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*Charlemagne and Northumbria : the influence of Francia on Northumbrian politics in the later eighth and early ninth centuries.*

Joanna Story

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**Charlemagne and Northumbria: The influence of Francia on Northumbrian politics in the later eighth and early ninth centuries.**

**Submitted for the Degree of Ph.D. in the Department of History,  
University of Durham, December 1995.**

**J. E. Story.**

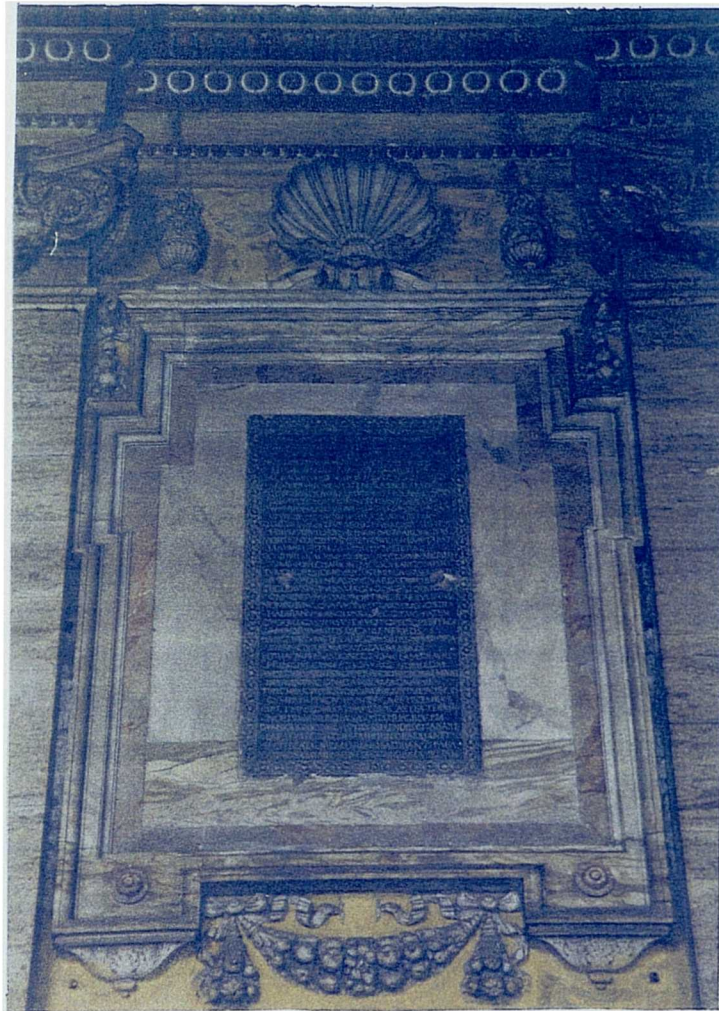
**Thesis Abstract:**

This thesis broadens understanding of the political connections between the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria and Carolingian Francia in the latter part of the eighth century. To this end it considers the influence of Francia on Northumbria through the analysis of three specific texts, emphasising primarily their Frankish affinities and secondly, their native Northumbrian contexts. The texts examined in this way are firstly, the set of annals produced in York and now incorporated within the chronicle compilation known as the *Historia Regum* (Chapter 3), secondly, the Report produced by George of Ostia, the papal Legate who was sent to Northumbria in 786 (Chapter 4) and thirdly, the so-called 'York Poem' composed by Alcuin (Chapter 5). A central theme in the analysis of these texts is the introduction of Carolingian concepts of kingship and the nature of temporal power to the Northumbrian secular and ecclesiastical élites, as exemplified by the elaborate ceremony in which Eardwulf was created king of Northumbria in 796. These later eighth-century links are set in their longer term context in Chapter 2, which considers Franco-Northumbrian connections in the seventh and earlier eighth centuries.

These central chapters are framed by an analysis of the Frankish involvement in the restoration of King Eardwulf to Northumbria in 808 after his expulsion and exile in Francia. Chapter 1 examines the evidence for the restoration of Eardwulf by Carolingian and papal agents and notes that similar Frankish interest in Northumbrian affairs was displayed during the reigns of preceding rulers of that kingdom. A study of the 'Eardwulf incident' also raises questions as to the nature of Carolingian 'foreign policy' towards other regions which lay beyond the marchlands of Frankish territory. Thus, Chapter 6 examines several events which parallel Eardwulf's return to Northumbria as recorded in chronicles concerning other kingdoms which bordered Charlemagne's realm. Carolingian attitudes towards Northumbria are thereby placed within the broader context of the growing influence and power of Charlemagne's Francia within eighth-century Europe.

**CHARLEMAGNE AND NORTHUMBRIA :**

**THE INFLUENCE OF FRANCA ON  
NORTHUMBRIAN POLITICS IN THE LATER  
EIGHTH AND EARLY NINTH CENTURIES.**



The epitaph of Pope Hadrian, commissioned by Charlemagne, composed by Alcuin and recorded in the eighth-century York section of the *Historia Regum* (s.a. 794). This, the original marble memorial, is now preserved in the portico of St Peter's, Rome (on which, see below Chapter 3, pp. 156-8).

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## **CHARLEMAGNE AND NORTHUMBRIA :**

### **THE INFLUENCE OF FRANCA ON NORTHUMBRIAN POLITICS IN THE LATER EIGHTH AND EARLY NINTH CENTURIES.**

**Joanna Elizabeth Story,  
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**4 JUN 1996**

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## PREFACE

My first debt of thanks is to the British Academy which generously sponsored the period of research which has resulted in this thesis. I owe much to my ever watchful supervisor David Rollason whose enthusiasm has been a constant source of inspiration to me during my time in Durham and also to Lynda Rollason whose good-humoured friendship has been much appreciated. Many friends have helped with countless hours of discussion and distraction, but in particular I am grateful to Adam Gwilt, Rebecca Reader, Ed Eastaugh, Katie Hirst, Jeremy Taylor, Liz Foyster, Ros Martin, Vicky Avery and Sara Marani (who took the photograph on p. ii). I owe a lot to the patience and kindness of Roger Norris of the Dean and Chapter Library in Durham Cathedral and have a similar debt to Michael Gullick, Alan Piper and Tim Graham. Professor Ros emary Cramp and Deborah Lavin of Trevelyan College have both given me hours of their valuable time at critical moments in the last few years and for their advice I am very grateful. Latterly, much thanks is due to Martin Millett who made me believe I could finish this and to my parents who knew all along that I would.

Finally, due credit must be given to a man who is long since dead. Most notable amongst the scholars interested in early Anglo-Continental relations was Wilhelm Levison whose book *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946), based on his series of Ford Lectures given in 1943, remains the standard and most authoritative work in the field. The forthcoming study can only contribute to the debate engendered by Levison's book, the product of a lifetime of devotion to the study of the history of early medieval Europe. He was given an honorary fellowship in Durham in 1939 when life became impossible for him in his German *patria*. The preparation of this thesis has been considerably eased by the presence in Durham of a large collection of books from Levison's personal library, many of which are extensively annotated in his own distinctive hand. In my own wanderings through the mass of evidence which sheds light on this period of history, I am therefore more than usually conscious of following in the tracks of a great scholar and (at the risk of gross pretension) to his posthumous guidance I am indebted. It is hoped that this thesis, finished a few months before the fiftieth anniversary of Levison's death might be considered in some small way to have contributed to the subject to which he devoted so much attention.

Jo Story,  
December 1995,  
Durham.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- Alc. Ep.* Alcuin's letters as found in Dümmler, E., ed. *Epistolae Karolini Aevi* Vol. 2, MGH Epistolae IV (Berlin, 1895).
- ALf* *Annales Lindisfarnenses* as discussed and edited by Levison, W., 'Die "Annales Lindisfarnenses et Dunelmenses" kritisch untersucht und neu herausgegeben', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* Vol. 17 (1961), 447-506.
- AMPr* (de Simson) *Annales Mettenses Priores* as edited by de Simson, B., 'Annales Mettenses Priores', in *Scriptores Karolini Aevi*, MGH SRG Vol. VII.10 (Hanover and Leipzig, 1905), pp. 1-105.
- ARF* (Kurze) *Annales Regni Francorum* as edited by Kurze, F., 'Annales Regni Francorum qui dicuntur Annales Laurissenses Maiores et Einhardi', in *Scriptores Karolini Aevi*, MGH SRG Vol. VII.6 (Hanover, 1895), pp. 2-178.
- ARF* (Rev) Revised edition of the *ARF* (see under *ARF*), pp. 3-115.
- ASC* (Plummer) Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as edited by Plummer, C. and Earle, J., *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1892-99).
- ASC NR* The Northern Recension of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, that is, the version found in manuscripts D, E and F of the *ASC*.
- BAR** British Archaeological Reports.
- BNJ** British Numismatic Journal.
- BL** British Library.
- CB** *Continuatio Bedae*.
- CC** *Codex Carolinus*, Gundlach, W., ed. *Epistolae Merovingici et Karolini Aevi* Vol. 1, MGH Epistolae Vol. III (Berlin, 1892), 469-657.
- CCCC** Cambridge, Corpus Christi College.
- Capitularia* Boretius, A., ed. *Capitularia Regum Francorum*, Vol. 1, MGH Legum Sectio II (Hanover, 1883).

- Concilia* Werminghoff, A., ed. *Concilia Ævi Karolini* Vol. 2.i, MGH Legum Sectio III (Hanover and Leipzig, 1906).
- CUL** Cambridge University Library.
- DCL** Durham, Dean and Chapter Library.
- DPSA** *De primo Saxonum Adventu*.
- EIID I** Whitelock, D., *English Historical Documents c. 500-1042*, 2nd edition (London, 1979).
- EHR** English Historical Review.
- Ep. Ecg.** *Epistola Bedae ad Ecgbertum Episcopum*; an edition is found in *HE* (Plummer), pp. 405-23 and the text is translated by L. Sherley-Price, *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (London, 1955), pp. 337-351.
- HAA (Plummer)** The *Historia Abbatum anonymo* as edited by Plummer, C., *Bedae Opera Historica*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1896, reprinted 1975), i, pp. 388-404.
- HAB (Plummer)** The *Historia Abbatum Bedae* as edited by Plummer, C., *Bedae Opera Historica*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1896, reprinted 1975), i, pp. 364-87.
- HE** *Bedae Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, cited by book and chapter, ed. and trans. Colgrave and Mynors; ed. Plummer.
- HE (Colgrave and Mynors)** Colgrave, B. and Mynors, R. A. B., ed. and trans., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969).
- HE (Plummer)** Plummer, C., *Bedae Opera Historica*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1896, reprinted 1975), i, pp. 5-360. Volume 2 contains Plummer's notes on the text.
- HpB** *Historia post Bedam* as edited by Stubbs in his edition of Hoveden; Stubbs, W., *Chronica Magistri Rogeris de Houedene*, Vol. 1, RS Vol. 51.i (London, 1868).
- HReg** *Historia Regum*, the *History of the Kings*, cited *sub anno*. Edited by Hinde, J. H. ed. *Symeonis Dunelmensis Opera et*

*Collectanea*, Vol. 1. Surtees Society Vol. 51 (London 1868), pp. 1-131 and by T. Arnold, ed. *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, Vol. 2, RS Vol. 75.ii (London, 1885), pp. 3-323.

- LDE** *Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius, hoc est, Dunelmensis ecclesiae*, the *History of the Church of Durham* (frequently elsewhere cited as HDE) attributed to Symeon of Durham and cited by book and chapter; ed. Sym. *Op. Om.* I, 3-169. Page references are to this edition.
- LP** *Liber Pontificalis* as edited by Duchesne, L., ed. *Liber Pontificalis* (Paris, 1886-92).
- MA** The additional annals found as an appendix to the *HE* in the Moore Manuscript, CUL MS Kk.5.16 on fol. 128 r lines 26-31.
- Melrose** Chronicle of Melrose; Anderson, A. O. and Anderson, M. O., *The Chronicle of Melrose AD 735-1270, a facsimile of Cotton MS Faustina B ix* (London, 1936).
- MGH** Monumenta Germaniae Historica
- AA** Auctores Antiquissimi
- Capit.** Capitularia regum Francorum
- Conc.** Concilia
- Epp.** Epistolae
- Leg.** Legum Sectio II
- PLAC** Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini
- SRG** Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum
- SRM** Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
- SS** Scriptores
- PL** Patrologia Latina
- RA** Ramsey Annals; Hart, C. 'The Ramsey Computus', *English Historical Review* Vol. 85 (1970), 22-44, 39-44.
- RS** Rolls Series (Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores or Chronicles and memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages)
- Settimane di Studio** Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.

- SHR** *Scottish Historical Review*
- Sur. Soc.** Surtees Society
- Sy. Op. Om.** Arnold, T., ed. *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, 2 Vols, RS Vol. 75 (London, 1885).
- TAASDN** *Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland.*
- V K (Einhard)** Einhard's *Vita Karoli*. Pertz, G. and Waitz, G., eds, *Einhardi Vita Karoli Magni*, 5th edition, MGH SRG Vol. XXV (Hanover and Leipzig, 1905).
- V W (Colgrave)** *Vita sancti Wilfridi Deo digni episcopi*, The Life of St Wilfrid by Stephanus, cited by chapter; edited and translated by Colgrave, B., *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge, 1927).
- Wattenbach-Levison**  
Wattenbach, W. and Levison, W. with Löwe, H., *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter; vorzeit und Karolinger*, Vol. 2 *Die Karolinger vom anfang des 8 Jarhunderts bis zum tode Karls des Großen* (Weimar, 1953).
- Webster and Backhouse**  
Webster, L. and Backhouse, J., eds. *The Making of England, Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture, AD 600-900* (London, 1991).
- YA** The 'York Annals'; see Blair, P. H, 'Some observations on the "Historia Regum" attributed to Symeon of Durham', in *Studies on the Early British Border*, ed. N. K. Chadwick (Cambridge, 1963).
- YAJ** *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal.*
- YP** The 'York Poem' by Alcuin, *Versus de Patribus Regibus et Sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae*, edited by Godman, P., ed. *Alcuin|the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 1982).

## INTRODUCTION

*The English stream flowed into the greater river that is usually called the 'Carolingian Renaissance'. The stream gave the river its direction, other tributaries reinforced the movement...But the facts adduced show that the current of the eighth century was reversed at its end.*<sup>1</sup>

It was thus that Wilhelm Levison in his seminal book *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* defined the essential features of the relationship between Francia and Anglo-Saxon England. Highlighting the importance of Anglo-Saxons to the establishment of the dynasty which controlled the most powerful territorial unit in Western Europe since the heyday of the Roman Empire, Levison simultaneously noted the counter influence of that dynasty's power on the kingdoms which lay across the Channel. Writing as he did in 1943, Levison's comments would certainly have struck a note of contemporary irony. Under his pen the history of England and Francia in the eighth century became a tale of close links and mutual interest. He described a time, over a thousand years ago, when missionaries from England had been a fundamental weapon in Charlemagne's campaigns to conquer the Germanic tribes which lived to the East and to rid those regions of paganism. In the dark ages of the 1940s the regions that had once constituted the heartlands of Carolingian Francia had seldom been in so much need of a renewal of those ancient links with the country which had evolved from the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

Since Levison's day, the subject of Anglo-Continental relations has remained on the academic (and political) agenda. Cultural links of a political, economic and religious nature, have continued to be a focus of academic interest, arresting the attention of some of the greatest scholars of medieval Europe of recent decades whose interests in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England have brought them to consider more closely the

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<sup>1</sup> W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946), pp. 151, 107.

connections between the two regions.<sup>2</sup> Yet to date, no analysis has emerged which has looked directly at the Carolingian influences to which Levison alluded upon the various kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England. Focusing specifically upon the kingdom of Northumbria, the objective of this thesis is to examine the impact of that emerging Carolingian power, concentrating primarily on the evidence for political and diplomatic links between the two regions in the later decades of the eighth century and the early years of the ninth. Northumbrian and Carolingian lands were separated from each other by several hundreds of miles of land and sea, yet as Levison pointed out, our sources for the period, both textual and material, indicate that a healthy cross-fertilization of contacts existed between Francia and Anglo-Saxon England, including distant Northumbria. The subject of Anglo-Continental relations in the early medieval period consequently is a huge subject and one which demands the diverse approaches and technical skills of historians of text and art, of archaeologists and numismatists as well as linguists, lawyers and many other specialists. In the political climate of the late twentieth century, it remains a subject of unusual interest and surprising relevance to the political and cultural geography of present day Europe.

Whilst not wishing to prejudice the reading (and writing) of this thesis, it is important

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<sup>2</sup> The bibliography on the subject is substantial since almost all surveys of either England or Francia in the period discuss the links between the two in some respect. Outside Levison, the most directly relevant analysis is J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and England', in *Early Medieval History* (Oxford, 1975), 155-180. For a view from a specifically Frankish perspective, in which Anglo-Saxon England plays a part, see the important paper by F. L. Ganshof entitled 'The Frankish Monarchy and its external relations, from Pippin III to Louis the Pious', in *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy; studies in Carolingian History* (London, 1971). The existence of a sophisticated Anglo-Continental dialogue is implicit within P. Wormald's introductory chapter on the later eighth century entitled, 'The Age of Offa and Alcuin' in *The Anglo-Saxons*, ed. J. Campbell (London, 1982, reprinted 1991). A synthesis of the archaeological evidence is provided by D. M. Wilson, 'England and the Continent in the eighth century - an archaeological viewpoint', in *Angli e Sassoni al di qua e al di là del mare*, Settimane di Studio Vol. 32.i (Spoleto, 1986), 219-247. Also useful is section 5 of the catalogue of the 1991 British Museum exhibition edited by L. Webster and J. Backhouse, eds, *The Making of England, Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture, AD 600-900* (London, 1991), pp. 157-192 which also has a full bibliography. For a glance into the ninth-century subject see, J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Franks and the English in the Ninth Century: some common historical interests', *History* Vol. 35 (1950), 202-18 and for a perspective on the pre-Carolingian connections see the papers by I. Wood, *The Merovingian North Sea*, Vol. 1 Occasional Papers on Medieval topics (Alingsås, 1983) and 'Frankish hegemony in England', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo: the seventh century in north-western Europe*, ed. M. O. H. Carver (Woodbridge, 1992), 235-41.

at the outset to remember that all who study the past are necessarily deeply influenced (whether consciously or subconsciously) by the atmosphere and emphasis of their present world and their current personal concerns within it. This is as true for scholars of today as it was for the men who were writing in Northumbria in the later eighth century. Both Bede and Alcuin wrote of their concerns for their *patria* in their own day and in the years to come. Their writings are infused with ideas affected by their clerical status and political interests. A study of Northumbrian history through their eyes needs to take all this into account as well as allowing for the validity and reality of their personal opinions. On that note, it seems only fair to add that the research for this thesis and its writing were conducted, near enough, between the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 and the Inter-Governmental Conference planned for the beginning of 1996, both of which are instruments of a fundamental re-evaluation of the status of Europe and its political dynamics in today's world. There has rarely been a more ironically appropriate time for a focused study of the evidence of the influence which mighty Carolingian Francia had on the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria and of Northumbria's place within a Carolingian world. Much has been written on the importance of the Carolingian period in the formation of the modern European states and indeed, the existence of the *Prix de Charlemagne* given to politicians who advance the goal of the unification of Europe is eloquent testimony to the reputation which the first Carolingian emperor has maintained down the centuries.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps Einhard, Charlemagne's biographer (and Abbot of Maastricht), would have approved of such a study, writing as he did of the influence which his master held in the parts of *Europa* which lay beyond the technical limits of

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<sup>3</sup> E. James, *The Franks* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 230-43.

Frankish territory.<sup>4</sup>

The period chosen for this study is not random. In Francia, the middle years of the eighth century witnessed the total eclipse of the Merovingian dynasty, which had ruled Francia for the previous two and a half centuries.<sup>5</sup> In practice Merovingian supremacy had been whittled away during the preceding decades of the earlier eighth century by the descendants of Arnulf of Metz who, as Mayors of the Palace under the Merovingian kings, had gradually obtained from them control of the means to rule the Frankish kingdom. Power having been removed in practice, the traditional right of the Merovingian family to continue as Frankish kings was finally taken from them in 751 when the Pope sanctioned the coup which recognised the reality of

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<sup>4</sup> Einhard's biography of Charlemagne, the *Vita Karoli* was composed c. 829-30. The edition used here is that of G. Pertz and G. Waitz, eds, *Einhardi Vita Karoli Magni*, MGH SRG Vol. XXV (Hanover and Leipzig, 1905). References to this edition are hereafter abbreviated to VK (Einhard). There has been much argument surrounding the validity of Einhard's biography as a source for Charlemagne's life. Halphen argued that since it was so closely based on the *Vitae Imperatorum* of Suetonius it could not be used as an accurate witness to Charlemagne's reign; L. Halphen, *Études critiques sur L'histoire de Charlemagne* (Paris, 1921), pp. 60-103, a view supported by Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Franks and the English', 206-7. This view was opposed primarily by F. Ganshof, *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy, studies in Carolingian history* (London, 1971), pp. 1-16 and 'Notes Critiques sur Eginhard, biographe de Charlemagne', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* Vol. 3.iv (1925), 725-58 and was an opinion followed, amongst others, by A. Kleinclausz, *Eginhard* (Paris, 1942). On this debate and the problems of other Frankish sources see the review by D. A. Bullough, 'Europae Pater: Charlemagne and his achievement in the light of recent scholarship', *EHR* Vol. 85 (1970), 59-105, 67-9 and W. Wattenbach and W. Levison, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter; vorzeit und Karolinger*, Vol. 2 (Weimar, 1953), pp. 266-80 (hereafter abbreviated to Wattenbach-Levison).

<sup>5</sup> The most recent synthesis of Merovingian Francia and the circumstances of the rise to power of the Carolingian dynasty is by I. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450-751* (London, 1994). Two of the major contemporary sources which discuss the transition period of the early to mid-eighth century are the *Liber Historiae Francorum* (ch's 47-53) an essentially Neustrian chronicle which takes the story to AD 727 and the *Continuations to the Fourth book of the Chronicle of Fredegar* which depends in part on the text of the former, but modified to an Austrasian viewpoint. The composition of the second and third so-called 'Continuations' to the *Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar*, which run to AD 768, was supervised initially by Count Childebrand and subsequently by his son Nibelung who were close relatives of the Carolingian family (*Continuation*, ch. 34). The rise of the Carolingians as described by this text must therefore be read in the undoubtedly partisan light in which it was originally compiled; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, ed. and transl. *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar and Continuations* (London, 1960), pp. xxv-vii and references therein. The *Liber Historiae Francorum* was edited by B. Krusch, ed. MGH SRM Vol. II (Hanover, 1888), pp. 215-328.

Carolingian supremacy in Francia.<sup>6</sup> The period after the coup, which had seen the last Merovingian king consigned to a fate of monastic oblivion, consequently witnessed the deliberate and determined reinforcement of the rights of the newly royal Carolingian dynasty to rule the Frankish kingdom. Thus, one of the notable features of the Carolingian period is the development and enhancement of rituals of power such as the anointing and coronation of members of the royal dynasty in order to emphasise divine approval of their right to rule over the men and women who had recently been their temporal peers.<sup>7</sup> These rituals, as developed by the Carolingians, were influential and not only affected the methods of kingmaking of contemporary non-Frankish monarchs (Northumbria included) but were to become a fundamental aspect of royal power for centuries and kingdoms to come.

The period under study covers the reigns of the first two major Carolingian monarchs, those of Pippin III and his eldest son Charlemagne. Despite the fact that their brothers and sons also held royal office alongside them at various times during their reigns, it is the memory of Pippin and Charlemagne and of their endeavours which is paramount in the vast majority of the contemporary sources and subsequent histories. As kings (and latterly as emperor), Pippin and Charlemagne ruled Francia and its dependent realms for over six decades between 751 and 814. Their reigns marked the expansion of a political, cultural and geographic entity which rivalled

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<sup>6</sup> For a contemporary, mid eighth-century comment on the coup of 751 see chapter 33 of the *Continuation*; Wallace-Hadrill, *The Chronicle of Fredegar*, p. 102. Another text which discusses this event, known as the *Clausula de unctione Pippini regis*, in the latest assessment is considered to be a composition of the ninth century; A. Stoclet, 'La "Clausula de unctione Pippini regis": mises au point et nouvelles hypothèses', *Francia* Vol. 8 (1980), 1-42. An edition of that text is given by G. Waitz, ed., MGH SS Vol. XV.1 (Hanover, 1887), p. 1. Wattenbach-Levison (Weimar, 1953), p. 163 defends the authenticity of the *Clausula* and provides a review of the literature on it. For a view of the Carolingian coup embellished with hindsight of seven decades see Einhard's opening comments to his biography of Charlemagne; *VK* (Einhard), pp. 2-3.

<sup>7</sup> A synopsis of the theories about the evolution of Carolingian royal rituals is given by J. L. Nelson, 'The Lord's anointed and the people's choice: Carolingian royal ritual', in *Rituals of Royalty, power and ceremonial in traditional societies*, eds, D. Cannadine and S. Price (Cambridge, 1987), 137-80. This article (and those by the same author in *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London and Ronceverte, 1986)) emphasise the employment and adaptation of Old Testament style inauguration rituals by the Franks. For an alternative suggestion which argues for the Irish origins of the Frankish rites, see M. J. Enright, *Iona, Tara and Soissons; The Origin of the Royal Anointing Ritual* (Berlin, New York, 1985) and references therein. Important too is W. Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London, 1969).

Byzantium and as such, was chosen by the papacy to be its secular protector.<sup>8</sup> The first fifty or so years of Carolingian Francia is also remembered as the beginning of the so-called renaissance or *renovatio* of learning which provided a major impetus for cultural development in post-Roman Europe.<sup>9</sup> Evoking the glories of the classical past as well as evolving distinctive styles of book production, architecture, coinage, music and poetry, the Carolingian *renovatio* saw the preservation of many of the literary classics of the ancient world and created much which was new. Contemporary writers talked of Charlemagne's palace at Aachen as the new Athens and of the Franks as a new Israel, as God's 'Chosen People'.<sup>10</sup>

Under Charlemagne, Frankish territory and influence encompassed an unparalleled area. His armies conquered Lombardy, Saxony and the central European lands held by the Hunnic tribe known as the Avars. His armies went into Spain, initially encountering defeat at Roncevalles in 778 but later establishing a long-term Frankish presence in a marchland which straddled the Pyrenees. Charlemagne's elimination of the Lombard threat was a major factor in the evolution of the papal states in central Italy as the Franco-papal alliance attained a new level of symbiotic assistance.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Pippin and his sons Charles and Carlomann were granted the title *patricius Romanorum* by Pope Stephen in 754, on which see the account in the set of Frankish annals known as the *Annales Mettenses Priores* (AMP<sub>r</sub>) s.a. 754; B. de Simson, ed. *Annales Mettenses Priores*, MGH SRG Vol. X (Hanover and Leipzig, 1905), p. 45 [28]. On this issue in particular and more generally on the development of the Papacy in this period and its growing dependence on the kings of the Franks see T. F. X. Noble, *The Republic of St Peter; the birth of the Papal State, 680-825* (Philadelphia, 1984), especially pp. 87, 278-9 and references therein.

<sup>9</sup> The scholarship on the Carolingian Renaissance or *Renovatio* is diverse not least because the revived impetus for learning affected so many aspects of Carolingian culture and administration. Consequently, the bibliography is widespread. See for example D. A. Bullough, *The Age of Charlemagne* (London, 1973) and R. McKitterick, ed. *Carolingian Culture: emulation and innovation* (Cambridge 1994).

<sup>10</sup> As Alcuin said in a letter to Charlemagne, *forsan Athenae nova perficeretur in Francia, immo multo excellentior*; E. Dümmler, ed. *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, Vol. 2, MGH Epp. Vol. IV (Berlin 1895), no. 170, p. 279 [22]. References to this edition of Alcuin's letters is hereafter abbreviated to *Alc. Ep.* The reference to the Franks as the new Israel was made by Pope Paul I in a letter addressed to the Franks written 758-67; W. Gundlach, *Epistolae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi*, Vol. 1, MGH Epp. Vol. III (Berlin 1892), p. 552 [12-15]. It was an idea implicit in Charlemagne's pseudonym of David, King of Israel.

<sup>11</sup> For comments on the background to these events see Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter*, p. 138 ff.

Consequently, the period witnessed an axial shift, away from the Mediterranean Rome-Constantinople focus and towards a north-south emphasis. The forging of an alliance between Rome and Aachen transcending the Alps, as well as the resurgence of the office of Emperor in western Europe, were features of later eighth-century politics which were to remain fundamental aspects of the dynamics of the European power structure for many centuries to come.

The vibrance and strength of Carolingian Francia and of the family which ruled over it in the second half of the eighth and the first half of the ninth centuries is, however, in marked contrast to the fortunes of Northumbria in the corresponding period. Contemporary sources there talked as if the golden age of the previous century had been lost, of the dubious moral standards of the upper classes and of the slide into the abyss of ethical and political decay as rival factions fought for control of the kingdom.<sup>12</sup> Bede and Boniface remarked on the unsavoury changes in the kingdom after the death of Aldfrith in 704 and the accession of his son Osred.<sup>13</sup> The dynastic instability which shook Northumbria when Osred was murdered in 716 to be succeeded by Coenred, a distant relative, was the pattern of things to come. The second half of the eighth century in Northumbria witnessed the rise and demise of no less than nine men from at least four rival families who were able to obtain sufficient

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<sup>12</sup> The period is chronicled until 802 by the *Historia Regum (HReg)* and to 806 by the Northern Recension of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC)*. These two sources are discussed in greater detail below, Chapter 3. The edition of the *HReg* cited here is that by T. Arnold, ed. *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, Vol. 2, RS Vol. 75.i (London, 1885) which is hereafter abbreviated to *Sy. Op. Om.* The edition of the *ASC* cited (unless stated otherwise) is that by J. Earle and C. Plummer, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1892-9) which is hereafter abbreviated to *ASC* (Plummer).

<sup>13</sup> Bede, *Epistola ad Ecgbertum Episcopum* (hereafter *Ep. Ecg.*) in C. Plummer, *Bedae Opera Historica* Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1892), p. 416 and comments by D. P. Kirby, *Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum: its contemporary setting*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1992), pp. 10-11. Boniface, *Epistola ad Aethelaldi* in M. Tangl, ed. *Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus* (Berlin, 1916), no. 73, pp. 152 [13-21], 153 [8-12]. The instability caused by Osred was also remarked upon by the early ninth-century writer Aethelwulf, author of the *de Abbatibus*; A. Campbell, ed. *Aethelwulf, De Abbatibus* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 4-7.

support to claim the throne of the kingdom, one of them twice.<sup>14</sup> To a man such as Alcuin, Northumbria was not the place that it had once been. To him (and doubtless others too) the political instability of the kingdom and the commencement of the hostile Viking raids in the closing years of the century was a direct result of the religious laxity and moral lasciviousness of the Northumbrian nobility and was a sure sign of God's displeasure.<sup>15</sup>

A persistent theme which underlies many discussions of Northumbria in this period is thus the relative 'decline' of the later eighth century; decline from the 'golden age' of its conversion and its dominance in Britain during much of the seventh century, to the commencement of the Viking raids at the end of the next century to the eventual establishment of Scandinavian kings in York by the middle of the ninth century.<sup>16</sup>

This impression has many causes, not least the comparative strength of the longlived Mercian kings Athelbald, Offa and Coenwulf in the parallel period. The origin of the image of Northumbria in decline is largely, however, the doing of Northumbria's best known scholar, Bede. By concentrating on the period of the conversion of Northumbria to Christianity, the evolution of that kingdom and the period when it dominated all others in Britain, Bede avoided much discussion, rather judiciously some might argue, of the most recent decades which he himself had lived through. Though Bede wrote his best known work the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* by 731, our knowledge of the preceding three decades is comparatively limited.<sup>17</sup>

Cautiously however, almost as an aside at the end of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Bede did verbalise concerns about his own time and that to come, commenting (famously)

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<sup>14</sup> Æthelred ruled from 774-8 and again from 790-96 when he was assassinated. On the reign of Æthelred and Alcuin's concerns for the safety of the kingdom under his rule see the several letters by the latter addressed to Æthelred and to his nobles and the letters which Alcuin wrote to friends in Francia while resident in Northumbria at the start of Æthelred's second reign; *Alc. Ep.* nos 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 30, pp. 33-6, 42-4, 49-52, 71-2. On the 'Northumbrian revolutions' of the eighth century see F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1971), pp. 89-95, D. P. Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings* (London, 1991), pp. 148-58 and B. Yorke, *The Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1990), pp. 86-95.

<sup>15</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 16, p. 43 [8-10].

<sup>16</sup> See for example B. Colgrave, *Bede and his Times*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1958), pp. 3-4, 14-15.

<sup>17</sup> Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, pp. 147-8.

in Book V.23 about his patron and the incumbent monarch King Ceolwulf, that ‘both the outset and course of Ceolwulf’s reign were filled by so many grave disturbances that it is quite impossible to know what to write about them or what the outcome will be’.<sup>18</sup> On this portentous note, Bede began to draw his *History of the Church of the English People* to a close, and scholars ever since have heeded those wise words almost as a premonition of the doom which was to culminate in the piratical raids on Northumbria and eventual Scandinavian kingship in Bede’s own *patria*.

Just as the evolution of early medieval culture can be simplified erroneously to a flow diagram commencing with Italy in the sixth century to Northumbria in the seventh and early eighth, to Francia in the later eighth and ninth centuries, so the political fortunes of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria can be whittled down to the basic formula of gradual decline over a period of the century and a half preceding the Scandinavian coup at York in 867.<sup>19</sup> This impression is caused not just by the content of the historical sources as hinted above, but also by their very nature and construction. Historians of Northumbria are spoilt by Bede. Though by no means the only scholar whose work has survived from that area in that period nor the only historical work which Bede himself produced, the convenient coherence and absolute dominance of Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica* not only dictates the interpretation of the period it most closely describes, that is, the seventh century, but also creates a dramatic contrast with the sources which are its immediate successors. After the completion of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* in 731 (with evidence of a revision by 734), the nature of the texts which provide historians with their information about later eighth-century Northumbrian history changes.<sup>20</sup> No longer is there a single dominant literary text, rather a profusion of chronicles which tell related but not identical stories of the

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<sup>18</sup> Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* (hereafter *HE*) was edited by C. Plummer, *Beda Opera Historica*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1892-6) and edited and translated by B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, ed. *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969). These editions are hereafter abbreviated to *HE* (Plummer) vol. no. and *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors) respectively. For Bede’s comment on the reign of Ceolwulf see *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 349.

<sup>19</sup> As noted by Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms*, p. 324.

<sup>20</sup> Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, p. 149 and by the same author, ‘Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica de gentis Anglorum*’, p. 3.

events of their time. Bede's own work presaged this change; the last chapter of his *Historia* was intended to 'recapitulate' the entire work, but may have been a free-standing chronicle since it contains references to events not included in the main body of the text.<sup>21</sup> Arguably, these chronicles were generally more secular in form and content than the *Historia Ecclesiastica* had been. They were not compositions explicitly dictated from an ecclesiastical perspective. They tell of the fate of kings, of their marriages and wars, of their accession ceremonies and frequent assassination. Chronicle compilations such as the Northern Recension of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (ASC NR), the *Historia Regum* (HReg) and their derivatives describe in concise terms the reigns of ten kings over a period of about five decades from 758-810. Of these kings, at least four were murdered and four forced into exile.<sup>22</sup> These chronicles do not, under any reading, engender an impression of stability and cohesion within Northumbria. Quite the reverse is true, with evidence of factional rivalry and internal dissent dominating the accounts in the annals.

The most striking feature of these chronicles is the way in which the density of the annals changes dramatically in the first decade of the ninth century. Only a few later compilations dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries preserve fragments of detail about Northumbrian history in the period between the exile of King Eardwulf in 806 and the arrival of the Danish warriors in the 860s.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the political

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<sup>21</sup> The entries for the years 538, 540, 547, 675, 697, 698 and 711 are not included in the main text. On the possibility that Bede had access to an independent chronicle (the lost Northern Annals) see below Chapter 3 and P. H. Blair, 'The Northumbrians and their southern Frontier', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4th ser. Vol. 36 (1948), 98-126, 105-112 and by the same author, 'The Moore Memoranda on Northumbrian History', in *The Early Cultures of North West Europe*, eds. C. Fox and B. Dickins (Cambridge, 1950), 245-57 both of which are reprinted in *Anglo-Saxon Northumbria*, eds. P. H. Blair and M. Lapidge (London, 1984), chapters 4 and 6. See also C. W. Jones, *Bedae Opera de Temporibus* (Cambridge, Mass., 1943), p. 121.

<sup>22</sup> Yorke, *Kings and Kingdoms*, p. 87.

<sup>23</sup> That is, the early thirteenth-century *Flores Historiarum* by Roger of Wendover; H. O. Coxe, ed. *Rogeri de Wendover, Chronica sive Flores Historiarum*, Vol. 1 (London, 1841) and the texts which seem to have produced in Symeon's twelfth-century Durham scriptorium, that is the *Libellus de exordio*, the *Epistola de Archiepiscopis Eboraci* (both certainly by Symeon himself, *Sy. Op. Om.* 1, pp. 3-135, 222-28) the *De Primo Saxonum Adventu*, the *Series Regum* (*Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 365-84, 389-93) and to an extent the *Annales Lindisfarnenses*; W. Levison, 'Die "Annales Lindisfarnenses et Dunelmenses" kritisch untersucht und neu herausgegeben', *Deutsches Archiv* Vol. 17 (1961), 447-506. On the dating of Eardwulf's exile see below Chapter 1.

instability described in the chronicles seems to be dramatically reinforced by the cessation of the chronicles themselves. The physical absence of the texts which told of Northumbrian troubles in the last decades of the eighth century could thus be interpreted as evidence for the continuation of those troubles into the vacuum of the early ninth century.

As if this was not enough, another type of evidence which speaks volumes about the political and economic health of a kingdom, corroborates this hiatus in the historical texts. The numismatic evidence is an essential element in the comprehension of this period of Northumbrian history, all the more so because of the continued silence of the texts.<sup>24</sup> On the basis of recovered coins for this period, there appears to be a total lack of specimens for the reign of Eardwulf, a loss which is virtually contemporaneous with the almost total cessation of the chronicle evidence.<sup>25</sup> Are these two pieces of negative evidence connected, or is it just a coincidence? Could it be that the reign of this king which is known to have been contentious in the extreme, created an atmosphere where coin was not minted and which resulted in the end of the traditional keeping of chronicle records in Northumbria? Both aberrations could be accounted for by a variety of explanations. In theory, both could be a result of instability caused by the commencement of the Viking raids on northern England in 793 and 794. The lack of texts could be the result of the loss of a single quire from the manuscript of an archetype which supplied the extant chronicles. The apparent lack of coins for Eardwulf could be the result of the continued use of those belonging to his predecessors or of the misidentification and attribution of coins struck during

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<sup>24</sup> On this problem see in particular the alternative regnal chronology provided by H. E. Pagan, 'Northumbrian numismatic chronology in the ninth century', *BNJ* Vol. 38 (1969), 1-15 and the several articles in D. M. Metcalf, ed., *Coinage in ninth-century Northumbria*, BAR Bri. Ser., Vol. 180 (Oxford, 1987).

<sup>25</sup> S. Lyon, 'Ninth-century Northumbrian chronology', in *Coinage in ninth-century Northumbria*, 27-42, 31 and in the same volume, J. Booth, 'Coinage and Northumbrian History: c. 790-c. 810', 57-90, 72-3.

his reign to another monarch's period of office.<sup>26</sup> Yet the parallel between the two types of evidence is there. The impression of a cessation in the coinage is enhanced by the fact that the next group of coins minted during the reign of Eanred, a man who may have been Eardwulf's son, are visually more debased than those of the later eighth century. Thus, it is easy to connect a discontinuity in the coinage followed by a significant and continued debasement in the silver standard to the point at which the coins were made of brass, with an overall picture of the decline of the kingdom.<sup>27</sup>

Another type of source which becomes important in the later eighth century is epistolary evidence. Bede's famous letter to Ecgberht, the soon-to-be Archbishop of York written on November 5th 734, just a few months before Bede's death is the forbear of the collections of letters written by the West Saxon Boniface, the Northumbrian Alcuin and several others on a lesser scale.<sup>28</sup> The difference between Bede's letter and those of Boniface and Alcuin is that the former was written within Northumbria to another Northumbrian whereas the others were, with a few exceptions, written from abroad. Both Boniface and Alcuin made their lasting reputations on the continent. This eighth-century 'brain-drain' is an important element in the 'decline' myth, in part generated by these expatriates themselves. Alcuin wrote several letters to Northumbrian kings and noblemen and women, to their Mercian counterparts and to Frankish friends talking of the troubles of his homeland. 'Since the days of King Ælfwald', runs a famous letter to King Æthelred, 'fornications, adulteries and incests have poured over the land...for sins of this kind kings lost their kingdoms and peoples their country; and while the strong unjustly seized the goods of others, they justly lost their own'.<sup>29</sup> When compared with

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<sup>26</sup> Confusion is possible, for example the styca coins of the second reign of Æthelred II (844-8 or 858-62, the latter being that suggested by Pagan) are almost entirely struck by a moneyer by the name of Eardwulf; C. S. S. Lyon, 'A reappraisal of the sceatta and styca coinage of Northumbria', *BNJ* Vol. 28.ii (1956), 227-42, 231 and by the same author, 'Ninth-century Northumbrian chronology', p. 31.

<sup>27</sup> See for example, Booth, 'Coinage and Northumbrian History', pp. 72-6.

<sup>28</sup> See above notes 10 and 13.

<sup>29</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 16, p. 43 [8-10].

Bede's evident disquiet as voiced in the concluding chapter of his *Historia Ecclesiastica* and also in his letter to Ecgberht, Alcuin's concerns can be viewed in a longer term context. Yet, whilst Bede seems never to have travelled very far from Jarrow throughout his life, Alcuin as the renowned Northumbrian scholar of the next generation, is primarily famed for the reputation he made far away from Northumbria at the distant Frankish court of Charlemagne.

Another paradox exists within the existing scholarship on Northumbria; this period of 'decline' is also thought to have been the time at which many of the greatest works of Northumbrian art were created.<sup>30</sup> These are too numerous to list but the corpus of Northumbrian sculpture and manuscripts which has survived the ravages of time bears eloquent witness to the flourishing of Northumbrian culture in the eighth century.<sup>31</sup> After all, Alcuin himself was actively sought by Charlemagne to join his court as an internationally respected scholar. Whilst at York he was in charge of one of the best libraries in Europe and certainly had access to books unavailable in Francia at the time.<sup>32</sup> Rather than a picture of inevitable decline, it is arguable that Northumbria in the latter part of the eighth century at least, ought to be regarded as a place of vibrant intellectual and artistic merit, of a centre for trade and economic prosperity. The struggle of noble groups for control of a prosperous kingdom is in many ways more plausible than the concept of factional infighting for the sake of a realm in terminal decline. Alcuin's (and Bede's) condemnation of the moral standards of the Northumbrian nobility could best be explained by the wealth and prosperous

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<sup>30</sup> For an introduction to the subject of the Northumbrian renaissance see Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England* and C. L. Neuman de Vegvar, *The Northumbrian Renaissance, a study in the transmission of style* (London and Toronto, 1987) and the extensive references in both.

<sup>31</sup> The essential works on the sculpture of the region are volumes 1, 2 and 4 of the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture in England*; R. J. Cramp, *Corpus*, Vol. 1, *Co. Durham and Northumberland* (Oxford, 1984), R. N. Bailey and R. J. Cramp, *Corpus*, Vol. 2, *Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire north-of-the-Sands* (Oxford, 1988) and J. Lang, *Corpus*, Vol. 4, *Yorkshire* (Oxford, 1991). On Northumbrian manuscripts the best general introduction is J. J. Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts 6th to 9th centuries*, *A Survey of Manuscripts Illustrated in the British Isles* Vol. 1 (London, 1978) as well as Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, pp. 110-31.

<sup>32</sup> See the description of the York Library in Alcuin's poem on York; P. Godman, ed., *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 122-27 [lines 1536-52] and Alcuin's letter to Charlemagne written in 796-7 in which he requests that someone should go to York in order to obtain books not available in Francia; *Alc. Ep.* no. 121, pp.176-8.

excess to which those noblemen had access and to which both Alcuin and Bede, as good churchmen, would have undoubtedly objected. Indeed, it is arguable that both clergymen and pirates might be expected to attack precisely those things which were most prosperous.

Yet, in relation to the expansive power of Offa's Mercia, Northumbria in the latter part of the eighth century certainly seems comparatively stagnant. Scholars of this period of Anglo-Saxon history tend to emphasise the 'Mercian Supremacy' of the later eighth century, and contemporary Northumbria is studied in its shadow.<sup>33</sup> With its territorial ambitions towards the land of the southern English kingdoms and its international status, Mercia can be argued to have been in the eighth century what Northumbria had been in the seventh. Yet, King Offa of Mercia, despite his flagrant aggression towards southern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and his undoubted dynastic ambition (as manifested by the systematic elimination of his rivals, his quarrels with Charlemagne and his attempts to get his son's accession hallowed by the church) nevertheless always respected Northumbrian territorial integrity. He made no attempt to gain territory to the north of his border, but rather considered King Æthelred of Northumbria as a suitable match for his daughter Ælflæd in 792, presumably at least partly as a gesture of co-operation and alliance with that particular northern faction.<sup>34</sup> Apart from an incursion by Æthelbald of Mercia into Northumbrian territory at the start of Eadberht's reign,<sup>35</sup> it was not until after the death of both Æthelred and Offa in 796 and the succession of Eardwulf and Coenwulf to Northumbria and Mercia respectively that relations between the two kingdoms started to decline. But it was a Northumbrian army which attacked Mercian territory in 801, on the grounds that

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<sup>33</sup> See for example the introduction to section 6 of Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, pp. 193-4.

<sup>34</sup> *HReg s.a. 792; Sy. Op. Om. 2*, p. 54.

<sup>35</sup> The attack is recorded in the *ASC DE s.a. 737* and in the *Continuatio Bedae (CB) s.a. 740*; *ASC (Plummer) 1*, p. 45 and *HE (Plummer) 1*, p. 362.

Coenwulf was sheltering enemies of the Northumbrian king Eardwulf.<sup>36</sup> Even then, Eardwulf and his Northumbrian army were not overawed by Mercian power and the quarrel between the two kings had to be played out on the international diplomatic stage provoking a flurry of activity between the Northumbrian and Mercian courts and those of the Pope and Charlemagne.<sup>37</sup>

Later eighth-century Northumbria was certainly thriving, at least in part, on the notion of a glorious past as had been described by Bede. This perception of the Northumbrian past was promoted by Bede's scholarly successors who ensured that his fame and his thoughts were disseminated widely, as books containing his writing were taken across Europe. Northumbria in the second half of the eighth century was certainly also politically unstable, as might be expected in a kingdom which was in the secondary phase of state development having undergone a period <sup>of</sup> conversion and territorial expansion. Both these themes had served to unite and create a sense of identity. By the latter part of the eighth century Northumbria had its Christianity and its territory defined and secure, it had its national saints established and it had its propagandists to promote them. In the last decades of the eighth century, Northumbria was a place of political tension and of cultural reputation which was renowned throughout Europe. It was this kingdom which the native nobility struggled to control and for which external rulers such as Offa and, more significantly, Charlemagne first as king and later as emperor, considered to be worth cultivating.

This short resumé of the apparent waning fortunes of Northumbria and the waxing dawn of Carolingian greatness may not at first glance augur great things for a study of the contemporary political links between the two kingdoms. Yet, the return of King Eardwulf to his homeland in 808 after a period of exile abroad provides explicit evidence for deliberate interference by Charlemagne in the political affairs of the far

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<sup>36</sup> *HReg s.a.* 801; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 65. See also the concern expressed by Alcuin writing in the same year to Calvinus and Cuculus with reference to the role of the Archbishop of York in the political instability, fearing that he too was supporting the king's enemies (*susceptiones inimicorum*); *Alc. Ep.* no. 233, pp. 378 [24].

<sup>37</sup> See below, Chapter 1 and the references cited therein.

distant kingdom that was Northumbria. A study of this incident (Chapter 1) leads one directly to question whether Charlemagne's interest in Eardwulf in 808 was a unique occurrence or whether it was part of longer term Carolingian interest in Eardwulf and his kingdom. Tangentially, it also raises questions as to the nature of Carolingian 'foreign policy' towards those regions which lay beyond the marchland borders of Frankish territory, and thus the degree to which Charlemagne's interest in Northumbria may have fitted into his broader strategy for managing his empire and his duties as the most powerful Christian monarch of his era (Chapter 6). The intervening chapters will consider both the longer term context for Franco-Northumbrian links (Chapter 2) as well as presenting the evidence for the complex chronicle sources which argue for links between the two regions in the latter part of the eighth century (Chapter 3). Chapters 4 and 5 both consider the evidence for the introduction into Northumbria of concepts of royal authority which have become closely associated with Frankish government. The former considers the evidence which survives in this respect from the Legatine Council which was held in Northumbria in 786 and argues that the mission of the Legates has an important Frankish context not hitherto stressed. Chapter 5 turns to consider directly the pervasive influence of Alcuin on the Franco-Northumbrian relationship in this period. In particular, the analysis considers the Northumbrian and Frankish context of his epic poem *Versus de Patribus, Regibus et Sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae*. It is however, the expulsion and subsequent return of King Eardwulf in the early years of the ninth century which provides an apposite (if somewhat unusual) starting place for the examination of some remarkable evidence for what can be seen to be the longstanding, genuine interest of Carolingian kings in the political affairs of the northernmost Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE RESTORATION OF KING EARDWULF: ITS CAROLINGIAN CONTEXT.

In the last entry which is unique to its northern recension, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (*ASC*) states in the annal for the year 806 that Eardwulf, king of Northumbria, was expelled from his kingdom.<sup>1</sup> The event is stated simply, between accounts of a lunar eclipse and the death of Eanberht, the bishop of Hexham. The dating of the eclipse is accurate. It was witnessed also in Francia and recorded in a set of annals compiled at the Carolingian court.<sup>2</sup> There is no suggestion in the English source that the expulsion of Eardwulf from Northumbria was anything other than the common fate which befell so many of his predecessors in the politically volatile eighth century. The independent chronicle which supplied the *ASC* with information about the affairs of northern England ceases after this entry and thus no more is heard of Eardwulf in any near-contemporaneous Anglo-Saxon source.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 59. The manuscripts which represent the Northern Recension of the *ASC*, that is versions D, E and F, are collectively referred to as *ASC* NR except when reference is made to a variant reading in a specific manuscript. For example, Version D of the Chronicle in its entry for 806 refers to an eclipse of the sun rather than the moon (*sona* instead of *mona*) as found in versions E and F, which are correct. This inconsistency can easily be explained by a scribal error which caused the omission of two letters, *her sfe mJona*.

<sup>2</sup> The dating of the lunar eclipse by the *ASC* to 1 September 806 is accurate. The Frankish annals record the same eclipse (*iv Non. Sept.*, that is, 2nd Sept.) in the annal for 807 but as a reference to the preceding year (*anno superiore* ie; 806); F. Kurze, ed. *Annales Regni Francorum qui dicuntur Annales Laurissenses Maiores et Einhardi*, MGH SRG Vol. VII.6 (Hanover, 1895), p. 122. This edition is hereafter abbreviated to *ARF* (Kurze). The eclipse occurred around midnight on 1-2 September 806; D. J. Schöve, *Chronology of Eclipses and Comets, AD 1-1000* (Woodbridge, 1984), p. 174. The standard reference book, however, gives 813 as the date of Bishop Eanberht's death, based on the mid-twelfth-century writings of Richard of Hexham; E. B. Fryde et al. ed. *Handbook of British Chronology*, 3rd edn (London, 1986). This discrepancy was analysed and this later date rejected by H. S. Offler, 'A note on the last medieval bishops of Hexham', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4th ser. Vol. 40 (1962), 163-9.

<sup>3</sup> The problems of dating Eardwulf's expulsion and return to Northumbria are discussed below pp. 22-34.

However, the Frankish counterpart of the *ASC*, the *Annales Regni Francorum* (*ARF*), describes in some detail the subsequent movements of the exiled Northumbrian king. This set of Frankish annals records several somewhat surprising events within its entry for the year 808, events which are not preserved in any native Anglo-Saxon source.

Interea rex Nordanhumbroꝝ de Britannia insula, nomine Eardulf, regno et patria pulsus ad imperatorem, dum adhuc Noviomagi moraretur, venit et patefacto adventus sui negotio Romam proficiscitur; Romaque rediens per legatos Romani pontificis et domni imperatoris in regnum suum reducitur. Praeerat tunc temporis ecclesiae Romanae Leo tertius, cuius legatus ad Britanniam directus est Adulfus diaconus de ipsa Britannia, natione Saxo, et cum eo ab imperatore missi abbates duo, Hruotfridus notarius et Nantharius de sancto Otmaro.

*ARF s.a.* 808. 4

According to this Frankish chronicle, the exiled king Eardwulf crossed the sea into lands which constituted part of the territory of the Empire of Charlemagne. He travelled to the imperial palace at Nijmegen on the Rhine where Charlemagne's court was in residence for the season of Lent.<sup>5</sup> There he pleaded his case to the Emperor. Immediately after this, Eardwulf proceeded to Rome for an audience with Pope Leo III. The *ARF* then state explicitly that on his return from Rome, Eardwulf was 'escorted back to his own kingdom by legates of the Roman Pontiff and the Lord Emperor'. The three men who accompanied him are named. The papal legate was a Saxon from Britain by the name of Aldulf, and is indeed, mentioned in several papal letters of the period.<sup>6</sup> The Frankish emperor was represented on the mission to Northumbria by two *missi*, Hrotfrid the notary and Nantharius, both of whom are said to have been abbots. Nantharius was abbot of the monastery of St Omer (SS

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<sup>4</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), pp. 126-7.

<sup>5</sup> The *ARF* state at the beginning of the entry for the year 808 that Charlemagne had arrived at Nijmegen at the beginning of spring and had remained there throughout Lent, returning to Aachen after Easter (which fell on April 16 in that year); *ARF* (Kurze), p. 125.

<sup>6</sup> K. Hampe, ed. *Epistolae Karolini Aevi* Vol. 3, MGH Epp. Vol. V (Berlin, 1899), nos 2-4, pp. 90 [1-2], 91 [33], 93 [12].

Audomar and Bertin) which was situated a little way inland from the port of Quentovic on the Channel coast.<sup>7</sup> Hruotfrid, whose profession as a notary marks him out as a literate and educated man, was probably abbot of the monastery of St Amand further to the east of St Omer near the River Scheldt.<sup>8</sup> The geographical situation of both of these monasteries means that they would have been familiar to Anglo-Saxons who were travelling to the continent, and thus, their abbots would have been known and respected in Britain.<sup>9</sup> On face value therefore, the evidence of the *ARF* indicates that the collaborative diplomatic efforts of Charlemagne and Leo were sufficient to ensure that late in 808 Eardwulf could return to his own kingdom, thereby presumably overturning the wishes of the native faction which had deposed him. Above all, the affair shows explicitly that foreign powers, Charlemagne in particular, were willing to get involved in the domestic disputes of an independent Anglo-Saxon kingdom and, more to the point, had the ability actively to alter the political status quo in Northumbria and apparently to enforce those changes.

No historical analysis has yet provided a completely satisfactory context for this

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<sup>7</sup> Nantharius is also listed as abbot of St. Omer in other sources, see for example O. Holder-Egger, ed. *Scriptorum*, MGH SS Vol. XIII (Hanover, 1881), pp. 390-1 and in the *Gesta Abbatum S. Bertini Sithiensium* written by Folcuin in the third quarter of the tenth century, *ibid.*, p. 613. Nantharius (the second abbot of that name at St Omer) died in 820 and was succeeded as abbot by Fredegisius, Alcuin's pupil and friend, on whom see Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 165.

<sup>8</sup> There was an abbot by the name of Rotfrid at St Amand who died in 827 according to the *Annales Elnonenses Miores*; G. Pertz, ed., MGH SS Vol. V (Hanover, 1844), p. 1. The entry giving the obit of Rotfrid is apparently in a twelfth-century hand. However, the same list appears to show that one Adalricus was abbot of the community between 787 and 819. Adalricus may have taken over as abbot when Arno (Alcuin's great friend) was promoted to the metropolitan see of Salzburg 785. The St Amand Rotfrid was first identified as the notary in the *ARF* annal by Pertz in his edition of the *ARF* in MGH SS Vol. I (Hanover, 1826), p. 195, n. 66, but the attribution is not certain. A man named Hruotfrid is recorded as a royal *missus* acting in the Chalons-Reims region in 825; R. Hennebicque-le Jan, 'Prosopographica Neustrica, les agents du roi en Neustrie de 639 à 840' in *La Neustrie, les pays au nord de la Loire de 650 à 850*, ed. H. Atsma (Paris, 1989), pp. 231-70, 245 no. 168.

<sup>9</sup> The reality of the contacts with Anglo-Saxon England is revealed by the insular elements in the books produced at both these monasteries. Both were important centres of the Franco-Saxon style of book production in the ninth century, on which see R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751-987* (London, 1983), p. 223.

'extraordinary incident'.<sup>10</sup> Levison simply incorporated the facts of the case as part of his broader commentary on Northumbrian contact with Francia as background to his central analysis of the Anglo-Saxon mission to the Continent.<sup>11</sup> The only really detailed examination of the evidence tried primarily to resolve the issue of authority.<sup>12</sup> Writing in 1894, Karl Hampe argued that the only way in which Charlemagne could effect a change in Northumbria was to use papal pressure to enforce his wishes on the Archbishop of York, whom Hampe perceived to have been the major instigator of Eardwulf's demise. His main aim, however, was to use the evidence of this incident to disprove the 'accepted opinion' that Leo's participation reflected the true power of the papal throne over and above that of Charlemagne. If Hampe's thesis is accepted, its implication must be that the Emperor rather than the Pope provided the impetus behind the restoration of 808. Underpinning his analysis is the assumption that Charlemagne was prepared to become involved in the domestic politics of Northumbria. By turning up as a political exile at Charlemagne's court Eardwulf had brought this domestic incident onto the international diplomatic stage. Charlemagne, and Leo too, could have ignored the Northumbrian plaintiff, but choosing not to do so, plainly put a considerable amount of effort into returning Eardwulf to Northumbria. Evidently, sufficient pressure had been brought to bear on Charlemagne and subsequently on the Pope to do something about Eardwulf's problems. In essence, the incident reveals both a remarkable willingness by Charlemagne to become involved in the affairs of a distant kingdom as well as the ability to achieve that goal.

Wallace-Hadrill questioned how this was achieved in practice, admitting that the whole incident is 'an awkward piece of evidence'.<sup>13</sup> It is 'awkward' because it

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<sup>10</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and England', in *Early Medieval History* (Oxford, 1975), 155-180, 170. A full description of the events is given by S. Abel and B. Simson, *Jahrbücher des Fränkischen Reiches unter Karl dem Großen, 789-814*, Vol. 2 (Berlin, 1883, reprinted 1969), 380-3, 398-9.

<sup>11</sup> Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 114.

<sup>12</sup> K. Hampe, 'Die Weidereinsetzung des Königs Eardulf von Northumbrien durch Karl den Großen und Papst Leo III', *Deutsche Zeitschriften für Geschichtswissenschaft* Vol. 9 (1894), 352-9.

<sup>13</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and England', 170.

demonstrates the reality of Carolingian interest and practical involvement in the secular political issues of a kingdom outside the territorial boundaries of Charlemagne's Empire. The fundamental question therefore must be not so much how the restoration of Eardwulf was achieved but why it was even attempted. Was Charlemagne's motive just a question of 'moral importance' (as Wallace-Hadrill thought) or was he in any way obliged to respond to Eardwulf's plea for help? What was the nature of the relationship between Eardwulf and the Carolingian Emperor? Was it unique to Eardwulf or can a similar type of contact be distinguished in the historical accounts of the reigns of other Northumbrian kings? Further than this, the question arises as to whether the evidence from the 'Eardwulf incident' can be used as a springboard for the study of wider issues such as longer term Carolingian interests in Northumbria and, indeed, Carolingian 'foreign policy' towards Anglo-Saxon England in general. Basically, to what extent was the restoration of King Eardwulf to Northumbria an isolated incident and a unique example of Carolingian involvement in the politics of an independent kingdom or alternatively, an unusually tangible example of Charlemagne's ability to monitor and influence events in independent kingdoms which lay beyond the borders of his militarily defined Empire?

The international dimension of Eardwulf's journey to Charlemagne and to the Pope is reinforced by another continental source. A single manuscript, the precise original provenance of which is unknown but which is certainly of Frankish origin and which dates palaeographically to the ninth century, contains the only surviving copies of ten letters written by Pope Leo III to Charlemagne.<sup>14</sup> Of these ten letters, three refer to

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<sup>14</sup> The manuscript which is now preserved as Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Helmstadt MS 254, also includes the only surviving copy of the important Carolingian capitulary, the *Capitulare de Villis*, O. von Heinemann, ed. *Katalogue der Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel Part 1, die Helmstedter Handschriften* (Frankfurt, 1884, reprinted 1963), p. 214. The ten letters by Leo from this manuscript were edited by Hampe, *Epistolae*, pp. 85-104 (full reference see above note 6). Those concerning Eardwulf were also printed in part in A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs, eds, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, Vol. 3 (Oxford, 1871), 562-7.

Eardwulf and the mission to return him to Northumbria.<sup>15</sup> The remainder are concerned with places and issues of considerable international significance such as Venice, Sicily, Sardinia, relations with the Saracens, Pippin and Italy, Corsica, Ravenna and the Byzantine succession.<sup>16</sup> The deliberate collection of papal letters into this Frankish manuscript makes it a successor to the renowned *Codex Carolinus* in which letters written by popes to Carolingian kings of previous decades were transcribed as an official record.<sup>17</sup> The Leonine letters cast light not only on the Pope's perception of his role in the affair but also reveal information about the embroilment of both Eanbald II, the Archbishop of York and Coenwulf, King of Mercia. Consequently, the intrigue surrounding the internal politics of Northumbria around the year AD 808 and, more significantly, the international ramifications of these events are illuminated from a variety of angles and in unusual detail. Thus, it could be argued that the entire controversy surrounding the exile of Eardwulf provides a potential entry point for a closer understanding of the diplomatic machinations of the political forum of a Europe dominated by Charlemagne's neo-Roman Empire.

Yet Eardwulf's story does not quite stop with his escorted return to Northumbria in 808. The verb used in the *ARF* to describe the manner of his return is simply *reducere*, which commonly might be translated as 'returned' or 'escorted back' but could in this case be interpreted rather as 'reinstated'. The difference is subtle, but from the available evidence, which is admittedly limited, the possibility emerges that Eardwulf was not just returned to Northumbria by the Carolingian and papal legates but was also restored to the throne of that kingdom. If this was so, Charlemagne's involvement in the problems of the ousted king was directly instrumental in

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<sup>15</sup> The letters which refer to Eardwulf are numbers 2,3 and 4 in Hampe's edition and 5, 8 and 7 in the manuscript. The folio references for the Eardwulf letters in Helmstadt MS 254 are fols 4r-5r, 7 and 6 respectively. The quire in which these letters are found is now bound at the front of the manuscript. However, a quire number (which appears to be contemporary with the script of the text) is found on fol. 8v indicating that it had originally been the thirteenth quire in a codex.

<sup>16</sup> Hampe, *Epistolae*, nos 1, 5-10, pp. 87-8, 94-104.

<sup>17</sup> The *Codex Carolinus* (CC) was edited by W. Gundlach, ed., *Epistolae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi* Vol. 1, MGH Epp. Vol. III (Berlin 1892), pp. 476-653 and P. Jaffe, ed., *Monumenta Carolina* (Berlin, 1867), pp.1-334.

Eardwulf's subsequent resumption of royal power.<sup>18</sup> The language of the Frankish annals suggests this in other ways, saying that the place to which Eardwulf was returned was *regnum suum*, that is, 'his own kingdom' (the emphasis being on the possessive pronoun), possibly implying that Eardwulf enjoyed a second period of power in Northumbria. No contemporary, native source talks of such a resumption of power, but the chance that it occurred is obliquely hinted at in two later English sources which attempted to resolve the chronology of the ninth-century Northumbrian kings. In these texts Kings Eanred and Æthelred II are described as the direct descendants of Eardwulf, comments which in turn imply the creation and maintenance of an hereditary dynasty in Northumbria in the early decades of the ninth century.<sup>19</sup> Although this does not in itself constitute proof of a second reign by Eardwulf, these later sources imply that his family maintained a dynastic supremacy in Northumbria which lasted until the middle years of the ninth century. As such, it would have been a domination of the Northumbrian kingship unheard of since the days of the family of Oswald and Oswiu in the seventh century. Under these conditions, it could be argued that the intervention by Charlemagne in 808 was of lasting significance.

The question of Eardwulf's fate after his return to Northumbria in 808 has aroused much debate, primarily because the question of a second reign naturally has a knock-on effect on the basic regnal chronology of the Northumbrian kings of the pre-Viking ninth century. As noted here though, the question of Eardwulf's reinstatement to power also reflects the degree of influence wielded by Eardwulf's Frankish patron. It

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<sup>18</sup> The reinstatement of Eardwulf is implicit in the title of Hampe's article, 'Die Weidereinsetzung des Königs Eardulf'; Wallace-Hadrill also subscribed to the view that Eardwulf had been reinstated to power, 'Charlemagne and England', pp. 170-1. See also Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, pp. 156, 196 and by the same author, 'Northumbria in the ninth century', in *Coinage in ninth-century Northumbria*, ed., D. M. Metcalf (Oxford, 1987), 11-26, 17. Levison however, fell short of stating that Eardwulf actually regained power on his return to Northumbria; Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 114. Booth rejects the idea completely, erroneously citing a 'minor mistake' in the *ASC* as the cause of the confusion; J. Booth, 'Coinage and Northumbrian History: c. 790-810', in Metcalf, ed., *Coinage*, 57-90, 64-5.

<sup>19</sup> The two twelfth-century sources which refer to Kings Eanred and Æthelred II as the descendants of King Eardwulf are the *Libellus de exordio... (LDE)* by Simeon of Durham, Bk II Ch. 5, *Eanred filius Eardulfi*; *Sy. Op. Om.* 1, pp. 3-135, 52, also the so-called *Series Regum Northymbrensiū* which states, *Ethelred filius Eanredi*; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 389-93, 391.

is therefore a problem which demands closer attention. However, for reasons relating to the nature and extent of the available sources, the regnal chronology of the ninth-century Northumbrian kings is not secure and doubt can be raised about the validity of the accepted chronology. The historian of ninth-century Northumbria, as noted above, is faced with a virtual hiatus in the chronicle sources for the majority of the first half of the century, the consequence of which is that only the thinnest scatter of events are recorded in the historical sources which discuss that period. The source(s) which supplied the Northern Recension of the *ASC* and its related text the *HReg*, comes to an end in the early years of the ninth century.<sup>20</sup> Thereafter, the regnal chronology of the Northumbrian kings of the first half of the ninth century is insecure. What is known of the regnal chronology must be deduced partly from later medieval texts and partly from the numismatic evidence. The essence of the argument is this, that the sources which provide the information about Eardwulf's successors are all creations of a later age, predominantly the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>21</sup> These later sources do not provide entirely consistent evidence for the dates of the reigns of the early ninth-century Northumbrian kings. The inconsistencies are such that a period of three to four years remains unaccounted for in the period between the

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<sup>20</sup> The *HReg* ends in the year 802 and the *ASC* NR in 806. On the complexities of these sources and their importance for the eighth-century history of Northumbria and its relations with Francia, see below Chapter 3.

<sup>21</sup> The twelfth-century sources are the *Libellus de exordio* by Symeon of Durham (Bk II . 5), *Sy. Om. Op.* 1, pp. 3-135; the *De primo Saxonum adventu*, *Sy. Om. Op.* 2, pp. 365-84, 377 and the *Series Regum Northymbrensiū*, *ibid*, pp. 389-93, 391; the *Chronicle of Melrose*, for a facsimile of which see, A. O. Anderson and M. O. Anderson, *The Chronicle of Melrose AD 735-1270, a facsimile of Cotton MS Faustina B ix* (London, 1936) and also the chronicle known as the *Annales Lindisfarnenses* on which see below n. 49. The early thirteenth-century *Flores Historiarum* by Roger of Wendover also contains important information about this period of Northumbrian history; H. O. Coxe, ed., *Rogeri de Wendover, Chronica sive Flores Historiarum*, Vol. 1 (London, 1841), pp. 270-1. This latter chronicle preserves notices of Eardwulf's expulsion and of the reign of his successor Ælfwald who, Roger says, reigned for two years. On the latter text see below pp. 31-3.

demise of the man who usurped Eardwulf and the death of King Aelle in 867.<sup>22</sup> Thus, it has been argued that the failure of the contemporary Anglo-Saxon sources to acknowledge Eardwulf's restoration to power and therefore, to incorporate the correct number of years for his second reign into the narrative sources, resulted in incongruities in the Northumbrian regnal chronology as recorded by later tradition.

The sparsity of the contemporary textual evidence is juxtaposed by the abundance and complexity of the numismatic remains of the period. Since the historical texts concerning Northumbria for the period 806-867 are so thin, the evidence from the tens of thousands of coins which survive from that period becomes proportionally very important, all the more so because these coins bear the name of the king and moneyer who issued them. It is technically possible therefore, to compare and cross-relate the designs on the dies from which these coins were struck and to analyse the proportion of precious metal within them in order to arrange these coins into a chronological typology which provides a regnal list independent from that gleaned from the texts. However, several problems emerge when reviewing the numismatic evidence. Firstly, the chronology provided by such numismatic analysis is only relative. Since the coins themselves bear no calendar date, they cannot provide an independent absolute chronology which accords with years *Anno Domini*, let alone the text-derived chronology. Were such coins to be found in independently datable archaeological contexts then this problem might begin to be resolved. However, the great majority of the ninth-century stycas available for analysis today were discovered as parts of large hoards uncovered in the nineteenth century or as stratigraphically

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<sup>22</sup> Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, pp.156, 196. The argument rests on the fact that the eleventh-century text known as the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* which appears to have a tenth-century core, suggests that Osberht lost his life within a year of being challenged by Aelle in 866 rather than in 861/2. As Kirby says, this readjustment of the Northumbrian regnal chronology leaves a gap of three-four years which may correspond to the second reign of Eardwulf. He ignores however, the numismatic analysis as presented by Pagan which supports his overall conclusion. On the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* see L. Simpson, 'The King Alfred/St Cuthbert episode in the *Historia de sancto Cuthberto*: Its significance for mid-tenth-century English history', in G. Bonner, C. Stancliffe and D. Rollason, eds, *St Cuthbert, his Cult and Community to A.D. 1200* (Woodbridge, 1989), 397-412 and P. H. Sawyer, 'Some sources for the history of Viking Northumbria', in R. A. Hall, ed., *Viking Age York and the North*, CBA Research Report No. 27 (London, 1978), 3-7, 4.

unrecorded metal detector finds reported in more recent decades.<sup>23</sup> The discovery of the hoards in the nineteenth century has meant two things: firstly, that the ninth-century stycas have been subject to many decades of numismatic scrutiny which has considerably complicated (and sometimes confused) subsequent analysis and secondly, that the contents of the hoards have since been dispersed so that much of the early work on the stycas cannot easily be checked as the whereabouts of the hoard coins is often unknown.<sup>24</sup> In addition to this, the vast numbers and unaesthetic appearance of the stycas in comparison to both earlier and later Northumbrian issues has meant that until relatively recently, they have been rather derided and therefore avoided by numismatic scholars.<sup>25</sup> In quantitative and historical terms, therefore, the coin evidence and the analysis of it is far from easy to assimilate.

The problems of the last period of Eardwulf's life, therefore, have tended to have been considered by scholars whose primary interest was to resolve the ninth-century regnal chronology of Northumbria, since the accepted chronology would have to be adjusted in order to accommodate a second reign.<sup>26</sup> In an oft-quoted paper written in

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<sup>23</sup> The Ripon, Hexham, York St Leonard's Place and Cuerdale hoards for example, J. H. D. Thompson, *Inventory of British Coin Hoards, A. D. 60-1500* (London, 1956); E. J. Pirie, 'Some Northumbrian finds of sceattas', in D. Hill and D. M. Metcalf, eds, *Sceattas in England and on the Continent*, BAR British Ser. Vol. 128 (Oxford, 1984), 207-16 and by the same author, 'Finds of "sceattas" and "stycas" of Northumbria' in M. A. S. Blackburn, ed. *Anglo-Saxon Monetary History, essays in memory of M. Dolley* (Leicester, 1986), 67-90, 75-85; J. Booth and I. Blowers, 'Finds of Sceattas and Stycas from Sancton', *Numismatic Chronicle*, Vol. 143 (1983), 139-45; M. A. S. Blackburn and M. J. Bonser, 'Single finds of Anglo-Saxon and Norman coins' (three parts), *BNJ* Vols 54-56, (1984-6), 63-73, nos 9, 10, 11 and 17; 55-78, nos 68-9 and 64-101, nos 71-7, 118 respectively. Also, H. E. Pagan, 'Some thoughts on the hoard evidence for the Northumbrian styca coinage', in Metcalf, ed. *Coinage*, 147-58.

<sup>24</sup> Pirie's presentation of some of the original plates of drawings of coins from the Hexham hoard shows how some information can be retrieved; E. J. Pirie, 'Adamson's Hexham plates' in *Coinage in ninth-century Northumbria*, 257-328.

<sup>25</sup> The tenth Oxford symposium on Coinage and Monetary History in 1987 (published as BAR Vol. 180) was devoted to the Northumbrian styca issues in an attempt to reverse this trend.

<sup>26</sup> H. E. Pagan, 'Northumbrian numismatic chronology in the ninth century', *BNJ* Vol. 38 (1969), 1-15 with reference to C. S. S. Lyon, 'A reappraisal of the sceatta and styca coinage', 235. A commentary on Pagan's paper was provided by D. Dumville, 'Textual Archaeology and Northumbrian History subsequent to Bede', in Metcalf, ed. *Coinage*, 43-56, 53-5, and in the same volume, S. Lyon, 'Ninth-century Northumbrian chronology', 27-42. The latter paper tempers the extremity of Pagan's paper, concluding that a gap of about five years can be deduced from the numismatic evidence.

1969, Hugh Pagan proposed a novel chronology for the ninth-century Northumbrian kings based on his interpretation of the styca evidence and the significance of the 867 date for the minting of native Northumbrian issues. Noting the relative proportions of the recovered coins of Kings Eanred, Æthelred II, Redwald and Osberht, he surmised that the coins of the latter king demanded a reign of nearer five years than the thirteen or eighteen years provided by the historical texts.<sup>27</sup> Amongst other factors, such as the anomalous silver + *EANRED REX* coin from the Cornish Trehiddle hoard,<sup>28</sup> this observation, in Pagan's view, required the wholesale shifting of the text-derived regnal chronology forward by at least ten years. Thus, Eanred who is traditionally thought to have succeeded in 810 would, under Pagan's chronology, have gained the Northumbrian throne in 821, thereby allowing several years for a second reign by Eardwulf to have occurred. That Pagan considered this relocation an option was made possible in part, by the imprecision in the chronicles concerning the actuality of Eardwulf's restoration in the early part of the century. The uncertainty generated by the early texts over this issue, Pagan argued, confused later medieval scholars who tried to resolve the ninth-century regnal chronology (erroneously in his opinion) by rearranging the dates of the kings in order to fit the gap generated by the 806-67 hiatus.

There are all sorts of specific problems with Pagan's analysis, but it has remained influential because for the first time a numismatist tried to break from the confines of the accepted, text-derived regnal chronology for ninth-century Northumbria rather than pushing the numismatic evidence to fit in with the traditional dates. His contribution to the debate however, showed that the numismatic chronology is sufficiently flexible to allow for a second reign by Eardwulf post 808. The numismatic evidence does not prove that a second reign occurred but neither does it preclude the possibility of such a restoration of power having happened.

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<sup>27</sup> Pagan, 'Northumbrian numismatic chronology', 9. The traditional dates are obtained from Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum* and Symeon of Durham's *Libellus de exordio*, on which see further, above note 21 and below pp. 31-3.

<sup>28</sup> On the anomalous Eanred coin see, D. M. Metcalf, H. E. Pagan and V. Smart, 'Notes on the Eanred penny', in Metcalf, ed. *Coinage*, 36-41; Pagan, 'Northumbrian numismatic chronology', 11-12; D. M. Wilson and C. E. Blunt, 'The Trehiddle hoard', *Archaeologia* Vol. 98 (1961), 75-122, 113-16, 119 no. 93, plate XXXI.11, and Dumville, 'Textual Archaeology', 53-5.

The problem can perhaps be solved by analysis of the date at which Eardwulf was initially expelled from Northumbria. The *ASC NR* states that Eardwulf was expelled in 806. This is the last entry in that chronicle before the Northern Recension is lost. Its record of the lunar eclipse on 1 September 806 is accurate, a feature which strongly suggests that the other two events in the same annal also occurred in that year. Given the precision of the date of his accession in both the *ASC NR* and the *HReg*,<sup>29</sup> it is reasonable on the basis of this evidence to assume that Eardwulf had an initial reign which lasted ten years. Indeed, that was the assumption plainly made by the scholars of twelfth-century Durham priory. The *Libellus de exordio*, the *De primo Saxonum adventu*, the *Annales Lindisfarnenses* and the *Series Regum*, all of which are Durham texts dating from the first decades of the twelfth century, concur on this point.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, according to the *ASC NR*, King Eardwulf was expelled in the same year in which Bishop Eanberht of Hexham died, that is 806. However, Richard of Hexham, writing a history of his church some time after the translation of the Hexham saints in 1155 (*De statu et episcopis ecclesiae Hagustaldensis*), placed this Bishop Eanberht's death in 813, seven years after the *ASC NR* said that he had died.<sup>31</sup> Presumably because the author of that comment on a Hexham bishop was a Hexham man, this later date has been followed by the *Handbook of British Chronology* in its list of the bishops of that see.<sup>32</sup> In an article which attempted to explain this anomaly, Offler decided that the date provided in the *De statu* for Eanberht's death was an error probably deriving from Richard's confused conflation

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<sup>29</sup> His accession is dated by the *ASC NR* and *HReg* 26th May 796; *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 57 *s.a.* 795 (*recte* 796 by virtue of the eclipse) and *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 58. Both sources also record an eclipse on 28th March (the date is given as a marginal note in the *HReg* manuscript). On these descriptions of Eardwulf's accession see below pp. 36-7.

<sup>30</sup> *Libellus de exordio* by Symeon of Durham (Bk II . 5), *Sy. Op. Op.* 1, pp. 3-135; the *De primo Saxonum adventu*, *Sy. Op. Op.* 2, pp. 365-84, 377; the *Series Regum Northymbrensiūm*, *ibid*, pp. 389-93, 391 and the *Annales Lindisfarnenses*, W. Levison, "Die "Annales Lindisfarnenses et Dunelmenses" kritisch untersucht und neu herausgegeben", *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* Vol. 17 (1961), 447-506, 483. The anomalous AD dates of the latter are explicable by the cramped layout of the annals which are found in the margins of an Easter table, see below n. 49.

<sup>31</sup> Richard of Hexham's text was edited by J. Raine, ed. *Priory of Hexham*, Sur. Soc. Vol. 44.i (London, 1864).

<sup>32</sup> Fryde et al., *Handbook of British Chronology*, p. 217.

of a variety of late sources.<sup>33</sup> Offler concluded that Eanberht in all probability died in the same year in which Eardwulf was expelled, that is either 806 or 808. The second option was offered because Offler, although preferring the authority of the *ASC*, noted two problems. Firstly, the section of the *ASC* in which this annal occurs is subject to a fairly systematic chronological dislocation, the result of which is that events are consistently placed a couple of years too early. The 806 entry might therefore, really refer to events which occurred in 808. Secondly, he noted that the continental chronicles which discuss Eardwulf's demise as well as some post-conquest English sources, place Eardwulf's expulsion in 808.<sup>34</sup> For Offler, these two observations combined to make the date of Eardwulf's expulsion (and Eanberht's death) uncertain, that is 806 x 808.

A solution can be proposed for the first of Offler's problems. It is true that the annals of the *ASC* suffer a chronological dislocation between the years 756 and 845 whereby those annals which are common to all versions of the *ASC* (A-F) are dated two or sometimes three years too early. As Whitelock notes, because this error is found in all versions of the Chronicle, including Athelweard's Latin translation, the error must have been present in their common archetype.<sup>35</sup> However, those sections of the *ASC* which are found only in versions D, E and F, that is, the so-called Northern Recension of the *ASC*, do not suffer from this systematic chronological error between those years.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, those *ASC* NR annals which tell of events in Northumbria between the years 756 and 845 are deemed to be correctly dated and can be cross-checked with the annals found in the *HReg*. It is unfortunate that the early section of *HReg* annals which corroborates the *ASC* NR annals in this way come to an end in the year 802. Therefore, there is no comparative annal for the *ASC* NR entry for 806 which describes Eardwulf's expulsion and Bishop Eanberht's death.

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<sup>33</sup> Offler, 'A note on the last medieval bishops of Hexham', 168-9.

<sup>34</sup> Offler, 'A note on the last medieval bishops of Hexham', 166.

<sup>35</sup> EHD 1, pp. 124, 175 n. 5.

<sup>36</sup> This point is (unsurprisingly) often misunderstood; Booth, 'Coinage and Northumbrian history: c. 790-810', 63.

However, given that this annal is found only in the Northern Recension of the *ASC* it is likely that the date which the chronicle supplies for those events within it is correct. This interpretation is forcibly supported by the accurate observation of the lunar eclipse on 1 September 806 in *ASC* versions E and F.

There might also be a way of resolving Offler's second problem, that of the difference between the *ASC* and continental chronicle dates which concern Eardwulf's expulsion. The *ARF* for 808 describes Eardwulf's arrival in Francia in that year.<sup>37</sup> It makes no direct statement concerning the date of Eardwulf's expulsion from Northumbria, the unwritten logical assumption being that it occurred prior to his arrival in Francia. The *ARF* referred to the expulsion only in an explanatory sub-clause (*regno et patria pulsus*) which acts as an introduction for the major subject of the sentence which was the audience granted by Charlemagne to this exiled king. The *ARF* (which like the *ASC*, seem to preserve a near contemporary account) state that Eardwulf visited Charlemagne at the imperial palace of Nijmegen. The same annal also says that Charlemagne was resident at Nijmegen only between the 'beginning of Spring' (*vereque inchoante*) and Easter of that year, that is the forty days of Lent. After this, the annals say, the Emperor returned to Aachen. Easter fell on April 16 in 808, meaning that Charlemagne was at Nijmegen for certain only between the beginning of March and mid April of that year. Thus, the Frankish annals do not say that Eardwulf was expelled from Northumbria in 808, only that he arrived in Francia in the early months of that year. The *ARF* account goes on to describe Eardwulf's return journey to Northumbria, in the company of a papal legate and two Frankish abbots. That Eardwulf's return to Northumbria occurred later in the same year as his initial audience with Charlemagne is confirmed by the entry in the *ARF* for the following year, 809. That annal describes the safe return of the Frankish abbots and the capture of the papal legate by pirates, *postquam Ardulfus rex Nordanhumbrorum reductus est in regnum suum*. Eardwulf's safe return is also implicit in a letter from Pope Leo to Charlemagne dated 31 December which talks of the return of the papal and imperial legates from Northumbria. Unfortunately, this letter is dated only by day and month, not by its year of composition. Its editor dates it to 808 by virtue of

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<sup>37</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 126.

comparison with the *ARF*.<sup>38</sup> One other factor suggests that that the Frankish legates were back in their homeland by 809. If the abbot named Hruotfrid in the *ARF s.a.* 808 was indeed the leader of St Amand as customarily assumed, it is likely that as the abbot of his community he would have been present when the body of St Amand was translated to a new resting place on 20th September 809.<sup>39</sup>

Another source which provides an *Anno Domini* date for Eardwulf's expulsion to which great value has been attached, is the *Flores Historiarum* written by Roger of Wendover in the early thirteenth century.<sup>40</sup> Although writing from St Albans, he evidently had access to a source concerning northern England which contained information about events in the ninth century lost to all other sources.<sup>41</sup> It may have been that he obtained this information via the monastery at Tynemouth which by the mid-twelfth century was a dependent cell of St Albans, ceded to that monastery by Durham.<sup>42</sup> Roger ascribes the usurpation and expulsion of Eardwulf by a man named Ælfwold to the year 808. Ælfwold, he says, ruled for two years, that is 808-810. However, were Roger's chronology to be correct, it would imply that Eardwulf was returned *in regnum suum*, during the 'occupation' of Ælfwold. Also, it suggests that, under these conditions, Eardwulf did not challenge Ælfwold and that Ælfwold tolerated Eardwulf's presence in the kingdom. Both of these implications

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<sup>38</sup> Hampe, *Epistolae*, p. 89.

<sup>39</sup> See for example the entries recorded under the year 809 in the *Annales sancti Amandi, pars secunda*, the *Annales S. Amandi breves* and the *Annales Elenonenses Miores* as edited respectively by G. H. Pertz, ed., MGH SS Vol. I, p. 14; MGH SS Vol. II (Hanover, 1829), p. 184; MGH SS Vol. V, p. 11.

<sup>40</sup> Coxe, *Rogeri de Wendover*, Vol. 1, pp. 270-1. For the weight attached to Roger's account see for example, Booth, 'Coinage and Northumbrian history', 60, 63-4. The *Chronicle of Melrose* at this point is evidently based on an incomplete version of the *ASC NR* such as is found in version E. This can be assumed because of the long gap after the 806 entry in *Melrose* and the reflection of that gap in the second clause of the *Melrose* annal, which notes that after Eardwulf fled, 'there was no king for a long while', thereby confirming the lack of Northumbrian information available to the scribe of *Melrose* after that date.

<sup>41</sup> Roger includes a unique reference to King Redwulf whom, he says, ruled in Northumbria for a short while in 844. Roger's reference is corroborated by coins minted in this king's name.

<sup>42</sup> D. Knowles et al., *Heads of Religious Houses, England and Wales 940-1216* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 96-7.

seem unlikely given Eardwulf's military reputation, his influence with Charlemagne and Leo as well as the suggestion that it was Eardwulf's son, not Ælfwald's who eventually succeeded to the throne.

Had Eardwulf really been expelled from Northumbria in 808 (as Roger's chronology implies) the crisis which had brought about his political demise, his expulsion and the journey from Northumbria to Francia must have taken place during the earliest months of the year when the seas would have been least hospitable to travellers between England and the Continent. It is not impossible that Eardwulf's journey from Northumbria was made at this time, especially since the Frankish annals state that the winter that year was 'unhealthily mild' (*hiemps mollissima*).<sup>43</sup> However, given the strong likelihood that the date provided by the *ASC NR* for Eardwulf's expulsion is correct, it is necessary to reconcile it with the Frankish account. An alternative pattern for this series of events can be proposed by following the chronology hinted at in the *ASC NR* and the regnal lists of post-Conquest sources. The *ASC NR* state that Eardwulf was expelled in 806. The regnal list embedded within the twelfth-century Durham texts the *LDE*, the *DPSA*, the *Series Regum* and to a degree the *ALf* (which are almost certainly based on the same source) agrees with this by according Eardwulf a reign of ten years and his successor Ælfwald a reign of two years. There is no controversy as to the date of Eardwulf's accession. Both the *ASC* and the *HReg* describe in detail Eardwulf's accession ceremony and its date, 26th May 796. A ten year reign would have made Eardwulf king until May 806. It is possible therefore, that the political crisis which brought about Eardwulf's expulsion occurred *circa* May 806. This would then have given Eardwulf some eighteen months to have amassed the evidence and money to pursue his case with Charlemagne and subsequently in Rome. In combination with the evidence that Eardwulf was returned to Northumbria later in the year 808, the hypothesised time lapse between his expulsion and return provides the necessary space for a two year reign for the usurper Ælfwald, that is, mid-late 806 until mid-late 808.

This revised chronology disagrees with that given by Roger who was writing some

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<sup>43</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 125.

four hundred years after the event. However, the accuracy of the chronology of many of Roger's other early chronicle entries is suspect. In several places he ascribes an event to a year two or three years after the event is known from other sources to have occurred.<sup>44</sup> Thus his annal for 783 which describes the mission to Rome to collect the pallium for archbishop Eanbald I should more correctly be dated to 780/1. The entry for 828 is also incorrectly dated, and the annal for 844 is otherwise dated to 843. It may be that Roger's annals for 808 and 810 are simply two years too late.

The hypothesis that a lengthy time lapse occurred between Eardwulf's expulsion from Northumbria and his arrival in Francia is also supported by the correspondence of Pope Leo to Charlemagne concerning his case.<sup>45</sup> Leo's letters describe a frenetic coming-and-going of messages and messengers about the troubles in Northumbria at this time. Writing to Charlemagne in 808, the pope responded to the emperor's letter concerning Eardwulf's expulsion *quod Eardulfus Rex de regno suo ejectus fuisset*, saying that he already knew about it. He had already heard about 'this very great evil' and so had sent his own *missus* to 'that place'. It was 'with great joy and much happiness' he adds, when this messenger reported to Leo that Charlemagne's *missi* had already found Eardwulf and had, in Leo's words, *vivum eum [Eardwulf] ad vos usque perduxistis*. This letter is normally dated to the year 808, on the assumption that it was written after Eardwulf had reached the Frankish court in the early spring of that year. If Leo's letter is to be taken literally, news of Eardwulf's troubles had reached the ears of both Leo and Charlemagne independently. Both men had sent *missi* to England to try and sort out the problem. Charlemagne's agents had reached Eardwulf first and had 'brought him alive' to the Emperor. The same letter to Charlemagne refers to the arrival of letters from three other men Archbishop Eanbald II of York, King Coenwulf of Mercia and the nobleman Wado. The likelihood is that the letters from these men also concerned the Eardwulf problem since all of them are known to have been in conflict with Eardwulf. Certainly 'these writers were full of

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<sup>44</sup> On this problem see the notes provided by Whitelock, EHD 1, 281-4.

<sup>45</sup> Hampe, *Epistolae*, no. 2, p. 90 and Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, pp. 562-4.

deceit which they had concocted amongst themselves'.<sup>46</sup> The implication of these letters is that there was a considerable degree of activity between Northumbria, Mercia, Francia and Rome in the months preceding Eardwulf's departure from his kingdom which is not inconsistent with the idea that Eardwulf's political control was slackening some while before he arrived in Francia in March 808.

In the last resort, the actuality of Eardwulf's restoration to the Northumbrian throne cannot be finalised on the basis of the available evidence. All that can be said with any certainty is that both the numismatic and textual evidence is sufficiently flexible to allow the possibility that Eardwulf enjoyed a second period of power in Northumbria. Yet in practice the reality of a second reign by Eardwulf does not alter the observation that Eardwulf was returned to Northumbria under escort from Carolingian and papal envoys. Since it is inherently unlikely that the usurper Ælfwald would have been able to tolerate the presence of his rival in the kingdom, the burden of probability argues that Eardwulf's return to his homeland prompted the demise of Ælfwald and therefore that the rule of the latter extended from 806-8. This interpretation, albeit hypothetical and unproven by either contemporary historical or numismatic sources, is supported by the twelfth-century claim that the next two kings of Northumbria were direct descendents of Eardwulf. Thus, despite the lack of contemporary sources to verify such a claim, a real possibility remains that not only was Eardwulf returned to Northumbria from exile with the assistance of imperial and papal legates, but may also have regained power in his kingdom. Indeed, it is arguable that it would have been unlikely that Charlemagne should have expended so much energy in the plan for Eardwulf to be *in regnum suum reducitur*, without his protégé re-gaining some political status.

#### **Evidence for contacts between Eardwulf and Francia before 808:**

The idea that this incident was not an isolated event, but that it formed part of a longer-term relationship between Northumbrian and Carolingian kings has found favour recently. Kirby pointed out that 'the contacts and connections which secured

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<sup>46</sup> Hampe, *Epistolae*, no. 2, p. 90 [8-9].

for Eardwulf Carolingian and papal support in 808 are unlikely to have been suddenly extinguished and may well have helped to create the stable conditions of Eanred's reign'.<sup>47</sup> He also surmises that Eardwulf must have been the 'recipient of Carolingian favours' earlier in his reign in order to warrant the intervention in 808.<sup>48</sup> In contrast to the lack of sources after this point, a fair amount of background information exists concerning Eardwulf's major period of rule from 796-806, which can be scrutinised for evidence of longer term Carolingian influence over that king. The most explicit statement in this respect is found in the minor Durham chronicle known as the *Annales Lindisfarnenses (ALf) s.a. 797*.<sup>49</sup> This annal makes the claim that Eardwulf married a daughter of Charlemagne, *duxit uxorem filiam regis Karoli*. This is the only unique piece of evidence found in these annals, the remainder being derived from a variety of other sources. Since the *ALf* seem to be a compilation of the early twelfth century (though based on earlier material), the reference to Eardwulf's possible dynastic union with the Carolingians previously has been thought to be spurious.<sup>50</sup> Levison considered the reference to have been a twelfth-century

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<sup>47</sup> Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, p. 197.

<sup>48</sup> Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, p. 157.

<sup>49</sup> The *ALf* are one of the few surviving true Easter-table chronicles, the entries being written in the margins of a Dionysian Easter-cycle. The reference to Eardwulf is found on the last line of the table on fol. 21r of the manuscript which is now kept as Glasgow University Library, MS Hunter 85 (once T.4.2); J. Young and P. H. Aitken, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Hunterian Library of the University of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1908), pp. 91-4, the annals are Item 2 on p. 92; N. Thorpe, *The Glory of the Page, Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts from Glasgow University Library* (London, 1987), p.57, no. 9; R. A. B. Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts* (Oxford, 1939), pp. 55-6, no.71. The annals were edited initially by G. Pertz, *Scriptorum*, MGH SS Vol. XIX, pp. 502-8 and later by W. Levison, 'Die "Annales Lindisfarnenses et Dunelmenses" kritisch untersucht und neu herausgegeben' *Deutsche Archiv*, Vol. 17 (1961), 447-506 (Wattenbach-Levison, p. 190). The manuscript is a Durham book. Recently it has received attention as an example of a manuscript worked on by Symeon of Durham whose hand has been identified; M. Gullick, 'The Scribes of the Durham Cantor's Book (Durham Cathedral Library, MS B.IV.24) and the Durham Martyrology Scribe', in *Anglo-Norman Durham*, eds, D. Rollason et al. (Woodbridge, 1994), 93-109, 105. The hand which has been attributed to Symeon wrote the annals of the second Dionysian cycle, that is of the years 532-1063. This discovery is of significance for Symeon's historical *œuvre*, and is considered by the author of this present study in a forthcoming article to be published by D. Rollason, ed. *Symeon of Durham* (forthcoming).

<sup>50</sup> Levison, *England and the Continent*, p.114 and see also Plummer's comment; *ASC* (Plummer) 2, p. 68. Levison's argument rests in part on Einhard's statement in Ch. 19 of his *Vita Karoli* that Charlemagne did not allow any of his daughters to marry during his lifetime; *VK* (Einhard), p. 21. Other scholars have however, been sceptical about the veracity of the detail in the *VK*, see above Introduction, note 3.

confusion with Æthelwulf's marriage to Judith, the daughter of Charles the Bald in 856. This is a possible explanation, but a surprising one given the dissimilarity in the names of those kings concerned. Indeed, given Eardwulf's other connections with Charlemagne and Francia, the allegation that Eardwulf had dynastic connections with the Emperor's family perhaps <sup>sh</sup>ought to be taken more seriously. Even if mistaken in detail, the *ALf* reference may reflect a tradition that Eardwulf had been closely associated with Charlemagne during his time as king of Northumbria. This is especially interesting given that further evidence survives which suggests that Charlemagne might have had a longer standing interest in Eardwulf's career. This is illustrated by the two surviving accounts of Eardwulf's accession ceremony in 796.

Her wæs seo mona ađistrod betwux hancrod 7 dagunge on .v.  
kl. Apr. 7 Eardwulf feng to Norþanhymbran cine dome on .ii.  
idus Mai. 7 and he wæs syððan gebletsod 7 to his cine stole  
ahofen on .vii. k. Iunii on Eoferwic fram Eanbalde arceb. 7  
Æðelberhte 7 Higbalde 7 Badewulfe.

ASC NR *s.a.* 795 (*recte* 796).<sup>51</sup>

Eardulf enim, de quo supra diximus, filius Eardulfi de exilio  
vocatus, regni infulis est sublimatus, et in Eboraca in ecclesia  
sancti Petri ad altare beati apostoli Pauli, ubi illa gens primum  
perceperat gratiam baptismi, consecratus est vii. Kal Junii.

*HReg s.a.* 796.<sup>52</sup>

The accession of Eardwulf to the throne of Northumbria in 796 is described in the native sources in language which would not have seemed out of place in a contemporary Carolingian chronicle.<sup>53</sup> In both the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin descriptions of the event significant terms were employed to describe the ceremony.

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<sup>51</sup> ASC (Plummer) 1, p. 57.

<sup>52</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 57-8.

<sup>53</sup> The question of the Carolingian-style vocabulary which is used in the *HReg* is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3 of the present study. The clergymen named in the *ASC* entry were the Archbishop of York and the bishops of Hexham, Lindisfarne and Whithorn, respectively. This annal was one of those translated into Latin in a short text which catalogues the connections between Whithorn and York. This text was copied into a manuscript containing Bede's *HE*, *s.* xii/xiii *in.*, BM Additional MS 25014, fol. 118v. On this manuscript and the short chronicle text within it see R. J. Brentano, 'Whithorn and York', *Scottish Historical Review*, Vol. 32 (1953), 144-6.

*Gebletsod* is close in meaning to *consecratus est*, that is ‘consecrated’, whereas *cine stole ahofen* is similar in sense to the Latin *regni infulis est sublimatus* that is ‘enthroned’ or ‘raised to the kingship’. This is the first time in a Northumbrian context that we hear of an elaborate kingmaking ceremony held in the presence of the four highest ranking clergymen of the kingdom, complete with ideological overtones of the divine confirmation of kingship which are implicit in the references to the ‘enthronement’ and ‘consecration’ of the new king.<sup>54</sup> It is also significant that the ceremony was held at York *in ecclesia sancti Petri ad altare beati apostoli Pauli* which was a holy place of great importance to the Northumbrian people being where *illa gens primum perceperat gratiam baptismi*. Thus, the kingmaking rituals took place at the ecclesiastical heart of the kingdom in the church of St Peter at the altar of St Paul ‘where the nation first received the grace of baptism’.<sup>55</sup> The Peter/Paul imagery is a direct parallel not just with Canterbury but more significantly, with Rome. This type of kingmaking ceremony seems to have been innovative not just in a Northumbrian context, but also within a broader Anglo-Saxon perspective. The only previous allusion to a similar type of event is found in the *ASC s.a. 787*, referring to the possible ‘anointing’ of Offa’s son, Ecgfrith after the contentious Synod of Chelsea.<sup>56</sup> It is not clear from the description in the Chronicle whether that ritual took place in the immediate context of the Synod or an equivalent ecclesiastical forum or even if anointing formed part of the ‘hallowing’ process.<sup>57</sup> What was so different about the

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<sup>54</sup> The *HReg* uses similar vocabulary when describing certain aspects of the reign of Eardwulf’s rival, Æthelred. For example he is said to have been *tanto honore coronatus* in 774 and in 790 *iterum per gratiam Christi regni solio est subtronizatus*; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 45, 52. However, for neither of Æthelred’s reigns is there any mention of an accession ceremony of the type enjoyed by Eardwulf in 796 and the ‘Carolingian’ terminology used in the Æthelred contexts seem to be the choice of the chronicler, on which see further, below Chapter 3.

<sup>55</sup> The whereabouts of St. Peter’s is not known for certain, but its site is speculated in R. K. Morris, ‘Alcuin, York and the *alma sophia*’, in *The Anglo-Saxon Church, Papers on history, architecture and archaeology in honour of Dr H M Taylor*, ed. L. A. S. Butler and R. K. Morris, CBA Research Report No. 60 (London, 1986), 80-89 and E. James, ‘Introduction part 2 : The post Roman period to AD 1069’, in D. Phillips and B. Hayward, *Excavations at York Minster Vol. 1, From Roman fortress to Norman cathedral* (Swindon, 1995), pp. 9-15.

<sup>56</sup> *ASC s.a. 787*; *Ecgferth to cyninge gehalgod*; *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 54.

<sup>57</sup> For a discussion of the problems concerning the 787 incident see J. Nelson, ‘Inauguration Rituals’ in *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), 283-307, 285. See also N. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 118-119.

accession of Eardwulf which made such a departure from tradition necessary? Why did such a strong, ritualised statement need to be made in Northumbria at this date? Eardwulf's accession was a high profile event, imbued with ritual significance and contemporary, continental connotation. The ceremony described in the *HReg* and the *ASC NR* is reminiscent of the consecration, elevation and indeed, anointing of Pippin by Archbishop Boniface in 751. This was the event which in many ways 'legitimised' the claim of the Carolingian dynasty to usurp the Merovingians and to rule Francia in their stead.<sup>58</sup> Eardwulf, like Pippin, had been born into a noble but non-royal family. His father, also called Eardwulf, may have been one of the two men named Eadwlf in the *HReg* whose deaths were recorded *s.a.* 774 and 775, both of whom held the title *dux*, indicating high secular rank.<sup>59</sup> The latter of these seems to have been murdered (*per insidias*), one of the several high-ranking Northumbrians who lost their lives during Æthelred's turbulent first reign (774-8).<sup>60</sup> It maybe no coincidence that the first target of Æthelred's second reign (790-96) was Eardwulf who survived an execution ordered by Æthelred to take place outside the walls of the monastery at Ripon in 791.<sup>61</sup> Well before his creation as king in 796, Eardwulf had been a man of considerable political significance within Northumbria and possibly posed a second generation threat to Æthelred's authority. Both Pippin in 751 and Eardwulf in 796 were, therefore, in the business of making a high-ranking noble family a royal one and both used the highest clerical authority available in their kingdoms to do it.

The parallel between the 751 and the 796 ceremonies extends to the vocabulary used

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<sup>58</sup> J. Nelson, 'The Lord's anointed and the people's choice: Carolingian royal ritual', in *Rituals of Royalty, power and ceremonial in traditional societies*, eds. D. Cannadine and S. Price (Cambridge, 1987), 137-80.

<sup>59</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 45, 46 and 57. The man killed in 775 was murdered *per insidias* during Æthelred's first reign. For an analysis of the titles of laymen in this period see A. Thacker, 'Some Terms for noblemen in Anglo-Saxon England, c. 650-900', in *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, ed. D. Brown, BAR British Ser. Vol. 92 (Oxford, 1981), 201-36.

<sup>60</sup> See also the account of the murders of the *duces* Aldwlf, Cynwlf and Ecga in 778; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 47 and *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 53.

<sup>61</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 52.

to describe both events. The text known as the *Continuation to the Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar*, although making no explicit mention of Pippin's anointing, like the *HReg* also uses the phrases *sublimatur in regno* and *cum consecratione episcoporum* in its description of the 751 kingmaking ceremony.<sup>62</sup> Admittedly, there is no specific reference to anointing in the accounts of Eardwulf's accession ceremony. The Anglo-Saxon word used in this context is *geblætsod* whereas the verb *gehaligan* ('hallowed') was used to describe the Mercian events in 787.<sup>63</sup> The latter of these words has overtones of ordination and in an episcopal context at this date, such a ceremony may well have involved the process of anointing. The verb used in the 796 account has more of a sense of blessing which nevertheless has overtones of ecclesiastical sanction. However, the Latin author of the *HReg* annal used the word *infulis* (*infula*, *ae* f.) which in a classical context specifically referred to the headband worn by a priest. It could be argued that a tangible noun of this type was implied in the 796 context, with the word meaning something akin to a crown. Indeed, it was in the context of ritual headgear in which Isidore of Seville, writing in the earlier seventh century discussed the meaning of the word.<sup>64</sup> However, the noun is plural mitigating against this impression and the alternative meaning of a 'sign of religious consecration and inviolability' is perhaps implied. This sense of inviolability is very much the scriptural reasoning behind anointing; 'Thou shalt not touch the Lord's anointed'.<sup>65</sup> Given the possibility of the anachronistic insertion of specific words into the *HReg* description, it is stretching the evidence too far to assert that Eardwulf

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<sup>62</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, ed. *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar and Continuations* (London, 1960), p.102, ch. 33.

<sup>63</sup> For an analysis of the Anglo-Saxon *gehaligan*, see P. H. Blair, *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1959), p. 205.

<sup>64</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, Book XIX.30.4; W. M. Lindsay, ed. *Isidore Hispalensis Episcopi, Etymologiarum sive originum, Libri XX*, Vol. 2 (Oxford, 1911). In later medieval Latin c. 1300 the word becomes interchangeable with 'chasuble', maintaining the ritual context but for a garment worn on the body as opposed to the head. However, it is still used to describe the bands on a bishop's mitre, reviving the connotation with religious headgear. See for example the Salzburg *infulae* as discussed by H. Granger-Taylor, 'The Weft-patterned Silks and their Braid: The remains of an Anglo-Saxon Dalmatic of c. 800?', in G. Bonner et al. *St Cuthbert*, 303-27, 320.

<sup>65</sup> Psalms 105.15. Also, I Samuel 26.9; 'for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?'

was anointed in 796.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, the evidence from the two chronicles implies that he was created king in a ceremony brimming with religious connotations and ecclesiastical ritual. The Carolingian affinities of Earwulf's accession ceremony go beyond the allusions in the vocabulary used by the authors of the accounts found in the *HReg* and *ASC* (or indeed, by the author of the archetype which supplied the information for these two chronicles). The ceremony in which Eardwulf was made king was different <sup>from</sup> anything which had been recorded in Northumbria before. Apart from the 787 'hallowing' of Ecgfrith referred to above, this is the first definite occasion that such a king-making ceremony is described in any Anglo-Saxon context. Indeed, the *ASC* account of the Northumbrian ceremony is much fuller than the single line statement describing the better known Mercian event. Is it too much to suppose that something akin to the legitimisation of a new regime was as much the intention in York in 796 as it had been at Soissons in 751 and that the organisers of the latter event were aware both of the force and of the enduring success of the earlier Frankish ceremony?

Another source which points to a longer term liaison between Eardwulf and Charlemagne is Leo's letter to the Emperor referred to above which discussed the plight of the King and the circumstances of his expulsion. In it Leo tells of his reaction to the news that Charlemagne had taken steps to intervene in the Northumbrian crisis:

Magnum enim gaudium et magna laetitia in corde nostro ascendit pro eo, quod vestra pietas misit missos suos, et vivum eum ad vos usque perduxistis. Et valde de vita ejus delector; quia et vester semper fidelis extitit, et ad nos missos suos dirigebat. Pro qua re vestra imperialis defensio ubique multipliciter resonat.

Leo to Charlemagne, post Apr. 16 808.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> See the arguments regarding descriptions of coronations in the *HReg* as a whole (ie: not just the section which contains the eighth-century annals) in M. Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the early sections of the *Historia Regum* attributed to Symeon of Durham', *Anglo-Saxon England* Vol. 10 (1982), 97-122, 108. For arguments against some of Lapidge's conclusions, see below, Chapter 3.

<sup>67</sup> Hampe, *Epistolae*, no. 2, pp. 90 [8-11]; Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, pp. 562-4.

Leo says that ‘much joy and great happiness’ had arisen in his heart, because Charlemagne, in his great piety, had sent his own *missi* (to Northumbria) who ‘led him [Eardwulf] alive all the way to you [Charlemagne]’. The Pope continues, describing Eardwulf as *vester semper fidelis*. The phrase is extraordinary since, taken literally, it implies that Eardwulf owed some sort of loyalty or fidelity to Charlemagne. Was this ‘fidelity’ a linguistic turn of phrase used by the Pope or did it in reality imply that some sort of alliance, either informal or formal, existed between the two rulers. However, in Frankish sources the word frequently implied a quasi-formal degree of mutual obligation between the emperor and his *fidelis*, a *fidelis* being a ‘royal servitor’ under oath to a Carolingian overlord.<sup>68</sup> Wallace-Hadrill interpreted Leo’s words as a reference to the loyalty which Eardwulf owed to Charlemagne after he had been reinstated. He argued that ‘Eardwulf, doubtless heartened with a share of Carolingian *munificentia*, returned to his throne as the *fidelis* of an emperor who had exercised the power of *imperialis defensio*’.<sup>69</sup> However, this passage explicitly states that Eardwulf had been Charlemagne’s ‘faithful man’ *semper*, that is ‘always’. This corroborates the hints in other sources that Eardwulf had strong links with the continental powers earlier in his career, certainly before his expulsion from Northumbria in 806, since the Pope says in the same breath that Eardwulf *ad nos missos suos dirigebat*, that is, to Rome presumably whilst still acting in his capacity as king.<sup>70</sup> Some understanding of Leo’s usage of the word *fidelis* is important when trying to evaluate Eardwulf’s relationship to Charlemagne. Significantly perhaps, the same word is used earlier in the letter to describe the loyalties of a certain Count Helmengaud, *vester nosterque fidelis*. Helmengaud was present at Charlemagne’s imperial coronation in Rome in 800<sup>71</sup> and acted as his envoy to the Byzantine court in 802.<sup>72</sup> He was obviously,

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<sup>68</sup> C. E. Odegaard, *Vassi and Fideles in the Carolingian Empire* (New York, 1972), pp. 51-68.

<sup>69</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, ‘Charlemagne and England’, 170-1.

<sup>70</sup> The imperfect tense of the verb *dirigeo* suggests that Eardwulf’s sending of messengers to the papal court occurred more than once.

<sup>71</sup> L. Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis*, Vol.2 (Paris, 1886-92), 1-34, ch. 20.

<sup>72</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 117.

therefore, one of Charlemagne's highest ranking followers and was entrusted with important missions.<sup>73</sup> The evidence from this letter (and indeed, all of Leo's surviving letters) is difficult to deal with since his diplomatic epistolary style frequently seems intentionally ambiguous.<sup>74</sup> What the phrase meant in this context as opposed to Frankish usage of the term is unclear, it is possible that the Pope was recognising that Eardwulf had been a longstanding ally of the Emperor simply in the sense that he was not actively hostile to him. The literal implication of this passage from Leo's letter is that Eardwulf, as a *fidelis* of the Emperor, was rescued from England by Charlemagne's agents (*missos suos*)<sup>and</sup> was escorted by them to Charlemagne's presence (*et vivum eum ad vos usque perduxistis*).

The last sentence of this part of Leo's letter is particularly intriguing, 'because of this thing [Eardwulf's escape], everywhere repeatedly echoes with your defence of the empire'. The phrase *vestra imperialis defensio* seems to imply that by 'defending' his *fidelis* in this way, Charlemagne's *imperium* extended even to Northumbria. Whether this comment was meant literally or was another example of Leo's obsequious flattery towards the Emperor is a moot point. Leo's language, however, carries several implications; that Charlemagne's broad *imperium* correlated with the territory of the Emperor's *fideles* and whatever land was under the control of one of Charlemagne's *fideles* was considered by the Pope to have been part of the wider Carolingian *imperium*. Furthermore, inclusion in that *imperium* came about as a result of the pro-Carolingian affiliation of the ruler of the kingdom, the implication being that Charlemagne's *imperium* could expand through political and diplomatic alliances as well as by military conquest.

### Charlemagne and Æthelred:

Was Eardwulf's restoration and possible reinstatement to the Northumbrian throne by Carolingian and papal envoys a unique event or can any similar incidents be discerned in the accounts of the political relationships between other Northumbrian

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<sup>73</sup> Ganshof, 'The Frankish Monarchy and its external relations', 169.

<sup>74</sup> See Browne's comments on Leo's letter to Coenwulf concerning the Archbishopric of Lichfield; G. F. Browne, *Alcuin of York* (London, 1908), p. 112.

kings and Charlemagne? Another Northumbrian king received particular notice from across the Channel. Æthelred, who reigned twice from 774-8 and 790-6, was the recipient or subject of many letters from Alcuin.<sup>75</sup> Undoubtedly, the bias in the number of Alcuin's letters to and about Æthelred is largely due to the coincidence of his second reign with Alcuin's most prolific and prominent period of influence at the Carolingian court. As such, Æthelred was a particular target of Alcuin's proselytising about the duties and responsibilities of kings. These letters provide an insight into Alcuin's opinions on another Northumbrian monarch, and through him to Charlemagne's attitudes. Writing to King Offa of Mercia in 796, Alcuin described the Frankish king's dramatic reaction to the news of Æthelred's recent assassination;

Similiter et Æthilredo regi et ad suas episcopales sedes dona direxit. Sed heu pro dolor, donis datis et epistolis in manus missorum, supervenit tristis legatio per missos, qui de Scotia per vos reversi sunt, de infidelitate gentis et nece eius. Qui, retracta donorum largitate, in tantum iratus est contra gentem ut ait. 'illam perfidam et perversam et homicidam dominorum suorum', peiorem eam paganis estimans ut omnino, nisi ego intercessor essem pro ea, quicquid eis boni abstrahere potuisset et mali machinare, iam fecisset.

Alcuin to Offa, mid-April to mid-July 796.<sup>76</sup>

Even allowing Alcuin a bit of leeway for dramatic effect, his description of Charlemagne's reaction is extraordinary. After hearing the news of Æthelred's assassination from his legates who had travelled into *Scotia* (a point of note in itself), Charlemagne recalled his gifts to the Northumbrians. He threatened direct action and revenge against such people who could murder their lord and whom he considered to be 'worse than pagans'. There is other evidence for Charlemagne's temper so this description of his ire is entirely plausible, even if slightly melodramatic.<sup>77</sup> But why should Charlemagne react in such a way to the assassination of a Northumbrian king? Indeed, Alcuin specifically says that he was prepared *eis boni abstrahere* and

<sup>75</sup> *Alc. Ep.*, nos 8-10, 16, 18, 30, 79, 105, 101, 102, 121, 122, 231.

<sup>76</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 101, p.147 [10-16].

<sup>77</sup> See Charlemagne's reaction to the news of the murder of his Abodrite ally, Witzan; *ARF* (Kurze), p. 97 and below Chapter 6.

*mali machinare* as vengeance for this deed. This is fairly drastic action for the Frankish king to consider taking against a distant and non-subject nation such as the Northumbrians. Luckily for them, Alcuin graciously interceded on behalf of the Northumbrians thereby sparing them the wrath of his Frankish lord. But why should Charlemagne have reacted like this? The reason perhaps is to be found behind the *donorum largite* which Charlemagne retracted *in tantum iratus est contra gentem*. It appears that Charlemagne had sent gifts to both the King of Northumbria *et ad suas episcopales sedes*. These ‘generous gifts’ are mentioned elsewhere, most notably in a letter ostensibly written by Charlemagne (but possibly drafted by Alcuin) again to Offa in the spring of 796;

Cognoscat quoque dilecto vestra, quod aliam benedictionem de dalmaticis nostris vel palleis ad singulas sedes episcopales regni vestri vel Ædilredi...Sed et de thesauro humanarum rerum, quem dominus Iesus nobis gratuita pietate concessit, aliquid per metropolitanas civitates transmisimus. Vestrae quoque dilectioni ad gaudam et gratiarum actiones Deo omnipotenti dirigere studuimus unum balteum et unum gladium Huniscum et duo pallia sirica...

Charlemagne to Offa, Spring 796.<sup>78</sup>

The ‘worldly treasure’ referred to was the spoil of the war fought against the Hunnic Avars which had culminated in a resounding victory for the Frankish forces in the previous year. Charlemagne had promised Offa a Hunnic sword and baldric and two precious robes from the treasure. The dissemination of parts of this treasure to Anglo-Saxon kings and bishops of the *metropolitanas civitates* (York and Canterbury) raises significant questions when the Frankish sources are consulted. The *ARF* for 796 tell how Charlemagne (a *vir prudentissimus atque largissimus*):

magnam inde partem Romam ad limina apostolorum misit...  
porro reliquam partem optimatibus, clericis sive laicis,  
ceterisque fidelibus suis largitus est.

*ARF*, s.a. 797.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>78</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 100, p.146 [1-12]. The letter is also translated in *EHD* 1, pp. 848-9, no.197.

<sup>79</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 98.

Having sent a large part of the treasure 'to the threshold of the apostles' in Rome, he divided the rest between his *optimates*, both secular and clerical and 'all his faithful men' (*fidelibus*). The so-called Lorsch Annals which are based on the *ARF* but which in this section incorporate extra information, also say that *fideles* were amongst the recipients of the treasure.<sup>80</sup> Does the phrase once more imply that, in the eyes of the Frankish chronicler who recorded these events at the royal court, the Anglo-Saxon recipients of Charlemagne's largess were also considered his *fideles*? This is unlikely with a king of the rank and power of Offa, yet given the papal usage of the word with regard to Eardwulf and his subsequent restoration by the Emperor, Alcuin's prolonged contact with Æthelred and with Charlemagne's violent reaction to the news of his murder, it is at least possible that both Æthelred and Eardwulf owed some form of allegiance or debt to Charlemagne. The parallel of Æthelred's successful restoration in 790 with Eardwulf's in 808, further points in this direction, although without direct proof such suggestions must necessarily remain speculation. Yet the donation of gifts, especially robes, should certainly be regarded as part of the complex etiquette which oiled the wheels of long distance diplomacy in the political world of the eighth century.<sup>81</sup> As recipients of gifts from the Carolingian king, these Anglo-Saxon kings were acknowledging a relationship which almost certainly would have incorporated concepts of obligation and debt to the giver. The perception of that relationship may have differed in the Anglo-Saxon and Frankish courts but as the accumulated evidence cited above indicates, these links were real and had a significant impact on the political life of each kingdom.

After its description of the distribution of the Avar treasure, the Lorsch Annals *s.a.* 795 add a further note which is relevant in this context. This annal also records the death of the Roman pontiff Hadrian and states that Charlemagne in memory of his

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<sup>80</sup> The *Annales Laurehamenses* were edited by G. Pertz, ed. MGH SS Vol. 1, p. 36. On the authorship of these annals and their place in the Frankish annalistic literature see Halphen, *Études critiques*, pp. 26-36 and the comments in Bullough, 'Europae Pater', p. 65.

<sup>81</sup> See for example, the analysis of the diplomatic relationship which developed between the Carolingian court and the Abbasid Caliphate and the importance of the robe of honour in that link, in F. W. Buckler, *Harunu'l-Rashid and Charles the Great* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931) and M. Borgolte, *Der Gesandtenaustausch der Karolinger mit den Abbasiden und mit den Patriarchen von Jerusalem* (Munich, 1976).

friend asked that prayers be said for him throughout the whole Christian people 'within his own boundaries' (*infra terminos suos*). Under normal circumstances this latter phrase might reasonably be taken to refer to Frankish territory under direct Frankish command and administration. However, a letter survives addressed by Alcuin 'son of the holy church of York' to the bishops (*pontificibus*) of Britain, which he evidently wrote shortly after the death of Hadrian.<sup>82</sup> In it he repeats the statement of the Lorsch Annals, that Charlemagne 'greatly desires your prayers' amongst other things *pro anima beatissimi patris Adriani pape, quia fides amicitiae erga defunctum maxime probatur amicum*.<sup>83</sup> Charlemagne, Alcuin adds, had sent monks and priests *cum munisculis* in order to ensure that this was done. Although not certain, these messengers and these gifts may have been those who not only broke the news of Hadrian's death with Charlemagne's orders for prayers to be said in his memory but who also carried Charlemagne's letter to Offa and who took the Avar treasure to that Mercian king, to Æthelred in Northumbria and to the metropolitan bishops of Alcuin's letter. More significantly, Alcuin's letter reflects the Carolingian perspective that Anglo-Saxon England was considered to be within the *terminos* of Charlemagne's authority as defined by the author of the Lorsch Annals.<sup>84</sup>

This chapter has argued that events in Northumbria which affected the political élites during the later years of the eighth and the earlier years of the ninth century were at the time (and need now) to be considered within a broader Carolingian context as well as the narrower native atmosphere. Although the specific incident of Eardwulf's return to Northumbria in 808 and his probable restoration to power has been highlighted, hints in the sources suggest that the Carolingian influence in Northumbrian political life is a theme which can be identified in the preceding decades. The second reign of Æthelred, coinciding as it did with Alcuin's most

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<sup>82</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 104, pp. 150-1.

<sup>83</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 104, p. 150 [25-6].

<sup>84</sup> The Lorsch Annals recur again in Chapter 3 below in relation to the marble memorial which Charlemagne commissioned for his friend Hadrian.

prolific period at the Carolingian court provides further evidence of such links, especially with regard to the distribution of the Avar treasure. Perhaps therefore, the restoration of Eardwulf to Northumbria should no longer be considered either 'extraordinary' or 'awkward'. In the light of the evidence presented above, that event can be seen to fit in neatly with a political, diplomatic relationship between the Frankish king and the rulers of Northumbria, which stretched back into the eighth century. The following chapters will explore the evidence for Carolingian interaction with Northumbria in this period. But it is perhaps in the context of the Franco-Northumbrian relationship that was to develop during the reigns of Æthelred and Eardwulf that we should view the letter of an earlier Northumbrian king, Alhred (765-74) which he addressed to Archbishop Lul of Mainz. Alhred petitioned Lul to take good care of the legates which he had sent to *gloriosissimum regem Carl*; in order that *pax et amicitia* might be 'firmly strengthened between us'.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Tangl, *Bonifatius und Lullus*, no. 121, pp. 257-8, 258 [8-11].

## CHAPTER 2

### FRANCIA AND NORTHUMBRIA BEFORE AD 750: A SUMMARY OF CONTACTS.

The preceding chapter has presented evidence for the existence of high-level diplomatic contact between the rulers of Francia and Northumbria in the later decades of the eighth century and early years of the ninth. It has been suggested that the evidence of Eardwulf's restoration in 808 with the aid of Frankish and papal legates, previously regarded as aberrant, fits into a longer term pattern of Carolingian interest in Northumbria. Hints of a similar type of relationship are visible in the texts which discuss the rule of Æthelred. Even with the parenthesis that the evidence presented to support this argument so far is overwhelmingly of Frankish origin and perspective, the conclusions presented by the evidence disclosed in Chapter 1 are startling. It suggests that from the perspective of Frankish (and papal) authors, Northumbria and its rulers were perceived in terms of a subservient relationship to Charlemagne's overlordship. It is true that the Northumbrian opinion of this relationship is lacking. Arguably, however, Eardwulf's flight to Francia in 806 and his subsequent return to his homeland under Frankish and papal protection indicated willingness by a Northumbrian to manipulate this relationship to his own fullest advantage, thereby confirming the existence of such a link as well as conforming to the hierarchical nature implicit in the continental sources.

It would be unrealistic, however, to examine the nature of the political contacts between Northumbria and Francia during the later eighth and earlier ninth centuries in isolation, with no sense of the longer term context of contacts between the two regions. In the light of the evidence presented in Chapter 1, it is important to establish whether these links between Francia and Northumbria were a feature just of the Carolingian period or whether similar high-level, élite contacts can be identified in

the sources which describe the period before the Carolingian family assumed royal control in Francia. It is necessary, therefore, to consider, even if only briefly, the nature and extent of the evidence which exists for interaction between the two regions in the period preceding the Carolingian coup in Francia in 751, in order to establish whether the types of contact visible in the later period were an extension to or a radical departure from previous tradition by the new Carolingian kings. This chapter, therefore, aims to explore the type of links which seem to have existed between the two regions in the period before the Carolingian family acquired royal status in Francia and thus, to provide a background to the contact which (according to this thesis) is apparent under the first two Carolingian kings.

The links between Francia and Northumbria in the period before the mid eighth century have normally been considered within the broader context of connections between the continent and Anglo-Saxon England in general.<sup>1</sup> As such, discussions of Anglo-Frankish relations are preoccupied by the evidence for the southern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and Northumbria in this regard has received less attention. This is strange since ample evidence exists, both in the historical literature and, to a different degree, in the archaeological evidence, for direct contacts between Northumbrians and Franks in this period. The obvious people with whom to start such an analysis are the Northumbrian clergymen who owed their ecclesiastical allegiance to the ways of Rome and who looked primarily to the Continent for spiritual inspiration. Between them Benedict Biscop, Ccolfrid and Wilfrid made the journey to the continent twelve times. Every time, even when Wilfrid was in danger of his life from Ebroin the

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<sup>1</sup> A notable exception to this trend being E. Fletcher, 'The influence of Merovingian Gaul on Northumbria in the seventh century', *Medieval Archaeology* Vol. 20 (1980), 69-81. On the contacts between England and the Continent in this period see for example J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Europe*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1962) and the comments by the same author in 'The Franks and the English in the Ninth Century: some common historical interests', *History* Vol. 35 (1950), 202-18. Also important is I. Wood, 'Frankish hegemony in England', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo: the seventh century in north-western Europe*, ed. M. O. H. Carver (Woodbridge, 1992), 235-41. For a rare synthesis of the archaeological evidence see D. M. Wilson, 'England and the Continent in the eighth century - an archaeological viewpoint', in *Angli e Sassoni al di qua e al di là del mare*, *Settimane di Studio*, Vol. 32.i (Spoleto, 1986), 219-47 and the rather bizarre article by R. Hodges and J. Moreland, 'Power and Exchange in Middle Saxon England', in *Power and Politics in Early Medieval Britain and Ireland*, eds. S. T. Driscoll and M. R. Nieve (Edinburgh, 1988), 79-95. See also the introduction to E. James, 'The origins of Barbarian kingdoms: the continental evidence' in *The Origins of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. S. Bassett (London, 1989), 40-52.

Neustrian mayor of the Palace, the three clerics travelled into Francia. Both Biscop and Wilfrid were said to have brought treasures back from their travels and both were said to have studied and learnt the ways of continental monasticism. Biscop spent two years on the monastic island of Lérins which had recently changed from an eremitic to coenobitic lifestyle, and in doing so embraced the rule of St Benedict. Biscop duly introduced St Benedict's rule in his new foundation at Wearmouth and Jarrow, employing his own combination of the rules of seventeen monasteries which he had visited on his travels abroad.<sup>2</sup> Wilfrid similarly spent formative years in a continental community, (although in accordance with his subsequent career he chose to learn from an episcopal rather than monastic community). Wilfrid stayed at least three years with Annamundus the bishop of Lyons, nearly suffering martyrdom with his Frankish master.<sup>3</sup> Like Biscop he was tempted to stay but decided to return to Northumbria. Wilfrid's turbulent career is well known, one of the results of which were his frequent journeys to Rome, staying with kings and bishops en route.

On one such journey he stayed with the Lombard king Perctarit and the Austrasian king, Dagobert II on the way to Rome in 679. The latter was particularly indebted to the Northumbrian bishop. The author of the *Vita Wilfridi* relates a remarkable story of this Frankish prince in exile which displays significant parallels with Eardwulf's troubles described previously.<sup>4</sup> Having been expelled from his kingdom under conditions of increasing turbulence and political instability amongst the noble classes, Dagobert was exiled to Ireland (*ad Hiberniam insulam*) where he stayed safely for several years. His kinsmen and allies in Francia, hearing that he was still safe sent messengers to Wilfrid to ask him to invite Dagobert *de Scottia et Hibernia* and to send him safely back to Francia as king. To this Wilfrid evidently agreed, Dagobert arrived in Francia 'receiving him coming from Ireland'. The Frankish prince was

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<sup>2</sup> *HAB*, ch. 11; *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 374-5.

<sup>3</sup> *HE*, V.19; *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 324-5 and *VW*, ch. 4; B. Colgrave, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge, 1927) pp. 10-11.

<sup>4</sup> *VW*, chs 28 and 33; *VW* (Colgrave) pp. 54-5, 66-9. On Dagobert see also Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 49-51, I. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450-751* (London, 1994), pp. 221-6, 231-4 and J. M. Picard, 'Church and politics in the seventh century: the Irish exile of King Dagobert II', in *Ireland and Northern France, AD 600-850*, ed., J. Picard (Dublin, 1991), 27-52.

sent *de arma ditatum et viribus sociorum elevatum magnifice ad suam regionem emisit* and was duly made king in 676.<sup>5</sup> So aware was Dagobert of Wilfrid's role in his reinstatement, that in gratitude, he offered the Northumbrian the archbishopric of Strasbourg on the next occasion that Wilfrid travelled through Francia in exile from his homeland. Despite the obviously partisan nature of this description, Wilfrid's rôle in the reinstatement of this Frankish prince appears to have been central to the success of the venture. What is notable is that Wilfrid as bishop of York was specifically sought by the Frankish faction as a suitable person to intervene in issues of their domestic politics. It is true that we only know the story from the almost hagiographical biography of Wilfrid, yet his involvement in high level politics in Francia is perfectly plausible given what is known of his stormy relationship with various Anglo-Saxon kings and of his several journeys to Rome to clear his name and to seek restoration to his bishopric.<sup>6</sup> His biographer reveals two further stories of controversial dealings with Continental magnates. Ebroin, the Neustrian mayor of the palace and one of Dagobert's major rivals apparently tried to bribe Aldgisl, King of the Frisians to murder Wilfrid whilst resident at his court in 678, presumably because of Wilfrid's friendship with Dagobert. Aldgisl nobly refused the offer of a bushel of gold solidi in return for Wilfrid's head and Wilfrid travelled safely on to Rome.<sup>7</sup> On his return however, he was waylaid by more opponents of Dagobert, who had just engineered the king's assassination.<sup>8</sup> Blaming Wilfrid for his rôle in the elevation of that 'tyrant' king, these men threatened the lives of the bishop and his retinue, wanting to take Wilfrid before Ebroin for judgement. Wilfrid's defence of his actions, according to his biographer, is an interesting early reflection on inherent rights of royal exiles to assistance; *quid aliud habuisti facere, si exul de genere nostro*

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<sup>5</sup> *VW*, ch. 28, *VW* (Colgrave), p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> There is some debate over the bias of Wilfrid's biographer Stephanus and thus the reliability of his work in contrast with Bede's treatment of Wilfrid in the *HE*. On this debate, see W. Goffart, 'Bede and the Ghost of Wilfrid', in *Narrators of Barbarian History* (Princeton, 1988), pp. 235-328 and D. Kirby, 'Bede, Eddius Stephanus and the Life of Wilfrid', in *EHR* Vol. 98 (1983), 101-14.

<sup>7</sup> *VW* chs 26-7; *VW* (Colgrave), pp. 52-5.

<sup>8</sup> *VW* ch. 33; *VW* (Colgrave), p 66-9.

*ex semine regio ad sanctitatem tuam perveniret quam quod ego in Domino feci?*<sup>9</sup>

Although it is plainly anachronistic to project the type of influence and reputation which Charlemagne wielded in Eardwulf's case back onto Wilfrid over a century previously, the parallel between the two cases exists and argues that in the light of such comparison Wilfrid's rôle in the Dagobert affair should be taken more seriously than recent commentators have given credit.<sup>10</sup>

Was the type of influence and reputation which Wilfrid as a powerful Northumbrian prelate held in Francia a unique example of Frankish contacts with Northumbria in the seventh century? It was certainly unusual but as further perusal of the references to the travels of others will show, contact with Francia both on a political and material level was relatively frequent. Yet, it is a notable reflection on recent research on the links between Anglo-Saxon England and Francia in this period, both historical and archaeological, that interest has focused overwhelmingly on the southern kingdoms whereas links with Northumbria have been much less discussed.<sup>11</sup> This is in many ways an understandable reflection of the recovered artefactual evidence. It is a feature of the distribution of Frankish artefacts deposited in Anglo-Saxon contexts that the overwhelming majority derive from sites in southern England.<sup>12</sup> The archaeology of Kent has long since reflected close links with Frankish culture, with regular finds of Frankish artefacts occurring in Kentish contexts.<sup>13</sup> Northumbria in contrast, can boast only a handful of objects which can claim to have been imported from Francia in the same period. Indeed, the number of Frankish

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<sup>9</sup> VW ch. 33; VW (Colgrave), p. 68.

<sup>10</sup> See Picard, 'Church and politics in the seventh century', 43 n. 36, where the author dismisses Wilfrid's role in the affair but simultaneously notes a deeper influence of the continent on insular culture which has causes and implications beyond that of Dagobert's sojourn in Ireland.

<sup>11</sup> See above note 1.

<sup>12</sup> J. W. Huggett, 'Imported grave goods and the early Anglo-Saxon economy', *Medieval Archaeology* Vol. 32 (1988), 63-96.

<sup>13</sup> For a recently excavated Kentish cemetery displaying such Frankish affinities see, K. Parfitt, 'The Buckland Saxon Cemetery', *Current Archaeology* No. 144, Vol. 12.xii (August, 1995), 459-64 also below note 24.

artefacts to have been recovered from Northumbria (and to have been identified and published as such) are very few and far between. Only a very few items which originated in Francia have been found in areas which once constituted part of Northumbria. A fifth-century claw vase from the Rhineland was found in a grave at Castle Eden, Co. Durham but is so unusual and early in date that it is thought likely to have been connected with a period when Germanic federate troops were present in late-Roman Britain.<sup>14</sup> A bronze bowl found at Barton-upon-Humber which was thought to have been a Frankish import of the sixth or seventh century is now considered to have been of native manufacture.<sup>15</sup> The use of Frankish coin has been postulated in the manufacture of the golden mounts on the pommel of a sword found at Acklam Wold in North Yorkshire. The gold standard in the sword pommel is most like that of Merovingian tremisses dating to c. 650, a date which accords with that obtained from the relative typology derived by comparison with other swords found in England and on the continent.<sup>16</sup> Of later Frankish coins only seven coins minted in the name of Pippin or Charlemagne have been found and recorded in England. Of these, only one is known to have come from a Northumbrian site. A denarius of Charlemagne minted c. 770-5 was recovered by metal detectors from a site close to

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<sup>14</sup> This type 2a claw vase finds its closest parallels in German contexts. A similar one was recovered from grave 43 at the Krefeld-Gellep cemetery and another of unknown provenance is housed in Cologne museum; V. I. Evison, 'Anglo-Saxon glass claw beakers', *Archaeologia* Vol. 107 (1982), 43-76, 46-7, 61 and J. Campbell, *The Anglo-Saxons*, p. 35 fig. 33.

<sup>15</sup> J. R. Watkin, 'A Frankish bronze bowl from Barton-upon-Humber', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, Vol. 15 (1980), 88-9 and P. A. Stafford, *The East Midlands in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1985), p. 42. For its identification as a native product see C. P. Loveluck, *Exchange and Society in early medieval England, 400-700 AD*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Durham, 1994), p. 111.

<sup>16</sup> B. Ager and B. Gilmore, 'A pattern-welded Anglo-Saxon sword from Acklam Wold, North Yorkshire', *YAJ* Vol. 60 (1988), 13-23. It is a rare find of its type in Northumbria and has been tentatively tied to the period of Northumbrian 'supremacy' over the southern kingdoms of England in the mid-late seventh century. The gold in the mounts was tested by x-ray fluorescence which indicated the probability that the mounts were made c. 650 by comparison with the gold content of extra-Provençal gold coins which were becoming gradually more debased throughout the seventh century.

Sancton in East Yorkshire.<sup>17</sup> A single Merovingian gold coin was recovered from the Anglian palace site at Yeavinger along with an iron buckle which, the excavator says, 'follows Frankish fashion closely'.<sup>18</sup> Frankish pottery has been recovered from the Fishergate site in York, one of the very few Anglian sites excavated in the city<sup>19</sup> and a wheelthrown pot imported probably from Alamanic region of Germany was recovered from a late seventh to early eighth-century inhumation cemetery at Driffield.<sup>20</sup>

The sparsity of Frankish objects in Northumbrian contexts as opposed to Kent has a number of possible explanations, not least the obvious geographical observation that

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<sup>17</sup> For notice of the Sancton denarius see J. Booth and I. Blowers, 'Finds of Sceattas and Stycas from Sancton', *Numismatic Chronicle* Vol. 143 (1983), 139-45, 104-2. Another coin of Charlemagne was found in London at Middle Temple; R. H. M. Dolley and K. F. Morrison, 'Finds of Carolingian coins from Great Britain and Ireland', *BNJ* Vol. 32 (1963), 75-87, 78. Two single finds of coins of Charlemagne were recorded from Southampton in the last century; *J. Bri. Arch. Assoc.* Vol. 20 (1864), 71-2 and a Dorestadt denarius (768-81) was found near the Cathedral at St. Alban's; R. H. M. Dolley and D. M. Metcalf, 'Two stray finds from St Alban's of coins of Offa and of Charlemagne', *BNJ* Vol. 28.iii (1957), 459-66, 463-4. On the coins from Pippin's reign found in England see below note 91.

<sup>18</sup> B. Hope-Taylor, *Yeavinger; an Anglo-British centre of Early Northumbria* (London, 1977), pp. 182-3, 185, Pl. 111. The coin is considered to be an 'ancient forgery' (gold-washed copper) of a *triens* of the Merovingian moneyer Bertoldus, dated on the basis of its colour to the 630s-640s. Had it been a genuine 'continental imitation' (ie; produced after the original issue had become scarce) it would date to c. 650-60. The analysis of this coin is critical for understanding the phasing and relative dating of the entire site, since it was the only coin to have been found there. The excavator interpreted the site in terms of the comment by Bede that the palace complex was abandoned 'in the time of the kings who followed Edwin', ie; post 633. The coin was found in a context which was interpreted as a central phase in the lifetime of one of the major structures on the site (Building A3(b)). If the coin is correctly dated to the 630s-40s, allowing time for it to have travelled to Northumbria and to have been lost (or deliberately deposited in the wall trench), the relative dating of the end of the use of that building and indeed of the whole site might date to the mid-later decades of the seventh century.

<sup>19</sup> The Fishergate 46-54 site in York produced 'sherds of Frankish and Rhenish vessels' as well as German lava quernstones and 'porcupine' sceattas according to the interim report on the site; R. Kemp, 'Pit your "wics" or how to excavate Anglian York', *Interim* Vol. 11.iii (1986), 8-16, 10-11 and R. A. Hall, 'York 700-1050' in *The Rebirth of Towns*, eds, Hodges and Hobley 125-32, 128-9. This description is similar to the type of finds from the important high status/monastic site of Flixborough just to the south of the Humber estuary, very close to the confluence of the River Trent and the old course of the River Don (*Donamuthe*?). For a brief account of the site and the 'French' pottery found there, see *Current Archaeology* Vol. 11.6, No. 126 (Sept. Oct. 1991), 244-47 and J. B. Whitwell and K. Leahy, *Flixborough Middle Saxon site, 3rd Interim Statement* (Beverly, December 1990).

<sup>20</sup> Loveluck, *Exchange and Society*, p. 105 and M. J. Swanton, 'An early Alamanic brooch from Yorkshire' with an appendix by J. L. N. Myres in *The Antiquaries Journal* Vol. 47 (1967), 43-50.

the proximity of Kent to Francia in comparison to Northumbria would allow for a much easier transfer of goods between the two regions. It could also be argued that such a distribution is due in part to the relatively few Northumbrian sites of the period, especially cemeteries, which have been both excavated and published. Yet even taking this considerable excavation bias into account, the contrast with the number of Frankish objects recovered from excavations in areas of southern England is stark. On face value, the uneven geographic distribution of generic Frankish artefacts in Anglo-Saxon England might be taken as a reflection of the extent and degree of political contacts. The dilution of Frankish finds relative to distance away from Kent could be taken literally, implying that Frankish influence and interest became progressively fainter further to the north or, at least, was significantly different<sup>from</sup> the type of Frankish interaction with the kingdoms of southern England.

#### **Francia and southern England.**

In part, this simplistic interpretation of the archaeological evidence can be supported by the historical sources. So common are Frankish objects in Kentish graves that connections have often been drawn with the comments made by Gregory of Tours, Procopius and Bede which suggest that parts of southern England may have been settled by continental Franks and even that regions of Anglian Britain might have been in some way subject to the Merovingian kings in Francia. Relevant in this respect is the tradition, stemming from Procopius' sixth-century description of a claim put to the Emperor Justinian in Constantinople sometime in the 550s by a Merovingian king (possibly Childeberht I) of Frankish authority over some of the *Angloi* in *Britta*.<sup>21</sup> It may have been that this statement, made as it was by a messenger to Constantinople, was merely an attempt by the Merovingian king at self-aggrandisement for the benefit of the Imperial court. However, in practice the historical and archaeological sources testify to the close links between high status members of the Kentish and Merovingian dynasties, which might be the origin of the Frankish self-perception of hegemony in southern England.

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<sup>21</sup> Procopius, *Gothic Wars* VIII.xx .10; A. Cameron, *Procopius and the sixth century* (London, 1985), p. 214; Wood, 'Frankish hegemony in England'; James *The Franks*, p. 103 and I. Wood, *The Merovingian North Sea* (Alingsås, 1983).

Debate has raged in the academic literature over the possibility that ethnic Franks formed part of the ranks of Germanic peoples who settled in Britain during the fifth century.<sup>22</sup> The reality of the ethnic identity of the Germanic settlers of the earliest Anglo-Saxon period in Britain is a troubled question not least because of the ‘politically correct’ aversion to ethnicity as a valid subject for academic discussion because of its connotations with racist politics of more recent times. Yet, the relatively frequent retrieval of Frankish artefacts in early Kentish graves have been linked, for example, to Bede’s statement that people from the eastern Frankish tribe of the *Broctuari* (*Bructeri* in Frankish) settled in Britain.<sup>23</sup> The essence of the debate is whether large scale movement of material objects, which are the most visible (and most easily identifiable) part of the archaeological record, necessarily imply the large scale movement of people too. Technically, the distribution of such artefacts could equally be the result of trade or gift-exchange as of the migration of continental Franks. The other element of the debate is whether the deliberate burial of ethnically distinct objects with a human corpse can be taken to imply that the buried person belonged to the same ethnic community as the origin of the objects might suggest. It can be assumed safely that the act of placing grave goods in a human burial is a deliberate act by the mourners of the dead person. Therefore, it is possible that the objects placed in the graves represent both the status of the dead person (and their mourners) and of the longer term ancestry of all those involved. Since a great many of the Frankish derived objects found in Anglo-Saxon sites come from burials (as opposed to ‘casual’ losses on settlement sites for example) the question of the ethnic origin of the buried people remains a disputed point and is still open. Nevertheless, the number of Frankish artefacts from southern English sites such as Mucking, Sarre

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<sup>22</sup> For a brief review see James, *The Franks*, pp. 116-7 and also V. I. Evison, *The Fifth-century invasions south of the Thames* (London, 1965) and for the counter argument, J. L. N. Myres, *Anglo-Saxon Pottery and the Settlement of England* (Oxford, 1969), p. 92.

<sup>23</sup> *HE*, V.9; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 296 and James, *The Franks*, pp. 103,117.

or Finglesham<sup>24</sup> (to take but three examples) and indeed of Anglo-Saxon style artefacts found in areas of northern Francia must at the very least indicate a healthy amount of exchange between the two areas, exchange most likely both of artefacts and of people.

This suggestion is reaffirmed in some of the tales related by the sixth-century historians Gregory of Tours and Procopius. These hint at high level contact, usually of marriage contracts, between continental Franks and people from 'parts beyond the sea'.<sup>25</sup> Such stories are probably anecdotal, yet as both Cameron and Campbell suggest, they could contain a kernel of truth, echoing the tradition of such high level social interaction across the Channel in the sixth century as the quality of many graves goods might imply.<sup>26</sup> Of Frankish women who are known to have married into the Kentish royal family, two first generation Frankish women stand out. Bertha, the daughter of Charibert I and Ingoberga, was married to Æthelberht of Kent c. 560. Her marriage was of great importance for the introduction and ultimate acceptance of Christianity amongst the Kentish nobility, accompanied as she was by

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<sup>24</sup> Mucking is unusual in having produced a lot of Frankish pottery in settlement contexts. Some fifteen such sherds were found there, ten from Grubenhäuser, dating probably to the early seventh century; H. Hamerow, *Excavations at Mucking Vol. 2: The Anglo-Saxon Settlement*, English Heritage Archaeological Reports No. 21 (London, 1993), pp. 5, 7, 22. The great majority of Frankish pottery found in Anglo-Saxon contexts is from graves; V. Evison, *Wheel-thrown pottery in Anglo-Saxon Graves* (London, 1979), pp. 21-3, 57. For a summary of the finds from Finglesham including the Frankish made artefacts in graves D3 and 203 see, Campbell ed. *The Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 24-5. A Frankish glass vessel is known from grave 4 at the Kentish site of Sarre (Campbell, *The Anglo-Saxons*, p. 28) and a necklace incorporating gold coins of Byzantine and Merovingian issues is known from a female grave on the same site; L. Webster and J. Backhouse, eds, *The Making of England, Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture, AD 600-900* (London, 1991), pp. 48-9, no. 31b. See also James, *The Franks*, pp. 116-17.

<sup>25</sup> The story of Childeric and Basina as told by Gregory of Tours in Book II.12 of his *Ten Books of Histories*; B. Krusch and W. Levison, eds. *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis libri Historiarum X*, MGH SRM Vol. 1.i (Hanover, 1937), pp. 79-80, 80 [17-19]. See also Campbell, *The Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 37-8.

<sup>26</sup> Cameron, *Procopius*, pp. 213-6 and J. Campbell, 'The Lost Centuries: 400-600', in *The Anglo-Saxons*, ed. Campbell, 20-44, 37-8; Wood, 'Frankish hegemony', 235.

the Frankish bishop Liudhard.<sup>27</sup> Her adherence to the Christian faith acted as a ground breaker and precursor for the mission of St Augustine which arrived in Kent at the very end of the sixth century. It is possible that the choice of a Frankish bride by Æthelberht was a decisive factor in the acceptance of his authority in Kent.<sup>28</sup> Gregory of Tours, when describing the match of Charibert and Ingoberg's daughter, describes her prospective husband simply as 'a man from Kent' (*Canthia virum*) or as 'a son of the king of Kent' (*Canthia regis cuiusdam filius*), both phrases which seem to suggest that although Æthelberht was recognised as a man of royal blood, he was not yet established as king at the time of his marriage.<sup>29</sup> The Frankish connection with Kent was maintained in the next generation by the marriage of Æthelbald's son Eadbald to Ymme (or Emma), who seems to have been the daughter of Erchinoald, the Neustrian *maior domus*.<sup>30</sup> If this interpretation of her background is correct, she was not of royal descent, but was evidently of sufficient noble standing to have been considered a suitable wife for a Kentish king. It is her noble Frankish pedigree which is reflected and preserved in the name of her grandson Hlothere who was king of Kent (673/4 x 685) and her granddaughter, Earcongota who eventually entered the Neustrian monastery of Faremoutiers-en-Brie.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> A 'medalet' or bracteate inscribed LEUDARDUS EP(ISCOPU)S seems to be extant evidence for the Frankish bishop's presence in Kent. It was found somewhere in Canterbury in the earlier nineteenth century, the find site traditionally thought to have been near St Martin's. The first recorded references to the find, however, refer to St Augustine's as the probable find site; Webster and Backhouse, no. 5b. The bracteate was found with a collection of other precious artefacts, imperial and Merovingian medalet coins, a brooch and a Roman intaglio, probably from a number of female graves rather than as a single hoard, and seems likely to have been produced by a Frankish craftsman, perhaps working in Kent; North, *English Hammered Coinage*, p. 19 and P. Grierson, 'The Canterbury (St. Martin) hoard of Frankish and Anglo-Saxon coin-ornaments', *BNJ* Vol. 27 (1952), 39-51.

<sup>28</sup> Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, pp. 34-5.

<sup>29</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Decem Libri Historiarum*, IV.26 and IX.26; Krusch and Levison, eds, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, pp. 157, 445.

<sup>30</sup> K. Werner, 'Les rouages de l'administration', in *La Neustrie: Les pays au nord de la Loire de Dagobert à Charles le Chauve (vii-ix siècles)*, eds, P. Perin and L. Feffer (Créteil, 1985), p. 42. For the Kentish tradition of Ymme as a Frankish princess (*filia regis Francorum*) see D. W. Rollason, *The Mildrith Legend: a study in early medieval hagiography in England* (London, 1982), pp. 9, 33, 75, 77, 92, 114.

<sup>31</sup> Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 61.

One further piece of historical evidence indicates that linguistically at least, the two regions were compatible. Describing St Augustine's arrival in Kent in 597, Bede states that the Italian bishop needed the assistance of interpreters *de gente Francorum* in order to establish the mission in Kent.<sup>32</sup> The apparent compatibility of Kentish and northern Frankish speakers contrasts with the experience of the Frankish bishop Agilberht in Wessex who was removed from his see by King Cenwealh some sixty years later, c. 660. The reason given by Bede for the Frankish bishop's dismissal was that the West Saxon king could not understand Agilberht's *barbarae loquellae*.<sup>33</sup>

Outside Kent, the Frankish connections are subtly different. The Frankish coins found in Mound 1 at Sutton Hoo which is traditionally thought to be connected with the reign of Redwald (d. ?627), are testimony to Frankish artefacts reaching East Anglia in this period and being valued as high status artefacts by its inhabitants.<sup>34</sup> It has been suggested that East Anglia may have had most of its connections with the Frankish kingdom of Austrasia, based around the Rhineland, in contrast to Kent the contacts of which seem to have been focused on the Frankish kingdom of Neustria (the Paris Basin).<sup>35</sup> Sigebert (acc. 630/1) the king of East Anglia shares a name with several members of Merovingian royal blood.<sup>36</sup> The connections between his

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<sup>32</sup> *HE*, I.25; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 45.

<sup>33</sup> *HE*, III.7; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 140. This is dismissed as evidence by Richter who argues that the efforts of the king to have Agilberht recalled and the eventual acceptance of Leuthere as bishop of the West Saxons, mitigates against a linguistic barrier. Thus he argues that Agilberht 'moved effortlessly' between countries and languages; M. Richter, 'The English Link in Hiberno Frankish relations', in *Ireland and Northern France*, ed. Picard, 112, n. 42. Contrary to this runs Bede's comments in his description of the Synod of Whitby (*HE* III.25) in which says that Agilberht asked Wilfrid to expound the Romanist views on his behalf because *ille melius ac manifestus ipsa lingua Anglorum, quam ego per interpretem, potest explanare quae sentimus*; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 184.

<sup>34</sup> The most explicit proponent of the Redwald connection with Mound 1 at Sutton Hoo, is found in the article by R. S. L. Bruce-Mitford, 'The Sutton Hoo ship burial; some foreign connections', in *Angli e Sassoni*, *Settimane di Studio* Vol. 32.i (Spoleto, 1986), 143-218. The counter argument, that the mound and its treasure might relate better to the reigns of Sigebert (acc. 630/1) and Eorpwald (d. 627/8) is presented by I. Wood, 'The Franks and Sutton Hoo', in *People and Places in Northern Europe 500-1600*, eds. I. Wood and N. Lund (Woodbridge, 1991), 1-14.

<sup>35</sup> R. Hodges, *Dark Age Economics: The Origins of Towns and Trade A.D. 600-1000* (London, 1982), pp. 35-6 and Huggett, 'Imported grave goods', 63-96.

<sup>36</sup> Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms*, pp. 177, 360-1.

dynasty and Francia are explicit. He himself fled to Francia in fear of Redwald sometime before 630, possibly as early as 616, and remained there in exile until it was safe for him to return and claim his kingdom.<sup>37</sup> Whilst in Francia, Sigeberht received the grace of Christian baptism and Bede adds, was sufficiently inspired by the Frankish example to *imitari cupiens instituit scholam*, founding a school for boys when he returned to East Anglia. He was helped in this endeavour by another Frankish bishop Felix who had been ‘born and consecrated in Burgundy’ but had been working for some time in Kent.<sup>38</sup> Thus, the seemingly copious artefactual evidence for links between Francia and the kingdoms of southern England is to an extent complemented in the historical texts by evidence for dynastic connections between the ruling élites of these kingdoms enhanced by religious links. The geographical proximity of these regions enhances too the scholarly image of frequent cross-Channel contact through the movement of trade objects as well as people.

#### **Northumbria and the Continent, stylistic influences:**

This picture contrasts sharply with the impression gained from the available Northumbrian evidence. Yet, the meagre finds of generic Frankish artefacts in Northumbrian contexts described above in contrast to the wealth of evidence for links with southern kingdoms should not, however, automatically lead to the assumption that Franco-Northumbrian contacts in the seventh century were insubstantial or insignificant. Indeed, the artefactual evidence for Frankish influence on Northumbria is found in different types of archaeological context from that from southern England. Whereas generic Frankish objects in Northumbria are few, evidence for Frankish influence on style and craft production indicates that such influence was a widespread phenomenon, including the skills of building in stone and glass-making as well as aspects of sculpture and manuscript production. Evidence of this type of Frankish influence exists not just in the extant remains but also in passing comments made in the historical texts. This type of influence is difficult to assess, the analysis of style being necessarily a subjective one. Sometimes, as for example with much of the

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<sup>37</sup> *HE* III.18; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 162 and Wood, ‘The Franks and Sutton Hoo’, 6.

<sup>38</sup> *HE* II.15 and III.19; *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 116, 162.

stone sculpture found in Northumbria, the general stylistic influence can only be described as 'continental' as opposed to 'Insular'.<sup>39</sup> Simplistically, the 'insular style' is defined as having derived from the 'Celtic' traditions of Ireland, Iona and Pictland. As such, the Hiberno-Saxon style is exemplified by the emphasis on complex and sophisticated two-dimensional patterns. By this stage in its evolution, the 'insular style' contrasted markedly with the plasticity and realism of continental art forms which derived ultimately from representational classical models.<sup>40</sup> Yet it could be argued that the Northumbrian use of continental art forms and motifs had a political dimension, with the adoption of such styles representing a deliberate attempt by some of the ecclesiastical élites (from whom most of the extant evidence ultimately derives) to display a cultural affinity which was other than that derived from the Celtic north or 'native' Germanic traditions. The political dimension of the debate over the calculation of the date of Easter is an obvious example. The Romanist stand, led by Wilfrid and Agilbert was diposed to the Celtic opinion not just on theological grounds but also on the political and geographic divisions of Northumbria. The winning over of the Bernician king Oswiu to the Romanist cause not only damaged the authority of Lindisfarne as the bishopric with most influence over the ruling dynasty, but in doing so considerably enhanced the status of Wilfrid as bishop of York and of his episcopal see which lay at the heart of the southern kingdom of Deira. Given Wilfrid's subsequent turbulent career, with his consequent accumulation of power and influence both in several Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and abroad, the adoption of the Romanist Easter evidently had profound political ramifications within Northumbria. Thus, the cultural adoption of continental styles within seventh and eighth-century Northumbria could be regarded as part of a deliberate attempt to change the religious and political focus of the kingdom towards Rome and away from the rival Celtic powers to the north. The rôle of Francia as a source of such continental inspiration is reflected in the descriptions of the travels of Northumbrian churchmen.

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<sup>39</sup> T. D. Kendrick, *Anglo-Saxon Art to AD 900* (London, 1938), pp. 126-58.

<sup>40</sup> On the classicising and continental tendencies of Northumbrian sculpture see R. Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture*, Vol. 1.i (London, 1984), pp. 27-8 and J. Lang, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, Vol. 4 (London, 1991), p. 7.

A slight caveat to this argument needs to be inserted here. The source of continental influence on Northumbrian tastes could have been any one of a combination of three broad groups, namely Francia, Italy or late Roman remains which had survived in Northumbria during the seventh or eighth centuries. Early Christian sculpture from Italy, both late Roman and Lombard, has been seen as a source of inspiration for the eighth-century sculpture found in Deiran ecclesiastical sites associated with the archbishopric of York. Indeed, Lang believes that the parallels are sufficiently close as to be able to assume that the York sculptors were under orders to mimick Italian sculpture directly as part of the metropolitan, grandiose aspirations of the later eighth-century archbishops of York.<sup>41</sup> These two interpretations of the 'Italian' sources of continental influence on Northumbrian sculpture are not mutually exclusive. Bede's *Historia*, widely read and distributed at the time, talked of the Roman occupation of Britain, of the construction of the Wall and of Roman York. The Anglo-Saxon élite who were the patrons of such sculpture would have been simultaneously aware of the Roman past of their kingdom and of the Italian origin of the mission which had evangelised their homeland from the south.

It is also known that some Roman building structures and late Roman sculpture was still visible at this period in Northumbria and are likely to have been influential models for the early mediaeval craftsmen. Indeed, both Bede and The Anonymous record that at the time of his premonition of King Ecgfrith's death, Saint Cuthbert was being shown the Roman ruins at Carlisle by the city *praepositus*, Waga. A Roman fountain was particularly noted.<sup>42</sup> The reuse of Roman stone, some of it carved, is well illustrated in the two crypts built by Bishop Wilfrid at Hexham and

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<sup>41</sup> J. Lang, 'Survival and revival in Insular art: Northumbrian sculpture of the 8th to 10th centuries', in *The Age of Migrating Ideas*, eds, R. M. Spearman and J. Higgitt (Edinburgh, 1993), 261-67. Cramp has also found parallels between some of the Mercian schools of sculpture (especially that connected with Breedon-on-the-Hill) and extant Lombard sculpture, in particular from the region around Brescia. In these instances, it is arguable that a deliberately 'modern' Italianate style was being commissioned by the patrons of the sculpture. R. J. Cramp, 'Anglo-Saxon and Italian Sculpture', in *Angli e Sassoni*, *Settimane di Studio*, Vol. 32.1 (1986), 125-42. Also, by the same author, 'Schools of Mercian sculpture' in *Mercian Studies*, ed. A. Dornier (Leicester, 1977), 191-234.

<sup>42</sup> The reference is found in Book IV.8 of the Anonymous *Life of St Cuthbert* and in Chapter 27 of Bede's prose *Vita* of the saint; B. Colgrave, ed. *Two Lives of St Cuthbert* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 122, 242-4.

Ripon and in the contemporary church at Escomb.<sup>43</sup> The statue of Juno at the Roman fort of Chesters displays the same embroidered edge to her mantle as that which clothes St Matthew in his portrait page in the Echternach Gospels, most probably a product of Lindisfarne.<sup>44</sup> The foci of the two component kingdoms of Northumbria were intimately connected with places of major Roman significance. The capital city of Saxon Deira was of course, centred on the Roman citadel of *Eboracum*, York. Indeed, the church of St Peter seems to have been situated within the Roman camp, somewhere near the site of the present day Minster.<sup>45</sup> Recent excavations under the minster revealed sculpture of Anglian date as well as substantial Roman remains.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, since a few of the streets of modern day York still respect the plan of the Roman fort, it can safely be assumed that the inhabitants of Anglian York were sufficiently aware of the ancient layout of the fort to maintain the routeways that had once served it.<sup>47</sup>

The northern kingdom of Bernicia on the other hand although focused on the area between the Cheviot hills and the coast, was bisected by Hadrian's Wall. Although it no longer served as a defensive barrier, it seems to have acted as a landmark and to

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<sup>43</sup> On Escomb church see E. Fernie, *The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons* (London, 1983), pp. 54-5 and H. M. and J. Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1965), pp. 234-8. On the crypt at Hexham see E. Gilbert, 'Saint Wilfrid's church at Hexham', in *Saint Wilfrid at Hexham*, ed., D. P. Kirby (Newcastle, 1974), pp. 81-113, 82-9. On the Roman style sculpture from Hexham, see R. Cramp, 'Early Northumbrian sculpture at Hexham', *ibid.*, pp. 115-40 and Taylor and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, pp. 297-312. On Ripon see Taylor and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, pp. 516-18. Wilfrid's biographer describes the two churches of Ripon and Hexham in chapters 17 and 22; VW (Colgrave), pp. 3-7, 44-7.

<sup>44</sup> G. Henderson, *From Durrow to Kells, the Insular Gospel-books, 650-800* (London, 1987), pp. 74-5.

<sup>45</sup> Morris, 'Alcuin, York and the *alma sophia*', in *The Anglo-Saxon Church*, eds, Butler and Morris, 80-89 and Hall, 'York 700-1050', 126.

<sup>46</sup> J. Lang, 'The pre-Conquest Sculpture', in Phillips and Hayward, *Excavations at York Minster* Vol. 1.ii (Swindon, 1995), 433-67.

<sup>47</sup> There is some disagreement between the excavator of the York Minster site and the editor of the report on that project as to the length of time which the Roman *principia* building remained standing. Phillips (the excavator) argued that it remained standing until the ninth century whereas Carver argued that it collapsed during the sixth with new structures being built on the site in the ninth century; Phillips and Haywood, *Excavations at York Minster*, pp. 33-4, 64-5, 184-91.

some extent a roadway across the kingdom from east to west. Bede's description of the Wall and his subsequent references to it, demonstrate contemporary local knowledge of it as a Roman structure.<sup>48</sup> The evidence for post-Roman occupation at the fort of Birdoswald as well as the frequent references in the historical texts to places being situated in a geographical relationship to the Wall, *juxta Murum*, testify to the continued significance of the Wall in post-Roman Bernician minds.<sup>49</sup> A good example of this is the *vicus* which was associated with King Oswiu, named *Ad Murum*, indicating the persistence of the Roman Wall as a factor in Northumbrian high status placenames.<sup>50</sup> In terms of the transmission of artistic style into Anglian Northumbria the numerous forts along the wall and the settlements associated with them and the routes leading to the Wall, are therefore likely to have preserved sculptural remains which may have been seen by and inspired native craftsmen.

But Francia too played an important role in the stylistic evolution of the Northumbrian scholarly 'renaissance' of the earlier period. Partly this was due to matters of geography, Francia lay between Italy and England and travel through Frankish territory posed the most direct and probably safest route between the two regions. Bede describes the journey of Theodore, the new archbishop of Canterbury

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<sup>48</sup> Bede's comments on Hadrian's Wall are taken partly from Orosius and partly from Gildas as well as from apparently local or personal observations *HE* 1.5, I.12, I.13, V.24; *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 16-17, 25, 27-8, 352 and *HE* (Plummer) 2, 15-17.

<sup>49</sup> On the post-Roman occupation of the granaries in the north-western corner of the Roman fort at Birdoswald, see C. Daniels, *The Eleventh Pilgrimage of Hadrian's Wall*, Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society (Newcastle, 1989), pp. 35-7 and *Current Archaeology*, Vol. 10.ix, No. 116 (Aug. 1989), 288-91. Bede referred to the battle site of Heavenfield as being *iuxta murum*; *HE*, III.2, *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 129.

<sup>50</sup> The *vicus Ad Murum* is the place at which both Peada of Mercia and Sigberht of the East Saxons were baptised under the sponsorship of Oswiu. Bede adds the important typographical note that the place so named was *iuxta murum* and stood *XII milibus* from the eastern coast; *HE* III.22, *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 172. This led to the suggestion that the place might be equated with either of the modern-day settlements of Wallbottle or Walton; *HE* (Plummer) 2, p. 176. It is worth noting, however, that the Roman usage of the word *Ad* in this sort of context could equally have indicated the fork on a road or signpost which pointed to a particular place. The location of *Ad Murum* might therefore have been at just such a junction on a road or track leading towards the Wall, the Anglian name being taken from the extant Roman signpost or local tradition of such a sign or junction.

to England in 669.<sup>51</sup> He says that both Theodore and his companion Hadrian were warmly entertained and housed by several eminent Franks, notably Agilberht, once bishop of the West Saxons. Having been ousted by King Cenwealh c. 660, Agilberht was by the date of Theodore's journey the incumbent of the see of Paris. Such a man would, therefore, have been well able to brief Theodore on the state of the Church in England, albeit from a somewhat partisan point of view. Hadrian was also entertained by the bishops of Sens and Meaux. The town of Meaux was close to the abbey of Jouarre which is renowned for its Merovingian remains, particularly the sarcophagi. That which is thought to have been the tomb of Agilberht and the sarcophagus of Abbess Agilberte are often stylistically linked to monumental Northumbrian sculpture of the parallel period.<sup>52</sup>

In another example of the paranoia of Ebroin (which serves to underline the slightly later plots against Wilfrid noted above) both Theodore and Hadrian were prevented from travelling on to Britain by the mayor of the Neustrian Palace. Apparently, so Bede says, Ebroin was suspicious that the two Greek-speaking travellers from Rome might have been the bearer of an anti-Frankish plot, hatched by the emperor (Constans II) and being transmitted *ad Britanniae reges*.<sup>53</sup> Theodore was allowed to proceed under the escort of Rædfrith, the *praefectus* of King Ecgberht of Kent. Hadrian however, was kept in Francia by Ebroin a while longer until the *maior* was satisfied that no secret conspiracy was being planned by the emperor with the kings of Britain. The incident indicates the reality in the mind of the most powerful man in Neustria, that the kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England had the capacity to be involved in large-scale Byzantine plots against his authority in Francia. Anglo-Saxon involvement in European politics was evidently plausible.

But Francia was not just a conduit for Italian ideas and people to Anglo-Saxon England. Rome may have been the ultimate goal of many Anglo-Saxon travellers on

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<sup>51</sup> *HE*, IV.1; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 203.

<sup>52</sup> James, *The Franks*, pp. 132-5 and Fletcher, 'The influence of Merovingian Gaul', 80. See also below note 63.

<sup>53</sup> *HE*, IV.1; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 203.

the continent, but even those on ecclesiastical missions often stopped at length in Frankish territory. The best known of such travellers in the latter part of the seventh century were Wilfrid, Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrid. All three were Northumbrians and all played a major role in importing Frankish artefacts, craftsmen and their methods into northern England.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, it was Northumbria rather than any area of southern England which saw the rejuvenation of the stone mason's art in the seventh century. According to both Bede and the Anonymous author who wrote about the lives of the early abbots of Wearmouth Jarrow, the ability to use stone as a building material was a skill reimported directly from Francia. It is a moot point whether the same could be said of the sculpture of Northumbria, again the debate over the use of late Roman models comes into play. Technically, it is possible that the similarities between the Merovingian and Northumbrian sculpture of the period could have occurred as a result of shared sources of inspiration from late Roman sculpture which survived in both regions or possibly from contemporary Lombardic sculpture. Indeed, the Roman connection with stone building is implicit in the well known statements by Bede and the Anonymous author of the building of the monastery of Wearmouth Jarrow.<sup>55</sup> Yet, even here, the men who were to build *Romanorum more* had to be brought *de Gallia*.<sup>56</sup> The contemporary impression of stone building as a Roman technique is echoed in the letter from Nechtan king of the Picts to Ceolfrid. He asked that architects might be sent to his kingdom in order that he might build a church *in lapide* 'in the Roman manner', a plan which came in the context of Nechtan's request for better evidence concerning the Roman celebration of Easter.<sup>57</sup>

Of glass-production Bede also mentions the importation of Gaullish craftsmen

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<sup>54</sup> Fletcher, 'The influence of Merovingian Gaul', 69-81.

<sup>55</sup> The *Historia Abbatum* by Bede was edited by C. Plummer, *Bedae Opera Historica*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1896), pp. 364-87 and that by the Anonymous author can be found in the same volume, pp. 388-404.

<sup>56</sup> *HAB*, ch. 5; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 368 and *HAA*, ch. 7; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 390.

<sup>57</sup> *HE*, V.21; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 333.

(*legatarios Galliam*) by Biscop to glaze the windows of his new church at Wearmouth because *artifices videlicet Britanniis eatenus incognitos*.<sup>58</sup> These men, he says, 'not only completed the work for which they were sent' but taught some of the English the skill (*artificium*) of glass production and the methods of producing lamps and vessels. Wilfrid's biographer however, records that as Bishop of York Wilfrid restored the windows in St. Peter's with glass, during the reign of Oswiu, that is before 670 and consequently four or five years before Bede says that Biscop introduced Gaullish craftsmen to teach the Northumbrians how to make glass.<sup>59</sup> Yet some aspects of the archaeological evidence which survives from the region supports Bede's comments about the rarity of glass production in Northumbria in the seventh century. It has been noted that vessel glass is entirely absent in graves from inhumation cemeteries in East Yorkshire which date from the mid sixth to the early seventh centuries.<sup>60</sup> This is in contrast to the graves in the same region dating from the fifth to early sixth centuries and from the mid to late seventh centuries where vessel glass is a relatively commonly part of the grave assemblage. Further to this, the glass found in such graves which date to the earlier period are usually complete vessels implying access by the mourners to supplies of unbroken glass objects. In the later time span, however, after a period of total absence, only fragments of glass vessels were incorporated into the burial assemblage. The interpretation of this observation is that glass was regarded as a precious and rare commodity in the later period and that fragments of glass were being incorporated in graves as a mark of status where previously an entire vessel might have been deposited. Indeed, even as late as 764 Abbot Cuthberht of Wearmouth and Jarrow was writing to Bishop Lul, Boniface's successor in Frisia, requesting that he might send a man who can make

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<sup>58</sup> *HAB*, ch. 5; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 368. On the glass found at Wearmouth Jarrow see R. J. Cramp, 'Glass studies from the Anglo-Saxon monastery at Monkwearmouth Jarrow', in *Studies in Glass History and Design* (Sheffield, 1970), 16-19, fig. 1 and by the same author, 'Decorated window glass and millefiori from Monkwearmouth', *The Antiquaries Journal* Vol. 50 (1970), 327-35 and 'Window Glass from the monastic site of Jarrow', *Journal of Glass Studies* Vol 17 (1975), 88-96.

<sup>59</sup> *VW* (Colgrave), ch. 16, p. 34. On glass vessel fragments from the York Minster site which date broadly to the Anglian period, see Webster and Backhouse, pp. 146-7 no. 108 (a-d) and V. I. Evison, 'Early Medieval Glass Fragments', in Phillips and Haywood, *Excavations at York Minster*, 481-3.

<sup>60</sup> Loveluck, *Exchange and Society*, pp. 101-2.

vessel glass (*vitrea vasa*) 'because we are ignorant and unskilled in that art'.<sup>61</sup>

Parallels between Merovingian and Northumbrian architecture are difficult to make because of undoubtedly great losses in both regions. Yet, it has been argued plausibly that the extant architecture at Hexham, Wearmouth and Jarrow, is to be considered representative of Merovingian-style architecture as known from excavated sites such as the monastic church at Nivelles.<sup>62</sup> The Northumbrian sculpture of the period, both the standing stone crosses and the architectural embellishments, finds an immediate parallel in the oft-quoted Merovingian sculptured tombs at Jouarre and the Hypogée des Dunes at Poitiers the latter built by Abbot Mellobaudes about the year 700.<sup>63</sup> The tradition of stone coffin burial has also been argued to have been a Continental one. The superb stone sarcophagus dating to the eighth century found near the Tower of St Regulus' church in St Andrew's, is testimony to the diffusion of such continental tastes in material objects into areas which once formed an uneasy marchland between Northumbria and Pictland.<sup>64</sup> The sarcophagus may well be a direct or indirect result of the stone masons whom Nechtan asked to be sent to his kingdom in the early years of the eighth century.<sup>65</sup> But references (quoted above in Chapter 1 and below in Chapter 6) to Carolingian messengers being sent to *Scotia* in

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<sup>61</sup> Tangl, *Bonifatius und Lullus*, no. 116, pp. 250-2, 252 [23-27].

<sup>62</sup> Fernie, *The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons*, p. 57 and A. W. Clapham, *English Romanesque Architecture before the Conquest* (Oxford, 1930, repr. 1964), pp. 41-43 where the author notes that the general proportion of Northumbrian buildings of this date matches more closely Gaulish models than those from southern England.

<sup>63</sup> For a discussion on the parallels between some of the sculpture from Wearmouth Jarrow and Jouarre, see Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture*, Vol. 1.i, pp. 124-5. The same author compares the yellow and pink mortar of those churches with Merovingian churches of the same date; R. J. Cramp, 'Monkwearmouth and Jarrow: the archaeological evidence', in *Famulus Christi*, ed. G. Bonner (London, 1976), 5-18, 11 and Fernie, *The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons*, p. 56. On Jouarre and Poitiers see A. Grabar, 'Recherches sur les sculptures de l'Hypogée des Dunes à Poitiers et de la crypte Saint-Paul de Jouarre', *Journal des Savants* (Jan-March 1974), 3-42.

<sup>64</sup> I. Henderson, 'The Insular and Continental Context of the St Andrew's Sarcophagus', in *Scotland in Dark-Age Europe*, ed. Crawford, 71-102.

<sup>65</sup> Nechtan came to the throne in 706. At the time of completion of his *Historia*, Bede says (*HE*, V.23) that a peace treaty now existed between the Picts and Northumbria, which might have come about as a result of Nechtan's mission to Ceolfrid and the subsequent acceptance of the Roman traditions of Easter.

796 act as a reminder that direct links between the lands of the *Scotti* and Carolingian Francia could also occur. It has been argued that even the promotion of the cult of St Cuthbert, Northumbria's best known saint trained in the Irish tradition, was a deliberate parallel with the cult of the Frankish saint, Martin whose cult centre was focused on the important royal monastery at Tours.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, the very iconography and shape of St Cuthbert's coffin can be related to Gaulish and northern Italian models.<sup>67</sup> If correct, these parallels show the extent to which continental styles affected the archetypal insular monastery of Lindisfarne in the last years of the seventh century. This mixing of insular and continental elements is also mimicked in the Lindisfarne Gospels which were begun at about the same time as Cuthbert's coffin was made. Its text is a pure Vulgate version indicative of continental scholarship, a feature which alongside the Matthew evangelist portrait on fol. 25v, finds close parallels with the Codex Amiatinus made at Wearmouth Jarrow in the early years of the eighth century.<sup>68</sup>

Abbot Ceolfrid was entertained by a Frankish king on what proved to be his last journey. Leaving his monastery of Wearmouth Jarrow for the last time on Thursday 4 June 716, he came some two months later to Frankish territory. There his anonymous biographer says that he was honoured by King Chilperic II, named Hilpericus in the Latin.<sup>69</sup> This reference is significant because embedded in the list of names of *reges et duces* to be remembered by an early Northumbrian monastic community is found the name Helerpic. It is not impossible that this is a reference to the Merovingian king of that name. Other Frankish names, that of Charlemagne and Maegenfrith his treasurer appear later in the same list so it is not inconceivable that a Merovingian monarch might also have been recorded in a Northumbrian confraternity

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<sup>66</sup> A. Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the origins of the cult of St Cuthbert', in *St Cuthbert, his cult and community to A.D. 1200*, eds. G. Bonner et al. (Woodbridge, 1989), 103-22, 106-7.

<sup>67</sup> E. Kinzinger, 'The coffin-reliquary' in *The Relics of St Cuthbert*, ed. C. F. Battiscombe (Oxford, 1956), 202-304, 280-97.

<sup>68</sup> R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *The Art of the Codex Amiatinus*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1967).

<sup>69</sup> *HAA*, ch. 33; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 400.

book.<sup>70</sup> The origins of this *Liber Vitae* is not known for certain. It spent many centuries in the monastic community at Durham suggesting perhaps a Lindisfarne origin. However, Wearmouth Jarrow is an equally plausible option given that the name Ceolfrid head the list of *nomina abbatum gradus presbyteratus*. The name Helperic, if indeed a royal Frankish one, might be taken to strengthen the case for Wearmouth Jarrow given the evidence for Ceolfrid's contact with that king.<sup>71</sup>

The accounts of the journeys of Biscop, Ceolfrid and Wilfrid provide textual evidence of the movement of ideas, people and artefacts from Francia to Northumbria. These textual references are supported by the manuscripts and sculptural remains of seventh and eighth-century Northumbria which illustrate the integration of continental ideas and techniques in their creation. The prominence which these ecclesiastical travellers from Northumbria are given is due to the predominantly hagiographical nature of the sources which survive for the period. Yet there is also evidence of contact and movement of people in the secular world between Northumbria and Francia. Most notorious perhaps was the flight of Æthelburgh, queen of King Edwin and daughter of Bertha, the Frankish princess who had married Æthelberht of Kent. After Edwin's death at the hands of the Mercian pagan, Penda and the Briton Cadwalla in 633, Æthelburgh was forced to leave Northumbria fearing the wrath, so Bede says, not so much of her husband's killers but of the Bernicians who succeeded to the Northumbrian throne, that is Eadbald and Oswald.<sup>72</sup> She sent her children, the heirs to Edwin's kingdom, to the

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<sup>70</sup> On the Carolingian names in the *LVD* see further, below Chapter 3.

<sup>71</sup> The name of Helperic is to be found on fol. 12v of the manuscript, British Library, Cotton MS Domitian A.vii. The manuscript is no. 97 in Webster and Backhouse, p. 132, illustrating there fol. 18v. On the suggestion that the name Helperic should be equated with Chilperic II, see I. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450-751* (London, 1994), p. 268. A facsimile of the *LVD* was produced by the Surtees Society, A. H. Thompson, ed., Surtees Society, Vol. 136 (London, 1923) and was edited in the same series by J. Stevenson, ed. *Liber Vitae Ecclesiae Dunelmensis*, Surtees Society, Vol. 13 (London, 1841). The most up-to-date edition of the lists is to be found in J. Gerchow, *Die Gedenküberlieferung der Angelsachsen* (Berlin and New York, 1988), pp. 304-20 with a commentary at pp. 109-54 in which the case for Wearmouth Jarrow is most forcefully set out.

<sup>72</sup> *HE*, II.20; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 126.

court of King Dagobert I, who was her second cousin.<sup>73</sup> There they were to be brought up and educated, possibly one day to return to Northumbria. Unfortunately for the Deiran cause, both children died *in infantia* shortly after arriving in Francia and Oswald's Bernician dynasty maintained firm control of the kingdom of Northumbria for many decades to come. Nevertheless, the incident indicates that the Deiran royal family was sufficiently aware of the continental ancestry of its queen, that when facing exile, Francia was considered the proper place for the Northumbrian royal children to live.

The Frankish kings provided hospitality to another type of Anglo-Saxon traveller. The most important form of Anglo-Frankish interaction not yet discussed was that of the missionary activity undertaken particularly by Northumbrians in the early stages to the pagan regions of Frisia and Saxony. Just as the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms had benefited from the evangelising assistance of Frankish bishops such as Birinus, Agilberht, Felix and Hlothere (or Leutherius), so the Franks enjoyed reciprocal assistance after Christianity had been safely established in Anglo-Saxon England. The last years of the seventh century and much of the eighth arguably are characterised by the seminal influence of the Anglo-Saxons who travelled to the continent to convert the regions perceived by many to be their ancestral homelands.<sup>74</sup> Wilfrid (as noted above) was at the forefront of the Anglo-Saxon mission, travelling through Frisia in the winter of 678-9 in an attempt to avoid his enemies in Neustria who were eager to do him harm for his part in restoring the Austrasian king Dagobert II.<sup>75</sup> Yet Wilfrid was not the only Northumbrian to become involved in the continental mission. A fellow Northumbrian, Willibrord also took up the challenge of the Frisian mission under the guidance and inspiration of Ecgberht, the man who was responsible for the conversion of Iona to Roman ways. Yet, having been brought up at Ripon, Willibrord was very much in the mould of Wilfrid, the

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<sup>73</sup> Her maternal grandfather Charibert I and his paternal grandfather Chilperic I were brothers; Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms*, pp. 345, 348.

<sup>74</sup> Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 49 ff and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 144 ff.

<sup>75</sup> Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 51 and above.

founder of that monastery. In 690 Willibrord was sent along with eleven companions to Frisia, to tackle the renewed heathenism of that country which was at that time under the rule of their apostate king, Radbod. In this respect, Willibrord and his companions were acting very much as the ecclesiastical sword of expansionist Frankish ambitions towards the region of Frisia. A battle at Tertry near Péronne in 687 had established the domination of Pippin II (Charlemagne's great grandfather), not just as mayor of the palace in Austrasia, but also as ruler of Francia in the stead of an ineffective Merovingian monarch. Frisia was a target of Frankish interest, partly because its continued paganism and stubborn independence represented a constant challenge and possible threat to Francia and partly, no doubt, of the mercantile wealth and resources of the coastal Frisian region.

Bede described something of the use which Pippin made of Willibrord and his followers. In *HE* V.10 Bede referred to the generous reception offered by Pippin (*ducem Francorum*) to the twelve missionaries.<sup>76</sup> Pippin, Bede said, sent Willibrord to *citeriorem Fresiam*, having just expelled King Radbod from that region. Whilst there, Pippin gave them the benefit of his *imperiali auctoritate*, guarding them from molestation and supporting them with gifts to bestow on the any person who would convert to the Christian faith. In the same chapter, Bede described the lynching and mutilation of the two Anglo-Saxon missionaries named Hewald by a Saxon mob. Pippin, the *glorissimus dux Francorum*, honoured the two martyrs by having their bodies buried *cum multa gloria* in the royal cathedral of Cologne. This patronage by Pippin of the Northumbrian mission to Frisia was maintained over time. He provided a refuge for Bishop Swithberht at Kaiserswerth and was instrumental in the consecration of Willibrord as archbishop of the Frisians by Pope Sergius in Rome in 696. Bede also records how Pippin gave the new archbishop a place for his episcopal see *in castello suo inlustri*, now known as Utrecht. These references are further proof that information about events in Francia was reaching Northumbria in the early decades of the eighth century. Much of our knowledge of the early mission and of Willibrord in particular comes from the writings of another famous Northumbrian, Alcuin. Willibrord seems to have been a kinsman of Alcuin who composed two lives

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<sup>76</sup> *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 298-301.

of his eminent relative, one in prose and one in verse about half a century after the death of Willibrord.<sup>77</sup> Thus, both the beginning of the Frisian mission and the memory of it were bound by the co-operative efforts of Northumbrians and the Frankish noblemen who turned out to be the immediate ancestors of the Carolingian dynasty.

The creation of Willibrord as Archbishop of Utrecht in 696 has been argued to have been a deliberate act by Pippin to strengthen and formalise Frankish control in Frisia.<sup>78</sup> Nor was this the only occasion when the establishment of bishoprics was used as a means of extending Frankish influence into previously hostile 'pagan' areas which bordered Frankish territory. The mission of Boniface to various parts of Germany 718-54 was also supported by a proliferation of bishoprics promoted and protected by the secular Frankish authorities, by Charles Martel and his son Pippin III. Although he was granted the pallium by Pope Gregory III in 732 or thereabouts, it was not until 745 that a permanent seat was created at Mainz for Boniface's archbishopric, and this only after aborted attempts to found metropolitans at Cologne, Rheims, Sens and Rouen.<sup>79</sup> Thus, the period of expansion of Christian and Frankish activity in Germany and restructuring of the Frankish Church in general is marked by a proliferation and establishment of a structured ecclesiastical hierarchy based around the principle of a metropolitan see supported by dependent bishoprics. This was just the type of structure which Gregory had planned for the church in England and which he sent Augustine to implement at the turn of the seventh century. It is no coincidence that <sup>it was</sup> Anglo-Saxons, Willibrord and Boniface in particular who headed attempts to introduce such a structure to the Church in Francia and its new dominions in Germany. Nor, perhaps, is it a coincidence that it was this same period which witnessed a revival in Northumbria of the campaign to re-establish an

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<sup>77</sup> The prose life was edited by W. Levison, MGH SRM Vol. VII (Hanover and Leipzig, 1920), pp. 81-141. On Willibrord's career see also Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 53-69.

<sup>78</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, pp. 143 ff, 154.

<sup>79</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, p. 157, Levison *England and the Continent*, pp. 86-9 and for the letter of Pope Zacharias concerning the *pallia* for these proposed metropolitans, see Tangl, *Bonifatius und Lullus*, no. 57, pp. 102-5.

archbishopric in York with an extended circle of bishops more widely distributed throughout the kingdom than currently existed. It is Bede's well known letter to Ecgberht, who was then only bishop of York, written in November 734 which best encapsulates this idea.<sup>80</sup> Bede's motives were undoubtedly many, and there is no direct evidence that he knew of the campaigns in Francia to establish such a network of bishoprics, indeed nowhere, even in the *HE*, does he mention Boniface or his continental achievements.<sup>81</sup> Bede's concerns were ostensibly with effective pastoral organisation and a desire to bring to fruition the plan of Gregory which had lain unfulfilled for a century. A hundred years had passed between the granting of the pallium to Paulinus and the date of Bede's letter to renew that office and Bede may simply have been prompted to action by that centenary anniversary.

Was the renewal of the York pallium and equivalent developments in Francia simple coincidence? Just as the missions of Willibrord and Boniface have been seen as the ecclesiastical sword in an essentially political, military campaign by Carolingian princes, so too would the elevation of the brother of the Northumbrian king to archepiscopal status have had profound political ramifications in their country. Indeed, the collaboration between the brothers Archbishop Ecgberht and King Eadberht must have posed a concentration of secular and ecclesiastical power in the hands of one family rarely before seen in any Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Although Bede made no mention of Boniface or of his German mission, other evidence survives which argues for communication between the Northumbrian court of Eadberht and the Frankish one of Pippin III, evidence which argues at least for the existence of potential channels by which ideas of metropolitan grandeur and its temporal value could have passed between the two regions.<sup>82</sup> It is thus possible that the re-establishment of York to metropolitan status should be seen within the broader

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<sup>80</sup> Bede's letter can be found in *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 405-23, especially chapters 5 and 9. On the letter see also below, Chapter 5.

<sup>81</sup> *HE* (Plummer) 2, p. 346.

<sup>82</sup> Letters exist dating to 746-54 from Boniface to Ecgberht and Hwaetberht of Wearmouth Jarrow verifying the existence of such channels of communication in the period after York had acquired Metropolitan status; Tangl, *Bonifatius und Lullus*, nos 75-6, 91, pp. 156-9, 206-8.

context of developments in the Frankish Church. That these Frankish developments were initiated by the Northumbrian Willibrord suggests that the Northumbrian events should not by any means be seen as a evolution of the Frankish ones, rather as a mutual development in which the general goal of a metropolitan network was established in both places through the impetus of the temporal and political motives of specific magnates.

Pippin III, the man who ousted the last Merovingian monarch in 751 and who became the first king of the new Carolingian dynasty is said, by a single late source to have maintained a close friendship with one of the rulers of distant Northumbria. The early twelfth-century Durham text known as the *Libellus de exordio (LDE)* but which is more commonly known as the *History of the Church of Durham* records a unique note to this effect.<sup>83</sup> Discussing the fame of King Eadberht of Northumbria, who succeeded Ceolwulf in 738, the author of the *LDE* qualifies the king's reputation by saying,

cuius excellentiae fama ac operum virtutis longe lateque  
diffusa, etiam ad regem Franciae Pipinum pervenit, propter  
quod ei amicitia iunctus, multa ei ac diversa dona regalia  
transmisit.

*LDE*, Book II.3.<sup>84</sup>

Such comment on the friendship of Pippin III and Eadberht is not found in any other historical text, and given the late date of this unique note it is perhaps to be treated with some caution. However, several factors suggest that perhaps this reference to contact between Pippin and Eadberht should be taken seriously. Firstly, the internal evidence of the rest of the *LDE* indicates that the author, almost certainly Symeon of Durham, had access to sources which contained early annalistic elements. A version of the text which lies at the core of the early section of the *Historia Regum* certainly seems to have been available in Northern England during the twelfth century, and

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<sup>83</sup> The extended title of the *LDE* is the *Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius, hoc est Dunelmensis ecclesiae*. It was edited by T. Arnold, *Sy. Op. Om.* I, pp. 3-135.

<sup>84</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* I, p. 48.

seems also to have been available to Symeon.<sup>85</sup> A later chapter in the present study will discuss the Frankish components of the *Historia Regum*, and will argue that these components formed a contemporary element in that text. It is quite possible therefore, that Symeon writing at Durham in the early twelfth century had access to early chronicles which contained references to Frankish events and contacts. Added to this, is the evidence related earlier for the longer term contacts between Northumbria and Francia, contacts which became more intense as Northumbrian missionaries moved into Frisia as the evangelising wing of Frankish expansion into that region. Links between Pippin III and Eadberht are therefore entirely plausible.

There is however, one final piece of evidence which does point to another type of contemporary contact between Eadberht's Northumbria and Pippin's Francia, a comparison of the coins produced by the two kings reveals some important parallels. Eadberht's reign is noted, in part, for the introduction of a reformed currency of a high silver standard (50-90% pure) which reintroduced the name of the ruler inscribed as part of the obverse design. This latter feature was first used, somewhat precociously, on Northumbrian coins by King Aldfrith c. 700 but was allowed to lapse after his time until Eadberht's reform.<sup>86</sup> Eadberht's reassessment of the Northumbrian coinage which probably occurred during the 740s, thus restored the silver content of the coins to a high level which was in marked contrast to the relatively debased coins of the southern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of the day. He also

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<sup>85</sup> A detailed discussion of the complex text known as the *Historia Regum* is given below in Chapter 3. Its traditional attribution to Symeon is erroneous but it is perfectly plausible that he edited the text which was copied later into the manuscript now known as Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 139.

<sup>86</sup> The attribution of these silver Type 1 sceattas to Aldfrith of Northumbria has been a point of contention, with suggestions that they may date to the post-Offan reforms of the later eighth century, perhaps attributable to Ealdfrith of Lindsey; C. S. S. Lyon, 'A reappraisal of the sceatta and styca coinage of Northumbria', *BNJ* Vol. 28.ii (1956), 227-42, 229 and J. Booth, 'Sceattas in Northumbria', in *Sceattas in England and on the Continent*, ed. D. Hill and D. M. Metcalf, BAR Bri. ser. Vol. 128 (Oxford, 1984), 71-112, 72. However, excavations at the Six-Dials site at Hamwic have uncovered an Aldfrith sceatta in an early eighth-century context, that date being supported independently by dendrochronological analysis of the wooden surround of a contemporary well; M. Brisbane, 'Hamwic (Saxon Southampton): an eighth-century port and production centre', in *The Rebirth of Towns*, eds, Hodges and Hopley, 102-8, 103 and Webster and Backhouse, p. 66. On this point, see also P. Grierson and M. A. S. Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage with a catalogue of the coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge*, Vol. 1, *The Early Middle Ages (5th-10th centuries)* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 166.

marked these new coins literally with his stamp of royal authority incorporating his name onto the design of the obverse. Although, the king's name had been an intermittent feature of Merovingian gold coinage, the application of the king's name on the coins by the 740s was a practice not employed by any other Anglo-Saxon kingdom or <sup>by</sup> that of the Franks.<sup>87</sup>

In this context, it is significant that Pippin too reformed the coinage of Francia after he became king in 751. An early 'capitulary' dating to 754/5 provides the details of the new weights of the coins and which are broadly, but not exactly similar to Eadberht's new coins.<sup>88</sup> More significantly, however, Pippin's new coins bore his name.<sup>89</sup> This development must surely be interpreted as a political move to emphasise the control which the new king and the new dynasty had over the Frankish money supply, a situation not dissimilar to that of Eadberht in Northumbria. Both Pippin and Eadberht were regarded by contemporaries as strong, aggressive kings who came to power after a period of vacillating kingship. This literal stamp of royal authority on the coins of their kingdoms must have reinforced that impression considerably. Thus, it has been argued that the changes seen in the currency of the new Frankish regime directly mimicked the slightly earlier Northumbrian reforms.<sup>90</sup> Much has been made of Offa's coin reforms in the 790s which followed Frankish precedent of a high silver content and wider flan than was

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<sup>87</sup> Grierson, *The Coins of Medieval Europe*, pp. 16-17, 35 and North, *English Hammered Coinage*, pp. 22, 70, nos 176-8.

<sup>88</sup> The document which recorded Pippin's monetary reforms was edited by A. Boretius, *Capitularia regum Francorum*, Vol. 1, MGH Legum Sectio II (Hanover, 1883), pp. 31-2. *Capitula* 3 states that no more than 22 *solidi* (264 *deniers*) are to be cast from a pound of silver. On the significance of this particular document for the evolution of the capitulary and the Northumbrian rôle in that evolution, see below, Chapter 4. The weights of Pippin's coins (as given by Grierson and Blackburn, nos 719-20) are between 1.15-1.17 grams in their present corroded state. Eadberht's coins (of which more are known) attain this weight but range between 0.8-1.17 grams in their present condition; Booth and Blower, 'Finds of Sceattas and Stycas from Sancton', 139-45. On Carolingian coinage in general see K. F. Morrison and H. Grunthal, *Carolingian Coinage*, Numismatic notes and monographs of the American Numismatic Society, Vol. 158 (New York, 1967), Pippin's coins are described therein on pp. 74-87, nos 1-81.

<sup>89</sup> Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, pp. 203-4, pl. 33, no. 719.

<sup>90</sup> J. Booth, 'Sceattas in Northumbria', in *Sceattas in England and on the Continent*, eds, D. Hill and D. M. Metcalf, BAR Bri. Ser., Vol.128 (Oxford, 1984), 71-112.

previously used and of the failure of the Northumbrian coinage to follow suit. However, the numismatic evidence can be interpreted to show that the Northumbrian and Frankish coins of the 750s were related and that politically significant changes in the former may have precipitated a similar reform of the latter.<sup>91</sup> Thus, the numismatic evidence could be taken as corroborative evidence of Symeon's comments made some three and a half centuries later and it is possible to speculate that Eadberht's new coins were amongst the *multa ac diversa dona regalia* which found their way to Francia, uniquely described by Symeon.

It seems therefore, that Northumbria and Francia despite geographic distance, existed within a common cultural milieu during the seventh and eighth centuries. The relationship between Francia and Northumbria appears on the available evidence to have been different from those links which Francia had with the kingdoms of southern England, both in terms of cultural interaction and of political contacts. Such differences need not solely be a product of geography. The period under discussion was one of Northumbrian dominance within Britain but relative political instability in Francia, with rival factions from different kingdoms contesting overall control. It is perhaps then not surprising that one of those Frankish factions looked to a prominent Northumbrian to assist in the return of their lord from exile, nor that over a century later when Northumbrian politics was itself unstable, that the exiled leader of a Northumbrian faction should look for foreign support. Similarly, the period of Northumbrian dominance within Britain was accompanied by a resurgence of cultural activity in which the amalgamation of external influences, including that from Francia, were integrated into a new cultural identity. The period of Carolingian supremacy under Charlemagne likewise took cultural influences from abroad and amalgamated them with native talents to produce something distinctive. Although it is simplistic to push these parallels too far, the evidence nevertheless suggests that eighth-century Franco-Northumbrian relations were marked by a mutual appreciation

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<sup>91</sup> Only two coins of Pippin have been found in England, a Verdun dernier (751-68) at Repton and a Dorestadt/Utrecht dernier probably from Richborough; M. Biddle et al. 'Coins of the Anglo-Saxon period from Repton', in *Anglo-Saxon Monetary History*, ed. M. A. S. Blackburn (Leicester, 1986), 111-32, 127-30 and D. M. Metcalf, 'Artistic borrowing, imitation and forgery in the eighth century', *Hamburger Beiträge zur Numismatik* Vol. 6 (1966), 379-92, 384-7. The Richborough coin is probably that illustrated in Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, pl. 33, no. 719.

of the cultural achievements and political status of the dominant ecclesiastical and secular authorities. The bridge between the two regions is epitomised by the Northumbrian activity in the missionfields of eastern Francia and, later in the century, through the activities of men such as Alcuin and the legacy of his school in York.

Northumbria in this period thus had much in common with Merovingian Gaul and northern Italy. This impression is backed up by the texts which describe the high level Franco-Northumbrian contacts, in particular between noblemen and clergy. This is probably a reflection of the predominantly ecclesiastical bias of the sources in this period. However, the evidence of the coins, which arguably illustrates a more secular aspect to the contacts, suggests that at the start of the Carolingian period of rule in Francia the links which had been forged with the Northumbrian élite in the preceding century looked set to continue. Both in cultural and political terms, it can be argued that the Northumbrians and Franks c. 750 both ruled by strong kings shared a similar background and a common outlook. It is perhaps of no coincidence that notice of the death of King Pippin was recorded immediately after the obit of Eadberht *s.a.* 768 as one of the Frankish annals which found their way into the set of early Northumbrian annals later incorporated into the *Historia Regum*.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 44.

## CHAPTER 3

### FRANCIA AND THE NORTHERN ANNALS

The following chapter moves the focus back into the second half of the eighth century. It is concerned primarily with the chronicle sources which illuminate Northumbrian history of that period. These chronicles are highlighted for analysis not just because they form the predominant type of source for Northumbrian history in the period after the death of Bede, but because one of the most important of their number, the *Historia Regum* (*HReg*), contains within a section describing Northumbrian events of the eighth century, a series of annals concerning contemporaneous events in Francia.<sup>1</sup> Some of these Frankish annals in the *HReg* have unique details not found in any of the native Frankish sources which mention the same events. This basic observation begs an obvious question; at what stage did such a set of Frankish annals become incorporated within such an important chronicle for the history of Northern England? In the light of the evidence of Eardwulf's return to Northumbria in 808 with the assistance of Frankish and papal agents and the accumulating evidence for high level Frankish contact with Northumbria stretching back at least a century prior to that event, it is not unreasonable to speculate whether the presence of those Frankish annals in the *HReg* might be taken as a reflection of contemporary eighth-century contacts between the two regions. Could the Frankish annals visible in the *HReg* have been incorporated into that text early in its history? Is there an eighth-century context in which such detailed information about Frankish events might have been transferred to Northumbria? Indeed, is there any other aspect of the *HReg* other than these Frankish annals which might reflect eighth-century Frankish influence?

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<sup>1</sup> An edition and translation of these Frankish Annals as extracted from the only surviving manuscript copy of the *HReg* stands as an Appendix to the present study. They were first discussed by R. Pauli, 'Karl der Große in Northumbrischen annalen', *Forschungen zur Deutschen Geschichte* Vol. 12 (1872), 139-66. The *HReg*, one of the most complex texts for the period, is best described by P. H. Blair, 'Some observations on the "Historia Regum" attributed to Symeon of Durham', in *Celt and Saxon: Studies in the Early British Border*, ed. N. K. Chadwick (Cambridge, 1963), 63-118.

The *HReg* is therefore the focus of this chapter but it cannot be considered in isolation, since one of the most important characteristics of the several chronicles concerning post-Bedan Northumbria is that they are closely related. This observation, which will be explored further, leads to one of the most important, but unproven, historiographic principles of Northumbrian history, that there once existed an archetypal chronicle which underpins all subsequent annalistic compilations concerning northern affairs, of which the *HReg* is but one. It has been suggested that this 'lost northern chronicle', as best represented by the early section of the *HReg* annals, may have been compiled at York.<sup>2</sup> This theory gives further grounds for looking at the Frankish annals within the *HReg* and also, the language of the annals concerned with English events, since the connections between York and Francia in the later eighth century via the likes of Alcuin are well known.

The following chapter addresses all of these points. However, analysis of the corpus of chronicles for later Northumbrian history is fraught with fundamental problems which relate largely to the nature and structure of chronicles as historical texts and the way in which such texts get transmitted over time. It is necessary at the outset therefore, to address these problems in order to justify the employment of chronicles such as the *HReg* as valid witnesses for later eighth- and early ninth-century Northumbrian history. It is not an issue which can be taken for granted.

### **Historical writing in Northumbria in the century after Bede; the nature of the evidence and the problems of analysis:**

It would not be unjust to argue that Northumbrian history after Bede suffers under the reflected glory of its most illustrious scholar. The value of Bede's historical writing in terms of present day knowledge about early Anglo-Saxon Northumbria, throws into sharp relief not just the relative dearth of native sources concerning the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of his day, but arguably also distorts our reception of

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<sup>2</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', 98-9 and M. Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the early sections of the *Historia Regum* attributed to Symeon of Durham', *Anglo-Saxon England* Vol. 10 (1982), 97-122, 115-6. The York provenance is also tentatively accepted by D. Dumville, 'Textual Archaeology and Northumbrian History subsequent to Bede', *Coinage in Ninth-century Northumbria*, ed. D. M. Metcalf, BAR, Bri. Ser. Vol. 180 (Oxford, 1987), 43-55, 49.

the information which has survived concerning Bede's homeland for the remainder of the Anglo-Saxon period. The stylistic and literary sophistication which the *Historia Ecclesiastica* (*HE*) in particular attained, means that our perception of the very different types of historical sources for the post-Bedan era can be tainted by frustration of what it could have been had a scholar of Bede's ability got hold of such information. Proportionately very little of our knowledge of Anglo-Saxon England before the 730s (as derived from historical as opposed to archaeological sources) comes from sources outside Bede, and spoilt by the coherence of Bede's polished accounts of Anglo-Saxon England up to his own day, students of later Northumbrian history have to adapt to a striking change in the character of historical sources available after Bede's death in 735.<sup>3</sup> No longer is there a major author or source which encompasses the bulk of recorded information, and the historian of post-Bedan Anglo-Saxon England is forced to consult a relatively large number and wide variety of sources in order to find out even the most basic events of any given year. Even the best known of these sources, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (*ASC*), is notoriously heterogeneous, having survived in at least six different versions and the conscientious scholar must consult all of them in order to be certain of the information from this nominally single source.<sup>4</sup> In some ways, Bede precipitated this change by incorporating a chronicle as a *recapitulatio* of the whole text as the final chapter of his *HE*,<sup>book</sup> V.24. That chronicle (which may have been free-standing since it contains information not found in the body of the *HE*) contains short annalistic notes from 60 BC to AD 731, the last of which signals the date at which the *HE* was completed.

The major sources for this period of northern history are listed overleaf in Table 1 (along with a synopsis of the manuscript details and editions of those texts). The most significant of these sources are undoubtedly the chronicles listed in the top half

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<sup>3</sup> For the dating of Bede's death see the *Continuatio Bedae s.a. 735* and Cuthbert's letter *de obitu Bedae*; *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. 572, 579-87 respectively.

<sup>4</sup> The only single volume edition of all the *ASC* versions A-F is that by B. Thorpe, ed. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, RS, Vol. 23.i (London, 1861). The new edition of the *ASC* and all its related texts which is underway under the general editorship of David Dumville and Simon Keynes will eventually run to 22 volumes.

TABLE 1

SOURCE* MANUSCRIPT(S)	DATE OF MS(S) EDITION (see bibliography for full details)
<i>HReg</i>	CCCC MS 139, ff. 51v-129v
<i>ASC D</i>	BL Cotton MS Tiberius B.iv
<i>ASC E</i>	Bodleian MS Laud Misc. 636
<i>ASC F</i>	BL Cotton MS Domitian viii
<i>HE MA</i>	CUL MS Kk 5.16
<i>HE CB</i>	see Colgrave and Mynors (1969) pp. lxxviii-lxix
<i>Ramsey</i>	St John's College, Oxford MS 17
<i>Melrose</i>	BL Cotton MS Faustina B.ix
<i>HPB</i>	BL Royal MS 13.A.vi
<i>Alf</i>	St John's College, Oxford MS 97
<i>LDE</i>	GUL MS Hunterian 85
<i>DPSA</i>	earliest ms DUL MS Cosin V.II.6
	BL Cotton MS Domitian viii
	BL Cotton MS Caligula A viii
	Magdalene College, Oxford MS 53
	DCL MS B.II.35
<i>RW</i>	Bodleian MS Douce 207
	BL Cotton MS Otho B.v
	Arnold, RS, Vol. 75.ii (1885), 3-283 and Hinde, Sur. Soc. Vol. 51 (1867), 1-131.
	Classen and Harmer (1926).
	Plummer and Earle (1892).
	Thorpe, RS Vol. 23 (1861) and Magoun, Mediaeval Studies Vol. 9 (1947), 235-95.
	Plummer, Vol. 1 (1896), 361 and Colgrave and Mynors (1969), pp. 572-3.
	Plummer, Vol. 1 (1896), 361-3 and Colgrave and Mynors (1969), pp. 572-7.
	Hart, English Historical Review Vol. 85 (1970), 22-44.
	Anderson and Anderson, (1936) and Stevenson, Bannatyne Club (Edinburgh, 1835).
	Stubbs, RS, Vol. 51.i (1868).
	Levison, Deutsches Archiv Vol. 17 (1961), 447-506.
	Arnold, RS, Vol. 75.i (1882), 3-135 and Rollason, OMT, (forthcoming).
	Arnold, RS, Vol. 75.ii (1885), 365-84 and Hinde, Sur. Soc. Vol. 51 (1867), 202-15.
	Coxe, English Historical Society Vol. 8.i (1841).

\* A full list of the abbreviations used here is given above pp. viii-xi.

† Further details of the dating of this manuscript are given below pp. 95-7.

Δ As dated by Meehan, *A Reconsideration*, p. 160.

of Table 1, that is, the so called Northern Recension of the *ASC* (*ASC NR*) versions D, E and F, the *HReg* and the two chronicles associated with manuscripts of Bede's *HE*, that is, the annals from the so-called Moore Manuscript (*MA*) and the more common set of annals known as the *Continuatio Bedae* (*CB*). It will at once be noted from Table 1 that virtually all of the sources quoted are contained in manuscripts which date to the late-eleventh century at the earliest. The only exception is the so-called Moore Manuscript of the *HE* which contains some extra annals for the years 731-734 immediately after the *explicit* of the main work on fol. 128r, lines 26-31.<sup>5</sup> These annals, hereafter referred to as *MA*, are the sole example of a chronicle text concerning eighth-century Northumbrian events to have survived in a contemporary manuscript. As such, this manuscript is critical, not just as the earliest copy of Bede's *HE*, but also as a central element in the development of historical, chronicle records in Northumbria after Bede. The remaining chronicle texts which are concerned with this period of Northumbrian history, including the *HReg*, are contained in manuscripts written considerably after the events which they describe.

The reasons that these chronicles are found overwhelmingly in late manuscripts is arguably not just due to chance. It relates in part to the very nature of chronicles as a source type distinct from literary compositions such as histories or letters. Generally, chronicles are a compilation of brief summaries of selected events written down under the heading of the year in which they occurred in chronological order. As such they contrast with literary histories which have an identifiable theme running throughout and which are not necessarily obliged to maintain a strict chronological sequence. Strictly speaking, chronicles are thus a diverse concoction of contemporaneous observation of natural phenomena, brief notes of political and ecclesiastical events as well as occasional comments on more local themes which are written down close to the time of the events described. But almost by definition,

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<sup>5</sup> The Moore Manuscript is now housed as Cambridge, University Library, MS Kk. 5. 16. A facsimile edition of this manuscript is available; P. H. Blair, *The Moore Bede*, Cambridge University Library MS Kk.5.16, Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile, Vol. 9 (Copenhagen, 1959). See also E.A. Lowe, *Codicis Latini Antiquiores*, Vol. 2 (Oxford, 1972), p. 7, no. 139. For an analysis of the *MA* and of the other additions to the Moore Manuscript see P. H. Blair, 'The Moore Memoranda on Northumbrian History', in *The Early Cultures of North West Europe*, eds. C. Fox and B. Dickins (Cambridge, 1950), 245-57.

contemporary or 'living' chronicles such as these are organic documents, incomplete because they function as a source which is able to be updated annually, by a different author if necessary.<sup>6</sup> The authors of such 'living' chronicles also tend to be anonymous. Occasionally a named figure such as Bede (with his two world chronicles), Roger of Wendover, Matthew Paris and (perhaps) Symeon of Durham deliberately collected annalistic information from past years and wove it into their own composition creating retrospective chronicles. Chronicles formed and used in this way blur the distinction, becoming 'literary compositions' or quasi-histories. Indeed, it is the very collectability of chronicles which makes them such suitable material for interpolation into later compositions and thus likely to survive in a variety of guises in manuscripts and texts which were written many years after the original annals were compiled.

Another apparent by-product of the usual anonymity of chronicles is that the scribes who copied such texts seem to have done so in an entirely different frame of mind than when they transcribed patristic texts or finished products by named authors. The *HE* for example, was copied with such a degree of accuracy that recensions of it are identified only by a few orthographic variations and a few relatively minor editorial changes.<sup>7</sup> Yet the chronicle which comprises Book V.24 of the *HE* differs sufficiently between copies for it to be used as a definitive marker for distinguishing various recensions of the *HE* as a whole.<sup>8</sup> Chronicle information, perhaps because of its anonymity, was not necessarily treated with the same reverence as literary texts. Again, the brevity of the entries means that almost invariably, such information could easily be subsumed within or interpolated into later chronicle compilations without quotation or reference to the original source. Indeed, the propensity of chronicles to attract such additional information in subsequent editions adds to their

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<sup>6</sup> A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c. 550 to c. 1307* (London, 1974), p. 29.

<sup>7</sup> See the introduction to the edition of the *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. xxxix-xli.

<sup>8</sup> For example, the recension of the *HE* known as the c-type has extra annals for the years 733-4 added after the entry for 731 (see below). Also, copies of the so-called 'Durham' and 'Winchester' recensions of the *HE* are identified in part by characteristic additions to the chronological summary in V.24; *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. civ-v, cix-xiii and *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. xlix-l.

value as historical documents, since these extra layers can reveal much about the transmission of information between scholastic centres over time. The archaeological concept of stratigraphy is a useful analogy to describe how many of the early chronicles have come down to us today; hidden under additional layers added by scholars later in the medieval period.

The proliferation of historical writing as part of the twelfth-century renaissance of learning in Anglo-Norman England in combination with the very limited survival of post-Bedan texts in pre-Conquest manuscripts means that it is technically difficult to trace the relationships between the original source and the copies of it which must have existed once as a common stock of inspiration for these newer twelfth- and thirteenth-century histories. Effectively, what remains today are a few related texts in twelfth-century manuscripts at the foot of a tangled family tree of chronicles and histories which had been worked on (and handed down) by several generations of scholars in the intervening period. Yet, these post-Conquest manuscripts are the major vectors of the earlier learning and although the modern historian of Anglo-Saxon England is necessarily grateful for them, this situation makes it very difficult to establish a precise picture of the content and format of the information which was available to the scholars who lived in Anglo-Saxon England (as opposed to their twelfth-century successors) let alone to distinguish a chronological sequence within the text layers put down during the Anglo-Saxon period. As soon as the historian starts to search before the Conquest, the analysis inevitably moves into the realm of hypothetical exemplars and lost manuscripts, and there is an understandable tendency to channel the analysis of these lost sources via the big names and famous places of the Anglo-Saxon period in order to give the process some tangibility.

This observation immediately raises significant theoretical problems of interpretation; to what extent can these frequently anonymous chronicles in their post-Conquest forms be treated as valid witnesses of the history of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria? Given that they were subject to several generations of scholarly editing prior to being copied in the form which survives today, can they in any sense be considered contemporary sources? To be blunt, can the historian identify which part of which

entries of these complex late texts are early or near contemporary observations? This is a fundamental question, because with the solitary exception of the *MA* within the Moore Manuscript, historians of Northumbria in the century after Bede lack truly contemporary chronicle documents. This situation means that the historian's primary sources are manuscripts copied some four or five hundred years after the events which they describe. It is akin to writing the history of the Tudor monarchs solely from twentieth-century typescripts of sixteenth-century events. Thus, some fairly important assumptions combined with detailed critical analysis have to be imposed upon these texts before they can be used as contemporary sources.

The essence of this problem was highlighted by David Dumville in a paper entitled, 'Textual Archaeology and Northumbrian History', in which he states that;

History must be written from contemporary sources or with the aid of testimony carried to a later era by an identifiable and acceptable line of transmission. Many texts which present themselves for consideration are creations remote from that age. Historical writing may be entertaining if an author chooses to cut corners or ignore the rules of evidence when assessing such works - but it will not be worth the paper it is printed on.<sup>9</sup>

Each of these statements (bar the last clause) is a fair comment. But in the light of the discussion of the manuscript evidence given above, all except the annals provided by the Moore Manuscript are 'Anglo-Saxon testimony' which strictly speaking are 'creations remote from that age', since they survive only in late copies. Although we can accept the principle that a relatively pure version of a text may survive in much later manuscripts, we must also accept the probability that because of their particular format, chronicles and the information within them are likely to be subject to change over time as successive editors rework the data for their own ends. Such texts are prone to frequent copying, editing and interpolation almost as their *raison d'être* as couriers of historical information. This point is laboured because it highlights the need for an 'acceptable line of transmission' from the eighth-century annal through to

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<sup>9</sup> Dumville, 'Textual Archaeology', 55.

the (usually) twelfth-century format in which it survives today. Yet Dumville's 'acceptable line of transmission' with which he validates the use of some of these late creations such as the *HReg*, *CB* and the *ASC D/E*) is a longstanding historiographic assumption. It is based primarily on the theory that these texts are underpinned by an archetypal chronicle of early northern events now lost but which is thought to have been that referred to by Richard of Hexham, who was writing in the mid twelfth century, as the *Gesta Veterum Northanhymbrorum*.<sup>10</sup> Ironically, this assumption is made 'acceptable' by its longstanding place in the historiographical literature on these sources.<sup>11</sup> But despite generations of historians claiming its presence, to date, no attempt has been made to 'identify' this 'lost Northumbrian chronicle' within its extant offspring.

This is remarkable given the evidence to support this hypothesis. Not only is there a correlation in word and content between many of the later eighth-century and very early ninth-century annals in these sources, but the blank years correspond as well, again suggesting the echo of a common ancestor. This observation is true not only of the big hiatus of information in the first two-thirds of the ninth century in the Northern Recension of the *ASC* which finishes in 806 and the *HReg* which ends in 802,<sup>12</sup> but also with the later eighth-century annals which are partially complemented by the evidence of the *Continuatio Bedae*. The years 742, 743, 746, 748, 751, 763, 770, 776 and 784 are all blank years where nothing has been recorded in all the chronicles which cover this time span. Charles Plummer, writing in 1899 argued that, 'by comparing the three authorities [*ASC D, E* and *HReg*] we might restore these Northumbrian annals with some approach to completeness'.<sup>13</sup> Although he was speaking of the late ninth- and early tenth-century sections of these

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<sup>10</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 2, p. lxix, n.1; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. xix and J. Raine, ed. *The Priory of Hexham; The history and annals of the house*, Sur. Soc., Vol. 44. i (London, 1863), 60.

<sup>11</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 2, p. lxix; W. Stubbs, ed. *Chronica Magistri Rogeris de Houedene*, RS, Vol. 51.i (London, 1868), ix-xiii, xxv-xxx, and Arnold's comments in *Sy. Op. Om.* 1, pp. xviii- xix.

<sup>12</sup> They are subsequently complemented by material taken from Version C of the *ASC* and Asser respectively, before restoring a chronicle with a northern bias later in the ninth century.

<sup>13</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 2, p. lxxiv.

Northumbrian sources, his comments are equally valid for the earlier material in the same chronicles.

It is easy to see how research into the enigmatic lost Northern Annals might arise out of the original problem, that is, the extent to which the Frankish information which is visible in some of these sources can be construed as evidence of contemporary, eighth-century contact between Northumbria and Francia. This question has led to the heart of the problem surrounding these middle Anglo-Saxon Northern sources, that technically, because the manuscripts are late, their claim to be truly contemporary sources is tenuous. The way to make them (using Dumville's phraseology) 'acceptable testimony' is to positively 'identify' the lost Northern Annals which are said to underpin them. This could be done by comparing the parallel information and omissions in the major sources, supplemented by minor ones, as well as by collecting all the entries which contain evidence proving an early date of composition, such as accurate descriptions of astronomical events. In one sense, this is a self-fulfilling exercise. Any reconstructed source is inevitably going to be a satisfactory, hypothetical ancestor of the sources from which it is reconstructed. And yet it seems worthwhile, because even if the resulting Northern Annals text can never be anything more than a hypothetical academic exercise, the process of excavation of the extant sources might reveal significant information both about the transmission of the annals in the intervening decades between the later eighth and twelfth centuries and may also provide clues as to where and when the chronicle was edited in its various stages of evolution. This process in turn, may shed light on the original question, that is, the extent to which the corpus of eighth-century Northern chronicles display evidence of contemporary contact between Northumbria and the Frankish kingdom of Charlemagne.

### **Summary of Analysis :**

Because of the complexities of the sources it is useful at this stage to provide an outline of the hypothesis to be pursued in this chapter in order to clarify the terminology employed and the sequence of text development:

\* The hypothesis is based on the primary assumption that during the eighth century prominent historical events were recorded in annalistic format.

\* It seems likely that initially annals were collected at a variety of locations within Northumbria, their collection possibly being stimulated by the creation of two large-scale chronicles by Bede, the *Chonicae Minora et Maiora*. Collectively these annals are referred to as **NA** or the Northern Annals. The existence of the **NA** can be detected through analysis of the additional annals recorded in the Moore Manuscript, through the annals which were collected by Bede in Book V.24 of the *HE* and through the earliest annals in both the *CB* and in the eighth-century section of the *HReg*. The **NA** represents the primary phase in the collection of information about events in eighth-century Northumbria.

\* At some date after 734 (the last annal in the Moore Manuscript) some of these annals were collected together at a single centre somewhere in Northern England and were continued up to (at least) the year 806. This chronicle shall be referred to as **NA 1**. It is supposed that this act of compilation and composition occurred at York. **NA 1** is the chronicle which has elsewhere been referred to as the 'York Annals'.

\* This collection of annals (**NA 1**) had Frankish information added to it at various times during the eighth century but particularly so in the later years of that century. This stage in the evolution of the chronicle is termed **NA 2** but must be understood to have occurred contemporaneously with the evolution of **NA 1** in the latter part of the eighth century. This Frankish information was seemingly added to **NA 1** at York within the circle of scholars associated with Alcuin's school, stimulated particularly by the links created through Alcuin's contact with the Frankish court. The literary style of much of the chronicle was also affected at this time in order to reflect current Frankish political thought.

\* **NA 2** was subsequently revised by Byrhtferth of Ramsey Abbey near Peterborough in the later years of the tenth century. This phase in the development of the chronicle, termed **NA 3**, is marked partly by an editorial revision of the chronicle text with identifiable stylistic devices which compare with other texts known to have

been composed by Byrhtferth (as identified by the analysis of those texts by Lapidge). This phase was also marked by a clumsy amalgamation of NA 3 with four other previously independent texts into a form which Blair and Lapidge referred to as Part 1 of the *HReg*. NA 3 is the fourth of these five sections and might therefore be termed Section 4 of the *HReg* (and so called by Blair).

\* NA 3 was modified again to produce NA 4 the version of the text which is now found in the *HReg* in CCC MS 139 (fols 61-69r according to the new foliation of that manuscript). This stage in the development of the chronicle undoubtedly consisted of more than one phase, including for example the phase at which the so-called Hexham interpolations *s.a.* 740 and 781 were added, some time after the year 1113 and the Durham additions added (probably) by Symeon.

The scheme outlined above is simplistic. It identifies only the major stages in the evolution of the eighth-century annals. It is very likely that other phases existed, phases which are difficult to identify conclusively within the available text and manuscript evidence. The scheme also concentrates overwhelmingly on the evidence of the Latin annals. A full analysis of the entire corpus of eighth-century Northumbrian annals would obviously also have to include a detailed comparison with the parallel vernacular annals as preserved in the northern recension of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (*ASC NR*) to which the Latin annals exemplified in NA4 are evidently closely related.<sup>14</sup> However, such a complete re-analysis of the Northumbrian annals is not the objective of the following chapter and must in any case wait for the appearance of effective editions of the *ASC NR* texts.<sup>15</sup> Such a re-analysis would also need to be conducted with an eye to the evidence of the later ninth-century annals in the *ASC NR* and the few earlier ninth-century notes preserved in the thirteenth-century *Flores Historiarum* of Roger of Wendover. These texts might be taken as evidence that the collection of annals continued, albeit to a lesser degree, throughout the ninth century. Reference too must be made to the

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<sup>14</sup> Dumville, 'Textual archaeology', 49.

<sup>15</sup> Such editions are planned as part of the Collaborative Edition of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, general eds D. Dumville and S. Keynes. The necessary new edition of the *HReg* (Pt 1) (said to be 'at press' in 1986; Dumville, 'Textual Archaeology', 46 n. 15) will be volume 16 of that series.

*Chronicle of Melrose* which is an important witness to the development of Latin chronicles on Northern affairs in this period. But again its use (and translation) of the ASC version E makes close analysis complex at this stage.<sup>16</sup>

The focus of the ensuing analysis is the branch of the eighth-century Northern annals which was eventually to become embodied in the *HReg* as it is found today in CCCC MS 139 fols 61-69r (referred to here as NA4). Although this is deemed the 'final' phase in the development of the eighth-century northern annals it is recognised that the many interlineations and marginalia in that manuscript naturally represent further phases of glosses on the text after it had been copied into that manuscript.<sup>17</sup> In this respect, the evidence of the text known as the *Historia post Bedam* (*HpB*) represents still further complications since some of its readings are incorporated into the main body of the text of NA4 by the original scribe whereas others are interlineations, thereby indicating a two-phase use of the *HpB* in the creation of NA4.<sup>18</sup> The true course of the development of the Latin northern annals was certainly much more complex than the simplified diagram given below implies with several more manuscripts and texts playing important roles in the transfer of the annalistic information over time. The main objective of the following chapter however, is an understanding of the Frankish annals which are today found in NA4, of the time at which they were incorporated into this set of Latin annals concerning later eighth-century Northumbria and of the circumstances of their inclusion. The essence of the hypothesis pursued below is that a phase, NA2, can be identified within the *HReg* as it exists today, the argument being that the Frankish elements of NA2, both language and content, were introduced into it in the later eighth century specifically under the influence of the channels of communication enhanced by Alcuin's presence at the Frankish court between 781-804.

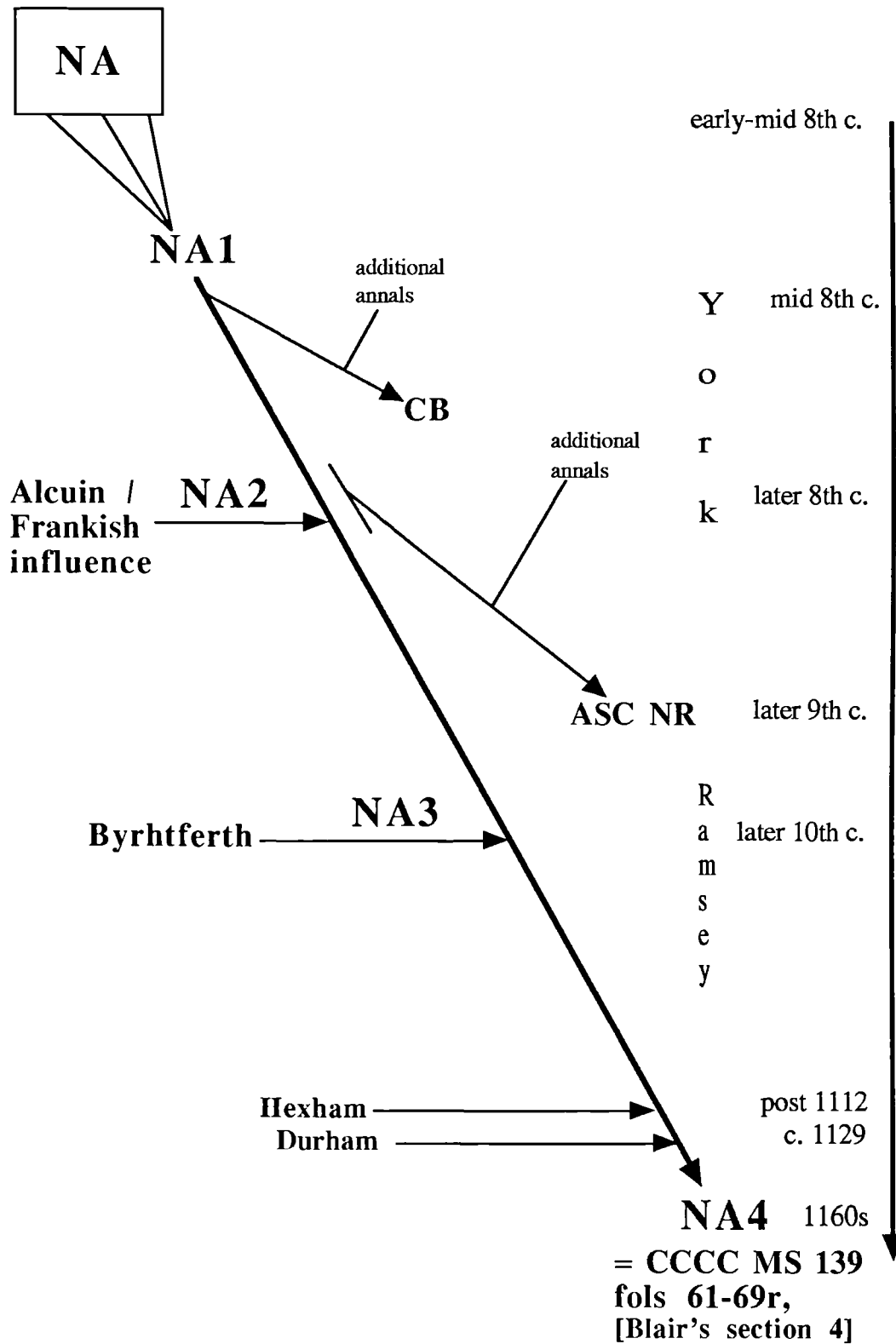
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<sup>16</sup> The best (but partial) analysis of the Melrose Chronicle is to be found in the introduction to A. O. Anderson and M. O. Anderson, *The Chronicle of Melrose AD 735-1270, a facsimile of Cotton MS Faustina B ix* (London, 1936).

<sup>17</sup> Dumville, 'Textual Archaeology', p. 46.

<sup>18</sup> B. Meehan, *A reconsideration of the historical works associated with Symeon of Durham; manuscripts, texts and influences*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Edinburgh, 1979) pp. 183-221 and C. Hart, 'Byrhtferth's Northumbrian Chronicle', *EHR* Vol. 97 (1982), 558-582, 577.

**Simplified hypothetical diagram of the evolution of the eighth-century Northern Annals**



## Section A) The NA: evidence for the collection of annals in Northumbria in the 730s.

The concept of the Northern Annals underpinning all texts which describe eighth-century Northumbrian events is a longstanding one. Scholars such as Raine, Stubbs, Arnold and Plummer assumed that the collection of a distinct Northern chronicle began in the early 730s having been stimulated by Bede's historical and chronicle compilations, such as the *Chronicae Minora et Maiora*, the *HE* and in particular by the chronicle recapitulation which constituted Book V.24 of the *Historia*.<sup>19</sup> Thus it has been argued that the process of systematic collection of historical details in annalistic format began in Northumbria after the completion of the *HE*.<sup>20</sup> Attention has inevitably also turned to the source of Bede's information pre-731 and suggestions have been made that Bede may have made use of annals recorded in the paschal chronicles amongst his other sources of information.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, there survive three (apparently Frankish) manuscripts dating to the earlier ninth century containing continental annal collections which also record Anglo-Saxon events. Predominantly these events concern later seventh and early eighth-century events in Northumbria and Kent, particularly of the bishoprics of Lindisfarne and Canterbury, some of

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<sup>19</sup> Raine, *Priory of Hexham*, p. 60 and Stubbs, *Rogeri de Houedene*, pp. xxvi-xxxii. Plummer's opinions were voiced in *ASC* (Plummer) 2, pp. lxxviii-lxxxi and *HE* (Plummer) 2, p. 343. See also *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. xvii-xix .

<sup>20</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p. 31 where she notes that the *Gesta Northanhymbrorum* was compiled between 732 and 802.

<sup>21</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p. 15, 25; D. P. Kirby, 'Bede and Northumbrian Chronology', *EHR* Vol. 78 (1963), pp. 514-27; Blair identified some entries in the *ASC* NR and the *HE* which, he argued, point to independent chronicles being compiled in later seventh and earlier eighth centuries; P. H. Blair, 'The Northumbrians and their southern Frontier', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4th ser. Vol. 36 (1948), 98-126, 105-12.

which include details not found in the *HE*.<sup>22</sup> These collections might be taken to suggest that small scale independent collections of annals, possibly not much more than a group of dates recording locally significant obits, were collected at these centres during that period. The evidence from these particular manuscripts has been doubted, but the collection of basic chronological details concerning political events which affected such bishoprics should not be surprising, especially since Canterbury had provided Bede with so much of his material for the *HE*.<sup>23</sup> The ninth-century date of the manuscripts in which these notes are found does at least provide a *terminus ante quem* such information must have reached Francia, thereby providing further evidence that a dialogue of annalistic information existed in the latter part of the eighth century between Francia and Anglo-Saxon England. Part of the significance of these annals is that they are found in manuscripts which also contain copies of Bede's computistical writings such as the *De Temporum Ratione*, again suggesting that Bede's chronological studies, and the proliferation of those works, may have stimulated the collection of annals elsewhere.

### The Moore Manuscript.

Most tangible, however, is the role of Bede's *HE* and the chronicle recapitulation in Book V.<sup>24</sup> in the evolution of subsequent Northumbrian chronicle compilations. Critical in this respect is the oldest extant copy of the *HE*, known as the Moore Manuscript now housed as CUL MS Kk.5.16. It has several important appendices, one of which contains annals for the years 731-734 immediately after the *explicit* of

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<sup>22</sup> These sets of annals known as the *Annales Fuldenses Antiqui*, the *Annales Iuvanenses Maiores* and the so-called *Annales Alcuini* were edited by G. Pertz, MGH SS Vol. III (Hanover, 1839), pp. 116\*-117\*, MGH SS Vol. I (Hanover, 1826), pp. 86-9 and MGH SS Vol. IV (Hanover, 1846), pp. 1-4 respectively. On these annals see Wattenbach-Levison, p. 190. These annals deserve closer attention at manuscript level since they could have an important bearing on non-Bedan collections of historical information. The *Annales Alcuini* (so named because of their record of the places at which Charlemagne kept Easter in the latter part of the eighth century) in particular record several Kentish events with accurate dates not immediately accessible from the *HE* (the death of Eadric of Kent on *ii kal. Sept, feria vi* for example). It is of course possible that such obits were recorded in a calendar or cantor's book for annual memorial rather than in a free-standing chronicle format.

<sup>23</sup> On Bede's debt to Canterbury, see his own comments in the Preface to the *HE*; *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 6. For doubts about the Canterbury notes in these Frankish manuscripts see D. N. Dumville, 'Some aspects of annalistic writing at Canterbury in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries', *Peritia* Vol. 2 (1983), 23-57, 25-6.

the *HE* on fol. 128r, lines 26-31.<sup>24</sup> These annals, which are found in no other copy of the *HE*, were written in the same mid eighth-century Anglo-Saxon minuscule hand as copied the whole *HE* text in that manuscript. The fluency of that hand on fol. 128r suggests that these extra annals were copied at the same time as the last few paragraphs of the *HE*. The entire manuscript cannot therefore have been copied before 734, the date of the last annal. On the verso of this folio is found a series of historical notes known as the Moore 'Memoranda' which contains internal retrospective dating evidence to prove that those notes were composed in the year AD 737.<sup>25</sup> The Memoranda works by adding numbers to the dates of certain events which when added together produce the date 737. The sum of the numbers thereby indicates a reckoning backwards from a single point in time. From comparative palaeographic dating it is probable that the Memoranda was copied into the Moore Manuscript in 737 or relatively shortly afterwards. This is likely not least because the relevance of the Memoranda would have been reduced after that year. Also the hand which wrote the Memoranda is almost certainly that which copied the text of the *HE* and the additional annals on fol. 128r. But the scribe who wrote these texts appears to have copied the Memoranda at a later sitting than the texts on the preceding folios.<sup>26</sup> Although it is not possible to be absolutely certain, the likelihood is that the text and the annals were copied after 734 but before 737 when the Memoranda was composed and probably copied into the Moore Manuscript.

It seems likely therefore that the text of the *HE*, the *MA* and the Memoranda were copied into the Moore Manuscript just six years after the *HE* was written and only two since the death of Bede.<sup>27</sup> The Moore Manuscript is thus a very early version of the *HE* and is consequently put at the head of one of the two major recensions of that

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<sup>24</sup> *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 361 and *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. 572-3.

<sup>25</sup> Blair, 'The Moore Memoranda on Northumbrian History', 245-57.

<sup>26</sup> Blair, *The Moore Bede*, pp. 26-9.

<sup>27</sup> See above and Blair, *The Moore Bede*, pp. 26-9 and by the same author, *The Moore Memoranda*, 245-57 for a discussion of the dating of the Moore Manuscript in relation to the *MA* and the Memoranda.

text alongside the Leningrad Bede.<sup>28</sup> This so-called ‘m-type’ recension of the Moore and Leningrad manuscripts is the ancestor of the overwhelming majority of the continental copies of Bede’s *HE*, including all those which contain the *CB*. Both the Moore and Leningrad copies of the *HE* are known to have gone abroad shortly after they were written apparently leaving no trace of that m-type recension in any of the extant copies of the *HE* which were copied in medieval England. An alternative recension, known as the c-type, the best example of which is an eighth-century copy now in the British Library,<sup>29</sup> prevails in all remaining English manuscripts, with only a single exception. A solitary m-type manuscript is known to have remained in England after the eighth century, that is, BL Cotton MS Tiberius A. xiv. It is also of mid eighth-century date and is descended directly from the Leningrad Bede.<sup>30</sup> However, it shows no sign of having influenced any extant English copies of the *HE* and later in its life was corrected to agree with the c-type recension. Like its parent, the Leningrad Bede, the ‘Tiberius Bede’ does not contain any additional annals, which leads to the suggestion that the *MA* were added only to the Moore Manuscript and not to any other m-type copy of the *HE*.<sup>31</sup>

### The Moore manuscript, York and Francia :

The early history of the Moore Manuscript can be traced with some certainty and indeed, its early journeys are particularly relevant to the theme of this thesis. The Moore Manuscript, Leningrad Bede and other m-type copies like them must have left England soon after they were copied in the eighth century since there exist several copies of the *HE* made on the continent in the later eighth and earlier ninth centuries

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<sup>28</sup> Leningrad, M. E. Saltykov-Schedrin Public Library Lat. Q.v.I.18. This manuscript also displays the type of retrospective dating employed in the Moore Memoranda providing the Leningrad manuscript with a date of 746 for the final corrections to the manuscript; M. B. Parkes, *The Scriptorium of Wearmouth-Jarrow*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1982), pp. 5-12. For his scepticism on the dating of the Moore Memoranda see *ibid*, n. 35. On the Moore and Leningrad manuscripts see, Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 16-17 n. 30.

<sup>29</sup> BL Cotton MS Tiberius C. ii; *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), p. xlii.

<sup>30</sup> Parkes, *The Scriptorium*, p. 12 and *HE* (Plummer), pp. xci- xciii and *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. xlvi-xlvii; Webster and Backhouse, no. 92, pp. 128-9.

<sup>31</sup> *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. xlvi-xlvii.

which are of the same recension.<sup>32</sup> However, the Moore Manuscript itself can be traced to the Palace Library of Charlemagne, being one of the few Northumbrian books which can be secured to the collection of the Frankish king.<sup>33</sup> As such the book itself is hard evidence of the flow of annalistic information between the two kingdoms, on this occasion of Northumbrian annalistic details arriving in Francia, at the king's court itself. Further to this, the career of Alcuin (or at least, his library at York) provides a plausible eighth-century context for the transmission of the Moore Manuscript from England into Charlemagne's library. That books travelled from York to Francia is implied by a letter which Alcuin wrote to Charlemagne requesting permission to import books otherwise unavailable in Francia from his home library.<sup>34</sup> In addition, analysis of Alcuin's poem *Versus de Patribus, Regibus et Sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae* reveals that the <sup>author</sup> had access to an m-type copy of the *HE* since the poem includes a story based on one found only in that recension of Bede's text.<sup>35</sup> None of this is conclusive evidence to place the Moore Bede at Alcuin's home library in York prior to its transfer to Francia, but it remains a plausible hypothesis and one which has important implications for the provenance of the *MA* and their related texts.

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<sup>32</sup> For example, the copy of the *HE* now housed as Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August Bibliothek Weissenburg MS 34, copied in the late eighth century in an early Carolingian minuscule hand; Lowe, *CLA* Vol. 9, no. 1385 and *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. xliv-xlv. For other early examples of the *HE* which are early descendants specifically of the Moore Manuscript see *ibid*, p. lxii.

<sup>33</sup> B. Bischoff, 'Die Hofbibliothek Karls des Grosses', in *Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, Vol. 2, *Das Gestige Leben*, ed. B. Bischoff (Dusseldorf, 1965), 42-62, 56.

<sup>34</sup> Alcuin explicitly asked Charlemagne for permission to send to York for copies of books which were not available in Francia; *Alc. Ep.* pp. 175-8. Bischoff also refers to a request by Alcuin to acquire a *libellus annalis* for Charlemagne. He interprets this as a reference to Vatican Pal. MS Lat. 1448, an early ninth-century copy of the *De Temporum Ratione* and *De Temporibus*, thought to have been at the Palace Library, the reference being presumably to the world chronicles at the end of these texts by Bede.

<sup>35</sup> That is, a miracle of St Oswald as told by Bede in m-type copies of the *HE* at Book IV.14. On Alcuin's use of this story see P. Godman, ed. *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 130-1, lines 1600 ff. Chapter 5 below argues that this poem might better be considered a product of Alcuin's years in Francia rather than his time in York, an interpretation which might explain his use of an m-type copy of the *HE* in the 790s.

What can be certain is that the *MA* are a unique example of a chronicle text concerning eighth-century Northumbria to have survived in a contemporary manuscript. Furthermore, its transfer to the continent by the end of the eighth century implies that the annalistic information which it contains would have gone out of circulation in Northumbria after this date unless that information had previously been copied into (or from) another source which remained there. In these respects, the *MA* are particularly important, all the more so because the four annals of the *MA* closely match entries for the same years in both the *HReg* and the *CB*. Since both the *HReg* and the *CB* are considered to be vectors of the lost Northern Annals, the existence of such a group of annals (albeit only four years) which are very close to both of them and which survive in a contemporary eighth-century manuscript, is a critical observation. The relationship between the *MA*, *CB*, *HReg* and indeed the last entry in *HE* V.24 is best displayed in tabular form (see Table 2 overleaf).

Table 2 shows the annals for the years 731-4 in four texts, the *MA*, *CB*, *HE* V.24 and *HReg*. It also highlights the shared wording found in these texts. Immediately striking is the apparent conflation of the wording of the *MA*, *CB* and *HE* V.24 into the *HReg*. In addition to this, it is apparent that the *MA* shares certain elements with both *HE* V.24 and the *CB*. These observations suggest that the *MA* is a lynchpin for understanding the development of northern chronicles in the period after the completion of the *HE* in 731. The four annals which comprise the *MA* discuss the deposition and enforced tonsuring of King Ceolwulf and the flight of Bishop Acca (of Hexham) in 731, the choice of Ecgberht in place of Wilfrid as bishop of York *s.a.* 732, an eclipse of the sun on 1st September 733 and an eclipse of the moon on 31st January 734.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> The solar eclipse is dated very closely to the hour and seems therefore to represent contemporary observation. The date of this lunar eclipse is wrong by a week. The text reads *ii kal. Febr.* whereas the correct date should be *ix kal. Febr.* The difference could be due to a simple scribal error in an archetypal text which copied an *i* instead of an *x*; Schöve, *Chronology of Eclipses*, pp. 150-2.

TABLE 2 : The relationship between the *HReg* and the annals associated with the *HE* s.a. 731-734.

DATE	HE V.24 (m-type)	MOORE MS (MA)	CONTINUATIO BEDAE	HISTORIA REGUM
731	Berctwald archiepiscopus obiit. Anno eodem Tatuini consecratus archiepiscopus * nonus Dónuem-ensis ecclesiae Aedilbaldo rege Merciorum xv agente annum imperii	Ceoluulf rex captus et adtonsus et remissus in regnum; Acca episcopus de sua sede fugatus.		
732		Egberct pro Uilfrido Eboraci episcopus factus.	Egberct pro Uilfrido Eboraci episcopus factus <i>Cynibertus episcopus Lindisfarorum obiit.</i>	Berthwaldus archiepiscopus est defunctus. Eodem anno Tatwine est consecratus archiepiscopus nonus Doroverniensis ecclesiae. Ethilbaldo rege Merciorum quintum-decimum agente annum imperii. Ipso quoque anno Ceolwulfus rex captus, attonsus, et remissus est in regnum. Erat vero miro studio imbutus, ut Beda testatur in exordio sui proemii veridicus. Acca episcopus eodem anno de sua sede est fugatus, et <i>Cyneberht Lindisfarorum</i> ecclesiae antistes <i>obiit</i> . Ipso autem anno Alric et Esc cum aliis plurimis occisi sunt die x kal. Septembris, v feria.
733		* Eclipsis facta est solis XVIII kal. Sep. circa horam diei tertiam, ita ut pene totus orbis solis quasi nigerrimo et horrendo scuto uideretur esse coopertus.	Tatuini archiepiscopus, accepto ab apostolica auctoritate pallio, ordinavit Aluwich et Sigfridum episcopos.	Tatwine archiepiscopus, accepto ab Apostolica auctoritate pallio, ordinavit Alwig et Sigfrid episcopos. Eclipsis facta est solis xix kal. Septembris, circa horam diei tertiam, ita ut pene totus orbis solis quasi nigerrimo et horrendo scuto videretur esse coopertus.
734		* Luna sanguineo rubore perfusa quasi hora integra II kal. Febr. circa galli cantum, dehinc nigredine subsequente ad lucem propriam reuersa.	Tatuini episcopus obiit.	Luna sanguineo rubore est perfusa, quasi hora integra, ii kal. Februarii circa gallicantum. Dehinc nigredine subsequente ad lucem propriam est reuersa. Eodem anno Tatwine archiepiscopus nonus Doroverniensis civitatis in Cantia obiit die iij kal. Augusti. [Canterbury info]. † Eodem anno ordinatus est Friohtberht Haugustaldensis ecclesiae episcopus sub die vi idus Septembris.

† The reference to the ordination of Friohtberht as bishop of Hexham in *HReg* s.a. 734 is also found in the *CB* s.a. 735.

\* The annals for 733-4 in the Moore MS also occur in *HE* c-type mss at \* in *HE* V.24, thereby omitting the remainder of the annal for 731 as found in m-type mss of the *HE*.

**MA and HE V.24:**

The *MA* for 733 and 734 which discuss solar and lunar eclipses, were included also within *HE* V.24 *s.a.* 731 after the notice of Tatwine's consecration as Archbishop of Canterbury in that year. The inclusion of these details at this point in the *HE* V.24 occurs only in copies of the c-type recension, copies of the m-type having an alternative conclusion. The m-type V.24 annal for 731 describes Tatwine as the ninth archbishop of Canterbury and dates his consecration to the fifteenth year of the reign of Æthelbald of Mercia (see Table 2 col. 1). Thus, the c-type *HE* V.24 entry for 731 ends with the word *archiepiscopus* and continues with the 733 and 734 astronomical observations, whilst the m-type adds the words *nonus...imperii* after the word *archiepiscopis*. The incorporation of the details of the eclipses *s.a.* 733-4 into the c-type archetype must have occurred during an early revision of the c-type *HE*, since it is found in all copies of that recension. The suspicion of an early revision of the *HE* shortly after its official completion date in 731, is supported by the reference in Book V.23 to the defeat of the Saracen army by Charles Martel in Francia. The Battle of Poitiers/Tours, to which it is assumed this comment refers, took place in the year 732. Allowing time for such news to reach Northumbria, it is not impossible to imagine the information about the Frankish battle being incorporated within the *HE* during a revision of the text early in 734. This may have presented an ideal opportunity for extra annals for those years to have been written into the c-type archetype at the end of V.24. However, since the reference to the Saracen army is found in both recensions of the *HE*, the incorporation of the 733 and 734 annals into just the c-type must represent a second phase of revision. That all these events lie within Bede's lifetime, presents the possibility that Bede himself was responsible for such changes to his work and therefore that it was he who started the process of a chronicle continuing beyond 731. In the context of the argument being presented by this study, it may also be no coincidence that it is information about a major military event in Francia which seems to have prompted an early revision of the *HE*, within Bede's own lifetime and thus possibly by Bede himself.

These observations about the two annals for 733 and 734 which are found as an insertion into the c-type and as an appendix to the Moore Manuscript, have a bearing



on the debate about which of the two recensions is the earlier. The textual analysis of the *HE* by Mynors assumed that the c-type was the earlier of the two recensions on the basis that the description of a miracle of St Oswald which is included as Book IV.14 in the m-type but not in the c-type recensions must represent an addition to the former rather than a deletion from the latter.<sup>37</sup> Mynors' interpretation was the reverse of the conclusion reached by Plummer on the same point.<sup>38</sup> Plummer argued plausibly that the description of Tatwine's consecration in accordance with the regnal years of Æthelbald was a fact much more relevant for the year 731 in which it occurred than three years later in 734. He noted too, that the chronological summary in Book V.24 in the m-type finished in the year 731, which accords with the date at which Bede himself said in Book V.23 that the whole work was completed. The most economical conclusion is that the descriptions of the eclipses in 733 and 734 were interpolated into the c-type *HE* during a revision in 734, having copied the details from a free-standing collection of annals. This is supported by the observation that the c-type version of the annal for 733 differs in two small details from that found in the *MA*.<sup>39</sup> This observation makes it unlikely that the c-type version of the annal was originally copied directly from the *MA*, but argues in favour of an independent archetype. Also suggestive of a chronicle independent of the *MA* is the fact that the two *MA* for 731 and 732 were not incorporated into the *HE* at the same time as the record of the eclipses. The reviser of the c-type *HE* may have considered it politically unwise (or irrelevant) to have included the details of the enforced tonsuring and temporary deposition of King Ceolwulf at a later date. It is more difficult to explain why notice of the election of Ecgberht as bishop of York in place of Wilfrid (*MA s.a.* 732) would have been omitted if the *MA* had been the direct source of the c-type reviser's information. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that by 734 the reviser of the c-type *HE* (whether adding or removing the astronomical observations from V.24) had access to additional chronicle-style information which was not part of the original *HE* and which was not taken directly from the *MA*. This

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<sup>37</sup> *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), p. xli.

<sup>38</sup> *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. xciv-vii.

<sup>39</sup> The word *est* is omitted in the c-type and the word *sicut* is used in place of the m-type *scuto*.

can be taken as evidence that more than one set of annals was being collected in Northumbria in the early 730s.

### *MA* and *CB*:

The *MA* contain further details of Northumbrian events, *s.a.* 731 and 732. The annal for 731 which records the enforced tonsuring and temporary deposition of King Ceolwulf and the deposition of Bishop Acca is not found in *HE* V.24, although Bede did refer to the troubles of Ceolwulf at the end of V.23. The *MA* for 732 however, is incorporated in the set of annals known as the *CB*. This latter chronicle contains annals mainly about Northumbrian events between the years 732-766. In contrast to the *MA* which form an appendix to a single early manuscript, the *CB* is found as a continuation to the chronicle recapitulation of *HE* V.24 exclusively in copies of the *HE* produced in northern Germany and the Netherlands between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>40</sup> Like the *MA*, the *CB* annals are found only in m-type copies of the *HE*, a factor which not only implies a common distant ancestor of the host text but which suggests that the archetype of the *HE* which contained the *CB* left Northumbria during the eighth century before the m-type made any significant impact on the c-type recension. It is not unreasonable to suppose that such a manuscript might have left Northumbria shortly after the date of the last entry in the *CB*, that is 766.

A parenthesis is needed here in order to justify this claim. Two entries in the *CB* might be taken to suggest that it was compiled in its present form sometime after the date of the entries it describes. Firstly, the annal for 741 which notes the death of Charles

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<sup>40</sup> The distinction is not explicit in the editions, especially that of *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 361 in which he amalgamates the versions found in all manuscripts (including the Moore manuscript) and refers to the combined text as *Beda's Continuatio*. On occasion, the *MA* are referred to as *CB*, thereby confusing the nature of the *MA* as an appendix to the whole text and the *CB* as a continuation to Book V.24. See for example Dumville's comments concerning the *MA* which he refers to as *CB* in D. Dumville and M. Lapidge, eds, *The Annals of St Neots with Vita Prima Sancti Neoti*, p. xlvii and n. 61. The *CB* is a text which is poorly understood, the details of which are difficult to follow in the current editions. It is a text which deserves closer attention because it reveals much about the transmission of the *HE* to the continent as well as the development of annalistic writing in Northumbria after Bede's death. The text of the *CB* is also reproduced after the text of the *MA* in *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. 572-77 with a list of the manuscripts in which it is found at pp. lxxviii-lxix.

Martel in Francia refers to him as *rex*, a title which he never attained. Although Pauli argued that this meant that the *CB* could not be older than the tenth century, it is not unreasonable to suppose that such an error could easily have been made at a time previous to that, especially since the reference is simply to *Karolus*.<sup>41</sup> After the accession of Charlemagne in 768 and the development of his subsequent reputation, the accidental transposition of *rex* from an alternative word such as *princeps* would be an understandable slip of the pen.<sup>42</sup> Secondly, the annal for 757 includes the statement that Cynewulf king of the West Saxons died in that year. He did not in fact die until 786.<sup>43</sup> The error in the *CB* reference appears to be a misreading of the mainstream *ASC* annal for 757 which tells of Cynewulf's accession and then adds a long story of the conspiracy which led to his eventual assassination nearly thirty years later.<sup>44</sup> This too might be taken as evidence that the *CB* was not compiled into its present form until later, after the *ASC* had been written in the late ninth century. However, the story of Cynewulf's accession and death is part of the *ASC* (Versions ABC) which, between the years 756 and 845, is afflicted by a systematic dislocation of dates, by which all events are dated two or three years too early. The story of Cynewulf's accession and assassination is therefore found in the manuscripts which include the southern recension of the *ASC* under the year 755. That this chronological dislocation occurs in all versions of the *ASC* which preserve the southern recension (including Æthelweard's Latin translation) argues that it must have been present in their common archetype original.<sup>45</sup> That the *CB* record Cynewulf's death, albeit mistakenly, under the correct year of his accession (757)

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<sup>41</sup> Pauli, 'Karl der Große', 157, see also *HE* (Plummer) 2, p. 346.

<sup>42</sup> This error of title is also to be found in the *Annales Cambriae s.a. 714* recording the death of Pippin II, *Pipinus maior rex Francorum obiit in Christo*; J. Williams, ed. *Annales Cambriae*, RS Vol. 20 (London, 1860), p. 9. The *ALf* however, record Martel's title as *princeps*, *s.a. 741*; Levison, 'Die "Annales Lindisfarnenses et Dunelmenses"', p. 81.

<sup>43</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 51 and *ASC* (Plummer) 1, pp. 52-3, *s.a. 784 (recte 786)*. Cynewulf's presence was recorded in the first council held by the papal legates in Mercia in that year; *Alc. Ep.* no. 3, p. 20.

<sup>44</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 1, pp. 46-50.

<sup>45</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 2, pp. cii-iv and *EHD* 1, p. 175 n. 5.

suggests that its author had misunderstood a correctly dated annal and not a manuscript of the southern recension *ASC* or its immediate archetype which had backdated that event by two years. The implication must be that the author of this *CB* annal had access to a correctly dated version of the annal which was subsequently to become incorporated into the southern recension of the *ASC*, possibly its archetype.<sup>46</sup> This observation frees the *CB* from necessarily belonging to a date after the ‘publication’ of the *ASC* in the later ninth century. Post 734, however, the *CB* and the *HReg* are not identical, yet the verbal relationship between the two is sufficient to suggest that they were evolving along separate but closely related paths (see diagram above, p. 93). They share details of phrases and display common interests, for example in foreign events (Pictish and Frankish), implying that the authors of both had access to similar informants.

Ultimately, conclusive decisions about the date of compilation of the *CB* in its final form must wait for an edition which collates all the known versions of that text. It is possible, on the available evidence, to suppose that the archetype of the *CB* might have remained in England until any time prior to the twelfth century (the date of the earliest surviving manuscript copy) in order to collect the 757 annal from the *ASC* and the 741 mistake only subsequently to be transported abroad. But such an analysis must explain why the chronicle stops in 766 and why it is found only in m-type copies of the *HE*, neither of which seem to have had any direct impact on copies of that text produced in England after the mid eighth century.<sup>47</sup>

#### *HReg* and its related texts (*s. a.* 732-4):

As noted above, the annals found in *MA*, *CB* and V.24 (m-type) are incorporated into the earliest entries in the eighth-century section of the *HReg* (see Table 2). The

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<sup>46</sup> It has been argued that the Annals of St Neot’s too preserve a correct chronology based upon its compiler’s access to a correctly dated chronicle similar in content to the *ASC*, possibly a version unaffected by the chronological dislocation. This idea has been downplayed in the latest edition of that text, with the editor arguing that the St Neot’s compiler had a sufficient interest in chronology to rectify the error which he found in the copy of the *ASC* available to him; Dumville and Lapidge, *The Annals of St Neots*, pp. xxxii-vi.

<sup>47</sup> This problem is implicit in Mynor’s (contradictory) writings on the text, *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. lxix, 575 n. 9.

importance of this observation is made clear when it is realised that the manuscripts which contained the *MA* and the archetype of the *CB* almost certainly left these shores during the eighth century. The m-type recension of the *HE* to which those manuscripts belonged, played no further part in the subsequent development of the *HE* in England. Apart from the Tiberius Bede (which was later corrected to agree with the c-type) there is no surviving trace of the m-type readings in any copy of the *HE* to have been produced in medieval England. Equally, the m-type predominates on the continent, presumably sprung from manuscripts such as those which bore the *MA* and the *CB* archetype. The *HReg* annals for 732-4, therefore, represent the survival of the *MA* and *CB* annals in England long after those texts had been lost to the continent. The implication is that a chronicle existed in eighth-century Northumbria from which the *MA* and *CB* drew (or contributed) information. The survival of the *CB* and *MA* readings for the years 731-4 in the *HReg* indicates that the data existed in a format independent of the Moore Manuscript and the *CB* archetype which travelled to the continent.

It is also to be noted that the *HReg* is not entirely true to the dating of the *MA*, the annal for 731 in the latter is found under 732 in the *HReg*. There are also some pieces of information which are found in the *HReg* but not in the *MA*. For example, *HReg* 732 has the information about the death of Cyniberht, Bishop of Lindsey which is only elsewhere found in the *CB* under the same year.<sup>48</sup> However, the *HReg* omits the reference to the election of Ecgberht as bishop of York which is the only annal which is found in both the *CB* and the *MA*. This omission in the *HReg* could be accounted for by the chronological dislocation of the *MA* for 731 annal into the *HReg* 732 entry. *HReg* 732 also includes an additional piece of information about the deaths of two otherwise unknown men called Alric and Esc, dating their deaths to the day of the month and week. Blair noted that *v feria* (Thursday) fell on 23rd August in 731 not 732.<sup>49</sup> This chronological dislocation mirrors the error about Ceowulf and Acca in the same annal. However, the closeness of the wording

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<sup>48</sup> See Table 2. Cynibert's death was dated to 731 by S. Keynes, 'Episcopal succession in Anglo-Saxon England' in *The Handbook of British Chronology*, 3rd edn., eds. E.B. Fryde *et al.* (London, 1986), p. 219.

<sup>49</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', p. 94.

between the common components of the *MA* and the *HReg* makes it certain that they were based on a common source. The dislocation of a year displayed by the *HReg* annal for 732 for example, could be a simple error of transcription by any of the scribes who worked on the text before it was finally copied as NA4 into CCC MS 139 in the 1160s. The *HReg* incorporates the 731 *MA* about the fate of King Ceolwulf and Bishop Acca *s.a.* 732 after recording the death of Berhtwald, Archbishop of Canterbury and the accession of Tatwine.

A further point which links the *HReg* to the m-type recension typified by the Moore Manuscript is the *HReg* 732 entry which dates the information about the archbishops of Canterbury in relation to the regnal years of Æthelbald, King of Mercia. As noted above, the reference to the regnal years of Æthelbald is only found in copies of the m-type *HE*.<sup>50</sup> The alternative c-type *HE* which was dominant in the British Isles omitted the Mercian clause and included at this point annals almost identical to the *MA* for 733 and 734 instead. This implies that the prototype of the *HReg* had access to either a copy of the first draft, m-type *HE*, or a copy of the source which supplied the m-type *HE*. Once again, it is possible to think of the m-type annalistic readings surviving in an alternative format to the *HE* from which they were imported into the *HReg* chronicle. Again this evidence argues for the continued existence of a chronicle source in northern England which was independent of the c-type *HE* tradition and which reflected the older one represented by the Moore Manuscript.

This conclusion is reinforced by further examination of the 733 entries. The c2-type *HE* dates the eclipse to *XVIII Kalends* of September, whereas the *MA* and *HReg* version has the correct date which is a day earlier, *XIX Kl.*<sup>51</sup> *Sub anno* 733, the

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<sup>50</sup> There is another reference to the death of Berhtwald at V.23. Here the m-type recension reads *die Iduum Ianuarium* whereas the c-type has *die v Iduum Ianuarium*. It is significant that an earlier section of the *HReg* (section 3; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 28-9) quotes a c-type text for this event, indicating that the person who added section 3 to the *HReg* (Byrhtferth in Lapidge's and Hart's analyses) had access to a standard English-type text of the *HE*. In this respect it is notable that the *ASC* NR also preserves the *HE* m-type reading for the death of Berhtwald, which implies either that it too had access to the independent source which supplied the Moore Manuscript, or that it took its information from an m-type *HE*; *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 45.

<sup>51</sup> The *Chronicle of Melrose* has several readings which agree with the *HE* c2-type texts including this misdating of the solar eclipse; Schöve, *Chronology of Eclipses*, pp. 150-1.

*HReg* reading also follows the m-type text; *eclipsis facta est*, and *horrendo scuto uideretur*. This contrast with the c-type manuscripts in which the word *est* is omitted and *scuto* reads *sicut*.<sup>52</sup> The observation that the early annals of the *HReg* parallel closely not just the *MA* annals but prefer the *MA* readings to those included in the c-type *HE* versions of the same annals, is in direct contrast to other quotations from the *HE* found in other sections of the *HReg* as well as later interpolations into the eighth-century annals in the *HReg* which rely on c-type recensions of the *HE*.<sup>53</sup> The implication must be that either the archetype of the *HReg* took the information for its 731-734 entries directly from the Moore Manuscript itself or from an identical copy which included the extra annals or that the scribe of the Moore Manuscript copied these annals from an independent source which also supplied the ancestor of the *HReg*.

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<sup>52</sup> The chronicle of John of Worcester contains the account of the eclipses in 733 and 734, which the most recent editor of that text notes as having been derived from the 'CB'. This statement is confusing since (as Table 2 shows) the annals for 733-4 do not occur in the *CB*, but only in the *MA* and the c-type recension of the *HE* where they are inserted after notice of the obit of Berhtwald *s.a.* 731 in Book V.24. McGurk's terminology implies that a copy of the *CB* existed in Worcester in the early twelfth century, which as noted above, is unlikely. It is far more probable to suppose that John took the text of these annals from a c-type *HE*. However, the variant reading *sicut/scuto s.a.* 733 shows that copies of John's work had access either to the *MA* or more likely to the *HReg* or the text which supplied it. The links between the Worcester and Durham scriptorium are well known and thus could provide a context for the transfer of such annalistic information in the earlier twelfth century; R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, eds, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, Vol. 2 (Oxford, 1995), pp. 182-3 note 4. For a discussion on the links of John's chronicle with Durham see M. Brett, 'John of Worcester and his contemporaries', in *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages*, eds, R. H. C. Davis and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (Oxford, 1981), 101-126.

<sup>53</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 28-9 (Blair's section 3) and see above note 50. This section which quotes from *HE* V.23 and 24 shows evidence of use of a c-type copy of the *HE* like the Durham manuscript DCL MS B.II.35 (which has an additional chapter V.25 containing the information about Bede's life which is elsewhere included in V.24); Blair, 'Some observations', 85-6. This has important implications for the place of composition of the *HReg* compilation. Also, the death of Ceolwulf in 764 is amplified by a c-type quotation from the Preface to the *HE* which uses the unusual reading *meditaturum* for *meditandum*. This reading is found only in BL Cotton MS Tiberius C. ii, a later eighth-century Southumbrian copy of the *HE* and an important example of the c-type recension of that text; *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), p. xlii and Blair, 'Some observations', 90-1. The *HReg* annal for 798 also incorporates an interpolated quotation from *HE* IV.17 about the Synod of Hatfield in 679. This recension from which this quotation derives is more difficult to pin down especially since it contains an extension to the declaration and confession, longer than that found in the *HE*.

**Section B) NA1: evidence for the keeping of chronicles at York in the eighth-century post 734.**

The evidence suggests that the *HReg* annals for the years 732-4 represent a conflation of several distinct but related chronicle sources which were being collected in Northumbria at that time, one of which was certainly the *MA* or its exemplar (see Diagram and Table 2 above, pp. 93, 100). The origin of the Moore Manuscript certainly has a bearing on the place of collection of the *MA*, and through their connection with the *HReg*, also on the place of collection of the more extended chronicle of eighth-century events which was eventually to become incorporated into CCCC MS 139 as NA4. York has been suggested as a possible place of origin for the Moore Manuscript and by implication, the *MA* too. Such a suggestion necessarily remains circumstantial, but further evidence in support of York as the place of collection can be derived from analysis of the subsequent chronicle of later eighth-century events in the *HReg* which continues the description of events in the early 730s discussed above.

Many of the entries in the *HReg* eighth-century chronicle are dated closely to the day of the month on which a particular event occurred. This enhances the impression of accuracy and contemporary notation of not just those events recorded with a close date but also reflecting well on those which surround them. Of particular note is the annal for 796 which has five closely dated events including the elaborate creation of Eardwulf as king of Northumbria on 26 May 796. Blair noted that eleven of the thirty-four such dated events can be cross-checked, and again the *HReg* eighth-century chronicle comes out well under such scrutiny.<sup>54</sup> Particularly important in this respect are the astronomical observations. References to eclipses can be checked to a very great degree of accuracy. Two eclipses, one solar and one lunar, recorded in the *HReg s.a.* 733 and 734 are also in *MA* and indeed the c-type version of the *HE* V.24 chronicle which incorporated these two annals (see Table 2). It is noteworthy that they all agree in one error, writing *ii kl. februarii* for *ix kl. februarii* the latter of which would give the correct date for the lunar eclipse in January 734. The

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<sup>54</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', 94-6.

implication again is that all are based on an incorrect exemplar. The description of the solar eclipse in 733 as partial is exactly what would have been seen at the Northumbrian latitude.<sup>55</sup> The eclipse would have been total in southern England. The author of the 733 eclipse as preserved in the *MA*, the c-type *HE* manuscripts and the *HReg* must therefore have made his observation in Northumbria rather than in a southern monastery like Canterbury which as is known from Bede's preface, was a major source of information for the *HE*. Blair also commented that some of these closely dated events imply that the compiler(s) of the early material were dating the start of the year in September as opposed to January which was the practice favoured by the *ASC*. This might account for the occasional chronological discrepancy between the Northern Recension of the *ASC* and the *HReg* chronicle. The eclipse recorded *s.a.* 756 in the *HReg* is particularly interesting in this regard. It records a unique reference to the movement of a *lucida stella*, the planet Jupiter, from one side of the moon to the other during the eclipse. The eclipse itself happened on 23 November 755, but again the discrepancy between the two sources could be due to the use of the September date for the start of the year.<sup>56</sup>

#### Evidence from the Durham *Liber Vitae*:

Apart from the Moore Manuscript there is one other early source in a near-contemporary, Northumbrian manuscript which serves to highlight the degree of detail found in the *HReg* and which helps to pinpoint further those parts of the chronicle which are of eighth-century composition date. The Durham *Liber Vitae* (*LVD*) is a list of personal names (now numbering some three thousand) for whom

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<sup>55</sup> The *MA* and *HReg* description of this particular eclipse preserves the correct date whereas that preserved by the c2-type *HE* is a day out. The Chronicle of Melrose has several of these c2-type readings in preference to the m-type ones which are prevalent in the *HReg*; Schove, *Chronology of Eclipses*, pp. 150-1.

<sup>56</sup> This is an event which would have happened very infrequently and as such is thought to be a unique reference to the phenomenon in all recorded descriptions of astronomical events; F.R. Stephenson (pers. comm.) and Schove, *Chronology of Eclipses*, pp. 154-5. Opinions on the date at which the year was started in these chronicles differs. Levison was the great protagonist arguing that Bede employed Christmas as the start of the year; Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 265-79 where he argues against Poole and Stenton who preferred a September starting date; R. L. Poole, *Studies in Chronology and History* (Oxford, 1934), p. 9 and Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 76, 129, 684. On the latter argument see also Blair, *The Moore Bede*, p. 30.

prayers were to be said at the appropriate point in a church service.<sup>57</sup> The earliest section of the book (fols 15r-41r) is dated c. 840 and consists of several folios of names written in an Insular half uncial script alternately in gold and silver ink by a single scribe on parchment originally tinted purple.<sup>58</sup> Books of this quality were undoubtedly rare and precious items, although other such books are known to have been available in eighth-century Northumbria. Wilfrid, when bishop of York, ordered a copy of the Gospels for his new foundation at Ripon, to be written *de auro purissimo in membranis depurpuratis coloratis*.<sup>59</sup> The original provenance of the *LVD* is debated but its later history is firmly fixed with the Cathedral Priory at Durham, where it was updated by scribes associated with Durham from the early twelfth century until the Dissolution in 1539. Its association with Durham has led many scholars to believe that the original section of the book was written at Lindisfarne and passed down through the centuries with the treasures of the community of St Cuthbert.<sup>60</sup> However, a Wearmouth/Jarrow provenance is also possible because of the prominence given to monks and abbots from that monastery

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<sup>57</sup> BL Cotton MS Domitian vii. A facsimile edition was produced by A. H. Thompson, ed. *Liber Vitae Ecclesiae Dunelmensis*, Sur. Soc., Vol. 136 (London, 1923); transcript edition, J. Stevenson, ed. *Liber Vitae Ecclesiae Dunelmensis*, Sur. Soc. Vol. 13 (London, 1841). A more recent edition is to be found in J. Gerchow, *Die Gedenkübelieferung der Angelsachsen* (Berlin and New York, 1988), pp. 304-20. See also, A. G. Watson. *Catalogue of dated and datable manuscripts c.700-1600 in the Department of Manuscripts, The British Library*, Vol. 1 (London, 1979), no. 527, p. 101 and Webster and Backhouse, no. 97, p. 132.

<sup>58</sup> This relative date is obtained primarily from the name of the last three kings mentioned in the *regum vel ducum* list. They are Ecgberht of Wessex, Eoghenan of the Picts and Eanred of Northumbria, all of whom are thought to have died c. 840.

<sup>59</sup> VW (Colgrave), ch. 17, pp. 36-7.

<sup>60</sup> The late sixteenth-century *Rites of Durham* contain a note which evidently refers to the *LVD* and the belief that the book was indeed a remnant of the Lindisfarne library. The *Rites* describe the *LVD* sitting on the altar of the cathedral, 'containing the names of all the benefactors towards St Cuthbert's church from the first original foundation thereof'; J. T. Fowler, ed. *The Rites of Durham*, Sur. Soc., Vol. 107 (London, 1902), 16-17. A Lindisfarne provenance was also pursued by E. Briggs, *Religion, Society and Politics and the Liber Vitae of Durham*, unpublished Ph.D. (Leeds, 1987). Brown though, was more circumspect about the origins of the book; M. Brown, 'The Lindisfarne Scriptorium from the late seventh to the early ninth century' in *St Cuthbert*, eds, G. Bonner et al., 151-63, 162.

in the early section of the book.<sup>61</sup> Whatever its precise place of origin might have been, both the names and the script indicate that it was written within Northumbria. The book is important in this context because it records the names of men and women who were significant to that monastic community grouped under fairly tight headings, in approximate chronological order. A large number of the Northumbrian names in the *HReg* are recorded in the *LVD* under the appropriate headings. This enhances the impression of accuracy and detail in the eighth-century chronicle preserved in the *HReg*. The names which occur in the *LVD* and in that *HReg* chronicle are given below:<sup>62</sup>

1 . NOMINA REGUM VEL DUCUM : (fols 15r-v)

**Eadberct (23)** : King of Northumbria 737-758; *HReg s.a.* 737, 750, 756, 758 and 768 (obit in York *quondam rex tunc autem clericus...apud Eboracum feliciter spiritum emisit ad superos .xiii. kal. Septembris*, see also section 6 below).

**Osuulf (37)** : King of Northumbria 758/9; *HReg s.a.* 758.

**Cyniuulf (54) and Alduulf (56)** : two of the *duces* murdered by Æthelred in 778; *HReg s.a.* 778.

**Earduulf (55)** : *Dux*, murdered during Æthelred's reign; *HReg s.a.* 775 (in preference to the king of Northumbria 796-806, because of the relative chronology in the *LVD* lists).<sup>63</sup>

**Beornuini (66) | Beorn (98)** : *patricius* of King Ælfwald, burnt at Seletune on *ix Kl Januarii*, 780.<sup>64</sup>

**Edilred (72)** : King of Northumbria 774-8 and 790-6; *HReg s.a.* 774, 778, 779, 790-3, 796, 798-9.

<sup>61</sup> Webster and Backhouse, p. 132. The suggested Wearmouth/Jarrow provenance may reflect the fact that we can identify more named individuals from that monastery than from other Northumbrian institutions of this date; Gerchow, *Die Gedenküberlieferung*, pp. 119-31.

<sup>62</sup> The titles of the sub-lists are those given in the *LVD*, and the arabic numerals show the place of a name within its sub-list according to the Gerchow edition. The orthography of the names is that of the *LVD*.

<sup>63</sup> Note that the names of three of Æthelred's victims Cyniuulf, Earduulf and Alduulf are found together in the *LVD* (nos 54-6). That the names of such men were remembered in the *LVD* may reveal clues about the political affiliation of the monastery to which it once belonged.

<sup>64</sup> The *HReg* name is Beorn; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p.47. In the *LVD* two possible names which equate with this are given; Beornuini may be the better of the two because it fits the approximate chronological order maintained by the *LVD* better than Beorn which comes later in the list.

- Torctmund (74)** : *Dux*, murdered Alhred the killer of King Æthelred, *HReg s.a.* 799.
- Aelfuald (78)** : King of Northumbria *rex pius et iustus* 779-8; *HReg s.a.* 779-81, 783-4, 788, 791.
- Uada (91)** : *Dux*, conspired with the murders of Æthelred in battle against King Eardwulf and fled after being defeated by him; *HReg s.a.* 798.
- Brorda (57)** : *Merciorum princeps*, *HReg s.a.* 799.

## 2 . NOMINA REGINARUM ET ABBATISSARUM : (fols 16r-17v)

- Eðilðryth (98)** : Queen of King Æthelwald, married at Catterick *Kl. Nov.* 762; *HReg s.a.* 762.
- Uerburg (90)** : Queen of Ceolred of Mercia; *HReg s.a.* 783  
*quondam regina Merciorum, tunc vero abbatissa defuncta . est* 783.<sup>65</sup>
- Ricðryth (74)** : *Regina dudum, iam tunc abbatissa* obit; *HReg s.a.* 786.
- Ælfled (121)** : Queen of Æthelred and daughter of Offa, marriage at Catterick *iii Kl. Oct*; *HReg s.a.* 792.
- Osgeofu (198)** : Queen of King Alchred, married 768; *HReg s.a.* 768.<sup>66</sup>

## 3. NOMINA ANACHORITARUM : (fol. 18r)

- Balthere presbyter (13)** : Hermit of Tynningham, E. Lothian, obit *HReg s.a.* 756.<sup>67</sup>
- Echha presbyter (17)** : *Anachorita feliciter in Cric obiit*; *HReg s.a.* 767.

## 4. NOMINA ABBATUM GRADUS PRESBYTERATUS <sup>68</sup> : (fol. 18v)

- Frehelm presbyter (20)** : *Presbyter et abbas obiit*; *HReg s.a.* 764.

<sup>65</sup> She is described as Ceolred's queen in *ASC E s.a.* 782; *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 53. However, Ceolred died in 716, and her death is placed *s.a.* 783. Might this error in the *HReg* and *ASC* be based on a faulty *NA*?

<sup>66</sup> The *HReg* calls her *Osgearn*. However, the *LVD* spelling of her name is corroborated by a letter written in her name and that of her husband which was sent to Lul, Archbishop of Mainz, requesting amongst other things, a favourable referral of their names to Charlemagne; *EHD* 1 no. 187, p. 833-834; Tangl, *Bonifatius und Lullus*, no. 121 p. 257-8 and Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, p. 434.

<sup>67</sup> The *LDE* records his death in exactly the same florid style in Book II.2; *Sy. Op. Om.* 1, p. 48.

<sup>68</sup> One entry from the *CB* also fits into this category of the *LVD*; Herefrid *vir Dei*, Abbot of Lindisfarne, recipient of Bede's *Life of St Cuthbert* who died in 747; *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. 574-5 and Colgrave, ed. *Two Lives of St Cuthbert* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 270-89.

- Botuini presbyter (33)** : Abbot of Ripon obit; *HReg s.a.* 786.  
**Albercht presbyter (35)** : Abbot of Ripon election and obit;  
*HReg s.a.* 786-7.  
**Sigred presbyter (43)** : Abbot of Ripon ordained; *HReg s.a.* 787.

5. NOMINA ABBATUM GRADUS DIACONUS : (fol. 19v)

- Alchuini diaconus (7)** mentioned under his pseudonym *Albinus*;  
*HReg s.a.* 792.

6. NOMINA ABBATUM : (fols 20r-v)

- Herebald (27)** Abbot of Tynemouth obit 745.<sup>69</sup>  
**Eadberct rex (50)** : King Eadberht, also recorded under section 1.  
**Eðilwald rex (62)** King Æthelwald Moll, deposed at *Wincanheale*,  
*HReg s.a.* 765.  
**Suiðuulf (54)** : *Abbas obiit* ; *HReg s.a.* 772.  
**Uulfhaeth (55)** : abbot of Beverly obit; *HReg s.a.* 773.  
**Eduini (77)** : *quondam dux tunc vero...abbas obiit xviii Kl. Feb.*;  
*HReg s.a.* 801.  
**Osbold (87)** : *quondam dux et patricius et ad tempus rex tunc vero abbas*, died and buried at York; *HReg s.a.* 799.

7. Nomina praesbyterorum : (fols 21v-24r)

8. Nomina diaconorum : (fol. 26r)

9. NOMINA CLERICORUM : (fols 27r-36r)

- Alric (609)** : *Quondam dux tunc clericus in Eboraca civitate defunctus est*; *HReg s.a.* 796.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *HE* V.6 says that c. 686 he was the clerk of John of Beverly and afterwards abbot of Tynemouth; *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. 464-5.

<sup>70</sup> The identical wording records the death of a man named Æthelheard in the *HReg s.a.*794; *quondam dux tunc clericus in Eboraca civitate defunctus est*, but gives a date of 1st August for his death rather than the place in which he died (as with Alric); *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 56-7. Unlike Alric, Æthelheard's name is not found in the list of clerics in the *LVD*. It is found in the list of Abbots (fol. 20r, no. 13), Priests (fol. 21v, no. 41) and Monks (fol. 42r, no. 657 and fol. 44r, no. 948). The *ASC* (DE) also records the death of Æthelheard in 794. It gives the same date of death and says that he was an *ealdorman* (which equates with the Latin *dux*) thereby implying that they were derived from the same archetype. It is possible that Æthelheard was one of the other grades of cleric referred to in the *LVD* or simply that the copyist of the *HReg* or one of its forbears transcribed the rather formulaic phrase which described the death of Alric.

Particularly interesting is the *LVD* record of kings and ‘dukes’ (*regum vel ducum*). Notable omissions from amongst the later eighth-century Northumbrian kings are the names of Alhred (765-74) and his son Osred (788-90). This is all the more marked given that the name of his wife Osgifu is mentioned in the list of Queens and Abbesses. She was of thoroughly royal descent, being the daughter of Oswulf who had been king in 758, granddaughter to Eadberht (738-58), sister to Ælfwald (778-88) and mother of Osred (788-9). Through Eadberht (who died in 768, the same year as her marriage to Alhred) Osgifu was descended from the seventh-century Bernician royal dynasty of Oswald and Oswiu, which is amply represented in the *LVD*.<sup>71</sup> By contrast, Alhred’s claim to descent from the traditionally royal line of Ida seems to have been doubted. Recording his accession in 765, the *HReg* says of Alhred *prosapia Idae regis, ut quidam dicunt*. It seems likely that Alhred married into the Bernician family in order to enhance his claim to royal status. Yet it is possible that the scepticism voiced by the *HReg* regarding the legitimacy of Alhred’s claim to the Northumbrian throne is reflected in the *LVD* by the absence of his name and that of his son.

Another strange omission from the *LVD* king list is the name of Ceolwulf, the king to whom Bede dedicated the *HE*. The name *Ceoluuf* is recorded in the king section on fol. 15v (no. 69) but out of the approximate chronological order which the list preserves. This is a strange omission if the *LVD* really was a Lindisfarne book, given that Ceolwulf retired there as a monk in 758 and that he was subsequently venerated as a saint by that community. It may be that King Ceolwulf is the monk recorded on fol. 37r (no. 51), but if so it is strange that his name was not highlighted further as were the names of other once-royal clergymen. The name of Eadbert who resigned the kingship in 758 is recorded both under the king section and also under the rank of abbot with the suffix *rex* added to clarify his status. The *HReg s.a.* 768 records his death and burial at York, but refers to him as *clericus* and not as an

<sup>71</sup> Her royal descent is perhaps reflected in the by the *Os*-prefix to her name. This would explain Osred’s name. The aristocratic connections of the Os prefix are underlined by the name Oshere which is found on the Anglian helmet from Coppergate, York which is one of only three to have survived from the Anglo-Saxon period in England; D. Tweddle, *The Anglian helmet from 16-22 Coppergate in The Archaeology of York, the small finds*, Vol. 17.viii (London, 1992), pp. 1012-15.

abbot.<sup>72</sup> Also included in the section on abbots is the name of Æthelwald, again as an abbot but further defined as *rex*. The evidence of the *LVD* suggests that we should regard this admission into a monastic life as the fate of Æthelwald after he was deposed as king of Northumbria at Wincanheale in 765. The *LVD* record is indeed backed up by the Irish *Annals of Tigernac s.a. 764* which record the fate of Æthelwald under his cognomen Moll; *Moll rex Saxonum clericus efficitur*.<sup>73</sup> Eardwulf, king from 796-806 is also not definitely recorded, the entry of that name in this section is chronologically more likely to be that of his father whom the *HReg* records having died in 775.

Evidence of international political connections with the monastery to which the early part of the *LVD* belonged is also visible through the inclusion of the names of three Pictish kings *Unust* (mentioned in *HReg s.a. 750* and *759*), *Custantin* (c. 789-820) and *Uoenan* (836-839) (nos 43, 80, 100 respectively).<sup>74</sup> Significant too is the inclusion of the name *Karlus* (79) which could refer either to Charles Martel or to Charlemagne. The position of the name in the relative chronology implies that the latter is the more likely. There is a direct Lindisfarne connection with Charlemagne which could well explain the inclusion of his name in such a book if indeed it did belong to that monastery. Alcuin when writing to the Lindisfarne community after the Viking raid on their property in 793, told them that he intended to ask Charlemagne to intervene with the piratical kidnappers who had captured several of the the Lindisfarne brethren during the raid.<sup>75</sup> This detail accords with the *HReg* description of the raid which records that several of the monks had been carried away

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<sup>72</sup> *ASC* versions A-F *s.a. 738* record the fact that he was buried alongside his brother Ecgberht in the same chapel in York. His death is also recorded in the *ASC D/E* under the correct year 768. See also Symeon's *LDE*, Book II.3; *Sy. Op. Om.* 1, pp. 48-9.

<sup>73</sup> C. D. D. O'Connor, ed. *Annals of Tigernac*, *Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores Veteres*, Vol. 4.ii (Buckingham, 1814-26), p. 257.

<sup>74</sup> This interest in Pictish matters is mirrored in the *HReg* and the *CB*. Cynoth whose obit is recorded in the *HReg s.a. 775* is not, however, mentioned in the *LVD*, *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 46.

<sup>75</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 20, pp. 56-8.

in chains by the pirates.<sup>76</sup> Another name in the *LVD* with Frankish connections is *Torctmund* (no. 74) who avenged the murder of King Æthelred (*HReg s.a.* 799) and for whom Alcuin once more intervened with Charlemagne on his behalf as an exile in Francia.<sup>77</sup> *Mægenfrith* (no. 77) also sounds like a Frankish name. Chronologically, there is a Frankish *Mægenfrith* who fits, that is, Charlemagne's treasurer with whom Alcuin was in frequent contact as his *carissimum amicum*.<sup>78</sup> It is initially difficult to conceive of a reason why <sup>the name of</sup> a Frankish *dux* would be incorporated within the *Liber Vitae* of a Northumbrian monastery. However, the *ARF* (Rev) for 791 states that *Mægenfrith* was a major player in the Avar campaign. As Charlemagne's treasurer he is also a likely candidate for the official who was responsible for the distribution of the treasure hoard of the Avars after their defeat in 795. Was the monastery which recorded *Mægenfrith*'s name an intended beneficiary of the treasure, recording his name in gratitude? As already noted in Chapter 1, some of this treasure was to be sent to Northumbria, to King Æthelred and to the metropolitan see, that is, to York. Is it possible that York was the place where the early section of the *LVD* was compiled, remembering in its list of benefactors of the community the names of both Charlemagne and his treasurer who had targeted York as a beneficiary of the spoils of the war against the Avars? A key connection in this Frankish/*LVD* context is the name of Alcuin which is included correctly as an abbot of the rank of deacon. There are only nine such names in the *LVD*. Alcuin was made abbot of St Martin's at Tours in 794 and so the inclusion of his name in the *LVD* (or its archetype) must have been made after his promotion at that date.

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<sup>76</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 55, *nonullos secum victos assumunt*.

<sup>77</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no 231 p. 356 [8-9] and no 232 p. 377 [2]. The latter letter is addressed to Archbishop Eanbald II in York, but refers to the letter which he had written to Charlemagne on behalf of *Torctmund* and his fellow travellers (Æthelhard of Canterbury, Cyneberht bishop of the West-Saxons, another unnamed bishop and a man named Ceolmund) to ensure ease of travel; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 62.

<sup>78</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 211, p. 351 [26] with reference to his death in 801. Also, letter 111, pp. 159-162, where Alcuin refers to *Megenfrid* as *regalis palatii arcario* p. 159, line 22 and *dispensator thesaurorum*, p. 161, line 19. The *ARF* (Rev) refer to him as *Caroli camerarius* in the context of the 791 Avar campaign where he is one of Charlemagne's military commanders; *ARF* (Kurze), p. 89.

### Information concerning bishops:

One of the striking features of the *HReg* chronicle is the amount of information recorded about a wide range of Anglo-Saxon bishoprics. Again, the accurate recording of obits and episcopal successions, often to the day of the month, reflects near contemporary annotation. The *HReg* annals about eighth-century events describe in some depth episcopal events in the dioceses of Canterbury, York, Hexham, Whithorn, Lindisfarne, Lindsey and Lichfield. Particularly noticeable are the detailed and comprehensive references to the Northumbrian bishoprics of York and Hexham whereas that for Lindisfarne is complete only as far as the resignation of Cynewulf in 783. York has four out of eight references dated to the day of the month, Hexham has six of thirteen episcopal references closely dated. None of the Lindisfarne episcopal information has a close date attached. The succession of the bishops of Whithorn is also well recorded, omitting only the change from Pecthelm to Frithuwald in 735.<sup>79</sup> One of the Whithorn references, that of the death of Pectwine is dated to the day in 777.<sup>80</sup> This close contact with episcopal affairs to the north parallels the Pictish regnal information recorded in the *HReg* chronicle and indeed in the *LVD*. Rather more incidental references are made to some of the bishops of Selsey, Hereford, Sherborne, London, Elmham, Rochester and Worcester, none of which go beyond the year 745, except the reference to the death of Hathuberht, bishop of London in 801. Also noteworthy are the references to the Anglo-Saxon bishopric of Mayo in Ireland (768, 773, 786), for which the *HReg* is a rare source.

The extensive episcopal information in this section of the *HReg* contrasts markedly with the *LVD*. A glaring omission from the latter manuscript is a list of bishops to be remembered in the community which owned the manuscript. It is probable that this information was maintained in a separate document. This does not mean that the source of the episcopal information in the *HReg* was an episcopal list of the type

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<sup>79</sup> This event is recorded in the *CB s.a. 737*; *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. 572-3.

<sup>80</sup> The *ASC* NR recorded his accession in 762 dated *XVI Kl. Aug. at Ælfet*, which it has been suggested, could be Elvet in Durham; *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 51. For a discussion of the possible location of Ælfet and its possible identification with the monastery of Donamuthe see W. Richardson, 'The Venerable Bede and a lost saxon monastery in Yorkshire', *YAJ* Vol. 57 (1985), 15-22 and also R. J. Brentano, 'Whithorn and York', *SHR* Vol. 32 (1953), 144-6.

extant today, since these do not record the dates of accession, death or any other information about a bishop, just the order of his episcopacy. The implication is that the original chronicler had access to a more descriptive source or sources about various Anglo-Saxon bishoprics and one which was more than a calendar which might only record the day of the year in which a bishop died or was remembered. However, in the same way as with the *LVD*, contemporary manuscripts of bishop-lists can provide a useful means of cross-reference and act as pointers to the contemporaneity of parts of <sup>the</sup> *HReg*. Episcopal lists which give no more than the names of bishops in chronological order according to dioceses, are found in several extant manuscripts, one of which dates to c. 812, that is, close to the proposed date of the original *HReg* chronicle and the suggested date of the *LVD*. This manuscript which is now BL Cotton MS Vespasian B.VI, which also contains the complex Anglian regnal genealogies, refers to the first bishop of Leicester as *Totta*.<sup>81</sup> All other bishop-lists and historical sources, bar the *Chronicon ex chronicis* of John of Worcester refer to this bishop as *Torhthelm*.<sup>82</sup> The *HReg* chronicle agrees with the Vespasian B.VI reading, when recording Totta's consecration in 737 and his death in 764 but not with any of the other mutual peculiarities common to Vespasian B.VI and John of Worcester.<sup>83</sup> The implication is that the original NA1 chronicler had access to another episcopal source, which followed the early tradition of Vespasian B.VI with regard to the Leicester bishop. In answer to the criticism that the name could have been changed by a twelfth-century author at Durham after having obtained access to the John chronicle,<sup>84</sup> none of the other bishops' names have been changed to suit the John and Vespasian idiosyncrasies nor do the *HReg* names agree with the only other episcopal list known to have been in Durham in the twelfth century over

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<sup>81</sup> R. I. Page, 'Anglo-Saxon Episcopal Lists, Part III', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, Vol. 10 (1966), p. 5 and D. N. Dumville, 'The Anglian collection of royal genealogies and regnal lists', *Anglo-Saxon England* Vol. 5 (1978), 23-50, 24-5, 30-1.

<sup>82</sup> Darlington and McGurk, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, pp. 184-5.

<sup>83</sup> R. I. Page, 'Anglo-Saxon Episcopal Lists, Parts I and II', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, Vol. 9 (1965), 71-95, 87; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 32, 42.

<sup>84</sup> As in the scenario perceived by Brett, 'John of Worcester and his contemporaries', 119-121.

and above any other such list.<sup>85</sup>

To conclude this section it can be seen that a series of documents which survive in near contemporary manuscripts (the Moore Manuscript, *LVD* and Vespasian B.VI) serve to highlight the degree and detail of the eighth-century evidence which is preserved in the *HReg*. That section of the *HReg* can therefore be regarded as preserving well a chronicle which was written in the eighth century. The next question relates to the place at which that chronicle was compiled? It may be that the Frankish evidence in the *HReg* can provide a clue. The evidence is in some ways circumstantial, and the argument even circular, yet it has been noted that both the Moore Manuscript and the *LVD* have connections with Francia, the former being part of the collection in Charlemagne's Palace Library, the latter containing references to Charlemagne, Mægenfrith and Alcuin. The common factor between all of these is Alcuin and through him the attention focuses on his Northumbrian community at York. As Parkes pointed out, it is tempting to believe that the Moore Manuscript was taken to Francia by Alcuin on one of his journeys there to collect books for the understocked library at Charlemagne's palace.<sup>86</sup> If this hypothesis is correct, it could imply that the Moore Manuscript originated in York and following from that, that annals upon which the *MA* were based were being collected at that centre of learning.

### The evidence for York.

In the eighth-century section of the *HReg* chronicle the episcopal succession of the York archdiocese is complete. It does not record Ecgberht's accession to the bishopric in 732 (this being the only component of the *MA* omitted from the *HReg*) but does record his receipt of the pallium in 735, *primus post Paulinam in*

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<sup>85</sup> That is, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 183. For a transcript of its lists see Page, 'Anglo-Saxon Episcopal Lists, Part III', 8-12.

<sup>86</sup> Parkes, *The scriptorium*, p. 27, n. 35 and Godman, *Alcuin, The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York*, pp. 130-1.

*archiepiscopatum confirmatus est.*<sup>87</sup> From here onwards the *HReg* chronicle contains references not just to the obit and succession of each new incumbent of the metropolitan see but also records when each bishop received the pallium which inferred archiepiscopal status. For example Ælberht was ordained bishop on 24th April 767 and received his pallium in 773.<sup>88</sup> Eanbald I was ordained as bishop in 780, and again in a distinct separate event *eodem etiam anno Eanbald episcopus pallium ab apostolica sede sibi directum accepit qui eo suscepto in episcopatum solenniter est confirmatus.*<sup>89</sup> The death of Eanbald I is described *s.a. 796 on III Idus Augusti* and his body was carried with great solemnity *magno comitante agmine ad Eboracam civitatem portantes in ecclesia beati Petri Apostoli sepultum est honorifice.*<sup>90</sup> His successor was another Eanbald, a priest of that same church, and was ordained in the monastery of *Sochasburg, xviii kal Septembris, die Dominica.* Except for the loss of one minim this day and date are accurate.<sup>91</sup> Eanbald II received his pallium in the following year on *vi Idus Septembris*, yet another closely dated event associated with this part of the *HReg* chronicle and York.<sup>92</sup> Indeed, there are seven events associated with the careers of the York archbishops which are dated to the day of the month, a fact which in itself points to a source compiled close to the centre of the Archbishop's power at York. This contrasts with the see of Lindisfarne which has only one accurate date associated with it in this part of the *HReg s.a. 793.*<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, p. 31. The alliterative phrase *primus post Paulinum* was used by Alcuin in a letter to Æthelred of Northumbria written late in 793 ; *Alc. Ep.* no. 16, p. 43 [1].

<sup>88</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, pp. 43, 45.

<sup>89</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, p. 47.

<sup>90</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, p. 58.

<sup>91</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', 95.

<sup>92</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, p. 58.

<sup>93</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, p. 54; *ii Kal. Maii*, the date of the burial of Sicga the patricius who murdered King Ælfwald.

The York detail is not restricted to the archiepiscopal events. There are two notes of fires in the city (741, 764). That for 741 states that the monastery *in Eboraca civitate* was burnt on *ix. Kal. Maii, feria prima*.<sup>94</sup> April 23rd was indeed a Sunday in 741. Alric *quondam dux tunc clericus* died in the city shortly before *v. Kal Aprilis* in 796, King Osred was deposed and tonsured *in Eboraca civitate* (790), also Osbald who had been *quondam dux et patricius, et ad tempus rex, tunc vero abbas* died and his body *in ecclesia Eboracae civitatis sepultum est* (799).<sup>95</sup> Æthelheard also *quondam dux tunc autem clericus* is said to have died in York on 1st August 794 and Ælf and Ælfwine, the sons of King Ælfwald who had been murdered in 788 were persuaded in 791 to come out of sanctuary *de ecclesia principali per promissa fallaciae* and were killed *miserabiliter...in Wonwaldremere*.<sup>96</sup> Most impressive is the description *s.a.* 796 of the ritual ceremony which made Eardwulf king *in ecclesia Sancti Petri, ad altare beati Apostoli Pauli, ubi<sup>illa</sup> gens primum perceperat gratiam baptismi, consecratus est, vii kal. Junii*. The *ASC D/E* say that the four bishops of Northumbria were present at this ceremony, which serves to highlight the ritual significance of the event.<sup>97</sup> It is important that all of these references, although not directly concerned with the archbishop are connected with the religious community in York. The *ecclesia principali<sup>s</sup>* and the community associated with it seems to have been an important place for refuge for Northumbrian noblemen either in retirement or, with an overtone of sanctuary, after having been ousted from power. The compiler of these annals seems to have considered the actions of important political figures in Northumbria important in so far as they affected or overlapped with the archbishop's community in York.

The use of the word *civitas* to describe York in relation to its archbishops may also be relevant. It has been noted that early ninth-century practice in episcopal lists was to use the word *civitas* for bishoprics established in those places which had been

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<sup>94</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, p. 38.

<sup>95</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, pp. 57, 52, 62.

<sup>96</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, pp. 56, 53.

<sup>97</sup> See above Chapter 1 on Eardwulf.

Roman cities and *ecclesia* for those dioceses which were new foundations.<sup>98</sup>

Although it might be inappropriate to transfer this observation to a chronicle format, the distinction does occur occasionally. For example, the annal 767 states that *Alhberht Eboracae civitatis, et Alchmund Hagustaldensis ecclesiae ordinati sunt episcopi viii kal. Maii*.<sup>99</sup> The same is true in *HReg s.a.* 766, 790, 791, 796. References to Canterbury in this chronicle, however, fluctuate between the two usages.

The death of Etha the anchorite in 767 is said to have occurred at *Cric, qui locus distat ab Eboraca civitate x miliaris*. This is a fairly accurate topographical observation, modern-day Crayke lies twelve Roman miles from the northern corner of the fort at the heart of York.<sup>100</sup> The anchorites Etha (*HReg s.a.* 767) and Balthere (*HReg s.a.* 756), both of whom are mentioned within the *nomina anachoritarum* in the *LVD* (see above) are otherwise best known by the inclusion of their names and lengthy description of their virtues in Alcuin's poem *Versus de Patribus, Regibus et Sanctis Eboricensis Ecclesiae*.<sup>101</sup> As the title implies, this poem is about the famous people associated with York. The poem however does not record the dates of the obits of either of these two anchorites, implying that the *HReg* annals cannot have been derived from the 'York Poem' but were dependent on an independent source. However, the prominence given to these two anchorites in both the *HReg* and Alcuin's poem seems unlikely to be coincidence and argues strongly in favour of a York provenance for the archetype of this section of the *HReg* (NA1).

As Blair noted, there are other geographical clues which point to York as the place where the original author was writing.<sup>102</sup> Both references to the exile of kings to the

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<sup>98</sup> Page, 'Anglo-Saxon Episcopal Lists, Parts I and II', 78 n. 31.

<sup>99</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 43.

<sup>100</sup> On the location of the monastery at Crayke see K. A. Adams, 'The monastery and village at Crayke, north Yorkshire', *YAJ* Vol. 62 (1990), 29-50.

<sup>101</sup> Godman, *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings and Saints of York*, pp. lv-lvii, 104-109 [1319 -93].

<sup>102</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', 98-9.

Picts via Bamburgh (774, 796) are written from a perspective which viewed ‘the two exiled rulers as going away from the place at which he was writing, not coming towards it’, an observation which reduces the likelihood of Lindisfarne being the place of writing.<sup>103</sup> Also important are the references to identifiable places near York such as Ripon (786, 787, 790), Beverley (773), Catterick (762, 792, 796) Doncaster (764) and Crayke (767) although this may be a false emphasis because there are several placenames such as *Seletune* (780), *Wifeswelle* (781), *Hearrahalch* (790) and *Ætlæte* (796) which cannot be identified which might affect the balance.<sup>104</sup>

In the context of York in the eighth century, the treatment of events at its dependent monasteries and associated bishoprics should also be noted. Thus, the bishopric of Hexham and the abbey at Ripon which were closely tied up with the interests of York both having been associated with Bishop Wilfrid I of York in the late seventh and early eighth centuries.<sup>105</sup> Hexham in particular is frequently mentioned in the *HReg* chronicle and is often associated with close dates.<sup>106</sup> The episcopal succession is complete between the flight of Acca in 731 to the ordination of Eanberht in 800. Particularly interesting in connection with the image of Hexham in the *HReg* is the description of the murder of King Ælfwald on *IX Kl. Oct. 788* at *Scythlescester iuxta murum* and his subsequent burial in the church at Hexham *cum magnis monachorum cuneis et clericorum cantilenis*.<sup>107</sup> It could be argued that much of the description of the church of *sanctissimi Andreæ Apostoli* at Hexham is due to the same Hexham author who inserted the two long interpolations about Acca and

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<sup>103</sup> Blair, ‘Some observations’, 98.

<sup>104</sup> Blair, ‘Some observations’, 99.

<sup>105</sup> VW (Colgrave), ch. 8, pp. 16-19 and ch. 22, pp. 44-7.

<sup>106</sup> *HReg* s.a. 734, 766, 767, 781, 781, 788, 797, that is, seven out of thirteen episcopal references to the see of Hexham.

<sup>107</sup> This date is one of those which can mark the change of the year which might account for the 789 date given in the ASC NR.

Alchmund *s.a.* 740 and 781 respectively sometime after 1113.<sup>108</sup> Indeed there is a twelfth-century context for a connection between York and Hexham, that of the refoundation of the monastery as an Augustinian Priory at Hexham by monks from York in 1112. Arguably, all the Hexham information could have been put into the chronicle at the time when the interpolations were added. However, the coherence of the information about the reaction of the monks of Hexham to the death of Ælfwald fits within the framework of the proposed York based, eighth-century chronicle whereas the Acca and Alchmund interpolations read with an uncomfortable change in style.

This conclusion is reinforced by the close similarity of much of the 788 *HReg* annal information about Ælfwald with that found in the parallel 789 *ASC D/E* annal suggesting a common textual ancestor. This is particularly true of the reference to the mysterious light which shone at the place of the king's assassination, *cœlitus lux emissa* in the *HReg* and *heofenlic leoht* in *ASC E*.<sup>109</sup> The references to Ælfwald as *rex justus* (788) and *rex pius et iustus* (779) are two of the very few partisan comments in the *HReg* chronicle.<sup>110</sup> It implies a bias by an author towards one particular king and his dynasty. It is significant that this king was connected with Hexham. The fate of Ælfwald's murderer, Sicga is also interesting. The *HReg* entry for 793 says that he committed suicide on *ix kal. Maii* and was buried on the island of Lindisfarne.<sup>111</sup> This is really quite extraordinary, partly because the chronicle records the fact that he died by his own hand (*interiit propria nece*) which is a unique reference to suicide in that chronicle. More bizarre, however, is the next statement in the annal which records the burial of Sicga's body, *corpus ad insulam*

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<sup>108</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 32-8 and 47-50 respectively. On the interpolations see Blair, 'Some observations', pp. 87-90 where he draws attention to the reference to Thomas II of York which dates the interpolations to 1113 at the earliest. For a more extended argument on the role of Hexham in the compilation see H. S. Offler, 'Hexham and the *Historia Regum*', *TAASDN* new ser. Vol. 2 (1970), 51-62.

<sup>109</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 52 and *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 55.

<sup>110</sup> The *Chronicle of Melrose* here refers to Ælfwald as *rex innocentus*.

<sup>111</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 54.

*Lindisfarnensem perlatum est*. A date precise to the day is noted, *ix kal Maii*, suggesting that his burial date was recorded and remembered at Lindisfarne and at the place which collected the original version of this annal. Yet, the acceptance of his body onto Lindisfarne implies that the community there was prepared not only to flout Canon Law and current penitential teaching which held strict rules on the treatment of the body and memory of a suicide, but in doing so seems also to have condoned Sicga's act of regicide.<sup>112</sup> The acceptance of Sicga's body, a suicide and regicide, onto Lindisfarne, must have had political ramifications, all the more since both Sicga and Higbald, the Bishop of Lindisfarne in 793, had signed the decrees issued by the Legatine Missionaries to Northumbria in 786, chapter 12 of which specifically condemned the sin of regicide.<sup>113</sup> This is made all the more poignant when it is remembered that Ælfwald too was a signatory, having received the Continental dignitaries into his kingdom *cum omni gaudio*.<sup>114</sup>

The *HReg* annal goes on to describe the sack of Lindisfarne by Scandinavian pirates. The *dira prodigia* which preceded this attack and which are described in almost identical terms by the *HReg* and the *ASC D/E* are usually interpreted as a

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<sup>112</sup> Condemnation of suicides seems to have been first written into a Canon Law code at the Council of Auxerre (561x605), where chapter 17 having described various forms of suicide *istorum oblata non recipiatur*; C. De Clercq, *Concilia Galliae A. 511- A. 695*, CCSL Vol. 148A (Brepols, 1963). Certainly the eighth-century penitential code generally attributed to Archbishop Theodore, but specifically to the *Discipulum Umbrensiu* included within its second book (II.x.1-4), which contained precepts of Canon Law, included four pronouncements on how clergy ought to react when someone 'possessed by a devil' killed himself; P. W Finsterwalder, *Die Canones Theodori Cantuariensis und ihre Überlieferungsformen* (Weimar, 1929), p. 324. That the compiler of this penitential claims in his name to have been a 'disciple of the Northumbrians' suggests that these precepts would have been known at Lindisfarne, especially since private penance, as codified in penitentials, were a phenomenon originating in the Irish tradition to which Lindisfarne belonged. Levison, establishing an English origin for the 'Theodore' Penitential, suggested in his review of Finsterwalder that the teachers of the Disciple might have been associated with the school of York; W. Levison, *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, kanonistische Abteilung* Vol. 19 (1930), pp. 699-707, 705. See also the comments by T. Charles-Edwards, 'The Penitential of Theodore and the *Iudicia Theodori*' in *Archbishop Theodore: Commemorative Studies on his Life and Influence*, ed. M. Lapidge (Cambridge, 1995), 141-74.

<sup>113</sup> The 786 Legatine Mission forms the subject of Chapter 4 below. An edition of the letter which gives details of the mission is found in *Alc. Ep.* no. 3, pp. 24 [15-16], 27 [35-6,41-2], 28 [3].

<sup>114</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 20 [35-6].

warning of the forthcoming Viking attack.<sup>115</sup> This impression is underlined by the famous letter of Alcuin on the subject in which he used the pagan attack to berate the people of Northumbria in general and the Bishop of Lindisfarne in particular about their lax and evil ways.<sup>116</sup> However, given the highly unusual nature of Sigga's death and of the severity of his crime, especially in relation to the Legatine Mission of 786, it is worth considering the possibility that both the dire portents and the Viking attack may have been Alcuin's interpretation of divine judgement for the murder of King Ælfwald in 788 and the burial of such a suicide on the holy island of Lindisfarne. This hypothesis might be supported by the fact that a church dedicated to the two most important Lindisfarne saints, Cuthbert and Oswald, was built on the spot where Ælfwald was murdered. Given the apparent sympathy of the Lindisfarne community towards his murderer, the building and dedication of this church in the names of the powerful saints of Lindisfarne could be interpreted as an act of reconciliation and atonement. The 788 description of the dedication of this church is not explicit about the date so the chronological dislocation implied need not affect this interpretation.

The monastic community at Ripon was linked to Hexham and York through their mutual patron, Wilfrid I. It is significant, therefore, that the succession of three abbots of that community are recorded (786, death of Botwine and election of Alberht; 787, death of Alberht and accession of Sigred). In contrast, only two other abbots from named communities are mentioned in the *HReg* chronicle, Wlfheath of Beverley (773) and Edwine of Gainford (801). The obits of five abbots from unnamed monasteries are also recorded (745, 764, 771, 772, 775) but this only serves to highlight the fact that the succession of the Ripon abbots is described as well, implying an alternative source of information than a calendar or other such obituary list for the Ripon information.<sup>117</sup> There is a bizarre event connected with

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<sup>115</sup> See for example Wormald, 'The Ninth Century' in *The Anglo-Saxons*, ed. J. Campbell (London, 1991), p. 132. Similar bizarre astronomical events preceded the account of the Saracen attack in *HE* V.23; *HE* (Plummer), p. 349.

<sup>116</sup> *Alc. Ep.* nos 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

<sup>117</sup> Charles Plummer was so impressed by the Ripon data that he hypothesised that the Northern Annals as a whole were collected there; *ASC* (Plummer) 2, pp. lxix-lxxi.

Ripon which parallels the Hexham/Ælfwald incident; that of the failed execution of Eardwulf in 790. This highly political event was discussed in more detail in Chapter 1, and it must suffice here to say that despite the fact that this story is presented as a miracle, its original compilation could be taken to suggest a source the political allegiances of which were pro-Ripon, pro-Eardwulf and against King Æthelred. The decision to preserve such a story arguably also reflects a political opinion, especially in the context of Æthelred's subsequent assassination and the accession of Eardwulf in 796.

### Section C) NA2-NA4 : The *Historia Regum* and the Frankish annals.

This discussion has a bearing on the place at which the Frankish details in the *HReg* were incorporated into that text. In the light of the preceding observations, attention now turns to a close examination of these Frankish annals and the question of whether they represent a genuine component of the chronicle being compiled at York in the eighth century. As noted above, the section of the *HReg* which discusses eighth-century Anglo-Saxon events, contains fourteen annals which relate directly to Frankish or papal events. Some of these form the only element in the entry for a particular year whereas in other years, 768 for example, the Frankish information is incorporated within a longer annal about Anglo-Saxon, usually Northumbrian affairs. Briefly, the continental elements found in the early section of the *HReg* concern the following events; the martyrdom of St Boniface (754), the ordination in York of Aluberht as bishop of the Old Saxons (767), the death of Pippin III (768), the death of King Carloman and the accession of Charlemagne to the entire kingdom (771), a series of three annals concerning Charlemagne's military exploits against the Saxons and the Lombards (772, 775 and 774 respectively), a record of the arrival in Britain of papal legates (786), the arrival of a book from Charlemagne concerning the iconoclast controversy and Alcuin's response to it (792), the death of Pope Hadrian and Charlemagne's tribute to him (794), Charlemagne's destruction of the Avar tribe and the capture of their treasure resources (795), the attempted assassination of Pope Leo III (799), Charlemagne's coronation as Emperor (800) and finally the story

concerning Eadburgh, the wife of Byrtric of Wessex and her journey as an exile to Francia (802).<sup>118</sup>

All of these annals bar the last three fit easily into the style of the bulk of the annals concerning Anglo-Saxon events in this section of the *HReg*. The Frankish Annals merge easily into the English ones. The last three Frankish annals picked out above are different in this respect. That for 799 which describes the assassination attempt on Pope Leo III is written in verbose, flowery Latin with a distinct partisan flavour which stylistically is at odds with the other annals in this section of the *HReg*. Similarly, the last one, the story of Eadburgh which is found within the annal for 802, can be dismissed immediately as a later interpolation into the text. It too reads very differently to the great majority of the other annals in this section, being an obviously fictionalised story about Eadburgh's journey to Francia. On closer inspection it can be seen to have been derived from Asser's *Vita Alfredi* and is better therefore considered as part of the next section of the *HReg* which is a West Saxon Chronicle for the years 849-87 based closely on the works of that author.<sup>119</sup> The remaining annal of the three picked out as being slightly different in style to the rest of the Frankish Annals in the *HReg* is more difficult to evaluate. It covers in unusual detail and length the coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor in Rome on Christmas Day in the year 800. It is different primarily because it is so much longer than all the other Frankish annals in the *HReg*, but as the analysis below shows, the information contained therein is of the highest quality and detail.

The other Frankish annals in the *HReg* fall into two basic types, those which are concerned with events which happened on the continent and those which are of mutual relevance for Northumbrian history. Into the latter category fall the reference to the Legatine Mission in 786 (on which see Chapter 4, below), the relatively long annal for 792 about the book on the Iconoclast controversy sent by Charlemagne for

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<sup>118</sup> Blair counted only twelve continental entries, omitting the 786 reference to the Legatine mission and the 802 story of Eadburgh; Blair, 'Some observations', 93. The text of these annals and a translation are to be found as an Appendix, below pp. 281-94.

<sup>119</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', pp. 99-104 and W. H. Stevenson, *Asser's Life of King Alfred* (Oxford, 1094), pp. 12-14 chapters 14-15.

comment in Northumbria and the reference to the anointing of Aluberht as bishop of the *Ealdsexos*, that is, the 'Old' or continental Saxons in 767. Objections have been raised to this interpretation of the word *Ealdseaxe* with some scholars assuming that the *Eald* element must have been an error for *suth* or *east*.<sup>120</sup> However, no contemporary Anglo-Saxon bishop list records a bishop of this name (or indeed has a gap where one could be incorporated into the chronology). The problem is solved by reference to the Life of St Liudger by Alfrid of Münster which records the circumstances under which Aluberht and several others travelled from Frisia to England to be consecrated for the Frisian missionfield.<sup>121</sup> The reference in same chapter of the Life of St Liudger to Alcuin and the school in York corroborates the *HReg* evidence that the place to which Aluberht was sent for consecration was York. In addition, the term *Ealdseaxe* is used by the *ASC* in the only direct reference in that chronicle to Frankish affairs when noting a battle between the forces of the Franks and the *Ealdseaxe* in 779/80.

It might be argued that annals such as these which are of mutual interest to Francia and Northumbria would be expected to be found in a chronicle otherwise concerned with the Northern English affairs. However, several of the other Frankish annals in the *HReg* show particular interest in Charlemagne's military campaigns against continental foes (772, 774, 775, 795) and on some occasions provide unusual emphasis and unique details which are not found in native Frankish sources. In the two references to the Saxon wars (772, 775) it is noticeable that no mention is made of the conversion aspect of the campaign. This is especially surprising given the long-standing Northumbrian interest in the Christianisation of that area, as

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<sup>120</sup> See Arnold's comments in *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 43, note *a*, where he observed that John of Worcester recorded Aluberht as the fifth bishop of Selsey. The text known as the *Historia post Bedam* (on which see below) which is closely related to the *HReg*, has the reading *Eastsexos* in both surviving manuscripts, which has contributed to the confusion; D. A. Bullough, 'Aluinus deliciosus Karoli regis, Alcuin of York and the shaping of the early Carolingian court', in *Institutionen, Kulture und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter, Festschrift für Josef Fleckenstein zu seinem 65 Geburtstag*, eds, L. Fenske, W. Rösener and T. Zotz (Sigmaringen, 1984), 73-92, 79 n. 18.

<sup>121</sup> The *Vita* was written by Alfrid some time between 839 and 849, about a generation after the death of Liudger in 809. It is printed in G. H. Pertz, ed. *MGH SS* Vol. 2, 403-19, chapter 10 and *EHD* 1, p. 788. See also Bullough, 'Aluinus deliciosus', 73-92, 78-9 and Pauli, 'Karl der Große', pp. 151, 159.

exemplified by Aluberht's consecration in York. This observation is all the more pronounced when the Frankish sources for the two campaigns are consulted. These all stress the destruction of the Irminsul in 775 which was the most sacred pagan sanctuary in Saxon Germany.<sup>122</sup> By contrast, the *HReg* gives a somewhat negative entry for 772 stating that Charlemagne returned to his own lands having lost *multisque ex principibus ac nobilibus viris suis*. The only Carolingian reference to the loss of any Frankish noblemen is found in Einhard's *Vita Karoli* and then with reference to the whole Saxon war and not just the 772 campaign.<sup>123</sup> The *HReg* entry concerning the 775 Saxon campaign is a spirited, bloodthirsty account describing the Carolingian king in Virgilian-style prose as *igne ferroque debacchans, quia erat consternatus animo*. The *HReg* description of Charlemagne's anger is quite unlike any Frankish source although the 'fire and sword' element does appear in the Revised version of the *Annales Regni Francorum* description of the 772 campaign.<sup>124</sup> The description of the outcome of the Avar conflict in the *HReg s.a. 795* is one of only two entries in the chronicle devoted entirely to a single continental event, the other being the martyrdom of St Boniface in 754. On this occasion it tells in unique detail of the extraordinary treasure taken by the Carolingian army;

sublatis inde xv. plaustris auro argentoque palliisque  
olosericis preciosis repletis, quorum quodque quatuor  
trahebant boves.

*HReg s.a. 795*.<sup>125</sup>

No surviving continental source contains anything like this degree of detail about the Avar hoard. The closest annalistic source is the Lorsch annals which tells of a 'great abundance of treasure' (*thesauri magna multitudo*) but again it was only Einhard, writing in the 820s who used the words *auri et argenti* to describe the nature of the

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<sup>122</sup> See for example the Moselle and Greater Salzburg Annals and both versions of the *ARF*; P. D. King, *Charlemagne: Translated sources* (Lambrigg, 1985), pp. 75, 110, 132, 150.

<sup>123</sup> *VK* (Einhard), ch. 8, p. 9; *Plures tamen eo bello tam ex nobilitate Francorum quam Saxonum et functi summis honoribus viri consumpti sunt*.

<sup>124</sup> *Rex vero Karlus...Saxoniam bello agredi statuit amque sine mora ingressus ferro et igni cuncta depopulatus Eresburgum castrum cepit*; *ARF* (Kurze), pp. 33-5.

<sup>125</sup> *Sy. Op. Om. 2*, p. 57.

treasure.<sup>126</sup> The Avar treasure has already been mentioned with reference to Northumbria and Charlemagne. The letter from the Frankish king to Offa of Mercia (quoted above in Chapter 1, p. 44) talks of the gifts he was to send to the Mercian and Northumbrian kings and to the metropolitan sees of England. Alcuin's subsequent letter to Offa talked of Charlemagne's fury at hearing of the murder of Æthelred, and the withdrawal of those gifts, the *donorum largite*. Perhaps it should not be surprising therefore that such a detailed account of the collection of that treasure, should have found its way for inclusion into an eighth-century chronicle being compiled in Northumbria.

It is not unusual for English chronicles to contain factual details about foreign events, as the interpolation in the twelfth century of parts of the Norman Annals into the Annals of St Neots and the *ASC* version E indicates.<sup>127</sup> But as both Blair and Pauli pointed out the Frankish annals in the *HReg* are sufficiently detailed and accurate to be considered a primary source of information about eighth-century Francia and were unlikely to be derivatives of a Frankish chronicle.<sup>128</sup> The Frankish Annals in the *HReg* have therefore been considered as a unitary Frankish chronicle which was incorporated within the *HReg* at some stage prior to the 1160s when the only surviving manuscript was copied (ie: NA4). The central question therefore is not so much concerned with the authenticity of these annals as a contemporary Frankish source, but rather more the date at which these annals were incorporated into the chron<sup>icle</sup> which was to become NA4. Stubbs, Pauli and Blair accepted implicitly that these Frankish Annals were incorporated into the ancestor of the *HReg* in the eighth century and they understood the presence of those annals in that chronicle to represent another example of the close relationship between Northumbria and Francia caused (as Levison thought) by the Northumbrian interest in the mission field of

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<sup>126</sup> Einhard, *VK* (Einhard), p. 14; Lorsch Annals, *Scriptorum*, MGH SS Vol. I, pp. 30-9, 36. A translation of the Lorsch Annals s.a. 785-803 is found in King, *Charlemagne*, pp. 137-145.

<sup>127</sup> Dumville and Lapidge, *The Annals of St Neot's*, pp. xliii-xlvii, *ASC* (Plummer) 2, pp. xl, xlv-xlvii and Dumville, 'Annalistic writing at Canterbury', 32-4 and 55-7.

<sup>128</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', 93 and Pauli, 'Karl de Große', 160 where he expresses the opinion that the closest Frankish source are the *Annales Laurissenses*, otherwise known as the *ARF*.

eastern Francia.<sup>129</sup> This conclusion is obviously desirable for the general argument being promoted by this thesis. However, as yet, no real proof has been offered to support this argument, only circumstantial probability. The basis for believing that a chronicle was being collected in York in the eighth century has been laid out above. The burden of probability is that the Frankish Annals were a part of that chronicle being added to it in the eighth century. The burden of proof, however, requires that the successor of that eighth-century York chronicle, the *HReg*, be examined ‘from the top down’, that is, working from the twelfth-century manuscript through to its eighth-century components. Since the *HReg* is found only in a single late manuscript, the identification of the eighth-century elements of the *HReg* (including the Frankish annals) involves eliminating where possible the additions and interpolations which were the product of reworkings of the text in the period between the early ninth century and the latter part of the twelfth when the manuscript was copied.

#### The *Historia Regum* and Durham:

As noted above, the *HReg* is found in only one manuscript, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 139. It is a notoriously complex and contentious twelfth-century manuscript which has been the subject of much critical scrutiny by various eminent scholars.<sup>130</sup> The manuscript itself is a composite volume containing some twenty-six historical texts, many of which are concerned with the history of northern England and several of which, including the *HReg*, are not found in any other

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<sup>129</sup> Blair, ‘Some Observations’, p. 93; Stubbs, *Chronica*, p. xxviii; Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 49-69.

<sup>130</sup> Blair, ‘Some Observations’; M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* Vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1909-12), 317-23; T. Mommsen, ed. *Chronica Minora saec. IV, V, VI, VII*, MGH AA, Vol. 3.i (Berlin, 1877-1919), p. 125; H. S. Offler, ‘Hexham and the “Historia Regum”’, *Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland*, New Ser. Vol. 2 (1970), 51-62; D. N. Dumville, ‘The Corpus Christi “Nennius”’, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* Vol. 25 (1972-4), 369-79; D. Baker, ‘Scissors and Paste: Corpus Christi, Cambridge MS 139 again’, in *Studies in Church History: The Materials, Sources and Methods of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 11, ed. D. Baker (Oxford, 1975), 83-123; Meehan, *A Reconsideration of the historical works associated with Symeon of Durham* and by the same author, ‘Durham Twelfth-Century manuscripts in Cistercian Houses’, in *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093-1193*, ed. D. Rollason et al. (Woodbridge, 1994), 439-49. A detailed study and facsimile of this manuscript is in preparation by T. Graham and M. Budny. The previously complex foliation of the manuscript has been revised recently, all folio references in this chapter are to this new sequence.

manuscript. The hand of the scribe who copied the *HReg* (and several of the preceding texts) can be dated on palaeographic grounds to the third quarter of the twelfth century.<sup>131</sup> The manuscript has been contentious in recent years largely over the debate of its origin (and that of its sister manuscript which is split between CUL MS Ff 1.27 and CCC MS 66). This is not the place to survey this long-running debate, suffice to note that the both manuscripts spent time in the small Cistercian abbey at Sawley just to the west of Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire, as indicated by *ex libris* at the beginning of both books.<sup>132</sup> However, for the purposes of this chapter it is important to note the role of the Anglo-Norman Cathedral priory of Durham in the debate. Durham is an obvious place for many of the texts within CCC MS 139 to have originated (regardless of whether or not it was actually copied there). This is partly due to the content of several of the texts, including the marginalia of the *HReg*, which display a strong interest in Durham and partly due to the fact that two of the texts (items 2 and 4, fols 19r-37v and 48r-50v respectively) within the manuscript can be shown to have been copied directly from two extant (and indisputable) Durham manuscripts, that is, DCL MSS C.IV.15 and B.IV.22.<sup>133</sup> Furthermore, the copies of the *Historia Brittonum* and the Life of Gildas in the CCC MS 139 were used to update the copies of those same texts in another Durham manuscript, DCL MS B.II.35.<sup>134</sup> Significant too in this respect is the traditional attribution of the

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<sup>131</sup> Blair dates the manuscript to 1164; 'Some observations', 77-8. The precision of this date was questioned by Baker who preferred a date range of 1164-75 for the bulk of the manuscript; Baker, 'Scissors and Paste', 96-8.

<sup>132</sup> Mommsen, Blair and Dumville assumed that the manuscript was written at Sawley, with Dumville arguing that the option of the manuscript having arrived at Sawley as the result of a gift or purchase (as Offler suggested) was little more than a 'formal caveat'; Dumville, 'The Corpus Christi "Nennius"', 372, n. 3 and H. S. Offler, 'Hexham and the Historia Regum', *TAASDN* new ser. Vol. 2 (1970), 51-62, 52. Meehan, doubts that the section of the second manuscript found in CCC MS 66 belongs with CUL MS Ff 1.27 and cautions that these manuscripts are not homogenous entities; Meehan, 'Durham Twelfth-Century manuscripts', 441-6.

<sup>133</sup> Meehan, *A Reconsideration*, p. 118 with reference to Meryl Foster's unpublished observations about these manuscripts. See the forthcoming article by J. Story, 'Symeon as Annalist', in *Symeon of Durham: Historian of Durham and the North*, ed. D. Rollason (Stamford, forthcoming).

<sup>134</sup> Dumville, 'The Corpus Christi "Nennius"', 372-3 and Meehan, 'Durham Manuscripts', 441. The Corpus version of the *HB* copied from the same exemplar as the copy in Liège, University Library MS 369 C (which also contains a text closely related to one of the later sections of the *HReg*) and was also used to produce a slightly amplified version of the *HB* in CUL Ff 1.27 at ff. 11r-20v.

*HReg* to the early twelfth-century Durham historian, Symeon (as exemplified by the editions of that text by Hinde and Arnold). The rubrics to the *HReg* ascribe the text to Symeon, although the evidence to corroborate that attribution is technically only circumstantial. Symeon is however, known to have incorporated parts of the *HReg* (or its exemplar) into a text which is undisputedly his own work, the *Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius, hoc est, Dunelmensis Ecclesiae (LDE)* which he wrote 1104-9.<sup>135</sup>

Recently a convincing case has been made for the identification of Symeon's own handwriting, based partially on notations made in the Cantor's Book at the time at which it is known that Symeon held that office.<sup>136</sup> The same hand which made these notes in the Cantor's Book also wrote the exemplar for the short text which is the fourth item in CCC MS 139.<sup>137</sup> This exemplar (which now forms the flyleaves of a later twelfth-century copy of Bernard Clairvaux's commentary on the Song of Songs, DCL MS B.IV.22) is a short chronicle compilation based on the Bede's Six Ages of the World, running from Adam to the death of the Emperor Henry V in 1125. As such it is unremarkable but it incorporates within it some notes of Frankish events, the source of which is not immediately identifiable. At a glance it is apparent that the notes of Frankish events in DCL MS B.IV.22 are not related to those in the *HReg*. Yet since the author of the B.IV.22 chronicle is thought on palaeographic grounds to have been Symeon, it is necessary to consider the Frankish information available in Durham in his day not least because of the unique reference in Symeon's *LDE* to the friendship between Pippin III and Eadberht (quoted above in Chapter 2) which indicates that Symeon and the early twelfth-century Durham scriptorium had access to some unusual Frankish sources. It is necessary therefore, in the context of the Frankish annals embedded in the *HReg*, to eliminate Symeon and twelfth-century Durham as the means by which those annals became incorporated within the *HReg*.

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<sup>135</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 1, pp. 50-1.

<sup>136</sup> M. Gullick, 'The Scribes of the Durham Cantor's Book (Durham Cathedral Library, MS B.IV.24) and the Durham Martyrology Scribe', in *Anglo-Norman Durham*, 93-109 and A. J. Piper, 'The Durham Cantor's Book (Durham, Dean and Chapter Library MS B.IV.24)', *ibid.*, 79-92.

<sup>137</sup> Fols 48r-50v.

This is made more pressing with the realisation that the Durham manuscript which was the exemplar for item 2 in the *HReg* manuscript, the *Chronicon* of Regino of Prüm, also contains the set of Frankish annals known as the *Annales Mettenses Priores* (*AMPr*).<sup>138</sup> That manuscript, DCL MS C.IV.15, is written in an early-twelfth century hand and is likely to have been available in the Durham scriptorium when Symeon was working there.<sup>139</sup> The medieval catalogues of Durham show that MS C.IV.15 was certainly in the Cathedral spendement in 1391, where it is referred to as *Chronica Pipini*.<sup>140</sup> It could also be that which is referred to in the early twelfth-century book list contained in DCL MS B.IV.24 as *Liber de Gestis Francorum*.<sup>141</sup> The *AMPr* is related to the quasi-official *Annales Regni Francorum*, especially for the years 806-29 but unlike the *ARF* also contains annals for the years 688-741. Comparison between the *AMPr* and the Frankish annals within the *HReg* reveals only one place where the wording is identical. The annal for 771 tells of the death of Carlomann and the subsequent accession of Charles to the whole of his father's realm;

cum dimidium prius patris obtenuit principatum, totius regni monarchiam et Francorum fastigium populorum dehinc est indeptus invicta fortitudine.

*HReg, s.a. 771.*<sup>142</sup>

et unxerunt super se dominum suum Carolum gloriosissimum regem, et obtenuit feliciter monarchiam totius regni Francorum.

*AMPr, s.a. 771.*<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> The text was edited by B. de Simson, ed. *Annales Mettenses Priores*, MGH SRG VII.10 (Hanover and Leipzig, 1905), with reference to the Durham manuscript at pp.v-vi.

<sup>139</sup> R. A. B. Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts*, (Oxford, 1939), p. 59, no. 81 and Tim Graham is of the opinion that C.IV.15 was written at Durham in the early years of the twelfth century (pers. comm. and the forthcoming facsimile of CCCC MS139).

<sup>140</sup> J. Raine, ed., *Catalogi Veteres Librorum Ecclesiae Cathedralis Dunelm*, Sur. Soc. Vol. 7 (London, 1838), p. 30.

<sup>141</sup> As opposed to the *Liber de gestis Normannorum*, which follows it; *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>142</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 44.

<sup>143</sup> *AMPr* (de Simson), pp. 57-8.

This single textual parallel possibly shows an echo of a common ancestor for that particular annal but is hardly sufficient to attribute direct influence from one to the other, especially as the critical reference to the anointing of Charles by the Frankish noblemen of Carlomann as discussed by the *AMPr* is not recorded in the *HReg* version of events. Also the word *totius* was omitted from the version of this sentence in the Durham manuscript version of the *AMPr*.<sup>144</sup> It seems therefore that the *AMPr* found in DCL MS C.IV.15 was a text independent and unaffected by the Frankish Annals found in the *HReg* in CCC MS 139 and vice versa. The lack of any further parallels between the texts which seem to have been available to Symeon and his colleagues at Durham in the early twelfth century, mitigates against the Frankish annals having been incorporated within the *HReg* at Durham at that date thereby implying that the Frankish Annals in the *HReg* were inserted therein at another time and in a different place.

#### **Byrhtferth of Ramsey:**

The analysis of these Frankish Annals also has to tackle the tenth-century phase of the *HReg* (NA3) which recently has been identified. Work done independently by Michael Lapidge and Cyril Hart established the influence of Byrhtferth of Ramsey on the text in the late tenth century.<sup>145</sup> Lapidge and Hart argued that Byrhtferth was responsible for amalgamating the first five sections of the *HReg* into a loosely contained unit, referred to as Part 1 of the *HReg* as a whole. The annals about eighth-century events, including the Frankish ones, are regarded as Section 4 within the five sections of Part 1. The work of Lapidge and Hart was based largely on observations of distinctive linguistic parallels between the five sections of Part 1 of the *HReg* and other texts known to have been written by Byrhtferth (*Vita S. Ecgwini*, *Vita S. Oswaldi*, *Enchiridion* and *Epilogus*). Thus, these five sections are considered a unit because they share certain literary characteristics implying a common editorial touch. There is no suggestion that Byrhtferth wrote any of these five sections from scratch,

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<sup>144</sup> DCL MS C.IV.15, fol. 11r.

<sup>145</sup> M. Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the early sections of the *Historia Regum* attributed to Symeon of Durham', *Anglo-Saxon England* Vol. 10 (1982), 97-122 and Hart, 'Byrhtferth's Northumbrian Chronicle', 558-82.

just that he linked them together, adding to them in certain places using his distinctive literary style.<sup>146</sup> Their work is important because it provides a definite pre-Conquest stage in the editorial text-history of the *HReg*. Furthermore, if the linguistic elements identified by Lapidge as characteristic of Byrhtferth's literary style can be identified in the Frankish annals incorporated in the *HReg*, it is safe to assume that those elements were associated with the embryonic *HReg* text in the late tenth century as opposed to a later, Norman context. To paraphrase Lapidge, the linguistic and literary predilections of Byrhtferth and which *en masse* can be used as stylistic markers of that author can be summarised as follows:

- 1) **Words** : unusual vocabulary, eg; *subtronizatus*  
hellenisms, eg: *platoma*,  
polysyllabic adverbs *-iter*, *-enter*  
agenitive nouns *-or bellator*, *interemptor*  
superlatives, especially those ending *-issimus*  
verbal irregularities (passive infinitives)
- 2) **Phrases** : elaborate descriptions of death  
references to Rome as *Romulea Urbs*  
three verbs (or participles) consecutively
- 3) **Topics** : coronations  
scientific information, tides, eclipses (DTR)  
numerology  
computistical interest
- 4) **Glosses / asides** (*id est*....)
- 5) **Sources** : Bede, *HE*, *De temporum ratione*, *De temporibus*,  
*Historia Abbatum*, *De Die Iudicii*  
Aldhelm, *De Virginitate*, *Enigmata*  
Alcuin, *Bishops, Kings and Saints of York*  
Boethius, *de Consolatione Philosophiae*

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<sup>146</sup> McGurk notes that a 'chameleon like adaptability [is] not a noted characteristic of Byrhtferth's writing' implying that his style of tenth-century Latin is sufficiently individual to stand out from whatever text he was editing. McGurk is also sceptical of using superlatives as a definitive marker of Byrhtferth's style arguing that they are a commonplace feature of Latin written in this period; Darlington and McGurk, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, p. lxxx.

If Lapidge's analysis is accepted at face value, a sufficient number of these attributes of Byrhtferth's linguistic and literary style are visible in several of the Frankish entries in the section of the *HReg* under scrutiny to suggest that they were part of the text which came under the influence of Byrhtferth, and thus that the Frankish information was in England by the end of the tenth century at least. For example (the highlighted words are those explicitly picked out by Lapidge as examples of Byrhtferth's style):<sup>147</sup>

*s. a. 771*

Eodem quoque anno Karlmon, famosissimus rex Francorum...

*s. a. 774*

Karl, Francorum rex invictissimus, nobilissimam Longobardorum urbem Ticin am....

*s. a. 775*

Karl denique rex, ut praefati sumus, bellicosissimus Francorum, cum omni exercitus sui virtute vallatus, confortatus, glorificatus, gentem Saxonum est ingressus centuriatibus atque legionibus stipatus, quam magnis et inedicibilibus regionem praeliis gravissimis vastavit, igne ferroque debacchans, quia erat consternatus animo.

*s. a. 792*

...Contra quod scripsit Albinus epistolam ex auctoritate Divinarum scripturarum mirabiliter affirmatam...

*s. a. 794*

Adrianus papa venerandus eodem anno sublevatus est ad Dei visionem vii kal. Januarii; qui sedit annos xxvi, menses x, dies xii. Est quoque in ecclesia Sancti principis Apostolorum Petri sepultus, et super sepulcrum platoma parēti infixā, gesta bonorum eius aureis literis et versibus scripta. Hoc marmor ibi Karolus rex, ob amorem et memoriam praedicti patris, facere jussit, regali fretus diademate.

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<sup>147</sup> Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey', 100-12.

*s. a. 795*

Idem rex **fortissimus** Karolus...sublatis inde xv plaustris auro argentoque palliisque **olosericis** pretiosis repletis, quorum quodque quatuor trahebant boves....

*s. a. 799*

...Leonem papam **sanctissimum** apprehenderunt ligaveruntque ...quae res **cunctis cernentibus crudele** spectaculum est factum...ut **penitissima** (vel **profundissima**) edere verba praedicationis valuisset...(plus Boethius quote).

*s. a. 800*

Karolus...cum magna exercitus sui multitudine **Romuleæ** urbis moenia ingreditur...locaque sancta frequenti visitatione **adorat, ditat, exornat...**in ecclesiam **sanctissimi** principis Apostolorum Petri, in qua a domino Leone papa **purpura regaliter induitur; cui corona aurea capiti imponitur, et regale sceptrum in manibus datur...**Rogabant eum ut Christianae religioni subdita sancta coenobia **conservaret, regeret ac defenderet....**

We can establish, therefore, that the Frankish components of the *HReg* were part of the text which came under the influence of Byrhtferth of Ramsey in the late tenth century. The question as to whether Byrhtferth incorporated these Frankish annals into the northern chronicle along with his other embellishments of that text (such as extracts from Asser, Pliny, Boethius, Alcuin, Aldhelm and Bede amongst others) or whether he received the continental information already amalgamated with the northern chronicle is more difficult to answer. Byrhtferth and the Abbey at Ramsey are known to have had close connections with Abbo of Fleury, an important master of computistical studies who was brought to Ramsey in 986 by its founder Oswald of Worcester and York.<sup>148</sup> The link between Ramsey and an important Frankish monastery like Fleury-sur-Loire could provide a hypothetical alternative route by which Frankish annals such as those in the *HReg* could have reached Byrhtferth's home monastery. There are no grounds for supporting this hypothesis, only

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<sup>148</sup> Hart, *The Ramsey Computus*, 29-31,

circumstance. However, the idea that the Frankish elements were a part of Section 4 of the *HReg* when its prototype arrived at Ramsey is supported by the observation that the components of Part 1 (Sections 1-5) of the *HReg* are easily spotted, Byrhtferth's attempt to integrate them was clumsy and minimal. In contrast, (most of) the continental extracts in this section of the *HReg* do not read like a blatant interpolation into this section. They are frequently within the same entry as Anglo-Saxon issues and with the exception of the last three continental entries (799, 800 and 802), are written in the same overall style as the Anglo-Saxon material.

### **The *Historia post Bedam*:**

A comparison of the continental entries in the early section of the *HReg* with those texts which are thought to descend from earlier recensions might prove another means by which to tackle the problem of whether Byrhtferth or a previous editor were responsible for integrating the Frankish annals into the embryonic *HReg* text. One of the most important (and least understood) texts which is related to the *HReg* is the so-called *Historia post Bedam* (hereafter *HpB*).<sup>149</sup> Its exact relationship with the *HReg* as it survives in CCC MS 139 is far from clear. Stubbs thought that the *HpB* descended from a collateral branch of the Corpus version which broke away after Part 1 of the text had been amalgamated at Durham in the early twelfth century with a section taken from John of Worcester.<sup>150</sup> The *HpB*, he argued, was an 'attempt at a reduction of [the conjoined chronicles] to a reasonable chronological sequence with the aid of frequent extracts from [Henry of] Huntingdon'.<sup>151</sup> Stubbs believed that this text, created in the twelfth century, was subsequently used as the basis of Roger of Hoveden's *Chronica*, which was compiled in the closing years of

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<sup>149</sup> The *HpB* is printed only as part of the chronicle compilation known as the *Chronica* of Roger of Howden; W. Stubbs, *Chronica Magistri Rogeris de Houedene*, RS Vol. 51.i (London, 1868). It is found in two manuscripts one of which is definitely a Durham product (Oxford, St John's College MS 97) the other, BL MS Royal 13.A.vi is unprovenanced but contains minor initials which are not unlike those found in several Durham books of twelfth-century production. Both date to the third quarter of the twelfth century.

<sup>150</sup> Stubbs, *Chronica*, p. xxx. The section based on John of Worcester is section 8 in Blair's analysis of the *HReg*, a chronicle from 848-1118; Blair, 'Some observations', 107-111.

<sup>151</sup> Stubbs, *Chronica*, p. xxxi. This interpretation is followed by Whitelock; *EHD* 1, 127-8.

the twelfth century and the earliest years of the thirteenth.<sup>152</sup> This however conflicts with the more recent assumptions made about the two texts. Hart refers to the *HpB* as 'representing what survives from the text of Byrhtferth's first recension of his Northumbrian Chronicle'.<sup>153</sup> Hart's thesis, therefore regards the *HpB* as an ancestor of the *HReg* (rather than a collateral descendant of it) and puts the split between the ancestors of the *HpB* and the *HReg* back to the tenth century. Were his thesis to be correct, an analysis of the *HpB* should reveal whether or not the continental references were included in Byrhtferth's first draft of the text that was to become Part 1 of the *HReg*.<sup>154</sup> Were this to be the case it would not, of course, automatically imply that the Frankish Annals were received by Byrhtferth as part of the prototype *HReg* which came to him at Ramsey. Yet the process of comparison reveals significant points of interest regarding these Frankish Annals since it is to be noted that the continental references in the *HpB* are identical to those found in the *HReg* except on two occasions, *s.a.* 799 and 800. These two entries deserve closer attention not least because the different style, especially in the annal for 799, contrasts with the other earlier Frankish annals sufficiently to highlight the unity of those earlier annals.

#### **AD 799, the attack on Pope Leo III:**

An account of the attempted assassination of Pope Leo III is entirely absent from the *HpB* whereas in the *HReg* it forms one of the longest of the annals in that section. The compiler of the *HpB* may, of course, simply have chosen to omit it because it was too long. However, an analysis of the substance and style of the 799 annal as it is found in the *HReg* today shows how far it is from the earlier Frankish Annals in

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<sup>152</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 225-7. Gransden follows Stubbs' belief that the *HpB* is a mid twelfth-century compilation.

<sup>153</sup> Hart, 'Byrhtferth's Northumbrian Chronicle', 578.

<sup>154</sup> The two theses are not entirely incompatible, it is possible to think of a compromise, whereby a precursor of the *HpB* was the first recension of the Part I *HReg* text, but which was reworked in Durham during the mid-twelfth century at the point when the Huntingdon and Worcester texts became available. The *HpB* has a later influence on the *HReg* as found in CCC MS 139 as a provider of many of the interlineations, some of which are Lapidge's Byrhtferth markers; Meehan, *A Reconsideration*, pp. 183-221, especially pp. 219-21.

that text. In this respect it serves to indicate the quality and indeed, the stylistic cohesion and unity of the preceding Frankish annals in that section of the *HReg*.

However, the *HReg* version of the assassination attempt is interesting in that it follows the papal version of events as opposed to the Frankish one. There are two main versions of this event which circulated shortly after it was resolved, one put out by the Papal Curia in the *Liber Pontificalis* and the other which is found in Frankish sources. The former naturally emphasises the heretical injustice of the attack and the miraculous recovery of the Pope.<sup>155</sup> In this papal version there is no doubt that the Pope's eyes were put out and that his tongue was chopped off as he was left for dead in a Roman gutter. The papal version emphasised the recovery of the Pope from these injuries and uses the miracle to explain the Pope's return to power. Almost as an afterthought, the *Liber Pontificalis* refers to the arrival in Rome of the Duke of Spoleto, who upon seeing the Pope's marvellous recovery for himself escorted the Pope to Spoleto. From thence, the *Liber Pontificalis* says, the Pope made his way to Charlemagne who was resident in Francia for a reason not made explicit by this official papal source. The Frankish sources are markedly different. They are openly sceptical about the attack on the Pope and his miraculous recovery, adding phrases such as *ut aliquibus visum est* to the narrative.<sup>156</sup> Central to the Frankish version is the role of Charlemagne in the Pope's rescue and political recovery. According to the Frankish sources the Pope had to be smuggled by night from the place where his captors had imprisoned him and was spirited to Spoleto by the Duke and taken from thence to Paderborn where Charlemagne was on campaign against the Saxons.

Contrary to what might be expected given the depth of Frankish detail in the rest of the eighth-century chronicle information, the *HReg s.a. 799* follows the Papal version of events and fails to mention Charlemagne at all. The author of this annal in the *HReg* goes into great detail about the attempted murder and the language is florid with several examples of the words and phrases which Lapidge has ascribed to Byrhtferth's latinity. That it is not included at all in the *HpB* might be taken as

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<sup>155</sup> L. Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis* Vol. 2 (Paris, 1886-92), pp. 4-7.

<sup>156</sup> See the Revised version of the *ARF*; *ARF* (Kurze), p. 107.

evidence that all the information for this annal was imported into Part 1 of the *HReg* by Byrhtferth in a second draft (following Hart) or simply omitted as too long by a twelfth-century compiler (following Stubbs). At any rate, the 799 annal may be taken as evidence of an interpolation of continental material into the core *HReg* chronicle at a date considerably after the event occurred. Lapidge believed it contained many examples of Byrhtferth's style and combining that observation with Hart's theory, the annal must have been introduced by Byrhtferth after the *HpB* had been constructed. Stylistically, it certainly stands apart from the other eighth-century Frankish annals contained in this section of the *HReg*.

The papal version of the assassination of Leo is the one found in all other English chronicles which mention the event. As such this annal is a useful point of comparison for assessing the interrelation of various chronicles. For example the *Chronicle of Melrose* (which is closely related to the early section of the *HReg*) is very close to that found in both the *Ramsey Annals (RA)* and in the *ASC* Version A.<sup>157</sup> Hart was of the opinion that the *RA* annal for 799 was derived from the same core information as the *HReg* annal and was the same as that which was translated by the scribe of *ASC* A.<sup>158</sup> The same entry for *Melrose* is evidently a retranslation of the *ASC* version since it is noted *s.a.* 797 (that is, in the tradition of the Southern Recension chronological dislocation in this section of the *ASC*).

Romani Leonis papae oculos eruerunt, et linguam perciderunt;  
sed dei gratia et visum et loquelam mox adeptus est, et iterum  
papa urbis fit.

*Ramsey Annals s.a.* 799. 159

Romani amputaverunt linguam leoni papa et oculos eruerunt et  
eum a sede apostolica fugaverunt. Sed ipse per virtutem diem  
iterum [videre] et loqui potuit et in sede apostolica restitutus est.

*Chronicle of Melrose s.a.* 797. 160

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<sup>157</sup> C. Hart, 'The Ramsey Computus', *EHR* Vol. 85 (1970), 22-44, 42 n. 3 and *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 56.

<sup>158</sup> Hart, 'The Ramsey Computus', 42 n. 5.

<sup>159</sup> Hart, 'The Ramsey Computus', 42.

<sup>160</sup> A. Anderson and M. Anderson, *The Chronicle of Melrose AD 735-1270* (London, 1936), p. 5.

Her Romane Leone þam papan his tungan forcurfan. 7 his  
eagan ut astungon. and hine of his setle aflymodon. 7 þa sona  
eft Gode gefultumiendum he mihte geseon 7 spreca. 7 eft  
was papa swa he ær wæs.

*ASC s.a 797.*<sup>161</sup>

The *RA* deserve mention in the context of *HReg*-type texts given their inherent connection to the monastery at which Byrhtferth lived, and indeed, their incorporation into a computistical manuscript the contents of which are closely associated with that author.<sup>162</sup> The *RA* are preserved in a classic annalistic format along the margins of an Easter Table of a late eleventh-century manuscript. Commencing in AD 538 the annals also bear a close resemblance to those found in *HE* V.24, the *ALf*, the common stock of (northern and southern) annals behind the *ASC* and the *CB*. With the sole exception of the papal annal for 799 mentioned above, *RA* does not include any of the continental material found in *HReg*. This is further evidence for the introduction of the credulous account of the assassination attempt into the *HReg* at Ramsey by Byrhtferth.

#### **AD 800, the imperial coronation of Charlemagne:**

As noted previously the annal for the year 800 in the *HReg* is also of a different character to the earlier Frankish annals incorporated therein. The description of the imperial coronation of Charlemagne is unusually detailed and, disregarding the Asser-based Eadburgh story for 802 and the description of the attack on Leo in 799 which were inserted into the *HReg* at a later date, is by far the longest Frankish annal in this part of the *HReg*. Whereas the earlier Frankish annals (bar that for 799) are incorporated verbatim in the *HpB*, the basic information of *HReg* 800 is contained in *HpB* in a much shorter format, *s.a.* 801;

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<sup>161</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 1, pp. 56-7.

<sup>162</sup> St. John's College Oxford, MS. 17, copied from Byrhtferth's own exemplar in 1086 x 1092; Hart, 'The Ramsey Computus', 34.

Hoc anno potentissimus rex Francorum Karolus Romae  
summus imperator declaratur ab omni senatu, imposito  
capiti eius diademate imperiali a domino papa.

*HPB s.a. 801.*<sup>163</sup>

The word *potentissimus* is a typical 'Byrhtferth' superlative and the last clause is close to one found in the *HReg* version (the latter uses the word *corona* and not *diadema*). As such, following Hart's interpretation of the date of the *HPB*, this entry could be a feasible 'first draft' of the *HReg* annal. But, if Hart's interpretation were to be correct the 'second draft' version of the imperial coronation as found in the *HReg s.a. 800* must be regarded entirely as a composition by Byrhtferth in the late tenth century. Because it is concerned with a coronation ceremony Lapidge assumed that it was one of the sections of the *HReg* which betrayed the editorial hand of Byrhtferth. It certainly contrasts with the other Frankish annals in the *HReg* in terms of its length but mirrors annals such as the 795 description of the Avar hoard in containing details which are not readily found in native Frankish sources. However, whereas the annal about Leo for 799 can be shown to be based on a non-Frankish source (and therefore was not part of the original group of Frankish information incorporated into the *HReg*), the case for the 800 annal in the *HReg* is not so clear cut. Pauli was suspicious of it as a contemporary annal, thinking that it might even relate to the crusading ideals of the twelfth century but nevertheless noted some parallels with Einhard's description of the event.<sup>164</sup>

Arguably the closest Frankish text to the *HReg* annal for 800 are the annals for 800 and 801 in the *ARF*. Thus, the *ARF s.a. 801* states, *Leo papa coronam capiti eius imposuit*. This parallels the phrase in *HReg s.a. 800*:

a domino Leone papa purpurea regaliter induitur; cui corona  
aurea capiti imponitur.

*HReg s.a. 800.*<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Stubbs, *Chronica*, p. 18.

<sup>164</sup> Pauli, 'Karl der Große', p. 164 and *VK* (Einhard), ch. 28, p. 28.

<sup>165</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 62.

The same Frankish annal provides the information that Charlemagne travelled back to Aachen via Ravenna after the ceremony, a detail which is also noted in the *HReg*.

The *ARF* annal for 800 also gives notice of the ambassadors who came to see Charlemagne and especially notes the gift which were brought to him from Jerusalem. Thus, the *ARF s.a.* 800 says:

ad regem misit, qui benedictionis causa claves sepulchri  
Dominici ac loci calvariae, claves etiam civitatis et montis cum  
vexillo detulerunt.

*ARF s.a.* 800, 166

The *HReg* annal for the year 800 is verbally similar to the Frankish version:

vexillum argenti<sup>e</sup> inter alia munera regi ferentes, clavesque  
locorum sanctorum Dominicae, resurrectionis aliorum ei  
optulerunt...

*HReg s.a.* 800.<sup>167</sup>

The *HReg* also gives details of the fate of the conspirators against Leo saying that some of them were killed for their involvement and others were exiled. The Frankish version says that Leo had magnanimously intervened on their behalf in order to save their lives. The phrase *limina sanctorum apostolorum* used in the *HReg s.a.* 800 and which derives from Bede (*HE* V.2, *HAB* chapters 2, 21) is also found in the *ARF s.a.* 796 as is the word *diademate* (*ARF s.a.* 813, 816). It is notable that the description of the imperial coronation is found in the *ARF s.a.* 801 which reflects the fact that the Christmas festival frequently marked the beginning of the following year in Francia. In that respect it is notable that the *HReg* version of the incident is recorded *s.a.* 800, indicating an alternative date for the assessment of the beginning of the year as well as an understanding of the Frankish technique of calculating the end of the year. In conclusion, it is evident that the *HReg* annal for 800 is broadly based on a Frankish description of the event, but the immediate source of that description is not clear. In this respect it resembles the Frankish annals included in the *HReg s.a.* 754-95. It certainly contains some of the stylistic devices attributed to

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<sup>166</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 112.

<sup>167</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 62.

Byrhtferth, but these come across as editorial additions to a pre-existing text rather than a wholesale composition by that author (thereby arguing against the logic of Hart's hypothesis regarding the *HpB*). On balance it seems that the *HReg* annal for 800 should be regarded alongside the earlier Frankish annals in that text (bar 799), but whether its inclusion there belongs to the same stage in the development of that chronicle as the earlier Frankish annals is debatable.

### **Coronations and the vocabulary of kingship:**

Lapidge and Hart noted that an interest in coronations is a recurrent theme running through the writings of Byrhtferth.<sup>168</sup> Lapidge cites the examples of the coronations of Charlemagne *s.a.* 800, Cenwulf of Mercia *s.a.* 798, and King Egbert of Wessex *s.a.* 802 in the *HReg* as evidence of his interest spilling over into that chronicle compilation. Lapidge compares these examples with the description of King Edgar's coronation in the *Vita S. Oswaldi; dedit coronam in capite, et benedictionem; contulit ipsi et sceptrum*.<sup>169</sup> The parallel is there and Lapidge is correct to point out the use of vocabulary concerned with the ideology of kingship and that it links the several sections of the *HReg* which are perceived to have been worked on by Byrhtferth with other works by that author. The implication of his argument however, is that this kingship vocabulary when used by Byrhtferth in the context of eighth- and ninth-century coronations is anachronistic. What Lapidge does not state is that in the *HReg* this type of vocabulary is not solely restricted to annals which describe the ceremony of coronation. A diverse political language is used more broadly in the context of both the accession and deposition of kings as well as the ceremonies which confirmed their status. The language of kingship in section 4 of the *HReg* is sufficiently striking and important in a historical context to warrant a list;

**732** Ceolwulfus rex captus, attonsus, et remissus est.

**734** Augustinus...ad supernae civitatis gaudia sublevatus,  
sceptra tanti fastigii dereliquit Laurentio.

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<sup>168</sup> Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey', 108 and Hart, 'Byrhtferth's Northumbrian Chronicle', 569-70.

<sup>169</sup> J. Raine, ed. *The Historians of the Church of York*, RS Vol. 71.i (London, 1879), 438.

- 754 Bonifacius...martyrio coronatus est...
- 758 Eadberht...sponte contulit filio suo regnum sibi a Deo collatum, nomine Oswulfo, qui uno anno regnum tenuit, amisit, perdidit.
- 765 Ethelwald regnum Northanhymbrorum amisit in Wincanheale.
- 768 Eadberht, quondam rex tunc autem clericus, decimo anno amissionis regni<sup>Sui</sup>...spirjtum emisit ad superos...
- 771 ...frater eius Karl, cum dimidium prius patris obtinuit principatum...
- 772 Karl Francorum rex, collecta manu valida, et bellicosis suae majestatis viris conjunctis, Saxonum gentem est ingressus.
- 774 Ethelredus quoque filius Ethelwaldi, pro eo regnum suscepit: qui tanto honore coronatus vix quinque annos tenuit...
- 779 Ethelredo expulso de regali solio et in exilium fugato... Elfwald...regnum Northanhymbrorum suscepit...
- 790 Ethelredus de exilio liberatus est et iterum per gratiam Christi regni solio est subtronizatus.
- 794 Hoc marmor<sup>ibi</sup> Karolus rex....facere iussit, regali fretus diademate.
- 796 Osbald vero patricius a quibusdam ipsius gentis principibus in regnum est constitutus...Eardulf,...de exilio vocatus, regni infulis est sublimatus, et in Eboraca, in ecclesia Sancti Petri, ad altare beati Apostoli Pauli, ubi illa gens primum perceperat gratiam baptismi, consecratus est...Coenwulf quoque...dehinc diadema regni Merciorum suscepit gloriose...

- 798 Eodem anno Eardwulf rex victoriam regaliter sum<sup>p</sup>sit ex inimicis... [Coenwulf] Deinde Domini suffragio potitus, adjecit imperium ipsius regni suo imperio, imponens sibi coronam in capite, sceptrumque in manu.
- 800 <sup>In</sup> qua a domino Leone papa purpura regaliter induitur; cui corona aurea capiti imponitur, et regale sceptrum in manibus datur.
- 802 Ecgberht rex...diadema totius regni capiti im<sup>p</sup>osuit maximo sceptro redimitus.

The latter three examples are those quoted by Lapidge.<sup>170</sup> That for 802 has already been noted as an anachronistic interpolation into the *HReg*, plausibly by Byrhtferth. The description of Charlemagne's imperial coronation in the year 800 and the word *regaliter* to describe Eardwulf's victory and the 'coronation' of Coenwulf of Mercia after his victory over the Kentish rebels in 798 could well represent additional glosses by a later author on core material. However, the example of 796 which describes the kingmaking ceremony of Eardwulf does so in language which is different but not entirely dissimilar to the proposed editorial additions by Byrhtferth. That ceremony is accepted as a genuine late eighth-century ritual and the presence of a description of it within the *HReg* chronicle points to a contemporary context for the development and use of the type of kingship vocabulary which was later to be employed by Byrhtferth in his various writings. It is possible therefore that the emphasis on coronations and kingly rituals picked out by Lapidge as a defining characteristic of Byrhtferth's hand may in fact mask vocabulary which was current in an earlier age. The distinction is subtle since in Byrhtferth's day the rituals of kingmaking such as coronation and ecclesiastical sanction of new monarchs were commonplace, in the later eighth century, however, these rituals were only just beginning to be used within an Anglo-Saxon context, probably as a result of continental developments.

Many of the quotations above have examples of nouns symbolic of the office and ritual of kingship, such as *sceptrum*, *corona*, *diadema*, words which were used in

<sup>170</sup> Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey', 108.

eighth and ninth-century Carolingian annals. The verbs used in association with obtaining or losing the kingship also bear note; *accipere/suscipere*, *amittere*, *sublevare*, *constituere*. The two entries *s.a.* 734 and 754 show that the same type of vocabulary is used in ecclesiastical contexts. The reference in 732 to the enforced tonsuring of King Ceowulf is immediately reminiscent of early Carolingian practice of removing unwanted Merovingian monarchs and brothers from the secular political arena. The 732 annal bears special note since it also occurs in the *MA* thus indicating that the triple participle was part of the style of the original eighth-century annalist. At least one of the characteristic markers of Byrhtferth's style can be shown definitively to have been employed by his eighth-century precursor.

Another important feature of this annal, and indeed of many of the others is that the verbs describing the accession or the deposition of a king are passive, in other words implying that a third party was controlling access to the kingship (eg: 796). Sometimes this third party is named *sua familia* (758), *consilio et concensu suorum omnium* (774) or *eius patricius, Sicga* (788). It is striking that this period of unpredictable kingship in Northumbria is contemporaneous with the first examples of the elevation of the status of kingship by ecclesiastical ritual, arguably as another means to legitimise the status or to protect the person of the king from his secular enemies. Since it is known that a similar process was evolving in Mercia simultaneously (Offa had his son Ecgrith 'hallowed' as king in 787)<sup>171</sup> there is thus good reason to suppose that much of the vocabulary used to describe the processes of kingmaking in the *HReg* are an integral part of the contemporary, eighth-century text, and not an anachronism imposed by Byrhtferth.

Lapidge's analysis pinpointed the features of a tenth-century writer whose work had long been suspected within the *HReg*.<sup>172</sup> The subtlety of his analysis is based on the amalgamation of all of these features into a single literary finger-print. However, problems of detail arise because some of the individual features of this style were

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<sup>171</sup> ASC *s.a.* 785 (*recte* 787); Nelson, 'Inauguration rituals', in *Politics and Ritual*, p. 285.

<sup>172</sup> See Arnold's comments, *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. xxv.

also (inevitably) used by authors from previous decades, and indeed, Lapidge cites several authors to which he believed the Byrhtferth of Ramsey had access.<sup>173</sup> This in many ways blurs the contribution which earlier editors may have had on the prototype *HReg*. In particular, Lapidge cites the work of Alcuin as an inspiration to Byrhtferth. He thereby assumes that any phrases which are reminiscent of the work of Alcuin were anachronistically imposed into the prototype *HReg* text by Byrhtferth in the later tenth century. This may be a realistic assessment of the course of events but it negates the possibility that either Alcuin himself or scholars in contact with him or his Frankish friends may have had a contemporary impact on the parts of the *HReg* which concern the later eighth century. This is true not just of the Frankish Annals within the *HReg* which have an obvious possible link with Alcuin during his time at the Frankish court, but also with the vocabulary which Alcuin himself used and the topics in which he expressed an interest, coronations and the trappings of kingship for example.<sup>174</sup>

#### The eighth-century context:

This idea is further supported by comparison of the vocabulary with other early texts unrelated to the *HReg*. Significantly, those which provide the closest parallels to the words and set phrases used in the *HReg* are writings of Alcuin and the *ARF* and its dependent texts. In the poetic context of *Versus de Patribus, Regibus et Sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae*, Alcuin uses many of the technical words and phrases of kingship of the type that are also found in the *HReg*.<sup>175</sup> For example:

line 115	qui mox <u>accipiens sceptri regalis honorem</u>
line 154	qui mihi concessit vitam <u>regnique coronam</u>

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<sup>173</sup> For example, one of Lapidge's 'typical' polysyllabic adverbs (*inenarrabiliter*) cannot be due to Byrhtferth's work since it is found in a quotation from the *HE* which was in turn quoting from the proceedings of the synod of Hatfield held in 679; *HE* (Colgrave and Mynors), p. 386 and Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the early sections', pp. 103, 112-18.

<sup>174</sup> For a more detailed study of the political vocabulary used by Alcuin than is possible here see J. Chelini, *Le Vocabulaire Politique et Social dans la Correspondence d'Alcuin*, Travaux et Mémoires Vol. 12, Publications des Annales de la Faculté des lettres (Aix-en-Provence, 1959) pp. 1-104, especially pp. 13-58.

<sup>175</sup> P. Godman, ed., *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York* (Oxford, 1982).

line 506	Osui germano terrestria <u>sceptra</u> relinuens.
lines 575-6	Ecgrido tradens proprio <u>diademata</u> gnato, Ecgrido moriens <u>regalia sceptra</u> relinuens.
lines 1273-4	Cuius frater item Tyrio nutritus in ostro sumpserat Eadberctus gentis <u>regalia sceptra</u>
line 1281	ille <u>levat capiti veterum diademata</u> patrum
line 1286	ille annis tenuit ter septem <u>sceptra</u> parentum

Although the words such as *corona*, *sceptra* and *diademata* might arguably have been used in a non-specific, poetic way in this context, the point is that they were words current in the late eighth-century vocabulary to describe the accessories which made a king. And Alcuin was not the only eighth-century author to use such words, St Boniface writing to Æthelbald of Mercia refers to the *sceptra imperii Anglorum*.<sup>176</sup>

Other phrases which Lapidge has used as markers to Byrhtferth's style but which are found in Alcuin's poem are *armipotens* (line 125, *HReg s.a.* 868, 878), *bellator* (line 659, *HReg s.a.* 887). That these unusual words are found in section 5 of the *HReg* implies that Byrhtferth indeed had direct or indirect access to some of Alcuin's writings. The reference in *HReg s.a.* 800 to Rome as *Romulea urbis* is mirrored in line 1455 of Alcuin's poem; *Hic quoque Romuleam venit devotus ad urbem*. The phrase *auro scilicet argento gemmisque* (*s.a.* 800) is repeated twice in Alcuin's poem (lines 277, 389) and indeed in Einhard's *Vita Karoli*, chapter 27.<sup>177</sup> Alcuin uses frequent superlatives and agentive nouns (lines 99, 131, 232, 265, 267, 291, 569, 773) and the characteristic triple verb technique (lines 1237, 1450).<sup>178</sup> He also refers to a copy of Boethius held in the library of York (line 1548). Alcuin's letters and other poems offer further frequent examples of such agentive nouns, alliteration, hellenisms, superlatives and triple verbs or participles which Lapidge cites as typical of Byrhtferth's literary style. Charlemagne and other kings are often addressed in superlative terms and referred to using allusions such as *rector*, *defensor*, *amator*,

<sup>176</sup> J. Nelson, 'The earliest royal *ordo*: some liturgical and historical aspects', in *Politics and Ritual*, 341-60, 356; for an edition of the letter see Tangl, *Bonifatius und Lullus*, no. 73, p. 146.

<sup>177</sup> VK (Einhard), pp. 20-21. .

<sup>178</sup> Levison comments that Alcuin uses the triple verb in his verses for the church at Salzburg; Levison, *England and the Continent*, p.150, note 6.

*adjutor et protector, gubernator* for example.<sup>179</sup> In this respect, a letter which survives from Alcuin's pupil, Eanbald (who was to become Archbishop Eanbald II) to the incumbent archbishop, Eanbald I, which also displays some of these features indicates that others in York were able to write in a style akin to that employed by Alcuin.<sup>180</sup>

It could of course be argued that the parallels between the writings of Alcuin and the kingship vocabulary of the *HReg* could be due to Byrhtferth, or another editor like him, mimicking the style of Alcuin. Although, as McGurk has recently noted, such literary subtlety is not recognised as part of Byrhtferth's style,<sup>181</sup> Lapidge's general conclusion that the hand of Byrhtferth can be perceived in Part 1 of the *HReg* must be accepted. However, it must also be noted that an analysis especially of Alcuin's 'York Poem' as well as his letters, indicates that much of the precise vocabulary which Lapidge assumes is an anachronistic imposition into the *HReg* was current in the eighth century. The possibility that Alcuin and his school at York were responsible for more of the *HReg* chronicle than has previously been supposed must be considered seriously.

One phrase used in the *HReg*, *s.a.* 796, has an even more venerable Frankish pedigree than the late eighth century. With reference to the accession of Eardwulf, the phrase *regni infulis est sublimatus...consecratus est* is employed. The technical phrase *sublimare in regnum*, that is, 'raised to the kingship' is first recorded in the late seventh-century *Passion of St Leudgarius*, *s.a.* 673 in the context of a traditional ritual procedure, *solemniter, ut mos est*.<sup>182</sup> This phrase in combination with the

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<sup>179</sup> See for example *Carmina*, MGH PLAC 1.i (Berlin 1880), no. xxvi, p. 245 and Chelini, *Le Vocabulaire Politique*, p. lxxii for a synopsis. For a summary of the grammatical style of Alcuin's poetic language see, Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. civ-cvi.

<sup>180</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 46, the (Ciceronean) triple construction, *ammonitionis, benedictionis et promissionis.... Remunerator...* p. 91 [24-5].

<sup>181</sup> Darlington and McGurk, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, p. lxxx and indeed Arnold's comments of the 'pretentious and bombastical' style of the tenth-century editor; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. xvii.

<sup>182</sup> Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', in *Politics and Ritual*, 283-307, 286.

element of consecration is next used in the famous passage in the *Continuation to the Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar* which describes the elevation of Pippin III to the kingship, thereby deposing the last Merovingian monarch;

Pippinus electione totius Francorum in sedem regni cum consecratione episcoporum et subiectione <sup>n</sup>pr̄cipum una cum regina Bertradane, ut antiquitus ordo deposcit, sublimatur in regno.

*The Continuation to the Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar*, ch. 33.<sup>183</sup>

The whole description of the consecration of Eardwulf in 796 is filled with analogies to Frankish models of kingship (as noted above in Chapter 1), analogies emphasised by his close ties to the Carolingian court. The elaborate reference to the consecration and elevation of this *dux* in front of the most important altar in the most important church of York, where the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxon Northumbrians were first converted to Christianity seems an entirely plausible description of an attempt to legitimise a new king and his regime. As such it is a close parallel to the events at Soissons in 751. It seems that the weight and significance of this technical Frankish phrase was understood by the chronicler of the 796 Northumbrian event and that such terminology was employed deliberately in this context.

### **The death of Pope Hadrian :**

Blair and Pauli pointed out that only one of the continental entries in the *HReg* contained a factual error.<sup>184</sup> The *HReg* records the death of Pope Hadrian under the year 794, in common with all versions of the *ASC* (A-F).<sup>185</sup> The correct year of his death was 795. However, the *Liber Pontificalis* notes that Hadrian died on *vii kal. Januarii* that is, on the day after Christmas. The *HReg* annal gets this part of the date correct but mistakes the year in which it happened, suggesting perhaps a confusion

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<sup>183</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, ed. *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar and Continuations* (London, 1960), p. 102.

<sup>184</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', 93 and Pauli, 'Karl der Große', 162.

<sup>185</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 56-7 and *ASC* (Plummer) 1, pp. 56-7.

over the starting date of the year.<sup>186</sup> A similar error occurs in the *ARF* which tend to start the date of a new year with the Christmas celebration.<sup>187</sup> Christmas 794 would therefore have been considered Christmas 795 in Frankish sources. Thus, knowing that Hadrian died on the day after Christmas the Frankish sources recorded his death *s.a.* 796. Yet, the *HReg* annal concerning Hadrian gives more detail than either the *ARF* or its revised version. It attempts to give a calculation of the years, days and months of Hadrian's rule. The *HReg* says that Hadrian ruled *annos xxvi menses decem et dies xii*. The correct figures as given by the official and contemporary papal biography, the *Liber Pontificalis* states that he ruled twenty three years, ten months and seventeen days, his accession having occurred on 9 February 772. The *HReg* error therefore seems substantial, incorrect by four years and five days. But it is notable that the number of months of Hadrian's rule as quoted by the *HReg* was given in words not numerals. This figure (*decem*) is correct. However, the Roman numerals for the years and days of Hadrian's rule could very easily have been miscopied from the correct version (xxvi for xxiii and xii for xvii). Only the so-called Lorsch Annals amongst the Frankish corpus of chronicles gives the correct year and date for the death of Hadrian, but does not provide a calculation of the length of his reign.<sup>188</sup>

Further to this, is the evidence which the *HReg* provides for the memorial which Charlemagne commissioned for his friend, Hadrian. The *HReg* annal describes a marble slab which was to rest over the tomb. This marble slab, it is said, was to record the Pope's good deeds in verse written in golden lettering, *aureis literis et versibus scripta*. The annal states that Charlemagne himself ordered this marble slab to be made out of loving memory for the Pope. Once again it is only the Lorsch Annals for 795 which comes anywhere close to this level of detail, stating;

Adrianus summus pontifex Romanus obiit, pro quo domnus  
rex, postquam a planctu eius cessavit, orationes per universum

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<sup>186</sup> Poole, *Chronology and History*, pp. 8-11.

<sup>187</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), pp. 96-9.

<sup>188</sup> Pertz, MGH SS Vol. 1, p. 36.

Christianum populum infra terminos suos fieri rogavit et aelimosina sua pro eo multipliciter transmisit et ebitaffium aureis litteris in marmore conscriptum iussit in Francia fieri, et eum partibus transmitteret ad sepultra summi pontificis Adriani ormandam.

*Annales Laureshamenses, s.a. 795.*<sup>189</sup>

Several significant points of detail emerge. Firstly, the reference to the golden lettering is common to both the Lorsch and the *HReg* descriptions of the marble epitaph. A further contemporary source provides the same detail. The poetic epitaph to the Pope written by Theodulf of Orleans commences with the words;

Aurea funereum complectit littera carmen,  
Verba tonat fulvus et lacrimosa color.

Theodulf, *Carmen ad Hadriani* [lines 1-2].<sup>190</sup>

The *HReg* reference to the golden letters of the epitaph is therefore in good company and is seemingly based on a contemporary description of the slab. This observation is all the more striking since the marble epitaph, which still survives in the portico of St Peter's in Rome today, reveals no sign of gold in the letters which appear to be carved into the surface of the marble.<sup>191</sup> Were these letters once inlaid with gold in accordance with the three sources quoted above, or does the absence of gold in the finished product perhaps reflect details of the original commission from Charlemagne? Gold leaf or plate could of course have been removed from the slab at any time, when the slab was set into its current Renaissance surround for example. But the present day lack of gold on the slab does at least highlight the parallel between the comments by Theodulf and the authors of the Lorsch and *HReg* annals and argues that the detail of the latter is based on a contemporary source.

<sup>189</sup> Pertz, MGH SS Vol. 1, p. 36 and King, *Charlemagne*, p. 142. This section was quoted above in Chapter 1 with reference to the order to preach the news of Hadrian's death.

<sup>190</sup> E. Dümmler, ed., MGH PLAC Vol. 1 (Berlin, 1881), no. 26, pp. 489-90.

<sup>191</sup> The letter forms imitate second-century *capitalis quadrata*. D. A. Bullough, *The Age of Charlemagne* (London, 1973), p. 66, pl. 19 and R. Krautheimer, *Rome, Profile of a City, 312-1308* (New Jersey, 1980), p. 140 fig. 115. Unfortunately, both these reproductions of the marble slab are in monochrome, first-hand inspection of the slab is difficult because it is placed high up in the portico. See above p. ii.

Why should such close details of the marble memorial to Hadrian have reached eighth-century York? The answer is perhaps to be found in the identity of the poet of the epitaph carved upon the surviving slab. It is known that the verses for <sup>the</sup> epitaph were composed by Alcuin himself, having won the commission from Charlemagne in a competition with Theodulph.<sup>192</sup> Remembering Alcuin's letter to the bishops of Britain (quoted above in Chapter 1, p. 46) regarding Charlemagne's request for prayers to be said for the dead pope and Alcuin's reference therein to the monks and priests who had been sent to carry out this order, it is highly plausible that details of Alcuin's success in the competition for the composition of the epitaph might have reached his home-community at York along with details of its physical appearance. But the parallel with the Lorsch Annals entry for 795 bears further note, since this annal is also the closest in the Frankish annalistic corpus to the description of the Avar treasure hoard which is found in the *HReg s.a. 795* and in Alcuin's and Charlemagne's letters to Offa on the subject. Can it be coincidence that the information concerning the Avars and Hadrian's death which is found in such exceptional detail in the *HReg* are both most closely paralleled by a single entry in the Lorsch Annals? The information about the two incidents in these two sources is not sufficiently close as to suppose direct borrowing from one to the other, but it might be taken to suggest a distant common ancestor. It is significant too that the Lorsch Annals being so detailed are considered to be a contemporary compilation which were written down in the later years of the eighth century.<sup>193</sup> It is arguable that the contemporaneity of the Lorsch Annals also reflected in the detail of the *HReg* annals for 794 and 795.

### Alcuin and the *Historia Regum*:

It serves lastly to look directly at the evidence which links Alcuin to the Frankish Annals within Section 4 of the *HReg*. Much of the evidence is arguably circumstantial, the epitaph of Hadrian for example, but as William Stubbs suggested

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<sup>192</sup> L. Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: studies in Carolingian history and literature* (Ithaca, 1959), pp. 178-97 and P. Godman, *The Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London, 1985), pp. 11, 17.

<sup>193</sup> Halphen, *Études critiques*, pp. 26-31 and King, *Charlemagne*, pp. 19-20.

in 1868 Alcuin may have been involved in the original collection of the annals which form the basis of all the annals in the early part of the *HReg*, not just the Frankish ones;

‘It is not improbable that Alcuin was instrumental in a remote way in the composition...the references to events of European rather than domestic interest and especially to the history of the great emperor, seem to imply it. It ends too about the time of Alcuin’s death, as if the writer had not thought it worthwhile to continue it’.<sup>194</sup>

However, he qualifies this observation with the comment that, ‘There is no distinct trace of Alcuin’s hand in it, for it contains few allusions and no direct references to the historical events that are mentioned in his existing letters’. The scenario which Stubbs had in mind is apparently one of distant influence as the transmitter of the Frankish information as opposed to more direct editorial input. However, contrary to what Stubbs thought, a close analysis of some of the vocabulary which has been attributed to the influence of Byrhtferth, does indicate parallels in the writing of Alcuin. Also, several of Alcuin’s letters are concerned with many of those events mentioned in the *HReg*. His letters to Charlemagne, the treasurer Mægenfrith, Archbishop Arno of Salzburg and Paulinus, patriarch of Aquileia, concerning the conversion of the Avars are an important source illustrating the Carolingian insistence on conversion to the Christian faith as a means of enforcing Carolingian overlordship.<sup>195</sup> Interesting in this respect is Alcuin’s reference in a letter to the Irish *magister* Colcu about the conquest of the *Avari*, *quos nos Hunos dicimus*.<sup>196</sup> This reclassification of the Avars as the Huns is consistent in all references concerning the tribe in Anglo-Saxon sources, including the *HReg* 795 reference which tells of Charlemagne’s conquest *Hunorum gentem armis vastando subegerat*.<sup>197</sup> In contrast,

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<sup>194</sup> Stubbs, *Chronica*, p. xi and n. 2.

<sup>195</sup> *Alc. Ep.* nos 99,110-113, pp. 143-4, 156-66.

<sup>196</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 7, p. 32 [14].

<sup>197</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 57. Other letters to Anglo-Saxons include one by Alcuin to Higbald, bishop of Lindisfarne; *Alc. Ep.* no. 20, p. 53 [32] and Charlmagne’s letter to Offa regarding the gift of a *gladium Huniscum* from the treasure hoard recorded in *HReg s.a.* 795.

his letters circulating on the continent and the *ARF* and its revised version use the name Avar or Hun interchangeably with no clarification. Alcuin when writing to a man who had spent much time in his native Northumbria, may have felt the need to clarify the expression current in Francia in terms which Colcu would understand, hence Hun for Avar, *quos nos dicimus*.<sup>198</sup>

The ordination of Aluberht as bishop of the Ealdseaxe in 767 and his connection with Alcuin has been mentioned above. The *Life of St. Liudger* describes, amongst other things, the early life of that saint in the monastery of Utrecht under the tutorship of Abbot Gregory. Chapter 10 of the *Life* tells of the arrival of Aluberht, *vir quidam de terra Anglorum* who desired to assist with the missionary work of the province.<sup>199</sup> Seeing Aluberht's potential, Gregory decided that he should become a bishop, but lacked episcopal orders himself and therefore the ability to ordain others to that rank. Aluberht therefore suggested that he might return with others 'to the land from which I have come' to be ordained by the bishop of that place. Thus Aluberht, Luidger and Sigiberht, another brother of the Utrecht community, were sent away *ad terram Anglorum* to be ordained. 'And in that place' the author of the *Life* continues, 'Alcuin was master, who afterwards in the times of Charles was in charge of the teaching at Tours and in the Frankish kingdom'. The *Life* continues with a chapter describing Alcuin's tutorship of Liudger in York. The *Vita* of this Frisian saint therefore reveals Alcuin's presence in York at the time when Aluberht was consecrated Bishop of the Ealdseaxe, accurately recorded by the *HReg s.a. 767*. The connection between Alcuin and the *HReg* is again circumstantial, and may reflect more the connection of the early *HReg* chronicle with York rather than with Alcuin *per se*, but the *Life* reminds us that Alcuin at this time was a venerated *magister*, and was just the sort of person who might have inspired the keeping of accurate records of important events which occurred in his city and in his *patria*. Furthermore, the *Life*

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<sup>198</sup> Colcu's death is recorded in the *HReg s.a. 794*, which suggests that he had contact with Northumbria, probably via Alcuin; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 56. This is confirmed by another letter by Alcuin, one of the few written whilst he was resident in Northumbria, on this occasion at the beginning of the second reign of Æthelred in 790, which refers to Colcu and several other friends *qui apud nos sunt*; *Alc. Ep.* no. 8, p. 34 [14].

<sup>199</sup> Pertz, MGH SS Vol. 2, pp. 403-19, 408-9.

of *Liudger* indicates that Alcuin was attracting students from abroad, students who may well have brought with them information about important events on the continent. Alcuin's subsequent fame in Francia (as *Liudger's Vita* notes) could well have provided the impetus for maintaining this interest in Frankish events after his departure for Charlemagne's court in 781/2.

That Alcuin may have been the catalyst for the collection of Frankish information in a Northumbrian chronicle is further highlighted by the *HReg* annal for 792.<sup>200</sup> This annal tells how Charlemagne, evidently worried, sent a *synodalem librum...sibi ad Constantinopoli directum* to Britain. The book *Heu, pro dolor*, was full of *multa inconvenientia et verae fidei contraria reperientes* and apparently reported the outcome of the 787 Second Council of Nicæa which condemned Iconoclasm.<sup>201</sup> Charlemagne seems to have sent the book to Britain precisely because Alcuin, his valued scholar, was resident there at the time.<sup>202</sup> His presence in Northumbria at the start of Æthelred's second reign is confirmed by several letters which he wrote back to his friends in Francia.<sup>203</sup> To Joseph he complained that 'the new reign keeps me here against my will so that I cannot come to you'.<sup>204</sup> The book and Alcuin's letter condemning the Iconoclasts 'supported marvellously by the authority of the divine scriptures' seems to have provided Alcuin with the excuse to return to Francia where he was certainly resident by June 793 as his letters to Higbald of Lindisfarne

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<sup>200</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 53-4.

<sup>201</sup> The expression *Heu! Pro dolor* is a mock-Virgilian expression which is found frequently in the letters and poems of Alcuin; *Alc. Ep.* nos 7, 41, 43, 212 also used in his poem bemoaning the sack of Lindisfarne; P. Godman, *The Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London, 1985), p. 128 [66] and see also above, p. 43. Was the author/editor of this annal which speaks of Alcuin's letter on Iconoclasm deliberately invoking an Alcuinian allusion?

<sup>202</sup> The *HReg* refers to Alcuin by one of his pseudonyms, Albinus. In a letter to George the Patriarch of Jerusalem written c. 800, Alcuin commented, *Albinus habeo nomen inter notos et filios sanctae Dei ecclesiae*; *Alc. Ep.* no. 210, p. 350 [31].

<sup>203</sup> See the letters to Joseph and Arno; *Alc. Ep.* nos 8 and 10 respectively, pp. 33 [16-17], 36 [20-1].

<sup>204</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 8, p. 33 [16-17].

indicate.<sup>205</sup> The *HReg* annal which describes this event is important not least because of the statement that Alcuin's letter condemning the ideas in the book from Constantinople was confirmed *persona episcoporum ac principum nostrorum*. That 'our bishops and highest noblemen' added their authority to Alcuin's response to Charlemagne provides a direct parallel to the letter which the Papal Legates took to Hadrian in Rome after their journey to Northumbria and Mercia in 786.<sup>206</sup> This letter (which forms the subject of Chapter 4) reveals an extraordinary degree of Frankish interference in the workings of Northumbrian (and Mercian) politics. Alcuin was present at the 786 meeting too, and according to the latest analysis was fundamental in the drafting of the letter which reported the outcome of the mission to Hadrian.<sup>207</sup> The parallel of the 786 mission which witnessed the gathering of the Northumbrian élite to sign a document which resonates with Frankish influence with the meeting six years later in 792 is remarkable. Not only was Alcuin a major player in both events, but both meetings seem to have been underpinned by Charlemagne. The 792 meeting has not before been referred to as a synod, but the parallel with the 786 Legatine synodal meeting suggests that it perhaps ought to be considered as such.

That Alcuin was involved at some stage in the evolution of the eighth-century component of the *HReg* chronicle has been accepted by some modern scholars.

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<sup>205</sup> The letter does not survive amongst the extant collections of Alcuin's letters. However, this annal caused confusion about the authorship of the so called *Libri Carolini*. This official Carolingian rebuffal of Byzantine Iconoclasm, which was one time attributed to Alcuin, is now thought to have been composed by his great rival Theodulf of Orléans. Alcuin in his turn was the Carolingian spokesman against the heresy of Adoptionism expounded by Elipandus of Toledo and Felix of Urgel. On Alcuin's role in the latter controversy see Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 156-7. For an overview of the literature on the problem of the *Libri Carolini* see P. Mayvaert, 'The authorship of the *Libri Carolini*: Observations prompted by a recent book', *Revue bénédictine*, Vol. 89 (1979), 29-57. The authorship of Theodulf was championed by A. Freeman, 'Theodulf of Orléans and the *Libri Carolini*', *Speculum* Vol. 32 (1957), 663-705 and continued in *Speculum* Vol. 40 (1965) 203-89 and *Speculum* Vol. 46, (1971), 597-612. Objections were raised by L. Wallach, *Diplomatic Studies in Latin and Greek Documents from the Carolingian Age* (Ithaca, 1977). Alcuin wrote to Higbald from Francia after the Viking raid on the monastery on 8 June 793; *Alc. Ep.* no's 20-1, pp. 56-9.

<sup>206</sup> *HReg s.a. 786, Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 51 and *Alc. Ep.*, no. 3, pp. 19-29. Alcuin is referred to on p. 28 [11].

<sup>207</sup> C. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils, c. 650-c.850* (London, 1995), pp. 153-90.

Blair's seminal article on the *HReg* emphasised the York interest which pervades Section 4, but he was sceptical of Stubbs' comment about Alcuin, saying rightly, 'That there are likely to have been many others in a position to secure and transmit to Northumbria information of the kind recorded in these entries'.<sup>208</sup> This is self evident when the sources are closely scrutinised. Someone must have brought the synodal book to Alcuin in Northumbria in 792 for example. Lapidge, however is more amenable to the idea that Alcuin had some real influence over the information within this section of the *HReg* and refers to the core set of annals behind *HReg* Section 4 as the 'York Annals'. He argues that these York Annals became available in Ramsey in the late tenth century at which time they were used by the compiler(s) of both the Ramsey Annals and Part 1 of the *HReg*.<sup>209</sup> Dumville also admits that there was 'perhaps' a York origin to that section of the *HReg*.<sup>210</sup> The circumstantial evidence for the involvement of Alcuin in bringing detailed Frankish material into Northumbria is good and it is perfectly feasible that he, or at least the contacts which he created between the Carolingian court and the school at York, were responsible for the Frankish information found today in section 4 of the *HReg*. Alcuin's stylistic influence over the work is also detectable, but it is difficult to tell whether this was a result of direct editorial influence or of secondary borrowing from his own compositions by a later editor of those 'York Annals'. If such kingship vocabulary can be attributed to an eighth-century editor of the York Annals then it provides significant ramifications for the development of royal ritual in Anglo-Saxon England at that date.

With regard to the Frankish annals in the *HReg*, it is noteworthy not so much that the section on English affairs finishes at about the time of Alcuin's death, but that the Frankish annals which can, with a reasonable degree of certainty be considered contemporary inclusions in the eighth-century section of the *HReg* (disregarding the entries for 799 and 802) finish after Alcuin had retired to Tours in 796. Only a few

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<sup>208</sup> Blair, 'Some observations', 94, n. 1, 98-99. He also refers to the three consecutive verb device as one used by Alcuin, *ibid*, 97 note 4.

<sup>209</sup> M. Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey', 115-6, 121, n. 74.

<sup>210</sup> Dumville, 'Textual Archaeology', 48-9.

letters from Alcuin to Northumbrian noblemen in the extant collections can be attributed to the post 796 period and apart from the slightly awkward description of Charlemagne's coronation in 800, after 795 no further Frankish annals are found in the *HReg*. Alcuin's retirement to Tours coincided with a dramatic year in Anglo-Saxon England; Offa of Mercia died and his heir Ecgfrith followed him to the grave only a few months later.<sup>211</sup> In Northumbria, Æthelred was assassinated and his successor Osbald survived but twenty-seven days before being forced into exile in Pictland. Alcuin's lifelong friend Eanbald I, the archbishop of York, died on *iiii Idus Augusti* and was replaced by Alcuin's pupil also called Eanbald on *18 kal. Sept.* Alcuin's letters to Eanbald II show his increasing concerns about the health of the Northumbrian nation, and his evident apprehension about Merca and Northumbria after the deaths of their kings may have meant that he simply backed down and retired to Tours, and the flow of Frankish information to York slowed.

### Conclusions:

To summarise therefore, it can be assumed that the continental entries found in the section of the *HReg* which discusses eighth-century events formed an intrinsic part of the material which came under the editorial influence of Byrhtferth at Ramsey in the late tenth century. Yet, the contrast with the clumsy joints between the five sections<sup>of</sup> the *HReg* which Byrhtferth amalgamated into a nominal unit as well as Byrhtferth's distinctive linguistic style make it inherently unlikely that tenth-century Ramsey was the place at which the Frankish details (754-95) were introduced to the northern chronicle material. Byrhtferth's editorial additions stand out from the text of the *HReg* as a whole. As such, although the Frankish components of the *HReg* display some of these characteristics, with the exception of the annals for 799 and 802, the Frankish annals *per se* do not stand apart from the other eighth-century events. This observation alone would provide sufficient grounds for suspecting that the introduction of the Frankish elements into that chronicle belonged to a pre-Ramsey phase in its existence. The verbal parallels and coincidence of interests in the writings of Alcuin point the way to a perfectly logical earlier context. Notices such as that concerning the marble epitaph of Hadrian and the Avar treasure *s.a.* 794 and 795

<sup>211</sup> See *HReg s.a.* 796; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 57-8.

in the *HReg*, have the resonance of contemporary observation and both were events with which Alcuin was involved. The focus on York inherent in this section of the annals further points to the school in that city, of which Alcuin had been master, as a likely place where such information might have been collected together in chronicle format. It is arguable therefore that it was under the influence of the continental journeys which Alcuin and his colleagues took and of the people such as Liudger who travelled to York, that the Frankish element was added to the Northern Annals both in terms of the hard facts of continental events and arguably also in terms of the political vocabulary visible in that portion of the *HReg* today.

Thus, the corpus of Northern Annals in combination with the Frankish material constitutes the 'York Annals'. This interpretation of the construction of the chronicle accounts for the differences between section 4 of the *HReg* version of the lost Northern chronicle and that which is represented by the Northern Recension of the *ASC*, since it is conceivable that a copy of the Northern Annals did not receive the Frankish/York input, and maintained a separate path of evolution only to be incorporated in the *ASC* at a later date. It is unlikely to be coincidence that a series of detailed descriptions of Frankish events should find their way into a Northumbrian chronicle at just the time when other evidence for contacts between Francia and Anglo-Saxon England is most prolific. The evidence suggests that these annals, found as they are in a northern English chronicle, should be regarded as further contemporary evidence for such contacts. Furthermore, the internal pointers in that chronicle to York as the place of its compilation provide an entirely logical context for the amalgamation of such continental material into a chronicle otherwise focused on the fortunes of later eighth-century Northumbria.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE LEGATINE MISSION OF 786: THE EVIDENCE FOR FRANKISH INVOLVEMENT.

The *Historia Regum* contains an account under the year 786 of the arrival of two papal legates in Britain.<sup>1</sup> It states that their mission was to renew the faith which St Augustine had preached to the pagan Anglo-Saxons of southern Britain when he and his fellow evangelists had settled in Canterbury almost two hundred years previously. Our primary source on the mission is a letter which was written to Pope Hadrian by one of the legates as a report on the progress of the mission through Britain.<sup>2</sup> The Report says that the eighth-century papal legates were met by Augustine's successor, Archbishop Jaenberht on their arrival in Kent before going on to hold councils in the presence of the secular and ecclesiastical élites of the kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria. It was the first official papal delegation to have been sent to Britain since Augustine's and as such, this mission must be considered a diplomatic encounter of major international significance in later eighth-century Europe.<sup>3</sup> The mission was ostensibly a papal one yet, if Northumbria was

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<sup>1</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> The best edition of the report can be found in, E. Dümmmler, ed., *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, Vol. 2, MGH Epp. Vol. IV (Berlin 1895), no. 3, pp. 20-29. As with other references to this edition (which contains Alcuin's letters) references hereafter will be to *Alc. Ep.* An incomplete version which omits the address and the initial sentence can be found in Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, pp. 447-61. The letter survives in a single manuscript, Wolfenbüttel, Herzogliche Bibliothek, MS Helmstedt 454, fols 113v-127v. The manuscript is now incomplete, the middle section of the letter having been lost. However, the full text was transcribed before the loss of these leaves by the Magdeburg Centurators and it is this edition which formed the basis of later ones; Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *Ecclesiastica historia, integram ecclesiae Christi ideam quantum ad locum...congesta per aliquot studiosos et pios viros in urbe Magdeburgica*, 13 vols (Basle, 1561-74), cent. 8, cap. ix, cols 574 [59]-587 [15]. The edition by the Magdeburg Centurators abbreviated the rubric and the first few lines, starting the text with the words *Nos faventibus sanctis orationibus...*. The edition by Haddan and Stubbs followed the Centurators' edition in this respect. The manuscript copy reveals no obvious reason for this choice of starting place.

<sup>3</sup> The author of the Legatine Report himself pointed out this fact, *quia ut scitis, a tempore sancti Agustini pontificis sacerdos Romanus nullus illuc missus est nisi nos*; *Alc. Ep.* p. 21 [2-3].

truly part of the Carolingian world and really came within Charlemagne's sphere of political interest and influence, then the mission of the papal legates in 786 and the council which was held in Northumbria late in that year was precisely the type of forum at which Carolingian ideas might be expected to have been promoted within a Northumbrian political environment. The genuine friendship which is known to have existed between Charlemagne and Pope Hadrian in combination with the probability that a papal legate would have had to pass through Francia in order to reach Britain makes it unthinkable that the Frankish king would not have known about the mission. At the very least, it would have presented to Charlemagne an ideal opportunity to find out more about the workings of the courts of Offa and Ælfwald under the aegis of a papal mission. The mission is an especially important marker in the Franco-Northumbrian political relationship since the Report to Hadrian describes in detail the Northumbrian council and the decrees which were promulgated there. In the light of subsequent Frankish interest in Northumbrian politics (Æthelred and Eardwulf) the Legatine Mission of 786 warrants close inspection to ascertain not just whether a Frankish element existed in the delegation and the decrees which were produced but, taking the argument to its extreme conclusion, the extent to which the whole council could be interpreted as a tool of Carolingian diplomatic influence.

This interpretation may not be as improbable as it may seem at first sight. Even a cursory glance at the legates' Report to Hadrian immediately reveals features which demonstrate Carolingian involvement in the mission at a variety of levels. The letter is dated in the address (amongst other methods) by the regnal years of Charlemagne indicating that the event was considered and recorded within a Carolingian time-frame.<sup>4</sup> The Frankish king is also mentioned in the introductory preamble in relation to an abbot by the name of Wigbod, whom Charlemagne sent as an *adiutor* for the legates.<sup>5</sup> This Wigbod, who accompanied the delegation which travelled to Northumbria, was considered to be a man *probatae fidei*. His 'proven faith' could

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<sup>4</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 20 [3-4].

<sup>5</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 20 [30-2]. Charlemagne described himself as a *humilis adiutor* in the preface to the reform capitulary written in 789, the *Admonitio Generalis*; A. Boretius, ed. *Capitulum Regum Francorum*, MGH, *Legum Sectio 2.i* (Hanover 1883), no. 22, pp. 52-62, 53 [23].

equally be translated as 'approved loyalty', an interpretation which suggests a rôle as a trusted Carolingian official. He was certainly a known and respected scholar at Charlemagne's court and is thought to have been abbot of St Maximin's at Trier. He was most probably the author of a *Commentary on Genesis* which was dedicated to Charlemagne.<sup>6</sup> It was to him that Levison attributed the survival of George's letter. He argued that the Wolfenbüttel manuscript which contains the letter and other canonical material had been compiled at Trier, the library of which also contained an early manuscript of Wigbod's biblical commentary.<sup>7</sup> Although this attribution to Trier is not secure, the evidence remains that Wigbod was a learned man who knew Charlemagne personally and who had access to the king at court.

In addition to Wigbod, the report to Hadrian also mentions the presence of Alcuin in Northumbria at the time of the Northern council with reference to his role as a legate of King Ælfwald and Archbishop Eanbald.<sup>8</sup> The mission to Northumbria occurred about five years after Alcuin had accepted Charlemagne's invitation to join the Frankish court and Alcuin's presence as *legatus* of the Northumbrian king and archbishop ought perhaps to be interpreted also in the light of his recent sojourn in Francia. The fourth feature of the legatine Report which reflects entrenched Carolingian influence is perhaps the most important. Canon 12 of the document, which the Report demonstrates was approved by both the Northumbrian and Mercian

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<sup>6</sup> The interest in Wigbod's work has largely been connected to the evidence which his verse prologue provides for books available at Charlemagne's court. For comments on Wigbod's work and the access which he had to the Lorsch library see D. A. Bullough, *Carolingian Renewal* (Manchester, 1991), pp. 14, 30, 140; Levison, *England*, p. 128, n. 9; M. M. Gorman, 'The Encyclopedic Commentary on Genesis prepared for Charlemagne by Wigbod', *Recherches Augustiniennes*, Vol. 17 (1982), 173-201 and Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, pp. 257-8, n. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 128, n.9. It has been claimed more recently that the Wolfenbüttel manuscript originated at Hildesheim; Bullough, 'Alcuinus deliciosus Karoli regis, Alcuin of York and the shaping of the early Carolingian court', 80, n. 24. The verse introduction to Wigbod's commentary (as quoted by Bullough, 'Alcuinus deliciosus', p. 140) praises Charlemagne for his care to book-collection, 'who can count the great series of books which your decree has brought together from many lands, reviving the writings of earlier Holy Fathers'. Bullough suggests that this decree was sent out c. 780, which dates it to the time of Alcuin's arrival at the Frankish court. Alcuin's concern for supplementing the book collections in Francia is well known (*Alc. Ep.* no. 121, pp. 175-8) and Wigbod seems to have been the sort of man whom Alcuin would have had considerable affinity.

<sup>8</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 28 [11].

councils, contains a reference to the practice of royal anointing, to the king as *christus domini*.<sup>9</sup> Unrecorded in any Anglo-Saxon source prior to this, it can be suggested that the Legatine Mission was the instrument by which the concept of royal anointing (through which the Carolingian dynasty itself had obtained its right to rule) was introduced into Anglo-Saxon political culture.

All of these features will be explored in more detail below. Together they provide the justification for pursuing the hypothesis that the Legatine Mission was deeply imbued with Carolingian political ideas and that this influence was not just a reflection of the linguistic habits of the author of the Report. In the light of these observations the Report can be scrutinised for other hints of Carolingian influence on the mission and of the way in which such influence might have been amalgamated into the practice of politics in Northumbria. The form of the councils, the status of the people involved, the structure of the Report and the style of the decrees which were ratified by the Northumbrian and Mercian councils as well as the content of those decrees can all be examined for evidence of a knowledge of Frankish methods and ideas. This approach to the evidence must of course be tempered by an awareness of other factors which are likely to have influenced the construction of the council and the Report. Thus both the native and papal influence on all aspects of the mission need to be taken into account.

The analysis which follows can be summarised into a four-part question, what was Frankish about the 786 Legatine Mission in terms of :

- A. the form of the Northumbrian and Mercian councils?
- B. the form of the document produced in Northumbria and ratified by the Mercians?
- C. the content of that document?
- D. the personnel who formed the mission and who attended the northern council ?

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<sup>9</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 24 [2, 16].

## Historiography of the Legatine Mission:

The Legatine Mission of 786 is a significant marker in Anglo-Continental relations not just because it was the first official delegation to have been sent to Britain from Rome since AD 597 but because the surviving documentation concerning it is of unusual quality. The Report to Hadrian gives details the legates progress through the regions of Britain, of the personnel who attended the meetings and of the decisions made at the councils organised for the legates. The rarity of such an endeavour and of the quality of the Report concerning it means that the facts of the papal mission to *Anglorum Saxonia* in 786, such as they survive, are well known and have been so for some time. Interest in the mission has been aroused by many aspects of its history and the major areas of research can be summarised briefly. German scholars were interested in the reference in the discussion of the second Mercian Council to the word *theodisc*, which is one of the earliest references to the germanic vernacular language.<sup>10</sup> A legal aspect to the second Mercian council has also been picked up in discussions of the verbal nature of early germanic law: the fact that the decisions of the Northumbrian council were read to the Mercian assembly in Latin and in the vernacular (*theodisc*) in order to ensure full understanding amongst the gathered southern assembly.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, it has been suggested that the canons agreed upon by the Mercian council represent the lost law code of King Offa which was later used by King Alfred in the construction of his own.<sup>12</sup> Another important issue in the legatine missionaries' Report is, as suggested above, the reference to royal anointing in canon number 12. This has been interpreted by some scholars to mean that anointing of kings was practised in eighth-century England, pointing to the fact that

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<sup>10</sup> A. Dove, 'Das älteste Zeugnis für den Namen Deutsch', *Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-philologischen und der historischen Classe des königlichen bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Munich, 1895), pp. 223-35 and Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 128-30.

<sup>11</sup> P. Wormald, 'Lex Scripta and Verbum Regis: Legislation and Germanic Kingship, from Euric to Cnut', in *Early Medieval Kingship*, eds, P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977), 105-38, 118. Wormald follows F. L. Ganshof, *Recherches sur les Capitulaires* (Paris, 1958), pp. 50-61, 69-85, 196-212.

<sup>12</sup> P. Wormald, 'In Search of King Offa's "Law-Code"', in *People and Places in Northern Europe 500-1600, Essays in honour of Peter Sawyer*, eds, I. Wood and N. Lund (Woodbridge, 1991), 25-45.

Offa's son Ecgfrid was 'hallowed' the following year.<sup>13</sup> This coincidence of events has led scholars to interpret the mission primarily in terms of a Mercian context, in particular its manipulation by Offa in order to ensure the succession of his son.<sup>14</sup> This idea was supported by the (now discredited) belief which equated the Council of Chelsea in which Offa created the archbishopric of Lichfield and had his son hallowed, with the second council held by the Legates in Mercia after the expedition to Northumbria.<sup>15</sup> The situation in Mercia regarding Offa's ambitions for his son and his consequent desire for an archbishop who would co-operate with his plans is undoubtedly an important aspect of the Mission, not least because the objective of the legates as stated in the Report and in the contemporary chronicles (see below) was to renew the ancient Gregorian faith of Augustine. As Bede says, and the legates and Offa would certainly have known, Augustine's blueprint for Anglo-Saxon Christianity as defined by Gregory I required just two archbishops, one in London/Canterbury and one in York.<sup>16</sup> Offa's challenge to the status quo is in itself reminiscent of <sup>the</sup> Carolingian policy of the proliferation of archbishoprics in order to ensure political control over areas of uncertain loyalty.<sup>17</sup> Offa's desire for an archbishop who would sanction his son's preferment was a challenge to the authority of Rome in the established English church akin to that posed by Henry VIII 800

<sup>13</sup> E. John, *Orbis Britanniae and other studies* (Leicester, 1966), pp. 32-4. His claims were countered by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill in, *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford, 1971), p. 114.

<sup>14</sup> See for example, Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, Vol. 3, 445-5. See also D. P. Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings* (London, 1991), p. 170 whose fullest discussion of the Mission<sup>s</sup> in the chapter on Offa. F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1971), p. 215 and N. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), p. 117.

<sup>15</sup> This is the opinion of Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, 444-7 and is followed by R. Hodges and J. Moreland, 'Power and Exchange in Middle Saxon England', in *Power and Politics in Early Medieval Britain and Ireland*, eds, S. T. Driscoll and M. R. Níeke (Edinburgh, 1988), 79-95, 86. The confusion arose over the inclusion of the description of the Chelsea Synod in the ASC *s.a.* 785, the same year as the reference to the Legatine Synods in the Northern Recension of the Chronicle. The reference to the Chelsea synod is found in all versions of the Chronicle the dates of which are dislocated by two years at this point. The true date of the Synod of Chelsea is 787 whereas the date of the Report of the Legates to Hadrian which describes the second Mercian council can be dated to late 786.

<sup>16</sup> *HE* I.29; *HE*, (Colgrave and Mynors), pp. 104-7.

<sup>17</sup> Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, p. 169.

years later. The mission by the papal legates to Britain at this date undoubtedly relates closely to Offa and his ambitions for Lichfield and Ecgfrid.

Yet, this emphasis on the Mercian context of the mission has been redressed in recent years in order to illuminate the mission's less obvious but equally important Northumbrian aspect.<sup>18</sup> It is after all, the account of the Northumbrian council and of the canons ratified by it as reported to Hadrian which provides the bulk of evidence about the mission as a whole. Recently Cubitt has investigated thoroughly Alcuin's involvement in the mission.<sup>19</sup> As noted above, the report refers to Alcuin's involvement in the mission as an envoy of the Northumbrian king and the archbishop of York. Parallels between a few of the canons and the some of letters written by Alcuin in later years provide evidence which suggests that he was involved in the construction of the document sent to Hadrian under George's name. There is a technical methodological objection to Cubitt's approach, that of the retrospective attribution of authorship from sources which are chronologically later than the Report. The letters of Alcuin which undoubtedly provide a close parallel to so many aspects of the Legatine Report and which are used to prove his authorship<sup>of the Report</sup> were without exception written after the Report during the 790s. This chapter aims in part to prove that there is a more economical explanation for the Frankish aspects of the Report, that it can truly be attributed to George of Ostia. This does not deny either the connection between the letters of Alcuin and the Report as proven by Cubitt or that Alcuin may have been involved in the production of the Report to Hadrian, merely that the major impetus came from George. Crucially for the investigation into the Carolingian aspect of the Mission, Cubitt has also drawn attention to the close links between a few of the 786 canons and some of those which are found in Charlemagne's first major reform capitulary, the *Admonitio Generalis* which was

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<sup>18</sup> See in particular Chapter 6 of Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, pp. 153-90. This book came out just after the current chapter had been written. Some aspects of this chapter have therefore been modified to take Cubitt's work into account, but it is gratifying that broadly speaking our observations and conclusions about the Report complement each other. Naturally when dealing with the analysis of a single document some overlap of detail is inevitable.

<sup>19</sup> This longstanding assumption is reflected in the fact that best edition of the report is contained in the MGH collection of Alcuin's letters as edited by Dümmler; *Alc. Ep.* no. 3, pp. 20-29.

written only three years later in 789.<sup>20</sup> The importance of the *Admonitio* in the study of Carolingian legislative administration and ideological evolution is paramount. As Bullough noted,

It is however, with the great capitulary known as the *Admonitio Generalis* of March 789 that the synthesis of ideology and administrative action is for the first time complete...It appears to express so well and in such fulness what we believe to be Charles' view of his princely functions that it is easy to overlook its novelty, both in scale and content'.<sup>21</sup>

That this 'synthesis of ideology and administrative action' was apparently rehearsed in Northumbria three years earlier emphasises the international importance and impact of the Legatine Mission and the report which describes its Northumbrian aspect. That a major Carolingian capitulary was influenced by the Report of the legates to Britain in 786 is itself an argument for viewing the Report and the mission as an important vehicle of Carolingian influence injected directly into the heart of Northumbrian politics. All the observations made above provide a worthy basis for looking again at the Report of the Legatine Mission for evidence of Frankish involvement.

### Contemporary records of the Mission and its purpose :

The primary purpose of the Legatine Mission to Britain is stated in the Report to Pope Hadrian which describes both the chronology of the mission and the issues which were discussed at the meetings. With letters *continentes saluberrima statuta et omni sanctæ ecclesiæ necessaria* two legates were sent;

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<sup>20</sup> Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 161-5. See also D. A. Bullough, 'Aula Renovata; the Court before the Aachen Palace', in *Carolingian Renewal* (Manchester, 1991), p. 142; Of the *Admonitio Generalis*, Bullough argues, 'Alcuin's involvement in at least the final section or sections is demanded on stylistic and textual grounds' and Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, p. 62 where he states 'Alcuin's co-authorship of the *Admonitio* seems to be a fact'. See also Wormald, 'Offa's Law Code', p. 42.

<sup>21</sup> Bullough, 'Aula Renovata', p. 141.

...trans mare in gentem Anglorum peragraré...ut si qua zizania  
 messem optimo semine satam, quam beatus Gregorius papa  
 per os sancti Agustini seminavit, inritasset, funditus eradicare  
 quod noxium et fructum saluberrimum stabilire summo  
 conamine studuissemus.

Report to Hadrian, 786. <sup>22</sup>

This desire to root out any evil which had spoilt the message brought to England by Augustine on the orders of Pope Gregory at the end of the sixth century is precisely the purpose assigned to the mission by the other contemporary sources from northern England. The words in the Report to Hadrian used to describe the purpose of the mission are mirrored closely by those which are used in the contemporary Northumbrian chronicle sources to describe this event. The Legatine Mission is mentioned in the annal for 786 in the *HReg* and in the annal for 785 in the *ASC* NR.<sup>23</sup> Both these sources state that the legates came to England expressly in order to renew the faith which St Augustine had sown on the orders of Pope Gregory. The *HReg* adds the information that a *venerabilis episcopus* named George, ‘held the primacy’ amongst them. There is no reference to the episode in those versions of the *ASC* which are known to have stayed in the south (Versions A, B, C). It is only those manuscripts of the *ASC* which contain the annals relating to northern English affairs which contain the reference to the mission, that is *ASC* versions D, E and F. This is important since it implies that records of the mission were only available in the north of England, an observation which parallels the fact that the Report to Hadrian focused on the council which was held in Northumbria rather than those which were held in Mercia. The close verbal link between the *HReg* description of the mission and that found in the northern recension of the *ASC* can be pushed further with the observation that the vernacular description of the mission in the latter chronicle reads like an epitome of the Latin version as preserved in the *HReg*. The *HReg* and *ASC* descriptions of the event are given below with the parallel passages underlined;

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<sup>22</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 20 [12-14].

<sup>23</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 51. All the *ASC* manuscripts were edited by B. Thorpe, ed. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, RS Vol. 23.i (London, 1861). The 785 annal is on pp. 6-7. Cubitt though, notes in her opening comment on the report says that the *HReg* account was ‘the only contemporary English source to record the visit’, Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 153.

Tempore illo legati ab apostolica sede a domino Adriano papa ad Britanniam directi sunt, in quibus venerabilis episcopus Georgius primatum tenuit; qui antiquam inter nos amicitiam et fidem catholicam quam Sanctus Gregorius papa per beatum Augustinum docuit innovantes, honorifice suscepti sunt a regibus et a præsulibus sive a principibus<sup>24</sup> hujus patriae, et in pace domum reversi sunt cum magnis donis, ut justum erat.

*HReg, s.a. 786.*<sup>25</sup>

And in þas tid wæron ærendračan gesend of Rome fram Adrianum papan to Englalande to niwanne þone geleafan and þa sibbe þe Scs Gregorius us sende þurh þone biscop Augustinum and hi man mid weorðscype underfeng and mid sibbe ongæn sænde.

*ASC D, s.a. 785.*<sup>26</sup>

There are only slight differences between the two passages, the Anglo-Saxon version refers to the messengers having been sent from Rome as opposed to the Latin *ab apostolica sede* (although the meaning is identical) and that the *HReg* version refers to *Britannia* whereas the *ASC* version refers to *Englalande*. More significantly perhaps, the Anglo-Saxon version omits the name of the legate George and the fact that the messengers were received by the kings and noblemen of the countries which they visited. But these could simply be omissions by the author who translated the Latin version as preserved in the *HReg* into the vernacular. Yet the *ASC* <sup>version</sup> D<sub>k</sub> is so close to the *HReg* description of the event that the inescapable conclusion is that they derive from the same archetype, possibly the so-called lost Northern Annals. In addition to this, the combined similarity of the *HReg* and the *ASC* NR description of the mission to the introduction to the Report to Hadrian would seem to suggest that the archetype of these northern chronicle sources was drawing on a document very like the introduction of the letter to Hadrian or at least on an authentic oral tradition

<sup>24</sup> The words *et primatibus* are interlineated in the *HReg* manuscript, CCC MS 139 at this point.

<sup>25</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 51.

<sup>26</sup> Note that only *ASC* version D contains the last clause *and mid sibbe ongæn sænde* which corresponds to the Latin *in pace domum reversi sunt* as found in the *HReg*; E. Classen and F. E. Harmer, ed. *An Anglo-Saxon Chronicle from British Museum Cotton MS., Tiberius B. IV* (Manchester, 1926), p. 19. The description of the Council (bar the last clause) is also found in Version E of the *ASC* (Bodleian, MS Laud 636) also *s.a.* 785; *ASC* (Plummer) 1, pp. 53-4.

that the papal legates had been sent to Britain in the late eighth century with the stated aim of renewing the faith which Augustine had brought to the English. It might also be taken as evidence either that a copy of the Legatine Report was available to the compiler of the archetype of the chronicle descriptions or (if it is believed that this archetype was a contemporary chronicle) that someone involved in the creation of the Report was also involved in the writing of the chronicle archetype.<sup>27</sup>

The Latin section of version F of the *ASC* (the bilingual version) also refers to the Legatine Mission.<sup>28</sup> The vernacular portion is closely based on Version E (Bodl. MS Laud 636) but the Latin annals which accompany it (known as the *Annales Domitiani Latini*, hereafter *ADL*) are not always an epitome of the vernacular annals which run alongside. However, in the case of the annal for 785, the *ADL* version does appear to be a translation of the vernacular one as found in the same manuscript. Again, they both refer to the renewal of the faith of Augustine, sent by Gregory as the primary function of the mission. The *ADL* and *ASC F* descriptions of the Legatine Mission are given below for the sake of completeness:

...Isto etiam eodem tempore missi sunt ab Adriano papa nuntii  
in Angliam ad renovandam fidem, quam beatus Gregorius  
misit nobis, et cum magno honore recepti sunt.

*ADL s.a. 785.*<sup>29</sup>

....On ðis timan wæron ærendracan gesend fram Adriane papan  
to Englalande to geniweanne ðone geleauan. ða Scs Gregorius  
us sende 7 hi man mid wurðscipe underfeng.

*ASC F, s.a 785.*<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> For the suggestion that the annals in the *HReg* are based on a York Chronicle see above Chapter 3 and Blair, 'Some observations' pp. 63-118. For the suggestion that Alcuin may have been involved in the *HReg* annals see W. Stubbs, *Chronica Magistri Rogeris de Houedene*, RS 51.i (London, 1868), p. xi and note 2. Whitelock believed that the archetype of the northern recension of the *ASC* was compiled at York; *EHD* 1, p. 113.

<sup>28</sup> That is, the Latin annals contained in MS Cotton Domitian A.VIII which compliment the vernacular annals in the same volume known as *ASC* version F. The *ADL* are best edited by F. P. Magoun, 'Annales Domitiani Latini: an edition', *Mediaeval Studies* Vol. 9 (1947), 235-95 at pp. 243-72. An edition of *ASC F* is found within Thorpe, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Vol. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Magoun, 'Annales Domitiani Latini', 254.

<sup>30</sup> Thorpe, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Vol. 1, p. 97 and *ASC* (Plummer) 1, pp. 52-4.

The information about the Legatine Mission as found in the chronicles is corroborated by another near contemporary source. Pope Leo III wrote to King Coenwulf of Mercia in 797 ostensibly concerning the confusion over the archbishopric of Lichfield but referring also to a promise made by his predecessor Offa of a gift of 365 mancuses which was to be sent annually to Rome.<sup>31</sup> Leo claimed that a vow was made in front of a synodal meeting of all the bishops and noblemen of the island of Britain as well as the two papal legates who are referred to by name;

quod Offa rex pro victoriis regni, quam tenuit, beato Petro auctori suo signiferum et comitem in ipso regno utens atque amplectens, coram synodo tam omnibus episcopis seu principibus atque optimatibus cunctoque populo insulae Bryttanniae morantibus quamque et nostri fidelissimi missi Georgii et Theophilacti, sanctissimis episcopis, votum vovit eidem Dei apostolo beato Petro clavigero regni caelorum: ut per unumquemque annum, scilicet quantos dies annus habuerit, tantos mancasas eidem Dei apostolo aecclesiae, nimum trecentos sexaginta quinque, pro alimoniis pauperum et luminarium concinnationes emittere.

Pope Leo III to Coenwulf of Mercia, 797.<sup>32</sup>

The references to *nostri fidelissimi missi* George and Theophylact and the synod held in the presence of King Offa and his bishops, *principibus atque optimatibus* makes it certain that this letter refers to one of the Mercian councils held during the legates mission.

The bulk of our knowledge of the councils held in England during the year 786 by the continental legates is preserved primarily in the Report which was written by one of their number as a letter to Pope Hadrian. The author does not name himself but in the introduction refers to one Theophylact, *venerabilem episcopo sancte Tudertine*

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<sup>31</sup> *Alc. Ep.* pp. 187-9. See also Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 31 for the suggestion that this was the start of the traditional tax known as Peter's Pence.

<sup>32</sup> BL MS Cotton Vespasian A XIV, fol. 172; printed as no. 127 in *Alc. Ep.* pp. 187-9, and partially in Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, p. 445. The manuscript in which it is found is one of the major collections of Alcuin's letters; C. Chase, *Two Alcuin Letter Books* (Toronto, 1975).

*ecclesie*.<sup>33</sup> The introductory address in the sole surviving manuscript copy of the letter gives the name of the other legate as George Bishop of Ostia.<sup>34</sup> The address therefore corroborates the identity of the legates as named in the letter of Pope Leo and in the *HReg* account. The Report describes how Theophylact brought letters *misisti nobis* with instructions that *trans mare in gentem Anglorum peragrare debuissimus*. The first-person voice (plural for formality) of the verbs leads to the assumption that the author of the letter was Theophylact's co-traveller, George of Ostia. As the author of the letter to Hadrian, an analysis of the career of George is obviously essential to a full understanding to the Report and of the biases implicit within it.

### The Date of the Mission

The formulaic address which announces the letter of Bishop George to Pope Hadrian contains a complex dating system which enables the date of the Legatine Mission to Britain to be established more accurately than the *anno domini* date(s) provided by the chronicle evidence. This is achieved by combining four dating methods (line numbers are given in brackets):

- I. ...temporibus ter beatissimi et coangelici domini Hadriani  
summi pontifici<sup>5</sup>et universalis pape... [1-2]
- II. ...regnante gloriosissimo karolo excellentissimo rege  
Francorum et Langobardorum seu patricio  
Romanorum, anno regni ipsius XVIII... [2-4]
- III. ...anno incarnationis eiusdem domini nostri  
DCCLXXXVI... [6-7]
- IV. ...Ind. X. [7]

The address thereby dates the mission to the time of 'thrice blessed and coangelical lord Hadrian', the eighteenth year of the reign of Charlemagne and in the year of the incarnation 786 which fell in the tenth indiction. A combination of all four dating

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<sup>33</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 20 [5].

<sup>34</sup> Helmstedt MS 454, fol. 113v line 21, Plate 1.

methods shows that the Northumbrian council must have been held relatively late in the year 786. The *Annales Regni Francorum* state that Charlemagne had been made king on *vii Id.* October 768 after his father's death earlier in that year.<sup>35</sup> His eighteenth year as king therefore, stretched from 9 October 786 to the eighth of that month in the following year. The indiction (the tenth in the fifteen year cycle) also corresponds with a date in the latter part of the year. The tenth indiction lasted from 1 September 786 to 31st August 787 which corresponds to the October-December date suggested by the Caroline regnal years.<sup>36</sup> The Northumbrian council was therefore held sometime between 9th October AD 786 and the end of that year, probably Christmas. There are several other references within the letter which reaffirm this approximate date. Some of the people who attended the Northumbrian and Mercian councils could only have done so if those councils had been held in the latter part of 786. Thus, the *HReg* describes under the annal for that year how in the eighth year of the reign of Ælfwald (implying that his first year was calculated to include 779) Aldulf was consecrated bishop and Alberht was made abbot of Ripon in the place of Botwine. These two people are witnesses to the Northumbrian portion of the Legatine Report.<sup>37</sup> Since Aldulf had been consecrated to Irish bishopric of Mayo, it is likely that the northern council occurred relatively soon after his consecration before he returned to his diocese. The *HReg* description of these events comes immediately before the passage concerning the Legatine mission *s.a.* 786. The same set of annals describe how Alberht of Ripon died the following year apparently during a synod held at Wincanheale on 2 September 787.

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<sup>35</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 28.

<sup>36</sup> Indiction dates are calculated in 15 year cycles starting from the year 312 when the system was first introduced by Constantine I. This calculation is based on the Greek Indiction which started on Sept. 1. The other possible starting date of the Indiction, 24 Sept, as used by Bede, would not alter the relative date after which the Northumbrian council occurred, since the starting date of both types of Indiction fall before the accession date of Charles. On the calculation of Indictions see K. Harrison, *The Framework of Anglo-Saxon History to A.D. 900* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 38-42 and R. Cheney, ed. *Handbook of Dates for Students of English History*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks, No. 4 (London 1961), pp. 2-3, 6.

<sup>37</sup> See Plate 4 lines 4 and 12.

The death of Cynewulf, king of Wessex, is also recorded in the *HReg s.a.* 786.<sup>38</sup>

The Legatine Report says that Cynewulf was present at the first meeting held in Mercian territory<sup>39</sup> but his name was not included amongst the list of witnesses who signed the report after the second southern council meeting. It seems probable therefore that the second Mercian meeting which ratified the canons of the Northumbrian council was held after the assassination of Cynewulf earlier in 786. Also indicative of a pre-787 date is the fact that Hygeberht is still referred to only as bishop of Lichfield. It was not until the following year that his bishopric was controversially promoted to metropolitan status.

### AD 786 in Francia:

It has been argued above that the Northumbrian council and the second Mercian meeting were held sometime during the last three months of 786. This is important in relation to Charlemagne's actions in that year. AD 786 was an unusual year for Charlemagne. The *Annales Regni Francorum* describe how in this year he sent his army to *partibus Britanniae*, that is against Brittany.<sup>40</sup> The Revised version of the *ARF* explains the etymology of the name of Brittany, explaining that its inhabitants fled<sup>cum</sup> *ab Anglis ac Saxonibus Britannia fuisset invasa*.<sup>41</sup> It may be coincidence, but the annal for 786 remains one of the very few in the Frankish Annals which refer to Britain, in any respect. Significantly perhaps, the only other references to Britain are in connection with the Eardwulf affair in 808 and in 809.<sup>42</sup> The Breton campaign having been concluded successfully, Charlemagne's seneschal Audulfus brought the

<sup>38</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 1, p. 51. See also the *ASC s.a.* 755 (*recte* 757) and 784 (*recte* 786); *ASC* (Plummer) 1, pp. 46-50, 52-3.

<sup>39</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 20 [26].

<sup>40</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 72. See also J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire, Brittany and the Carolingians* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 58.

<sup>41</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 73.

<sup>42</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), pp. 126, 128 and above Chapter 1. Britain is also mentioned in a geographical subclause in the annal for 813 which describes a diplomatic meeting between Frankish, Saxon and Danish magnates; *ARF* (Kurze), p. 138.

Breton leaders to the King at an assembly at Worms. The Revised version of the *ARF* emphasised that Breton resistance was broken *mira celeritate*. Yet, it is unlikely the campaign can have been finished much before the end of the fighting season in the summer of 786. The reference to the speed of the Breton campaign means probably that it was brought to a successful conclusion in only one season rather than dragging on over many as was happening with drawn out war against Saxons. The *ARF* continue their account of this year with an unusual observation;

Tunc domnus rex Carolus praespiciens, se ex omni parte Deo largiente pacem habere, sumpsit consilium orationis causae ad limina beatorum apostolorum iter peragendi et causas Italicas disponendi, et cum missis imperatoris placitum habendi de convenientiis eorum, quod ita fact<sup>um</sup> est. Tunc suprascriptus domnus rex natalem Domini celebravit in Florentia civitate.

*ARF, s.a. 786.*<sup>43</sup>

Thus, with the defeat of the Bretons during the campaigning season of 786, Charlemagne found that ‘he had peace throughout his realms’ and decided to go to Rome to give thanks ‘at the threshold of the blessed apostles’ and to sort out the affairs of Italy. It seems entirely plausible that the decision to go to Rome was made at the Worms assembly after the defeated Breton leaders had been presented. Charlemagne would probably have set out for Rome in early autumn, he certainly reached Florence in time to celebrate Christmas. This date is confirmed by the Revised version of the *ARF* which says that he entered Italy with his troops ‘in the cold of winter’.<sup>44</sup> The first episode in the annal for the subsequent year 787, describes how he entered Rome and was received ‘with great honours by the Lord Pope Hadrian’. Thus, in the same year in which Hadrian sent Theophylact to Francia to find George, Charlemagne travelled to Rome. Given that the Northumbrian synod must be dated to October of that year at the earliest, it is possible that Theophylact’s arrival in Francia, en route to Britain, may have prompted Charlemagne’s decision to go to Rome. An assembly was the place at which foreign dignitaries would pay their respects to the king and it is more than likely that a papal emissary such as

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<sup>43</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 72.

<sup>44</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 73; *In ipsa hiemalis temporis asperitate Italiam ingreditur.*

Theophylact would have visited Charlemagne too.<sup>45</sup> George would probably also have needed Charlemagne's permission before he could leave for England. Given that the Legatine Report cannot have been written until the last few weeks of 786 after the Mercian meeting, allowing for the time which a letter would take to get to Rome in winter from Britain, it is possible that George's letter to Hadrian may also have been read to Charlemagne when he was in Rome. The outcome of the Legatine Mission to Britain could well have been one of the items discussed by Charles and the Pope in the 'several days' which they spent together early in 787.<sup>46</sup> If George and Theophylact knew before they left for Britain that Charlemagne intended to travel to Rome that same winter, the entire report to Hadrian could have been written with the foreknowledge that Frankish king might <sup>have been</sup>  $\lambda$  in Italy when George's report on the mission arrived. This could account for the formulaic reference to Charlemagne in the address, being exactly that which the papal chancery would have used when writing to the Frankish king at this date.<sup>47</sup>

One of the letters contained in the *Codex Carolinus* provides another example of Franco-papal collaboration in the weeks before Theophylact was sent to find George in Francia. A letter from Hadrian to Charlemagne written early in 786 discusses the days of prayer and thanksgiving which Charles had requested be instigated as spiritual assistance for his Saxon campaign.<sup>48</sup> Hadrian announced that three days be set aside for this purpose, the vigils of St John the Baptist, SS John and Paul and of

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<sup>45</sup> McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms*, pp. 97-8.

<sup>46</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 72.

<sup>47</sup> *Gloriosissimo Karolo excellentissimo rege Francorum et Langobardorum seu patricio Romanorum*. See for example W. Gundlach, ed. *Epistolae Merovingici et Karolini Aevi*, Vol. 3, MGH Epp. Vol. 3 (Berlin 1892), nos 73 and 74, pp. 604-5 (references to the *Codex Carolinus* are hereafter abbreviated to *CC*).

<sup>48</sup> Gundlach, *CC*, no. 76, pp. 607-8; King, *Charlemagne*, no. 30, pp. 293-4.

St Peter, all of which fall in late June.<sup>49</sup> Hadrian ‘decreed and sent forth orders into all our lands’ to this effect. He also suggested that Charlemagne organised that word be sent to this effect ‘throughout all your territories and to those regions beyond the sea where Christian people are to be found for the performance of three days of litanies in this fashion’.<sup>50</sup> A mission such as that led by George would have been a perfectly logical way in which to declare this message throughout the Christian kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England. Indeed George and Theophylact read out messages from the Pope before the first Mercian assembly and before the Northumbrian one which could conceivably have included instructions of this type. However, given that the days of thanksgiving were to be held in June of that year and the Northumbrian council, as is shown above, was held sometime after 9 October of that year, a time lapse of several months would need to have occurred between the arrival of the papal message and the holding of the council. George’s description of the Mission’s progress through Kent, Mercia and Northumbria gives the impression of a fairly speedy journey, a delay of this order seems unlikely. It is not absolutely certain whether the Christian peoples of Anglo-Saxon England should to be included in Hadrian’s reckoning of a Christian ‘region beyond the sea’, but if they were, it would imply that the Papal decree for the three days of prayer were transmitted, possibly via a Carolingian agent as Hadrian’s letter suggests, prior to the mission of George and Theophylact. It is not impossible therefore, that two sets of Franco-papal envoys were sent to Britain in 786, the first perhaps acting as a sounding-board, even prompting the bigger, second mission.

### **The Format of the Legatine Report:**

The report of the Legates mission to Pope Hadrian (as it survives in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript) is divided into four distinct sections:

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<sup>49</sup> That is 23rd, 26th and 28th June respectively. The feast day of St. Peter, as the chief of the apostles was evidently a common day for prayer and celebration of military campaigns. Cathwulf, writing to Charlemagne about a decade prior to the Legatine Report after the successful conclusion of the Lombardic campaign, suggests that on behalf of the ‘Christian army’ public masses be said on the feast days of SS Michael and Peter; *Alc. Ep. no. 7*, p. 504 [28].

<sup>50</sup> Gundlach, *CC*, p. 608 [11-18].

- I. The formulaic dating address,
- II. A narrative introductory passage,
- III. The canons agreed upon at the councils,
- IV. The attestations of those who agreed to them.

After the initial dating address (described above), a lengthy introduction describes the progress of the Mission through Britain. Having described the journey to the Mercian and Northumbrian courts, George appears to quote in full the issues which were ratified by councils initially in Northumbria and afterwards in Mercia. Twenty issues were thus recorded in varying degrees of detail. The Report continues with a list of the 'signatures' or attestations of those Northumbrians and Mercians who pledged to obey the legates' canons. The process by which the noblemen affirmed their consent is important and was obviously considered so at the time since the method by which it was done is described in the Report in some detail. The signatories verbally signified their agreement to the conciliar canons after George had made the sign of a cross *in vice vestra in manu nostra*.<sup>51</sup> In a second distinct action (*et postea*), the signatories themselves made the sign of the cross as a symbol of attestation *stilo diligenti in charta huius pagine*.<sup>52</sup> Thus the noblemen proved their desire to maintain the teachings of the canons by marking the 'page of the charter' with a cross. The surviving manuscript copy of the letter at this point actually gives an example (*ita*) of the type of cross used to mark the approval of the various Northumbrian witnesses.<sup>53</sup> In the Wolfenbüttel manuscript, the names of Archbishop Eanbald, King Ælfwald and Bishop Tilberht of Hexham are indeed followed by such

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<sup>51</sup> This is the correct manuscript reading, that is, 'by our [George's] hand on your [Hadrian's] behalf'. Dümmler erroneously has *in vice nostra in manu nostra*; *Alc. Ep.* p. 27, [32].

<sup>52</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 27 [33-4].

<sup>53</sup> See Plate 3 line 17.

crosses.<sup>54</sup> None of the other Northumbrian or Mercian attestations on the subsequent folios have crosses but some of the Northumbrian ‘signatures’ have a space left after the word *crucis* which may indicate the presence of a cross in the archetype but was omitted by the copyist, perhaps meaning to be filled in at a later date.<sup>55</sup> The placing of the name of the bishop of Hexham immediately after that of the king may reflect the special link between Ælfwald and Hexham, as suggested by the development of the king’s cult at Hexham after his assassination.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, the name of Hygeberht, the bishop of Lichfield who was soon to be promoted to archbishop, follows Offa’s ‘signature’ in the Mercian list. The other Northumbrian attestors to the document were Hygbald, Æthilberht and Aldulf who were the bishops of Lindisfarne, Whithorn and Mayo<sup>57</sup> respectively, along with an unprovenanced bishop named Æthelwin. The report records the consent of this unknown bishop in a way which is noticeably different <sup>from</sup> the others; *Ætheluuinus episcopus per legatos subscripsi*.<sup>58</sup> This seems to suggest that whereas the other delegates of the Northumbrian council witnessed the original document themselves, Æthelwin was not actually present at the meeting and his consent was ascribed on his behalf ‘through the legates’. This may help account for the reason why this particular

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<sup>54</sup> This observation contrasts with Wormald’s comment about the lack of a cruciform mark alongside any of the attestations in the manuscript as it stands; Wormald, ‘In Search of King Offa’s “Law-Code”’, p. 31. The attestation of Archbishop Eanbald in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript is written at the foot of the folio (fol. 126r, Plate 3) after the attestation of Tilberht of Hexham. It was copied in a lighter ink at a later date to the writing of the whole manuscript, but evidently by the same scribe. The proper place for Eanbald’s attestation is marked by an unusual sign which elsewhere in the manuscript (fol. 117v, line 4) is used as the first part of the contraction of the word *dominus*. When used as a carat mark, the ascender was extended and three dots placed in three of the quadrants made by the cross-bar.

<sup>55</sup> Such a space is left for example in the ‘signatures’ of Siguulf, Aldberht and Eghard, fol. 126v [11-13], Plate 4, fol. 126v.

<sup>56</sup> *HReg s.a.* 788; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 52.

<sup>57</sup> Aldulf was in Northumbria in 786 for his consecration which the *HReg* records as having taken place *in monasterio quod dicitur Et-Corabridge* (s.a. 786; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 51). The legatine synod meeting must have taken place after this event but before he returned to Ireland. Dümmler suggested that the Legatine council may have been held at the same monastery in which Aldulf was consecrated (*Alc. Ep.* p. 28, n. 1).

<sup>58</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 28 [2], Plate 4 fol. 126v.

bishop is not recorded in any other context.<sup>59</sup> Abbots Aldberth and Eghard also attested their support of the canons as did Sigha the *patricius* and two *duces* Alrich and Siguulf.<sup>60</sup>

After the Northumbrian ‘signatures’, George describes in a short narrative passage the journey from the north to Mercia and notes that on this occasion they were accompanied by the *lectores*, Alcuin and Pyttel.<sup>61</sup> At the second Mercian council the identical procedure to approve the canons was followed; the decrees were read out aloud but on this occasion *tam latine quam theodisc*, a verbal pledge was made to the decrees by the assembled council, the decrees were blessed *in manu nostra* and the written document listing the decrees was signed by the witnesses with a cross.

in manu nostra in vice dominii vestri signum sancte crucis  
firmaverunt et rursum presentem chartulam sacro signo  
roboraverunt.

Report to Hadrian, 786.<sup>62</sup>

After the Mercian attestations, the letter breaks off suddenly, suggesting that the letter as it survives may be incomplete.

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<sup>59</sup> There is no other northern bishopric which he may have represented. Two alternative explanations suggest themselves; firstly that Æthilwin may have been a continental bishop consecrated in York, such as is known to have occurred earlier in the century (*HReg s.a.* 767) or that the tenth century scribe who copied the report into the Wolfenbüttel manuscript wrote *episcopus* after the name of Æthilwine in error of another title. His name is the last in the list of bishops. Another suggestion is that Athelwine was Bishop Elfod of Bangor, M. Deansley, *The Pre-Conquest Church in England*, 2nd edn (London, 1963), p. 228.

<sup>60</sup> The *HReg* for 786 also describes how Aldberht was elected and consecrated as abbot of Ripon after the death of Botwine. The same chronicle records in the following year that Aldberth died, probably during a synod which was held at *Winchala* on 2 September (*Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 51). The career and fate of Sigha is also recorded in the *HReg s.a.* 788 and 793.

<sup>61</sup> See Plate 4 fol. 126v. The plate indicates that the name of Pyttel was added in a lighter ink with a different pen to the rest of the section but probably by the same scribe. It is evident that Pyttel's name was written into a space too large for his name possibly over an erasure. Bullough noted that the spelling of Pyttel's name is the correct OE version whereas the name of Alcuin on the same line is spelt in the late tenth-century continental style; *Alquinum*; Bullough, 'Albinus deliciosus', p. 80 n. 24.

<sup>62</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 28, [20-1].

### Anglo-Saxon affinities in the diplomatic form of the Report :

The twenty canons and the attestations which follow them look like a document interpolated wholesale into George's narrative of the mission. The format of this document and its diplomatic affiliations are important and will be explored in some detail. The double process of attestation, with the sign of the cross first made by the hand of George as the deputy of Hadrian (*in vice vestra*) and subsequently by each of the signatories (except Æthelwin the unidentified bishop whose consent was affirmed *per legatos*) is reminiscent of the format of legal charters. The first sign of the cross as made by George, could be argued to correspond with the cross which is so often found in the top left hand corner of a charter and which acts as a stamp of sanctity and inviolability over the whole document.<sup>63</sup> George does indeed use the words *charta* and *chartulam* to describe the respective documents which the Northumbrian and Mercian elites signed. The Northumbrians signed *in charta huius pagine*, in which the use of the word *charta* could simply mean a sheet of parchment rather than a fully fledged legal document and the diminutive *chartulam* signed by the Mercians could be taken literally, that they signed a summarised version of a larger Northumbrian document.<sup>64</sup> The presence of the attestations accompanied by pledge crosses does argue in favour of the document written by George being constructed in the formalised style of a legal document. This idea is complemented by other features of the Report and of the manuscript in which it is found.

In the Wolfenbüttel manuscript, the address of the Report merges into the text of the

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<sup>63</sup> See for example the reproductions of two eighth-century charters, the 'Ismere Diploma' and the 'Charter of King Hlothere of Kent' in J. Cambell, ed., *The Anglo-Saxons* (London, 1982, reprinted 1991), pp. 96, 98. The alternative explanation is that George blessed the document with an imposition of hands, thereby sanctifying the canons on the Pope's behalf, see Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 95.

<sup>64</sup> Alcuin, following Aldhelm's *Versus de Virginitate* (544), uses the word *charta* in the sense of a single sheet of parchment in his poem, *de Patribus Regibus et Sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae, signorum... quae per mundum chartis inscripta leguntur* [line 288]. Godman translates it in a more general sense as 'a written record'; P. Godman, ed. *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 28-9.

letter.<sup>65</sup> The scribe wrote the initial part of the address in a light ink, probably coloured red, starting on line 15 of fol. 113v (*Synodus que facta est...et Theophylacto*).<sup>66</sup> The address was continued in the same light ink for two lines on the top of fol. 114r as far as the words *sancte Tudertine ecclesie*.<sup>67</sup> The remainder of line 2 is taken up with ten *X* line fillers. The first letter of the word *regnante* is written as a large capital in the same light colour ink at the head of line 3. But the rest of the address ([R]egnante domino ...Ind. X), is written in the dark (black) ink of the main body of the text of the report, thereby making the second part of the address look indistinguishable from the start of the letter. This division of the address could be dismissed as a copying quirk of the tenth-century scribe who transcribed the Report, but it does at least suggest that the address was an intrinsic part of the letter he copied and not his own invention. Yet this scribal division of the address, merging the second part into the start of the letter provokes other observations. Presented like this, the Report starts with the formulaic invocation, *Regnante domino nostro Ihesu Christo inperpetuum*. This was the usual sentence by which the record of Anglo-Saxon synodal proceedings commenced.<sup>68</sup> It was also a common invocation in many of Offa's surviving charters.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> This feature of the text is not represented in any of the printed editions or translations of the report even by Dümmler who apparently corrected the Maëburg Centuriator's printed version against the manuscript original.

<sup>66</sup> The photographs of the manuscript obtained from the library at Wolfenbüttel are monochrome. The copyright of these plates remains with that library.

<sup>67</sup> See Plates 1 and 2.

<sup>68</sup> See for example the introduction to the Council of Clovesho, 747, Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, p. 362. The issue of synodal diplomatic custom is discussed by Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 78-83.

<sup>69</sup> See for example the charters listed by P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters, an annotated list and bibliography* (London, 1968), S106 (BCS 201), S114 (BCS 230) and reproduced in A. Bruckner and R. Marichal, *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores*, Vol. 3 (Olten and Lausanne, 1963-7), pp. 24-5, no. 184 BM Cotton Aug. II.4, Hartleford 779 and pp.29-31, no. 186 BM Cotton Aug. II 26.27 Chelsea 767. Also, S1184 a South-Saxon charter confirmed by Offa and reproduced in *ChLA*, Vol. 4, pp. 16-18, no. 236, Chichester, West Sussex Record Office Cap. 1/17/2, Selsey 780. Offan charters with a *Regnante* style invocation in non-contemporary manuscripts are S105 (BCS 195), S115 (BCS 229, of dubious authenticity), S143 (BCS 188). Significantly, the *Admonitio Generalis* of 789 which is closely based on the Legatine Capitulary also starts with this invocation.

**S**iquis ep̄s dampnatus a synodo . uel p̄b̄t . aut diāc .  
 a suo ep̄o ausi fuerint aliquod de manisterio sacro con  
 tingere . siue ep̄s iuxta precedentem consuetudinē .  
 siue p̄b̄t . siue diāc . nullomodo liceat eius nec in  
 alio synodo restitutionis sperare locum habere  
 satisfactoris; Sed & cōmunicantes ei om̄s abici ab  
 eccl̄a & maxime si postea quam dicitur aduer  
 sus memoratos placam sententiam fuisse eidem  
**I**communicare cōtrauerunt; Ex conc̄lio uulgarien̄si  
 dem placuit uniuerso concilio ut qui ex cōmuni  
 catus fuerit p̄ suo neglectu siue ep̄s qui liber siue  
 clericus & tempore ex cōmunicacionis suae ante  
 auctoritatem cōmunicacionis p̄sumpserit ipse uise  
 dampnacionis iudicetur p̄ualisse sententiam;  
 Si notus que facta est in anglorum saxonia  
 temporibus ter. beatus simi & coangelici domini  
 hadriani summi pontificis & uniuersalis pape  
 regnante gloriosissimo karolo excellentissimo rege  
 francorū & langobardorū seup. ap̄ticio romanorum  
 anno regni ipsius . xviii. missi a sede apostolica  
 georio othensi episcopo eccl̄e phi. lacto

**PLATE 1. Helmstedt MS 454, fol. 113v.** This shows the incipit to the letter of George to Hadrian, commencing at line 15 with the words *Synodus quefacta est in anglorum saxonia*. The incipit appears to function as a rubric, and may indeed be written in a red ink. Unfortunately since only black and white reproductions were available from the library all that can be said for certain at this stage is that the ink of the incipit is of a different colour to the main text ink. The hand of the incipit/rubric is the same as that of the main text.

. . . . . episcopo sancte tuderinc  
 et ceteris . . . . .  
**R**egnante domino nostro ihesu christo in perpetuum anno  
 incarnationis eiusdem domini nostri . . . . .  
 Inspirante divina clementia. O pastor egregie  
 sime sancte gloriose decus alme pontifex hadriane  
 misisti nobis epistolam protheophilactum venerabilem  
 episcopi sancte ecclesie tuderinc conantes saluberrima  
 statuta. & omnia sancte ecclesie necessaria. Non simul  
 paritate pacis pietate admonentes. que ad mo-  
 dum transire. ingenitum anglorum pagare  
 debuissimus. ut supra izaria messum optimo  
 semine satam qua beatus gregorius papa pro  
 sancti augustini seminauit intrasset. sanctus et ad-  
 care. quod noxum & fructum saluberrimum  
 stabili summo conamine studuissimus. Nos  
 vero fauentibus sanctis orationibus vestris hilari uultu  
 vestris uisionibus obtemperantes precamur. sed  
 impediunt nos id. qui tempore uento conuato.  
 ille uero quomodo. fluctus ex aucta uestra  
 deprecatione misericorditer optata fieri. & ipsi

PLATE 2. Helmstedt MS 454, fol. 114r. The incipit continues on fol. 114r. The arrangement of the text on this folio is important. Technically, the main body of the letter starts with the words *Inspirante divina clementia* on line 5. However, the feature of this folio is the capital letter 'R' of the word *Regnante* which is the height of two lines and spills into the margin. Indeed the previous line has been filled with a series of decorative x's in order to allow the writing of the word *Regnante* to begin a new line. The letter 'R' seems to have been written in the same ink as the preceding incipit, possibly in red. In this copy, therefore, the text starts with the emphatic phrase *Regnante domino domino (sic) nostro ihesu christo inperpetuum*. The natural start of the letter (*Inspirante*) has thus been superseded in this copy by a phrase which was a common invocation at the beginning of synodal proceedings and early charters, especially of Offa's time. Thus, George's letter was made to look like the start of a recognisable official document. It is impossible to know whether the *Regnante* emphasis was introduced to the text by the copyist of the Helmstedt manuscript or whether it was a feature of the original copy. This important feature of the Helmstedt text is not reported in any edition of the letter.

nīm absq; peccato est . nec infans unus elia dicente  
 apostolo . sed eximus quia peccatū non habemus ipsinos  
 seducimus & ueritas in nobis non est ; Penitentia igitur  
 & conuersione quia mors non tardat ut deleantur  
 nra peccata & illa uita sine fine mansura cū angelis  
 sctis p̄tra mercedum p̄ eum qui uiuat & regnat in sctis

**H**ec namq; decreta beatissime papa hadriane in  
 concilio publico coram rege ælfwāldo . & archiepo  
 eanbaldo & omnib; ep̄is & abbatibus regionis seu senato  
 ribus duobus . & populo t̄p̄te p̄posuimus . & illi super  
 us facti sumus cū om̄i deuotione mentis uixta possibili  
 tatem ut uisuarū adiuuante supra clementia se  
 in om̄ib; custodire deuouerunt & signo sc̄e crucis  
 uiuere uia in manu nra confirmauerunt . & postea  
 stilo diligenti in charta huius pagine exarauerunt .

signum sc̄e crucis infigentes . ita . † . † .

**E**go ælfwāldus rex humberne gentis rex con  
 sentiens signo sc̄e crucis subscripsi ; †

**E**go tilberhtus agustadensis eccl̄e p̄sul gaudent  
 siḡno . sc̄e crucis subscripsi ; †

† Ego eanbalduſ gr̄a d̄i archiepi sc̄e eboracensis eccl̄e huius  
 curie p̄p̄ & catholice taxationi signo sc̄e crucis subscripsi ; †

**PLATE 3. Helmstedt MS 454, fol. 126r.** This folio carries the start of the witness list for the 786 meetings. It is particularly interesting because the crosses with which each witness marked his pledge have been copied into this manuscript. In this case only the crosses for the first three Northumbrian witnesses have been copied, that is, for Eanbald the Archbishop of York, King Ælfwald and Tilberht Bishop of Hexham. Another cross has been copied as an example on line 17 after the words *signum sancte crucis infigentes, ita †*. The other interesting feature of this page is the symbol which follows the example cross on line 17 which keys in the testimony of Archbishop Eanbald which seems initially to have been omitted. Eanbald's name and his long testimony is therefore written by the main text scribe at the foot of the page in a different ink. The scribe seems to have checked and corrected the whole text at this stage. This secondary pen in this ink adds the word *ut* superscript above the words *illi superius* on line 11. Dümmler's edition of the letter places Eanbald's testimony correctly according to the contemporary scribal revision. The edition of Haddan and Stubbs which was based on that of the Mâdeburg Centurators ignored the correction and put Eanbald's witness mark after that of Tilberht. The notation used to mark the correct place of Eanbald's name on line 17 is used elsewhere in the manuscript as an abbreviation of the word *dominus* (crossed lower case *d*). It is possible that the symbol used on line 22 with which that on line 17 corresponds might be an abbreviation of the word *Ihesu* (crossed lower case *h*) It is to be assumed that these witness crosses are contemporary with the main text because that which follows to Eanbald's name appears to be in the same ink as the rest of his testimonial.

Ego hregbaldus lundis farnensis ecclie eps obediens signo  
scē crucis subscripsi; / subscripsi;

Ego aethelberthus cantensis ecclie eps supplex signo scē crucis

Ego adulfus mirenensis ecclie eps deuota uoluntate scripsi.

Ego aethelwinnus eps perlegatos subscripsi.

gostigha patricius signo scē crucis placido animo subscripsi.

Hicq saluberrimis admonitionib; p̄tri diae eccliarū  
& abbatē monasteriorum iudices opamates & nobiles  
unopre consencimus et subscripsimus;

Ego alrich dux signo scē crucis subscripsi;

Ego signulfus dux signo scē crucis subscripsi;

Ego alberth abbe signo scē crucis subscripsi;

Ego eghard abbe signo scē crucis subscripsi.

Hic namq; p̄ actis & dca benedictione p̄ximus ad sup  
as nobiscum uis uisib; legatis. regis & archiepi  
alipum̄ uideleca & pyttel lectores quia nota  
p̄genet & ipsa decreta secum deferentes in concilium  
mercatorum ubi gloriosus rex offa cum senioribus  
totiq; uia cum archiepo iacnbertho scē ecclie docto  
p̄p̄natis & ceteris ep̄is regionū conuenit. & in  
consp̄ctu concilii clauode singula ~~reperita p̄bata~~

Litur

**PLATE 4. Helmstedt MS 454, fol. 126v.** This folio shows the rest of the Northumbrian witness list. Unlike those names on the preceding folio, these do not have crosses after their names. Yet, an unusually large space has been left between the words *crucis subscripsi* following the names of Signulf, Aldberth and Eghard which might have been intended for such crosses. Another feature is the omission of the 'E' of *Ego* before the name of *Sigha patricius* on line 6. Also noteworthy is the name of Pyttel on line 16 which seems to have been copied in a lighter ink, possibly at a later stage since the space left for his name is too large for the number of letters, leaving an awkward gap before the next word.

sunt. & tam bene quam theodoseus quo omnes intellegere  
 potuissent dilucide reserata sunt. quomodo consona uoce.  
 alicuius animo gratias referentes apostolatus uiri ad moni-  
 tiombus pmisserunt sechnmo adinuiculanre fauore  
 iuxta qualitate uirum potissima uoluntate monimb;  
 haec statuta custodire. Qui etiam ut supra ediximus  
 tam rex quam principes sui archi ep̄s cum sociis suis in  
 manu nra inuice domini uiri signum sc̄e crucis firmaue-  
 runt & rursum p̄sentē chartulā sacrate signo robo-  
 raerunt: Ego itan brechtus archi ep̄s sc̄e doraueriensis  
 ecclē suppleo signo sc̄e crucis subscripsi:

Ego offa rex merciorū consentiens his statutis prompta  
 uoluntate signo crucis subscripsi: Teruic subscripsi.

Hugi brechtus ep̄s lichte fel dēnsē ecclē signo sacrate

Edeulfus lundensis faronensis ep̄s subscripsi.

Vnuona legorensum episcopus subscripsi:

A lehartus ep̄s. sub. fadbertus episcopus sub.

Chun brechtus ep̄s. sub. H archelus ep̄s subscripsi.

A einc ep̄s. sub. Tota episcopus. subscripsi.

Vuaremundus ep̄s. sub. Adalmond episcopus subscripsi.

A doretus ep̄s. sub. E dharct. abt.

**PLATE 5. Helmstedt MS 454, fol. 127r.** This folio shows the beginning to the Mercian witness list. Features to note here are the lack of crosses, contrasting with the beginning of the Northumbrian list and the abbreviated witness statement of the last 10 names, which are effectively written in two columns (again a feature of early charters). Also interesting is the notation mark written between lines 15 and 16. It is the same as that used to key in the witness statement of Eanbald on fol. 126r line 17. Its presence on fol. 127r suggests perhaps that another name was omitted in the Mercian witness list but which the scribe forgot to add subsequently. The mark comes in the list of bishops, but there is no known bishopric which is unexpectedly missing from the list. However, the Northumbrian list contains the name of *Æthiluuinus episcopus* (Pl. 4 line 5) who is otherwise unknown. It is possible therefore that a person of similar status was to be put into the Mercian list.

Also the less important names (Alchard to Edilhard) in the list of Mercian attestations were copied into the Wolfenbüttel manuscript two to a line, suggesting that they were copied from a list written in two columns (Plate 5). Again this is a feature of charters. The combined evidence of the ritual process of attestation by the signing of crosses, the verbal pronouncement of the decrees and the verbal agreement of the assembled counsellors to uphold the decrees, the *Regnante* invocation and the list of attestations at the end of the report all argue in favour of the suggestion that the (semi-literate) Mercian and Northumbrian noblemen would have identified the written document which they were being asked to sign and to which they had agreed verbally with a legal document of charter-style. The physical image of the Report as an Anglo-Saxon charter is striking and is an important observation, not least because no charters of any sort are known to have survived from Northumbria in this period.<sup>70</sup> The Legatine Report is not a charter in the sense of a record of land transfer or a grant of privilege, and its charter-like affinities lie closest to Mercian charters of Offa's reign. Yet this was a document initially produced in Northumbria and as it stands it is the closest thing that survives to a secular legal document from pre-Viking Northumbria.

It is apparent that it was common practice for land charters and grants of privilege to be confirmed and witnessed at synods where the secular and ecclesiastical élite had gathered.<sup>71</sup> Nor was it uncommon for synodal proceedings which concerned ecclesiastical matters (which may of course have had secular implications) to be witnessed, but only by clergymen even when the king was present.<sup>72</sup> It was, however, not normal practice in an Anglo-Saxon synodal council for the secular members of the assembled company to ratify a document that was even partially ecclesiastical in content. The Legatine Mission could have provoked an innovative amalgamation of ecclesiastical synodal conventions with secular charter-type practice

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<sup>70</sup> There is one fake charter ascribed to Northumbria in this period; Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, no. 66, p. 87.

<sup>71</sup> See for example the land grants and privileges enacted at the Synod of Clovesho in 798; Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, pp. 512-14.

<sup>72</sup> For example, the Councils of Hatfield (*HE* IV.5) and Clovesho 803; *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 214-17 and Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, pp. 542-7, but also pp. 541-2 for a document witnessed also by the Mercian secular élite.

in a single document concerning both church and lay matters. The alternative explanation is that the document signed by the élites was based on an different, non-native model so that its ratification required a new attestation procedure. The obvious places to look for such a model are the *patria*e of the author of the report, Francia and papal Italy.

## FRANKISH PARALLELS.

### The Northumbrian Council : Parallels in form.

The visual presentation of the whole Report as a Mercian-style charter is, however, in marked contrast with the image presented by the internal structure of the Report. Without doubt, the immediate affinities of the document which lists the decisions of the Northumbrian council and which was interpolated into George's Report, lie with Frankish legislative documents.<sup>73</sup> This is true not just of structure of the Legatine document but also of its contents. This observation can be pushed further, since one of the most striking aspects of the Legatine Mission to Britain as it was reported to Hadrian, is the parallel between the Northumbrian council and a Carolingian assembly. The comparison is true both of the format of the council and as suggested above, of the document which it produced. Four common features stand out:

- I. The meeting was summoned by the king and was held in the presence of the gathered secular and ecclesiastical élite of the kingdom.
- II. A document (a 'capitulary') was produced with the proceedings of the council summarised in numbered paragraphs.
- III. The capitulary was concerned with a combination of ecclesiastical and secular issues, of practical procedures and of moral reforms.
- IV. The document was proclaimed verbally to the gathered assembly thereby giving it a degree of legal authority.

Thus, when Ælfwald heard of George's arrival in Northumbria he 'straight way with great joy ordered a day for a council, at which gathered all the principle men of the

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<sup>73</sup> Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 160 and Wormald, 'Offa's Law Code', 34.

region both ecclesiastical and secular'.<sup>74</sup> Of the document produced and its verbal transmission to the assembled northern company George recorded;

Scripsimus namque capitulare de singulis rebus et per ordinem cuncta disserentes auribus illorum protulimus.

Haec namque decreta, beatissime papa Hadriane, in concilio publico coram rege Ælfuualdo et archiepiscopo Eanbaldo et omnibus episcopis et abbatibus regionis seu senatoribus, ducibus et populo terre proposuimus et illi...cum omni devotione mentis...confirmaverunt.

Report to Hadrian, 786.<sup>75</sup>

The document produced by George is called a *capitulare* and the canons within it are termed *decreta* or *capitula*.<sup>76</sup> It was presented to the assembled public council of all the most important men of the kingdom, lay and clerical, who affirmed it 'with all devotion'. This description can be compared directly with the introduction to Charlemagne's capitulary of March 779 which was promulgated at the palace of Herstal;<sup>77</sup>

Anno feliciter undecimo regni domni nostri Karoli gloriosissimi regis in mense Martio factum capitulare, qualiter, congregatis in unum sinodali concilio episcopis, abbatibus virisque inlustribus comitibus, una cum piissimo domno nostro secundum Dei voluntatem pro causis oportunis consenserunt decretum.

Capitulary of Herstal, s.a. 779.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Alc. Ep.* pp. 20 [35-6] -21 [1].

<sup>75</sup> *Alc. Ep.* pp. 21 [3-5], 27 [28-33].

<sup>76</sup> *Alc. Ep.* pp. 21 [4, 8], 27 [28], 28 [15] the word *statuta* is also used p. 28 [19, 24]. Offa's attestation of consent was explicitly given to *his statuta*.

<sup>77</sup> The Revised version of the *ARF* s.a. 778/9 say that Charlemagne spent Easter at Herstal having spent the last Christmas there too. The introduction to the Capitulary does not state where the Capitulary was made but dates it to March. Since Easter in 779 fell on April 11 it is assumed that the capitulary was promulgated at Herstal.

<sup>78</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 20, p. 47, translated in King, *Charlemagne*, no 2, pp. 203-5. The capitulary is dated to the month of March in the eleventh year of Charlemagne's reign, that is 779. The Revised version of the Frankish Annals say that Charlemagne spent Easter at Herstal before moving on to Compiègne; *ARF* (Kurze), p. 53.

The Herstal Capitulary, dated by Charlemagne's regnal years (as the Legatine document also is dated), was presented to an assembled group of important laymen and their ecclesiastical counterparts, who willingly affirmed the *decreta* concerned with 'relevant matters'. The Herstal Capitulary continues with twenty-three short *capitula*, the first few concerning ecclesiastical matters and the rest detailing matters of secular concern. This is also a feature of the contents of the document produced for the Northumbrian council; the first ten relate to ecclesiastical concerns and the next ten to secular issues. Thus, at both Herstal in 779 and in Northumbria in 786 a document called a capitulary was promulgated at a council where the ecclesiastical and secular élite of the kingdom had gathered. To the decrees (*decreta*) of the Herstal Capitulary also the assembled company enthusiastically agreed. *Capitula* 13 of the Herstal Capitulary refers to the *precariae* issued *de verbo nostro* which is suggestive of the oral pronouncement of the royal decisions.<sup>79</sup> Once more, this is reminiscent of the verbal declaration of the Legatine Capitulary to the Northumbrian and Mercian councils. The structure of the council which ratified the Herstal Capitulary is exactly the type which agreed to the capitulary composed by George in Northumbria in 786. This pattern of assembly and capitulary was repeated time and again in Carolingian legislative history, for example the capitulary produced at the synod of Frankfurt in 794 and the *Capitulare Saxonicum* produced at an Aachen assembly in 797 to name but two of the better known.<sup>80</sup>

### The Legatine Capitulary : parallels in form.

The papal legate used a specific word to describe the document which was presented to the Northumbrian élite. He calls it a *capitulare* and refers to the canons as

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<sup>79</sup> In his important study of Carolingian capitularies, Ganshof argued that it was the verbal pronouncement of the Frankish capitulary which gave them legal force; F. L. Ganshof, *Recherches sur les Capitulaires* (Paris, 1958), pp. 18-21. He quotes the introduction to the capitulary of Mantua (Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 90, pp. 190-1), the Capitulary of Herstal (B. 20), the *Capitulare de Villis* (B.32) and the Capitulary of the Saxon regions (B. 32). On this point see also P. Wormald, 'Lex Scripta and Verbum Regis', p. 118 and R. McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 28.

<sup>80</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, nos 27 and 28, pp. 71-8.

*capitula*.<sup>81</sup> The terminology is significant since this is the first occasion that this word, in the technical sense of treatise concerning secular as well as ecclesiastical issues arranged in chapters, is found in an Anglo-Saxon context.<sup>82</sup> And it is found in the context of a document, the trappings of which were recognisably legal to an Anglo-Saxon audience. This word is significant because the capitulary is a type of quasi-legal document type which is synonymous with Carolingian legislation. It is not an indigenous Anglo-Saxon form of document. Without delving any further, this basic observation indicates the inspiration of a non-Anglo-Saxon mind at work behind the composition of the document which is dovetailed into George's letter. It is of course arguable that this person was George himself, that he was subconsciously drawing on his years of experience in the Frankish and papal courts when constructing a document for Northumbrian social reform. In combination with the parallel between the Northumbrian council and the structure of a Frankish assembly, the whole impression of George's mission to the north looks increasingly Carolingian.

The use of the word *capitulare* in the Legatine Report is in fact one of the earliest usages of the word outside a papal context. The word *capitulum* was employed in papal documents, the letters of Pope Gregory I for example.<sup>83</sup> In this papal context it meant a chapter heading or a summary of a complex series of points, rather than a specific type of legislative document.<sup>84</sup> The word had long been in use in this sense in strictly ecclesiastical contexts, even in Anglo-Saxon England where the word was quoted by Bede in his transcription of the canons of the Synod of Hertford.<sup>85</sup> In

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<sup>81</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 21 [4, 8].

<sup>82</sup> *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, Fasc. 2, prepared by R. E. Latham et al. (London, 1981), p. 271, col. 3.

<sup>83</sup> P. Ewald, ed., *Gregorii I Papae Registrum Epistolarum*, Vol. 1, MGH Epp. Vol. I (Berlin, 1887), pp. 53 [9], 55 [9] and L. M. Hartmann, ed., *Gregorii I Papae Registrum Epistolarum*, Vol. 2, MGH Epp. Vol. II (Berlin, 1899), pp. 9 [28], 178 [14], 386 [6], 410 [11].

<sup>84</sup> C. Du Cange, *Glossarium mediae et infirmae Latinitatis*, revised edition D. P. Carpenter and G. A. L. Henschel, 10 vols (Niort, 1883-7), ii, p. 140 col. 2.

<sup>85</sup> *HE*, IV.5; *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 215-17.

contrast, the word *capitulare* (plural *capitularia*) in the sense of a legal-style decree proposed by a secular ruler and divided into *capitula*, is a word which has become associated specifically with Carolingian secular legislation. However, there has been a tendency by historians to use this word anachronistically, applying it to all types of Merovingian and early Carolingian legal material.<sup>86</sup> Yet a brief survey of the term *capitulare* in Frankish contexts before 786 reveals it to have been a word used sparsely before that date. The term *capitula* occurs in only a few documents belonging to the reign of Charlemagne's father Pippin III. The synodal Council of Verno which was held in July 755 produced a document concerning mostly ecclesiastical issues which were divided into twenty-one sections referred to as *capitula*.<sup>87</sup> Twelve issues in another document promulgated by Pippin which concerned ecclesiastical and secular problems of Aquitaine are referred to in a title as *capitula*. However, the title of this latter document was certainly anachronistically attached since it refers to Charlemagne's reaffirmation of his father's Aquitanian decrees. Charlemagne produced his own Capitulary on Aquitanian issues in 789, closely based on his father's decrees suggesting that the reference to Pippin's decrees as *capitula* may well date closer to 789.<sup>88</sup>

These documents are not themselves referred to as capitularies, just the divisions of their chapters. The first document to be referred to as a capitulary is the Herstal Capitulary of March 779, referred to above.<sup>89</sup> Apart from this one, the only other true capitularies which predate the Legatine Capitulary come from the territories of

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<sup>86</sup> See the comments made in King, *Charlemagne*, pp. 23-4. This is the terminology employed by Boretius, the major editor of the Frankish Capitularies.

<sup>87</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 14, p. 33 (34).

<sup>88</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*,<sup>no. 18</sup> p. 42 (31). The title is as follows; *Incipiunt capitula quas bonae memoriae genitor Pipinus sinodaliter [instituit] et nos ab hominibus conservare volumus*. Charlemagne's own capitulary on Aquitanian issues is Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 24, pp. 65-6.

<sup>89</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 20, pp. 47-51. Translated in King, *Charlemagne*, pp. 203-5; Ganshof, *Recherches*, p. 4.

Frankish Lombardy.<sup>90</sup> There are three documents issued by Charlemagne or his son Pippin concerning Lombardy which can be dated pre-786 and one other which is dated 780-90.<sup>91</sup> The Capitulary of Mantua is particularly interesting in the context of the precursors to the Legatine Capitulary.<sup>92</sup> It represents 'each capitula' which was presented *ad placitum generale omnibus notum fecimus* and is a document which aimed to reinforce Carolingian institutions and methods of government in Frankish Lombardy. Again, as with the Legatine and Herstal Capitularies, that which was promulgated in Mantua is a mixture of episcopal and secular issues, of moral and practical, fiscal and military issues. There is no suggestion that the Legatine Capitulary was quite such a blatant attempt to introduce Carolingian institutions into Northumbria, but it is notable that the recipe of *capitula* is the same. An obvious feature of the Mantuan capitulary (which recurs in Frankish Capitularies concerning the control of newly conquered Saxony) is the way in which the church and its needs and institutions were an intrinsic part of the implementation of Carolingian government in Lombardy.<sup>93</sup> Northumbria was in no way a military threat to Francia nor was it pagan (like Saxony), yet the Legatine Capitulary offered a program of reform which was more subtle than that imposed upon its annexed territories but which shows the same concerns.

The Mantuan capitulary probably dates to 781. The context of its creation was probably Charlemagne's journey to Rome in that year, at which time his sons Pippin

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<sup>90</sup> Ganshof redated the *Capitulare episcoporum* which Boretius had dated '780?' to 792-3, Ganshof, *Recherches*, p. 109; Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 21, pp. 52-3. On the 'Italian' capitularies see Ganshof, *Recherches*, pp. 16-18.

<sup>91</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, nos 88-91, pp. 187-93. Boretius dated the first of these 776 or 781, Ganshof, following LeClercq supported the earlier date; Ganshof, *Recherches*, p. 17, n. 56.

<sup>92</sup> The dating of the Mantuan Capitulary is not certain. Boretius, Ganshof and Grierson dated it to 781 or thereabouts. Other scholars have suggested that it may date later, to 803-13. Ganshof preferred the earlier date because of the close parallels of the Mantuan Capitulary to the Capitulary of Herstal (*capitulae* 5,7,8). See Ganshof, *Recherches*, p. 19 n. 63 and P. Grierson, 'Chronologia delle riforme monetari di Carolo Magne', *Rivista Italiana di Numismatica*, 5th Ser. Vol. 56 (1954), 65-79, 66-72 and reprinted as Chapter 17 in P. Grierson, *Dark Age Numismatics, Selected studies* (London, 1979). Wormald accepts the later date, 'Offa's law Code' p. 34, n. 20.

<sup>93</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, nos 26 and 97, pp. 68-70, 203-4.

and Louis were anointed kings of Lombardy and Aquitaine respectively. There seems to be a connection between that part of Italy and the development of the capitulary as a technical document in Francia. Ganshof suggested that the model for Carolingian capitularies came from Lombardic Italy.<sup>94</sup> George's connection with Italy and Lombardic issues in particular makes him a logical candidate for the introduction and development of capitularies as a standard form of legislation within Francia. The Legatine Capitulary, which was produced in Northumbria in 786, backs up this hypothesis, as George used a form of document which was still quite new in Francia in order to record the Northumbrian vices. It may be no more than coincidence, but a letter exists dated sometime between the April 781 and April 783 written by Pope Hadrian to Charles concerning the embassy of George between the Frankish and papal courts.<sup>95</sup> There is no direct evidence to link George with the Mantuan Capitulary but the fact remains that Lombardic issues were in the early 780s the special diplomatic concern of the man who five years later was sent to Northumbria. George in his capacity as the Franco-Papal *missus* with special interest in Lombardy may well have come into contact with capitulary documents. It seems possible that a man who had official interests in Francia and Italy and who was evidently involved in the creation of Frankish proto-capitularies, was an important element in the development of the capitulary as a Frankish legal document.<sup>96</sup> That he also used this novel form of document in Northumbria arguably ties him even closer to the development of the Carolingian capitulary tradition.

The capitulary as a widespread form of Carolingian legislative document became common only in the late 780s and 790s after the important reform capitulary of 789, the so-called *Admonitio Generalis*.<sup>97</sup> It is after this date that it becomes used in the

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<sup>94</sup> Ganshof, *Recherches*, pp. 5-6. He quotes the edict of Aistulf of March 750 which uses the word *Capitulare* in the introduction to a group of decrees.

<sup>95</sup> Gundlach, *CC*, no. 73, p. 604.

<sup>96</sup> See the decrees of the Synod of Compiègne, *s.a.* 757; Boretius, *Capitularia*, pp. 37-8, 38 [38, 45] and 39 [16].

<sup>97</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 22, pp. 52-62, p. 54, line 7. On the *Admonitio Generalis* see Cubitt, *Church Councils*, ch. 6

Carolingian sense by papal writers.<sup>98</sup> The format of the Legatine document was, therefore, innovatory and sophisticated in that it seems to combine the charter-style of Anglo-Saxon law making with the new type of legislative document emerging in Francia, the capitulary. The document produced by the papal legates in England in 786 stands very near the front of a long and important Carolingian tradition of legislative technique. As such, the appearance of a capitulary in England, in Northumbria initially, is quite remarkable. It is apparently the first time that such a document was seen or used in Anglo-Saxon England and an innovation of this type begs the question as to whether the content of this legislative document was as foreign as its format and whether the style of the Carolingian capitulary in general in fact owes anything to the form of document which was produced in Northumbria in 786. The form both of the Legatine document and the council at which it was presented is entirely consistent with emerging Carolingian methods of legislation. Although nominally papal in origin, the Legatine Capitulary is undoubtedly Carolingian in typology. Yet the Legatine Capitulary which was created in England and ratified by English councils was of a type that in 786 was still relatively unusual in Francia.

### **The Legatine Capitulary: Parallels in content.**

It has been suggested above that the Legatine Capitulary stands out from preceding Anglo-Saxon legislation because it legislates on a combination of secular and ecclesiastical issues. In this way the structure of the Legatine Capitulary mimicks emergent Carolingian legislative techniques. Does the Carolingian parallel extend to the detailed contents of the Report? The canons of the Legatine Capitulary form a wide ranging program of reform. The first ten canons, addressed to bishops, commence with the proclamation and affirmation of the true faith as prescribed by the council of Nicaea and the six universal synods. The proper canonical method of baptism as a fundamental symbol of Christian life is laid out in the second canon, as are the duties of godparents. The third *capitula* commands that two councils be held

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<sup>98</sup> See the letters of Popes Hadrian and Leo to Charlemagne, E. Dümmler and K. Hampe, eds, *Epistolarum Karolini Aevi* Vol. 3, MGH Epp. Vol. 5 (Berlin, 1889), pp. 7, [13]; 31, [30]; 40, [34]; 102, [15, 16, 18].

each year, following the canonical institutes in order that a bishop may annually visit his *parrōchia* ensuring that pagan practices are repressed and that all may hear the word of God. A diligent pastor must in this way ensure the separation of incestuous relationships, the confirmation of the populace and the elimination of the practices of augurers, soothsayers chanters and other purveyors of pagan rites. The fourth *capitula* advocates that bishops are to ensure that all canons live *canonice* and monks and nuns follow the proper regular life. *Discretio* is ordered between canons monks and laymen and they are to follow the sober example of the eastern religious. They are not to adorn themselves in *tinctis Indie coloribus aut veste preciosa*, but bishops, abbots and abbesses are to provide a good example to all. As in the first canon, the frequent reading of the precepts of the six universal councils is encouraged in order to avoid the pitfalls of innovation and schism within the church of God. The fifth canon describes the process by which the heads of religious houses are to be chosen with the *consilio* of the bishop. The sixth *decretum* orders that the bishop is to ordain no-one to the office of priest or deacon whose lifestyle is not of proven merit. Once they are consecrated, no priest or deacon is to take up another title without a reasoned case and a letter of commendation. The seventh canon orders churches to maintain the proper canonical hours. The eighth statute orders the conservation of all the old privileges granted by the papacy but allows for the uprooting of those things which written by evil men are against the canonical institutes. Canon 9 forbids ecclesiastics from daring to hoard food in secret, *nisi pre nimia infirmate* because this is 'hypocritical and like the Saracens'. Equally they are not to pretend to fast, looking like pallid sepulchres. The tenth and final *capitulum* directed to clergy orders them not to celebrate mass with bare legs *ne turpido eius appareat et offendatur Deus*. Bread not *crusta* is to be presented to the faithful and the chalice and paten are not to be made of ox-horn because these are 'of blood'. An observation of contemporary practice is apparently then added, since George notes (*vidimus*) that bishops judge secular cases in their councils, a practice which is forbidden by apostolic command. The section finishes with a hope that the with assiduous prayers for the Church, God and Christ may 'exalt, invigorate, protect and defend and preserve it immaculate for the praise and glory of his name for all the ages of the world, Amen'.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 23 [12-15].

The next half of the capitulary deals with matters which were directed in particular *ad reges et principes* so that they might manage their *regimen* with *magna cautela et disciplina* and to judge with justice. It emphasises the inherent superiority of bishops, who with the confidence and truth of divine authority behind them are always ‘with fear and adulation to speak the word of God to kings, princes and all dignitaries, they never disguise the truth, to spare no-one, to damn no-one unjustly, to excommunicate no-one without just cause and to give good example to all by their way of life. In this way also we admonish kings and princes, that they might obey their bishops with all heart and great humility, because it is they who hold the keys of heaven and have the power of binding and loosing’.<sup>100</sup> A long section of scriptural quotations to justify this claim follows, completed by a recommendation that kings have *consiliarios prudentes*, that they fear God and be morally honest.

The twelfth canon continues this argument about the relationship between kings and clerics. ‘In the choosing of a king, let not the choice of evil men prevail, but let kings be chosen *legitime* by priests and the elders’. Just as it is not possible for an adulterer to be a priest, nor can he be *christus domini* and *rex totius regni et heres patrie*. Honour is due to the king and no-one may contemplate the murder of a king *quia christus Domini est*. If a bishop or any one of priestly rank is to advocate such wickedness then he is to be degraded and deprived of his sacred inheritance. Such a bishop is compared to Judas and condemned by eternal anathema to chains and everlasting hellfire. The thirteenth canon is concerned with justice, ordering that the rich and powerful are to give just judgements, avoiding the bribes of the rich and contempt for the poor. The next canon forbids fraud, rape and violence and orders that no injustice or heavy tribute be imposed on the church of God, it is to be no more than in ‘Roman law and ancient custom of forgone emperors kings and princes’. Let there be concord everywhere, George says amongst kings and bishops, clerics and laymen and all the christian populace so that there is unity everywhere in the church of God, and peace in one church...having one head who is Christ’. The remaining six canons (15-20) concern the duties of all christians, prohibiting uncanonical marriages, union with nuns and incestuous relationships. The offspring

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<sup>100</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 23 [18-25].

of whores, adulterers and nuns are to be disinherited. Tithes (tenths and ninths) are to be paid as in the scriptural laws. Usury is prohibited and the proper use of fair weights and measures is advocated. Canon 18 refers to the Christian vows and canon 19 to the avoidance of pagan rituals including *tincturae inūriam*.<sup>101</sup> Disgust is expressed at the clothes of the gentiles which are worn, the gentiles ‘whom your fathers expelled, it is a marvellous thing and no less stupid, that those whose life you always hate, their example you imitate’. The canon prohibits the mutilation of the noses, tails and ears of horses: ‘*Audivimus etiam,*’ that when a quarrel erupts amongst you, ‘*sortes more gentilium mittitis*’. The eating of horses is forbidden, since no Christian in the east does this. The final *caput*, directed at everyone stresses the imminent need for conversion, the confession of sins and penance.

The author of the Legatine Report to Hadrian was clear about the immediate inspiration for these particular canons. He says that after the Northumbrian élites had been summoned to council that ‘it was related in our hearing’:

...quod reliqua vicia non minima ibi necessaria erant ad  
corrigenum...

Report to Hadrian, 786.<sup>102</sup>

It was because of these ‘vices’ that he wrote the capitulary, ‘concerning each single thing in order’ which was subsequently read out to the assembly.<sup>103</sup> This statement implies that that the canons of the Legatine Capitulary as described above, however Frankish in their mode of presentation, were in content prompted by the need to correct native Northumbrian problems. Since the capitulary was presented before the papal letters brought by the legates, it is apparent that the canons were something other than the immediate issues which had prompted the mission to come to England. It is not easy to double check how many of the canons of the capitulary do indeed relate specifically to Northumbrian ills since the capitulary provides an almost unique insight into Northumbrian society in the 780s. A few of the *capitula* have references

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<sup>101</sup> Wormald suggests that this might be a reference to the practice of tattooing; Wormald, ‘Offa’s Law Code’, pp. 31, 33.

<sup>102</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 21 [1-2].

<sup>103</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 21 [3-4].

which seem to relate directly to observation of Anglo-Saxon practices. Canon 12 ends with the all too pertinent comment that the *internecionis dominorum* occurred *apud vos saepe*. In Northumbrian terms the reference in this canon to the sin of regicide must relate to the murder of Ælfwald's father, King Oswulf, in 758 and to the relative instability and unpredictability of Northumbrian politics in general in this period. Given that King Ælfwald (at whose command the Legatine Council had been called) was himself murdered two years later, it seems that regicide was indeed a Northumbrian vice.<sup>103</sup> Yet it is difficult to tie many of the other canons to specific Northumbrian concerns in the years up to 786. A letter of Alcuin written to King Æthelred in 793 refers to the decline in Northumbrian morals, to incest, adultery and fornication. These vices he said had inundated the land *a diebus Ælfwaldi*.<sup>104</sup> Several of the capitulary canons find close parallels in letters of Alcuin, but without exception these letters were written several years after the council and are arguably therefore likely to have received inspiration from the capitulary rather than vice versa.

The reference in *capitulum* 10 to the prohibition of bishops judging secular cases seems also to be based on observation of Northumbrian practice since it is introduced by a verb in the first person.<sup>105</sup> The reference in the same canon to chalices and patens made of horn also reads like an observation of local practice. The discussion in canon 19 concerning pagan behaviour is another of these. It is mimicked closely by one of Alcuin's letters to Æthelred of Northumbria written six years later in which Alcuin berated the king and his nobles for having their hair and beards cut in the manner of pagans. He admonishes them for their luxurious clothing which he says is beyond their means and away from the traditions of their forefathers. The pagans with whom Alcuin equates these fashions are those 'whose terror threatens us', that is presumably the Viking pirates whose raid on Lindisfarne had prompted that

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<sup>103</sup> Kynewulf the king of Wessex who was present at the first Mercian council but did not witness the second Mercian council, was assassinated sometime in 786.

<sup>104</sup> This phrase is ambiguous, does it include the days while Ælfwald reigned or does it refer to the days after his death? Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 182.

<sup>105</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 23, [10-11]; *Vidimus etiam ibi episcopus in conciliis suis secularia iudicare*. See also the opinions on this subject voiced by Bede and Alcuin, below Chapter 5.

letter.<sup>106</sup> This suggests that the Northumbrians were familiar with Scandinavian ways before the raids started. However, the pagans and gentiles who are referred to in canon 19 of the Legatine Capitulary are those whom *patres vestri<sup>de</sup> orbe armis expulerunt* which has led to one suggestion that these people might have been Picts.<sup>107</sup> The writer of the Capitulary marvels that, 'it is a remarkable thing and no less stupifying, that those whose life you always hate, you desire to imitate'.<sup>108</sup> The implication is that the Northumbrians were particularly partial to the fashions of their northern neighbours which seemed to a foreign, continental eye to be pagan. Equally, the reference to the eating of horsemeat which 'no Christian does in the East' is obviously the opinion of an outsider, used to an alternative lifestyle.<sup>109</sup>

There are several other details in the Legatine Capitulary which point directly to the fact that it was being written and presented by someone who was not native to Anglo-Saxon England. The suggestion in canon 4 that monks, nuns and canons conduct themselves with suitable sobriety in the manner of Eastern monks and canons is an example the knowlege of Eastern customs. In addition, this reference to canons and their lifestyle as being distinct from that of regular monks is the earliest of its kind in any Anglo-Saxon source, again suggesting external influence.<sup>110</sup> Another feature suggestive of Frankish concerns is the request for the proper payment of tithe

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<sup>106</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 16, p. 43 [23-4].

<sup>107</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 27 [5-6]. Wormald, 'Offa's Law Code', p. 33. He rightly points out that the Picts were of course Christian by this date, but that their appearance would have been bizarre to a man who had spent much of his long life in Italy and Francia. On the Pictish contact with the Frankish world see G. Henderson, *From Darrow to Kells, the Insular Gospel-books, 650-800* (London, 1987), pp. 93-7 and R. G. Lamb, 'Carolingian Orkney and its Transformation', in *The Viking Age in Caithness, Orkney and the North Atlantic*, eds, C. E. Batey, J. Jesch and C. D. Morris (Edinburgh, 1993), 260-71.

<sup>108</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 27 [6-7].

<sup>109</sup> There are several papal letters which forbid the consumption of horses as a pagan attribute. Gregory writing to Boniface forbid it in the newly Christianised regions of Germany and in a reply to Pope Zacharias, Boniface remarked that horse eating was a barrier to conversion. On this subject see F. J. Simoons, *Eat not this Flesh, food avoidances from prehistory to the present*, 2nd edn (London, 1994), pp. 187-8.

<sup>110</sup> Wormald, 'Offa's Law Code', p. 34.

and the use of fair weights and measures as found in canon 17 of the Legatine Capitulary. Financial issues are a common concern of Frankish legislation but are rarely found in an Anglo-Saxon source prior to this reference.<sup>111</sup> The Legatine Capitulary was the first official English document to demand the payment of tithe and as Levison noted, this 'may have been a reflection of the continental situation'.<sup>112</sup> One of the letters of Boniface notes that Pippin made it a universal duty to pay tithe.<sup>113</sup> Tithe was employed by Charlemagne as a method of ensuring lasting control over the newly conquered tribes of the Saxons and Avars. Alcuin wrote to various Frankish potentates voicing his concerns that excessive tithe payments would harm the nascent faith of these newly Christianised tribes.<sup>114</sup> Cathwulf incorporated those who did not pay tithes amongst his list of evil doers which included pagans, sorcerers, slave traders and adulterers.<sup>115</sup> In legislative terms tithe was insisted upon in canon 17 of the first Saxon Capitulary where 'in accordance with God's demands' a tenth part of acquired wealth is to be given to the church and its priests.<sup>116</sup> It was also the subject of the seventh and thirteenth items in the Herstal Capitulary of 779 (the latter chapter refers to the payment of ninths as well as tenth part tithes, both of which are mentioned in the Legatine Capitulary). The use of fair weights and measures was advocated by Pippin back in 744 at the Council of Soissons (chapter 6) and in his 751/5 Council (chapter 5).<sup>117</sup> The reference to ecclesiastical tribute in canon 14 of the Legatine Capitulary in which the tribute levied on churches is to be

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<sup>111</sup> See for example the Capitulary of Mantua, cap. 9; Boretius; *Capitularia*, p. 190 and Grierson, 'Chronologia delle riforme monetari di Carolo Magne', 65-79, 66.

<sup>112</sup> Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 106-7.

<sup>113</sup> Tangl, *Bonifatius und Lullus*, no. 118, p. 254.

<sup>114</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 110 to Charlemagne concerning the Avars, pp. 156-9, 158 [7]; no. 111 to Magenfrith concerning the Saxons, pp. 159-62, 161 [6]; no. 110, to Arno concerning the Saxons, pp. 153-4, 154 [18]; no. 174 to Charlemagne concerning the Saxons, pp. 287-9, 289 [7].

<sup>115</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 7, pp. 501-5, 504 [15].

<sup>116</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 26, pp. 68-70 [26-8]. The first Saxon Capitulary is dated 785 by Ganshof and 782 (?) by King, *Charlemagne*, 205-8.

<sup>117</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 12, pp. 28-30, 30 [1-3] and no. 13, pp. 31-2, 32 [12-14].

no more than in 'Roman law and the ancient custom of aforegone emperors, kings and princes' is paralleled by chapter 15 of Charlemagne's Herstal Capitulary in which it is said that the longstanding arrangements for the levy of tithe are to be honoured.<sup>118</sup>

Another recurring theme in the Legatine Capitulary which is also commonly found in Frankish capitulary legislation are the references to canonical marriage. The Legatine Capitulary contains several references to the proper ordering of marriage as found in *capitulae* 3 and 15. The subject is implicit in the chapters on illegitimacy and the inheritance rights of the offspring of illegal marriages (*capitula* 12 and 16).<sup>119</sup> Again the Herstal Capitulary (*capitula* 5) gives the bishop the right to punish those guilty of incest, just as the Legatine Capitulary orders bishops in *capitula* 3 to separate incestuous relationships. Illicit marriages are also condemned in *capitula* 20 of the first Saxon Capitulary. Sanction against improper carnal union is also found in the legislation of Pippin's rule. The decrees produced at the Council of Soissons in 744 refers to union with nuns and the first capitulary of his reign as king starts *De incestis*. The Council of Compiègne which met in 757 produced a set of twenty-one decrees which were concerned almost entirely with the complexities of canonical marriage. It is highly significant given the number of references in the Legatine Capitulary to this subject and its ramifications, that George of Ostia is known to have been present at the Council of Compiègne some thirty years prior to the mission to Northumbria. His consent is explicitly recorded against three of the decrees promulgated there (numbers 14, 16 and 20).<sup>120</sup>

A council held at Verneuil just two years prior to that at Compiègne which George is known to have attended, shows perhaps the closest overall parallels with the Legatine

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<sup>118</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 20, pp. 46-51, 50 [37-9].

<sup>119</sup> On this subject see Wormald, 'Offa's Law Code', p. 38-9. On Frankish family ties and views on marriage more generally see, E. James, *The Origins of France, from Clovis to the Capetians, 500-1000* (Basingstoke, 1982), pp. 78-81.

<sup>120</sup> Boretius, *Capitularia*, no. 15, pp.37-39, 38 [38,45] and 39 [16].

Capitulary.<sup>121</sup> Apart from the fact that it is one of the earliest Frankish conciliar documents to use the word *capitula* to divide its findings, it also refers to the need by bishops to correct the regular and secular clergy of his diocese (*capitula* 3 and 4 in the Legatine Capitulary). Capitula 4 of the Verneuil document orders that two synods be held annually one on the Kalends of March and another on the Kalends of October. This is another precept of the Legatine Capitulary which stands out as being ‘contrary to English usage’.<sup>122</sup>

The final aspect of the contents of the Legatine Capitulary which displays evidence of Frankish thought is perhaps the most significant, that of the power of kings in relation to the church. The reference to the anointing of kings in *capitula* 12 is important. This appears twice, once in a passage which condemns the sin of regicide, ‘Let no-one dare to kill a king because he is the Lord’s anointed’ and once with reference to the need to choose a king from legitimate stock,

quia sicut nostris temporibus ad sacerdotium secundum  
canones adulter pervenire non potest, sic nec christus Domini  
esse valet, et rex totius regni, et heres patrie...

Report to Hadrian, Legatine Capitulary, Canon 12.<sup>123</sup>

Its native relevance has already been discussed. The Frankish context of the references to anointing in the Legatine Capitulary are uncontroversial, but it can be shown that they are particularly appropriate to the circumstances of George’s career. The anointing of Pippin by Archbishop Boniface in 751 and condoned by Pope Zacharias, confirmed the Carolingian coup over the Merovingian dynasty.<sup>124</sup> The implication of this act elevated the status of Pippin above his peers and implied that

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<sup>121</sup> As observed also by Wormald, ‘Offa’s Law Code’, p. 34, n. 21.

<sup>122</sup> Wormald, ‘Offa’s Law Code’, p. 33. Two annual synods was, however, a condition of chapter 7 of the Canons of the Council of Hertford held in 672, although the same meeting decided *quia diversae causae impediunt*, to meet only once a year at Clovesho on 1 August; *HE*, IV.5, *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 216.

<sup>123</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 24 [1-3].

<sup>124</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), pp. 8-10.

his right to rule had been sanctioned by God. The right of his two sons to rule after him was affirmed three years later when Pope Stephen II travelled to Francia seeking protection from the Lombard threat.<sup>126</sup> In a ceremony held probably in July 754 Stephen anointed the young Charlemagne and Karlomann reaffirmed the anointing of Pippin, thereby superseding the indirect nature of the papal involvement in the 751 anointing with a rôle which was central to the status of the Frankish king.<sup>127</sup> The *Liber Pontificalis* describes Stephen's journey and lists the people who accompanied the pontiff from Rome. George of Ostia is the first in the list. Thus, the man who wrote the Legatine Capitulary was in Francia at a critical moment in Frankish history, the point which not only cemented the right of Pippin's dynasty to rule Francia but which also forged the symbiotic link between the Carolingians and the Papacy on which so much of that right was founded. Indeed, it was this event rather than the initial 751 coup by which Einhard writing eighty or so years later as Charlemagne's official biographer marked the demise of the Merovingians.<sup>128</sup> The presence of George at these historic proceedings seems to have had a lasting effect on his career. George quickly became an important and respected figure in Frankish circles as indicated by his presence and active participation in the Council of Compiègne held three years later in 757.

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<sup>126</sup> On this event see chapters 23-27 of the *Vita Stephani* in the *LP*; L. Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis* Vol. 1 (Paris, 1886-92), 476-8 and R. Davis, ed. *The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes (Liber Pontificalis)*, (Liverpool, 1992), pp. 61-4. See also the *ARF* and its revised version *s.a.* 754; *ARF* (Kurze), pp.12-13.

<sup>127</sup> The Frankish Annals do not provide a date for the ceremony in which Pippin and his family were anointed. The *LP* says it occurred 'some days after the Pope had travelled to St. Denis when 'the season of winter was pressing'. This is contradicted by the account of the ceremony given in the text known as the *Clausula de unctione Pippini regis*, which is generally (but not uncontroversially) assumed to be a near contemporary account written by a monk of St. Denis. The date given by the *Clausula* is 28 July 754. The *Clausula* is edited by G. Waitz, ed., *MGH SS Vol. XV.1* (Hanover 1887), p. 1. On the debate over the authenticity of this text see T. F. X. Noble, *The Republic of St Peter; the birth of the Papal State, 680-825*, (Philadelphia, 1984), p. 87, Davis, *Lives*, p. 64 n.64 and Nelson, 'The Lord's anointed and the people's choice', p. 151 n. 37 .

<sup>128</sup> *VK* (Einhard), ch. 1, pp. 2-3; *Gens Meroingorum...usque in Hildricum regem, qui iussu Stephani Romani pontificis depositus ac detonsus...*

### George of Ostia and Amiens:

George evidently formed a close working relationship, even friendship, with the man whom he had helped to make king of the Franks. Five letters survive in the *Codex Carolinus* from Stephen II or his successor Paul I which testify to the several missions which George undertook as an official legate between the papal and Frankish courts between the years 756 and 759.<sup>128</sup> To these men George was *reverentissimum et sanctissimum fratre et coepiscopum nostrum*. His apparent affection for Francia led in 761 to Paul I giving permission for George to remain in Francia.<sup>129</sup> This permission was withdrawn after Paul's death in 767 by Constantine II whose uncanonical election to papal office was nullified in August the following year.<sup>130</sup> As bishop of Ostia and one of the suburbicarian bishops of Rome, George played an important role in the confirmation of the pontifical dignity of a new pope.<sup>131</sup> The bishop of Ostia was traditionally the first of the consecrators of a new pontiff and it is plausible that Constantine needed George in Rome in order to legitimise his election to papal office and to minimise the negative effect of his uncanonical promotion. George did not obey Constantine's demands and it seems that it was at this stage that Pippin granted him the bishopric of Amiens which he held concurrently with the benefice of Ostia.<sup>132</sup> This duality of office is reflected in the proceedings of a synod which was held in Rome in 769 at the start of the pontificate of Stephen III. This synod effectively sanctioned the dismissal of

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<sup>128</sup> Gundlach, *CC*, no. 8, pp. 494-8; no. 11, pp. 504-7; no. 16, pp. 513-14; no. 17, pp. 514-17; no. 18, pp. 518-19.

<sup>129</sup> Gundlach, *CC*, no. 21, pp. 522-4 and 73, pp. 547-50.

<sup>130</sup> Kelly, *Popes*, pp. 93-4. There is no record of Constantine in the *LP* but a letter survives from him to Pippin III written in 767, post August 31, in which he demands that George and the priests Peter and Marinus return to Rome; Gundlach, *CC*, pp. 649-53. On this Peter see, Bullough, 'Albinus deliciosus', 73, n. 3.

<sup>131</sup> Noble, *The Republic of St Peter*, p. 215. Colgrave noted that one of the previous incumbents of the see of Ostia, Andrew had been one of those to judge Wilfrid's case when he travelled to Rome in 679; *VW* (Colgrave), pp. 58-9, 171.

<sup>132</sup> Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 128 and Bullough, 'Albinus deliciosus', 75, n. 9. For George as bishop of Amiens see also L. Duchesne, *Fastes Episcopaux de l'ancienne Gaule*, Vol. 3 (Paris, 1915), pp. 128-9.

Constantine (who had already been blinded) and reversed the decisions made by him and the ordinations authorised under his leadership. The *Liber Pontificalis* records how twelve Frankish bishops were sent to Rome, men who were ‘learned in the divine scriptures and in the holy canons’.<sup>133</sup> George was one of those present at this council, recorded in the French manuscript of the *Liber Pontificalis* as Bishop of Ostia but in the proceedings of the council as the Bishop of Amiens.<sup>134</sup> It is possible that the precepts of this Roman council could provide the context for the ‘contradictory and puzzling’<sup>135</sup> *capitula* 8 of the Legatine Capitulary which George wrote seventeen years later, in which all the ancient privileges granted by the Roman see were to be respected except those which were written *contra canonica instituta* with ‘the assent of evil men’.

George was therefore a prominent person in the Franco-papal diplomatic axis of Pippin’s reign. This was maintained during Charlemagne’s reign, although his career became increasingly weighted towards Francia so much so that Hadrian writing to Charlemagne *c.* 782 referred to George not as *coepiscopum nostrum* as his predecessors had done but as *episcopum vestrum nostrumque*.<sup>136</sup> The *Liber Pontificalis* refers to George’s Frankish status as an envoy of Charles *regi Francorum et patricio Romanorum* in a mission to Hadrian in 773, ostensibly to enquire whether the Lombardic king Desiderius had ‘restored the stolen cities and all

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<sup>133</sup> Duchesne, *LP*, Vol 1, p. 473, section 17.

<sup>134</sup> Duchesne, *LP*, Vol. 1, p. 473 section 17 and A. Werminghoff, ed., *Concilia Aevi Karolini*, 2.i, MGH Legum Sectio 3, Concilia, (Hanover and Leipzig 1906), 74-92. This contradiction has led to some speculation that George did not attend the Roman synod at all or that he was the thirteenth bishop at the synod, especially since thirteen bishops’ names are recorded in the list interpolated into the French *LP* manuscript. See Duchesne, *LP*, Vol. 1, p. 482, n. 30 and Davis, *Lives*, p. 96, n. 42-5. However, the proceedings of the council intermix the names of the Frankish and Italian delegates and do not specify how many bishops travelled from Francia; Werminghoff, *Concilia*, 79-92.

<sup>135</sup> Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 158.

<sup>136</sup> See the letters given in the *Codex Carolinus* and quoted above note 133 and also Gundlach, *CC*, no. 73, p. 604 [13-14] and no. 99 pp. 650-3, 653 [16-17].

St Peter's rights'.<sup>137</sup> This mission was of the highest diplomatic importance, since the lack of co-operation by the Lombardic king as reported by George and his fellow ambassadors to Charlemagne was a major factor in the invasion of Lombardy in the following year, resulting in its annexation to the Frankish crown.<sup>138</sup> Lombardic issues seem to have been the recurrent theme of George's missions between Rome and the Frankish kings. The Lombardic threat to papal security was the issue which had brought Stephen II to Francia in 754 which resulted in the anointing of Pippin's family. It is a reflection of George's high status and obvious ability that the continued monitoring of the Lombardic problem was largely entrusted to him.<sup>139</sup>

The creation and maintenance of temporal power was a hallmark of George's career. Not only was he involved in the ceremony which confirmed the elite status of the Carolingian dynasty but the advice given to Charlemagne by the 773 mission to Hadrian of which George was the prominent member was evidently instrumental in the decision by the Frankish king to dispose of the (non-anointed) Lombardic monarch. Yet his status as bishop of Ostia meant that he also had considerable influence in the sanctioning of papal power, as the incident with Constantine the antipope indicated. This papal aspect of George's career (which was after all the one in which he started) provides the context for the other comments on royal power which are implicit in the Capitulary produced in Northumbria in 786. *Caput* eleven which commanded *reges et principes* to rule with *disciplina* also ordered kings to obey their bishops:

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<sup>137</sup> Duchesne, *LP*, Vol. 1, p. 494, section 26. George was accompanied on this mission by Wulfhard, abbot of St Martin's at Tours and by a man named Alboinus *deliciosus ipsius regis*. On the controversy surrounding the identification of the latter of these envoys see Bullough, 'Alboinus deliciosus', 73ff.

<sup>138</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), pp. 37-41.

<sup>139</sup> Ganshof noted that it was traditional practice for the *missi* of the Pope and Frankish kings to concentrate their diplomatic activity within a tight sphere of influence; Ganshof, 'The Frankish Monarchy and its external relations', p. 168f.

ita quoque reges et principes admonuimus, ut obediant ex corde cum magna humilitate suis episcopis, quia illis claves caeli datae sunt, et habent potestatem ligandi atque solvendi.

Legatine Capitulary, Chapter 11.<sup>141</sup>

They are to obey their bishops because the bishops held the keys to heaven and had the power of binding and loosing. These latter proofs of priestly influence over kings and princes are those which were granted by Christ to the apostles and especially to Peter, the patron saint of Rome.<sup>142</sup> The implication is that on Judgement Day, it is priests who will render account to God for the deeds of kings. A clear distinction is drawn in the Legatine Capitulary to the two facets of temporal power, that of kings and of bishops. Both are special, being *christus domini*, and *quia sicut reges omnibus dignitatibus praesunt, ita et episcopi in his, quae ad Deum attinent*.<sup>143</sup>

As Cubitt points out, this bipartite nature of temporal power which nevertheless granted ultimate superiority to clergymen is obviously based on the opinions of Gelasius who had been pope in the late fifth century.<sup>144</sup> The core of his argument was contained in a letter to the Emperor Anastasius:

Duo quippe sunt, imperator auguste, quibus principaliter mundus hic regitur; auctoritas sacrata pontificum, et regalis potestas. In quibus tanto gravius est pondus sacerdotum, quanto etiam pro ipsius regibus hominum in divino reddituri sunt examine rationem’.

Letter of Gelasius to Emperor Anastasius.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 23 [23-4].

<sup>142</sup> Matthew 16.19.

<sup>143</sup> *Alc. Ep.* p. 23 [35-6].

<sup>144</sup> Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 172.

<sup>145</sup> A. Theil, ed., *Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum genuinae a S. Hilario usque ad Pelagium II* Vol. 1 (Brunswick, 1868), pp. 285-613, 350. See also, L. Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: studies in Carolingian history and literature* (New York, 1959), pp. 10-12, A. K. Zeigler, ‘Pope Gelasius and his Teaching on the Relation of Church and State’, *Catholic Historical Review* Vol. 27 (1942), 412-37 and Kelly, *Popes*, pp. 47-9. It is noteworthy that this passage formed the basis in the later Frankish debate on the relative powers of king and church being quoted for example in chapter 1 of the proceedings of the 829 Synod of Paris; J. Reviron, *Les Idées Politico-Religieuses d’un Evêque de IXe Siècle: Jonas D’Orléans et son De Institutione Regia* (Paris, 1930), pp. 134-5.

Gelasius, who was the first pope to be acclaimed as ‘vicar of Christ’ argued that the two worldly powers were the ‘consecrated authority of bishops’ and ‘royal power’. The authority of both came from God, and was independent of each other in its own sphere of influence. However, the authority of the clergy was superior because it ultimately provided salvation for the temporal, secular rulers. His opinions remained extremely influential since in political terms they justified the continued independence of the Papacy from Imperial control. The popes of the second part of the eighth century were forced to reconcile this philosophy with the harsh reality that they needed the active protection of the Frankish kings in order to combat both <sup>the</sup> threat of the Lombards and that of the Eastern Emperors. The anointing of the Frankish kings solved this dile<sup>m</sup>ma for the papacy since it provided the means by which the succession of Pippin’s sons could be assured but simultaneously imbued the Carolingian kings with a sense of obligation and duty towards the papal creators of their status. The philosophy concerning temporal power inherent in the Legatine Capitulary is thus entirely explicable in the context of George’s experiences in Francia with the emergent Carolingian dynasty and his papal training as Bishop of Ostia. It is thus entirely rational that George could equate disloyalty to an anointed king with the betrayal of Christ by Judas immediately after a discussion on the subordination of those same kings to the power of bishops.<sup>145</sup>

There is another source which provides an important comparison with the Legatine Capitulary. It is the letter which was written by an otherwise unknown Anglo-Saxon named Cathwulf to Charlemagne probably about ten years prior to the mission of the legates to Northumbria.<sup>146</sup> The letter is a eulogy of praise for the Frankish king and as such it provides an alternative insight into the contemporary opinions about the

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<sup>145</sup> Canons 11 and 12 of the Legatine Capitulary; *Alc. Ep.* pp. 23-4.

<sup>146</sup> The letter was edited by Dümmler; *Alc. Ep.* pp. 501-5 and by P. Jaffé, ed., *Monumenta Carolina*, Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicarum, Vol. 4 (Berlin, 1867), 336-41. The letter is dated c. 775 because the last event the author mentions is the conquest of Italy in 774 and Charlemagne’s receipt of the Italian crown. The events which Cathwulf refers to in the letter are dated 768-775 and as such display the same type of interest in Charlemagne’s military exploits of that period as the earlier Frankish events recorded within the eighth-century annals in the *HReg* (see above Chapter 3).

basis of Charlemagne's power.<sup>147</sup> Furthermore, the letter provides an important parallel not least because it was written by an Anglo-Saxon who evidently had access to Charlemagne and seems to have been writing from within Francia. Cathwulf, therefore, provide a useful parallel with Alcuin and his opinions, both being Anglo-Saxons apparently working close to Charlemagne's court within Francia. In essence, Cathwulf's opinions on the basis of royal power are the reverse of the Gelasianism which is implicit within the Legatine Capitulary. He stresses the divine approval of Charlemagne's actions by comparing him with David. Later in his reign Charlemagne was frequently compared with David, the anointed king and the Old Testament prefiguration of Christ. Cathwulf argues that God himself exalted Charlemagne to glory;

...quod ipse te exaltavit in honorem glorie regni  
 Europe...Memor esto ergo semper, rex mi, Dei regis tui cum  
 timore et amore, quod tu es in vice illius super omnia membra  
 eius custodire et regere, et rationem reddere in die iudicii,  
 etiam per te. Et episcopus est in secundo loco, in vice Christi  
tantum est. Ergo considerate inter vos diligenter legem Dei  
 constituere super populum Dei, quod Deus tuus dixit tibi,  
cuius vicem tenes, in psalmo: 'Et nunc reges intellegite', et  
 reliqua; item: 'servite Domino in timore', et reliqua; item:  
 'Aprehendite disciplinam, ne quando irascatur Dominus' et  
 reliqua.

Letter of Cathwulf to Charlemagne, c. 775.<sup>148</sup>

Cathwulf maintains the distinction between the two pillars of temporal power but modifies the Gelasian concept of the pope as the vicar of Christ. Thus he argues that Charlemagne is the vicar of God (*in vice illius*) whose duty it is to guard and rule God's *membra*, and who must give account, 'even for himself', on Judgement Day.

<sup>147</sup> The letter is found in a single manuscript, Paris BN, MS lat. 2777, fols 56-57 dated to the ninth century and which is otherwise known as the formula book of St Denis. On this manuscript see W. Levison, 'Das Formularbuch von St Denis', in *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für altere deutschen Geschichtskunde*, Vol. 41 (1919), 283-304 and K. Zeumer, ed., *Formulae Merovingici et Karolini Aevi*, MGH Legum sectio V (Berlin 1877), 493-511. The most recent reference to the manuscript is in D. Nebbiai-Dalla Guarda, *La Bibliothèque de l'Abbaye de St. Denis en France du IXe au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1985), pp. 301-2. Catalogue references to the manuscript are found in *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae regiae*, Vol. 3.iii (Paris, 1744), 331 and J. Porcher, *Catalogue général des manuscrits latin*, Vol. 3 (Paris, 1952), nos 2693-3013.

<sup>148</sup> *Alc. Ep.* 503 [1-9].

The bishops, are the vicars of Christ (*in vice Christi*) but are explicitly ‘in second place’ to Charlemagne, the vicar of God. The last quote used by Cathwulf is that also used at the start of canon 11 of the Legatine Capitulary which argues that the kings and princes must rule with *disciplina* and immediately continues with the justification for the superiority of bishops over secular rulers.<sup>150</sup>

Despite this fundamental divergence of opinion on the relative superiority of the temporal powers, the letter of Cathwulf does in many other respects provides a very close parallel with several of the precepts of the Legatine Capitulary. The unusual reference to the need for minimal tribute in *capitula* 14 of the Legatine Capitulary is mirrored in Cathwulf’s letter, where he argued that lightness of tribute was considered to be the seventh pillar of strong government.<sup>151</sup> Cathwulf also urged Charlemagne to correct a variety of evil-doers which strongly parallels the list of pagan practices condemned in canon three of the Legatine Capitulary.<sup>152</sup> This list also includes those who do not pay tithes, who are public liars, who purger themselves in church with *falsa moneta* and those who indulge in adultery and incest, a series of offences which parallels many of the concerns elsewhere in the Legatine Capitulary.<sup>153</sup> The concern for just judgements, the refusal of bribes and regard for the poor as found in canon 13 of the Legatine Capitulary is also paralleled in Cathwulf’s letter as is the phrase *membra Christi* to describe the disciples of the Church. Both have references to the maintenance of the proper lifestyles of monks nuns and (significantly) also of lay canons.<sup>154</sup> These parallels between Cathwulf’s

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<sup>150</sup> Psalms 2.12; *Alc. Ep.* p. 23 [17-19].

<sup>151</sup> Wormald suggests that the reference to ecclesiastical tribute reflects papal influence; Wormald, ‘Offa’s Law Code’, p. 33.

<sup>152</sup> *Alc. Ep.* pp. 21 [33-4] and 504 [12-17].

<sup>153</sup> For example, canon 17 which argues for canonical tithe demands, condemns usury (*falsa moneta*), canon 18 which is concerned with the keeping of vows (perjury) and canon 12 which condemns adultery and incest.

<sup>154</sup> Cathwulf says; *monachorum vitam et canonicorum cum episcopis tuis simul virginum monasteriorum regere*; *Alc. Ep.* p. 503 [24-25]. On the unusual nature of the Legatine Capitulary reference to canons see Wormald, ‘Offa’s Law Code’, p. 34 and Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 106.

letter and the Legatine Capitulary argue in favour of commonplace general thinking about issues of temporal government. The common ground between the two sources in these respects emphasises the suggestion that the ‘Gelasian’ opinions on kingship as expressed by the Legatine Capitulary (in stark contrast to those of the nearly contemporaneous letter by Cathwulf) emanated from someone who had a papal background.<sup>154</sup>

The Legatine Capitulary, therefore, can be argued to represent a Franco-papal response to the problems of Northumbria. George’s Franco-papal career provides an entirely plausible context for introduction of such a sophisticated document into Northumbria in 786. Not just is the Legatine Capitulary an advanced reform program for its time, but its format as a capitulary is also precocious. Ganshof’s suggestion that the capitulary format may have come originally from Italy, Lombardy in particular, fits uncannily well with the career of George as a Franco-papal legate for thirty years with special interest in the affairs of Lombardy. That it was he who subsequently produced what is essentially an early example of a Carolingian reform capitulary on his mission to Northumbria in 786 corroborates this hypothesis.

Much ink has been spilt on the question of Alcuin’s role in the production of the Legatine Capitulary and it must be concluded that his input was significant. However, one piece of evidence survives to tell us of the nature of the relationship between George and Alcuin, and that piece of evidence suggests one of subordinate admiration from the Northumbrian deacon to the venerable bishop who arrived in Northumbria in 786. Alcuin’s subsequent letters to the Northumbrian and Mercian élites show the extent to which his thinking was influenced by the Legatine Capitulary. His hand has also been detected in the major Carolingian reform capitulary the *Admonitio Generalis* which was promulgated by Charlemagne in 789

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<sup>154</sup> Cathwulf’s letter has been quoted in the context of the Legatine Capitulary before. Cubitt used the differences in kingship philosophy to highlight what she regards as the closeness of the Legatine Capitulary ideology with that expressed by Alcuin, again to back up her hypothesis that Alcuin wrote much of the Legatine Capitulary; Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 171-2. In her thesis however, she was forced to consider the problem that the parts of the Legatine Capitulary which do match Cathwulf’s letter show that many of the concerns reflected current political opinion rather than direct Alcuinian influence.

and in this respect it is significant that the oldest manuscript copy of the *Admonitio* was copied in an Anglo-Saxon hand.<sup>155</sup> The impact of the Legatine Capitulary upon Alcuin's subsequent opinions is undoubted but the nature of the evidence makes it difficult to tell if he held these ideas before the Council of 786. Since it is methodologically unwise to impute Alcuin's authorship of the Report from the retrospective analysis of his letters, the most economical explanation of the appearance of Legatine Capitulary is that George wrote it and that Alcuin helped him, deeply influenced by the thoughts and opinions of this venerable bishop. Indeed, one of the very few letters which can be shown to have been written by Alcuin when resident in his homeland demonstrates that there was a close filial relationship between himself and George. When writing to Adalhard, abbot of Corbie in 790 at the start of the second reign of Æthelred, Alcuin asked Adalhard:

saluta obsecro, patrem meum Georgium, roga eum, ut non  
obliviscatur filii sui Alcuini spirituāli solatio.

Letter of Alcuin to Adalhard, 790. 156

Alcuin does not refer to many of his other episcopal superiors in this tone, describing himself as a spiritual son. The best parallel is the respect in which he held Ælberht, the archbishop of York under whom Alcuin spent his most formative years. In his 'York Poem' (*YP*) Alcuin describes the occasion when Ælberht, *praesul perfectus* [line 1522] handed over control of his precious library to Alcuin,

Tradidit ast alio caras super omnia gazas  
Librorum gnato, patri qui semper adhaesit.

nostri patris atque magistri...

Alcuin, *YP*. 157

If George could be regarded as Alcuin's latterday Ælberht, the similarities between

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<sup>155</sup> That is, Wolfenbüttel, Herzogliche Bibliothek MS Helmstedt 496a. It is catalogued in O. von Heinemann, *Kataloge der Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbuttel; die Helmstedter Handschriften* Vol. 1 (Frankfurt, 1963), 377.

<sup>156</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 9, pp. 34-5, 35 [23-4].

<sup>157</sup> Godman, *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York*, lines 1526-7, 1575 and see also lines 1577 and 1589.

George's ideas as presented in the Legatine Capitulary and Alcuin's later letters are more easily explained.

### **Conclusions:**

Our information about the Northumbrian and Mercian meetings is of unequal quality. Much of the Mercian aspect is assumed by inference from later events. Offa's decision to create a third metropolitan see and to have his son anointed the following year must be seen in the context of Carolingian precedent, and given its Frankish components, of the Legatine Mission as well. The Northumbrian aspect of the mission was undoubtedly influenced by and benefited from Alcuin's years of experience of the archepiscopal and royal courts in York. Yet the Mission as led by George, seems to have been a major influence upon him too, on his attitudes to the political network of his patria and to its ruling élite, both secular and ecclesiastical.

In procedural terms George effectively merged the Carolingian and Anglo-Saxon methods of producing a document which the Northumbrian and Mercian élite would hopefully honour. The Carolingian-style capitulary with its tradition of oral pronouncement was combined with the ritualised Anglo-Saxon procedure of synodal and charter records. The decrees were written down as a capitulary but were attested like a charter and presented in synodal diplomatic form. The result of this combined methodology was a defined ritual of confirmation, oral proclamation of the decrees followed by oral agreement of them, followed by a blessing of the decrees (a sign of the cross made with the hands over the parchment and perhaps at the head of the recto folio) followed by the attestation by signature with a cross. This procedure was established at the Northumbrian meeting and repeated at the Mercian one. The purpose for combining both Carolingian and Anglo-Saxon (Mercian) methodology may have arisen for one of several reasons; out of habit of the author of the capitulary, out of the need to make the document comprehensible to the secular portion of the Northumbrian and Mercian assembly or perhaps for ensuring maximum authority in order to ensure that the decrees were upheld.

Cubitt's approach to the Carolingian affiliations of the Legatine Capitulary does in fact corroborate the approach pursued by this thesis. Regarding the comparable elements in the Legatine Capitulary and Frankish capitularies she says that they are 'more likely to betoken shared outlook than borrowed legislation'.<sup>158</sup> Ultimately the conclusions presented by this thesis imply just that, that the political culture in Northumbria and Francia was mutually comprehensible. It can be argued therefore, that the Legatine Capitulary was an important element in the process by which Northumbrians came to tolerate Carolingian interference in their political life. The Legatine Capitulary was a vehicle by which both the methods of Frankish government and Frankish ideology could be injected into the heart of Northumbrian political culture. In the light of subsequent Frankish interference in Northumbrian politics it is essentially irrelevant whether or not the capitulary incorporated within the Legatine Report was produced in that way because of the Franco-papal habits of George. Nor is it particularly relevant whether or not the capitulary form was reused in Northumbria after 786 or whether the precepts of the Legatine Capitulary were subsequently adhered to. What is most significant is that a definitively Frankish style of legislative document which incorporated both secular and ecclesiastical issues was presented at a Northumbrian council and agreed upon and signed by both the secular and ecclesiastical counsellors present at the meeting. This was not the normal Anglo-Saxon method and necessitated the implementation of a new set of procedures to deal with this peculiar circumstance. Arguably, this created a precedent for Carolingian-style political involvement at the heart of Northumbrian politics. The Legatine Report shows how in procedural terms an alien Carolingian type of document could be subsumed within and made relevant in a Northumbrian context. The content of this Carolingian document further highlights the way in which Frankish-style political ideology could infiltrate the political culture of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria in the latter part of the eighth century.

The next papal messenger to be sent to Britain arrived in a context which is an important parallel to the 786 mission. A papal *legatus*, a British deacon by the name of Aldulfus, accompanied Eardwulf, the deposed king of Northumbria back into his

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<sup>158</sup> Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 161.

kingdom in 808 after he had fled to Charlemagne.<sup>159</sup> The papal legate was accompanied by two Carolingian abbots, Hruotfrid and Natharius. Yet again the sources record a collaborative Franco-papal mission to interfere in Northumbrian politics. Whereas the Legatine Mission in 786 had been primarily an attempt to reform the morals of the secular and ecclesiastical Northumbrian élites, the events of 808 illustrate that a Franco-papal team was prepared to interfere actively to change the political status quo in Northumbria. The 786 Mission was ostensibly a papal one. The legates were sent by Hadrian and the Report was sent back to him. However it has been illustrated above that there are a sufficient number of Carolingian features about the personnel, format and content of the report to show that the Frankish influence on the Mission was considerable. It was with papal authority that Eardwulf went back to Northumbria but only after Charlemagne had sent the exiled king to Rome. The combined forces of Frankish and Papal delegates were a force which seems to have been difficult for the Northumbrians to ignore. These two incidents in 786 and 808 indicate that foreign powers could effectively impose their will onto native political élites without having to resort to military intervention. The power of St Peter in combination with that of Charlemagne was evidently a force to which the Northumbrians had to listen. The motive for such interest and interference in the theoretical basis of Northumbrian royal power seems to have been based largely on a concept of Christian kingship as was evolving at the Frankish court. The 786 Mission was an important stepping stone in this process and also marks the spread of Carolingian political culture into Anglo-Saxon England. Yet the motive for interference in the 808 incident, as was suggested above, hints at a more complex diplomatic relationship between Northumbrian rulers such as Eardwulf and a Carolingian 'overlord'. The two incidents illustrate Carolingian interest in Northumbrian political events in two ways. The 786 mission questioned the theoretical basis of royal power in Northumbria, whereas the Eardwulf incidents illustrates a willingness to take active steps to alter the succession of kings. Both are remarkable.

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<sup>159</sup> On this incident and its implications see above Chapter 1.

## CHAPTER 5

### ALCUIN, THE YORK POEM AND FRANKISH KINGSHIP.

This chapter turns to consider a subject which is central to the theme of Franco-Northumbrian interaction in the latter part of the eighth century, that of Alcuin, the deacon from York who ended his days as abbot of the eminent Frankish monastery of St. Martin's at Tours. Alcuin's career as a scholar at Charlemagne's court is one upon which many others have subsequently been based. His reputation and literary works have sustained many later scholars who recognised him to have been a key figure in the *renovatio* of learning which was one of the defining legacies of the Carolingian age.<sup>1</sup> As a member of the inner circle of scholars working at the court of Charlemagne through most of the period 782-804, the literary legacy which Alcuin bequeathed illuminates much about the workings of the Frankish court, the people who served it and the issues which troubled it.<sup>2</sup> But as a Northumbrian working abroad, his correspondence with the secular and ecclesiastical noblemen

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<sup>1</sup> The bibliography on Alcuin is widespread, but see in particular (with references therein) J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, (Oxford, 1983), pp. 205-16. Alcuin's life in the context of his poetry is discussed in the introduction to P. Godman, ed. *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York* (Oxford, 1982), pp. xxxiii-cxxx. On Alcuin's philosophy of kingship see L. Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: studies in Carolingian history and literature* (Ithaca and London, 1959), pp. 5-96 and J. Chelini, *Le Vocabulaire Politique et Social dans la Correspondance d'Alcuin* (Aix-en-Provence, 1959). More general works on Alcuin are A. Kleinclausz, *Alcuin* (Paris, 1948), C. J. B. Gaskoin, *Alcuin: his life and work* (London, 1904), G. F. Browne, *Alcuin of York* (London, 1908) and E. S. Duckett, *Alcuin, Friend of Charlemagne: his world and his work* (New York, 1951). Critical too is W. Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London, 1969). Alcuin's multi-faceted career has been the subject of several articles by D.A. Bullough and formed the subject of his Ford Lectures delivered in 1980 which are to be published as *Alcuin: The Achievement and the Reputation*. A life of Alcuin was composed under the influence of one of Alcuin's pupils, Sigulf, probably in Ferrières between 823-9. It was edited by W. Wattenbach, 'Vita Alcuini Auctore Anonymo', in *Monumenta Alcuiniana*, ed. P. Jaffé (Berlin, 1873), 1-34.

<sup>2</sup> For a synopsis of the known facts of Alcuin's life in comparison to events in Northumbria see Table 3. Alcuin seems to have received the invitation from Charlemagne to join his court in March 781 and seemingly left for Francia shortly thereafter; *Vita Alcuini*, Ch. 9, pp. 22-3. He returned to Northumbria in 786 (see above, Chapter 4) and was there again at the start of Æthelred's second reign, from 790-3 as his letters to Francia and an entry in the *HReg s.a. 792* indicate; *Alc. Ep.* nos 8-10, pp. 33-6 and *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 53-4.

and women from the various kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England also provides very valuable evidence for the connections between those courts and that of Charlemagne, especially during the last decade of the eighth century.<sup>3</sup> As such, any survey of the relations between Anglo-Saxon England and Francia in this period invariably touches upon the career of Alcuin at almost every turn. A detailed study of the links between Alcuin's homeland of Northumbria and the Frankish kingdom which he adopted in his later life would be incomplete without a direct study of some of the works<sup>written</sup> by one of the most illustrious scholars ever to have worked either in York or at Charlemagne's court.

Naturally, therefore, Alcuin's name has impinged upon the themes of the preceding chapters. Chapter 3 noted the likely influence which his school at York had on the collection of annals in post-Bedan Northumbria and of the probability of his personal influence over the integration of entries on Frankish events into that York annal collection. Chapter 4 noted his presence at the meetings held by the legates in Northumbria and Mercia in 786 and his subsequent enduring friendship and loyalty towards George of Ostia, the leading light behind that mission. The emphasis placed by George in the Legatine Capitulary on the subject of kingship and proper temporal government was one which Alcuin carried forward not just into the renowned *Admonitio Generalis* reform capitulary of 789 but also into his many letters to the secular and ecclesiastical élites of the kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England and Francia in the years before his death in 804. Indeed, it is likely that Alcuin's persistent interest in the welfare of his homeland in combination with his rôle as Charlemagne's personal mentor, laid the ground for the Frankish king's close involvement in the restoration of Eardwulf to Northumbria in 808, four years after Alcuin's death. It was not for nothing that Alcuin could claim in a letter written to the brothers of the York *monasterium* in 795 that, 'such a friend [as Charlemagne] may not be slighted by anyone like myself. For with God's grace, many have been helped by that friendship which God gave me with him'.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Some ten letters were addressed directly to Northumbrian and Mercian secular noblemen by Alcuin; *Alc. Ep.* nos 16, 18, 30, 108, 109 (Northumbria) 61, 64, 101, 122, 123 (Mercia). Another sixty two were written to Anglo-Saxon bishops, abbots, abbesses, monks and nuns.

<sup>4</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 43 p. 89 [3-4].

**TABLE 3 (a) : Known events of Alcuin's life correlated alongside events in Northumbria as gleaned from the chronicle sources (731-780)**

DATE	ALCUIN	NORTHUMBRIAN EVENTS
731	Alcuin born into a possibly noble family near York and joins the monastery of York as a <i>puer</i> (YP 1602-1605, 1635-36).	<u>Ceowulf</u> temporarily deposed, Acca expelled from Hexham, Alric and Esc murdered, Thurs. 23 Aug. ( <i>HReg</i> )
732		*Ecgbert becomes bishop of York ( <i>MA, CB</i> )
734		Frithubert ordained as Bp. of Hexham.
735		Ecgbert receives the pallium, Bede dies.
737		<u>Ceowulf</u> tonsured and becomes a monk at Lindisfarne. <u>Eadberht</u> succeeds to the Northumbrian throne.
740		Acca (Hexham), Æthelwald (Bp. Lindisfarne) die. Cynewulf consecrated Bp. of Lindisfarne. Æthelwald, king of Mercia invades Northumbria. Arwine and Eadbert killed.
741		* <i>Monasterium</i> at York burnt.
744/5		* Wilfrid II of York dies.
747		Herefrid, Abbot of Lindisfarne dies.
750		<u>Eadbert</u> forces Offa son of Aldfrid from sanctuary in Lindisfarne and holds Bp. Cynewulf prisoner.
758	<u>Eadberht</u> abdicates, <u>Oswulf</u> his son, succeeds.	
759	<u>Oswulf</u> murdered by traitors in his household at Mechil Wongtune. <u>Æthelwald Moll</u> succeeds.	
761	As an <i>adolescens</i> Alcuin accompanies Ælberht on his trips to the continent to collect books. ( <i>Alc. Ep.</i> 271, 172; YP 1454-59, 1465; PLAC I, 206)	<u>Æthelwald</u> fights Oswine at Ædwine's clife/Elduun.
762		<u>Æthelwald</u> marries Ætheldrytha at Catterick
764		<u>Ceowulf</u> dies at Lindisfarne.
765		<u>Æthelwald</u> loses the kingdom at Winchanheale. <u>Alfred</u> succeeds.
766		*Ecgberht (Abp. York) and Frithubert (Bp. Hexham) die.
767		* Ælberht ordained Abp. of York on 24 April, Alchmund made Bp. of Hexham and Aluberht Bp. of the Old Saxons
768		* <u>Eadberht</u> (once king) dies at York.
769		Catterick burnt by Eanred ( <i>tyrannus</i> )
773		* Ælberht receives pallium.
774		* <u>Alfred</u> expelled from York at Easter. <u>Æthelred</u> succeeds.
775	Eadwulf <i>dux</i> killed.	
778	Ælberht 'retires' and Eanbald succeeds as bishop, Alcuin inherits control of the library. ( <i>Alc. Ep.</i> 114) Alcuin and Eanbald collaborate in building the new church of S. Sophia in York, consecrated nine days before the death of Ælberht (YP 1509-30,	<u>Æthelbald</u> and Heardbert ( <i>principes</i> ) kill Ealdulf, Cynwlf and Ecga ( <i>duces</i> ) on orders of Æthelred.
778/9		<u>Æthelred</u> expelled from Northumbria, <u>Ælfwald</u> succeeds.
779		Osald and Æthelheard burn Bearn ( <i>patricius</i> ). Ælberht dies. Cynewulf Bp. Lindisfarne resigns.
780		

\* Starred items indicate events which occurred at York. Underlined names are those of Northumbrian kings.

**TABLE 3 (b) : Known events of Alcuin's life correlated alongside events in Northumbria as gleaned from the chronicle sources (781-804)**

DATE	ALCUIN	NORTHUMBRIAN EVENTS
780/1	Alcuin sent to Rome by Ælfwald to get <i>pallium</i> for Eanbald ( <i>ASC DE</i> 780).	Higbald consecrated Bp. of Lindisfarne. Alchmund Bp. of Hexham dies Tilberht consecrated in his place. *Eanbald made Abp of York on receipt of <i>pallium</i> .
781	Alcuin meets Charlemagne at Parma, probably on 15 March ( <i>Vita Alc.</i> ch. vi)	
781/2	Alcuin leaves England to join the Frankish court.	
786	Alcuin attends the Legatine synods in Northumbria and Mercia.	Botwine Abt. of Ripon dies. Papal Legates are sent to England and hold a synod in Northumbria.
787/8		Synod held at Wincanheale, Alberht Abt. of Ripon dies.
788/9	( <i>Admonitio Generalis</i> drafted by Alcuin in Francia for Charlemagne 789)	<u>Ælfwald</u> assassinated nr. Wall by Sicga. <u>Osred</u> succeeds.
790	Alcuin is present in York at time of Æthelred's coup. Probably Sent to mediate in Mercian dispute ( <i>Alc. Ep.</i> 7)	* <u>Osred</u> overthrown, tonsured at York and sent into exile. <u>Æthelred</u> succeeds to throne again. Attempted execution of Eardwulf <i>dux</i> .
791		* <u>Ælf</u> and <u>Ælfwine</u> (sons of <u>Ælfwald</u> ) taken from sanctuary at York and murdered by <u>Æthelred</u> .
792	Alcuin writes a reply to the proceedings of the Council of Nicaea (787) at Charlemagne's request.	<u>Osred</u> returns from exile in the Isle of Man and is assassinated. Buried at Tynemouth. <u>Æthelred</u> marries <u>Æelflæd</u> , daughter of Offa at Catterick.
793	Alcuin returns to Francia ( <i>Alc. Ep.</i> 15 to Gisela), writes to Æthelred and Higbald.	Sicga <i>dux</i> commits suicide and is buried on Lindisfarne. Viking pirate attack on that monastery.
794	Charlemagne's court settles at Aachen. Synod of Frankfurt. Alcuin involved.	Viking attack on monastery at <i>Donamuthe</i> . <u>Æthelheard</u> <i>dux</i> and Colcu die.
795/6	Alcuin goes to meet the king in Saxony.	* <u>Alric</u> <i>dux/clericus</i> dies in York.
796	Alcuin urges the monks of York to caution regarding the new abp. talks of travelling to York to oversee the election (journey not fulfilled). Alcuin receives the monastery of St. Martin's at Tours.	<u>Æthelred</u> assassinated, <u>Osald</u> succeeds as king for 27 days. * <u>Eardwulf</u> consecrated king in York. Eanbald Abp. of York dies, Eanbald II elected and consecrated in his place.
797	Alcuin travels to Eastern Francia to join Charlemagne for the summer, met envoys of Eanbald ( <i>Alc. Ep.</i> 112, 125).	Eanbald II receives <i>pallium</i> . <u>Æthelberht</u> Bp. of Hexham dies and Heardred consecrated in his place.
798	Journeys to Aachen, July.	Battle at Hwealleag between <u>Eardwulf</u> and the killers of <u>Æthelred</u> led by Wada <i>dux</i> . Alric dies in battle.
799	Travels in N. Francia, invited by Chm to Rome. Prepares a treatise v. Felix.	Moll killed by <u>Eardwulf</u> , * <u>Osald</u> dies as a cleric at York, Aldred <i>dux</i> (murderer of <u>Æthelred</u> ) slain by Torhtmund.
800	Continuation of debate with Felix on Adoptionism. Chm visits Tours.	Heardred Bp. Hexham dies, Eanberht ordained in his place. Alhmund (son of <u>Alhred</u> ) killed by <u>Eardwulf</u> .
801	Intercedes with Charlemagne on behalf of Torhtmund.	Edwine <i>dux/abbas</i> dies and buried at Gegenforda. <u>Eardwulf</u> fights Coenwulf of Mercia.
803		Higbald Bp. Lindisfarne dies, Ecgberht elected.
804	Alcuin dies at Tours on 19 May.	

\* Starred items indicate events which occurred at York. Underlined names are those of Northumbrian kings.

### Alcuin as a political philosopher:

Alcuin's reputation as a political philosopher and his contribution to the contemporary Carolingian debate on the subject of proper temporal government has long been recognised.<sup>5</sup> His treatises *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus* and *De Virtutibus et Vitiis*, mirror the attitude displayed in his many letters to kings concerning their proper function as rulers.<sup>6</sup> The former of these treatises, the *Disputatio*, has been referred to as an example of a type of exposition known as a *via regia* or *speculum principis*.<sup>7</sup> The concept of a *via regia*, the 'king's highway' or of a *speculum principis*, a 'mirror of princes' is one which reached fruition as a distinctive literary type in the Carolingian period.<sup>8</sup> Such works were effectively manuals on good government, on the proper conduct of kings and princes who had been raised by God to a position of rank and power. They discussed the nature and divine origin of temporal power, and ecclesiastical authority in relation to that wielded by secular rulers. The best known of these tracts by the Abbot Smargadus of St. Mihiel, Bishop Jonas of Orléans, Hincmar the Bishop of Rheims and the Lady Dhuoda were all composed well into the ninth century.<sup>9</sup> Yet Alcuin's writings on these themes show him to have been an early exponent of the

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<sup>5</sup> Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp. 5 ff and Chelini, *Le Vocabulaire Politique*, pp. 13 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Both these treatises were composed in the form of a conversation, the first between Alcuin and Charlemagne and the latter between Alcuin and Count Wido. Editions of these texts are produced in C. Halm, *Rhetores Latini Minores* (Leipzig 1863), 523-50 and Migne, *PL* Vol. 101, cols 613-38 respectively. For a commentary on both texts, see Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp. 35-72, 229-54.

<sup>7</sup> The phrase *via regia* comes ultimately from Numbers 21.22. See Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp. 32, 69 and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The *Via regia* of the Carolingian age' in *Trends in Medieval Political Thought*, ed. B. Smalley (Oxford, 1965), 22-41 where the author defines the *via regia* as the 'Whole Duty of a King'.

<sup>8</sup> L. Born, 'The *Specula Principis* of the Carolingian Renaissance', in *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* Vol. 12 (1933), 483-612. This lists neither the *Disputatio* or the *de Virtutibus* as works of this type, but see Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp. 32, 229-30 and Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, p. 207.

<sup>9</sup> Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, p. 230. For an edition of Smargadus's *Via Regia*, in Migne, *PL* Vol. 102, cols 933-70; Jonas' *de Institutione Regia* in J. Révillon, ed. *Les idées politico-religieuses d'un évêque de IXe Siècle: Jonas d'Orléans et son De Institutione Regia* (Paris, 1930); Hincmar *de regis persona et de regis ministerio*, Migne, *PL* Vol. 125, cols 833-56 and Dhuoda's manual in E. Bondurand, ed., *Le Manuel de Dhuoda* (Paris 1887).

philosophical debate on kingship within the Frankish court circle.<sup>10</sup> He was also an influential one. As a personal advisor to Charlemagne, Alcuin's thoughts on kingship attained a lasting reputation and acted as an important source of inspiration both in terms of style and content to many later Frankish thinkers. Arguably the most important in this respect was the Synod of Paris held in 829. Amongst other issues the synodists debated the question of the rôle of the king, of episcopal power over secular rulers and drawing on the theories of Gelasius, Isidore and others in this respect. Alcuin's tract *De Virtutibus et Vitiis* was also used as a source of inspiration by the Paris synodists, ranking Alcuin amongst the most influential political theorists of the early medieval world.<sup>11</sup>

Alcuin's reputation in Frankish élite circles as a leading exponent on kingship, moral values and temporal government forms an essential backdrop to the ensuing chapter. It seeks to examine some of the evidence which exists for the period of Alcuin's career before he settled in Francia, and questions the extent to which his views on kingship and temporal government, as well as his rôle as an advisor to kings, were a development from the intellectual and political atmosphere in the York of his youth or whether they owed more to the environment which he encountered in Francia later in his life. In this respect, this chapter intends to examine closely one of Alcuin's works which is not normally considered in the light of the debate on Frankish kingship, that is, his *Versus de Patribus, Regibus et Sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae*, otherwise known as the *York Poem (YP)*.<sup>12</sup> The aim of the chapter is simple; it seeks to show how the language and imagery of royal and ecclesiastical power in the poem indicate not just its Frankish affiliations (and date) but also how those ideas were a product of the specific political

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<sup>10</sup> The *Disputatio* and *De Virtutibus* were both written between 801-4; Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp. 47, 229. The former text quotes from the latter, and therefore must have been written shortly after it.

<sup>11</sup> As shown, for example, by the proceedings of the Synod of Paris held in 829 as recorded by Jonas of Orléans in his tract, *de Institutione Regia* addressed to Pippin of Aquitaine; Reviron, *Les Idées Politico-Religieuses* and R. W. Dyson, transl. *A Ninth-Century Political Tract, the De Institutione Regia of Jonas of Orleans* (Smithtown, 1983).

<sup>12</sup> Edited most recently by P. Godman, ed. *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York* (Oxford, 1982) with a list of previous editions at pp. cxxxi-ii.

circumstances of York in the 740s to 780s and a development from the political philosophy implicit in the later writings of Bede. The focus in the *YP* on the archbishops of York in those years makes the poem a retrospective mirror to the forward-looking letter written by Bede to one of those archbishops in November 734 just a few months before Bede's death and Ecgberht's elevation to metropolitan rank.<sup>13</sup> The common ground of subject matter shared by the *YP* and Bede's letter provides an unusual opportunity to survey the inherent opinions of two important Anglo-Saxon scholars concerning the status of kings and bishops, of two immensely influential theorists whose roots lay in a common kingdom but whose career paths were so very different. Tangentially, this chapter also questions the extent to which the *YP*, addressed as it was in exhortatory tone to *iuventus Euboricae*, can be considered a statement on the ideal government of temporal power in a manner not too dissimilar to the *via regia* produced in his later years.<sup>14</sup>

This is not an easy task. With the possible exception of the *YP*, the letters and poems attributable to Alcuin date to the latter part of his life, to the period after he became established at the Frankish court.<sup>15</sup> Of these surviving works the

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<sup>13</sup> This letter, known by its Latin title (as found in one of the two surviving manuscript copies) as the *Epistola Bedae ad Ecgbertum Episcopum* is hereafter referred to as *Ep. Ecg*. References to the editions are found below p. 242, n. 75.

<sup>14</sup> *YP* [1408].

<sup>15</sup> The major edition of his letters is by E. Dümmler, ed. *Epistolae Karolini Aevi* Vol. 2, MGH Epp. Vol. IV (Berlin 1895), pp. 18-481, 614-16 and MGH Epp. Vol. V, (Berlin 1899), pp. 643-5 although they were also edited by P. Jaffé, ed. *Monumenta Alcuiniana*, Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicarum, Vol. 6 (Berlin, 1873). Three hundred and eleven were printed by Dümmler but of that number, fourteen are by different authors but were included because they were of relevance to the issues discussed by Alcuin. Levison noted the existence of another three letters; Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 314-23. Bullough gives a figure of '280-plus' and promises a 'comprehensively re-examined' account of the manuscript tradition of Alcuin's letters; Bullough, 'What has Ingeld to do with Lindisfarne?', *Anglo-Saxon England* Vol. 22 (1993), 93-125, 95 and n. 8. For bibliographic references to the poetry of Alcuin and his contemporaries, see Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. xviii-xxix and by the same author, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London, 1985) and *Poets and Emperors* (Oxford, 1987).

overwhelming majority cluster into the last decade of his life, 794-804.<sup>16</sup> No works can be pinned with certainty to a date before he left for Francia, so naturally, his career tends to be analysed with an emphasis accordingly weighted. This bias in the epistolary evidence is not random, but is due in part to deliberately selective preservation. Alcuin himself tells us that he personally destroyed some letters which he considered to be politically sensitive.<sup>17</sup> It is likely too, that Alcuin himself organised the collection of his letters (from source as they were being written) and it is equally apparent that within a few years, possibly even before his death in 804, the letters were being copied as examples of the epistolary style of a master scholar. Thus, the selection of those letters to be preserved in the long term was as likely to have been the result of a subjective decision with regard to style as much as for content. In the early twelfth century, William of Malmesbury included letters of Alcuin as part of the evidence for his exposition on the *Gesta Regum of England*, but it cannot be taken for granted that in the decades immediately following Alcuin's death, his letters were preserved as anything other than examples of the epistolary style of a master teacher.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the earliest manuscript copies of the letters to have survived seem to have been concentrated in two Frankish ecclesiastical centres, Saint-Amand and Salzburg, a factor which would go some way towards explaining the bias towards the preservation of letters

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<sup>16</sup> Alcuin's letters have no dating clause and can only be dated by reference to events corroborated in other sources. However, of the approximately 300 letters preserved under his name, only five (less than 2%) can be placed with any degree of certainty in or before the year 789. Another thirty nine (13%) can only be dated pre-804, the date of his death. Of the remainder, the majority peak between the years 793-801, with approximately 9% being datable closely to the year 796 and 8% to the year 799. Approximate percentages for the years 793-5 = 12.3%, 796-8 = 24%, 799-801 = 27.6%. These percentages are approximate since many of the letters are datable only within a time bracket of a few years and are certainly subject to alteration with new research (Bullough, 'What has Ingeld to do with Lindisfarne?', p. 95 n. 9).

<sup>17</sup> Alcuin writing to Arno Archbishop of Salzburg in 799 concerning the behaviour of Pope Leo III, *sed quia ego nolui, ut in alterius manus pervenisset epistola, Candidus tantum illam perlegebat mecum. Et sic tradita est igni, ne aliquid scandali oriri potuisset propter negligentiam cartulas meas servantis; Alc Ep. no. 184 p. 309 [9-12].*

<sup>18</sup> On William of Malmesbury's use of Alcuin's letters see R. M. Thomson, *William of Malmesbury* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp. 158-73. On the interpretation of an Alcuin letter book as a collection of epistolary exercises, see C. Chase, *Two Alcuin Letter Books* (Toronto, 1975).

of a predominantly late date.<sup>19</sup> As Alfrid, the author of the *Vita Luidgeri* noted, Alcuin's primary cause for fame was his reputation as a teacher at Charlemagne's court.<sup>20</sup> Added to this is the obvious point that the letters were written by a man of the cloth and are therefore imbued with an ecclesiastical approach to the issues which demanded his attention. Also, we only have Alcuin's half of the correspondence. Frequently, his letters refer to the receipt of another letter, sometimes accompanied by a gift, but it is only his response which survives.<sup>21</sup> The evidence which survives therefore, is very much the mature opinion of a man writing towards the end of his life, selectively preserved at that.

### **The Date of *York Poem*:**

There is one work which might counterbalance this trend, that is, Alcuin's poem on his native city of York and the great men who influenced it, the *YP*.<sup>22</sup> This much discussed poem has traditionally been considered a unique survival of Alcuin's literary output from his time at York.<sup>23</sup> That conclusion was reached partly because of the content of the poem which is so obviously focused on York and partly because the last datable event which Alcuin mentions in the *YP* is the death of his master Archbishop Ælberht. The *HReg* records Ælberht's death in 780, an event which the northern recension of the *ASC* places the event a year earlier, but

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<sup>19</sup> Bullough, 'What has Ingeld to do with Lindisfarne?', 95 with reference to chapter 1 of *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (forthcoming).

<sup>20</sup> *Vita Luidgeri* Ch's 10 and 11 discussed above Chapter 3, pp. 160-1

<sup>21</sup> See for example Alcuin's letter to Riculf the Archbishop of Mainz thanking him for a comb carved with animals or the letter to the Mercian noblewoman Æthelburgh thanking her for her gifts; *Alc. Ep.* nos 20 and 103, pp. 57-8, 149-50.

<sup>22</sup> For an edition, translation and a commentary on the context of the *YP* see Godman, *Alcuin, the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York*.

<sup>23</sup> This theory was pursued by Wattenbach in his edition of the *YP* in P. Jaffé, ed. *Monumenta Alcuiniana* (Berlin, 1873), p. 80 and subsequently by Dümmler, *Poetae*, MGH PLAC Vol. 1, p. 62.

adding the detail that he died *in Ceastre*, that is, at York.<sup>24</sup> The argument for a date of composition before Alcuin's Frankish days rests partly on this observation and partly on the notion that the poem shows no evidence of the author being removed from the community to whom it was directed, that is, the *Euboricae... iuventus*.<sup>25</sup> More recently Bullough has suggested that the poem underwent a more prolonged gestation, with the period of composition spanning the last years of Ælberht's rule and the earliest years of Alcuin's period at the Frankish court. Thus he argued that the poem was 'probably' composed over an extended period of time starting in the late 770s with additions and revisions over the subsequent decade.<sup>26</sup> Under this interpretation, the poem becomes a witness to the period of transition in Alcuin's career, of the mixed influences of York and Charlemagne's court. This broad band date also brings the poem within reach of the 786 legatine mission to Northumbria, an event, which (as argued above) was itself an important mechanism by which ideas on Carolingian kingship were transliterated into a Northumbrian context.

The most recent editor of the *YP* however, has argued for a wholly Carolingian date of composition, pointing out that the amount of foreign travel which Alcuin was doing in the 780s would have left little time for the composition of such a poem.<sup>27</sup> More specifically, he argues, there are grounds for comparing the *YP* closely with the Alcuin's poetic output known to have been written during the continental part of his career, that is his metrical *Life* of Willibrord (composed 785 x 797) and his panegyric poems such as his poems on the Frankish court, on life

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<sup>24</sup> *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 47 and *ASC* (Plummer), 1, p. 53. The *YP* does not help with dating the death of Ælberht, although it does give the day of his death as 8th November, two years and four months after he had retired from the active duties of an archbishop (*YP*[1565, 1583-4]). The *YP* says that he died in the fourteenth year of his episcopacy, but this does not establish the date of his death any more closely since the date of his accession is not fixed. Again we know the day, 24th April, but the year was either 766 (*ASC* DE) or 767 (*HReg*). The discrepancy between the *ASC* and the *HReg* over the date of Ælberht's death may be due to the *HReg* annalist reckoning the start of the year from September, thereby accelerating the date of events which occurred between September and December in any year. See the comments in Blair, 'Some Observations', p. 96.

<sup>25</sup> *YP* [1409].

<sup>26</sup> D. Bullough, "Hagiography as patriotism: Alcuin's "York poem" and the early Northumbrian "vitae sanctorum", *Hagiographie Cultures et Sociétés IV-XIIIe siècles* (1981), 339-59, 339.

<sup>27</sup> Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. xlii-xliii.

at Aachen and on the destruction of Lindisfarne.<sup>28</sup> The latter of these is a parallel example of a poem concerning Northumbria which was certainly written from Francia. Thus, Godman argues that the poem was more likely to have been written after one of Alcuin's subsequent visits to England in 786 or 790-3, that is, after he had become an established figure at Charlemagne's court. After all, George's report to Pope Hadrian after the 786 Mission referred to Alcuin as an agent of the archbishop of York and the king of Northumbria, thereby indicating that despite having joined the Frankish court, Alcuin was still employed as an aide by the leading men of Northumbria.<sup>29</sup> Godman argues that despite the fact that the poem does not refer to Archbishop Eanbald I (or for that matter to any king after Eadberht), a date as late as 792 could be proposed for the poem. He thus suggests that the possible context for its composition was the marriage of King Æthelred to the Mercian princess Ælflæd, the motive being a 'calculated act of deference to the Mercian king [which] would appear most natural when Offa's relations with Northumbria were most harmonious'.<sup>30</sup> Since Godman, this post-782, Frankish context for the composition of the *YP* has been cautiously accepted.<sup>31</sup>

The idea that the *YP* is better understood in a Carolingian context fits not just with the style of the extant poems which certainly date from that period, but also with the observation that several of his letters to the York community survive, some dated 795 offering advice on the method of choosing a new archbishop after the impending retirement of Alcuin's peer Eanbald I.<sup>32</sup> These letters indicate that

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<sup>28</sup> See Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. xliii-iv and for an edition and translation of several of Alcuin's Carolingian-period poems; Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, pp. 118-149.

<sup>29</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 3 p. 28 [10-11] where Alcuin and Pyttel were described as *legatis regis et archiepiscopi*.

<sup>30</sup> Godman, *Alcuin*, p. xlvi.

<sup>31</sup> 'Some time after 780', R. Morris, 'Alcuin, York and the *alma sophia*', in *The Anglo-Saxon Church, Papers on history, architecture and archaeology in honour of Dr H M Taylor*, eds. L. A. S. Butler and R. K. Morris, CBA Research Report Vol. 60 (London, 1986), 80-9, 80; Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, p. 205 where he argues that the poem was 'written or at least revised in Francia'.

<sup>32</sup> For example *Alc. Ep.* nos 42-3, 47, pp 85-9, 92. On Alcuin's friendship with Eanbald see *YP* [1515-35].

despite having lived abroad for many years, Alcuin's opinion on important matters was still sought as an elder of that York community. It is quite plausible therefore that Alcuin might also have written a poem directed at the 'young men of York' whilst resident in Francia as a teaching aid for their instruction. And indeed, the tone of reminiscence and idealisation of the recent past is arguably the strongest sentiment running throughout the poem. This possible redating of the *YP* to the years 790-2 nevertheless still places it amongst the earlier of Alcuin's surviving compositions. The further the date of the poem is pushed from the last datable event within it, the more it becomes a stylised reminiscence of an increasingly distant past. In this sense, the poem is of great importance as a glimpse into Alcuin's perceptions of temporal power as he remembered it having worked in the York of his younger years, overlain by a layer of ideas gained through his more recent experiences at the Carolingian court. In that respect, it is possible to regard the poem as illuminating a stage of transition between the formative York experiences and the development of a fully-fledged Carolingian scholar, becoming imbued with opinions such as those expounded by men such as George of Ostia.

### **The *York Poem* as a Carolingian composition:**

The concept of the *YP* as a Carolingian poem is juxtaposed by the subject matter which is unequivocally Northumbrian. His immediate debt was to Bede and to the *HE* which served as the major source of the early part of Alcuin's poem. Though closely modelled around the *HE*, it is evident that Alcuin's choice of people and events from it upon whom he chose to dwell was deliberately selective.<sup>33</sup> The kings on whose reigns and reputations he concentrated were few, from the period covered by the *HE* he dwelt overwhelmingly on the achievements of Edwin, Oswald and Oswiu, though kings Ecgfrith and Aldfrith were also discussed in lesser detail.<sup>34</sup> In his own day, the reign of Eadberht was mentioned only in

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<sup>33</sup> See the discussion by Godman on Alcuin's 'kingly trio'; Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. xlix-li.

<sup>34</sup> On these kings see *YP* [90-233; 234-506; 507-74; 575--6, 751-842; 843-6] respectively.

relation to the career of his brother, Archbishop Ecgberht.<sup>35</sup> That of Offa of Mercia was also emphasised in a way which serves to highlight both the lack of references to any other Northumbrian king of the later eighth century and also the cautious portrayal of Offa as a prince of the rank of Oswald.<sup>36</sup> The seemingly deliberate lack of reference to the kings of his own age other than Eadberht should probably be regarded as a prudent measure given the turbulent nature of Northumbrian secular politics in the latter part of the eighth century (see Table 3). The emphasis of the last quarter of the poem which deals with the period of Alcuin's own experience dwells heavily on the archiepiscopates of Ecgberht and Ælberht, with references to the secular community of York being tangential to that theme. This structure is significant because within these bounds Alcuin was able to mix the vocabulary of royal and episcopal virtues of kings and bishops long since past but in complementary fashion, present the men of his own memory in an idealised image of episcopal and secular harmony. This then is the critical concept presented to the reader of Alcuin's poem, one of temporal harmony between the rulers of the *ecclesiae regimen* and of the *negotia regni*, one which attained perfection during the rule of the brothers Ecgberht and Eadberht.<sup>37</sup> Yet it is an ideal which is projected back into the Northumbrian past onto Alcuin's seventh-century royal heroes whose virtues are those shared by men of ecclesiastical rank.

Most explicit in this respect are virtues of Archbishop Ecgberht which mirror closely Alcuin's own description of Oswald. Ecgberht, Alcuin says was the descendant of kings:

Hic fuit Ecgberctus regali stirpe creatus,  
nobilium coram saeclo radice parentum,  
sed Domino coram meritis praeclarior almīs:

*YP* [1251-53].

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<sup>35</sup> *YP* [1273-79].

<sup>36</sup> Offa is mentioned in relation to his adornment of Oswald's tomb which Bede tells us was housed in the monastery of Bardney, *YP* [388-91] and below p. 231. On Bardney's reluctant acceptance of Oswald's body after the battle of Maserfelth as described by Bede, *HE* III.9 and III.11; *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. 145, 148.

<sup>37</sup> *YP* [1279, 1532].

Mortal men, suggests Alcuin, admired and accepted Ecgberht as bishop because of his royal blood. However, in God's eyes his potential qualities as bishop were due to virtues other than his noble birth. His primary virtue, Alcuin goes on to say, was generosity to the poor, despite great earthly wealth [YP, 1254-8]. Ecgberht was *preclarior* in God's sight for his generosity. This recalls immediately one of the features of Oswald's fame, he too was *pauperibus largus*, distributing treasure (*gaza*) amongst the needy *in Domini honorem*.<sup>38</sup> This was a virtue which Alcuin recommended in his letters to nobility, secular and ecclesiastical and his emphasis on this virtue as the main quality which God admired in this successful and royal bishop was undoubtedly deliberate.<sup>39</sup> Alcuin describes Ecgberht with characteristic hyperbole:

Hic erat ecclesiae rector clarissimus atque  
 egregius doctor, populo venerabilis omni,  
 moribus electus, iustus, affabilis atque  
 efferus in pravos, mitis simul atque severus.

YP [1259-62].

Again, the qualities listed are similar to those which Alcuin required of his correspondents but again in the poetic context they mimic the virtues of Oswald. Both were *iustus*, severe against their enemies yet kindly.<sup>40</sup> In both cases the list of virtues is followed by a description of their patronage of churches in Northumbria with fine treasures. Again, the description of good temporal government is formulaic:

Of Ecgberht's gifts he says;

inque Dei domibus multa ornamenta paravit.  
 Illas argento, gemmis vestivit et auro,  
serica suspendens peregrinis vela figuris  
 sacrauitque probos altaribus ipse ministros,  
 ordinibus variis celebrent qui festa Tonantis.

<sup>38</sup> YP [269, 285-300]. Alcuin quotes Bede's famous story about Oswald's gift of the silver platter laden with food to the poor and Aidan's prophecy of the king's sanctity.

<sup>39</sup> See for example, *Alc. Ep.* nos 114 p. 168 [21-5] and 18 p. 51 [36]

<sup>40</sup> Oswald's merits in this respect are to be found at YP [270-3].

Davidisque alios fecit concinnere canna,  
qui Domino resonent modulatis vocibus hymnos.

*YP* [1266-72].

Of Oswald's:

exstruit ecclesias donisque exornat opimis,  
vasa ministeriis praestans pretiosa sacratis.  
Argento, gemmis aras vestivit et auro,  
serica parietibus tendens velamina sacris  
auri brateolis pulchre distincta coronis  
sanctaque suspendit varias per tecta lucernas,  
esset ut in templis caeli stellantis imago;  
christicolasque greges duxit devotus in illa,  
ut fierent Domino laudes sine fine canentum.

*YP* [275-83].

Both Ecgberht and Oswald's gifts of 'silver, jewels and gold' to the churches of God resulted in the singing of hymns of praise. Both Ecgberht and Oswald are said to have used silken tapestries (*serica velamina*) to adorn the walls of their churches, Ecgberht's coming from abroad. These phrases are repeated elsewhere. Of Offa's adornment of Oswald's tomb:

Postea rex felix ornaverat Offa sepulcrum  
argento, gemmis, auro, multoque decore,  
ut decus et specimen tumbae per saecula maneret,  
praemia pro modico sumpturus magna labore.

*YP* [388-91].

The gifts of all three leaders are stylised; *argento, gemmis, auro*. This formulaic phrase is repeated not just in the description of Ælberht's adornment the altar of St. Paul but by later authors.<sup>41</sup> Einhard for example used the same phrase to describe the gifts lavished upon the church of St. Peter's in Rome.<sup>42</sup> Overall, the image created by Alcuin of the decorated holy places of Northumbria is instantly reminiscent of the images of found in many Carolingian manuscripts of Frankish kings residing in resplendent glory. In these pictures, the Frankish kings are often synonymous with Old Testament rulers, David (Charlemagne) and Solomon

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<sup>41</sup> *YP* [1492].

<sup>42</sup> *VK* (Einhard) Ch. 27, pp. 20-1.

(Charles the Bald). The use of chandeliers and lanterns as representations of the 'starry heaven' in combination with silken tapestries is reminiscent of the frequent images of the cosmos as found in illuminations in Carolingian manuscripts such as the Codex Aureus of St Emmeram<sup>43</sup> or the Bible of San Paolo Fuori le Mura.<sup>44</sup> The light-giving *coronis* described by Alcuin are a common feature in these pictures as is the literal use of gold and the depiction of jewels to adorn the pages.<sup>45</sup> Alcuin's reference to David in his description of Ecgberht's generosity may not be coincidental. Ælberht too consecrated a new altar to St Paul in the old church of St Peter's in York and adorned it with *argento, gemmis simul undique et auro* [YP 1492] and hung above it a chandelier and placed on it a silver cross [YP 1495-98]. There is a striking parallel between the description of Ælberht's altar of St Paul and the depiction of the Ark of the Covenant in the later ninth-century Bible which was given by Charles the Bald to the church of St Paul Outside the Walls in Rome.<sup>46</sup> These examples of Alcuin's use of descriptive vocabulary show the extent to which he mixed the images of the perfect earthly ruler. Under Alcuin's ideal the distinction between secular and ecclesiastical power is conflated, his message is clear, the adornment of churches by any man, bishop or king would lead to eternal reward. These later, ninth-century Carolingian manuscripts do in two-dimensional, visual terms what Alcuin was trying to do in his poem. In both there is a deliberate mixing of secular and ecclesiastical images. In the illuminations the onlooker associates biblical stories and personages with contemporary Carolingian rulers. In Alcuin's poem the moral virtues of an effective king and a good bishop merge. Earthly power, historic and divinely inspired, is both <sup>times</sup> superimposed onto contemporary situations.

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<sup>43</sup> Fol. 5v, the throne of Charles the Bald/Solomon which faces the scene of the Adoration of the Lamb; Mutherich and Gaehde, *Carolingian Painting*, Pls 37 and 38.

<sup>44</sup> The Bible of San Paolo Fuori Le Mura, fol. 188 v, frontispiece to Proverbs; Mutherich and Gaehde, *Carolingian Painting*, Pl. 44 and also C. Nordenfalk, *Early Medieval Book Illumination*, (New York, 1988), p. 71

<sup>45</sup> See for example, the book produced during the lifetime of Charlemagne <sup>known as</sup> the Gospels of St Medard de Soissons, fol. 82r, Plate 7, Mutherich and Gaehde.

<sup>46</sup> Fol. 30 v, the Ark in the desert, Nordenfalk, *Early Medieval Book Illumination*, p. 71.

**The *alma sophia*:**

Yet Alcuin's images of Northumbrian churches as bejewelled wonders goes beyond the sophisticated message of later illuminations. Many of his words resound with echoes of three-dimensional Carolingian architecture. In this respect, it is necessary also to look more closely at Alcuin's description of Ælberht's 'new basilica' which Alcuin himself had helped to build [YP 1515-17]. This new church of *mira structura* was 'begun, completed and consecrated' (*coepta, peracta, sacrata*) while Ælberht was still alive.<sup>47</sup> Alcuin described this church, dedicated to *alma sophia* or Holy Wisdom, in the same stylised manner as his previous references to Northumbrian churches:

Haec nimis alta domus solidis suffulta columnis,  
 suppositae quae stant curvatis arcubus, intus  
 emicat egregiis laquearibus atque fenestris.  
 Pulchraque porticibus fulget circumdata multis,  
 plurima diversis retinens solaria tectis,  
 quae triginta tenet variis ornatibus aras.

YP [1509-14].

This poetic description, enhanced by luxurious alliterative hyperbole, is once more immediately reminiscent of Frankish architecture, recalling the sumptuous architectural imagery both of later Carolingian manuscripts and standing structures. The tall church with its curved arches supported by columns, its inlaid ceilings and windows is like the many stylised architectural designs which embellish canon tables in Carolingian manuscripts, symbolic of the Church housing and protecting the Word of God.<sup>48</sup> The *alma sophia* description can be compared with extant Frankish churches, not least Charlemagne's own church at Aachen. The curved arches and the *plurima solaria* of Alcuin's church recall the form of Charlemagne's chapel at Aachen. This too was an *alta domus*, its tall, octagonal form undoubtedly inspired by the Lateran Baptistery in Rome and the Church of San Vitale in

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<sup>47</sup> Note the use of a triple participle. On the possible location of this church see Morris, 'Alcuin, York and the *alma sophia*', in *The Anglo-Saxon Church*, 80-89. For a discussion of the possible form of the building see also, R. Cramp, *Anglian and Viking York* (York, 1967), p. 10.

<sup>48</sup> See for example fol. 7v of the Gospels of St. Medard de Soisson or fol. 8v of the Fleury Gospels; Mutherich and Gaehde, *Carolingian Painting*, plates 5 and 11.

Ravenna.<sup>49</sup> It too had a mosaic on the ceiling like the 'inlaid ceilings' of the *alma sophia*. The reference to 'many porches' surrounding Alcuin's church (*porticibus fulget circumdata multis*) provoke an image of a centrally planned building not unlike Charlemagne's Chapel or the Greek cross structure of the oratory at Germigny-des-Prés.<sup>50</sup> Alcuin's naming of the York church as *alma sophia* also recalls the Eastern preference for that dedication, echoing the sophistication of Eastern Christianity and Ravenna.<sup>51</sup>

Yet, despite Alcuin's own comments that Ælberht had visited many places on the continent (*sophiae deductus amore*)<sup>52</sup>, it is almost certainly wrong to read Alcuin's words as a literal description of a building constructed in York. The impression of a building 'surrounded' by porches is counterbalanced by his use of the word *basilica* implying a rectangular structure in classical Roman style only five lines previously. The famous reference to the *triginta...aras* in the church was not even matched by the huge monastic complex planned for St. Gall. The plan of that building could boast only twenty-one altars.<sup>53</sup> It is unlikely, though not impossible that the *alma sophia* had so many altars, but more probable that the word *triginta* was chosen as a large number which alliterated with the following word (*tener*), as an example of one of Alcuin's favourite poetic motifs.<sup>54</sup> It is

<sup>49</sup> K. J. Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture 800-1200* (New Haven and London, 1993), p. 46.

<sup>50</sup> See the comments by Morris, 'Alcuin, York and the *alma sophia*', p. 80. The oratory at Germigny was part of a complex of buildings constructed there by Theodulf of Orléans, on which see, Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture*, pp. 51-2.

<sup>51</sup> Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture*, p. 51. The best known dedication to Holy Wisdom is the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, dedicated initially in 537; R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (Harmondsworth, 1981), pp. 215-50 and references therein. See Morris on the dedication of the *alma sophia* and the concept of Christ as the personification of *sophia* and Godman for Alcuin's use of hellenisms; Morris, 'Alcuin, York and the *alma sophia*', p. 82 and Godman *Alcuin*, pp. c-ci.

<sup>52</sup> *YP* [1454-9].

<sup>53</sup> W. Horn and E. Born, *The Plan of St Gall* Vol. 1 (Berkeley, 1979), p. 142 and Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture*, pp. 55-8, 470 n. 26.

<sup>54</sup> On Alcuin's frequent use of alliteration as a poetic motif, see Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. cv-cvi.

arguable that Alcuin's purpose was not to describe the physical architecture of the *alma sophia*, but rather to present the church commissioned by his master as a structure which could rival the best that the continent had to offer. It is tempting to speculate whether either Alcuin's description of his own church in York was affected in hindsight by the construction of Charlemagne's new chapel completed in 794, or whether Alcuin's experience as a church builder meant that he himself played a part in the construction of the Aachen building. Einhard describing Charlemagne's great new cathedral says;

hoc plurimae pulchritudinis basilicam Aquisgrani extruxit  
auroque et argento et luminaribus atque ex aere solido  
cancellis et ianuis adornavit. Ad cuius structuram cum  
columnas et marmora aliunde habere non posset, Roma  
atque Ravenna devehenda curavit.

VK (Einhard) Ch. 26. 55

It is of course pure speculation to suggest that Alcuin may have played an active role in a project such as the building of Charlemagne's chapel, designed as it was by Odo of Metz. Yet the project was started in 792 at the time of Alcuin's greatest influence at the Frankish court.<sup>56</sup> The parallel in the descriptions of the building and decoration of large-scale, complex churches in Northumbria and Francia is notable. Krautheimer argued that the building of elaborate churches was part of the Carolingian system of social integration of outerlying areas into the Frankish realm.<sup>57</sup> As such, the aggressive Christian architecture of the Franks has been perceived as an important element of strategy to use churchmen and ecclesiastical institutions for the spread of Carolingian influence outside the Frankish

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<sup>55</sup> VK (Einhard), p. 27.

<sup>56</sup> It was dedicated by Leo III to the Virgin in 805; Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture*, p. 47. However, Charlemagne's court moved permanently to Aachen in 794, see J. Fleckstein, 'Karl der Grosse und sein Hof' in *Karl der Grosse*, Vol. 1, *Personlichkeit und Geschichte* ed. H. Beumann (Dusseldorf, 1965), pp. 24-50.

<sup>57</sup> R. Krautheimer, *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval and Renaissance Art* (London, 1971) and R. Hodges and J. Moreland, 'Power and Exchange in Middle Saxon England', in *Power and Politics in Early Medieval Britain and Ireland*, eds, S. T. Driscoll and M. R. Nieke (Edinburgh, 1988), 79-95.

heartlands.<sup>58</sup> It is tempting to see Alcuin's description of his church in York in much this light, that the building of sumptuous new churches represented an emphatic renewal of the Christian message. But Alcuin's renewed message to Northumbria was a Carolingian one. Whether or not  $\mu$  was literally constructed in Carolingian fashion, the <sup>the alma sophia</sup> image <sup>that it was</sup> was certainly the one which Alcuin intended to display to his readers.

### The vocabulary of royal regalia:

Alcuin's use of this type of vocabulary in the *YP* is important and has been referred to before.<sup>59</sup> Alcuin says that Eadberht wore 'the ancient diadem of his ancestors on his head' (*ille levat capiti veterum diademata patrum* [YP 1281]) and 'assumed the royal sceptre of the people' (*sumpserat...gentis regalia sceptrum* [YP 1274]). Recording his death, Alcuin says that Eadberht had held his *sceptrum parentum* for twenty one years. Much the same words were used in his description of the death of King Oswiu and the accession of his son Ecgfrid in 670. Like Eadberht, Oswiu was also a strong military king (*invictis bellis* [YP 571]). Both subdued enemies and extended the boundaries of their realm [YP 565-69 and 1275-6]. Oswiu died in 670:

Imperium retinens septenos nam quater annos,  
compositis rebus felix in pace quievit,  
Ecgfrido tradens proprio diademata gnato,  
Ecgfrido moriens regalia sceptrum relinquens.

*YP* [573-6].

Images of such regalia were common visual attributes of kings in Frankish manuscripts. This type of vocabulary is used elsewhere in the poem as a synonym for royal power. For example, the Romans were said to have *sceptrum regebant* [YP 23] and that their rule had been turbulent (*turbatis sceptris* [YP 38]). After them, the 'slothful race of Britons' *tenuit sceptrum* [YP 41]. Yet the *gens dei*, the Anglo-Saxons, produced *reges potentes* and became the 'new power' (*nova sceptrum*) in Britain [YP 76-8]. Edwin accepted *sceptrum regalis* [YP 115] and exercised

<sup>58</sup> See Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, pp. 181-204.

<sup>59</sup> See above Chapter 3, pp. 152-5.

*sceptra ferox* [YP 117]. Oswald, *invaluit postquam sceptris et culmine regni* [YP 274], his brother Oswiu inherited *terrestria sceptrata* but initially has to work hard to retain the *sceptra* [YP 115-6].<sup>60</sup> Edwin gave thanks to God *qui mihi concessit vitam regnique coronam* [YP 154]. Alcuin seems to have used words such as *sceptra*, *diadema* and *corona* to symbolise royal power rather than necessarily to describe an actual object of royal regalia. This observation is important for two reasons, firstly because it provides a parallel to the similar vocabulary used in the *HReg* and secondly because it suggests that the poem was written after Alcuin had come into contact with Carolingian thinking on kingship. The poem itself is an example of the type of mechanism by which such ideas might have been taken into the York community which, it is argued, produced the chronicle preserved in the *HReg*. Yet again, Alcuin's choice of words ties the distant Northumbrian past into the modern imagery of kingship in later eighth-century Francia.

#### Alcuin and Ælberht:

Alcuin's comments on Archbishop Ælberht as found in both the *YP* and several of his letters are important evidence for building a picture of Alcuin's early experiences of ecclesiastical power. Ælberht evidently had great influence over the young Alcuin who regarded him as his teacher and mentor. Frequently Alcuin refers, with affection, to *magister meus*. Ælberht was *dilectus* [*Alc. Ep.* no. 114, line 8], *devotissimus* [*Alc. Ep.* no. 121, line 5] and *beatus* [*Alc. Ep.* no. 143, line 20].<sup>61</sup> In the *YP* [1397] Ælberht is called *sapiens*. He was:

Vir bonus et iustus, largus, pius atque benignus,  
catholicae fidei fautor, praeceptor, amator,  
ecclesiae rector, doctor, defensor, alumnus,

<sup>60</sup> Bede also used this type of stylised vocabulary, using the inanimate regalia of kingship as a synonym for royal power, see for example his description of Coenred's resignation of the Mercian crown in 709. He is said to have *regni sceptrata reliquit* in order to go to Rome; *HE* V.19, *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 321.

<sup>61</sup> See also *Alc. Ep.*, nos. 112 [24], 116 [19], 148 [28], 200 [28], 232 [32], 233 [31] and 271 [27]. In letter no. 233, p. 378 [31] written to Calvinus and Cuculus in 801 he refers to Ælberht as *magister noster* indicating perhaps that Calvinus was of Alcuin's York generation, and also remembered Ælberht as his own teacher. See also Alcuin's comments on Calvinus in a letter to Charlemagne; *Alc. Ep.* no. 229, pp. 373 [28-31].

iustitiae cultor,<sup>62</sup> legis tuba, praeco salutis,  
 spes inopum, orphanisque pater, solator egentum,  
 trux rigidis, blandusque bonis durusque superbis,  
fortis in adversis, humilis fuit inque secundis,  
 mente sagax, non ore loquax sed strenuus actu.

*YP* [1398-1405].

Thus he was seen by Alcuin to possess some of the essential qualities necessary for good government ; protector of the church and of the catholic faith, institutor of justice and proper law as well as protector of the needy. Godman notes that this panegyric on Ælberht's virtues was modelled on Venantius Fortunatus's encomia of bishops and that it combines many of the virtues singled out by Alcuin in bishops and kings described earlier in the poem. Alcuin's teacher was therefore a cumulation of the old Northumbrian virtues as well as a model for future rulers, both secular and ecclesiastical.<sup>63</sup> These governmental virtues can be compared with comments which Alcuin made in his letters to kings, Mercian, Northumbrian and Frankish. The most explicit parallel is found in his letter to Charlemagne's son Pippin, king of Italy. Writing to Pippin at the end of 796 Alcuin advised him to be:

largus in miseris, pius in peregrinis, devotus in servitio  
 Christi...fortis in adversarios, fidelis in amicos, humilis  
 christianis, terribilis paganis, affabilis miseris, providus in  
 consiliis...Et aequitatis iudicia in regno tuo...

Alcuin to Pippin of Italy, late 796.<sup>64</sup>

He takes the same line when writing to Charlemagne's eldest son Charles in 801, advising him to 'strike terror into the adversaries of the Christian faith' and to 'show justice and mercy amongst your Christian people'.<sup>65</sup> To the Mercian king Ecgfrid he recommends the pursuit of justice, devotion to Christianity, generosity

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<sup>62</sup> Note Lapidge's comments on the use of agentive nouns by his editor of the *HReg*; Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey', 101.

<sup>63</sup> Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. 109-111 and notes to line 1397.

<sup>64</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 119, p. 174 [13-20].

<sup>65</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 217, p. 361 [3, 6].

to the poor and seriousness of conduct.<sup>66</sup> To Ecgfrid's successor Cænwulf he recommends that:

Habeas consiliarios prudentes, Deum timentes, iustitiam  
amantes, pacem cum amicis desiderantes, fidem et  
sanctitatem in conversatione pia ostendentes.

Alcuin to Coenwulf, 797.<sup>67</sup>

The Northumbrian kings Eardwulf, Æthelred and his noblemen Osberht and Osbald also received similar advice.<sup>68</sup>

It is significant that Alcuin perceived that similar virtues and qualities were necessary both for good secular and good ecclesiastical government. Ælberht was himself of noble rank being related to his predecessor Ecgberht and thus to one of the Northumbrian royal dynasties.<sup>69</sup> This royal blood link has important ramifications both for Ælberht's dealings with the Northumbrian kings of his day (Alfred and Æthelred) as well as for Alcuin's own political perceptions (and biases) having been brought up under the guidance of such a man.

Ælberht's career before becoming archbishop was in many ways a model for Alcuin's own. It is apparent that Alcuin accompanied Ælberht on many missions to the continent and to Rome, ostensibly in search of books for the library at York.<sup>70</sup> Alcuin confirms these journeys in a letter to the monks of Murbach; *olim magistri*

<sup>66</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 61, p. 105 [5-8].

<sup>67</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 123, p. 181 [11-12].

<sup>68</sup> *Alc. Ep.* nos 18, 108, pp. 49-52, 155.

<sup>69</sup> *YP* [1428-9], *pontificique comes Ecgberct coniunctus adhaesit / cui quoque sanguineo fuerat iam iure propinquus.*

<sup>70</sup> *YP* [1454-9]. Note especially line 1458 where Alcuin refers to Rome as *Romuleam...urbem*. This phrase is used in the *HReg s.a.* 800 with regard to Charlemagne's imperial coronation; *cum magna exercitus sui magnitudine Romulea urbis moenis ingreditur*. Reference to Ælberht's continental journeys is also found in Alcuin's epitaph on the bishop. There he is referred to as *Pontifex apex...Euborica doctor celebri praeclarus in urbe, Qui semper sophiae magnus amator erat. Dum Romam cunctis venerandam gentibus urbem...*; E. Dümmler, ed., *MGH PLAC* 1, (Berlin, 1881), 206-7.

*mei vestigia secutus vestrae congregationis laudabilem conversationem videbam et amabam.*<sup>71</sup> It seems that Ælberht made a real impact on these journeys, receiving offers from ‘great kings’ to remain at their courts. This is an exact parallel to Alcuin’s own invitation to join Charlemagne’s court in 780.

Inde domum rediens, a regibus atque tribunis  
doctor honorifice summus susceptus ubique est,  
utpote quem magni reges retinere volebant,  
qui sua rura fluens divino rore rigaret.

YP [1460-3].

It is possible that one of the great kings who made an offer to Ælberht was Pippin III, Charlemagne’s father. The early twelfth-century source, the *LDE*, refers to the contacts which Pippin had with Eadberht, who was king of Northumbria until his abdication in 758.<sup>72</sup> It is feasible that Ælberht may have been an important part of these diplomatic contacts especially since he was closely related to the Northumbrian king. Ælberht’s political strength seems to have continued despite the fact that control of the crown had moved away from his own dynasty. Eadberht had abdicated in 758 but lived in retirement in York until 768.<sup>73</sup> He would therefore have still been alive when Ælberht his kinsman was made archbishop in 767. It is not improbable that Eadberht played a part in ensuring that control of the archiepiscopal see remained in his family. Ælberht maintained a strong voice in secular politics, presumably continuing the advantages which Ecgberht had been able to use when his brother was king. Alcuin says of Ælberht (echoing his previous comments on Oswald and Ecgberht:

nolentesque sequi placido sermone vocantem  
insequitur iuris terroribus atque flagellis.  
Non regi aut ducibus iustus parcebat iniquis

YP [1477-9]

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<sup>71</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 271, p. 429 [27].

<sup>72</sup> *LDE* Bk 2 Ch. 3; see above Chapter 2.

<sup>73</sup> *HReg*, s.a. 768, *Eadberht, quondam rex tunc autem clericus, decimo anno amissionis regni sui in clericatu Dei que Omnipotentis servitio apud Eboracum feliciter spiritu emisit ad superos xiii kal. Septembris.*

The king with whom Ælberht would have had most dealings was Alhred who reigned from 765-74. He lost his throne in one of the less violent coups of late eighth-century Northumbrian politics, but he lost it at York. The date of his expulsion is also significant and points to some ecclesiastical involvement. The *ASC NR* state that he was expelled at Easter which he surely would have celebrated with the Archbishop.<sup>74</sup> This fact in combination with Alcuin's comments on Ælberht's scathing attitude towards *iniqui* kings, makes it not just possible but even likely that the Archbishop was involved in the removal of Alhred. It is also worth noting that Alhred was the author of a letter to Lul, Archbishop of Mainz, requesting amongst other things the friendship of Charlemagne. It is possible that Ælberht's opposition to Alhred had forced the king to seek an alternative means by which to secure the friendship of the Frankish king without using the archbishop's established contacts. The other king with whom Ælberht had to deal was the young Æthelred who succeeded Alhred in 774. Æthelred cannot have been more than twelve at the time of his accession (his parents were married in 762, *HReg s.a.* 762) and must therefore have been under the control of some of the secular nobility (perhaps Osbald and Æthelheard who were responsible for the burning of the ealdorman Bearn at Christmas in the year 779). It is possible that Æthelred and his cronies may also be some of Alcuin's 'evil kings or nobles'. It is noteworthy that the same twelfth-century source which refers to Eadberht's contacts with Pippin also refers to Æthelred as *rex impiissimus*.<sup>75</sup> This source, albeit a late one, is the only one which explicitly refers to Æthelred as a less-than-perfect monarch. Our other sources for Æthelred's character are Alcuin's own letters to him during his second reign (see above). It may be that Alcuin remembered Æthelred's impiety from Ælberht's dealings with him as a young man and sought to avoid the same mistakes during Æthelred's second reign by attempting to tutor the king in the proper ways of ruling. In some ways, therefore, although Ælberht split his inheritance between Alcuin and Eanbald with the latter becoming bishop and Alcuin gaining control of

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<sup>74</sup> *Her Nordhymbra fordrifon heora cining Alhred of Eorforwic on Eastertid. ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 51.

<sup>75</sup> *LDE Bk II . 5* refers to the year 793 as *annus imperii impiissimi regis Ethelredi quintus*, *Sy. Op. Om.* 1, p. 50-1.

the library, it seems that Alcuin retained some of Ælberht's rights of access and advisor to the Northumbrian kings. This advisory role he maintained when he moved to Charlemagne's court.

### The *YP* as a development of Northumbrian thinking:

It is evident therefore, that the *YP* needs to be read with an eye to both the political implications of the philosophical ideas implicit within the poem and to the place of those ideas within a Northumbrian and a Carolingian scholarly context. The Northumbrian element of Alcuin's opinions on the association between secular and ecclesiastical power can to some extent be highlighted by comparison of the *YP* with some of the writings of Bede. Bede's well-known letter to Ecgberht is especially important in this respect.<sup>76</sup> It was written on 5th November 734, just six months before Bede's death and more importantly, just a matter of a few months before the promotion of Ecgberht's see to archiepiscopal status.<sup>77</sup> Bede complains of ill health in the letter, and being written so close to his death, the letter can be taken to represent his most mature thoughts on the state of the Northumbrian church in his own day. Through this letter, Bede joins Alcuin as one of our foremost sources on Bishop Ecgberht. Both writers apparently knew Ecgberht personally, although obviously from different perspectives. Bede befriended him when he was an old man, spending *aliquot diebus legendi gratia in monasterio tuo*.<sup>78</sup> Alcuin would almost certainly have known Ecgberht when he was a young

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<sup>76</sup> Bede's letter was edited by Plummer; *HE* (Plummer), 1, pp. 405-23 and was translated by L. Sherley-Price, *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (London, 1955), pp. 337-351. References are made to the divisions of the letter employed by Plummer.

<sup>77</sup> Bede died on 26th May 735. See Cuthbert's letter to Cuthwin on the death of Bede edited and translated in *HE* (Plummer) 1, pp. lxxii-lxxvii, clx-clxiv. The *ASC*, *HReg* and *CB* record his death simply as having occurred in 735. The exact date of Ecgberht's receipt of the *pallium* which made him an archbishop is not known though the *HReg*, *CB* and *ASC* refer to the event *s.a.* 735. Bede in his letter to Ecgberht discussed the need to upgrade the status of the York bishopric in a way which makes it plain that the promotion had not yet occurred.

<sup>78</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 1, p. 405.

pupil at the archbishop's York *monasterium*.<sup>79</sup> The obvious distinction between Bede and Alcuin's evidence is that the latter's information about Ecgberht's episcopacy was recorded with the hindsight of a considerable number of years whereas Bede's was contemporaneous with the earliest years of Ecgberht's rule. The time lapse between the date of the bulk of Alcuin's extant writings in the 790s and Bede's works of the 730s puts a gap of some fifty to sixty years between the recorded thoughts of each man.<sup>80</sup> It is easy, therefore, to forget that many of Alcuin's concerns about the respective roles of bishops and kings were also important issues implicit in much of Bede's work. Alcuin may have been writing about the immediate political situation of the later part of the eighth century in Northumbria, but his experiences growing up in York earlier in the century bring him into almost exactly the context discussed by Bede in his letter to Ecgberht. The traditional date quoted for Alcuin's birth coincides with the obit of Bede that is 735.<sup>81</sup> The accuracy of this date is debatable, yet the coincidence of the start of Alcuin's life with the death of the nation's most eminent thinker to that date, serves as a reminder that Alcuin's philosophy on matters such as the relative power of ecclesiastical and secular magnates, fit into an earlier Northumbrian context, and was arguably part of an on-going debate on the subject.

Bede's letter to Ecgberht is quoted most often in the context of his condemnation of so-called 'false monasteries'. In Chapter 13 of his letter he refers to *nullus pene... praefectorum* who have procured *huiusmodi...monasterium*.<sup>82</sup> And, he says, the 'evil custom' has spread to the *ministri...regis ac famuli*. Thus, Bede argues, 'in

<sup>79</sup> *YP*[1259-60] for Ecgberht's role as teacher at York and [1653] for the reference to Alcuin's residence there from his earliest days.

<sup>80</sup> Slightly less if Bullough's arguments about dating the *YP* to the 770s is followed, Bullough, 'Hagiography', p. 346.

<sup>81</sup> The coincidence is perhaps, as Godman notes, too convenient, see Godman's notes on Alcuin's birth date; Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. xxxvi, 133 and commentary to lines 1635-6. Gaskoin has 'second quarter of the eighth century'; C. J. B. Gaskoin, *Alcuin: his life and work* (Cambridge, 1904), p. 41 n. 1. In contrast, Levison suggests 'about 730'; Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 153 and also, Wallace-Hadrill, 'doubtless between 735 and 745'; Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, p. 205.

<sup>82</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 13, p. 416.

this perverse way many are found who call themselves abbots and at the same time highest officials, ministers or courtiers of the king' (*praefectos sive ministros aut famulos regis*).<sup>83</sup> At the heart of his letter of complaint about the wrongs of Northumbrian society, therefore, is an explicit connection between the ecclesiastical and secular leaders of Northumbrian society within the social stratum below the royal class. This situation is echoed by the comments in Æthelwulf's poem *De abbatibus* which was written in the early ninth century but which describes the fortunes of an unnamed Northumbrian monastery in the preceding century.<sup>84</sup> Æthelwulf indicated that it was common practice for nobility to enter monastic establishments, sometimes apparently under royal duress.<sup>85</sup>

Although the problem which Bede describes would have been particularly abhorrent to him as a true monk, much of rest of Bede's letter contains less specific information about Bede's perception of the nature of ecclesiastical power and its ideal relationship with secular authority. He started his letter with a synopsis of the virtues of a good bishop. Just as Alcuin was to do in his letters to churchmen such as Eanbald II, Bede emphasised that the *graduum et spiritualium...charismatum* of a bishop is God-given and that these two gifts are dependent on the bishop practising in equal proportion 'righteous living' and 'teaching'.<sup>86</sup> Alcuin writing to Eanbald sixty-two years later in 796, reminded his reader that it was God who 'has given you all a man could hope for'. **B**ecause of this Eanbald's tongue ~~should~~ not cease preaching and he ~~should~~ be 'a model of every man's salvation'.<sup>87</sup> Alcuin reiterates the necessity of preaching and doing good in a slightly later letter to

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<sup>83</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 13, p. 416.

<sup>84</sup> The poem was edited and translated by A. Campbell, ed. *Æthelwulf; De Abbatibus* (Oxford, 1967). For a discussion of the date of the poem see *ibid.* pp. xxiii, xlvi. For the influence of Alcuin's *YP* on the *de Abbatibus* (a unique influence in Anglo-Saxon poetry) see Godman, *Alcuin*, pp. xci-ii.

<sup>85</sup> Campbell, *Æthelwulf*, pp. 49-51, 56.

<sup>86</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 2, pp. 405-6.

<sup>87</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 114, p. 167 [14-18].

Eanbald, recommending that he reads and constantly refers to Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care* since it is 'a mirror of a bishop's life'.<sup>88</sup> Bede too had recommended this book to Ecgberht, counselling him to avoid *confabulationibus, obtreccionibus ceterisque linguae indomitae contagiis*.<sup>89</sup> In his letter to Ecgberht, Bede also concentrates on the sin of greed saying; *Cuius totius facinoris nulla magis quam avaritia causa est*.<sup>90</sup> Later he adds that greed (*culpa concupiscentia*) was the reason why Balaam a *virum prophetiae spiritu plenissimum* lost his right of sainthood and also why Saul was 'stripped of the royal insignia'.<sup>91</sup> Greed is thus the major temptation and trap for both kings and ecclesiastical leaders. Alcuin refers to greed for worldly possessions in many of his letters to both kings and bishops, as well as emphasising the holiness of almsgiving as the counterbalance to avarice.<sup>92</sup> Agreeing with Bede's sentiments on the sin of greed, in a letter to Archbishop Eanbald II written in 796 Alcuin says that *cupiditatis...est omnium radix malorum*, repeating exactly the quotation used by Bede.<sup>93</sup> In Chapter 7 of his letter Bede emphasised the severity of the sin which was committed by those:

qui et terrena ab auditoribus suis lucra diligentissime  
requirere, et pro eorum salute aeterna nichil omnino  
praedicando, vel exhortando, vel increpando, laboris  
impendere contendunt.

*Ep. Ecg. Ch. 7.*<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 116, p. 171 [27]; *Speculum est enim pontificalis vitae*. See also Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp. 233-5 where the author notes other references made by Alcuin to the *Cura Pontificalis*, especially in his treatise *de virtutibus et vitiis* addressed to Count Wido.

<sup>89</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 3, pp. 406-7.

<sup>90</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 8, pp. 411-12.

<sup>91</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 17, pp. 422-3. The word *infulis* is frequently used in the *HReg* annals to describe royal power, eg: the kingmaking ceremony of Eardwulf in 796.

<sup>92</sup> See for example, *YP* [1254-8]; *Alc. Ep.* nos 18, 108, pp. 49-52, 155.

<sup>93</sup> I Timothy 6.10, *Alc. Ep.* no. 114, p. 168 [20] and *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 8, p. 411.

<sup>94</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 7, p. 410.

This was the same sin against which Alcuin told Eanbald II to guard against when he became archbishop in 796:

Non te numerus propinquorum avarum faciat, quasi illis in hereditatem congregare debeas.

*Alcuin to Eanbald II, s.a. 796.* <sup>95</sup>

Bede told Ecgberht to ‘correct and admonish those people subject to him’ <sup>96</sup>

whereas Alcuin upgraded the right of

bishops to correct their ‘people’ by including princes as ‘subjects’ of the bishop.

Thus to Eanbald he commanded; *Non mollescat animus tuus in adolatione*

*principum, nec torpescat in correctione subiectorum.*<sup>97</sup> This statement shows

explicitly that Alcuin believed that part of a bishop’s duty was to castigate the

secular leaders of society when they stepped out of line, a quality which he admired

in Ecgberht’s successor, his own teacher Ælberht.<sup>98</sup> Bede probably would have

concurred. In Chapter 11 of his letter he argued to Ecgberht:

Quomodo enim in peccatum reputari potest si iniusta principum iudicia recto meliorum principum examine corrigantur; ac mendax stilus scribarum iniquorum discreta prudentium sacerdotum sententia deleatur.

*Ep. Ecg. Ch. 11.* <sup>99</sup>

Thus, it is not a sin, he argues, for the ‘unjust judgments of princes’ to be corrected by better princes nor for the ‘deceitful writings of wicked scribes’ to be destroyed by wise priests. In Bede’s view it was the priests whose job it was to destroy false charters which granted hereditary rights to noblemen who had taken charge of false monasteries.

<sup>95</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 114, p. 168 [18-20].

<sup>96</sup> *Ep. Ecg. Ch. 2*, p. 406.

<sup>97</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 116, p. 171 [29].

<sup>98</sup> *YP* [1479]; *Non regi aut ducibus iustus parcebat iniquis.*

<sup>99</sup> *Ep. Ecg. Ch. 11*, pp. 414-15.

In a famous letter to King Æthelred and his ministers Osbald and Osberht, Alcuin summarised the kernel of the idea which Bede had tried to impress upon Ecgberht years earlier. Thus he said:

Episcoporum est monasteria corrigere, servorum Dei vitam  
disponere, populo Dei verbum praedicare et diligenter  
plebem erudire subiectam.

*Alcuin to Æthelred, Osbald and Osberht, 793, post June.*<sup>100</sup>

The direction of the servants of God, preaching to the people and careful instruction of the common people were also duties which Bede considered essential for a bishop.<sup>101</sup> Alcuin had also perceived that it was the duty of bishops to correct monasteries. Ostensibly Bede would have agreed; he said in chapter 14 of his letter that it was Ecgberht's duty:

...diligentissime perspicere, quid in singulis monasteriis  
tuae parrochiae recti, quid perversi geratur; nel vel abbas  
regularum inscius aut contemptor...Tui...est officii  
procurare, ne in loci s Deo consecratis diabolus sibi regnum  
usurpet...

*Ep. Ecg. Ch. 14.*<sup>102</sup>

Yet there is a suggestion in Bede's writing which suggests that if the bishop did not see to the abuses of *monasteria* then the secular authorities might be quite justified in intervening. Bishops in the 730s it seems were protesting their right to investigate and judge *monasteria* without interference *ad regum curam, non ad aliquorum seculi principum causam*. Bede was arguing, apparently against current opinion, that the king should have an active role in the reform of the religious health of the kingdom. Thus, he argued that King Ceolwulf who had an 'innate love of religion', should help in the task to correct by a standardised, righteous way of life (*ad rectam vitae normam*) the 'misfortunes of our people' (*de calamitate qua nostra*

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<sup>100</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 18, p. 52 [30-1]. Note the repeated use of an infinitive verb for extra force.

<sup>101</sup> *Ep. Ecg. Ch. 15*, pp. 418-19.

<sup>102</sup> *Ep. Ecg. Ch. 14*, pp. 417-18.

*gens...*).<sup>103</sup> Ceolwulf would help Ecgberht in the task to institute *regulam pietatis* because he was *propinquus illius amantissimus*. Co-operation between two related rulers, one episcopal and one secular would restore the *statum nostrae gentis ecclesiasticum*. This perfect state of secular and episcopal unity was achieved, so Alcuin was later to claim, under the rule of Eadberht who succeeded Ceolwulf in 737. In the *YP* he recorded that:

Tempora tunc huius fuerant felicia gentis,  
Quam rex et praesul concordi iure regebant:  
Hic iura ecclesiae, rex ille negotia regni.

*YP* [1277-9].

In his letter to Ecgberht, Bede advocated greater co-operation between secular and ecclesiastical power if Northumbria was to be saved. For example, he suggested that a *maiori concilio* to be summoned by *pontificali simul et regali edicto* in order to choose the site of a new bishopric.<sup>104</sup> It is no wonder therefore, that with the idea of royal and episcopal collaboration being promoted so forcibly during the rule of Eadberht's predecessor, that Alcuin would have perceived the joint-rule of the two brothers as a golden age of harmony for Northumbria.

Bede further implied in his letter that co-operation between king (*religioso rege nostrae gentis*) and bishop in the correction of *irreligiosa et iniqua priorum gesta atque scripta* is also necessary for the secular security of the kingdom.<sup>105</sup> The combined kingly and episcopal duty to provide for *provinciae nostrae sive secundum Deum, sive secundum seculum...utilia* was necessary in order to ensure that religion and love did not cease and that the secular army maintained sufficient numbers in order to protect *fines nostros a barbarica incursione*.<sup>106</sup> Alcuin says of Eadberht that he 'extended the boundaries of his own kingdom, subjecting the

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<sup>103</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 9, pp. 412-13.

<sup>104</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 10, pp. 413-14.

<sup>105</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 11, pp. 414-15.

<sup>106</sup> *Ep. Ecg.* Ch. 11, p. 415.

forces of the enemy to frequent terror'.<sup>107</sup> Eadberht's success was directly related by Alcuin to the fact that *ex alio frater felix adiutus uterque*.<sup>108</sup> In a letter to King Æthelred and all his nobles written after the *barbarica incursione* on Lindisfarne in 793, Alcuin pursued this theme of the ideal symbiotic relationship between nobility and clergy commanding:

Sit una pax et karitas inter vos. Illi intercessores pro vobis,  
vos defensores pro illis.

*Alcuin to Æthelred*, 793 post June.<sup>109</sup>

Yet, this is said in the context of a powerful statement which had important repercussions in later Carolingian political philosophy, 'Obey God's priests. They must give account to God for their advice to you, and you for your obedience to them'.<sup>110</sup> It was an idea reiterated in another letter to Æthelred and his nobility, 'it is for priests to speak the word of God, and for you princes to obey humbly and act conscientiously'.<sup>111</sup> This concept evolves easily into the idea that royal prerogative is obtained from God via the intercession of priests, the theme dominant in the 829 Synod of Paris and echoes George's exhortations to the noblemen of an earlier Northumbrian king in 786.<sup>112</sup>

Elsewhere in Bede's writings hints are to be found of the idea that royal power was God-given. This concept is implicit in the phrase found in the preface to the *HE*. This time addressing Ceolwulf directly, Bede said:

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<sup>107</sup> *YP* [1275-6].

<sup>108</sup> *YP* [1284].

<sup>109</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 16, p. 44 [24-5].

<sup>110</sup> *Oboedite sacerdotis Dei. Ille enim habent rationem rederre Deo, quomodo vos amhoneant; et vos, quomodo oboediatis illis; Alc. Ep.* no. 16, p. 44 [23-4].

<sup>111</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 18, p. 51 [17-19].

<sup>112</sup> Jonas of Orléans, *De Institutione Regia*, Ch. 1; Reviron, *Les idées politico-religieuses*, pp. 134-5. On the parallels between the wording of the Legatine Capitulary and Alcuin's exhortatory letters, see Cubitt, *Church Councils*, pp. 168-70, 175-8.

historiam memoratam in notitiam tibi simul et eis, quibus te  
regendis divina praefecit auctoritas, ob generalis curam  
salutis latius propalari desideras.

*HE Preface.*<sup>113</sup>

Thus 'divine authority' had appointed Ceolwulf to rule. This is a theme which becomes much more explicit and widespread in the political thought of Alcuin. It was Omnipotent God who, in the *YP*, had appointed Oswald to rule the kingdom of Edwin in vengeance for his uncle's death.<sup>114</sup> In his letter to a newly created king, Alcuin reminded Eardwulf:

de quibus te divina misericordia liberavit periculis et quam  
facile te, dum voluit, provexit in regnum.

*Alcuin to Eardwulf, s.a. 796.*<sup>115</sup>

Thus for Alcuin, a king's liberty, safety from danger, and right to the throne was dependent entirely on Divine whim. Alcuin was telling Eardwulf this in order that he might guard against future mishaps by 'obeying His servants who counsel you about His commandments'.<sup>116</sup> Therefore, Eardwulf's godly gift of secular power might only be preserved as long as he took the advice of the servants of God, that is, his bishops and priests. However, Alcuin used this concept of the Divine appointment of kings in a retrospective fashion too. Thus he argued that kings had lost power because of their disobedience to God.<sup>117</sup> Again, to Eardwulf he recommended that the king;

Considera intentissime, pro quibus peccatis antecessores tui  
vitam perdidissent et regnum...Aliorum periuria Deus

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<sup>113</sup> *HE* (Plummer) 1, p. 5.

<sup>114</sup> *YP* [234-5]; ...*Omnipotens...dedit Osuualdum regis regnare...* .

<sup>115</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 108, p. 155 [10-11].

<sup>116</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 108, p. 155 [13]; *oboediens servis Dei, qui te de mandatis eius ammonent.*

<sup>117</sup> See also his letter to Æthelred, Osbald and Osberht, 'You have seen how the kings and princes who preceded you perished because of their injustices, expropriations and foul ways, beware of such wickedness in yourselves that you may win the favour of Almighty God in present life and in the future be granted eternal goodness'; *Alc. Ep.* no. 18, p. 52 [5-8 ].

damnavit; aliorum adulteria punivit; aliorum avaritiam et fraudes vindicavit, aliorum iniustitiae non placuerunt illi.

*Alcuin to Eardwulf, s.a. 796.*<sup>118</sup>

Perjury, adultery, avarice, fraud and ‘other injustices’ had caused God’s wrath. Bede too in the *Ep. Ecg.* dwelt on the sins of avarice (Ch’s 8, 17), injustice (Ch. 11), *luxuriae et fornicationi* (Ch’s 10, 11, 17) as temptations which lured holy men and women away from a proper God-fearing lifestyle. Alcuin equated these sins of clerics with the same sins which would ensure the downfall of prominent laymen. The distinction between the status, power and temptations of a high ranking nobleman and clergyman was not great, just as Bede feared it might be.

On reflection, much of Alcuin’s advice to kings, noblemen and bishops in the later eighth century seems to have evolved easily from many of the concerns implicit in Bede’s writing and which were especially explicit in his letter to Ecgberht. Both Bede and Alcuin placed much value on the *Pastoral Care* of Gregory the Great as a model of proper episcopal government. It is significant that Alcuin referred to the *Pastoral Care* as a *speculum...pontificalis vitae*,<sup>119</sup> thereby bringing the vocabulary of idealised Carolingian kingship into an episcopal context. Again in Alcuin’s mind, the difference between the power of the highest ranking secular and ecclesiastical rulers and the contemporary stresses and pressures on them was somewhat indistinct. Both men blamed the troubles of Northumbria on the same vices of avarice, injustice, insobriety, gluttony and sexual deviance. Both appreciated the reality of worldly power, be it secular or ecclesiastical, and therefore emphasised the urgent need to advocate against succumbing to the temptations of avarice and ambition. Both men saw that the ideal combination of good government was a collaboration between bishops and kings, logically, therefore, maximum harmony would occur in the collaboration between blood relatives. Alcuin’s ideas were arguably more idealised than those of Bede. In his letters Alcuin constantly emphasised the need to restore morality in order to restore

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<sup>118</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 108, p. 155 [19-22].

<sup>119</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 116, p. 171 [27].

peace. Bede's letter is unusual in that it contains practical, if somewhat radical and unpopular, solutions to actual problems within Northumbrian society.

There is no direct evidence that Alcuin knew Bede's letter. The manuscript tradition of Bede's letter to Ecgberht is limited, leading some to argue that the opinions in it were decisively ignored within Northumbria in the later 730s.<sup>120</sup> Yet the common concerns are arguably indicative of shared problems. Both men, from their opposite viewpoints of the eighth century were attempting to deal with similar problems arising from the same institution, the church in Northumbria and its powers in relation to the secular nobility of that kingdom. Bede and Alcuin moved in a common thought area with regard to the philosophy of earthly power, yet their opinions were not absolutely identical. Alcuin's ideas can be seen to be a development of concepts implicit in Bede's letter. Bede did not witness the perfect state of episcopal and royal harmony under Ecgberht and Eadberht, and Alcuin would have had only the hazy memories of his early youth to remind him of it and the reminiscences of the elders of the York church, maybe even of Eadberht himself, to remember how it had once been before Ælberht had needed to castigate kings.<sup>121</sup> Yet, when he came to write down his thoughts in the context of advice to Anglo-Saxon rulers it is arguable that his ideas had evolved beyond the idealised, equal relationship between king and bishop as manifested in his *YP*. There are hints in his later letters which suggest that he was beginning to perceive that high churchmen had the right to correct kings. It was the duty of kings to protect the Church on earth. But the duty of priests to speak on king's behalf to God could be taken to imply a measure of superiority over temporal rulers on the final Day of Judgment. These ideas had perhaps evolved under the tutorship of Archbishop Ælberht when the coalition between bishop and king had broken down and the Archbishop went into opposition against 'evil kings'. Yet it is also to be noted that these ideas fit entirely within the developing debate in Francia on the origins royal

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<sup>120</sup> D. P. Kirby, *Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum: its contemporary setting*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1992), pp. 13-14.

<sup>121</sup> The *HReg* records his death *s.a.* 768, ten years after his abdication; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 41, 44.

and ecclesiastical power. Bede's letter and the preface to the *HE* suggest that the early stages of these ideas on the divine rights of kings and the rôle of priests were under discussion in Northumbria in the 730s. Alcuin took these preconceptions to Francia and because he maintained strong links with his homeland, ensured a reciprocal cross-fertilisation of ideas on the relative roles of kings and bishops between Francia and Northumbria.

There are grounds therefore for regarding the *YP* as an important transitional work of Alcuin. <sup>It is</sup> one which recalls the York and Northumbria of his youth through the gaze of anachronistic retrospection. Parallels with the opinions of Bede as revealed in the latter's letter to Bishop Ecgberht reveals that many of Alcuin's preconceptions about royal and ecclesiastical power had their foundations in the scholarship and experiences of Northumbria at the beginning of the eighth century. What is so interesting about the *YP* is that it begins to reveal an idealisation of Alcuin's memories of real people and events and of how their memories should serve as a model for current and future generations. In this sense the poem can be read as a verse example of a *speculum principis, via regia* or even a *speculum episcopis* in the manner of Gregory's Pastoral Care, but one which was aimed not at the behaviour and function of either lay or clergymen but at the ideal of royal and ecclesiastical co-operation. As such the poem is not so much a recommendation to princes as to how a king ought to behave in relation to his ecclesiastical guardians (as with Jonas) but at a more elusive ideal wherein the bishop and a king together ruled a temporal kingdom; *quam rex et praesul concordi iure regebant: hic iura ecclesiae, rex ille negotia regni* [*YP* 1278-9]. This idealistic merging of the virtues of bishops and kings fits entirely within the renewed Carolingian enthusiasm for Christian government and as such can the *YP* too can be read as a Frankish inspired attempt to reinforce such ideals onto the kingdom of Northumbria. The poem presents Northumbrian history partly as a homage to the *HE* but yet reformulates its message into the language of Carolingian epic poetry. In this light, the poem stands hand in hand with the Legatine Mission of 786. Both have an explicit, primary Northumbrian context, but both can be interpreted as an instrument by which ideas were redefined and marshalled according to evolving Carolingian principles and

reintroduced into Northumbrian society. The same is true of the kingly vocabulary in the *HReg* and with the subsequent return of Eardwulf to his kingdom in the early years of the ninth century. The ideal government depicted by Alcuin involved respect for the office of king and an appreciation of the extra-temporal duties of the bishops. Such an administration, ultimately dependent in both respects on Divine authority, was the ideal government of the *imperium christianum* which was Charlemagne's realm.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS: NORTHUMBRIA IN A CAROLINGIAN WORLD.

So far the evidence presented has concentrated almost exclusively on the impact of Francia upon the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria. The preceding chapters have presented evidence which, it is suggested, call for something of a re-evaluation of the impact of Francia on Northumbria in the late eighth century. They have argued that the evidence for Carolingian influence upon Northumbria at a political as well as intellectual level was sustained over that period, building on contacts initiated in the latter part of the seventh century by clergymen such as Wilfrid, Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrid. It serves now to return to the theme of the first chapter, that of the involvement of Charlemagne in the domestic politics of Northumbria in the 790s and the first decade of the ninth century. That chapter established precedents for the 'extraordinary incident'<sup>1</sup> of the involvement of Charlemagne in the restoration of Eardwulf to his kingdom in 808, arguing that Eardwulf's accession ceremony is best regarded as a king-making ritual in a Carolingian-style ceremony. Æthelred too had attracted the attention of the Frankish king, sufficiently so for Charlemagne to threaten retribution against the perpetrators of Æthelred's murder.

It remains now to compare the evidence of Charlemagne's involvement in the affairs of Northumbria with that which survives from other kingdoms which lay beyond the borders of Charlemagne's realm. The following chapter will therefore examine the parallel evidence for Charlemagne's treatment of kings and political exiles from other parts of Britain, from Spain, Italy and the Slavic regions to the east of the Frankish realm. Such comparative material shows, it is argued, that Charlemagne's treatment of and attitude towards the Northumbrian nobility, both as kings and as exiles, fits neatly within a common pattern of Frankish motives and

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<sup>1</sup> Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and England', 170.

reactions towards those kingdoms which lay beyond the border regions of the Frankish realm. Although it may be pushing the evidence too far to suggest that this pattern of action was a preconceived strategy, it nevertheless indicates that from a Frankish perspective at least, Northumbria came within the ever-expanding orbit of the power and influence wielded by Charlemagne and was thus plugged securely into a Carolingian-centred world.

### I. Eadberht Præn and Kent.

The first parallel relates to the kingdom of Kent and Eadberht Præn. After reference to the death of Offa in 796, the *ASC s.a. 794 (recte 796)* says that *Eadbryht onfeng rice on Cent. þam wæs oðer nama nemned Præn.*<sup>2</sup> It is likely that this man was the exiled priest Odberht (the Frankish form of the name Eadberht) to whom Charlemagne referred in his letter to Offa written in 796;

De Odberto vero presbitero, qui de Roma rediens, pro Dei amore ut referre solet, peregrinare volens, non vos accusare veniens, sciat dilectio vestra, quod eum cum ceteris exulibus, qui timore mortis sub nostrae protectionis confugerunt alas, Romam diregimus; ut sub praesentia domini apostolici et illi archiepiscopi vestri - quo se, ut vestri innotuerunt apicjes, voto constrinxerunt - audita causa illorum iudicaretur; ut quid pietatis intercessio non profuit, aequitatis iudicatio proficiat. Quid nobis cautius esse poterit, quam ut apostolicae auctoritatis censura causam discernat, in qua aliquorum dissonat sententia?

Charlemagne to Offa, before 26 July 796.<sup>3</sup>

It seems that in true Carolingian fashion Offa had forced this political opponent into ecclesiastical orders as an attempt to remove him as a threat to his hard won control

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<sup>2</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 100, p. 144 [28-35]. Eadberht is also referred to by Pope Leo in a letter to Offa's successor Coenwulf written probably in 798; *Alc. Ep.* no. 127, pp. 187-9 [25-7].

of Kent.<sup>4</sup> This reluctant priest had then fled to Charlemagne *timore mortis* who sent him on to Rome to plead his case at the papal court.<sup>5</sup> The parallels between this series of events and the case of Eardwulf are obvious, and become even more so after the death of Offa in late July 796 when Eadberht returned from Frankish exile and gained control of Kent, albeit temporarily. There is no explicit evidence of Carolingian involvement in the restoration of Eadberht to Kent in 796, yet it is hard to believe that Charlemagne would not have known about, if not actively supported, Eadberht's return to Kent, the coup having been launched from Carolingian territory. It seems unlikely that his successful return after a period of exile abroad could have been achieved without external assistance of some sort.<sup>6</sup>

## 2. Ecgberht and Wessex.

Another possible Anglo-Saxon incident to parallel the 808 Northumbrian restoration concerns Ecgberht of Wessex. The *ASC* entry for 836 (*recte* 839) which recorded Ecgberht's death in that year, describes how he had been forced to flee to Francia for three years prior to his accession because of the political machinations of the kings of Mercia and Wessex; *aflymde .iii. gear of Angel cynnes lande on Franc land ær he cining wære*.<sup>7</sup> After the death of his opponent Byrhtic in Wessex in 802, Ecgberht was able to return from Francia and stage a successful bid for the crown. Again, there is no direct proof linking Charlemagne with Ecgberht's successful coup in Wessex in 802 after the death of his oppressor

<sup>4</sup> The case of Osbald of Northumbria is similar, king for just 27 days in 796. Alcuin wrote to him in exile in Pictland, reprimanding him for not having taken religious vows as he had told him to do in his last letter; *Alc. Ep.* no. 109, p.156; EHD 1, no. 200, pp.852-3. The *HReg s.a.* 799 notes that he died as an abbot in York implying that Alcuin's advice was heeded.

<sup>5</sup> It seems that Leo was not altogether sympathetic towards Eadberht probably because he considered his priestly vows to be binding, regardless of whether they were taken voluntarily or not. Leo likens him to Julian the Apostate in a letter to Coenwulf written in 798; *Alc. Ep.* no. 127, p.188, [25-6] and translated in EHD 1, no. 205, pp. 861-2. The whole incident was bound up in the difficulties surrounding devolution of the Archbishopric of Lichfield.

<sup>6</sup> Kirby has argued that Eadberht's intrusion into Kent was 'almost certainly with Carolingian support'; Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, p.185. See also Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, pp. 114, 121-5.

<sup>7</sup> *ASC* (Plummer) 1, p. 63.

Byrhtic, but again, as Stenton argued, 'it cannot have been without Charlemagne's approval that Egbert, the rival of Offa's protege Byrhtic of Wessex, lived in Frankish territory after Byrhtic and Offa had driven him from England'.<sup>8</sup> Kirby goes further arguing that, 'his return from Gaul was also probably as consequence of Carolingian and possibly even papal influence'.<sup>9</sup> Once more an Anglo-Saxon nobleman, having fled to Charlemagne for protection whilst in exile, returned triumphant to his kingdom. It is likely that Ecgberht was the son of Ealhmund who, in addition to being king of Wessex had also been the independent ruler of Kent in 784/5 prior to Offa's invasion of that kingdom.<sup>10</sup> By condoning Ecgberht's actions in 802 therefore, Charlemagne would have asserted his interest in a dynasty which had a tradition of control over Kent, (which by 802 had reverted to the control of the Mercian king, Coenwulf) as well as extending his interest and influence in Wessex. It is a moot point whether Charlemagne would have been primarily interested in who controlled Kent which was after all, the nearest Anglo-Saxon kingdom to Francia or if he was more concerned to bolster the strength of the kingdoms which encircled the increasing power of Mercia.<sup>11</sup>

Can it be a coincidence that three Anglo-Saxon noblemen of royal blood, Eardwulf, Ecgberht and Eadberht Praen, after having been forced into exile in Francia, subsequently reassumed royal power in their respective realms between the years 796 and 808? Direct contact with Charlemagne in Francia is a common factor in all three cases. The parallels between the three incidents are highlighted by their chronological proximity. Do they simply reflect the power of Charlemagne's

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<sup>8</sup> Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 220.

<sup>9</sup> Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, p.186.

<sup>10</sup> ASC F s.a. 784 and Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, pp. 166-7.

<sup>11</sup> The *Vitae duorum Offae* by Matthew Paris writing in the early thirteenth century contains a story arguing that Archbishop Jænberht had actively plotted with Charlemagne against Offa, and had assured him that he would have free passage into the diocese of Canterbury if Charlemagne would invade England. Brooks argues that although this 'may simply be a typical fabrication by Matthew Paris...it is possible that a genuine tradition had been preserved at St Alban's, the house that Offa founded, and therefore that Carolingian interest in Kentish politics was real', Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, pp. 115-6, note 24.

protection or might the triple restoration reflect a deliberate Carolingian strategy to encircle Offa's and Coenwulf's Mercia with rulers who were indebted to Charlemagne for their regained status? It may be no coincidence that Offa had married two of his daughters to the enemies of two of these men. Thus Ælflæd was married to Æthelred of Northumbria in 792 two years after Æthelred had unsuccessfully tried to execute Eardwulf at Ripon.<sup>12</sup> Eadburgh was married to Ecgberht's rival Byrhtic of Wessex in 789.<sup>13</sup> The letters which passed between Offa and Charlemagne were composed in the strict diplomatic language of friendship. Yet evidence survives which shows that the rivalry between the two kings was acute, sufficiently so to result in the enforcement of economic sanctions when the semblance of friendship cracked. This rivalry revolved around the negotiations surrounding the marriages of Offa's daughters, this time to Charlemagne's eldest son Charles. The initial plan had been that Offa's daughter should marry Charles.<sup>14</sup> Offa refused to consider the proposal unless one of Charlemagne's daughters, Bertha, should be married to his son Ecgfrith. Charlemagne refused and the result was a cessation of trade between the two nations.<sup>15</sup> It is evident therefore, that the Carolingian monarch took the threat posed by Mercia seriously (for commercial reasons if nothing else) and may have taken steps to irritate the comfortable Mercian supremacy when the opportunities in the form of three exiled Anglo-Saxon princes presented themselves.

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<sup>12</sup> The marriage is recorded in the *HReg s.a.* 792 and Æthelred's attempted assassination of Eardwulf in 790; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 52, 54.

<sup>13</sup> The marriage is recorded *s.a.* 787 (*recte* 789) and 836 (*recte* 839); *ASC* (Plummer)1, pp. 54-5, 62-3. Eadburgh was alleged to have murdered Byrhtic and fled to Charlemagne. Asser recorded a story (subsequently copied into the *HReg s.a.* 802, see below, Appendix) that Charlemagne offered Eadburgh a choice of marriage between himself or his eldest son Charles. Eadburgh made the wrong decision and in choosing Charles got neither as husband and was consigned to a monastery; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, pp. 66-8. The story is apocryphal but again illustrates a later tradition that Charlemagne's Francia was remembered as having been a refuge to Anglo-Saxon nobles.

<sup>14</sup> Stenton argued that the daughter in question was Ælflæd who later married Æthelred (see above); Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 218.

<sup>15</sup> Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 220, note 4. See also the section in the *Lives of the Abbots of Fontanelle* which records the rôle of its abbot Gervold in the marriage and trade dispute with Offa; S. Loewenfeld, ed. *Gesta Abbatum Fontanellensium*, MGH SRG Vol. XXVIII (Hanover 1886), ch. 16, pp. 46-7.

Certainly the three incidents should be analysed together and could even be taken as examples of a broader, if opportunistic ‘foreign policy’ towards Anglo-Saxon England. This policy was one which bridged the reigns of Offa and Coenwulf in Mercia. It seems that Coenwulf inherited the slightly strained relationship which had existed between Offa and Charlemagne despite the protestations of brotherly love in the correspondence which had passed between them.<sup>16</sup> Alcuin referred to Coenwulf as a *tyrannus*<sup>17</sup> and the fact that this Mercian king was accused of sheltering Eardwulf’s enemies may be of more than domestic relevance.<sup>18</sup> One further ninth-century incident may refer to the continued mistrust between the two powers regarding Carolingian meddling in Anglo-Saxon politics. A quarrel between Coenwulf and Archbishop Wulfred was resolved at a council in 821 at which the king backed down on condition that the Archbishop, on pain of banishment should *numquam nec verbis domni papae nec Caesaris seu alterius alicuius gradu huc in patriam iterum recepisse*. This has traditionally been seen as a reference to the interference by Charlemagne and the Pope in the restoration of Eardwulf in Northumbria.<sup>19</sup> However, the Frankish emperor’s willingness to shelter several enemies of Mercia and occasionally to collude with the pope in their restoration to their kingdoms must have been a very real barrier to Coenwulf’s domestic stability. It seems likely therefore, that the relationship between Francia and Mercia was a major factor in Charlemagne’s attitudes and reactions to the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

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<sup>16</sup> For example: *viro venerando ac fratri carissimo*, *Alc. Ep.* no. 100, pp. 144-146.

<sup>17</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 300, p. 458.

<sup>18</sup> *HReg, s.a.* 801; *Sy. Op. Om.* 2, p. 65.

<sup>19</sup> Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, pp. 587-8. The incident is discussed by Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, pp. 133-6.

## Carolingian involvement in the politics of non-Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

### 1. The *Scotti*.

The 808 Northumbrian incident therefore could be presented as part of a deliberate, if opportunistic Carolingian strategy towards Anglo-Saxon England which was aimed at containing the power of Mercia. Can a similar type of policy using similar strategies of diplomatic (or military) interventions, gift-giving and pledges of fidelity can be discovered in the sources which relate to Frankish attitudes to other independent nations or tribes which came within the orbit of Carolingian power? In the context of the British Isles, Carolingian contacts with the so-called *reges Scottorum* come immediately to mind. Alcuin in his letter to Offa referred to Carolingian *missi* travelling to *Scotia* after having visited the Mercian court in 796 bearing gifts from the Avar treasure hoard for the Mercian king and also for Æthelred in Northumbria.<sup>20</sup> In his biography of Charlemagne, Einhard talks of the contact between the *reges Scottorum* and Charlemagne saying;

Scotorum quoque reges sic habuit ad suam voluntatem per munificentiam inclinatos, ut eum numquam aliter nisi dominum seque subditos et servos eius pronuntiarent. Extant epistolae ab eis ad illum missae, quibus huiusmodi affectus eorum erga illum indicatur.

VK (Einhard), Chapter 16.<sup>21</sup>

This remarkable statement implies that by the act of gift-giving, the kings of the *Scotti* felt Charlemagne to be their lord (*dominum*) to the extent that they never considered themselves anything other than his ‘subjects and slaves’. Einhard also talks of letters which had survived from these kings in which this subservience was shown. Recalling the distribution of the Avar hoard (and the reference to the *fideles* to whom it was sent), Einhard’s comments again raise the possibility that some form of fidelity was owed to the Frankish monarch by independent kings and that this bond was cemented by the giving of precious gifts and exchange of letters. Such evidence mitigates against the argument that Einhard’s biography of

<sup>20</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 101, p.147 [12]; *per missos, qui de Scotia per vos reversi sunt*.

<sup>21</sup> VK (Einhard), p. 16 [23-8].

Charlemagne is but a stylised representation of the Emperor's power, with minimal semblance to reality.<sup>22</sup>

It is not clear whether the *reges Scottorum* to whom Einhard referred were rulers in Ireland or the area now called Scotland. It is usually thought that the kings of the Irish were implied by the phrase.<sup>23</sup> As with Northumbria, the longer term contacts between Francia and the Irish *Scotti* are well known.<sup>24</sup> Recently however, scholars have started to rework the history of the *Scotti* who lived to the north of Northumbria in the late eighth and early ninth centuries in the light of the evidence which links their rulers into the Carolingian world.<sup>25</sup> The sarcophagus recovered from the churchyard of St Regulus in St. Andrew's bears eloquent witness to the arrival and use of sophisticated continental artistic tastes incorporated into a native stylistic framework.<sup>26</sup> Though such influences may equally have reached northern Britain via Northumbria, objects such as the sarcophagus point to the intrusion of continental tastes into traditional Scottish and Pictish ways. Continental references to political contact with the *reges Scottorum* reinforce such impressions.

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<sup>22</sup> Such an impression of Einhard's writing is presented in the works of L. Halphen, *Études critiques sur L'histoire de Charlemagne* (Paris, 1921), ch. 3. Ganshof argued the reverse, claiming that the *Vita Karoli* was a valuable source for details concerning the reign of Charlemagne; see for example F. L. Ganshof, 'Notes Critiques sur Eginhard, biographe de Charlemagne', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* Vol. 3.iv (1925), 725-58.

<sup>23</sup> Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century*, p. 113. The *ARF* define the *Scotti* in this way in the annal for 812 which discusses a raid by the Northmen on *Hiberniam Scottorum insulam*; *ARF* (Kurze), p. 137. Wallace-Hadrill rather implausibly thought that the phrase might also refer to the British kings of Wales; Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and England', 172.

<sup>24</sup> For Frankish contacts with Ireland see J. M. Picard, ed. *Ireland and Northern France, AD 600-850* (Dublin, 1991).

<sup>25</sup> See for example S. Airlie, 'The View from Maastricht', in *Scotland in Dark Age Europe*, ed. B. Crawford, 33-46. (St Andrew's, 1994). Also important in this respect is the paper by P. Wormald, 'The emergence of the Regnum Scottorum; a Carolingian hegemony?' which was delivered to a conference held in St Andrew's in February 1995 and which will be published as part of the proceedings of that conference; *Scotland in Dark-Age Britain*, ed. B. Crawford (St Andrew's, forthcoming).

<sup>26</sup> I. Henderson, 'The Insular and Continental context of the St Andrews sarcophagus' in *Scotland in Dark Age Europe*, ed., Crawford, pp. 71-102.

## 2a. Spain: Alfonso II King of Asturias and Zadun governor of Barcelona.

Several incidents in the same mould as those described above can be traced in the complex history surrounding Carolingian ventures into the marchland of northern Iberia in the latter part of the eighth and the early ninth centuries.<sup>27</sup> The Frankish campaigns in the region are best known for the defeat of Charlemagne's forces at Roncevalles in 778, yet the period is marked also by the frequent travels of eminent noblemen of conflicting factions to the Frankish court as well as the military skirmishes which culminated in the siege of Barcelona in 801/2 and the establishment of the Frankish march south of the Pyrenees. The same chapter of Einhard's biography which talks of the allegiance of the *reges Scottorum*, refers to the nature of Charlemagne's contacts with one of these Iberian rulers. It tells of the bond of friendship between the Frankish monarch and Alfonso II who was king of Asturias, the north-western Iberian kingdom, from 791-842;

Adeo namque Hade fonsum Galliciae atque Asturicae regem  
sibi societate devinxit, ut is, cum ad eum vel litteras vel  
legatos mitteret, non aliter se apud illum quam proprium  
suum appellari iuberet.

Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, Chapter 16.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, Einhard says that whenever Alfonso sent a letter or a legate to Charlemagne, he ordered that he be referred to as Charlemagne's 'own man'. Such diplomatic contact between Alfonso and Charlemagne is confirmed by references in the *ARF* and its revised version in the annals for the years 797 and 798 where it is said that Charlemagne received the legates of the Asturian king who brought him precious gifts such as a pavilion-tent, Moorish slaves and coats of mail.<sup>29</sup> These gifts were obtained as part of the booty captured during the sack of Lisbon by Asturian forces.

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<sup>27</sup> R. Collins, *The Arab Conquest of Spain, 710-797*, A History of Spain, ed. J. Lynch (Oxford, 1989), pp. 86-96, 210-16; B. F. Reilly, *The Medieval Spains* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 77-9. On Charlemagne's involvement in Spain see also K. Herbers, 'Karl der Große und Spanien-Realität und Fiktion' in *Karl der Große und sein Schrein in Aachen*, ed. H. Mülle jans (Aachen, 1988), 47-53.

<sup>28</sup> *VK* (Einhard) p. 16 [19-23].

<sup>29</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), pp. 102, 104-5.

It has been suggested that the campaign of which this attack was a part is likely to have been instigated with the foreknowledge and approval of Charlemagne, surrounded as it was by diplomatic comings and goings between the Asturian and Frankish courts.<sup>30</sup> Einhard's words emphasise the sense of obligation which Alfonso owed Charlemagne as *proprium suum*. Once more this is reminiscent of the duty and loyalty owed by a *fidelis* of the Frankish king. Was a relationship of that type implicit in Einhard's words about both the Asturian king and the rulers of the *Scotti*? Once again caution can be voiced about the veracity of Einhard's comments, yet once again, the contemporary Frankish chronicles independently affirm diplomatic and political contact between the two regions and between the rulers of those kingdoms.

A further series of events links the type of diplomatic relationship which Alfonso had with Charlemagne and that proposed for certain Anglo-Saxon kings described previously. In 801/2 Alfonso was deposed in a revolt and consigned to a monastery. He was subsequently restored by another noble faction.<sup>31</sup> There is no direct evidence to link Charlemagne with the restoration of Alfonso to his throne, yet <sup>these events</sup> occurred at a time of shifting political allegiances within the region as Frankish troops moved in to besiege Barcelona. Alfonso's subsequent reinstatement as king of Asturias appears to have been virtually contemporaneous with the fall of Barcelona and the renewal of Frankish authority in the area to the east of Alfonso's realm. The picture of loyalty to the Carolingian king as implied by the Frankish sources in combination with the subsequent restoration of a deposed king, is once more reminiscent of the Anglo-Saxon events discussed above.

The similar elements of these events may simply reflect the fact that any new ruler who had reason to feel insecure about his claim and tenure to his throne, automatically sought the friendship and patronage of the most powerful monarch in Europe. Alfonso for example, had succeeded a distant member of his family to the Asturian throne and within a short space of time was under attack from Arab

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<sup>30</sup> R. Collins, *The Arab Conquest of Spain*, p. 212.

<sup>31</sup> R. Collins, *Early Medieval Spain; Unity in Diversity, 400-1000* (London, 1983), p. 232.

forces.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, Eardwulf had no known blood claim to the Northumbrian throne and both he and Æthelred before him had become king after having been in exile for a several years. Contact with Charlemagne is again a common factor. Yet there are other ways in which Asturias under Alfonso seems to have looked to Francia as a model of a Christian kingdom, most of the rest of Spain being under Islamic authority. Alfonso is recorded as the first great church builder in his kingdom and the man who firmly established Christianity in a kingdom which had been converted to that faith only recently.<sup>33</sup> It is argued that these new churches, especially Alfonso's basilica of San Julián de los Prados (Santullano) in his new capital at Oviedo, have much in common with Carolingian ecclesiastical building forms, although a native Visigothic influence is also tangible.<sup>34</sup> As with Charlemagne's personal chapel at Aachen, 'Santullano' was linked physically to the royal residence of the king. The latter church abutted Alfonso's palace at the north transept, the king's 'tribune' opening into it at an upper level. At Aachen too the palace complex was attached to the north of the chapel via a two-story passageway running from the south of the palace to the tribune level of the chapel 'westwerk'.<sup>35</sup> In both cases, a major church played an intrinsic part in the overall design of the palace complex which stood at the heart of the city which the king had chosen to be his capital. The idealised symbiosis between secular and ecclesiastical government was thus symbolically displayed in the architecture of the palace complex, the church and palace as distinct units yet joined at an upper level, symbolising both the

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<sup>32</sup> Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, p. 197.

<sup>33</sup> As recorded by the Chronicle of Alfonso III; J. Gil Fernández, J. L. Moralejo and J. Ruíz de la Peña, ed. *Crónicas Asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III, Crónica Albeldense* (Oviedo 1985), p. 174, ch. 21. This chronicle also emphasises the Visigothic origins of Alfonso's buildings, a valid point, but one which must be tempered by observation that the chronicle was composed c. 881 during the rule of Alfonso III who sought to emphasise native Asturian independence and power.

<sup>34</sup> B. F. Reilly et al *The Art of Medieval Spain A.D. 500-1200* (New York, 1993), p. 19 and J. D. Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology in Early Medieval Spain* (London, 1990), pp. 34-46. The latter author argues in favour of a significant degree of Carolingian influence in the architecture of Asturias in this period, but argues that such borrowings were selective points of style and ideas rather than wholesale transfer of Carolingian craftsmen. See also A. Correa, *Arte pre-Romanico Asturiano* (Barcelona, 1967), pp. 62-8.

<sup>35</sup> Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture*, pp. 46-50, 87-9.

elevated status of the ruler and his ideological rôle in the governmental functioning of his realm through the secular and ecclesiastical administrative machinery.

Significantly, it was during Alfonso's rule that a ruined shrine was discovered by Bishop Teodemar which held, it was said, the bones of St James. Thus, the cult which was to become focused around the shrine of Santiago de Compostela was founded and Asturias had a patron saint in the manner of the Frankish patron saint, Martin whose cult was centred on Tours.<sup>36</sup> Alcuin, as Abbot of Tours, recorded the arrival of an Asturian pilgrim named Vincent to St Martin's in a letter written to Beatus of Liébana probably in 797/8, that is, the same time as which the Asturian legates were travelling to Francia bearing gifts for the Frankish king.<sup>37</sup> The Carolingian influence on the christianization of Asturias may mean that it is no coincidence that Charlemagne in later legend was considered the liberator of northern Spain and a pilgrim to the shrine of St James.<sup>38</sup>

*Yet it is the possibility that a quasi-formal agreement of mutual assistance might have been a condition of the relationship between the kings of Asturias and Francia which is intriguing. Alfonso's kingdom was in the north-west of the Iberian peninsular and as such, was on the absolute periphery of Carolingian territorial*

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<sup>36</sup> Reilly, *The Medieval Spains*, p. 76.

<sup>37</sup> *Gaudens de adventu viri venerabilis Vincentii, qui orationis gratia limina beati Martini patris nostris et protectoris vestri visitavit*, Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 314-23, 318 [7-9]. The letter is primarily concerned with the Adoptinist heresy which provided another inroad for Frankish influence in Iberian Christianity. Beatus was abbot of a monastery dedicated also to St Martin in Asturias, hence Alcuin's reference to *protectoris vestri*. Tours became a particularly important influence on the book production of the successor kingdom to Asturias, León, in the tenth century; Reilly et al. *The Art of Medieval Spain*, p. 20.

<sup>38</sup> T. F. Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1979), p. 192. This idea was particularly promoted by the *Historia Turpini* the spurious memoirs of one Abbot Turpin who is said to have died at Roncevalles in 778. The *Historia* is included as part of the *Liber Sancti Jacobi*, a creation of the mid twelfth century designed to promote the pilgrimage to Santiago; C. Smith, *Christians and Moors in Spain, 711-1150*, Vol. 1 (Warminster, 1993), p. 172. An alternative explanation is that the cult of St James was set up to emphasise the independence of Asturias from both Francia and Toledo, and that the linking of Charlemagne with the cult was a cynical attempt to illustrate Frankish authority over the independent Alfonso; Reilly et al. *The Art of Medieval Spain*, p. 20. Genuine Frankish influence on eighth-century Asturias has been rather downplayed because of this later legend and the desire to promote the Visigothic heritage of the eighth-century Asturian architecture, see above note 33.

interests in the region. The tradition of these interests stretched back to the famous victory of Charles Martel over the Saracens at Poitiers in 732, which brought the Frankish monarchy into direct contact with the Arab military threat. The marchlands straddling the Pyrenees were a constant battle ground in the late eighth century, as the author of the *ARF* (Rev) annal for 797 commented, *quae alternante rerum eventu nunc Francorum nunc Sarracenorum dicioni subiciebatur*.<sup>39</sup> A treaty of friendship with the lord of a large Spanish kingdom which backed onto these disputed border areas could, therefore, have been a major element in Charlemagne's plans to protect and enhance his territorial claims. This would have been a subject in which Charlemagne took great personal interest after the humiliating annihilation of the rearguard of his army by Basque forces at Roncesvalles in 778. The evidence to support this hypothesis is only circumstantial but the practical military and political circumstances confirm the logic of such an alliance. This is underlined by the context of the comments of the Frankish annalists regarding the events of 797. Both the *ARF* and its revised version describe the return of Barcelona to Frankish overlordship in that year by its governor Zadun:

Barcinona civitas Hispaniae, quae iam pridem a nobis desciverat, per Zatum praefectum ipsius nobis est redita. Nam ipse ad palatium veniens domno regi semetipsum cum civitate commendavit.

*ARF, s.a. 797.*<sup>40</sup>

Barcinona civitas in limite Hispanico sita quae alternante rerum eventu nunc Francorum nunc Sarracenorum dicioni subiciebatur, tandem per Zatum Sarracenum, qui tunc eam invaserat, regi reddita est. Nam is aestatis initio Aquisgranis ad regem venit seque cum memorata civitate spontanea deditione illius potestati permisit. Qua recepta rex filium Hludovicum ad obsidionem Oscae cum exercitu in Hispaniam misit...

*ARF (Rev), s.a. 797.*<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 101. On the Frankish marchland in Catalonia see Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, pp. 253-59.

<sup>40</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 100.

<sup>41</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 101.

The Frankish annals state that Zadun, in spite of the fact that he was a saracen, had travelled to Aachen in the summer of 797 and ‘commended himself and the city’ to the power of Charlemagne. Charlemagne apparently accepted the commendation since he responded by sending an army in the same year into northern Spain led by his son Louis in order to besiege the northern city of Huesca.<sup>42</sup> Although it is evident that Zadun was using this alliance with the Christian king of Francia for his own political ends, the act of commendation to the Frankish ‘overlord’ was not something which could be reneged upon without retribution. That this act of commendation was considered binding by Charlemagne is confirmed by the account of the subsequent fall of Barcelona in 801 after Zadun’s promise of allegiance to the Franks was proven false:

Ipsa aestate capta est Barci<sup>n</sup>ona civitas in Hispania, iam  
biennio obsessa; Zaton praefectus eius et alii conplures  
Sarraceni conprehensi...Zaton (et Roselmus) una die ad  
praesentiam imperatoris deducti et exilio dampnati sunt.

*ARF*, s.a. 801.<sup>43</sup>

Thus after the eventual capture of the city after two years siege, Charlemagne condemned the perfidious Zadun to exile, which could well be interpreted as the action of a slighted overlord. Thus it may be no coincidence that the unrest caused in part by the Frankish presence in northern Spain was contemporaneous with the deposition of Charlemagne’s ‘own man’ in Asturias and his subsequent restoration after Carolingian superiority in the region was confirmed.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> The campaign for Barcelona forms a large element of the poem *In honorem Hludowici* by Ermold the Black on the exploits of Charlemagne’s son who later succeeded him as Louis the Pious; E. Faral, ed., *Ermold le Noir: Poem sur Louis le Pieux et Épitres au Roi Pepin* (Paris, 1932), pp. 12-22, [102-223]. The Spanish campaign led by Louis was also discussed by his anonymous biographer, sometimes referred to as The Astronomer; A. Cabaniss, transl. *Son of Charlemagne: a contemporary life of Louis the Pious*, (Syracuse, 1961), pp. 39-44; G. H. Pertz, ed. MGH SS Vol. II (Hanover, 1829), pp. 604-48.

<sup>43</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 116. The siege of Barcelona receives relatively detailed treatment in the Frankish sources partly because it was the first major military venture made by Louis (later Emperor) as king of Aquitaine and partly because it established the region as a Frankish march for the following two hundred years or so.

<sup>44</sup> The Anonymous biographer of Louis the Pious records that the Asturians were involved in the Frankish campaign to capture Barcelona in 801/2. They were attacked by the Saracen army which was en route to raise the siege of Barcelona; Cabaniss, *Son of Charlemagne*, pp. 42-3.

## 2b. Spain, Abd Allah:

Another parallel to all these events found in the Frankish annals is the incident concerning a saracen prince named Abd Allah. After having described Zadun's journey to Aachen, the *ARF* annal for the year 797 continues with the statement that Charlemagne played host to another saracen at Aachen in that year. Thus it is said that:

Et in Aquis palatio Abdellam Sarracenum filium Ibin-Mauge regis, qui a fratre regno pulsus in Mauritania exulabat, ipso semetipsum commendante suscepit...Inde Abdellam Sarracenum cum filio suo Hludowico in Hispanias reverti fecit.

*ARF, s.a. 797.*<sup>45</sup>

Another high-ranking nobleman had made his way to the Frankish court in the disgrace of exile. The son of the 'king' Ibn Mauwiya, Abd Allah had been expelled from his kingdom by his brother and was living in exile in Mauritania. It is thought that he was from the southern Iberian kingdom of Cordova but it is not entirely clear whether Charlemagne returned him to that same kingdom.<sup>46</sup> Yet the annals state that Charlemagne's son Louis took this Saracen who had 'commended himself' to the Christian monarch back into Spain, presumably as part of his punitive expedition in that year. The revised version of those Annals elaborate on this saying:

Hludovicum ad Aquitaniam remisit, cum quo et Abdellam Saracenum ire iussit, qui postea, ut ipse voluit in Hispaniam ductus et illorum fidei, quibus se credere non dubitavit commissus est.

*ARF (Rev), s.a. 797.*<sup>47</sup>

Thus, Abd Allah accompanied Louis to Aquitaine and from thence they travelled into Spain where the Saracen was handed over to 'those whose trust was not in

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<sup>45</sup> *ARF (Kurze)*, p. 100.

<sup>46</sup> Odegaard, *Vassi and Fideles*, p. 62.

<sup>47</sup> *ARF (Kurze)*, p. 103.

doubt'. A native arab source suggests that Abd Allah actually took control of Huesca, ruling it until about 801 when he appears to have made peace with his relative in the south and returned there.<sup>48</sup> If that source is correct, Abd Allah was installed as a Frankish magnate, ruling a marchland city under Frankish authority. This is an extraordinary degree of effort for the Frankish king to expend on a prince who was not even a Christian. Both this incident and that of Zadun indicate that Charlemagne was in no way adverse to accepting the allegiance of non-Christians and, furthermore, acting in their favour, presumably when it suited his own designs. A difference may lie in the technical use of the verb *commendare* which describes their act of deference to Charlemagne. However, just as with Christian *fideles* it seems that a degree of mutual assistance was implicit in the contract. It seems that by accepting the commendation Charlemagne made himself liable for the protection of the man who had commended himself, and conversely, the commendeo had laid himself open to retribution if the bargain was not kept. It has been suggested that commendation was 'a secular act' whereas an oath of fidelity was a 'religious guarantee' of that act.<sup>49</sup> This distinction would fit entirely with the extra-Christian context of the 'commendation' of the two Saracen princes. Charlemagne as a Christian prince and crusader against paganism, obviously could not accept a religious oath from a muslim. One wonders who the *fidei, quibus se credere non dubitavit* were, whether they were Iberian *fideles* of Charlemagne or of Abd Allah. These three Iberian events again illustrate Charlemagne's capacity and willingness to become involved in the internal affairs of other independent kingdoms which lay far from the borders of his own lands. These examples differ from the Anglo-Saxon in that a military element was often included in the resolution of the crises which emerged. Yet this may be a reflection of the fact that Charlemagne had territorial claims to parts of northern Spain and also that he was likely to be dealing with non-Christian noblemen and their legates. The extra authority of the pope on which he relied for enforcing his wishes in England would have meant nothing in these Spanish contexts.

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<sup>48</sup> The arab source is that of Ibn 'Idari as discussed by Collins, *The Arab Conquest of Spain*, p. 212.

<sup>49</sup> Odegaard, *Vassi and Fideles*, pp. 4-5.

### 3. The Abodrites:

There is another parallel to these incidents among the rulers whose kingdoms were beyond the eastern borders of Charlemagne's realm. On this occasion it concerned Witzan, the chieftain of the Abodrites. His lands lay beyond that of the Saxons, between the Jutish peninsular and the territory of the Slavic tribe known as the Wilzites. It is in the context of a Carolingian campaign against this latter tribe who were the longstanding enemies of the Abodrites, that Witzan is first mentioned in the Frankish sources.<sup>50</sup> The *ARF* entry for 789 relates how an alliance of various Frisian and Slavic tribes assisted the Carolingian forces who had marched across Saxony in order to subdue the Wilzites. Witzan is variously termed a *princeps*, *rex* or *dux* in the Frankish sources and once in the Lorsch Annals is called a *vassus domini*, a vassal of Charlemagne.<sup>51</sup> He seems, therefore, to have acted as a military auxiliary of Charlemagne having considered it wise to ally with the distant Frankish king who was at war with Witzan's southern and western neighbours and in contact with the Danes to the north.<sup>52</sup> There is a parallel here with the Carolingian alliance with Alfonso II in Asturias. Both the Asturian king and the Slavic chieftain were separated from the territory of Charlemagne by a kingdom of fluctuating political and religious allegiance.<sup>53</sup> That both of these kings considered

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<sup>50</sup> The *ARF s.a.* 808 talks of the *antiquam inimicas* between the Abodrite and Wilzite tribes; *ARF* (Kurze), p. 126.

<sup>51</sup> *Annales Laurehamenses s.a.* 795, Pertz, MGH SS Vol. 1, p. 36. The Lorsch Annals seem to be contemporary between the years 786 and 803 and were found in at least one contemporary manuscript; King, *Charlemagne*, pp. 19-20. On this set of Frankish annals and their relevance to the *HReg* especially *s.a.* 794-5 see above Chapter 3.

<sup>52</sup> Charlemagne offered to use his influence with the Danes to secure the release of prisoners taken during the sack of Lindisfarne in 793; *Alc. Ep.*, p. 58, no. 20. It is evident that the alliance between the Abodrites was longstanding and outlived Witzan's rule, see *ARF* (Rev) *s.a.* 798; *ARF* (Kurze) p. 105 and the *ARF s.a.* 808; *ARF* (Kurze), p. 125. The *Annales Mettenses Priores*, record *s.a.* 804 that Charlemagne actually decided who was to be the next Abodrite king; *AMPr* (de Simson), p. 91 [8-11].

<sup>53</sup> It is arguable that Offa's Mercia was also considered to be of dubious religious loyalty as his defiance of papal and Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical tradition showed, with regard to the creation of the third archbishopric of Lichfield in 787. The letter written by Hadrian to Charlemagne sometime between 784-91 expressing with some horror the rumour that there was a Franco-Mercian plot to depose him as pope may have contributed to this impression; Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, p. 117.

an alliance with distant Charlemagne to be a practical ‘foreign policy’ option says much about the contemporary perception of Charlemagne’s ability to offer assistance to far-flung allies, as well as the capabilities of such kings to manage a coherent diplomatic and foreign policy in eighth-century Europe. There has been much discussion of Witzan’s official status and what the term *vassum domini* actually implied for a non-Frankish dependent.<sup>54</sup> Yet it is the account of Witzan’s assassination in an ambush organised by the rebellious Saxons as described by the *ARF* (Rev) s.a. 795 which gives the most eloquent picture of what a reciprocal alliance between Charlemagne and the Slavic chief actually meant;

...subito ei nuntiatum est, Witzinum regem Abodritum, cum Albim traiceret, in dispositas a Saxonibus insidias in ipso flumine incidisse et ab eis esse interfectum. Quod factum animo regis ad Saxones citius debellandos velut quosdam stimulos addidit et in odium perfidæ gentis amplius excitavit. Terra igitur magna ex parte vastata...

*ARF* (Rev), s.a. 795. <sup>55</sup>

Thus, the murder of his Abodrite ally spurred Charlemagne to an even greater hatred of the ‘perfidious’, pagan Saxons and brought about a savage military revenge against them and, as the Lorsch Annals add, taking a greater number of Saxons hostage than ever before.<sup>56</sup> This reaction parallels closely Charlemagne’s rage against the *perfidam et perversam* people of Northumbria when he heard of the assassination of Æthelred the following year. According to Alcuin, *in tantum iratus* Charlemagne threatened the Northumbrians whom he considered ‘worse than pagans’, with retribution in ‘whatever way he could’.<sup>57</sup> It is possible to interpret the revenge on Witzan’s behalf simply as part of the on-going campaign against the ‘*perfidious race*’ of the Saxons, yet it also fits into a wider picture of Charlemagne’s strategy to make his influence felt in the kingdoms beyond Frankish territory.

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<sup>54</sup> See Odegaard, *Vassi and Fideles*, pp. 38-40.

<sup>55</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 97.

<sup>56</sup> Pertz, *Annales Laureshamenses*, MGH SS Vol. 1, p. 36.

<sup>57</sup> *Alc. Ep.* no. 100, p. 147 and above Chapter 1.

Given the size of his kingdom this had to be achieved primarily through strategic diplomatic alliances through which direct or indirect pressure, military or otherwise, could be brought to bear on mutual opponents of the allied kingdoms. It may have been that this pressure was normally of a military nature, yet this could be a reflection of the bias of the sources which tended to favour the recording of wars. It is an exceptional source which mentions commercial activities, which were undoubtedly another important component in the campaign to isolate and subdue rivals (as the troubles with Offa indicate).<sup>58</sup>

It is easy to get side-tracked by the terminology used to describe these allies of Charlemagne; *fideles*, *vassum domini*, *commendare*, and although terminology is important, it is arguable that it was the individual context of each alliance and the reciprocal benefits of each which defined the actual nature of such a relationship,<sup>59</sup> that is, whether the common opponents were Christian, pagan or Arab or whether the disputed issues were territorial, commercial or religious or if the method of opposition was direct military action or diplomatic counter-alliances or a combination of both. Yet all the incidents described illustrate Charlemagne's method of maintaining his influence in the kingdoms which orbited his Empire. The alliances which he formed with the lords of the realms beyond his disputed marchlands reflect the practical realities of controlling such a vast kingdom late in the eighth century. It could only be done by strategic alliances. Where practical, it seems likely that his foreign alliances were cemented by oaths or pledges of fidelity which had religious connotations, however it seems that this was not always essential. It is a startling reflection of his realism and opportunism that Charlemagne did not quibble about allying with non-Christians (there is no evidence that Witzan was Christian). The exchange of gifts was also a fundamental element in maintaining these ties of loyalty as the gifts in 786 to the newly baptized

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<sup>58</sup> Hence Booth's error in assuming that the 'authority of the western 'emperor of the Romans' [Charlemagne] carried no weight whatsoever in the internal affairs of Northumbria, unsupported by the realistic threat of military action'; Booth, 'Coinage and Northumbrian History', 64.

<sup>59</sup> See for example, the extended debate over the oaths of vassalage sworn by Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria; Odegaard, *Vassi and Fideles*, pp. 24-31.

Tudan of the Avar tribe and his followers indicate.<sup>60</sup> This is not a novel concept, yet what is different is the idea that Charlemagne was as much in need of these alliances as the men who had pledged their loyalty to him and that he was in some way also bound by their oaths of fidelity and commendation and bound also to assist them actively in their hour of most need. Such assistance could involve being escorted back to a kingdom from exile by an army (Abd Allah) or by inviolate clergymen (Eardwulf) or revenge if the ruler was assassinated (military in the case of Witzan or in 'whatever way possible' in the case of Æthelred).

#### 4. The Papacy, Leo III:

The role of the papacy in this broad strategy of international alliances is particularly interesting. Obviously in the context of his dealings with Islamic Spain, Charlemagne had no use for the Pope's authority. However, it appears that he was very prepared to use it in his relations with the Christian kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England (hence his outburst against the 'pagan' murderers of Æthelred). It may have been that he had to. The pope obviously thought that he had a right to use his authority, independent of Charlemagne, and it is undoubted that the Frankish king respected this opinion. Both Hadrian and Leo had their own contacts in England which were free from Frankish influence. For example in his letter to Charlemagne in 808, Leo says that he had already heard about Eardwulf's expulsion *iam hoc per Saxones agnoveramus*.<sup>61</sup> However, as his subsequent correspondence on the matter indicates, it was very difficult and indeed unwise for a papal legate to attempt to pass through Carolingian territory without seeking an audience with Charlemagne.<sup>62</sup> In 801 Archbishop Æthelheard travelled to Rome with the Bishop of Winchester (and significantly, also with Torctmund who had avenged the murder of Æthelred) in order to obtain papal approval for dissolving the archbishopric of Lichfield. They were met on their arrival in Frankish territory by a

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<sup>60</sup> *ARF* (Kurze), p. 98.

<sup>61</sup> Hampe, *Epistolae*, no. 2, p. 90 [6-7]; Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, pp. 562-4.

<sup>62</sup> Hampe, *Epistolae*, no. 3, pp. 91-2; Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, pp. 565-6.

servant of Alcuin who provided a horse for the archbishop and a letter of introduction to Charlemagne's court.<sup>63</sup> They then went on to Rome to deliver two letters from King Coenwulf of Mercia to the Pope, but presumably only after Charlemagne had heard what they had to say on this and other matters in England. Despite papal attempts to act independently, it must have been very difficult for Rome to bypass Charlemagne's network. And indeed, it is Leo III himself who provides the final international parallel to Eardwulf's restoration in 808;

Romani Leonem papam letania maiore captum excecaverunt  
ac lingua detruncaverunt. Qui in custodia missus noctu per  
murum evasit et ad legatos domni regis, qui tunc<sup>apud</sup> basilicam  
sancti Petri erant. Wirundum scilicet abbatem et Winigisum  
Spolitinum ducem, veniens Spoletium est deductus...Ipsa  
altera medietate secum retenta eodem in loco Leonem  
pontificem summo cum honore suscepit ibique reditum Carli  
filii sui expectans Leonem pontificem simili, quo susceptus  
est, honore dimisit; qui statim Romam profectus est.

*ARF, s.a. 799. 64*

Thus, Leo was himself deposed and imprisoned by enemies in a coup organised by Roman nobility who attempted to blind him and cut out his tongue. Leo escaped from the clutches of his enemies by scaling the walls of his prison by night. His escape was orchestrated by two of Charlemagne's legates and with their help, Leo was spirited from the country eventually to arrive at Charlemagne's court. He was subsequently sent back to Rome accompanied, as the Revised version of the *ARF* say, by *legatos regis...reductus atque in locum suum restitutus est*.<sup>65</sup> This is reminiscent of Leo's own comments about the escape of Eardwulf from England nine years later, and indeed, the annals use the same verb (*reducere*) to describe both men's return to their respective realms. The restoration of Leo is obviously on an entirely different political scale to any of the English examples but yet the parallels exist. This is even true of the sense of mutual obligation implicit in the

<sup>63</sup> *Alc. Ep. nos 231-2, pp. 375-8.*

<sup>64</sup> *ARF (Kurze), p. 106.*

<sup>65</sup> *ARF (Kurze), p. 109.*

audience of the deposed ruler with Charlemagne. The use of the verb *suscipere* to describe the way in which Charlemagne greeted the Pope is significant in this context, as it is frequently used in connection with the acceptance of homage.<sup>66</sup> The coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor and his trial of the anti-Leonine conspirators in the following year is an example of a mutually beneficial alliance at its highest political level.<sup>67</sup>

All this has profound repercussions for any discussion of the relative subservience of royal power to that of the clergy, which unsurprisingly, was a hotly disputed debate throughout the ninth century. With regard to the deposition of the Pope in 799, the papal sources naturally play down Leo's debt to Charlemagne and emphasise the divine intervention which restored Leo's eyes and tongue to full working use.<sup>68</sup> The evidence of Leo's ten letters to Charlemagne indicates that Leo did not stay silent long and frequently communicated with the Frankish king on matters of international diplomacy.<sup>69</sup> The format of that manuscript is not unlike that of the *Codex Carolinus*, an observation which implies that the papal and Carolingian interest in the events of Northumbria in 808 were deliberately preserved alongside letters on other important European affairs about which the Pope and Charlemagne chose to concern themselves. On this basis alone, it is necessary to consider the evidence of Eardwulf's restoration in the broadest possible context of European politics of the late eighth and early ninth centuries. When this is done it can be seen that the Northumbrian incident is not necessarily 'awkward' nor even particularly out of place. It fits neatly both into a longstanding Carolingian interest in the political affairs of Anglo-Saxon England as well as an established mechanism for maintaining such an interest, tried and tested in several

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<sup>66</sup> Odgaard, *Vassi and Fideles*, p. 5.

<sup>67</sup> For comments on the nature of the fidelity owed by the people of the papal Republic to Charlemagne, see T. F. X. Noble, *The Republic of St Peter; the birth of the Papal State, 680-825* (Philadelphia, 1984), pp. 285-6.

<sup>68</sup> Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis*, Vol. 2, pp. 4-7.

<sup>69</sup> Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek Helmstadt MS 254. The letters which this manuscript contains are to be found in Hampe, *Epistolae*, pp. 85-14 and see above, Chapter 1.

independent nations other than Northumbria.

Under these conditions it becomes possible to talk of a Carolingian hegemony in western Europe at the turn of the ninth century.<sup>70</sup> The word 'hegemony' is used in its loosest sense, but the collected incidents described above show, if nothing else, that Charlemagne himself was an important focus for the noblemen who ruled the kingdoms which lay behind those which existed on the borders of his own territory. The strategic reasons for forming such alliances are obvious and were well tried by Charlemagne's day. By securing the allegiance of a ruler and his tribe whose territory lay beyond that of a disputed marchland, the area under dispute and the people within it were effectively trapped in a pincer of hostile alliance. It seems that the exchange of high status goods was an intrinsic part of the diplomatic process which complemented actual or threatened military action.<sup>71</sup> The exchange of high status gifts seems also to have been one of the strategies employed by the commanders of the later Roman Empire. High status Roman artefacts are rarely found in the regions immediately to the east of the Rhine frontier but are much more commonly recovered in areas some distance beyond. These artefacts are often interpreted as diplomatic gifts which emanated from within the Empire in order to ensure pro-Roman attitudes amongst the tribes which lay one step beyond the

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<sup>70</sup> Ganshof argued against this idea saying that 'the emperor's personal prestige was apparently such that he could use diplomatic means to satisfy his sense of what was right'; Ganshof, 'The Frankish Monarchy and its external relations', p. 173.

<sup>71</sup> Ganshof touched on the uses of gifts in the Frankish diplomatic world as 'signs of peace and friendship'; Ganshof, 'The Frankish monarchy and its external relations', pp. 173-4, 176. The cross-over between trade goods and status gifts is discussed by P. Grierson, 'Commerce in the Dark Ages', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Ser. Vol. 9 (1959), 123-40, 129-39, reprinted as chapter 2 in P. Grierson, *Dark Age Numismatics, Selected studies* (London, 1979) and also A. E. Leiber, 'International trade and coinage in the northern lands during the Early Middle Ages: an introduction', in *Viking-Age coinage in the northern lands; the sixth Oxford symposium on coinage and monetary history*, eds, M. A. S. Blackburn and D. M. Metcalf, BAR Int. ser. Vol.122 (Oxford, 1981), 11-12.

frontier.<sup>72</sup> This interpretation is preferred to one which explains the presence of such Roman artefacts in these distant areas as being evidence of economic exchange or plunder from raiding.

The exchange of high status objects is one of the factors which links many of the incidents which brought those noble petitioners to Charlemagne's court at the end of the eighth and early ninth centuries. Several of those men who appear to have received active support from Charlemagne were tied to him through the exchange and acceptance of high status goods. The donation and receipt of gifts carries an implicit recognition and acceptance of a mutual bond which forges the donor and the receiver together.<sup>73</sup> The most explicit group in this category were the *reges Scottorum* who, according to Einhard, considered themselves the 'subjects and slaves' of Charlemagne upon the receipt of his *munificentiam*. Alfonso is said to have sent precious gifts on a regular basis to Charlemagne. The distribution of the Avar treasure hoard is graphic evidence of Charlemagne's largess towards men whom the Frankish sources considered to be his *fideles*. In the case of the Anglo-Saxon recipients of the Avar treasure, we may choose to disregard the literal interpretation and implications of the Frankish use of the word *fideles*, however, we cannot ignore the fact that both Offa and Æthelred were intended recipients as were the metropolitan archbishops of Anglo-Saxon England. The significance of these gifts is highlighted by the fact that Charlemagne withdrew his offering to the Northumbrians after he heard of Æthelred's murder. The withdrawal of such a gift

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<sup>72</sup> For example, with regard to such luxury finds in Denmark see L. Hedeager, transl. J. Hines, *Iron-Age Societies, from tribe to state in northern Europe 500 BC to AD 700* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 155-8, 160, 174 and by the same author, 'Empire, Frontier and the barbarian hinterland. Rome and northern Europe from AD1-400', in *Centre and Periphery in the ancient world*, eds, M. Rowlands, M. T. Larsen and K. Kristiansen (Cambridge, 1987), 125-40, 129. Also, M. Millett, *Roman Britain* (London, 1995), p. 43. In contrast to these, Todd favours trade as an explanation for the polarised distribution of status goods beyond the Roman frontier, but notes that 'it is worth making a distinction between the luxury goods which penetrated deep into free Germany and those of humbler character which tend to be found closer to Roman frontiers'; M. Todd, *The Northern Barbarians, 100 BC -AD 300* (Oxford, 1975), p. 26.

<sup>73</sup> The obligation to reciprocate the receipt of a gift is a fundamental precept in the classic anthropological study of gift exchange; M. Mauss, *The Gift; the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*, transl., W. D. Halls (London, 1990), pp. 39-43. Note also the comment of Mary Douglas in the introduction to this translation of Mauss' work, 'a gift that does nothing to enhance solidarity is a contradiction', *ibid*, p. vii.

after it had been promised was evidently considered to be a forceful and explicit mechanism by which Charlemagne could display his anger. This incident also makes a connection between the donation of status gifts and the threat of military or possibly economic sanctions against a nation which had aroused the intense displeasure of the donor of such gifts.

All of these incidents together perhaps come close to illustrating the method by which Charlemagne maintained his influence in countries distant from his own centres of power. The defining factor in these incidents is the evidence for personal contact between the noblemen and the emperor. This contact expressed itself in any of three ways, face-to-face meeting, epistolary contact (perhaps via a secondary spokesman such as Alcuin) or by the exchange of high status gifts. Implicit within all these incidents is a recognition that Charlemagne was the more powerful ruler. In some cases he is recognised as an overlord, the Frankish sources hinting that the foreign rulers were considered as vassals or *fideles* of the lord emperor. Perhaps it is inevitable that the domestic sources should present their king in such an exalted light, with foreign kings subsidiary to his power. Yet, these Frankish sources also describe the other aspect to these relationships. Such personal contact with the emperor in could result in active military assistance or diplomatic pressure on the behalf of a distant allied community if trouble arose in those places.

Thus, the network of diplomatic connections in Charlemagne's Carolingian world was based on personal contact and mutual obligation created by a recognition of the superior status of the Frankish king and enhanced by gift exchange. The acceptance of Charlemagne as the most powerful ruler in western Europe was combined with an implicit recognition that he could effect real and direct change in a distant community if called upon to do so. Thus, a broad contextual analysis of <sup>the</sup> incident of Eardwulf's restoration in 808 leads into a closer understanding of the complex ties which bound the territory of Charlemagne's Francia to a broader *imperium*. These incidents indicate the extent to which Francia was increasingly becoming the focus of Europe around the turn of the ninth century and also the extent to which Northumbria was linked into that Carolingian world.

It is perhaps in this context that the Greek proverb reported by Einhard some years after Charlemagne's death should be understood.<sup>74</sup> It epitomises the reputation of the Franks in terms of their animosity towards near neighbours and friendship towards those further afield:

*FRANCUM AMICUM HABEAS,  
VICINUM NON HABEAS.*

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<sup>74</sup> This translation of the original Greek version of the proverb as given by Einhard in Ch. 16 of his *Vita Karoli* is found in the copy of that text in Vatican Pal. MS 243; VK (Einhard), pp. xxi, 17.

## APPENDIX A.

### EIGHTH-CENTURY FRANKISH ANNALS IN THE *HISTORIA REGUM*: Latin edition.

This appendix is included here in order to ease reference to the text of the Frankish Annals which are incorporated within the *Historia Regum* to which frequent reference has been made in the preceding text. Appendix A gives a Latin edition of these annals and Appendix B provides a translation of those sections and an English summary of the remaining sections of those same annals which also make reference to non-Frankish events. Only those annals which contain information about events in Francia have been included. For the text of the remainder of the *Historia Regum* annals, reference should be made to the editions of that text made by J. H. Hinde, *Symeonis Dunelmensis Opera et Collectanea*, Surtees Society Vol. 51.i (London, 1868) pp. 1-131 or by T. Arnold, *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, Rolls Series Vol. 75.ii (London, 1885), pp. 3-283. The story of Eadburgh and Charlemagne has been included in this appendix even though it is thought to be a later addition to the *Historia Regum* text having been taken from Asser's *Vita Alfredi*. All of these 'Frankish' annals (bar those for 786 and 802) were extracted from the text of the *Historia Regum* and published as a group of annals relating to Francia; *ex vetus annalibus Nordhumbranis, Historiae regum Anglorum et Dacorum* by R. Pauli in MGH SS Vol. XIII (Hanover, 1881), pp. 154-6. They were further discussed by Pauli in an article 'Karl der Große in Northumbrischen annalen', *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, Vol. 12 (1872), 139-66. In that article Pauli listed the annals alongside those from the Chronicle of Melrose and the equivalent passages from the *Flores Historiarum* by Roger of Wendover.

**CODE:**

Words or letters in pointed brackets are interlineations in the *HReg* text as found in CCCC MS 139, ff.51v-129v.

Words or letters in pointed brackets and underlined are interlineations made by the main text hand of CCCC MS 139 (therefore, those interlineations not underlined were made by one of the several other hands which worked on the manuscript after it had been written).

Words in square brackets are marginal notes alongside the text of the *HReg* in CCCC MS 139.

Words in round brackets are interlineations to the *HpB* (BL Royal MS 13 A vi).

Words or letters in italics are editorial corrections (attempting to make sense of uncorrected omissions in the manuscript).

Three dots mark where the text of the annal is preceded by or continues with information about a non-Frankish event (summarised in Appendix B, below).

The orthography and numerals are those of the manuscript (*c* sometimes used for *t* etc). However, proper names have been capitalised and punctuation normalised and dates in arabic numerals have been added for ease of reference.

An asterisk (\*) indicates an unorthodox spelling or word order in the manuscript. The 'correct' spelling is given at the foot of the page.

754. Anno .dcc.l.iiii. Bonifacius archiepiscopus, qui et Winfridus, Francorum martyrio coronatus est cum .l. tribus.

767 Anno .d.cc.lxvii. ...Eodem tempore Aluberht ad Ealdsexos ordinatus est episcopus...

768 Anno .dcc.lx.viii. ...Eodem anno Pipin rex Franchorum mortuus est ...

771 Anno .d.cc.lxxi. ...Eodem quoque anno Karlmon <famosissimus> rex Francorum subita praeventus infirmitate defunctus est. Sed et frater ejus Karl, cum dimidium prius patris obtinuit <vel -isset> principatum tocius regni monarchiam et Francorum fastigium populorum dehinc est indeptus invicta fortitudine.

- 772 Anno septingentesimo .lxxii. ...Carl quoque Francorum rex collecta manu valida et bellicosus suae maiestatis viris coniunctis, Saxonum gentem est ingressus. Multisque ex principibus ac nobilibus <viris> suis amissis in sua se recepit.
- 774 Anno .d.cc.lxx.iiii. ...Eadem tempestate Karl Francorum rex invictissimus nobilissimam Langob<sup>1.\*</sup><a>rdorum urbem Ticinam longa obsidione vexatam, simul cum ipso rege Desiderio ac totius Italiae imperio cepit.
- 775 Anno .d.cc.lxx.v. ...Karl denique <vel quoque> rex ut praefati sumus bellicosissimus Francorum, cum omni exercitus sui virtute vallatus, confortatus, glorificatus gentem Saxonum est ingressus, centuriatibus atque legionibus stipatus, quam magnis et inedicibilibus regionem praeliis <gravissimis> vastavit, igne ferroque <sup>2.\*</sup>debachans, quia erat consternatus <vel efferatus> animo. Urbes denique duas Sigeburht <et Aresburht> atque provinciam Bohveri olim a <sup>3.\*</sup>Francis oppressam, suo potenter adjecit summo imperio.
- 786 Anno .d.cc.lxxx.vi. ...Tempore illo legati ab apostolica sede a domino Adriano papa ad Britanniam directi sunt, in quibus venerabilis episcopus Georgius primatum tenuit, qui antiquam inter nos amicitiam et fidem catholicam quam Sanctus Gregorius papa per beatum Augustinum docuit innovantes, honorifice suscepti sunt a regi<bus> et a praesulibus sive a principibus <et primatibus> huius patriae, et in pace domum reversi sunt cum magnis donis, ut justum erat.
- 792 Anno .d.cc.xc.ii. Karolus rex Francorum misit sinodalem librum ad Britanniam sibi a Constantinopoli directum. In quo libro, heu pro dolor, multa inconvenientia et verae fidei contraria <sup>4.\*</sup>repperientes, maxime quod pene omnium orientalium doctorum non minus quam trescentorum vel eo amplius episcoporum unanima assertione confirmantium imagines adorare debere, quod omnino ecclesia Dei execratur. Contra quod scripsit Albinus epistolam ex auctoritate Divinarum scripturarum mirabiliter affirmatam, illamque cum

1.\* Longobardorum

2.\* debachans

3.\* a Francia

4.\* repperientes

eodem libro et persona episcoporum ac principum nostrorum regi Francorum attulit....

- 794 Anno .d.cc.xc.iiii. ...Adrianus papa venerandus eodem anno sublevatus est ad Dei visionem .vii. kal. Januarii; qui sedit annos .xx.vi. menses decem dies .xii. Est quoque in ecclesia Sancti principis Apostolorum Petri sepultus, et super sepulcrum platoma (<id est marmor>) parieti infixi gesta bonorum eius aureis literis et versibus scripta. Hoc marmor ibi Karolus rex ob amorem et memoriam predicti patris, facere iussit, regali fretus diademate.
- 795 Anno .d.cc.x.cv. idem rex <fortissimus> Carolus cum manu valida Hunorum gentem armis vastando subegerat, eorum principe fugato, et ipsius exercitu superato vel perempto, sublatis inde .xv. plaustris auro argentoque palliisque olosericis preciosis repletis, quorum quodque quatuor trahebant boves. Quæ omnia idem rex, propter victoriam a Domino sibi concessam, Christi ecclesiis atque pauperibus dividere præcepit, grates Deo referens cum omnibus secum pugnantibus.
- 799 Anno .d.c<̄>.xc.ix. ...Romani quoque inter se dissecabantur, et cum magnam dissensionem habebant, in qua Leonem papam sanctissimum apprehēderunt ligaveruntque cuius linguam inter maxillas duriter protra<̄>ta et in gucture crudeliter extensa, præcisa est ab ipsis. Eruerunt et oculos prædicti pontificis radicitus; quæ res cunctis cernentibus crudele spectaculum est factum. Dehinc absque ulla humanitate semivivus eum relinquentes inconsulte domum reversi sunt. Sed magnus conditor orbis ex alto cuncta intuens, quem, quia respicit omnia solus, verum possumus dicere solem, non sic suum contempsit fidelem famulum. Omnipotens igitur Dominus, post pauci temporis intersticium, sic eum salutifero sanavit antidoto ut postmodum videre clare et loqui posset, prorsus ab eo expellens caligines oculorum et concedens ei pristinae sanitatis linguam ut penitissima <vel profundissima> edere verba prædicationis valuisset et omnia officia honorifice implere. 'Cesset inscitia <vel ignorantia> nubilus error, cessent profecto mira videri'

1\* lingua

2\* semivivum

universa opera Domini. Hoc miraculum repente diffusum est per cardines quadrati orbis, ad gloriam et laudem Christi nominis, ut ab omnibus ubique prædicetur et laudetur, quia mirabilis est Deus in Sanctis suis.

800 Anno .d.ccc. ...Karolus quoque eximiae virtutis rex Francorum paulo ante ipso anno cum magna exercitus sui multitudine Romuleae urbis mœnia ingreditur, ibique per aliquot menses demoratus est, locaque sancta frequenti visitatione adorat, ditat, exornat, munere regali. Precipue vero æcclesiam Beati Petri Apostoli necnon et Sancti Pauli, donis exornavit regalibus, auro scilicet et argento gemmisque pretiosis. Leonem quoque venerabilem papam magnifice muneravit, eiusque adversarios dispersit quosdam extinxit vel exilio damnavit nonnullos interfecit qui contra eum impie coniurationem promoverunt. His atque aliis quam plurimis rebus ordinatis ipse armipotens imperator quae ad honorem et correptionem ecclesiarum Christi Christianorumque populorum pertinebant in die natalis Domini nostri Iesu Christi ingreditur cum ducibus et magistratibus et militibus in ecclesiam sanctissimi principis apostolorum Petri. In qua a Domino Leone papa purpura regaliter induitur; cui corona aurea capiti imponitur, et regale sceptrum in manibus datur. Hanc dignitatem ipso die meruit ab omni populo percipere, <ut> imperator totius orbis appellaretur et esset. Eo quoque tempore legati Grecorum, cum magnis muneribus a Constantinopoli directi, ad eum veniebant, rogantes ut illorum susciperet regnum et imperium. Similiter legati ab H<j>erosolimis a Christianis populis ibi manentibus missi, Romamque venientes vexillum argenteum inter alia munera regi ferentes clavesque locorum sanctorum Dominicæ resurrectionis aliorumque ei optulerunt obnixè flagitantes ipsorum esse susceptorem et defensorem. Rogabant eum ut Christianæ religioni subdita sancta coenobia conservaret, regeret ac defenderet et contra insurgentes gentes <sup>\*</sup> exurgeret bellica virtute et regali maiestate. Annuit benignissimus rex beatis precibus qui ad se confluerant, et non solum se paratum esse ad devincendos inimicos in terra, verum etiam in mari, si necessitas compulisset. Intellexit beatas fore res publicas, si eas vel studiosi sapientiæ regerent, vel si earum rectores studere sapientiæ

\* exurgeret

contigisset. Is ad urbem Ravennam perveniens, ad Aquas deinde perrexit, de his omnibus cum suis optimatibus tractaturus.

802 Anno .d.ccc.ii. ab incarnatione Dominica. Brychric, Occidentalium *Saxonum* rex, qui eidem genti .x. et .vii. annis nobilissime prefuit, defunctus est; cujus imperium et regnum post eum Ecgberht, ex regali illius gentis prosapia, suscepit ac tenuit. Rex autem Brictric Occidentalium Saxonum accepit sibi in conjugium <vel<sup>m</sup>matrimonium> Eadburgam, quæ erat filia regis Merciorum, nomine Offa, qui vallum magnum inter Britaniam atque Merciam, id est de mari usque ad mare facere imperavit. Cumque filia regis esse multis suffulta honoribus, miris se extollebat ambitionibus, quæ more paterno tyrannice vivere coepit, et omnem hominem execrari. Sicque, ut omnibus esset perosa, non solum ducibus et magistratibus, verum etiam cunctis populis. Omnes religiosos viros ad regem semper accusare non cessavit, et ita maledicta virum suum constrinxit blanditiis, ut illos quos accusare coepit, aut vita aut regno privaret; et si a rege impetrare non posset, veneno eos clam disperdere <vel necare> non distulit. Erat eodem tempore quidam prædives adolescens, praeamabilis <vel valde> regi prædicto <et carus>; quem cum accusare vellet ad regem et minime prevaleret. Veneno ipsum ipsa malevola necavit <vel extinxit>. De quo veneno cum ipse rex inscianter gustasset, periit. Neque etiam illa venenum regi proposuerat dare sed puero, quem princeps ducum præoccupans, ambo necis poculum biberunt, ambo gustu amarissimo perierunt. Quo ex hoc sæculo <vel scelere> perempto, venefica illa<sup>1</sup> æquissima timore perterrita<sup>1</sup> fugiendo ultra mare est egressa, cum innumerabilibus thesauris, regem adiens Francorum famosissimum Karolum. Ad quem cum ante solarium astaret et regi deferret munera preciosa, sic est eam affatus. ‘Elige, Eadburg, quem <velis> me aut filium meum qui mecum in solario astat’. At illa sine deliberatione stulte respondit, dicens, ‘Si mihi optio daretur, filium tuum magis eligerem quam te, quia junior esse videtur’. Cui rex Carolus ita respondisse fertur, ‘Si me eligeres, haberes filium meum, sed quia illum elegisti, nec me nec illum propitium habebis’. Contulit tamen illi

<sup>1</sup> . *veneficia...perterrita* is written at the foot of the column in the hand which added the continuing annals for 803 (partial), 830 and 846. This hand is not that of the main text.

propter improbitatem eius optimum monasterium, in quo deposito seculari habitu, sub specie hypocricissima indumento sanctimonialium assumpto, perpaucis fungebatur annis: sicut enim <execrabilis et> flebilis ipsa <nequiter et> irrationabiliter in propria vixit regione: ita multo <miserabilius et> <nequius>, irrationabilius in terra aliena vixisse deprehenditur. ‘Aestas ut quidam ait <sup>\*</sup>quidam, cererem fervida siccata, remeat pomis gravis autumnus, hyemem defluus irrigat ymber’. Sed hujus pessimæ reginæ mentem nec pulcritudo æstatis, nec aliorum hyemis valuit a libidine cohibere. Namque intersticio <vel parvo tempore> peracto, dum que sancta erant exerceret, ut quidam estimabant, a quodam suæ propriæ gentis ignobili viro constuprata est. ‘Cedet inscitæ nubilus error, cessent profecto mira videri’. Mulierem, inquit, in adulterio deprehensam. Nichil itaque est quod admirare, nichil occultum quod non sciatur. Post hæc, præcipiente magno Carolo imperatore, projecta est cum magno mentis tedio <et angore> a suo sancto monasterio: que in paupertate et miseria vitæ suæ tempora vituperabiliter ad finem perduxit. Quæ ad ultimum uno servulo comitata, cotidie mendicans per domos et per civitates atque castella, in Pavia miserabiliter obiit.

\* ut quidam ait, Cererem ...

## APPENDIX B.

### EIGHTH-CENTURY FRANKISH ANNALS IN THE *HISTORIA REGUM*: English translation.

A translation of the full text of the *Historia Regum* is available as a Llanarch facsimile reprint of the 1858 translation by J. Stevenson, *Simeon of Durham, A History of the Kings of England*, (Lampeter, 1987).

#### CODE:

A synopsis of other (non-Frankish) information in the same annal is in small type within square brackets. Those words within pointed brackets are translations of those words which are interlineations in the manuscript, CCCC MS 139. Dates in arabic numerals have been added in bold type for ease of reference.

- 754.** In the year 754 Boniface, also called Winfrid, the archbishop of the Franks, was crowned with martyrdom, with fifty three others.
- 767.** [Alberht was consecrated bishop of the city of York, and Alchmund of the church of Hexham on 24 April.] At the same time, Aluberht was appointed bishop of the Old Saxons, [and Ceolwulf was consecrated bishop of the Lindissi. Obit of Etha of Crayke.]
- 768.** [Obit of King Eadberht, 20 August.] In the same year Pipin, King of the Franks died [consecration of Hadwin as bishop of Mayo and the marriage of King Alchred to Osgifu (Osgearn).]
- 771.** [Obits of Abbot Sibald and Egric the reader, Offa's victory over the people of the *Hestingi*.] In the same year also Karlomann, <most famous> King of the Franks died, overcome by a sudden illness. But his brother Charles, who had previously held half his father's kingdom, was now endowed with the whole kingdom and the highest rank of the Frankish people with unconquered strength.

772. [Obits of Pictel *dux* and Abbot Swithulf.] Also, Charles, King of the Franks, collecting a strong army and assembling the warriors of his dominions, attacked the Saxon race. And having lost many of his leaders and nobles <men>, returned to his own land.
774. [Obit of Eadwulf *dux* and the deposition of King Alchred and his flight to the Picts. Description of the city of Bamburgh and the accession of King Æthelred). At the same time Charles, the unconquered king, took Pavia the most noble city of the Lombards after a long siege, and with it at the same time captured King Desiderius himself and the whole realm of Italy.
775. [Obits of Cynoth king of the Picts, *dux* Eadwulf and Abbot Ebbi.] Finally <also> Charles, most warlike king of the Franks, as we said before, by the valour of his whole army, supportive, brave and glorious, attacked the race of Saxons surrounding them with divisions and legions, whose region he devastated with <very severe> battles, great and indescribable, in an orgy of fire and sword, because he was alarmed <savage> in mind. Finally, he powerfully added to his great empire the two cities Sigeburht <and Aresburht> and the province of the Bohveri, once subdued by the Franks.
786. [Obits of Abbot Botwine and Abbess Ricthryth, the election of Alberht as abbot of Ripon, the consecration of Bishops Aldulf, Tilberht and Hygbald and the murder of Cynewulf, King of Wessex.] At that time legates were sent from the apostolic seat by the lord Pope Hadrian to Britain, amongst whom the venerable bishop George held the primacy, they came to renew the old friendship and Catholic faith amongst us which the holy Pope Gregory taught through blessed Augustine. Having been received with honour by kings and bishops and princes <and leading noblemen> of that country, in peace they returned home with great gifts as was proper.
792. Charles, King of the Franks sent a synodal book which had been forwarded to him from Constantinople to Britain. In which book, alas, what pity, were found many difficulties and things contrary to the true faith, primarily that all

the Eastern doctors, not less or rather more than three hundred bishops, had confirmed with unanimous agreement that images ought to be adored, which is abhorrent to the whole church of God. Against this Alcuin wrote a letter marvelously affirmed by the authority of divine scriptures, and took it to the king of the Franks with that same book and the approval of our bishops and noble leaders. [The murder of Osred at Aynburg on 14 September and his burial at Tynemouth and the marriage of King Æthelred and Ælflæd, the daughter of Offa at Catterick on 29 September.]

- 794.** [Devastation of *Donamuthe* by pagans and their subsequent destruction and the obits of Colcu priest and reader and of Æthelheard, *dux* on 1 August.] Venerable Pope Hadrian was raised to the sight of God in the same year, on 26 December, having ruled for 26 years ten months and 12 days. And he was buried in the church of the chief apostle Peter, and a flagstone <that is, a marble slab> fixed over his tomb was inscribed in verse with his good deeds in gold letters. King Charles having been bestowed with the royal diadem, ordered this marble to be made because of his love for and memory of the aforementioned father.
- 795.** That same <most brave> King Charles with his strong army subdued the race of the Huns by force of arms, having put their chief to flight and having overcome or destroyed their army. He carried off from there 15 carts filled with gold, silver and rich silk vestments each of which was dragged by four oxen. Because of the victory given to him by God, the king ordered all these things to be divided amongst the churches of Christ and the poor, giving thanks to God with all who fought with him.
- 799.** [Storms at sea, obit of the Mercian *princeps* Brorda, the murder of Abbot More and execution of Moll by Eardwulf. Also, the obit of Osbald with a synopsis of his career, noting his burial in York. The murder of Aldred by Thortmund in revenge for the assassination of King Æthelred]. The Romans also were divided amongst themselves, and were having major disagreements, during which they apprehended and bound the most holy pope Leo, whose tongue was harshly

pulled between his jaws and cruelly stretched in his throat and was lopped off by them. They poked out the eyes of that same pope by the roots, that deed was done as a cruel spectacle with many witnesses. Then leaving him without any humanity, barely alive, they returned home hastily. But the great Maker of the world watching everything from on high, Who, since he alone looks after all things, we are able to call the true sun, did not ignore his faithful servant. Therefore the Almighty Lord, after a short interval of time, so cured him with his healing remedy, that shortly he was able to see clearly and to speak, expelling absolutely from him the blindness of his eyes and granting to him a tongue of perfect health so that was able to preach most worthy <or very profound> speeches and to perform all duties with honour. 'Wandering clouds of error <or ignorance> may stay, Yet marvels' universal works of God 'shall certainly remain to be seen'. That miracle was diffused rapidly through the four corners of the world, so that, to the glory and praise of Christ's name, it should be spoken of and praised by everyone everywhere, because 'God is marvellous in his Saints'.

- 800.** [Obit of Heardred, bishop of Hexham and election of Eanbryth at Cettingaham. Record of the capture and execution of Alchmund and of great storms]. Also, a little beforehand in the same year, Charles, king of the Franks and of exceptional ability, came within the walls of the city of Rome and remained there for several months; and he worshipped, enriched and adorned the holy places on frequent visits with royal largess. Especially indeed the church of the blessed Apostle Peter and also of St Paul, he adorned with royal gifts, gold and silver and precious gems. He also endowed with magnificence the venerable pope Leo, and he dispersed his opponents; some of them he destroyed or condemned to banishment, a few he killed who had impiously planned a conspiracy against him. These, and many other things which concerned the honour and correction of the churches of Christ and of Christian people having been settled, on the day of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ the all-powerful emperor entered the church of the most holy prince of the apostles Peter with dukes and magistrates and soldiers, there he was robed magnificently in

purple by the lord pope Leo; a crown of gold was placed on his head, and a royal sceptre was placed in his hand. This dignity he deserved to receive on that day from all people so that he might be called emperor of the whole world, and he was. At that time also legates from the Greeks came to him, having been sent from Constantinople with great gifts, begging that he might receive their kingdom and empire. Similarly, legates having been sent from Jerusalem by the Christian people living there, coming to Rome, brought to the king a silver standard amongst other gifts, and presented to him the keys of the holy places of the Lord's resurrection and of other places, resolutely begging to be their helper and defender. They were asking him that he might preserve, rule and defend the holy monasteries dedicated to the Christian faith, and that he might rise up with warrior courage and royal majesty against the insurgent peoples. The most gracious monarch agreed to the blessed prayers of those who flocked to him, and not only was he prepared to defeat enemies by land, but also by sea if need compelled it. He understood that the countries would be content if they were ruled either by a student of wisdom or if he might bring their governors to study wisdom. Arriving at the city of Ravenna, he travelled from there to Aachen so that he might discuss all these things with his nobles.

- 802.** [Obit of Brychtric, King of the West Saxons and the accession of Ecgberht]. But King Brychtric of the West Saxons had taken in marriage Eadburga, who was the daughter of the king of the Mercians, named Offa, who ordered the great rampart to be built between Britain and Mercia, that is from sea to sea. And when the daughter of the king had been elevated by many honours she became aroused with marvellous ambition, and began to live in the tyrannical manner of her father, and to curse all men; so that she was detested by all, not only by dukes and magistrates but also indeed by all the people. She never ceased to bring accusations to the king against all religious men; and in this way this foul-mouthed woman entwined her man with such flattery so that he began to accuse those men that he might deprive them of life or homeland; and if she could not achieve her objective from the king, she did

not hesitate to destroy <or to kill> them secretly by poison. There was at that time a certain wealthy young man, much beloved <or very much loved> and dear to the king already mentioned, whom, wanting to denounce him to the king but with minimal success, that malevolent female killed <or exterminated> him with poison. Of that poison the king, having himself unwittingly tasted it, died. She, however, had not planned to give the poison to the king but to the boy; which the chiefs anticipating, both drank from the goblet of death, and perished by the most bitter drink. From this timely <or wicked> murder that most wicked poisoner fleeing in great fear, travelled across the sea, with countless treasures, coming to Charles, the most renowned king of the Franks. When she stood before the dais, and had presented precious gifts to the king, he spoke to her in this way, 'Choose Eadburgh, whom you desire, me or my son who stands with me on the dais'. She without giving any thought to the matter stupidly answered, saying, 'If the choice is given to me, I choose your son rather than you, because he appears younger'. To this King Charles is said to have replied in this way, 'If you would have chosen me, you would have had my son; but because you chose him, you will have neither me nor him'. However, because of his dishonesty he endowed her with an excellent monastery, in which, having laid aside her secular attire, and with most hypocritical pretence taking on the habit of a nun, she passed a very few years; for, as this <detestable and> lamentable woman had lived <wickedly and> foolishly in her own land, so it was discovered that she was living in a foreign land in a much <more wicked>, miserable <and very foolish> manner. 'The boiling summer, as indeed it is said, may dry the corn, Autumn returns with laden fruit, Winter waters with flowing storms.' But neither the beauty of the summer, nor the cold of winter, was able to quell the libido of this most wicked queen; for after a short period <or a little time>, while she was a holy woman, as some thought, she was romanced by a certain lowborn man from her own people. 'Wandering clouds of error may stay, Yet marvels shall certainly remain to be seen' as is said of a woman taken in adultery. There is nothing therefore at which to wonder, for there is nothing concealed which shall not be known.

After this, by the command of the great emperor Charles, she was ejected from her holy monastery, to her great mental grief <and anguish>; and in poverty and misery she passed her life scandalously to the end. Eventually, in the company of one slave, begging daily from houses, towns and castles, she died miserably in Pavia. [Repetition of the accession of Ecgberht after Brychtric's death, with record of the length of his reign and of the kings who succeeded him, down to the accession of Alfred].

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