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BASILEOS ANGLORUM: A STUDY OF THE LIFE AND REIGN OF KING ATHELSTAN OF ENGLAND, 924-939

A Dissertation Presented

by

PHILIP NATHANIEL CRONENWETT

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History

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Basileos Anglorum: A Study of the Life and Reign of King Athelstan of England, 924-939 (November 1974)

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The reign of Athelstan of England is of central importance to Anglo-Saxon history and has unexpected significance for contemporary continental history. Building on the foundation laid by his predecessors Alfred and Edward, Athelstan claimed suzerainty over all Britain, and his efforts to establish authority over disparate peoples and to secure the borders of his kingdom came to triumphant culmination in the battle of Brunanburh. Mercia was welded to the kingdom, the Welsh paid tribute, the Danes were absorbed, and the Scots were forced to accept England's overlordship. Out of several smaller states, Athelstan molded England. In European diplomacy he was a figure of great power and prestige. Through marriage alliances and a trading network that extended from Norway to Italy, Athelstan made England a European power, something no previous king had done, and his accomplishments were not to be matched by another Anglo-Saxon ruler.

Athelstan was a benefactor of the church in England. Gifts of relics and manuscripts and wise

ecclesiastical preferments enriched the church materially and spiritually. More important, his concessions and grants of land provided a fiscal base on which the church was able to flourish. Without Athelstan, the church reforms of the later tenth century would not have been possible.

Athelstan attempted to restore order and prosperity and to develop cultural life. His law codes reflect the problems he faced and attempted to solve. Economic growth was stimulated by the king. The power of the nobility apparently began to increase during Athelstan's reign, a problem that would become critical later in the century. Athelstan supported the Palace School, a center of education for English nobles and foreign princes. The language of charters and the writing of poetry indicate a renewed interest in cultural affairs.

Athelstan, then, was a successful warrior-king, an efficient administrator, a patron of the arts, a benefactor of the church, and a ruler respected by his European peers. His role in the evolution of England and in the general history of the tenth century, insufficiently appreciated in current as well as past historiography, is here described and evaluated.

PREFACE

Miss Dorothy Whitelock, in her inaugural lecture as Elrington and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Cambridge, confessed to an early apprehension that "there would be nothing left to do" by the time she was prepared to undertake research in Old English studies.[1] That this concern was needless is evident, of course, from her own abundant and significant contributions during a long and distinguished career as well as by the impressive volume of original studies in primary sources recently published in her honor.[2] As Frank Stenton observed in his presidential address to the Royal Historical Society some years ago, "the content of early English history has increased in range and interest with each successive decade of research. The end of this enlargement is not yet."[3] Nor is it now. That no one

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1 Changing Currents in Anglo-Saxon Studies, an inaugural lecture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 2.

2 England Before the Conquest, Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock, ed. by Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

3 "Early English History, 1895-1920," Preparatory, p. 356 [reprinted from TRHS, Ser. 4, XXVIII(1946), 7-19] .

today contemplates an early exhaustion of research opportunities is obvious if only from the establishment in 1972 of the major serial publication Anglo-Saxon England.

It is all the more remarkable, then, in view of the continuing scholarly activity in every branch of Old English learning--art, architecture, epigraphy, numismatics, diplomatic, Latin and vernacular literature, the Church, military institutions, government and administration, land tenure, agriculture, toponymy--that not one of the three great tenth-century kings has attracted a biographer. Even the excellent ongoing "English Monarchs" series apparently intends to ignore all the rulers between Alfred and Edward the "Confessor", that is to say, those of the entire tenth century and more. Yet if there is any century in Anglo-Saxon history, perhaps in all medieval history, that urgently requires reassessment and coherent presentation, it is the tenth. The time has clearly arrived when sufficient information exists to make a synthetic effort not only worthwhile but essential. This dissertation is such an attempt. It is a biography of Athelstan, king of England, overlord of surrounding peoples, and the outstanding Western European personality in his age.

The existing treatments of Athelstan cast him in two chief roles: as an avid relic collector and advocate

of ecclesiastical reform, and as the victor in the battle at Brunanburh, celebrated in the famous contemporary vernacular poem. His accomplishments in economic affairs, diplomacy, education, and patronage of the arts are rarely acknowledged and then only cursorily. This biography provides the first comprehensive account of Athelstan's reign and attempts to assess its impact on the civilization of Western Europe in the tenth century and its significance in the whole of Anglo-Saxon history.

This dissertation could not have been completed without the support of many people. My committee, and particularly my advisor Professor R. Dean Ware, gave valuable criticism. My department provided me with a History Service Fund Grant for research in Great Britain. In Great Britain, considerable aid was given by the staffs of the Reading Room and of the Students' Room, Department of Manuscripts, of the British Museum, and the staff of the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Mr. Eric John, Senior Lecturer in History at Manchester University, gave valuable advice and counsel as well as gracious hospitality.

The staff of the University Library, University of Massachusetts, particularly Mr. John D. Kendall, Assistant Chief Bibliographer, and Mrs. Ute Bargmann and Mrs. Judith Schaefer of Inter-Library Loan, gave me every consideration. My colleagues Robert E. Hudson III,

William E. Kapelle, and Lindsay Shippee allowed me to test ideas on and argue points with them in many late-night sessions.

Finally, my wife--critic, editor, typist--is owed a debt that can not be repaid.

It should be noted that all translations are mine unless otherwise specified. In transcribing Old English, the aesc is rendered as "ae", thorn and eth as "th", and wyn as "w".

ABBREVIATIONS

ASC	Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel. Edited by Charles Plummer. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892-1899. Citations are to year and recension.
ASPR	The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records. Edited by George P. Krapp and Elliot Van Kirk Dobbie. 6 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-1953.
B	Birch, Walter deGray, editor. Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters relating to Anglo-Saxon History. 3 vols. London: Whiting and Co., 1885-1893.
BIHR	Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research.
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.
BNJ	British Numismatic Journal.
BT	Bosworth, Joseph. An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary. Edited by T. N. Toller. London: Oxford University Press, 1898.
BT: Supp.	Toller, T. Northcote. Supplement (to BT). London: Oxford University Press, 1921.
BT: Add.	Campbell, Alistair. Enlarged Addenda and Corrigenda (to BT: Supp.). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
DCNQ	Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries.
EETS	Early English Text Society.
EHR	English Historical Review.
EP-NS	English Place-Name Society.

John, LT	John, Eric. Land Tenure in Early England. Studies in Early English History, I. Corrected Impression. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1964.
John, OB	John, Eric. Orbis Britanniae and Other Studies. Studies in Early English History, IV. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1966.
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica.
MGH, Ss.	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores.
NC	Numismatic Chronicle.
PBA	Proceedings of the British Academy.
Plummer, II	Volume II of ASC, containing Plummer's notes.
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association.
P-N	The Place-Names of . . . . Publications of the English Place-Name Society.
Preparatory	Stenton, Frank M. Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England. Being the Collected Papers of Frank Merry Stenton. Edited by Doris M. Stenton. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.
S	Sawyer, Peter H. Anglo-Saxon Charters. An Annotated List and Bibliography. Royal Historical Society, Guides and Handbooks, VIII. London: Royal Historical Society, 1968.
Saga-Book	Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research.
SCBI Ashmolean	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Anglo-Saxon Pennies. By J.D.A. Thompson. London: British Academy, 1967.

SCBI Chester	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. Grosvenor Museum, Chester. Part I: The Willoughby Gardner Collection of Coins with the Chester Mint-Signature. By Elizabeth J.E. Pirie. London: British Academy, 1964.
SCBI Copenhagen	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. Royal Collection, National Museum, Copenhagen. Part I: Ancient British and Anglo-Saxon Coins before Aethelred II. By Georg Galster. London: British Academy, 1964.
SCBI Fitzwilliam	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. Part I: Ancient British and Anglo-Saxon Coins. By Philip Grierson. London: British Academy, 1958.
SCBI Glasgow	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. Hunterian and Coats Collections, University of Glasgow. Part I: Anglo-Saxon Coins. By Anne S. Robertson. London: British Academy, 1961.
SCBI Hiberno-Norse	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. The Hiberno-Norse Coins in the British Museum. By R.H.M. Dolley. London: British Museum, 1966.
SCBI Reading	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. University Collection, Reading. Anglo-Saxon and Norman Coins. By C.E. Blunt and Michael Dolley. London: British Academy, 1969.
SCBI Scotland	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland. Part I: Anglo-Saxon Coins with Associated Foreign Coins. By Robert B.K. Stevenson. London: British Academy, 1966.
Stenton, ASE	Stenton, Frank M. Anglo-Saxon England. Oxford History of England, II. 3rd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

TRHS — Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.

William of Malmesbury, GR Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi De Gestis Regum Anglorum. Edited by William Stubbs. Rolls Series, 90. 2 vols. London: Master of the Rolls, 1887-1889.

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CHAPTER I

WESSEX AND THE NORTH

The reign of King Alfred was crucial in the history of Wessex and England. After a series of devastating battles with the Vikings, he began a slow reconquest of the land south of the Thames River. While his later battles were indecisive, Alfred managed to stave off new Danish incursions into his territory and, at the same time, was able to begin the reconstitution of society and the reorganization of learning. It was into this milieu that his children were born and raised. Sometime before 869 Alfred had married Ealhswith, daughter of Ealdorman Aethelred of the Gani and Eadburh of the royal Mercian family, and the first child of this union was Aethelflaed, born in that year. His son and successor Edward was probably born in 870, and over the next five years there followed the future countess of Flanders, Aelfthryth, a second son, Aelfweard, later a noted scholar, and finally Aethelgeofu, who would become a nun at Shaftesbury.[1] All of the children were well educated by Alfred's scholars in preparation for their positions in the affairs of the kingdom.

In the first of what would become standard

political maneuvers of the house of Wessex, Aethelflaed was wed in 889 to Aethelred, ealdorman of the Mercians. This union cemented an alliance between the two major English states against the Viking menace, and whether or not there was a long-range plan to unify the two parts into one kingdom, this would be the result.

In 892 or 893 Edward married a noble woman named Ecgwynn and, in the following year, Athelstan was born.[2] There is a curious legend attached to his birth. William of Malmesbury tells of a shepherdess who dreamed her womb was illuminated by moonlight that radiated over all England. She interpreted this to mean that her child would have a spectacular career as the ruler of the nation. Soon after the dream, Edward, who was out riding, stopped in the vill, saw the beauty of the girl and slept with her.[3] The result was Athelstan. There is no foundation for this tale of bastardy. Elsewhere, William of Malmesbury notes that Ecgwynn was of the noble class and another source clearly states that she was of high birth.[4] These assertions undercut the base of the legend. There are several possible explanations for the story. It may be an accretion to the Athelstan myth as a result of the high regard for the king since dreams of the sun, moon and stars by a woman before or during pregnancy are common symbols of the future importance of an unborn

child. More important, the illumination of the state by a glowing womb is a portent of the greatness of the child-to-be.[5] This is one explanation. Another may be that Ecgwynn was the wife of Edward before he became king in late 899. This would explain why the later wives of Edward are specifically called queens while Ecgwynn is noted only as a noble woman.[6] Other writers may have noted the titular discrepancy and borrowed the shepherd girl story to explain it. An unnamed girl was also born of this marriage in 894 or 895.[7]

William of Malmesbury, the great twelfth-century monk-historian, discovered a tenth-century poem or panegyric on Athelstan in what he calls an ancient book and incorporated it into his Gesta Regem.[8] The Latin poem gives detail not found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's terse entries or, for that matter, in any other source. Some stanzas of the poem are quoted in the Gesta while much else is paraphrased, thus making William of Malmesbury an important source for the reign of Athelstan. This tenth-century poem also predates the stories of Charlemagne and may have been a source of the Chanson de Roland.[9]

Athelstan and his sister were raised in the court of King Alfred for several years where, sometime before October of 899, Alfred bestowed a great honor upon the

boy after recognizing the child's ability and seeing his beauty. Athelstan was given a scarlet cloak, jeweled belt, and a Saxon sword encased in a gold scabbard in a ceremony that made him a knight.[10] This was supposedly in recognition of the boy's ultimate right to rule Wessex as the successor of Edward, but Alfred's actions present a problem in interpretation. He himself had been given similar honors by Pope Leo IV in 853-855. Asser records the investiture:

> In the same year King Aethelwulf sent his above-named son Alfred honorably to Rome with an escort of nobles and commoners. Pope Leo IV at that time presided over the apostolic see and anointed as king the previously mentioned child Alfred in the town and, adopting him as a son, confirmed him.[11]

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle notes that Alfred was sent to Rome in 853 and, at about the age of five, was consecrated to kingship.[12] Since both sources were written in Alfred's lifetime, one by his close companion Asser and the other under his direction and scrutiny, there is little chance that the statements are in error. It may well be that they both are purposeful frauds or are carefully worded statements to encourage readers to believe that Alfred was consecrated king at the age of five. To imagine that the confirmation ceremony or the elevation of Alfred to consular rank could be erroneously construed by Alfred and Asser as consecration has been called

bizarre.[13] On the continent there were papal consecrations. Pepin the Short's children, for example, had been raised to patrician dignity as an indication of their right to rule.[14] These, however, were rites of consecration, not confirmation. Whatever the case, Alfred did invest Athelstan with a sword and cloak. It may well be that the king was remembering the pleasure he received from the ceremony and desired to do the same for his grandson. On the other hand, Alfred may simply have wanted to continue the myth that he and Asser had concocted.

Soon after the ceremony, Athelstan was removed from court and sent to Mercia to be educated by Aethelflaed and Athelred and was "with great care raised by the aunt and that most famous ealdorman in expectation of a kingdom ...."[15] There are several reasons for this change. First, Ecgwynn was most probably dead and there was need of a woman to raise the child. Second, several of the finest educators Alfred had used were Mercians and there is little reason to doubt that qualified teachers remained in Mercia. Finally, and perhaps most important, if the plans of Alfred and Edward were to merge Mercia into the kingdom of Wessex, what better method to do so than to rear the future ruler in Mercia? The Mercian nobles would have ample opportunity to become intimate

with their future king.

King Alfred died on 26 October, 899, and was buried in New Minster, Winchester.[16] Although Edward succeeded him, he did not do so uncontested. His cousin Aethelwold seized Wimborne, Dorsetshire, in defiance of the new king. Apparently Aethelwold felt that his claim to the throne, since his father Aethelred had preceded Alfred on the throne, was stronger than Edward's. Edward immediately gathered his forces and encamped at Bradbury near Wimborne causing the rebel to flee.[17] It is not known where Aethelwold went, but the Chronicle notes that, in the following year, he returned with a fleet from across the sea. When he arrived, Aethelwold was able to stir up the people of Essex and receive their submission.[18] In 903, Aethelwold roused the inhabitants of East Anglia to his cause and, with them, harried Mercia as far as Cricklade, crossed the Thames and sacked the town of Braydon, Wiltshire, and returned to East Anglia. Edward marshalled his troops and marched into the area between the Ouse River and the Devil's and Fleam Dykes, ravaging the land as far as the fens. At this point, he ordered the army to return home, but the forces from Kent refused, even though Edward sent a number of messengers to order them back. The result of their disobedience was a battle at the Holme in East Anglia against the rebels

and allied Danes in which several Kentish ealdormen were killed, as was Aethelwold and a Danish king, Eorhic of East Anglia.[19] Thus the rebellion was ended but peace was not established with the Danes until the treaty at Tiddingford, Bedfordshire, in 906.[20]

One result of the short-lived war was the loss of a rallying point in the Danish territories of England. Eorhic's death eliminated the one truly strong Viking leader. An indicator of this lack of leadership is the coinage of the Danes for this period. York was the only Danish mint producing at this time and its output was limited to silver pennies and half-pennies, none of which carried the name or title of any king, evidencing an oligarchic system of government.[21] Lack of leadership among the Danes was to benefit Edward and his Mercian allies in the next decade. If there had been a strong leader, it might not have been possible to rebuild the power of Wessex as Edward was able to do.

It was sometime between 900 and 905 that Edward's mother Ealhswith died. The main section of the Chronicle notes the date as 903 while the Mercian Register places the obituary in the annal for 902.[22] This Register is a chronicle for the years 902 to 924, separate from other recensions of the ASC. Sometime after 924 it was partially incorporated into Ms. D, which was at Ripon at the

time, and placed in its entirety into Mss. B and C, both connected with Abingdon. The Register gives details of Mercian affairs not found in the Chronicle proper since the purpose of the Chronicle was to record and glorify the acts of the kings of Wessex, not its neighbors. The Mercian Register, then, is of considerable importance in study of the welding together of the two states. Moreover, the dating of the Register, particularly in Ms. C, is accurate for Mercian affairs. Since Ealhswith was a member of the royal Mercian line, it is probable that the Register's date of 902 for her death is correct.

Edward's wife Ecgwynn was also dead by this time. He took as his second wife Aelfflaed, the daughter of Ealdorman Aethelhelm, a union that produced eight children: Aelfweard, Eadwine, Eadflaed, Eadgifu, Aethelhild, Eadhild, Eadgyth, and Aelfgifu.[23] Although the exact date of the marriage is not known, whether as early as 900 or as late as 905, the first child was born in the latter year. It is also not known if Eadwine was, in fact, the second child since William of Malmesbury is more interested in male offspring and invariably lists males first. In any case, each of the children would play an important role in the future of Wessex.

Preparations were constantly being made for the possibility of a Viking attack. As a result of the

inroads made by the Vikings on the continent, Edward began to reinforce his harbors on the Channel coast. In 904 he traded property at Bishops Waltham, Hampshire, for the land of Bishop Denewulf of Winchester and his familia at Portchester, Hampshire. The charter transferring the land, S372, is a late copy with some interpolations, but it appears to be an authentic instrument of transfer. The exchange was extremely important since Portchester is several miles north of the present city of Portsmouth and is within the same harborage. Control of this site gave Edward the needed protection for the city of Winchester, some twenty miles to the north, and also gave him an excellent sheltered harbor for his ships. With a fleet here, the roadstead between the mainland and the Isle of Wight could easily be patrolled.

A second exchange took place at about the same time. An undated charter, S380, evidences the trading of three properties: Wellington, West Buckland, and Bishops Lydeard, Somerset, to Bishop Asser of Sherborne and his familia for their minster at Plympton, Devonshire. The exchange must have occurred between 899, the date of Edward's accession, and 909, the date of Asser's death. Like the previous land transfer, this grant gave Edward another Channel harbor and also protected the estuary of the River Tamar. The reliability of this charter has

been questioned on grounds of language. It is a late copy--the earliest extant manuscript is of the fifteenth century--which makes philological examination of little use. Moreover there are no major personages other than the king and the bishop witnessing this charter whose dates could be used to verify its authenticity. There is one piece of supporting evidence, however. The three estates that Edward is purported to have granted to Sherborne were in the possession of the diocese in 910 when they formed part of the endowment of the newly created bishopric of Wells.[24] This, along with the fact that Edward is known to have been trying to obtain harbors on the Channel, lends credence to the charter.

The difficulties with which Wessex had to contend were not caused entirely by the Danes in England. Norsemen moving from the Irish Sea coasts into northwest England became a threat to Edward's sister Aethelflaed and brother-in-law Aethelred of Mercia. The Norwegians had entered the Irish Sea and settled in Ireland in the later decades of the ninth century, founding several of the major ports on the island: Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Wexford.[25] Their stay in Ireland, however, was not peaceful. The indigenous population did not simply accept the overlordship of the Norse. Within the first five years of the tenth century, many of the

Norse were forced to emigrate to the Isle of Man and to England as a result of a major Irish victory over the Norse, weakened by earlier emigrations from Ireland.[26] The only well-documented settlement in England is that of "Ingimund's invasion" of the Wirral peninsula in 902 that was accomplished with the permission of Aethelflaed and Aethelred,[27] and was a small part of a much larger movement.

Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire were colonized by this secondary migration of Norse from Ireland. They came to settle without having to conquer the land, a contrast with the stormy settlement of the Danes on the eastern coast of England. The three shires were similar to their old homeland where they could fish, farm the uplands, and catch birds. Apparently they were not interested in the lowland areas of Britain.[28] Cumberland was colonized to the point that Norse was spoken throughout the county and, in the interior, was the chief language. In Westmorland, archaeological evidence is very clear.[29] This county, however, was not solely under the control of the Norse. The southern sector, the barony of Kendal, was Norse, while in the northern section, the barony of Appleby, the Danes had considerable influence and the area may have been part of the Danelaw.[30] The name of the county itself may be derived

from the Scandinavian Vestmøringa-lond, land of the people west of the moors.[31] Norse settlements have been found throughout Lancashire north of the Ribble River and on the coast south of the river. Later there was some movement into both the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire.[32] Domination of the Wirral peninsula and the coast of Lancashire gave the Norse control of the Mersey estuary and thus the river itself, an excellent highway to the interior of northwest Britain. This highway was part of the route between the Norse and the Danes at York that would become important in the wars of the following years.

Another factor in northwest Britain in the early tenth century was the expansion of the kingdom of Strathclyde partly in consequence of the diminished Danish power and the confusion caused by the entry of the Norse. The kingdom grew to the extent that its borders were from the mouth of the River Clyde to Lancashire. Calling themselves Cymry or Cumbrians, these peoples were known to others as the Britons of Strathclyde but the latter name began to lose importance and fade from usage with the Cymric expansion into Cumberland.[33] Their expansion southward to block the ingress of the Norse was probably encouraged by Aethelflaed and Aethelred who were the first Mercian rulers to be faced with the dual threat of the

Danes and the Norse. They needed all the friends they could gather, probably allying with Britons, Scots, Picts, and Welsh to face the challenge.[34] The other tactic used was construction of burhs, similar to Edward's fortifying of Wessex.

The burh was a ditch-rampart-stockade complex of either wood or stone, depending on the importance of the site enclosed. Some of the burhs were hill forts for a small number of warriors while others enclosed entire towns. If the burh enclosed a town, the town was usually carefully laid out in a rectilinear plan to facilitate movement. Burh-towns commonly became the administrative and commercial centers of the district they served. A third use of the town-burh was offensive. Troops could be gathered and sent out from these carefully selected sites for quick raids or long wars. The major military result of the burhs was to change the character of the Anglo-Viking conflict. The Vikings, unrivalled in lightning raids, could not cope with a war of attrition.[35]

The Burghal Hidage, a document of the second decade of the tenth century, gives great detail regarding the burhs and their defensive usage. It was a far-reaching military and fiscal reorganization of much of the defensive line of the house of Wessex. Thirty-one burhs are recorded, beginning from the south-east and running

clockwise to Southwark, a listing similar to the bounds of an Anglo-Saxon charter. Each burh was granted an assessment of hides with one man assigned to the burh for every hide assessed, totalling 28, 671 men-at-arms, stationed four to a pole or 160 to a furlong on the walls.[36] All but three of the burhs, Eorpeburnan, Cissanbyrig, and Sceaftesege, are readily identifiable and, with some detective work, two of these have been identified. Eorpeburnan may be located at Castle Toll, Newendon, Kent, or may be on the Rother River east of Rye, but the exact site is unknown since the Rother has changed course and the entire area is extremely swampy.[37] Cissanbyrig had been thought to be Tisbury, but a fort there would be superfluous since Shaftesbury and Wilton protect the River Nadder. A better location would be Chisbury, the site of an Iron Age hill fort two miles north of the old Roman road from Mildenhall to Winchester, and close to several ancient north-south tracks. It is also equidistant from Cricklade, Oxford, Winchester, and Wilton and fills the hiatus between the northern boundary forts and the south. Finally, it is on the manor of Bedwyn which Edward inherited from his father.[38] The third burh has been located at Sashes in the Thames at Cookham, Berkshire, a natural defensive position where Viking Age weapons have been found. The

Roman road from Wallingford to Saint Albans crosses the river here, adding to the importance of the location.[39] The line of forts created by Edward did more than anything else to turn the tide of war in his favor.

Aethelflaed was also involved in the construction of burhs. The Mercian Register reads much like a "Burghal Hidage" for the north. Between 907 and 915, she ordered eleven forts erected which, when linked to those built by Edward, formed an almost impregnable line against the Danes and the Norse.[40] Her husband was not involved in any of this. Aethelred had been ill for a number of years and Aethelflaed was, de facto, ealdorman of Mercia from 907 and possibly from as early as 902 to Aethelred's death in 911.[41] This is the major reason that she was immediately accepted as the ruler of Mercia at his death. The annal in the Mercian Register for 912 gives her the title Myrcna hlaefdige, Lady of the Mercians.[42] Immediately after Aethelred's death, Edward took the burhs of London and Oxford and the hidation that belonged to each town.[43] Both sites were of strategic importance to Wessex since they commanded the Thames. Aethelflaed must have consented to the act since there is no mention of it in the Mercian Register. It is possible that her concerns in the north were so time-consuming that she felt her brother was in a better position to deal with

problems in the south.

Edward did not always use force or burhs to obtain territory from the Vikings. Several charters of the reign of Athelstan indicate that land was purchased from the Danes. In 926 Athelstan confirmed to the thegn Ealdred a grant at Chalgrave and Tebworth, Bedfordshire, that Edward and Aethelred had ordered the thegn to purchase from the "pagans" for ten pounds.[44] In the same year another charter, S397, grants to Uhtred sixty hides at Hope and Ashford, Derbyshire, which Uhtred had purchased from the Danes for twenty pounds of gold and silver at the command of Edward and Aethelred. Both purchases were of land under the control of the Danes, apparently to force inroads into their territory. The purchasers were trusted thegns whose lands would be useful in the coming wars of Edward. The dates of the purchases are not known, but they occurred early in the first decade of the tenth century since Aethelred concurred. It is probable that the purchases were part of an agreement included in the treaty of Tiddingford of 906 since prior to the peace Edward could not possibly have ordered Danish land purchased and it probably was not later than Aethelred's incapacitation in 907.

The process of merging Mercia with the kingdom of Wessex received great impetus in 918 when, after

receiving the submission of York, Aethelflaed retired to her estate at Tamworth, probably the seat of her government, and died on 12 June. Edward marched from Stamford to Tamworth and obtained an oath of submission from the Mercians and three Welsh kings, Hywel, Clydog, and Idwal. The body of Aethelflaed was taken to Gloucester and interred in the Church of Saint Peter.[45] The importance of Aethelflaed in the reconquest of the north can hardly be over-estimated. She had ruled Mercia in her own right for almost eight years,[46] and was continually on the offensive. The Wessex sources are silent on her career, but the Mercian Register presents it in detail, probably because the Chronicle was used as a propaganda piece for the kings of Wessex and the acts of a Mercian were outside this purview. Irish and Welsh sources, however, note her passing while they ignore Alfred and Edward.[47] It is doubtful that Edward could have concentrated on the conquest of northeastern England, particularly the East Anglian sections, if Aethelflaed had not been such an excellent leader and defender of the northwest.

On the other hand, Athelstan may have been the architect of Aethelflaed's victories. He had been sent to be educated in Mercia about the year 900 and by the time his uncle Aethelred was dead in 911, Athelstan was nearly twenty years old. William of Malmesbury notes

his education:

> Given at his father's order to the learning of schools, he feared stern teachers with their rigid rule, and avidly drinking the honey of learning, he passed unchildishly the years of childhood. Soon, clothed in the flower of young manhood, he practiced the pursuit of arms as his father ordered. Nor in this did the work of war find him remiss ...."[48]

Since he knew how to rule and how to fight, it is possible that Athelstan was doing his part to reconquer the enemy-held sectors of Mercia. His education in Mercia also allowed the Mercian nobles to assess Athelstan over a long period of time under situations of stress. From the death of Aethelflaed until his own coronation, Athelstan was apparently viceroy in Mercia.

The daughter of Aethelflaed and Aethelred, Aelfwynn, was permitted to remain in Mercia as a figurehead for the government for some six months. The Mercian Register records that three weeks before Christmas of 918 she was taken to Wessex.[49] Aelfwynn could easily have been the focus of any disgruntled Mercian nobles who wished to throw off the rule of Wessex. Since Edward held all of England to the Humber, he could not risk a revolt fomenting in the heartland of the enlarged kingdom. Aelfwynn remained a prisoner in Wessex until she died, at a date unknown.

In 919, Edward was commanding the Mercian host.

Part of it was taken to Thelwall, Cheshire, where another burh was constructed while the other part was sent, probably under the command of Athelstan, to Manchester to repair the walls and install a garrison.[50] The erection of both forts was a reaction to Ragnald's capture of York, apparently in the year 919 since Ragnald submitted to Edward as ruler of York in the following year. Before the so-called submission was made, Edward constructed a burh at Nottingham across the Trent from the existing burh, connecting the two with a bridge. He then marched into the Peak District and built a fortress in the vicinity of Bakewell, Derbyshire. Soon after this, Constantine of the Scots, Ragnald of York, the lords of Bamborough, and the king of the Strathclyde Welsh made a pact with Edward to restore peace and stabilize the existing political situation in the north.[51] Each of the members of the pact stood to gain from the peace. Constantine had temporary security from the marauding of the Vikings, Ragnald received confirmation of his newly won kingdom at York, the lords of Bamborough got respite from the wars, the Strathclyde Welsh conquests were recognized, and Edward's gains were accepted. This was the first general peace in Britain for many years and it was welcomed by all.

Aelfflaed, Edward's second wife, died sometime

before 920. There is no reference to her death in any document, but in 920 Edward had a third wife, Eadgifu, daughter and sole heir of Ealdorman Sigehelm of Kent who had been killed by the Danes in 903. Their first child was Edmund, born in 920 or 921, who was followed by Edred, Edburga, and Eadgifu. Queen Eadgifu was to survive Edward by many years, living to see her sons and grandsons on the throne of England. She died on 25 August, sometime after 963.[52]

Edward extended his line of burhs in 921 by constructing one deep in Welsh territory. Ragnald's kingdom at York could use water routes in the west of England for rapid movement as could the Norse and Strathclyde Welsh. Several of these routes had been constricted by earlier building, such as the fort at Manchester overlooking the Mersey. One river that was not protected was the Clwyd in north Wales. When Edward constructed a burh there, he cut off the entrance to the river and gained a harbor in the Irish Sea from which his fleet could maneuver.[53] It was also in 921 that Ragnald died, surrendering York to his cousin Sihtric.[54] The fact that Sihtric could easily march into York and take the city and kingdom may have been the reason for the construction of the burh at the mouth of the Clwyd.

Aelfweard, Edward's only brother, died on

16 October, 922.[55] It is mystifying that no reference is made to his death in the Chronicle. It is possible that he was overlord of an area not treated by the Chronicle or he may not have been involved at all in politics. Since he was noted as a scholar, he may have entered a monastery late in life or was simply a student of literature totally divorced from the governance of England. Whatever the case, his passing removed the only possible claimant of Edward's generation to the throne and smoothed the way for the succession of Athelstan.

For the next two years, Wessex and England were at peace. No battles were fought and no burhs were constructed. The great works that Edward had striven to complete were now giving him a hard-won respite. In June or July of 924, however, there was a revolt of Mercians at Chester allied with some Welsh partisans.[56] This uprising may have been a result of the unrest caused by the construction of an English burh at the Clwyd, deep in Welsh territory, and aggravated by discontented Mercians. The revolt was immediately crushed by the king and Athelstan after which Edward retired to his estate at Farndon on the River Dee. Falling ill there, he died on 17 July. Sixteen days later on 2 August, Aelfweard, his son by his second wife Aelfflaed, died at Oxford. Both were buried at Winchester in New Minster, the traditional

resting place of the Alfredian family.[57] Edward had received the kingdom from his father and, during a twenty-four year reign, had expanded the realm from the Thames River to the Humber River and the Peak. This impressive enlargement of the kingdom was aided by the acumen of his sister Aethelflaed and his son Athelstan.

Athelstan became king in Mercia without opposition immediately after the death of Edward, but the succession in Wessex is less clear. Plummer, in his notes to the Chronicle, proposes three theories: that Aelfweard was king for the sixteen days that he survived his father, that Aelfweard was associated in kingship with his father and crowned before his father's death, or that the kingdom was divided between Aelfweard, Athelstan and Eadwine.[58] The first suggestion is supported by a citation from the Liber Vitae of Hyde Abbey.[59] The second theory assumes a division of authority in the kingdom. A citation from the Liber de Hyda lends credence to this proposal.[60] This is possible since Athelstan was probably viceroy in Mercia and Eadwine may have been viceroy in Kent. The third theory, a development of the second, is that the kingdom was divided among the sons with each given the territory that he had governed as viceroy. This is grasped by many as the solution to the problem. That they were viceroys under their father is probably

true, particularly since Edward was concerned with the conquest and retention of lands in the north and would need lieutenants to govern in his stead. However, it would be surprising if a trifurcation of the kingdom were permitted after the quarter-century struggle of Edward to weld England into a single kingdom.

Thus far, Plummer's theories of succession have centered on the person of Aelfweard apparently because of the presumed bastardy of Athelstan. Evidence favoring the succession of Aelfweard, however, is slight and tends to ignore other, more convincing evidence. The Chronicle is of little help except for an argument ex silentio. From the accession of Alfred to the accession of Aethelred, the succession to the throne is carefully indicated by the phrase feng to rice--succeeded to the kingdom. Since this is not done in the case of Aelfweard, the chronicler apparently did not consider Aelfweard the successor of Edward. William of Malmesbury, who had access to the tenth-century poem, gives more substantial evidence. He first notes that Athelstan was named king in 924 and then relates the death of Aelfweard.[61] Later, he states that Athelstan was named king at the command of his father and that it had been so ordered in Edward's will.[62] It would almost appear that arguments favoring Aelfweard as king are manufactured

and that there was never any question of Athelstan's succession to the throne. There remains, then, the reason for the delay in Athelstan's election in Wessex. It is possible that Aelfweard was known to be dying and that the magnates were simply waiting for the atheling's death before proceeding with his brother's election. The more probable reason is the time needed for the notification of Edward's death and the assembling of the magnates. Since the great lords and churchmen would gather at Winchester for Edward's funeral rites, it was probably decided that this was the proper time for the election.

William of Malmesbury implies that Athelstan was elected immediately after the interment of Edward:

> And thus elected with great unanimity by the nobles in the same place [Winchester], Athelstan was crowned at the royal vill which is called Kingston: although a certain Alfred with his faction, for sedition always finds accomplices, tried to oppose it ....[63]

Athelstan, then, was probably elected after the burial of his father and brother in New Minster, Winchester, in August of 924. The legend of Alfred's opposition is thus: Alfred tried to seize and blind Athelstan at Winchester during Edward's funeral, but was caught and remanded to Rome for papal judgment. In Rome, Alfred swore a false oath at the altar of Saint Peter,

immediately took ill and died. After permitting the nobles to give Alfred a decent burial, Athelstan confiscated the traitor's property, giving much of it to Saint Peter's, Bath, and to Malmesbury.[64]

Three charters, two greatly interpolated and one spurious, claim to relate the story of Alfred's misdeeds. S414, granting land to Saint Peter's, Bath, and dated 931, is actually from the period 934x939. The grant is accurate, since Eadwig in 955x957 noted it in his charter (S664) to Saint Peter's. There is, however, a paragraph interpolated into the twelfth-century recension of the charter purporting to relate Alfred's perfidy. This is also true of S415, a grant of 931, <u>recte</u> 934x939, to Malmesbury which contains the Alfred interpolation in the thirteenth-century text. A third charter, S436, is a conflation of S434, S435, and S438. Dated 21 December, 937, and containing the same story of Alfred, it purports to be a grant to Malmesbury and may well have been concocted by its most famous historian. These, then, are the only documents evidencing the plot of Alfred and all are suspect. William of Malmesbury is not certain himself that the attempt ever occurred, since his introduction makes clear that he is wary of the tale. The legend appears to be another accretion to the Athelstan myth.

It was not until September, 925, that Athelstan was crowned. The cause for the delay is not known; perhaps it was opposition to his election or, more probably, the need for time to prepare for the coronation. Delayed coronations were not unusual; that of Edgar was delayed from 959 to 973. The site of the coronation was the royal vill of Kingston on the Thames River where Edred, Eadwig, and Aethelred would also be crowned. The date of Athelstan's enthronement can be ascertained from a memorandum of a charter, S394, which restores land to the monastery of Saint Augustine, Canterbury. The memorandum begins, "In the year of Our Lord 925, Indiction 13, the first year of the reign of King Athelstan, the day of his consecration, 4 September ...."[65]

Although the exact rite of coronation for Athelstan is not known, something of the ceremony may be described. There were three parts: acclamation, enthronement, and homage.[66] Acclamation by the clergy and people was a necessity for elected kingship, for, if the king was not approved by the nation, he could not rule. Enthronement almost certainly included anointing, which set the king apart from the people. This rite had been borrowed from the Franks and first used in 785 at the consecration of Offa's son Ecgfrith.[67] The use of oil made the king <u>rex et sacerdos</u>, much like the kings of

the Old Testament, and made him the mediator between the clergy and laity, insuring the king the right to interfere in the activities of the church.[68] This part of the coronation concluded with the bestowing of the ring, sword, scepter, and staff of office and, ultimately, Athelstan was crowned by Archbishop Aethelhelm of Canterbury, the ranking prelate.[69] The final section of the ceremony was the taking of homage from the great magnates of the realm. Even though there are versions of the rite early enough to have been used at Athelstan's coronation, the ordo actually followed is not known.[70]

In what was apparently his first official act as king, Athelstan freed a slave, probably one who had served him while he was a prince. The manumission is found in an eighth-century Gospels of Northumbrian origin, Ms. Reg. I. B. vii., f. 15^{b}:

> King Athelstan freed Eadhelm immediately after he first became king. Aelfheah the priest and the community, Aelfric the reeve, Wulfnoth White, Eanstan the prior, and Byrnstan the priest are witnesses of this. He who averts this--may he have the disfavor of God and of all the relics which I, by God's mercy, have obtained in England. And I grant the children the same that I grant the father.[71]

The Gospels in which the manumission is recorded was owned by Saint Augustine's, Canterbury, and may have been the one upon which Athelstan took his oath of office. The previously mentioned charter memorandum, S394, may

have been notice of a gift for the use of the volume during the coronation.

The celebration of the coronation was one of great feasting. William of Malmesbury quotes from the tenth-century poem a scene reminiscent of the celebrations in Beowulf:

> The nobles assemble and place the crown, pontiffs pronounce a curse on faithless men, fire glows among the people with more than wonted festivity, and by various signs they disclose their deepest feelings. Each burns to show his affection to the king; one fears, one hopes, high hopes dispel fears, the palace seethes and overflows with royal splendor, wine flows everywhere, the great hall resounds with tumult, pages scurry to and fro, servers speed with their tasks. Bellies are filled with food, minds with song; one makes the harp resound, another contends with phrases, there sound in unison, "To Thee praise, to Thee glory, O Christ!" The king drinks in this honor with eager gaze, graciously bestowing due courtesy on all.[72]

Malmesbury also includes a description of Athelstan: "He was, as we have learned, not beyond what is becoming in stature, and slender in body; his hair, as we ourselves have seen from his relics, flaxen, beautifully mingled with gold threads."[73]

The peace that Edward created was not disrupted during the period from Edward's death to Athelstan's coronation, an excellent measure of its strength. Athelstan is said to have held the peace by the terror of his name alone.[74] Not one of the rulers of Britain attempted

to cause trouble in the uncertain times of 924 and 925. In fact, within a year of Athelstan's coronation several kings renewed the peace with the house of Wessex and others made peace for the first time.

The first of the renewals of peace was that of the Welsh kings. Although the Welsh had accepted the suzerainty of Alfred and Edward, Athelstan wanted true submission. In late 925 or early 926, he called the kings to Hereford for a conference. After initial resistance, Hywel Dda of Deheubarth, Idwal Foel of Gwynedd, and Morgan of Morgannwg submitted to Athelstan. They were forced to pay an annual tribute of twenty pounds of gold, 300 pounds of silver, 25,000 oxen and as many hunting dogs and hawks as the king desired and to accept the River Wye as the boundary between England and Wales.[75] Hywel Dda went so far as to base his code of laws on Athelstan's, name his son after Athelstan's half-brother Eadwine, and make use of the mint facilities of Chester for his coinage.[76] All three Welsh kings were in attendance at the court numerous times in Athelstan's reign and witness a number of his charters, with their names in a position of dignity.[77]

There is also a code of laws, the Ordinance Concerning the Dunsaete, that was probably drawn up at this conference of Welsh kings with Athelstan. Composed of

nine sections, the code treats the problems of the border peoples between Monmouthshire and Herefordshire. The prologue states, "this is the ordinance that the English Witan and the councillors of the Welsh established among the Dunsaete."[78] Twelve men, six English and six Welsh,[79] were ordered to prepare rules for the judgment of cases of theft, particularly of sheep and cattle, and homicide between the two peoples. Although Athelstan had overlordship of the territory, the Ordinance makes it clear that the Dunsaete were autonomous. The code probably was a result of border skirmishing between the Welsh and the Mercians.

There is a poem, composed shortly after the imposition of the tribute, that evidences the dislike by some Welsh of the treaty. Approximately two hundred lines long, the Armes Prydein Vawr, The Great Prophecy of Britain, was written by a monk in the kingdom of Hywel Dda who was bitterly opposed to his king's policy.[80] The poem is a call to arms to all Britons to throw off the yoke of the mechteyrn, the Great King. The stewards of the Great King come from Cirencester to the border river, possibly the Dee, to collect taxes (ll. 17-20), which the Welsh are going to oppose to the death (ll. 83-84). The poet desires the unification of all Celts against Wessex:

> Wise men foretell all that will happen:
> they will possess all from Manaw [near Edinburgh]
> to Brittany, from Dyfed [Pembrokeshire]
> to Thanet, it will be theirs;
> from the Wall [Hadrian's] to the [Firth of] Forth,
> along the estuaries, their dominion will spread
> over Yr Echwydd [Swaledale, Yorkshire].
> (ll. 172-175)

Also included in the unification of the Celts were the people of the Cymry, Dublin, the Irish from Ireland, Anglesey, Scotland, Cornwall, and Strathclyde (ll. 9-11). It is evident that this patriotic call to arms was a result of the demands of Athelstan and even more evident that the poet was seeking a merger that could never be accomplished. Cornwall, by this time, was an integral part of the kingdom of Wessex and the Bretons were overrun by the Vikings with their lords and princes in exile in Wessex. The other peoples could possibly ally against Athelstan.

There is meager evidence that an attempt to unify against the growing power of the English was made. A hoard of coins found in 1894 at Bangor was probably lost by an envoy from the Vikings of Ireland coming to treat with the Welsh. The hoard, lost between 927 and 930, consists of three pennies of Edward the Elder, five coins of the Vikings, and five dihrems from Samarkand and Es Shash dating from 899-909.[81] Even though there were preliminary talks, the Welsh were never able to unite or

rise up against Athelstan. One of the major reasons is the relationship between the Welsh kings and Athelstan. Their close ties kept the Welsh in check, particularly since Hywel Dda, a confirmed Anglophile, was the most powerful of the three. The fact that the kings spent time in the English court also aided in the close relations.

Athelstan improved the opportunities for a lasting peace in the north by engaging in a pact with Sihtric Caoch, king of the Danes at York. Sihtric had refused to treat with Edward the Elder, but apparently instituted bargaining for a treaty with Athelstan. The two leaders met at Tamworth, Staffordshire, in January of 926 to complete the pact. A widower, Sihtric was given a sister of Athelstan, in fact his only full sister, in a marriage that was celebrated there on 30 January. The sister is unnamed in the Chronicle, but other sources call her Eadgyth.[82] The site of the wedding was probably selected not only for the convenience of the two kings, but also to give the Mercians a sense of belonging. At this time, Tamworth was probably raised to the status of a burh and given a mint since there are no surviving coins from it prior to this. At the junction of Watling Street and the Chester road, Tamworth commanded the fords over the Anker and Tame Rivers, and controlled access to

the Trent valley. The first coinage produced here bore the legend Rex Saxorum [sic], indicating it was produced between early 926 and the takeover of Northumbria in 927.[83] In conjunction with this moneying activity, it is possible that Athelstan forced Sihtric to halt minting at York as part of their treaty since there are no surviving Sihtric issues after 925.[84]

The Danish king of York did not live to see the fruits of the peace that he and Athelstan had created. In early 927, Sihtric died and left a confused heritage. Anlaf, Sihtric's son by his first wife, became king and was accepted by all, including Athelstan. However, Sihtric's brother Guthfrith, king of the Danes at Dublin, crossed the Irish Sea to interfere in the young man's rule of York. Athelstan could not tolerate this situation since the possible merger of the kingdoms of York and Dublin would endanger his entire northern frontier and the fragile peace in the north. The troops of Wessex and Mercia were assembled and marched toward York. Carved Viking stones of the period indicate the greater Danish lords were concentrated in the area of York and in the vills along the route from York to Scarborough and Flamborough Head.[85] This concentration enabled Athelstan to encompass the Vikings with more ease than if they had been scattered throughout the countryside. Before July

of 927, York was in the hands of Athelstan with Anlaf fleeing to Ireland and Guthfrith soon appearing in the court of Constantine of the Scots. William of Malmesbury comments that York belonged to Athelstan by ancient right and the recent marriage alliance.[86] A more accurate assessment is that York belonged to Athelstan because his army was more powerful than that of the Danes.

The fact that Guthfrith was with Constantine did not sit well with Athelstan. If the two kings joined forces, Athelstan could easily lose control of the north. He therefore requested or commanded the northern leaders to meet with him and renew the pact that Edward had made with them in 920. This was done on 12 July on the River Eamont, Cumberland, possibly at Dacre near Penrith. If this was a case where the site of a meeting of a number of kings was set at the border, then the River Eamont was the boundary between Athelstan's kingdom and that of the Strathclyde Welsh.[87] Among those present at the conference were Hywel Dda, Idwal of Gwynedd, Constantine of the Scots, Ealdred of Bamborough, and Eugenius of Strathclyde. Guthfrith was to have been brought to the meeting and surrendered by Constantine, but he had escaped and fled. The kings nevertheless gave oaths and pledges of peace to Athelstan and returned to their respective lands. Athelstan took Constantine's son as a

godson in baptism and placed him in his court,[88] most likely as a hostage for his father's good behavior.

Guthfrith remained the only problem and he was still at large. The Viking king soon found an ally in Earl Thurfirth and they with their armies attempted to take the city of York. As a result of the rapid march of Athelstan and his forces and the strong city walls, the siege failed. If the Vikings had succeeded in taking the city, they would have held a strong position that would have endangered Athelstan's hold on the north. To prevent York from becoming a Danish stronghold, Athelstan razed the walls and divided the Viking booty among his troops. The leveling of the walls left the most northern city of England without defenses. Athelstan was almost immediately counterattacked by Guthfrith and Thurfirth who again failed. They soon surrendered to Athelstan and the king, forgiving the Vikings, feted them at his court. Thurfirth apparently retained his lands in the north and was permitted to return to them while Guthfrith was honorably sent to Ireland.[89] Athelstan apparently realized that it was preferable to have friends than enemies.

The dating of these events to 927 rather than 926 is based on several pieces of evidence. A charter of Athelstan's, S404, states that 930 was three years after

the Northumbrians accepted him as lord.[90] Coinage after 927 bears the inscription Rex to Brit to signify the new unity with the regions north of the Humber River. It is also after this year that the coinage of Wessex begins to be the standard currency as far north as a line from the Firth of Forth to the mouth of the River Clyde.[91] The D recension of the Chronicle contains the reference to the events in the year 926 while the E and F recensions date the events to 927. The weight of evidence, then, favors 927 as the year in which York was taken.

That the 920's was a decade of disruption may easily be seen in the coin hoards that have been discovered from this period. The peak era for hoards, 900 to 939, finds sixteen hoards, nine of which were lost or buried between 920 and 929. Most of the Islamic coins found in Britain are from Viking deposits from the larger, forty-year period.[92] One important hoard that may be connected with the Danes from York is the huge Morley Saint Peter find of 1958 from Wymundham, Norfolk, that contains coins of Edward, Athelstan, and the Viking kings.[93] Although this interpretation has not been ventured by numismatists, a hoard of this size buried in the latter part of the 920's may well be related to the flight of the Danish leadership from York. Other hoards have been identified as related to the Viking exodus.

The Bossall-Flaxton hoard from Yorkshire, another huge collection containing Anglo-Saxon, Viking, and Islamic coins, is thought to be part of the 927 emigration.[94] Two smaller hoards, Glasnevin, near Dublin, with ten coins, and Bangor, Wales, of about twenty coins, are probably also connected with the expulsion.[95] A number of other coin hoards buried about the year 927 may bear relationship to the movement of Vikings from York, but there is no real evidence to connect them.[96]

From the autumn of 927 to 934, there was peace in Britain. Athelstan had absorbed Northumbria and was supreme over the other kings of the island. There were no Viking raids, no internal conflicts, and relations with neighbors were excellent. The Welsh kings, Hywel, Idwal, and Morgan, were in attendance at the court on several occasions and Constantine of the Scots and Eugenius of Strathclyde were absorbed in their own affairs, apparently respecting the terms of the treaty of 927. The Danes in the north of England who remained after the expulsion were taken into the affairs of Athelstan's realm. Names such as Grim, Gunnar, Guthrum, Hadder, Halfden, Hawerd, Ivar, Rǫgnvald, Styrcar, Thurferth, Urm, and Uhtred appear as ealdormen in the charters of Athelstan after 927, particularly in the early years of the fourth decade. Athelstan must have realized that it was

easier to absorb these leaders and warriors into his government than to drive them out or attempt to drive them out and replace them with his own men.

The quiescence that had settled upon Britain for some six years was thrown off in 934. Guthfrith of Dublin died and was succeeded by his son Anlaf whose recent marriage to the daughter of Constantine of the Scots threatened to unite the two states in an anti-English faction. Coupled with this threat was the breaking of the 927 pact by Constantine. The nature of the infraction is not known, but the result was that Athelstan immediately assembled his army. By 28 May, the massed Mercian and Wessex forces were in Winchester where Athelstan granted twelve hides at Durrington, either Sussex or Kent, to his thegn Aelfwald. The charter, S425, lists a number of witnesses including the Welsh kings. This may mean Athelstan was taking no chances that the Welsh would rise against him while he was in the north, or that the Welsh had arrived voluntarily to show support. A charter dated 7 June at Nottingham indicates the route traveled by Athelstan and the army. In the charter, S407, Athelstan grants a large tract of land to Saint Peter's, York. Although the charter is dated 930, the indiction, epact and concurrences are correct for a date four years later. Burhic, appointed bishop at

Rochester in 934, witnesses the charter in his episcopal capacity as does Byrnstan of Winchester who reigned from 932 to 934. It is clear, then, that the charter, preserved only in fourteenth-century form, is to be dated to 934. Witnesses to this charter include the Welsh kings as well as many Northumbrian and ex-Viking ealdormen, indicating support to the king.

Not only was the army taken north, but the navy was also sent up the eastern coast into the coastal waters of Scotland. Both units ravaged deep into the kingdom of Constantine, the army as far as Dunnottar and Wedder Hill, Kincardineshire, and the navy as far as Caithness, at least according to the sources. There has been some question as to the depth of Athelstan's invasion of Scotland, since it is argued that a march into Kincardineshire would take many weeks. However, since Athelstan was able to travel from Winchester to Nottingham in ten days or less, it is quite possible that a march of twenty days or so could place the army beyond Edinburgh. Whether or not the English were as far north as the sources claim is not the important point. What is crucial is that Athelstan felt confident enough to invade Scotland at all. Several of the sources, most copying the usage of the Chronicle, specifically call the territory Athelstan invaded Scotland, the first use of the

term.[98] Constantine did not attempt to prevent the harrying of Athelstan, simply retreating deep into his kingdom and waiting until Athelstan had finished his ravaging.

Peace overtures were made by the Scots as soon as Athelstan had returned to his own lands. The peace was probably signed on 13 September at Buckingham where Constantine's signature appears as subregulus on a charter of that day. Although the charter, S426, is a late copy, there is no reason to doubt its authenticity or the veracity of the witness list. As a part of the peace agreement, Constantine was again forced to give up his son as a hostage in Athelstan's court.[99] The peace was guaranteed for some years, but the cost had been great. Territories desolated by the English armies would not recover for many years and the loss of life on both sides was great. Several of Athelstan's ealdormen died on the campaign. Aescbeorht, a regular signatory from 930 to 934, does not witness charters after 28 May. Osferth, who was in some way connected to the royal family and mentioned in King Alfred's will, does not sign after 7 June. Aelfstan, the brother of Ealdormen Aethelwold and Aethelstan semi-rex of the powerful East Anglian family, also does not appear in the witness lists after 7 June.[100] Although it is possible that all three

died of natural causes, the coincidence of three great magnates disappearing from the record in the summer of 934 is probably evidence of bitter resistance to Athelstan's movements in Scotland.

Constantine was not decisively beaten by the devastation of Eastern Scotland in 934. The fact that his armies were intact led him to intrigue with the other northern powers. Fear of the Norse, who were ensconced in Ireland and no longer a threat to Britain, was replaced by a fear of the massive growth and strength of the combined kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia. Athelstan had shown in 934 just what the unified armies working in concert with the ship-fleet could do to ravage a territory. Since Eugenius of Strathclyde was a cousin of Constantine and Anlaf was the Scot's son-in-law, they were encouraged to ally. What the motivation behind the alliance was is not known, although it may have been the desire of Anlaf to take York, a kingdom that he felt was rightfully his, and its capture would greatly damage Athelstan's position in the north.

Whatever the cause of the war, it began early in 937 with the combined forces of Anlaf and Constantine invading the territories of Athelstan. Evidence for the point of incursion is slight, with only Florence of Worcester indicating that Anlaf entered the Humber

estuary.[101] No other source states the point of entry and this silence, in itself, is strange. Symeon of Durham, who is consistently involved with the affairs of northern England, does not reveal the invasion route, simply noting that Anlaf had 615 ships in his command, that Constantine and the Cumbrians joined Anlaf, and nothing else.[102] How Anlaf was able to take his ships from the Irish Sea to the North Sea is a mystery. An armada of that or any size could not be easily hidden, even in the dense fogs of the north. Athelstan, it should be remembered, had an excellent fleet that was constantly on patrol, not only in the English Channel, but also along the northeastern coast of England. The only reason for attempting a landing in the Humber estuary is that it is near York, but there are no references to an attack on the city. It is probable that the Norse-Irish did not enter the North Sea at all, but contented themselves with crossing the Irish Sea to the northwestern coast of England. Their allies were primarily in the western sector of Britain and a link-up would be facilitated by this move.

Athelstan did not immediately reply to the invasion. The tenth-century poem in William of Malmesbury claims that Athelstan was content to rest on his laurels after the retributive act of 934 and did not want

to fight again, implying that he did not realize the threat to his kingdom.[103] The marauders were permitted to ravage much of northern England, avenging the damage done to the Scot's kingdom in 934. It is possible that Athelstan, well aware of the danger posed by the northern coalition, needed time to rally his forces and bring the navy into position. The size of the Norse fleet, which Symeon of Durham gives as 615 ships, is clearly an exaggeration; but it was probably such that it was advisable to wait for the military muster rather than to rush headlong into a potentially disastrous conflict. William of Malmesbury suggests that it was the wisdom of a brilliant tactician to allow the enemy to advance into his kingdom and select, with great care, the site of the conflict.[104] Fortunately for Athelstan, the Welsh did not join the Celtic-Scandinavian alliance. If the three kings had desired to destroy the power of Wessex, this would have been the perfect time. It was Hywel Dda who apparently kept the Welsh in check in these crucial weeks. Although he did not actively support the English army, Hywel did nothing to disrupt the peace.

Athelstan, then, permitted the enemy to ravage his lands until the autumn of 937. The two armies finally came within striking distance on the western coast of England, probably in October. The evening before

the battle Anlaf is purported to have entered the camp of Athelstan disguised as a harper to ascertain the strength of the English. After singing for the king and his lords, Anlaf was paid and sent off. Attempting to bury the gold that Athelstan had given him, Anlaf was discovered by a soldier who had previously served with the Viking. The soldier was later questioned by Athelstan and told the king that the same oath Athelstan had exacted never to betray the king had previously been given to Anlaf, an explanation Athelstan could easily understand. The soldier advised Athelstan to move his tent and a bishop who erected his tent on the site was murdered later in the night.[105] Although Malmesbury is the only source for the tale, it has a ring of truth. The details are natural and the actions of Anlaf and the soldier are in character.[106]

On the morning of the battle, the usual religious ceremonies were conducted. A prayer before battle, supposed to be the one Athelstan offered, has survived.[107] Strongly emphasizing Old Testament values, the prayer requests of God the same victories that were allowed the great Biblical kings. Whether or not it is the prayer of Athelstan, it gives a sense of the beliefs of the era and the need for reassurances that God was on their side.

The actual battle is described in the longest and perhaps the finest of the poems of the Chronicle, detailing in seventy-three lines of heroic verse the events and aftermath of Brunanburh.[108] In the battle, lasting from sunrise to sunset (ll. 12-17), Athelstan, his brother Edmund, and the armies of Wessex and Mercia drove off the enemy (ll. 25-28). The fleeing troops left five kings and seven earls, including the son of Constantine, dead on the field (ll. 28-31, 37-44). Constantine fled north to his kingdom while Anlaf and his remnant escaped to their ships and sailed over the sea of Dinge to Dublin (ll. 32-36, 53-56). The anonymous poet exclaims:

> Never in this island before now, so far as the books of our ancient scholars tell us, has an army been put to greater slaughter at the edge of the sword, since the time when the Angles and the Saxons made their way here from the east over the wide seas, invading Britain when warriors eager for glory, proud forgers of battle, overcame the Welsh and found for themselves a country.[109]

None of the other sources speak in such detail of the battle, but all give essentially the same facts. Florence of Worcester agrees that it was a day-long battle with the enemy losing five kings and seven earls and that the English were victorious.[110] Malmesbury relates that Athelstan lost his sword during the battle, but it was miraculously restored through the intercession of Saint Aldhelm. The sword was supposedly in the king's

treasury in the historian's day. He also enlarged the number of earls killed to twelve with the fifth king dead being Constantine. The old poem in Malmesbury's history gives little detail except to describe the field where Athelstan claimed his victory as one of carnage.[111] Aethelweard adds that the Picts and the Scots both submitted to Athelstan after the battle.[112] The thirteenth-century Egil's Saga, probably composed by Snorri Sturluson, contains a long section on the deeds of Egil Skallagrimsson in England, where he fought at Vinheither. Egil and his brother and three hundred men aided Athelstan as mercenaries in the battle, but the acts of Egil are greatly exaggerated in the saga.[113] The account of the battle, though interesting, sheds no light on the subject. In fact, there is probably more fiction than fact in the saga's version of Brunanburh.[114]

The most vexing problem in discussing the battle of Brunanburh is the location of the battle. Sites in every conceivable section of northern England and Scotland have been proposed, propounded, and put to rest. There have been numerous articles by various authors and an entire book by John H. Cockburn dealing with the problem. Cockburn, like the others, is biased in favor of one location. He lists seven criteria--several useless--for deducing the site. Forcing the evidence

into his seven categories, he settles on Brunesburh, Templeborough, on the Don River between Sheffield and Rotherham.[115] However, every shred of evidence used by Cockburn has been distorted to fit his criteria with no evidence permitted to stand on its own merit. Stenton believes the site to be south of Cheshire and west of the River Wear, but not on the western coast of Britain.[116] He does not, however, specify a site. One writer categorically states that there is no way to know the site of the battle, and then proceeds to state that it was fought at Brunby (Brough) on the Ouse, fifteen miles west of York.[117] The most reasoned argument of an east-coast site may be found in A.L. Binn's recent monograph where he proposes a site south of York.[118] Only one of the latter three suggestions considers the one hard and unquestionable piece of evidence that is extant, that is, the place-name Brunanburh. The argument for Brunby, however, is not etymologically sound.

The consensus at this time is that Brunanburh was fought on the west coast, with either Burnswork, Dumfriesshire, or Bromborough, Cheshire, as the likely site. Burnswork has much to offer since there are good arguments for locating the battle near the Solway where the Viking ships could anchor.[119] There is also a coin hoard from Cockburnspath, Berwickshire, containing over

twenty Anglo-Saxon coins, that may have some connection with the battle.[120] Within the proponents of the northern site is a faction that disputes the location of Burnswork and opts for Brown Moor Hill, several miles south of Burnswork, since the hill at Burnswork is too small for a battle of the magnitude of Brunanburh.[121] There are several serious objections to this northern site. First, to move etymologically from Brunanburh to Burnswork necessitates a tortuous argument. Second, it is improbable that the battle was fought outside the lands of King Athelstan. Only once in his career, and for that matter only once in the century between the accession of Alfred and the death of Edgar, was there a march into the territory of the Scots or the Cymry, and on this occasion, in 934, it was trumpeted in the Chronicle. It would seem that if Athelstan had marched that far north again, it would be clearly noted. It should be remembered that the sources comment that the enemy was permitted to ravage in England and that Athelstan waited for his opportunity to fight the battle on a site of his own selection.

The site must have been near the sea, must have been a convenient meeting place for the Scots, Vikings, and Cymry, and must be etymologically sound. All these prerequisites are met by Bromborough, Cheshire.

Bromborough is convenient to the Mersey and to the enemy allies. The etymology of Bromborough is derived from Bruna+Burh, Bruna's or Brown's Stronghold and the site in the twelfth century is noted as Brunburg.[122] While many scholars accept this identification, at least provisionally,[123] Cockburn argues vociferously against it. That 60,000 invaders could fit on the Wirral peninsula is ridiculous, he believes, particularly with three major forts, Chester, Runcorn, and Eddisbury, poised against the invaders. Apparently Cockburn arrived at the number with a formula involving the 615 ships noted in Symeon of Durham. This is hardly evidence that there were as many invaders, and there is no evidence that there were ever as many enemy troops assembled in England before the death of Edward the Confessor. Cockburn also suggests that the long pursuit claimed by the poet in the Chronicle is impossible since the distance from Bromborough to the Mersey is a ten-minute walk.[124] This "ten minute walk" is predicated on the ships being anchored in the Mersey at a point closest to Bromborough which is not necessarily true. Cockburn also does not consider the day-long battle in armor. Viking armor at this time was a triple-plaited corslet of refined iron or brass.[125] This armor, combined with heavy swords, axes, and shields, would make any pursuit a long one

after a full day of battle. Cockburn's arguments, then, are superficial and do not damage the identification of Brunanburh with Bromborough.

The results of the battle at Brunanburh were momentous for all concerned. The Scots and Cymry returned to their lands and Anlaf was forced to flee to Ireland where, in the following year, he would fight for his life against the native Irish.[126] For Athelstan, it was his greatest victory. The state that he had molded had survived the crisis, emerging stronger than ever before. Borders that had been hammered out of Viking territory were made formal. Mercia was unified with Wessex and the two were not thought of as separate entities. All of this was done, according to Aelfric, the Biblical commentator and homilist, with the help of God. In an epilog to his translation of Joshua, done in the period 1002 to 1005, Aelfric notes that, among the great leaders of the world, Athelstan ranked with the greatest as a war leader.[127]

In December of 937, Athelstan granted land at Bremhill (S434) and Wooton (S435), Wiltshire, to the monastery of Malmesbury. The two charters indicate the strength of the king after his victory since the three Welsh kings, Hwyel, Idwal, and Morgan, witness the charters as does Eugenius of Strathclyde. Since this

one-time enemy was at Dorchester in December, only a few months after Brunanburh, he must have been thoroughly repentant. The victory at Brunanburh, however, was costly. Two nephews of the king, Aelfwine and Aethelwine, were left on the field of battle. The grants to Malmesbury were for the benefit of the souls of the athelings and they were not the only victims of the battle. The thegns Aelfheah, Aelfnoth and Aelfric, who were usually in attendance at the court and were normally witnesses to charters, no longer sign. Omission of these names from the witness lists of later charters is probably a result of their deaths in battle.

That the title Basileos Anglorum was deservedly borne by Athelstan can not be denied. At his death in October, 939, all Britain was under his suzerainty. The Danish kingdom had been absorbed into the new kingdom of England as was the kingdom of Mercia. The Welsh were in constant attendance at the court and were paying exorbitant tribute. The Scots and Cymry had accepted the supremacy of Athelstan. Only the Norse, whose strength had been temporarily sapped at the critical battle of Brunanburh, were to remain a menace to Athelstan's successor Edmund. Otherwise Athelstan enjoyed a complete domination of Britain. Although the title Basileos Anglorum was the affectation of charter scribes,

it is a true reflection of the power of Athelstan at the end of his reign.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 129; F.M. Powicke and E.B. Fryde, edd., Handbook of British Chronology, Royal Historical Society, Guides and Handbooks, II (2nd ed.; London: Royal Historical Society, 1961), pp. 24-25; Frederick T. Wainwright, "Aethelflaed Lady of the Mercians," The Anglo-Saxons, Studies Presented to Bruce Dickins, ed. by Peter Clemoes (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1959), pp. 54-55. The standard secondary works for the period are Stenton, ASE; Gwyn Jones, A History of the Vikings (London: Oxford University Press, 1968); and Lucien Musset, Les invasions: le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne, VIIe--XIe siècles (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965). See Genealogy I: Wessex I, p. 282.

2 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 145, notes that Athelstan was thirty at the time of his election to the throne: "Tunc, jussu patris et testamento, Ethelstanus in regem acclamatus est, quem jam tricennalis aetas et sapientiae maturitas commendabant."

3 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 155: "Erat in quadam villa opilionis filia, eleganti specie puella, quae, quod non contulissent natales, formae mercabatur gratia. Huic per visum monstratur prodigium, lunam de suo ventre splendere, et hoc lumine totam Angliam illustrari. Quod cum mane ad sodales detulisset ludo, ab illis non joculariter exceptum, confestim villicae auribus, quae regis filios nutrire solebat, insonuit. Illa, rem examinans, puellam intra lares suos receptam filiae loco habuit; cultioribus vestimentis, cibis delicatioribus, gestibus facetioribus, virgunculam informans. Non multo post, filius regis Elfredi Edwardus, itineris casu per villam transiens, ad domum divertit infantilium rudimentorum olim consciam; neque enim integrum famae suae rebatur si nutricem salutare fastidiret; ubi, visae virginis amore captus, noctem petiit." The Liber de Hyda, ed. by Edward Edwards, Rolls Series, 45 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1866), p. 112, repeats the story.

4 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 136; Florence of Worcester, Florentii Wigorniensis monachi Chronicon ex Chronicis, ed. by Benjamin Thorpe (2 vols; London: English Historical Society, 1848-1849), I, 117.

5 Charles G. Loomis, White Magic, An Introduction to the Folklore of Christian Legend, Mediaeval Academy of America, Publications, 52 (Cambridge: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1948), p. 12.

6 Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 117, is careful to note Ecgwynn as a noble woman while Eadgifu is called queen.

7 Ibid.; William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 136.

8 See Malmesbury's comments, GR, I, 144, and Stubbs', GR, II, lxi-lxii. Both Laura H. Loomis, "The Holy Relics of Charlemagne and King Athelstan," Speculum, XXV(1950), and idem, "The Athelstan Gift Story: its influence on English chronicles and Carolingian Romances," PMLA, LXVII(1952), 520-537, discuss the dating of the poem.

9 Loomis, "Athelstan Gift Story," 521.

10 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 145: "Nam et avus Elfredus prosperum ei regnum olim imprecatus fuerat, videns et gratiose complexus spectatae speciei puerum et gestuum elegantium; quem etiam praemature militem fecerat, donatum chlamyde coccinea, gemmato baltheo, ense Saxonico cum vagina aurea." Malmesbury's comment that Athelstan was made a knight should not be taken as an indication of the feudal nature of tenth-century English society. Since he is paraphrasing the poem, Malmesbury himself may have interjected an editorial comment to describe the presentation of the sword, belt and cloak.

11 Asser, Asser's Life of King Alfred, ed. by W.H. Stevenson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904 [reprinted with a new introduction and additional bibliography by Dorothy Whitelock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959)]), ¶ 8: "Eodem anno Aethelwulfus rex praefatum filium suum Aelfredum, magno nobilium et etiam ignobilium numero constipatum, honorifice Romam transmisit. Quo tempore dominus Leo Papa [quartus] apostolicae sedi praeerat, qui præfatum infantem Aelfredum oppido ordinans unxit in regem, et in filium adoptionis sibimet accipiens confirmavit." The question of the authenticity of the Life has been settled with the publication of Dorothy Whitelock, The Genuine Asser, The Stenton Lecture, 1967 (Reading: University of Reading, 1968). A review (Medium Aevum, XXXVIII [1969] , 178-181), by V.H. Galbraith, the instigator of the most recent controversy, should be read in conjunction with the Whitelock lecture. The most recent contribution is David P. Kirby, "Asser and His Life of King Alfred," Studia Celtica, VI(1971), 12-35.

12 ASC 853 A.

13 John, OB, p. 38; R.H.C. Davis, "Alfred the Great: Propaganda and Truth," History, N.S., LVI(1971), 176. The most recent work, Janet L. Nelson, "The Problem of King Alfred's Royal Anointing," Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XVIII(1967), 162, states that the consecration notices were a purposeful fraud perpetrated on the English people.

14 Percy E. Schramm, History of the English Coronation, trans. by L.G.W. Legg (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), p. 16.

15 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 145. The phrase reads, "multo studio amitae et praeclarissimi ducis ad omen regni altus ...."

16 ASC 901 ADE; Plummer, II, 112-113; Stenton, ASE, p. 269; Murray L.R. Beaven, "The Regnal Dates of Alfred, Edward the Elder and Athelstan," EHR, XXXII (1917), 531; W.H. Stevenson, "The Date of King Alfred's Death," EHR, XIII(1898), 71-77. For Alfred's burial, see Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester, ed. by Walter deGray Birch, Hampshire Record Society, V (London: Simpkin and Co., 1892), pp. 5-6.

17 ASC 901 AD; William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 135.

18 ASC 904 AD.

19 ASC 905 AD.

20 ASC 906 ADE.

21 R.H. Michael Dolley, Viking Coins of the Danelaw and of Dublin (London: British Museum, 1965), pp. 11, 21. See also, Charles W.C. Oman, "The Danish Kingdom of York, 876-954," Archaeological Journal, XCI(1934), 11-12.

22 ASC 903 A; ASC 902 C. See, Frederick T. Wainwright, "The Chronology of the 'Mercian Register'," EHR, LX(1945), 385-392.

23 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 136-137. See, Genealogy II: Wessex II, p. 283.

24 J. Armitage Robinson, The Saxon Bishops of Wells, British Academy, Supplemental Papers, IV (London: British Academy, 1918), pp. 53-54.

25 Peter Foote and David Wilson, The Viking Achievement, The Society and Culture of Early Medieval Scandinavia, Great Civilization Series (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1970), p. 217; Peter Sawyer, "The Vikings and the Irish Sea," The Irish Sea Province in Archaeology and History, ed. by Donald Moore (Cardiff: Cambrian Archaeological Association, 1970), p. 92.

26 Sawyer, "Vikings and the Irish Sea," p. 88.

27 Frederick T. Wainwright, "Ingimund's Invasion," EHR, XLIII(1948), 161.

28 David Wilson, "Archaeological Evidence for the Viking Settlements and Raids in England," Frühmittelalterliche Studien, II(1968), 292; Peter Sawyer, "The Two Viking Ages of Britain, A Discussion," Medieval Scandinavia, II(1969), 164.

29 Eilert Ekwall, "The Scandinavian Settlement," An Historical Geography of England before A.D. 1800, Fourteen Studies, ed. by H.C. Darby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), pp. 157-158; A.H. Smith, P-N Westmorland, EP-NS, XLII-XLIII (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), I, xl-xli.

30 Ekwall, "Scandinavian Settlement," pp. 143-144; Stenton, "Pre-Conquest Westmorland," Preparatory, pp. 216-217 [reprinted from Great Britain, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, Westmorland (London: HMSO, 1936), pp. xlvii-lv.] .

31 Smith, P-N Westmorland, I, xxxvii and 2.

32 Ekwall, "Scandinavian Settlement," pp. 155-158; A.H. Smith, P-N West Riding of Yorkshire, EP-NS, XXX-XXXVI (7 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961-1963), VII, 46; Frederick T. Wainwright, "The Submission to Edward the Elder," History, N.S., XXXVII(1952), 117.

33 P.A. Wilson, "On the Use of the Terms 'Strathclyde' and 'Cumbria'," Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, LXVI(1966), 74; Stenton, "Pre-Conquest Westmorland," p. 217; Ifor Williams, The Beginnings of Welsh Poetry, ed. by Rachel Bromwich (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1972), pp. 70-71.

34 Wilson, "Terms 'Strathclyde'," 72-73; Wainwright, "Aethelflaed," pp. 64-65.

35 Wainwright, "Aethelflaed," p. 58; C.A. Ralegh Radford, "The Later Pre-Conquest Boroughs and their Defenses," Medieval Archaeology, XIV(1970), 83; Martin Biddle and David Hill, "Late Saxon Planned Towns," Antiquaries Journal, LI(1971), 83.

36 David Hill, "The Burghal Hidage: The Establishment of a Text," Medieval Archaeology, XIII(1969), 87-91. The sites, with hidation in parentheses, are: Eorpeburnan (324), Hastings (500), Lewes (1300), Burpham (720), Chichester (1500), Portchester (500), Southampton (150), Winchester (2400), Wilton (1400), Chisbury (700), Shaftesbury (700), Twyneham (470), Wareham (1600), Bredy (760), Exeter (734), Halwell (300), Lydford (140), Pilton (360), Watchet (513), Axbridge (400), Lyng (100), Langport (600), Bath (1000), Malmesbury (1200), Cricklade (1500), Oxford (1400), Wallingford (2400), Buckingham (1600), Sashes (1000), Eashing (600), and Southwark (1800).

37 Ibid., 84 n.3; Nicholas Brooks, "The Unidentified Forts of the Burghal Hidage," Medieval Archaeology, VIII(1964), 82. B.K. Davidson, after preliminary excavations, suggests that Castle Toll, Newendon, Kent, is the site. The fort is located on the Rother River's tenth-century course. See, B.K. Davidson, "The Burghal Hidage fort of Eorpeburnan: a suggested identification," Medieval Archaeology, XVI(1972), 123-127.

38 Brooks, "Unidentified Forts," 75-78.

39 Ibid., 79-81.

40 See, ASC 907-915 C: Chester (907); Bremesburh, Herefordshire (910); Scergeat, on the Severn (912); Bridgnorth, Shropshire (912); Tamworth, Staffordshire (913); Stafford (913); Eddisbury, Cheshire (914); Warwick (914); Chirbury, Shropshire (915); Weard byrig, probably Warburton, Cheshire (915); Runcorn, Cheshire (915).

41 Aethelweard, The Chronicle of Aethelweard, ed. and trans. by Alistair Campbell (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), p. 53; ASC 911 C; ASC 912 AD; Wainwright, "Aethelflaed," pp. 55-56; idem, "Submission," 124. Cyril Hart, "Athelstan 'Half-King' and his family," Anglo-Saxon England, II(1973), 116-118, suggests that the Half-King's father Aethelfrith was probably Aethelflaed's chief lieutenant in Mercia after the incapacitation of Aethelred in 902. If this is true, then the future king and his namesake may well have been educated together. This could also explain why the future ealdorman was so greatly favored by Athelstan the king and his family.

42 ASC 912 C.

43 ASC 912 A: "... Eadweard cyng feng to Lunden byrg and to Oxna forda, and to thaem landum eallum the thaer to hierdon."

44 S396. B 659: "... terram que nuncupatur CEALHGRAEFAN et TEOBBANWYRTHE .v. manentium quam propria condignaque pecunia id est .x. libras inter aurum et argentum a paganis emerat jubente Eadwardo rege necnon et duce Aetheredo ...."

45 ASC 918 C; ASC 922 A; Wainwright, "Submission," 123; A.L. Binns, The Viking Century in East Yorkshire, East Yorkshire Local History Series, XV (York: East Yorkshire Local History Society, 1963), p. 14.

46 ASC 918 C. The phrase reads: "... thy eahtothan geare thaes the heo Myrcna anweald mid riht hlaford dome healdende waes."

47 Wainwright, "Aethelflaed," p. 65, lists the Irish and Welsh sources. Henry of Huntingdon, Henrici archdiaconi Huntendunensis Historia Anglorum, ed. by Thomas Arnold, Rolls Series, 74 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1879), p. 158, writing some two hundred years later, composed this panegyric:

"O Elfleda potens, O terror virgo virorum,
Victrix naturae, nomine digna viri.
Te, quo splendidior fieres, natura puellam,
Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri.
Te mutare decet, sed solam, nomina sexus,
Tu regina potens, rexque trophaea parans.
Jam nec Caesarei tantum meruere triumphi,
Caesare splendidior, virgo virago, vale."

48 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 145:

.....
Ad patris edictum datus in documenta scholarum,
Extimuit rigidos ferula crepitante magistros;
Et potans avidis doctrinae mella medullis,
Decurrit teneros sed non pueriliter annos.
Mox, adolescentis vestitus flore juventae,
Armorum studium tractabat, patre jubente.
Sed nec in hoc segnem senserunt bellica jura:
.....

John of Wallingford, The Chronicle attributed to John of Wallingford, ed. by Richard Vaughan, Camden Miscellany, XXI (London: Royal Historical Society, 1958), p. 40, states that Dunstan was born while Athelstan was ruling as a subordinate of his father. Unfortunately, John of Wallingford is not a reliable authority.

49 ASC 919 C.

50 ASC 923 A.

51 ASC 924 A.

52 Charles E. Woodruff, "The Picture of Queen Ediva in Canterbury Cathedral," Archaeologia Cantiana, XXXVI(1923), 8-9; ASC 941 A, notes Edmund was eighteen when he assumed the throne in 939; A. Boutemy, "Two Obituaries of Christ Church Canterbury," EHR, L(1935), 295, gives the day and month of her death. The last recorded date for the queen is 963, found in S811. See also S563, S1211-1212, S1515, and Genealogy II: Wessex II, p. 283.

53 ASC 921 C; Frederick T. Wainwright, "Cledmutha," EHR, LXV(1950), 203-212.

54 Binns, Viking Century, p. 14; Stenton, ASE, p. 338.

55 Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 130.

56 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 144.

57 Ibid., 144-145; Liber Vitae, pp. 5-6; Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 130; ASC 924 CDE; ASC 925 A; Stenton, "The Death of Edward the Elder," Preparatory, p. 3 [reprinted from The Athenaeum, 2 October, 1905]. The best discussion of the problem of the date of Edward's death is J. Armitage Robinson, The Times of Saint Dunstan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), pp. 27-34, where he corrects the one year error in Beaven, "Regnal Dates," 521-526. See also, W.S. Angus, "The Chronology of the Reign of Edward the Elder," EHR, LIII(1938), 197, and idem, "The Eighth Scribe's Dates in the Parker Ms. of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," Medium Aevum, X(1941), 130-141.

58 Plummer, II, 121.

59 Liber Vitae, p. 6: "... alter uero regalibus infulis redimitus, immatura ambo morte preuenti sunt."

60 Liber de Hyda, p. 113: "Elfredus [sic] ... inunctus in regem ac coronatus est."

61 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 141.

62 Ibid., 145. The passage is quoted, supra, note 2.

63 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 141-142: "Itaque magno consensu optimatum ibidem Ethelstanus electus, apud regiam villam quae vocatur Kingestune coronatus est: quamvis quidam Eluredus cum factiosis suis, quia seditio semper invenit complices, obviare tentasset ...."

64 Ibid., 153.

65 "Anno ab incarnatione domini .DCCCC.XXV. indictione .XIII. primo anno regni regis Adalstani die consecrationis ejus pridie nonas Septembris ...."

66 Schramm, English Coronation, p. 147.

67 Ibid., p. 15.

68 Ibid., pp. 115-119.

69 Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 130; Percy E. Schramm, "Ordines-Studien III: Die Krönung in England," Archiv für Urkundenforschung, XV(1938), 332.

70 Pontificale Lanaletense (Bibliothèque de la ville de Rouen A. 27. Cat 368), A Pontifical formerly in use at St. Germans, Cornwall, ed. by G.H. Doble, Henry Bradshaw Society, LXXIV (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1937), pp. xvi-xvii. The order, printed in pp. 59-63, is early tenth century as are the Leofric and Egbert recensions of the Dunstan ordo. See, Schramm, "Ordines-Studien," 311-312.

71 "adelstan cyng gefreode eadelm forrathe thaes the he aeraest cyng waes. thaes waes on gewitnesse aelfheah maesse preost and se hired and aelfric se gerefa and wulfnoth hwita and eanstan praefost and byrnstan maesse preost. se the thaet on wende haebbe he godes un miltse on ealles thaes haligdomes the ic on angel cyn begeat mides godes miltse and ic than bearnan thaes ilcan thaes ic than faeder an." This is printed in Florence E. Harmer, ed. and trans., Select English Historical Documents of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), pp. 31-32.

72 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 146:

.....
Conveniunt proceres et componunt diadema,
Pontifices pariter dant infidis anathema,
Emicat in populis solito festivior ignis,
Et produnt variis animi penetralia signis.
Ardet quisque suum regi monstrare favorem;
Hic timet, hic sperat, pellit spes ampla pavorem,
Fervet et exundat regali regia luxu,
Spumat ubique merum, fremit ingens aula tumultu,
Discurrunt pueri, celerant injuncta ministri.
Deliciis ventres cumulantur, carmine mentes;
Ille strepit cithara, decertat plausibus iste,
In commune sonat, 'Tibi laus, tibi gloria, Christe!'
Rex non invitis oculis hunc haurit honorem,
Omnibus indulgens proprium dignanter amorem.

73 Ibid., 148: "Statura, ut accepimus, quae justam non excelleret, corpore deducto; capillo, ut ipsi ex reliquiis vidimus, flavo, filis aureis pulchre intorto."

74 Ibid., 146.

75 Ibid., 148. Glanville R.J. Jones, "Post-Roman Wales," The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. I, Part II, A.D. 43-1042, ed. by H.P.R. Finberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 318, notes the gold probably came from Caeo in Cantrif Mawr, a region ruled by Hywel Dda.

76 John E. Lloyd, A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest (2 vols.; 3rd ed.; London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1939), pp. 336-337; Jones, "Post-Roman Wales," p. 300.

77 Hywel, Idwal and Morgan all sign S413 (931), S416 (932), S407 (934), S425 (934), S1792 (935), S434 (937), and S435 (937) as subreguli. Hywel and Idwal also sign S400 (928), and S417 (932). Hywel signs alone in S427 (934), and S433 (937), the latter as regulus.

78 Felix Liebermann, ed., Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen (3 vols.; Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1903-1916), I, 374: "This is seo geraednes, the Angel cynnes witan and Wealhtheode raedboran betweox Dunsetam gesetton." The Ordinance is printed in ibid., 374-380, with notes in ibid., III, 214-219.

79 Ibid., I, 376.

80 Armes Prydein Vawr, The Prophecy of Britain, From the Book of Taliesin, ed. by Ifor Williams, trans. by Rachel Bromwich, Mediaeval and Modern Welsh Series, VI (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1972), pp. xxv-xxvi. All citations to the poem are to this edition, by lines.

81 Armes, p. xx, n.1; J.D.A. Thompson, Inventory of British Coin Hoards, A.D. 600-1500, Royal Numismatic Society, Special Publications, I (London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Numismatic Society, 1956), #32.

82 ASC 925 E; William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 142, 146; Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 130. Matthew Paris, Chronica Majora, ed. by H.R. Luard, Rolls Series, 57 (7 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1872-1884), I, 446, and Liber de Hyda, p. 11, both call her Eadgyth.

83 John Evans, "Anglo-Saxon Coins found in Meath," NC, Ser. 3, V(1885), 136-137; E.W. Danson, "The Anglo-Saxon and Norman Mint of Tamworth (Staffs.)," Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological Society, XI(1969-1970), 34, 40.

84 Dolley, Viking Coins, p. 22.

85 Binns, Viking Century, p. 14.

86 ASC 926 D; ASC 927 E; William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 147.

87 A.M. Armstrong, et. al., P-N Cumberland, EP-NS, XX-XXII (3 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950-1952), III, xxvi.

88 ASC 926 D; William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 147; Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 131.

89 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 147.

90 B667: "... tertioque postquam authentice Northanhimbrorum cumbrorumque blanda mirifici conditoris benevolentia patrocinando sceptrine gubernaculum perceperat virgae ...." The charter has been castigated as a forgery, but there are no grounds for not accepting it as a late, i.e., twelfth century, interpolated text.

91 SCBI Reading, p. 7; SCBI Scotland, p. xii.

92 Wilson, "Archaeological Evidence," 297-298; SCBI Scotland, p. xiv.

93 SCBI Hiberno-Norse, p. 50; R.R. Clarke and R.H.M. Dolley, "The Morley St. Peter Hoard," Antiquity, XXIII(1958), 100-103.

94 SCBI Hiberno-Norse, pp. 30, 50; Thompson, Inventory, #162, notes only the Anglo-Saxon coins with no mention of the Viking or Islamic coins.

95 SCBI Hiberno-Norse, pp. 28-30, 50.

96 Thompson, Inventory, #13, #133, #205, #263, and #277. Thompson's dating of #205 is impossible unless it is a misprint for c.930. A hoard containing an Athelstan penny could not have been deposited c.920.

97 Powicke and Fryde, Handbook, p. 27; Murray L.R. Beaven, "King Edmund and the Danes of York," EHR, XXXIII(1918), 2; Jones, Vikings, p. 237; and Stenton, ASE, pp. 342-343, state that Anlaf was Guthfrith's son. Binns, Viking Century, p. 17; and War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill, or the Invasions of Ireland by the Danes and other Norsemen, ed. and trans. by J.H. Todd, Rolls Series, 48 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1867), Appendix D, pp. 279-281, state that Anlaf was the son of Sihtric.

98 Symeon of Durham, Historia Regum, Opera Omnia, II, ed. by Thomas Arnold, Rolls Series, 75 (2 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1882-1885), p. 93; Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 131-132; ASC 933 A; ASC 934 DEF.

99 Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 132.

100 On Osferth's royal connections, see Agnes J. Robertson, ed. and trans., Anglo-Saxon Charters (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 301. In a recent article, Hart, "Athelstan 'Half-King'," 118 and n.5, has reached the same conclusions regarding the deaths of the three ealdormen.

101 Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 132.

102 Symeon of Durham, Historia, p. 93.

103 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 151-152.

104 Ibid., 142.

105 Ibid., 142-143.

106 Cyril E. Wright, The Cultivation of the Saga in Anglo-Saxon England (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1939), pp. 144-145.

107 Cott. Nero A. ii., f. 11[b]: "Domine deus omnipotens rex regum et dominus dominantium in cujus manu omnis victoria consistit et omne bellum conteritur concede mihi ut tua manus cor meum corroboret ut in virtute tua in manibus viribusque meis bene pugnare viriliterque agere valeam ut inimici mei in conspectu meo cadent et corruant sicut corruit golias ante faciem pueri tui david et sicut populus pharaonis coram moysi in mare rubro. et sicut philistini coram populo israhel deciderunt. et amalech coram moysi et chananei coram jesu corruerunt sic cadant inimici mei sub pedibus meis et per viam unam conveniant adversum me et per septum fugiant a me et conteret deus arma eorum et confringet framea eorum et eliquisce in conspectu meo sicut cera a facie ignis ut sciant omnes populi terre quia invocatum est nomen domini nostri ihesu super me et magnificetur nomen tuum domine in adversariis meis domine deus israhel." This is printed, with errors, in Frances Rose-Troup, "The Ancient Monastery of Saint Peter and Saint Mary of Exeter," Transactions of the Devonshire Association, LXIII(1931), 218-219.

108 All references to the poem are to The Battle of Brunanburh, ed. by Alistair Campbell (London: Heinemann, 1938). The poem is ASC 937 A.

109 Ll. 65-73:

Ne wearth wael mare
on this eiglande aefre gieta
folces gefylled beforan thissum
sweordes ecgum, thaes the us secgath bec,
ealde uthwitan, siththan eastan hider
Engle and Seaxe up becoman,
ofer brad brimu Brytene sohtan,
wlance wigsmithas, Wealas ofercoman,
eorlas arhwate, eard begeatan.

110 Florence of Worcester, Chronicon, I, 132.

111 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 143-144, 152.

112 Aethelweard, Chronicle, p. 54.

113 Egil's Saga, ed. and trans. by Gwyn Jones (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press for the American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1960), pp. 120-165.

114 L.M. Hollander, "The Battle on the Vin-Heath and the Battle of the Huns," JEGP, XXXII(1933), 33-43.

115 John H. Cockburn, The Battle of Brunanburh and its Period Elucidated by Place-Names (London: Sir W.C. Leng and Co., 1931), pp. 34-39.

116 Stenton, "The Historical Bearing of Place-Name Studies: Anglo-Saxon Heathenism," Preparatory, p. 291 [reprinted from TRHS, Ser. 4, XXIII(1941), 1-24.] .

117 Hollander, "Battle," 42-43.

118 Binns, Viking Century, pp. 17-18.

119 W.S. Angus, "The Battlefield of Brunanburh," Antiquity, XI(1937), 288-293; George Neilson, "Brunanburh and Burnswork," Scottish Historical Review, VII(1910), 37-55.

120 SCBI Hiberno-Norse, p. 50; SCBI Scotland, pp. xiii, xxii. The connection must be the loss of the coins by the fleeing Scots.

121 O.G.S. Crawford, "The Battle of Brunanburh," Antiquity, VIII(1934), 338-339.

122 J. McN. Dodgson, P-N Cheshire, EP-NS, XLIV-XLVIII (5 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970-1973), IV, 237-238; Kemp Malone, "A Note on Brunanburh," Modern Language Notes, XLII(1927), 238-239. Unfortunately, the relevant volume of the EP-NS, XLVIII, is not yet published.

123 J.J. Alexander, "The Battle of Brunanburh," DCNQ, XIX(1936-1937), 304; J. McN. Dodgson, "The Background of Brunanburh," Saga-Book, XIV(1956-1957), 303-304; Stanley B. Greenfield, A Critical History of Old English Literature (New York: New York University Press, 1965), p. 98; and A.H. Smith, "The Site of the Battle of Brunanburh," London Mediaeval Studies, I(1937), 56-59. The latter contains an excellent review of the evidence.

124 Cockburn, Brunanburh, p. 45. Michael Prestwich, War, Politics and Finance Under Edward I (Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1972), p. 113, states that Edward I's infantry of 25,700 and cavalry of 3000 is probably the largest English army prior to 1642. One would think the Scots, Cymry and Norse would be hard put even to match this number.

125 War of the Gaedhil, pp. 53, 153.

126 Beaven, "King Edmund," 2.

127 The Old English Version of the Heptateuch, Aelfric's Treatise on the Old and New Testament and His Preface to Genesis, ed. by S.J. Crawford, EETS, O.S., 160 (London: EETS, 1922), p. 416: "On Engla lande eac oft waeron cyningas sigefaeste thurh God, swa swa we secgan gehyrdon, swa swa waes Aelfred cining, the oft gefeaht with Denan, oth thaet he sige gewann and bewerode his leode; swa gelice Aethestan [sic] , the with Anlaf gefeaht and his firde ofsloh and aflimde hine sylfne, and he on sibbe wunude siththan mid his leode." See also, Minnie Cate Morrell, A Manual of Old English Biblical Materials (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1965), pp. 1, 7.

128 S436, another charter purported to have been granted to Malmesbury at this time is a conflation of S434, S435, and S438, that was concocted probably by William of Malmesbury himself. The authenticity of S434 and S435 is no longer in question.

C H A P T E R I I

WESSEX AND THE CONTINENT

Anglo-Saxon kings employed two distinct forms of international agreement, the written treaty, such as the trade pact between Offa and Charlemagne at the end of the eighth century, and the dynastic alliance. The latter, similar to the union of Aethelflaed and Ealdorman Aethelred of Mercia, was the style of international agreement used by Edward and Athelstan. Both were masters in the art of marrying off family members to the benefit of their overseas' interests. William of Malmesbury comments:

> ... foreign kings rightly considered themselves fortunate if they could buy his friendship either by marriage or gifts.[1]

Between 893 and 937, one aunt and five sisters of Athelstan were wed to European kings or nobles. These marriages would draw Wessex into continental affairs more closely than ever before and not until the extinction of the Anglo-Saxon royal line did England again become so intimately involved.

Unfortunately, there are a number of difficulties involved in the study of the alliances. Records are few and many times confused. Several of the marriages to the

greater nobles and kings are well documented, even to exact dates, while two are a matter of conjecture and detective work. The importance of these six marriages in the development of Wessex and England as a European power demands that they be studied in detail.

The first alliance of the period linked Wessex with Flanders. A rather odd relationship already existed between the two lands. Count Baldwin I of Flanders had married Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald of France, who had been successively the wife of Alfred's father Aethelwulf (d.858) and Alfred's eldest brother Aethelbald (d.860), soon after the latter's death. Children of this match were Baldwin II, who succeeded his father in 879, and Raoul of Cambrai.[2] Flanders, encompassed by the lines of the Scheldt and Canche Rivers,[3] was not large but was Wessex's closest neighbor across the English Channel and formed a vital link in the cross-Channel trade system and in communications.

At some time between 893 and 899, Baldwin II sent to Wessex for a wife and received Aelfthryth, the fourth child of Alfred.[4] The marriage was beneficial to both states. For Wessex, it insured that the English Channel at its narrowest point was under friendly control, but Flanders was the greater beneficiary. The union gave the county a strong ally and began the web of Flemish

alliances on the continent. The prestige it gained would, in later years, give Baldwin and his heirs an affinity with the German and French kings and the duchy of the Franks.[5]

To Baldwin and Aelfthryth were born four children: Arnulf, Adelulf, Ermentrude and Ealhswith.[6] Two of the children bore English names, Adelulf named after his greatgrandfather Aethelwulf and Ealhswith after her grandmother. A generation later Arnulf named one of his sons Egbert, after another West Saxon royal ancestor.[7]

Besides being lord of Flanders, Baldwin II was also the lay-abbot of the monastery of Saint Bertin at Saint Omer. He was granted the abbey by Charles the Simple of France in 900 or 901[8] and it was held by Baldwin and later by his younger son Adelulf until the latter's death in 933. Sometime after this it became regular,[9] an important change in the constitution of the abbey since Saint Bertin was to become a major center of the Lotharingian reform. A second abbey, Saint Peter's, Ghent, became regular on 20 August, 950, when Louis IV, at the request of his relative Arnulf, confirmed Gerard of Brogne as abbot and reaffirmed all of Arnulf's gifts as long as the monks followed the rule of Saint Benedict and prayed for the king and his kingdom.[10] This act insured that the Lotharingian reform of Gerard would

flourish in Flanders. The abbey later became an important factor in English ecclesiastical history when Saint Dunstan would spend the years 955 to 957 in exile there, learning of the reforms which influenced the reform movement in England in later decades.

Baldwin II died on 10 September, 918.[11] It was assumed that he would be buried at the Abbey of Saint Bertin with his father, but Aelfthryth would not permit it since the abbey was closed to women and she wished to be interred with her husband. Consequently, Baldwin was buried at Saint Peter's, Ghent.[12] There is a curious charter of Aelfthryth dated 11 September, 918, that purports to grant to Saint Peter's the estates at Lewisham, Greenwich, and Woolwich, Kent.[13] Several noted authorities have accepted it as reliable,[14] but its historicity has been seriously questioned.

Two points are immediately apparent. First, although it was not unusual for a noble woman to give land to the abbey at which her husband was to be interred, it is very strange that Baldwin, with whom Aelfthryth insisted on being buried, is never mentioned in the document. Some pious ejaculation regarding the good of his soul would be expected in the proem of the charter. Second, there is some question as to her ownership of land in England. Although Aelfthryth did inherit three

estates including Wellow, Isle of Wight, Steeple Ashton, and Chippenham, Wiltshire, she apparently gave, traded, or sold it to her brother Edward prior to this time.[15] If she traded the land, she may then have owned the estates she is supposed to have granted to Saint Peter's.

It remains then, to consider internal evidence. An exhaustive article by Jan Dhondt clearly proves the charter is a fiction of the eleventh century.[16] The original grant of the estates at Lewisham, Greenwich and Woolwich is included in a charter of 964 of King Edgar in which he also grants the estates at Mottingham and Coombe, Kent. Mention of Aelfthryth in Edgar's charter is an interpolation.[17] Dhondt also uses a charter of Edward the Confessor, S1002, dated 1044, to indicate that Aelfthryth's charter is a forgery, but Edward's charter has itself been proven to be spurious.[18] The case is unaffected by this revelation, however, because Dhondt clearly shows that the Aelfthryth charter is a verbatim copy of a charter of a certain Wicman who donated land at Destelbergen to Saint Peter's in 962.[19]

The county of Flanders was divided between Baldwin's two sons. Adelulf received the Boulonnais and Ternois as well as the abbacy of Saint Bertin while Arnulf inherited the remainder, by far the larger share.[20] It has been said that, although Baldwin II

created Flanders, it was Arnulf who consolidated, enlarged and made the county a continental power of consequence.[21] It will become evident that in the 930's Arnulf was a focus of the European alliance system.

The second of the unions between Wessex and the continent and the first devised by Edward was with the rather shaky Carolingian state in France. The death of Odo in 898 left Charles the Simple sole ruler of France.[22] One of Charles' early acts was the renewal of grants of immunity to the Abbey of Saint Benoit-sur-Loire, known as Fleury, which had been given the right of free election of its abbots by Pope John VIII, Louis the Pious, and Charles the Bald.[23] The freedoms granted to the abbey permitted it to develop as an outpost of the Cluniac reform and would have considerable impact on the reform movement in England in the latter half of the tenth century.

Charles married Frederone, the sister of Beuve, Bishop of Chalon-sur-Marne, in 907. The union produced six daughters: Irmintrude, Frederone, Adelaide, Gisela, Rotrude, and Hildegarde.[24] For a king of the faltering Carolingian house, six daughters and no son was disastrous. Daughters could be used to seal treaties, but could not succeed to the throne. A son was desperately needed to shore up the deteriorating fortunes of

Charlemagne's heirs.

A second problem, and one more immediate, was the incursion of the Vikings into French territory. The marauders ravaged much of the northwestern and western coast of France and settled down in what is now Normandy, forcing Charles to cede the territory to Rollo in 911.[25] He later married his daughter Gisela to Rollo as the chieftain's second wife to insure that Rollo would not make further demands upon the territory of the crumbling Carolingian state. There is a coincidental event connected with the growth of Normandy. In 914, Earl Thurketel of Bedford was forced to accept Edward as lord. He apparently chafed under the rule of Wessex since he made it known he wished to leave. Two years later, Edward gave him permission to emigrate to France with all the men who would follow him.[26] Edward probably realized that it was better to allow the Vikings to leave than to keep them pent up and perhaps cause difficulties. Normandy was the likely destination of Thurketel and his men.

Viking activities in France were not limited to Normandy. Brittany was also ravaged early in the tenth century. Originally an integral part of France, Brittany gained comital status under Alan the Great in approximately the year 880.[27] After Alan's death in 907,

Normans from the Loire valley began to flood north, inundating the county.[28] By 919, the nobles from Brittany had been driven out and the Vikings controlled the northwest of France from the Loire valley to the English Channel.[29] Matheudoi, Count of Poher and son-in-law of Alan the Great, fled to Wessex with his son Alan along with most of the nobility and many of the clergy with their valuables.[30]

Manuscripts, relics, and the veneration of Breton and Norman saints filtered into England as a result of this migration. Some manuscripts, such as Bodley 572, show the disruption caused by the Vikings. The document is an early tenth-century collection of masses, music, and verse written partly in Brittany and partly in Cornwall as a result of the Norman incursion.[31] Another manuscript, although done entirely at the monastery of Landevennec, Brittany, appeared in Wessex early in the tenth century and was in the possession of Exeter Cathedral in the following century.[32]

Relics of saints, some donated and some purchased, also entered England. Athelstan received the bones of Saint Paternus, Bishop of Avranches (c.557), for which he ordered a shrine constructed and inscribed with the following lines: "Hoc opus Ethelstanus totius Britanniae multarumque gentium in circuitu positarum

imperator, in honorum sancti Paterni fiere jussit."[33] In another shrine constructed for Athelstan and given to Milton Abbas, William of Malmesbury found a letter from Radbod, Prior of Saint Samson's, Dol, Brittany:

> To King Athelstan, most glorious and munificent by the honoring of the supreme and indivisible Trinity and by the excellent intercession of all the saints, I Radbod, prior of the great bishop Samson, [wish] the glory of this world and the blessedness of Eternity.
> In your piety, benevolence and greatness, surpassing in renown and praise all earthly kings of this time, you King Athelstan will know that, while our country was still at peace, your father King Edward commended himself in letters to the confraternity of Saint Samson the great confessor, and my superior and cousin Archbishop Jovinian and his clerics. Therefore to this time we pour out to Christ the King unwearied prayers for his soul and your well-being, and day and night, seeking your great compassion on us, we promise to pray to the merciful God on your behalf, in Psalms, Masses, and Prayers, as if I with my twelve canons were prostrate before you. And now I send you relics, which we know to be dearer to you than all earthly substance, namely the bones of Saint Senator, and of Saint Paternus, and of Saint Scabillion, teacher of the same Paternus, who likewise departed to Christ on the same day and hour as the previously named Paternus. Most certainly these two saints lay with Saint Paternus in the tomb, on his left and right, and their solemnities are celebrated like his on 23 September.
> Therefore, most glorious king, exalter of the holy church, subduer of evil gentiles, mirror of your kingdom, example of all goodness, dissipator of enemies, father of clerics, helper of the poor, lover of all the saints, invoker of the angels, we, who for our deserts and sins dwell in France in exile and captivity, humbly implore and pray that you

> with your blessed liberality and great compassion will not forget us. And now and henceforth you can command without delay whatever you will deign to entrust to me.[34]

The letter, probably written in late 924 or early 925, is a plea for aid. Radbod knows enough of Athelstan that he can play on the king's major weakness, the love of relics. It indicates that many of the clerics of Brittany were living in exile in France until they could return to their monasteries in peace.

Relics and manuscripts are not the only evidence of the impact of the Breton exile in England. At the Church of Saint Mary, Wareham, Dorsetshire, there are Breton or Breton-like inscriptions on the walls, a result of exiles living in the area.[35] There are later indications of the Bretons in England and the English devotion to Breton saints. The Salisbury Psalter, Ms. Salisbury 150, dated c.975, contains a litany with invocations to a number of Breton saints.[36] A Winchester prayer book of the eleventh century, now Cott. Galba A. xvi., contains similar devotions.[37] At least in the south of England, the interest in Breton saints was not a passing fancy that faded with the departure of the Bretons. Their exile in England had a lasting effect on the church and its devotion to non-English saints.

The death of Frederone, the wife of Charles the

Simple, on 10 February, 916 or 917,[38] freed Charles to remarry and attempt to produce an heir. He turned to the prolific Edward and married Eadgifu, the second daughter of Edward's second wife Aelfflaed, in 919 or 920.[39] The union was to benefit both parties since it aided in preventing the Vikings in England from uniting with the Normans across the Channel. Pressure could be brought to bear on the new duchy of Normandy from both north and south. Charles had the support of a strong king in his struggle to retain his throne. Most important, the marriage produced an heir.

Louis was born to Charles and Eadgifu between 10 September, 920, and 10 September, 921.[40] Within the year, however, Charles had little need of an heir. He managed to irritate the nobles of his kingdom to the point of open rebellion. In April of 922, Raoul of Burgundy broke with Charles and was soon joined by Count Robert of Paris.[41] In two months the two vassals had garnered enough support for Robert to be crowned rival King of France on 29-30 June.[42]

Charles was not immediately defeated, having enough loyal vassals to continue to function as king for another year. The major battle of the civil war was fought at Soissons on 15 June, 923. Although Charles was decisively defeated and forced to flee toward Flanders,

Robert was killed. Within the month Raoul of Burgundy was elected to replace Robert on the rival throne. The war ended for Charles and eliminated him as king when he was treacherously captured by Herbert II of Vermandois after Charles had fled to Flanders and the safekeeping of his cousin Arnulf. Herbert sent envoys under a flag of truce and Charles, believing that he was safe, returned with them. Herbert broke the truce, took Charles captive, and imprisoned him at Chateau Thierry for most of the rest of his life.[43] This made Raoul king in fact and in name.

Eadgifu and her two- or three-year-old son Louis were not captured, apparently remaining safely in Flanders. There was a fear that Herbert would attempt to take them since Herbert's father had been murdered by a vassal of the Count of Flanders and there was enmity between the two counts.[44] It was believed that Herbert or, for that matter, Raoul would attempt to murder the only surviving Carolingian and the legitimate heir of Charles. Eadgifu, therefore, took her son to Wessex to the court of his grandfather Edward and his uncle Athelstan where he was raised.[45] She also took an Evangelar with her that had been presented to her when she was yet queen. The manuscript, Ms. Coberg Landesbibliothek I, was manufactured at the Metz scriptorium at the beginning

of the tenth century. On the bottom edge of f.168[a] is the inscription: "+eadgifu regina."[46] The Gospel did not remain long in Wessex, however, for several years later it became a marriage gift to another continental prince.

The third European marriage allied Wessex with what would become the dukedom of the Franks. Robert of Paris had married Beatrix, daughter of Herbert I of Vermandois, in 890 and three children were born of the marriage: Hugh, Emma, and a daughter who would marry Herbert II of Vermandois. Robert claimed the throne of France in June of 922 and, with his death on 15 June, 923, his son Hugh became Count of Paris. He did not assume the title of Duke of the Franks for another ten years.[47]

Hugh immediately began to consolidate his position. His sister Emma married Raoul, the usurping King of France, which linked Hugh closely to the royal power. Raoul gave Hugh the county of Maine in 924, a grant that greatly enlarged the territorial base of the Parisian counts.[48] On 22 March, 925, Hugh's first wife died.[49] Within a year, he would have an English bride.

Early in 926, while meeting with his nobles at the royal estate at Abingdon, Athelstan received envoys from Hugh who sought the hand of Athelstan's sister

Eadhild.[50] William of Malmesbury records the event:

> The fourth [daughter], in whom was united by nature the whole essence of beauty which the others had in part, Hugh, king [recte, duke] of the Franks, sought from her brother by messengers. The leader of this embassy was Adelulf, son of Baldwin count of Flanders by Aethelswith, daughter [recte, sister] of King Edward. When he had set forth the suitor's requests in an assembly of nobles at Abingdon, he indeed offered most ample gifts, which might immediately satisfy the cupidity of the most avaricious: perfumes such as never before had been seen in England; jewelry, particularly emeralds, in whose greenness the reflected sun lit up the eyes of the onlookers with a pleasing light; many fast horses with trappings, as Maro says, "champing on bits of ruddy gold"; a vase of onyx carved with such subtle engraver's art that the cornfields really appeared to wave, the vines really to bud, the shapes of the men really to move, and so clear and polished that it reflected like a mirror the faces of the onlookers; the sword of Constantine the Great on which could be read the name of the ancient owner in letters of gold; on the pommel also above the thick plates of gold you could see an iron nail fixed, one of the four which the Jewish faction prepared for the Crucifixion of our Lord's body; the spear of Charles the Great, which, whenever that most invincible emperor, leading an army against the Saracens, hurled it against the enemy, never allowed him to depart without victory; it was said to be that same which, driven by the hand of the centurion into our Lord's side, opened Paradise for wretched mortals by the gash of that precious wound; the standard of Maurice, the most blessed martyr and prince of the Theban legion, by which the same king was wont in the Spanish war to break asunder battalions of the enemies, however fierce and dense, and to force them to flight; a diadem, certainly precious for its amount of gold, but more for its gems, whose splendor so threw flashes of light on the onlookers that the more anyone strove to fix his stare on it, the more he was driven

> back and forced to give in; a piece of the holy and adorable Cross enclosed in crystal, where the eye, penetrating the substance of the stone, could discern what the color of the wood was and what the quantity; a part also of the Crown of Thorns, likewise enclosed, which the insanity of the soldiers placed on Christ's sacred head in mockery of His kingship. The most august king, delighted with such great and exquisite gifts, responded with hardly inferior gifts, and moreover gladdened the heart of the eager suitor with his sister.[51]

There are two reasons for the presentation of these gifts and relics, aside from the custom of exchanging gifts while arranging a wedding. The first is that Athelstan was an avid relic collector, well-known throughout Europe as a purchaser of any type of holy artifact. The magnificent gifts of Hugh would be regarded the treasures of any such collection.[52] The second reason, and for Hugh the more important, was that the majority of these relics were previously owned by the Carolingian kings and he wanted nothing to do with them. Hugh was doing his best to efface all traces of the Carolingians from France.[53] The relics, then, had export value only.

Athelstan was delighted with the treasures. Several of them were given to various abbeys while most of them remained in the king's <u>haligdom</u>. The piece of the Cross and Crown of Thorns are recorded as a gift to Malmesbury, while the sword of Constantine, spear of

Charlemagne, and the vexillum of Maurice were apparently given to Exeter.[54] There is some confusion and overlapping of claims since both the above-named monasteries boasted that they had the Cross and Crown among their treasured relics. Further confusion is apparent since the Germans claimed to have owned Charlemagne's lance.[55] It is possible that Athelstan gave Otto the lance, or there may be a multiplication of relics.

A question has arisen over the exact relationship of Eadhild to Athelstan. In a provocative article, Robert L. Reynolds has suggested that Eadhild, rather than being the sister of Athelstan, was, in reality, his niece. As evidence, he points to the notice in the Antapodosis of Liudprand of Cremona that Liudolf, the son of Eadgyth and Otto, and Liudprand's friend, was the son of a daughter of a brother of Athelstan. Also cited is William of Malmesbury's comment that Aelfthryth was the daughter of Edward, rather than his sister. Professor Reynolds notes that the Ealhhild in the poem Widsith was the daughter of Edwin, and the possible connection between the Ealhhild in the poem and Eadhild the wife of Hugh is presented as further evidence.[56] William of Malmesbury's comment is an error in copying since he relied on Aethelweard for his genealogical material. Aethelweard and Flodoard both specifically state that

Eadhild was Edward's daughter.[57] It is probable that Professor Reynolds' theory is incorrect since the weight of evidence favors the brother-sister relationship.

For Hugh, the marriage was profitable since it blunted his opposition on the continent. Arnulf of Flanders became Hugh's cousin by marriage, easing pressure on the northern frontier of the county. It also lessened the bitterness engendered by Hugh's aid in the overthrow of Charles the Simple who was, it should be remembered, Athelstan's brother-in-law. Ten years later it would give Hugh the upper hand in the naming of a successor to his brother-in-law Raoul of France. The union also engendered a web of confused alliances. Hugh was closely tied to the house of Vermandois, a traditional enemy of Flanders and the jailers of Charles the Simple. At this point, the warring factions of the Frankish kingdom were all united, though tenuously, by marriage.[58]

Shortly after the marriage of Eadhild to Hugh, Athelstan received an embassy from Harald, King of Norway. Helgrim and Osfrid, the envoys, were royally welcomed at York. Since Athelstan did not take York until late in 927, it is evidently at this time that the Norwegian officials arrived. They presented Athelstan with a magnificent ship with a golden beak, purple sails

and a rank of gilded shields.[59] Having a common enemy in the Vikings, they made a pact against the marauders that was of value to both kings.[60] Athelstan, in return, sent emissaries with gifts to Harald to seal the alliance. A great sword with a gold hilt and gold scabbard encrusted was presented to the Norwegian king, and Harald, by touching the haft, gave the traditional sign of acceptance of the suzerainty of Athelstan. The sagas complain that this was a cruel trick played by Athelstan upon their king.[61] Named Kvernbitr because of its ability to slice a quernstone to the center, it was the finest sword in Norway and was treasured by many Norwegian kings.[62]

Harald then sent his son Haakon, born in 920, to be raised and educated in Wessex. The sagas note that the boy was received at London by Athelstan who set him on his knee, a sign in Norway of the inferiority of the man who was to be the foster-father.[63] Although this was seen as a trick in kind for the ruse Athelstan played on Harald, the fostering of a child was of great importance to Norwegians. They had strong feelings regarding the environment and education of their children and often sent noble sons to foster homes to be raised. The ties between foster-parents and the children were as strong or stronger than blood ties.[64] Raising Haakon would bind

Norway to Wessex more closely than a marriage alliance. Although there is no English evidence for this nurturing, it is well attested in the saga sources. "Athelstan's foster-son" is a common kenning for Haakon.[65]

Two deaths in 929 began to change the complexion of the continental alliances of Wessex. Aelfthryth, widow of Baldwin II of Flanders, died on 7 June and was buried at Saint Peter's, Ghent, beside the body of her husband.[66] The ties between Wessex and Flanders began to weaken after this year and the two states would be at opposite poles within the next decade. Charles the Simple also died in this year. He was taken from Chateau Thierry by his jailer Herbert II of Vermandois early in the year and moved to Perrouane where he died on 7 October.[67] The death of Charles, although he was no longer king, did free Eadgifu to remarry and her selection of a new husband, to be discussed later, was bizarre.

The fourth of the continental marriages of Athelstan's family was to yoke the interests of the eastern part of the old Carolingian empire with the interests of Wessex. In 929, envoys were sent from Henry the Fowler of Germany to obtain a wife for Prince Otto:

> Henry the First, son of Conrad, for there were many of this name, king of the Germans and emperor of the Romans, demanded his [Athelstan's]

> sister for his son Otto, passing over so many neighboring kings, since from a distance he perceived in Athelstan nobility of lineage and greatness of mind. For these two qualities had so taken up a united abode in him that there could be no one either more illustrious or noble of race or more courageous or powerful of disposition. Wherefore, when he had considered carefully that he had four sisters, in whom except for difference of age there was no disparity of beauty, he sent two to the emperor at his request ....[68]

Hrotswitha, the nun-author of Gandersheim, wrote in her Gesta, a composition of the 960's, that Henry sent gifts with his representatives which pleased Athelstan greatly. After praising Eadgyth's virtues, Hrotswitha states that Eadgyth, her sister Aelfgifu, and many gifts were sent to Germany.[69] Aethelweard, who dedicated his Chronicle to Matilda, Abbess of Essen and a descendant of the Otto-Eadgyth union, notes that Athelstan sent two of his sisters to give Otto the opportunity of selecting his own wife.[70] Liudprand of Cremona wrote in the Antapodosis that Eadgyth was a niece of Athelstan.[71] This is the only account that makes this claim, but the close relationship which the bishop had with the Ottonian family, does not permit it to be casually ignored. The weight of evidence, however, favors the identification of Eadgyth as the sister of Athelstan.

It was probably in September of 929 that Eadgyth and Aelfgifu were sent to Germany in the custody of

Bishop Coenwald of Winchester who visited several of the important monasteries while he was there. The Confraternity Book of Saint Gall lists Coenwald as a visitor on 15 October who had arrived with gifts of silver from Athelstan in exchange for prayers to be said for the king. Also listed in the book are Wighart, Kenvun, Conrat, Keonlaf, and Keondrud.[72] The last named person may be Cynethrith, the mother of Saint Dunstan, but the identification is conjectural.[73] The Reichenau Confraternity Book contains the names of Athelstan and Archbishop Wulfhelm of Canterbury.[74] A third notice is in the Book of Pfäffers where the names of Athelstan, Edmund and his mother Eadgifu, and Archbishop Oda of Canterbury are enrolled. The Athelstan inscription may date from 942 or 943 when Oda was on his way to Rome for his pallium.[75] Athelstan was well remembered by several of the most important of the monasteries in Germany.

Along with the gifts to the monasteries and the presentation of the two women, Athelstan sent at least one book to Otto. This was the Gospels that Eadgifu, widow of Charles the Simple, had brought with her when she took refuge in Wessex. The Gandersheim Gospels, as it is now known, is Ms. Coburg Landesbibliothek I. On f. 168[a] next to the notice of Eadgifu is the inscription: "aethelstan rex angulsaxonum et mercianorum."[76] That

Athelstan's title is also given as king of the Mercians is due perhaps to Bishop Coenwald, a Mercian, inscribing the book.[77] In all probability there were more gifts than this one book, but none have survived or have been identified.

Otto sent at least three manuscripts to Athelstan. A Gospels, Cott. Tib. A. ii., written at the monastery of Lobbes in the late ninth or early tenth century, was presented.[78] It contains an inscription on f. 24a beneath the incipit for Matthew in a small hand quite different from the hand of the manuscript: +ODDA REX ▶▶ MIHTHILD MATER REGIS ▶▶. The second manuscript, Cott. Claud. B. v., is a ninth-century German copy of the Acts of the Council of Constantinople which considered the problem of the monothelete heresy. There is no evidence to indicate it was a gift from Otto to Athelstan except tradition. The third treasure, Cott. Galba A. xviii., is the so-called Athelstan Psalter. This was created at Stavelot in the late ninth century under Abbot Ebbo after he had been removed from the archepiscopacy of Rheims. Again there is no evidence other than tradition that Otto gave the book to Athelstan.[79]

There is a remarkable poem in the style of early Carolingian court poetry addressed to Athelstan sometime after he had sent Coenwald to Saint Gall. The panegyric

is found in two English manuscripts: Durham Cath. Lib. A. II. 17., f. 31^b and Cott. Nero A. ii., ff. 10^b-12^b. The former is a seventh- or eighth-century Gospels with the poem as a twelfth-century insertion and the latter a miscellany of theological and hagiographical texts dated to the mid-tenth century.[80] The author tells the poem to fly to Athelstan and greet him and his family, the clergy and nobles. Athelstan is known for his great deeds after the death of Sihtric of York and for his friendship with Constantine, king of the Scots. The poet wishes health and long life to Athelstan with the grace of God.[81] The author may well have been thanking Athelstan in his own way for the gifts Athelstan had bestowed upon the monasteries. It would be only after Coenwald had gone to Germany and after Henry's and Otto's emissaries had returned that all of Athelstan's exploits were made known in Germany. Mention of the friendship with Constantine of the Scots indicated the poem was composed before 934 when Athelstan harried Scotland.

For the Germans, Eadgyth's marriage to Otto was an important factor in the neutralization of Wessex in the shifting balance of alliances. It was an attempt to prevent Wessex from aligning with Flanders and France in the matter of control of the borders of Lorraine, always a line of contention. Another result was the enlarging

of avenues of intercourse and trade for Wessex via the trans-Alpine route to Rome. A friendly monarch controlling these roads would be of great economic value. The relations between Wessex and Germany also greatly influenced art and ecclesiastical affairs, particularly monastic reform.[82]

The marriage of Eadgyth and Otto produced two children, neither of whom survived their father. Liudolf was born in 930 and his sister Liutgard in the following year.[83] In what is described as purely a political maneuver, Liudolf was wed to Ida, daughter of Duke Hermann of Swabia. Two children were born to them; Otto, who was later duke in both Swabia and Bavaria, and Matilda, latter Abbess of Essen.[84] Otto and Eadgyth's daughter Liutgard was wed to Duke Conrad of Lorraine after January of 946.[85] This union would produce Otto of Carinthia who, in turn, fathered Bruno, later Pope Gregory V, and Henry, the father of Emperor Conrad II.[86]

Eadgyth lived in Germany for sixten years, ten as queen, and died on 26 January, 946.[87] Called "holy Eadgyth" by the people, she was greatly loved and respected. Her remains were interred at the monastery of Saint Alban, Mainz.[88] Within a year, Otto wed Adelaide of Burgundy, a political marriage which insured the survival of the Ottonian house.

An event of the year 930 had tremendous impact on Wessex and its foreign relations. Harald Fairhair either resigned the throne of Norway or was set aside, and his son Erik Bloodaxe became king. Although unpopular, he ruled without opposition as long as his father lived. Upon the death of Harald in 933, however, his younger son Haakon tried to overthrow Erik with the aid of his foster-father Athelstan.[89] There is no English evidence for Athelstan aiding Haakon and no Scandinavian evidence except that of the sagas. They reflect a tradition that Athelstan's support was crucial in Haakon's success in taking the throne from his half-brother.[90] It would not be out of character for Athelstan to assist Haakon and meddle in the internal affairs of another country, particularly one so important to the control of the North Sea. With Haakon's return to Norway in 934 and his immediate subjection of Trondheim and Uppland, Erik fled west. He did not, as the sagas state, escape to England where Athelstan is said to have given him the rule of York. The gift of York to Erik is to be dated to the next decade and the rule of King Edmund.[91]

Throughout the twenty-five year reign of Haakon in Norway, he remembered his training under his foster-father. Laws were promulgated, much the same as in Wessex. Haakon divided his realm into ship-levies,

erecting beacons for warning.[92] Both were probably learned in Wessex. In the sagas, Athelstan is called the Good, the Victorious, and Firm in Faith.[93] Several lines of a poem composed by Egil Skallagrimsson have been recovered which give an indication of Scandinavian regard for Athelstan:

> Egil then composed a drapa upon King Athelstan, in which will be found these lines:
>
> Landlofty man, warlifter,
> Of many a king main kinsman
> (Falls land in Ella's line now),
> Brought three proud princes crashing.
> Great Athelstan wrought further:
> We flaunt this, wave-flame breaker,
> That all the world louts lowly
> To king so named, so kinfamed.
>
> And this is the refrain in the drapa:
>
> Now falls each loftiest deerfell
> To valiant Athelstan.[94]

This is an apparent reference to the battle at Brunanburh in which Egil purportedly fought. Relations between Wessex and Norway for the remainder of Athelstan's reign are unknown, but it is probable that the foster-father, foster-son relationship kept them cordial.

A death and a marriage in the years 933 and 934 presage the shifting of alliances on the continent. Adelulf, ruler of the Boulonnais and Ternois and lay-abbot of Saint Bertin, died on 13 November, 933.[95] This permitted his brother Arnulf of Flanders to enlarge and solidify his holdings. In the following year Arnulf married Adele, daughter of Herbert II of Vermandois.[96]

This union was one of great convenience since Vermandois was on the southern border of Flanders and was growing in power and prestige. It also helped heal the wound of the murder of Herbert I by a vassal of Arnulf's grandfather. Vermandois acted as a buffer for the protection of Flanders and as a closer tie to the dukes of the Franks, since Hugh's sister was Arnulf's mother-in-law. This trend in alliances would bring results in the crucial year of 939.

Sometime around the year 935 another of the sisters of Athelstan was sent to the continent to be wed. Eadgifu, daughter of Edward's third wife Eadgifu, was given in marriage to Lewis, prince of Aquitaine, a member of the Carolingian house.[97] Much confusion has been created in an attempt to identify this Lewis. In the work of Ademar of Chabannes, it is stated that a certain Adela, the daughter of Rollo of Normandy, was married to Ebles Manzer, Count of Poitou, but the editor has "rectified" this error and noted that Adela was actually the daughter of Edward. This idea is also propounded in <u>L'art de vérifier les dates</u>.[98] A recent study indicates that it was not Ebles but his son William III of Aquitaine who was wed to Adela.[99] The idea that Eadgifu was married to one of these men has seriously confused the historical treatment of the problem. Lewis has also been

identified as Lewis the Blind, the deposed emperor. This Lewis was dead by 928 and his Carolingian connections were, to say the least, tenuous.[100] There remains, then, only the evidence of Malmesbury, that Lewis was a Carolingian and a prince of Aquitaine. No definite identification can be made at this time.

At the western end of the French kingdom there were other important changes as Brittany struggled to rid itself of the rule of the Vikings. There had been an abortive attempt in 931 to overthrow the alien rule but the leaders, presumably Count Mathuedoi of Poher and perhaps his son Alan, were forced to return to exile in Wessex.[101] In 936, another attempt was made to regain Brittany. This time, Alan, with the aid of Athelstan's fleet, gained a foothold from which he could maneuver.[102] With the taking of Nantes and its environs in the same year, Alan was on the offense. The following three years were spent in slowly driving the Vikings out of the county. The decisive battle occurred on 1 August, 939, at Trans near Saint-Malo, with Alan victorious and the Viking power crushed in western France.[103] English sources are silent on the use of the Anglo-Saxon fleet to aid Brittany, but its use is attested in several of the Breton and French sources. Alan, known as Barbetorte, was to rule Brittany as a friend and ally of Wessex to

the year 952.[104]

In January of 936, King Raoul, ill since the previous autumn with what the chroniclers call a "grave malady," died.[105] Immediately the magnates began maneuvering and jostling for strong positions for the candidacy and election of a new king. The "Celts" and Aquitaine were partisans of Hugh of the Franks while the "Belgians" favored Louis, the son of Charles the Simple.[106] Both had claims to the throne; Hugh's father Robert had been the usurping king in 922-923 while Louis was a direct descendant of Charlemagne. A division among the partisans that ran so deeply could very easily lead to civil war. It soon became a question of power. If Hugh were elected, there would be a strong monarchy. If Louis were elected, there would be a regency, necessitated by Louis' age, and Hugh would be a viable candidate for the post of regent.

It was Hugh who ended the stalemate by favoring Louis' election. In a speech to the gathered nobles, at least as recorded by Richer, Hugh suggested that in order to avoid discord and possible dissolution of the kingdom that Louis be recalled from his exile in Wessex. He praised Louis' lineage and stated that the fifteen-year-old was the best selection for the king.[107] Allied with Hugh was Artaud, Archbishop of Rheims and the leading

prelate of France.[108] This convinced the magnates of the wisdom of Hugh's arguments and they accepted.

An embassy was sent to Athelstan to seek the return of the child. At York, Athelstan received the envoys with mixed feelings. He apparently desired the elevation of Louis to the throne but did not wish to see the boy end up in prison for the remainder of his life as his father had. The leader of the French embassy, Archbishop William of Sens, tried to convince Athelstan. In a speech made by William or another of the lords, Athelstan was told that Hugh, his brother-in-law, was the guiding force behind the selection of Louis. The child was to be made king, treated as any other monarch, and recognized as the legitimate power in France. Athelstan, however, was not satisfied with the promises. He demanded that one of his lords be permitted to visit France and view conditions for himself, that the embassy give an oath that Louis would be crowned, and that homage would be made to Louis the instant he landed in France.[109] To this, the Frankish nobles agreed.

Oda, Bishop of Ramsbury, was Athelstan's inspector in France. While the king was waiting for the bishop's report, he sent Louis to the coast with a royal cavalry escort amid the pomp and ceremony due a new king.[110] Oda returned with a good report and Louis was sent to France

with a retinue of nobles on board a royal ship. Landing at Boulogne, the fifteen-year-old, called Louis d'outre mer as a result of his exile, proceeded to Laon where he was crowned by Archbishop Artaud of Rheims, the senior metropolitan, who was assisted by twenty bishops.[111]

The coronation of one of the last Carolingians changed the complexion of Wessex-continental relations only slightly since Wessex's concerns in France were paralleled by its concerns in Flanders. Louis needed his English uncle's backing against the power of the Frankish lords and also needed his cousin Arnulf's aid to keep a line of communication open to England. Athelstan, in turn, wanted as many allies on the continent as he could amass. Several weeks after the coronation of Louis, another event occurred that, in time, would make drastic changes in the system. Henry the Fowler of Germany died on 2 July.[112] At the age of twenty-four, Otto was king. With an English wife, he was closely connected to Flanders, the duchy of the Franks, the kingdom of France, and the kingdom of Wessex, a system of relationships that lasted for some three years.

Eadgifu, the widowed mother of Louis of France, apparently returned to France with her son and was given the city of Laon to hold as a fief. The following year she was besieged by several French lords and Louis was

forced to come to her rescue.[113] Eadgifu remained in Laon until 951 when, for some unknown reason, she married Herbert III of Vermandois, the son of her first husband's jailer. A possible explanation of her choice is that her lands lay near the ever-strengthening county of Vermandois and she decided to reinforce her position with the union, or it may be that she was forced into the marriage. Louis was not pleased with the result, whatever the reason may have been. He marched into Laon and confiscated all of his mother's property.[114] Eadgifu apparently lived for some years as the wife of Herbert III, but the year of her death is not known. She died on 26 December and was buried in the subterranean crypt of Saint Medard, Soissons.[115]

The final English-continental marriage occurred in 936 or 937. Athelstan had no hand in the developments since it was arranged by Otto of Germany for his wife's sister who had accompanied Eadgyth to Germany in 929. The identity of Aelfgifu's husband-to-be had been in doubt for a number of years. William of Malmesbury notes that the noble was a duke "juxta Alpes," and the Liber de Hyda repeats the phrase.[116] Aethelweard pleads ignorance:

> The other sister he married to a certain king near the Alps, concerning whose family we have no information, because of both

distance and the not inconsiderable lapse of time.[117]

The most likely candidate is Conrad the Peaceable of Burgundy, fifteen years old and in danger of being kidnapped by Hugh, King of Italy, who coveted Burgundy. To prevent this Otto took Conrad and kept him at the court in Germany from 937 to 942. It is probable that Conrad married Aelfgifu at this time.[118]

Although there was some difference in the ages of the couple, he was fifteen and she twenty-two or twenty-three, this did not disrupt the marriage. One child was born to them, Gisela, who later married Henry the Wrangler of Bavaria and nephew of Otto I. They, in turn, would produce a son who would rule as Emperor Henry II. Sometime between 963 and 966 Aelfgifu died and Conrad immediately married Matilda, daughter of Louis IV of France.[119] The web of marriage alliances was sometimes broken, but always repaired.

The final two years of Athelstan's reign was a period of confusion and confrontation on the continent. Louis was valiantly attempting to free himself from the control of Hugh of the Franks and managed to do so temporarily in 937.[120] On his part, Hugh quickly shifted the balance with another political wedding. Eadhild, Hugh's second wife and Athelstan's sister, died in late

936 or early 937. Hugh seized the opportunity to encapsulate Louis further by allying with a state on one of France's exposed borders. He married Hedwig, the sister of Otto I, in late 937 or early 938.[121] The union engendered Hugh Capet and was the foundation of the Capetian dynasty. More important, it brought pressure to bear on Louis' eastern frontier. Rather than having a powerful duke in alliance with a friendly power such as Wessex, Louis found himself with a duke allied with the strongest state on the continent and one that had designs on French territory. The fact that Otto was also allied with Wessex does not appear to have had any effect on his desires. The marriage also gave Otto the right and opportunity to meddle in French politics, and he was not slow to do so.

Louis was aided in 938 by his vassal Arnulf in the attempted restoration of the port and fortress of Quentovic on the western border of Flanders.[122] This is commonly interpreted as an attempt to restore the silted harbor to commercial usage; but the port of Boulogne, a major trade center with excellent facilities facing the English Channel ports, was a mere ten miles up the coast. Quentovic, however, was at the mouth of the Canche River, on which was situated the fortress-city of Montreuil, capital of Herluin, lord of Ponthieu. A fortress at the

mouth of the Canche would lessen the effectiveness of the fortress of Arnulf's rival in Ponthieu. Although the effort may have been a commercial venture on the part of the king and the count, the military advantage of the reconstructed fortress must be considered.

Late in 938, Louis' armistice with Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois was negated and war erupted. Hugh found another ally in William Long-Sword of Normandy and used this alliance to ravage much of Flanders. Herbert moved south and sacked several towns belonging to the archbishopric of Rheims, for which he was excommunicated.[123] The war subsided with the end of the campaigning season but the frantic search for allies continued. Louis found his needed support in Hugh, count palatine of Burgundy and nephew of Hugh of Arles, King of Italy. They met early in 939 to seal the pact, the main thrust of which appears to have been against Hugh of the Franks and William of Normandy.[124] With another strong ally besides Flanders, Louis was able to reinstitute a truce at least until the beginning of June.[125]

At the same time Louis was gathering allies, Otto of Germany was having difficulties with his own vassals. Gilbert of Lorraine rebelled in the spring of 939 and forced Otto to meet him in battle at Xanten on the Rhine where Gilbert was soundly defeated.[126] Apparently

Gilbert did not learn his lesson. Several months later he renounced his allegiance to Otto and tried to become a vassal of Louis. If this had been permitted, it would have been a disastrous blow to the Germans, politically and economically. Louis realized the danger of the threat to Otto and also realized that, if he took Gilbert as a vassal, Otto's reprisal would be swift and deadly. He therefore refused to accept Gilbert's offer. Taking no chance that his actions could be misinterpreted by Otto, Louis appeared at Douzy on the frontier of Lorraine in force on 20 June to prevent Gilbert from crossing into France.[127]

Louis also had problems with vassals. Arnulf of Flanders took the major city of Ponthieu, Montreuil, and captured the wife and children of Count Herluin with a masterful stroke of treachery. Herluin's family was sent to Wessex for safe-keeping. Herluin immediately allied with his neighbor William of Normandy. They managed to retake Montreuil almost immediately, but the surrounding territory, both in Ponthieu and Flanders, did not recover from the ravages of the adversaries for many years.[128]

Gilbert of Lorraine again rebelled against Otto, this time allied with Otto of Verdun, Isaac of Cambrai, and Thierry of Holland. Otto reacted by crossing the Rhine and devastating parts of the duchy but this did not

break up the new pact.[129] What did disrupt the alliance system was the appearance of an English fleet off the coast of Flanders in support of Louis IV. The ships of Athelstan did no physical damage except for some plundering of the Flemish coast.[130] Possibly the same as the one that was involved in the wars of Alan of Brittany, the fleet was not authorized by Athelstan to attack the Flemish. The fleet's actions did nothing to aid Louis and, in fact, dealt him a near mortal blow.[131] Arnulf, once Louis' strong ally, immediately bolted for the camp of Otto. The German king quickly formed an alliance with Arnulf, Hugh of the Franks, Herbert of Vermandois, and William of Normandy. Signed between 7 June and 11 September, the pact was such that Louis was almost entirely cut off from England.[132] Louis replied to this challenge by marching into Alsace, ravaging it with the aid of his only ally Hugh of Burgundy.[133] The conflict terminated quickly. Otto had been in Saxony, at Werla near Dortmund, on 11 September. When he heard of Louis' invasion, he crossed the Rhine and moved south.[134] In the ensuing conflict, Gilbert of Lorraine was killed and that ended Louis' pretentions of ruling Lorraine.

The war was finished but more was needed to insure peace. This came in the person of Gerberga, the sister of Otto and widow of Gilbert. Louis arranged to

wed her late in 939 without the knowledge of Otto who was not pleased with his new brother-in-law.[135] Louis thought that the marriage would give him the advantage in dealing with the Germans, but this was not to be. Otto used the new relationship to his own advantage, involving himself deeply in French affairs. At one point, Otto's brother Bruno, acting in his capacity of both Archbishop of Cologne and Duke of Lorraine, was the virtual regent of France.[136] Otto would side with Louis for the remainder of Louis' life and the life of Louis' heir Lothair to prevent the usurpation of more power by Hugh the Great. This was the only advantageous result of the marriage for Louis.

By this time, Athelstan was dead. The alliance system that he had created was no longer in existence. There are several reasons for this. His attempts to meddle in continental politics did not always produce the desired results. Brittany may be counted as a success but the shift of Arnulf to Otto's camp as a result of the plundering of the fleet placed Louis in an untenable position. This must be cited as the greatest error in Athelstan's foreign policy. The second reason is the short-lived marriages of his sisters. Although obviously not a preventable situation, it was regrettable. The unions of two of his sisters to the two most powerful

western European rulers, Hugh and Otto, failed to produce heirs. Both Hugh and Otto would create dynasties crucial in the history of Europe, but in each case the dynasty was continued by children of later wives. If Athelstan's sisters had lived longer and produced children who survived their parents, the alliance system might have remained in force for a much longer period.

There was another important factor in the relationship of Wessex to the continent. Trade was reviving after several centuries of morbidity and England was closely involved in the new growth. Unfortunately there is little documentation to give evidence of the size and content of trade across the English Channel and the North Sea. What evidence exists does give a sense of the type and amount of trade.

One of the major problems in knowledge of trade has been the lack of a clear understanding of precisely what the ships used in this trade were like. Little was known of the size and capacity of tenth-century ships until very recently. The discovery in 1970 of a merchant vessel excavated at Graveney on the north coast of Kent has given much evidence to clarify this point. Clinker-built, fourteen meters long, with a broad, three-meter beam, it is of rigid construction unlike other known ships of the period such as those of the Oseberg or Gokstad

type. The Graveney boat was constructed c.870±40 and carried a cargo which included a Flemish pot of the late tenth or early eleventh century. Obviously a cross-Channel cargo vessel, it anticipates the construction methods of the cog.[137] It was capable of carrying more cargo than the Viking ship, particularly since the hull was not egg-shell thin, and its broad beam was well suited to weathering Channel seas.

In the tenth century, the Channel ports were very active. Southampton, Dover and London were the most important of the ports for overseas trade, but most of the coastal towns of the south and east were involved.[138] They became part of the economic renascence of the tenth century which encompassed much of Europe. The economy was sound and fairly sophisticated with a relatively stable currency system.[139] In this context, England's trade with the continent was not simply one of staples but also included some luxury items.

From the English ports, trade goods were taken south, primarily to Flanders. Quentovic had been very important from the sixth century until it was badly ravaged by the Vikings about the year 900. The restoration attempt by Louis and Arnulf in 938 to make the port useable for trade was not a success. Although the fortress did serve to control the Canche River, the

anchorage itself was badly silted and never regained its earlier position as an important port. Trade shifted to Boulogne and Wissant. The eastern section of Flanders was served by Bruges, which at this time was connected to the North Sea by the Zwin. Boulogne, however, was the most important port for trade from Flanders to England. It was also a terminus for the road system in this part of Europe.[140] Trade goods were brought to Flanders on these roads and the many rivers and shipped from Flemish ports to England. It is clear that Flanders developed as a trading nation very early in its history.[141]

The Viking invasions which many have thought damaged or destroyed English trade did much the opposite. Wessex and its neighbors recovered rapidly from the devastation and linked themselves to France, Germany, Italy and other states, and Wessex was soon pre-eminent in the North Sea as the trading nation.[142] The trade impetus was also carried over to the production of woolens. What was known at the time as "Frisian cloth" was produced not only in Frisia but, more important, in England.[143] The Frisians were also the great middle-men of the era, trading primarily in the area of the Rhine River with Utrecht and Tiel as the main centers of their trade with England.[144] They apparently took much of the woolens produced in England, perhaps the reason for

describing it as "Frisian", to the Rhine and returned with wine for the English.[145] One item which could easily have been a major trade factor for the English was expressly forbidden by Athelstan. Horses could not be exported except as gifts.[146] This proscription suggests that horses were essential to the internal economy or, likelier, were in short supply and needed by the army.

It should be noted that there is little monetary evidence for trade with the continent. Lack of Carolingian coins in England, however, cannot be used as an indicator of trade. "Money" used in trade was something other than coinage. Coin played little or no part in the trading system between England and the continent, especially in the area of Carolingian control.[147] Athelstan also had proscribed the use of foreign currency in England. The fact that there are so few Carolingian coins in England, then, should come as no surprise.

There is a curious reference in a late tenth-century geography entitled Hudud al-'Alam. Written in Afghanistan in Persian, the geography is clearly based on Ptolemy with several important additions. The author states that "... there are twelve islands called Britaniya, of which some are cultivated and some desolate. On them are found numerous mountains, rivers,

villages and different mines."[148] The writer appears to be interested in the ore reserves of England, described as "Britannia, the last land of Rum on the coast of the Ocean. It is an emporium of Rum and Spain."[149] It is not known where the geographer obtained his information, but he makes it clear that England is a trade center for Europe. It is possible that he received the data from Muslim traders who traveled to Rome.

The English connection with Rome in the tenth century is well documented. Archbishops traveled to Rome to receive the pallium and Peter's Pence was being taken there with some regularity. The Anglo-Saxon schola was in operation in Rome during Athelstan's reign so that travelers and traders would have a place of rest and refuge.[150] There is also evidence that English travelers, either religious leaders or merchants, were being attacked in the Alps by Saracens.[151] Trade was not centered entirely at Rome. The Honorantiae civitatis Papiae of the city of Pavia clearly states that English merchants were in a privileged position. Trading in slaves, woolen and linen goods, and tin from England, they were as free or freer than most other trading groups in Pavia.[152] That the English were important in Italian commercial life in the tenth century there can be no question.[153]

It may have been in Italy that the English received Byzantine influences. There is no real evidence for a direct connection between the Byzantine Empire and England in Athelstan's reign, but both were actively engaged in trade in Italy and may have exchanged ideas there. A relationship between Byzantine and English art is also indicated in this period.[154] One of the monograms that King Alfred used was a variation on the Byzantine model and the head of Athelstan on his coinage is very much a copy of Greek coinage.[155] This does not imply a direct relationship. It is possible that Athelstan saw Greek coins from traders and decided to copy them. There is also a white paste technique found in England in Athelstan's reign that is definitely of Byzantine origin. It has been suggested that if such an elaborate technique was present, much else must have found its way to England.[156]

One other area was of importance to England. The Scandinavian nations, particularly Norway with which Wessex had close political ties, had strong trade relations with England. In Egil's Saga there is notice of one Thorolf, a great magnate, loading his ocean-going vessel with dried fish, sheep-skins and furs, traveling south and west to trade in England in the spring, and returning in the fall with wheat, honey, wine and

clothing.[157] Silver was also an important trade item with the Scandinavians as well as a medium of exchange.[158] It should be remembered that Athelstan received large quantities of silver in tribute from the Welsh and some of this may have made its way to Scandinavia.

Wessex, then, was not isolated from the continent and its trade as a result of the Viking invasions. If anything, trade was stimulated and by the early tenth century English trade goods and traders were common on the continent and knowledge of English activities was known as far away as Afganistan. Woolen goods were the staple of English trade as they would be for many hundreds of years. England was the focus of a trade system that extended from Norway to Italy with English bottoms carrying a varied cargo. In this, England has not changed in a thousand years.

Wessex was truly a power in the early tenth century. Continental princes sought English brides while English rulers were content to wed their own country-women. This is an important fact. Wessex was looked to by the rulers on the continent as an important element in diplomatic maneuvers. The web of alliances was carefully constructed by Athelstan to give him

leverage in continental politics and to insure good trade relations. Athelstan made Wessex a European power, something no previous king had done, and his program would not be repeated by another Anglo-Saxon ruler.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 149: "... felices se reges alienigenae non falso putabant si vel affinitate, vel muneribus, ejus amicitias mercarentur."

2 Auguste Eckel, Charles le Simple, Annales de l'histoire de France à l'époque carolingienne, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études, section des sciences philologiques et historiques, 124 (Paris: Emile Bouillon, 1899), p. 38. For Judith, see H. Sproemberg, "Judith, Königin von England, Gräfin von Flandern," Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire, XV(1936), 397-428, 915-950.

3 Philip Grierson, "The Relations between England and Flanders Before the Norman Conquest," TRHS, Ser. 4, XXIII(1941), 113.

4 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 133-134; Asser, Asser's Life of King Alfred, ed. by W.H. Stevenson, with a new introduction and additional bibliography by Dorothy Whitelock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 57-58; Grierson, "Relations," 85. Aethelweard, The Chronicle of Aethelweard, ed. and trans. by Alistair Campbell (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), p. 2, believes she was sent to Germany to marry Baldwin. See also, Genealogiae comitum Flandriae, MGH, Ss., ed. by L. Bethmann (Hannover, 1851), IX, 303.

5 Jacques Flach, "Le comté de Flandre et ses rapports avec la couronne de France du IXe au XIIe siècle," Revue Historique, CXV(1914), 14.

6 Aethelweard, Chronicle, p. 2; Genealogiae comitum Flandriae, 303; Grierson, "Relations," 86 and n.1. See Genealogy III: Flanders, p. 284.

7 Grierson, "Relations," 86.

8 Recueil des actes de Charles III le Simple, roi de France (893-923), ed. by Philippe Lauer, L'Academie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Chartes et diplômes relatifs à l'histoire de France, VII (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1949), #36; Eckel, Charles le Simple, p. 57.

9 Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Bertin, ed. by B. Guerard, Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France (Paris, 1840), p. 143.

10 Recueil des actes de Louis IV, roi de France (936-954), ed. by Philippe Lauer, L'Academie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Chartes et diplômes relatifs à l'histoire de France, III (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1914), #36.

11 Folcwin of Saint Bertin, Gesta Abbatum Sithiensium, MGH, Ss., ed. by O. Holder-Egger (Hannover, 1881), XIII, 627; Les annales de Saint-Pierre de Gand et de Saint-Amand, ed. by Philip Grierson, Commission royale d'histoire, Recueil de textes pour servir à l'etude de l'histoire de Belgique (Brussels: Palais de académies, 1937), p. 6 and n.4.

12 Folcwin, Gesta, 627.

13 B661. See also, J.H. Round, ed., Calendar of Documents Preserved in France, Illustrative of the History of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. I: A.D. 918-1206 (London: HMSO, 1899), #1372.

14 Helen M. Cam, Local Government in Francia and England (London: University of London Press, 1912), p. 16; J.M. Toll, Englands Beziehungen zu den Niederland bis 1154, Historische Studien, CXLV(1921), p. 22; and Stenton, ASE, p. 344, accept the charter as genuine.

15 S1507; Grierson, "Relations," 85. See also S727, in which Edgar grants Steeple Ashton to himself in 968.

16 Jan Dhondt, "La donation d'Elftrude à Saint-Pierre de Gand," Bulletin de la Commission royale d'histoire, CV(1940), 117-164. Grierson, "Relations," 86-87, and 86 n.5, agrees.

17 Dhondt, "donation," 124-126. The charter is S728.

18 See the comments in S1002.

19 Dhondt, "donation," 119-122.

20 Grierson, "Relations," 97.

21 F.L. Ganshof, La Flandre sous les premiers comtes (3rd ed.; Brussels: La Renaissance du Livre, 1949), p. 23.

22 Eckel, Charles le Simple, pp. 2, 12, and 28.

23 actes de Charles le Simple, #34, dated 30 October, 900.

24 Eckel, Charles le Simple, p. 58.

25 Ibid., p. 79; Ferdinand Lot, Naissance de la France (2nd ed.; Paris: Librarie Fayard, 1970), p. 417.

26 ASC 915 D; ASC 918 A; ASC 920 A.

27 Philippe Lauer, Robert Ier et Raoul de Bourgogne, rois de France, 923-936, Annales de l'histoire de France à l'époque carolingienne, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études, section des sciences philologiques et historiques, 188 (Paris: Librarie Honore Champion, 1910), p. 6.

28 La chronique de Nantes (570 environs-1049), ed. by René Merlet, Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, 1896), pp. 80-81.

29 Ibid., p. 84; Flodoard, Les Annales, ed. by Philippe Lauer, Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire (Paris: Librarie Alphonse Picard et fils, 1905), p. 1.

30 chronique de Nantes, pp. 82-83. Stenton, ASE, p. 348, suggests Alan may have been born in Wessex, but there is no evidence to support this assertion.

31 E.W.B. Nicholson, Early Bodleian Music: III. Introduction to the Study of Some of the Oldest Latin Musical Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (London: Novello and Co., 1913), p. xxiv.

32 Oxford University, Bodleian Library, A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (7 vols. in 8 parts; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895-1953), #2719. Other manuscripts that may have come with the Bretons are Bodl. Laud Lat. 26, an early tenth-century Breton Gospels, and Bodl., Auct. D. 5. 3., a ninth-century Gospels with Old English glosses. See Otto Pächt and J.J.G. Alexander, Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library (3 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966-1973), #428, #424.

33 William of Malmesbury, Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum, ed. by N.E.S.A. Hamilton, Rolls Series, 52 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1870), p. 399.

34 Ibid., pp. 399-400: "Summae et individuae Trinitatis honore omniumque Sanctorum praecellentissima intercessione glorioso ac munifico regi Adelstano, Samsonis summi pontificis ego Radbodus praepositus, istius saeculi gloriam et eterni beatitudinem. Benignitatis ac sullimitatis vestrae piissimae et in omnibus hujus temporis regibus terrenis famosa laude praecellentissimae, rex Adelstane, optime noverit pietas; manente adhuc stabilitate nostrae regionis, quod pater vester Edguardus per litteras se commendavit consortio fraternitatis Sancti Samsonis summi confessoris, ac Joveniani archiepiscopi senioris, ac consobrini mei ac clericorum ejus. Unde usque hodie indefessas regi Christo pro ejus anima et pro salute vestra fundimus preces, et die noctuque videntes super nos magnam misericordiam apparere vestram, in psalmis et missis orationibusque nostris quasi provolutus ego et .xii. canonici mei genibus vestris fuissemus, promittimus Deum clementem orare pro vobis. Et modo reliquias, quas omni terrena substantia vobis scimus esse cariores, transmitto vobis, id est ossa sancti Senatoris, et sancti Paterni, et sancti Scubilionis, ejusdem sancti Paterni magistri, qui similiter uno die eademque hora cum superadicto Paterno migravit ad Christum. Isti certissime duo Sancti, cum sancto Paterno dextra levaque jacuerunt in sepulchro; atque illorum sollemnitates sicut et Paterni .ix. kalendas Octobris celebrantur. Igitur, rex gloriose, sancte exaltator ecclesiae, gentilitatis humiliator pravae, regni tui speculum, totius bonitatis exemplum, dissipator hostium, pater clericorum, adjutor egentium, amator omnium Sanctorum, invocator angelorum, deprecamur atque humiliter imploramus, qui in exulatu atque captivitate nostris meritis atque

peccatis in Frantia commoramur, ut non nostri oblivisca-tur vestrae felicissimae largitatis magna misericordia. Et nunc amodo, quae mihi dignemini commendare, sine ulla mora potestis imperare."

35 Edmund McClure, "The Wareham Inscriptions," EHR, XXII(1907), 729.

36 The Salisbury Psalter, edited from Salisbury Cathedral Ms. 150, ed. by Celia and Kenneth Sisam, EETS, 242 (London: EETS, 1959), pp. 11-12; Salisbury, Cathedral Library, A Catalogue of the Library of the Cathedral Church of Salisbury (London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1880), #150.

37 The Bosworth Psalter, ed. by Francis A. Gasquet and Edmund Bishop (London: George Bell and Sons, 1908), p. 56. See especially ff. 93^{b}-94^{a}.

38 Eckel, Charles le Simple, p. 104.

39 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 136; Aethelweard, Chronicle, p. 2; Eckel, Charles le Simple, p. 104; Philippe Lauer, Le règne de Louis IV d'Outre-mer, Annales de l'histoire de France à l'époque carolingienne, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études, section des philologiques et historiques, 125 (Paris: Emile Bouillon, 1900), p. 9 n.4.

40 Eckel, Charles le Simple, p. 104; Lauer, règne de Louis, p. 10 n.2. See Genealogy IV: France, p. 285.

41 Eckel, Charles le Simple, p. 116.

42 Richer, Histoire de France, ed. and trans. by Robert Latouche (2 vols.; Paris: Honore Champion, 1930-1937), I, 81; Lot, Naissance, pp. 425-426.

43 Flodoard, Annales, pp. 13-15; Richer, Histoire, I, 86-94.

44 Lauer, Robert Ier, pp. 11-12; Eckel, Charles le Simple, pp. 38-39.

45 Richer, Histoire, I, 125; Folcwin, Gesta Abbatum, 626.

46 For a description of the ms., see Ilona Hubay, Die Handschriften der Landesbibliothek Coburg, Kataloge der Landesbibliothek Coburg, V (Coburg: Coburger Landesstiftung, 1962), pp. 11-12 and Plate 2.

47 Eckel, Charles le Simple, pp. 34-35; Walther Kienast, Der Herzogstitel in Frankreich und Deutschland (9. bis 12. Jahrhundert) (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1968), p. 63.

48 Eckel, Charles le Simple, p. 37; Lot, Naissance, p. 417.

49 Grierson, "Relations," 88 n.1.

50 Frank M. Stenton, The Early History of the Abbey of Abingdon, Reading Studies in Local History (Reading: University College, 1913), p. 44. See also, Genealogy V: Duchy of the Franks, p. 286.

51 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 149-151: "Quartam, in qua omne coagulum pulchritudinis, quod ceterae pro parte habent, naturaliter confluxerat, Hugo rex Francorum per nuntios a germano expetiit. Princeps hujusce legationis fuit Adulfus, filius Baldewini comitis Flandriae, ex filia regis Edwardi Ethelswitha. Is, cum in conventu procerum apud Abbandunam proci postulata exposuisset, protulit munera sane amplissima, et quae cujuslibet avarissimi cupiditatem incunctanter explerent: odores aromatum qualia nunquam antea in Anglia visa fuerant: honores gemmarum, praesertim smaragdorum, in quorum viriditate sol repercussus oculos astantium gratiosa luce animaret: equos cursores plurimos, cum phaleris, fulvum, ut Maro ait, 'mandentes sub dentibus aurum:' vas quoddam ex onichino, ita subtili caelatoris arte sculptum, ut vere fluctuare segetes, vere gemmare vites, vere moveri hominum imagines viderentur; ita lucidum et politum ut vice speculi vultus intuentium aemularetur: ensem Constantini magni, in quo litteris aureis nomen antiqui possessoris legebatur; in capulo quoque super crassas auri laminas clavum ferreum affixum cerneres, unum ex quatuor quos Judaica factio Dominici corporis aptarat supplicio: lanceam Caroli magni, quam imperator invictissimus, contra Saracenos exercitum ducens, siquando in hostem vibrabat, nunquam nisi victor abibat; ferebatur eadem esse quae, Dominico lateri centurionis manu impacta, pretiosi vulneris hiatu Paradisum miseris mortalibus aperuit: vexillum Mauricii beatissimi martyris, et Thebaeae legionis principis,

quo idem rex in bello Hispano quamlibet infestos et confertos inimicorum cuneos dirumpere, et in fugam solitus erat cogere: diadema ex auro quidem multo, sed magis gemmis pretiosum, quarum splendor ita in intuentes faculas luminis jaculabatur, ut quanto quis certaret visum intendere, tanto magis reverberatus cogeretur cedere: particulam sanctae et adorandae crucis crystallo inclusam, ubi soliditatem lapidis oculus penetrans potest discernere qualis sit ligni color, et quae quantitas: portiunculam quoque coronae spineae, eodem modo inclusam, quam ad derisionem regni, militaris rabies sacrosancto imposuit capiti. His tantis et tam elaboratis donis magnificentissimus rex gavisus, non minoribus pene respondit beneficiis, quin et anhelantis animum nuptiis sororis refecit." Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon, ed. by Joseph Stevenson, Rolls Series, 2 (2 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1858), I, 88, contains essentially the same story.

52 Frances Rose-Troup, "The Ancient Monastery of Saint Mary and Saint Peter of Exeter," Transactions of the Devonshire Association, LXIII(1931), 190.

53 Laura H. Loomis, "The Holy Relics of Charlemagne and King Athelstan," Speculum, XXV(1950), 446.

54 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 151; Loomis, "Holy Relics," 449.

55 The lance is pictured in Robert Holtzmann, Geschichte der Sächsischen Kaiserzeit (900-1024) (4th ed.; Munich: G.D.W. Callwey, 1961), Plate 7. See also, P.E. Schramm, Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik. Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert, MGH, Schriften, XIII(3 vols.; Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1954-1956), II, 492-538.

56 Robert L. Reynolds, "Eadhild, duchesse de la Francia et Ealhhild, patronne du Scop de Widsith," Moyen Âge, Ser. 4, X(1955), 284-285. The reference to Liudprand of Cremona is Antapodosis, Opera, ed. by Joseph B. Becker, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum, 41 (3rd ed.; Hannover: Hansche Buchhandlung, 1915), p. 114: "Duxerat idem rex Otto ante regni susceptrionem ex Anglorum gente nobilissima regis Hadelstani fratris filiam sibi uxorem nomine Otgith, ex qua et filium genuit nomine Liutolfum." For William of Malmesbury, see note 51. The Widsith reference is to Widsith, ed. by Kemp Malone (2nd ed.; Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1962), ll. 97-98. Kemp Malone, "The Franks Casket and the Date of Widsith," Nordica et Anglica, Studies in Honor of Stefan Einarsson, ed. by Allan H. Orrick (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), 10-18, has challenged Reynolds' dating of the poem. On Malone's arguments, see pp. 243f. of Chapter IV.

57 Aethelweard, Chronicle, p. 2; Flodoard, Annales, p. 36.

58 Lauer, Robert Ier, p. 45.

59 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 149.

60 Stenton, ASE, pp. 348-349.

61 Snorri Sturluson, "Harald's saga Harfagra," Heimskringla, ed. and trans. by Lee M. Hollander (Austin: University of Texas Press for the American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1964), p. 92; Hilda R.E. Davidson, The Sword in Anglo-Saxon England, Its Archaeology and Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 186.

62 Davidson, Sword, p. 163; Peter Foote and David M. Wilson, The Viking Achievement, The Society and Culture of Early Medieval Scandinavia, Great Civilization Series (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1970), pp. 273-274.

63 Snorri, "Harald's saga," pp. 91-93.

64 Foote and Wilson, Viking Achievement, p. 116.

65 Egil's Saga, ed. and trans. by Gwyn Jones (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press for the American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1960), p. 120; Snorri, "Magnus saga in Gotha," p. 553.

66 annales de Saint-Pierre, p. 17; Dhondt, "donation," 119.

67 Flodoard, Annales, p. 44; Folcwin, Gesta Abbatum, 626.

68 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 149: "Henricus primus, filius Conradi, multi enim hujus nominis fuere, rex Teutonicorum et imperator Romanorum, sororem ejus filio Othoni expostulavit, tot in circuitu regibus praetermissis, progeniei generositatem et animi magnitudinem in Ethelstano e longinquo conspicatus. Adeo enim haec duo in eo consentiens habitaculum effecerant, ut nullus esset vel genere clarior et illustrior, vel animo audacior et efficacior. Quare perpenso consilio, quod quatuor sorores haberet, in quibus praeter aetatis discrimen nihil de formae gratia dissideret, duas postulanti Caesari misit ...." Henry, of course, was not emperor nor was Conrad his father. The only biography of Otto is Rudolf Köpke and Ernest Dümmler, Kaiser Otto der Grosse, Jährbucher der Deutschen Geschichte (Leipzig: Dunker and Humblot, 1876).

69 Hrotsvit of Gandersheim, Gesta Ottonis, Hrotsvithae Opera, ed. by H. Homeyer (Munich: Verlag Ferdinand Schoningh, 1970), ll. 73-116, pp. 408-410.

70 Aethelweard, Chronicle, p. 2.

71 Liudprand, Antapodosis, p. 114. The relevant quotation may be found supra, note 56. See also, Reynolds, "Eadhild," 285.

72 Libri Confraternitatum Sancti Galli Augiensis Fabariensis, MGH, Antiquitates, Libri Confraternitatum, ed. by Paulus Piper (Berlin, 1884), pp. 136-137.

73 J. Armitage Robinson, The Saxon Bishops of Wells, British Academy, Supplemental Papers, IV(London: British Academy, 1918), p. 41.

74 Libri Confraternitatum, p. 238.

75 Ibid., p. 363; Edmund Bishop, "Some Ancient Benedictine Confraternity Books," Liturgica Historica, Papers on the Liturgy and Religious Life of the Western Church (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918), p. 355 [reprinted from Downside Review, IV(1885), 2-14] .

76 See supra, p.79f.and note 46.

77 Pierre Chaplais, "English Diplomatic Documents to the End of Edward III's Reign," The Study of Medieval Records, Essays in Honour of Kathleen Major, ed. by D.A. Bullough and R.L. Storey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 23 n.1.

78 Francis Wormald, English Drawings of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), pp. 22-23.

79 The Department of Manuscripts of the British Museum accepts this identification.

80 W.H. Stevenson, "A Latin Poem Addressed to King Athelstan," EHR, XXVI(1911), 482-485; Durham, Cathedral Library, Durham Cathedral Manuscripts to the end of the Twelfth Century, intro. by R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford: For the Dean and Chapter of Durham, 1939), #4; British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Catalogue of Ancient Manuscripts in the British Museum, Part II: Latin (London: British Museum, 1884), p. 54.

81 Stevenson, "Latin Poem," 486:

"Carta, dirige gressus
tellurisque spatium
Regem primum saluta,
clerum quoque comites
Quorum regem cum ista
vivit Rex Aethelstanus
Ille Sictric defunctum
Saxonum exercitus
Constantinus, Rex Scottorum
salvando regis Saxonum
Dic, ut Rex Athelstanus
sit sanus, sit longaevus
per maris et navium
ad regis palatium.
reginam et clitonem,
armigeros milites.
perfecta Saxonia
per facta gloriosa.
armatum in proelio
per totum Bryttanium.
et velum Bryttanium
fidelis servitia.
per Petri praeconia
Salvatoris gratia."

Italicised words are restorations of Stevenson's.

82 Stenton, ASE, p. 346.

83 Hrotsvit, Gesta, ll. 418-422, p. 422; Holtzmann, Geschichte, p. 111.

84 Hrotsvit, Gesta, ll. 450-466, p. 423; Liudprand, Antapodosis, pp. 130-131. Hermann ruled Swabia from 926 to 949. See Kienast, Herzogstitel, pp. 318-319; and Genealogy VI, p. 287.

85 Hrotsvit, Gesta, ll. 444-449, p. 423, notes Liutgard married after her mother's death in 946. See also, Kienast, Herzogstitel, p. 324.

86 Kienast, Herzogstitel, p. 323; Teta E. Moehs, Gregorius V, 996-999, A Biographical Study, Päpste und Papsttum, Band 2 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1972), p. 5 and genealogy. I wish to thank Ms. Alice Weaver of the Robert Frost Library, Amherst College, for obtaining the latter work for me.

87 Diplomatum regum et imperatorum Germaniae, vol. I, Konrad I-Otto I, MGH, ed. by Theodor Sickel (Hannover, 1879), 155. The charter, dated 29 January, 946, notes the death of Eadgyth. See also, Holtzmann, Geschichte, p. 140.

88 Hrotsvit, Gesta, ll. 395-404, p. 421; Holtzmann, Geschichte, p. 223.

89 Snorri, "Harald's saga," pp. 93-94.

90 Snorri, "Hakonar saga Gotha," pp. 96-97; Egil's Saga, p. 154; Frederik Paasche, "Athelstan-Adelstan," Studia Neophilologica, XIV(1942), 368.

91 Snorri, "Hakonar saga," p. 98; Egil's Saga, p. 154; W.G. Collingwood, "King Eirik of York," Saga-Book, II(1898-1901), 313-327 shows the error in the statements of the sagas.

92 Snorri, "Hakonar saga," p. 113.

93 Egil's Saga, p. 120; Snorri, "Harald's saga," p. 92.

94 Egil's Saga, p. 134.

95 Grierson, "Relations," 88 n.1. Flodoard is silent on this point.

96 Flodoard, Annales,p. 59 and n.5.

97 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 149: "Tertiam legitima copula sortitus est comparem Lodowicus Aquitanorum princeps, de genere Caroli magni superstes."

98 Ademarus Cabannensis, Chronicon, ed. by Jules Chavanon, Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire, 20 (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, 1897), pp. 143-144 and p. 143 n.3; Religious of Saint Maur, L'art de vérifier les dates, Ser. 2, X (Paris: La Banque, 1818), p. 93.

99 Kienast, Herzogstitel, pp. 176-177.

100 Stubbs, in the introduction to William of Malmesbury, GR, II, lii, suggests Lewis the Blind. Reginald L. Poole, "The Alpine Son-in-Law of Edward the Elder," Studies in Chronology and History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934) [reprinted, in corrected form, from EHR, XXVI(1911), 310-317], p. 117 n.2, shows Stubbs in error.

101 Flodoard, Annales, p. 50; chronique de Nantes, p. 82 n.4.

102 chronique de Nantes, pp. 88-89; Flodoard, Annales, p. 63; Stenton, ASE, p. 348.

103 chronique de Nantes, p. 91 and n.2; Flodoard, Annales, p. 74; Lauer, règne de Louis IV, pp. 116-117.

104 Kienast, Herzogstitel, p. 146.

105 Richer, Histoire, I, 122.

106 Ibid., 124.

107 Ibid., 124-126.

108 Lauer, règne de Louis IV, p. 9.

109 Richer, Histoire, I, 128-130.

110 Ibid., 130. The comment on the cavalry is: "Ibi enim Adelstanus rex cum regio equitatu nepotem praestolantibus Gallis missurus aderat."

111 Ibid., 132; Flodoard, Annales, pp. 63-64. The date is 19 June according to Richer, Histoire, I, 133 n.3.

112 Holtzmann, Geschichte, p. 107. For relations between Otto and Louis, see James H. Forse, "The Political Career of Archbishop Bruno of Cologne: Ottonian Statesman of Tenth-Century Germany," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1967), especially Chapters III and IV; and August Heil, Die politischen Beziehungen zwischen Otto dem Grossen und Ludwig IV. von Frankreich (936-954), Historische Studien, XLVI(1904).

113 Richer, Histoire, I, 136; Flodoard, Annales, p. 65.

114 Richer, Histoire, I, 292; Flodoard, Annales, p. 132.

115 Jean Mabillon, ed., Vetera Analecta (2nd ed.; Paris: Montalant, 1723), pp. 377-378. Mabillon cites the epitaph:

Quae fueram quondam titulis generosa superbis,
Quae Ducibus Regni regimen memorabile Francis:
Hic ETHGIVA premor, terrae sub pulvere pulvis.
Quod quisquis cernis, casus reminiscere mortis,
Orans ut requies detur mihi carne solutae.

116 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 137; Liber monasterii de Hyda, ed. by Edward Edwards, Rolls Series, 45 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1866), p. 112.

117 Aethelweard, Chronicle, p. 2: "Alteram etiam subiunxit cuipiam regi iuxta Iupitereos montes, de cuius prole nulla nobis notitia extat, tam pro extenso spatio, quam per obruptionem quodam modo temporum ...."

118 Poole, "Alpine Son-in-Law," p. 119; idem, "Burgundian Notes, II, Cisalpinus and Constantinus," EHR, XXVII(1912), 303. Grierson, "Relations," 87 n.3, and Stenton, ASE, p. 346, accept the identification. See also, Genealogy VII: Burgundy, p. 288.

119 Poole, "Alpine Son-in-Law," p. 120.

120 Forse, "Career of Bruno," p. 145.

121 Flodoard, Annales, p. 69.

122 Ibid., pp. 69-70; Richer, Histoire, I, 140.

123 Flach, "comté," 18.

124 Flodoard, Annales, p. 71; Poole, "Cisalpinus," 308.

125 Flodoard, Annales, p. 71.

126 Forse, "Career of Bruno," p. 16.

127 Flodoard, Annales, pp. 71-72; Holtzmann, Geschichte, p. 123. Poole, "Cisalpinus," 302, gives the date.

128 Flodoard, Annales, p. 72; Richer, Histoire, I, 144-150, is especially outraged at the treachery.

129 Flodoard, Annales, p. 72; Richer, Histoire, I, 150.

130 Flodoard, Annales, p. 73.

131 For Alan, see supra, p.95f. Grierson, "Relations," 89.

132 Flodoard, Annales, p. 73. See Poole, "Cisalpinus," 301, for the dates. Holtzmann, Geschichte, p. 123, suggests July. This makes sense if the fleet was the same as that which aided Alan in late July and August. The ships could easily have sailed west from Flanders.

133 Flodoard, Annales, pp. 73-74; Poole, "Cisalpinus," 302.

134 Ibid.

135 Richer, Histoire, I, 156; Flodoard, Annales, p. 74.

136 See Forse, "Career of Bruno," pp. 146-184, for evidence of meddling and Bruno as regent.

137 A.C. Evans and V.H. Fenwick, "The Graveney Boat," Antiquity, XLV(1971), 89-96.

138 H.R. Loyn, Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1963), p. 92. The following pages on English trade are in no way an attempt to develop all aspects of that trade. Only a brief overview is presented. The standard work on trade is Archibald R. Lewis, The Northern Seas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), especially pp. 318-396. One should also consult Robert S. Lopez, The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950-1350 (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1971); Etienne Sabbe, "Les relations économiques entre Angelterre et le continent au haut moyen âge," Moyen Âge, Ser. 4, V(1950), 169-193; and G.C. Dunning, "Trade Relations between England and the Continent in the Late Anglo-Saxon Period," Dark-Age Britain, Studies Presented to E.T. Leeds, ed. by D.B. Hardin (London: Methuen and Co., 1956), pp. 218-233.

139 Karl F. Morrison, "Numismatics and Carolingian Trade: A Critique of the Evidence," Speculum, XXXVIII(1963), 427.

140 Grierson, "Relations," 72-81.

141 Flach, "comté," 3; Etienne Sabbe, "L'importation des tissus orientaux en Europe occidentale au haut moyen âge (IXe et Xe siècles)," Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire, XIV(1935), 1262.

142 Lewis, Northern Seas, p. 305.

143 Ibid., p. 303; Dirk Jellema, "Frisian Trade in the Dark Ages," Speculum, XXX(1955), 32; P.D. Whitting, "The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons," Anglo-Saxon Coins, Studies Presented to F.M. Stenton, ed. by R.H.M. Dolley (London: Methuen and Co., 1961), p. 23.

144 Jellema, "Frisian Trade," 35.

145 Ibid., 31.

146 II Athelstan, c. 18, in F.L. Attenborough, ed. and trans., The Laws of the Earliest English Kings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922).

147 Morrison, "Numismatics," 432; R.H.M. Dolley and Karl Morrison, "Finds of Carolingian Coins from Great Britain and Ireland," BNJ, XXXII(1963), 86-87.

148 Hudud al-'Alam, A Persian Geography, 372 A.H.-982 A.D., trans. by V. Minorsky, E.J.W. Gibb Memorial, N.S., XI (Oxford: Trustees of the E.J.W. Gibb Memorial, 1937), p. 59. I wish to thank Prof. A.R. Lewis for bringing this work to my attention.

149 Ibid., p. 158.

150 O. Jensen, "The 'Denarius Sancti Petri' in England," TRHS, Ser. 2, XV(1901), 171-247.

151 Flodoard, Annales, pp. 5 and 19. The attacks occurred in 921 and 923.

152 Honorantiae civitatis Papiae, MGH, Ss., ed. by Ernst Dümmler (Hannover, 1896), XXX, Pars 2, 1452.

153 Lewis, Northern Seas, p. 301; Robert S. Lopez, "Le problème des relations anglo-byzantines du VIIe au Xe siècles," Byzantion, XVIII(1948), 152. One should also consult the little-known but important article by J. Lestocquoy, "D'Angleterre à Rome au Xe siècle," Etudes historiques dédiées à la mémoire de M. Roger Rodière, Mémoires de la Commission départmentale de monuments historiques de Pas-de-Calais, V, fasc. 2 (1947), 35-40.

154 Lopez, "relations," 153; Whitting, "Byzantine Empire," p. 25.

155 David Talbot Rice, English Art, 871-1100, Oxford History of English Art, II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 34. See idem, The Byzantine Element in Late Saxon Art (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), for a survey of Byzantine influence.

156 T.C. Lethbridge, "Byzantine Influence in Late Saxon England," Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, XLIII(1949), 4-6.

157 Egil's Saga, p. 57; Lewis, Northern Seas, p. 302. For Norwegian trade in general, see Lewis, Northern Seas, passim.

158 Foote and Wilson, Viking Achievement, p. 199.

CHAPTER III

THE KING AND THE CHURCH

As with many other institutions in England, the church was shattered by the incursions of Vikings. Ecclesiastical organization was disrupted in all parts of England and, even though there was no active suppression of Christianity in Danish-held parts of England, plundering of churches and the inability of bishops to rule their dioceses effaced all but vestiges of organized Christianity. An attempt to convert the Vikings was made but it enjoyed some success only in parts of the Danelaw.[1]

King Alfred was keenly interested in the development of the church and his support was crucial in its resurgence. He promoted three interrelated programs that would blossom into the reform movements of the tenth century. The first was the use of the clergy in the governance of Wessex. Many of the greater ecclesiastics were involved in the formation of policy in the king's councils and some churchmen were used to govern territory. Their positive role in politics has been called a move toward theocracy, but that is an overstatement.

Since they formed an educated elite and were influential, churchmen did contribute much to the ruling of Wessex.[2]

The second of the programs was the importation of foreign scholars. The best-known of these, of course, was Asser, the Welsh priest who became bishop at Sherborne and wrote the valuable biography of Alfred. Four Mercian scholars also appeared in Wessex at this time: Athelstan, Werwulf, Werferth, and Plegmund, the last-named becoming Archbishop of Canterbury in 890. From the continent came John the Old Saxon, probably a monk from New Corbie, who became the abbot at Athelney, and Grimbald of Saint Bertin. The monk of Saint Bertin was one of Alfred's more important foreign scholars, helping to found New Minster, Winchester, where he was abbot for the few months between the house's completion and his death in July, 901.[3] All of the foreign scholars were in positions of ecclesiastical authority, either abbacies or bishoprics, and were used in the promotion of lay and religious education.

A third program was the construction and reconstruction of religious houses. Athelney in Somersetshire was founded by Alfred in 888 as was Shaftesbury, Dorsetshire.[4] The latter, a nunnery created for the king's daughter Aethelgeofu who later became its abbess, received such great endowments from the royal family that

it became the largest and wealthiest nunnery in England. A third site, Wilton in Wiltshire, was refounded by Alfred in 890.[5] New Minster, Winchester, was conceived and begun by Alfred although he did not live to see it completed. Each of these sites, in conjunction with those that had survived the Viking scourge, was important as an outpost of royal power. They would become more important in the decades to come as instruments of change.

Edward and his sister Aethelflaed continued the program of founding and refounding religious houses. In the first decade of his reign, Edward completed the construction of New Minster and also founded Romsey, a nunnery in Hampshire probably built for a noble woman named Aelfflaed.[6] Aethelflaed and her husband Aethelred founded two houses in Chester about the year 906, one dedicated to John the Baptist and the other to Saint Werburgh.[7] Another house was founded at Taunton, Somersetshire, in 904 by Bishop Denewulf of Winchester.[8] In each case the houses, like those founded by Alfred, were not regular, that is, they did not live under a rule. These were secular endowments for canons, priests, and women. The founding of houses under the Benedictine <u>regula</u> did not occur in Edward's lifetime. The fact that there were no monastic endowments is not entirely the result of the Viking ravages. There was apparently no

real desire among the majority of the religious community to become monks when they could enjoy the fruits of endowments as secular canons or priests without the rigors of monastic life.

One major reorganization occurred during Edward's reign. The two great sees of Winchester and Sherborne were broken into five dioceses in 909 for religious and political reasons. The ecclesiastical reason was simply to provide for the spiritual needs of a growing population. Politically, it was in the king's interest to have smaller administrative units with which to work. It would also bring the church, as an instrument of social control, closer to the people. Therefore, Hampshire and Surrey became one diocese with the seat at Winchester, Wiltshire and Berkshire belonged to Ramsbury, Dorsetshire to Sherborne, Devonshire and Cornwall to Crediton, and Somersetshire to Wells.[9] Frithustan was appointed to the see of Winchester, Athelstan to Ramsbury, Asser remained at Sherborne, Eadwulf was appointed to Crediton, and Athelhelm became bishop at Wells.[10] These new bishops and bishoprics would be important in both the religious and secular life of Wessex and England in the years to come.

In Mercia there were two events of importance in 909. Dorchester, a see that had been vacant for almost

ten years as a result of the Vikings, was reconstituted with Coenwulf as its new bishop.[11] The second reflection of a religious revival in Mercia was the removal of the body of the seventh-century Northumbrian king Oswald, revered as a martyr, from Bardney, Lincolnshire, to a site in Gloucester founded expressly to house the remains.[12] This translation may have been an attempt on the part of the Mercian lords to enlist support of native Northumbrians by showing reverence, in a spectacular way, for their most important hero and a major saint, or it may have been a simple act of piety. In any case, it is clear that Mercia was beginning to rebuild the church at the same time reconstruction was proceeding in Wessex.

For the remainder of his reign Edward did little more to aid the church. The usual grants were made and the obligatory payments were given; but Edward does not appear to have been greatly interested in the practices and usages of the church nor was he interested in reforming the abuses that had developed. In all probability Edward was so deeply involved in wresting England from Viking control that he simply did not have time to devote more attention to the church. Then too, the country was not fiscally capable of extensive reform.

In the year of his election to the throne Athelstan did little to indicate the deep interest he had in

the church. He made several gifts of land and relics to Old and New Minster, Winchester, the former, for example, receiving the head of Justin Martyr and the latter some bones of Saint Sebastian.[13] Old Minster also supposedly received three manors from the king but the charter granting the estates is dated 934, even though the annals note the gift ten years earlier.[14] Since the annals were probably compiled by Richard de Devizes in the twelfth century, it is possible that Richard erred in his reading of the numerals on the document. The king is said to have endowed one other monastery, Bury Saint Edmunds, where the relics of Edmund, king and martyr, were enshrined in 903,[15] but no extant charter relates to this house.

The coronation of Athelstan was an important development in the relations between church and state. Not only did the king's anointing give him the prerogative of entering into church affairs, but it also cemented ties between him and the church hierarchy.[16] The king was quick to bestow largesse on the church for its support. His grant to Saint Augustine's, Canterbury, S394 of land at Thanet in September of 925 was probably in appreciation for the use of their Gospels, Ms. Reg. I. B. vii., in the coronation ceremony. The manumission recorded in the Gospels gives an indication

of the king's religious interests. In the document it is stated that Athelstan gathered relics in England, although the phrase may also be read to mean that relics were brought to or procured for England.[17] Whatever the case, it is certain that he was interested in relics and collecting them prior to his coronation.

This collecting became a mania for the king who, at times sent men to the continent in search of precious items for his _haligdom_. Throughout his life, Athelstan continued to amass relics and, consequently, came to possess the largest collection ever owned by a single person.[18] Athelstan's relic collection also had economic importance. Royal charters and archival copies of charters were apparently housed with the king's _haligdom_, probably at Winchester.[19] The charters, after being folded, were endorsed enabling scribes to search readily through the files to find the necessary document.[20] This made the king's _haligdom_ doubly important for the welfare of the country. Since homes and religious houses were prone to destruction by fire in this age, a copy in a secure, sacred place was useful.[21]

One other piece of information obtained from the manumission is that the king's mass-priests, who may also have acted as his scribes, were promoted to higher positions in the church and consequently in the

government. Byrnstan, named as a priest in the document, was elevated to the see of Winchester in 931 and the other priest, Aelfheah, succeeded him on that episcopal throne in 934.[22] Both of these men were in close contact with the king and were probably elevated as a reward for service and to give the king a greater voice in the ecclesiastical affairs of the kingdom. Since the king was also using more clerics in his government, elevation of the two priests to bishoprics gave him added advisors in whom he could trust.

Athelstan's first legislation, enacted with the advice of Archbishop Wulfhelm and the other bishops, was to insure that tithes were paid to the church from all of the king's properties.[23] Livestock and produce were to be carefully tithed and the king enjoined all greater lords, ecclesiastical and secular, to do the same. Bishops and reeves were ordered to disseminate this new law that required tithes to be paid on 29 August, the day of the beheading of John the Baptist.[24] The king warned his reeves that church dues, plow alms, and soul-scot were to be paid as demanded for the good of the church and also that priests and canons were to remain with their benefices on pain of deprivation.[25] The final section of the law threatened reeves who did not pay dues to the church or did not give the king his due.[26]

The king also promulgated an ordinance concerning charities, a supplement to I Athelstan, that outlined provisions for feeding and clothing destitute Englishmen. From the royal properties, the poor were to be given grain, meat and clothing and any reeve who did not do this was liable to a fine of thirty shillings, to be divided among the poor of the reeve's estate by the local bishop. There was also provision for the emancipation of one slave per year who had been placed in penal servitude.[27] The ordinance is clearly an act of piety on the part of Athelstan and is also the first social legislation in England. Starving peasants were of little use to anyone.

Two other acts of the king have bearing on the church. Breaking into a church was considered the worst sort of theft. If a man was found guilty of this crime as a result of the three-fold ordeal, he was liable to pay compensation, a fine, and have the offending hand cut off.[28] The hand, however, could be redeemed on payment of the appropriate wergeld. The other act is directly related to the eternal welfare of the king. It was decreed that fifty Psalms were to be sung for the king in every monastery every Friday. Psalms were also to be sung for the loyal subjects of the king.[29] The king was interested in his own welfare as well as that

of the church.

In view of the debilitation of the church during the wars with the Vikings, Athelstan's financial support was crucial. The four sources of church revenues were: plow alms, a small charge on each plow levied at Easter; church-scot, a levy of grain against every free man who held arable land, paid at Martinmas; soul-scot, the burial fee; and the tithe.[30] These revenues, that the king commanded be paid, were probably gathered locally by the priest and divided between him and the bishop of his diocese. They, along with revenues from lands held by the diocese, were the sources of income for support of the church on the local, diocesan, and national level.

One other revenue, and one which was not national, was Peter's Pence. This was one penny collected from every household once a year and sent to Rome in support of the papacy. It was a royal institution, perhaps begun by King Alfred, that would later be protected by law.[31] Although there is no numismatic evidence for the sending of Peter's Pence to Rome by Athelstan, there is in the following reign. A hoard found near the House of the Vestals at the foot of the Palatine Hill at Rome gives an idea of what a payment to the pope was like. The hoard contains nearly 835 coins, five of which have no connection with England. Two Pavian denarii, a

denarius each of Ratisbon and Limoges, and a solidus aureus of the Emperor Theophilus are included with the Anglo-Saxon and Viking coins. Of the approximately 830 coins from England, 500 are of the reign of Athelstan. Also found with the hoard was a fibula with the inscription +DOMNO MA+RINO PAPA, probably of Pope Marinus II. Since there are no Roman coins in the group, it is clear that the coins were amassed outside of Rome. They were probably buried by someone in the papal household in 946 when Hugh of Italy marched on Rome in his war with Alberic of Rome.[32] The yearly collections of Peter's Pence were apparently delivered throughout Athelstan's reign as his father and grandfather had done before him.

Knowledge of Athelstan's interest in relics spread to the continent in the year after his coronation. A worsening situation in Brittany had forced many clerics to flee to France for protection, where a letter from Radbod of Dol evidences knowledge of Athelstan. Since Edward had been in contact with Saint Samson's and had been in their confraternity, it was natural for these clerics to turn to the new king whose reputation was known on the continent. The relics sent to Athelstan included bones of Saints Paternus, Senator, and Scabillion, three Bretons of repute. Of course, Radbod wanted a donation in return, but the request was obsequious

rather than demanding.[33] Athelstan presented the relics of Paternus, encased in a shrine of the king's construction, to Malmesbury while the bones of the other saints were later given to Milton Abbas.[34] These were the first of many foreign relics presented to Athelstan.

At some time early in his reign, the king was given a French Gospels. The manuscript, Reg. I. A. xviii., is beautifully illuminated and surely a regal gift. Although the edges were slightly charred in the fire of 1731, the illuminations were not damaged. On f. 3^b is an eleventh-century inscription stating that the book was a gift of Athelstan to Saint Augustine's, Canterbury.[35] Other than this late inscription, there is only circumstantial evidence of the grant. It is known that Athelstan received religious and liturgical manuscripts from abroad and that he was particularly generous in his gifts to Saint Augustine's. There is also a note of John Leland, the great antiquary, on f. 2^b, that supports the claim.[36]

The king was not the only member of his family involved with the church. Several of his close relatives were members of religious communities in England. Aethelgeofu, Athelstan's aunt, was the abbess of Shaftesbury, a nunnery created for her by her father in 888. Three of Athelstan's sisters were also in religious

seclusion. Eadflaed and Aethelhild, both daughters of Edward and Aelfflaed and both born about 905, were nuns at Wilton, a house that Alfred had refounded about 890.[37] A third sister, and the most famous, was Eadburga. She was placed at Nunnaminster, Winchester, a foundation of Alfred and his queen that had been completed by Edward. Eadburga lived at Nunnaminster for her entire life, from her birth in c. 923 to her death as abbess on 15 June, c. 960.[38] A cult soon formed and the abbess was beatified. Her cult was still active in the fourteenth century when a life was written.[39]

It was at approximately this time that several of the great church reformers of the later tenth century were introduced to the court to be educated with other noble children. Dunstan, the son of Heorstan and Cynethrith, was related to the royal house through one or both of his parents. He was introduced to the king by his uncle Aethelhelm of Canterbury. The boy was also related to Bishop Aelfheah of Wells (or Winchester) and to Cynesige, later bishop at Lichfield.[40] One of Dunstan's schoolmates was Aethelwold, second of the great church reformers of the century, who is noted as a favorite of the king.[41] There is a record of a gift of the king to Aethelwold, probably given to the boy before he was sent for training to Glastonbury.[42] If this is

accurate, the boy must have shown great promise or was of a family of consequence. A third leader of the reform was presented by the Danish-born Oda, who would successively become Bishop of Ramsbury and Archbishop of Canterbury. Oda brought his nephew Oswald, the third of the reforming triumvirate, to the court of Athelstan.[43]

The magnificent gifts that Hugh the Great gave to Athelstan in 926 were divided among several houses in that or the following year. Malmesbury apparently received pieces of the Cross and Crown of Thorns, Exeter claimed a part of the Cross and the lance and a tooth of Maurice, and Westminster, in a grant of Edward the Confessor of Athelstan's relics, received part of the Cross and the lance of Maurice.[44] New Minster also received a number of relics, clothes of the Virgin, a bone of Saint Sebastian, and relics of John the Baptist, Peter and Christopher. The relic list found in the Hyde Register notes the king presented a gem with the relics. It has been suggested by Förster that this is the Alfred Jewel created for King Alfred and used in royal ceremonies. However, John Earle in his monograph on the Alfred Jewel does not mention the relationship.[45] Although the king gave many relics to the new monastery, at least one was not granted by him. The list includes relics of Eadgyth, daughter of King Edgar, that could not possibly have been

given by Athelstan. The remainder of the list is apparently an authentic record of the king's gifts.[46] Even though Athelstan commonly presented quantities of relics to religious houses, his collection remained huge.

The taking of York in 927 had little effect on the church or the archdiocese centered in that city. Hrothweard was immediately appointed to the archiepiscopal throne but he did not take up residence at any time during his four-year reign. This is strange since there was clearly a great amount of work to be done in York to rebuild the church. It is possible Athelstan considered Hrothweard too valuable a counselor to be sent north or that he was too old to survive the trip. In any case, the church in York did not benefit from the appointment of Hrothweard. Suffragan bishops may have been active in the archdiocese in the archbishop's stead.

There is a charter of the king in 927 that is of interest. Christ Church, Canterbury, received land at Folkestone, Kent, for the reconstruction of a nunnery there. The charter, S398, has been challenged on the basis of the witness list that contains two problematic names. Aelfheah is listed as Bishop of Winchester, a dignity to which he was not elevated until 934, and Oda is listed as Bishop of Sherborne. It is possible that the twelfth-century copyist changed the listing of

Aelfheah from Wells to Winchester since there was a bishop at Wells of the same name. It is also possible that Oda's bishopric was changed from Ramsbury to Sherborne since the two were merged as Sherborne in 1058. The copyist may have thought he was correcting "errors" in the text. The other witnesses are correct, including the signature of Wulfgar, ealdorman of Kent. If someone were tampering with the charter or creating it out of hand, it would have been extremely difficult to come up with the correct ealdorman of Kent.

The death of Maelbright MacDurnan, Abbot of Armagh and Raphoe, in 927, brought another precious manuscript into Wessex. The Gospels that bear the abbot's name appeared in Wessex within the year although the means of acquisition are unknown. It may have been a gift to the king by Irish friends or it may have been willed to Athelstan by Maelbright who surely had heard of the piety of the king. It is also possible that the king purchased the manuscript. The Gospels are done in an archaic, pointed, Irish minuscule that resembles that of the Book of Armagh. The entire Gospels is magnificently illuminated, something that is not seen in English manuscripts of this period. Athelstan did not retain possession of the book for long. Christ Church, Canterbury, was soon the recipient of this gift.[47]

The continental marriage of Eadgyth and Otto of Germany was to have impact on the English church. Not only did Athelstan receive several manuscripts, but he also learned about continental reforms of the church. It should be remembered that relations between Wessex and Flanders, the Frankish duchy, and France were such that information about Lotharingian and Burgundian reforms was being sent to England. This knowledge, in addition to information from Germany, probably spurred Athelstan to consider what could be done for the church in England. One of the first actions of the king was to import foreign scholars, as his grandfather had done. From Germany came the scholar Godescalc who was given charge of a religious house on the royal estate of Abingdon to build a school. He was not a monk as is sometimes thought. Godescalc is always referred to as a priest and even in his capacity as head of the house at Abingdon he was not called abbot.[48] There is, however, some indication that there was a small monastic revival in England. Aelfheah, the king's mass-priest, is noted in 929 as a monk as had been Archbishop Aethelhelm of Canterbury. Bishop Coenwald, who had been a visitor at the German monasteries in 929, was also a monk.[49] Although there was no strong monastic life in Athelstan's reign, evidence of monks and abbots becomes more and more apparent

as the years pass. It is clear that the church was reviving and monasticism was no longer the rarity that it had been after the Danish wars.

The manuscripts that Otto of Germany gave to Athelstan at the time of Otto's marriage to Eadgyth were given to monasteries. The Acts of the Council of Constantinople, Ms. Cott. Claud. B.v., was granted to Saint Peter's, Bath, probably in 929 or 930. The dedication, written in a late tenth-century hand, notes the king presented it for the good of his soul.[50] This manuscript is the only one of the three that is not illuminated. The Athelstan Psalter, Cott. Galba A. xviii., is a magnificently illuminated manuscript done at Stavelot in the ninth century. This book was probably a direct inspiration for the Winchester School of illumination, and the school was given its impetus by the king's gift of the book to Winchester. There are three full-page illuminations in the manuscript, ff. 2, 20, and 120, and at one time there was a fourth. This fourth illumination was at a later date removed and pasted into Ms. Bodl. Rawl. B. 484., f. 85.[51] All four of the full-page illuminations were done at Winchester and are the earliest representatives of that school. One interesting sidelight on the manuscript is the Greek version of the Litany, Pater Noster, and Sanctus on ff. 199^{b}-200^{b} that

are done in an Anglo-Saxon hand. It is not known if the scribe actually knew enough Greek to know what he was copying or whether he simply was copying what he was told. The third of Otto's manuscripts was a Gospel done at Lobbes in the late ninth century. The illuminations of the four Evangelists are very much in the style of the early ninth-century Carolingian portraits. A late tenth-century notice on f. 15^b states that the king donated the Gospels to Christ Church, Canterbury. In a hand entirely different from the donation notice but on the same folio is a poem in praise of Athelstan and his good deeds toward the church. Although the manuscript was badly faded in the 1731 fire, it is possible to read both the dedication and the poem.[52]

These latter two manuscripts were very important in the development of Anglo-Saxon illumination in the tenth century. The Danes had killed off the art in England with their rampages in the north. However, with the dealings of Athelstan on the continent, the importation of manuscripts prompted a revival of the art of illumination. The Winchester School was a direct result of the king's love of these beautiful manuscripts. A close scrutiny of the products of the school will indicate the debt of these artists to the Frankish and German schools that Athelstan greatly admired.[53]

Athelstan's relations with the continent also brought other manuscripts of interest to England. The earliest Romanorum Psalter dates from the early tenth century with glosses in Old English from the reign of Athelstan.[54] The cult of Saint Christopher was also new in the reign of Athelstan.[55] Probably spurred by the king's acquisition of relics of that saint, the cult spread and was soon followed by a life that would later be copied into the Beowulf codex.

There is a list of books--an inventory--on a leaf of Ms. Cott. Dom. I., that were at one time thought to have been gifts of Athelstan to Saint Augustine's, Canterbury, but are apparently the manuscripts of an eleventh-century member of the community. The list on f. 55^b names a certain Athelstan, and, as a result of the generous gifts of the king, it was assumed that this was another list of his donations. A second possibility is that the books were those of Athelstan Half-King particularly since it was thought that one of his sons, Aelfwold, became a priest rather than an ealdorman and there is an Aelfwold mentioned in the list. This cannot be correct since Aelfwold the son of Athelstan Half-King did involve himself in secular affairs. The likeliest possibility is that the Athelstan named in the list was a member of the community at Saint Augustine's and,

perhaps because of family wealth, was the owner of many books.[56]

Four charters were purportedly granted by Athelstan in 930 to churches.[57] The first, S406, may be dismissed with little comment. It is a grant to Worcester of land at Clifton-upon-Teme, Worcestershire, and is clearly spurious. The charter notes the invasion of Anlaf and mentions monks, both anachronisms. The other three charters are not spurious and are of some importance. Dated 5 April, S403 grants land at Medmerry and Earnley, Sussex, to Bishop Beornheah of Selsey. This is the only grant of Athelstan to this see and, although the charter is found only in a fourteenth-century copy, it is authentic. Some time in this year the king granted land to Cynath, who was probably abbot at Evesham. The charter, S404, notes land was given at Dumbleton on the River Isbourne, Gloucestershire; at Ashton Somerville, Worcestershire; and woodland at Flyford Flavell on the Piddle Brook, Worcestershire. Although the charter is a late copy with errors in the text and witness list, there are no substantial reasons for rejecting it. In one of the copies, there is a later confirmation of King Edgar. The final charter of 930, and in many ways the most interesting, is a grant of 29 April to Eadulf and the _familia_ of Crediton. This charter, S405, is the only

one that clearly relieves a community of the onus of the common burdens. There has been, however, a serious challenge to the charter on palaeographical grounds that cannot be ignored. The manuscript is tentatively dated to the late tenth century while the script is dated to the early eleventh century. Rather than being a forgery, it is possible that the document is simply an eleventh-century copy. Also within the charter is a clear division of the mensa, something that is not usually so well defined.[58] Thus, the charter is important for the understanding of the common burdens and the division of the mensa.

It was about this time that Athelstan completed the work begun by his father in the division of the large sees into smaller units. Crediton was further divided by creating a bishopric for Cornwall with its boundary at the River Tamar. Evidence for the division is found in a letter of Saint Dunstan to King Aethelred written between 980 and 988 that contains the statement: "Then it happened that King Athelstan gave to Conan the bishopric as far as the Tamar flowed."[59] The selection of the boundary and the bishop shows the king's political acumen. Taking the see to the Tamar was a clear recognition of the Cornish territory and the use of a Cornish ecclesiastic as bishop was a politic concession

to the populace. If Athelstan had not used this boundary or had placed a West Saxon on the throne, it could have caused difficulties. Although the exact date of the event is not known, Conan begins to be a regular witness to royal charters in 931.[60] The seat of the see was Lanalet, where Conan may have been abbot-bishop prior to his elevation by Athelstan. The name of the seat would later be changed to Saint Germans, in honor of Saint Germanus of Auxerre, sometime before the death of Edward the Confessor.

Although Lanalet was subservient to Crediton, the Cornish people were pleased with the king's actions. He not only created a see for them, but also was a benefactor of that see and of many churches in Cornwall. Athelstan is purported to have founded the house known as Saint Buryan for secular canons in 930.[61] The charter, S450, granting land to Saint Buryan is dubious since the text is fourteenth-century and is extraordinarily corrupt. The Domesday Survey states that Saint Buryan did hold the property, however, so the grant may be historical even though the charter has been badly handled by copyists over a number of centuries. Whatever the case, Athelstan was revered by the Cornish peoples as a benefactor of their churches.

A number of grants were made to religious houses

by the king in 931. The first three, S408, S409, and S410, concern Saint Mary's, Abingdon. Only one of the three, S409, is not questionable. It grants land at Shellingford, Berkshire, to the abbey and is witnessed by numerous lay and religious leaders, including Godescalc, the German who was probably brought to the abbey to revive the school there. The authenticity of the other two charters has been challenged. However, the language of both documents is consistent with the grandiose, full-blown language of charter formulae of the period and the witness lists display an intimate knowledge of the personnel of the king's retinue. The two charters are interpolated, late copies that, although not perfect, may be accepted as grants of land at Sandford, Oxfordshire, and Swinford, Berkshire, to Abingdon. It may have been in 931 that Athelstan began to promote the fortunes of the abbey since these are the only grants he gave to the house. If Godescalc came to England as a result of the king's dealings with the German throne in 929, part of the enticement to England may have been the upgrading of the economic fortunes of the house.

It may also have been at this time that Athelstan Half-King granted land at Uffington, Berkshire, to Saint Mary's, Abingdon. The charter, S1208, is unique in the

development of the Anglo-Saxon diploma. Rather than acting as an instrument of transfer, the document indicates the transfer has already occurred. This solves the problem of why Athelstan is referred to as ealdorman, a title to which he did not accede until 932. The document is also unique in that it clearly proves that a great landowner could alienate his estates in his lifetime, with or without his heirs' consent.[62] Athelstan Half-King appears again in the ensuing years as a major benefactor of the religious houses of England.

At the Witan at Colchester on 23 March, 931, Abbot Aelfric received a grant of ten cassates at Ecchinswell, Hampshire, as recorded in S412. Aelfric was probably the abbot of New Minster, Winchester, although this is an inference. He was, however, the ranking abbot since his signature appears first in the list of abbots witnessing charters from 931 to 934. The grant may have been given to the abbey in recognition of Aelfric's ascendancy to the abbatial throne there. Saint Peter's, Bath, was also the recipient of the king's largesse. In a charter, S414, dated 931, the house was granted land at Priston, Somersetshire, and Cold Ashton, Gloucestershire. The date, however, is inconsistent with the witness list which indicates a date sometime after 934. The charter is greatly interpolated with a

paragraph on the evils of Alfred and his attempt to take Athelstan at the king's coronation.[63] Nevertheless, the grant was made since it is corroborated by a charter of King Eadwig, S664, that clearly states that Cold Ashton was granted by Athelstan to Saint Peter's.[64] In 932, on the day before Christmas, Athelstan gave land at Fontmill, Dorsetshire, to Shaftesbury nunnery where his aunt was yet abbess. The grant, S419, was presented at the king's vill at Amesbury, Wiltshire, where the king was spending the Christmas season.

The church was also supported by the lesser nobility. A certain thegn named Wulfgar, in a will drawn up between 931 and 939, granted lands to New and Old minster, Winchester. Although he is called thegn in his will, S1533, it is probable that this Wulfgar is the hereditary ealdorman of Wiltshire who succeeds to the office in 937-940. Athelstan gave Wulfgar land at Ham, Wiltshire, in November of 931, S416, in one of the most impressive of the extant Anglo-Saxon charters. The document is clearly an original and most probably comes from the royal archives.[65] Another charter granting land to Wulfgar is not as clear. It purports to be a grant of Edward to the thegn, but evidence in the charter, S379, indicates it was actually a grant of Athelstan. It is one of the "Flebilia fortiter" series of

Athelstan's charters,[66] the dating clause is of Athelstan's reign, and the witness list is from the period 931-933. It was apparently an error in copying that replaced Athelstan with Edward and changed the date to 921. This is entirely possible since the manuscript is of the fourteenth century. Whatever the case, the grant of Collingbourne Kingston, Wiltshire, was made to Wulfgar, either by Edward or more probably Athelstan, since the land was included in the thegn's will. The terms of the will leave all land to Wulfgar's wife Aeffe with provision that certain religious communities will be given produce from the estates and that the estates will revert to the communities after the death of Aeffe. For two of the grants, Aeffe is to provide three days' food-rent a year to the institution while to the house at Knitsbury, a fourth of the produce of Inkpen, Berkshire, is to be given every year.[67] This latter estate would revert finally to Knitsbury, while Collingbourne Kingston would devolve to New Minster and Ham to Old Minster. Several other estates were willed to relatives of Wulfgar. The will is important since it shows what provisions were made to support a thegn's wife during her lifetime and also what kind of donations were made by lay lords to religious communities.

At the same time that Athelstan donated land to

Shaftesbury nunnery, he also gave land to a thegn named Alfred. The grant, S418, gives twelve cassates at North Stoneham, Hampshire. Alfred, in turn, willed the land to his wife for her lifetime with final reversion to New Minster, Winchester.[68] Alfred had close ties with this institution since New Minster had leased land to him before he drew up his will in 932 or later. The lease, S1417, was for three lives of land at Chiseldon, Wiltshire, in return for eighty mancuses of gold and a yearly rent of eighty shillings to be paid on the anniversary of the death of Edward the Elder. These twenty hides must have been enormously productive to command such a rent.

Sometime in this period, perhaps in 932, Athelstan gave generously to the monastery of Saint Mary and Saint Peter in Exeter. There are three charters that purport to grant land to this house: S386, S387, and S389. A fourth grant, S390, is a conflation of S386 and S389 and may be ignored. The first three grants, however, may not be the spurious instruments that they are thought to be. They transfer land to the house at Culmestock, Monkton and Thoverton, and Stoke Canon, Devonshire. The charters are clearly not original documents and are probably not even copies of originals. They are very likely clumsy reconstructions of documents

destroyed by a Viking assault on the city of Exeter in 1003[69] that partially destroyed the monastery. It is likely that the monks of the eleventh century were aware of Athelstan's grants and tried to reconstruct the charters as best they could. Although the charters are forgeries in the strict sense, they probably reflect actual transfers of land to the house.

Athelstan was known as a fundator of the monastery as a result of his donations of land and relics.[70] In a tenth-century Breton Gospels in the possession of Exeter Cathedral in the eleventh century, there is a commentary on Athelstan's activities as a relic collector. The commentary is in Ms. Bodl. Auct. D. 2. 16., ff. 8^a-9^a and is in an eleventh-century hand.[71] It notes that the king was a benefactor of Exeter for the good of his soul and the welfare of his people. The king sent men overseas to purchase the best and finest relics obtainable for himself and the state. Fully a third of the great collection of relics and twenty-six hides of land were given to Exeter by Athelstan according to the commentary. Although the vast majority of the relics are of the early martyrs and saints, some of them are English and several are clearly of a later date than the reign of Athelstan.[72] The two most notable later additions to the collection are the remains of

Edward the Martyr (no. 66) and the relics of Aelfgifu (no. 134), the wife of King Edmund. Athelstan clearly did not give all the relics during his lifetime and possibly did not give them at all. The list may be a record of other kings' grants to the monastery from the haligdom of Athelstan. The claim that Exeter received a third of Athelstan's relics has been called "too bold" and it has been suggested that, rather than being a list of relics donated to Exeter, it is an inventory of all of Athelstan's relics.[73] Although this is possible, it should be remembered that Athelstan was an extremely avid collector of relics, that he received numerous gifts from foreign princes, and that he apparently spent a great deal of time and money assembling his collection.

The death of Athelstan's brother Eadwine in 933 spurred the king to found at least one house in his memory.[74] Milton Abbas, or Middleton, Dorsetshire, was created for the benefit of the soul of Eadwine and was endowed with several estates and a number of relics, including bones of Saint Samson that had been a gift of Radbod of Saint Samson's.[75] Also given were bones of Saint Bradwalador, a piece of the Cross, and other relics in five reliquaries.[76] A charter, dated 843 but actually given in 933 or 934, evidences the grants of the king to Milton Abbas. It is interpolated and

confused, perhaps as a result of an attempted reconstruction after the disastrous fire in 1309, but is apparently a true reflection of the king's grant. The land given in S391 is entirely in Dorsetshire and consists of sixty-six and one-half hides at Milborne, Woolland, the Frome mouth, Clyffe, Lyscombe, Burleston, Little Puddle, Cattestock, Compton Abbas, Whitcombe, Osmington, and Holworth. To this was added a weir on the Avon River at Twyneham, the water at Weymouth, half the shore of the Weymouth, twelve acres for the weir and its keeper, three thegns in Sussex, a salthouse near the weir, thirty hides at Sydling to supply food, two at Chalmington, and six at Hillfield, and ten at Ercecombe for timber. This is an enormous grant, but it is consistent with the king's generosity in dealing with his own or his relatives' souls. There is no reason to dispute the grant simply because of its size.

The king is also supposed to have founded a house at Muchelney, Somersetshire, in sorrow over the death of his brother. In this case, he could not have founded the house since there are two eighth-century grants to the house, S249 and S261, in existence. Possibly Athelstan refounded the house and was known as its <u>fundator</u>. William of Malmesbury notes that he founded the house and comments that land and relics were given as an

endowment.[77] As late as 1277, the abbot of Muchelney ordered alms to be given and a pittance made on the anniversary of Athelstan, apparently the anniversary of his death.[78] This was seemingly done as a remembrance of the refoundation and gifts of the king. One charter, S455, purports to be a grant of Athelstan to Muchelney of land at Curry Rivel and Stowey, Somersetshire. Included in the fourteenth-century cartulary of the house, the document is either spurious or greatly interpolated. The language is definitely not of the period but this may be due to the diligence of the copyist in attempting to modernize the charter to make it uniform with the remainder of the cartulary. The witness list, however, agrees with other witness lists of the period indicating that it may be drawn from a genuine instrument.

Two charters of 933 represent large grants of land to the see of Sherborne. On 26 January at a Witan at Chippenham, Wiltshire, Athelstan granted ten hides at Bradford Abbas, S422, and eight hides at Stalbridge Weston, Dorsetshire, S423. The former is without question an authentic charter. The latter, however, has been called a forgery because of the inclusion of the archaic term familiae rather than hides and the anachronistic reference to Sherborne Castle.[79] The charter, S423, is thought to be based on S422 since both are a

part of the "Flebilia fortiter" series. The differences in the charters, however, are very evident. The supposed forgery has a much fuller witness list and the language is closer to the other charters of the "Flebilia" series than it is to S422. If it was forged, the creator of S423 must have had access to other charters of the series that were not available at Sherborne and this is most unlikely. It would appear, then, that the see of Sherborne received two grants of land from Athelstan in 933.[80]

As 934 was a crucial year for the growth of England, so it was for the restoration and growth of the church. The first major event and one that would have great impact on the church in the next half century was the expulsion of Dunstan from court. The boy had been at court at least from the coronation of Athelstan and was favored by the king. He was educated with his kinsmen and peers at the palace school and was such a good student that other boys became jealous of his abilities and knowledge. As a result there was apparently a plot against Dunstan who was, in 934, accused of witchcraft and knowledge of the occult. The king was forced to banish the boy from court for the remainder of his reign.[81]

This banishment, however, was not of the usual

sort. Dunstan was sent to Glastonbury, one of the great centers of learning in Britain. It was a wise decision of Athelstan to send the boy here. At this time, Glastonbury was not independent since it was in the king's hands and under the supervision of two thegns, Cuthred and Edgwulf.[82] The abbot was a certain Aelfric,[83] who was apparently an appointee of the king. It would therefore not be possible for the boy to go to Glastonbury without the king's permission and it is likelier that he was expressly sent there by Athelstan. At Glastonbury there were Irish scholars whose tradition of learning had not been so badly disrupted by the Vikings as had the educational system elsewhere in England. Dunstan was taught the Trivium and Quadrivium as well as some Greek in the best possible education available in England.[84] It was probably during this period that Dunstan received his first experience of monastic life and perhaps the knowledge of the Rule of Saint Benedict. It is possible that without this exile at Glastonbury, Dunstan would not have returned to the mainstream of English affairs as a supporter of the monastic life and as a church reformer.

The march north to invade Scotland in June of 934 also brought the church immediately to the king's attention. Several grants were made that reflect

Athelstan's concern for the welfare of his religious houses. One, S424, was probably given early in the year to Saint Mary's, Wilton, even though the date is given as 933. This date is unacceptable since the charter is witnessed by Bishop Aelfheah of Winchester who did not succeed to the see until 934. The grant, however, is authentic. Two large grants were purportedly made at Nottingham on 7 June when the king was on the road north. The first, a spurious grant of land to Saint Mary's, Worcester, supposedly transfers a great amount of land in Worcestershire to the church. The grant, S428, has a possible authentic base but in its present form can not be accepted as genuine. A second charter of this date, S407, is authentic and is of interest. Although dated 7 June, 930, the year is apparently a copyist's error since the indiction, concurrent, and epacts are for 934 and several of the witnesses could not have signed before 934. The document records the presentation of land at Amounderness, Lancashire, that Athelstan had purchased with his own money, to the church of Saint Peter, York. The tract of land is immense. It is bounded by the sea, the Cocker River to its source, a line across to the spring called Dunsop, the Dunsop to the Hodder, the Hodder to the Ribble, and following the Ribble to the Irish Sea. This may have been an attempt

to block the Norse movement in Lancashire. The grant was to Wulfhelm, whom Athelstan had elevated to the archepiscopal throne in 930 or 931 and who was one of the king's trusted advisors. Wulfhelm had never left the court from the time of his appointment until the march north in 934.[85] The grant of Amounderness may have been a reward for Wulfhelm's service to the king or it may have been necessary economic support for the see of York.

From Nottingham, Athelstan and his army marched north to Beverley and the shrine of Saint John of Beverley. After refounding the site as a house for seven canons,[86] Athelstan is said to have vowed gifts to the shrine if he were victorious. Hence, gifts of land, relics, and the making of the shrine a place of refuge for those outside the law were granted.[87] Although the source of this information is late, it is possible that these were given to Saint John's. The king is also supposed to have granted other privileges in a charter, S451, that is clearly spurious.[88] A small silver alloy ring has been found that may bear on the Athelstan-John of Beverley story. The inscription on the ring reads: IOHNSE BEVERIYA/RCEB// A E STA R G N//. The first part is clearly Archbishop John of Beverley, and the second is conjecturally read as "Athelstan gave the ring."[89] The ring is purportedly a gift of Athelstan,

but it is difficult to believe a ring of such little intrinsic or artistic value would be a royal gift. It is likelier a commemorative of the events of 934 or some sort of trophy or recognition of a pilgrim's trek to Beverley. The latter is the strongest possibility since the ring is probably of the eleventh century.[90] One odd piece of evidence is found in Ms. Bodl. Rawl. C. 697., a tenth-century manuscript of Aldhelm and Prudentius that at one time belonged to Bury Saint Edmunds. At the end of the manuscript is a poem containing an acrostic of Athelstan and a telestic of John.[91] While this may have nothing to do with John of Beverley, the name John is not so common that the connection may be ruled out. It is possible that it is some monk's commemoration of Athelstan's visit.

From Beverley Athelstan is supposed to have visited Ripon and the church founded by Wilfred. The only evidence of this visit are two charters, S456, and its rhyming version, S457, that are spurious. The former is in the form of a twelfth-century writ and the latter is a concoction derived from it. It is doubtful that there is even an authentic basis for the forgeries. There was, however, a strong tradition in the thirteenth century and lasting into the fifteenth century that Athelstan did visit the church, made it a place of

sanctuary, and granted a number of concessions.[92] In 1228, the clergy of Ripon claimed Athelstan had granted them a weekly market and an annual five-day fair, but the charters on which their claims were based are spurious.[93] There are also two fifteenth-century acta of the Chapter of Ripon that claim Athelstan made the church a place of refuge and that all kings, and Athelstan in particular, would have the usual services sung for their souls.[94] Although the evidence is meager, it is probable that Athelstan visited Ripon at this time and made some sort of contribution to the church. Geographically, the visit is logical. If the king was proceeding northward with his army and clergy, especially considering Athelstan's religious convictions, it would be strange if he did not stop at the church of Wilfred at Ripon.[95]

From Ripon, Athelstan and his army marched to Chester-le-Street and the shrine of Saint Cuthbert. This most famous Northumbrian saint had been bishop of Lindisfarne in the seventh century. When the Danes invaded, the saint's bones were moved to Chester-le-Street and the see was transferred to that town in 883. It is not surprising that Athelstan would stop at this shrine since his family appears to have had a special relationship with the saint in time of war. Cuthbert had

appeared to Alfred in 878 before the battle at Edington and told him that he would not only be victorious but also that he and his descendants would rule England.[96] Athelstan was certainly aware of this vision and may have wanted to insure Cuthbert's aid in this venture into Scotland. Great gifts were given to the shrine, including books, vestments, jewelry, plate, and restoration of twelve pieces of property.[97] Although there is no record of the restoration of the land aside from Symeon of Durham's list, some of the objects given to the shrine are still in existence.[98]

Three vestments were given to the shrine: a stole, a maniple, and a smaller maniple that is probably a girdle. As the only surviving complete examples of Anglo-Saxon embroidery, they are of extreme value in the study of that art and of the influences on it. The maniple and stole were originally made at the command of Aelfflaed, the second wife of Edward the Elder, to be presented to Bishop Frithustan of Winchester. On the stole are the inscriptions: "AElfflaed fieri precipit," and "Pio Episcopo Fridestano."[99] The creation of the vestments was costly. Threads used in the embroidery are silk and gold while the braids are imported Soumak ware from Egypt. The decorations on the vestments are strongly influenced by Sassanian art and the iconography

shows Byzantine influence.[100]

Several books are listed by Symeon of Durham as presentations of Athelstan: A Gospels, a missal, a text of two of the Evangelists, and a manuscript containing the prose and metrical lives of Saint Cuthbert. Only one book survives although another is recorded and a third may be identified. This third book is Elfledes Boc, a Gospels listed in the twelfth-century Durham catalog. It may once have belonged to Aelfflaed, Athelstan's step-mother, and later given to Saint Cuthbert by Athelstan.[101] The manuscript is now lost and there is no trace of it after the listing in the catalog.

The second book, a French Gospels, was destroyed in the fire of 1731. Only thirteen badly charred fragments of Cott. Otho B. ix. remain and even under ultraviolet light give no evidence of their pedigree. Fortunately, Humphrey Wanley listed the manuscript in his Catalogus and printed a description of the manuscript as well as Athelstan's grant.[102] The manuscript was beautifully illuminated with pictures of the Evangelists. At the beginning of the work, before the Gospel of Matthew, was an illumination of Saint Cuthbert receiving the book from Athelstan. Near the illumination was a notice of the grant.[103] Included in the manuscript was a list in Old English of the gifts of Athelstan that is

now found only in Latin in the work of Symeon of Durham.[104]

The only surviving manuscript gift of Athelstan is the metrical and prose lives of Cuthbert by Bede that is now C.C.C.C. 183.[105] The work contains not only the lives, but also two chapters of Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica on Cuthbertine miracles, a list of English bishops and kings, the mass and office of Saint Cuthbert, and a list of the difficult words in the metrical life.[106] On folio 1^b is a magnificent illumination of Saint Cuthbert accepting the book from Athelstan, probably the only extant representation of the king.[107] Although promised in 934, this and the previous manuscript, Cott. Otho B. ix., were only delivered at a later date, probably in 937. The manuscript containing the lives of Cuthbert was created at Winchester or Glastonbury and it is probable that the Cuthbert-Athelstan illumination was painted in the Gospels at the same time and place.[108]

The gifts of Athelstan were fitting. The chalices, plate, and jewelry were a royal treasure in themselves and the addition of vestments and manuscripts make this one of the richest gifts of any Anglo-Saxon king to any shrine. It is an indication of the piety of the king toward one of the greatest of the Anglo-Saxon saints.

After Athelstan's return from his raid in Scotland he donated to several houses. At the beginning of November, the see of Crediton received a grant of privileges in a charter dated 933, Indiction VI. The charter, S421, must be dated to the following year because of the witness list. The error in dating may be explained by the fact that the charter is a copy of the middle or late tenth century. It is doubtful that the document is the work of a forger since the agreement between the king and the see required Crediton to pay sixty pounds of silver for the freedom from taxation. A forger would be more likely to state that the see was freed from taxation by an act of royal piety. A second charter, S427, was granted to the familia of Winchester on 16 December while the king was at the royal estate at Frome, Dorsetshire. The grant gives the clergy thirty hides at Enford, Wiltshire, ten at Chilbolton and ten at Ashmansworth, Hampshire. In the charter there are several later interpolations that do not damage its authenticity. The phrase that provides for the division of the mensa is clearly a later insertion and should be ignored when reading the charter.[109] Otherwise, the charter is an authentic instrument of transfer.

In the following year, Athelstan granted land to the nunnery where his aunt Aethelgeofu was abbess.

Shaftesbury received six hides at Tarrant Hinton, Dorsetshire. The instrument of the grant, S429, is late but there is no reason to doubt its authenticity. A one-year error in the indiction is apparently a copying error. The charter is noted as being written in the eleventh year of the king's reign, so there is little doubt that it was in 935 that the charter was written.

For the next several years, there was little activity in the church and a two-year gap in the presentation of land and relics to religious houses. The lack of activity is mirrored in the lack of political activity. All this changed, however, in 937. Several bishops traveled with Athelstan to the crucial confrontation at Brunanburh. Oda of Ramsbury and Theodred of London are specifically cited by William of Malmesbury as riding in the contingent that fought against the invaders.[110] It is probable that the bishops did not fight but were there to give religious support. The evening before the battle, a bishop is reported as having been murdered and the bishop is named as Waerstan of Sherborne.[111] Waerstan, however, had been dead for a number of years before the battle. There are no other known bishops who could have died at Brunanburh. The only bishop who died in 937 was Tidhelm of Hereford and he was alive in December to witness a charter. The

victim, if the story is true, is unknown. During the battle, Oda is said to have saved the king's life but there are two versions of the story. Malmesbury states that the king lost his sword and it was returned to him through Oda's prayers. In return, Athelstan vowed to make Oda the archbishop at Canterbury as soon as the see fell vacant.[112] Eadmer, the biographer of Oda's nephew Oswald, states that the king's sword was broken in the fighting and it was made whole by the prayers of Oda.[113] Whichever occurred, the king survived the battle.

The deaths of Athelstan's nephews Aethelwine and Aelfwine at Brunanburh resulted in a number of gifts from the king to the house at Malmesbury. Relics, several of which were from the gifts of Hugh the Great, and land were given to the community as burial fees and for the benefit of the souls of Aethelwine and Aelfwine.[114] When the king was at Dorchester on 21 December, he granted land at Bremhill, Wiltshire (S434), and at Wooton, Wiltshire (S435), to Malmesbury. A third charter of this series, S436, is a conflation of the first two and may have been created by William of Malmesbury himself. A charter of unknown date may have been written at this time. The grant, S415, bears a date of 931 that is inconsistent with the witness list. The earliest it could have been written is 934 and the

latest 939. It gives to Malmesbury estates at Norton, Wiltshire, at Ewen, Gloucestershire, and at Sumerford, possibly Somerford Keynes, Gloucestershire. Although interpolated, the charter reflects an authentic grant to the house that may have been given in 937.

At this same time, Athelstan is supposed to have founded a house in Axminster, Dorsetshire, for seven priests and named the site for Saint Mary.[115] There is little evidence for this foundation. Several other communities received grants from the king in 937 although it is not known if they were granted before or after Brunanburh. The first was to the house at Athelney, Somersetshire, of land at Lyng, Somersetshire, that was to be free from all secular dues. The charter, S432, is a late, interpolated copy--the indiction is four rather than ten, for example--but there is no reason to doubt its authenticity. The next grant, S433, is purportedly to the church of Saint Peter or Saint Mary, Exeter, depending on the manuscript used. It is a grant of land at Topsham, Devonshire, and is in the same hand as S386, S387, and S389. It, too, was probably reconstructed after the fire of 1003 which may be the reason for the numerous errors and discrepancies. Athelstan also gave land at Burcombe, Wiltshire, to the community of Saint Mary, Wilton, for the redemption of his sins and those

of his sister Eadflaed who was a nun of the house. The grant, S438, is a late copy but is reliable in every way.[116]

In 938, two grants were purportedly made. The first, S443, was to Bishop Frithustan of Winchester who was dead by 933. It is clearly spurious. The second, S444, is an authentic grant to Old Minster, Winchester, of land at Beauworth and Tichborne, Hampshire. The bishop of Winchester, who is named in the document, is Aelfheah who had been the king's mass-priest at the time of his coronation and was probably being remembered for his service to the king.

In 939, Bishop Aelfric--or Alfred--of Sherborne was given five mansas of land at Orchard, Dorsetshire, and immediately, in the same charter, regranted the land to a woman named Beorhtwine, the daughter of Wulfhelm. The charter, S445, is a late copy with some errors in the manuscript, but it is clearly authentic. The family of this Beorhtwine is of some interest. It was apparently her father Wulfhelm who granted land at Canterbury to Archbishop Wulfhelm in the same year. This charter is also a late copy, but S1209 is authentic. Although it is difficult to make identifications such as this, there was only one layman named Wulfhelm witnessing charters at this time and the grant of Aelfric to Beorhtwine

implies that the father is still alive.[117] Beorhtwine's daughter also mentions her mother in her will, S1539, dated c. 950.

Three nuns and their houses received grants from Athelstan in 939. The king's sister Eadburga, a nun at Winchester, received land at Droxford, Hampshire, S446. Land at Brightwalton, Berkshire, was given to the nun Eadulfu. The charter, S448, is important since the verba dispositiva reads: "AETHELSTANUS nodante Dei gratia basileos Angloram et eque tocius Brittanniae orbis gubernator ...."[118] This is one of the few clearly authentic uses of the phrase in the corpus of Athelstan's charters. The third nun, Wulfswyth, called "ancilla Christi," was granted land at East Overton, Wiltshire, in S449. This is an authentic charter that may be a royal archival copy. It is probable that Athelstan was attempting to revive the nunneries in England and, in the case of the latter two nuns, he may have been making provisions for the wives or daughters of trusted thegns or ealdormen who died in his service.

There are a number of grants during Athelstan's reign that are not possible to date exactly. One is simply an extract of a charter that must have been granted in 939 since it notes that Athelstan granted land at Tarring, Sussex, to Christ Church, Canterbury,

and in the same year, when Edmund came to the throne, it was confirmed. The grant is inserted into a charter of Edmund's, S477, dated 941, that was apparently poorly copied and interpolated. According to the table of contents of a lost Glastonbury cartulary, the king gave twenty hides at Deverill, Wiltshire, to Archbishop Wulfhelm sometime during his reign.[119] Since the charter and the entire cartulary are lost, there is no way to corroborate the statement. Glastonbury itself is said to have been granted eighty-six hides by the king, but there are no extant records of the donations, other than the statement by William of Malmesbury in his study of the monastery.[120] The historian also notes that relics were given by the king. It would not be unusual for Athelstan to grant land to Glastonbury since it is known that he had a special interest in the house. However, without additional evidence, the grants must remain in question.[121]

Athelstan was a strong supporter of Christianity in England in every possible form. Throughout his reign, he granted concessions and estates to strengthen and dignify the organization of the church. Several dozen estates were given to dioceses, houses, and individual members of communities in an attempt to restore the economic basis of the church and to insure its continued

viability. Most of the estates were small, averaging five to ten hides each, while others, such as the grant of Amounderness to York, were immense. Each appears to have been carefully considered. The grant to York, for example, was necessary since this archdiocese was heavily damaged by the Viking incursion. It should be remembered that even in the reign of Edgar, York was held dually with Worcester because the archsee was still not capable of supporting itself. The donations of land by Athelstan were not simply acts of piety; they were crucial to the success of Christianity in England.

As a grantor of relics and manuscripts, Athelstan had no equal. The vast collection that he began prior to assuming the throne was dispensed with great liberality. It is unfortunate that this mania for collecting and dispensing relics is the reason for remembering Athelstan and his relations with the church. Although he did amass huge quantities of relics and grant them to religious houses in great number, this is the least important of the king's activities in support of the church. The relics, plate, and manuscripts were important in the growth of the prestige of churches and probably helped to draw people to the churches and shrines. If this was the reason for the gifts, then the program was a success.

In terms of legislation, Athelstan again was primarily interested in the fiscal affairs of the church. The one major law code in favor of the church insured that all moneys due the church from the properties of the king, the clergy, and the greater magnates, were paid. The code is extremely important to an understanding of the relations between church and state. The fact that the king commanded that rents be paid to the church indicates a merging of the interests of government with those of the religious institutions in England. This trend would continue for the remainder of the century. The other legislation insured the spiritual welfare of the king and the physical welfare of the destitute on the king's estates.

To promote the welfare of the church, Athelstan was careful to have the better clerics elevated to positions of ecclesiastical authority. Men such as his mass-priests Byrnstan and Aelfheah were promoted to bishoprics, giving the king a strong position in ecclesiastical affairs. It also insured that men favorable to reform and the strengthening of the church were placed in positions of trust. Strong leaders such as Oda of Ramsbury were used to rule. The use of these men, many of whom were monks or favored the rebirth of monasticism in England, was to be vital in the further development

of the church in England.

Athelstan is usually compared--most unfairly--with his nephew Edgar and that king's reforms in England. It is said that Athelstan founded several houses for secular canons and priests rather than instituting monastic reforms and insisting on houses that were founded upon the Benedictine Rule. Athelstan is also accused of ignoring the reform movements on the continent of which he was well aware. Edgar, however, did not face the challenge that Athelstan did. He did not have to reconquer much of England, defend England from the advances of the Vikings and Scots, reconstruct the economic foundations of England, rebuild schools to develop an educated elite, or contend with creating a foundation on which to build a reform movement. Since Athelstan was able to do all this, he can not be faulted even though the reforms of Edgar were more apparent and more spectacular.

Athelstan, then, was crucial to the development and reconstruction of the church in England. Without his support, both economic and legislative, the church would not have been financially capable of its tremendous growth in the next half century. Without the institution of schools and religious houses, there would not have

been the reservoir of educated, dedicated clerics from which later kings could draw. Without Athelstan, the church could not have been reformed in the tenth century.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1 David M. Wilson, "The Vikings' Relationship with Christianity in Northern England," Journal of the British Archaeological Association, XXX(1967), 42-46; David P. Kirby, "The Saxon Bishops of Leicester, Lindsey, and Dorchester," Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, XLI(1965-1966), 3; Dorothy Whitelock, "The Conversion of the Eastern Danelaw," Saga-Book, XII(1941), 159-176. For the church in general in this era, see E. Amann and A. Dumas, L'église au pouvoir des laïques, Histoire de l'église, 7 (Paris: Bloud and Gay, 1942).

2 Edward Carpenter, Cantuar, The Archbishops and their Office (London: Cassell, 1971), p. 33; Dale E. Landon, "Church-State Relations in the late Anglo-Saxon Period, 871-1066" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1969), p. 74. The latter is an excellent study.

3 John Godfrey, The Church in Anglo-Saxon England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), pp. 285-286. See also, Philip Grierson, "Grimbald of Saint Bertin's," EHR, LV(1940), 529-561.

4 David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales (2nd ed.; London: Longman Group, Ltd., 1971), pp. 59, 265.

5 Ibid., p. 267. There were religious houses that did survive the Danes and were in use in Athelstan's reign. See, for example, Knowles and Hadcock, Houses, s.v., Berkeley, Cerne, Dover, Oswestry, Pershore, Saint Albans, Shrewsbury, Southwell, Wimborne, Winchcombe.

6 Ibid., pp. 81, 264.

7 Ibid., pp. 62, 422.

8 Ibid., p. 175.

9 William of Malmesbury, Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum, ed. by N.E.S.A. Hamilton, Rolls Series, 52 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1870), p. 157; Godfrey, Church, p. 295; J. Armitage Robinson, The Saxon Bishops of Wells, British Academy, Supplemental Papers, IV (London: British Academy, 1918), p. 5.

10 F.M. Powicke and E.B. Fryde, edd., Handbook of British Chronology, Royal Historical Society, Guides and Handbooks, II (2nd ed.; London: Royal Historical Society, 1961), pp. 257, 247, 254, 219, and 205. See also, David P. Kirby, "Notes on the Saxon Bishops of Sherborne," Proceedings of the Dorsetshire Natural History and Archaeological Society, LXXXVII(1965), 215, for Sherborne. Robinson, Saxon Bishops, p. 6, notes that Aethelhelm of Wells was of royal blood and the uncle of Dunstan.

11 Kirby, "Bishops of Sherborne," 4.

12 ASC 909 C; Plummer, II, 118; Knowles and Hadcock, Houses, pp. 425-426.

13 Annales de Wintonia, Annales Monastici, ed. by H.R. Luard, Rolls Series, 36 (5 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1864-1869), II, 10; J. Armitage Robinson, The Times of Saint Dunstan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), pp. 78-79.

14 Annales de Wintonia, II, 10. The charter is S427.

15 Knowles and Hadcock, Houses, p. 61, apparently citing William Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, ed. and trans. by John Caley, Henry Ellis and Bulkeley Bandinel (6 vols. in 8; London: John Bohn, 1846), III, 98-99, state that Athelstan endowed Bury Saint Edmunds. However, Dugdale's comment is that Athelstan "is said" to have endowed the house. He does not support the statement with references to documents and this is perhaps why the statement is couched in qualified terms.

16 See Chapter I, pp. 26-27, and Carpenter, Cantuar, p. 32.

17 Reg. I. B. vii., f. 15b: "...and ealles thaes haligdomes the ic on angel cyn begeat mid godes miltse." The manumission is quoted in full in Chapter I, p. 27, and n.71.

18 Frances Rose-Troup, "The Ancient Monastery of Saint Mary and Saint Peter of Exeter," Transactions of the Devonshire Association, LXIII(1931), 190-191. See William A. Chaney, The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England, The Transition from Paganism to Christianity (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970), p. 76, n.137: "King Athelstan was a particularly assiduous collector of relics."

19 Cyril Hart, "The Codex Wintoniensis and the King's Haligdom," Land, Church, and People, Essays Presented to Professor H.P.R. Finberg, Agricultural History Review, XVIII(1970), Supplement, 19. The author clearly proves the existence of a royal archive. See pp. 9-12.

20 Ibid., 20-24.

21 See, for example, S371, in which Edward in 904 renews a land book destroyed by fire for Ealdorman Aethelfrith. The phrase in B606 reads: "libri ignis vastacione combusti perierunt ...."

22 For Byrnstan's first signature as bishop, see S409, dated 931. For Aelfheah, see S421, dated 934.

23 I Athelstan, in F.L. Attenborough, ed. and trans., The Laws of the Earliest English Kings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922). See also, Felix Liebermann, ed., Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen (3 vols.; Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1903-1916), III, 96-98, for notes to I Athelstan.

24 I Athelstan, c. 1.

25 I Athelstan, c. 4.

26 I Athelstan, c. 5.

27 Ordinance Relating to Charities, cc. 1-2.

28 II Athelstan, c. 5.

29 V Athelstan, c. 3.

30 Godfrey, Church, pp. 324-327; idem, The English Parish, 600-1300, Church History Outlines, 3 (London: SPCK, 1969), p. 64.

31 O. Jensen, "The 'Denarius Sancti Petri' in England," TRHS, Ser. 2, XV(1900-1901), 180-182.

32 Charles F. Keary, "A Hoard of Anglo-Saxon Coins found in Rome and described by Sig. de Rossi," NC, Ser. 3, IV(1884), 225-227. The coins are detailed on pp. 233-255. See also, J. Lestocquoy, "D'Angleterre à Rome au Xe siècle," Etudes historique dédiées à la mémoire de M. Roger Rodière, Mémoires de la Commission départmentale des monuments historiques du Pas-de-Calais, V, fasc. 2(1947), 35-40. For the popes of the period, see Angelo Mercati, "The New List of the Popes," Mediaeval Studies, IX(1947), 71-80.

33 William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum, pp. 399-400. The passage is quoted in Chapter II, note 34.

34 William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum, p. 399. The passage is quoted in Chapter II, pp. 75-76. See also, Robinson, Times, pp. 73-74.

35 Reg. I. A. xviii., f. 3^b: "hunc codicem AEDELSTAN rex devota mente dorobernense tribuit ecclesie beato augustino dicate et quisquis hoc legerit omnipotenti pro eo proque suis fundat preces."

36 Ibid., f. 2^b:

"Joannes Lelandus
Aethelstanus erat nostre pars maxima cure,
Cuius nota mihi bibliotheca fuit.
Illo sublato sexcentos amplius annos,
Puluere delitui squalidus atque situ
Nunc pietas sed me superas revocavit ad auras
Henrici digno restituitque loco."

37 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 131, 137; idem, Gesta Pontificum, pp. 186-187.

38 Francis Wormald, "The Liturgical Calender of Glastonbury Abbey," Festschrift Bernhard Bischoff zu seinem 65. Geburtstag, ed. by Johanne Autenrieth and Franz Brunhölzl (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1971), p. 333.

39 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 137; idem, Gesta Pontificum, p. 174; Laura Braswell, "Saint Edburga of Winchester: a study of her cult, A.D. 950-1500, with an edition of the fourteenth-century Middle English and Latin Lives," Mediaeval Studies, XXXIII(1971), 292-293. The lives are edited on pp. 325-333. Ingulf, Historia croylandensis, Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores, Tome I, ed. by W. Fulman (Oxford, 1684), p. 36, states that Thurketel, the refounder of Crowland Abbey, was the son of Aethelweard and thus the cousin of Athelstan. While there is no corroboration for this statement, it is known that Thurketel was of royal blood. Orderic Vitalis, Historiae ecclesiasticae libri tredecim, Vol. II, ed. and trans. by Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 340, notes that Thurketel was de regali progenie. W.G. Searle, Ingulf and the Historia croylandensis, Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Octavo Publications, 27 (Cambridge: Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 1894), pp. 71-72, agrees that Thurketel was a member of the royal family, but does not accept the relationship claimed by Ingulf.

40 Regularis Concordia Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialumque, ed. and trans. by Thomas Symons (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953), pp. xii-xiii; J. Armitage Robinson, "Some Memories of Saint Dunstan in Somerset," Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, LXII [Ser. 4, II] (1916), xxx. John, OB, p. 156, states that Aelfheah of Winchester, Athelstan's mass-priest, was Dunstan's uncle. For the court school, see Chapter IV, pp. 235-236.

41 William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum, p. 165.

42 S776; S779; Liber Eliensis, ed. by E.O. Blake, Camden Third Series, XCII(London: Royal Historical Society, 1962), pp. 75-76.

43 J. Armitage Robinson, Saint Oswald and the Church of Worcester, British Academy, Supplemental Papers, V (London: British Academy, 1919), pp. 12, 39-41; Eadmer, Vita Sancti Oswaldi Eboracensis Archiepiscopi et Confessoris, Historians of the Church of York and Its Archbishops, ed. by James Raine, Rolls Series, 71 (3 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1879-1894), II, 2-3; Rose Graham, "The Intellectual Influence of English Monasticism between the Tenth and Twelfth Centuries," TRHS, Ser. 2, XVII(1903), 24.

44 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 149-151. The passage is quoted in toto in Chapter II, note 51. See also, Rose-Troup, "Ancient Monastery," 190-191.

45 Max Förster, "Zur Geschichte des Reliquienkultus in Altengland," Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Abteilung, Heft 8 (1943), 11, and nn. 1-5; John Earle, The Alfred Jewel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901). Joan R. Clarke and David Hinton, The Alfred and Minster Lovell Jewels (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1971), pp. 8-9, suggest the Alfred Jewel was a pointer used in reading. There is no reference to the jewel as a gift of Athelstan to New Minster. I wish to thank Miss Audrey Duckert for the loan of this pamphlet.

46 Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester, ed. by Walter deG. Birch, Hampshire Record Society, V (London: Simpkin and Co., 1892), pp. 162-163: "this is se Halidom the is on tham scrine. the Althold Cyricweard Beworte. this is eal se halidom the thaes on Aethelstanes kyningces gimme. and of Sancte Sebastianes bane. and of sepulchrum domini. and of presepio domini. and of sancta Marian reafe. and sancte Baerhtines. II.teth. De uesti mento Sancti Johannis baptiste. de uestimento domini. Dens sancti Benedicti. and of sancte Eadgithe reafe. and of Sancte Contestores bane. and sancte Christofores ban. and of Sancte Petres rode. and of his thrih. and of Sancte Ualentiani. and of 'Sancte' Radegunde. De mamillis Sancte Agathe."

47 Neil R. Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), #284; E.G. Millar, "Les principaux manuscrits à peintures du Lambeth Palace à Londres," Bulletin de la société française de reproductions de manuscrits à peintures, VIII(1924), 7-15; M.R. James, A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace, The Mediaeval Manuscripts (5 parts in 1 vol.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), pp. 843-845. On folio 3b is the inscription:

"Maeielbrithus	Macdurnani
istum textum	per triquadrum
deo digne	dogmatizat
Ast Aethelstanus	Anglo Saexna
Rex et Rector	Dorovernensi
Metropoli dat	per aevum."

48 S409; Frank M. Stenton, The Early History of the Abbey of Abingdon, Reading Studies in Local History (Reading: University College, 1913), p. 38.

49 John, OB, p. 156 and n.3; Regularis Concordia, p. xi.

50 Cott. Claud. B. v., f. 5^a: "+hunc codicem aethetsanus [sic] rex tradidit deo et alme christi genetrici sanctisque petro et benedicto in bathonie civitatis coenobio ob remunerationem suae animae. et quisquis hos legerit caracteres. omnipotenti pro eo proque suis amicis fundat preces."

51 Otto Pächt and J.J.G. Alexander, Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library (3 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966-1973), III, #19.

52 Cott. Tib. A. ii., f. 15^b:
"Volumen hoc euuangelii AETHelstan anglorum basyleos. et curagulus totius bryttannie devota mente. dorobernensis cathedre primatum tribuit ecclesie christo dicate quod etiam archiepiscopus huius ac ministri ecclesie. presentes successoresque. curiosis affectibus perenniter agnoscant. scilicet et custodire studeant. prout deo rationem sunt reddituri. nequis in aeternum furua fruade deceptus. hinc illud arripere conetur. sed manens hic maneat. honoris exemplumque cernentibus. perpetue sibi demonstret. vos et enim obsecrando postulo memores ut uestris mei mellifluis oraminibus. consonaque uoce fieri prout confido. non desistatis."

The poem reads:

"Rex pius AEDELSTAN patulo famosus in orbe
Cuius ubique uiget gloria lausque manet
Quem deus angligenis solii fundamine nixum
Constituit regem terrigenisque ducem
Scilicet ut ualeat reges rex ipse feroces
Vincere bellipotens colla superba terens
Quisquis amore fluens rutilans hoc luce volumen
Perspicis eximia dogmata sacra lege
Quod rex aureolis sacro spiramine fusus
Ornauit titulis gemigerisque locis
Quodque libens christi de more dicauit
Atque agiae sophiae nobilitauit ouans
Hoc quoque scematicis ornarier ora lapillis
Auxit ubique micans floribus ut uariis
Quisque sitit uenicat cupiens haurire fluenta

Dulcia mella gerens inveniat latices
Ergo greges pastorque sacrae dorobernicus aulae
Se caueant ne quid fraus inimica gerat
Hunc quisquis textum diuino fonte refertum
Tollere praesumat fine tenus pereat."

A note on the folio indicates that it should precede f. 3 of the manuscript.

53 E.G. Millar, English Illuminated Manuscripts from the Xth to the XIIIth Century (Paris: Librarie nationale d'art et d'histoire, 1926), p. 2; Thomas D. Kendrick, Late Saxon and Viking Art (London: Methuen and Co., 1949), p. 3; Francis Wormald, "The 'Winchester School' before Saint Aethelwold," England Before the Conquest, Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock, ed. by Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 305-313.

54 Minnie Cate Morrell, A Manual of Old English Biblical Materials (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1965), pp. 81-84.

55 Kenneth Sisam, Studies in the History of Old English Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), pp. 71-72.

56 M.R. James, The Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), p. lxix; V.H. Galbraith, "The Literacy of the Medieval English Kings," PBA, XXI(1935), 232-233, n. 15; F. Haverfield, "The Library of Aethelstan, the Half-King," The Academy, DCXXXVI(12 July, 1884), 32. For the latter, see Cyril Hart, "Athelstan 'Half-King' and his family," Anglo-Saxon England, II(1973), 131-132. For Athelstan as a member of the community at Saint Augustine's, see A.J. Robertson, ed. and trans., Anglo-Saxon Charters (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 449; Ker, Catalogue, #146; R.M. Wilson, "More Lost Literature, II," Leeds Studies in English, VI(1937), 49; and J.D.A. Ogilvy, Books Known to the English, 597-1066, Mediaeval Academy of America, Publications, 76 (Cambridge: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1967), p. iii.

57 Two charters of 929 purport to grant land to Worcester. Both S401 and S402 are apparently fabrications of the late tenth century and only S401 may have an authentic base.

58 On the common burdens, see W.H. Stevenson, "Trinoda Necessitas," EHR, XXIX(1914), 689-703; and John, LT, pp. 64-79. On the division of the mensa, see idem, "The Division of the Mensa in Early English Monasteries," Journal of Ecclesiastical History, VI(1955), 143-155.

59 S1296; A.S. Napier and W.H. Stevenson, edd., The Crawford Collection of Early Charters and Documents, Anecdota Oxoniensia (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), p. 19: "tha gelamp hit that aethestan [sic] cing sealde cunune bisceoprice ealswa tamur scaet."

60 S412; S413; S416.

61 H.P.R. Finberg, "Hyple's Old Land," Lucerna, Studies of Some Problems in the Early History of England (London: Macmillan and Co., 1964), p. 124; idem, "Sherborne, Glastonbury and the Expansion of Wessex," Lucerna, pp. 112-113.

62 See Hart, "Athelstan 'Half-King'," especially pp. 120-121, for his power. Stenton, Early History, pp. 35-36. On the question of whether Anglo-Saxon charters were dispositive or evidentiary, see John, LT, pp. 168-177.

63 See Chapter I, pp. 24-25.

64 B936: "... et alias .v. mansas AET AESCTUNE. quas patruelis meus AEthelstanus rex obtulerat aecclesiae beati Petri apostolorum principis. quae sita est BATHONIS civitate ...."

65 Hart, "Codex Wintoniensis," 33.

66 On this series of charters, see Chapter IV, pp. 231-232.

67 Robertson, Charters, pp. 52-53.

68 S1509.

69 ASC 1003 EF.

70 On the relics, see Rose-Troup, "Ancient Monastery," 189-191; and Förster, "Reliquienkultus." Margaret Deanesly, The Pre-Conquest Church in England, An Ecclesiastical History of England, I (2nd ed.; London: Adam and Charles Black, 1963), p. 340, relates the apocryphal story of Athelstan sending a thief to Flanders to steal the relics of Saint Gudwal. As she notes, the story is probably untrue, but it shows that the king's ravenous appetite for relics was not appreciated in Flanders.

71 Bodl. Auct. D. 2. 16., ff. 8^a-9^a:
" [H] er swutelath on thisum gewrite be tham halgum reliquium. the aethelsta se wurthfulla kyning geaf in to sancta marian and sancte petres mynstre on exancestre. gode to lofe. for his sawle alisednisse. eallum tham the tha halgan stowwe gesecath and gewurthiath to ecere haele. Wytodlice se ilca kyning aethelsta. tha tha he aefter his faeder edwarde cynerice onfeng. and thurh godes gife ana geweold ealles englalandes the aer him manege cyningas betwix heom haefdon. tha com he on sumne sael hider to exancestre. swa swa hit of sothfaestra manna sage gefyrn gesaed waes. and he ongan smeagan and theahtian hwaet him sealost waere to geforthienne of his cynelicum madmum gode to lofe. and him silfum and his theode to ecere thearfe.
Se aelmihtiga god tha the eallum tham the wel thencath. simle is fultum and firthriend gesende tham godan cyninge. thone gethanc on. thaet he mid tham gewytendlicum madmum. tha unateoriendlican madmas begitan sceolde. He sende tha over sae getriwe men and gesceadwise. and hig ferdon swa wide landes swa hig faran mihton. and mid tham madmum begeaton. tha deorwurthestan madmas the aefre ofer eorthan begitene mihton beon. thaet waes haligdom se maesta. of gehwilcum stowum wydam and sydan gegaderod. and hig thone tham foresaedan cyninge brohton. and se cyning mide micelre blysse gode thaes thancode.
He bebead tha. thaet man her on exancestre. thaer thaer him aer god thone nyttwirthan gethanc on besende. mynster araeran sceolde. gode to wurthminte. and thaere heofenlican cwene sancta marian cristes meder. and sancte petre thaera apostola ealdre. thone se ylca cyning him to mundboran gecoren haefde. and he geaf thider inn six and twentig cottlifa, and thone thryddan dael thaes forsaedan haligdomes thyder inn let don. his sawle to ecere alysednisse. and eallam tham to hylpe. the tha halgan stowwe the se haligdom on is. mid geleafan gesecath and wurthiath.

Nu will we eow segcan butan aelcere leasunge. hwaet se haligdom is. the her on thisum halgan mynstre is. and gewrytu forth mid. the geswuteliath butan aelcere tweonunge. hwaet anra gehwilc thaera haligdoma beo." The initial "H" is absent from the manuscript and the first three lines are indented, indicating the list was to have had an illuminated initial. There is a description of the manuscript in Oxford University, Bodleian Library, A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (7 vols. in 8 parts; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895-1953), #2719.

72 The relic list is Bodl. Auct. D. 2. 16., ff. 9^a-14^a. Förster, "Reliquienkultus," 80-114, discusses each of the 138 relics.

73 Robinson, Times, p. 78.

74 On the death of Eadwine, see Chapter IV, pp. 224-227.

75 William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum, p. 186: "Middeltunensem ecclesiam fecit rex Ethelstanus pro anima fratris sui Eduini, quem pravo corruptus consilio Anglia ejecit. Cujus qui fuerit finis alias non silui. Ibi multas sanctorum reliquias ex Britannia transmarina emptas reposuit; inter quas eminent praecipue beatissimi Samsonis ossa, Dolensis quondam archiepiscopi."

76 The Bosworth Psalter, ed. by Francis A. Gasquet and Edmund Bishop (London: George Bell and Sons, 1908), p. 54; Robertson, Charters, pp. 301-302; and Robinson, Times, p. 74.

77 William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum, pp. 199-200.

78 E.H. Bates, ed., Two Cartularies of the Benedictine Abbeys of Muchelney and Athelney in the County of Somerset, Somerset Record Society, XIV(London: Somerset Record Society, 1899), pp. 3-4, 97.

79 H.P.R. Finberg, The Early Charters of Wessex, Studies in Early English History, III (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1964), #579.

80 There are two charters of 933 that are fabrications. S393 is a very questionable confirmation of a spurious charter, S229. The other, S420, is the first of several fabricated charters in favor of Chertsey Abbey. The others are S752 and S1035.

81 B., Sancti Dunstani vita auctore B., Memorials of Saint Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, ed. by William Stubbs, Rolls Series, 63 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1874), pp. 10-12; Godfrey, Church, p. 297.

82 Robinson, Saxon Bishops, pp. 41-42.

83 William of Malmesbury, Guilielmus Malmesburiensis de Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae, Adam of Domerham, Adami de Domerham Historia de rebus gestis Glastoniensibus, ed. by Thomas Hearne (2 vols.; Oxford, 1727), I, 104.

84 Graham, "Intellectual Influence," 26; Dunstan Pontifex, "Saint Dunstan in His First Biography," Downside Review, LI(1933), 25.

85 John W. Lamb, The Archbishopric of York: The Early Years (London: Faith Press, 1967), pp. 119-121; Dorothy Whitelock, "The Dealings of the Kings of England with Northumbria in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries," The Anglo-Saxons, Studies Presented to Bruce Dickins, ed. by Peter Clemoes (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1959), p. 72.

86 Knowles and Hadcock, Houses, p. 421.

87 William Ketell, Miracula Sancti Johannis, Eboracensis episcopi, Historians of the Church of York and Its Archbishops, ed. by James Raine, Rolls Series, 71 (3 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1879-1894), I, 264-266. See also, William Dugdale, The History of Saint Paul's Cathedral, Section 3, "A Brief Historical Account of the Cathedrals of York, Durham, and Carlisle," (2nd ed.; London: Jonah Bowyer, 1716), p. 53.

88 My colleague William E. Kapelle believes the charter to be a concoction of the period immediately after the Black Death, at which time the house was in desperate need of grain renders.

89 Elisabeth Okasha, "A rediscovered medieval inscribed ring," Anglo-Saxon England, II(1973), 167-169.

90 Ibid., 170-171; C.C. Oman, "Anglo-Saxon Finger Rings," Apollo, XIV(1931), 107.

91 Robinson, Times, p. 69 and n.2.

"A rchalis clamare triumvir nomine sax i
D ive tuo fors prognossim feliciter aev o
A ugustae.Samu.cernentis rupis eris.el. h
L arvales forti beliales robure contr a
S aepe seges messem fecunda praenotat altam i n
T utis solandum petrinum solibus agme n
A mplius amplificare sacra sophismatis arc e
N omina orto petas donet precor inclita doxu s."

Robinson does not attempt a translation, nor will this writer.

92 Joseph T. Fowler, ed., Memorials of the Church of Saints Peter and Wilfred, Ripon, Surtees Society, LXXIV, LXXVIII, LXXXI, CXV (4 vols.; Durham: Surtees Society, 1882-1908), I, 51, 54, 59, 66.

93 Florence E. Harmer, "Chipping and Market: a lexicographical investigation," Early Cultures of North-West Europe (H.M. Chadwick Memorial Studies), ed. by Cyril Fox and Bruce Dickins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), p. 334.

94 Fowler, Memorials, IV, 144.

95 Wilfred's church is still in existence, although one must descend beneath the nave of the present cathedral to enter it.

96 Kirby, "Notes on Sherborne," 219-222; William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 125.

97 Symeon of Durham, Historia de Sancto Cuthberto, Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia, ed. by Thomas Arnold, Rolls Series, 75 (2 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1882-1885), I, 211: "In nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi. Ego Ethelstanus rex do sancto Cuthberto hunc textum, Evangeliorum, II. casulas, et unam albam, et unam stolam, cum manipulo, et unum cingulum, et III. altaris cooperimenta, et unam calicem argenteum, et duas patenas, alteram auro paratam, alteram Graeco opere fabrefactam, et unum thuribulum argenteum, et unam crucem auro et ebore artificiose paratam, et unum regium pilleum auro textum, et duas tabulas, auro et argento fabrefactas, et duo candelabra argentea, auro parata, et unum missalem, et duos Evangeliorum textus, auro et argento ornatos, et unam sancti Cuthberti vitam, metrice et prosaice scriptam, et septem pallia, et tres cortinas, et tria tapetia, et duas coppas argenteas cum cooperculis, et quatuor magnas campanas, et tria cornua, auro et argento fabrefacta, et duo vexilla, et unam lanceam, et duas armillas aureas, et meam villam dilectam Wiremuthe australem cum suis appendiciis, id est, Westun, Uffertun, Sylceswurthe, duas Reofhoppas, Byrdene, Seham, Setun, Daltun, Daldene, Heseldene. Haec omnia do sub Dei et sancti Cuthberti testimonio, ut siquis inde aliquid abstulerit, damnetur in die judicii cum Juda traditore, et trudatur in ignem aeternum, qui praeparatus est diabolo et angelis ejus."

98 Several of the vestments remain at Durham, where the see was transferred in 995. The Monks' Dormitory at the cathedral is now a museum housing these and other Durham treasures. Saint Cuthbert's remains are interred behind the High Altar screen in the cathedral and the remains of that other famous Northumbrian, Bede, are in the Galilee Chapel in the narthex.

99 C.F. Battiscombe, ed., The Relics of Saint Cuthbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral, 1956), p. 375. There is a fragment of Anglo-Saxon embroidery, the only other example, at the Basilica Ambrosiana, Milan, that is probably from the same workshop that created the Cuthbert vestments. See ibid., p. 393.

100 Ibid., p. 423; David Talbot Rice, English Art, 871-1100, Oxford History of English Art, II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 249.

101 R.M. Wilson, The Lost Literature of Medieval England, Methuen's Old English Library (2nd ed.; London: Methuen and Co., 1970), pp. 75-76.

102 Humphrey Wanley, Librorum Vett. Septentrionalium, qui in Angliae Biblioth. extant, Catalogum Historico-Criticum; nec non multorum Vett. Codd. Septentrionalium alibi extantium notitiam, cum totius operis sex Indicibus (Oxford: E theatro Sheldoniano, 1705), p. 238. The dedicatory statement is: "In nomine dni nri Ihu Xpi. Ic Aethelstan Cyning selle thas boc into sco Cuthberhte. and bebeode on Godes noman. and on thaes halgan seres. thaet hio naefre nan monn of thisse stowe. mid nanum facne ne reaflace ne afirre ne nane thara geofona the ic to thisse stowe gedoo. Gif thonne hwelc monn to thaem dyrstig beo. thaet he thisses hwaet breoce oththe wende. beo he scyldig with God and with menn. and dael neomende Iudases hletes Scariothes, and on Domes daege thaes egeslican cwides to geheranne and to onfone. discedite a me maledicti in ignem aeternum et reliq."

103 Ibid.

104 Ibid.

105 Ker, Catalogue, #42; Robinson, Saxon Bishops, p. 7; Durham, Cathedral Library, Durham Cathedral Manuscripts to the End of the Twelfth Century, intro. by R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford: For the Dean and Chapter, 1939), #16.

106 Bertram Colgrave, ed. and trans., Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert, A Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), pp. 20-21.

107 Millar, Illuminated Manuscripts, Plate 3a reproduces the illumination.

108 Kendrick, Late Saxon Art, p. 3; Robinson, Saxon Bishops, pp. 13-14.

109 John, "Division of the Mensa," 154 n.4. The insertion is: "And se thaet sae bisceop a thae thaer thonne sie him do hira fullan fostaer butan hira beodlandum of his bisceophamum." Robertson, Charters, #XXV.

110 William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum, pp. 144, 178.

111 Ibid., p. 178; idem, GR, I, 142-143. See Chapter I, p. 44.

112 William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum, p. 21.

113 Eadmer, Vita Oswaldi, II, 3.

114 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 151; idem, Gesta Pontificum, pp. 396-397.

115 Knowles and Hadcock, Houses, p. 420.

116 S439, a grant of 937 of beneficial hidation to Saints Peter and Paul, Winchester, is clearly spurious.

117 W.G. Searle, Anglo-Saxon Bishops, Kings and Nobles, the Succession of the Bishops and the Pedigrees of the Kings and Nobles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899), p. 415, does not make this identification.

118 B743.

119 S1714. See William of Malmesbury, de Antiquitate, I, 70.

120 William of Malmesbury, de Antiquitate, I, 71.

121 Two clearly spurious charters to Saint Paul's, London, S452 and S453, may be dismissed without comment.

C H A P T E R I V

THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM

The Viking incursions and the resulting devastation wreaked havoc on the internal order and affairs of Wessex and England. While valiantly holding back the onslaught of the Vikings, King Alfred attempted to restore order within his kingdom. A series of laws were passed that encompassed many aspects of life. The main thrust of the legislation, however, was against lawlessness in the kingdom. Violence and theft must have been common for the laws again and again enjoin men from fighting, maiming, killing, and stealing. The fact that later kings were forced to restate the general tenor of the laws indicates that they were ineffective. Alfred also tried to revive learning and to raise the general level of education. The desperate cry found in the introduction to Gregory's Pastoral Care soon gave way to a program for the redevelopment of learning in Wessex. The importation of scholars and the translation of books gave impetus to this revival of education. The work of Alfred was the foundation on which his heirs were to build.

Edward the Elder's contributions to the

restoration of society, although overshadowed by those of his father and his son, are of importance. Even though he was more interested and involved in the conquest and retention of land in the north, he managed to keep the level of education at what it was during his father's career and to educate his children and other noble children to prepare them for the following reign. He also promulgated two sets of laws that appear to be additions and restatements of Alfred's laws and exhortations to keep the public peace. As evidenced in the repetition of strictures against killing and theft, lawlessness remained a problem.

The foundation that Alfred laid and Edward shored up was used by Athelstan to build the walls of a new society. The laws promulgated by Athelstan covered almost every aspect of society and did much to strengthen the economic and social basis of his kingdom. He was involved in the promotion of learning and raising the general level of education. The interest he showed in cultural affairs made Athelstan's court a center of renown.

Athelstan's legislation, consisting of six codes, is in part a restatement of legislation from the previous two reigns but also shows royal intervention in areas untouched by his predecessors. The first code is

strictly ecclesiastical in nature and has been considered in the previous chapter. The remaining five treat many aspects of life in England but are, as was the legislation of Alfred and Edward, concerned in the main with lawlessness. Much of the legislation concerning theft and murder, fighting and maiming is similar to earlier laws although the penalties are different and usually more strict. Innovations in the laws indicate some changes in the economic development of the state and in the social structure.

The king's first secular law code was promulgated at Grately, Hampshire, at a great assembly of nobles and ecclesiastics early in his reign. It may have been created as early as 925, but it was more likely written in the following year. Consisting of twenty-six capitulae and a number of subsections, II Athelstan is the longest and most complex of the king's codes.[1] The king had clearly studied the laws of his father and grandfather since borrowing from the laws of the previous two reigns is evident: there are, however, a number of very important innovations. Three themes are developed in II Athelstan: theft, the burh, and the relationship between a lord and his man.

Theft was clearly a problem since over a third of II Athelstan directly or indirectly deals with it. The

death penalty is prescribed for the theft of goods or property valued at eight pence or more if the thief is aged twelve or over.[2] Payment of wergild, however, was usually enough to be spared capital punishment. After a stint of forty days in prison, the thief could avoid further punishment by paying a fine of 120 shillings (c. 1). A thief's kinsmen were responsible for his actions after he was redeemed. Ordeal was the basic method of determining guilt if a thief was not caught in the act, and the process of ordeal by fire or water was clearly delineated (cc. 7, 23). Three kinsmen of a thief could clear him if they swore oaths of his innocence (c. 11). Slaves could also be fined although their masters were liable to payment and the slaves had to be scourged (c. 19). The frustration of justice was dealt with summarily. If anyone took a bribe from a thief, he forfeited his wergild (c. 17), but it was possible to come to terms with the prosecutor rather than suffering the ordeal (c. 21). Finally, swearing a false oath meant loss of the right to swear oaths (c. 26). This may appear slight at first glance, but it was a damaging blow to anyone in the tenth century when so much depended on one's oath. It would be almost impossible for a man to obtain justice, to buy or sell, or to interact with his peers and neighbors if it were known that his oath

was invalid. The penalty would severely limit a man's capabilities in society.

Cattle were definitely a target of theft, and stealing of livestock was a problem Athelstan attempted to treat. Livestock could be attached if the claimant could produce five men to swear the animals were his but this could be thwarted if the man who held the cattle could gather ten men to swear he owned the stock in question (c. 9). To prevent the question of ownership from arising in the case of sale or trade, a witness was necessary to complete the transaction. A reeve, priest, landowner, or one of the king's financial officers was to oversee the exchange on pain of a thirty-shilling fine and the loss of the stock in question (c. 10). A corollary to this is c. 24 which states that if cattle were purchased and a question of ownership arose, the seller had to take back the cattle. This is the first of several indications that the king was involving himself in business transactions to keep trading honest and probably to insure the collection of duties. Unfortunately, the laws did not halt the problem, for the ordinances appear again and again in Athelstan's laws.

Four of the <u>capitulae</u> of the code deal with the <u>burh</u> and with commerce. Goods worth more than twenty pence had to be purchased within a <u>burh</u> and the

transaction had to occur in the presence of a reeve or another trustworthy person (c.12). This is reiterated in a subsection of the following capitula, and c. 24, section 1, states that no trading could be done on a Sunday. Athelstan was attempting to make burhs something more than military and administrative centers as well as trying to make trading a thoroughly honest affair. The king realized the potential of commercial centers located at the same place as military and administrative centers and wanted to encourage development. This is not to say that the king was neglecting the defensive potential of the towns since one of the laws (c. 13) required the repair of all fortifications within two weeks of Rogation Days every year. The burh, however, was changing character. Burhs were no longer solely for the protection of Wessex and Mercia, but also for the encouragement of trade and the insurance of collection of duties.[3] An indication of the trend toward a commercial focus is that the terms burh and port were beginning to lose their explicit denotations, blur in meaning, and be used interchangeably. Although burh had meant a defensive center and little else, and a port was a center where trade occurred, the terms became interchangeable in Athelstan's reign.[4] This commercialization of towns did much to stimulate domestic and foreign trade.

A key section of II Athelstan was the law requiring a single coinage for the realm (c. 14). Mints were required to be within burhs, enabling the king's officers to oversee minting and also reinforcing the commercial importance of towns. The penalty for light or base coinage was the loss of the offending hand. Each burh was to have at least one moneyer, although some were permitted several. Canterbury, for example, had seven moneyers, including two under the jurisdiction of the archbishop and one for the abbot of Saint Augustine's. The other mints were: Bath, Bury Saint Edmunds, Chester, Chichester, Darent (probably Dartmouth, Devonshire), Derby, Dover, Exeter, Gloucester, Hereford, Hertford, Langport, Leicester, Lewes, London, Maldon, Norwich, Nottingham, Oxford, Rochester, Shaftesbury, Shrewsbury, Southampton, Stafford, Tamworth, Veri (probably Warwick), Wallingford, Wareham, Weardbyrig (in the West Midlands?), Winchester, and York.[6] Decentralization of the mints was for both local and royal convenience.[7]

The coins of Athelstan usually bore the name of the moneyer and the burh in which the coin was minted on the reverse and a portrait, cross, or rosette on the obverse.[8] Placing the names of moneyers on the coins helped prevent dishonest moneyers from working. It

would be easy to catch and punish the offender if his work was signed. It also helped prevent counterfeit coins from being circulated and to keep the coins of a proper weight and content. The average weight for the coins of the period was about twenty-four grains of silver.[9] Dies for all coinage were cut at a central location--probably London--and circulated to the various mints.[10] This not only insured uniform coinage, but also facilitated the recall of old coins and the introduction of new issues. The size of the circulation is not precisely known, but a figure of five to ten million pence has been suggested with good argument.[11] The final picture of the coinage of Athelstan is that it was of high quality, was technically competent, uniform, centrally directed, and subject to regular changes and recall of type.[12] All this indicates not only a technically high level of ability on the part of the minters, but also a central government aware of the need for coins accepted with confidence by the people and keenly interested in the economy of the country.

An interesting piece of evidence obtainable from the lists of moneyers is the international mixture in the towns. Although the names of most moneyers are Anglo-Saxon or Viking, there are some non-English and non-Viking moneyers. Chester is a prime example of this.

During the reign of Athelstan, there were approximately twenty identifiable minters in that city. Several of the eight non-Anglo-Saxon names are to be expected. Three minters are either Welsh or Irish--Maeldomen, Maertin, Paules--and two are Viking--Reanulf and Tiot. Since Chester is located near Wales and on the route to Ireland, the Celtic names are not surprising nor are the Viking names since there was a large Scandinavian settlement in the area. What is of interest are the names of Frard, which is Germanic or Romance, and Boiga and Boigalet, which are Norman-French.[13] Although it is known that Athelstan's court and interests were international in character, the use of foreigners or persons of foreign descent from Germany and France as moneyers is not common and implies much more of an international mixture than has previously been thought.

The third major theme in II Athelstan is the relationship between lords and their men. The first laws note that a lordless man must have his relatives settle him in a fixed residence and find him a lord on penalty of outlawry (c. 2). This suggests that a man had to have land that could be held as surety for his good behavior.[14] It also implies that the lord-retainer relationship was regarded as more important than blood ties since it is only if a man had no lord that his

family must care for him. The next section (c. 3) states that a lord can not side with his man in matters of law under a penalty of 120 shillings fine and that if a man plots against his lord, he incurs the death penalty (c. 4). Landless men were not free to move from one shire to another (c. 8), nor could a man change lords without permission (c. 22). These specific laws give some idea as to the problems encountered by Athelstan in his attempt to control and regularize the development of the relationship between lord and retainer. It is clear that the king did not want men moving from county to county with no check on their actions. This restriction was also to prevent pockets of resistance to central authority.

Three other clauses of II Athelstan are of interest. It is stated that a man must plead three times before the local court before he could take his case to the king for justice (c. 3). This pleading was apparently done in the court noted in II Edward, c. 8. The court was a monthly assembly before a reeve where suits were heard. The dire threats of punishment outlined (c. 20) indicate the king was having difficulty forcing men to come to the assemblies. Athelstan was obviously attempting to institute regular proceedings to bring about a regular judicial system for his state. II Athelstan,

c. 25, is the penalty clause for failure to comply with the law. A reeve could be fined 120 shillings and lose his position for noncompliance or failure to uphold the law. Anyone else was subject to a five-pound fine on the first offense, his wergild on the second, and all of his possessions and the king's friendship on the third. Loss of the king's friendship meant outlawry and death if caught.

This, then, was Athelstan's longest and most involved code. It is clear that he was attempting to regularize society in many areas. Care of property, development of trade, and the social order were of great importance to the king and to the progress of England.

At some time early in his reign, Athelstan was forced to deal with the problem of the Cornu-British in Exeter. The burh was originally dual-national, with both Cornish and Anglo-Saxon spoken and the Cornu-Britons living side by side with the Anglo-Saxons equally under the law.[15] The date of the king's movement into Exeter and the ensuing action is not known. It may have been as early as 926 since William of Malmesbury states that Athelstan dealt with the problem immediately after his meeting with the Welsh kings in late 925 or early in 926; or it may have been in 928 when the king is known to have been in Exeter at a Witan.[16] Whatever the date, the

problem had reached crisis proportions. It may have been race riots between the two nationalities that forced the king to act or it may have been friction that threatened to explode into riots. Athelstan solved the difficulty by evicting all Cornu-British from the town and deporting them to the lands beyond the Tamar River. Although this was an extraordinarily harsh measure, it apparently quieted the area. The action may have occurred for the same reason that Alfred allowed the Danes to administer their own territories. It would be much easier to control the Cornu-British if they were in a specific area under their own leaders. Cornwall was reorganized as an English shire with English laws, thus completing the uniformity of southern England.[17] There is a legend that Athelstan, after this social engineering, marched on Cornwall and subjugated it. This is totally unfounded since Cornwall had been under the domination of Wessex for a hundred years.[18]

At Exeter, either at the time of the eviction of the Cornu-British or in 928, another code of laws was promulgated. The code was written at midwinter (V Athelstan, c. 1) and, if the specific date of Midwinter, i.e., Christmas Day, is meant, the earlier year is the more likely since the Witan of 928 was held at Easter. The early dating is reinforced by the probable need to

restate laws in a disrupted burh. V Athelstan is an addendum to II Athelstan resulting from non-compliance with the earlier law.[19] In the Preamble to the new code, the king rages against this non-compliance and warns that he will tolerate no more disobedience. Habitual criminals were to be banished from their shires with their wives and property and, if they returned, they were liable to the death sentence. No lord was to take a man into his service who had been dismissed from the service of another lord as a result of misconduct (c. 1). Reeves and thegns alike were subject to these laws and the penalties were laid down for not heeding them. The perennial problem of cattle theft was also treated (c. 2). It would seem that Athelstan's attempts to institute laws were not as satisfactory as the king would have liked and that more and more stringent regulations were necessitated.

A third code, III Athelstan, was probably decreed before the end of the decade. Rather than being universal, this code was developed by the greater magnates in Kent and was local application of national laws.[20] The laws were set down at Faversham, Kent, and, like V Athelstan, were an addendum to II Athelstan. The code was clearly concerned with the lord-retainer relationship with four of its eight capitulae directly dealing with

that problem. Capitula 4 repeats parts (cc. 1, 3, and 5) of V Athelstan that deal with the changing of lords. The next section repeats II Athelstan, c. 25. One law requires the banishment of men so powerful that they can disobey the law with impunity (c. 6). The seventh chapter states that a lord must stand surety against all charges levelled against any of his men. Other chapters treat the payment of tithes (c. 1), acceptance of II Athelstan (c. 2), and the pardoning of men who repent their crimes (c. 3). The continual repetition of strictures against powerful lords and the reminders that lords were responsible for their retainers' actions leads one to believe that this problem was one of the greatest with which the king had to contend. Although this was a local code for a single shire, it is an indication of the problems relating to the growth of power of the greater magnates.

The fourth code, IV Athelstan, was promulgated at Thundersfield, Surrey (?), some time in the 930's.[21] It is primarily a restatement of II, V, and III Athelstan with several important changes. One crucial change (c. 2) was the repeal of the law forbidding trading outside burhs and trading on Sunday, laws first enacted in II Athelstan, cc. 12, 13, and 24. A second change outlined penalties for theft (c. 6). An accused person,

if he fled to the king or an archbishop, was granted nine days' respite, while flight to an abbot, bishop, ealdorman or thegn, was permitted three days' respite. The penalty for theft was death and, in the case of women, the execution was carried out by drowning or throwing from a cliff. Male slaves were to be stoned and females burned. The execution of a slave was to be carried out by eighty other slaves acting together. If the slaves failed to aid in the execution, they were liable to scourging. After executing a fellow slave, each slave was required to pay three pennies to the owner to complete the price of one pound for a new slave. This code was apparently a national law that, in several important areas, amended II Athelstan.

The final code, VI Athelstan, concerned only the territory around London. It was probably promulgated late in Athelstan's reign and was for the burh of London, the shire of Middlesex, Surrey east of the Wye, and parts of Essex and Kent.[22] The Preamble states that the notables of the area, in association, were drawing up laws as a supplement to II, V, and IV Athelstan. The first section repeated the laws regarding theft, including the provision that any thief over the age of twelve stealing goods worth more than twelve pence was to be executed. Capitulae 2 through 9 treated the association of the

London area. This included contributions of money for the common good, the organization of men into tithings and hundreds, riding after thieves, indemnification for losses in theft, feuds, and the like. The tenth section stated that two thegns, Aelfheah Stybb and Brihtnoth, son of Odda, were in attendance at Thundersfield at the request of the king when, apparently, IV Athelstan was drawn up and that they gave pledges that the laws would be upheld. It may have been here that they obtained their ideas for the new law code. This chapter also clearly states the order in which all of the secular laws codes were drawn up. The last two capitulae were, again, national in character and concern. The king commanded that all laws were to be obeyed and all those in authority had to enforce the laws on penalty of fine and loss of office (c. 11). The last chapter rescinded the death penalty for thieves younger than fifteen, a contradiction of chapter 1. This code is important since it gives an indication of what a local guild was like in the tenth century. It cared for its members and was a support for the authority of the king and the upholding of the law.

It has been stated that the poor organization and constant repetition found in Athelstan's laws is an indication of the general weakness of Athelstan's

government.[23] This is difficult to accept. One code, I Athelstan, is ecclesiastical and is not repeated later. Two codes, III and VI Athelstan, are local so that the repetition of national ordinances is to be expected. The other three are clearly repetitive. Both V and IV Athelstan repeat parts of II Athelstan, the first and most comprehensive of the king's laws. The difference lies in the fact that V and IV Athelstan are involved solely in the administration of justice rather than being a broad code for the reign. It is possible that rather than the repetition harped upon by the critics, the king was modifying and molding the system of justice to fit the needs of the state. It is true that the king complained that his laws were not obeyed (V Athelstan, Preamble). This may have been the result of the friction between the Anglo-Saxons and the Cornu-British in Exeter rather than a problem throughout the realm. It is also true that theft and murder were problems that the king had difficulty coping with. The savagery of the penalties, particularly the death sentence for thieves aged twelve, has again been used as a sign of the ineffectiveness of the king in dealing with internal matters.[24] It should be noted, however, that the England of some nine hundred years later could condemn a nine-year-old for the theft of goods valued at two pence.[25]

There is also no evidence that anyone of that age was ever executed for his crimes. Then, too, Athelstan soon amended the law and raised the age limit several years after consultation with his ecclesiastical advisors. Taking only one aspect of a law code out of its historical context and judging it by contemporary standards is not only unfair, but it does nothing to help explain or interpret the system from which it was taken. Athelstan's laws were harsh but they were not arbitrary or capricious. Whether or not they were effective is a question that can not be fully answered.

An important aspect of Athelstan's legislation was his attempts to regulate trade. Allowing exchanges only in a burh and in the presence of witnesses, limiting trade to Monday through Saturday, and the like, all indicate that the king was trying to promote honest dealing and also to insure that any duties owed the crown were paid (II Athelstan, cc. 10, 12, and 24). His insistence on one regular coinage facilitated commerce within the state. It is clear that there was a mixed barter-sales economy, a combination of trading and selling rather than one or the other, in England at this time. Although the economy was predominantly agricultural, there were other goods and services available.

There are few records of the tenth-century

economy extant today. One of the few burhs known to have been a commercial center is Exeter. William of Malmesbury states that, after Athelstan removed the Cornu-British from that city, he rebuilt the walls with stone and added four towers. The burh, however, was surrounded by barren lands. Grain rarely grew near the town and when it did, there was a good chance that it would only produce husk and no kernel. Exeter prospered, says William of Malmesbury, because it was a center of trade for both domestic and foreign merchandise.[26] Unfortunately, Malmesbury does not detail what was traded for domestic goods or what the domestic goods were. His statements, however, are important since they show the economic foundations of Exeter were not grounded on agricultural barter.

Archaeological studies of at least one town in England present more evidence of the commercial activities of the tenth century. Although York is not a typical English burh, the commerce of that town can not be too different from that of purely Anglo-Saxon burhs. York was a thriving community at the center of an agricultural district evidently producing enough food to supply the town amply. There is evidence of a developed metallurgical industry with iron and bronze as the two most important metals worked. Luxury goods such as

glass beads were produced and there was some working in amber, which was obtained from traders from Scandinavia. Production of leather and finished leather products was also an important industry. Most important, there is evidence of a booming cloth industry. The great number of clay loom weights and spindle-whorls indicates the importance of the production of woolens for sale.[27] The finished cloth was probably traded domestically and exported. Again, it should be stressed that York was not a typical English burh, but the commercial activities of the town were similar to those in many English towns.

The commercialization of the towns emerged at the same time as external trade and economic prosperity. Several factors contributed to this general resurgence. First, the stabilization of society permitted a return to internal trade without the fear of Viking raids. Concomitant with this was the ability to move freely in the Channel and in the North Sea, reopening trade routes to Scandinavia and Northern Europe. Throughout Europe there was a burgeoning commercial revolution that greatly enhanced the economy of England.[28] The English had a plentiful supply of precious metals, indicated by the Welsh tribute, and this may be taken as a reflection of the prosperity of the nation.[29] Trade in salt, pottery,

iron, lead and silver is evident early in the tenth century.[30] The woolen industry was a particularly important factor in international trade.[31] The growth of trade and commerce in England was to be continuous for much of the remainder of the tenth century and was crucial to the position of England in international affairs. The combination of a strong, highly respected king and several basic and luxury industries placed England in the center of the northern world.

Another major theme in the legislation of Athelstan was the relationship between lord and retainer. This theme indicates that there were problems in the relationship and it may indicate there was a change in the social structure in general. Two basic distinctions are found in the social strata, noble-non-noble and free-unfree. Within each of these broad groupings are a number of gradations. Although a slave was considered property, the slave could own goods and acquire property. This is evidenced in the law requiring slaves to pay for other slaves they have executed (IV Athelstan, c. 6). A <u>ceorl</u> or commoner could rise in status from non-noble to noble if he owned four hides of land and supported a church on his property. This may appear somewhat difficult to achieve, but it did occur.[32]

The thegn or one of equivalent status was

originally termed a gesith, implying a person with land who acted as a warrior and retainer. The application of the term gesith was soon changed to mean one with land but with no particular status as an official. Thegn replaced gesith and by the tenth century was the exclusive term used to indicate a class of landed officials and retainers to great lords and the king. Becoming a royal official, the thegn was closely tied to the growth of centralized power in Wessex and England. The thegn was a landowner, police officer in his shire, enforcer of ecclesiastical discipline, and a judicial officer.[33]

Over a hundred thegns witness the charters of Athelstan at one time or another. Through the witness lists of the royal charters it is possible to trace the careers of many of these men. An example is the thegn Odda. His signature appears first in a memorandum of 925 (S394), as one of several witnesses. In 928, his name occurs first in a list of thegns or ministri of the king witnessing a charter (S400) to the thegn Byrhtferth. From this time to 942 (S496), Odda is invariably listed as the senior thegn, an indication of his high status at court. On two occasions he is listed as an ealdorman. The first is in 939 (S446) and is apparently an error since Odda signs later charters as senior thegn. The other occasion is in 942 (S485), a signature that

may indicate he was elevated to the status of ealdorman immediately before his death or resignation from active status.

A second example is the career of Wulfgar, who appears first in a charter of 928 (S400) low in the list of thegns. He must have been a promising individual or was, more likely, a member of a family ruling in one of Athelstan's shires, since he was given land on at least one occasion. In 931, the king granted Wulfgar land at Ham, Wiltshire (S416). Sometime between this date and 938, Wulfgar willed his property to his wife Aeffe and, after her death, to several religious institutions (S1533). Aeffe also received land from the king in an undated charter giving her property at Worston, Somersetshire. By 932 (S417, S418, S419), Wulfgar had risen through the ranks of thegns and his name appears among the first four or five witnesses of charters. Wulfgar remained in that status until the end of Athelstan's reign when he was created ealdorman. Two manuscripts of a charter (S433) differ as to Wulfgar's status in 937. One manuscript titles him thegn while the other lists him as an ealdorman. This second listing is an error since Wulfgar continues to witness charters in 938 as a thegn and it is not until 939 (S448) that he clearly attains the status of ealdorman. It has been suggested

that Wulfgar was the hereditary ealdorman in Wiltshire and, since all of his property was in that shire or very near it, this is probably correct.[34] The problem in studying Wulfgar's career is similar to the difficulties involved in the study of the lives of many of the nobles of the period, i.e., there is more than one noble of the same name. The second Wulfgar does not appear until 931 (S414) and continues to witness charters as a thegn until 944 (S500). The relative positions of the two signatures in the witness lists of charters makes it possible to separate the two men. The next signature of Wulfgar II appears in 944-946 (S514) as an ealdorman and he continues to witness in this capacity until 948 (S533).

Neither the career of Odda nor that of Wulfgar I was the usual career of a thegn. Both of these men rose to the status of ealdorman, a rank not attained by the vast majority of thegns. Most thegns were never promoted, even though many were given property or shown other favors by the king. Grants of land to thegns were either rewards for service or a fiscal base from which the thegn could equip himself for his position as military, legal and judicial officer of the king.[35]

Grants of land to ealdormen were considerably less in number; in fact, only two were given by the king and each was a special case. The grant to Osferth (S1713),

is tentatively dated 924x939, but must have been granted before the summer of 934 since Osferth died during the Scottish raid of that year. This Osferth, it should be remembered, was a member of the royal family and was mentioned in King Alfred's will. He can not, therefore, be considered a typical ealdorman and the gift of land to him may well have been from cousin to cousin rather than king to lord. The other grant to an ealdorman was to Athelstan, known as the Half-King, in 938 (S442). The title of Half-King is most fitting since Athelstan was ealdorman in East Anglia, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, the fens known as Holland in Lincolnshire, and the eight hundreds known as Oundle in the north-east quarter of Northamptonshire. This, however, is the barest minimum that he held. It is probable that he ruled all the land that King Edward had hidated, from the Thames to the Welland and as far west as Watling Street.[36] This was probably an attempt on the part of the king to weaken the Danelaw by placing it under a single ealdorman who could and did rule as the king desired. The Half-King was the second most powerful secular ruler in England.

Although the majority of ealdormen did not have anywhere near the considerable power of Athelstan Half-King, they were crucial in the governance of England. One of the important changes in society at this time was

the growth of their power. The king was no longer able to govern personally as he had done in Wessex. Aside from the huge increase in physical territory, there were other pressing problems with which the king had to cope. There was also the need for more local government to mete out justice and insure that laws were obeyed. The ealdorman was the agent of the central government, the royal officer who was the extension of the king's power in the shire.[37] His role was both military and civil in that he was the commander of the troops from his ealdordom, was chief judicial officer, and chief law officer in the shire.[38] The growth of the power of the ealdorman is tied to his control of more than one shire and the introduction of a deputy, a gerefa or reeve, to govern the shire. It has been suggested that this was a result of the breakdown of the shire as a workable unit of governance[39] but this is not necessarily true. It may have been an attempt to keep power centralized within a close group of trusted and tried leaders under the king and at the same time keep government close to the people.

At one time or another, Athelstan had a dozen ealdormen serving under him. Several appear only for short periods of time while others survive the reign of Athelstan by many years. The ealdormen began as king's thegns and were then promoted to the higher rank. During

Athelstan's reign, there were six ealdordoms given to a small number of closely-knit families, several related to the crown.[40] These families were usually given the shires that originally composed the holdings of the kings of Wessex. There were also Viking ealdormen in eastern and northeastern England. Fourteen Scandinavian eorls witness the charters of Athelstan at one time or another, particularly in the period 930 to 934. Their presence indicates the attempts of the king to bring a large minority population into the government. Most of the ealdormen of Viking descent governed areas under the superior control of Athelstan Half-King. This is another sign of the merging of the two peoples into a unified nation.

It has been suggested that the growth of power of the ealdormen was a source of weakness to the crown, particularly in the case of a man such as Athelstan Half-King. Several of the sections of the laws seem to support this allegation (II Athelstan, c. 3; III Athelstan, c. 6); but the lack of a general study of ealdormen and the growth of ealdormanric power makes it impossible either to prove or refute the assertion. Until such a study is provided or more evidence uncovered, a final judgment can not be made.

The death of the atheling Eadwine may shed some

light on the problem of the power of the nobility. It also, unfortunately, has cast a shadow over the character of Athelstan. William of Malmesbury appends the story of Eadwine to the section of his history of Athelstan's reign taken from the tenth-century poem. The tale, like the story of Athelstan's illegitimate birth and the rebellion of Alfred at the coronation of Athelstan, is separate from the main body of the history. Malmesbury carefully notes that he is not certain of the veracity of the legends and that he, himself, does not quite believe them. This is particularly true of the story of the death of Eadwine since Athelstan took such good care of his brothers and sisters.[41]

William's version of the story is thus: Eadwine, displeased with the selection of Athelstan as king, began to grow more and more unhappy. Apparently Eadwine felt he had a better claim to the throne, possibly because he was born to the purple. The king's cupbearer accused Eadwine of perfidy and of plotting to overthrow Athelstan. Eadwine was placed in an oarless, open boat with only his armor bearer as a companion and sent into the English Channel. Despondent over his brother's actions, Eadwine drowned himself. His body was taken to Whitsand on the Flemish coast and buried at the Abbey of Saint Bertin. Athelstan later realized that the cupbearer had

deceived him and ordered the execution of the servant. The king then did seven years' penance for his crime.[42] Malmesbury, in another work, notes that Athelstan created the religious house at Milton Abbas for the soul of his brother.[43]

Other English sources are contradictory. Symeon of Durham says that Athelstan ordered the drowning of his brother and Matthew Paris repeats the story almost verbatim.[44] The Chronicle simply states that Eadwine drowned.[45] Flemish sources, which seem to know more about the situation, or at least are more interested, do not report any foul play on the part of Athelstan. Folcwin, the historian of Saint Bertin, states that Eadwine was forced to flee England as a result of a political disturbance. There is no indication whether he fled on his own or was exiled by Athelstan. While crossing the Channel, Eadwine drowned. His body was recovered and buried by Count Adelulf at Saint Bertin. Athelstan, upon hearing of the interment, gave gifts to the monastery.[46] It is important to note that, in each case, the Flemish sources style Eadwine as "rex". This may be a key to the situation. If Eadwine was acting as sub-king or viceroy in Kent, as is thought, he may have attempted to subvert Athelstan's power in that shire and attempted to rule without his brother. In any case, the

only evidence of foul play on the part of Athelstan is contradicted by several other sources that were intimately connected with the event. The Flemish sources surely would have commented if Athelstan had ordered the death of Eadwine. Since they did not, it is doubtful that Athelstan did kill his brother.

The Anglo-Saxon charter, from which so much evidence such as the careers of nobles can be obtained, changed radically in the reign of Athelstan. It is not in form or content that the change is evident, but in language. Rather than the prosaic language of the diplomas of Alfred and Edward, there is a verbal explosion of such magnitude that it is very difficult to translate parts of Athelstan's charters. The arenga clauses in his charters are a swamp of obscurantism and pleonasm.[47] Not only does the language of the charters change radically, but charters also become available in the original rather than copies in cartularies. This may be due to the disruption of earlier reigns where even good copies of charters are rare. Whatever the case, the diplomas of the reign of Athelstan are many and rich.

The cause for the eruption is directly related to relations with continental Europe. This is evident in the introduction of continental minuscule in the charters of the reign.[48] It has been thought that the

inflated language of the charters was a result of the revitalization of the Hisperic tradition of Saint Aldhelm,[49] but this is not the case. Several major glossaries of the eighth and ninth centuries were in England in the tenth century and these were the source of the bombastic language of Athelstan's charters.[50] The glossarial Latin in these charters make them the most extreme in the hermeneutic tradition in England.[51] As a result, they were probably difficult to understand even at the time of their creation and are now nearly untranslateable. It is necessary, at times, to decode rather than to translate.

With the general inflation of language in the charters comes an inflation in the superscriptio--the clause containing the ruler's title--from a simple designation of authority to a greatly enlarged claim of superiority. Phrases such as basileos Anglorum (S442), rex Anglorum et aequae totius Britanniae orbis curagulus preelectus (S440), and Rex anglorum et eque totius albeonis gubernator (S437) are not uncommon.[52] A question arises as to the meaning of the titles. Were they a true reflection of the authority of Athelstan or were they simply the products of overactive scribal minds? It is necessary first to view the situation of the empire on the continent. When Berengar of Friuli died in 924,

the empire was in abeyance until the coronation of Otto in 962.[53] There was, then, a hiatus that Athelstan could have filled. In the minds of writers of the tenth century, there were three qualifications a man had to meet in order to be emperor: rule over kings, acclamation by the army, and papal sanction.[54] Athelstan clearly met the first requirement with his overlordship of the Welsh and Scots. The second is met if it can be taken to mean that the army accepted Athelstan as its leader. The third is fulfilled if coronation by a prelate sanctioned by the pope is acceptable. It is granted that this may be stretching the requirements, but there were few claims to the imperial crown that fit the three qualifications perfectly.

The titles, however, may have stemmed from the use of glossarial Latin. Imperator, for example, is used only in a forged charter (S406). Basileos Anglorum, on the other hand, is used in several charters of unquestioned authenticity. Basileus is common only in England and Byzantium in the tenth century and Basileos Anglorum is commonly accepted in England as a synonym for rex.[55] The earlier English concept of an overlord, brytenwalda, is found in one charter of Athelstan and this is the only time that a king claimed this title in a diploma.[56] This, however, does not prove that

Athelstan was claiming the imperial title.

Athelstan clearly had claim to superiority over the other kings of Britain, but how far this was carried is not known. There is no trace of the imperial idea in his laws nor in the report of his reign in the Chronicle.[57] His coinage claims lordship of all Britain after 927 with the designation Rex to Brit. It has been suggested that the title on the coins mirrors the revival of titles and hegemony and that this implies absolute lordship of Britain.[58] Recent scholarship either dismisses the titles as stylistic flourishes of the scribes,[59] or takes them to mean that there was a concept of an empire encompassing Britain alone.[60] The first explanation is to view the evidence too lightly and to ignore the political situation. The second suggestion is correct but does not carry the argument far enough.

Since there was no emperor on the continent during Athelstan's reign, he may have felt that he had a viable claim to the title. He did rule over other kings, was accepted by his army, and was crowned by a prelate acceptable to the pope. Athelstan was held in high esteem by his regal colleagues on the continent and ties to the throne of England were eagerly sought by suitors from Europe. Athelstan's kingdom was one of the most

powerful in Europe and he was recognized as a major influence on the European scene. With this in mind, Athelstan may well have had imperial pretentions and the titles given him in charters may be a reflection of this claim.

The reign of Athelstan also brought about a change in the production of charters. Before this time, charters were local products created by local scribes for the recipient. In Athelstan's reign, charters were created by some sort of royal writing office.[61] There are two definite indications of the presence of a centralized scribal institution: the uniformity of charters and palaeographical peculiarities. The first indicator is not as clear-cut as it would appear. Similarities in the charters have been called accidental since they were all products of Winchester and the scribes would tend to use the same formulae.[62] If this were the case, then it presupposes a formula book, but there is no evidence for one. There are two major series for the period of the 930's. The first is the Flebilia fortiter series running from 23 March, 931 to 21 January, 933. Consisting of nine or possibly ten charters, it contains the most impressive of all of Athelstan's diplomas.[63] Although the use of formulae is common in Athelstan's charters, it is this series that begins the use of a

complete formula for the entire charter. The second series, called Fortuna fallentis, is comprised of seven charters written between 28 May, 934 and 21 December, 937.[64] Although not as extensive as the first series, this group also uses a complete formula. It would be difficult if not impossible for these charters to be so uniform if there had not been a royal writing office from which they were issued.

The second feature indicating a writing office is the scribal peculiarities found in the charters. Winchester was the site of the office and only one of the seven or eight known hands of the period 931 to 963 is not from that burh.[65] One scholar suggests that there were three scribes responsible for many of Athelstan's charters: "A" who drew up charters from 928 to 934, "B" writing from 938 to 942, and "C" who was active from 939 to 947.[66] Since these are clear indications of a group of scribes active in the creation of charters, there can be little doubt that there was a royal writing office. Then, too, there were the royal archives at Winchester that contained duplicates of diplomas used as reference copies for the scribes and the king.[67] If such an archive existed, there must have been an organization to create the documents and their duplicates.

The datum clause in Anglo-Saxon charters,

particularly in the reign of Athelstan, is rich in information. Rather than simply giving the year, the datum clause gives the indiction, epact, concurrent, day and month, and sometimes the place of granting. In some years, as a result, it is possible to trace the king's movements throughout his realm. This is particularly true in the Fortuna fallentis and Flebilia fortiter series of charters. Other charters have place and date attached, but not as regularly as in the two great series.[68] It is also possible to discover a number of estates in the possession of the king during his reign. Several of these estates are known, such as Farndon on the Dee where Edward died, Tamworth which was the site of the Mercian government, and Kingston-on-Thames where Athelstan was crowned. The very name of the latter indicates it was a royal vill and other towns of this name--and there are several--were royal at one time or another. Other vills, such as Cheddar and Abingdon, can be discovered as royal in documents.[69] From the datum clause, more estates can be ascertained. Three are specifically noted: Wellowe, Hampshire (S1604), Frome, Dorsetshire (S427), and Dorchester (S391). Several other sites may have been royal estates. Since Wilton and Amesbury were the sites of Witans in 931 and 933 respectively, they were probably held by Athelstan.[70] Five vills where charters were

promulgated are mentioned in King Alfred's will (S1507) and may, therefore, have been considered royal estates. Lifton, Devonshire, was granted to Aethelweard as was Amesbury. Wellow was given to Aethelflaed or Aelfthryth. Aelfthryth also received Chippenham, Wiltshire. Osferth, Alfred's kinsman, was bequeathed Lyminster, Sussex. Alfred specifically required the estates to remain in the family and if there were no heirs, the estates reverted to the king.[71] Since one of the estates, Wellow, is listed as a royal vill, the others may also have been. This is particularly possible if the euphemistic phrase "well-known vill" found in a number of Athelstan's datum clauses indicates the site was in the possession of the royal family.[72]

The charters of Athelstan, then, are a treasure-house of information. The mobility and careers of ecclesiastics and lay lords can be charted, the king's itinerary may be followed, and several royal estates may be discovered.[73] The great number of charters in this and the following four reigns is interesting in light of the dearth of information given in the Chronicle for the same period. Language, too, is of interest. It is possible that the verbosity of the charters is related to a revived interest in literature at this time. The charters are a clear indication of the revival of learning

at least in a small part of the population. They are also evidence that the king was involved in the growth of learning and the development of an educated elite.

Education made definite advances over the reign of King Alfred who had confessed almost total illiteracy for his kingdom. With the introduction of foreign scholars by Alfred and Edward and the continuation of this policy by Athelstan, the number of literate clergy and laity rose. Alfred had probably begun the Palace School at Winchester for the education of his children and the children of noble families and this was continued by Edward.[74] It was also at this time that schools were organized or revived at several religious institutions. Glastonbury, Abingdon, and New Minster, Winchester, were known to be centers of education for ecclesiastics and there may have been others. Alfred, it should be noted, was the only English king before Henry I who is known to have been literate.[75]

It was with Athelstan that the Palace School developed into an international school for princes and clerics. Several young Englishmen educated here went on to become the most important clerics in England in the later tenth century. Aethelwold, one of the great church reformers, was a student here as was Dunstan. The school is described as a very important institution and

Athelstan, its sponsor, as it was commonly known, was very wise.[76] Apparently it was common for children of good birth and prospects to be educated at the Palace School.[77] The precise size of the school is not known, but from the number of students known to have attended during Athelstan's reign, there must have been several dozen pupils. This school produced many of the scholars and ecclesiastics of the next generation.

Equally important was the education of statesmen from England and abroad. Princes were sent from several countries to study in the court in preparation for their eventual succession to the throne. Other princes fled to England as a result of unrest in their countries and were also raised in the court school. Haakon of Norway was sent expressly to be educated. Alan of Brittany and Louis of France both fled to England and were brought into the school. These three along with Athelstan's younger brothers and sisters were the core of the princely elite at the school.[78] Other noble children were probably raised with these children. The resulting friendships of the foreign princes with Athelstan and his family were to play an important role in international affairs in the era with Brittany, Norway, and France acting as close allies of England for the period of the reigns of these three boys.

In conjunction with the general rise in education in England, there was also a renewal of interest in all areas of learning. Medicine in the tenth century, for example, was the best to be had in Europe outside of Muslim Spain.[79] Athelstan was a patron of the arts and his interest in art combined with other aspects of learning made his court one of the greatest centers of culture in tenth-century Europe.[80] The king was one of the most cultivated men of his age and it was he, rather than his grandfather Alfred, who was regarded by the Anglo-Saxons as the most learned of their kings.[81] Athelstan was very interested in poetry, as were his father and grandfather,[82] and this interest is evidenced in the poetry produced during his reign.

The difficulty involved in the study of Old English poetry is that most of the poetry is undated. The few examples of dated poetry are found in the Chronicle and are known as The Battle of Brunanburh and the like.[83] It is surprising that in a period of sparse Chronicle entries and, according to philologists, a dearth of poetry, that there would be such an outpouring of poetry in the Chronicle. What is necessary, then, is to view the corpus of Old English poetry in an historical context rather than applying only literary examinations.

With the exception of what are unfortunately

cataloged as the "minor" poems, the corpus of Old English poetry is found in four manuscripts: Bodleian Junius XI, Vercelli Codex CXVII, the Exeter Book, and Cotton Vitellius A. xv. The reason for the compilation of the four books is not known. Each of the manuscripts is late tenth century, although the poetry contained in them may have been collected as anthologies at an earlier time. The lack of early texts is blamed on destruction by the Vikings. There is little overlapping among the four manuscripts, an indication of the quantity of Old English poetry.[84]

The "minor" poems range in date from the seventh to the tenth century according to commentators, but there is little agreement among students of Old English literature. The poem Waldere is ascribed by Dobbie to either the eighth or the tenth century and another commentator relates it to the tenth-century German poem Waltharius, while a recent study suggests there is no relation between the two poems.[85] There are, however, only two fragments of Waldere in existence out of what was once a thousand-line poem. This in itself makes any comparison difficult. It is possible that the poems are related, particularly since intercourse between Germany and England was common and manuscripts were known to have been transmitted from one country to another. Several

poems are dated to the tenth century simply because they can not be moved back earlier in time. Brunanburh and Maldon, however, are discussed in terms of archaisms and traditional heroic stylistics related to Beowulfian criticism.[86] It is interesting to note that the language, meter, and style of two specifically dated poems are termed archaic as a result of comparison with an undated poem that may or may not be eighth century. Other poems are of the tenth century and are not archaic. The Dialogue of Solomon and Saturn, the oldest such dialogue in western literature, is tenth century. The Menologium, a chronology of the Christian year, Maxims II, the Kentish Hymn, Psalm Fifty, Aldhelm, a poem in praise of that saint containing a great number of Greek words, and the Seasons for Fasting, are all of the tenth century.[87] It must be pointed out that the Kentish Hymn and Psalm Fifty were originally composed in West Saxon and later transcribed by a Kentish monk at Canterbury, thus giving the poems an overlay of Kentish word forms. All of the remainder of the "minor" poems are described as ninth century or earlier, even though, with the exception of Caedmon's Hymn, all manuscripts containing the "minor" poetry are late ninth century or later.

The first of the four major manuscripts containing Old English poetry, Bodl. Jun. XI, is a magnificent

parchment codex of 116 folios that was produced by four scribes about the year 1000. Three of the poems in the manuscript, Genesis, Exodus and Daniel, were transcribed originally with Christ and Satan added at a later date.[88] Genesis is a composite of two separate poems. Genesis A is purported to have been created by a member of the school of Caedmon about the year 700 but the language is of a much later date and the Anglian forms are buried or blurred. Genesis B is a translation of an Old Saxon poem of the same name and was probably done at the court of Alfred.[89] The problem of the Anglian forms in Genesis A brings to a head the question of dialect in Old English poetry and its use in dating poetry. It is not known what the poetic language of any one period was like and it is not known if the language of poets at a given time was similar enough to make comparison viable. Statements on dialect or dialectal differentiation are a matter of inference based primarily on Beowulf. Furthermore, West Saxon with an admixture of Northumbrian and Anglian forms is, according to linguists, the common literary language of Anglo-Saxon England.[90] It has been noted that the copying of a West Saxon text by a Kentish scribe radically changed the language forms of the poetry in the case of the Kentish Hymn and Psalm Fifty. It appears, then, that any statement of dialect would be

suspect unless one was certain of the scribal transmission. Exodus is an epic poem based on chapters thirteen and fourteen of the Old Testament text and is usually dated earlier than Beowulf. Daniel is a paraphrase of the first four chapters of that book and overlaps the poem Azarius found in the Exeter Book. It, too, is dated earlier than Beowulf. The final poem, Christ and Satan, is a lyric amplification of the Biblical themes and is dated to the period 790-830.[91] The dating of the poems in this manuscript, then, rests almost entirely on the dating of Beowulf.

The Vercelli codex contains twenty-one homilies, a prose life of Saint Guthlac, four poems, and fragments of two other poems. The manuscript, of 136 folios, was executed by a single scribe in the latter half of the tenth century.[92] Three of the poems, Andreas, Fates of the Apostles, and Elene, are hagiographical. The Dream of the Rood, the debate entitled Soul and Body I, and a poetic homily fragment constitute the remainder of the poetry. Two of the poems, Fates of the Apostles and Elene, contain the runic signature of Cynewulf, and the remainder are dated to the period of the Cynewulfian school.[93] Although Cynewulf and his school were once considered to have been active in the early eighth century, their work is now thought to be of the ninth

century, probably earlier than the reign of King Alfred.[94]

The third and largest of the poetic manuscripts, the Exeter Book, was presented by Bishop Leofric to Exeter Cathedral sometime in the middle of the eleventh century. The codex is 131 folios of parchment transcribed at Crediton about the period 960 to 990. The compilation, however, is considerably earlier, dating to the period between the accession of Edward and the death of Athelstan.[95] A number of poems are of the school of Cynewulf, i.e., purportedly from the ninth century, while several are of the tenth century. The Wanderer is clearly a product of the period after Alcuin and the Seafarer may well have been composed in the reign of Athelstan as could Resignation and Maxims I.[96] The unique Riming Poem is tentatively dated to the eighth century, even though the only parallels are tenth century and the poem is clearly related to the Wanderer and the Seafarer.[97] Half-line rhyme and alliteration are found in the Chronicle poems and in tenth-century Norse poetry. The close relations between England and Norway in the tenth century may mean there was some influence in poetry from one country to another. This, along with the late dating of the Seafarer, suggests a revision of the dating of the Riming Poem.

The remaining poem in the Exeter Book, and in many ways the most interesting and important, is Widsith. Heriot as an Anglo-Saxon institution is indicated in the poem and the dating of heriot is, hence, closely tied to the date of the composition of the poem. Widsith is an original creation with no parallels in Old English poetry. It was purportedly composed in the late seventh or early eighth century.[98] Heriot, so conspicuous in the poem, is first noted in non-literary sources in the reign of Athelstan and the tenth-century milieu was such that a poem like Widsith could have been composed.[99] For this and other reasons, the eighth century date has been challenged by Professor Robert L. Reynolds and a date of the tenth century has been argued.[100] The Ealhhild of the poem is, like Eadhild the wife of Hugh the Great, a weaver of peace and the poet could easily have obtained materials for the poem from the treasures presented by Hugh to Athelstan.[101] Further evidence presented by Reynolds suggests that Widsith was indeed created during the reign of Athelstan. Not all of Reynolds' arguments can be sustained, but his proposals do merit thoughtful consideration.

Reynolds' dating of Widsith has been vigorously attacked by the most recent editor of the poem. Malone combines a general restatement of his arguments with a

suggestion that the Franks Casket is clearly connected to Widsith. This is an important suggestion with much merit. Curiously enough, Malone opts for the earliest posited date for the creation of the casket--c. 550--rather than the eighth-century date that is generally accepted by linguists.[102] Both the sixth-century and the eighth-century dates are suggested as a result of orthography, linguistic forms, and the style of incised runes. There is no consideration of the artistic rendering which may be a more useful approach since there are dated objects with which to compare the casket. Dating by the style of the runes is nearly impossible since runes are cut variously according to the material incised, date and place of cutting.[103] The study of runes is not such that one can use the style of incising as a dating method. Until a serious study of the historical, artistic aspects of the casket is published, there can be no effective rebuttal of Reynolds' dating of the poem.

The fourth codex, Cott. Vit. A. xv., is the most interesting and most controversial. The volume, of 211 folios, contains two distinct manuscripts: ff. 4-94, of the twelfth century, and ff. 95-211, of the tenth century. It is the latter section, with four poems in two hands, that must be considered. The poems are a

fragment of the Passion of Saint Christopher, the Wonders of the East, the Letter of Alexander to Aristotle, Beowulf, and a fragment of Judith. The underlying theme of the codex is a Liber Monstrorum or, as Sisam suggests, "Liber de diversis monstris, anglice."[104] The manuscript was written in the late tenth century and the collection itself was probably not gathered before 950.[105] The contents of the codex must be examined in an attempt to understand the problem of dating the poems involved.

The Saint Christopher fragment, ff. 96^a-100^b of the new foliation, is a direct result of the importation of relics of that saint by Athelstan. The cult of Christopher, although probably known in England before this period, was spurred by the acquisition of these relics and it was after the bones had entered England that the life of Christopher was composed.[106] The Wonders of the East, ff. 100^b-108^b, is a version of the Letter of Pharasmanes to Hadrian that was turned into Old English in the period from Alfred to Athelstan. It also appears in Cott. Tib. B. v., ff. 78^a-87^b.[107] The spurious Letter of Alexander to Aristotle, ff. 109^a-133^b, is an Old English translation of the Latin text of the Greek original. The Latin text, in its full version, is a work of the ninth century and the Old English translation found in this codex, the first vernacular edition of the poem,

is of the very late ninth century.[108] Judith, ff. 204^a-211^b, is a 350 line fragment of what was once a 1300 line poem based on the Vulgate Book of Judith. Originally thought to have been created at the school of Caedmon, later assigned to the Cynewulfian school, and sometimes given to the Anglian school, the poem is now ascribed to the tenth century. Judith was composed in the period 930 to 937.[109]

The final poem in the codex, found on ff. 134^a-203^b, is Beowulf. The consensus was once that the poem was a creation of the late seventh or early eighth century but the agreement is not as solid as before. A number of experts still date the work to this period, while one linguist proposes a date of the late ninth century and the Reynolds Thesis suggests the tenth century.[110] Again, the dating of the poem is crucial in the study of Anglo-Saxon institutions since Beowulf clearly refers to the institution of heriot. There is only one dateable event in the poem, the raid of Hygelac of c. 521 A.D.

Much has been made of the various linguistic, philological, and orthographical tests for the dating of Beowulf, but the examinations give confusing results. Stenton, for example, cites the ancient word forms and the Anglian dialect and, as a result, assigns a seventh

or eighth century date. Klaeber argues that the language of the text is Late West Saxon with some non-West Saxon, particularly Anglian, forms.[111] However, as noted above, Late West Saxon with an infusion of Anglian is the common if not the standard, if that is possible, poetic language of Old English.[112] Orthography is also a dubious test. Reynolds has shown convincingly that spelling and grammar do not necessarily indicate the date of composition.[113] Finally, Dobbie makes it clear that the standard linguistic tests, when applied to Beowulf, give contradictory results.[114]

There are two tests that can be applied to Beowulf that may shed light on the date of composition: the cultural milieu and comparison with dated and dateable literature. Several attempts have been made to place Beowulf in its cultural milieu, the most notable by Cook, Whitelock and Girvan.[115] All begin on the assumption that the poem was created in the late seventh-early eighth century and work with evidence from this assumption. The Reynolds Thesis assumes that the poem was created in the tenth century and, using the same evidence as Cook, Whitelock and Girvan, convincingly supports the theory. The evidence in the poem is interesting. The poet was a Christian writing for a thoroughly Christian audience. If laymen were to

understand the poem, they would have to be steeped in Christian doctrine, indicating that Christianity had been present for a considerable length of time and that religion played a role in the lives of the audience.[116] The author was probably of high social rank writing for recitation before a king or a great magnate and his retainers.[117] The dominant tone of the poem is courtly. References to fighting and fine arms and armor were of great interest to a noble audience. Above all, the poem is a lesson in court etiquette and shows the ideal relationship between a lord and his retainer.[118] The court of Athelstan was an ideal location for the recitation of the poem. Indeed, with a court school there for the education of young nobles and future kings, the poem would have been of considerable pedagogical value.

Many Beowulf scholars do not believe that a poem so thoroughly Scandinavian could have been composed after the terrible Viking wars of the ninth century. This view is contradicted by the evidence of the relationship between Athelstan and his non-English subjects. It would be difficult to name an Anglo-Saxon king more interested in and more sympathetic to things Viking than Athelstan. It should be remembered that many of the king's greater magnates were Viking.[119] Athelstan is even supposed to have acquired a taste for Viking mead because of his

intimate relations with Vikings.[120] There are many other indications in the reign of Athelstan that the king was interested in the Vikings and interested in cultivating the friendship of Vikings in his kingdom. The argument of a pre-Viking date, then, does not stand up to historical scrutiny.[121]

There are several works in Old English that may have influenced the creation of Beowulf. It is possible that Boethius' Consolatio Philosophiae was known to the poet although there is not enough direct evidence to argue a case.[122] There is also some indication that the Beowulf poet was aware of the Wonders of the East. Reynolds suggests the character of Grendel is drawn directly from the monster Hostis in the Wonders and the Draca in the latter part of Beowulf is very similar to the Draco in the Wonders.[123] Geographical lore in the tenth century was such that they knew a great deal about the north and the Baltic regions.[124] Then, too, the court of Athelstan was steeped in Christianity so that the Christian allusions in the poem would be understood.

There is one piece of evidence that relates the poem directly to the court of Athelstan. A charter of 931 (S416) conveys a grant of land to Athelstan's faithful thegn Wulfgar. The grant contains two interesting names in the perambulation: on beowan hammes and on

grendles mere. Hrothgar's faithful thegn in Beowulf is also named Wulfgar and with the references in the perambulation, there are definite indications of knowledge of the poem.[125] The proem of the charter should be considered in light of Whitelock's comment that Beowulf is a story of monsters in relationship with the Christian universe who can be overcome with faith in God.[126] The theme of the poem and the proem are remarkably similar. Reynolds also suggests a relationship between the term monila in the proem and the jewelled collar of Beowulf.[127]

Several other relationships bear mentioning. Hrothgar's queen Wealhtheow is called frithusibb folca, bond of peace to the nations (l. 2017), and there could be no better description of Athelstan's sisters and their roles in international affairs. Beowulf's sword is called Naegling, or nail (l. 2680), a name that may well be a description of the sword given to Athelstan by Hugh the Great that contained a nail of the True Cross in its haft. It is interesting to note that in the passage naming the sword, the sword shatters at a critical point in the conflict, just as Athelstan's had done in one version of the Brunanburh fight.[128] There is also a rare kenning used to describe Hrothgar, Beowulf, and Athelstan. The phrase eorla dryhten, lord of earls, as far as it is

known, is used only in the description of these three warrior-kings.[129]

A homily of the late tenth century is very much like a passage in Beowulf. Blickling Homily XVII, a sermon dedicating a Church of Saint Michael in an unknown place, contains a vision attributed to Saint Paul that mirrors the description of the mere in Beowulf. The editor of the homilies, realizing the implications of the comparison, notes that this section is clearly earlier than the tenth century, simply because it relates so closely to the poem.[130] Other tenth-century works, such as Brunanburh and Maldon, reflect the epic in style, attitude, and language. As a result, they are identified as archaic. One can well believe that were the two battle poems not firmly anchored in the chronology of the tenth century, they too would be ascribed to the late seventh or early eighth century.

It should be evident at this point that there is no conclusive proof that Beowulf is a creation of the tenth century just as there is none for a date of composition some two centuries earlier. The tenth century is no longer as barren of poetic creation as was thought only a few years ago. Many poems once firmly ascribed to earlier centuries are now confidently ascribed to the era of Athelstan and that Beowulf itself was produced at

this time is not an outrageous suggestion. The facts here presented do not singly prove that the poem is a tenth-century creation, but they require further consideration. Either there is an amazing number of coincidental relationships between Beowulf and the reign of Athelstan, or the poem was created at this time.

Athelstan's career, from a domestic viewpoint, was a continuation of and an enlargement upon the policies of his grandfather and father. There were two main thrusts to his internal program: the restoration of order and prosperity and the continued advancement of the cultural life. In each of these, he attempted to do what he felt was best for his subjects, and for the most part succeeded in his endeavors.

The six extant law codes show the problems faced in the tenth century in an attempt to restore order within the kingdom. Theft, particularly of cattle, was a great problem and the repetition of strictures against theft, each harsh and terrible, indicates the problem was not solved in Athelstan's lifetime. The law codes also show the king was determined to organize a regular system of justice for his kingdom. Athelstan wanted to insure that justice could be found by all who sought it. The friction between the Cornu-British and the Anglo-Saxons of Exeter was eliminated by deporting the Cornu-British to

lands beyond the Tamar River.

Involved in the legislation of Athelstan was the development of commerce. Although several attempts of Athelstan to regulate trade did not work, particularly the laws regarding trading on Sunday and within a burh, his regulations on coinage are important for the economy. The evidence of trade, both domestic and international, in Athelstan's reign, is an indication of the growing economic power of England in the tenth century.

The theme of the relationship between lord and retainer is found often in the law codes of Athelstan. In the codes, in Athelstan's relations with his greater lords, and in the expulsion of Eadwine from England, are found the roots of a problem which would bedevil later Anglo-Saxon kings. The difficulty was the need for men to govern in the king's stead without becoming so powerful that they could ignore the commands of the king. This balance of power within the kingdom was, it appears, impossible for Athelstan to attain. The results were not as dire for Athelstan as they were to be for his successors. Athelstan's major problem in this area was his brother Eadwine and this was solved by exiling the atheling, an event with disastrous results. The growth of power of such men as Athelstan Half-King was to hamper the English crown for several generations.

Charter evidence in Athelstan's reign is plentiful and invaluable. Not only is it possible to trace the growth in power of many of the magnates and also to trace their careers, but the charters give evidence of Athelstan's movements and land holdings. The language of the charters is an indication of a revival of the interest in language in general and points to a revival in literature. One important feature of the charters is the full-blown titles used in the diplomas. Although usually considered an extension of the language used, the titles may be an indication of Athelstan's imperial pretentions. Since Athelstan clearly felt he was entitled to be called emperor, it is possible that the titles reflect his attempt to be recognized as the emperor in the West.

The development of educational centers, particularly at the palace, made England an outstanding cultural center. Foreign princes were sent to be educated and exiles in England also benefited from the Palace School. The number of the educated elite grew during Athelstan's reign and his court was recognized as a center of culture. The literature produced in this period also reflects the level of culture. Although there are several works dated to Athelstan's reign, such as Brunanburh, the Seafarer, and Judith, many others were probably created

at this same time. The intellectual and literary milieu was right for the creation of such works.

The results of the attempts of Athelstan to reorganize society and learning are not clear. Some of his efforts were productive while others were failures. However, in the minds of Englishmen, his work was a great success. He was considered a great administrator, a warrior king, and a cultural leader. The remark that he was the "English Charlemagne" is an acceptable estimate of his reign.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1 II Athelstan, Postscript, in F.L. Attenborough, ed. and trans., The Laws of the Earliest English Kings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922). All references to laws are to this edition. The Preamble to II Athelstan is missing. See Felix Liebermann, ed., Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen (3 vols.; Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1903-1916), III, 99-107, for notes to II Athelstan. The numbering of the codes does not reflect the order of promulgation. Rather, it is a matter of editorial practice resulting from the order of the codes in their various manuscript recensions. On this, see Liebermann, Die Gesetze, I, xviii-lx. For the legislation of Athelstan in general, see H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, Law and Legislation from Aethelberht to Magna Carta (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), particularly pp. 17-21; and Frederick Pollock and Frederic William Maitland, History of English Law Before the Time of Edward I (2nd ed.; 2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898), I, Chapter 2. On the latter study, see James R. Cameron, Frederick William Maitland and the History of English Law (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), pp. 4-5.

2 II Athelstan, c. 1. Richardson and Sayles, Law, pp. 19-20, suggest Athelstan's impotence is indicated by the savage penalties imposed. However, as late as the nineteenth century, there were similar laws.

3 Archibald R. Lewis, The Northern Seas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), pp. 300-301; H.R. Loyn, Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1963), p. 99; and William A. Morris, The Medieval English Sheriff to 1300 (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1927), p. 27.

4 H.P.R. Finberg, "Anglo-Saxon England to 1042," The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. I, Part II: A. D. 43-1042, ed. by H.P.R. Finberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 504; James Tait, The Medieval English Borough (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1936), p. 27; and Carl Stephenson, Borough and Town, A Study of Urban Origins in England, Mediaeval Academy of America, Publications, 15 (Cambridge: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1933), p. 66.

5 Martin Biddle and David Hill, "Late Saxon Planned Towns," Antiquaries Journal, LI(1971), 84; and Robert S. Lopez, "Still Another Renaissance?" American Historical Review, LVII(1951), 7.

6 J.J. North, English Hammered Coinage (2 vols.; London: Spink and Son, 1960-1963), I, 173-185. Adam B. Richardson, "Notice of a hoard of broken silver ornaments and Anglo-Saxon and Oriental coins found in Skye," Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, XXVI [Ser. 3, II] (1892), 227, suggests Weardbyrig is Wardborough, Oxfordshire. For Athelstan's coins in general, see the SCBI series and R.H.M. Dolley, Anglo-Saxon Pennies (London: British Museum, 1964). On the use of numismatic evidence, see C.E. Blunt, "The Anglo-Saxon Coinage and the Historian," Medieval Archaeology, IV(1960), 1-15.

7 H.R. Loyn, "Boroughs and Mints, A.D. 900-1066," Anglo-Saxon Coins, Studies Presented to F.M. Stenton, ed. by R.H.M. Dolley (London: Methuen and Co., 1961), p. 126.

8 Ibid., p. 127; and George C. Brooke, English Coins from the Seventh Century to the Present Day, Methuen's Handbooks of Archaeology (3rd ed.; London: Methuen and Co., 1950), p. 56. Athelstan's coins are conveniently described in ibid., pp. 58-60, 253.

9 North, Hammered Coinage, I, 193; and Brooke, English Coins, p. 58.

10 Loyn, "Boroughs and Mints," p. 124.

11 D.M. Metcalf, "How Large was the Anglo-Saxon Currency?" Economic History Review, XVIII(1965), 482.

12 Loyn, "Boroughs and Mints," p. 125.

13 SCBI Chester, p. 37, states that Frard is Germanic and Boiga and Boigalet are Norman-French. Miss Duckert has informed me that a case could be made for arguing that Frard is Romance.

14 Frederic William Maitland, Domesday Book and Beyond (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897), p. 70.

15 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 148; H.P.R. Finberg, "The Making of a Boundary," Lucerna, Studies of Some Problems in the Early History of England (London: Macmillan and Co., 1964), p. 169; and Max Förster, "Zur Geschichte der Reliquienkultus in Altengland," Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Abteilung, Heft 8 (1943), 61 and n.3.

16 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 148.

17 H.P.R. Finberg, "Hyple's Old Land," Lucerna, p. 124.

18 John J. Alexander, "Aethelstan in the West of England," Devonian Year Book, XXI(1930), 61; L.E. Elliott-Binns, Medieval Cornwall (London: Methuen and Co., 1955), p. 48; and Finberg, "Making of a Boundary," p. 168 and n.3.

19 See Liebermann, Gesetze, III, 107-109, for notes to V Athelstan.

20 Richardson and Sayles, Law, p. 18. See Liebermann, Gesetze, III, 110-112, for notes to III Athelstan.

21 See Liebermann, Gesetze, III, 112-114, for notes to IV Athelstan.

22 See ibid., pp. 114-123, for notes to VI Athelstan; and Richardson and Sayles, Law, p. 18.

23 Richardson and Sayles, Law, p. 19.

24 Ibid., pp. 19-20.

25 See R.W. Harris, A Short History of Eighteenth-Century England (New York: New American Library, 1963), especially p. 216, for the savagery of English law in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

26 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 148-149. On foreign trade, see Chapter II, pp. 106-112.

27 Jeffrey Radley, "Economic Aspects of Anglo-Danish York," Medieval Archaeology, XV(1971), 47-52. This is an extraordinarily important study. It is unfortunate that there are not more like it.

28 Lopez, "Still Another Renaissance," 1-21; idem, The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950-1350 (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1971), passim.

29 Lewis, Northern Seas, p. 327; and supra, Chapter I, p. 26.

30 Loyn, Anglo-Saxon England, pp. 102-110.

31 Peter Sawyer, "The Two Viking Ages of Britain, A Discussion," Mediaeval Scandinavia, II(1969), 172.

32 Finberg, "England to 1042," pp. 517-518. See ibid., p. 466, for social and economic gradations.

33 H.R. Loyn, "Gesiths and Thegns in Anglo-Saxon England from the Seventh to the Tenth Century," EHR, LXX (1955), 529-549.

34 A.J. Robertson, ed. and trans., Anglo-Saxon Charters (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 308, n.13. The problem of upward mobility and blood relationship within the nobility of the tenth century has never been examined in its entirety. Cyril Hart, "Athelstan 'Half-King' and his family," Anglo-Saxon England, II(1973), 115-144, is an example of what can be accomplished in this type of study. Other fragmented attempts can be found in modern editions of charters and wills. I plan to do a study of the Anglo-Saxon nobility from the accession of Alfred to the death of Edward the Confessor in the future.

35 Many other thegns received grants of land from Athelstan. Eadric, an otherwise unknown thegn not to be confused with the brother of Athelstan Half-King, received land from Athelstan in 925 (S395). Land purchased from the Vikings was confirmed to Uhtred and Ealdred in 926 (S397, S396). Since there are two Uhtreds, witnessing from 930-937 and 930-939 respectively, it is not possible to determine which was given confirmation. Ealdred became an ealdorman in 930 (S403) and continued in that position until at least 933 (S422), probably in Berkshire or Dorset. In 928, a certain Byrhtferth received land at Odstock, Wiltshire (S400). Two thegns received land in 931; Aelfric (S413) and Wulfnoth (S1604). Aelfred (S418) and Aethelweard (S417) were granted land in 932. A certain thegn Aethelnoth was given land in an undated charter (S1841). Since he witnesses charters in the period 931 to 934, it is possible that this was the time he was given the grant. Aethelhelm received grants in 934 (S426) and 936 (S431). Aelfweard was granted land in 935 (S425) and Whitgar was leased land for four lives in the same year (S430). Two thegns named Aelfheah were given land. Although it is not possible to distinguish precisely who each of the thegns was, it is probable that the grants were not to the same person. One Aelfheah does not witness charters after 937 and he is the probable recipient of S411, dated 934x937. The other grant to an Aelfheah is dated 938 (S440). The thegn Eadwulf, who later became an ealdorman, was granted land by Athelstan in 937 (S447). Also in this year, a certain Sigulf received a grant (S437). This Sigulf has been identified as a moneyer, but he may also be the thegn Sigewulf who witnessed charters from 935 to at least 939. Aethelred received land in 938 (S441) and Byrhthelm, the father of Byrhtnoth of Maldon fame, was given land in the following year (S392). There are also four undated charters to thegns in the reign of Athelstan: to Wulfsige and his wife (S458), to Aethelred (S1792), and to one or two Aelfrics (S1709 and S1717).

36 Hart, "Athelstan 'Half-King'," 121.

37 H.R. Loyn, "The Term Ealdorman in the Translations prepared at the time of King Alfred," EHR, LXVIII (1953), 523.

38 H.M. Chadwick, Studies on Anglo-Saxon Institutions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), pp. 168-169. In using Chadwick, one should consult D.A. Bullough, "Anglo-Saxon Institutions and Early English Society," Annali di Fondazione italiana per la storia amministrativa, II(1965), 647-659.

39 Helen Maud Cam, Local Government in Francia and England (London: University of London Press, 1912), pp. 51-54.

40 Ibid., p. 55; and Chadwick, Studies, pp. 294-295.

41 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 157.

42 Ibid., 156-157.

43 William of Malmesbury, Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi de Gestis Pontificum Anglorum, ed. by N.E.S.A. Hamilton, Rolls Series, 52 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1870), p. 186.

44 Symeon of Durham, Historia Regum, Opera Omnia, ed. by Thomas Arnold, Rolls Series, 75 (2 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1882-1885), II, 93: "Rex Ethelstanus jussit Eadwinum fratrem suum submergi in mare." Matthew Paris, Chronica Majora, ed. by H.R. Luard, Rolls Series, 57 (7 vols.; London: Master of the Rolls, 1872-1884), I, 449.

45 ASC 933 E: "Her adranc Aedwine [sic] aetheling on sae." This is the only recension noting Eadwine's death.

46 Folcwin of Saint Bertin, Gesta Abbatum Sithiensium, MGH, Ss., ed. by O. Holder-Egger (Hannover, 1881), XIII, 629. The Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Saint-Bertin, ed. by B. Guerard, Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France (Paris, 1840), p. 145, repeats Folcwin verbatim, except the date of the incident is given as 932. See also Les annales de Saint-Pierre de Gand et de Saint-Amand, ed. by Philip Grierson, Commission royale d'histoire, Recueil de textes pour servir à l'étude de l'histoire de Belgique (Brussels: Palais de académies, 1937), pp. 17, 84.

47 The term arenga--harangue--is used rather than invocatio-proem because it is much more descriptive. For the charters in general, see R. Dean Ware, "Prolegomena to the Anglo-Saxon Charters," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1960); and Frank M. Stenton, The Latin Charters of the Anglo-Saxon Period (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955). See Florence E. Harmer, "Anglo-Saxon Charters and the Historian," BJRL, XXII(1938), 339-367, for the use and misuse of charter evidence.

48 J. Armitage Robinson, The Times of Saint Dunstan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 97, notes the influence of continental minuscule on S416 (931). See Richard Drögereit, "Gab es eine angelsächsische Königkanzlei?" Archiv für Urkundenforschung, XIII(1935), 342-351, for some of the palaeographical peculiarities found in Athelstan's diplomas.

49 John, OB, pp. 49-50.

50 R. Dean Ware, "Hisperic Latin and the Hermeneutic Tradition," Studies in Medieval Culture, II(1966), 47.

51 Ibid., 45.

52 Curagulus is an amalgam of curator and regulus. See Robert Folz, The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century, trans. by Shelia Ann Ogilvie (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), p. 42, n.3.

53 Ibid., pp. 34-35.

54 James A. Brundage, "Widukind of Corvey and the 'non-Roman' Imperial Idea," Mediaeval Studies, XXII(1960), 15-16.

55 Charles DuCange, Glossarium mediae et infirmae latinitatis, Unveränderter Nachdruck der Ausgabe von 1883-1887 (10 vols. in 5; Graz: Akademische Druck-u. Verlag, 1954), s.v., basileos. See Richard Drögereit, "Kaiseridee und Kaisertitel bei den Angelsachsen," Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Germanistische Abteilung, LXIX(1952), 58, for notes on basileos in the Epinal Glosses.

56 S427. The phrase, in B706, is, "Ongolsaxna cyning and byrtaenwalda eallaes thyses Iglandaes ...." See Walter deG. Birch, "Index of the Styles and Titles of English Sovereigns," Index Society, First Report (1879), 67. ASC 827 AE, lists the six traditional Brytenwaldas. See BT, s.v. brytenwalda.

57 H.R. Loyn, "Historical Revision No. CXXI: The Imperial Style of the Tenth Century Anglo-Saxon Kings," History, N.S., XL(1955), 112.

58 John, OB, pp. 51-52, 54. Edward A. Freeman, The History of the Norman Conquest of England, its causes and results (Rev. Am. ed.; 5 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1873-1876), I, 90-98, and Appendix B, 366-376, argues the titles were a serious claim to imperium.

59 Loyn, "Imperial Style," 111-113; Drögereit, "Kaiseridee," especially 57-69; and Frank M. Stenton, The Early History of the Abbey of Abingdon, Reading Studies in Local History (Reading: University College, 1913), p. 40.

60 John, OB, pp. 49-52; Folz, Concept of Empire, pp. 43-44; and Carl Erdmann, Forschungen zur Politischen Ideenwelt des Frühmittelalters (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1951), p. 38.

61 John, OB, p. 2, uses the term "royal writing office," a term preferable to chancery or proto-chancery, both of which could be misleading. See Ware, "Prolegomena," pp. 73-84, for an historical account of the debate surrounding the origins of the royal writing office.

62 Pierre Chaplais, "The Origin and Authenticity of the Royal Anglo-Saxon Diploma," Journal of the Society of Archivists, III(1965), 59.

63 S416. B677: "Flebilia fortiter detestanda totillantis saeculi piacula diris obscenae horrendaeque mortalitatis circumsepta latratibus non nos patria indoeptae pacis securos sed quasi foetidae corruptelae in voraginem casuros provocando ammonent ut ea toto mentis conamine cum casibus suis non solum despiciendo sed etiam velud fastidiosam melancoliae nausiam abhominando fugiamus tendentes ad illud evvangelicum; 'date et dabitur vobis'; Qua de re infima quasi per-ipsema quisquiliarum abiciens superna ad instar pretiosorum monilium eligens animum sempiternis in gaudiis figens ad adipiscendam mellifluae dulcedinis misericordiam perfruendamque infinite letitiae jucunditatem; ego Aethelstanus rex Anglorum ...." The charters in the series are: S379, S412, S413, S416-S419, S421-S423, and S1604. S379 is mistakenly dated 921 and the grantor is said to have been Edward, but it is clearly a part of this series. S1604 is incomplete, with only the perambulation, sanctio, datum, and attestatio clauses extant.

64 S425. B702: "Fortuna fallentis saeculi pro-cax non lacteo inmarciscibilium lilorum candore amabilis, sed fellita heiulandae corruptionis amaritudine odibilis, foetentis valle in lacrimarum carnis, rictibus debacchando venenosis mordaciter dilacerat, quae quamvis arridendo sit infelicibus adtractabilis acherontici ad ima cociti ni satus alti subveniat boantis, impudenter est decurribilis. Et ideo quia ipsa ruinosa deficiendo taliter dilabitur, summopere festinandum est ad amoena indicibilis laetititae arva, ubi angelica ymnidicae iubi-lationis organa mellifluaque vernantium rosarum odoramina, a bonis beatisque naribus inestimabiliter dulcia capiuntur, sineque calce auribus clivipparum suavia audiuntur. Cuius amore felicitatis illectus fas-tidiunt iam infima dulcescunt superna eisque pro percipiendis semperque specie indefectiva fruendis ego Aethelstanus rex anglorum ...." The charters in the series are S407, S425, S426, S434-S436, and S458. S407 is dated 7 June, 930, but must be from 934 because of the witness list, indiction, epact, and concurrents. S436 is probably a conflation of S434 and S435. S458 lacks the perambulation, sanctio, datum, and attestatio clauses, and although tentatively dated to 929x940, it is more likely to be from the period 934x937.

65 Pierre Chaplais, "The Anglo-Saxon Chancery: From Diploma to Writ," Journal of the Society of Archivists, III(1966), 163. Drögereit, "Gab es," is a key article on the scribes. Chaplais, "Origin," 59-60, suggests one scribe was responsible for S404 and S425; one for S447, S464, and S512; one for S497, S510, S528, S535, and S552; one for S636 and ASC 951 A; one for S624 and S626; one for S649; one for S470; all from Winchester. An Abingdon scribe is responsible for S687, S690, S703, S706, and S717.

66 Drögereit, "Gab es," suggests "A" created S399, S400, S403, S405, S407, S412, S413, S416-S419, S422, S423, S425, S426, S458, and S1604 (pp. 361-369, 434); "B" created S441, S442, S466, S480, and S485 (pp. 370-372, 434); and "C" created S447, S464, S468, S476, S490, S512, and S527 (pp. 372-377, 434).

67 Cyril Hart, "The Codex Wintoniensis and the King's Haligdom," Land, Church, and People, Essays Presented to Professor H.P.R. Finberg, Agricultural History Review, XVIII(1970), Supplement, especially 20-24.

68 The king was at Exeter on 16 April, 928 (S399, S400); Lyminster, Sussex, on 5 April, 930 (S403); Chippenham, Wiltshire, on 29 April, 930 (S405); Colchester, Essex, on 23 March, 931 (S412); Worthy, Hampshire, on 21 June, 931 (S413); Lifton, Devonshire, on 12 November, 931 (S416); Wellowe, Hampshire, sometime in 931 (S1604); Milton Abbas, Dorsetshire, on 30 August, 932 (S417); Amesbury, Wiltshire, on 24 December, 932 (S418, S419); Wilton, on 11 January, 933 ? (S379); Chippenham, Wiltshire, on 26 January, 933 (S422, S423); Dorchester on 6 April (Easter), 934 (S391); Winchester, on 28 May, 934 (S425); Nottingham, on 7 June, 934 (S407); Buckingham, on 13 September, 934 (S426); Frome, Dorsetshire, on 16 December, 934 (S427); Cirencester, Gloucestershire, sometime in 935 (S1792); and Dorchester, on 21 December, 937 (S434, S435).

69 Stenton, Early History, p. 31. On Cheddar, see Philip Rhatz, "The Saxon and Medieval Palaces at Cheddar, Somerset--an Interim Report of Excavations in 1960-1962," Medieval Archaeology, VI-VII(1962-1963), 53-66. Athelstan's "palace" at Sherburn, Durham, found on several older Ordinance Survey maps, is a figment of someone's imagination. See W.H. Stevenson, "Yorkshire Surveys and Other Eleventh Century Documents in the York Gospels," EHR, XXVII(1912), 20, n.153.

70 R.R. Darlington, "Anglo-Saxon Wiltshire," A History of Wiltshire, Victoria History of the Counties of England (9 vols.; London: Oxford University Press, 1953-1973), II, 9.

71 The best edition of the will is Florence E. Harmer, ed. and trans., Select English Historical Documents of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), pp. 15-19, and notes, pp. 91-103.

72 With the exception of Buckingham (S426) and Cirencester (S1792), all the sites are listed as "well-known vill" or "well-known town." This is an odd phrase for many of the sites, particularly a place such as Lyminster, Sussex, which was never well-known. The sites are listed in note 68.

73 Other questions regarding the charters and their import are outside the scope of this study. On the hide and related problems, see John, LT; John, OB; T.M. Charles-Edwards, "Kinship, Status and the Origins of the Hide," Past and Present, LVI(1972), 3-33; John F. McGovern, "The Hide and Related Land-Tenure Concepts in Anglo-Saxon England, A.D. 700-1100," Traditio, XXVIII (1972), 101-118; and idem, "The Meaning of 'gesette land' in Anglo-Saxon Land Tenure," Speculum, XLVI(1971), 589-596. On land tenure and obligations, see the above and R.R. Darlington, "The Last Phase of Anglo-Saxon History," History, N.S., XXII(1937), 1-13; J.M.W. Bean, "'Bachelor' and Retainer," Medievalia et Humanistica, N.S., III (1972), 117-131; C.W. Hollister, "The Five-Hide Unit and the Old English Military Obligation," Speculum, XXXVI (1961), 61-74; and idem, Anglo-Saxon Military Institutions on the Eve of the Norman Conquest (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), passim. The last named work is of use for later developments rather than being pertinent to the reign of Athelstan.

74 Dale E. Landon, "Church-State Relations in the late Anglo-Saxon Period, 871-1066," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1969), p. 53.

75 V.H. Galbraith, "The Literacy of the Medieval English Kings," PBA, XXI(1935), 209-210.

76 Aelfric, Life of Saint Ethelwold, Three Lives of English Saints, ed. by Michael Winterbottom, Toronto Medieval Latin Texts (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1972), pp. 18-19; Wulfstan, Life of Saint Ethelwold, Three Lives, ed. by Winterbottom, p. 37.

77 Rose Graham, "The Intellectual Influence of English Monasticism between the Tenth and the Twelfth Centuries," TRHS, Ser. 2, XVII(1903), 24; Philip Grierson, "Les foyers de culture en Angleterre au haut Moyen Age," Settimane di Studio del Centro italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, XI(1964), 281.

78 Robinson, Times, p. 84; Snorri Sturluson, "Harald's saga," Heimskringla, ed. and trans. by L.M. Hollander (Austin: University of Texas Press for the American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1964), p. 93; La chronique de Nantes (570 environs-1049), ed. by René Merlet, Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, 1896), p. 88; Philippe Lauer, Le règne de Louis IV d'Outre-mer, Annales de l'histoire de France à l'époque carolingienne, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études, section des sciences philologiques et historiques, 125 (Paris: Emile Bouillon, 1900), p. 10. See, however, ibid., p. 235, where the author claims Louis' education was neglected as the king could not read Latin.

79 C.H. Talbot, Medicine in Medieval England, Oldbourne History of Science Library (London: Oldbourne Book Co., 1967), pp. 16-23.

80 David Talbot Rice, English Art, 871-1100, Oxford History of English Art, II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 19.

81 David P. Kirby, "Asser and His Life of King Alfred," Studia Celtica, VI(1971), 34; Grierson, "Les foyers," 281.

82 Kenneth Sisam, Studies in the History of Old English Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), p. 137.

83 ASC 937 A; 942 A; 953 E; 973 A; 975 ADE; 979 E.

84 Daniel and its counterpart Azarius are in the Junius and Exeter mss.; The Debate of the Soul and Body is in both the Exeter and Vercelli mss. All references to notes and editions are to the ASPR, unless there is a much better edition readily available.

85 ASPR, VI, xix-xxvi; Stanley B. Greenfield, A Critical History of Old English Literature (New York: New York University Press, 1965), p. 94.

86 ASPR, VI, xxvi-xxxii, xl; Greenfield, History, pp. 98-99.

87 ASPR, VI, l-lxvii, lxxviii-lxxxiii, xc-xciv.

88 ASPR, I, ix-xi.

89 Ibid., xxiv-xxvii.

90 Greenfield, History, pp. 78-79; The Seafarer, ed. by I.L. Gordon, Methuen's Old English Library (London: Methuen and Co., 1960), p. 32; Sisam, Studies, pp. 119-139.

91 ASPR, I, xxvii-xxxvi.

92 ASPR, II, xi-xx; D.G. Scragg, "The Compilation of the Vercelli Book," Anglo-Saxon England, II(1973), 207.

93 ASPR, II, xxxviii-xli.

94 Sisam, Studies, pp. 1-28.

95 Ibid., p. 108; ASPR, III, ix-xiv.

96 Peter Clemoes, "Mens absentia cogitans in The Seafarer and The Wanderer," Medieval Literature and Civilization, Studies in Memory of G.N. Garmonsway, ed. by D.A. Pearsall and R.A. Waldron (London: University of London, Athlone Press, 1969), pp. 62-77; Seafarer, p. 29; ASPR, III, xlv-xlviii, lx.

97 ASPR, III, xlvii-xlix.

98 Widsith, ed. by Kemp Malone (2nd ed.; Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1962), pp. 112-118.

99 Robert L. Reynolds, "Le poème anglo-saxon Widsith, Réalité et Fiction," Moyen Âge, Ser. 4, VIII (1953), 321-322. For the remainder of the discussion on Old English literature, this student relies heavily on the "Reynolds Thesis," fragments of which will be found in the works cited infra. An exposition of the thesis may be found in R. Dean Ware, "Anglo-Saxon Studies and the Contribution of Robert Reynolds," (privately circulated paper delivered at the Midwest Medieval Conference, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, November 15, 1969).

100 Reynolds, "Le poème," 322-324.

101 Idem, "Eadhild, duchesse de la Francia et Ealhhild, patronne du Scop de Widsith," Moyen Âge, Ser. 4, X(1955), 283, 288-289. See ibid., 282, n.3, on the confusion in the spelling of names and the possibilities of the shift from Eadhild to Ealhhild.

102 Kemp Malone, "The Franks Casket and the Date of Widsith," Nordica et Anglica, Studies in Honor of Stefan Einarsson, ed. by Allan H. Orrick (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), pp. 16-17, citing K. Schneider, "Zu den Inschriften und Bildern des Franks Casket und einer ae. Version des Mythos von Balders Tod," Festschrift für Walther Fischer (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1959), pp. 4-20. The standard work on the casket, and one which suggests an eighth-century date, is A.S. Napier, "The Franks Casket," An English Miscellany Presented to Dr. Furnivall in Honour of his Seventy-Fifth Birthday (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901), pp. 362-381.

103 Raymond I. Page, An Introduction to English Runes (London: Methuen and Co., 1973), p. 250. Page notes that (pp. 24-25) the Lancaster Cross is dated to the ninth century at the latest by philologists and to the tenth century by art historians. The Casket seems to be stylistically close to the Bayeaux Tapestry.

104 Sisam, Studies, p. 96. See also P.B. Taylor and P.H. Salus, "The Compilation of Cotton Vitellius A xv," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, LXIX(1968), especially 199-200.

105 Dorothy Whitelock, The Audience of Beowulf (corrected impression; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 51.

106 Sisam, Studies, pp. 71-72.

107 Ibid., p. 82; D.J.A. Ross, Alexander Historiatus, A Guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature, Warburg Institute, Surveys, I (London: University of London, Warburg Institute, 1963), pp. 32-33.

108 Sisam, Studies, p. 88; Ross, Alexander, pp. 28-29. George Cary, The Medieval Alexander, ed. by D.J.A. Ross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), does not discuss the Alexander material in Cott. Vit. A. xv.

109 Greenfield, History, pp. 161-162. See the introduction in Judith, ed. by B.J. Timmer, Methuen's Old English Library (2nd ed.; London: Methuen and Co., 1961).

110 ASPR, IV, lvii; Stenton, ASE, pp. 193-194; Albert S. Cook, "The Possible Begetter of the Old English Beowulf and Widsith," Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, XXV(1922), 296-312; Friedrich Klaeber, ed., Beowulf (3rd ed. with 1st and 2nd supps.; Boston: D.C. Heath, 1950), p. cxiii; and Whitelock, Audience, all opt for the late seventh-early eighth century. Levin L. Schücking, "Wann entstand der Beowulf? Glossen, Zweifel, und Fragen," Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur, XLII(1917), especially 399-408, suggests the ninth century and the Danelaw as the locus. Robert L. Reynolds, "An Echo of Beowulf in Athelstan's Charters of 931-933 A.D.?" Medium Aevum, XXIV(1955), 101-103; and idem, "Note on Beowulf's Date and Economic Social History," Studi in Onore di Armando Sapori (2 vols.; Milan: Instituto Editoriale Cisalpino, 1957), pp. 175-178, points to the tenth century. A good summary of the dating controversy may be found in Jane Acomb Leake, The Geats of Beowulf: a study in the geographical mythology of the Middle Ages (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), pp. 101-102 and nn. R.W. Chambers, Beowulf: An Introduction, Supplement by C.L. Wrenn (3rd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), p. 486, notes the dating of the poem to c. 700 is an inference that has tended to become dogma. Loyn, Anglo-Saxon England, pp. 275-276, comments on the uncertainty of the late seventh-early eighth century date. The supplement to Chambers, Beowulf, pp. 531-533, 610, ignores Reynolds' work.

111 Stenton, ASE, pp. 193-194; Klaeber, ed., Beowulf, p. lxxi. For his full discussion on language, see ibid., pp. lxxi-xcv. Chambers, Beowulf, p. 104, agrees.

112 See the references in note 90.

113 Robert L. Reynolds, "Handwriting, Illustrations: Some Problems in Economic-Historical Research," Studi in onore di Amintore Fanfani (6 vols.; Milan: Dott. A. Giuffre, 1962), III, 429-439.

114 ASPR, IV, lvi.

115 Cook, "Possible Begetter,"; Whitelock, Audience; and Ritchie Girvan, Beowulf and the Seventh Century, with a new chapter by Rupert Bruce-Mitford (2nd ed.; London: Methuen and Co., 1970).

116 Whitelock, Audience, pp. 3-6, 21.

117 Cook, "Possible Begetter," 343; Kenneth Sisam, The Structure of Beowulf (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), pp. 8-9.

118 Sisam, Structure, pp. 12-15; ASPR, IV, lv.

119 Whitelock, Audience, p. 24, states that the poem is "surely pre-Viking ...." See supra, Chapter I, pp. 37-38, and Chapter IV, p. 224, and also Reynolds, "Echo," 103, for the eorls. Incidentally, Whitelock, op. cit., pp. 1-19, is one of the best pleas, albeit unwittingly, for dating Beowulf to the tenth century.

120 John of Wallingford, The Chronicle Attributed to John of Wallingford, ed. by Richard Vaughan, Camden Miscellany, XXI (London: Royal Historical Society, 1958), pp. 41-42; Matthew Paris, Chronica Majora, I, 448; B., Sancti Dunstani vita auctore B., Memorials of Saint Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, ed. by William Stubbs, Rolls Series, 63 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1874), pp. 17-18; J. Armitage Robinson, "Some Memories of Saint Dunstan in Somerset," Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Taunton Proceedings, LXII [Ser. 4, II] (1916), 10.

121 Reynolds, "Echo," 103: "Incidentally, it is to overlook entirely the place of mighty Athelstan, most Christian king, rather likely a Mercian in upbringing, lord of all the English and of all the second- and third-generation English-tongued (?) Christian Danes in England and friend or patron or relative by marriage of non-English Viking nobles and kings, to hold with the vast majority of modern Beowulfians 'that a poem so thoroughly Scandinavian in subject-matter and evincing the most sympathetic interest in Danish affairs cannot well have been composed after the beginning of the Danish invasions toward the end of the eighth century'. It could well have been composed in Athelstan's England, if such-like historical considerations are all that we have to go on." Reynolds is quoting Klaeber, ed., Beowulf, p. cvii.

122 Greenfield, History, p. 34 and n.13. A comparison of Beowulf and the ninth-century Old English translation of Boethius may prove interesting.

123 Reynolds, "Note," 176-177.

124 Leake, Geats, pp. 72-75 and nn.

125 Reynolds, "Echo," 103. Cf. Beowulf, ll. 348-370. On Athelstan's Wulfgar, see pp. 220-221, supra. There is also a grendles gatan in S1451, a forged charter of Dunstan from the 970's. Stenton, "The Historical Bearing of Place-Name Studies: Anglo-Saxon Heathenism," Preparatory [reprinted from TRHS, Ser. 4, XXIII(1941), 1-24] , p. 285, notes two other interesting names: Grendels mere by the boundaries of Staffordshire and Worcestershire, and Grendles pyt in Devonshire.

126 Whitelock, Audience, p. 95; Reynolds, "Echo," 102, n.1. The proem of S416 is quoted in note 63.

127 Reynolds, "Echo," 102; Beowulf, ll. 1192-1201. Klaeber's notes to these lines indicate the collar of Beowulf is a symbol of heavenly jewels.

128 See above, Chapter III, note 113, for Athelstan's broken sword.

129 Beowulf, ll. 1050, 2338; ASC 937 A. An interesting study could be made of the use of gesith and thegn in Beowulf, particularly in light of Loyn's "Gesiths and Thegns," and the conclusions reached in that study.

130 The Blickling Homilies of the Tenth Century, ed. and trans. by R. Morris, EETS, O.S., 58, 63, 73 (3 vols.; London: EETS, 1874-1880), II, 208-211; Beowulf, ll. 1357-1382; Greenfield, History, p. 59. The editorial comment is in Homilies, III, vi-vii.

CONCLUSION

In 939, after a reign of over fourteen years, Athelstan died of an unknown disease at Gloucester.[1] The date of his death was once the focus of considerable debate. Many sources agree on the day and month of his demise, some agree on the length of the king's reign, but the year of his death is disputed. The Chronicle records Athelstan's death on 27 October, one day short of the fortieth anniversary of the death of Alfred, and notes that he reigned fourteen years and ten weeks. However, the obituary is entered under the year 940.[2] The Genealogical Preface to the Chronicle specifically says Athelstan reigned fourteen years, seven weeks, and three days.[3] If this is added to the date of his coronation, 5 September, 925, the resulting date is 27 October, 939. One study of the problem has shown quite clearly that Athelstan died on 26-27 October, 939.[4]

Athelstan's body was taken in state to Malmesbury Abbey in a procession led by men carrying objects of gold and silver, relics and reliquaries that the king had amassed in his lifetime. He was interred under the main altar of the abbey church with many of the relics.[5] William of Malmesbury records his epitaph:

Hic jacet orbis honor, patriae dolor, orbita recti,
Justitiae fulmen, munditiae specular.
Aethera flatus adit, carnis compage soluta,
Urna triumphales excipit exuvias,
Sol illustrarat bisseno Scorpion ortu,
Cum regem cauda surruit ille sua.[6]

Malmesbury also makes several comments on the reign of Athelstan. He says that, "His years, though few, were full of glory." The historian remarks that even in the twelfth century, Athelstan's reputation was high: "Concerning this king, a solid opinion is current among the English, that no one more just or learned administered the state." Malmesbury assesses Athelstan's relations with his subjects as humble and friendly with the clergy, mild with the laity, reserved with the nobility and kindly condescending with the lower classes.[7] Athelstan was considered the English Charlemagne by his contemporaries.[8]

As a result of the impact of Athelstan's career, a number of stories, sagas, and legends developed about this king. One of the most important and most notable is the tenth-century poem incorporated in part into William of Malmesbury's Gesta Regum. Unfortunately, the poem is only quoted in fragments and paraphrased in other sections of the historian's work and is no longer extant in its entirety. There were apparently other

works of the tenth-century about Athelstan that have also disappeared.[9] One suggested use of the Athelstan "legend" are the various details found in Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae. Some of the incidents found in Geoffrey's Book IX, X, and the first two chapters of Book XI, totally incongruent in a sixth-century reign, are parallel to events in the reigns of Alfred and Athelstan.[10] The "ancient book" Geoffrey mentions in his introduction as the source of his Historia may have been from the tenth century and may have recorded events of the lives of Alfred and his heirs. The subduing of lands from the Humber to Caithness, the taking of York, constructing churches at York, the Norwegian stories, Arthur's foreign travels, Excalibur and the mystic lance may well be borrowed from events of the life and reign of Athelstan.[11] If this is a valid hypothesis, Athelstan's reign made a greater impact on historians of the Middle Ages than has previously been thought.

The importance of King Athelstan in the history of Anglo-Saxon England can not be denied. He was respected by his colleagues on the continent, loved and obeyed by his subjects, held in awe by other rulers of Britain, and acknowledged a great benefactor of the

church. His reputation survived his reign by many generations. As the Annals of Ulster record in his obituary notice, Athelstan was "the summit of the nobility of the western world ...."[12]

NOTES TO THE CONCLUSION

1 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 157. Apparently he lingered. See, e.g., the illumination in Ms. West. 24, f. 167b, a fourteenth-century recension of the Flores Historiarum. The illumination shows Athelstan on his deathbed. This is reproduced in J.A. Robinson and M.R. James, The Manuscripts of Westminster Abbey, Notes and Documents Relating to Westminster Abbey, I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), #24.

2 ASC 940 D: "Her Aethelstan cyning forthferde on .vi. kl Nov. ymbe .xl. wintra butan anre niht thaes the Aelfred cyning forthferde; and Eadmund aetheling feng to rice. and he waes tha .xviii. wintra. and Aethelstan cyning rixade .xiiii. gear and .x. wucan." The entry in ASC, Ms. A, was originally 941 and later altered to 940, and the forty years after Alfred was originally forty-one. If a date of 899 is acceptable for the death of Alfred, then, according to Ms. D, Athelstan died in 939.

3 The Genealogical Preface to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Four Texts Edited to Supplement Earle-Plummer, ed. by Bruce Dickins, Cambridge University, Department of Anglo-Saxon, Occasional Papers, II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), pp. 5-6. The ms. is Cott. Tib. A. xiii., f. 178, a Worcester document of c. 977-978. Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester, ed. by Walter deG. Birch, Hampshire Record Society, V (London: Simpkin and Co., 1892), p. 95, agrees with the length of the reign.

4 Murray L.R. Beaven, "The Regnal Dates of Alfred, Edward the Elder, and Athelstan," EHR, XXXII(1917), 517-521. In a later article, Beaven, "King Edmund I and the Danes of York," EHR, XXXIII(1918), 1, n.2, narrows the time to the twelve-hour period from 4 P.M., 26 October--4 A.M., 27 October.

5 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 157.

6 Idem, Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi de Gestis Pontificum Anglorum, ed. by N.E.S.A. Hamilton, Rolls Series, 52 (London: Master of the Rolls, 1870), pp. 397-398.

7 William of Malmesbury, GR, I, 157: "Vir, qui parum aetati vixerit, multum gloriae." Ibid., 144: "De hoc rege non invalida apud Anglos fama seritur, quod nemo legalius vel litteratius rempublicam administraverit." Ibid., 148: "Deo famulantibus pronus et dulcis, laicis jocundus et comis, magnatibus pro contuitu majestatis serius, minoribus pro condescensione paupertatis ...."

8 Laura H. Loomis, "The Athelstan Gift Story: its influence on English chronicles and Carolingian Romances," PMLA, LXVII(1952), 521. This article is crucial to the understanding of Athelstan's reputation.

9 Malmesbury's use of the poem is noted supra, Chapter I, p. 3. See C.E. Wright, The Cultivation of the Saga in Anglo-Saxon England (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1939), p. 156; Kurt Beug, "Die Sage von König Athelstan," Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen, CXLVIII(1925), 181-195, for the development of materials on Athelstan and the later work in particular for the Athelstan legend in the Middle Ages.

10 W.G. Collingwood, "Arthur and Athelstan," Saga-Book, X(1898), 132-144. Two editions of Geoffrey should be consulted: Geoffrey of Monmouth, Historia Regum Britanniae, ed. and trans. by Robert E. Jones, commentary and intro. by Acton Griscom (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1929); and Geoffrey of Monmouth, Historia Regum Britanniae, A Variant Version Edited from Manuscripts, ed. by Jacob Hammer, Mediaeval Academy of America, Publications, 57 (Cambridge: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1951).

11 See Geoffrey's introduction, Historia, ed. by Jones, p. 218; Historia, ed. by Hammer, p. 22; Collingwood, "Arthur," 133-142.

12 Annals of Ulster, Alan O. Anderson, ed. and trans., Early Sources of Scottish History, A.D. 500 to 1286 (2 vols.; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1922), I, 430.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS NOTICED

Cambridge. Corpus Christi College, 183.

Coburg. Landesbibliothek, I.

Durham. Cathedral Library, A. II. xvii.

Exeter. Cathedral Library, Exeter Book.

London. British Museum, Cotton Claudius B. v.
Cotton Domitian I.
Cotton Galba A. xvi.
Cotton Galba A. xviii.
Cotton Nero A. ii.
Cotton Otho B. ix.
Cotton Tiberius A. ii.
Cotton Tiberius A. xiii.
Cotton Tiberius B. v.
Cotton Vitellius A. xv.
Royal I. A. xviii.
Royal I. B. vii.

Westminster Abbey, Chapter Library, 24.

Oxford. Bodleian Library, Bodley Auctarium D. 2. 16.
Bodley Auctarium D. 5. 3.
Bodley 572.
Junius XI.
Laud Latinum 26.
Rawlinson B. 484.
Rawlinson C. 697.

Vercelli. Cathedral Library, Codex CXVII.

APPENDIX II

GENEALOGIES

I. Wessex I

II. Wessex II

III. Flanders

IV. France

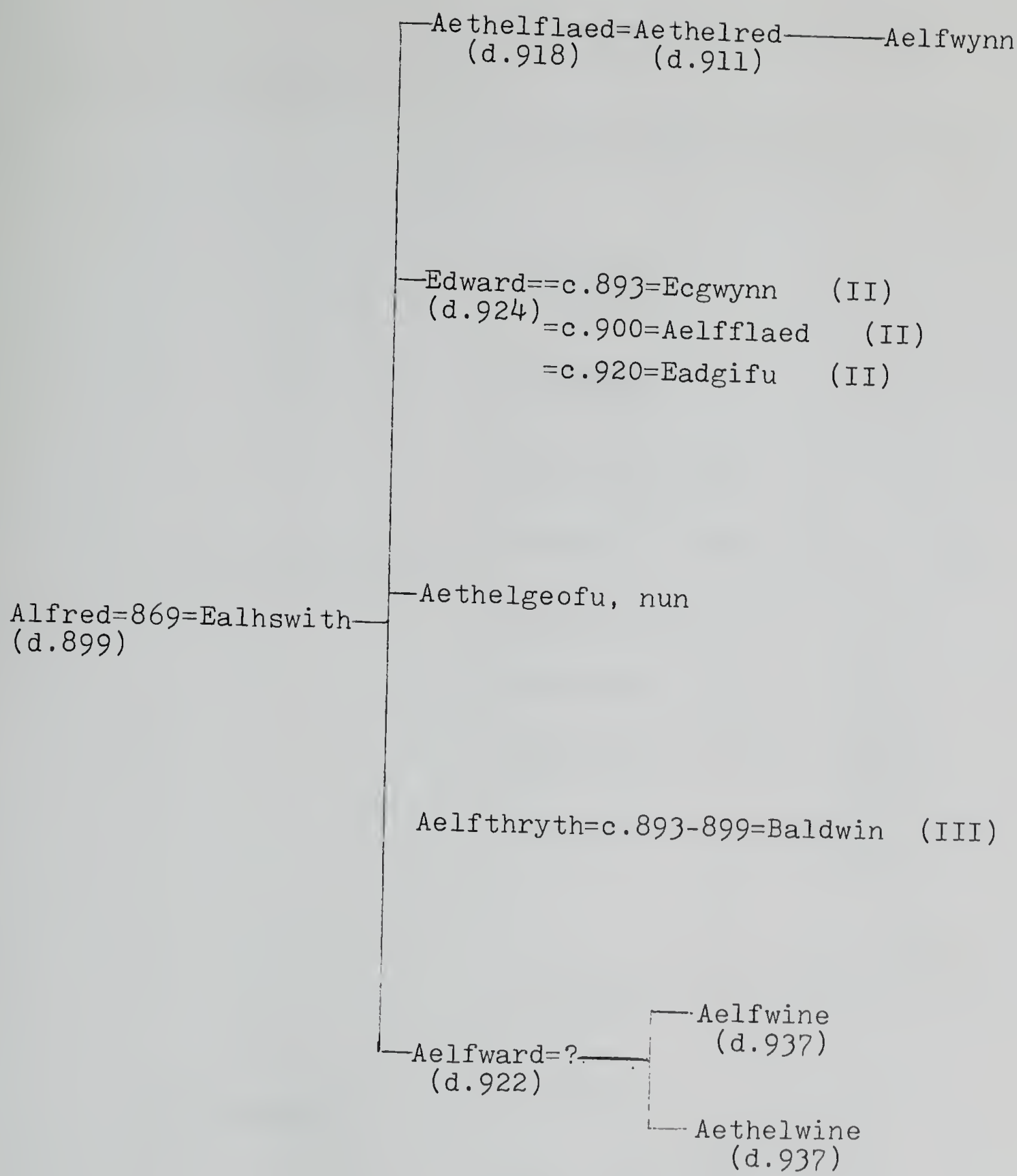
V. Duchy of the Franks

VI. Germany

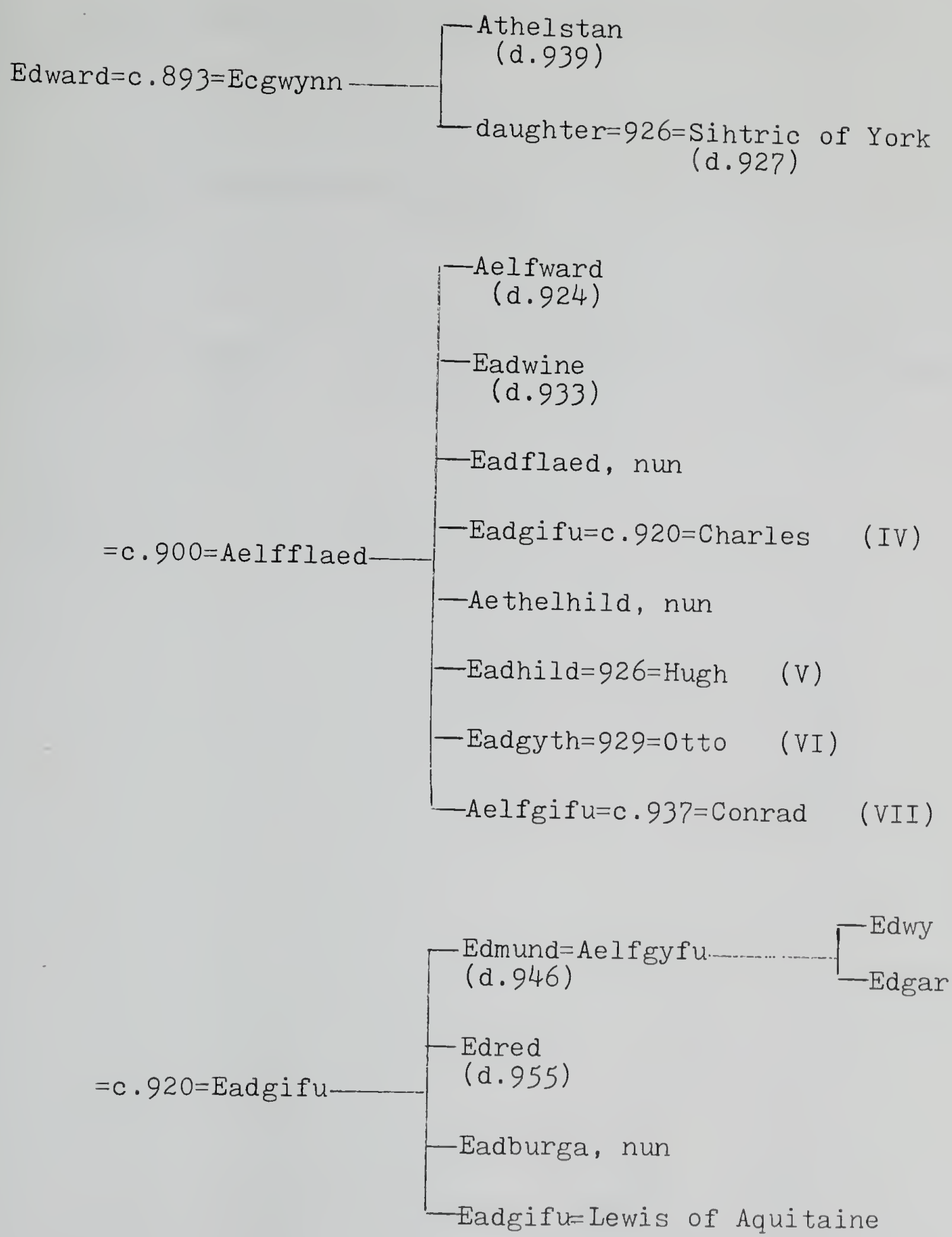
VI. Burgundy

N.B.: A Roman numeral in parentheses indicates a cross-reference to another of the genealogies. In Genealogy III to VII, names in capitals are those of the Alfredian family.

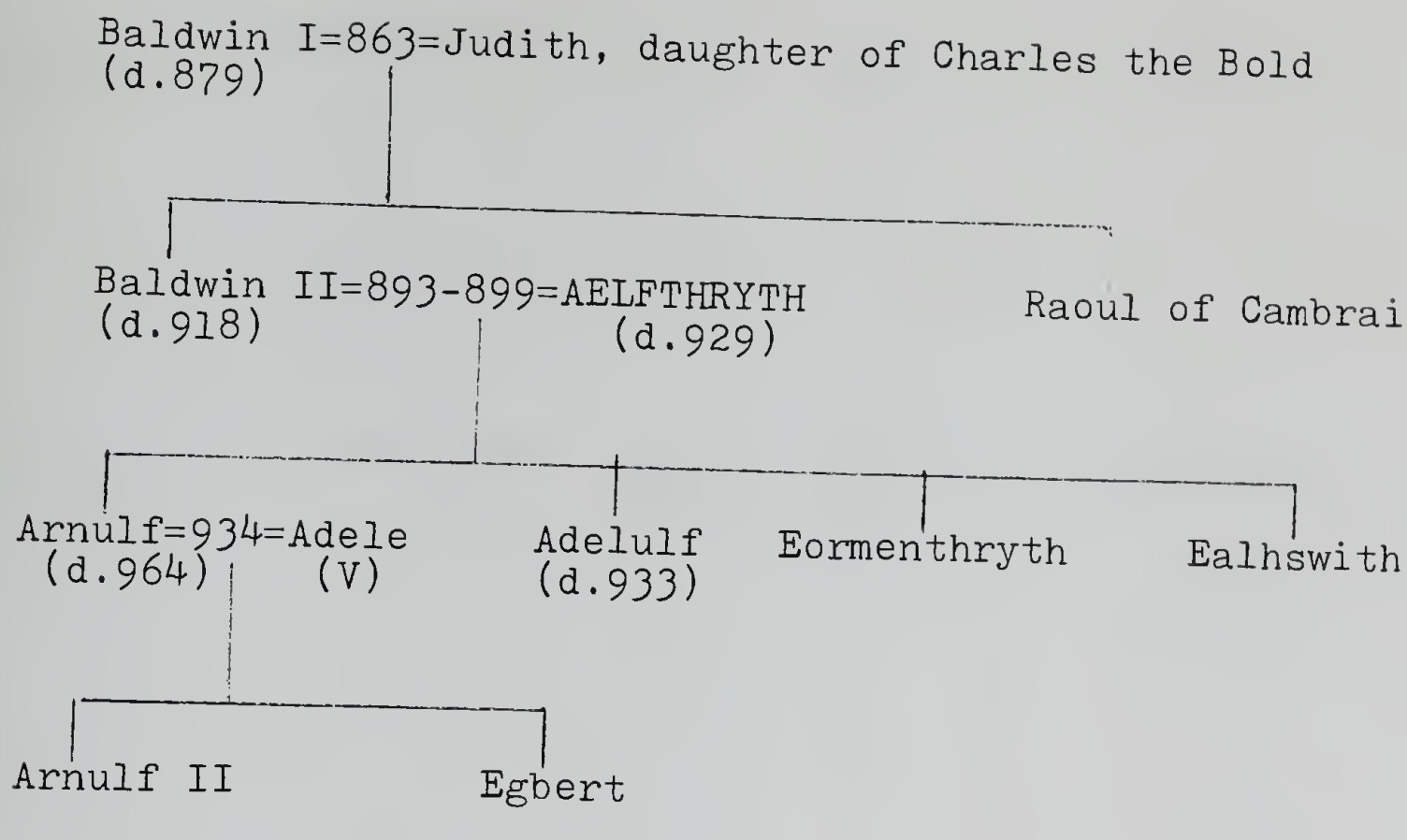
I. Wessex I


Aethelflaed=Aethelred
(d.918)
(d.911)
Aelfwynn
Edward==c.893=Ecgwynn (II)
(d.924)
=c.900=Aelfflaed (II)
=c.920=Eadgifu (II)
Alfred=869=Ealhswith
(d.899)
Aethelgeofu, nun
Aelfthryth=c.893-899=Baldwin (III)
Aelfwine
(d.937)
Aelfward=?
(d.922)
Aethelwine
(d.937)

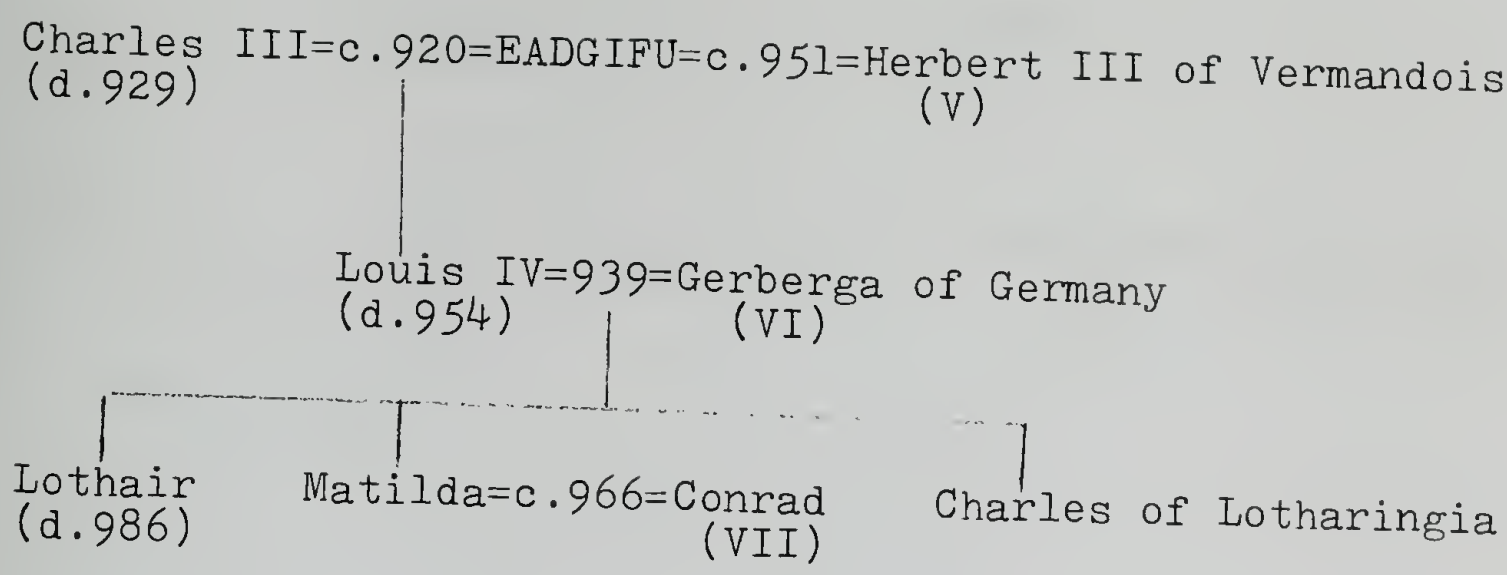
II. Wessex II


Edward=c.893=Ecgwynn
Athelstan (d.939)
daughter=926=Sihtric of York (d.927)
=c.900=Aelfflaed
Aelfward (d.924)
Eadwine (d.933)
Eadflaed, nun
Eadgifu=c.920=Charles (IV)
Aethelhild, nun
Eadhild=926=Hugh (V)
Eadgyth=929=Otto (VI)
Aelfgifu=c.937=Conrad (VII)
=c.920=Eadgifu
Edmund=Aelfgyfu (d.946)
Edwy
Edgar
Edred (d.955)
Eadburga, nun
Eadgifu=Lewis of Aquitaine

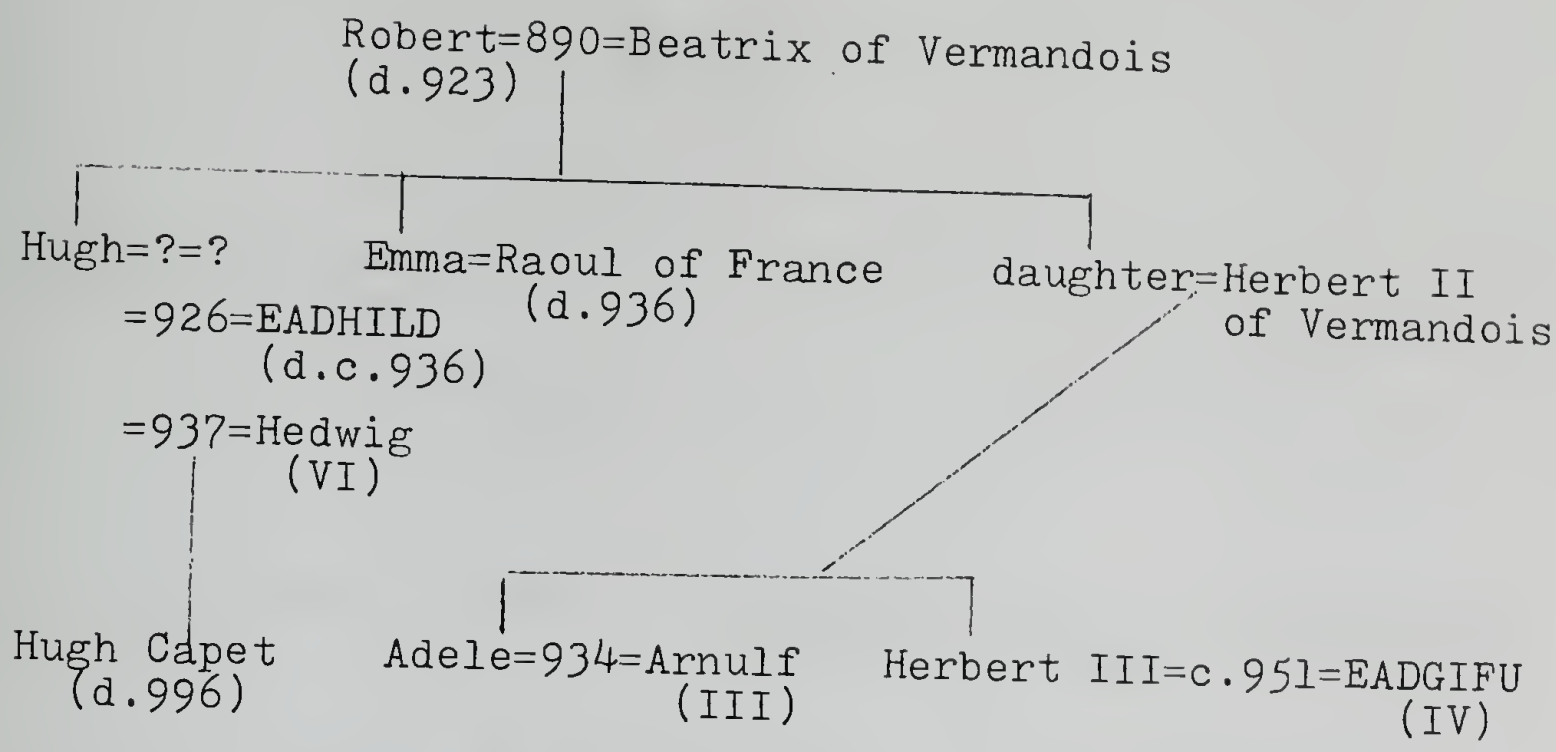
III. Flanders



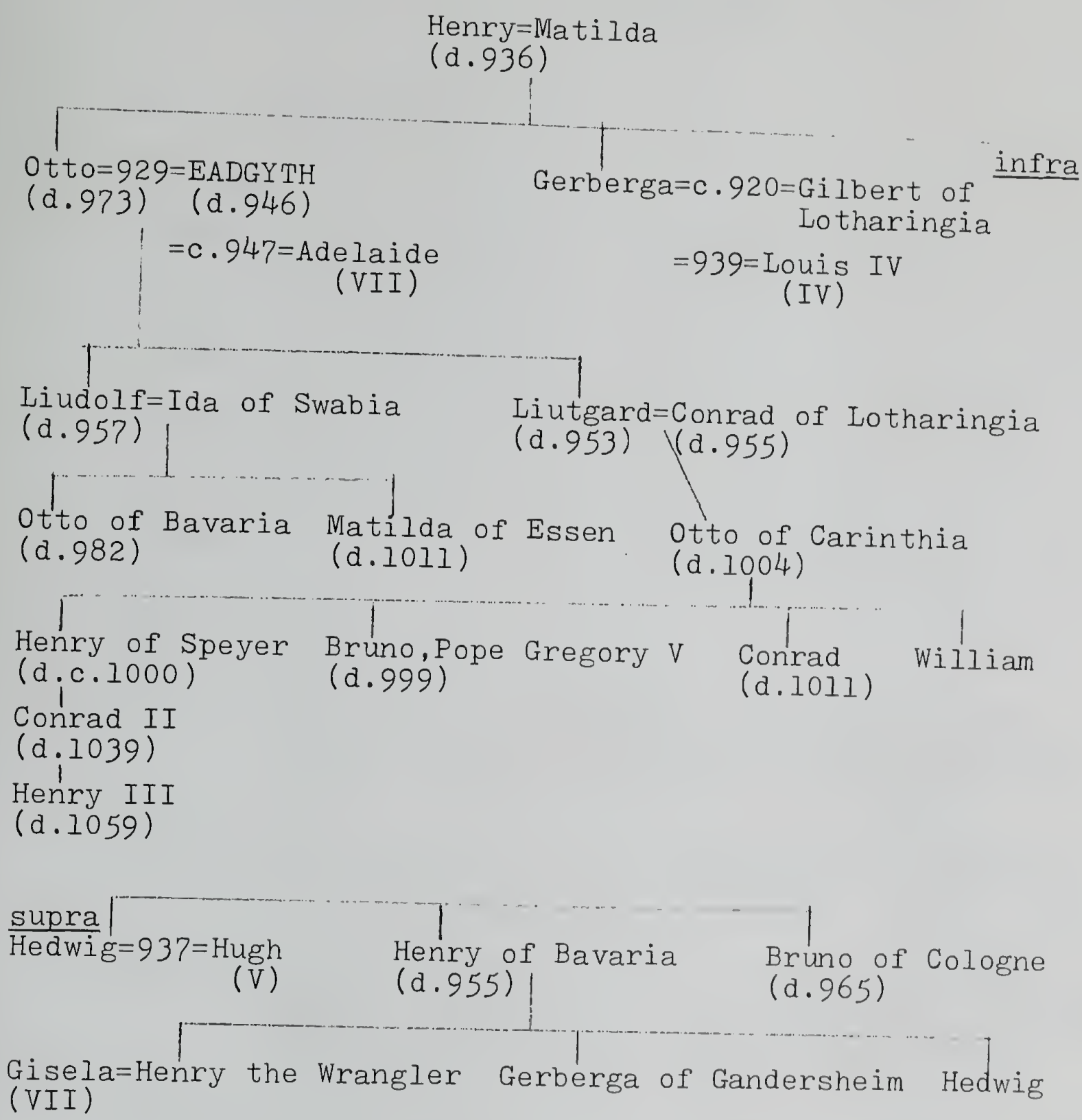
IV. France


Charles III=c.920=EADGIFU=c.951=Herbert III of Vermandois
(d.929)
(V)
Louis IV=939=Gerberga of Germany
(d.954)
(VI)
Lothair
(d.986)
Matilda=c.966=Conrad
(VII)
Charles of Lotharingia

V. Duchy of the Franks



VI. Germany


Henry=Matilda
(d.936)
Otto=929=EADGYTH
(d.973) (d.946)
=c.947=Adelaide
(VII)
Gerberga=c.920=Gilbert of
Lotharingia
=939=Louis IV
(IV)
infra
Liudolf=Ida of Swabia
(d.957)
Liutgard=Conrad of Lotharingia
(d.953) (d.955)
Otto of Bavaria
(d.982)
Matilda of Essen
(d.1011)
Otto of Carinthia
(d.1004)
Henry of Speyer
(d.c.1000)
Bruno,Pope Gregory V
(d.999)
Conrad
(d.1011)
William
Conrad II
(d.1039)
Henry III
(d.1059)
supra
Hedwig=937=Hugh
(V)
Henry of Bavaria
(d.955)
Bruno of Cologne
(d.965)
Gisela=Henry the Wrangler
(VII)
Gerberga of Gandersheim
Hedwig

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