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# The Journal of Theological Studies

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## THE EARLY COMMUNITY AT CHRIST CHURCH, CANTERBURY.

THE nature of the early community established by St Augustine at Christ Church, Canterbury, and its history down to the time of Lanfranc's reform have long been the subject of divergent views. The Norman or Normanized historians of the metropolitan church had no patience with any controversy in the matter. They told a simple tale, which they established with appropriate charters, leaving no doubt that St Augustine by Pope Gregory's orders planted monks there as well as at the adjoining abbey of SS. Peter and Paul. In the ninth century a great pestilence carried off all the monks but five, and Archbishop Ceolnoth filled the vacant places from among his clerks that the service of God might be carried on. His successor tried to expel the intruded clerks, but they could not be got rid of until the days of Archbishop Ælfric at the very end of the tenth century. A few monks had always remained, and it had been the rule, to which there were but few exceptions, that the archbishops of Canterbury should always be monks.

History of this kind could not fail to be challenged, when original documents came to be critically studied. Already in 1849, shortly after he had published the six volumes of his *Codex Diplomaticus*, Kemble, in commenting on the tale about Christ Church in the annal for 995 in the Canterbury edition (F) of the Chronicle, wrote: 'Probably it had never been monastic from the very time of Augustine'.<sup>1</sup> Later writers have spoken with more hesitancy, following for the most part the lead of Bishop Stubbs, who thought that an attenuated monasticism may possibly have survived, or that the word *monachus* may

<sup>1</sup> *The Saxons in England* ii 459 (ed. Birch, 1876).

have gone the way of *monasterium*, and have become applicable to a community of clergy living a more or less common life.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand the late Edmund Bishop, though rejecting the Canterbury legend, was very unwilling to allow that the community had quite ceased to be monastic.<sup>2</sup> But neither on the one side nor on the other had there been any systematic study of the evidence offered by the charters—evidence which here as well as elsewhere has been rendered provokingly contradictory, owing to the way in which monks of a later time dealt with their earliest documents.

The experience gained in the investigation of a somewhat similar problem in connexion with the church of Worcester before the time of St Oswald has emboldened me to attempt the more difficult subject of the early character of the community of Christ Church, Canterbury. The charter evidence is much less in bulk and has suffered much more corruption, and we are faced at the outset by the disputed question as to the meaning of the instructions which St Augustine obtained from St Gregory, and the action which he took as the result of those instructions.<sup>3</sup>

Our authority in the first place must of necessity be the Ecclesiastical History of Bede, completed in the year 731, and mainly based for the period in question on letters of St Gregory which are often quoted in full.

In 596 St Gregory sent from Rome a mission of monks to convert the pagan English: 'Augustine the servant of God and with him many other God-fearing monks'.<sup>4</sup> On reaching Gaul they faltered, and sent Augustine back to beg that they might return. Gregory replied in a firm but kind letter, and told them to go forward: Augustine their *praepositus* he has now made their abbot, and him they must obey.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents* iii 576.

<sup>2</sup> See a few guarded words on the subject in *The Bosworth Psalter* p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> A recent attempt to treat the subject afresh which will be found in a dissertation by Margaret Deanesly in the volume of *Essays in Mediaeval History* presented to Professor Tout (Manchester, 1925). It is partly because I cannot feel satisfied with the method and the assumptions of this stimulating essay that I have taken up again a topic to which I devoted some attention several years ago.

<sup>4</sup> Bede *H. E.* i 23 'misit servum dei Augustinum et alios plures cum eo monachos timentes dominum praedicare verbum dei genti Anglorum'.

<sup>5</sup> In a letter to Syagrius, bishop of Autun, Gregory speaks of Augustine as having been at the time of his mission 'monasterii mei praepositum', i. e. prior of the monastery of St Andrew on the Caelian Hill: *Epp.* ix 108.

Thus encouraged 'Augustine, with the servants of Christ who were with him, returned to the work of the Word, and reached Britain'. So there landed in Kent (597) 'the Lord's servant Augustine and his companions, men to the number, as it is said, of about forty'.<sup>1</sup> They had with them by Gregory's orders 'interpreters of the Frankish race', who are afterwards said to have been presbyters.<sup>2</sup>

After a preliminary interview in the island of Thanet, King Ethelbert promised them a hospitable reception and provision for their needs, with leave to preach as they might desire.

'He gave them therefore a place of residence in the city of Canterbury (*mansionem in civitate Doruvernensi*), which was the capital of his whole empire, supplying them as he had promised with the necessaries of life, and not withdrawing their leave to preach.'

'Now when they had entered upon the place of residence granted to them (*datam sibi mansionem*), they began to imitate the apostolic life of the primitive Church: that is to say, serving (God) with continual prayers, watchings, and fastings: preaching the word of life to such as they could; disregarding the things of this world, accepting from those whom they taught only what seemed necessary for their life. . . .'

Thus, living as they taught, they were speedily rewarded by conversions and baptisms. They used the old Roman-British church of St Martin, where the Christian queen Bertha and her Gallican bishop Liuthard worshipped. Presently the king was converted and matters moved more rapidly. The king's baptism was followed by that of many of his subjects, but always without any compulsion.

In gratitude to his teachers the king now gave them 'a place of settlement suitable to their condition (*locum sedis eorum gradui congruum*)', at the same time conferring on them such possessions as they needed of various kinds.

Augustine now went to Arles, and was consecrated bishop, as Gregory had arranged. On his return he sent Lawrence the presbyter and Peter the monk to Rome, to report to Gregory and bring back an answer to certain questions which had arisen in the course of his mission. The first of these questions directly concerns us here.

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.* i 25 'servus domini Augustinus et socii eius, viri ut ferunt ferme XL'.

<sup>2</sup> *Greg. Epp.* vi 58.

Up to this time Augustine had lived as an abbot with his monks. We do not know if he had any presbyters with him who were not monks, excepting perhaps the interpreters who had been brought over from Gaul. That Lawrence is called the presbyter while Peter is called the monk proves nothing—the higher title is naturally used where it is applicable. Such non-monastic elements as the mission may have contained were necessarily merged for the time being in the common monastic life under the abbot's rule.

But a new situation was inevitable when the mission had justified itself by unexpected success, and a native Church had to be organized with a clergy free from monastic obligations. The abbot was now also a bishop, and more bishops would be needed before long. A bishop must needs gather round him a clergy, dependent in the first instance entirely upon himself, and having pastoral duties to fulfil which were inconsistent with a cloistered monachism. What was to be the personal relation of bishops to their clerks in the new churches of the English? How were they and theirs to be provided for out of the offerings of the faithful?

Here we must set out in full the question and the response:

The first question of the blessed Augustine, bishop of the Church of the Kentishmen.

Concerning bishops, after what manner they should live with their clerks: in particular of things which come to the altar by the offerings of the faithful, into how many portions they should be divided; and in what manner the bishop should act in the Church.

Gregory, Pope of the city of Rome, replied:

Holy Scripture, with which it is certain you are well acquainted, bears witness, and specially the epistles of the blessed Paul to Timothy, wherein he took pains to instruct him how he should behave in the house of God. Now the custom of the Apostolic See is, when bishops are ordained, to charge them that, in every stipend that comes in, four portions must be made: that is to say, one for the bishop and his *familia* for hospitality and entertaining; another for the clergy; the third for the poor; the fourth for repairing churches. But since you, brother, have been trained in the rules of the monastery and must not be separated from your clerks, you must establish in the Church of the English, so lately drawn, thank God, to the faith, that manner of life which our fathers had in the beginning

of the infant Church: among whom none of them said that aught of the things that they possessed was his own, but they had all things common.

But if there are clerks outside the sacred orders who are unable to contain, they should take wives and receive their stipends apart: for we know that it is written of those same fathers of whom we have spoken, that division was made unto each, according as any had need. For the stipend of these thought must be taken and provision made, and they must be bound by ecclesiastical rule—to live good moral lives, to keep watch for singing of psalms, and by God's help to preserve heart and tongue and body from all that is unlawful.

But for those who are living the common life, why need we say anything at all as to dividing portions or shewing hospitality and fulfilling mercy? when all that remains over is to be expended in causes of piety and religion, as the Lord and Master of all teaches: 'What remains over give in alms, and behold all things are clean unto you.'<sup>1</sup>

Augustine knew well enough how an abbot should live with his monks, though his recent experiences had shewn him that for some of them at least the ordinary rules of the cloister could not be kept. He had seen as he came through Gaul how bishops lived in dioceses long settled. But among the English all was to be built up from the beginning—and that beginning had been made by a mission of monks. Now the work was rapidly extending: new bishops with a new clergy would be forming fresh centres of church life. How then are bishops to live in relation to their clergy? Up to this point all have been living a common life after the apostolic model. Can this continue, and on what terms? Or are precedents familiar elsewhere to be introduced here?

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.* i 27. It will suffice to give the Latin of the more pertinent clauses: 'De episcopis, qualiter cum suis clericis conversentur, vel de his quae fidelium oblationibus accedunt altario, quantae debeant fieri portiones, et qualiter episcopus agere in ecclesia debeat? . . . Mos autem sedis apostolicae est ordinatis episcopis praecepta tradere, ut omni stipendio quod accedit quattuor debeant fieri portiones: una videlicet episcopo et familiae propter hospitalitatem atque susceptionem; alia clero; tertia pauperibus; quarta ecclesiis reparandis. Sed quia tua fraternitas, monasterii regulis erudita, seorsum fieri non debet a clericis suis, in ecclesia Anglorum, quae auctore deo nuper adhuc ad fidem perducta est, hanc debet conversationem instituere, quae initio nascentis ecclesiae fuit patribus nostris; in quibus nullus eorum ex his quae possidebant aliquid suum esse dicebat, sed erant eis omnia communia. Si qui vero sunt clerici extra sacros ordines. . . .' (This last phrase refers to those below the rank of subdeacon.)

Gregory's answer is practically, 'Go on as you have begun: only see that special arrangements are made for clerks in the minor orders who are allowed to marry; these must have stipends apart. The fourfold division of offerings, ordinarily recommended to bishops on their consecration, does not apply here in the first stage of an infant Church. All that is not required for the common life, and the separate stipends just named, will naturally go to religious purposes. You will easily understand such a relation with your clergy as this, for as a monk you are accustomed to the common life.'

It would be hazardous to draw from this plain and straightforward reply any conclusion whatever as to the relative positions of clerks and monks in the first settlement at Canterbury. What stands out is that the bishop and his clergy, of whatever elements they may be composed, are with but the necessary exceptions to live in common; the bishop is not to have a separate portion of the Church's revenue, nor are the clergy; no such division is to be contemplated as was usual in long-established dioceses.

It so happens that we are in a position to know how the historian Bede himself regarded St Gregory's counsel. For in a later part of his work he tells of the appointment of Cuthbert by Abbot Eata, who ruled both Melrose and Lindisfarne, to the office of *praepositus* (or prior) in the latter place, which was at once an abbey and a bishop's seat.<sup>1</sup>

In the same place from the earliest times there was a bishop living with his clergy and an abbot with his monks, the latter being also under the direct care of the bishop. For Aidan, who was the first bishop of the place, being himself a monk, came with his monks and established therein the monastic manner of life: just as at an earlier period the blessed father Augustine is known to have done in Kent, when the most reverent pontiff Gregory wrote to him, as we have recorded above, and said: 'But since you, brother, have been trained, &c. . . . they had all things common.'

Now this is but a recasting and abbreviation of a less familiar passage in his Life of St Cuthbert, which he had written some ten years before.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.* iv 25 (27) 'Siquidem a temporibus ibidem antiquis et episcopus cum clero et abbas solebat manere cum monachis, qui tamen et ipsi ad curam episcopi familiariter pertinerent'.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita Cuthb.* c. 16 (Giles iv 257 f) 'Namque una eademque servorum de habitatio utrosque tenet, immo omnes monachos tenet'.

Let no one be surprised that in the same small island of Lindisfarne we have mentioned above the place of a bishop and now mention that of an abbot and monks; for such indeed is the case. For one and the same habitation of servants of God contains both together, or rather contains all as monks. For Aidan who was the first bishop of that place was a monk, and was accustomed to lead the monastic life with all his followers. And therefore all the prelates of that place, from him to the present day, exercise the episcopal office in such wise that, while the monastery is ruled by an abbot chosen by themselves with the consent of the brethren, all presbyters, deacons, chanters, lectors and other ranks of ecclesiastical order observe the monastical rule in all respects together with the bishop himself—a mode of life which was greatly pleasing to the blessed Pope Gregory, as he shewed when, in answer to Augustine's question how bishops should live with their clergy, he replied, &c.<sup>1</sup>

We can hardly be wrong in accepting Bede's interpretation of St Gregory's counsel to Augustine. At the outset at any rate, all, whether under the monastic vow or not, were to live the life of monks as far as was practicable together with the bishop himself. As to the further point in Bede's comparison—the choice of an abbot to rule the monastery—that, as we shall see, was soon to come.

Gregory's answer would seem to have been delayed until he was able to send out a substantial reinforcement of the missionary staff. The leader of the new band was Mellitus, whom Gregory speaks of as an abbot; and with him were Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus. All these except the last became bishops, as Gregory had no doubt foreseen: Rufinianus is said to have become third abbot of the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul, known later as St Augustine's. They brought with them an abundance of materials for the furnishing of churches—vessels and vestments, relics and books.<sup>2</sup>

Bede has next to tell us of an important developement which took place at Canterbury. Augustine took over an old Roman church and re-dedicated it to 'the Holy Saviour Jesus Christ our God and Lord; there he fixed an habitation for himself and

<sup>1</sup> Compare what Bede tells us of St Gregory himself (*H. E.* ii 1) 'maxime quia et pontificali functus officio domum suam monasterium facere curavit'.

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.* i 29 'plures cooperatores ac verbi ministros; in quibus primi et praecipui erant Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, Rufinianus; et per eos generaliter universa quae ad cultum', &c.



all his successors. But he also made a monastery not far from the city, on the eastern side, wherein at his request Ethelbert built from the foundations a church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and endowed it with various gifts; where the bodies of Augustine himself and all the bishops of Canterbury might be laid, and likewise the bodies of the kings of Kent.' This was the first church to be newly built; and Augustine did not live to consecrate it. Christ Church, on the other hand, was ready for immediate use. The first abbot of the monastery was that Peter the monk who was one of the original missionaries: he has now been ordained, and is called by Bede 'abbas Petrus presbiter'.<sup>1</sup>

Here was an obvious solution of what might have proved a grave practical difficulty. If Canterbury had been on the same humble scale as Lindisfarne, and if the Roman missionaries had been content with the simple ideals of the Celtic saints, the bishop with his clergy and the abbot with his monks might perchance have gone on happily together as a single family living a monastic life. But the new arrangement of the *habitatio* of the bishop at Christ Church, and the *monasterium* with its abbot hard by on the other side of the city wall, forestalled the possibility of a serious strain between those who were engaged in pastoral work and those who desired to maintain the strictly monastic life of the cloister. It may well be that the plan was already in Augustine's mind when he put the question how he in his *habitatio* should comport himself in relation to his clergy. If so, he would presently interpret the reply as meaning that he and his clergy were to live *regulariter*—to live the apostolic life—that is, as nearly as might be, the same quasi-monastic life as had been natural and necessary in the earliest days of the mission. This would indeed satisfy Gregory's requirement to the full, and the further provision of a monastery close by would certainly have met with his entire approval.

It would be reasonable to suppose that after no long interval the community at Christ Church would become in the natural course of events simply a community of clerks leading what might be called a 'regular' life in common with their bishop. The distinctive characters of the two foundations would be

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.* i 33.

clearly marked. New professions would only be made under the abbot in the monastery: Christ Church would lose the monastic element of its first beginning, as those of the monks passed away who had devoted themselves at the outset to missionary and pastoral labours.

What befell the 'regular' life of the community at Christ Church is hidden from us. But we have evidence that at the end of the eighth century its members still had a 'common table'; and early in the next century Archbishop Wulfred is found endeavouring to enforce the use both of the refectory and of the dormitory. The investigation of this later stage of the history is an intricate task owing to the unsatisfactory character of many of the Canterbury charters.

After an obscurity of two hundred years fresh light is thrown on the community of Christ Church by the charters of Archbishop Wulfred, who succeeded Æthelhard in 805 and ruled till 832. This remarkable man appears to have had large properties of his own in Kent; but of his early history we know nothing more than that he attests charters of his predecessor with the title of archdeacon—a title which thus appears for the first time in the English Church.

Wulfred was archbishop in the troublous days when the Mercian supremacy was giving way before the rising power of Wessex under Egbert. This supremacy had been built up under Penda (626-655), Peada (655-658), Wulfhere (658-675), and Æthelred (675-704), the last of whom had acquired the overlordship of Kent. It had reached its height in the long reigns of Æthelbald (718-757) and Offa (757-796). Desirous of making Mercia ecclesiastically independent of Canterbury King Offa succeeded in getting Lichfield established as an archbishopric in 787. At the council of Clovesho in 794 Hygbert of Lichfield actually signs a charter before Æthelhard, who had succeeded Jaenbert at Canterbury in the previous year. But there were no more archbishops of Lichfield; for under Coenwulf of Mercia (796-821) this policy was reversed. At the council of Clovesho in 803 the restoration of the rights of Canterbury was formally acknowledged, and it is among the acts of this council that we first find the attestation of 'Wulfred the archdeacon'.

This particular group of signatures has a peculiar value as shewing who were the clergy accompanying each of the bishops at the council. Thus for Canterbury we have :

Æthelheah abbas	Wernoth presbyter
Feologeld presbyter abbas	Beornmod presbyter
Uulfheard presbyter	Uulfred archdiaconus

Of these we may note that Wulfheard appears in certain later charters concerning Christ Church, Wernoth was abbot of SS. Peter and Paul (i. e. St Augustine's) from 804 to 826, and Beornmod soon became bishop of Rochester.

Wulfred's signature as archdeacon is also attached to a charter of Æthelhard's last days (805: K. C. D. 189; B. C. S. 319), by which the archbishop grants land 'æt Burnan' (Bishopsbourne) to the *familia* of Christ Church. The land, says the archbishop, had originally been given by Aldhun, prefect of the city, 'to our brethren for their table'. This suggests that the *familia* at that time had a common table supported by a fund of their own apart from the general revenues of the see. They had lost this property 'through the rapacity of a certain king'; but the archbishop had recovered it, and he now declares that 'the brethren shall have the profit thereof to themselves in particular for their table (*sibi singulariter ad mensam suam*)'.

The story is given in fuller detail in a charter of 799 (K. C. D. 1020; B. C. S. 239), by which Æthelhard had recovered the property from King Coenwulf. Here we learn that King Egbert had given to Christ Church properties at Charing in Kent and elsewhere, and had also granted the land at Bishopsbourne to Aldhun, who on going abroad had given it 'to the *familia* which dwelt at the same church'. Offa had revoked these grants, as having been made without his authority as overlord. But now, in 799, Coenwulf regranted them at Archbishop Æthelhard's request to Christ Church, with a clause indicating that the land at Bishopsbourne might be assigned 'to the congregation and *familia* of the same', as in the original grant. This clause only took effect in 805, shortly before Æthelhard's death.

Once again the story is told (K. C. D. 195; B. C. S. 332), when in 811 Archbishop Wulfred gave to the *familia* certain lands of his own in exchange for this land at Bishopsbourne,

which Aldhun—here said to have been a kinsman of Archbishop Jaenbert—had given ‘to the *familia*, and for their own in particular to the brethren (*et proprie singulariterque fratribus*)’.

As Archbishop Jaenbert ruled from 766 to 791, the king of Kent who booked the land ‘æt Burnan’ to Aldhun was doubtless King Egbert II, who reigned from about 765 to 799. Thus we find the *familia* with a small separate endowment at least as early as 799. There does not seem to be earlier evidence for this use of the term *familia* in England, though Gregory’s answer to Augustine had used it in some sense of the households of bishops abroad.

Wulfred’s charter of 811 is a very elaborate document. It deals with a rearrangement of properties by exchange between three distinct parties—Archbishop Wulfred himself, holding *hereditario iure*; Christ Church (*ecclesia Christi*), i.e. the archbishop holding the properties of the see; and the community of the same church (*familia nostra, fratres nostri*) with their small estate of Bourne, given them by a prefect of the city, torn from them ‘by the rapacity of a certain king’, recovered by Archbishop Æthelhard, but withheld from them until the last moments of his life; and finally ceded by them to Archbishop Wulfred in exchange for something more than an equivalent at Eastry.

Returning for a moment to Æthelhard’s charter of 805, of which the original is preserved in the British Museum, it is instructive to observe the kind of change it undergoes in the Christ Church register, Lambeth 1212. In the first place Æthelhard is styled ‘primate of all Britain’, instead of ‘archbishop of the metropolitan city in Dorobernia’; next, the grant is made not ‘to the holy *familia* of Christ Church for their own possession’, but ‘to the Church of the Saviour and the *familia* there serving God, that is, to the monks of the same church’; and further, Aldhun is said to have given the land in the first instance ‘for the victuals of the monks there serving God’.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> B. C. S. 320 ‘*primas tocius Britannie . . . concedo ecclesie salvatoris et familie ibidem deo servienti, id est, monachis eiusdem ecclesie . . . ad victum monachorum ibidem deo serviencium*’.

That the thirteenth-century scribe of Lamb. 1212 is not primarily responsible for the introduction of monks into the document is shewn by the fact that in one instance he erroneously expands ‘m<sup>o</sup>’ (monachi) as ‘modo’.

It will be seen from this how little we need concern ourselves with the references to 'monks' which perpetually occur in the copies of the early charters contained in this register.<sup>1</sup> We are thus relieved, for example, from the necessity of discussing the will of Werhard the presbyter, a kinsman of Wulfred (B. C. S. 402). Werhard had held large properties from the archbishop, whom he survived. He restores all these lands, as Wulfred had directed, 'to the Church of Christ and the monks my brethren who serve God there'. The document (misdated 830) may be an eleventh-century Latin rendering of the original Anglo-Saxon—the language in which it was customary at that time for wills to be written. In any case, when we know the character of Lamb. 1212, we are not surprised to find in it such an expression as *domini mei monachi ecclesiae Christi*.

Archbishop Æthelhard died early in 805; so that the charter which we have been examining was a tardy act of restitution.<sup>2</sup> Wulfred was consecrated in August of that year. He attests as 'Wulfred electus' a grant of Coenwulf and Cuthred (B. C. S. 321), which gives lands in Kent to Wulfhard the presbyter, 'the devoted *famulus* of Archbishop Æthelhard of blessed memory'.<sup>3</sup>

An interesting reference to the community is found in a grant, in Anglo-Saxon (K. C. D. 226; B. C. S. 330), by Oswulf alderman and his wife, of Stanstead to Christ Church—to the holy congregation (*gesomnunege*), accompanied by a petition for 'fellowship with God's servants' and an anniversary. This grant is followed by a confirmation by Archbishop Wulfred, with an arrangement for the anniversary, including a banquet of the community (*higna*): a gift to the poor is to be made 'from the common provisions of the community there at home':

<sup>1</sup> This portion of Lamb. 1212 is written in an early thirteenth-century hand. The modification of the charters which introduced the mention of 'monks' probably goes back to the end of the eleventh century, the period when the stories about monks at Christ Church were inserted into the A.-S. Chron. (F). The 'Evidences of Christ Church' printed by Twysden (*Decem Scriptores* 2207 ff) shew the same modification, and the charters are there further abbreviated: these 'Evidences' form the last part (twelfth century) of MS 189 at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

<sup>2</sup> 'Paulo ante obitum cum persuasione amicorum', as Wulfred's charter says.

<sup>3</sup> Wulfhard 'the presbyter of the late archbishop Athelhard' appears again (K. C. D. 199; B. C. S. 341) as having sold lands at Swarling and elsewhere to Wulfred.

distribution of the provisions sent in from the estate is to be made by the provost (*reogolward*), as may be advantageous to the community and most efficacious for the souls of the donors. The archbishop adds a gift from the estate of Bourne for doles to the poor; and he asks that he also may be remembered.<sup>1</sup>

We now come to a charter of Wulfred in 813, which is of first-rate importance for our subject (K. C. D. 200; B. C. S. 342). It is strangely ungrammatical, but its general import is plain enough. The archbishop begins by speaking of his work 'in renewing and restoring the holy monastery of the church of Canterbury (*sanctum monasterium Dorovernensis ecclesiae*), with the aid of the presbyters and deacons and all the clergy of the same church serving God together'.

Such language seems almost decisive against the occupation of Christ Church by monks at this period. The word *monasterium* is used here for the first time in this connexion: it was perhaps necessary to explain that this was not a restoration of the church itself.

The rest of the charter we may paraphrase thus:

I concede to the *familia Christi* to have and enjoy the houses (*domos*) which they have constructed for themselves by their own labour<sup>2</sup> . . . to hold them for life, with power to bequeath to whom they will, but only in the same monastery (*in eodem monasterio*), not to any one outside the congregation. And I enjoin on my successors that they maintain this gift unimpaired but on this condition:

That they be more humbly grateful to God for his benefits, and diligently frequent the church of Christ at the canonical hours, praying for the forgiveness of their own and others' sins, and also frequent in common the refectory and dormitory according to the rule of the monastic life (*iuxta regulam monasterialis disciplinae vitae*; i. e. as monks do).

If any of them should assemble guests to eat and drink or to sleep in their cells (*cellulis*), he is to forfeit his own house (*domus*), and the archbishop may give it to whom he will.

<sup>1</sup> Oswulf's grant is assigned to 805-810: see Haddan and Stubbs *Councils* iii 567; and Miss Harmer's *English Historical Documents* p. 69. The property at Bourne came to the archbishop by exchange only in 811: so that his confirmation may be later than the original gift; or, again, he may already have had some property at Bourne.

<sup>2</sup> In Lamb. 1212 (B. C. S. 344) this becomes 'W. archiepiscopus adiecit *monachis ecclesiae Christi domos suas quas proprio labore ipse construere fecit*'!

In the attestation of this document Wernoth, the abbot of SS. Peter and Paul, signs next to the archbishop. The names which follow may perhaps be taken as representing the *familia*. There are eight presbyters, six of whom had attested the Bourne exchange of 811; three deacons, one of whom had so attested; two persons with no distinctive title, and then at the end 'Haehferth praepositus'. The position of the 'praepositus' at the end of the list suggests that he was rather a steward than what was afterwards called a 'prior'.

Another charter of equal significance was granted by Wulfred at the close of his life (K. C. D. 225; B. C. S. 380). No date is attached to it, but the signature 'Ego Wulfred gratia dei archiepiscopus' is followed at once by 'Ego Ciolnoth divina gratia archiepiscopus', and the rest of the signatures agree very closely with those attached to the will of Abba the reeve (K. C. D. 235; B. C. S. 412), which apparently belongs to the year 835. Ceolnoth became archbishop in 833 or earlier. It would seem therefore as if this were a death-bed grant, confirmed a few years later by Wulfred's successor.

Wulfred grants to 'that devoted *familia* which shall serve God in the city of Canterbury' a portion of his hereditary estate, viz. four ploughs at Shelford, near Eastry, together with certain meadows which had previously been transferred to him by the *familia*. They are for ever to remain 'for the needs of that congregation'.

In return for this gift and all the benefits which I have done them since our common congregation by God's grace was established (*postquam nostra communis congregatio per dei gratiam facta est*), I implore this my *familia* ever to remember me with alms and psalmody and the celebration of masses for the repose of my soul. And I make this condition in giving this land: namely, that all the acts and words before agreed upon by us remain firm and unchanged, and that each shall strive to bring our agreement into full effect.

This shews—what the former charter did not make quite clear—that Wulfred established the *familia* on a new footing of comparative independence, endowing it with estates of its own apart from the general revenues of the Church. The *mensa* had its little endowment already under Æthelhard or earlier; which would suggest that there then was still some lingering trace of

a common life. But Wulfred created the *communis congregatio*, and enjoined on it the use of the refectory and dormitory after the monastic manner. This was accompanied by a restoration of buildings, but those of the brethren who had built houses of their own were allowed to retain them under conditions.

Moreover that land which Cynehard the deacon had, and he gave it to me, and to him it had been given for his own inheritance by Kings Egbert and Æthelwulf—that is, 85 crops (*segetes*) with the book of the same field (*agelli*)—to that *familia* aforesaid in Canterbury I will give it after my days for the salvation of the souls of both of us: and on this condition, viz. that always night and morning, when the brethren go to the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle for the accustomed chant in supplication for his soul they should chant the Lord's Prayer *Pater noster*.<sup>1</sup>

Cynehard attests as deacon in 824 and 825 (B. C. S. 381, 384), and as archdeacon in 830 (B. C. S. 390).

Also that court which Dodda the monk had in the monastery (*illum curtem quem Dodda monachus in monasterio habuit*), and obtained for himself as his own possession, I grant after the passing of my spirit from the world for the salvation of our souls, viz. of mine and Cynehard's and Dodda's, to the same *familia* freely for their own use and enjoyment, to store their own goods therein; or to entertain the citizens when occasion or need may arise; or, if a presbyter or deacon of the *familia* be afflicted with bodily infirmity, that he may honourably rest there. And in return for the convenience of the gift of this property (*istius villae*) I ask of my devoted *familia* that they be faithful rewarders and intercessors for our souls.

Of Dodda the monk we know nothing more: his case is clearly an exceptional one.

The *familia*, thus fairly established under Wulfred, appears in charters now and then after his time as receiving gifts from individuals who desire to be remembered in its prayers. It is strange that the first year of Ceolnoth should have been selected by the Canterbury monk, who wrote the bilingual Chronicle (F) at the end of the eleventh century, as the date of the fabulous

<sup>1</sup> 'Hacque condicione ut semper vespere matutinoque tempore quando fratres ad ecclesiam beati Petri apostoli ad consuetum canticum ingrediuntur pro supplicatione animae illius illud dominicum orationem *pater noster* decantent.' Possibly the reference is to the ancient church of St Peter not far from Christ Church gate. It may be that Cynehard was buried there.



introduction of clerks to supply the vacancies created by the death of all the monks but five in an otherwise unrecorded plague.

The same Canterbury writer tells us that Æthelred, Ceolnoth's successor, sought to eject the clerks, but in vain; so that they remained, together with a few monks, until they were finally expelled by Ælfric, after his return from Rome with his pallium in 997, that is, less than ten years after the death of St Dunstan.<sup>1</sup>

The alleged introduction of monks by Ælfric is sometimes challenged on the ground that Florence of Worcester states that they were brought in by his predecessor Sigeric. But that statement is an insertion by a later hand in Cod. A (the C. C. C. Oxon. MS of Florence), and is not found in Cod. B (the Lambeth MS): it may be that the interpolator inserted his gloss under Sigeric through mere carelessness.

If the story of this introduction of monks were pure fiction, we should have expected it to have been connected with the greater name of St Dunstan. Some change must have taken place about the time in question: for there is respectable evidence from charters of the reigns of Cnut, Harold Harefoot, and Edward the Confessor to shew that there were monks at Christ Church in the first part of the eleventh century. Moreover we find at this period mention of a *decanus*, apparently in the sense of the prior of the cathedral church—a use of the title which survived at Worcester to the time of 'Warin the dean', *c.* 1136. Thus the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (E) says that Æthelnoth was *munuc and decanus* at Christ Church before he became archbishop in 1020: and Godric appears as dean in 1044, 1049, 1053 (K. C. D. 773, 789, 799).<sup>2</sup>

It may well be that the change from clerks to monks, whether begun by Sigeric or Ælfric, was, as in the case of Worcester under Oswald, effected gradually and without serious controversy.

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<sup>1</sup> See Plummer *Two Saxon Chronicles* i 128 ff and 283 ff for the texts. The same story is told in the spurious charter of King Æthelred of 1006, confirming the monastic properties, which appears in two very different forms, Latin and Anglo-Saxon (K. C. D. 715).

<sup>2</sup> For a list of these deans see Wharton *Anglia Sacra* i 135, where it will be seen how great has been the confusion in this matter.