

Leaders of the Anglo-Saxon Church

FROM BEDE TO STIGAND

Edited by Alexander R. Rumble



PUBLICATIONS OF
THE MANCHESTER CENTRE FOR ANGLO-SAXON STUDIES

Volume 12

Leaders of the Anglo-Saxon Church
From Bede to Stigand

PUBLICATIONS OF
THE MANCHESTER CENTRE FOR ANGLO-SAXON STUDIES

ISSN 1478-6710

Editorial Board

Donald Scragg

Richard Bailey

Timothy Graham

Nicholas J. Higham

Gale R. Owen-Crocker

Alexander Rumble

Leslie Webster

Published Titles

1. *Textual and Material Culture in Anglo-Saxon England: Thomas Northcote Toller and the Toller Memorial Lectures*, ed. Donald Scragg
2. *Apocryphal Texts and Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Kathryn Powell and Donald Scragg
3. *King Harold II and the Bayeux Tapestry*, ed. Gale R. Owen-Crocker
4. *The Place of the Cross in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Catherine E. Karkov, Sarah Larratt Keefer and Karen Louise Jolly
5. *Writing and Texts in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Alexander R. Rumble
6. *Anglo-Saxon Royal Diplomas: A Palaeography*, Susan D. Thompson
7. *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham
8. *Edgar, King of the English 959-975: New Interpretations*, ed. Donald Scragg
9. *The Landscape Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham and Martin J. Ryan
10. *Place-names, Language and the Anglo-Saxon Landscape*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham and Martin J. Ryan
11. *A Conspectus of Scribal Hands Writing English, 960-1100*, Donald Scragg

Disclaimer:

Some images in the printed version of this book
are not available for inclusion in the eBook.

To view the image on this page please refer to
the printed version of the book.

BL, Additional 49598, fol. 118v: Benedictional of St Æthelwold: a bishop
(?Æthelwold) pronouncing a blessing.

© British Library Board. All Rights Reserved

Leaders of the Anglo-Saxon Church
From Bede to Stigand

edited by
ALEXANDER R. RUMBLE

THE BOYDELL PRESS

© Contributors 2012

All rights reserved. Except as permitted under current legislation no part of this work may be photocopied, stored in a retrieval system, published, performed in public, adapted, broadcast, transmitted, recorded or reproduced in any form or by any means, without the prior permission of the copyright owner

First published 2012
The Boydell Press, Woodbridge

ISBN 978–1–84383–700–8

Disclaimer:

Some images in the printed version of this book are not available for inclusion in the eBook.
To view these images please refer to the printed version of the book.

The Boydell Press is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
and of Boydell & Brewer Inc,
668 Mt Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620, USA
website: www.boydellandbrewer.com

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

The publisher has no responsibility for the continued existence
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred
to in this book, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Papers used by Boydell & Brewer Ltd are natural, recyclable products
made from wood grown in sustainable forests



Printed in Great Britain by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

Contents

List of Illustrations	viii
Preface	ix
Contributors	x
Abbreviations	xi
Introduction: Church Leadership and the Anglo-Saxons	1
ALEXANDER R. RUMBLE	
1 Bede and the Early English Church	25
NICHOLAS J. HIGHAM	
2 Archbishop Ecgberht and his <i>Dialogus</i>	41
MARTIN J. RYAN	
3 Abbatial Responsibility as Spiritual Labour: Suckling from the Male Breast	61
CASSANDRA RHODES	
4 Understanding the Earliest Bishops of Worcester c. 660–860	77
ALLAN SCOTT MCKINLEY	
5 The Role of Bishops in Anglo-Saxon Succession Struggles, 955 × 978	97
DOMINIK WASSENHOVEN	
6 Image-Making: Portraits of Anglo-Saxon Church Leaders	109
GALE R. OWEN-CROCKER	
7 ‘To Keep Silence Following the Rule’s Command’: Bishop Æthelwold, Reforming Ideology and Communication by Signs	129
DEBBY BANHAM	
8 Wulfsgie of Sherborne’s Reforming Text	147
JOYCE HILL	
9 From Winchester to Canterbury: Ælfheah and Stigand – Bishops, Archbishops and Victims	165
ALEXANDER R. RUMBLE	
Index	183

Illustrations

Photographs are reproduced by special permission of The British Library Board (Frontispiece, 6.2–3), the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (6.1), The Trustees of Lambeth Palace Library (6.4), the city of Bayeux (6.5) and David Wright (6.6).

Frontispiece. BL, Additional 49598, fol. 118v: Benedictional of St Æthelwold: a bishop (?Æthelwold) pronouncing a blessing

Figures

4.1	Churches probably or possibly patronised by independent (or quasi-independent) Hwiccan rulers	90
4.2	Location of patronage of King Æthelbald of the Mercians (716–57)	91
6.1	CCCC, fol. 1v: Bede's <i>Life of St Cuthbert</i> : King Æthelstan and St Cuthbert	111
6.2	BL, Additional 49598, fol. 90v: Benedictional of St Æthelwold: St Æthelthryth	116
6.3	BL, Cotton Tiberius A. iii, fol. 2v: <i>Regularis Concordia</i> : King Edgar, Archbishop Dunstan and Bishop Æthelwold	118
6.4	Lambeth Palace 200, fol. 68v: Bishop Aldhelm and Abbess Hildelith	121
6.5	Bayeux Tapestry: Archbishop Stigand (coronation of King Harold II)	124
6.6	Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire. The Virgin Mary or an unnamed abbess	125
7.1	Sign for abbot as prescribed in the <i>Monasteriales Indicia</i>	134

Table

4.1	Recorded bishops of Worcester before AD 900, with location of information about activities prior to becoming bishop	78
-----	---	----

Disclaimer:

Some images in the printed version of this book are not available for inclusion in the eBook. To view these images please refer to the printed version of the book.

Preface

The collection of papers published in this volume seeks to illustrate the important and various roles played by individual leading ecclesiastics in England, both within the church and in the wider political sphere, from the late seventh to the mid eleventh century. Individual chapters discuss not only the undeniable authority of Bede and Bishop Æthelwold but also the influence of less-familiar figures such as Bishop Wulfsig of Sherborne, Archbishop Ecgberht of York and St Leoba. The book draws new conclusions from both textual and material evidence which will demonstrate the influence (by both deed and reputation) of powerful personalities not only on the developing institutions of the English church but also on the secular politics of their time.

As is demonstrated in my introduction, theories of ecclesiastical leadership were expounded in contemporary texts on the role of bishops and heads of monastic houses. But how far did image or ideal reflect reality? Writers of biography have to weigh up the balance between an individual's character, acumen and talents and the norms of institutional training, expectations and duties of those in authority in the church. Which were outstanding, rather than merely doing the same as others of their status? How much room was there for individuals to use their office to promote new ideas?

It is clear that both episcopal and abbatial authority were of fundamental importance to the development of the Christian church in Anglo-Saxon England. Church leaders such as bishops and abbots were invested with a variety of types of power and influence. Their actions, decisions, and writings could change not only their own institutions, but also the national church, while their interaction with the king and his court affected the lives of many within wider contemporary society. It should not be forgotten, however, that occasionally a monk such as Bede, who was neither bishop nor abbot, could produce works of such lasting significance that they have moulded the views and attitudes of future generations of both religious and secular readers and worshippers, even unto the present day. The memory and reputation of other individuals discussed in the book, although considerable in their own lifetime and within their own church, have not endured in the same way. It is hoped that the present collection will serve as a reminder of their activities and provide some indications, where still possible, of their aims, image and character. The present volume is dedicated to the memory of the late Dr David Hill, Anglo-Saxonist and cartographer, who was an inspiration to many, colleagues and students alike.

Alexander R. Rumble
Manchester, 2011

Contributors

Debby Banham, University of Cambridge

Nicholas J. Higham, University of Manchester

Joyce Hill, University of Leeds

Allan Scott McKinley, University of Birmingham

Gale R. Owen-Crocker, University of Manchester

Cassandra Rhodes, London

Alexander R. Rumble, University of Manchester

Martin J. Ryan, University of Manchester

Dominik Wassenhoven, University of Bayreuth

Abbreviations

ASC	The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
AS Charters	Anglo-Saxon Charters (British Academy and Royal Historical Society series)
ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>
BCS	Walter de Gray Birch, <i>Cartularium Saxonicum</i> , 3 vols. (London 1885–93)
BL	London, British Library
BN	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale
Bod	Oxford, Bodleian Library
CCCC	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum, series latina</i> (Turnhout, 1953–)
Colgrave and Mynors	<i>Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> , ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969)
Councils & Synods, ed. Whitelock	<i>Councils & Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church</i> , ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C. N. L. Brooke, I, i, 871–1066 [volume edited by D. Whitelock]
CSASE	Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England
CSEL	<i>Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum</i> (Vienna, 1886–)
DB+county abbreviation	County volumes in the Phillimore <i>Domesday Book</i> series, general editor John Morris, 38 vols. (Chichester, 1975–92)
Douglas and Greenaway, EHD	<i>English Historical Documents</i> , II, 1042–1189, ed. David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway, 2nd edn (London and New York, 1981)
EETS	Early English Text Society os = Original Series ss = Supplementary Series
EHR	<i>The English Historical Review</i>
EPNS	English Place-Name Society
GDB	Great Domesday Book: The National Archives E.31/2
HBC	<i>Handbook of British Chronology</i> , ed. E. B. Fryde, D. E. Greenway, S. Porter and I. Roy, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 2, 3rd edn (London, 1986)
HBS	Henry Bradshaw Society (London, 1891–)
HE	Bede, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
HRH	David Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke and Vera C. M. London, <i>Heads of Religious Houses, England and Wales</i> , I,

- 940–1216, 2nd edn with new material by C. N. L. Brooke (Cambridge, 2001)
- JW* *The Chronicle of John of Worcester: II, The Annals from 450–1066*, ed. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, trans. Jennifer Bray and P. McGurk (Oxford, 1995); III, *The Annals from 1067 to 1140 with the Gloucester Interpolations and the Continuation to 1141*, ed. and trans. P. McGurk (Oxford, 1998)
- KCD Johannes M. Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici*, 6 vols. (London, 1839–48)
- Ker, *Catalogue* N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957)
- LDB Little Domesday Book: The National Archives E.31/1
- MGH Monumenta Germaniae Historica
- ODNB *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online ed. 2006 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com>))
- OE Old English
- OG Old Germanic
- ON Old Norse
- PASE *Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England* (<http://www.pase.ac.uk/index.html>)
- PL* *Patrologia latina*, ed. J. P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–64)
- Robertson, *AS Charters* *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. and trans. A. J. Robertson (Cambridge, 1939)
- RS Rolls Series
- RSB* St Benedict of Nursia, *Regula*
- Rumble, *Property and Piety* Alexander R. Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents Relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and its Minsters*, Winchester Studies 4, *The Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Winchester*, part iii (Oxford, 2002)
- S (Sawyer) P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 8 (London, 1968), with additions and revisions by Susan Kelly and Rebecca Rushforth at <http://www.esawyer.org.uk>; quoted by number
- VÆ* Wulfstan of Winchester, *Vita Sancti Æthelwoldi*
- Whitelock, *EHD* *English Historical Documents*, I, c. 500–1042, ed. Dorothy Whitelock, 2nd edn (London and New York, 1979)

Introduction

Church Leadership and the Anglo-Saxons

ALEXANDER R. RUMBLE

FROM the time of the late sixth-century mission led by Augustine, who had been sent by the bishop of Rome to convert the pagan Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, the church in England was intended to follow a territorial pattern, like that already established on the Continent and previously in Roman Britain, based on the diocese and administered by bishops.¹ Groups of such dioceses would be subject to a metropolitan and within each diocese there could be ecclesiastical centres (*monasteria*, ‘minsters’ mostly led by abbots or abbesses) of lesser status than the bishop’s cathedral and whose clergy would be under his higher authority. The structure was hierarchical, its justification stemming from powers invested in St Peter, the first bishop of Rome, by Christ himself.²

Although the administrative system that eventually emerged in England was not identical with the Continental one, the two archdioceses of Canterbury and York having an unequal number of satellites,³ the expected episcopal and abbatial nature of leadership within the church was common to the whole country, even when the latter was still divided into a number of secular kingdoms. The Anglo-Saxon pattern was also different from that of the Romano-British and Irish churches. Cathedrals were not always in major urban centres as in late Roman Britain, though many were, and there was a clear distinction made between the offices of bishop and abbot such as was not always present in the early Irish church

¹ Cf. Barbara Yorke, *The Conversion of Britain: Religion, Politics and Society in Britain c. 600–800* (Harlow, 2006), pp. 149–52.

² Matt. XVI.18: ‘And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it’. Modern English biblical quotations are from the Douay-Rheims version, revised by Bishop Richard Challoner (1749–52).

³ For a very short period there existed three archdioceses in England but that of Lichfield, created by King Offa of Mercia and consisting of seven dioceses in central and eastern England, did not survive after his death. See further J. W. Lamb, *The Archbishopric of Lichfield (787–803)* (London, 1964).

and its foundations in northern and western Britain. The importance of the diocesan bishop was further underlined by the canons of the Council of Hertford in 670/2.⁴

Primary definitions of the powers and responsibilities of episcopal and abbatial leadership came from biblical, patristic and conciliar texts. They were further expounded and reinforced by Anglo-Saxon writers through letters, homilies and treatises. How far a particular bishop, abbot or abbess succeeded in fulfilling his or her role within the church depended, however, both on the character of the individual and on the political climate of the age in which they lived. They were more likely to achieve success if working in conjunction with their peers in synod or when supported by royal or comital power.

Exceptionally, a scholar such as Bede⁵ or Byrhtferth,⁶ although neither bishop nor abbot, produced such writings as to influence not only his contemporaries but also future generations. These individuals, too, can be seen as leaders of the church but in a less public and more intellectual mode.

Guidelines for the episcopal role

The etymology of the term ‘bishop’, ultimately from Greek *ἐπίσκοπος* ‘overseer’, by way of Latin *episcopus* and OE *biscop*, reflects both its original and its continued significance within the church.⁷ In the early

⁴ Catherine Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c. 650–c. 850* (London and New York, 1995), pp. 8–11, 249–50. Bede, *HE*, IV. 5; Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 348–53. The second canon required: ‘That no bishop intrude into the diocese of another bishop, but that he should be content with the government of the people committed to his charge’. The fifth canon required: ‘That no clergy shall leave their own bishop nor wander about at will [...]’. For a limitation on episcopal power in the third canon, see below, p. 19.

⁵ For a survey of Bede’s works, see George Hardin Brown, *A Companion to Bede* (Woodbridge, 2009). For the political influence of his writings, see below, chapters 1 (Higham) and 2 (Ryan).

⁶ See *Byrhtferth’s Enchiridion*, ed. Peter S. Baker and Michael Lapidge, EETS ss 15 (Oxford, 1995), with an account of his life and writings at pp. xxv–xxxiv.

⁷ The OE form was used by Ælfric to describe the one (Aaron) chosen by God for high religious office, that of hereditary high-priest of the Israelites, according to Numbers XVII–XVIII.1–20, see *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text*, ed. Malcolm Godden, EETS ss 5 (Oxford, 1979), no. I, p. 4 (line 51). The Vulgate text, however, spoke of the office as a *sacerdotium* to be held by a *sacerdos*, see *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, ed. Robert Weber, 5th edn by Roger Gryson (Stuttgart, 2007), pp. 205–6. The precedent of Aaron as God’s appointee had also been used by Alcuin in a letter to Archbishop Eanbald II of York in 796: Stephen Allott, *Alcuin of York c. A.D. 732 to 804: His Life and Letters* (York, 1974, reprinted 1987), letter 6, p. 8. Elsewhere Aaron was referred to four times in the prayers used at the

Christian church the Greek term seems to have been applied to the leader of a local community of believers, responsible for maintaining the faith disseminated by the apostles of Christ.⁸ The late first-/early second-century Pastoral Epistles of Paul, composed in his name but after his death,⁹ include two sets of injunctions governing the behaviour of bishops. The first is in the First Letter to Timothy, bishop of Ephesus (III.1–7):¹⁰

1. A faithful saying: if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth good work.
2. It behoveth therefore a bishop [Vulgate ‘oportet ergo episcopum’]¹¹ to be blameless, the husband of one wife,¹² sober, prudent, of good behaviour, chaste, given to hospitality, a teacher.
3. Not given to wine, no striker, but modest, not quarrelsome, not covetous, but
4. One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all chastity.
5. But if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?
6. Not a neophyte: lest being puffed up with pride, he fall into the judgment of the devil.
7. Moreover he must have a good testimony of them who are without: lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

The text goes on to distinguish bishops from the lesser role of deacon (1 Tim. III. 8–10, 12–13).¹³

The writer of the Letter to Titus (I.5–9) described the desired character of bishops in somewhat similar vein although not clearly distinguishing them from ordinary priests.¹⁴

ordination of a bishop, see Dorothy Bethurum, *The Homilies of Wulfstan* (Oxford, 1957), p. 353, note on lines 21–5 of homily XVII.

⁸ Clare Drury, ‘The Pastoral Epistles’, in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, ed. John Barton and John Muddiman (Oxford, 2001), ch. 73, pp. 1220–33, at pp. 1224–5. Ultimately, the role of bishop descended from that of the apostles, charged to be witnesses to the teaching of Christ in Acts 1.8: ‘But you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth’; and in Luke XXIV. 46–8: ‘And he said to them: Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, the third day. And that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things’. For Wulfstan’s use of the subsequent verses in Luke, see below, p. 10, n. 43.

⁹ On their authorship, see Drury, ‘Pastoral Epistles’, pp. 1220–1. Paul died c. AD 65.

¹⁰ For commentary, see Drury, ‘Pastoral Epistles’, pp. 1224–5.

¹¹ *Biblia sacra*, ed. Weber and Gryson, p. 1833.

¹² This stipulation was later modified by the expectation of celibacy for bishops by AD 400, see Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Harmondsworth, 1967), p. 175.

¹³ For commentary, see Drury, ‘Pastoral Epistles’, p. 1225.

¹⁴ For commentary on this epistle, see Drury, ‘Pastoral Epistles’, pp. 1230–3. For a brief

5. For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldest ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee:
6. If any be without crime, the husband of one wife,¹⁵ having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly.
7. For a bishop must be without crime, as the steward of God: not proud, not subject to anger, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre.
8. But given to hospitality, gentle, sober, just, holy, continent.
9. Embracing that faithful word which is according to doctrine, that he may be able to exhort in sound doctrine, and to convince the gainsayers.

At least from the time of Irenaeus (bishop of Lyons in 180), these letters were treated as part of the canonical Pauline epistolary corpus and were thus disseminated throughout Christendom within the New Testament.¹⁶ All three Pastoral Letters were quoted in the *Regula Sancti Benedicti*.¹⁷ Pope Gregory the Great referred to the First Letter to Timothy in *responsio* 1 of the *Libellus Responsionum*, in relation to a bishop's conduct in church, and quoted the Letter to Titus in *responsio* 8 (concerning admission to church or holy communion of those with various categories of perceived bodily uncleanness).¹⁸ In the early eleventh century, parts of both the First and Second Letters to Timothy were translated by Ælfric in an expansion made to one of his homilies.¹⁹ The injunctive phrasing of 1

account of bishops in the early church, see Stephen Neill, 'The Historic Episcopate', in *Bishops*, ed. [William G. H. Simon] the Bishop of Llandaff (London, 1961), pp. 41–50, especially pp. 43–8.

¹⁵ As above, p. 3, n. 12.

¹⁶ For the New Testament canon, see F. F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments* (5th edn, London, 1991), pp. 97–104.

¹⁷ For references, see *RB 1980: The Rule of St Benedict in Latin and English with Notes*, ed. Timothy Fry (Collegeville MN., 1981), p. 590.

¹⁸ The *Libellus Responsionum*, Gregory's answers to questions put to him by his missionary Augustine, as reported by Bede, makes up most of *HE*, I.27; Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 78–103. Bede used both letters to Timothy in his own narrative in *HE* (at I.15; II.19; III.17; and IV.1: Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 93–4, 201–2, 265–6, 343–4). Note also the use of 2 Tim. in the letter of Pope Boniface V quoted by Bede at II.3 (Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 172–3). Titus I.7–9 and I Tim. III.3 were quoted in the Anonymous *Vita Sancti Cuthberti* (IV.1) in relation to the saint's conduct as bishop of Lindisfarne, see *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: A Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940, pbk edn 1985), pp. 110–11.

¹⁹ *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series, Text*, ed. Peter Clemoes, EETS ss 17 (Oxford, 1997), no. XVII (*Dominica secunda post Pasca*), pp. 313–16 with the considerably expanded text at pp. 535–42. Lines 146–8 are from 1 Tim. VI.10 and lines 157–84 are partly from 2 Tim. III.1–5, see Malcolm Godden, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, EETS ss 18 (Oxford, 2001), 143–4. See also, below, p. 9, and n. 38.

Tim III.2 may also have influenced the wording of texts by Wulfstan on the duties of bishops.²⁰

From the late sixth century an aid to bishops as to their general conduct was available in the form of Gregory the Great's *Regula Pastoralis*, a handbook for those churchmen placed in authority over others, the general importance of which was deemed so great that its Latin text was later translated into the vernacular by King Alfred.²¹ Certain of Gregory's answers in the *Libellus Responsionum*, widely disseminated as part of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, were also of particular and lasting significance to the Anglo-Saxon episcopacy. They included the statement (*responsio* 1) that non-monastic bishops and their household should take only a fourth part of the income of the diocese 'for purposes of hospitality and entertainment' with the rest being divided between the clergy, the poor and church repair, but that bishops who, like Augustine, were monks should possess all things in common with their fellow monks. *Responsio* 6 concerned the consecration of bishops in England in the presence of at least three or four existing bishops, while *responsio* 7 advised in connection with future relations between bishops of Britain and Gaul.²²

Bede, in his *Epistola ad Ecgberhtum episcopum* of 734, recommended to Archbishop Ecgberht of York that he should meditate on the scriptures and read the Letters to Timothy and Titus and Gregory's *Regula Pastoralis* or his homilies

[...] that your speech may always be seasoned with the salt of wisdom, more elevated than common diction, and may shine forth more worthy of the divine hearing.²³

Bede's letter is one of a number of advisory missives, addressed by individual Anglo-Saxon churchmen to particular archbishops of Canterbury or York, which have survived. Some of their content is specifically focused on the role of the metropolitan as a senior bishop.²⁴ For example,

²⁰ Particularly in the text *Incipit de synodo*, see below, pp. 12–13.

²¹ *PL* 77, 13–128; *King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, ed. Henry Sweet, EETS os 45, 50 (London, 1871–2). For Alcuin's recommendation of it to his pupil Archbishop Eanbald II of York in 796 as 'a model of life and teaching' and 'a mirror of a bishop's life', see Allott, *Alcuin of York*, no. 7 (at p. 11).

²² *HE*, I.27; Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 78–81, 86–9.

²³ *Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica*, ed. C. Plummer, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1896), I.405–23, at p. 406; Whitelock, *EHD*, no. 170, pp. 799–810, at p. 800.

²⁴ Within their own diocese, the archbishops carried out the same duties as ordinary bishops, but in relation to their archiepiscopal province they had the right to consecrate their suffragans, over whom they had precedence, and a duty to coordinate their work. In England, the bitter contention between Canterbury and York as to which metropolitan had the legal right of national primacy was a post-Conquest dispute, but one which engendered a number of supposedly pre-Conquest papal documents. See

a letter from Boniface (archbishop of Cologne since 745)²⁵ to Archbishop Cuthberht of Canterbury in 747 spoke of their common duty as follows:

The work of our ministry is in one and the same cause, and an equal oversight of churches and people is entrusted to us, whether in teaching or in restraining or in admonition or in protecting all classes of the clergy or the laity.[...] Our responsibility toward churches and peoples is greater than that of other bishops on account of the pallium entrusted to us and accepted by us, while they have the care of their own dioceses only.²⁶

Other parts of the same letter, however, are applicable to all of episcopal rank:

[...] a dread necessity impels us to present ourselves as an example to the faithful [...] the teacher is to live so justly that his deeds shall not contradict his words [...] He is set over the Church of God to this end, that he not only may set an example of right living to others, but, through his dutiful preaching, may bring every man's sins before his eyes and show him what punishment awaits the hard of heart and what reward the obedient.²⁷

Likewise, Alcuin in 793, three years before becoming abbot of St Martin's at Tours, wrote to the newly-appointed Archbishop Æthelheard of Canterbury:

You have received the pastoral rod and the staff of brotherly comfort, one to rule, the other to console, that the deserving may have comfort and the rebellious may feel your correction.[...]

Remember that the bishop is the envoy of the Lord God and the holy law must be sought from his lips, as we read in the prophet Malachi.²⁸ He is a watchman, put in the highest place; so he is called 'bishop', meaning 'overseer', for he must look ahead for the whole army of Christ and give wise advice on what to avoid and what to do. Bishops are the lights of the holy church of God, the leaders of the flock of

Frank Barlow, *The English Church 1000–1066*, 2nd edn (London, 1979), pp. 232–8; R. W. Southern, 'The Canterbury Forgeries', *EHR* 73 (1958), pp. 193–207.

²⁵ *The Letters of Saint Boniface*, trans. Ephraim Emerton, with new introduction and bibliography by Thomas F. X. Noble (New York, 2000), no. 47, pp. 85–9.

²⁶ *Letters of Saint Boniface*, trans. Emerton, no. 62, pp. 114–19, at p. 114. For the *pallium*, see Wilhelm Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century*, Ford Lectures 1943 (Oxford, 1946, reprinted 1998), pp. 18–22; and Lamb, *Archbishopric of Lichfield*, Appendix, pp. 54–61.

²⁷ *Letters of Saint Boniface*, trans. Emerton, p. 117.

²⁸ Referring to Mal. IV.5: 'Behold I will send you Elias the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.'

Christ. They must boldly raise the standard of the holy cross in the front line and stand without fear before every attack of the enemy....²⁹

The same writer, in 796 in a letter to his ex-pupil Eanbald, who had just been elevated to the rank of archbishop of York, exhorted him as follows:

Let not your tongue cease preaching, nor your feet visiting the flock entrusted to you, nor your hands working for the giving of alms and the building up of God's holy church in every place. Be a model of every man's salvation, an example of the religious way of life, a comfort to the unhappy, an encouragement to the hesitant. Let firmness of discipline, confidence in truth and every promise of good be seen in you. Do not be excited by worldly pomp, or softened by rich food and vanity of dress, or deceived by flattery, or upset by the opposition of critics, or broken by sorrow, or carried away by joy. [...]

Do everything decently and in good order. Fix a time for reading and hours for prayer. Mass should have its proper time. A wise use of the day is wisdom with God. Enjoy eating in moderation and fasting in purity. Wash your face in penitence and anoint your head with love that all may be acceptable to God, who has chosen you as his priest. For every high priest, who is taken from among men, is placed on men's behalf before God.[...] God's priest must be the preacher of his word and will to the people and intercede for them as a mediator between God and men.[...]

Do not think yourself a lord of the world but a steward. Do not let the number of your relations make you greedy, as if you ought to collect an inheritance for them – the opportunity will be there, if the tinder of greed, the root of all evil, is set alight.[...]

Let your companions be of respectable conduct, not known by the extravagance of their dress, but by their moral standing.[...] Let them not gallop bawling over the fields after the fox, but ride with you singing psalms in harmony.[...]

Your grace should provide teachers for the boys. There should be classes for reading, singing and writing separate from the clergy, and separate teachers for each class, so that the boys are not idle and do not run about playing silly games and forming frivolous habits.³⁰

Such letters were in the first instance private and were intended to give personal support and advice to their recipient but, through having become included in posthumous collections of missives associated with notable churchmen such as Boniface and Alcuin, have been given wider circulation

²⁹ Allott, *Alcuin of York*, letter 48, pp. 61–3, at pp. 61 and 62.

³⁰ Allott, *Alcuin of York*, letter 6, pp. 6–10, at pp. 7, 8 and 9. See also below (Hill), pp. 150–1.

over more than twelve hundred years.³¹ Any beneficial effect of the advice they contained on the thought and conduct of the recipient would have been first displayed to his fellow bishops at the provincial church councils which had become a more regular feature of ecclesiastical administration in England from the time of Theodore of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury in the later seventh century.³² Thus, the canons of the Council of *Clofesho* in 747, attended by south-Humbrian bishops, are thought to have been influenced by Boniface's letter to Archbishop Cuthberht in that year.³³ Seven of these canons related to episcopal responsibilities and authority.³⁴ Later, the Council of Chelsea in 816 made an important reaffirmation of the rights of bishops over religious life within their particular dioceses.³⁵ Such meetings of episcopal colleagues were essential for church unity but also as the means by which archiepiscopal authority could be exercised. They continued a regulatory institution exemplified by important councils of the early Christian church (for example at Nicaea in 325 and Chalcedon in 451),³⁶ and mirrored those held in Francia.³⁷

In the later Anglo-Saxon period, two of Ælfric's homilies bore on the role of bishop and the high status accorded to those so designated. In his First Series homily for *Dominica secunda post Pasca* he described bishops ('ælc biscop 7 ælc lareow') with reference to the biblical motif of 'the Good Shepherd' (from Ezechiel XXXIV, also applied to Christ in John X. 11 and 14). Bishops are required to guard 'godes folc' ('God's

³¹ For two later Anglo-Saxon letters giving advice to a bishop and an archbishop, see Barlow, *English Church*, p. 64.

³² For Theodore's influence, see Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 8–13.

³³ Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 102–10. The canons are edited in *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. Arthur West Haddan and William Stubbs, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1869–78), III. 362–76; for discussion, see Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 100–52, and *eadem*, 'Pastoral Care and Conciliar Canons: The Provisions of the 747 Council of *Clofesho*', in *Pastoral Care before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester, 1992), pp. 193–211, at pp. 195–8. For the location of *Clofesho*, see Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 304–6; also, Simon Keynes, 'The Councils of *Clofesho*', Brixworth Lecture 1993 = University of Leicester Vaughan Paper 38 (Leicester, 1994), particularly 13–17, 49–50.

³⁴ Canons 1–7; *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, ed. Haddan and Stubbs, III.363–5.

³⁵ Canons 4, 7 and 8: *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, ed. Haddan and Stubbs, III.580–3. See Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 191–203, 285; and Nicholas Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury: Christ Church from 597 to 1066* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 175–6.

³⁶ Chadwick, *Early Church*, pp. 130–2, 203–5.

³⁷ See Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789–895*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History (London, 1977), pp. 11–17, 23–4.

people') from the depredations of the wolf (i.e. the Devil).³⁸ In his Second Series homily *De natale Domini* he used the vernacular term *biscop* in specific references to Christ, firstly representing the Latin of his source 'Christum verum sacerdotem' as 'se ðe is soð biscop' ('he who is the true bishop') and later avowing Christ to be 'soðlice ealra biscopra biscop. and ealra cyninga cyning' ('truly bishop of all bishops and king of all kings').³⁹

However, Ælfric's Latin letter to Archbishop Wulfstan of York, datable 1002×1005, indicates that he did not always find the expected high standards of behaviour among the bishops he encountered. In it he complained:

Sed valde dolendum est, quia his diebus tanta negligentia est in episcopis, qui deberent esse columpne aecclesiae, ut non attendant divinam scripturam, nec docent discipulos qui sibi succedant in episcopatum, sicut legimus de sanctis viris, qui multos perfectos discipulos successores sibi reliquerunt, sed honores seculares et cupiditates vel avaritiam sectantes, plus quam laici mala exempla subditis prebentes. Non audent de iustitia loqui, quia iustitiam nec faciunt nec diligunt. Vacant potationibus honorifice in aula, non lectionibus cum clero aut monachis, et nolunt scire quid sit opus episcopi. Certe nos timemus valde ut eorum negligentia fides deficiat in ista insula, et nimium miror quomodo ausi sunt vendere sanctam crisma; emunt oleum vili pretio et consecratum magno vendunt pretio, cum Dominus dicat: 'Gratis accepistis, gratis date'. Ergo omnes benedictiones et inpositiones manuum dare gratis deberent sicut apostoli fecerunt, qui non habuerunt villas nec agros. Sed avaritia hoc non sinit.⁴⁰

³⁸ *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series*, ed. Clemoes, no. XVII, pp. 313–16, 535–42, at p. 314 (lines 23–4). On the use of the Letters of Timothy in this homily, see above, p. 4, n. 19. Although much of this homily was drawn from the earlier one by Gregory the Great and the expansion of it by Haymo of Auxerre, Ælfric's introduction of the 'bishop and teacher' was original, see Godden, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction*, p. 138. Bede also used 'the Good Shepherd' motif in his *Epistola ad Ecgberhtum*, see Whitelock, *EHD*, no. 170, p. 807. For its use in monastic texts, both in relation to the abbot and to King Edgar, see below, p. 15 and p. 16, n. 76. For its employment by Archbishop Wulfstan, see below, pp. 11 and 17.

³⁹ *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series*, ed. Godden, no. I, p. 4 (line 58) and p. 7 (lines 166–7). Ælfric's source for the first instance was Pseudo-Augustine, *Sermones* (now attributed to Ildefonsus of Seville), see Godden, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction*, pp. 347–8.

⁴⁰ *Councils & Synods*, ed. Whitelock, no. 45, pp. 242–55, at pp. 253–4. 'But it is greatly to be deplored that there is such a great lack of care these days in the bishops, who ought to be pillars of the church [cf. Gal. II.9], that they do not apply themselves to divine scripture, nor teach pupils who might succeed them in the episcopate, as we read of the holy men who left many perfect pupils as their successors, but, pursuing secular honours and desires and avarice, they more than laymen are furnishing bad examples to subordinates. They do not dare to speak about justice, because they neither do nor love justice. They give time with honour to drinking-bouts in the hall [but] not