The career of Aldhelm

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ABSTRACT

A re-examination of the evidence on which the life of Aldhelm can be reconstructed. Attention is focussed initially on Aldhelm's links with the royal family of Wessex, and the relationship between the West Saxon and Northumbrian royal houses is used to throw light on the period in Aldhelm's early life when he was fostered along with Aldfrith on Iona. The same relationship is reflected thereafter in Aldhelm's ties with Aldfrith as king of Northumbria, and Aldhelm's fosterage on Iona is reflected in aspects of his later literary activity. His period with Theodore and Hadrian (after 670) is illuminated by his familiarity with texts known to have been studied at Canterbury, and the length of Aldhelm's period of study there is extended by reconsideration of the date of his appointment as abbot of Malmesbury. Evidence also suggests that, while abbot, Aldhelm accompanied the West Saxon king Ceadwalla to Rome (688), and made a careful study of Latin inscriptions while there. An Appendix supplies a revised chronology of the composition of Aldhelm's Latin writings.

Aldhelm is rightly recognized as the first English man of letters, and one of the most influential, at least in the period before the Norman Conquest. But in spite of the fact that he left a very substantial corpus of Latin writings – both in prose and in metrical and rhythmical verse – very little is known of his life, above all because his voluminous writings contain hardly any autobiographical detail.[1] Later biographers of the saint therefore had very little information to work with. In his brief account of Aldhelm in the *Historia ecclesiastica*, Bede supplied the only two reliable dates in Aldhelm's life: namely that after the death of Haeddi, bishop of the West Saxons (which Bede places at the beginning of the reign of Osred, who succeeded his father Aldfrith as king of Northumbria in late 705 or early 706), the West Saxon see was divided, and Aldhelm became bishop of one part of it, over which he presided energetically until his death four years later.[2] The first attempt to compose a full-length Life of Aldhelm

[1] The standard (and irreplaceable) edition of Aldhelm's writings is *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. R. Ehwald, MGH Auct. antiq. 15 (Berlin, 1919). Most of these writings are accessible in English translation: M. Lapidge and M. Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works* (Cambridge, 1979); and M. Lapidge and J. Rosier, *Aldhelm: the Poetic Works* (Cambridge, 1985).

[2] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica* [hereafter *HE*], V. 18 (ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), p. 514).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0263675107000026 Published online by Cambridge University Press

was made four centuries later by Faricius (d. 1117),[3] an Italian from Arezzo who subsequently became abbot of Abingdon (in 1100) and physician to Henry I (he narrowly missed being elected archbishop of Canterbury in 1114), and whose *Vita S. Aldhelmi* was written during the years 1093 × 1099 when he was still cellarer at Malmesbury.[4] As an account of Aldhelm's life, Faricius's work is seriously defective, not least because he was unable to read such documents in Old English as were available to him at Malmesbury. Many of the defects of Faricius were rectified thirty years later by William of Malmesbury, who devoted book V of his *Gesta pontificum Anglorum* (*c.* 1125) to a Life of Aldhelm.[5] William made good use not only of Old English documents available at Malmesbury, but also of a number of Aldhelm's writings (notably *Epp.* ii–iii, ix–xiii) which he quoted *in extenso* and which have not otherwise been preserved. But William was also prone to unsubstantiated conjecture and to uncritical use of Malmesbury documents (not least the alleged foundation charter of Malmesbury). In sum, Bede's brief paragraph and the Lives by Faricius and William still leave huge gaps in our knowledge of Aldhelm's career. To some extent these gaps can be filled by recent gains in knowledge concerning (for example) the nature of studies at the Canterbury school of Theodore and Hadrian,[6] or in refined understanding of the literary debts revealed by Aldhelm's hexameter verse,[7] or by critical examination of the early charters from the Malmesbury archive,[8] to name only three relevant areas of research. In what follows I treat the following topics: Aldhelm's family links with the royal houses of Wessex and Northumbria; a possible period of fosterage and study at Iona; his (securely documented) period of study at Canterbury with the two Mediterranean masters, Theodore and Hadrian; the date of his appointment to the abbacy of Malmesbury; the date and circumstances of his one (securely documented) trip to Rome; and, finally, the brief period of his episcopacy at Sherborne.

[3] M. Winterbottom, 'An Edition of Faricius, *Vita S. Aldhelmi*', *Jnl of Med. Latin* 15 (2005), 93–147.

[4] The dating is established on the basis of new manuscript evidence by Michael Winterbottom, 'Faricius of Arezzo's Life of St Aldhelm', in *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, ed. K. O'Brien O'Keeffe and A. Orchard, 2 vols. (Toronto, 2005), I, 109–31, at p. 110.

[5] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta pontificum Anglorum*, I. *Text and Translation*, ed. M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 2007), pp. 498–663.

[6] M. Lapidge, 'The School of Theodore and Hadrian', *ASE* 15 (1986), 45–72 (repr. in M. Lapidge, *Anglo-Latin Literature, 600–899* (London, 1996), pp. 141–68); B. Bischoff and M. Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries from the Canterbury School of Theodore and Hadrian*, CSASE 10 (Cambridge, 1994); and *Archbishop Theodore: Commemorative Studies on his Life and Influence*, ed. M. Lapidge, CSASE 11 (Cambridge, 1995).

[7] A. Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, CSASE 8 (Cambridge, 1994).

[8] *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, ed. S. E. Kelly, AS Charters 11 (Oxford, 2005).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0263675107000026 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ALDHELM'S ROYAL CONNECTIONS

In his *Vita S. Aldhelmi*, Faricius tells us that Aldhelm was 'of royal stock, born from distinguished parents' (*regia autem stirpe descendit, clarissimis natus progenitoribus*).[9] He states that his source for this information was some 'very ancient documents in the English language' (*antiquissimis Anglice lingue scedulis*) which he apparently found at Malmesbury, but which he was unable to read on his own; he was therefore obliged to rely on an interpreter (*ex interprete legendo audiuimus*).[10] The anonymous interpreter was unfortunately not much help, and prompted Faricius to make a terrible hash of, for example, the relationship between Aldhelm and Kings Centwine and Ine, by stating – absurdly – that Centwine and Ine were brothers.[11] Some thirty years later William of Malmesbury, who had access to the same document, sorted out the hash and put the record straight by demonstrating that Centwine was not, and could not be, the brother of King Ine, but merely a blood-relation; the crucial point, however, is William's statement, made in passing, that King Centwine was Aldhelm's father: 'qui enim legit manualem librum regis Elfredi, repperiet Kenten, beati Aldhelmi patrem, non fuisse regis Inae germanum' ('whoever reads the *Handboc* of King Alfred will find that Centwine, the father of St Aldhelm, was not the brother of King Ine').[12] The crucial fact here is not Aldhelm's relationship with King Ine, but that he was the son of *Kenten*. The form *Kenten* is not as such Anglo-Saxon (the second element, *-en*, is not Old English), and the simplest explanation is that it is a corrupt spelling of the OE name *Centwine*. Now Centwine is not a common name,[13] and the Centwine in question is most plausibly to be identified with Centwine, king of Wessex (676–85). That is to say, William of Malmesbury has revealed Aldhelm's precise link to the West Saxon royal dynasty, without, it seems, fully realizing the importance of what he recorded.[14] Furthermore, William specified that his source for this information – the ancient document which Faricius had been unable to read – was none other than King Alfred's (lost) *Handboc*, a work the existence of which we know independently from Asser's *Life of King Alfred*.[15]

[9] *Vita S. Aldhelmi*, c. 1. 1: ed. Winterbottom, 'An Edition of Faricius', p. 99.

[10] *Ibid.* (c. 1. 2). [11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum* V. 188 (ed. Winterbottom, p. 502).

[13] See W. G. Searle, *Onomasticon Anglo-Saxonicum* (Cambridge, 1897), p. 128, who lists, in addition to King Centwine, two eleventh-century examples: a moneyer in the time of King Harold, and a name embedded in a local topographical feature (*Kentwines treow*) in the foundation charter of Eynsham Abbey, dated 1005 (S 911).

[14] That is to say, the corrupt spelling *Kenten* seems to have prevented him from making a connection with *Kentuuinus rex Westsaxonum* whom he discusses at a subsequent point of his narrative: *Gesta pontificum Anglorum* V. 205 and 208–9 (ed. Winterbottom, pp. 530–4).

[15] *Vita Alfredi*, cc. 88–9 (ed. W. H. Stevenson, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, with addenda by D. Whitelock (Oxford, 1959), pp. 73–5); trans. S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's*

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We know from both Asser and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that Alfred was proud of his royal descent and hence was studiously interested in the genealogy and history of previous West Saxon kings.[16] He was also studiously interested in Aldhelm, whom he regarded as England's finest vernacular poet.[17] Accordingly, Alfred's statement in his lost *Handboc*, that Aldhelm was the son of Centwine, must be taken on the highest authority. The hypothesis that this Centwine was the king of Wessex (676–85) allows a radical reinterpretation of Aldhelm's career.

We unfortunately do not know the name of Aldhelm's mother; but Stephen of Ripon reports[18] that after King Ecgfrith of Northumbria (670–85) had expelled Bishop Wilfrid from his kingdom, in 678,[19] Wilfrid was refused shelter in Wessex, because the sister of Ecgfrith's then queen (Eormenburg),[20] was married to King Centwine. If this unnamed queen was Aldhelm's mother, we would gain an interesting perspective on Aldhelm's relationship with Ecgfrith's half-brother and successor, King Aldfrith (686–705), on whom more below, as well as on Aldhelm's public support of Bishop Wilfrid's clergy during the period of their exile.[21]

Life of King Alfred and other Contemporary Sources (Harmondsworth, 1983), pp. 99–100, with discussion at p. 268 (n. 208); see also D. Whitelock, 'William of Malmesbury on the Works of King Alfred', *Medieval Literature and Civilization: Studies in Memory of G. N. Garmonsway*, ed. D. A. Pearsall and R. A. Waldron (London, 1968), pp. 78–93, at pp. 90–1.

[16] The insertion of genealogies of the West Saxon kings in Asser's *Vita Alfredi*, c. 1 (ed. Stevenson, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, pp. 1–4) and in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, s.a. 855 ADE, is evidently a reflex of the king's personal interest.

[17] As was clear from Alfred's (lost) *Handboc*, as reported by William of Malmesbury, *Gesta pontificum* V. 190 (ed. Winterbottom, p. 506): 'natiuae quoque linguae non negligebat carmina; adeo ut, teste libro Elfredi, de quo superius dixi, nulla umquam aetate par ei fuerit quisquam' ('nor did he neglect the composition of poetry in his native language, to such an extent that, according to the witness of the book of Alfred [*scil.* the *Handboc*] which I mentioned earlier, there was no-one who was his equal in any age').

[18] *Vita S. Wilfridi*, c. 40 (ed. B. Colgrave, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge, 1927), p. 80).

[19] After his expulsion from Northumbria, Wilfrid travelled to Rome to appeal for papal support; while in Rome he happened to participate in an important synod (679). He then returned to England with papal endorsement for his reinstatement, but Ecgfrith refused to accept it, and Wilfrid was forced to go back into exile, whence he turned first, unsuccessfully, to Centwine, and subsequently to Ceadwalla, then sub-king, later to become king, of Wessex. Wilfrid was only finally restored to (much diminished) episcopal authority following the death of Ecgfrith in 685, and through the mediation of Archbishop Theodore.

[20] I say 'then queen', because Ecgfrith had previously been married to Æthelthryth, who, on the dissolution of their marriage, became abbess of Ely: Bede, *HE* IV.17 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 390–2).

[21] As expressed in *Ep.* xii (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, pp. 500–2; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, pp. 168–70).

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A second important fact derives from Aldhelm's third *carmen ecclesiasticum*, a *titulus* composed for an unidentified church built somewhere in Wessex by *Bugga*, whom Aldhelm calls 'the noble daughter of King Centwine'.[22] Now *Bugga* is evidently a pet or hypocoristic name, presumably derived from a woman's name having the final theme *-burg*.[23] It is therefore significant that in the salutation of his prose *De uirginitate* Aldhelm addresses a number of noble ladies in Hildelith's community at Barking, among whom is one 'Osburg, related very closely (*conglutinata*) to me by family bonds of kinship'.[24] The intimacy of the relationship, indicated by the rare verb *conglutino*, may be best understood as meaning that Osburg was Aldhelm's sister. And if this Osburg is identical to King Centwine's daughter Bugga (the pet name by which she was known to her family), she was also – on the hypothesis being advanced here – Aldhelm's sister. If so, the family tree of West Saxon kings needs to be redrawn (I have accordingly incorporated Aldhelm and Osburg into the family tree given in fig. 1).

In his *titulus* on Osburg's church, after mentioning that Centwine relinquished the throne in order to enter a monastery,[25] Aldhelm goes on briefly to describe the achievements of Centwine's two royal successors, Ceadwalla (685–8) and Ine (688–726).[26] The poem thus throws helpful light on the West Saxon dynasty during the late seventh century.[27] What was Aldhelm's place in

[22] Aldhelm, *Carmina ecclesiastica* III. 1–2: 'Hoc templum Bugge pulchro molimine structum / nobilis erexit Centuuini filia regis' (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi Opera*, p. 14). The importance of Aldhelm's poem for understanding the career of Centwine was first emphasized by H. M. Porter, 'Centwine', *Somerset & Dorset Notes & Queries* 29 (1968), 40–2.

[23] For OE hypocoristics, see C. Clark, 'Onomastics', *The Cambridge History of the English Language, Volume I: the Beginnings to 1066*, ed. R. M. Hogg (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 452–89, at pp. 459–60 (with further bibliography).

[24] Aldhelm, prose *De uirginitate*, praef.: '. . . Osburgae, contribulibus necessitudinum nexibus conglutinatae' (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, p. 229).

[25] It would be more accurate at this period to speak in terms of a 'minster' rather than a 'monastery', as John Blair has recently demonstrated: *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005); see, in particular, his definition of 'minster' (a reflex of OE *mynster*) on p. 3, and his discussion of the late-seventh-century Anglo-Saxon institution in general on pp. 73–8.

[26] Aldhelm, *Carmina ecclesiastica* III. 17–32 (Ceadwalla), 33–7 (Ine) (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, pp. 14–16). On the abdication of King Centwine, described uniquely in this poem, see below, n. 32.

[27] On the early West Saxon dynasty, see B. Yorke, *Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1990), pp. 128–56; *eadem*, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995), pp. 79–84; and D. P. Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, rev. ed. (London, 2000), pp. 38–49. For the genealogical relationships of the early West Saxon kings, and the place of Aldhelm and his sister Osburg in this genealogy, see fig. 1 (which is a modified version of the genealogical table drawn up by Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 81). For the difficulties inherent in constructing such a table, and the problems which infest the identities of early West Saxon kings, see esp. Kirby, *ibid.*, pp. 40–3.

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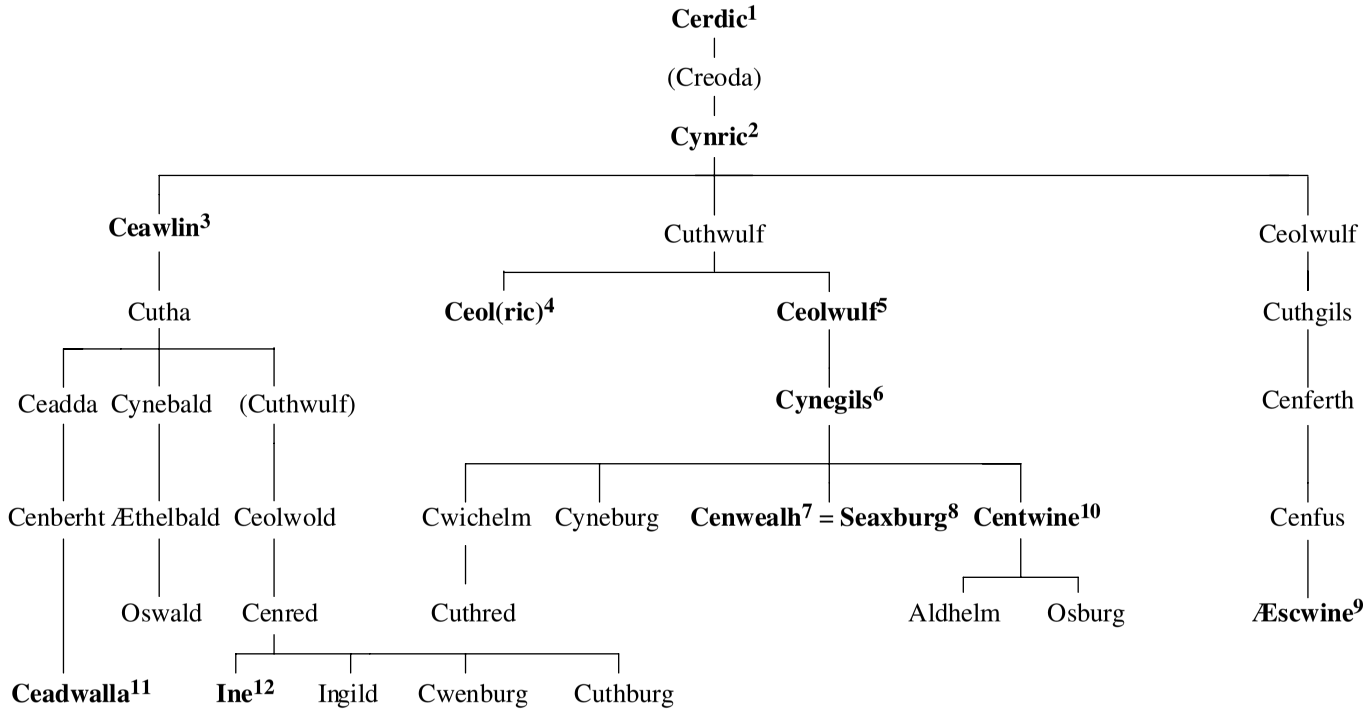


Fig. 1. The West Saxon royal house (rulers are highlighted in bold; the sequence of their reigns is shown by superscript numerals)

this dynasty, and what can his relationship to his father Centwine tell us about West Saxon politics? Centwine was the third son of the great West Saxon king Cynegils (611–42), who was baptized by the Italian missionary Birinus in 635.[28] Cynegils apparently had three sons: (1) Cwichelm (who seems to have ruled jointly with Cynegils during the latter years of the old king's reign, but who predeceased his father in 636);[29] (2) Cenwealh, who succeeded his father, who *inter alia* built the original Old Minster at Winchester, and who married one Seaxburg, but apparently produced no male heir; and (3) Centwine. (Cynegils may also have had a daughter named Cyneburg: see below.) Cenwealh became king after the death of Cynegils in 642 and, like him, ruled for thirty years until his own death in 672.[30] Because he had no male heir, the West Saxon succession was thrown into temporary confusion: in the first instance, his widow Seaxburg assumed the throne herself and held it successfully for a year (until her death in 673 or 674).[31] Seaxburg was followed by one Æscwine, the scion of a collateral line descended from the grandfather of Cynegils (see fig. 1); but when Æscwine himself died in 676, the throne passed back to the direct line of King Cynegils, to Cenwealh's brother Centwine, who then ruled for nine years or so (676–85) until he abdicated and entered a monastery.[32] (The sources do

[28] Bede, *HE* III. 7 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 232); and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* [hereafter *ASC*] s.a. 635: 'King Cynegils was baptized in Dorchester' (trans. D. Whitelock, with D. C. Douglas and S. I. Tucker, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1961), p. 18).

[29] According to *ASC*, Cwichelm was baptized at Dorchester, like Cynegils before him (trans. Whitelock, p. 18). From Bede and the *ASC* we know that it was Cwichelm who sent the assassin Eomer to kill King Edwin: Bede, *HE* II. 9 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 164); *ASC* 626E (trans. Whitelock, p. 17). In concert with his father, Cwichelm fought against Penda of Mercia at Cirencester (*ASC* s.a. 628; trans. Whitelock, p. 17). He had a son named Cuthred (see fig. 1); but Cuthred's dynastic ambitions (if any) were bought off by Cenwealh (*ASC* s.a. 648: see following note), and he died in 661.

[30] On Cenwealh, see Bede, *HE* III. 7 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 232–4), and a succession of entries in *ASC*. Note in particular the entries s.a. 641: 'Cenwealh succeeded to the kingdom of the West Saxons and held it for 31 years' (trans. Whitelock, p. 19), that is, until 672. His reign was not uneventful: he was driven out of Wessex by King Penda in 645, and spent three years in exile in East Anglia; he was baptized there in 646; he gave his kinsman Cuthred (the son of Cwichelm) the vast sum of 3,000 hides, presumably in order to buy off any possible dynastic ambitions (trans. Whitelock, p. 19). In 648 the Old Minster at Winchester, which Cenwealh had built, was dedicated. In 652 Cenwealh fought (against whom? presumably the British) at Bradford on Avon; in 658 he fought the British at Penselwood, Somerset, and again, at Posbury, Devon, in 661. On the problems with some of these dates, see Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, pp. 39 and 42–3.

[31] *ASC* s.a. 672: 'in this year Cenwealh died, and his queen Seaxburg reigned one year after him' (trans. Whitelock, p. 22).

[32] The abdication of Centwine is not mentioned in the *ASC* but is known from Aldhelm's *carmen ecclesiasticum* III. 4–5 and 8–9 (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi Opera*, pp. 14–15). Note that Centwine endowed the unnamed monastery with many estates (*plurima rura*), and that Christians (*Christicolae*) kept monastic vows (*monastica iura*) there.

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not report which monastery it was, but many stray pieces of evidence fall into place if Malmesbury is the monastery in question: see below.) The implication is that, by the time that Centwine became king in 676, he was no longer a young man, having lived through the thirty years of his brother Cenwealh's reign. He had presumably sired Aldhelm and Osburg long before he became king, or before his accession to the throne seemed even a remote possibility.[33]

ALDHELM AND IONA

Aldhelm, in short, was a royal prince of Wessex. We may now turn to the upbringing of this gifted prince. Although the possibility has never previously been raised, various evidence combines to suggest that Aldhelm spent some time during his youth at Iona, probably during the 660s. The evidence derives both from what can be known of the relationship between Adomnán, ninth abbot of Iona (abbot from 679 to 704), and Aldfrith, king of Northumbria (686–705), and how the career of Aldhelm relates to that of Aldfrith. As we have seen, Aldhelm was the son of Centwine, king of Wessex (676–85): a royal prince, and no doubt a wealthy one. At this time it was the Anglo-Saxon custom to foster royal children at the courts of friendly kings.[34] What is important to stress is that there were always close relationships between the West Saxon kingdom and Northumbria. The Northumbrian king Oswald (634–42), for example, had stood as sponsor in baptism to Aldhelm's grandfather Cynegils when the latter was baptized by Birinus in 635. Bede, in his account of the baptism of Cynegils, goes on to say that Oswald subsequently married the daughter of Cynegils.[35] Bede does not name her; but a twelfth-century historian (Reginald of Durham) gives her name as Cyneburg.[36] Whatever her name, the lady was Aldhelm's aunt (see fig. 1). Furthermore, as we have seen, Stephen of Ripon reports that, after the Northumbrian king Ecgfrith (670–85) had expelled Bishop Wilfrid from his kingdom in 678, Wilfrid was refused shelter in Wessex, because the sister of Ecgfrith's then queen was married to King Centwine, Aldhelm's father. If this unnamed (Northumbrian?) queen was Aldhelm's mother, we would gain a new per-

[33] If Centwine was born when Cynegils was still young, say 610×620, he could have sired Aldhelm and Osburg 640×650; he will then have been about 50 or 60 when he became king, and was perhaps in his seventies when he retired to a monastery to die, in the period 682×685.

[34] For the fosterage of West Saxon princes, see F. Roeder, *Über die Erziehung der vornehmen angelsächsischen Jugend in fremden Häusern* (Halle, 1910), esp. pp. 10–16 and 19–22; for the practice in general, see (briefly), D. Whitelock, *The Beginnings of English Society* (Harmondsworth, 1974), p. 94.

[35] *HE* III. 7 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 232).

[36] Reginald of Durham, *Libellus in honorem S. Oswaldi regis*, in *Symeonis monachi opera omnia*, ed. T. Arnold, 2 vols., RS (London, 1882–5), I, 349: 'factum est ut Kyneburgam sponsam suam, regis Kynegulsi filiam . . . ab unius thori communione seiungeret [*scil.* Oswald]'.

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spective on Aldhelm's relationship with Ecgfrith's half-brother and successor, Aldfrith (686–705). That is to say, Aldhelm and Aldfrith may have been cousins; in any event they enjoyed a very close personal relationship, as we shall see.

Aldfrith was the son of Oswiu, king of Northumbria (of Deira, from 642; of Bernicia also, from 651). Oswiu died in 670. He in turn was a son of the Northumbrian king Æthelfrith (*c.* 592–616) and brother of Oswald, the aforementioned king of Bernicia (634–42). During the ascendancy of King Edwin of Deira (616–33), Oswiu and Oswald were forced into exile. We know from Bede[37] that Oswald spent part of his exile at Iona among the Irish of Dál Riata, and Oswiu presumably did so as well. The result was, as Bede tells us, that Oswiu spoke Irish fluently.[38] Now during the period of his exile Oswiu fathered Aldfrith by an Irish woman named Fín, a princess of the northern Uí Neill. For this reason Aldfrith appears in Irish annals and genealogies as *Flann Fína mac Ossu* ('Flann Fína, son of Oswiu');[39] his learning in Irish is reflected in the fact that a collection of maxims has been transmitted in his name, the *Bríathra Flainn Fína maic Ossu*.[40] It is unknown how many years Aldfrith spent at Iona. According to Bede's prose *Vita S. Cudbercti* (c. 24), Aldfrith had been pursuing his studies 'for some considerable time previously' (*non paucis ante temporibus*) in the regions of the Irish, 'suffering a self-imposed exile to gratify his love of wisdom'.[41] The implication is that he 'had been in Iona throughout the early years of Adomnán's abbacy',[42] and possibly even earlier. One set of Irish annals describes Aldfrith as *dalta Adamnáin*, 'Adomnán's pupil'.[43] In any case it is likely that he was there during much of the time that his half-brother Ecgfrith (the legitimate son of Oswiu) was king of Northumbria (670–85). Certainly Aldfrith was still at Iona in 685 when the body of Ecgfrith, who had been killed in battle in Pictland at a place identified in later sources as

[37] *HE* III. 3 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 218).

[38] *HE* III. 25: 'illorum etiam lingua optime imbutus' (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 296).

[39] See C. Ireland, 'Aldfrith of Northumbria and the Irish Genealogies', *Celtica* 22 (1991), 64–78, esp. pp. 68–72.

[40] *Old Irish Wisdom attributed to Aldfrith of Northumbria: an Edition of Bríathra Flainn Fhína maic Ossu*, ed. C. Ireland (Tempe, AZ, 1999). The language of these maxims indicates that they are unlikely to be contemporary with the lifetime of Aldfrith (though they are in Old, not Middle, Irish); the fact that they are attributed *nominatim* to him is a token of his prestige in Irish learned circles.

[41] *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 238–9. Of course Aldfrith will at the same time have been avoiding the murderous grasp of his half-brother Ecgfrith, a point made by James Campbell, 'Elements in the Background to the Life of St Cuthbert and his Early Cult', *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 3–19, at p. 18.

[42] *Adomnán of Iona: Life of St Columba*, trans. R. Sharpe (Harmondsworth, 1995), p. 350.

[43] *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland*, ed. and trans. J. Radner (Dublin, 1978), pp. 54–5.

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Nechtanesmere,[44] was brought to Iona for burial, and it was at Iona that Aldfrith was declared Ecgfrith's successor.[45] Adomnán,[46] who had become abbot of Iona in 679, was certainly on friendly terms with Aldfrith; as he tells us in his *Vita S. Columbae*,[47] he travelled to Northumbria the following year (686?) to visit Aldfrith, then installed as king, and to redeem sixty Irish hostages who had been captured during a Northumbrian raid in Brega in 684. By 686 Aldfrith and Adomnán had apparently known each other for many years; and Adomnán went to Northumbria a second time two years later (in 688?) to present King Aldfrith with a copy of his work *De locis sanctis*.[48]

Now Aldhelm, too, was an intimate friend of King Aldfrith. His massive and composite *Epistola ad Acircium* is addressed to Aldfrith as the 'ruler of northern regions' (that is, Northumbria).[49] In the salutation Aldhelm refers to the king not by his conventional name, but by a pet-name, *Acircius* (*illustri Acircio*). The name *Acircius* is not attested before Aldhelm, but it evidently derives from *a+circio* (*Circius* = the northwest wind, hence 'someone from the region of the northwest').[50] Viewed from Aldhelm's Southumbrian vantage-point, the

[44] The death of Ecgfrith is known from Bede, *HE* IV. 24 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 428). Except for stating that Ecgfrith was killed while leading an army to ravage the land of the Picts, Bede does not here state the place of Ecgfrith's death; we learn from a much later source, the *Libellus de exordio* of Symeon of Durham, that he was killed at *Nectanesmere*, in what is now Scotland (the place has been identified as modern Dunnichen, three miles SE of Forfar): see *Symeon of Durham: Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis ecclesie*, ed. D. Rollason (Oxford, 2000), p. 46 (I. 9). For the identification of the place-name, see W. J. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926), p. 239.

[45] For the circumstances in which Aldfrith acceded to the Northumbrian throne, and the possible role of the Irish Uí Néill in the defeat of Ecgfrith and Aldfrith's accession, see H. Moisl, 'The Bernician Royal Dynasty and the Irish in the Seventh Century', *Peritia* 2 (1983), 103–26, esp. 120–4.

[46] For the life of Adomnán, see *Adomnán of Iona: Life of St Columba*, trans. Sharpe, pp. 43–65.

[47] *Adomnan's Life of Columba*, ed. and trans. A. O. and M. O. Anderson (London and Edinburgh, 1961), p. 460 (II. 46); trans. Sharpe, *Adomnán of Iona*, p. 203.

[48] Bede, *HE* V. 15 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 508).

[49] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 61: 'Aquilonalis imperii sceptra gubernanti'. The *Epistola ad Acircium* (*ibid.*, pp. 61–204) is made up of four distinct parts (which were presumably composed at different times): an introductory *epistola* on the numerological significance of the number seven, and two metrical treatises, *De metris* and *De pedum regulis*, separated by Aldhelm's collection of one hundred *Enigmata*, ostensibly inserted to illustrate metrical points raised in the two treatises. The reference to Aldfrith's ruling the 'northern regions' dates the composite work to 686 or later (see below, Appendix, pp. 67).

[50] See N. Wright, 'Aldhelm, Gildas and Acircius', in his *History and Literature in Late Antiquity and the Early Medieval West: Studies in Intertextuality* (Aldershot, 1995), no. XIV, pp. 20–1. Wright convincingly demonstrates that Aldhelm derived the expression from Gildas, *De excidio Britanniae*, c. 14, who in describing the barbarian tribes who attacked Roman Britain, distinguishes between Irish from the northwest and Picts from the northeast (*Scotorum a circione, Pictorum ab aquilone*).

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designation of Aldfrith as *Acircius* would allude fittingly to the latter's period of residence at Iona. In the salutation of the *Epistola*, Aldhelm reminds Aldfrith that he 'had for some time now been bound to him by the bonds of spiritual clientship', and that 'twice-two *lustra* ago' [that is, twenty years ago] they had 'made the unbreakable pledge of a binding agreement, and through the bond of spiritual association we established the comradeship of devoted charity'.[51] This is just Aldhelmian verbiage; what Aldhelm means to say is that he (Aldhelm) stood as sponsor to Aldfrith at a ceremony of episcopal confirmation.[52] Aldhelm was in some sense returning the earlier favour which King Oswald (Aldfrith's uncle) had done in standing as sponsor at the baptism of Cynegils, Aldhelm's grandfather, in 635 (see above). In any event, in becoming Aldfrith's godparent, Aldhelm established a bond between the two men which was regarded by contemporaries as comparable to that of blood relationship.[53] The precise date of the confirmation cannot be established. But if we assume that Aldhelm sent the *Epistola ad Acircium* to Aldfrith soon after the latter became king of Northumbria in 686, as a sort of memento of their earlier intimacy, and recall that the confirmation had taken place twenty years (twice-two *lustra*) earlier, then a date sometime in the mid-to-late 660s is in question.[54]

[51] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 61; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 34.

[52] On the significance of the ceremony of episcopal confirmation, and the implied relationship between Aldhelm and Aldfrith, see the important discussion by J. H. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship: Ritual Sponsorship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ithaca, NY, 1998), pp. 112–16.

[53] James Campbell (*Essays in Anglo-Saxon History* (London, 1986), p. 75) points to a passage in the *Laws of Ine* (c. 76) illustrating how a godfather–godson relationship was regarded as establishing ties comparable to those of blood. The terminology which Aldhelm uses to describe the bond between himself and Aldfrith, *inextricabile conglutinati foederis pignus* (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, p. 61), and in particular the rare verb *conglutino*, recalls that used by Aldhelm to describe his relationship to Osburg, who was *contribulibus necessitudinum nexibus conglutinatae* (*ibid.*, p. 229) and who, on my understanding of the evidence, was Aldhelm's sister. (Note that these are the only two occasions on which Aldhelm uses the verb *conglutino*.) We have already seen (above, p. 22–23) that Aldhelm and Aldfrith were probably blood relations as well: if Aldhelm's mother was indeed the sister of Eormenburg, who was married to King Ecgfrith, given that Ecgfrith was Aldfrith's half-brother, then Aldhelm and Aldfrith were cousins through marriage.

[54] More interesting is the question of who the bishop was who performed the rite of confirmation, and where it took place. If in Iona, any one of a number of bishops might be in question; but if in Northumbria, at a date in the mid to late 660s, the only probable candidate is Wilfrid, the indefatigable bishop of Ripon and York (consecrated 664; deposed 678). (The tenure of other Northumbrian bishoprics at this time is a matter of guesswork; for the complex political scene, see C. Cubitt, 'Wilfrid's "Usurping Bishops": Episcopal Elections in Anglo-Saxon England *c.* 600–*c.* 800', *NH* 25 (1989), 18–38, esp. pp. 18–19.) Stephen of Ripon at one point describes Wilfrid travelling around the Northumbrian countryside performing the rite of confirmation: 'Wilfritho episcopo equitando et pergenti ad uaria officia episcopatus sui . . . cum manus impositione confirmandi populos' (*Vita S. Wilfridi*, c. 18; ed. and trans. Colgrave, p. 38). Aldhelm's later public support of Bishop Wilfrid's clergy

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A further strengthening of the link between Aldhelm and Aldfrith probably occurred when Aldfrith married Cuthburg, the sister of the West Saxon king Ine (688–726), who was a cousin – admittedly at some removes – of Aldhelm (see fig. 1).[55] But the marriage was soon dissolved, and it is possible that Aldfrith's *quondam* queen Cuthburg is identical with the Cuthburg whom Aldhelm addresses among the community of nuns at Barking in the salutation of his prose *De uirginitate*.[56] In any event, Cuthburg subsequently became abbess of the minster at Wimborne, in what after 706 was (I assume) Aldhelm's diocese of Sherborne.[57]

The more crucial question, however, is where Aldhelm and Aldfrith were staying when they established their 'comradeship of devoted charity'. We know that Aldfrith spent his youth on Iona, and was still at Iona when he was called to the Northumbrian throne. Since Aldfrith is known both in later Irish and Anglo-Saxon sources as a scholar of considerable learning – Bede calls him *uir undecumque doctissimus*, 'a man learned in every respect'[58] – and since he was a close friend of Adomnán, whom we know to have taught the text of Vergil at Iona (see discussion below), I suggest that Aldhelm may have got to know Aldfrith on Iona, and that it may also have been at Iona where Aldhelm acquired his first knowledge of Vergil, through the tutelage of Adomnán.

Although there are no sources (as far as I am aware) which link Aldhelm specifically with Iona, there is nevertheless unambiguous evidence that he had spent time in Ireland (location unspecified), and Iona is arguably in question. For example, an unknown Irishman wrote to Aldhelm reminding him, *inter alia*, that 'he [Aldhelm] was fostered by a certain holy man of our race' ('a quodam sancto viro de nostro genere nutritus es').[59] In advising his English friend

(as expressed in his *Ep.* xii) may imply a personal bond of some kind between Wilfrid and Aldhelm; the confirmation of Aldfrith is a possible occasion for the establishment of such a bond.

[55] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum* I. 36 (ed. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, *William of Malmesbury, The History of the English Kings*, I (Oxford, 1998), p. 52).

[56] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 229; see discussion in Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, pp. 52–6. The notice that Cuthburg had been married to King Aldfrith comes from the *ASC* s.a. 718: 'Cuthburg founded the monastery at Wimborne. She had been married to Aldfrith, king of the Northumbrians, and they separated during their lifetime' (trans. Whitelock, p. 27).

[57] Wimborne Minster is just north of Bournemouth (Poole Bay), but not *west* of Selwood, if that is what *be westan wuda* means (see below, n. 228). David Hill's map (*An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1981), no. 251) shows Wimborne in what was later the diocese of Sherborne; but, as F. P. Magoun rightly noted, 'the boundaries between these new episcopates are . . . uncertain and have been the subject of no little controversy' ('Aldhelm's Diocese of Sherborne *be westan wuda*', *Harvard Theol. Rev.* 32 (1939), 103–14, at p. 104).

[58] Bede, *HE* V. 12 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 496).

[59] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 494 (*Ep.* vi). Could the holy man in question, who is not named in the letter, have been Adomnán?

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Heahfrith not to return to Ireland to study (where he had just spent six years, in the 'northwest' part – *circionis insulae* – of the island), but instead to go to Canterbury to the school of Theodore and Hadrian, Aldhelm displays a remarkable familiarity with Irish scholarly traditions.[60] In another letter, to an English student named Wihtfrith, who is setting out to study in the northernmost part of Ireland (*climate . . . septentrionali*), Aldhelm warns him to avoid pagan texts and to stay well away from whore-houses, 'where lurk pretentious prostitutes who have sexual indulgence as their only pimp, (prostitutes) who are adorned with the flashing burnish of leg-bands and with smooth arm bracelets'.[61] These comments imply Aldhelm's own familiarity with the northernmost parts of Ireland and quite possibly, depending on how much weight we should wish to place on phrases like *circionis insulae* and *climate septentrionali*, with Iona itself.

Two classes of evidence support the hypothesis that Aldhelm had indeed spent some time in his youth studying with Adomnán at Iona: the structure of his Latin rhythmical verse, and the Irish and Iona-derived entries in the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary', in the compilation of which Aldhelm played a principal role. I treat these two complex classes of evidence in turn.

Iona and Aldhelm's Latin rhythmical verse

If Aldhelm had indeed spent time studying at Iona, many problems in the nature of his literary estate would be cleared up. I have always wondered why, for example, when Aldhelm composed octosyllabic verse (as in his *Carmen rhythmicum*), he did not use the insistent trochaic rhythms of octosyllables like those composed by Archbishop Theodore, in which the stress falls regularly on the first, third, fifth, and seventh syllables of the line, yielding what is called paroxytonic stress, as in the following brief poem addressed by Theodore to Haeddi, bishop of Winchester (676–705):

> Té nunc, sáncte spéculátor,
> Vérbi Déi dígne dátor,
> Háeddi, píe práesul, précor,
> Póntifícum dítum décor,
> Pró me túo péregríno
> Préces fúnde Théodóro.[62]

In these lines the trochaic verse *ictus* ('beat') coincides with the natural stress of each Latin word (the only exception in this poem being *póntifícum*, which would

[60] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, pp. 488–94 (*Ep.* v), esp. pp. 490–1; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, pp. 160–4, esp. pp. 161–2.

[61] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, pp. 479–80 (*Ep.* iii); trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, pp. 154–5 (slightly modified).

[62] M. Lapidge, 'Theodore and Anglo-Latin Octosyllabic Verse', *Archbishop Theodore*, ed. Lapidge, pp. 260–80, at pp. 260–1; Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, pp. 29–31.

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naturally be stressed on the antepenult: *pontíficum*). I have suggested elsewhere that Theodore's model for trochaic stress-patterns such as this was probably Greek anacreontics, which by the sixth or seventh century had developed from an originally quantitative form into regular trochaic octosyllables, exactly as in Theodore's (Latin) poem.[63]

Now in spite of the fact that in other respects Aldhelm was a devoted follower of the great Mediterranean master, the rhythmical structure of his octosyllabic verse is utterly different from that of Theodore. In Aldhelm's rhythmic octosyllables, the stress falls invariably on the antepenultimate syllable (not the penultimate, as in Theodore's verses), with the result that the final word of each line necessarily consists of three syllables or more (unlike the poem of Theodore quoted above, there is no example in Aldhelm's *Carmen rhythmicum* of a bisyllabic word – with its inevitable stress on the penult – at line-end); pairs of lines are linked by rhyme, usually bisyllabic:

Neque caelorum cúlmina
Carent nocturna nébula
Quorum pulchra planíties
Perlucebat ut glácies,
Donec nimbo ac núbibus
Torve teguntur trúcibus (55–60).[64]

As various scholars have observed,[65] Aldhelm's model for such a rhythmical structure is to be found in Hiberno-Latin verse of the seventh century, and notably in the Hiberno-Latin hymn 'Altus prosator', which was demonstrably composed at seventh-century Iona.[66] For sake of comparison I quote the first six lines of the S-stanza of 'Altus prosator':

Stantes erimus pávidi
Ante tribunal Dómini
Reddemusque de ómnibus
Rationem afféctibus
Videntes quoque pósita
Ante obtutus crímina . . .[67]

[63] Lapidge, 'Theodore and Anglo-Latin Octosyllabic Verse', pp. 266–73.

[64] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 525; trans. Lapidge and Rosier, *Aldhelm: the Poetic Works*, pp. 177–8.

[65] M. Herren, 'The Stress Systems in Insular Latin Octosyllabic Verse', *CMCS* 15 (Summer 1988), 63–84, at pp. 77–8; Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, pp. 54–60.

[66] See J. Stevenson, 'Altus prosator', *Celtica* 23 (1999), 326–68.

[67] *Analecta hymnica medii aevi*, ed. G. M. Dreves and C. Blume, 55 vols. (Leipzig, 1886–1922) LI, 277; also ed. T. O. Clancy and G. Márkus, *Iona: the Earliest Poetry of a Celtic Monastery* (Edinburgh, 1995), pp. 39–68, at pp. 50.

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As in Aldhelm, each line of the Hiberno-Latin hymn concludes with a word of at least three syllables, having stress on the antepenultimate (proparoxytonic) syllable; also as in Aldhelm, the stress-patterns in the rest of the line are variously distributed. Pairs of octosyllables are linked by rhyme, usually bisyllabic, as in Aldhelm. The ways in which Hiberno-Latin poets developed this verse-form from the model of the (quantitative) iambic dimeter hymns of late antiquity does not concern us here.[68] What is important to emphasize is that Aldhelm's octosyllabic verse has its closest model in a verse-form that was practised at Iona during the seventh century.

Adomnán and the Study of Vergil at Iona

A secure link between Aldhelm and Iona is established by the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary', in particular with the various lemmata to the poems of Vergil found in this glossary.[69] We will consider Aldhelm's role in the genesis of the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' when we come to investigate Aldhelm's activity at the school of Theodore and Hadrian in Canterbury (see below). Before turning to the school of Canterbury, however, it is necessary to understand the ways in which Vergil was studied at Iona in the time of Adomnán. For there is convincing evidence that Vergil's poetry was studied at Iona, not only in the reminiscences of Vergil in Latin works composed at Iona, such as the hymn 'Altus prosator' and the writings of Adomnán,[70] but above all in the redactions of a late antique commentary on Vergil's Eclogues which pass under the name of Junius Philargyrius. The identity of this Philargyrius is not certainly known: by all appearances he was a grammarian at Milan in the early fifth century.[71] His commentary on Vergil's Eclogues has not been preserved intact, but remnants of it are found in two related series of *Explanationes in Bucolica*, called 'Explanatio I' and 'Explanatio II'.[72] The two

[68] A plausible hypothesis for the development is set out by Herren, 'The Stress Systems'.

[69] Evidence relating to the study of Vergil at Iona and Vergil glosses deriving from Iona in the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' is set out at length in M. Lapidge, 'Aldhelm and the "Epinal–Erfurt Glossary"', *Aldhelm and Sherborne: Essays to Celebrate the Foundation of the Bishopric*, ed. K. Barker and N. Brooks, BAR (Oxford, 2007), forthcoming.

[70] For Adomnán's knowledge of Vergil, see G. Brüning, 'Adamnans *Vita Columbae* und ihre Ableitungen', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 11 (1917), 213–304, at p. 241.

[71] On Junius Philargyrius, see R. A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: the Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, CA, 1988), pp. 284–5 (no. 60), as well as D. Daintree and M. Geymonat, 'Scholia non Serviana', *Enciclopedia Virgiliana*, ed. F. della Corte, 6 vols. (Rome, 1984–91) IV, cols. 711–20, and esp. G. Funaioli, 'Scolii Filargiriani', *Rheinisches Museum* 70 (1915), 55–106, and *idem*, *Esegesi virgiliana antica. Prolegomeni all'edizione del commento di Giunio Filargirio e di Tito Gallo* (Milan, 1930).

[72] The two *explanationes* are printed in parallel columns by H. Hagen, *Appendix Serviana ceteros praeter Servium et Scholia Bernensia Vergilii commentatores continens* (Leipzig, 1902), pp. 1–189; see also D. C. Daintree, '*Explanationes in Bucolica*: a New Edition of an Early Medieval Scholar's Notes on the Eclogues of Vergil' (unpubl. MLitt dissertation, Cambridge Univ., 1983).

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series of *explanationes* apparently derive from the *viva voce* exposition of Vergil's *Bucolica* (Eclogues) by an Irish master; they are preserved in three continental manuscripts of ninth-century date which, judging from the Irish palaeographical symptoms which they contain, derive from an earlier (lost) Irish exemplar.[73] Embedded in both *explanationes* are numerous glosses in Old Irish (*c.* 120 in 'Explanatio I', *c.* 30 in 'Explanatio II').[74] The glosses were first recognized and published (piecemeal) by Whitley Stokes in the late nineteenth century;[75] more recently they have been printed, without commentary of any kind, by Pierre-Yves Lambert.[76]

On the basis of the language, Rudolf Thurneysen dated the glosses to *c.* 700.[77] He drew attention in particular to (for example) the occurrence of long **-o-** (in words such as **conbochuil**), where later forms of the word would show breaking of the long **-o-** to **-ua-**. Given this approximate philological dating, it is impossible not to be struck by a comment in 'Explanatio I' on a later passage in Eclogue III, where Menalcas, in an obscure insult, states, 'if anyone doesn't hate Bavius, let him love your poems, Maevius' ('qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Maevi': III. 90). The identity of these two poets is unknown, and here the Irish commentator rightly notes: 'De Mevio vero nihil reperi, ut Adamnanus ait.'[78] Given the dating of the glosses, the only Adomnán who can seriously be in question is Adomnán, ninth abbot of Iona, who died in 704. We will return to Adomnán and these Vergil glosses when we come to consider the sources of the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' in the following section. For now it is sufficient to remark that Adomnán's role in expounding the text of Vergil at Iona is established by the citation of his opinion in the *Explanationes in Bucolica*.

[73] The three manuscripts are: Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. XLV. 14 (central France, s. ix$^{2/3}$: see B. Bischoff, *Katalog der festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts (mit Ausnahme der wisigotischen)* (Wiesbaden, 1998–; in progress), no. 1226); Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 7960 and 11308. For Irish palaeographical features in these manuscripts, see C. Beeson, 'Insular Symptoms in the Commentaries on Vergil', *SM* 5 (1932), 81–100.

[74] See D. Daintree, 'Glosse irlandesi', *Enciclopedia Virgiliana*, ed. della Corte II, cols. 774–6.

[75] W. Stokes, 'Hibernica', *ZVS* 33 (1894), 62–80 and 313–15; *idem*, 'Old-Irish Glosses on the Bucolics: from a MS. in the Laurentian Library', *TPS* (1891–4), 308–26; and *idem*, 'Old-Irish Glosses on the Bucolics: from a MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale', *Revue celtique* 14 (1893), 226–37, and 16 (1895), 123.

[76] P.-Y. Lambert, 'Les gloses celtiques aux commentaires de Virgile', *Etudes celtiques* 23 (1986), 81–128, at pp. 95–105.

[77] R. Thurneysen, 'Das Alter der Würzburger Glossen', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 3 (1901), 47–54, at pp. 52–4.

[78] *Appendix Serviana*, ed. Hagen, p. 66: 'Concerning Maevius I have discovered nothing, as Adomnán said.' It is possible that Adomnán was simply repeating an observation made by Junius Philargyrius; nevertheless, the anonymous compiler of the *Explanationes in Bucolica*, presumably an Irish student, attributed the opinion to Adomnán.

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ALDHELM AT THE SCHOOL OF CANTERBURY

The next stage in Aldhelm's scholarly career took place at Canterbury. Perhaps soon after Hadrian's arrival in England in 670, Aldhelm set off to study in Canterbury.[79] We have long known from Bede of the excellence of the school established by Theodore and Hadrian in Canterbury.[80] But although Bede describes this school in general terms, his description lacks detail (and it is striking that he nowhere associates Aldhelm with it). During the past thirty years our knowledge of this Canterbury school has been transformed in two ways: first, by the publication of a large corpus of biblical commentaries, on the Pentateuch and Gospels, which are evidently a record of the *viva voce* teaching of Theodore and Hadrian at Canterbury;[81] and, secondly, by the recognition that a famous Latin–Old English glossary, the so-called 'Leiden Glossary', is similarly a record of the explanations of difficult words in a wide range of biblical, grammatical and patristic texts, made by the same two Mediterranean masters.[82] In effect it is the 'Leiden Glossary' rather than the Canterbury biblical commentaries which can shed most light on Aldhelm's student days.

The 'Leiden Glossary' (hereafter LdGl) is preserved in a single manuscript now in the University Library in Leiden (Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Voss. lat. Q. 69, fols. 7–47), written at St Gallen *c.* 800 (the 'Leiden Glossary' is on 20r–36r).[83] Although written at St Gallen, however, the manuscript is evidently a later copy of a collection of glossary materials which originated in England, for the collection contains some 250 glosses in Old English. The fact that Theodore is at one point cited by name as the source of an explanation (LdGl xii. 40), together with the fact that there is substantial overlap with the Canterbury biblical commentaries,[84] indicates beyond reasonable doubt that the compilation originated at the Canterbury school of Theodore and Hadrian,

[79] As we know from a fragmentary letter (*Ep.* ii) from Aldhelm to Hadrian, preserved by William of Malmesbury: ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, p. 478; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, pp. 153–4.

[80] Bede, *HE* IV. 2 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 332–4).

[81] Bischoff and Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries from the Canterbury School of Theodore and Hadrian*, esp. pp. 266–74.

[82] Lapidge, 'The School of Theodore and Hadrian' (repr. *Anglo-Latin Literature, 600–899*, pp. 141–68); see also J. D. Pheifer, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Glossaries and the School of Canterbury', *ASE* 16 (1987), 17–44.

[83] On the manuscript, see E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini antiquiores*, 11 vols. and suppl. (Oxford, 1934–71) [hereafter *CLA*], X, no. 1585. The 'Leiden Glossary' was edited carefully by J. H. Hessels in 1906: *A Late Eighth-Century Latin–Anglo-Saxon Glossary preserved in the Library of the Leiden University* (Cambridge, 1906); its contents are discussed and listed by Lapidge, 'The School of Theodore and Hadrian', pp. 54–67 (repr. *Anglo-Latin Literature, 600–899*, pp. 150–63).

[84] Bischoff and Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, pp. 173–9 and 545–8.

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hence between 670 and 690, before it was transmitted at some later point to St Gallen. As preserved in the Leiden manuscript, the glossary consists of forty-eight separate batches of glosses; of these, the first two (from a collection of church canons (no. i) and from the *Regula S. Benedicti* (no. ii)) have been arranged in alphabetical or *a*-order, perhaps by the St Gallen scribe. The remainder are preserved as simple *glossae collectae*: that is, the lemmata occur in the glossary in the same order, and usually in the same grammatical form, as the text from which they are taken. Some of the batches pertain to books of the Bible (nos. vii–xxv), but the remainder are to patristic and grammatical texts which were read and expounded, apparently word-by-word, at the Canterbury school: Sulpicius Severus, *Vita S. Martini* and *Dialogi* (three batches: nos. iii, xli, xlii), Rufinus's Latin translation of the *Historia ecclesiastica* of Eusebius (three batches: nos. iv, v, xxxv); Gildas, *De excidio Britanniae* (two batches: nos. vi, xl); Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum* (two batches: nos. xxxiv, xlviii); Isidore, *De rerum natura* (two batches: nos. xxvii, xliv); Evagrius's translation of the *Vita S. Antonii* of Athanasius (two batches: nos. iii, xxviii); and single batches of glosses from Isidore, *De ecclesiasticis officiis* (no. xxvi), Jerome, *Comm. in euangelium Matthaei* (no. xxix), Orosius, *Historiae aduersum paganos* (no. xxxvi), Gregory, *Dialogi* (no. xxxix), and others.

It is particularly the three Rufinus batches which concern us here.[85] All in all, the three Rufinus batches contain 458 glosses to the text of the *Historia ecclesiastica*, distributed as follows: First Rufinus Glossator, 120 glosses (LdGl iv); Second Rufinus Glossator, 32 glosses (LdGl v); Third Rufinus Glossator, 306 glosses (LdGl xxxv). The three batches often consist of related (but rarely identical) glosses to the same textual lemma, and in such cases the differences cannot be explained simply in terms of scribal transmission as it is normally understood (that is, through miscopying and miscomprehension). On the contrary, the variant explanations are best understood as independent records of the one explanation. Consider, for example, the glosses to the statement in Rufinus (*HE* V. 20. 1) that Irenaeus composed a book entitled *De ogdoade*, in which he portrayed himself as a successor to the Apostles, hence of the New Testament era:

> First Rufinus Glossator: ogdoade. nouum testamentum (LdGl iv. 10)
> Second Rufinus Glossator: de octoade: de octaua die (LdGl v. 6)
> Third Rufinus Glossator: de octoade. de nouo testamento (LdGl xxxv. 254)

The master presumably explained that the title of Irenaeus's work refers literally to the 'eighth day', but in context means that he situated his career in New Testament times. One student (the Second Rufinus Glossator) recorded the

[85] See M. Lapidge, 'Rufinus at the School of Canterbury', *La tradition vive. Mélanges d'histoire des textes en l'honneur de Louis Holtz*, ed. P. Lardet (Paris, 2003), pp. 119–29.

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literal explanation, but the other two recorded the contextual one. The glosses thus help to illustrate the ways in which the text of Rufinus was expounded in the Canterbury school.

Although there are very few points where all three Rufinus batches overlap, it is clear that the Third Rufinus Glossator was by far the most attentive recorder of the master's explanations, particularly in cases involving Greek etymologies. Now Aldhelm had a thorough knowledge of the writings of Rufinus, particularly of the *Historia ecclesiastica*, which supplied him with material for a number of chapters of his prose *De uirginitate*: the account of Basil and Gregory in c. xxvii is drawn from *HE* XI. 9; that of the virgins of Antioch in c. xxxi from *HE* VIII. 12. 4; that of Narcissus in c. xxxii from *HE* VI. 9–10; and the account of Athanasius of Alexandria also in c. xxxii derives from *HE* X. 13–18. So thorough was Aldhelm's knowledge of Rufinus that it is tempting to ask whether he could have been one of the three Rufinus glossators represented in LdGl. In fact there is one striking piece of evidence which links Aldhelm and the Third Rufinus glossator. In c. x of his *De uirginitate*, Aldhelm describes the aggressive attitude of the chaste virgin, 'rejecting the pleasures of the world with contempt like the off-scourings of filth' (*qui contempta mundi blandimenta velut quisquiliarum peripsima respuens*).[86] The word *peripsima* occurs in the Vulgate (I Cor. IV. 13), but also in Rufinus, *HE* VII. 22. 7: 'et effecti sunt eorum, ut dicit Apostoli sermo, peripsima'. In the Leiden Glossary, the explanation of *peripsima* offered by the master and recorded by the Third Rufinus Glossator is: 'peripsima. purgamentum uel quisquilea' (LdGl xxxv. 195). It is apparent that Aldhelm, with his characteristic penchant for tautology, simply combined the Rufinian lemma with the Canterbury gloss to create the phrase *quisquiliarum peripsima* in the *De uirginitate*.[87]

If Aldhelm can be identified as the Third Rufinus Glossator, it is possible that further contributions by him to the 'Leiden Glossary' await identification, particularly in the case of texts from which he quotes in his prose *De uirginitate*. Of the texts represented in the 'Leiden Glossary', Aldhelm shows first-hand knowledge of the following (in addition of Rufinus's translation of Eusebius, *HE*):[88]

[86] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 238; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 66.

[87] Although there is no surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscript of Rufinus's *Historia ecclesiastica*, Aldhelm's scholarly work on the text may be reflected in a continental manuscript written at Lorsch *c.* 800 and now in the Vatican (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 822). Here the text of Rufinus is accompanied by marginal glosses which are identical to the glosses of the Third Rufinus Glossator. The Vatican manuscript was written almost a century after Aldhelm's death; but it would seem to be a copy of Aldhelm's own (otherwise lost) working copy of Rufinus, into which he entered glosses as he recorded them from Theodore and Hadrian; see Lapidge, 'Rufinus at the School of Canterbury', pp. 127–8.

[88] For details of works quoted by Aldhelm, see M. Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 178–91.

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Athanasius, *Vita S. Antonii*, trans. Evagrius (LdGl nos. iii, xxviii)
Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum* (LdGl nos. xxxiv, xlviii)
Donatus, *Ars maior* (LdGl no. xliii)
Gildas, *De excidio Britanniae* (LdGl nos. vi, xl)
Gregory the Great, *Dialogi* (LdGl no. xxxix)
Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis* (LdGl no. xxxix)
Isidore, *De ecclesiasticis officiis* (LdGl no. xxvi)
Isidore, *De natura rerum* (LdGl nos. xxvii, xliv)
Jerome, *Comm. in Euangelium Matthaei* (LdGl no. xxix)
Orosius, *Historiae aduersum paganos* (LdGl no. xxxvi)
Phocas, *Ars de nomine et uerbo* (LdGl no. xlv)
Sulpicius Severus, *Vita S. Martini* (LdGl nos. iii, xli, xlii)
Passio S. Eugeniae [pseudo-Rufinus] (LdGl no. xlii)
Recognitiones [pseudo-Clement], trans. Rufinus (LdGl no. xxxviii)

In sum, and omitting books of the Bible, Aldhelm had first-hand knowledge of fourteen of the twenty-four texts studied at Canterbury and represented in the 'Leiden Glossary'.

The identification of Aldhelm's involvement in the glossing activity which lies behind the 'Leiden Glossary' could have far-reaching implications for our understanding of the circulation of patristic and grammatical texts in early Anglo-Saxon England. Not least of these implications is the role which Aldhelm played in the genesis of the so-called 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary'.[89]

Aldhelm and the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary'

For nearly a century it has been realized that there is an undeniable link between Aldhelm and one of the earliest surviving English glossaries, the so-called 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary', the compilation of which, since one of the two manuscripts which preserve it dates from the last quarter of the seventh century, falls squarely within the period of Aldhelm's scholarly activity. The first scholar to attempt to define the nature of this link was Henry Bradley, the great editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, who in 1919 argued 'that the archetype of Epinal and Erfurt was compiled in the school of Aldhelm at Malmesbury, and perhaps under his personal supervision'.[90] Bradley's findings

[89] I have examined this question in greater detail (with particular reference to Vergilian lemmata in the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary') in 'Aldhelm and the "Epinal–Erfurt Glossary" '.

[90] H. Bradley, 'Remarks on the Corpus Glossary', *Classical Quarterly* 13 (1919), 89–108, at p. 101. Bradley's principal focus of attention was the later 'Corpus Glossary' which, as he also argued, was 'a remodelled and enlarged edition of the earlier work which has been preserved in the Epinal and First Erfurt Glossary' (*ibid.*). The fact that the 'Corpus Glossary' contains large numbers of Aldhelmian lemmata was first demonstrated by A. S. Napier, *Old English Glosses, chiefly Unpublished* (Oxford, 1900), pp. xi–xii.

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have been restated in more recent times by J. D. Pheifer,[91] but deserve re-examination in the context of the present discussion of Aldhelm's scholarly development.

The 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' is preserved in two manuscripts, one presently at Epinal in France, the other at Erfurt in Germany.[92] Of these, the first, now Epinal, Bibliothèque municipale, 72 (2), fols. 94–107, was written at an unidentified centre in Southumbria during the last quarter of the seventh century;[93] the second, now Erfurt, Wissenschaftliche Allgemeinbibliothek, Amplon. F. 42, was written at the cathedral of Cologne in either the first or second quarter of the ninth century.[94] The Erfurt manuscript in fact contains three glossaries, all having English links of some kind; since the first two contain glosses in Old English, the manuscript was evidently copied at Cologne from a (lost) Anglo-Saxon exemplar of earlier date. It is only the first of the glossaries in the Erfurt manuscript – the so-called 'First Erfurt Glossary' on fols. 1r–14v – which is directly relevant here. Although the Erfurt manuscript is later in date than Epinal, its text of the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' contains material omitted by the scribe of Epinal, which proves that the two manuscripts must derive independently from a (lost) exemplar.[95] In any event, given the date of the Epinal manuscript, the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' must have been compiled no later than the last quarter of the seventh century; and this date agrees with the dating (on philological grounds) of the Old English glosses established by H. M. Chadwick.[96] The 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' was printed integrally by Georg Goetz in vol. V of his *Corpus*

[91] J. D. Pheifer, *Old English Glosses in the Epinal–Erfurt Glossary* (Oxford, 1974), p. lvii, who concluded that Bradley's suggestion [that the archetype of 'Epinal–Erfurt' was compiled in the school of Aldhelm] 'is an attractive possibility which is not at variance with the linguistic evidence'.

[92] Both manuscripts are edited in the splendid facsimile edition of B. Bischoff, M. Budny, G. Harlow, M. B. Parkes and J. D. Pheifer, *The Epinal, Erfurt, Werden, and Corpus Glossaries*, EEMF 22 (Copenhagen, 1988). A collotype facsimile of the Epinal manuscript was edited by Henry Sweet in 1883.

[93] For the date and origin, see B. Bischoff and M. B. Parkes, 'Palaeographical Commentary', *The Epinal, Erfurt, Werden, and Corpus Glossaries*, ed. Bischoff *et al.*, pp. 13–17. This early dating, prompted in part by the palaeographical opinions of the late Julian Brown, supersedes that given in *CLA* VI, no. 760, in N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 151–2 (no. 114), and in Pheifer, *Old English Glosses*, pp. xxi–xxv.

[94] See Bischoff and Parkes, 'Palaeographical Commentary', pp. 17–20, and Bischoff, *Katalog*, no. 1174, as well as Pheifer, *Old English Glosses*, pp. xxv–xxviii.

[95] See J. D. Pheifer, 'The Relationship of the Epinal, Erfurt, Corpus and Werden Glossaries', *The Epinal, Erfurt, Werden, and Corpus Glossaries*, ed. Bischoff *et al.*, pp. 49–63, at pp. 49–50.

[96] H. M. Chadwick, 'Studies in Old English', *Trans. of the Cambridge Philol. Soc.* 4 (1899), 85–265, at pp. 188–249, esp. p. 246: 'the compilation [*scil.* of the archetype of 'Epinal–Erfurt'] can scarcely have been made earlier than about 670–680'; cf. also Pheifer, *Old English Glosses*, pp. lxxxix–xc.

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glossariorum Latinorum,[97] and it is this edition which is referred to throughout the following discussion.

The 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' contains (by my count) some 3,710 Latin lemmata; of these, about 1,100 are accompanied by *interpretamenta* in Old English. It was recognized as long ago as 1876 by Gustav Loewe, the pioneer in the field of medieval glossography, that the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' is not in fact a single, integrated glossary, arranged according to a single system of alphabetization, but a combination of two separate compilations, arranged according to two separate systems of alphabetization, so that under each letter of the alphabet 'Epinal–Erfurt' has a series of entries grouped solely according to their initial letter (this arrangement is called *a*-order), followed usually by a series of entries grouped according to their first two letters (called *ab*-order).[98] Although the two distinct parts have been clearly demarcated by Goetz and Lindsay, it may be helpful to set out the information once more (references are to page and line number of Goetz's edition):[99]

A: *a*-order (337.1–343.16, 346.23–54); *ab*-order (343.17–346.22)
B: *a*-order (346.55–348.25); *ab*-order (348.26–349.15)
C: *a*-order (349.16–354.72); *ab*-order (354.73–355.48)
D: *a*-order (355.49–357.9); no *ab*-order entries
E: *a*-order (357.10–359.60); no *ab*-order entries
F: *a*-order (359.61–361.49); *ab*-order (361.50–362.41)
G: *a*-order (362.42–363.46); *ab*-order (363.47–364.22)
H: *a*-order (364.23–365.13); no *ab*-order entries
I: *a*-order (365.14–367.51); *ab*-order (367.52–368.3)
L: *a*-order (368.4–370.8, + 11); *ab*-order (370.9–10, 12–42)
M: *a*-order (370.43–372.37); *ab*-order (372.38–373.39)
N: *a*-order (373.40–374.45); *ab*-order (374.46–375.14)

[97] *Corpus glossariorum Latinorum*, ed. G. Goetz, 7 vols. (Leipzig, 1888–1921), V, 337–401. Goetz used the Erfurt manuscript as the base-text for his edition, but recorded variants from Epinal in an accompanying *apparatus criticus*. Pheifer (*Old English Glosses*) printed the two texts in parallel columns; however, since his principal interest was in the language of the Old English glosses, he omitted to print the numerous Latin–Latin entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt'. On the limitations, for scholarly purposes, of the selective edition of medieval glossaries, see M. Lapidge, 'Old English Glossography; the Latin Context' *Anglo-Saxon Glossography*, ed. R. Derolez (Brussels, 1992), pp. 43–57 (repr. in *Anglo-Latin Literature, 600–899*, pp. 169–81).

[98] See G. Loewe, *Prodromus Corporis glossariorum Latinorum* (Leipzig, 1876), pp. 114–16; *Corpus glossariorum Latinorum*, ed. Goetz, I, 152–3; W. M. Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 44–5; and Pheifer, *Old English Glosses*, pp. xli–xlii. Lindsay's important monograph is repr. in W. M. Lindsay, *Studies in Early Mediaeval Latin Glossaries*, ed. M. Lapidge (Aldershot, 1996), no. XI.

[99] Cf. *Corpus glossariorum Latinorum*, ed. Goetz, I, 153, and Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries*, p. 45.

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O: *a*-order (375.15–376.35); *ab*-order (376.36–377.35)
P: *a*-order (377.36–383.1); *ab*-order (383.2–385.43)
Q: *a*-order (385.44–386.5); *ab*-order (386.6–34)
R: *a*-order (386.35–387.41); *ab*-order (387.42–388.22)
S: *a*-order (388.23–393.11); *ab*-order (393.12–395.7)
T: *a*-order (395.8–397.46); *ab*-order (397.47–398.37)
V: *a*-order (398.38–400.18 + 401.3); *ab*-order (400.19–401.2)
X: *a*-order (401.4); no *ab*-order entries
Y: *a*-order (401.5–12); no *ab*-order entries
Z: *a*-order (401.13–18); no *ab*-order entries

In sum, the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary' contains some 2,700 *a*-order entries, and some 1,010 *ab*-order entries (a proportion of nearly 3:1). What is interesting is that the *a*-order entries were mostly taken from batches of *glossae collectae*, whereas the *ab*-order entries were taken from pre-existing glossaries. In what follows, our concern is principally with the *a*-order entries, since their sources can be identified more securely. Presumably the compiler of 'Epinal–Erfurt' took batches of *glossae collectae* and distributed them crudely according to the letters of the alphabet (to make up the *a*-order entries); when he had copied out all these, he then copied in entries from pre-existing glossaries that had already been arranged in *ab*-order. His ultimate intention may have been to amalgamate both sections in order to make an integrated, *ab*-order glossary, but he never got around to rearranging the *a*-order entries. Although both sections are undoubtedly Anglo-Saxon compilations (both contain Old English glosses), it is the *a*-order entries which have the clearest demonstrable links with Aldhelm.

The entries in the *a*-order sections were largely drawn from *glossae collectae* derived from marginal and interlinear annotations to various texts, and then grouped crudely according to the letters of the alphabet. Because no further ordering was imposed on these materials, the resulting entries very often contain sequences of what are called 'batches', that is to say, groups of between two to five lemmata at a time which happen to be kept together because the compiler of the glossary was working his way through the *glossae collectae* of the one source-text. If such a batch occurs, one can be reasonably certain of the original source from which it was drawn, particularly if the compiler has not altered the grammatical form of the lemma as it occurred in the source-text (by, for example, putting nouns and adjectives into the nominative singular, or verbs into the third person singular, the default positions for medieval dictionary makers). By the same token, there can be correspondingly less certainty about the source of individual (often called 'stray') entries. It is thus a great advantage to the modern researcher that the compiler of the *a*-order entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt' made so

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little attempt to reorder and standardize the *glossae collectae* from which he was compiling his glossary. Now the pioneering work in identifying batches of entries in the *a*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt' was done by W. M. Lindsay.[100] What Lindsay showed, in effect, was that most of the identifiable batches in 'Epinal–Erfurt' correspond to batches of *glossae collectae* preserved in the aforementioned 'Leiden Glossary'. I shall first list the batches identified by Lindsay, state how they correspond to batches in the 'Leiden Glossary', and then discuss the significance of the debt to the 'Leiden Glossary'.

(1) batches deriving from Phocas, *Ars de nomine et uerbo*: Lindsay identified some 120 entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt' which derive from Phocas; the majority of these correspond to *glossae collectae* which make up nos. xlv–xlvi of the 'Leiden Glossary'.[101]

(2) Greek–Latin entries (*hermeneumata*) from a so-called 'class glossary'. A 'class glossary' is one in which the entries are arranged, in no particular order, under subject headings rather than in alphabetical order; the subject-headings may include, for example, names of animals, plants, trees, ships, tools, and so on. Many medieval glossaries of the type called *hermeneumata* derive from compilations which were originally designed to serve as ancillary to elementary Greek–Latin grammars.[102] Lindsay attributed some 400 entries in the *a*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt' to a class glossary of this sort (the glossary in question is, alas, unidentified).[103] Now in the 'Leiden Glossary' there is a chapter misleadingly entitled 'Item alia' (no. xlvii) which is obviously drawn from a class glossary of this sort, and J. D. Pheifer has lucidly demonstrated that nearly all of the 103 entries in this chapter of 'Leiden' recur in 'Epinal–Erfurt'.[104]

(3) batches deriving from Rufinus's Latin translation of Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*. Lindsay attributed some 160 entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt' to this source.[105] As we have seen, glosses to Rufinus make up a substantial part of the 'Leiden Glossary', three separate chapters of which (nos. iv–v, xxxv) are drawn from that source; of these, c. xxxv, consisting of 306 entries, is the longest single batch of *glossae collectae* in the 'Leiden

[100] *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries*, pp. 1–43.

[101] *Ibid.*, pp. 2–7, with a list of the Phocas entries on pp. 16–17.

[102] See the excellent account of such Greek–Latin compilations by A. C. Dionisotti, 'Greek Grammars and Dictionaries in Carolingian Europe', *The Sacred Nectar of the Greeks*, ed. M. W. Herren (London, 1988), pp. 1–56, as well as her earlier study, 'From Stephanus to Du Cange: Glossary Stories', *Revue d'histoire des textes* 14–15 (1984–5), 303–36.

[103] Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries*, pp. 7–10, with a list of his putative attributions on pp. 17–20.

[104] Pheifer, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Glossaries', pp. 19–24.

[105] Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries*, pp. 10–12, with a list of his attributions on pp. 21–3.

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Glossary', and it is this batch which has verbal links with Aldhelm's prose *De uirginitate*. As Lindsay showed, most (if not all) of the Rufinus entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt' correspond to entries in no. xxxv of the 'Leiden Glossary' (nos. iv–v of 'Leiden', however, have no correlate in 'Epinal–Erfurt').

(4) by contrast, batches deriving from Orosius, *Historiae aduersum paganos*, constitute a very small component of the 'Leiden Glossary', but make up the largest number of batches identified by Lindsay in the *a*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt': some 420 entries in total.[106] In the 'Leiden Glossary', no. xxxvi ('De Orosio') consists solely of twenty-two entries drawn from bks I–II of the *Historiae*, whereas the *c.* 420 entries from this source in 'Epinal–Erfurt' are drawn from all seven books; furthermore, there is no apparent link between the few entries in 'Leiden' and the far greater number of entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt'.

(5) batches from Jerome, *De uiris inlustribus*. Lindsay identified more than 150 entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt' (mostly titles of works in Greek) taken from this source; many of these entries correspond to the 100 or so entries in no. xxx (entitled 'De catalogo Hieronimi') of the 'Leiden Glossary'.[107]

(6) batches from books of the Bible. Lindsay identified more than 180 entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt' taken from the Vulgate; many of these correspond to entries in the numerous chapters of Bible glosses which make up the 'Leiden Glossary' (nos. vii–xxv).[108]

In sum, Lindsay's batches (taken from six individual sources) account for more than 1,400 of the 2,700 *a*-order entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt': just over half. The other half of the *a*-order entries derive from various sources; but because they do not occur in batches, these sources are not always securely identifiable. Lindsay pointed to a number of source-texts which contributed individual entries to 'Epinal–Erfurt' and are represented by chapters of *glossae collectae* in the 'Leiden Glossary': Cassiodorus, *Expositio psalmorum* (LdGl, no. xxviii); Jerome, *Comm. in Euangelium Matthaei* (LdGl, no. xxix); Isidore, *De natura rerum* (LdGl, no. xxvii); Gregory, *Dialogi* (LdGl, no. xxxix); Athanasius, *Vita S. Antonii* in the Latin translation of Evagrius (LdGl nos. iii, xxviii); and the *Passio S. Eugeniae* in the Latin translation attributed to Rufinus (LdGl, no. xlii).[109] He also showed that the compiler of the *a*-order entries drew on a pre-existing glossary

[106] Lindsay, *ibid.*, pp. 12–13, with a list of his attributions on pp. 23–31. The Orosius entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt' are analysed carefully by Pheifer, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Glossaries', pp. 26–9.

[107] Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries*, pp. 13–14, with a list of his attributions on pp. 31–2.

[108] Lindsay, *ibid.*, pp. 14–15, with a list of his attributions on pp. 32–5.

[109] *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.

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similar in content to the 'Abstrusa Glossary'.[110] More recently, J. D. Pheifer has demonstrated convincingly the presence of a small number of batches from the *Etymologiae* of Isidore.[111] And there is a very substantial component of some 200 lemmata drawn from the poems of Vergil which have been overlooked by previous commentators.[112] But these additional texts by no means exhaust the list of sources of 'Epinal–Erfurt', and much work remains to be done in this area.

The crucial factor in understanding the genesis of the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary', especially its *a*-order sections, is the indisputable link between its entries and the batches of *glossae collectae* which make up the 'Leiden Glossary'. In a word, both glossaries were ultimately based on the same collections of materials. As we have seen, Aldhelm was involved in the compilation of at least one batch of Rufinus entries in the 'Leiden Glossary' (no. xxxv), and he had first-hand knowledge of at least fourteen of the twenty-four patristic and grammatical texts represented in 'Leiden'. His involvement in the compilation of the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary', itself a derivative of 'Leiden', would not, therefore, be surprising. What is the evidence for Aldhelm's involvement in 'Epinal–Erfurt'?

In the first place, there are numerous links between Aldhelm and 'Epinal–Erfurt' which reveal both that Aldhelm drew on the glossary and that the compiler of the glossary drew on Aldhelm. It is well known that Aldhelm's Latin writings reveal a developed taste for glossary words; on occasion he incorporates both lemma and *interpretamentum* into his prose. In c. ix of the prose *De uirginitate* he refers to the purity of clear water drawn from a well by means of an *antlia* (some kind of mechanism for drawing water), but quickly incorporates a gloss to explain what an *antlia* is: 'gelida cisternae limpha, quam anthlia hoc est rota hauritoria exanthlamus' ('icy liquid of the cistern which we draw up by means of an *antlia*, that is to say, a drawing-wheel').[113] The word and its explanation were both taken from 'Epinal–Erfurt': '*anthlia.* rota hauritoria' (338.25).[114] In c. xxxviii of the same work, Aldhelm describes a feast delivered by heavenly agency to the hermit Apollonius which consisted *inter alia* of 'dates of the palm which they call "Nicolian" . . . and figs, that is, bunches of Carian [i.e. dried] figs': 'dactilis, quos nicolaos vocant . . . palatas id est caricarum massas'.[115] Here, once again, Aldhelm has simply incorporated two lemmata with their *interpretamenta* from

[110] *Ibid.*, pp. 37–43. [111] *Old English Glosses*, pp. liii–liv.
[112] See Lapidge, 'Aldhelm and the "Epinal-Erfurt Glossary"'.
[113] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 237; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 65.
[114] References given in this form are to page and line number of the edition by Goetz, *Corpus glossariorum Latinorum*, V, 337–401. I follow scholarly convention in printing OE glosses in bold.
[115] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 290; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 106.

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'Epinal–Erfurt': '*Nicolaum*. idem quod tactilus' (373.41) and '*palathas*. caricas' (380.20). Some of the exceptionally rare words in Aldhelm's writings seem similarly to have been taken by him from 'Epinal–Erfurt'. Three examples will suffice: *arcister*, *fastus* and *poalum*. In his letter to Heahfrith (*Ep*. v) Aldhelm compares Archbishop Theodore to a 'warlike bowman in the midst of battle' – 'utpote belliger in meditullio campi arcister' – where the word *arcister* is apparently taken from 'Epinal–Erfurt': '*arcister*. **strelbora**' (342.2). Similarly, near the beginning of his *Carmen de uirginitate* Aldhelm refers to his earlier prose work on the same subject, and recalls that he had promised his dedicatees (the nuns of Barking) a metrical work on the same subject:

> ut prius ex prosa laudabat littera castos;
> sic modo heroica stipulentur carmina laudem
> ut fasti seriem memini dixisse priorem (19–21)

The word *fasti* here, construed as gen. sg. of a noun **fastus*, evidently means 'book'. In Classical Latin the masc. plural noun *fasti* meant 'days lawful for the transaction of business' (the singular **fastus* is not attested), hence a list of such days (as in Ovid's poem *Fasti*), and, by extension, a list of consuls by whose names a year was known. Now in 'Epinal–Erfurt' (*a*-order) we find the following entry: 'Fastus. liber in quo sunt nomina consulum' (360.27; cf. 360.5: 'Fastes. libri').[116] Finally, one of Aldhelm's *Enigmata* is entitled 'Poalum' (no. xi), a word otherwise unattested, but apparently meaning 'bellows' in context. Lindsay hypothesized that the singular form *poalum* derived by false inference from an entry in 'Epinal–Erfurt' – '*poalaventium*. folles fabrorum' (380.26) – where *poala* was misunderstood as neuter plural, and *ventium* as genitive plural of *ventus* (mistakenly for *ventorum*), hence meaning 'bellows of wind'.[117] The hypothesis may seem far-fetched, but some explanation of the word *poalum* is needed. In support of the hypothesis, it is interesting to note that in several manuscripts of Aldhelm's *Enigmata* (judging from Ehwald's *apparatus criticus*) the title of *Enigma* no. xi was glossed '*poalum*. folles fabrorum' or simply rendered as *De follibus fabrorum*. Perhaps these explanations were devised by Aldhelm himself; in any event there is no doubt that they, together with the word *poalum/poala*, derive from 'Epinal–Erfurt'.

But if some portion of Aldhelm's eccentric vocabulary was derived from 'Epinal–Erfurt', it is equally clear that the compiler of 'Epinal–Erfurt' occasionally drew rare lexical items from the Latin writings of Aldhelm. A few examples will illustrate this point. In c. xvii of his prose *De uirginitate*, Aldhelm

[116] In the Epinal manuscript, the words *liber in quo* are written over an erasure (as is clear from the facsimile); in Erfurt I the word *liber* is omitted, and *quo* replaced by *quibus*. Goetz omitted to record the reading of the Epinal manuscript in his *apparatus criticus*.

[117] Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries*, p. 98.

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characterizes the immodest behaviour of the unchaste woman, 'parading with the senseless pomp of her ornaments': *stolidis ornamentorum pompis indruticans*.[118] No-one knows precisely what *indruticans* means, since there is no attestation of the word earlier than Aldhelm. Various conjectures have been made, none entirely convincing.[119] The crucial point here, however, is that the word is found, conjugated as a present participle exactly as in Aldhelm, in 'Epinal–Erfurt': '*indruticans*. **uraestendi**' (365.26) (where the OE present participle, from *wræstan*, should mean 'twisted', 'bent'; but one wonders whether the transmitted form is derived from *wrænsian*, 'to be wanton'). Whatever the word means, the link between Aldhelm and 'Epinal–Erfurt' is undeniable. Similarly with the word *ostriger*, which is apparently first attested in Aldhelm's *Enigm.* xcviii. 1: 'ostriger en arvo vernabam', 'a purple flower, I grow in the fields', where the compound is evidently coined from *ostrum* ('purple') + *-ger*.[120] Again, this otherwise unattested compound is found glossed in 'Epinal–Erfurt': '*ostriger*. **bruunbesu**' (376.34) (the OE gloss means 'bright/shining purple'). The rare verb *pipo*, 'to chirp (of birds)', attested only in archaic Latin writers, is used twice by Aldhelm, construed each time in the third person present plural form *pipant*;[121] the very same verbal form occurs as a lemma in 'Epinal–Erfurt': '*pipant*. resonant' (382.6). Finally, the equally rare noun *portisculus*, an archaic word meaning the hammer used in Roman galleys to beat time for the rowers, is used by Aldhelm in an ablative absolute construction in c. ii of the prose *De uirginitate*: 'crepitante naucleru portisculo', 'the master-rower beating time with his truncheon';[122] the very same ablative form occurs as a lemma in 'Epinal–Erfurt': '*portisculo*. malleo' (380.40).

These few unambiguous examples are sufficient to illustrate the nature of the link between Aldhelm and the *a*-order entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt'. Aldhelm's involvement in the production of the 'Leiden Glossary', and the fact that 'Epinal–Erfurt' is very largely drawn from 'Leiden', together with the fact that the Epinal manuscript was written in Southumbria in the last quarter of the

[118] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 246; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 73. The translation of *indruticans* as 'parading' is merely a guess from context.

[119] Bradley suggested possible derivation from an otherwise unattested Late Latin verb, cognate with Modern Italian *drudo*, 'paramour' ('Remarks on the Corpus Glossary', pp. 105–6, followed by Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries*, p. 11); the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (s.v.) hesitantly suggested derivation from Irish *drúth*, 'wanton'; and Pheifer raised the possibility that Aldhelm simply latinized OE *drutian*, 'to swell' (*Old English Glosses*, p. 92). None of these explanations is wholly persuasive (I cannot find any example of a verb *drutian* in the surviving corpus of Old English, for example).

[120] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 144; trans. Lapidge and Rosier, *Aldhelm: the Poetic Works*, p. 92.

[121] *De pedum regulis*, ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi Opera*, p. 179 ('accipitres pipant'), and *Carmen de uirginitate* 15 ('cantica pipant').

[122] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 230; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 60.

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seventh century, combine to prove that Aldhelm was somehow involved in the compilation of 'Epinal–Erfurt'. 'Epinal–Erfurt', in other words, provides a valuable witness to Aldhelm's period of study at Canterbury with Theodore and Hadrian. But it can also throw new light on what I have suggested was an earlier period of study by Aldhelm with Adomnán on Iona.

The Irish Element in the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary'

It is striking, to begin with, that the *a*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt' contain a number of lemmata in Old Irish which were (perhaps inevitably) misunderstood and so miscopied and mutilated by the English scribes who compiled and reproduced the glossary.[123] Three examples:

(1) *beta*. **berc**, arbor dicitur (347.15)
The lemma *beta* is convincingly explained as a confused spelling of OIr *beithe*, 'birch' (see *DIL*, s.v.),[124] with a latinized ending (*-a*); the OE gloss *berc* ('birch') correctly renders the lemma.

(2) *og astrum*. **aeg gimong** (376.5)
The first element of the lemma (*og*) is the correct spelling of OIr *og*, 'egg'. The OE gloss (*aeg gimong*) means 'egg mixture', so that OE *aeg* correctly renders OIr *og*; but there is apparently no OIr word corresponding to the transmitted *astrum* or *astr* (with a latinized ending *-um*) and having the sense of 'mixture' (implying that *astrum* is a corruption introduced at some stage by an English scribe).

(3) *orge*. occide (376.29)
The Latin gloss *occide* is the pres. sg. impv. form of Latin *occidere*, 'to kill'. The OIr verb *orgaid* (pres. 3rd sg.) also means 'slays', 'kills'; the termination *-e* is probably a latinization (see *DIL*, s.v. 'oirgid').

It is not known from what text (or texts) these three Old Irish lemmata were extracted, and where and when they acquired their English and Latin *interpretamenta*.

The *a*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt' also contain what appear to be Old Irish *interpretamenta* which have been mutilated by the English scribe, but which

[123] The Old Irish element in 'Epinal–Erfurt' has been discussed by various scholars, notably O. B. Schlutter, 'Some Celtic Traces in the Glosses', *Amer. Jnl of Philol.* 21 (1900), 188–92; Pheifer, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Glossaries', pp. 29–30; Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, pp. 58–9; and M. W. Herren, 'Scholarly Contacts between the Irish and the Southern English in the Seventh Century', *Peritia* 12 (1998), 24–53, at pp. 46–7.

[124] In what follows, *DIL* = *Dictionary of the Irish Language, mainly based in Old Irish and Middle Irish Materials* (Dublin, 1913–76).

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appear to derive from the interlinear or marginal glossing of Latin texts. Two examples:

(1) *deperuntur*. **meldadun** vel roactum (356.51)
There is no such Latin word as *deperuntur*. Pheifer[125] suggested that the lemma in question is *deferuntur* in Orosius, *Historiae aduersum paganos* IV. 5. 5, referring to the wretched Volsinians who were expelled by the slaves they had freed and went to Rome to appeal for help ('qui miseri, exules egentesque Romam deferuntur'), where the word *deferuntur* clearly means that the wretches 'are brought' to Rome. The OE gloss *meldadun* (from the verb *meldian*) means 'they announced / declared / proclaimed / revealed', *vel sim.*, which does not suit the proposed passage in Orosius. The form *roactum* has been interpreted as a corrupt spelling of OIr *ro-achtatar*, 3rd pl. pluperfect of OIr *aigid*, 'drives, impels' (cf. *DIL*, s.v. 'aigid'), but it is perhaps simply the perfect passive (or active) singular form *ro-acht* with a latinized ending *-um*. But neither this nor the OE gloss is a satisfactory explanation of the supposed lemma *deferuntur* (it would better suit a form of *depello*). In any case, it is far from certain that the lemma *deperuntur* is taken from this passage in Orosius, and the meaning of the alleged OIr form must remain in doubt.

(2) *Hyadas*. **raedgaesran** (364.34)
The lemma here is arguably Vergil, *Aen.* I. 744. The OE gloss *raedgaesran*, however, is incomprehensible, and Pheifer (reporting the unpublished opinion of A. K. Brown) suggested that it might be a corruption of OIr *rétglainn*, 'stars',[126] which in context would be an entirely appropriate explanation, even though it is very difficult to see how the OIr form could have been corrupted to the (inexplicable) *raedgaesran*.

The possibility that this last entry in 'Epinal–Erfurt' may conceal an Irish gloss on Vergil brings us back to the question of the ways in which Vergil was studied in the school of Adomnán at Iona, and in particular to Adomnán's recension of the Vergil commentary of Junius Philargyrius, the so-called *Explanationes in Bucolica*. Now it is clear that some of the *interpretamenta* to Vergilian lemmata in 'Epinal–Erfurt' derive from the widely circulated Vergil commentaries of Servius, as we might expect.[127] Certainly Aldhelm was familiar with Servius, to

[125] 'Early Anglo-Saxon Glossaries', p. 29.
[126] Pheifer, *Old English Glosses*, p. 92; see *DIL*, s.v. 'rétglu'.
[127] For example, the following Vergilian entries in the *a*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt' seem to be taken from Servius: '*carecta*. loca caricis plena' (351.22), verbatim from Servius, ed. G. Thilo, *Servii Grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii Bucolica et Georgica Commentarii* (Leipzig, 1887), p. 33: 'carecta loca caricis plena'; '*Camenae*. a cantu' (351.23), from Servius, ed. Thilo, *ibid.*

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judge from quotations in his metrical treatises,[128] and there is manuscript evidence for the circulation of Servius's commentary on the *Aeneid* in early-eighth-century Southumbria.[129] However, the commentaries of Junius Philargyrius circulated far less widely than those of Servius; indeed all debts to Philargyrius in medieval glossaries and scholia can be traced ultimately to the scholarly activity of Adomnán at Iona. It is therefore striking that there are some close verbal parallels to Philargyrius in the Vergil entries in the *a*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt':

cantarus. genus vassis (352.33; from *Ecl.* VI. 17): cf. *Explanatio* I: 'cantharus idest cratera idest vas'; *Explanatio* II: 'cantharus idest vas' (*Appendix Serviana*, ed. Hagen, p. 108). There is no corresponding entry in Servius's commentary on the Eclogues.

culmen. quia culmis tegitur (353.6; from *Ecl.* I. 68): cf. *Explanatio* I: 'culmen idest eo quod culmo tegitur' (*Appendix Serviana*, ed. Hagen, p. 29). There is no corresponding entry in Servius's commentary on the Eclogues.

Lycisca. canis ex lupo et cane natus (370.2; from *Ecl.* III. 18): cf. *Explanatio* I: 'Lycisca idest *conbochuil* idest canis ex lupo conceptus' (*Appendix Serviana*, ed. Hagen, p. 53). The corresponding entry in Servius is worded differently (both Servius and Philargyrius must here derive from a common source).[130]

Naidis. fontium nimphe (374.29; from *Ecl.* X. 10): cf. *Explanatio* I: 'Naidis idest vocativus idest Nymphae fontium propriae'; *Explanatio* II: 'Naides idest fontium Nymphae' (*Appendix Serviana*, ed. Hagen, p. 178).[131]

These four entries constitute a suggestive link between the Vergil entries in the *a*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt' and the *Explanationes in Bucolica* produced at the school of Adomnán at Iona.

There are further links between Iona and the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary'. Already in 1921 W. M. Lindsay had pointed to entries in 'Epinal–Erfurt' derived from the 'Altus prosator',[132] and more recently Jane Stevenson has analysed the vocabulary of the 'Altus prosator' in order to demonstrate the dependence of the early English glossaries on the Hiberno-Latin hymn.[133] She lists fifteen words

p. 37: 'camenae musae, quibus a cantu nomen est inditum'; and '*labrusca*. vitis agrestis' (370.6), verbatim from Servius, ed. Thilo, *ibid.* p. 54: 'labrusca vitis agrestis'.

[128] See Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library*, p. 186.

[129] The fragmentary manuscript now in Marburg, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, Pfarrei Spangenberg, Hr no. 1 [*CLA* Supp. no. 1806] has been associated, on the evidence of its script, with Wynfrith-Boniface; since its later provenance is Fulda, it was arguably a manuscript written in SW England and subsequently taken by Boniface to Fulda (or sent to him there).

[130] Servius has: 'LATRANTE LYCISCA. Lycisci sunt, ut etiam Plinius dicit, canes nati ex lupis et canibus, cum inter se forte misceantur' (ed. Thilo, *Servii . . . Commentarii*, p. 33).

[131] Cf. the entries in Servius on *Ecl.* x. 9: 'naides enim fontium, oreades montium nymphae sunt' (ed. Thilo, *ibid.*, p. 120).

[132] *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries*, pp. 85–6.

[133] 'Altus prosator', pp. 359–61. The discussion of the same material by Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, pp. 54–7, is based on Stevenson's earlier (1985) doctoral dissertation.

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from 'Altus prosator' which are found as lemmata in 'Epinal–Erfurt'. The force of her argument is mitigated somewhat by her failure to distinguish the *a*-order from the *ab*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt'.[134] Nevertheless, when due allowance is made for the *ab*-order entries (whose link with Aldhelm and the 'Altus prosator' remains to be demonstrated), there remain twelve unusual words from 'Altus prosator' in the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary'. Two of these words are so rare that it is difficult to imagine a source other than 'Altus prosator': '*dodrans*. **egor**' (355.61) and '*prosator*. genitor' (380.6). The first of these words, *dodrans*, properly means 'three-quarters (of any unit)'; but it is used in 'Altus prosator' to mean 'flood' (I-stanza, line 4: 'Oceani dodrantibus / maris'),[135] and that is how the word was understood by the compiler of 'Epinal–Erfurt' (OE *egor* means 'flood', 'high tide').[136] Although the word *prosator* is attested (but rarely) in patristic sources, it is found only in authors, such as Marius Mercator, whose writings were wholly unknown in the British Isles. It is significant, therefore, that both these words should also be used by Aldhelm: *dodrans* in his *Carmen rhythmicum* (107–9: 'Oceanus cum molibus / Atque diris dodrantibus / Pulsabat promontoria'),[137] and *prosator* twice in his letter to Heahfrith.[138]

Finally, there is unambiguous evidence of a link between Adomnán and the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary'. At one point of his *Vita S. Columbae*, Adomnán relates a prophecy of St Columba concerning a rich cleric named Luguid. Although Luguid is apparently wealthy at the present time, Columba saw him in a prophetic vision as being a poor little man who, on the day of his death, will have nothing in his possession but three stray cows: 'Non ita video: sed homuncio miser et pauper in die qua morietur tria apud se vicinorum praetersoria in una retentabit maceria.'[139] No-one knows precisely what the word *praetersoria* means; the translation 'stray (animal)' is just a guess from context. Scholars from Colgan to Sharpe have assured us that Adomnán's use of the

[134] The following entries in her list are from the *ab*-order sections of 'Epinal–Erfurt' (hence were taken from earlier glossaries rather than from a glossed text such as 'Altus prosator'): '*altum*. mare vel caelum' (345.6), '*turbinae*. rota ventorum' (398.27), and '*vernans*. laetans' (400.35). She places unwarranted emphasis on the third of these examples: 'The gloss *laetans* on *vernans* is particularly significant in justifying "Altus prosator" as a source, since it is an unusual meaning for the word, and the only one which will fit the context in the poem' ('Altus prosator', pp. 360–1).

[135] *Analecta hymnica*, ed. Dreves and Blume LI, 276; ed. Clancy and Márkus, *Iona*, p. 46. For the semantic development by which *dodrans* came to mean 'flood', see A. K. Brown, 'Bede, a Hisperic Etymology, and Early Sea Poetry', *MS* 37 (1975), 420–8.

[136] Cf. Pheifer, *Old English Glosses*, p. 80.

[137] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 526; trans. Lapidge and Rosier, *Aldhelm: the Poetic Works*, p. 178.

[138] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, pp. 488 and 492; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, pp. 160 and 162.

[139] *Vita S. Columbae* I. 38: ed. Anderson and Anderson, p. 290; trans. Sharpe, *Adomnán of Iona*, p. 142.

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word here is unique. It is not. It also occurs in the *a*-order sections of the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary': '*praetersorium*. **paad**' (381.7), where the Old English gloss may be a misspelling of the word wað, meaning 'ranging abroad, especially in wild lands'.[140] Even so, the meaning of the Latin word is far from clear. In 1900 Otto Schlutter suggested that it might have been coined from Latin *praeter* ('outside') + Old Irish *scor* ('unyoking', hence 'paddock') + *-ium*, meaning '(animal) outside the paddock', hence 'stray'.[141] Whatever its etymology, however, the word provides an undeniable link between Adomnán, Iona and the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary'.

The above evidence suggests the following reconstruction of Aldhelm's early scholarly career. As a young West Saxon prince, and as a result of family connections with the royal house of Northumbria, Aldhelm was fostered at Iona, where the family of Kings Oswald and Oswiu spent long periods in exile. While at Iona, probably in the 660s, Aldhelm began his Latin studies under the tutelage of the great Irish scholar Adomnán, who was to become the ninth abbot of Iona. Among Aldhelm's co-students in the school of Adomnán was Aldfrith, the future king of Northumbria. One of the texts which Aldhelm studied at Iona was the poetry of Vergil. In later life Aldhelm had an extraordinarily thorough knowledge of Vergil, reflected (for example) in the easy and wide-ranging reference which he makes to Vergil's verse in his metrical treatises (*De metris* and *De pedum regulis*), as well as in the pervasive debt to Vergilian diction in his own hexameter verse.[142] It is most unlikely that Aldhelm acquired his knowledge of Vergil from Theodore and Hadrian at Canterbury: there is no evidence that Vergil was one of the texts studied at the Canterbury school, and in any case the two Mediterranean masters, who were native speakers of Greek, will have studied the poems of Homer as part of their early school curriculum, rather than Vergil, whose poetry was the mainstay of the western, Latin-speaking, curriculum. That is to say, Aldhelm must have acquired his familiarity with Vergil before he went to Canterbury. Since Adomnán is known to have expounded the text of Vergil at Iona (this exposition is reflected in the *Explanationes in Bucolica*), it is a plausible hypothesis that Aldhelm studied Vergil with Adomnán during his years at

[140] A suggestion made to me by Andy Orchard, who points out that in the Old English poem *Exodus*, line 488, the transmitted text preserves the meaningless reading *helpendra pad*, which was convincingly corrected by Tolkien to *helpendra wað*: '[wað] was an ancient word meaning "hunting". The sense is "ranging abroad (especially in wild lands)"' (J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Old English Exodus*, ed. J. Turville-Petre (Oxford, 1981), p. 73). The OE runic character wynn (represented by modern editors as w) was frequently confused with p by medieval scribes. The original gloss in 'Epinal–Erfurt' therefore probably read: '*praetersorium*. waad'.

[141] Schlutter, 'Some Celtic Traces in the Glosses', p. 192. Cf. *DIL* s.v. 'scor' (v.n. of *scuirid*), and Pheifer, *Old English Glosses*, p. 111.

[142] For a conspectus of evidence for Aldhelm's knowledge of Vergil, see Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library*, pp. 188–90.

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Iona; and during these same years he will have learned to write rhythmical Latin verse in the style practised in Irish schools, as witnessed in the Hiberno-Latin hymn 'Altus prosator' which was composed at Iona during these same years.

Soon after 670 word will have spread throughout literate Insular communities of the arrival at Canterbury of two scholars of prodigious learning in patristic literature. As Bede says, Theodore and Hadrian soon 'attracted a crowd of students into whose minds they daily poured the streams of wholesome learning' ('congregata discipulorum caterua scientiae salutaris cotidie flumina irrigandis eorum cordibus emanabant').[143] Among these students was Aldhelm who, given his royal connections, will have had no difficulty in financing a period of advanced study in Canterbury. While in Canterbury, Aldhelm and the other English students worked through the curriculum of biblical, grammatical and patristic texts represented in the 'Leiden Glossary'. Aldhelm was able subsequently to draw on his knowledge of these texts in his own Latin writings. One further result of this period of study in Canterbury was Aldhelm's involvement in the compilation of (the *a*-order entries of) the 'Epinal–Erfurt Glossary', which, as we have seen, is largely drawn from lemmata and glosses like those preserved in the 'Leiden Glossary'. But it is clear that Aldhelm was also able to contribute to the compilation of 'Epinal–Erfurt' notes and glosses, particularly to the poems of Vergil, which he had brought with him from Iona. These notes included stray glosses to lemmata in Old Irish as well as, strikingly, words used uniquely in the hymn 'Altus prosator' and in the Latin prose of Adomnán.

It is not known how many years Aldhelm spent at the Canterbury school. We know from a letter which he sent to Hadrian (partially preserved by William of Malmesbury) that this period of study had been interrupted because of illness.[144] It will have required a substantial period of time – many years, perhaps as much as a decade – to work through in detail the curriculum of grammatical and patristic texts represented in the 'Leiden Glossary'. The length of this period of study is thus inextricably bound up with the question of when Aldhelm was appointed to the abbacy of Malmesbury.

ALDHELM AND THE ABBACY OF MALMESBURY

One of the seemingly fixed dates in Aldhelm's career is that he was appointed abbot of Malmesbury in 675. The date derives from a charter issued by Leuthere,

[143] Bede, *HE* IV. 2 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 332). For the background and learning of Theodore and Hadrian, scarcely glimpsed even by Bede, see Bischoff and Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, pp. 190–242.

[144] *Ep.* ii, where Aldhelm explains that, after having been compelled to return home, his return to Hadrian had been prevented by illness: 'presertimque corporeae fragilitatis valitudine medullitus tabentia membra coquente non sinerer, qua quondam . . . domum redire coactus sum' (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, p. 478; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 154).

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bishop of Winchester (670–6), dated 26 August 675 and promulgated 'by the river *Bladon*' (now the river Evenlode, which rises in Gloucestershire and flows into the Thames near Eynsham). The charter is preserved in the various Malmesbury cartularies;[145] and William of Malmesbury quotes a much-abbreviated version of it in his *Gesta regum*,[146] and a fuller version in his *Gesta pontificum*.[147] None of these sources is earlier than the twelfth century. Furthermore, as Susan Kelly has persuasively argued, the emphasis in the charter on Malmesbury's freedom from episcopal encroachment would be best explained on the supposition that the charter was fabricated in the decade *c.* 1125 × *c.* 1135 in the attempt 'to bolster Malmesbury's defences against episcopal predation', notably by Roger, bishop of Salisbury.[148] Because the proem of the charter is a confection of phrases cobbled together from Aldhelm's prose *De uirginitate* and his letter to Heahfrith (*Ep.* v), it seems likely that the twelfth-century forger based himself on a document confected in the late tenth or early eleventh century, when those two works of Aldhelm were intensively studied as part of the curriculum in Anglo-Saxon schools.[149]

What then of the date of the charter, 26 August 675? Various evidence suggested to Susan Kelly that 'the formulation of the dating clause is generally consistent with a very early date';[150] she pointed in particular to the wording *actum publice iuxta flumen Bladon*, which could be considered an Anglo-Saxon reflex of the wording of late Roman exemplars, and suggested, therefore, that 'there may be some genuine basis in the tradition that Aldhelm was endowed with Malmesbury by Bishop Leuthere', and that 'a seventh-century document of some kind underlies the present text'.[151] Yet there is reason to doubt that any element of this charter, dating clause included, is authentic. If, for example, the wording *actum publice* is to be regarded as an imitation of a Roman formula, why does the dating clause not contain an indictional dating alongside the incarnational dating quoted above? (Late Roman documents were invariably dated by reference to indiction and imperial regnal year.) Susan Kelly (pers. comm.) suggests to me that, since a dating clause from this period would normally include an indiction, its absence might indicate that the incarnational year

[145] Listed P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an Annotated List and Bibliography* (London, 1968) [hereafter S], no. 1245; ed. Kelly, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, pp. 125–31 (no. 1). The charter is also ptd Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, pp. 507–9, whence trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, pp. 173–4.

[146] *Gesta regum Anglorum* I. 30 (ed. Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, p. 44).

[147] *Gesta pontificum Anglorum* V. 199 (ed. Winterbottom, pp. 524–6).

[148] Kelly, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, p. 128.

[149] See the *apparatus criticus* in Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, p. 507, as well as discussion by A. S. Cook, 'A Putative Charter to Aldhelm', *Studies in English Philology . . . in Honor of Frederick Klaeber*, ed. K. Malone and M. B. Ruud (Minneapolis, MN, 1929), pp. 254–7.

[150] Kelly, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, p. 130. [151] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

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675 was a substitute for whatever date was used in the dating clause of the forger's model. Evidence assembled by Eilert Ekwall for the form of the river-name, *Bladon*, suggests that it is twelfth- rather than seventh-century in date.[152] The charter is attested by six witnesses, among them an 'abbot Haeddi' (presumably identical with the Haeddi who subsequently became bishop of Wessex, 676–705: it is unknown where, indeed if, he was abbot before his elevation to the bishopric),[153] but also by a priest named *Hiddi* and an unspecified *Hedda*. These last two names seem simply to be calques on the name *Haeddi*.[154] Finally, it is worth noting that the scribe of the Malmesbury cartulary (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Wood empt. 5) which served as the base-text for the recent edition of the Malmesbury charters, originally wrote *.dclxxxv.* (that is, 685) before correcting the date to *.dclxxv.* (that is, 675).

In view of these doubts it seems (to me at least) that no aspect of Leuthere's charter can be treated as an authentic record of a late seventh-century transaction; in other words, that there are no secure grounds for dating the foundation of Malmesbury Abbey (and hence the inception of Aldhelm's abbacy) to 675. When, in that case, was Malmesbury founded?[155] Or, more relevant to the present enquiry, when did Aldhelm become its abbot? If we set aside Leuthere's 'foundation' charter – as I believe we must – there is no arguably authentic charter, either witnessed by Aldhelm as abbot, or in favour of him and the abbey of Malmesbury, earlier than 681.[156] There

[152] E. Ekwall, *English River-Names* (Oxford, 1928), pp. 36–7.

[153] William of Malmesbury states, on the basis of no known evidence, that he had previously been both monk and abbot: 'Hedda qui prius fuerat et monachus et abba' (*Gesta pontificum Anglorum* II. 75, ed. Winterbottom, p. 252).

[154] Note that William of Malmesbury (see previous note) spells *Haeddi* as *Hedda*. The odd-looking name *Hiddi* is attested in other early Anglo-Saxon sources, such as the *Liber uitae* of Durham (ed. H. Sweet, *The Oldest English Texts*, EETS o.s. 83 (London, 1885), 158 (line 159)).

[155] Bede refers to Malmesbury as *Maildubi vrbs*, the 'monastic enclosure of Maildubh' (*HE* V. 18, ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 514), and there has inevitably been much speculation about the identity of Maildubh (evidently an Irishman, judging from his name). Because Malmesbury is sited on an Iron Age hill-fort, scholars have recently inclined to the view that Maildubh was an Irish anchorite who settled in the unoccupied hill-fort at Malmesbury, perhaps at some time in the first half of the seventh century, much as another Irishman, Fursa, occupied the Roman fort of Burgh Castle at much the same time (*HE* III. 19): see Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 190, 217 n., and 250 n., as well as Kelly, *The Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, pp. 2–5 and 305–7 (on early forms of the name Malmesbury). I remain sceptical that Maildubh was the founder of the abbey of Malmesbury, or that a fully fledged abbey (or minster) existed on the site before Aldhelm became its abbot.

[156] There is a charter in the Glastonbury archive allegedly issued by King Cenwealh, who died in 672, dated 670, which is witnessed by 'Abbot Aldhelm' (S 227), but this is a manifest forgery. Similarly, a charter in the Malmesbury archive (S 1166; ed. Kelly, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, no. 2), recording a grant to Abbot Aldhelm by a thegn named Cenfrith and dated 680, is rightly described by Susan Kelly as an 'unequivocal fabrication' (*ibid.*, p. 51).

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are two charters purportedly issued in 681 by Æthelred, king of Mercia (675–704), which are grants of land at Tetbury (Gloucs.) in favour of Abbot Aldhelm and his successors at Malmesbury.[157] One of these (S 71) is a brief memorandum which is in a form consistent with other late seventh-century documents (and therefore not obviously a fabrication); the other (S 73) is 'a more suspicious longer text' concerning land at Tetbury.[158] There is also a charter issued by one 'King' Baldred preserved in the Glastonbury archive, dated 681 and witnessed by 'Abbot Aldhelm'; but this document has many late and suspicious features (not least the identity of 'King' Baldred and the dedication of the church at Glastonbury to Mary and St Patrick), and is unreliable evidence for the date of Aldhelm's abbacy at Malmesbury.[159] Only when we reach 685 or so does the charter evidence fo Aldhelm's abbacy at Malmesbury become secure.[160] All of which is tantamount to saying that the beginning of Aldhelm's abbacy cannot be reliably dated before 680, and possibly not before 685.

In light of this uncertainty, it is worth asking whether an understanding of Aldhelm's personal circumstances, in particular his royal connections, can throw any light on this problem. We know from *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that in 685 Ceadwalla 'began to contend for the kingdom' of Wessex.[161] The implication, not stated by the chronicler, is that Centwine, who had been king since 676, died in that year. Bede's *HE* unfortunately makes no mention of Centwine; but we know from Aldhelm's third *carmen ecclesiasticum* that Centwine had abdicated sometime before his death (whenever that took place), leaving a substantial endowment to a monastery (unfortunately not named by Aldhelm) where he could pursue a life of devotion in retirement.[162] Perhaps, therefore, Centwine's abdication is to be dated somewhat before 685 (but not before 682 when, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, he put

[157] S 71 and 73; ed. Kelly, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, nos. 3–4 (pp. 133–8).

[158] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

[159] S 236. On the identity of 'King' Baldred, see Kelly, *The Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, pp. 148–9. Another charter in the Glastonbury archive issued by King Centwine (S 237) and apparently dated to 682 is similarly witnessed by 'Abbot Aldhelm'; but this charter, too, has many suspicious features.

[160] A grant by King Berhtwald (S 1169 = *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, no. 5) to Abbot Aldhelm, dated 30 July 685, is thought by Susan Kelly to be based on 'a genuine seventh-century diploma' (*ibid.*, p. 140).

[161] *ASC* s.a. 685 (trans. Whitelock, p. 23). It is possible, as John Blair suggests to me, that the *ASC* entry is simply a rendering of Bede's description of Ceadwalla as a *iuuenis strenuissimus de regio genere Geuissorum* (*HE* IV. 14, ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 380). In any case it is an open question how much reliance is to be placed on the seventh-century dates for West Saxon kings given in *ASC*: see Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, pp. 38–49.

[162] *Carmen ecclesiasticum* III. 3–9: ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, pp. 14–15; trans. Lapidge and Rosier, *Aldhelm: the Poetic Works*, p. 48.

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the Britons to flight as far as the sea). In any event, by abdicating in order to enter a monastery,[163] Centwine was following a practice established by numerous Anglo-Saxon kings of the seventh and eighth centuries.[164] But what is intended by the chronicler's oblique expression that, in 685, Ceadwalla 'began to contend for the kingdom' (*ongan æfter rice winnan*)? Contend with whom? After Centwine's abdication, Aldhelm, his son, will have had an obvious claim to the West Saxon throne, even though primogeniture was far from being the norm in West Saxon royal succession; Ceadwalla, the scion of a collateral line of the West Saxon royal house (see fig. 1), will, in order to press his own case, have needed to reach some accommodation with Aldhelm. If, by way of hypothesis, the minster, which Centwine had endowed and to which he retired on abdication, had been Malmesbury itself, Aldhelm's election as abbot would have been an elegant resolution of a potential conflict with Ceadwalla's dynastic ambitions. Certainly Ceadwalla (and Ine after him) seems to have been generous in endowing Malmesbury during the period of Aldhelm's abbacy.[165] In any case, there was apparently no friction between Aldhelm and Ceadwalla: on the contrary, various evidence suggests that Aldhelm accompanied Ceadwalla when the king abdicated in order to travel to Rome and be baptized at the shrines of the apostles.[166]

ALDHELM'S TRIP TO ROME

One of the few documented facts in Aldhelm's life is that, at some point, he made a trip to Rome. We know this because an undated letter addressed to Aldhelm by an anonymous Irishman states that Aldhelm 'was a visitor to Rome' (*quia tu Romae aduena fuisti*).[167] When did Aldhelm go to Rome, and what did he do there? I shall treat the last question first, because an understanding of Aldhelm's activities at Rome can help us to construct a dating framework for the visit.

[163] It is a pity that Blair (*The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*) nowhere discusses Centwine's minster in the course of his long discussion of the relationship of minsters to royal power centres (*ibid.*, pp. 266–90).

[164] C. Stancliffe, 'Kings who Opted Out', *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society*, ed. P. Wormald *et al.* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 154–76; on Centwine, see esp. pp. 154–5 and 170.

[165] See, for example, S 231 and 234, both ed. Kelly, *The Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, nos. 6–7 (pp. 142–6). Both of these charters present problems, not least in the vast size of the grants involved and in the disparities between their incarnational and indictional datings (see discussion by Kelly, *ibid.*, p. 144, who concludes nevertheless that there is 'little doubt that they are based on early documentation').

[166] There is helpful discussion of Ceadwalla's brief but important reign by Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings*, pp. 100–3.

[167] *Ep.* vi (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, p. 494; trans. Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 164).

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The Rome which Aldhelm visited was marked by the public commemoration of local martyrs, both at intramural churches and basilicas, and at extramural cemeteries (that is to say, catacombs). Between the fourth century and the seventh, a number of popes had expended money and effort on the enhancement of these martyrial shrines, as we know from the *Liber pontificalis*.[168] The pope who initiated this process of enhancement, still within living memory of the Great Persecution under Diocletian and Maximian (303) and within a generation of the Peace of the Church established by the so-called Edict of Milan in 313, was Pope Damasus (366–84), known best to history as the patron of Jerome's revision of the Latin Bible.[169] Damasus devoted especial energy to the decoration of martyrial shrines, above all by composing commemorative epigrams (*tituli*), of between four and fifteen lines in length, and having them engraved on marble tablets in the relevant churches by the calligrapher Furius Dionysius Filocalus. Damasus composed some seventy of these *tituli*, and although only one or two survive in approximately their original position, many more would have been visible *in situ* in the later seventh century.[170] Now Aldhelm himself composed a number of *tituli* for churches and altars in his Wessex diocese (these are the so-called *Carmina ecclesiastica*), and it is hardly surprising that Aldhelm's own *tituli* contain reminiscences of the *tituli* composed by Damasus for Roman churches. At least five of Damasus' *tituli* are in question:[171]

Epigr. III (inc. 'Cingebant latices montem teneroque meatu').[172] On an (unidentified) Christian cemetery (the lapidary inscription was found in the fifteenth century on the Vatican Hill, and is now preserved in the museum in the Vatican crypt).

[168] The bibliography on martyrial shrines in Rome is immense. See, above all, H. Geertman, *More veterum. Il 'Liber pontificalis' e gli edifici ecclesiastici di Roma nella tarda antichità e nell'alto medioevo* (Groningen, 1975), esp. pp. 1–5 and 184–93, and C. Piétri, *Roma Christiana. Recherches sur l'église de Rome, son organisation, sa politique, son idéologie, de Miltiade à Sixte III (311–440)*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1976), esp. I, 69–77.

[169] J. R. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 2000), esp. pp. 137–55, and the essays collected in *Saecularia Damasiana*, Studi di antichità cristiana 39 (Vatican City, 1986).

[170] See the excellent edition (illustrated in cases where fragments of the original inscriptions have been preserved) by A. Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, Sussidi allo studio delle antichità cristiane 2 (Vatican City, 1942).

[171] The evidence for Aldhelm's knowledge of Damasus is set out by Andy Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, pp. 236–7. I leave out of account Orchard's identifications of debts to the first two of Damasus's epigrams in Ferrua's edition – one on St Paul (inc. 'Iam dudum Saulus procerum praecepta secutus'), one an exhortation to Christians (inc. 'Tityre tu fido recubans sub tegmine Christi') – since they are not epigraphical (that is, they were not inscribed in churches).

[172] Listed D. Schaller and E. Könsgen, *Initia carminum Latinorum saeculo undecimo antiquiorum* (Göttingen, 1977) [hereafter *ICL*], 2315; ed. Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, pp. 88–93.

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Epigr. XVI (inc. 'Hic congesta iacet quaeris si turba piorum').[173] On popes buried in the 'Crypt of the Popes' in the catacombs of Callistus on the Via Appia.[174]

Epigr. XVII (inc. 'Tempore quo gladius secuit pia uiscera matris').[175] On Pope Sixtus II (d. 258), also buried in the 'Crypt of the Popes' in the catacombs of Callistus on the Via Appia.

Epigr. XXXV (inc. 'Hippolytus fertur premerent cum iussa tyranni').[176] On St Hippolytus (d. 258), buried in the church of St Hippolytus on the Via Tiburtina.[177]

Epigr. XLVII (inc. 'Aspice descensum, cernes mirabile factum').[178] On SS Protus and Hyacinthus, buried in the catacomb of Basilla on the Via Salaria Vetus.[179]

To these five *tituli* of Damasus may be added one composed by or for Pope Sixtus III (432–40) on the occasion of his rebuilding of the great basilica now known as S. Maria Maggiore.[180] The question is, how did Aldhelm come to know these *tituli*?

On the one hand, all of these inscriptions were almost certainly visible *in situ* in seventh-century Rome. On the other hand, they were all in circulation in manuscript by no later than the ninth century, and possibly as early as the mid-seventh, in manuscript collections (called *syllogae*) of Roman *tituli*. The *syllogae* relevant to the present discussion are as follows:

C=*Sylloge Centulensis*, the 'Sylloge of Saint-Riquier', a collection of sixty-seven *tituli* of Roman churches, the core of which was apparently assembled

[173] Listed *ICL* 6312; ed. Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, pp. 119–23.

[174] On the catacombs of Callistus, and the 'Crypt of the Popes' in particular, see E. Josi, *Il cimitero di Callisto* (Rome, 1933); L. Reekmans, *La Tombe du pape Corneille et sa région céméteriale* (Vatican City, 1964); A. Ferrua, 'Cimitero di S. Callisto', *Rivista di archeologia cristiana* 57 (1981), 7–24; and A. Baruffa, *The Catacombs of St Callixtus*, trans. W. Purdy (Vatican City, 1993).

[175] Listed *ICL* 16193; ed. Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, pp. 123–6.

[176] Listed *ICL* 6852; ed. Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, pp. 169–74.

[177] The church has not been identified: see G. B. de Rossi, 'Elogio damasiano del celebre Ippolito martire sepolto presso la Via Tiburtina', *Bullettino di archeologia cristiana* 3rd ser. 6 (1881), 26–55.

[178] Listed *ICL* 1125; ed. Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, pp. 190–3.

[179] See C. Carletti, *Iscrizioni cristiane inedite del cimitero di Bassilla «ad S. Hermetem»* (Vatican City, 1976).

[180] Listed *ICL* 17340; ed. from various individual *syllogae* (on which see below) – the original inscription is not extant – by G. B. de Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae vrbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores* II. 1 (Rome, 1888) [hereafter *ICVR*], pp. 71, 98, 139 and 435. The first line of the inscription is quoted by Aldhelm in his treatise *De pedum regulis* (ed. Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, p. 153). On the church of S. Maria Maggiore, see R. Krautheimer, *Corpus basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, 5 vols. (Vatican City, 1937–77), III, 1–60; V. Saxer, *Sainte-Marie-Majeure. Une basilique de Rome dans l'histoire de la ville et de son église (Ve–XIIIe siècle)*, Collection de l'Ecole française de Rome 283 (Rome, 2001); and H. Brandenburg, *Ancient Churches of Rome from the Fourth to the Seventh Century*, trans. A. Kropp (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 176–89.

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during the pontificate of Pope Honorius I (625–38), preserved in a manuscript written at Corbie, now partly in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 7701, fols. 129–40, and partly in St Petersburg, Russian National Library, F. v. XIV. 1 (Corbie, s. viii^{ex}); the *sylloge* is on 123r–133v of the St Petersburg part.[181] The manuscript also contains copies of Venantius Fortunatus, *Carmina* (6r–104v), a breviate text of Aldhelm, *Carmen de uirginitate* (110v–122r), Aldhelm, *Enigmata* (134r–138v), and the *Aenigmata* of Symposius (138v–143v).

Ca=*Sylloge Cantabrigiensis*, the 'Sylloge of Cambridge', a collection of thirty-four papal epitaphs and inscriptions pertaining to Roman churches which have been interpolated into a late copy of the *Liber pontificalis*, now Cambridge, University Library, Kk. 4. 6 (Worcester, s. xii^{1}), fols. 224–80. The latest epitaph commemorates Pope John VII (705–7).[182]

L_4=*Sylloge Laureshamensis IV*, the 'Fourth Lorsch Sylloge', a collection of 104 *tituli* and epigrams preserved as the fourth such collection in a manuscript from Lorsch, now Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 833, 55v–82r (NE France [?Lotharingia], s. ix^{1}).[183]

T=*Sylloge Turonensis*, the 'Sylloge of Tours', a collection of forty-two *tituli*, of which thirty-seven pertain to Roman churches (the remaining five represent a later addition to the collection: see below), preserved in two late medieval manuscripts which derive from a lost ancestor dating perhaps from the second half of the seventh century: Klosterneuburg, Stiftsbibliothek, 723 (s. xii), 264v–269r, and Göttweig, Stiftsbibliothek, 64 (s. xiii), 163v–169v.[184]

Did Aldhelm know the *tituli* from first-hand experience of Rome (the assumption being that he made his own transcriptions while visiting the churches and catacombs in question), or by way of an early *sylloge* (or *syllogae*)? When I treated the question in 1985, I noted that Roman *syllogae* were certainly in circulation in England no later than the eighth century (such a *sylloge* lies behind Milred of

[181] Ptd de Rossi, *ICVR*, pp. 72–94. On the manuscript, see *CLA* V, no. 570 and XI, no. **570.

[182] Ptd A. Silvagni, 'La silloge epigrafica di Cambridge', *Rivista di archeologia cristiana* 20 (1943), 49–112. This important *sylloge* was discovered by Wilhelm Levison, 'Aus Englischen Bibliotheken II', *Neues Archiv* 35 (1910), 331–431, esp. pp. 350–66; see also L. Duchesne, 'Le recueil épigraphique de Cambridge', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 30 (1910), 279–311; and O. Marucchi, 'Studio critico sulla nuova silloge di Cambridge e sulla menzione *Sumite perpetuam* ecc. in relazione alla memoria di S. Pietro nel cimitero di Priscilla', *Nuovo bullettino di archeologia cristiana* 16 (1910), 69–129.

[183] Ptd de Rossi, *ICVR*, pp. 95–118. On the manuscript, see C. Vircillo Franklin, 'The Epigraphic Syllogae of BAV Palatinus Latinus 833', *Roma, magistra mundi: Itineraria culturae medievalis. Mélanges offerts au Père L. E. Boyle à l'occasion de son 75e anniversaire*, ed. J. Hamesse, 3 vols. (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1998), II, 975–90, with discussion of L_4 at pp. 986–8.

[184] Ptd de Rossi, *ICVR* pp. 58–71.

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Worcester's collection of epigrams), and stated (wrongly) that the *titulus* of Pope Sixtus III from S. Maria Maggiore was preserved only in the 'Sylloge of Tours' (T);[185] but Andy Orchard subsequently pointed out that several of the *tituli* known to Aldhelm were also found in the 'Fourth Lorsch Sylloge' (L_4), which on his evidence seemed a more probable source for Aldhelm.[186] But the matter is not straightforward, for two of the *tituli* of Damasus which, on Orchard's evidence, were known to Aldhelm, are found neither in the 'Sylloge of Tours' nor in the 'Fourth Lorsch Sylloge'. The five Damasan *tituli* known to Aldhelm, together with that for Pope Sixtus III in S. Maria Maggiore, are preserved in *syllogae* as follows:

Epigr. III (on an unidentified cemetery): only in Ca
Epigr. XVI (from the 'Crypt of the Popes' in the catacombs of Callistus): L_4 and T
Epigr. XVII (also from the 'Crypt of the Popes'): only in L_4
Epigr. XXXV (on St Hippolytus, from a church on the Via Tiburtina): only in C
Epigr. XLVII (on SS. Protus and Hyacinthus, from the catacombs of Basilla): only L_4
titulus for Pope Sixtus III (S. Maria Maggiore): L_4 and T

If Aldhelm had known these six *tituli* solely in manuscript, in other words, he would have needed access to four separate *syllogae*.

Let me return briefly to the possibility that Aldhelm had seen these inscriptions in Rome and had made his own copies of them. By the mid-seventh century at latest, the martyrial shrines of Rome were attracting huge numbers of pilgrims. Then as now it would have been difficult to find all these shrines without the help of a guidebook, and it was at this time, apparently, that the first guidebooks (properly called *itineraria*) came into existence.[187] The earliest such *itinerarium* is arranged so that it treats the important gates and highways leading through them out of Rome to the catacombs, beginning at the Vatican with the Porta Cornelia and Via Cornelia, and proceeding clockwise around the city, ending back near the Vatican at the Via Aurelia.[188] On the basis of various commemorations, Giovanni Battista de Rossi was able to date the text to the period 648 × 682.[189] If, for sake of argument, Aldhelm had had this guidebook

[185] Lapidge and Rosier, *Aldhelm: the Poetic Works*, p. 36.
[186] Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, pp. 203–6.
[187] The Roman *itineraria* are edited, with detailed topographical commentary, in R. Valentini and G. Zucchetti, *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, 4 vols. (Rome, 1942–53).
[188] *Ibid.*, II, 133–53; also ptd, with minimal commentary, in CCSL 175, 323–8.
[189] G. B. de Rossi, *La Roma sotterranea cristiana descritta ed illustrata*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1864–77) I, 146. De Rossi noted, for example, that SS. Primus and Felicianus are already commemorated on

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in his hand when visiting martyrial shrines in extramural cemeteries, it would have directed him *inter alia* to those churches where the *tituli* of Damasus were to be found, namely: the church of SS Protus and Hyacinthus in the catacombs of Basilla on the Via Salaria Vetus; the church of Hippolytus on the Via Tiburtina; and the catacombs of Callistus, with its 'Crypt of the Popes', on the Via Appia. (He might also have found it interesting to note that the head of the Persian martyr Anastasius was preserved in the monastery of S. Anastasio at the Aquas Saluias on the Via Ostense: for it was from this monastery that Archbishop Theodore came to England, bringing with him a copy of the *Passio S. Anastasii*, and introducing the cult of the Persian martyr to Anglo-Saxon England.) The relevant information is contained in this *itinerarium* as follows (I print in bold the names of those martyrs commemorated in Damasan *tituli* known to Aldhelm):

Quarta porta et Via Salaria, quae modo Sancti Siluestri dicitur. Ibi iuxta uiam sanctus Hermes requiescit, et sancta Vasella [*leg.* Basilla] et **Protus et Iacinctus** . . .

Sexta porta et Via Tiburtina, quae modo dicitur porta Sancti Laurentii. Iuxta hanc uiam iacet sanctus Laurentius in sua ecclesia et Abundius martyr . . . Et ibi non longe **basilica Sancti Ipoliti**, ubi ipse cum familia sua pausat, id est decem et octo.

Vndecima porta et Via dicitur Appia. Ibi requiescunt sanctus Sebastianus et Quirinus . . . Et paulo propius Romam sunt martyres Ianuarius, Vrbanus, Xenon, Quirinus, Agapitus, Felicissimus . . . Nec longe ecclesia Caeciliae martyris, et ibi reconditi sunt Stephanus, **Sixtus**, Zepherinus, Eusebius, Melchiades, Marcellus, Euticianus, Dionysius, Antheros, Pontianus, Lucius papae, etc.

Duodecima porta et Via Ostensa dicitur, modo porta Sancti Pauli uocatur, quia iuxta eam requiescit in ecclesia sua . . . In Aqua Saluia est caput Anastasii martyris.

The unique surviving copy of this Roman guidebook was preserved at Malmesbury in the twelfth century, when William of Malmesbury copied it whole into his *Gesta regum Anglorum* (hence it is known as the 'Itinerarium Malmesburiense').[190] How did it get to England, and to Malmesbury in particular? Aldhelm would be a very plausible agent of transmission.

In theory, therefore, Aldhelm could have visited the extramural martyrial sites of Rome, guiding his sight-seeing expeditions by means of the 'Itinerarium Malmesburiense'. (He will also have visited the great intramural basilicas, such as S. Maria Maggiore, but will not have required a guidebook for such visits.) In all of these sacred sites he will have seen *tituli*, some composed by Damasus and engraved by Filocalus, others composed by later popes such

the Monte Celio, where they were translated in 648, whereas SS. Simplicius, Faustinus and Beatrix are not named on the Via Portuensis, where they were translated in 682.

[190] *Gesta regum Anglorum* IV. 351–2 (ed. Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, pp. 614–20).

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as Sixtus III. The presence of these *tituli* in Roman churches may have given Aldhelm the idea of composing similar *tituli* for his own churches in Wessex. Aldhelm's *tituli* are preserved as the collection designated *Carmina ecclesiastica* by Ehwald,[191] and include the following:

(I) a *titulus* of twenty-one lines for an unidentified church dedicated to SS Peter and Paul, perhaps in Malmesbury;
(II) a *titulus* of thirty-one lines for an unidentified church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, perhaps also in Malmesbury;
(III) a lengthy poem of eighty-five lines, celebrating a church built by Bugga (Aldhelm's sister, Osburg?), of which the first sixteen lines were possibly intended as a *titulus* for the unidentified church, the apse of which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary (lines 41 and 59–65), and possibly identical with that commemorated by Aldhelm in no. II;
(IV) a sequence of twelve *tituli* for altars dedicated to each of the twelve apostles in an unidentified church, possibly identical with that commemorated in no. I (it is unlikely to be identical with that celebrated in nos. II–III, since the apse in Bugga's church was dedicated to the Virgin, whereas that in no. IV is dedicated to St Peter);
(V) a *titulus* for a 'shrine' (*dilubrum*) dedicated to the later apostle Matthias.

In sum, Aldhelm's *tituli* possibly relate to two churches – one dedicated to SS Peter and Paul, the other to the Virgin – both located in Malmesbury. In the seventh and eighth centuries it was common practice in Anglo-Saxon England for a minster to be provided with two churches, one dedicated to an apostle (or apostles), the other to the Virgin, with the lesser church (St Mary's) often standing due east of the greater (apostolic) church.[192] With the exception of no. III, which, since it mentions the death of King Ceadwalla and the accession of King Ine (688–726), cannot have been composed before 689, Aldhelm's *tituli* cannot be dated; they could all have been composed after Aldhelm became abbot of Malmesbury, and after he returned from Rome.

If Aldhelm was inspired to compose *tituli* for his own churches while in Rome, the question nevertheless remains of whether he knew those Roman *tituli* which served him as model by way of manuscript *syllogae* or by way of personal transcriptions which he made during the course of visits to Roman churches. The evidence is complex and the answer is not straightforward. Verbal echoes of Damasan *tituli* in Aldhelm's verse occur in his *Enigmata* and the *Carmen de uirginitate*, not – surprisingly, perhaps – in the *Carmina ecclesiastica*.[193] In his treatise

[191] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, pp. 11–32.
[192] See Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 199–201.
[193] See Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, pp. 236–7.

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De pedum regulis Aldhelm quotes the first line of the *titulus* in S. Maria Maggiore as follows:

Virgo Maria tibi Sixtus nova templa dicavi.[194]

As we have seen, the poem from which this line is taken is preserved in two *syllogae*: the 'Sylloge of Tours' (T) and the 'Fourth Lorsch Sylloge' (L_4). In T the line is recorded in precisely the form quoted by Aldhelm;[195] in L_4, however, a variant form of the line is given:

Virgo Maria tibi Xystus nova tecta dicavit.[196]

The variants are sufficient to establish that Aldhelm did not take his quotation from (a seventh-century predecessor of) the 'Fourth Lorsch Sylloge'; but what of the 'Sylloge of Tours'? As it is preserved in two late medieval manuscripts, the 'Sylloge of Tours' is composite, consisting of thirty-seven *tituli* pertaining to churches in seventh-century Rome; the remaining items form a sort of appendix which was evidently added to the Roman collection at Tours (including an epitaph for one Ebrachar who had reportedly endowed and constructed four *cenobia* in Tours itself). Three items in the appendix are *tituli* from Roman churches; they presumably reached Tours by a separate route from that by which the first thirty-seven Roman *tituli* arrived. The *titulus* from S. Maria Maggiore quoted by Aldhelm is one of these. Now among the three Roman *tituli* in the appendix to T is the epitaph for the West Saxon king Ceadwalla,[197] who had abdicated in 688 and travelled to Rome to be baptized, where he died still wearing the white surplice in which he had been baptized, on 10 April 689. Because the papacy at this time greatly valued its links with the English church (established first by Pope Gregory the Great), the current pope, Sergius (687–701) determined to commemorate the death of Ceadwalla with an epitaph engraved in St Peter's. In addition to T, the epitaph for Ceadwalla is also preserved in two other *syllogae* (C and L_4);[198] but it is best known to students of Anglo-Saxon history because it is quoted *in extenso* by Bede during the course of his discussion of Ceadwalla in bk V of the *HE*.[199] Giovanni Battista de Rossi produced a critical edition of the epitaph from these various witnesses,[200] and Richard Sharpe has recently done likewise.[201] De Rossi was able to show that the epitaph had been engraved on a tablet on the wall of the outer porticus of St Peter's on the Vatican; the porticus stretched across the whole western façade of the basilica, near to the place to which Pope Sergius had

[194] *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 153. [195] De Rossi, *ICVR*, p. 71. [196] *Ibid*., p. 98.
[197] *Ibid*. p. 70. [198] *Ibid*. pp. 79 (C) and 111 (L_4).
[199] *HE* V. 7 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 470–2). [200] *ICVR*, pp. 288–9.
[201] R. Sharpe, 'King Ceadwalla's Roman Epitaph', *Latin Learning and English Lore*, ed. O'Brien O'Keeffe and Orchard I, 171–93.

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himself translated the remains of Pope Leo the Great in 688 (in the late seventh century, St Peter's was still essentially the fourth-century Constantinian basilica,[202] which was only demolished in 1506 to make way for Bramante's present basilica; it was at this time that the tablet containing the epitaph went missing, presumably destroyed).

Since Bede never travelled to Rome, he can only have known the epitaph from a transcript made in Rome and brought back to England by an Anglo-Saxon traveller, perhaps as part of a *sylloge* of such *tituli*.[203] Now it is striking that, of the three *syllogae* which preserve a text of Ceadwalla's epitaph, it is only that in the 'Sylloge of Tours' that can have been used by Bede, inasmuch as the other two (C and L_4) have deeply corrupt versions of the poem, and both lack the formal prose summary of Ceadwalla's death: 'HIC DEPOSITVS EST CEADVAL QVI ET PETRVS REX SAXONVM SVB DIE XII KAL. MAIARVM INDICT. II QVI VIXIT ANN. PLM XXX IMPERANTE DNO IVSTINIANO PIISSIMO AVG. AN. ET CONS. IIII PONTIFICANTE APOSTOLICO VIRO DOMNO SERGIO PP AN. II.'[204] Only the 'Sylloge of Tours' preserves the text in the form quoted by Bede, including the prose summary, which is omitted from the other *sylloge*.[205] As we have seen, it was this same 'Sylloge of Tours' which preserved the *titulus* from S. Maria Maggiore in the form quoted by Aldhelm. It can scarcely be coincidence that two of the three Roman *tituli* included in the appendix to the 'Sylloge of Tours' were known in Anglo-Saxon England by no later than 731.[206] Once again, Aldhelm is a plausible agent of transmission for at least these two texts, the assumption being that he transcribed them himself when he was in Rome and brought his transcriptions back with him to England, whence

[202] For reconstructions of the Constantinian basilica, showing the *porticus* or *exedra* where the tablet bearing the epitaph of King Ceadwalla may have been located, see Krautheimer, *Corpus basilicarum Christianarum Romae* V, 165–279, esp. 180 (fig. 148) and pl. V, together with Brandenburg, *Ancient Churches of Rome*, pp. 91–102 and 275–81 (esp. pl. XI. 9).

[203] Bede also quotes the epitaph for Gregory the Great in *HE* II. 1 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 132), which he presumably took from the same source. The epitaph for Gregory (inc. 'Suscipe terra tuo corpus de corpore sumtum') is preserved *inter alia* in C and L_4, but not in T.

[204] Ed. de Rossi, *ICVR*, p. 288; ed. Sharpe, 'King Ceadwalla's Roman Epitaph', p. 177: 'Here was buried Ceadwalla, also known as Peter, king of the [West] Saxons, on the 20th of April, in the second indiction [i.e. in 689]. He lived thirty years, more or less, during the reign of Lord Justinian, the holy emperor, in the year of his [reading EIVS for the transmitted ET] fourth consulship and in the second year of the pontificate of the holy pope Sergius.' Justinian II was emperor 685–95 (and again 705–11).

[205] The text in T has, however, a number of errors not found in Bede: in the prose summary quoted above, for example, T has *Saxonorum* for *Saxonum*, *indict. iii* for *indict. ii*, *plurimos* for *plm* (= *plus minus*), etc.

[206] Aldhelm's familiarity with the wording of the Ceadwalla epitaph is reflected in the diction of his *Carmen ecclesiasticum* III, particularly in his account of the death of Ceadwalla in Rome (lines 17–32): cf., for example, the words of the epitaph ('pollentia regna . . . Ceadual armipotens') and Aldhelm, 'Rex Caeduualla, potens regni possessor' (line 18), etc.

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they were copied and used by Bede, and subsequently transmitted to Tours and incorporated as part of an appendix to the 'Sylloge of Tours'.

The implication of this hypothesis is that Aldhelm accompanied his kinsman Ceadwalla to Rome in 688, and was with him when he was baptized and died there on 20 April 689.[207] But how does the hypothesis square with the supposition that Aldhelm made copies of Damasan *tituli* while staying in Rome, and brought these back with him to England? The proposed new dating of his trip to Rome in 688–9 raises various chronological difficulties. The verbal debts to Damasus which have been noted by Orchard occur either in his *Enigmata* (Damasus, *Epigr.* III) or in the *Carmen de uirginitate* (*Epigr.* XVI, XVII, XXXV and XLVII). Of these works, the *Enigmata* were incorporated into the massive *Epistola ad Acircium*, which was dedicated to King Aldfrith, probably soon after his accession to the Northumbrian kingdom in 686.[208] The *Enigmata* may well have been composed many years before their incorporation into the *Epistola ad Acircium*: many years, that is to say, before Aldhelm's trip to Rome in 688–9. If the *Enigmata* show verbal debts to Damasus, *Epigr.* III, as Orchard has suggested,[209] the implication would seem to be that Aldhelm knew this poem of Damasus from a written source (a *sylloge*?), rather than from personal inspection of the inscription. As we have seen, *Epigr.* III is preserved only in the 'Cambridge Sylloge' (Ca). Could Aldhelm have known the 'Cambridge Sylloge' in some form at an early stage in his career? Various evidence makes this hypothesis very unlikely.[210] The *Carmen de uirginitate*, which contains reminiscences of four of Damasus' *Epigrammata* (XVI, XVII, XXXV and XLVII), cannot be dated precisely.[211] If, for sake of argument, it was composed before

[207] Cf. Sharpe, 'King Ceadwalla's Roman Epitaph', p. 186: 'Whatever the circumstances in which Ceadwalla left his kingdom for Rome, he would surely have taken some senior churchman with him, and Aldhelm may well have been the man.' In his *Vita S. Aldhelmi* (c. 6) Faricius stated that Pope Sergius had summoned Aldhelm to Rome (ed. Winterbottom, 'An Edition of Faricius', p. 103); on the strength of Faricius's statement, Thomas Wright conjectured that Aldhelm accompanied Ceadwalla to Rome in 688: *Biographia Britannica literaria*, 2 vols. (London, 1842), I, 216.

[208] Here, too, there are difficulties with Aldhelm's self-designation: he describes himself as *catholicae vernaculus ecclesiae*, although on any reckoning he must have been abbot of Malmesbury by 686; see below, p. 67.

[209] *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, p. 237.

[210] Alongside a collection of *tituli* for Roman churches, the 'Cambridge Sylloge' includes a collection of papal epitaphs for popes up to and including Pope John VII (705–7). This fact makes it unlikely that the 'Cambridge Sylloge' could have been available to Aldhelm at the time he was composing his *Enigmata*, perhaps in the 670s.

[211] See Lapidge and Rosier, *Aldhelm: the Poetic Works*, pp. 12–14. The most that can safely be said is that the *Carmen de uirginitate* was composed *after* the prose *De uirginitate*, which in turn was apparently composed before Aldhelm became abbot of Malmesbury, since in the dedication of the prose work he describes himself not as abbot but simply as a 'supplex ecclesiae bernaculus' (for the chronology of Aldhelm's self-designations, see the Appendix, below, pp. 66–9).

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Aldhelm's trip to Rome in 688–9, the implication would be that Aldhelm must have known these four *epigrammata* in one or more *syllogae*,[212] rather than from personal inspection of the inscriptions themselves. If, however, the *Carmen de uirginitate* was composed after the trip to Rome – and there is nothing in the evidence to rule out such a possibility – then his knowledge of the four Damasan *Epigrammata* in question could arguably derive from personal knowledge. Unfortunately, the uncertainties attending the chronology of Aldhelm's writings rule out a definite solution to this problem.

Similar uncertainties attend the *titulus* of Pope Sixtus III from S. Maria Maggiore. This poem is quoted by Aldhelm in his treatise *De pedum regulis*, which (like the *Enigmata*) was incorporated in his *Epistola ad Acircium*, sent, as we have seen, to King Aldfrith soon after his accession in 686 – several years, in other words, before the suggested date of Aldhelm's trip to Rome in 688–9. Does this mean that Aldhelm knew this poem only from a *sylloge*? Only in the case of the epitaph for King Ceadwalla is Aldhelm's knowledge of the poem, as reflected in his own *Carmen ecclesiasticum* III, unquestionably datable to the period after 688–9.

Let us return to Aldhelm's activity in Rome. While there Aldhelm will have visited the sites of many Roman martyrs, perhaps making use of the pilgrims' guidebook now preserved as the 'Itinerarium Malmesburiense'. He arguably made transcriptions of some of the Damasan *epigrammata* on display at these sites. Through Ceadwalla he presumably came into contact with Pope Sergius and, unlike Ceadwalla, will have been able to converse fluently with the pope in Latin. Aldhelm will have been aware that contemporary Anglo-Saxon churchmen had taken care to secure papal privileges for their monasteries, as, for example, Benedict Biscop had done in the case of Monkwearmouth and Jarrow.[213] Through his own contact with Pope Sergius, Aldhelm was able to present his petition for a similar privilege for two of his monasteries, that of SS Peter and Paul at Malmesbury and that of St John the Baptist 'on the river Frome' (that is, at Frome (Somerset) itself).[214] Sergius

[212] Recall that the *epigrammata* in question are preserved in the following *syllogae*: the 'Sylloge of Saint-Riquier' (XXXV), the 'Fourth Lorsch Sylloge' (XVI, XVII, and XLVII), and the 'Sylloge of Tours' (XVI).

[213] See discussion by W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946), pp. 22–7 (who does not, however, mention Malmesbury), and Kelly, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, pp. 6–7.

[214] I previously suggested that, since Aldhelm is said by William of Malmesbury to have built a church at Wareham (Dorset), which is situated on another river Frome, the church specified in the papal privilege might be that at Wareham (Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 183); but this suggestion has subsequently been rejected by L. Keen, 'The Towns of Dorset', *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England*, ed. J. Haslam (Chichester, 1984), pp. 203–47, at p. 213.

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granted the privilege;[215] and although no copy of it has been preserved in the papal archives (for the obvious reason that such documents were at the time written on papyrus),[216] a copy of the original must have been brought back to England by Aldhelm. This copy spawned two redactions, one in Latin, one in Old English.[217] The Latin redaction is preserved by William of Malmesbury in his *Gesta pontificum*,[218] and in the later Malmesbury cartularies;[219] the Old English redaction was added in the mid-eleventh century to an incomplete copy of the West Saxon translation of the gospels, now London, BL, Cotton Otho C. i, vol. i (s. xi[1]).[220] There are minor discrepancies between the redactions, notably that the Latin text states the monastery of SS Peter and Paul to have been founded 'by Meldum of sacred memory' (*monasterium . . . quod Meldum religiose memorie condidit*), whereas in the Old English text the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul is simply said to have been 'situated at Meldum' (*gelogud æt Meldum*); and that the Old English text concludes with endorsements by Ine, king of Wessex, and Æthelred, king of Mercia, and with the statement that Aldhelm brought the privilege to King Ine, whereas no such conclusion is found in the Latin text.[221] These discrepancies are sufficient to establish that the Latin and Old English versions derive independently from a lost exemplar,[222] which was probably not the document brought back to Malmesbury by Aldhelm, inasmuch as both redactions (and presumably their exemplar) lack the dating clause, in indictional reckoning, which the papal original undoubtedly contained. There is reason to suspect that the Latin version has been tampered with so as to emphasize Malmesbury's liberty from episcopal encroachment, an issue which (as we have seen) was of vital concern to the Malmesbury community in the decade

[215] The privilege is listed by P. Jaffé, *Regesta pontificum Romanorum ad annum 1198*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1885–8), I/2, 245 (no. 2140).

[216] A point made by H. M. Porter, 'Frome and a Bull of Sergius I', *Somerset & Dorset Notes & Queries* 30 (1977), 249–52.

[217] Both are ed. and discussed by H. Edwards, 'Two Documents from Aldhelm's Malmesbury', *Bull. of the Inst. of Hist. Research* 69 (1986), 1–19, at pp. 9–19.

[218] *Gesta pontificum Anglorum* V. 221 (ed. Winterbottom, pp. 554–8).

[219] It is ed. from all these sources by Ehwald, *Aldhelmi opera*, pp. 512–14.

[220] On the manuscript, see Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon*, pp. 234–5 (no. 181); the Old English redaction is discussed in detail by C. Rauer, 'Pope Sergius I's Privilege for Malmesbury', *Leeds Stud. in Eng.* 37 (2006), 261–81.

[221] See discussion by Edwards, 'Two Documents', pp. 9–10.

[222] Edwards (*ibid.*) suggests rather that the Latin text is a version of the Old English made at Malmesbury for Faricius (hence in the 1090s); but this suggestion does not square easily with her further suggestion that the diction of the Latin text reflects that of the papal *Liber diurnus* (see below, n. 224), nor that at various points the Old English text has what are unambiguous misunderstandings of the Latin text, as Rauer has shown ('Pope Sergius I's Privilege for Malmesbury', pp. 268–9).

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1125 × 1135.[223] Nevertheless, there is reason to think that an authentic privilege lies behind (perhaps at some removes) the two surviving redactions: the endorsements by the kings of Wessex and Mercia (Ine and Æthelred) preserved in the Old English version are likely to be an original feature, inasmuch as Malmesbury lay on the boundary between the two kingdoms, and would have required the support of both kings; and, as Heather Edwards has shown, many of the features of the diction of the Latin text reflect the language of papal formularies preserved in the *Liber diurnus*.[224] In short, the fact that Aldhelm is known to have travelled at some point to Rome provides a convincing context for the papal privilege granted by Pope Sergius; and if the hypothesis that Aldhelm accompanied King Ceadwalla to Rome in 688–9 is correct, the original privilege must have carried the date 689.[225]

ALDHELM AS BISHOP OF SHERBORNE

With Aldhelm's appointment to a bishopric we come to the one securely datable event in his life. As we have seen, Bede reports that, after the death of Haeddi, bishop of the West Saxons (which Bede places at the beginning of the reign of Osred, who succeeded his father Aldfrith as king of Northumbria in late 705 or early 706),[226] the West Saxon see was divided, and Aldhelm became bishop of one part of it, over which he presided energetically until his death four years later.[227] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* notes that Aldhelm, 'who was

[223] See above, p. 49, and N. Berry, 'St Aldhelm, William of Malmesbury and the Liberty of Malmesbury Abbey', *Reading Med. Stud.* 16 (1990), 15–38. It was the unambiguous evidence of twelfth-century tampering with the text of the privilege that led to it being described as 'almost certainly spurious' in Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 10.

[224] Edwards, 'Two Documents', pp. 11–12. The *Liber diurnus* is ed. H. Foerster (Bern, 1958).

[225] Jaffé (*Regesta pontificum Romanorum*, no. 2140) and Hamilton (*Willelmi Malmesberiensis monachi Gesta pontificum Anglorum*, p. 367) dated the privilege to 701, the year in which Pope Sergius died. Ehwald commented (*Aldhelmi opera*, p. 512, n. 1): 'cur ad ultimum Sergii annum (701) Jaffé . . . itemque Hamilton in Willelmi editione descenderint, non video'. Neither do I.

[226] The date of Aldfrith's death is problematical, in spite of the fact that all manuscripts of the *ASC* place it in 705. The date 704 was preferred by R. L. Poole, *Studies in Chronology and History* (Oxford, 1934), p. 80, and by Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 274; but convincing arguments in favour of 705 were given by K. Harrison, *The Framework of Anglo-Saxon History* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 85–91, and these were followed by Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, p. 10.

[227] Bede, *HE* V. 18 (ed. Colgrave and Mynors, p. 514). The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, s.a. 709, specifies that Aldhelm was bishop 'west of the wood' (trans. Whitelock, p. 26; for the meaning of the phrase, see below, n. 228). King Aldfrith died late in 705, on 14 December; it will have taken at least two weeks to arrange for the installation of his son Osred (then aged eight) as king, and given that the successor of Bishop Haeddi (who died 'at the beginning' of Osred's reign: *huius regni principio*) is unlikely to have been consecrated immediately, it is unlikely that Aldhelm's episcopacy began before sometime early in 706; and if Aldhelm died after four years, his death will have taken place in late 709 or early 710.

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bishop west of the wood' (that is to say, Selwood), died in 709.[228] The seat of the bishopric 'west of the wood' was at Sherborne.[229] Unfortunately, in spite of Bede's assertion that Aldhelm presided 'energetically' (*strenuissime*) over his diocese, there is very little reliable evidence to support Bede's statement. There are, for example, no authentic early eighth-century charters from Sherborne.[230] A few charters from other archives are witnessed by Aldhelm as bishop,[231] including one from Glastonbury which has a strong claim to authenticity.[232] But perhaps the most interesting testimony to Aldhelm's activity as bishop of Sherborne is a charter in which Aldhelm states his agreement to remain as abbot of the monasteries of Malmesbury, Frome and Bradford on Avon during the period of his bishopric, but that after his death these houses are to be free to choose their own abbots (free, that is to say, of episcopal interference).[233] Unfortunately, very little can be said in favour of the authenticity of this document: its language is suggestive of tenth-century charters, and its production would seem once again to be the result of Malmesbury's concern to free itself from episcopal encroachment during the period 1125 × 1135. In sum there is very little contemporary evidence for Aldhelm's activity, energetic or otherwise, as bishop of Sherborne.

CONCLUSIONS

Aldhelm's relationship with the West Saxon royal family provides the key to understanding his career. Because he was the son of King Centwine, he could in principle have succeeded to the West Saxon throne. That he did not choose

[228] *ASC* s.a. 709 (trans. Whitelock, p. 26). For the meaning of the phrase 'west of the wood' (OE *be westan wuda*), see Magoun, 'Aldhelm's Diocese of Sherborne *be westan wuda*', who notes (pp. 105–9) that the B-manuscript of *ASC* reads *be westan Selewuda* ('west of Selwood'), but rejects this reading, and interprets the phrase to mean 'west of the (Hampshire) Weald'.

[229] It has been plausibly suggested that the site chosen for Aldhelm's cathedral was that of a former Celtic monastery known as *Lanprobus*: see K. Barker, 'Sherborne in Dorset: an Early Ecclesiastical Settlement and its Estate', *ASSAH* 3 (1984), 1–33. There is no trace of eighth-century fabric in the fragmentary remains of the pre-Conquest cathedral: J. H. P. Gibb, 'The Anglo-Saxon Cathedral at Sherborne', *ArchJ* 132 (1975), 71–110.

[230] See *Charters of Sherborne*, ed. M. A. O'Donovan, AS Charters 3 (Oxford, 1988). The first charter in the archive (no. 1) is purportedly a grant by King Cenwealh dated 671 in favour of the bishopric of Sherborne; but since the bishopric was not established until 705, this document is a 'manifest forgery' (*ibid.* p. 2).

[231] For example, S 246 for Glastonbury, dated 704 and deemed spurious by all commentators, and a charter from the thirteenth-century Muchelney cartulary (S 1176) dated 708.

[232] S 248, issued by King Ine and dated June 705; see the full discussion of this document by L. Abrams, 'A Single-Sheet Facsimile of a Diploma of King Ine for Glastonbury', *The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey*, ed. L. Abrams and J. P. Carley (Woodbridge, 1991), pp. 97–133 (including valuable discussion of the date of Aldhelm's elevation to Sherborne on pp. 116–19).

[233] *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, ed. Kelly, pp. 159–65 (no. 11).

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to do so is one of the most fascinating aspects of his life. By the time Centwine was old and dying, presumably, Aldhelm was so deeply involved in patristic and grammatical studies that he had lost all interest in acquiring secular power; and was probably delighted when his younger kinsman Ceadwalla expressed enthusiasm for the job. Yet one wonders. If, for sake of argument, Malmesbury was not founded until as late as 682 × 685, the purpose of its foundation could initially have been that of housing King Centwine in his retirement; that Aldhelm then became abbot of Malmesbury could have been part of an accommodation reached with Ceadwalla, to remove any threat which Aldhelm might otherwise have posed to the new king. As far as I can see, there is no surviving charter which proves incontestably that Aldhelm was abbot of Malmesbury before 685. On this hypothesis, Malmesbury may have been a minster founded on property belonging to the royal family; and the series of monastic foundations which followed Malmesbury – those at Frome and Bradford on Avon – might similarly have been established on royal property (it was for this reason, perhaps, that Aldhelm 'kept the control of all his houses in his own hands', to use Sir Frank Stenton's words,[234] even after he became bishop of Sherborne). In any case, that the accommodation reached between Aldhelm and Ceadwalla was a peaceful one seems assured by the various incidental evidence which suggests that Aldhelm accompanied Ceadwalla to Rome in 688, returning after Ceadwalla's death in 689 with a papal privilege for his monasteries at Malmesbury and Frome which was endorsed by the new West Saxon king, Ine, another of Aldhelm's kinsmen. In short, we will better understand Aldhelm's extraordinary achievement if we think of him as a well-connected prince–bishop rather than as a retiring monk whose only link to reality was expressed through deliciously difficult Latin prose and verse.[235]

APPENDIX

THE CHRONOLOGY OF ALDHELM'S WRITINGS

The writings of Aldhelm are notoriously difficult to date, not least because they contain so few personal references which can be tied to external (datable) events. However, ecclesiastical protocol required that an ecclesiastic refer to himself in terms of his position within the church's strict hierarchy. Aldhelm must perforce have referred to his title when writing as abbot or bishop; accordingly, the salutations of his compositions, especially of his letters, supply a very rough chronological framework of

[234] *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1971), p. 160.

[235] I am grateful to five colleagues for helpful (and sceptical) comment on an earlier draft of this article: John Blair, Susan Kelly, Simon Keynes, Rosalind Love and Andy Orchard. Carlotta Dionisotti generously provided help with the sources of the early Anglo-Saxon glossaries.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0263675107000026 Published online by Cambridge University Press

three categories: namely, writings composed before he became abbot (at some time between 682 and 686); writings sent as abbot, hence between 682×686 and 706; and writings sent as bishop, hence between 706 and his death in 709 or 710.

THE PERIOD BEFORE APPOINTMENT AS ABBOT

In works of this period Aldhelm typically describes himself as a 'servant' (*uernaculus*) of the church. Thus in the prose *De uirginitate* he styles himself *Aldhelmus segnis Christi crucicola et supplex ecclesiae bernaculus* (*Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 229), and similarly in a number of letters: *Ep.* i, addressed to an unspecified bishop – the relevant name was evidently omitted from the exemplar from which the two surviving copies derive – whom Aldhelm describes as his *patronus*, presumptively the bishop of the West Saxons, either Leuthere (670–6) or Haeddi (676–705), where Aldhelm styles himself *supplex almitatis uestrae uernaculus* (*ibid.*, p. 475); *Ep.* ii, addressed to Abbot Hadrian, which is signed *Aldhelmus bernaculus familiae Christi* (*ibid.*, p. 478); and *Ep.* iii, addressed to one Wihtfrith and signed *Aldhelmus bernaculus supplex* (*ibid.*, p. 479). Possibly to be classed with these letters is *Ep.* v, addressed to one Heahfrith, and signed *Aldhelmus exiguus in Domino* (*ibid.*, p. 488); because Aldhelm refers in the letter to the teaching of Theodore and Hadrian (*ibid.*, pp. 492–3), it may date from the period of Aldhelm's study in Canterbury (670 × 680). There is, however, one composition which, since Aldhelm styles himself *uernaculus ecclesiae*, should belong to the period before his election as abbot, but which on other grounds cannot easily do so, namely the *Epistola ad Acircium*. As we have seen, this composite work was dedicated to Aldfrith, after (perhaps very soon after) he became king of Northumbria in 686, a date by which, on any reckoning, Aldhelm had become abbot of Malmesbury. Yet Aldhelm styles himself simply as *Aldhelmus catholicae uernaculus ecclesiae* (*ibid.*, p. 61), not as (say) *abbatis officio functus*. I do not see how this discrepancy is to be explained, except by supposing that Aldhelm had been elected as abbot, but not yet consecrated, at the time he sent his composite *Epistola* to Aldfrith. In any case, the individual works contained in the *Epistola* – the two metrical treatises (*De metris* and *De pedum regulis*) and the *Enigmata* – must have been composed before, perhaps many years before, the *Epistola* was assembled.

THE PERIOD OF ALDHELM'S ABBACY

There are two letters in which Aldhelm styles himself unambiguously as abbot. The first of these is *Ep.* iv, addressed to Geraint, king of *Dumnonia* (Devon and Cornwall), and urging the British church to conform to Roman practices regarding tonsure and paschal reckoning. Aldhelm styles himself as *Aldhelmus sine meritorum praerogatiua abbatis officio functus* (*Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 481). Aldhelm reports to Geraint that he had been instructed to write by an episcopal synod which he had recently attended (*nuper cum essem in concilio episcoporum*). It is not possible to identify the synod in question (thus, rightly, C. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c. 650–c. 850* (London, 1995), p. 261), and

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hence to achieve a more precise dating for the letter; certainly the revised dating for Aldhelm's appointment as abbot suggested above rules out the possibility that it could have been the Council of Hertford of 672 (as was wrongly supposed by Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works*, pp. 140–3). Since any date after 682 × 686 and before 706 may be in question, there is no chronological difficulty in identifying the addressee of the letter with the Geraint who fought against King Ine in 710 (*ASC* s.a., trans. Whitelock, p. 26). A second letter, *Ep.* viii, addressed to an unidentified woman named Sigegyth, and signed by Aldhelm as *Aldhelmus supplex indigno abbatis uocabulo functus* (*Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 497), unquestionably belongs to the period of his abbacy. A letter sent to Aldhelm by one of his students, named Æthilwald, which addresses him as *sacrosancto abbati Aldhelmo* (*ibid.*, p. 495) evidently belongs to this period as well. It is also likely that a letter addressed to Aldhelm by an Irishman at Péronne named Cellán (*Ep.* ix), as well as the fragment of Aldhelm's reply (*Ep.* x), belong to the period of Aldhelm's abbacy, inasmuch as Aldhelm is addressed by Cellán as *archimandrita*, literally 'keeper of the sheepfold', hence 'abbot' (*ibid.*, pp. 498–9). And although the *Carmina ecclesiastica* contain no reference to Aldhelm's place within the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the fact that no. III mentions the death of King Ceadwalla in Rome (in 689) and describes King Ine as ruling the kingdom of the West Saxons, dates at least this one poem to the period after Aldhelm's trip to Rome. On the assumption that the remaining *carmina ecclesiastica* were inspired by Aldhelm's experience of engraved *tituli* in Roman churches, they may be similarly dated, although there is no hard evidence to confirm the assumption.

THE PERIOD OF ALDHELM'S EPISCOPATE

Two of Aldhelm's letters may be securely dated to the period of his episcopate (706–9), inasmuch as he styles himself *seruus seruorum Dei*, a formula apparently initiated by Gregory the Great, and used in the seventh and eighth centuries uniquely by bishops (see Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 121, and Kelly, *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, pp. 155–6): *Ep.* xi, to Aldhelm's student Æthilwald (see above), is signed by Aldhelm as *extremus seruorum Dei* (*Aldhelmi opera*, ed. Ehwald, p. 499), a friendly variant on the usual formula; and *Ep.* xiii, to Wynberht, abbot of Nursling (Hants.), signed formally by Aldhelm as *Aldhelmus seruus seruorum Dei* (*ibid.*, p. 502), where the formal title is appropriately used because the letter concerns ecclesiastical business (the restitution of an estate and its fishing rights to Malmesbury).

UNDATABLE WRITINGS

There are finally two works of Aldhelm which simply cannot be dated: the *Carmen de uirginitate* and the *Carmen rhythmicum*. Of these, the *Carmen de uirginitate* was evidently composed later than the prose *De uirginitate*, which, as we have seen, is to be assigned to the period before Aldhelm was elected abbot; but it is impossible to say how much

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later. The fact that the *Carmen* contains reminiscences of Damasan *tituli* may suggest that it is to be dated after Aldhelm's return from Rome in 689 (on the assumption that he knew these *tituli* from personal experience rather than from a manuscript *sylloge*), but this is scarcely secure evidence. The *Carmen rhythmicum* concerns a trip taken by Aldhelm through Devon and Cornwall, territories which presumably formed part of his bishopric 'west of the wood': but he could, of course, have visited them at any point of his career. Perhaps he did so in connection with the ecclesiastical business prompted by the episcopal synod to which he refers in his *Ep.* iv. But again, this is scarcely more than a conjecture.

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