The Evolution of the Becket Controversy in the Twentieth Century

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THE EVOLUTION OF
THE BECKET CONTROVERSY
IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

by
James P. Edmiston

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PREFACE

Few medieval topics have received the popular attention and engendered the abundance of historical research and controversy as the struggle between Henry II of England and Archbishop Thomas Becket of Canterbury. The personalities of these two men, the motives for which they fought, and the institutions which they defended have served to elevate this struggle to epic proportions in the minds and writings of many historians. In their writings, historians of the controversy have alternately condemned and eulogized Becket and Henry to such an extent that it is now possible to discover several, if not many, conflicting interpretations of the struggle by considering the works of various authorities of the controversy.

The scholars of the Becket controversy have long labored in the shadow of a problem which is unique in medieval history, and which might account in part for the enigmatic role which Becket has assumed in modern scholarship. While scholars of many other problems of medieval history have had to extract both their information and their conclusions from scattered and often pitifully scanty sources, the historian of the Becket controversy is faced with a mine of primary sources so vast that any attempt at a complete mastery of them would take many years. There were, for example, no less that twelve contemporary biographers of Becket alone, and the letters of Becket and the many other principals
in the conflict would fill many volumes. Modern scholars know what Becket ate, where he slept, and what clothes he wore; yet Becket even today remains one of the most puzzling figures of medieval history.

Many key issues of the controversy—Becket's personality and motives, his "transformation" upon becoming archbishop of Canterbury, the question of "criminous clerks," the Constitutions of Clarendon and the "ancient customs," the position of the English bishops and clergy, and the effect of Becket's murder on Henry's reign and personality—have been the subjects of continuous debate among Becket scholars, and their positions and views of Becket have largely been determined by their interpretation of these key issues.

Like any historical problem, the Becket controversy has not remained static, but has undergone a process of change in which new materials relating to the subject have been edited, new issues have been stressed, and significant attempts have been made to clarify many of the long-standing areas of doubt in the controversy.

The purpose of this study is to trace the evolution of twentieth-century historical scholarship on the Becket controversy. This is not to dismiss as unworthy for serious consideration attempts made before the twentieth century to discuss and clarify the central issues. Much previous work has provided the basis from which modern research has begun. For example, the Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, edited
in seven volumes by J.C. Robertson and J.B. Sheppard in the Rolls Series, 1875-1885, remains today the single most valuable primary source collection for scholars of the controversy. Historical research on Thomas Becket has assumed such a prominent place in the last seventy years among scholars of medieval history, however, that the twentieth century seemed a logical choice to begin a study of this kind.

After a general description of the condition of western Europe in 1154 and the church in England under the Norman kings, 1066-1154, a brief outline of the struggle will be given in Part I in order to provide the basis for a discussion of the evolution of twentieth century scholarship on the controversy in Part II. Finally, in Part III some attempt will be made to give the current status of historical opinion on Thomas Becket, indicating, if possible, new areas where significant historical research might be made.
INTRODUCTION

"The middle decades of the twelfth century were part of an
epoch in which both ideas and men circulated with the greatest
freedom throughout western Europe."¹ The early twelfth century
was indeed one of profound social, economic, political, intel-
lectual, and religious change in Western Europe.

Socially, this period witnessed the continuation of a trans-
formation of feudalism and the growth of towns. Feudalism was
changed because of the rediscovery of Roman laws, the concept of
a fief as a tract of land which could be inherited or sold, and
the change from personal service to money payments by vassals.
The economic development of towns occurred as a result of the trade
revival which was taking place in Western Europe after the First
Crusade.

Politically, strong monarchs were already beginning to con-
solidate their power with the aid of the middle classes in several
areas of Western Europe. France under Louis VI (1108-1137) and
Sicily under Roger II (1101-1154) were two countries in which an
effective monarchy was becoming a reality.

Western Europe also witnessed the beginning of an intellectual
revolution during the twelfth century. The cathedral schools had

¹ David Knowles, The Episcopal Colleagues of Archbishop Thomas

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provided the basis for a revival of classicism and humanism, and the rise of the universities in this period led to a further systematization and specialization of study. The application of dialectic to theology and philosophy, which occurred partly as a result of the discovery and dissemination of the corpus of Aristotelian thought, was the central feature of this renaissance.

The dominant institution in twelfth-century Europe was the Church. The popes of the twelfth century were guided by Gregory VII's motto of "justitia et pacem," and their efforts to secure Christian justice in the world often led to an involvement in temporal affairs and conflict with national monarchs.2

All of these changes were taking place in western Europe when Henry II came to the English throne in 1154, but the religious changes were perhaps the most significant in England in the years before Henry. In the reign of William I, 1066-1087, the main emphasis was on spiritual reform, and William acted in conjunction with his archbishop of Canterbury, Lanfranc, in stressing the ideals of the Cluniac reform, while maintaining a tight personal control of the church structure in England. This co-operation between king and archbishop came to an end with William Rufus, 1087-1100, whose quarrel with Anselm over the question of lay investiture resulted in a general deterioration of

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Norman relations with the church in England.

The conflict over lay investiture, the rights of clerical appeals to Rome, and the position and authority of papal legates continued in the early part of the reign of Henry I, 1100-1135. Although Anselm's death in 1109 removed much of the personal antagonism in the conflict, the fact remains that he had produced a challenge to the "ancient customs," such as the practice of lay investiture and the royal control of ecclesiastical elections.

Henry's death in 1135 without a male heir to the throne led to a period of civil war in England for nineteen years. The main contestants for the throne were Stephen of Blois, Henry's nephew, and Matilda, Henry's daughter. Although Henry had designated Matilda as his successor, Stephen held the throne during most of this tumultuous period. In order to gain support for his position, Stephen found it necessary to make concessions to the church, which provided him with his chief source of strength. For example, in the Charter of 1136, Stephen promised that he would

...neither do nor permit anything to be done simonically in the Church, or in ecclesiastical affairs. I allow and concede that jurisdiction and authority over ecclesiastical persons and over all clerks and their property, together with the disposal of all ecclesiastical estates, shall be in the hands of the bishops.3

These grants of ecclesiastical immunities enabled the church to re-establish much of the freedom and power that had gradually been lost

since the beginning of the Norman rule over England in 1066. This was essentially the state of the church in England when Stephen died in 1154. In addition to the growth of ecclesiastical power, the barons and local lords had also emerged from the civil war with increased strength.

The English people now looked to the new king, Henry II, to rectify the chaotic conditions which existed in England. As William of Newburgh stated:

...so many evils had sprung up in the previous reign that after their unhappy experiences the people looked for better things from the new monarch.

4 William of Newburgh, in Douglas, p. 323.
PART I

THE STORY

When Henry II was crowned king on December 19, 1154, he had already secured a strong legal claim to the throne. Since Stephen's son Eustace had predeceased him, Stephen's line could claim no direct descendant to the throne. By the Treaty of Winchester, Stephen had recognized Henry, the son of Count Geoffrey of Anjou and Matilda, as the legal heir to the throne. In addition to this legal claim, Henry's position as a great landowner gave him a broad basis of support. During the five years preceding his coronation, Henry had obtained Normandy and Anjou as part of his inheritance, but his greatest acquisition was the Duchy of Aquitaine. This last territory had been acquired through Henry's fortunate marriage in 1152 to Eleanor, the divorced wife of Louis VII of France.

Upon assuming the throne, Henry was immediately beset by various internal difficulties. Feudal magnates held many strategic castles throughout England, which made them a definite threat to Henry's power. The presence within England of a large body of Flemish mercenary troops, which had been used by both sides in the previous civil war, was causing much popular discontent. In addition, one of the major problems facing Henry was the existence within England of five rival systems of courts, each trying to get as much legal business as possible. Henry's attempt to remedy this last situation was one of the principal objectives of his entire
reign. By the end of the first seven years of his rule, Henry had largely succeeded in solving these various internal problems which had beset England when he came to power.

Henry certainly did not attain these objectives without the help of a considerable number of administrative officials. Among these officials, the man who played an important part in the affairs of the kingdom from 1155 to 1162 was Henry's chancellor, Thomas Becket. Thomas was the son of Gilbert Becket, a Rouen merchant who had come to London, where he became a member of the growing bourgeoisie and was later elected sheriff of that city. Thomas' early education consisted of training at the priory of Merton and at a London grammar school. From there he went to the University of Paris, where he met John of Salisbury. Returning to England, Becket took a minor post as a sheriff's scribe, where he remained until he was taken into the service of Theobald, the archbishop of Canterbury, around 1145. Becket's ten-year period of service to Theobald ended in 1155, when the office of chancellor fell vacant, and Henry appointed Becket to the post. Henry had met Becket through Theobald, and he had been very impressed by Becket's record under the archbishop.

Becket held the office of chancellor from 1155 to 1162, and during this time he greatly aided Henry in the transaction of public business. For example, Becket helped to reorganize a scutage tax to produce additional royal revenue, and he was also instrumental

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in securing from the barons of the realm a formal recognition of Henry's oldest son as the successor to the throne. But Becket's most noteworthy achievements came in the area of foreign affairs. He was Henry's diplomat par excellence, and his negotiations with Louis VII provided many advantages for Henry and England. For example, it was Becket who negotiated the successful treaty by which Margaret, Louis' daughter, was betrothed to Henry's young son. Included in Margaret's dowry was an important series of castles located in the Verin. Becket as chancellor did more than negotiate for Henry—he also fought for him. In the Toulouse campaigns of 1160 against Louis VII, Becket distinguished himself by successfully leading a retinue of knights in battle. Because of his notable term of service as chancellor, Henry in 1162 looked to Becket as one of his most trusted agents.

The death of Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury on April 18, 1161 left the most important and influential ecclesiastical office in England vacant, and provided Henry with an excellent opportunity to fill the office with a man of his own choosing. That choice fell upon Thomas Becket, and he, after his ordination as a priest, was nominated and consecrated archbishop of Canterbury on June 3, 1162.

Since Henry's motives for nominating Becket and Thomas's reasons for accepting the nomination have led to much historical debate, they will not be considered at this time. Suffice it to say that, once having been elected archbishop of Canterbury by the monks of Christ's

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Church, Becket gradually became, between 1162 and 1170, the most determined opponent of any attempted elevation of royal power by Henry. The conflict began with Becket's resignation of the office of chancellor upon assuming his duties as archbishop of Canterbury, and it culminated in his murder in the Canterbury cathedral on December 29, 1170.

The first major dispute between Becket and Henry occurred at a council held at Woodstock in July 1163, in which Henry proposed that a sheriff's "aid" be transferred to the crown in order to defray part of the royal expenses for the Welsh and French campaigns. Becket, who as archbishop of Canterbury was in charge of much land which was under the administration of his see, opposed this scheme because it would lead to the transfer of revenues from ecclesiastical to the royal coffers. Becket's opposition to this scheme was one of the main factors which caused it to be defeated. During the next two years, Becket vigorously defended the prerogatives of the Church.

The growing conflict reached a climax in 1164 with Henry's proposals for limiting ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Until 1164, ecclesiastical jurisdiction was a nebulous and relatively undefined province under which many "criminous clerks" had sought protection. Henry's main objection to the system of ecclesiastical jurisdiction was that

...an ordained clerk, who commits those grave crimes that are known as felonies, can be tried only in an
ecclesiastical court, and can be punished only by such punishment as that court can inflict. The case of Philip of Broi, a canon of Bedford, served to illustrate to Henry how royal justice was being flaunted. Philip had been accused of murdering a knight, but he had exonerated himself by taking an oath in the bishop's court. When he had been requested to answer to the same charge in the royal court he refused, and in so doing he had used abusive language to the local sheriff.

Henry's first attempt to define the limits of ecclesiastical jurisdiction occurred at a council held at Westminster on October 1, 1163, in which he declared that the punishment of a "criminous clerk" fell under the limits of royal jurisdiction. After receiving the consent of the bishops, led by Gilbert Foliot of London, and the reluctant promise of Becket to agree to his proposal, Henry then attempted to reduce his assessment of the "ancient customs" to writing. The result was the Constitutions of Clarendon, which were proposed at a meeting of the Great Council at Clarendon on January 14, 1164. The sixteen articles of the Constitutions were, in Henry's opinion, an accurate statement of the "ancient customs" as they had existed in the reign of his


8 This celebrated case is mentioned by nearly all contemporary writers (Cf. Douglas, pp. 712-15, in which the case of Philip of Broi is mentioned by Roger of Pontigny, William FitzStephen, and Edward Grim), and it is cited as the principal example of "criminous clerks" by nearly all modern scholars of the Becket controversy. Since the case is so well known, I will omit specific references here.
grandfather, Henry I. Becket did not share this view. Basing his objections on the growth of ecclesiastical authority during Stephen’s reign, which Henry chose to ignore as a time of anarchy, Becket opposed this written version of the customs. The crux of the problem for Becket was article three of the Constitutions, which stated:

Clerks cited and accused of any matter shall, when summoned by the king’s justice, come before the king’s court to answer there concerning matters which shall seem to the king’s court to be answerable there, and before the ecclesiastical court for what shall seem to be answerable there, but in such a way that the justice of the king shall send to the court of the holy Church to see how the case is there tried. And if the clerk be convicted or shall confess, the Church ought no longer to protect him. 9

Although Becket contended that Henry’s proposals would constitute a double punishment on clerics, he did at first verbally agree to them. When presented with a written version of the customs, however, Becket refused to sign them and left the council. 10

The next major confrontation between Becket and Henry occurred at the council of Northampton on October 6, 1164. Becket was originally summoned to the council to answer the charges of a man named John Marshall that he had not obtained justice in the bishop’s court, and was therefore entitled to a royal hearing. The council

9 The quotation is a translation from the Latin text in Stubbs, Select Charters... pp. 164-65, which reads: "Clerici retati et accusati de quacunque re, summoniti a Justitia regis venient in curiam ipsius, responsuri ibidem de hoc unde videbitur curiae regis quod ibidem sit respondendum; et in curia ecclesiastica, unde videbitur quod videbitur quod ibidem sit respondendum; ita quod Justitia regis mittet in curiam sanctae ecclesiae ad videndum qua ratione res ibi tractabitur. Et si clericus convictus vel confessus fuerit, non debet de cestere eum ecclesia sueri."

10 Herbert of Bosham, in Douglas, p. 722.
soon became an attack on Becket himself, whom Henry accused of mishandling royal funds while he was chancellor, and from whom he demanded compensation. Becket refused to answer to the charges and, after Henry threatened to declare him a traitor, he secretly fled to France on November 2, 1164.

Becket spent the next six years in exile in France under the protection of Louis VII, and it was during this time that the conflict became a war of letters, which are today a major source for historians of the controversy. In addition to Becket and Henry, Pope Alexander III, who was having his own conflict with Frederick Barbarossa, was a major figure of the period of Becket's exile. His actions and attitudes towards Becket have been the subject of much controversy among modern historians, and will be considered in a later section.

There were several efforts at reconciliation between Becket and Henry in this period, with Louis VII and Pope Alexander III acting as the principal mediators. Meetings were held at Montmirail and Montmartre in 1169, but they ended in failure. The climax of Becket's exile was reached in 1170, when Henry had his son crowned king by Roger Pont l'Évêque, the archbishop of York. The right of coronation had customarily belonged to the archbishop of Canterbury, and Becket saw this as an infringement of his ecclesiastical rights. Pope Alexander III supported him in this contention. With the threat of an interdict hanging over England,

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William FitzStephen, in Douglas, p. 753.
Henry and Becket met at Preteval in July, 1170, and were reconciled. The terms of the reconciliation did not seem to solve any of the basic differences between the two men, since the Constitutions of Clarendon were not mentioned. Both men seemed intent upon avoiding this controversial issue in order to affect a peaceful settlement.12

Upon returning to England, Becket issued letters of excommunication for various bishops, including Foliot, Roger of York, Jocelin of Salisbury, and Walter of Rochester, who had sided with Henry in the quarrel. Henry, who was in Normandy at this time, became enraged that Becket should have reopened the struggle so soon after a reconciliation had been reached. Henry's violent diatribe against Becket prompted several of his men to take action. Four of his knights, Reginald FitzUrse, Richard Brito, Hugh de Moreville, and William Tracy, crossed the English Channel that night, and on December 29, 1170, they confronted Becket at Canterbury. After Becket's refusal to renounce the excommunications, they murdered him in the sanctuary of the cathedral. The stormy, eight-year conflict between the king and the archbishop had culminated in Becket's murder.

12
Herbert of Bosham, in Douglas, pp. 755-56.
PART II

THE EVOLUTION OF HISTORICAL SCHOLARSHIP ON THE BECKET CONTROVERSY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

And later is worse, when men will not hate you
Enough to defame or to execrate you,
But pondering the qualities that you lacked
Will only try to find the historical fact.
When men shall declare that there was no mystery
About this man who played a certain part in history.13

The "historical fact" has often been an elusive and difficult object to attain in medieval studies, and the Becket controversy, despite the wealth of primary source information, has proved no exception to the problem of reaching a concrete solution to a given historical problem. Thomas Becket indeed played an important part in history, but the mystery which surrounds him has remained. This is not to say that there have been no attempts at clarification of the many issues involved in the controversy, but even today there is no definitive study of the entire struggle between Henry II and Becket.

Before attempting an investigation of the evolution of twentieth-century scholarship on the controversy, it might be helpful to briefly examine some of the major historical works on Becket in the nineteenth century. Two men--J.A. Giles and J.C. Robertson--have been recognized by the majority of twentieth-century Becket scholars as being prominent researchers of the controversy in the nineteenth century. Giles, writing in the 1840's, produced several

works which advanced previous knowledge of Becket. In 1845 he produced an eight-volume collection of primary source materials relating to Becket and his contemporaries, which contained an edition of the letters of Gilbert Foliot, the Bishop of London who was one of Becket's principal episcopal adversaries in the struggle with Henry, and also an edition of the letters and charters of John of Salisbury. In 1846 Giles wrote a two-volume work entitled *The Life and Letters of Thomas Becket*. J.C. Robertson was another prominent Becket scholar in the mid-nineteenth century. From 1875 to 1885, he joined with J.B. Sheppard in editing the *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, which included, not only the lives by Becket's biographers, but also over eight hundred letters written by Becket and others during the course of the struggle. As will be noted later, the dating and authenticity of these letters has produced much research by twentieth-century scholars.

Several other nineteenth-century scholars should be mentioned for their work on the Becket controversy. E.A. Freeman devoted much time and research in an attempt to assess the historical merit of Becket's biographers. W.H. Hutton wrote a biography of Becket

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in the 1890's in which he made use of the primary source collections that had been compiled by Giles and Robertson.\(^{17}\) In addition, there were specialized studies made of various contemporary accounts of Becket's life. E. Magnusson, for example, edited a two-volume account of *Thomas Saga Erkibyskups*, the Icelandic saga of Becket, in the *Rolls Series*.\(^{18}\) This previously little-known work showed the international popularity of Becket, whose life and ideals were the basis of this saga. L.B. Radford made a specialized study in 1894 of Becket's life and activities before he became archbishop of Canterbury, especially concentrating on his activities as chancellor of Henry II.\(^{19}\)

Three nineteenth-century authors and developments deserve special attention in a study of the Becket controversy, for their views have had profound effects in the twentieth century. The first of these is the romantic French historian, Augustin Thierry. In his recent work on Becket, Richard Winston mentioned Thierry's view of Becket's Saxon birth, in which Thierry represented Becket as the defender of the underdog Saxons against the Norman aggressors.\(^{20}\) Although Winston rejected this hypothesis on the grounds that both Gilbert Becket and


his wife were Normans, it has been emphasized by several twentieth-century writers. Sidney Dark, in his study of Becket in 1927, indicated his acceptance of Thierry’s statement when he said that "...archbishop after archbishop... was the defender of the Saxons against the Norman oppressor...."

More recently, Jean Anouilh adopted Thierry’s position as one of the bases for his play on Becket.

The legal aspects of the struggle between Becket and Henry II have always loomed large in historical scholarship, and in 1892 a fairly definitive account of the issue of "criminous clerks" and the Constitutions of Clarendon was given by Frederic William Maitland. In his article, Maitland attempted to remove much of the confusion among historians by proposing a new interpretation of article three of the Constitutions of Clarendon. Maitland first reviewed the old opinion, which said that for temporal offenses a cleric would be tried and sentenced in the royal court, while for ecclesiastical offenses a cleric would be tried in a church court. Henry, according to this opinion, reserved the right to decide if

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an offense was temporal or spiritual in nature. In contrast to this, Maitland maintained that

Henry did not propose that a clerk accused of crime should be tried in the temporal court, and he did not propose that a clerk should be punished by a temporal court. The clerk was to be tried in the bishop's court; the convict who was to be sentenced by the king's court would be no clerk, for he would have been degraded from his orders. The scheme is this: accusation and plea in the temporal court; trial, conviction, and degradation in the ecclesiastical court; sentence in the temporal court to the layman's punishment.26

Maitland's novel re-interpretation of the third clause of the Constitutions of Clarendon dealing with the trial and punishment of "criminous clerks" seemed to make Henry's proposal less radical because it seemed that Henry was willing to concede at least some form of jurisdiction to the ecclesiastical courts. This placed him in a clearer and more easily defendable legal position. The majority of twentieth-century scholars of the Becket controversy have followed Maitland on the legal issues in the struggle.

A third late nineteenth-century Becket scholar whose work had significant repercussions among twentieth-century historians of the controversy is E.A. Abbott. In 1898 he wrote a work27 which dealt specifically with the death of and the miracles attributed to Thomas Becket. Part I of his study dealt with all the events surrounding the death of the archbishop. By a comparison of various

contemporary accounts of the murder, he tried to establish what had actually happened on the day of Becket's death. The writers whose testimony he compared were Edward Grim, William FitzStephen, John of Salisbury, William of Canterbury, Herbert of Bosham, and Anonymous I. In addition, Abbott compared the accounts of Dean Stanley and Alfred Tennyson with the early biographers to determine their historical merit. Part II contains an analysis of the various miracles attributed to Becket after his death, and this section is based mainly on the works of Benedict and William of Canterbury. Abbott's work had a two-fold value for later scholars of the Becket controversy. In the first place, he demonstrated the value of internal criticism in assessing the historical veracity of the various contemporary accounts of Becket. He also made some attempt to indicate where the biographers borrowed from each other in their accounts. This theme was later taken up by Louis Halphen in 1909. In the second place, Abbott's work on the miracles of Becket began a tradition which was followed in the twentieth century by scholars such as Tancred Borenius and Paul A. Brown.

With these nineteenth-century developments in mind, the research and scholarship of twentieth-century scholars of the controversy will be seen in a clearer light.

The attempt to assess the relative value of Becket's contemporary

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Anonymous I has been attributed, although not conclusively, to Roger of Pontigny, and Abbott (Vol. I, p. 209.) considers this in some respects to be the most reliable of all accounts of Becket's death.
biographers occupied much of the research of Louis Halphen, the first of the twentieth-century scholars to be considered. Writing in the Revue Historique in 1909, 29 Halphen attempted to give a general analysis of the reliability of the biographers instead of limiting his research to a specific aspect of Becket's life, as Abbott had. 30 The real value of Halphen's article lay in his analysis of the extent and manner in which the biographers of Becket borrowed from each other's accounts, and his conclusions in this respect are worth noting.

The principal biographers of Thomas Becket can be divided into two groups: on the one side John of Salisbury, which follows William of Canterbury and Anonymous (Lambeth); on the other side Édouard Grim, which follows Roger of Pontigny, and Garnier of Sainte-Maxence, which follows from the one and the other. Between these two groups, there had been a "contamination," Roger having known the work of John of Salisbury, and Garnier that of William of Canterbury. 31

Halphen's contention that Grim's account was based on the poem of Garnier of Sainte-Maxence is especially interesting, for it seems


30 Abbott dealt with the biographers' accounts of only one aspect of Becket—his murder in the cathedral—while Halphen was more interested in how the contemporary biographers borrowed from each other's accounts.

31 The quotation is a translation from the French text in Halphen, "Les biographes de Thomas Becket," p. 44, which reads: "On peut repartir les principaux biographes de Thomas Becket en deux groupes: d'une part Jean de Salisbury dont procedent Guillaume de Canterbury et l'Anonyme de Lambeth; d'autre part Édouard Grim, dont procede Roger de Pontigny, et Garnier de Pont-Sainte-Maxence, qui procede de l'un et de l'autre. Entre ces deux groupes, il y a eu 'contamination,' Roger ayant connu l'oeuvre de Jean de Salisbury et Garnier celle de Guillaume de Canterbury."
to imply that Grim is not the most reliable of the biographers except when he is describing the event which he witnessed: the murder of the archbishop. Many later writers have used Grim's account almost exclusively in their work, and this has led to certain discrepancies in their writings. Sidney Dark constantly quotes from "the biographer," and his acceptance of Grim's narrative certainly slants his account of Becket.

In addition to Halphen's critical work on the dating and authenticity of the primary sources, he also did work on a previously little-explored area of Becket's conflict with Henry: the period of Becket's exile in France. He showed that, in addition to the three general meetings (Montmirail, Montmartre, Preteval) which had been stressed by previous historians, there was a series of lesser conferences between Henry II and Louis VII to attempt to settle the quarrel. The elaboration of these lesser meetings by Halphen significantly advanced the knowledge of Becket's role in France.

Halphen's consideration of the relative value of the contemporary biographers has been implicitly followed by nearly all later scholars who have used the biographers in their accounts of Thomas Becket. However, the debt which these later authors owe to Halphen's

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research has been infrequently expressed.

The study which Halphen had made of Becket's exile was not deemed useful, however, by L.F. Salzman, who wrote a biography of Henry in 1914. He claimed that "...to follow the course of the struggle between king and archbishop during the six years of Becket's exile in detail is a useless and unprofitable task." Salzman gave a fairly moderate account of the struggle, although he believed, following Maitland, that Henry had the better legal position.

There are several aspects of Salzman's work which are interesting. The first point involves the circumstances of Becket's murder. Salzman stated that it was the news of Becket's excommunications of Ranulf de Broc and others on Christmas day that led Henry to become infuriated and utter the words which indirectly led to Becket's death on December 29, 1170. Since Henry was in Normandy on Christmas day, it seems highly unlikely that news of the Christmas excommunications could have reached Henry and caused Becket's murder in less than four days. A more probable explanation could be that Henry was enraged over Becket's excommunications of Roger of York and Gilbert Poelot, among others, which Becket had issued upon his return to England on December 1, 1170.

A second rather minor point involves the activities of the

35 Ibid., p. 60.
36 Ibid., p. 95.
four knights after they had murdered Becket. Salzman stated that "...having wreaked their vengeance on the archbishop, the murderers turned to the plunder of his palace." This is the only mention of a plundering of the palace which I have found among twentieth-century accounts and, in the absence of a citation of a source by Salzman, his conclusion on this point could be debated.

A third aspect of Salzman's account worth noting is his view of the effect of Becket's murder on papal authority in England. This issue, which is one of the major sources of controversy among twentieth-century historians, has produced such widely divergent interpretations such as those of Z.N. Brooke and Mary Cheney among others, which will be discussed in a later section. Salzman for his part did not go into nearly as much detail as later writers on the subject, but he did have a definite viewpoint.

The final issue in the conflict was...decidedly in Henry's favor, and the murder, instead of proving, as it must have done in the case of a less able man, disastrous, had actually been beneficial.

Salzman did not believe that Henry conceded any real advantages to the papacy in the Compromise of Avranches of 1172.

37 Ibid., p. 99.
40 Salzman, p. 123.
One final point of Salzman's work deserves mention. He cited a Latin metrical chronicle, _Draco Normannicus_, in his narrative.\(^4\)

This work, "...attributed to Etienne of Rouen and written before Becket's martyrdom had conferred upon him exemption from criticism..."\(^2\) has received little attention from twentieth-century Becket scholars, whose main complaint is often that all contemporary accounts of Becket are biased. The _Draco Normannicus_ might prove to be a valuable, unbiased source for future work on Becket.\(^3\)

Salzman himself merely cited the work, but did not use it, and his work is based chiefly on the _Pipe Rolls_.

It is perhaps a bit unfair to criticise Salzman's treatment of Thomas Becket, because his work was devoted primarily to a study of the reign of Henry II. His work was received at the time as an adequate, but not exceptional, study of Henry's reign. Charles H. Haskins wrote in the _American Historical Review_ that "...the limits of the volume offer small space for fresh material, but the author has used the fundamental sources well..."\(^4\)

Haskins also stated

\(^4\) Ibid., p. 238.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Halphen briefly mentioned the _Draco Normannicus_ in "Les entre-\text{vues...}," p. 152. He accepted Etienne of Rouen as the author, and maintained that this work confirmed meetings between Louis VII and Henry II at Gisors on April 11, 1165, and at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on February 15, 1169. However, Halphen had nothing to say on the value of _Draco Normannicus_ as a source for a study of Becket's character.

that "...his judgment on Henry II, while sane and sober, is not strikingly new."\textsuperscript{45} In his review of Salzman's work, Haskins limited his remarks to Salzman's treatment and consideration of Henry II.

The seven hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Becket's death was the occasion of a lecture delivered by T.F. Tout which was subsequently published in \textit{The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library} in 1921.\textsuperscript{46} Tout viewed Becket as an English saint and statesman rather than as a character of international importance, and in this sense his evaluation of Becket was somewhat nationalistic. Tout did make an advance in the direction of study by stressing the psychological aspects of the struggle. He believed that Becket was the type of man who "...devoted himself as his first duty to the service of the immediate lord whose bread he ate."\textsuperscript{47} When Henry was his lord, Becket served his interests to the full, but his consecration as archbishop of Canterbury relegated Henry to a secondary place in Becket's loyalties.

In his address, Tout believed that Thomas drew his theory of church and state from John of Salisbury, who "...made himself the brain of the archbishop."\textsuperscript{48} This is certainly possible, for Becket

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p. 239.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p. 247.
for Becket knew of John's Polycratua, which was dedicated to him. Tout in his lecture also reacted against those who stressed only Becket's career as archbishop, saying, "...the position of Thomas the chancellor has been so little recognized by historians..." that a student of administration feels in private duty bound to stress...this aspect of his work." Tout was not concerned in this article with the other principals in the conflict, and his curt dismissal of the part which Pope Alexander III played in the struggle did not indicate a very penetrating analysis of Alexander's position. He stated that "...the half-hearted pope made the man he had snubbed in life a canonized saint within three years of his death." In general, Tout's lecture was merely a popular review which contributed little to an advance in the knowledge of Becket.

The study of Thomas Becket received a fresh approach in 1923 when Tancred Borenius published his work dealing with the iconography of St. Thomas. He showed in his work that the development of the representation of Becket in art followed largely the marriages of Henry II's daughters: Mathilda in Germany, Eleanor in Spain, and Joan in Sicily and southern France. Borenius traced

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49 It would be interesting to know whether Tout was acquainted with L.B. Radford's work (see above, p. 18) on this very topic.
50 Tout, p. 242.
51 Ibid., p. 256.
Becket's iconography in every field of medieval art, and the many representations of Becket show that he was not only a popular English saint, but a favorite of all Europeans as well. The work of Abbott and Borenius dealing with the popularity of Becket after his death was taken up again in 1930 by Paul A. Brown. Brown's work treated of the development of the legend of Becket as a theme in literature. Brown concluded that

The legend of Becket shows a tendency to throw a glamour of romance about the character of Becket. If a study of the life of the Saint determines anything at all, it reveals his essential human quality. But this characteristic is forgotten, and Becket becomes in legend a saint without flaw or blemish.

The work of Abbott, Borenius, and Brown, although not specifically concerned with Becket's quarrel with Henry, has been of importance in assessing the popularity of Becket in literature, art, and religious thinking in Europe after his death. It seems that recent scholars of the controversy, such as Knowles, Cheney, Morey, C.N.L. Brooke, and Winston, have been less concerned with this aspect of Becket's role in Europe after his death, but this does not, in my opinion, detract from the work of Abbott, Borenius, and Brown. There are so many facets of Becket's career to be considered that one historian could not adequately cover them all.

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52 Tancred Borenius, St. Thomas Becket in Art (London: Methuen and Co., 1923).
54 Ibid., p. 259.
Controversial topics often permit an author to give a free reign to his personal feelings, and this is evident in the case of Sidney Dark, who wrote a biography of Becket in 1927. Dark was the general editor of a series which dealt with prominent and popular churchmen in England during the middle ages, and he wrote his study of Becket as part of this series. His views were totally apologetic for Becket, with whom he sided on practically every issue, both legal and personal, in the conflict. Dark did not bother to conceal his views with subtleties for, as he stated in the preface to his work:

Becket to me is a heroic figure whose life and death were of inestimable service to the Church which he loved and served, and the object of this book is to prove that this judgment squares with the facts and that no other judgment can be maintained if all the facts are considered.

Dark has already been mentioned in connection with his acceptance of Thierry's hypothesis, but Becket for Dark was more than a defender of the Saxons against the Normans. He was a person who could do no wrong, and was the champion of the church's opposition to the secular power. Dark ruthlessly condemned those who opposed Becket in the struggle, singling out Gilbert Foliot for particular abuse. He stated that "Richard Brito [one of the four

57 See above, p. 19.
knights who murdered Becket was a kinsman of Gilbert of London, which, to some extent, accounts for his murdering zeal." Although a thorough analysis of the parts played by the English bishops in the controversy had to await detailed studies by scholars such as Adrian Morey in 1937 and David Knowles in 1949, Dark even in 1927 made little attempt to distinguish the different attitudes of the English bishops and clergy toward Becket. It seems that Dark wrote this polemical work less to accurately investigate the controversy than to refute the arguments of several authors, notably J.A. Froude, Mrs. J.R. Green, Dean Stanley, and Dean Hock, who had taken an adverse attitude toward Becket in their writings. A final aspect of Dark's book is his refutation of Tout's unfavorable analysis of Pope Alexander III. Dark contended that "Alexander was sympathetic, and there is no truth in the suggestion of one historian that he had 'but limited sympathy with the fiery zealot.'" The absence of reviews of Dark's work in historical and ecclesiastical journals indicates that scholars of the controversy did not feel that his

58 Ibid., p. 168.
61 Dark was probably referring to Froude here, but his arguments would have applied to Tout's analysis also.
62 Dark, p. 120.
work significantly added to an increased understanding of Becket, and his apologetic views have certainly not stood the test of recent scholarship.

The effort to analyze the character of Alexander III and the extent of papal authority in England both before and after the Becket controversy occupied the research of one of the greatest Becket scholars of the twentieth century—Z.N. Brooke. His work in this area gave a fresh perspective to the controversy, which had previously been analyzed in terms of its national effects in England. Brooke viewed the conflict in the larger area of European affairs, and his emphasis on the important part played by the papacy opened up a new direction of investigation of the controversy. Brooke was the first of the twentieth-century scholars to attempt to assess the importance of Becket's murder on papal authority in England. Writing for the Cambridge Historical Journal in 1927, Brooke took issue with those who contended that the Compromise of Avranches of 1172 was a victory for Henry, who was successful in maintaining his position against the Church. Brooke argued that Avranches represented a radical increase in papal authority in England, and he based his thesis on the evidence of the decrees. As Brooke stated:

\[\text{In 1172, at Avranches, Henry made his great concession and permitted freedom of appeal to Rome, a} \]

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64 Cf. Ibid., pp. 219-28.

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concession which altered the whole character of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in this country and necessitated the introduction of Canon Law practically in its entirety. 65

Brooke maintained this position four years later when he published his study of the relations between the English Church and the Papacy before the reign of John. He recognized the dual allegiance of the English bishops in the controversy, a fact which Dark and others had overlooked. According to Brooke, the bishops were both feudal subjects of the king and ecclesiastical subjects of the Pope, and this explained their unique position in the controversy for him. He believed that "...the episcopate was mostly on the king's side but could not act with him directly against the Pope." 66 As far as the controversy between Becket and Henry itself was concerned, Brooke believed that the legal question of the Constitutions of Clarendon was the central issue, but he did not agree with Maitland's contention that Becket was wrong in opposing the third clause of the Constitutions. Brooke maintained that "...Becket was right, for the lay courts had clearly been exceeding their duties...." 67 Brooke did, however, "...emphasize the moderation of Henry's statement of ancient custom...," 68 and F.M. Stenton in his review

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65 Ibid., p. 218.
67 Ibid., p. 200.
68 In a review by F.M. Stenton of Z.N. Brooke, The English Church and the Papacy..., in English Historical Review, XLVII (July, 1932), p. 485.
believed that Brooke gave a just evaluation of each protagonist in the struggle.

Brooke based his theory of Becket's correct interpretation of the spheres of royal and ecclesiastical legal power, as he did in the case of his theory of the effect of Becket's murder on papal authority in England, on the evidence of papal appeals and the decretals. The reputation of Pope Alexander III as a canon lawyer might in part account for the increases in appeals during his pontificate. Although the evidence of appeals was not new in itself, Brooke's interpretation of this evidence was novel, for he saw in the papal appeals an increasing fear of the extension of royal justice on the part of clerics. At the time, Brooke's statement on this issue was disregarded, but a recent scholar has defended Brooke and built up an elaborate argument against Maitland's thesis. 69

If Brooke has recently found a scholar who supports him on the legal issues of the Constitutions of Clarendon, he also found a scholar who violently disagreed with his analysis of the effect of Becket's murder on papal authority in England. Mary Cheney, writing in the English Historical Review in 1941, did not believe that there was a sudden and dramatic increase in papal authority in England after Becket's murder. 70 She believed 71 that there

69 Charles Duggan, "Henry II and the Criminous Clerks," Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, XXIV, no. 91 (May, 1962), 1-28. This important work will be considered in a later section.
71 Ibid., p. 178.
was a constant history of appeals to Rome in the English Church, and that "...the decretal collections do not necessarily prove that there was a sudden and unforeseen increase in appeals to Rome after 1172." Cheney believed that Brooke had been misled by the large number of papal decretal collections during the pontificate of Alexander III, who was an excellent canon lawyer. She maintained that

...the effect of Becket's martyrdom and pontificate was to allow the Church in England to develop steadily, in spite of constant friction with the secular power, in the direction in which it was already set, and to prevent a violent change in its relations with the papacy.

Cheney's refutation of Brooke's thesis regarding papal power in England after Becket's death, although it appeared to have been based on sound arguments, has not been accepted by all later historians, and the views of both Brooke and Cheney have been accepted and defended by various Becket scholars.

The parts played by the English bishops in the controversy had remained until 1937 a puzzling aspect of the struggle between Becket and Henry. The tendency had been, except for the most prominent bishops, such as Gilbert Foliot and Roger of York, to

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72 Ibid., p. 184.
73 Ibid., pp. 196-97.
lump the rest of the bishops into a single amorphous body which supported the king against the archbishop. Taking up a suggestion by Walther Holtzmann and Z.N. Brooke, Dom Adrian Morey in 1937 attempted to give a short biography and an edition of the letters and charters of Bartholomew of Exeter. This was "...the first English attempt to give a full account of one of Becket's bishops from a study of the sources." From Morey's study, Bartholomew emerged as a competent canonist who supported Becket against the king with varying degrees of loyalty throughout the struggle. Morey's conclusion that Bartholomew championed Becket's cause in England was based on a thorough analysis of the letters which passed between Bartholomew and John of Salisbury during Becket's period of exile in France. The majority of Morey's work was concerned with an edition of various letters and charters attributed to Bartholomew of Exeter, and these threw considerable light on the activities of one, although not the most important, of the English bishops in the struggle. Morey's work added little to an increased understanding of Becket himself, but his work cannot be criticised on these grounds, for his purpose was to study Bartholomew of Exeter, not Thomas Becket. In his review of Morey's

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In a review by E.B. Graves of Adrian Morey, *Bartholomew of Exeter*, in *Speculum*, XIV (January, 1939), p. 120. Morey, p. 20.
work, E.B. Graves did criticize the work for "...an incomprehensible method of chronology..." but he praised Moray for his work on editing for the first time the letters and charters of Bartholomew of Exeter. The main influence of Moray's work was to provide the impetus for a fuller study of the entire English episcopate in the struggle.

This analysis of the entire body of English bishops had to await the work of David Knowles, but meanwhile Becket did not suffer from a lack of research on his character and position in the controversy. Becket found an apologetic biographer in 1938 with the publication of the work of Robert Speaight. His bias was evident from the start, because, as he stated, "I have written this book from the standpoint of a Catholic, and therefore the matter of St. Thomas's sanctity is not for me an open question." Despite this obviously apologetic statement, Speaight did succeed in giving a fairly moderate account of the struggle. Thomas was not for Speaight, as he had been for Dax, a person who could do no wrong. What Speaight maintained was not Thomas's infallibility, but the essential justice of his cause.

Speaight was not primarily an historian, but a playwright and an actor, and his connection with T.S. Eliot seems to have exercised

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78 Graves, in Speculum, p. 121.
80 Ibid., p. x.
a real formative influence on Speaight’s work. Speaight was the head of the original company of English actors who performed T.S. Eliot’s *Murder in the Cathedral*, and he played the role of Becket in the production. In his play, Eliot seems to have viewed Becket as an actor who superbly filled out the many roles he was called upon to play in life, and whose final victory resulted from a conquest of the vice of pride. As Becket states in Eliot’s play,

> They know and do not know, that acting is suffering,  
> And suffering is action. Neither does the actor suffer  
> Nor the patient act. But both are fixed  
> In an eternal pattern....

These same two themes of a man acting his role and conquering pride are found in Speaight’s work, and indicate a borrowing from Eliot. For example, when describing Becket’s exploits on the Toulouse campaign in 1159, Speaight says that "...he was able to adopt himself to the role of a great captain with the same faculty that he had shown in adapting himself to the role of a great statesman." 82 The role of pride in the struggle is stressed by Speaight when he describes, for example, Henry’s refusal to give Becket the kiss of peace after the reconciliation at Fretteval. "This impious and unkindly procrastination illustrates the havoc which pride can work in the soul of a man. It

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81  *Eliot*, p. 21.
82  *Speaight*, p. 74.
kills friendship; it annuls truth." Although Speaight stressed
the many roles which Becket had to fulfill throughout his life,
he did not condemn Becket for fulfilling these roles, and Speaight
maintained Becket's basic sincerity throughout the book.

Since Speaight was not primarily an historian, his work was
not reviewed in any scholarly journals. This does not mean, how­
ever, that historians have discarded his views on the Becket con­
troversy. In the absence of any attempt by Becket's contemporary
biographers to describe his mind and motives, no hypothesis, how­
ever untenable it might seem, can be entirely rejected.

There are several scholars whose work has been of central im­
portance to the study of the Becket controversy in the twentieth
century. One of them, Z.N. Brooke, has already been considered.
The research of Raymonde Foreville has also produced much de­
bate and controversy among twentieth-century Becket Scholars.
In her first work in 1943, L'église et la royauté sous Henri II
Plantagenet, Foreville attempted to view the conflict, as Brooke
had, in the general context of European affairs. She was symp­
pathetic with Becket's position in the struggle, and she tried

83 Ibid., p. 184.
84 Cf. Raymonde Foreville, L'église et la royauté sous Henri II
Plantagenet (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1943); "Lettres 'extravagantes' de
Thomas Becket, Archevêque de Canterbury," in Mélanges d'histoire
du Moyen Âge offerts à Louis Halphen (Paris: Presses universitaires
de France, 1951); Du Premier Concile du Latran à l'avènement d'Inno­
cent III (1123-1198). Vol. IX of Histoire de L'église, planned
under the direction of M. Augustin Fliche (Paris: Bloud et Gay,
1953); Le jubilé de Saint Thomas Becket, du XIIIᵉ au XVᵉ siècle,
to give a favorable assessment of his character. For example, the letters which Becket wrote during his exile in France have often been described by historians unfavorable to him as vituperative and vindictive, but Foreville believed that "...his letters soon revealed an ardent soul, struck with a supernatural love...." 

Foreville stressed the legal and jurisdictional disputes in the conflict, and her claim that the dispute between the sees of Canterbury and York was a factor of great importance in the Becket struggle opened up a new field of investigation in the controversy. Sidney Packard recognized this in his review of her work when he said,

As a result of her work, the role of the various archbishops of Canterbury, notably that of Theobald, assumes a new importance in the English chapter of the great conflict of church and state, and the rivalry of York and Canterbury reveals itself as a factor of hitherto unsuspected importance in the Becket struggle.

Sidney Packard's review of Foreville's initial work was mainly concerned with her style, which he criticized as being terribly dull, and with her use of various materials for her work. Packard believed that Foreville's work suffered because "It makes no use of

85 Foreville, L'église et la royauté..., p. 111: "...ses lettres révèleront bientôt une âme ardent, éprise de charité sur-naturelle...."

86 Ibid., pp. 48-58.

87 This topic was examined recently by Anne Heaslin (Mrs. Charles Duggan) in Studies in Ecclesiastical History, II (London, 1965). Unfortunately, I have been unable to find this journal.

88 In a review by Sidney Packard of Raymonde Foreville, L'église et la royauté..., in Speculum, XXII (April, 1947), p. 643.

89 Ibid.
unprinted materials, either English or continental. It makes no
real use of the financial records which are available in print;
it's use of available judicial records is not entirely satisfac-
tory." 90 Finally, Packard did not think that the size of the
book was justified because Foreville did not have enough that
was new to say. 91 Austin Lane Poole, who also reviewed Fore-
ville's first major work, 92 was much more critical of her treat-
ment of the Becket controversy. Poole condemned Foreville's
papalist views saying, "Adopting, like Becket himself, an extreme
ultramontane view, Dr. Foreville writes a panegyric rather than a
balanced history." 93 Poole believed that Foreville, who was well
versed in the literature of the period, had "...allowed her judg-
ment to be warped by preconceived ideas."
94 I do not believe that
Poole's review of Foreville can be taken at face value, because
Poole's own work has evidenced as great an admiration for Henry as
Foreville had indicated for Becket.

The letters written during the conflict were of particular
interest to Foreville, and her examination of the letter Multi-
plicem nobis (1167), perhaps the most famous piece of correspon-
dence of the entire Becket controversy, aroused much comment among

90 Ibid.
91 Ibid.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid., p. 90.
94 Ibid., p. 92.
historians. This letter, attributed by some to Gilbert Foliot, stated the bishops' case against the archbishop, and condemned Becket in eloquent language for his position in the struggle. Foreville did not believe that Foliot wrote the letter, and she claimed it was a forgery. The famous letter for her was "...a vast satire comically written...", and she hinted that the real author might have been John of Salisbury. Foreville's case for the spurious nature of the letter was decisively refuted by David Knowles in 1949. Basing his arguments on internal criticism and handwriting analysis, Knowles stated that the letter was indeed written by Gilbert Foliot, and his view has been accepted by the most recent authorities of Foliot's correspondence. Although Knowles' study of the English bishops led Foreville to revise her opinion of their part in the controversy in her later work, she seems to have remained unconvinced by his arguments for the authenticity of Multiplicem nobis. Knowles seems to have disagreed with Foreville's analysis of the conflict in more than just this one respect. In his review of her volume in the Histoire de L'eglise, Knowles stated that "...little attempt is made

**Footnotes:**

95 Foreville, L'eglise et la royaute..., pp. 244-47.
96 Ibid., p. 247: "...un vague pamphlet humoristique écrit...."
99 Cf. Foreville and Rousset de Pina, pp. 84-126.
here to set the Becket story in its English context, while the actions and attitudes of Alexander III and Gilbert Foliot are made to seem more consistent and more deserving, the one of commendation and the other of censure, than was in fact the case." The main complaint of Massey H. Shepard, who also reviewed Foreville's volume in the *Histoire de L'église*, was that "...the treatment is rather definitely ordered from the papal point of view." 101

In addition to her work on the general aspects of the Becket controversy, Foreville also made several specialized studies of written material relating to Becket's life. In an article in 1951, Foreville made a study of a series of documents which were not included in Robertson's *Materials*, 102 and which related to Becket's episcopal duties and acts. She classed these letters in six categories:

a) Decisions or arbitration in the questions of church property; b) A grant or confirmation of goods dependent on the archbishop of Canterbury by right of eternal alms; c) Jurisdiction of the metropolitan over the suffragans; d) Confirmation of the canonical allocation of churches ceded by the patrons, generally laity, to the religious establishments; e) Promulgation of indulgences. 103

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100 In a review by David Knowles of Foreville et Rousset de Pina, in the *English Historical Review*, LIX (April, 1954), p. 316.

101 In a review by Massey Shepherd of Foreville et Rousset de Pina, in *Speculum*, XXX (October, 1955), p. 649.

102 See above, p. 17.

103 Foreville, "Lettres 'extravagantes'..." p. 227: "a) Jugement ou arbitrage dans les questions de propriete ecclésiastique; b) Concession ou confirmation de bien relevant de l'archevêche de Canterbury, a titre d'auumone perpetuelle; c) Jurisdiction du metropolitan sur les suffragans; d) Confirmation de l'appropriation canonique d'églises cédées par les patrons, généralement laiques, a des établissements religieux; e) Promulgation d'indulgences."
These letters and acts, although they do little to clarify Becket's struggle with Henry, could provide the basis for an independent study of Becket's implementation of his archiepiscopal duties.

In 1957, Foreville wrote a work dealing with the religious, political, and social aspects of the pilgrimages made to Becket's shrine in the Canterbury cathedral in the jubilee years of the Middle Ages. She devoted most of her attention to the jubilees of 1220, 1420, and 1470, and concentrated especially on the questions of indulgences, the liturgy of the celebrations, and the editing of many papal documents which related to the celebrations. Robert Brentano, in his review of this work, agreed with Foreville that

...the saint of the cult is depersonalized. The Becket of the jubilee is not the prototype rebel, the anti-tyrant; he is relatively mindless, physical, and local, the genius of a holy place, the source of relics, the solace of pilgrims. By the time of the experimental Lancastrians, his peculiar personal texture had been sufficiently worn away for him to be a royal as well as a national saint.

This work by Foreville is similar to the studies made by Borenius and Brown because it dealt with a specific aspect of Becket's influence on the mores of the Middle Ages.

In her research, Foreville has ventured into many different areas of the Becket controversy. Much of her work, such as that

104 Cf. Foreville, Le jubilé....

dealing with certain unedited letters of Becket and on the cele-
bration of Becket's jubilee in the Middle Ages have, in my opinion,
yielded fruitful results and have broadened the scope of Becket
scholarship. But it seems that her work which concerned her per-
sonal interpretation of the Becket controversy has not been well
received by Becket scholars such as Poole and Knowles. Her un-
compromising support of Becket and the papalist viewpoint have
led these Becket scholars to take an unfavorable view of this
aspect of her work.

Although many different attempts have been made to view the
struggle between Becket and Henry, the theory of Hugh Ross Wil-
liamson is unique among twentieth-century Becket scholarship.
Williamson placed the entire struggle in the context of the
growth of Catharism, which he believed might have affected both
Becket and Henry. He believed that Becket's presence at the counc-
cil of Tours in 1163, which dealt with the growth of the heretical
sect in southern France, could have first brought the Catharist
religion to his thinking and produced his "death with." Wil-
liamson relates Henry's refusal to give the kiss of peace after
the reconciliation at Preteval to Catharist practices, and he
contends that there were "...indications that the murder was, in
some sense, the cult right...." Williamson's theory was not

106 Hugh Ross Williamson, The Arrow and the Sword (London: Faber
and Faber, 1947), pp. 126-27.
107 Ibid., p. 133.

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supported by any evidence whatsoever from the sources, and it has not been cited or repeated by any later Becket scholars.

The attempt to improve the historical knowledge of the primary sources of the Becket controversy led to several worthwhile efforts in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Avrom Saltman, in a brief article in the Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research in 1949, drew attention to the Bodleian M.S. Rawlinson G. f8, which contained many references to Becket, such as the Constitutions of Clarendon, which were not included by Robertson in his Materials. In 1950, C.R. Cheney published a specialized study which dealt with the administrative and secretarial functions and forms of the acta of the English bishops. Cheney recognized in this study that the administration of the see of Canterbury during the pontificate of Becket was extremely obscure, and he stated that a precise dating method of Becket's acta, based on internal evidence, was needed before any detailed study could be made of Becket's administration. Cheney's work was recognized as an important beginning to a more comprehensive analysis of the acta of the English bishops. Kathleen Edwards stated that "...his object is merely a


110 Ibid., p. 82.
preliminary statement of some of the problems and evidence, made in
the hope of encouraging more co-ordination in research. E.B.
Graves also praised Cheney's work, saying that "The author has
combed the printed sources so carefully that apparently little
has escaped him." Additional work was done on the primary
sources by David C. Douglas, who in 1953 edited a series of excerpts
from Becket's contemporary biographers in his volume of English
Historical Documents.

All research done on the Becket controversy since 1949 owes an
immense debt to the work of David Knowles who, perhaps more than
any other twentieth-century scholar, has successfully attempted to
produce a clear explanation and understanding of the struggle be-
tween Henry and Becket. Knowles made a lasting contribution to a
clarification of the issues of the controversy in 1951 when he
published his study of the episcopal colleagues of Becket. Reacting
against Tout's judgments that "...most of the bishops were on the
king's side..." and that there was "...solid support given by
the English bishops to the king..." Knowles attempted to view
the bishops individually in order to discover what their views
were in the struggle between Becket and Henry. He gave a short

\[111\] In a review by Kathleen Edwards of Cheney, English Bishops' Chanceries..., in English Historical Review, LXV (October, 1950), p. 517.

\[112\] In a review by E.B. Graves of Cheney, English Bishops' Chanceries..., in Speculum, XXV (October, 1950), p. 559.
biographical sketch of each bishop, and then analyzed their role collectively in the period from 1163-1170. He concluded that the bishops were not, as had previously been thought, united in opposition to Becket, and he noted several occasions in which the bishops acted in harmony with Becket:

...1) the appeal at Northampton in 1164; 2) that after Vezelay in the summer of 1166, renewed in November 1167; 3) and that shortly before and again shortly after the excommunication of Gilbert Foliot in the spring of 1169.\footnote{116}

The leader of the episcopal opposition to Becket was, of course, Gilbert Foliot. Knowles attempted to describe his opposition by stressing that Foliot was both a loyal subject of the pope and a faithful baron of the king,\footnote{117} and his difficulties arose because he was "...endeavouring to serve two masters."\footnote{118}

As far as the central issues in the conflict were concerned, Knowles placed the controversy in the broader realm of regnum against sacerdotium, and he placed less stress on specific issues such as the legal question of the punishment of criminous clerks. Knowles stated that "...the matter of criminous clerks was not in truth the issue over which the great contest was fought. That issue was the broader and more essential one of the overall control of the Church by the secular authority...."\footnote{119} In a review

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item[116] Knowles, Episcopal Colleagues..., p. 95.
\item[117] Ibid., p. 42.
\item[118] Ibid., p. 117.
\item[119] Ibid., p. 55.
\end{itemize}}
of Knowles' work in 1953, E.B. Graves agreed that...

...the book may suggest that a too insular view of the Becket quarrel may distort its position on the larger canvas of the ecclesiastical world of Europe. It holds that Henry had a purpose, although unrealistic, of establishing a regional church in England. It counters the opinion that the bishops were supporters of the king or even cowed by the king's anger.\textsuperscript{120}

Graves also agreed with Knowles that a primary aspect of the struggle was the conflict of loyalties which perplexed the bishops,\textsuperscript{121} and he praised the work as an outstanding contribution to Becket scholarship. In his review of Knowles' work, R.W. Southern agreed with Graves that "...the chief general conclusion of the book is that the bishops showed a greater solidarity in the maintenance of canonical principles and were less amenable to royal persuasion than has previously been allowed."\textsuperscript{122} However, Southern did criticize Knowles for not concerning himself at any length with the king's part in the dispute.\textsuperscript{123}

The need for a re-editing of certain materials relating to Becket was a subject which Knowles stressed in his work on the episcopal colleagues of Becket. Knowles believed that there was

\textsuperscript{120} In a review by E.B. Graves of Knowles, \textit{Episcopal Colleagues}..., in \textit{Speculum}, XXVIII (January, 1953), p. 182.
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{123} In a review by R.W. Southern of Knowles, \textit{Episcopal Colleagues}..., in \textit{English Historical Review}, LXVII (January, 1952), p. 87.
\textit{Ibid.}, p. 89.
an immediate need for a revision of Robertson's *Materials* because of the lack of attempts at internal criticism of the *Lives*, and also because of the inaccurate and imprecise dating of many of the letters. Knowles also complained of the chaotic state of J.A. Giles' edition of the letters of Gilbert Foliot and John of Salisbury, saying, "Before any attempt could be made at a wholesale rearrangement of the Becket materials, critical editions of Foliot and John of Salisbury are an absolute necessity."

Knowles also wrote a short character study of Becket in which he tried to analyze the personality and motives of the archbishop. Knowles concluded that "Thomas was admired, listened to, and followed, but not loved...." He could not condone Becket's self-righteous and often tactless behavior, but he never disputed the sincerity of Becket's motives. Knowles believed that the precise object for which Becket had fought had gradually evolved in the course of the struggle with Henry.

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125 Ibid., p. 3. Since Knowles' work in 1951, the letters and charters of both Foliot and John of Salisbury have been re-edited. Cf. C.N.L. Brooke and others, eds., *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, I (London: T. Nelson, 1955); Adrian Morey and C.N.L. Brooke, eds., *The Letters and Charters of Gilbert Foliot* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967). This latter work was first planned under the aegis of Z.N. Brooke.


127 Ibid., p. 105.
At the beginning, it had been the forensic rights of the Church and the clerical order; then it had become at Clarendon the freedom of the English Church as part of the universal Church in its relations with Rome; finally, it had broadened into a defense of the rights of God as against Caesar.\textsuperscript{128}

The research of David Knowles has had a profound effect on the scholarship on the Becket controversy in the twentieth century. His study of the roles which the individual bishops played in the controversy has led to further research in this area by men such as H. Mayr-Harting, Adrian Morey, and C.N.L. Brooke. His request for a new edition of the letters and charters of John of Salisbury and Gilbert Foliot has been answered. Finally, his attempt to describe the personality of Becket has led, in my opinion, to a further knowledge of the mind and motives of the archbishop.

Austin Lane Poole included a study of the Becket controversy in his work \textit{From Domesday Book to Magna Carta} in 1955, and his judgment on Becket was singularly unfavorable. Poole dismissed the work of the contemporary biographers as mere "...panegyrics in an uncritical spirit...",\textsuperscript{129} viewed Becket as "...a vain, obstinate, ambitious man who always sought to keep himself in the public eye...",\textsuperscript{130} and sided with Henry on the legal issues of the Constitutions of Clarendon.\textsuperscript{131} Poole's work did not seem to take

\textsuperscript{128}Ibid., p. 121.
\textsuperscript{130}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{131}Ibid., pp. 206-207.
into account the views of recent historians of the controversy. Poole's review of Knowles' *Episcopal Colleagues* stated that the book was "...the greatest contribution, within its prescribed limits, that has been made for many years to this very complex subject...", but in his own work Poole did not follow the views of Knowles. C.N.L. Brooke criticized Poole's work for "...discarding too lightly the evidence of the twelve biographers."  

In addition to his unfavorable appraisal of Becket, Poole expressed what was until 1955 the common opinion regarding the growth of Church power in England during the reign of Stephen. He stated that, during the nineteen-year period preceding Henry's reign, the pretensions of the Church "...had advanced beyond all bounds." One of the main purposes of Avrom Saltman's biography of Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury, also written in 1955, was to refute this claim. In his study of Theobald, who had previously been called "...one of the three ciphers between Anselm and Becket...", Saltman showed that the growth of the Church's power was not nearly so great, nor the kingship so weak under Stephen, as had previously

134 Poole, p. 200.  
been thought. Although Saltman's edition of the charters of
Theobald\textsuperscript{137} threw some light on the archiepiscopal duties during
Theobald's pontificate, Saltman made little effort to relate them
to Becket's duties when he was a member of Theobald's household.
However, since this was not Saltman's intention in his work, he
cannot be criticised on these grounds. Reviewers of Saltman's
work varied in their assessment of its value. Although both
Harold E. Aikins\textsuperscript{138} and Frank Barlow\textsuperscript{139} agreed that the section
on the edition of Theobald's charters was helpful and illuminating,
they disagreed on the value of Saltman's biography of Theobald.
While Aikins found "...little to criticize in this meticulously
written work...",\textsuperscript{140} Barlow believed that "The historical section
does not make quite the impact which was expected. Indeed, there
is small direct contribution in this study to a general appreciation
of the period.\textsuperscript{141}

Maitland's interpretation of the Constitutions of Clarendon had
been accepted with little question by Becket scholars for seventy

\textsuperscript{136} Cf. Saltman, pp. 11-177 for a full exposition of this view.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., pp. 181-549.
\textsuperscript{138} In a review by Harold E. Aikins of Saltman, Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, in Speculum, XXXIX (Oct., 1959), pp. 674-77.
\textsuperscript{139} In a review by Frank Barlow of Saltman, Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, in English Historical Review, LXXII (April, 1957), pp. 306-307.
\textsuperscript{140} Aikins, in Speculum, p. 677.
\textsuperscript{141} Barlow, in English Historical Review, p. 306.
years, but the first major attempt to refute his thesis came with Charles Duggan in 1962.\textsuperscript{142} Duggan believed that Becket's opposition to the "criminous clerks" clause was canonically justifiable, and he stated that

...the domination of Maitland's brilliant but misconceived thesis has hindered a more just evaluation: Maitland himself, Genestal, Lillie, Poole, Cheney, Knowles, even the sympathetic Foreville, all these merely typify the many distinguished scholars who argue that in one respect or other Becket's case was weaker in canon law than the king's...\textsuperscript{143}

Arguing that Becket was fully acquainted with Gratian's Decretum and other statements of canon law which had protected criminous clerks and forbade any "double punishment," Duggan concluded that "...Becket's arguments were...a faithful index of the true purpose of the canons and of the broad stream of canonical tradition concerning them..."\textsuperscript{144} Although Duggan reaffirmed this thesis in a later article,\textsuperscript{145} later scholars have continued to follow Maitland's interpretation\textsuperscript{146} with one exception.\textsuperscript{147} In his most

\textsuperscript{143} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{144} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{145} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 3.
recent work in 1965, Duggan also concurred with Mary Cheney's refutation of Z.N. Brooke, saying, "Brooke's thesis is no longer tenable, because of his misconception of the evidence of the decretales."  

Henry II was recently the subject of two full-length biographies written by John T. Appleby in 1962 and Richard Barber in 1964. Both works devoted relatively little space to the Becket controversy, and their accounts of the struggle were moderate and not very detailed. Appleby relied most heavily on the account of William FitzStephen, whom he called "...one of the most impartial and readable biographers of Thomas of Canterbury." Barber cited no specific sources in his section on Becket, and neither work significantly added to the knowledge of the struggle between Becket and Henry.

H. Mayr-Harting's article in 1963 dealing with Hilary of Chichester was an attempt to elaborate on a bishop who had been described by Knowles as a consistent supporter of Henry throughout the conflict. Mayr-Harting agreed that Hilary was a royal supporter, but he did not attribute this to cowardliness or lack of

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148 Charles Duggan, "From the Conquest to the Death of John," p. 92.
150 Appleby, p. 114.
151 H. Mayr-Harting, "Hilary, Bishop of Chichester (1147-1169) and Henry II," English Historical Review, LXXVIII (April, 1963), 209-224.
152 Cf. Knowles, Episcopal Colleagues..., p. 27.

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principles on Hilary's part.

He was certainly not lacking in courage, and his royalism was too active to be merely a question of submission when submission was prudent or unavoidable. To him...the royal government was a more potent reality than the advance of papal influence.  

This article is a prime example of the influence that Knowles' work has had on recent research on the Becket controversy.

The difficulties which future scholars of the Becket controversy will have to face was demonstrated in an article by C.R. Cheney in 1963, in which he proved by internal criticism that the document in which Becket "...refers to the calamities which his conduct has brought upon the Church of Canterbury during the seven years, and declares himself ready to expose his head and body to his persecutors in order to obtain its peace and security..." was a forgery by the monks of Christ Church some time after Becket's death. This document was long used by scholars to prove Becket's sincere devotion to the welfare of his see, and it will have to be disregarded in any future work. No doubt there are other forgeries in the Becket correspondence, and it is hoped that the work of Mrs. Charles Duggan will help to discover them.

It is thought by many that additional historical work on the

153 Mayr-Harting, p. 224.
155 Ibid., p. 21.
Becket controversy might serve to eliminate personal prejudice and produce a clear understanding of the conflict, but the recent work by Nesta Pain in 1966 has proved this theory partially wrong. Her study, called The King and Becket, is perhaps the most strongly biased book written on the controversy in the twentieth century in my opinion. Pain is totally prejudiced in favor of Henry, and she sees Becket as an ambitious, worldly prelate whose greed for money prevented a final reconciliation with Henry during his six-year exile. 156 Either Pain was not acquainted with the work of Knowles, or she chose to ignore his arguments. For example, she accepts Multiplicem nobis as "...a clear and a well-constructed argument of the case against Becket...\" 157 while for Knowles "...it is Foliot whom Multiplicem damages incomparably more than Thomas....\" 158 Gilbert Foliot seems to be the hero of Pain's work, and Becket for her was a man who "...died for a cause which few people today would find admirable.\" 159 To date, no reviews of Pain's work have appeared in historical journals, and the absence of such reviews might indicate that her views have been dismissed as untenable.

If Pain's work was the latest evidence of historical scholarship on the Becket controversy, it would indeed seem like a dismal

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Ibid., p. 190.
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Pain, p. 244.
and unprofitable end to a period in which so much competent research has been done on the Becket controversy. But more recent work has resulted in a more fruitful completion of previous work done on the controversy.

The research of Adrian Morey and C.N.L. Brooke has resulted in a preliminary understanding of the man who, except for Thomas Becket, is perhaps the least understood figure of the entire controversy—Gilbert Foliot. Their critical edition of his many letters and charters, in which a more accurate dating analysis was given than in the original work by J.A. Giles, will provide an excellent basis for a full-length biography of Gilbert Foliot. The need for such a biography seems to be, in my opinion, the most useful undertaking which could be pursued at the present time, for only by thoroughly understanding all the characters in the conflict can we hope to gain any further insights into Thomas Becket. Donald Nicholl, in a review of Morey and Brooke's book, summed up the current need for a biography of Foliot when he stated that "...there is enough evidence embedded in this rigorous book to make any careful reader aware that Professor Knowles' judgment on Foliot is not necessarily the last one." Fred A. Cazell stressed this last statement more emphatically in his

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161 In a review by Donald Nicholl of Morey and Brooke, Gilbert Foliot and His Letters, in the Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XVII (1967), p. 95.
review when he said,

Their analysis of the Becket controversy differs significantly from that given by Professor Knowles in the Episcopal Colleagues of Archbishop Thomas Becket. Foliot's quarrel with Becket appears here less a matter of difference in objectives and more a matter of means. Foliot was just as papalist as Becket, and when the chips were down he obeyed the pope rather than the king. The conclusions of the present authors as to Gilbert's character are much more charitable and complex, much less dramatic and certain, than were those of Knowles.  

The most recent effort at a complete biography of Becket, and in many ways the most successful in the twentieth century, was made in 1967 by Richard Winston. Although he did not have the benefit of using the fruits of the research by Morey and Brooke on Gilbert Foliot, Winston made excellent use of the work by Knowles, Foreville, Duggan, and C.R. Cheney. He adopted a judicious, but not a wholly skeptical, attitude toward Becket's contemporary biographers. He stressed the legal issues in the conflict, and seemed to agree with Charles Duggan that Becket had a good case from the point of view of canon law. Throughout the book he laid particular stress on the effect that Alexander III's troubles with Frederick Barbarossa had on his relations with both Becket and Henry. On the whole, Winston seemed to agree with Duggan's belief that "...it is possible in retrospect to sympathize either with the one or the other, while fully accepting and understanding the views of both."  

162 In a review by Fred A. Cazell of Morey and Brooke, Gilbert Foliot and His Letters, in Speculum, XLII (April, 1967), p. 399.  
163 Duggan, "From the Conquest to the Death of John," p. 88.
Most of the issues of the Becket controversy can be viewed somewhat dispassionately by historians, and a judgment can be made based mainly on historical fact. An important issue in the controversy which has divided twentieth-century scholarly opinion, and which, more than any other issue, seems to be based mainly on subjective judgment is the question of the personality and motives of both Becket and Henry. This issue has not been dealt with by all Becket scholars, and historians such as F.W. Maitland, C.R. Cheney, Mary Cheney, E.A. Abbott, and Louis Halphen have been more concerned with legal and historiographical questions rather than with the personal aspects of the controversy. But those who have dealt with the issue of the personality and motives of Becket and Henry have, in my opinion, displayed a more intense variation than those who have been involved in any other aspect of the controversy.

Because the question of the character and motives of Becket and Henry involve the personal feelings and judgments of the individual scholars of the Becket controversy more than any other issue, I do not believe that any overall trend or development can be discovered in the twentieth century. Other issues in the conflict, such as that of the interpretation of article three of the Constitutions of Clarendon or the effect of Becket's murder on papal authority in England, have been the subjects of continuous debate among twentieth-century scholars. On these issues, conclusions that have been reached by men such as F.W. Maitland and Z.N. Brooke have been taken up and either accepted or rejected with solid historical criteria as a basis. Judging from the
diversity of opinion in the twentieth century, the mind and motives of Becket and Henry seem to be a subject that is much harder to define. Three aspects of this issue remain to be considered: the personality and motives of Thomas Becket, the personality and motives of Henry II, and the question of Becket's apparent transformation upon becoming Archbishop of Canterbury.

Various assessments have been made of the character of Thomas Becket. Writers who have taken an unfavorable view of Becket include L.F. Salzman, John Harvey, A.L. Poole, and Nesta Pain, and their efforts to penetrate his mind and motives have proved to be very interesting as well as controversial. This group views Becket as a self-righteous, ambitious, power-mad individual who had little regard for the art of diplomacy, and whose thirst for glory made him disregard the advice of others. L.F. Salzman stressed Becket's ambitious nature when he said that "Becket himself must have seen in his promotion as Archbishop of Canterbury the chance of satisfying his ambition..."  

164 John Harvey criticized Becket's worldly and obstinate character when he said,

"...Henry was never known to choose an unworthy friend, but Becket's worthiness is largely a matter of opinion. Extraordinary mixture of well-to-do man-about-town, witty and extravagant, and self-willed, self-torturing, and it must be said, self-advertising churchman, Thomas Becket won for himself an outstanding place in history by his genius for manoeuvring other parties into the wrong."  

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164 Salzman, p. 50.
In addition to Becket's ambitious and worldly nature, there is a tendency among anti-Becket authors to characterize him as an actor with no element of sincerity. A.L. Poole followed this trend when he described Becket as "...a great actor superbly living the parts he was called upon to play." Poole, p. 198. Nesta Pain seemed to agree with Poole's analysis when she contended that Becket "...was never able to help seeing himself in the center of the stage, playing the star part and playing it admirably." Pain, p. 112. In these character analyses of Poole and Pain, the authors tend to ascertain an artificial and insincere element in Becket's character. An emphasis on his ungovernable spirit and insatiable ambition has led these authors to charge him with being the aggressor in the conflict.

In contrast to these unfavorable assessments of Becket, the pro-Becket group of historians and writers have stressed his strength of character, his virtue, and his basic sincerity. Sidney Dark, Robert Speaight, Z.N. Brooke, Raymonde Foreville, and Richard Winston are among those who have given a moderate or favorable assessment of Becket. The trend among scholars who are pro-Becket has seemed to be toward a less dogmatic and apologetic view of his character, and recent writers such as Winston, while being in general sympathetic with his cause, have stressed the flaws as well as the virtues in Becket's character. As far as the theory of Becket being a mere actor is concerned, authors

166 Poole, p. 198.
167 Pain, p. 112.
such as Robert Speaight, Z.N. Brooke, and Richard Winston do not deny that Becket fulfilled many different roles in his life, but they see no hypocrisy in these changes. As Z.N. Brooke has stated,

...he was one of those men who, exalting to the full the role they have to play, picture themselves as the perfect representative of their office, visualising a type and making themselves the living representation of it; actors playing a part, but unconscious actors.168

Richard Winston believed that Becket had adopted Anselm as a model for his life, and "...he tried to become what his great predecessor Anselm had been: a true priest and a doctor of the Church."169 Winston's statement might in part explain why Becket appeared to be a man fulfilling a role, since he was attempting to emulate one of the great names in the English Church. Indeed, Becket's career, with his uncompromising adherence to the ideals of the Church and his conflict with royal authority resulting in his subsequent exile, parallels the career of Anselm to some extent.

In my opinion, the recent attempt by David Knowles170 to describe the personality of Becket has been the most worthwhile effort to penetrate the mind and motives of the archbishop. In his work, Knowles tried to maintain a neutral attitude toward Becket. Although it seems that Knowles could find little to admire in

Becket's personality,171 saying that in the struggle Becket "...showed himself every whit as relentless as Henry...,"172 Knowles nevertheless believed that Becket was a basically sincere, selfless person. In addition, Knowles disputed the notion of Becket's inordinate desire for glory, arguing that "...to say, with some historians, that desire for the glory of martyrdom made him fatalistic or reckless, is to go beyond the evidence and the bounds of human reason."173

The personality and motives of Henry have also been the subject of a significant difference of opinion among Becket scholars, although these scholars seem to have concentrated less on Henry and his part in the struggle than should in fact be the case. Those favorable to Henry describe him as an energetic, capable, orderly individual whose main objective was the systematisation of government and the extension of royal power. They stress his love for Becket both as a friend and an administrator, and emphasize his subsequent disillusionment with Becket's opposition to his policies. There is one point on which Henry's conduct has been condemned by nearly all Becket scholars, and this involves his conduct at the council of Northampton, in which he accused Becket of mishandling funds while he was chancellor. A.L. Poole, who normally sided with Henry on most of the issues of the controversy, stated that "Henry's conduct at the council of Northampton in October was both outrageous and undignified."174

171 See above, p. 50.
172 Knowles, Historian and Character, p. 118.
173 Ibid., p. 122.
174 Poole, p. 207.
According to writers who favor Henry, Becket was the aggressor in the struggle, and Henry appears in their view as a passive figure who was wronged by Becket's actions.

On the other hand, writers less disposed toward Henry have characterized him as a despot with a childish fascination with power. According to this view, Henry could tolerate no opposition to his absolute rule, and Becket's defense of Church rights after his consecration as archbishop of Canterbury caused the ultimate break. Jean Anouilh, in his play on Becket, portrayed Henry as an individual who was obsessed with the desire for power.\textsuperscript{175}

Henry's motives for promoting Becket to the post of archbishop are seen by writers who are critical of Henry as being a desire to both discipline and control the church structure in England. Winston called Becket's election "...a royal appointment..."\textsuperscript{176} and Sidney Dark maintained that "When Theobald died, Henry II determined that the next Archbishop should be the instrument of the king's will."\textsuperscript{177} These authors condemn Henry for attempting to use Becket to control the Church.

Perhaps one of the most perplexing and least understood issues of the struggle between Becket and Henry is the transformation of Becket after his election as archbishop of Canterbury, "...an

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[175]{Cf. Anouilh, \textit{Becket, or The Honor of God}.}
\footnotetext[176]{Winston, pp. 116-17.}
\footnotetext[177]{Dark, p. 69.}
\end{footnotes}
external transformation so fundamental and so hasty that many have attributed it to a change of temperament and of character."\(^{178}\)

Those writers who question Becket's sincerity in his capacity as archbishop have attributed his transformation to a quest for absolute domination over Henry. To substantiate this claim, they emphasize the luxurious life which Becket lived as chancellor, and contend that his attempted sanctity was inconsistent with his past luxury. Nesta Pain stated that

He may have felt that he had received a call from God...but the probabilities are against it. He may have felt a sudden call to become a new kind of man, but there is little in his life before or afterwards to make it probable.\(^{179}\)

John Appleby was even more explicit and skeptical of Becket's sincere change, and he contended that "There is no evidence that Thomas underwent an emotional conversion such as has often led men to give up the pleasures of the world and turn to a religious life."\(^{180}\)

Scholars who defend Becket's sincere transformation have based their conclusion on the testimony of Herbert of Bosham, William FitzStephen, and Roger of Pontigny,\(^{181}\) all of whom stressed Becket's sincerity. Robert Speaight and Sidney Dark are two writers

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\(^{178}\) Foreville and Rousset de Pina, p. 93: "...une transformation extérieure si radicale et si prompte qu'ils l'attribuent à un changement d'humeur et de caractère."

\(^{179}\) Pain, pp. 78-79.

\(^{180}\) Appleby, pp. 74-75.

\(^{181}\) Cf. Douglas, pp. 702-775.
who have taken a favorable view of Becket's transformation, but
the most succinct statement of the issue has been given by Richard
Winston. He maintained that

...the testimony is so unanimous, and so uncon-
tradicted by Thomas' enemies, that we must accept
it as in the main true: from the moment that
Thomas became Archbishop of Canterbury, his
thinking and habits underwent a great change.
There was nothing hypocritical about it.182

As can be seen from the various viewpoints that have been ex-
pressed regarding the personalities of Becket and Henry, there
is no single conclusive statement on this issue that can be ac-
cepted by all. This does not mean that any chance for a defini-
tive statement on this issue is beyond hope, for the prospective
edition of the Becket correspondence by Mrs. Charles Duggan might
enable future historians to gain new insights into this problem.

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Winston, p. 150.
PART III
CONCLUSION

As can be seen from the preceding study, the efforts to clarify many of the issues of the Becket controversy have occupied the research of some of the most prominent scholars of the twentieth century. Although I consider Z.N. Brooke, Raymonde Foreville, David Knowles, C.R. Cheney, and Adrian Morey to be the scholars who have made the most lasting and significant efforts to advance the understanding of the Becket controversy, there have been many other scholars whose attempts to clarify the issues have been worthwhile, even if they have not been as significant as the authors just mentioned.

Before a study of this kind can be concluded, several questions must be answered. First, are there any discernable overall trends in the evolution of Becket scholarship in the twentieth century? Secondly, what work remains to be done before any definitive study can be made of the Becket controversy?

I believe that the twentieth century has witnessed several significant trends in the evolution of scholarship on Becket. First of all, scholars of this century have turned increasingly to internal criticism of the primary sources. The beginning of the century saw significant attempts made by E.A. Abbott and Louis Halphen to assess the historical veracity of Becket's biographers, and their research proved to be of immense value to later scholars. The effort to provide critical editions of the charters and acta

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of many of the principals in the controversy in order to learn more about them and, in many cases secondarily, to discover their influence in the Becket controversy, has led scholars to produce the fairly complete works of Theobald, John of Salisbury, Gilbert Foliot, and Bartholomew of Exeter. Finally, the last twenty-five years have witnessed attempts at internal criticism of the many letters in the conflict. The dispute over the authorship of Multiplicem nobis and more recently, the work of C.R. Cheney on Magna Carta Beati Thome, are indicative of this trend of internal criticism of the letters.

A second trend that can be noticed is the effort to view the conflict in its international aspects, with its consequences for papal authority in England. Z.N. Brooke was instrumental in bringing this aspect of the controversy to the attention of Becket scholars, and I believe that today the conflict is viewed in the broader terms of regnum versus sacerdotium, as can be seen in the recent work of Richard Winston.

A third significant advance in twentieth-century scholarship on the Becket controversy has been made in the area of the role of the English episcopate in the struggle. The research of Adrian Morey, H. Mayr-Harting, and, above all, David Knowles has been instrumental in providing a deeper understanding of the part which the English episcopate played in the conflict.

In addition, the legal aspects of the conflict have undergone a clear evolution in the twentieth century. Maitland's
interpretation of the Constitutions of Clarendon has recently been contested by Charles Duggan, and it remains to be seen which view will eventually prevail.

Despite all these advances, there is no single account of the controversy which can be accepted by all as being definitive, and much work remains to be done before such an undertaking can even be planned. First of all, I believe there is a great need for a biography of Gilbert Foliot, and this task is clearly plausible in view of the recent work by Morey and Brooke. A further study could also be made of the role of Roger of York in the controversy, and a biography is a clear possibility here also. In my opinion, the role of Pope Alexander III in the conflict has never been fully or adequately explained, and his position with Becket could be the subject of further study. Finally, there is a pressing need at the present time for a study of the views of church-state relations of both Becket and Henry II. Their views in this respect seem to have gradually developed in opposite directions, but no scholar has adequately explained this development.

Perhaps the greatest hope for the future study of the Becket controversy lies in the critical edition of the Becket correspondence which is currently being undertaken by Mrs. Charles Duggan. The results of her research might open up entirely new areas of investigation in the conflict. The many facets of the Becket controversy may never be adequately solved to the satisfaction of all, but as long as research continues, a solution is nearer to being reached.
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