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37 buildings, and 41 ships or boats, but no attempt is made to show local colour, horses, dogs, etc. being blue, green or yellow, just as may have suited the convenience of the design. To show perspective, different colours are used, sometimes with curious effect, such as when a blue horse has its off-legs red.

"Rude But Vigorous"

Scenes are generally separated from each other by a tree or other object, most of the scenes are described by Latin inscriptions sewn along the upper margin of the main part of the tapestry. Along the top and bottom run decorative borders with figures of animals, scenes from fables, from husbandry and the chase, and occasionally from the story of the Conquest itself.

The drawing throughout is rude but vigorous and spirited, and has a bold sense of rhythm and composition. But the most striking thing about it is the impression it gives that time has been telescoped for us; that centuries have been dropped out of history and the actions of men in 1066 have been brought up to the present.

The tapestry has been repeatedly described, discussed, and reproduced since its discovery in 1730, and disputes have been carried on about its origin. Local tradition assigned the work to Matilda, the wife of William the Conqueror, but later it was connected with his half-brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who is said to have had it executed for the decoration of Bayeux Cathedral. The tapestry fits exactly round the nave of the cathedral, and was used there on feast days. It has also been claimed that the work was done by English fingers, some of the words on it seeming to favour this view.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, it passed out of the keeping of the cathedral authorities, and was kept in the *hotel-de-ville* on a couple of rollers and exhibited to the curious by winding from one to the other. When its great value was discovered, however, it was put in an apartment built for the purpose, and relined, and portions were restored that had suffered from age and the rollers.

At Napoleon's desire it was exhibited at Paris in 1803-04, after it had narrowly escaped the perils of the French Revolution. In 1871, during the Franco-Prussian war, the Prussians were so near the town that the tapestry was taken from the glass case in which it is displayed, and hidden till danger was past. Although it has encountered many dangers from fire, invasion, and other causes, it has yet to be seen whether this ancient pictorial history will come unscathed through the battles that are raging once again in Normandy.

—J.H.

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