



Detail from Frederiksborg's hand-coloured photographic copy of the Bayeux Tapestry. Press photo/Frederiksborg

The world's most famous tapestry can also be found at Danish museum Frederiksborg – almost

The Bayeux Tapestry is on everyone's lips as the nearly 1,000-year-old masterpiece is on display in London. But visitors to Frederiksborg can also get remarkably close to the 70-metre-long account of the Battle of Hastings. The museum holds a historic photographic copy of the Bayeux Tapestry dating from 1878, created using cutting-edge technology of its day and painstakingly coloured by hand. Around 20 metres are on display today – alongside nothing less than Denmark's answer to the Bayeux Tapestry: Lorenz Frølich's 37-metre-long frieze depicting the Danish conquests of



England around the year 1000. Horses and riders, bloody battles, ships at sea – and an arrow through an eye. The Bayeux Tapestry unfolds the conquest of England in 1066 as one long, dramatic visual narrative. Almost 70 metres in length, the work was created shortly after the Battle of Hastings and is today one of the world's most famous surviving works from the Middle Ages.

With *The Bayeux Tapestry* opening at the British Museum in London on 10 September, the medieval masterpiece is once again at the centre of international attention. At Frederiksborg, however, its famous story has been part of the museum for almost 150 years.

1878: Bringing a world-famous work to Frederiksborg

Even before Carlsberg founder J.C. Jacobsen established a museum of national history at Frederiksborg, the brewer had plans to acquire a reproduction of the Bayeux Tapestry.

In 1878, the museum's board decided to commission a photographic copy from the Arundel Society in London. This was by no means considered a second-rate substitute for the original. During the second half of the 19th century, copies of the world's great works of art and cultural heritage were both highly sought after and culturally significant. They made it possible to bring art and cultural heritage from some of the world's most important collections to new audiences – without the originals ever leaving their homes.

Photography itself was still a relatively new technology, and the possibility of reproducing an extraordinary work such as the Bayeux Tapestry photographically caused considerable excitement.

Frederiksborg received a coloured photographic reproduction, which was installed as a continuous picture frieze across six rooms in the King's and Princess's Wings. Today, around 20 metres remain on display at the museum.

Bringing the Middle Ages vividly to life

The newly established museum's desire to acquire the Bayeux Tapestry also reveals much about the way history was presented at the time. Visitors were to be led chronologically through history, from the introduction of Christianity to the present day.

Although the Bayeux Tapestry does not tell a story from Danish history, it was regarded as an exceptional source of knowledge about the Middle Ages: its weapons and clothing, architecture and shipbuilding – and how people lived and waged war almost 1,000 years ago.

At Frederiksborg, the Bayeux Tapestry therefore took its place in the museum's medieval galleries alongside statues of the Viking king Gorm the Old and Queen Thyra, plaster casts of the Jelling Stones and copies of the Viking ship from Gokstad.

300 glass plates, egg white – and eight colours

Frederiksborg's Bayeux Tapestry is also a fascinating piece of photographic history. To create a photographic reproduction at the same scale as the original, the tapestry was photographed onto around 300 glass-plate negatives, each measuring 28.8 × 28.8 centimetres.



The photographs were produced using the albumen process, one of the most widespread photographic techniques of the 19th century. Paper was coated with a mixture of egg white and salt before being sensitised with silver nitrate.

The photographs were then hand-coloured using eight different colours, mounted on canvas and backed with pine. The work was so precise that the texture of the nearly 1,000-year-old embroidery remains clearly visible in the photographic reproduction.

Frederiksborg's copy was most likely hand-coloured in the studio of British photographer Joseph Cundall and produced from E. Dossetter's glass-plate negatives. Two comparable copies are held by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

And Denmark's answer to Bayeux hangs right next to it

The story does not end with the copy. Frederiksborg is also home to a Danish work directly inspired by the Bayeux Tapestry: Lorenz Frølich's monumental 37-metre frieze depicting the Danish conquests of England around the year 1000.

Frølich had seen the Bayeux Tapestry himself in Normandy in 1868. When he was later commissioned to create a monumental visual narrative for Frederiksborg, the famous medieval work became an important source of inspiration.

Completed in 1886, the frieze sends Vikings, ships, battles and dramatic events sweeping across the walls in one continuous visual narrative. The Danes had conquered England in 1013, more than half a century before William the Conqueror – and at Frederiksborg, this was a story worth telling.

Today, visitors to Frederiksborg can therefore experience both a historic reproduction of one of the world's most famous medieval works and a 19th-century Danish answer to it.

FACTS · Frederiksborg's Bayeux Tapestry

1878: Frederiksborg's board decides to commission a photographic reproduction of the Bayeux Tapestry from the Arundel Society in London.

Approx. 20 metres: On display at Frederiksborg today.

Approx. 300 glass-plate negatives: Was used to create the full-scale photographic reproduction. Each negative measured 28.8 × 28.8 cm.

8 colours: The photographs were hand-coloured using eight different colours.

Albumen: The copy was produced using the albumen process, in which paper was treated with substances including egg white before being sensitised with silver nitrate.

FACTS · Frølich – Denmark's answer to Bayeux

37 metres: Lorenz Frølich's monumental pictorial frieze stretches through the ground floor of the Princess's Wing at Frederiksborg.

1868: Frølich sees the Bayeux Tapestry in Normandy.



1886: The frieze at Frederiksborg is completed.

Denmark and England: While the Bayeux Tapestry tells the story of the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, Frølich's frieze depicts the Danish conquests of England around the year 1000.

One continuous drama: Like the Bayeux Tapestry, Frølich's work unfolds as a continuous visual narrative filled with ships, warriors, battles and dramatic events.



Detail from the Frølich Frieze. Cnut the Great and his army land in England in September 1015.

About Frederiksborg

At Frederiksborg, you come face to face with the people, defining events and periods that have made Denmark what it is today. Frederiksborg is home to Denmark's National Portrait Gallery and the Museum of National History, where the past offers a starting point for exploring and discussing identity: who we are, where we come from and where we are going.

The museum's founder, brewer J.C. Jacobsen, wanted to create a great visual history of Denmark to strengthen Danish self-confidence after a difficult 19th century. Frederiksborg is therefore filled with narrative history paintings which, through the national romantic perspective of the 19th century, have played a significant role in shaping how Denmark sees its own history.

Press

Press material is available at www.frederiksborg.dk/presse. For interviews and press visits to see Frederiksborg's Bayeux Tapestry copy and the Frølich Frieze, please contact Head of Communications Sara Juel Andersen at sja@frederiksborg.dk / +45 29 74 75 53.

