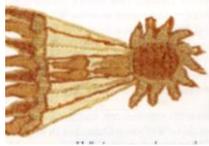


## The Battle of Hastings

In April 1066 people saw a comet in the sky. They thought this was a sign from God that something bad was going to happen!



*Halley's comet*

In September King Harold heard that ships had landed in the North. They brought an army led by Hardrada and Tostig (Harold's brother). King Harold had been waiting in the South because he knew William's army was preparing to attack. Harold marched North with his army and defeated and killed Hardrada at the Battle of Stamford Bridge. However two days later a change in the wind direction allowed William to set sail and landed at Pevensey on the English coast.

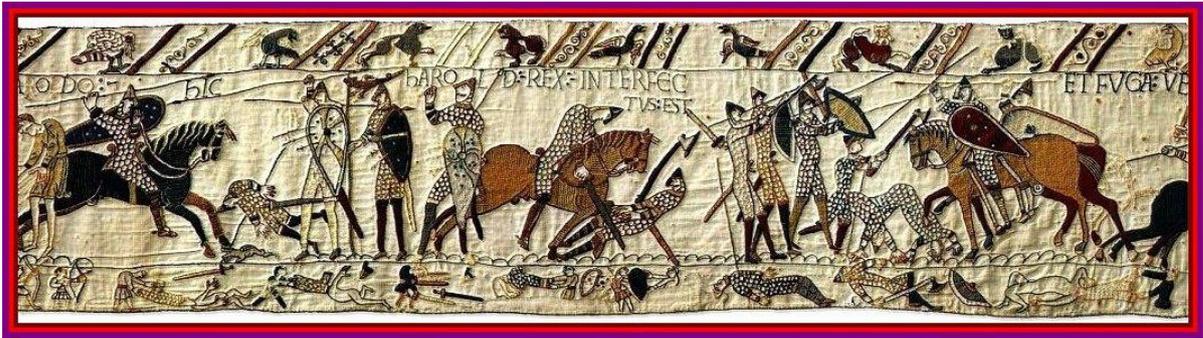


*The Normans land in England!*

As Harold came towards York with thousands of good soldiers, he met the Norwegians in battle at Stamford Bridge. He killed Harald and most of his army. At this moment, King Harold was told that William had arrived with a huge army of men from all over France.' Florence of Worcester, early 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Harold's exhausted army was now forced to march over 250 miles south to meet William. On the 13<sup>th</sup> October they were in position on Senlac Hill opposite the Normans at Hastings. On 14<sup>th</sup> October the battle started. Harold's men fought on foot using shields and weapons such as swords and axes, whilst William's army included foot soldiers, knights, and archers. There were about 5000 soldiers on each side.

The Normans charged up Senlac Hill but could not break through the Saxons' shields. Then William had the idea to pretend that his army ran away. The English followed and the Normans turned around and attacked them. The Norman Knights charged while the archers fired their arrows high. Harold was killed by an arrow to the eye.



*Harold is shot in the eye*

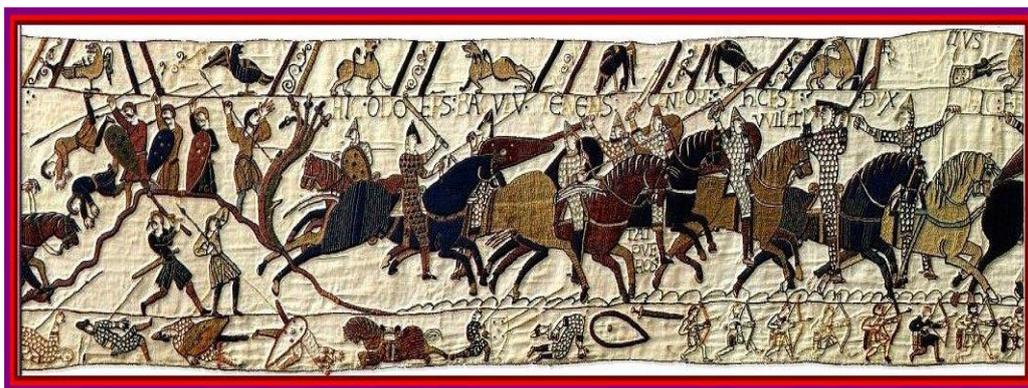
### Activity one

Read the text above and answer the following questions:

- 1) Why were people terrified at the sight of the comet?  
People were frightened because they thought it was a...
- 2) Why were Harold's army tired when they went to fight William?  
Harold's army was tired because...
- 3) Did Harold suffer from bad luck? (clue - what 'change' allowed William to sail to England?)
- 4) What trick did William play which helped him to defeat the English?

### Activity two

Look at the picture below.



- 1) a) What differences can you spot between Harold's army (on the hill) and William's army?  
b) Do the pictures provide a clue to why William managed to beat Harold?

2) The Bayeux tapestry was around the time of the Norman conquest.  
Does this make it a primary or secondary source?