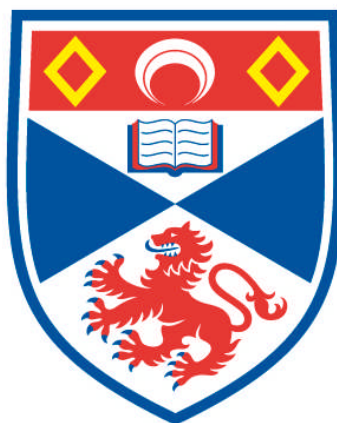


**LIVING STONES:
THE PRACTICE OF REMEMBRANCE AT LINCOLN
CATHEDRAL, (1092-1235)**

William Kay

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



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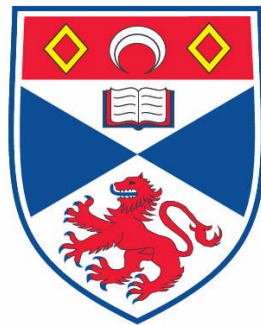
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LIVING STONES

THE PRACTICE OF REMEMBRANCE AT LINCOLN CATHEDRAL (1092-1235)

William Kay



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1 August 2013

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LIVING STONES

THE PRACTICE OF REMEMBRANCE

AT LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

(1092-1235)

William Kay

*FOR JOY, MY MOTHER,
IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER, DENNIS*

This thesis analyses four different aspects of devotional life at one of England's largest and wealthiest medieval cathedrals between the years 1092 and 1235. Each of these is associated with the remembrance of the dead. It is an area of religious practice that was subject to momentous change over the course of the period. These changes would have a profound effect on the organization of Christian worship for centuries to come. The thesis assesses how contrasting approaches to the practice of remembrance were able to enhance and shape the composition of the church, and explores what they reveal about the distinctive fellowship of a secular cathedral.

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Abbreviations

A. Mag. Vit.	Adam of Eynsham, <i>Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis: The Life of St Hugh of Lincoln</i> , ed. D.L. Douie & D.H. Farmer (Oxford, 1985)
Can. St Hugh	D.H. Farmer, 'The Canonization of St Hugh of Lincoln', <i>Lincolnshire Architectural and Archaeological Reports and Papers</i> , vol. 6 (1956)
Edwards	Kathleen Edwards, <i>The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages</i> (2 nd Edition; Manchester, 1967)
EHR	English Historical Review
Eng. Epis.	<i>English Episcopal Acta</i> , vols. 1 & 4, ed. D.M. Smith (Oxford, 1980 & 1986)
Eyns. Cart.	<i>Eynsham Cartulary</i> , ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford Historical Society, vols. 49 & 51; 1906-8)
Fasti	John Le Neve, <i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066-1300</i> , vol. 3, ed. Diana Greenway (Institute of Historical Research, 1977)
G. Op.	Gerald of <i>Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis) Opera</i> , ed. J.S. Brewer, James F. Dimock & G.F. Warner, 8 vols. (RS, 1861-91)
G. Sp. Duo.	Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis), <i>Speculum Duorum</i> , ed. Yves Lefèvre, R.B.C. Huygens, Michael Richter (Cardiff, 1974)
H. Hist. Ang.	Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, <i>Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People</i> , ed. Diana Greenway (OMT, 1996)
Hill	Sir Francis Hill, <i>Medieval Lincoln</i> (Cambridge, 1965)
LRS	Lincoln Record Society
M. Chron. Mai.	Matthew Paris, <i>Chronica majora</i> , ed. Henry R. Luard, 7 vols. (RS, 1872-1884)
Met. Hugh	<i>The Metrical Life of St Hugh of Lincoln</i> , ed. Charles Garton (Lincoln, 1986)
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
OMT	Oxford Medieval Texts
PL	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1841-1864)
Reg. Ang.-Nor.	<i>Regesta regum anglo-normannorum</i> , ed. H.W.C. Davis <i>et al.</i> , 4 vols. (Oxford, 1913-1969)

- Reg. Ant.* *The Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln*, ed. C.W. Foster and K. Major (LRS, 10 vols., 1931-1973)
- R. Chron.* Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs, 4 vols. (RS, 1868-1871)
- R. Gesta* Roger of Howden, *Gesta Regis Henrici secundi Benedicti abbatis*, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols. (RS, 1867)
- RS Rolls Series
- Statutes* *Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral*, arranged H. Bradshaw, ed. C. Wordsworth, 2 parts, in 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1892-7)
- W. De Nug.* Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, ed. M.R. James, rev. C.N.L. Brooke and R.A.B. Mynors (OMT, 1983)

Introduction

The subject of this inquiry is a ‘church’ (*ecclesia*), conceived not simply as a place of public worship, but as an assembly of the faithful. It is an examination of a body of people and the process of their coming together.¹ The inquiry focuses on one part of this process which was central to the formation, growth, and designation of the particular fellowship with which we are concerned: the practice of sustaining, and calling to mind, the memory of the dead. For those living around the twelfth century an understanding of the composition of a church could incorporate the deceased. To appreciate the church in all its dimensions, therefore, it is vital to consider the leading role which the practice of remembrance played.

The assembly in question was based at the cathedral church of Lincoln, and was, by any standard, as substantial, intricate, and singular as the outstanding work of architecture in which it was housed. The timeframe of this inquiry covers the most important period in the creation of the social fabric of the church and also of the structure itself. It begins in the late-eleventh century, around the time when the first building was brought to a stage of completion. While parts of the imposing façade date back to this period, today the cathedral is, for the most part, the product of a major building campaign that began in the last decade of the twelfth century and carried on through to the death of Bishop Hugh of Wells, in 1235. This is where the inquiry draws to a close. Over the duration of this especially industrious era, the complex fellowship of the church was envisaged and described in different ways. It was not determined rigidly or dogmatically. Partly this is because the exercise touched upon a fundamental mystery of faith, a perpetual truth relating to the conception of the church as a whole, which is a body whose nature is revealed in compound images and personifications. As Bede describes it, the mysteries of the church and of Christ ‘are brought to mind in many ways and by many figures, but when they are repeated they always bring forth something new, which either enables one to grasp the content of these mysteries or, through its very newness, brings delight to the souls of those who

¹ Although the English word church can refer to both the building and its people, it will be used here to translate the Latin *ecclesia*, derived from Greek *ekklēsia* (‘assembly’), which has a broader semantic scope. Significantly it may refer both to the assembled community and to the process of assembling. In the nineteenth century a distinction was sometimes made between a church and a cathedral, but this definition has mainly fallen out of use.

hear it'.² Because one defining image of the Christian congregation is as a spiritual building, a living temple made from living stones (1 Pet. 2: 4-6), a common starting point when exploring some of the convoluted and finely balanced relationships which joined the members of a secular, or non-monastic, cathedral was to draw allegories from the material structure. As we will see, symbolism and allegory can offer insightful and wholly appropriate tools for this purpose. The present inquiry, however, takes the form of a critical analysis. It addresses one general sphere of conduct, and the four chapters deal with differing sorts of evidence, corresponding to specific kinds of activity. Each presents distinctive interpretations of what it might mean to belong to, or to be incorporated within, the fellowship of the cathedral. The four chapters inevitably arrive at partial conclusions. They are best characterized as test trenches which will, it is hoped, turn up as many new questions as answers. The inquiry sets its sights on stimulating, rather than culminating, discussion.

The practice of remembrance went through major changes over the course of the period, as is reflected by an unprecedentedly diverse and illuminating range of sources. These sources are frequently products of a conscious attempt to honour, and create lasting memorials of, individual members of the church or the body as a whole. We are often confronted with examples of calculated self-fashioning, therefore, and it is vital, when analysing such sources, to give proper weight to the impulses which conceived them, and to view them within the context of their creation. Despite the tremendous power and influence of the great secular cathedrals, historians are only just beginning to appreciate the distinctive nature of these impulses as they were formulated within such unique environments. As a result there is some likelihood that an inquiry into the practice of remembrance at Lincoln Cathedral (or Lincoln Minster as it is often called) will raise questions about areas of research that can only be served fully and effectively through the pursuit of extended, comparative surveys. This inquiry is a localized one, focusing on a particular setting, and on a single church, with the intention of making a modest, multidimensional contribution to a more general historical debate.

Lincoln's post-Conquest foundation is normally traced back to the year 1072, and to the decision to transfer the bishop's 'seat' (*cathedra*) in England's largest diocese to a significant and regionally dominant centre of commerce, with an estimated population in the late-eleventh century of between six and ten thousand inhabitants.³ The elevated and fortified site was of immense strategic importance in guarding against the threat of invasion and rebellion. In 1067,

² PL vol. 91, col. 1133; quoted, together with a useful introduction to the development of this branch of theology prior to the fourteenth century, in S.M. Holmes, 'Reading the Church: William Durandus and a New Approach to the History of Ecclesiology', *Ecclesiology* (2011), vol. 7, pp. 29-49 (at p. 34).

³ M. Jones, D. Stocker and A. Vince, *The City by the Pool* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 166-167.

following the death of Wulfwig, bishop of Dorchester (on Thames, in Oxfordshire, where the cathedral was previously located), the see had been the first to fall vacant after the Norman Conquest. The Norman monk Remigius, almoner of Fécamp, was nominated to it. For historians writing in the first half of the twelfth century, however, the unexpected demise of the bishop some 25 years later, immediately before the dedication ceremony which had been planned for the new cathedral, together with the funeral service that was held in its place, represented a much more noteworthy, if inauspicious, moment of inauguration. Bearing in mind that the focus of this inquiry is the memorialization of the dead, it seems a fitting juncture from which to begin.

The memory of Bishop Remigius served as an important point of reference for writers of this era who endeavoured to present the history of the cathedral. Although such qualities seem to have eluded his contemporaries entirely, in death the bishop was eventually recognized, at least locally, as a paragon of virtue and a saint. In the *Life of St Remigius (Vita sancti Remigii)*, which was first produced at the end of the twelfth century, Gerald of Wales traces key developments in the history of the cathedral church through the commemoration of its founder. The work contains portraits of the careers of the six men who had since succeeded Remigius in office. These portraits integrate a range of subject matters, such as the changing boundaries of the diocese, the various building campaigns at the cathedral, and the enlargement of its senior clerical body - the cathedral chapter. Members of this collegiate body, the canons, are characterized by Gerald as the pillars of the church.⁴ The work is indicative of the way in which the remembrance of the bishops of Lincoln, and particularly those bishops who were venerated as saints, offered a channel through which expositions of the wider fellowship of the church could be projected. It is a core theme of this inquiry.

Even though, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, limits were imposed on the authority individual bishops were able to exercise over the affairs of their cathedrals, the theme of remembrance reveals that they remained central figures in the corporate lives of these churches. Throughout the period of this inquiry, at least in the context of Lincoln, they do also appear to have been active, participating members of the clerical community, with a privileged role in the choir and in chapter. Indeed the idea that Bishop Hugh of Avalon, or St Hugh of Lincoln, who was canonized in 1220, had occasionally presided in chapter, as reported by his chaplain and hagiographer, is entirely consistent with standards observed in the Late Middle Ages.⁵ An illustration of the role of the bishops in choir is exhibited in the custom that, when in attendance, they would lead the attendant canons and vicars-choral in the daily recitation of the

⁴ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 31-42 (in particular Bishop Hugh of Avalon is said to have promoted learned and honourable men to the chapter as trustworthy pillars for his church (*fideles ecclesiae suae columnas*), at p. 41).

⁵ *Statutes* (part 2), cciv; for further discussion of this issue see Edwards, pp. 107-108.

psalter – a collective act of worship performed on behalf of the benefactors of the church. The negotiation of episcopal authority during this period was hammered out at a local level and resulted in contrasting resolutions. The relationships between bishops and cathedrals, conventionally likened to that of spouses, were also shaped by circumstance and by the personalities involved. There were situations, especially where disputes had arisen, in which bishops could find themselves ‘strangers, often unwelcome, in their own cathedral city’.⁶ Immediately after the period with which we are concerned, Bishop Robert Grosseteste (himself a former canon and archdeacon of the cathedral) announced a formal visitation of the chapter, inciting vocal opposition and prompting a long-drawn-out rift with his canons. In a dramatic portrayal of this dispute, the chronicler of St Albans, Matthew Paris, describes how, just at the moment one of the canons was denouncing the bishop’s actions from the pulpit, proclaiming that ‘if we hold our peace, the very stones will cry out in protest’, parts of the main crossing tower at the centre of the church plummeted to the ground.⁷ In spite of such exceptional episodes, the opening words of Lincoln’s fourteenth-century customal, known as the Black Book (*Liber Niger*), enshrined the bishop’s primary position within the clerical hierarchy: ‘It belongs to the bishop’s dignity to have pre-eminence in the honour shown to him in choir, in chapter, and in all places, above the dean and above all the dignitaries and canons of the church’.⁸

Partly because of the functions and obligations of their offices, the bishops, along with a significant proportion of the canons, were not always present at the cathedral. Indeed the college of canons, which, by the end of the twelfth century, had up to 55 members, comprised an especially diverse group, with differing levels of involvement in the day-to-day operation of the church. There is the special case of the archdeacons who acted as agents of the bishop (using their own seals from the middle of the twelfth century) within distinct territories.⁹ More generally, a cathedral prebend (a canon’s separate income or estate) often included a manor, a church, or even a number of churches, located some distance from Lincoln, with whose administration the canon was entrusted. Henry Mayr-Harting has recently argued that, while ‘a good deal of parish direction came from the cathedral centre’, these individual prebendal churches came to play a significant role in transmitting pastoral direction from the cathedral to the dispersed parish churches around the diocese: ‘prebendal churches’, he says, ‘were intended

⁶ Timothy Reuter, ‘A Europe of Bishops: The Age of Wulfstan of York and Burchard of Worms’, in *Patterns of Episcopal Power: Bishops in Tenth and Eleventh Century Western Europe*, ed. Ludger Körntgen and Dominik Wassenhoven (Berlin, 2011), p. 34.

⁷ M. *Chron. Mai.*, vol. 3, p. 529 & pp. 638-639.

⁸ ‘*Dignitas episcopi est in choro Capitulo et in omnibus locis supra Decanum et omnes personas ecclesie et canonicos in exhibitione honoris habere preminenciam*’; *Statutes* (part. 1), p. 273:

⁹ Seals (though fragmentary) are attached to charters of Walter of Oxford and Henry of Huntingdon from c.1150; *Twelfth-Century Archidiaconal and Vice-Archidiaconal Acta* (Woodbridge, 2001), ed. B.R. Kemp, xl-xlii.

to be pastoral models'.¹⁰ Especially at a large and wealthy cathedral like Lincoln, the canons also held other important positions, with responsibilities extending far beyond the essential pastoral activities of the cathedral or diocese. They served as canon lawyers, as physicians, as theologians, and - with greatest frequency - as bureaucrats; whether engaged in royal, episcopal, or papal administrations. Some of the most senior dignitaries fulfilled these social functions. During the twelfth century we can identify a series of deans of the cathedral, for instance, who served as head of the chapter and simultaneously held prominent positions at the royal court. Most prominent among them were Dean Philip of Harcourt, who served for a time as chancellor to King Stephen, and Dean Richard fitz Nigel, a nephew of Bishop Alexander, who was royal treasurer, and famously wrote a guide to the operation of the exchequer (*Dialogus de Scaccario*). Furthermore, because prebends were technically deemed sinecures (meaning 'without cure of souls'), it was permissible to hold multiple offices of this sort, and it is not rare to find canons of Lincoln, again including some of the chief dignitaries, holding prebends, and sometimes major offices, at other cathedrals. We can take as one example, the famous writer and courtier Walter Map, who was a leading member of the chapter, occupying, successively, the offices of chancellor, precentor, and archdeacon of Oxford, and who was also a canon of Hereford and of St Paul's (where he would give his name to the prebend of Mapesbury). The two deans we have just mentioned were, respectively, archdeacons of Évreux and Ely. These points are obviously worth bearing in mind when evaluating the cultural environment inhabited by the cathedral's senior clerical personnel and the breadth of influences which informed their conduct.

Among individual members of Lincoln's chapter, which was the largest of any English cathedral, we find such a range of personal connexions to the institution, and differing levels of involvement in the life of the church, that it is best to avoid generalizations about the nature of the body as a whole. This applies to the imposition of clear-cut distinctions relating to the issue of residency. There is not space here to cover this topic in any great depth, but it is important to observe that, when it came to be defined towards the end of our period, residency, which entitled canons to an increased share of the church's revenues, corresponded to minimum annual terms of greater or lesser residency dependent on office and on the number of years a canon had held their prebend. It did not, in any sense, require continuous participation in cathedral services. Although, as we have mentioned, this is an exceptional case, archdeacons could be classified as 'resident' if they spent just forty days each year in the city.¹¹ By the end of the twelfth century an obligation was placed upon those canons that did not fulfil their specific term of residency (and

¹⁰ Henry Mayr-Harting, *Religion, Politics and Society in Britain 1066-1272* (Harlow, 2011), p. 126.

¹¹ *Statutes*, vol. 2, p. 144. Resident canons were required to participate in one of the canonical hours each day or high mass (*ibid*, vol. 1, pp. 293-294).

there were clearly some who had little or no direct contact with the cathedral) to cover the expense of their vicar, or 'substitute'.¹² (This obligation was not placed upon canons described as resident although it is likely that many would also have had their own vicar.) Such regulations reflected changing standards. Little evidence can be found to support the view that a pristine constitutional model established in the late-eleventh century was gradually degraded by the problems of non-residence and pluralism, but over the course of the twelfth century these subjects did exercise reformers more and more, with some limited effects. The sentiments were echoed by the monk Richard of Devizes, in the late-twelfth century, when he condemned secular canons of collegiate churches: he leaves his liturgical obligations to ill-paid vicars, Richard complained, and is 'permitted to be absent from his church for as long as he pleases'.¹³ A crucial point, however, is that the regular duties of the canons in choir were commonly performed by minor clergy. It is an over-simplification, but Moorman, writing about English secular cathedrals in the thirteenth century, observed that 'for the most part the members of the Chapter lived a life of superb detachment from the cares of pastoral work'. The burden of their clerical duties, for which they received payment, was mainly shouldered by substitute priests: 'the vicars-choral were not much more than servants in a club of which the canons were the members'.¹⁴ Certainly, when envisaging the clerical community of Lincoln Cathedral, it ought to be recognized that the college of canons formed one privileged section of a much larger corporation.

Having said this, it is in large part the college of canons, the idiosyncrasies of their constitution and of their personal relationships to the cathedral, which lend a special colour and interest to the practice of remembrance at Lincoln. The first chapter of this inquiry specifically concerns one canon: the archdeacon and eminent historian Henry of Huntingdon. While his *History of the English* (*Historia Anglorum*), produced around the second quarter of the twelfth century, is primarily concerned with the formation of the English kingdom, it also sheds a great deal of light on the early history of the cathedral. Chiefly this material is to be found in sections which mark the deaths of the bishops and senior officeholders. The work as a whole contains a cornucopia of memorials, in which a range of compositional techniques are employed to reflect upon the lives and deaths of particular individuals. These memorials are coupled with Henry's more general deliberations on the scope and value of human memory. The chapter specifically addresses the memorialization of fellow churchmen, but it also seeks to present this component of the work in the context of the broader historical enterprise to which it belongs. In many ways the chapter lays the groundwork for the rest of the inquiry. It allows us to observe, in some

¹² *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 260-262 (nos. 300-301).

¹³ Richard of Devizes, *Cronicon* (Nelson's Medieval Classics, 1963), ed. J.T. Appleby, pp. 70-71.

¹⁴ John R.H. Moorman, *Church Life in England in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1945), p. 21.

detail, the ways in which one senior member of the church reflected on the practice of remembrance, and will also familiarize us with the main themes, conventions, and devices that he applied to this task.

Among other things the practice of remembrance can offer some insight into the gradual expansion of the clerical community at Lincoln throughout the period. Up to the late-twelfth century the size of the chapter was steadily rising, and, after this point, as the number of canons became fixed, the group of minor clergy would start to swell dramatically. The ritual commemoration of the dead was inextricably linked to this increase. It was a fundamental channel through which the entire clerical hierarchy was organized, maintained, and progressively enlarged. Of course it would be wholly untenable, not to say misleading, to suggest that the fellowship of a secular cathedral can be reduced to a hyper-structure of spiritual functionaries. For one thing the construction of this body (and of the material structure) depended heavily on the institution's facility to integrate and draw support from the nobility and from the population of the diocese as a whole. The subject of intercessory worship, to which Chapter Two is devoted, points to the kind of formal and exclusive arrangements by which lay benefactors as well as ecclesiasts could be more closely incorporated within the society of the church.

This period is associated with an important transition in the Latin Church's approach to, and co-ordination of, commemorative worship, when new forms of funeral rite and expiatory prayer emerged, and when doctrinal formulations of the afterlife began to achieve greater coherence. Part of the historical interest which Lincoln holds relates to its status as a new cathedral foundation, inhabited, in the first place, by a new generation of canons, developing a new constitutional model. While generally cathedrals can be regarded as guardians of tradition, at least from the start of the period under investigation, Lincoln maintained few direct connexions to its past. From the extant sources, the cathedral seems to have had no legacy of commemoration from Dorchester, or indeed of a more general liturgical use. As Richard Pfaff has pointed out, 'to a large extent Lincoln seems to have been a liturgical *tabula rasa*'.¹⁵

Chapter Three addresses the theme of burial. It is concerned with the cathedral's status as a site of burial. It also includes some discussion of the function of the cathedral as a mother church, exploring some of the ways in which the clerical community was involved in regulating and cultivating practices of remembrance in the churches under its supervision. The theme is pursued with particular reference to the episcopate of the Carthusian monk Hugh of Avalon, who was celebrated for his commitment to providing decent burial, and for his enthusiastic participation in funeral rites. After his own death, on 16 November 1200, the status of the

¹⁵ Richard W. Pfaff, *The Liturgy in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 498.

church was dramatically transformed as the bishop's tomb became an important place of pilgrimage and a focus of popular devotion.

As will be seen, there were also major changes at this time in regard to the veneration of the saints. Chapter Four examines this distinctive species of remembrance, assessing the church's role in its management, and also scrutinizing the unique set of relationships that it could foster. The analysis concentrates on the early stages of the cult of Hugh of Avalon, and on the events leading up to his canonization, with which the cult received papal approval and the basis of an international observance. Veneration of the bishop was the pinnacle expression of remembrance at the cathedral. Yet the splendour of the shrines and their setting, and the various hagiographical compositions written about Hugh, remind us that his memory is the product of a particular context and ought to be appreciated with reference to its immediate environment.

Chapter One

FOUNDATIONS: HENRY OF HUNTINGDON

INTRODUCTION

The four decades following the death of Bishop Remigius in 1092 witnessed a dynamic, prolific, and spontaneous revival of historical research in England. The movement emanated from the great Benedictine monasteries and was stimulated by an effort to conserve status and traditions, to safeguard land and religious artefacts.¹ At the tail-end of this period, Lincoln Cathedral, a beacon of the Norman regime, emerged as a significant new locus of historiographical production, when, under the direction of Bishop Alexander the Magnificent (1123-1148), Henry of Huntingdon, a canon and archdeacon of the cathedral, completed the first versions of his *Historia Anglorum*. While Henry's motivations differed in many ways from those of his monastic counterparts, there was also a shared basic interest in what could be described as institutional aggrandizement. His composition projected a sharp image of the new cathedral foundation, of its bishops, and advanced the reputation of its senior clergy within an enlivening and morally incisive contribution to universal history. In the Prologue, courteously addressing his patron, Henry set out the broad parameters of the work: 'on your instruction Bishop Alexander, I have undertaken to narrate the history of this kingdom and the origins of our people, a kingdom and a people of which you are regarded as the lustre and the pinnacle'.²

One attribute of the *Historia Anglorum* is its rhetorical fluency; its unity of purpose, clarity of structure, and stylistic variation. Henry of Huntingdon has been especially celebrated for his methodical exposition of early Anglo-Saxon history, a task which largely involved the judicious

¹ R.W. Southern, 'Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing 4: The Sense of the Past', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1973), Fifth series, vol. 22, pp. 246-256; repr. *History and Historians: Selected Papers of R.W. Southern*, ed. R.J. Bartlett (Oxford, 2004), pp. 69-77. The movement is traced specifically to the period 1090 to 1130.

² 'Hec ergo considerans, huius regni et nostre gentis origins, iussu tuo presul Alexander, qui flos at cacumen regni et gentis esse videris, decurrenda suscep?'. H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 4-7.

arrangement of the words of other historians.³ When dealing with the history of England before the Conquest, in fact, there are only quite rare glimpses of the author's actual voice. Sporadically it interjects with points of detail. The *Historia* is the earliest surviving source to describe and name Stonehenge (*Stanenges*), for example, adding that 'no one can work out how the stones were so skilfully lifted up to such a height or why they were erected'.⁴ Mainly these interjections help to frame the wider narrative and tie in its overarching themes. One important way in which this is achieved is when reflecting upon the deaths of prominent historical figures. This is where Henry's flair and invention starts to break through. Due to the system of organizing the work by regnal years, instead of dating *anno domini*, there was perhaps a stronger sense in which the deaths of kings encouraged retrospective analysis within the rigid annalistic format that much of the work adopts. By far the most famous single episode in the work, the story of Cnut and the waves, belongs to the lengthy obituary passage composed for that king. The following chapter examines how Henry commemorated and reflected upon the memory of the bishops and higher clergy of his own cathedral - a task to which he applied special energy and a range of compositional techniques.

Naturally, when studying the representation of a single theme within a work, and when concentrating on the portrayal of a limited set of subjects, certain components are bound to hold particular interest and merit closer analysis. This chapter begins by examining two fairly self-contained and discrete elements of the composition. The first of these is a letter of consolation addressed to a fellow archdeacon, a devotional tract which memorializes, and passes stern judgement upon, a host of contemporary figures: kings, bishops, barons, the heads of religious houses, royal justices, and also, most pertinently, the earliest office-holders at Lincoln Cathedral. The second is a group of original epitaphs, all of which either celebrate clergymen from Lincoln or English monarchs.

The analysis of these two elements will invite some more generalized discussion. The letter of consolation, for example, develops a number of moral tenets, which recur time and again in the obituary passages running throughout the main historical narrative. It epitomizes many of the views and concerns of Henry's memorial writing, and can be treated as a kind of synopsis, through which we can gain a working understanding of his basic approach to the subject of remembrance. The epitaphs, on the other hand, shed light on the first phase of Henry's literary career - portraying the key personalities who would shape and inform the nature

³ James Campbell, 'Some Twelfth-Century Views of the Anglo-Saxon Past', *Essays in Anglo-Saxon History* (London, 1986), pp. 212-213.

⁴ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 22-23.

of his personal attachment to the cathedral. They are also helpful in illustrating the cultural setting from which his writings sprang.

While the analysis of these distinctive modes of remembrance provides a constructive entry point, there is also a need to evaluate this strand of Henry's writing, and specifically his memorials of the bishops of Lincoln, from a wider angle, to examine the place they are afforded within the larger scheme of the *Historia*, and to assess the influence of Henry's historical standards and objectives on their representation. This is the task of the final part of the chapter.

Even as it was being compiled, advance versions of the *Historia Anglorum* seem to have generated interest and enjoyed a relatively wide circulation. This is implied at least by the number of textual variations, which show that numerous copies were made at different stages of composition. Diana Greenway's critical edition identifies two versions ending in the year 1129, and four subsequent versions that take the narrative up to 1138, 1146, 1149, and finally, to 1154.⁵ The project commenced after Bishop Alexander's consecration in July 1123. He not only commissioned and patronized the work, but is also said to have had a hand in determining its scope and its structure. Part of the initial goal was to produce a compact book: 'an abbreviated history in a single volume'.⁶ Over a period of roughly 30 years, as Henry continually updated and extended the composition, the initial parameters were stretched. Originally divided into seven books, the longest versions of the *Historia* consist of twelve books, including collections of epigrams and a series of letters. As a result of this progressive textual record it is possible, quite unusually, to follow the writer's gradual maturation, regarding aspects of his style, for instance, or in reference to particular viewpoints that he held. The following study tries to make use of this special feature of the work.

The 1130s were marked by a sudden proliferation of environments in which historical writing was being produced in England, released from the working methods and objectives of the convent. The first extant history in the French vernacular, for example, Gaimar's rhymed History of the English (*Estoire des Engleis*) belongs to the context of small aristocratic courts with a taste for 'history and romance, as well as Lives of the saints, all of which dealt with the English past'.⁷ Constance, the noblewoman who patronized Gaimar's work, was based in Lincolnshire.⁸

⁵ The work's initial popularity may have waned somewhat. Around 30 manuscripts contain the full text, although it was heavily drawn upon by later chroniclers, especially as a source for the events of King Stephen's reign. No autograph manuscript survives. See H. *Hist. Ang.*, lxvi-lxxvii.

⁶ Greenway points out that an early manuscript (BL Egerton MS 3668), which forms the base text of her edition to 1138, is a portable, 'handbook size' (300 x 130 mm.), *ibid.*, lviii. The remit set out by Alexander was recorded: 'On your advice I have followed the Venerable Bede's Ecclesiastical History where I could, selecting material also from other authors and borrowing from chronicles preserved in ancient libraries, and I have described past events down to the present time of our own knowledge and observation'.

⁷ M. Dominica Legge, *Anglo-Norman literature and its background* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 2-4.

The court of the bishop of Lincoln was a loftier sphere of patronage. Geoffrey of Monmouth, when dedicating part of his hugely popular History of the Kings of Britain (*Historia regum Britanniae*), to Bishop Alexander (The Prophecies of Merlin), declared that ‘No one among the clergy or the people enjoyed the service of so many nobles, whom he bound to him with his gentle goodness and kind generosity’. Geoffrey claimed to have received his main source ‘a very old book in the British tongue’ from Henry of Huntingdon’s fellow canon, Walter archdeacon of Oxford.⁹ While the *Historia Anglorum* is an illuminating record of one canon’s distinctive and evolving outlook on the practice of remembrance, it should be borne in mind that he was also part of a learned, privileged and influential clerical élite, and in many respects the work he produced reflects the particular cultural orbit that he inhabited.

⁸ She was married to the Lincolnshire land-holder Ralph fitz Gilbert. A discussion of this particular cultural setting is found in Geffrei Gaimar, *Estoire des Engleis*, ed. and trans. Ian Short (Oxford, 2009), ix-xvi.

⁹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, ed. Michael D. Reeve and trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 142-143 and pp. 4-5.

AN ARCHDEACON'S RECOLLECTIONS

Henry of Huntingdon was not at all unusual among chroniclers of his era in bringing the story of his own church to the foreground in the later parts of a wide-ranging historical survey. Even so, the most sustained, thorough, and instructive discussion of Lincoln Cathedral in the *Historia Anglorum* is located in a separate, appended composition. This is an intimate letter of consolation addressed to a friend and colleague (*consortem*), Walter the archdeacon of Leicester, who was also the recipient of Henry's three major poetic works. 'As a young man', he says, 'I dedicated to you, also young, the writings of my youth; as an old one, I send you, now also old, the work of my old age'. Entitled 'Contempt for this world based on what I have seen', the missive takes the form of a moral treatise, a pious meditation 'on the desires of this world'.¹ As is typical of the literary mode to which it belongs, it combines scathing criticism of the ills of the day with satirical exposé, and also incorporates extensive lists of the dead, asking, where are they now (*ubi sunt*)? Because this device is applied to cathedral clergy, even to those who were still living, the letter contains a detailed register of the first generation of canons who held high office at Lincoln, and many of their immediate successors. It gives an impression of the initial structure of the cathedral chapter, and, in some instances, includes character portraits of these men. Being introduced as a comfort to Walter in ill health, a way to occupy his mind, in its final sentences the work is completely recast with news of the death of the addressee. 'This can not now be sent to you as a letter, but as an epitaph, a brief memorial, to be written with tears'.² A verse epitaph is put at the end of the letter, but this will be examined separately. The present discussion focuses on how this text characterizes the bishops and canons of Lincoln and what it can tell us about Henry of Huntingdon's approach to the practice of remembrance. First it will be necessary to outline, in a little more detail, its form and its place in the *Historia*.

Simply put, Henry's letter to Walter is an attempt to apply commonplace sentiments of devotional writing, familiar to the genre of *De contemptu mundi* literature, to the events of his lifetime. It is a clear affirmation of his literary ambitions. This style of writing was taken up with renewed vigour in the early-twelfth century and perhaps the best-known example, a verse

¹ 'De contemptu mundi per ea que ipsi vidimus', H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 584-585; for this characterization of the letter ('de mundi appetitu'), see pp. 502-503.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 618-619. Because Walter is said to have died during the writing of the letter, he should be identified with the archdeacon of Leicester. A tradition that Walter archdeacon of Oxford was the intended recipient seems to have originated early on at the Abbey of Le Bec, but he, like Henry, lived into the 1150s (see p. 584, note 2).

composition by Bernard of Cluny, was written around the same time.³ The letter is first found in the third version of the *Historia* (ending in 1138), although an earlier, discrete copy was produced between May 1133 and August 1135. It was revisited subsequently, with additions made, in particular, to the register of cathedral clergy.⁴ Henry stresses that the material contained in the letter is not covered elsewhere: 'I shall consider nothing from history books and nothing that has been narrated above'. In this respect it is similar to the two other letters that are incorporated along with it. The first of these, addressed to King Henry I, is an ambitious hand-list of the most powerful kings 'from the beginning of history to the present time'. The other, addressed to Warin the Breton, is a compilation of excerpts from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*. The three letters are accompanied by an Epilogue which originally concluded the first two versions of the *Historia* (ending in 1129), where Henry ponders the narrow reach of historical knowledge, the fragility of human memory, and the extent of time.⁵

Although both the subject matter of the letter to Walter and its unusually introspective tone do set it apart from the rest of the *Historia*, thematically it is closely aligned to the main narrative. In fact the letter represents a systematic treatment of ideas that appear recurrently throughout the work, and above all within its obituary passages. After the opening chapter, which is expressly concerned with 'our church', it is divided into a sequence of chapters in which Henry's most commonly rehearsed maxims are exemplified and enlarged upon: (Ch. 2) men raised in luxury come to misery in the end; (Ch. 3) 'The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God' (1 Cor. 3: 19); (Ch. 4) great names are achieved by the greatest of crimes; (Ch. 5) kings, like anyone else, are victims of circumstance and they should not be so highly regarded; (Ch. 6) all memory of the nobility, and of the most powerful, will one day disappear without trace. For the most part the letter is involved in creating an exposition of these principles.

This correspondence of themes reflects the fact that the devotional mode of writing encapsulated in the letter to Walter is employed so extensively in the course of the narrative, as a way to unify the whole around a central, consistent polemic. The entire work converges on the simple thought that all visible and material things are perishable. They 'come to nothing'. This precept was, at least from Henry's perspective, a suitably pointed and weighty observation with which to bring key sections of his writing to a close. The refrain rounds off the Prologue, for

³ *Scorn for the world: Bernard of Cluny's De contemptu mundi*, ed. Ronald E. Pepin (East Lansing, 1991). The place of the letter within this genre is discussed in Nancy Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago, 1977), esp. pp. 33-36.

⁴ The three revisions are dated by Greenway to after August 1137, c.1140 (perhaps after January 1141), and between 1146 and May 1147; H. *Hist. Ang.*, lxx-lxxi, and lxxv. Notably, in one manuscript recension, the letter is accompanied by a poem composed in a similar vein, *De contemptu visibilium* (Blackburn (Lancashire), Stonyhurst College, MS 26 ff. 105^v-106^r).

⁵ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 502-557 (Letter to Henry I), 558-583 (Letter to Warin), & 494-501 (Epilogue).

instance, in the last lines of the dedicatory poem for Bishop Alexander: ‘See, great father, what has become of the powerful: see how the honour, the splendour, the glory of the world come to nothing’.⁶ In the first two versions of the *Historia* an account of the sudden, accidental death of Philip of France, son of King Louis the Fat, ends the narrative in a similar fashion. (He died in October 1131, but the incident is reported in the final annal of 1129, showing that the first versions of the text can be dated no earlier than this). When the feet of his horse struck a boar, Philip was thrown and killed: ‘unusual event deserving of wonder! How quickly, how easily, such great eminence was brought to nothing!’⁷ The Epilogue accompanying the series of letters finishes in the same way. Glory attained in God is everlasting. Gain the world and ‘it will flow away like water from a broken pitcher, and you have nothing’.⁸ So pervasive and repetitive are these warnings of ultimate annihilation, especially when portraying the deaths of kings that, as Nancy Partner observed, the book ‘sometimes seems determined to become entirely a *memento mori* addressed to royalty’.⁹ While the letter does carry through and reinforce Henry’s deliberations on the subject of kingship, it can also be seen as an attempt to develop a central insight or motif of his work in reference to a larger cross-section of society.

For our purposes, the exceptional value of the letter to Walter lies in its narrow concentration on events of the author’s lifetime, and on his direct experiences. It should be noted that this approach represents an important divergence from the conception of personal memory advanced elsewhere in the narrative, which incorporated information learned by report, and so had a much wider scope. Hence it could include the St Brice’s Day massacre, on 13 November 1002, which Henry was told about in his youth by ‘very old men’.¹⁰ Perhaps this is why he felt able to describe the discovery of St Yvo’s body, in the year 1001, as ‘not long before the time that I can remember’.¹¹ Later Walter Map would similarly define ‘our times’ using the rough span of a century: ‘for there are still centenarians (*centennes*) alive, and there are very many sons who possess, by the narration of their fathers and grandfathers, the certainty of things which they did not see’.¹² Within the letter, however, an essential distinction is made between oral testimony and first-hand observation. Henry explains that the tract pools evidence from, ‘what I know from having seen it for myself, since the law admits only such testimony’.¹³

⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 6-9 (lxiii).

⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 484-487 (Cf. W. *De Nug*, p. 456).

⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 498-501 (Cf. Ps. 58: 7 (57: 8)).

⁹ Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, p. 30.

¹⁰ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 340-341.

¹¹ *Ibid*, pp. 690-692 (Henry does not give the year, see note 143).

¹² W. *De Nug*, pp. 122-125.

¹³ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 584-585.

The application of such a strict criterion is used to justify a fairly cursory description of Bishop Remigius. A lack of first-hand knowledge precludes him from discussion - 'I am not speaking of what I have not heard or seen, and I did not know him'. The little that is said is nevertheless informative. Crucially we are given the only clear reference to the bishop's presence at the battle of Hastings.¹⁴ Henry also pays homage to the vital role he played in establishing the cathedral church at Lincoln: '[Remigius] founded our church, endowed the foundation with many possessions, and enhanced the endowment with most virtuous dignitaries'.¹⁵

Contrastingly, there is a lengthy and much more insightful discussion of Bishop Robert Bloet. Henry connects the manner of his death, reports of 'utterly vile insults directed at him', and the bishop's unceremonious fall from favour at court towards the end of his life, to a mounting sense of personal disillusionment with fleeting pleasures. Writing the letter when he was probably aged in his mid-40s, Henry puts this feeling down to 'the natural improvement of maturity'.¹⁶ The passage symbolizes the great influence Robert Bloet had wielded over the archdeacon's career. From an early age Henry was raised and educated in the episcopal household (*familia*), and was probably one of a number of students Bloet sent to France to pursue a course of higher education.¹⁷ After the death of his father Nicholas, who held the archdeaconry of Huntingdon before him, he had served as the bishop's representative from 1110 to 1123. In this time, Henry says, 'throughout my boyhood, adolescence, and young manhood', he had been captivated by the grandeur of the bishop's household, 'the handsome knights, the young noblemen, and the valuable horses'. It was from the image of 'these fairest things' (*hec pulcherrima*) that he now drew back, as 'with advancing age, what was once soothing becomes abrasive, what tasted sweet becomes bitter'.

While the passage includes a rather mournful sketch of the bishop's death, after suffering an apoplectic fit when out hunting at Woodstock (Oxon.) with the king and the bishop of Salisbury, it is concentrated on the sudden change of fortunes that marked the end of his life. Robert Bloet was a prominent and influential political figure of the Norman regime. Having served as a chaplain to William the Conqueror, he achieved major political influence in the reign of William Rufus. He accompanied the new king to England in September of 1087, and was

¹⁴ As almoner of the monastery Fécamp, he contributed a ship and forty knights to the invading forces; E.M.C. van Houts, 'The ship list of William the Conqueror', in *Anglo-Norman Studies*, vol. 10 (1988), p. 175.

¹⁵ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 588-89.

¹⁶ For Henry's birth no later than c.1088 see *ibid.*, xxvi-xxvii. The following citations are from pp. 586-591, unless indicated otherwise.

¹⁷ This is implied by a brief reference in one of his poems ('*dum mellea flumina poto fontibus Anselmi manancia*'), which suggests, more specifically, that he was among the stream of young clerics from England, and from across Europe, who headed to the cathedral school at Laon; Henry of Huntingdon, *Anglicanus ortus: A Verse Herbal of the Twelfth Century*, ed. and trans. Winston Black (Toronto, 2012), pp. 104-105 (no. 1.12). Other clerics of Robert Bloet were sent to study under Ivo of Chartres, PL vol. 162, col. 278.

appointed chancellor of the realm in January 1091. After his elevation to the episcopate in 1093 he operated as a chief minister and royal justice.¹⁸ But, it is revealed, he had eventually managed to rouse Henry I's native hostility. Accordingly he was, on two occasions, 'sued by the king before a low-born judge', suffering heavy damages and humiliation. Henry of Huntingdon, who is alone in recording this sequence of events, recalls sitting beside the bishop at dinner and witnessing his anguish and bewilderment; seeing tears well up as he considered his relative impoverishment. As he thought back on Robert Bloet's demise, Henry reflected that the things which the bishop prized so highly and could not bear to lose, 'the golden and gilded vessels, the number of dishes, the splendour of those who waited upon him, the purple garments and satins', lacked true value and should really be despised.

Taken narrowly as a memorial of Robert Bloet, the passage is quite nuanced in character and complicated by the intrusion of personal sentiment and by its position and function within the argument of the letter, as part of the exordium. On the one hand it seems, at times, to present a defence of the bishop's reputation, possibly as a reaction to the 'utterly vile insults' which are referred to only obliquely. An assurance is given that he was 'meek and humble, pulling up many and pulling down no one, 'the father of the fatherless', the delight of his men'.¹⁹ Yet Henry also admits a major shortcoming. He 'cherished the world with a strong affection', and paid the price: 'because it usually happens that worldly men meet with bitter misfortunes before death'. Clearly these remarks do not portray the bishop in a favourable light, but the criticism was in no way specific to him. It is bound up with Henry's personal acknowledgement of the deep-seated affection he once held for the finer things in life: 'if anyone had said to me then that those beautiful things that we all admired ought to be despised, with what kind of expression or humour would I have received it?' Indeed Bloet's wealth and power was so impressive that 'everyone, and even those who taught in the schools of contempt for the world, bowed down to him'. Although the bishop's fall from favour at court, his 'bitter misfortunes', are explained as the consequence of his worldliness, they are linked even more forcibly to the king's capricious and malignant character: 'For King Henry, if I may say so, was a man of the utmost animosity, whose purpose was inscrutable'. Any criticism of the bishop is thus substantially moderated, and can hardly be disentangled from its rhetorical context at the beginning of the letter and from Henry's admission that of all the vices, the most dominant and the most unshakeable had been an excessive love of 'the here and now' (*presentium*). Penitent remarks of this kind could be regarded as a necessary prelude to the barbed chastisement of eminent personalities that would be delivered later on in the letter. It also underlines an important quality

¹⁸ For a summary of Robert Bloet's career, see Dorothy M. Owen, 'Bloet, Robert (*d.* 1123)', ODNB.

¹⁹ *Cf.* Ps. 67: 6 (68: 5)

of the genre, which was an author's ability to integrate his own particular circumstances, and convey genuine personal responses, within a long-established and familiar mode - his ability to create an ingenious and successful 'mix of convention and sincerity'.²⁰

There are one or two additional dimensions to this passage which should be explored in greater depth. As has been mentioned, Henry seems to have been contending with accusations that had been levelled against the bishop. The nature of these accusations is not divulged. They are perhaps alluded to, however, in William of Malmesbury's *History of the English Bishops*, which infers that they were known to Robert Bloet, but that he reacted blithely. We are told: 'He never cared a jot if he was suspected, and accused, of every kind of lust'. Presumably this relates to a charge of sexual impropriety, of conduct that did not match the standards of abstinence and probity required of a prelate. Henry is at least careful to point out that Bloet had fathered his son Simon when still chancellor, and so before his ordination and election to the episcopate.²¹

Regarding other areas of his conduct William of Malmesbury is also reproachful. In particular the bishop is criticized for dealing impudently with monks and hermits. He was 'unequaled for knowledge of lay business; of church affairs not so'. A special reprimand was issued for reversing the decision of Bishop Remigius to transfer a community of monks to the minster church at Stow (Lincs.) from the monastery of Eynsham (Oxon.), which uniquely in England at that time, was held by the bishop as an *Eigenkloster*, meaning that he had exceptional rights over its organization. This U-turn was motivated, it is claimed, by Bloet's envy of his predecessor's reputation, although 'he gave the excuse that his interests were being harmed by the monks'. More generally the bishop is noted for beautifying the cathedral church with the costliest of ornaments, and - being fairly light-hearted with his men - for failing to treat them with enough severity.²² As these remarks show, Henry's reflections on the bishop's memory were not written in isolation, and it was perhaps necessary when writing of him, and when trying to secure the interest and good will of the reader, to acknowledge, if only reticently, perceived flaws in Bloet's character.

In addition to this, when conceding Robert Bloet's major shortcoming, Henry was undoubtedly aware that equivalence could be drawn between the sumptuous household in which he had been raised and that of Bishop Alexander. Indeed, Alexander is sternly rebuked for an immoderate love of riches in a letter from Bernard of Clairvaux, and warned 'not to allow the

²⁰ Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, pp. 34-35.

²¹ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom (OMT; Oxford, 2007), vol. 1, pp. 474-475. *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 596-597.

²² '*Cetera satis suis hilaris et parum gravis*', William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum*, pp. 474-477. The bishop's fraught exchange with Christina of Markyate is also relayed here; cf. *The Life of Christina of Markyate*, ed. and trans. C.H. Talbot (OMT; Oxford, 1987), pp. 64-67. For the special status of Eynsham Abbey see *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 83-85 (no. 135), and Dom David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (Cambridge, 1940, repr. 1976) p. 402.

flattery of present prosperity to hide from you the inevitable end, so that when it comes it will bring endless adversity'.²³ Henry's comments on Robert Bloet - though their delivery is slightly more circumspect – carried precisely this message.

In its opening stages the letter is inward looking and familiar. Significantly, it is framed as an intimate reminiscence between friends. While expressions of intimacy were occasionally employed purely as a figurative device in the composition of letters, there is no reason to doubt that the familiarity Henry adopts is representative of a real and longstanding association between two canons. As the letter proceeds, continuing appeals are made to Walter's memories. The pool of experiences on which the letter draws were not Henry's alone, but also Walter's. Explicitly they are 'events that you and I have witnessed'. As this makes clear, by maintaining a strict reliance on first-hand experiences, the letter also finds its basis in a shared, and in a corporate history; it is tied unambiguously to the interests and concerns of the cathedral.²⁴

Following his reflections on Bishop Robert Bloet, Henry offers a detailed list of leading members of the cathedral chapter, in sequence of office, from the first group of clergy instituted by Bishop Remigius. All of them he claims to remember seeing as a child.²⁵

Because of the way it is arranged, the register offers a guide to the constitution of the cathedral chapter in the earliest period of its formation. Clearly it was not only intended to be a record of individual canons but an image of the institution. After the final revision of the letter, but still within his lifetime, Henry would witness important changes to the organization of the chapter, although it would be some time before this developed into a fixed hierarchy. Only in the early-thirteenth century (when the diocese of Moray decided to emulate the organization of Lincoln) was the constitutional structure fully set down; by which time the chapter was structured in accordance with the preeminent 'four-square' model, founded on the chief dignitaries of dean, precentor, chancellor, and treasurer. There were then the additional offices of subdean, succentor, and also eight archdeacons, who operated as the agents of the bishop, overseeing the ministry of parishes within designated territories.²⁶ There is a slender connexion

²³ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Lettres*, ed. J. Leclercq, H. Rochais and C.H. Talbot (Paris, 2001), vol. 1, pp. 224-231 (no. 64). Translation: *The Letters of St Bernard of Clairvaux*, ed. and trans. B.S. James (London, 1953), pp. 90-92 (no. 67).

²⁴ This was not limited to the opening part of the letter, which specifically concerns 'our church'. The illustrative examples, or *exempla*, presented within it have been seen as an indication of the cultural and political orbit inhabited by the cathedral chapter as a whole. So, for instance, it has been argued that a reference to the gruesome deposition of King Magnus IV of Norway exemplifies Lincoln's close cultural and economic relations with the Scandinavian world. *H. Hist. Ang.*, p. 607, n. 64. On Lincoln's trading links with Norway, in particular, see Hill, pp. 173-7.

²⁵ For what follows, see *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 588-593.

²⁶ '*Dignitates libertates et consuetudines*', dated 1214; *Statutes*, vol. 2 (1), pp. 136-142 (but this is 'a conflated text, incorporating additions made later in the century', Diana Greenway, 'The false *Institutio* of St Osmund', in *Tradition and Change*, ed. Diana Greenway, Christopher Holdsworth and Jane Sayers (Cambridge, 1985), p. 78, note 6).

between this model and the composition of the chapter outlined in Henry's register, but it is certainly not negligible.

Henry lists just three chief dignitaries put in place by Bishop Remigius. He gives the name of the first dean, Ralph, the first treasurer, Reiner, whose office, it is noted, was currently held by a kinsman (*nepos*) named Geoffrey, and he lists Guerno, the first cantor, whose successor Ralph still held office. This structure is remarkably close to the one described in the same period by Hugh the Chanter (*cantor*) at York, who also mentions, separately, a 'master of the schools' (*magister scholarum*).²⁷ Therefore it is significant that Henry records the name of Albinus of Angers in the opening part of the register, calling him 'my master' (*magister quippe meum*). Presumably Albinus had a role that was not exclusive to Henry, and it is reasonable to associate him with the office of *magister scholarum* (or *scolasticus*), which is also found at the cathedrals of Salisbury and London in the first half of the twelfth century. In each case it was seemingly a subordinate role among the chief dignitaries. In English secular chapters the functions of this office were later designated to the chancellor, who might have several masters operating under his supervision. That position emerged only gradually in England from the mid-twelfth century.²⁸ Henry would have known Hamo, the first chancellor at Lincoln, but he was in place long after the final revisions were made to the letter.²⁹

The order in which the names of chief dignitaries are arranged in the register may reflect their rank or status in chapter. Hugh the Chanter lists the dignitaries at York in the same sequence. It diverges from the model recorded in the early-thirteenth century where, rather than being placed second to the dean, the treasurer was preceded by precentor and chancellor. In this respect it is remarkable that special distinction is given to Hugh, 'a memorable man', who appears third in the register, after the treasurer and before the cantor. Hugh is simply entitled 'priest' (*sacerdos*), but, rather enigmatically, he is distinguished as 'the origin and, as it were, the foundation-stone of our church'. What this seminal role actually entailed is not explained. Generally it is hard to be clear about the specific duties attached to the offices that Henry mentions. Titles and functions varied at this time from one cathedral to the next, and shifted over the course of the twelfth century. Kathleen Edwards noted that a gradual change in the title normally given to the head of the choir, for example, where the term *praecentor* superseded *cantor*,

²⁷ Hugh the Chanter, *The Church of York*, pp. 18-19.

²⁸ Edwards, pp. 176-185. Greenway, 'The false *Institutio*', pp. 83-86.

²⁹ Hamo, styled '*magister*' or '*doctor*', was appointed by Bishop Alexander (so before 1148), but first appears with the title *cancellarius* in the 1150s; *Fasti*, vol. 3, p. 16; *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 2, pp. 19-20 (no. 331) and vol. 10, pp. 15-17 (no. 2681); *Danelaw Ch.*, p. 287 (no. 383).

probably came about ‘as a result of expanding functions and greater dignity’ (although the words could still be used interchangeably).³⁰

The first part of the register, dealing mainly with the chief dignitaries, does include some further names. Along with Albinus of Angers Henry refers to ‘his virtuous brothers, my friends’ (*consocii mei*), praising their profound learning, purest chastity, and supreme innocence. Perhaps they were fellow monks from Angers. Greenway has suggested the term ‘*consocii mei*’ may simply imply they were fellow students, but their role in the church, if a formal one, is not defined.³¹ Crucially two successors of Hugh the priest are also mentioned, Osbert and William. These were the names of the first holders of the eighth archdeaconry of Lincoln, which emerged only gradually, but, from the late-twelfth century, came to be known as the archdeaconry of Stow.

At first the holders of this office appeared without a designated territory and the title of archdeacon only started to be applied consistently after William took office. Osbert is called archdeacon just once c.1133, when he witnessed the deed of William, the constable of Bishop Alexander, augmenting the prebend held by his son Robert. The gift of two churches in Lincolnshire (South Carlton and Thurlby by Lincoln) was made in chapter, near to the time that the first version of the letter was drawn up, and notably Henry of Huntingdon was another witness to it.³² In view of the prominent, if unspecified, role given to Hugh and his successors in the register, and because they are distinguished completely from the other archdeacons, it seems likely that some discrete functions may have been attached to this office. A relatively small territory, covering the West Riding of Lindsey, was eventually assigned from part of the much larger archdeaconry of Lincoln, around the middle of the twelfth century. Henry describes the fourth archdeacon of Lincoln, Robert junior, as ‘the richest of all the archdeacons of England’, and, even after the creation of the archdeaconry of Stow, its spiritualities at the end of the thirteenth century (when such a comparison becomes possible), were assessed at more than double those of Norfolk, which was the next wealthiest in England.³³ Although Henry does not reveal any connexion between Hugh, Osbert, and William, or define their role in chapter, there is fairly good evidence to suggest that the office they held was hereditary and that the third in office, William son of Osbert, succeeded his father Osbert son of Hugh. In turn, William’s son, a canon named Philip son of William son of Osbert, the prebendary of Thorngate in the city of

³⁰ Edwards, p. 163.

³¹ H. *Hist. Ang.*, xxxi. All three were said to have been struck down by leprosy.

³² *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 2, pp. 253-254 (no. 553). Osbert’s successor William was also among the witnesses. For the dating see *Fasti*, vol. 3, p. 153.

³³ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 590-591, note 18 (from the *taxatio* of Pope Nicholas IV compiled c.1291, where Lincoln was assessed at £10,236 6s 8d, and Norfolk at £4,944 1s 7d). At this point the archdeaconry of Lincoln comprised Kesteven and Holland, while the archdeaconry of Stow covered the West Riding, and was the smallest of Lincoln’s eight archdeacons (assessed at £1,421 10s. 4d. in the *taxatio*).

Lincoln, was possibly the great-grandson of Hugh the priest. There is a sign that the distinctive functions of this office were linked to the conduct of divine worship at the cathedral in the fact that William was succeeded by the precentor, Roger of Almaria, who then held both offices simultaneously. Roger's successor, a kinsman named Ralph of Almaria, continued to hold the offices of precentor and archdeacon of Stow concurrently.³⁴

All office-holders, as far as we can tell, were canons of the cathedral, meaning they were assigned a place in chapter, a seat in choir, and a prebend. From the beginning of the thirteenth century at least, when there were 55 prebends at Lincoln, the chapter was able to support more canons than any other English secular cathedral. Under Bishop Robert Bloet the number of prebendaries had doubled to around 42, and it is not surprising that Henry shies away from recounting all of their names, 'lest I should be accused of verbosity'. But neither, significantly, does he claim to provide a comprehensive account of office-holders: 'I will recall a few of them', he says, 'with a few words'. Occasionally we can be sure that quite prominent dignitaries have been omitted altogether. This is revealed when names in the letter are compared with other contemporary records, such as the various supplementary records added to Lincoln's Chapter Bible - an imposing manuscript, identified as 'the earliest illustrated English Romanesque Bible', which was given to the cathedral by Nicholas, the first archdeacon of Huntingdon, Henry's father.³⁵ From this we learn that there is no place in the register for a treasurer named William, for example, who held office between Reiner and his kinsmen Geoffrey.³⁶ Only the first dean appears, and is distinguished, quite simply, as 'a revered priest'. Dean Simon Bloet is not named, although, as we shall see, he does feature elsewhere in the letter, and neither is Dean Philip of Harcourt, who was in office when the register was drawn up.³⁷

Broadly speaking, Henry's memorials of his fellow canons were positive and affectionate. All of them, he says, were 'well regarded for their learning and way of life'. A number are singled out for special praise. They include Hugh's successors Osbert and William; the first being 'an extremely affable and endearing man', the second, 'a young man of great natural talent'. Henry describes how Reiner, the first treasurer, 'was so pious that he often chanted psalms at the grave (*in tumulo*) that he had prepared for his death, and accustoming himself to his eternal home, he

³⁴ *Fasti*, vol. 3, pp. 12-13. This theory depends on identifying Osbert (who appears c.1133 as archdeacon) with Osbert son of Hugh (c.1132). A canon named Hugh, who held 6 bovates in the Lindsey survey, is presumably Hugh the priest. *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 9, pp. 255-262.

³⁵ This two-volume bible, the work of one late-eleventh-century hand, has been identified as the centrepiece of a group of locally made manuscripts which share a characteristic style of writing and decoration. C.M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts 1066-1190* (London, 1975), pp. 59-60 (no.13, pls. 30-33); for others in this group, *ibid*, pp. 15 & 92 (pls. 34-36 and 163-165), and R.M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library* (Woodbridge, 1989), MSS. 9, 13, 74-76, 90, 141, 155, 161.

³⁶ His name is listed alongside Henry's in the bible (Lincoln Cathedral, MS 1 f. 207^v); *Reg. Ant.* vol. 2, pp. 253-254 (no. 553); *Fasti*, vol. 3, p. 18.

³⁷ Philip was appointed Bishop of Bayeux by 1142. For both his and Simon Bloet's career see *Fasti*, vol. 3, pp. 7-8.

spent a long time praying that when he came to lie there unable to pray, he might be visited by God's loving-kindness'. In the context of the letter, it is hardly surprising that such a form of devotion, so demonstrably mindful of mortality, was wholly to be recommended; 'Happy the example of this distinguished man', Henry adds. Besides their piety, canons were also celebrated for their erudition. There is an allusion to the literary expertise of Walter archdeacon of Oxford, who is labelled 'the supreme rhetorician'. Geoffrey of Monmouth would portray him as 'skilled in the rhetorical arts and in foreign histories'.³⁸ Gilbert archdeacon of Buckingham is also called 'a man most polished in verse and prose, as well as in appearance'. And, like Gilbert, Henry's father Nicholas was noted for his exceptionally good looks: 'None was physically more handsome, and his looks did not belie his character'.

Yet discussion of the cathedral canons is not confined entirely to the opening chapter, and neither is it entirely complimentary. While his name is not included in the register, the story of 'our dean, Simon', the son of Bishop Robert Bloet, appears as a cautionary tale in the second chapter of the letter. The moral lesson his story is used to illustrate is summarized with an aphorism: 'Those who are brought up in rose-beds are surrounded by manure'. Simon appeared to have the world at his feet. He was raised in the royal household and set out on a promising career. Being quick-witted, eloquent, handsome, charming and showing discretion beyond his years, he managed to develop a close friendship with the king and was rewarded with offices at court. When still a youth (*inpubeis*) he received the highest office within the cathedral chapter. But Simon's upbringing had instilled him with too much pride and his sharp ascent came to an abrupt and ignominious end. He turned his exceptional talents on the king's attendants. Indeed, he liked to boast, 'I pass among courtiers like salt among live eels'; an analogy which suggests he inflicted torment on them. But, as Henry points out, he had not realized how truly he spoke, because, 'Just as salt is ruined by the eels' moisture, so he was destroyed by the whispering of all'. Simon's injudicious behaviour had consequences. He acquired enemies at court and was imprisoned, only managing to escape, by way of a sewer, into exile and misery. It is unlikely that Robert Bloet, who felt for himself the treacherous and dissembling nature of life at the royal court, lived to witness his son's downfall.³⁹

In contrast to his treatment of the chief dignitaries, Henry's record of fellow archdeacons is remarkably comprehensive. He gives the names of 24 men who had held an archdeaconry, or who currently held one. We know of only two archdeacons who are omitted. These were Osbert and William, who, as we have seen, were listed elsewhere. Before the creation of the

³⁸ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Kings of Britain*, pp. 4-5.

³⁹ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 592-595. Simon's final occurrence as dean seems to date to the vacancy between his father's death (10 January 1123) and Bishop Alexander's nomination (15 April 1123), *Reg. Ang-Nor.*, vol. 2, p. 184 (no. 1389).

archdeaconry of Stow, there were seven archdeacons. The bishopric stretched over a vast area of the kingdom, extending as far north as Scunthorpe and Grimsby, on the Humber estuary, down to the north bank of the River Thames, to Eton, Henley and Oxford. As Henry explains, the territorial division of the archdeacons at this stage broadly corresponded to the counties situated within the diocesan boundaries: Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire (and Rutland), Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and, finally, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire, which together comprised the archdeaconry of Huntingdon.

The particularly complex and shifting boundaries of Henry's own archdeaconry are discussed only briefly. It is observed that, around the time that his father Nicholas died, when the smallest English diocese of Ely was created, in 1109, Cambridgeshire was removed from the diocese of Lincoln. Elsewhere in the *Historia* Henry makes clear that part of Hertfordshire fell within the Liberty of St Albans. Although the abbey and its lands technically lay inside the diocese, they were effectively exempt from episcopal jurisdiction: 'The abbot of that place has always had the privilege of exercising pontifical right over the priests as well as the laity in his land'.⁴⁰ These rights were confirmed in 1163 after Bishop Robert Chesney made a failed attempt to subject the abbey to his authority.⁴¹ A larger part of Hertfordshire lay under the supervision of 'the curiously compounded archdeaconry of Middlesex'.⁴² In spite of these peculiar territorial constraints, which meant that Henry supervised three geographically distinct areas, at the end of the thirteenth century the spiritualities accrued from Huntingdon ranked it fourth wealthiest of the eight archdeacons of Lincoln. At this point there were five deaneries in Huntingdonshire overseeing about 100 parishes (Huntingdon, Leighton Bromswold, St Ives, St Neots, and Yaxley), and four deaneries in Hertfordshire overseeing about 68 parishes (Baldock, Berkhamsted, Hertford, and Hitchin).⁴³

Henry's archidiaconal duties regularly brought him into contact with religious communities in and around the area under his supervision, particularly the ancient and powerful Benedictine monasteries of the Fenlands, such as Ramsey, Peterborough, Ely, and Thorney. From the sources on which he drew it is evident that Henry must have enjoyed some access to the written materials they held; relying on them for much of his research, and perhaps even for aspects of production. As with the first, the final chapter incorporates a long inventory of names,

⁴⁰ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 624-625.

⁴¹ *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 1, pp. 146-148 (no. 234); J.E. Sayers, 'Papal privileges for St Albans abbey and its dependencies', *The Study of Medieval Records: Essays in Honour of Kathleen Major*, ed. D.A. Bullough and R.L. Story (Oxford, 1971), pp. 57-84, esp. pp. 64-65.

⁴² A. Hamilton Thompson, 'Diocesan Organization in the Middle Ages: Archdeacons and Rural Deans', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. 29 (1943), p. 165.

⁴³ R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 235-236.

this time dealing with ‘the leading men (*proceribus*) of our realm’, which includes a complete list of the abbots of Ramsey and Peterborough from the end of the eleventh century.

This additional record of religious houses in the immediate locality of the archdeaconry reminds us that the personal ties binding Henry to the clergy of Lincoln Cathedral were coloured by the peculiar circumstances of his working life, and, more specifically, by a slightly displaced working environment. A notable feature of the *Historia* as a whole is not simply the pride and affection expressed for the city of Lincoln and the cathedral, but for the particular area under his supervision, and for the town of Huntingdon, which, he maintained, was far and away superior to neighbouring Bedford and Buckingham.⁴⁴ Occupying the office of archdeacon, as a married secular cleric, Henry would have been routinely absent from Lincoln. He observed the changing personnel of the cathedral from a removed and relatively privileged position; enjoying a certain independence of means and presiding over a sizeable, independent *familia* of his own.⁴⁵ For much of the time Henry would have been based at his manor to the north-east of Huntingdon at Little Stukeley, where he built the parish church dedicated to St Martin. In one poem he refers to the elegance of his house, estate, and bedchamber, of his orchards and garden. All contrasted, he said self-effacingly, to his own inelegance.⁴⁶ But, while he would rarely have resided at Lincoln, the letter to Walter is evidence of his keen awareness of the membership and organization of the cathedral chapter, as well as a compelling symbol of the spirit of collegiality that existed among its senior office-holders at this early phase in its history. The sense of affinity this produced was central to the argument of the letter. At the end of the register Walter is implored, ‘Turn over in your mind all those whom we saw in the old days on the right of the choir, and on the left. Not one of them now survives. They loved what we love, desired what we desire, hoped what we hope, and death has consigned them all to oblivion’.

In one sense the register of canons, and the list of powerful figures in the final chapter, steps beyond the bounds of memorial writing because of the decision to incorporate the names of the living along with the dead. Towards the end of the letter an explanation is provided. Henry contends that just as the dead have come to nothing, so too the living will, or in some ways already have, come to nothing: ‘for this present life is nothing’. The reader is implored to hold in

⁴⁴ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 348-349.

⁴⁵ A broad idea of its size and composition can be gleaned from references to the household staff of Henry’s successor Nicholas de Sigillo, in the witness lists of his *acta*, which show that it comprised a personal chaplain, several able clerics, some of whom had pursued higher education, as well as a group of lay attendants, servants and guards (at one point apparently numbering 13 men); *Twelfth-Century English Archidiaconal and Vice-Archidiaconal Acta*, edited by B.R. Kemp (Woodbridge, 2001), xlix-l.

⁴⁶ Found in the poem *In seipsum*, H *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 802-803.

contempt the visible, sensible world of the flesh, and ‘seek the life after life, since in this life there is no life’.⁴⁷

In elaborating on such themes the final chapter reveals Henry’s fundamental perspective on the practice of remembrance from a position of faith. In order to enforce a sense of the world’s vapidness, he reflects on the fragile basis of memory. Words and actions vanish instantaneously, he says, and the memory of them can not be retained indefinitely. ‘For whatever we do, whatever we say, once it is done or said, it dies immediately. It is true that the memory of them like that of the dead survives for a while, but when that perishes it is like a second death, in which all our deeds and sayings are totally annihilated’. Greenway has observed that these reflections seem ‘fundamentally unhistorical, even anti-historical’ in tone.⁴⁸ Certainly it is an argument which is magnified by Henry’s rhetorical affectations. ‘Where is what I did yesterday? Where is what I said? They have come to nothing. Where is what I did and said on this day last year? They have been swallowed up by the everlasting death of oblivion’.

The theme, which is pursued at greater length in the Epilogue, closely parallels the deliberations of Boethius on the futility of worldly glory and of ‘public acclaim’ (*fama*). It is a line of reasoning which relies on the postulation of a theory about the extent of time. With some foresightedness, Henry addresses readers in the third millennium: ‘Consider us, who at this moment seem to be renowned, because, miserable creatures, we think highly of ourselves’. In view of their present state, he asks, ‘what gain has it been to us to have been great or famous?’⁴⁹ Henry based this appeal to the long-distant future on the teaching of Herbert Losinga, who he had heard argue that the Christian era would necessarily last longer than the pre-Christian era: ‘truth will endure much longer than symbol, light than shadow, the thing signified than what signifies it, the time of grace than the time of law’. It was not a commonly professed view, and it directly challenged those who lived ‘in daily and trembling expectation of the end of the world’. In some ways it was at odds with prevalent opinions about the extent of time, which informed the shape of commemorative practices: ‘The day on which you die is for you the end of the world’.⁵⁰

Henry’s comments in the final chapter build continually on derision of the nobility, whose fast fading memory, he acknowledges, may be ‘tedious to hear’. Consideration of the vanity of worldly reputation and of public acclaim in *The Consolation of Philosophy* declares the emptiness and worthlessness of a noble title and the commonality of the human race. It is

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 614-617.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, lxii.

⁴⁹ *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 496-499.

⁵⁰ *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 496-499; the passage attributed to Herbert Losinga has no parallels, and is printed in, *Life, Letters and Sermons of Bishop Herbert de Losinga*, ed. E. Goulburn and H. Symonds (Oxford, 1878), vol. 1, pp. 371-2.

echoed in Henry's poem *Contempt of the Visible* (*De contemptu visibilium*): 'The spirit teaches a lesson of equality: it makes all the same equal to all: 'you have one Father', it says, God Himself. The image of this father is drawn in your faces: this image lets you dispense with forefathers and fathers. Hence race, hence good birth, remains equal for all men'. Henry's roll-call of the nobility, in particular, argues that the endeavour in which he is engaged is a fruitless pursuit, 'They who were so powerful and seemed to merit eager scrutiny, are now not fit to be mentioned'. The argument is paradoxical. Names are set down in an attempt to argue that names will not endure: 'scarcely any of them is remembered. All memory of them has begun to fade, and soon there will be none' It is a line of reasoning that elicits some self-referential ridicule: 'Even the sheepskin on which their names are inscribed seems totally ruined (*perdita videtur omnino*), nor do we find eyes that wish to read it. This letter is a witness to the names of the most powerful and of all those most worthy of remembrance, yet there may be no one, or scarcely anyone, to read it'.⁵¹

In connection with the main proposition of the letter, the practice of remembrance, and specifically the recollection of the figures it presents, is posed, above all, as a devotional tool, intended to provoke and instil the awareness of a spiritual truth. Henry engages the reader in order to evoke a desire for mortification of the flesh, the rejection of the world: 'let us make every effort to seek what will endure, what will be unshakeable, what will be distinct from dreams – indeed, what will be truly valuable – for these present things are nothing'. Yet the elucidation of this theme, which would have been a wholly familiar one to the body of canons, also created the opportunity to conserve for posterity the names and offices of the new foundation. Despite the emphasis which it places on the instability of memories, therefore, the extensive register of officers at the cathedral is a sign of the value invested in the preservation of a detailed institutional record. In bringing together these seemingly opposed intentions, one abstract, the other concrete, Henry crafted a thorough and engaging survey of the senior clergy at the cathedral, portraying its strong personalities and affording some impression of its constitutional formation.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, pp. 608-17.

EPITAPHS

Recent scholarship has done much to advance Henry of Huntingdon's reputation and has helped to flesh out the details of his life and work, but, most unexpectedly, it has also awoken fresh interest in his composition of Latin verse. This development is owed, in part, to Greenway's edition of the *Historia Anglorum*, in which questions about the attribution of historical poems embedded within the narrative were largely resolved. This was due to the incorporation of the final version of the text (ending in 1154). Here, for the most part, original poems are clearly assigned to Henry.¹ The edition also included two books of epigrams, mainly modelled on Martial, which are found in a group of manuscripts witnessing the fifth version of the text (ending in 1149).² One of these had never before been published. As is clear from the preface, these two books of 'serious epigrams', explicitly dealing with religious topics, once formed part of a larger work, where they were teamed with six books of less weighty, or 'jovial epigrams': 'you wondered at my wit', Henry exclaims, 'now wonder at my piety'.³ The work was one of three major poetic compositions addressed to the archdeacon of Leicester. With the exception of the two books of epigrams, all these were thought lost. But, in light of the subsequent discovery of another of these compositions, *An English Garden* (*Anglicanus ortus*), which is a compilation on the properties of plants, spices, and gems, it is suggested that Henry should really now be seen 'primarily as a poet'.⁴

Eight epitaphs can be securely attributed to Henry, and three of these pertain to fellow churchmen. In these poems, commemorating Nicholas archdeacon of Huntingdon, who died in 1110, Bishop Robert Bloet, who died in 1123, and Walter archdeacon of Leicester, whose death is dated (by the earliest version of the letter) to c.1134, Henry formally credited and honoured three prominent figures in his early life. It is possible that his connexion to each of the subjects stretched back to the period before he took up office at Lincoln, but the relationships they signify correspond with a network of obligations, and a specific set of social bonds, that were

¹ The attributions are possible because the final version of the text revealed several alterations to introductory comments, changing the third person into the first, so that 'it is said', for instance, reads 'I have said'. Four poems, lacking such clear-cut statements, are nevertheless attributable on the basis of context and style (two are epitaphs: one for Bishop Robert Bloet, the other for King Henry I); see H. *Hist. Ang.*, cviii.

² These belong to the so-called 'spiraculi' group, *ibid.*, cliv-clv.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 778-779.

⁴ Diana Greenway, 'Henry of Huntingdon as poet: the *De herbis* rediscovered', *Medium Aevum*, vol. 74 (2005), p. 329; published in Henry of Huntingdon, *Anglicanus ortus: A Verse Herbal of the Twelfth Century*, ed. and trans. Winston Black (Toronto, 2012); not containing the section on gems for which see *idem*, 'Henry of Huntingdon's Lapidary Rediscovered and His *Anglicanus ortus* Reassembled', *Mediaeval Studies*, vol. 68 (2006), pp. 43-87.

essential to the organization and development of the cathedral chapter. These were the bonds of kinship, patronage, and friendship. The three epitaphs are concise (consisting of 2, 8, and 16 lines respectively) and represent a very small component of Henry's effusive poetic achievements. However in a limited way they do exemplify the versatility of Henry's verse composition and also reveal another distinctive and creative dimension to his memorialization of fellow clergymen.

While being rooted firmly in the art of tomb inscription, the epitaphic mode was frequently adapted in this period to suit a range of different contexts. Like his contemporaries, including, most notably, Godfrey of Winchester, who wrote epitaphs on Cnut, Emma, and Edward the Confessor, Henry would employ this poetic form to memorialize politically important historical figures, as well as contemporaries. In such cases they might be described as literary exercises, or even as vehicles for political commentary.⁵ Another significant medium through which epitaphs were transmitted, and widely circulated, was in mortuary rolls. As they were carried between ecclesiastical institutions verses of commendation were often attached, alongside assurances of, and appeals for, prayers for the souls of the departed. At Lincoln Cathedral an 18-line epitaph was entered on the roll for Matilda abbess of Caen, for example, the daughter of William the Conqueror, who died in 1113.⁶ Chroniclers would also serve as important intermediaries through whom epitaphs were amassed and conveyed. But, unlike Orderic Vitalis, who exemplifies this trend well, Henry only rarely included the work of other poets in the *Historia*. It is notable, however, that where they do feature they are mainly epitaphs. William Clito's epitaph by Walo the Versifier is of particular significance, as it presents the only known example of this poet's work.⁷ Three more are taken from Bede.⁸

Of course epitaphs were also produced for more limited funereal contexts, and there is some likelihood that the epitaphs Henry composed for cathedral clergy, particularly those for his father and for Robert Bloet - both of whom we know were buried at Lincoln - may have been first produced in connexion with a funeral ceremony, perhaps even serving as adornments for a grave. The prospect of this is strengthened when we review the place of the poetry and of the epitaphs, most especially, within the *Historia*.

⁵ Godfrey of Winchester offers a significant model for Henry's poetic ambitions. Both produced substantial epigrammatic works in the style of Martial, featuring some of his poetic figures, such as Zoilus, Tullus, and Atticus, see A.G. Rigg, *A history of Anglo-Latin literature 1066-1422* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 18-19. For Godfrey's epitaphs, see *The Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the Twelfth Century*, ed. T. Wright, vol. 2 (RS, 1872), pp. 148-155.

⁶ *Recueil des Rouleaux des morts*, ed. Jean Dufour, (Paris, 2005), vol. 1, pp. 416-417 (no. 43)

⁷ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 836-838.

⁸ These are for Gregory the Great (significantly rearranged), Augustine, and Ceadwalla, king of the Gewisse; *ibid.*, pp. 160-161, 164-165, and 218-219.

Henry excelled as a versifier, and there is little doubt that he first earned a reputation for himself through poetry before embarking upon his manual of English history.⁹ For the most part, his poetic compositions, including the epitaphs, are products of the earlier stages of his literary career, although he would continue to revise and redraft them, as he would the prose narrative. All the major poetic works attributed to him are enumerated in the letter to Walter, and characterized collectively as ‘the writings of my youth’.

Six of the original epitaphs were included, at least in some form, in the earliest versions of the *Historia*, and may well have predated it. Of these, three are clustered together in Book Five, ‘The Danish Wars’. Each of them extols the virtues of an exceptional monarch: King Alfred, Ethelfleda ‘Lady of the Mercians’, and King Edgar. The others are in the seventh book, ‘The Kingdom of the Normans’, where Henry announces that he will begin to describe events of which he had some personal knowledge. These commemorate Henry’s father Nicholas, Queen Matilda of Scotland, the first consort of Henry I, and Robert Bloet.

Two other original epitaphs were added in the third version of the text along with the letter to Walter. One, for King Henry I, appeared within the historical narrative, at the end of Book Seven. The other, for Walter, which is the longest that Henry produced, stands alone from the rest because, like the letter, it is exceptionally intimate in tone and expression. Henry emphasizes a feeling of disassociation from his younger self: now he is ‘a wholly different man’, for, with Walter’s death, ‘Half of me has died, my ornament and light have perished’.¹⁰ The only comparable example of such poignant introspection in a verse composition is the penitential poem, entitled ‘Henry’s prayer on his death, or after his death’ (*Oratio Henrici in morte vel post mortem*), which concludes the two books of epigrams, where he confesses to being ‘held back by the allures of lust’ and begs forgiveness. Here Henry could be said to prefigure the practice observed by cathedral canons in the Late Middle Ages of creating memorial plaques adorned with autobiographical verses.¹¹ In the third version of the narrative, where these last two epitaphs were added, major additions were also made to the earlier compositions on Alfred and Edgar.¹²

⁹ A similar trajectory is proposed for Orderic Vitalis, for example, whose ‘earliest writings may have been occasional verses, particularly epitaphs’, Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. Marjorie Chibnall, vol. 1 (OMT, 1969), p. 28.

¹⁰ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 618-619.

¹¹ ‘*Me rapuit, me detinuit blandita libido*’, *ibid.*, pp. 824-825. Robert Sanderson (Bishop of Lincoln 1660-1663) made a record of many inscriptions he found in the seventeenth century, most of which can be dated to the late-thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Pilgrims could have read the inscriptions, which, besides biographical information and requests for prayers, included short verses reflecting on the subject of worldly vanity. They were ‘original compositions on familiar themes displaying their author’s skill in Latin verse’. Robert Sanderson (corrected by Sir W. Dugdale), *Lincoln Cathedral: an exact copy of all the Ancient Monumental Inscriptions as they stood in 1641*. See David Lepine, *A brotherhood of canons serving God: English secular cathedrals in the later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 135-136.

¹² The final couplet of King Alfred’s epitaph, a prayer of commendation, was added at this point, and the epitaph for Edgar was expanded from a single couplet to 8 lines, H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 298-299 and pp. 322-323.

A number of the original poems used to punctuate the annalistic narrative appear in separate collections. A variant reading of Robert Bloet's epitaph is contained in the first book of epigrams. The epitaph for Queen Matilda, who was an important patron of literature, is also mentioned in the newly discovered composition *Anglicanus ortus*, in which Henry describes her cultivation of basil plants - her habit of keeping them outside during the day (to receive light) and bringing them indoors in the evening (for protection and to enjoy their scent). With this aside readers are directed to Matilda's 'funeral song provided in my book of epigrams', which presumably refers to one of the books of 'jovial epigrams'.¹³ While it is conceivable that this could be a way of marketing a lesser known poetic composition above the more popular *Historia*, it would otherwise suggest that the epitaph predated the historical narrative. These two epitaphs for Robert Bloet and Queen Matilda are also included in a small, separate collection of Henry's historical poems (Bodleian Library MS Laud lat. 86, fo. 133^{r-v}).¹⁴

Although the epitaph for Walter appears to be tied inextricably to the context of the letter, a reasonably well-founded premise that some of the historical poems were composed before the narrative in which they are preserved would link the epitaphs for Nicholas and Robert Bloet more firmly to the occasion of their funerals, and so to earlier points in Henry's career. In the case of the epitaph for his father to around the time he first took office. Notably Robert Bloet's epitaph forms part of an intense concentration of poetry within the seventh book associated with a series of key events leading up to the accession of Bishop Alexander. There are five or six occasional poems corresponding to incidents in the six years before work on the *Historia* would have begun.¹⁵ A number of these do seem to be tailored for particular situations. Most obviously the poem celebrating the beauty of Adeliza of Louvain, the second consort of Henry I, closes with a direct appeal for patronage: 'I was not ashamed to give my modest praise to great qualities, so be not ashamed, I pray, to be my lady'.¹⁶ Notably a panegyric celebrating the splendour and generosity of Bishop Alexander addresses 'the people of Lincoln', and could have been intended to mark an event at the cathedral, such as the bishop's enthronement. It is

¹³ '*Anglorum Matillis honor, decus et dolor orbis, Cuius funereum mea dant epigramata carmen*'; *Anglicanus Ortus*, Black, pp. 82-83. This reference is one of the few means of dating the work. King Henry I is addressed at one point, indicating that it was composed between the death of the queen, in 1118, and that of the king, 1135; *ibid*, pp. 10-13.

¹⁴ The epitaph by Walo the Versifier and Henry's poem on the Battle of Brémule are also included in this collection; *H. Hist. Ang.*, clviii-clix.

¹⁵ These events are: the death of Queen Matilda (1118); the Battle of Brémule (1119); the sinking of the White Ship (1120); the marriage of Adeliza of Louvain to Henry I (1121); the death of Robert Bloet (1123); and perhaps the appointment of Bishop Alexander (1123). The last is placed with the bishop's journey to Rome in 1125. The hypothesis is argued at length by John Gillingham, 'Henry of Huntingdon in his time (1135) and place (between Lincoln and the royal court)', in *Gallus Anonymus and his Chronicle in the Context of Twelfth-Century Historiography in the Perspective of the Latest Research*, ed. K. Stopka (Krakow, 2010), pp. 157-172.

¹⁶ Gillingham links this poem to the royal marriage at Windsor (January 1121) or the preceding Christmas at Brampton (2 miles from Huntingdon). Henry is the only chronicler to report the crown-wearing at Pentecost in London - another possibility; *ibid*, p. 164; *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 466-469.

included slightly later on in the narrative, however, under the year 1125, when Alexander made the first of three visits to Rome during his episcopate: ‘O people of Lincoln, previously great, now forever greatest, may such a man as this long be the protector of your honour’.¹⁷

While it is likely that a number of the historical poems were composed before the *Historia*, Henry makes special efforts to integrate lines of verse seamlessly into the prose narrative. An outstanding example is the displacement of an astronomical event described in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, where it is moved to the end of the annal: ‘In this year a comet appeared in an unusual way: for rising in the east it climbed into the sky and was then seen to go backwards’. This introduces the conceit of the epitaph composed in honour of the first archdeacon of Huntingdon: ‘The star of the clergy falls, the light of Nicholas fades: may the falling star of the clergy shine in the citadel of God’.¹⁸ Henry asks that, in exchange for his labours, readers would pray for the repose of his father’s soul (*Anima eius in pace requiescat. Amen*). Such meticulous integration was not always carried out or felt necessary. The poem on the White Ship disaster, for example, which sunk near the port of Barfleur on 25 November 1120, depicts a ‘wild sea’ and ‘dense cloud on the swelling sea’, while the adjoining prose account states that conditions were good, ‘the sea was very calm and there was no wind’.¹⁹

Of course the historical poems Henry composed are only preserved because of the integral place they are given within the narrative. The work was an ideal medium through which to publicize them more widely. Although in the majority of cases their incorporation can be explained by the way in which they complement and enliven the prose account, in the case of the three epitaphs commemorating Lincoln clergymen, their inclusion may be regarded distinctly as a symbol of Henry’s affection and esteem for the subjects themselves.

The three epitaphs vary considerably in form. They point, in a modest way, to the variety of Henry’s compositional technique. This was more than a symptom of his ingenuity. The range of topics, themes, and modes of versification, exhibited in his poetry are indicative of his immersion within a particular cultural setting, one which was characterized by poetic innovation and competitive exchange. It was especially informed and shaped by a close, continuous interaction with other cathedrals and monasteries not only in England, but also on the continent, particularly in Northern France. Thus it is possible that the model of female rulership embodied in Henry’s epitaph for Ethelfleda, ‘a conqueror of nature’, drew inspiration from verses attached to Matilda of Caen’s mortuary roll, which he is likely to have seen at Lincoln. The poem builds upon the

¹⁷ ‘*Lincolie gens magna prius, nunc maxima semper, / Talis ut iste diu sit uobis tutor honoris*’ (vv. 10-11), *H. Hist. Ang.*, p. 474.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 456-459.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 466-467.

introductory statement that ‘in praise of her wonderful gifts some call her not only lady, or queen, but even king’; arguing that she was indeed ‘worthy of a man’s title’ (*nomine digna uiri*). The idea of a woman taking on a typically male role is also evident in the epitaph for Queen Matilda, who was actively engaged in political life. Power did not make Matilda proud, Henry observes, and beauty did not make her weak.²⁰

Henry’s accomplished participation in this cultural sphere is also signalled in the intricate and inventive use of metre and rhyme in his verse. He is noted for displaying a particular versatility and imagination in the field of prosody.²¹ This quality can be glimpsed in the brief epitaph composed for his father, an elegiac couplet whose tightly paralleled structure employs heavy alliteration and duplicated phrasing (*anaphora*), within a ‘single-sound’ (*unisoni*), or four-part, rhyme scheme.²²

*Stella cadit cleri, splendor marcet Nicholai,
Stella cadens cleri splendeat arce Dei.*

Among the most complex rhyme schemes exhibited in Henry’s work is that found in his penitential poem, where every line is divided into three rhyming parts (*trinini salientes*). Remarkably, a similarly elaborate form (*dactyllici tripartiti*) was used by Bernard of Cluny over the course of three books (totalling 2,966 lines), in his *De contemptu mundi*.²³

Henry would have been exposed to this learned environment from a tender age in the bishop’s household, and at Lincoln. The name of Henry’s master at the cathedral, Albinus of Angers (we are told no more about him), implies some connexion to the important school at Angers which was headed by Marbod of Rennes, who addressed a series of poems to Robert Bloet.²⁴ Using a classic routine of imitation, Henry took the first line of King Edgar’s epitaph from Marbod’s epitaph for Charlemagne. The opening couplet of Robert Bloet’s epitaph, which presents the idea that, because of his lasting fame, the bishop, though dead, will not die, borrows the phrase ‘*non obiturus obit*’ from an epitaph for Berengar of Tours by Hildebert of Lavardin, another important influence on Henry’s poetry. In the separate collection of Henry’s historical

²⁰ Rouleaux des morts, Dufour, vol. 1, pp. 392-502, esp. p. 447 (no. 114). H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 308-309 and pp. 462-463. Lois, L. Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland: A Study in Medieval Queenship* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 73-102 (Ch. 4). Cf. the epitaph for Adela of Blois, *Hildebertus cenomannensis episcopus: carmina minora*, ed. A. Brian Scott (Leipzig, 2001), p. 5 (no. 15).

²¹ Rigg, *Anglo-Latin literature*, pp. 36-40; *idem*, ‘Henry of Huntingdon’s Metrical Experiments’, *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, vol. 1 (1991), pp. 60-72.

²² The 14-line epitaph for Alfred is another good example, where bisyllabic tail-rhyme is employed. This epitaph was singled out by the previous editor Arnold as an example of Henry’s talent for hexameters. He commented on the ‘vigour and good taste’ with which it was written, *Historia Anglorum*, (RS), Arnold, lxiv.

²³ Bernard of Cluny, *De contemptu mundi*, xiii.

²⁴ PL, vol. 171, cols. 1717-36. H. *Hist. Ang.*, xxxv-xxxvi.

poems found in the Bodleian manuscript there is a slightly different construction (*non moriturus obit*).²⁵

In light of the accusations levelled against Bishop Robert Bloet, and the wider criticism he received, the idea which introduces the epitaph, that, on account of his ‘enduring public acclaim’ (*fama superstes*), the bishop will not die, may take on a slightly different reading.²⁶ Yet the opening accolade followed a prescribed pattern, in which tribute is first paid to the good reputation of a subject, comparable to the ‘everlasting name’ evoked at the start of King Alfred’s epitaph, and, on the surface at least, this composition is highly formulaic in its sentiments and structure. There follows a summary of the bishop’s virtues and a final clause identifying the date of his death: ‘On the tenth day of January he departed the dreams of the deceitful world, and waking sees truth eternally’.²⁷

Of course this mode of composition directly contrasted with that of the letter to Walter, which was intended to highlight themes of corruption and transience. The epitaph was designed to accentuate notions of propriety and permanence. Regardless of this difference in form, there is a close resemblance between the images of leadership found in the letter and those found in the epitaph. When Henry defends the bishop’s reputation in the letter, he says Bloet fostered the careers of his men, ‘building up many and pulling down no one’, and was pictured as a ‘father of the fatherless’. He ‘was looked upon as everyone’s father and god’. These references to the bishop’s patronal support, employing an image of fictive kinship, correspond to sentiments expressed in the epitaph, which also stress the strong protection he offered his retinue: ‘He did not wish to lord it over his men, but strove to be their father, always in adversity a wall and armour to his men’. The line is rearranged in the book of epigrams. The militaristic image is removed.²⁸ The metaphor of the bishop’s paternal direction, evoking ideas of discipline and authority, was moderated, and complimented by a reference to his maternal traits, a capacity for nurture and affection: ‘He did not wish to lord it over his men, but strove to be their father, and was in his heart, so to speak, a mother to them’. The conflation of paternal and maternal imagery was not uncommon in the characterization of male religious superiors.²⁹

²⁵ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 322-323 (cf. PL vol. 171, col. 1726), & pp. 470-471 for Edgars epitaph, and for Robert Bloet’s pp. 790-791 (cf. *Hildeburtus*, ed. Scott, pp. 7-9 (no. 18)).

²⁶ It is even possible that this phrase subversively echoes comments from Boethius on the vain pursuit of glory, which, as has been noted, provided an important model for the letter to Walter: ‘*Signat superstes fama tenuis pauculis / Inane nomen litteris*’; Boethius, *De consolatione Philosophiae*, 2. 7m. 17-18.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 470-471 and 790-791.

²⁸ This phrase might allude to Robert Bloet’s victory in battle. He led the troops besieging Tickhill (Yorks.) in 1102; John of Worcester, vol. 3, pp. 100-101.

²⁹ For the prevalence of this analogy and the male and female stereotypes on which they were based see Caroline Walker Bynum, ‘Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother’, *Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 70 (1977), pp. 257-284.

The formality and deference which typifies the epitaph for Robert Bloet is quite different to the familiar and companionable tone of the epitaph added to the letter for Walter. This acquaintance is envisaged in reference to the art of mutual beneficence, the facility ‘to give so freely that no gift needed to be asked’. In essence the epitaph is an exercise in *amplificatio*, enlarging on one theme without repetition, although the idea of generosity being Walter’s ‘habitual disposition’ (*mens assueta uiri*), is used as a refrain for the composition to build upon (at the start of lines 7, 9, 11 and 13). Crucially, this relationship was also figured in connexion with learned exchanges, and with literary gifts. The opening of the epitaph is revealing because it includes a short list of Henry’s poetic achievements. Indeed, the main conceit of the poem partly serves to compliment, or counterbalance, the remarkable generosity shown in offering these poetic works: ‘I, Henry, who bear garlands to you, first brought epigrams, next the contests of love, and then herbs’.³⁰ It is notable that when Henry wrote the epitaph for Walter, he had already completed all three of his major poetic compositions. Even if he may have revisited them subsequently, the poem does therefore mark a real turning point in his literary output. After the third version of the *Historia*, it appears, no further epitaphs were attempted.

Where we find professions of maturity in the letter to Walter, or a determination to leave frivolity behind in order to take on weightier subjects, as expressed at the beginning of the books of serious epigrams, it seems Henry was not simply employing a literary convention, but signalling a substantive change in the way that he conceived of himself as a writer. There was possibly a sense in which the composition of brief occasional verses, particularly as autonomous compositions, was the province of younger men.³¹ Nevertheless it is in the historical poems of Book Ten, which covers ‘The Present Time’, that the language of elegy is most forcefully engaged to complement the prose narrative. The first poem, for example, lamenting ‘my country’s impious deeds’, vividly portrays the destitution associated with the Anarchy, and its grieving victims, ‘Their flesh consumed, hunger fills those who mourn; skin and bones breathe out their wandering souls’.³² Two further poems, both appealing to the future king, Henry II, emulate Lucan by personifying the country (*Anglia*) in a state of physical exhaustion, at last rejuvenated by the prospect of a new king, and a new dawn: ‘England, long numbed by mortal

³⁰ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 618-619.

³¹ Verses attached to mortuary rolls could be composed by quite junior members of the community. Ralph of Caen, for example, canon of Lincoln from the late 1130s (and subdean from c.1161 until the early 1180s), may have composed a poem in the roll of Vitalis, abbot of Savigny (*d.* 1122), as a young student at St Paul’s Cathedral (signed *Versus Radulphi filii Fulcredi Cadomensis*); *Rouleaux des morts*, Dufour, vol. 1, p. 585 (no. 204); Richard Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Turnhout, 1997), p. 445; *Fasti*, vol. 3, pp. 21, 50, and 80.

³² H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 724-727.

chill, now you grow warm, revived by the heat of a new sun'.³³ This, the final poem of Book Ten, appears in its first line, announcing the death of King Stephen, to subvert a conventional epitaphic opening: 'The king has died, but England, although without a king, is not without peace'. While Henry seems to have composed much less poetry in the later stages of his career it was a form to which he returned to mark the conclusion of his narrative.

As we have seen, the epitaphs for Lincoln clergy can be regarded as expressions of Henry's allegiances and as formal evocations of three specific types of relationship that were of critical importance to the social fabric of the cathedral chapter in the first half of the twelfth century. Of course Henry's especially close, lifelong involvement with the cathedral resulted from an inherited office and from his upbringing within the bishop's *familia*, and it hard to say how common or exceptional his experience was at the time. Although, in some ways, the circumstances supporting the nature of his personal relationships would be altered over the course of the twelfth century with the abolition of hereditary offices and more rigorous enforcement of clerical celibacy, relations of kinship continued to play a crucial role in the organization of the cathedral chapter. While the close personal ties which many canons had to the cathedral put them in a unique position to critically assess the bishops, by far the best expression of this is found in the *Historia Anglorum*.

³³ *Ibid*, pp. 776-777. The mode is also used the obituary of William Rufus. On account of his repressive rule: 'England was miserably stifled and could not breathe'; *ibid*, pp. 446-449.

‘THE CUSTOM OF MOSES’

Particularly in its earliest form, the *Historia Anglorum* offered a symbol of the enthusiasm and sophistication of its patron, Bishop Alexander the Magnificent. As the epithet suggests, Alexander was an energetic and lavish sponsor, whose largess reached far beyond the field of historical literature. His support for the religious orders was extensive.¹ Much of the spectacular Western façade of Lincoln Cathedral is vivid testament to his architectural patronage. Henry also alludes to the fine workmanship of the castles built at Newark and Sleaford,² and composed a panegyric in which the bishop’s generous spirit is celebrated.³ It is striking, therefore, to read Alexander’s obituary, where his motives are coolly dissected, and where his achievements are put in the shade when weighed against their cost.

The account is brief and damning. By issuing copious gifts and offering patronage, Henry says, the bishop showed himself to be ‘a far-sighted man’ (*uir prudens*). This is why he received the title ‘*magnificus*’ from the Papal Curia. But when he had reached the point at which the amount he gave out exceeded his income, he would carry on disbursing more and more, and tried to settle the difference by coaxing payment out of his men. The root cause of this reckless display of wealth was an arrogant desire to outdo others. Echoing a maxim found in the letter to Walter, about those who are raised in the lap of luxury, it is argued that Alexander acquired this trait in childhood, when he was featherbedded by his uncle, the bishop of Salisbury.⁴

We might detect some private acrimony simmering beneath these very public remarks. As well as being a beneficiary of the bishop’s patronage, as his archdeacon, Henry was no doubt among those who would have been leant upon to cover the bishop’s shortfalls. The immediate context of this critique could also suggest a degree of political expediency. It was placed at the end of the fifth and penultimate version of the *Historia*, shortly before the announcement of Robert Chesney’s election to the see of Lincoln, in December 1148. All parties gave their joyful

¹ Alexander founded two Cistercian houses, at Thame (Oxon.) and Louth (Lincs.). On the site of the former cathedral church at Dorchester he founded a house of Augustinian canons, and he also gave support to the Gilbertine Order, founding Haverholme Priory (Lincs.). This aspect of his patronage is assessed in A.G. Dyson, ‘The Monastic Patronage of Bishop Alexander of Lincoln’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 26 (1975), pp. 1-24.

² Parts of the episcopal castle at Newark (Notts.) remain. It was said that Sleaford was ‘not inferior in style’, but very little of that structure survives; H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 720-723. Alexander was given license by Henry I to divert the highway through Newark as he wished and to build embankments for a fish pond; *Reg. Ant.* vol. 1, pp. 23 and 33 (nos. 26 and 46).

³ Its phrasing would be echoed closely in the epitaph for Walter. The poem announcing the arrival of King Henry II, which crowns the final version of the *Historia* also borrows directly from Bishop Alexander’s panegyric. So, but for two words, lines 7-8 of the poem in praise of Alexander – *Certa fides, hilaris clementia, cantata potestas, / Lene iugum, doctrina placens, correctio dulcis* – correspond with lines 10-11 of the poem in praise of Henry II (*uindicta decens* replaces *doctrina placens*), H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 474-475 and 776-777.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 750-751.

assent to the election, Henry records, and the ‘young man worthy of all praise’, previously archdeacon of Leicester, was ‘devotedly received by clergy and people at Lincoln’ on the feast of the Epiphany (6 January 1149). This version of the text concluded with a prayer for the bishop’s future joy and prosperity.⁵ The way in which it is framed strongly indicates it was compiled in order to mark Robert Chesney’s elevation. From the start of his episcopate, Robert seems to have faced financial impediments and his relations with the cathedral chapter grew strained. So Henry’s obituary for Alexander could be read as a gesture of accommodation towards the new incumbent, or as a naked attempt to win favour.⁶

In defence of such frank and pointed assertions Henry introduces the obituary by deferring to the model of sacred history contained in the Pentateuch, where both praiseworthy and condemnable actions are set down, sinful along with virtuous behaviours: ‘The truth should be told of this man’s character’, he says, ‘according to the custom of Moses’.⁷ In the Prologue Henry had quite conventionally stated an intention to pursue this basic formula: ‘the attentive reader will find what to imitate and what to reject, and if, by God’s help, he becomes a better person for this emulation and avoidance, that will be for me the reward I most desire’. For this reason, he argued, the path of history leads us back to ‘moral purity’.⁸

In the case of Bishop Alexander, and as we have also seen with Robert Bloet, Henry did not confine himself to the creation of bland eulogy when memorializing the bishops of Lincoln. Neither was he willing to forego the level of scrutiny that typified the rest of his writing. While it is generally true that different standards would be applied when he wrote about the canons of the cathedral, the bishops were often subjected to more rigorous appraisals. Certainly Henry’s decision to handle Bishop Alexander’s death in the way that he does should not be understood merely as a vindictive or pragmatic act. As we turn to examine the manner in which he assessed and preserved the memory of the bishops of Lincoln, it will be necessary to gain a fuller appreciation of the aspirations and assumptions that underpinned his overall approach to historical writing. This will involve drawing some comparisons with the rest of his work.

When evoking a scriptural model as justification for Alexander’s obituary there is clearly a tacit acknowledgement that it might be controversial, and could be poorly received. The only other

⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 752-755.

⁶ Geoffrey of Monmouth’s poem *Vita Merlini* is ostensibly dedicated to Robert Chesney, a former canon of the church of St George in Oxford Castle, with which Geoffrey was associated. See J. C. Crick, ‘Monmouth, Geoffrey of (d. 1154/5)’, ODNB; and Michael D. Reeve, ‘The Transmission of the *Historia Regum Britanniae*’, *The Journal of Medieval Latin* (1991), vol. 1, pp. 73-117.

⁷ *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 750-751.

⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 4-5. A. Gransden, ‘Prologues in the historiography of twelfth-century England’, *England in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Daniel Williams (Woodbridge, 1990), pp. 65-66.

occasion when Henry explicitly cites the custom of Moses is when relaying the scandalous story of the papal legate John of Crema who spoke out adamantly on the subject of priests' wives at an ecclesiastical council in London, in 1125. Henry alleges that while openly declaring 'it was the greatest sin to rise from the side of a whore and go to make the body of Christ', the cardinal was then discovered after vespers with a prostitute. No source corroborates these allegations, but Henry vehemently affirmed, 'This affair was very well-known and could not be denied'.⁹

In view of his personal circumstances, as a married archdeacon who was enjoined to levy penalties from married priests, this issue was obviously a pressing concern, and a subject close to his heart. Henry openly expressed opposition to the provisions of several ecclesiastical councils on this matter, arguing that it exposed priests to a 'danger that if they sought a purity beyond their capacity, they might fall into horrible uncleanness, to the utter disgrace of the Christian name'.¹⁰ At least among his descendants, who formed something of a clerical dynasty, the ideal of priestly celibacy would be disregarded for several generations to come.¹¹ But just as Henry's views on this topic can be seen as partial and subjective, we can probably put his deliberations on Bishop Alexander in the same category. At least it is important to acknowledge that they do not necessarily reflect wider opinion, and should not be taken as evidence of a commonly held evaluation of the episcopate at Lincoln.

Even by the standards of his day, Henry could be an especially acerbic and uncompromising commentator on the contemporary political scene, and, in the wider context of his writing, the occasionally reproachful reflections of the bishops of Lincoln do not seem so severe. Evidence for this can be found in the way he reported on the tragedy of the White Ship. The disaster provoked an unprecedentedly intense and widespread outbreak of lamentation. 'No ship', declared William of Malmesbury, 'was ever productive of so much misery for England; none was so widely acknowledged throughout the world'.¹² In his dramatic and sensitively constructed commentary, shifting between prose and poetry, Orderic Vitalis explained the cause

⁹ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 472-475. Here Henry defines this model of sacred history more fully, calling it 'the true law of history'. The phrase is used elsewhere in connection with the model described by Bede: 'simply to make known to posterity in writing what is to be collected by common report' - a quotation taken (with slight alteration) from the preface to *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 6), pp. 234-235.

¹⁰ These comments were made in reference to the council of London in 1102, H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 450-451; cf. pp. 482-485 (London, 1129).

¹¹ 'Adam the son of Henry the archdeacon' was parson of King's Walden (Herts.), when it was granted to the Gilbertine priory of Malton (Yorks.) and the rectorship was held by his son Master Aristotle (Henry's grandson), a royal justice (C.T. Clay, 'Master Aristotle', *EHR* (1961), vol. 76, pp. 303-308), and Adam's grandson (Henry's great-grandson) Nicholas of Stukely. All also held the tenancy of Little Stukeley from Ramsey Abbey, see H. *Hist. Ang.*, xxvii-xxviii and *Eng. Epis.*, vol.1, p. 100 (no. 168).

¹² William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. R.A.B. Mynors, vol. 1 (OMT, 1998) pp. 760-761: '*Nulla unquam fuit navis Angliae tantae miseriae, nulla toti orbi tam patulae famae*'. Classical allusions in William's account are identified in two articles by N. Wright, 'William of Malmesbury and Latin Poetry: further evidence for a Benedictine's reading', *Revue Bénédictine*, vol. 101 (1991), pp. 150-152, and "'Industriae Testimonium': William of Malmesbury and Latin poetry revisited', *Revue Bénédictine*, vol. 103 (1993), pp. 522-524.

of such universal grief, moved by a feeling of empathy, ‘for the black deep swallowed none of my kindred, for none need I weep by reason of blood, but only from compassion’. The explanation for his overt expressions of remorse, which are highly unusual from a monastic chronicler, was that the disaster had represented the antithesis of a good death. The victims were in high spirits. They were unprepared to meet their end. They also died at sea, and so were deprived of a proper burial. The verses incorporated in Orderic’s account relate specifically to the latter point: ‘Damnation threatens all those lost in deep waters unless mercy from heaven is willing to spare them’.¹³ Like Orderic and William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon turned to poetry to mark the tragedy, but showed no compassion, nor any semblance of remorse. The fact that ‘almost all of them had no burial’, he said, was a sign of ‘glistening vengeance’ (*Ecce coruscabilis Dei uindicta*). The disaster was retribution for sin: ‘unexpectedly, death swallowed up those who deserved it’. Henry visualizes the event in lurid and brutal detail: the naked body of Prince William, the king’s only legitimate son, being thrown about in the waves, his head smashing against the rocks.¹⁴ While the poem he composed could be broadly categorized as a lament, in the context of the narrative it reads like a gleeful celebration, comparable to his jubilatory victory poem on the battle of Brémule.¹⁵

As was not untypical of the historical tradition in which Henry was engaged, the *Historia* is unwaveringly homiletic in its tone and objectives. To some extent, Henry’s often obdurate moral stance can be seen to chime with his public role as an ecclesiastical functionary. One of his tasks as an archdeacon was to preach.¹⁶ His deliberations are grounded in a straightforward and unshrinking submission to providence. All current affairs were portrayed and reflected upon as the progressive enactment of God’s will as it had been signalled in the scriptures. Dramatic turns of ill fortune, in particular, were interpreted as signs of God’s intervention in the world and they warranted clear and purposeful explanation.

This applied to major historical change as it did to the lives of particular individuals. Henry employed the biblical concept of divine punishment or plague (*plaga*) as an overarching structural theme in the *Historia* to mark different eras of English history shaped by invasion and migration. In doing so he presented a model of national eschatology in which political upheavals brought on by conquest were interpreted as part of a continuing salvific pattern, the cyclical

¹³ This is why, at great cost, ‘experienced swimmers and famous divers’ were hired to recover whatever they could. Orderic Vitalis, vol. 6, pp. 294-307.

¹⁴ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 466-467 and pp. 592-595. Cf. John of Worcester, vol. 3, pp. 146-149 and Hugh the Chanter, pp. 164-165.

¹⁵ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 466-467.

¹⁶ Among Henry’s lost works is a sermon on divine law addressed to the monks of Peterborough (*De lege Domini*). In the sixteenth century a copy was recorded at Sawtry Abbey, which lies midway between Huntingdon and Peterborough; *The Libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines and Premonstratensians*, ed. D.N. Bell (Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues: London, 1992), Z. 22. 1; see H. *Hist. Ang.*, cxv-cxvi.

disclosure of God's judgement. Of course this theme was loaded with contemporary resonance, and would lend the work a prophetic character. Henry maintained that the Normans were yet another in a succession of invading peoples. In time they too would be subject to judgement. Their fortunes would falter and their memory would fade. The account of the White Ship disaster should be understood as part of a larger narrative about 'The Norman Kingdom'. Because of its closeness to the battle of Brémule, the tragedy had marked a sudden turnaround in fortunes, which reaffirmed a fundamental truth: the world's glories and successes are transient, and vanish without warning. Just as the Normans, after a long campaign, 'forced the proud mouths of the French to bleat', they were struck by a terrible calamity.¹⁷ Henry's observations on the death Robert Bloet, as with many of the individual memorials he produced, were similarly focused on an attempt to justify and explain misfortune with reference to a finite and easily intelligible interpretive scheme. The bishop's fate illustrated a common rule; worldly men fall upon hard times before their death.

Henry developed his main principles, in the manner of a sermon, with reference to biblical texts and to a broader framework of Christian ethics, and applied them with remarkable consistency. One liturgical record appended to Lincoln's Chapter Bible helps to show just how closely the routine practice of reading the scriptures could inform Henry's selection of biblical models. It is a page that sets out which section of the daily Psalter each canon was required to intone in choir. If canons were absent, as Henry often must have been, then a vicar would fulfil this obligation on their behalf. From the names of the canons it mentions the addition can be dated to c.1132. This means it was probably drawn up shortly after the first versions of the *Historia* were completed.¹⁸ Fittingly, the long historical narrative of Psalm 78 (77) was allocated to the chapter's up-and-coming historian. Its phrases and themes resound throughout Book Ten - commencing in the year 1135, and covering 'The Present Time'. The way it represents the story of God's vengeance in response to the faithlessness, deceit and perjury of the Israelites, and the ascendancy of one tribe (that of Judah) above all others, offered a powerful analogy with which to report and rationalize the political instability of the Anarchy. Right at the start of Book Ten the main refrain of the psalm (*temptaverunt Deum*) is paraphrased to introduce the figure of King Stephen and his seizure of the crown (*Deum temptans*).¹⁹ This is yet another example of Henry's propensity to frame and synthesize his writing in accordance with a simple descriptive model, which typifies the way in which specific figures are memorialized.

¹⁷ The first line of the poem on the White Ship refers to the battle, H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 464-467.

¹⁸ The list is printed and dated in *Fasti*, vol. 3, pp. 151-3.

¹⁹ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 700-701. Cf. Ps. 77: 18, 41, 56.

This quality is especially noticeable in memorials of English royalty, many of which are designed to enforce the same firm distinction between the supreme heavenly king and fallible earthly monarchs, who, out of necessity, are mired by worldly concerns. ‘Hence the saying: “Royal business is wickedness”²⁰ As has been mentioned, within a rigid annalistic format the death of a king presented a fitting juncture not just to review and assess an individual reign but also to establish and reinforce major historical and ethical themes. The most outstanding clarification of Henry’s Boethian critique of kingship is supplied in the obituary for King Cnut, which includes his famous proclamation against the rising tide: ‘You are subject to me, as the land on which I am sitting is mine, and no one has resisted my overlordship with impunity. I command you, therefore, not to rise on to my land, nor to presume to wet the clothing or limbs of your master’. The story ends by putting into the mouth of Cnut a précis of the lesson enforced consistently throughout the *Historia* and specified in the fifth chapter of the letter to Walter: ‘the power of kings is empty and worthless, and there is no king worthy of the name save Him by whose will heaven, earth, and sea, obey eternal laws’.²¹

Falling, as it so often does, some way beyond the remit of political detail, and being made up almost entirely of conventional literary devices, it is not surprising that the question of the special form of obituary notices contained in chronicles has never excited much critical attention. So standardized and familiar were the devices and phrases at the disposal of chroniclers, in fact, that their efforts can easily appear to dissolve into triviality. Vivian Galbraith observed how the tendency to create ‘stilted obituaries, couched in the language of formal piety’, meant that however independent chroniclers may have been they would inevitably reach agreement. What they report, he concluded, should be classed as ‘mass sentiment’, and not ‘individual opinion’.²² In many instances the same could be said of Henry’s more sententious obituary notices, but there is also a dynamic variety in the formulation of his memorial writing, which reflected a trend of the time, and, in the particular case of his memorialization of the bishops of Lincoln, we are also exposed to the author’s quite distinctive perspective.

A key development in the language of personal remembrance has been traced to literature of the Anglo-Norman period. David Crouch has highlighted a changing style in descriptions of death and dying, in particular, noting that ‘the reign of Henry I saw a breach in the depiction of idealised clerical death, and it also produced accounts of agitated, even unregenerate, lay deaths’. Memorials in the letter to Walter, are used to illustrate this, where

²⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 604-605.

²¹ *Ibid*, pp. 366-9.

²² V.H. Galbraith, ‘Good Kings and Bad Kings in English History’, *History*, vol. 30 (1945), 119-120.

Henry of Huntingdon ‘portrays for didactic purpose the deaths of the unhappy rich’.²³ The prime example is in the account of Robert count of Meulan, ‘the wisest in secular matters of all living between here and Jerusalem’, who, when receiving confession on his deathbed, declined the injunction of priests and the archbishop to return lands he had taken by force or trickery: ‘So it is clear that at the end (when praise is sung) man’s highest wisdom has turned not only into the height of folly, but even into blind insanity’.²⁴

Although Crouch has pointed to ‘a growing drift towards a more realistic, even journalistic, reporting of deathbeds from the beginning of the twelfth century’, which ran alongside more conventional and idealized portrayals, it is striking that Henry gives limited space to describing the circumstances of the deaths of the bishops of Lincoln. The notice relating to Remigius is particularly brief: ‘on the day before the church of Lincoln was to be dedicated, Bishop Remigius was attacked by illness and breathed his last’. There is no mention of the date of his death (or of the date scheduled for the dedication ceremony), and no mention of his burial. Before the obituary passage relating to Alexander, Henry does explain that the bishop fell ill when visiting Pope Eugenius at Auxerre in August 1147: ‘The bishop was honourably received by the pope, but he returned to England having contracted a sickness brought on by an unseasonal heatwave. Before long he succumbed to illness, then to paralysis, and finally to death’. The bishop’s burial ‘at Lincoln at the beginning of Lent’ is also noted. But there is no account of the moment of his death, just the cause. Within the main narrative the report of Robert Bloet’s death, where the epitaph is placed, seems remarkably perfunctory, especially because it follows a comprehensive obituary of Ranulph the chancellor, outlining his career and describing his accidental death at Berkhamsted, where he was trampled under the feet of a monk’s horse. After this account Henry simply adds, ‘Thence the king went to Woodstock, a remarkable place which he had made a dwelling-place for men and beasts. And there Robert, bishop of Lincoln, closed his last day’.²⁵

A much fuller account of Robert Bloet’s death appears in the letter to Walter (in which an additional account of the death of Ranulph the chancellor also appears), but it is mainly concerned to apportion blame to Henry I. It relates that the bishop was paralyzed by a stroke when hunting in the company of the king and the bishop of Salisbury, was then carried to his lodgings ‘still alive, but speechless’, and died soon after in the king’s presence: ‘The great king

²³ David Crouch, ‘The Culture of Death in the Anglo-Norman World’, in *Anglo-Norman Political Culture and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Woodbridge, 1997), p. 167. The details of this story are challenged in Sally N. Vaughn, *Anselm of Bec and Robert Meulan: the innocence of the dove and the wisdom of the serpent* (Berkeley, 1987), pp. 360-361, and David Crouch, *The Beaumont twins: the roots and branches of power in the twelfth century* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 3 & 216-217.

²⁴ *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 596-601.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 416-417 (Remigius), pp. 750-751 (Alexander), 470-471 (Robert Bloet).

whom he had always served, whom he had greatly loved and feared, whom he had regarded so highly, and in whom he had placed such confidence, could give him no more assistance'.²⁶ Notably where Henry does include deathbed scenes, they seem to be part of an invective or parody.²⁷ Idealized portraits of good deaths, which were models of dying well, could be a means not only of eulogizing a subject, but of demonstrating a special piety and sanctity. No such associations were drawn in Henry's memorials of the bishops. It should be borne in mind, however, that we are dealing with a partisan account, based on privileged knowledge of the subjects, and in his estimations of their episcopates, Henry did, in several instances, try to publicly uphold the memory of the bishops in the face of criticism. This has been shown in the case of Robert Bloet. It is also apparent in the case of Remigius.

As explained in the letter to Walter, the death of Bishop Remigius lay on the perimeter of Henry's experience. After the start of his own era is signalled in the opening words of Book Seven, beginning in the year 1088, there is only a perfunctory notice of the bishop's untimely death in 1092, on the eve of the day scheduled for the new cathedral's consecration. There is no reference to his burial and also no assessment of his character.²⁸ Instead a character sketch of the bishop is placed a little earlier on, at the end of Book Six, together with an account of the transfer of the see from Dorchester to Lincoln; where it is explained that, because Dorchester lay on the border of the diocese, and was of middling size, a new church was constructed on land purchased at the summit of the city of Lincoln beside its towering new castle: 'strong in a strong place, beautiful in a beautiful place, [dedicated] to the Virgin of virgins' (*in loco forti fortem, pulchro pulchram, Virgini uirginum*).²⁹

Ironically, the only physical description of a bishop of Lincoln in the *Historia Anglorum* is reserved for the one bishop Henry had never seen. Employing a standard rhetorical figure, his aspect is contrasted with his character: 'He was small in stature, but great in heart; dark in complexion, but fair in deeds'. William of Malmesbury also records the bishop's especially diminutive stature, suggesting that, 'It might have been supposed that nature put him together precisely to make it known that a brilliant talent can dwell in the most pitiful frame'.³⁰

Henry follows the brief portrait by defending Remigius from an accusation of treason. It is uncorroborated. The only other possible allusion is contained in a letter of Archbishop

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 588-589.

²⁷ Parody may lie behind the account of the death of Siward, earl of Northumbria; *ibid*, pp. 378-381.

²⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 416-7.

²⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 408-411.

³⁰ William of Malmesbury cites Statius when using this trope; '*gratior exiguo ueniens e corpore uirtus*', *Gesta Pontificum*, pp. 472-473.

Lanfranc, dating to 1075, which mentions that many were speaking out against the bishop, and few would defend him from these ‘disparaging words’.³¹ We have no more detail and Henry is circumspect in his comments, simply going on to say that eventually ‘his pontifical honour was cleansed of stain’, when, submitting to a trial by ordeal, a member of the episcopal household ‘purged his lord by hot iron’.³²

For the most part, Henry’s treatment of Remigius, while broadly positive, is laconic. There is no acknowledgement at all of the controversy which had engulfed his appointment. The selection of the almoner of the monastery of Fécamp, who made a sizeable contribution to the Conqueror’s forces, naturally raised the charge of simony. It was interpreted as a straight reward for military service. Besides this, the consecration ceremony had been conducted by the schismatic Archbishop Stigand, and, as a result, Remigius was required to travel to Rome in person, under suspension, to plead his case.³³ There is, however, a reference to the objection that had been raised by the archbishop of York over the transfer of the see, because of a long-standing claim to the province of Lindsey.³⁴ Only after a substantial payment to the crown made by Robert Bloet was the whole diocese conclusively brought within the southern province of Canterbury. Henry does describe this transaction, claiming that Robert had given a sum of £5,000, but he pointedly ascribed this act of simony to the king.³⁵

Obviously the implications of these controversies concerned more than the deeds and character of the bishops, but related to the origins of the cathedral and the territorial claims of the diocese. It could indeed be said that the memory of Bishop Remigius, as the one who had ‘founded our church’, had a much closer bearing on the reputation and status of the institution as a whole. Perhaps this is why Henry was more reticent and seems to have treated the bishop more deferentially. It is also worth noting that at the end of the twelfth century the veneration of Remigius as a bishop-saint would be traced back at least as far as the episcopate of Alexander, and to the time in which Henry was writing. Detailed accounts of miracles were dated to this period as well as a solemn translation of the bishop’s remains. Not only is there no mention of a posthumous cult in the *Historia*, and no description of his burial or burial place, there is also no special reference to the bishop’s piety or holiness. The omission is remarkable, and points to one

³¹ *The Letters of Lanfranc Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. and trans. Helen Clover and Margaret Gibson (OMT; 1979) pp. 128-129 (no. 37).

³² H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 408-9.

³³ The subsequent profession made to Archbishop Lanfranc records that he was ‘neither entirely familiar, nor entirely unfamiliar,’ with Stigand’s position.

³⁴ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 408-409; Bishop Wulfwig of Dorchester’s episcopate was also marked by disputes over the province; Bates, *Remigius*, pp. 20-21.

³⁵ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 416-419. Hugh the Chanter says that Robert Bloet paid a fee of £3,000 to the crown after the archbishop of York claimed the district of Lindsey and the right, therefore, of consecration, Hugh the Chanter, pp. 14-15. The final agreement makes oblique reference to the redemption: *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 11-13.

of two explanations. Either Henry was unaware of a cult, meaning that this section of the miracle collection is likely to have been fabricated, or he simply declined to acknowledge the bishop's veneration, suggesting that he may have objected in some way. The latter explanation would be another reason for his reticence.

In light of the fairly constant ways both Remigius and Robert Bloet are presented, the sharply inconsistent treatment of Alexander is puzzling. This is because no attempt is made to reconcile the praise so freely showered on the bishop in his lifetime with the dry, disapproving remarks that announce his death. It is not simply the tenor and form of Henry's reproof, but the wilful disparity between his portrayals of the bishop, which calls for some explanation. In order to achieve this it will be helpful to compare the way the memory of King Henry I is handled in the *Historia*. For, of all the personalities featured in the work, the memorialization of this king is the most striking, and the most complex example, precisely because of its contradictory and, at first sight, inexplicable fluctuation between censure and praise.

A good illustration of this is found in the main obituary of the king placed at the start of Book Ten, where Henry expresses two opposing views side by side. They are portrayed as the contested opinions of different parties. 'As usually happens when a man dies', he says, 'the frank opinions of the people came out'.³⁶ In reality, however, these views simply reiterate comments laid out elsewhere in the *Historia*. One party affirmed the king's great qualities: he was supremely wise, victorious in battle, and wealthy. These qualities matched the God-given attributes that it was earlier claimed were bestowed on the king after his triumphant return from Normandy in 1107: wisdom, victory, wealth.³⁷ But another party 'of a different school' evoked three vices. They were directly paralleled: instead of praising his wealth, they said he was excessively greedy; where the first party recognized military prowess, the second saw only cruelty; rather than possessing the wisdom of Solomon, they asserted, the king was similarly subject to the influence of women. In the letter to Walter, where the starkest criticisms of the king were aired along these very same lines, the readers' confusion is anticipated: "So why in your history do you extol King Henry with such lavish praise, while here you accuse him of such great crimes?"³⁸ Henry's reply might help us to grasp the rationale behind Bishop Alexander's memorialization. The opposing positions are maintained and defended. Both were said to have been true. Of course this explanation is not totally satisfactory. While the differing assessments may have been broadly compatible, it does not explain the intensity with which they are delivered. Why is the king

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 698-701 (also for the following).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 454-7.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 606-607.

extolled with such lavish praise? Why in the letter is he attacked so fiercely? It is as if Henry is unable to give a balanced, objective appraisal. Manifestly in the main obituary he is only able to present the opposing positions simultaneously by disassociating himself from either viewpoint. ‘The masses (*vulgus*)’, he said, ‘elaborated in such a manner at will’.³⁹ But, as with the contrasting memorials of King Henry I, it was the very qualities for which Alexander had been celebrated, his outstanding generosity - his ‘hastening to give freely’ -, that formed the basis of the criticisms later levelled against him.

Adjustments were subsequently made to this appraisal of Henry I’s reign. Nearly twenty years later, when producing the final version of the *Historia*, the passage was carefully reworded. Two of the three vices associated with the king, his cruelty and debauchery, were extracted, and a defence of royal wealth was inserted to counter the accusation of greed. Those ‘of a different school’, who had set out to injure the king ‘with base venom’, had failed to appreciate that the king’s prowess and wealth meant that he was held in awe by his neighbours, and feared by his enemies. Consequently his people were ruled ‘in peace and prosperity, as if their every little dwelling was a castle’. Although the emendation has been seen understandably as an attempt to ‘tone down’ the obituary passage before Henry I’s grandson acceded to the throne, no attempts were made to change other parts of the work where the king was attacked, and it may well constitute a genuine reinterpretation of the reign in light of the relative misrule that had marked the intervening years. Thus, it is explained, ‘what Henry had done – whether in the manner of a tyrant or of a king – seemed, by comparison with worse, to be the very summit of excellence’.⁴⁰

The panegyric for Bishop Alexander was composed in the early part of the episcopate, certainly before the appearance of the first version of the text (c. 1131) and possibly even nearer to the time of the bishop’s elevation. As revealed in the obituary passage just discussed, Henry was not incapable of modifying his opinions. But part of the explanation for the opposing portrayals of Bishop Alexander may also lie in the different modes in which they are expressed. They may not be as incongruous as they seem at first sight. When composing a verse panegyric for Alexander - and likewise in his epitaph for the king - Henry was engaging in formal styles of

³⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 698-701.

⁴⁰ If the final memorial was intended to prevent offence, it is notable that the latter part of the obituary was not removed, which contains the gruesome description of the king’s putrefying remains as they lay in the cathedral at Caen, awaiting milder conditions to cross the channel, to receive burial at Reading, the abbey he had founded, and had built there, specifically for the purpose. In summary, Henry’s version of this ancient *topos* runs as follows: Incisions were made all over the body; it was salted, and dressed in ox hides to prevent the ‘strong, pervasive stench’, which proved fatal to those guarding it. The man employed to remove the brain with an axe had been ‘the last of many whom King Henry put to death’. Vessels were placed beneath the bier to gather the fearful black liquid seeping through the hides. Readers were encouraged to meditate upon ‘the corpse of a most mighty king, whose crowned head had sparkled with gold and the finest jewels, like the splendour of God... see what the body became, how fearfully it melted away, how wretchedly cast down it was!’, *Ibid*, pp. 702-702. For the various accounts of the burial of Henry I see *Reading Abbey Cartularies*, ed. B.R. Kemp, vol. 1 (London, 1986), p. 14.

address that conventionally seek to acclaim and eulogize their subject. Yet even when observing the narrow constraints of encomium, Henry was adept at subverting the form, and adding extra, even counterintuitive, layers of meaning. This is quite obvious in the epitaph for Henry I where the equivocal way in which the poem is introduced shows clear reservations: ‘I implore the muse to grant him a memorial, if he has deserved it’. The poem is a response to Walo the Versifier’s epitaph for William Clito, Henry’s nephew and political rival, and is an example of hyperbole.⁴¹ If William Clito enjoyed parity with the gods, Henry I had outshone them; collectively the gods wail at his passing (*‘Numina flent numen deperuisse suum’*).⁴² It has been observed that the epitaph ‘feels ironic’.⁴³ Its theme should be read in conjunction with the comment made in the letter to Walter about the excessive reverence shown to kings and on the perceived glory and divinity of kingship: ‘Kings are like God to their subjects’, but in spite of their majesty, they are subject to circumstances like anyone else, outwardly they are thought to be blessed, inwardly they are in turmoil, ‘no one in their kingdom their equal in misfortune, no one their equal in crimes’.⁴⁴ What is remarkable about the theme of this poem, however, is not simply the way it presents the king, but the comment it makes upon the constraints of the epitaphic mode, and the subtleties of its subversion. Through exaggeration it makes an attack on the empty praise of kings. It shows importantly that Henry’s acclaim was often nuanced and concealed criticism. We should probably not rule out the possibility that, even in this early stage of the episcopate, when praising Alexander’s ‘courteous modesty’ (*‘pudorque facetus’*) in the panegyric poem, and his boundless liberality, such that ‘what he has not yet given he regards as no longer his to have’, Henry may even have been subtly undermining his patron.⁴⁵

Behind many of the memorials in the *Historia Anglorum* lay a parodic or satirical intent. Towards the end of the narrative, as the history of Lincoln Cathedral took on a greater prominence in the narrative, the character of the bishops became a natural focus. Because of the spiritual authority they represented, and the temporal power they exercised, bishops, like kings, were common targets of satire. As such, criticisms could often be implied rather than overt. There can be little doubt that members of the cathedral chapter would have been struck by the examples chosen to

⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp. 482-483 & 836-838. The passing of Henry I witnessed an outpouring of poetic laments. See Rigg, *Anglo-Latin literature*, pp. 32, note 77; Dietrich Lohrmann, ‘Der Tod König Heinrichs I von England in der mittellateinischen Literatur Englands und der Normandie’, *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 8 (1973), pp. 90-107.

⁴² The endings of the two epitaphs are mirrored. Normandy had cradled William and he was entombed in Flanders. England had cradled Henry and Normandy ‘lost the man’. Cf. Marbod, PL, vol. 171, 1721-2, v. 7: ‘*Nutritus Andegavis, quem perdidit Aurelianus*’; H. *Hist. Ang.*, p. 493, at n. 290.

⁴³ A. Cooper, ‘The feet of those that bark shall be cut off’: timorous historians and the personality of Henry I’, *Anglo-Norman Studies*, vol. 23 (2001), p. 49.

⁴⁴ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 604-607.

⁴⁵ The panegyric is included under the year 1125 a year of severe inflation partly due to a debased coinage, which ‘was the most expensive of all in our time, when a horse’s load of corn was sold for 6s.’

illustrate simoniacal appointments to the episcopate in the Common Satire found in Henry's first book of epigrams. 'One buys his episcopal throne by offering a cursed present, another buys an office that leads on to a bishopric; one receives the crozier thanks to a blood-tie, another, as though his due reward, for cash'.⁴⁶ Of these four illustrations, we know that three, at least, would have been startlingly recognizable. Robert Bloet was known to have paid a cash sum to secure the liberty of the church prior to his enthronement. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states plainly that Alexander was chosen by the king 'out of love for the bishop [of Salisbury]'. Allegations had circulated over the appointment of Remigius in the belief that it was a reward for military service – 'a cursed present'. It is certainly not implausible that the remaining illustration of simony, buying the 'office that leads on to a bishopric' refers specifically to Robert Chesney. We can at least say that, as a young man (*iuvenis*), and not yet ordained, he succeeded Walter as archdeacon of Leicester, and may have been assisted in this by the fact that he came from a reasonably well-established and wealthy knightly family.⁴⁷

Of course it was customary for satirists to ridicule themselves, and so it is not surprising that Henry freely denounced fellow officeholders in the Common Satire after dealing with bishops, just as 'A sick head is followed by the limbs'. Archdeacons, like bishops, were frequently victims of moral invective. Henry portrays them 'delighting in fleecing and gnawing away at the priests of the Lord'. A letter of introduction sent by John of Salisbury to Nicholas de Sigillo, when he succeeded Henry to the archdeaconry of Huntingdon playfully mocks him for the way he had previously spoken of this institution: 'I seem to remember that there was a race of men known in the church of God by the title of archdeacons for whom you used to lament, my discerning friend, that every door to salvation was closed'.⁴⁸ A rare occasion on which Henry tempers the severity of his admonishments, and acknowledges the unworldliness of his ethical propositions, is in 'A poem for children'. Here a young boy sharply rebukes 'Savage Henry'. He had learnt an epigram of his which concluded that all things are merely dreams, a standard theme of Roman satire. The boy watched on as the tutor who taught it to him followed in the train of an earl (*dux*). The tutor begged for an audience but was beaten away. Then, when finally granted an audience, the tutor fawned at the earl's feet. On returning home, the boy's father, mother and grandfather all asked about the earl; 'They ask endlessly about his symbols of office and about his pride'. Everyone, 'common folk and clergy', talk of nothing else. So he enquires: 'Tell us now,

⁴⁶ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 780-781.

⁴⁷ Eadmer and William of Malmesbury imply that Remigius' appointment was simoniacal. The Common Satire, and book of epigrams first appears in the fifth version of the *Historia*, after Robert Chesney's elevation, but there is a chance that the poem was composed before the beginning of his episcopate. Henry had claimed '*Quod regi quidem simonie, presuli uero iusticie deputatum est*', H. *Hist. Ang.*, 418-419.

⁴⁸ *The Letters of John of Salisbury, vol. 2, The Later Letters (1163-1180)*, ed. W.J. Millor & C.N.L. Brooke (Oxford, 1979), pp. 24-27.

poet, is it only dreams you see? It is rather morality that is dreams, and anyone who madly listens to your precepts will be despised and beggared'. Henry responds patiently: 'A small proportion sees and the majority stay blind'.⁴⁹

Two qualities give Henry's writings a special edge and authority. Fittingly they are touched on in a sketch of the archdeacon in Ely's cartulary, where he is simply called 'a highly competent writer, deserving respect for his age and white hair'.⁵⁰ Firstly, he was a man of letters. This was a trait he shared with many of his fellow canons. His command of grammatical techniques was sufficient to generate a number of intricate and composite memorials of the cathedral clergy. Besides this, he had an unusually thorough and longstanding experience of the cathedral church. From childhood he witnessed its early formation, and participated in its growth. As we have seen Henry could be an impassioned and informed commentator, whether on the cathedral's early history or the wider political landscape. Among his double-edged assessments and mordent criticisms of powerful figures of the day, including at times the bishops under whom he had served, Henry's memorial writing offers an original and distinctive exposition of the higher clergy of the cathedral. The work is the main source for key events and personalities in the earliest stage of Lincoln's history under the Norman kings. Yet his memorial writing can be seen more generally as evidence of an enlivening dialogue among the body of canons about the brief history of the institution, incorporating some sophisticated interrogation of its place in the world.

⁴⁹ *De inani cura* (4 lines), directed at a fictional addressee of Martial's epigrams, enforces a traditional motif of Roman satire, 'Do you know, Atticus, what all things are? Dreams?' *Carmen puerile* (60 lines) follows; *ibid*, pp. 786-791. We know that Henry was involved with a school in Huntingdon because he offered restoration to the canons of Huntingdon on the altar of the priory church, in person, responding to a mandate of Robert Chesney (dated 1148) to suppress unlicensed schools. *Ibid*, xlii-xliii; pp. 829-830 (where the charter is printed).

⁵⁰ *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E.O. Blake (London, 1962), p. 125; translated by Janet Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis: a history of the Isle of Ely from the seventh to twelfth century* (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 151.

Chapter Two

PETITIONING FOR SOULS

INTRODUCTION

Up to now we have examined the remembrance of the dead at Lincoln Cathedral from a single vantage point, focusing on the representation of a fairly select company: the bishops of Lincoln and senior officeholders among the body of canons. Over the next two chapters, which address the interrelated subjects of prayers for the dead and the provision of burial, there is a chance to open the inquiry out and explore the involvement of a much larger and more representative group of people, who were joined in fellowship with the cathedral in a variety of different ways. As might be expected, the kind of practices associated with these two fields of activity centred on prescribed modes of public worship, and so lead into the realm of liturgy. Although they drew upon long-established conventions of piety, the organization and significance of these activities, along with so many other areas of life, were subject to considerable change from the late-eleventh century to the early-thirteenth century. This period of transition has come to be regarded as a pivotal one in developing the traditions of worship that would characterize the Late Middle Ages. In particular it is associated with the establishment of new systems of commemorative devotion and also with an accentuation of the extent to which the living were held to be implicated in the spiritual fate of the dead. Such change was widely felt. The obligation to perform propitiatory rituals on behalf of patrons and benefactors, which is the subject of the present chapter, was familiar to virtually every ecclesiastical institution. The following analysis is focused upon the more distinctive ways in which these common features of organized worship were formulated at Lincoln.

Intercessory worship was a routine observance which, in one form or another, engaged the entire community of attendant clergy at the cathedral. Communal services were observed on a daily basis. Lincoln's 'earliest recorded statute', which arranges the distribution of the psalter among the bishop and canons in the late-twelfth century, refers to the long-established custom

of singing one mass and intoning the whole psalter every day on behalf of all benefactors whether alive or dead.¹ In addition to this, on allocated days, the community observed special services of intercession which marked the deaths of particular benefactors. These services, anniversaries or obits, revolved around the celebration of the Office of the Dead and the Requiem Mass. By the late-twelfth century, as the number of anniversaries increased, they began to be assigned to side altars, where they were performed by designated clergy. The arrival of the institutional chantry, which has been identified as an innovation of the late-twelfth century, entailed an endowment for the maintenance of a priest to celebrate mass at a particular altar much more frequently, sometimes daily, for the souls of specific individuals and their kin, as well as much larger consortiums.² These individualized commemorations, whose organization was fairly independent, helped to support a growing number of minor clergy at the cathedral. In our period, such memorials were mainly instituted by canons, who were able to deploy their often substantial income in a way that could not be replicated within a monastic community (where all was held in common). But chantries were also founded by guilds and fraternities, and these were crucial in establishing stronger connexions between the cathedral and the regional population and the citizens of Lincoln.

In the context of this study, the history of the cathedral's relationship with benefactors can be subdivided by a dramatic incident in 1185, when, reportedly on Palm Sunday (15 April), the building was structurally compromised by an earthquake. Roger of Howden, who described this event, creates the impression of wide-ranging devastation. Rocks fractured. Stone-built houses came thundering down. The din was 'heard all over England'. Lincoln Cathedral - the only site he identifies by name - 'split from top to bottom'.³ While the scale of this calamity may have been subject to some exaggeration, it was not long after this, in the early-1190s, that a bold and extensive phase of rebuilding got underway.⁴ By the death of Bishop Hugh of Wells, the whole fabric of the church, with the exception of the tremendous façade, had been reworked in

¹ 'Ex antiqua institutione Lincolnensis ecclesie optentum est ut singulis diebus dicantur una missa et unum psalterium pro vivis et defunctis benefactoribus'; *Statutes* (part 1), p. 300.

² On the early development of the chantry, see David Crouch, 'The origin of the chantries: some further Anglo-Norman Evidence', *Journal of Medieval History* (2001), vol. 27, pp. 159-180.

³ R. *Gesta*, vol. 1, p. 33; cf. R. *Chronica*, vol. 2, pp. 303-304.

⁴ Kidson suggested the tremors exposed existing flaws and that a collapse of the choir section of stone vaulting built by Bishop Alexander probably first induced the construction of a new east end. Peter Kidson, 'St Hugh's Choir', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lincoln Cathedral* (British Archaeological Association, 1986), pp. 29-30. The Annals of Multifernan note the start of the rebuilding under the year 1192 (*Jacitur fundamentum ecclesiae Lincolniae*), although Stalley has observed: 'the chronology of events in this set of annals in the 1190s is between one and two years in arrears. If we make due allowance for this, Lincoln must have been started not in 1192, but in 1193 or possibly 1194'. *Annales de Monte Fernandi* (Dublin, 1842), ed. Aquilla Smith, p. 11; and Roger Stalley, 'Lapides Reclamabunt: Art and Engineering at Lincoln Cathedral in the Thirteenth Century', *Antiquaries Journal*, vol. 86 (2006), p. 144 (note 1).

accordance with the ensuing campaign and its integrated architectural scheme: ‘complete throughout its entire length in the new Gothic style’.⁵

A new era of benefaction was associated with the building campaign, and this broadly coincided with a reorganization of the cathedral’s resources. In the late-eleventh century the bishop was effectively in charge of the cathedral’s properties and revenues, and so the earliest gifts in the form of rectories or large estates were made to the bishop or the church, normally in the person of its patron, the Virgin Mary. But from the mid-twelfth century, the chapter had begun to realize a degree of autonomy in respect of the church’s resources and by the late-twelfth century these were managed by discrete administrative bodies.⁶ Mostly gifts pertaining to the later phase of benefaction, which often took the form of relatively modest contributions of land or rent-charges, were allocated directly to the fabric fund, under the direction of a master of works, or to the commons (*Communa*), which provided for communal expenses: the maintenance of church services, the additional allowances for canons in residence, or general administrative costs. By the 1190s, as Kathleen Major observed, the administration of the commons appears to have fallen to a defined group ‘predominantly and almost professionally concerned with the management of the chapter estates’, under the direction of a provost of the canons.⁷

The possessions of the commons are well documented in the *Registrum Antiquissimum*. This major cartulary, whose modern printed edition (with some additional material) spreads over ten volumes, was probably first compiled in the final decade of the episcopate of Hugh of Wells, between 1225 and 1235.⁸ Quite clearly this cartulary records a firm shift in the profile of lay benefactors over the course of the twelfth century, and in the size of their contributions, with the easing off of large-scale endowments, the gifts of major land-holders, and the extensive accrual of smaller gifts especially around the turn of the thirteenth century when the building campaign was in full swing, often consisting of a few acres within the county or fixed ground-rents for properties held in the city. To some degree a shift in the demographic profile of benefactors may be a symptom of more rigorous documentary habits, and we certainly should not see the motives behind these exchanges simply in relation to spiritual benefits, of which intercessory worship

⁵ Stalley, ‘*Lapides Reclamabunt*’, p. 131.

⁶ Everett U. Crosby, *Bishop and Chapter in Twelfth-Century England: A Study of the Mensa Episcopalis* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 290-313.

⁷ This group (identified as a regular group of witnesses to charters) was made up of precentor, subdean, provost (of the common fund), succentor, and sacrist (plus several vicars and clerks) ‘whereas until about 1190 most of the charters both to and from the cathedral are witnessed by a group of canons’, Kathleen Major, ‘The Finances of the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century: a Preliminary Survey’, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* (1954), vol. 5, p. 154.

⁸ The cathedral’s secretarial practices were invigorated dramatically under Hugh of Wells, whose episcopate also saw the creation of episcopal rolls, the earliest surviving documents of their kind. It may be that Hugh was inspired by his earlier experiences in the royal chancery, where he had witnessed the implementation of Archbishop Hubert Walter’s chancery reforms.

represented one element. For the most part the explanatory clauses found in the cathedral's deeds of gifts are highly formulaic, and reflect the diplomatic conventions in use at the time. One important consideration that they rarely mention is the right of burial, which could be secured for relatively modest sums. In the case of a rent of 2s given jointly at the end of the twelfth century by a married couple from Boston, Adam son of Widmund and his wife Emma, burial is only referred to because of the special provision that on the death of either one of the them, half the chattels would travel with the corpse to Lincoln, and the rent at this time would be halved.⁹

In similarity with many other English cathedrals, from the last quarter of the twelfth century gifts channelled directly to the building works were encouraged through the creation of a fraternity of the fabric. There are substantial gaps in the records of the fabric fund, which remained distinct from the commons, and Major has postulated 'the existence of a Fabric cartulary now lost'.¹⁰ A number of original charters do survive. At the end of the twelfth century, for example, John Mutun granted a rent of 6d to the fabric, which had first been given by his father Wigot from land in the parish of St Andrew on the Hill, directly adjacent to the cathedral precinct. The deed contains a revealing clause relating to the delivery of payment: if within two weeks of the feast of St Michael the holder of the land had not deposited the rent 'in the chest in which alms for the repair of the church are collected', in the presence of the master of works, or otherwise of three clerks of the cathedral, then the land would be distrained and the defaulters excommunicated.¹¹ We know that the members of this fraternity were commemorated at the altar of St Peter's Chapel. The first mention of this altar is in 1205, when it was the scene of a murder; the subdean William of Bramfeld having been slain by one of the vicars.¹² It might have been one of the very first chantries established in the cathedral and it appears that the chaplain assigned to it would be distinguished in the thirteenth century as the highest ranked chantry priest. Ralph of Coggeshall gives the round figure of a thousand marks for the yearly intake from such donations at Lincoln, indicating the remarkable success of the fraternity.¹³

An important instrument used to accelerate the rate of gifts to the fabric over a designated period was the episcopal indulgence, which remitted the faithful from periods of enjoined penance in which they were conventionally expected to fast. In the hands of local bishops it was a relatively novel device. At first it had been an extraordinary measure reserved to

⁹ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 7, p. 23 (no. 1977).

¹⁰ This was due to 'the absence of transcripts of surviving fabric fund charters into either *Registrum Antiquissimum* or *Registrum Magnum*'; Major, 'Finances of the Dean and Chapter', p. 160.

¹¹ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 10, no. 2951, pp. 288-289.

¹² Peter B.G. Binnall, 'Notes on the Medieval Altars and Chapels in Lincoln Cathedral', *The Antiquaries Journal* (1962), vol. 42, p. 76. The murder is recorded in the Waverley and Tewkesbury Annals, *Annales monastici* (RS), vol. 2, p. 257; and vol. 1, p. 57.

¹³ Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum* (RS, 1875), ed. J. Stevenson, p. 111.

the Roman see. Hence, at the consecration of the convent at Godstow (Oxon.) in 1139, Bishop Alexander had offered those who made donations to the nuns the blessings and prayers of the cathedral, while the papal legate, Alberic of Ostia, who was in attendance at the ceremony, granted an indulgence of one year to all benefactors, and a remission of forty days for those visiting on the feast of St Priscia and the feast of John the Baptist.¹⁴ Nicholas Vincent has established that the earliest surviving episcopal indulgence in England was issued at the start of the twelfth century.¹⁵ But records of episcopal indulgences are found far more frequently during the second half of the twelfth century. Immediately after his consecration at Westminster, on 21 September 1186, Bishop Hugh of Avalon issued an indulgence of thirteen days to all those attending the enthronement ceremony at Lincoln, on 29 September. Perhaps it was not long after this that an indulgence was issued for gifts to the fabric fund.¹⁶ The text of the letter setting out the special privileges and the indulgence granted to these donors is partially damaged and illegible. Yet it does reveal that, corresponding with the Canterbury fraternity founded by Archbishop Baldwin of Forde in the same year, the effect of interdict on burials and funeral services was moderated; so that donors could, like the regular clergy, still receive Christian burial. Bishop William of Blois would issue a similar indulgence.¹⁷ Some idea of the expiatory services which might be offered in exchange for such gifts can be gauged by comparing arrangements at other secular cathedrals. Precedent for this kind of fraternity is recorded at St Paul's Cathedral in 1174-1175, for instance, where there are details of the form of intercessory worship involved. The assurance was that priests of the diocese would recite thirty masses for members of the confraternity: half for the dead and half for the living. For dead and living members two masses would also be sung each week at the cathedral by the chapter.¹⁸

At least initially, the fraternity of the fabric formed at the end of the twelfth century was, like similar organizations, a specific guild designed to meet the needs of a highly focused donor group, who were keen to pursue what was an extraordinary arrangement, probably with limited

¹⁴ *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 1, no. 33, pp. 20-24.

¹⁵ The earliest surviving English letter of episcopal indulgence, issued by Archbishop Anselm, has been dated 1101-1107; Nicholas Vincent, 'Some Pardoners' Tales: The Earliest English Indulgences', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, vol. 12 (2002), p. 36.

¹⁶ *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 4, nos. 97-8, p. 204.

¹⁷ Nicholas Vincent has observed that before 1220, the Carthusians and Cistercians were in receipt of no indulgences. Yet, remarkably, the two bishops during this period who were elevated from these orders – Baldwin of Forde and Hugh of Avalon – were particularly active in granting them. There is uncertainty over the length of the indulgence issued by Hugh of Avalon specifically for the fabric fund, which is calculated variously at eighty or twenty days. However, if it is the former, Hugh would represent a very rare example, alone apart from Baldwin of Forde, of an English prelate who issued an indulgence in excess of forty days. Nicholas Vincent, 'English Indulgences', pp. 43-5, esp. note 89.

¹⁸ [Rose Graham, 'An appeal about 1175 for the building fund of St Paul's Cathedral Church', *Journal of the British Archaeological Society*, 3rd Series, 10 (1945-7), 73-6]; cited in C.R. Cheney, 'Church-building in the Middle Ages', *Medieval Texts and Studies* (Oxford, 1975), 359.

availability. Thus, in 1186, Archbishop Baldwin of Forde established a fraternity throughout the province of Canterbury to last for seven years from the year of issue, requiring either an annual donation or a bequest. Similarly, in 1226, a confraternity was established at Worcester to last for seven years, and in 1202 a fraternity was established at Winchester to run for five years. Although fraternities of the fabric were almost entirely confined to cathedrals in this period, in 1230 'a confraternity of the New Work' is found at the powerful abbey of Osney in Oxford.¹⁹

It is necessary to consider changes in the formulation of services of expiation towards the end of the twelfth century in light of broader ideological changes and developing penitential practices. The new wave of benefaction built upon intense engagement with the local population. This period also witnessed the institution of much more elaborate commemorative arrangements among the senior clergy. The second part of this chapter relates new approaches in the organization of suffrages to an evolving conception of the significance of intercessory worship and of the mass.

The first part of this chapter addresses the earlier period which was crucial to the formation of the cathedral chapter. It analyses a specific document; the obituary kalendar contained in Lincoln's Chapter Bible, which records the names of benefactors from the time of Bishop Remigius up to the 1180s. As has been mentioned, the Chapter Bible is an important store of information on the cathedral's early history, incorporating records of clerical personnel dating from the late-eleventh century and through the twelfth. Besides this kalendar and an inventory of books on the title page, it contains two further supplementary documents of note.²⁰ These are two complete lists of canons at two specific points in time, both placed at the beginning of the psalter, immediately after the obituary kalendar. The first (List One), which has been dated to c.1132, clearly distributes the psalms between the bishop and 42 canons - a number that is in accord with the comment of Gerald of Wales, writing at the end of the twelfth century, explaining that Bishop Remigius first founded 21 prebends, and that his successor Robert Bloet then doubled this number.²¹ By c.1187, when the second register was compiled (List Two), the chapter comprised 56 prebends (the names of 53 canons are listed, and there are three blank spaces corresponding to the three remaining, presumably unoccupied, prebends). Shortly thereafter the total number of canons reduced to 55, where it would remain until the end of the thirteenth century, (at which point the number returned to 56 and did not change again before the sixteenth century).²² The gradual expansion of the chapter was a convoluted process,

¹⁹ See Cheney, 'Church-building', pp. 359-361. For the '*confraria novi operis*'; see *Cartulary of Osney Abbey* (Oxford, 1929), vol. 1, ed. H. E. Salter p. 136.

²⁰ This is published in G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 165-171.

²¹ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 19, 32.

²² *Fasti*, ix.

involving many adjustments and reversals, but in outline this process can be traced through the obituary kalendar. It is also a precious record of the earliest benefactors of the church – the people who, through their gifts, were able to impact greatly upon the shape, structure, and on the personnel, of the new foundation.

EARLY ANNIVERSARIES

In the first part of Lincoln's two-volume Chapter Bible, over five pages between the Book of Job and Psalms (ff. 204^v-206^v; each parchment leaf measuring about 325 mm in width and 495 mm in depth), 180 anniversaries, or obits, are registered within the ruled frame of a complete calendar year, ornamented in blue, green, and red ink (and entitled, in red lettering, '*Incipiunt obitus anniversariorum per anni circulum*').¹ On the title page, above the inventory of the cathedral's books, an inscription identifies the bible itself as the gift of Nicholas the archdeacon. An entry in the kalendar on 13 March (*iii id. Mar.*) also commemorates 'Nicholas the canon and archdeacon who donated the bible to St Mary the Virgin'. Since the manuscript pre-dates the appointment of Henry of Huntingdon's successor Nicholas de Sigillo, and because Nicholas archdeacon of Bedford is found elsewhere in the kalendar (*ii kal. Apr.*), this donor can be identified with the first archdeacon of Huntingdon, the father of Henry of Huntingdon, who, as we know, was buried at the cathedral in 1110.² The document in question was copied into the bible much later on, in the second half of the twelfth century, but includes the names of benefactors who can be traced back to the earliest period of the cathedral's foundation, in the late-eleventh century. Some of these names would have continued to hold a special resonance for the institution and for its members, as records of the intricate network of associations and exchanges that were of fundamental significance to the formation and constitution of the college of canons. To begin with, it will be helpful to examine the manner and context of the kalendar's creation.

Any proposition about the exact timespan in which the kalendar was created must be tempered by the significant proportion of men and women it lists who remain obscure or untraceable. The majority of anniversaries simply attach a name to a date with no further details. There are no internal references to the year in which anyone died, and only 35 entries mention

¹ Lincoln Cathedral Library, MS 1 (A.1.2), ff. 204^v-206^v; for the most recent codicological description, see R.M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Library* (Woodbridge, 1989), at xiv & p. 3. The separate second volume of the Chapter Bible (Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.5.2 (148)) is described at p. 212. Two transcriptions of the calendar were published in the nineteenth century. In 1877 an edition was appended to the works of Gerald of Wales for the Rolls Series and the other appeared in the *Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral* (published 1892-1897). G. Op., vol. 7, pp. 153-164, and *Statutes* (Part 2), ccxxxv-ccxlii, where subsequent obits from the cathedral are also published. Diana Greenway has pertinently warned that the text 'is written in several different hands, and palaeographically it is far more complex than appears from the editorial annotations of the two printed versions' (*Fasti*, xvi). To accompany the following discussion digital images are provided (on CD attached). References to anniversaries consequently follow the Julian calendar.

² The inscription on f.2 (f.1, modern and blank, was removed in the rebinding of 1977) reads, '*Nicholaus canonicus et archidiaconus dedit hanc bibliothecam in duobus uoluminibus sancta Marie Lincol.* Nicholas de Sigillo the third archdeacon of Huntingdon, first appears in office in the mid-1160s and the manuscript belongs to the late-eleventh century; see C.M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts 1066-1190* (London, 1975), pp. 59-60. For Nicholas's burial at Lincoln, see H. *Hist. Ang.*, p. 458.

any kind of material contribution to the cathedral. 14 entries provide only a first name. In the case of William (*xi kal. Apr.*), therefore, where nearly one in ten of all those commemorated in the kalendar shared this especially common name, the individual in question is effectively identified with an anonym. Where some type of byname is supplied, or a designation of title or office appears, then there is obviously a better prospect of establishing the identity of the person concerned. Such information is normally provided in the case of cathedral canons, to whom more than half of the anniversaries correspond. Obviously it is often difficult to establish the year in which they died, but, by tracing the recognizable names, and by taking into account the relevant palaeographic features of the document, it is possible to establish broadly when the kalendar was made, and also when the majority of anniversaries are likely to have been entered within it.

It has long been appreciated that the various hands in the kalendar are consistent with the latter part of the twelfth century, and, as Rodney Thomson stated in his *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Library*, the frame itself, along with the majority of entries in the kalendar, can be attributed to one main hand c.1170.³ This dating can be substantiated with reference to the anniversaries that are recorded, but it is worth noting firstly that the main hand is also responsible for the core text in the inventory of books on the title page of the Chapter Bible, which was written in the time of Master Hamo (*xvi kal. Sep.*), who was appointed by Bishop Alexander, and served as the first chancellor of the cathedral. He must have held office for at least 34 years, therefore, by the time of his death in the summer of 1182. There is a strong probability that he was the chief instigator behind the creation of the kalendar in its present form and it is also entirely plausible that the main hand belongs to him.⁴

Almost immediately after it was made the kalendar seems to have functioned as a progressive record, steadily accumulating extra names. These additions, a substantial minority of which, it should be stressed, were also recorded by the same main hand, are generally (but not always) distinguishable because of the use of carbon ink, and appear noticeably paler (at times heavily faded and olive or chestnut in colour), when set against the original group of entries. Along with what are likely to be some of the very earliest additional entries, such as the anniversary of Robert junior archdeacon of Lincoln (*xviii kal. Feb.*), who died in 1171, these are the work of multiple hands.⁵ The original group of entries, which are all made using a deep and

³ See Thomson, *Manuscripts of Lincoln*, xiv. I am grateful to Dr Tessa Webber and Dr James Willoughby for their helpful comments on the palaeography of this text (personal correspondence).

⁴ Notably the anniversaries which were certainly added after Hamo's death in 1182 (including his own) are not the work of the main hand.

⁵ The fourth archdeacon of Lincoln, called *junior* by Henry of Huntingdon, first appears in office in the 1140s, listed alongside his predecessor, William of Bayeux, who remained a canon (*Reg. Ant.*, vol. 3, pp. 262-264). Robert's name

more durable incaustum ink (so-called because of its facility to corrode the surface of parchment), can be quite clearly differentiated on the third, fourth, and fifth pages of the calendar (ff. 205^v-206^v), because a spare ruled line is consistently left in the kalendar frame whenever an anniversary was to be incorporated (with the apparent exception of the first anniversary listed on f. 205^v).⁶ This convention is observed only erratically on the preceding two pages. The entry for Bishop Robert Chesney (*vi kal. Jan.*) is slightly irregular because the scribe had initially entered it on the preceding day, meaning that a blank line is left with no related anniversary.⁷ While we can be certain that the kalendar was made after the death of Bishop Robert Chesney in late December 1166, given that some additions do appear in the main hand, using incaustum ink – the most obvious case being Bernard the priest (*vi id. Dec.*) – it is not possible to say unreservedly whether the entry for Robert of Worcester, who appears just once as a witness c.1170, belongs to the original band of entries, but, if it is, it would be the very latest original entry to which a date can be attached. Given that there are a number of additions which mark the deaths of individuals who died in the late 1160s, it seems that the kalendar was created after the death of Robert Chesney, and not much later than c.1170.

While it is impossible to establish the identity of every individual entered in the kalendar with certainty, we can establish a general timeframe for the document by focusing on the registration of Lincoln clergymen. At no point, it appears, was entry in the kalendar an automatic privilege for members of the chapter, but once it had been created the registration of canons became a far more regular practice for a period of a little over a decade. There are a series of anniversaries for canons who died, or are last recorded, in the 1170s, and up to the start of the 1180s, but the latest known year of death for any canon which can be identified with any degree of certainty is Gentilius (*x kal. Nov.*), a nephew of Pope Alexander III, who was collated to a prebend by bishop-elect Geoffrey Plantagenet (1175-1181), and died in October 1183.⁸ Based

in the Pipe Roll (September, 1170) is underlined for deletion, with '*mortuus est*' noted by a different hand. Because he occurs elsewhere in 1170, his death can be assigned quite securely to January 1171 (*Fasti*, p. 25).

⁶ The probable exception is the anniversary of Gleu (*viii id. Sep.*), which seems to be an original entry, and may be identified with the tenant of Alfred of Lincoln listed in Domesday Book who shared this Breton name, and was a progenitor of the de Rothwell family; for whom see K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, *Domesday People: A Prosopography of Persons Occurring in English Documents, 1066-1166* (Woodbridge, 1999), p. 216.

⁷ Despite an attempt to delete these words, by scraping away the ink, they are still visible under ultraviolet light.

⁸ Gentilius was alive in November 1182 but had died by 14 February 1184 (*Papal Decretals*, ed. Holtzmann and Kemp, pp. 50-51; *Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church, Canterbury*, ed. D.C. Douglas (London, 1944), pp. 108-110; *Fasti*, pp. 122-123). Dimock noted a correspondence in the distinctive hand responsible for this entry with that of Robert de Racolf 'canon and priest' (*id. Oct.*), *G. Op.*, vol. 7, p. 162 (note 1). No other record of Robert de Racolf survives, and neither is it possible to establish the identity of Richard the clerk (*xi kal. Jan.*), an entry which is certainly in the same hand. The steady flow of anniversaries up to this point makes the cut-off very noticeable. Nicholas archdeacon of Bedford (*ii kal. Apr.*) last occurs in the 1170s, for example, and had been succeeded by 1181. Canon Ilbert (*viii kal. Sep.*) last occurs 1179-1180. The same is true of the subdean Ralph of Caen whose anniversary is on the same day. Canon Robert of Cambridge (*iv kal. Sep.*) does not appear after 1181. Canon Peter de

simply on the names of canons, therefore, it would appear that the kalendar was chiefly composed between *c.*1170 and *c.*1183.⁹

This is a time when, it is worth noting, there was no serving bishop of Lincoln. For a period of six and a half years after the death of Robert Chesney the temporalities of the see were administered by royal custodians (one of whom was the cathedral precentor, and archdeacon of Stow, Richard de Almaria), but in 1173 the king's illegitimate son Geoffrey Plantagenet, previously archdeacon of Lincoln (from 1171), was elected bishop. Still a young man (probably in his early twenties), Geoffrey was never consecrated and finally resigned the see on 6 January 1182. For at least part of this time he was studying at Tours. It was not until 1183, on 11 December, after almost 17 years, that Master Walter of Coutances, archdeacon of Oxford, was enthroned as Robert Chesney's successor. Walter's term in office was relatively short-lived, however, and on 3 March 1185 he was received as archbishop of Rouen, a cathedral in which he had, during his term as archdeacon, simultaneously held the office of treasurer.¹⁰

This timeframe for the calendar is corroborated by the entry of lay benefactors where an identity and year of death can be established, but it can be qualified further by looking beyond those anniversaries which correspond to the bishops and canons of Lincoln. Firstly, as principal benefactors, it is unsurprising that English royalty appear regularly. William the Conqueror's death, on 7 September 1087, is among the earliest dateable anniversaries. There are also entries for Henry I and Stephen (styled '*pacificus rex*' and '*illustris rex*' respectively), and, on 2 and 3 May, Matilda of Scotland, Henry's queen, appears beside her niece Matilda of Boulogne, Stephen's queen. Thus the omission of Henry II, who died on 6 July 1189, has been widely acknowledged as a point at which the calendar had ceased to function as a progressive record.

However it is probable that there is at least one much later addition, which has not previously received comment, even though it is quite conspicuous in the manner in which it is recorded. This is the anniversary of 'William the priest of St Swithins' (*ix kal. Dec.*), who is said to have given a rent of 12*d* from land in the neighbouring parish of St Edmund. This anniversary may well relate to William son of Ulf, the priest of St Swithins, who served as dean of the city of Lincoln in the early-thirteenth century, when he established a chantry to maintain a priest to say

Melida (*v non. Oct.*), the canonist, died before January 1181. As we have mentioned Hamo the chancellor died in the summer of 1182. See (in the order given) *Fasti*, pp. 41-42, 129, 21, 133-134, 139, & 16.

⁹ Although Diana Greenway (*Fasti*, xvi) pointed to the latest dateable entries in 1182 and 1183, those of Hamo and Gentilius (also mentioning Dean Geoffrey, who probably died in October 1182, but does not in fact appear in the kalendar), the document was 'assigned to *c.*1188' on the basis of a misattribution (subsequently retracted) of Nicholas de Sigillo as donor of the bible, and on the identification of *Guarinus* (*vii kal. Apr.*) as *Warinus* of List Two. The latter entry can probably be assigned to the original band, however, and elsewhere Greenway has mooted another possible identification with Warin the Breton, addressee of Henry of Huntingdon's *De serie Britonum* (*H. Hist. Ang.*, p. 559 (note 2)).

¹⁰ For a summary of these two episcopates see *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 1, xxxvi-xxxix.

mass every day for the souls of the departed at the altar of St Catherine.¹¹ This is an entry which is very obviously irregular and would actually tend to support the idea that the kalendar was no longer functioning in the manner in which it once had at the time the entry was made. On every other occasion where the information included exceeds the available space next to a date, whether this is because of the notice of a gift or because multiple anniversaries are clustered on a single day, some care was taken not to encroach fully over the blank, ruled space assigned to another date - with the obvious implication that future entries were anticipated. But in this anomalous example, the entry is written out over the spaces reserved for the following two dates, leaving no extra room, which would tend to suggest that when the anniversary was registered it was not envisaged that any further names were to be added. While this item may warn of the inherent insecurity of assigning a document of this type too rigidly to a specific time period, it does not, in the end, challenge the basic chronology which has already been outlined.

Because the original group of entries in the kalendar include the anniversaries of benefactors who died as far back as the late-eleventh century, it is likely that it was initially copied from at least one antecedent source. A notable pattern relating to the registration of Lincoln clergymen within the original band of entries is that the more regular entry of canons between c.1170 and c.1183 is paralleled by a weighting towards the earliest members of the chapter. A simple analysis of the registration of archdeacons demonstrates this trend. Since five of the ten anniversaries explicitly referring to an archdeacon stipulate which archdeaconry they held, it is possible, by a process of elimination, to give a firm identification of the individual concerned in all but one instance. The ambiguous case relates to an archdeacon named Ralph (*ii id. Dec.*). This could refer to the first archdeacon of Leicester. Alternatively it might refer to the second archdeacon of Bedford, who was, according to Henry of Huntingdon, 'pitifully murdered' (*miserande occisus*).¹² Either way, this Ralph was one of six archdeacons registered in the calendar who had been replaced in office before the first version of the letter to Walter was produced in 1135. The names of the remaining four men were all added after the kalendar had been drawn up. William of St Clere (*v id. Feb.*), who was archdeacon of Northampton and a nephew of Bishop Alexander, died in 1169, and so is probably among the earliest additions.¹³ The remaining three archdeacons last occur in the 1170s. Although archdeacons obviously represent a limited sample, the apparent hiatus, a period of over thirty years without the entry of any archdeacon at all, does see some prominent omissions, including, for example, Henry of Huntingdon and Walter of Oxford. Yet this does not necessarily correspond with any kind of gap in the sources.

¹¹ He was still alive in 1215; see *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 10, pp. 274-275 (no. 2938).

¹² *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 592-593.

¹³ The entry is written in the main hand using (faintly discernible) carbon ink.

Certainly there are no shortage of dignitaries and canons registered in the intervening period, including, for example, Canon Ralph of Monmouth (*xiv kal. Sep.*), who appears regularly as a witness alongside Geoffrey of Monmouth, and, like Henry and Walter, last occurs around the mid-1150s.¹⁴ It is possibly worth clarifying too that while there were no archdeacons from within the diocese entered during this period, the anniversary of Canon Roger (*ix kal. Apr.*), who was archdeacon of Berkshire (in the diocese of Salisbury), seems to have been entered around this time. The same can be said of Canon Gilbert (*xii kal. Oct.*), who was the son of Richard, the first archdeacon of Lincoln (*kal. Jul.*).

There is an obstacle when it comes to identifying the earliest two or three generations of canons that seem to feature more prevalently in the kalendar. They are not always differentiated with reference to a particular office. Partly this may relate to the fact that terms of office only became standardized gradually over the course of the twelfth century. It is seen in the case of the early holders of the dignity that would become the archdeaconry of Stow, which was discussed previously. It is suggested that all three men mentioned by Henry of Huntingdon might be represented in the kalendar: Hugh (*xv kal. Jul.*), Osbert (*xv kal. Mar.*), and William (*viii kal. Apr.*). Osbert son of Hugh is not distinguished by any office, and is simply described as a canon, but, remarkably, William son of Osbert is not even called a canon. Just his name is given. In the case of Hugh – simply described as ‘the priest’ by Henry of Huntingdon – he is called ‘canon and priest’ in the kalendar. However, the title ‘canon and priest’ is common (appearing in 24 entries), and may have been applied to other early officeholders. As Albinus of Angers (who Henry describes as ‘*magistrum quippe meum*’) is the only canon known by this name, he might be associated, at least tentatively, with ‘*Albinus canonicus et sacerdos*’ (*xv kal. Jan.*). For the same reason, it is possible that the treasurer Reiner could be associated with ‘*Rainerus canonicus et sacerdos*’ (*iv non. Oct.*). Yet still, inevitably, a large number of identifications remain obscure or insecure. This is linked to the use for which the document was intended. For a solitary name, and nothing more besides, was felt to be a fitting and effective means of identification in prayer.¹⁵

For the most part, anniversaries entered in the calendar seem to have marked the date of death.¹⁶ The service may have been deferred, particularly if it clashed with a feast-day, and in later

¹⁴ *Fasti*, p. 136.

¹⁵ There were certain anxieties around this issue. An Austin canon from Norton Priory petitioned Rome because he feared the prayers said by his brothers under the name Augustine, given to him on his profession, would be of no benefit, and so asked if his new name could be confirmed, or his baptismal name, Henry, restored; *Selected Letters of Pope Innocent III concerning England (1198-1216)*, ed. C.R. Cheney and W.H. Semple (Nelson Medieval Texts, 1953), p. 83 (no. 27).

¹⁶ This would be consistent with the format ascribed to the ‘necrology’ by modern historians, in which ‘the dead are intended to be remembered on the anniversary of the day of their death’; Keats-Rohan, ‘Testimonies of the Living

obituaries surviving from Lincoln, there are several cases where the date of an anniversary has been altered. In the early-thirteenth century, Roger de Insula, the chancellor, arranged to be remembered on the day of his burial rather than that of his death, and this practice was not unheard of.¹⁷ As with many of the canons who established individual obits, or anniversaries, around this time, he also instituted the service far in advance of his death, and so designated it temporarily to a particular feast-day (30 November, in Roger's case, the feast of St Andrew). Nevertheless, a kalendar such as this has some value attached to it in being a fairly consistent historical record (not least because the anniversary was sometimes the occasion for related annual payments to the church). Slight discrepancies could creep in between such sources because there was no uniform method of determining when a day had ended. Frequently it was calculated from Vespers, or sunset, which explains why Matilda of Scotland's anniversary was celebrated on 1 May at her burial place in Westminster Abbey, but on 2 May at Lincoln. In his epitaph Henry of Huntingdon reports that, 'The first day of May, at night-time as we reckon it on earth, took her away to enter into endless day'.¹⁸ But, as a general rule, it has been claimed that, for cases in which it is possible to compare chronicles with calendars, where inconsistency occurs it is 'in the majority of cases in the chronicle'.¹⁹

The value of the kalendar in this respect should not be overlooked. The capacity for variation in the dates of death recorded in chronicles is illustrated in the case of Bishop Remigius, which is after all the starting point for this inquiry. Because the untimeliness of the bishop's demise seemed fateful to commentators, being so close to the planned consecration ceremony, the date of his death was consistently calculated from the day that had been arranged for this occasion. Henry of Huntingdon and William of Malmesbury, for example, note that Remigius died on the day before the proposed dedication, but both failed to mention when it was meant to be. While the date of the dedication is provided by John of Worcester, where it is explained that all the English bishops had been summoned to Lincoln for the dedication of the church on 9 May, the account goes on to state that Remigius died not one but two days beforehand.²⁰ Writing much later on, Ralph of Diceto, who, when serving as archdeacon of Middlesex, may also have been a member of the chapter of Lincoln Cathedral, followed closely the phrasing of this version of events, but, for some reason, gives 10 May as the date of the

Dead', p. 190. Two slightly dubious entries are those in which related individuals are paired on the same day, are remarkable because of their proximity in the text (*v id Sep. & iv id. Sep.*).

¹⁷ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 9, pp. 110-111 (no. 2508).

¹⁸ *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 462-463. In the same way King Henry I's death on the night of 1 December was assigned to 2 December at Lincoln.

¹⁹ *The heads of religious houses, England and Wales, 940-1216*, ed. David Knowles, C.N.L. Brooke and Vera C.M. London (Cambridge, 1972, repr. 2001), pp. 8-9.

²⁰ John of Worcester, vol. 3, p. 62.

ceremony. The date of the bishop's death would thus be put a day later, on 8 May.²¹ Hugh the Chanter, meanwhile, clouds the issue further, claiming that Remigius had fallen ill on the day prior to the consecration, for which no date is given, and then died 'shortly afterwards'.²² It is remarkable that not one of these accounts tally with the anniversary recorded in the obituary kalendar, where Remigius was commemorated on 6 May.²³

The form of the kalendar shows that it was designed to be used over the course of a yearly cycle with annual commemoration celebrated, at least in principle, on the day assigned to each individual. The dominical letters placed in the left-hand column of the frame meant that it was relatively straightforward to establish on which day of the week an anniversary would fall, and whether or not it would coincide with the season of Lent or with any moveable feast. While liturgical sources from Lincoln during this period are scarce, the *Liber Niger* clearly sets out the order of service which would later be followed on the occasion of an anniversary. It shows that some distinction was given to certain anniversaries such as those of kings and of bishops of Lincoln (specifically including bishop-elect Geoffrey Plantagenet), when compared to the rest.²⁴ An obvious way of marking anniversaries apart in the kalendar is the use of red ink, which is limited to the entries of Bishop Remigius and Bishop Alexander. Potentially this prompted some variation in the way in which their anniversaries were observed. There is contemporary evidence for variation of this sort from other secular cathedrals.²⁵

While the patterns of worship carried out at Lincoln were given some unique quality through the suffrages organized for benefactors, supplementing the regular observance of the divine office, in general the form of intercessory services adhered to uniform and conventional devotional models based on the Requiem Mass and the Office of the Dead – an adaptation of the hours of Vespers, Matins, and Lauds, which had come to be referred to collectively as *Placebo*

²¹ Radulphi de Diceto Decani Lundoniensis Opera Historica, 1, ed W. Stubbs (RS, 1876), p. 217.

²² Hugh the Chanter, *The History of the Church of York, 1066-1127*, ed. and trans. Charles Johnson, rev. M. Brett, C.N.L. Brooke, and M. Winterbottom (OMT, 1990), pp. 14-17: 'infirmate correptus ex qua et paulo post uitam finiuit'.

²³ We do know this remained the day on which his memory was honoured at Lincoln at the end of the twelfth century because Gerald of Wales, notes the concurrence on 6 May of the feast of St John before the Latin Gate and the moveable feast of the Ascension. *Festa Johannis erant portam simul ante Latinam et Domini Ascensus, cum pater hic obit*; G. Op., vol. 7, pp. 21-22.

²⁴ 'Anniversaria quidem fiunt in hunc modum: pro rege et episcopo loci et Galfrido archiepiscopo eboracensi cantatur missa in maiori altari et commendacio dicitur in choro, pro aliis in capitulo, cum Placebo et dirige .ix. lectionum preter quam in paschali tempore, nisi anniversarium venerit tali die quo fieri non solet in choro, quo casu fiet in alio tempore cum distinctione tamen. Rex, episcopus, decanus, precentor, cancellarius, subdecanus et ille pro quo vinum confertur canonicis die anniversarii sui speciale habebit officium suum et separatim et si cum aliis anniversariis concurrat aliorum vero anniversaria sive simul evenerint sive temporibus quibus fieri non solent communiter fient et una vice'; *Statutes*, vol. 1, pp. 296-298 (pp. 374, 383, and 393, for special arrangements on specific feast days).

²⁵ Anniversaries from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries entered in the margins of the martyrology of Exeter Cathedral (Exeter Cathedral Library, MS 3518), for instance, clearly distinguish between 'a solemn service as for a bishop' and 'a solemn service as for a canon', stipulated when the service (taken by the editors to mean an 'obit mass') was offered to those who were either not bishops or not canons (e.g. Peter archdeacon of Cornwall (*d. 7 September, 1171*) possibly the brother of Bishop Robert II of Salisbury), *Death and Memory in Medieval Exeter* (Exeter, 2003), ed. David Levine and Nicholas Orme, pp. 250-258 (no. 25).

et Dirige by the early-thirteenth century. Essentially, at least in their outward arrangement, these commemorative observances repeated or sustained the main celebrative components of the funeral service. This is signalled by the positioning of the kalendar within the bible. Heading the page on which it begins is a passage from the preceding Book of Job, *Spiritus meus* (Job 19: 20-27), which customarily featured in the Office of the Dead as one of the three lessons to be read at Matins.

Entry in the kalendar was a privilege reserved for a few. The relationships that bound these people to the cathedral could differ markedly, but sporadic references to ‘our brother’ or ‘our sister’ denote that lay benefactors established confraternal relations with the church.²⁶ There were obvious contrasts between what this entailed in the context of a secular cathedral compared with a monastic community. Most conspicuously, the confraternal agreements that lay benefactors reached with monasteries might offer the prospect of taking up residence within a community, even if it were only for a relatively brief spell towards the end of one’s life, in preparation for death (*ad succurrendum*). This practice required sizeable gifts to the monastery and complemented the provision of burial and commemoration.²⁷ It also reflected a special esteem for the monastic setting as the surest path to salvation and could be an aspiration among the secular canons. Thurstan archbishop of York, ‘at the petition, on the advice, and with the approval’ of his chapter, allowed any secular canon of York wishing to become a monk or regular canon to give two-thirds of his prebendal revenues for one year to the monastery that he chose to enter.²⁸ A secular cathedral could not offer the advantages of entrance to a cloistered community as might a cathedral priory.²⁹ There is scattered evidence that a number of people entered in the kalendar received burial at Lincoln, and this may well reflect a more general trend.

Not all of those listed in the kalendar were strictly speaking benefactors of the cathedral, to the extent that gifts were presented on their behalf. While the small group of gifts registered within particular entries normally relate to instances where an individual had presented a gift

²⁶ Receipt of the fraternity of the cathedral is explicitly stated in two similarly worded deeds recording gifts made by twin sisters, Richilda and Matilda, c.1200 (*quia recepta sum in fraternitate memorate ecclesie*), of land inherited jointly from their uncle Alan; *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 9, pp. 1-2 (nos. 2390-2391). They do not seem to correspond with women of that name in the obituary calendar. Both Matildas who appear there (besides queens), are connected with separate donations. One gave land in St Augustine’s (*id. Aug.*) the other had a son who gave 12*d.* rent (*viii kal. Aug.*). The single name Richilda (*xii kal. Apr.*) probably refers to Richilda daughter of Lamfram who gave her land in the parish of St Swithins.

²⁷ See C. Harper-Bill, ‘The Piety of the Anglo-Norman Knightly Class’, *Anglo-Norman Studies* (1979), vol. 2, pp. 69-71

²⁸ Alternatively the sum could be granted to kinsmen, to the needy, or used to pay debts. The same applied to churches of St John, Beverley, St Wilfred, Ripon, St Mary, Southwell, and St Oswald, Gloucester, *Early Yorkshire Charters*, vol. 1 (1914), ed. William Farrer and Charles Clay, pp. 130-131 (no. 150); *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 5, pp. 64-65 (nos. 79-80).

²⁹ Specific rules were set down at Worcester Cathedral for free men who became members of the community *ad succurrendum*, *The Cartulary of Worcester Cathedral Priory*, ed. R.R. Darlington (PRS; London, 1968), p. 178-179 (no. 334).

personally, three entries mention a donor as distinct from the person commemorated. The anniversary of Gilbert the Clerk (*non. Oct.*), for example, was established by his mother, Lecia, who gave a rent worth 2s from land in Newark, formerly held by her husband Arnold the Mason. An unnamed son offered a rental payment in order to found an anniversary for his mother Matilda (*viii kal. Aug.*). Hamo the chancellor made a gift of a book of sermons for the soul of his brother Peter, abbot of Missenden (*viii id. Jun.*).

With the exception of this last case it is probable that these entries relate to gifts made on the occasion of a funeral. Thus Alice de Condet, together with her infant son Roger, gave and placed upon the altar three bovates and three messuages to the cathedral on the day that her husband Robert de Condet (*vi id. Oct.*) was buried. At this time King Stephen granted to Bishop Alexander the wardship of her son Roger until he was old enough to be made a knight and hold his lands in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Kent. This was presumably the occasion when, c.1160-1165, together with a company of the bishop's knights, Roger confirmed the grant that he and his mother had made on the day of his father's funeral.³⁰

Of course the presentation of a gift to the church in which one's kinsman was buried could simply be a way to honour their memory. In the mid-1150s William Becket, whose father lay buried in the cathedral cemetery, presented upon the altar one bovat and one house in Croxby (Lincs.) for the salvation of his father's soul.³¹ From a rare explanatory clause at the start of the deed which records a gift made by Walter de Amundeville of an annual payment from his mill at Kirkby, it is clear that his wife Hawise (*x kal. Mar.*) was buried at the cathedral, and probably also Walter's parents, Goscelin (*non. Apr.*) and Beatrice (*iii id. Nov.*):

He who endeavours to offer some benefice for the salvation of departed loved ones at the holy place in which their bodies lie shows himself fittingly and commendably mindful of them. Therefore I, Walter de Amundeville, the bishop of Lincoln's steward, have given a yearly rent of 3s from my mill at Kirkby to the commons of the canons in the church of St Mary of Lincoln for the souls of my progenitors and my wife, which is to be paid on the anniversary of the death of my wife Hawise.³²

³⁰ The three bovates and messuages were in Normanby by Stow (Lincs.). The confirmation includes the condition that he would hold the land for an annual payment of 10s, except in wartime, when the land would revert to the canons and the payments would cease. With Roger's consent, Alice also gave for Robert's soul the render of the heath and marsh of Skellingthorpe to the church of St Mary Magdalene Hartsholme, *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 61-62 (no. 99) & (for editorial notes) pp. 282-292; *ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 1-2 (nos. 1101-1102).

³¹ *Reg. Ant.* vol. 4, p. 226 (no. 1389).

³² *Reg. Ant.* vol. 4, pp. 155-6 (no. 1292): *Recte et laudabiliter se memorem defunctorum ostendit amicorum qui locis sacrosanctis in quibus eorum corpora sepulta quiescent aliquod beneficium pro eorum salute studuit conferre. Ea ratione ego Walterus de Amundevill dapifer episcopo Linc' dedi pro animabus parentum meorum et uxoris mee annuum redditum .iii. solidorum de molandino meo de Kirchebeia in communem canonicorum ecclesie sancta Marie Linc' qui persolventur die anniversaria obitus uxoris mee Hawisie. In usus*

With this added stipulation, that the payment would be rendered on the anniversary itself, Walter expressed a desire to bind the annual act of transfer and the regular commemorative service. The most conspicuous byname within the kalendar belongs to this family whose members held the secular office of steward (*dapifer*) in the bishop's household. Their progenitors are thought to stem from Mondeville (in the arrondissement of Caen), which had connections with the abbey of Fécamp, where Bishop Remigius had been almoner. The office of steward passed successively from Goscelin to three of his sons; Walter (*xiii kal. Jan.*), William (*xi kal. Aug.*), and Elias.³³ Another son, Jordan (*kal. Jul.*), served as cathedral treasurer, and Jordan's son Adam was also a canon.³⁴ As is shown by the witness list to the deed quoted above which includes three of Walter's brothers (William, Elias, and Adam) the initial gift appears to have been made as part of a collective act of remembrance.

In cases involving the conveyance of land, the payment of rent, or the donation of books to the cathedral, the kalendar did not serve as the primary record of a gift, and this may explain the relatively straightforward manner in which information is relayed.³⁵ Size or value of property is rarely mentioned and in eight entries property is simply indicated as 'his/her land'. Where the location of a gift of property is named in the kalendar, it is most commonly (in ten instances), within a parish of the city, and on one level the obituary kalendar serves as a useful record of the initial acquisition of parcels of land within the city and of the consolidation of the cathedral's interests within this locale. Regarding the presentation of gifts, as we have seen, family members were often involved in their delivery. This could be crucial for the security of a grant. Hence there is one entry in the obituary kalendar (*iii kal. Aug.*) which records the requisite assent of a husband to the gift of his wife (*'concessu viri su'*). In the case of Richilda daughter of Lamfram (perhaps *xii kal. Apr.*) who gave her marriage-portion in the parish of St Swithun to the cathedral chapter to take effect at the time of her death, the grant was later disputed by her brother William.³⁶

There are a series of anniversaries in the calendar which reflect relationships formed with leading families in the city.³⁷ In some instances it is possible to trace successive generations of family members within the kalendar. This is certainly the case with the constables of Lincoln

tamen eorum canonicorum dumtaxat quos illi servicio interesse contigerit. Hec autem acta sunt in capitulo Linc' anno ab incarnato domino m.c. LXII. mense martio. Testibus Radulfo subdecano Wigero. Siwardo. Pagano. Ilberto. Gervasio. Alexandro Malebissa. Willelmo de Amundevilla. Elia fratre eius. et Adam fratre eius. et Willelmo de Bad'.

³³ Lewis C. Lloyd, *The Origins of some Anglo-Norman Families*, ed. C.T. Clay and D.C. Douglas (Leeds, 1951), pp. 3-4.

³⁴ The cure of a member of his *familia* was reported in the *Vita sancti Remigii*, G. Op., vol. 7, p. 23.

³⁵ An exception may be gifts of church furnishings (e.g. *ii kal. Jul.*) where no corroborative document survives.

³⁶ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 8, pp. 43-44 (no. 2230).

³⁷ So, for example, William (*iv non. Mar.*) and Gerald (*viii kal. Oct.*) were both sons of William of Paris, who was bailiff of Lincoln in the 1160s. Alice (*v id. Aug.*), the wife of Eilsi of Wigford, who gave 3 acres of land in the parish of St Bartholomew, was grandmother of the first mayor, Adam; see Hill, pp. 391-392 & pp. 385-387.

Castle, beginning with Colsuein (*vi id. Jan.*), who is the very first name listed in the kalendar (although his anniversary was eventually moved to 21 March).³⁸ His lands and office passed from his son Picot (*viii kal. Mai*), through Muriel (*iv id. Sep.*), who was either his daughter or his granddaughter by Picot's wife Beatrice (*non. Mar.*), to Robert de La Haye (*iv id. Sep.*), and then to Richard (*viii kal. Mai*), who was Robert's son (note that Picot and Richard share an anniversary as do Robert and Muriel). Richard's eldest daughter, Nicola de La Haye, who famously acted as constable of the castle at the beginning of the thirteenth century, was also a benefactor of the cathedral, giving a rent of 21*d* to the fabric fund from land lying beyond the gate of the cathedral cemetery.³⁹

A number of benefactors assigned their gifts to particular prebends. These were used either to establish, or to supplement, the independent endowments held by individual canons, which were financially distinct from the cathedral's main estates, and mostly free from episcopal dues, rights, and jurisdiction.⁴⁰ Robert de Stuteville (perhaps *vii kal. Mar.*), for example, gave houses near the bridge of Lincoln 'in prebend' before 1106. The first canon we know to have been collated to this particular prebend, called 'Thorngate', was Philip son of William son of Osbert, who seems to have benefited from a supplementary gift made by Martell of land by the River Witham (possibly Cwenhild (*xiv kal. Feb.*) was his wife).⁴¹ Other gifts were subsequently assigned to prebends.⁴² Royal grants were particularly important in establishing prebendal properties in the city and in the region. In the early part of his reign, Henry I gave the canons all the churches of his fee in Lincoln. Many of these became prebends (before 1147 when all churches in the borough not assigned as prebends were granted to the precentor).⁴³ However, the cathedral's prebends were widely dispersed and often far from Lincoln. In part this was because, at the time of the transfer of the see, the episcopal estates lay predominantly in the south of the diocese, including large units of land (90 hides) in Oxfordshire, centred on the church of Dorchester. It was from this that the earliest prebends were created. The first bishops allocated a number of churches from manors that had formed part of the Dorchester estates, either to found new prebends or to augment existing ones. Remigius granted the churches of

³⁸ *Statutes* (part 2), cclix.

³⁹ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 10, pp. 267-268 (no. 2931).

⁴⁰ Major, 'Finances of the Dean and Chapter', pp. 149-150. In 1146 a bull of Pope Eugenius III addressed to the canons of Lincoln set out the distinction between prebendal possessions and those of the common, *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1 no. 252, pp. 197-202. For the development of the prebendal system see P.D.A. Harvey, 'English Cathedral Estates in the Twelfth Century', *The Medieval English Cathedral: Papers in Honour of Pamela Tudor-Craig (Proceedings of the 1198 Harlaxton Symposium)*, ed. Janet Backhouse (Donington, 2003), pp. 5-7.

⁴¹ *Fasti*, p. 102.

⁴² Such as the gift of Roger Bigod (perhaps *ii id. Mar.*) of the church of St Benedict in Wigford (before 1107), which was eventually joined with King Stephen's grant 'in prebend' of the church of North Kelsey; *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, p. 27 (no. 34) & *Fasti*, p. 92.

⁴³ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 262-263 (no. 302).

Buckingham, Aylesbury, and Leighton Buzzard. And, at some point before 1146, either Robert Bloet or Alexander granted a further 8 churches on episcopal estates to form individual prebends, including, in Oxfordshire, the churches of Banbury, Cropredy, and Thame.⁴⁴ Bishop Alexander also granted the church of Great Milton in Oxfordshire to augment the prebend of Aylesbury, and then used the manor of Milton to form a discrete prebend. About this time Alexander oversaw the reconstitution of the old cathedral at Dorchester as an Augustinian abbey (c.1140).⁴⁵ Robert Chesney made similar grants from manors in Nottinghamshire which the bishops of Lincoln had held in 1186.⁴⁶

The endowment and allocation of prebends was critical to the organization of the cathedral chapter and was an issue of concern to the whole body of canons. The basic qualification for membership of the chapter was the fact of being collated to a prebend.⁴⁷ Attempts were made to assign specific prebends to particular offices (although not with great success). Bishop Robert Chesney conferred the church of Langford upon his kinsman Robert Foliot (later bishop of Hereford), recently appointed archdeacon of Oxford, and annexed it to the archdeaconry in perpetuity, so that 'all archdeacons of Oxford will be canons of the church of Lincoln by reason of this prebend'.⁴⁸ In a similar way Bishop Alexander assigned the church of Leighton Bromswold to the subdeanery (both arrangements had been superseded by the end of our period). Robert Chesney's act was witnessed by 'the entire chapter' (*toto capitulo*). The witness list names the dean, the precentor, the chancellor, the subdean, and three archdeacons. Two charters relating to the prebend of South Scarle, endowed with the churches of South Carlton and Thurlby (Lincs.) by the commander Bishop Alexander's troops (*constabularius*), also show in their especially lengthy lists of witnesses the collective participation of the chapter in these kinds of settlement, as well as the presence of local laymen and ecclesiasts.⁴⁹

There were also personal associations and private interests in the affairs of particular prebends. The influence of the subdean Ralph of Caen (*viii kal. Sep.*) is perhaps discernable in the nature of the information recorded in the kalendar in relation to the prebend of Asgarby (by Spilsby), for example. The endowment had been held for some time by Ralph, before he became

⁴⁴ The other five churches were Buckden, Leicester St Margaret, Leighton Bromswold (called Leighton Ecclesia), Louth, and Sleaford.

⁴⁵ *Reg. Ant.* vol. 1, pp. 245-249 (no. 286).

⁴⁶ *Fasti*, x-xi.

⁴⁷ In one exceptional case, when it was judged that bishop-elect Geoffrey Plantagenet had exceeded his authority by making an appointment to the vacant archdeaconry of Northampton, the new incumbent, Savaric, 'freely resigned' the associated prebend in favour of Gentilius, Pope Alexander III's nephew. The pope responded by restoring the prebend, explaining that 'it is contrary to reason and ecclesiastical order that an archdeacon should be without a prebend'; *Papal Decretals*, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁸ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 2, pp. 38-39 (no. 346). For its dating to the mid-1150s see *Fasti*, p. 157. Robert Foliot, who already held a different prebend at Lincoln (*ibid.* p. 74), was elected bishop of Hereford in 1173.

⁴⁹ *Reg. Ant.* vol. 2, pp. 253-254 (nos. 552-553).

subdean (c.1160), at which point he would presumably have transferred to the prebend of Leighton Ecclesia (based on the church of Leighton Bromswold), which, as we have said, was assigned to the subdeanery by Bishop Alexander. But before he was made subdean (c.1150), with the consent of the chapter, Ralph of Caen had let out part of the prebend (20 acres) to his vassal Edrich for an annual payment of 10*s*, so that Edrich and his heirs would be free tenants of the church, obedient and subject to Ralph and his successors.⁵⁰ No other endowment recurs by name in the kalendar and no other endowment is specifically described as a prebend. The related entries stand apart from any other type of transaction; involving an initial gift (*dedit*) by Roger fitz Gerold (*id. Jul.*), the subsequent confirmation (*confirmavit*) of this gift by his heir, William de Roumare (*iii id. Sep.*), and finally the concession (*concessit*) of Saher de Arceles (*iii kal. Jun.*). In the confirmation of William de Roumare, the earl of Lincoln, the initial gift was said to have been made, ‘as he had ascertained from his barons and old men in the wapentake of Bolingbroke’, both by his father Roger and his mother Lucy of Bolingbroke as a gift to the church of Lincoln and to Robert de Granville (the first prebendary).⁵¹ Saher de Arceles, who in 1147 had been one of the leaders of the English contingent at the siege of Lisbon, quitclaimed half a carucate in Asgarby ‘at the end of his days for the health of his soul’.⁵²

The foundation and endowment of prebends was instrumental to the creation and preservation of particular kin groups within the church. This was a prevalent feature of benefaction. Thus Bishop Alexander’s constable William (*ii kal. Feb.*) had established and augmented the prebend of South Scarle for his son Robert to hold. A significant advantage of making gifts in prebend to secular cathedral chapters, or to other collegiate churches, was the continuing opportunities that this afforded for patronage, where the right to present clergy, or the advowson, was reserved.⁵³ The advowson of prebends, or the occupancy of a prebend itself, might pass through generations. Philip of Kyme, the son of Simon fitz William (*viii kal. Nov.*), gave the churches of North Carlton and Dalby to form the prebend named Carlton Kyme, reserving the advowson to his son Simon. The prebend itself was held by another kinsman, possibly another son, Richard of Kyme, who served for a time as treasurer.⁵⁴ The inheritance of a prebend might be stipulated at the time of foundation. Hence when Henry I granted the church on the royal manor of Great Corringham (Lincs.), he stated that Brand the priest (*non. Mar.*) and

⁵⁰*Reg. Ant.*, vol. 2, p. 192-193 (no. 495). Crosby described this as an ‘example of how the chapter came to assert its authority with regard to prebendal jurisdiction’, *Bishop and Chapter*, p. 303. See also *Statutes* (part 2), ccxxxiv.

⁵¹*Reg. Ant.* vol. 1, pp. 78-79 (nos. 130-131).

⁵²This is confirmed by a charter of Gilbert de Gant; *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, p. 77 (no. 129).

⁵³David Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London, 1992), pp. 269-270.

⁵⁴The prebend was augmented by an annual payment of 50*s* from the bishop; *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 142-143 (no. 214); *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 2, p. 67 (no. 96); *Fasti*, p. 19.

his son after him were to hold it for the duration of their lives in prebend.⁵⁵ A cautionary story told by Gerald of Wales, one he says was ‘frequently repeated’, about a canon of Lincoln who fell into poverty after giving over a prebend to his son, suggests that this kind of arrangement did not always promote harmonious relations within the church. In spite of numerous protestations, the son, once collated, refused to provide for his father in any way. Even as his father lay prostrate on the floor in front of him, appealing for assistance, the son simply aimed a kick at his head. On hearing of this the bishop intervened and restored the prebend to the father⁵⁶

The dominant position of the bishops, and of episcopal patronage, is reflected not only in the occupancy of prebends but also in respect of appointments to high office. This would even appear to have extended to bishop-elect Geoffrey Plantagenet, whose half-brother Peter succeeded him to the wealthy archdeaconry of Lincoln c.1175.⁵⁷ Naturally the obituary kalendar offers a valuable record of episcopal dynasties among the body of canons. We also find the anniversaries of Alice de Langetot (*iv id. Jan.*), the mother of Bishop Robert Chesney, and Bishop Alexander’s mother Ada (*ii kal. Jan.*). Bishop Alexander’s kinsmen, in particular, represented an influential ecclesiastical and legislative faction, and were a leading group within chapter, with Alexander’s brother David (*xiii kal. Feb.*) holding the archdeaconry of Buckingham and Adelelm (*vi kal. Mar.*) serving as dean. All three were nephews of Roger bishop of Salisbury (*iii id. Dec.*), the impoverished and unlettered priest who had rocketed up the social pyramid to become Henry I’s chief minister.⁵⁸ It has been suggested that Canon Fulk *de Cheineto* (*iii non. Oct.*) must be an otherwise unknown kinsman of Robert Chesney, to add to his two nephews Gerard (*vi id. Dec.*) and Martin the treasurer. Gerard’s appearance in the kalendar is notable because, just like his uncle, his name was at first entered on a different day (*vi id. Nov.*). In his case there is a neat erasure line drawn through his name.⁵⁹ The absence of Martin the treasurer, who had been replaced in office by c.1187 (with the creation of List Two), and last occurs 1179/1180, would perhaps suggest that he died after the last entries of canons were made in the kalendar c.1183. Of course the occurrence of the bishops’ kin within the kalendar reminds us that while the

⁵⁵ Brand would appear to be another canon listed in the kalendar who is not specifically described as a canon. This prebend was in 1277 providing a priest for the church of Stow, which may reflect an arrangement dating back to its foundation; *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 127-128 (no. 35).

⁵⁶ *G. Sp. Duo.*, pp. 14-15.

⁵⁷ The clergy of the archdeaconry would eventually request his removal, but it was not until 1217 that papal judges enquired into his probity, *Fasti*, p. 25.

⁵⁸ Roger’s gift of the church of Langford is confirmed by a charter of Henry I, *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 88-89 (no. 139).

⁵⁹ In addition to the 180 entries there are also, in places, visible scars typical of erasure. This could be the result of scribal error, as is clearly the case for examples of duplication on the final page of the calendar in relation to Gerard the subdeacon and Bishop Robert Chesney. More intriguingly, a few words appear to have been deleted from the anniversary for King Stephen, and in one case (*ii non. Apr.*) a name is scratched away completely. It could also indicate a scribal error, but does at least raise the possibility of a kind of *damnatio memoriae*, involving the deliberate subtraction of a name.

document can be associated quite securely with a long period of the cathedral's history in which there was no enthroned bishop, and can also help to map out the expanding resources of an increasingly independent and assured body of canons, the imprint of the bishops of Lincoln on the organization of the church remained definite and deep.

THE EPISODE AT BUCKDEN

To give some context to the commemorative arrangements designated by the obituary kalendar, and to explain some of the more distinctive ways in which the organization of intercessory worship changed at the cathedral from the late-twelfth century, it is necessary to take account of the particular cultural and ideological environment which the church inhabited, and to consider the gradual adaptation of a shared conviction in the process of collaborative engagement between the worlds of the living and the dead.

One fruitful place to start might be to turn to the copious evidence for attitudes towards the dead and for conceptions of the operation of intercessory worship which can be discovered in contemporary narratives. The spiritual benefits of ritual expiation for the souls of the departed were framed, and given fresh intensity, by graphic revelatory experiences of the kind that flourished in England in the late-twelfth century. Ghost stories surviving from this period often encapsulate some special insight into the journeys of souls in the afterlife. In England and Scotland especially, these did not only concern the visitations of spectres or apparitions, but also sightings of the walking dead, or reanimated corpses. There was some debate as to whether these revenants were moved by ghosts, the soul which had once inhabited the body, or alternatively by demons, but reports of such sightings are numerous and can be found in a range of sources (we will discuss this topic more fully later on). There is additionally a group of vision narratives from the time relating otherworldly revelations and depicting in vivid imagery the conditions of souls in the afterlife. One example from the 1190s, recording the experiences of a monk from the abbey of Eynsham, is addressed to Bishop Hugh of Avalon and was recorded by his chaplain and hagiographer Adam of Eynsham.¹

We might connect these narratives with a more defined conception of purgatory, in which the ancient patristic idea of purgation of the soul was envisaged more concretely as a delimited space. Famously, in his study of the development of the notion of purgatory, Jacques Le Goff attached great significance to the emergence of the noun ‘purgatory’ (*purgatorium*) in the latter half of the twelfth century within the Cistercian order and in the Parisian schools of theology.² Yet it is important to acknowledge that the idea of ‘the third place’, not encompassed by heaven or hell, resisted comprehensive definition. This was no doubt part of its appeal as a

¹ *Eynsham Cartulary*, ed. H. E. Salter (Oxford, 1907), vol. 2, pp. 257-371; a useful recent introduction (with parallel Latin text) is found in the Middle English edition, *The Revelation of the Monk of Eynsham*, ed. Robert Easting (Oxford, 2002).

² Jacques Le Goff, *La naissance du Purgatoire* (Paris, 1981), esp. pp. 489-493; English translation by Arthur Goldhammer, *The Birth of Purgatory* (London, 1984), pp. 362-366.

subject of discourse. Considerable variation and speculation persisted throughout the Middle Ages. The monk of Eynsham, for example, claimed to have witnessed two intermediary areas of the afterlife. St Nicholas, his spiritual guide, showed him one (with three distinct regions) inhabited by souls that were being expunged of their sins, ‘the place of purgation’, and, separately, an ‘earthly paradise’, in which souls blissfully awaited their final journey to the court of heaven. Since there was great diversity in these stories, in many cases they might tend to inhibit, rather than facilitate, the formulation of a coherent impression of the afterlife or of the migration of souls. Unsurprisingly there was also a degree of tension with theological authorities. Walter Map related the experience of a Northumbrian knight who, seated on his own after dinner one day, saw a terrible apparition of his long-dead father ‘clad in a foul and ragged shroud’. At first he mistook the revenant for a malign spirit (*daemonium*), but in conversation discovered that his father, who had been excommunicated for failing to pay tithes, was helped greatly by the prayers of the church, and by gifts of alms, so that his soul had now arrived at a point where he was able to seek a priest for absolution: ‘This new case’, Walter said, ‘has introduced a new subject of discussion into the books of divinity’.³ It is difficult to argue that a ‘marvel’ (*prodigium*) such as this, or a specific vision narrative for that matter, can be seen as an embodiment of prevalent cultural attitudes relating to the practice of intercessory worship at the cathedral. Peter Brown has warned of the problems of interpreting and drawing particular historical significance from stories of this kind, pertinently arguing instead that ‘we should take care not to endow any one narrative with universal validity’, and should resist the desire ‘to impose imaginative form on a problem that was almost too big to be seen’.⁴

While there were divergences in the kind of insights contained in ghost stories and vision narratives, there were also common themes, and some consistent messages. These stories undoubtedly fostered, and also reflected, a sense of proximity to souls in torment, and nurtured a sense of obligation towards the dead.⁵ Such encounters generally tended to promote the efficacy of alms-giving and of propitiatory rituals as measures capable of atoning for the residual sins of the faithful departed, and particularly of the celebration of the mass as a remedial sacrifice enacted on behalf of all Christian society. In doing so they lent weight to the functions of the priest. There was nothing particularly new in this. Old and familiar stories that established the

³ W. *De Nug.*, pp. 206-207.

⁴ Peter Brown, ‘The Decline of the Empire of God: Amnesty, Penance, and the Afterlife from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages’, *Last Things: Death & the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Caroline Walker Bynum and Paul Freeman (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 44.

⁵ Indeed there was an acknowledgement that souls undergoing punishment might make regular contact with the living, appearing in visions and dreams, in order to convey their distress, both as a warning to others, and in order to make specific requests of the living, while souls lifted up to the heights did not show themselves. Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia* (OMT, 2002), ed. and trans. S.E. Banks and J.W. Binns, pp. 588-591.

basic efficacy of intercessory worship were also rehearsed and invoked. In his catalogue of English saints Henry of Huntingdon included the purgatorial vision of Drythelm told by Bede. From Bede he also took the local story of Tunna, a priest who offered frequent masses for the absolution of his brother Imma's soul, believing, mistakenly, that he had been killed at the Battle of the Trent (679). Imma was taken captive, but, any time a mass was celebrated on his behalf, the chains used to restrain him fell apart. Bede stressed the tremendous popular appeal of this story. It had inspired many 'to offer up more frequent sacrifices to God in the holy oblation and to increase their alms and prayers, for the deliverance of those who had departed from the world'.⁶ Although this story contains no direct encounter with the afterlife, it offered a compelling image of the dynamic power of priestly mediation. Eucharistic miracles and wonders, which also abounded in the late-twelfth century, could inform and encourage the practice of commemorative worship just as forcefully as direct encounters with the dead.

The present discussion will begin by considering one such account which contains a rare portrayal of the private, if quite exceptional, experiences of a parish priest observing regular devotions on behalf of the dead. It is included in Adam of Eynsham's extensive *Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*. The episode is useful in that it serves to introduce the personal association between Adam and Hugh. Adam's work, arranged in five books, which is commonly known as the *Magna vita*, is a source which will be referred to frequently in the later parts of this inquiry. But more importantly, this story encapsulates, quite compactly, the major themes relating to the delivery of intercessory services at the cathedral in the late-twelfth century. It is a way to frame what must be a fairly brief discussion of a multifaceted topic.

In 1194, on Saturday 7 November, Bishop Hugh of Avalon arrived at the episcopal palace of Buckden (Hunts.) having just attended the funeral of a servant of the archdeacon of Bedford. There, in the presence of a large and distinguished company of clergymen, he celebrated high mass in honour of the Virgin.⁷ Afterwards a young parish priest emerged from the crowd and managed to gain a private audience with the bishop. This priest claimed to have witnessed a strange and remarkable event one week earlier on the morning of All Saints Day. Hugh listened attentively and was deeply touched by the story he told.

According to custom (*sicut ipsa die sollempnis exhiberi earum memoria solet*), the priest had embarked upon a complete recitation of the psalter for the souls of all the faithful departed. After some time he noticed a sound and paused. Believing that he was completely alone, and in an empty church, he became aware of a voice emanating from the altar. It was uttering a fierce

⁶ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 664-667 (Tunna), pp. 680-685 (Drythelm).

⁷ For this story see A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 85-92.

denunciation of a whole range of clerical abuses. Complaints were made most forcefully about the inadequate provision of pastoral care. Special condemnation was reserved for rectors who farmed out their churches - 'let to make money for an annual rent to the highest bidder in the same way as taverns or shops'. The voice began by referring specifically to Hugh of Avalon: 'Arise my son, and go quickly to the bishop of Lincoln, and tell him from God to admonish earnestly the archbishop of Canterbury that with his assistance he should devote himself more zealously to reform of the church and the clergy. The daily acts of the rectors of churches and their assistants have deeply offended the divine majesty'. Once the voice had fallen silent the priest was overcome with emotion, struck unexpectedly by the memory of his recently deceased father. Filled with a sense of remorse, the priest broke off completely from the recitation of the psalter, and allowed more heartfelt prayers to pour out of him.

At first, the priest said, he had questioned his senses, but the same voice returned and was corroborated by a pious virgin who spent much of her time in the church. Thus he felt unable to refuse the final command, when the voice addressed him for a third time (which came as he was lying in bed the same night), to meet with the bishop of Lincoln urgently and pass on everything he had heard. He was told that he would be able to identify Hugh of Avalon because, as the bishop was celebrating mass, at the moments of elevation, the elements would appear in his hands in the form of the Christ-child. This the priest had just witnessed.

After listening to the story, and being moved to tears, Hugh instructed the priest to join a monastery: 'He told him it was not right for anyone who had heard and seen what he had to remain any longer in the world'. Crucially Adam of Eynsham concludes the passage with an additional remark; explaining that, as a monk, the same man would go on to experience certain 'very widely-known' revelations, which had been reported directly to Adam, and which he had set down on the bishop's instruction. This clearly references Adam's other major, and far more popular, composition, which is a narrative description of the ecstatic, near-death vision of the afterlife witnessed by Edmund, a fellow monk of Eynsham. An early manuscript, produced c.1200, identifies Adam and Edmund as brothers. Scholars have tended to interpret the phrasing to mean that they were not only brothers in religion, but blood brothers.⁸ It should also be noted that the meeting at Buckden took place three years before Adam's appointment as Hugh's chaplain in November 1197, and there is some indication that the main source for this passage was Edmund rather than Hugh.

⁸ Bodleian Library, MS Digby 34; see *Revelation*, Easting, xxxiv (*Incipit prefatio domni Adam prioris de Ameshamma super visionem quam uidit Eadmundus monachus, bone indolis adolescens, frater ipsius scilicet prioris, & in professione filius, anno ab incarnatione Domini M^o C^o xcvi^o d^o*).

There are a number of important themes which this account touches upon in relation to the organization of intercessory worship on behalf of the dead at Lincoln Cathedral. At its heart is a plea for reform of the church. Such polemic is often imbedded within revelation narratives, as a reflection of far-reaching political and doctrinal issues, or dealing with much more limited and local interests. After his assessment of the episcopate of Robert Bloet, for example, William of Malmesbury claimed that visions had been reported by an earlier monk of Eynsham specifically regarding the bishop's decision to reverse the transfer of the monastery to Stow. The Virgin Mary had appeared to this monk more than once to condemn Robert Bloet's actions.⁹ Edmund's vision of the afterlife has been seen as especially provincial in its subjects and perspective. His revelations, according to McGuire, 'were used to criticize the administration of his own monastery and to praise one faction of the monks for fighting laxity. Just as in Cistercian visions of the same period, this one was very much pro-domo: a view of the afterlife in order to legitimize and influence the situation of one's own monastery'.¹⁰ The message Edmund delivered at Buckden is quite general in its complaints. It is concerned with inadequate ministry to the parishes and emphasizes the need for a dedicated and virtuous body of clergy to manage this problem.

The message would have struck a chord with Hugh of Avalon. It reinforced a central element of his administrative programme. Not long before this incident, in March 1194, we have the first reference to William de Montibus serving as chancellor of the cathedral. Under his direction Lincoln became the foremost centre for pastoral training in England. The school was associated with the propagation of a highly practical and systematized brand of theological instruction focused on the office and ministry of the priest; essential matters of doctrine and the delivery of the sacraments. Of course the cathedral was not the only location in the diocese where clergy were educated. Oxford, most obviously, was known for its schools and for offering courses of higher education. On returning from Toledo, where he had been engaged in the translation of Arabic texts, Daniel of Morley claimed Northampton was where the liberal arts flourished most in England, and the school there was also known to have supported students engaged in prolonged periods of study.¹¹ Yet it was the provision of basic levels of training for priests that was pursued with special vigour in this period and that appears to have been especially effectual. While the various manuals produced by William de Montibus (along with

⁹ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum*, vol. 1, pp. 474-477. After Robert Bloet's death at Woodstock, when his viscera were interred at Eynsham, acts of propitiation were also said to have been undertaken, by singing masses and giving alms, to put an end to ghostly disturbances in the night.

¹⁰ Brian Patrick McGuire, 'Purgatory, the Communion of Saints, and Medieval change', *Viator* (1989), vol. 20, p. 80.

¹¹ One student was maintained in the schools at Northampton for five years (1171-1186). H.G. Richardson, 'The Schools of Northampton in the Twelfth Century', *The English Historical Review*, vol. 56 (1941), pp. 595-605.

those compiled by his students) demonstrate no new advances in speculative theology they do display an abundance of innovative pedagogical techniques tied to the programmatic transmission of core tenets of doctrine. The elementary style of these mnemonic devices is illustrated in one of William's metrical treatises (a favoured literary form) where seven birds are identified with the seven cardinal sins: peacocks go with pride, ravens with wrath, cuckoos with envy, and so on.¹² Alexander, prior of Canons Ashby (Northants.), also writing around the end of the twelfth century, applauded the growing number of masters who delivered simple instruction to priests without demanding a fee (which, he says, made a change from his own student days). Now these masters, 'wellsprings of the Saviour', could be found all over, but he singles out the nearby towns of Oxford and Northampton.¹³ At least to some extent it is possible to attribute an increased demand for ritual expiation in the late-twelfth century to a more proficient and engaged body of clergy in the parishes.

Expressly in relation to the procedure of instituting priests, a system of diocesan administration that reportedly benefited from the pastoral leadership and special intervention of Hugh of Avalon, the best evidence is contained in the episcopal rolls compiled under Bishop Hugh of Wells, which catalogue the institution of parish priests throughout the diocese towards the very end of our period. In them the methods of regulating appointments to benefices and of enforcing certain standards of education and moral conduct are represented.¹⁴ A key insight of the rolls is the frequency with which the diocesan authorities intervened to insure that parishes were in the hands of proficient clergy, even though, in practice, the ministry with which they were entrusted might be undertaken by substitutes. There were evidently criteria for selection and established methods of appraisal. In some rare instances those nominated were flatly rejected, or (more commonly) conditions were applied, generally involving the injunction to 'attend the schools and study'. Institutions were thus postponed or granted provisionally upon successful examination. The process of reform was gradual and the influence of the bishops only reached so far. Although Hugh of Avalon professed that he had tried to institute only learned and upright men to parishes, he ruefully acknowledged that this was not always achieved, lamenting that he had been duped by bogus and misleading letters of recommendation.¹⁵

¹² Joseph Goering, *William de Montibus (c.1140-1213): The Schools and the Literature of Pastoral Care* (Toronto, 1992), p. 177.

¹³ Alexander of Ashby, *De artificioso modo predicandi*, ed. F. Morenzoni, *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, vol. 32 (1991), p. 922. Cf. R.W. Hunt, 'English Learning in the Late Twelfth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th series, vol. 19 (1936), pp. 19-20.

¹⁴ *Rotuli Hugonis de Welles, Episcopi Lincolnensis, A.D. MCCIX-MCCXXXV*, ed. W.P.W. Phillimore, 3 vols. (London, 1907-1909). David Smith, 'The Rolls of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln 1209-35', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, vol. 45 (1972), pp. 155-95.

¹⁵ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 96-98.

This study concludes in the year of Bishop Robert Grosseteste's consecration (June 1235), whose episcopate saw an exceptional rigour brought to the enforcement of religious discipline throughout the diocese, mediated by the energetic personality of the bishop and assisted by the Franciscans. Within weeks of his consecration Grosseteste began an extensive visitation, 'archdeaconry by archdeaconry, and rural deanery by rural deanery, requiring the clergy of each deanery to bring their people with their children together at a fixed place and time in order to have their children confirmed, to hear the Word of God, and to make their confessions'.¹⁶ From the pronouncements he produced we get a sense of the elaborate abuses that might surround the provision of expiatory worship at a parish level. He condemns priests who impose commemorative services, in the form of annals and trentals, as a way to generate income, and a type of penance whereby a murderer, or one guilty of another's death, is required to make an offering on behalf of every deceased person in the parish.¹⁷

The diversification of commemorative services at the cathedral can be seen as one symptom of a much broader reform movement, in which greater energy was applied to the task of cultivating relations not only with the most wealthy and powerful inhabitants of the region, but with a far wider social group. This was a labour intensive process, requiring the acknowledgement of sin, a developed understanding of salvation, and the consistent propagation of penitential practices. The importance of confession and penance needed to be enforced on a parochial level, and also on a personal level, and this required input from a large clerical administration, including regional penitentiaries. It was this administrative structure that would be used to promote the benefits of gifts to the fraternity of the fabric in the last decade of the twelfth century. Such efforts would also involve the bishop directly. In his *Magna vita* Adam of Eynsham claims that Hugh of Avalon had once confronted, and managed to amend the life, of a reputed witch (*phitomissa*) who claimed the ability to expose thefts and hidden offences. A local rural dean had initially approached the bishop seeking his advice on how to deal with the woman, who had a formidable reputation, attracted large crowds, and could not be rebuked or silenced because 'the flow of her words overwhelmed everyone'. Hugh arranged to meet with her. In his presence the woman was uncharacteristically placid. The powers she claimed were put to the test. Holding out a fist, Hugh asked her to reveal what it contained. Conceding that she could not say, the woman implored him to show compassion. Hugh instructed her not 'with the spirit of divination to prophesy even the truth', and she faithfully carried out the measures enjoined on her by the penitentiary for that region, the prior of Huntingdon, and astonished all

¹⁶ *Councils & Synods: with other documents relating to the English church* (Oxford, 1964), vol. 2 (part 1), ed. F.M. Powicke and C.R. Cheney, p. 261 (translation from Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 258).

¹⁷ *Councils & Synods*, p. 265.

with her reformed character; becoming the embodiment of temperance. Rather than seeking out faults in others, she looked devoutly to her own shortcomings.¹⁸

Ideas about purgatory may have been important in developing a scheme for salvation which potentially incorporated a far greater section of the population, but emphasis was always given to the fear of damnation rather than the dread of purgatorial punishments. Part of the instruction delivered to priests by William de Montibus, for example, involved the enumeration of the pains of hell.¹⁹ Alexander of Ashby, who commended contemporary schools of theology, was himself involved in offering priests the tools they required. His guide to preaching, which includes model sermons for priests to follow, urges that; 'In every sermon there should be a reminder of the rewards of the saved and the sufferings of the damned, so that the congregation may be moved to fulfil what they have been commanded to do both by love and fear'.²⁰

The trials faced by souls in purgatory were rarely handled in large-scale iconographic representations.²¹ The expertly carved and vividly painted relief running across the façade of Lincoln Cathedral offered stark and compelling representations of the ultimate destinations of the soul. The choice was simple. There are images of souls held within, others being borne towards, the bosom of Abraham. There is a line of the elect, six men, one of whom is dressed in episcopal vestments. Christ, flanked by John the Baptist, tramples on the devil and ushers souls out from the mouth of hell. There are three scenes of the grisly torments of hell inflicted by demons, snakes, and dragons. An essentially binary image of the afterlife is conveyed in one of the panels relating the parable of Lazarus, which was commonly cited as a scriptural basis for alms-giving and as a model of the Christian afterlife, and appears to the right of the north doorway. Two angels are shown helping the little figure of a soul as it rises out from the corpse of Lazarus. Below a grimacing demon wielding a three-pronged pitchfork, stabs out at Dives and his flailing companions as they tumble headfirst into hell.²² The costly and masterful execution of these reliefs was exceptional, but the iconography could be found in most parish churches. It was part of the role of the clergy to explain these images. Shortly before King John's enthronement, when visiting Fontevraud where Henry II and Richard I were buried, Hugh of Avalon had explained the images of the afterlife depicted on the Doom reliefs. He highlighted

¹⁸ *A. Mag. Vit.*, vol. 2, pp. 117-119.

¹⁹ There are 15 listed: 'Nix, nox, vox, lacrimae socii, sitis, phulfur et ignis, malleus, stridor, spes perdita, vincula, vermes, esse carere deo, carcer, confessio rara'; Goering, *William de Montibus*, pp. 146.

²⁰ Alexander of Ashby, p. 907 (translation from Robert Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 451-452).

²¹ Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (1996, London), pp. 188-199.

²² On a base layer of white gypsum a range of colours were painted, bound with linseed oil. There are traces of the most sought after mineral pigments (ultramarine of *lapis lazuli* and deep vermillion, or cinnabar) besides the blues, greens, browns, and reds, obtained from copper, iron oxide and lead. John Larson, 'An Outline Proposal for the Conservation of the Romanesque Frieze at Lincoln Cathedral', *The Romanesque Frieze and its Spectator*, edited by Deborah Kahn (London, 1992), p. 188.

images of kings suffering eternally, 'Fix your mind always on their howls and perpetual torment, and let your heart dwell upon their unceasing punishment; by frequently recalling their misfortunes you will learn the great risks those incur who for a short space of time are set over others as rulers, and who by not ruling themselves are eternally tortured by demons'.²³

It ought to be acknowledged that Adam of Eynsham gives priority to just one component of his account of the episode at Buckden. This is the detail that Edmund had been able to recognize Hugh of Avalon through the appearance of Christ during the mass. It is the justification for incorporating the episode within the *Magna vita*. Edmund claimed to have witnessed the separate elements at the moments of elevation take on the appearance of a child, tiny in stature, and exhibiting an astonishing, supernatural elegance, 'radiant beyond all earthly beauty'.

For Adam, a key sign of the bishop's sanctity was his ability to visualize with the eye of the mind the true nature of the eucharist, as an embodiment of Christ. The episode at Buckden is found in the company of a number of analogous incidents which exhibited Hugh's inner comprehension of this mystical reality. Adam stresses that this was not for Hugh a one-off occurrence but something he perceived repeatedly. To illustrate the point he describes how, when the episcopal retinue passed through the village of Joie in France, the local priest sought an audience with Hugh and asked him to visit his parish church, so that he could venerate preserved elements of the mass which years earlier had been materially and visibly transformed into flesh and blood. The invitation was declined. 'Why should we gape at a sensory image of this divine gift', Hugh said, 'when every day we behold by faith this heavenly sacrifice, whole and entire?'²⁴

The elements of the mass often featured in connexion with prodigious events and were the subject of miracle stories. Henry of Huntingdon recorded an incident at the cathedral before the first battle of Lincoln in 1141, when, in front of the bishop, the pyx (containing the consecrated host), which was suspended above the high altar, dropped to the ground. This was explained as a sign of King Stephen's downfall.²⁵ From the late-twelfth century up to the first quarter of the thirteenth century miracle stories concerning the eucharist formed a prominent part of theological discussion, particularly in the influential works of Peter the Chanter and his students. It was probably while at Lincoln that Gerald of Wales, another of Hugh's hagiographers, composed a book of pastoral advice, drawing heavily on the moral instructions of Peter the Chanter, entitled *Jewel of the Church* (*Gemma Ecclesiastica*), which is also brimming with miracle stories of this type. Most frequently they were used to substantiate the idea of the real

²³ A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 139-141.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-95.

²⁵ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 732-733.

presence and also to explore questions about the worthy reception of the sacrament. Significantly this could involve spiritual communion, where reception of the eucharist was substituted by some other ritual action, most commonly the offering of prayers and petitions at the moments of elevation. At the centre of this discourse was an ecclesiological debate about the membership of the church. Reception of the eucharist, whether through sacramental or spiritual communion, marked and fortified an individual's union with Christ and with the church. It has been observed that 'medieval communities shared a sense of Christian identity through their communal negotiation of the miraculous'.²⁶ Although Simon Yarrow was speaking specifically about the cult of the saints, his remark is just as applicable in reference to the theological discourse concerning the eucharist in the late-twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries. The new prominence given to eucharistic signs and wonders is closely aligned to an escalating devotion to the sacrament, which heightened the dramatic quality of the ritual. This in turn took the emphasis away from the participation of the congregation. Theologians of the period would develop the idea that spiritual reception, involving a life of faith and love in union with Christ, was sufficient for salvation. A shifting appreciation of the significance of the eucharistic rite corresponds with a rising popular demand for the celebration of intercessory services in the form of the Requiem Mass and would give greater weight to private rituals, performed at side altars by designated priests, and without a congregation, as distinct from regular communal celebrations.

The proliferation of side altars and private masses would have a considerable impact on the size of the population of priests at the cathedral. Little record survives from this period of the community of minor clergy, who, under the direction of the precentor, were commissioned to carry out these services of expiation. As Julia Barrow has noted, there was no hard-and-fast distinction between vicars, who generally served in choir, singing the canonical hours and celebrating high mass in place of canons, and the chaplains, officiating at particular altars. The titles were used interchangeably and their roles might also interchange.²⁷ There is a telling characterization of the body of vicars in the metrical *Life of St Hugh of Lincoln* where the distinction between their role and that of the canons is presented in a remarkably straightforward way. The passage belongs to an extended allegory of the different parts of the cathedral structure. The varying functions of the clergy, it is proposed, are represented by the glass

²⁶ Simon Yarrow, *Saints and their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth Century England* (Oxford, 2006), p. 13. For further discussion see Gary Macy, 'Theology of the Eucharist in the High Middle Ages', *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Middle Ages* (Boston, 2012), ed. Ian Christopher Levy, Gary Macy and Kirsten Van Ausdall, pp. 391-396.

²⁷ In the case of the chantry ordained by Hugh of Wells, for example, at the altar dedicated to his predecessor and namesake St Hugh of Lincoln, the deacon and subdeacon serving at the altar were to be selected from the vicars-choral and seem to have been assigned the role for one week at a time; *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 2, pp. 58-61 (no. 363); Julia Barrow, 'Vicars Choral and Chaplains in Northern European Cathedrals: 1100-1250', *Studies in Church History*, vol. 26, p. 87.

windows of the church. The canons, who grapple with secular affairs, are likened to the high, clerestory range. Their florid ornamentation represents the manifold adornments of the world. The aisle windows, on the other hand, bearing the names of the holy fathers, are compared to the vicars, whose function it is to perform the divine office without ceasing.²⁸ From the late-twelfth century commemorative services were conducted by, and the endowments used to support, an expanding body of minor clergy.

One aim behind the foundation of chantries and obits by the canons in the early-thirteenth century (even if it was often implicit), was simply to augment the observance of divine worship at the church, and to support this core clerical community. But the motives could obviously vary. In some circumstances these memorials might function as a cover for simony.²⁹ One consequence of their foundation was to direct the substantial, independent income of the church's prebendaries towards other divisions of the institution, such as the fabric fund, the commons, or the clergy who attended the memorial. Canons would make fairly elaborate arrangements in this respect. We can take the provisions of one canon, Peter of Hungary, as an example. Towards the end of our period (1223/1224), and at least 15 years before his death, Peter set about the organization of his obit to be performed in perpetuity. Lands valued at four marks of silver a year or more were assigned for distribution on the anniversary. A portion was to be paid to the clergy in attendance. Canons would receive one mark, vicars half a mark, half a mark would go to clerics officiating at the mass of the Virgin, and 3s 4d was reserved for clerics who were not vicars. Fixed payments were to be made to the fabric fund (3s 4d), the chancery (6d), and the chapter (2s 4d), with the surplus to be left at the disposition of the dean and chapter, save for the largest sum (20s), which was set aside to provide bread for the poor.³⁰ A recent survey by David Lepine has pointed to the pervasiveness of alms-giving at English secular cathedrals mediated through late-medieval funerary practices. What distinguishes charitable structures at these cathedrals, it is argued, is the role of obits instituted by individual canons or a small group of canons, and it is noted that these forms of commemorative observance would prove to be remarkably durable.³¹ Such long-term arrangements were also complemented by the temporary deployment of prebendal income. From the early-thirteenth century, in similarity with most other secular cathedrals, the canons of Lincoln were given the right to allocate the revenues

²⁸ *Metr. Hugh*, pp. 58-59.

²⁹ Barrow, 'Vicars Choral', p. 94.

³⁰ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 4, pp. 130-132 (nos. 1259-1260).

³¹ David Lepine, 'Cathedrals and Charity: Almsgiving at English Secular Cathedrals in the Late Middle Ages', *English Historical Review*, vol. 126 (2011), pp. 1095-1096.

from their prebend ‘for pious uses’ for a period of one year subsequent to the date of their death.³²

One way that historians have read the changes in commemorative practices witnessed from the late-twelfth century is to identify this period with the creation of more personalized memorials and to emphasize the changing dynamics of collective and private commemoration. Henri de Lubac, for instance, suggested that, ‘at one level the constant build-up of Eucharistic piety became more easily oriented towards an overly individualistic devotion’.³³ The complex structures of Gothic architecture have provided an analogy for the shifting conception of the mass, and of its social function. They have been interpreted as signs of a fading communal, or public, dynamic to salvation, where the building is ‘split up into a multitude of chapels, in which the separate guilds, separate families even, have their own guild or family altar and their own worship’, in which the mass had a tendency to become ‘a lifeless civil act’. Conversely, the proliferation of separate altars and chapels within churches has been viewed as a symbol of a more collectivist and responsive vision of salvation, in which competing, disparate interests are united, and even regarded as the ‘expression of a genuinely organic understanding of the nature of the community’.³⁴

Although the mass took on a central place in the formulation of suffrages, another feature of the story related by Edmund at Buckden is the depiction of intercessory worship it contains, where, notably, there are two differing representations of prayer for the dead, neither of which involved the celebration of the mass. One is presented as a regular liturgical exercise, a formal service performed on behalf of all the faithful departed in connexion with the feast of All Saints. The other is shown as a personal, heartfelt, and inspired, mode of prayer, which was undoubtedly directed by a sense of filial piety, but also, quite clearly, by unmitigated grief. Thus the story exemplifies two parallel trends in the conception of intercessory worship in this era. The endowment of prayers for the dead was presented more sharply as a service undertaken on behalf of all Christian society, the community of all the faithful, but the rise of more complex and personalized memorials, such as those organized by cathedral canons, also gave expression to images of personal loss and salvation, and was able to reflect individual associations, especially

³² The ordinance of Bishop William of Blois, claiming the support of dean Roger of Rolleston and the chapter, also assigned the sum 10s. of to all vicars of the prebendary, *Reg. Ant.* vol. 1, no. 293, pp. 254-255.

³³ Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, 2006), trans. Gemma Simmonds with Richard Price and Christopher Stephens, p. 259. For Le Goff; ‘Though the new solidarity between the living and the dead – incipient at Cluny – strengthened family, corporate and fraternal ties, Purgatory, caught up in a personalization of spiritual life, actually fostered individualism’, *La naissance du Purgatoire*, p. 370 (*Birth of Purgatory*, p. 497). On the issue of individualism and memorialization, see Crouch, ‘Culture of Death’, pp. 169-172.

³⁴ The views of Josef A. Jungmann (from his essay *Liturgisches Erbe und pastorale Gegenwart*) are here pitched against those of John Milbank (*The Word Made Strange* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 268-292) in a useful essay by Eamon Duffy, ‘Worship’, in *Fields of Faith: Theology and Religious Studies for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. David F. Ford, Ben Quash & Janet Martin Soskice (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 119-134 (at 123 & 129).

the bonds of kinship. After his death the management of Peter of Hungary's obit, at least in the first instance, was assigned to his brother Henry (also a canon), who was not only charged with the collection and delivery of the yearly payments, but would also ensure their proper distribution.

The organization of the fraternity of the fabric relied on a system of incentives, and a high level of public engagement, that the cathedral was uniquely placed to exploit and provide. But in some ways it was at a disadvantage in attracting benefactors. Barrow has observed that, compared with the religious ('monks, friars, and hermits') the canons of secular cathedrals 'were not valued so highly as men of prayer'.³⁵ Members of the cathedral were commemorated individually and collectively at a number of monastic foundations and services of commemoration were an important way to cement relations between institutions. The spirit in which these spiritual bonds were forged could differ. Both at the institutional and personal level, commitments to perform commemorative services might arise from a dispute, for instance, and represent part of a formal settlement. Thus, in 1231, following litigation between the abbot and convent of Westminster and the bishop and chapter of Lincoln, an award was agreed whereby the monks of Westminster would commemorate the membership of the cathedral as part of their regular observances. On his death Bishop Hugh of Wells was granted the funerary services ordinarily reserved for an abbot of the house, with wine and pittance distributed among the monks and food for 100 people distributed among the poor. The anniversary of his death was to be kept in perpetuity accompanied by a special memorial instituted 'for the deceased canons of Lincoln and for benefactors of the same church'.³⁶

The integration of regular programmes of intercessory worship, together with the merger of ecclesiastical interests, strengthened the special association between the bishop and chapter and the Gilbertine order, whose early priories were almost exclusively established within the diocese, and mainly within Lincolnshire. Bishop Alexander, in whose household Gilbert of Sempringham had served as chaplain, lent support to the order from the outset.³⁷ In doing so he offered the prayers of the cathedral as an inducement to all those who made benefactions, or gave protection, to his foundation at Haverholme, which lay a short distance downstream of the new castle he built at Sleaford (*suscipimus eos in orationibus et in omnibus beneficiis nostre matris ecclesie Lincolie*). The foundation charter, which stated that the house had been established, in part, 'for

³⁵ Julia Barrow, 'The Canons and Citizens of Hereford C. 1160-C.1240', *Midland History*, vol. 24 (1999), p. 15.

³⁶ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 2, pp. 75-79 (nos. 373-374). For Westminster Abbey's long-standing claims in Rutland see Barbara Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 47 and 356-357.

³⁷ *The Book of St Gilbert*, ed. and trans. R. Foreville and G. Keir (Oxford, 1987), pp. 20-29.

the comfort and profit of our mother church', also revealed the bishop's intention of remembering family members in the prayers of the community: 'for the souls of King Henry and my uncle Roger, who was bishop of Salisbury, and for the souls of my father, mother, and my departed loved ones'.³⁸ Bishop Robert Chesney's only religious foundation, St Catherine's Priory, situated just beyond Bargate, the main entrance to the southern part of the city, formed a confraternal arrangement specifically with members of the chapter.³⁹ The canons of the priory agreed that they would maintain a cleric to minister in the cathedral (a priest, deacon, or subdeacon), and the prior himself, Roger, granted full brotherhood to all cathedral canons, meaning that the same honours would be observed for them, whether living or dead, as were usually observed for any canon of the Gilbertine order, in the hospital as well as in other houses of the order.⁴⁰ As Dorothy Owen has pointed out, the chapter as a whole had a definite part to play in diocesan affairs, and the cathedral church might also offer 'a setting of due solemnity for the public ceremonial which accompanied many of the gifts made to religious houses'.⁴¹

The episode at Buckden might be seen as part of an effort to stress the connexion between Hugh of Avalon and the abbey of Eynsham. This intention is certainly evident elsewhere in the *Magna vita*. It is emphasized most obviously in the description of the blessing of Robert of Dover as abbot of Eynsham in a ceremony held at Lincoln Cathedral on 11 November 1197.

...amid general approbation and rejoicing, the elect of Eynsham received his solemn benediction as abbot. There was a great banquet for the clergy as well as for the abbot and his monks, at which the bishop sat presiding over both groups. He was exceedingly glad and gave thanks to God that like the good shepherd he had brought other sheep who had belonged to another sheepfold into his own, and that henceforward these and his other sheep should be one flock and he himself shepherd of both, and that he should unite the cathedral and the abbey under himself, so that both should be one forever.

³⁸ *Eng. Epis.* vol. 1, pp. 24-25 (no. 37).

³⁹ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 120-121; also *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 1, p. 97 (no. 163). Brian Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham and the Gilbertine Order c. 1130-c.1300* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 230-233.

⁴⁰ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 2, pp. 39-41 (no. 348).

⁴¹ Thus as a symbol of the 20 acres he had given to the Cistercian priory of Stixwold, Roger Basuin laid a knife on the high altar of the cathedral 'in the presence of many clerks and laymen'; Dorothy M. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire* (Lincoln, 1971), pp. 40. In a similar capacity archdeacons would be called upon to witness grants made to religious houses in the area under their supervision, as when, in 1141, Henry of Huntingdon witnessed a grant to Peterborough Abbey, again symbolized by the presentation of a knife on the high altar, H. *Hist. Ang.*, xlv.

A chapter of the *Magna vita* is devoted to setting out the bishop's resolute and unrelenting defence of his rights of patronage over the abbey before this election, against the claims of the crown. As a new abbot was being chosen Hugh reportedly came to stay with the monks at Eynsham for eight days, 'eating together with them in the refectory, fully restoring them with the wine of pleasantness, and the banquet of generosity'.⁴² It has been suggested that Adam was responsible for compiling the cartulary of Eynsham Abbey which was probably first put together in connexion with the earlier suit.⁴³ Adam's advancement was entirely subject to the patronage of the bishops of Lincoln. Throughout his career, his writing seems to have been closely allied to his promotions. It may have been partly as a result of his hagiographical work that he was elected abbot of Eynsham, in 1213 through the influence of the same bishop, Hugh of Wells, who would later depose him, in 1228, on the grounds of mismanagement.⁴⁴

Among the body of secular canons, as we might expect, critical attitudes were sometimes expressed about monastic institutions, and one recurring area of criticism concerned the keenness and ingenuity with which conventual churches managed to secure gifts from laymen in exchange for commemoration and burial. In his Common Satire, when addressing monks, the 'dregs of the greedy religious life', Henry of Huntingdon imagined them rummaging about for corpses, 'with no respect and no legal right, with no concern where they died or how'. They were in the habit 'of seeking out corpses as ravens do, skilful at flattery and despoliation by flattery'.⁴⁵ Walter Map's satire of the religious orders (*Incidencia magistri Gauteri Mabap de monachia*) begins by criticising the methods used to engage patrons and benefactors in confraternal relationships, evoking a subversive image of the well-practiced and wily monks luring in down-at-heel laymen.⁴⁶

Monks both black and white recognize their prey, as the hawk spies the frightened lark, in the shape of knights whom they can pluck – men who have wasted their patrimony or are shackled with debts. These they entice, and at their firesides, remote from noise and apart from those guests of charity, the fleas, entertain them sumptuously, most amiably press them to repeat their visits frequently, promise

⁴² A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, p. 42 (*cum eis in communi refectorio partier conuescens, eosque uino iocunditatis et dapibus sue largitatis copiose reficiens*).

⁴³ For this suggestion see *Eynsham Cartulary*, Salter, vol. 1, xxxii-xxxv. The dispute began with the death of Abbot Geoffrey in 1196 but had been concluded by the time Robert of Dover was blessed in November 1197, see A *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 39-42.

⁴⁴ Adam was assigned in his retirement the abbey's manor of Little Rollright (Oxon.). He held this in 1232, four years after the deposition (which cited *tanquam periurus et dilapidator manifestus*). A consummate summary of the biographical information and subsequent extrapolations is contained in *The Revelation of the Monk of Eynsham*, Easting, xxxv-xxxviii.

⁴⁵ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 782-783.

⁴⁶ W. *De Nug.*, pp. 84-85.

them similar cheer for every day and faces always smiling. They show them their larders before they have broken their fast; they lay out before them all the treasures of their house in open view, and awaken their hopes; they undertake to supply their needs, then hurry them to the various altars and tell them who is the patron of each, and how many masses are said there every day: They enrol them in the brotherhood in full chapter, and make them sharers of their prayers.

This subversive, even impish piece of social commentary does not stop short of pursuing more fundamental interrogation of the legitimacy and value placed on prayers for the dead. ‘A few prayers uttered by two women were enough to move the Lord to raise a man four days dead: but so many thousands of men and women, whether they belong to an old order or a new, whom do they avail to raise? What do we gain by all their assiduity in alms, in fasts, in prayers?’

These remarks do not challenge the efficacy of expiatory worship, but express an underlying apprehension, one which was entirely orthodox, that too great a reliance on intercessory worship might lead to the deferral of penance. In spite of the various mechanisms of propitiation that ritual specialists could offer in order to intercede on one’s behalf, and to ease the journey of one’s soul, individually men and women would face judgement on their own, and make an account of their lives: ‘we, each one by himself, as Paul says, shall be able through the grace of God to be raised up at our own entreaty’.⁴⁷ Henry of Huntingdon’s description of the death of Robert de Beaumont, count of Meulan, could also be interpreted as a criticism of a behavioural norm that put undue confidence in the power of expiatory worship before genuine repentance. Henry used the death of Robert de Beaumont to illustrate the foolishness of worldly wisdom, since he failed to heed the warning of the archbishop and those administering confession on his dying day, to divide his lands and restore those that he had taken wrongfully; ‘Otherwise you have cursed your soul to hell’. This he declined to do, saying, ‘I shall leave everything to my sons; let them act mercifully for the salvation of the dead’.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁸ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 596-601.

Chapter Three

BIERS, BELL-TOWERS, AND BURIAL

INTRODUCTION

A recent suggestion about the kind of funeral service observed at Lincoln in the earliest part of the cathedral's history can be found in the study of a group of Lincolnshire bell-towers conducted by David Stocker and Paul Everson. They argue that common features in the design of these towers indicate they were built to accommodate a new type of burial ritual introduced in the late-eleventh century under Archbishop Lanfranc. Large entrances on the west side of the ground-floor tower spaces, and archways on the east leading through to the nave, allowed access to a kind of 'mortuary chapel' reserved for the purpose of observing a vigil away from the main part of the church as this ritual prescribed. Above, on the first floor, small windows overlooking the burial ground enabled bell-ringers to take their cue from the procession leading out of the west door. Given the nature of the evidence, it is hardly surprising that a fair amount of resourceful conjecture is employed to piece this argument together, but to explain the widespread construction of this group of towers within a fairly short space of time between c.1090 and c.1120, Stocker and Everson suggest that a prototypical ritual had first been exhibited at the cathedral and was then imitated in parishes of the city, before spreading out to other parts of the county.¹

It is worth mentioning another related theory contained in this study, which is that the extensive building campaign, in each case involving the addition of a large tower to existing church structures, was achieved without the need for episcopal directives. A survey of the patrons of the churches involved leads to the contention that the towers were commissioned by a socially diverse group of patrons, who were apparently acting under their own steam. The

¹ David Stocker and Paul Everson, *Summoning St Michael: Early Romanesque Towers in Lincolnshire* (Oxford, 2006), esp. pp. 79-91. Details of the service are set out in Lanfranc, *Monastic Constitutions*, ed. David Knowles (rev. ed.; OMT, 2002). The study divides towers into regional groupings, whose broad chronology supports the idea that their construction began in, and then emanated outwards from, Lincoln, with the earliest group of bell-towers belonging to churches within the city.

process, it would seem, occurred spontaneously. Although the precise responsibilities of patrons in relation to building works at parish churches are far from clear, this second theory does at least open up a stimulating discussion about the possible lines of communication between the cathedral and the parishes.²

So far little attention has been given to the cathedral's position as a mother church, involved in promoting, regulating, and monitoring worship within the many churches that came under its jurisdiction. The examination of burial rites, which, as might be expected, represented a key channel of remembrance, allows for some discussion of the mechanisms by which this kind of episcopal oversight was implemented. There is the additional benefit that it may help to elucidate the standards of commemorative practice that were observed at Lincoln. As the study by Stocker and Everson would suggest, there is value in looking further afield, to the local region or to the diocese more generally, to build up a sharper picture of observance at the cathedral. Their study also reminds us that the direction given by diocesan authorities took various forms. Besides the publication of episcopal mandates, for example, or specific archidiaconal interventions, pastoral guidance could also be delivered much less formally through a process of imitation. The final part of this chapter considers the regulation of mortuary customs throughout the diocese by examining selected incidences of exhumation. It is a phenomenon which is capable of revealing several different sides to the executive functions of the bishops as well as the ancillary involvement of the cathedral clergy.

Although this chapter does incorporate some discussion of the development of funeral practices and burial customs right across the period, it focuses attention on the figure of Hugh of Avalon, drawing on the depictions of his conscientious provision of burial and considering the transformation which was brought about at the cathedral after his death. The bishop's assiduous provision of burial in his lifetime, which exemplified the commitment and intensity of his pastoral work, is a common thread running through the hagiographical portrayals of his episcopate and it was spectacularly symbolized and honoured in the stateliness of his own funeral. The first part of this chapter considers representations of this particular event. The second part addresses, more generally, the role of the cathedral as a place of burial.

When examining sources relating to Hugh of Avalon an extra degree of caution needs to be exercised because it is not always possible to draw a firm distinction between ordinary standards of episcopal practice, or the customary rights and privileges associated with his office, and the special measures which reflected the pious enthusiasm that was a peculiar feature of his ministry. When Adam of Eynsham claims that Hugh insisted on performing burials in the parish

² *Ibid*, pp. 70-76.

churches of the cathedral city, for example, he was effectively impinging on parochial rights.³ Although there were unique relationships between cathedrals and parishes of the city, especially in respect of burial, and some English cathedrals claimed exclusive and long-standing rights of burial for the whole population of the city, this does not seem to have been the case at Lincoln. The potential disparity between Hugh's personal ministry and the customs of his office do not simply muddy the waters of historical analysis. They also caused agitation in the bishop's lifetime. Thus, by refusing to accept payments or property that was due to him from the bereaved on his estates, for example, it was feared that a precedent might be established.⁴ But Hugh's energetic resolve could not be subdued. At every opportunity the bishop leapt in to perform the funeral service personally. Anticipating that he might stumble upon a funeral at any time, he always carried a small service book expressly designed for the occasion. If he was unable to officiate, he took the part of a layperson; 'began or ended the collects, said the amens and other responses'.⁵ Famously, in prioritizing this duty above scheduled conferences with archdeacons, fellow prelates, and kings, he provoked consternation. This aspect of Hugh's ministry has been seen as a manifestation of a specifically Carthusian brand of spirituality, but it did also correspond with a basic duty of his office. Inadequate provision of burial in a diocese was an issue that might be taken up with the bishop. On his travels through Normandy, when Hugh learned that a mound he had passed by the roadside 'contained the body of a poor man who had formerly begged alms from door to door', and that the local priest had entirely neglected him because he was destitute, it was to the local bishop that he turned for reprisal.⁶ As well as seeing to it that parish priests had a sufficient level of training to conduct religious services, bishops might be expected to ensure that priests were equipped with the relevant tools to administer burial. Thus Hugh was said to have made provision for impoverished parishes, so that they would not find themselves without the necessary instruments, 'lights or any other things needed in funerals'.⁷

While it was a personal preoccupation for Hugh of Avalon, tending to the physical remains of the dead, and conducting them to the grave, was also a basic priestly duty. The responsibility for conveying a corpse to its final resting place, wherever this may have been, would normally fall to the priest of the parish in which someone died.⁸ On one level the descriptions of Hugh's

³ It is a reminiscent of a decree he issued prohibiting priests on episcopal manors from conducting burials when he was in residence; *ibid.*, p. 77.

⁴ *G. Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 96-97.

⁵ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, p. 71.

⁶ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 79-80. On the limitations of diocesan rights over burial in the twelfth century, with specific reference to the legatine ruling of Henry of Blois concerning sepulture rights in Northampton, see M.J. Franklin, 'Bodies in Medieval Northampton: Legatine Intervention in the Twelfth Century', *Medieval Ecclesiastical Studies: in honour of Dorothy Owen*, ed. M.J. Franklin & Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 57-81.

⁷ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 79-80.

⁸ *Reg. Ang.-Nor.*, vol. 2, p. 265 (no. 1774).

pious lead can be interpreted as an example to priests. We have the sermon passed on by his chaplain, which sets out some of the main tasks expected of a priest when conducting funerals. It highlights their symbolic connotations. Nowhere was the love of God for mankind more greatly demonstrated, the bishop had urged, than at the start and end of a human lifetime, and at the thresholds of birth and death.⁹

When the course of this transitory life is cut short by death and his former friends regard him with distaste, and his children and relatives remove him from his former home with anxious haste, only the loving kindness of God does not despise one whom all others reject. Not only does he immediately send his angels to guard the soul on its return to its creator, but he also sends his ministers on earth, the priests and other clerics, to bury him.

This sermon, relayed in the *Magna vita*, is one of several passages in Adam of Eynsham's work that purports to convey, at length, the bishop's direct speech. In this instance, however, the words are presented in the form of a divine injunction.

You see, my priests and courtiers in my earthly palaces, this my creature whom I have always loved and for whose sake I did not spare my only son but made him the sharer in mortality and death. You see how it has become a burden to its former friends and kinsmen, who cast it out and drive it away with violence. Now, go in haste to meet him as his soul flies to me; take up the image of my son, crucified for this creature, with incense and candles, toll the bells of my church and open wide its doors and its inner sanctuary with solemn chants, and lay the remains of my brother or sister near the altar where my son's body rests. Cover the bier of one who has gained the victory at last with a rich pall, and with lights and torches go round the body with a throng of servers. Renew the acceptable sacrifice of my son and prepare the communion feast so that the soul which is still restless and weary from its mortal condition may now recover its vigour. And let the body, now emptied of its former principle of life, be cherished meanwhile in the lap of mother earth and be watered by this hallowing. Thus, on the last day, being happily reunited with its soul, it will blossom again, to enjoy for ever eternal renewal.

⁹ A *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 75-76.

The sermon contains a succinct description of the basic celebrative components of the funeral service.¹⁰ It is worth noting the centrality of the vigil and the mass. There is naturally a reference to the tolling of bells which became synonymous with funerals in this period, so that the word *campana*, in this case specifically denoting the bell of a belfry, gained equivalence with the right of burial. When Bishop Hugh of Wells confirmed an arrangement between Baldwin de Vere and the abbot and convent of Crowland, for example, which allowed Baldwin to build a private chapel within the parish of Great Addington (Northants.) for the use of his family, household, and guests, the condition that he should have ‘neither baptistery nor bell-tower’ (*nec baptisterium nec campana*) determined that the right to conduct baptisms and to bury the dead, would be retained by the parish church.¹¹ We turn now to the accounts of Hugh of Avalon’s burial which, as contemporary descriptions of a funeral ceremony, are unsurpassed in their range and detail.

¹⁰ For further discussion see Sarah Hamilton, ‘Rites of Passage and Pastoral Care’, *A Social History of England 900-1200*, ed. Julia Crick and Elisabeth van Houts (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 299-308.

¹¹ The confirmation, dated 9 September 1232, repeats this phrase from a prior agreement between Baldwin and Crowland Abbey; *The Acta of Hugh of Wells: Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, ed. David M. Smith, (LRS, 2000), p. 181 (no. 383).

THE ADVENT OF ST HUGH

Because it heralded a birth into eternal life, the day of a saint's physical death or martyrdom, and the anniversary of that day, was commonly figured as a 'birthday' (*dies natalis*), and might prompt expressions of triumph or jubilation. According to some of his hagiographers, miraculous events which publicized Bishop Hugh of Avalon's holiness and helped to endorse him as a worthy subject of public veneration, began to occur soon after he breathed his last on the evening of Thursday 16 November (feast-day 17 November) in his London residence at Old Temple, Holborn. They were reported throughout the week-long interval before he was eventually laid to rest in the cathedral. Adam of Eynsham described how the grief-stricken were not only consoled on hearing of these events, but moved by a new-found sense of companionship: 'the wondrous cures showed those who wept and mourned for him as dead and absent that he was alive and present'.¹ The poet Henry of Avranches, revelling in the quarrel of emotions, imagined waves of loss and elation spreading among the people: 'thus crying for their sun seized away, and rejoicing that he had attained to perpetual light; crying at his fading, rejoicing at his rising'.²

For Gerald of Wales, however, the circumstances of the bishop's funeral on 23 November had represented the first of the bishop's miracles. Others took place during the night vigil, as large crowds gathered around the body in the choir of the cathedral.³ The circumstances were indeed remarkable and were widely regarded as portentous. A dramatic, unprompted gravity had been lent to the occasion through the enthusiastic participation of the kings of England and Scotland, the prince of Galloway, a glittering cast of senior nobles from both sides of the border, and ecclesiastical dignitaries from the two kingdoms, and from much further afield. All of them had gathered in the city to attend a major royal assembly. The honour that was brought to Hugh's funeral by the convergence of these two events seemed especially fitting given that the bishop's resolve to insure proper burial for others had been a central feature of his pastoral activity.

In spite of the improvised stateliness of this occasion, it is clear that many aspects of the final journey of the bishop's corpse, from deathbed to grave, were carefully scripted. Hugh's preparedness, which chimed with the idealized image of a devout death, included his plans for which members of the household would wash his body, which clothes he would be buried in, and precisely where in the cathedral he would be buried inside two coffins, one made of lead,

¹ A. Mag. *Vita.*, vol. 2, p. 218.

² '*Sicque suum solem flet ademptum, gaudet adeptum / Perpetuam lucem; flet labi, gaudet oriri*'; *Metr. Hugh*, pp. 72-73.

³ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, p. 117.

and another of stone. During his illness, he had arranged with Gilbert de Noiery, his master mason, for an altar to St John the Baptist, his special patron, to be consecrated at the chosen site. The meticulousness with which he arranged for his body to be washed and prepared was interpreted as a sign of reverence: 'lest the venerable, rightfully consecrated place is dishonoured'. On his deathbed Hugh was aware of the major royal assembly taking place at Lincoln and instructed his canons and clergy in attendance to head back to the city, promising that he would join them soon.⁴ Aware too that no bishops or abbots would be available, as they had been summoned to Lincoln, he personally invited seven or eight monks from Westminster, along with the choristers of St Paul's, 'to perform the rite of commendation by which my soul shall be released from its prison'.⁵

Hugh had kept in a little case 'the plain, tasteful vestments' used at his consecration, 'from the sandals all the way up to the mitre', with the intention that they would clothe him in death.⁶ In choosing this apparel there was a conscious endeavour to echo, and draw a parallel with, the ceremony in which he had been installed. As Timothy Reuter has observed, descriptions of episcopal funerals often make reference to the ceremonial arrival (*adventus*) which formally marked the moment of installation.⁷ Any time that a bishop entered their cathedral city could be a celebratory occasion and such events might be invested with their own peculiar resonance. Although he was never formally enthroned as bishop, for example, following a papal confirmation of his election in 1175, the young Geoffrey Plantagenet travelled to Lincoln, fresh from a victorious military campaign, and was received in a solemn procession.⁸ But the moment of installation clearly held a special importance. As has been mentioned, Henry of Huntingdon chose to bring the fifth version of the *Historia Anglorum* to an end with the occasion of Bishop Robert Chesney's entrance to the city, when, 'with great jubilation he was eagerly awaited and still more eagerly welcomed, being devotedly received by clergy and people at Lincoln on the Lord's Epiphany'.⁹

The various accounts of Hugh's funeral, contained both in chronicles and in hagiographical works, are not simple reports of proceedings, but develop and refine the symbolic connotations of the event. They stress the most exceptional qualities of the occasion. In

⁴ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 111-112.

⁵ A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, p. 191.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 191-192. A comparison might be made with another full account of the death and burial from this period, William Marshall, who for 30 years, kept a fine and costly length of cloth brought back from the holy land in order to be draped over his body during his funeral (used to cover both body and bier). *L'histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* (lines 18,179-18,260), text with translation in *History of William Marshall*, ed. A. Holden, S. Gregory, and D. Crouch (Anglo-Norman Text Society: London, 2004), vol. 3, pp. 410-415.

⁷ Reuter, 'A Europe of Bishops', pp. 17-21.

⁸ Ralph of Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ed. W. Stubbs (RS, 1876), vol. 1, p. 401.

⁹ H. *Hist Ang.*, pp. 754-755.

particular they document the strange and inexplicable incidents that transpired. There is no sharp distinction to be drawn between the types of sources. The chronicler Roger of Howden, for example, writing soon after the event, does not shy away from hagiological detail. He relates the story of a pick-pocket whose attempt to rob the large gathering of mourners inside the cathedral was freakishly exposed. As he reached out to take a purse, both his hands suddenly contorted, and he found himself rooted to the spot. Then his mouth started to move involuntarily, as he began to utter a full and eloquent confession. Roger of Howden's account is particularly useful in that it provides an extensive list of the religious leaders and senior noblemen who were present, or who had been present on the previous day, 22 November, to witness William the Lion, king of Scots, do homage and swear fealty to King John.¹⁰

It is notable that, over time, the numbers of bishops who were said to have been present reduced. This seems to have been part of an attempt to confer a particular allegorical reading of the service. According to Howden, thirteen bishops as well as the archbishops of Canterbury, Dublin, and Ragusa (Dubrovnik) were present, and honourably received the body as the procession arrived at the door of the cathedral. In the company of many abbots the bishops led the service. Gerald of Wales claimed that the attendance of twelve bishops, of which three were archbishops, had mirrored the twelve fellow monks who would usually be present at a funeral in a Carthusian priory. In Hugh's case there were twelve brother bishops who took the place of twelve brother monks.¹¹ The poet Henry of Avranches, when depicting the scene twenty years later, repeated the numbers given by Gerald of Wales: 'Three kings, three archbishops, nine bishops and two hundred or more of the nobility and magnates, a throng of abbots, and a crowd of priors all hastened with one accord to meet the bier at the entrance to the city, and vied in placing their shoulders beneath it'.¹² The simplest, and the most widely accessible, synthesis of this event is found in a section of painted glass belonging to the early part of the thirteenth century, portraying Hugh's coffin raised aloft by three kings and three archbishops.¹³

The interval between death and burial presented a special opportunity to mark and observe the memory of the dead in a way that could only be achieved in the presence of the body. In the case of saints there was a particular significance attached to this. It is noticeable that the act of

¹⁰ All, he says, with the exception of King William, would stay in the city the following day to participate in Hugh's funeral. R. *Chron.*, vol. 4, pp. 141-143. However, Adam of Eynsham, an eye-witness, specifically mentioned the presence of William the Lion - although he supposedly stood a little way off from the rest, pp.

¹¹ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 115-116.

¹² *Metr. Hugh*, pp.72-3 (*Tres autem reges, et tres metropolitani, / Pontificesque novem, comites proceresque ducenti / Aut plures, populus abbatum, turba priorum, / Urbis in ingressu feretro communiter omnes / Occurrunt, humerosque suos supponere certant*).

¹³ The glass was inserted into the north transept rose window (the Dean's Eye). Nigel J. Morgan, *The Painted Glass of Lincoln Cathedral* (London, 1983), pp. 11, 16, & 32.

interment does not feature prominently in the accounts of Hugh of Avalon's funeral. The focus is on the procession, the long journey from London, and the muddy march through the city up to the cathedral. It is also on the night vigil, as the corpse, with its uncovered face, arrayed in episcopal vestments, lay on a litter in the choir of the cathedral, at which time the company of mourners were invited to approach. John of Leicester composed an incisive summary of Hugh's achievements and placed it at the bishop's feet.¹⁴ The large crowd, which gathered from different parts of the church, not only intended to view Hugh's body or to encircle it bearing candles, which was a standard part of the ceremony, but they also sought to touch him, to kiss his feet and his hands, and make offerings.¹⁵ Before setting out for Lincoln, practical steps had been taken to preserve the body and make it presentable. This involved evisceration and embalment. The procedure, undertaken 'on the advice of doctors' because of the lengthy journey involved, had provoked strenuous opposition. This was because some remains would need to be separately interred. The organs which had been removed were placed in a small lead box and buried beneath a marble slab close to the altar steps at the Old Temple, there to await 'the glorious temple of his resurrected body'.¹⁶

In Adam of Eynsham's portrayal of the interactions between mourners and the bishop's body, there is a notable lack of any sense of reserved decorum. The privilege of carrying the body reflected political prestige, so that 'only men of high rank and position dared to take part in the struggle', but it still appears to have developed into something of a shoving match, as 'at almost every moment new bearers replaced the former ones'. Of course this may be an overstatement, an accentuation of the raw emotions on display, but the scene Adam captures is certainly one of commotion and fervent excitement. Occasionally he expresses consternation at the behaviour of the crowd, as when the body was being carried to its burial site, where Adam laments the many attempts that were made to cut away pieces of Hugh's vestments; in the mistaken belief, he says, that an act of sacrilege could bring blessings.¹⁷

The procession had left London on Saturday 18 November, leading out of the city by Bishopsgate, and starting off along the Old North Road, which followed the ancient thoroughfare of Ermine Street, a direct route to Lincoln. The opening stage of the procession was also marked by high ceremony, according to Adam, and along the whole journey people swamped the roads: 'The clergy and people of London with crosses and candles attended us for a long way beyond the walls of the city. Everywhere whether in the villages or the open country,

¹⁴ *Pontificum baculus, monachorum norma, scholarum consultor, regum malleus Hugo fuit*. A. Mag. *Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 231-232.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 229 (of gold, silver, and precious stones, valued at 40 marks).

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 218. David Parks, 'Medieval Burials and Monuments', *The Temple Church in London: History, Architecture, Art*, ed. Robin Griffith-Jones and David Park (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 67-68.

¹⁷ A. Mag. *Vita*, vol. 2, p. 232; for the following account, see pp. 219-225.

immense crowds of persons of both sexes, and of every rank, class and profession, collected when the body was carried through their region'. Mostly these were regions of within the diocese. On the second day, soon after the cortège had left the first staging post at Hertford Priory, a cell of St Albans, it took off on an alternative, north-westerly route, again following an old Roman road (the White Way), thus passing the episcopal manors of Biggleswade and Buckden, where the second and third nights were spent. After two further stops at Stamford and Ancaster, the procession finally arrived in Lincoln, on Thursday 23 November.

The whole event, as Adam describes it, reads as a type of public exhibition. It fed a devout longing, he explained, felt by the inhabitants of different counties to lay a hand on the bishop or else witness him passing through: 'Everyone's great ambition was to touch the coffin, but those who were unable to do so on account of the mass of people surrounding it felt it no mean achievement to have seen and venerated it from some distance away'. At Stamford the pressing crowd was so dense that the funeral party had to wait outside the town until after dark. There were casualties. On entering Stamford one zealous man, crying out prayers to heaven, lunged himself in front of the cavalcade, desperate to gain even momentary contact with the bishop's coffin, and received a fatal blow in the process. Earlier on, at Biggleswade, another man declared a miracle after he seemed to have broken his arm under the weight of the crowd. He reported that the wound healed the same night when he saw the bishop in a dream. Adam would later attest at least one miracle from this stage of the journey before the papal inquest examining the case for Hugh's canonization: 'The lighted candles carried by four servants on horseback, although exposed like torches to the air were extinguished neither by the strong winds nor by the occasional heavy rain. When they dismounted, or hastily remounted their horses, they held the candles, which still remained alight'. By the time the convoy reached Stamford new lanterns made of horn were purchased, because 'the movements of the riders and the strong winds had caused the candles to burn so viciously that the wax had injured the hands and clothing of their bearers'.

In Adam's version of events a distinction is drawn between the journey of the body and the journey of the soul. Soon after one's death, according to the 'classical theological description', the soul separated from the body.¹⁸ The numerous vision episodes reported by Adam revealed the journey of the soul which ran in parallel to the funeral procession. They also show the way in which a sense of companionship with the bishop might extend and be deepened beyond the finite limits of his lifetime. Adam claimed that a number of visions were reported to him by the canons or by other members of the episcopal household. Richard of Kent, for

¹⁸ Karl Rahner, *On the Theology of Death* (New York, 1961; 2nd edition 1965), trans. C.H. Henkey, revised by W.J. O'Hara, pp. 16-26.

example, the archdeacon of Northampton, gave an assurance that he had seen Hugh rising to heaven on the night of his death. Richard's vision also contained a premonition. Robert de Capella, a member of the bishop's household, was following on behind. As the funeral party processed to Lincoln he had suffered a violent fever and, on the day of their arrival, he died.¹⁹

The period surrounding death was customarily associated with premonitions and spiritual insights. Among the visions Adam reports he includes the story of how the bishop had once claimed to have been forewarned about the death of his long-serving almoner, the Templar Morinus. On the night of his passing, the bishop dreamt (*vidit in sompnis*) that he was standing outside the almoner's room at Stow. On entering, he discovered a white dove (a common symbol for the soul) trapped and desperately seeking an exit. The dream woke Hugh and insured that he was present as the funeral rites were performed. By the time that news of the death of Morinus had reached the bishop at Sleaford Castle, horses were saddled, and ready to leave for Temple Bruer (Lincs.), where burial had been arranged.²⁰

Similarly, the saint's iconographic emblem, a pet swan he adopted at the palace of Stow, seemed to demonstrate prior knowledge of his death by being strangely withdrawn and failing to exhibit its normal sociability towards the bishop on his final visit.²¹ Gerald of Wales, who first described this swan (paying such keen attention to its markings that it can be safely identified as a hooper swan), says that it would reportedly sense whenever the bishop was about to arrive, becoming excitable in its behaviour, tramping up to the hall or to the gate, or gliding above the water and beating the surface with its wings. Gerald also pondered the mystery of the bishop's association with an animal, which, as it was traditionally understood, would let out one beautiful song at the moment of its death. This, he suggested, taught a lesson that death should not be regarded as a cause of grief. Just as the saints long to be 'dissolved', liberated from their bodies, and with Christ, so the swan shows its contempt for mortality by singing.²²

In another vision described by Adam of Eynsham an attendant seemingly conversed with Hugh during the funeral vigil. He witnessed the bishop rise up from the litter and they walked hand in hand together through the church. The whole time the visionary heard a beautiful, unearthly melody, which Hugh assured him he had heard continually since the moment of death. Remarkably the visionary inquired specifically about the appearance of the Christ-child at Buckden, to which he received a sharp retort: 'What concern is it of yours, if on the occasion you

¹⁹ A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 211-212. Roger of Howden reports a conflicting version of this episode in which Dean Roger of Rolleston received a premonition of the death of Robert de Capella directly from Hugh some weeks after the funeral.

²⁰ Morinus, a Templar knight, who had served as the bishop's almoner from the start of the episcopate (described as 'exceedingly conscientious in his treatment of the needy'), died at Stow in 1199; *ibid*, pp. 212-213.

²¹ A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 1, p. 109.

²² G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 73-76.

have mentioned, and on very many others, the Lord deigned to manifest himself to me in this way?²³ Although it is not explicitly stated, in light of its content and the outstanding detail of this vision, it is possible that the subject in question was actually Adam. The passage even includes a piece of almost comical suspense that appears to reflect the chaplain's anxieties about the behaviour of mourners during the funeral, where Hugh, from a position of repose, starts to raise his head to speak with the visionary, but then, noticing the large crowd pressing in, quickly lies back down again, staying absolutely still until they had withdrawn. Once the people had realized that their proximity at this time was distasteful the bishop stood up from his litter and spoke openly. This vision has a particular symbolic resonance in that it contains a vivid description of the scene and setting of the church, which is not overtly identified as the cathedral, but, at one point at least, seems to evoke an image of the sacred tabernacle (Exod. 26: 1). The funeral is thus represented as a moment of consecration, where the environment and character of the church are altered and sanctified. This symbolic depiction could be said to correspond with a real, historical transformation. Echoing, in some ways, the circumstances of the burial of Remigius in 1092, after Hugh's death the cathedral would serve as a reliquary for the bishop attributed with its construction. His new gravesite would be centre of the life of the church.

²³ A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 214-217 (quotation at p. 216).

THE CATHEDRAL AS A GRAVESITE

Up to the end of the twelfth century Lincoln Cathedral managed to flourish without the prestige as well as the material rewards, which the shrine of a widely-recognized saint could confer. From this time successive attempts were made to promote the church as a site of pilgrimage. Lincoln is outstanding, and seemingly unique, among European cathedrals for the frequency with which it appealed to Rome in order to secure the canonization of its bishops prior to the Reformation.¹ It is important to recognize that Hugh's cult had been foreshadowed by attempts to publicize the cult of Remigius, for which the primary evidence is the *Life* by Gerald of Wales, first composed in the late 1190s. The strategy of cult promotion adopted in the final years of Hugh's episcopate suggests that there was already a definite aspiration to encourage popular veneration. While the work produced by Gerald of Wales seems to have marked the high point for the cult of Remigius, the memory of the bishop would retain a prominent place within the commemorative practices of the cathedral. According to the *Liber niger*, a connexion between the memory of St Hugh and St Remigius was affirmed each morning when two incense bearers would process from the high altar, first purifying the tomb of Remigius, then the altar of the Virgin, before censuring the two shrines of St Hugh (built at the end of the thirteenth century). At this point they broke apart, one heading north, the other south, and made their way separately around the rest of the church.² It is probably wrong to think of the cult of Hugh simply eclipsing that of Remigius. Allied by the circumstance of their nativities, the two bishops would become brother saints, sharing the same domain, receiving veneration from the same core clerical following, and being seen to act in partnership.³

One way to account for the dramatic escalation of gifts to the church around the year 1200 signalled in the *Registrum Antiquissimum* would be to point to the heightened status of the church as a site of pilgrimage where the cult of the saints was actively promoted. Although the cathedral's major saint's cult only took off in November 1200. We are told by Gerald of Wales that the shrine of Remigius had attracted a spate of offerings from pilgrims in the final years of Hugh's episcopate, corresponding with an intensification of healings at the cathedral, that was

¹ For a general discussion of attempts to secure the canonization of Robert Grosseteste and John Daldery see E.W. Kemp, *Canonization and Authority in the Western Church* (London, 1948), pp. 118-121. Specifically in regard to Robert Grosseteste, whose canonization was pursued unsuccessfully on four separate occasions, see *idem*, 'The attempted canonization of Robert Grosseteste', in D.A. Callus, *Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 241-6; and E.G. Cole, 'Proceedings relative to the canonization of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln', in *Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers*, vol. 33 (1915), pp. 1-34.

² Discussed in Ben Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines of Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 1998), p. 61.

³ Miracles following the death of Robert Grosseteste, for example, were said to have spurred Remigius and Hugh into action, so that the three bishop-saints were operating in unison; M. *Chron. Mai.*, vol. 5, pp. 490-491.

exactly coextensive with a costly phase of construction: ‘abundant miracles were continually sparking off around the holy man’s tomb just as the church roof neared completion; people came together from all over with gifts and offerings up to the point that the sumptuous workmanship was completely finished, but then no longer’.⁴

Acts of remembrance were oriented in relation to particular environments, resonant objects and ritually demarcated, or consecrated, spaces. The veneration of Remigius and Hugh added to the cathedral’s already considerable appeal as a site of burial and commemoration. Not every benefactor wished to be interred at the cathedral. However, as gifts to the church did sometimes form part of the funeral service, the right of burial was clearly a key motive for benefaction. As with several other major English cathedral sites, the cathedral precinct, incorporating the graveyard, was carved out from the prominent central area of an ancient Roman fortification. In Lincoln’s case this covered a comparatively large area, and one which lay beyond the jurisdiction of local secular authorities.⁵ The procurement of a resting place in this exclusive, elevated location inside the walled summit of the city denoted some level of social privilege. But the presence of a shrine had a unique appeal and burial close to the remains of the saints was a deep-rooted and powerful incentive.

The graves of the majority of benefactors and canons during this period would have been located within the designated cemetery plot, thought to have been situated north-west of the nave.⁶ However the very earliest recorded burial at the cathedral, after the funeral of Bishop Remigius, is that of William son of Walter d’Aincourt, whose grave was uncovered ‘near to the west door of the cathedral church’ in the seventeenth century. The grave contained a lead burial plaque which identifies William, ‘born of royal stock’, as a kinsman of Remigius, and records the date of his death (30 October) while in fosterage at the court of William Rufus. Subsequently, in 1741, a corpse, (‘sewed up in a strong tanned leather hide, the seam running up the middle of the breast’), was also found outside the west door, although it is not entirely clear if this was a separate burial or a rediscovery of the same grave.⁷

⁴ G. Op. vol. 7, pp. 30-31: ‘...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’.

⁵ Julia Barrow, ‘Urban cemetery location in the high Middle Ages’, *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100-1600*, ed. Steven Bassett (Leicester, 1992), pp. 79-80

⁶ The management and maintenance of this plot, and the task of grave-digging, is likely to have been assigned to a sexton or verger, whose management and payment would be in the hands of the treasurer. The location of the graveyard is discussed in Stocker & Everson, *Summoning St Michael*, p. 88. A new extension to the cemetery was inaugurated in the middle of the thirteenth century, which lay south-east of the choir. *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 10, pp. 194-202.

⁷ The plaque, and William d’Aincourt’s royal lineage (through his mother Matilda), have recently been discussed in Richard Sharpe, ‘King Harold’s Daughter’, *Haskins Society Journal* (2007), vol. 19, pp. 1-27, where (at p. 1, note 1) the connexion is made with the body found in the eighteenth century, noted (by Maurice Johnson) in *Archaeologia* (1770), vol. 1, p. 31. The initial discovery was reported in William Dugdale, *The Baronage of England* (London, 1675), vol. 1, p. 386.

It is possible that a few of the early graves in the cemetery may have been marked with tombstones or with wooden post markers, a practice which is recorded within the cemetery of the city parish of St Mark's from the late-eleventh century through to the twelfth.⁸ While surviving tomb monuments situated around the northern part of the diocese, especially in Lincolnshire, reveal a thriving and distinctive tradition of sepulchral sculpture in this period, there is little way to establish a firm connexion to the cathedral.⁹ The majority of graves were probably left without any long-term marker and it may well be that the role customarily allocated to a gravesite was attached instead to a different place altogether; to the church of burial, for example, or the particular altar where someone was commemorated. In the case of Hugh of Avalon, the altar of St John the Baptist played a major part in his commemoration. Even ahead of his burial, on the day before the procession arrived in Lincoln, King John entered the cathedral to present a gold chalice at the altar, evidently conscious of the purpose assigned to it.¹⁰ Presumably a number of burials belonged to the parishioners of St Mary Magdalene in the upper city. John de Schalby claims that the church had previously existed on the site of the cathedral and that, after the foundation, its parishioners were baptized at the cathedral, received burial in the cathedral cemetery, and were served by a designated altar in the nave.¹¹

At least among the laity intramural burial in our period was an honour effectively confined to 'kings, princes, and patrons and founders of churches'.¹² Aristocratic families were free to select their own place of burial, and so cathedrals would struggle to contend with the opportunities afforded at monastic foundations, where there was far greater freedom to create elaborate, personalized monuments.¹³ In the context of Lincoln the privilege of a burial place inside the church may have been reserved to bishops, although there is the implication that the first treasurer Reiner received burial inside the church when Henry of Huntingdon described how, 'accustoming himself to his eternal home', he would routinely intone psalms at the grave he

⁸ B.J.J. Gilmour & D.A. Stocker, *St Mark's Church and Cemetery* (Lincoln, 1986), pp. 19-22.

⁹ The cathedral does possess a pair of tombstones that have been dated (approximately) to the early-eleventh century and an illustration of an early tombstone from Lincoln seems to relate to a similar period. It is likely that these predate the cathedral. Their simple cross designs correspond with other locally produced tombstones, all of which are especially hard to date; see *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Tomb Sculpture, vol. 5 Lincolnshire*, ed. Paul Everson and David Stocker (Oxford, 1999), esp. pp. 194-196. Lincolnshire limestone, particularly associated with the quarry at Barnack (Barnack Rag), was of immense importance to sculptural production during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, developing distinctive sepulchral designs; see L.A.S. Butler, 'Minor Medieval Monumental Sculpture in the East Midlands', *The Archaeological Journal* vol. 121 (1964), pp. 111-53.

¹⁰ *R. Chron.*, vol. 4, p. 141.

¹¹ *G. Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 195-196.

¹² Christopher Wilson, 'The Medieval Monuments', *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), ed. Patrick Collinson, Nigel Ramsey, & Margaret Sparks, p. 453 (note 8).

¹³ The legal principle was established in a prominent dispute at the beginning of the twelfth century between Gloucester Abbey and Hereford Cathedral, which involved the body of Robert fitz Azkitill being disinterred and restored to the abbey from where it had been taken by force; *Reg. Ang.-Nor.*, vol. 2, pp. 79-80 (no. 880).

had prepared for himself.¹⁴ It is possible that a burial from the early-thirteenth century is included among the nine priestly burials located at the entrance to the chapter house (directly outside the northernmost entrance to the cathedral), which was probably completed in the 1220s.¹⁵ Burial in this location seems to have resembled monastic practice and comparable customs are also seen in parish churches.¹⁶

If the cathedral was principally a site of burial for the bishops, their monuments, even for the time, appear to have been quite simple. There are no effigy monuments at the cathedral, for example, although the tradition mainly emerged at English cathedrals from the late-twelfth century. Notably at Wells, under the direction of Bishop Jocelin, the brother of Hugh of Wells, a thriving industry of life-size effigy sculpture, which left its impressive legacy on the Western façade, included a series of effigies made retrospectively for the Anglo-Saxon bishops. Hugh of Wells (in stark contrast to his brother) was buried beneath a plain stone slab.¹⁷ The rising demand for such monuments has been seen as a response to changing attitudes towards the afterlife and, more specifically, to the role given to the gravesite in the enactment of intercessory worship. Over the course of the thirteenth century, funeral monuments were increasingly fashioned in anticipation of specific commemorative acts. With the exception of Walter of Coutances and Geoffrey Plantagenet, both of whom went on to take up office as archbishops, all Lincoln bishops received burial inside the cathedral. During the building campaign, which continued in the early thirteenth century, their graves seem to have been relocated near to the entrance of the north-east chapel on the eastern transept, which Jennifer Alexander has proposed as the site of Hugh's shrine after the first translation of his relics following his canonization in 1220.¹⁸ The *Liber niger* describes the incorporation of the gravesites of all the

¹⁴ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 590-591.

¹⁵ A report of the excavation carried out in 1955 can be found in Rupert Bruce-Mitford, 'The Chapter House Vestibule Graves at Lincoln and the Body of St Hugh of Avalon', *Tribute to an Antiquary: Essays presented to Marc Fitch by some of his friends*, edited by Frederick Emmison and Roy Stephens (London, 1976), 127-140. Differences in the design of the coffins, notably in the shape of the head-recesses and the manner of their arrangement, indicate that they belong to a range of periods, the very latest being from the sixteenth century. Priestly vestments were discovered inside some. With one exception they all contained a chalice and paten: instruments of the mass and symbols of the priesthood.

¹⁶ For a monastic comparison see, for instance, Roberta Gilchrist, *Norwich Cathedral Close: The Evolution of the English Cathedral Landscape* (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 109. No English parish churchyard has been as extensively excavated as St Peter's, in Barton upon Humber (Lincs.). Although burials relating to the Norman era are few in number, and there is low incidence of intramural burials before the thirteenth century, eight adult graves were discovered in the south porch, creating 'a burial porticus or chapel', two of which contained chalice and paten. No pre-Conquest graves contain any such artefact or personal possession. Warwick Rodwell and Kirsty Rodwell, 'St Peter's Church, Barton-upon-Humber: Excavation and Structural Study, 1978-81', *The Antiquaries Journal* (1982), vol. 62, p. 303.

¹⁷ For Jocelin's marble tomb, positioned in the centre of the quire, and mounted with a brass, see Jane Sayers, 'Jocelin of Wells and the Role of a Bishop in the Thirteenth Century', *Jocelin of Wells: Bishop, Builder, Courtier*, ed. Robert Dunning (Woodbridge, 2010), p. 34.

¹⁸ Jennifer S. Alexander, 'The Angel Choir of Lincoln Cathedral and the Shrines of St Hugh', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* (1995), vol. 195, pp. 142-143.

bishops on the occasion of a bishop's anniversary, when two wax candles would be placed over the tomb of the particular bishop whose anniversary was being celebrated, and one candle would be placed on each of the tombs of the other bishops who were buried in the cathedral.¹⁹

It may be that there was a general aversion to, or reaction against, the placement of ornate and obtrusive personal monuments within churches. This is implied in Hugh of Avalon's instructions to be buried next to the altar of his special patron, John the Baptist, 'in any fitting place near a wall', when he asked that the 'tomb may not take up too much of the pavement and obstruct or injure those who pass by, as I have seen happen in a great many churches'.²⁰ Another argument put forward by Julia Barrow to explain a 'low point for funerary art' in the twelfth century is that priority tended to be given instead to funeral and anniversary services.²¹ As a consequence, as has already been said, remembrance may not have centred on the burial site so much as the altar at which these services were regularly performed. However there is one significant and exceptional episcopal monument which survives from the twelfth century. It has been discussed at length by George Zarnecki. The upper surface, which is about two metres long (narrowing from 69 cm in width at the head to 51 cm at the base), carries a heavily eroded relief, whose design is identified as the Tree of Jesse, a popular contemporary iconographic image of Marian devotion. The stone was imported from Tournai, and it was almost certainly there that the relief was carved. There is a local tradition linking this monument with Bishop Remigius, but similarities with grave-stones at Salisbury and Ely, thought to have been used for Bishop Alexander's kinsmen, Roger and Nigel, led Zarnecki to suggest that it was more likely used to mark Alexander's gravesite.²² Of course the idea that this was one of several episcopal monuments which existed before the translation of the bishops in the early-thirteenth century should not be ruled out.

It would appear that the first burial place of Hugh of Avalon was not as plain as his instructions might imply. The location of this monument has been debated at length by scholars. But there are references to the first tomb contained in miracle narratives. One story concerns a

¹⁹ *Statutes* (part 1), pp. 298-299: '*in anniversariis cuiuslibet episcopi debet invenire duos cereos super tumbam illius cuius fit anniversarium et unum cereum super tumbam cuiuslibet alterius episcopi qui in ecclesia requiescit et ardere debent quamdiu durat servicium*'.

²⁰ *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, p. 192 ("Ante aram", inquit, "sepedicti patroni mei precursoris Domini, ubi congruentius videbitur spatium, secus murum aliquem ponetis me, ne pavementum loci tumba, ut plerisque in ecclesiis cernimus, importune occupet, et incedentibus offendiculum prestat aut ruinam").

²¹ Julia Barrow, 'Urban cemetery location in the high Middle Ages', *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100-1600*, ed. Steven Bassett (Leicester, 1992), pp. 79-80

²² Since at least the nineteenth century the monument has been associated with Bishop Remigius. An attribution to the eleventh century was considered implausible by Zarnecki, on the basis of the material, the craftwork, and the unusual motif. George Zarnecki, *Romanesque Lincoln: the Sculpture of the Cathedral* (Lincoln, 1988), pp. 93-96. See also, Elizabeth Schwartzbaum, 'Three Tournai Tombslabs in England', *Gesta*, vol. 20 (1981), pp. 89-97. On the Stirps Jesse image see Margot Fassler, 'Mary's Nativity, Fulbert of Chartres, and the Stirps Jesse: Liturgical Innovation circa 1000 and Its Afterlife', *Speculum*, vol. 75 (2000), pp. 389-434.

supplicant, who spent a night beside the shrine, and described falling asleep with her head inside one of the tomb's round apertures. From this vantage point a vision was seen of the bishop celebrating mass at the adjacent altar of St John the Baptist.²³ The account indicates that the first tomb was constructed above the ground with a series of apertures running along one side and may have shared similarities with Archbishop Hubert Walter's distinctive, Purbeck marble sarcophagus at Canterbury Cathedral, which is quite close in date (Hubert died in 1205).²⁴ A series of chaplains, the first being Philip '*de Tumba*', were designated to Hugh's tomb. In his bull of canonization dated 1220, Pope Honorius III ordered that St Hugh's relics were to be solemnly translated, and they would seem to have been elevated promptly (and long before the second translation in 1280), because from this time we start to find another chaplain, not of the tomb, but of the shrine, the first being Adam '*de Feretro*'. The two chaplaincies continued until at least the middle of the thirteenth century. Alexander has observed that the 'original burial site must have remained as a sanctified site after 1220', and points out that it was in no way uncommon for empty tombs of the saints to continue to receive veneration.²⁵ By the early-thirteenth century these two gravesites appear to have become the chief focus of commemorative activity in the cathedral, with the burials of the bishops of Lincoln oriented in relation to the shrine.

²³ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, p. 140.

²⁴ It is similarly elevated above the ground, against a wall, with six apertures running along its front. The highly unusual design recalls 'reliquary coffins' common to saints' shrines; Wilson, 'Medieval Monuments', *Canterbury Cathedral*, pp. 454-458. Such monuments are generally thought to have been designed with pilgrims in mind, allowing them close proximity with the saint.

²⁵ Alexander, 'Shrines of St Hugh', pp. 144-145.

EXHUMATION

The memory of the dead was honoured through the provision a fitting or seemly (*decens*) place of burial. If, for whatever reason, it was felt that this obligation had not been met then gravesites could be disturbed, remains unearthed, inspected, and moved. The kinds of evidence which throw light on the special conditions and procedures which accompanied such remedial action are surprisingly diverse and are found in a range of sources. They correspond to differing, often quite unrelated circumstances, where there were evidently quite distinct objectives in mind. As a result an analysis of this phenomenon can be helpful in illustrating various different dimensions of the oversight and intervention applied throughout the diocese by the bishop, and also by cathedral clergy, in respect of mortuary customs.

Descriptions of the disinterment and transfer of bodily remains are most abundant, unsurprisingly, in relation to the saints. There was a longstanding ritual significance attached to this process, as a highpoint of public veneration, and as a fulfilment of the saint-making process. Frequently in our period the elevation of relics involved relocation to a more prominent, lavish, and accessible situation above ground, thereby allowing supplicants increased proximity. Although saints might be moved without the connotations of a formal translation ceremony, transferrals initiated out of necessity or as a result of inadvertent discovery could involve similar celebrative patterns. These cases involve a specific area of episcopal jurisdiction which went through a significant readjustment in this period. They are best discussed as a distinct group.

It should be acknowledged that exhumation as an occasion of high ceremony was not confined to the transfer of relics. Other kinds of translation took place, particularly those which were orchestrated by monastic patrons, where the main goal was simply to improve the position and structure of a tomb, and thus raise the status of the deceased within a specific environment. Gestures such as these could also be read as fairly ostentatious displays of wealth and of influence. They might have the effect of lifting the status of a family and would entail the provision of a substantial reward to the church in question. In some cases the attendance of the bishop was sought, although possibly as a conciliatory gesture. Bishop Robert Chesney was present at Bullington Priory (Lincs.), for example, on the day that Philip of Kyme had the remains of his mother Agnes disinterred and moved to a new position next to the more recent tomb of his father Simon, who was the founder of the Gilbertine house.¹ As has been mentioned, the Kyme family had close links to Lincoln Cathedral. Brian Golding has

¹ *Documents Illustrative of the Social and Economic History of the Danelaw*, ed. F.M. Stenton (London, 1920), pp. 38-39 (no. 58).

characterized the ceremony, which took place in the chapter house, and saw Philip place a grant to the convent of Ingham church into the bishop's hands, as 'a moment of great solemnity that revealed an emotional solidarity between Bullington and the Kymes'.² Local ecclesiasts, including members of the bishop's household, and the heads of nearby religious houses, were among the subscribed witnesses to the grant, including the abbots of nearby Bardney and Kyme. As was not uncommon, the members of the episcopal household were also cathedral canons. It is not entirely clear whether or not the historian Ralph of Diceto, who was also archdeacon of Middlesex, and is regularly found as a witness to Robert Chesney's charters, was himself a canon of Lincoln, but two other canons William Cement and Malger of Newark served as the bishop's chaplain and clerk (respectively).³

Of course there may have been a range of motives behind such acts. As we have seen, the transfer of the bishops' graves at Lincoln (as at Wells) came about as a result of extensive reconstruction of the church, which would overhaul the surroundings of existing burial places and it is also possible that such translations were associated with building campaigns. It was inevitable that the building projects which were undertaken on a vast scale throughout our period would breach long-established attachments to particular gravesites. Occasionally we hear of concerted efforts to transfer multiple graves to newly built churches. When William fitz Ernis gave land in Long Sutton (Lincs.) to Castle Acre Priory, on which to construct a parish church from stone, he tried to ensure that the graves located within the existing church would not be abandoned: 'my wish is that the earlier wooden church of the same vill, in place of which the new church will be built, shall be taken away and the bodies buried in it shall be taken to the new church'.⁴ Such sentiments indicate an enduring obligation towards the dead expressed through the maintenance and integration of their graves and also a desire to preserve continuity of commemoration within parish churches. But even in cases where the exhumation of remains was a secondary consequence, there was the opportunity to enhance funerary monuments within a new location. The basic improvement and adornment of his parents' burial place was clearly one of Philip of Kyme's main motives. This is apparent from an additional gift of land to Bullington - the rent from which would be used to pay for lights around the tombs.⁵

The involvement of the bishop and canons in the ceremony at Bullington may simply reflect the influential position of the Kyme family in the county, and the proximity of the house to Lincoln, but one part of the bishop's duties was to monitor commemorative routines within

² Brian Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham and the Gilbertine Order: c.1130-c.1300* (Oxford, 1995), p. 337.

³ Both chaplain and clerk also appear frequently as witnesses to the bishop's charters, see *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 4, xlv; also *Fasti*, p. 148 (William) & p. 131 (Malger).

⁴ Castle Acre Cartulary (London, MS BL Harley 2110, f.70^v), cited in Owen, *Church and Society*, p. 5.

⁵ Golding, *Gilbertine Order*, p. 336.

religious houses. The main opportunity for this was during episcopal visitations, which were either undertaken by bishops in person or by their archdeacons.⁶ We know from one famous example involving Hugh of Avalon that burial locations could be deemed unsuitable on such occasions and that the transfer of a gravesite might be ordered.

The case in question concerns the removal of Rosamund Clifford's grave from the conventual church at Godstow on Hugh of Avalon's instruction. The royal mistress had been buried in the most prominent location within the church, directly in front of the main altar, and at the centre of the choir. This privileged position reflected the generous endowments made by Henry II after her death and by other members of the Clifford family, which had significantly enlarged Godstow's wealth and status.⁷ During a visitation of the nunnery in 1191, two years after the king had died, Hugh ordered that Fair Rosamund's body should be buried in the communal cemetery beyond the cloister. Roger of Howden's contemporary account implies that the tomb's position had been a total surprise to the bishop. Only when entering the church to pray had he discovered the heavily adorned monument, encircled by lamps and by candles, and veiled under a silk canopy.⁸ It should be noted that Howden suggests the main objection to the gravesite specifically related to the adulterous relationship Rosamund had engaged in with the king, and because of the example that this sumptuous tomb in her memory might set to the community of women at Godstow. It was fairly common for the tombs of powerful figures to dominate the space within conventual churches and perhaps not unusual for them to be dressed and attended in this fashion.

Geoffrey Plantagenet was said to have been outraged by Hugh's directive (prompting the theory that Rosamund was his mother) and, whatever the impulse behind the action, there were strong political overtones in this case. We might add another example at this point which illustrates the use of moral and episcopal authority as a way to preserve the sanctity of a church and to make an emphatic political statement. Again it involves the direct, personal intervention

⁶ Records of episcopal visitations from this period are few and far between, but it has been proposed that, within the province of Canterbury, Hugh was 'among the first to conduct a systematic visitation of monastic houses'; David M. Smith, 'Hugh's Administration of Lincoln Diocese', in *St Hugh of Lincoln*, pp. 33-34. Nevertheless, in the archdeaconry of Bedford, they were said to have been conducted annually; *The Early Charters of the Augustinian canons of Waltham Abbey, Essex, 1062-1230*, ed. R. Ransford (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 45-6.

⁷ Both Rosamund and her mother Margaret were buried there. Grants by Rosamund's father Walter Clifford in memory of his wife and daughter, and the confirmations of his sons Walter and Richard, are found in *The English Register of Godstow Nunnery, near Oxford, written about 1450*, edited by Andrew Clark (London, 1911), at pp. 135-136 (nos. 156-159) and p. 161 (nos. 199-201). For Henry II's grants, see *ibid.*, pp. 661-665 (no. 886).

⁸ R. *Gesta*, vol. 2, p. 231. The abbreviated version reads, '*Eodem Hugo Lincolnensis episcopus, faciens visitationes suas per domos religiosorum in sua diocesi, venit ad abbatiam sanctimonialium de Godestoue, quae est inter Oxoniam et Wudestoc. Et cum intrasset ecclesiam ut oraret, vidit tumbam in medio chori anto altare, sericis pannis velatam, et lampadibus et cereis circumdatam: et quaesivit cuius esset tumba, et dictum est ei, illam esse tumbam Rosemundae, quae quondam exstiterat amica Henrici Regis Angliae, filii Matildis imperatricis; et quod ipse pro amore illius multa bona ecclesiae illi fecerat. Et respondit episcopus: "Tollite eam hinc, quia scortum fuit, et sepelite eam extra ecclesiam cum caeteris, ne Christiana religio vilescat, et ut exemplo illius caeterae mulieres exterritae, caveant sibi ab illicitis et adulterinis concubitibus."* Et factam et ista'; R. *Chron.*, vol. 3, pp. 167-168.

of Hugh of Avalon. This is the story of the harrowing penance devised for some of the earl of Leicester's men after they had tracked down a suspected thief, who was claiming asylum in the church of Brackley (Northants.), and, by some underhand but undivulged method, managed to coax their victim out of the church. On the outskirts of the town, they performed a summary execution, hanging their victim and burying the body on the spot. When news reached the bishop all the men involved were immediately excommunicated. In order to be reconciled to the church they were forced to submit to a public act of contrition. Returning to Brackley, to the site of the gallows, and stripped to their breeches, they were made to unearth the body, and place it on a bier. Taking the weight on their shoulders, the men were led to churches in the vicinity. Outside each they were beaten by a delegation made up of 'all the priests of the cathedral chapter'. On arriving at the church of Brackley, they were instructed to rebury the body in consecrated ground, using only their bare hands.⁹ The group walked barefoot from Brackley to Lincoln, a journey that must have taken the best part of a week. At Lincoln they were flogged again outside the city's churches before being reconciled at the cathedral.¹⁰

A striking feature of this story is the role given to the cathedral clergy in overseeing and administering public penance, and to the cathedral (and cathedral city) as the place of reconciliation. The punishment reflected the bishop's outrage at the contravention of core ecclesiastical rights. In similarity with other reported penances of this kind, specifically involving exhumation and reburial in consecrated ground, this act was linked to the transgression of sanctuary and to unlawful hanging. Excommunication was the most powerful punitive tool at the bishop's disposal and involved exclusion from burial.¹¹ Efforts were made to reserve this power. During Hugh of Avalon's episcopate archdeacons, deans and other officials were prevented from absolving excommunicates or those placed under interdict by the cathedral chapter unless commanded by the chapter.¹²

In the early-thirteenth century the kingdom as a whole was placed under a General Interdict, lasting from March 1208 to May 1213. Among the most grievous effects of the papal interdict was the denial of full Christian burial. Exceptions were made for religious houses, but

⁹ The detail that the Brackley penitents were to dig a new grave using their bare hands has echoes of a penalty enforced by the bishop of Chartres, for example, in which one group of noblemen accused of hanging a cleric were made to dig up the body bare-handed, using their finger-nails. They were then to rebury it, with honour, in consecrated ground. Another instance of public penance issued on a castalen for the hanging of a conversi is cited in the same place, Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon*, pp. 198-201. For an overview, with a later and more closely analogous example from Lille, see Mary C. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (London, 1995), pp. 110-1 (esp. note 66).

¹⁰ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 158-9; the case is discussed within the context of violent correction in James Buchanan Given, *Society and Homicide in Thirteenth-Century England* (Stanford, 1977), pp. 194-8.

¹¹ Excommunicates were prevented from burial 'in stone or wood'. *Councils & Synods: with other documents relating to the English Church, A.D. 871-1204*, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke (Oxford, 1981) vol. 1.2, p. 801.

¹² *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 4, p. 66 (no. 93); for the similar instruction of Bishop William of Blois, see *ibid.* p. 166 (no. 257).

not, it would seem, for the cathedral. In the case of William de Montibus, a translation ceremony was said to have ensued ‘on the return of Christian observance to England’. The chancellor’s death ‘after Easter’ in 1213 (so after 14 April) is reported in the Melrose Chronicle.¹³ King John issued an invitation to Hugh of Wells to return from exile, in which he assured the bishop’s peace and safety on 24 May 1213.¹⁴ There was thus a prolonged gap between the initial burial (it is not said where), and the translation of William’s remains to (perhaps meaning inside) the cathedral in the following year.

We have briefly mentioned another circumstance in which exhumation was customarily performed. An example involving Hugh of Avalon is found among a series of stories reported by the chronicler William of Newburgh concerning reanimated corpses. The details of the case are of particular interest because they purport to show the involvement of several different levels of diocesan administration. William of Newburgh claimed to have heard the story directly from Stephen, the archdeacon of Buckingham, who served as the chancellor of the cathedral before the appointment of William de Montibus.¹⁵ It involved a revenant that was understood to be harassing the inhabitants of a Bedfordshire village by night. The situation had stirred up such panic that each household in the village had been keeping vigils for their own protection. The revenant was identified as that of a recently deceased local man. First he had visited his widow, next he targeted his brothers, but eventually he started to cause more general commotion, which included unsettling local animals (both those kept indoors and outdoors).¹⁶ The case had been brought to the attention of Stephen as he sat in local synod, by which time it must have been raised with the parish priest and presumably the rural dean. The archdeacon proceeded to set out the details of the case in writing, and sent a letter to Hugh of Avalon asking for guidance. Other cases involving the walking dead tend to show the involvement of bishops passing judgement on such matters and suggest a variety of responses. Normally exhumation was involved (the need to see and display the corpse in such cases was clearly important) but Walter Map describes how one village, acting on the instructions of the bishop of Worcester, had successfully dealt with a revenant that was seen walking through the area both night and day by forming a large human

¹³ Although his death is traced to Scotland, it is not clear that the chancellor went into exile. He is found officiating at the cathedral in 1212. The account reads, ‘*Obiit pie memorie magister Willelmus de Montibus, cancellarius ecclesie Lincolnensis, post pascha, cuius corpus anno sequenti, reddita Christianitate per Angliam, in ecclesiam Lincolnensem est translatum, ibidemque cum debita reverential est tumulatum*’. Faustina B. IX f. 30^r, *The Chronicle of Melrose Abbey: A Stratigraphic Edition* (2007), vol. 1, edited by Dauvit Broun and Julian Harrison.

¹⁴ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 133-136 (no. 207).

¹⁵ Stephen first appears as archdeacon around the same time that William de Montibus became chancellor. 1194 On one occasion he is called ‘de Swafeld’, perhaps relate to Swayfield (Lincs.), *Fasti*, p. 16 and p. 40.

¹⁶ William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of the Reign of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett (RS, 1884-5), vol. 2, pp. 474-475.

chain, encircling it, and sweeping it back towards, then into, its grave, before placing a cross above it.¹⁷

The case from Buckinghamshire was debated among the bishop and his companions. Some of whom, it is safe to say, would have been cathedral canons. The bishop was amazed at the story but his companions were able to cite numerous similar cases. The customary course of action, it was explained, was to dig up and cremate the body.¹⁸ Nevertheless Hugh, with an outsider's point of view, recommended an alternative method. He presented Stephen with a letter of absolution and gave him instructions to open up the tomb, inspect the corpse, and place the letter on its chest, before sealing the grave. It was a practice known to have been carried out in the case of posthumous retractions of excommunication. We know from his hagiographers that Hugh felt an on-going, even intensified, responsibility towards the dead, and that he tried to cultivate this sensibility among his clergy. Unlike his councillors, Hugh offered a redemptive solution and was able to utilize the special discretion of his office in achieving this. As Carl Watkins puts it, 'Hugh substituted a view in which revenants were integrated into a scheme for salvation more heavily infused with divine mercy'.¹⁹ The story was one of many illustrations of the bishop's unique and compassionate approach to pastoral problems (frequently in contravention of the advice he had received).

The translation of the remains of Bishop Remigius, reported by Gerald of Wales, is an illustration of the complexity of hagiographical descriptions of such events. The collection of miracles contained in the *Vita sancti Remigii* describes how 32 years after the bishop's death, so near to the start of Bishop's Alexander's episcopate, the original tomb was damaged by fire. The stone which lay above it broke in two. As a result of this accident, a decision was reached among the canons to transfer the remains and the tomb to a new site. Before going through with this, the canons to whom the task was assigned underwent a process of ritual purification, which involved fasting, reciting prayers, and making confession. Once they had exhumed and exposed the body, they found it to be incorrupt, giving proof to the bishop's sanctity. The body was

¹⁷ The occupier of the grave was known to have died 'faithlessly' (*infideliter*). The bishop in question was Roger (1164-1179), W. *De Nug.*, pp. 204-205.

¹⁸ Another common solution was to remove the head of the corpse and place it between the legs. Walter Map describes how Gilbert Foliot, as bishop of Hereford, had recommended decapitation in a comparable situation, *De Nug.*, pp. 202-205. In Stapenhill (Derbys.) cemetery two bodies were exhumed, the heads removed and placed between the legs, but the hearts were removed and burned separately; Geoffrey of Burton, *Life and Miracles of St Modwenna* (OMT: Oxford, 2002), ed. R. Bartlett, pp. 196-199. See also John Blair, 'The dangerous dead in early medieval England', in *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald* (Farnham, 2008), ed. Stephen Baxter, Catherine Karkov, Janet L. Nelson, and David Pelteret, pp. 539-559.

¹⁹ C.S. Watkins, *History and the Supernatural in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 186.

conveyed, 'with great reverence', from its original resting place 'within sight of the altar of the Holy Cross' to the northern side of the altar.²⁰

The episode is among the very first in the miracle collection to which a date can be assigned and it is possible that the translation represented the starting point for a cult which would find its fullest expression towards the end of the twelfth century. While the solemnity of the preparations undertaken might suggest that Remigius was already considered a saint, this source is, of course, far from contemporary. If we assume the translation did take place, then in its details the description must represent something of a creative rendition, abiding by standards that would be deemed appropriate at the end of the twelfth century. In this context the fact that Bishop Alexander was not involved in the decision to undertake the translation is notable. The miracle which immediately precedes the translation portrays Alexander as an avid promoter of the cult of Remigius. Yet the responsibility for deciding to translate the relics was attributed entirely to the body of canons. While this translation was apparently performed out of necessity, by the end of the twelfth century formal translations would require the consent not only of the bishop but of Rome. Episcopal translations were becoming a delicate issue. Traditionally the ceremony was a way in which bishops had locally recognized the cult of a saint. However episcopal controls over the cult of the saints were curtailed markedly over the course of our period. By the first third of the thirteenth century the local translation ordered by an individual bishop had 'lost its decisive and definitive character'.²¹ It could also be cause for grievance. An illustration of the changing perception of episcopal authority in this respect involves John of Coutances, the nephew of Bishop Walter of Coutances, who had succeeded his uncle as archdeacon of Oxford. Not long after he left this office, having been elevated (albeit briefly) to the bishopric of Worcester, an ominous dream was relayed to him, where his predecessor St Wulfstan (d. 1095) had appeared, and demanded, on pain of death, that his remains should be honourably translated. The bishop followed this instruction, placing the saint's remains and vestments in two separate shrines upon the high altar, but he was subsequently reproached for undertaking a hasty, unauthorized translation 'at night' in the absence of papal sanction or of any secular witnesses, and it was suggested that this action had caused his death two weeks later.²²

As has been mentioned in relation to ordinary burials, the resting places of the saints might be disturbed as a result of building campaigns and, in such cases, acts of reintegration were required. When Peterborough Abbey was re-consecrated by Bishop Alexander, for example,

²⁰ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 25-26.

²¹ André Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1987), trans. Jean Birrell p. 30.

²² 'Translatio Sancti Wlstanii', in *The Vita Wulfstani of William of Malmesbury*, ed. R.R. Darlington, Camden Society, 3rd ser., 40 (1928), pp. 180-3.

Hugh Candidus affectionately recalled kissing and washing Peterborough's principal relic, the right arm of St Oswald.²³ The transfer of cathedrals in the twelfth century would displace holy artefacts that formed the focal point of devotion in the church. Translations that occurred in such circumstances were often associated with a resurgence of cult activity and with miracles. Henry of Huntingdon recalled seeing the iron chains associated with the miraculous liberation of a prisoner named Bricstan of Chatteris when attending the translation of St Etheldreda to her shrine in the newly built cathedral at Ely. This widely reported miracle was one of several that accompanied the translation ceremony associated with the most significant alteration of the territorial boundaries of the diocese of Lincoln in our period.²⁴

Translations and, more generally, the promotion of shrines became a feature of the protracted and subtle negotiations between the bishops of Lincoln and the abbey of St Albans, as the abbey asserted its independence from episcopal jurisdiction during the twelfth century.²⁵ Bishop Alexander was said to have offered an indulgence of 40 days to those attending the feast of the translation of St Alban, with instructions for alms to be distributed to the poor people on the anniversary, and for priests to say 4 masses for penitents, and 40 psalms for every mass. This had augmented an earlier indulgence of Robert Bloet, remitting a day's enjoined penance each week for a year, to all those in attendance on St Alban's feast day.²⁶ During the twelfth century indulgences were used as part of the bishop's apparatus in order to inject momentum into a saint's cult - especially as a means of raising the appeal of a particular shrine and encouraging attendance on specified feast-days.²⁷

Inevitably, when a burial place was moved, this had the effect of multiplying the sites and objects associated with the dead. As suggested in the case of Hugh of Avalon's first tomb, former resting places of the saints could continue to attract pilgrims and operate as focal points for their cult. Translations could also result in the multiplication of contact relics or relic fragments, although there was still an aversion to divide holy remains and the procedure required sensitivity. The inspection of bodily remains could serve as a vital proof in the process of establishing holiness when signs of incorruption were discovered. At the time of the translation

²³ *The chronicle of Hugh Candidus, a monk of Peterborough*, ed. W.T., Mellows (London, 1949), p. 220.

²⁴ *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 662-663.

²⁵ For which see Jane E. Sayers, 'Papal Privileges for St Albans Abbey and its Dependencies', *The Study of Medieval Records: Essays in honour of Kathleen Major* (Oxford, 1971), ed. D.A. Bolland and R.L. Storey, pp. 58-65.

²⁶ *Gesta abbatum*, ed. Riley, vol. 1, p. 92; *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 1, no. 13, p. 11. The translation took place on 1 August 1129 (but the feast was celebrated on 2 August).

²⁷ This kind of promotional measure was not confined to the diocese. Robert Chesney, for example, was one of many bishops who offered an indulgence to pilgrims visiting the hand of St James the Apostle at Reading Abbey on the saint's feast day or during the octave of his feast. 20 days remission was given. An indulgence was also granted, probably by Robert Chesney, to pilgrims to the tomb of Edward the Confessor; *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 1, no. 231, p. 145 & vol. 4, Appendix 1, p. 199. K. Leyser, 'Frederick Barbarossa, Henry II and the hand of St James', *English Historical Review*, vol. 90 (1975), pp. 497-498.

of Remigius, one of those in attendance, having seen and wondered at the condition of the body, tried to pull away some hairs from the bishop's beard, but was soon struck by a terrible illness and bedridden for a year. During the translation, however, an episcopal ring was also removed. Water in which the ring had been steeped was said to have been used specifically to revive the listless and feverish.²⁸

Papal inquiries were not only commissioned to investigate the merits of a saint, but also to assess the authenticity of particular relics and shrines. In 1224, on the instructions of Pope Honorius III, Archbishop Stephen Langton had established an inquiry to investigate the claims of the canons of Dorchester to possession of the remains of St Birinus (d. 650), the first bishop of Dorchester, after the canons had appealed directly to Rome for permission to translate his relics. Winchester had an ancient claim to these relics of Birinus. Henry of Huntingdon's itinerary of saint's shrines mentions the miracles of the saint which could be witnessed at Winchester, and notes his association with the diocese. Henry also referred to Bede, who recorded that the relics had been transferred to Winchester, the new ecclesiastical centre of the kingdom of Wessex, before the end of the seventh century, by bishop Hedda (676-705).²⁹ According to the vision of a hermit, this was a case of mistaken identity. The bishop of Winchester had taken the relics of Bertin, the tenth bishop of Dorchester, while those of Birinus still lay under the pavement. The inquiry, involving an account of the initial discovery of the body, a record of miracles that followed, and an inspection of the remains, proved inconclusive, but the cult would endure and a new shrine was built. As we will see the judicial investigation of such matters led by papal commissioners had important repercussions for the way in which Hugh of Avalon would be remembered and how participation in his cult was documented.³⁰

²⁸ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, p. 26. For a similar remedy relating to Hugh, see *Can St Hugh*, p. 101.

²⁹ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 662-663. For the cult at Winchester see Rosalind C. Love, *Three Eleventh-Century Anglo-Latin Saints' Lives* (Oxford, 1995), xlix-lxxxviii.

³⁰ *Nova legenda Anglie*, ed. Carl Horstman (Oxford, 1901), pp. 119-122. I am grateful to Robert Bartlett for sharing his research on this case with me.

Chapter Four

THE SAINT'S KEEPERS

INTRODUCTION

This final chapter is concerned with the early growth of the cult of St Hugh of Lincoln and with the key protagonists involved in disseminating his memory and giving witness to his holiness at the start of the thirteenth century. Their accounts were vital in bringing about the publication in 1220 of one of ‘the perfect little bulls of Honorius III’ confirming that Hugh had been formally ‘enrolled on the list of saints’.¹ The first section covers the work of the principal hagiographers. It is followed by a discussion of the many people who claimed to have benefited from some miraculous exhibition of the new saint’s special virtue.

The subject of the veneration of the saints is one which throws fresh light on the role of the core community of spiritual functionaries at the cathedral in overseeing and directing the memorialization of the dead. At least on the surface, when compared with other channels of remembrance that have been discussed up to now, the reduced or moderated involvement of the cathedral clergy is an obvious aspect of the way in which this distinctive form of worship was configured, as is the more active contribution of a set of disparate individuals who often lay on the margins of the institutional framework of the church. No other channel of remembrance would cast its net so wide, and none would embrace such a diverse social group. The beneficiaries of miracles, in particular, came from a range of backgrounds, and few had any specially allocated position within the fellowship of the cathedral. These were men and women whose voices are ordinarily silent in contemporary records. One consequence of the increased involvement of the papacy in the process of canonization in this period, however, specifically relating to the implementation of judicial inquiries, was the extra weight that was given to their sworn public testimony. When asked to verify their experiences under oath before papal commissioners, there was not only a new platform on which to establish or affirm their integral

¹ Robert Brentano, ‘“Consolatio defuncte caritatis”: A Celestine V Letter at Cava’, *The English Historical Review*, vol. 76 (no. 299), p. 298. *Can. St Hugh*, p. 116.

place within the devotional life of the church, but also an acknowledgement that their stories were a matter of profound and immediate significance to the universal church. Nonetheless, the diverse experiences and personal interactions which characterized the veneration of the saints at the cathedral would rely heavily on the engagement and supervision of the bishops of Lincoln, of the dean, the chapter, and other clerical personnel. While they may not be the primary focus of discussion in either part of this chapter, therefore, their influence should not be underplayed and ought to be given proper consideration.

The issue was not straightforward. Hugh of Avalon clearly had his avid supporters among the canons. Even though they were not written by members of the chapter, the main hagiographical works make it clear that Hugh's cult was fostered and promoted, in no small way, by the company of learned men he had gathered around him. Above all, Roger of Rolleston, the dean (c.1195-1223), is named as a key figure in the pursuit of his canonization. Yet the individual espousals of saintliness which were so critical to the transmission of the bishop's reputation for sanctity were, at different times, both championed and restrained by senior clergy.

Evidently the animated excitement generated by reports of miracles could sometimes be difficult to contain. Adam of Eynsham describes an argument he had with certain cathedral clerics about a woman who announced, when offerings were being presented during the bishop's funeral vigil, that her sight had suddenly been restored. Adam feared that they were being duped, 'because the woman was a stranger and had perhaps pretended to be blind'. But there was a keen desire to proclaim the incidence of a miracle immediately and publicly - by ringing the bells of the cathedral and singing the *Te Deum* - even before her story could be verified.²

On the other hand, in the collection of miracles which conclude the *Life* by Gerald of Wales, the canons are painted, at times, as wary arbiters of cult, or even as sceptics. This was not simply a matter of casting aspersions on the claims of beneficiaries; even their pleas could be rejected, as when the subdean William of Bramfeld, serving as penitentiary, attempted to wrench open the hands of a woman who complained that they had contracted after she failed to observe the Sabbath. He rejected her story and turned her away from the tomb.³ Only one occurrence listed by Gerald in his catalogue of miracles directly concerned a canon. This was a report of a vision. It involved another subdean, Philip, who had been undecided (*haesitaverat*) about the bishop's sanctity. One night this had changed when he was instructed in a dream to hurry to the cathedral and witness 'God's glory flowing down from the heavens into the church, especially upon the tomb of the holy bishop Hugh'.⁴

² A. Mag. *Vita*, vol. 2, p. 230.

³ G. *Op.* vol. 7, pp. 121-124.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 130. Philip (possibly 'of Mablethorpe') acted as subdean from c.1206-c.1212, *Fasti*, pp. 22-23.

To some extent the portraits of enthusiasm, indifference, and reservation, among the cathedral clergy could be regarded as compelling narrative devices. They are used to convey the rich, transformative potential which such stories possessed. As Pope Honorius III would emphasize in the letter establishing a papal commission to investigate Hugh of Avalon's virtue and merit, signs and wonders were marked by their versatile capacity 'to strengthen the purity of catholic faith, cause heretical distortion to subside, turn the incredulous towards the knowledge of what is just, and sweetly enflame the hearts of the faithful towards the love of their creator'.⁵ These events could thus be shown to have stirred and rejuvenated the faith of the clerical body in powerful and unexpected ways. Reports of scepticism also serve to emphasize the conscientious scrutiny to which miracle stories were subjected as a means of authentication.

Yet the clergy's sometimes challenging relations with the beneficiaries of miracles reflects the fact that the cult of the saints was grounded in a process of exchange. The custodians of a shrine, or, more broadly, the clerical personnel attached to the church in which a shrine was housed, were unable to exert any tight controls over the transmission of a saint's memory, and they did not necessarily have a consistent or uniform response to a saint's veneration. It was mainly the privileged insights of Hugh's hagiographers, and, most especially, the personal stories of the recipients of his miracles, which served to endorse and publicize the newly acquired status of the church and the special merits of the shrine to a wider audience. The bishop's chaplain, Adam of Eynsham, was able to depict, with tremendous authority and in assiduous detail, the holy life Hugh had led. How far this extensive work actually circulated at the beginning of the thirteenth century is difficult to say, but it was at least drawn upon by the poet Henry of Avranches in his far more accessible composition. When it comes to the beneficiaries, we can take the example of Alice of Keal, the woman who was at first turned away from the cathedral by the subdean William of Bramfeld, and who later was able to demonstrate that her affliction had been a real one and that her petitions to the saint had been answered. She was reportedly cured while kneeling at Hugh's tomb on Palm Sunday just as mass was being celebrated at the adjacent altar of St John the Baptist. Her cure was announced the same day in a sermon by William of Blois, who was then serving as precentor, meaning that it must have taken place before his consecration as bishop of Lincoln on 24 August 1203. The miracle cure was also certified with sworn testimony given in chapter and, many years later, in 1219, Alice would attest to the miracle under oath for a second time before the papal commission, where both affliction

⁵ '*...innouat signa dominus et immutat mirabilia magnifice mirificans sanctos suos ad confirmandam catholice fidei puritatem et prauitatem hereticam confutandam et ad conuertendum incredulos ad iustorum scientiam et corda fidelium in sui conditoris amorem suauiter accendendum*': *Can. St Hugh*, p. 91.

and cure were corroborated by one deacon and one layperson.⁶ For the most part the creative force which fuelled and motored popular veneration in the early-thirteenth century did not stem from a group of clergy attached to a cult centre but was derived externally. A shrine's reputation for healing was transmitted first and foremost through public discourse, and, as Rachel Koopmans has observed, 'miracle collections fed off the oral world far more than they ever added to it'.⁷

For hagiographers, the dynamic interplay between the clerical custodians of a shrine and other protagonists of cult reinforced the idea that veneration had been divinely instigated. This mode of worship was thus seen to have been enacted, like any other mode of worship, as a response. But an important repercussion of this kind of interplay was that it created an extended community around the saint's memory, one which was defined by the action of God, where the role of the clergy was subordinate and secondary, and where, to some degree, the ordinary standards of social rank or ecclesiastical geography could be transcended. Miracles were the vital medium in this process. It is worth repeating Simon Yarrow's comments: 'medieval communities shared a sense of Christian identity through their communal negotiation of the miraculous'.⁸ Devotion to the memory of a saint was able to generate an enhanced image of the church's engagement with the world and of its worshipping community.

When reflecting upon the various interactions between cathedral clergy, hagiographers, and the beneficiaries of miracles, and when attempting to characterize their diverse relationships to the memory of Bishop Hugh of Avalon, the idea of keepers, or of the act of keeping, with its plurality of meanings, seems apposite; whether evoked in the sense of holding, or holding to the bishop's memory, for example, or with the implication of tending, defending, and observing it in a prescribed manner. Over the course of this chapter we will encounter a full spectrum of relationships which this phrase might denote. Perhaps we might also be prompted to consider the political dimension to Hugh's cult, which, it should be noted, emerged at the time of Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest. In the context of early-thirteenth century England the word keeper is sometimes used to refer to foresters or the keepers of the forest (*forestarius*), who were associated with harsh penalties exacted under the Forest Law and came to symbolize oppressive royal exactions. Walter Map reports the pun Hugh made when he came across two of Henry II's foresters waiting angrily by a door: "Keepers, keep out!" (*Forestarii foris stent*). On hearing this, the king laughed, but was rounded on by the bishop: 'when the poor, whom these men oppress,

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 102.

⁷ Rachel Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collections in High Medieval England* (Pennsylvania, 2011), p. 26.

⁸ Simon Yarrow, *Saints and their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth Century England* (Oxford, 2006), p. 13.

are let into paradise', he said, 'you will be keeping outside with the keepers' (*'cum forestariis foris stabitis'*).⁹ As in the case of Thomas Becket, the cult of Hugh would provide a vehicle for the expression of moral opposition to the excesses of royal power and an opportunity to rebuke the behaviour of kings. It not only raised the standing of Lincoln Cathedral as an institution but also played its part in reinforcing the authority of the English church more generally.

There was certainly a correspondence between Hugh's cult and that of Becket. Gerald of Wales, in the preface to his *Life*, wasted little time in presenting the complementary relationship that existed between the two saints, comparing the colour and fragrance of the rose of Kent to the brilliant whiteness of the lily from Lincoln.¹⁰ The promotion of the cult of Hugh of Avalon in the first quarter of the thirteenth century was facilitated by a swelling popular interest in pilgrimage in the wake of Thomas Becket's martyrdom. Miracle stories enforced the closeness of this connexion. Alice of Keal, for example, had claimed to have travelled to Canterbury, after being turned away from the cathedral, where she heard a voice telling her to return to Lincoln. This correspondence was also a feature of the cult of Bishop Remigius in the late-1190s. The stream of recent miracles incorporated by Gerald of Wales in the *Vita sancti Remigii* was said to have been forewarned by Becket, who appeared in a vision to another woman at Canterbury, urging her to undertake the long journey north to Lincoln, and assuring her that a spate of miracles was about to be performed there through the merits of the bishop: 'whoever goes to the holy man's tomb, cleansed by penance and confession, will, whatever their illness, recover the joy of health'.¹¹

The miracles reported by beneficiaries were important in supporting the fundamental authority of ecclesiastical structures, and of those who sat at the helm of the church, partly because spiritual functionaries drew so extensively on the legitimizing power of the saints in the execution of their offices, particularly in so far as this power was exhibited in saints' relics. There are several reports of the way in which Hugh of Avalon set about the task of acquiring such artefacts. Perhaps the most memorable is the report of his visit to the monastery of Fécamp which claimed possession of part of an arm of St Mary Magdalene. The monks treasured this bone so highly that not one of them had so much as set eyes on it, keeping it sewn up within three layers of fine cloth. Disregarding these pious sentiments, and to the alarm of the on-looking monks, Hugh took up the relic, cut through the material with a knife, examined the object, and then set about removing a piece for himself; first using his hands, then his incisor teeth, until, at last, he managed to break part of it away by biting down hard with his molars. Of

⁹ W. *De Nug.*, pp. 10-11. Cf. A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, p. 26.

¹⁰ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, p. 87.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

course the strong urge to gather relics, by whatever means, underlines their importance to the work of a bishop. The large relic collection amassed by Hugh was employed to lend gravity to the functions of his office. He is said to have carried a silver casket reliquary, for example, which contained many of the relics that either he or his monk-chaplain had collected, when consecrating churches.¹²

Hugh symbolized a particular tradition of sanctity, one which was expressed on the political stage and in the sphere of ecclesiastical governance. The bishop-saint represented an especially prevalent model of holiness in England during the twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries. This trend was the subject of an exchange between Hugh and his fellow Carthusian Adam of Dryburgh on one of the bishop's retreats to his old priory at Witham. Reportedly, the two men would customarily engage in lively altercations, where they would incite one another to virtue, like the 'two trumpets of silver' (Num. 10: 2). Such altercations involved the exchange of frank opinions and Adam of Dryburgh started out by rebuking Hugh for the acclaim he had received, lamenting the way in which contemporary bishops were compared to apostles, eulogized, and spoken of as saints, simply because they were not totally corrupt, because they had not injured their neighbours to the best of their ability, because they refrained from tyrannizing over everybody, or simply because they had once helped somebody. In reply Hugh spoke of the 'exemplary virtues of the monks, hermits and bishops of his own region'.¹³ Notably, he did not struggle to find recent examples of good prelates, whose names could be measured against the well-known bishops of the early church. In particular, he reminded Adam of Bishop Hugh of Grenoble, who supported the first band of monks led by Bruno of Cologne in their endeavour to establish the first house of the order in the Dauphiné Alps north of Grenoble. He also spoke of Bishop Anthelm of Bellay, who had been prior of the Grande Chartreuse, and then prior of Portes, before his elevation to the episcopate.¹⁴

In fact the sources from Hugh's episcopate give an impression of a vigorous and sophisticated discourse concerning the role of bishops, and the proper commission of their office, a discourse which was channelled, in part, through the remembrance of the saints. The cathedral library contains a compendium of saints' lives surviving from Hugh's term in office, and perhaps preserving a sample of the bishop's handwriting, which is a catalogue of illustrious examples of bishop-saints. There are the more ancient Lives, those of Nicholas of Smyrna, Cyprian of Carthage, Hilary of Poitiers, Martin of Tours, and Honoratus of Arles, but also more

¹² *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 167-171, & pp. 153-154.

¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 52-54.

¹⁴ Henrietta Leyser has calculated that by the year of Hugh's death there had been 32 Carthusian bishops. Henrietta Leyser, 'Hugh the Carthusian', in *St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. Henry Mayr-Harting (Oxford, 1987), pp. 13-14.

recent works concerning Malachy, archbishop of Armagh, and indeed, Hugh of Grenoble.¹⁵ Such personalities were no doubt a routine topic of conversation when Hugh of Avalon, during stays at his episcopal residences, preferred to leave the hall after dinner with a little group and spend time recounting ‘the sayings and deeds of various types of famous men, selected with reference to his audience, to imitate their high-mindedness and virtues’.¹⁶

While he was not highly regarded beyond the cathedral, it is clear that the reputation of Bishop Remigius was honoured and revitalized at Lincoln in this period and this can be seen as part of the same project. The miracle collection compiled by Gerald of Wales suggests a gradual emergence of the cult, traceable from the episcopate of Bishop Alexander, but it is notable that Henry of Huntingdon did not corroborate this claim in any way, and the obituary calendar does not mark Remigius out as a saint. It would be in Hugh of Avalon’s episcopate that the cult received definitive expression, when the bishop was freshly cast as a symbol of good conduct for the foundation, through whom its subsequent history could be explored. The on-going process of analysis, exposition, and assessment, traceable from the writings of Henry of Huntingdon to those of Gerald of Wales, gives a sense of the capacity for the memory of an individual to be reconfigured in ways that deepened the church’s sense of its origins and growth, and informed the practical engagement with its past. But Gerald’s work was especially far-reaching in its subject matter. Following a lengthy treatment of Hugh in the section on the bishops of Lincoln, there is an additional section in which six of the most outstanding English pontiffs of recent times are discussed in pairs: Thomas Becket and Henry of Blois; Roger of Worcester with Bartholomew of Exeter; and finally Hugh of Avalon (the only one of the six still living) with Baldwin of Forde.¹⁷ The composition is an essay on episcopal leadership as well as being strong evidence that, in the final years of his life, and as Adam of Dryburgh had sarcastically noted, Hugh’s own qualities were already being represented as worthy of emulation, and that his deeds were being commended, eulogized, and promulgated among his supporters.

¹⁵ Entitled, *Libellum de vita patrum in rubeo coopertario*: Lincoln Cathedral Library, MS 107 (A/4/15). See Thomson, *Manuscripts of Lincoln*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁶ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, p. 202.

¹⁷ *G. Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 31-42 (*De successoribus eiusdem*) & 43-80 (*De episcopis Angliae tergeminis*).

ST HUGH'S HAGIOGRAPHERS

The three major hagiological portraits of Bishop Hugh of Avalon produced within 35 years of his death were tailored towards specific contexts and are strikingly diverse in form. A single copy of the combined Lives of St Remigius and St Hugh composed by Gerald of Wales survives.¹ The verse composition ascribed to Henry of Avranches appears in two thirteenth-century manuscripts.² There is no complete text of Adam of Eynsham's *Magna vita*, because the longest and most faithful copy - 'a text with strong idiosyncrasies and awkwardness of style and vocabulary which suggest they are the author's own' - is lacking the Prologue and the first half of Book One. This section of the work must be drawn from the numerous later abbreviations which circulated among the Carthusians. The lengthiest of these, a substantial abridgement that preserves around two-thirds of the base text, was designed to free Adam's meandering narrative from extraneous material; 'those wordy elaborations which the aforesaid brother introduced for elegance and edification, and also those digressions which concern not St Hugh's life but others'.³ As a group, these three compositions present distinctive interpretations of the hagiographer's craft, and throw light on the differing uses for which they were intended.

The two prose hagiographies, in similarity with the early Lives composed for Thomas Becket, were products of a tense and volatile political landscape. Adam of Eynsham and Gerald of Wales devised and executed much of their respective works when the English church was in a state of isolation and withdrawal. Both compositions seem to have emerged, almost simultaneously, shortly after the General Interdict had been lifted. Adam of Eynsham, who spent at least part of the duration of the interdict exiled in France, gives a date in the prologue to his fifth and final book, counting fourteen years and three months of King John's reign, which gives a *terminus post quem* of July 1213 - the very month in which Archbishop Stephen Langton arrived in England. It is likely that the *Magna Vita* was complete by the end of the year, when Adam was appointed abbot of Eynsham.⁴ The two-part composition by Gerald of Wales, which was addressed to Langton, describes Hugh of Wells as the only bishop he had consecrated. This

¹ Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 425; described in Kari Anne Rand, *Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (Woodbridge, 2009).

² Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud. 515 and London, British Library, Royal MS. 13 A iv; the two are collated in *Metrical Life of St Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln*, ed. J. F. Dimock (Lincoln, 1860). The attribution is based on an entry from the library of Peterborough Abbey listing the versified Life of St Hugh by 'Mag. H. de Hariencl', and also on points of correspondence with other hagiographical compositions; see *Metr. Hugh*, p. 4.

³ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 1, xlix-li. Bodleian Library, MS Digby 165 is the fullest version, of which the opening quire is missing, meaning that the prologue, chapters 1-6 of the first book, and part of chapter 7 (of 14), are lost.

⁴ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 73-74.

indicates that the composition was certainly complete before 5 October 1214 (when the bishops of Worcester and Exeter were consecrated).⁵ In all likelihood the elaborately produced manuscript of the early-thirteenth century which contains the two Lives is the very same copy that was presented to Langton. It is referred to in the joint preface, where Gerald requests that the book be kept in the possession of Hugh of Wells, so that he could advance canonization procedures on behalf of both bishops. The environment in which these two works first circulated was thus especially receptive to concerted attempts to strengthen the authority of the English church. They appeared at an opportune moment and reflect the concerns of their time. These concerns surface at various points. They may even be discerned, for example, in the portrayals of Hugh's special prioritization of funerary rites. While burial itself was an aspect of worship which emphasized the critical social function of the priesthood, the topic would directly invoke one of the most disquieting repercussions of the interdict. There are also moments when the simple act of burial is presented as a challenge to the power of kings; as when the bishop is said to have kept waiting, on separate occasions, Henry II and Richard I, because he was attending to this task.⁶

Although they shared common themes, and were produced around the same time, the circumstances which gave rise to these two hagiographical works were ostensibly quite different. The Life by Gerald of Wales was evidently produced on behalf of the chapter and had a clearly defined remit. It was explicitly intended to support the formal demonstration of the bishop's conformity to the papal criteria for sainthood. Adam's work was addressed to Hugh's successor as prior of Witham, and claimed to have been written at the instigation of its monks.⁷ Its aims are much less narrowly defined. As might be expected, the affairs of the priory of Witham are dealt with at some length. Parts of the second of the *Magna vita's* five books, where the first years that Hugh spent in England are covered, include sections devoted solely to the history of the house, drawing in several character portraits of its individual members.⁸ Even though Adam made no reference to the canonization process, he was undoubtedly aware of it, and would indeed play a major part in it. The papal commission of 1219 seem to have found the Life by Gerald of Wales to be an especially useful model. The biographical summary in their report was drawn mainly from this. But the commissioners would personally interview, and quite possibly

⁵ The consecration of Hugh of Wells took place at Melun, on 20 December 1209. References to Hugh of Wells suggest the General Interdict had ended; G. *Op.* vol. 7, xii-xiii.

⁶ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 99 & 102. Cf. A. *Mag. Vita*, pp. 77-79.

⁷ Concerning the addressee, see A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 1, p. 1 (mentioned vol. 2, p. 195). 'R., prior of Witham' must be Robert of Keyford (who occurs 1210-13), rather than his predecessor, also named Robert, who, along with Dom Ralph 'encouraged, entreated, and compelled me to write this present work' (*ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 89); see *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, 940-1206* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 149.

⁸ A. *Mag. Vita*, vol. 1, especially pp. 46-49, 56-60 & 74-89

begin their cross-questioning, with the bishop's loyal chaplain, the abbot of Eynsham. The catalogue of miracles they produced begins with Adam's testimony.

If the intention of securing papal endorsement for Hugh's cult had driven on and directed early efforts to gather hagiographical material, it did not define this enterprise. The metrical Life by Henry of Avranches is proof of a continuing demand for new ways to portray the bishop's sanctity in the wake of the canonization process. The composition was produced during the episcopate of Hugh of Wells, and contains a short account of the papal inquiry, suggesting that it may have formed part of the ensuing celebrations to mark the successful resolution of the process. In his work, Gerald had promised that future hagiographers would be generously rewarded by Hugh of Wells, which would possibly imply that he had received some form of remuneration. But in the case of Henry of Avranches it was almost certainly a material incentive, rather than any special personal attachment, that motivated his work. Henry has been described as 'one of the first truly professional Latin poets of the Middle Ages'. This composition was one of a series of verse hagiographies thought to have been produced during the 1120s, which commemorated saints venerated at English churches, included a Life of St Birinus addressed to Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester.⁹ Around 1228 he moved to the papal curia and would eventually produce 'his *magnum opus*' a metrical Life of St Francis of Assisi.¹⁰ Yet his diverse output on a range of topics reflected a popular demand at this time for versified compositions. The impulse behind his Life of St Hugh of Lincoln can be regarded, to a great extent, as one of literary adornment and elevation. Henry signals his pretensions to the epic mode by borrowing the opening words of this Life from the opening of Virgil's Aeneid.

This work is not alone in being marked by a certain freshness of approach. An attribute which makes the work of Gerald of Wales fairly unconventional is the Life that appears alongside it. Although this earlier work was explicitly intended to support the cult, and call for the canonization, of Bishop Remigius, the virtuous activities of Bishop Hugh of Avalon feature prominently. Put together, the two passages describing Hugh far exceed the opening section describing the merits of the first bishop of Lincoln. The first version of this work appeared in the Hugh's lifetime, during Gerald's first stay at Lincoln (between 1196-9), but it should be borne in mind that the surviving copy, was reproduced much later on (c.1213), and is a modified

⁹ The authorship is often difficult to establish. Lives of Oswald, Edmund, Guthlac, Fremund, Birinus, and Becket are discussed along with this one in Rigg, *Anglo-Latin literature*, pp. 179-185 (quotation at p. 179). The Life of St Birinus was purportedly envisaged as one of a series of compositions for this patron (the others being on Swithin, Aethelwold and Martin of Tours), but the other have not survived, if they were completed. See Robert Bartlett, 'The Hagiography of Angevin England', *Thirteenth Century England*, vol. 5 (Woodbridge, 1995), ed. P.R. Cross and S.D. Lloyd, p. 38.

¹⁰ Peter Binkley, 'Avranches, Henry d' (d. 1262/3)', ODNB.

version of the text.¹¹ The degree to which it was modified is unclear. Certainly it speaks about Hugh as if he was still holding office. It would appear to provide an exceptional perspective of Hugh's venerable status, during his lifetime, judged in relation to his predecessors and to other prominent members of the English episcopate. The composition could be characterized as a kind of hagiographical pre-text, in so much as it prefigures, and informs, the principal work to which it is adjoined. For Antonia Gransden, this wide-ranging compendium is 'stylistically reminiscent of the *De Contemptu Mundi* which Henry of Huntingdon added to his history of England'.¹² Such stylistic comparisons should probably not be pushed too far, but the two works do share a very basic correspondence in their attacks on the power of kings. In his lengthy discussion of the English bishops, Gerald develops overtly political sentiments about the peculiarly oppressive rule to which the English church is subjected, the notion of an 'insular tyranny', and also about the clash of royal and priestly authority.¹³

Like many hagiographical compositions of this era, Adam of Eynsham's *Magna vita* is a product of the strong and heartfelt rapports between bishops and their chaplains. It is presented not primarily as a commission but as an act of devotion. The work is outstanding for its length and its exhaustive, digressive approach. Perhaps in a conventional show of modesty, Adam claims to have worked to gather together details gleamed through his privileged insight into the bishop's life, in the hope that a more competent writer would reshape them and present them in a more literary form. 'My purpose was merely to collect the material and make it available for the labours of future generations, but not to undertake the task of constructing an edifice, which should be left to a more skilled architect'.¹⁴

One way to illustrate the differing approaches of the three main hagiographers is to compare the ways in which they deal with a single topic. A telling example is found in their treatment of Hugh's tortured but finally victorious battle with his own sexual appetite - a dimension of his inner life, which, in some circles, has fashioned him into a prototype of clerical abstinence, the 'epitome of monastic masculinity'.¹⁵

Gerald's description is the earliest. It is found in two versions. One appears in the *Vita sancti Remigii*, when Hugh is being compared to Archbishop Baldwin of Forde, and the other is

¹¹ A succinct preface is retained in *Symbolum Electorum* in the catalogue Gerald made of his works (c.1199). Here the merits of Bishop Remigius are enumerated, and he is distinguished from his better-known namesake: '*Beati Remigii, non Remensis sed Lincolnensis, acta describere, me praecipue duo dedere; inter mundi divitias et dignitates spontanea spiritus humilitas et paupertas, et in hac mundi vespera, qua refrigerescere caritas solet, fidei fervor inventus et devotionis*'; G. Op. vol. 7, p. 8.

¹² Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England: c.550-c.1307* (London, 1974), p. 311.

¹³ G. Op., vol. 7, p. 51.

¹⁴ A. Mag. *Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 226-227.

¹⁵ Jacqueline Murray, 'Masculinizing Religious Life: Sexual Prowess, the Battle for Chastity and Monastic Identity', in *Holiness and Masculinity in the Middle Ages*, ed. P.H. Cullum and Katherine J. Lewis (Cardiff, 2004), p. 37.

included in the *Gemma ecclesiastica*. For whatever reason, the story was not carried over into the subsequent hagiographical composition. Gerald simply relates how, when still a young monk, Hugh was faced with an abhorrent struggle between the flesh and the spirit, but then at last he was cured from all bodily temptations when an angel appeared to him in the guise of a man clutching a pair of pincers. In a flash the angel cut away his manhood (*virilia*). Hugh would never again experience any strong feelings of temptation or sexual attraction, ‘even though afterwards, when he was bishop and in the vigour of youth, he was thrown among the excesses of English extravagance’. A precedent is found for this ‘felicitous remedy’ in the story of a desert monk, named Elijah, and Gerald also stresses, by quoting a few words of Augustine, that this cure was divinely granted and so should not be attributed to Hugh’s resilience: ‘That it be given to a rational creature not to be able to sin is not an essential attribute of nature, but a gift’.¹⁶

Adam of Eynsham’s treatment of the same subject is, quite typically, more extensive. Large parts are delivered in the first person, as if they were Hugh’s words. This version also conveys at much greater length Hugh’s heroism in wrestling with ‘his most intimate feelings’ before he had been blessed with ‘the gift of chastity’.¹⁷ Although both Gerald, in his later composition, and Henry of Avranches after him, would claim that Hugh’s decision to join the Carthusian order had been partly motivated by a desire to be free of the unsettling presence of women, the picture Adam paints is very different. He describes how it was only after entering the seclusion of his cell that Hugh came to know the true strength of physical passion: ‘As soon as I crossed the threshold of my cell I felt the stirrings of a new temptation in my heart’. These feelings were not concentrated upon a single object of desire, or one source of temptation, which could be identified and countered - ‘I could not resist, since they were part of me’. Adam speaks of the young monk’s prolonged anguish: groaning to the heavens, striking his breast, and weeping, ‘as one that beateth the air’ (1 Cor. 9: 26). And, when at last these relentless waves of emotion began to subside, Hugh was astonished by the sheer strength of feeling which had emerged from inside him and by the powerful transformation that the solitude of the cell had brought about: ‘perceiving the aridity of my soul’, he said, ‘I marvelled at what I had been, and what I had now become’.¹⁸

The story of what had happened many years later, shortly before his appointment as prior of Witham, was, according to Adam, only relayed in full during Hugh’s final illness. As opposed to Gerald’s version of events, it was in midlife, as ‘a man of already about forty’, that his physical compulsions returned with greater intensity than ever before - in spite of the great

¹⁶ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 76-77; vol. 2, p. 247 (*Jewel of the Church*, Hagen, pp. 187-188).

¹⁷ ‘...sic eo nesciente operabatur salutem in intimis sensibus eius’; A. *Mag. Vita*, vol.1, p. 54.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

austerity of his existence and his habit of constant prayer. This more severe trial, which Adam again reports at length, ended one day at dawn. Lying prostrate on the floor, in a state of ecstasy, Hugh recognized his old prior Basil standing over him, dressed in radiant robes, and uttering soothing words. Drawing out a knife, the apparition then cut open Hugh's bowels, grabbed hold of 'something resembling hot cinders', and hurled them a long way out of the cell. With this action the saint received permanent relief. But it did not extinguish totally the personal dread that he might again succumb to the sins of pride and lust, nor did it snuff out completely the natural motions of arousal: 'I will not deny that I have felt some, but these were so insignificant that I did not have to fight them'.¹⁹

Not unlike Gerald, Adam grounded his version of events in tradition. He pointed to two illustrious forerunners. In similarity with St Peter, who had been released from captivity by an angel, Hugh 'knew not that it was real and the work of an angel, supposing that he had merely seen a vision without realizing its effects'. In similarity with St Benedict, who was also 'assailed by carnal temptation', Hugh overcame these troubles and went on 'to be a leader of other soldiers of Christ, a pillar of the monastic life and a conspicuous example of sanctity'.²⁰ It is worth noting that Adam justifies this protracted narrative, which he professed to have heard about in private conversation, on the basis that other inaccurate reports had already been circulated: 'I have written about this, because I have heard that someone else gave another version in which our Lady, the blessed virgin mother of God, appeared to him and made him a eunuch, so that he was completely cured and did not thereafter experience the slightest carnal inclination'. There is no firm proof to connect this with the earlier version by Gerald of Wales, whose work Adam did know, but whose account, as we have it, does not mention the Virgin.

Turning to the manner in which Henry of Avranches took up this theme, it should be clearly stated that his version represents the most significant point of departure anywhere in his work from the established biographical details set out by the two earlier hagiographers. Henry does give a very short account of the vision of Prior Basil as it was reported by Adam of Eynsham. It is the detail from Gerald's *Life*, however, that Hugh had tried to escape the company of women by entering a monastery, which forms the basis of Henry's exploration of this theme. It is a high point of his work, a stylized set-piece, which builds upon a far more conventional hagiographical motif, one that concentrates on a specific object of temptation, 'the hunter of men', who, by her very nature, tests Hugh in his early years, before he became a Carthusian; 'she spreads her soft arts like nets of her own devising and entangles youths in them

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-52.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54 & 56.

as a spider does flies'.²¹ The passage is a lingering display of lyrical virtuosity stretching over 113 lines of verse. It is a sensual delineation of an ideal female form, which pitches the saint's courageous restraint against a candidly erotic image of attraction. The basic narrative conceit is obviously to weigh Hugh's outstanding purity of thought and spiritual courage in proportion to the overwhelming charms of his assailant. Resistance, Henry says, was beyond what might be expected even from a saint: 'such promise of sexual passion young Joseph himself could not deny'.²² The adversary transmutes, in quick succession, from one personification to another, at once a young woman, Venus, the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and the whole of womankind. We find expressed here the misogynist sentiments that were ordinary consumption among the learned male clergy: 'Woman is inflamed by a great desire but no Christian love', Henry opines. 'An intense appetite ignites them, not love'.²³ The description finishes with a gentle squeeze of Hugh's arm. Foreshadowing his later dream, the young saint, 'recoiling from the girl's touch as if it were a lesion, felt such indignation at her snakelike act that he took a sharp knife and cut out the small portion of flesh affected'.²⁴

The contrasts between Hugh's hagiographers illustrated by this key theme of his life are indicative of their differing methods and aims. But they also highlight the level of personal knowledge each of these writers was able to draw upon. This was a central issue because, unusually, the hagiographical works concerning Hugh of Avalon were received by contemporaries, including the monks of the priory of which he had been head, and his own cathedral community. Because the details of Hugh's career were widely discussed, and his deeds and words were still quite fresh in the minds of the audience, there was a particular incentive, seen most obviously in the work of Adam of Eynsham, to substantiate their statements.²⁵ The hagiographers were faced with an informed audience, and there were inevitably points of correspondence not just between their works, but with other contemporary observers.

Unlike the earlier writers, Henry of Avranches was unable to draw on personal interactions with the bishop, and this is exemplified by the elaborate displays of deference in his work. It can be seen in the way that the bishop is humbly invoked for support at the outset: 'My limited skill will hardly suffice to impart form to the matter. So where the faculty itself fails, let

²¹ *Metr. Hugh*, pp. 16-23.

²² '*Cui puer ipse Joseph non vota negaret amoris*', *Ibid*, pp. 20-21.

²³ '*Multus amor succendit eam, dilect nulla*', *Ibid*, pp. 16-17.

²⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 22-23.

²⁵ Some of the bishop's remarks were said to have become common currency. For example, the simple, unworldly open-handedness of Hugh's reply when asked how many deer ought to be slaughtered before his inaugural feast was said to have been a stock joke at court. '*Trecente, inquit, capiantur; nec, si uideritis expedire, numero huic adicere dubitetis*'; A. Mag. *Vita*, vol. 1, p. 104. Adam (*Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 26) and Walter Map both relate Hugh's pun on the word *forestarius*.

faith make up for it, and let your own sainthood countenance and prosper what I do'.²⁶ There are few additional biographical details provided by Henry, but one notable supplementary detail he does give is the name of Hugh's parents: Anne, who died when he was a small boy, and William, who, after Anne's death, joined the Augustinian canons of Villarbenoît, near Grenoble, taking the young saint with him: 'when the boy was ten years old'.²⁷ These extra details would stress, in a way that earlier hagiographers had not, Hugh's noble or aristocratic lineage.

Perhaps it should be said that the anxious, unsympathetic view of women exemplified in this poetic composition is quite remote from what we learn about the bishop from his chaplain. Hugh enjoyed female company. At least he invited 'devout matrons and widows' to eat with him. He was not despising of physical contact with the opposite sex. He would lay his hands on women's heads, bless, and embrace them, and fondly converse with them about the female saints. In mixed company he liked to reflect on the extraordinary honour that had been conferred on womankind by virtue of the fact that Christ was born of a woman: 'To no man was it granted to be called the father of God'.²⁸ It was also a basic tenet of the Carthusian tradition that the extreme rigours of the cloister, and a life of sexual abstinence, were not suitable, or desirable, for all. Hugh supported and encouraged diverse forms of Christian life, including married life. He taught that 'The kingdom of God is not confined only to monks, hermits and anchorites', seeing that married people could also be chaste, and 'equally with virgins and celibates would be admitted to the glory of the heavenly kingdom'.²⁹

Adam, who had served as chaplain to the bishop in the final three years of his episcopate, went to great lengths to support his authoritative statements and to stress his prioritization of first-hand knowledge. He claims that as chaplain he was constantly in the bishop's company, and notably was a witness to the bishop's monastic regime. He would accompany Hugh to Witham, where a cell was always reserved for his use, and where he would return 'once or twice almost every year'. He accompanied him overseas as he journeyed to Anjou and returned to his home province and to the Grande Chartreuse. Adam would also have had intermittent contact with Hugh before his appointment as chaplain, particularly in the period directly leading up to his appointment, when he recorded the vision of the monk of Eynsham. Sometime beforehand, as a monk at Eynsham, he may also have witnessed the early stages of Hugh's election to the see of Lincoln, which had initially taken place at the abbey. He reported the process at length.

²⁶ *Metr. Hugh*, pp. 8-9.

²⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 10-15.

²⁸ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, p. 48.

²⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 46-47. On the 'characteristically Carthusian' quality of these sentiments, see Henrietta Leyser, 'Hugh the Carthusian', p. 13.

Regular apologies are made for the digressive approach that is adopted, although in explaining the inadequacies of the work, Adam stresses the limits of the information recorded in comparison with the extent of his own recollections. This sentiment is most powerfully expressed, typically for Adam, in the form of a dream. He had seen a large fallen pear tree by the wall of the Old Temple, where Hugh had undergone his final illness. In the dream he was able to clasp and lift its heavy trunk with ease, but the leaves and branches simply fell away. One of several interpretations of this dream that occurred to Adam was that the leaves and branches symbolized the small fragments of information he had managed to put across in his *Life*, the great trunk symbolized his personal memories: ‘What the author has set down in writing about this astounding personality bears the same resemblance to the memories treasured in his heart as a bundle of light faggots does to the magnificent branches of a fir or a cedar reaching almost to the sky’.³⁰ Adam claims that this light bundle contained only the most reliable details of Hugh’s life, and those which served a clear didactic purpose.³¹

We do not promise to set down all his deeds and words, or even the most notable of them, but only those which we have learned on unimpeachable authority, or remember for ourselves, and not even all of these. 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.

As seen in the story of Hugh’s gift of chastity, this appeal to the accuracy and moral authority of the work is occasionally set against other reports, including the earlier works of Gerald of Wales. There is a clear reference in the preface to his *Life*, where Adam refers to ‘persons far more competent than myself’ who had written in depth about the bishop when he was alive, ‘when his merits had already made him a citizen of heaven’.³² Part of Gerald’s description of the swan at Stow appears verbatim in a lengthy extract, but the passage is also supplemented by Adam’s personal interactions, or altercations, with the swan, describing, in particular, the way it would guard the bishop (‘I myself was often attacked by it when the bishop was resting’).³³

The portrait of Remigius to which Adam refers was first composed during an especially productive period of Gerald’s literary career. A period he had set aside to write. It was one of

³⁰ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 209-211.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

³² *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 3.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 103-109.

four known saints' lives that he produced during the 1190s. Three survive. As with the Lives of St David and St Ethelbert, which were commissioned by the canons of St David's and Hereford Cathedral, the Life of Remigius reflected his ecclesiastical connexions, but the dedication and presentation of his works at this point in time reveals a special association with Lincoln, and with Hugh of Avalon in particular. Early versions of his *Descriptio Kambriae* and *Itinerarium Kambriae*, produced in the 1190s (and now lost), were addressed to the bishop.³⁴ The list of books on the flyleaf of Lincoln's Chapter Bible also notes that 'the archdeacon from Wales' had presented copies of other major works to the cathedral, the *Gemma ecclesiastica* and the *Topographia Hibernica*, together with an original version of the *Vita sancti Remigii*.³⁵ The book of moral instructions, *Gemma ecclesiastica*, is particularly notable, not only because it makes several references to Hugh (including the story of his gift of chastity), but because it corresponded in spirit with the kind of practical training which William de Montibus was pursuing. Although Gerald was not a canon himself, the works he produced at Lincoln in the latter part of 1190s, suggest that he was deeply engaged in the life of the church, and it was indeed in this city that he is thought to have spent the greater part of his later retirement (between 1207-1223).

Given his literary credentials, his strong personal association with the cathedral, and his knowledge of Hugh, Gerald was a natural choice to create a hagiographical work promoting the new cult. His *Vita sancti Hugonis* stands apart from his other hagiographical works because it was based on a contemporary figure, with whom he was personally acquainted, and of whom he had previously written. There was an attempt to avoid repetition, partly, perhaps, because the work was meant to be read in conjunction with the earlier Life of Remigius. The one reiterated passage, the famous story of the swan Hugh befriended at Stow was complemented by descriptions of other wild animals that the bishop had managed to tame: the squirrel he would share his food with at the Grande Chartreuse, and the titmice at Thornholm (Lincs.), who would willingly settle on his outstretched hands, or perch on his shoulder, and on his head.³⁶ Such remarkable familiarity with animals was a commonplace of hagiographical narratives, especially those concerning hermits. In Felix's eighth-century Life of St Guthlac, for instance, the hermit of Crowland repeatedly demonstrated his sanctity through a mastery of the natural world, explaining to one astonished visitor: 'Have you not read how if a man is joined to God in purity of spirit, all things are united to him in God? And he who refuses to be acknowledged by men

³⁴ On the dedications of Gerald's work, see Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales: A Voice of the Middle Ages* (Stroud, 2006), pp. 56 & 208, note 10. On the saints' lives see *idem*, 'Rewriting Saints' Lives: The Case of Gerald of Wales', *Speculum* 58.3 (1983), pp. 600-601.

³⁵ The *Gemma Ecclesiastica* is listed by the alternative title *Gemma Sacerdotalis*. *G. Op.*, vol. 7, p. 168.

³⁶ *G. Op.*, vol. 7, p. 92 & p. 110.

seeks the recognition of wild beasts and the visitations of angels'.³⁷ By repeating and elaborating this theme, Gerald was drawing on personal knowledge to emphasize Hugh's conformity to an established model of holiness, as part of an overt attempt to present the bishop's memory in a way that would demonstrate his sanctity.

Understandably, the commemorative literature associated with Hugh focused largely on the final phase of his life, as bishop of Lincoln, from 1186 up until his death in 1200, and on his activities as an energetic and influential prelate with a significant role on the political stage. Both Adam and Gerald came to know their subject most fully during the final years of his episcopate. Yet, as each approached the task of describing Hugh's episcopal career, they clearly felt that it had been his austere training as a Carthusian which had most shaped and defined his character. Through the rigorous embodiment of a life led in total obedience to a religious rule, Hugh had won the admiration of the chapter, and had also transmitted to his canons, and to the church, the virtues which characterized his particular form of his holiness.³⁸

It is in Adam's work that this theme is pursued most comprehensively. Adam was sensitive to the ways in which the monastic life carried over into Hugh's manner of living in the world. Throughout his term in office Hugh was said to have remained 'a hermit by intent'.³⁹ It was a point of comparison with other saintly men. With his attention often given over entirely to prayer and meditation, Hugh's mind would sometimes become completely disengaged from his immediate environment so that, whenever he travelled, a guide horse would be designated to prevent his mount from wandering off. Adam made the comparison firstly with St Martin, who famously journeyed with his eyes always fixed up to heaven, and also with St Bernard, who, being so utterly lost in contemplation, had once spent a whole day encircling a lake on horseback.⁴⁰ By concentrating on the monastic discipline reflected in the bishop's life Adam also emphasized a point of difference with the body of secular canons. The contrast is addressed at several points. It is captured neatly in the account of how, after his election to Lincoln, Hugh had set out from Eynsham for the consecration ceremony at Westminster Abbey on an unadorned horse, with only a rough bundle of hides, encircled by a group of illustrious

³⁷ 'Nonne legisti, quia, qui Deo puro spiritu copulatur, omnia sibi in Deo coniunguntur? Et qui ab hominibus cognosci denegat, agnoscitur a feris et frequentari ab angelis quaerit?'; in *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac*, trans. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge, 1952), c.39, p.122. The *topos* is explored by Dominic Alexander, *Saints and Animals in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2008), particularly chapters 2 and 3.

³⁸ Walter Map, for example, who composed some stinging attacks on the duplicity of the monastic life, praised the outstanding ideals of the Carthusians (and the Gilbertines), and gave an account of the foundation of the order. *De Nug.*, pp. 50-53 & 114-117

³⁹ '...episcopus quidem officio set heremita proposito'; *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 43-4.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 200-201.

clergymen ‘distinguished politicians and scholars and men of considerable fortune’ with their ‘gold-embroidered saddle bags’.⁴¹

Although, of the three main hagiographical compositions, the production of the *Magna vita* is the least clearly tied to the cathedral chapter, it is indeed here that we find the most comprehensive articulation of the bishop’s protective affection for his canons. One of its most striking features, and something which marks it out from the other works, is the amount of direct speech the work contains, and Adam recounts how Hugh had personally described his relationship with the cathedral chapter.⁴²

Since I know that I have strictly maintained the blessing of peace and union with my sons, I do not think that I need fear the king or any other man, nor do I lose the inner peace which is a reflection and preparation for the peace of heaven. This unruffled harmony between me and my lords (for this was his name for his canons) is not because they find me mild or gentle. On the contrary I am more astringent and biting than pepper, and when I am presiding in chapter the least thing often rouses me to anger. They realise that they must take me as they find me, and bear with me, making a virtue of a necessity, for which I am most grateful to them. They have never opposed me on a single occasion since I came to live amongst them. When the chapter ends, and they go out, I do not think any of them has any doubt about my affection for them, and I believe they too are all fond of me.

It is perhaps because, unlike Gerald of Wales and Henry of Avranches, Adam was not writing explicitly for, or necessarily addressing his work to, the community of the cathedral, that he was able to express so openly the nature of the bond between the bishop and his church.

The recurring examples of Hugh’s bold, principled, and sometimes jocular, contests with kings often linked back to the subject of his charge and guardianship of the chapter community. They illustrated the way in which he had shielded his canons from outside intervention, and defended the liberties of the cathedral. When, for example, a prebend became vacant at Lincoln, and Henry II wrote to Hugh to ask him to collate a courtier as the prebendary, the royal messengers were bluntly rebuffed without the expected courtesy of an explanation. This was the occasion for one of the most notable altercations between the saint and the king. Hugh was summoned to Woodstock, from nearby Dorchester, where he was staying. He found Henry

⁴¹ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 103.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 124.

sitting discontentedly in the forest, surrounded by a large company of noblemen, who had been instructed not to speak with the bishop, and wore grim expressions. When he noticed the king stitching a bandaged wound, Hugh said softly, 'How you resemble your cousins in Falaise'. This allusion to William the Conqueror's mother, the daughter of a tanner from Falaise (and, implicitly, to his illegitimate birth), broke the tension. A mixture of amusement, alarm, and suspense, fell over the company of sombre faces gathered round, until the king began rolling through the undergrowth, bellowing with laughter.⁴³ Making a stand on behalf of the chapter did carry more severe consequences, as when Hugh turned down an extraordinary appeal for twelve canons to undertake diplomatic service in Rome, Germany, and Spain, at their own expense. It began a prolonged dispute in which Archbishop Hubert Walter suspended the bishop's temporalities and King Richard threatened to dispatch Mercadier against him, the commander of his mercenaries. This strategy, according to Adam of Eynsham, had been skilfully devised by agents of malice to wound the bishop, by placing exceptional demands on his close associates: 'they suggested to the king that many of the canons of Lincoln were so wealthy and well-endowed with gold and silver, that without much loss to themselves they could bring a considerable amount of money into the treasury'.⁴⁴

The bishop's staunch defence of his canons in the face of such demands was associated with his efforts to gather together a virtuous group of clergy at Lincoln, which represented a major theme for his hagiographers. In a typically convoluted visual metaphor Adam of Eynsham bound up a discussion of the diligence with which he sought out men of learning and good conduct to hold office at the cathedral with the image of Hugh's 'radiant whiteness', an image which linked his outward appearance, corresponding with the white habit of the Carthusians, to his pure spirit and unblemished character. Dressed in white, but far whiter in virtue, Hugh had transformed Lincoln into a 'Lebanon of mystical whiteness' not only by setting a righteous example, through his teaching and holy manner, but because of the fame of the group of illustrious men he had appointed.⁴⁵ The image deliberately fused the integrity of the group of secular canons with the strictly ascetic monk. Similarly for Gerald of Wales, the community of canons Hugh had brought together emerged as a central achievement of his episcopate: thus he had made a church 'out of living stones'.⁴⁶

⁴³ A. Mag. Vita, vol. 1, pp. 114-119.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 110-116 (citation at p. 110). An 'unusual exaction' which, it is said, 'bore a remarkable resemblance to the practice of the *Reichskirche* (the Imperial Church), though even there the links between any given cathedral community and the royal chapel were not quite so arbitrary'; Karl J. Leyser, 'The Angevin Kings and the Holy Man', *St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. Henry Mayr-Harting (Oxford, 1987), pp. 68-69.

⁴⁵ A. Mag. Vita, vol. 1, p. 102. Their garments were reputedly the most abject of all the religious orders; see Peter the Venerable, *De Miraculis*, PL, 189, col. 943.

⁴⁶ G. Op., vol. 7, p. 98.

Although Henry of Avranches does speak in praise of the chapter Hugh had assembled, the centrality of this theme is supplanted by a special admiration for the building campaign he had begun. One of the most significant departures from the previous compositions, besides the rendering of Hugh's irresistible temptress, is a lengthy description of the new cathedral, including an elaborate meditation on the symbolism of particular features of its architectural design. This allegorical description of Lincoln Cathedral represents more than one-tenth of the entire composition.⁴⁷ Perhaps it is indicative of Henry's sensitivity to his audience. Over twenty years after the saint's death, when the body of clergy were less obviously shaped by the bishop's guiding hand, the magnificent edifice, whose construction he had instigated, was regarded as his major, abiding legacy. This was a legacy which Bishop Hugh of Wells, 'the second Hugh', had vigorously continued. The passage may also point to the circumstances of the work's delivery. Being prepared, quite possibly, for a reading at the cathedral on a particular occasion, the composition is instilled with a rich theatricality that draws together the memory of the bishop and the setting of his cult.

⁴⁷ The passage (which is only slightly longer than the account of the temptress), covers 132 lines, while the entire work runs to 1308 lines. *Metr. Hugh*, pp. 52-61.

LIVING RELICS

Long before the first works of hagiography were produced, an active cult of St Hugh of Lincoln had been established at the cathedral. In the immediate aftermath of the bishop's death, impetus and vitality was breathed into this cult through the personal stories of those who claimed to have witnessed, or to have directly benefited from, wondrous acts performed through his intercession. In the first instance it was in light of this unwritten testimony that the health-giving properties of the bishop's shrine were propagated and his reputation as a saint grew.

Miracles were clearly critical events not only in the life of the church, but in the lives of individual beneficiaries, where the operation of divine agency, through the merit of a saint, was felt to have been experienced personally and vividly. Their significances and meanings were determined in the context of people's lives. This is apparent in cases where an affliction was construed as a punishment for sin, for example, and where the cure was perceived as a type of atonement. Alice of Keal, who we have already mentioned, claimed that her injury had come about when she failed to observe the Sabbath, even though she had been warned of the gravity of this offence through the preaching tour of Eustace abbot of Flaye.¹ In such situations miracle narratives describe the attainment of a moral transformation over and above a recovery from a particular condition. Nearly all Hugh's miracles were curative in nature. In the canonization report a total of 36 miracles are recorded along with 36 beneficiaries who gained relief from a specified affliction, whether physiological or, as in 10 instances, psychological.² There were exactly as many beneficiaries as miracles because the report generally noted the cure of a single individual, however there are two exceptions. The miracle of the candles that stayed alight around the bishop's funeral bier, despite rain and high winds, involved no healing. Loretta of Lincoln swore that two of her sons recovered from two separate ailments, after Hugh had blessed them, but these cases were registered together.³

A healing, and its public declaration, could accomplish other kinds of personal transformation. At one extreme a miracle could result in the alteration of someone's legal status. Henry of Huntingdon recalled seeing the set of the iron chains hung at Ely Cathedral which were associated with the widely reported liberation of Bricstan of Chatteris that took place soon after

¹ *Can. St Hugh*, p. 102 (*cf.* p. 101); *G. Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 121-124. On the abbot of Flaye's preaching tour see Bartlett, *Norman and Angevin Kings*, pp. 637-639.

² This figure tallies with the list provided by Henry of Avranches, although there are slight differences in the numbers given for specific ailments, *Metr. Hugh*, pp. 76-77.

³ *Can. St Hugh*, p. 98.

the new diocese of Ely had been created within what was formerly the area of his archdeaconry. Bricstan professed to have been released from his chains by a special envoy of saints, including St Benedict and the patrons of Ely, St Etheldreda and St Sexburga, although he was eventually released from prison by Queen Matilda of Scotland. Once freed, Bricstan was processed through London, cheered on by a great crowd, in front of whom the abbot of Westminster, Gilbert Crispin, publicly declared: 'If the relics of a dead man should be received in the church with all solemnities, we ought far more to receive with honour this man who is a living relic'.⁴

No liberation miracles were reported in relation to Hugh, and the changes to the status of his beneficiaries were possibly less famous or dramatic, but their circumstances certainly did alter and the church occasionally facilitated in this process. After announcing the recovery of his sight, a beggar named Simon was maintained in the household of Dean Roger of Rolleston for two years. Roger also found work in the hospital for a girl from Wigford who was healed at the bishop's tomb.⁵ The idea that there were strong incentives for beneficiaries to claim a cure, and for the cathedral clergy to accept its legitimacy, is implicit in Adam of Eynsham's suspicions about the woman who claimed to have recovered her sight during the funeral vigil. When assessing the role of those who benefited from Hugh's miracles, whether they had taken place after his death or in his lifetime, it is important to recognize that, generally speaking, miracles were favourable both for the church and for the recipient, and also that beneficiaries might experience all kinds of positive, restorative effects beyond the receipt of a cure. The obvious exception would be the only hostile miracle attributed to Hugh, reported by Adam of Eynsham, where a devout noblewoman claimed to have had a vision in which Hugh used his episcopal staff to strike down Robert de Beaumont, the bishop of St Andrews, hitting him hard under the chest. She claimed to have experienced the vision shortly before news of Robert's death came to light.⁶

As with many of Hugh's beneficiaries, both individuals that Roger of Rolleston gave support to after their cures, were local to the church and had also been provided for in their affliction by charitable institutions. Simon had for many years begged alms from the cathedral canons. The girl had received alms from the matrons of the city. Predominantly the saint's beneficiaries came from Lincolnshire, and mostly they came from Lincoln or its suburbs. They had differing but often quite close relations to the church. Obviously the beneficiary who lives

⁴ Orderic Vitalis, vol. 3, pp. 346-358.

⁵ *Can. St Hugh*, pp. 99-100; *G. Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 134-135. Bricstan of Chatteris, quite exceptionally, would actually go on to become a member of the monastic community at Ely.

⁶ The death of Robert de Beaumont was interpreted as a protective act because he had set his sights on the vacant see of Lincoln. Robert died at Cambuskenneth Abbey, near Stirling, in early July 1202. William of Blois, Hugh's successor, was elected a year later. *A. Mag. Vit.*, vol. 2, pp. 64-65.

for a year in the cathedral close, being supported by the clergy, contrasts greatly with the person who is brought to the church under restraint, cured, and is never heard of again. The person who returns to the cathedral annually to give thanks for their cure has a personal connexion to the church quite unlike the person who has never actually seen the shrine for themselves. Yet the stories recounted by beneficiaries reflect some of the differing ways in which laypeople, particularly within the city, might participate in the life of the cathedral. The events they reported were generally regarded as acutely significant moments in the devotional life of the church and there are close correlations between the incidence of miracles and the ordinary rhythm of divine worship. The cure of Simon the beggar was said to have occurred at Prime on Whitsunday, just at the moment the choir began singing the Pentecostal hymn '*Beata nobis gaudia*'. It was announced in a sermon to the people on the same day.⁷ The ritual responses to such events represent a major component of the narrative descriptions contained in the collection of miracles made by Gerald of Wales. He records the manner in which miracles were observed and publicized; if they had been proclaimed in a sermon, marked by a solemn procession to the tomb, or announced by ringing the church bells. The descriptions of miracles provided by Gerald thus offer a layer of circumstantial detail about the fairly regular attendance of citizens of Lincoln at the cathedral, particularly on major feast-days, when they came in large numbers, although these details were no doubt included to explain that the incident had been witnessed by an especially sizeable group of worshippers. While their relationships to the church were informal, the beneficiaries of miracles do provide an enhanced image of the worshipping community of the church, which highlights the kind of everyday associations and personal connexions that would not otherwise be traceable.

In their reporting miracle narratives could be appropriated and dramatized by hagiographers, but the documentary evidence relating to Hugh's miracles exhibits an important shift in the ways in which they were recorded. Around the beginning of the thirteenth century, particularly during the papacy of Innocent III (1198-1216), new judicial standards and criteria began to emerge.⁸ Members of the cathedral chapter would have been well aware of these new criteria. Shortly after Hugh's death, when a papal inquiry had been established to investigate the sanctity of Gilbert of Sempringham, Roger, in the name of the dean and chapter, wrote a petition in support of his canonization, and would subsequently issue a mandate to all archdeacons to encourage the celebration of St Gilbert's feast.⁹ One of the Amundeville clan, the knight Adam, another son of Goscelin and Beatrice, even reported a dream in which he had been assured of

⁷ *Can. St Hugh*, pp. 99-100; *G. Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 126-127.

⁸ Bartlett, 'Hagiography of Angevin England', p. 51.

⁹ *Book of St Gilbert*, pp. 228-229 & 256-257.

the saint's eternal glory.¹⁰ The canonization of a local saint, who had himself served in the bishop's household, was, in the absence of a serving bishop, supported and commemorated by the cathedral chapter and by the dean. Gerald explains that a group of additional miracles had been included at Roger's insistence.¹¹ Evidence that the canons were conversant with the procedural requirements of St Gilbert's canonization comes across in the levels of scrutiny to which miracles occurring in St Hugh's name would be subjected, and in the methods of verification that were observed and carefully noted by Gerald of Wales. It appears that an informed anticipation of the canonization process had a significant effect on the practice of registering the occurrence of miracles, particularly when it came to establishing the identity and trustworthiness of beneficiaries, by making efforts to find witnesses who could corroborate their statements. The contrast between the more recent sequence of miracles recorded by Gerald in his *Vita sancti Remigii* and those catalogued in the *Vita sancti Hugonis* is remarkable in terms of the methods of recording their investigation, corroboration, and publication.

Other ecclesiastical institutions were involved in the registration of miracle episodes, particularly when a lay beneficiary came from outside the diocese. If locations outside the diocese are mentioned, they tend to be just a short distance beyond the diocesan boundaries. There is the case involving a subsidiary inquiry forming part of the investigation carried out by the chapter of Beverley, who were asked to corroborate the cure of a local woman named Matilda. She had suffered from generalized oedema, and returned from Lincoln cured after spending a month at the shrine. Her story was corroborated by men from neighbouring villages.¹² A bed-ridden man from near King's Lynn received a vision of St Hugh in which he was instructed to travel to a cell of Worksop Abbey and there received a cure. A canon from that cell then travelled to Lincoln in order to attest the miracle before the chapter. One of the first to report a cure after Hugh's funeral was the rural dean of Marnham (Notts.), who claimed that whenever he had invoked Hugh's name in a moment of anguish, however difficult the circumstances, relief had arrived. Out of gratitude for the saint's assistance, he fashioned a little wax figurine representing the bishop and left it at the tomb.¹³ The large church of St Wilfrid in Low Marnham, a little over ten miles to the west of Lincoln, just across the River Trent in the archdiocese of York, dates from the early-thirteenth century and is a vestige of an era when it was the site of an important ferry-crossing. Supplicants would customarily present votive wax offerings at the shrine, both as an offering, in gratitude, or when appealing to the saint. Thus a

¹⁰ Adam was a witness to his brother Walter's grant on behalf of Hawise; see also *ibid*, pp. 94-97 & lxxiv.

¹¹ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, p. 139.

¹² *Can. St Hugh*, pp. 110-111; cf. G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 124-126. Cf. *ibid*, pp. 128-129.

¹³ G. *Op.*, vol. 7, pp. 119-121.

knight named Milo presented a wax model of his healed arm at the shrine.¹⁴ A knight from Lindsey, John Burdet, who had injured his arm during the assault on Montauban castle in the summer of 1206, came to the cathedral the following year and presented a replica of the effected limb. Gradually he recovered the use of it.¹⁵

The new methods of recording the stories of beneficiaries in this period had a significant impact on the miracle collection as a genre of writing. Koopmans has made a strong case that 1220, the year of Hugh's canonization, and of Becket's translation, was 'the point when the enthusiasm for miracle collecting that had gripped English monks and canons since the late eleventh century was evaporating'.¹⁶ However the emphasis which papal commissions placed on first-hand oral testimony did provide a different kind of insight into the operation of the cult of the saints.

The letter of Pope Honorius, dated 27 April 1219, nominated three English prelates to gather evidence and cross-examine witnesses. John, superior of the Cistercian monastery of Fountains, had been chosen to adjudicate in previous cases by Honorius, and had also received recognition for services to the crown. His star was on the rise. Within a year of the inquiry, he was consecrated bishop of Ely. The way in which he performed his duties in this case were evidently admired because in 1223 he would lead a papal commission into the canonization of William fitz Herbert, archbishop of York.¹⁷ If the idea of the inquiry was to provide independent arbitration of miracle episodes, then the nomination of William of Cornhill, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, is surprising. Before his elevation to the episcopate in 1214 William had received various ecclesiastical appointments centred on Lincoln. Over a short period in 1206, as a trusted agent of the king, he had acted as custodian of the vacant see. He became archdeacon of Huntingdon in 1207 (an office he continued to occupy until 1214) and in 1208, following the interdict, he received custody of all clerical lands in the diocese.¹⁸ Evidently such close involvement with the cathedral church, and an inevitable familiarity with Hugh's emergent cult, did not bar him from involvement in the inquiry, at least from the perspective of Rome. Perhaps it was even thought desirable to appoint a man who had already served at the cathedral. As a

¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 142-143.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 137-138. Perhaps the prince of Tarragona was a kinsman; see L.J. McCrank, 'Norman Crusaders in the Catalan Reconquest: Robert Burdet and the Principality of Tarragona, 1129-55' *Journal of Medieval History* (1981), vol. 7, pp. 67-82.

¹⁶ Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate*, p. 201.

¹⁷ John (abbot of Fountains from 1211) was made bishop of Ely in March 1220. St William of York was canonized in 1227, see Christopher Norton, *St William of York* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 198-199.

¹⁸ William is last found styled archdeacon in mid-August 1214, and was elected bishop before 9 July 1214. He was consecrated by Stephen Langton on 25 January 1215; *Fasti*, p. 28. His loyalty to the king was noted in his epitaph: '*Vir simplex et liberalis, fidelis regi et utilis regno*'; cited with a useful summary of his career in M.J. Franklin, 'Cornhill, William of (d. 1223)', ODNB.

member of the chapter it is possible that he had previously heard a number of beneficiaries deliver statements. In any case, the commissioners' report explained that William of Cornhill had left for the Holy Land before the papal instructions arrived. Provision had been made for this eventuality: if any one commissioner could not attend, then the other two were to go ahead with the task. It is likely that Archbishop Stephen Langton, who presided, and to whom Gerald had dedicated his *Life*, would also have felt an affiliation to Lincoln. He is thought to have been raised in the shadow of the cathedral, at Langton by Wragby, and it represents a likely venue for the early part of his education. But personal allegiances of this kind were probably not an issue of great consequence. This was not a criminal trial. The bishop's saintliness, as Pope Honorius had pointed out, was virtually assured, because 'such numerous and extensive testimonies' had been provided, including a petition presented by the English episcopate. Wishing to proceed 'with all due deliberation', however, the commissioners were asked to assess Hugh's life and to establish whether the miracles associated with him, both before and after his death, had been authentic.¹⁹ The report they produced demonstrates that their focus was mainly on the second of these objectives.

The report claims that when they arrived in Lincoln, on the prearranged day (not divulged), they were met by a large crowd. Besides Bishop Hugh of Wells, the dean and chapter, there were many representatives from various religious orders, other clerics, and 'a surging multitude of laymen'.²⁰ The main task was to amass depositions from reliable witnesses made under oath. There are no references to miracles that did not meet the required standards of verification, but some intimation that methods of selection were applied. As Henry of Avranches describes; 'No witness came to testify except under oath and unless certain of his facts and fit to attest; and it was a case of the inquisitors refusing ear rather than of witnesses running short of miracles'.²¹ Although no recipient of the saint's curative powers was a member of the cathedral clergy, they were inevitably called upon regularly as witnesses. Dean Roger of Rolleston attested most frequently of all. While miracles are reported only briefly in the canonization report, it is possible to construe lines of questioning from the few details that are given. Among Roger of Rolleston's attestations, for example, there is an explanation of the extent of the beggar Simon's visual impairment prior to his cure: 'he had bleary eyes', Roger had said, 'and he used to stumble

¹⁹ *Licet igitur tot et tantorum testimoniis plenam fidem nos deceat adhibere, uolentes tamen in tam arduo facto cum omni maturitate procedere, discretioni uestre per apostolica scripta mandamus quatinus tam super uita predicti sancti quam miraculis, ante mortem et post mortem, nec non aliis huiusmodi negocii circumstantiis inquiratis diligentius ueritatem...': Can. Hugh (Letter I), p. 91.*

²⁰ *Veniens autem ad ecclesiam memoratam die prefixo cum episcopo et canonicis eiusdem ecclesie multos uiros religiosos diuersorum ordinum inuenimus congregatorum aliorum clericorum necnon et laicorum multitudinem copiosam ut ascertio plurium fidem faceret cerciorem super his de quibus oportebat inquiri': Can. Hugh, (Letter II), p. 92.*

²¹ *Nullus nisi juratus, nisi certus/ Accessit testis et idoneus; et prius aurem/ Inquisitores, quam testes signa, negarunt, Metr. Hugh, pp. 76-77.*

badly when his legs and feet collided with logs and stones'. On regaining his sight, Simon was no longer able to recognize those with whom he had previously been familiar.

In many cases some time had passed since the events had taken place. The commission set out to find evidence of miracles reported at his tomb, but also of 'the many wonders worked through him in his lifetime'.²² The first name listed in the miracle collection is that of the abbot of Eynsham. The story he reported illustrates the process of retrospective analysis to which miracles were submitted. He explains in the *Magna vita* that the event had only returned to his mind when passing through Cheshunt, in the company of Richard, the head of nearby Waltham Abbey. Entering the village square, he began to recall what had taken place 'about thirteen years earlier'. The bishop was with a small party of attendants. Most of the retinue had ridden ahead. A crowd of locals appeared and encircled the bishop's horse. They implored him to come and make the sign of the cross over a man they believed to be possessed. Hugh caught a glimpse of the man through an open doorway, writhing on the floor, struggling against the constraints that were being used to tie him down. The bishop dismounted, made the sign of the cross over the man as requested, and spoke the opening words of the Gospel of John. Afterwards he consecrated some water and passed it among the bystanders, asking each of them to offer their own blessings. According to Adam, once freed from the demon, the violent sailor cured at Cheshunt did all he could to improve his lifestyle. He occupied himself with pilgrimages to saints' shrines, lived devoutly, and died well and peacefully.²³

The papal commission attempted to supply additional details and testimony. Langton's chaplain and the abbot of Waltham made further inquiries. They established that the possessed man was a sailor, named Roger Colhoppe, who had been restrained with chains after an eruption of violent insanity lasting three weeks. The event was commonly known in the local area nearly twenty years later. It was said to have happened on a Sunday and seven witnesses had been found to testify. These witnesses added the detail that the blessing had involved the use of Hugh's sacramental ring. This item, made of gold and studded with precious stones, had been especially commissioned in order to incorporate a large, hollowed setting covering the breadth of the hand, which could hold up to thirty different relic fragments.²⁴ After the blessing Roger had fallen asleep and later awoke in his right mind.²⁵

²² '...ut multas per eum in vita ipsius virtutes dignaretur mirabiliter operari': *Can. Hugh*, p. 91.

²³ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 123-126.

²⁴ One marvel that Adam of Eynsham relates is that of a goldsmith from Banbury who came to see the bishop at Dorchester at the exact moment a messenger was being sent to fetch him to open the bishop's sacramental ring so that a small relic cut away from St Oswald's arm at Peterborough could be placed inside. He claimed to have been foretold in a dream that the next day he would be called upon. The ring was given as a bequest to altar of the Virgin at Lincoln. *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 2, pp. 167-171.

²⁵ *Can St Hugh*, pp. 107-108.

The reception of a cure could be far more traumatic than this and, in the case of posthumous miracles, often followed long periods of unheeded supplication. Such petitions might entail the practice of spending nights beside the tomb. One woman (identified as M.), who for three years had been immobilized by illness, and had entirely lost the use of her legs, recollected before the commissioners a harrowing experience as she had passed a night in the cathedral. She said that she had fallen asleep in the basket which two women regularly used to carry her to the shrine. She awoke in terrible pain, aware of her muscles contorting, and her bones snapping. After this ordeal she was once again able to walk. No one else claimed to have witnessed this event first-hand. Her story was attested by two laymen, one of whom had maintained her during her illness, and by the two women who took her to the church to pray for a cure.²⁶

The mode of assessment associated with judicial inquiries placed emphasis on the action of miracles rather than on their interpretation. Adam of Eynsham juxtaposes the differing kinds of analysis when describing the miracle of the candles that stayed alight during the funeral procession. He points to the material changes which occurred in the physical universe, altering the characteristics of three elements: fire, air, and water. But he also proposes, and seems to prioritize, another symbolic reading of the event, that it had glorified the bishop's generosity in assigning a large annual sum to the treasurer of Lincoln for the provision of lights: 'Whatever may be the other explanations given by scholars of this amazing miracle wrought by almighty God, this one should suffice for the faith of ordinary people'.²⁷ Such exposition, primarily concerned with the discernible material or physiological alteration which had occurred in the natural order of things, was a prominent feature of scholarly deliberation on miracles in the thirteenth century.²⁸ It was sometimes employed for rhetorical effect. According to Henry of Avranches, for example, at the time of the funeral, the wave of competing emotions experienced among the crowd of mourners, feelings of remorse and newfound companionship, seemed to defy nature: 'In what way the created world is subject to the creator! Possession is always followed by loss. The rule is irreversible. Yet, in these things, St Hugh stands by resolutely. A possession returns, and loss flies away'.²⁹

Among the first to appeal to the new saint after his death was a knight from Lindsey who approached the body and uncovered face of the bishop and held his cancerous arm against the

²⁶ *Can. St Hugh*, p. 101.

²⁷ *A. Mag. Vita*, p. 220.

²⁸ Discussed in Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York, 2011), pp. 217-265 (Ch. 4).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, (1258-1261), pp. 76-77. '*O quam subijcitur natura create Creanti!/ Semper post habitum sequitur privation; non est/Ordo regressibilis. Sed sanctus fortiter Hugo/Instat in his: habitus redit, et privation cedit.*'

corpse lying in rest. He professed that the tumour had subsided. The miracle was attested before the papal commission by the knight's brother and by Roger of Rolleston, who had inspected the wound and seen how it healed.³⁰ In describing the miracle, Henry of Avranches wrestled with the problem of how new flesh and skin could form so quickly over an open wound, without any visible evidence of scarring. It could not have been achieved by any natural process, he suggested, because new flesh is only created gradually, and in stages. Neither could it have been achieved by violent motion, because this would have involved taking flesh from one part of the body to another, which it obviously had not. Therefore, because the new flesh was not known to have been formed from any identifiable substance, it must have been created 'out of nothing', and so will not be predisposed to the ordinary processes of corruption to which matter is ordinarily subject.

In the majority of cases the miracles which beneficiaries described could be credited to the bishop's intercession because they involved direct appeals for assistance and some sort of physical interaction with his gravesite at the cathedral. Cultic devotion was consistently mediated through religious artefacts in the form of corporal remains and the shrines which housed them. There was a natural link between the beneficiaries of miracles and relics in mediating the memory of a saint. When the healing powers which were credited to the bishop's remains spread beyond the cathedral, it was often by means of some physical substance, such as the dust rubbed away from the tomb, which most commonly would be mixed with water and swallowed (of 20 miracles attributed to Remigius 4 came about in this way). A paralysed woman who was brought to the shrine in a wheelchair was spoon-fed this solution. In the case of John of Plumgard mortar from the tomb was applied to his diseased arm forming a poultice. Clearly this practice carried the benefits of proximity beyond the cathedral church, perhaps for those who were too sick to make the journey.³¹ Not only in their stories or in the personal experiences they recounted, but in their beings, in their healed minds and eyes and limbs, the beneficiaries of miracles were held to be walking manifestations of the mercy of God as it was specially mediated to the faithful through the figure of St Hugh. Their personal stories also gave expression to truths that could never fully be grasped and opened a window onto the life of faith which lay at the heart of the church.

³⁰ This miracle is recounted in numerous sources, with slight variations. It is listed in Gerald of Wales, the report of the papal inquiry, the *Legenda*, and the metrical Life. According to Gerald the whole chapter witnessed the miracle, *G. Op.* vol. 7, pp. 117-119; *Can. St Hugh*, pp. 99.

³¹ The dissemination of artefacts associated with a particular place, also transmitted the image of that place. Tokens of pilgrimage, the souvenirs from a shrine, dispersed the virtue of a saint. Georgia Frank, 'Loca Sancta Souvenirs and the Art of Memory', *Pèlerinages et Lieux Saints dans l'Antiquité et le Moyen Âge: Mélanges Offerts à Pierre Maraval*, edited by Béatrice Caseau, Jean-Claude Cheynet & Vincent Déroche (Paris, 2006), 193-202.

Relics also issued from saints in their lifetimes and the veneration of these objects would indicate the existence of cult prior to the time of the saint's death. Regarding the miracles said to have occurred during Hugh's lifetime, there were indeed instances in which related objects had been preserved as tokens of the event. Generally hagiographers would stress that a saint had not encouraged the veneration of such relics or had not intentionally set out to display their faculty as miracle workers.³² Adam of Eynsham makes it very clear that, while Hugh was deeply inquisitive about stories of marvels and wonders of various kinds, and was fond of reciting them, he did not seek 'to contend with (*emulare*) the prodigies of miracles'.³³ For the most part, when recounting miracles which took place during Hugh's lifetime, Adam only attributes them to the bishop's intercession by means of personal and retrospective commentary. He does not mention the existence of relics. During the papal inquest it became clear, however, that they did exist. When the bishop healed a baby boy at Alconbury (Hunts.), for example, by removing a small piece of iron lodged in his throat, the iron was treasured as a relic.³⁴ Similarly the hod on which the bishop had carried bricks during the construction of the cathedral, which cured a lame man after he used it as a crutch, was reverently preserved as a token of the miracle.³⁵ These miracles seemed to reflect particular aspects of Hugh's character and ministry in his lifetime. Adam of Eynsham comments upon his easy manner with children, for instance, detailing the occasion when he blessed a six-month-old-baby, who chuckled happily, and then licked the bishop's face.³⁶ More obviously, the hod used for carrying bricks drew a direct link with his building campaign (also indicating that he was personally involved in lugging materials around the site). The beneficiaries of posthumous miracles demonstrated the bishop's continued presence at the cathedral and they not only sustained the bishop's memory but deepened the church's conception of his character and persona.

For all their guarded investigations, the stories of beneficiaries were crucially important to the custodians of a shrine. They could provide the spur that led penitents to seek out the assistance of a particular saint, to take the road to a particular church, and to make offerings. Yet it was of course much more than a popular appreciation of a saint's propensity for wonder-working that they publicized. Through them the community was able to realize and express, in a localized and immediate sense, the vitality of their worship and the significance of their ministry.

³² Henry of Huntingdon relates a miracle performed by the Somerset hermit Wulfic of Haselbury which had taken place some time before his death in 1155. The story of how he had managed to trim the chainmail shirt that he wore beneath his clothing using only a pair of sheers had 'spread among all the people and is commonly known everywhere', much to Wulfic's embarrassment, so that 'many religious devotees rejoiced to have iron rings from the holy hauberk'; *H. Hist. Ang.*, pp. 696-697.

³³ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 1, p. 20.

³⁴ *Can. St Hugh*, pp. 98 & 109-110.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

³⁶ *A. Mag. Vita*, vol. 1, pp. 129-130.

These stories, which at once sprang from, and helped to replenish, faith, not only invigorated cult and stimulated interest in the personality of the saint, but also affirmed God's presence in the world, and in all conditions of human life. For our purposes these sources are particularly insightful because they indicate the diversity and complexity of the social framework of the cathedral, especially as it was envisaged through the veneration of St Hugh. It was in the wake of his cult that the fellowship found its fullest expression.

Conclusion

Riding through Hertfordshire, in the territory of the abbey of St Albans, Hugh of Avalon and his retinue passed a man in chains, who had been convicted of theft, and was being led to the gallows. Summoning all his strength, the condemned man scrambled towards the bishop's horse, dropped to the ground by its feet, and started to beg for pity. Hugh was able to offer sanctuary on unusual grounds: 'wherever there is a bishop', he said, 'and a company of the faithful servants of Christ, there is a church'. The judges involved in the case accepted the claim and 'recalled that this was an ancient English law which had fallen into disuse either owing to the negligence of English bishops or royal tyranny'. In stating his case, Hugh observed that this legal principle evoked the historic vision of a church as primarily constituted by human beings, and underlined the special pastoral role of the bishop: 'He who as part of his office is accustomed to dedicate the inanimate stones of a church to God's service, has the duty through the different sacraments to sanctify the living stones, which are the church in an even truer sense, that the Lord's temple may be erected from them'.¹ The story exemplified Hugh's forceful defence and far-reaching interpretation of this role, which seemed to acknowledge a place for all within the community of the church, as members of the body of Christ. It was a personal emphasis in his ministry which mirrored a basic precept of the Carthusian order, encapsulated in the Meditations of Prior Guido I (1106-1136), who wrote the Rule of Chartreuse: 'if for whatever reason you lose the will to save one man, no matter whom, you cut off a limb from Christ's body'.²

The assembly of any individual church will always need to be defined with reference to its incorporation within a wider congregation of the whole church. By what standard this congregation is determined is another question altogether. In serving as the mother church of a diocese, however, Lincoln Cathedral held a position of moral authority over the entire population of the diocese. In various ways the social framework of the cathedral was able to integrate this population, which, though vast, could be determined in accordance with concrete measures. Normally these related to formal acts of consecration – chiefly the rite of baptism. By virtue of his birth and baptism in Oxford, for instance, Hugh of Avalon could refer to Richard I

¹ *A. Mag. Vit.*, vol. 2, pp. 128-129.

² For a summary of editions and discussion of this point, see Henrietta Leyser, 'Hugh the Carthusian', p. 17

as his ‘parishioner’ (*parochianus*).³ The diocese might also be figured, more abstractly, as a territorial unit. So when Henry of Huntingdon praised Bishop Alexander as ‘the father of the fatherland’ (*pater patrie*) it is likely that he intended to evoke the meaning of the word *patria* as a region, and one which broadly corresponded with the territorial limits of the diocese.⁴ A study of the memorialization of the dead shows one aspect of this integration but hardly does justice to the relationship between the wider diocesan population and the cathedral.

A number of other practices illustrate this relationship far more effectively. To take just one example, during Whitsun-week, or the octave of the feast of Pentecost, representatives from parish churches across the diocese acknowledged their affiliation to the cathedral by offering oblations and undertaking processions to Lincoln.⁵ Because of the distances involved, the obligation was relaxed for the remoter parts of the diocese, so that archdeacons would arrange to receive processions at designated churches. The allowance was first made in the archdeaconry of Oxford where processions were led to the bishop’s abbey at Eynsham.⁶ As has been said, in the case of the great majority of small gifts recorded in the *Registrum Antiquissimum*, little is said about the circumstances in which they were presented, but these Pentecostal processions could have provided a significant opportunity. In Whitsun-week of 1176, for example, two grants of land were presented on the main altar by four men from Saltfleetby (Lincs.). Two acres were given jointly by the brothers Hugh and Oggrim, sons of Alverun, and a further five acres were given by Ketel Dumping, in the company of his son Odo, who would return each year on Tuesday of Whitsun-week to deliver a rent 12*d* for this land (which he would continue to hold).⁷ Signs of the value of these processions for the subsequent building campaign are found in the mandates issued by Hugh of Avalon and William of Blois, which commanded archdeacons and diocesan officials to encourage their more regular observance.⁸

The goal of this inquiry was to examine a secular cathedral church as a body of people being joined together in faith by focusing on the most outstanding and essential feature of that process. The subject of memorialization is especially important in acknowledging the place of the

³ (Richard was born at Beaumont Palace) ‘*Noster, inquit, parochianus es, domine rex; nobisque incumbit ratione pastoralis cure, pro anima uestra, quam uniuersitatis Dominus proprio redemit cruore, in tremendo ipsius iudicio respondere*’; A. Mag. *Vita*, vol. 2, p. 103. According to Timothy Reuter, ‘either birth and the spiritual rebirth of baptism or else ordination made one a ‘citizen’ of a diocese’; Reuter, *A Europe of Bishops*, p. 29.

⁴ H. *Hist. Ang.*, pp. 6-7.

⁵ Notably it was the one area of episcopal jurisdiction from which prebendal churches had no exemption; *Statutes*, vol. 2 (1), pp. 136-142.

⁶ *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 1, no. 26, p. 17; Owen, *Church and Society*, 41-42.

⁷ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 5, pp. 134-135 (nos. 1648); *ibid.*, pp. 122-123 (no. 1630).

⁸ *Reg. Ant.*, vol. 1, pp. 257-259 (nos. 297-298), and *Eng. Epis.*, vol. 4, pp. 66 & 165 (nos. 92 & 256). A measure of the depth and scope of popular feeling inspired by these processions is Bishop Grosseteste’s injunction to rectors and priests ‘not to permit their parishes to contend with each other over whose banners should take the lead at the time of the annual visitation of the mother church, because this commonly results in both fights and deaths’; *The Letters of Robert Grosseteste*, trans. F.A.C Mantello & Joseph Goering (Toronto, 2010), p. 189.

dead within the assembled community. It also reflects something of the cultural, political, and economic environment which the church inhabited. New structures of intercessory worship reflected exclusive and socially privileged arrangements which were nevertheless accessible to a much larger section of the population around the beginning of the thirteenth century when compared with the end of the eleventh century. This progression was facilitated by changing attitudes to the role of the church in assuaging the suffering of the dead. The practice of remembrance also allows us rare glimpses into the personal and unique relationships by which individuals achieved closer integration within the fellowship of the church, including those bonds which united the senior ecclesiastical functionaries. To go back to the source which we first looked at in detail, Henry of Huntingdon's letter to Walter, at least on one level, is a statement of friendship between two archdeacons. It is an eloquent and assured example of letter-writing which illustrates the kind of attachments that might be formed and cherished within the college of canons. Significantly this treatise also presents the memory of deceased office-holders as part of a wider discourse about the character and status of the church.

No field of remembrance embodies so fully the ideals and aspirations of the assembly of Lincoln Cathedral at this time as the memorialization of the saints who had once called the church their own. The hagiographical works publicizing the special merits of Bishop Remigius, but far more importantly those relating to Bishop Hugh of Avalon, which reflected on the lead they had given to the church, and set down substantiated reports of miracles at their burial sites, offer testimony to this fact. In the final chapter of this inquiry the aim was to relate the cult of St Hugh to the industrious society that first shaped his memory, and to demonstrate that much of his continuing appeal must be attributed to his being so compellingly modelled as a channel of grace. By participating in the celebration of the bishop's cult, and by giving creative form to the bishop's memory, the assembly of the church would find rich, fluent and inventive ways to enhance and define themselves.

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