

# The Construction of Episcopal Identity: The Meaning and Function of Episcopal Depictions within Latin Saints' Lives of the Long Twelfth Century

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Submitted by Matthew Michael Mesley to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, September 2009.

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**Matthew Michael Mesley**

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# Abstract

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My PhD offers a reassessment of the representation of English bishops within episcopal *vitae* composed between 1093 and 1214. It argues that the depiction of episcopal sanctity was shaped by the expectations of the community for which these texts were written and the hagiographer's specific *causa scribendi* (reasons for writing). Through an investigation of four distinct Latin episcopal saints' lives, I investigate the relationship between hagiographical function, episcopal identity and patronage by setting each text within its specific institutional and historical context. The *vitae* I have selected are: Faricius of Arezzo's life of Aldhelm (c.1093-1099), William Wycombe's life of Robert Bethune (c.1148-1150) and Gerald of Wales's lives of Remigius (c.1198-1199) and Hugh of Avalon (c.1210-1214).

One aim of my thesis has been to establish the precise hagiographical function of each text. As such, each chapter begins by providing a textual history of the particular *vita* in question, and situates the source within its historical and cultural environment. By reflecting upon the local circumstances surrounding the production of these texts, we establish how different twelfth-century religious communities sought to interpret the episcopal office in the light of their own spiritual values and concerns. The thesis also demonstrates that these texts were all written for a particular purpose, including didactic instruction, propaganda, and to construct the way a community remembered its past and/or to promote an institution's cult. Yet, we also show how each author employed different techniques and hagiographical models to achieve his objective. By investigating the ways in which episcopal *vitae* were composed in their specific

localities and how bishops were represented in these texts, we can look afresh at the wider religious environment of the twelfth century.

# Acknowledgements

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I am grateful to many people for their help, both direct and indirect, for assistance in writing my PhD. It is my greatest regret, therefore, that I do not have space here to thank them all, so I must start by offering my apologies if I inadvertently omit anyone to whom special acknowledgement is due. First and foremost my thanks go to the AHRC and the IHR for a Scouloudi Award, without whose generous financial support this thesis would not have been possible. By no means less influential has been the steady guiding hands of my supervisors, Drs Sarah Hamilton and Julia Crick. Both have demonstrated a remarkable degree of patience and kindness and furnished me with much invaluable advice. I very much appreciate both their management and support. I could not continue without also thanking my fellow students and closest friends. A number of friends have looked over drafts of this thesis, including Helen Birkett, Jennifer Helen Davey, Atsushi Iguchi and Aisling O'Donnell. Others have provided accommodation during research trips, notably Alison Carrol, Tamsin Rowe, Caitlin McDonald and Maddy Morgan. On a final note, I would like to particularly thank my partner, Christopher Bonfield. His constant and continuous support has helped me stay the course. He knows the degree to which I appreciate everything he has done and the extent to which I hope to redress the balance.

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# List of Abbreviations

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ANS	Anglo-Norman Studies
BHL	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina: antiquae et mediae aetatis</i> , 3 Vols. (Brussels, 1898-1911)
BL	British Library, London
<i>Council and Synods</i>	<u>Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church. Vol.1, pt. 2: 1066-1204</u> , ed. D.Whitelock, M.Brett, C.N.L.Brooke (Oxford, 1981)
DAA	' <i>De Abbatibus Abbendoniae</i> ' in <i>Chronicon monasterii de Abingdon</i> , ed. J. Stevenson, 2 Vols. (London, 1858), Vol.2, Appendix I, pp. 268-94
DEAT	<i>De episcopis Anglicae tergeminis</i> (in <i>VSR</i> , chapters 27-29)
<i>Du Cange</i>	C.Du Fesne, Sieur Du Cange, <i>Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infirmae latinitatis</i> , 3 Vols. (Paris, 1678); supp. (Lyon, 1688); new extended ed. G.A.L.Henschel, 7 Vols. (Paris, 1840-1850)
EEA	<u>English Episcopal Acta</u> (London, 1980, -)
GCO	<i>Giraldi Cambrensis Opera</i> , ed. J.S.Brewer, J.F.Dimock and G.F.Warner, 8 Vols. (London, 1861-1891)
GE	Gerald of Wales, <i>Gemma Ecclesiastica</i> , trans. J.Hagen (Leiden, 1979)
GP	William of Malmesbury, <u><i>Gesta Pontificum Anglorum: The History of the English Bishops</i></u> , ed. and trans. M.Winterbottom and R.M.Thompson, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 2007)
GR	William of Malmesbury, <u><i>Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings</i></u> , ed. R.M.Thomson and M.Winterbottom, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1998-1999)
HEA	<u><i>Historia Ecclesie Abbendonensis: The History of the Church of Abingdon</i></u> , ed. and trans. J.Hudson, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 2002-2007)
LAC	<u>Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues: Volume 6: The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons</u> , ed. T.Webber and A.G.Watson (London, 1998)

- MVSH Adam of Eynsham, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis: The Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. and trans. D.L.Douie and D.H.Farmer, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1985)
- Niermeyer J.F.Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis lexicon minus: a Medieval Latin-French/English Dictionary* (Leiden, 1954-1955)
- PL *Patrologiae cusus completus. Patres ... ecclesiae latinae*, ed. Jacque-Paul Migne, 217 Vols. (Paris, 1844-1855)
- SCH Studies in Church History
- SE *GCO*, Vol. 1, *Symbolum Electorum*, ed. J.S.Brewer (1861), pp.197-395
- SD Gerald of Wales, *Speculum Duorum*, ed. Y.Lefèvre and R.B.C .Huygens, trans. B.Dawson (Cardiff, 1974)
- TRHS *The Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
- WVSA M.Winterbottom, 'An Edition of Faricius, *Vita S.Aldhelmi*', *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, 15 (2005), pp.93-147
- VRB B.J. Parkinson, 'The Life of Robert de Bethune by William de Wycombe: Translation with Introduction and Notes', B. Litt. thesis (Oxford University, 1951), pp.100-240. The text and translation are based on Lambeth MS 475, with variant readings from BL, MS Jul. D. X
- VSA *Vita Sancti Aldhelmi*
- VSH Gerald of Wales, *The Life of St Hugh of Avalon*, ed. and trans. R.M.Loomis (New York and London, 1985)
- VSR *GCO*, Vol. 7, *Vita Sancti Remigii*, ed. J.F.Dimmock (1877), pp.1-80
- VSW William of Malmesbury, '*Vita Wulfstani*', in *William of Malmesbury. Saints' Lives*, ed. M.Winterbottom and R.M.Thomson (Oxford, 2002), pp.8-154

# Introduction: Twelfth-Century Episcopal Saints' Lives: 'A Notoriously Stereotyped Genre'.<sup>1</sup>

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Not forgetful of wherefore he had come, Lanfranc directed his entire concern to the correction of men's morals and to setting in order the state of the Church. And at first he was at pains to renew the mother Church of the Kingdom and that of Canterbury.<sup>2</sup>

~*Vita Lanfranci*, p.692 ~

## I: An Approach to the Issues: Miles Crispin's *Vita Lanfranci*

The twelfth-century *Vita Lanfranci*, a life of Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury (c.1010-c.1089), has been attributed to Miles Crispin, precentor of the Norman Abbey

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<sup>1</sup> P.Morrison, 'The Miraculous and French Society, 950-1100', Unpublished D.Phil. Thesis (Oxford, 1983), p.18, cited in S.Yarrow, Saints and their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth-Century England (Oxford, 2006), p.3, n.7.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita Lanfranci*, ed. M.Gibson in Lanfranco di Pavia e l'Europa del Secolo XI. Nel IX Centenario della Morte (1089 -1989) ed. G.D'Onofrio (Rome, 1993), pp.667-715, at p.692; *PL* 150. cols. 697-714.

of Bec (d.c.1150).<sup>3</sup> The *vita*, written c.1140-c.1150, was dismissed by Marjorie Chibnall as a 'disappointing work when one considers the fine letter collections left by Lanfranc that might be used to enrich its meagre content.'<sup>4</sup> Despite her criticism, Herbert Cowdrey, in a recent biography, used the *vita* to clarify Lanfranc's initial aims and priorities at the beginning of his archiepiscopate. Citing the above passage from the *vita*, Cowdrey argued that 'an ultimate pastoral motive ... lay behind Lanfranc's thoroughgoing reform and development of the structure and organisation of the church'.<sup>5</sup>

Cowdrey here placed Lanfranc's vocation in the context of the reform of the English Church; this conveniently reflected his wider argument that Lanfranc, as archbishop of Canterbury, should be viewed as a reformer rather than a traditionalist.<sup>6</sup> In his study Cowdrey did not, however, attempt to contextualise the *vita*; neither did he examine why Miles Crispin wrote the *Vita Lanfranci*, or suggest why this image would have appealed to his audience. In this respect, Miles was not writing for a Canterbury audience. The *vita* was instead part of a series of lives of the abbots of Bec – a *Vita*

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<sup>3</sup> M.Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford, 1978), pp.195-203.

<sup>4</sup> M.Chibnall, 'Charter and Chronicle: The Use of Archive Sources by Norman Historians', in *Church and Government in the Middle Ages*, ed. C.Brooke *et al* (Cambridge, 1976), pp.1-17, at p.16.

<sup>5</sup> H.E.J.Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: Scholar, Monk and Archbishop* (Oxford, 2003), p.87.

<sup>6</sup> H.E.J.Cowdrey, 'The Enigma of Archbishop Lanfranc', *Haskins Society Journal*, 6 (1994), pp.129-52. For the older view, see Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec*, p.191: 'Lanfranc was a traditionalist, untouched by the radical experiments of the day'. See also R.W.Pfaff, 'Lanfranc's Supposed Purge of the Anglo-Saxon Calendar', in *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages*, ed. T.Reuter (London, 1992), pp.95-108; T.A.Heslop, 'The Canterbury Calendars and the Norman Conquest', in *Canterbury and the Norman Conquest: Churches, Saints, and Scholars, 1066-1109*, ed. R.Eales and R.Sharpe (London, 1995), pp.53-85.

*Abbatum*, one of five lives which were composed for this community.<sup>7</sup> Miles placed these texts alongside two earlier lives of Bec abbots, Gilbert Crispin's *Vita Herluini* and Eadmer of Canterbury's *Vita Anselmi*.<sup>8</sup> In the *praefatio* to this corpus, Miles provided a rationale for writing these texts: 'Long ago it was customary to set up statutes of one's ancestors and to keep a written record of their achievements for the edification of posterity; theirs was the pattern of life to be emulated'.<sup>9</sup> Thus, Miles portrayed the acts and deeds of the "great men" of Bec as an exemplar or model for future monks; in this way, these saints' lives held both a didactic and a commemorative function.

Miles's hagiographical accomplishments can be viewed in the context of a strong tradition of historical writing that existed at Bec, and which flourished particularly in the first few decades of the twelfth century. Indeed, Sally Vaughn has suggested that the monks had 'a kind of philosophy of history' that they particularly valued.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, the hagiography Miles composed and compiled should be considered as much a way of articulating the community's past as it was an edifying account of Bec's

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<sup>7</sup> According to the editors of the *PL*, Miles probably also wrote the lives of William of Belmont and Boso, two later abbots of Bec: *PL*, 150, cols.695-96, n.76. Two other lives, that of Theobald, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury, and Letardus, were written by anonymous authors at Bec.

<sup>8</sup> For editions of the *Life of Herluin*, see J.A.Robinson, *Gilbert Crispin, Abbot of Westminster: A Study of the Abbey Under Norman Rule. Notes and Documents Relating to Westminster Abbey*, 3 Vols. (Cambridge, 1911), Vol.3, pp.83-110; *The Works of Gilbert Crispin, Abbot of Westminster*, ed. A.S.Abulafia and G.R.Evans (Oxford, 1986), pp.185-212; *PL* 150, cols.698-714. For the edition of the *Life of Anselm*, see Eadmer, *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. and trans. R.W.Southern (Oxford, 1962).

<sup>9</sup> Cited in M.Gibson, 'History at Bec in the Twelfth Century', in *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Richard William Southern*, ed. R.H.C.Davis and J.Wallace-Hadrill (Oxford, 1981), pp.167-86, at p.170. The *praefatio* is found at *PL*, 150, cols. 695-96.

<sup>10</sup> S.N.Vaughn, 'Among these Authors are the Men of Bec: Historical Writing among the Monks of Bec', *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 17 (2000), pp.1-18, at p.2; *passim, eadem, The Abbey Bec and the Anglo-Norman Regnum* (London, 1981).

abbots. In short, the *Vita Lanfranci* was part of an ongoing process in which the historical traditions at Bec were to become further developed and consolidated.

However, we should note that the placement of the *Vita Lanfranci* alongside the other lives of Bec's abbots was not necessarily how Crispin originally conceived the *vita*. The *Vita Lanfranci* drew extensively upon Gilbert Crispin's (c.1045–1117/18) earlier life of Herluin.<sup>11</sup> Gilbert, a student of Bec, and later, at the request of Lanfranc, Abbot of Westminster (c.1085), wrote the *Vita Herluini* at some point between 1107 x 1118. In it, Gilbert described how Herluin, a former knight, founded a community at Bec c.1039, promoting an ascetic regime which placed importance upon manual work.<sup>12</sup> Lanfranc was also a central character in Gilbert's *vita*. Gilbert explained how Lanfranc had joined the community at Bec in 1048 and, with the permission of Herluin, set up a school there that would become famous for its scholarship and attract students from throughout Christendom. The *Vita Lanfranci*, reflecting a later tradition, instead suggested that the motive for Lanfranc establishing the school was due to the condition in which he found the Bec monks: 'Now the brethren who were assembled in this place were not very well educated, or fully versed in their religion ... [Lanfranc observed] the slackness of the brethren, the low state of their morals and their transgressions against the monastic rule'.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> S.N.Vaughn, 'Lanfranc, Anselm and the School of Bec: In Search of the Students of Bec', in The Culture of Christendom: Essays in Medieval History in Commemoration of Denis L.T. Bethell, ed. M.A.Meyer (London, 1993), pp.155-82, at p.160.

<sup>12</sup> See C.Harper-Bill, 'Herluin Abbot of Bec and his Biographer', ed. D.Baker, SCH, 15 (Oxford, 1978), pp.15-25; Gibson, Lanfranc of Bec, pp.23-38.

<sup>13</sup> *Vita Lanfranci*, p.675.

In his *Vita Herluini*, Gilbert Crispin had already emphasised the part that Lanfranc played in Bec's development. In Miles's *Vita Lanfranci*, however, the tradition appears to have heightened the reforming nature of Lanfranc's actions. By the mid-twelfth century, the growth of the library at Bec, and the importance attached to historical writing, may have inspired authors such as Miles to retrospectively apply a greater significance to the intellectual origins of the community. Having examined the context in which the *Vita Lanfranci* was written, the passage cited at the start of this introduction assumes a different significance. Certainly, Miles may have simply recorded a Canterbury tradition, yet his stress upon reform and moral instruction provides an interesting parallel to Miles's depiction of Lanfranc's activity at Bec. Perhaps, therefore, Miles was emphasising the continuities between Lanfranc's life as a monk and his later life as archbishop.

To a large extent, the way in which the *Vita Lanfranci* has been studied mirrors how twelfth-century episcopal *vitae* from England have been utilised in modern scholarship. Treated as a backdrop, or way into their subjects, questions have been teased out about particular bishops, but most are not studied in and of themselves.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, for the early twelfth century, the historiography has been dominated by the study of the Norman Conquest and its repercussions. The emphasis has been largely devoted to how twelfth-century writers represented the past and their religious institutions, and the role that Anglo-Saxon bishops played as representatives

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<sup>14</sup> See, for example, H.Vollrath, 'Was Thomas Becket Chaste? Understanding Episodes in the Becket Lives', *ANS*, 27 (2005), pp.198-209; K.A.Fenton, 'The Question of Masculinity in William of Malmesbury's Presentation of Wulfstan of Worcester', *ANS*, 28 (2006), pp.124-37.

of monastic or cathedral communities.<sup>15</sup> Hagiography produced in the aftermath of the Conquest is viewed as a product of communities wanting to update or establish a written record which set out the relationship between a saintly founder or benefactor and his or her institution.<sup>16</sup>

It is not my intention to examine the *Vita Lanfranci* in full. However, this brief investigation is pertinent to my study because it demonstrates that episcopal *vitae* can help shed light on different, yet no less important questions, about how the compositional and historical contexts of such texts influenced the way an author would depict a bishop. As we have demonstrated, Lanfranc's life and career has been studied in great detail, with the *vita* being used by Cowdrey to add to his biographical portrait. However, less has been written about the *vita* in the context of Bec's historical and hagiographical traditions; and, even here we have to be careful in applying a later meaning or function upon a text. Crispin's depiction of Lanfranc as archbishop was both monastic and Bec-centred. Thus, we might conclude that the *vita* reveals much more about the community for which it was written, than its actual subject. In this thesis the focus, therefore, will be upon the authors of saints' lives and the intended audience of those texts, rather than the saints themselves (see section IV

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<sup>15</sup> For example, N.Robertson, 'Dunstan and Monastic Reform: Tenth-Century Fact or Twelfth-Century Fiction?', *ANS*, 28 (2006), pp.153-67; J.Barrow, 'How the Twelfth-Century Monks of Worcester Perceived their Past', in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. P.Magdalino (London, 1992), pp.53-74. For the wider context of medieval historiography see R.W.Southern, 'Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing, 4: The Sense of the Past', *TRHS*, 23, (1973), pp.246-56.

<sup>16</sup> S.J.Ridyard, "'*Condigna veneratio*": Post-Conquest Attitudes to the Saints of the Anglo-Saxons', *ANS*, 9 (1986), pp.179-206; D.Townsend, 'Anglo-Norman Hagiography and the Norman Transition', *Exemplaria*, 3 (1991), pp.385-433; P.A.Hayward, 'Translation-Narratives in Post-Conquest Hagiography and English Resistance to the Norman Conquest', *ANS*, 21 (1998), pp.67-93; J.Rubenstein, 'Liturgy Against History: The Competing Visions of Lanfranc and Eadmer of Canterbury', *Speculum*, 74 (1999), pp.279-309.

for a list of the saints' lives to be studied). Notwithstanding, the relationship between the two needs to be unpicked; in order for this to be achieved, the following methodological questions will be addressed throughout this thesis:

1. Who determined how the past was to be presented; and who decided upon the structure and subject matter of a saint's life?
2. To what extent was this vision an articulation of a community's understanding of the past, and how far did the author's own personal agenda or perspective influence the construction of the narrative?
3. Having been written, was a saint's life automatically given credence by the community; indeed, can we assume that hagiography is a trustworthy indicator of how an institution viewed its past?

Clearly, these questions are relevant for all periods, but as we shall demonstrate, they are of particular importance in a discussion of twelfth-century episcopal *vitae*.

## II. Historiography

The figure of the medieval bishop has, in recent years, increasingly become the focal point of many studies.<sup>17</sup> To some extent, this is a consequence of the unique position he occupied in medieval society; he often acted as an arbitrator or intermediary

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<sup>17</sup> For example, see the contributions in *The Bishop: Power and Piety at the First Millennium*, ed. S.Gilsdorf (Münster, 2004); *The Bishop Reformed: Studies of Episcopal Power and Culture in the Central Middle Ages*, ed. J.S.Ott and A.T.Jones (Aldershot, 2007); *Bishops, Texts and the Use of Canon Law Around 1100: Essays in Honour of Martin Brett*, ed. B.C.Brasington and K.G.Cushing (Aldershot, 2008).

between the Church and State, the laity and priesthood, and the values of the aristocracy on the one hand, and the religious norms of either the monastic or secular Church on the other. As Sean Gilsdorf has suggested, 'the episcopacy is in the middle of things, not as a permeable membrane or medium of interaction, but as a node, a nexus, a mediator in the fullest sense of the term'.<sup>18</sup> The reform movements of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, however, have been viewed as a development which destroyed this careful balance, heightening the tension between episcopal ideal and practice.<sup>19</sup> The stress on simony, clerical marriage and lay investiture resulted in a campaign primarily concerned with policing the behaviour of both the clergy and laity.<sup>20</sup>

The degree to which bishops should act as arbiters of morals and representatives of clerical reform was also emphasised in reform literature; as Katherine Cushing states, for Gregory VII, 'issues of personal behaviour had become matters of correct faith'.<sup>21</sup> In this respect, bishops were expected to set an example, but they were also

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<sup>18</sup> S.Gilsdorf, 'Preface', The Bishop: Power and Piety at the First Millennium, ed. *idem*, pp.xiii-xvii, at p.xiii; see also his article in the same collection 'Bishops in the Middle: Mediatory Politics and the Episcopacy', pp.51-74.

<sup>19</sup> M.C.Miller, The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950-1150 (Ithaca 1993), p.174; in contrast to an earlier period in which bishops were often studied in the context of local ecclesiastical and secular politics, see: T.Reuter, 'Ein Europa der Bischöfe: Das Zeitalter Burchards von Worms', in Bischof Burchard von Worms 1000-1025, ed. W.Hartmann (Mainz, 2000), pp.1-28.

<sup>20</sup> Works that I have consulted include: K.F.Morrison, 'The Gregorian Reform,' in Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century, ed. B.McGinn and J.Meyendorff (New York, 1985); U-R.Blumenthal, The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century (Philadelphia, 1988); G.Tellenbach, The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century, trans. T.Reuter (Cambridge, 1993); Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform, ed. M.Frassetto (New York, 1998); I.S.Robinson, 'Reform and the Church, 1073-1122', in The New Cambridge Medieval History VI, ed. D.Luscombe and J.Riley-Smith (Cambridge, 2004), pp.268-334; Reforming the Church before Modernity: Patterns, Problems, and Approaches, ed. C.M.Bellitto and L.I.Hamilton (Aldershot, 2005).

<sup>21</sup> K.Cushing, Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change, (Manchester, 2005), p.125.

considered accountable for the clergy in their charge. One area of study has been to examine the extent to which members of the episcopate were instigators of this change, rather than passive agents in the face of papal dictates. Recent scholars of the reform movement have highlighted how the aims and intellectual underpinnings of reform were realised in practice, within specific local contexts.<sup>22</sup> Reform also had an influence upon hagiography: Maureen Miller's study of the episcopal *vitae* of St Ulrich, bishop of Augsburg (c.923-c.973), demonstrated that later re-writings of Ulrich's legend were more likely to reflect the concerns of the reform movement and thus effect how Ulrich's sanctity was portrayed.<sup>23</sup>

#### (a) Work on English Bishops

In England, mirroring the older continental historiography, reform has been often discussed from a top-down perspective. Studies have concentrated on the success (or failure) of English archbishops to implement the policies of the Gregorian reform in England.<sup>24</sup> A question that has received some attention is to what extent continental reforms were adopted in England after the Norman Conquest.<sup>25</sup> Again, less emphasis has been paid to the English response to reform, or indeed whether communities

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<sup>22</sup> See for instance M.C.Miller, 'Secular Clergy and Religious Life: Verona in the Age of Reform', in Medieval Religion: New Approaches, ed. C.H.Berman (London, 2005), pp.156-82.

<sup>23</sup> M.C.Miller, 'Masculinity, Reform, and Clerical Culture: Narratives of Episcopal Holiness in the Gregorian Era', Church History, 71 (2003), pp.25-52; Kathleen Cushing adds in regard to Miller's article that 'it is the progressive accentuation of the individual agency of and even isolation of the bishop that begins to sound a note in eleventh-century hagiography': *eadem*, Reform and the Papacy, p.94.

<sup>24</sup> Z.N.Brooke, The English Church and the Papacy: From the Conquest to the Reign of John, (Cambridge, 1931); H.E.J.Cowdrey, 'The Gregorian Reform in the Anglo-Norman Lands and in Scandinavia', Studi Gregoriani, 13 (1989), pp.321-52. An excellent article on the pitfalls of this approach is J.Gilchrist, 'Was There a Gregorian Reform Movement in the Eleventh Century?', Canadian Catholic Historical Association; Study Sessions, 37 (1970), pp.1-10.

<sup>25</sup> C.N.L.Brooke, 'Gregorian Reform in Action: Clerical Marriage in England, 1050-1200', Cambridge Historical Journal, 12 (1956), pp.1-21; and J.Barrow, 'Hereford Bishops and Married Clergy, c.1130-1240', Historical Research, 9 (1987), pp.1-8.

initiated their own forms of reform.<sup>26</sup> Finally, whereas Anglo-Saxon historians have examined the relationship between the Benedictine reform movement and the representation of bishops within hagiography, an analogous study has yet to be undertaken of the impact of later reform currents upon twelfth-century hagiography.<sup>27</sup>

Historians of the English Church have traditionally been more concerned with clarifying the relationship between the *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, than examining literary representations. For example, Charles Duggan provided a traditional understanding of the development of the English Church from the Conquest to King John's death in 1216, noting that: 'The overall trend is one of gradual extension and ramification of papal influence in England, with many setbacks and against frequent opposition: a gradually rising plane broken by three peaks of crisis'.<sup>28</sup> The 'three peaks of crisis' to which Duggan referred concerned the struggles that took place between the Norman and Angevin Kings (Henry I, Henry II and John), and their respective Archbishops of Canterbury (Anselm, Thomas Becket and Stephen Langton), over the extent to which monarchical rights and customs outweighed papal and archiepiscopal authority. Although this oversimplifies the subtleties of his argument, Duggan viewed the developments of the twelfth century in England as a battle between two sides,

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<sup>26</sup> Although see V.I.J.Flint, 'The Elucidarius of Honorius Augustodunensis and Reform in Late Eleventh-Century England', *Revue Bénédictine*, 85 (1975), pp.178-89.

<sup>27</sup> For example, E.M.Trehanne, 'Aelfric's Account of St Swithun: Literature of Reform and Reward', in *Narrative and History in the Early Medieval West*, ed. E.M.Tyler and R.Balzaretti (Turnhout, 2006), pp.167-88.

<sup>28</sup> C.Duggan, 'From the Conquest to the Death of John', in *The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages*, ed. C.H.Lawrence (Stroud, 1999), pp.63-116, at p.77.

akin to a chessboard, in which the bishops were the pawns, albeit on the winning side. Episcopal *vitae* are often situated within the framework outlined above.

Not every study of the English Church has concentrated on this “conflict”. Others have focussed upon the structures and personnel of the secular Church. Three historians have been particularly influential; their works have revolutionised the way in which we view the twelfth-century English church, yet their approach to hagiography can be equally problematic. In *From Becket to Langton: English Church Government, 1170-1213* (1956), Christopher Cheney moved away from a political perspective.<sup>29</sup> His study assessed bishops in their role as judges, administrators and pastors. In two of his chapters, he explored their relationships vis-à-vis the papacy and the monarchy, while two further chapters situated English bishops within their diocese, examining their responsibilities to both the clergy and laity. In this respect, Cheney investigated what bishops did when they were not ‘wrangling with the lay government’.<sup>30</sup> Cheney’s study, which located the bishop both at a local, national and supra-national level, and examined how the episcopate were influenced by both insular and continental developments, established a framework for later works, such as Frank Barlow’s *The English Church, 1066-1154* (1979).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> C.R.Cheney, *From Becket to Langton: English Church Government 1170-1213* (Manchester, 1956).

<sup>30</sup> Cheney, *Becket to Langton*, p. 119.

<sup>31</sup> F.Barlow, *The English Church, 1066-1154: A History of the Anglo-Norman Church* (London, 1979). See also H.R.Loyn, *The English Church 940-1154* (Harlow, 2000).

Likewise, in *The English Church under Henry I* (1975), Martin Brett investigated how the secular Church was administered in practice, concentrating on its organizational and pastoral structures.<sup>32</sup> Brett also approached the Church from a hierarchical perspective, and his monograph was arranged with this in mind. He first examined the extent of papal authority and influence in England throughout Henry's reign, and then discussed in turn the roles and functions of English archbishops, bishops, cathedral clergy and finally the parish clergy. Although he focussed solely upon Henry I's reign, Brett, like Cheney, tended to examine the systems of ecclesiastical government rather than its local manifestations. Nevertheless, he provided a significant counterpoint to earlier studies, such as N.F.Cantor's *Church, Kingship, and Lay Investiture in England, 1089-1135* (1958), which had focused upon the political and polemical debates afforded by the "Gregorian Reforms".<sup>33</sup>

Finally, in *Bishop and Chapter in Twelfth-Century England: A Study of the 'Mensa Episcopalis'* (1994), E.U.Crosby highlighted the increasing division of the episcopal and capitular *mensa* throughout the course of the twelfth century.<sup>34</sup> Although Cheney had discussed this briefly in his work, Crosby examined the evidence for all seventeen of England's episcopal sees; he demonstrated that the separation of jurisdictional and proprietary authority between bishops and chapters was not a uniform process. By exploring the dynamics between English bishops and their respective cathedral communities, Crosby situated the former within a specific institutional context, that of

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<sup>32</sup> M.Brett, *The English Church under Henry I* (London, 1975).

<sup>33</sup> N.F.Cantor, *Church, Kingship, and Lay Investiture in England, 1089-1135* (Princeton, 1958).

<sup>34</sup> E.U.Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter in Twelfth-Century England: A Study of the 'Mensa Episcopalis'* (Cambridge, 1994).

their cathedral. He also suggested that the cathedral chapter had its own interests and concerns, which were not always analogous to that of their bishop.

To understand how bishops conceived of their own vocation and responsibilities to the wider Christian society, it was thought essential to examine the mechanics and practicalities of their profession. Nonetheless, there was an inherent problem in situating bishops in their diocesan environment. As Cheney put it, 'fully half of the fifty-two bishops of the seventeen English sees [from 1170-1213] received no notice, good or bad, in the contemporary writings which have come down to us; and the dearth of administrative records of the Church from this period makes it impossible to say how efficiently most of these men conducted diocesan business'.<sup>35</sup> One source that all three writers utilised to sketch more fully the provision of pastoral care, or the relationship between the bishop and his chapter, was hagiography. Even so, this was done with some hesitation, and with frequent caveats; in particular, there was an acknowledgment that saints' lives portrayed ideal behaviour or that they sought to reinterpret an institution's foundation in the light of contemporary concerns, and therefore was problematic. Consequently, episcopal saints' lives were often only used where the evidence was limited or unreliable. For example, Brett used the *Vita Sancti Wulfstani*, even though it reflected an earlier period than his study, because, he argued, it illuminated 'important issues in the period on which there is little contemporary information'.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Cheney, *Becket to Langton*, p.26.

<sup>36</sup> Brett, *The English Church*, p.3.

The move from a political to an institutional approach was mirrored too in monographs in which bishops were the primary focus of study. David Knowles's *The Episcopal Colleagues of Thomas Becket* (1951) was criticised by Richard Southern, for example, for focussing too much upon whether each bishop had supported either Henry I or Thomas Becket.<sup>37</sup> Later studies, such as Christopher Cheney's *Hubert Walter* (1967) and Mary Cheney's *Roger, Bishop of Worcester, 1164-1179* (1980), instead situated their subjects within a variety of categories.<sup>38</sup> The latter, for instance, focused on three aspects of Roger's career; although she explored his role in the conflict between Henry I and Becket, she also investigated the evidence for his episcopal duties within his diocese and his role as a papal judge-delegate. Her work and that of others were not biographies *per se*, not least because they frequently focussed on certain types of evidence; in the case of Cheney, Roger's correspondence and episcopal *acta*. As Richard Pfaff stated in a review of her work: 'there is virtually no information about spirituality or liturgy and very little about the cultural activity notable during Roger's episcopate'.<sup>39</sup> To some extent, her approach was a consequence of the evidence available; however, Cheney did prioritise certain sources over others. Notably, she was reluctant to use narrative sources because of their supposed 'inaccuracies'. One historian who went against the grain in this respect was Adrian Morey in his *Bartholomew of Exeter, Bishop and Canonist: A Study in the Twelfth Century* (1937); almost fifty years prior to Cheney, Morey would use Gerald of Wales's

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<sup>37</sup> D.Knowles, *The Episcopal Colleagues of Thomas Becket* (New York, 1951); R.W.Southern, 'Review of *The Episcopal Colleagues of Archbishop Thomas Becket* by D.Knowles', *English Historical Review*, 67 (1952), pp.87-90.

<sup>38</sup> C.R.Cheney, *Hubert Walter* (London, 1967); M.Cheney, *Roger, Bishop of Worcester, 1164-1179* (Oxford, 1980).

<sup>39</sup> R.W.Pfaff, 'Review of *Roger, Bishop of Worcester, 1164-1179* by M.G.Cheney', *American Historical Review*, 87 (1982), p.165.

short account of Bartholomew to great effect.<sup>40</sup> Clearly, the sources that historians have used in their studies (or had at their disposal), influenced the questions they asked, and how they viewed their subject.

One consequence of the historiography has been to view bishops within either a pastoral or political framework. Stephen Marritt, in his study of King Stephen's episcopate, has critiqued this perspective and argued that this dichotomy is flawed.<sup>41</sup> In other words, he suggests that to view bishops either as holy men, or as opportunist careerists, paints a false picture of episcopal culture.<sup>42</sup> Marritt contends that to understand the interplay of episcopal roles and functions, a greater focus is needed upon how bishops acted within their diocese. Even so, although Marritt has moved the debate forward, it nonetheless remains focussed on what bishops themselves prioritised. Less is asked about what communities or institutions wanted or expected from their bishop, and how this varied according to their own background. To some extent, Marritt's warning might exacerbate the tendency for church historians to neglect hagiography, regarding it as aspirational in nature. Certainly, we should distinguish between the evidence for episcopal practice, from how contemporaries conceived of the episcopal office in narratives. Yet, to ignore how the latter might have influenced the way bishops discharged their office is to neglect the very real

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<sup>40</sup> A. Morey, Bartholomew of Exeter, Bishop and Canonist: a Study in the Twelfth Century with the Text of Bartholomew's Penitential from the Cotton MS. Vitellius A.XII (London, 1937).

<sup>41</sup> S. Marritt, 'King Stephen and the Bishops', *ANS*, 24 (2001), pp.129-44.

<sup>42</sup> For example, C. Duggan, 'Richard Ilchester, Royal Servant and Bishop', *TRHS*, 5<sup>th</sup> Series, 16 (1966), pp.1-21; D.E. Desborough, 'Politics and Prelacy in the Late Twelfth Century: The Career of Hugh de Nonant, Bishop of Coventry, 1188-1198', *Historical Research*, 64 (1991), pp.1-14; S.M. Christelow, 'Chancellors and Curial Bishops: Ecclesiastical Promotions and Power in Anglo-Norman England', *ANS*, 22 (2000), pp.49-70. Henry Loyn has also argued that such distinctions are anachronistic: *idem*, 'William's Bishops: Some Further Thoughts', *ANS*, 10 (1987), pp.223-35.

importance of literary and hagiographical models as a template for episcopal behaviour.

It is also important to note that in modern biographies of bishops who were also the subject of a *vita*, hagiography has been under utilised. For instance, Avrom Saltman, in his biography of Theobald of Canterbury, only refers once to Theobald's *vita*.<sup>43</sup> If we take Archbishop Anselm as a more prominent example, twentieth-century historians have come to widely different interpretations of him. Interestingly, Sally Vaughn believed that Anselm at times modified his behaviour to conform to the kinds of actions or topoi that are normally associated with hagiography. Southern believed that this argument called into question Anselm's sincerity, a charge rejected by Vaughn.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, Mary Ruud has suggested that there is a clear relationship between topoi utilised in episcopal saints' lives, and the actual actions of medieval bishops.<sup>45</sup> Both Southern and Vaughn sought to uncover the "real" Anselm, either as a genuine man of religion or as an astute politician, yet they differed in the way in which they understood the role of *exempla*.

A different perspective has been to examine the authors of saints' lives. In *St Anselm and his Biographer* (1963), for instance, Southern studied the intellectual and cultural

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<sup>43</sup> A.Saltman, *Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1956), p.79.

<sup>44</sup> R.W.Southern, 'Sally Vaughn's Anselm: An Examination of the Foundations', *Albion*, 20 (1988), pp.181-204; S.N.Vaughn, 'Anselm: Saint and Statesman', *Albion*, 20 (1988), pp.205-20. Vaughn's earlier articles include: *eadem*, 'St. Anselm: Reluctant Archbishop?', *Albion*, 6 (1974), pp.240-50; *eadem*, 'St. Anselm of Canterbury: The Philosopher-Saint as a Politician', *Journal of Medieval History*, 1 (1975), pp.279-305.

<sup>45</sup> M.Ruud, "'Unworthy Servants": The Rhetoric of Resignation at Canterbury, 1070-1170', *Journal of Religious History*, 22 (1998), pp.1-13.

contexts of both Anselm and Eadmer, the author of the *Vita Anselmi*.<sup>46</sup> To some extent, Southern anticipated the view that ‘the life depicted in a biography is ultimately inseparable from the life of a biographer’.<sup>47</sup> More recent works, such as Michael Staunton’s *Thomas Becket and his Biographers* (2006), have added to this trend; in particular, Staunton was one of the first scholars to situate fully Becket’s Canterbury hagiographers within their local context.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, the focus on both Anselm and the corpus of Becket’s hagiography demonstrates the extent to which the study of bishops’ *vitae* is still dominated by a particular set of episcopal *vitae*. To some extent this is also fuelled by the terminology that has been employed to describe these texts. This is exemplified by a comment made by Giles Constable in his review of Farmer’s edition of Adam of Eynsham’s *Life of St Hugh* and Southern’s edition of Eadmer’s *Life of St Anselm*. Constable remarked that: ‘Both these works, in spite of the miracles they record, may be considered biographies rather than hagiographies ... [as] they are both primarily concerned with the lives and actions of men rather than with the power of God’.<sup>49</sup> Constable here makes a very unhelpful distinction, and it is worth asking if medieval contemporaries would have really viewed such texts in these terms.<sup>50</sup> This is not to argue against the idea that certain texts can provide greater insight into their

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<sup>46</sup> R.W.Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer: a Study of Monastic Life and Thought, 1059-c.1130* (London, 1963).

<sup>47</sup> J.Rubenstein, ‘Biography and Autobiography in the Middle Ages’, in *Writing Medieval History*, ed. N.Partner (London, 2005), pp.22-41, at p.23.

<sup>48</sup> M.Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers* (Woodbridge, 2006). His methodology is also exemplified in his earlier essay: *idem*, ‘Exile in Eadmer’s *Historia Novorum* and *Vita Anselmi*’, in *Saint Anselm: Bishop and Thinker*, ed. R.Majeran and E.I.Zielinski (Lubin, 1999), pp.47-59.

<sup>49</sup> G.Constable, ‘Review of *The Life of St. Hugh of Lincoln*, by D.L.Douie and D.H.Farmer; *The Life of St. Anselm: Archbishop of Canterbury*, by R.W.Southern; *Saint Anselm and his Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought, 1059-c.1130*, by R.W.Southern’, *Speculum*, 39 (1964), pp. 515-19, at p. 518.

<sup>50</sup> As Walter Berschin has stated: ‘In the Middle Ages the overlap shared by biography and hagiography was greater than is today commonly assumed’: *idem*, ‘Biography’, trans. S.A.Schulz, in *Medieval Latin: An Introduction and Bibliographical Guide*, ed. F.A.C.Mantello and A.G.Rigg (Washington, 1996), pp.607-17, at p.607. For a recent study where hagiography and biography are not seen as two concrete genres, see I.van’t Spijker, ‘Saints and Despair: Twelfth-Century Hagiography as “Intimate Biography”’, in *The Invention of Saintliness*, ed. A.B.Mulder-Bakker (London, 2002).

subject's character or personality. Yet, the emphasis on hagiography as merely panegyric or pious fiction, neglects the ways these narratives can tell us about contemporary concerns. Furthermore, there is a tendency to prioritise monastic conceptions of the holy life. At times this may be a reflection of the surviving material. Examining Rouen, for instance, Felice Lifshitz pointed out that all eight of the see's episcopal saints had *vita* written for them by the monasteries that held their relics.<sup>51</sup> It is not necessarily a question of problematising this bias, but making sure to recognise that the monastic perspective does not provide the complete picture.

The study of the English Church and the role and function of bishops is, as we have demonstrated above, often viewed from different dichotomies; more generally, that of bishops as either politicians or pastors. Less examined are the differences between the practice and conception of episcopal office, and the relationship between the kinds of sources that are used to shed light on both. The reason why such texts have been absent from wider ecclesiastical debates is due in part to the fact that episcopal *vitae* do not always shed light on the type of questions that have provided a historiographical framework for the Anglo-Norman Church. Those saints' lives that have been utilised are, in general, those labelled biographies; they are drawn upon because they apparently provide a greater level of verisimilitude. This has led to a situation where episcopal *vitae* are only tackled from an intellectual perspective or by

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<sup>51</sup> F.Lifshitz, 'Eight Men In: Rouennais Traditions of Archiepiscopal Sanctity', Haskins Society Journal, 2 (1990), pp.63-74, p.64.

Latinists drawn to questions of literary style or language, rather than assimilated into the historiography of the twelfth-century Church.<sup>52</sup>

### (b) Approaches to Hagiography

In order then to examine episcopal *vitae* effectively, two threads of enquiry need to be combined: medieval bishops and hagiography. Each have vast historiographies whose aims and methods can be at variance and, at times, are difficult to reconcile. The output on hagiography in the last century has been vast; indeed, one only needs to look at the introduction to Thomas Head's *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology* (2001) to see how the study of saints' lives has mushroomed in recent years.<sup>53</sup> Nonetheless, the development in this field has provided a set of research questions not currently addressed in current scholarship on Anglo-Norman episcopal *vitae*. This disjunction can be explained by the fact that most scholars of hagiography have concentrated on the continental evidence. As it is not possible to comment on all the works published in this field, the following section will highlight a number of the more important works, and suggest how these developments justify the approach that shall be taken in my study of twelfth-century episcopal *vitae*.

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<sup>52</sup> In particular the work of Michael Lapidge has been almost ignored by twelfth-century Church historians: *idem*, 'The Medieval Hagiography of St Ecgbwine', Research Papers, Vale of Evesham Historical Society, 6 (1977), pp.77-93; *idem*, 'Dominic of Evesham's *Vita S. Ecgwini Episcopi et Confessoris*', Analecta Bollandiana, 96 (1978), pp.65-104; *idem*, The Cult of St. Swithun (Oxford, 2003). See also The Saint of London: The Life and Miracles of St Erkenwald, ed. E.G.Whatley (Binghampton, 1989).

<sup>53</sup> T. Head, Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology (New York, 2001), pp.xiii-xxxviii.

In his classic study entitled *Les Légendes hagiographiques* (1905), translated into English in 1962, Hippolyte Delehaye provided a methodical and ordered study of medieval saints' lives; to some extent, Delehaye's work was a history of the genre and its early roots.<sup>54</sup> Although Delehaye attempted to apply a scientific 'rigour' to the study of hagiography, he did not present saints' lives as faithful accounts of their subject, but instead viewed such texts as stories or anecdotes that were products of popular culture. Nevertheless, Delehaye was keen to point out that saints' lives also came in multiple forms. As he stated, 'the work of the hagiographer may be historical, but it is not necessarily so. It may assume any literary form suitable to the glorification of the saints, from an official record adapted to the use of the faithful, to a poetical composition of the most exuberant character wholly detached from reality'.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, Delehaye did note the literary shape of saints' lives; in particular, he explored the way in which topoi, motifs and rhetorical strategies peppered these texts.<sup>56</sup> Finally, Delehaye was also preoccupied with ascertaining the origins of hagiographical traditions; to some extent, he viewed later revisions as a corruption of the authenticity of the initial narrative. In this respect, he differs from modern scholars who tend to tie later rewritings of *vitae* to their contemporary contexts.

More recently, but no less groundbreaking, has been the work of Peter Brown. In 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', which was developed further in

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<sup>54</sup> H.Delehaye, *Les Légendes Hagiographiques* (Brussels, 1905); trans. D.Attwater, *The Legends of the Saints* (Fordham, 1962). For Delehaye and the context in which he was writing his study, see T.J.Heffernan, 'Hippolyte Delehaye, 1859-1941', in *Medieval Scholarship: Literature and Philology*, ed. H.Damico *et al* (New York and London, 1998), pp.215-26.

<sup>55</sup> Delehaye, *Legends of the Saints*, p.4.

<sup>56</sup> For hagiographical topoi, see also C.W.Jones, *Saints' Lives and Chronicles in Early England* (New York, 1947), pp.51-79.

'The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity', Brown discussed how a Holy Man's sanctity was authenticated through the patronage of his followers.<sup>57</sup> Brown and later commentators then focused their attention on the ways in which the Holy Man's reputation and status was managed after his death. For example, in his *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (1980), Brown explored the social dynamics of a cult; by applying an anthropological critique, he suggested that social elites, often bishops, used saints' cults to legitimise their own power and authority.<sup>58</sup>

Subsequent historians have tended to follow Brown rather than Delehaye's approach. Brown's investigation was clearly fruitful; he was able to show how sanctity was an attribute that was culturally constructed, and he highlighted the socio-political circumstances in which a cult emerged. Nevertheless, later scholars criticised Brown for viewing such texts as tools of social hegemony, and thus equating these narratives with propaganda. Furthermore, in producing a meta-narrative that sought to explain the function of late-antique hagiography, Brown sometimes neglected to focus upon the specific motives and purposes of individual texts. Philip Rousseau, for instance, would argue that 'Any judgement on the 'function' of the holy man must take into account the function of the text'.<sup>59</sup> Rousseau's comment reflected a more post-modern approach, and while this may be open to the charge of reductionism, the close study of the text does not exclude us from examining the narrative within its social, albeit local

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<sup>57</sup> P. Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 61 (1971), pp. 80-101; *idem*, 'The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity', *Representations*, 1 (1983), pp.1-25.

<sup>58</sup> P.Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1980), especially pp.62-63.

<sup>59</sup> P.Rousseau, 'Ascetics as Mediators and as Teachers', in *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. J.Howard-Johnston and P.A.Hayward (Oxford, 1999), pp.45-62, at p.51.

context.

To focus upon the text or hagiographical sources is a continuation and advancement of Delehaye's earlier study. Scholars of hagiography increasingly looked afresh at saints' lives as part of a genre, but, at the same time, prioritised the author and audience of a *vita*. In *Sacred Biography: Saints and their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (1992), Heffernan stated that a saint's life 'provides a documentary witness to the process of sanctification for the community and in so doing becomes itself part of the sacred tradition it serves to document'.<sup>60</sup> Not only did Heffernan seek to explore the literary conventions used within hagiography, he also questioned the motives of the authors of the lives, and the extent to which they shaped the texts for their audience. In some respects, Heffernan was reacting to scholars of a previous generation; the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the use of quantitative approaches and social-scientific methodologies in the study of hagiography.<sup>61</sup> These studies often sought a way of classifying or systemising medieval sanctity, and, therefore, they often emphasised the similarities with the genre, while overlooking the distinctions.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> T.J.Heffernan, *Sacred Biography: Saints and their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1992), p.16.

<sup>61</sup> For example, M.Goodich, 'A Profile of Thirteenth Century-Sainthood,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 18 (1976), pp.429-37; D.Weinstein and R.M.Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000-1700* (Chicago, 1986). See also the criticisms of this approach: A.M.Klienbergl, *Prophets in Their Own Country: Living Saints and the Making of Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages* (Chicago, 1997), pp.9-17.

<sup>62</sup> Medieval miracles have also been studied in this way: R.C.Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (Totowa, New Jersey, 1977).

In viewing saints' lives collectively, as part of a discrete genre, they have had a bad press: indeed, the late Timothy Reuter often spoke of the English historians' tendency to favour the archival document over the literary text.<sup>63</sup> Even a very recent author, Mary Giandrea, in her *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (2007), demonstrates a common misconception concerning the historical value of the genre:

Given hagiography's extreme debt to convention, there is probably not much to be learned about actual attitudes towards episcopal power in these texts.<sup>64</sup>

The homogenous nature of hagiography, along with its dependence on inherited conventions and models, does not mean that we cannot use such sources to shed light on contemporary expectations of episcopal roles: as Robert Bartlett has stated, 'saints' lives are both part of a genre of immense longevity *and* the products of individual circumstance and environments'.<sup>65</sup> Bartlett here raises two integral aspects of the hagiographical genre, characteristics which are not necessarily at variance. As Timothy Reuter has noted, 'the modern historian constantly runs the risk both of confusing the topical (in the sense of "*topos*-laden") with the typical, and of dismissing

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<sup>63</sup> T.Reuter, 'Modern Mentalities and Medieval Polities', in *Medieval Polities and Modern Mentalities*, ed. J.Nelson (Cambridge, 2007), pp.1-18, at pp.14-16.

<sup>64</sup> M.Giandrea, *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2007), p.42; M.Mesley, 'Review of *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England* by M.Giandrea', *Early Medieval Europe*, 16, (2008), pp.365-66.

<sup>65</sup> R.Bartlett, 'Rewriting Saints' Lives: The Case of Gerald of Wales', *Speculum*, 58 (1983), pp.598-613, at p.598.

the representative as merely topical'.<sup>66</sup> In other words, Reuter cautions us in thinking that hagiographers applied *topoi* unthinkingly; clearly we need to unpick the reasons for their use. Indeed, authors of hagiography were not forced by the 'dictates' of the genre to compose a generic timeless portrait of their saints. Instead, writers had at their disposal a repertoire of tools, conventions and *topoi* that could be employed to emphasise or point up particular attributes or characteristics. In the context of episcopal *vitae*, bishops might be shown to have similar qualities to popular episcopal archetypes; for example hagiographers throughout the Middle-Ages would frequently compare their subject with St Martin of Tours, who was the archetypal model for episcopal behaviour.<sup>67</sup> In this respect, different communities at different times might highlight specific models in ways that reflected their own values.

### (c) Identity

In recent years the use of the term "identity" has become popular in certain fields of history; and the "past" – how it is remembered, used, constructed and manipulated – is now considered to be an important facet of identity. As Richard Jenkins states, "Time is important in processes of identification because of the continuity which, even if only logically, is entailed in a claim to, or an attribution of, identity".<sup>68</sup> The trend throughout the nineties was to investigate how societies remembered their past, which itself grew

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<sup>66</sup> T.Reuter, 'Bishops, Rites of Passage, and the Symbolism of State in Pre-Gregorian Europe', *The Bishop: Power and Piety at the First Millennium*, ed. Gilsdorf, pp.23-36, at p.36.

<sup>67</sup> B.Rosenwein, 'St. Odo's St. Martin: The Uses of a Model,' *Journal of Medieval History*, 4 (1978), pp.317-31; S.L.Reames, 'Saint Martin of Tours in the *Legenda aurea* and Before', *Viator*, 12 (1981), pp.131-64.

<sup>68</sup> R.Jenkins, *Social Identity* (London, 1996), pp.27-28.

out of debates concerning orality and literacy, and how, at different periods in time, those societies adapted (or invented) new traditions.<sup>69</sup>

In respect to hagiography, this link was made as early as 1967 when Baudouin Gaiffer pointed out that ‘the aim of historical traditions is to justify the present, and “hagiographical” narratives express historical traditions’.<sup>70</sup> Yet, the concept of identity prompts the historian to ask whose traditions such narratives sought to justify, and to investigate why this was important. This is set out clearly in Matthew Innes’s introduction to *Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (2000).<sup>71</sup> He states that ‘Within a social group, shared beliefs about the past were a source of identity: the image of a common past informed a *Wir-Gefühl* (a sense of us-ness)’.<sup>72</sup> Innes’s articulation of this relationship was not new; it came after almost a decade of studies that had seen medievalists explore the interconnections between the use of the past, memory and the construction of identities in the present. A previous attempt to explore this issue, however, in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe* (1992) had been criticised by Gabrielle Spiegel, who had argued that many of the authors adopted an approach which neglected the literary genres of the texts that they studied. As she maintained, ‘It is the literary figuration of history through the choice of

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<sup>69</sup> The subject is vast; notable studies include J.Fentress and C.Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992); E.J.Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1992); P.Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1996); B.Stock, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Pennsylvania, 1997). See also W.Kansteiner, ‘Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies’, *History and Theory*, 41 (2002), pp.179-97.

<sup>70</sup> Cited in F.Lifshitz *The Norman Conquest of Pious Neustria* (Toronto, 1995) p.14, n.34.

<sup>71</sup> M.Innes, ‘Introduction: Using the Past, Interpreting the Present, Influencing the Future’, in *Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Y.Hen and M.Innes (Cambridge, 2000), pp.1-8.

<sup>72</sup> Innes, ‘Introduction’, p.1.

specific narrative techniques, rhetorical tropes, plots, images clusters, archetypes, and the like that provide structure and therefore meaning to the past'.<sup>73</sup>

To survey every work on medieval identities would be beyond the remit of this study; instead, this section will focus predominantly on how the term has been applied in the study of medieval hagiography and historical writing.<sup>74</sup> After outlining the development of the term in the last two decades, we will be better placed to demonstrate how the concept of identity will be applied within my own study. Scholars of the continent have, for quite some time, appreciated the ways in which saints' lives or episcopal biographies can shed light upon the intellectual and historical contexts in which such texts were composed. Among British scholars, Robert Bartlett and Simon Yarrow are unusual in investigating hagiographical material with such questions in mind.<sup>75</sup> The reasons for this are as much due to nationalist approaches to historiography, as they are with the kinds of sources that survive.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> See *Perception of the Past*, ed. Magdalino; G.Spiegel, 'Review of *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth Century Europe* ed. P.Magdalino', *Speculum*, 69 (1994), p.1220.

<sup>74</sup> I recognise that identity has been investigated in a range of other medieval genres, including art, architecture and surviving fabric: For example, L.Weigart, *Weaving Sacred Stories: French Choir Tapestries and the Performance of Clerical Identity* (Cornell, 2004); *Shaping Sacred Space and Institutional Identity in Romanesque Mural Painting: Essays in Honour of Otto Demus*, ed. T.E.A.Dale and J.Mitchell (Pindar, 2004); and, for a later period, see P.Sherlock, 'Episcopal Tombs in Early Modern England', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 55 (2004), pp.654-80. Although she does not specifically use the term identity, the following article is also important because Miller suggests that religion as a concept should be treated in a similar way to gender – as something that can define individuals or communities within the past: M.C.Miller, 'Religion Makes a Difference: Clerical and Lay Cultures in the Courts of Northern Italy, 1000-1300', *American Historical Review*, 105 (2000), pp.1095-1130.

<sup>75</sup> Geoffrey of Burton, *Life and Miracles of St Modwenna*, ed. and trans. R.Bartlett (Oxford, 2002); *The Miracles of Saint Aebbe of Coldingham and Saint Margaret of Scotland*, ed. and trans. R.Bartlett (Oxford, 2003); Yarrow, *Saints and their Communities*.

<sup>76</sup> See T.Reuter, 'Pre-Gregorian Mentalities', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 45 (1994), pp.465-74.

Thomas Head, in his *Hagiography and the Cult of Saints* (1990), set out to study ‘the identity of the saintly “fathers” of the diocese of Orléans and analyse how those “fathers” exerted their ‘pious local patronage’ on behalf of the clergy and laity of the Orléans in the period between the ninth and twelfth century’.<sup>77</sup> He noted that the promotion of saints was in large part a result of religious communities within the diocese appropriating such cults; as such, they retained a monopoly upon how a saint was portrayed. Head’s study demonstrated an interest in the relationship between clerical institutions, their patronage of local saints, and also how far cults were mediated to the laity. Hagiography was the literary medium through which authors constructed what Head termed the ‘saintly identities’ of their patrons. In his methodological approach, Head was indebted to Brown’s *The Cult of the Saints* (1981). Here, Brown had talked of authors of hagiography imprinting their own identities upon their saints.<sup>78</sup> Head, however, also emphasised how such writers were members of religious communities, and thus their agendas were, to some extent, influenced by their institutional loyalties.

This emphasis upon communities and saintly identity is notable too in Sharon Farmer’s *Communities of Saint Martin: Legend and Ritual in Medieval Tours* (1991).<sup>79</sup> Farmer examined the relationship between group identities and cultural expression, predominately through a study of historiographical and hagiographical material.<sup>80</sup> By exploring three medieval communities of Tours (the town of Tours, the chapter of St

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<sup>77</sup> T.Head, *Hagiography and the Cult of Saints: The Diocese of Orléans, 800-1200* (Cambridge, 1990), p.5.

<sup>78</sup> Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, pp.50-68.

<sup>79</sup> S.Farmer, *Communities of Saint Martin: Legend and Ritual in Medieval Tours* (London, 1991).

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p.ix.

Martin in Tours and the abbey of Marmoutier), Farmer set out to ask how these institutions 'defined themselves, or were defined, through the cult [of St Martin] in different ways'.<sup>81</sup> Farmer was one of the first historians to make an explicit link between group identities and hagiographical production; she framed her study by examining one cult and investigated its use within different institutional contexts. For instance, in her section concerning the abbey of Marmoutier, Farmer used the abbey's legendary and its historical writings, such as an in-house *Gesta Abbatum* (c.1137), to explore how the community constructed (and indeed manipulated) its own past, thus forging a collective identity.

Farmer's methodological approach increasingly became prevalent in works on medieval religious communities. Indeed, two studies of the mid-nineties show how saints' lives, foundation narratives and historical writings were all used to examine the relationship between collective identity and representations of the past. Amy Remensnyder's *Remembering King's Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Southern France* (1995) is a prime example of this new approach. Remensnyder examined a range of medieval foundation narratives, including saints' lives, and investigated how monastic communities constructed their image of the past through what she termed 'imaginative memory'. Although Remensnyder was more interested in how the past was remembered, she also maintained that by its very nature, the past has 'a power and often an authority that we might call "constitutive" [which] creates identity and meaning, whether of the institution, the social group, or even the individual, in the

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

present'.<sup>82</sup> In contrast, Felice Lifshitz, in *The Norman Conquest of Pious Neustria: Hagiographical Discourse and Saintry Relics, 684-1090* (1995), argued that 'the identities then in force in a given locality' was disseminated through the oral transmission of saints' lives in public, and that it was 'through participation in traditional festivities that most people, including the clergy acquired their identities and their visions of the past'.<sup>83</sup>

The emphasis in historiography on the relationship between identity, memory and historical writing continued in the late nineties. Brigitte Resl showed in her study of the medieval historiography of Passau that, just as many medieval monasteries sought to associate the present with their origins, so episcopal sees were also keen to establish an official version of their past. She argues that it was often through hagiography that ecclesiastical identity was cemented, as saints' lives were easily adaptable to the needs of the present.<sup>84</sup> Finally, in the same collection, Julia M. Smith examined six Breton *vitae* and argued that 'all of them are as much about intensely local identity and tradition as about saintly exemplars'.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> A. Remensnyder, Remembering King's Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Southern France (Ithaca and London, 1995), p.2.

<sup>83</sup> Lifshitz, Norman Conquest, p.13. She made no distinction between historical and hagiographical narratives.

<sup>84</sup> B. Resl, 'Ethnic History and Ecclesiastical Identity: The Example of Passau', in Integration und Herrschaft, ed. W. Pohl and M. Diesenberger (Vienna, 2002), pp.91-103.

<sup>85</sup> J.M. Smith, 'Confronting Identities: The Rhetoric and Reality of a Carolingian Frontier', in Integration und Herrschaft, ed. Pohl and Diesenberger, pp.169-204. It should be noted that both Resl and Smith are also influenced by the work of Walter Pohl, who edited the collection; they, therefore, draw connections between ethnicity and identity.

A few examples demonstrate how this concern has continued into the twenty-first century. Both Catherine Cubitt and Jennifer Paxton have looked at the relationship between memory and identity within specific monastic communities.<sup>86</sup> Some have taken the idea and applied it much more broadly. For instance, Rosamond McKitterick, in *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (2004), demonstrated how historical texts formed or reflected the political ideologies and identities of an entire race, the Franks.<sup>87</sup> Walter Pohl, in contrast, has argued that an analysis of a text's manuscript history, not just the text itself, was important in understanding how medieval historians tried to shape their understanding of the past.<sup>88</sup>

So far we have looked at how the concept of community or group identity has been explored within the context of hagiographical production. We have suggested that group identities can be construed through texts. Nonetheless, we can also examine the question of identity at a different level. If a saint or founder was considered to be integral to a community's origins, it figures that the way they would be represented might also have been a way of establishing the identity of an institution. For example, using a similar methodology to Head, Simon Coates investigated the extent to which Wearmouth-Jarrow defined itself as a religious community through the way it

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<sup>86</sup> C.Cubitt, 'Monastic Memory and Identity in Early Anglo-Saxon England', in *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain*, ed. W.O.Frazer and A.Tyrell (London, 2000), pp.253-76; J.Paxton, 'Forging Communities: Memory and Identity in Post-Conquest England', *Haskins Society Journal*, 10 (2001), pp.95-109.

<sup>87</sup> R. McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2004).

<sup>88</sup> See W.Pohl, 'Memory, Identity and Power in Lombard Italy', in *The Uses of the Past*, ed. Hen and Innes, pp.9-28. His methodological approach is set out in W.Pohl, 'History in Fragments: Montecassino's Politics of Memory', *Early Medieval Europe*, 10 (2001), pp.343-74.

remembered the activities of its former abbot, Ceolfrid.<sup>89</sup> Ultimately, Coates argued that Wearmouth-Jarrow ‘shared a strong sense of its own corporate identity and the part played by Abbot Ceolfrid in creating and maintaining that identity’.<sup>90</sup> In contrast, Stephanie Coué in *Hagiographie im Kontext*, analysed the early eleventh-century *Life of Burchard* and demonstrated how the author of the *vita* emphasised the bishop’s relationship with the canons of his diocesan cathedral of Worms. In this respect, the *Life’s* author, who was probably a canon of Worms, concentrated on Burchard’s interactions with his chapter, while other aspects of the bishop’s life were ignored or excluded.<sup>91</sup> Whereas Coates demonstrated that the memorialisation of one saint could be used to bolster a community’s own identity, Coué showed how episcopal depictions could address present concerns.

The expression “Episcopal identity” has, to my knowledge, been used very rarely. One exception is Brian Brennan, who examined the hagiographical poetry of Venantius Fortunatus (c.530-600), and explored the ways in which Venantius constructed idealized images of episcopal identity for his patrons.<sup>92</sup> Brennan used the methodology of Stephen Greenblatt, who had applied the term ‘self-fashioning’ in 1980 when describing the process of constructing one’s identity and public image.<sup>93</sup> In a similar way, Brennan demonstrated how the later bishops of Tours wanted

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<sup>89</sup> S.Coates, ‘Ceolfrid: History, Hagiography and Memory in Seventh- and Eighth-Century Wearmouth-Jarrow’, *Journal of Medieval History*, 25 (1999), pp.69-86.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p.85.

<sup>91</sup> S. Coué, *Hagiographie im Kontext: Schreibenlaß und Funktion. von Bischofsviten aus dem 11. und vom Anfang des 12 Jahrhunderts* (Berlin and New York, 1997), pp.27-28.

<sup>92</sup> B.Brennan, “‘Being Martin’: Saint and Successor in Sixth-Century Tours”, *Journal of Religious History*, 21, (1997), pp.121-35.

<sup>93</sup> S.J.Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London, 1980)

themselves to be portrayed as the heirs or ‘foster-sons’ of the famous St Martin of Tours, providing them with a traditional ‘legitimizing’ model of an ideal bishop. Brennan goes so far as to suggest that such a literary construction might have influenced not only ‘the bishops’ concept of themselves and the ‘role’ they had to play in the community, but also their social behaviour, particularly in those situations that might be seen as analogous to some of the celebrated events in St Martin’s life.<sup>94</sup> Brennan’s study certainly illustrates the link between a function of a *vita* and depictions of ideal episcopal behaviour.

Of course, episcopal identity is just one expression of a number of similar umbrella terms which have been used by historians to explain how contemporaries viewed the episcopal vocation, its roles and duties. Here one thinks of the use of the terms ‘episcopal authority’ or ‘episcopal duty’, ‘episcopal image’ or ‘episcopal consciousness’.<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, the term ‘episcopal identity’ does, as Brennan’s use demonstrates, have a particular advantage because it explores not simply the image or depiction of bishops in relation to their historical contexts, but also centres upon hagiographical function, and thus relates the above with its compositional context. Throughout this study, I will explore the way episcopal *vitae* were used to create, maintain or revise the identity of an institution, social group or religious community; by asking such questions through the prism of episcopal identity, one can perhaps

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<sup>94</sup> Brennan, “Being Martin”, p.123.

<sup>95</sup> See S.Coates, ‘Venantius Fortunatus and the Image of Episcopal Authority in Late Antique and Early Merovingian Gaul’, English Historical Review, 115 (2000), pp.1109-1137; H.Westermann-Angerhausen, ‘Modelling the Bishop: Egbert of Trier, Gregory the Great, and the Episcopal Image’, The Bishop: Power and Piety at the First Millennium, ed. Gilsdorf, pp.113-37. For a twelfth-century example, see J.D.Cotts, ‘Monks and Mediocrities in the Shadow of Thomas Becket: Peter of Blois on Episcopal Duty’, Haskins Society Journal, 10 (2001), pp.143-61.

approach such communities as more than simply a product of an institution's way of rewriting the past.

### III. Methodological Approach

At the heart of this thesis lies the question: to what extent was the depiction of episcopal sanctity shaped both by the expectations of the community for which saints' lives were written, and that of the *causa scribendi*. The relationship between hagiographical function, episcopal identity and the patronage of *vitae* will be explored in reference to each of the texts I will examine in this study (see section IV). In order to determine the function of a particular *vita*, each chapter will begin with an investigation of the text's historical and compositional context. The former has necessitated an analysis of the text's date and the circumstances surrounding its production, along with a brief investigation of the extant manuscripts. Where appropriate, the structure of the *vita* is also analysed, and attention paid to the ways in which language was used to define episcopal attributes and characteristics.

Another question that will be investigated is what sources authors used to construct their particular typology of episcopal identity. Although the use of hagiographical models will be investigated, there will be a stress on the process whereby authors selected other forms of material or evidence. The focus on saints' lives as being part of a clearly defined genre has understandably led some to concentrate upon the use of inherited hagiographical exemplars or motifs by authors of saints' lives. Yet historians,

such as Lifshitz, have argued that there is a tendency to overemphasise the distinctions between hagiography and historical narratives.<sup>96</sup> Lifshitz's argument is useful as long as one recognises that contemporaries did attach significance to different types of sources at different times.

In addition, this study will explore the degree to which we can view saints' lives as representative of the community for which they were written. In looking at episcopal rituals within texts, Reuter had argued that 'community was being constructed by these accounts of symbolic sequences themselves as well as by the actual symbolic sequences which they purport to represent'.<sup>97</sup> It will be argued here that episcopal *vita* can be viewed in the same way, as they attempted to reflect the relationship between a bishop and his community, but at the same time might also impact upon how that community came to understand and articulate its past. Thus, just as Heffernan saw each saint's life as part of the 'sanctification process', here we will suggest that such sources were not passive agents of this process, but could be active in transmitting institutional traditions. Indeed, 'the emergence of that tradition may have been coincident with, and its nature may have been determined by, important developments and crises in the history of the religious community with which the saint was associated'.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> F.Lifshitz, 'Beyond Positivism and Genre: "Hagiographic" Texts as Historical Narrative', *Viator*, 25 (1994), pp.95-114.

<sup>97</sup> Reuter, 'Bishops, Rites of Passage', p.36.

<sup>98</sup> S.J.Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England: A Study of West Saxon and East Anglian Cults* (Cambridge, 1988), p.13.

We will also ask if the lives selected were a product of a dialogue between the author and the community for which each text was written. In short, this thesis will investigate if episcopal hagiography was simply a means by which to recount the life and deeds of a saint, or if saints' lives also expressed the concerns of their intended community or audience. It will be suggested that depictions of episcopal sanctity within episcopal *vita* should not be viewed simply as idealistic images, but instead can be seen as part of an attempt to establish or legitimise institutional values and norms. In so doing, it will be recognised that hagiography can have numerous functions.

#### IV. Sources Considered

To examine the questions outlined above, I have adopted a case-study approach, focussing upon four particular episcopal *vita*. This approach has been utilised in a number of recent studies that have examined saints' cults and episcopal *vitae*, notably those by Coué and Yarrow. Such an approach offers an effective way of asking specific questions of a select group of sources, which can later be compared and contrasted with other texts. It is important to note, however, that each chapter will also seek to shed light upon broader issues; indeed, the depiction of episcopal identity is pertinent not only to the study of hagiography, but raises wider questions about twelfth-century reform, episcopal roles and functions and the relationship between cultural discourses and textual narratives. Another advantage of this methodology is that it does not impose a particular argument or template upon the various texts; all four chapters in this study explore specific saints' lives from a perspective which reflects the historiographical context in which they have previously been discussed. Each

chapter, however, is intended to illustrate the different dynamics of hagiographical production throughout the twelfth century.

The *vita* to be examined are Faricius of Arezzo's *Life of St Aldhelm*, William Wycombe's *Life of Robert Bethune* and Gerald of Wales' *Lives of St Remigius and St Hugh*. In part, these texts have been selected for their chronological range, as they span the last decade of the eleventh century to the second decade of the thirteenth century. Thus, my analysis will be set against the religious changes of the twelfth century, although it will not necessarily view the texts as wholly reflective or always informed by these wider developments. The fact that three out of the four texts were written by authors who were not monks will hopefully serve as a corrective to a historiography that has often prioritised the monastic perspective, even if, to a large extent, this reflects the nature of the surviving material. Moreover, by focussing on episcopal saints' lives that were written by an Augustinian and secular canon respectively, alongside a *vita* written by a Benedictine monk, this study will also investigate how membership of a specific religious order might influence the way bishops were depicted. Nevertheless, it will be remembered that monastic hagiography is diverse and that differences within categories may be as significant as those between. In addition to monastic bias, there is also a geographical bias, in that the centre is often prioritised over the periphery. Here I have concentrated upon texts that were produced outside of the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. This should redress the balance, and make clear the relationship between local concerns and the broader trends of the twelfth-century Church.

Furthermore, all four of the texts that have been chosen do not generally feature within accounts of twelfth-century hagiography or that of English bishops. To some extent, this is because they have not inspired the interest of historians, or they have been compared unfavourably with later texts that are viewed as an improvement or corrective to the original *Life*. Furthermore, at times, such texts have been rendered invisible by the wider currents in the historiography of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Of the texts chosen, only one, that of the *Life of St Hugh*, concerns a subject who was canonised; the other lives focus upon saints who were essentially local in their appeal, or at least that was how their hagiographers wished them to be perceived. Unfortunately, the development of procedures for papal canonisation at the turn of the thirteenth century tends to disregard saints' lives that did not inspire a cult, or those that simply reflected a local interest where recognition was of a more informal manner.<sup>99</sup> Yet, as Bartlett has maintained, even after papal canonisation became fully established 'the vast majority of Christians continued to treat as saints those whom they regarded as such, whatever papal views on the matter might be'.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> For papal canonisation see E.W.Kemp, *Canonisation and Authority in the Western Church* (London, 1948); A.Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. J.Birrell (Cambridge, 1997).

<sup>100</sup> R.Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225* (Oxford, 2002), p.461. For an earlier period, see A.T.Thacker, 'The Making of a Local Saint', in *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. *idem* and R.Sharpe (Oxford, 2002), pp.45-73. From the same collection see also J.Blair, 'A Saint for Every Minster? Local Cults in Anglo-Saxon England', pp.455-94.

## V. Structure

This thesis will be divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 will begin with a study of Faricius's life of the eighth-century abbot of Malmesbury and bishop of Sherborne, St Aldhelm. This life, criticised thirty years later by William of Malmesbury for Faricius's careless approach to his sources, nonetheless permits us to examine how one Anglo-Saxon bishop's reputation was subsequently affected by the Norman Conquest, and how one institution, Malmesbury Abbey, sought to rehabilitate its patron saint through the composition of a *vita*. Starting with the life itself, the chapter will begin by questioning the reasons for William of Malmesbury's critical view of Faricius's text. We will suggest that William's perspective has overshadowed an investigation of the text that focuses on the specific historical context and patronage of Faricius's *Life of St Aldhelm*. The periods in which Faricius and William composed their texts, and the different functions of the lives, had an influence on the ways in which Aldhelm's sanctity was depicted.

In Chapter 2 we will focus on William Wycombe's *Life of Robert Bethune*, bishop of Hereford. William, an Augustinian canon, provides a unique window into a relationship between Robert, an ex-Augustinian prior turned bishop, and his former community of Llanthony and Lanthony Secunda. Surprisingly, the *vita* is entirely missing from Antonia Gransden's monumental *Historical Writing in England*, and it is also conspicuously absent from the recent *Corpus Christianorum* series which included

a survey of English saints' lives.<sup>101</sup> The chapter will focus on how William sought to define Robert's episcopal identity in relation to his Augustinian background. This will entail examining the extent to which William emphasised the continuities between Robert's life as a canon and his later profession as a bishop. It will also explore how William was remembered by his fellow canons, and if his depiction of Robert was representative of his community.

The final two chapters focus upon Gerald of Wales's lives of St Remigius and St Hugh. Both *vitae* are accounts of Lincoln bishops. However, both texts have been dismissed as simply texts written to promote local cults. Consequently, neither has been explored in great depth; nor have the texts been assessed in relation to Gerald's wider views of the episcopal office. Although both lives survive in a single manuscript, each text will be explored primarily in its own context, but parallels between the two *vita* will be drawn when relevant.

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<sup>101</sup> A.Grandsden, Historical Writing in England. 1, c.550 to c.1307 (London, 1974); and Hagiographies: Histoire Internationale de la Littérature Hagiographique Latine et Vernaculaire en Occident des Origines à 1550, ed. G.Phillipart, 4 Vols. (Turnhout, 1994-).

## Chapter 1: The *Vita Sancti Aldhelmi*

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The *Vita Sancti Aldhelmi* (hereafter *VSA*) records the life, deeds and miracles of Aldhelm, the seventh-century abbot of Malmesbury and bishop of Sherborne.<sup>1</sup> Although the text is anonymous, the remarks made by William of Malmesbury, in the preface to Book V of his *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum* (hereafter *GP*), identify the *vita's* author as Faricius of Arezzo (d. 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 1117).<sup>2</sup> Faricius had been a monk of Malmesbury during the abbacies of Warin of Lire (1070 – 1087 x 1091) and Godfrey of Jumièges (1087 x 1091 – 1100 x 1105), and, from 1100, was to become abbot of Abingdon.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *BHL*, p.256; R.Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland Before 1540* (Turnhout, 1997), p.115. See also M.Lapidge, 'The Career of Aldhelm', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 36 (2007), pp.15-69; *idem*, 'Aldhelm [St Aldhelm] (d. 709/10)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/308>, accessed 10 Sept 2009]

<sup>2</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum: The History of the English Bishops. Vol. 1: Text and Translation*, ed. and trans. M.Winterbottom and R.M.Thomson (Oxford, 2007), p.499. The work was previously translated by D.Prest, *The Deeds of the Bishops of England (Gesta Pontificum Anglorum)* (Woodbridge, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> *The Heads of Religious Houses. England and Wales. 1, 940-1216*, ed. D.Knowles, C.N.L. Brooke and V.C.M.London, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cambridge, 2001), p.25.

## I. Faricius's *Vita Sancti Aldhelmi*

### (a) The Text: Manuscript, Editions, Recensions and Date

Faricius's original autograph is not extant. Two manuscript witnesses of the *vita* survive: BL, MS Cotton Faustina B. iv, ff.139<sup>r</sup>-156<sup>r</sup> (C) *saec.* XII *ex*; and Gloucester Cathedral, MS 1, ff.192<sup>r</sup>-198<sup>r</sup> (G) *saec.* XII *ex*. BL Cotton Faustina B.iv is a composite manuscript, and ff.3<sup>r</sup>-178<sup>v</sup> include a collection of saints' lives. It has been dated by Neil Ker to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century.<sup>4</sup> On the first leaf appears an inscription entitled: '*Liber Sanctae Mariae de Holmecaltram lib.cxli*'. This suggests that the MS belonged to the Cisterican abbey of Holm Cultram.<sup>5</sup> R.M.Thomson has argued, in respect of the Cotton manuscript, that the *VSA* was written not later than 1200.<sup>6</sup> C ends with Faricius's eyewitness account of the (re)translation of Aldhelm's bones; they were moved from a stone tomb-shrine, the site of an earlier *translatio* initiated by Archbishop Dunstan in 986, and subsequently placed in a new shrine, either in 1078 or 1080.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books, ed. N.R.Ker, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London, 1964), p.102.

<sup>5</sup> See E.Jamroziak, 'Holm Cultram Abbey: A Story of Success?', Northern History, 45 (2008), pp.27-36.

<sup>6</sup> M. Winterbottom, 'Faricius of Arezzo's Life of St Aldhelm', in Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge, ed. K.O'Brien O'Keefe and A. Orchard, 2 Vols. (Toronto, 2005), Vol. 1, p.124, n.3.

<sup>7</sup> *WVSA*, pp.119-21; *GP*, Vol. 2, pp.327-29.

Gloucester Cathedral MS 1 (s.xii<sup>ex</sup>) is a passionnal or legendary, and consists of a collection of saints' lives which cover the period 17<sup>th</sup> September – 1<sup>st</sup> December.<sup>8</sup> Various scholars have examined the MS with reference to a particular *vita*.<sup>9</sup> Ker believed this MS to be the third volume of a three-volume collection, which also included Lincoln Cathedral MS 149 and possibly Lincoln Cathedral MS 150.<sup>10</sup> Certainly, Thomson has suggested that the former has a number of cross-references to the Gloucester text.<sup>11</sup> The manuscript history is, however, unclear, although on the second leaf we learn from an inscription that it was the property of Fulk Walwyn (d.1660) of Hellens, Much Marcle, approximately twenty miles from Leominster. Ker, therefore, has argued that the manuscript most likely came from the priory of Leominster, a daughter-house of Reading Abbey.<sup>12</sup> The contents of the MS also suggest this; a collection of miracles attributed to a relic of Saint James, which Reading Abbey received from Matilda, Henry I's wife in 1125, as well as the interest shown generally in Reading throughout the MS (arts. 35, 36, 46), would seem to support Ker's argument.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, in a library inventory, which has been dated to c.1190-1195 or slightly earlier to c.1180-1191, the item '*Passionarii iii in tribus*

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<sup>8</sup> S.M.Edward, A Catalogue of Gloucester Cathedral Library (Gloucester, 1972), p.1. The Gloucester manuscript consists of mostly pre-1000 Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, Confessors and Virgins. There appears to be a clear insular interest, as well as the *Life* of St Aldhelm, there is also a *Life* of St Wulfstan and a *Life* of St Patrick.

<sup>9</sup> For example, 'Eine Patricksvita in Gloucester', ed. L.Bieler, Festschrift Bernhard Bischoff zu seinem 65. Geburtstag dargebracht, ed. J. Autenrieth and F. Brunhölzl (Stuttgart, 1971), pp.346-63.

<sup>10</sup> N.R.Ker and A.Piper, Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries, 5 Vols. (Oxford and New York, 1969-2002), Vol.2, pp.934-39.

<sup>11</sup> R.M.Thomson, Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library (Woodbridge, 1989), pp.115-20.

<sup>12</sup> Ker and Piper, Medieval Manuscripts, Vol. 2, p.939.

<sup>13</sup> See K.Leyser, 'Frederick Barbarossa, Henry II and the Hand of St James', English Historical Review, 90 (1975), pp.481-506, at p.498 (for mention of the Gloucester Manuscript) and pp.490-99 (for the history of Reading's relationship with St James's relic). See also B.R.Kemp, 'The Miracles of the Hand of St James', Berkshire Archaeological Journal, 65 (1970), pp.1-19; and *idem*, The Hand of St James at Reading Abbey (Reading, 1990), pp.1-22.

*voluminibus*' is listed under items from Reading Abbey.<sup>14</sup> This may very well be a record of the Gloucester and Lincoln MSS.

The text from (C) has been edited in the *Acta Sanctorum*, and in the nineteenth century by J.A.Giles.<sup>15</sup> More recently, utilising both the Cotton and the Gloucester text, Michael Winterbottom edited the *VSA* in the *Journal of Medieval Latin*.<sup>16</sup> (G) is a longer version of (C); it contains hitherto unknown material, including a dedicatory verse couplet to Bishop Osmund of Salisbury (d.1099), and a *Commendatio*. This version of the *vita* also contained a number of miracles (188<sup>v</sup>-192<sup>r</sup>) not found in (C), which shed additional light on the development of Aldhelm's post-conquest cult. Winterbottom argued that (G) represented the *VSA* more faithfully than (C); and thus his text represents (G) with a few corrections from (C).<sup>17</sup>

Before (G) was edited by Winterbottom, the general consensus was that the *vita* was written sometime after Aldhelm's post-conquest translation (1078 x 1080), yet before Faricius became abbot of Abingdon in 1100. However, the material in (G) can be used to date the composition of the *vita* more precisely. Faricius includes a miracle of a crippled woman which occurred 'In the seventh year of William the second's reign'

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<sup>14</sup> The list was first edited by S.Barfield, 'Lord Fingall's Cartulary of Reading Abbey', *English Historical Review*, 3 (1888), pp.113-25. For the suggested date and discussion of the list, see *English Benedictine Libraries. The Shorter Catalogues*, ed. R.Sharpe *et al* (London, 1996), p.420; and A.Coates, *English Medieval Books: The Reading Abbey Collections from Foundation to Dispersal* (Oxford, 1999), p.20.

<sup>15</sup> *Acta Sanctorum* (Antwerp, 1638), 6, pp.84-93; *Sancti Aldhelmi ... opera quæ extant*, ed. J.A.Giles (Oxford, 1844), pp.354-82. Giles printed the same text in *Vita quorundum [sic] Anglo-Saxounum* (London, 1854), pp.119-56. The *PL* version (89, cols.63-84) of the text is taken from Giles's edition.

<sup>16</sup> M.Winterbottom, 'An Edition of Faricius, *Vita S.Aldhelmi*', *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, 15 (2005), pp.93-147 (hereafter *WVSA*).

<sup>17</sup> *WVSA*, p.94.

(Sep 1093-Sep 1094).<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, in the *Commendatio* the work is dedicated to Bishop Osmund and Hubald, his archdeacon. Osmund died in 1099; Winterbottom has, therefore, asserted that ‘the book must have been written at Malmesbury and between the autumn of 1093 and 1099’.<sup>19</sup>

Winterbottom’s confidence in a date no earlier than 1093 rests to a large degree on his understanding of the relationship between (C) and (G). Noting that both versions of the *vita* are copies of earlier manuscripts, Winterbottom provides two hypotheses:

1. That (C) descends from an early version of the Life, which only includes events up to the 1078 x 1080 *translatio*, and not the additional miracles – and that (G) was a later expanded version.
2. That (G) was the original version and (C) a later abbreviation. Winterbottom is more sympathetic to this latter hypothesis.

In particular, he argues that (C) often conceals references to Malmesbury, and, for this reason, it is more likely to be a later adaption, shortened to attract a broader audience who was interested more in Aldhelm’s life than his contemporary cult. A third possibility could be hypothesised:

3. That (C) was a copy, rather than an abbreviation, of an earlier *Ur-text* (A) which ended with Aldhelm’s relics being transferred to a new location.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.127: ‘*Anno septimo regni Willelmi secundi*’.

<sup>19</sup> Winterbottom, ‘Faricius of Arezzo’, p.110.

<sup>20</sup> Winterbottom, ‘Faricius of Arezzo’, pp.123-24, and *WVSA*, p.94.

This text (A) may have been added to later when Faricius decided to dedicate an earlier version of (G) to Bishop Osmund.

Although Winterbottom's case is convincing, one can still approach the *VSA* from a different perspective. Without knowing whether the original *Ur-text* ended with the *translatio* or not, it is difficult to judge whether Faricius's reasons for composing the *vita* were first tied to this event. Occurring more than a decade after the Norman Conquest, the occasion appears to have precipitated a much greater interest in St Aldhelm. Indeed, some scholars have explicitly associated the *translatio* with the production of Faricius's *vita*.<sup>21</sup> However, much of the supplementary material which is included in (G) concerns Bishop Osmund and the members of his episcopal household. The nature of the supplementary material suggests there is another context for the *vita* as well. The last decade of the eleventh century saw the foundation of a cathedral community at Salisbury (Old Sarum). Having introduced a community of canons in c.1089, Bishop Osmund oversaw the completion and dedication of the cathedral in 1092. While Winterbottom emphatically states 'that Faricius was writing at, and for Malmesbury'<sup>22</sup>, the additional material, particularly that which pertains to Osmund and the wider diocese of Salisbury, implies that Faricius was writing with a larger audience in mind. Even if the *causa scribendi* was not linked to the development of Salisbury cathedral, the establishment of the chapter would have had significant implications for diocesan administration, and, to some extent, it established a new

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<sup>21</sup> See S.Gwara, 'Review of Die altenglischen Glossen zu Aldhelms "De laudibus virginitatis" in der Handschrift BL, Royal 6 B. VII by M.Richter', *Speculum*, 74 (1999), pp. 820-22, at p.821.

<sup>22</sup> *WVSA*, p.93.

rival for the existing monasteries within the diocese. The extent to which the *vita* reflects Osmund's interests and even the corporate interests of Salisbury cathedral is a question, that, until now, has been left unanswered.<sup>23</sup>

(b) The Author

In order to contextualise the *vita*, we need first to examine the *VSA*'s author, Faricius. What we know about Faricius can be gleaned mainly from a number of twelfth-century narrative sources. These include, in the main, William of Malmesbury's *GP*, the *Historia Ecclesie Abendonensis* (hereafter *HEA*),<sup>24</sup> and a few short references in *De Abbatibus Abendoniae* (hereafter *DAA*).<sup>25</sup> Both of the latter texts were concerned with Abingdon Abbey's foundation, its subsequent history and the actions of its abbots.

We do not know why Faricius originally came to England. Both William of Malmesbury and the *HEA* state that he was a citizen of Arezzo, and mention his skill as a physician.<sup>26</sup> The *DAA* is the only text which mentions that Faricius held the office of cellarer at Malmesbury; this would have entailed supporting the sick and poor, as well

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<sup>23</sup> Winterbottom, 'Faricius of Arezzo', p.108.

<sup>24</sup> *Historia Ecclesie Abendonensis: The History of the Church of Abingdon* ed. and trans. J.Hudson, 2 Vols (Oxford, 2002-2007). Hudson discusses the complex compositional history of the manuscripts of the *HEA* in Vol.1, pp.xxii-xxvi. He is cautious, but suggests that the text was probably written in the 1160s.

<sup>25</sup> *De Abbatibus Abendoniae* in *Chronicon monasterii de Abingdon*, ed. J. Stevenson, 2 Vols. (London, 1858), Vol.2, Appendix II. Hudson briefly discusses the date of the *DAA* in *HEA*, Vol. 1, p.xxi: 'The *De Abbatibus* is usually regarded as a later source than the History ... However, the very idea of the *De Abbatibus* as a later source than the History may be flawed'.

<sup>26</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.301: 'He was a Tuscan by birth, by profession a doctor, a citizen of Arezzo, and actually a monk of ours.' / '*Tuscus genus, arte medicus, ciuis Aretinus, noster profecto monachus*'. The fact that he came from Arezzo has led some scholars to suggest that Faricius may have been educated at Salerno, a major medical centre in Italy: P.Horden, 'Faricius (d. 1117)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9157>, accessed 9 Sept 2009]

as taking care of guests.<sup>27</sup> Faricius, along with another Italian physician, Grimbald, attended Henry I's wife, Queen Matilda in childbirth. His reputation as a medical authority is emphasised in a verse eulogy by a monk named Peter, which is included in the *GP*: 'Steeped in all the laws pointed out to Physics, He made even kings beholden to him by cures'.<sup>28</sup> Peter also went on to stress Faricius's court credentials and worldliness: 'Court favour thus so emboldened him, that he dared to vie as of right with the powerful .... That he lorded over lords, pressing them beneath him'.<sup>29</sup> We might speculate whether such court connections helped Faricius secure the abbacy of Abingdon in 1100; we know, for instance, that one of Henry I's illegitimate sons was married to Faricius's niece.<sup>30</sup> He was, after the death of Anselm in 1109, even a serious candidate for the Archbishopric of Canterbury in 1114; however, several bishops scuppered his candidacy, objecting to Faricius on the ground that as a physician, he had inspected women's urine.<sup>31</sup>

Descriptions of Faricius tend to focus on his ability as an effective administrator. Describing his candidacy for Canterbury, William of Malmesbury states that Faricius was 'a man of great severity, together with remarkable energy in carrying through his

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<sup>27</sup> *DAA*, p.285.

<sup>28</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.303: '*Omnibus imbutus quas monstrat phisica leges, ipsos demeruit medicandi munere reges*'.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*. '*Hinc animos illi fauor aulicus hactenus auxit, ut de iure suo certare potentibus ausit... ut sibi subiectos dominos premeret dominator*'.

<sup>30</sup> K.L.Shirley, 'Faricius of Abingdon and the King's Court', *Haskins Society Journal*, 9 (2001 for 1997), pp.175-84, at p.176.

<sup>31</sup> *DAA*, p.287: '*Eo tempore obiit Anselmus archiepiscopus; tunc electus est Faricius ad archiepiscopatum, sed episcopus Lincolniensis et episcopus Salesburiensis obstiterunt, dicentes non debere archiepiscopum urinas mulierum inspicere*'. Eadmer of Canterbury, states that the monks of Canterbury were however supportive of his candidacy, and approved of his vigour (*industria*): *Eadmeri historia novorum in Anglia*, ed. M.Rule (London, 1884), p.222.

plans'.<sup>32</sup> In his discussion of Abingdon Abbey, William would also state that: 'In our own times Abbot Faricius has been especially prominent in the advancement of the house'.<sup>33</sup> Peter of Malmesbury added that Faricius was 'A man upright and wise, truly a man of business, he enriched the house [of Abingdon] without, and took great care for its morals within'.<sup>34</sup> From this we get the impression that Faricius was a particularly able steward, yet it is worth pointing out that within a monastic context, this was not always considered a positive attribute. For instance, in the *Vita Sancti Wulfstani* (hereafter *VSW*), William of Malmesbury would make a distinction between 'Aethelwig, the clear sighted and hard-working man of business or Wulfstan, the straightforward man of God'.<sup>35</sup> In this comparison, Wulfstan was deemed the more suitable for episcopal office. Notwithstanding this caveat, Faricius's depiction in the *HEA* is overwhelmingly positive. Faricius is described as a defender of church rights and property, as one who greatly increased the church's prosperity, while also enlarging its personnel, from twenty-eight to eighty monks.<sup>36</sup>

Faricius appears to have tried hard to make Abingdon a centre of learning. The *DAA* notes that Faricius brought in six scribes who copied a number of works by Augustine, Gregory, Jerome, Ambrose, John Chrysostom, Bede and Cyprian.<sup>37</sup> The bias towards patristic authors certainly ties in with what both Richard Gameson and Teresa

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<sup>32</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.200-201: '*Uir ingentis acrimoniae et insignis industriae ad ea quae cepisset explenda*'.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.300-301: '*Emicuit precipue nostris temporibus abbas Faritius in meliorandis rebus*'.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p.303: '*Vir probus et prudens uir uere consiliorum, extera ditauit, curauit et intima morum*'.

<sup>35</sup> William of Malmesbury, '*Vita Wulfstani*', in *William of Malmesbury Saints' Lives*, ed. M.Winterbottom and R.M.Thomson (Oxford, 2002), pp. 8-154, at p.47: '*Ailwii perspicacem industriam in seculo an Wlstan simplicem religionem in Deo*'.

<sup>36</sup> *HEA*, Vol.2, p.lxi.

<sup>37</sup> *DAA*, p,289; and printed in N.Ker, *English Manuscripts in the Century after the Norman Conquest* (Oxford, 1960), p.11; and *English Benedictine Libraries: The Shorter Catalogues*, ed. R. Sharpe *et al* (London, 1996), pp.4-7.

Webber argue; they note that, after the Conquest, there was an emphasis upon such texts.<sup>38</sup> Although less is said about the abbey's spiritual and liturgical life, Faricius's interest in saints' relics is reiterated in the *HEA*, along with his continuing attachment to Aldhelm. Abingdon appears to have had a wide range of relics including those of St Mary, and various apostles, martyrs, confesors and virgins; here, Aldhelm was placed second in the list of confessors.<sup>39</sup> We also learn that at some point Faricius acquired a whole thigh-bone, with part of the head, one tooth and part of the shoulder-blade of Aldhelm from Malmesbury.<sup>40</sup> In return, Faricius gave the monks of Malmesbury part of the arm of St John of Chrysostom. The author of the *HEA* commented upon this exchange: 'Nor is it any wonder that the abbot acquired such great relics of this saint because he shed his worldly garb in the monastery where Aldhelm fell asleep, and he provided many benefits for the brethren living there during his monastic life with them'.<sup>41</sup> Thus, his time spent at Abingdon provides us with a much rounder understanding of Faricius and his particular concerns. We learn that Faricius had a genuine interest in saints and this is demonstrated in the emphasis given to their relics as abbot of Abingdon. His court connections and his administrative acumen suggest that he was comfortable in both secular and spiritual spheres.

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<sup>38</sup> See R.Gameson, *The Manuscripts of Early Norman England (c. 1066-1130)* (Oxford, 1999), p.20; T.Webber, 'The Patristic Content of English Book Collections in the Eleventh Century: Towards a Continental Perspective', in *Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, Their Scribes, and Readers: Essays Presented to M.B. Parkes*, ed. P.Robinson and R.Zim (Aldershot, 1997), pp.191-205.

<sup>39</sup> *DAA*, p.287.

<sup>40</sup> *HEA*, Vol.1, p.69.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

## II. William of Malmesbury's Account of the Life of Aldhelm

Almost twenty-five years after Faricius had composed his *vita*, William of Malmesbury wrote an account of Aldhelm's life which made up Book V of his larger *oeuvre*, the *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*. William's *GP* was initially envisaged as a companion work to his earlier *Gesta Regum Anglorum* (hereafter the *GR*); whereas this volume concentrated on the more secular themes of kings and kingdoms, the *GP* was intended as an ecclesiastical history.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the purpose of the *GP* appears to have been two-fold: first, to detail the history of each English diocese, including the names and deeds (if there was evidence) of its bishops, alongside the religious houses that existed in each diocese; secondly, as an account of English saints and their cults.<sup>43</sup>

Book V has often been considered an anomaly or 'special case'; its focus on Aldhelm and the saint's relationship with Malmesbury has prompted the text's most recent editor, Rodney Thomson, to state that 'Book V stands outside this structure [of the *GP*], and is qualitatively different from the others [Book I-IV]'.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, there is evidence that William had always planned to include an account of Aldhelm's life. For example, in one of the prefaces attached to the *GR*, William stated that Queen Matilda had inquired about her ancestry, in particular, whether she was a descendent of St Aldhelm. She had also requested that William write a full account of Aldhelm's life. Although the *GR* did not include an account of Aldhelm's life, we might wonder if Book

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<sup>42</sup> *GP*, Vol.2, p.xxi. See also William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, ed. R.M.Thomson and M.Winterbottom, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1999).

<sup>43</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.327. As with many of his contemporaries, William sought, through his writings to establish continuity between the Anglo-Saxon past and the present.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxvii.

V of the *GP* was written with Matilda in mind.<sup>45</sup> William also attempted to integrate Book V into the themes and aims of the *GP*; he explicitly stated, for instance, in the prologue to Book V, that ‘... it would be a monstrous deviation for justice if in this brief account of the saints [the *GP*] I threw light on all save our own lord and patron’.<sup>46</sup> As important is the question of genre; can we think of Book V as a saint’s life? Elsewhere, Thomson and Winterbottom have considered the *GP* to be part of William’s hagiographical canon, although, as they point out, it was also a history of Malmesbury Abbey, through its foundation to the present day.<sup>47</sup>

Regardless of William’s intentions, Book V was certainly treated differently by later scribes. This might have been due to its particular emphasis on the history of Malmesbury; perhaps it was considered too parochial for other monastic communities. Indeed, William’s autograph manuscript, Magdalen College, Oxford, MS lat. 172 (A), written mid-1125 (and, therefore, not treated to his later corrections and revisions), is the sole medieval manuscript of the *GP* which contains an unabridged version of Book V.<sup>48</sup> Of the six witnesses to the first recension, only BL, MS Cotton Claudius A.v, s. XII (B) contains a version of Book V, although here it is heavily abbreviated.<sup>49</sup> It might be the case that this more “streamlined” version was an attempt to incorporate this section more effectively into the themes of Books I-IV,

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<sup>45</sup> *GR*, pp.4-5. Indeed, Thomson later acknowledged this fact, ‘we may see it as explanatory of the otherwise anomalous Book V’: *GP*, Vol.2, p.xx.

<sup>46</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.498-99: ‘*immaniter deuiaretur a iustitia si in hoc sanctorum breui commentario solus dominus et patronus noster obumbraretur silentio.*’

<sup>47</sup> *VSW*, p.xiii.

<sup>48</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.xi-xii.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.xiii-xiv. Thomson and Winterbottom argue that this abbreviated version is unlikely to be William’s own: p.xxiv.

although it is just as likely that it was abbreviated to suit a wider audience. Of the other existing manuscripts, both Cambridge University Library, Ff.i.25, s.xii (N) and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 43, s.xiv, East Anglian (Q), include versions of Book V.<sup>50</sup> The nineteenth-century editor of the *GP*, N.E.S.A. Hamilton, stated that both N and Q's versions of Book V were actually sixteenth-century additions and were titled the *Vita Sancti Aldhelmi*.<sup>51</sup> Book V has been also edited independently, for example, in the *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis* (Paris, 1677), and in the *Anglia Sacra* (London, 1691).<sup>52</sup>

Thomson states that we cannot be certain 'to what extent William envisaged this book [i.e. Book V] as (at least potentially) a separate entity'.<sup>53</sup> However, we should look to William's autograph manuscript as a reliable indication of the author's original intentions. Unfortunately, Book V's place within the *GP* has been somewhat overshadowed by a later manuscript tradition which, as we have seen, tends to treat it as either an anomaly, or as a separate monograph. It is important that such a tradition is not applied retrospectively to a discussion of William's motives.

### III. Approaches to the VSA

Many scholars also consider William's account of Aldhelm's life to be a more effective vehicle for sanctity than Faricius's earlier attempt. For instance, Susan Kelly stated

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xv.

<sup>51</sup> These sixteenth century additions are explored in William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, ed. N.E.S.A.Hamilton (London, 1870) pp.xxxiii-xxxv; furthermore, in three paper MSS copies of the text (of sixteenth and seventeenth century provenance), Book V is printed as an independent book.

<sup>52</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.xxvi.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxviii

that 'William's account of Aldhelm in the *Gesta Pontificum*, Book V, is an expansion and improvement of Faricius's Life'.<sup>54</sup> In part, this is because such scholars have concurred with William of Malmesbury's own view; indeed, William details his own objections to Faricius's *vita* in his preface to Book V, and argues why his work should be thought of as superior. It is necessary to begin this study with William's criticisms, as his comments have frequently shaped how Faricius's *vita* is viewed by subsequent scholars. William's attack on Faricius's *vita* in his *prefatio*, which follows the traditions of rhetoric, is often taken at face value. Furthermore, by concentrating solely on what is said, that which is left unsaid or unrecorded is ignored. William might not have wanted to acknowledge all his reasons for why he disliked Faricius's narrative.

In order to appreciate the reasons for William's critique, it is necessary to examine how William sought to model his work differently from that of Faricius. As such, this chapter will be divided into three sections, each of which will ask different questions concerning Faricius's text, and, where applicable, will contrast this with William's narrative. The first section contextualises William's methodology *vis-à-vis* Faricius's. It will ask to what extent William's cleverly worded *prefatio* provides a misreading of Faricius's own aims in writing his *vita*, and of the sources which Faricius used to compose the *Life*.<sup>55</sup> William's emphasis on the use of proper authorities and testimony

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<sup>54</sup> S.E.Kelly, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey* (Oxford, 2005), p.6. Similarly, A.Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm* (Cambridge, 1994), p.2: 'His (Faricius) is a pedestrian account, superseded by the fuller and more famous biography by William'.

<sup>55</sup> For the importance of prologues in setting out the aims and methods of the author see A.Gransden, 'Prologues in the Historiography of Twelfth-Century England', in *eadem*, *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England*, pp.125-53. As Gransden put it: 'In a prologue the author introduces himself to the reader, and tries to put him in a receptive frame of mind; he informs him about the purpose and scope of the work, and demonstrates his own rhetorical skill. To achieve these ends he

needs to be substantiated; we need to ask whether an unfortunate effect of the current historiography has been the neglect of William's approval of, and use of, oral traditions. Whether through written or oral authorities, one of William's main aims was to detail properly the *Life of Aldhelm* alongside the history of his own abbey, Malmesbury. Yet, for William, the construction of the recent past, and the control over its interpretation, was of intrinsic importance.

The second section will focus upon the additional material in manuscript (G). It will ask to what extent this evidence sheds new light on the intended audience of Faricius's *vita*, or even if the nature of that material implies that Faricius was now directing his *vita* at a wider audience. In the longer version of the life, Faricius dedicated the *vita* to both Bishop Osmund and Osmund's archdeacon Hubald; however, this association between writer and patron has been left relatively unexplored. To some extent, this is due to the modest amount of evidence we have for Osmund's life and deeds. It is also, however, a consequence of the current historiography, which, at times, retrospectively conflates Osmund's interests with those of his secular canons at Salisbury cathedral, and sees both as unreceptive and unsympathetic to Anglo-Saxon saints. It will be argued that the *VSA* demonstrates the success of the Malmesbury community in harnessing their diocesan bishop in the service of their own patron saint. However, the extended negotiations that Faricius depicts between Osmund and the Malmesbury monks concerning a relic of Aldhelm, to which William of Malmesbury only alludes, seems to stress the extent to which Osmund wished to identify himself with his saintly predecessor. As such, reading

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uses a variety of literary commonplaces, *topoi* ... although an historical prologue might well have distinctive features, it had much in common with prologues to other classes of work': p.125.

against the grain, we will suggest that the influence of Osmund in Aldhelm's early post-conquest cult may have been under-represented.

The third section will examine how the first two aspects relate to the ways in which Faricius depicts Aldhelm's episcopal identity. It will suggest that both William and Faricius articulated Aldhelm's patronage of their monastery in different ways, which suited the context in which they were writing their texts. William's criticisms will be seen as not only a consequence of Faricius's methodology or style, but also concern the way in which the earlier author had defined Aldhelm's sanctity. In this respect I will argue that it was Aldhelm's status as both bishop and abbot of Malmesbury which was problematic for William, and thus an aspect which he did not seek to highlight.

Overall, this chapter will seek to determine why such texts were written and for whom, how authors envisaged their work, and how they attempted to match their work with the aims of their intended audience. In so doing we will reflect on the ways in which medieval writers are often characterised by modern historians. Take, for example, Winterbottom, who states of Faricius: 'Faricius ... is hagiographer, not historian. But he has a historian's impulse to say something about his sources'.<sup>56</sup> It is easy to sometimes read into William's claims a more modern historical methodology. In the *GP*, for instance, William, describing his account of Aldhelm, states, 'My little

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<sup>56</sup> Winterbottom, 'Faricius of Arezzo', p.112. Concerning William's *Vita Dunstani*, Winterbottom makes a similar comparison between William and the Canterbury monk Osbern: 'William was still a historian's hagiographer, with an eye to what was unique, personal and particular, and to the specifics of period and context, rather than to that which was held to be timeless and generally exemplary': p.xxxvii

book promises no display of eloquence, but is a collection of facts; it is to be thought of as not so much a life of the saint as a witness to his life and a source of information.<sup>57</sup> However, the assumption that William of Malmesbury is the 'historian' and Faricius the 'hagiographer' minimises Faricius's own attempts at situating Aldhelm within a historical framework, and the extent to which he drew upon Bede. It will also be the case that William, in his reference to the *Life* as a witness, used a biblical or theological analogy rather than a historical one. In writing the text he was bearing witness to Aldhelm's *Life*, just as Jesus had borne witness to the truth. Thomson, however, stated that this comment suggested 'William still feels himself to be writing history rather than hagiography'.<sup>58</sup> This may, indeed, be the case, but this chapter will not assume such preconceptions which otherwise tie the modern researcher into certain conceptual models, which themselves tends to neglect both literary trends and fashions.

#### IV. William of Malmesbury's Treatment of the Life of Aldhelm

William explains to his readers (and listeners) that one of the reasons he had decided to write his own work is due to the paucity of earlier material on Aldhelm's life: apart from Bede's brief summary of the saint in his *History of the English*, William states 'he [Aldhelm] has been illuminated by no surviving text'.<sup>59</sup> His own extensive

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<sup>57</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p. 501: '*Hic enim libellus non ostentationem eloquentiae sed congeriem scientiae pollicetur, ut non tam uita dicatur Sancti quam uitae ipsius testimonium, cognitionis instrumentum*'.

<sup>58</sup> *GP*, Vol.2, p.247.

<sup>59</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.498: '*nulla quae supersit illustratus scriptura*'. By airbrushing Faricius from the historiography, William portrays himself as a natural successor to Bede. See also A.Gransden, 'Bede's Reputation as an Historian in Medieval England', in Legends and Traditions and History in Medieval England, ed. *eadem* (London, 1992), pp.1-29. Of course, Bede was not the only historian to which

investigation had uncovered nothing further, except that is for a silver shrine, which later in William's narrative we learn was ornamented with representations of Aldhelm's miracles.<sup>60</sup> However, after making a reference to this shrine, William seems to contradict his previous assertion by abruptly introducing Faricius's life of Aldhelm:

These [details] Faricius, abbot of Abingdon, brought together  
into a little book ....<sup>61</sup>

*A libellus* could refer to any number of different documents, and can be translated to mean a pamphlet, a written profession of faith, a calendar or a tract: the latter meaning, for instance, is used by the editor of Simeon of Durham's *Libellus de Exordio Atque Procursu Istius, Hoc Est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie*.<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless, in this context, Winterbottom's translation, 'little book', appears more suitable. Certainly, William of Malmesbury had on other occasions labelled his hagiographical works *libelli*. For example, in the *prologus* of his *De Antiquitate Glastonie Ecclesie*, he listed the works he had previously composed for the Glastonbury monks, describing the *uitam beati*

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William looked: see R.M.Thomson, 'William of Malmesbury and the Latin Classics Revisited', in *Aspects of the Language of Latin Prose*, ed. T.Reinhardt, M.Lapidge and J.N.Adams (Oxford, 2005), pp.383-94.

<sup>60</sup> As he states, 'But to me, certainly, nothing has come down, nothing has rewarded my most minute researches, except what an artist's hand imprinted on a silver shrine of great antiquity'. /'Ad me profecto nichil manuit, nichil quamquam curiosissimo accessit studio, nisi quod artifex manus argenteo et perantiquo impressit scrinio': *GP*, Vol.1, pp.498-99. For the shrine, see *GP*, Vol.2, pp.327-29. For other examples of such shrines see J.Crook, 'The Typology of Early Medieval Shrines - A Previously Misidentified "Tomb-Shrine" Panel from Winchester Cathedral', *Antiquaries Journal*, 70 (1990) pp.49-64; *idem*, 'King Edgar's Reliquary of St Swithun', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 21 (1992), pp.177-202.

<sup>61</sup> The quotation continues on *GP*, Vol.1, pp.13-14: 'Compegit haec in libellum abbas Abbendoniensis Faritius'. Although William was referring to Faricius as abbot of Abingdon, it is unlikely that he meant to suggest the *vita* was written by Faricius when abbot: see *GP*, Vol.2, p.110, n.12.

<sup>62</sup> See Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie: Tract on the Origins and Progress of this the Church of Durham*, ed. and trans. D.W.Rollason (Oxford, 2000).

*Patricii, miracula uenerabilis Benigni* and the *passionem martiris Indracti* as ‘illos *libellos*’.<sup>63</sup> The term *libellus* appears to be used within a number of hagiographical contexts throughout the twelfth century. Eadmer, for instance, called his abbreviated life of St Wilfrid a ‘*libellus vite*’, and Reginald of Durham employs the term to describe both his “little book” of St Cuthbert’s miracles and his life of Godric of Finchale.<sup>64</sup> William’s use of the term in the preface to Book V could be part of his wider critique of Faricius’s *vita*, which was meant to highlight the *vita*’s brevity and lack of scope. Yet, in the same preface, William calls his own work a *libellus*. Nevertheless, William was certainly adroit enough to play with a word’s meaning; whereas the word might be loaded with negative connotations with respect to Faricius’s *vita*, in reference to his own work, William would use the same term to express the well-worn topos of modesty.

It is still curious that William begins this passage in such a manner, without distinguishing exactly where Faricius had obtained his evidence. Thomson has argued convincingly that this was a deliberate decision by William; his insinuation being that Faricius, in composing his *vita*, had simply relied upon the representations stamped

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<sup>63</sup> The Early History of Glastonbury: an Edition, Translation, and Study of William of Malmesbury's *De antiquitate Glastonie ecclesie*, ed. and trans. J.Scott (Woodbridge, 2002).

<sup>64</sup> Reginald of Durham, *Libellus de admirandis beati Cuthberti virtutibus quæ novellis patratae sunt temporibus*, ed. J.Raine (London, 1835); and *idem, Libellus de vita et miraculis S.Godrici, Heremitaie de Finchale: appendix miraculorum*, ed. J.Stephenson (London, 1847). F.Wormald, ‘Some Illustrated Manuscripts of the Lives of the Saints’, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 35 (1952), pp.248-66 at pp.249-50. Wormald has, I think, a rather too narrow definition of what a *libellus* was/could be – however, his comments certainly suggest that the term could be used in multiple contexts, including a hagiographical context: ‘Certain manuscripts of these long biographies appear as small books, or *libelli*, which are entirely devoted to the saint, and besides the life and miracles contain also prayers, masses and even the musical portions of the Office ... If the manuscripts containing single lives of saints are examined, it frequently happens that they are found to be smallish quartos, rather square, and are usually written in a good hand which frequently resembles the hand of the liturgical books’. For a very different context in which *libelli* was used, and for further bibliography, see: D.C.Skerner, *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania, 2006), p.127, n.1.

upon the silver shrine.<sup>65</sup> However, William may have been referring to another source; later, in Book V, chapter 236, he recounts the origins of the shrine. In this passage, we are informed that Aethelwulf (d.858), King of the West Saxons, had a shrine made for ‘the bones of the holy confessor [Aldhelm]’, on which in ‘raised metal’ (*leuato metallo*) he depicted Aldhelm’s miracles.<sup>66</sup> The last clause of this passage ‘*quae iam sermo deprompsit*’ has been translated in quite different ways by both Preest and Winterbottom; where Winterbottom gives ‘I have already listed’, Preest translates this clause as ‘which in our day are passed on in speech’.<sup>67</sup> The sense of the passage seems to rest on both the translation of *iam* (either ‘now’ or ‘already’), but also the significance of the noun *sermo*. Unfortunately William does not supply an adjective before the noun, which would have helped us to reach a conclusion. The exact meaning of the sentence is important, for if Preest is accurate, then it suggests that Aldhelm’s legend – as depicted in the shrine – was remembered and retold by contemporaries. It also implies that such accounts were themselves conveyed from previous generations, and that William, when writing about the shrine, was very conscious of this contemporary discourse.

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<sup>65</sup> *GP*, Vol.2, p.246.

<sup>66</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.582-83: ‘*Fecit etenim scrinium quo sancti confessoris ossa locaret, in anteriori parte ex solido argento iactis imaginibus; in posteriori uero leuato metallo miracula figurauit, quae iam sermo deprompsit*’. For this period, a useful summary of the relations between the Anglo-Saxon monarchy and the Church is P. Wormald, ‘The Ninth Century’, in *The Anglo-Saxons*, ed. J.Campbell (London, 1982), pp.132–57.

<sup>67</sup> *GP*, Vol. 1, p.582; *GP*, Vol. 2, p.288; and Preest, *Deeds of the Bishops*, p. 265.

In their commentary on this passage, Winterbottom and Thomson refer to R.Gem's translation of this same passage: 'which now verbal accounts [alone] relate'.<sup>68</sup> As the editors state, Gem's insertion of 'alone' is incorrect, for both William and Faricius claim to have personally seen this shrine.<sup>69</sup> However, this appears to be a misrepresentation of Gem's viewpoint, as Gem himself stated: 'What one can certainly accept, however, is that William saw the shrine which had received the relics in 1078'.<sup>70</sup> Gem's insertion of 'alone', therefore, was most likely due to his belief that in William's day, there were only oral, rather than literary accounts, of the miracles depicted on the shrine.<sup>71</sup>

Yet, would the significance and meaning of the miracles wrought upon the shrine have been easily understood and interpreted by a later generation? In rejecting a translation of *sermo* as concerning speech or verbal accounts, Winterbottom and Thomson perhaps unintentionally imply that an oral tradition would not have endured, or be needed, if the object itself existed. Their rejection (which was based on a misreading) of Gem's translation leads them to a logical fallacy, which then also necessitates a rejection of Preest's reading.

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<sup>68</sup> R.Gem, 'Architecture of the Anglo-Saxon Church, 735-870', in Studies in English Pre-Romanesque and Romanesque Architecture, ed. *idem*, 2 Vols. (London, 2004), Vol.1, pp.109-114.

<sup>69</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.539. William states that he has seen [*uiderimus*] in his introduction to Aldhelm's miracles (the third section): 'Not that the stories I tell are unsupported by visible evidence, for I have seen them imprinted on the silver of an old shrine, in the type of work known as 'relief' / *'Nec uero haec nostra ita fide oculata carent, cum ea scrinii antiqui argento uiderimus impressa, eo genere artificii quod anaglifum uocant'*.

<sup>70</sup> Gem, 'Architecture', p.111.

<sup>71</sup> This seems to be suggested by his comment later that: 'These depicted miracles which William could not find described in books...': *Ibid.*, p.111.

V. The Use of Oral Sources in the Work of William of Malmesbury and Faricius of Arezzo

(a) Malmesbury's Hagiographical Traditions

William of Malmesbury is certainly conscious of the nature of oral sources, for when discussing Aldhelm's miracles (c.212), he addresses whether such sources are acceptable to the historian, and clearly errs on the side of caution: 'What through successive generations everyone has proclaimed is not to be thought of no importance'.<sup>72</sup> If we examine the passage which follows, '*quae iam sermo deprompsit*', this also suggests a translation closer to that of Preest. Here, William states that the existence of the shrine had led some people to believe that the monastery had once possessed an older *Life of Aldhelm*; a '*librum vitae*' as William puts it, 'in which Aethelwulf read about them [the miracles]', but that apparently this work had been lost during the Danish invasions.<sup>73</sup> William rather pointedly does not tell us whether he believes this to be true, and this omission could suggest some scepticism on his part. On the other hand, William may have felt he needed to address this possibility in his own work, particularly as this tradition, erroneous or not, was found in the prologue to Faricius's earlier *vita*. Here, Faricius speaks of his forefathers who had

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<sup>72</sup> GP, Vol.1, p.537: '*Non ergo uideri debent de nichilo, quae per succiduas generationes ab omni predicantur populo*'. Also, in the prologue to Book III, William stated 'I will put down all I have learned of the bishops of York either from the stories of our elders or by turning the pages of books'./ '*quicquid se de pontificibus Eboracensibus notitiae nostrae uel maiorum relatione uel librorum reuolutione infudit*': *ibid*, p.326-27. Preest translates *relatione* as 'tales': *idem*, Deeds of the Bishops, p.140.

<sup>73</sup> GP, Vol.1, p.583, '*Vnde putatum est tunc fuisse in loco librum uitae, in quo ista legerit, sed postea tempore Danorum amissum*'. Winterbottom translates the highlighted section as: 'in which Aethelwulf read these stories'. Preest translates it as 'and that Aethelwulf read about the miracles in it': *idem*, Deeds of the Bishops, p.265. My translation is closer to Preest's because I think it is clearer.

read ‘a volume, in a clear style, concerning his [Aldhelm’s] virtues’.<sup>74</sup> For Faricius, the existence of this work was verified by Malmesbury’s oral tradition. While the terminology used by William and Faricius is different, it is perhaps safe to assume that William’s lost ‘*librum uitae*’ can be identified with the ‘*volumen*’ in the *VSA*. However, we should note that a *liber vitae* suggests a liturgical context. As Keynes has stated, there ‘was a well-developed culture of liturgical commemoration in Anglo-Saxon England’, one which was promoted by the proponents of tenth-century monastic reform.<sup>75</sup> In this respect, Winterbottom and Thomson are perhaps too sceptical concerning an earlier life of Aldhelm: ‘The basis of this notion [the earlier *vita*] was clearly only the carvings on the shrine. It is perhaps remarkable that no earlier local hagiography survived to the time of Faricius or William’.<sup>76</sup>

#### (b) Compositional Methods

Depending on the context in which William was writing, his attitudes regarding oral sources appear to have been mixed.<sup>77</sup> William does not attempt to create a strict dichotomy between oral versus written evidence – instead, he points to Faricius’s ignorance, and criticises his use of evidence, rather than the evidence itself:

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<sup>74</sup> *WVSA*, p. 98: ‘... uolumen ex uirtutibus eius lucido stilo dicebant legisse, sed Danorum tempore, cum adhuc Christi ecclesiam persequerentur’. Although *uolumen* can refer to either a charter, deed or a letter, it is more likely that Faricius’s *uolumen* is intended to mean simply a type of book. In Book VI of Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologies*, ‘*De Librorum Vocabulis*’, it states ‘*Codex multorum librorum est; liber unius voluminis*’, which translates as ‘A Codex has many books; a book, is one volume’: *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. S.A.Barney *et al* (Cambridge, 2006).

<sup>75</sup> S.Keynes, ‘The *Liber Vitae* New Minster, Winchester’, in *The Durham Liber Vitae and its Context*, ed. D.W.Rollason (Woodbridge, 2004), pp.149-63, at p.151.

<sup>76</sup> *GP*, Vol.2, p.288. For an interesting perspective and one that is less sceptical concerning the older *vita*, see G.Princi Braccini, ‘Aldelmo di Malmesbury Probabile Autore in Volgare: Esame Delle Fonti E Dell’Aldelmo Trilingue Del MS. CCCC 326’, *Quaderni del Dipartimento di Linguistica – Università di Firenze*, 13 (2003), pp.73-100.

<sup>77</sup> *GR*, Vol.1, see introduction and p.69.

... relying on his personal authority and adducing  
no further evidence from outside to back up his statements.  
I have decided as an insider, to employ a different approach,  
going through events that were missing in Faricius, and surrounding  
all I say with respectable witnessess as though with doorposts.  
Who otherwise would give credence to things so far removed  
from what we can remember, things that are, so to say, buried  
for want of a pen to record them? What is more, there still  
survives much that Faricius either did not know or omitted to  
put down; and this awaits the attentions of myself, as a  
monk of Malmesbury. For in fact, he was, as it were,  
not wholly of contemptible eloquence, certainly, as  
far as one measures such things, yet he was slapdash  
with research, on account of his ignorance of our  
language, having been born under a Tuscan sky.  
I ask my readers to think well of me and to judge me fairly,  
so that my lack of distinction is not effaced by the prestige

of an abbot.<sup>78</sup>

Here William vigorously contrasts his own compositional methods with Faricius, in particular the author's approach to his sources. For example, unlike Faricius, whom William tells us depended 'on his own authority' and supported his claims without reference to external evidence [*testimonium*],<sup>79</sup> William states that he will instead 'employ a different approach' by backing up all his assertions with 'respectable witnesses [*testis*]'.<sup>80</sup> William may here be placing the term within a hagiographical context; certainly, '*testes*' were often sought to attest and ratify the miracles of saints. At the time William was writing, there was not the judicial conditions of witness-hearing which were to become the norm from the late twelfth century onwards.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, local communities often still sought to confirm miracle reports, and occasionally such attempts were also recorded in the *vita* or *miracula* of their local

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<sup>78</sup>GP, Vol.1, pp.499-501: *Auctoritate sua nitens, nec quicquam preterea quod dicta sua firmaret testimoniorum extrinsecus adducens. Michi placuit diuersum dicendi genus, ut per illa gesta quae a scriptis Faritii uocabant introrsus pergerem, et quaeque dicta idoneis testibus uelut quibusdam postibus ambirem. Quis enim aliter crederet gestis tam longe a nostra memoria remotis utque sic dictum sit propter stili penuriam sepultis? Supersunt preterea plura meum, monachi scilicet Malmesberiensis, expectantia offitium quae uir ille aut nesciuit aut dicere supersedit. Fuit enim sicut non usquequaque despicabilis eloquentiae, ita in his dumtaxat, propter ignorantiam linguae, incuriosae scientiae, utpote sub Tusco natus aere. Aequi igitur et boni consule, lector meus, ne personae meae obscuritas pre abbatis dignitate preiudicium patiatur*. Adapted from Winterbottom's translation.

<sup>79</sup> Du Cange, p.567; Niermeyer, p.1027. William's emphasis on properly documented evidence is demonstrated in his use of the plural forms of '*testimonium*' and '*testis*'. Both words can have different meanings depending on the circumstances in which they are used. The former '*testimonium*' could be used to refer to written or oral accounts, or even physical objects as evidence, and was often used in a legal context; it can also refer to witnesses who provide said evidence. Its application, therefore, is often related to the act of demonstrating proofs or substantiating one's claims.

<sup>80</sup> Du Cange, p.567-88; Niermeyer, p.1027. The term '*testis*' (or more rarely '*contestis*') was used universally in English charters and wills to refer to those who witnessed and affirmed such documents.

<sup>81</sup> The literature for this is vast, but includes: J.M.H.Smith, 'Oral and Written: Saints, Miracles and Relics in Brittany, c.850-1250', *Speculum*, 65 (1990), pp.309-43; G.Klaniczay, 'Speaking About Miracles: Oral Testimony and Written Record in Medieval Canonization Trials', in *The Development of Literate Mentalities in East Central Europe*, ed. A.Adamska and M.Mostert (Turnhout, 2004); and more generally M.Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders: The Development of the Concept of Miracle, 1150-1350* (Aldershot, 2007).

cults. For example, in Geoffrey of Burton's *Life and Miracles of St Modwenna* (BHL 2097), written c.1118 x 1135, the cure of a blind man by Modwenna is investigated by the contemporary abbot, who makes an effort to seek out witnesses so as to verify the miracle:

When the abbot had heard this, he made careful enquiry  
 into the truth of the matter and established for certain by  
 many witnesses that the man had indeed previously been  
 blind.<sup>82</sup>

However, William uses the term '*testis*' in large part to mean written witnesses/evidence, either credible earlier authorities or verifiable documentation, such as charters and letters. Whilst not the only example of William employing such language, in this instance, he gives his rationale, arguing that the *Life* needs such 'witnesses' because 'who otherwise would give credence to things so far from what we can remember, things that are, so to say, buried for want of a pen to record them?'<sup>83</sup> It is this part of the passage, which really reiterates William's criticisms concerning the problems of relying wholly on oral tradition. In particular, William points to the problem of relying on the collective memory (*nostra memoria*) of the community at

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<sup>82</sup> *The Life and Miracles of St Modwenna*, ed. and trans. Bartlett, p.188: '*Ad hec abbas, rei ueritate diligentius inquisita et probate pro certo, contestantibus plurimis, quoniam antea uere cecus fuisset*'.

<sup>83</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.498-99: '*Quis enim aliter crederet gestis tam longe a nostra memoria remotis utque sic dictum sit propter stili penuriam sepultis?*'. Similar sentiments are expressed in the *GR*, Vol.1, p.9: 'For it both seemed and was quite wrong that the memory of those great men should remain buried and their deeds die with them'./ '*Quia uidebatur et erat indignum ut tantum uirorum sepeliretur memoria, immorerentur gesta*'.

Malmesbury, which, for the purposes of rhetoric, he here paints as transient and inexact. Elsewhere in the *GP* he appears to contradict himself: 'God put them into the minds of men instead of in writing, so that the saints' miraculous deeds should not perish and go to waste.'<sup>84</sup> In contrast, William suggests that the evidence he will use is more trustworthy; further, by judging Faricius's methods as deficient, William can demonstrate that it is his work, or more exactly his pen, which will preserve the memory of Aldhelm's deeds for posterity.

William's assessment needs to be judged against Faricius's own work. As with most medieval writers, Faricius sets out both the written and oral sources he has used in the *prefatio* to his *vita*:

Nonetheless, not only those great works which we have seen, thanks to him, for his greatest workmanship surpasses all, but also what we have by careful investigation found in many texts in the vernacular tongue and in Latin. Some of these things are even in our own day witnessed [*testantur*] to by privileges from Rome and by the traditions of various kings, having been written down and witnessed by many bishops and abbots.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., pp.536-37: '*Inseruit ea diuinitas mentibus hominum uice litterarum, ne deperirent inutiliter per Sanctum facta mirabiliter*'.

<sup>85</sup> *WVSA*, p.98: '*Veruntamen non ea tantum que per eum, summo Opifice prestante, uidimus magnalia sed et que curiose indagando in multis reperimus barbarice aut Latine assignata paginis. Quorum aliquam*

In commenting upon Faricius's method of referencing his evidence within both the *vita* proper and the *prefatio*, Winterbottom states that 'this passage is a good example of his [i.e. Faricius's] imprecise wordiness'.<sup>86</sup> Such an assertion appears at odds with the significance that medieval writers conferred upon the prologue or *exordium*.<sup>87</sup> Setting out one's evidence and authorities was an integral part of the authorial craft, and was not restricted to any single genre.<sup>88</sup> At the same time, 'the *exordium* was ... the place where authors were most at liberty to say what they wanted, and was often used as a place to set out a wider conceptual framework to their texts, or to justify their work in literary or other terms'.<sup>89</sup> Indeed, it is possible to provide a much more considered reading of this passage, one that places Faricius's *vita* within an established literary tradition.

First, Faricius emphasises the miracles/wonders (*uidimus magnalia*) that he has seen.<sup>90</sup> For most historians at this time, it was usual to prioritise eye-witness accounts over written ones.<sup>91</sup> He then specifies the written texts that he has examined, and

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*partem Romana priuilegia diuersorumque regum traditiones, sub multorum presulum abbatumue inscripta testimonio, nostris adhuc testantur temporibus*'.

<sup>86</sup> Winterbottom, 'Faricius of Arezzo', p.113.

<sup>87</sup> The purpose of the *exordium* is discussed in E.R.Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. W.R.Trask (London, 1979), pp.85-89. See also R.D.Ray, 'Medieval Historiography through the Twelfth Century: Problems and Progress of Research', *Viator*, 5 (1974), pp.33-60.

<sup>88</sup> As P.Damian-Grint states, 'many of the stock elements and motifs of the Latin historiographic prologue are not peculiar to historiography, as successful and well-established motifs would naturally be used in various different types of literature wherever appropriate': *idem*, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge, 1999), p. 90.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p.88.

<sup>90</sup> Although he uses third person verb here, the sense of the sentence suggests he is talking about himself.

<sup>91</sup> See *GR*, Vol.1, p.17. See also: E.M.C. van Houts 'Genre Aspects of the Use of Oral Information in Medieval Historiography', in *Gattungen Mittelalterlicher Schriftlichkeit*, ed. B.Frank, T.Haye and

points to where this evidence comes from. He notes that for the most part his written evidence originates from those that held office: kings, bishop, and abbots. Contrary to William's criticisms, Faricius appears to regard witness testimony as a vital component of his source material. Indeed, he uses both contemporary evidence such as 'the Roman privilege', and authorities from the past, to support his research. The privilege to which Faricius refers might in fact be the papal privilege of Pope Sergius I, which made clear that Malmesbury was not to be the site of an episcopal see nor to suffer episcopal interference.<sup>92</sup> Historians have been sceptical about this privilege, because the surviving document is a Latin translation of an earlier Old English document, which was itself translated from Latin.<sup>93</sup>

The use of '*regum traditiones*' in part echoes the preface to Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, confirming that this type of evidence was considered acceptable. Bede states that for his work he has drawn upon Abbot Albinus, who had obtained information about the kingdom of Kent from written record and 'from the old traditions [*seniorum traditione*]'. Furthermore, Bede himself 'learned the history of the church of East Anglia, partly from the writings or the traditions of men of the past [*traditione*

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D.Tophinke (Tübingen, 1998), pp.297-311; R.D.Ray, 'Bede's *vera lex historiae*', *Speculum*, 55 (1980), pp.1-24; I.Short, 'Gaimar's Epilogue and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Liber vetustissimus*', *Speculum*, 69, (1994), pp. 323-43.

<sup>92</sup> C.Rauer, 'Pope Sergius I's Privilege for Malmesbury', *Leeds Studies in English*, 37 (2006), pp.261-81.

<sup>93</sup> As discussed in H.Edwards, 'Two Documents from Aldhelm's Malmesbury', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 59 (1986), pp.1-19; N.Berry, 'St Aldhelm, William of Malmesbury, and the Liberty of Malmesbury Abbey', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 16 (1990), pp.15-38.

*priorum*].<sup>94</sup> To some extent, Faricius is even more cautious than Bede, for he implies that the traditions he uses had since been applied to writing.

Having dealt with his literary sources, Faricius then moves on to consider non-written evidence:

Also things which we have often heard as being done by  
 the merits of His servant from truthful persons living under  
 the Rule as monks or others living catholic lives in another  
 order, which they had seen with their bodily eyes, or from  
 their forefathers ... frequently heard.<sup>95</sup>

The emphasis here is on the type of witness, and the way it had been transmitted. Of the former, Faricius stresses that he will use the testimony of truthful men, and, more importantly, that they should be either a monk living under a rule, or from an analogous religious order. That Faricius stipulates who his witnesses were suggests

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<sup>94</sup>Bede, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. B.Colgrave and R.A.B.Mynors (Oxford, 1969), pp.5-7.

<sup>95</sup> *WVSA*, p.98: '*Necnon ea que a ueridicis et reulariter monastico ordine degentibus uel ab aliis diuerso ordine catholice conuersantibus sepe audiimus facta per serui sui merita, que ipsi aut corporeis oculis uiderunt, aut a primoribus suis...frequenter audierunt*'. Similarly, the author of the *Miracles of St Margaret* actually structured their work around the kinds of evidence they used and was keen to demonstrate that the oral testimony which he used came from reputable sources: 'We inform the readers without any shadow of a doubt that, up to this point, I have included nothing in this little account except what I have seen with my own eyes. What is to follow, however, I have learned from trustworthy informants, who are still monks in our church, whose testimony about the things they relate is entirely credible to all who hear it.': *The Miracles of Saint Aebbe of Coldingham and Saint Margaret of Scotland*, ed. and trans. Bartlett, p.91.

that he thought that the testimony of a monastic witness was of more value. This was certainly not uncommon in other twelfth-century narratives; indeed, as Carl Watkins has shown in relation to '(un)natural wonders', 'in the mind of the chronicler the status of a witness and their vocation was intimately bound up with the weight that was to be attached to their evidence'.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, if the evidence was substantiated by such trustworthy people, there was little need to question their accounts.<sup>97</sup>

The transmission of Faricius's evidence, however, is a little more difficult to unpick. Faricius appears to include the evidence he had heard first-hand from witnesses. He then distinguishes between what they had seen, and what they had heard from their forefathers. Consequently, we have a chain of witnesses from Faricius's day back to the time when Aethelstan had commissioned a shrine. William's problem with Faricius may also lie with the quality of the transmission of evidence. Yet, what we have demonstrated is that Faricius did in fact retain a methodology which was consistent with contemporary practice, and in some cases went beyond what was needed in setting out the sources which he had used for his text. Many of William's criticisms were more than a little excessive, yet modern scholars follow William in this respect. It is worth pointing out that for all his criticisms William still used the *VSA* in writing his own account of Aldhelm.

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<sup>96</sup> C.Watkins, 'Memories of the Marvellous in the Anglo-Norman Realm', in Medieval Memories: Men, Women and the Past, 700-1300, ed. E.M.C. van Houts (Harlow, 2001), pp.92-113, at p.96, and also 'authors preferred the word of churchmen who were of acknowledged experience, seniority and virtue': p.108.

<sup>97</sup> For another early twelfth-century example, The Life and Miracles of St Modwenna, pp.2-3: 'The things that I have deemed worth adding, beyond those in the codex, I learned from the trustworthy and reliable report of truthful men, who had knowledge of them from their elders or witnessed them at first hand' / '*Cetera uero que preter hunc codicem non immerito superadicienda putauerim, ueracium ualde uirorum, qui uel didicerunt a maioribus uel ipsi uiderunt atque affuerunt presentes, fidelissima et probatissima narratione cognoui*'.

## (c) Faricius: An Outsider?

The criticisms of Faricius's methodology outlined above also fed into William's second line of attack, that which emphasised the former cellarer of Malmesbury's status as a foreigner and outsider. By relying upon the prejudices of his readers, William attempts to demonstrate that he, not Faricius, is in a better position to write a life of Aldhelm. For example, Thomson and Winterbottom argue that William uses the term '*introrsus*' to suggest that, unlike Faricius, he is a genuine "insider"; a claim William later reiterates by stating that much evidence is still to be investigated by one such as himself, a 'monk of Malmesbury'.<sup>98</sup> When William comments on Faricius's style, he uses the adjective '*despicabilis*' in his translation of '*non usquequaque despicabilis eloquentiae*' which suggests a more sarcastic quality to William's overall tone.<sup>99</sup> '*Incuriosae scientiae*' could have a much more cutting undertone, particularly as it may be in reference to Faricius's claim in his own prologue that he will 'search out carefully' [*curiose indagando*] for sources to Aldhelm's life.<sup>100</sup> What is apparent is that William ties Faricius's methodological (in)aptitude with his inability to read Old English, and this, William makes clear, was because Faricius was an Italian. Whether this criticism was altogether reasonable is a different matter entirely. Certainly, in the

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<sup>98</sup> *GP*, Vol.2, p.246.

<sup>99</sup> Certainly *usquequaque* is normally translated as 'wholly', 'utterly' or 'in every conceivable situation' – although it can be translated as 'altogether'.

<sup>100</sup> This line has been translated by Thomson in different ways: R.M.Thomson, 'Latin Classics Revisited', in *Aspects of the Language of Latin Prose*, ed. T.Reinhardt, M.Lapidge and J.N.Adams (Oxford, 2005), pp.383-94, at p.393, n.37: 'The fact is that Faricius, though not without style, was unwilling to research into matters like this; for he was a native of Tuscany and did not know the language'; and later in *GP*, Vol. 1: 'The fact is that Faricius, though not altogether with style, lacked exact knowledge, at least on this subject, for he was a native of Tuscany, and did not know the language'; Preest gives 'For although his powers as a writer are in no way to be despised, his ignorance of our language, as one born under the Tuscan skies means that he lacked the knowledge to research properly on this particular subject': *Deeds of the Bishops of England*, p.224. Italics are my emphasis.

prologue to his *vita*, Faricius claims that he will use an interpreter for some of his sources.<sup>101</sup> More radically, perhaps, and impossible to prove, is Braccini's suggestion that Faricius was unlikely to have been ignorant of the English idiom that was spoken between the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but instead would have been unable to grasp the English of an older period/phase.<sup>102</sup>

This was not the only instance of William criticising the works of previous hagiographers.<sup>103</sup> For example, in the *VSW*, William's Latin revision of an Old English Life (not extant) by the Worcester monk Coleman (d.1113), William censured Coleman for inserting quotations and sayings from the 'Lives of other Saints'. In this instance, William's criticisms were predominately of a stylistic nature:

Whoever tries to use language to heighten something that is  
grand enough in itself is just wasting time. Indeed, in  
his [Coleman's] desire to praise he is in fact degrading and belittling  
his topic, because he looks unable to rely on his own material if he

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<sup>101</sup> *WVSA*, p.99 '*Antiquissimis Anglicanae linguae schedulis saepius ex interprete legendo audivimus*'. For such practices see R.M.Wilson 'Some Lost Saints' Lives in Old and Middle English', *The Modern Language Review*, 36 (1941), pp.161-72.

<sup>102</sup> Braccini, 'Aldelmo di Malmesbury', p.78.

<sup>103</sup> Authors often used prologues to criticise other writers. For instance, in his prologue to the *Historia Regum Anglicarum* the twelfth-century writer William of Newburgh included a wide-ranging attack on Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. For a recent discussion of William's attack see: A.Mathers, 'William of Newburgh and the Northumbrian Construction of English History', *Journal of Medieval History*, 33 (2007), pp.339-57.

has to prop himself up with the aid of another.<sup>104</sup>

Similarly, in the prologue to his *Vita sancti Dunstani archiepiscopi*, William argues that previous lives of Dunstan were either too unpolished, or could not be trusted. Criticising both varieties, he suggests that neither is acceptable 'for rustic writings give no pleasure, and it is shaming to repeat the things that lack a firm basis in truth'.<sup>105</sup> Of the latter, William's main target appears to have been Osbern, a monk of Canterbury, who had previously written a life of St Dunstan.<sup>106</sup> In their edition and translation of William's *Vita Dunstani*, Winterbottom and Thomson have pointed out that William's censures against Osbern's earlier life can be better understood alongside the *vita's* compositional and institutional context.<sup>107</sup> William was actually writing the *Vita Dunstani* for the monks of Glastonbury Abbey, who wanted William to justify their claims of having Dunstan's body. William appears either not to have believed this himself, or wished not to offend the community at Canterbury, who also claimed to possess Dunstan's relics. Therefore, we might want to think how William's account of Aldhelm, in particular his criticisms of Faricius's *VSA*, were also influenced by the institutional context in which he composed the *Life*.

## VI. Faricius's Treatment of the Life of Aldhelm

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<sup>104</sup> *VSW*, pp.59-60: 'Quin immo dun uult laudare infamat potius et attenuat, quia uideatur non posse niti argumento proprio, si fulciatur patrocini alieno'.

<sup>105</sup> *VSW*, p.166.

<sup>106</sup> Osbern was also criticised by a later Canterbury monk; this is discussed in J.Rubenstein, 'Liturgy Against History', pp.279-309.

<sup>107</sup> *VSW*, pp.xvii-xx.

(a) The Audience for the *VSA*

Parts of the Gloucester text shed light upon the relationship between Malmesbury Abbey and its diocesan bishop, Osmund (1078-1099). This section will examine how Faricius portrayed Aldhelm's post-conquest cult. It will suggest that the *vita* reflects or promotes the view that although the monks of Malmesbury abbey encouraged Aldhelm's cult, the bishop of Salisbury and his household had an important role in its establishment and early propagation. Connected to this enquiry is the extent to which Faricius shaped the *vita* and the depiction of Aldhelm to reflect his patrons' interests. Certainly, Faricius made quite clear in the *vita* that Osmund viewed himself as Aldhelm's successor.<sup>108</sup> But Faricius himself also made a judgement about Osmund: stating that Osmund governed his parish in an irreproachable manner, just like the blessed saint before him.<sup>109</sup> Thus, we will ask why Faricius may have also highlighted the parallels between the two bishops, and we will explore Osmund's role within the *VSA*, suggesting that this provides a new perspective for the *VSA*.

## (i) The Significance of the Dedication to Bishop Osmund of Salisbury

As we have noted, Faricius dedicated the *VSA* to Osmund, bishop of Salisbury and Osmund's archdeacon, Hubald, a fellow Italian.<sup>110</sup> A dedicatory couplet to Osmund is placed before the *commendatio* and the main part of the *vita*; presumably the verse

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<sup>108</sup> *WVSA*, p.125-26: '*Tandem supradictus presul Deo carus Osmundus, tum quia de illo tot admiranda perhodie audibat, tum quia illius etsi post multorum seriem annorum successor existebat*'.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p.122: '*Osmundum nomine qui eandem parrogiam inreprehensibiliter gubernabat quam iste beatus ante eum*'.

<sup>110</sup> He is described also in the *GP*, Vol.2, p.643: 'Osmund had a second archdeacon, Hubald, a man who had made much progress in the liberal arts, but because of a stammer could not get them over to his audience.' / '*Eiusdem antistitis alter erat archidiaconus, Hubaldus, uir qui liberalium atrium non exiguum experimentum cepisset, sed pro titubantia oris parum eas audientibus expediret*'.

itself was composed by Faricius. The first line of the couplet states that the work was for Osmund; the second line is more difficult to translate, but it may be that Faricius is expressing his hope that the text will be read by both Osmund and the canons under him.<sup>111</sup> Presumably, he felt that the *VSA* would be of interest to Osmund and perhaps also the canons at Salisbury cathedral.

Both Osmund and Hubald were described in glowing terms within the *commendatio* or preface: Osmund is proclaimed as ‘the most blessed of bishops ... ornamented by unblemished character, by the dignity of a priest, and, more important, by enthusiasm for holy devotion and chastity. Laying hold of the lawful path of learning before he ascended to the rank of bishop’.<sup>112</sup> Hubald is said to be ‘adorned with learning in the liberal arts ... filled full with the seven rivers of philosophy, stuffed with words of holy scriptures, famous for his praiseworthy eloquence’.<sup>113</sup> Faricius might have emphasised Osmund and Hubald’s scholarly achievements because Aldhelm was considered such an intellectual giant; certainly, in the *VSA*, Faricius listed in some detail the works that Aldhelm had composed. In this way, Faricius demonstrated how his patrons lived up to the saint’s merits. Dedications often provided their texts with an additional aura of credibility, yet, as Faricius relates within the *vita*, Osmund, it appears, had already taken a keen interest in Aldhelm’s cult.

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<sup>111</sup> *WVSA*, p.97: ‘*Hoc opus Osmundus, nulli probitate secundus, presul sanciuit canonisque sub ordine misit*’. Winterbottom believes *misit* could be translated as ‘sent out into the world’.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* p.97: ‘*beatissime pontifex Osmunde ... et morum perfectione et sacerdotii dignitate et (quod iis maius est) sancti studii feruore ac castimonie stabilitate decoratus*’.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘*liberalium atrium dogmate decorate doctor Hubalde ... phylosophie septem riuulis longe repletus, sanctorum scripturarum sententiis refertus, facundie laudabilitate preclarus*’.

Faricius also states in the *commendatio* that the choice of dedicatees was a communal decision, and that Osmund was chosen ‘at the request of all the brothers’.<sup>114</sup> It is difficult to know whether this is in fact true or whether it was simply a topos; it may have been an exaggeration on Faricius’s part, but it does rule out the possibility that Osmund had initially commissioned the *vita*. The impetus for the *VSA*’s composition definitely appears to have come from within Malmesbury itself. If we take Faricius at his word, we might ask why the monks of Malmesbury felt they needed the patronage of Osmund. Clearly, why Faricius, speaking here in his capacity as “spokesman” for the monks of Malmesbury, sought out Osmund as their patron is a matter for investigation.

(ii) Osmund, Bishop of Salisbury

Little is actually known about Osmund; a fifteenth-century tradition states that he was the nephew of William I, but this is not supported by any contemporary narratives, and is almost certainly spurious.<sup>115</sup> His modern biographers suggest that he was likely from the continent, and had come to England shortly after the Conquest.<sup>116</sup> Certainly, Osmund forged a close relationship with the early Anglo-Norman kings. Not only was he one of William’s personal chaplains before he became bishop, but he also acted as

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<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘*omniumque nostrorum fratrum desiderio*’.

<sup>115</sup> ‘Appendix: Memoranda de Osmunda’ in *Charters and Documents Illustrating the History of the Cathedral, City and Diocese of Salisbury in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, ed. W.R.Jones and W.D.Macray (Salisbury, 1891), p.373. Repeated in *The Canonisation of St Osmund*, ed. A.Malden (Salisbury, 1901), p.iii.

<sup>116</sup> Summaries of Osmund’s life include T.Webber, ‘Osmund [St Osmund] (d. 1099)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20902>, accessed 28 Aug 2008], *EEA. 18: Salisbury 1078-1217*, ed. B.R.Kemp (Oxford, 1999), pp.xxxiv-xxxviii; and *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066-1300: Vol.4 Salisbury* (1991), pp.xxi-xxxix.

royal chancellor from c.1070-1078.<sup>117</sup> He was clearly well connected and was, therefore, a good choice of patron for the monks of Malmesbury.

In 1078, Osmund became bishop of Salisbury. The diocese of Salisbury had been newly formed in the reign of Hermann (1045-1078), Osmund's predecessor.<sup>118</sup> Hermann had been appointed to the bishopric of Ramsbury in 1045, then, in 1055, he attempted to have his episcopal seat stationed at Malmesbury Abbey. William of Malmesbury reports that Hermann petitioned Edward the Confessor with this request; Edward initially agreed, but he annulled the grant shortly afterwards.<sup>119</sup> As his plan had failed, William tells us Hermann 'left England in a huff' and retired to a monastic life at St Bertin in Normandy.<sup>120</sup> However, at the death of Bishop Aelfwold of Sherborne, he then returned and joined the see of Sherborne to Ramsbury, with his seat at Sherborne (thus joining the counties of Dorset with Wiltshire and Berkshire). Three years before his death in 1078, at the 1075 Council of London, Hermann was granted permission to move his see from Sherborne to Salisbury (Old Sarum).<sup>121</sup> Consequently, Osmund took over a newly founded episcopal see, and to some extent had a blank slate from which to start over.

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<sup>117</sup> In *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, 1066-1154*, ed. H.W.C.Davis (Oxford, 1913), I, no.76 – he is called the king's chaplain. For Osmund as chancellor, see *Facsimiles of Royal Writs to A.D.1000*, ed. T.A.M.Bishop and P.Chaplais (Oxford, 1957), pp.xiii-xv.

<sup>118</sup> J.Barrow, 'Hermann (d. 1078)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13084>, accessed 28 Aug 2008]

<sup>119</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.286-87.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> *Councils and Synods*, pp.607-16.

Osmund's activities within his diocese are poorly documented. The few scattered references we do have suggest he took his episcopal duties seriously. For instance, the Chronicle of Abingdon records how Osmund dedicated the village church of Peasley and blessed the graveyard.<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, one of Osmund's few surviving *acta* details an agreement between the bishop and Abbot Reginald of Abingdon concerning Reginald's possession of a parish church in Whistley. The act states that the church had been originally dedicated by Osmund.<sup>123</sup> The only other episcopal *acta* to survive are his profession of obedience to Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, and the important foundation charter of 1091 stating that the cathedral at Salisbury had been built, and that Osmund had constituted the canons that were living there (*illis viventibus canonice*). A year later, in 1092, Osmund consecrated the cathedral himself.<sup>124</sup> The language used in the charter suggests a community of canons already existed at Salisbury; evidence for this earlier community is also supported by the Chronicle of Holyrood which notes that Osmund had already established thirty-six canons in 1089.<sup>125</sup>

Osmund did not, however, provide his canons with a written constitution. As Diana Greenway has demonstrated, the so-called '*Institutio* of St Osmund', which purported to be written at the same time as the foundation charter, was in fact written in the

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<sup>122</sup> *Chron. Abingdon*, Vol. 2, pp.31, 120.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>124</sup> *GR*, Vol. 2, p.375.

<sup>125</sup> *A Scottish Chronicle Known as the Chronicle of Holyrood*, ed. M.O.Anderson (Edinburgh, 1938), p.110: '*Mlxxxix. Osmundus episcopus constituit canonicus xxxvi in ecclesia Salisberiensis*'. B.R.Kemp states of the above chronicle 'this notice, assuming that it is reliable, may represent, not the first introduction of canons, but the formal constitution of a community which had been building up since 1075 x 8 following the removal of the see from Sherborne to Salisbury': *EEA*, 18: *Salisbury*, p.xvi.

mid-twelfth century.<sup>126</sup> But Teresa Webber has suggested that the community at Salisbury may initially have been regular canons. Kemp also argues that we might view the early canons as 'enjoying their emoluments in common and gathering round their bishop like an extended familia'.<sup>127</sup>

### (iii) The Cult of the Saints at Salisbury

William of Malmesbury, who had elsewhere in his *GP* written of the horrors of bishops replacing monks with secular canons in their chapters, nevertheless praised Osmund's efforts at Salisbury:

Clerics renowned for their learning arrived from all sides ... Here more than elsewhere shone out the brilliance of canons famous both for singing and for letters. A large store of books was acquired, the bishop not disdaining to copy and bind them himself.<sup>128</sup>

To what extent Aldhelm's sanctity was recognised by these canons, or, indeed, ever promoted by them, is difficult to trace. For instance, Salisbury Cathedral MS 150, which Webber states was likely to have been composed in the vicinity of Salisbury,

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<sup>126</sup> D.Greenway, 'The False *Institutio* of St Osmund', in Essays in Honour of Marjorie Chibnall Presented by Her Friends on the Occasion of Her Seventieth Birthday, ed. D.Greenway *et al* (Cambridge, 1985), pp.77-101. Also see her later article '1091, St Osmund and the Constitution of the Cathedral', in Medieval Art and Architecture at Salisbury Cathedral, ed. L.Keen and T.Cook (London, 1996), pp.1-9.

<sup>127</sup> *EEA*, 18: Salisbury, p.xxxvi.

<sup>128</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.288-89: '*Clerici, undecumque litteris insignes uenientes ... Denique emicabat ibi magnis quam alias canonicorum claritas, cantibus et litteratura iuxta nobilium. Librorum copia conquisita, cum episcopus ipse nec scribere nec scriptos ligare fastidiret*'.

includes a litany, listing Aldhelm as second among a group of confessors.<sup>129</sup> However, the text originates from the mid-tenth century, thus it was composed at the height of Aldhelm's popularity in terms of both his works and his particular hermeneutic style of writing.<sup>130</sup> Aldhelm's feast does appear to have been celebrated in the early thirteenth century at Salisbury, yet we discover in the *Vetus Registrum Salisburyensi* that his feast merited only a simple, rather than a double feast.<sup>131</sup> Elsewhere a marginal note, '*Sanctus Aldelmus*', appears alongside Aldhelm's name in a brief list of Sherborne's bishops.<sup>132</sup>

The hagiographical material found at Salisbury suggests that the early canons were more interested in continental rather than indigenous saints. The late eleventh-century collection of lives found in Salisbury Cathedral MSS 221 and 222, both Passionals (January-June and July-December), for example, are devoid of English saints.<sup>133</sup> However, two manuscripts from Salisbury written c.1100 do include a few English lives: Dublin, Trinity College, MS 174 contains *Vita s. Guthlaci* (BHL 3723); and Salisbury Cathedral MS 223 the *Vita s. Wilfridi* (BHL 8889) and the *Vita et Miracula s. Cuthberti* (BHL 2021). The evidence, in the main, however, suggests that the canons, at least initially, looked to the continent for models of sanctity.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> T.Webber, *Scribes and Scholars at Salisbury Cathedral, c. 1075-c. 1125* (Oxford, 1992), p.77, n.133.

<sup>130</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Litanies of the Saint*, ed. M.Lapidge (Woodbridge, 1991), p.xliii.

<sup>131</sup> *Vetus Registrum Sarisberiense*, ed. W.H.Rich Jones, 2 Vols. (London, 1883-1884), Vol.1, pp.37-39.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p.336. Aldhelm's feast is also included in the Sarum Breviary: *Brevium ad Usum Insignis Ecclesiae Sarisburiensis*, ed. F.Procter and C.Wordsworth, 3 Vols. (Cambridge, 1879-1886), Vol.3, pp.297-302.

<sup>133</sup> In her discussion of pre-conquest exemplars, Webber suggests both Passionals were probably copied from the same exemplar as a Passional from Worcester Cathedral Priory: *Scribes and Scholars*, p.70.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.158, 169-70.

The canons' early indifference to Anglo-Saxon saints had been seen as one of the reasons that the Flemish monastic hagiographer, Goscelin of St-Bertin (and later of St Augustine's Canterbury), criticised Osmund in his *Liber Confortatorius* (c.1080).<sup>135</sup> Goscelin, who had been part of Bishop Hermann's episcopal household, composed this work for a young woman called Eve, a ward of Wilton Abbey, who was forced to leave Wiltshire shortly after the death of Bishop Hermann. Stephanie Hollis speculates that the 'scandalous potential of his relationship with Eve ... played some part in Osmund's hostility'.<sup>136</sup> Frank Barlow has suggested that Goscelin's quarrel with Osmund may have been over the new fashion in chanting which the Normans introduced.<sup>137</sup> In fact, Goscelin's disfavour (excluding his affections for Eve) may have been due to Osmund's desire for new personnel; what is more, as Hayward has proposed, it may be the case that Osmund did not desire the services of a hagiographer.<sup>138</sup>

There is no direct evidence that Osmund was hostile towards Anglo-Saxon saints; yet historians have assumed this was the case due to Goscelin's problematic relationship

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p.40, n.32. The *Liber Confortatorius* has two recent modern translations: The Book of Encouragement and Consolation/ Liber confortatorius: the Letter of Goscelin to the Recluse Eva, trans. M.Otter, (Cambridge, 2004); and 'Gosclin's *Liber Confortatorius*', trans. W.R.Barnes and R.Hayward in Writing the Wilton Women: Goscelin's Legend of Edith and Liber Confortatorius, ed. S.Hollis et al (Turnhout, 2004), pp.97-212. I have taken quotations from the latter. Both are based with corrections on the edition by C.H.Talbot, 'The *Liber Confortatorius* of Goscelin of Saint Bertin', Analecta Monastica, 37, (1955), pp.1-117. Recent summaries of Goscelin's life include: R.C.Love, 'Goscelin of St Bertin', in The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Anglo-Saxon England, ed. M.Lapidge et al (Oxford, 1999), p.21; F.Barlow, 'Goscelin (b. c.1035, d. in or after 1107)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11105>, accessed 19 Aug 2008]

<sup>136</sup> S.Hollis, 'Goscelin's Writings and the Wilton Women', in Writing the Wilton Women: Goscelin's Legend of Edith and Liber Confortatorius, ed. eadem et al (Turnhout, 2004), pp.217-44, at p.221. Similarly F.Barlow, The Life of King Edward who Rests at Westminster / Attributed to a Monk of St. Bertin, ed. and trans. F. Barlow 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Oxford, 1992), pp.133-49, at p.139.

<sup>137</sup> Barlow, Life of King Edward, p.140, n.61

<sup>138</sup> Hayward, 'Translation-Narratives', pp.67-93, at pp.79-81.

with Osmund. Furthermore, it would appear to contradict Osmund's own interest in Aldhelm, as expressed in the *VSA*; we also know that one of his first recorded acts as bishop was to participate in the *translatio* of Aldhelm's bones to a new location. Therefore, we might question Frank Barlow's judgment that: 'Although an excellent reforming and administrative bishop, he [Osmund] was completely identified with the new culture and probably unsympathetic to the old'.<sup>139</sup>

Osmund is not known to have translated any of Sherborne's patron saints during his episcopate. The reason for this might be found in Goscelin's *Vita Wulfsini* (c.1077-9), which was a life of Wulfsige, bishop of Sherborne (993-1002). Goscelin was commissioned by Hermann, Osmund's predecessor, but having died, Goscelin probably attempted to seek Osmund's patronage, as evidenced by his appeal to an unnamed successor of Hermann in the dedication to his life of Wulfsige.<sup>140</sup> It may be that Osmund did not take too kindly to Goscelin's comments about Wulfsige's body remaining in Sherborne. Wulfsige is said to have been quite explicit about where he wished to be buried after his death: 'he imitated that the place was very definitely in Sherborne and also that there was a sarcophagus already prepared in which he would be laid'.<sup>141</sup> Furthermore, all the miracles in the life are located in Sherborne, suggesting that Goscelin was making a clear case for Wulfsige's sanctity being tied to

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<sup>139</sup> Barlow, *Life of King Edward*, at p.140.

<sup>140</sup> For the *Vita Wulfsini*, see C.H.Talbot, (ed.), 'The Life of Saint Wulsin of Sherborne by Goscelin', *Revue Bénédictine*, lxxix (1959), pp.68-85. A new translation of the text is R.C.Love, (trans.), 'The Life of St Wulfsige of Sherborne by Goscelin of Saint-Bertin', in *St Wulfsige and Sherborne: Essays to Celebrate the Millennium of the Benedictine Abbey, 998-1998*, ed. K.Barker and A.Hunt (Oxford, 2005), pp.98-123.

<sup>141</sup> Love, 'The Life of St Wulfsige', p.108.

the institution at Sherborne. In this respect, Osmund probably saw Aldhelm as a more appropriate patron for his see.

Such a discussion perhaps necessitates a need to distinguish Osmund's own interest as being in some spheres separate to, and distinct from, those of Salisbury's cathedral canons. We know from both Faricius's and William of Malmesbury's accounts that Osmund had participated in Aldhelm's *translatio* more than a decade before he had instituted the community of canons at his cathedral. Although we cannot know the extent of his involvement, he is unlikely to have participated in the event without thought as to what his presence signified – it meant that he endorsed the cult of Aldhelm at Malmesbury. Indeed, his presence may have been vital in providing the cult with the Norman bishop's episcopal authorisation.

In both accounts of the *translatio*, Faricius and William use the verb '*ascito*', the latter is translated by Preest and Winterbottom as 'brought in' and 'called in' respectively, to describe how Osmund came to officiate at the *translatio*.<sup>142</sup> Even if one was to translate the verb as 'received by', the meaning still suggests that Osmund was to a large extent responding to the wishes of Malmesbury. Nevertheless, in Faricius's *vita* Osmund's role in the '*translatio*' is much greater than that that assigned to him in William's account. Indeed, here Faricius describes Osmund as 'a man of humility,

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<sup>142</sup> *WVSA*, p.120: '*In die autem eius festiuitatis, ascito ab abbate loci illius diocesis Osmundo orthodoxo episcopo*'; *GP*, Vol.1, p.635: '*Sequenti ergo Dominica, ascito uiro uenerabili Osmundo Serberiensis episcopo*'.

worthy to be honoured and praised for his wisdom and holiness'.<sup>143</sup> Looking at his involvement from his perspective, rather than that of Malmesbury, such an action suggests he was keen to set his own stamp upon his diocese, yet wanted to demonstrate his support for the Anglo-Saxon saints which were venerated within his see. Furthermore, clearly his position might be strengthened if he was identified with the much more ancient saintly lineage of Aldhelm.

#### (iv) Bishop Osmund's Relations with Malmesbury

Osmund's interest in the saint, as well as his involvement in popularising Aldhelm's cult, is demonstrated again in chapter 27 of Faricius's *Life*.<sup>144</sup> This section provides an extended description concerning negotiations between Osmund and the Malmesbury monks over a relic of St Aldhelm. Setting the scene, Faricius explains that the veneration of Aldhelm had steadily grown after his translation, and increasingly people began to hear of the saint's miracles. At the same time, we are told that 'Beloved Osmund' (*Carus Osmundus*) also heard of the many wonders which Aldhelm had inspired within his diocese. Consequently, 'Hoping that he could have some small part of that sacred relic, the father [Osmund] came to the monastery [of Malmesbury]'.<sup>145</sup> After his arrival, Faricius describes in some detail how Osmund and his *fideles* begged and entreated the monks, prevailing upon them to agree to the bishop's request. Then having deliberated with 'the brothers' of the prelate's [Aldhelm's] monastery', and, after much deliberation, the monks reached an

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p.120: '*uero humilitate, sapientia et sanctitate honorando atque laudabili*'.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p.125: '*Qualiter quidam archileuita sit a mortis periculo sanatus potata aqua ablutionis eius reliquiarum*'.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p.126: '*sperans de illius sacris reliquiis aliquam porciunculam se posse habere, patrem aduenit monasterii*'.

agreement. Faricius states that ‘with universal assent they conceded to him [Osmund] part of his [Aldhelm’s] left arm.’<sup>146</sup> Commentating on the reason for this concession, Faricius states that the monks were reluctant to refuse Osmund’s request, ‘for he was a distinguished man in every way, and with the prayers of so many men, nobody wished to turn him away’.<sup>147</sup>

However, we soon learn that the monks’ gift to Osmund was to be of mutual benefit to both parties. Indeed, like many instances of medieval gift-giving there was a reciprocal aspect to the agreement.<sup>148</sup> As soon as he had been granted his request, Osmund ‘... declared to everyone in the monastery, that concerning the above-mentioned father, from henceforth he would be forever faithful’.<sup>149</sup> This proclamation of devotion towards Aldhelm also entailed a degree of respect and fidelity towards Malmesbury Abbey. Such commitment was also reflected in a practical measure. In return for the relic, Osmund decided to stop an ongoing custom of the abbey which Faricius labelled unjust (*iniuste*). This custom was the Maundy Thursday payment of 30*d.* (*triginta nummos*), which was bestowed upon a parish priest as payment for episcopal chrism.<sup>150</sup> Such payments were seen as an imposition by monasteries, in part because it reiterated episcopal authority within the diocese.<sup>151</sup> Such a contract may have been

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.: ‘*Tunc consilio habito cum fratribus a prelato cenobii, multis et uariis disputationibus inter eos protelatis, tandem ad hoc res deuenit, quod ei sinistri brachii partem communi assensu concesserunt*’.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.: ‘*Erat enim uir in cunctis honestus, et nolebant tanti hominis preces respuere*’.

<sup>148</sup> See A.J.Bijsterveld, ‘The Medieval Gift as an Agent of Social Bonding and Political Power: A Comparative Approach’, in *Medieval Transformations: Texts, Power, and Gifts in Context*, ed. E.Cohen and M. De Jong (Leiden, 2001) pp.123-56.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.: ‘*Se in omnibus cenobii supradicti patris fidelem perpetuo fore confirmauit*’.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.: ‘*Erat autem nostre ecclesie hoc consuetudinis, quamquam iniuste, quod in cene dominice die triginta nummos pro crismatis receptione presbiter parrochianus illius episcopii presuli reddebat*’.

<sup>151</sup> S.Wood, *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West* (Oxford, 2006), pp.711-26; D.Knowles, ‘The Growth of Exemption’, *Downside Review*, 50 (1932), pp.201-31.

acceptable to Osmund, for, as a reformer, he would have been inclined to eradicate any “bad customs” within his diocese. Significantly, however, the language that Faricius uses to describe the agreement suggests that the dispensation was intended to continue after Osmund’s death: ‘This same bishop, with the agreement of all his clerics, gave this up to us *forever* [*perpetuo*]’.<sup>152</sup>

The importance of the agreement is emphasised later in the narrative, for, as a precautionary measure, a ‘cyrograph’ was drawn up and ‘placed in the archive of the church [Malmesbury] for the memory of [our] successors’.<sup>153</sup> Likewise, the *vita* also makes clear that Osmund attempted to forestall any future challenge to the settlement: ‘But having sanctioned this [agreement], let it not be permitted, by any of our successors to remove it’.<sup>154</sup> For both sides, the document clearly had much symbolic significance. Indeed, as Adam Kosto has stated, such documents ‘...served the practical function of constructing a memory of an action or decision (extension in time) that could be communicated at a distance (extension in space)’.<sup>155</sup> Even if the authority of such a recorded action was never absolute, because it relied on a contingent future, such documents, and the record of these documents in other texts, were still cogent attempts to shape the future from a present perspective.

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<sup>152</sup> *WVSA*, p.126: ‘...*idem pontifex, clericorum suorum omnium assensu, nobis perpetuo condonavit*’.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘*in arciuis ecclesie ad successorum memoriam reseruantur*’. A cyrograph/chirograph was a document in duplicate; copies were cut apart and retained by both parties. See M.T.Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307* (London, 1979), pp.65-67 and K.Lowe, ‘Lay Literacy in Anglo-Saxon England and the Development of the Chirograph’, in *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts and Their Heritage*, ed. P.Pulsiano and E.M.Treharne (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 161-204. It may be that Malmesbury used the word as a synonym for charter. In S.Kelly’s edition of the Malmesbury charters no.11 is called a *cyrographum* and is also a forgery; *eadem*, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, p.80.

<sup>154</sup> *WVSA*, p. 126: ‘*sed ne liceat sancitum hoc suorum alicui remouere successorum*’.

<sup>155</sup> A.J.Kosto, *Making Agreements in Medieval Catalonia: Power, Order and the Written Word, 1000-1200* (Cambridge, 2001), p.271.

The description of the agreement within the *vita* is intriguing, particularly as the events described by Faricius appear to have been compressed. It is hard to imagine Osmund spontaneously turning up at the Abbey – although, such an action would have meant the monks could not refuse him. Nevertheless, the ritual entreaties and discussion which Faricius describes may reflect a much longer process of deliberation between the two sides. If one breaks the account down, three aspects of the narrative stand out. First, there is a description of Osmund and his men begging and entreating the monks of Malmesbury.<sup>156</sup> The pairing of gerund and present participle here not only makes clear the insistent nature of the plea, but the language of supplication suggests that Osmund and his men took part in a physical demonstration. Secondly, there is the oral component; Osmund’s public declaration of fidelity to the Malmesbury monks could also be seen as an affirmation of an oath. Finally, the addition of the ‘cyrograph’ provides an extra level of authentication; indeed, from the eleventh century onwards, the oral promise of fidelity was not always considered sufficient. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, the separate elements of Faricius’s account – ritual, oral and written – reiterate the importance which Faricius attempted to attach to these negotiations.

The differences between Faricius and William’s accounts are stark. Most noticeably, William omits the entire description of the deliberations between Osmund and the

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<sup>156</sup> *WVSA*, p.126: ‘*eum per se suosque fideles deprecans, deprecando exorans, exorando supplicans, supplicando deposcens quatinus de sanctissimo predecessore suo sibi aliquid daret*’.

Malmesbury monks, including Osmund's removal of the Maundy Thursday tithes.<sup>157</sup> Indeed, William puts a slightly different spin on it, suggesting that Osmund sought the relic for his own purposes:

He thought, and said quite openly, that it was only proper for him to receive a share in the remains of his distinguished predecessor, whose see he now occupied. This would he said bear fruit for himself, and be welcome to the saint, who at modest cost to his completeness would purchase new honours and new attention. Even Abbot Warin did not prove hard to win over: he could see that it was logical to agree.<sup>158</sup>

While not necessarily critical of Osmund's actions, there might be an insinuation here that obtaining the relic was first and foremost to the benefit of Osmund. The last line of the passage seems to reveal William's prejudice, where he explicitly points the finger at Prior Warin as the one responsible for acquiescing to Osmund's request. This is in sharp contrast to the account given in Faricius's *vita*; here, each step of the agreement is depicted as if it was a mutual decision on the part of monks. As has already been mentioned, Faricius makes clear that ultimately the relic was

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<sup>157</sup> The only possible reference to this is William's remark in Book II of the *GP* that Osmund 'fleeced none of the abbeys of his diocese by the imposition of any burdensome levy': *GP*, Vol.1, p.289.

<sup>158</sup> *GP*, Vol.2, p.641: '*... decere putans et predicans ut probatissimi antecessoris communicaret exuuiis cuius sedem impleuerat. Fructuosum id sibi, gratum Sancto, qui paruo integritatis suae dispendio nouos honores, magnos fauores mercaretur. Sed nec abbas Warinus difficilis fuit impetratu, qui se ad consentiendum ratione duci uideret*'. Thomson appears to follow William of Malmesbury in this respect and is rather sceptical of Osmund's interest in Aldhelm; he calls it 'his alleged promotion of the cult of Aldhelm': *GP*, Vol.2, p.319.

relinquished to Osmund ‘with universal assent’. Likewise, it is to ‘everyone in the monastery’ [*omnibus cenobii*] that Osmund declares his fidelity.<sup>159</sup>

Faricius appears to have emphasised the ritual elements in the narrative, while also playing up the consensual aspects. Philippe Buc has demonstrated how authors often imbued events with a ritual significance, so as to ‘create’ an image of cohesion and uniformity.<sup>160</sup> At no point does Faricius mention Warin in his description of the negotiations. The emphasis on a unified front is likely as much an attempt to create an ‘official’ memory of the event as William’s omission of the entire procedure. Even Faricius’s narrative points to the ‘many and various disputes’ that took place between the monks. Although they did reach a final agreement, reading between the lines, a number of monks may have been against Osmund’s request. Of course, William’s decision to point to Warin as the person responsible for giving up Aldhelm’s relic also fits into William’s wider narrative of early Norman control and abuse, and particularly his rather critical opinion of Warin: ‘he was of little use to the church, because he was the helpless puppet of his own hopes of a higher position. That made him adept at emptying the monks’ pockets and raising cash from any and every source’.<sup>161</sup> Faricius, on the other hand, had nothing but praise for Warin.<sup>162</sup> In this respect, William likely

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<sup>159</sup> This emphasis on a collective decision-making process is also highlighted in respect of Osmund as well: Osmund’s decision to get rid of the baptismal tithes is done ‘with the agreement of all his clerics’.

<sup>160</sup> P.Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton, 2001).

<sup>161</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.628-29: ‘*aeclesiae non multum utilis, quia maioris spe honoris preceps raptaretur. Quapropter idoneus monachorum marsupia euacuare, undecumque nummos rapere*’.

<sup>162</sup> *VWSA*, p.121: ‘*qui primus postquam Anglorum Francigene dominati sunt bonorum morum assuetudinem beateque conuersationis cultum et regule monastice doctrinam illic commorantibus ostenderat*’.

saw Faricius as part of the old establishment, and as Malmesbury's cellarer as following Warin's lead.

What is of interest is not what was "true", but how each writer attempted to write or rewrite these events. While Osmund appears to play an important part in Faricius's *vita*, and we learn much more about his relationship with Malmesbury and his apparent devotion to Aldhelm, to some extent he is sidelined in William's account; one wonders if the next generation at Malmesbury were much more guarded over sharing their patron saint.

## VII. The Depiction of Aldhelm as Bishop: A Comparison

In the *VSA*, Aldhelm's role as a bishop is an integral component of his sanctity and is emphasised by Faricius throughout. In the preface (included in both manuscripts), Faricius states that he will describe faithfully the works, life, miracles and learning 'of the most holy of bishops Aldhelm'.<sup>163</sup> In the *commendatio* to the Gloucester manuscript the saint is described as 'the holiest of bishops and most precious confessor of God'.<sup>164</sup> The twinning of "bishop and confessor" is frequently used in the text; for instance, both the *incipit* to the *prefatio* and the *incipit* to the *vita* of the Gloucester manuscript include the pairing.<sup>165</sup> Even in a vision that Faricius himself has, Aldhelm wears episcopal vestments; struck down with an illness, Faricius dreams

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p.98: '*sanctissima Aldelmi presulis ortum et uitam, miracula atque doctrinam, utcumque describere, fideliter tamen*'.

<sup>164</sup> *WVSA*, p.97: '*de sanctissimi presulis ac preciosissimi confessoris Dei*'.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.. '*Incipit prefatio in uita sancti Aldelmi episcopi et confessoris eximii*', and p.99: '*Incipit uita sancti Aldelmi episcopi et confessoris eximii*'.

that he is beside Aldhelm's tomb when an old man suddenly appears wearing a staff, mitre, ring, gloves and boots.<sup>166</sup> For an earlier period, Isabel Moreira has argued that such dreams or visions could reiterate the importance of institutional episcopal traditions.<sup>167</sup> In this way, the emphasis on Aldhelm as a bishop might have been a consequence of a wish for Malmesbury to have an episcopal patron.

In contrast to Faricius's *vita*, while Aldhelm's role as bishop was a necessary component to William's account, William did not align the saint's sanctity with his episcopal office. In the preface to Book V of the *GP*, no mention is made of Aldhelm as a former bishop of Sherborne, even though William had first suggested he would write a work on Aldhelm in Book II of the *GP* when he was listing the bishops of Sherborne.<sup>168</sup> Instead in Book V, William reiterates the connections between Malmesbury Abbey and Aldhelm, and emphasises the saint's status as patron of the Abbey. He describes the saint as 'our blessed father Aldhelm', and later 'our own lord and patron'.<sup>169</sup> On both occasions, William uses the possessive adjective to reiterate the sense that Malmesbury laid claim to Aldhelm.

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<sup>166</sup> This is one of the new miracles found in the Gloucester manuscript: *WVSA*, p.115. See also *ibid.*, p.122: '*Vidi continuo senem ueneranda canicie, uultu angelico, resupinato corpore in sepulchro uelud in lecto iacentem, sacro habitu, uirga et cydare, anulo, cyrothecis et caligis presulem, quem si nunc uiuentem corpore uiderem proculdubio abseque indice recognoscerem*'.

<sup>167</sup> I. Moreira, *Dreams, Visions and Spiritual Authority in Merovingian Gaul* (Cornell, 2000), p.89: 'These supernatural aids often came in the guise of former bishops of the district who appeared to the living as ghosts: the returned dead'.

<sup>168</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.277.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, p.498: '*beatissimo patre nostro Aldelmo*' and '*dominus et patronus noster*'.

Indeed, William made clear that he felt Aldhelm was responsible for Malmesbury's foundation and its continuing existence.<sup>170</sup> As he stated, Malmesbury 'is still full of monks .... I think that this is the doing of our merciful saint, who gave himself body and soul to its service, ensuring that it might escape so many disasters, and last out so many troubles, still breathing some faint trace of liberty lost long ago'.<sup>171</sup> William describes Aldhelm, however, not as a saintly bishop, but instead throughout the narrative he used the term '*sanctum virum*', or alternatively '*sanct[um] confessor[em]*'.<sup>172</sup>

Neither author, however, focussed upon Aldhelm's see of Sherborne; although William did point out that he had seen the Church that Aldhelm had built there.<sup>173</sup> Faricius had even less to say about Sherborne. This was probably because he was more interested in Aldhelm's status as bishop, not the see itself; he wished to lay claim to his title for Malmesbury, but perhaps Faricius was writing with Osmund in mind. Both texts reveal how each hagiographer sought to portray the saint in a subtly different light. In chapter nine of his *vita*, Faricius states how, having been instructed by an episcopal synod, Aldhelm composed a book detailing the 'controversy and error' of the Irish (or British) way of calculating the date of Easter.<sup>174</sup> Faricius probably took his own account from Bede, who, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, wrote that 'When Aldhelm was still a priest and abbot of the monastery called Malmesbury, he wrote at the command

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p.579.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., p.523.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p.501 ('*sanctissimi uiri*'), p.507 ('*sanctum uirum*'), p.541 ('*sanctum uirum*'), p.579 ('*beati uiri*'), and p.583 ('*sancti confessoris*').

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., p.567.

<sup>174</sup> Aldhelm's actions here reflected the concerns of the former Synod of Whitby, for which see F.Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1971), pp.123-28.

of a synod of his people, an outstanding book against the error of the Britons in not celebrating Easter at the proper time, and doing several other things contrary to the purity and peace of the Church'.<sup>175</sup> Faricius begins his account in a similar manner to Bede: 'venerable Abbot Aldhelm, and still, so far a priest'.<sup>176</sup> Yet Faricius then writes an interesting aside: 'indeed, not yet one [i.e. bishop] himself, although through his holy life and deeds, he was being set up to be bishop'.<sup>177</sup> In this comment Faricius reiterates how Aldhelm was destined to ascend the episcopal heights. In contrast, in William of Malmesbury's account of this same event, the saint is only referred to as 'the most blessed of men'.<sup>178</sup>

The difference in outlook is also striking when each author comes to describe the saint's episcopate. In the *GP*, William is mainly concerned with *why* Aldhelm was offered the bishopric of Sherborne. He states that Aldhelm's 'superior wisdom and advanced age invited promotion'; indeed, he reiterates these qualities later when he states, 'everyone, whatever their age or rank, was agreed that he obviously deserved the post, being old, serious minded, rich in learning, and unparalleled in piety'.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Bede, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p.514: *Denique Aldhelm, cum adhuc esset presbyter et abbas monasterii, quod Maildubi Urbem nuncupant, scripsit iubente synodo suae gentis librum egregium aduersus errorem Brettonum quo uel pascha non sup tempore celebrant, uel alia perplura ecclesiasticae castitati et paci contraria gerunt*'.

<sup>176</sup> *WSVA*, p.106: '*Quare Saxonum orientalis plage sancta synodus uenerabilem Adelmum abbatem, et adhuc tantum presbiterum... pro sanctitatis sue reuerentia rogauit librum componere egregium, quo maligna, que tunc exorta fuerat, Britonum controuersia et error penitus aboleretur*'. William of Malmesbury refers to this work also: *GP*, Vol.1, p.545: '*Opus ergo summa laude perfectum Britonibus direxit*'.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*: '*nondum enim, etsi sanctus uita et moribus, in ordine ponebatur pontificum*'

<sup>178</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.544: '*uir beatissimus*'.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, p.563: '*sapientiae prerogatiua et aevi maturitas in maius culmen aspiraret*'; '*Omnis aetatis et ordinis conflatur sententia dignum uideri presulatu excocta iam aetate serium, litteris uberem, religione nulli disparem*'.

William perhaps emphasised Aldhelm's age to demonstrate that the saint had not become bishop of Sherborne until near the end of his life.

Faricius, however, does not talk about why Aldhelm was raised to the bishopric. Instead, he concentrates upon the saint's actions in office, and how this measured up to a conventional understanding of the ideal bishop. Indeed, Faricius provides a much more rounded picture of Aldhelm's episcopate, drawing upon traditional models. First, Faricius cited the first clause of 1 Timothy, 3:2: 'It behoveth therefore a bishop to be blameless'.<sup>180</sup> In this chapter, the author of Timothy had set out the qualifications required of pastors and church leaders. Faricius made clear that all Aldhelm's actions proceeded from this one precept.<sup>181</sup> Nevertheless, Faricius also placed the saint's behaviour in the context of earlier influential models; for instance, he stated how Aldhelm acted upon the guidance of Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care*.<sup>182</sup> Furthermore, he also compared the saint to Martin of Tours (one of the most drawn upon episcopal models), stating that Aldhelm remained as virtuous as a bishop, as he had been in his earlier life.<sup>183</sup>

Faricius emphasised the degree to which Aldhelm was active within his diocese; he pointed out Aldhelm's qualities as a preacher, and how he had multiplied his

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<sup>180</sup> *WVSA*, p.110, '*Oportet episcopum esse irreprehensibilem*'.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*: '*In quo uno precepto ab apostolo dato omnia subsequencia continentur, quamuis pro intellectu singula nominentur*'.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Ut de bonis prelati ait sanctus Gregorius, sicut preerat in honoris culmine, ita precellebat sibi subiectis in omnium bonitatum amplitudine*'.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Is quippe impeditus in episcopio rebus secularibus, ut moris est omnium (uti de beato Martino Turonensium presule legitur)*'.

congregation while in office. Faricius also noted that ‘in the four year[s] he spent in his bishopric he ruled most vigorously, watching over his episcopal office [and] the monasteries, of which before his [episcopal] office he had governed providently with divine mercy’.<sup>184</sup> Certainly, Faricius sought to show how Aldhelm’s saintliness was a consequence of his particular vocation and his actions within his diocese - a point that he makes explicit at the end of this chapter:

For his merits he [Aldhelm] is called a man of the greatest  
saintliness... [for] having been commissioned by God he  
would fulfil his office in its entirety.<sup>185</sup>

In comparison, while William mentions Aldhelm’s qualities as a preacher, he places Aldhelm within a monastic context, and states that ‘in particular, [Aldhelm] was concerned for the liberty of the monasteries’.<sup>186</sup> Of course, William makes clear that this particularly pertained to the monks of Malmesbury. To prove his point, William included two charters within the text, which confirmed an earlier privilege that stressed Malmesbury’s autonomy. Of the second charter, William states that ‘In this charter Aldhelm was seen to have provided for his monasteries and warded off the

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid.: ‘*Qui dum episcopatum per annos quatuor strenuissime reget, intentus episcopii officio, monasteriis, que prouidente diuina clementia ante id officio gubernauerat*’.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.: ‘*Veruntamen merito uocatur ille sanctissimus ... qui deuote sibi a Deo commissum implet officium in omnibus*’.

<sup>186</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.566: ‘*tum uel maxime libertati monasteriorum studere*’.

threat of oppression by those who came after'.<sup>187</sup> Faricius does make reference to the privilege and claims that it was stored in a chest at Malmesbury.<sup>188</sup> Yet, at a time when many monasteries were increasingly seeking to claim independence from episcopal control, William may have thought Faricius's mention of the privilege was an opportunity to expand and supplement what was already tradition.<sup>189</sup>

One adjective that is repeated on six occasions in the *Life of Aldhelm* is *strenuus*, meaning active or vigorous. To some extent, Faricius's use of this attribute may be due to the fact that he often borrows verbatim descriptions from Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Indeed, Faricius himself points to his debt to Bede at the beginning of the section that outlines Aldhelm's episcopate.<sup>190</sup> Their descriptions of Aldhelm are very similar, for example: Bede states that Aldhelm 'presided over it [his diocese] energetically for four years'.<sup>191</sup> In fact, both J.M Wallace-Hadrill and Henry Mayr-Harting have noted how Bede frequently used both the adjective *strenuus* and noun *strenuitas*.<sup>192</sup> Both, however, only discuss Bede's use as it was applied to Anglo-Saxon kings. Wallace-Hadrill states that in both Anglo-Saxon and Frankish contexts,

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p.568: '*Quauis igitur hac carta suis monasteriis consuluisse et tirannidem successorum propulsasse uideretur*'.

<sup>188</sup> *WVSA*, p.110: '*priuilegium sanxit cum anathemate, quod postea a totius Anglie sancta synodo eo id agente laudatum, in Meldunensis ecclesie armario reposuit ratum*'.

<sup>189</sup> See also J.Barrow, 'William of Malmesbury's Use of Charters', in *Narrative and History in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Tyler and Balzaretto (Turnhout, 2006), pp.67-89.

<sup>190</sup> *WVSA*, p.109: '*Cuius uitam laudabilem Beda uenerabilis presbiter in Historia narrat Ecclesiastica*'.

<sup>191</sup> Bede, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History* p.515: '*cui annis quattuor strenuissime praefuit*'; *WVSA*, p.110: '*Qui dum episcopatum per annos quattuor strenuissime reget*'.

<sup>192</sup> See H.Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England* (Pennsylvania, 1991), pp.40-50; and J.M.Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long Haired Kings* (Toronto, 1982), p.62.

'*strenuitas* is an aspect of *utilitas* and refers specifically to martial prowesses'.<sup>193</sup> Consequently, the word has more violent connotations; certainly, Mayr-Harting makes this point: 'Bede, too, approved of *strenuitas* in kings, but he had no idea what it was like to be on the receiving end of it'.<sup>194</sup> The use of the term within an episcopal context appears to have been common also; the connotations it invoked were of a less violent variety, although it is important to note that Bede was writing in an age when bishops as warriors were deemed acceptable (or at least less objectionable).<sup>195</sup> To some extent, this was because bishops needed the same attributes as kings. As Janet Nelson states: 'Churchmen need royal power and *lay vigour* in order to carry out their ministry'.<sup>196</sup> Thus, Faricius's borrowing from Bede may explain why he makes no distinction, using the term three times to describe a king's rule, and three times for bishops. This is perhaps a small difference, which also shows a distinct lack of variety on Faricius's part, although it adds to the idea that Faricius and William understood or viewed the episcopal role differently.

In describing Aldhelm's attributes as a bishop, William emphasised Aldhelm's wisdom and maturity over his pastoral vigour. Indeed, *strenuus* and *strenuitas* appear to be missing entirely from the *GP*; although, in the *GR*, William used both Latin forms to describe laymen and kings. The following section will explore William's descriptions

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<sup>193</sup> J.M.Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People: A Historical Commentary* (Oxford, 1988), p.84. Wallace-Hadrill derives this argument in some part from J.O.Bodmer, *Der Krieger der Merowingerzeit und seine Welt* (Munich, 1957), pp.55-56.

<sup>194</sup> Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity*, p.41.

<sup>195</sup> T.Reuter, '*Filii matris nostrae pugnant adversum nos: Bonds and Tensions between Prelates and their 'milites' in the German High Middle Age*', in *Chiesa e mondo feudale nei secoli X-XII* (Milan, 1995), pp.247-76; see also K.Leyser, *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Gregorian Revolution and Beyond*, ed. T. Reuter, 2 Vols. (London, 1994), Vol. 2, pp.189-204.

<sup>196</sup> J.Nelson, 'The Intellectual in Politics: Context, Content and Authorship in the Capitulary of Coulaines, November 843', in *Frankish World 750-900*, ed. *eadem* (Londonm, 1996), pp.155-68, at p.161.

of bishops within his *GP*; we can examine the types of attributes and activities that William felt were essential for the episcopal office.

Throughout the *GP* William employs a number of adjectives to describe how a bishop governed his diocese. The qualities which were frequently stressed were a bishop's energy, efficiency, industry and good sense. Such characteristics went hand-in-hand with sanctity or holiness. William often contrasted past bishops with what he saw as less than satisfactory behaviour of the recent prelates. It was rare for William to praise a recent bishop. In his description of the post-conquest bishop of Chichester, Ralph (d.1244), he mentions the bishop's episcopal rigour (*rigor pontificalis*), and described how he preached three times a year to the people within his diocese. After which, William complains: 'I should not mention this, were it not that in our own age it is accounted a miracle if bishops show any skill in preaching or any moderation in receiving [it]'.<sup>197</sup>

William was not necessarily critical of bishops having administrative and political roles, but he was concerned with how bishops *used* their power, believing that they should act differently from those who wielded power in the secular sphere. He was in this respect, slightly distrustful of secular ecclesiastics. William even suggests that ignorance in lay affairs is a *positive* characteristic. St Anselm, for instance, is said to have known 'nothing of lay business, because he had no wish to know things he had

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<sup>197</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.323: '*quod non commemorarem nisi quod nostro euo miraculo ducitur in episcopis uel predicandi sollertia uel accipiendi temperantia*'.

shrunk from being involved in ever since he had become a monk'.<sup>198</sup> In contrast, William was scathing of Ranulf of Durham who was described as 'so active in worldly affairs, and so lazy in those of the spirit';<sup>199</sup> and of Robert bishop of Lincoln, who 'was unequalled for knowledge of lay business; of church affairs, not so'.<sup>200</sup> Such depictions reflected the perspective of Church reformers who believed bishops should not involve themselves in secular activities. We can, therefore, better understand William's descriptions if we place him within the context of reform. William also drew upon a patristic tradition, which was popular within monastic circles. The episcopal office was thought of as a burden; indeed, Bjorn Weiler has demonstrated that the reluctant bishop was a well-established hagiographical topos in the central middle ages.<sup>201</sup> An extreme example of this can be found in William of Malmesbury's *VSW*. Here, Wulfstan declared he would rather decapitate himself than become a bishop. As William was keen to stress, men were not to seek the episcopal office for their own sake; for ambition was antithetical to the office.<sup>202</sup>

Unsurprisingly, another attribute that William thought integral to the episcopal office was education, if only in a practical capacity as bishops were expected to preach to the laity and instruct the clergy. Again, William used this in his characterisations of those

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p.120: '*Secularia negotia se nescire, quia nollet scire quorum occupationes semper post monachatum horruisset*'.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., p.418: '*Sed haec et talia qui esset in mundialibus efficax, in spiritualibus deses*'.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p.474: '*Negotiorum scientia secularium nulli secundus, aecclesiasticorum non ita*'.

<sup>201</sup> B.Weiler, 'The *Rex renitens* and the Medieval Ideal of Kingship, c. 900 - c. 1250', *Viator*, 31 (2000), pp.1-42, at pp.24-29.

<sup>202</sup> *VSW*, pp.48-49: 'Wulfstan, however, was so bitter about the way in which the bishopric had been thrust upon him that he said (so eyewitnesses testified) that he would have preferred to be beheaded than have to put up with this burden'. / '*Ipse porro impositionem episcopatus adeo ingratus tulit ut diceret, sicut qui presentem furere testantur, maluisse se decapitari quam illud onus pati*'.

who held the episcopal office. Thus, while Lanfranc was 'notable for his learning',<sup>203</sup> his predecessor, Stigand, along with the other pre-conquest bishops, were described as illiterate.<sup>204</sup> As William put it, without a proper education, Stigand 'thought church business was conducted just like public affairs'.<sup>205</sup> To a large extent, William's views on the episcopal office and the qualities that he deemed necessary were influenced by his perspective of the past. William looked back on the tenth century as a golden age, and was particularly favourable in his characterisation of such reform-minded monastic bishops as St Dunstan and St Oswald. Nicola Robertson has argued that Dunstan's reputation may even have been bolstered or magnified by twelfth-century writers, such as William of Malmesbury, looking back nostalgically on the tenth century.<sup>206</sup> He also contrasted this period of reform with the present, arguing that after the Conquest there was 'an increase in the hostility of bishops who desired to intrude clerics and drive monks away from the episcopal sees'.<sup>207</sup> Although this was perhaps disingenuous of William, it contrasted with the situation in the tenth century, where bishops such as Dunstan had expelled secular clerks from their cathedral. Note, that in this respect, William was rather more favourable in his opinion: 'The clerics of the cathedral and of the church next door, which they called New Minster, were given the choice of changing their way of life or leaving; they chose the softer course and were kicked out, monks being introduced in their stead'.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.49: '*litteratura perinsignis*'.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.46-47: '*Quod homo illiteratus, sicut plerique et pene omnes tunc temporis Angliae episcopi*'.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*. '*Rem aecclesiasticorum negotiorum sicut publicorum actitari existimans*'.

<sup>206</sup> Robertson, 'Dunstan and Monastic Reform', pp.153-68.

<sup>207</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.105: '*Iam enim episcoporum linuor increuerat, uolentium ab episcopalibus sedibus monachos clericis immissis extrudere*'.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, p.263: '*Clerici episcopatus simul et alterius aecclesiae quae iuxta erat, quam Nouum Monasterium uocabant, data optione ut aut uitam mutarent aut loco cederent, molliorem partem eligentes exturbati, monachis introductis*'.

### VIII. Conclusion

If we return to William's depiction of Aldhelm in the *GP*, we can see that he actually had some, if not all, of the episcopal qualities that William had praised in other bishops. Why then did William not emphasise Aldhelm's status as bishop, as Faricius had done for the *VSA*? We have to look at the changed circumstances in which Malmesbury found itself in the early twelfth century to understand more clearly why William did not want to emphasise this aspect of the saint's identity. Between 1118-1139, Malmesbury Abbey's titular abbot was Roger, who at this time was also bishop of Salisbury.<sup>209</sup> Throughout this period Roger continued to make his position at Salisbury more established. Rather dangerously for Malmesbury, in 1131, Henry I granted the abbey to the Church of Salisbury, '*ut dominum suum et sedem priorem*'.<sup>210</sup> Roger may have had the same idea as Hermann, the bishop of Sherborne, who had attempted to make Malmesbury his diocesan seat. Interestingly, these events are not mentioned explicitly in William's *GP*; indeed, his history of Malmesbury's abbots ends with Godfrey of Jumièges (1100 x 1105).<sup>211</sup> Nevertheless, in the period in which William was writing, the community anticipated its future independence, gathering together its resources and evidence – both in works like William's life, hence his stress on evidence, and by correcting, updating or forging charters.<sup>212</sup> William's narrative was thus not simply intended to edify, it also had a very practical function. William

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<sup>209</sup> E.J.Kealey, *Roger of Salisbury, Viceroy of England* (Berkeley, CA and London, 1972); B.R.Kemp, 'Salisbury, Roger of (d. 1139)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23956, accessed 10 July 2009]

<sup>210</sup> *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, ed. C.Johnson and H.A.Cronne, 3 Vols. (Oxford, 1956), Vol.2, no.1715.

<sup>211</sup> *GP*, Vol.2, p.320.

<sup>212</sup> As Susan Kelly points out, 'the abbey's scribes were prone to forgery and the 'improvement' of their texts', in *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, p.1.

and the monks at Malmesbury had a stake in how Aldhelm was perceived. In the circumstances in which the community of Malmesbury found itself, William certainly did not want Aldhelm to be identified with Roger, both bishop of Salisbury and abbot of Malmesbury. No doubt this is why William emphasised Aldhelm's saintly patronage over Malmesbury, rather than the saint's episcopal status.

Writing only two decades after the Conquest, Faricius's stress on the saint's episcopal office and attributes may have been a conscious decision to mitigate those who doubted the sanctity of early Anglo-Saxon saints. In this respect, Paul Hayward has argued in his study of Goscelin's post-conquest translation-narratives that a frequent device of hagiographers was to use both historical and contemporary kings and prelates to provide such saints' cults with an aura of authority.<sup>213</sup> Faricius looked to Osmund of Salisbury for this role, and offered, in return, an episcopal exemplar which Osmund could follow – one that emphasised the bishop's pastoral role, but also pointed to the responsibilities the bishop had for the monastic communities within his diocese. Yet, it was perhaps this personal '*auctoritas*' which William would later criticise, because while Faricius's depiction of Aldhelm was useful for his own lifetime, it did not consider the possibilities for future conflict between Malmesbury and its bishop.

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<sup>213</sup> Hayward, 'Translation-Narratives', pp.89-90.

## Chapter 2: The *Vita Roberti Bethune*

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### I. Introduction

The *Vita Roberti Bethune* (hereafter the *VRB*) was written by William of Wycombe,<sup>1</sup> prior from 1137-1147 of two post-conquest Augustinian foundations, Llanthony (Monmouthshire, in the diocese of Llandaff) and Lanthony Secunda (outside the town of Gloucester, in the diocese of Worcester).<sup>2</sup> The *VRB* records the life, death and great deeds of one of William's predecessors at Llanthony, Robert Bethune, who had been prior c.1125-1131, and then bishop of Hereford between 1131-1148.<sup>3</sup> It is the only known twelfth-century episcopal *vita* from England in which both the subject of the life, and its author, were canons regular.

As it is, we have very little information about the author of the *VRB*, William Wycombe; indeed, he remains somewhat of an enigma. His *toponym* suggests that he

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<sup>1</sup> William identified himself as the author of the *VRB* in a *prologus* (Lambeth Palace Library, MS 475), which dedicated the work to Henry of Blois: '*Henrico divina gratia Episcopo Wintoniensi Willelmus prior Lanthoniensis*': f.111v. William Wycombe (or Wycumbe) was the fourth prior of Llanthony, and the second prior of Lanthony Secunda: J.Barrow, 'Wycombe, William of (*fl.* c.1127-c.1148)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29464>, accessed 15<sup>th</sup> February 2009]; Knowles and Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses, pp.164-65; and The Heads of Religious Houses, ed. Knowles, Brooke and London, pp.172-73.

<sup>2</sup> For the history of Llanthony and Lanthony Secunda, see: R.Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', in *idem*, The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire (London, 1786), pp.262-73; G. Roberts, 'Llanthony Priory, Monmouthshire', Archaeologia Cambrensis, 1 (1846), pp.201-45, at pp.202-3, 228-29; W.St.Clair Baddeley, 'The Story of Two Lanthonys', Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 25 (1902), pp.212-19; W.Page, 'Houses of Augustinian Canons: The Priory of Lanthony by Gloucester', in A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 2 (London, 1907), pp.87-91; J.N.Langston, 'Priors of Lanthony by Gloucester', Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 63 (1942), pp.8-16.

<sup>3</sup> J.Hillaby, The Friends of Hereford Cathedral: 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Report (London, 1980), pp.21-42; EEA, 7: Hereford 1079-1234, ed. J.Barrow (Oxford, 1993), pp.xxxvii-xl; and J.Barrow, 'Béthune, Robert de (*d.* 1148)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23724>, accessed 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008].

came from the county of Buckinghamshire, but we know nothing more about his family, or his early education.<sup>4</sup> William does state that he was born in the same neighbourhood as Robert Bethune.<sup>5</sup> It is, therefore, possible that William and Robert were both natives of Buckinghamshire; Julia Barrow has argued that Robert's family, although from Flanders, could have settled in England after the Conquest, and that they may have been subtenants of Gunfrid de Chocques (a town located eleven miles from Béthune), who held significant holdings in Buckinghamshire.<sup>6</sup> By 1127, William had become a member of the community of Llanthony. In the *vita*, when Robert decides to leave that community, William joined him as his companion.<sup>7</sup> He was very likely a member of Robert's episcopal household until he became prior in 1137; he certainly witnessed a number of Robert's episcopal *acta*.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> C.H.Talbot had argued that a letter existed in which William of Wycombe was the recipient. He edited this letter from Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V. 5.8, f.2; *idem*, 'William of Wycumbe, Fourth Prior of Llanthony', Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 76 (1957) pp.62-69. However, the recipient is instead William of Taunton not William Wycombe. Talbot's erroneous reading of Lanton' for Tanton' was noted in Ian Doyle's catalogue of the Cosin manuscripts now found online [<http://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/theme/medmss/apvv8/>] and was helpfully pointed out to me by Richard Sharpe through personal correspondence, 05/01/2007. See also Sharpe, Handlist of the Latin Writers, p.443.

<sup>5</sup> *VRB*, p.101: 'since, indeed, my birthplace and his of whom I speak were in the same neighbourhood' / '*Quippe cum mihi et prefato viro fuerit locus nativitatis conterminus*'. *Ibid.*, p.103: 'And for proof of this thou dost add that my birthplace and that of the man of whom I speak were in the same neighbourhood' / '*adici argumentum quod michi et prefato viro locus fuerit nativitatis conterminus*'.

<sup>6</sup> Barrow, 'Béthune, Robert de (d. 1148)'; certainly, a number of those who accompanied William I to England were of Flemish extraction: J.A.Green, The Aristocracy of Norman England (Cambridge, 2002), pp.40-43.

<sup>7</sup> *VRB*, p.142.

<sup>8</sup> EEA, 7: Hereford: For charters that William Wycombe witnessed, see nos. 23, 28, 36, 38. See also Z.N.Brooke and C.N.L.Brooke, 'Hereford Cathedral Dignitaries in the Twelfth Century', Cambridge Historical Journal, 8 (1944), pp.1-21.

William wrote the *VRB* as a member of the Augustinian order of regular canons.<sup>9</sup> This chapter will explore to what extent William's identity as a member of this 'new' order shaped the themes and content of the *VRB*. As was demonstrated in Chapter 1, the purpose for which a *vita* might be written also influenced how an episcopal saint was characterised. Here, it will be argued that although William drew upon traditional episcopal models, similar to those used by contemporary hagiographers, his depiction of Robert was nonetheless distinct and that it should be viewed as a product of William's background, and of his time. While regular canons were introduced quite late in England, in comparison to the continent, their growth in the early decades of the twelfth century was swift.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, it is estimated that during the reigns of Henry I (c.1100-1135) and his successor Stephen (c.1135-1154), well over a hundred priories were founded throughout England.<sup>11</sup> We will also examine whether William's depiction of Robert was defined by the individual circumstances in which the priories of Llanthony and Lanthony Secunda had arisen. This analysis of the *VRB* will not, however, explore the text in isolation; the *vita* must be situated within its authorial and historical contexts. In the past the *VRB* has been characterised as 'very old-

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<sup>9</sup> See J.C.Dickinson, 'English Regular Canons and the Continent in the Twelfth Century', *TRHS*, 1 (1951), pp.71-89; *idem*, The Origins of the Austin Canons and their Introduction into England (London, 1950); D.Postles, 'The Austin Canons in English Towns, c.1100-1350', Historical Research, 66 (1993), pp.1-20; T.M.Colk, 'Twelfth-Century East Anglian Canons: A Monastic Life?', in Medieval East Anglia, ed. C.Harper-Bill (Woodbridge, 2005), pp.209-24. Our knowledge of this process of Augustinian settlement has been improved by D.M.Robinson, The Geography of Augustinian Settlement in Medieval England and Wales, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1980). Local studies of specific houses help fill in these gaps. To take one example, see The Early Charters of the Augustinian Canons of Waltham Abbey, Essex, 1062-1230, ed. R.Ransford (Woodbridge, 1989). For the broader context see R.W.Southern, Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages (Harmondsworth, 1970), pp.240-50.

<sup>10</sup> For background, see J.Burton, Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000-1300 (Cambridge, 1994), pp.43-63.

<sup>11</sup> Barlow, The English Church, p.291. The canons' popularity was probably associated with the gradual dissemination of continental reform ideology. Nevertheless, it was not only churchmen who supported these foundations - the Anglo-Norman aristocracy were also attracted to this fashionable import: over thirty-three foundations during Henry I's reign had aristocratic patrons.

fashioned'.<sup>12</sup> Yet scholars, such as Richard Hunt, have stressed the degree to which Augustinian canons (including later priors of Llanthony) were in the vanguard of twelfth-century intellectual developments.<sup>13</sup> The chapter will be structured around two main themes or types of activity, the pastoral and the ascetic, reflecting a tradition within the genre of episcopal *vitae*.<sup>14</sup> It will be argued, however, that in both areas William situated his image of Robert as bishop within an Augustinian context. Indeed, it will be shown that in his depiction of Robert, William often combined traditional episcopal topoi with material of a more Augustinian bent. To begin with, however, we will discuss when William composed the text, and explore the *VRB*'s manuscript history. Secondly, we will outline briefly the structure of the *vita* and what this can tell us about William's intentions. Finally, we will discuss the possible audiences of the text.

## II. The Composition of the *VRB*

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<sup>12</sup> Barlow, *The English Church*, p.23. Barlow never fully substantiates this statement – instead he contrasted the *VRB* with two other contemporary biographies of the period, Eadmer's *Life of Anselm* and the short *vita* of Gundulf, bishop of Rochester: Eadmer, *The Life of St Anselm* and *The Life of Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester*, ed. R.Thomson (Toronto, 1977).

<sup>13</sup> R.W.Hunt, 'English Learning in the Late Twelfth Century', *TRHS*, 19 (1936), pp.19-42; D.Postles, 'The Learning of Austin Canons: The Case of Osney Abbey', *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies*, 29 (1985), pp.32-43.

<sup>14</sup> This division was used by P.Rousseau, 'The Spiritual Authority of the 'Monk-Bishop': Eastern Elements in Some Western Hagiography of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 22 (1971) pp.380-419, at p.409. See also S.Coates, 'The Bishop as Pastor and Solitary: Bede and the Spiritual Authority of the Monk-Bishop', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 47 (1996), pp.601-19.

## (a) Date

The precise date of the *VRB*'s composition is unknown. However, it is likely to have been written sometime after Robert Bethune's death on April 16<sup>th</sup> 1148.<sup>15</sup> At this time William was probably no longer prior, having been deposed by his fellow canons<sup>16</sup> and forced into retirement at a cell of Llanthony's at Canon Frome.<sup>17</sup> We know nothing more of his life after this point, nor is the date of his death recorded. That said, it is most likely that it was at Frome that he composed the *vita*. This can be collaborated further: two different prefaces of the *VRB* survive, the first of which is dedicated to Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester and abbot of Glastonbury (c.1096–1171), and the other to Prior Reginald, of the Cluniac house of Much Wenlock, who died in the mid-1150s. The exact date of Reginald's death is unknown, but in a charter 1151 x 1157 his name features as prior.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that William wrote the life in the early 1150s.

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<sup>15</sup> *VRB*, p.218.

<sup>16</sup> It has been suggested by Julia Barrow that William had been deposed before Robert Bethune's departure for Rheims in March 1148. She argues that he occurs without title in a charter of Robert's issued between 1143 and 1148, and that his successor Clement became prior in or before 1148: *EEA, 7: Hereford*, p.24, no. 23. Knowles and Hadcock gives 1150 for Clement becoming prior, but gives William Wycombe's retirement as 1148 x 1152: *The Heads of Religious Houses*, p.172. William's dismissal is also recorded in the late twelfth-century foundation history of Llanthony, which is placed alongside one of the surviving copies of the *vita*: BL, MS Cotton Julius D. x, ff. 30<sup>v</sup>-53<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> Although in the *prologus* which dedicates the life to Henry of Blois, William retains his title as prior of Llanthony. However, his last dated occurrence as prior is 16<sup>th</sup> July 1147: *Papsturkunden in England*, ed. W.Holtzmann, 3 Vols. (1930-1952), Vol.1, no.39.

<sup>18</sup> *Cartulary of Osney Abbey*, ed. H.E.Salter, 6 Vols. (Oxford, 1929-36), Vol.5, p.31.

## (b) Manuscripts containing the VRB

The *VRB* is found in three extant manuscripts: London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 475 ff.111<sup>v</sup>- 180<sup>r</sup>; BL, MS Cotton Julius D.x ff.2<sup>r</sup>-28<sup>r</sup>; and Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, MS 5088 ff.1<sup>r</sup>-37<sup>v</sup>.<sup>19</sup> The Lambeth MS has a prologue that dedicates the life to Bishop Henry of Blois; in contrast, the Cotton and Toronto MSS begin with a dedicatory epistle addressed to Prior Reginald of Much Wenlock. Having listed each of these three MS, I will now provide a brief overview of each.

London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 475

The *VRB* is bound with a fifteenth-century collection entitled *Musica Ecclesiastica* (ff.1-108<sup>v</sup>).<sup>20</sup> An inscription makes clear that John Barkham owned the MS in 1612. Barkham was an antiquary, and also chaplain to Archbishop George Abbot; Abbot later bequeathed the MS to Lambeth Palace. On f.111<sup>v</sup> there is a title written in brown ink, *Vita domino Roberti de Betune Herfordensis episcopi*; on f.112<sup>r</sup>, appears a list of chapter headings entitled *Capitula in speculum uite Rotberti ven. ep. hereford'*, and on f.114<sup>r</sup>, before the main part of the text another title occurs, rubricated in red: *Speculum uite uen. Rotberti ep. Herefordie*.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> For discussions of the manuscripts see *VRB*, pp.93-98; Hardy, *Descriptive Catalogue*, p.235.

<sup>20</sup> M.R.James, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace: The Medieval Manuscripts* (Cambridge, 1932); R.Lovatt 'The Imitation of Christ in Late Medieval England', *TRHS*, 18 (1968), pp.97-121, at p.119.

<sup>21</sup> James has stated that the heading on f.111<sup>v</sup> is an 'old title', yet it is not clear which of the two titles William intended for the work: idem, *Catalogue*, p.655.

The actual life is written in one column, and has sixteen lines to a page. The life is divided into thirty-one chapters<sup>22</sup>, each with its own chapter heading, and rubricated in either blue or red ink. It is written in a clear proto-gothic script, with the rubrics written in the same hand as the main text. The text is also split into two books; there is an explicit at the end of book I, and an incipit introducing book II. The manuscript has been dated to the mid-twelfth century, which makes it the earliest version of the *VRB*. M.R. James believed the MS originated from Llanthony Secunda, and there is no reason to doubt his hypothesis. If true, it suggests that the *VRB* was written with the regular canons in mind.

#### BL, MS Cotton Julius D.x

William's *vita* is placed before a genealogical table featuring the Lords of Brecknock, (ff.28-30)<sup>23</sup> and a *History* of Llanthony Prima (ff.30<sup>v</sup>-53<sup>v</sup>).<sup>24</sup> On the second initial flyleaf is an inscription of ownership. The MS was owned by Thomas Talbott (*fl.*1580), a member of the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries.<sup>25</sup> The manuscript appears to have suffered some damage in the Cotton Library fire of 1731. It contains fewer rubrics than the Lambeth MS. A title on f.ii states '*Vite (sic) Venerabilis Roberti Herefordensis Episcopi*', but this appears to have been written in an early modern hand. Preceding the *vita* is a list of unnumbered headings. The chapters themselves are generally not

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<sup>22</sup> Although chapter xxx is followed by chapter xxx (sic).

<sup>23</sup> Described in F.M.Powicke, 'Loretta, Countess of Leicester', in Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait, ed. J.G.Edwards, V.H.Galbraith and E.F.Jacob (Manchester, 1933), pp.247-72, at p.271.

<sup>24</sup> The History is printed in W.Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, ed. J.Calley, H.Ellis and B.Bandinell, 6 Vols. (London, 1846; new edn.), Vol.6, pt. 1 pp.128-34. Note: as part of the *History* is not included in Dugdale, I have seen fit to use Atkyns's text: *idem*, 'The History of Llanthony Priory'.

<sup>25</sup> The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain. Volume 4 1557-1695, ed. J.Barnard, D.F.McKenzie and M.Bel (Cambridge 2002), p.344.

rubricated. The few that are have been labelled erroneously; chapter nine is actually chapter ten; similarly, chapter sixteen is chapter seventeen in the Lambeth MS. The MS has been dated to the early thirteenth century. Throughout, the text is written in an uneven and untidy gothic hand; the text is placed in one column, but the number of lines vary from between twenty-five to thirty. There is no incipit in the *vita*, yet there is one explicit at the end: *'Explicit vita Domino Roberti Episcopi'*.

Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, MS 5088

The Fisher library acquired the MS, now known as Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, MS 5088 in 1966; the MS is listed in a 1964 Sotheby Catalogue of Sales.<sup>26</sup> It was previously known as Phillipps MS 22230, being part of the private manuscript collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792–1872).<sup>27</sup> Sir Thomas had bought the MS in 1837, in an auction of Thomas Bird's (a squire of Herefordshire) manuscript collection.<sup>28</sup> It has been dated to the early thirteenth century.<sup>29</sup>

As with the Cotton MS, the Toronto MS includes a prologue dedicated to prior Reginald of Much Wenlock.<sup>30</sup> This is similar to that found in the Cotton MS in all but a

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<sup>26</sup> Selected Acquisitions – Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library (Toronto, 1972); Catalogue of Sales (London, 1964), pp.9-33.

<sup>27</sup> The Phillipps Manuscripts: *Catalogus Manuscriptorum in Bibliotheca D. Thomae Phillipps, Bt.* ed. A.N.L.Munby, 2 Vols. (London, 1968); A.Bell, 'Phillipps, Sir Thomas, Baronet (1792–1872)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22143>, accessed 24 Sept 2008].

<sup>28</sup> A year before it was sold, its existence was noted in J.Britton, Cathedral Antiquities: Winchester, Lichfield and Hereford (London, 1836), p.10, n.24.

<sup>29</sup> The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library: A Brief Guide to the Collections (Toronto, 1982), p.5.

<sup>30</sup> Unlike the Cotton version, this version includes a dedication which reads: 'William prior of Lanthony to Reginald Prior of Wenlock'.

few minor scribal variants. The text of the Toronto MS begins with a list of thirty *capitula*. The chapters are also rubricated in red ink in the main text; however, the actual text itself contains thirty-three chapters; cc.31-33 list a number of Robert Bethune's post-mortem miracles. As chapter 30 is entitled 'Of the following miracles', it may be that initially William had intended this as a single chapter, but that later scribes sub-divided the chapter; or perhaps William meant for this part of the text to be kept open-ended, with subsequent miracle-accounts added as necessary.

The Toronto version of the *vita*, like the Lambeth MS, is arranged into two books, although only the incipit *liber secundus* is found in the text. The text appears without a title or preliminary incipit, yet there is a rubricated explicit which reads: 'Here ends the Life of Master/Lord Robert Bethune Bishop of Hereford'.<sup>31</sup> Alongside the first chapter of book II (chapter XIV), which concerns Robert's behaviour as a bishop, the word '*nota*' is written in the margins on three occasions; presumably the reader was particularly interested in this part of Robert's life.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, MS 5088, f.37v.

<sup>32</sup> M.Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1992), p.108: 'In manuscript margins from the twelfth century on, one finds commonly the word "*nota*" addressed to the reader. It is the imperative singular of the verb "*notare*" "make a note" and it points out an important or difficult passage that the reader might wish to particularly to mark with a "*nota*" of some sort of his own to help remember it'.

## (c) Editions of the VRB

The *vita* has been edited twice; first, in the seventeenth century by Henry Wharton in *Anglia Sacra*, his collection of the lives of English bishops and archbishops;<sup>33</sup> secondly, an edition and translation of the text in 1951 by Betty Parkinson for her unpublished B.Litt from Oxford University. The existence of the Toronto MS was unknown to either editor. Wharton based his text on the Lambeth manuscript, although he did print the alternative Cotton prologue. Wharton also omitted all of the miracles. Parkinson largely based her edition on the Lambeth copy, although she did provide the alternative readings given by the Cotton Manuscript. Furthermore, Parkinson did find evidence for a third manuscript, but was unaware of the Phillipps (later Toronto) manuscript and was unable to include it in her thesis.<sup>34</sup>

III. The Structure of the VRB and its Intended Audiences

## (a) The Structure

Evidence from both Lambeth MS 475 and Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, MS 5088, suggest that William had planned the *VRB* to consist of two books (I and II). In book I, William detailed the formative stages of Robert's life: his education, his spiritual calling, his time spent as a regular canon and prior at Llanthony, and finally how he came to be raised to the see of Hereford. Book II focused predominately on Robert's

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<sup>33</sup> *Anglia sacra sive collectio historiarum de archiepiscopis et episcopis Angliae ad annum 1540*, ed. H. Wharton, 2 Vols. (London, 1691), Vol.2, pp.295–322. It was placed after two other twelfth-century saints' lives, William of Malmesbury's *Life of Wulfstan of Worcester*, and the unattributed *Life of Bishop Gundulf of Rochester*.

<sup>34</sup> B.J. Parkinson, 'The Life of Robert de Bethune by William de Wycombe: Translation with Introduction and Notes', unpublished B.Litt. Thesis (Oxford University, 1951), pp.100-240, at pp.96-98.

actions as a bishop; William expands upon Robert's episcopal duties and the way he governed his household. Book II also comprised a short discussion of Robert's actions during the civil war between Stephen and Matilda. The penultimate chapters provide a description of Robert's death at the Council of Rheims, and an account of the journey of the saint's body from the channel and its interment at Hereford Cathedral, rather than in his former community. William concludes the *vita* with five miracles.<sup>35</sup>

By structuring the *vita* in two books, William was able to demonstrate how Robert's early life as a canon and prior at Llanthony prepared him for his episcopal vocation. This typology of sanctity had earlier antecedents. For example, Stephen Jaeger has argued that 'in Merovingian and Carolingian *vitae*, the beginning chapters, describing the period prior to the cleric's promotion to church office, tend towards a stereotypical idealising of the future bishop according to monastic-ascetic models'.<sup>36</sup> These *vitae* offered narrative progression, but at the same time provided a static model of sanctity.<sup>37</sup> In other words, a saint's actions did not alter as a result of becoming bishop; instead, as he ascended each new rung of the ecclesiastical ladder, the saint drew upon the ideals and beliefs of his previous position(s). Likewise, in the *VRB*, Robert's sanctity did not increase as he moved up the ecclesiastical ladder. Robert's sanctity was also not defined by his ability to perform miracles. The relative

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<sup>35</sup> After 1137, when William was prior of two religious communities, he must have relied on second-hand material; in the first book of the *vita*, William was an eyewitness to many events and the author uses the first-person singular on occasion to stress this point, adding a veneer of verisimilitude to the text.

<sup>36</sup> S.Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 923-1120* (Philadelphia, 1985), p.25; *idem*, 'The Courtier Bishop in *Vitae* from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century,' *Speculum*, 58 (1983), pp.291-325.

<sup>37</sup> For this model see C.Stancliffe, 'Cuthbert and the Polarity between Pastor and Solitary', in *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to AD 1200*, ed. G.Bonner *et al* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp.21-44.

dearth of miracles may indicate that William's objective in writing the *vita* was not simply to establish a cult.

The fact that the Lambeth version of the *VRB* labels the *vita* as a *speculum* further suggests that William, or an early reader, wished to emphasise the Augustinian perspective. The Latin *speculum* genre, which covered a variety of different subjects, was intended to 'mirror' the way things actually were; but it was also supposed to show the reader how things should be, or how he or she should behave.<sup>38</sup> It is a word that is rarely used in the titles of saints' lives.<sup>39</sup> However, William, or the scribe who rubricated the text, may have applied the word due to its Augustinian origins.<sup>40</sup> According to Augustine's contemporary biographer, Possidius, the saint had named one of his works, a collection of Biblical passages, a *Speculum*; this text is known today as the *Speculum Quis Ignorant*.<sup>41</sup> Augustine hoped 'that those who wished might read it and see to what extent they were obedient or disobedient to God. This work he wished to be known as the *Mirror*'.<sup>42</sup> The idea that a text could act as a mirror, so that a person could reflect on his or her own behaviour, is also found in the *Rule of Augustine*. The reader is told, as way of a final injunction, that 'you may see yourselves in this little book, as in a mirror, have it read to you once a week so as to neglect no

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<sup>38</sup> R.Bradley, 'Backgrounds of the Title *Speculum* in Mediaeval Literature', *Speculum*, 29 (1954), pp.100-15.

<sup>39</sup> H.Grabes, *The Mutable Glass: Mirror Imagery in Titles and Texts of the Middle Ages and the English Renaissance*, trans. G.Collier (Cambridge, 1982), pp.236-41.

<sup>40</sup> See J.C.Cavadini and A.D.Fitzgerald, 'Speculum', in *Augustine Through the Ages*, ed. A.D.Fitzgerald (Michigan, 1999) p.812, and the articles cited there.

<sup>41</sup> The text is listed in Lanthony's mid-fourteenth-century library catalogue: *LAC*, p.59.

<sup>42</sup> The English translation is cited in: *The Life of Augustine by Possidius, Bishop of Calama*, trans. J.E.Rotelle (Villanova, 1988), p.111; *Vita di Cipriano, Vita di Ambrogio, Vita di Agostino*, ed. A.A.R.Bastiaensen, trans. L.Canali and C.Carena (Milan, 1975), pp.204-05: '*ut qui vellet legeret, atque in eo vel quam oboediens Deo inoboediensque esset agnosceret; et hoc opus voluit Speculum appellari*'.

point through forgetfulness'.<sup>43</sup> Just as the saint who acted as an intercessor between the penitent and God, one could argue that William's *Life of Robert* acted as a model or mirror for behaviour.<sup>44</sup> One might go further and even suggest that if Robert's *Life* was patterned upon Augustinian models, then the text also acted as a validation of the canonical life.<sup>45</sup>

### (b) The Prologue as Evidence for External Audiences

Having discussed the structure of the text and why William may have divided the *VRB* in this way, we will now turn to the prologue, to examine further the purpose for which the *vita* was written and its intended audiences.

In his introductory epistle to Henry of Blois, William stated that the *VRB* was composed to commemorate Robert's life and deeds. In William's own words, he described the work as 'the memorial of the life of thy sincere lover and beloved Robert, bishop of Hereford, of honourable memory, which has been written for you; a monument which among all the many distractions of thine Excellency will not suffer

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<sup>43</sup> The English translation is cited in: Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule, ed. and trans. G.Lawless (Oxford, 1987), p.103 (All English translations from the *Rule* cited in this chapter are Lawless's own); La Règle de saint Augustin, ed. L.Verheijen, 2 Vols. (Paris, 1967), Vol. 2, p.437: '*Ut autem uos in hoc libello tamquam in speculo possitis inspicere, ne per obliuionem aliquid neglegatis, semel in septimana uobis legatur*'.

<sup>44</sup> The idea of the text as mirror became a popular concept in late medieval devotional writings: J.Bryan, Looking Inward: Devotional Reading and the Private Self in Late Medieval England (Pennsylvania, 1997), pp.75-104.

<sup>45</sup> In a similar way that Aelred of Rievaulx expressed his understanding of Cistercian spirituality in his *Mirror of Charity*: see Aelred of Rievaulx, '*De Speculo Caritatis*', in Aelredi Rievallensis Opera Omnia: Opera Ascetica, ed. A.Hoste and C.H.Talbot (Turnhout, 1971), pp.3-161.

his memory to be wholly obliterated in thy thoughts'.<sup>46</sup> The stress on memory and remembrance is particularly stark in William's description of his work. In this respect, his use of the word *monimentum* can be seen as an imitation of classical historians, such as Livy, who had used the word to describe commemorative works and biographies of great men.<sup>47</sup> As a derivative of the Latin verb *monere* (to remind, advise or warn), a *moni-mentum* was used for something that recalled the mind, and, in particular, was connected to the memory of people and objects.<sup>48</sup> The word also suggests the intent to create a lasting memory; thus, by calling the *vita* a *monimentum*, William attempted to provide a permanent memorial of the saint for future generations.

William might have envisaged Henry of Blois as the dedicatee of the *vita* from the outset. In the part of the *vita* that describes Robert's funeral, Henry is called 'a magnificent and illustrious man', and later a 'noble and exalted man'.<sup>49</sup> William relates how, due to Henry's love for Robert, he walked alongside the funeral bier as it was being carried through London. William also provided Henry with a speech in which, with tears of devotion, he lamented the loss of 'the flower of our order'.<sup>50</sup> William also suggested that Henry thought Robert was a saint: 'When they asked for his blessing, he replied: "I have not the blessing of my brother". But he said this in deference to the

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<sup>46</sup> *VRB*, p.101: '*Monimentum vite sinceri dilectoris et dilecti tui pie memorie Rotberti Herefordensis episcopi tibi conscriptum. Quod inter magnificentie tue studia multimoda illius tibi memoriam penitus oblitterari non sinat*'.

<sup>47</sup> M.Jaeger, *Livy's Written Rome* (Michigan, 1997), pp.15-39; and T.P.Wiseman, *Historiography and the Imagination* (Exeter, 1994), pp.37-48.

<sup>48</sup> E.Partridge, *Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern-English* (London, 1977), p.1993.

<sup>49</sup> *VRB*, p.226: '*vir illustris atque magnificus*'; and *ibid.*, p.228: '*virum nobilem et sullimem*'.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.226: '*florem ordinis nostri*'.

sanctity of him who was now dead'.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, Henry had been a keen patron of various religious orders in the environs of Winchester. Michael Franklin has stated that by c.1150, exactly around the time the *vita* was written, Henry began to insert regular canons into religious houses throughout his diocese.<sup>52</sup> Franklin has calculated that over 47% of Henry's surviving episcopal *acta* were directed at Augustinian houses.<sup>53</sup> The fact that Henry was a church reformer and favoured the Augustinians is, therefore, another reason why William would have sought Henry's patronage. Although William never mentions this, perhaps he had hoped that Henry would assist in the promotion of Robert's early cult.

As we have stated, the Cotton and Toronto MSS had a different preface, which was dedicated to prior Reginald of Much Wenlock. Wenlock was a Cluniac priory in the diocese of Hereford, only eleven miles from Llanthony.<sup>54</sup> Reginald also appears in the Lambeth version of the *vita*, where he is one of two men that Robert asks to receive corporate discipline from before his death.<sup>55</sup> We might speculate that because Robert scolds Reginald here, his actions are omitted in the Cotton MS version. Unlike the dedication to Henry, in the epistle to Reginald, William does not state how the text

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p.228: '*Benedictionem fratris non habeo. Hoc autem dicebat deferens sanctitati eius qui defunctus ferebatur*'.

<sup>52</sup> M.J.Franklin, 'The Bishops of Winchester and the Monastic Revolution', *ANS*, 12 (1990), pp.47-65. Franklin notes on p.56 that: 'In his promotion of the Augustinians Blois showed himself truly an apostle of the Reform'.

<sup>53</sup> This, Franklin suggests, was because Henry wished to reform the previous hereditary system of vicarages, and because the placement of regular canons afforded the bishop greater powers over diocesan affairs.

<sup>54</sup> M.Chibnall, 'The Abbey, Later Priory, of Wenlock', in The Victoria History of the County of Shropshire, ed. W.Page, 4 Vols. (London, 1968-), Vol.2 (1973), pp.38-47.

<sup>55</sup> *VRB*, p.212.

should be used. Instead, William calls the prior a friend of Robert's, and simply hopes that he will have done justice to Robert's life.

The fact that William Wycombe dedicated his text to two men who were Cluniacs (albeit one a powerful bishop) points to the ecumenical character of William's choice of patrons. This is mirrored in the *vita* itself when, in chapter V of book I, Robert seeks the counsel of Abbot Richard of the Benedictine Abbey of St Alban concerning the manner of life he wished to live. When asked by Richard which religious house appealed to him, Robert stated 'I do not presume to set up one order before another'.<sup>56</sup> Yet, although the evidence above might suggest that William's audience was not exclusively Augustinian, we shall see that he probably directed the *vita* principally to the canons formally in his charge. Indeed, if the text was designed to have a didactic or hortatory function we could, therefore, assume that William wrote with the canons of Llanthony and Lanthony Secunda in mind.

(c) An Internal Audience? The Significance of the Foundation of Lanthony Secunda and its Presentation in the *VRB*.

The *VRB* is, on one level, a record of the relationship between Robert and his former priory. Robert had played an important role in what would be a defining moment of Llanthony's institutional history, namely assisting in the establishment of the priory's daughter-house, Lanthony Secunda. This event is recorded both in the *VRB* and the

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp.116-18.

mid to late twelfth-century *History of Llanthony*.<sup>57</sup> From these sources we learn that after Henry I's death (d.1135) persistent Welsh raids throughout Monmouthshire created a situation in which most of Llanthony's canons had to leave the priory by 1136.<sup>58</sup> The *History* records that initially the canons were provided with a temporary sanctuary at Hereford, where Robert supplied them with everything at his disposal. In the *VRB*, William records that in the spring of 1137, with the aid of Miles of Gloucester, Robert himself founded a new site for the canons, 45 miles from the original priory, outside Gloucester. The location of the site was not in Robert's own diocese, but instead was part of the Worcester diocese.<sup>59</sup>

William is likely to have underplayed Miles of Gloucester's actual contribution to Llanthony Secunda's foundation. William's depiction of Robert was certainly influenced by these events, as we will soon discover.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, the *History* stated that it was Robert who persuaded Miles to help the canons of Llanthony by reminding him of his father's affections for the house; in his old age, Walter the Constable had made his profession at Llanthony and was also buried there.<sup>61</sup> However, it is Miles who is

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<sup>57</sup> Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', p.267; *VRB*, pp.182-86.

<sup>58</sup> The *History* adds that the last straw was when a neighbouring Welshman and family sought sanctuary in the priory; apparently, the women of the family 'profaned the place with their light and effeminate behaviour': *Ibid.*, p.267.

<sup>59</sup> *VRB*, pp.184-86: 'Meanwhile he sought and found for them a dwelling place near Gloucester under the lordship of Miles the Constable. He [Robert] paid for the building'. / '*Interim quesivit et invenit eis locum habitationis apud Gloecestram sub Milone Constabulario. Expensas dedit ad edificandum*'.

<sup>60</sup> There still appears to be much confusion over who founded the priory. For instance, in the online DNB, David Crouch expresses the view that Roger fitz Miles, earl of Hereford (d. 1155), Miles of Gloucester's son, had a hand in this transfer: 'He [Roger fitz Miles] was a generous patron of Brecon and Hereford priories, and transferred Llanthony Priory, his father's foundation, to a new site outside Gloucester when the Welsh made the original site in the Honddu valley untenable'. Here Crouch seems to have confused Roger with his father Miles: D.Crouch, 'Roger , earl of Hereford (d. 1155)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/47203>, accessed 1 April 2007]

<sup>61</sup> W.E.Wightman, *The Lacy Family in England and Normandy, 1066-1194* (Oxford, 1966), p.184.

named as the founder and patron of the church at Gloucester.<sup>62</sup> Clearly, the establishment of Llanthony Secunda would not have happened without his patronage. His foundation of Llanthony Secunda suggests a continuation, and perhaps strengthening, of his family's support for the original priory; what is more, this new priory was firmly situated within his sphere of authority.<sup>63</sup> The extent to which this patronage mattered to the canons of Llanthony Secunda can be demonstrated in a long-running dispute between the priory and the abbey of St Peter's Gloucester over where Miles's body was buried after his death.<sup>64</sup>

William's removal as prior was undertaken with the support of Llanthony's patron, Roger, earl of Hereford (d. 1155). Roger had been displeased by a work that William had written, entitled 'The Whole Tyranny and Malicious Proceedings of the Earl and his Excommunication from the Flock of Christ'.<sup>65</sup> This work, which we learn about in the *History*, and which is unfortunately now lost, was critical of Roger's father, Miles of Gloucester.<sup>66</sup> William was likely referring to Robert Bethune's excommunication of Miles, which had occurred during the civil war between King Stephen and Empress Matilda. It appears that their earlier friendship had soured. William may have felt that Miles's patronage and his descendents had proved a threat to Llanthony Secunda's

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<sup>62</sup> Atkyns, 'History of Llanthony Priory', p.267; D.Walker, 'Miles of Gloucester, Earl of Hereford', Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 77 (1958), pp.66-84.

<sup>63</sup> N.Baker and R.Holt, Urban Growth and the Medieval Church: Gloucester and Worcester (Aldershot, 2004), pp.285-86.

<sup>64</sup> See D.Walker 'A Register of the Churches of the Monastery of St Peter's, Gloucester', An Ecclesiastical Miscellany (Gateshead, 1976), pp.18-19. Furthermore, Clement, William of Wycombe's successor, may have been Miles's brother (or close relative): G.R.Evans, 'Llanthony, Clement of (*d. c.1169?*)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2000) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5600>, accessed 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009]

<sup>65</sup> See F.G.Cowley, The Monastic Order in South Wales, 1066-1349 (Cardiff, 1977), p.151.

<sup>66</sup> Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', p.268.

Augustinian ideals and aspirations, not to mention independence. By emphasising Robert's involvement in this affair - William records how, after its initial foundation, Robert provided some of his own church lands and revenues from the bishopric to Llanthony Secunda.<sup>67</sup> William likely wished to highlight the religious nature or inspiration behind Llanthony Secunda's foundation, in order to bind Robert Bethune more closely to the institution's history.

The generosity that Robert showed towards his former community would, however, appear to have angered the secular canons at Hereford Cathedral.<sup>68</sup> In the *vita*, William stressed the difficult relationship Robert had with his canons, and details Robert's conflict with the dean of Hereford cathedral's chapter. This helped him draw a sharp parallel between Robert and his former canons and his relationship with the secular cathedral canons. However, his successor as bishop of Hereford, Gilbert Foliot (c.1110-1187; bishop of Hereford 1148-1163), was unimpressed with how Robert had granted land to Llanthony Secunda.<sup>69</sup> Gilbert had previously been abbot of St Peter's Gloucester Abbey, and one might suspect that, like Robert, he may have retained some sympathy for his former institution, which happened to be Llanthony

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<sup>67</sup> *VRB*, p.186.

<sup>68</sup> There are ten extant episcopal *acta* of Robert's concerning Llanthony and Llanthony Secunda: *EEA*, 7: *Hereford*, pp.33-43, nos.35-44. The Hereford chapter would have considered such lands to be the property of the see; before the mid-1150s the estates and properties of the bishop had not been clearly defined from those owned by the chapter. See Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*, pp.278-89.

<sup>69</sup> *The Letters and Charters of Gilbert Foliot, Abbot of Gloucester (1139-48), Bishop of Hereford (1148-63) and London (1163-87)*, ed. A.Morey and C.N.L. Brooke (Cambridge, 1967), nos.1 and 2. There are no more gifts to Llanthony or Llanthony Secunda (from any Hereford bishop) after Gilbert Foliot's consecration.

Secunda's main rival in Gloucester.<sup>70</sup> Yet the main cause of Gilbert's anger would have been due to the loss of episcopal lands.

It is perhaps unsurprising, therefore, that William did not dedicate a copy of the *VRB* to Gilbert. That said, the Hereford canons did not remember Robert in an unfavourable light; indeed, after his death, his body was returned to the cathedral where a tomb was built and there is evidence of offerings to his tomb up to 1332/1333.<sup>71</sup> Nonetheless, there is no indication of any local cult at Hereford cathedral after Robert's death. In the late thirteenth century, however, opponents of Thomas Cantilupe's (bishop of Hereford from 1275-1282) canonisation, attempted to credit his first post-mortem miracle to Robert Bethune.<sup>72</sup>

Robert's actions as bishop could be viewed from a different perspective; his role as patron and protector of the Llanthony communities put him at odds with his responsibilities as bishop of Hereford. However, we have to realise that William was not only recording Robert's ties with his former community, he was also justifying this relationship. Even so, why did William focus so heavily upon a community that had expelled him as their prior? Certainly, later commentators seldom paint William in a particularly positive light: both Gerald of Wales and the in-house historian of

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<sup>70</sup> See E.Cownie, 'Gloucester Abbey, 1066-1135: An Illustration of Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England', in *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, ed. D.Bates and A.Curry (London, 1994), pp.143-68.

<sup>71</sup> R.N.Swanson, 'Devotional Offerings at Hereford Cathedral in the Late Middle Ages,' *Analecta Bollandiana*, 111 (1993), pp.93-102.

<sup>72</sup> R.N.Swanson and D.Lepine, 'The Later Middle Ages, 1268-1535', in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, ed. G.E.Aylmer and J.Tiller (London, 2000), pp.42-86, at p.76.

Llanthony attest to William's over-zealous austerity, the harshness of his discipline and the fact that he was involved in despoiling the original priory at Llanthony.<sup>73</sup>

One possibility is that William wished his text to remind the canons how they should live; in other words, he hoped to inspire change by pointing to Robert as a model for living. The community of canons appears to have remembered Robert Bethune fondly; somewhat ironically this was probably due to William's *vita*. We know that the author of the *History* had access to the *VRB*, having described how 'his venerable life and laudable actions are already digested in a clear learned treatise'.<sup>74</sup> He seems to suggest that the *VRB* acted as a model for future priors; although, in this respect, the author appeared sceptical of success. As he put it:

Who would not read with great delight the virtues of one  
so beloved of God, what care he took for the necessary  
support of his house... Who would not make good use,  
and profit himself by reading those things? And because  
few pastors could imitate his virtues while he [Robert] was living,  
I wish to God that more may emulate him now he is dead.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> The Journey through Wales and The Description of Wales, trans. L.Thorpe (Harmondsworth, 1978), p.98: 'Prior William, who was the first to despoil the house of its herds and stores, was deposed in the end and expelled by his brothers, with the result that he was held unworthy to be buried with the other priors'. Edited in *GCO*, Vol.6, *Itinerarium Kambriae et Descriptio Kambriae*, ed. J.F.Dimock (London, 1868). See also Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', p.268: 'When the above mentioned William had presided several years in the church of Lanthony ... he incurred the great displeasure of Earl Roger, then patron of the monastery: perhaps this might seem good to divine providence, because he had a hand in taking away the goods from the church of St John [Llanthony].'

<sup>74</sup> Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', p.266.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

#### IV. Pastoral Models in the VRB

##### (a) The VRB: The Portrait of Robert Bethune as 'Bonus Pastor'

Robert's formative years followed a familiar hagiographical framework and pointed towards his future spiritual calling. Chapter I of the *VRB* contains two common topoi. First, we are told that Robert was descended from a quite well-known knightly family. This provided Robert with quasi-noble credentials, and it suggested that Robert could have chosen a military career. Instead, he chose a life of spiritual warfare. Secondly, the topos of the *puer senex* (the boy-saint who was old and wise before his time) is used: William explains that "Think me not mistaken in calling him [Robert] a man while yet a boy ... his rapid advances in maturity of mind so anticipated the later stages of life that you would find in the boy the man, in the man the sage, in the sage the greybeard".<sup>76</sup> John Kitchen has stated that this authorial device was 'used at the onset of a narrative to distinguish the holy person from the ordinary lot of humankind and to put into relief the extraordinary nature of [his/her] sanctity'.<sup>77</sup> It also placed Robert within a venerable tradition of monastic saints; indeed, the topos had been used to great effect in Gregory the Great's *Life of St Benedict*.<sup>78</sup>

As has been stated, hagiographers used these topoi to demonstrate that their subject was "predestined" to follow a particular path. In chapter 2, for instance, William

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<sup>76</sup> *VRB*, p.108.

<sup>77</sup> J.Kitchen, *Saints' Lives and the Rhetoric of Gender: Male and Female in Merovingian Hagiography* (Oxford, 1998), p.57.

<sup>78</sup> Curtius, *European Literature*, pp.98-101, at p.100.

situated Robert within a more specific context. William describes how Robert was an outstanding student who soon outshone and baffled his own teachers. Robert was given the respectable honorific of '*Pater noster*', with William stating: 'A name indeed happily chosen for one who was to become the father of so many children not by a physical begetting but by preaching'.<sup>79</sup> William here places Robert within a pastoral context, with his behaviour as a youth again foreshadowing his later achievements.

To a large extent, William focuses upon Robert's intellectual capabilities. We learn in chapter III that Robert became a teacher at an early age, and 'strove to benefit (*prodesse*) all men in common without venality'.<sup>80</sup> In using the verb *prodesse*, William signalled to his readers that Robert showed a predilection for pastoral ministry; he indicated too that, with a background in teaching, Robert could communicate the word of God more effectively to his future flock. In chapter IV, after his spell as a teacher, Robert continued his studies under the direction and guidance of William of Champeaux and Anselm of Laon, both of whom William describes as 'outstanding masters whom the writings of the Fathers had instructed truly what they should determine as the sense of the Scriptures, [and] what they should preach or venerate'.<sup>81</sup> Indeed, William placed Robert's education within a continental context; both of Robert's teachers were based in the cathedral schools of Northern France, and

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<sup>79</sup> *VRB*, p.110: '*auspicato tamen nomine, qui tantorum filiorum pater futurus erat, non genitura sed prelatione*'.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Omnibus in commune prodesse sine venalitate studuit*'.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p.112: '*Magistros emeritos quos documenta sanctorum patrum veraciter instituerant, quid in divinis scripturis sentire, quid predicare vel venerari deberent*'. The '*vel venerari*' may refer to the growing scepticism of popular cults.

were hugely influential within reform circles in the early twelfth century.<sup>82</sup> They greatly contributed to what some historians have termed the rationalisation of theology; part of this endeavour included the systematic study of the Bible, which resulted in the increasing appeal of written *sententiae* that summarised aspects of Christian doctrine.<sup>83</sup> To many, therefore, both men would have represented an accepted orthodoxy, combined with the spirit of renewal and reform; or, as Ludo Milis has stated, they 'were progressive in the religious field, [yet] they remained traditional as thinkers'.<sup>84</sup>

Clearly, William Wycombe sought to model Robert upon his teachers. To some extent, Robert had followed a similar path to that of William of Champeaux; the latter, having rejected the schools, would found the strict order of regular canons based at St Victor. Similarly, Wycombe emphasised Robert's interest in the scriptures over the secular learning of classical poets or philosophers, and suggested this precipitated his quest for a more spiritual life. This characterisation of Robert would have been greatly appreciated by an audience of regular canons.

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<sup>82</sup> For Anselm of Laon and William of Champeaux, see M.T.Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life* (Oxford, 1997), pp.67-75; R.W.Southern, *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe* (Oxford, 2001), pp.25-49 and C.J.Mews, 'Logica in the Service of Philosophy: William of Champeaux and his Influence' in *Schrift, Schreiber, Schenker: Studien zur Abtei Sankt Viktor in Paris und den Viktorinern*, ed. R.Berndt (Berlin, 2005), pp.77-118.

<sup>83</sup> J.Leclercq, 'The Renewal of Theology', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. R.L.Benson *et al* (Oxford, 1982), pp.68-87; B.Smallley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1952), pp.46-52.

<sup>84</sup> L.J.R.Milis, 'The Regular Canons and Some Socio-Religious Aspects about the Year 1100', in *Religion, Culture, and Mentalities in the Medieval Low Countries*, ed. J.Deploige and M. De Reu (Turnhout, 2005), p.176.

## (b) The VRB: The Depiction of Robert as Prior

In chapters IX-X of book I, William describes how Robert behaved as prior of Llanthony. These chapters are important because they demonstrate the ways in which William set out to define Robert's authority, and show how he approached this topic from an Augustinian perspective. At the beginning of chapter IX, he states that 'in all else which pertained to the rule of his office, he [Robert] was found to be without peer among all the pastors of our time'.<sup>85</sup> William then goes on to describe the ideal pastor in more detail:

For while he grieved to set himself [*praeesse*] above

others, he strove to be of service [*prodesse*] to all.

And he who set in authority over all made himself the

servant of all, thinking himself fortunate, not in his power

to rule, but in his charity to serve.<sup>86</sup>

In the first part of this quotation, William uses the Latin doublet *praeesse/prodesse* to explain Robert's own understanding of his vocation. These verbs had been used by earlier Christian writers, who had sought to explain the appropriate attitude to

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<sup>85</sup> VRB, p.130: '*In ceteris que ad officium regiminis pertinebant, omnibus incomparabilis inventus est temporis nostri pastoribus*'.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., '*Nam et si ceteris se praeesse dolebat omnibus tamen prodesse satagebat. Quique praefectus erat omnibus factus est omnium servus, non se reputans potestate dominante sed karitate serviente felicem*'.

leadership among a community of believers.<sup>87</sup> Augustine of Hippo (c.354-430) appears initially to have used the doublet in a sermon celebrating the anniversary of his episcopal ordination; in it, he stated that a pastor should delight (*delectet*) in serving others rather than by ruling over them.<sup>88</sup> In Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, '*praeesse/prodesse*' was also employed, again in the context of a discussion on episcopal authority.<sup>89</sup> This way of articulating religious authority was adopted by later writers, and is found in both the Rule of St Benedict (c.530), and in Gregory the Great's (c.540-604) popular handbook, the *Liber Regulae Pastoralis* (c.591).<sup>90</sup> In the latter, Gregory repeated Augustine's earlier injunction that 'All who are superiors should not regard in themselves the power of their rank, but the equality of their nature; and they should find their joy not in ruling over [*praeesse*] men but in helping [*prodesse*] them'.<sup>91</sup> Such a conception of power relations within the Christian community was convenient, for it could be applied both to the abbot, responsible as he was for his monastic brethren, and to the bishop who had a wider pastoral remit.

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<sup>87</sup> Y.Congar, 'Quelques expressions traditionnelles du service chrétien', in *L'Épiscopat et l'Église universelle*, ed. Y.Congar and B.Dupuy (Paris, 1962), pp.101-32, at pp.101-5. Also helpful for the earlier context: R.A.Markus, 'The Latin Fathers', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c. 350-c. 1450*, ed. J.H.Burns (Cambridge, 1988), pp.92-122.

<sup>88</sup> Augustine, *Sermo* 340, *Clavis Patristica Pseudepigraphorum Medii Aevi*, ed. J.J.Machielsen, 5.Vols (Turnhout, 1990-), Vol.2 (1992), 104, pp.919-21, at p.920: '*Ut nos vobis non tam praeesse quam prodesse delectet*'.

<sup>89</sup> Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, ed. G.E.McCracken (Harvard, 1957), p.202. (*PL* 41,657).

<sup>90</sup> A.de Vogue, *La règle de Saint Benoit*, 6 Vols. (Paris, 1971-1972), Vol.2, 64:7, pp.650-51; Gregory the Great, *Pastoral Care*, trans. S.J.Henry Davis (New Jersey, 1950), p.60. Gregory's work was considered a handbook for prospective bishops, and is found in Llanthony's library: *LAC*, p.50, no.127. This guide set out the requirements of the pastoral office and discussed the attributes of a good pastor. It also spoke of the way a pastor might tend to the needs of the various classes over which he watched.

<sup>91</sup> See also R.A.Markus, *Gregory the Great and His World* (Cambridge, 1997), pp.27-31.

William likely drew his understanding of *praeesse/prodesse* from a wide range of texts. However, his use of this expression was no doubt indebted to the Augustinian tradition. The abovementioned quotation reflects this, for the latter part has similarities with a passage in the *Rule of Augustine* that concerns how a prior should rule: ‘The superior, for his part, must not think himself fortunate in his exercise of authority but in his role as one serving you in love’.<sup>92</sup> The idea that Robert needed to serve others in his position as prior might sound paradoxical, but, in fact, the ability to serve (*prodesse*) others, demonstrated that one could lead effectively. In short, by serving his community, Robert showed that he was a model of Christian pastoral leadership.<sup>93</sup>

Throughout this section, William provides a synthesis of traditional conceptions of authority and situates this within a twelfth-century Augustinian framework. For instance, William describes Robert as a ‘true imitator of Jesus Christ who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life to his sheep’.<sup>94</sup> Here, William used the example of the good shepherd, a biblical motif often associated with the pastoral vocation.<sup>95</sup> However, William’s stress on Robert’s *imitatio Christi* also reflected the message of the new religious orders of the eleventh and twelfth

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<sup>92</sup> Verheijen, *Règle*, p.436: ‘*Ipse uero qui uobis praeest, non se existimet potestate dominantem, sed caritate seruientem felicem*’. See also *VRB*, p.130: ‘*non se reputans potestate dominante sed karitate seruiente felicem*’.

<sup>93</sup> A helpful examination of these themes is T.F.Martin, ‘Augustine and the Politics of Monasticism’, in *Augustine and Politics*, ed. J.Doody, K.L.Hughes and K.Paffenroth (Oxford, 2005), pp.165-86. See also D.Reinke, ‘“Austin’s Labour”: Patterns of Medieval Governance in Medieval Augustinian Monasticism’, *Church History*, 56 (1987), pp.157-71.

<sup>94</sup> *VRB*, p.130: ‘*Verus imitator Iesu Christi, qui non uenerat ministrari sed ministrare. Et dare animam suam pro ovibus suam*’.

<sup>95</sup> See N.Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd as a Source for the Spirituality of the Ministerial Priesthood* (Rome, 1997), *passim*.

centuries, which stressed the importance of living one's life according to the Gospels.<sup>96</sup> Although Jesus had always been considered the 'ultimate exemplar of saintly behaviour', increasingly the saint, in his imitation of Christ, acted as an intercessor between Jesus and a *vita's* audience; thus, writing in the prologue to the *VSW*, William of Malmesbury hoped that his audience would follow Wulfstan's example, just as Wulfstan had himself imitated Christ.<sup>97</sup>

In the *VRB*, in his reference to Robert as coming not to be ministered to, but instead to minister himself, William appears to have conflated Matthew 20:28/Mark 10:45 with John 10:11.<sup>98</sup> Again, both of these passages reinforced the idea that ministering to others was a service in itself. However, William returns to the *Rule of Augustine*; Robert, he explains, maintained the office of a pastor by following the model which the apostle gives and which Augustine imitates.<sup>99</sup> This statement referred to William's next passage, and was taken almost verbatim from the Augustinian Rule, the first part of which is a citation from Paul's Letter to the Thessalonians:

Chiding the restless, consoling the fainthearted,

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<sup>96</sup> See G.Constable, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought: The Interpretation of Mary and Martha, the Ideal of the Imitation of Christ, the Orders of Society* (Cambridge, 1998), pp.143-248. On p.179, Constable states that 'The ideal of imitating Christ in all respects deepened in the eleventh century into a passionate devotion to His humanity, which increasingly excluded other models and established Christ as the supreme exemplar for devout Christians'.

<sup>97</sup> *VSW*, pp.12-13.

<sup>98</sup> Matthew 20:28: 'Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many'/'*Sicut Filius hominis non venit ministrari sed ministrare et dare animam suam redemptionem pro multis*. Repeated almost verbatim in Mark 10:45 '*nam et Filius hominis non venit ut ministraretur ei sed ut ministraret et daret animam suam redemptionem pro multis*'. John 10:11: 'I am the good pastor: the good pastor giveth his life for the sheep'/'*ego sum pastor bonus bonus pastor animam suam dat pro ovibus*. See n.94 for comparison. Note: I have used the Douay-Rheims Latin-English version of the Vulgate (Rheims, 1582).

<sup>99</sup> *VRB*, p.130, '*Officium tamen in se retinebat pastoris, qualem format apostolus qualem imitator Augustinus*'.

succouring the infirm, long-suffering to all men;  
 gladly withholding discipline, austere in imposing  
 it (1 Thes 5:14).<sup>100</sup> And since both may be necessary,  
 seeking rather to be loved than feared; yet wisely  
 exercising this measure of discretion, that he might  
 not be loved in proportion to his laxity, more so  
 than his severity.<sup>101</sup>

Again, all of this section reiterated Robert's responsibilities towards his community and the various roles that he fulfilled as prior. It also sought to show how Robert had disciplined those members of his community who had sinned. In this respect, the last part of William's final clause appears to echo more closely a comment made by Gregory the Great in his *Pastoral Care*: in exercising discipline, 'Gentleness is to be mingled with severity; a compound is to be made of both, so that subjects may not be exasperated by too great harshness nor enervated by excessive tenderness'.<sup>102</sup> Likewise, in his commentary on Galatians, Augustine had also discussed the

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<sup>100</sup> Vulgate (1 Thes 5:14): *Rogamus autem vos fratres corripite inquietos consolamini pusillanimes suscipite infirmos patientes estote ad omnes.*

<sup>101</sup> See VRB, p.130, '*Corripens inquietos consolans pusillanimos. Suscipiens infirmos. Patiens ad omnes. Disciplinam libenter habens. Metuendus imponens (1 Thes 5:14), et cum utrumque sit necessarium plus tamens appetens amari quam timeri. Hoc tamen prudenter utens discretionis temperamento, ne remissior plus amaretur, rigidior plus timeretur*'. Contrast with Verheijen, *Règle*, p.436: '*corripiat inquietos, consoletur pusillanimes, suscipiat infirmos, patiens sit ad omnes. Disciplinam libens habeat, metum inponat. Et quamuis utrumque sit necessarium, tamen plus uobis amari adpetat quam timeri, semper cogitans deo se pro uobis redditurum esse rationem*'.

<sup>102</sup> Davis, *Pastoral Care*, p.67.

appropriate way of chastising the sinner. Although the Apostle Paul had urged that anyone found committing a transgression was to be treated with a spirit of gentleness (Galatians 6.1), Augustine suggested that within a pastoral context, there was scope for flexibility: 'Whether to use more severity or more charm in speaking should be determined by what seems necessary for the salvation of the person being corrected.'<sup>103</sup> These earlier patristic discussions may explain why William added his own qualification. What is important, however, is that William depicted Robert's understanding of his office primarily according to the rule followed by both the canons of Llanthony and Lanthony Secunda.

Chapters IX and X of the *vita* further explore Robert's relationship with his canons. William portrays Robert as a spiritual counsellor and, in particular, stresses the prudence with which he received the canons' confessions. In this respect, the *VRB* was not unusual; Alexander Murray has demonstrated how descriptions of private confession by monks (and those in regular orders) were not uncommon in saints' lives of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>104</sup> In the context of this *vita*, however, they also appear to highlight Robert's especial gift for spiritual discernment, which again reflected pastoral ideals. Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, for instance, states: 'those who rule others should show themselves such that their subjects are unafraid to reveal their hidden secrets to them'.<sup>105</sup> In the *VRB*, William related how a canon had been sent out of the priory on an errand, but instead visited his kinsmen, even though this had been

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<sup>103</sup> See E.Plumer, Augustine's Commentary on Galatians: Introduction, Text, Translation, and Notes (Oxford, 2006), pp.114-115. Galatians 6.1: '*Fratres et si praeoccupatus fuerit homo in aliquo delicto vos qui spiritales estis huiusmodi instruite in spiritu lenitatis considerans te ipsum ne et tu tempteris*'.

<sup>104</sup> A.Murray, 'Confession Before 1215', *TRHS*, 6<sup>th</sup> Series, 3 (1993), pp.51-81, at pp.70-71.

<sup>105</sup> Davis, Pastoral Care, p.58.

strictly forbidden. Naively thinking that he had managed to get away with this act of disobedience, the canon returned to the priory, and subsequently went to Robert for confession. After his confession, the prior asked why the canon had withheld his worst offence:

The brother blushed and said marvelling. “How did it reach yours ears, father?” But he [Robert] replied playfully:  
 Did you not know that I had my angel whom I myself send with those who go abroad observe and report to me what happens on the way.<sup>106</sup>

This humorous anecdote had a serious message, for William explained that ‘in this way he [Robert] often penetrated the secrets of the hearts of other men’.<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, by recalling this example and others, William showed how Robert was interested in the *vita interior*, in particular the well-being of the canons under his charge, for their salvation was his responsibility.

Robert’s ability to perceive the truth was also emphasised by William in a similar story. This account, however, demonstrated a more serious side to Robert. William recalled that a canon tried to abscond from the priory, but was hauled up in front of

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<sup>106</sup> *VRB*, p.132: ‘*Erubuit frater et admirans ait. Et quomodo innotuit tibi pater. At ille tanquam ludens respondit. An nesciebas quod haberem angelum meum quem ego mitto cum his qui foris exeunt, ut observet et renuntiet mihi quid agatur in via*’. By responding playfully (*lucens*), William was also providing a more human depiction of Robert.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p.134: ‘*Sic et aliorum secreta cordis sepe deprehendit*’.

the brethren in chapter and told to explain his actions. Before giving his excuses, Robert, calling on the power of the Holy Ghost, declared that if the canon was going to deceive them, then he should be struck dumb. After which, the canon was unable to speak a single word.<sup>108</sup> Why did William include these stories within the text? To some extent, these anecdotes referred back to William's earlier comment, which demonstrated how Robert had conformed to the Augustinian *Rule's* understanding of how to be a pastor. Robert was seen in his role as confessor, but also shown as a disciplinarian; at all times he tempered mildness with severity.

#### (c) Depiction of Robert's Elevation to the See of Hereford

The events proceeding Robert's episcopal elevation demonstrate again the influence of Augustine and Gregory the Great upon William's characterisation of the saint; they also highlight how William wished to emphasise Robert's attachment to his canons and his position as prior. A discussion of the former will follow after a brief synopsis of William's account. On first discovering that he was being considered for bishopric of Hereford, Robert was 'full of fear and distraught with foreboding'.<sup>109</sup> Even after the agreement of the king, archbishop, pope and his local bishop Urban, Robert asked the brethren of Llanthony to plead for him to remain as their prior. When they refused, he then sought their forgiveness and blessing. Leaving to argue his case in front of the assembly charged with electing Hereford's bishop, Robert took William Wycombe as his travelling companion. After falling asleep at the village of Ross, both had separate

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<sup>108</sup> Another example of this kind of 'miracle' is found in the *Life of St Kenelm: Three Eleventh-Century Anglo-Latin Saints' Lives: Vita S. Birini, Vita et Miracula S. Kenelmi and Vita S. Rumwoldi*, ed. R.C.Love (Oxford, 1996), p.75.

<sup>109</sup> *VRB*, p.138: '*territus est et mente praesaga consternatus*'.

visions. After William related his, Robert divined that both visions concerned him becoming bishop. Feeling a moment of doubt at this sudden realisation, Robert cried out: 'Behold, while I am a free man and my own master, why do I enter into slavery and torment seemingly with open eyes and a consenting mind'.<sup>110</sup> At first, William appears to agree: 'In my opinion he is not free whom the shackle of Apostolic authority has fettered. But if obedience matters less than will, why do we hesitate to choose that which is better?'<sup>111</sup> Quickly however, William realised his mistake, and remembered that Robert had often preached on the virtue of obedience.<sup>112</sup> Finally, 'having been compelled by the virtue of obedience', both of them continued their travels.<sup>113</sup> The distinction between *voluntas* and *obedientia* has a long monastic tradition.<sup>114</sup> To some extent, the decision to follow the regular life involved the renunciation of self-will 'which was replaced by the will of God, represented by the superior to whom the monk promised obedience' and guided by the Rule.<sup>115</sup> Even here, William placed the discussion of whether to become bishop within a context that would have been understood by the canons of Llanthony and Lanthony Secunda.

In chapter XIII, Robert was, although unwilling, elected to his bishopric. William explains why Robert had resisted to such a degree: 'Thus by showing such an example that as long as the harsh sentence of the ruler was held in the balance and might be

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p.144: '*Ecce dum liber et meus sum, quid me tanquam videns et volens ingero in servitatem et tormenta*'.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.: '*Non sic mihi constat liberum esse, quem apostolice auctoritatis cathena constringit. Quod si minor est obedientia quam voluntas, quid cunctamur quod melius est eligere*'.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.: '*qui virtutem obedientie tociens nobis praedicasti*'.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p.148: '*Coactus... obedientie virtute*'.

<sup>114</sup> C.H.Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (Harlow, 2001), pp.18-38.

<sup>115</sup> *Three Treatises from Bec on the Nature of Monastic Life*, ed. G.Constable, trans. B.S.Smith (Toronto, 2008), p.22.

altered, he should strive with all manner of humility to avert it. But once inflicted, he must accept it as circumstance and reason demanded'.<sup>116</sup> In other words, Robert was obedient to God's will; anything else would have suggested an eagerness to accept a position of authority. In the end, Robert had to accept God's wish. This chimed also with Gregory's *Pastoral Care*: 'it is safest to decline the office of preaching, yet it may not, as we have said, be pertinaciously refused'.<sup>117</sup> Such scenes in the *VRB* reflect a topos common in episcopal *vitae* written by monks, and here William appears to have appropriated the trope.<sup>118</sup> We will see in the next section the extent to which William's canonical background was significant in his discussion of episcopal duties.

#### (d) Depiction of Robert as Bishop

Wherefore, after Robert, venerable and blessed of God  
was raised to the pontifical dignity he diminished nothing  
of the good rules which he had laid down, no article of  
religious observance.<sup>119</sup>

Again, William here employs a common hagiographical topos; authors of saints' lives frequently attempted to show that when a saint or holy man became bishop, they

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p.150: '*tali scilicet indicans exemplo quamdiu gravis sententia praesidentis suspensa tenetur et mutari poterit, modis omnibus humilitatis annitendum esse quo redimatur. Cum autem definita fuerit, continendum esse prout tempus et ratio postulaverit*'.

<sup>117</sup> Davis, *Pastoral Care*, p.33.

<sup>118</sup> Again, see B.Weiler, 'The *Rex renitens*' pp.1-42. See also Chapter 1, p.109.

<sup>119</sup> *VRB*, p.152: '*Postquam igitur venerabilis vir et adeo benedictus Robertus pontificali honore sullimatus (sic) est nichil ut assolet bonis moribus, nichil proposito religionis imminuit*'.

continued to live according to the precepts of the regular life. Sulpicius Severus's *Life of St Martin* was a key hagiographical text in this respect. Describing how Martin was elected as Bishop of Tours, Sulpicius wrote that 'with full authority and favour he used to maintain the dignity of a bishop without losing his commitment and virtue as a monk'.<sup>120</sup> Sulpicius's depiction of Martin became a popular topos; in the anonymous *Life of Cuthbert*, for instance, the author quoted this passage directly.<sup>121</sup> Such a motif demonstrated that a saint could combine the asceticism of monasticism with an active dedication to pastoral ministry.

In England and on the continent, the reform movements of the eleventh and twelfth centuries encouraged a situation in which the transition from the regular life to the episcopal vocation was increasingly common.<sup>122</sup> Consequently, canonists sought to define the extent to which the new bishop was free from the requirements of monastic life.<sup>123</sup> However, some, like the twelfth-century theologian Peter Abelard (d.1142), argued that bishops with a monastic background could hardly consider themselves to be monks if they did not retain some semblance of their former life.<sup>124</sup> It was perhaps such views that influenced William of Malmesbury's depiction of St Wulfstan of

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<sup>120</sup> *Sulpicii Seueri libri qui supersunt*, ed. K.Halm, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 1 (Vienna, 1886), cc.10.1-2: '*plenus auctoritatis et gratiae, implebat episcopi dignitatem, ut non tamen propositum monarchi uirtutemque desereret*'.

<sup>121</sup> *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: A Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life* ed. and trans. B.Colgrave (Cambridge, 1985), cc.4.1.

<sup>122</sup> M.G.Newman, *The Boundaries of Charity: Cistercian Culture and Ecclesiastical Reform, 1098-1180* (Stanford, 1996), pp.148-55. In contrast, in the thirteenth century, bishops were increasingly from a secular background: M.E.Gibbs and J.Lang, *Bishops and Reform 1215-1272* (Oxford, 1934), pp.1-52.

<sup>123</sup> Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*, pp.33-34; P.R.Oliger *Les Évêques Réguliers: Recherche sur Leur Condition Juridique Depuis les Origines du Monachisme Jusqu'à la Fin du Moyen âge* (Paris, 1958), pp.92-110.

<sup>124</sup> *PL* 178, col.604: '*Quanta sit autem impudentia tales episcopos de monachis factos habitum monachi retinere, et non monastice vivere, non suae professioni contraria prorsus agere, non videat quanta sit impudentia*', cited in J.Mann, *Ysengrimus* (Brill, 1985), p.15.

Worcester. Recounting the saint's behaviour after his elevation as bishop, William writes: 'His life kept so fine a balance that he held to both professions without losing either: he was the bishop without abjuring the monk in his religious practice, and the monk while preserving a bishop's authority'.<sup>125</sup>

Similarly, it is worth considering whether William Wycombe was simply drawing upon a literary motif for Robert, or whether his decision was influenced by contemporary debates, or if it reflected Robert's own circumstances. The major difference between Wulfstan and Robert was that the latter had a secular chapter; therefore, there arose a situation in which Robert, as a regular canon, ruled over a community of secular canons. In this respect, William would have wanted to make clear that Robert had retained the religious character of his earlier life, so as to distinguish his behaviour from that of the members of his cathedral community. Specifically, in the *VRB*, we are told that Robert regulated his life 'by preserving the rule as well as prescriptions of justice'.<sup>126</sup> This was, of course, the Augustinian Rule which Robert had, up to this point, already modelled his life upon. Indeed, William pointed out in book I that when Robert joined the order, 'he set out to learn the rule and customs of his order [*regulam ordinis et consuetudines*], committing them to

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<sup>125</sup> *VSW*, p.50-51: '*Tanto aequilibrio uitam informans ut utramque professionem teneret et neutram amitteret: sic episcopus ut religione non abiuraret monachum, sic monachus ut auctoritate representaret episcopum*'.

<sup>126</sup> *VRB*, p.154: '*servata regula iusticie simul et ordine*'.

memory, so he could put them into practice.<sup>127</sup> In this way, William once more showed the continuity evident in Robert's life.

As has been demonstrated, Robert is depicted as a model monk-bishop; one who performs ascetic devotional practices and maintains the regular life. Yet, William Wycombe was keen to demonstrate to his readers that the offices of prior and of bishop were not mutually exclusive roles and that Robert's duties and the attitude towards each of the offices he held were interconnected.

#### V. Asceticism within the *VRB* and Its Influence on the Depiction of Robert Bethune

##### (a) Background

Asceticism is an integral component in the construction of Robert Bethune's episcopal identity. Ascetic practices are not infrequently recorded within contemporary saints' lives, yet there is a noticeable emphasis upon monastic-ascetic models within the *VRB*.<sup>128</sup> In one respect this simply reflected Augustinian practice; the reformed monastic orders of the twelfth century had sought to situate the ascetic lifestyle within a coenobitic environment. However, the extent to which asceticism features in

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<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p.124: '*coepit regulam ordinis et consuetudines diligenter ediscere, memorie commendare, actibus adimplere*'.

<sup>128</sup> Ascetic behaviour was common in non-episcopal saints' lives too, particularly those which prioritised the eremitical life. See S.Ridyard, 'Functions of a Twelfth-Century Recluse Revisited: the Case of Godric of Finchale', in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. R.Gameson and H.Leyser (Oxford, 2001), pp.236-50. See also D.Alexander, 'Hermits and Hairshirts: The Social Meanings of Saintly Clothing in the *vitae* of Godric of Finchale and Wulfric of Haselbury', *Journal of Medieval History*, 28 (2002), pp.205-26.

the *VRB* may have been a function of the text itself. In his examination of two pre-conquest lives of St Dunstan, David Rollason demonstrated that asceticism was an important part of Dunstan's sanctity; it was employed within the texts to demonstrate how Dunstan could lead both an active and contemplative life. At times Dunstan would seek out monastic isolation, yet on other occasions he effectively performed his duties at court.<sup>129</sup> Asceticism here was tied to a bishop's authority, for a man's resolve and self-control reflected well within a secular context. Here the focus will be on why William presented Robert in this way. Does it tell us about twelfth-century standards of episcopal sanctity, or does it instead reflect the specific audience and circumstances in which the *VRB* was composed?

Throughout the *vita*, Robert's high regard for the ascetic lifestyle is demonstrated in both his attitude towards food and clothing, and in ritual penitential displays involving self-flagellation and monastic discipline. To some extent, Robert's asceticism can be seen as a consequence of his chosen vocation as a canon regular at the isolated Augustinian priory of Llanthony. Yet, it was also probably William's desire to situate Robert within a specific hagiographical model that would have mirrored his Augustinian audience's interests. Significantly, the few hagiographical texts that the Llanthony *Secunda* canons appeared to have possessed suggest they retained a keen intellectual interest in a religious tradition that emphasised spiritual retreat and ascetic behaviour. There is no evidence of contemporary twelfth-century hagiography either in Llanthony *Secunda*'s library catalogue, which has been dated to the mid-

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<sup>129</sup> D.Rollason, 'The Concept of Sanctity in the Early Lives of St. Dunstan', in *St. Dunstan: His Life, Times and Cult*, ed. N.Ramsay, M.Sparks and T.Tatton-Brown (Woodbridge, 1992), pp.261-72, at pp.268-69.

fourteenth century, or in the list of texts to which Ker assigned a Lanthony provenance.<sup>130</sup> The collection, however, does include a manuscript entitled *Jeronimus in vitas partum. magnum volumen*. Teresa Webber states that collections with this common title often began with the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* and also contained works from the *Vitae Patrum* (PL 73-74), as well as Jerome's *Lives of St Paul the Hermit, St Hilarion* and *St Malchus*.<sup>131</sup> All of these works emphasised the spiritual authority and ascetic achievements of the holy man in the wilderness. Other works the priory possessed included a copy of the *Verba Seniorum* (or Sayings of the Fathers), which Webber says is probably Lambeth Palace Library MS 373, and dated to the twelfth century; and a copy of John Cassian's *Collationes* (Lambeth Palace Library, MS 101).<sup>132</sup> Both of these texts can be seen as transmitting the wisdom and ascetic teachings of the Desert fathers. Finally, one text which may have an early twelfth-century Lanthony provenance is Lambeth Palace Library MS 173. This manuscript contains *The Life of Abraham the Hermit* (BHL 12) by St Ephraim, translated from the Greek into Latin, and James the Deacon's *Life of St Pelagia the Harlot* (BHL 6609).<sup>133</sup>

In order to understand the degree to which the later canons of Llanthony and Lanthony Secunda were influenced by an eremitic tradition, and why William emphasised Robert's asceticism, we need to also detail the house's institutional origins. A discussion of depictions of asceticism in the *VRB* will follow; we shall then

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<sup>130</sup> *LAC*, p.xxiii and *passim*; Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp.108-112.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p.49, no.118. We do not know, however, when Lanthony Secunda obtained this text, and it has not been identified with a particular manuscript.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p.75, no.316.

<sup>133</sup> Gameson, *The Manuscripts of Early Norman England*, p.123; although James disagrees: *idem*, *Catalogue*, pp.272-274.

ask to what extent such examples reflect the genre of episcopal *vitae*, or if we should see the *vita* as more Augustinian than episcopal 'biography'. In respect of this last question, I will suggest that William's depiction of Robert suggested a specific way of approaching the episcopal office which could be seen as both traditional, but also one which reflected the religious changes of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

#### (b) The Foundation of Llanthony

As with many Augustinian priories established in the twelfth century, Llanthony had begun its life as a hermitage. It would go through a number of phases before it was established as a priory for canons regular. The timeline goes as follows: at the turn of the eleventh century, a certain William, a knight in the service of Hugh de Lacy, renounced his military profession and set up a hermitage in the Vale of Ewias. In 1103, Ernisius, a former chaplain of Queen Matilda, joined William at the hermitage and henceforth their reputation for sanctity spread. In 1108, William and Ernisius erected a church at this site dedicated to John the Baptist which was later consecrated by Urban, bishop of Llandaff and Reinhelm, bishop of Hereford.<sup>134</sup> John the Baptist, along with the Old-Testament prophets Elijah and Elisha, were considered to be the biblical archetypes for the eremitic life, thus the choice of dedicatee reiterated the lifestyle that the hermits had chosen to follow.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> See n.2 for narratives setting out Llanthony's history.

<sup>135</sup> L.J.R.Milis, 'Hermits and Regular Canons in the Twelfth Century', in *Religion, Culture, and Mentalities in the Medieval Low Countries*, ed. Deploige and De Reu, pp.181-246, at p.198. The author of the *History* adds it was particularly suitable because when John the Baptist was young he had retreated into the desert, Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', p.264.

Both secular and religious patrons played a part in Llanthony's early fortunes. Hugh de Lacy would, along with Payn Fitz John, the sheriff of Shropshire and Hereford, contribute generously to the church's early endowment.<sup>136</sup> However, it would be Archbishop Anselm who would affect the largest change: after taking his advice, William and Ernisius decided to become canons regular. To help them succeed in this endeavour, Anselm brought over forty regular canons from the priories of Holy Trinity (Aldgate), Colchester and Merton to instruct the former hermits on the *Rule of Augustine*.<sup>137</sup> As a number of previous historians have noted, the priory of Merton had only been founded c.1114, so this suggests that Llanthony became an Augustinian priory proper after this date; John Dickinson gives a date of around 1118.<sup>138</sup>

It may be that the *Rule of Augustine* was chosen as it was the least demanding rule with which to facilitate the change to coenobitism. As Jane Herbert states, 'it provided a general framework for community life rather than a set of detailed instructions and could therefore be assimilated more easily by an established group'.<sup>139</sup> Clearly, there was some interpretive scope within the *Rule*, which might have allowed for the preservation of an eremitic spirituality that any earlier hermits had practiced.

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<sup>136</sup> It was these same men who approached Henry I and the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1131 asking that Robert Bethune be bishop of Hereford: *VRB*, p.138. Hugh de Lacy is described as the founder of the priory in a bull of Innocent II's dated to 1131: *Papsturkunden*, ed. Holtzmann, 1, no.16.

<sup>137</sup> Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', p.265. See also J.C.Dickinson, 'Anselm and the First English Regular Canons in England', *Spicilegium Beccense* (Paris, 1959), pp.541-46.

<sup>138</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p.50; Dickinson, *Origins of the Austin Canons*, p.112.

<sup>139</sup> J.Herbert, 'The Transformation of Hermitages into Augustinian Priors in Twelfth-Century England', in *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition*, ed. W.J.Sheils, SCH, 22 (Oxford, 1985), pp.131-45, at p.131.

That we know of Llanthony's origins, and how it became an Augustinian priory, is due primarily to the existence of a history of its foundation, which is preserved in BL, MS Cotton Julius D x, ff.31<sup>r</sup>-53<sup>r</sup>. The manuscript-copy is written in two late thirteenth-century hands; however, Michael Richter has argued that the first fifteen chapters were originally composed sometime between 1170-1191. Specifically, Richter argues that Gerald of Wales used an earlier copy of the *History* when he wrote his *Itinerarium Cambriae* (Journey through Wales); Gerald completed this work in c.1192.<sup>140</sup>

The *History* was, therefore, written more than seventy years after the initial foundation. The fact that it was composed two or three generations after the priory's foundation means that we have to be cautious with the narrative evidence. For instance, although we are told that Anselm advised William and Ernisius to become regular canons, it is not clear whether the hermits themselves sought the archbishop's advice, or whether there was external pressure from other sources, such as their secular patrons. Indeed, the *History* states that at first William and Ernisius argued about whether to establish a larger community.<sup>141</sup> Certain parts of the account also seem to reflect a late twelfth-century context. For example, the author of the *History* states that the founders chose not to become Black monks 'because they did not wish to affect superfluities, nor become Cistercians for they were not solicitous to increase

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<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, in the manuscript the earlier hand ends at the death of Prior Clement (c.1170), and Richter suggests that this points to an early exemplar, written soon after this date: M.Richter, 'Giraldus Cambrensis and Llanthony Priory', *Studia Celtica*, 12-13 (1977-1978), pp.118-32, at pp.118, 122. Christopher Brooke concurs with this earlier date: *idem*, 'Monk and Canon': Some Patterns in the Religious Life of the Twelfth Century', in *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition*, ed. Sheils, pp.109-29, at p.126.

<sup>141</sup> Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', p.264. For the wider interest and appeal of hermitages to religious communities in the twelfth century see T.Licence, 'The Benedictines, the Cistercians and the Acquisition of a Hermitage in Twelfth-Century Durham', *Journal of Medieval History*, 29 (2003), pp.315-29.

their riches'.<sup>142</sup> Although the early hermitage is often treated as if it was a footnote in the priory's origins, the *History* provides an extensive description of the life lived by William and Ernisius and, likening them to the desert fathers, includes a conventional story of the hermits fighting and resisting the temptations set forth by the devil.<sup>143</sup> It also goes to great length in demonstrating how William and Ernisius lived a life of poverty and did not seek to encourage secular patronage. For instance, the *History* records how Queen Matilda was particularly inventive in her attempt to make a donation for the hermitage; having asked William if she could put her hand inside his cloak and feel his undergarments, the hermit, although blushing, had reluctantly agreed, and while her hand was there she slipped a purse of gold into his shirt.<sup>144</sup> The *History* clearly promoted a nostalgic view of the past, yet it nonetheless suggests that in the late twelfth-century, the Llanthony canons (or some of them at least) sought to highlight their eremitic roots, along with a more austere spirituality.

The Llanthony writer(s) had another motive for describing the eremitic roots of its priory, namely it allowed them to highlight the spiritual qualities of the original priory and then contrast it with the character of the canons at Lanthony Secunda. Indeed, for the anonymous author(s), the foundation of Lanthony Secunda had begun a process of decay and dilapidation for the original priory. As the author put it: 'There [at Lanthony] they have built lofty and stately offices; here they have permitted our plain

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<sup>142</sup> Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', p.265. By the latter half of the twelfth century the Cistercians were gaining a reputation for wealth and profligacy: G.Constable, The Reformation of the Twelfth Century (Cambridge, 1998), pp.32-33.

<sup>143</sup> Atkyns, 'The History of Llanthony Priory', pp.263-64.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p.266.

ancient buildings to go to ruin'.<sup>145</sup> The author of the *History* argued that William of Wycombe had been a chief culprit in the collapse of Llanthony's fortunes. Not only had he allowed the priory's library to be despoiled of all its books, but the Welsh house's relics and vestments had been shipped off to the Gloucester priory; their poverty was now so great that some of the canons of Llanthony had to go without breeches! This sense of grievance runs throughout the *History*; the original priory was now seen as an embarrassment to the Gloucester canons, who wished nothing more, the author claimed, than the original priory and all its offices to be swallowed by the sea.<sup>146</sup>

Interestingly, in the *VRB* there is no sign of the future conflict between the two priories; William may have, of course, had as much interest in underplaying any conflict as did the author of the *History* in exaggerating the differences. It is worth pointing out that the author of the history(s) did not blame Robert Bethune for this situation; he suggested that Robert's intention had always been to return to the original priory, leaving thirteen canons at the Gloucester site. It may be that the process of institutionalisation that took place over the course of the twelfth century transformed the way the canons of Lanthony Secunda saw themselves. Ludo Milis, looking at the "mechanism of transition" from hermitage to regular canonry in both English and Continental priories, demonstrated that future generations of canons often moved away from upholding the ideals of the founding hermitage.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p.267.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, p.268.

<sup>147</sup> See Milis, 'Hermits and Regular Canons', pp.181-246.

(c) Asceticism within the *VRB* and the Influence of Augustine and Rule of Augustine

In the *VRB*, William Wycombe appears to subscribe to the idea that one could practice an ascetic lifestyle, whether in the wilderness or close to the city. In book 1, chapter VII of the *Life*, William comes closest to commenting on Robert's relationship with the former hermits William and Ernisius, and the extent to which his life and spirituality contrasted with theirs. Robert, under the supervision of the hermit William, is described as building a place of religion (*locum religionis*) on land given to Llanthony by its patron Hugh de Lacy. Although physical labour was an important part of the monastic life, it had also been traditionally associated with hermits.<sup>148</sup> William described how Robert excelled in this activity, and that 'the philosopher of old became an apprentice workman'.<sup>149</sup>

Nevertheless, William goes on to state that 'since he [Robert] would not show consideration for himself, nor was his weak body equal to the zeal/passion of his mind; the decision [was made] to recall him to the cloister'.<sup>150</sup> Immediately after this event, prior Ernisius decided to return to the hermit's life (*vitam anchoriticam*), and consequently the brethren chose Robert as their new prior.<sup>151</sup> What is clear from this part of the narrative is that William did not seek to contrast the eremitic life unfavourably with that of the canons. Instead, he suggests that Robert was intended

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<sup>148</sup> See V.Davis, 'The Rule of St Paul, the First Hermit, in Late Medieval England', in Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition, ed. Sheils, pp.203-14, at p.212.

<sup>149</sup> *VRB*, p.126: '*Philosophum antiquum factum novum operarium*.'

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Cum nec sibi parceret nec corpus imbecille fervorem mentis equaret, de consilio revocatur in claustrum*'.

<sup>151</sup> One might assume that the (*locum religionis*) which Robert built was intended for Ernisius. As having lived the regular life, Ernisius could now return to his hermit-like existence.

for a different life: a life dedicated to pastoral ministry, where Robert's talents, and the fervour of his mind, could be used appropriately.<sup>152</sup>

In fact, Robert's attitude to his body, and the degree to which his mind overcame the frailty of his flesh, is a theme that dominates the text. Robert's asceticism is mentioned early in the *vita*. In chapter II, we are told that even as a child Robert 'began before his time by covert fasting to torment his tender little body and to overcome it by stinting his food more than necessary'.<sup>153</sup> In this instance, the topos of the *puer senex* was given an ascetic gloss. The emphasis upon Robert's personal asceticism, particularly his practice of private discipline and abstinence, is evident throughout both books of the *vita*; indeed, it appears as a common thread that runs throughout Robert's life as both a canon and a bishop.

Such depictions had a didactic function. Examples of Robert's asceticism were used to show the text's audience how they should behave; at the same time, they were intended to demonstrate how Robert had conformed to, and even exceeded, the behaviour expected of Augustinian canons. Although at times Robert's actions were placed within an Augustinian framework, William was not always consistent in his approach. In particular, the *VRB* demonstrates the potential difficulties an author might face when seeking to balance the conventions of a genre with a didactic function. A saint was meant to surpass everyday moral strictures on behaviour and, as

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<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.114, 126.

<sup>153</sup> *VRB*, p.108: '*Quoniam furtivis ieiuniis premature cep [Here the MS is torn/damaged]- tenerum corpusculum macerare, ciboque castigato preter necessitatim edomare*'.

a result, the language of Augustinian moderation could clash with the more extreme examples of asceticism that Robert is shown to practice. William, of course, may have seen no contradiction here.

The description of Robert's asceticism ran parallel to his spiritual journey and education. William makes clear in chapter IV, during which time Robert was studying the works of Anselm of Laon and William of Champeaux, that Robert 'began daily to strengthen his mind [and] to spurn his flesh'.<sup>154</sup> The 'contempt' of the body was not intended to be an end in itself; instead, it was intended to fortify the saint's mind or will against temptations. William again returns to this subject when he describes Robert's behaviour as a canon: '[he was] extremely frugal with food and drink ... [And] In private discipline he was most strict. Punishing with copious tears the apparitions/figments of nocturnal delusions, he strove to punish them more than another [man] would have [punished] acts of shamefulness'.<sup>155</sup>

The use of the noun *turpitude* suggests that William was hinting at sexual anxieties. That William alluded to these concerns is not uncharacteristic, and neither should it be considered unusual to find this within a hagiographical context.<sup>156</sup> There was a long monastic tradition of discussing nocturnal emissions and sexual concerns, and

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p.112: '*Cepit mentem cotidie roborare, carnem in contemptum ducere*'.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., p.124: '*In cibo et potu parcissimus ... In disciplinis privatis districtissimus. Nocturne delusionis fantasias uberibus lacrimis puniens ultra quam alius etiam actus turpitudinis punire curaret*'.

<sup>156</sup> Concerns about sex or masturbation within the cloister are often alluded to in saints' lives. For instance, in the *Life of Anselm*, a sick youth's vow not to touch his genitals caused the devil to inflict aching pains on his member; Anselm subsequently went into a room with the boy, along with an old monk, after which the boy was freed from further pain. Eadmer, *Life of Anselm*, pp.23-24.

how to combat such temptations.<sup>157</sup> In this example, William suggests that Robert placed sinful thoughts on the same level, or even above, that of sinful actions. Earlier writers, such as Caesarius of Arles (468/470–542), had compared the damage committed by sexual thoughts during sleep to the damage caused to the flesh by burning coals.<sup>158</sup> William's characterisation of Robert also followed the example of earlier hagiography; *The Life of St Antony* for instance, described how the devil used dirty thoughts to tempt Antony in his sleep.<sup>159</sup>

William also highlighted the hortatory nature of Robert's approach to sexual desires. In his letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul had argued that erotic activity or obscenity should not be discussed; Augustine, however, had taken a more practical approach.<sup>160</sup> In his *City of God*, Augustine had argued that a religious leader 'should stigmatise the actions of his own depravity [*turpitude*], not the words imposed on us by necessity'.<sup>161</sup> In other words, on pastoral grounds it was sometimes necessary to discuss sexual thoughts and actions in order to prevent a person from committing a sin. In this regard, Robert also promoted the idea of fasting and ascetic discipline to his fellow canons. For example, one brother, 'gravely assailed by the spirit of fornication', had, on the advice of Robert, 'subdued his flesh with fasting and

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<sup>157</sup> C.Leyser, 'Masculinity in Flux: Nocturnal Emission and the Limits of Celibacy in the Early Middle Ages', in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. D.M.Hadley (London, 1999), pp.103-20.

<sup>158</sup> Cited in J.Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago, 1990), p.108.

<sup>159</sup> *Life of Antony, Select Writings of Athanasius*, trans. H. Ellershaw (New York, 1924; repr. 1957), pp.195-221, at p.197.

<sup>160</sup> Ephesians 5.3-4: 'But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints: Or obscenity or foolish talking or scurrility, which is to no purpose: but rather giving of thanks'. / '*Fornicatio autem et omnis inmunditia aut avaritia nec nominetur in vobis sicut decet sanctos: aut turpitude aut stultiloquium aut scurrilitas quae ad rem non pertinent sed magis gratiarum actio;*

<sup>161</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 14:23: '*Facta denotet suae turpitudinis, non verba nostrae necessitatis*'.

abstinence from food'.<sup>162</sup> William, therefore, not only established Robert's own ascetic credentials, he also placed them within a pastoral context by depicting Robert as both a teacher and counsellor.

If William's purpose was to some extent didactic, he also wished to demonstrate that although Robert was now a bishop, he still retained the religious sensibilities he had practised at Llanthony. Indeed, William's depiction of Robert's asceticism in book II of the *vita*, which described Robert's behaviour within his episcopal household, reinforced claims that William had made concerning Robert's attitudes towards his episcopal office. Thus, in book II, chapter XV, we are told that Robert: 'kept a frugal table without trace of greed, and was often in the company of the religious, or other holy confessors'.<sup>163</sup> Certainly, William made sure that his description of Robert's household reflected the saint's earlier life; in other words, Robert's environment was shown to be unaffected by his change in status.

At the same time, William acknowledged that because of Robert's episcopal position, he was expected to act as a generous host; and there is clearly an acceptance that his guests, including those who led a secular life, might adhere to different (worldlier) standards. This also allowed William to distinguish Robert's behaviour from the other members of his household. At his episcopal table, for instance, Robert was described

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<sup>162</sup> *VRB*, p.136: '*Item frater alius spiritu fornicationis gravius impugnatus, de consilio sancti viri carnem suam domuerat ieiuniis et abstinentia esc[a]e*'.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, p.156: '*Mensam habebat frugalem sine avaritie nota religiosis personis aut aliis sullimibus confessoribus adornatam*'.

as 'cheerfully bountiful and liberal towards others, toward himself he was from habit most sparing .... Thus while he feasted others, he himself remained abstemious'.<sup>164</sup>

The Augustinian canons saw Augustine as their spiritual founder, and he is mentioned as a model whom Robert sought to imitate. Yet, how, and in what way, William uses Augustine as a model needs to be explored further. In chapter XV, for instance, William specifically comments on Robert's imitation of Augustine in a description of how the saint would forgo meat during dinner. Robert would, without anyone seeing, place bread quickly in between slices of meat on his plate; in this way it would appear to others that he had eaten meat, when in reality he had only consumed bread.<sup>165</sup> Robert's behaviour is shown to be exceptional, although William makes clear that he did not single himself out in a self-righteous manner. Instead, he is portrayed as self-effacing and humble. Nevertheless, although William claimed that Robert imitated Augustine in this respect, there is no parallel story in the life of Augustine by Possidius. Possidius simply records that at mealtimes Augustine 'found more delight in reading and conversation than in eating and drinking'.<sup>166</sup> Interestingly, this appears to reflect the way Eadmer described St Anselm, who 'would nibble rather than consume his food and stop eating to listen to the reading, waiting while others ate'.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid., p.158: '*Et cum aliis hilariter dapsilis esset et largus, sibi tamen erat pro consuetudine parcissimus ... sic cum alios saginabat, ipse siccus permanebat*'.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.: '*Hoc autem erat mirabile quomodo quotiens exemplo beati Augustini carnes in mensa eius apponebantur propter hospites. Ipse magne quodam apparatu et fantastica manuum agilitate oculos fallebat convivantium carnes incidens et in ora parapsidis ordinans bucellis tamen panis intersertie, quas cum acciperet carnem edere putaretur*'.

<sup>166</sup> *Vita di Cipriano, Vita di Ambrogio, Vita di Agostino*, pp.186-89: '*magis lectionem vel disputationem quam epulationem potationemque diligebat*'.

<sup>167</sup> Eadmer, *Life of Anselm*, p.78.

It is, however, likely that William had access to Possidius's *Life of Augustine* while he was writing the life of Robert; the Lanthony Secunda catalogue contains a copy of the text in the library inventory.<sup>168</sup> More suggestively, Gameson has demonstrated how this *Life* was particularly popular following the Conquest, as it appears in at least nine manuscripts, most of which can be dated to the early twelfth century.<sup>169</sup> If we compare and contrast the two texts, however, Robert's asceticism is more strongly emphasised. For example, Possidius says of Augustine that: 'His meals were frugal and economical; however, in addition to herbs and vegetables they included meat for the sake of guests or sick brethren'.<sup>170</sup> Possidius does not distinguish clearly between Augustine's personal diet, and that of his household. Meat was also served for Robert's episcopal household, but William contrasts this with Robert's more austere diet: 'He rarely touched fish, except perchance the coarsest. His food according to the season consisted in milk, cheese, butter, young greens, the fruits of trees and garden herbs. He was no less sparing in drink, so that he could not easily be persuaded to slake his thirst'.<sup>171</sup> William does include one caveat: if he was at a guest's table, Robert might eat meat or poultry, but only to avoid hurting the feeling of strangers. Even this, however, would require penance, and Robert would always atone the next day by shedding tears and fasting.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> LAC, p.58, no.181.

<sup>169</sup> Gameson, *The Manuscripts of Early Norman England*, nos. 20, 263, 322, 407, 717, 857e, 894e, 895 and 913.

<sup>170</sup> *Vita di Cipriano, Vita di Ambrogio, Vita di Agostino*, pp.184-87: '*Mensa usus est frugali et parca, quae quidem inter olera et legumina etiam carnes aliquando propter hospites vel quosque infirmiores*'.

<sup>171</sup> VRB, p.158: '*Pisces raro tangebatur nisi forte viliores, cibus eius erat pro temporum congruentia lac caseus butyrum nascentia leguminum fructus arborum clera herbarum. In potu non minus erat abstemius, ut nec bibisse facile possit adverti*'.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.: '*nocte sequenti lacrimis in crastino abstinentia esse tanquam reatum aliquem expiabat*'.

Ironically, perhaps, the asceticism of Augustine, as portrayed in Possidius's life, did not match up to the self-denial and abstinence that was increasingly preached by the new reforming orders of the twelfth century. Possidius, in his description of Augustine's episcopal household, had cited the saint's Confessions: here, Augustine stated that 'It is the uncleanness of gluttony that I fear, not unclean meat'. It was the sin of greed itself, rather than the consumption of any particular food, which was discouraged. One can only imagine what William might have thought of Possidius's claim that Augustine's meals always included wine by citing 1 Timothy 4:4-5 'Everything created by God is good ....'<sup>173</sup> Similarly, Possidius's insistence that 'Only the spoons [at Augustine's table] were made of silver' would have no doubt seemed indulgent to a twelfth-century audience.<sup>174</sup> This was not, therefore, a model to which Robert could be compared.

At the end of chapter XV, William returns to Robert's asceticism; the following passage provides a clue as to how William sought to depict Robert's sanctity:

But while he wished to follow the example of Paul  
saying "I chastise my body and bring it into subjection"  
and also the teaching of Augustine: "subdue your flesh  
with fasts and abstinence from food as far as health allows",  
his medicine exceeded the proper proportion.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> *Vita di Cipriano, Vita di Ambrogio, Vita di Agostino*, pp.186-87: '*quod omnis creatura Dei bona sit*'.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Coclearibus tantum argenteis utens*'.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.158-60: '*Sed cum Paulum imitari vellet dicentem, castigo corpus meum et in servitatem redigo; itemque Augustinum decentem carnem vestram domate ieiuniis et abstinentia esce quantum*

What did William mean by the ‘teaching of Augustine’? The citation that William used was actually taken directly from the *Rule*, or to be more precise the *Praeceptum*.<sup>176</sup> Like many of his contemporaries, William assumed that Augustine had been the author of this *Rule*. In Possidius’s *Life*, however, the *Rule* is only alluded to. Augustine had lived ‘According to the custom and the way of life established by the holy apostles’; that is, according to the life set out in Acts 4:32-35.<sup>177</sup> This lack of clarity in the early *Life* would, in later centuries, lead to much debate about the authorship of the *Rule*. However, Philip of Harvengt (d.1183), a Premonstratensian abbot, appears to have had no such qualms in ascribing the *Rule* to Augustine. In his *Vita Sancti Augustini*, written after William Wycombe’s death, Philip claimed that not only had Augustine composed the *Rule*, but that he was also the founder of the canonical life.<sup>178</sup> In the twelfth century, therefore, the *Rule* was considered by many contemporaries to be part of Augustine’s teachings; at the same time, it was also seen as a model of behaviour based on Augustine’s own way of life.

However, just as Robert went beyond the asceticism of Augustine in the *Life* by Possidius, so William, in this instance, set Robert’s behaviour above the benchmark advocated in the *Rule*. It is likely that William had taken the expression ‘*excessit*

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*valitudo permittit*. The first part of this passage was a citation from the first half of 1 Corinthians 9:27: ‘*Sed castigo corpus meum et in servitutum redigo ne forte cum aliis praedicaverim ipse reprobus efficiar*’.

<sup>176</sup> Verheijen, *Règle*, p.421: ‘*Carnem uestram domate ieiuniis et abstinencia escae et potus, quantum ualetudo permittit*’.

<sup>177</sup> *Vita di Cipriano, Vita di Ambrogio, Vita di Agostino*, pp.140-41: ‘*secundum modum et regulam sub sanctis Apostolis constitutam*’.

<sup>178</sup> E.L.Saak, *High Way to Heaven: The Augustinian Platform Between Reform and Reformation, 1292-1524* (Leiden, 2002), pp.178-82.

*medicina modum*’, which can be translated as ‘his medicine exceeded the proper proportion’, from book III of Augustine’s *De Civitate Dei*, itself a citation from Lucan’s *Pharsalia* (also known as *De Bello Civili*), a Roman epic poem.<sup>179</sup>

William was not always consistent concerning the models which he used to portray Robert’s behaviour. In chapter XVI, he goes on to discuss Robert’s chastity and the ‘purity of his flesh’ (*munditia carnis*). William wrote that Robert ‘was never in the habit of fixing his eyes upon a woman. For he had read that whoever focuses his eyes [on women] is an abomination to the Lord’.<sup>180</sup> The last part of this sentence is again a direct citation from the *Rule* of Augustine, although William’s entire description closely resembles the provisions set out in chapter four of the *Rule*:<sup>181</sup> ‘When you see a woman, do not fix your eyes on her or any woman .... So as not to look upon a woman in a sinful manner, let him bear in mind that God sees everything. Fear of the Lord is recommended in this matter too where we read in the Scriptures: “The Lord Abhors a Covetous Eye”.<sup>182</sup> In this chapter, William condenses the precept and placed it alongside a statement that applied to a pastoral context: ‘He [Robert] nowhere presumed to sit or speak alone with a woman except in the presence of appointed

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<sup>179</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, p.380.

<sup>180</sup> *VRB*, p.160, ‘... *Numquam oculum in feminam figere consuevit. Legerat enim quomodo abominatio est domino defigens oculum*’.

<sup>181</sup> The citation appears to have originally come from a scribal addition in the Greek Septuagint version of the Bible. See Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo*, p.89, n.23.

<sup>182</sup> Verheijen, *Règle*, p.424; Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo*, p.89: ‘*Oculi uestri, et si iaciunter in aliquam feminarum, figantur in nemine ... Illum cogitet omnia uidere. Ne uelit feminam male uidere. Illius namque et in hac causa commendatus est timor, ubi scriptum est: “Abominatio est domino defigens oculum”*’. The *Rule* made clear that this was not meant in a literal sense. Instead, it was the desire with which one might look that was prohibited. In the same chapter that is cited above, it was stated: ‘You are not forbidden to see women when you are out of the house. It is wrong however, to desire women or to wish them to desire you’. / ‘*Neque enim, quando proceditis, feminas uidere prohibemini, sed adpetere, aut ab ipsis adpeti uelle crimosum est*’.

companions, not even in confession nor in any secret matter'.<sup>183</sup> Such a statement reflected a twelfth-century environment in which the practice of confession was increasingly systematised in canon law.<sup>184</sup> Indeed, in his discussion of the relationship between women and clerics Gratian had warned that a cleric should not speak with a woman in solitude.<sup>185</sup> What is interesting is that instead of consistently following hagiographical models of behaviour, William here used the teachings of the *Rule*, alongside a canonical injunction applied to clerics to frame Robert's behaviour. In these examples, and elsewhere in the life, William appears reluctant to use specific hagiographical *exempla* to model his descriptions of Robert's behaviour. This might of course reflect a function of the text; if examples of Robert's asceticism were used to show other Augustinians how they should behave, the use of citations from the *Rule* makes sense – as it would have been easily recognisable by such an audience. Furthermore, over the course of the twelfth century there appears to have been an effort, in Augustinian and other reformed orders, to ensure the behaviour of the community conformed to a literal approach to the *Rule*.<sup>186</sup> For Robert to be considered a saint, William needed to demonstrate that Robert had conformed to, and then exceeded, the behaviour expected of his order. The following section will examine how this tension was reflected in another aspect of Robert's sanctity.

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<sup>183</sup> *VRB*, p.160: '*Nusquam solus cum sola sedere vere loqui nisi coram positis arbitris praesumsit, nec de confessione quidem vel quolibet archano*'.

<sup>184</sup> See J.Gerring, 'The Internal Forum and the Literature of Penance and Confession', in *The History of Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period, 1140-1234: from Gratian to the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX*, ed. W.Hartmann and K.Pennington (Washington, 2008), pp.379-425.

<sup>185</sup> Gratian had discussed this issue in his *Decretum*. See A.G.Weiler 'The Requirements of the Pastor Bonus in the Late Middle Ages', in *The Pastor Bonus: Papers Read at the British-Dutch Colloquium at Utrecht, 18-21 September 2002*, ed. T.Clemens and W.Janse (Leiden, 2004), pp.57-83, at p.74.

<sup>186</sup> Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p.174.

## (d) Flagellation within the VRB

A description of self-flagellation occurs in book 1. William describes how Robert would wait until everyone was asleep, and then:

After this, rising, the good shepherd/pastor secretly went into the oratory to make a sacrifice of his own person for the flock entrusted to him. Therefore, having removed his hair-shirt, which he wore next to his skin, on bended knees, with tears and prayers, he afflicted himself with awful stripes, a hundred times or even more.<sup>187</sup>

Before the description cited above, William stated that Robert mused on a passage in the Book of Job which recalled how Job sacrificed burnt offerings for his children's sins.<sup>188</sup> Robert performed a *holocaustum* (a word used to symbolise an act of personal sacrifice) for the sins of his fellow brethren. The example is also placed within an Christological context. Indeed, just in case the reader did not understand this allusion,

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<sup>187</sup> VRB, p.128: *'Post hec surgens pastor bonus clanculum exibat in oratorium pro grege sibi commisso de se ipso facturus holocaustum. Flexis igitur genibus centies aut eo amplius cum lacrimis et orationibus, detracto cilicio quo ad carnem utebatur, se ipsum diris flagellationibus afficiebat.'*

<sup>188</sup> Job 1:5: *'cumque in orbem transissent dies convivii mittebat ad eos Iob et sanctificabat illos consurgensque diluculo offerebat holocausta per singulos dicebat enim ne forte peccaverint filii mei et benedixerint Deo in cordibus suis sic faciebat Iob cunctis diebus'*. Whereas Job had sacrificed burnt offerings for his children's sins, Robert sacrificed himself for his brethren.

William stated: 'Had you seen him you would have thought of the Son of God, scourged before the tribunal of Pilate, atoning for the sins of the whole world.'<sup>189</sup>

The example of Robert's private self-flagellation resembled the type of asceticism advocated by the eleventh-century cardinal and reformer Peter Damian (c.1007-1072), whom the Victorian, William Cooper, called 'a great authority on the subject of whipping'.<sup>190</sup> Certainly, in Damian's letters there is a preoccupation, almost obsession, with ascetic discipline; the act of flagellation was both a spiritual aid to prayer and penance, and a way of denying the flesh. Damian also considered self-flagellation to be particularly suitable for hermits, yet his correspondence to the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino, in which he encouraged them in this habit, shows how he felt it might have a wider application.<sup>191</sup> Certainly, the first example showed Robert in a penitential context, but it should be remembered that William also placed Robert's penitential offerings within a pastoral context.

Furthermore, flagellation was certainly not an invention of reformed monasticism. In a different context, flagellation had always been a part of monastic custom – part of correction and community discipline. In Lanfranc's widely disseminated *Monastic Constitutions*, the practice was to be undertaken every day; the punishment performed

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<sup>189</sup> VRB, p.128: 'Videres te putares dei filium ante pilati tribunum flagellatum luere peccata totius mundi'.

<sup>190</sup> W.M.Cooper, *Flagellation & the Flagellants: A History of the Rod in All Countries from the Earliest Time to the Present Time* (London, 1910), p.48.

<sup>191</sup> J.Howe, 'Peter Damian and Montecassino', *Revue Bénédictine*, 107 (1997), pp.330-51. For the wider context see G.Constable, *Attitudes Toward Self-Inflicted Suffering in the Middle Ages* (Brookline, Mass., 1982); *idem*, 'Moderation and Restraint in Ascetic Practices in the Middle Ages', in *From Athens to Chartres: Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought: Studies in Honour of Edouard Jeuneau*, ed. E.Jeuneau and H.Jan Westra (Leiden, 1992), pp.315-28.

with the rest of the community in attendance.<sup>192</sup> This emphasis may be why scenes of communal monastic discipline feature in two early twelfth-century saints' lives: William of Malmesbury's *VSW* and the anonymous *Life of Gundulf*. Both examples are found, however, in a very specific context; private discipline occurs before the death of the saint, as each seek repentance for the sins committed during their life. In the *VSW*, for example, Wulfstan is said to have 'made confession to the shortcomings to which men are heir, and also received discipline, for that is what monks call the strokes of the rod inflicted harshly on the bared back.'<sup>193</sup> In the *VRB*, examples of corporal discipline appear similarly in the part of the narrative that Robert prepared for his death. It is worth asking, therefore, if William was here applying a relatively new hagiographical topos in his depiction of Robert. Nevertheless, unlike the examples from the *Lives of Gundulf* and *Wulfstan*, William's description of monastic discipline is placed alongside Robert's own acts of self-flagellation.

Robert's death occurred during his attendance at the 1148 Council of Rheims.<sup>194</sup> He died on the Tuesday after Easter Sunday. William himself refers to the excellent timing of Robert's death: 'this diligent work of preparation took place, by a happy chance, in the six day division between the passion and the resurrection of the lord ...'<sup>195</sup> On the previous Ash Wednesday, Robert asked his host, Odo, the current abbot of Rheims, to

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<sup>192</sup> *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, ed. and trans. D.Knowles and C.N.L.Brooke (Oxford, 2002), p.101: 'He shall come into the chapter on days fixed by the abbot, led by the aforesaid warden, and undergo corporal punishment with humility and patience'. / '*In capitulum, statutis ab abbate diebus, praedicto custode eum ducente, ueniat, et corporale iudicium humiliter et patienter sustineat*'.

<sup>193</sup> *VSW*, p.141. '*Wlstanus humanorum excessuum confessione facta etiam disciplinam accepit (ita uocant monachi uirgarum flagra, quae tergo nudato cedentis infligit acrimonia)*'. See also *The Life of Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester*, p.88.

<sup>194</sup> *Councils and Synods*, pp.818-19.

<sup>195</sup> *VRB*, p.194: '*Hanc preparationis diligentiam intra passionem et resurrectionem domini senaria dierum distinctione optabili eventu digessit*'.

grant him extreme unction. Odo and the entire convent formed a procession and, entering Robert's room, found the saint naked upon the floor. Refusing to return to his bed, Robert confessed that he was a sinner, was unworthy to live, and had been false as a bishop.<sup>196</sup> Finally, he asked each of the brethren to discipline him with switches. However, Robert, we are told, was not pleased with their efforts, 'Wherefore he snatched the switches from the last of the brethren. "What is this that you do Brothers", he said, "What piety is this to spare the sinner, by which he will be spared much less, but be more greatly punished in the future". So saying, he began to flog himself, as was his custom, without measure or without mercy, until one of them, rushing up with a tenderness and unable to endure anymore, tore the scourge from Robert's hands'.<sup>197</sup>

Two days later, on Good Friday, William related that Robert sought to increase the discipline of the flesh, and therefore become like one partaking in Christ's passion.<sup>198</sup> Indeed, William reiterated how Robert's death could be portrayed as a spiritual re-enactment of the Passion of Christ.<sup>199</sup> Finally, on Holy Saturday, after searching his conscience further for any other sins he might have forgotten, Robert called his

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid., p.194-96. William refers to the scriptural reference "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.": James 5:14.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., p.196: '*Unde ab ultimo fratrum rapit ipse virgas et "quid est" inquit "frateres quod facilitis" "que est hec pietas parere peccatori, quo minus pareatur ei, sed gravius puniatur in futuro." Hec dicens cepit seipsum pro more suo flagellare, sine modo, sine misericordia, donec de suis unus accurrens impatienti pietati extorsit ei flagellum e manibus*'.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p.202: '*Totus positus in passione Christi*'.

<sup>199</sup> Although discussing a later period Eric Saak argues that "The Passion is portrayed as the source of Augustine's pastoral mission, which then was to be imitated by his followers. Just as the Augustinians propagated the image of Augustine as the paradigm for living the most perfect life of Augustine's religion, so did they propagate the exemplar of Christ's Passion as the source of identity, the norm of action, for following the Christian religion': *idem, High Way to Heaven*, pp.468-69.

friends to his side. When they arrived he berated them both for not chastising him during his lifetime, in particular he reminded them how he had kept various animals, including a courtly black dog with white paws, a tame stag, a ram with four horns, and various cranes and peacocks, and had thrown scraps to them underneath the table.<sup>200</sup> Robert again provided switches to his friends, but was unimpressed with their meagre efforts: 'And snatching the switches, he completed with his own hands that from others he could not have. Therefore, when with such constant remedies, he had inflicted pain not only on his enfeebled body, but [also] on his bones and marrow.'<sup>201</sup>

What are we to make of these above examples? On one level, William showed that Robert not only conformed to an accepted practice of the regular life, by receiving corporate discipline before death, but he also went further than what was expected by performing his own acts of self-flagellation. At the same time, this is also a prime example of how hagiographers could play with, or adapt, existing hagiographical topoi to suit their own needs and appeal to their audience.

#### (e) The Bishop and His Community: The *VRB* in Context

The thematic content of the *VRB* reflected to a large extent William's own institutional background, and the audience for which he wrote the *vita*. Throughout, William

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<sup>200</sup> *VRB*, pp.212-14: '*quod habebam in domo mea canem nigrum albipede curialem quidem, sed tamen canem; quod habebam cervum domesticum, arietem quadricornem grues et pavones et cetera vanitantium oblectamenta*'.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p.214: '*Et corripuens virgas propriis minibus supplevit quod alienis non poterat, cum igitur talibus medicamentis assiduatis non solum carni defecte sed et ossibus et medullis dolorem inflixisset*'.

reiterated the primacy of the regular life, but specifically the Augustinian way of living. Indeed, the *vita* can be viewed as a reform narrative; Robert was shown to ‘monasticise’ the surrounding environment. Thus, within the *vita* the symbols of worldliness are seen as stains upon a well-ordered household. For instance, Robert’s household retainers are described by William as well trained, ‘not rowdy or tainted with the loquacity common to the vulgar, but taught to minister with sobriety and decorum.’<sup>202</sup> In contrast, Robert ‘took care neither to see nor by any means to hear’ singers and jesters.<sup>203</sup>

Robert’s relationship with members of the religious orders is also emphasised throughout the text. William tells us that as a bishop, Robert ‘received hospitably the religious who came, harkened to their needs, and relieved compassionately their penury’.<sup>204</sup> In this way, Robert could be seen to provide not only spiritual, but also physical care and assistance for all those who followed the regular life. Robert’s responsibility towards those in religious orders was one component of a wider narrative, which emphasised Robert’s obligations to the people within his diocese. Alongside the religious, the *pauperes* were also the chief beneficiaries of Robert’s good works. The *vita* described how Robert maintained a certain number of the poor in each of his houses, providing them with a daily allowance, suitable clothes and shoes.<sup>205</sup> These anecdotes allowed William to demonstrate Robert’s reform

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., p.156: ‘*non tumultuantem aut populari loquacitate dissolutam, sed cum modestia et honestate ministrare institutam*’.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid. ‘*nec videre curabat, nec prorsus audire*’.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., p.154: ‘*Religiosorum adventum hospitaliter suscipiebat necessitates audiebat penuriam misericorditer relevabat*’.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., p.166.

credentials, yet also reminded the reader about his canonical background; charity work, alongside a rigorous ascetic life, were the central characteristics of regular canons.<sup>206</sup>

In this light, Robert was portrayed as a steward of the religious and the poor; a bishop who provided counsel and support, while offering comfort and charity. In contrast, both the secular canons of Hereford and the nobility were frequently mentioned in a negative context or sidelined all together. Of the former, William accused the canons of consistently persecuting Robert. William here specifically mentions the dean of Hereford, Ralph, as the ringleader.<sup>207</sup> Apparently, Robert had to travel to Rome, receiving a mandate from the Pope to strip the dean from his responsibilities.<sup>208</sup> It may be that the power struggles that habitually occurred between chapters and their bishops intensified during the civil war. However, Julia Barrow has argued that William quite deliberately provided a false narrative of the events.<sup>209</sup> It may be that William wished to stress the differences between Robert's relationship with his former Augustinian brethren and that of the secular canons at Hereford.

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<sup>206</sup> Miller, The Formation of the Medieval Church, pp.84-88. See also C.W.Bynum, 'The Spirituality of the Regular Canons in the Twelfth Century', Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the Middle Ages, (Berkeley, 1982), pp.22-58.

<sup>207</sup> *VRB*, p.182: 'For it came about that a certain Ralph, a stranger whom he had admitted and appointed Dean, was the first to kick against him'. / '*Unde factum est ut Radulphus quidam quem alienum asciverat et decanum constituerat, primus contra eum levaret calcaneum*'.

<sup>208</sup> J.Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche', in Hereford Cathedral: A History, ed. Aylmer and Tiller, pp.21-48, at p.31.

<sup>209</sup> EEA. 7: Hereford, p.xxxvii, n.69: 'William of Wycombe's view of Dean Ralph of Hereford seems to be blinded by prejudice'.

It should be remembered that as he was writing the *vita* shortly after his forced retirement, William had to be careful about how he recorded Robert's life:

Here I pass over not unknowingly many conflicts of this remarkable man: conflicts which he came through magnificently as he handled them vigorously. To narrate which, in my time at least would not be safe for me, neither is it necessary, to set them down in writing.<sup>210</sup>

Here William probably referred to Robert Bethune's conflict with Miles of Gloucester, which resulted in the latter's excommunication. Without going into too much detail, Miles had switched sides during the civil-war, and declaring for Empress Matilda, had, at his base of Gloucester (the site of Lanthony Secunda) set out to widen his territorial influence.<sup>211</sup> William eluded to these circumstances yet mentioned no names. We are told that a plague infested the entire land, with men pillaging and destroying churches everywhere. This plague entered Hereford, and the bishop was soon 'despoiled of his houses and possessions. He was deprived of his power and of access to his church.'<sup>212</sup> William is surreptitious in his account of the civil war, and there is no mention of Lanthony Secunda in this chapter. We can only speculate, but Miles probably had no

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<sup>210</sup> *VRB*, p.186: '*Transeo multa nec ignarus hoc loco magnifici viri certamina; quam strenue percurrit, que michi quidem diebus meis stilo prosequi nec satis tutum erat, ed neque necessarium*'.

<sup>211</sup> For these events see S.Marritt, 'Reeds Shaken by the Wind: Bishops in Local and Regional Politics in King Stephen's Reign', in *King Stephen's Reign (1135-1154)*, ed. P.Dalton and G.J.White (Woodbridge, 2008), pp.115-38.

<sup>212</sup> *VRB*, p.188: '*Episcopus eius domibus suis et possessionibus spoliaretur. Ab ecclesie sue potestate vel accessu secluderetur*'. These events are also described in the *Gesta Stephani*, ed. K.R.Potter and R.H.C.Davis (Oxford, 1976), p.143

intention of plundering a church of which he was the founder and patron. Nonetheless, William presented Robert as a defender and protector of the people and churches within his diocese. He sought to provide a view of the episcopate that sharply contrasted with the destruction caused by the nobility.

## VI. Conclusion

In the *VRB*, William Wycombe was able to demonstrate that Robert Bethune followed the canonical ideal, and was, throughout his life, a *bonus pastor*. William showed that during each stage of Robert's life, first his success as a canon, and then as prior, provided him with the right qualities needed for exercising the episcopal office. Furthermore, while the *vita* commemorated Robert's life, it also served a pedagogic function, encouraging its readers to follow the monastic and canonical ideal of the regular life. The central themes within the *VRB* illustrated William Wycombe's Augustinian world-view, and demonstrated the influence of a reform mentality, which is totally at odds with the suggestion that it is an old-fashioned *vita*. Llanthony Secunda, like many other monastic communities at this time, would have seen the benefit of having an episcopal patron saint that could supply the community with an aura of saintly prestige and a more coherent identity. Yet at the same time, the *VRB* should be viewed as part of a dialogue in an ongoing debate concerning the aims and ideals of Llanthony's regular canons and the place of secular patronage. To some extent, William sought to commemorate Robert by glorifying a much stricter understanding of the canonical life, yet he still demonstrated how Robert conformed to the Augustinian Rule. As a text, the *vita* could be seen as a call to reform as much as

a mirror of the community's own beliefs. William's portrayal of Robert's sanctity had to first conform to Augustinian understandings of spirituality if the text was to confirm and validate Augustinians in their fervour and commitment.

# Chapter 3: Gerald of Wales's *Vita Sancti Remigii*

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## I. Introduction

Gerald of Wales (c.1146–c.1223) composed the *Vita Sancti Remigii* (hereafter *VSR*) in the last decade of the twelfth century.<sup>1</sup> The *VSR* included the life and miracles of the eleventh-century bishop, Remigius, who had re-founded the see of Lincoln in 1072 and was its bishop until his death on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1092, prior to the planned dedication of Lincoln cathedral.<sup>2</sup> The text also comprised an account of Remigius's episcopal successors at Lincoln, and three long chapters on the merits of six contemporary bishops. Composed over a century after Remigius's death, the *VSR*

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<sup>1</sup> *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. J.S.Brewer, J.F.Dimock and G.F.Warner, 8 Vols. (London, 1861-1891), Vol.7, *Vita Sancti Remigii*, ed. J.F.Dimock (1877), pp. 1-80. The bibliography on Gerald is vast. The main works I have consulted are: F.M.Powicke, *The Christian Life in the Middle Ages and Other Essays* (Oxford, 1935), pp.107–29, J.C.Davies, 'Giraldus Cambrensis, 1146-1946', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 99 (1947), pp.85-108, and pp.256-80; D.Knowles, *Saints and Scholars* (Cambridge, 1966), pp.76-85; M.Richter, 'Gerald of Wales: A Reassessment on the 750th Anniversary of his Death', *Traditio*, 29 (1973), pp.379-90; B.F.Roberts, *Gerald of Wales* (Cardiff, 1982); Y.Wada, 'Gerald on Gerald: Self-Presentation by Giraldus Cambrensis', *ANS*, 20 (1998), pp.223-46; R.Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales: A Voice of the Middle Ages*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Tempus, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> 'Bishop Remigius, who had moved the see from Worcester to Lincoln with King William the Elder's permission, wanted to build and dedicate there a church worthy of a bishopric because he felt the day of his death approaching; but Thomas, archbishop of York, opposed him, saying that the church was in his own diocese. King William the Younger, in return for some money given him by Bishop Remigius, summoned almost all the English bishops to assemble on 9<sup>th</sup> May and to dedicate the church. Two days before the agreed date Bishop Remigius was, by the mysterious judgement of God, taken from this world, and for this reason the church's dedication was put off.' / '*Antistes etiam Remigius, qui, licentia Regis Willelmi senioris, episcopalem sedem de Dorkeceastre mutauerat ad Lindiocolinam, constructam in ea ecclesiam pontificali cathedre dignam dedicare uolebat, quia sibi diem mortis imminere sentiebat, sed Thomas Eboracensis arciepiscopus illi contradicendo resistebat, affirmans eam in sua parrochia esse constructam. At rex Wilelmus iunior, pro pecunia, quam ei Remigius dederat, fere totius Anglie episcopis mandauit, ut, in unum conuenientes, septenis idibus Maii, ecclesiam dedicarent, sed biduo ante diem statutum, occulto Dei iudicio, ipse episcopus Remigius migravit e seculo, et ecclesie per hoc remansit dedicatio*': John of Worcester, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester: The Annals from 1067 to 1140 with the Gloucester Interpolations and the Continuation to 1141*, ed. and trans. R.R.Darlington and P.McGurk (Oxford, 1998), p.63. The only modern study of Remigius is D.Bates, *Bishop Remigius of Lincoln, 1067-92* (Lincoln, 1992); see also H.E.J. Cowdrey, 'Remigius (d. 1092)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) - <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23362>, accessed 19 April 2007. And *EEA 1: Lincoln, 1067-1185*, ed. D.M.Smith (London, 1980), pp.1-4; *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066-1300*, ed. D.Greenway (London, 1968), Vol. 3, *Lincoln* (1977), pp.9-13.

differs markedly from the written accounts by Remigius's monastic contemporaries; although he was deemed to be an able bishop, there are no sources in his lifetime that allude to his sanctity.<sup>3</sup> This has led to certain assumptions about the reasons for the *VSR*'s composition. For instance, the text has been viewed by some historians as a consequence of the Lincoln cathedral's desire for a local saint.<sup>4</sup> Alternatively, Dorothy Owens has suggested the *VSR* was the 'first stage of a canonisation process which was later abandoned'.<sup>5</sup> Still others have linked the growth of his cult in the late twelfth century to an earthquake that destroyed the choir at Lincoln in 1185. Indeed, it has been suggested that the promotion of Remigius was connected to its subsequent rebuilding, presumably in the hope that this would bring in extra revenue for the cathedral.<sup>6</sup> Certainly, the last seven chapters of the *miracula* section of the *VSR* refer to how recent miracles had occurred during repairs to the roof of the church.<sup>7</sup> Only David Bates has bucked this trend. In what is first and foremost an analysis of Remigius's life and episcopal career, Bates gave a more sympathetic reading of the *vita*, and examined the ways in which Remigius was later remembered at Lincoln. He argued that to view the *vita* as simply a consequence of the chapter's need for a patron saint is not sufficiently three-dimensional:

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<sup>3</sup> Even the Lincoln archdeacon, Henry of Huntingdon, writing in the mid-twelfth century, merely stated that Remigius: 'founded our church, endowed the foundation with many possessions and enhanced the endowment with most virtuous dignitaries': *idem*, *Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People*, ed. and trans. D.Greenway (Oxford, 1996), pp.588-90: '*qui ecclesiam nostrum fundavit, fundatam possessionibus variis ditavit, ditatam personis honestissimis infloravit*'.

<sup>4</sup> See E.Venables and G.G.Perry, who argue that: 'The Church of Lincoln wanted a local saint, and for lack of a better one, they were ready to accept Remigius as their patron': *idem*, *Lincoln* (London, 1897), p.46.

<sup>5</sup> D.Owen, 'The Norman Cathedral at Lincoln', *ANS* (1984), p.189.

<sup>6</sup> 'It is by no means impossible that the canons of Lincoln had the intention of promoting the cult of Remigius in connection with their great rebuilding necessitated by the earthquake': P.Draper, 'Bishop Northwold and the Cult of St Etheldreda', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Ely Cathedral*, ed. N.Coldstream and P.Draper (London, 1979), pp.8-27, at p.20.

<sup>7</sup> *VSR*, p.30: '*Porro et hoc notandum, et quasi pro miraculo habendum occurrit quod usque ad consummabilem ecclesiae cumulum beneficiis et oblationibus confluentis undique populi tam sumptuosum opus plene perfectum fuerat, et non amplius, crebra ad tumbam viri sancti miracula coruscabant*'.

The most important historical conclusion which we can surely draw from Gerald's *vita* is that it shows how Remigius's reputation, which was already a good one in his own lifetime, developed in a way which did further credit to what were perceived as his outstanding merits.<sup>8</sup>

Bates provides an excellent analysis in his monologue; one that demonstrates the degree to which Remigius was admired and revered at Lincoln during the twelfth century. Nevertheless, to some extent Bates still seeks to justify Lincoln's burgeoning interest in Remigius in the later twelfth century. However, we do not need to be persuaded by the sincerity of the Lincoln church; neither do we need to be quite so sceptical.

This chapter will seek to extend Bates's analysis of Gerald's text. It will be suggested that the *VSR* provides a useful insight into how the Lincoln church viewed, and to a certain extent attempted to construct, a version of its past. In this historical account, Remigius was a central figure who was situated within a wider narrative of change and continuity. Indeed, the *VSR* presents us with an idealised version of Remigius, as is demanded by the genre. The extent to which this version contrasted with the "historical" Remigius will be investigated in due course. It will be argued that Gerald was careful to edit or amend certain aspects of the saint's history and character in order to present a portrait that would have been

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<sup>8</sup> Bates, *Bishop Remigius*, p.35.

appreciated by his audience. In this way, the *VSR* raises similar methodological issues to those noted in previous chapters. In particular, it demonstrates that in order to understand a particular author's depiction of episcopal behaviour, we need to ask why he would have shaped the narrative in such a way, or why particular actions were remembered. That said, the focus here is not upon Remigius *per se*, but instead on the composition, content and structure of the *VSR*. The chapter will also examine the evidence for whom the *VSR* was composed. The assumption has often been that the *VSR* was written for the secular canons of Lincoln cathedral.<sup>9</sup> This chapter will explore the implications of this view, and suggest that the *VSR* addressed the concerns of the chapter.

## II. The Date and Structure of the Text

### (a) Date

Between 1196-1199, Gerald was resident at Lincoln and studied at the city's theological school, then run by William de Montibus, a specialist in pastoral theology and the then chancellor of Lincoln cathedral.<sup>10</sup> It is likely that Gerald wrote the *VSR* during his stay here, a period which he described in his *De rebus a se gestis*.<sup>11</sup> Evidence from the *VSR* also suggests that it was written in the lifetime of Hugh of Avalon (c. 1140–c.1200), during the period in which he occupied the bishopric of Lincoln.<sup>12</sup> Hugh's life and deeds are related in the *VSR*, both in the

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<sup>9</sup> 'He wrote probably to please, or at the direct request of, the cathedral chapter': Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p.310.

<sup>10</sup> On William de Montibus, see H.MacKinnon, 'William de Montibus, a Medieval Teacher,' in *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Bertie Wilkinson*, ed. T.A.Sandquist and M.R.Powicke (Toronto 1969), pp.32-45; and, more recently, J.Goering, *William de Montibus (c.1140–1213): The Schools and the Literature of Pastoral Care* (Toronto, 1992).

<sup>11</sup> *GCO*, Vol. 1, *De rebus a se gestis*, ed. J.S.Brewer (1861), pp.1-122.

<sup>12</sup> A bibliography of works written on Hugh will be provided in Chapter 4.

section on Remigius's successors, and in the last part praising the behaviour of six contemporary bishops. In the former, Gerald extolled Hugh's time in office:

Among the bishops of Lincoln up to his own time, he is now  
rightly regarded as first and foremost after blessed Remigius,  
if his end should agree with his beginning ... may he bring to  
a happy conclusion what he has begun so admirably.<sup>13</sup>

Gerald's words clearly indicate that this passage was written during Hugh's lifetime. Further evidence in the *VSR* indicates that this work predated Hugh's death, in particular, when Gerald points out that Hugh might die a confessor, rather than a martyr: 'If the bishop of Lincoln *should not* in fact obtain the purple and rose-coloured crown [of martyrdom – like Becket]'.<sup>14</sup>

Hugh died on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1200. By this point Gerald had left Lincoln. The bishop of St David's, Peter De Leia, died on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1198, and Gerald was one of four candidates nominated to the Welsh see. In 1199 Gerald travelled to Rome to argue his case, in the hope of becoming Peter's successor.<sup>15</sup> Gerald could certainly have finished the *vita* while at Rome, or in transit, during the months preceding

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<sup>13</sup> *VSR*, p.42: '*Inter Lincolnienses antistites usque ad sua jam tempora post beatum Remigium merito primus et praecipuus, si principio finis assenserit... quae tam laudabiliter inchoavit felici fine concludat*'. At the end of the paragraph Gerald continues in the same vein: '*sed quanto fini affinior, tanto ad finem Christum amplioribus virtutem passibus*'.

<sup>14</sup> *VSR*, p.78.

<sup>15</sup> These events are described in *De rebus*, pp.94-96.

Hugh's death. However, it is more likely that he completed the *vita* before he had left.

In contrast, the earliest possible date at which Gerald could have begun the *vita* is 1197. Gerald records how Hugh of Lincoln won a successful suit against Richard I, over the right of the bishops of Lincoln to appoint the abbot of Eynsham Abbey; this had been the accepted practice since Remigius's successor, Robert Bloet.<sup>16</sup> We know that Abbot Geoffrey died in 1196; Gervase of Canterbury states that Hugh blessed his successor Robert of Dover at Lincoln on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1197.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, unless this was a later revision, it appears likely that Gerald began the *VSR* sometime after this date.<sup>18</sup>

#### (b) Manuscript

The text of the *VSR*, as it was first written, no longer exists. The only known surviving version of the *vita* is found in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 425.<sup>19</sup> In this manuscript, the *VSR* was placed before the *Vita Sancti Hugonis* (hereafter *VSH*), a life of Hugh of Avalon, which was also composed by Gerald of

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<sup>16</sup> *VSR*, p.40: 'Item monasterium de Egnesham olim perditum ire regia potestate paratum, viriliter retinuit; baculique pastoralis donationem sumptuosis laboribus, sed efficacibus et fructuosis, ad ecclesiam Lincolnensem revocavit'. This is discussed in greater detail in Adam of Eynsham, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis: The Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. and trans. D.L.Douie and D.H.Farmer, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1985), Vol.2, pp.39-42 (hereafter *MVSH*).

<sup>17</sup> Gervase of Canterbury, *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1880), Vol.1, pp.543-44; *The Heads of Religious Houses*, ed. Knowles, Brooke and London, p.49.

<sup>18</sup> *VSR*, pp.xi-xii.

<sup>19</sup> The layout and structure of the text is provided in M.R.James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College Cambridge*, 2 Vols. (Cambridge, 1911) Part 5, Vol.2, Part 2, pp.330-32; see also T.D.Hardy, *Descriptive Catalogue of Materials Relating to the History of Great Britain* (London, 1865), p.65.

Wales.<sup>20</sup> Composition of the *VSH* has been dated to c.1209-1214; both the reasons for this date, and the manuscript itself, will be examined in more detail in Chapter 4.

### (c) Editions

The *VSR* has been edited twice. In 1691, as part of the second volume of the monumental *Anglia Sacra*, Henry Wharton edited the *VSR* from the Corpus manuscript. For this edition, Wharton divided the *VSR* into two works, the *De Vitis Episcoporum Lincolnensium* and the *De Copula Tergemina*. Furthermore, he omitted the miracle section altogether.<sup>21</sup> In the nineteenth century, also using the recension of the *VSR* found in CCCC MS 425, James Dimock edited the life, along with the *VSH*, as part of the Rolls Series editions of Gerald's work; indeed, between 1867-1877, he edited four volumes of Gerald's *opera*.<sup>22</sup>

Dimock was the first historian to discuss properly the composition of the *VSR* and its relation to CCCC MS 425. Importantly, he suggested that there were at least two 'editions', or what might be more accurately termed 'versions', of the text; the first written in the last years of the twelfth century, the second as part of the Corpus

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<sup>20</sup> *VSR*, pp.ix-x.

<sup>21</sup> *Anglia Sacra*, Vol.2, pp.408-34, at p.408 Wharton describes this division: '*Duae proxime sequentes Giraldi historiae ex uno eodemque decerptae sunt Opere, quod ipse Legendam S.Remigii inscripsit. Idem tamen alibi pluries historiam suam De Vitis Episcoporum Lincolnensium, et tractatum De Copula tergemina, seu sex episcopis sui temporis, laudavit*'.

<sup>22</sup> A.F.Pollard, 'Dimock, James Francis (1810-1876)', rev. M.C.Curthoys, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7674>, accessed 12 June 2008]. For the Rolls Series, see D.Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises* (Edinburgh, 1963), pp.101-34. Dimock criticised Wharton's edition strongly: 'The life of Remigius in the *Anglia Sacra*, I must just repeat, is very badly edited; and so very badly, that I can scarcely imagine it possible that Wharton himself can have had anything to do with it, further than giving his name': *VSR*, p.xlvii. The text from Wharton is also found in *Anglia sacra*, Vol.2, p.764 (although some parts of the *Proemium* and *Prefatio* are omitted).

manuscript.<sup>23</sup> Dimock's terminology here is problematic, not least because since the nineteenth century we have learned much more about Gerald's methodology. As A.B.Scott states, Gerald 'could never leave any of his works alone, once he had written them, but continued to tinker with the text, adding, altering and even cutting passages from time to time'.<sup>24</sup> In this respect, to talk of 'editions' is unhelpful as Gerald might have implemented more minor changes to the *VSR* over the course of a number of years, rather than substantially editing it in the modern sense of the word.

As Scott also stated, the degree and quantity of corrections differed for each of Gerald's works. The *VSR* appears to have had few amendments made to it. Of course, this conclusion is to some extent speculative, not least because we do not have the original recension, or *Ur-text*.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, Gerald did not include any allusions to events or people after Hugh's time in office in the *VSR*, nor did he change the tense of his verbs to indicate that Hugh was now dead. There are a few minor marginal additions to the MS, and in one instance a scribe inserted a leaf which described Thomas Becket's consecration; Dimock believed Gerald himself inserted this page, because the same story was also found in his *De iure et statu Menevensis Ecclesiae*.<sup>26</sup> This would again agree with Gerald's likely method of 'dictat[ing] his revisions to a scribe who would enter them into a working copy'.<sup>27</sup> Consequently, a possible scenario may be that a scribe either copied from Gerald's

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<sup>23</sup> *VSR*, p.ix-xiii.

<sup>24</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland*, ed. and trans. A.B.Scott and F.X.Martin (Dublin, 1978), p.xl.

<sup>25</sup> *VSR*, p.xiv: 'It is impossible to say what were the alterations or additions ... [however] the large bulk ... of this second edition of the treatise [meaning CCCC MS 425], it seems to me pretty clear, was but a simple transcript of the first edition'.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xv. See also *GCO*, Vol.3, *De iure et statu Menevensis Ecclesiae*, ed. J.S.Brewer (London, 1863), pp.101-373.

<sup>27</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, p.lxi.

own autograph of the life, or from another transcript version, and that after viewing this version Gerald provided the scribe with additional amendments.

There is certainly evidence that an earlier version of the *VSR* was in circulation. This is found in a cathedral inventory drawn up by Master Hamo, who was chancellor of the Lincoln cathedral from the mid-1140s.<sup>28</sup> The list was copied into Lincoln's Great Bible in 1160 on the initial flyleaf.<sup>29</sup> Later works that were bequeathed or donated to the library were subsequently added. In the list of books there is a record of Gerald's own gifts to the cathedral. Alongside his *Topographia Hibernica* and *Gemma Sacerdotalis* (more commonly called the *Gemma Ecclesiastica* – hereafter *GE*), Gerald presented the library with a *Vitam (sic) sancti Remigii*.<sup>30</sup> It is possible that this donation may have been discussed in a letter by Gerald and later appended to his *Speculum Duorum* (hereafter *SD*).<sup>31</sup> In this letter, Gerald responded to the criticisms that William de Montibus had made about his Irish works. Unfortunately we do not have William's letter, but, from what Gerald states, it appears that William had found fault with passages detailing the vices of the Irish, particularly tales concerning their involvement with bestiality.<sup>32</sup> Gerald

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<sup>28</sup> On Hamo, see *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, Vol.3, p.16; and Thomson, *Catalogue*, pp.xii-xiv. The inventory is printed in R.M.Wooley, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library* (Oxford, 1927), pp.v-ix; see also *VSR*, Appendix C, pp.165-71; and H.Bradshaw, *Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral*, ed. C.Wordsworth, 2 parts in 3 Vols. (Cambridge, 1892-7), Vol.2, pp.ccxxv-ccxlii.

<sup>29</sup> A facsimile of this list is reproduced in Thomson, *Catalogue*, plate 3.

<sup>30</sup> Thomson states there is no further trace of these donations at Lincoln: Thomson, *Catalogue*, p.xv, n.24. Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica; Expugnatio Hibernica*, ed. J.F.Dimock (London, 1867); *GCO*, Vol.2, *Gemma Ecclesiastica*, ed. J.S.Brewer (London, 1862), pp.1-364. There are modern translations of these two works: Giraldus Cambrensis, *Gemma Ecclesiastica*, trans. J.Hagen (Leiden, 1979) and *Topographia Hibernica: The History and Topography of Ireland*, trans. J.J.O'Meara (Harmondsworth, 1982).

<sup>31</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Speculum Duorum*, ed. Y.Lefèvre and R.B.C.Huygens, trans. B.Dawson (Cardiff, 1974), pp.168-75. The letter was edited seven years earlier by R.B.C.Huygens, 'Une lettre de Giraud le Cambrein à propos de ses ouvrages historiques', *Latomus*, 26 (1967), pp.90-100.

<sup>32</sup> *SD*, pp.168-69: 'Our Amazement could not have been greater that a man, whom public opinion proclaims to be good and kind, should now, so we hear, dare to condemn our books on Ireland (namely The Topography and The Prophetic History of the Conquest) on account of the subject matter – books which we gave in one volume to the church of Lincoln, and which he used to praise

defended the work, and suggested that even if William did not like his historical compositions, such as the *Topographica Hibernica*, he might instead favour the other works he had donated to the Lincoln cathedral, notably the *GE* and the *VSR*.<sup>33</sup> It is now impossible to assign an exact date to Gerald's letter. R.B.C.Huygens had at first cautiously dated the letter to 1210, yet in Lefèvre and Huygens' later edition of the *SD* they suggested that it could have been composed at anytime before William de Montibus's death in 1213.<sup>34</sup>

It is probable that the donations discussed in the letter were those referred to in the library inventory.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, it could be suggested that Gerald's donations to the cathedral library coincided with his stay at Lincoln between 1196-1199. In Gerald's letter, Dawson translated *annis plurimis* to mean 'some years ago', yet, as the adjective *plurimus* is a superlative, it would make more sense to translate it as 'many years ago'. Such a donation may have been made to show gratitude to the secular canons, who had allowed Gerald to use the cathedral library during his studies. However, although it was a gift, this does not rule out the possibility that Gerald had been asked to write the *VSR*. Indeed, if the *VSR* had been originally composed with the secular canons at Lincoln in mind, it would make sense for

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highly – just because somewhere in them the vice of these people (the vice of coupling with beasts and of beasts' coming to women) is dealt with strict historical accuracy'. / *'Satis admirari non potuimus quod vir, quem bonum et benignum fama predicat, libros nostros Hybernicos, Topographiam scilicet et Vaticinalem Expugnationis Historiam, olim ecclesie Lincolnensi in uno volumine datos a nobis, quos antea plurimum commendare consuevit, nunc, [sicut] accepimus, ratione materie dampnare presumit, quoniam alicubi inter cetera de vitio gentis illius agitur cum bestiis coeundi, de bestiis quoque ad mulieres accedentibus, historica veritate simul et severitate'*.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp.172-73: 'Look more kindly upon our *Gemma Ecclesiastica* which we worked upon in our more mature years and which we gave some years ago to Lincoln cathedral, together with the *Life of St Remigius*'. / *'Gemma nostram Ecclesiasticam maturioribus annis elaboratam et ecclesie Lincolnensi cum Vita quoque sancti Remigii... transcursis iam annis plurimis datam... oculo benigniore respiciatis'*.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p.xli.

<sup>35</sup> Lefèvre and Huygens do not make the connection between the donations discussed in this letter and the evidence of Gerald's donation in the cathedral inventory.

Gerald to have presented the text of the *vita* to the chapter library when he left the city.

Other evidence confirms the existence of an earlier version of the *VSR* before 1200. It is found in the *Symbolum Electorum*, which was a compilation of Gerald's favourite works.<sup>36</sup> Gerald himself tells us that he had decided to bring together these texts after requests from friends.<sup>37</sup> Gerald divided the *Symbolum Electorum* into four sections: the first and second parts contained extracts from his Irish works; the third his letters and poems; and, finally, the fourth contained his collected prefaces. In the fourth part, Gerald included a preface to the *VSR*, entitled *Praefatio in Vitam sancti Remigii Lincolniensis Episcopi*.<sup>38</sup> Unlike the preface found in CCCC MS 425, this has no dedication and is also much shorter, being about a paragraph in length.<sup>39</sup> Commenting on the chronology of Gerald's works, Bartlett has dated the MS to c.1199. Justifying this date, he argued that all the works within the *Symbolum Electorum* could be dated to before 1200.<sup>40</sup> Since we have no reason to question Bartlett's assessment, this would again suggest that there existed an early version of Gerald's *VSR* c.1199.

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<sup>36</sup> *GCO*, Vol.1, *Symbolum Electorum*, ed. J.S.Brewer (London, 1861), pp.197-395.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.199: '*Requisitus a sociis et familiaribus, litterarum studiis et lectionis datis cum magna instantia multotiens fui, quatinus epistolas meas ad varias personas variis ex causis olim destinatas, revoluitis scedulis in unum congererem*'.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.395; in the edition of the *Symbolum Electorum*, only the title is printed. Richard Sharpe has argued that these prefaces have been rarely used by Gerald's editors: *idem*, 'Which Text is Rhygyfarch's Life of St David?', in *St David. Cult, Church, and Nation* ed. J.W.Evans and J.M.Wooding, (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 90-105, at p.97, n.30.

<sup>39</sup> The CCCC 425 preface is printed in *VSR*, pp.3-7; the older preface is *VSR*, p.8.

<sup>40</sup> Bartlett does raise one problem with his theory: 'The only doubt which might be raised springs from the inclusion in the *Symbolum Electorum* of all four prefaces for the *De Principis Instructione*. However, although the text of the *De Principis* as we now have it dates from c.1217, Gerald worked on it for many years and there is no compelling objection to the existence of a complete, short draft of all three books c.1199': *idem*, *Gerald of Wales*, p.218.

The evidence suggests that there were at least two, but probably three versions, of the *VSR*; two earlier versions, and the remaining text found in CCCC MS 425. The donated version given by Gerald to Lincoln's cathedral library could have been a transcript of Gerald's initial autograph, or it may have been the autograph itself; however, as Gerald was quite protective of his works, the former seems more likely. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise the fact that there was an earlier version of the *VSR*, written a decade before the surviving text in CCCC MS 425. It also seems clear that the *VSR* was composed independently of, and not in conjunction with, the *VSH*. All too often the two lives are viewed as one work; A.G.Rigg, for example, noted that 'the *Vita S Remigii* and the *Vita S Hugonis* form a single work in honour of bishops of Lincoln'.<sup>41</sup> However, such an assumption ignores the differing agendas behind each work and even the motives that lay behind the creation of CCCC MS 425.

### III. The Sources Used by Gerald to Represent Lincoln's Past

#### (a) Earlier Scholarship

In his edition of the *VSR*, Dimock was scathing of Gerald's work.<sup>42</sup> In particular, Dimock focussed his censure upon the historical value of the *VSR* and Gerald's methodology. As he put it, 'Giraldus's account of his [Remigius's] sanctity, whether his own invention, or whether resting upon what he found believed or recorded at Lincoln in 1198, is simply a worthless fabrication'.<sup>43</sup> Dimock's comments reflect the empirical values of most nineteenth-century editors, who assessed texts upon

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<sup>41</sup> A.G.Rigg, *A History of Anglo-Latin Literature, 1066-1422* (Cambridge, 1992), p.95.

<sup>42</sup> *VSR*, pp.xv-xlii.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxii.

their capacity to reflect the 'truth'. The *VSR* was therefore judged by the historical accuracy of the information it provided about Remigius, including the claims Gerald made for Remigius's sanctity.<sup>44</sup> Such an interpretation has retained its force; for instance, more than a century after Dimock's criticisms, Antonia Gransden followed this same line, arguing that Gerald:

Concocted a life representing Remigius (probably unjustifiably) in a hagiographical light. This part of the work has no value to the historian.<sup>45</sup>

Dimock's and Gransden's interpretations have serious implications for our understanding of the purpose behind the *vita's* composition. The *VSR* has been viewed as a fictional account of Remigius's life that was written at the urging of Lincoln's cathedral chapter in order to promote a new saint and more firmly to establish Lincoln's place on the contemporary pilgrimage map. Since it provided almost no useful factual information about the saint, the text has hitherto been disregarded as a source for the history of Lincoln's cathedral community. The point, however, is not to rehabilitate Remigius, but to look at the processes involved in Gerald's composition of the *VSR*.

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xvii: 'the proposed dedication of the church and the death of Remigius, are, perhaps, the only portions of Giraldus's account of him that have any real historical value'.

<sup>45</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p.310. Similar sentiments are expressed by David Smith: 'It is a piece of stylised hagiography of little historical value': *idem*, 'Hugh's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', in *St Hugh of Lincoln : Lectures Delivered at Oxford and Lincoln to Celebrate the Eighth Centenary of St Hugh's Consecration as Bishop of Lincoln*, ed. H.Mary-Harting (Oxford, 1987), pp.19-47, at p.24.

## (b) Gerald's Sources

In early MSS, both *vita* and *legenda* are terms used to describe the *VSR*. For example, the *Vita* is called the *Vita S. Remigii* in the short preface to the pre-1200 *VSR*, but in the CCC MS 425 version, the title *Legenda beati Remigii* is placed before a list of *capitula*.<sup>46</sup> It may be the case that Gerald's view of the text changed in between writing the first and the latter recension. Some evidence comes from Gerald's own writings: in the *Catalogus brevior librorum suorum* (c.1217) and *De libris a se scriptis* (after 1220), both of which were written after CCC MS 425, Gerald calls the *Life* the *Vita S. Remigii Lincolniensis episcopi primi*.<sup>47</sup> In contrast, in the *De iure*, he calls the *VSR* and *VSH* collectively by the title *Legenda S. Remigii Lincolniensis episcopi primi*.<sup>48</sup> It is likely, therefore, that Gerald used *vita* and *legenda* interchangeably. As Delehaye has stated, a *legenda* did not have the later negative connotations to mean a false narrative or story. Initially, a *legenda* meant any life of a saint that was read out or recited in a liturgical context.<sup>49</sup> The Paris theologian, John Belet, writing sometime around 1150-1160, in his *Summa de Ecclesiasticis officiis*, suggested that a *legenda* ought to refer to the life of a confessor, rather than a martyr.<sup>50</sup> It is entirely plausible that as Remigius and Hugh were both confessors, Gerald chose on occasion to describe his lives as *legendae*. Although, as Delehaye states, medieval writers rarely, like Belet, followed such

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<sup>46</sup> *VSR*, p.x.

<sup>47</sup> The following are found in *GCO*, Vol.1, ed. J.S.Brewer (London, 1861): *Catalogus brevior librorum suorum*, pp.421-23, at p.421; and *De libris a se scriptis*, pp.410-15, at p.415. For the suggested dates of composition, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, pp.179-180.

<sup>48</sup> *De iure*, p.360.

<sup>49</sup> Delehaye, *Legends of the Saints*, pp.10-11.

<sup>50</sup> John Belet, *Summa de ecclesiasticis officiis*, Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis, 41 (Turnhout, 1976), p.115.

definitions stringently, it should be remembered that Gerald studied in Paris (c.1165-1172 and 1176-1179) around the same time as Beleth and may certainly have been aware of his teachings on this matter.<sup>51</sup>

Dimock suggested that the content of the *VSR* depended on the mere fancy of Gerald and/or his compatriots at Lincoln. However, this accusation is not a fair assessment of the method Gerald used to compose the *vita*. Gerald most likely took a pragmatic approach to his text, working with the historical records – both textual and oral – that were available to him. He may well have drawn upon the early records of the Lincoln church to help compile the *VSR*. One source he might have used was a register of miracles at Lincoln, copied down by custodians of Remigius’s tomb.<sup>52</sup> Certainly, nine of the eleven miracles which Gerald records are said to have taken place *ad tumbam*. The library list in the Great Bible, dated to 1160, demonstrated that a *liber foundationis*, along with a collection of early charters, existed in the chapter library.<sup>53</sup> We can only speculate about what material the foundation book might have included; it may not have gone into great detail about Remigius’s character or background.

Gerald might also have used an old martyrology, which is now lost.<sup>54</sup> We know about this martyrology from records of a dispute that took place in 1312 between the canons of Lincoln and the cathedral dean. In the Register that documented the

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<sup>51</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p.201, n.12.

<sup>52</sup> Dimock is not convinced: ‘Such an authority would not give an atom of historical value to what Giraldus tells us on any one of these points. All that he says on these points, all but wholly if not quite, we can only look upon as simple fiction’: *VSR*, p.xxiii.

<sup>53</sup> The library list is printed in *VSR*, pp.165-71. It is also discussed in Owen, ‘The Norman Cathedral’, p.189.

<sup>54</sup> Bradshaw, *Statutes*, pp.87-89.

disagreement, the canons used a set of *Consuetudines* from 1214; furthermore, the author noted how the earlier canons had, prior to 1214, recorded their *customs* at the end of an *antiquum Martilogium*. A number of works listed in the twelfth-century library inventory may have been this very work. First, Jordanus the Treasurer had a *Regula Canonorum, cum Martrilogio qui cotidie legitur in capitulo*; secondly, Hamo the Chancellor had a work entitled *Martilogium novum continens Regulam sancti Augustini cum expositione eiusdem Regulae cum aliis pluribus scriptis*; finally, Hugh of Lincoln donated a *Martilogium, cum textu quatuor Evangeliorum, quod cantor habet*.<sup>55</sup> Martyrologies were often liturgical in nature, and would be read out as part of the office when the chapter assembled after Prime; their content varied, however, and they often included a liturgical calendar in which saints' feasts were celebrated, but they could also include historical matter, detailing what a saint had accomplished or what their connection with an institution was.<sup>56</sup> We can, therefore, only speculate about the kind of information these texts contained about the early history of Lincoln. Nevertheless, it seems likely that there would have been something pertaining to Remigius, and, at the very least, that Gerald would have had access to these Martyrologies during his stay at Lincoln.

That Gerald used these sources is further corroborated by a history of the early Lincoln bishops, written in 1330, by a canon named John of Scalby. Significantly, the account of Lincoln's early bishops closely follows Gerald's *VSR*. Srawley, who translated the text, believed that 'both writers had access to earlier sources as well

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<sup>55</sup> *VSR*, pp.165-71.

<sup>56</sup> E.Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books From the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century* (Collegeville, MN, 1998), pp.165-69.

as to local tradition'.<sup>57</sup> It may be, however, that Schalby based his account solely on Gerald's life alone.

Gransden has suggested that, in part, the *VSR* was indebted to the work of another Lincoln writer, Henry of Huntingdon (c.1088–c.1157).<sup>58</sup> Henry, an archdeacon of Lincoln and also a canon of the cathedral, had written the *Historia Anglorum* at the request of bishop Alexander 'the Magnificent' (d.1148). The work, which was itself highly indebted to Bede, presented a history of the English people from the Roman times up to the Anglo-Norman period. Diana Greenway, its recent editor, has demonstrated how popular the text was; over forty manuscripts survive, the majority of which are found in England.<sup>59</sup>

Book VIII of the *Historia* consisted of a letter of sorts called the *De Contemptu Mundi*. This part of the history, which was written between 1135-1138, contained accounts of contemporary bishops, nobles and kings, yet Henry also provided a short list of the Lincoln cathedral clergy from its foundation to 1146. The work itself, however, was held together by a unifying theme that emphasised material worthlessness and the fickle nature of secular power. In a review of Robert Bartlett's *Gerald of Wales*, Gransden argued that the 'lives of the Bishops of Lincoln was certainly indebted to this [*De Contemptu Mundi*] model'.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> The Book of John de Schalby, Canon of Lincoln, 1299–1333, Concerning the Bishops of Lincoln and their Acts, trans. J.H.Srawley (Lincoln, 1949), p.3.

<sup>58</sup> Gransden, Historical Writing, p.310; Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, pp. cxix-cxliv;

<sup>59</sup> D.Greenway, 'Henry of Huntingdon and the Manuscripts of his *Historia Anglorum*', *ANS*, 9 (1986), pp.103-26.

<sup>60</sup> A.Grandsden, 'Review of Gerald of Wales 1146-1223 by Robert Bartlett', English Historical Review, 100 (1985), pp.159-61, at p.161.

First, we must try to unpick Gransden's comment; what did she mean by 'lives of the Bishops of Lincoln'? Indeed, it is unclear whether she meant both the lives of Remigius *and* of Hugh, or instead that she was here referring to the third part of the *VSR*, which gave an account of the Lincoln bishops after Remigius, up to and including Hugh. The context of her remark suggests the latter, yet there is a problem with this proposal. Henry's *De Contemptu Mundi* was part of a genre in which writers attacked the secular life and highlighted the ephemeral nature of the material world. However, the section on the bishops of Lincoln focuses to a large extent upon the material assets of the Lincoln see. Gerald does not suggest that any of these donations are worthless, far from it; thus this entire section of the *VSR* appears to be at odds with the themes of the *De Contemptu Mundi*. It is true that Gerald may have drawn upon Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia*, but so far the case that it acted as a model for the *VSR* has not been made convincingly.<sup>61</sup>

Whatever sources might have been employed in the composition of the *VSR*, Dimock felt able to state that Gerald 'Had much to manufacture [i.e. Remigius's sanctity] out of very meagre or unworthy materials'.<sup>62</sup> Of course, this is a reason in itself why the cathedral chapter may have felt a *vita* necessary. A *vita* was one way of updating the history of the see, while at the same time bringing it into line with the religious changes initiated by the eleventh- and twelfth-century reform movements. It is within this context that we should see Gerald's account of Remigius; not as an inaccurate story, but as a way of portraying Remigius in a way which was acceptable to a contemporary audience. The Lincoln chapter, like many

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<sup>61</sup> In Gransden's defence, she was not examining the *VSR* in depth, but was suggesting possible links between the two writers.

<sup>62</sup> *VSR*, p.xix.

other contemporary cathedral chapters in the last half of the twelfth century, witnessed a period of transition and institutional development; we might speculate as to whether the secular canons reflected upon or reevaluated their sense of identity. Was the *VSR* an attempt to reconnect with their origins? The chapter can be viewed as an independent body – the written record was one tool by which this institution increasingly sought to define its authority and powers in relation to its bishop. This was not always a confrontational process, as the limitations imposed upon a bishop were not a serious threat to his authority.<sup>63</sup> To some extent, the chapter should also be seen as a corporate body whose members were tied together with shared norms and values. Thus, a further question that will be asked here is whether we can see the *VSR* as an expression of community identity.

#### IV. Gerald's Hagiography

Gerald wrote five saints' lives during his lifetime. In addition to the *VSR* and *VSH*, he also composed the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti*, *Vita Sancti Davidis* and a now lost *Vita Sancti Karadoci*.<sup>64</sup> Although not generally included in his hagiographical canon, Gerald also composed the *Vita Galfridi Archiepiscopi Eboracensis*, which has been viewed as a more secular 'biography' of Henry II's illegitimate son, Geoffrey.<sup>65</sup> Apart from the *VSH*, all these works have been dated to, or have been suggested as being composed during, the last decade of the twelfth century. Michael Richter, for

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<sup>63</sup> Indeed, throughout this period, bishops had a significant influence on the composition of the cathedral chapter: K.Edwards, The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages: A Constitutional Study with Special Reference to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Manchester and New York, 1967), p.119-23.

<sup>64</sup> Both works are found in *GCO*, Vol.3, ed. J.S.Brewer (London, 1863): *Vita Sancti Ethelberti*, pp.407-430; *Vita Sancti Davidis*, pp.377-404.

<sup>65</sup> *GCO*, Vol.4, *Vita Galfridi Archiepiscopi Eboracensis*, ed. J.S.Brewer (London, 1873), pp. 357-431.

instance, suggests that Gerald wrote the *Vita Sancti Davidis* in the 1190s after he had retired from Henry II's court.<sup>66</sup>

Despite his output, John Hagen stated that Gerald was 'least interested in the minor group [of works] dealing with the lives of saints'.<sup>67</sup> However, this view should be contrasted with Gerald's own opinion. In a letter entitled *De libris a se scriptis*, addressed to the secular canons of Hereford Cathedral, Gerald defended his saints' lives. Gerald drew a distinction between his more mature works, and his smaller compositions. Although Gerald included his saints' lives in the latter category, he clearly valued the didactic nature of his hagiographical works: 'although minor, [they are] not unprofitable'.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, as he went on to tell the canons, such smaller works (*opuscula minora*) should not be given less consideration or thought unworthy of praise.<sup>69</sup> This letter must have been written in Gerald's retirement, as he mentions the *Speculum Ecclesiae*, which was composed after 1220.<sup>70</sup> Gerald made these comments almost two decades after he had written the majority of his saints' lives; he evidently still felt they were important compositions, and notable in their own right.

Richter, assessing Gerald's life and works, summed up the main agenda behind the author's hagiographical canon in a single sentence by suggesting that they were

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<sup>66</sup> M.Richter, 'The Life of St. David by Giraldus Cambrensis', *Welsh History Review*, 4 (1969), pp.381-86.

<sup>67</sup> *GE*, p.xi.

<sup>68</sup> *GCO*, Vol.1, pp.415-16: '*minora quaedam nec inutilia*'.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Verum ne parvipendantur haec opuscula minora, si interdum emergant inter majora, sciendum quia signa sunt saltem et argumenta certissima, quod mens, quae non minora passim loco et tempore recusat onera, sicut nec majora, merito censeri debet laude non indigne*'.

<sup>70</sup> R.W.Hunt, 'The Preface to the '*Speculum ecclesiae*' of Giraldus Cambrensis', *Viator*, 8 (1977), pp.189-213; Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p.179.

written 'at the request of friends, or, more likely, to make friends'.<sup>71</sup> While there may be an element of truth in Richter's comment – Gerald certainly seems to have been continually seeking patronage for his works – this understanding of Gerald's hagiography is nonetheless reductive. In the *De libris a se scriptis*, Gerald stated that he had written all his saints' lives at the request of great men of authority.<sup>72</sup> In the case of the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti* and *Vita Sancti Davidis*, we can be more specific. These lives were not 'original' works; the former was a revision of a life by Osbert of Clare (d. c.1158), while the latter was based to some extent on the earlier life written by the Welsh canon of St David's, Rhygyfarch (d.1099). However, in both instances, Gerald tells us that the secular chapters of St David and Hereford had requested his assistance for their cathedral institutions in writing these lives.<sup>73</sup> For example, Gerald states at the beginning of the *Life of St David*: 'Although so busy with my other literary studies I have grudgingly, overcome by the insistence of my brothers and fellow canons, agreed to expound the life of St David'.<sup>74</sup> Similarly, in the *Life of Ethelbert*, Gerald noted that: 'At the insistence of my fellow canons, I have composed a shorter and clearer version'.<sup>75</sup>

When we view Gerald's hagiography as a whole, we see that Gerald had connections with each of the communities for which he wrote. Not only was he a secular canon (and later an episcopal candidate) of St David's, he also held a prebend at Hereford cathedral, and was on good terms with the secular canons of

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<sup>71</sup> Richter, 'Gerald of Wales: A Reassessment', pp.379-90, at p.385.

<sup>72</sup> *GCO*, Vol.1, p.415: '*Ad magnorum quoque virorum et auctenticorum instantiam plurimam, legendas sanctorum vitas emisi*'.

<sup>73</sup> R.Bartlett, 'Rewriting Saints' Lives', pp.598-611.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 600.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 601. *The Life of Ethelbert* was edited by M.R.James, 'Two Lives of St. Ethelbert, King and Martyr', *English Historical Review*, 32 (1917), pp.222-36.

Lincoln cathedral. To some extent, Gerald was a professional hagiographer,<sup>76</sup> in much the same way as William of Malmesbury had been for the communities of Glastonbury and Canterbury, in the earlier twelfth century.<sup>77</sup> In each case, William and Gerald wrote for particular communities on request. No doubt the cathedral chapters at St David's and Hereford wanted a written account of their patron saints that had been updated for a contemporary audience.<sup>78</sup> That the canons in each case looked to a fellow secular canon to write these texts, one who could provide an insider perspective, suggests that they felt they needed someone who would appreciate and understand their way of life.

From a review of Gerald's hagiography, we can see that there were at least two precedents, at Hereford and St David's, for a secular chapter requesting Gerald's aid. This clearly has implications for our understanding of the *VSR*. While it is possible that Gerald instigated the project of writing the *VSR* himself, the above review suggests that the Lincoln Cathedral chapter had the greatest motive for commissioning Gerald's expertise. Nevertheless, this needs to be confirmed through an analysis of the text. What is more, we also need to examine why this may have been the case.

## V. The *VSR*

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<sup>76</sup> R.Bartlett, 'The Hagiography of Angevin England', in Thirteenth-Century England. Vol. 5: Proceedings of the Newcastle on Tyne Conference 1993, ed. P.R.Cross and S.D.Lloyd (Woodbridge, 1995), pp.37-52.

<sup>77</sup> See Gransden, Legends, Traditions, and History, p.156.

<sup>78</sup> Bartlett, 'Rewriting Saints' Lives', p. 599.

(a) The *Proemium* to the *VSR*

Gerald's understanding of the *VSR*'s hagiographical function can be discerned from a variety of sources. In the short preface to the first-version of the *VSR*, Gerald simply writes that he had set out to describe the deeds of Remigius in order to restore the fervour of faith and devotion in those whose zeal had grown cold.<sup>79</sup> Gerald also began the *VSR* proper with a *proemium*, a kind of prologue or introduction that provided an author with an opportunity to situate his work within a particular genre and to set out its aims.<sup>80</sup> Unlike the *prefatio*, the *proemium* had no dedication; instead, the piece was used by Gerald to discuss the merits of reading the lives of the saints.<sup>81</sup> Much of what Gerald had to say was standard fare. For instance, Gerald highlighted the exemplary nature of saints' lives and stated that by reading about holy behaviour or conduct one could be inspired and challenged.<sup>82</sup> Examples of good works acted as a model or, at the very least, encouraged admiration or approval.<sup>83</sup> This emphasis on the didactic properties of hagiography was a common theme in Gerald's works, many of which also included a *proemium*.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> *VSR*, p.8: '*in hac mundi vespera, qua refrigescere caritas solet, fidei fervor inventus et devotionis*'.

<sup>80</sup> For albeit an earlier English context, see A.J.Frantzen, 'The Form and Function of the Preface in the Poetry and Prose of Alfred's Reign', in *Alfred the Great*, ed. T.Reuter (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 121-36.

<sup>81</sup> *VSR*, p.11: '*Vitas virorum virtute praeditas legere libenter, et mente tenere, laudibilis est operae diligentia*'.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Unde et quanto magis multorum hodie caritas, quasi contagiis infectorum, Moresque formantium a convictu, jam refrixit, tanto propensius ipsam variis tam lectionum remediis et exhortationum, quam etiam sanctae conversationis exemplis, tanquam incitatoriis quibusdam et auram provocantibus, opus est exsuscitare*'.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p.12: '*malos autem ad conversationem, virtutumque quas in ipsis vident imitationem, tam monitis quam bonorum operum exemplis vocant, vel saltem ad earundem admirationem pariter et approbationem efficaciter invitant*'.

<sup>84</sup> For example, see the *GE*, pp.xvii, 1-2; and Gerald's *Life of St David* in *GCO*, Vol. 3, pp.377-78.

Clearly, Gerald viewed his hagiographical works as implicitly didactic texts in which the saint provided an exemplar for the reader to imitate in so far as he was able. In the *De libris a se scriptis*, Gerald maintained that all his saint's lives were written in a similar vein to Ambrose's *Life of St Agnes* and to Bernard of Clairvaux's (1090-1153) *Life of St Malachy*.<sup>85</sup> Gerald does not describe either text in detail, yet he did state how Ambrose had used holy scripture to explain Agnes's life.

The structure of the *vita* was also outlined in Gerald's *proemium*. Again, this was a standard feature of Gerald's works; in the preface to the *GE*, for instance, he states that the work will be divided into two distinctions.<sup>86</sup> In contrast, Gerald divided the *VSR* into four parts. The first part concerned the life and deeds of Remigius; the second part his miracles and virtues; the third detailed the actions of his six successors; and finally, the fourth part dealt with the behaviour and manner of six contemporary bishops.<sup>87</sup> From the structure set down in the *proemium*, it certainly would appear that Gerald has a preconceived idea concerning the structure of the text. He might even have been instructed to write the *VSR* in this manner. However, we cannot be sure that Gerald had written the *proemium* at the same time as the *vita*, or that there was a *proemium* for the first recension of the *VSR*. Furthermore, medieval writers (like modern writers today) sometimes composed the *proemium* after the main of body of work had been completed; at this point, an author could perhaps summarise his composition more effectively.

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<sup>85</sup> *GCO*, Vol.1, p.416: '*Beatus Ambrosius eodem stilo studioque quo sacras Scripturas tam arduas exposuit et explanavit, vitam quoque Sanctae Agnetis et Martiris explicare dignum duxit. Sanctus quoque Bernardus Clarewallensis vitam Sancti Malachiae praesulis Hiberniensis solita stili sui elegantia tractare curavit*'.

<sup>86</sup> *GE*, p.4.

<sup>87</sup> *VSR*, p.13: '*In quatuor itaque particulas libellus iste distinguitur. Prima viri sancti vitam singulariter et gesta complectitur. Secunda virtutes ipsius et signa prosequitur. Tertia suorum ejusdem sex proprias seriatim exprimit actiones. Quarta praelectorum Angliae nostri temporis antistitum tergemorum mores et modos comprehendit*'.

Whatever the case, Gerald chose to arrange the *Life* using a combination of hagiographical material, miracle accounts, collective biography and contemporary comment. As work on other *vitae* makes clear, one should not view the function of a saint's *vita* simply as the record of an individual's life; instead, they could function as foundation narratives and accounts of institutional histories. Was this the case at Lincoln?

(b) The Preface to the *VSR*

We will now turn to the text itself and examine how Gerald presented Remigius within the *VSR*. To explore this question we will investigate both the first part of the *vita*, and the *prefatio* - the dedicatory epistle that was placed at the beginning of the *VSR*, and which is found in CCC MS 425. In this preface, Gerald dedicated both *vitae* to the archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton (c.1150–c.1228).<sup>88</sup> Although the *prefatio* is useful for our purposes here, it must be remembered that Gerald may have emphasised different aspects of Remigius's life in the letter affixed to the later version of the *VSR* and that the *prefatio* is unlikely to have been found in the first-version of the *VSR*. In short, both the section of the *vita* relating specifically to Remigius and the *prefatio* will be used to shed light upon the ways in which Gerald presented Remigius's life, and to whom he directed this portrait.

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<sup>88</sup> *VSR*, p.3: 'Reverendo patri et domino, S. Dei gratia Cantuariensi archiepiscopo, totius Angliae primate, et sanctae Romanae ecclesiae cardinali, G.de Barri dictus, archidiaconus Sancti David, cum salutatione devota et salute perpetua libellum suum'.

In the *prefatio*, Gerald praised Remigius for restructuring his diocese as bishop. In particular, Gerald stated that Remigius deserved honour and recognition for helping to transfer his cathedral from its previous location of Dorchester-on-Thames to the city of Lincoln.<sup>89</sup> Gerald was here referring to the Whitsun Council of Winchester in 1072 which, with the consent of the king, the archbishop and *'auctoritate et consilio Alexandri pape et legatorum'*, had authorised the transfer.<sup>90</sup> The exact date at which Remigius took up residence at Lincoln is unknown, and Gerald provides no specific details himself. Crosby has suggested that the relocation was not immediate, but may have occurred in stages; Bates has also stated that the move could have taken place at any point between 1072 x 1087.<sup>91</sup>

The transfer from Dorchester to Lincoln was a significant one – the distance between the two towns was over 145 miles. Henry of Huntingdon, writing in the mid-twelfth century, noted that: 'it seemed inconvenient to the bishop [i.e. Remigius] that the cathedral of the bishopric was at the extremity. It also displeased him that the city was of middling size, while in the same bishopric the famous city of Lincoln seemed more appropriate for the episcopal see'.<sup>92</sup> Likewise, Gerald also suggested that Remigius's main concern was the location of his cathedral. The previous seat at Dorchester had been both 'unsuitable and obscure'; the choice of Lincoln, a more 'distinguished and appropriate location', was

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<sup>89</sup> In the *praefatio*, Gerald writes *'gratiam et gloriam adjicere debet, quod sedem suam cathedralem a loco nimis incongruo et obscuro ad urbem praeclaram et locum competentem, scilicet Lincolniam, transferre curavit'*: Ibid., p.6. For Lindsey, see R.Gem, 'The Episcopal Churches of Lindsey in the Early Ninth Century', in *Pre-Viking Lindsey*, ed. A.Vince (Lincoln, 1993), pp.123-27.

<sup>90</sup> *Facsimiles of English Royal Writs to AD 1100 Presented to Vivian Hunter Galbraith*, ed. T.A.M. Bishop and P.Chaplais (Oxford, 1957), no.14. See also *Council and Synods*, pp.591-607 and M. Brett, 'A Collection of Anglo-Norman Councils', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 26 (1975), pp.301-8.

<sup>91</sup> Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*, p.292; *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum: The Acta of William I, 1066-1087* ed. D.Bates, (Oxford, 1998), p.588.

<sup>92</sup> *Historia Anglorum*, p.409: *'molestum uisum est episcopo quod in ipso termino episcopates sedes esset episcopalis. Displicebat etiam ei quod urbs illa modica erat. Cum in eodem episcopate ciuitas clarissima Lincolie dignior sede episcopali uideretur'*.

strategic in a number of ways.<sup>93</sup> The town was not only situated on an important trade route,<sup>94</sup> but could also be used as a defence post against any surviving Anglo-Saxon rebels.<sup>95</sup> In fact, Remigius's decision reflected a wider trend after the Norman Conquest; at the Council of Westminster (1075), a number of other bishops moved their episcopal sees to more populous towns or cities. This no doubt enabled greater administrative and pastoral effectiveness.<sup>96</sup>

Gerald also reiterates how Remigius had been successful in taking possession of the province of Lindsey for the diocese of Lincoln. In the ninth century, Lindsey had been an episcopal see in its own right, but before the Norman Conquest it had become part of the diocese of Dorchester. In 1072, the same year as he had been authorised to move his see to Lincoln, Remigius became a signatory to the *Accord of Winchester* that set out Canterbury's supremacy over York.<sup>97</sup> It also decreed that everything to the south of the Humber, including Lindsey, would fall under Canterbury's jurisdiction. This clearly had implications for the territorial aspirations of both Lincoln and York. In particular, it made it clear that Remigius's entire diocese was now considered to be part of the Canterbury province. However, before the Conquest, the previous archbishop of York, Ealdred, had seized Lindsey and claimed it for the diocese of York. Thus, his successor at York, Thomas of Bayeux, did have a claim based on precedent. The York historian, Hugh the Chanter, related how Thomas of Bayeux had claimed 'that the town of Lincoln

<sup>93</sup> *VSR*, p.6: '*quod sedem suam cathedralem a loco nimis incongruo et obscuro ad urbem praeclarum*'.

<sup>94</sup> Speaking of the transfer, William of Malmesbury described Lincoln thus: 'one of the most populous [cities] in England, a market for those coming by land and sea' / '*unam et populosioribus Angliae, emporium hominum terra marique uenientium*': *GP*, Vol.1, p.473.

<sup>95</sup> There has been some discussion about how far the cathedral was built with an intended military function. See R.Gem, 'Lincoln Minster: *ecclesia pulchra, ecclesia fortis*', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lincoln Cathedral*, ed. T.A.Heslop and V.A.Sekules (Leeds, 1986), pp.9-28.

<sup>96</sup> C.N.L.Brooke, 'Archbishop Lanfranc, the English Bishops, and the Council of London of 1075,' *Studia Gratiana*, 12 (1967) pp.41-59; *Councils and Synods*, pp.607-616; *GP*, Vol.1, pp.97-101.

<sup>97</sup> *Councils and Synods*, p.604. See also *GR*, Vol.1, pp.537-39.

and a great part of Lindsey had been and rightly should be in the diocese of the Church of York, and had been wrongfully taken from it, together with three towns, Stow, Louth, and Newark'.<sup>98</sup> Although ultimately unsuccessful in this matter, Thomas of Bayeux continued even after Remigius's death, to campaign for the return of Lindsey, refusing, for instance, to consecrate Remigius's successor Roger Bloet for this very reason.<sup>99</sup>

Gerald highlights this dispute in the preface. Remigius, we are told, had fought 'against such a great and powerful adversary, namely the metropolitan of York', but due to his innate prudence, he had been successful and by this action had effectively stabilised the boundaries of both the province of Canterbury and diocese of Lincoln.<sup>100</sup> It is significant that Gerald here mentions both Lincoln and Canterbury. Clearly, Remigius's actions should be placed within the ecclesiastical context of his time.<sup>101</sup> By 1070, Lanfranc had been partially successful in establishing the primacy of Canterbury over York. Indeed, Thomas of Bayeux, at his consecration, gave an oral profession of obedience to Lanfranc, although Thomas made clear that this was specifically addressed to Lanfranc and not his successors. Cowdrey has argued that the dispute between York and Lincoln 'did not in itself

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<sup>98</sup> Hugh the Chanter, *The History of the Church of York 1066-1127* ed. and trans. C.Johnson *et al* (Oxford, 1990), pp.14-15: '*Uerum Lincolnium oppidum et magnam partem prouincie Lindissi dicebat fuisse et iure esse debere parochiam Eboracensis ecclesie, et iniuria illi ereptam esse cum tribus uillis, scilicet Stou et Ludha et Niuwerca*'.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *VSR*, p.6: '*Necnon et hoc quoque, quod Lindoseiam totam, ab Humbro marino usque Withemam fluvium, qui Lincolniam permeat et penetrat, per tanta terrarum spatia, contra adversarium tantum tamque potentam, metropolitanum scilicet Eboracensem, innata quippe prudentia praeditus, et gratia quoque desuper et divinitus adjutus, quoniam diligentibus Deum omnia cooperanter et prosperantur in bonum, tam provinciae Cantuariensi quam etiam diocese Lincolnensi stabiliter atque potenter adiecit*'.

<sup>101</sup> For the ecclesiastical context, see H.E.J.Cowdrey, 'Lanfranc, the Papacy, and the See of Canterbury', *Popes and Church Reform in the 11th Century* (Ashgate, 2000), pp.439-500; and *idem*, 'Archbishop Thomas I of York and the *pallium*', *Haskins Society Journal*, 11 (2003), pp.31-41.

raise issues about the primacy'.<sup>102</sup> However, that it occurred while these questions were being raised, and as they relate to York's claims of jurisdiction, suggest that we should perhaps view the York-Lincoln dispute as part of a larger campaign concerned with Canterbury's status and metropolitan authority.<sup>103</sup> Remigius had a good reason for siding with Canterbury: if he was to defend his see's own territorial boundaries, he required the assistance of Lanfranc.

By demonstrating Remigius's involvement in establishing the Humber divide between the provinces of Canterbury and York in the *prefatio*, Gerald appealed directly to the interests of the letter's recipient, Stephen Langton, the archbishop of Canterbury. Although the period in which Gerald wrote the *VSR* was not so charged as the height of the dispute between York and Canterbury, the 1190s had witnessed the continued antagonistic behaviour of both parties, for example the insistence of Geoffrey Plantagenet and Hubert Walter on carrying their crosses in front of them whenever they travelled in each other's diocese.<sup>104</sup> Therefore, Gerald's emphasis on how Remigius stabilised the borders of his own diocese would also have appealed to a Lincoln audience. Furthermore, the prologue did not simply restate Lincoln's early history – it also highlighted the parallels to Gerald's own time. At the time in which Gerald was writing, Canterbury and Lincoln again stood together as allies, reflected in Stephen Langton's close relationship with the current bishop of Lincoln, Hugh of Wells.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Cowdrey, 'Lanfranc', p.89, n.14.

<sup>103</sup> Wulfstan of Worcester would also attempt to claim back lands that Ealdred Archbishop of York had appropriated. At the Council of Winchester (1072), Wulfstan set out the case for Worcester. See A. Williams, 'The Cunning of the Dove: Wulfstan and the Politics of Accommodation', in St Wulfstan and his World, ed. J.Barrow and N.Brooks (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 23-38.

<sup>104</sup> Gervase of Canterbury, Historical Works, Vol.1, p.519, 523.

<sup>105</sup> For Hugh of Wells, see Chapter 4, III (a).

It is worth reiterating that in the preface Gerald focused specifically on two of Remigius's actions: the first, his decision to transfer the cathedral to the more suitable location of Lincoln; the second, his success in stabilising both the diocesan border, and that of the province of Canterbury. Gerald's use of the adverb *stabiliter* is significant; it not only suggested a sense of "fixedness" in relation to a geographical or territorial area, but also gave the impression of permanence or constancy over time. Indeed, it was occasionally used, along with *firmiter*, in episcopal *acta* to denote a grant that was given *imperpetuum*.<sup>106</sup> Sir Francis Hill has argued that in the *VSR* Gerald promoted the view that Remigius was the founder of Lincoln cathedral, and, at the same time, that he ignored other Lincoln traditions. In particular, Hill referred to a cathedral obituary, which he and Dimock dated to 1182 x 1189, which labelled Remigius *stabilitor*, rather than *fundator*.<sup>107</sup> Yet the preface to the *VSR* suggests that Gerald was mindful of Remigius's role as a protector and promoter of the see; indeed, it is a tradition that he appears to have promoted himself.

Having examined the *prefatio*, we will turn now to the hagiographical section of the *VSR* (chapters 1-5). First, we will explore to what extent this part of the *vita* reflected the concerns expressed in the *prefatio*. Secondly, we will investigate other factors that Gerald focused upon in order to determine how his depiction of Remigius was shaped for his audience.

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<sup>106</sup> See for example *EEA*, 28: *Canterbury, 1070-1136*, ed. M.Brett and J.Gribbin (Oxford, 2004), nos.28 and 30.

<sup>107</sup> F.Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, (Cambridge and New York, 1948), p.79; *VSR*, pp.153-58. In the obit, Remigius was also one of two bishops to be given the distinction of having their name written in red ink: Bradshaw, *Statutes*, p.cccxxiv.

## (c) The Life and Death of St Remigius

Chapter 4 of the *VSR* is entitled: *'That he transferred the episcopal seat to Lincoln, and added the whole of Lindsey to his diocese'*.<sup>108</sup> Once more, emphasis is placed upon Remigius's decision to situate his cathedral in Lincoln. In the *vita*, however, Gerald is less explicit about the dispute between York and Lincoln. York, we are told, had wisely surrendered Lindsey when the decision had been made that everything between the River Witham and the Humber Sea was now part of both the Lincoln diocese and the Canterbury province.<sup>109</sup> As we have discussed, York's swift acquiescence was not, in fact, accurate. Nevertheless, Gerald again used the term *stabilitate* to describe Remigius's actions. This change assumes that Gerald wrote this passage before he wrote the *prefatio* to Stephen Langton.

Unlike the preface, Gerald now spoke of the cathedral's institutional origins and of Remigius's role in its construction. After Remigius had secured his diocesan borders, a church was built, and Gerald states it was to be founded (*fundari*) in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>110</sup> In this instance, Gerald emphasised Remigius's actions as the founder of Lincoln cathedral but not of the see itself.

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<sup>108</sup> *VSR*, p.18: *'Quod episcopalem sedem Lincolniam usque transposuit; totamque diocese suae Lindesiam adiecit'*.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.18-19: *'His (sic) itaque Remigius et moribus ornatus, et operum meritis imitabile bonis omnibus exemplar datus, de sedis suae Lincolniam usque, locum longe cathedrali ecclesiae competentiore, translatione, quod olim mente conceperat, non absque labore grandi, operam erga regem et archiepiscopum, excambium Eboracensi pro Lindeseia donantes, prudenter effectui, Deo cooperante mancipavit'*.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p.19: *'Utque firmiori quod gestum fuerat stabilitate constaret, cathedralem ecclesiam suam in summo apud Lincolniam montis vertice trans Widhemam, in honore beatae Virginis fundari, ereque in brevi consummari procuravit'*.

Later, however, he used the adverb *stabilliter* once more in his description of Remigius's decision to select the Rouen rite as the model or example to which his canons at Lincoln would adhere. Having established the constitution of the church, we are told that he firmly applied these rules.<sup>111</sup> The Rouen rite had been detailed in a work composed by John of Avranches, Archbishop of Rouen between 1067-1079.<sup>112</sup> The question of whether Remigius established the Lincoln chapter according to that found in the Rouen rites and customs has been examined in depth by many historians, including Edmund Bishop, and, more recently, by Diana Greenway and Dorothy Owen.<sup>113</sup> Greenway has argued that Bayeux is more likely to have acted as a model for the secular cathedrals of England.<sup>114</sup> Nonetheless, Owen has suggested that even if the Rouen rite did not influence the cathedral constitution, it could still have impacted upon the liturgy at Lincoln.<sup>115</sup>

Whatever the case, it appears that successive Lincoln writers wanted it to be understood that from the chapter's inception, Remigius had been quite clear about the particular rites and customs the chapter was to use. That Gerald was so specific in his account of the early chapter may cause some suspicion. It does appear that Gerald was accurate in stating that Remigius had begun to organise the chapter in 1092 in a 'familiar structure', and that he had provided the early chapter with

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p.20: '*Constituta vero ecclesia, et stabilliter collocata, juxta ritum Rothomagensis ecclesie, quam singulis quasi exemplar elegerat et praefecerat*'.

<sup>112</sup> *De officiis ecclesiasticis*, ed. R.Delamare (Paris, 1923).

<sup>113</sup> E.Bishop, *Liturgica Historica* (Oxford, 1918), pp.276-300; Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, pp.13-19; Greenway, 'The False Institutio of St Osmund', pp.100-101; Owen, 'Norman Cathedral', p.198-99.

<sup>114</sup> D.Greenway, 'The Influence of the Norman Cathedrals on the Secular Cathedrals in England in the Anglo-Norman Period, 1066-1204', in *Chapitres et Cathédrales en Normandie: Actes du XXXIe congrès tenu à Bayeux du 16 au 20 Octobre 1996*, ed. S.Lemagnen and P.Manneville (Caen, 1997), pp.273-84.

<sup>115</sup> D.Owen, 'Historical Survey 1091-1450', *A History of Lincoln Minster*, ed. eadem (Cambridge, 1994), pp.119-120.

twenty-one canons with various prebends and assigns.<sup>116</sup> Indeed, alongside two other post-conquest bishops, Osmund of Salisbury (d.1099) and Thomas of York (d.1100), Remigius bucked the trend for monastic chapters favoured by Lanfranc and provided his cathedral chapter with secular canons.<sup>117</sup> There are several good reasons why Remigius and his fellow bishops may have opted for a secular constitution. A large diocese, such as Lincoln, demanded a bishop whose clerical personnel were efficient in administrative affairs and pastoral care. However, it has already been suggested in Chapter 1, that Osmund's canons initially may have lived in common and according to the regular life.<sup>118</sup> Similarly, it may be that Remigius took some time to decide whether Lincoln should have a secular constitution. Christopher Brooke has argued that Remigius's establishment of a monastic community at Stow near Lincoln, in 1091, may imply that he was contemplating the idea of a monastic chapter.<sup>119</sup> Contemporary accounts are not altogether clear: However, it is interesting that William of Malmesbury is extremely critical of Remigius's successor, Robert Bloet, who would return the monks at Stow to Eynsham Abby.<sup>120</sup> Clearly, Robert might have considered the

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<sup>116</sup> *VSR*, p.19: '*canonicos viginti et unum statim adhibuit*'.

<sup>117</sup> Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*, pp.290-312, 332-61; *passim* Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*.

<sup>118</sup> See Chapter 1, VI (b).

<sup>119</sup> C.N.L.Brooke, *Church and Churchmen in Medieval Europe* (London, 1999), p.50, n.47. David Knowles had earlier stated, 'Remigius ... had refounded Stow in the neighbourhood of his Cathedral City, no doubt with the intention of introducing the monks to Lincoln itself': *idem*, *The Monastic Order in England: A History of its Development from the Times of St. Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council, 940-1216* (Cambridge, 1963), p.132. Bates adds that Stow's endowment was included in the Domesday Book within the section describing the estates of the bishopric of Lincoln: *idem*, *Bishop Remigius*, pp.29-32.

<sup>120</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.474-75: 'He treated all religious observance with contumely, and ordered the monks of Stow to be uprooted and placed at Eynsham; wicked even when it did not pay and envious of his predecessor's reputation, he gave the excuse that his interests were being harmed by the monks who were his neighbours. If God thus granted the monks of Eynsham a fine addition to their numbers, it was no thanks to Robert, who used to boast that he was doing them a great service if he allowed them even to stay alive'. / '*In cunctam religionem proteruus, monachos Stou summoueri et apud Egnesham locari iussit. Gratis malus et gloriae antecessoris inuidens, a uicinis monachis sua commoda peruerti causabatur. Quocirca, si monachi Egneshamnenses Dei dono pulchrum incrementum acceperint procul illi gratias, quibus eximium se gloriabatur commodum inferre si uel illos sineret uiuere*'.

Stow monks to be a rival institution, and in this light it is perhaps significant that Gerald does not mention Stow at all in the *VSR*.

In chapters 1-3 and 5 of the *VSR*, Gerald also manipulated certain aspects of Remigius's life in order to suit his audience, adding little that was new, but responding to received tradition. Gerald began his narrative by relating how Remigius was elected bishop of Dorchester at the beginning of William I's reign. The reason he started his account this way was because earlier monastic writers had viewed Remigius's election to the Dorchester see as a direct consequence of the support he had given to William I's invasion in 1066. In particular, the fact that Remigius had provided a ship and twenty men towards William's war effort was seen to tarnish his reputation.<sup>121</sup> For example, in his *GP* (written c.1125), William of Malmesbury stated that 'he [Remigius] had been made bishop in return for help he had given to William on his coming into England, thus paying [*nundinatus*]<sup>122</sup> for a religious post by exertions in war'.<sup>123</sup> This arrangement was also referred to by William in a later chapter: 'Remigius, a monk of Fecamp, gave much help to William duke of Normandy in his invasion of England, having bargained [*pactus*]

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<sup>121</sup> Gerald gives a figure of ten (*decem*): *VSR*, p.14. See E.M.C. van Houts, 'The Ship List of William the Conqueror', *ANS*, 10 (1987), pp.159–83. The relationship between the Anglo-Norman kings and the monastery of Fecamp is examined in a paper by Judith Green, '*Fecamp et les rois anglo-normands*'. See: <http://www.unicaen.fr/mrsh/crahm/revue/tabularia/print.php?dossier=dossier2&file=02green.xml#mainTable>

<sup>122</sup> The verb *nundinor* had connotations of trading in a discernible way. In a sermon by Bishop Herbert de Losinga (c.1050, d. 1119), Herbert writes '... Selling Him for a mean price. Who could not be gotten for the price given by any ungodly man.' / '*Eum vili nundinatus pretio, qui comparari poterat nullius iniqui pretio*': *The Life, Letters, and Sermons of Bishop Herbert de Losinga*, ed. E.M.Goulburn and H.Symonds (Oxford, 1878), p.199.

<sup>123</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p. 91: '*secundus pro auxiliis Willelmo uenienti Angliam prebitis factus esset episcopus diuinum munus bellicosis laboribus nundinatus precibus suis restituit officio*'.

with him for a bishopric if he was successful, and William was no slower to grant him the Bishopric of Dorchester than Remigius was to accept it'.<sup>124</sup>

William was not the only writer who viewed the appointment of Remigius as *quid pro quo*. The monk, Eadmer (d.1124), was even more specific in his *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, noting: 'That having made a bargain with William, before he became King, he [Remigius] had in effect bought his bishopric from him by the service which he had rendered him by the outlay of much effort and of lavish expenditure on his behalf, when he was setting out to subdue England'.<sup>125</sup> It may be that William and Eadmer were vocalising a concern specific to monastic writers rather than reflecting a view held by all of Remigius's contemporaries. Nevertheless, it is likely that Gerald was aware of these earlier views and consequently altered his version of events. Gerald argued that Remigius was initially reluctant to agree to William's request, as it required him to leave his monastery at Fecamp, but that in the end, he had obeyed William's wishes.<sup>126</sup> By referring to Remigius's decision as an act of obedience, Gerald defined Remigius's actions as consistent with his monastic vocation. Indeed, as if to reiterate this point, Gerald insisted that by assisting William, Remigius did not denigrate either 'the dignity of his order or [his] habit'.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p.473: '*Remigius ex monacho Fiscamnensi, qui Willelmo comiti Normannorum in Angliam uenienti auxilium in multis prebuerit, episcopatum, si uinceret, pactus. Nec fuit Willelmus senior in dando quam Remigius in accipiendo*'.

<sup>125</sup> Eadmer, *History of Recent Events in England*, trans. G.Bosanquet (London, 1964), p.11; Eadmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, ed. M.Rule (London, 1884).

<sup>126</sup> VSR, p.14: '*Illud autem officium, quanquam invite susceptum, quoniam a monastica quiete longe alienum, sed per obedientiam tamen*'.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p.15: '*Nec ordinis aut habitus dignitatem*'.

Although much of the first chapter of the *vita* was concerned with how Remigius had come to England, the chapter itself was entitled '*Concerning the election and consecration of Remigius; the arrangement of the life and morals of this same man*'.<sup>128</sup> In actual fact, Gerald provided a very short description of this event, stating simply that Remigius had been elected by the clergy of Dorchester, canonically elected to the bishopric, and then consecrated by Lanfranc.<sup>129</sup> Gerald's *VSR* is the only source which gives this account of this election; earlier writers had been unanimous that the decision was William I's alone. By making this claim, Gerald again attempted to conceal any suggestion or hint of simony on the part of Remigius. Gerald's version of events also reflected late twelfth-century conceptions of episcopal elections, in particular, that the clergy of Dorchester appeared to have chosen Remigius freely, without any outside interference from either the king or their metropolitan.<sup>130</sup>

Gerald's version of events also glosses over another uncomfortable aspect of Remigius's appointment to the bishopric of Dorchester. The *vita*'s assertion that Lanfranc had initially consecrated Remigius is inaccurate; the consecration had been performed by Lanfranc's predecessor Archbishop Stigand (d.1072) in 1067.<sup>131</sup> Later writers, such as William of Malmesbury, viewed Stigand as an unashamed pluralist; it certainly appears he caught the ire of a reforming papacy,

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<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14: '*De electione Remigii, et consecratione; vitaeque et morum ejusdem institutione*'.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Ad sedem Dorkescestrensem a clero loci illius canonice in episcopatum est electus, et a viro venerabili ac sancto, archipraesule Cantuariensi Lanfranco, solemniter apud Doroberniam consecratus*'.

<sup>130</sup> See R.Benson, 'Election by Community and Chapter: Reflections on Co-Responsibility in the Historical Church', *Jurist*, 31 (1971), pp.54-80. Sharon McMillan traces the development within medieval pontificals: *eadem*, Episcopal Ordination and Ecclesial Consensus (Collegetown, MA, 2005), pp.136-70.

<sup>131</sup> Richter, Professions, no.31; David Bates has suggested that Remigius avoided consecration by Ealdred [the Archbishop of York] as Ealdred had a claim on parts of his diocese: *idem*, Bishop Remigius, p.7.

but there is no doubt that William I found it politically expedient to replace him with Lanfranc in 1070.<sup>132</sup> As a consequence, Remigius's consecration oath to Stigand was declared void in that same year. In order to redeem himself, Remigius had to travel with Lanfranc to Rome in the autumn of 1071. Here, he gave up his ring and crosier to the Pope, which were subsequently returned to him by Lanfranc.<sup>133</sup> We do, however, have a later profession, dated to 1072, from Remigius to Lanfranc, in which Remigius claimed that he had not known that Stigand had been a pluralist at his earlier election.<sup>134</sup> It is unsurprising that Gerald chose to omit any reference to what must have been an awkward affair for Remigius. Linking Remigius with a pluralist such as Stigand, would hardly have given his *vita* an auspicious beginning.

In chapters 2, 3 and 5 Gerald situated Remigius's deeds and actions in the diocese of Lincoln. In the first two chapters Gerald emphasised Remigius's generous charitable provision towards the poor and sick throughout his diocese.<sup>135</sup> In the main, Gerald did not allude to actual examples of Remigius's charity; instead, general comments concerning Remigius's virtues were paired with scriptural *exempla*.<sup>136</sup> Nevertheless, in the final chapter of the hagiographical section (chapter 5), Gerald described how, as Lincoln's bishop, Remigius had reformed the diocese.

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<sup>132</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, pp.48-49. For a more positive portrayal of Stigand, see M.F.Smith, 'Archbishop Stigand and the Eye of the Needle', *ANS*, 16 (1994), pp.199-219.

<sup>133</sup> See T.Reuter, '*Pastorale pedum ante pedes apostolici posuit*: dis- and reinvestiture in the Era of the Investiture Contest', in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. Gameson and Leyser, pp.197-210.

<sup>134</sup> The profession that Remigius swore to Lanfranc in 1072 is printed by Dimock in *VSR*, Vol.7, pp.151-2 (also discussed pp.lxxi-lxxiv). In it, Remigius titles himself bishop of '*Dorcacensis, Legoracensis et Lincoline*'. A modern edition of the profession can be found in Richter, *Professions*, no.32. According to Remigius, he was unaware of Stigand's simoniacal position. Stigand himself was deposed (alongside other Anglo-Saxon bishops) in 1070 by papal legates at the Whitsun Council of Winchester: *Councils and Synods*, pp.565-76.

<sup>135</sup> *VSR*, pp.15-18.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, esp, p.16. Gerald's style here resembles the comments he had made about Ambrose's Life of St Agnes.

Gerald first commented upon the appalling state in which Remigius found the diocese upon his arrival. We are told that many of his flock were committing grave crimes, so much so that Gerald suggested that the laity: ‘thought of perjury, adultery and incest, as insignificant, while having promiscuous sex and illegitimate children was [considered] nothing’.<sup>137</sup> In Gerald’s view, before the Conquest Lincoln appears to have been almost as bad as Wales and Ireland in terms of moral degeneracy.<sup>138</sup> Against such a veritable Sodom and Gomorrah, Remigius fought a campaign of preaching and instruction to uproot and eradicate these sins. Remigius was presented as ‘an active and efficient pastor’; he travelled throughout the whole of his diocese, and never ceased to patrol its limits. As Gerald puts it, ‘from border to border, [Remigius] bravely reached out [to] the whole of his diocese’.<sup>139</sup> This was no mean feat as the diocese of Lincoln was then the largest diocese in the see of Canterbury, and required no less than seven archdeacons.<sup>140</sup> As in the preface, the emphasis is again upon Remigius’s jurisdiction and the territorial limits of the Lincoln diocese. In this instance, however, Gerald placed Remigius’s actions within a pastoral context and suggested that within his diocese his sphere of authority was total. There are few sources that corroborate Gerald’s depiction of Remigius as pastor. In William of Malmesbury’s *VSW*, Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester was granted a licence by Remigius so that he might dedicate a church within the diocese of Lincoln. Such an example perhaps tells us more about

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<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20: ‘*Perjurium, adulterium, incestum, pro modico, vagum vero concubitus et illegitimum pro nihilo reputabant*’.

<sup>138</sup> See D.Rollo, ‘Gerald of Wales’ *Topographia Hibernica: Sex and the Irish Nation*, *The Romantic Review*, 86 (1995) pp.169-90.

<sup>139</sup> *VSR*, p.20: ‘*De fine ad finem fortiter attingens*’.

<sup>140</sup> Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, pp.64-82. Henry of Huntingdon records how Remigius had first appointed these seven archdeacons: *Historia Anglorum*, p.591.

William's desire to construct a positive image of Wulfstan as conforming to canon law, but it also suggests that Remigius could be pragmatic and assuaging.<sup>141</sup>

The emphasis upon the poor state of the pre-conquest Lincoln diocese also fitted with many post-conquest historical narratives, which attributed one cause of the Norman invasion to God's retribution for the lax morals of the conquered Anglo-Saxons.<sup>142</sup> However, it may be that for his depiction of Remigius, Gerald drew upon Lincoln tradition. Remigius, a favourite of Lanfranc's, does appear to have sought reform-driven policies within his diocese during his time in office.<sup>143</sup> These policies were not, however, simply concerned with the pastoral care of the laity. When Remigius re-founded the Benedictine monastery at Eynsham, at Stow, he made sure the monks followed the *Decreta Lanfranci*, a rule much stricter than the conventional Rule of St Benedict.<sup>144</sup> D.Stocker and P.Everson have argued that Remigius was also responsible for instituting new liturgies at the cathedral church in Lincoln, based in part on those used and prescribed by Lanfranc at Canterbury.<sup>145</sup> However, there is no mention of the *Decreta Lanfranci* in the *VSR*. Indeed, there are no examples pointing out Remigius's relationship with monastic communities within his diocese. We know from William of Malmesbury's *GP* that

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<sup>141</sup> *VSW*, p.79: 'But he was in some uncertainty, because the dedication could not go forward without the approval of the bishop of the diocese. But his anxiety was removed by a licence, freely granted by the kindness of Remigius bishop of Lincoln'. / *'Fluctuabat autem sententiae incerto, quod fieri non posset inconsulto diocesis illius episcop. Sed sustulit fluctus animi licentia facilitate Remigii Lincolnensis episcopi cum gratia impetrata'*. Concerning episcopal jurisdiction of church dedications see M.Brett, 'The English Abbeys, their Tenants and the King (950-1150)', in *Chiesa e mondo feudale nei secoli X-XII* (Milan, 1995), pp.277-300 at p.288.

<sup>142</sup> For example, *VSW*, p.59: 'For at that time, almost everywhere in England, morals were deplorable, and in the opulence of peace luxury flourished'. / *'Vivebatur enim tunc pene ubique in Anglia perditis moribus, et pro pacis affluentia deliciarum feruebat'*. See also E.M.C. van Houts, 'The Memory of 1066 in Written and Oral Traditions', *ANS*, 19 (1997), pp.167-79.

<sup>143</sup> For Lanfranc's influence on church reform generally, see Cowdrey, *Popes and Church Reform*, pp.321-52.

<sup>144</sup> A.W.Klukas, 'The Architectural Implications of the *Decreta Lanfranci*', *ANS*, 6, (1984), pp.136-71.

<sup>145</sup> P.Everson and D.Stocker, 'The Common Steeple? Church, Liturgy, and Settlement in Early Medieval Lincolnshire', *ANS*, 28 (2006), pp.103-23.

Remigius re-founded not only Eynsham Abbey, but also Bardney Priory as well.<sup>146</sup> Yet, apart from founding a *leprosarium* within his diocese, Gerald is silent about these other communities.<sup>147</sup> The *vita* shows only how Remigius was a supporter of ecclesiastical reform and pastoral care, and omits any real mention of his role as a vigorous proponent of reformed monasticism.

Thus far we have demonstrated the ways in which Gerald attempted to shape Remigius's character within the *VSR*. If Gerald was writing with a particular audience in mind, that of the secular canons at Lincoln, this would explain why he stressed the origins of the Lincoln cathedral and the circumstances surrounding the transfer of the see from Dorchester to Lincoln. Not only this, but it would also make clear why Gerald emphasised the cathedral's customs and the origins of the chapter's constitution. Finally, it would provide a rationale for why he was more interested in Remigius's relationship with the laity within the diocese. What is more, both the *prefatio* and the first part of the *VSR* have one thing in common; they both reiterate how Remigius's tenure in office was of fundamental significance to the development of the Lincoln see. To test this theory further, we will examine the third section of the *vita*, that which concerned the history of the Lincoln bishops.

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<sup>146</sup> *GP*, Vol.1, p.473; G.Beech, 'Aquitanians and Flemings in the Refoundation of Bardney Abbey', *Haskins Society Journal*, 1 (1989), pp. 73-90, at pp.80-81.

<sup>147</sup> *VSR*, p.18.

## (d) Remigius's Successors at Lincoln

In the third section of the *VSR*, Gerald comments upon six of Remigius's episcopal successors: Robert Bloet, Alexander 'the Magnificent', Robert Chesney, Geoffrey Plantagenet, Walter Coutances and finally Hugh of Avalon.<sup>148</sup> For each, Gerald provides a brief synopsis of their origin and character, and then discusses their principal acts in office.<sup>149</sup> Gerald did not comment on each bishop's pastoral qualities, but instead focuses almost exclusively upon how far each of Remigius's successors either increased or diminished the Lincoln see's patrimony. The structure of the *VSR* at this point calls to mind the *Liber Pontificalis*, which heavily influenced the writing of episcopal *gesta* in the early Middle Ages; the authors of the *Liber* often stressed the wealth and munificence of successive Popes and included inventories of donations and bequests.<sup>150</sup> In England, after Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, it was not until William of Malmesbury's *GP* (c.1125), that there existed a work that provided a thorough chronological list of each bishop within every diocese of England. Nevertheless, there had always been a strong Anglo-Saxon tradition of local history and cathedral or minster communities often kept episcopal obits.<sup>151</sup> It may be that because of Gerald's continental outlook, he was also influenced by the *Gesta episcoporum* genre, which was particularly popular in both West and East Francia; such works were often a hybrid of part hagiography, part cartulary and part institutional history.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> *VSR*, pp.31-42.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p.31: '*sub stili brevitare transcurra, subsequentium antistitum nomina summatim et acta perstringere non incongruum reputavi*'.

<sup>150</sup> The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes (*Liber Pontificalis*): The Ancient Biographies of Nine Popes from AD 715 to AD 817, trans. R.Davis (Liverpool, 1992). For its influence, see M.Deliyannis, 'A Biblical Model for Serial Biography: The Books of Kings and the Roman *Liber Pontificalis*', *Revue Bénédictine*, 107 (1997), pp.15-23.

<sup>151</sup> R.I.Page, 'Anglo-Saxon Episcopal Lists, Part 1 and 2', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 9 (1965), pp.71-95; and *idem*, 'Anglo-Saxon Episcopal Lists, Part 3', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 10 (1966), pp.2-24.

<sup>152</sup> For example, T.Reuter, 'Property Transactions and Social Relations Between Rulers, Bishops

A few examples from the *VSR* illustrate the extent to which Lincoln bishops were judged according to their role as custodians. Criticisms were aimed specifically at those who created financial debts. For instance, Remigius's immediate successor, Robert of Bloet (1094-1123), although 'conspicuous for his prudence and probity', was heavily criticised for granting a payment of a mantle worth £100 to Henry I.<sup>153</sup> Gerald condemned both Robert and his successor Alexander 'the Magnificent' (1123-1148) for continuing with this payment.<sup>154</sup> In a later section, Gerald states that Richard I attempted to reintroduce the mantle under Hugh of Avalon but that Hugh managed to mitigate this to a single large cash payment.<sup>155</sup> Similarly, Robert Chesney came under censure, for his decision to take out a loan of £300 to a Jewish money lender named Aaron.<sup>156</sup> In contrast, Geoffrey of York was praised for correcting his predecessor's error.<sup>157</sup>

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and Nobles in Early Eleventh-Century Saxony: The Evidence of the *Vita Meinwerci*', in Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages, ed. W.Davies and P.Fouracre (Cambridge, 1995), pp.165-99.

<sup>153</sup> *VSR*, p.33: '*centum librarum pallium ... regi Henrico primo dedit ... et inconsiderata largitione ad donaria similia successores suos obligavit*'.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Pallium, quod decessor suus primo dedit, et ipse quoque sine contradictione persolvit*'. Hugh the Chanter mentions another payment by Bloet to William II so that the king would side with Lincoln rather than the diocese of York: 'All England knows that Bishop Robert gave King William £3000 for this'. / '*Hoc autem Anglia tota nouit, quod propter hanc concordiam Robertus episcopus Willelmo regi ter mille libras dedit*': Hugh the Chanter, History of the Church of York, p.15.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p.41: '*Item pallium illud Bloetinum et Alexandrium, minus provide minusque circumspecte semel datum, et ob hoc perpetuo debitum, saniori consilio depilavit et tam interminabilem tantae servitutis exactionem, per cartas regio sigillo munitas, Lincolnensis ecclesiae libertatem, ac perpetuam, si regnet in terris fides, immunitatem protestantes, unica largitione deleuit*'. See also *MVSH*, Vol.2, p37: 'Thus by one act he freed the churches of the diocese as well as the Mother Church for ever from a shameful and heavy burden which they had borne for a long time.' / '*Sicque prouinciales potius ecclesias quam earum matrem ecclesiam Lincolnensem a turpi simul et graui diu inolite iugo seruitutis semel eripiendo, perpetue restituit libertati*'.

<sup>156</sup> *VSR*, p.35: '*Idem etiam in trecentis libris erga Aaron Judaeum ecclesiam suam obligavit*'. For Aaron of Lincoln see H.G.Richardson, The English Jewry under Angevin Kings (London, 1960), pp.61-62, 74-76.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, '*Hic autem inter ipsa initia ornamenta ecclesiae suae, quae in libris argenti trecentis apud Aaron Judaeum decessor suus obligauerat, redimendo statim adquietavit*'.

Bishops who were monastic benefactors or granted lands to other religious corporations also received plenty of condemnation throughout this section of the *VSR*. Occasionally, Gerald simply refers to how these lands had been previously the property of the Church rather than the bishop. For instance, in the very brief summary of Alexander's pontificate, the foundation of four monasteries and three castles were referred to as coming 'from the lands of his church'.<sup>158</sup> Gerald is more critical of Robert Chesney (1148-1166). Although Robert is described as a generous man, he was perhaps too generous: Gerald writes that he 'alienated many lands and gave positions to his family and followers, causing scandal'.<sup>159</sup> Specific censure is also reserved for Chesney's loss of episcopal jurisdiction over St Alban's abbey, as well as his donations to the Sempringham house of St Catherine.<sup>160</sup> Finally, although he was bishop for just one year (1183-1184), Walter de Coutances is given a much larger place in Lincoln's institutional history, merely because he confirmed Chesney's earlier grant to the Sempringham order. Gerald writes that Walter 'grievously injured the Lincoln church and greatly offended his entire cathedral chapter'.<sup>161</sup> Here, Gerald appears to associate the transpersonal institution of the bishopric with the cathedral chapter. Indeed, Gerald notes throughout the extent to which the bishops added to the chapter. Robert Bloet is noted for doubling the amount of prebends;<sup>162</sup> so too are Alexander and Robert

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<sup>158</sup> *VSR*, p.33: '*Sed quatuor, ex terris ecclesiae suae*'. On Alexander, see T.Dyson, 'The Monastic Patronage of Bishop Alexander of Lincoln', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 26 (1975), pp.1-24.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p.34, '*Hic terras quasdam alienavit; quasdam neptibus suis nuptui dandies cum scandali nota donavit*'.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, '*Ad haec etiam ecclesias de maneriis suis quatuor, quas decessores sui clericis capellae suae dabant, et unam praebendam, ordini de Semplingeham in perpetuum donando, ecclesiam Lincolnensem et successores suos non mediocriter damnificavit. Item Sanctum Albanum amisit*'. For Chesney's involvement with the Sempringham order and his loss of St Albans, see *The Book of St Gilbert*, ed. R.Foreville and G.Keir, (Oxford, 1987), pp.xxxi-xxxii; and B.Bolton, 'St Albans' Loyal Son', in *Adrian IV, The English Pope, 1154-1159: Studies and Texts*, ed. B.Bolton and A.Duggan (Aldershot, 2003), pp.75-104.

<sup>161</sup> *VSR*, p.38-39: '*In uno tamen Lincolnensem ecclesiam graviter laesit, totumque capitulum non medicoriter offendit*'.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p.32: '*Terras plurimas et maneria perquisivit; praebendas quoque in duplum multiplicavit*'.

Chesney – the latter was also praised for initiating a market.<sup>163</sup> Finally, generous donations to Lincoln cathedral were also commended. Robert of Bloet's many bequests of ornate gifts were noted by Gerald,<sup>164</sup> as were two large bells which Geoffrey of York had built for the church.<sup>165</sup> Furthermore, Alexander 'the Magnificent' and Hugh of Lincoln were both praised for their building projects.<sup>166</sup>

The stress on the material goods and property of the Lincoln church suggests that Gerald was writing with the secular canons in mind. It was certainly in the cathedral chapter's interests to celebrate such actions, as the durability and strength of such institutions depended to a large degree on how far the church managed to maintain its possessions and estates. Indeed, that the chapter requested the *VSR* also makes more sense when we examine its institutional development in the twelfth century. This can be difficult as much of the surviving evidence survives from the mid-twelfth century during Robert Chesney's tenure in office (1148-1166). More than two thirds of this evidence concerns episcopal confirmations of lands to either monastic houses or to the chapter.<sup>167</sup> However, one key text that survives which is of major importance, is Robert's charter of privileges which 'exempted the prebends at Lincoln from all episcopal exactions

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p.33: '*Hic praebendas aliquot adiecit: terras etiam aliquas et maneria perquisivit*'. Ibid., p.35: '*Mercatus tamen nonnullos, et nundinas per utiles hic acquisivit*'. For the market, see The Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln, ed. C.W.Foster and K.Major, 2 Vols. (Lincoln, 1931), Vol.1, p.87.

<sup>164</sup> *VSR*, p.32: '*Hic palliis olosericis, capis auro intextis, philateriis, phialis, crucibus, et textis aureis et argenteis, artificum diligentia mirifice fabricatis, ecclesiam suam laudabiliter adornavit*'.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p.37 '*Cui et inter cetera quoque campanas duas grandes, egregias, atque sonoras, devota largitione donavit*'.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p.33: '*Ecclesiam tamen Lincolnensem casuali igne consumptam egregie reparando lapideis fideliter voltis primus involvit*'. And '*Item ecclesiae suae capicium. Pariis lapidibus marmoreisque columnis miro artificio renovavit, et totum a fundamento opere sumptuosissimo novum erexit*': pp.40-41. For a discussion of medieval bishops as builders, see C.P.Scriber The Dilemma of Arnulf of Lisieux: New Ideas Versus Old Ideals (Bloomington, 1990), pp.61-80.

<sup>167</sup> EEA, 1: Lincoln, nos. 67-284.

and from all archidiaconal demands'.<sup>168</sup> This privilege was confirmed by Lincoln's later bishops, although Hugh of Lincoln shrewdly inserted the clause 'saving in all things the right and authority (*potestas*) of the bishop'.<sup>169</sup> While this has been seen as a proactive action on Hugh's part – it may actually have been a defensive move which reflects the chapter's strength at the turn of the century: as early as the 1150s, the chapter had been administering its own properties and within the diocese it had become something of a separate institution, as there was a marked increase in the chapter's involvement in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs. Again much of this concerned property. It is useful, therefore, to think of bishoprics, like monasteries, as institutions which extended or transcended the personnel of the institution and extended into the local population.

The interest of the chapter in the cathedral's estates also reflects a wider theme found in other saints' lives. For instance, after the Norman Conquest, religious corporations sought out professional hagiographers such as Goscelin of St Bertin or William of Malmesbury to write-up the life and deeds of their communities' saints. David Rollason has stated that 'for ecclesiastical communities, the cult of saints had a special role to play in a situation in which they felt the need to claim lands and privileges which they had earlier lost, or lost the documentation for'.<sup>170</sup> As such, a *vita* like Gerald's *VSR* could act like a record which belonged to the sphere of the church's internal institutional memory.

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<sup>168</sup> Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter*, p.300; *Registrum Antiquissimum*, Vol.1, no.287.

<sup>169</sup> *Registrum Antiquissimum*, Vol.1, no.294. Hugh also confirmed Chesney's earlier *acta*: *EEA.4: Lincoln, 1186-1206* ed. D.Smith, (London, 1986), nos.93-4, 102-103.

<sup>170</sup> D.Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1996), p.196.

Therefore, while one of the *VSR*'s functions was certainly to commemorate these men's lives, it was not a neutral account, the past was judged through the institutional eyes of a late twelfth-century chapter. However, we are left with one caveat. One could argue that Gerald was merely being pragmatic, and was working with the sources that he had to hand. If two thirds of the surviving *acta* relate to episcopal confirmations of possessions, then the focus on property might be inevitable. Yet, I would argue that the interpretive spin that Gerald places on these sources suggests that he was following a 'party line'. Certainly the *VSR* reads as if it was intended to promote the community and its interests.

(e) *De episcopis Angliae tergeminis*

The last part of the *vita*, entitled '*De episcopis Angliae tergeminis*' (hereafter *DEAT*), consists of three chapters (27-29), in which Gerald provides a portrait of six contemporary bishops whom he considered to display ideal episcopal qualities. These were Thomas Becket, Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, Bartholomew of Exeter, Roger of Worcester, Baldwin of Canterbury and Hugh of Lincoln. The *DEAT* has been left unexamined by most modern historians; but, before we discuss its content, or consider its place within the *VSR*, we will first examine how earlier historians have interpreted the text. It will be argued that too often the *DEAT* has been considered simply a product of Gerald's eccentricity, and not as a narrative which echoes and reflects many of the themes that are raised in the *VSR*.

## (i) Earlier Scholarship

Previous commentators have been unsure of how to tackle this part of the *VSR*. They have thought it odd that in a composition ostensibly entitled the *Life of Remigius*, so much of the narrative concentrates on other subjects. The *vita's* first editor, Henry Wharton, addressed this 'problem' by claiming that it was a separate work, which he entitled *Giraldi Cambrensis Copula Tergemina, seu De Vitis sex episcoporum coetaneorum*.<sup>171</sup> However, this division appears to be artificial, as although in his preface to the *VSR*, and in his later work *De iure*, Gerald refers to the *Copula tergemina* (three sets of two); on both occasions the work is discussed as a constituent part of the *VSR*.<sup>172</sup> That it was also part of the first-edition text of the *VSR* is confirmed by the initial comments Gerald made at the beginning of *DEAT*. Here Gerald states that having discussed the bishops of Lincoln, and 'having neglected none' (*nullum praetereundo*), he will now turn to the exemplary bishops of his own time.<sup>173</sup> If this part of the work had been written specifically for the later second edition, Gerald should have included Hugh of Lincoln's successor, William of Blois (d.1206).

Nonetheless, although the *DEAT* was clearly conceived as part of Gerald's original plan for the *VSR*, it is often treated as an anomaly. Mary Cheney, in her historical biography of Roger of Worcester, dismissed the entire section, arguing that it

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<sup>171</sup> *Anglia sacra*, Vol.2, p.408: '*Duae proxime sequentes Giraldi historiae ex uno eodemque decerptae sunt Opere, quod ipse Legendam S.Remigii insciptsit. Idem tamen alibi pluries historiam suam De Vitis Episcoporum Lincolnensium, et tractatum De Copula tergemina, seu sex episcopis sui temporis laudavit*': *VSR*, p.xliv and p.43.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4 '*Invenietis et hic episcoporum Angliae, praecipua nostris diebus laude dignorum, copulam tergemina*'; *De iure* p.360: '*tractatum ejusdem De Copula Tergemina, in Legenda S.Remigii, Lincolnensis episcopi primi*'. Gransden has argued that this section is stylistically similar to the *De Contemptu Mundi* because 'it is appended to a work which up to this point had a unifying theme': *eadem*, *Historical Writing*, p.275. See section III (b) above for the reason why this is unlikely.

<sup>173</sup> *VSR*, p.43.

consisted entirely of 'trivial stories'.<sup>174</sup> Cheney's reductive assessment is symptomatic of most critiques of the text. Even if we view the narrative as a collection of stories or yarns spun by Gerald, we are still left with the question of why they were included in the first place. Often, the subject matter is explained away as indicative of Gerald's tendency to stray from his main focus. Dimock, for example, states that Gerald had 'wandered away from his subject [i.e. Remigius], after his manner, in giving the history of the successors of Remigius .... In the last three long chapters ... he wanders further away altogether even from Lincoln'.<sup>175</sup> Similarly, when Roberts came to comment upon the *DEAT*, he stated that this section was 'wholly irrelevant to the main theme [of the *VSR*]'.<sup>176</sup>

In defence of these earlier interpretations of the text, there are questions to be asked about why Gerald felt this section should be included within the *VSR*. However, it may be that in assessing the text, historians have imposed far too rigid a framework upon a genre that has great flexibility. The *DEAT* itself is not easily pigeonholed into a specific genre; the narrative is at times biographical, historiographical and hagiographical, while other parts read like a critique of contemporary bishops. Indeed, on a few occasions, Gerald even criticises the very bishops he has selected, most notably Baldwin of Canterbury. Neither is each portrait arranged chronologically. The question of genre is significant, as the *DEAT's* dismissal as irrelevant is predicated, to a large extent, on the view that its place within a work of hagiography is inappropriate. Yet, far from being remarkable or out of place, what the *DEAT* actually demonstrates is the degree to

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<sup>174</sup> Cheney, Roger, p.3. Cheney follows Gransden here in suggesting that this section of the *VSR* was appended: 'he jotted down a few notes, hardly more than anecdotes, about him and the others, and appended them to his work on St Remigius and his successors': *Ibid.*, p.1.

<sup>175</sup> *VSR*, p.xli.

<sup>176</sup> Roberts, Gerald of Wales, p.33.

which Gerald measured episcopal sanctity and ideal episcopal behaviour by the same criteria.

### (ii) The Re-use of *DEAT* in Gerald's Other Works

This may explain too why parts of the *DEAT* were recycled, often *verbatim*, in other works written by Gerald. Sections of Gerald's account of Henry of Blois's life, for example, are found in both Gerald's *De iure* (c.1218) and *GE*; in both instances, Gerald uses Henry as a model of exemplary episcopal conduct.<sup>177</sup> Likewise, his discussion of Thomas Becket's martyrdom is replicated in both his *De Instructione Principis* and his *Expugnatio Hibernica*.<sup>178</sup> Indeed, it is unclear whether these sections were composed first for the *VSR*, since the earliest recensions of the *Expugnatio Hibernica* exist from the early 1190s.<sup>179</sup> Such repetition is found throughout all of Gerald's *oeuvre*, and he felt no need to amend the text for the particular work that he was writing. The *VSR*'s audience of secular canons will have found similarities between Gerald's portrayal of Remigius and his description of contemporary exemplary prelates.

### (iii) View of Episcopal Office

Like the earlier parts of the *VSR*, the *DEAT* provides a welcome insight into contemporary views of the episcopal office, and reflects Gerald's ongoing interest

<sup>177</sup> *De iure*, pp.357-59; *GE*, p.113-114.

<sup>178</sup> *GCO*, Vol.8, *De Instructione Principis*, ed. J.Dimock (London, 1867), pp.1-329, at p.17: Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, pp.73-75.

<sup>179</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, p.xl; Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p.175. The *GE* may predate the *VSR*. Bartlett states it usually has been dated to 1197, but that the work as it exists (London, Lambeth Palace 236) may be a later recension: *ibid.*, p.178.

in appropriate episcopal conduct and behaviour, made much more personal by his own lack of success at becoming the (arch)bishop of St David's. It should not be viewed, however, as entirely reflective of Gerald's ideas or thoughts on the episcopal order – which itself changed throughout his lifetime. Most noticeably, in the *De iure* Gerald insists that secular clerics make much better bishops than those with monastic backgrounds; however, four of the six bishops in the *DEAT* were monks.<sup>180</sup> It may be that the *DEAT*'s themes reflect the period that Gerald wrote the work, certainly, the last decade of the twelfth century saw Gerald giving much thought to pastoral theology and its practical application within a diocesan environment. In light of this, the following section will examine the main themes that are highlighted in the *DEAT*. Drawing parallels with the views Gerald would express elsewhere, it will seek to contextualise the *VSR* and ask why it was originally composed.

Pastoral care is a central theme throughout the *DEAT*. In particular, Gerald was concerned with the mechanics of pastoral care, and the responsibilities thought to be held by the secular clergy. In contrast, the laity, the actual beneficiaries of pastoral care, are almost entirely absent from the *DEAT*. Again this is suggestive of a clerical audience for the *VSR*. Fundamental to the narrative is the relationship between bishops and their clergy, and the way in which said prelates took an active role within their diocese. Gerald also underscored the extent to which these bishops sought to endow their cathedral, and how they maintained and preserved the estates or lands with which they were entrusted. Henry of Blois, for instance,

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<sup>180</sup> *De iure*, p.127: 'Da mihi nunc quaeso, et praemium accipito, monachos nostri temporis duos his clericis duobus, quorum unus libertatem ecclesiasticam tyrannice depressam sub capitis discrimine tam viriliter evicit, alter eandem denuo deperditam et tanquam ex toto deformatem tam strenue reformavit, digne comparabiles'.

demonstrated an aptitude in both spheres; Gerald relates how Henry sought only 'prayers and masses' from his diocesan clerics, rather than tithes or other payments. At the same time, Gerald includes a list of the numerous and costly tapestries and works of art that Henry donated to Winchester cathedral.<sup>181</sup>

To some extent, these examples reflected concerns that Gerald had already illustrated in earlier parts of the *VSR*. When bishops were viewed or identified as a representative of their see, they were judged in their role as custodian or steward of an institution. As has been already documented, in his account of the Lincoln bishops after Remigius, Gerald included instances where bishops had given gifts or benefactions to their cathedral. Often, such donations had a lasting effect on the institution, even if it was only in terms of community prestige. On the other hand, the behaviour of some of the prelates he had criticised in this section could now be contrasted with these contemporary bishops. Having criticised Robert Chesney for simony and nepotism, Gerald, later in the *DEAT*, explains how Roger of Worcester had never conferred ecclesiastical benefices on any of his relations.<sup>182</sup> In this regard, Gerald argued, Roger followed the example of Thomas Becket.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> *VSR*, p.47: '*Item cathedralem ecclesiam suam palliis purpureis et olosericis, cortinis et aulaeis pretiosissimis textis, philateriis, crucibus aureis massatis et argenteis, miro et exquisito artificio longe materiam exsuperante fabricatis et gemmatis, incomparabiliter et inaestimabiliter usque ad regum etiam invidiam exornavit*'. See also E.Bishop, 'Gifts of Bishop Henry of Blois, Abbot of Glastonbury, to Winchester Cathedral', *Downside Review*, 3 (1884), pp.33-44; E.Mason, 'The Purposeful Patronage of Henry of Blois', *Medieval History*, 3 (1993), pp.30-50.

<sup>182</sup> For Robert Chesney see *VSR*, p.34: '*Hic terras quasdam alienavit; quasdam neptibus suis nuptui dandis cum scandali nota donavit*'. Gerald may be referring to him in the *GE* (p.224) when he states 'Then there was the bishop who said that when modest benefices were vacant he would give them to good men who were deserving of them, but rich and wealthy livings he would give to his kinsmen and nephews'. For Roger of Worcester, see *VSR*, p.66: '*nullos omnino redditus aut in terris aut ecclesiasticis beneficiis ulli consanguineorum suorum dedit*'. Found also in *GE*, pp.224-25.

<sup>183</sup> *VSR*, p.66: '*Thomae Cantuariensis in hoc vestigia sequens*'. In his *GE*, Gerald states 'It is said of Blessed Thomas of Canterbury that, in so high and revered an office as his was, he never gave preferment nor procured promotion for even one nephew or relative': *Ibid.*, pp.231-32.

In a wider sense, the focus upon pastoral care in the *DEAT* reflected Gerald's own position as a staunch reformer. Gerald relates in his autobiography his attempts at diocesan reform as archdeacon of Brecon, including how he suspended an elderly archdeacon named Jordan, who had been caught living with a mistress.<sup>184</sup> As Bartlett and others have suggested, Gerald viewed himself as a member of an educated ecclesiastical elite, with whom he shared a similar cultural outlook, one in which national or local allegiances were subordinated; yet to some extent he also saw himself as part of the civilising process of the Celtic church.<sup>185</sup> The earlier example of Henry of Huntingdon, a fellow archdeacon, provides a useful contrast. In his *Historia Anglorum*, Henry described how, at the legate Council of London (1125), the papal legate denounced those clerics who had wives or mistresses; the legate had subsequently been caught with a prostitute.<sup>186</sup> Henry began his story with a comment suggesting that we should judge such actions according to (English) tradition.<sup>187</sup> By the end of the twelfth century, such a view would have been considered out of step and insular. No doubt, this development in part reflected the very different educational background of both Henry and Gerald.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Butler, *Autobiography*, pp.42-44; for the archdeacon Jordan, see *The Letters of John of Salisbury, I. The Early Letters (1153-1161)*, ed. W.J.Millor and H.E.Butler, revised by C.N.L.Brooke (London, 1955), pp.134-35.

<sup>185</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, pp.31-53; R.R.Davies, *Domination and Conquest: The Experience of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, 1100-1300* (Cambridge, 1990), pp.20-23.

<sup>186</sup> Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, p.475: 'For in the council he dealt most severely with the matter of priest's wives, saying that it was the greatest sin to rise from the side of whore and go to make the body of Christ. Yet, although on the very same day he had made the body of Christ, he was discovered after vespers with a whore'. See also *Council and Synods*, pp.733-54.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p.473: '... it is right that we follow a true law of history concerning good and evil deeds. If this should displease any Roman or any prelate, let him keep silent...' / '... nos quoque ueram historie legem, de bonus et malis sequi dignum est. Quod si alicui Romano uel prelato displicuerit, taceat tamen...'

<sup>188</sup> The background to these developments is discussed in A.L.Barstow, *Married Priests and the Reforming Papacy: The Eleventh-Century Debates* (New York and London, 1982).

Gerald's interest in pastoral care was expressed in the *GE*. Here, he expounded at some length about contemporary prelates who were negligent and lax in applying church law, and in many instances taking advantage of their clergy.<sup>189</sup> To give just one example of many, Gerald tells of one priest who owed ten pigs to a bishop. Because he was late in this payment the bishop added another ten onto the tally. The priest then begged for leniency, but the bishop added another ten, and then another, until the priest was left owing forty pigs.<sup>190</sup> Such stories were perhaps caricatures, yet their purpose was to demonstrate the disorder and confusion that occurred in an environment in which the secular clergy, and particularly bishops, flouted canon law. Thus, in the *DEAT*, Gerald's prelates are inevitably shown to take a keen interest in their diocese.

Gerald provides a germane example of this in his description of Henry of Blois. In this section, Gerald explains how Henry sought, after many warnings and injunctions, to make all the priests within his diocese celebrate mass with chalices made out of silver rather than pewter or tin.<sup>191</sup> Having promised five hundred marks towards Henry II's campaign in Toulouse, Bishop Henry convened a council in his diocese in order to collect this loan from his clergy. He also suggested that the method of payment should be made in silver chalices. Consenting to their bishop's request (no doubt a little reluctantly), Henry consecrated the chalices, then returned them to his priests sending them off with a sharp rebuke, a little

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<sup>189</sup> For developments in the schools that likely impacted upon Gerald's thought, see J. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and his Circle* (Princeton, 1970).

<sup>190</sup> *GE*, p.251.

<sup>191</sup> *VSR*, p.47: '*Item cum audisset presbyteros per diocesim suam, post multas commonitiones et praeceptiones de calicibus argenteis habendis, in stanneis passim celebrare...*'

aggrieved that it had taken this measure for them to get their act in order.<sup>192</sup> Such an account might be discounted as a trivial story, yet there was a good reason for Gerald to highlight the behaviour of Henry in this case. In 1175, one of the canons of the Council of Westminster, had prohibited the consecration of pewter chalices by bishops.<sup>193</sup> By this act the Council expanded upon and reinforced a number of earlier continental conciliar rulings, which had sought to proscribe the use of wood, glass, tin and pewter chalices. By demonstrating that Henry, four years before this council, had made efforts to ensure that all the priests in his diocese had silver chalices, Gerald depicted Henry as a true reforming bishop. Henry was shown not simply reacting to the prescriptions of Church legislation, but instead taking the initiative. Such a story shows how carefully Gerald chose his examples for the *DEAT* in order to illustrate both individual conduct and wider ecclesiastical concerns.

For a bishop to be effective in his pastoral duties, Gerald held the view that any candidate for the episcopate had to have a thorough and extensive knowledge of canon law, theology and the Bible. This was not, of course, an innovative position to take; furthermore, by adopting this stance, Gerald articulated the concerns of many other contemporary critics of the Church. In part, as a response to these criticisms, throughout the twelfth century reformers sought to enforce measures which would reduce the gulf between the theoretical episcopal ideal and the many

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid., p.47-48: '*Quo promptissima a cunctis voluntate concessa, cum ad diem statutum singuli de singulis ecclesiis ad minus calices congererentur; de plerisque nimirum ecclesiis opimis plures allati fuerant; consecratis omnibus et benedictis, ad ecclesias unde venerant cunctos remisit, dicens; "Quae Deo et officio suo dare parati fuistis: nunc autem saniori consilio Deo donentur et ejus obsequiis in perpetuum mancipientur"*'.

<sup>193</sup> See *Councils and Synods*, p.988; M.G.Cheney, 'The Council of Westminster 1175: New Light on an Old Source', ed. D.Baker, SCH, 11 (Oxford, 1975), pp.61-68. This was repeated in Hubert Walter's Council of Westminster (1200): *Councils and Synods*, p.1063.

and varied practices which were adhered to on the ground. Indeed, by the turn of the century, pastoral theology was a topic discussed avidly within the Schools.<sup>194</sup> For many reformers, an institution which was hierarchical in nature needed to ensure that the ideas and practices of the Church were disseminated down to the lesser clergy, who, of course, in theory, held the ultimate responsibility for the care of souls. Clearly, if a bishop was ignorant or misinformed, how could the clergy be expected to behave in line with ecclesiastical legislation?

Episcopal responsibility is a dominant discourse in many of Gerald's works. Such criticisms could be used in various ways, depending on the context of Gerald's work and the point he was attempting to make in each instance. In his censures of the Celtic churches, for instance, it was often the bishops who were accused of promoting an environment in which clerical ignorance and unacceptable practices thrived. For example, in his *De rebus*, Gerald discussed a sermon that he gave at the council at Dublin (1186) in which he criticised the prelates and bishops of Ireland for 'being exceedingly slothful and negligent in the correction of a people whose transgressions are so extravagant'.<sup>195</sup> To some extent, his denunciation of Irish bishops fitted into Gerald's wider (and distorted) critique of the Celtic churches. However, Gerald found other targets for his censure: for example, in his *Speculum Ecclesiae*, he argued that the widespread practice of priests having wives or concubines reflected the negligence of the episcopate.<sup>196</sup> In the *GE*, Gerald enlarged upon this theme, and demonstrated some of the pastoral problems caused by the lack of judgement and incompetence of contemporary bishops. One of Gerald's

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<sup>194</sup> S.C.Ferruolo, *The Origins of the University: The Schools of Paris and their Critics, 1100-1215* (Chicago, 1985), pp.168-83.

<sup>195</sup> Butler, *Autobiography*, p.93; Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p.38.

<sup>196</sup> *GCO*, Vol. 4, p.314.

regular refrains is that there were too many 'superficial clerics', many of whom were barely literate.<sup>197</sup> As Gerald also stated in the *GE*, this was frequently the result of bishops not performing their job effectively:

... they [bishops] are extremely negligent in the examination of the clerics they ordain, especially of priests to whom the care of souls is committed. They ordain men without any selection or discrimination whatsoever .... Education and learning (especially necessary for priests concerned with the government of parishes and the care of souls), which ought to be scrutinised thoroughly, they dismiss.<sup>198</sup>

In the *DEAT*, therefore, Gerald highlights the other side of the coin, and commented upon the learning and knowledge of the prelates he had chosen as exemplary. Bartholomew of Exeter and Roger of Worcester, for instance, were thought to be 'consummate in the discipline of letters and speech'; while Hugh of Lincoln was called a very learned man '[*literatissimus*]'.<sup>199</sup> Examined in this light, it is worth recognising that even Remigius's qualities matched Gerald's understanding of an

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<sup>197</sup> *GE*, p.266.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>199</sup> *VSR*, p.57: '*eruditos literarum disciplinis et eloquentia praeclarus*'; and p.68.

ideal contemporary bishop: Remigius had been described as ‘a prudent and provident man, and very learned’.<sup>200</sup>

One example within the *DEAT* which provides a particularly good window into Gerald’s viewpoint is his account of the Council of Westminster. The Council, held between 11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> May 1175, was presided over by Archbishop Richard of Dover, Thomas Becket’s successor at Canterbury. This Council has been seen as one of the first in England where Gratian’s *Decretum* was used as a direct model for the canons that were promulgated; such measures sought to situate the issues raised in the *Decretum*, and apply them to a local and pastoral context.<sup>201</sup> However, in his account Gerald does not comment upon the substance of the canons. Instead, Gerald relates how Bartholomew of Exeter and Gilbert Foliot each gave sermons at the Council, and how both included veiled criticisms of Richard’s archiepiscopate. Gilbert had warned that someone who was raised up too quickly, above and beyond his or her merits, and then was subsequently found wanting, would find their fall all the quicker and ignoble.<sup>202</sup> Clearly, the main point they wished to express was that Richard was in no way qualified for his post. As Gerald puts it: ‘This Richard, greatly in the king’s favour ... seemed inferior, not only in scholarship, but also in zeal/energy and natural talent.’<sup>203</sup> To a large extent, Gerald was sympathetic to this view, and went on to argue in the following passage that knowledge should be seen as an essential prerequisite for the episcopal office.

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p.14: ‘*vir prudens et providus, et copiose literatus*’.

<sup>201</sup> C.N.L.Brooke, ‘Canons of English Church Councils in the Early Decretal Collections’, *Traditio*, 13, (1957), pp.471-80.

<sup>202</sup> *VSR*, p.58: ‘*de montibus virtutem ibidem loquens et montibus vitiorum, in illis dicebat, quia quo plus ascenditur et plus merito scandens sublimatur, in his vero quo plus proficit quis eo plus deficit, quo plus ascenditur plus descenditur, et longe deorsum ascensor in deteriora dejicitur*’.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.: ‘*Richardus ille, tantis in regno personis et tam validis longe non literatura solum, sed industriae pariter et naturae dotibus*’.

Indeed, all bishops, he maintained, needed to be knowledgeable 'to the tips of their fingers'.<sup>204</sup> Too often, Gerald complained, it happened that a bishop was chosen before he had acquired the relevant expertise.

A number of concerns are being articulated here. Questions regarding the circumstances of a bishop's education were placed alongside a larger discussion about who should be chosen as bishop, what the appropriate criteria were, and, finally, who made that decision. Furthermore, on one level, Gerald's comments and that of the speeches he relates could also be seen as a comment about social mobility. Earlier twelfth-century writers, like Orderic Vitalis, had criticised prelates such as Ranulf, bishop of Durham, who was a son of a village priest, for their ignoble backgrounds.<sup>205</sup> For Ranulf's critics, it seemed that he was prepared to ride rough shod over others because his position was entirely dependent on the king's favour. Similarly, such concerns can be seen borne out by the example in the *DEAT*. Many contemporaries appear to have been suspicious that Richard of Dover was acting as if he was accountable only to the king rather than the wider Church.

Issues of class and education were undoubtedly interrelated; a measure of both allowed a bishop to retain an independent identity as a noble or learned scholar. Nobility as an attribute is seen by Gerald not only a virtue in itself, but something that was often the root of, or reason for, a bishop's education and learning. Here Gerald was probably drawing upon classical traditions, particularly Ciceronian concepts and ideas, and then placing them within a Christian framework. For

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid.: '*ad unguem*'.

<sup>205</sup> Orderic's attitudes to these 'new men' are discussed in R.W.Southern, 'Ranulf Flambard and Early Anglo-Norman Administration', *TRHS*, 4<sup>th</sup> Series, 16 (1933), pp.95-128.

example, in his depiction of Henry of Blois Gerald talks of Henry's nobility on at least three occasions. In one instance, in contrast to William Wycombe, who suggested that Robert Bethune's unusual collection of animals was considered a cause for severe penitence, Gerald argues that Henry's assortment of wild beasts and birds were 'signs of [his] innate nobility'.<sup>206</sup> No doubt here we see how Gerald's background as a secular cleric and the audience for which he was writing influenced his view on the use of wealth; whereas a monastic writer might have condemned such actions as profligacy.

Clearly, the fact that Henry was brother to King Stephen must have permitted him a considerable degree of political influence. Gerald comments upon this in the *DEAT*: although he did suggest that Henry went too far in his use of such power, Gerald states that Henry's behaviour should be indulged because of the strength with which he maintained the reputation of the Church.<sup>207</sup> Gerald is certainly half-hearted in his criticisms of Henry. Indeed, he almost gloatingly writes of the way Henry destroyed the royal palace at Winchester because it was too close to his cathedral, and then used the materials to furnish his own houses.<sup>208</sup> Gerald seems almost nostalgic in his account of Henry's audacious actions. Was he here asking his readers to think about whether contemporary bishops would have a similar strength of will in respect of their see?

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<sup>206</sup> *VSR*, p.45: '*hic, inquam, quicquid in bestiis, quicquid in avibus, quicquid in monstris terrarum variis, peregrinum magis et prae oculis hominum vehementius obstupendum et admirandum audire vel excogitare potuerat, tanquam innatae nobilitatis indicia congerebat*'.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46: '*tam indulta desuper potestate quam et innata nobilitate conservavit*'.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Domos regias apud Wintoniam, ecclesiae ipsius atrio nimis enormiter imminentes, regiae Londoniensi non qualitate non quantitate secundas, quoniam cathedrali ecclesiae cui praeerat nimium vicinae fuerant et onerosae, vir animosus et audax funditus in brevi, raptim et subito, nacta solum temporis opportunitate, dejecit; et in majorem publicae potestatis offensam, ex dirutis aedificiis et abstractis domos episcopales egregias sibi in eadem urbe construxit*'.

## (iv) The Liberty of the Church

The importance of pastoral care and education impinged upon a wider theme, one which is perhaps the strongest among Gerald's reformist concerns, that is, the defence of ecclesiastical liberties. Throughout the *DEAT*, Gerald portrays these bishops as fearless in their opposition to the king. In this instance, Thomas Becket was the yardstick by which he judged the behaviour of the contemporary episcopate. Becket's conflict with Henry II, his exile and his eventual murder in 1170, led to heightened fears about the extent to which the king might impinge upon papal power and church autonomy.

Gerald gave a vivid and graphic account of Becket's murder, and the saint's death resonated throughout the *DEAT*; each of the six bishops was compared to the martyr, and they were also contrasted with him if they were found lacking. For instance, Baldwin of Canterbury, although Gerald's former patron, was deemed by Gerald to have lost the ecclesiastical freedoms won by Becket's martyrdom.<sup>209</sup> Gerald summed up Baldwin's life as 'that most fervent monk, warm abbot, tepid bishop, and slack archbishop'.<sup>210</sup> In other words, as Baldwin had become part of the establishment, he had done less to defend ecclesiastical liberties. However, Gerald also tried to create a more tangible link between the bishops in the *DEAT* and Thomas Becket. He described how each of these bishops had played a part in Becket's life, or in the events following his death. For example, concerning Henry of Blois, Gerald relates how, at Thomas Becket's consecration as archbishop of

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid., p.72: '*Quod itaque martyr insignis, pravas reni consuetudines in ecclesiam Dei pullulantes extirpando, multis prius allegatis, demum caput allegando feliciter evicit, hoc ille, cujus occulta quidem iudicia sed nunquam injusta, per martyris ejusdem primi successoris remissam liberalitatem, nec dicam ignaviam, recidivo jam morbo redivivaque malitia, quod non absque dolore dicendum vel audiendum, in ecclesiae suae damnum enorme perditum ire permisit*'.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., p.68: '*...monacho ferventissimo, abbati calido, episcopo tepido, archiepiscopo remisso*'. Repeated also in Gerald's *Speculum ecclesiae: GCO*, Vol. 4, p.76.

Canterbury, Henry had counselled Becket about his position and Henry II's attitude towards the Church. The king was, Henry said, by his very nature entirely against liberty for the Church.<sup>211</sup> Similarly, Gerald describes how one of Becket's murderers, William de Traci confessed to Bartholomew that Henry had made them swear an oath that they would kill Becket. Although Henry denied William's claims, Bartholomew is said to have always believed in the king's guilt.<sup>212</sup> Such examples demonstrated how these bishops acted as heirs to Becket.

In some respects, therefore, if the *DEAT* was a comment upon the contemporary episcopate, it also constituted a criticism of the unjust use of royal power. Gerald makes this point specifically when he comments on the process by which bishops were usually elected. He argued that 'today in many places the intrusions of the king replace canonical election; there is a mere pretext of election and a very doubtful acclamation in which the voice alone is heard, but the choice of the will goes unheard'.<sup>213</sup> The same themes found in the earlier parts of the *VSR* are again reiterated here. The defence of ecclesiastical liberties would continue to be a theme of late twelfth-century and thirteenth-century episcopal hagiography and we can see how Becket's legacy influenced Gerald's composition as well.

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid., p.45: '*Noverat enim regis Heinrici secundi naturam, ecclesiasticae libertati ex toto contrariam*'.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., p.61: '*Sed ex quo dictus miles ei locutus, ut dictum est, et confessus fuerat, quoties inde postmodum sermo fiebat, praecisum super hoc mandatum emanasse*'. For discussion of this incident and how the event was remembered, see Barlow, *Becket*, pp.251-258 and N.Vincent, 'The Murderers of Thomas Becket', *Bishofsmord im Mittelalter*, ed. N.Fryde and D.Reitz (Göttingen, 2003), pp.211-72.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p.59: '*Hodie vero loco canonicae electionis, in plerisque partibus successit intrusio principis, sub voce tamen electionis, vana et umbratili pronuntiatione, ubi vox quidem solum auditur, nec voluntas attenditur*'.

The life of Remigius, including Gerald's history of the Lincoln bishops and his description of exemplary contemporary bishops, places emphasis upon episcopal stewardship, and highlights the importance of episcopal autonomy from royal interference. Such concerns would have certainly appealed to Lincoln's canons. As has been argued, the first edition of the *VSR*, which was donated to the chapter library, was probably written at the request of the chapter and, therefore, was composed with the chapter's interests in mind. Gerald's emphasis on the positive and negative aspects of episcopal conduct also suggests that it was intended as a didactic guide for future bishops of the diocese. Certainly, any new incumbent at Lincoln who read the *VSR* would now have some understanding of what his cathedral canons wanted from their bishop.

## VI. Conclusion

Like many saints' lives, the *VSR* provided the Lincoln chapter with both a history of its establishment and an account of Remigius's life and acts. However, the *vita* was also a record of the see's past which provided the church at Lincoln with a sanctified post-conquest history. Gerald's choice of material for the *VSR* may well reflect a pragmatic decision based on the evidence available, yet he also seems to have structured the text to suit the interests of the audience for whom he composed the work. We have argued here that this audience would most likely have been the secular canons of Lincoln cathedral; certainly Gerald emphasised particular events which related to the development of the Lincoln cathedral and its chapter. Furthermore, the *VSR* seems to echo the chapter's contemporary preoccupations.

Remigius's *vita* was one part of a larger work in which certain themes, such as the changing nature of the episcopal office, were reiterated throughout. There was clearly a need to update Remigius's image, and Gerald pruned and cut his episcopal representation until he was satisfied. In this way, Gerald's own beliefs and attitudes were also expressed within the *VSR*. However, considering the generally reformist nature of these comments, as well as Gerald's own status as a secular canon, it is possible to argue that the *VSR* articulates the interests and concerns of the secular chapter at Lincoln as much as it reflects the author's own beliefs. In this way it is difficult to distinguish whose voice we hear in the *VSR*, and we can not know whether the canons were wholly satisfied with Gerald's finished product. As we shall see in the following chapter, Remigius's cult was later superseded by that of Hugh of Lincoln, although thanks to the efforts of Gerald, the saint was not forgotten by the canons at Lincoln cathedral.

## Chapter 4: The *Vita Sancti Hugonis*

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### I. Introduction

The *Vita Sancti Hugonis* is a life of the Carthusian bishop of Lincoln, Hugh of Avalon (c.1140-1200), written by Gerald of Wales (c.1146–1220 x 1223).<sup>1</sup> Hugh, a native of Burgundy, had come to England in 1179 at the request of Henry II, who wished Hugh to head his new Carthusian foundation at Witham, Somerset.<sup>2</sup> Having been impressed with both Hugh's administration as prior, and his reputation for holiness, Henry encouraged Hugh's candidacy for the Lincoln bishopric. Consecrated on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 1186, Hugh was bishop of Lincoln for fourteen years until his death on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1200.<sup>3</sup> The *VSH* is an *opusculum*; it briefly sketches Hugh's life, concentrating on a few of his notable deeds, focussing in particular on his actions as bishop; it was also an account of Hugh's early cult and post-mortem *miracula*. To a large extent the *VSH* has been ignored in comparison to another *Life* of Hugh, the

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<sup>1</sup> See Gerald of Wales, *The Life of St Hugh of Avalon*, ed. and trans. R.M.Loomis (New York and London, 1985) – hereafter *VSH*. Farmer has stated that the *VSH* was the second of two lives Gerald composed of St Hugh. In this respect, Farmer must have been referring to the two short accounts of Hugh in the *VSR*; these were summaries of Hugh, written during the bishop's life, and not hagiographical in nature: Adam of Eynsham, *MVSH*, Vol.1, p.xxviii. This error may be why Lapidge and Love thought the *VSR* was actually an earlier life of St Hugh: M.Lapidge and R.C.Love 'The Latin Hagiography of England and Wales (600-1500)', in *Hagiographies*, ed. Phillippart, Vol.3, pp.203-325, at p.277.

<sup>2</sup> *VSH*, pp.12-13; *MVSH*, Vol.1, pp.xxiv-xxv.

<sup>3</sup> I have consulted the following for Hugh: R.M.Woolley, *St Hugh of Lincoln* (Oxford, 1927); Knowles, *Monastic Order*, pp.375-91; D.H.Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln* (London, 1985); H.Leyser, 'Hugh the Carthusian', in *St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. Mary-Harting, pp.1-18; K.Leyser, 'The Angevin Kings and the Holy Man', in *ibid.*, pp.49-73; H.E.J.Cowdrey, 'Hugh of Avalon, Carthusian and Bishop', in *De Cella in Seculum: Religious and Secular Life and Devotion in Late Medieval England*, ed. M.G.Sargent, (Cambridge, 1989), pp.41-57; *idem*, 'The Carthusian Impact upon Angevin England', *Die Ausbreitung Kartausischen Lebens und Geistes im Mittelalter* 1, ed. J.Hogg (Salzburg, 1990), pp.35-48; *idem*, 'The Carthusians and their Contemporary World: The Evidence of Twelfth-Century Bishops' *Vitae*,' in *Die Kartausen und ihre Welt. Kontakte und Gegenseitige Einflüsse*, 1, ed J.Hogg (Salzburg, 1993), pp.26-43.

*MVSH*, written by Adam of Eynsham (c.1155-c.1233), Hugh's chaplain and confidante.<sup>4</sup> The *MVSH* has been termed an 'intimate biography' and, as such, is seen as representative of a new style of writing which provided a more personal portrait of its subject.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, the brevity of the *VSH* has been considered one of its major flaws. David Knowles, for instance, went so far as to state that the *vita* was a 'colourless piece of work which adds little to our knowledge of either saint or of his biographer'.<sup>6</sup> Even the more positive reviews still treat the *VSH* as an *addendum*; Farmer stated the *VSH* was 'an admirable supplement to Adam's biography'.<sup>7</sup>

The *VSH* has been seldom explored in its own right. The notable exception to this trend is Richard Loomis who defended the *Life* by arguing that it was 'a concise, dignified portrait, written to enlighten and move a general audience' and 'a sensitive tribute to the Bishop of Lincoln that contributed significantly to his public cult'.<sup>8</sup> Loomis raised many valid points about the nature of Gerald's *vita*, yet much more remains to be said about the links between the depiction of Hugh in the *VSH* and the *vita's* audience.

Indeed, Loomis's interpretation of the *Life* was, to some extent, hindered by his attempt to situate the *VSH* alongside the same models that Eadmer used in his *Life of*

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<sup>4</sup> For Adam see *MVSH*, pp.vii-xxii; and D.H.Farmer, 'Eynsham, Adam of (*b. c.1155, d. in or after 1233*)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/48313>, accessed 12 Sep 2008]

<sup>5</sup> R.W.Southern, Saint Anselm and his Biographer, pp.320-26; and J.F.Benton, 'Consciousness of Self and Perceptions of Individuality,' in Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century, ed. Benson and Constable, pp.263-95.

<sup>6</sup> Knowles, Monastic Order in England, p.673; elsewhere (p.381) Knowles calls the *VSH* 'very meagre and disappointing'.

<sup>7</sup> *MVSH*, p.xxviii.

<sup>8</sup> *VSH*, p.30; R.Loomis, 'Giraldus De Barri's Homage to Hugh of Avalon', in De Cella in Seculum ed. Sargent, pp.29-40.

*Anselm*. For the latter work, Southern had come up with a four-fold typology of hagiographical models which Eadmer could have drawn upon for the *Vita Anselmi*: the heroic pattern, the commemorative pattern, the secular pattern and the desert tradition.<sup>9</sup> Using Southern's terminology, Loomis argued that 'the anecdotes in the *Life of St Hugh*, with their wise sayings, call to mind the lives of the desert fathers ... like Eadmer, he [Gerald] tells Hugh's life and conversation with some of the naturalness and directness of the ancient desert fathers'.<sup>10</sup> Loomis's claim is difficult to substantiate. Gerald does not appear to have referenced the *Vitae Patrum*, nor does speech or conversation, a quality found in the lives of the desert fathers, play a significant role in the *VSH*. In fact, Loomis noticed that his comparison was artificial; as he stated, Gerald's work 'has none of the features Southern identifies as essential to the conventional saint's life: no portents at birth, no miracles or prophecies during life, no death-bed scene with signs'.<sup>11</sup> In this respect, the *VSH* is a work that falls outside of Southern's classification and needs to be treated as such.

This chapter will expand upon the conclusions made in Chapter 3's analysis of the *VSR*. There we demonstrated that Gerald probably wrote with the secular canons of Lincoln cathedral in mind, and that this influenced the ways in which both Remigius and other bishops were presented. Here, we will suggest that episcopal identity was shaped and delineated as much by reference to those whom Gerald dedicated and patronised his text, as it effected the characterisation of the saint itself. In parts III and IV we will explore the degree to which Hugh's episcopal identity was appropriated

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<sup>9</sup> Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer*, pp.320-26.

<sup>10</sup> *VSH*, p.xlvi.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.xlvi-xlvii.

and used by various groups; we will also suggest that the form of the *VSH* was largely shaped by its primary function as a record of Hugh's post-mortem cult and miracles. Part V will examine the models and sources that Gerald used to construct Hugh's sanctity, contrasting it with the monastic 'biography' of Adam of Eynsham. Here, we will again develop the idea, suggested in our analysis of the *VSR*, that the model of Thomas Becket influenced Gerald and that he frequently emphasised those characteristics that Hugh shared with the martyred saint. We will also demonstrate that Gerald was influenced to a large extent by the scholastic education and upbringing which he inhabited; again, this shaped the way he emphasised Hugh's episcopate and the sources he drew upon in constructing this image. Nonetheless, first, in part II, we will sketch briefly the manuscript context of the *VSR*, and introduce the text by contrasting Gerald's purpose in writing the *VSH* with that of Adam of Eynsham's understanding of the *MVSH*.

## II. Manuscript and Text

### (a) Composition of the *VSH* and MS CCC 425

The evidence for the dating of the *VSH*'s composition is as follows: the *Life* had to have been written after 1209, as the list of *capitula* at the beginning of the only manuscript of the *vita* to have survived describes Hugh of Avalon as '*Hugonis primi*'. Hugh of Wells was consecrated bishop of Lincoln on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 1209 at Meulan by Stephen

Langton.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, a *marginalia* addition in the MS adds '*primo*' to a reference to King John's expedition to Poitou. John's first expedition had occurred in 1206; his second in mid-February 1214. Thus, the correction had to have been made after this date. Dimock and Loomis both suggest this occurred while Gerald or his scribes were preparing the manuscript for presentation.<sup>13</sup>

The *VSH* was also likely completed before Innocent III lifted the interdict from England on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1214.<sup>14</sup> The third section of the *vita* documented the miracles that had occurred during the interdict, and Gerald here does not speak of the interdict in the past tense.<sup>15</sup> Stronger evidence comes from the *prefatio* in which Gerald mentions how, at the time of writing the dedication, Hugh of Wells was currently the only English bishop that Langton had consecrated.<sup>16</sup> The *vita* must have been written, therefore, before October 5<sup>th</sup> 1214, when Langton consecrated two further bishops, Walter de Grey and Simon De Apulia, to the sees of Worcester and Exeter respectively. The last event recorded in the *VSH* is a miracle account that includes mention of three Lincoln church officials, Geoffrey the precentor of Lincoln cathedral, Reimund the archdeacon of Leicester and William the archdeacon of West Riding.<sup>17</sup> Using Adam of Eynsham's *MVSH*, Loomis has argued that Reimund was in Paris during the whole of the interdict, but likely returned to England at the same time as Stephen Langton –

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<sup>12</sup> *VSH*, p.3.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.69; and see *GCO*, Vol.7, *Vita Sancti Hugonis*, ed. J.F.Dimock (London, 1877), pp. 83-147, at p.137, n.3 – hereafter Dimock, *VSH*.

<sup>14</sup> See C.R.Cheney, 'King John and the Papal Interdict', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 31 (1948), pp. 295-317; *idem*, 'King John's Reaction to the Interdict on England,' *TRHS*, 4<sup>th</sup> Series, 31 (1949), pp.129-50.

<sup>15</sup> *VSH*, p.69: 'A transition from signs before the interdict to signs given by God during the interdict itself...' / '*Transitus de signis ante interdictum ad signa divinitus in ipso interdicto data*'.

<sup>16</sup> Dimock, *VSH*, p.5, n.2. Dimock states that this is proven by Gerald's use of the word '*unigenitus*'.

<sup>17</sup> *VSH*, p.81.

that is July 1213.<sup>18</sup> However, this is certainly circumstantial, as we do not know when Reimund ended his self-imposed exile. Instead, we can look at another of the officials named in the account. William of West Riding, who is mentioned alongside Reimund, can be identified as William Thorney or Tournay. The nineteenth-century edition of *Fasti Anglicanae* stated that William became archdeacon of Stow (West Riding) in 1213.<sup>19</sup> However, the first time William occurs with his actual title is in fact 27<sup>th</sup> February 1214.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, it may be that this last miracle was recorded in the spring of 1214. Nevertheless, even if this is not the case, and William was already archdeacon at this time, this would certainly agree with the evidence examined thus far. In short, Gerald had to have composed the *VSH* at some point between the beginning of 1210 and the first half of 1214.

(b) The *Proemium* to the *VSH*

Gerald begins the *Proemium* to the *VSH* thus: 'The more rarely that miracles and signs appear in saints when the church is old than when she is young, the more lovingly, the more gratefully and joyously should they be cherished when they do appear'.<sup>21</sup> This initial comment, some of which appears to echo Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Job*, sets out one of the main agendas of the *VSH* – that is, to act as record of Hugh's miracles. The miracle sections were not, however, intended as a fulsome record of

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp.125-26; *MVSH*, p.155: 'He [Reimund] was almost the only one who of his own free will chose a long exile rather than be responsible for the cowardly betrayal of the liberty of [sic] Holy Church'. / *'Ipse pene solus spontaneum potius elegit et diutinum subire exilium quam sponse Regis eterni, sancte uidelicet ecclesie libertatem'*.

<sup>19</sup> *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, Vol. 3, p.76.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 44-47.

<sup>21</sup> *VSH*, pp.6-7: '*Quanto rarius ecclesia senescente quam nascente virtutes in sanctis et signa clarescunt, tanto carius ea, cum emergerint, graciosius atque iocundius amplectenda'*.

Hugh's post-mortem miracles; at the end of chapter 13, Gerald stated that his record of Hugh's miracles was a '*conpendi[um]*', not a comprehensive list.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, in chapter one of the final section, Gerald had commented thus: 'I shall give a digest in the style of the schools and add some additional relevant material'.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, his summaries of the miracles in fact contained more detail than that found in Hugh's canonisation report.

The emphasis upon the miracles and signs in the *VSH* may be one reason why Adam of Eynsham criticised the other works which were written of Hugh: 'I do not wholeheartedly admire their work, for to write a full and satisfactory life of such a man is impossible'.<sup>24</sup> Adam does not specify that he is referring to Gerald here, and he appears to contradict himself later when he states that 'Many persons far more competent than myself wrote in some detail about him, and I have even perused some of their works'.<sup>25</sup> Farmer has certainly made the case for Adam having read Gerald's *VSH*.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, Adam may have written his biography of Hugh because he felt that Gerald's life did not provide enough detail of Hugh's monastic upbringing and life. One cannot help

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp.64-65.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp.68-69: '*Scolastico quoque digerere stilo ceterisque non incompetenter adicere*'.

<sup>24</sup> *MVSH*, p.3: '*Quis enim, ut uere condignum erat, uniuersa que de tanto uiro salubriter innotescerent, scribendo explicaret*'.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.: '*non modica set nec pauca de hiis quosdam me longe doctiores scripsisse agnoui, ex quibus aliqua inspexi*'. Again, in the prologue (p.45) to Book II of the *MVSH*, Adam notes that he omitted 'valuable material concerning his episcopate, belonging to the period before I became his companion ... because I have learnt that more competent scholars than myself have already set it down in writing.' This may have referred to the *VSH*, or the accounts that Gerald gave of Hugh within the *VSR*.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p.xiv.

but feel that he was less than pleased that the *VSH* concentrated upon Hugh's miracles rather than his life and deeds. Adam, in fact, points out that Hugh himself 'thought miracles were the last thing to admire or wish to emulate, although he used to describe very attractively those worked by holy men which he had read or heard about, and had a great veneration for them himself ... but to him the holiness of the saints was better than any miracle and alone provided an example to be imitated'.<sup>27</sup> Instead, Adam made clear that it was Hugh's life that should be looked upon as a model to imitate. It may be that Adam contrasted Gerald's *vita* with his own when he stated: 'Our motive in making our selection was not to win the empty admiration of our readers or audience, but to edify those who want to learn what things are good and holy in order to imitate them'.<sup>28</sup> Here, as in Chapter 1 where William of Malmesbury's criticised Faricius's *vita*, it appears that Adam sought to distinguish his own *vita* from that of previous works.

### (c) The Manuscript Context and Editions

The lives of St Remigius and St Hugh survive in a single manuscript, at Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 425.<sup>29</sup> The author, Gerald of Wales, is identified in an inscription which appears at the beginning of the manuscript: '*Libellus de diversis (sic) miraculis, G. De Barri dictus archidiaconus sancti David*'. The lives are situated within the manuscript on ff.6<sup>r</sup>-44<sup>v</sup> and ff.46<sup>r</sup>-79<sup>r</sup> respectively; a collection of seventy-eight

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p.90: '*ut nichil minus quam miraculorum prodigia mirari aut emulari uideretur, cum hec tamen de uiris sanctis lecta aut cognita suauius referret et sublimius ueneretur ... cum illi sola esset sanctorum sanctitas pro miraculo, sola sufficeret pro exemplo*'.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.: '*In quibus non admirationem superfluum legentium siue audientium captamus, set ea potius que sancta sunt et salubria nosse et imitari cupientium edificationem*'.

<sup>29</sup> James, *Catalogue*, pp.330-32.

letters was appended to the manuscript in the fifteenth century.<sup>30</sup> The lives (as part of CCC MS 425) were considered to be part of a single work; in the preface Gerald describes the treatise as containing two parts: '*Volumen hoc bipartitum, duorum quippe virorum illustrium vitas ... complectens*'.<sup>31</sup> The pagination also indicates that the lives were intended as a single entity and were copied jointly by the same scribe.<sup>32</sup> The *VSH* begins in the last quarter of the sixth quire and follows directly on from the *VSR*. As with the *VSR*, the *VSH* was first edited by Henry Wharton in 1691 as part of the second volume of the *Anglia Sacra*.<sup>33</sup> Dimock edited the text for the nineteenth century Rolls Series, yet this has now been superseded by Loomis's edition and translation of the text.<sup>34</sup>

Much of the following investigation will examine the question of patronage and audience by using textual references from within the *VSH*. Yet a few words should be said about why Gerald would have placed the two lives together. Principally, the lives strengthened the association between Lincoln's founder Remigius with the contemporary Saint Hugh. As such, it associated Lincoln's past, specifically its first post-conquest bishop, with that of the present saint, linking them together in the minds of their audience. CCC MS 425 can be paralleled with another thirteenth-century manuscript. Senatus, who was a member of Bishop Roger of Worcester's episcopal household, wrote abbreviated lives of St Oswald and St Wulfstan, both

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<sup>30</sup> This is attributed to Gerald's contemporary Peter of Blois. Peter of Blois was like Gerald a late twelfth-century archdeacon. Perhaps a later librarian thought that works of two twelfth-century archdeacons should be catalogued together.

<sup>31</sup> *VSR*, p.2.

<sup>32</sup> James, *Catalogue*, pp.330-32.

<sup>33</sup> Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*; see also Dimock, *VSH*, p. xlix.

<sup>34</sup> See Dimock, *VSH* and Loomis, *VSH*. Loomis does not, however, include the *prefatio* to CCC 425 in his edition.

Worcester saints, which are found together in Durham Cathedral Library, MS IV.39b.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps composed for the Worcester community in their attempt to have their eleventh-century bishop Wulfstan canonised, the lives, as with the Lincoln bishops, are placed consecutively within the manuscript.

#### (d) Audience for the Manuscript

The most recent study of Gerald's works has suggested that CCC 425 was one of nine manuscripts written in a scriptorium under Gerald's supervision. Scriptoria were more generally found in monastic settings or sometimes in ecclesiastical households, yet Rooney suggests that Gerald had his own private scriptorium, and that this can be substantiated by the similarities in the manuscripts' appearance and the fact they all have common features such as chapter lists and chapter headings. She adds a caveat to this, however, noting that 'the precise arrangements within which these scribes were working, and whether they were 'professionals' or religious (and hence perhaps working within their own religious institutions) is impossible to determine in the present state of our knowledge'.<sup>36</sup>

Montague James has described the layout and structure of the text, and more recently Julia Crick has provided a brief and helpful codicological summary.<sup>37</sup> Without

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<sup>35</sup> Cheney, Roger, Bishop of Worcester, pp.58-66; Eadmer of Canterbury, Lives and Miracles of Saints Oda, Dunstan, and Oswald, ed. B.J.Muir and A.J.Turner (Oxford, 2006), pp.cxxiv-cxxvi.

<sup>36</sup> C.M.Rooney, 'The Manuscripts of the Works of Gerald of Wales', Unpublished PhD thesis (2005, Cambridge), p.151.

<sup>37</sup> James, Catalogue, pp.330-32. James gives the collation as 1<sup>8</sup> (wants 1) 2<sup>8</sup> 3<sup>8</sup>. Crick's description is in *VSH*, pp.li-lii.

repeating Crick's summary there are many features of the text which suggests that CCCC MS 425 was intended to be a presentation copy. The manuscript contains eleven elaborately decorated initials, five of which contain illustrations which provide a conventional portrayal of a contemporary bishop; these figures wear a mitre, hold a crook in their left hand and bestow blessings with their right hand.<sup>38</sup> Each of these illustrations is placed at a section of the text which introduces a new bishop.<sup>39</sup>

If this manuscript was intended as a presentation copy, were the lives only meant as devotional texts? Clearly, this has implications for our understanding of both the manuscript's function and its audience. Loomis has suggested that its brevity meant the *vita* would have been read aloud, a point which he demonstrated by drawing attention to the use of the *punctus elevatus* throughout the *VSH*.<sup>40</sup> This mark also features throughout the *VSR*, although it went unnoticed by Loomis. Malcolm Parkes has noted that the *punctus elevatus* was used 'to indicate a major medial pause within a *sententia* where the *sensus* is complete but the sentential is not'.<sup>41</sup> It also had an oral function; the mark was used to regulate pitch, and was intended to emphasise a particular section and signal the attention of the listener.<sup>42</sup> Parkes has shown that this

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<sup>38</sup> The five illustrations are to be found at: (1) The Preface to Stephen Langton, p.9; (2) The beginning of *VSR*, p.20; (3) The chapter concerning Bartholomew of Exeter and Roger of Winchester, p.62; (4) The chapter concerning Hugh of Lincoln and Baldwin Archbishop of Canterbury, p.73; (5) The beginning of *VSH* p.97. Rooney seemed to think these illustrations had been randomly placed but, as James stated much earlier, the placement makes perfect sense.

<sup>39</sup> For some reason there is no illustration for the chapter concerning Thomas Becket and Henry of Winchester, even though the other two sets of bishops receive illustrations. Nevertheless on p.54 *De Thoma Cantuarenci* has been entered in capitals and the M of *Martyris* is printed in Gold.

<sup>40</sup> *VSH*, p.xliv. Loomis took his argument from *Life of St. Anselm*, ed. and trans. Southern, p.xxix. Southern notes that such marks are found more frequently in the miracle sections of *vitae*.

<sup>41</sup> M.B.Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation* (Aldershot, 1992), p.36.

<sup>42</sup> Loomis points out that in Gerald's *vita* the punctuation is often found before a verb at the end of a sentence: *VSH*, p.xliv. See also M.T.Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307*

type of punctuation was most commonly used in liturgical manuscripts, and that increasingly throughout the Middle Ages the use of *positurae* came to be adopted and used for a wide range of non-liturgical texts.<sup>43</sup> What we can say is that although this was clearly a presentation copy, it does not exclude the idea that Gerald intended his work to reach a wider audience, nor that his audience was necessarily restricted to monks and clerics. Certainly, for the earlier Carolingian period, Katherine Heene has demonstrated how hagiographical texts might have been recited to an audience who did not understand Latin.<sup>44</sup> Saints' lives were often used or incorporated into the liturgy for saints' feast days, and it is feasible that these sources may have been disseminated to a wider audience. Gerald's *Vita Ethelberti*, written at the request of Hereford canons, states in the preface that it was intended to be read on St Ethelbert's day.<sup>45</sup> The *VSR* and the *VSH* may have been used on similar circumstances, and specifically on those occasions where the laity and the cathedral clergy came into contact.<sup>46</sup>

### III. Audience

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(Oxford, 1999), pp.256-70; and R.Crosby, 'Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages', *Speculum*, 11 (1936), pp.90-102.

<sup>43</sup> Parkes, *Pause and Effect*, p.36.

<sup>44</sup> K.Heene, '*Audire, legere, vulgo*: An Attempt to Define Public Use and Comprehensibility of Carolingian Hagiography', in *Latin and the Romance Languages in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. R.Wright (Pennsylvania, 1996), pp.146-63. A point also made for the Anglo-Saxon period by M.Lapidge, 'The Sainly Life in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. M.Godden and M.Lapidge (Cambridge, 1991), pp.243-63, at p.253.

<sup>45</sup> James, 'Two Lives of St. Ethelbert', p.220.

<sup>46</sup> See M.Franklin, 'The Cathedral as Parish Church: The Case of Southern England', in *Church and City: 1000-1500*, ed. D.Abulafia, M.Franklin and M.Rubin (Cambridge, 2002), pp.173-97.

## (a) Stephen Langton

In the preface, Gerald dedicated the lives to Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>47</sup> The *VSH* and *VSR* are not the only works that Gerald would dedicate to the archbishop. The second version of the *Descriptio Kambriae* was probably presented to Langton around the same time (c.1214) as the lives of Remigius and Hugh.<sup>48</sup> Gerald also dedicated his *De Iure* (c.1215) and *Speculum Ecclesiae* (c.1220) to the archbishop.<sup>49</sup> Presumably, Gerald wished for an ecclesiastical position or financial support from Langton; certainly, in the *prefatio* to the *Descriptio*, Gerald spoke hopefully of Langton's 'righteous dismissal of the benefices in his gift'.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, there is no evidence that he was successful. As Bartlett states: 'Gerald's elevated sense of the dignity of literature and his insistence upon the life of letters as virtually "a calling", gave him an inflated and unrealistic view of the rewards he could expect for his writing'.<sup>51</sup> We can assume that the *VSH* would have been presented to Langton soon after it was finished in 1214, in time for the archbishop's reconciliation with King John, although there is no evidence that this presentation took place.

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<sup>47</sup> *VSR*, p.3: 'Reverendo patri et domino, S. Dei gratia Cantuariensi archiepiscopo, totius Angliae primate, et sanctae Romanae ecclesiae cardinali, G.de Barri dictus, archidiaconus Sancti David, cum salutatione devota et salute perpetua libellum suum'. Stephen had been made Archbishop by Innocent III in 1207, yet had been unable to take up his office for seven years because King John refused to accept the papal-appointed appointment, as John saw this as an infringement of his monarchical prerogatives. Stephen did not return to England until 1213.

<sup>48</sup> *GCO*, Vol.6, *Descriptio Kambriae*, ed. J.F.Dimock (London, 1868), p.xxxviii; Gerald of Wales, *The Journey through Wales* trans. Thorpe.

<sup>49</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p.208, n.10.

<sup>50</sup> Gerald of Wales, *The Journey through Wales*, pp.155-58; see also K.J.Holzknicht, *Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1966), pp.124-55.

<sup>51</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p.56.

However, Gerald also showed a degree of foresight. The previous archbishop of Canterbury, Hubert Walter, had been instrumental in realising the canonizations of both Gilbert of Sempringham (1083–1189) and Wulfstan of Worcester (c.1008–c.1095), both of whom were canonized at the beginning of the thirteenth century, in 1202 and 1203 respectively.<sup>52</sup> As the canonisation procedure increasingly became formalised and official, the archbishop of Canterbury took on a greater role in promoting the cause of a saint's sanctity.<sup>53</sup> Langton would certainly play an important role in the canonisation of St Hugh. Alongside John, abbot of Fountains (a Cistercian abbey in the North of England), Langton was commissioned in 1219 by Honorius III to investigate Hugh's miracles and write up a dossier.<sup>54</sup> Stephen would announce Hugh's canonisation the following year.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, Gerald may have had one eye to Hugh's future canonization. Indeed, Gerald was astute enough to recognise that Stephen's participation in this process would have been inevitable.

(b) Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln (1209-1235)

In the *prefatio*, in which Gerald dedicated both the *VSR* and *VSH* to Stephen Langton, Gerald also raised a number of comments that concerned Hugh of Wells, Hugh of Lincoln's successor at Lincoln. Hugh was a career cleric: he began his career in the

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<sup>52</sup> See The Book of St. Gilbert, ed. R.Foreville and G.Keir (Oxford, 1987); The Vita Wulfstani of William of Malmesbury: To Which are Added the Extant Abridgments of this Work and the Miracles and Translation of St. Wulfstan, ed. R.R.Darlington (Camden, 1928).

<sup>53</sup> R.Foreville, 'Canterbury et la Canonisation des Saints au XII siècle', in Tradition and Change, ed. Greenway, Holdsworth and Sayers, pp.63-76.

<sup>54</sup> D.H.Farmer, 'The Cult and Canonisation of St Hugh', in St Hugh of Lincoln, ed. Mary-Harting, pp.75-88, at p.78.

<sup>55</sup> The documents are printed in D.H.Farmer, 'The Canonization of St Hugh of Lincoln', Lincolnshire Architectural and Archaeological Society Reports and Papers, 2 (1956), pp.86-117.

household of the bishop of Bath, before becoming a secular canon of Wells Cathedral; he left the country during the interdict and was consecrated bishop of Lincoln on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 1209 at Meulan by Stephen Langton.<sup>56</sup> One request Gerald made of Stephen was that, after reading or listening to the lives of Remigius and Hugh, he would lend the manuscript to Hugh of Wells. Gerald hoped that by reading the *VSH* (and the *VSR*), Hugh would reflect upon and imitate the virtues and saintly life of his predecessors at Lincoln. In return, Gerald claimed that he wanted no remuneration from Hugh, certainly not any monetary payment for the works he had written. However, he did ask that Hugh of Wells would do everything he could to accomplish the canonizations of both Remigius and Hugh.<sup>57</sup>

That Gerald mentions Hugh within the *prefatio* suggests that he had always written the *VSH* with him in mind. This is clearly hinted at in chapter 13, the final chapter of the second section of the *VSH* (concerning miracles which took place before the interdict). Other historians have gone further; Gransden has stated that the entire second section of the *vita* was *added* by Gerald to please Hugh of Wells.<sup>58</sup> In fact, Gerald does not specify this within the text; one would have expected Gerald to have mentioned this point, either in the *prefatio*, or somewhere else in the main text. Furthermore, for much of the interdict, Hugh was in exile in France, exactly during the

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<sup>56</sup> J.A.Robinson, *Somerset Historical Essays* (London, 1921), pp.156–59; D.M.Smith, ‘The Rolls of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln, 1209–35’, *Bulletin on the Institute of Historical Research*, 45 (1972), pp155–95.

<sup>57</sup> *VSR*, p.6: ‘*Non igitur aliam ab ipso vel alio laboris hujus vel expeto vel exspecto remunerationem, nisi quod, duplicato beneficio, unico tamen ad curiam labore complendo, sed multiplici quidem et non unica mercede retribuendo, beatum Remigium, nobilem Lincolnensem antistitem primum, simul cum Hugone primo, opere quidem et opera laudatissimis, Romae canonicari satagat, Lincolniaeque transferrī*’.

<sup>58</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p.311.

period in which the *VSH* was composed. Finally, only the third section of the *VSH* (miracles after the interdict) appears to be an actual supplement to the main work.<sup>59</sup>

Chapter 13, at the end of part II of the *vita* was entitled 'By way of an epilogue, a commission given to new writers, with a hope for compensation with due reward'.<sup>60</sup> The language used suggests that Gerald had initially thought to end his account of Hugh's life and miracles here.<sup>61</sup> As he puts it:

Since we all cannot do all things I yield to the new zeal and service  
of another in dealing with the great works of Christ that later occurred  
through the saint's merits and that occur almost daily to the present time.<sup>62</sup>

Gerald suggests that even as he was writing, miracles wrought by Hugh were frequently occurring. Having stated his willingness to let others address the saint's

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<sup>59</sup> Section three was an addition because a table of contents for this section appears on a half-leaf of vellum inserted between the pages that Parker numbers 92 and 95. Gransden does not appear to distinguish between the second and third parts of the *vita* in her comments.

<sup>60</sup> *VSH*, p.64: '*De finali tanquam epilogo novisque scriptoribus, spe remunerationis et condigne retributionis, exercitio dato*'.

<sup>61</sup> He adds at the beginning of part three of the *vita*: 'Although I intended to conclude this work and this delightful effort at this point...' / '*Quamquam autem huic operi et delicioso labori finem hic ponere promiserimus*': *Ibid.*, p.69.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.65: '*Ad ea vero tractanda que postea contigerunt et cotidie fere adhuc contingunt per viri sancti merita Christi magnalia, novo alterius studio novoque beneficio, quia "non omnia possumus omnes"*'.

future miracles - and it is worth repeating that Gerald focuses here on Hugh's miracles rather than his life - Gerald says he hopes that Hugh of Wells will:

Through generous patronage encourage new writers to write,  
 promoting learned men and rewarding their studious labours,  
 and by new works these writers will proclaim his [Hugh of  
 Avalon] deeds as well as those of his fellow bishops and with  
 distinguished books they will make the church of Lincoln famous.<sup>63</sup>

Gerald was clearly looking for Hugh's patronage, and, notwithstanding what he had said about new writers, one cannot help feel that he was seeking promotion and reward for himself. What is significant is the way in which Lincoln's saints were being utilised. In his study of saintly patronage in the early medieval Orléanais, Thomas Head argued that the patronage or 'protection' that local saints provided could be a very powerful tool; as he states, 'As patrons of abbeys and collegiate churches ... [they] wielded an ongoing lordship over communities of monks and canons'.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p.67: '*Porro scriptores novos novis studiis, tam sua quam co-episcoporum suorum gesta declarantes et scriptis egregiis Lincolnensem ecclesiam illustrantes ... literatos promovendo viros et studiosos remunerando labores, ad scribendum per ampla beneficia provocabit*'.

<sup>64</sup> Head, Cult of Saints, p.202

Saints' lives were products of this process, as were records of miracles; both could be used to reiterate the power and sanctity of a community's patron, and to point out who wielded this authority in the saint's name. That Remigius and Hugh could be viewed in a proprietary way is emphasised in the remark where Gerald proclaimed Hugh as the 'third shining lamp of the church of Lincoln'.<sup>65</sup> In so doing, Gerald linked Hugh not only to Hugh of Avalon, but also to Remigius, the first bishop of Lincoln. However, what is so noticeable about this reference is that Gerald ties each bishop to 'the church of Lincoln'. In this respect, while Gerald certainly sought patronage for himself, he also sought patronage of the saints who were the subjects of his works. We could think of this as a well of potential; what was needed was somebody to draw upon the saints, after which a decision had to be made concerning their use. Patronage was not necessarily fixed towards one person or community; instead, different interest groups could use the memory of such saints for various causes.

The recognition of these local episcopal saints would have certainly added to Hugh of Well's own prestige, and strengthen not only his authority within his diocese, but also his see's reputation and stature. That Hugh actively took part in managing the patronage of the Lincoln saints is to some extent speculative; we do know, however, that Hugh was keen to continue the building improvements that had been instigated by his namesake. In this respect, he may have tried to draw parallels with himself and his predecessor. In Henry of Avranches's metrical life of St Hugh, written after the saint's canonisation in 1220, Henry includes an account of the rebuilding of the Lincoln Cathedral. This had been initiated by the former Hugh, but had still not been

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<sup>65</sup> *VSH*, p.67: '*Quatinus tercia Lincolniensis ecclesie lampas perlucida*'.

completed entirely by the time Henry's life was composed. Indeed, commenting upon the chapter house, Henry states that 'if its completion should be achieved, the work of Hugh the First will be finished under the Hugh the Second'.<sup>66</sup> It may be that in composing his life, Henry also sought Bishop Hugh's patronage; certainly, this reflects the nature of his other works.

### (c) Roger of Rolleston and the Lincoln Cathedral Chapter

Finally, we have evidence that Roger of Rolleston, the dean of Lincoln cathedral, was involved with the composition of the *VSH*. Gerald states in the introduction to the third section of the *VSH* that, at the request of Roger, he had included a brief account of the signs (miracles) that had occurred during the interdict.<sup>67</sup> Gerald's proclamation of friendship may be more than mere rhetoric; in the *SD*, for instance, Gerald described Roger as a 'faithful and true man, as well as prudent and learned'.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> *The Metrical Life of Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, trans. C. Garton (Lincoln, 1986) pp.60-61: '*Si quorum vero perfectio restat, Hugonis Perficietur opus primi sub Hugone secundo*'.

<sup>67</sup> *VSH*, p.69: 'I have decided at the urging of the venerable Roger [of Rolleston], dean of Lincoln – since nothing honourable can or should be denied to friendship – to summarize also the miracles by which God's goodness willed that his saint be glorified and magnified on earth even in the clouded period of the interdict'. / '*Cum tamen nichil honestum vere valeat aut debeat amicitie denegari, ad instanciam viri venerabilis Rogeri Decani Lincolniensis et ea miracula quibus nubiloso nichilominus interdicti tempore divina bonitas*'.

<sup>68</sup> *SD*, pp.8-9: '*virii fidelis et boni, discreti quoque et eruditi*'. Adam of Eynsham also provides a favourable portrait of Roger, who 'is at present, and I hope will be for a long time, dean of Lincoln, a man of unusual tact, generosity and worldly wisdom' / '*Est enim adhuc, et extet utinam in eum longissimum ecclesie Lincolniensis decanus, uir incomparande moderationis, liberalitatis et prudentie secularis*': *MVSH*, Vol.1, p.113.

For certain, Roger would have been interested in promoting Hugh's sanctity. Previously archdeacon of Leicester, Roger had been assigned to Hugh of Avalon, alongside another master Robert of Bedford, by Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury.<sup>69</sup> He became a prominent member of Hugh's household, and in 1195 was installed into his new position as dean of Lincoln cathedral.<sup>70</sup> Incidentally, it is worth pointing out that Roger would have been dean almost two years before the estimated composition date of the *VSR*; although there is no proof that Roger had convinced Gerald to write a life of Remigius, his interest in Hugh may have been part of a wider concern to promote Lincoln's saints. Roger's career (1195-1223) as dean spanned both of Hugh's successors, William of Blois and Hugh of Wells. In this respect, he would have built up a position of authority, not only in the city of Lincoln, but also in the wider diocese. Moreover, during this time the chapter gained a greater degree of independence; throughout this period, for instance, episcopal *acta* were often made with the assent of both the dean and chapter of Lincoln.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, the chapter was in charge of the administration of the diocese during the episcopal vacancy between 1206-1209. Likewise, during the interdict (1209-1214), the chapter was given the authority to administer diocesan affairs.<sup>72</sup>

As such, the chapter, under the governance of the dean, had both a strong interest in the smooth running of the diocese, and in encouraging or supporting any local saints'

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<sup>69</sup> *MVSH*, p.113: See *EEA, 1: Lincoln*, pp.xxiv-xxv.

<sup>70</sup> *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, Vol.3, pp.9-10.

<sup>71</sup> See *The Acta of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, ed. D.M Smith (Lincoln, 2000); *EEA, 1: Lincoln*.

<sup>72</sup> J.Barrow, 'Origins and Careers of Cathedral Canons in Twelfth-Century England', *Medieval Prosopography*, 21 (2000), p.37.

cults. Most modern commentators have assumed that it was the Lincoln chapter who had the greatest motive for commissioning Gerald's expertise.<sup>73</sup> More specifically, Loomis has suggested that it was the cathedral dean, Roger of Rolleston, who had asked Gerald to write the *VSH*.<sup>74</sup> Yet, it is perhaps impossible to really distinguish the interests of Roger from that of the chapter at Lincoln. Clearly Roger was an influential figure; however, we should note that in the canonisation dossier of St Gilbert of Sempringham (called the *Liber Sancti Gilberti*), which was assembled after Hugh of Avalon's death, it had been the responsibility of both the dean *and* the chapter of the Lincoln church to send the necessary documentation to Rome in preparation for Gilbert's canonisation. In the dossier, a letter was attached which made clear that Roger was acting alongside the Lincoln chapter.<sup>75</sup>

Therefore, in the case of the *VSH*, we should view Roger similarly as representing the interests of the Lincoln chapter. However, does the *VSH* reflect the interests of the secular chapter at Lincoln? Gerald does not mention the chapter's involvement, either in the *prefatio* or within the biographical sections of the *VSH*. Nevertheless, one place that the chapter's presence is evident is within the two *miracula* sections of the *VSH*. These miracle sections are valuable records of the early growth of Hugh's local cult. They reveal not only that the chapter was keen to publicise Hugh's miracles, but also how they actively attempted to control the shape of Hugh's cult within the locality. It

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<sup>73</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p.310.

<sup>74</sup> *VSH*, p.32.

<sup>75</sup> Foreville and Keir, *St Gilbert*, p.228: 'To our most holy father and lord I(nnocent), by God's grace pope, his humble sons R(oger), dean, and the chapter of Lincoln, send greetings and the service both devout and proper of submission and obedience'. / '*Sanctissimo patri et domino I(nnocentio), Dei gratia summo pontifici, humiles filii sui R(ogerus) decanus et capitulum Lincolnie, salutem et tam deuotem quam debitum subiunctionis et obedientie famulatum*'.

will be argued that in this respect, Gerald was recording a chapter-centred view of Hugh and his cult at Lincoln. Certainly, the chapter's involvement in Hugh's cult has been underappreciated; although Farmer explored the canonisation proceedings and the dossier of Hugh's miracles, he did not explore the significance of Gerald's *vita* in the context of Hugh's early cult.<sup>76</sup> Yet, on a local level, the *VSH* demonstrates how the cult was popularised – and how the chapter sought to create relationships with the laity.

#### IV. The Miracles within the *VSH*

##### (a) Role of Chapter in the Cult

The description of Hugh's miracles constitutes the second and third parts of the *VSH*; twelve miracles in the former, six in the latter. The *miracula* highlight the significance of Hugh's cult to the Lincoln community in the decade following the saint's death in 1200. Gerald appears to have recorded the miracles in chronological order: part two of the *vita* begins with an account of Hugh's funeral and translation of the saint's body from London to Lincoln; and the initial miracle, in chapter 2, is recorded as having occurred in 'the first year after the saint's death'.<sup>77</sup> William of Blois, elected as bishop of Lincoln in 1203, appears in chapter 4; here, however, Gerald writes that although

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<sup>76</sup> Farmer, 'The Cult and Canonisation of St Hugh', p.77.

<sup>77</sup> *VSH*, pp.42-43: '*primo transitus eiusdem anno*'.

he was still *precentor*, 'shortly afterward [he was] made bishop of Lincoln'.<sup>78</sup> It is not until chapter 8 that William is mentioned again, and then as bishop, which suggests this miracle occurred after 1203.<sup>79</sup> The last miracle, as we mentioned previously, probably took place in the first few months of 1214.

Gerald makes clear that as soon as miracles occurred in Lincoln and elsewhere, the chapter began to take the initiative in managing Hugh's cult. For instance, in the account of the first miracle, which concerned a knight of Lindsey, we are told that having been cured of an ulcer on his arm, the knight went straight to Lincoln, accompanied by his friends who were present to confirm his account. Gerald relates how 'the dean, Roger and other officials in the cathedral, with the canons, were assembled in chapter. In the presence of these venerable persons, he [the knight] showed his bare arm'.<sup>80</sup> If we are to understand this account correctly, one year after the saint's death there was already an official procedure for confirming the saint's miracles. As we shall see in the following section, the process of substantiating Hugh's cures is a central theme of these *miracula* accounts; more than two thirds of the miracles, thirteen of the eighteen that feature in the *vita*, include a brief description in which the miracle is reported to the chapter.

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., pp.50-51: '*Unde et precentor W[illelmus] qui paulo post episcopus Lincolnensis effectus est*'. Adam of Eynsham notes that William of Blois as precentor was one of three priests who Hugh confessed his sins to prior to his death: *MVSH*, p.185.

<sup>79</sup> *VSH*, pp.56-57: '*coram episcopo Willemo*'.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., pp.44-45: '*et coram vernerabilibus viris, R.Decano, ceterisque personis cathedralis ecclesie cum canonicis in capitulo convocatis, brachium suum quod paulo ante tam invalidum viderant*'.

From the *VSH*, we also learn that Hugh's tomb was a focus of pilgrimage, and that his miracles appear to have responded primarily to the needs of the people of Lincoln and the surrounding populous.<sup>81</sup> That it was a Lincoln-centred cult is suggested by examples within the text. First, a number of the pilgrims who were cured lived within the various suburbs of Lincoln.<sup>82</sup> Other individuals had travelled further, journeying from smaller towns or villages in the vicinity of Lincoln; for example, Stubton (18 Miles), Ancaster (25 Miles) and Worksop Priory (29.2 miles).<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, with one exception (one woman had travelled from Beverley, in the diocese of York – about fifty miles from Lincoln), the majority originated from within the diocese of Lincoln.<sup>84</sup>

The majority of the miracle accounts in the *VSH* follow a similar narrative. Although not all of the examples share the same features, there is an archetypal or standard model from which most do not deviate:

- (1) On the advice of friends, a sick individual travels to Lincoln where he/she enters the cathedral church and stays at the tomb of St Hugh overnight.
- (2) At the tomb he/she is cured.

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<sup>81</sup> All of the miracles are curative; this may indicate, as Sally Crumplin has suggested, a general 'modernising' trend found in *miracula* collections of the late twelfth century, but it likely reflected also the local context, and the type of cult that Hugh inspired: *eadem*, 'Modernising St Cuthbert: Reginald of Durham's Miracle Collection', in K.Cooper and J.Gregory, *SCH*, 41 (2005), pp.179-91.

<sup>82</sup> For example, chapters 9, 10 and 12 are accounts of people cured from the Lincoln suburb of Wigford, while chapter eleven is an account of a mute boy cured in the Lincoln suburb of Pottersgate: *VSH*, pp.56-65.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.56-57 (Stubton), pp.54-57 (Ancaster) and pp.78-79 (Worksop Priory).

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.50-53.

- (3) Witnesses spread word of the miracle, and the chapter is informed.
- (4) Confirmation of the miracle is required, however, and either the person cured, or other trustworthy witnesses, are brought to the chapter house so that they can testify in the presence of the canons and cathedral officials.
- (5) Finally, the miracle is proclaimed to the multitudes.

In nearly all these stories there is an emphasis upon the process with which these miracles were verified. The chapter would, of course, have needed a body of material if they wished to help foster any canonisation appeal, and popular support for a local cult was needed if an appeal was to be successful. Even so, the actual process by which miracles were confirmed is reported in great detail in the *VSH*. For example, Gerald relates how a blind youth recovered his sight while staying at the tomb of St Hugh. The miracle was reported 'to the dean and subdean, as well as to the whole chapter which was then meeting. At their request the youth who had gained his sight was presented to them in chapter. There the miracle was recounted and confirmed by the testimony of not only the citizens who had known him well, but the dean himself ... and other members of the chapter'.<sup>85</sup> Many, of course, might have already heard about the miracle, but the sermon reiterated the chapter's control over the entire process.

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<sup>85</sup> *VSH*, pp.54-55: '*Iuvenis autem qui visum susceperat, ad iussionem illorum eis in capitulo est presentatus, ubi non solum civium qui bene eum noverant testimonio, sed etiam decani ipsius... et aliorum quoque quorundam de capitulo, declaratum est hoc miraculum et approbatum*'.

In dealing with miracles that occurred outside of the city of Lincoln, cathedral officials and canons seem to have been particularly vigilant. Thus, when John from Plungar is cured of an ulcer after using mortar from the tomb of St Hugh to bind his wound, Roger of Rolleston sends for a vicar from Plungar to investigate the case.<sup>86</sup> Another example is of a woman from Keal who was cured of contracted hands. Gerald writes that the chapter sought 'greater proof of the event and assurance of the miracle'.<sup>87</sup> Consequently, certain knights from Lindsey who had known the woman and of her ailment, went straight to the chapter house at Lincoln and swore publicly upon the Holy Gospels that the woman's claims were true.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, after the woman from Beverley was cured of dropsy, the chapter of Lincoln wanted further proof and sent a letter to the secular chapter at Beverley, asking them to investigate the matter.<sup>89</sup> The Beverley chapter assembled men worthy of trust from three places near where the woman was born and reared, and these men confirmed the truth over an oath on the gospels and before the body of St John of Beverley. Finally, they reported their inquiry to the chapter at Lincoln, who, having been convinced of this testimony, publicly proclaimed the veracity of the miracle to the people.<sup>90</sup> Other groups, such as the chapter at Beverley, might alter the process, but the Lincoln chapter still had the final word.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., pp.72-75.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp.50-51: '*Ad maiorem quoque rei geste probacionem et miraculi certitudinem*'.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.: '*milites quidam de Lindeseia et viri fide dignissimi, qui eam ab inicio sic contractam viderant et inutilem diucius et invalidam, Lincolnense capitulum intrantes, tactis sacro-sanctis evangeliiis, palam et publice iuraverunt hanc eandem esse revera quam antea viderant in Lindeseia, vindicta divina manus ambas in pugnā clausas et contractus habere*'.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., pp.52-53: '*Capitulum vero Lincolnense, cupiens etiam super hiis amplius cerciorari, literas suas et nuncios fideles ad capitulum Beverlacense destinavit, rogans et monens quatinus et ipsi veritatem diligentissime super hiis inquisitam ipsis renunciarent*'.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.: '*per sacramentum ipsorum tam super evangelia quam super corpus beati Johannis de Beverlaco corporaliter prestitum, veritatem quam mulier ipsa professa fuerat ab eis inquisitam et patefactam literis suis sigillo beati Johannis signatis capitulo Lincolnensi rescripserunt*'.

It is within the chapter house where a number of Hugh's posthumous miracles are verified and then publicised, and it is the chapter who initiates the investigation of the miracle. We have to remember that Gerald wrote (or rewrote) these accounts after 1209: without an episcopal head, in 1200-1203, and again after William's death, the chapter was left to safeguard Hugh's cult and to continue to approve the saint's miracles. One question that we might ask is upon what sources might Gerald have drawn? As with the *VSR*, it is likely that in this respect Gerald drew on the pilgrimage records; like many saint's tombs across England, the Lincoln chapter often had officials who acted as caretakers of the tomb, and who also recorded Hugh's miracles.<sup>91</sup> In the *VSH*, Gerald even mentions this process: at the conclusion of one miracle, a mute boy, now cured, was, we are told 'enrolled among the others' at the tomb.<sup>92</sup> If Gerald used such a source, we cannot be sure to what degree he adapted this material for the *vita*. However, it is likely that by providing a literary account, the chapter now wished to be remembered for their role in organising Hugh's cult.

#### (b) The Role of Other Elites

The miracle accounts in the *VSH* also suggest that the chapter had to consider other interest groups who were each promoting Hugh's sanctity. In particular, the *VSH*

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<sup>91</sup> We have evidence of a 'Philip, Chaplain of the tomb of St Hugh': *Registrum Antiquissimum*, Vol.1, p.130.

<sup>92</sup> *VSH*, pp.60-61: '*ad tumbam sancti Hugonis est transductus et inter ceteros ibi mirifice et magnifice curatos annumeratus*'.

demonstrates the attention which Lincoln's city elites paid to Hugh's early cult. While the chapter was responsible for endorsing any claims, many of the miracle stories show that the initiative frequently came from Lincoln's citizens. Yet, only on one occasion in the *VSH* is there a suggestion that the miracle was celebrated as authentic before the chapter intervened. Here a mute boy staying at the tomb of St Hugh was cured, after which clerics and the women of the city 'went throughout the boy's neighbourhood, praising God and proclaiming the miracle' to everyone they met.<sup>93</sup> The canons, however, wanted to be assured of this, so the boy's local priest was called to them along with elders of that parish, who swore before the Holy Gospels. It was only then that the canons rejoiced and the bells of the cathedral were rung.<sup>94</sup>

The following example points to the relationship between the city elites and Lincoln's chapter:

The chapter, wishing to be apprised of this in detail,  
omitting nothing, summoned Adam the elected Major,  
Reimbald called "the Rich" and as many as possible  
of the other citizens in whose homes and *by whose*

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., pp.62-63: '*Clerici vero in Poteregate manentes qui mutum optime noverant et matrone vici eiusdem ad tumbam tunc vigilantes que eum nutriverant, viso miraculo, exilientes per vicos clamabant quia mutus ille ad tumbam sancti Hugonis iam recte et expedite loquebatur*'.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

*alms the boy had long been supported.*<sup>95</sup> [my emphasis]

Is there an element of self-interest reflected within this account? Certainly, the emphasis appears to be on the piety and charity of the citizens, particularly the major and Reimbald 'the Rich' who was a burgess of Lincoln.<sup>96</sup> Significantly, a number of these miracle accounts involve a city ward, an orphan or a servant. After a mad girl had been cured, Gerald reports that 'the matrons of the city who had fostered her with their alms and who had grieved at the violence of her illness now rejoiced and were glad'; afterwards we are told that Roger of Rolleston, for reasons of charity, placed the girl in a hospital.<sup>97</sup>

Would these details have been included in the tomb records? And if not, why did Gerald include this information within his own accounts? These records commemorated more than Hugh's miracles; they also commemorated those who participated in these miracles. One could suggest that the reason why these examples often included orphans or wards was because of their limited capital and independence. In London, in this period, Jennifer Ward states that 'the major's court had responsibility for the orphans of citizens ... the court kept an eye on orphans and had its say in their apprenticeship and marriage'.<sup>98</sup> In Lincoln, it appears that both the chapter and the Major shared this duty. These miracle accounts, therefore, symbolized

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., pp.60-61: '*capitulum super hoc ad unguem adeoque ut nichil supra certificari volens, Adam prelatione maiorem, et R. agnomine divitem, aliosque quam plures de civibus illis circiter quos et de quorum elemosinis diucius fuerat sustentatus, convocaverunt*'.

<sup>96</sup> Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, p.199.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., pp.64-65: '*Matrone vero civitatis, que et ipsam de elemosinis suis educaverant*'.

<sup>98</sup> J.Ward, *Women in Medieval Europe, 1200-1500* (London, 2002), p.24.

a link between the town and the chapter – a link that was advantageous for both parties.

In short, these miracle stories show some of the ways in which the chapter might have had to negotiate with the laity and Lincoln's city elites over Hugh's sanctity. Clearly, we need to remember that as texts, the miracle accounts do not necessarily reflect reality. There are many reasons why the chapter would have wished to be involved in this process. The motives behind a saint's promotion were not always altruistic; those who controlled the sanctification process also shared in the prestige. Diana Webb, examining the interrelationship between saints and shrine promotion in the twelfth century, talks of saints being the 'possessions' of religious communities.<sup>99</sup> This is an interesting way of conceptualising the relationship between the saint and their sponsor. In this context, the chapter wished to "own" Hugh's sanctity, to effectively market their "product" to the populace.

However, as Simon Yarrow has pointed out, miracles are the 'result of normative processes of negotiation and that medieval communities shared a sense of their Christian identity through their communal negotiation of the miraculous'.<sup>100</sup> That is to say, they had a discursive function, and the narrative format of such stories may actually have been an attempt to create, rather than reflect, a sense of social unity between the canons and the citizens of Lincoln. This would have been even more

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<sup>99</sup> D.Webb, Pilgrimage in Medieval England (London and New York, 2000), p.38.

<sup>100</sup> Yarrow, Saints and their Communities, p.13.

prescient as in the first decade of the thirteenth century the city of Lincoln saw the growth of an emerging communal infrastructure.<sup>101</sup> Adam the major, for instance, was the first mayor of Lincoln; this suggests that at the beginning of the thirteenth century, the chapter had an urban corporate body with which they had to negotiate and compete. The miracle sections act as a record of the chapter's involvement in the confirmation, verification and publicising of Hugh's miracles and gives credence to the suggestion that the chapter was behind the composition of the *vita*.

### (c) The Identity of the Chapter

Our knowledge of twelfth-century English secular chapters still remains rather limited, particularly in comparison with monastic chapters. Nonetheless, the extensive work undertaken by the *fasti* editors has provided scholars with the tools for a thorough prosopographical investigation.<sup>102</sup> Other studies have focused the discussion upon the origins of the English secular chapters and their subsequent development after the Norman Conquest.<sup>103</sup> These studies reveal the increasingly corporate nature of the cathedral body. Indeed, during the course of the twelfth and thirteenth century the chapter wielded greater independence which can be attributed to an increasingly clearer division between episcopal and capitular lands and

<sup>101</sup> For instance, the earliest reference to a town mayor occurs in 1206.

<sup>102</sup> *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1066-1300*. 8 Vols. For prosopographical studies which have shed light on the education and social backgrounds of the Hereford clergy and cathedral canons see J.Barrow, 'Education and the Recruitment of Cathedral Canons in England and Germany 1100-1225', *Viator*, 20, (1989), pp.117-38; J.Barrow, 'Clergy in the Diocese of Hereford in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *ANS*, 26 (2004), pp.37-53; Barrow, 'Origins and Careers', pp.23-40.

<sup>103</sup> For the origins of the secular canons' rule(s) see *The Chrodegang Rules: The Rules for the Common Life of the Secular Clergy from the Eighth and Ninth Centuries*, ed. and trans. J.Bertram (Aldersot, 2005). See also the important comments by J.Barrow, 'Review Article: Chrodegang and its Successors', *Early Medieval Europe*, 14, (2006), pp.201-6. The place to begin with any study of English secular chapters is Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals*; and for a later period D.N.Lepine, *A Brotherhood of Canons Serving God: English Secular Cathedrals in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1995).

properties.<sup>104</sup> Of course, the pace of change differed according to the internal characteristics of each episcopal see.

Alongside these investigations have been a number of local studies which have enlightened our understanding of the religious and institutional life of specific cathedral chapters. For example, in a thorough palaeographical and codicological investigation of the Salisbury chapter library, Teresa Webber has revealed the eclectic intellectual interests of the Salisbury canons.<sup>105</sup> A perspective which has been less examined is the ways in which the chapter, as a community with shared interests and cultural values, maintained a distinctive identity. As Pfaff asks: 'Bishops were often men of vividness and force ... in the face of which, how do their cathedral chapters acquire anything like comparable vividness?'<sup>106</sup> One way chapters asserted their institutional consciousness was through the promulgation of saints' lives and relics,

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<sup>104</sup> Studies that have examined the increasingly corporate nature of the cathedral chapter include J.Barrow, 'A Lotharingian in Hereford: Bishop Robert's Reorganisation of the Church of Hereford 1079-1095, in Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in Hereford, ed. D.Whitehead (Leeds, 1995), pp.29-47; E.U.Crosby, Bishop and Chapter; J.Barrow, 'Cathedrals, Provosts and Prebends: A Comparison of Twelfth-Century German and English Practice', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 37 (1986), pp.536-64. For a Scottish perspective, see I.B.Cowan, 'The Organisation of Secular Cathedral Chapters', in The Medieval Church in Scotland, ed. J.Kirk (Edinburgh, 1995), pp.77-96.

<sup>105</sup> See the important work by Webber, Scribes and Scholars. Here Webber points to the influence of continental trends. However, one must be aware of the view that 'Secular cathedrals made a far more modest contribution to learning and book-production, even in a narrowly English perspective, than their monastic counterparts': see D.A.Bullough's review of Webber in The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 45 (1994), pp.127-29, at p.127. Yet, we need to be careful that we do not fall into the trap of seeing secular canons as worldly and corruptible. Other local studies include D.E.Greenway, Chichester Cathedral: An Historical Survey, (Chichester, 1994). For a later perspective, although one which includes the monastic chapters, see C.Reeves, 'Creative Scholarship in the Cathedrals, 1300-1500', in The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R.B.Dobson, ed. C.M.Barron and J.Stratford (2002), pp.160-69.

<sup>106</sup> R.Pfaff, 'Review of Bishop and Chapter in Twelfth-Century England: A Study of the 'Mensa Episcopalis' by E.U.Crosby', The Medieval Review (1995).

for this not only sustained a sense of communal identity, but it also provided secular chapters with a variety of opportunities to gain patronage and win friends.<sup>107</sup>

Indeed, we need to place an investigation of Gerald's *vitae* within the confines of the previous discussion. Do these lives show the Lincoln chapter attempting to strengthen their institutional identity or are they in fact a reflection of twelfth-century developments? Clearly they could be both. For the earlier tenth and eleventh centuries, Barrow stated that 'Communities of secular clergy were not uninterested in saints but they tended not to have the educational or liturgical resources to develop cults fully'.<sup>108</sup> Therefore, how do we account for the increasing exploitation of saints' cults by chapters in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries?<sup>109</sup> We need to recognise the changes that were occurring in the organisational make-up of the cathedral clergy. As Barrow has demonstrated, in the second half of the twelfth century, episcopal clerks were increasingly forming a significant component of the chapter.<sup>110</sup> These clerics, many of whom had the title of *magister*, perhaps now had the educational experience needed to direct a saint's cult.

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<sup>107</sup> As Julia Barrow has shown for the town of Hereford: 'The Canons and Citizens of Hereford, c.1160-1240', *Midland History*, 24 (1999), pp.1-23.

<sup>108</sup> J.Barrow, 'English Cathedral Communities and Reform in the Late Tenth and the Eleventh Centuries', in *Anglo-Norman Durham: 1093-1193*, ed. D.Rollason, M.Harvey and M.Prestwich (Oxford, 1994), pp.25-39, at p.37.

<sup>109</sup> For Chichester we have the thirteenth-century cult of Bishop Richard de Wych where the canons were pivotal in pursuing the canonisation. The formal canonisation took place in 1262. For Hereford, St Thomas of Cantilupe would finally be canonised in the fourteenth century: see *St Thomas Cantilupe Bishop of Hereford*, ed. M.Jancey (Hereford, 1982).

<sup>110</sup> Barrow, 'Origins and Careers', pp.21-34. This parallels the increasing trend in the latter twelfth century for clerics in ecclesiastical households to become bishops. See D.Knowles, *The Episcopal Colleagues of Archbishop Thomas Becket* (Cambridge, 1951).

## V. Depicting Episcopal Identity

In the *VSH* Gerald makes clear to his audience that Hugh consistently conformed to a particular episcopal ideal. As with most hagiographers, Gerald sought to emphasise the parts of Hugh's life which appealed to himself and to his readers. The following section will explore how Gerald shaped the depiction of Hugh's episcopal identity, and will suggest reasons for the *VSH*'s content and structure. In so doing, the text will also be compared and contrasted with Adam of Eynsham's *MVSH*. I will also examine whether this representation of Hugh was a conscious decision on Gerald's part and, if so, how it might relate to the motives behind the *vita*'s composition, and the audience for which it was written.

### (a) Gerald's *VSH*: Hugh's Earlier Life

In the section detailing the saint's life and deeds, Hugh is portrayed as an efficient and conscientious bishop who was entirely mindful of what his office entailed. For instance, at the end of chapter eight, Gerald states that:

He [Hugh] was careful to do with all his strength and  
whatever belonged to the pontifical office, whatever

pertained to the honour of the episcopal order and dignity.<sup>111</sup>

Gerald could have chosen to focus upon Hugh's monastic background, and how he was a member of the Carthusian order. However, apart from chapter 1, Gerald only again mentions Hugh's status as a Carthusian monk in the chapter concerning his death.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, when Gerald refers to Hugh's episcopal duties, he does so without commenting upon how being a monk influenced his later vocation. Unlike William Wycombe in his representation of Robert Bethune (see Chapter 2), Gerald does not explore the extent to which these formative years shaped the saint's own understanding of the episcopal office. Adam of Eynsham had discussed Hugh's childhood, education and entry into the monastic life within a substantive book (one of five) of the *MVSH*.<sup>113</sup> In contrast, Gerald compressed Hugh's entire 'education, admirable manner of life, and promotion' into the first chapter of his *vita*, which tellingly begins 'Of the origins of the bishop of Lincoln'.<sup>114</sup> Gerald was interested in recounting this part of Hugh's early life only in so much as it introduced how Hugh became bishop of Lincoln.

Nevertheless, the few details that Gerald does provide of Hugh's youth are related in a way which would have been appreciated by the secular canons at Lincoln. Explaining

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<sup>111</sup> *VSH*, p.31: '*Quicquid ad officium pontificale, quicquid ad ordinis et dignitatis episcopalis spectabat honorem, totis exequi viribus totoque conamine effectui mancipare curabat*'.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37.

<sup>113</sup> *MVSH*, Vol.1, pp.1-44.

<sup>114</sup> The first capitulum in full is: '*Prima distinctio continet de ortu Lincolniensis episcopi, scilicet Hugonis primi, educatione, conversacione laudabili, et promocione*': *VSH*, p.2.

how, at a young age, Hugh entered a ‘conventional and canonical monastery,’<sup>115</sup> Gerald states: ‘Our [*noster*] child ... embraced the canonical life with all his strength and effort and whatever the place or time, did not relax from literary and especially theological studies.’<sup>116</sup> The description here of Hugh’s early instruction reflected Gerald’s (and his readers’) own education, which was shaped by the curriculum of the twelfth-century schools. The specific authors Gerald refers to are Prudentius (c.348-c.405), Sedulius (the fifth century) and Fulgentius (c.468-c.533), all of whom were early Christian poets whose works were taught in the schools.<sup>117</sup> By using the possessive adjective *noster* in the above citation, Gerald may have attempted to link more strongly Hugh’s early religious life with his readers, the Lincoln canons.

Gerald then explained how Hugh left the canonical life and entered the Carthusian monastery at *Grande Chartreuse*.<sup>118</sup> This event was not portrayed in the *VSH* as if Hugh had now discovered his true vocation. Indeed, Gerald stresses that Hugh added

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid.: ‘*cenobio conventuali et canonico*’. Adam of Eynsham adds that Hugh was sent to the Augustinian priory at Villarbenoit, where he was ‘*instructed in both religious and secular letters*’ / ‘*secularibus simul et ecclesiasticis litteris imbuendi*’: *MVSH*, Vol.1, p.7.

<sup>116</sup> *VSH*, pp.8-9: ‘*Puer autem noster... vitam canonicam viribus totis et nisibus amplexatus, a studiis tamen literalibus et maxime theologicis, animum loco et tempore non relaxavit*’. In contrast, Adam of Eynsham suggests it was as a Carthusian that Hugh developed his love of learning: ‘What shall we say of Hugh’s life there and the progress he made? The love of learning which he had possessed from his earliest years was here given the books, masters and leisure, which enabled his natural genius to develop with the rapidity of a forest fire’ / ‘*Quid uero hic egisse, quantum profecisse Hugonem putamus? Vbi inolitus ei a primeuis, ut ita dicatur, mensibus discendi amor, tum libris, tum magistris, tum ingenio preclarissimo, tum otio quam oportuno tam ferme et continuo, tantum iuuari et promoueri potuit, quantum siluis infinitis ignis inexplibilis*’: *MVSH*, Vol.1, p.33.

<sup>117</sup> *VSH*, pp.8-9: ‘his teacher, a good man, old and true, expounded Prudentius, Sedulius, Fulgentius, and similar works fragrant with the teaching of the Christian religion alone’ / ‘*Preceptor etenim eius, vir bonus, antiquus, et auctenticus... Prudentium, Sedulium, Fulgencium, ceterosque libellos similes, sincera solum Christiane religionis dogmata redolentes... exponebat*’. For these poets’ place in the curriculum, see Curtius, *European Literature*, pp.45-54, 458-62.

<sup>118</sup> Gerald states that one of the reasons for Hugh leaving his position as prior of a cell of Villarbenoit was that women frequented the place due to an old local custom: *VSH*, p.11. This has usually been considered another example of Gerald’s misogyny, but perhaps Gerald used this anecdote as a way of justifying to his readers why Hugh left the canonical life. In contrast, Adam of Eynsham does not mention Hugh’s “problem” with women intruding upon an all-male environment: *MVSH*, Vol.1, pp.18-19.

(*adiceret*) his own *rigour* to the austerities of the Carthusian order, and that he also illuminated Chartreuse with 'his holy way of life'.<sup>119</sup> Thus, Gerald depicts each step of the saint's life as successive episodes of preparation and training. Throughout this early section, Hugh's leadership qualities are emphasised so as to demonstrate that he was always suited to the episcopal office. For example, Gerald described how Hugh 'ruled with such foresight and maturity' the Augustinian cell of St Maxime, and, as with sections of the *VSR*, Gerald stressed how Hugh had made this house rich in material goods.<sup>120</sup> Later, as prior of the Carthusian house of Witham in England, Gerald stated that 'with great maturity and discretion he [Hugh] governed that house, both inwardly through instruction and grace of conduct, and outwardly through foresight and watchful care in all things'.<sup>121</sup> Gerald was vigilant, both as prior of Witham and as bishop; it was with 'watchful care' (*vigili cura*) that he fulfilled his duties.<sup>122</sup>

By highlighting Hugh's leadership qualities, Gerald demonstrated how suited Hugh was to the active life of a bishop. To a large extent, therefore, Gerald wrote with his audience in mind: the secular canons and bishop of Lincoln. Conversely, Adam of Eynsham wrote the *MVSH* at the request of Prior Robert of the Carthusian monastery

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<sup>119</sup> *VSH*, pp.12-13: 'When the man of God had even added what rigor he could to the Order's great austerity, and like the sun breaking through clouds of glory, had for some time happily illuminated the Carthusian monastery by his holy way of life...' / '*Cum igitur ordinis austeritati tante rigorem etiam in se quantum potuit vir Deo ex toto datus adiceret et, tanquam inter nebulas glorie solare lumen erumpens, Cartusiense cenobium sanctissima conversacione sua iam aliquamdiu feliciter illustrasset*'.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.10-11: 'This he at once ruled with such foresight and maturity that what he had received impoverished and destitute he soon made rich and abundant in ample possessions'. / '*Quam incontinenti tam provide rexit et tam mature, ut quam pauperam susceperat et exilem, possessionibus amplis opulentam in brevi redderet et opimam*'.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.11-12: '*Quanta vero maturitate pariter et modestia domum illam tam doctrina interius et morum venustrate quam providencia exterius et vigili per omnia sollicitudine gubernarat*'. Gerald's use of such classical virtues as *maturitas* and *modestia* were also used to emphasise Hugh's innate gift for leading others.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.14-15: '*Quanta vero et quam vigili cura*'.

of Witham; thus, we would have expected him to emphasise Hugh's spiritual qualities and monastic vocation.<sup>123</sup> As Farmer stated, the *MVSH* was written 'by a monk for monks'.<sup>124</sup> The depiction of Hugh in the *VSH* also reflects Gerald's own perspective. Gerald thought quite highly of the Carthusian order in contrast to his more critical views of both the Cistercians and Benedictines.<sup>125</sup> Nonetheless, in a letter to Stephen Langton, Gerald still attempted to dissuade the archbishop from becoming a Carthusian, by expounding upon the merits and virtues of the pastoral life, which he compared unfavourably with the life of the cloister or hermitage.<sup>126</sup>

#### (b) Textual Models of the Depiction of Hugh in the *VSH*

The emphasis on the active life is also reflected in the way Gerald appropriated the episcopal model of St Martin in the *VSH*. Indeed, Gerald's use of the model was very different to that of Adam of Eynsham. In the *VSH*, Gerald related how the chancellor of Lincoln cathedral, William de Montibus, testified that Hugh had kissed a certain leper in the town of Newark, yet William, perhaps to test Hugh's intentions, suggested that unlike St Martin, Hugh had not cured the leper with his kiss. Hugh's humble reply was that 'Martin, by kissing the leper, cured him in body, but the leper with a kiss has

<sup>123</sup> *MVSH*, p.1. See also H.Leyser, 'Hugh the Carthusian', in *St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. Mayr-Harting, pp.1-18.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xvii.

<sup>125</sup> For the former, see R.J.Doney, 'Giraldus Cambrensis and the Carthusian Order,' *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 53 (1954), pp.334-46. For the latter, see Knowles, *Monastic Order*, pp.662-78; B.Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Monks,' in *Thirteenth-Century England*, V, ed. P.R.Coss and S.D.Lloyd (Woodridge, 1995), pp.53-64; *idem*, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 21, (1995), pp.5-30; J.Castora, 'The Cistercian Order as Portrayed in the *Speculum Ecclesiae* of Gerald of Wales', *Analecta Cisterciensia*, 53 (1997), pp.73-97.

<sup>126</sup> The letter is printed in *GCO*, Vol.1, pp.401-07; it is taken from Lambeth Palace Library, MS 236, f. 157v.

healed me in my soul'.<sup>127</sup> This story, which would also appear in Hugh's canonisation report, is placed within a section of the *VSH* where Gerald expounds upon Hugh's many charitable works and his pastoral care; it also ends with a passage emphasising his aptitude as a bishop. Drawing upon a popular hagiographical model and motif, Gerald placed his own example, linking Hugh with Martin, within an episcopal framework.<sup>128</sup>

If we contrast this with *MVSH*, Adam of Eynsham also drew out the connections he wished to emphasise. Chapter IX of book IV, for instance, was entitled 'How, like his [Hugh's] patron the blessed Martin, his chief glory was the monastic life, and how it was his custom frequently to visit Witham'.<sup>129</sup> Sulpicius Severus had written how St Martin, as Bishop of Tours, had derived great spiritual benefits from retreating to the Abbey of Marmoutier. Adam drew a similar analogy with Hugh; as he put it, at Witham he 'could freely enjoy the embraces, and feast fully on the beauty of his lovely Rachel, and get away completely from the dreariness of bleary-eyed Leah'.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> *VSH*, p.31: '*Martinus osculando leprosum curavit eum in corpore. Leprosus autem osculo sanavit me in anima*'. See also Farmer, 'The Canonization of St Hugh', pp.93-94. As Farmer acknowledges the dialogue between Hugh and William was most likely borrowed from Gerald's *VSH*: *idem*, p.88.

<sup>128</sup> Sulpicius Severus, *Vie de Saint Martin*, ed. J.Fontaine, 3 Vols. (Paris, 1967-1969), Vol.1, pp.292-93, and Vol. 2, pp.862-70. For discussion of this topos, see C.Peyroux 'The Leper's Kiss', in *Monks, Nuns, Saints and Outcasts*, ed. S.Farmer and B.H.Rosenwein (Ithaca, N.Y, 2000), pp.172-88. So popular was this story of William de Montibus and Hugh that in the Rheno-Flemish sub-recensions of the *MVSH*, the scribe inserts almost verbatim this story into the text: *MVSH*, Vol.1, p.lii, and Vol.2, p.13. Indeed, this incident was also used by late medieval preachers: see BL MS Royal 8 C I, fos 129<sup>v</sup>-130<sup>r</sup>, cited in C.Rawcliffe, *Leprosy in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2006), p.145, n.75.

<sup>129</sup> *MVSH*, p.43: '*Quod specialis ei gloria, sicut et patrono suo beato quondam Martino, in ordine fuerit monastico. Quod Withamiam frequenter adire consueverit*'. Chapters IX-XIV of the *MVSH* (which ends book IV) relate in greater detail Hugh's visits to Witham each year. As Hugh had died only six days after St Martin's feast day (November 11<sup>th</sup>) Adam commented upon yet more comparisons between Hugh and Martin in chapter XVII: pp.199-208.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p.44: '*hic tamen liberius dilecte sue fouebatur amplexibus, et uberius pascebatur decore formose Rachel, perfectius hic tediose declinabat Lye lippitudinem*'.

It is probably not surprising that Adam of Eynsham uses the model of St Martin in this way, but what is perhaps noteworthy are the vast differences in the kinds of texts each author used. Adam refers to a plethora of texts within the *MVSH*: notwithstanding the *Life of St Martin*, Adam also used Gregory of Tours's miracles of St Martin, St Jerome's *Life of St Paul*, St Hilary's *Life of St Honoratus* of Arles and Guigo the Carthusian's *Life of St Hugh* of St Grenoble, amongst many others.<sup>131</sup> Unlike Adam of Eynsham, Gerald favoured using citations from the Church Fathers and from classical authors; he also quoted liberally from the Bible. Gerald did use saints' lives in his works, but as Hagen has shown for Gerald's *GE*, their use was primarily for exemplary purposes.<sup>132</sup> In fact, Gerald appears to have used a similar methodology for all his works. In this way, he did not treat hagiography as a highly specialized genre with its own specific conventions, nor did he view saints' lives as primarily a record of a person's life.

To make clearer Gerald's methodology, the next section will briefly explore two citations in the *VSH* that Loomis was unable to identify. It will be suggested that Gerald was indebted to *florilegia*. Such manuscripts contained collections of sentences or passages from popular works or writers; often, as A.Rigg has noted, medieval authors used them as shortcuts. Goddu and Rouse have already demonstrated the degree to which Gerald would use the *Florilegium Angelicum* in his writings.<sup>133</sup> The

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<sup>131</sup> *MVSH*, pp.xiv-xv.

<sup>132</sup> *GE*, p.xxii. One could argue that Gerald only used saint's lives in this way here because one of the *GE*'s functions was to instruct through examples, but it seems to be a trait shared with his use of hagiographical material in his saint's lives.

<sup>133</sup> A.A.Goddu and R.H.Rouse, 'Gerald of Wales and the *Florilegium Angelicum*', *Speculum*, 52 (1977), 488-521. I have not, however, been able to find a direct link between the two citations in the *VSH*, and

first citation we will look at is from chapter six of the *VSH*. We are told by Gerald that he is citing from Jerome: 'He does not go slightly astray who prefers a slight good to a great good'.<sup>134</sup> The only source for this citation that I have found is in a thirteenth-century *florilegium* manuscript, from England, now at the Huntington Library, Pasadena, which contained a collection of theological and sermon material.<sup>135</sup> Although there is no suggestion of ownership, the manuscript does include some sermons of Stephen Langton (f.57). The citation is found under the title *Ieronimus xxxvi causa distinctione ultima* (Item 23, ff.92-97v). It is certainly conceivable that in other *florilegia* that Gerald utilised, this work would also appear. The second citation to be discussed here is from chapter eight of the *VSH*. In this instance Gerald states 'but as we read in the life of a certain saint, "He whom grace had filled had to be loved by all"'.<sup>136</sup> Gerald also refers to this source in his *SD*, but again all he says is 'as we read' (*legitur*).<sup>137</sup> This citation may have come from the eleventh-century *Vita S.Odilonis* by Jotsald of Cluny; the only difference between the two sources is that Gerald states '*ab omnibus diligeretur*', while the earlier source gives '*ab omnibus amaretur*'.<sup>138</sup> Gerald's use of the *Vita S.Odilonis* may point to the existence of a *florilegium*. Yet, what we can take from even such a small sample is that like his contemporaries John of Salisbury

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the aforementioned *florilegium*. See also R.H.Rouse, 'Florilegia and Latin Classical Authors in Twelfth- and Thirteenth- Century Orleans', *Viator*, 10 (1979), pp.131-611; R.H.Rouse and M.A.Rouse, 'The *Florilegium Angelicum*: its Origin, Content, and Influence', in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. J.J.G.Alexander and M.T.Gibson (Oxford, 1976), pp.66-114.

<sup>134</sup> *VSH*, pp.22-23: '*Non mediocriter errat qui magno bono prefert mediocre bonum*'.

<sup>135</sup> Huntington Library, Pasadena, HM 26960. See C.W.Dutschke and R.H.Rouse, *Guide to Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Huntington Library* (San Marino, 1989).

<sup>136</sup> *VSH*, p.29: '*Verumtamen, sicut in vita sancti cuiusdam legitur, "Necesse erat ut quem gracia perfuderat ab omnibus diligeretur"*'.

<sup>137</sup> *SD*, p.67: '*sicut de sancto quodam legitur, Necesse enim erat ut quem Deus gracia perfuderat ab hominibus diligeretur*' (lines 1093-1094).

<sup>138</sup> Jotsald of Cluny (*BHL* 6281; *PL* 142): '*quia necesse erat ut quem Deus perfuderat gratia, ab omnibus amaretur*'. See also: Jotsald von Saint-Claude, *Vita des Abtes Odilo von Cluny*, ed. J.Staub (Hannover, 1999). A similar citation is also found in the twelfth-century *Chronicon Hugonis* written by Hugh of Flavigny (*PL* 154): '*Cui tantam Deus contulit gratiam ut a regibus et principibus, a divitibus et mediocribus miro diligeretur affectu; quia et congruum erat ut, quem Deus perfuderat gratia, ab omnibus amaretur*'.

and Peter of Blois, Gerald 'drew on a variety of intermediate sources, among them the works of contemporary authors, earlier works of his own, and *florilegia*; in fact anything he read was a potential source from which to cull a well-expressed thought or piece of documentation'.<sup>139</sup> Thus in his use of sources for the *VSH*, Gerald often applied citations to strengthen or reinforce his point, rather than using them as models *per se*, for his depiction of Hugh.

In this way, he viewed hagiographical writings as one resource of many. Of course, that Gerald did not make direct links with traditional hagiographical models was probably a consequence of the function of the *vita*. In the *VSH* he was not seeking to produce a 'biography' of Hugh; the first part of the *vita* was intended to briefly emphasise Hugh's episcopal conduct and virtues. Gerald concentrated, as we have demonstrated in the first half of this chapter, upon the early cult and the potential canonisation process. However, as yet there is one hagiographical model which we have not touched upon. Gerald made a number of comparisons between Hugh and Thomas Becket. The following section will explore why Gerald may have drawn such associations.

### (c) Thomas Becket as a model for the *VSH*

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<sup>139</sup> Goddu and Rouse, 'Gerald of Wales and the *Florilegium Angelicum*', p.489.

In the preface to the *VSH*, Gerald situated Hugh alongside Thomas Becket. Both, he argued, were defenders of the priesthood, the *sacerdotium*:

While heavy blows every day oppressed the church of Christ because  
of constant conflict between royal and ecclesiastical government, so  
with a richer remedy and with greater comfort, by sending the red rose  
of Kent – sweet with ointment poured out and red from the shedding  
of precious blood, and the glowing lamp of the lily of Lincoln.<sup>140</sup>

Here, the red rose of Kent represented the martyr-bishop Thomas Becket, while the lily, which signified confessors and virgins, was here used to represent Hugh.<sup>141</sup> This was not the first time Gerald had used this analogy; he had already compared the two men in the *VSR*. Such imagery had been also employed to great effect by at least five of

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<sup>140</sup> *VSH*, p.6: '*Quanto namque, pertinacior regni sacerdotique conflictu, Christi ecclesiam gravior de die in diem urgebat affliction, tanto, remedio longe uberiore, solacioque propensiore, rubicundam et odoriferam unguenti effusi Cancie rosam, precioso sanguine fuso rubricatam, liliique Lincolniensis luculentam lampadem mittens*'.

<sup>141</sup> A good description of how various typologies of saints were represented by specific colours can be found in the Golden Legend: Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea, vulgo Historia lombardica dicta*, ed. J.G.T.Graesse, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1850), p.507: '*Statimque eam circumdederunt flores rosarum rosei, scilicet coetus martirum, et lilia convallium, agmina scilicet angelorum, confessorum et virginum*'. White was the liturgical colour for the feasts of confessors and red for the feasts of martyrs. This was first codified by Innocent III in his *De Sacro Altaris Mysterio* (PL 217, cols. 799-802). For an earlier and later period see C.Stancliffe 'Red, White and Blue Martyrdom', in *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. D.Whitelock, R.McKitterick and D.Dumville (Cambridge, 1992), pp.21-46; and T.S.Freeman 'Introduction: Over their Dead Bodies: Concepts of Martyrdom in Late-Medieval and Early-Modern England', in *Martyrs and Martyrdom in England, c.1400-1700*, ed. *idem* and T.F.Mayer (Woodbridge, 2007), pp.1-34.

Thomas Becket's hagiographers.<sup>142</sup> Edward Grim, for instance, had described Becket's death thus: 'the blood white from the brain, and the brain equally red from the blood, brightened the floor with the colours of the lily and the rose, the Virgin and the Mother and the life and death of the confessor and martyr'.<sup>143</sup> Gerald's audience would have been aware that this kind of colour symbolism derived from the Song of Songs; Gerald likely used such imagery because it had been popularised by Thomas Becket's hagiographers. In this way, Gerald employed a highly recognised "brand" in order to market Lincoln's own saint.<sup>144</sup>

No study of early-thirteenth-century hagiography can disregard the impact of Thomas Becket's martyrdom, cult, and saint's lives. Becket's cult spread rapidly throughout Western Christendom. A much used quotation from Gervase of Canterbury expresses this very well: 'The first miracles took place around his tomb, then throughout the crypt, then throughout the church, then throughout Canterbury, then throughout England, and France, Normandy, Germany, and, in short, throughout the whole church of Christ throughout the world'.<sup>145</sup> This may have been hyperbole, but not by much. From his death in 1170, other religious institutions sought ways of competing with Becket's cult and the many pilgrims who travelled to Canterbury. One particular topos was used frequently by hagiographers: a pilgrim from the local saint's area would at first travel to Thomas's tomb at Canterbury, and here would either fail to be cured, or

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<sup>142</sup> J.O'Reilly, "*Candidus et Rubicundus*": An Image of Martyrdom in the "Lives" of Thomas Becket', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 99 (1981), pp.303-14.

<sup>143</sup> M.Staunton, *The Lives of Thomas Becket* (Manchtser, 2001), p.203.

<sup>144</sup> See A.F.Harris 'Pilgrimage, Performance, and Stained Glass at Canterbury Cathedral', in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, ed. S.Blick and R.Tekippe (Brill, 2005), pp.243-84; and D.Torevell, *Liturgy and the Beauty of the Unknown: Another Place* (Aldershot, 2007), pp.82-84.

<sup>145</sup> *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, Vol. 1, p.18.

would be told (or told off) by Becket to return to their “own” saint’s tomb.<sup>146</sup> In the *VSH*, Gerald similarly provides an example of a sceptical woman from Keal, who at first travelled to Canterbury and stayed at Becket’s tomb; during the night she heard a voice telling her that she would recover her health at Hugh’s tomb.<sup>147</sup> In this way, smaller cults could emphasise their saint’s efficacy as *genius loci*, yet still seize a share of Becket’s status and fame.

This was but one example of how Thomas Becket and his cult influenced hagiography in the aftermath of his death. Yet, for all this, no one has fully explored the extent to which Thomas Becket’s cult has influenced the representation of episcopal sanctity within hagiography.<sup>148</sup> Becket’s influence was not, however, restricted to saints’ lives; Becket became a figurehead that infused public discourse surrounding church-state relations. The specifics of the arguments might change, as might the personnel, but the debate was to some extent fixed by the rhetoric of Becket’s legacy. Becket’s life, but especially his death and the cause for which he died, would be unpicked and dissected by a plethora of writers and contemporary commentators who sought to use Becket’s reputation and sanctity for their own objectives.<sup>149</sup> In this respect, comparisons between contemporary bishops, such as that of Hugh and Becket, were almost to be

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<sup>146</sup> Webb, *Pilgrimage*, pp.53-58.

<sup>147</sup> *VSH*, pp.50-51: ‘*Demum autem Cantuariam transiens, sanctum Thomam adivit. Ad cuius tumbam cum fessa dormiret, vocem ei dicentem audivit quatinus Lincolniam quam cicius rediret, ad tumbam beati Hugonis sanitatem procul dubio receptura*’.

<sup>148</sup> Although Anne Duggan has looked at the effect of Becket’s cult on other saints’ cults. See *eadem*, ‘The Cult of St Thomas Becket in the Thirteenth Century’, in *St Thomas Cantilupe, Bishop of Hereford: Essays in His Honour*, ed. M.Jancey (Hereford, 1982), pp.21-46.

<sup>149</sup> For example, Pope Innocent III warned King John that ‘it would be perilous for him to oppose God and the church in the cause for which St Thomas had recently shed his blood’: *Selected Letters of Pope Innocent III Concerning England (1198-1216)*, ed. C.R.Cheney and W.H.Semple (London, 1953), p.89.

expected. Briefly, we will look at how Stephen Langton utilised Becket in the construction of his own episcopal identity.

In 1207, the archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, distributed a sermon to his friends in England, in which he compared his failed election and exile in France with that of his predecessor, Thomas's exile. In particular, he stressed the degree to which he was continuing the struggle against secular tyranny that Thomas Becket had initiated.<sup>150</sup> This would not be the last time Langton used the memory of his predecessor in his own dealings with King John. Although Gerald would draw his own comparison between Becket and Langton in his *Speculum Ecclesiae* and his *De Iure*, to a large extent Langton had already self-consciously promoted this connection.<sup>151</sup> Even his own episcopal seal held the image of Thomas Becket. In these circumstances, it might be difficult to not feel somewhat cynical, yet: 'The coincidences between himself and Becket was a useful propaganda ploy in his contest with the king [John], but his own personal regard for St Thomas rested on deeper foundations'.<sup>152</sup> Certainly, for the latter we have evidence that Langton personally wrote a sermon for the translation of Becket's relics in 1220.<sup>153</sup> Likewise, Reames has credited him with

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<sup>150</sup> *Acta Stephani Langton Cantuariensis archiepiscopi. AD 1207-1228*, ed. K.Major (Oxford, 1950), pp.2-7; R.Foreville, 'Etienne Langton', *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 4.2 (1961), cols 1495-1502; Powicke, *Stephen Langton*, pp.94-99; J.W.Baldwin 'Master Stephen Langton, Future Archbishop of Canterbury: The Paris Schools and Magna Carta', *English Historical Review*, 123 (2008) pp.811-46; B.Bolton, 'Pastor Bonus: Matthew Paris's Life of Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury (1207-1228)', ed. W.Janse, *Dutch Review of Church History*, 84 (2004), pp.57-70. The fragmentary life is found in *Matthaei Parisiensis, Vita sancti Stephani archiepiscopi Cantuariensis* in *Ungedruckte Anglo-Normannische Geschichtsquellen*, ed. F.Liebermann (Strasbourg, 1879), pp.318-29.

<sup>151</sup> *De iure*, pp.125-27; *Speculum Ecclesiae*, p.77; see also N.M.Fryde, 'The Roots of Magna Carta: Opposition to the Plantagenets', in *Political Thought and the Realities of Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. J.Canning and O.G.Oexle (Göttingen, 1998), pp.53-66.

<sup>152</sup> R.Eales, 'The Political Setting of the Becket Translation of 1220', ed. D.Wood, SCH, 30, (Oxford, 1993) pp.127-39.

<sup>153</sup> *Selected Sermons of Stephen Langton*, ed. P.B.Roberts (Toronto, 1980), pp.67-94.

writing liturgical lessons that would have been read every year on the anniversary of Becket's translation.<sup>154</sup>

The above case demonstrates quite forcibly how Becket increasingly represented an ideal episcopal model. As Robert Eales has stated, 'St Thomas stood as a model for the rights and duties of the clergy, and ideal life and death of the good pastor, which had obvious implications for the place of the clergy within society as a whole and in relation to royal power'.<sup>155</sup> In this respect, the model had implications for the way Hugh was depicted by his hagiographers. Indeed, one could argue that Thomas's conduct as a bishop, or at least the way he was remembered and recorded, acted as a template for Gerald's own depiction of Hugh. There is, in contrast, a noticeable lack of comparisons of Thomas with Hugh in Adam of Eynsham's *MVSH*. On the few occasions that Becket is mentioned, Adam is less than flattering: for example, in a chapter which describes how Hugh prevented his archdeacons from imposing fines rather than penances upon local parishioners, Adam explains how the bishop's officials argued that even the 'most holy archbishop and martyr Thomas' had taken fines. Hugh replied (a little sarcastically), 'Believe me, this did not make him a saint, his other conspicuous virtues showed him to be one and he deserved the martyr's palm for another cause'.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> On the dissemination of liturgical lessons commemorating the *translatio* see S.L.Reames 'Reconstructing and Interpreting a Thirteenth-Century Office for the Translation of Thomas Becket' *Speculum*, 80 (2005), pp.118-70; and *eadem*, 'The Remaking of a Saint: Stephen Langton and the Liturgical Office for Becket's Translation', *Hagiographica*, 7 (2000), pp.17-33.

<sup>155</sup> Eales, 'The Political Setting', p.138.

<sup>156</sup> *MVSH*, Vol.2, p.38: '*Credite michi, inquit, non iccirco sanctus fuit; alia enim uirtutum merita sanctum exhibuerunt, alio meruit titulo palmam reportare martirii*'. The martyr's palm was a standard iconographical image used for martyr saints. See R.Gameson 'The Early Imagery of Thomas Becket', in

Thomas's early life as a courtier cleric was not above reproach, which is perhaps why Adam of Eynsham did not use Thomas as a model for Hugh. While Hugh had always been a holy man, Thomas, no matter how hard his biographers tried to show otherwise, had to grow into his sanctity. Chiefly, it was his death and the cause for which he died, upholding the liberties of the Church, which presented a rationale for his canonisation. The obvious dilemma for Gerald was of how to go about demonstrating that Hugh had met a similar standard of sanctity. Although Hugh had not died a martyr's death, like Becket, he had still upheld the liberty of the Church, and had publically stood up against both Henry II and Richard I. Indeed, on a number of issues Hugh's official position had not been without risk; this is certainly implicit in the *VSH*, and it is made explicit in the canonisation report, where it notes how in his resistance to the 'secular power' Hugh had thought little of the danger to himself.<sup>157</sup> To some extent, Hugh was viewed as one who had shared with Thomas the "martyr's intention". Certainly, Gregory the Great had argued that anyone could be a martyr as long as they were prepared to suffer for their faith. Thus, in his *Dialogues* Gregory concluded that 'Martyrdom is secret whenever the soul is eager and ready for suffering, even if there is no open persecution'.<sup>158</sup> Gerald situated Hugh within this model also: 'He believed that reproaches should be endured where Christ is in

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Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan, ed. C.Morris and P.Roberts (Cambridge, 2002), pp.46-89, at pp.52-53. The only other reference to Thomas in the *MVSH* is when Hugh tries to dissuade both Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury, and his successor Hubert Walter from building a college for secular canons at Canterbury. Baldwin argued that Thomas had had a similar intention, but Hugh smoothly replied 'Be content with sharing the martyr's intention; I venture to advise you to go no further,' / '*Sufficiat... uos simili iam proposito martiri adequatum; si meam uultis audire imperitiam, ulterius eo minime procedetis*': *MVSH*, Vol.1, p.122.

<sup>157</sup> Farmer, 'Canonization of St Hugh of Lincoln', p.97.

<sup>158</sup> Gregory the Great: Dialogues, trans. O.J.Zimmerman (New York, 1959), p.160.

question, even thinking himself happy to be held worthy to suffer contumely for the church of Christ'.<sup>159</sup>

If Hugh was to have any chance of fulfilling the requirements of canonisation, Gerald needed to demonstrate within the *vita* that the saint had fulfilled all his episcopal duties exceptionally. The report from the papal commission on Hugh's miracles also summarised how Hugh had performed in office:

He made his church illustrious by his merits, and he instructed his people so well by word and example that he proved himself a bishop worthy of the name. He built up his church with carefully chosen clerics and, heedless of the danger to his person and property resisted the secular power, delivered his church from bondage and recovered several lost rights.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> VSH, pp.26-27: '*adoptanda quidem duxit obprobia ubi Christus in causa, felicissimum quoque se reputans si dignus habeatur pro Christi ecclesia contumeliam pati*'.

<sup>160</sup> Farmer's above translation is an abbreviation of the Latin: *idem*, 'The Canonization of St Hugh of Lincoln', p.96: '*Ecclesiam autem suam ita meritorum tytulis illustravit ita plebem sibi commissam uerbis informare studuit et exemplis quod episcopi nomen sibi competere bonorum operum testimonio patenter et ueraciter ostendebat. Nec iuxta uerbum propheticum Syon in sanguinibus edificare studuit, set ex uiuis lapidibus habitaculum ecclesie construebat. Electas in ecclesia sua collocando personas et iuxta uerbum scripture: Cum lateres cecidissent quadris edificabat lapidibus cedrosque plantabat corrumentibus siccomoris. Potestatis autem secularis in ecclesiam seuientis inpetus adeo constanter elidere consuevit ut et rerum et corporis sui periculum contempnere uideretur. Adeo etiam potestati resistendo profecit: quod ecclesiam suam a seruitute grauissima liberauit et iura amissa plurima recuperauit*'.

It is significant that the description of Hugh's actions as bishop mirrors the central themes that dominate the first part of the *VSH*. Not only is there a stress upon Hugh's commitment to preserving the rights of his church from secular tyranny, Gerald also emphasises throughout how Hugh was devoted to providing proper pastoral care. Previously, the similarities between the *VSH* and the canonization report have not been emphasised, yet in some respects the report reads as a synopsis of Gerald's *vita*. This is perhaps unsurprising, as Stephen Langton, the dedicatee of the *VSH*, was on the same papal commission that set out to enquire about Hugh's life and miracles. It would make more sense if Langton had used the *VSH*, rather than the weighty *MVSH*, in any summation of Hugh's life.

Gerald reflects upon Hugh's difficult relationship with the Angevin kings. However, Gerald also demonstrates how Hugh prioritised the religious works that he was expected to perform over any secular duties that were expected of him or owed to the king. For example, in chapter six Gerald describes how Henry II had summoned Hugh to an early morning council at Le Mans in Normandy, but that 'As was his custom, he omitted nothing having to do with God and his order because of secular responsibilities'.<sup>161</sup> The emphasis on the need to pay no heed to the '*seculares curas*' was not merely a hagiographical gloss; this was how bishops had always been expected to behave. For instance, in Archbishop Wulfstan's (as archbishop c.1002-1023) eleventh-century collection of canon law, one canon, entitled *De secularibus curis*, had stated: 'A bishop, priest or deacon must by no means take on worldly

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<sup>161</sup> *VSH*, pp.20-21: '... ipse, sicut moris habebat, nichil ad Deum spectans et ad ordinem suum propter seculares curas unquam omittens'.

responsibilities, but if he behaves otherwise, let him be removed from office'.<sup>162</sup> By this depiction, Gerald equated Hugh's behaviour to the ideals set out in numerous collections of canon law. To some extent, the prescriptions placed upon the office could be associated with an ideal form of episcopal behaviour, which was itself a sign of sanctity. Arguably, any bishop who prioritised the sacred over the secular was the exception rather than the norm.<sup>163</sup> Gerald depicts Hugh as unlike the other contemporary bishops and archbishops, who had without exception hurried to Henry's meeting. Later Gerald even contrasts Hugh of Lincoln with his namesake Hugh, bishop of Coventry. Both bishops are described celebrating mass for the feast day of a confessor; when Hugh of Coventry tries to urge St Hugh to be quick 'for the king's sake', the latter bishop replied:

No, for sake of the King of Kings, who should be honoured

most of all and whose services ought not to be shortened because

of worldly business, the services on this feast should be conducted

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<sup>162</sup> Wulfstan's Canon Law Collection ed. J.E.Cross and A.Hamer (Cambridge, 1999), pp.73-74. Derived from recension A of the eighth-century *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*, which was itself derived from *Canones Apostolorum* VII: PL 67, col. 142. For this specific canon in the *Collectio* see H.Wasserschleben, *Die Irische Kanonensammlung*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Leipzig, 1885), p.20. This canon is found in Charlemagne's *Magni Capitulare* (PL 97), and would find its way into Gratian's twelfth-century *Decretum*. It continued to be copied throughout the middle ages. For instance, in *William Durant the Younger's* (c.1266-1330) *Tractatus maior*, the second part of the tract begins with this canon.

<sup>163</sup> Adam of Eynsham describes how Hugh urged Hubert Walter to 'abandon for a season the business of state [*curis secularibus*] in which he was immersed, and devote himself more to his archiepiscopal duties than to the administration of the kingdom'. / '*Quatinus omissis parumper quibus indefessus adherebat curis secularibus, studio potius indulgeret pontificalis officii quam reipublice administrationi*': *MVSH*, Vol.2, p.96.

in the manner of a feast and not in haste.<sup>164</sup>

Gerald emphasised how Hugh was not prepared to prioritise the '*seculares curas*' over service to God. Consequently, Hugh prolonged the mass, after which we are told he went to the court with his usual '*gravitatas et maturitas*'.<sup>165</sup> These qualities appear again in chapter 7, where Gerald relates a similar episode: here Hugh, along with the other English bishops, was expected to swear fealty to Richard I; however, as it happened to be a feast day, Hugh again decided to first conduct the liturgical offices again with '*gravitas and maturitas*'.<sup>166</sup> The twinning of these nouns could be a mere coincidence; however, it may also speak to Gerald's extensive knowledge of classical writers.<sup>167</sup> In Cicero's *de Senectute*, for instance, the author contrasts the '*infirmitas puerorum et ferocitas iuvenum*' with the *gravitas* of the middle-aged and *maturitas* of the elderly. For the twelfth century, such qualities were considered suitable for court, and were also used to praise good leadership.<sup>168</sup> Again, Gerald was following a blueprint set by others; for example, Edward Grim, in his description of a youthful Becket, had stated 'There was in him a mature wisdom unique in one so young. His counsels were those of an experienced man'.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> VSH, pp.20-21: '*Quinimmo propter Regem regum, cui potis[s]ime est obsequendum et cuius obsequiis propter seculares curas nil subtrahendum, festive pocius hoc festo et non festine est agendum*'.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p.25.

<sup>167</sup> However, much of his knowledge of classical authors may have been transmitted through Peter the Chanter's *Verbum Abbreviatum*. See E.M.Sanford, 'Giraldus Cambrensis' Debt to Petrus Cantor', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, 3 (1945), pp.16-32.

<sup>168</sup> S.Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950-1200* (Pennsylvania, 1994), *passim*.

<sup>169</sup> E.Grim, *Vita S. Thomae Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi et Martyris*, in *Materials for the Life of Thomas Becket*, ed. J.Robertson, 7 Vols. (London: 1875-1885), Vol.2, p.361, ch.11.

Returning to our main theme, these are not the only occasions where Hugh prefers the sacred over the secular. For example, in chapter six Gerald states that 'Firmly and unalterably, he [Hugh] bore in mind that divine things were always to be put before secular things'.<sup>170</sup> We might note the similarities here with Wulfstan's collection of canon law; canon thirty dictates that a bishop should never place secular things above being a servant of God.<sup>171</sup> This dichotomy is stressed throughout, but Gerald still emphasises that Hugh was loyal to the English king. Indeed, to some extent Gerald indicates that Hugh's holy life allowed him to have more latitude with the king over his behaviour.<sup>172</sup> The fact that Henry II had requested Hugh's candidacy would have perhaps also provided the bishop with more flexibility during his time in office. Furthermore, Gerald made it clear to his readers that Hugh never failed in his duties to the 'earthly prince', yet he also maintained that the 'supreme King' came first. To express this sentiment, Gerald used a verse from Matthew's Gospel; in the *VSH* he argued that Hugh always 'rendered therefore to Caesar the things that were Caesar's, and to God the things which are God's'.<sup>173</sup> Jesus's message was not intended to define relations between Church and state, yet later medieval commentators often used this verse in this way.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> *VSH*, p.23: '*Hoc etenim fixum in animo ferebat et inmutabile, quod cunctis secularibus negociis semper essent divina preponenda*'.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, p.78: '*Episcopi nullatenus secularibus negotiis plus quam Dei seruitiis*', p.78.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.22-23: '*Ad hoc etiam, quod regi tam acceptus in omnibus et tam placabilis erat, multum id facere potuit. Sciens enim et non ignorans rex tam intensam erga Deum viri sancti intencionem, plurima eius facta tolerabilia duxit, plurimaque sub dissimulacione pertransiit, que forsitan ab alio gesta gravem ei gignere possent indignacionem*'.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, '*que Cesaris erant Cesari redderet, et que Dei Deo*'.

<sup>174</sup> B.Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools: A Study of Intellectuals in Politics* (Oxford, 1973), p.43.

Describing events that occurred after Richard's coronation, Gerald relates how Hugh was pressed by his followers to travel to court without delay, but that Hugh, having discovered an unburied corpse by the side of the road, took the time to bury the body properly. After he had completed the burial Hugh arrived at court, and here Gerald contrasts him with the other bishops and archbishops who had gathered 'early in the morning'.<sup>175</sup> Gerald makes another reference to Matthew's dictum at the end of his account of these events, although here it is altered to emphasise the primacy of the sacred over the secular sphere: 'Thus, in all things to be done, this holy man always put first the things that are God's and attended to those that were Caesar's afterward in second place. He both strove to please the supreme Prince and yet never annoyed the earthly [prince] save by some simple and perhaps slight opposition, where God also was concerned.'<sup>176</sup> The last clause states a claim for sacred power within the political realm. Gerald reinforces that Hugh's actions were not seditious, and that he used his authority as a bishop in an appropriate manner, and only when the king acted improperly. Throughout his life, Gerald was very outspoken concerning the 'tyrannical' nature of the Angevin kings. To show Hugh in a similar light to Becket, Gerald emphasised the parallels between Henry II and Thomas Becket and that of Richard and St Hugh.

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<sup>175</sup> *VSH*, pp.24-25.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*: '*Hic itaque vir santus in cunctis agendis semper ea que Dei sunt anteponens et hiis que Cesaris erant secundo loco et subsequenter intendens, et summum Principem principaliter ac precipue placare curavit et terrenum tamen nunquam, nisi facili et frivola forsans offensa ubi etiam Deus in causa molestavit*'. Gerald may have been influenced by John of Salisbury: See C.J.Nederman and C.Campbell 'Priests, Kings and Tyrants: Spiritual and Temporal Power in John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*', *Speculum*, 66 (1991), pp.572-90.

The Oxford Council of 1197 witnessed Hugh of Lincoln's refusal to provide military service (or *scutage*) for Richard I's war in France.<sup>177</sup> In the *VSH* this event and Hugh's subsequent reconciliation with Richard demonstrates how Gerald constructed a very specific image of Hugh's actions as bishop. Certainly, Gerald's account of the Oxford Council is quite different from the accounts by two other contemporary writers, Roger of Hoveden and Adam of Eynsham.<sup>178</sup> Gerald describes how, after King Richard's imprisonment in Germany, the king returned and 'began to rage against the English church with harsh demands'.<sup>179</sup> As a consequence, the clergy of the kingdom gathered and held an 'angry council' (Oxford is not mentioned in the *VSH*) where they decided to resist Richard's exactions, choosing Hugh of Lincoln as their spokesman.<sup>180</sup> Adam of Eynsham's account in his *MVSH* provides much more detail; we learn that it was Hubert Walter, the current archbishop of Canterbury (from 28<sup>th</sup> May 1193- *d.*1205), acting in his capacity as king's justiciar, who had convened the council on Richard's behalf.<sup>181</sup> Walter had assembled the lay magnates and English episcopate at Oxford to ask all of Richard's tenants-in-chief to provide three hundred knights collectively (or the monetary equivalent) for the king, who at the time was in France, engaged in war with the French king, Philip.<sup>182</sup> In the *MVSH*, Adam explains that when it came time for

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<sup>177</sup> For discussion see *Councils and Synods*, pp.1052-1053; J.H.Round, 'The Oxford Council of December 1197', *English Historical Review*, 26 (1892), pp.301-06; Cheney, *Hubert Walter*, pp.94-95.

<sup>178</sup> Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ed. W.Stubbs, 4 Vols. (London, 1869-1871), Vol.1, p.40; *MVSH*, Vol.2, pp.98-102.

<sup>179</sup> *VSH*, pp.26-27: '*in Anglicanam cepit ecclesiam duris exactionibus debaccari*'.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*: 'By common choice, the expression of resistance to the severe and intolerable demands of all the clergy's defence of the liberty of the church was entrusted to the mouth of the Bishop of Lincoln, as one surpassing the rest in proven and authentic religion'. / '*verbum ad inportunas pariter et inportabiles impositiones contradictionis et cleri totius pro ecclesiastica libertate responsionis in ore Lincolnensis, tanquam persone pre ceteris approbate religionis et autentice magis, communi omnium desiderio est assignatum*'.

<sup>181</sup> See above, n.178.

<sup>182</sup> For discussion of why both bishops and magnates were summoned to the council see *MVSH*, Vol.1, pp.xlii-xliv; J.H.Round *Feudal England* (London, 1895), pp.528-38; H.M.Chew, *The English Ecclesiastical Tenants-In-Chief and Knight Service* (Oxford, 1932), pp.39-43.

the bishop of Lincoln to consent to this request he refused, declaring that any service to the king that was due from the church of Lincoln was not owed for wars fought beyond England's borders. Hugh finished his speech by declaring his desire to resign his episcopal office and return to his native land, 'rather than remain here as bishop and cause unprecedented burdens to be laid on the church under my charge by surrendering her ancient rights'.<sup>183</sup> Next, Herbert, the bishop of Salisbury, answered in a similar vein to Hugh, and Hubert Walter, furious at this turn of events, quickly disbanded the Council. Hubert soon informed the king who, on hearing of Hugh's pronouncement, ordered that both Lincoln's and Salisbury's episcopal temporalities should be immediately confiscated.

In contrast to Adam of Eynsham's account of the Oxford Council, in Gerald's *vita* the Council is depicted as a spontaneous reaction to Richard's treatment of the church. Both Hugh's public rejection and his entire speech are omitted, whilst in the *VSH* Richard deprives Hugh of his barony (his temporalities) not because of his refusal to provide military aid, but because of Hugh's role as the clergy's representative.<sup>184</sup> This discrepancy can perhaps be accounted for; Round did suggest that in the *VSH* Gerald could have been referring to an earlier meeting, convened before the Council of Oxford. Likewise, the editors of *Councils and Synods* suggest that Gervase of Canterbury's brief description of the Council, in which Gervase appears to describe a meeting of the English bishops, may indicate that a provincial council was held in

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<sup>183</sup> *MVSH*, Vol. 2, p.99: '*quam hic pontificatum gerere et ecclesiam michi commissam, antiquas immunitates perdendo, insolitis angariis subiugare*'. Hugh may have been threatening to resign to bolster his position; see Ruud, "Unworthy Servants", pp.1-13.

<sup>184</sup> *VSH*, pp.26-27.

parallel to the Council of Oxford.<sup>185</sup> Whether this is accurate or not, the depiction of these events is best understood by focussing on Gerald's hagiographical intentions, and by bearing in mind the specific context in which he was writing.

In this regard, the most noticeable difference between Adam and Gerald's texts is that in the *VSH* Hubert Walter's role is completely omitted. Considering the many unflattering comments Gerald had made of Hubert in his lifetime, it is at first surprising that Gerald did not seek to draw a comparison between the saintly Hugh and the worldlier Hubert. However, it may be that near the end of his life, when Gerald was writing the *VSH*, Gerald could look at Hubert Walter's character more dispassionately, unclouded by his earlier resentments. Certainly, in his *Retractiones* (c.1217), Gerald tempered some of his earlier judgements, even suggesting that the archbishop had acted as a powerful restraint upon the tyranny of the Angevin kings.<sup>186</sup>

Nevertheless, by ignoring Hubert's role and the actual objectives of the Oxford Council, Gerald was able to simplify his narrative. In the *VSH* Hugh becomes the classic example of an episcopal saint defending the Church's liberties and rights. At the same time, the bishop's humility, authority and religious charisma was emphasised; Hugh had not sought after his position as spokesman, instead he had been appointed 'by common choice'. Gerald demonstrated the English Church's unanimity in this decision,

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<sup>185</sup> *MVSH*, Vol.1, p.xliv; *Council and Synods*, p.1053.

<sup>186</sup> *GCO*, Vol.1, pp.426-27.

yet at the same time emphasised Hugh's behaviour as being exceptional and distinct from his clerical brethren. Gerald states that Richard also blamed Hugh solely for any resistance to his plans 'since he alone, before and on behalf of the others, publicly upheld the liberty of the church'.<sup>187</sup> Here and elsewhere in the *VSH* there appears to be an element of implicit criticism of Hugh's episcopal colleagues. Indeed, by stressing Hugh's uniqueness Gerald could demonstrate that Hugh's sanctity was evident.

Finally, Hugh's decision to deny feudal service to Richard could also be considered a tacit censure of his own metropolitan Hubert Walter. Although at the Oxford Council Hubert acted in his capacity as the King's justiciar, Hugh's behaviour at the Council could be interpreted as disloyal to his ecclesiastical superior. Hugh's actions may have been considered embarrassing by Gerald, or at the very least not deemed suitable for his patrons and audience. We have to remember that during the interdict a number of bishops remained faithful to King John, rather than siding with Stephen Langton, and Gerald, a supporter of the latter, would not have wished to provide any example of Hugh's behaviour which suggested disobedience to one's metropolitan. His account thus served its purpose by creating a version of the past in which the Church was united.

As Richard was still in Normandy at Roche d'Andely, Hugh took the initiative and travelled overseas to meet him. Gerald describes Hugh approaching the king at the

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<sup>187</sup> *VSH*, pp.26-27: '*quia solus pre ceteris et pro ceteris cunctis ecclesiasticam extulit in publico libertatem, totam*'.

chapel of Les Andelys where he 'greeted him and by word and look invited him to kiss'.<sup>188</sup> What is described in this passage was the *osculum pacis* or kiss of peace, which although was primarily a liturgical component of the Mass, 'could [also] be given or exchanged in rituals of contract making or dispute settlement and in the act of homage'.<sup>189</sup> As such, the kiss could have multiple meanings; certainly, within the political sphere there may have been little control over how such rituals were interpreted by their audience; further, writers recording the event might reinterpret the ritual to fit their own ideological or narrative agenda. The kiss of peace had played an important part in the conflict which occurred between Henry II and Thomas Becket.<sup>190</sup> Indeed, it has been argued that Henry II's refusal to give Becket the kiss of peace during their meeting at Northampton further exacerbated suspicion about Henry's motives, and, therefore, prolonged their dispute.<sup>191</sup> As William fitz Stephen, one of Thomas's hagiographers put it, the archbishop was 'ready to receive the grace of the kiss customary among the English if the king [Henry II] anticipated it. He was not received to the kiss.'<sup>192</sup> It may be that this prior event, discussed in great detail by Becket's biographers, was one of the reasons why both Adam of Eynsham and Gerald sought to record the confrontation that occurred between Hugh and King Richard.

In this instance, we are told that although Richard initially drew back from Hugh, the bishop was not diverted and 'pressed on and drew nearer and once more invited him

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., pp.28-29: '*ipso salutato et ad osculum tam verbo quam vultu provocato*'.

<sup>189</sup> K.Harvey, *The Kiss in History* (Manchester, 2005), p.20.

<sup>190</sup> See T.Reuter, '*Velle sibi fieri in forma hac*: Symbolic Acts in the Becket Dispute', in *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. Nelson, pp.167-92; H.Vollrath, 'Kiss of Peace', *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History*, ed. R.Lesaffer (Cambridge, 2004), pp.162-68, at pp.177-82.

<sup>191</sup> Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, p.577.

<sup>192</sup> For the council at Northampton, see *Council and Synods*, pp.894-914; D.Knowles, *Thomas Becket* (Stanford, 1970), pp.94-100; Staunton, *Lives of Thomas Becket*, p.176-77.

to kiss, [this time] with success'.<sup>193</sup> Richard perhaps realising that this now signified to those watching that he and Hugh were reconciled stated that the kiss had been given '*sub risus modici significancia*'.<sup>194</sup> But Hugh disagreed and said that Richard had nothing to complain about and that the king would decide this later when he pleased. The first part of Gerald's description needs to be unpicked. It would seem to suggest that Hugh understood that for the king to save face, Richard needed to be the one who initiated the act of reconciliation. Gerald's depiction of the event is different in some respects from that recorded within *MVSH*. The latter seems to suggest that Hugh was able to bend Richard to his will:

When the bishop greeted the king he did not reply, but having frowned at him after a while turned his face away. The bishop said to him 'Lord king, kiss me'. But Richard turned his head even further and looked the other way. Then the bishop firmly gripped the king's tunic round his chest and shook it violently, saying again, 'You owe me a kiss, because I have come a long way to see you'. The king answered 'You deserve no kiss from me'. He shook him more vigorously than before, this time by his cloak Which he held firmly, and said boldly 'I have every right to one,'

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<sup>193</sup> *VSH*, pp.28-29: '*episcopus prosequens et proprius accedens, iterum ipsum ad osculum efficaciter invitavit*'.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*.

adding, 'Kiss me.' The other, overcome by his courage and determination, after a little while kissed him with a smile.<sup>195</sup>

This description in the *MVSH* suggests that Hugh had to actually batter down Richard's resolve. Indeed, the next sentence states that the bishops and archbishops who had accompanied the king were now anxious after the bishop's 'triumph' to include Hugh within their number.<sup>196</sup> In contrast, Gerald of Wales does not try to create a kind of 'Holy Man' persona for Hugh. Instead, his behaviour suggests an acute awareness of both his own episcopal role, but also the king's position. One wonders whether Gerald's audience, primarily made up of secular canons, would have been shocked, rather than impressed, with the *MVSH's* idiosyncratic description of Hugh's behaviour. In the *VSH*, Gerald suggests that Hugh put the ball in Richard's court and encouraged the king to seek a resolution. This may well be a consequence of Gerald's own understanding of kingship; certainly, although Gerald was a harsh critic of the Angevin kings, like his earlier contemporary John of Salisbury, his writings do not advocate a strict hierocratic understanding of the relationship between political and religious authority. It may also imply that Gerald wanted Hugh to be depicted as the type of bishop who sought to guide kings, rather than force submission.

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<sup>195</sup> *MVSH*, Vol.2, p.101: 'Cum ergo salutasset regem episcopus, ipse non respondit ei uerbum, set cum illum parumper toruis fuisset oculis intuitus faciem ab eo auertit. Cui episcopus ait, "Da michi osculum, domine rex." Qui magis auertit aspectum ab eo, uultumque et capud in partem aliam declinauit. Tunc episcopus, circa pectus uestem illius fortiter constringens, hanc uehementius concussit, iterum dicens, "Osculum michi debes," inquit, "quia de longinco ad te uenio." Rex ad hec, "Non," ait, "meruisti ut osculer te." Qui fortius concutiens eum per capam quam stricta tenebat manu, confidenter ait, "Immo," inquit, "merui," et adiecit "Osculare me." Tunc ille, admiratus fiduciam constantie eius, paululumque subridens, osculatus est eum'.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*: 'Qui non procul a rege, presulem hoc modo de rege iam triumphantem inter se accisci cupientes, locum ei sessionis fecere'.

In Gerald's account, as we have seen, the king chooses to reconcile himself with Hugh. During mass, which the king's chaplain celebrated, Richard is described as descending to the bishop in the choir and giving him the kiss of peace.<sup>197</sup> Later, at dinner, Richard also presented a gift of a large pike to Hugh. Hugh's role, however, does not end here for while the previous action had taken place in the public sphere, the bishop and the king now met in private. During this meeting the bishop accused the king 'of certain serious and irregular excesses and with a father's affection invited the son to amendment.'<sup>198</sup> Again this type of behaviour reflected a traditional understanding of the episcopal office as counsellor and spiritual advisor to the king.<sup>199</sup> What seems somewhat out of place is Gerald's assertion that Richard acted humbly, and 'devoutly promised amendment in everything', yet then he stated, 'the King in his persistent way asked the bishop not to thwart his affairs in England from then on'.<sup>200</sup> Hugh, however, responded that he would always look after Richard's interests 'provided they were not obviously opposed to God and respect for the liberty of the church'.<sup>201</sup>

Having written the *vita* both during and after the interdict, any tension between royal and ecclesiastical power that had taken place in Hugh's lifetime took on a heightened

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<sup>197</sup> *VSH*, pp.28-29: '*ipse statim de stallo suo descendens et ad episcopum in choro veniens, pacis osculum ei, cunctis admirantibus, ipse portavit*'.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*. '*Ipse vero paternam conmonicionem et castigacionem valde pacienter et benigne suscepit et emendacionem in omnibus humiliter et devote promisit*'.

<sup>199</sup> For this tradition portrayed in an Anglo-Saxon saint's life, see W.T.Foley, *Images of Sanctity in Eddius Stephanus' Life of Bishop Wilfrid, an Early English Saint's Life* (Lampeter, 1992), pp.17-18.

<sup>200</sup> *VSH*, pp.28-29: '*rex episcopum obnixe rogavit quatinus negocia sua in Anglia de cetero non impediret*'.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*: '*dum tamen contra Deum aperta fronte non fuerint et ecclesiastice libertatis honorem*'.

significance. Such conflict would resonate with Gerald's audience, who by now would have felt the practical consequences of the papal interdict.

(d) *VSH*: Hugh as Model for Delivery of Pastoral Care

Gerald wished to portray Hugh as a proficient provider of pastoral care. This stress, although traditional, was even more pertinent in the late twelfth century when the Church increasingly sought to regulate the behaviour of the laity and administer the Christian sacraments more efficiently to its flock.<sup>202</sup> In his *VSH*, Gerald singles out the sacraments of confirmation and church consecration, although he states that Hugh was concerned with all the sacraments that were 'specifically assigned to the office of the bishop'.<sup>203</sup> Due to their nature, those sacraments that were performed exclusively by bishops were considered to be of fundamental significance; without chrism there could be no sacerdotal baptism, and without ordination there could be no clergy. Gerald's stress on these "status-changing" episcopal rites reflects the interests of the major eleventh and twelfth-century compilers of canon law.<sup>204</sup> For example, Burchard of Worms's eleventh-century *Decretum* contained sections on the consecration of churches, altars and graveyards; moreover, his fourth book was entitled *De*

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<sup>202</sup> A.Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, trans. M.J.Schneider (Notre Dame and London, 1993), pp.95-106.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.14-15: '*cuncta que ad episcopum spectabant*'.

<sup>204</sup> For surveys of the state of canon law in the twelfth-century, see M.Brett, 'Editions, Manuscripts and Readers in some Pre-Gratian Collections', in *Ritual, Text, and Law: Studies in Medieval Canon Law and Liturgy Presented to Roger E. Reynolds*, ed. R.E.Reynolds, K.G.Cushing and R.Gyug (Aldershot, 2004), pp.205-24; C.Duggan, *Twelfth-Century Decretal Collections and their Importance in English History* (London, 1963); K.Pennington, 'Decretal Collections 1190-1234', in *The History of Medieval Canon Law*, ed. *idem* and Hartmann, pp.293-317.

*Sacramento Baptismatis et Confirmationis*, and included over a hundred and one canons on this subject.<sup>205</sup> Although continental in origin, the *Decretum* was found in English manuscripts after the Conquest; for instance, London, BL, Cotton Claudius C.VI, which included Burchard's text, circulated at Christ Church, Canterbury, near the end of the eleventh century, probably due to the initiatives of Archbishop Lanfranc.<sup>206</sup>

Of course, Gerald would not have drawn specifically upon Burchard's text in the depiction of Hugh. However, he would have been aware of twelfth-century developments in canon law, as he was a student of the Paris schools for two periods in the 1160s and 1170s. Much of his knowledge of canon law would have been filtered through the *Concordia Discordantium Canonum*, otherwise known as the *Decretum*; it was compiled c.1140 by Gratian, a Calmaldolese monk, as a compilation of older texts upon which Gratian imposed an accessible structure. As such, the *Decretum* became the foundation text for the study and teaching of canon law during Gerald's lifetime.<sup>207</sup> In fact, Gerald boasts in the *De Rebus* that he gave lectures on Gratian's *Decretals* in Paris, which, in his view, were particularly popular with students.<sup>208</sup>

What follows is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of the canon law texts employed by Gerald. The development of canon law within England after the

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<sup>205</sup> *PL* 140, cols. 537-1065, at cols. 725-50.

<sup>206</sup> The *Decretum* was placed alongside Lanfranc's *Constitutions*, see Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc ed. Knowles and Brooke, pp.xlv-xlvi. For a survey of Burchard's surviving manuscripts see L.Kéry, Canonical Collections of the Early Middle Ages (ca. 400-1140): A Bibliographical Guide to the Manuscripts and Literature (Washington, 1999), pp.134-48.

<sup>207</sup> The Treatise on Laws: (Decretum DD. 1-20), ed. A.Thompson (Washington, 1993), pp.xvi-xvii.

<sup>208</sup> De Rebus, pp.45-47.

Conquest should be viewed as an accumulative process; later canonists often drew upon a large number of earlier texts to create their own collection. For example, Gratian drew upon Burchard's earlier *Decretum*. So too did the *Collectio Lanfranci*, which, through the energies of Lanfranc, became 'the most widespread law book of the English church until the late twelfth century'.<sup>209</sup> Gerald himself could have certainly drawn upon Lincoln's twelfth-century copy of the *Collectio Lanfranci*.<sup>210</sup>

Obviously, it is not the case that such texts would have been the sole influence upon Gerald's characterisation of Hugh's episcopal sanctity. To some extent, Gratian's *Decretum* and its influence upon canon law mirrored the development of theology within the twelfth century: Peter the Lombard's *Sentences*, for instance, provided a systematic and organised approach to sacramental theology, and Peter himself drew upon earlier texts such as Hugh of St Victor's *De Sacramentis* (c.1134).<sup>211</sup> Both trends are seen as one consequence of the increasing professionalization of the clergy and episcopate, and thus the legal and administrative apparatus of both the Church and state. By producing collections and summaries of all the authoritative texts, it allowed greater efficiency among the clerical professions, but also meant the divide between theory and practice could be more easily bridged. We can see the influence of both canon law and sacramental theology in Gerald's *GE*; not only did he draw upon

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<sup>209</sup> M.Brett, 'The *Collectio Lanfranci* and its Competitors', in *Intellectual Life in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Margaret Gibson*, ed. M.T.Gibson, L.M.Smith and B.Ward (London, 1992), pp.157-74, at p.166.

<sup>210</sup> Thomson, *Catalogue*, p.129.

<sup>211</sup> For these developments see M.L.Colish, 'Systematic Theology and Theological Renewal in the Twelfth Century', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 18 (1988), pp.135-56.

Gratian's *Decretum* here, but the contents are also heavily indebted to Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, as well as Peter the Chanter's *Verbum Abbreviatum*.<sup>212</sup>

Considering the above developments, it is perhaps surprising that there has been little discussion by previous historians about how such sources might have influenced the representation of bishops within Gerald's hagiography. Was Gerald's emphasis upon confirmation and consecration merely a reflection of the canon laws that sought to codify and regulate certain episcopal practices and behaviour, or did he instead focus upon the importance of episcopal rites because of the greater weight which had been given to them by advocates of sacramental theology? Clearly, we can not provide an either/or answer to this question. We might also wish to ask whether Gerald's *VSH* represents such developments, or whether it is an evidential trick of the light. Was Gerald's focus on such sacraments simply a result of the *VSH*'s function, which was to provide a brief summary, rather than an in-depth portrait of Hugh's life? In this instance, it may have been simpler to draw upon canon law rather than hagiographical models.

Nevertheless, the influence of canon law upon hagiography can be viewed in earlier saints' lives. For example, in the eleventh-century *Vita Sancti Wilfridi*, the Canterbury monk Eadmer described how Chad, the seventh-century Bishop of the Mercians, had admitted to pluralism and relinquished his position as Bishop of York. As Eadmer put it, 'Reflecting on the fact that he had not obtained the see of another bishop justly, and

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<sup>212</sup> *GE*, pp.xx-xxiv.

being drawn to penitence, Chad chose to go without such an honour rather than to be in charge of another's church unjustly any longer'.<sup>213</sup> In this respect, it is very likely that Eadmer was drawing upon contemporary views of pluralism (no doubt with Lanfranc's predecessor Stigand in mind) and situating them within the past. Gerald had, of course, done this with Remigius.<sup>214</sup> However, in the *VSH*, Gerald not only moulds Hugh's character around contemporary notions of appropriate episcopal practice, but his account of Hugh's behaviour, at times, mirrors contemporary expectations exactly. In the following section we will first look at the two sacraments that Gerald emphasises, the consecration of churches and confirmation.<sup>215</sup> What needs to be asked is why such practices were deemed important, and whether this was the reason why Gerald described Hugh performing such rites.

Gerald may have used the example of church consecrations because it suggested that Hugh was able to maintain the territorial jurisdiction of the bishopric in the face of encroachments by rival episcopal or monastic institutions. We have already demonstrated in Chapter 3 how this was a theme which Gerald developed in the *VSR*. Clearly, an emphasis on episcopal sacraments also centred Hugh within his diocese, and demonstrated his stewardship. Consecrations also had practical implications: in England, from the mid-ninth century, the ecclesiastical landscape had changed dramatically as large parishes increasingly fragmented. This process led to a situation in which a number of churches were the property of aristocrats or monastic

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<sup>213</sup> *Vita Sancti Wilfridi auctore Eadmero*, ed. B.J.Muir and A.J.Turner (Exeter, 1998), p.46.

<sup>214</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>215</sup> *VSH*, pp.14-15: '*precipueque in puerorum confirmationibus ... et ecclesiarum consecrationibus*'.

institutions, and thus they fell outside episcopal jurisdiction.<sup>216</sup> From the Conquest, monastic exemption increased; a part of Gregorian policy, it was endorsed by the papacy. Consequently, by consecrating churches within their diocese, bishops could continue to have 'a significant moral influence over new foundations within their spheres of authority'.<sup>217</sup> In referring to Church consecrations in the *VSH*, Gerald drew from the Song of Songs and used the imagery of the bride and bridegroom.<sup>218</sup> In this way, just as the Roman Church was described as the bride of Christ, Gerald used the act of consecration to represent a union between a local church and its diocesan bishop. Such an equation had already been made between the marriage ceremony and the ordination of bishops, and became a stock image in Gregorian liturgies.<sup>219</sup> At this point, we should inquire whether Gerald, in pointing out the sacraments Hugh fulfilled, actually did so for the reasons stated above. Gerald does not give any specific examples of Hugh consecrating churches; neither does he suggest a motivation behind Hugh's devotion in this respect. Was he, therefore, simply recording Hugh performing an episcopal practice that was encouraged at the time?

We will now turn to the second sacrament that Gerald emphasises in the *VSH*, that of confirmation. The sacrament of confirmation had been originally part of a single rite of Christian initiation but, after the fifth century it increasingly became detached from baptism and was set apart as an exclusively episcopal rite, traditionally associated

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<sup>216</sup> This process is described in J.Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), pp.291-367.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, p.94.

<sup>218</sup> *VSH*, pp.14-15: '*ubi sponso sponsa coniungitur*'.

<sup>219</sup> M.McLaughlin, 'The Bishop as Bridegroom: Marital Imagery and Clerical Celibacy in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries', in *Medieval Purity and Piety*, ed. Frassetto, pp.209-38.

with Pentecost.<sup>220</sup> However, the evidence from English manuscripts is not always so clear. Certainly, in both the tenth-century pontificals of Egbert and Sidney Sussex it is treated as a separate sacrament.<sup>221</sup> Nonetheless, in the twelfth-century Pontifical of Magdalen College, confirmation is integrated into the rite for baptism, reflecting the earlier tradition.<sup>222</sup> The latter was perhaps intended to be a pragmatic approach to confirmation; in the text it states 'If a bishop is present', then the child may be confirmed. Consequently it envisaged a degree of flexibility in approach; one that might be contrasted with the idealistic images portrayed within saint's lives. Nevertheless, an ongoing concern was that people were not always receiving this sacrament. Indeed, the provision of confirmation could be erratic or irregular, particularly, we might suppose, in large dioceses like Lincoln.<sup>223</sup> These anxieties, spurred by the increasing dissemination of canon law, may explain why from the eleventh century on, confirmation begins to frequently appear within episcopal *vitae*.<sup>224</sup>

For example, in William of Malmesbury's *VSW*, Wulfstan is said to have been 'assiduous in travelling through his diocese, giving infants any sacraments they

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<sup>220</sup> For general surveys of medieval confirmation see J.D.C.Fisher, Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West: A Study in the Disintegration of the Primitive Rite of Initiation (London, 1965); J.D.C.Fisher and E.J.Yarnhold 'The West from about A.D 500 to the Reformation', in The Study of Liturgy, ed. C.Jones *et al* (Oxford, 1978), pp.110-17; and P.Cramer, Baptism and Change in the Early Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1993), pp.179-85.

<sup>221</sup> Giandrea, Episcopal Culture, p.104.

<sup>222</sup> The Pontifical of Magdalen College, ed. H.A.Wilson (London, 1910), pp.176-79.

<sup>223</sup> A classic statement on confirmation can be found in Life in the Middle Ages, ed. and trans. C.G. Coulton (New York, 1910), pp.14-15.

<sup>224</sup> This is not to suggest that the sacrament was not taking place in practice, simply that it had now become part of a recognised episcopal ideal.

lacked'.<sup>225</sup> It is difficult to know exactly whether William meant baptism or confirmation here, although both Thomson and Mason believe that as he used the word '*sacramentorum*', it suggests the latter.<sup>226</sup> Later, William recounts how it was usual for Wulfstan to confirm two, or even three thousand children on a single day.<sup>227</sup> Pfaff has suggested this would be nigh on impossible, yet whether or not this was the case, William clearly wished to demonstrate how efficient Wulfstan was at this task.<sup>228</sup>

Another example of confirmation within twelfth-century hagiography is found in the *Vita Anselmi*. Here Eadmer describes a number of 'honourable men' who asked the archbishop if he would confirm their children. Anselm consented to their request: 'I shall gladly receive for this purpose those for whom you make your request; and if there are any others in need of this sacrament, I shall not turn them away if they come'.<sup>229</sup> Later Eadmer states that it was not only the children who received this sacrament: 'men and women, great and small, rushing from their houses and running eagerly to our lodgings to receive this sacrament'.<sup>230</sup> The anecdotes in both the *Life of Wulfstan* and *the Life of Anselm* may reflect an increasing trend towards the provision of confirmation in childhood, although such accounts may merely reflect the prescriptive evidence, rather than the actual practice. Certainly in the *Vita Anselmi*,

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<sup>225</sup> VSW, p.53: '*diocesim sedulo peragrarere, infantibus quod reliquum esset sacramentorum supplere*'.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., p.53, n.6; E.Mason, *St. Wulfstan of Worcester. c.1008-1095* (Oxford, 1990), p.95, n.41.

<sup>227</sup> VSW, p.87: 'Often in a single day, as careful witnesses prove, he confirmed at least two, often three or more, thousand'. / '*Sepe illum duo milia ut parum, sepe tria et quod excurrit, uno die confirmasse non perfunctoriis terstibus approbatur*'.

<sup>228</sup> R.W.Pfaff, 'The Anglo-Saxon Bishop and his Book', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 81 (1999), pp.3-24.

<sup>229</sup> *The Life of St Anselm*, ed. and trans. Southern, p.101: '*Et hos pro quibus petitis libens in hac causa suscipiam, et alios hoc sacramento egentes, si presto fuerint, non abiciam*'.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.: '*viros ac mulieres, magnos ac parvos e domnibus ruere, certatimque currendo ad nostrum hospitium praedicti gratia sacramenti properare*'.

there is also recognition that there were instances where people were not confirmed until they were adults; Eadmer, for instance, states that the people of the diocese had been without a bishop for some time.

As the importance of confirmation increased, it appears to have become a regular hagiographical trope in episcopal *vitae*, and a significant mark of holiness. Again, one can only speculate in the case of the *VSH* to what extent this image of an ideal bishop was taken from canon law, or if Gerald was either describing current practice or reflecting contemporary concerns. Indeed, the descriptions of Hugh in the *VSH* at times reflect canonical precepts, and act almost as set pieces. Both Burchard and Ivo of Chartres, for instance, include a canon which enjoined the *presbyter* to remind the populous to present their children to the bishop for confirmation.<sup>231</sup> Another canon, which was included in Ivo of Chartres's *Decretum*, stated that all Christians should hasten to the place of confirmation after it was publicly announced.<sup>232</sup> Such instructions are found in the *VSH*. For example, Gerald states that a group of men had been confirmed by Hugh 'at a place where they had been summoned for that purpose'.<sup>233</sup> Hugh would also tell a *rusticus* that if he wanted to be confirmed, he

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<sup>231</sup> PL 150, Cap.LIX: '*Ut presbyteri populum admoneant ut suos infantulos ad confirmationem episcopo praesentent: Annuntient presbyteri populis, ut quam citius potuerint, suos infantulos ad confirmandum episcopo praesentari faciant*', col. 738; PL 161, Cap.CCLIII: '*Ut presbyteri populum admoneant, ut suos infantulos ad confirmationem episcopo praesentent. Ex concilio Wormatiensi Annuntient presbyteri populis, ut quam citius potuerint suos infantulos ad confirmandum suo episcopo praesentari faciant. Quod si neglexerint, et presbyter et populus canonicis disciplinis subjaceant*', col. 120.

<sup>232</sup> PL 150, Cap.LXII: '*Ut omnes Christiani ad confirmationem festinent: Ut ad praedicationem et confirmationem episcopi omnes devote conveniant, eique fideliter ministrent et obediant.*'

<sup>233</sup> *VSH*, pp.14-15: '*in loco quo ad hoc convocati fuerant*'.

needed only to 'approach with the others at the anointed place that was sufficiently nearby'.<sup>234</sup>

In these examples, the priest's role as intermediary has vanished, and this of course emphasises the relationship between the bishop and his flock. We can contrast the *VSH* with the previous examples from the lives of Wulfstan and Anselm. Chapter 3 of the *VSH* is entitled *De puerorum confirmationibus*, which appears to reiterate the importance of confirmation for children; however, recounting one anecdote Gerald recalled how Hugh also confirmed a 'great many men'.<sup>235</sup> Like the *VSW*, Gerald stressed the demanding nature of the episcopal office. In this respect, Gerald again pairs the consecration of churches with confirmation; after a day consecrating churches, Hugh is described as spending all night confirming the children of his diocese.<sup>236</sup> We have already discussed in Chapter 2 how hagiographers often conceptualised the episcopal office as a burden. Gerald notes here that Hugh also 'knew and affirmed that the episcopal dignity had its accompanying burden too'.<sup>237</sup> Nevertheless, there are no claims of confirmations numbering in their thousands; indeed Gerald is keen to point out that 'he confirmed the children in due order'.<sup>238</sup> On one level, the examples in the *VSH* show little difference from earlier twelfth-century

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<sup>234</sup> Ibid.: '*quatinus ad locum conducti satis propinquum cum aliis accederet*'.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.: '*magna hominum*'

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.: 'It often happened in winter that when the hard task of solemnly consecrating a church of his diocese had lasted almost till evening and a great number of children had gathered together to be signed with the holy chrism, everyone else was fatigued and hungry and he alone, who had worked more than any of them, was neither slowed nor wearied by the work'. / '*Contigit enim et hoc pluries quod cum ecclesiam aliquam sue diocesis hiemali tempore solempniter consecrando, laboriosum officium illud usque ad verperam fere produxisset, collecta ibidem et congesta puerorum crismate sacro signandorum multitudine magna, ceteris cunctis fatigacione pariter et fame affectis, solus ipse, qui plus omnibus laboraverat, neutro retardatus nec labore fatigatus*'.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.: '*sciens et probans honorem hunc et honus suum annexum habere*'.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.: '*pueros per ordinem confirmavit*'.

examples although, as has been noted, the language Gerald used appears to conform much more closely to canonical precepts. Writing at the end of the twelfth century, it also may have been less acceptable for older adults to be unconfirmed. An old man is described as begging Hugh to confirm him; during the blessing, Gerald describes how the Hugh slapped the man a bit harder than was customary, because the old man 'had so long postponed asking for this sacrament necessary for salvation'.<sup>239</sup>

Both of Hugh's hagiographers also insist that Hugh only ever gave the sacrament of confirmation on foot. Gerald, for instance, states it was 'out of respect for the sacrament he [Hugh] always fulfilled this function [confirmation] on foot'.<sup>240</sup> Adam of Eynsham went further and compared Hugh's behaviour with another contemporary 'young' bishop who had sprinkled children with sacred chrism while still on horseback.<sup>241</sup> In contrast, Hugh was said to have always dismounted from his horse, taking time in a gentle (*leniter*) manner to summon each child, one after another.<sup>242</sup> Again, as with the *VSH*, there is an emphasis upon the way in which the sacrament should be administered; perhaps this was in response to incidents where bishops had confirmed *en masse*.

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid., pp.16-17: '*quia sacramentum hoc saluti necessarium tam diu inpetrare distulerat*'.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., pp.15-16: '*Quoniam ob sacramenti reverenciam semper hoc opus pedes explebat*'.

<sup>241</sup> *MVSH*, Vol.1, p.128: 'To my shame and sorrow, I afterwards saw a certain young bishop, of exceptional strength, when the spot and the weather were both admirable and he had no reason to be in a hurry, sprinkle children with the sacred chrism whilst on horseback'. / '*Sicut non absque rubore et quodam mentis dolore postea uidimus episcopum quemdam etate iuuenem, uiribus prestantem, in loco etiam et tempore satis ameno, nec festinandi necessitate ulla preuentum, equo sublimem chrismate sacratissimo paruulos imbuentem*'.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.. 'He used to dismount and gently summon the children and their godparents to him one after another'. / '*Equo descendebat paruulosque et eorum baiulos ad se leniter et successiue accersiebat*'.

This anecdote could be seen as a critique of contemporary bishops. Clearly, it also served to demonstrate Hugh's ability to exceed contemporary expectations; that Adam said he had witnessed this act further reinforced his comparison. However, this particular story also illustrates the way in which a new hagiographical motif could develop. No one previously has made the connection between the account of Hugh, and that referred to by one of Thomas Becket's hagiographers. In his collection of Becket's *miracula*, Benedict of Peterborough describes a similar incident to that of the examples found in the *MVSH* and the *VSH*. Travelling to London, Benedict states that Becket stopped in Newington and: *'de equo descenderat, et dum pueris manus imponeret et chismate confirmatis gratiae plenitudinem adesse invocaret, eodem in loco consiterat'*. After describing this incident Benedict goes on to say how Thomas was always careful administering this sacrament, and he claimed that the archbishop had always alighted from his horse when confirming children.<sup>243</sup> Here it appears that Thomas's example acted as a precedent for that of Gerald and Adam - and we again see the influence of Becket's legacy on the depiction of bishops in episcopal *vitae*. All three authors appear to be utilising a new *topos*; in the case of Hugh's hagiographers, not only were Gerald and Adam able to show how Hugh acted like Becket, they also demonstrated his commitment to pastoral care. To what extent, therefore, such *topoi* reflect contemporary criticism is difficult to ascertain, yet a writer would have probably not used the *topos* unless it at least raised issues that were pertinent to a contemporary audience.

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<sup>243</sup> [Materials for Thomas Becket](#), p.177. After Becket's death, the places where he had confirmed these children were also sites of miracle accounts.

However, when we look outside of the twelfth century, in fact, we see how the examples of Thomas and Hugh not confirming on horseback, were actually an updated topos, rather than a new one. In Bede's *Life of St Cuthbert*, the saint is described as 'sometimes riding on a horse, but more often going on foot' as he preached to the surrounding villages.<sup>244</sup> The link between preaching and walking is further exemplified by the example of Bishop Chad. In his *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede stated that 'it was the custom of the reverend Bishop Chad to carry out his evangelistic work on foot rather than on horseback'.<sup>245</sup> Theodore, the current archbishop of Canterbury, would order Chad to ride if he was to travel far, however still Chad hesitated: 'for he was deeply devoted to this religious exercise, so the archbishop lifted him on to the horse with his own hands since he knew him to be a man of great sanctity and he determined to compel him to ride a horse when necessity arose'.<sup>246</sup> In these accounts, as with the twelfth-century examples, the topos describes how a bishop would perform his duties on foot rather than horseback. What is different, however, is that in these early instances, it is preaching that is emphasised. To some extent, the context in which Chad and Cuthbert found themselves may have been one of conversion rather than simply refreshing the faith. In the *VSR* Gerald, we must remember, still stressed Remigius's preaching ability. Yet in the context of the later twelfth century the sacramental duties of bishops were increasingly emphasised, thus perhaps the act of confirmation was now seen as a crucial episcopal duty.

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<sup>244</sup> *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: Texts*, ed. and trans. Colgrave, pp.184-87.

<sup>245</sup> Bede, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. Colgrave, pp.336-37: '*Et qui moris erat eidem reuerentissimo antistiti opus euangelii magis ambulando per loca quam equitando perficere*'.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*: '*multumque renitentem studio et amore pii laboris ipse eum manu sua leuauit in equum, quia nimirum sanctum esse uirum conperiit atque equo uehi, quo esset necesse, conpulsit*'.

## VI Conclusion

In this chapter we have demonstrated that the *VSH* can be situated within a very specific local context. The text reflected the interests of the secular chapter at Lincoln, yet Hugh's image appears to have been used and appropriated by various interest groups. In contrast to Adam of Eynsham's *MVSH*, the *VSH* set out to record Hugh's time as bishop of Lincoln, after which it recounted his post-mortem miracles. It appears that as with the *VSR*, the model of Becket influenced Gerald's themes and subject. Indeed, much of the way Hugh is portrayed is dependent on contemporary issues and discussions. Even the hagiographical topos that we have identified appears to have been relatively new, originating from one of Becket's biographers, even if it did have older antecedents. Hugh's sanctity within the *VSH* was therefore defined in a way which demonstrated how he exemplified ideal episcopal behaviour.

## Conclusion

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Coleman has given elaborate details of all this,  
 but I have decided to pass them over, because it  
 is my plan to write the man's life, not lay down the  
 bishop's duties. What is the point of telling what other  
 people as well do, and indeed cannot do except in  
 the manner laid down in books?<sup>1</sup>

In the above citation, William of Malmesbury, in his translation and adaption of the Old English *Life of Wulfstan* written by the Worcester monk Coleman, clarified his thoughts on the appropriate scope of an episcopal *vita*. For William, it was Wulfstan's life, rather than his vocation, that should be prioritised in his text; indeed, he argued that his audience had no need of reading about things that they could learn from other material.<sup>2</sup> In William's opinion some of Coleman's narrative was unnecessary because it did not aim to shed light on Wulfstan's life. Later in the *VSW*, William even suggested that Nicholas, prior of Worcester (c.1113-24), who had supplied William with a number of anecdotes, would have written a more satisfactory *vita*: 'Nicholas loved to

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<sup>1</sup> *VSW*, pp.134-35: '*Quae omnia quanuis Colemannus magno uerborum circuitu egerit, michi pretermittere consilium fuit, propterea quod non episcopale, officium designare sed uitam eius describere susceperim. Quid enim ad rem ea dicere quae et alii fatiunt nec aliter quam in libris continetur facere possunt*'.

<sup>2</sup> Winterbottom and Thomson state that this is a 'good example of the sort of generality that William did not include in his own saints' Lives': *Ibid.*, pp.134-35, n.4.

tell over the doings and sayings of Wulfstan and could perhaps be criticised for not writing his biography. For no one could have more truthfully recorded a life that no one knew more intimately at first-hand'.<sup>3</sup>

William's thoughts are pertinent to this study because it brings us back to the idea of what an appropriate episcopal *vita* should be, and what an audience expected from such a text. Throughout, we have sought to question a narrow understanding of twelfth-century episcopal hagiography. It might be easy to take William at face value, and to assume that his contemporaries shared his view, yet we have demonstrated episcopal saints' lives came in a variety of forms and had multiple functions.<sup>4</sup> In circumstances where authors had specific concerns to express, a "biographical portrait" might not have been deemed necessary or practical.

In the case of the *VSW*, William reiterated Wulfstan's conduct and his way of life and, although he included much that Coleman had probably written concerning the bishop's pastoral activities, he also made clear that Wulfstan had always balanced his responsibilities as a bishop with his monastic calling. This stress upon Wulfstan's performance, rather than his deeds, points to the purpose of the *VSW*. Wulfstan's

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<sup>3</sup> *VSW*, p.133: '*Nicholaus Wlstan dicta et facta referre uoluptati habebat, in hoc fortase culpandus quod uitam eius stilo non commisit. Nullus enim eam memoriae mandare posset ueracius quam nemo ipso nosset presentius*'. See also A.Orchard, 'Parallel Lives: Wulfstan, William, Coleman and Christ', in *Saint Wulfstan and his World*, ed. Barrow and Brooks, pp.39-58, at pp.44-46. Orchard's translation is to be preferred: 'Nicholas loved to tell of Wulfstan's word and deeds and is perhaps to be blamed, that he did not write down his life in his own words. For no one could have committed it to memory more truthfully, since no one knew him more intimately'.

<sup>4</sup> On the problems of approaching William as a modern writer see R.Morse, *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation, and Reality* (Cambridge, 1991), especially pp.156-57.

behaviour was intended to act as a model or template by which the Worcester monks could live their life; this was thought even more necessary at a time of cultural transition.<sup>5</sup> There was no 'true' record here. To some extent, the saint was already a reflection of the audience for which it had been written.

Of course, it is difficult to know to what degree episcopal *vitae* reflected an author's ideals, or that of the intended audience(s). Clearly, the two are not mutually exclusive. One of the arguments of this study has been that episcopal *vita* were composed with specific audiences in mind. Consequently, there was a need to present the saint in a way that would be recognised and appreciated. Authors might prioritise or adopt the cultural framework of their audience, but often these texts were written by insiders within the group.

The process by which we have examined episcopal *vitae* also relates to how we have viewed religious communities or institutions. The fact that such institutions saw themselves as part of a long historical tradition does not mean we should think of them as immutable or unable to adapt. One observation we have made is how quickly the social and cultural circumstances of institutions might alter and change. It is also easy to forget that such communities did not have the luxury of hindsight; the production of hagiography was as much about short-term interests as it was about articulating long-held customs. Consequently, we could interpret such texts as a

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<sup>5</sup> A.Grandsden, 'Cultural Transition at Worcester in the Anglo-Norman Period The Norman Conquest', in Legends, Traditions, and History, *eadem*, pp.107-53, at pp.110-15.

vehicle of community expression. However such an approach might disregard the way in which authors attempted, through their *vita*, to reinforce a sense of group cohesion.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, identity is a useful way of articulating the relationship between text, community and author, so long as we recognise that identity can be unstable *and* highly malleable. I argue that one function of episcopal saints' lives is to enable certain sections of a religious community to 'reinforce the boundaries of an identity', rather than being 'responsible for shaping that identity' *per se*.<sup>7</sup> In other words, episcopal *vita* can illuminate the concerns and anxieties of the community for which they were written; they might, for instance, be intended to more coherently define institutional values. Whether texts actively impinged upon a community's character is more difficult to establish.

In Chapter 1 we demonstrated that a particular way of remembering a founder or patron could take hold at a specific point in time. Although Faricius had composed a *Life of Aldhelm* in the last decade of the eleventh century, in less than thirty years there was a need for a new text. On this occasion, William of Malmesbury's depiction of Aldhelm became the dominant discourse at Malmesbury Abbey, replacing that found in Faricius's earlier *vita*.<sup>8</sup> Previous historians have thus assumed that William simply wanted a better *vita*. However, we suggested that different conceptions of Aldhelm's sanctity mirrored the particular institutional and historical circumstances in which both authors composed their texts. We noted too that Faricius sought to

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<sup>6</sup> Remensnyder, *Remembering King's Past*, p.3.

<sup>7</sup> N.Webber, *The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911-1154* (Woodbridge, 2005), p.5.

<sup>8</sup> The author of the *Eulogium historiarum*, which was written in the fourteenth-century at Malmesbury, suggested that William of Malmesbury replaced Faricius's life '*quia rude compositum fuerat*': *GP*, Vol.2, p.246.

highlight Aldhelm's status as a bishop, and by examining the function of the *VSA*, we were able to situate Faricius's *Life* and his presentation of Aldhelm's sanctity within a specific context - that is, the patronage of Aldhelm's post-conquest cult by Osmund, bishop of Salisbury. By pointing to Osmund's part in promoting Aldhelm's sanctity throughout the diocese, Faricius's *vita* can be interpreted as a post-conquest narrative that attempted to uphold a vision of ecclesiastical unity. Such narratives that promoted cohesion were as much shaped by an authorial agenda as those texts that emphasised conflict. One of William's motives for 'updating' Faricius's narrative might have been the image of harmonious relations that Faricius had stressed between Osmund and the abbey of Malmesbury. The next generation had their own reasons for being protective of Aldhelm and, as such, they wished to make clear that Aldhelm's patronage was exclusive to Malmesbury.

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It has been argued that hagiography is often viewed as a genre in which stock themes are copied by successive generations of uninspired writers. Nevertheless, we have shown how authors of episcopal *vitae* could situate a life within a traditional template, yet still make reference to their own specific concerns, or express broader cultural and religious trends. Such templates were not always hagiographical in nature, as authors often appropriated the motifs and literary conventions of other genres.

Indeed, in Chapter 2 we highlighted the way William Wycombe portrayed Robert Bethune as a bishop who retained his Augustinian values and mores. In this respect, William went so far as to draw verbatim from the *Rule of Augustine* in his account of Robert's behaviour, both as prior, and then later as Bishop of Hereford. Although William was still providing a model to imitate here, it was made explicit that Robert's behaviour mirrored the norms of the Augustinian community. The *VRB* acted as a *speculum*; to emulate Robert was a matter of following the guidelines set out in the *Rule*. Yet William made sure that Robert was shown to be both ordinary and extraordinary; he followed the moderate customs of the Augustinian, yet also abided by a strict ascetic regime. William's *vita* is notable because the communities at which he likely aimed his texts actually remembered him unfavourably. Nonetheless, we can still view the *VRB* as an individual's articulation of Augustinian identity. It may be that William wished his text to encourage the regular canons at Lanthony Secunda to preserve their independence and to motivate their faith and Augustinian calling.<sup>9</sup>

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In Chapter 3 we investigated how Gerald of Wales presented a particular version of Remigius's life and deeds to the secular canons at Lincoln cathedral, and emphasised the saint's patronage and association with Lincoln. We noted that the *VSR* has been ignored or disregarded in the past, in part because Remigius was not considered a saint by his own contemporaries, but also as the *Life* itself was only one of four sections within the text. Again our study has demonstrated the worth of approaching

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<sup>9</sup> Coué, *Hagiographie im Kontext*, p.172: Coué here uses the German verb *bewegan*, which gives a stronger meaning to the idea of a text being written to cause an effect.

a text anew, without preconceived notions of what is an acceptable *vita*. Gerald situated Remigius within a continuous historical narrative, one where he could stress Lincoln's territorial boundaries and its properties. Bishops were central to this perspective, for they stood as the representatives of the Lincoln community. Another context for the *VSR* was found in the accounts of six praiseworthy bishops of Gerald's own time. This part of the text echoed contemporary discourses surrounding episcopal independence and church liberties. In this way, the example of Thomas Becket was held up as the ideal model which contemporary prelates should imitate. To some extent, the *VSR* reflected both an old and contemporary typology of sanctity. The *DEAT* may have been written because Gerald thought it was necessary to provide portraits of contemporary heroes alongside his tribute to Remigius's life; such accounts would speak to the present interests of the secular canons, and Remigius to their sense of tradition.

Finally, in Chapter 4 an analysis of Gerald's *VSH* showed that its primary function appears to have been to record and document Lincoln cathedral chapter's involvement and direction of Bishop Hugh's early cult. Although others have noted the chapter's participation, here we placed the miracles within a new context, highlighting how the town elders of Lincoln and the chapter are presented together in harmony. In the part of the *vita* that presented an account of Hugh's life, Gerald described how Hugh fulfilled all the requirements of the episcopal office, and related Hugh's actions to contemporary discussions that defined church state relations. It is difficult to ascertain whether the way Gerald depicted Hugh without reference to either the

saint's spirituality or his inner life had been influenced by the text's function. Faricius's representation of Aldhelm in the *VSA* was, as I have argued, part of an integral context for the life; function and depiction in symmetry. Gerald's depiction of Hugh, however, was not central to the chapter's promotion of his cult. Nonetheless, the way Gerald portrayed Hugh as conforming to contemporary notions of proper episcopal practice, in particular his emphasis on confirmations and church consecrations, suggests that he was thinking with a future canonisation in mind. Nevertheless, it is worth considering further how Gerald's conception of an ideal bishop, as expressed in his other texts, fitted quite naturally with how he expressed Hugh's episcopal identity within the *vita*. For monastic authors, such as William of Malmesbury, simply fulfilling episcopal duties would have not met the criteria for sainthood.

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It is now pertinent to return to the questions we set down in the beginning of the thesis. It is perhaps possible to modify them to reflect the conclusions of this study:

1. Why was the saint presented in a particular way; and how did this impinge upon the structure and subject matter of a *vita*?
2. To what extent was the articulation of a community's depiction of the saint a reflection of the specific context in which a *vita* was produced; in what ways did the author and community speak as one in this respect?

3. Having been written, did the initial *causa scribendi* reflect the circumstances in which these lives were later copied or used.

The questions we are now faced with move us from exploring issues of authorship to investigating why texts were first written. Instead of simply exploring the *vitae* from the perspective of either author or community, it is important to reflect on the way in which they expressed a discussion of the appropriate relationship that a community should have with its episcopal patron. The above questions also reiterate the importance of setting any investigation within a context of hagiographical production. It should be remembered that the initial *causa scribendi* was not necessarily how the community would have viewed the *vita*, or determined how later scribes would use the text.

With this in mind, there is much to be taken from this study. Certainly, the methodology used here could be applied to a wider sample of episcopal *vitae*. In this thesis we have been able to view texts as both products of their local environments as well as a reflection of broader developments. With a larger selection, however, we might be able to explore trends both in hagiographical production and episcopal depiction. For instance, in their use of non-hagiographical models, did William of Wycombe and Gerald of Wales apply such texts only to suit their authorial agendas? One way of exploring this question would be to examine to what extent monastic rules or canon law codes begin to feature more often within episcopal *vita*. The latter would provide a way of examining the relationship between prescriptive codes and

hagiographical models. To some extent, the former is as much an episcopal ideal or model as the latter, yet their use within a *vita* surely tells us something about the expectations of their audiences. Ultimately, however, this thesis has demonstrated that in the saints' lives that I have studied we cannot view the depiction of a bishop as merely a list of episcopal duties; the representation of a saint was seldom just a topos.

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