FOUND IN THE CHURCH REGISTER OF ST GEORGE CROWHURST SUSSEX

"A blazing star appeared in the Kingdom in the year 1680. It did just show itself 10th of December that year 80, which did stream from the South West to the middle of the heaven broader than a lambs bone by far and continued till the latter days of February"

This fits with the recorded appearance of a comet in 1680/81

Great Comet of 1680

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Jump to: navigation, search

C/1680 V1	
 The Great Comet of 1680 over Rotterdam	
Discovery	
Discovered by:	Gottfried Kirch
Discovery date:	1680-11-14
Alternate designations:	Great Comet of 1680, 1680 V1
Orbital characteristics [A]	
Epoch:	2335000.5

Aphelion distance:	889 AU
Perihelion distance:	0.00622 AU[1]
Semi-major axis:	444 AU
Eccentricity:	0.999986[1]
Orbital period:	~9356 a
Inclination:	60.7°
Last perihelion:	1680-12-18[1]
Next perihelion:	~11037

C/1680 V1, also called **the Great Comet of 1680**, **Kirch's Comet**, and **Newton's Comet**, has the distinction of being the first comet discovered by telescope. Discovered by Gottfried Kirch on 14 November 1680, New Style, it became one of the brightest comets of the 17th century--reputedly visible even in daytime--and was noted for its spectacularly long tail.[2] Passing only 0.4 AUs from Earth on 30 November, it sped around an incredibly close perihelion of .006 AU (898,000 km) on 18 December 1680, reaching its peak brightness on 29 December as it rushed outward again.[1][3] It was last observed on 19 March 1681.[4] As of December 2010 the comet was about 252.1 A.U. from the Sun.[5][6]

While the Kirch Comet of 1680-1681 was discovered and subsequently named for Gottfried Kirch, credit must also be given to the Jesuit, Eusebio Kino, who charted the comet's course. During his delayed departure for Mexico, Kino began his observations of the comet in Cadíz in late 1680. Upon his arrival in Mexico City, he published his *Exposisión astronómica de el [sic] cometa* (Mexico City, 1681) in which he presented his findings. Kino's *Exposisión astronómica* is among one of the earliest scientific treatises published by a European in the New World.[7]

Although it was an undeniably a sungrazing comet, it was probably not part of the Kreutz family.[8] Aside from its brilliance, it is probably most noted for being used by Isaac Newton to test and verify Kepler's laws.

[edit] References