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ECCLESIASTICS OF THE CROWN UNDER KING EDGAR: A PROSOPOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF BISHOPS AND ABBOTS IN ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND, 959-975

by

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A Thesis
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Valerie C. Hauch
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King Edgar's royal charters frequently contain a formula which indicates that a grant of land or privilege was confirmed by the leading persons of the kingdom. For example, a representative charter sets forth the rights and duties attendant upon a certain estate, which the king declares he granted "with the consent of my chief men."¹ The same charter concludes by reiterating the formula of consent: "This charter has been written in the year of the incarnation of our Lord 968, and confirmed by the king together with all of his chief men whose names are seen to be present below."² Thereupon follows a list of witnesses to the royal transaction. Although the consenting formula is not explicitly present in every royal charter, the principle of confirmation by various prominent individuals in the kingdom is evidenced repeatedly in the lists of witnesses which accompany almost all of Edgar's grants.

This paper sets forth the results of an examination and identification of a selected group of these "chief men" who acted as

¹William Birch, ed., Cartularium Saxonicum (3 vols.; New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1964), III, B 1213. All references to specific charters from Birch's edition will be cited with the abbreviation B and the number of the document.

²Ibid.
witnesses to King Edgar's royal charters, the ecclesiastics. The approach involved in this inquiry is prosopographical rather than biographical. My object has been to glean from the sources the surviving information concerning the basic details of the lives and careers of the bishops and abbots whose names appear in Edgar's witness lists. In the great majority of cases it is not possible to produce fullfledged biographies owing to the paucity of evidence. This study has a twofold purpose. I have first sought to discover the identity of each of the chosen witnesses through establishing his title, office, family relationships, economic status, political activities, and all other information which reveals his significance in the affairs of England during Edgar's reign. Secondly, I have attempted to apply the results of my findings toward a fuller understanding of the components of government and society in Anglo-Saxon England during Edgar's reign.

In tenth-century England the starting point for the prosopography of bishops and abbots is the royal charter. The higher clergy were one of the three basic categories of witnesses to the king's charters in addition to royalty and the secular nobility. It is the charter evidence for this period and not ecclesiastical sources which provides the most complete list of names and titles for the church leadership at that time. Furthermore, although the bishops and abbots form distinct groups of witnesses owing to their ecclesiastical status, they must not be considered apart from the other groups of people who attested. One of the basic defining characteristics of the bishops and abbots whose names appear in the
lists is their function and status as charter witnesses. All of the
witnesses to royal charters, members of the royal family, bishops,
abbots, ealdormen, and thegns, belonged to an elite segment of
society, representing those closest to the king and invested with
the right and privilege to witness his grants. The ecclesiastics
shared with the other categories of witnesses the basic attribute
of being at the center of power in England while Edgar was king.
It is clear that the role which bishops and abbots played as charter
witnesses and the information which charters yield about their
careers gain greater illumination through comparison and contrast
with, and not apart from, what charters tell about other groups of
witnesses.

A prosopographical study of prominent ecclesiastics during any
period of Anglo-Saxon history would undoubtedly yield fruitful
results. Edgar's reign (959-975) is particularly well suited for
such an investigation. Complete and partial witness lists to 139
royal charters ascribed to Edgar have survived, the largest number
for any Anglo-Saxon king. The total number of signatures, lay and
ecclesiastical, from all witness lists is 3,285 and these repre-
sent a minimum of 210 separate individuals.¹ It is of course
possible and likely that additional charters which have perished
would have supplied further names. However, the existing number
and repetition of names is such that it can be safely assumed that
a large majority of the individuals who witnessed Edgar's charters

¹ See Chapter II for a discussion of how these figures were arrived at.
are accounted for by the surviving subscriptions. Thus a prosopographical study of Edgar's bishops and abbots proceeds with a fairly complete set of individuals, which gives added weight and value to the conclusions ascertainable from such an analysis. This is a feature not common to research in Anglo-Saxon history, where scanty evidence and gaps in information are usually a constant element in all attempts at interpretation.

Furthermore, the significance of Edgar's reign in the development of Anglo-Saxon England calls for increased attention and emphasis. Edgar's seventeen years as king marked a period during which England was temporarily free from the threat of foreign invasion and war and when the efforts of his predecessors in regard to territorial expansion and the augmentation of royal power could be consolidated and furthered. Conditions of peace and relatively strong government also fostered a flowering of culture and learning, chiefly expressed in a monastic reformation, which had not been seen in England since the so-called golden age of Bede in the late seventh and early eighth centuries, and which in fact surpassed the earlier period in scope and penetration. The third quarter of the tenth century witnessed the mature stage of Anglo-Saxon development before decline set in under Aethelred II, Scandinavian conquest by Cnut occurred, and English society felt the Normanizing influences of Edward the Confessor and William the Bastard. One must look to Edgar's reign to view the culmination of Old English institutions and society. Thereafter, the Anglo-Saxon scholar must speak of
survival, adaptation, and integration.

However, to describe Edgar's reign as the high point of Anglo-Saxon development is not to suggest an achievement in the creation of a strong monarchy and government parallel, for example, to the accomplishment of William I. Compared to Anglo-Norman and Plantagenant England, Edgar's kingdom must appear monarchically weak, fragile in political unity, and lacking in social integration. Edgar's succession marked the conclusion of three years of political fragmentation initiated when a number of nobles had defected from Edgar's brother King Eadwig and had chosen Edgar as king of Mercia and Northumbria, which he ruled between 957 and 959, while Eadwig continued to command only southern England. The relative ease with which this division of the kingdom had taken place seemed to belie the efforts at unification to which Kings Alfred, Edward the Elder, Aethelstan, Edmund, and Eadred had devoted themselves. The kingdom which was again unified under Edgar in 959 following Eadwig's death had little or no national consciousness. Moreover, throughout Edgar's reign Northumbria and eastern Mercia, which together comprised the area of Scandinavian settlement called Danelaw, remained all but autonomous, retaining its own traditions and institutions. In the rest of England government functioned primarily at the local level. It is hardly possible to speak of an English state in the tenth century.

Nonetheless, the limitations of central government and royal power should not obscure the achievements which occurred under
Edgar in many spheres, including law and the administration of justice,\textsuperscript{1} land tenure,\textsuperscript{2} military organization,\textsuperscript{3} currency reform,\textsuperscript{4} royal ideology and the growth of the monarchy,\textsuperscript{5} art, literature, and learning,\textsuperscript{6} and ecclesiastical reform.\textsuperscript{7}

Among the many faceted developments of Anglo-Saxon society under Edgar, one aspect of his reign has tended to be the focal point of modern scholarship: the monastic revival carried out under the leadership of St. Dunstan, St. Aethelwold, St. Oswald, and 

\begin{itemize}
  \item Agnes Jane Robertson, ed. and trans., The Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925).
  \item Eric John, Land Tenure in Early England (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1960).
\end{itemize}
many others. From the nineteenth century until the present time historians have demonstrated that the reform of monastic life was an outstanding feature of Edgar's reign with far reaching effect, not only on the church, but also in its influence on land tenure, the monarchy, and the tone of politics in the second half of the tenth century. In spite of this attention to ecclesiastical developments under Edgar, prosopography has not been applied with any concentration to the leadership of the church at this time. Considerable work has of course been done on the three great reformers and a number of others have been more or less identified. No attempt, however, has been made systematically to bring together and analyze all surviving information on the power hierarchy of the English church at this time. The need for this type of study is evident, for it will broaden and give new perspective to existing knowledge not only of the monastic revival but also of Edgar's reign as a whole. As I have indicated, the availability of a defined set of ecclesiastics supplied by the witness lists to Edgar's charters and the significance of his reign combine to render the period highly suitable to such a prosopographical analysis.

The primary evidence upon which this study depends consists of all of the sources for Edgar's reign in so far as they contain references to any of the bishops and abbots. This evidence falls into a number of categories, which vary in their value and reliability. By far the largest and most important group of sources are the diplomatic materials, which include royal and private charters,
wills, and memoranda. The clues to the identity of many witnesses are found only in charters and wills. Here may be learned or inferred the offices, duties, activities, and chronology of the careers of many of the ecclesiastics, as well as their landed possessions and kinship relations. These details must usually be sought out and assembled piecemeal. A royal charter may reveal that a witness was the brother of another witness. A private grant may show that the same witness was a monastic benefactor. A will may state that the individual held estates in Berkshire. The memorandum of a monastery's possessions might indicate that the same person took part in a shire moot. Where direct evidence is lacking, the approximate dates of the person's tenure of office may be established through determining the dates of his first and last appearances as a charter witness.

The extent of the evidence provided by diplomatic sources naturally differs greatly from witness to witness. In some cases a surprising amount may be learned from scrutiny of charters and wills. On the other hand, for some persons the references are disappointingly few or lacking altogether. The information provided by these documents is often suggestive rather than definitive and raises more questions than are answered. Compilation and interpretation resemble the assembly of a puzzle where some or most of the pieces are missing. Nonetheless, the majority of evidence for all the persons who figure in this examination is to be found in charter materials, and while elusive and fragmentary,
the information provided is also the most objective and reliable of all the groups of sources. Except in the case of spurious charters, which will be discussed in the next chapter, there existed no motive for fabricating information about persons, because such information was usually peripheral and incidental to the main purpose of the documents. The diplomatic sources for Edgar's reign are particularly rich when compared with those of other periods and also in comparison to the other categories of evidence for his reign. The bulk of my findings on the identity of witnesses derives from these sources.

Chronicles provide on the whole less extensive but sometimes more definite evidence than charters and wills. The most important chronicle sources for this purpose are the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Florence of Worcester's Chronicle, the first of which is a contemporary record of events and the second a later, but highly reliable source. Both of these unfortunately possess only meagre entries for the years of Edgar's reign, but do occasionally supply some illuminating piece of information about a witness, such as the year of death, date of appointment to office, or the identification of the episcopal see held by a bishop. Chronicles of later date than Florence's, such as those of William of Malmesbury, Eadmer, Henry Huntingdon, Roger of Wendover, and others, are for the most


part useless for this study. Only the most outstanding figures among the witnesses such as Dunstan, Aethelwold, and Oswold receive mention and the information provided is a repetition of the earlier sources.

The cartulary-chronicles of monastic houses are of mixed value. These sources record the history and endowments of various abbeys, interspersing charters and narrative material. The cartulary-chronicles which contain evidence for Edgar's reign were all composed after the Norman Conquest and hence must be treated with caution, for the claims of land and privilege and other information pertaining to Anglo-Saxon times often became embellished over the passage of years and in accordance with the interests of the particular monastery. However, these records do provide valuable material on the lives of some witnesses, particularly those who were directly involved in the affairs of the abbeys in question either as bishops or abbots.

The lives of Saints Dunstan, Oswold, and Aethelwold are a class of evidence which again must be used with discernment and are of mixed value. In spite of the possible existence of ecclesiastical bias which must be taken into account when exploring such sources for evidence pertaining to the lives of witnesses, the earliest of these biographies, which are nearly contemporary accounts, are very fruitful sources of information, particularly of course for the careers of the three great reformers, but also for associated persons. The later lives decrease in value, as they generally repeat and embellish the earlier sources. The saints' lives have the
added distinction of being more fully developed and continuous narratives than the generally brief or cursory statements of chronicles and charters, and therefore sometimes provide a fuller background and framework in which to understand the activities and facts relating to witnesses who receive mention.

The primary sources as detailed above may on the one hand be judged to provide but scanty information on the majority of ecclesiastical witnesses, but on the other hand prosopography does not proceed with the assumption that comprehensive biographies can be constructed for its subjects. It is indeed a method of historical inquiry which is particularly suited to areas of scholarship where surviving sources are limited in quantity and scope. A number of the ecclesiastical witnesses have until now remained mere names while the pieces of evidence which have come to light concerning many others have never been systematically collected and analyzed. Where even a few facts about the lives of these individuals can be established it may be considered not an insignificant contribution in a discipline such as Anglo-Saxon history where the value of each piece of evidence is heightened by the dearth of sources.

The secondary sources which have proved helpful to the investigation are of two types. The first of these might be described as consisting of reference works, including indices to charters and wills, onomastical dictionaries, registrees for abbots and bishops which give dates and location of office. Such resources have proved

1 See Bibliography for a listing of these sources and citations.
of very great aid in treating the primary sources and in determining where to locate information on specific individuals. A not insignificant number of the witnesses under consideration receive some form of identification in these works, which was often a starting point for more in depth examination.

The other group of secondary materials, the interpretive works, are few in number. Most basic textbooks and specialized monographs on Anglo-Saxon history give some attention to the more outstanding bishops and abbots, such as Dunstan, Oswold, Aethelwold, and a few others. The emphasis given to the monastic reformation has resulted in rather intensive work on the lives and careers of the three principal reformers. There has been much less and in some cases no attention paid to many of the other bishops and abbots.

In addition to the secondary sources which pertain specifically to the identification and analysis of the witnesses, I have also consulted a number of works dealing with aspects of Edgar’s reign and Anglo-Saxon church history, which better enable me to recognize the framework into which my findings fit and the importance of my conclusions either as confirming, expanding, or challenging prevailing interpretations.¹

The methodology applied to this project consists of three stages. First, a determination of the number of all individual witnesses, ecclesiastical and lay, and the frequency of their signatures was obtained through compiling from all the witness lists

¹See Bibliography under Secondary Sources, Interpretive and General Works for a listing of these sources and citations.
the number of times each separate name with its identifying title occurs. Thus, for example, it was determined that one witness of the name and title Aelfhere, dux, appears in 109 of Edgar's charters, while an individual who signed as Aelfstan, dux, witnesses only one charter. In this manner an estimate of the number of witnesses and the charters to which they subscribed was obtained. It was necessary not only to determine the number of ecclesiastical witnesses, but also the number of secular witnesses in order to be able to make comparisons between the two groups.

The next step was to take each individual bishop and abbot and scan all the source materials pertaining to Edgar's reign for every reference, definite and possible, to individuals of identical name and rank. In many cases this search was not confined to evidence strictly adhering to the dates of Edgar's kingship, but extended to both earlier and later sources in order to determine as completely as possible the facts relating to the life of each person. Following this approach, the complete evidence which has survived was gathered and analyzed in order to construct the identity or possible identify of all witnesses.¹

Finally, after individual identification had been made it was necessary to recognize and analyze interrelationships among the bishops and abbots by means of establishing the various smaller groups and classifications to which they belonged within the general category of royal witnesses and to ascertain other common character-

¹See Appendix II for the collected information on each bishop and abbot. All future references to witnesses in the text or footnotes are cited in Appendix II under the names of the witnesses.
istics which they shared. This provided the means of organizing a vast amount of detailed information relating to over fifty persons, which could then be meaningfully applied to expanding knowledge of the church, monarchy, society, and politics during Edgar's reign. Some of the groups into which the witnesses could be divided were evident at the outset of my research. The principal of these were holders of office, members of families and kinship groups, and land owners. Yet a further means of defining the witnesses was by their geographical affiliations. A pattern of association which did not emerge until later was the group of witnesses bearing Scandinavian names.

The utility of analyzing the witnesses in terms of the groups to which they belonged is twofold. It both defines more clearly the identity of individuals by bringing their common roles into sharper focus and it elucidates the nature of the groups to which they belonged by revealing what membership in that group required and consisted of in terms of personal characteristics and qualifications. The next step after finding the relationships between individuals by identifying shared characteristics and common group affiliations was to study the relationships between the various groups of witnesses. For example, what if any relation was there between the category of kinsmen to the royal family and the group of bishops? What was the status of abbots as land owners? How many bishops were of Scandinavian origin? It is clear that the answers to these and other similarly conceived questions will prove constructive in understanding many spheres of mid-tenth-century
Anglo-Saxon society.

The objective of any prosopographical inquiry is ultimately to extract from the findings information and conclusions which may be used to gain a better knowledge of the broader aspects of the society in which the chosen group of individuals lived and operated. Accordingly, this paper will apply its results to several questions and problems regarding Anglo-Saxon England during the period of Edgar's reign. On the basis of evidence provided by the identification and examination of the ecclesiastical witnesses, conclusions will be drawn and postulated and questions raised concerning the monarchy, the function of central and local government, the church and its relation to secular authority, land tenure, and the composition of political and economic power in England at that time. These areas form different facets of one central theme: the position of bishops and abbots in the power structure in England during the reign of King Edgar.
CHAPTER II
A DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARTERS AND WITNESS LISTS
AND A GENERAL CHARACTERIZATION OF THE WITNESSES

The examination and analysis of those bishops and abbots who acted as witnesses to Edgar's charters must be preceded by a brief discussion of the charters themselves. This will provide a framework for understanding the purpose for which the ecclesiastical and lay subscribers assembled together and the composition of all witnesses.

The 139 documents which preserve the names of witnesses belong to the category of diplomata, which includes all kingly instruments. These particular diplomas belong to a still narrower designation, the carta or royal charter. Functionally speaking, these charters like all Anglo-Saxon charters are concerned with either grants of land or grants of privilege. The majority of charters under consideration here belong to a yet more precise classification, the land-book (landboc), which was a form of royal endowment to ecclesiastical persons and establishments and to lay individuals, involving a grant of book-land, which meant land granted in perpetuity to the recipient and carrying certain obligations, while being freed from the customary burdens attending folk-land, the land from which the king drew food rents and other services.

The other purpose for which charters were promulgated, the conveyance of privilege, concerned mainly the church, and in Edgar's reign especially the monastic institution. The privileges granted
were of many types. Specific and limited privileges might be accorded, such as the rights to a royal salt cellar or vineyard. On the other hand, a number of Edgar's charters concern much broader privileges, such as the foundation charters of newly established monasteries which delineated the rights these abbeys were to enjoy. Other charters of privilege confirmed, restored, or broadened already existing rights.

Of the 139 charters, 112, or roughly eighty percent, are grants of bookland, of which in sixty-four instances the recipients were secular persons and in forty-seven cases the grantee was an ecclesiastical person or institution. Of the remaining twenty percent of the charters, twenty-five are conveyances of privilege all relating to the church and two are leases of land (rather than grants in perpetuity) to a nobleman. In fifty-two percent of the total number of charters (seventy-two grants) the recipient was a clerical person or establishment, while forty-eight percent of the grants (sixty-seven charters) were to secular individuals. Thus it is evident that the people who witnessed and thereby confirmed Edgar's charters were primarily involved in approving land transactions as well as some grants of privilege, which together were fairly evenly divided between ecclesiastical and lay spheres.

It must also be noted that the regional distribution of estates conveyed in the book-land grants does not follow an even pattern. The great majority (seventy-seven percent) pertain to lands in southern England, with the greatest concentration in the four shires.
of Berkshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Somerset, where sixty-one or over half of the total estates granted by the 112 land books were located. The remaining estates are scattered through the Midlands, eastern and northern England. Of these, however, there are only two charters making grants in York and other areas north of the Humber River. This distribution of the estates which Edgar booked is significant in determining the regional affiliations of the witnesses. As the greater number of charters pertain to southern-lying estates, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of witnesses are also to be connected with shires in the south of England, as the site at which charters were issued depended on where the king happened to be. Therefore, those persons gathered around him who acted as witnesses would change to some degree according to the king's itinerary. The geographical affiliations of the bishops and abbots will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

Just as the Anglo-Saxon royal charter is characterized by a specialized function, so also it is defined by its unique form. Edgar's charters mark a late stage in the evolution of the Old English charter, while still conforming to those of his predecessors in their basic formulaic structure. The component parts may be briefly described as (1) the invocation, (2) the proem, (3) the superscription, (4) the inscription, (5) the exposition, (6) the disposition, (7) the sanction, (8) the boundary clause (in the case of book-land grants), (9) the date, and (10) the attestations. These formulae are defined respectively as (1) a pious exclamation, (2) a scriptural or moral sentiment, (3) the
name and title of the grantor, (4) the name of the beneficiary, (5) the reasons for the grant, (6) the substantive portion, which described the nature of the land or privileges conveyed and the rights and duties of the grantee, (7) a pronouncement of doom and punishment on potential violators of the charter, (8) a description of the boundaries of the estate being conferred, (9) the date of promulgation, and (10) the names of the witnesses. Thus it may be seen that the witness list itself was but one component of the highly developed structure and organization of the Anglo-Saxon charter. The great majority of Edgar's charters were written in Latin with a vernacular boundary clause.

Before passing onto a more detailed characterization of the witness lists to Edgar's charters, a comment is in order on the problem of charter authenticity and its implications in the treatment of the attestations. The task of establishing charter authenticity frequently does not yield decisive results. Outside of a relatively small number of charters which are obviously authentic or spurious there remains a large number which must be said to lie somewhere between the two extremes of reliability. Assessments of authenticity often establish only the fact that a given charter apparently passes the tests of internal and external criticism to varying degrees and may therefore be judged authentic, questionable, or a fabrication only within a relative framework. One of the most important tests of a charter's plausibility is the credibility of its witness list. If it can be demonstrated that the subscriptions are those of persons living at the stated date of promulgation and holding
the title or office by which they are described, this in itself con-
stitutes good evidence that a charter is authentic. However, the
mere fact that a witness list contains irregularities does not auto-
matically indicate a forgery. A later copyist may have erred in
reproducing the witnesses while retaining the authentic basis of the
charter. Furthermore, if a charter may be shown to be spurious or
highly dubious it does not imply necessarily that the witnesses are
also false. A scribe or other person may have interpolated the
contents of a charter while retaining the original list of sub-
scribers or may even have completely forged a document, but have
added the names of witnesses from an authentic charter of the period.
In either of these cases the witnesses would still represent persons
who lived and held office at the date affixed to the charter, though
they of course would not have been actual witnesses to the altered
or fabricated transaction.

The assessment of the authenticity of Edgar's charters has been
necessary to this inquiry in order to arrive at criteria for the
treatment of the witness lists. The witnesses to spurious documents
obviously have to be examined with caution to determine if they
represent real persons, belonging chronologically to Edgar's reign.
Knowledge of the relative degree of charter authenticity is one of
the first steps toward defining the actual number of witnesses with
which we are dealing and deleting the names of those who could not
have been present as subscribers.

The number of the latter is relatively small in this case. Of
the 139 charters only thirteen are definitely spurious, while twenty-
four are questionable and 102 are probably more or less authentic.¹ Seven of the thirteen spurious charters contain basically authentic witness lists. In other words, although the transactions ascribed to the documents may be fabricated, the attestations are those of persons whose names appear as witnesses to other authentic charters. In the other six documents, however, the witness lists as well as the grants are forgeries. Two charters are noteworthy for having anachronistic witness lists. B 1210, one of the spurious charters, names Edgar as grantor, but is dated 867 and the witnesses are from the reign of Aethelred I of Wessex. A more interesting case is that of B 1308, which records an authentic transaction of Edgar's reign, but whose witnesses belong to the time of Aethelbert of Wessex and are in fact identical with those of a charter from that king's reign, B 510. The scribe who copied B 1308 apparently mistakenly copied these earlier witnesses onto one of Edgar's charters.

With this introductory to the function, form and reliability of Edgar's charters it is now possible to undertake an examination specifically of the witness lists with the aim of evaluating what information concerning the witnesses is available through the context in which their names appear. Of the 139 charters with which we are dealing, twenty-one have preserved only incomplete witness lists, and in thirteen other charters it is probable that the subscriptions have survived in fragmentary form. An incomplete list is defined as one in which after a number of attestations an indica-

¹See Appendix 1 for a listing of authentic, questionable, and spurious charters.
tion is present that the original charter included additional names. Thus in the designated twenty-one charters such phrases as *Et ceteri duces et ministri*, \(^1\) *multis aliis*, \(^2\) or other similar indications follow the signature of the last witness, signifying that a later copyist omitted a portion of the original witness list. The thirteen additional charters suggested to have shortened witness lists do not contain such specific statements of abridgement, but nonetheless are most certainly lacking the original number of subscriptions, as the names break off after only a few signatures of those individuals who always lead in order of precedence, such as the king, archbishops, and bishops. Therefore there are 105 charters which contain full witness lists. Eight of these are spurious and one (B 1308) has an anachronistic group of witnesses. Hence for the purpose of this characterization we are dealing with ninety-six witness lists.

The witness lists vary widely in the number of subscriptions, from a low number of thirteen in B 1054 and B 1185 to a high number of eighty in B 1047. The average number of witnesses attesting charters with complete lists is twenty-eight. Although it may appear that the number of witnesses was determined according to no discernible rule, there do appear from the numbers alone to be two categories of attestations. First, in fifty-nine charters out of the ninety-six the tally of witnesses ranges from thirteen to thirty

\(^1\) B 1081  
\(^2\) B 1122
persons. In these charters the same names are fairly constant in their appearance. The other thirty-seven charters whose numbers of witnesses range from thirty-one to eighty continue for the most part to retain the individuals whose names appear on the charters with fewer subscriptions while adding other names which occur with much less regularity. Thus it would appear that there was a certain core group of persons who consistently acted as witnesses of Edgar's charters, as well as a large number of other individuals who signed only occasionally. Therefore the number of witnesses who attested to any given document seems to have been determined according to at least two principles: first, that certain people of a relatively fixed number whether by duty or right almost always subscribed, and secondly that any additions to this core group were the product of chance depending on the individual situation under which the charter was promulgated and who happened to be assembled with the king at the time and location of issuance. Special and important gatherings would have added to the number of witnesses as would have those grants themselves which were considered of great or unusual significance.

If the number of witnesses differs from charter to charter, the organization of the witness lists does not, but adheres to fixed formulae. Each witness is almost always identified by name and title. The location of his attestation is determined by a relatively strict order of precedence. In this ranking the king witnesses first, followed by archbishops, bishops, abbots, duces, and ministri. Some-
times the abbots follow the duces instead of the bishops. On rare occasions the names of other persons are included, such as the queen, who signed after the king or archbishops, royal aethelings, whose names are generally after the king, and members of the royal household who witnessed after the duces and before the ministri. Another group of witnesses appearing infrequently were priests. However, their signatures occur only on spurious charters, and they may not be considered an authentic category of witnesses.

Within these groups of witnesses there is also a somewhat more flexible ordering of precedence. The name of the king is almost invariably followed by that of the archbishop of Canterbury, who is succeeded by the archbishop of York. In the early years of Edgar's reign the bishop of London heads the group of attesting bishops, while in later years the bishop of Winchester takes the lead. The abbot of Abingdon almost always leads the abbots in subscribing, while among the duces the ealdorman of Mercia is first, followed by the ealdorman of Hampshire and then the others whose order of attesting varies from charter to charter. It is more difficult to recognize a pattern in the signatures of the ministri. However, certain names do appear with frequency at the head of the list of ministri, which would seem to indicate that there were distinctions of status within this group. It may be concluded that the arrangement of the witnesses was dependent first on the office or title held by the individual and secondly on personal prominence within the particular group of office holders.
The form of the subscriptions also follow general formulae. The name of each witness was preceded by the sign of the cross. Individuals of royal and ecclesiastical status often had individual phrases of assenting, while the lay witnesses signed with a set phrase or no consenting formula at all. For example in B 1190 the archbishop of Canterbury witnesses as *Ego Dunstan Dorobernensis aeclessiae archiepiscopius largifluam benivoli regis donationem venerans crucis signaculo corroboravi*, the other bishops use shorter formulae of assent, and the *duces* and *ministri* all attest as *Ego X confirmavi*. It should be noted that although reference has been made to the "signatures" of those "signing" charters, these terms are used figuratively, for Anglo-Saxon charters do not have autograph witness lists.

In addition to names and offices other information is occasionally provided about a given witness. Two witnesses may be identified as brothers or kinsmen such as in B 1301 where the following attestations occur: *Ego Byrhtelm geminique Athelwoldi espiscipi consensimus et subscripsimus*, and further on *Ego Ethelwerd fraterque meus Aelfwerd ministri consensimus et subscripsimus*. Generally in the case of bishops, abbots, and *duces* the location of their office is not indicated, but infrequently such information does appear, for example in B 1221, *Ego Aelfstan Lundoniensis ecclesiae episcopus predictum donum consensi*, and in B 1178, *Ego Alfstanus abbas Glastoniae consilium dedi*.

With this general description of Edgar's witness lists, of their structure, and the basic information they convey as to the categories
and identifying features of the witnesses, the problems attendant on
the use and treatment of the attestations may now be considered. The
first step in studying the witnesses is of course to determine how
many there are. This, however, is not a simple process and is accom­
panied by such complications—owing to ambiguous evidence—that in
the final analysis only an approximate number of individuals may be
reckoned.

There are a total of 3,285 separate signatures of witnesses on
Edgar's 139 charters, of which 306 attestations belong to the thir­
ten spurious documents. The distribution of signatures among the
various categories of witnesses is detailed on the chart on page
twenty-seven.

The count of individuals begins by noting the number of charters
on which identical names and titles occurs. For the royal family,
archbishops, bishops, abbots, and duces, this method produces a fairly
certain and fixed number of persons, owing to the relatively low
number of witnesses belonging to each of these groups and the lack of
duplication of names. For example, there is only one archbishop
named Dunstan, one bishop named Osulf, one abbot named Osgar, and one
ealdorman named Aethelwine. Therefore whenever one of these names
with its title occurs it may be identified as belonging to one indi­
vidual. The only problem in numbering these witnesses arises out of
a plurality of or mistaken titles accorded to the same person. How­
ever, in the former instance once the variety of spellings given to
a certain name is learned there is little difficulty in determining
## Distribution of Signatures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>On Total Charters</th>
<th>On Authentic and Questionable Charters</th>
<th>On Spurious Charters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Mother</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aethelings</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archbishops</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishops</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbots</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbess</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duces</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministri</td>
<td>1122</td>
<td>1086</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (total)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consul</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subkings</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipulus</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdormen</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comes et prefectus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefectus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3285</strong></td>
<td><strong>2979</strong></td>
<td><strong>306</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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the identity of a witness. For example, in addition to the regular form of the name of Ealdorman Aethelweard, the name also appears as Aethelward, Aethelwerd, Athelwerd, Ethelweard, Adelward, and Atelward. The orthography used in this paper is based on the forms adopted by Whitelock and Robertson.¹

Plurality of titles ascribed to the same person is found only among the bishops and duces. In regard to the bishops this poses no problem, for whether an individual is described as episcopus, pontifex, or antistes there is no doubt that the term indicates the office of bishop. The title of dux is very seldom replaced by other terms. In a few charters the title of ealdorman occurs and in these cases it is obvious that the term carries the same meaning as dux. The only other term very infrequently used instead of dux is comes, which again when it occurs is clearly a substitution for the title of dux. On occasion an erroneous title occurs, which may be credited to a scribal mistake. In B 1094 five individuals who always sign as duces on other charters to which they attest are here called ministri. This is obviously an error and it is not to be thought that five new ministri have suddenly appeared as witnesses.

The last point to recognize in tabulating numbers in these groups is that of possible changes of status during the course of Edgar's reign from abbot to bishop or from minister to dux. This is best verified through other evidence, but where evidence is lacking the

witness lists themselves often suggest such elevations of rank. Where the name of a certain individual who signs consistently as abbas for the first five years of the reign suddenly disappears from the group of attesting abbots and the same name appears in the list of bishops where no such name had previously been, it is of course almost surely the case that the former abbot has now been elevated to a bishopric. Thus only one person is counted for these names and titles rather than two. The same holds true of changes from ministri to duces.

It is far more difficult to arrive at the number of ministri who witnessed Edgar's charters. There are 1,122 signatures of ministri alone. In several instances two or more individuals of this rank having the same name appear in one witness list. Owing to this plurality of witnesses with identical names it is impossible to determine with absolute certainty in charters where only one person of the name signs which of the two or more persons bearing the name he might be. Moreover, it cannot even be assumed that the greatest number of times identical names of ministri occurs in one witness list is an indication of the number of witnesses so named. That is, is three ministri called "Aelfric" witness one charter it is not axiomatic that these same three individuals account for all other signatures of ministri named "Aelfric" in other charters. Is is not impossible, though it is very unlikely, that every single signature of an Aelfric, minister, belonged to a different person. Therefore, the largest number of ministri of identical name appearing together in any one witness list represents the least possible number of subscribers of that name from all witness lists.
These considerations bear some merit in securing an approximate number of ministri. It also seems valid to employ the assumption that the group of persons who bore the title minister, although many in comparison to other categories of witnesses, was not of so large a size or indeterminate a character as to represent completely haphazard and ever changing collections of people who witnessed charters. Relatively few names appear only once or twice as witnesses and there is a large degree of continuity and consistency to the names of subscribing ministri. Therefore, although only the least possible number of ministri can be obtained by counting each identical name as belonging to one person using the method indicated for reckoning numbers of ministri with duplicate names, there is good reason to suppose that this represents a fairly accurate figure.

Minister is generally translated as king's thegn or thegn, the latter term being used in this paper. A few witness lists substitute miles for minister, individuals of the same name interchangeably bearing either title. The other titles applied to names which usually are listed as minister are consul, prefectus, and discifer, which apparently were not synonymous with the office of minister, but denoted some special position or office in addition to thegnhood. Two other special titles, provost and prepositus occur only in two spurious charters, which would indicate that there were no such persons holding such offices under Edgar.

In a small number of charters names appear in the witness lists without any title. This is probably attributable to subsequent scribal deletion. The location of the names in the list and their
identical form with titled names in other lists generally makes clear to what group of witnesses they belonged, the majority being ministri. There is one final group of witnesses which must be included in the total number. They appear only in two charters and are called kings and subkings of lands tributory to Edgar's kingdom. Although the authenticity of their signatures has been questioned, their names do correspond to historical personages of the period.

Applying the methods of counting and identifying individuals as above described, a minimum of 210 separate witnesses has been obtained. This total does not include those witnesses who appear only on spurious charters and whose existence is substantiated by no other evidence nor does it include the witnesses on the two anachronistic lists. The chart on page thirty-two illustrates the groups comprising the total number of witnesses with indications of the possible range or number of individuals in each category.

As emphasized, 210 is the least possible number of individuals. However, it may be considered a fairly accurate indication of the size of the group of witnesses. Even if the higher limits are accepted for abbots, ealdormen, and tributory kings, and a considerable allowance is made for duplication of names among the thegns, the total number would be unlikely to exceed 250. Although population figures pertaining to tenth-century England have not been estimated, the population has been put at 726,000 in the mid-ninth century and had

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1See Appendix III for spurious and anachronistic witnesses.

Groups and Numbers of Witnesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number or Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royal family</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(King, Queen, Aethelings, Queen Mother)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tributory kings and subkings</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archbishops</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishops elevated to archbishoprics during Edgar's reign</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishops</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbots elevated to bishoprics during Edgar's reign</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbots possibly elevated to bishoprics during Edgar's reign</td>
<td>0-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbots</td>
<td>21-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbess</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdormen (duces, comes)</td>
<td>16-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thegns (ministri) promoted to ealdormen during Edgar's reign</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thegns (ministri) possibly promoted to ealdormen during Edgar's reign</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thegns (ministri, including those occasionally designated as consul, discipulus, or prefectus)</td>
<td>128(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total minimum number of witnesses</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)This represents a minimum number. The maximum number would be the total number of separate signatures of all thegns, which is not a meaningful figure for reasons outlined above.
grown to 1,100,000 by 1086.\footnote{J. C. Russell, *British Medieval Population* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1948), p. 54.} Assuming the population during Edgar's reign to fall somewhere between these two figures, 913,000 being the mean, the total number of witnesses represent about two-hundredths of one percent of the total population of England at that time. Such a calculation is not to be considered trivial, for it indicates the very small size and select nature of the group of persons who were closest to the king and exercised power during his reign.

It is evident that the witnesses belong to five major categories of offices: royalty (including tributory kings and subkings), bishops (including archbishops), abbots, ealdormen, and thegns. Fifty to fifty-six of the 210 individuals or about twenty-four percent of the total are ecclesiastical personnel, archbishops, bishops, abbots, and one abbess. Secular persons, royalty, ealdormen, and thegns, are numbered at 160 or seventy-six percent of the total. The thegns as a group of course predominate numerically, making up sixty-one percent of the total witnesses. It is interesting to note that ecclesiastical persons account for thirty-nine percent of the total number of charter signatures, while representing only about a quarter of the actual number of witnesses. This would indicate that, although the group of bishops and abbots was considerably smaller than the group of secular witnesses, ecclesiastics signed more regularly than ealdormen and thegns.

It has been suggested that a core group of witnesses existed within the larger number. The members of this group are distinguished
by their repeated appearance in a significant proportion of charters, an indication that these people were closer to the king in terms of the authority they exercised and as counselors to the monarch than the other witnesses who signed charters on a much more irregular basis. The composition of this group seems to have been based on two criteria: The nature of the offices held and personal characteristics, such as kinship to the king and/or outstanding ability. The following chart shows those witnesses who remained members of the core group throughout Edgar's reign and those who gained membership at points during the reign.

Witnesses in the Core Group, 959-975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual, Identified by Office or Name</th>
<th>Number of Charters Signed From Total of 139</th>
<th>Percentage of Charters Signed From Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archbishop of Canterbury</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archbishop of York</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(two persons successively)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Winchester</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(two persons successively)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of London</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Wells</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(two persons successively)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Hereford</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Ramsbury</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(three persons successively)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Credition</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(two persons successively)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual, Identified by Office or Name</td>
<td>Number of Charters Signed From Total of 139</td>
<td>Percentage of Charters Signed From Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Lichfield (three persons successively)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Rochester</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Worcester</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbot of Abingdon (two persons successively)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdorman of Mercia</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdorman of Hampshire</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdorman of Essex</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdorman of East Anglia (two persons successively)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdorman of Devon (two persons successively)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdorman in the Southeast Midlands</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aelfsige, thegn</td>
<td>up to 65&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aelfweard, thegn</td>
<td>up to 45</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aelfwine, thegn</td>
<td>up to 72</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aethelsige, thegn</td>
<td>up to 54</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aethelweard, thegn</td>
<td>up to 59</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brihtferth, thegn</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osweard, thegn</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wulfstan, thegn</td>
<td>up to 60</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aelfgar, thegn (signs from 959 to 963, the year of his death)</td>
<td>signs 21 out of 47 charters</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup>Indefinite numbers indicate a possibility of the number of signatures being divided between two or more persons of the same name.
Witnesses Added to the Core Group, 963-964

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual, Identified by Office or Name</th>
<th>Number of Charters Signed From Total Issued 963X964-975</th>
<th>Percentage of Charters Signed From Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bishop of Selsey</td>
<td>signs 25 out of 98</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbot of Bath</td>
<td>signs 50 out of 98</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbot of St. Augustine's</td>
<td>signs up to 39 of 98</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbot of Milton Abbey</td>
<td>signs 21 out of 79</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdorman of York</td>
<td>signs 37 out of 97</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbot of New Minster</td>
<td>signs 46 out of 79</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a total of forty-five individuals, who because of their office or other relationship to the king appear as relatively frequent witnesses and must be considered as composing a distinct group among the witnesses as a whole. Of these forty-five people, twenty-six, or about fifty-eight percent, were ecclesiastics and the new additions to the core group between 963 and 964 were all, with one exception, churchmen. It has been established that the total number of bishops and abbots lay between fifty and fifty-seven. Thus about half of all bishops and abbots belonged to the king's select inner circle of witnesses. The same is roughly true for ealdormen, as eight of the sixteen to eighteen ealdormen serving throughout Edgar's reign and one out of the three appointed during the course of the reign were included with the core group of witnesses. The ecclesiastics of course greatly predominate numerically.

The foregoing analysis of Edgar's charters and their witness lists has provided a basic characterization of the ecclesiastical
witnesses in terms of their numbers, some of the smaller groups to which they belonged, their specific role as ratifiers of royal grants, and their relationship to other groups of witnesses. The nature of the problems involved in the interpretation of the evidence and the methods and assumptions which must be relied on in pursuing this inquiry have also been set forth. It is now possible to examine in greater detail what may be learned about the lives and careers of those individuals who comprised the leadership of the English church under Edgar.
CHAPTER III

THE LEADERSHIP OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH UNDER EDGAR

The fifty some persons who signed Edgar's charters as archbishops, bishops, and abbots together formed the nucleus of ecclesiastical power in England during his reign. The evidence for their individual careers has been assembled and analyzed in Appendix II.¹ My purpose here will be a characterization of the bishops and abbots collectively and in terms of their group affiliations. In this way, shared and common characteristics among these categories of witnesses will emerge and differentiating features will be identified. The archbishops and bishops will first be examined and then the abbots. The results of this examination will provide some insight into ecclesiastical leadership qualifications and characteristics and will define more clearly the objectives of the English church and its relationship with royal and secular authority during this period.

THE BISHOPS

Twenty-eight authentic bishops appear as witnesses to Edgar's charters from 959 to 975. These men presided during different periods of the reign over the seventeen or eighteen episcopal sees into which

¹Throughout this chapter references to individuals and to the evidence for their careers appearing in the text and in footnotes receive full bibliographic citations in Appendix II under the names of the respective individuals which are listed alphabetically.
England was divided. The following list identifies these bishops by their sees and gives their dates of office. The map on page forty-one shows the English dioceses at this time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of See</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates of Episcopacy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>Dunstan</td>
<td>960-988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>Oscytel</td>
<td>956-971</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oswold</td>
<td>972-992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester-le-Street</td>
<td>Aelfsige</td>
<td>968-990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall</td>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>946X955-959X963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wulfsgie</td>
<td>959X963-980X988</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credition</td>
<td>Aelfwold</td>
<td>953-972</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sideman</td>
<td>973-977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorchester</td>
<td>Leofwine</td>
<td>958-965X974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aelfnoth</td>
<td>965X974-975X979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmham</td>
<td>Aelfric</td>
<td>965X979-c. 974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theodred</td>
<td>970X974-c. 979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hereford</td>
<td>Aethulf</td>
<td>951X955-1012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lichfield</td>
<td>Cynesige</td>
<td>946X948-963X964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Winsige</td>
<td>963X964-973X975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The existence of an eighteenth diocese in addition to the seventeen documented sees receives thorough consideration in the evidence presented for the career of Bishop Wulfric in Appendix II.

2 Dates of elevation to or termination of office which are indeterminate through lack of evidence, but which are known to fall between two dates will here and elsewhere be expressed by means of placing an X between the earliest and latest possible dates for the beginning and/or end of office.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of See</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates of Episcopacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lichfield</td>
<td>Aelfheah</td>
<td>973X975-1002X1004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?Lindsey</td>
<td>?Wulfric</td>
<td>c. 958-c. 970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>Aelfstan</td>
<td>961-995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsbury</td>
<td>Osulf</td>
<td>949X950-970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>?Aelfgar²</td>
<td>970-973X974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aelfstan</td>
<td>973X974-981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>Aelfstan</td>
<td>955X964-995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selsey</td>
<td>Eadhelm</td>
<td>953X963-979X980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherborne</td>
<td>Aelfwold</td>
<td>958X961-978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells</td>
<td>Brihthelm</td>
<td>956-973X974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Brihthelm</td>
<td>959-963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aethelwold</td>
<td>963-984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester</td>
<td>Oswold</td>
<td>961-992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taken as a group, a number of generalizations may be made concerning the bishops. First, it is immediately apparent from their position in the witness lists and the frequency of their attestations that the bishops were prominent members of the king's council or witan. As members of the witan, one the bishops' functions is evidenced by their inclusion in the witness lists: the approval and ratification of the king's grants of land and privilege. Other surviving documentation shows that eight of the bishops were present at various gatherings of the witan where other issues besides the pro-

¹See Footnote 1 on page thirty-nine.
²See Bishop Aelfgar.
Map of Episcopal Sees During Edgar's Reign

5. Rambsbury 12. Dorchester
7. Wells 14. Elmham

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mulgation of royal charters were considered, including hearings on disputed titles to lands, the trial of a criminal, the dedication of a monastery, and a planning session on monastic reform.¹

It is clear that episcopal participation in the witan in judicial, advisory, and confirmation roles was great. It is also important to note that not only were bishops active participants in the witan, but that they were among the most important and influential members. Of the forty-five persons designated as members of the core group or inner circle of the king's witan throughout the years of his reign, nineteen or forty-two percent were archbishops and bishops.²

It cannot be doubted therefore that on the basis of personal proximity to the king, Edgar's bishops were among the most powerful men in the kingdom. Archbishop Dunstan and Bishop Aethelwold were the king's closest and most influential advisors in the witan.³

Another basic characteristic of the episcopal witnesses was their nobility. A definition of nobility in Anglo-Saxon England at this time must comprise two aspects. As Sayles points out, in later Old English history the traditional designation of nobility by blood was increasingly being eclipsed by a new nobility of service.⁴ The evidence records that a number of the bishops came from noble


²See Chapter II, pp. 35-36.

³Bishops Dunstan and Aethelwold.

families\(^1\) or were related to the royal family.\(^2\) These individuals were nobles by birth. The lack of evidence pertaining to the noble family status of the remaining majority of bishops need leave no doubt that they were in fact members of the noble class. Even lacking noble origins they belonged to the nobility of service which their membership in the witan by itself indicates. Moreover, as Kirby emphasizes, during the Anglo-Saxon period social standing depended primarily on the wergeld value assigned to individuals by law.\(^3\) At this time an archbishop's wergeld was the same as that of a royal aetheling and a bishop's wergeld was rated at five times that of a thegn.\(^4\) Nothing could provide clearer evidence that bishops were at the top of the social hierarchy.

In addition to their function and status in the witan, bishops were intimately involved with the monarchy in additional ways. Some bishops were called on to perform administrative functions for the king. Bishops Daniel and Oswold composed or dictated royal charters (B 941, B 949, B 1066, B 1067). This evidence supports the recent opinion that Anglo-Saxon charters were not drafted in a central royal secretariat or so-called proto-chancery, but were composed in monastic or episcopal scriptoria.\(^5\) Bishops were also active in carrying out

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\(^1\) Bishops Aethelwold, Cynesige, Dunstan, Oscytel, and Oswald.

\(^2\) Bishops Brihthelm of Wells and Brihthelm of Winchester.


\(^4\) Ibid., p. 146.

the king's programs of diplomacy and defense. Late in Edgar's reign Bishop Aelfsige of Chester-le-Street escorted King Kennath of Scotland when he paid homage to Edgar. Bishop Aelfstan led troops against the Danes during King Aethelred's reign.

Edgar's bishops not only participated in the central government of the realm. They were also one of the Crown's chief instruments in maintaining local government. King Edgar's laws state that the shire court or moot was to be held twice a year "and the bishop of the diocese and the ealdorman shall be present, and shall direct the observance of both ecclesiastical and secular law." The shire together with its hundredal subdivisions was the basic unit for the exercise of local administration in Anglo-Saxon England. The shire moot administered justice, collected taxes, settled land disputes, and in general enforced the king's law. By law bishops together with ealdormen were the presiding officials of the shire court and were thus not only prominent at the center of government but extended their public authority into the local level. Little evidence survives to indicate the precise activities of Edgar's bishops in the shire courts, but the importance of their roles as guardians and enforcers of the king's and church law at the local level is reflected by Archbishop Wulfstan's description of the bishop as "Christ's Sheriff" in the eleventh cen-

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1 Bishop Aelfsige.

2 Bishops Aelfstan of Rochester and Aelfstan of London.

It is evident that bishops were actively involved in the service of the monarchy as members of the witan and in administrative and political roles. The episcopal leadership also provided the monarchy with a theoretical foundation. In 973 Archbishops Dunstan and Oswold crowned Edgar king in a coronation ceremony which exemplified the cooperation between the monarchy and the church.  

The Coronation Oath was drawn up by Dunstan and it clearly expressed the concern of the church leaders that the power of the king should have spiritual sanction. Moreover, the oath reflected the development of a theory of sacral kingship in which the king was viewed to have a quasi-sacerdotal function and character. The *Regularis Concordia* written by Bishop Aethelwold is another example of the theory of kingship which ecclesiastical leaders were advocating. Here the king is referred to as the Good Shepherd and as the teacher of bishops, abbots, and abbesses. The church under the leadership of its bishops was obviously concerned not only with practical involvement in the affairs of the monarchy but also with providing the Crown an ideological basis.

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5. Bishop Aethelwold.

for rule.

This leads to the question of the degree of power which the episcopal leaders wielded over the king. Edgar was a young king. He came to the throne at the age of sixteen and died at thirty-two. His closest advisors were bishops, bishops were involved in every aspect of central and local government, bishops drew up and administered the king's coronation oath and elaborated a theory of Christian kingship. Did they in effect control the king? The evidence pertaining to the bishops may supply a partial answer to this question. It is noteworthy that as a royal aetheling Edgar spent a great deal of time under the care and instruction of Aethelwold who was then abbot of Abingdon. Aethelwold makes reference to his tutelage of Edgar in the Regularis Concordia.¹ Aethelwold's vernacular account of the monastic reform also records that as an aetheling Edgar stayed at Abingdon with Aethelwold and promised to help restore the monastery there.² As John states, Edgar's later enthusiasm for monastic reform and the royal favor he bestowed on church leaders must be partly explained by his early schooling under Aethelwold.³

However, such evidence does not lead to the conclusion that Edgar was the mere pawn of Aethelwold and the other church leaders. A strong episcopal influence on the king cannot be doubted, but it is

¹Symons, ed. and trans., Regularis Concordia, p. 1.
also clear from the evidence that Edgar was firmly in control of his own government and policy making. This may be ascertained first through his power of episcopal appointment. Canon law provided for the election of bishops by the episcopal *familia*. There is no question, however, that the actual power of choice lay in the king's hands, or as Barlow states, "royal consensus had become the basis of episcopal nomination and the popular *electio* had been reduced to an acceptance." Edgar's power of episcopal selection is reflected in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and other contemporary sources. The Chronicle records that in 959, upon his succession, Edgar sent for Dunstan and "gave him the bishopric of Worcester, and afterwards the bishopric of London." Later the same year Edgar went so far as to depose the reigning archbishop of Canterbury and appoint Dunstan. Under the Chronicle's entry for 963 we find that "St Aethelwold was chosen for the bishopric of Winchester by King Edgar." There can be no question that the Crown was in control of the appointment of bishops.

Furthermore, the sources give every indication that Edgar exerted an independent and decisive influence in other areas of church affairs. While some later sources, seeking to magnify and glorify the reforming bishops' role in monastic revival, do not give as much weight to

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1 Deansely, *Sidelights on the Anglo-Saxon Church*, p. 104.
4 Bishop Brihthelm of Wells.
the king's role, the more contemporary sources place Edgar in the forefront. Thus the Chronicle states that Edgar "directed his people wisely in matters of Church and State." In 964

King Edgar drove the priests in the city from the Old Minster and from the New Minster . . . and replaced them with monks. And he appointed Abbot Aethelgar as abbot in the New Minster, and Ordberht for Chertsey, and Cyneweard for Milton.

It was the king who commanded that the Rule of St. Benedict be translated from Latin into English and who commanded a synod to be held to draw up a uniform monastic observance. While Edgar was influenced by his chief episcopal counselors it is also abundantly clear that he acted with independence and in full control of his royal power.

If bishops were busily involved in the governmental affairs of the kingdom so they were also active participants in the economic life of the realm as landholders. Records survive which show the involvement of fourteen bishops in land transactions. Ten bishops are known to have received grants of bookland from King Edgar. It

1 Whitelock, et al., eds., Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 959.
2 Ibid., 964.
4 Symons, ed. and trans., Regularis Concordia, p. 2.
5 Bishops Aelfric, Aelfstan of Ramsbury, Aelfstan of Rochester, Aelfwold of Sherborne, Aethelwold, Brihthelm of Wells, Brihthelm of Winchester, Dunstan, Oscytel, Osulf, Oswold, and Wulfric.
6 Bishops Aelfric, Aelfstan of Rochester, Aelfwold of Sherborne, Aethelwold, Brihthelm of Wells, Brihthelm of Winchester, Dunstan, Osulf, Oswold, and Wulfric.
seems clear that in the majority of cases the episcopal grantees used their endowments to increase the estates of their sees or to benefit monastic establishments. There is also some indication that the bishops did not necessarily receive these lands as outright gifts from the king, but that they were purchased. For example, Bishop Aethelwold bought land for Ely Abbey and an endowment for Tauton Abbey from Edgar.\textsuperscript{1} Archbishop Oscytel purchased from the king two estates in Northumbria for the church of York.\textsuperscript{2}

There is also documentation to show that two bishops made purchases of estates from individuals other than the king,\textsuperscript{3} while two others were involved in exchanges of estates.\textsuperscript{4} Furthermore, the evidence indicates that bishops were active in \textit{laenland} transactions, the leasing of estates. Three bishops are known to have been the lesors of estates to secular individuals.\textsuperscript{5} For one of these, Archbishop Oswold, there are extensive records of his activities as a landlord over the triple hundred of Oswoldslow. His seventy-nine \textit{laenland} charters covering a thirty year period uniformly provided for a lease of land to an individual which was to revert back to the church of Worcester after three lives, that is, the life of the leasee and two succeeding persons.\textsuperscript{6} Bishop Brihthelm's lease also follows this

\textsuperscript{1}Bishop Aethelwold.
\textsuperscript{2}Archbishop Oscytel.
\textsuperscript{3}Bishops Aethelwold and Oscytel.
\textsuperscript{4}Bishops Aethelwold and Brihthelm of Wells.
\textsuperscript{5}Bishops Aelfwald of Sherborne, Brihthelm of Winchester, Oswold.
\textsuperscript{6}Birch, ed., \textit{Cartularium Saxonicum}, Vol. III.
формул.¹ Эти лизенды оговорили арендные платежи и другие услуги, которые должны были быть выполнены получателями.

Что следует из этих данных, это высокий уровень участия епископов в земле и, следовательно, в экономической власти и влиянии, которые они получали. Как уже было отмечено, босоисты были заинтересованы в утверждении королевских земель и действовали как арбитры в спорах о праве на владение землей. В дополнение к этому, епископы продолжали играть эту роль в области местных дел. Три епископа были записаны как свидетели частных земельных сделок. Одна из их основных обязанностей состояла в получении поправлений для их церквей от королевских и частных источников. Осторожность, с которой они управляли экономической основой своих диоцезов, подтверждается записями архиепископа Освальда о землях Йорка, записями архиепископа Дунстана о церковных имуществах в Корнуолле, и записями епископа Этельволда о его дарах Петербургскому аббатству, в которых уделяется много внимания наводке заемщиков на различные земельные покупки.² Епископ Аельстанинская вовлеченность в судебный процесс, который был незаконно уклонением имущества из Рочестера, - еще один пример епископальной старательности в сохранении церковной собственности.³ Земля являлась экономической базой страны в то время, и епископы Эдгаров, как покупатели, владельцы земли, арендаторы, владельцы земельных владений, судья и свидетели земельных сделок,

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¹ Епископ Брихельм из Винчестера.
² Епископы Аельстанин, Этельволд, и Осульф.
³ Епископы Освальд, Дунстан, и Этельволд.
⁴ Епископ Аельстанин из Рочестера.
transactions, represented a large portion of the wealth and economic power in England.

Edgar's bishops were thus vitally involved in local affairs through their function in the shire courts and through their economic interests. As bookland recipients bishops owed the traditional dues of military service and bridge and fortification maintenance. It is also apparent that when they leased estates from their bookland endowments they and their respective churches enjoyed the profits of such arrangements. The question must be raised whether as land holders bishops were privileged with independent jurisdiction over their estates and owed feudal dues. This is a complex problem which has divided scholarly opinion since the time of Maitland and Round and continues to provoke spirited debate.¹ The central question in the controversy is that of the existence of feudalism in England before 1066, and its focal point is the evidence provided by Archbishop Oswald's practice of land tenure based on his numerous surviving lagen charters. I will not dwell on the opinions of scholars on either side of the question, but will instead point out the evidence which pertains to Oswald's obligations and rights over his estates.

¹The controversy began with Round's publication in 1891 of his article "The Introduction of Knight Service into England," which denied pre-Conquest English feudalism and interpreted the Norman Conquest as a cataclysmic event for English institutions. Maitland responded in 1897 in Doomsday Book and Beyond with an assertion of Anglo-Saxon feudal institutions based on Oswald's practice of land tenure. Stenton in 1932 in his The First Century of English Feudalism accepted and furthered Round's view. More recently Eric John has taken up and added to Maitland's thesis on English feudalism in Land Tenure in Early England. Brown in 1973 in his Origins of English Feudalism dismissed but did not disprove John's views. Refer to Bibliography for full citations for these works.
According to a charter, whose authenticity has been both denied and upheld, King Edgar in 964 granted to Bishop Oswold a sizeable group of estates in Worcester and created what is known as the triple hundred of Oswoldslow. The significance of the granting of three hundreds in the shire of Worcester which was otherwise under the administration of Ealdorman Aelfhere of Mercia is obvious. The hundred was the primary unit of local government in Anglo-Saxon England. It has also been claimed that the hundred was the basic military unit for the raising of the fyrd or national army in times of war. The charter of endowment refers to the triple hundred of Oswoldslow as a scipsocn or shipful, which can leave little doubt that a military obligation was to be exacted from the bishop for the endowment, that of raising a naval force. In addition to the military obligations of Oswoldslow the charter confers judicial privileges:

Such are to be rightly judged according to the custom of the country and the provisions of the laws; and this bishop and all his successors are to have there for the church's right all the dues for transgressions and fines for crimes . . . and everything the king has in his hundred . . . . If any of the aforesaid rights be lacking by reason of the crime of evasion, [the defaulter] shall pay the price of evasion according to the law of the bishop. It is difficult not to view this charter as conveying an independent jurisdiction over a group of hundreds which included military dues and judicial obligations and rights. Oswold's land charters give a

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1 B 1135. For assessment of authenticity see P. H. Sawyer, Anglo-Saxon Charters (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968), 731.
2 John, Land Tenure, p. 115.
3 B 1135, translated by John in Land Tenure, pp. 116-17.
picture of the duties he expected from his tenants. For example, in 963 Oswold leased to his thegn Aelfric one hide of land at Cotheridge, Worcester, which was to pass to two of Aelfric's heirs and then revert to the church of Worcester.\(^1\) In return for the grant Aelfric promised to give to the church the produce of two acres as his church-scot. Aelfric in an appended codicil referred to Oswold as his "dear Lord."\(^2\)

We have been discussing the practice of land tenure for one of Edgar's bishops, Oswold. Evidence does not survive which would indicate whether the land holding arrangements for other bishops were similar and therefore point to a uniformity of episcopal land tenure, or if Oswold's case was unique. It is clear that as bookland recipients if not also as independent suzerains they owed the king services and enjoyed rights stemming from their endowments.

Analysis of the evidence concerning Edgar's bishops shows that as a group these individuals shared the common characteristics of belonging to the nobility, of membership in the witan and hence being imbued with high political power, of involvement with local administration, and of being wealthy landowners with extensive economic interests. Further scrutiny of the sources provides still more information on Edgar's episcopal witnesses which must be analyzed from the standpoint of differentiating rather than common characteristics.

The bishops may be divided into two categories on the basis

\[^1\] B 1106.  
\[^2\] Ibid.
of whether they were appointed prior to or during Edgar's reign. The chart on page fifty-five represents such a categorization.

For all of the bishops in Group I there is no evidence except in one case that any of them had a monastic background, that is, that they had been monks or abbots before their elevation to the episcopacy. The exception is Bishop Aethulf who spent some time at the Old Minster, Winchester, but who was probably there before it was reformed in 964, as the date of his elevation was between 951 and 955; and so he may not have been a monk.¹ In contrast, of the fifteen bishops assigned to Group II, eight are known to have been monks and in some cases abbots before they were raised to bishoprics. What this points to is an unmistakable change in leadership qualifications for bishops after Edgar became king. Before he became king it cannot be documented that any bishops were monks; after his succession it would appear that it became royal and ecclesiastical policy to create a monastic episcopate.

Five of the eight monastic bishops had first been abbots: Dunstan, Aelfstan of Ramsbury, Aethelwold, Cyneweard, and Sideman. Of the remaining three, two had been monks at Old Minster, Winchester, and very possibly may also have been abbots: Aelfheah and Aelfnoth. Finally, Oswold had been a monk at Fleury and acted as abbot of West­bury-on-Tyme and Ramsey concurrent to his episcopates at York and Worcester. Edgar placed monks in both of the archepiscopal sees in England, going so far in the case of Canterbury to remove Brihthelm who had been elevated under King Eadwig and substitute Dunstan, the prime mover in the monastic revival.

¹Bishop Aethulf.
### Episcopal Appointments Prior to and During Edgar's Reign

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group I</th>
<th>Group II</th>
<th>Group III</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bishops elevated prior to Edgar's reign</td>
<td>Bishops elevated under Edgar</td>
<td>Bishops whose elevation may have occurred prior to or during Edgar's reign</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aelfwold (Crediton)</td>
<td>Aelfgar</td>
<td>Aelfstan (Rochester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aethulf</td>
<td>Aelfheah</td>
<td>Aelfwold (Sherborne)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brihthelm (Wells)</td>
<td>Aelfnoth</td>
<td>Eadhelm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brihthelm (Winchester)</td>
<td>Aelfric</td>
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<td>Cynesige</td>
<td>Aelfsige</td>
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<td>Daniel</td>
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<td>Leofwine</td>
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<td>Osulf</td>
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<td>Wulfsige</td>
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</table>
Of the three bishops in Group III whose dates of appointment through their indeterminancy may fall either into Edgar's or one of his predecessor's reigns, Aelfstan of Rochester and Aelfwold of Sherborne were monks, and the latter continued to rule over the Abbey of Exeter while bishop. This monastic background may in itself indicate that Aelfstan and Aelfwold were elevated during Edgar's reign and not before.

Furthermore, the evidence is clear that not only were these bishops monks and abbots, but that they were very much schooled in and part of the reform of monastic life taking place under Edgar. This is shown by their associations with Glastonbury, Abingdon, and Old Minster, three of the principal centers of reform. Four had been monks or abbots at Glastonbury, two at Abingdon, and four at Old Minster. It is apparent not only that the leadership of the English church was now being drawn from monastic ranks as it had not before, but that careful and deliberate planning lay behind this policy. Upward mobility among ecclesiastical personnel during this period, that is, advances in rank from monk to abbot, from abbot to bishop, or from bishop to archbishop all seem to have depended on preparation in the reformed monasticism and often on personal association with Bishop Aethelwold who trained monks first as abbot of Abingdon and then as bishop of Winchester. Aethelwold, perhaps the most zealous and

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1Aelfstan of Ramsbury, Aethelwold, Cyneweard, and Dunstan.
2Aelfstan of Ramsbury and Aethelwold
3Aelfheah, Aelfnoth, Aelfstan of Rochester, and Sideman.
active of the reformers, was undoubtedly the most prominent and powerful of Edgar's bishops and always testified first among episcopal witnesses following the two archbishops.

In accounting for this change in episcopal composition which reflected the new thrust of royal ecclesiastical policy it is necessary at this point to summarize the monastic revival during Edgar's reign, which will also provide background for understanding the characteristics of the monastic bishops and the abbots.¹

It is generally accepted that monastic life in England had ceased to exist with any vitality by the time of King Alfred in the ninth century. The primary causes for this decline were the disordering impact of the Scandinavian invasions and the spread of lay control over monastic and church foundations. In the early tenth century there had arisen among certain church leaders, notably Archbishop Odo of Canterbury and Bishop Aelfheah of Winchester, the desire for a revival of the monastic life. In 941 King Edmund appointed a young priest and monk abbot of Glastonbury. This was Dunstan, who for the next fifteen years concentrated his energies on creating a monastic community based on the Rule of St. Benedict. In 956 Dunstan fell into disfavor with King Eadwig and went into exile on the continent at St. Peter's monastery in Ghent. He was recalled by King Edgar immediately upon the latter's succession in 959 and made first bishop of Worcester and London and then archbishop of Canterbury. Aethelwold was ordained

¹The following characterization corresponds to that provided in David Knowles, The Monastic Order in England (Cambridge: The University Press, 1950), pp. 31-56.
priest at the same time as Dunstan by Bishop Aelfheah and was one of Dunstan's earliest disciples at Glastonbury. In 955 Aethelwold left Glastonbury with a number of monks and refounded the monastery at Abingdon. In 963 he was raised to the see of Winchester. Oswald began his career as dean of an unreformed monastery in Winchester. Seeking a stricter practice he travelled to Fleury on the continent where he remained for a few years until 958. Upon his return he was introduced to Dunstan who influenced Edgar to appoint Oswald bishop of Worcester in 961. In the mid 960's the monastic reform movement under royal patronage and the direction of Dunstan, Aethelwold, and Oswald began to expand rapidly, resulting in the foundation or reform of numerous monasteries in southern and middle England. In the later years of his reign Edgar convoked a synod to compose a set of monastic customs which would be uniformly observed. The monastic revival continued into the eleventh century and remained a vitalizing force within the English church.

The development of a monastic episcopate as a consciously pursued royal and ecclesiastical policy was in accordance with the goals of the monastic revival which sought to reform monastic life and indeed the entire church through placing ecclesiastical leadership into the hands of reforming monk bishops. In this connection it is important to note the influence of continental contacts and the role of learning as characteristics associated with the monastic bishops.

In the early tenth century, monastic life on the continent experienced a marked and penetrating revival. The spearhead of this revival was the foundation of Cluny in 910. Under the leadership of
talented abbots, Cluny extended its influence on many other monastic foundations. Prominent among these was Fleury on the Loire which fell under the control of Cluny around 930. Contemporary to the rise of Cluny another revival took place in Upper Lorraine with its center at the refounded abbey of Gorze near Metz. The monastery of St. Peters in Ghent was reformed from Gorze around 950. The monastic life of Cluny and Gorze and their daughter houses was based on the reforms of Benedict of Aniane. It was in essence a liturgical life.¹

The contacts of the reforming English church leaders with the reformed continental monasticism would have obvious ramifications for the development of the English revival. The English movement did not develop in isolation. On the contrary, the evidence for the careers of the three great bishops, Dunstan, Aethelwold, and Oswold, reflects a high degree of communication and exchange between England and the continent. During his period of exile under King Eadwig, Dunstan found refuge in the monastery of St. Peters in Ghent where he was exposed to the practices of the newly revived monasticism in Lotharingia. It is also to be noted that Dunstan relied on Frankish formularies in drawing up King Edgar's coronation rite, which may have come to him through his friend Abbot Fulrad of Saint-Vedast near Arras.² Dunstan also kept up a correspondence with Abbo of Fleury and the latter dedicated his life of St. Edmund, an early king of East Anglia,

¹This summary follows Knowles, The Monastic Order in England, pp. 29-30.

²Deansely, Sidelights on the Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 74.
to Dunstan. On another occasion Abbot Abbo sent Dunstan a poem written with an elaborate triple acrostic in the Carolingian manner. Abbot Wido of Blandinium in Lotharingia also corresponded with Dunstan. Count Arnulf of Flanders wrote to Dunstan asking the archbishop for an introduction to the king for his ambassadors. Dunstan certainly had a wide continental acquaintance.

Early in his career Aethelwold had desired to leave England and learn monastic discipline at Fluery, but he was discouraged by King Eadred and instead was given the ruined abbey of Abingdon to reform. Later

Aethelwold sent the monk Osgar across the sea to the monastery of St. Benedict of Fleury, there to learn the customs of the rule and then expound them by his teaching to the brethren at home, to the end that Aethelwold might follow the regular way of life together with those subject to him, and, avoiding every false path, might guide the flock committed to him to the promised land.

Aethelwold obviously looked to the continent as a source and model of reformed monasticism. Abingdon apparently got its first copy of

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the Rule of St. Benedict from Fleury.\footnote{John, "The King and the Monks in the Tenth Century Reformation," p. 168.} Aethelwold sought advice on liturgical matters from the abbot of Corbie in France, who sent a deputation of monks to teach the monks of Abingdon the rules of psalmody and plain-chant.\footnote{Aelfric, Life of Saint Aethelwold, I, 829.} Lantfridus who became Aethelwold's secretary at Winchester and who wrote the Translatio et miracula S. Swithani was from the continent.\footnote{Aelfric, Lives of the Saints, ed. by W. W. Skeat (London: Early English Text Society, 1881-1900), I, 466, line 402.}

Oswold spent five or six years at the monastery of Fleury before returning to England where he quickly rose to prominence in the reform movement. When his kinsman Oscytel was elevated to the archbishopric of York, Oswold accompanied him to Rome to receive the pallium. On the return trip Oswold stopped off at Fleury for a visit where he found his friend Germanus, who was a fellow Englishman and who had been at Fleury during Oswold's earlier stay there. Oswold brought Germanus back with him to England.\footnote{Bishop Oswold.} Oswold subsequently appointed Germanus first prior of Westbury-on-Tyme and then prior of Oswold's most important monastic foundation, Ramsey. In 972 Germanus was appointed abbot of Ramsey, and in 992 King Aethelred appointed Germanus abbot of Cholsey.\footnote{Abbot Germanus.} Oswold was also responsible for bringing Abbo of Fleury to Ramsey as a teacher in the monastic school. Abbo
was one of the most learned monks of Fleury and his influence on the
level of learning at Ramsey was great.¹

When King Edgar commanded a synod to meet and agree upon a uni-
form monastic observance throughout England, the result of which was
the Regularis Concordia, the leaders of the church "summoned monks
from St. Benedict's monastery at Fleury and from that eminent monas-
tery which is known by the renowned name of Ghent, gathered from their
praiseworthy customs much that was good . . . ."²

The foregoing evidence indicates the high degree of communi-
cation, exchange, and influence between the monastic bishops of the
English church and the representatives of reformed monasticism on the
continent. In particular, Aethelwold and Oswold were concerned to
provide for their monastic foundations an observance patterned on
continental practices and went so far as to place men who had had
direct contact with the monastic usage of Fleury into places of leader-
ship. If the English monastic revival was not the direct offshoot of
the continental movement, it certainly borrowed and adapted much from
what its leaders learned from the monasteries of Fleury and Ghent.
This is made clear from the role which monks from those monasteries
had in the drawing up of the Regularis Concordia. The evidence for
the extensive foreign contacts of Edgar's monastic bishops should help
dispel any notion that England was isolated from continental influence
before the Norman Conquest.

¹Frank M. Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England (Oxford: Clarendon

²Symons, ed. and trans., Regularis Concordia, p. 3.
Edgar's monastic bishops were also highly interested in education and scholarship and were in fact quite learned men. There is no reason to doubt that all of the bishops were literate, although conclusive evidence is lacking. The monastic revival under the leadership of the monk bishops, however, stimulated a flowering of intellectual activity. Dunstan's biographer records that Dunstan darted through many fields of sacred and religious volumes, with the rapid course of an able mind . . . and always explored with critical scrutiny the books of other wise men . . . among his sacred studies of literature he also diligently cultivated the art of writing, that he might be sufficient in all things; and the art of harp-playing, and skill in painting likewise . . . he excelled as a keen investigator of all useful things.\(^1\)

Although no written works of Dunstan have survived, it cannot be doubted that his biographer correctly characterized Dunstan's enthusiasm for learning. As already mentioned, Abbo of Fleury wrote to Dunstan dedicating to him a life of St. Edmund. Abbo records his debt to Dunstan, stating that Dunstan had collected the life from the memory of antiquity and that Dunstan "ceased not to feed the brethren with holy words both in Latin and in English."\(^2\)

Aethelwold's own literary activities were considerable. He wrote the *Regularis Concordia*, he translated the Benedictine rule into English, and he wrote an account in English of the monastic revival.\(^3\) Furthermore, Aethelwold established a school at Winchester.


which produced two of the greatest writers of the late Old English period, Aelfric the Homilist and Wulfstan the Cantor.\textsuperscript{1} Aethelwold has been credited with the standardization of Old English through his work and that of his pupils at Winchester.\textsuperscript{2} He was certainly interested in the English language: "He always took great pleasure instructing the young men and boys, in explaining Latin books to them in the English language, in teaching them the rules of grammar and metre."\textsuperscript{3}

Evidence for the scholarly pursuits of the other monastic bishops is lacking. However, as so many of them were schooled in the reformed monasticism by Dunstan and Aethelwold there can be no doubt that they too were learned.

If the monastic bishops were concerned with learning they were also eminent teachers both of their episcopal and monastic familia and also in regard to the pastoral care of their dioceses. One of the major endeavors of the reforming leaders of the church was to train and educate monks to carry on the work of monastic revival. Aethelwold as a teacher is portrayed as "exhorting them gently to strive for greater things. And so it was that many of his pupils became abbots, bishops, and even archbishops in England."\textsuperscript{4}

Dunstan's biographer characterizes his activities in the pastoral

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{1}Lapidge, "Three Latin Poems from Aethelwold's School," I, 91.


\end{quote}
care of his flock, stating he constantly endeavored
to benefit with his kind support widows, orphans, pilgrims, and
strangers in their necessities; or to dissolve by just separation
foolish or wrongful marriages . . . or to season with the teaching
of wholesome knowledge, the ignorant of both sexes, men and
women.¹

Here is a picture of Dunstan's attention to the details of his pasto­
ral care. Deansely points out that there was a close relationship
between the literary activities undertaken and spread by the reform­
ing bishops and the emphasis they placed on pastoral care. The devel­
opment of English prose writing exemplified by Aelfric's homilies had
a teaching function for lay people and popularized learning.²

The move towards the establishment of a monastic episcopate during
Edgar's reign is of fundamental importance in understanding the
character of the English church at this time and its relationship
with the Crown. However, there is no evidence that those bishops who
were not of a monastic background suffered from a lack of royal favor.
Non-monastic bishops received grants of bookland and were influential
members of the witan. The evidence suggests that other factors besides
monastic involvement influenced the choice and status of bishops.

Two bishops, Brihthelm of Winchester and Brihthelm of Wells, are
definitely known to have been related to the Wessex royal family and
were kinsmen to Edgar.³ Both were appointed by King Eadwig who may
have favored them because of the relationship. Edgar seems also to

¹Auctore B, Vita Sancti Dunstani, I, 831.
²Deansely, Sidelights on the Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 38.
³Bishops Brihthelm of Winchester and Brihthelm of Wells.
have favored his relations, booking estates to Brihthelm of Winches-
ter whom he identified as his kinsman. Bishop Aethelwold was kin
to Brihthelm of Wells and so may have also been related to the king,
which could not have but helped to strengthen his close association
with Edgar.

There appear to have been certain influential families who pro-
vided some of the most prominent ecclesiastical leaders during the
mid and late tenth century. Archbishop Dunstan was the nephew of
Archbishop Aethelm of Canterbury and was also a kinsman to Bishop
Aelfheah of Winchester and Bishop Cynesige of Lichfield. The two
Brihthelms and Aethelwold were related. Archbishop Oscytel of York
and Oswold of York were kinsmen and the latter was the nephew of Arch-
bishop Odo of Canterbury. The evidence certainly suggests that fam-
ily connections and having prominent ecclesiastical kinsmen influ-
enced the appointment of bishops. It would, moreover, hardly be sur-
prising if there was a great deal more interrelatedness among the
episcopal personnel of the church and with the royal family than can
be ascertained from surviving sources. Dunstan who was the son of
noble parents and spent much time at court while a youth was most
probably related to the king as was Bishop Sideman of Crediton who
was chosen to be tutor to the Aetheling Edward. Bishop Aethelwold

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1 Bishop Brihthelm of Winchester.
2 Bishop Aethelwold.
3 Bishop Dunstan.
4 Bishop Oswold.
5 Bishops Dunstan and Sideman.
very well might have been related to Bishop Aelfheah, one of his predecessors at Winchester, with whom he stayed for a while and who ordained him a priest.¹ If so, Aethelwold could have been related to Dunstan, who was Aelfheah's kinsman. These possibilities may only be suggested in lieu of conclusive evidence, but there is enough documentation to conclude that kinship affiliations had much to do with episcopal choice and further that certain families were noteworthy for the number of bishops and archbishops they contributed to the church.

Three of Edgar's bishops² and possibly a fourth³ were of Scandinavian descent. That about one-seventh or fifteen percent of all bishops who witnessed the king's charters had Scandinavian backgrounds seems significant of increasing integration of Danish settlers into Anglo-Saxon life and the role of the church in this process. Politically, it must have been advantageous to Edgar, concerned as he was with the extension and consolidation of English borders, to appoint bishops to sees with large Scandinavian populations who would at once be loyal supporters of the monarchy and English church while also garnering popular support by their identification with the Scandinavian heritage of their flocks.

This study of Edgar's episcopal witnesses has centered on two principal themes: the common and differentiating characteristics of the bishops as a group of charter witnesses and the nature of the power and influence they exercised as a result of their offices. It

¹Bishop Aethelwold.
²Bishops Oscytel, Osulf, and Oswold.
³Bishop Aethulf.
has been seen that there were a number of factors which constituted the criteria for episcopal office holding. The most outstanding of these, as it represented the inauguration of a new policy, was the selection of monastic bishops dedicated to the monastic reform movement. Other factors which retained importance were family connections and ethnic background. It should be clear that individuals became bishops for political, economic, and social as well as ecclesiastical reasons and that the latter were often identified with the former. Nor was a bishop necessarily picked on the basis of one criterion alone. Archbishop Oswold was not only an ardent monastic reformer, he was also of Scandinavian descent. Bishop Aethelwold was probably a kinsman to the king as well as a reformer. Archbishop Dunstan came from a family with a tradition of episcopal leadership and founded the monastic revival. In addition, the role of individual capability cannot be underrated in accounting for the rise to office and prominence among bishops. The aforesaid reformers were extremely talented and hardworking men and had risen through the ecclesiastical ranks as much for these reasons as for their other qualifications, and the same is undoubtedly true in varying degrees for the other bishops.

The nature of the authority belonging to Edgar's bishops, their duties, privileges, activities, and interests, have been seen to have been very extensive with no strict delineation between secular and spiritual spheres. As a group, the bishops exercised political and administrative power in the witan and in the shires in which their dioceses lay. Collectively they represented one of the wealthiest sectors of Anglo-Saxon society and they administered the financial
affairs of their sees in such a way as to augment this position of
economic power. The monastic bishops in particular had extensive
foreign contacts, were actively involved in scholarship and teaching,
and played an important role in developing an ideological foundation
for the rule of the English monarchy.

The character of Edgar's bishops is well reflected in the def-
inition which they or their immediate successors gave to the bishop's
role in the church and in society at large:

Bishops are heralds and teachers of God's law. He contemns God
who contemns God's preachers. Bishops shall follow their book
and their prayers and intercede for all Christian people. To a
bishop belongs all direction both in divine and worldly things.
He shall not consent to any injustice. . . . Every bishop shall
have the book of canon at the synod. . . . Bishops shall have
wise men to travel with them, and let there always be good
instruction in their families.1

The bishop must constrain the mass priests with love or fear to
observe God's law, and the familia over whom they are set; and
the simple men [laity] over whom they ought to be ealdormen. . . .
For the bishop is God's vassal and equal in holiness with the
apostles and in rank with the prophets. . . . The king and the
bishop shall be shepherds of Christian folk and turn them from
all unrighteousness.2

These statements reflect an ideal of episcopal leadership inspired
and transmitted by the bishops of Edgar's reign.

1Wulfstan, The Institutes of Polity, p. 44, translated in
Deansely, Sidelights on the Anglo-Saxon Church, pp. 133-134.

2R. Morris, ed., The Blickling Homilies of the Tenth Century
(London: N. Trübner and Company, 1880), p. 102, translated by
Deansely, Sidelights on the Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 39.
THE ABBOTS

Edgar's abbots are at once a less defined and more defined group than the bishops. They are less defined owing to a smaller amount of surviving documentation regarding their lives and hence a greater number of these witnesses cannot be identified nor their careers as fully known as is true for the episcopal witnesses. Large gaps of years between the appearance of certain names of abbots in the witness lists and duplication of names among some abbots make it impossible to establish with certainty the exact number of abbots. There were no less than twenty-eight abbots who signed the king's charters between 959 and 975, but there may have been as many as thirty. Furthermore, whereas the see of only one bishop cannot be positively identified, the monasteries of eight or nine abbots are unknown and very little or nothing is known of their careers. Therefore, a consideration of the characteristics of this group of witnesses proceeds from a smaller base of evidence than can be established for the bishops. The following chart provides the names of these abbots and their dates of office and monastic houses where known. The locations of the abbeys they ruled are shown on the map on page seventy-three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Abbey</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates of Abbacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abingdon, Berkshire</td>
<td>Aethelwold</td>
<td>955–963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Osgar</td>
<td>963–984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath, Somerset</td>
<td>Aescwig</td>
<td>963–979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Abbey</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates of Abbacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bath, Somerset</td>
<td>?Aelfheah</td>
<td>c. 970-974/975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford, Bedfordshire</td>
<td>Thurcytel</td>
<td>c. 971-c. 975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chertsey, Surrey</td>
<td>Ordbriht</td>
<td>964-988/990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowland, Lincoln</td>
<td>Thurcytel</td>
<td>946/951-c. 971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ely, Cambridge</td>
<td>Brihtnoth</td>
<td>970-996/999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evesham, Worcester</td>
<td>Osweard</td>
<td>c. 970-c. 975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter, Devon</td>
<td>Sidemann</td>
<td>968-c. 973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leofric</td>
<td>969/974-990/993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glastonbury, Somerset</td>
<td>Aelfstan</td>
<td>c. 964-973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sigar</td>
<td>970/974-975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malmesbury, Wiltshire</td>
<td>Aelfric</td>
<td>c. 970-977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton Abbey, Dorset</td>
<td>Cyneweard</td>
<td>964-973/974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aelfhim</td>
<td>subscribes 975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muchelney, Somerset</td>
<td>?Aelfwold</td>
<td>c. 959-c. 963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Minster, Hampshire</td>
<td>Aethelgar</td>
<td>964-980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pershore, Worcester</td>
<td>Foldbruht</td>
<td>c. 970-c. 988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romsey, Hampshire</td>
<td>Merwenna</td>
<td>c. 966/967-c. 975-990's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Augustine's, Kent</td>
<td>Aelfric</td>
<td>956-971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sigeric</td>
<td>subscribes 975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westminster, Middlesex</td>
<td>Wulfsige</td>
<td>c. 959-993/997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchcombe, Gloucester</td>
<td>Germanus</td>
<td>972-975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abbots of Unidentified Houses**

Aelfnoth, subscribes 974

Aethelsige, subscribes 974 (possibly in Devon)

Brihtheah, subscribes 970-974 (probably in southern England)
Abbots of Unidentified Houses

Ealdred, subscribes 958-959; 968-970 (probably in southern England)
Elsinus, subscribes 974
Fretheogar, subscribes 972
Godwine, subscribes 970-974 (probably in southern England)
Martin, subscribes 970
Siferth, subscribes 969-970

On the other hand, from working with what can be known and inferred about the abbots there emerges a more defined group in terms of uniformity of qualifications, characteristics, interests, and their status as a category of charter witnesses than is the case with the bishops. As a group, there appears to have been a greater homogeneity and less diversity among the abbots than the bishops, who are most evidently differentiated along monastic and non-monastic lines. This difference in uniformity between the bishops and abbots can be traced to the same cause: the change in ecclesiastical and royal policy in regard to the choice of church leadership which occurred during Edgar's reign. While this change affected the episcopate gradually, bringing about the elevation of monastic bishops only as diocesan vacancies opened up and hence intermingling bishops of the old and new schools, it acted quite differently in regard to the abbots. As monasticism was almost completely extinct in England prior to Edgar's reign, the abbots represent an essentially new category of persons, just lately risen to power and prominence and whose uniformity of attributes was the result of deliberate policy and planning.
Map of Monastic Houses Ruled by Edgar's Abbots

5. Crowland 13. New Minster
7. Evesham 15. Romsey
During the first four years of Edgar's reign, from 959 through 962, only three abbots signed royal charters: Aethelwold of Abingdon, Aelfwold, probably abbot of Muchelney, and Ealdred, whose house is unidentified. The attestations of the latter two abbots were infrequent and only Aethelwold regularly testified. During this period, similar to preceding reigns, it can hardly be said that abbots constituted a regular category of witnesses or were owing to their office members of the witan. It would appear that only the few existing abbots who were individually prominent or favored by the king were allowed these privileges.

Between the years 963 and 964 this situation began to change substantially when seven more abbots entered the lists as witnesses. Thereafter the number of subscribing abbots grew from year to year: between 965 and 969 four abbots were added; six new abbots appeared in 970 alone; and from 971 to 975 seven abbots began to sign. It is clear than beginning in 963-964 abbots began to be included as regular and not extraordinary witnesses to royal charters and members of the witan. Three of these abbots, Aelfric of St. Augustine's, Thurcytel of Crowland and Bedford, and Wulfsige of Westminster had been appointed prior to Edgar's succession, but they do not appear as

1. Abbots Aelfric, Aelfstan, Aescwig, Aethelgar, Cyneweard, Ordbriht, and Osgar.
3. Abbots Aelfheah, Brihtheah, Brihtnoth, Foldbriht, Godwine, Martin, and Osweard.
witnesses until midway through his reign, indicating that not only newly appointed abbots or abbots of newly founded or reformed monasteries gained membership in the witan during these years, but also some abbots who had already held office for some time but previously had not been accorded the status of advisors to the kings. The majority of abbots who made their appearances during this period were the first heads of newly reformed or established abbeys.

It is clear that beginning in 963 and 964 a fourth category of charter witnesses began to emerge in addition to the three long established groups: bishops, ealdormen, and thegns. Not all of the abbots whose names appear on the king's grants from 963 to 975 were frequent witnesses. Some appear only a few times. Others, however, especially the abbots of Abingdon, New Minster, Bath, and St. Augustine's were very regular subscribers. This undoubtedly reflected their prominence in the monastic reform. Under Edgar abbots had rather suddenly acquired a status in the kingdom they had hitherto not enjoyed. As members of the witan they now exercised the same political, judicial, and advisory roles as did the bishops and secular nobility. What accounts for their rise to power under Edgar?

There is a marked similarity to the careers of a large number of the abbots, careers which were characterized by three distinct phases. First, the abbots started as monks under the direction and tutelage of one or two of the three great reformers, Dunstan, Aethelwold, or Oswold. Five of the abbots, including Aethelwold, first practiced the monastic life under Abbot Dunstan at Glastonbury. These same indi-

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1Abbots Aethelwold, Foldbriht, Freothegar, Ordbriht, and Osgar.

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viduals then left Glastonbury to refound Abingdon with Aethelwold as their abbot. Dunstan also appears to have influenced the early training and careers of Abbot Aelfwold of Muchelney, which was in close proximity to Glastonbury, and Abbot Wulfsige of Westminster who was appointed by Dunstan while he was bishop of London.¹

Aethelwold was responsible for the education of the greatest number of abbots. Five of them were monks at Abingdon while Aethelwold was abbot there,² and four more are definitely known to have been monks at Old Minster, Winchester, which Aethelwold as bishop of Winchester reformed around 964.³ Oswold was the mentor of Germanus and Osweard.⁴ Furthermore, Osgar, the disciple of Aethelwold, and Germanus, pupil of Oswold, spent time as monks at the reformed monastery of Fleury on the continent.⁵ The point here is that of the twenty-eight to thirty abbots whose names appear on Edgar's charters, fourteen or one-half are known to have received their monastic training directly from one of the three leaders in the movement or at one of the centers of reformed monasticism: Glastonbury, Abingdon, Winchester, or Fleury. Two other abbots may have first practised the monastic life at New Minster, Winchester, which Bishop Aethelwold also reformed.⁶ It is more than likely that a number of other abbots for

¹ Abbots Aelfwold and Wulfsige.
² Abbots Aelfstan, Foldbriht, Freothegar, Ordbriht, and Osgar.
³ Abbots Aescwig, Brihtnoth, Sideman, and Sigar.
⁴ Abbots Germanus and Osweard.
⁵ Abbots Osgar and Germanus.
⁶ Abbots Aelfwold and Brihtheah.
whom documentation has not survived also received their preparation in this way.

The second stage in an abbot's career was appointment to head one of the reformed monasteries being founded throughout the lower half of England by Aethelwold and Oswold. This movement obviously gained momentum around 963-964 and continued throughout the remainder of Edgar's reign, accounting for the new appearances of abbots in the lists during this period. Finally, after achieving appointment as an abbot, a person's career could take two directions. A number of abbots continued in their offices until their deaths. However, a significant number were elevated to bishoprics in accordance with the new policy of episcopal selection. Four abbots are known to have been elevated during Edgar's reign and three others probably also became bishops during this time. Furthermore, four of Edgar's abbots were definitely appointed to bishoprics during the reigns of Edward the Martyr and Aethelred II and seven others very possibly were elevated by kings succeeding Edgar. In other words, eight of Edgar's abbots are known to have gone on to become bishops and up to eleven others may have followed that path.

1 Abbot Brihtnoth, Foldbriht, Germanus, Osgar, Freotheagar, Oswear, and Thurerctel.
2 Bishops Aelfstan of Ramsbury, Aethelwold, Cyneweard, and Sideman.
3 Abbot Aelfheah, Aelfnoth, and Aelfwold.
4 Bishops Aescwig, Aethelgar, Sigar, and Wulfisige.
5 Abbot Aelfheah, Aelfhim, Aelfric, Ealdred, Godwine, Ord-briht, and Siferth.
Thus as a group the abbots show a high degree of uniformity in regard to the outlines of their careers. The primary criterion for appointment to an abbacy, in addition to personal distinction, appears to have been schooling in and devotion to the principles of monastic reform enunciated by Dunstan, Aethelwold, and Oswold and personal association with one or more of these leaders. Upward mobility, that is, elevation to bishoprics, seems to have been great and it can only be concluded that from the inception of their monastic life in reformed centers, monks were being prepared for leadership positions in the abbeys and episcopal sees of England. One of the main concerns of the monastic reformers was to ensure abbatial election by the reformed communities, under the protection and in fact direction of the king, in order to avoid lay control of monastic establishments which had been one of the reasons for the decline of monastic life in the ninth century. By legislating this form of abbatial election with the support of royal power and carefully training monks for positions of leadership in the church the way was paved for continuance of the monastic episcopate begun during Edgar's reign.

The degree to which the foundation of reformed monastic houses was dependent on royal favor and protection is reflected in the geographical distribution of the abbeys ruled by Edgar's abbots. Not only were they all located in the lower half of England, but the majority were in close proximity to the center of royal power, Winchester. The limits of monastic reform seem to have been influ-

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1 Symons, ed. and trans., *Regularis Concordia*, p. 6.
2 See map on page seventy-three.
enced greatly by the extent of royal power.

Unfortunately, little can be known specifically about the activities of the abbots in regard to their monastic administration, their participation in local affairs, and their economic and political functions. Like bishops they attended meetings of the witan where they ratified the king's grants of land and privilege, which were frequently endowments to reformed monasteries. Evidence also exists to show that they helped to decide disputes over title to estates and to hear criminal cases. They belonged, along with the bishops, to the nobility of service created to serve the English Crown.

That abbots were very much involved in the economics of land acquisition and tenure cannot be doubted. In fact, during Edgar's reign abbots rose to a new position of economic power which paralleled their new prominence as members of the witan. The records of land acquisition by specific abbots are slight. It is known that Edgar booked estates to two abbots and Abbot Aescwig made an exchange of lands with the king. Abbot Osgar bought an estate from Ealdorman Aelfhere during Edgar's reign, and Abbot Leofric exchanged estates with Abbess Eadgifu.

What testifies more dramatically to the enormous landed wealth over which abbots came to exercise control during this period are the

1 Abbots Aethelgar, Brihtnoth, Leofric, Osgar, and Wulfsige.
2 Abbots Aelfric of Malmesbury and Aescwig.
3 Abbot Aescwig.
4 Abbots Osgar and Leofric.
large number of grants which the king made to the reformed monasteries which the abbots ruled. Between 959 and 975 Edgar issued seventeen charters of endowment to Abingdon Abbey, ¹ three to Bath, ² one to Crowland, ³ three to Ely, ⁴ three to Glastonbury, ⁵ one to Muchelney, ⁶ two to New Minster, ⁷ one to Pershore, ⁸ and two to the nunnery at Romsey. ⁹ Collectively, the estates booked in these charters represented a landed wealth of very great magnitude and gave an economic backing to the monastic reform movement which was vital to its success. Abbots, therefore, often administered huge estates and as a group had risen to a position of new wealth. They were the nouveau riche of the day. As a result of their socially and economically influential position, abbots were called on to act as witnesses and guarantors of private wills and charters. ¹⁰ As bookland recipients abbots would have owed traditional dues of military service and fortification

¹ B 1058, B 1066, B 1067, B 1080, B 1094, B 1095, B 1124, B 1213, B 1047, B 1142, B 1169, B 1171, B 1172, B 1221, B 1222, B 1224, B 1225.
² B 1257, B 1287, B 1073.
³ B 1178.
⁴ B 1268, B 1269, B 1266.
⁵ B 1188, B 1214, B 1294.
⁶ B 1297.
⁷ B 1190, B 1302.
⁸ B 1282.
⁹ B 1310, B 1311.
¹⁰ Abbots Aethelgar, Aescwig, Brihtnoth, and Wulfsige.
maintenance to the king.

Little can be said about the family relations of the abbots in comparison to what is known for the bishops. Abbot Thurcytel of Crowland and Bedford was a kinsman to Archbishop Oscytel of York and hence possibly related to Archbishop Oswold.¹ The relations of the other abbots, excepting Aethelwold who has been discussed already, are unknown and it can only be supposed that they had distinguished kinsmen. Three abbots, Osgar, Osweard, and Thurcytel, were of Scandinavian descent.²

This examination of the abbots who headed monastic houses under Edgar has demonstrated that they were a group with newly accorded status, political influence, and economic wealth as vested in their abbeys. They were carefully chosen on the basis of their schooling in monastic reform and personal associations with Dunstan, Aethelwold, and Oswold. They were prepared for and subsequently came to form a preponderance of the church leadership as abbots and monastic bishops. Although evidence is lacking, they may be considered to have been learned men after the model of their leaders and instructors in the monastic reform. The creation of the abbots as a favored and powerful group during Edgar's reign seems to be a fundamental reflection of the ecclesiastical, political, and economic policies and issues of the period.

J. Armitage Robinson, who may be considered the inaugurator of

¹Abbot Thurcytel.

²Abbots Osgar, Osweard, and Thurcytel.
scholarly study of the English monastic revival, long ago recognized both the importance of the men who formed the leadership of the tenth-century church as bishops and abbots and the absence of information pertaining to their lives and careers:

The tenth century for England was a century of movement, of advance. The heroes of advance were not better, greater souls than we have now in high places. But the big man counted for more: he was bigger relatively than his equal today. He stood out against a darker background: he had more direct responsibility. So he had to take greater risks, and often to suffer for his words and actions. We could wish to know more of these great men, but our records are very scant.¹

A prosopographical analysis of Edgar's bishops and abbots has produced a fuller, if still incomplete, picture of their lives, careers, interests, and characters. In summary, the assembled evidence portrays these ecclesiastical leaders as talented, energetic, sophisticated, learned, ambitious, but above all as extremely dedicated to their responsibilities and to the goals they set for themselves, their church, and their society. The impact of these men on England was great. It remains to assess the nature of this impact on the many spheres of late tenth-century English society.

¹Robinson, The Times of Saint Dunstan, pp. 8-9.
CHAPTER IV

THE PROSOPOGRAPHY OF EDGAR'S BISHOPS AND ABBOTS
AND THE CHURCH, MONARCHY, SOCIETY, AND POLITICS
IN LATE TENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

The study of the characteristics of the group of persons who ruled over the English church as bishops and abbots in the second half of the tenth century leads to a number of conclusions and raises certain questions which have important implications for understanding the dimensions of Edgar's reign and its significance for Anglo-Saxon development. These conclusions and questions will be discussed in terms of four major areas: the church, the monarchy, social and economic organization, the political life of the time, and the inter-relationship between them.

During Edgar's reign ecclesiastical leadership passed into the hands of reforming monks. The creation of a monastic episcopate was well under way by 975 and it became royal and church policy to fill vacant sees with monks and abbots. The reform and revival of monastic life instigated by Dunstan, Aethelwold, Oswold, and their associates became the dominant theme and program of the English church and was carried out by placing reformers into the seats of episcopal power. The monastic character of the English episcopate and of the church in general which was achieved in the second half of the tenth century has for some time been established by scholars.¹ My study of the change from secular to monastic bishops during Edgar's reign has

¹Knowles, Monastic Order in England, pp. 697-701.
further documented this new policy of episcopal appointment by pro-
viding a numerical comparison of monastic and non-monastic bishops from
Edgar's reign and tracing more fully the connections of the monastic
bishops to one or more of the three great reformers.

Family connections appear to have played a more important role in
episcopal selection than has previously been noted. Prominent rela-
tives of bishops and abbots have often been pointed out by past scho-
lers, but until now the kinship relations of the bishops have not
been studied collectively. My findings have suggested that certain
influential families tended to provide a significant portion of eccle-
siastical leadership in the second half of the tenth century. Further-
more, there is every reason to believe that there was a high degree of
episcopal interrelatedness and a high degree of kinship among bishops
with the royal family. The possibility that Dunstan and Aethelwold
may have been related has not before been raised. The significance of
kinship relations in understanding the ecclesiastical power structure
and its relation to the Crown deserves more attention and investigation.

In accordance with the weight of scholarly opinion, my evidence
points to a high level of learning and a high degree of interchange
and communication between the English and continental churches. A
recent study has questioned and in fact denied the scholarly competence

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1For example, see Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England, pp. 440, 442.

2For example, see Deansely, Sidelights on the Anglo-Saxon
Church, p. 37, and Frank Barlow, The English Church, 1000-1066 (Hamden,
of the English church leadership, but the evidence leaves no doubt that a major goal of the reformers was to prepare literate and learned church leaders. To fulfill this goal they did rely on their extensive continental contacts. It seems that it may be best to view their achievement in learning in a relative framework. After all, a hundred years before the reform King Alfred the Great had described the virtual extinction of learning in England. The leaders of the tenth-century movement sought to remedy this deficiency and the result was a flowering of intellectual and cultural activity.

Although my study does not deal extensively with diocesan organization in the tenth-century church, evidence has come to light which strongly suggests the existence of a separate diocese of Lindsey during Edgar's reign. Hitherto, it has been assumed that Lindsey had been incorporated into the see of Dorchester during this period. Although the evidence I have assembled on Bishop Wulfric is not conclusive, it certainly suggests that he held the see of Lindsey under Edgar. If so this evidence would aid in reconstructing a more complete picture of diocesan organization in the tenth century.

Royal and church interests and objectives drew closer together and in fact were united during Edgar's reign. My findings have sup-

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3 Bishop Wulfric.
ported and illuminated already existing studies on the composition and function of the king's witan, which stress the lack of differentiation between secular and ecclesiastical business in the witan and the leading role of churchmen as counselors to the king.\(^1\) However, the view that the witan was essentially formless, its membership completely dependent on location and occasion,\(^2\) is not substantiated by my examination of Edgar's witness lists. The number and composition of the witnesses were quite variable, but I have demonstrated the existence of a core group or inner circle of witnesses which was fairly constant in attendance at those meetings of the witan where charters were promulgated. Furthermore, the majority of witnesses comprising this core group were ecclesiastics, especially bishops. This core group of witnesses must be considered as a central part of the power structure surrounding the Crown. Similar statistical studies for the reigns of other Anglo-Saxon kings on the frequency of attestation by witnesses to royal charters would reveal much about the configuration of power during the pre-Conquest period as a whole.

A recent study\(^3\) suggests that the promotion of monks to the episcopacy during Edgar's reign may have taken place on a purely personal basis, owing to the close association of Dunstan and Aethelwold with


\(^{2}\)Barlow, *The English Church, 1000-1066*, p. 115.

the king. The influence of the two great reformers on Edgar was certainly great both as counselors and friends. However, my findings strongly point to the establishment and implementation from 963 on of a joint royal and ecclesiastical policy in regard to the creation of a monastic episcopate which was not haphazard and which further evidences the growing alliance between the church and monarchy. This alliance is reflected in the new status of abbots in the king's witan. Prior to 963 abbots as a recognized group did not participate in the witan or witness royal charters. This situation changed radically after 963 when the number of abbots increased rapidly with the spread of the reformed monasticism. Royal patronage of the movement was demonstrated by the incorporation of abbots into the witan on an equal basis with bishops, ealdormen, and thegns.

The unification of royal and ecclesiastical interests was given its highest expression in the coronation ceremony of King Edgar in 973 and in the Regularis Concordia. Both reflect the development of of an ideology of sacral kingship which was enunciated by the reforming leadership of the church and accepted and used by the king to strengthen the prestige and authority of the monarchy. The development and nature of this theory of quasi-sacerdotal kingship has been noted by scholars for some time.¹

Edgar's reign has usually been seen as a chapter in the ecclesiastical history of England with the result that the king's actions are explained in terms of their relationship to the contemporary goals of the church. It is obvious why the ecclesiastical leaders needed Edgar: for royal patronage, protection from lay control, landed endowments, the according of status and power. It has not been so obvious, on the other hand, why Edgar aligned himself closely with the church, unless he were simply a pawn in the hands of Dunstan and Aethelwold and the ecclesiastical leaders. This was certainly not the case; he has been seen to have been a strong and independent king.¹ Edgar obviously pursued a path of close alliance with the monastic reformers because he felt it to be politically advantageous in strengthening the power and assets of the monarchy, just as he accepted the church's theory of kingship for the same reasons.

The political advantages to the monarchy accruing from patronage of a special interest group of reforming bishops and abbots have not been altogether unrecognized by scholars,² but they deserve more consideration in the light of the particular problems faced by the tenth-century Crown and the resources available to it.

One of the main problems confronting tenth-century kings was persisting localism which mitigated against the extension of centralized government and encouraged local magnates to act independently of the king's authority. What better instrument could Edgar have employed

¹See pages 46-48 above.
²For example, see Barlow, The English Church, 1000-1066, p. 34.
to check the effects of localism than a church dependent on royal patronage and eager to exalt the image and power of the monarchy? The evidence I have assembled indicates that as co-presidents of their shire courts and as increasingly important landlords in their dioceses and elsewhere, bishops were in a position of great influence and power in regard to local affairs and they represented not only their own interests but those of the king.

In addition to localism, tenth-century kings faced the problem posed by the settlement of a large Scandinavian population in northern England or Danelaw which had come about through the invasions of the ninth century. For the most part Edgar and his predecessors were content to allow the Scandinavians to keep their own customs and laws:

Further, it is my will that the Danes continue to observe the best constitution which they can determine upon. I have always granted you such a concession and will continue to do so, as long as my life lasts, because of the loyalty which you have constantly professed to me.¹

However, professions of loyalty might not always have been entirely reassuring to a monarchy which had almost been destroyed by Danish invasions less than a century before Edgar's reign. It has of course been noted before that Edgar appointed bishops and abbots of Scandinavian descent,² but my collective evidence establishes that one-seventh of the king's bishops and one-ninth to one-tenth of his abbots were of Scandinavian heritage. These are significant numbers and suggest that the king found it politically advantageous in the causes


²For example, see Knowles, The Monastic Order in England, p. 40.
of peace and integration to favor the appointment of ecclesiastical leaders of Scandinavian lineage.

It has already been pointed out that Edgar richly endowed the church and especially monastic foundations. It is of course true that kings prior to Edgar booked estates to bishops, abbots, and religious establishments. However, of the 161 charters ascribed to Edgar, eighty-eight alone are purported grants to monasteries, which is by far the largest number for any king up to that time. Some of these charters are later fabrications, but the majority do record basically authentic grants.\(^1\) Within the course of a few years monasteries must have become one of the wealthiest elements in society, and the general economic position of the church was enriched considerably. Edgar's huge grant of three hundreds to Archbishop Oswold by itself demonstrates this. Kirby has estimated that by 1066 monasteries controlled one-sixth to one-fifth of the wealth in England.\(^2\) The move in this direction was started by Edgar.

What the church gained from landed endowment in addition to greater prosperity was a freedom from secularium prioritas or lay control of monasteries, which was a major concern of the monastic reformers.\(^3\) But what did the king hope to gain by granting large portions of his demesne to the church? As already suggested, Edgar

\(^1\)See Appendix I for assessments of the authenticity of Edgar's charters.


\(^3\)Cockayne, ed., Eadger's Establishment of Monasteries, p. 443.
could count on support for the Crown in the localities against the possible divisive activities of powerful lay magnates. It must be remembered that the kingdom had only recently been reunited after a group of nobles removed their allegiance from Edgar's brother King Eadwig.

Furthermore, Edgar's grants to the church must be considered in the perspective of yet another fundamental problem facing the English monarchy, that of defense. Edgar was called the "Peaceable" by his contemporaries and his reign was characterized by an absence of invasion and war which had occupied the energies of so many of his predecessors. It may not be supposed that this was only due to good fortune. The Chronicle described Edgar as "bold in battle." He must be credited with a policy of defense which helped stave off the invasions which were to plague his son, Aethelred II. To aid in the creation of this defense he received in return for his bookland endowments military services, such as the naval force owed by Archbishop Oswold from the Triple Hundred of Oswoldslow.

It is not as important in the context of this paper to determine whether or not ecclesiastical land tenure under Edgar represented the origins of English feudalism, as it is to emphasize that during Edgar's reign economic (landed) power was being redistributed in favor of the church. Although the debate over early English feudalism has evoked important research, scholars on both sides tend to take rigid views and become involved in a battle of semantics in which definitions of feudalism may be made to fit or not fit a given set of circumstances.

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\[1\] Whitelock, et al., eds., Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 973.

\[2\] Although the debate over early English feudalism has evoked important research, scholars on both sides tend to take rigid views and become involved in a battle of semantics in which definitions of feudalism may be made to fit or not fit a given set of circumstances.
and social features, was not only broadened, as indicated by the inclusion of abbots in the witness lists, but was being shifted in favor of the church, controlled as it was by monastic reformers. The developments in ecclesiastical and royal interests and programs under Edgar were carried out by and reflected in the careers of a very small group of men which included the king, the archbishops, the monastic bishops, and the abbots. It must be concluded that appointments to bishoprics and abbacies were matters of high political import and that, furthermore, the implementation and execution of new church and royal policies must have been one of the leading political issues of the day.

It has been suggested why Edgar felt it politically advantageous to align the monarchy with the monastic reformers. Other segments of society, most notably the secular nobility felt differently. This is most clearly demonstrated in the so-called anti-monastic reaction which broke out after Edgar's death and involved the confiscation of monastic lands by lay nobles. Changes in the power structure which benefited bishops and abbots and the entire ecclesiastical institution would certainly have threatened the position of other groups.

Study of the bishops and abbots who witnessed Edgar's charters suggests much, not only about the particular men who led the English church at this time, but also about the broader scope of ecclesiastical-royal relations, the nature of the English monarchy, and the political and economic implications of the monastic reform movement.

\[\text{1Whitelock, et al., eds., Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 975.}\]
The reform of monastic life has usually been cited as the outstanding feature of Edgar's reign. Why this was so and what it meant for the course of Anglo-Saxon development are questions which have been raised and in part answered through an examination of ecclesiastical leadership for this period.
APPENDIX I
A LIST OF KING EDGAR'S WITNESSED CHARTERS WITH
AN ASSESSMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

There survive 139 royal charters attributed to Edgar's reign which bear the names of witnesses. As the assessment of charter authenticity is always a preliminary step to the treatment of the witness lists, Edgar's charters are listed below according to their respective categories of authenticity, which are: (1) authentic or probably authentic charters, to which the great majority, 102, belong; (2) questionable charters, of which there are twenty-four; (3) spurious charters, which include thirteen, and (4) charters with anachronistic witness lists, of which there are two.

For every charter in each group the following information is provided: (1) the number of the charter in Birch's edition; (2) the date ascribed to the charter; (3) the name of the recipient and nature of the grant; (4) the language in which the charter was written; (5) the number of witnesses attesting and statement as to whether this number represents a complete or incomplete witness list; and (6) the authority for the judgement of authenticity. Wherever possible I have relied on the assessment of specialists who have commented on the authenticity of various charters. These comments are presented in P. H. Sawyer, Anglo-Saxon Charters, which I have referred to as S with the appropriate number of the charter according to his listing. In some instances there has been a difference of opinion among scholars as to authenticity, in which case the charter has been assigned a
questionable category. Although the authenticity of most charters has been judged, there are thirty-six charters which have not yet received scholarly evaluation. Therefore, in order to treat the witnesses of these charters I undertook myself to determine their reliability, which I assessed primarily on the basis of the credibility of the witness lists. Thus my concern was more to establish the plausibility of the witness lists than to judge the genuineness of the dispositions of these charters. I have noted those cases where I have relied on my judgement alone for determining authenticity. I have not listed the manuscript sources for each charter, as these are readily available in Sawyer.

AUTHENTIC OR PROBABLY AUTHENTIC CHARTERS


B 1056. A.D. 960. King Edgar to Eanulf, his faithful minister; grant of land at Tywarnhayle in Perranzabuloe and at Bosowsa in Ladoke, Cornwall. Latin. Twenty-four witnesses; complete list. S 684.

B 1058. A.D. 960. King Edgar to the church of St. Mary, Abingdon; grant of land at Drayton, Berks. Latin. Twenty-four witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.


B 1077 (a) and B 1078 (b). A.D. 961. (a) King Edgar to Aethelwulf, his faithful minister; lease for three lives of land at Kilmeston, Hants., with reversion to St. Peter's Winchester. Latin. (b) Brihthelm, bishop, and the community of Old Minster, Winchester to Aethelwulf; lease for three lives of land at Kilmeston, Hants. English. Twenty-eight witnesses; complete list. S 693.

B 1079. A.D. 961. King Edgar to Aelfric, his faithful minister; grant of land at Ardington, Berks. Latin. Thirty-five witnesses; complete list. S 691.


B 1082. A.D. 962. King Edgar to Aethelflaed, matrona; grant of land at Chelsworth, Suffolk. Latin. Fifteen witnesses; complete list. S 703.

B 1083. A.D. 962. King Edgar to Titstan, his faithful cubicularius; grant of land at Afene (Avon Farm in Durnsford, Wilts.) Latin. Twenty-one witnesses; complete list. S 706.

B 1085. A.D. 962. King Edgar to Aelfheah, his kinsman; grant of land
at Sunbury, Middx. Latin. Eighteen witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.


B 1094. A.D. 962. King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey; grant of various privileges. Latin. Twenty witnesses; complete list. S 701.


B 1104. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Wulfhelm, his minister; grant of land at Ottery St. Mary, Devon. Latin. Two witnesses; probably incomplete list. S 721.

B 1112. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Aeslac; grant of land at Sherburn-on-Elmet, Yorks. Latin. Twenty-seven witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1113. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Gunner, his faithful dux; grant of land at Newbold, Yorks. Latin. Eighteen witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1114. A.D. 963. King Edgar to the church of St. Andrew, Meon; grant of land at Amersham, Sussex. Latin. Sixteen witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1115. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Aelfsige, his faithful minister; grant of land at Orchard, Dorset. Latin. Four witnesses; incomplete list. S 710.

B 1116. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Aelfric, his faithful minister; grant of land at Manworthy in Milverton, Somerset. Latin. Twenty-one witnesses; complete list. S 709.


B 1121. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Aethelsige, his camerarius; grant of land at Sparsholt and Balkling, Berks. Latin. Twenty-three witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter to be probably authentic.

B 1122. Abridged form of B 1121. Latin. Three witnesses; incomplete list. This charter also seems to be authentic.

B 1123. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Wulfnoth, his faithful minister; grant of land at Hocanedisce. Latin. Nineteen witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1124. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey; grant of land at East Hale, Sussex. Latin. Twenty-four witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1125. A.D. 963. King Edgar to Aethelwold, bishop; grant of land at Washington, Sussex. Latin. Twenty witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.


B 1143. A.D. 964. King Edgar to Aelfthryth, his queen; grant of land at Ashton Upthorpe, Berks. Latin. Forty-eight witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.


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B 1173. A.D. 961X971. King Edgar to St. Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury; grant of land at Plumstead, Kent. Latin. Nine witnesses; probably incomplete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1175. A.D. 966. King Edgar to Aelfhelm, his minister; grant of land at Parwich, Derbys. Latin. Sixteen witnesses; incomplete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.


B 1177. A.D. 966. King Edgar to Aelfthryth, his wife; grant of land at Buckland, Dorset. Latin. Two witnesses; incomplete list. S 742.


B 1189. A.D. 966. King Edgar to Aelfgifu, his kinswoman; grant of land at Linslade, Bucks. Latin. Forty-one witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter to be probably authentic.


B 1196. A.D. 967. King Edgar to Aelfheah, his faithful comes, and Aelfswith, Aelfheah's wife; grant of land at Merton and Dulwich, Surrey. Latin. Two witnesses; incomplete list. I have judged this charter to be probably authentic.

B 1197. A.D. 967. King Edgar to Wulfnoth Rumuncant, his faithful vasallus; grant of land at Lesneage and Pennare in St. Keverner, Cornwall. Latin. Twenty-three witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1199. A.D. 967. King Edgar to Aelfsige, his minister; grant of land at Eastune. Latin. Thirty-eight witnesses; complete list. S 748.

B 1200. A.D. 967. King Edgar to Winflaed, the noble matrona; grant of land at Meon and Farnfield in Dorrett, Hants. Latin. Thirty-four witnesses; complete list. S 754.

B 1209. A.D. 967. King Edgar to Beorhtnoth, his comes; grant of land at Cold Brayfield, Buck. Latin. Twenty-four witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter to be probably authentic.


B 1218. A.D. 968. King Edgar to Brihtgifu, his faithful lady; grant of land at Ealderescumbe. Latin. Four witnesses; incomplete list. S 762.


B 1226. A.D. 968. King Edgar to Wulfstan, his faithful minister; grant of land at Wurstley, Berks. Latin. Thirty-five witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1227. A.D. 968. King Edgar to Aelfwine, his faithful minister; grant of land at Boxford, Berks. Latin. Twenty-seven witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.


B 1230. A.D. 969. King Edgar to Aelfhelm, his faithful minister; grant of land at Witney, Oxon. Latin. Forty-eight witnesses; complete list. S 771.

B 1231. A.D. 969. King Edgar to Aelfheah Gerent, his man, and Aelf-
heah's wife Macuura; grant of land at Lamorran and Trenowth in Probus, Cornwall. Latin. Twenty witnesses; complete list. S 770.

B 1234. A.D. 969. King Edgar to Aelfwold, his faithful minister; grant of land at Kineton, Warwicks. Latin. Thirty-three witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.


B 1259. A.D. 970. King Edgar to Aelfswith, widow and nun; grant of land at Idiniston, Wilts. Latin. Two witnesses; incomplete list. S 775.


B 1268. A.D. 970. King Edgar to Ely Abbey; grant of land at Linden End in Aldreth, Cambs. Latin. Thirty witnesses; complete list. S 780.


B 1285. A.D. 972. King Edgar to Aelfflaed, the lady; grant of land at Kennet, Wilts. Latin. Seventeen witnesses; complete list. S 784.


B 1291. A.D. 973. King Edgar to Wulfmaer, his minister; grant of
land at Barrow, Somerset. Latin. Three witnesses; incomplete list. S 793.

B 1292. A.D. 973. King Edgar to Aelfric, his minister; grant of land at Harwell, Berks. Latin. Twenty-five witnesses; complete list. S 790.


B 1295. A.D. 955 for ?973. King Edgar to St. Andrew, Rochester and Aelfstan, bishop of Rochester; grant of land at Bromley, Kent. Latin. Thirty-one witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1297. A.D. 973. King Edgar to Thorney Abbey; grant of privileges and confirmation of lands. Latin. Thirty-nine witnesses; complete list. S 792.

B 1302. A.D. 984 for 963X970. King Edgar to Old Minster, New Minster and Nuns' Minster, Winchester; grant of land at Winchester. Latin. Twenty-seven witnesses; complete list. S 807.


B 1309. A.D. 978 for ?974. King Edgar to Mangod, his faithful minister; grant of land at Hampstead, Middx. Latin. Thirty-seven witnesses; complete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.


B 1314. A.D. 975. King Edgar to Osweard, his propinquus; grant of land at South Stoke, Sussex. Latin. Fifteen witnesses; probably incomplete list. I have judged this charter as probably authentic.

B 1316. A.D. 975. King Edgar to Aelfweard, his minister; grant of land at Pyfield, Hants. Latin. Twenty-six witnesses; complete list. S 800.


QUESTIONABLE CHARTERS


B 1075. A.D. 961. King Edgar to Eadric, his faithful minister; grant of land at Hamstede. Latin. Twenty-one witnesses; complete list. The only irregularity in the witness list is that Aethelwold signs as bishop too early.

B 1096. A.D. 962. King Aethelred (?for Edgar) to Leofric, minister, grant of woodland partly bounded by the Claybrook, Leics. Latin. Eighteen witnesses; complete list. The assignment of this charter to Aethelred's reign is a suspicious feature.


B 1169. A.D. 965. King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey; grant of land at Marcham, Berks. Latin. Twenty-eight witnesses; complete list. I have found the depository portion of this charter to be suspicious.


B 1172. A.D. 965. King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey; grant of land at Denchworth, Berks. Latin. Twenty-six witnesses; complete list. This charter may contain interpolations.
B 1178. A.D. 966. King Edgar to Croyland Abbey; grant of privileges and confirmation of the lands named in B 538 with the addition of Burtoft and Sutterton, Lincs. Latin. Twenty witnesses; complete list. S 741.

B 1183. A.D. 956. King Edgar to Aelfstan, miles; grant of land at Harwell, Berks. Latin. Seventeen witnesses; complete list. S 672.

B 1185. A.D. 963X971. King Edgar to the church of Canterbury; grant of land at Sandwich, Kent. Latin. Thirteen witnesses; probably incomplete list. S 808.

B 1198. A.D. 967. King Edgar to Dunstan, archbishop; grant of land at Cealuadune. Latin. Seventeen witnesses; complete list. S 753.

B 1221. A.D. 968. King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey; grant of land at Fifield, Berks. Latin. Forty-one witnesses; complete list. I believe the formulaic structure of this charter to be suspicious.

B 1222. A.D. 968. King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey; grant of land at Cumnor, Berks. Latin. Forty-one witnesses; complete list. This charter contains unusual formulae.

B 1224. A.D. 968. King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey; grant of land at Hanney, Berks. Latin. Forty-one witnesses; complete list. Perhaps a fabrication similarly to B 1221 and B 1222.

B 1225. A.D. 968. King Edgar to Abingdon Abbey; grant of land at Oare, Berks. Latin. Forty-one witnesses; complete list. Doubtful formulae.


B 1281. A.D. 972. Extemporary confirmation by King Edgar of the lands and privileges of Peterborough Abbey. English. Thirteen witnesses; incomplete list. I believe that the witness list may be irregular.


SPURIOUS CHARTERS


B 1280. A.D. 972. King Edgar to Peterborough Abbey; grant of privileges and land. Latin. This is a later form of B 1258. Thirty-two witnesses; complete list. S 787.


B 1310 and B 1311. A.D. 974. King Edgar to Romsey Abbey; confirmation and grant of privileges and lands. Latin. B 1310: twelve witnesses; probably incomplete list; B 1311: thirty witnesses; incomplete list. S 798.

B 1313. A.D. 975. King Edgar to Old Minster, Winchester; grant of land at Bleadon, Somerset. Latin. Fourteen witnesses; probably incomplete list. S 804.
CHARTERS WITH ANACHRONISTIC WITNESS LISTS


APPENDIX II

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE BISHOPS AND ABBOTS

In the following pages I have set forth the results of my research concerning Edgar's bishops and abbots, who will be treated in alphabetical order. For each person I have presented and interpreted the surviving biographical data in such a way as will provide the fullest possible identification. At all times a distinction will be made between what can be known with certainty and what is only probable, possible, or questionable evidence regarding a given individual. Owing to the constant need for citation of sources, I have avoided the use of footnotes and instead have cited abbreviated references in parentheses within the text. These abbreviations are identified by author or editor and the name of work in the following list and receive full bibliographic citation in the Bibliography at the end.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelard, Vita</td>
<td>Adelard, Epistola Adelardi ad Elfegum Archiepiscopum de Vita Sancti Dunstani.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aelfric</td>
<td>Aelfric, Vita Sancti Aethelwoldi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASBKN</td>
<td>William G. Searle, Anglo-Saxon Bishops, Kings and Nobles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASC</td>
<td>Dorothy Whitelock, et al., eds., Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Walter de Gray Birch, ed., Carularium Saxonicum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td>William D. Macray, ed., <em>Chronicon Abbatiae de Ramesiensis</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMR</td>
<td>William H. Hart, ed., <em>Cartularium Monasterii de Rameseia</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGP</td>
<td>William of Malmesbury, <em>De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duckett</td>
<td>Eleanor S. Duckett, <em>Saint Dunstan of Canterbury</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eadmer, Vita</td>
<td>Eadmer, <em>Vita Sancti Oswoldi</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fl. Wig.</td>
<td>Florence of Worcester, <em>Chronicle</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flete</td>
<td>John Flete, <em>History of Westminster Abbey</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harmer</td>
<td>F. E. Harmer, <em>Anglo-Saxon Writs</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Eric John, <em>Orbis Britanniae and Other Studies</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>John M. Kemble, ed., <em>Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici</em>.</td>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>E. O. Blake, ed., <em>Liber Eliensis.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>LVH</td>
<td>Walter de Gray Birch, ed., <em>Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Osbern</td>
<td>Osbern, <em>Vita Sancti Dunstani.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Robertson</td>
<td>Agnes J. Robertson, <em>Anglo-Saxon Charters.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSA</td>
<td>William Stubbs, <em>Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>P. H. Sawyer, <em>Anglo-Saxon Charters.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Simeon of Durham, <em>Opera Omnia.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senatus, Vita</td>
<td>Senatus, <em>Vita Sancti Oswoldi.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vita B</td>
<td>Auctor B, <em>Vita Sancti Dunstani.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vita Ethelwoldi</td>
<td>Anonymous, <em>Vita Sancti Ethelwoldi.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita Oswoldi</td>
<td>Anonymous, <em>Vita Sancti Oswoldi.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita Wills</td>
<td>Dorothy Whitelock, ed. and trans., <em>Anglo-Saxon Wills.</em></td>
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Aelfgar, Bishop of Ramsbury, 970-973

Aelfgar's signature appears only on two copies of a spurious charter, B 1310 and 1311, which are the English and Latin versions, respectively, of Edgar's foundation charter of Ramsey Abbey, dated December 28, 974. In the Latin copy he is called Wintoniensis episcopus, but is identified in the English version as Aelfgarus Wiltuniensis episcopus. The see of Ramsbury included Berkshire and Wiltunescire (Wiltshire).

Florence states under the entry for A.D. 970 that Osulf, bishop of Wilton died and Aelfgar was ordained in his place (Fl. Wig., 970). However, in the catalogue of bishops following his chronicle, Florence contradicts himself and lists the succession as Osulf, Aelfstan, and then Aelfgar (Fl. Wig., p. 420). The LVH does not mention Aelfgar at all in its list of the bishops of Ramsbury (LVH, p. 21), but the LVH sometimes differs with other authorities on episcopal succession. William of Malmesbury places Aelfgar in between Osulf and Aelfstan, relying of Florence's Chronicle instead of his catalogue of bishops (DPG, p. 181).

Neither Stubbs nor Searle seem to be aware that Aelfgar may have held the see between Osulf and Aelfstan. Stubbs states that Aelfstan immediately succeeded Osulf on his death in 970, omitting Aelfgar altogether (RSA, p. 29). Searle also shows Aelfstan succeeding Osulf in 970. He identifies the successor of Aelfstan by two names Wulfgar and Aelfgar (ASBKN, p. 88). More recent authorities (Knowles, p. 699; Robertson, p. 341) have followed the opinion that Aelfstan succeeded Osulf in 970.
That Aelfgar's signature appears only on two spurious charters together with the confusion of evidence over the chronology of his elevation to Ramsbury makes it impossible to decide whether his episcopacy belongs to Edgar's reign or afterwards. I would not rule out the possibility, based on the evidence from Florence's *Chronicle*, that Aelfgar may have been bishop of Ramsbury from 970 (the date of Osulf's death) to 974 (Aelfstan's first signature on B 1304).

**Aelfheah, Bishop of Lichfield, subs. 975-1002**

Bishop Aelfheah's name appears on one authentic charter, B 1314, dated 975, and on two copies of a spurious document, B 1228 and 1264, dated 969, in which he is further identified as *Aelfegus Lichfeldensis ecclesiae episcopus*. In his catalogue of bishops, Florence lists Aelfheah as succeeding Winsige as bishop of Lichfield (*Fl. Wig.*, p. 425). Similarly, William of Malmesbury places Aelfheah after Winsige in the succession (*DGP*, p. 308).

The dates of Aelfheah's episcopacy are uncertain. He may have succeeded as early as 973 (Knowles, p. 699). Searle dates his succession as 973X975 (*ASBKN*, p. 138). Whitelock states that Aelfheah's last signature on a royal charter occurs in 1002 and the first of his successor Godwine does not appear until 1004, so it may be presumed that Aelfheah died between the two dates (Wills, p. 159).

According to the *LVH*, Aelfheah, bishop of Lichfield was one of the early monks at the reformed Old Minster at Winchester (*LVH*, p. 23). He would therefore have been in close association with St. Aethelwold and was undoubtedly a proponent of the monastic reform.
Nothing else is known with certainty about Aelfheah's background and career. However, it should be noted that an Aelfheah, abbot, witnesses Edgar's charters from 970 to 974, and it is possible that this abbot may be the same Aelfheah who became bishop of Lichfield. If this is true his date of succession could not be before 974. It does indeed seem likely that Aelfheah was first an abbot, as the greater number of bishops at this time were drawn from the monastic ranks.

Aelfheah, Abbot, subs. 970-974/975

Abbot Aelfheah subscribes to ten or eleven charters from 970 (B 1257) to 974 (B 1311) or 975 (B 1315, attesting as Aelfhim, abbot). I have been unable to identify his abbey. It seems likely that his house was located in southern England, as the charters he witnesses deal primarily with estates in that region.

There was an Aelfheah who was successively a monk at Deerhurst, Gloucester (Osbern, II, 629-30), Abbot of Bath from c. 963 to 984 (Fl. Wig., 984), Bishop of Winchester succeeding St. Aethelwold in 984 (ASC, 984), Archbishop of Canterbury in 1006 (ASC, 1006; Fl. Wig., 1006), and was taken captive by the Danes and martyred in 1012 (ASC, 1012). It is not impossible that this Aelfheah was identical with the abbot of Edgar's charters. This is Knowles' view (HRH, p. 28). The problem with identifying Aelfheah as abbot of Bath during Edgar's reign is the existence of other evidence that Aescwig was abbot there at the same time (HRH, p. 27). Knowles suggests as a remedy to this problem that there may have been two houses at Bath, Aescwig heading the active house and Aelfheah, in accordance with the statement of the LVH (p. 214).
that he was an anchorite at Bath, acting as abbot of the hermit abbey (HRH, p. 28).

However, it seems just as likely if not more so that the abbot of his name is to be identified with the Aelfheah who became bishop of Lichfield around 974, which corresponds with the last signature of Abbot Aelfheah.

**Aelfhim, Abbot of Milton Abbey, c. 975-c. 995**

This signature appears only on B 1315, dated 975. The name may be an incorrect form of the name Aelfheah and could therefore be identified with Abbot Aelfheah. However, it seems more likely that the witness is Abbot Aelfhim of Milton Abbey, Dorset, who signs King Aethelred's charters from 982 (K 1278) to 995 (K 1289). Knowles believes Abbot Aelfhim may possibly be identified with the bishop of London of that name who held the see from 1002X1004-?1013 (HRH, p. 56).

**Aelfnoth, Bishop of Dorchester, 965X974-975X979**

Aelfnoth is identified in two copies of the foundation charter of Ramsey Abbey dated 974 as *Dorocensis episcopus* (B 1310, B 1311). Florence lists Aelfnoth in the succession following Leofwine (Fl. Wig., p. 426). Bishop Aelfnoth signs one other charter of 975 (B 1314). He succeeded to the episcopacy some time between 965, which is the date of the last signature of his predecessor Leofwine (B 1164) and 974, the date of his first attestation. The name of his successor, Aescwig does not appear until 979 (K 621) and it is probable that Aelfnoth was bishop until then.

The LVH (p. 23) reports that Aelfnoth, bishop of Dorchester, was
one of the early monks at the reformed Old Minster, Winchester. He might be the same individual who signs as abbot of an unidentified abbey earlier in 974 (B 1303, 1304). If this is true it would be another example of a monastic bishop during Edgar's reign.

While bishop, Aelfnoth took part in the dedication of Ramsey Abbey at which were gathered a large number of the leading men of the kingdom (CAR, p. 43). Curiously, Stubbs records the name of the Bishop of Dorchester from 965-974 as Eadnoth (RSA, p. 30). Knowles has followed the form of the name used by Stubbs (Knowles, p. 698). I can find no references in the sources using Eadnoth instead of Aelfnoth and it would seem that Stubbs and Knowles have erred.

Aelfnoth, Abbot, subs. 974

His signature appears only on two charters of 974 (B 1303, B 1304). I have not been able to locate his abbey. He may possibly be the later Bishop of Dorchester of that name, who was elevated to the see sometime before November 8, 974, the dedication date of Ramsey Abbey, where Aelfnoth presided as bishop (CAR, p. 43). Abbot Aelfnoth is otherwise unidentifiable.

Aelfric, Bishop of Elmham, 965X970-c. 974

Bishop Aelfric attests to two charters of 970 dealing with the foundation and endowment of Ely Abbey (B 1265, B 1266). He is identified in a spurious charter dated 966 as Alfricus episcopus Estangiae (B 1179). William of Malmesbury lists Aelfric as the successor of Aethulf at Elmham (DPG, p. 148). Aelthulf's last signature is in 965 (B 1164) and Aelfric's successor Theodred witnesses for the first time
in 974 (B 1303), so Aelfric's tenure of office falls somewhere between those two dates.

Robertson notes that a passage found in both of the Cambridge University Library MSS of K 978 states that there were three bishops of East Anglia called Aelfric, unus bonus, alter niger, et tertius parvus, the first title fitting the Aelfric who was bishop during Edgar's reign (Robertson, p. 425). The same MSS indicate that Bishop Aelfric, cognomento bonus, gave the estate of Soham near Worlingworth, Suffolk to the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, also in Suffolk (Robertson, p. 443).

Aelfric, Abbot

Thirty-nine signatures of one or more abbots called Aelfric occur on Edgar's charters between 963 (B 1120) and 975 (B 1316). When an abbot of this name attests, he frequently heads the list of subscribing abbots. There are four abbots of this name for whom evidence survives from Edgar's reign. It is doubtful, however, that all four Aelfrics are represented by the attestations. I have presented the evidence for these individuals below, but it is likely that the first two are the signers of Edgar's grants.

1. Abbot Aelfric of St. Augustine's, Canterbury. He appears first in a document of 958 or 959 (B 1030). It is probably he who testifies first among subscribing abbots from 964 (B 1143) to 970 (B 1266). Robertson gives the dates of his abbacy as 956 to 971 (Robertson, p. 341), but I have not been able to determine the basis on which she has arrived at these dates.

2. Abbot Aelfric of Malmesbury. Searle identifies an abbot of
this name presiding over the see of Malmesbury from 970 to 977 before becoming bishop of Crediton (OAS, p. 18). It may be he who signs Edgar's charters from 970 or 972 through 975. Two charters dated 974 record Edgar's restitution of estates in Wiltshire to Aelfric, Abbot of Malmesbury (B 1300, B 1301). It is not made clear why these lands were originally forfeited. Both the LVH (p. 21) and Florence (p. 421) list Aelfric as succeeding Sideman as bishop of Crediton. As Sideman died in 977 (ASC, 977; Fl. Wig., 977), Aelfric may be supposed to have succeeded in that year. He signs as bishop charters of 979 (K 621) and 985 (K 1283), and his successor Aelfweard's first attestation is in 988 (K 662, K 665), so it would appear that Aelfric died between 985 and 988.

3. Abbot Aelfric of Glastonbury. His name occurs in a tenth-century list of Glastonbury abbots (HRH, p. 50).

4. Abbot Aelfric of St. Albans. Aelfric was the first abbot of the abbey's refoundation, who held the post from c. 969-c. 990 (HRH, p. 65).

Aelfsige, Bishop of Chester-le-Street, 968-990

Aelfsige appears as a witness on only one charter dated 970 (B 1269). Both Florence and Simeon of Durham record that in 968 Aelfsige succeeded Aldred as bishop of Chester-le-Street (Fl. Wig., 968; SD, I, 78). Chester-le-Street was the name given to the see of Durham from 900 to about 1000 (Fl. Wig., p. 430). It is further recorded that Aelfsige was consecrated at York by Archbishop Oscytel (SD, I, 78). Simeon states that Aelfsige held his see for twenty-two years and Aldhim suc-
ceeded him in 990 (SD, I, 78). Late in Edgar's reign Bishop Aelfsige, Ealdorman Oslac of York, and Ealdorman Ealdulf of Northumbria were present when King Kenneth of Scotland paid homage to King Edgar at Chester-le-Street (SD, II, 382).

Aelfstan, Bishop of London, 961–995

Aelfstan succeeded Dunstan as bishop of London in 961 (DGP, p. 145; RSA, p. 28). He witnesses his first charters also in that year and continues to sign seventy-nine charters throughout Edgar's reign. Aelfstan signs as Episcopus Londoniensis in a number of Edgar's charters: B 1097, B 1098, B 1134, B 1142, B 1145, B 1176, B 1179, B 1189, B 1190, B 1191, B 1211, B 1222, B 1224, B 1225, B 1226, B 1282, B 1284, B 1294, B 1304, B 1307, B 1310, and B 1311. His episcopacy lasted through 995, as his last signature is in that year (K 691) and his successor Wulfstan was appointed in 996 (ASC, 996).

References to Aelfstan's episcopacy show that he was involved in local and national affairs. He took part in the settlement of the controversy over the ownership of estates at Wouldham, Kent (Robertson XLI, dated 964-988). It is recorded that Aelfstan was present at a meeting of the witan in London probably during King Aethelred's reign (Robertson, LXIII, dated 993). Another gathering of the witan took place in London at which Aelfstan of London helped decide the title to lands at Bromley and Fawkham, Kent (Robertson, LIX, dated 975-982). In 992 a Bishop Aelfstan led an expedition against the Danes, but it is not clear whether the bishop was Aelfstan of London or Rochester (ASC, 992; Fl. Wig., 992).
Aelfstan, Bishop of Rochester, ?961X964-c. 995

The date of Aelfstan's appointment to the see of Rochester is uncertain. His predecessor Brihtsige appears for the last time in 955 (B 909, B 911). Aelfstan's name appears in a spurious charter attributed to Bishop Dunstan dated 959, which cannot be accepted as evidence (B 1050). His first signature on a royal charter is found in 964, where he attests as Aelfstan Hrovensis episcopus (B 1134). However, John suggests that he also witnessed earlier charters of 959 (B 1047) and 961 (B 1066, B 1067) (John, pp. 194-95). It cannot be determined if he is correct, as Bishop Aelfstan of London might have subscribed to these charters rather than the bishop of Rochester. Stubbs gives the date of his elevation as between 961 and 964 (RSA, p. 28). Aelfstan signed at least thirty-one charters.

Aelfstan of Rochester was among the monks at Old Minster, Winchester (LVH, p. 23). A Bishop Aelfstan is listed among the kinsmen of the wealthy landowning thegn Brihtric and his wife Aelfswith (Wills, XI). Whitelock thinks it probable that this Aelfstan was the bishop of Rochester (Wills, p. 130).

Aelfstan was involved in a lawsuit concerning the estates of Bromley and Fawkham, Kent. B 1295, dated around 973, shows that King Edgar granted ten hides at Bromley to the Church of St. Andrew's, Rochester, and to Aelfstan the bishop. However, the title to the land was later obscured and in Robertson, LIX, dated between 975 and 987, a record survives of the dispute over the estate, which was finally awarded to Rochester.

Aelfstan was a witness to the settlement over the ownership of
estates at Wouldham, Kent, as set forth in a charter dated between 964 and 988 (Robertson, XLI). He was also present at a meeting of the witan in London where a certain Wulfbold forfeited his holdings (Robertson, LXIII). He may have been the bishop who led an expedition against the Danes in 992 (ASC, 992; Fl. Wig., 992). His last signature occurs in 995 (K 691).

Aelfstan, Abbot of Glastonbury, c. 964-970; Bishop of Ramsbury, 970-973-981

The name of Abbot Aelfstan appears in Edgar's witness lists twenty-two times from 964 through 970. He is identified as abbot of Glastonbury by Florence (Fl. Wig., 970) and in a spurious charter dated 966 where his signature is given as Alfstanus abbas Glastoniae (B 1179). Prior to his appointment at Glastonbury Aelfstan had been a monk at Abingdon under St. Aethelwold (Aelfric, p. 835; DGP, p. 181). In 970, while still abbot, he and Abbot Aethelgar of New Minster, Winchester, deposited the relics of St. Swithin in the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Winchester (Fl. Wig., 970).

The problems surrounding the date of Aelfstan's elevation to Ramsbury have already been discussed in connection with the evidence for Bishop Aelfgar's tenure of office in that see (see Aelfgar, bishop). Most authorities give 970 as the date when Aelfstan succeeded Osulf as bishop (RSA, p. 29; Robertson, p. 341). However, as I have tried to show, it is at least possible that Aelfgar was bishop of Ramsbury between Osulf and Aelfstan. Aelfstan's first signature as bishop does not definitely appear until 973 when all three bishops of that name attest (B 1292). He is not clearly identified until 974, when he
witnesses as Aelfstan Wiltuniensis ecclesie episcopus (B 1304). He may have remained abbot of Glastonbury until 973. He signed at least seven charters as bishop.

There is little evidence of Aelfstan's activities as bishop. He may have witnessed the purchase of an estate by Abbot Os gar of Abingdon (Robertson, XLI, dated 971X980). Florence records that in 992 Aelfstan the Bishop of Wilton led troops against the Danes (Fl. Wig., 992), but he has clearly confused this Aelfstan with either the bishop of London or Rochester, for earlier he states that Aelfstan, Bishop of Wilton, died in 981 and was succeeded by Sigeric (Fl. Wig., 981). The Chronicle confirms this death date (ASC, 981), so Aelfstan of Ramsbury could not have been involved in the campaign. Upon his death in 981 Aelfstan was buried at Abingdon (ASC, 981).

Aelfwold, Bishop of Crediton, 953-972

Aelfwold was elevated to the see of Crediton, which corresponded to the shire of Dorset, during the reign of King Eadred in 953. Florence records under his entry for that year that Bishop Aethelgar died and Aelfwold succeeded him by the advice of Dunstan who was then abbot of Glastonbury (Fl. Wig., 953). The LVH (p. 21) and William of Malmsbury (DPG, p. 200) also testify to Aelfwold's elevation after the death of Aethelgar.

Aelfwold's signatures also begin in 953 (B 900) and continue with some frequency throughout the reigns of Eadwig and Edgar up to 972 (B 1282, B 1283, B 1284, B 1285). During Edgar's reign he witnessed fifty-seven charters. He is fully identified in a charter of 964 as
Alfwold episcopus Cridiensis (B 1134) and in two dubious charters dated 966 as Aelfwoldus episcopus Dorenoniae (B 1178, B 1179). Florence records that Bishop Aelfwold died in 972 and was buried at Crediton (Fl. Wig., 972).

Aelfwold, Bishop of Sherbourne, 958X961-978

The last signature of Aelfwold's predecessor, Wulfsige, appears in 958 (B 1032) and the first definite signature of Aelfwold of Sherbourne is in 961 (B 1079) when both bishops of that name attest. Therefore, it can only be said that Aelfwold was elevated to the see of Sherbourne, which covered the shire of Dorchester, between 958 and 961.

The LVH (p. 20) and William of Malmesbury (DPG, p. 179) record that Aelfwold succeeded Wulfsige as bishop of Sherbourne. Florence mistakenly names Aelfsige as Aelfwold's predecessor (Fl. Wig., p. 421).

Aelfwold signs twenty-eight of Edgar's charters from 961 on. In B 1134 his full title is given as Alfwold Sciraburnensis episcopus and in B 1282 and B 1284 as Aelfwold Scireburnensis cathedrae antistes.

It is recorded in Edgar's enfranchisement charter to Muchelney Abbey that Bishop Aelfwold established monks there around 964 (Finberg 1964, #489). The charter states that Aelfwold was directed to rule over the abbey as long as he lived and thereafter the monks were to elect their abbots.

In 966 King Edgar booked an estate of ten hides to Aelfwold of Sherbourne at Isle Abbots, Somerset (Finberg 1964, #492). A charter dated 1014 tells the history of an estate at Corscombe, Dorset (K 1309). Bishop Aelfwold with King Edgar's consent originally leased the estate...
which reverted to Sherbourne Abbey between 1001 and 1012.

Aelfwold died in 978 and was buried at Sherbourne (ASC, 978; FL Wig., 978).

**Aelfwold, Abbot, subs. 958-963**

The signatures of an Abbot Aelfwold are affixed to only three charters from the early part of Edgar's reign. Two of these involve grants to Abingdon Abbey of estates in Berkshire (B 1047, A.D. 959) and in Wiltshire (B 1124, A.D. 963). The other grant is to a thegn of land in Wiltshire (B 1120, A.D. 963). Abbot Aelfwold also subscribes to three charters from King Eadwig's reign. One of these dated 958, concerns land booked to a thegn in Wiltshire (B 1030). The other two are grants to religious foundations, one to New Minster, Winchester (B 1045, A.D. 959) and the other to Abingdon (B 1046, A.D. 959).

An Abbot Aelfwold is listed in the LVH (p. 24) as a devotee of the New Minster, Winchester. He is probably the same individual who witnesses Eadwig's and Edgar's charters.

Whitelock notes these appearances of Abbot Aelfwold, but she states that his abbey cannot be identified (Wills, p. 150). However, the cartulary of Muchelney names Aelfwold as abbot of that monastery in 964 (Ctl. Muchelney, #3). This seems the most likely identity for the witness of Edgar's charters, whose name appears on transactions concerning estates in shires adjacent to Somerset where Muchelney was located. Muchelney was reformed around 959 by Dunstan (HRH, p. 56). This would help explain why Aelfwold is the only abbot besides Æthelwold and Ealdred who appears in the witness lists during the period.

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from 959 to 963. Muchelney's proximity to Glastonbury would have placed Aelfwold in close association with Dunstan and he must have gained prominence in the early stages of the reform movement.

However, the evidence shows that Bishop Aelfwold of Sherbourne acted as abbot of Muchelney from 964 until his death in 978. This leads to speculation that Bishop Aelfwold and Abbot Aelfwold may have been one and the same person, who was abbot of Muchelney until about 961 and thereafter retained his abbacy while also presiding over the see of Sherbourne. The only problem with this explanation is that Bishop Aelfwold's first attestation is in 961 and Abbot Aelfwold continued to sign until 963. This two year overlap could be explained by a faulty dating of the charters or by the possibility that Aelfwold at this period sometimes witnessed as abbot and sometimes as bishop.

It cannot be stated with certainty that Abbot Aelfwold's house was Muchelney, but the evidence for this identification is certainly suggestive and if this is true there can be little doubt that he was the same individual who became bishop of Sherbourne and continued to rule over Muchelney. After 963 the name of an abbot called Aelfwold does not appear in the witness lists again until 980 (K 624) and the subscriber to that charter is most probably Abbot Aelfwold of Winchcombe (HRH, p. 78).

Aescwig, Abbot of Bath, c. 963-979; Bishop of Dorchester, c. 979-c. 1002

Aescwig's first signature occurs in 963 (B 1120). The last appearance of his apparent predecessor Abbot Wulfgar is in 956, where he is mentioned as abbot of Bath in a grant to that abbey King Eadwig (B 927).
Aescwig witnesses fifty-two charters throughout Edgar's reign from 963 on and it may be assumed he became abbot around that date. His name appears also in a few charters issued by Edward the Martyr (K 1277, K 598, K 1275). Around 979 he was elevated to the see of Dorchester and signs from that year (K 621) to 1002 (K 1297). Aescwig is erroneously called bishop in two copies of a spurious charter dated 968 (B 1228, B 1264).

Before Aescwig became abbot of Bath he was a monk at Old Minster, Winchester (LVH, p. 23), probably under Abbot Aethelwold, where he would have been schooled in the monastic reform movement.

In 965 Edgar granted an estate at Stanton Prior, Somerset to Abbot Aescwig (B 1164). In another charter of 970 the king exchanged lands at Compton, Gloucester for an estate at Clifton, Gloucester which was held by Bath Abbey. Aescwig is here again identified as abbot (B 1257).

As bishop of Dorchester, Aescwig received a number of grants from King Aethelred (K 689, K 690, K 691) and he took part in deciding a dispute over estates at Fawkham and Romeley, Kent (B 1296). By 992 he must have attained some stature in the political affairs of the kingdom, for he acted as one of the leaders in an expedition against the Danes (ASC 992; Fl. Wig., 992). He died sometime after 1002, the date of his last signature.

Aethelgar, Abbot of New Minster (Hyde Abbey), Winchester, 964–980

The LVH states that after the clerks had been expelled from the New Minster Bishop Aethelwold installed Aethelgar as abbot over the
new community of monks (LVH, p. 182). The ASC similarly records that in 964 King Edgar appointed Aethelgar abbot of New Minster, Winchester (ASC, 964). His first signatures also appear in that year and he continues to witness as abbot forty-six charters during Edgar's reign. In two charters of 966 he subscribes by his full title, *Aethelgarus abbas novi monasterii Wintoniae* (B 1178, B 1179).

Sometime between 964 and 975 Abbot Aethelgar was involved in a dispute over the boundaries delineating the properties of New Minster, Old Minster, and the nunnery at Winchester (Robertson, XLIX). At the prompting of the king and Bishop Aethelwold and "for the sake of peace and concord," Aethelgar granted two mills to the nunnery in exchange for a watercourse which the abbot had diverted to the New Minster and which formerly had belonged to the nuns. This apparently settled the dispute and the entire proceeding represents an interesting example of the problems which closely adjoining abbeys sometimes encountered.

During his period as abbot, Aethelgar was a witness to Brihtric Grim's bequest to Winchester Cathedral (Wills, VII). Between 971 and 980 he was present at a meeting at Alderbury, Wiltshire where he acted as a witness to Abbot Osgar's purchase of an estate from Ealdorman Aelfhere (Robertson, LI). During Edward the Martyr's reign, Aethelgar witnessed an exchange of lands in Wiltshire and Hampshire between Bishop Aethelwold and a certain Aelfwine (Robertson, LIII).

On May 2, 980 Aethelgar was consecrated Bishop of Selsey (ASC, 980; Fl. Wig., 980). While bishop he continued to be involved in local and national affairs, witnessing transactions concerning estates in Kent (Robertson, LIX) and taking part in the trial of a criminal.
(Robertson, LXIII). King Aethelred made at least two grants to the bishop, one in Winchester in 983 (K 635) and the other in Sussex in 988 (S, 869).

In 988, following Dunstan's death, Aethelgar was elevated to the archepiscopal see of Canterbury (ASC, 988; Fl. Wig., 988). He served as archbishop only a short time, one year and three months (ASC, 988). The date of his death is recorded as February 13, 990 (LVH, p. 270).

Aethelsige, Abbot, subs. 974

The name of Abbot Aethelsige is found on only one charter from Edgar's reign, a conveyance of land in Devon of 974 (B 1303). In 988 a second attestation of Abbot Aethelsgie occurs (K 664), which may possibly belong to the same witness of the earlier charter. Such an abbot is otherwise unknown.

Aethelwold, Abbot of Abingdon, 955-963; Bishop of Winchester, 963-984

Aethelwold was one of the most prominent individuals in England during Edgar's reign. He was a consistent witness to the king's charters, signing 107 of the 139 grants attributed to Edgar. He testifies as abbot from 959 to 963 and subsequently as bishop. Until 964 he was the only abbot who regularly subscribed. As bishop of Winchester, he generally signs first among the attesting bishop, following the Archbishop of York, indicating his esteemed position.

The chief and most valuable sources for Aethelwold's life and career are Aelfric's Vita and the Wulfstan's Vita, both probably written shortly after Aethelwold's death by persons who knew him. These sources report that Aethelwold was born of noble parents in Winchester during
the reign of Edward the Elder (900-925) (Aelfric, p. 832; Vita Ethelwoldi, col. 83). As a youth, he devoted himself to study, soon became known to King Aethelstan (925-940), and spent much time at court (Aelfric, p. 833). After remaining with Aelfheah for a while, Aethelwald went to Glastonbury to practice the monastic life under Abbot Dunstan. During this time he expressed a desire to journey to the continent to learn the monastic discipline of the reformed monastery of Fleury, but King Eadred (949-955) and his mother Queen Eadgifu did not wish him to leave England.

Instead, the king presented Aethelwald with the old monastery of Abingdon with its forty hides in Berkshire. The abbey at that time lay in ruins. Aethelwald thereupon left Glastonbury in 954 to refound Abingdon, taking with him three clerics from Glastonbury, Foldbriht, Osgar, and Freothegar, one cleric from Winchester, Ordbriht, and another from London, Eadric (Aelfric, p. 833; Vita Ethelwoldi, col. 88). King Eadred added another 100 hides to Abingdon to aid in its restoration. Aethelwald rebuilt the abbey and instituted strict monastic observance. However, still concerned to establish a more perfect rule, he sent Osgar to Fleury to learn the principles of its reformed discipline (Aelfric, p. 835; Vita Ethelwoldi, col. 89), and upon Osgar's return a stricter rule was initiated.

Aethelwald continued as abbot of Abingdon until 963. Edgar was now king and was taking an active interest in the new monasticism. In that year the king appointed Aethelwald bishop of Winchester and he was duly consecrated by Dunstan who was now archbishop of Canterbury (Aelfric, p. 835). Osgar became abbot in Aethelwald's place (Vita
Ethelwoldi, col. 92). Aethelwold promptly set his reforming energies to work in a wider sphere. In 964 (ASC) Aethelwold with the king's permission expelled the clerics from the Old Minster, Winchester and replaced them with monks from Abingdon, establishing himself as both their abbot and bishop (Aelfric, p. 835; Vita Ethelwoldi, col. 91). He subsequently performed a similar action at the New Minster, substituting monks for the secular canons (Aelfric, p. 836) and appointed Aethelgar as abbot in 964.

Aethelwold concentrated his energies on the proliferation of the reformed monasticism. He gave an additional 600 hides to Abgindon and bought Ely from the king and placed his pupil Brihtnoth there as abbot about 970. He acquired Medeshamstede in Northamptonshire around 965 and established the monastery of Peterborough with Ealdulf as abbot. The bishop founded yet another abbey, purchasing land at Thorney in Cambridgeshire and making Godwine abbot there (Aelfric, p. 836). Aethelwold may also have been responsible for refounding Milton Abbey in Dorset and Chertsey in Surrey (Duckett, pp. 125-26).

In addition to overseeing these monasteries and his duties as bishop, Aethelwold took an active interest in all forms of learning and Winchester became notable as a center of scholarship and art (see The Benedictional of St. Aethelwold, bishop of Winchester, an Illuminated MS of the Tenth Century, edited by John Cage, London, 1832). Aethelwold was probably the author of the Regularis Concordia which set forth the monastic discipline to be observed by all the reformed Benedictine houses and emphasized the special relationship between the new monasticism and the monarchy (see Symons, ed. and trans.,...
Regularis Concordia).

Aethelwold was evidently a man of great wealth, which he devoted to the cause of furthering monastic reform. He was the recipient of numerous royal grants of bookland. The gifts of land at Abingdon recorded by his biographers are substantiated by charter evidence, including a grant by King Eadred in 955 (B 906) and grants of further estates adjacent to the abbey by King Eadwig in 956 (B 919, B 926, B 1002, B 1032). Edgar also made several grants to Aethelwold in addition to the lands purchased by the bishop to found Ely (B 1265) and Peterborough (B 1270, B 1297). Surviving charters indicated King Edgar booked Aethelwold estates in Sussex (B 1125, A.D. 963), Leicester (B 1283, A.D. 967), and at an unidentified site (B 1312, A.D. 975).

A record also exists of the many gifts which Aethelwold made to Peterborough Abbey, an impressive list (Robertson, XXXIX; B 1128). He was involved in an exchange of lands with the thegn Wulfstan Uccea in which the bishop received estates at Yaxley, Huntingdon, which he gave to Thorney Abbey, and at Ailsworth, Northamptonshire, which he donated to Peterborough, in return for the land at Sussex which Edgar had earlier given him (B 1131). Aethelwold was also the recipient of a bequest of unidentified land from the wealthy noblewoman Aelfgifu (Wills, VIII, A.D. 966X975).

Aethelwold was a kinsman to Bishop Brihtelm of Wells, as indicated by their signatures to a charter of 974: Ego Byrththelm gemini-que Athelwoldi episcopis consensimus et subscripsimus (B 1301). As Brihtelm is known to have been related to the royal family, Aethel- wold also could have been kin to King Edgar.
The frequency and prominence of Aethelwold's signatures on Edgar's charters cannot but signify his stature as one of the king's principal advisors and friends. Aethelwold continued his ecclesiastical activities during the reign of King Aethelred. He died on August 1, 984 and was buried at Winchester (ASC, 984; Aelfric, p. 838; LVH, p. 27).

Aethulf, Bishop of Hereford, 951X955-1012

Although Bishop Aethulf testifies to forty-four of Edgar's charters and therefore must be considered one of the closer associates of the king, very little evidence has survived to elucidate his career. He is identified as bishop of Hereford in two charters, B 1050 and B 737 (dated from the reign of King Aethelred I, but having a witness list dated 961X971). Florence (Fl. Wig., p. 422) and William of Malmesbury (DPG, p. 300) also record his succession to the see of Hereford. His predecessor Aelfwine (Fl. Wig., p. 422) signs for the last time in 951 (B 905) and Aethulf's first signature appears in 955 (B 905), thus placing the date of his elevation between 951 and 955.

The LVH states that Aethulf spent some time at the Old Minster, Winchester (LVH, p. 23). However, as he succeeded to the see of Hereford before the reform movement was under way and the Old Minster reformed, it may be doubted that Aethulf was a monk.

Aethulf was present at a meeting of the witan held in London in 989 or 990, which considered the crimes of a certain Wulfbold (Robertson, LXIII).

Björkman believes that Aethulf is perhaps a Scandinavian name,
although it may also be a shortened form of the Old English Aethelwulf (Björkman, p. 22). If his first suggestion is correct it would indicate that Aethulf was of Scandinavian origin.

Aethulf's last signature occurs in 1012 (K 719) and his successor commences to witness in the same year (K 1307), so it seems clear that Aethulf died in 1012.

Brihtheah, Abbot, subs. 970-974

The signatures of Abbot Brihtheah occur in one charter of 970 (B 1269), two from 972 (B 1282, B 1284), and two from 974 (B 1303, B 1304). The location of his abbey is not known. However, the one charter (B 1303) he witnesses which does not concern a grant to a monastic house conveys an estate in Devon, which may indicate that Brihtheah's monastery lay in that or adjoining shires. It is to be noted that in 970 Edgar booked land in Berkshire to a deacon named Brihtheah (B 1260). It is at least possible that the two Brihtheahs are identical. If this is true it would be a further indication that Brihtheah's abbey lay in southern England. The LVH lists Abbot Brihtheah among the special devotees of New Minster, Winchester (LVH, p. 24) and this is undoubtedly a reference to the same abbot who signed Edgar's charters.

Brihthelm, Bishop of London, c. 950-959; Bishop of Winchester, 959-963

Brihthelm was Bishop of London from around 950 (B 887) to 959 (B 1051), signing B 966 as Ego Byrhtelmus Lundaniensis ecclesiae episcopus. In 959 he was translated to the see of Winchester, his first signature as bishop of that see appearing in a charter of the same
year, *Ego Byrhtelm Wintoniensis ecclesiae episcopus* (B 1045). He is also identified in the same manner in two other charters (B 1077, B 1079). Brihthelm witnesses thirty-six of Edgar's charters from 959 to 963 (B 1124).

In 957 King Eadwig granted Bishop Brihthelm as estate at Orsett, Essex (S 1794). Edgar made two grants to Brihthelm and we learn from these charters that the bishop was a kinsman to the king. In 960 Brihthelm received ten hides at Bishop Stoke, Hampshire, which states *Ego Eadgar . . . cuidam venerabili antistiti mihique consanguinitatis nexu copulato qui a peritis noto Brihtelm . . . .* "That this is Brihthelm of Winchester and not Brihthelm, Bishop of Wells, is shown by a reference to St. Peter's monastery, Winchester (B 1054). A year later in 961 Edgar granted *Byrhtelmo presuli mihi carnalis prosapius nexu copulato* seven hides at Easton near Winchester (B 1076). The degree of relationship cannot be determined.

Brihthelm died in 963 (Fl. Wig., 963), the same year as his signatures cease.

Brihthelm, Bishop of Wells, 956-973X974; Archbishop of Canterbury, 959

Brihthelm became bishop of Wells early in King Eadwig's reign. His signatures begin in 956 (B 919) and those of his predecessor Wulfhelm end in 955 (B 909). A charter of 956 names Brihthelm, bishop-elect, as kinsman to King Eadwig, who granted him five hides at Stowe, Northamptonshire (B 986). Another charter of 956 records a grant by the king to Brihthelm of an estate of sixty hides in Sussex (B 930). Between 956 and 957 Brihthelm was involved in an exchange of lands.
with Abbot Aethelwold of Abingdon. Brihthelm gave the abbot an estate at Kennington, Berkshire in exchange for seventeen hides at Creedy Bridge, Devon (Robertson, XXXI).

In 959, while Eadwig was still king, Brihthelm was elevated to the archbishopric of Canterbury. His only signature with this title occurs in one charter of that year (B 1045). Florence states, "Byrhthelm, bishop of the people of Somerset was elected to the archbishopric of Canterbury, but it being the general opinion that he was little qualified for so high a dignity, he returned to the church he had lately quitted" (Fl. Wig., 959). It is probable that when Edgar became king in 959 he wished to favor his own associates and friends, especially those of the reforming circle, so he replaced Brihthelm with Dunstan. Brihthelm signs forty-one charters during Edgar's reign.

Florence records the year of Brihthelm's death as 973 (Fl. Wig., 973), however his signature appears on an apparently authentic charter of 974 (B 1301), so probably Florence is mistaken. The same charter provides the noteworthy information that Brihthelm was related to Bishop Aethelwold, their signatures appearing as follows: Ego Byrhthelm geminique Athelwoldi episcopi consensimus et subscripsimus (B 1301).

Brihtnoth, Abbot of Ely, 970-996

Latin (B 1266) and English (B 1267) versions of a charter dated 970 record the establishment of Benedictines at Ely by Bishop Aethelwold and King Edgar's confirmation of the abbey's lands and rights. The charter goes on to designate Brihtnoth as abbot. Aelfric (p. 836),

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William of Malmesbury (DPG, p. 324), and the LVH (p. 182) also state that Brihtnoth was appointed abbot of Ely by Bishop Aethelwold. Brihtnoth's signatures as abbot begin in 970 (B 1257, B 1269) and also appear on two charters from 972 (B 1282, B 1284). The LVH (p. 182) states that before becoming abbot Brihtnoth was first a monk at Old Minster, Winchester, where he undoubtedly received his monastic training under Aethelwold.

Brihtnoth was present at a meeting of the witan in London between 989 and 990 (Robertson, LXIII). He also witnessed a grant of land by the thegn Aelfhelm to his goldsmith before 999 (Robertson, LXXI). His name is among the list of devotees of New Minster, Winchester (LVH, p. 24).

The Liber Eliensis dates Brihtnoth's death as 981 and attributes it to witchcraft perpetrated by Aelthryth, King Edgar's widow (LE, II, ch. 56). However, his signatures continue until 996 (K 696, K 1292) and his successor Aelfsige does not sign for certain until 999 (K 703), so it seems that the Liber Eliensis is mistaken, nor can the claim of foul play by Aelthryth be sustained.

Cynesige, Bishop of Lichfield, 946X948-963X964

Cynesige's predecessor at Lichfield, Wulfgar, witnesses for the last time in 946 (B 815) and Cynesige's signatures begin in 948 (B 872) where he testifies as Kinsius Lichfeldensis episcopus. Thereafter his name appears in the witness lists until 963 (B 1121) and on eight of Edgar's charters. He is also named in a private transaction dated 966 (B 1179), but this charter is considered spurious.
by all authorities and cannot be accepted as evidence that Cynesige was still bishop at that date (S 436). Indeed, his successor, Winsige, begins to appear as a witness in 964 (B 1134). Cynesige is also listed in the episcopal succession of Lichfield by Florence (Fl. Wig., p. 425) and William of Malmesbury (DPG, p. 308).

There is a reference to a Cynesige who is called bishop of Berkshire in a private charter of 931 (B 687). However, there is no evidence to show that this individual and the bishop of Lichfield were one in the same.

One of the later lives of St. Dunstan states that Cynesgie was a kinsman to St. Dunstan (William of Malmesbury, Vita, p. 283). There is no substantiating evidence for this relationship, but it is surely not to be disregarded, as William is generally a reliable source and there appears to have been a significant degree of interrelatedness among Edgar's bishops.

Cyneweard, Abbot of Milton Abbey, 964-973; Bishop of Wells, 973X974-975

The ASC (964), Florence (964), and Simeon of Durham (SD, II, p. 129) record that in 964 King Edgar expelled the clerics from Milton Abbey in Dorset and replaced them with monks, setting Cyneweard over them as abbot. Knowles states that Cyneweard had previously been a monk at Glastonbury and Milton before his appointment as abbot, but I have not been able to locate his sources for this statement (Knowles, p. 700). Cyneweard signs as abbot from 964 to 974 to twenty-six charters. He was elevated to the see of Wells either in 973 or 974 following the death of Brihthelm. Florence records Cyneweard's succes-
sion as 973 (Fl. Wig., 973). However, his signatures as abbot continue into 974 (B 1302, B 1304, B 1305, B 1309) and so it seems likely that sometime during that year he left Milton to assume responsibility as bishop of Wells.

Cyneweard's episcopal career was shortlived. In 975, ten days before Edgar's death, "the bishop, good from his innate virtue, departed from Britain a famous man, whose name was Cyneweard" (ASC, 975). "Departure" is clearly a euphemism for death, as Florence also records Cyneweard's demise in 975 (Fl. Wig., 975).

Daniel, Bishop of Cornwall, 946-955-959-963

Bishop Daniel's name is found on but two charters from Edgar's reign, one of 959 (B 1047) and one which is wrongly dated 956 as the witnesses come from the early part of Edgar's reign (B 1183), certainly no later than 962, for Aelfgar leads the attesting thegns and he is reported to have died in 962 (ASC, 962).

Daniel appears first as a witness in 955 (B 917) and his signatures continue with frequency to 959 (B 1046, B 1047). John points out that two of Eadwig's charters concerning Abingdon were written by Daniel, for his assenting formula in both appears as Ego Daniel jubente rege hanc singrapham dictavi (John, p. 182; B 941, B 949).

The only clue to the location of Daniel's see lies in a letter written by Archbishop Dunstan to King Aethelred between 980 and 988 (Crawford Charters, VII, pp. 18-19). Here Dunstan reports on the title to certain episcopal lands in Cornwall. In the course of the letter he states that the estates had been delivered to Daniel, bishop of
that see by King Eadred and that Daniel was consecrated in Eadred's reign. Daniel also receives mention as a witness to an Exeter manuscript from King Eadwig's reign (Thorpe, p. 623).

The see of Cornwall was a relatively new creation, dating from the reign of Edward the Elder (900-925). The bishop's seat in Cornwall was at St. Germans at the time of Daniel's coronation (Crawford Charter, pp. 105-6).

The length of Daniel's episcopacy is not certain. Succeeding sometime between 946 and 955 (the dates of King Eadred's reign), his last datable signature occurs in 959 (B 1047). He may have remained in office until 963, which is the date when his successor Wulfsgie commences to testify (B 1118).

Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury, c. 940-c. 956; Bishop of London and Worcester, 957-959; Archbishop of Canterbury, 960-988

Archbishop Dunstan is without doubt the most well known figure from Edgar's reign. His name appears as witness to 129 of the 139 charters attributed to that reign. His signature is almost invariably second in the witness lists, following that of the king.

Dunstan's life and career are well documented. The most reliable and valuable of the primary sources is Vita Sancti Dunstani written about 1000 by an anonymous biographer generally referred to as Auctor B. There are also a number of later lives which are of varying reliability. Dunstan also receives frequent mention in the chronicles, diplomatic materials, and other primary sources for Edgar's reign. He has been the subject of rather intensive modern investigation. J. A. Robinson's The Times of Saint Dunstan (1923) remains the starting
point for interpretation of Dunstan's career. Eleanor Shipley Ducket's *Saint Dunstan of Canterbury* (1955) is also noteworthy. In addition, numerous shorter articles and studies have appeared concerning Dunstan since revival of interest in the monastic revival in the late nineteenth century. As so much study has already been devoted to Dunstan, I shall here only set forth the basic details of his life and career without elaboration.

Dunstan was born in 909 in Somerset near Glastonbury (Duckett, p. 3). His parents, Heorstan and Cynethryth, were probably of noble blood (Vita B, p. 7). Dunstan was related to Bishop Aelfheah of Winchester (Vita B, p. 13), Bishop Cynesige of Lichfield (William of Malmesbury, Vita, p. 283), and Archbishop Athelm of Canterbury (Adelard, Vita, p. 55). Dunstan had a brother named Wulfric (MSD, p. lxxv).

As a child and youth, Dunstan excelled in studies and spent much time at the court of King Athelstan among other of his kinsmen (Vita B, p. 11), another indication of his nobility. During this period around 934 Bishop Aelfheah of Winchester influenced Dunstan to become a monk (Vita B, p. 13). Dunstan hesitated in taking vows and at last took only minor orders (Osbern, Vita, p. 77). However, around 936 Dunstan received the tonsure and began the monastic life at Glastonbury (Duckett, p. 43). Not long afterward Bishop Aelfheah ordained Dunstan and St. Aethelwold as priests on the same day (Duckett, p. 43).

Under King Edmund (939-946) Dunstan rose in prominence. He became one of the king's foremost counselors (Vita B, p. 21) and was
appointed abbot of Glastonbury around 940 (Robinson, p. 85). Thereafter, for about the next fifteen years Dunstan devoted his energies to perfecting the monastic life at Glastonbury (Robinson, p. 86). Aethelwold worked with him in this endeavor until he received Abingdon in 955. During this period Dunstan entrusted the management of the abbey estates to his brother Wulfric (Vita B, p. 28).

When Eadred succeeded King Edmund in 946 Dunstan continued in his role as a chief advisor to the king and a considerable part of the royal treasury was kept at Glastonbury (Vita B, p. 29). Eadred wished to make Dunstan bishop of Crediton, but the abbot refused the see, desiring to remain at Glastonbury (Vita B, p. 30). During Eadwig's reign (956-959), Dunstan fell into disfavor. The king seized his property and Dunstan was forced into exile at the monastery of Blandinium in Ghent on the continent and was under the protection of Count Arnulf (Vita B, p. 33; Adelard, Vita, p. 59). It may be assumed that during this period Dunstan came into contact with the currents of monastic reform on the continent which influenced his later development.

In 957 Edgar became king of Mercia and Northumbria when a number of nobles defected from Eadwig. Edgar immediately recalled Dunstan, restored his property, and appointed him bishop of Worcester and London (Vita B, p. 36). When the kingdom was reunited under Edgar in 959, the king set aside Brihthelm's election to the archepiscopal see of Canterbury and appointed Dunstan archbishop. He was consecrated in 959 (Fl. Wig., 959) and journeyed to Rome to receive the pall (Vita B, p. 38).
As archbishop of Canterbury throughout Edgar's reign Dunstan actively furthered monastic and ecclesiastical reform. He remained perhaps the most influential counselor to the king. His signatures on almost all of Edgar's charters point to his prominence in royal affairs. In 973 Dunstan took part in the coronation of King Edgar at Bath (Fl. Wig., 973). In 975 he took an instrumental part in the election and consecration of Edward the Martyr as king (Fl. Wig., 975) and in 978 after Edward's assassination Dunstan consecrated Aethelwold king (Fl. Wig., 978). Dunstan remained archbishop of Canterbury until his death on May 19, 988 (ASC, 988).

Dunstan was undoubtedly very wealthy. He received an estate at Christian Malford, Wiltshire from King Edmund in 940 (B 752). Eadred booked him another estate in Wiltshire at Badbury in 955 (B 904). In 967 Edgar granted him land at an unidentified location (B 1198). Dunstan contributed to the endowment of ecclesiastical establishments on many occasions. Between 963 and 975 he gave Westminster Abbey land at Hendon, Middlesex (B 1263) and later granted additional land in Middlesex at Lothenleage to Westminster (B 1290). In 963 Christ Church, Canterbury received an estate at Vange, Essex from the archbishop (B 1102). Ramsey Abbey held ten hides at Wardeboase from Dunstan (CMR, I, 272). Dunstan's active concern in the affairs of the English church until the end of his life is shown by his letter to King Aethelred, dated 980X988, discussing the estates belonging to the diocese of Cornwall (Crawford Charters, VII).
Eadhelm, Bishop of Selsey, 953-963-979

Bishop Eadhelm's signatures begin in 963 (B 1101) and he signs twenty-five charters during Edgar's reign. In a charter of 964 he is identified as *Ego Eadelm Selincensis episcopus* (B 1134). The date of his elevation is not clear. Florence (p. 418), William of Malmesbury (DPG, p. 205), and the LVH (p. 19) name Eadhelm's predecessor as Alfred. The signatures of a Bishop Alfred run from 934 (B 702) to 953 (B 900). Searle, however, maintains that Brihthelm was bishop between Alfred and Eadhelm, signing from 953 (B 992) to 957 (B 997) (ASBNK, p. 58). Therefore, Eadhelm's date of succession can only be fixed within a ten year period from 953 to 963.

Eadhelm continues to subscribe until 979 (K 621) and his successor Aethelgar's first attestation is in 980 (K 626), so Eadhelm must have died within those two years.

Ealdred, Abbot, subs. 958-959, 968-970

The name of Abbot Ealdred appears first in the witness lists in a charter of 958 (B 1042), concerning estates in Hampshire, which were granted by Edgar when he was king only of Mercia and Northumbria. In 959 when the kingdom was reunited under Edgar, Ealdred signed a confirmation charter to Abingdon Abbey (B 1047). From 960 to 968 there is no surviving record of Abbot Ealdred. Then in 968 such an individual occurs last among the attesting abbots in a charter granting lands to Winchester Cathedral (B 1220). The name of an Abbot Ealdred is also found in two spurious charters of 969 (B 1228, B 1264) and in the confirmation charter to Ely Abbey in 970 (B 1266). It cannot be deter-
mined if the abbot who subscribes in 958 and 959 is the same witness
of 970. Ealdred appears to have been a fairly common name and it is
possible the signatures may represent either one or two individuals.
In either case, there is no identification of the abbey or abbeys
represented. It should be noted that a person named Ealdred was
bishop of Cornwall during Aethelred's reign (K 994, A.D. 986; RSA,
p. 31). This bishop may first have been the abbot who appears as a
witness to some or all of the charters in question.

Elsinus, Abbot, subs. 974

In the Latin version of King Edgar's foundation of Ramsey Abbey
dated 974 the signature of Elseinus abbas occurs (B 1310). This char­
ter is considered spurious by all authorities (S 798). The form of
the name is probably a later rendering of Aelfsige or possibly Aethel­
sige. There is an Abbot Aethelsige who witnessed one charter from
Edgar's reign in 974 and is otherwise unaccounted for (B 1303). Elsinus
may possibly be identified with this individual. However, an Abbot
Aelfsige succeeded Aethelgar as abbot of New Minster, Winchester in
980 (Robertson, p. 385), began to witness charters in 988 (K 663),
and died in 1007 (LVH, p. 271). The scribe who composed or copied
B 1310 may have erroneously placed this abbot among the witnesses
from Edgar's reign, rendering the name Elsinus. This is an altogether
plausible explanation as the name of Aethelgar who was abbot of New
Minster in 974, the reputed date of the charter, does not appear among
the attesting abbots.
Foldbriht, Abbot of Pershore, c. 970–c. 988

In 972 Edgar issued a confirmation charter to Pershore Abbey in Worcester (B 1282). In it Foldbriht is identified as abbot of that house. William of Malmesbury also lists Foldbriht as the first abbot of Pershore (DPG, p. 298). His signatures begin in 970 (B 1257) and he witnessed eight charters during Edgar's reign.

Aelfric related that Foldbriht was one of the monks who left Glastonbury in 954 to share in the founding of Abingdon Abbey with St. Aethelwold (Aelfric, p. 833). He was therefore one of the many disciples of Aethelwold who subsequently headed their own abbeys.

The only evidence for the date of Pershore's establishment is Edgar's confirmation charter of 972, but the monastery may already have been active for a few years, as indicated by Foldbriht's attestations in 970. He witnessses one other charter from Aethelred's reign (K 1275).

No other information survives to indicate Foldbriht's activities as abbot of Pershore. However, the anonymous biographer of St. Oswold records a miracle that supposedly took place at the time of Foldbriht's death. The abbot fell seriously ill and apparently died, but then miraculously returned to life. Germanus, abbot of Winchcombe, was summoned to investigate this occurrence and calm the troubled monks. When he arrived, Foldbriht told him that St. Benedict had been his guide through death. After half a day Foldbriht died once and for all (Vita Oswaldi, pp. 439-41). Foldbriht's death is dated 988 (Annals of Worcester, p. 369).

Freothegar, Abbot, subs. 972

Abbot Freothegar appears as a witness to only one charter dated
972, which conveys land in Worcester to Bishop Aethelwold (B 1283).
The chronicle of Evesham Abbey states that in 976 during the so-called anti-monastic reaction following Edgar's death Ealdorman Aelfhere of Mercia seized Evesham and its lands in Worcester, but later restored them to Abbot Freothegar. Some time later Freothegar gave the abbey to a certain Godwine, possibly Aelfhere's successor in Mercia (Chron. Evesham, pp. 78-82).

Freothegar was one of the monks who left Glastonbury around 954 to join St. Aethelwold in the founding of Abingdon Abbey (Aelfric, p. 833). In 972 when he testified, Freothegar presided over another abbey than Evesham, as the evidence shows that Osweard was abbot of Evesham at that time (Chron. Evesham, p. 78). The location of his house prior to 976 cannot be discovered, but it may have been in the west midlands, which is suggested by his signature on the Worcestershire charter.

Freothegar witnesses no other charters and the termination date of his abbacy at Evesham cannot be determined.

Germanus, Prior of Westbury-On-Tyme, c. 961-c. 969; Prior of Ramsey, c. 969-972; Abbot of Winchcombe, 972-975; Abbot of Ramsey, 975-992; Abbot of Cholsey, 992-c. 1019

Abbot Germanus signs two charters of 972 (B 1282, B 1284) and one from 974 (B 1311). St. Oswold's anonymous biographer records that Germanus, a young man from Winchester, spent some time at the reformed monastery of Fluery on the continent during the same period when St. Oswold was there (Vita Oswoldi, I, 423). When Oswold became bishop of Worcester in 961, he recalled Germanus from the continent.
and appointed him prior of Westbury-on-Tyme in Gloucester which Oswold had founded (CAR, p. 29). Then around 969 Oswold transferred Germanus from Westbury to the newly founded abbey of Ramsey where he was installed as prior (CAR, p. 40). In 972 Oswold restored the abbey of Winchcombe, Gloucester, and made Germanus abbot (CAR, p. 42). This date corresponds to the year in which Germanus makes his first appearance in the witness lists.

In 975 after Edgar's death at the time of the anti-monastic reaction the monks were expelled from Winchcombe and Germanus fled to Fluery, but he was recalled to Ramsey by Archbishop Oswold (Vita Oswoldi, I, 443; CAR, p. 73). In 992 King Aethelred appointed Germanus abbot of Cholsey in Berkshire (CAR, p. 110). His signatures continue until 1019 (K 729).

Oswold's biographer mentions Germanus in connection with the story of Abbot Foldbriht of Pershore's miraculous return from death (Vita Oswoldi, I, 439-40).

**Godwine, Abbot, subs. 970-1002**

Abbot Godwine's signatures first appear in 970 (B 1257, B 1269) and thereafter during Edgar's reign he witnesses occasionally during 972 (B 1282, B 1284) and 974 (B 1302, B 1303, B 1304, B 1309, B 1316). The location of his abbey is not known, although it probably lay in southern England as most of the grants he signs concern estates in the south.

Godwine's signatures as abbot continue into the reign of King Aethelred until 1002 (K 707, K 1295, K 1297, K 1303). In 1004 the name
of a Bishop Godwine of Lichfield appears for the first time (K 709). It is possible that Abbot Godwine was elevated to the episcopacy of Lichfield between 1002 and 1004.

**Leofric, Abbot of Exeter, c. 969X974-990X993**

Abbot Leofric's name appears in the witness lists of the two copies of the spurious grant to Westminster Abbey dated 969 (B 1228, B 1264). He signs only one authentic charter from Edgar's reign dated 974 and conveying an estate in Devon (B 1303). The record of proceedings against a certain Wulfbold, dated 989 or 990, refers to two abbots named Leofric, Leofric of Micheln^r and Leofric of Exeter (Robertson, LXIII). The date of Leofric of Micheln^r's appointment is uncertain. His first definite appearance is in 983 when he signs along with Leofric of Exeter (K 636). Knowles states that although there is no authentic account of the foundation of Micheln^r, it appears to have been in existence in Edgar's reign (HRH, p. 49).

However, the Abbot Leofric who signs B 1303 is probably to be identified with the abbot of Exeter. The estate conveyed in the charter lay in Devon, making it natural that the abbot of Exeter, also in Devon, would confirm the grant. That Leofric of Exeter took part in the affairs of his shire is also shown by a document, dated between 969 and 993, which records the list of sureties for Devonshire estates exchanged between Abbes Eadgifu and Abbot Leofric (Robertson, XLVII). Leofric continued to appear as a witness into the reign of King Aethelred. His last definite signature occurs in 990 (K 673) and in 993 first attestation of his successor Brihthelm appears (K 684).
Leofwine, Bishop of Lindsey, c. 953–958; Bishop of Dorchester (?including Lindsey), 958X961–965X974

Florence states in his catalogue of the bishops of Dorchester that "Leofwine governed the united diocese of Leicester [the earlier name for Dorchester] and the Lindisfari [Lindsey] in the reign of Edgar, king of England" (Fl. Wig., p. 426). William of Malmesbury, undoubtedly relying on Florence's authority, also refers to this uniting of the see under Leofwine (DGP, p. 312).

Oscytel preceeded Leofwine as bishop of Dorchester, signing until 958 (B 1042, B 1043, B 1044) when he became archbishop of York. Leofwine's signatures, however, begin in 953 (B 899, B 900) and continue while Oscytel was bishop of Dorchester in 955 (B 903, B 908), 956 (B 923) and 958 (B 1040, B 1042, B 1043). Therefore, it would seem that Leofwine was already bishop of Lindsey between 953 and 958 and became bishop of Dorchester not until 958. Godfrey explains that after the mid-ninth century episcopal succession at Lindsey became sporadic owing to the pressures of Danish invasion and settlement. There is direct evidence only of four bishops at Lindsey between the mid-ninth and end of the tenth century (Godfrey, p. 294). However, whether Leofwine did indeed act as bishop over both Dorchester and Lindsey beginning in 958, as Florence claims, is open to question, depending on the identity of Bishop Wulfric (see Wulfric, bishop).

Leofwine witnessed only two of Edgar's charters, one of 961 (B 1013) and one from 965 (B 1164). It would appear that he was not often present at court. His successor at Dorchester, Aelfnoth, does not appear until 974 (B 1310), and therefore the terminal date of Leofwine's
episcopacy falls within 965 and 974.

**Martin, Abbot, subs. 970**

The only evidence for Abbot Martin is his signature on the foundation charter of Ely Abbey in 970 (B 1266). He is otherwise unknown and there is no clue to the location of his monastery. Martin is not an Anglo-Saxon name. Whether this would indicate a continental origin is uncertain.

**Merwenna, Abbess of Romsey, 966X967-c. 975-990's**

In a charter dated 966 Merwenna signs as *Ego Merwenna abbastissa de Rumsige* (B 1178). Between 967 and 975 Edgar granted a charter of privilege to Romsey Abbey in Hampshire in which Merwenna is named as abbess (B 1187). Simeon of Durham records that the king appointed her to Romsey in 967 (SD, II, 129). She also appears in a list of heads of religious houses (LVH, p. 58). Florence identifies her as the first abbess of the reformed Romsey, appointed by Edgar in 967 (Fl. Wig., p. 141). However, the charter evidence suggests she may have been appointed a year earlier.

The length of Merwenna's abbacy is not clear. Her two immediate successors held the position in the 990's (HRH, p. 218). William of Malmesbury states that Merwenna and Elfleda, her successor, were buried at Romsey (DPG, p. 175).

Merwenna is the only woman excepting the queen and queen mother, who appears as a witness to Edgar's charters.

**Ordbriht, Abbot of Chertsey, 964-988X990**

Abbot Ordbriht begins to testify in 964 (B 1143), the same year
in which Edgar replaced clerics with monks at Chertsey in Surrey and appointed Ordbriht as abbot (ASC, 964). Ordbriht signed eleven charters through 972 (B 1283) and appears again in some of King Aethelred's charters of 987 and 988 (K 657, K 663, K 664, K 665). It is probable that Abbot Ordbriht was elevated to the see of Selsey between 988 and 990, as the attestations of Bishop Ordbriht begin in the latter year (RSA, p. 30).

Before Ordbriht was appointed abbot of Chertsey he was first a monk at Glastonbury and then accompanied St. Aethelwold to Abingdon in 954 where he presumably remained until his appointment to Chertsey in 964 (Aelfric, p. 833).

Oscytel, Bishop of Dorchester, 950-956; Archbishop of York, 956-971

Archbishop Oscytel's name appears on seventy-four charters ascribed to Edgar's reign. His occupancy of the second highest episcopal office in England and his association with St. Oswold accorded him a prominence in the sources, which provide a relatively complete sketch of his career.

The ASC states that Oscytel was consecrated bishop of Dorchester and thereafter served first in that office and then as archbishop of York for a total of twenty-two years (ASC, 971). This would place the date of his elevation to Dorchester in 950, as the date of his death is recorded as 971 (ASC, 971). His first signature as bishop occurs in 951 (B 890, B 891). In 956 he was elevated to the archepiscopal see of York (Fl. Wig., 956), having been appointed by King Eadred and the witan (ASC, 971).
When St. Oswold returned to England after his stay at Fleury he went to live with Oscytel who was his kinsman (Vita Oswaldi, I, 420; SD, II, 130). Oscytel journeyed to Rome to receive the pallium and was accompanied by Oswold (CAR, p. 22). After returning, Oscytel introduced Oswold to Archbishop Dunstan and Oswold became bishop of Worcester shortly thereafter (Vita Oswaldi, I, 410).

There is little evidence relating to Oscytel's administration of the see of York. The frequency of his attestations to royal charters may indicate that he was often absent from York. In 968 Oscytel consecrated Aelfsige bishop of Chester-le-Street at York (SD, I, 78).

Oscytel was one of a group of ecclesiastics who were of Scandinavian origin and were interrelated. These included Archbishop Odo of Canterbury, Archbishop Oswold of York, and Abbot Thurcytel of Bedford (Vita Oswaldi, I, 410, 420).

Oscytel was undoubtedly wealthy. In 956 King Eadwig booked Oscytel a number of estates in Nottinghamshire (B 1029). In 958 Edgar granted the archbishop an additional estate in that shire (B 1044). Oscytel also received land at Sherburn in Elmet, Yorkshire from Edgar in 963 (HAY, II, 340, n. 5). After Oswold became archbishop of York in 972 he drew up a memorandum of church lands in Northumbria, from which the following excerpt is taken (Robertson, LIV):

These are the estates which Archbishop Oscytel obtained in Northumbria with his money, or which were given him because of an illicit union: Appleton bought from Eorwulf for 24 pounds; Everingham bought from Osulf's father for 44 pounds; Newbald bought from King Edgar for 120 mancuses of red gold; Helperbury because of an illicit union. . . . And he bought Skidby for 20 pounds, and he bought 3 hides at Bracken from King Edgar who granted it to him by charter for St. John's.
This record not only provides some indication of Oscytel's wealth and his efforts to enlarge the landed possessions of York, but also gives interesting insights into the sources of the church's estates and the methods of acquiring them.

Oscytel died November 1, 971 and was buried at Bedford by his kinsman Abbot Thurcytel (ASC, 971).

Osgar, Abbot of Abingdon, 963–984

Abbot Osgar's signatures appear on fifty-two of Edgar's charters from 964 (B 1135) to 975 (B 1316). Osgar was one of St. Aethelwold's most prominent disciples. He began his career as a monk at Glastonbury under Dunstan (Aelfric, p. 833). He accompanied Aethelwold to Abingdon around 955 (Aelfric, p. 833). Aethelwold then sent Osgar to Fleury on the continent to learn a purer Benedictine practice (Aelfric, p. 834). After returning to England Osgar remained at Abingdon. In 963 Aethelwold was elevated to the see of Winchester and Osgar was appointed his successor at Abingdon (Aelfric, p. 836).

Between 971 and 980 Osgar purchased an estate of twenty hides at Kingson, Berkshire from Ealdorman Aelfhere of Mercia for 100 mancuses of gold. The sale was confirmed at a meeting of the witan held at Alderbury, Wiltshire (Robertson, LI). Between 975 and 982 Osgar acted as a witness to a transaction concerning lands in Kent (Robertson, LIX).

Björkman notes that Osgar is an anglicized form of the Scandinavian name Asgar (Björkman, p. 13). Therefore, it is probable that Osgar was of Scandinavian descent.

Osgar's name appears in the witness lists until 979 (K 621, K 622).
Florence records that he died in 984 (Fl. Wig., pp. 140, 147) and the LVH (p. 271) gives the additional information that Osgar died on May 24 of that year.

Osulf, Bishop of Ramsbury, 949X950–970

Bishop Osulf was a consistent subscriber to Edgar's charters, signing eighty grants between 959 and 970. His predecessor at Ramsbury, Aelfric (LVH, p. 20), appears for the last time in 949 (B 885) and Osulf began to sign in 950 (B 887). William of Malmesbury identifies Osulf as the bishop of Wilton at Ramsbury (DPG, p. 181) and he witnesses a charter of 964 as Ego Osulf Sunningensis [Sunbury was the later name for Ramsbury] episcopus (B 1134).

In 957 King Eadwig granted Osulf twenty hides at Stanton in Wiltshire (B 998). Edgar apparently reconfirmed Osulf's title to this same estate in 960 (B 1053), for the boundaries delineated in both charters are identical (Finberg, 1964, #286). Between 956 and 957 Osulf acted as a witness to an exchange of lands between Bishop Brihthelm of Wells and Abbot Aethelwold of Abingdon (Robertson, XXXI). The chronicle of Evesham Abbey records that Osulf was involved in the activities of that monastery during Edgar's reign (Chron. Evesham, p. 77).

Björkman states that Osulf is an anglicized form of the Scandinavian name Asulf, which appeared in England in the tenth century (Björkman, p. 21). Thus Bishop Osulf was among the group of ecclesiastics of Scandinavian lineage.

Osulf died in 970 (Fl. Wig., 970), the same year his signatures ceased.
Osweard, Abbot of Evesham, 969-c. 975

Osweard's signatures appear on five charters from 970 (B 1257) through 974 (B 1303, B 1304). He also appears on a spurious charter whose date of 966 cannot be accepted, signing as Ego Oswardus abbas Eveshamensis ratum habui (B 1179).

The chronicle of Evesham Abbey related that Osweard was appointed abbot when Evesham was reformed in 969 (Chron. Evesham, p. 78). During his abbacy the relics of St. Edwin were found to be preserved amidst some ruins in the church (Chron. Evesham, p. 40).

During the anti-monastic reaction following Edgar's death the monks at Evesham were expelled and the monastery secularized, probably by Ealdorman Aelfhere of Mercia (Chron. Evesham, p. 78). Nothing further is known of Osweard which would indicate if he continued his monastic activities at some other location.

Oswold, Bishop of Worcester, 961-992; Archbishop of York, 972-992

Oswold, whose name appears as witness to seventy-four of Edgar's charters, belonged to the trio of great monastic reformers active in the second half of the tenth century, which included Dunstan and Aethelwold. Oswold's life is relatively well documented, the best sources being the anonymous Vita, written by a contemporary, later biographies, and the chronicle and cartulary of Ramsey Abbey.

Oswold was the son of noble Danish parents who lived in Danelaw. They converted to Christianity and Oswold was raised a Christian. His uncle on his father's side was Odo, the bishop of Ramsbury under King Aethelstan and archbishop of Canterbury under King Eadred. Odo pro-
vided for the education and care of Oswold, who took an active interest in learning from his youth (Vita Oswaldi, p. 404; CAR, p. 21).

On reaching maturity, Oswold took orders and was ordained a priest (Vita Oswaldi, p. 410). Odo provided Oswold with the means to purchase a monastery in Winchester where he became dean (Vita Oswaldi, p. 410). He spent some time there during the early 950's, but eventually became discouraged and resigned his office owing to the abuses among the clerics and the lack of strict monastic practice (CMR, p. 22). Oswold requested permission from Odo to seek a stricter life (Vita Oswoldi, p. 412). The archbishop agreed and Oswold went abroad to Fleury, where Odo himself had been a monk for a short time (CMR, p. 15). Oswold subsequently spent five or six years at the monastery of Fleury where he learned the reformed Benedictine observance (Vita Oswaldi, p. 413; CMR, p. 22).

In 958 Oswold was recalled to England by Odo who was dying. The archbishop was already dead by the time Oswold returned (Vita Oswoldi, p. 419). Oswold went to stay with his kinsman Bishop Oscytel of Dorchester (Vita Oswaldi, p. 420). When Oscytel was elevated to the archbishopric of York, Oswold accompanied him to Rome to receive the pallium (CMR, p. 227). On the return journey Oswold stopped off at Fleury for a visit. He found there his friend Germanus, who was a fellow Englishman and who had been at Fleury during Oswold's earlier stay there. Oswold brought Germanus back with him to England (CMR, p. 24).

Oscytel introduced Oswold to Dunstan who recognized Oswold's ability and urged the king to make him bishop of Worcester which was
done in 961 (Vita Oswaldi, p. 410). Many clerks now began to seek instruction from Oswold and the bishop placed them at Westbury-on-Tyme to form a monastic community (Vita Oswaldi, p. 424). Oswold's biographer reports that the bishop took part in a council with the king around 964 to plan the course of the monastic reform where the king ordered over forty monasteries to be founded (Vita Oswaldi, pp. 425-429). Eadmer reports in his biography that following the council Oswold reformed seven monasteries in his own diocese (Eadmer, Vita, p. 20). This may be an exaggeration, but it is known that in addition to Westbury, Oswold founded or reformed monasteries at St. Albans, Hertfordshire (Eadmer, Vita, I, 21), Worcester Cathedral (Robinson, p. 131), Winchcombe, Gloucester (DPG, p. 274), Ramsey, Cambridgeshire (CAR, pp. 35-43), Pershore, Worcester (Duckett, p. 149), and possibly Evesham, Worcester (Duckett, p. 157) and Deerhurst, Gloucester (Duckett, p. 146). A later life states that he also placed monks at Ely in Cambridgeshire (Senatus, Vita, p. 74), but this conflicts with the more reliable evidence that Aethelwold was responsible for the foundation of Ely. It does seem that Oswold and Aethelwold often acted together in their reforming activities (Duckett, p. 151).

In 972 Oswold succeeded Oscytel as archbishop of York while continuing to rule over the see of Worcester (CMR, p. 43). He journeyed to Rome to receive the pallium (Vita Oswaldi, p. 435). In 973 Oswold was present with the other great men of the kingdom for the coronation of King Edgar at Bath (CMR, p. 93).

Oswold's efforts to found the monastery of Ramsey are especially well documented. Oswold met Ealdorman Aethelwine of East Anglia at the
funeral of a nobleman and requested the ealdorman's support in the reform movement. Aethelwine pledged support to the bishop and together they became the co-founders of Ramsey. Efforts at building began in 969 or 970 and finally in 974 the consecration took place (CAR, pp. 35-43). Aethelwine and Oswold remained fast friends for the rest of the latter's life and Oswold's biographer states that after he died Aethelwine never smiled again (Vita Oswaldi, p. 474).

One significant aspect of Oswold's career which is not noted in the accounts of his biographers was the role he played as a landlord. In 964 Oswold received a charter from the king which created the triple hundred of Oswoldslaw (B 1135). In this grant three hundreds from the shire of Worcester were placed under the direct administration of Oswold. Seventy-nine charters survive from the years 962 to 992 in which Oswold granted leases of land (laenland) to individuals from the estates of Oswoldslaw and from property in other shires. Oswold also vigorously administered and added to the estates of the archdiocese of York as indicated by his memorandum on that subject (Robertson, LIV). It is evident that Oswold was one of the largest landholders in England at this time and was no less involved in secular affairs of administration than in monastic reform.

Oswold had a brother named Osulf to whom he leased various estates (B 1204, B 1139). Another brother was possibly Osweard who often witnesses Edgar's charters as minister with Osulf. The same Osweard was probably the kinsman to the king who received grants of bookland (B 1314). If Osweard was related to Oswald it would mean that Oswald was also related to the royal family.
After Edgar’s death, Oswold continued his episcopal duties. He and Dunstan together consecrated King Aethelred in 979 (Vita Oswaldi, p. 455). Oswold himself died on February 29, 992 and was buried at Worcester (Vita Oswaldi, p. 470; CMR, p. 102).

Sideman, Abbot of Exeter, 968-973; Bishop of Crediton, 973-977

Florence states under his entry for 968 that “Edgar the Pacific, king of England, sent Sideman, a devout man, to govern the monks at Exeter, with the rank of abbot” (Fl. Wig., 968). His seven attestations as abbot began in 969 (B 1230) and continue until 972 (B 1282, B 1284). In 973 the name of a Bishop Sideman first appears in the lists (B 1295) and the attestations of Abbot Sideman cease and it seems clear that the abbot was elevated to a bishopric in that year. He signed seven of Edgar's charters as bishop. His see has been identified as Crediton (ASC, 977; Fl. Wig., 977). Exeter and Crediton both lay in Devonshire.

Prior to his abbacy, Sideman had been a monk at the Old Minster, Winchester (LVH, p. 23). During Edgar's reign Bishop Sideman was present at a council which settled a dispute over estates in Kent (Robertson, LIX).

The anonymous life of St. Oswold provides the interesting information that Sideman was Edward the Martyr's tutor (Vita Oswaldi, p. 449). He must therefore have been in close relations with the royal family.

Sideman's episcopacy was cut short by his death in 977. The Chronicle gives a rather lengthy account of his death and burial,
stating that he died suddenly while attending a council at Kirtling-ton, Nottinghamshire on April 30 of that year. His own wish was to be buried at Crediton, but King Edward and Archbishop Dunstan ordered him to be buried at Abingdon Abbey (ASC, 977), perhaps because there was not time to transport his body to Devon.

Siferth, Abbot, subs. 969-970

Abbot Siferth witnesses only two royal charters, one in 969 conveying an estate in Oxford (B 1230) and the foundation charter of Ely in 970 (B 1266). He appears also as a witness to a private charter in 968 dealing with land in Kent (B 1212). He is otherwise unknown and the site of his abbey is unknown. Knowles suggests that he may possibly have been the same individual who later became bishop of Lindsey (HRH, p. 226).

Sigar, Abbot of Glastonbury, c. 965-975; Bishop of Wells, 975-995X997

Sigar testifies to one charter of 974 (B 1303) and two from 975 (B 1312, B 1315). He had earlier been a monk at the Old Minster, Winchester (LVH, p. 23). The date of his appointment as abbot of Glastonbury is uncertain. Sigar is named as abbot of Glastonbury in a charter dated 965 in which the king booked him seventeen hides at Hamme, Somerset (S 1773). However, Knowles believes that he did not become abbot until at least 970 (HRH, p. 50). Unless the charter is misdated I can see no reason to doubt its evidence and accept Knowles' judgment.

In 975 the see of Wells was left vacant by the death of Cyneweard and Abbot Sigar was elevated to that bishopric (Fl. Wig., pp. 147-48).
Sigar's signatures as bishop of Wells continue until 995 (RSA, p. 50). William of Malmesbury states that he was bishop until 997 (DPG, p. 194).

**Sigeric, Abbot, subs. 975**

An Abbot Sigeric of St. Augustine's Canterbury witnessed charters from 980 (K 624) to 985 (K 1283), became bishop of Ramsey in 985, and archbishop of Canterbury between 990 and 994 (HRH, p. 35). The Abbot Sigeric who witnessed one of Edgar's charters in 975 (B 1315) may possibly be the same abbot of St. Augustine's. There is no other evidence from Edgar's reign to suggest his identity.

**Theodred, Bishop of Elmham, 970–974-c. 979**

Theodred appears as witness to only three charters of Edgar's reign. The first is dated 967 (B 1201), but Finberg points out that the proper date may be 973 (Finberg, 1961, #302), which seems likely as Theodred's predecessor Aelfric was still bishop in 967, his last signatures occurring in 970 (B 1265, B 1266), which is therefore the earliest possible date for Theodred's elevation. Theodred also witnesses one charter of 974 (B 1303) and one of 975 (B 1314). William of Malmesbury identifies Theodred as bishop of Elmham, succeeding Aelfric (DPG, p. 148). Florence indicates that beginning with Bishop Aethulf in the time of King Eadred the see of Elmham consisted of the whole of East Anglia and remained so through the episcopacies of Aelfric and Theodred (Fl. Wig., p. 417). Theodred's last signature is in 979 (K 621). His career is otherwise unknown.
Thurcytel, Abbot of Crowland, 946x955-c. 971; Abbot of Bedford, c. 971-c. 975

Abbot Thurcytel signs three charters during the period 968-970 (B 1220, B 1230, B 1266). In a charter of questionable authenticity dated 966 Edgar conveyed a number of privileges to Crowland Abbey in Lincolnshire (B 1178). The document states that Thurcytel refounded and restored Crowland during the reign of King Eadred (946-955). Another spurious charter dated 966 also names Thurcytel as abbot of Crowland (B 1179). His dates of abbacy at Crowland are uncertain. However, by 971 he had become abbot of Bedford. In that year Archbishop Oscytel of York died and Abbot Thurcytel, the archbishop's kinsman, took the body to Bedford for burial where he was abbot (ASC, 971).

The Liber Eliensis also identifies Thurcytel as abbot of Crowland and Bedford (LE, II, 96) and further on states that Thurcytel was expelled from Bedford (LE, II, 105). The date of his expulsion is not given, but Knowles believes it was soon after 971 (HRH, p. 30). It seems likely that the event took place during the anti-monastic reaction following Edgar's death in 975.

Björkman classifies Thurcytel as a common Scandinavian name in England at this time (Björkman, p. 151). Abbot Thurcytel's Scandinavian origin is further proved by his kinship to Archbishop Oscytel and therefore probably to St. Oswold.

Winsige, Bishop of Lichfield, 963x964-975

Florence and William both record that Winsige followed Cynesige in the episcopal succession of Lichfield (Fl. Wig., p. 425; DPG, p. 308). Cynesige appears for the last time as witness in 963 (B 1121)
and Winsige's twenty-seven attestations start in 964 when he is identified as Ego Wynsige, Licetfeldensis episcopus (B 1134). His final subscription occurs in 975 (B 1312), the same year his successor Aelfheah begins to appear in the lists. Otherwise, Winsige's career is unknown.

**Wulfric, Bishop, c. 958-c. 970**

Of all the bishops who testify to Edgar's charters, only Wulfric remains virtually an enigma. At least the sees of all the others and their approximate dates of office are ascertainable. Wulfric, however, has puzzled those scholars who have even taken note of him. Searle and Stubbs list him among the holders of unknown sees. Stubbs does nevertheless suggest tentatively that he might be identified with Aelfric the bishop of Elmham, whose dates of offices lie between 965 and 974 (RSA, p. 15, n. 1). This opinion cannot be substantiated. There is no evidence that Bishop Aelfric was known by any other name, nor was it a common practice for an individual to have two names. Furthermore, Wulfric subscribes not just to one or two charters, but to thirteen from 958 (B 1040) to 970 (B 1269). In 968, moreover, King Edgar granted to Bishop Wulfric an estate of nine hides at Stanton, Derbyshire (B 1211).

Locating Wulfric's see is a difficult problem. There were eighteen dioceses in England during Edgar's reign. The succession of bishops for all of them has been accounted for by the other bishops who appear in the witness lists from 959 to 975. In addition, the large span of years covered by Wulfric's signatures does not indicate that he may
have been an unknown intermediate between two other bishops of a particular see whose dates of episcopacy are somewhat indeterminate. He was bishop for at least twelve years and thus does not fit into any convenient gaps in episcopal succession.

There are at least five possible theories which might be used to identify his see. First, it might be suggested that he was sort of a bishop-at-large, so to speak. Or, in other words, that he may have served temporarily in dioceses with short term vacancies or as assistant to other bishops. This admittedly is a rather farfetched and unlikely possibility. There is no precedent that I know of for ordaining a bishop without a see of his own.

Secondly, it might be that the thirteen signatures on charters do not belong to the same individual, that two or more bishops named Wulfric held office during that period of time in between more well known bishops of longer tenure. This again is most unlikely. If true, at least one of such individuals would certainly be recorded by Florence, William, or another of the chroniclers who gave attention to episcopal succession.

Another explanation is that Wulfric held one episcopacy in one see for a period of time and was then translated to another see, both periods of office being too short or insignificant to attract attention in the sources. However, even dividing by two the span of years covered by his signatures it still leaves an average of six years on either side. The evidence for the dates of episcopacy for bishops in all eighteen sees, although sometimes vague, simply does not allow very easily for the insertion of an episcopacy of six years duration.
by Wulfric.

Yet a further theory might point toward the existence of an unidentified nineteenth diocese of which Wulfric was bishop. This is a tempting solution to the problem of locating Wulfric. However, unless such a diocese were the creation of Edgar and subsequently disappeared after 975, it seems quite unlikely that evidence of a nineteenth see would be lacking in the documentation of other reigns. The creation of new dioceses is usually well documented as it was a matter of some importance to both the church and the monarchy, and sees did not come into and pass out of existence overnight. The boundaries of the eighteen existing sees are fairly well known and if a nineteenth see did exist one would be hard put to come up with a location for it. Once more, this solution to the problem of Wulfric does not really stand up to careful scrutiny.

The final and, in my opinion, the most likely explanation for the dilemma of Wulfric is to suggest that somewhere the sources for the succession and dates of office for Edgar's bishops have erred and that with a slight reappraisal of the evidence the location of Wulfric's see may come to light. This course is also not without its difficulties, but it does yield more fruitful possibilities than the other proposed theories.

It does not seem likely that Wulfric held office in southern England. Most of the charters on which his name appears concern estates in the midlands, eastern, or northern England. Furthermore, he held land in Derbyshire. After reviewing the sources for episcopal succession, I think there are two possible locations of Wulfric's diocese,
Chester-le-Street or Lindsey, which will be considered in turn.

Both Florence and Simeon of Durham record that Aelfsige followed Ealdred as Bishop of Chester-le-Street in 968 (Fl. Wig., 968; SD, I, 78). However, it is notable that Ealdred's final signature occurs in 958 (B 1042, B 1044), the same year as Wulfric begins to witness (B 1040). If Ealdred did hold office until 968 it would mean that for ten years he did not testify to one surviving charter, which might be explained by the remoteness of his see. Moreover, Aelfsige, does not appear in the witness lists until 970 (B 1269), the final year which Wulfric testified. So the gap between the signatures of Ealdred and Aelfsige corresponds exactly to the period in which Wulfric testifies as bishop, which is at least an interesting coincidence, if not evidence which contradicts the statements of Florence and Simeon that Aelfsige succeeded Ealdred in 968 and which might indicate that Wulfric held office between them.

The weakness in this proposal is that both Wulfric and Aelfsige witness the same charter in 970 (B 1269). The only way to get around this difficulty would be to suppose that Aelfsige as bishop-elect was permitted to testify along with Bishop Wulfric. Another problem is that Florence and Simeon are both generally quite reliable sources. To accept Wulfric as bishop of Chester-le-Street between 958 and 970 would be to render a judgment that both historians erred. This would be possible if, for example, they relied on the same source for their information, which was also in error. Such a source most likely would have been one of the versions or recensions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle which has been lost. Another possibility would be that Simeon
relied on Florence who gave a mistaken date. It is not impossible that Florence mistakenly wrote down 968 for the termination of Ealdred's episcopacy instead of 958, and nowhere finding a reference to Wulfric's term of office, stated that Aelfsige succeeded Ealdred. In one other case Florence made a similar error of ten years in dating the death of Bishop Sideman as 987 instead of 977, an error which he himself rectifies at another point in his chronicle in accordance with the evidence of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

This theory is of course purely conjectural. To accept it means to discredit two generally accurate sources as well as to be compelled to construct a reason for the signatures of Wulfric and Aelfsige on the same charter. However, it must at least be recognized as quite suggestive that the gap in the signatures of the two bishops of Chester-le-Street correspond to the years in which Wulfric subscribed.

Florence states that the sees of Dorchester and Lindsey were united during Edgar's reign (Fl. Wig., p. 426). The conclusion of this statement is that Bishop Leofwine who held Dorchester sometime between 958 and 974 also exercised primacy over Lindsey. However, none of the sources, including Florence, anywhere state that Leofwine was indeed bishop of Lindsey during the time of his episcopacy of Dorchester. It is evident that Leofwine was bishop of Lindsey up to 958 (see Leofwine, Bishop), but what happened thereafter is nowhere specifically stated. The next bishop after 958 who is definitely known to have held the see at Lindsey was Sigefrith, subscribing between 997 (K 698) and 1004 (K 710). As Godfrey has pointed out, there was no regular episcopal succession at Lindsey during the century between about 959 and 1050.
It is possible that Florence was mistaken in stating that the dioceses of Dorchester and Lindsey were merged during Edgar's reign. He may have assumed this without direct evidence both because Leofwine had been bishop of Lindsey before his translation to Dorchester and because there was probably no record available to him of Wulfric's episcopacy. It is again important to note that the final year of Leofwine's primacy over Lindsey before he became bishop of Dorchester was 958, the same year that Wulfric first appears as a witness (B 1040). The estate which Wulfric held from Edgar in Derbyshire lay in the diocese of Lichfield which was adjacent to Lindsey. Again, accepting this theory means disputing Florence's evidence, but his information on the uniting of Dorchester and Lindsey is nowhere else substantiated except by William of Malmesbury who undoubtedly relied on Florence. Taken together, the sees of Dorchester and Lindsey constitute a very large area. Edgar and the reforming leadership of the church may not have been willing to place such a vast district under the episcopal supervision of one bishop, and hence appointed Wulfric primate of Lindsey.

Of the two possible locations of Wulfric's see, I would designate Lindsey as more likely than Chester-le-Street. Assigning Wulfric to Lindsey presents less of a challenge to the evidence than does the Chester-le-Street hypothesis. Wulfric's land lay closer to Lindsey than to the more northern diocese. Finally, less assumptions must be made to explain conflicting evidence in the case of Lindsey than for Chester-le-Street. Admittedly, there is no direct evidence in support
of my conclusion, but it seems probable and at least not impossible that Wulfric was indeed bishop of Lindsey between 958 and 970.

**Wulfsige, Bishop of Cornwall, 959X963-980X988**

Similarly to Bishop Daniel of Cornwall, the only evidence for the location of Wulfsige's see is found in a letter written by Archbishop Dunstan to King Aethelred between 980 and 988, concerning title to estates belonging to the diocese of Cornwall (Crawford Charters, VII). Dunstan here related that he himself consecrated Wulfsige bishop of Cornwall during Edgar's reign and that the king delivered to Wulfsige the estates now in question (Crawford Charters, p. 103).

Wulfsige's subscriptions begin in 963 (B 1118) and he must have been elevated between 959 and 963, the former date being the last year that Bishop Daniel is definitely known to have witnessed (B 1047). Wulfsige signed twelve charters from Edgar's reign. His signatures cease in 980 (k 624) and those of his successor Ealdred begin in 993 (K 684). However, Ealdred must have become bishop by 988, the outer limit of Dunstan's letter, which makes clear that Wulfsige was no longer bishop at that time.

**Wulfsige, Abbot of Westminster, c. 959-993X997**

In a dubious charter dated 966, the following subscription occurs: Ego Wulfsinus abbas sancti Petri Westmonasterii extra London subnotavi (B 1178). The same attestation is present in B 1179, a spurious document attributed to the same year. These are the only appearances of Abbot Wulfsige in the witness lists.

William of Malmesbury records that while bishop of London, Dunstan
appointed Wulfsige, a monk of Glastonbury, to rule over the newly constituted abbey of Westminster (DPG, p. 178). Dunstan was bishop of London between 957 and 959. Wulfsige's next appearance in the evidence after his signatures on the two doubtful charters is in 989 or 990 when he was present at a meeting of the witan in London (Robertson, LXIII).

In 992 Wulfsige was elevated to the see of Sherborne (HRH, p. 76). His first signature as bishop occurs in 993 (K 684). He continued also to retain his position as abbot until 997 (HRH, p. 76). In 988 King Aethelred granted to Bishop Wulfsige and Sherborne Abbey a confirmation charter of land and privilege (K 701). Wulfsige acted as a witness to the will of a certain Aethelric around 995 (Wills, XIV, 2).

The date of Wulfsige's death may be placed between 1001 and 1002, as he signs for the last time in 1001 (K 706) and his successor appears first in 1002 (K 707). Flete gives January 8 as the day and month of his death (Flete, p. 137). Wulfsige was later canonized, being known as St. Wulsin (Harmer, p. 539).
APPENDIX III

WITNESSES APPEARING ONLY ON SPURIOUS CHARTERS
OR ANACHRONISTIC WITNESS LISTS

The following groups of witnesses are deleted from consideration in this paper because they appear only in charters which are spurious or which contain anachronistic features, and their existence is corroborated by no other evidence. For each individual I have listed his name, title, and the reputed date of signature together with the number of the charters from Birch's edition in which the name appears.

SPURIOUS WITNESSES

Adelbaldus, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Aethelfsi, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228)
Aefeg, dux, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Anulf, dux, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Athelfege, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228)
Athelsige, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1264)
Barnoth, dux, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Bermund, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Elwyn, dux, sub. 974 (B 1310, B 1311)
Folcmerus, abbas, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Fordwin, dux, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Frithelaf, dux, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Leoffa, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264); 974 (B 1311)
Marchar, dux, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Osred, dux, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Oswardus, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Sideman, presbiter, sub. 974 (B 1311)
Somer, abbas, sub. 969 (B 1228)
Thurredus, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Togred, prepusitus, sub. 960 (B 1057)
Wilfrerd, minister, sub. 966 (B 1191)
Wineman, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Wirhmod, dux, sub. 975 (B 1313)
Wolstanus, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Wulfgar, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1228)
Wulfget, presbiter, sub. 969 (B 1264)
Wulune, minister, sub. 936 (B 1191)
Wymer, abbas, sub. 969 (B 1264)
ANACHRONISTIC WITNESSES

Acca, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Adelsinus, Scireburnensis ecclesie episcopus, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Adelwulf, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aecbert, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aedelstan, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aedelstan, presbiter, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aegfrid, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aela, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aelfred, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aelfred, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aelfstan, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aethelmod, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Aethelward, presbiter, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Aethelwulf, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Alhhard, abbas, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Aluricus, Cridiensis ecclesie episcopus, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Athelgarus Ciseniensis ecclesie episcopus, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Beocca, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Beornoth, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Beorhtwulf, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Brithwald, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Coenwald, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Cyma, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Eadmund, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Eadwulf, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Ealheard, abbas, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Ealhferd, episcopus, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Eastmund, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Ecgbreht, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Ecgulf, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Escwius, Dorccensis ecclesie episcopus, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Garwlf, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Goda, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Heahmund, presbiter, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Huita, prepositus, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Hunred, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Monnel, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Mucel, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Odo, archiepiscopus, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Sigarus, Allmaniensis ecclesie episcopus, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Werfred, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Wistan, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Wlgarus, Wiltuniensis ecclesie episcopus, sub. 969 (B 1228, B 1264)
Wulfhelm, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Wulfhere, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Wulfred, dux, sub. 867 (B 1210)
Wulfred, minister, sub. 974X975 (B 1308)
Wynsige, minister, sub. 867 (B 1210)
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