayeux Tapestry have no doubt contributed to there being only six full-scale reproductions. Two of these are only partial: they are (appropriately) the earliest, showing only the opening scenes, and the most recent, a new embroidery which suggests the lost end.<sup>2</sup> The four complete reproductions span the nineteenth century. In 1816 the artist Charles Stothard was sent to Bayeux to make a hand-coloured drawing of the Tapestry for the Society of Antiquaries of London, which he presented along with an accompanying essay discussing its condition and restoration.<sup>3</sup> In 1871–2 the first photographic record was undertaken by E. Dosseter, one full-size set of plates being coloured for the International Exhibition of 1873 (catalogue no. 2897d) and later deposited in the Victoria and Albert Museum.<sup>4</sup> In 1885, thirty-five ladies of the Leek Embroidery Society began an embroidered reproduction of the Tapestry based on the Stothard drawings; after exhibition this was bought for the Borough of Reading, where, in 1927 it was cleaned, divided into sections and framed in twenty-five panels.

One further facsimile of the complete Bayeux Tapestry was made at full size. It belonged to John Collingwood Bruce, secretary of the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries and author

of one of the major nineteenth-century treatises on the Tapestry.<sup>5</sup> In Shirley Ann Brown's 1988 bibliography, Bruce's facsimile is described as follows:

Bruce, Rev. John Collingwood.

In 1853, Bruce displayed a series of full-size coloured drawings of the entire BT at the Archaeological Institute. The reproduction was produced under Bruce's directions from the Stothard plates published by the Society of Antiquaries, aided by inspection of the embroidery itself. The principal artist was a certain Mr Moffat. The current location of this facsimile, if still existing is unknown.<sup>6</sup>

Fortunately the Bruce facsimile was not wholly lost, but awaited the happy accident of re-discovery. Mr John H. Farrant, the Sussex antiquarian, studying Mark Anthony Lower,<sup>7</sup> followed up references to the Bruce facsimile, and tracked it down to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne. Although no one knew it was there when he first enquired, it was soon clear that at least some portions of the facsimile did still exist in the Black Gate Library of the Society. In 1997 Farrant published a short account of the production and history of the facsimile in *Archaeologia Aeliana*, announcing the continued existence of this treasure to the world of Bayeux Tapestry studies.<sup>8</sup>

With modern photographic reproductions, facsimile representations are no longer important as the sole possibility of 'seeing' the Bayeux Tapestry without travelling to Normandy; nor, in the case of the Newcastle copy, can the facsimile offer any new information as to the state of repair of the original at the time of production, since Bruce had it made from the 1816–18 drawings by Charles Stothard.<sup>9</sup> However, as the personal copy of one of the Bayeux Tapestry's most notable English scholars, and an admirable undertaking in its own right, it is not fitting that the Newcastle facsimile should further languish in obscurity.

Due to the size and condition of the surviving panels of the Bruce facsimile, unrolling all of them is a difficult and dirty undertaking. This article builds upon Farrant's paper and presents the results of a more detailed observation

of the 19 extant panels. Although the panels are identified alphabetically on the back, these are not in order according to the embroidery's narrative. A schema is provided to show the correct order and identify the missing scenes. This examination of the panels also explored how Bruce and his artist approached the old problem of scale: it appears that the facsimile was originally produced in twelve sections of around 6.5m each. These divisions raise interesting questions as to the original design of the Bayeux Tapestry, and this paper concludes with a tentative hypothesis for Tapestry scholars to investigate with reference to the embroidery itself.<sup>10</sup>

## HISTORY OF THE BRUCE FACSIMILE

Produced in late 1851 or early 1852 by pupils at Bruce's school, the Percy Street Academy, the Newcastle facsimile seems to have been shown by John Collingwood Bruce himself both in Newcastle and further afield. It was also lent out and exhibited independently elsewhere before it was superseded by the British Government's official photographs by Dossetter in 1871. However, despite the enduring fame of his book, the Bayeux Tapestry was not Bruce's favourite antiquarian topic, and the facsimile seems to have lost its novelty value very soon after the Dossetter photographs appeared. Bruce donated his 'Tapestry' to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1884, when the Society set up a museum in the Black Gate:

Some of the rooms at the Black Gate Museum would be lighted from the roof, and there would be a good deal of wall space, and it had occurred to him that the Black Gate committee would like to have the drawings to display in the room. . .<sup>11</sup>

The Society's energies and records in 1884 were preoccupied by the Royal Archaeological Institute's decision to hold their meeting that year in Newcastle and the proposed museum was completed in time for that visit in August;<sup>12</sup> It is unclear whether Bruce's facsimile was ever

displayed as he had proposed; indeed it virtually disappears from written record at this point.<sup>13</sup>

Due to the extensive growth of the Society's library, and the unsuitability of the room it had occupied since 1848 below the great hall of the castle keep, it was 'therefore resolved, in 1909, to remove the books to the top room of the Black Gate, and to fix it up with the requirements of a modern library'.<sup>14</sup> The change was effected in 1910, and in this process, 'the objects exhibited and their cases in the third floor of the Blackgate, had to make way for the new library shelving and furniture. A reorganisation of the Society's museum has been rendered necessary as is shown in the report of the curators'.<sup>15</sup> This report observes that 'objects of local interest are being transferred to the keep, to fill the places formerly occupied by books; the Saxon stones have been placed in the 'Heron Pit' annexe', but it fails to mention the Tapestry facsimile and where it might have fitted into this scheme of things is uncertain.<sup>16</sup>

How many changes in manner of display the facsimile may have undergone after Bruce's donation may never be known, but Mr Tony Dixon, Curator at the Museum in the 1950s, gave a very useful description of its display at that time, supporting a number of theories which examination of the remaining panels corroborate.<sup>17</sup>

This [the Bayeux Tapestry facsimile] was displayed in the Black Gate [ . . . ] in c. 1951 or 53 as follows:-

Library. As a frieze around the room above the original bookcases. In many places the bookcases had been extended upwards in front of the frieze. I think that parts of it had got dirty (extra dirty) and may have been painted over with white paint. (There was also roof water damage) [ . . . ]

Museum. As a frieze in parts of the room. This was taken down when the collection of Roman stones was transferred to the Museum of Antiquities, at the University, and the room redecorated for use as a bagpipe museum [ . . . ] The parts in the museum were vandalised by school kids adding their graffiti. Needless to say this did not take place in the library.

This transfer of Roman antiquities occurred in the early 1960s, when the Society and the University collaborated in the opening of the Museum of Antiquities. In his address on the occasion of the opening of the new Museum, Professor I. A. Richmond noted that ' . . . when the material came to us from its old home it had suffered sadly from the ravages not of time, but of grime. The smoke, inevitable to an industrial city and to the proximity of the railway and, in the past, to the glass furnaces which were a feature of that part of Tyneside, had done its worst to impregnate all the stones with the most formidable skin of grime and carbon that was possible to imagine'.<sup>18</sup> This problem is very much in evidence in the Bruce facsimile, with most of the remaining panels suffering badly from soot damage.

It appears to have been at this time of change, with the removal of most artefacts to the new Museum of Antiquities, that the panels of Bruce's Bayeux Tapestry facsimile was taken down and forgotten, assigned the ignominious fate of being rolled up in dirty pieces and left in a cupboard in the storeroom.

## THE SURVIVING PANELS

Despite the very obvious state of decay and damage of many of the panels, the facsimile is undeniably accomplished, and represents no small achievement on the part of John Moffat and his assistant illustrators.<sup>19</sup> When preparing his article, Farrant could only examine a couple of the panels. The appendix to this paper therefore offers a full description of all the panels, as initially observed in an interim report by Derek Seddon and David Hill on the 3rd September 1997, and subsequently confirmed and revised by the present author and Martin K. Foy on the 26th February 1998.<sup>20</sup>

The appendix identifies each panel by the letter marked on the back of the roll. In total 19 panels survive, drawn on 67 sheets of paper, giving a combined total length of 49.417m, about two-thirds of the original. Each panel is drawn on double in-elephanto size paper, watermarked J WHATMAN 1850, each sheet

Table 1 Sequence of panels in the facsimile.

[missing]				<i>S</i>	(to end of scene 6: the English landfall) <sup>21</sup>
<i>N</i>	+	<i>K</i>	+	<i>G</i>	(to end of scene 11: in front of tree)
<i>D</i>	+	<i>P</i>	+	<i>R</i>	(to scene 15: after first two knights)
		<i>L</i>			(to scene 21: William arms Harold)
<i>F</i>	+	<i>A</i>	+	<i>B</i>	(to end of scene 28: death of Edward)
<i>Q</i>	+	<i>C</i>	+	<i>E</i>	(to end of scene 36: launch of ships)
[whole section missing]					(to end of scene 39?) <sup>22</sup>
[missing]		<i>M</i>		[missing]	(to scene 45?) <sup>23</sup>
[missing]		<i>H</i>		[missing]	(to end of scene 49?) <sup>24</sup>
[missing]		<i>O</i>		[missing]	(to scene 51?) <sup>25</sup>
[missing]		<i>J</i>			(to scene 52) <sup>26</sup>
[missing]		<i>I</i>			(to end of Bayeux Tapestry)

being 655mm x 975mm, glued together with a c. 8mm overlap. The panels, varying in length from 36cm to 6.5m, must have been cut down from their original format. What was this original format? How had the artists wrestled with the traditional problem of scale? It is not likely that John Collingwood Bruce's Bayeux Tapestry would have been created as one continuous whole, nor can it have been produced in the apparently random lengths of the surviving panels. It must have been drawn in a number of sections of roughly similar size. In the examination of the surviving panels, the question arose as to whether it was possible to reconstruct the sections of the facsimile as it would have been originally produced?

Whilst fitting the panels back into their correct narrative order, it was gradually revealed that the facsimile had originally been produced in roughly 6.5m sections. To recreate the narrative of the embroidery, the panels fit back together as shown in Table 1.

This schema shows both the correct order in which to view the pieces in terms of the narrative of the embroidery, and also the original sections in which it was made. That the original was produced in 6.5m sections was evidenced in a number of ways.

Firstly, as the facsimile was made from joined sheets of paper, it is possible to identify panels beginning with a complete sheet. As each original section can be assumed to have begun with a fresh sheet of paper, a panel at the start of an original section could be expected to

begin with a whole sheet. In other words – allowing for overlaps – a new sheet would be found at around 975mm.<sup>27</sup> Do any of the panels begin a new sheet of paper at 975mm? Three panels do; *L*, *F*, and *Q*. Could any or all of these panels begin a section?

Secondly, is it possible that any original section has survived uncut – that any of the panels actually exist as they were produced? The longest panel is *L*, which had been established as a possible section-beginning. If *L* were to be intact in its original length, then other breaks may also occur at c. 6.5m. *F*, another panel identified as a potential section-beginning, directly follows *L*, emphasising a possible break here. Continuing the reconstruction of the narrative, *F* is followed by *A* + *B*, which together also total c. 6.5m. The next section length would begin with *Q*, which is followed by *C* + *E*, and these three also total c. 6.5m. A section end is suggested by the right-hand side of *E* being bound. Similarly, looking at the narrative prior to *L*, a section beginning is suggested by the left-hand side of *N*, which is also bound. Panels *K* + *G* follow *N*, which together would also total c. 6.5m. Between the end of *G* and the beginning of *L*, the narrative is completed by panels *D*, *P* + *R*. These three panels also total c. 6.5m. Panel *S* belongs before *N*, and though the very beginning panel or panels are now lost, the length of the missing panels added to *S* also equals approximately 6.5m.

With the exception of the very beginning, the panels through to the bound end of *E* show the

narrative intact. All the panels containing graffiti occur in this set, and so it may be proposed with some degree of confidence that these were the panels displayed in 'some parts of the museum'.<sup>28</sup> After *E*, missing panels become much more frequent; in fact over half of the remainder of the facsimile is missing. It is therefore very much more difficult to hypothesise as to where the sections may have begun and ended. However, sufficient evidence can be drawn from the first part of the facsimile to suggest that the original was constructed in sections of around 6.5m, using 6 to 7 sheets of paper each. It is possible that *L* is not in fact a complete section length, but the balance of the evidence just presented makes this highly unlikely. Six and a half metres is probably the maximum which could be handled comfortably if held up by pupils in the Lit. & Phil. Society hall to accompany Bruce's public lectures on the Bayeux Tapestry.<sup>29</sup>

Two further factors argue in favour of the *c.* 6.5m sections. Firstly, *N* is bound at the left end. The binding seems to be original, so *N* could not have been in the middle or end of a section, but must have begun a section. Secondly, although the condition of the back of the panels is poor, some marks can be observed. Amongst these are:

- On reverse of panel *N* "N2"
- On reverse of panel *D* "(3)"
- On reverse of panel *L* "(4)"

With approximately 6.5m sections, panel *N* would begin section 2, *D*, section 3 and *L*, section 4.

Unfortunately, little can be said on the five other panels which form the second half of the Bayeux Tapestry facsimile. Too much is at present missing to make any detailed comment on the possible continuation of the pattern. None of these five panels began with a fresh sheet of paper, nor can their images have depicted an appropriate beginning or end point (with the exception, of course, of the panel showing the very end of the Bayeux Tapestry, where the section, as the Tapestry itself, would have been foreshortened).

One might suppose that the portion of the facsimile accessible to the general public – the panels displayed in the Museum – would have been more at risk of damage than the second half which was displayed in the members' Library. The presence of the graffiti on the first half of the facsimile seems to bear this out. However the condition of the surviving panels and the number of missing panels from later sections shows the opposite to have been the case, the panels displayed in the Library were in fact at greater risk. By the time the Museum panels were taken down and stored, many of the Library panels had suffered from water damage from the roof of the Black Gate and may already have been beyond saving.<sup>30</sup> Two of the Library panels do indeed suggest that some panels may have been painted over.<sup>31</sup> Other 'missing' panels of the three final sections may still hang on walls where extra bookcases extend to ceiling height around a substantial part of the Library. Therefore although some panels may have been ruined by being painted over, it could be the case that only one panel of the facsimile – the very beginning – is physically lost.

There is no absolute proof that the facsimile was originally created in the *c.* 6.5m sections suggested above, although the arguments seem persuasive. There does however exist a simple explanation for the later division of the facsimile into the numerous panels of diverse lengths. Bruce donated the facsimile to hang around the walls of the Black Gate: these are no ordinary rooms. Each floor has at least seven internal walls, of irregular length.<sup>32</sup> In the Library the sections were fixed above the bookcases around the whole room, in the Museum they hung only around certain parts. Instead of running the sections continuously, perhaps due to the method of fixing, the panels were probably cut to match the piece of wall on which they were hung. Study of the history of the Bruce facsimile indeed raises once again one of the oldest points of scholarly discussion about the Bayeux Tapestry – the problem of its continuous display.

The only full size embroidered copy of the Bayeux Tapestry, by the Leek Embroidery

Society, was also later cut into panels to be framed and displayed. The inability of modern society to find any more appropriate solution for exhibition merely underlines the complexity of the matter. How thankful we must be that the Tapestry itself managed to avoid being cut into pieces, even if the system of keeping it rolled on a drum to be pulled out over a table almost certainly contributed to the loss of the final scene(s). It seems incontrovertible that the original eleventh-century intention was to hang the Tapestry around the walls in the great room of a seignorial hall, walls which would have had a minimum of interruptions caused by doors, windows or fireplaces.

#### DISCUSSION: THE DESIGN OF THE ORIGINAL BAYEUX TAPESTRY

Bruce's Bayeux Tapestry facsimile was based upon the 1816–18 drawings by Charles Stothard, and more specifically on the seventeen engraved plates publicly available. However, the sections in which the Bruce facsimile appear to have been produced do not follow those of their model. As the Bruce facsimile relied upon the Stothard, it would be feasible to assume, for example, that each Bruce section would be made up of a certain number of Stothard plates. Why is this not so? For the artist of the Bruce facsimile, looking to recreate a more continuous format, was there a pre-determined size for the sections? Had Bruce decided that he wanted sections of around 6.5–7m (or rather its imperial equivalent)? Was this simply the maximum size that could realistically be handled at a time? Or could there be any other reason?

The *c.* 6.5m section length of the Bruce facsimile was initially deduced simply by the observation that panel *L* is intact. However, when examining the panels and looking at the original section breaks, it is in fact possible to recognise the frequent incidence of a natural break in the narrative action at around 6.5m. Did Bruce or his artist look for natural breaks in the narrative? Could it be significant that such breaks enabled the whole to be divided into sections of roughly equal length? This

question has an important bearing on the composition of the original Tapestry. Many Tapestry scholars have discussed its design, and the possibility of cartoons, but most have noted only the divisions of the embroidery's linen background as it is in its finished state and not considered how the original cartoons were designed. The Bayeux Tapestry's linen ground is made up of nine conjoined pieces, the last now unnaturally foreshortened by damage.<sup>33</sup> Close inspection leads one to surmise that linen was obtained in a standard length of some thirteen to fourteen metres, but that this length turned out to be unmanageable (the first two pieces are substantially longer than the remainder), and the linen was subsequently cut down to more workable lengths. Can it be merely coincidence that this potential 'standard' length is approximately double the section-length of the Bruce's facsimile? If John Moffat was working only to the small-scale Stothard plates, he would have had no knowledge of the joins in the linen ground, yet he seems to have identified a series of natural breaks in the narrative which could have corresponded to the beginnings/ends of cartoons. Moffat's sections would have fitted two to each 'standard' length of Tapestry linen, leaving some room for joining seams. Could this Bruce division echo the Tapestry designer producing his cartoons, at a manageable size or at scale, for a known size of linen, an aim which would allow the Tapestry to be worked simultaneously in different sections and then fitted together? As most scholars agree that the embroiderers of the Bayeux Tapestry showed a steep learning curve during its production, it is possible that this system was abandoned soon after the embroidery work started and the 13m-long linen proved unwieldy. General consensus suggests that the embroiderers became more skilled at covering the joins in the linen with stitching so they are less obvious. It may also be that where later joins in the linen are covered in embroidery that this is not simply to hide the join, but also that the shorter lengths of linen no longer corresponded to the sections envisaged by the designer, thus creating divisions within scenes or figures.<sup>34</sup> This is no more than an intriguing post-script to the

detailed examination of the Bruce facsimile; however it is undoubtedly worthy of being brought to the attention of Bayeux Tapestry scholars for others to ponder.<sup>35</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This article has concentrated essentially on the provision of details of the panels of John Collingwood Bruce's personal facsimile of the Bayeux Tapestry as they survive in the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle. This information should be of as much interest to the local scholars of Newcastle and Northumberland as to those specialist students of the Bayeux Tapestry. Bruce's facsimile survives today, as with almost every other reproduction of the Bayeux Tapestry, in pieces. Even in its incomplete state, it is possible to make some tentative observations relating to the original production of the Bruce facsimile, and to pose a more interesting question on the design of the Bayeux Tapestry itself. In doing so, I hope I have brought a not unimportant local artefact back to the attention of the Antiquaries of Newcastle, and provided both information and perhaps also food for thought for Bayeux Tapestry scholars further afield.

## APPENDIX: THE SURVIVING PANELS, A DESCRIPTION

The panels are identified below by the alphabet letter most prominent on the end of each roll. This description includes where ribbon loops are attached to panels, or where there are holes which appear to have been previously used to attach the panels to walls/backing, but makes no attempt to explain any of these or the occasionally incomprehensible other markings on the reverse of the panels.

### [A]

*Notation on reverse:* completely innocent of inscription. Hanging loops and holes.

*Length:* 3.68m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.67m; 1.65m; 2.64m.

*Condition:* Damage at bottom from 1.10m to 2.09m. Small damage at lower corner and end at 3.55m to 3.68m and at 0.20m.

*Graffiti at (actual text in bold):* 0.02m **S. T.**; 0.03–0.05m **22/31/52**; 0.05m **C.Roberts July.** . . ; 0.07–0.095m **J. Crosland K.J.**; 0.38–0.45m **E. Goodwin 22.3.52**; 0.55–0.60m (in pencil) **Hubbard**; 0.79–0.83m [Illegible]; 0.88–0.94m **Thorpe, M. Haggard**

### [B]

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* N3; **3**; **(5)**; **4**; **'Bottom left hand corner'** (sic) N3 in top left hand corner of front.

*Length:* 1.02m. *New sheet begins at:* 0.92m.

*Condition:* Tear in bottom right hand corner.

### [C]

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* ?, hanging holes.

*Length:* 2.915m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.45m; 1.44m; 2.4m.

*Condition:* Damage at 1.47–1.60m, no loss of image; vertical tear at 2.1m, Bottom right hand corner 2.77m-end, 0.07m high with small loss of design. Dirt at bottom left, whole of right hand end dirty.

### [D]

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **(3)**; **(3)**.

*Length:* 0.972m. *New sheet begins at:* 0.07m.

*Condition:* Large damp patch diagonally 0.28m x 0.16m, smaller patch at 0.55m (0.05m in diameter).

### [E]

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **F**, repeated on front. Hanging loops.

*Length:* 1.685m (to a bound end). *New sheets begin at:* 0.47m; 1.43m.

*Condition:* Dirt at bottom corners, damage slight tear bottom left repaired grossly. Tear at 0.47m does not affect design.

### [F]

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* ( ) and repeated on front top left hand corner. 5 cloth tabs.

*Length:* 2.27m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.99m; 1.96m.

*Condition:* No damage, damp staining on right hand (varnish?).

### [G]

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **E**, 5 cloth tabs. Front **E** top right hand.

*Length:* 2.03m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.07m; 1.04m.

*Condition:* No damage, right hand very dirty.  
Water 1.65–1.80m.

**[H]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **RH** in indistinct pencil, 4 loops

*Length:* 1.25m. *New sheet begins at:* 0.46m.

*Condition:* Dirty and speckled with paint. Top left and top right torn, no image loss.

**[I]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **12** in a diamond and repeated. Part of **?10**. 9 loops, holes.

*Length:* 4.50 m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.81m; 1.80m; 2.78m; 3.77m.

*Condition:* Good but filthy dirty; vertical tear at 0.19m, but with no image loss.

**[J]**

*Notation on reverse:* the top and bottom are turned back at the limit of the design, 7 loops, holes for hanging at approximately every 15cm

*Length:* 3.04m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.235m; 1.20m; 2.18m.

*Condition:* the whole is filthy. Horizontal tear to 0.09m; ditto top right 9cm deep.

**[K]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* clear

*Length:* 4.52m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.64m; 1.62m; 2.61m; 3.60m

*Condition:* Fair (relatively). Vertical tear at 3.93m through top border.

**[L]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **(4); M**, On the top left hand corner of the face **M**.

*Length:* 6.685m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.95m; 1.94m; 2.92m; 3.91m; 4.88m; 5.84m.

*Condition:* No damage.

**[M]**

*Notation on reverse:* Nothing, 3 suspension loops.

*Length:* 1.35m. *New sheet begins at:* 0.86m.

*Condition:* Ragged right hand edge. Very dirty, particularly in top left hand, paint splashes, vertical tear at 1.10, strip torn from top.

**[N]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **N; N2**, on front top left **N2**. No loops

*Length:* 0.36m.

*Condition:* good, no tears.

**[O]**

*Notation on reverse:* Nothing. 5 loops.

*Length:* 2.60m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.53m; 1.52m; 2.49m.

*Condition:* Filthy, no graffiti, tear top left at 0.05m.

**[P]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **1?**; 4 loops

*Length:* 1.38 m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.07m; 1.02m.

*Condition:* Extreme left hand stained.

**[Q]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **P** and **4** on the back, **P** on front left hand corner. 6 suspension loops survive

*Length:* 2.49m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.98m; 1.95m.

*Condition:* Fair i.e. not very dirty, horizontal tear at 0.05m, tear at 0.50m (in lower border with no loss of image). Tear on extreme bottom right 2.43m to end with no loss of image.

*Grffiti (actual text in bold):* bottom left corner **Xmas 1914 Gordon**; 0.70m **B.R.**, 2.05m **K.M. 5 Sep 50**.

**[R]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **K** and on bottom right hand of the face **K**. 7 loops.

*Length:* 4.52m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.59m; 1.46m; 2.45m; 3.46m; 4.45m.

*Condition:* Fair, damp stain at 0.27m, slightly frayed on right hand side.

**[S]**

*Notation on reverse (actual text in bold):* **(I); 'top left hand'; N**. 6 loops.

*Length:* 3.15m. *New sheets begin at:* 0.25m; 1.19m; 2.15m.

*Condition:* Fair, dirty at right hand end, tear at 2.82m to 2.93m, slight damage to border with no loss of image. **N** top left,

*Grffiti (actual text in bold):* 0.52m **J. Fortune**; 0.55–0.60m **F. B. and R. B. 19.8.46**; 0.68–0.75m **Julia Leggatt 1949 Mrs Leggatt 25 Aug**; 0.75–0.85m **Alan Ball loves Lilian Longfellow**; 0.90–0.95m **June Drake**; 1.35–1.43m **T. Bristow 1950**; 1.80–1.86m **Alan T. Kelly 7 May 1954**, **Alan Pickles**; 2.75m **A. Brown**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The main arguments have been collected and discussed in S. A. Brown, *The Bayeux Tapestry History and Bibliography*, Woodbridge (1988) and David M. Wilson, *The Bayeux Tapestry*, London (1985).

<sup>2</sup> The Bayeux Tapestry came to the attention of antiquaries in 1724, after a drawing of the first thirty feet was discussed by M. Lancelot at the Académie



Royale. This 'première partie de la tenture de Bayeux dite du duc Guillaume', attributed to the daughter of Nicolas-Joseph Foucault, Intendant of Normandy, 1689–1704, only covers the beginning of the Bayeux Tapestry. However, at 45cms high, it is not only the first known copy, but is also close to full scale.

'The End of the Bayeux Tapestry'; embroidered by Jan Messent, Thirsk, U.K., sponsored by Madeira Threads. Displayed at the Centre Guillaume le Conquérant, Bayeux, in October 1999, this embroidery continues the depiction of the aftermath of the Battle of Hastings to a projected conclusion of the Coronation of William at Westminster on Christmas Day.

<sup>3</sup> Charles A. Stothard, Society of Antiquaries of London, 1819–23, with 17 engraved, coloured plates (about one quarter size) by Basire. Republished in volume 6 of the *Vetusta Monumenta* in 1885.

<sup>4</sup> E. Dossetter, Victoria and Albert Museum; a copy also deposited at Bayeux, Bibliothèque municipale.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. John Collingwood Bruce, *The Bayeux Tapestry Elucidated*, London (1856).

<sup>6</sup> Brown (1988), 153.

<sup>7</sup> An enthusiastic antiquarian who founded the Sussex Archaeological Society, and who shared an interest with Collingwood Bruce in the Norman Conquest, perhaps encouraging Bruce's study of the Bayeux Tapestry. See Farrant, n. 8 below.

<sup>8</sup> John H. Farrant, 'John Collingwood Bruce and the Bayeux Tapestry', *AA*<sup>5</sup>, 25 (1997), 109–113.

<sup>9</sup> Stothard's original is now unlocatable. There was no general release of a continuous facsimile.

<sup>10</sup> A number of people have played a large part in the writing of this article. The description of the panels could not have been completed without the help of David Hill, Derek Seddon and Martin K. Foys; correspondence from John Farrant, Barbara Harbottle, Tony Dixon, David J. Smith, Lindsay Allason-Jones and Pat Southern contributed enormously to the unravelling of the history of the Bruce facsimile; Brian J. Levy, Sarah Lowson and Joanna Lewis have painstakingly sorted out the resulting text. Many thanks.

<sup>11</sup> *PSAN*<sup>2</sup>, 1 (16), (1884), 112.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>13</sup> Farrant correctly observes that early descriptions of the museum do not mention the facsimile: a 1910 list of artefacts describes many Roman treasures, altars, stones and sculptures but says nothing of the Tapestry, although the museum purports to be 'rich in objects of interest and value illustrative of all periods': *AA*<sup>3</sup>, 10 (1913), Council's Report for 1910, 28.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 24–5.

<sup>15</sup> *PSAN*<sup>2</sup>, 1 (24), (1884), 174.

<sup>16</sup> *AA*<sup>3</sup>, 7 (1911), Curators' Report for 1910, xxii. This could be a most unfortunate omission, as the facsimile – if it was displayed as suggested when donated by Bruce – would almost certainly have been disturbed at this point.

<sup>17</sup> Correspondence from Tony Dixon, Curator of the Museum in the 1950s, to Barbara Harbottle, President of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle, dated 18 July 1998, copied to the present author.

<sup>18</sup> *Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle Annual Reports of Council 1960–69*, 27.

<sup>19</sup> For more information about the artist, see Farrant (1997).

<sup>20</sup> My thanks to David Hill for his permission to publish the details from his examination of the panels. I would also like to underline my thanks to the Librarian of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle, Denis Peel, for his patience in allowing me to make several other visits to unroll and photograph some of the panels, which causes no little disruption to the library.

<sup>21</sup> Numbers here refer to the usual scene divisions recognised by Bayeux Tapestry scholars. A new scheme of numbering, proposed by David Hill, whilst gaining currency, relies on measured distance from the beginning of the Bayeux Tapestry, and is not yet considered the standard point of reference due to the flexible nature of the textile. However, this is the method used in the Appendix for identification of marks/damage by distance from the left-hand edge of the facsimile panels.

<sup>22</sup> Before the ship which disembarks the horses (possibly through the beached ships).

<sup>23</sup> Between the peasants hitting each other and the foreman.

<sup>24</sup> Before the two trees (possibly earlier, between William and Vital).

<sup>25</sup> [During the battle gaps appear very rarely.] Between the two pairs of archers (possibly between the opposing forces).

<sup>26</sup> Panel *J* ends under Odo flourishing his *baculum* – this is a long panel with no obvious end of a section, but it seems likely that the break here formed the end of a section.

<sup>27</sup> This presumes that a panel beginning a section has not been cut before 975mm.

<sup>28</sup> See Tony Dixon, correspondence, no. 17 above.

<sup>29</sup> In correspondence with the present author, dated 9 July 1998, Miss Pat Southern, Librarian of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne, confirms that in 1853 the Lit. and Phil. Society's lecture room was in 'a transitional stage.

The ground floor had been altered several times so a plan of the room is not available'. The room, with a previous capacity of 300 had been extended during 1836–37 but did not reach its estimated target capacity of 500. There is no record of the measurements of the room.

<sup>30</sup> See Tony Dixon, correspondence, note 17 above.

<sup>31</sup> See splashes of white paint on panels *H* and *M*.

<sup>32</sup> See *AA*<sup>4</sup>, 2 (1926), 47, fig. 31. The Museum was the second floor and the Library the third floor.

<sup>33</sup> Bayeux Tapestry scholarship has trusted for many years that the information that the Bayeux Tapestry is made up of eight linen panels as recorded in Simone Bertrand, *La Tapisserie de Bayeux*, La Pierre-qui-Vire, (1966) and consequently copied in all major works, is correct. These measurements were 13.65m; 13.75m; 8.35m; 7.75m; 6.60m; 7.05m; 7.15m; 5.25m. However, at a conference at Cerisy-la-Salle in October 1999, it was revealed that scientific tests carried out on the Bayeux Tapestry in 1982–83 had actually found the Tapestry to be made up of nine sections of linen, measuring respectively

13.70m; 13.90m; 8.19m; 7.725m; 5.52m; 7.125m; 7.19m; 2.60m; 2.43m. These measurements are confirmed in B. J. Levy and F. Neveux (eds.) *La Tapisserie de Bayeux: l'art de broder l'histoire / The Bayeux Tapestry: Embroidering the Facts of History*, Caen (2003).

<sup>34</sup> Exactly as happened with the division of the Collingwood Bruce facsimile's sections into the panels that survive today.

<sup>35</sup> Should Tapestry scholars consider the natural breaks in the (pictorial) narrative tentatively proposed by this article, they may also wish to return to the question of when the text was added to the embroidery. In several cases the text interferes with the break, though this may be attributed to later conception without necessarily suggesting later execution. This author also feels, when presented with the re-assigned measurements of the *nine* pieces of linen ground, and having located the eighth join, that the death of Harold and the end of the Bayeux Tapestry may have been re-planned after the first design, thus affecting the planned original layout at the end of the Tapestry.