

Matilda of Flanders

Wife of William the Conqueror. England's first medieval queen (1031 A.D. to 1083 A.D.)

Matilda of Flanders was the daughter of *Count Baldwin V of Flanders* and *Adela* (the daughter of the King of France). She had many rich and powerful ancestors; such as *Charlemagne* and *King Alfred the Great*. But *William, Duke of Normandy*, fell in love with her and she married him in around the year 1051, (when she was about 20 years old). She became the Duchess of Normandy and used her great wealth to help her husband in becoming the king of England. In 1066, when she was around 35 years old, her husband, *William* set sail for England. *Matilda* paid for *William's* huge flagship '*Mora*' that he used to lead the Norman fleet across the English Channel. *William* won a victory over his rival, the Saxon king *Harold Godwinson*, at the Battle of Hastings. The battle took place on October 14th of that year, but *William* was not crowned king of England until Christmas day 1066. *Matilda* was declared Queen of England, but it was a whole year before she could join her husband again. This was because she was very busy. *Matilda* was a very clever, well-educated and powerful woman. While *William* was away fighting, she was left in charge of all Normandy. She had 10 children with *William*! Sadly, she died of a plague in 1083, *William* was heartbroken by her death and he was to die just 4 years later. 2 of *Matilda's* sons, *William Rufus* and *Henry*, were to become kings of England in the years that followed.

Why not colour Queen Matilda in?

As an 11th century queen, she would have rich, colourful clothes... so have fun with this.

Do you think her (crown) should be gold coloured?

Under this outfit she would wear a **Chemise** (a long dress made of soft material. But you cannot see it, because it's covered by her outer-clothes in this image).

She was supposed to be very beautiful, but quite small... compared to her tall husband William of Normandy.

Name _____

Class _____

Can you label Matilda?

Use these words to help:

Crown (gold with jewels)

Veil (cloth covering her head)

Mantle (cloak)

Pelicon (over-dress, often lined with fur for warmth)

Gown (long dress)

Book (for managing estate finances)

Shoes

Purse (hanging from her belt)

