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In Praise of the Archangel Michael: Piety and Political Accommodation in 11th-Century England.

By

Tara Leigh Gale ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

in

Religious Studies

Department of Comparative Literature, Religion, and Film/Media Studies

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University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled ***In Praise of the Archangel Michael: Piety and Political Accommodation in 11th-Century England*** submitted by Tara Leigh Gale in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Religious Studies.

Feb 1, 2002

Ehud Ben Zvi
(Religious Studies)

Raymond Grant
(English)

John Langdon

John Langdon
(History)

Stephen Reimer
(English)

Most belovèd brethren, it behoves us to honour and to celebrate the memory of the holy Archangel St Michael.

Abstract

In 1982, Dr. R. Grant published the text and a translation of three Anglo-Saxon sacred texts found in the margins of an Old English version of Bede. One of these texts, an untitled "hymn" dedicated to the Archangel Michael, is unique. This thesis will explore the creation and preservation of this text whose origins can be traced to an obscure monastic order in Ireland, to the Norman aristocracy, and to Cornish monasteries. The "hymn" also has connections to various strata of society from William the Conqueror's half brother, Robert of Mortain, to Leofric, Bishop of Exeter, who ministered to the royal court in the 11th century, and to various unnamed scribes and monks of Anglo-Norman England. The "hymn" contributes to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon literature and of the relationship between England, Normandy, and the Celtic fringes in 11th-century Europe.

Dedication

To Dr. E. Ben-Zvi, Dr. R. Grant, Dr J. Langdon, Brother Donatus, Dr. J. Kitchen, Dr. S. Reimer, my parents, and especially to William for having the patience to listen and for showing me a path where I could chase the angels and find the hidden figures of Anglo-Norman history.

Acknowledgements

A special thank-you to Dr E. Ben-Zvi, Brother Donatus, Dr R. Grant, Dr. J. Kitchen, Dr. F. Landy, Dr J. Langdon, Dr. S. Reimer, and L. Burton, J. Ould, and J. Rousseau for all their advice, help, and suggestions regarding Michael and the heavenly and earthly realms, and to William and my parents for listening.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

References

Corpus 41	MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41.
St Michael's Mount	Mount Saint Michael, Cornwall.
Mont St Michel	Mont Saint Michel, France.

nedicite do
minum om
angeli ei
potentes virtute qui facit
verbum eius ad audiendā
vocem sermonum eius ps.
nedic anima mea do
mino et omnia que intra.

Cover Credit

The Limborurg Brothers, Les Tres Riches Heures du duc du Berry, 1409-15, fol 195: *St Michael defeating the dragon above Mont St Michel. (Musee Conde, Chahtilly, Ms65/1284).*

Introduction

The manuscript which is now known as Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41, henceforth Corpus 41, is housed in the Parker Library. Its main text is the B-Version of the OE translation of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*. This main text was written in England by two scribes working concurrently in the first quarter of the eleventh century. A third scribe copied material of various kinds into the margins. This material consists of portions of a Latin missal, six homiletic texts in Anglo-Saxon, charms and loricas in Old English and Latin, a version of the Old English poem *Solomon and Saturn*, and fragments of an Anglo-Saxon martyrology. The manuscript has been described in detail by Humphrey, James, Ker, Schipper, Miller, Wanley, and Grant.[1]

One of the texts which is usually considered one of the six homiletic texts is fascinating in its own right. This unique text, which extols St Michael, begs further discussion and classification. The text of this panegyric is contained in the margins of folios 402-17 of Corpus 41 and can be arranged editorially into twenty-

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[1] Humphrey Wanley, ed., Catalogus Historico-Criticus (Oxford, 1705, reprinted New York, 1970), pp. 114-115; Thomas, Miller, ed., The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People, 4 vols., I.1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1890, repr. 1959, repr. New York, 1976) EETS, OS 95, introd., xvi-ii, and II.1, (London: Oxford University Press, 1898, repr. 1963), EETS, OS 110, intod., ix-x; Jakob M. Schipper, ed., König Alfreds Übersetzung von Bedas Kirchen-geschichte. Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Prosa IV, vol. I (Leipzig, 1897), xxv-viii; Montague Rhodes James, ed., A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), I. 81-5; and Neil R. Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, repr. 1990), no. 32, pp. 43-45.Raymond J. S. Grant, The B text of the Old English Bede: a linguistic commentary. Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1989.

eight sections; the text and a translation thereof have been published by Grant and are reproduced below with his kind permission.

The first two stanzas act as an introduction to the topic and the author's purpose.[2] These two stanza restates Michael's most famous feature, that of dragon-slayer, as well as preparing the implied readers for the revelation of how involved Michael has been in their lives. Ten stanzas covers the gamut of the Old Testament, eight of them (3-9 and 11) mentioning major figures from the historical books, and two (10,12) from the prophetic. The first reference is represented by the first martyr, Abel, and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The author also includes events in which Michael aided the Israelites, in particular their fleeing from Egypt and their adventures and misadventures in the wilderness, followed by a reference to the building of Solomon's temple. Two separate stanzas represent the prophets. The first reference is from *Daniel* and refers to the youths willing to sacrifice their lives for their God. The second reference tells the reader that Michael was always present and available to help all the prophets wherever they were. Two stanzas make reference to two of the most significant figures in the Christian Bible, the Virgin Mary and Moses, and the conveyance of their souls to heaven.

In the remaining stanzas the author makes no direct reference to a specific biblical figure, though there is a reference to the Trinity in the concluding stanza. The text now takes on the appearance of a dialogue in which the longer sections relate detailed accounts of Michael's activities to an audience who then respond with

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[2] The first section ends in a sentence fragment with no explanation for why the author chose not to complete this sentence or section.

additional information which broadens our knowledge of Michael's involvement with humanity. In one section we are told that Michael conveys the prayers of each and every holy man to God and then forgives the transgressions of his household. Michael is depicted as the spiritual ruler of the ecclesiastical hierarchy on earth, which coincides with the next stanza in which Michael is described as the ruler of royal houses. The author has declared Michael to be the secular and ecclesiastical representative of God on earth.

In the next three stanzas the author describes Michael as both gardener and shepherd. Michael is depicted as a worker in the vineyard picking through the grapes and throwing away the corrupt ones. Michael is not only a gardener, but he also a shepherd who guards the Lord's flocks. As in the above two stanzas, Michael is again depicted representing two separate but not necessarily distinct realms. The gardening imagery is emphasized by a third stanza in which Michael is depicted as a farmer separating the evil of humanity from the good, like farmers separate chaff from the wheat.

Stanzas 20-22 provides us with even more insight into Michael's role as protector and judge of all humanity. Stanza 20 discusses Michael's role as judge by comparing him to the one who controls the dispensation of food in the household. as well as reminding the reader that Michael has direct access to the divine king as a star in heaven. The theme of judge of humanity reappears in stanza 22 where Michael is depicted in the role of a heavenly ship's captain collecting "holy" souls to carry away the sea of heavenly life.

In stanza 23 the reader is presented (not with gardening imagery but) with an incident in which Michael protects a specific group of believers against non-believers. This stanza marks a change in tone, and the remainder of the text focuses on the coming of the Apocalypse and the judgement of all humanity. The final three stanzas are the longest individual stanzas in the text and focus attention on the Apocalypse. All the details discussed in these three verses originate from biblical or post-biblical traditions, but with Michael the focus of the events instead of other biblical figures. Again the themes of Michael as destroyer of Satan, summoner and judge of the dead are reiterated. The author's conclusion is that our time on the earth will end with all true believers, healed of all their injuries and sickness whether physical or emotional, in heaven with Michael as our divine ruler by permission of God, his Son and the Holy Ghost.

This interesting text in Corpus 41 is both fascinating and puzzling. As a text unique in the Anglo-Saxon corpus it is a fine example of Old English verse-making which is without peer and which has hitherto received too little recognition. As a list of the various attributes and functions of St Michael, the Old English text is a valuable resource for biblical scholars and one whose worth has not yet been recognized. Finally, as a piece produced in Anglo-Saxon immediately consequent upon the Norman Conquest, its historical and social function are worthy of historians' attentions.

In *fine*, the unique Old English text in the margins of Corpus 41 has much to tell Anglo-Saxonists, Religious Studies scholars, and social historians about Anglo

Saxon literature, the cult of Saint Michael, and political accommodation in England in the years immediately after the Norman Conquest.

In laudem Sancti Michaeli

[1]

Men ða leofestan, us is to Worðianne 7 to mærsianne seo ʒemind þæs halʒan heahenʒles Sancte Michaeles, se Wæs Wundorlic ærendraca ðæs ælmihtiʒan dryhtenes. Eac sWilce nu todæʒe þam ʒetriWum folce he Wæs inlihted 7 ʒebirhted. Forðon ðonne, men ða leofestan, blission We 7 ʒefeon in pisne simbelnisse dæʒ þæs halʒan heahenʒles Sancte Michaeles, se is on hefenum ʒecWeden sWa sWa God sylfa. A ʒehyron We for þon sinderlice drihtnes ...

[2]

He is efenrixiende; he is sWiðe mihtiʒ mid þam heahenʒlum þa standað dæʒes 7 nihtes beforan þrymsetle dryhtnes; se is eallra haliʒra fultum, 7 he is reccend eallra haliʒra saula, 7 he is nerʒende Godes folces, 7 he is stronʒ on ʒefeohte Wið ðane miclan dracan, sWa hit saʒað her on Pocalipsis þære bec. Blission We on heofonas 7 on ða þe on heofnum sint, forðon ðe Sanctus Michael he is stronʒ feohtend Wið þone miclan dracan, þæt is ðonne, Wið ðam aWyrʒedum ʒæstum. On þisne heahenʒel We sculon ʒelyfan 7 biddan us on fultom on æʒhWilcere frecennesse þam Cristenum folce.

In praise of St Michael

[1]

Most belovèd brethren, it behoves us to honour and to celebrate the memory of the holy archangel St Michael, who was the wonderful messenger of the almighty lord. Moreover, it was on this very day that he was illuminated and made bright to the faithful. Therefore, most belovèd brethren, let us exult and rejoice upon this feast day of the holy archangel St Michael, who is called in heaven like unto God himself. Let us ever give ear because of the lord's special ...

[2]

He is a fellow ruler; he is very mighty among the archangels who stand day and night by the throne of the lord; he is the helper of all holy men, he is the governor of all holy souls, he is the saviour of God's people, and he is strong in battle against the great serpent, as it says here in the book of the Apocalypse. Let us rejoice in heaven and in those who are in heaven, for St Michael is a strong fighter against the great serpent, that is, further, against the accursèd spirits. We must trust in this archangel and pray to him for succour in every danger to Christian people.

[3]

Ðis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael se Wæs andfenȝo Abeles saule þæs ærestan martires ðone his broðor Cain for æfstum ofsloh.

[3]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who was the receiver of the soul of Abel the first martyr whom his brother Cain slew out of envy.

[4]

Ðis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael se is hæleða healdend; 7 dryhtne fultumendum hira feorh he ȝenerede, þæt Wæs þonne, Noe 7 his suna þry 7 hira feoWer Wif in þam micelan flode.

[4]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who is guardian of men; and with the help of the lord he saved the lives of Noah, his three sons, and their four wives in the great flood.

[5]

Ðis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael þæs ȝemynd We nu todæȝe Worðiaþ, se Wæs Abrahames onlysend þæs heahfæderes ofer Caldea þeode, cumende drihtne fultumendum, 7 he Wæs latteoW þam ðrym heahfæderum Abrahame 7 Isace 7 Iacobe þurh ða ælðydiȝan land 7 ða uncuðan Weȝas; he Wæs him simle onWeard fultum on æȝhWilcere frecydnesse.

[5]

This is the holy archangel St Michael whose memory we honour today, who was the deliverer of Abraham, patriarch over the people of the Chaldees, coming with the lord's help, and he acted as guide to the three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through foreign lands and unknown ways; he was always a present help to them in every danger.

[6]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael se Wæs ferende on Eastron þurh Israela hus 7 Eȝypta; 7 Eȝypta frumbearn he ofsloh, 7 Israela bearn he ȝefryðode.

[6]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who went at Easter through the houses of the Israelites and of the Egyptians; he slew the firstborn of the Egyptians, but passed over the children of Israel.

[7]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael se ðe drihtne fultumendum þæt Cristene folc mid his ȝescyldnisse in þam Westene feoWerti Wintra he hit ferede 7 fedde.

[7]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who with the lord's help guided and nourished the Christian people with his protection in the wilderness for forty years.

[8]

Ðis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael se ȝesiȝefæsted stod beforan Cananisca cinne, 7 þurh Iosues handa þæt Israelica folc he ȝelædde to þam ȝehatlande þæt is floWende hunie 7 meolce.

[9]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael 7 se æþela forestihtend in þæra cræftena handa þe Salamones templ timbredon.

[10]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael se Wæs stronȝ scyldend þam þrym cnihtum þa Wæron sende in ofen birnendes fires. 7 he þa him bistod se enȝel 7 snitera ȝast he dihtode in hira muð þæt Wæs þonne se halȝa "Benedicete."

[11]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael 7 se æþela scyldend Wið deofles sWipornesse. SWa se Witeȝa sæȝde, þæt þæt deofol þohte þæt he sceolde ȝelæran þæt folc þæt hi Worðodon Moyses lichaman for God for his fæȝernesse. Ða cWæð him to se halȝa enȝel, "Ic ðe beode, mid mines drihtnes Worde, þæt ðu þæȝe þristnesse ne ȝedo þæt ðu his folc ne ȝescildiȝe."

[8]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who stood triumphant before the people of Canaan, and led the people of Israel at the hands of Joshua to the promised land which is flowing with milk and honey.

[9]

This is the holy archangel St Michael and the noble director of the hands of the craftsmen who built Solomon's temple.

[10]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who was the powerful protector of the three youths who were cast into the furnace of burning fire. And then the angel stood by them, and he, the wise spirit, composed in their mouth what was then the holy "Benedicite."

[11]

This is the holy archangel St Michael and the noble protector against the cunning of the devil. According to the prophet, the devil thought that he should instruct the people to glorify the body of Moses instead of God because of its beauty. Then the holy angel said to the devil, "I command thee, with the authority of my lord, not to carry out this act of presumption nor make his people guilty."

[12]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael se ðe a onWeard fultum þurhWunode drihtnes Witiȝan mid him in æȝhWilcere stoWe.

[12]

This is the holy archangel St Michael, who ever remained as a present help for the lord's prophets and [remained] with them in every place.

[13]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael þam dryhten befæste Sancta Marian saule æfter hire forðfore, 7 he hi him bebead.

[13]

This is the holy archangel St Michael to whom the lord entrusted St Mary's soul after her death when he committed her to him.

[14]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael se ðe anra ȝehWilces soðfæstes mannes saule ȝelædeð þurh þa ȝatu þæs ecan lifes to hefena rice.

[14]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who leads the soul of each and every true man through the gates of eternal life into the kingdom of heaven.

[15]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sancte Michael se ðe anra ȝehWilces haliȝes mannes bene ȝelæteð in dryhtnes ȝesyðe, 7 he his hiredes ȝeWyrht mid frofre he him eft toforlæteð.

[15]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who places the prayers of each and every holy man in the company of the lord, and afterwards with words of comfort forgives him the transgressions of his household.

[16]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael 7 se snotora dihtend ðære cynelecra husa; 7 he is se ȝetreoWa hierde ðære halȝan heofonlican ceastre.

[16]

This is the holy archangel St Michael and the wise ruler of royal houses; and he is the trusty guardian of the holy heavenly city.

[17]

Þis is se halʒa heahenʒel Sanctus Michael 7 se ʒleaWa londbiʒenʒa ðæs cynelican Winʒerðes se ðe ðisne ʒetreoWne ʒedeð; 7 þa berian heʒesamnað, 7 ða Wirrestan he ut aWirpð, 7 ðane Wæstm þæs ʒodan Winʒerdes he aʒifeð his hlaforde. HWæt sindon þa berian ðe he þær samnað? Þæt sindon haliʒra manna 7 soðfæstra saula.

[17]

This is the holy archangel St Michael and the skilful cultivator of the royal vineyard who keeps it in order; he gathers the grapes, throws away the corrupt ones and gives the fruit of the good vineyard to his lord. What are the grapes which he gathers there? They are the souls of holy and faithful men.

[18]

Þis is se halʒa heahenʒel Sanctus Michael se ʒoda hirde ðæs dryhtenlican eoWdes, se ðe ne læteð Wulf ne ðeof naneWuht ʒeWirdan on his hlafordes heorde.

[18]

This is the holy archangel St Michael the good shepherd of the lord's flock, who permits neither wolf nor thief to do any injury to his lord's herd.

[19]

Þis is se halʒa heahenʒel Sanctus Michæl 7 se ʒesundfulla saWend Cristes æcera, 7 se Wæstmberenda riftere ðæra hWitra ðeodlanda se his hlafordes bernas ʒefelleð mid þy clænestan hWæte, 7 ða eʒelan 7 ða fulnesse ut aWorpeð, nymðe ðæt sindon ða soðfæstan ðe he ascadæt fram ðam sinfullum saulum.

[19]

This is the holy archangel St Michael and the prosperous sower of Christ's fields, the fruitful reaper of the bright regions who fills his lord's barns with the purest wheat and throws out the awns and the impurities, save that those are the true souls that he separates from the sinful ones.

[20]

Þis is se halʒa heahenʒel Sanctus Michael 7 se ʒetreoWa þeoW þane dryhten ʒesette ofer ealne hiWscipe, þæt he him mete sealde on ða rihtan tid. HWæt is se mete nymðe ðæt he sceal on Domesdæʒe anra ʒehWelcum men his dæda edlean forʒildan?

[20]

This is the holy archangel St Michael and the faithful servant whom the lord appointed above all his household so that he might give them food at the due season. What is the food, save that he is destined on the Day of Judgment to grant every man the recompense he has merited?

[21]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael 7 þæt beorhte tunȝel þæt bið ascinende dæȝes 7 nihtes on hefonum betWexh ðam ȝæstelicum tunȝlum beforan ðam ȝodcundan cyninȝe.

[21]

This is the holy archangel St Michael and the bright star which shines forth by day and night in heaven among the spiritual stars in the presence of the divine king.

[22]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael 7 se æðela noWend 7 se ȝleaWa frumlida 7 se þancWirðesta stiȝend, se ðe his scip ȝefelleð 7 mid heofonlicum Wælum hit ȝefylleð, þæt is ðonne, mid þam halȝum saulum; 7 mid ðy Wryȝelse ðære ȝodcundan ȝefillnesse ofer þæs sæs yðe he hit ȝelædeð, þæt is ðanne, ofer ðisses middanȝeardes frecennesse, 7 þa haleȝan saula ȝelædeð to þære yðe ðæs heofoncundan lifes.

[22]

This is the holy archangel St Michael the glorious ship-master, the skilful pilot and the most renowned sailor, who fills his ship and fills it with heavenly dead, that is, with holy souls; and under the veil of divine fulfilment he guides it over the waves of the ocean, that is, through the dangers of this earthly world, and leads the holy souls to the sea of the heavenly life.

[23]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael se ðe com on fultum þam Crystenan, sWa hit sæȝð in Actum Apostolorum, þæt on sumere ceastere ðære nama Wæs Træleȝ 7 æȝhWelce ȝeare hæðen here ayddon ða ceasterWare. Ða ȝecWædon ða ceasterWare him betWeonum ðreora daȝa fæsten, 7 þa þæt fæsten ȝeendod Wæs, ða com him to Sanctus Michael, 7 he Wæs to ȝefeohte ȝearu. Ða stod he ofer ðæs ceasteres buruȝate, 7 hæfde him liȝen sWeord on handa, 7 he aflimde ða elðeodiȝan sona þæt hi fluȝon on oðer ðeodland 7 hi næfre ma ðær oðeoWdon.

[23]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who came to the assistance of the Christians, as it says in the Acts of the Apostles, in a certain town whose name was Træleg and whose townspeople a heathen army oppressed every year. Then the inhabitants of the town agreed among themselves on a fast of three days, and, when the fast was ended, St Michael came to them, ready for battle. Then he stood over the town's main gate, holding a flaming sword in his hand, and he straightway put the strangers to flight so that they fled to another country and nevermore appeared there.

[24]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael 7 se mycila mundbora se nu todæȝ his stoWe ætyWde on eorðan þæt men sceolden hi ðær dæȝhWamlice dryhten Weorðian.

[24]

This is the holy archangel St Michael and the great protector who on this very day showed his place on earth so that men should daily glorify the lord there.

[25]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael se ðe ær ðisse Worulde ende ofslihð þone ealdan feond þæt is se micla draca se ðe æt frymðe middanȝardes ȝesceapen Wæs to ðam beorhtestan enȝle; ac he selfa hit forWorhte mid ði he cWæð, "Ic hebbe min heahsetl to norðdæle, 7 ic beo ȝelic þam heahstan cyninȝe." 7 þa ȝefeol he, 7 ȝehreas mid his Werode on niWulnesse ȝrund, efene se illca Antacrist se ær ðisse Worlde ende cymeð on ðisne middanȝeard to ðam þæt he sceal ȝesamnian ða ðe his sindon. Þanne cymeð Sanctus Michael 7 hine ofslihð, forðon ðe he hit æfre ȝeðohte þæt he scolde ȝelic beon ðan heahstan cyninȝ.

[25]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who before the end of the world will slay the ancient enemy that is the great serpent who at the creation of the earth was created brightest of the angels; but he himself forfeited this when he said, "I will lift up my throne to the north, and I shall be like unto the highest king." And then he fell, and he landed with his troop in the depth of the abyss, the very same Antichrist who before the end of the world will come to the earth in order to assemble those who are his. Then St Michael will come and slay him, because he has ever thought that he ought to be equal to the highest king.

[26]

Þis is se halȝa heahenȝel Sanctus Michael se ðe on þam neahstan dæȝe Worulde ende 7 æt þam eȝesfullan dome he ðonne ða deadan aWeceð mid dryhtenes hæse; beoruhtere stefene he clipað 7 þus cWið, "Surȝite! Surȝite! Arisað! Arisað!" 7 þonne arisað ealle ða deadan ðe eorðe forsWealȝ, oððe sæ bescente, oððe fir forbærnde, oððe Wildeor abiton, oððe fuȝlas on lande tobæren, oððe Wirmas on eorðan fræten.

[26]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who on the latter day at the end of the world and at the fearful judgment will then awaken the dead at the lord's command; in an exceeding glorious voice he will call out and will thus speak, "Surgite! Surgite! Arise! Arise!" And then will arise all the dead whom the earth swallowed up, or the sea drowned, or fire consumed, or wild animals devoured, or birds carried off on land, or worms gnawed in the earth.

[27]

Þis is se halʒa heahenʒel Sanctus Michael se ðe ða ʒodan to life ʒelaðað 7 ʒelædeð, 7 þa yfelan on deað bescenceð; 7 þonne ða halʒan saula to heofona rice he ʒelædeð, 7 þa ʒeomriendan he blisað, 7 þa Wanhalan he ʒelacnað, 7 þa elðeodeʒan he afrefreð, 7 þam Winnendum he ræste forʒifð, læmerum ʒefean he ontyneð 7 þam lærrendum onʒit he ʒerumlæteð.

[28]

Uton þonne nu, men ða leofestan, biddan We þone halʒan heahenʒel Sanctus Michael þæt ura saula sie anfenʒe 7 hi ʒelæde on heofoncund rice to þam dryhtene ðe lifað 7 rixað mid Fæder 7 mid Suna 7 mid þam Halʒan Gaste in ealra Worlda World abutan ende, AMEN.

[27]

This is the holy archangel St Michael who will summon and bring forth the good to life, and will give over the evil to be drowned in death; and then he will lead the holy souls into the kingdom of heaven, and he will gladden them that mourn, and he will heal them that are sick, and he will comfort the homeless, and he will grant rest to them that labour, he will discover joy to them that study, and he will extend understanding to them that teach.

[28]

Therefore, most belovèd brethren, let us pray the holy archangel St Michael that he be a recipient of our souls and lead them into the heavenly kingdom to the lord, St Michael who lives and rules with the Father and with the Son and with the Holy Ghost for ever and ever, world without end, AMEN.

Chapter I: The Michael Cult in Corpus 41.

Upon introduction to the text *In Praise of St Michael* one is faced immediately with two problematic concepts. The first involves the term "archangel," and the second the term "saint." The term "archangel" is problematic when reference is made to Hebrew texts. Of course the term does not appear in the Old Testament, since "archangel" is a Greek term. "Archangel" translates from the Greek into "chief angel," a title befitting Michael, who was called the "great prince" in *Daniel* 12:1 and assigned the post of commander-in-chief in several post-biblical traditions such as *III Baruch/Greek 11:7.* The first reference to an archangel can be found in the *Septuagint*. "Archangel" appears twice in the New Testament, once in reference to an unnamed archangel, and secondly in *Jude* 1:9, where the "Archangel Michael" is depicted as disputing with Satan over the body of Moses. Later, non-biblical traditions have expanded the ranks of archangels to include Gabriel, Raphael, Ariel and others.

"Saint" is a later development of the Latin "sanctus," which originally meant "holy." The term originally referred to sacred temples, people, and any object which could be set apart from the everyday world.[1] After the first persecution, the first martyrs were often described as "holy" or as "saints." Prior to the Milan Edict of 313 CE and the division of the churches, anyone who was considered more devout than his/her fellow believers was often referred to as being a saint, or the term was used

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[1] David Rollason, Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England (London: Blackwell, 1989), p. 1.

to describe the faithful who were martyred for their faith. A sign that a person was a saint is that the uncorrupted corpse was responsible for miracles after the person's death. Traditionally, therefore, saints had to have a corporeal form since their earthly remains were necessary for any miracles to occur. But it was not until the 13th century that the Papacy decided to take control of the canonization process, and as a result many early saints lacked all the necessary requirements such as "evidence of a martyr's death or in the case of a confessor an oustandingly virtuous life."[2] Michael's lack of a corporeal form is problematic since he has left no bodily remains for the faithful to touch and receive healing or blessing from. As an archangel Michael would deserve the label "holy" but, since he never lived as a human, he would not fit the criteria for "saint." Still in the Corpus 41 text Michael is called "the holy Archangel St Michael," because Michael was given the title of saint prior to the Papacy's intervening in the canonization process, the reference to his being a saint is possible. However, it is possible that the reference to his being a saint may be simply the result of the Latin "sanctus" reverting to its original and basic meaning. "holy," rather than the author's specifically attempting to classify Michael as both a saint and an archangel.[3]

One can find references to God's messengers throughout the Bible. Rarely named in the Old Testament, the messengers are assigned tasks which vary

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[2] Rollason, p. 1.

[3] Prior to the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, and during the persecutions, there was no official canonization process. Martyrdom equaled sainthood. After the acceptance of Christianity and the end of the persecutions, one was declared a saint if miracles occurred at the site of one's grave. The papacy did not begin rigorously controlling the process by which people received the rank of sainthood until after the Reformation.

significantly. For instance, they deliver God's message to a chosen person (*Genesis* 16:10) and lead Moses and his followers to the Promised Land (*Exodus* 32:34) or the Israelites to their destruction (*I Chronicles* 21:15). In *Daniel*, two of God's messengers are named. The first is Gabriel, who appears to guide Daniel through his vision (*Daniel* 8:15-16). The second is Michael.

In his first appearance in *Daniel*, Michael is mentioned in passing by a heavenly figure speaking

to Daniel. The speaker states that Michael is Daniel's aide sent to deal with the prince of Persia:

> The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, so I left him there with the prince of the kingdom of Persia and came to make you understand what is to befall your people in the latter days...(*Daniel* 10:13) RSV

Michael's second appearance in *Daniel* is an expansion on his first appearance. The heavenly speaker clearly defines their relationship: "but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince" (*Daniel* 10:21).

In both *Daniel* 10:21 and 12:1, Michael is described as a "prince." Michael's rank in the heavenly and earthly hierarchies is expanded in *Daniel* 12:1 where Michael is declared to be "the great prince who has charge of your people..." (*Daniel* 12:1). The reference to Michael's being a "great prince" in *Daniel* 12:1 confers upon Michael a higher rank than that of other messengers of the Lord, which is confirmed by the title of protector of the Israelite people and which was later understood as all of Christendom.

Michael's role in the heavenly hierarchy and his involvement with humanity is greatly expanded in extra-biblical texts such as *Enoch*, *The Testament of Abraham* and *Baruch*.[4] In these post-biblical texts, Michael is no longer called "angel" but "archangel," and is declared to be controller of the other heavenly hosts[5] and humanity's champion.[6] One of the most interesting examples of Michael's championing of humanity occurs in *III Baruch/Greek* 13 where Michael prevents the lower angels from withdrawing their services from evil people to ensure that the angels' and humanity's enemies will not prevail at the end. The debate between the angels and Michael regarding their release from their duties continues for the whole chapter, and in the end Michael goes to God to discuss the issue.

Added to Michael's duty as protector of earth-bound believers is the role of conveyor of both bodies and souls to heaven. Michael often transports the bodies or souls of the departed (or those soon to depart) to heaven for judgment or for discussion with God.[7] One of the most interesting examples can be found in *The*

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[4] It is impossible to note all Michael's appearances in extra-Biblical texts. For a collection of different extra-Biblical texts see Charlesworth James, ed. and trans., Expansions of the "Old Testament" and Legends of Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms, Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works (New York: Doubleday, 1985).

[5] In *III Baruch/Greek 11:1-7* Michael is assigned the roles of holder of the keys of heaven and commander-in-chief.

[6] *III Baruch/Greek 13:5*.

[7] In numerous extra-Biblical books, such as the *Testament of Abraham*, Michael conveys individuals to heaven to meet with God prior to returning home to present a last speech and then die.

Testament of Abraham.[8] Michael is sent by God to convey Abraham's soul to heaven, and Abraham requests a tour of heaven prior to the taking of his soul so that he may see at first hand where he will spend eternity. After his tour of heaven, Abraham for the second time resists the taking of his soul, and Michael refuses to gather Abraham's soul because Abraham has been a loyal follower of God.[9] Finally, Death is sent to free Abraham's soul, which Michael then retrieves for God.[10]

Other Old Testament figures whose deaths are foreshadowed by the appearance of Michael and whose souls will be conveyed to heaven by angelic beings[11] include Jacob,[12] Isaac,[13] and, in the Christian but non-canonical tradition, the Virgin Mary.[14] Michael retains the duty of conveyor of souls as the medieval

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[8] *Testament of Abraham Recension A and B.*

[9] *Testament of Abraham Recension A* 15:14-15.

[10] *Testament of Abraham Recension B 14:7.*

[11] The *History of the Rechabites* discusses how the soul is forewarned of its departure from the body by a group of angels, and it is assumed that Michael was included in this group. *History of the Rechabites,* 15:1-3.

[12] In the *Testament of Jacob* there is a variety of possible readings regarding who conveyed Jacob's soul into heaven. In the Bohairic reading, Jacob's soul is conveyed into heaven by the Lord who is aided by Michael and Gabriel (*Bohairic Testament of Jacob* 5:10-15) but it is Michael who is sent to Jacob so that he could prepare his family and himself for his impending death (*Testament of Jacob* 1:6).

[13] Again, Michael is first sent to Isaac to warn him of his impending death (*Testament of Isaac* 2:1). But it is the Lord himself, with the assistance of his angels, who conveys Isaac's soul into heaven.

[14] M. R. James, ed. and trans., The Apocryphal New Testament (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1955), p. 216.

traditions develop; Michael is frequently depicted weighing the souls of the dead,[15] as well as being mentioned as conveying souls in early medieval literature. One example can be found in the *Song of Roland*, where Michael and Gabriel both appear at the death of Roland and convey his soul heavenwards.[16]

Michael in the first centuries CE was designated to fight the chief enemy of humanity, Satan. Christians, who adopted Michael as their own protector, particularly focus on his battles with Satan. The two New Testament references to Michael centre on his verbal and physical sparring with Satan. In *Jude* 1:9, Michael and Satan argue over who has the right to Moses' body; Michael apparently prevails against Satan's wild accusations by saying, "The Lord rebukes you." (RSV)

In *Revelation* 12:7, the verbal sparring ends. Michael and his angels are presented as being locked in battle against Satan, who is in the guise of a dragon. Eventually Michael and his army prevail over the evil dragon, and as a result Satan and his angels are cast from heaven. Medieval artwork most often depicts Michael as killing a dragon while the literature often refers specifically to the scene in *Revelation*.[17] Michael and his army's physical battle with Satan may explain why Michael is the patron saint of soldiers and policemen.[18]

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[15] See images in Millenaire Monastique Du Mont Saint Michel Vol. III (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1970), plate XIX.

[16] Keith Sisson, trans., Song of Roland. (Manchester: Carcanet, 1983), p. 86.

[17] For a selection of artwork depicting Michael slaying the dragon please see Millenaire Monastique Du Mont Saint Michel, plates II, X, XI.

[18] While it is difficult to date when Michael became the patron saint of soldiers, it is clearly an early tradition. Keck discusses the founding of military orders of which Michael was a patron saint. Pope Pius XII declared Michael to be the patron saint of policemen in 1950. Gustav Davidson, A

Michael also has a role in the Islamic faith. He is mentioned once in the Koran: "Whoever is an enemy to Allah and his angels and messengers, to Gabriel and Michael" (*al-Baqara* 2:98). Michael's role in the Islamic tradition is similar to his role in the Jewish and Christian faith; his duty is to intercede on the behalf of humanity. Early Persian Muslims also expanded the duties of the Islamic Michael in their writings. According to one text, Michael is called "Beshter," which translates as "one who provides sustenance for mankind."[19] Other early Persian texts suggest that cherubs were formed from the tears Michael shed over the sins of the faithful.[20]

Michael had a more prominent role in medieval society, where he retained the duties ascribed to him in earlier times, and, as the veneration of saints grew, so did his cult. As Western and Eastern Europe converted to Christianity, the number of Michael's apparitions also increased. As well, the Roman Church considered Michael to be of such great importance that he was included in the liturgy.[21]

The traditional Christian celebration of Michaelmas centred on several of Michael's miracles. These miracles usually involved Michael's appearance on mountains, cliffs, and other high places. Arguably the most famous Michael

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Dictionary of Angels Including the Fallen Angels (New York: Free Press, 1985), p. 195. Michael's patronage has been expanded to include the sick and grocers: "St. Michael, the Archangel" Catholic Online Saints 21 Feb. 2000< http://saints.catholic.org/saints/michaelarchangel.html>.

[19] Davidson, A Dictionary, p. 194.

[20] Davidson, p. 194.

[21] Until 1964, the daily mass in the Roman Catholic Church included a prayer dedicated to the Archangel Michael. This practice ended with Vatican II. For a discussion regarding the changes to the Roman Catholic mass see Austin Flannery, ed., Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents (Northport: Liturgical Press, 1992), pp. 154-221.

apparition occurred on Mount Garganus in Italy. This legend involves a marauding bull that comes down a mountainside to destroy the town at the foot of the mountain. After much destruction, the town's merchants are finally able to chase the bull up the mountainside, where the bull disappears into a cave. As the merchants follow the bull into the cave, Michael appears in the bull's place. Michael commands the merchants to build him a church at the mouth of the cave, which they proceed to do. The cave became an important pilgrimage site as many of Michael's "relics" were preserved there and the church was seen as a place of power.[22] The Mount Garganus legend is mentioned in texts throughout Europe and is found in Anglo-Saxon England. Michael also performed other miracles throughout western Europe. Probably the second most famous miracle involving Michael occurred in Rome, where he chased demons away from his church.[23] Michael also became the protector of high places and islands particularly in western Europe. Three islands which were dedicated to the archangel were Mont St Michel in Normandy, St Michael's Mount in Cornwall, and Skellig Michael off the coast of Ireland.

While a day in the fall was usually chosen to celebrate Michael's feast day, some churches chose to celebrate Michaelmas in the spring.[24] The two most common

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[22] David Keck, Angels & Angelology in the Middle Ages (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.180.

[23] Frederick Holweck,"Saint Michael," Online Catholic Encyclopaedia: 21 Feb. 2000 <http://www.newadvent.org /cathen/10275b.htm>.

[24] The dates vary according to nation and whether one follows the Eastern or Western tradition. Egyptian Christians celebrated Michaelmas on a variety of occasions. Frederick Holweck, " Saint Michael," Online Catholic Encyclopaedia.

feast days were therefore September 29th or May 8th. September 29th was also the traditional end of the harvest in both England and the Celtic lands and also became the traditional day of accounting where estate managers were expected to present the yearly accounts to the manor lords.[25] The exact nature of the celebration varied from country to country. In the Eastern tradition, the Feast of Saint Michael was celebrated with prayers and the donation of money.[26] In England there seem to have been two traditions, one of dedicating churches to the Archangel, and another of a simple celebration which centred around a sermon dedicated to Michael.[27] The Celtic fringes (Scotland, Ireland, and the islands surrounding both countries) had the most vibrant and exciting festival which involved a variety of activities including the collection of carrots accompanied by the saying of prayers to stimulate an increase in progeny, the chasing of horses, the sacrifice of a lamb, and the baking of a special bread to be given with the lamb to the poor.[28] The exact origins of these activities are unclear, but it appears that Michael had replaced a Celtic god possibly linked to

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[25] This tradition also seems to be referring to the last judgment where Michael was to judge humanity instead of grapes and the other harvests.

[26] According to an encomium by Archbishop Theodosius of Alexandria circa seventh century, the faithful would pray and donate money to the church in the name of the Archangel. See E. A. W. Budge ed., Saint Michael the Archangel: Three Encomiums by Theodosius, Archbishop of Alexandria, Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, and Eustathius, Bishop of Trake (London: 1894), pp. xiv-xxxi.

[27] The Michaelmas tradition apparently grew after the Norman invasion of England in 1066. Prior to this date Michaelmas was celebrated with a few prayers and the occasional church dedication to Michael.

[28] See Alexander Carmichael, Carmina Gaedlica Hymns & Incantations: Collected in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland in the Last Century (Hudson: Lindisfarne Press, 1992), pp. 626-628.

fertility and harvest rituals.[29] It is most likely that a festival day would be chosen in the summer or early fall since it required the digging up of carrots and the sacrifice of a lamb.[30]

Michael also held an important role in the Eastern Church. In addition to his functions as conveyor of souls and God's messenger, Michael was intimately involved with the guidance and protection of a variety of Old Testament figures in the Eastern tradition. In one Coptic encomium undated by the translator, E.A.W. Budge,[31] the speaker asks a variety of Old Testament figures, beginning with Adam, and continuing with New Testament figures, martyrs, and all the righteous, why they celebrate Michaelmas.[32] These figures in turn respond with a detailed explanation of what service Michael performed for them, and how Michael bettered their lives and, at times, the lives of the faithful. As well as aiding great figures, Michael was actively involved in the lives of common believers, from the poorest peasants whom

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[29] Oliver Davies & Fiona Bowie, Celtic Christian Spirituality: An Anthology of Medieval & Modern Sources (New York: Continuum, 1995), p. 119.

[30] It seems logical that the Celtic celebrations of Michaelmas would occur in the summer or fall as carrots and lambs would be available but there has been some suggestion that Michaelmas was also celebrated in the spring. Millenaire, pp. 476-77.

[31] E. A. W. Budge does not provide any dates for when these encomiums were written. This is problematic since Theodosius' encomium may be a source for the Anglo-Saxon text and without dates it is impossible to confirm whether the Eastern text was influenced by the Anglo-Saxon version or vice versa. Severus, the Patriarch of Antioch, whose encomium was included by Budge in his work on Saint Michael, has been dated circa seventh century, and one assumes therefore that Theodosius wrote his encomium circa sixth-seventh century.

[32] E. A.W. Budge, ed., Saint Michael the Archangel, pp. xiv-xxxi.

he rewarded for their piety to the Byzantine nobility whom he protected from the evil wiles of Satan.[33]

There is some suggestion that Eastern monks transmitted the tradition surrounding Michael's role in the Eastern Empire to Ireland and Scotland.[34] Unfortunately, the transmission of Eastern traditions to the Celtic fringes is difficult to prove. The Celtic fringes adopted a more fantastical image of Michael than that found in Anglo-Saxon England. Michael becomes a central figure in many of the prayers and at least one festival in the Celtic lands. There is a wide variety of prayers in which Michael is invoked to protect livestock, sailors, sleepers and hunters, and of prayers asking him for abundance in livestock and vegetables. There were even prayers and rituals surrounding Michael's white horse, which was called by the royal name of Brian. Included in these rituals was the tradition of horse stealing by which any horse could be stolen and returned the following day without compensation for any damage done to the beast.[35]

Michael's duties in England seem to follow the traditional roles ascribed to him in the Old Testament and New Testament, a conveyor of souls and the defender

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[33] Budge, pp. 893-947.

[34] While a hotly debated subject, there appears to be some connection between the flowering of the Michael cult and the arrival of the Eastern monks in Ireland. One example, an Eastern monk who may have made his way first from Syria then to Ireland and finally to England, is Ephrem the Syrian. According to Sims-Williams, Ephrem may have influenced the creation of the *Book of Cerne*. Patrick Sims-Williams "Thoughts on Ephrem the Syrian in Anglo-Saxon England," Learning & Literature in Anglo-Saxon England, Helmut Gneuss, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 209-210.

[35] The prayers are too numerous to specifically discuss each one. One source is Carmichael's Carmina Gædlica.

of the Church. References to Michael in Anglo-Saxon literature are relatively limited. Ælfric dedicates a homily to Michael on Michaelmas, making reference to Michael's role as mankind's defender, his apparition on Mount Garganus, and his conveyance of Mary's soul heavenward.[36] Other references centre around Church dedications to the Archangel Michael. There is one reference to a church being dedicated to Michael in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, an Anglo-Saxon translation of which is the principal text in Corpus 41.[37] Pevsner's *Buildings of England* mentions thirty churches seemingly dedicated to Michael in the pre-Conquest period.[38]

Anglo-Saxon devotion to Michael was more complicated than is implied by the above evidence. The text *In Praise of the Archangel Saint Michael* found in the margins of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41 is unique in the Anglo-Saxon corpus for two reasons: its structure and its content.[39] The rest of this chapter will focus, stanza by stanza, on the roles ascribed to Michael.

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[36] Ælfric's homily 1.34 (Dedicatio ecclesiæ sc̄i Michaelis archangeli)

[37] As well Bede does include a reference to Michael's appearance before St Wilfred to tell the saint that God had granted St Wilfred a longer life. Bede, A History of the English Church and People, trans. Leo Sherley-Price (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1955, repr. 1968), pp. 311-312.

[38] Please see Appendix I for the church dedications.

[39] The structure of the text has resulted in a scholarly debate regarding its purpose and the type of literature it represents. Since it does not fit into the group of Anglo-Saxon works labeled homilies, nor does it work as a saint's life, the typology has remained ambiguous. Although classifying the text as a homily is understandable as it appears alongside five other homilies also found in marginalia of Corpus 41. Grant suggests that the text could be a hymn. Raymond Grant, ed., Three Homilies From Cambridge, Corpus Christi College (Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1982).

[Stanza 1]

> Most belovèd brethren, it behoves us to honour and to celebrate the memory of the holy Archangel St Michael, who was the wonderful messenger of the Almighty Lord. Moreover, it was on this very day that he was illuminated and made bright to the faithful. Therefore, most belovèd brethren, let us exult and rejoice upon this feast day of the holy Archangel St Michael, who is called in heaven like unto God himself. Let us ever give ear because of the lord's special ...

In Stanza 1 of the Corpus 41 text, the author presents his plans for the text. In the first three words of the stanza he clearly states that he is presenting this work to a group of listeners. (Interestingly, this introduction is shared by another homily, which is in prose form and is found in the margins of the Corpus 41 manuscript.[40]) The author's purpose in writing this text is to celebrate the day on which Michael was "illuminated" [41] and "made bright to all of humanity."[42] He states all that Michael has done for humanity and the role Michael will play in our future. It is unclear which miracle is being celebrated, as no date or reference to a specific miracle is given. Grant has suggested that this hymn was meant for September 29th

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[40] Grant, Three Homilies, p. 81.

[41] The translator uses this term when describing Michael's first appearance to all of humanity. The text states "Michael was illuminated and made bright." The author is seemingly implying that Michael is somehow invisible, but working on humanity's behalf, and on this date is made fully visible to all of humanity. The reference to brightness may be connected to how the author and his audience viewed angelic creatures. In the Anglo-Saxon version of *Genesis*, the author makes a reference to Satan and his radiance before his fall. In the Irish tradition, Michael is depicted in a variety of hymns as wearing shining armor. For one example, see Charles Plummer, ed., *Irish Litanies Text and Translations* (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1925), pp. 88-89.

[42] There is a Judaic tradition that suggests that Michael's element was fire. Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews *Vol. 5* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947), n 13. p. 70.

when Michael supposedly first appeared in Italy.[43] No matter which particular miracle was being celebrated, the author positions himself as one who is revealing unknown information to his audience. For the remainder of the text he systematically and chronologically explores the various other duties Michael performs on behalf of all Christendom.

[Stanza 2]

> He is a fellow ruler; he is very mighty among the archangels who stand day and night by the throne of the Lord; he is the helper of all holy men, he is the governor of all holy souls, he is the saviour of God's people, and he is strong in battle against the great serpent, as it says here in the book of the Apocalypse. Let us rejoice in heaven and in those who are in heaven, for St Michael is a strong fighter against the great serpent, that is, further, against the accursèd spirits. We must trust in this archangel and pray to him for succour in every danger to Christian people.

In Stanza 2, the reader is told that Michael stands by the Lord's throne day and night. There is a tradition, in a medieval Jewish text focusing on earlier Jewish traditions, that Michael's place is on the right side of the throne of God.[44] In an Irish tradition Michael is called the "ductor omnium animarum ad thronum altissimum" ("the leader of all souls to the throne most high") which continues the tradition that Michael was associated with the throne of God.[45] Michael's duties also include being an aide to all holy people, governor of all holy souls, and saviour of God's people.

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[43] Grant, p. 67.

[44] Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, vol. 5, p. 23, n. 65.

[45] Diarmuid O'Laoghaire, "Prayers and Hymns in the Vernacular," in James P. Mackay, ed., An Introduction to Celtic Christianity (Edinburgh: T& T Clark Ltd., 1989), p. 282.

The image of Michael as governor and saviour of all believers suggests that the author believes that the members of the Trinity are no longer actively involved in a direct manner the lives of believers. After stating Michael's place beside God's throne and the aid he has provided to all Christendom, the author reminds his audience of Michael's most significant duty, that of battling the great serpent.[46] These duties are expanded upon in the remainder of the text.

The remainder of the work focuses on Michael's involvement in the lives of Old Testament and New Testament figures as well as explaining Michael's role in the life of every-day believers. Much of the information revealed by the author to his audience is not found in the Bible but comes from post-biblical sources. The particular references to Michael's activities in this text are certainly not a surprise. All of them are of the type that can be easily ascribed to Michael. Yet there are numerous stanzas for which no explicit narratives have been found elsewhere. Much of the material in the hymn may have originated from non-biblical sources or in response to biblical sources, Byzantine or Celtic literature.

[Stanza 3]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who was the receiver of the soul of Abel the first martyr whom his brother Cain slew out of envy.

In Stanza 3, the reader learns that the Archangel Michael was responsible for taking the soul of Abel to heaven after Cain murdered him. There is no mention of Michael's conveying Abel's soul into heaven in the Bible. References to Michael

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[46] It is interesting that the author of the Corpus 41 text depicts Satan as a serpent. Most of the pictorial representations of Michael show him fighting a dragon. See note . 17.

conveying the souls of other biblical figures into heaven appear elsewhere in post-biblical literature.[47] A variety of texts mention Abel's body being conveyed into heaven by a group of angels.[48] In the *Life of Adam and Eve*, a post-biblical text, it is not until Adam's death that Michael, Gabriel, Uriel and Raphael are ordered by God to retrieve Abel's body from its hiding place on earth.[49] There is no post-biblical or medieval narrative that explicitly states that Michael conveys Abel's soul into heaven. The fact that the author assigned this task to Michael is, however, not surprising, since Michael was the conveyor of other biblical souls. As humanity's representative and finally the judge of the righteous, Michael is the most likely candidate to convey the soul of Abel, the first martyr, into heaven. Michael's conveyance of Abel's soul is significant for a second reason; this stanza signals the first time Michael conveys a soul into heaven and is actively involved in the life of a human being.

[Stanza 4]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who is guardian of men; and with the help of the Lord he saved the lives of Noah, his three sons, and their four wives in the great flood.

In Stanza 4, Michael is credited with saving Noah, Noah's wife, his three sons, and their three wives. No explicit narrative of Michael actually communicating

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[47] See above, note 6.

[48] In the post-biblical tradition the soul and body are perceived as being two separate entities. As Cain did not want his crime known, it is apparent why he hid Abel's body; but all the texts seem to assume that it was only Abel's body which was hidden, not his soul.

[49] *Life of Adam and Eve [Apocalypse]* 40:1-5.

with or saving Noah, his sons, or their wives is to be found in any biblical and/or post-biblical text. There exists an Eastern tradition that supports this tradition, however. In the *Encomium of Theodosius*, the audience is told that Noah celebrates Michaelmas since it was Michael who "guided and directed us, and ceased not to pray to God until the waters which had increased had abated."[50] Later in the same encomium, the audience is told that it was Michael's prayers which encouraged God to provide Noah with the Ark and ensured that Noah and his family survived the great flood.[51]

[Stanza 5]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael whose memory we honour today, who was the deliverer of Abraham, patriarch over the people of the Chaldees, coming with the Lord's help, and he acted as guide to the three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through foreign lands and unknown ways; he was always a present help to them in every danger.

The author expands Michael's duties to include involvement in the lives of the patriarchs and the righteous in Stanza 5. Michael is protecting Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as well as acting as their guide and protector.[52] The patriarchs of the Old Testament throughout their lives receive orders from God and interact with his messengers. Some of the most striking episodes of this interaction include an angel's appearance to Abraham to prevent his sacrifice of Isaac (*Genesis* 22) and Jacob's wrestling with an angel of the Lord (*Genesis* 31:9-10). The angel involved in both

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[50] Budge, p. 12.

[51] Budge, p. 45.

[52] Chiefly *Daniel* 10:21 and 12:1.

these episodes is unnamed in the biblical texts, but some post-biblical traditions claim that Michael is the angel who prevents

Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. According to Theodosius, Michael actually takes the sword from Abraham's hand and presents a ram to be sacrificed instead.[53] In fact, Michael has an interesting if not a close relationship with Abraham and his heirs in later Judaic traditions. According to one source it is Michael who tells Sarah and Abraham of the arrival of Isaac.[54] As well, one should not forget the role Michael plays in the death of Abraham.[55] Explicit references to Michael's interaction with Isaac are limited when compared to his interactions with his father Abraham and his son Jacob. Apparently, Michael appears twice in Isaac's life, first to save him from being sacrificed and secondly to prepare Isaac for his impending death.

Jacob and Michael seem to have a more interesting and problematic relationship. Judaic traditions depict Michael's and Jacob's relationship as ambivalent. According to some traditions the angel with whom Jacob wrestles is the Archangel Michael. In the *Yalkut Shimoni*, Michael creates a situation in order to provoke Jacob's anger; as a result, the two wrestle, whereupon Michael injures Jacob. After they enjoy a long and somewhat complicated argument, God finally intervenes in the battle between the two. God then declares Michael to be his chosen

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[53] Budge, p. 12.

[54] Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, vol. 5, p. 242, n. 135.

[55] See note 3.

being from heaven and Jacob to be his chosen man on earth.[56] Theodosius supports the tradition that Isaac's blessing of Jacob is the result of Michael's prayers and that it is Michael who protects Jacob while he toils for his father-in-law.[57] Like his father and grandfather before him, Jacob receives a tour of the heavens led by Michael before he dies.

[Stanza 6]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who went at Easter through the houses of the Israelites and of the Egyptians; he slew the firstborn of the Egyptians, but passed over the children of Israel.

In Stanza 6, Michael is given credit for killing the firstborn Egyptians and saving the Israelite children. As the guardian angel of the Israelites Michael has the duty of following through on God's promises to ensure that God's people are allowed to leave Egypt and find their homeland. No explicit narrative that relates the same events can be found. In a Midrashic source great emphasis is placed on the fact that God is directly responsible for the slaying of the firstborn and the Exodus from Egypt.[58] In later traditions the slayer of the firstborn is an unnamed angel of the Israelites. Michael may have been associated with this unnamed angel because of his involvement with the deaths of two Egyptians during the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea. In a now fragmentary non-biblical text, Michael is depicted as throwing two magicians, Jannes and Jambres, into the sea and killing them to stop their attacks

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[56] Ginzberg,.vol 5, p. 305, n 289.

[57] Ginzberg,, vol I, 372.

[58] Jacob Neusner, Genesis Rabbah: *The Book of Genesis A* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), p. 151.

on the fleeing Israelites. Interestingly, one of the surviving fragments of this text is in Old English.[59] Keck suggests that there was a medieval tradition in which Michael was declared to be the Angel of the Exodus responsible for killing the Egyptian firstborn and parting the Red Sea.[60]

[Stanza 7]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who with the Lord's help guided and nourished the Christian people with his protection in the wilderness for forty years.

In Stanza 7 the author claims that Michael guides and nourishes the Christian people as they wander in the wilderness. Only one reference has been found to Michael's actively protecting the Israelites while they wander in the desert. In *Aggadat Bereshit* 37,64, Michael protects the Israelites from the moment of the Exodus to the worship of the Golden Calf.[61] It is possible that the author of the Corpus 41 text concluded that protecting believers also includes providing them with food when they are faced with starvation. The reference to nourishing the Israelites while they wander in the desert may be traced to an incident found in *Exodus*. Manna falls from heaven and nourishes the Israelites after the food they have brought from Egypt runs out (*Exodus* 16:15). By the author's making Michael responsible for provisions for the wandering Israelites as well as designating him protector of Abel, the first martyr, Noah, and the patriarchs, Michael's role has been democratized.

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[59] The manuscript is British Library, Cotton Tiberius B.V., fol 87 in both Latin and Anglo-Saxon. See Charlesworth, p. 431.

[60] Keck, p. 64.

[61] Ginzberg, vol 5, p. 415, note 115.

Michael is now depicted as providing aid and protection for *all* Christians, not just the patriarchs. The author's use of Christians in reference to the Israelites' wandering in the desert after the Exodus is a way of ensuring that the intended audience understands that Michael is protector of all of Christendom.

[Stanza 8]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who stood triumphant before the people of Canaan, and led the people of Israel at the hands of Joshua to the Promised Land which is flowing with milk and honey.

Stanza 8 continues the theme of Michael's expanded role as he triumphantly leads the Israelites into the land of milk and honey. There is a biblical reference to an angel in *Joshua* 5:14-15 is where "the captain of the Lord's host" guarantees divine aid in the attack on Jericho. Michael is called "the great prince" in *Dan* 12:1, so one has to wonder if later scholars assumed that the two titles were interchangeable. According to the *Aggadat Bereshit*, Michael is this "captain of the hosts."[62]

[Stanza 9]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael and the noble director of the hands of the craftsmen who built Solomon's temple.

Stanza 9 refers to the help Solomon's workers receive from Michael in building the temple in Jerusalem. There is no direct reference to the builder of the temple, king Solomon, in Stanza 9; instead, the author chooses to focus on the building of the temple. This is not surprising, since Christians believe that the temple foreshadows the arrival of Christ. The significance of Solomon's reign is his building

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[62] Ginzberg, v.5, p. 173, n.21.

of the temple, not his other accomplishments or his wisdom. There is one post-biblical tradition, in the *Testament of Solomon,* that discusses the problems the workers have building the temple and how Michael's intervention allows the temple to be built. The intervention involves Michael's giving Solomon a magical ring that will control the demons who are preventing the temple from being built (*Testament of Solomon* 1:7). Theodosius also mentions Solomon's reasons for rejoicing on Michael's feast day, but he does not mention Michael's helping to build the temple of Solomon. Instead, we learn that Michael entreats God on Solomon's behalf and that Solomon is commanded to build the temple for God.[63]

[Stanza 10]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who was the powerful protector of the three youths who were cast into the furnace of burning fire. And then the angel stood by them, and he, the wise spirit, composed in their mouth what was then the holy "Benedicite."

Stanza 10 refers directly to the only Old Testament book, *Daniel*, in which Michael appears. Interestingly, the author ignores the verses in *Daniel* in which Michael is explicitly mentioned; instead, he chooses to focus on an earlier incident which involves three youths who are thrown into a furnace for failing to worship a golden statue (*Daniel* 3:7).[64] The youths are thrown into the furnace but do not die even though the men who cast them in are overcome by the heat of the furnace. Several times the youths are cast into the flames and remain unharmed. At one point

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[63] Budge, p. 14.

[64] In the Anglo-Saxon version of *Daniel* several angels are mentioned and the angel who rescues the three youths from the furnace is called the "faithful servant of the Lord." There is no mention of Michael in the Anglo-Saxon version of *Daniel*. Charles Kennedy, trans. and ed., The Cædmon Texts (Gloucester: P. Smith, 1965), pp. 121-145.

in the text, Nebuchadnezzar, the king who ordered the youths' executions, sees a fourth person in the flames and asks the exact number of youths that there should have been (*Daniel* 3:24). According to *Daniel* 3:25 the fourth figure had a form "like a son of the gods."[65] In the Corpus 41 text it is Michael who appears in the furnace and saves the youths. No post-biblical source can be found for the author's claim that this angel was Michael. Grant suggests that it is not surprising that some critics see a relationship between the angel in the furnace incident and Michael;[66] the relationship is based on the meaning of Michael's name, "who is like God," in Hebrew and the description of the angel whose form "is like the Son of God" in the furnace incident (*Daniel* 3:25). Grant's theory seems to be supported by the Eastern tradition. In Theodosius' encomium the three youths from *Daniel* tell their audience that they are joyful on Michaelmas because it was Michael who turned the flames of the furnace into water.[67] The use of this incident in the text strengthens the author's argument that Michael's role as protector of believers extends to all and not just the elite in the Old and New Testaments.

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[65] In Aramaic, the original language of this section of Daniel, the phrase translates as "heavenly being." Modern translations of the text often translate the phrase "as son of the gods" (RSV). However, the medieval author and the intended audience would have most likely rejected either understanding in favour of "like the Son of God" (See KJV), and according to some, the phrase refers to Michael, whose name translates as "who is like God."

[66] Grant, p. 69.

[67] Budge, p. 16.

[Stanza 11]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael and the noble protector against the cunning of the devil. According to the prophet, the devil thought that he should instruct the people to glorify the body of Moses instead of God because of its beauty. Then the holy angel said to the devil, "I command thee, with the authority of my Lord, not to carry out this act of presumption nor make his people guilty."

In Stanza 11, Michael is shown fighting with Satan over the body of Moses, a similar tradition found in *Jude* 1:9. Michael wins this battle by telling Satan that "the Lord rebukes him" (*Jude* 1:9). Stanza 11 is the only reference in the text to Michael's and Satan's having met before their great battle of *Revelation*. This tradition may not have originated in the *Jude* text but supposedly came from a lost section of the *Assumption of Moses*.[68] But no source has been found for the author's suggestion that the fight was a result of Satan's demand that the people worship Moses' body instead of God because of its beauty. There are several traditions which make reference to the Israelites attempts to worship the dead Moses as a god.[69] The author has reinterpreted the biblical scene by increasing Michael's authority. As in the biblical text, Stanza 11 broadens the reader's understanding of Michael's and Satan's relationship. The wording also suggests that Michael has been given a great deal of power over heavenly and worldly beings by the Lord. The power granted to Moses was that of a prophet of the Lord and not that of law-maker. This suggests that the author was very aware that while Moses played an important role in the Old

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[68] According to Origen, *De Principiis* III, Jude is quoting the *Assumption of Moses*. Unfortunately, no such tradition has come down to us in the surviving fragments of the text.

[69] Rella Kushelevsky, Moses and the Angel of Death. (New York: P. Lang, 1995), pp. 93-95.

Testament, his role as the provider of the laws which constitute Judaism, had to be down played as all Christians would know that the Jewish laws were superceded by Christ.

[Stanza 12]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael, who ever remained as a present help for the Lord's prophets and [remained] with them in every place.

In Stanza 12 the reader is reminded that Michael "ever remained as a present help for the Lord's prophets and [remained] with them in every place." One would assume that Michael, as the protector of the Israelites, would be especially protective of God's human messengers. But the author is implying that Michael had a more direct and involved relationship with the prophets when he tells us that Michael remains with the prophets in every place. Although there is no explicit reference to Michael helping the New Testament apostles it is likely that Michael did aid the apostles, however this aid is not mentioned in the text itself. The only biblical and post-biblical tradition that depicts Michael as having a relationship with a prophet is Michael's involvement in the life of Daniel. There is an obscure reference to Michael's blowing a trumpet to signal Elijah's second appearance on earth,[70] but in no post-biblical tradition has any reference been found to Michael's explicitly aiding and protecting the prophets or apostles. There is an Eastern tradition, however, in which Michael is seen as aiding numerous prophets; in Theodosius' *Encomium*,

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[70] Ginzberg, vol 6, p. 341, note 116.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel all provide proof that Michael came to their aid in a variety of ways.[71]

[Stanza 13]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael to whom the Lord entrusted St Mary's soul after her death when he committed her to him.

Stanza 13 refers to a Christian tradition in which Michael receives the soul of the Virgin Mary and takes it to heaven. There are several post-biblical texts that mention this tradition including *De Transitu Mariae* and *Pseudo-Melito*; medieval versions of this tradition abound. There is even a surviving homily in Old English depicting Mary's assumption into heaven, and, interestingly, the Anglo-Saxon version of this tradition is also found in the margins of Corpus 41.[72]

In the first thirteen stanzas of the "hymn" the author relates episodes in the lives of Old and New Testament figures in whose lives Michael intervenes. Stanza 13 marks a change in the tone of the text. The author no longer discusses specific figures or incidents but refers generally to the aid Michael gives to past, present and future believers. The next eight verses are general statements that clarify Michael's role in the life of believers.

[Stanza 14]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who leads the soul of each and every true man through the gates of eternal life into the kingdom of heaven.

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[71] Budge, p. 15.

[72] Grant, p. 13.

In Stanza 14 the author states that Michael will lead the soul of "every true man" into heaven. This stanza ensures that the audience knows that Michael is aiding all of humanity and not just the important figures of the Old and New Testament. Michael's leading individuals into heaven can be found in a variety of post-biblical texts. As noted above, Michael led the patriarchs into heaven (e.g., *The Testament of Abraham* 1:6).[73] *The Vision of Paul* also shows Michael leading the faithful into the City of the Prophets.[74] None of the biblical or post-biblical traditions depicts Michael as leading all of the faithful into heaven.[75] The wording of this stanza seems reminiscent of several discussions that Christ has with his followers, in particular the Sermon on the Mount, where Christ states, "For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom" (*Matthew* 5:20).

[Stanza 15]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who places the prayers of each and every holy man in the company of the Lord, and afterwards with words of comfort forgives him the transgressions of his household.

In Stanza 15 the author states that the prayers of "each and every holy man" are placed before the Lord by Michael. This statement can be linked to an earlier tradition in which Michael is depicted as gathering the prayers of mankind to send up to the Lord (3 *Baruch* 11-12). The second half of the stanza seems odd since Michael appears to be the one who forgives believers' transgressions. In the New

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[73] For more examples of Michael's leading people into heaven, see above.

[74] *Visio Pauli*, 25.

[75] It is debatable whether the "City of the Prophets" is heaven.

Testament, there appear to have been two traditions regarding the forgiveness of transgressions; the first is that Christ's role was to sacrifice himself so that humanity's transgressions could be forgiven, (*Matthew* 26:26-28) and the second states that it is God who forgives the transgressions of humanity. (*Matthew* 6:15) Nowhere in the Bible is Michael depicted as forgiving humanity's transgressions. The closest tradition can be found in Theodosius *Encomium* in which he tells believers that Michael "may entreat [the Lord] to show mercy unto you and to other supplicants." [76]

[Stanza 16]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael and the wise ruler of royal houses; and he is the trusty guardian of the holy heavenly city.

Stanza 16 may be a direct reference to the title assigned to Michael in *Daniel* 10:13, where he is called a "great prince" over a group of unnamed heavenly beings. It should be noted that the text clearly states that Michael is not the only chief prince: "but Michael, one of the chief princes..." (*Daniel* 10:13*)*. In a post-biblical tradition Michael is given another title, "commander-in-chief" (*The Testament of Abraham 1:4*).[77] No explicit narrative besides this text has been found in which Michael is

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[76] Budge, p. 18.

[77] It is somewhat difficult to understand Michael's role in the heavenly hierarchy as found in the post-biblical traditions. As depicted in *Daniel*, Michael is considered to have held one of the highest position in the heavenly hierarchy (*Daniel* 10:13). The title "commander-in-chief" as assigned to Michael in the *Testament of Abraham* sits well with his role in the Bible, in particular, with his battle with the dragon in *Revelation* 12:7 where he leads his angels against the dragon and his army. Michael at times is depicted as the chief angel and at others times has been replaced by other heavenly figures such as Gabriel. For a discussion of Michael and other angels' places, in the heavenly hierarchy, see Charlesworth, 22-note e, p. 136. For a text in which Gabriel has taken the place of Michael as commander-in-chief, see *Enoch* 72, variant readings A and U.

depicted as the ruler of royal houses, but it is conceivable that the author knew of a variety of royal houses of which Michael was considered the patron saint. One possible house is that of Robert of Mortain, half-brother of William the Conqueror, who supposedly fought under Michael's banner at the Battle of Hastings and signed a charter in which he granted land and other privileges to St Michael's Mount in Cornwall as a reward for the favours granted to him by his patron saint.[78] Michael's role as guardian of the heavenly city is a tradition found in non-biblical texts; in *III Baruch* 11:2 the speaker states that his companions cannot enter heaven until Michael comes because he holds the keys of the kingdom to come. An Anglo-Saxon tradition also mentions Michael in the role of guardian of a celestial gate; this is found in a homily on Doomsday which occurs in the margins of the same manuscript, Corpus 41.[79]

[Stanza 17]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael and the skilful cultivator of the royal vineyard who keeps it in order; he gathers the grapes, throws away the corrupt ones and gives the fruit of the good vineyard to his Lord. What are the grapes which he gathers there? They are the souls of holy and faithful men.

The inspiration for Stanza 17 appears to have been several biblical texts in which Christ compares the righteous to good fruit and the unrighteous to corrupt fruit (*Matthew* 7:17-20). In *John* 15:1-2, Christ compares himself to a vine which is taken care of by God who prunes away the dead branches. In Stanza 17 Michael

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[78] "The Archangel Michael in Britain," Millenaire Monastique, p 465.

[79] The Doomsday homily is found in the first half of Corpus 41 while the Michael text is found in the latter half of the manuscript. Grant, Three Homilies, p. 5.

is now in charge of the vineyard. Michael's involvement with the land is a post-biblical tradition. In *Enoch* 24 and 25 Michael is associated with the "Tree of Life." Michael is also responsible for gathering the angels who will plant the garden as well as planting the olive trees himself in *III Baruch/Slavonic* 4:7. Stanza seventeen also suggests again that the poem was meant to be read during the fall feast days dedicated to the archangel.

[Stanza 18]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael the good shepherd of the Lord's flock, who permits neither wolf nor thief to do any injury to his Lord's herd.

As with Stanza 17, both the Old and New Testament appear to have inspired Stanza 18. In *Isaiah* 40:11 the prophet speaks of God's feeding his flocks like a shepherd, gathering lambs in his arms, and gently leading the youths, imagery reminiscent of scenes in which Christ is depicted as the shepherd of his Christian flock (chiefly *John* 10:1-11, but also see *Luke* 12:32 and 15:3-7). In this stanza it becomes apparent that Michael has now become the heavenly shepherd of God's flock, and he spends the remainder of the text protecting his flock from Satan.

[Stanza 19]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael and the prosperous sower of Christ's fields, the fruitful reaper of the bright regions who fills his Lord's barns with the purest wheat and throws out the awns and the impurities, save that those are the true souls that he separates from the sinful ones.

Stanza 19 returns the reader to New Testament imagery where Christ speaks of his believers' being like wheat in the field (*Matthew* 13:38-39.)[80] This stanza could also be linked to *III Baruch* where Michael is depicted filling a vessel with baskets of flowers that represent the righteousness of humanity. [81] More importantly, this text emphasizes the harvest theme found in Stanza 17.

[Stanza 20]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael and the faithful servant whom the Lord appointed above all his household so that he might give them food at the due season. What is the food, save that he is destined on the Day of Judgment to grant every man the recompense he has merited?

Stanza 20 is also based on New Testament sayings. The image of Michael as judge has already been mentioned in Stanza 15 and is possibly linked to the image of Michael judging mankind's righteousness in *III Baruch*.[82] Stanza 20 is also the culmination of the past few stanzas in which Michael is seen as the Lord's shepherd, farmer, and gardener. The probable source for this text is *Matthew* 24:45: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?" (Also in *Luke* 13:42.) For Michael as judge, see above.[83]

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[80] See also *Matthew* 13:3-43 in which Christ speaks in parables about his flock; being like wheat.

[81] *III Baruch*, 12:1-8

[82] See *III Baruch*, 11-15.

[83] See *III Baruch*, 11-15

[Stanza 21]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael and the bright star which shines forth by day and night in heaven among the spiritual stars in the presence of the divine king.

There is no direct source for Stanza 21, but the image of angels as stars is an early tradition that might be related to *Isaiah* 14:12-13. In post-biblical traditions, Satan falls after declaring that he will set his throne amongst the stars and be like God.[84] The brightness of Michael's star is expected and understandable, considering his rank amongst the heavenly beings. As well, the brightness of Michael's star may be linked to a Judaic tradition in which Michael is thought to represent the element of fire.[85]

[Stanza 22]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael the glorious ship-master, the skilful pilot and the most renowned sailor, who fills his ship and fills it with heavenly dead, that is, with holy souls; and under the veil of divine fulfilment he guides it over the waves of the ocean, that is, through the dangers of this earthly world, and leads the holy souls to the sea of the heavenly life.

The image of Michael as the controller of the seas in Stanza 22 may have originated in Eastern traditions. No explicit biblical or post-biblical text characterizes Michael as a sailor. In Egypt, Michael was the patron saint of the Nile, and at various times throughout the year ceremonies and festivals would centre on Michael and the Nile.[86] In Celtic lore, sailors would pray to the

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[84] *Vita of Adae et Evae*, 15:3.

[85] Ginzberg, vol. 5, p. 70, n. 13.

[86] Online Catholic Encyclopedia: 21 Feb. 2000

archangel for protection while they went fishing.[87] Grant suggests that there is a connection between this stanza and *Matthew* 13:47-50 in which the kingdom of heaven is compared to a net in which all things are captured and the righteous are kept while the unrighteous are cast away.[88] The same verse also makes reference to angels coming forward and separating the just and unjust for judgment and casting the unjust into a furnace.[89]

[Stanza 23]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who came to the assistance of the Christians, as it says in the Acts of the Apostles, in a certain town whose name was Træleg and whose townspeople a heathen army oppressed every year. Then the inhabitants of the town agreed among themselves on a fast of three days, and, when the fast was ended, St Michael came to them, ready for battle. Then he stood over the town's main gate, holding a flaming sword in his hand, and he straightway put the strangers to flight so that they fled to another country and nevermore appeared there.

In Stanza 23 the author claims to be citing an event, the rescuing of a town from its enemies by Michael. Oddly, the event referred to does not appear in *Acts*, or anywhere else in the Bible, or any post-biblical text. In the *Old English Martyrology* there is a church dedication for September 29th relating a similar incident, except that the town bears the name "Tracla."[90] Grant suggests that both incidents likely originated from the same lost source, perhaps an *Acta Sanctorum*. A martyrology seems unlikely since Michael had no corporeal form to be

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[87] Carmichael, pp. 118-120.

[88] Grant, p. 73.

[89] *Matthew* 13:49-50.

[90] George. Herzfeld, An Old English Martyrology (London: K. Paul Trenchm Trüner, 1900), p. 236.

martyred.[91] Herzfeld proposes that the name "Tracla" is linked to a passage in *Pseudo-Jerome* and *Usuard* where Thrace and Heræclea are mentioned in the same clause,[92] and suggests that a careless scribe ran together the two place-names in his translation.

Another possibility is that the author of the text was commemorating events that had occurred in his own county of Cornwall. Trælag does not appear to have any links with the mainland, either Western or Eastern Europe, Ireland or Scotland, but may bear a similarity to several place names in Cornwall. One possible site for Trælag is Treligga, an isolated village on the Coast of north Cornwall. This site has been occupied prior to the Conquest and after when is placed under the rule of Robert of Mortain. Another translation of the Doomsday book does not contain a reference to Treligga but does mention Treligiani, which the translator suggested is the modern village of Treleggan in Gerrans on the coast of southern Cornwall. Treleggan was also inhabited prior to the Conquest as well as being part of Robert of Mortain's estates after the Norman invasion. [93]

Even with the find of similarly named villages there appears to be no direct link between the sites and Michael, although both are found on cliffs. High spots were traditionally linked to Michael. However, the lack of a direct link is not necessarily a result of lack of interest in Michael. It is possible that the author of the poem was commemorating a local tradition, lost to all but a few of the Cornish, where Michael is credited with protecting the village of Treligga or Treleggan

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[91] Grant, p. 73.

[92] Herzfeld, An Old English Martyrology, p. 236.

[93] Thomas Taylor, trans. "The Doomsday Survey For Cornwall" The Victoria History of the Counties of England Cornwall (Folkestone: William Dawson & Sons Ltd, 1973) pg. 93.

from Anglo-Saxon invaders trying to gain control over Cornwall from the fifth to ninth century. It is also possible that the author was commemorating Michael's victory over Danish invaders during the numerous Viking incursions which occurred on the Cornish coasts until the eleventh century. Either possibility is likely, and with the difficulties regarding foreigners that occurred during Edward's reign and after the Conquest, the author may have wanted to avoid any suggestion of questionable loyalty to the Anglo-Saxons, the Danish, and/or the Normans, thereby disguising the town's name and not making an issue of the events mentioned in Stanza 23. Michael's importance to the Cornish may explain why Edward chose this area as the one in which to dedicate a monastery to the saint who may have appeared there in earlier centuries.

If this supposition is correct than we have more insight into the author than we previously thought, for we now know that the person was aware of local traditions suggesting that he was trained locally, or possibly in Normandy, where someone would have learned to write in Carologinian minuscule.

The tradition of Michael bearing a blazing sword may have originated in *Genesis*, in which a cherub is depicted as guarding the gates of Paradise with a flaming sword (*Genesis* 3:24).[94] There is a biblical tradition in which an angel of the Lord is depicted as destroying the enemies of the Israelites. In *II Kings* 19: 35, the angel of the Lord is credited with killing one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians to prevent an invasion of Jerusalem.[95] There is another biblical tradition

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[94] While cherubim differ radically from angels in the Old Testament, in later traditions cherubim begin to resemble angels.

[95] 2 *Kings* 19:29-37.

in which an angel stops a plague from destroying the Israelites (*II Samuel* 24:16). As the designated champion of all believers, Michael may be associated with the biblical angel who protects believers from their enemies. One medieval tradition that supports this argument has Michael alighting upon the mausoleum of Hadrian sheathing a bloody sword; signalling the end of a particularly virulent plague that had struck Rome.[96]

[Stanza 24]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael and the great protector who on this very day showed his place on earth so that men should daily glorify the Lord there.

Stanza 24 has no obvious source. The text is ambiguous enough that any day on which Michael appeared could be "the very day" referred to. Grant has suggested that the stanza refers to Michael's appearance on Mount Garganus;[97] One wonders if the text could also be referring to Michael's appearance at St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, a distinct possibility if the author was commemorating a earlier tradition in which Michael had helped the Cornish against either the Anglo-Saxon and/or Viking invasions. Interestingly, the author does not provide us with a specific date when Michael should be glorified, which suggests an awareness of the different feast days dedicated to Michael, and possibly some hesitation on the author's part in regards to showing allegiance to one nation by stating a specific date.

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[96] Francis Bond, Dedications and Patron Saints of English Churches (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1914), p. 38.

[97] Grant's theory that this stanza refers to Michael's appearance on Mount Garganus is based on the preterite that appears in the Old English. Grant, p. 74.

[Stanza 25]

> This is the Holy archangel St Michael who before the end of the world will slay the ancient enemy that is the great serpent who at the creation of the earth was created brightest of the angels; but he himself forfeited this when he said, "I will lift up my throne to the north, and I shall be like unto the highest king." And then he fell, and he landed with his troop in the depth of the abyss, the very same Antichrist who before the end of the world will come to the earth in order to assemble those who are his. Then St Michael will come and slay him, because he has ever thought that he ought to be equal to the highest king.

In Stanza 25 the author returns to biblical traditions, reiterating Michael's role as the leader of the angels and slayer of the dragon in *Revelation* 12:7. The author presents the reader with a brief synopsis of Lucifer's fall from heaven. A post-biblical source that most closely resembles this tradition can be found in the *Vitæ Adæ and Evæ.*[98] The fall of Satan was also popular in Anglo-Saxon England, and a longer variation of the same tradition can be found in the *Old English Genesis.*[99] Grant suggests that Michael's and Satan's relationship was a result of Satan's fall; Michael, who is described as being "like unto God," is sent into combat against Satan, who sought to be "like unto God."[100]

[Stanza 26]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who on the latter day at the end of the world and at the fearful judgment will then awaken the dead at the Lord's command; in an exceeding glorious voice he will call out and will thus speak, "Surgite! Surgite! Arise! Arise!" And then will arise all the dead whom the earth swallowed up, or the sea drowned, or fire consumed, or wild animals devoured, or birds carried off on land, or worms gnawed in the earth.

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[98] *Vitæ Adae et Evae* 12-16.

[99] Kennedy, The Cædmon Poems, pp.121-145.

[100] Grant, p.74.

In Stanza 26 the author turns to Michael's role in the coming Apocalypse. Michael's task of awakening the dead upon the Day of Judgment is a tradition found in two apocryphal works. In *The Acts of Andrew and Paul*, the dead arise too early and are bidden to return to their graves until they are summoned by Michael.[101] In *The Revelation of John* it is revealed that " [God] will send forth [his] angels and they shall take the ram's horns that lie upon the cloud; and Michael and Gabriel shall go forth out of the heaven and sound with those horns..."[102] The list of the dead who will arise at Michael's call comes from a biblical and a non-biblical source. In *Revelation* one finds a reference to the sea giving up the dead and the dead being judged everyone according to his works. The remainder of the list may have come from the list found in *The Apocalypse of Peter*: "And the wild beasts and the fowls shall be commanded to restore all the flesh that they have devoured..."[103] As well, there is a tradition in The *Second Book of the Sibylline Oracles* which lists the dead to be brought before the judgment seat of the Lord: "And all whom the wave of the sea hath destroyed in the waters, and all whom the beasts and creeping things and fowls have feasted on: all these shall he bring to the judgment seat."[104] Interestingly, this particular stanza may have parallels in several other Old English texts, for example *The Wanderer*, lines 80-84, and *Blickling Homily 7* . The most striking similarities can be found in a

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[101] *Acts of Andrew and Paul.*

[102] *Revelation of John* 11.

[103] James, p. 512.

[104] James, p. 522.

passage from *Blickling Homily 7* for the Easter feast where Michael is again associated with the list of the ways of death.[105]

[Stanza 27]

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael who will summon and bring forth the good to life, and will give over the evil to be drowned in death; and then he will lead the holy souls into the kingdom of heaven, and he will gladden them that mourn, and he will heal them that are sick, and he will comfort the homeless, and he will grant rest to them that labour, he will discover joy to them that study, and he will extend understanding to them that teach.

In Stanza 27 the author combines the role of humanity's judge as mentioned in Stanza 20 and of the summoner of the dead as mentioned in the above stanza. Even though these roles have already been assigned to Michael, this stanza does not repeat earlier material but expands on it. The audience is now specifically told that the good will be brought back to life while the bad will be drowned in the sea. The roles Michael performs in this stanza are depicted in two other Anglo-Saxon homilies; these are based on the *Apocalypse of Thomas* and the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, and are also found in Corpus 41.[106] The final lines seem to have no Old Testament or post-biblical source but are reminiscent of a variety of New Testament texts. Stanza 27 is similar to the Beatitudes found in *Matthew* 5:1-20 but, while both share the same sentiments, there are no verbal similarities. Both *Matthew* 10:8 and *Luke* 5:17 share the image of Christ healing the sick. Stanza 27 is also reminiscent of *Revelation* 7:16

> where believers will be before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.

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[105] James E. Cross, "On The Wanderer, Lines 80-84: A Study of a Figure and a Theme," Vetenskap-Societetens i Lund Årsbok (1958-59), pp. 75-110.

[106] Grant, p. 75.

> Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water.
>
> And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. (*Revelation* 7:15-17)

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[Stanza 28]

> Therefore, most belovèd brethren, let us pray the holy archangel St Michael that he be a recipient of our souls and lead them into the heavenly kingdom to the lord, St Michael who lives and rules with the Father and with the Son and with the Holy Ghost for ever and ever, world without end, AMEN.

Stanza 28 is the culmination of the previous twenty-seven stanzas. As a summation the author reiterates Michael's most vital duty, that of receiving souls and leading them into heaven, where Michael will live and rule over the kingdom alongside God, his Son, and the Holy Ghost. Michael's role as summoner and judge has been mentioned in previous stanzas, so it should come as no surprise that Michael also gains a throne in the heavenly hierarchy. The author has now also reunited Michael with the Trinity, presenting Michael not as an entity replacing these figures but as one who works alongside them. Grant has suggested that the concluding verses could be based on the Offertory for the Mass of the Dead, which shares a similar sentiment.[107] Although each of the twenty-eight stanzas has an individual point to make, there is also a cumulative and incantatory effort produced by incremental repetition and by the author's unifying several stanzas in their treatment of certain all-important themes. The closely-wrought text in Corpus 41 has, indeed, many facets to its brilliance.

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[107] Grant, p. 77.

After reviewing this text in detail it is apparent that the author is presenting a detailed list of all Michael's activities and duties.His involvement with mankind is greatly expanded when compared to biblical, post-biblical, and medieval traditions. To the author, Michael is more than your average archangel; he is "the helper of all holy men, he is the governor of all holy souls, [and] he is the saviour of God's people..."[108] To prove this statement the author details how Michael helps, governs and saves believers through the centuries.

As noted, the examples of Michael's intervention on humanity's behalf begin with figures from the Old Testament. The author covers the gamut of the Old Testament by making references to major figures found in a variety of the historical books. The earliest books are represented by Abel (who was the first biblical martyr), Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the patriarchs of the Old Testament. The author also includes events in which Michael aids all the Israelites, not just important Old Testament figures. The author dedicates three stanzas to discussing how Michael ensures that the Israelites escape from Egypt, survive their wanderings in the desert, find the Promised Land, and triumph over the Canaanites. After ensuring that the reader understands how much aid Michael provides in the founding of the Israelite nation, the author tell us of the aid Michael provides to the Israelite nation by guiding the hands of the workmen who build Solomon's temple.

Two separate stanzas represent the prophets. The first reference is to *Daniel* and refers to the youths' willing sacrifice of their lives for their God. The second reference tells the reader that Michael is always present and available to

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[108] Grant, p. 57.

help all the prophets wherever they are. The stanza which refers to the helping of the prophets (Stanza 12) appears after the reference to Moses (Stanza 11) and prior to the stanza regarding Michael's conveyance of Mary's soul to heaven (Stanza 13). At first glance, the stanza dedicated to the prophets seems out of sequential order. This perception is misguided. According to Christian tradition, the Old Testament prophets foretold Christ's coming; for this reason, the Old Testament books of the prophets appear at the end of the Old Testament and just prior to the beginning of the New Testament.

After mentioning Old Testament figures and events in sequential order, the author refers to Moses. The removal of Moses from his place in the Old Testament is interesting, since there are numerous occasions in the Old Testament in which Moses is depicted as communicating with the messengers of the Lord but the author may have been trying to separate Moses from his role as law-giver hence the remembrance of the scene from *Jude*. One of the most striking incidents is in *Exodus* 3:2 where the angel of the Lord appears to Moses from out of a burning bush (*Exodus* 2:3). There are numerous Judaic traditions in which Moses and Michael interact. According to one tradition, Michael saves Moses from execution in Egypt by becoming the executioner.[109] In another, Michael guides Moses' hands in the sacrifice of the bulls in preparation for the revelation of God.[110] Also intriguing is how the author spends three stanzas on the Israelites' escape from Egypt, which was led by Moses in the Old Testament, and their wanderings in the desert, again led by Moses in the Old Testament, and never once mentions Moses.

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[109] An execution does occur, but it is the unfortunate executioner, who is in the guise of Moses, who dies. Ginzberg, vol 6, 35.

[110] Ginzberg, vol 3, 88-89.

This is not surprising, considering that Moses represents the Law. Moses was the one who received the laws which are the basis of Jewish faith directly from God, and in the role of law-giver Moses may be seen as representing Judaism; since Christianity superceded Judaism (according to Anglo-Saxon belief) Moses' role in the Old Testament has less significance. The incident in *Jude* allows the author to mention Moses, and to note the importance of the prophets, but to shift the focus away from Moses as law-giver and prophet to the power struggle between Michael and Satan.

The last human to be included in the list of figures helped by Michael is the Virgin Mary. No other New Testament figure is mentioned; apparently, the author perceives these biblical individuals as representing past historical events. The remainder of the text, excluding the stanza that focuses on *The Acts of the Apostles*, discusses the ongoing judgment of humanity and the coming Apocalypse referred to in *Revelation*.

The fact that no other biblical figure is specifically mentioned after Mary does not mean Michael is not involved in their lives or that the author saw the New Testament figures as being of lesser importance. The author chooses to focus on parables of the New Testament instead of specific people in the remainder of the text, apparently with the hope of clarifying exactly with which humans Michael dealt, and how. From Stanza 14 until Stanza 22 the author uses a wide variety of imagery from the Bible and post-biblical sources to describe the people who will be judged by Michael and what will happen to believers and nonbelievers.

Beginning in Stanza 12, the text takes on the appearance of a dialogue in which a detailed account of Michael's activities is offered to an audience who then respond with additional information which broadens knowledge of Michael's involvement with humanity. An example of this dialogue is illustrated by Stanza 11 in which the fight over Moses' body, as found in *Jude* 1:9, is discussed and expanded. The response in Stanza 13 tells us that Michael not only fought for Moses' body but also protects *all* the prophets no matter where they are.

In Stanza 14 we are told that Michael conveys the prayers of each and every holy man to God and then forgives the transgressions of his household. leaving the impression that Michael is the spiritual leader of *all* holy men. In essence, Michael is the spiritual ruler of the ecclesiastical hierarchy on earth, which coincides with the next stanza in which Michael is described as the ruler of royal houses. The author has declared Michael to be the secular and ecclesiastical representative of God on earth.

In the next two stanzas, the author describes Michael as both gardener and shepherd, picking through the grapes and throwing away the corrupt ones, and guarding the Lord's flocks. As in the previous two stanzas, Michael is depicted as representing two separate but not necessarily distinct realms.

To emphasize the gardening imagery, the author even includes a third stanza in which Michael is depicted as a farmer separating evil believers from the good like farmers separate chaff from the wheat. The author reiterates the imagery of Michael as judge as though he wants his audience to see that Michael will judge them no matter what their wealth or status.

The one stanza which stands out amongst the verses which discuss the variety of forms Michael takes when judging humanity is Stanza 23, which relates an event which supposedly originated in the *Acts of the Apostles*.[111] Stanza 23 relates an incident in which Michael protects a specific group of believers against non-believers. The remainder of the text depicts how Michael aids not only a specific group of believers but also *all* true believers in Christ and God.

The final three stanzas are the longest stanzas in the text and focus our attention on the coming Apocalypse. All the details discussed in these three verses originate from biblical or post-biblical traditions, with Michael being the focus. The themes of Michael as destroyer of Satan and as summoner and judge of the dead are reiterated. The author's conclusion is that our time on the earth will end with all true believers healed of all their ills and in heaven, with Michael as our divine ruler by permission of God, his Son and the Holy Ghost.

Even after a detailed analysis of *In Praise of the Archangel Saint Michael*, we are left wondering about the text's purpose. Calling it a eulogy, or suggesting it was part of the Old English martyrology does not adequately explain the text's ecclesiastical purpose. Perhaps it was meant to be a homily, although it seems unlikely that Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Norman church would have approved of a homily in ***authoric*** form. It's more likely a trope, a text which adds to the service but it is not essential. As a trope there is the possibility that *In Praise of the Archangel Michael* was read to believers and, to ensure their understanding of the text, it was also performed like the Nativity at Christmas time, the celebration being even more joyous as the people also celebrated the end of harvest season. This could explain the content, style, and structure of the text, which provides its recipients with vignettes of Michael's intervention on their behalf throughout time.

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[111] Ginzberg, vol 3, 88-89

Chapter II: The Anglo-Saxon Perspective

This chapter will focus on devotion to Michael in Anglo-Saxon England, and will discuss those figures such as Edward the Confessor and Bishop Leofric of Exeter who were instrumental in promoting and preserving interest in Michael prior to the Norman Conquest of England. To understand Michael's place in Anglo-Saxon society and his importance to Edward the Confessor and others loyal to the king, one must understand the events which led to the Anglo-Saxon conversion to Christianity, the unification of the kingdom by both Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, Edward's eventual succession to the English throne, and the events which led up to the Conquest.

It is unclear when Christianity made its first appearance in England. Archeological evidence suggests that there may have been Christians in Roman Britain prior to the fall of the Western Roman Empire, but the evidnece that Christianity was widespread in Roman Britain is sparse enough to cause debate.[1] During the last tumultuous century of the Western Roman Empire, all Roman troops were withdrawn from Roman Britain, 410 CE marking the essential termination of Roman authority in Britain and the isolation of the island from the

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[1] This fact is debated. Hollister in The Making of England claims that "Christianity was Rome's most enduring legacy in Britain." C. Warren Hollister, The Making of England (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1983), p. 18.

remainder of the Western Empire.[2] Roman Britain was left to fend for itself. The result was Britain's being overrun by Germanic tribes such as the Angles and the Saxons, and the destruction of Roman society in Britain. Any remnants of Christianity were forced to the Celtic fringes of Britain. At the end of the fifth century, little was left of Roman rule in Britain, and most of the survivors had converted to the Germanic faith. The few monks and monasteries that might have survived the invasion in the southern and eastern parts of the island of Britain were increasingly isolated from the rest of population and eventually disappeared. But the Celtic fringes now had thriving Christian monasteries that played a central role in Celtic society, and with the coming of missionaries such as St Patrick these areas would convert to Christianity before the Anglo-Saxons.[3] That area we now know as "England" would have to wait another century for Christianity to become the central faith of its inhabitants.[4]

In the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms conversion began at the top of the social hierarchy through either marriage to converts or missionaries sent to the local kings. Gregory the Great, after noticing Anglo-Saxon boys in the Roman slave market, sent the first Christian missionaries to Kent in 597. Ethelbert, the King of

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[2] David L. Edwards, Christian England: Its Story to the Reformation (London: Collins & Sons Ltd., 1981), pp. 24-25.

[3] For a detailed discussion of the conversion of the Celtic lands and the role Michael played in the Celtic church see the Appendix I.

[4] Kathleen Hughes, The Church In Early Irish Society (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp 25-30.

Kent, was the preeminent monarch of England during this period and had chosen a Christian wife, Bertha, who campaigned for a meeting between the monks and Ethelbert. Not completely trusting the missionaries, Ethelbert did meet with them but would not allow them into his household. Instead, the missionaries were allowed to settle with a Frankish bishop who had accompanied Bertha to Kent and allowed the missionaries to preach to his subjects.[5] The monks were successful in their conversion of the Kentish people, and according to legends were baptizing thousands at a time.[6] Soon Christianity spread through two of Ethelbert's client kingdoms, Essex and East Anglia, and although both kingdoms experienced some temporary back-sliding to paganism, Christianity quickly spread to the remainder of Britain.[7]

As England was more settled than the outer regions of the British Isles, it was easier to create a more traditional ecclesiastical structure; the towns became the center of the sees, and the monasteries took on a more isolated role from the communities. This was unlike the trend in the Celtic lands, where the development of Christianity in the Celtic tradition was guided and shaped by

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[5] Edwards, Christian England, p. 24.

[6] Mayr-Harting, Henry. The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England. (London: B.T.Batsford, 1972.), pp. 59-65.

[7] Mayr-Harting, Henry. The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England., pp. 65-68.

monks who had access to more literature and very different ideas than the English church.[8]

These different developments resulted in radically different approaches to saints and other heavenly creatures. In the Celtic tradition, Michael was integral to believers' faith and was assigned duties not typical of an archangel, angel, or saint. The differences between the churches would eventually result in the Synod of Whitby's in 664. The goal was to end the conflicts regarding the style of tonsure and the date for Easter that were interfering with the relationship of the Celtic and English churches. At the end of the synod, the Celtic church was found at fault and was forced to submit to Roman traditions regarding the tonsure and the dating of Easter. However, this submission did not extend to the Celtic church's approach to saints and their lives.[9]

As the Anglo-Saxons and the Celts accepted Christianity they also began to honour saints of the church. Of particular interest were the apostolic saints such as Peter and Paul, the Virgin Mary, church fathers and early martyrs. Included among these saints was the Archangel Michael, whose worship proved difficult due to his lack of corporeal form and hence relics. Thus, early believers tended to make a connection between Michael and high mountainous places and islands. As a result many churches were founded on a high spot, such as Mount Garganus, or

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[8] The Irish church was also heavily influenced by Eastern traditions and more accepting of Apocryphal literature than the English church. See Appendix I.

[9] Hughes, pp. 104-106.

on islands such as St Michael's Mount, Mont Saint Michel or Skeilleg Michael.[10] Michael's lack of corporeal form meant that his remains could not be enshrined or venerated as a typical saint's or marytr's remains could.[11] Instead, believers dedicated churches on sites where Michael supposedly appeared. For some, apparitions were not enough, and certain sites claimed to have relics from the archangel [12] while others claimed to have special healing powers granted by the archangel, which often resulted in the influx of ill pilgrims. Others chose to visit Michael's apparition sites to ensure that the archangel would intervene on their behalf as the heavenly judge of all mankind.[13]

References to Michael in Anglo-Saxon England can be found in numerous Anglo-Saxon sermons, saints' lives, and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People,*[14] as well as church dedications. Much material regarding the archangel focused around his feast-day of September 29th when he was remembered mainly for his role in the apocalypse, for several later miracles in Rome and at Mount Garganus, as well as his aid in ensuring a fruitful harvest. At

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[10] David Keck, Angels and Angelolgy in the Middle Ages. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) pp. 114-115.

[11] Although there is some suggestion that some Irish communities believed that their graveyards contained Michael's burial mound. Alexander Carmichael, Carmina Gadelica Hymns and Incantations (Hudson: Lindisfarne Press, 1992), pp. 591-592.

[12] There was a legend that Michael had left his footprints in a stone at Mount Garganus.

[13] Keck, Angels and Angelology, p.110.

[14] Grant, Raymond. Three Homilies from Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41 (Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1982), pp. 47-49.

first glance surviving evidence suggests that there was a vibrant cult dedicated to the archangel; this theory is based on the number of references to the archangel in the primary sources. But further research suggests that interest in the archangel was limited to prayers and homilies recited on his feast day or brief references in homilies, prayers, and saint's lives where Michael is represented in his traditional roles as the conveyor of souls, judge of humanity, and less commonly, the summoner of all the dead for judgement day. Blickling Homily 17, *To Sc̆æ Michaheles Mæssan*, focuses on Michael's appearance at Mount Garganus while Ælfric's homily 1.34 praises Michael's role as protector of all Christians and also makes reference to the Mount Garganus event. Michael's other appearances in Anglo-Saxon literature make reference to his role as conveyor of souls and, more interestingly, Blickling Homily 7 tells of Michael's blowing four trumpets at the end of the earth to call everyone to judgement.[15] Also surviving from pre-Conquest England is another text dedicated to Michael and found in MS Cambridge, Pembroke College 25. The one significant difference between this text and the ones mentioned above is the language of the document, which is Latin. Cross, in his analysis of this untranslated Latin eulogy of Michael, suggests that this text also differs from the typical Roman material, but close analysis does not support his argument.[16]

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[15] Grant, Three Homilies from Cambridge, pp. 48-49.

[16] While the Latin text does suggest that the text was written in the memory of Michael, one wonders if it should be labeled a eulogy considering Michael's lack of corporeal form. James E. Cross, "An Unpublished Story of Michael the Archangel and its Connections." Magister Regis

While there are numerous references to Michael in early English literature they all originated from ecclesiastical material and represent the Latin tradition where Michael is seen as the protector of Christian believers, the conveyor souls, and the slayer of Satan. [17] The one exception is the Corpus 41 text, which is unlike any other pre-Conquest text dedicated to Michael. Even references to Michael in Leofric's missal reiterate the Latin tradition and lack the fantastical element of Corpus 41 where Michael is given almost Christlike-powers in his aid to believers.[18] It is interesting that the Anglo-Saxon tradition seems devoid of any of the ritual prayers and celebrations dedicated to Michael and found in the Celtic tradition.[19] Perhaps evidence for a wider celebration no longer exists, but it seems that the early Anglo-Saxon churchmen had little interest in the heavenly hierarchy. Although this does not mean that lay people were not interested in Michael, proving that there was widespread interest in Michael amongst the laity is more difficult as they have left little literary evidence. Another possible source is Anglo-Saxon church dedications to Michael; a large number of churches dedicated to the archangel prior to the Conquest would prove that interest in

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(New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), pp. 30-32.

[17] The South English Legendary is a Middle English manuscript which provides us with the most extensive details of Michael's appearences in England, and suggests that it was Norman interest in the archangel which allowed for the expansion of these traditions. Oddly, the Legendary suggests that Michael's day falls in November and not September. The Legendary is also the text which introduces Saint George and a dragon. Horstramn, Carl, ed. The Early South-English Legendary (London: Trubner & Co., 1887), pp. 294-322.

[18] Grant, Three Homilies, pp. 47-49.

[19] See Appendix 1 for details.

Michael was indeed an Anglo-Saxon phenomenon that disappeared with the Norman Conquest of England. But, the evidence suggests otherwise, as there were fewer than forty churches dedicated to Michael in the Anglo-Saxon period and almost half of these dedications occurred after Edward the Confessor became King of England, a problem which will be more fully discussed later in this chapter.

So all the surviving evidence suggests that Michael did not play the pivotal role in Anglo-Saxon society some modern scholars have suggested. Yet, Michael was important to men such as Edward and Leofric. To understand his significance to both men we must understand the events which led up to Edward's coronation and Leofric's nomination as bishop as well as the events which led to William's invasion of England.

The length of this chapter prohibits an in-depth analysis of the unification of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Suffice it to say that the seven warring kingdoms were eventually replaced by a single united state. This process of unification was probably hastened by the Viking raids on the British Isles from the late eighth century onwards, which reached a crescendo during the reign of Edward the Confessor's father, Ethelred the Unready. Ethelred, as his title suggests has been portrayed in a negative light. His childhood was clouded with scandal as his supporters were blamed for the murder of his elder half-brother although this controversy did not prevent him from gaining the throne in 978. A split in the

Anglo-Saxon aristocracy over Ethelred's becoming king and regarding reforms to the Anglo-Saxon church threatened to explode into civil war. Other factors causing difficulty for the child-king were the ever increasing Danish raids which were no longer mere private-enterprise raiding parties but attacks planned by the kings of Denmark. Ethelred and his fellow Anglo-Saxons were able to hold their own against these raids until 991, when a Viking band was able to destroy part of the East Anglia defense at Maldon in Essex. Ethelred was able to buy peace with a ransom known as the Danegeld, and future payments of this ransom did prevent more Viking raids. This tactic may have won time, but made it apparent to the Danes that England was extremely wealthy and poorly defended. In 1009, Swein the King of Denmark threw all his resources against the Anglo-Saxons and, with the support of the Danish already settled in England and with little resistance from the English, was able to gain the throne of England. Ethelred fled to his wife's homeland, Normandy, and Swein began to rule. Unfortunately for Swein he was not able to enjoy his triumph, and he died 1014. His son Canute, expecting to succeed, was surprised by Ethelred, who tried to regain his throne. Ethelred did not succeed, and the English throne was now Danish.[20] To strengthen his position Canute married Ethelred's widow Emma, the granddaughter of the first Duke of

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[20] Hollister, The Making of England, pp. 85-87.

Normandy. She left her surviving sons in Normandy and was apparently intent on creating a new line with Canute to replace her own sons.[21]

As with many of the pre-Norman figures, little is known about Edward's early life. The exact date of Edward's birth is unknown, but Barlow has suggested that 1005 is the most likely year.[22] What rank in the succession this date gave Edward is unclear as very little is known about his siblings, whether half-brothers or full relatives. Whatever Edward's placement as possible heir, he made few if any appearances in surviving Anglo-Saxon literature for the first ten to fifteen years of his life. Barlow suggests that Edward was actually sent to a monastery during this period, but there is not enough evidence to confirm this argument.[23]

In his teenage years, Edward appears in more of the surviving sources, perhaps most notably in the battle which sees him almost cutting the enemy in half, and yet his appearances are so infrequent that scholars are still unsure of Edward's place in his father's society.[24] With the death of his father, Edward lost whatever place he held in English society and was forced alongside his brother Alfred to flee to the Continent. Again, the lack of sources does not help in our understanding of what happened to Edward during his exile. Edward most likely

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[21] Jack Lindsay, The Normans and Their World (London: Hart-Davis, 1974) p. 72.

[22] Frank Barlow, Edward the Confessor (Yale: Yale University Press, 1997) p. 29.

[23] Barlow, Edward, p. 321.

[24] According to a Danish source, Edward almost chops Canute in half during a battle. This action seems very atypical of Edward. Barlow, Edward,, p. 35.

spent his time in the Duke of Normandy's court, but information regarding his education and activities during this exile has not survived. Barlow and Blake argues that Leofric, the Bishop of Exeter and Devon and one of Edward's allies during his reign in England, may have traveled with Edward outside the Norman court into Frankish territory, but cannot supply any details regarding this excursion or any others in which Edward and Leofric may have been involved.[25]

Norman attitudes regarding Edward are also difficult to understand. Apparently, Edward and his brother were tolerated at the court, which is not surprising considering their mother was directly linked to the first Duke of Normandy, Richard II. But there is no evidence that Edward and Richard II's successor, William, were friends, albeit one must assume that they did interact in the court. One incident that supports the argument that the Normans supported Edward and his brother as well as promoting their cause is an attempted invasion of England sometime *circa*1030-32 . Due to rough seas the invasion of England failed and the fleet attacked Brittany.[26] This attack was indirectly linked to an intervention by Michael and is somehow related to Edward's creation of Saint Michael's Mount, but the exact connection is unclear.[27]

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[25] D.W. Blake "Bishop Leofric," The Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art 106 (1974), pp. 47-51.

[26] Douglas, David. William the Conqueror: The Norman Impact upon England (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 275-290.

[27] Hull, The Cartulary of St. Michael's Mount (Torquay: The Devonshire Press Ltd., 1962), pp. x-xi.

With the death of Canute in 1035, the English crown was a ripe plum to be plucked again, and his kingdom was divided so that both of his sons could rule. Neither ruled wisely. Harthacnut, heir to the Danish throne, attempted to seize the English throne as well as gaining Ethelred's sons' support. Unlike Canute, Harthacnut was willing to allow his half brothers, Edward and Alfred, to return although this willingness may have been a trap so that the Norman heirs to the English throne could be removed from the succession. Alfred's return was not accepted by all and ended badly for the prince. Sometime in 1036, after traveling to England, Alfred was seized by men loyal to the Godwin family and blinded so brutally that he died shortly after. Edward was luckier and able to return to England and London without difficulties. It is unclear what role Edward would have played if Harthacnut had survived, but it was Harthacnut who died in 1042. The surviving Anglo-Danish magnates turned to the person most directly in the line of the throne and Edward was proclaimed king in 1042/44.[28]

Becoming the King of England in the late Anglo-Saxon world was not necessarily to one's advantage as the political situation was often violent as a result of the competing interest over who controlled the crown. Complicating matters was the division of English political powers between three separate and powerful political groups, the Danish, the Anglo-Saxons and to a lesser extent the Normans. By the time of Edward's coronation, the Danish and Anglo-Saxons had

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[28] Barlow, Edward, pp. 54-57.

intermarried enough so that there were powerful Anglo-Danish nobles whose main concern was to stop the Normans from gaining the English throne. It is during Edward's reign that these competing interests would attempt to control the throne and the king and to prevent the Normans from gaining a greater foothold in the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy.[29]

Edward's proclamation as king marked several changes in Anglo-Saxon politics. First was the removal of his mother, Emma, from the political scene, possibly due to her previous relationship with Canute and her distance from her son during his exile.[30] While Emma was being confined to a nunnery, their appears to have been a closeness between Edward, the Godwin family and other English magnates. This closeness may have been the result of the magnates' perception of Edward's trying to distance himself from his Norman mother and therefore from his ties to Normandy.[31] In 1045, Edward married Godwin's only daughter Edith. Edward's position seemed assured, but how much control he had over the English throne would depend greatly on the support he received from the Anglo-Saxon nobles.

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[29] Barlow, Edward, pp. 80-85.

[30] The exact nature of Emma and Edward's relationship is unclear but the two did not appear close which is not a surprise considering Edward had spent over two decades separated from his mother. Barlow, Edward, pp. 75-78.

[31] Lindsay, p. 93.

The three most powerful Anglo-Saxon nobles who allowed Edward to gain the throne were Leofric of Mercia, Tostig of Northumbria, and Godwin of Wessex. Their support of Edward assured the king his throne. Over Edward's twenty-five year rule, his relationship with these nobles was at best friendly, and at worst hostile. Godwin, Earl of Wessex, the strongest of the three magnates, and his family had the most influence over Edward's life, as Edward's wife was Godwin's daughter.[32]

Born to Anglo-Saxon parents *circa* 988, Godwin supported Canute's claim to the throne and when Canute overcame Ethelred the Unready he rewarded Godwin with lands in Wessex and Kent, thus creating the great English aristocracy and powerful magnates who could challenge the king's control of the throne. Godwin's support of the Danish cause included marrying into Danish aristocracy. His wife, Gytha, was from Danish stock and her family held lands near Exeter, including a church in Exeter itself.[33] Surviving evidence suggests that Gytha was not always on good terms with her family and who they supported in regards to the Scandinavian take over of the English throne or events in Denmark and Norway. Gytha may have played a role in who was assigned to the Exeter bishopric, as will be discussed later.

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[32] Barlow, Edward, pp. 86-89.

[33] In 1053 Gytha supposedly donated land to the church of St Olave in the memory of her husband and King Olaf of Norway who had died in battle in 1053. The dedication to Olaf suggests a conflict with her Danish family as Olaf was a hated and feared enemy of the Danish. " ST OLAVE " Genuki 15 Aug. 2001 <http://www.cs.ncl.ac.uk/genuki/DEV/Exeter/StOlave/ >

Gytha's relationship with the other Anglo-Danish aristocracy is uncertain. She did not appear to be close to Canute and may have favored the Norwegians over her Danish family members. Godwin's and his wife's support of Edward seems odd as there were other more Danish candidates who had a claim to the throne. Godwin may have feared his lack of influence over the Danish candidates and the support these heirs would have from the Scandinavian countries, and Godwin may have known that his only way of gaining the throne was to marry his daughter to the heir apparent. Even with this marriage Godwin's power in England varied according to his relationship with the throne.[34] Godwin at first supported Edward's plans in such things as confining Emma to a nunnery, and removing that power source from the court. He certainly began to disapprove of Edward's appointments of his Norman and other foreign friends. [35] This explains why at first Godwin and Edward appeared to be friends or at least allies and why as Edward attempted to exert control the relationship fell apart.

Whatever relationship Edward had with these magnates and their families at his coronation changed as he asserted his control over who received positions in his administration and the church. As positions became vacant Edward replaced Anglo-Saxon officials with his Norman friends. The Anglo-Saxon nobles became concerned that Edward's favoritism would cause rancour with the

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[34] Barlow, Edward., pp. 55-95.

[35] Barlow, The English, pp. 46-48.

magnates. Another factor that may have upset the friendship between Edward and the magnates, and especially Godwin, was Edward's decision not to have heirs and leave his wife untouched, thus ensuring that the Godwin family would not have direct links to the first in line for the throne.[36]

Several events in 1051 caused the conflict to come to a head. Edward's appointment of his goldsmith, Spearhavoc, to a bishopric upset the faithful in the Anglo-Saxon church. Another event that upset the already strained relationship between Godwin and Edward was when Edward appointed Robert of Jumièges, his Bishop of London, to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. The chapter had already elected Ælfric to replace the former archbishop, yet Anglo-Saxon dislike of Robert of Jumièges does not appear to be based on any wrongdoing but solely on his link to the Normans and Edward. Jumièges ' choice came at the expense of the Anglo-Saxon choice, who had been elected by his fellow bishops, and so Edward's choice of Robert against Anglo-Saxon wishes was seen as yet another of Edward's attempts to solidify the position of the Norman empire in England.[37] Whether this was actually Edward's goal is uncertain, nor is it clear if Edward's final intent in choosing Norman and other foreign officials over Anglo-Saxon ones was the first step in handing England over to the Normans. It should be remember that Edward's mother was Norman and that he had spent over two

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[36] Barlow, Edward the Confessor, pp. 90-95.

[37] Barlow, Edward., pp. 105-107.

decades in the Norman court. Perhaps Edward was not interested in politics and simply chose officials whom he liked as friends.[38]

The problem came to a head in 1051 when Eustace of Boulogne and a group of Normans became involved in a brawl at Dover and several men were killed. Edward ordered Godwin, as the Earl of Wessex, to punish the people of Dover for this attack on his Norman friends. Godwin refused and instead raised an army against the king. The earls of Mercia and Northumbria remained loyal to the king and, to avoid a civil war, Godwin and his family agreed to go into exile and Edith, Edward's wife, was exiled from the court.[39]

It appeared that Edward had finally gained complete control over his throne, but Edward soon lost that control when Godwin and a large army commanded by his sons, Harold and Tostig, landed in the south of England in 1052. Edward was unable to raise significant forces to stop the invasion and Edward was left as a token figurehead. The immediate result of the changing power base was the forcible removal of many of the Norman administrators that Edward had placed in the government and church. Many of these Normans were forced to flee England and would never return. The most notable of the exiles included the Archbishop of Canterbury who was immediately replaced by an Anglo-Saxon bishop, Stigand.

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[38] A view supported by Edward's nomination of Spearhavoc, his personal goldsmith, to bishopric of London. Barlow, The English Church, pp. 47-48.

[39] Barlow, The English Church, pp. 49-50.

Stigand's appointment was problematic, and would become the basis for a later Pope's support of William's invasion of England, as the previous archbishop was still alive and had not been legitimately removed from his position. This meant that Stigand did not have an official claim to the archbishopric nor should have received the pallium. When Stigand received the pallium in 1052, Benedict X was not supported by many of the cardinals and was attempting to find any form of legitimization of his power. Shortly after, Benedict X was removed from the papal seat and declared an antipope, but Stigand was secure in his position as Edward no longer held the power over the magnates and was now just a figurehead. In 1053 Godwin died, and it was questionable whether his family would retain control over the throne. Harold took over for his father and also attempted to prevent Edward from allowing his Norman friends to return. Harold controlled the throne until Edward's death in 1066.[40]

Even after his death, Edward does not appear to have been popular amongst the Anglo-Saxon noblemen, whose attention turned to who would gain the English throne which raises a question regarding the date of Edward's canonization. Edward's depiction in secondary sources would suggest that his canonization occurred immediately after his death and was the result of the Anglo-Saxon belief that he was a saint. The primary evidence suggests that Edward while credited with performing miracles after his death, these miracles were only noticed after the Norman Conquest which explains why his

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[40] Barlow, Edward the Confessor, pp. 49-51.

canonization was delayed until after William became king. The evidence also suggests that, like Michael, Edward's role as England's only "Saintly" king can be linked to a Norman agenda. [41]

In the midst all this turmoil one of the most intriguing figures in the period spanning both Edward's reign and the Norman Conquest of England is Leofric, Bishop of Exeter and Devon. Leofric's first appearance on the Anglo-Saxon scene occurred shortly after Edward's return to England and his acceptance of the English throne. Any discussion of Leofric and his role prior to and after the Conquest is marred by lack of evidence, although enough fragments survive to allow one to piece together Leofric's role in Edward's court.[42] Scholars such as Barlow have focused on Leofric's manuscript donations to Exeter because of their significance for scholars studying Anglo-Saxon literature and often have ignored the man himself except to suggest that he was uninterested in secular matters and devoted to his faith.[43] While there is no evidence to suggest that Leofric was not a devoted churchman, the focus on the manuscripts preserved by Leofric ignores the bishop's skills as a politician. Nor does it explain his reasons for preserving a text such as the Michael one in his attempts to survive the difficulties of both Edward's reign and the Norman conquerors.[44]

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[41] Barlow, Edward the Confessor, pp. 256-285.

[42] Barlow, Leofric, p. 1.

[43] Barlow, Leofric, pp. 14-15.

[44] Max Förster claims that the text was preserved by a Norman monk, not a Anglo-Saxon one, which suggests that the Normans were the ones interested in the text and not the Anglo-Saxons. Other evidence is linked to the number of treaties between the new Anglo-Norman

There is no mention of Leofric in surviving lay and ecclesiastical manuscripts until 1046, when he is mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.[45] No surviving Anglo-Saxon or Norman sources tell us Leofric's origins. A 12th century chronicler, Florence of Worcester, has suggested that Leofric was originally from England, and most likely Cornwall, as he was called a Breton, and was possibly linked to the Earls of Mercia with whom he shared a name. Leofric than apparently travelled to the Continent, but the exact reasons are unknown. It is possible he traveled over the Channel for training as a clerk, although one could receive this training in England. It is also possible, and more likely, that Leofric was exiled to the Continent during the turmoil caused by Canute's gaining the English crown. Barlow suggests that Leofric could have been exiled with Edward, although there is no supporting evidence. Another possibility is that Leofric was not originally from Anglo-Saxon England but the Continent itself. William of Malmesbury, another twelfth-century chronicler, has suggested that Leofric's origins were linked to Lotharingia where he was trained as monk and a clerk. Sometime during Edward's exile at the Richard I's court in Normandy, Leofric met with Edward. Whether this meeting was intentional and how Leofric even

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leaders and Saint Michael's Mount. Max Förster. " The Donations Of Leofric to Exeter." The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry: With Introductory Chapters by R.W. Chambers, Max Förster, and Robin Flower eds. (London: P. Lund, 1933), pp. 11-12.

[45] There is a problem regarding the dating in the various versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Barlow suggests that 1046 is the most likely of the possible dates.

ended up in Richard's court remain unknown.[46] With the deaths of Canute and his heirs Edward was able to claim his throne, and Leofric travelled with him.

If Leofric was a foreigner whose first appearance in England occurred with Edward's return, one is left to wonder about his name, which as mentioned above is linked to the Earls of Mercia. It is possible that Leofric chose this specific name for its links to Anglo-Saxon nobles, a possibility that will be explored later in this chapter. Whatever Leofric's origins it is apparent that his appearance on the Anglo-Saxon scene occurred only after Edward returned to England. [47]

In the 1046 reference to Leofric, the reader is told that Leofric is Edward's priest and that Edward made him Bishop of Cornwall and Devon. Both sees and a third had belonged to bishop Lyfing, who died in 1046. The third see held by Lyfing, which was in Worcestershire, was given to Bishop Aldred; no explanations have survived for why Leofric received only two sees and not the third. If later chronicles and the ***Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*** are accurate in their claim that Leofric was at the least Edward's personal priest or his chancellor, his assignment to Cornwall and Devon seems odd. Both sees had suffered greatly during Viking incursions in the past century and Exeter had been partially destroyed in a Norman raid in 1003.[48] Crediton, the seat of the bishopric, was a

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[46] Barlow, Leofric, pp. 2-3.

[47] Barlow, Leofric, pp. 1-2.

[48] Lindsay, The Normans and Their World, pp. 74-75.

small, underdeveloped village which contained only a small church and very few other structures. Exeter was by far the better site to house the head of a see, being partially walled albeit still in shambles from both the Viking and Norman raids, and Exeter had Gytha, Godwin's wife and Harold's mother, as a patron who donated money to several churches in and around Exeter.[49]

Even odder is the assignment of Worcester to another bishop whose relationship with the king does not appear to be as close as Leofric's since Worcester was a very wealthy see and had a famous scriptorium. It is possible that Leofric had somehow offended Edward and the result was the assignment to two of the poorest sees in England, but if that were the case why even bother to reward Leofric with a bishopric, not to mention two? A possible explanation proposed by Barlow is that Edward chose to assign the priest to Worcester and the clerk to Devon and Exeter.[50] A problem with this explanation is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's* reference to Leofric being Edward's priest, which does suggest that Leofric was not just a clerk.

So there must be another reason for Leofric's assignment to these two rather isolated and poor sees, and there is a possible and intriguing explanation for Edward's assignment. The one wealthy site[51] found in Exeter and near Crediton was Saint Michael's Mount, the monastery founded by Edward on his

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[49] Barlow, The English Church. p. 195.

[50] Barlow, Leofric, p. 4.

[51] "Wealthy" being a subjective term, Saint Michael's Mount appeared to be in a better financial state than Exeter or Crediton.

return to England and supported both financially and with manpower from Mont Saint Michel in Normandy.[52]

The origins of Saint Michael's Mount are shrouded in the mists of time. The surviving information is a mixture of legend and history. The first difficulty is whether Edward's Saint Michael's Mount was the first ecclesiastical center on this Cornish island or the replacement of a Celtic cell. Evidence suggests that even before the coming of Christianity the Celts had used the island as a place of worship, and after the conversion of the Celts to Christianity the island was supposedly converted into a Christian cell; however, no conclusive evidence for the existence of a Celtic Christian community has ever been found, leaving one to wonder if such a community ever existed on the island.[53] How Edward became aware of the island is unclear, but it has been linked to a Norman attempt to invade England, or at least make the Anglo-Saxons aware of Edward's legitimate claim to the English throne. The argument that this monastery was founded prior to Edward's return to England is based on a surviving, but problematic, charter in which an exiled Edward, referring to himself as King of England, grants lands and money to the monks of Mont Saint Michel to found the monastery in Cornwall.[54]

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[52] Prior to the foundation of Saint Michael's Mount in Cornwall, Mont Saint Michel did have contact with England in the form of scribes and manuscripts being sent to Normandy in order to create a scriptorium of which the Dukes of Normandy could be proud.

[53] Hull, pp. x-xi.

[54] Hull, pp. xii-xiii.

The fact that the charter refers to Edward as king even before he returned to England and before the death of Harthacnut suggests that charter is a forgery or written later in confirmation of the grant. It is more probable that the foundation of the monastery occurred after Edward's return and prior to the Godwins' take over of the throne, as it seems unlikely that the Godwin family would support Norman involvement in an English monastery. Later evidence also supports the argument that while Edward did fund the creation of a small cell on the Cornish island it was not until 1070 that Robert of Mortain's grant made the creation of the monastery's priory possible.[55] This suggests a closer relationship between the Cornish monastery and the Norman one than scholars have previously thought.

So while the foundation of Saint Michael's Mount may be important for those interested in claiming a widespread Michael cult, the evidence does not support this argument. However, the dating of the foundation, problematic as it is, supports another, more intriguing proposal. What if the monastery was founded so that Edward and his friends from Normandy could have a convenient way of contacting the Norman court? One of the oddities about Saint Michael's Mount is its exact purpose for existing.[56]

It is possible that evidence of a collection did not survive the passage of history, yet the cartulary or part of it did, leaving one to wonder what the explanation for the lack of manuscripts could be. A possibility is that the

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[55] Hull, pp. xvi-xvii.

[56] It is possible that all evidence of the scriptorium was destroyed, but it seems odd that the cartulary would survive virtually intact and no other manuscripts would.

monastery did not need to create its own collection of Anglo-Saxon or Norman texts as it had access to both. For the Norman texts the monks of Saint Michael's Mount could turn to the Norman monastery, which was just over the Channel. The difficulties of a channel crossing may have precluded a daily journey to the Norman site, yet there is evidence of a close relationship and an exchange of both monks and manuscripts. While the ties to the Norman house would have provided the monks with Norman manuscripts, the monks must have also desired access to Anglo-Saxon religious texts and without a scriptorium they would have been forced to turn elsewhere. This provides us with another connection tc Leofric, who as noted above is most famous for the collection of Anglo-Saxon texts that he donated to Exeter cathedral. Maybe the monks, or at least those from England, at Saint Michael's Mount did not develop their scriptorium because an ample and fine collection of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts already existed at Exeter, and all they required was access to the collection.[57] This evidence has been harder to find, but there is a surviving charter in which Leofric supposedly granted the monks ecclesiastical freedom and the right to receive a third of all income raised from almsgiving. This charter is considered a "crude" forgery but its very existence, if not its content, does provide evidence of a relationship between Leofric and the monastery.[58] Another possible concern regarding this forged charter and any

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[57] Hull, pp. xv-xviii.

[58] There is great debate regarding the authenticity of this charter which has been classified a crude forgery by several scholars. Although Hull was less harsh in her analysis of the text. Hull, pp. xx-xvi.

claim of a connection between Leofric and the monastery is the date of the document, which is 1070 or later, raising a possibility that Leofric became interested in these monks only after the Conquest, creating the forgery to suggest prior interest.[59] It is possible that Leofric did spend time at the monastery prior to the Conquest and did not want attention brought to the relationship, which leads one to wonder why Leofric would be concerned about others noting his relationship with a newly founded monastery. The most obvious answer is the link both Leofric and the monastery had with the Normans.

With the foundation of Saint Michael's Mount under the auspices of its mother house Mont Saint Michel, there was an even stronger connection between Normandy and Anglo-Saxon England. This connection was not always appreciated, as the Anglo-Saxon nobles saw Edward's devotion to his Norman friends as a threat to the kingdom. So Leofric may have received his two sees as a way of ensuring Edward a connection and support from the Normans in case of problems with the Anglo-Saxon nobles, and (as noted above) a threat which was realized later in Edward's reign.

The next appearance of Leofric in surviving Anglo-Saxon documents is in a letter from Edward to the incumbent Pope regarding whether Leofric had the permission to move the seat of his sees from Crediton to Exeter. No explanation for Leofric's desire to move the head of the see survives although Barlow has argued that Leofric wanted more protection from pirates and thought Exeter with

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[59] Hull, pp. xv-xvi.

its wall defenses would provide this safety.[60] From the surviving documentation it is apparent that Leofric still had Edward's support and had received permission to send one of his priests, Landbart who was associated with Liege, to Rome in order that the move be allowed. [61] These facts suggest that Leofric's being sent from the court to these run-down and isolated sees was not an apparent breakdown of the relationship between the king and his priest. [62]

The move was supported by Edward, which is evident if the surviving documentation is correct, for both the king and his wife went to Exeter to witness Leofric's installation at the foundation of the new cathedral in Exeter. Barlow has noted that Edward and his wife were able to travel to Exeter, which shows that Edward was still free to travel in 1050 and was not under the complete control of the Godwin family. Again, this evidence may strengthen the argument that Leofric was sent to Exeter as a means of ensuring Edward's connection to Normandy and one which would not unduly raise the suspicions of the Anglo-Saxon nobles. Any Bishop of Exeter who was a supporter of Edward, and possibly a foreigner, would have to be convincing as a supporter of all things Anglo-Saxon if he was to retain his post and remain in England. The fact that Edward and his wife were able to travel to Exeter shows the significance of the

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[60] This argument is problematic as Exeter is on the coast while Crediton is inland and more protected from pirates. It is possible that Leofric chose Exeter because of its proximity to the sea and its port where the arrival of foreign ships would not be questioned.

[61] Barlow, Leofric, p. 8.

[62] Barlow, Leofric, p. 4-8.

move and Edward's support of Leofric as Edward rarely travelled to church events outside of London.[63] Interestingly, Edward's confinement to London, whether by his choice or a result of his relationship with Godwin, prevented him seeing Robert of Jumièges, his choice for archbishop, installed at Canterbury. This trip would have been much shorter than the trek out to Exeter and suggests that Leofric was more important to Edward than the surviving sources suggest. Also interesting is the fact that Edward's wife also made the trek which also suggests that Edward had the support of the Godwin family. Whatever the case, it does seem odd that Edward was not present for Jumiège's confirmation.[64]

The methods by which Leofric went about moving the see are also intriguing as they suggest that the bishop wanted or needed the Pope and Edward involved in the moving of the seat to Exeter. The fact that Leofric went to the Pope is odd considering that other moves such as these were decided by a committee in England without the Pope's or the king's involvement. It is possible that Leofric chose the more "official" route to ensure that there was no debate over the moving of the see. One could also claim that the Papacy may have lost its power in England; however, it also possible that Leofric needed to have Edward and the Pope involved in order to prove how he was a loyal Anglo-Saxon

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[63] Barlow, Edward, pp. 105-106.

[64] Barlow, Edward, p. 106.

churchman interested in following proper protocol and not in just forcing his own political agenda onto his sees.[65]

After the moving of his seat, Leofric again disappears from public view and little is known of him till after the Norman Conquest and his commendation from William for his support in the Norman Conquest of England. His survival as the Normans removed bishops from their sees and until his death in 1072 will be discussed in the next chapter.

Leofric also left behind another, and perhaps the most wonderful example of his activities outside of the political realm, his collection of Anglo-Saxon texts and his gifts to Exeter upon his demise. While few if any of Leofric's gifts to Exeter cathedral have survived the will and the events surrounding Leofric's incumbency, they show a bishop who was dedicated to improving his cathedral. The will shows a multitude of luxury items including ornate pieces of cloth, ivory candlesticks, and other expensive items being left to the cathedral.[66] There is no surviving evidence to explain how Leofric raised the funds for the purchase of these items. One must wonder if Leofric's interest in collecting items for his church was his response to Gytha's expensive gifts and donations to monasteries and churches in and around Exeter. Maybe Leofric's gifts were his way of winning loyalty from some of Anglo-Saxon subjects. No surviving document has

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[65] Barlow, Leofric, p. 8.

[66] Max Förster, " The Donations Of Leofric to Exeter," The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry: With Introductory Chapters by R.W. Chambers, Max Förster, and Robin Flower (London: P. Lund, 1933),
pp. 18-30.

accused the bishop of immoral or unfair behavior with regards to the collection of taxes or in his treatment of his parishioners, and it seems unlikely that such poor sees could have funded his collections. Nor is their any evidence that Leofric was considered wealthy prior to his receiving either see, suggesting that his funding was coming from elsewhere. It is possible that Edward and the monks at Saint Michael's Mount ensured that Leofric could begin a collection of luxury items for the cathedral as well as improving the cathedral itself.[67]

Perhaps the most interesting and the most valuable items donated to Exeter cathedral and mainly surviving until today are the Anglo-Saxon texts donated by Leofric. His inscriptions cursing whoever removes the manuscripts from Exeter also specifically identify the manuscripts donated by Leofric.[68] His donation constitutes the largest surviving collection of Anglo-Saxon poetry in the world as well as some Latin manuscripts The most famous work in the collection being the *Exeter Book*. The *Exeter Book* and other texts donated by Leofric show an interest in a wide variety of topics such as riddles, lives of saints, antiphons, elegies, and heroic poetry to name just a few. These Anglo-Saxon texts do not focus solely on church matters, or theology and present a rather unique perspective on our understanding of Anglo-Saxon piety. [69]

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[67] Barlow, Leofric, pp. 11-13.

[68] See p. 154 for an example of Leofric's Malediction forbidding the removal of any his mansuctipts he donated to the Cathedral.

[69] As solemn and religious as many of these texts are, one also finds risque riddles whose answers always seem to focus on the male reproductive organ but are usually referring to mundane items such as bread, or helmets. R.W. Chambers, Max Förster, and Robin Flower The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry.

Included in Leofric's collection of course is *MS Cambridge Corpus Christi College* 41. While preserving a Bede manuscript is not unusual considering the importance of the history to the Anglo-Saxons, the fact that the text Leofric preserved is in Anglo-Saxon and not Latin does seem odd. Many of the surviving versions of Bede's work are in Latin and the Anglo-Saxon versions are seen as being of a lesser quality. If one does believe that Leofric was a foreigner the use of Anglo-Saxon here would seem odd.

If however, Leofric believed his political survival was linked to his preservation of Anglo-Saxon text, we may have a plausible explanation for why such texts as that dedicated to Michael in the margins of Corpus 41 was preserved. There is little evidence in the Anglo-Saxon period of Leofric's dedication to the archangel. Scholars may point to the existence of Saint Michael's Mount, but no surviving manuscript have suggested that Leofric and the monastery had had a relationship prior to the Norman Conquest, although one would assume that both the monastery and Leofric's connection to Normandy had ensured some sort of relationship. It is possible and more than likely that considering the unstable political climate Leofric would have downplayed any connection to foreigners even to foreign monks at a local monastery. Other evidence supporting the possibility that Leofric preserved the Michael text for the Norman arrival can be linked to the dating of the manuscript. As noted in the previous chapter the Michael text and the Bede manuscripts have always been

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linked to the last decades of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Ker suggests that the manuscript was created sometime around 1050 and that the Michael text was added sometime later. Either date would place the manuscript in the time of Edward's return and during the period in which numerous churches both around and outside Leofric's sees were being dedicated to the archangel.[70] Förster has dated the manuscript to after the Norman Conquest or at least claimed that the scribe who included the marginalia was a foreigner trained in the Carolingian manner suggesting the possibility that a Norman monk, maybe in the employ of Leofric, preserved the text.[71] Perhaps Leofric was preserving the Anglo-Saxon material both to promote his Norman cause and to ensure if the Normans failed to gain the throne, that he could claim to be a good Anglo-Saxon bishop, evidence Leofric may have needed if Gytha, and her family, gained the throne.

One other item known about Leofric which also brings to mind his loyalty to the Continent and his interest in St Michael is his choice of monastic rule for the St Peter's cathedral in Exeter. The rule of Chrodegang of Metz is an expansion of St Benedict's rule which is interesting for this thesis given the rule's allowance for individual monks, bishops, and other churchmen to privately increase their wealth, which Leofric apparently did do. Once the churchman died

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[70] N. R. Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), pp. 43-45.

[71] Barlow, Leofric, pp. 7-12.

this wealth was to be dedicated to the monastery or cathedral with which the churchman was involved, which is what Leofric did do.[72]

Secondly, the importance of this rule to my argument is linked by Chrodegang's indirect link to Anglo-Saxon England. Chrodegang was either a student or a devotee of one of England's greatest missionaries, St Boniface, who along with fifty other missionaries was martyred in the sixth century. Boniface's link to Leofric is his birth place, for he was most likely born at Crediton, and was worshipped in Leofric's see. As well, Boniface also dedicated at least one monastery in the name of St Michael. If one supports the theory that Leofric was actually from Lotharingia or Frankish territory he may have been influenced by Boniface's interest in the archangel. Leofric's choice of the Metz rule also points to his shrewdness as he could claim that again the choice is directly or indirectly linked to the land to which he was seemingly most loyal, to Anglo-Saxon England. One can just see the bishop explaining to Gytha and other Anglo-Danish leaders the connection between this foreign rule, Anglo-Saxon England, Crediton and the Archangel Michael. This does lead one to wonder whether Leofric was actually collaborating with the Normans. Again, the evidence suggests that Leofric use of the Chrodegang rule, which can be linked to Charlemagne, the Franks and Normandy, could also be used by Leofric to prove to William and other Norman leaders of his loyalty to their cause.

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[72] Barlow, Leofric, pp. 10-11.

Leofric's choice of Exeter of the head of his sees, as well as Cornwall and Devon, provided him a closer proximity to the Normans than other bishoprics in England. One must ponder how many Norman ships containing churchmen, and other Norman individuals, destined for Saint Michael's Mount or elsewhere came to call on Leofric as he resided at Exeter. Strengthening the argument that Leofric chose this rule in order to accommodate his parishioners' interest in all things Anglo-Saxon is the fact that Leofric's own copy of the rule is in Old English and Latin. Another interesting connection between Chrodegang, Michael and possibly Boniface can be found in an 813 synod called to regularize the litany of the mass. One of the decisions, which could have been influenced by devotees to Chrodegang and his rule, was the elevation of Michael feast to that of a public holiday which was to be celebrated in all countries of the Carolingian Empire and eventually Normandy.[73]

The claim that there was widespread devotion to Michael in Anglo-Saxon England is linked to the surviving literature and to a lesser extent to the foundation of Saint Michael's Mount in Cornwall and other church dedications. The literary evidence above suggests that the surviving Anglo-Saxon literature dedicated to Michael does not indicate widespread interest in the archangel. If this is the case, then one is left to wonder about the evidence that *would* demonstrate widespread devotion to Michael, although one has a stronger case for arguing that there was widespread devotion to Michael than say to George who had fewer than

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[73] "Saint Michael" Saints - Index Mater Dei Latin Mass, June 26 2001 <http://web2.iadfw.net/~carlsch/MaterDei/Saints/michael.htm>

ten churches dedicated to him in Anglo-Saxon England. Another possible source for Anglo-Saxon veneration of the archangel is the number of church dedications to him in Anglo-Saxon England.[74] The evidence from Pevsner suggests that there were under thirty-five churches dedicated to the archangel in Anglo-Saxon England which at first seems like a large number until one realizes that after the Conquest the number rose to over two hundred. Also worth noting is the fact that sixteen of the thirty-five churches dedicated to Michael in Anglo-Saxon England were dedicated after Edward's return to England.[75] This is problematic, as it leaves one to wonder what the influences were in these sixteen dedications. As noted above, Edward is known as the last Anglo-Saxon king of England, yet he did spend over two decades in Normandy and France where there was more widespread interest in Michael. The number of dedications that do appear after Edward's return may not represent Anglo-Saxon but *Norman* devotion to the archangel.

This leads us back to the idea proposed earlier in this section: how could Leofric's life be an example of the Norman desire to over take the English throne

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[74] Any research into pre-Reformation Church dedications, in particular Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman ones, is fraught with difficulty and the possibility of mistakes due to the lack of surviving records and the difficulty in accurately dating structures. The church dedications discussed in this chapter are from Pevsner's Buildings of England, and while scholars have noted problems with Pevsner's dating of buildings, based on the fact that many English building reused older material and as a result would invalidate some of our numbers, this information does provide the reader with insight into the differences in numbers between Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman dedications. It should also be noted that other scholars have used Pevsner as their source for this type of statistical information when written sources no longer exist.

[75] See the Appendix III for a map detailing all the church dedications to Michael in Pre- and Post-Conquest England.

prior to the death of Edward? One of the most striking aspects of the surviving information regarding Leofric is the lack of information we have on his origins, his time as archbishop, and his whole life. The surviving details suggest two possibilities. The first is that Leofric was at best not interested in politics, a position supported by Barlow who has described the bishop as having no interest in the secular world.[76] A position which may be supported by Leofric's very Anglo-Saxon name which could indicate that Leofric was a loyal Anglo-Saxon bishop just trying to survive tumultuous times and who did not think his life important enough to preserve for posterity. The other possibility is that Leofric did not want many of the details of his life drawn to people's attention to ensure that his loyalties to whomever could never be challenged. This would allow Leofric the opportunity to promote the Norman cause and to convince his parishioners that Michael would be their greatest ally if turmoil over the English throne did occur and possibly after the Norman succession if it did happen. He also may have been protecting his position if the Normans failed and Godwin began scrutinizing the loyalty of all his officials, at which point Leofric could claim interest in preserving the Anglo-Saxon culture and to a lesser extent the Danish one as well. In the end, Leofric seems to have been successful in his goals as he was one of the few foreigners to survive the Godwins' return and removal of Edward's friends and he was also one of the few Anglo-Saxon bishops to survive William's reform of the Anglo-Saxon church after the Conquest. As for

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[76] Barlow, Leofric, p. 14.

Michael, his star may not have brightly shone in Anglo-Saxon England but he *was* a presence and he would play a starring role in the Norman Conquest of England.

Chapter III: The French Connection

This chapter will focus on the development of the cult [1] of Saint Michael in Normandy and post-Conquest England, discussing the personalities most involved in perpetuating devotion to Michael including Edward the Confessor, William the Conqueror, Robert of Mortain, and Leofric, Bishop of Exeter. It will also explore the various levels on which the spiritual, political, and social cultivation of the worship of Michael occurred.

First, some words should be said about the origins of the worship of Michael in northwest Europe as a whole. Michael made his first appearance in France before the Norsemen settled in what would become Normandy. Surviving evidence suggests that missionaries, in particular the Irish and later Anglo-Saxon monks, introduced Michael to the inhabitants of Gaul and France in the fifth and sixth centuries.[2] The first references to the Archangel Michael in Frankish territory and surrounding lands have been dated to a sixth-century church dedication. According to the tradition surrounding the chapel, a Burgundian princess had the chapel rededicated to the archangel to commemorate Michael's aid in arresting the spread of a plague that had appeared in the area. The next

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[1] The use of the term "cult" is not meant as a pejorative term but as a reference to the "cult of the saints," so popular in medieval times.

[2] Francois de Beaurepaire,"Toponymie Et Evolution du Peuplement Sur Le Pourtour De la Baie Du Mont Saint-Michel," Millénaire Monastique du Mont Saint-Michel [Mélanges commémoratifs] (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1966-1971), pp. 50-52.

reference to the archangel is found in another church dedication *circa* the seventh century.[3]

Michael also makes an appearance in early French literature, most notably in a reference found in Gregory of Tours' "The History of the Franks," which notes Michael's conveying of the nun Disciola's soul to heaven.[4] Beyond these few references little else can be found regarding the worship of Michael by the Franks, although the increase in the number of church dedications in Frankish territory and the surrounding areas implies an increased interest in Michael.[5] Evidence does suggest that during the next three centuries one could find numerous churches throughout what would be France, including Normandy, that were dedicated to Michael.[6] While their exact number and the period in which each church was dedicated are unknown, it is apparent that the French appeared more interested in Michael than the English, for the Anglo-Saxons seemed much less interested in dedicating churches and especially monasteries to the archangel.[7]

Prior to the arrival and settlement of the Norsemen in Normandy the monastery of Mont Saint Michel was established. The island on which Mont Saint Michel was founded began life as an outcropping of the Norman coast. According

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[3] Beaurepaire, pp.50-51.

[4] Gregory of Tours, The History of the Franks (London: Penguin Books, 1974), pp. 356-357.

[5] Beaurepaire, pp. 51-60.

[6] Beaurepaire, pp. 51-65.

[7] "Saint Michael," Catholic Encyclopedia 15 Aug. 2000 <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10275b.html>

to legends surrounding the foundation of the monastery, Michael appeared before the Bishop of Avranches early in the seventh century and demanded that a church be dedicated to him on the site on which he appeared.[8] Apparently, the bishop had apprehensions regarding this first apparition and did not commence the building of Michael's church. Michael appeared a second time to press his demand, destroying the forest surrounding the rock with high waves from the sea that isolated the rocky outcropping from the rest of the Norman coast. After this miraculous event the bishop ordered the building of a monastery on the new island and the celebration of Michaelmas on October 16th, the date when Michael had first appeared before him and commanded the building of the monastery.[9]

Building began with all haste, and within a short period of time, Benedictine monks inhabited the new monastery dedicated to the archangel. Although the monastery had an auspicious beginning, it remained unfinished and the number of monks dwindled by the middle of the ninth century. At the close of the ninth century, the monks were planning to abandon the island and move to a mainland monastery. The number of monks remaining on the island is unclear, but one legend does suggest that the transfer of these monks would not be difficult, as there were only a handful remaining.[10] The future of Mont Saint

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[8] David Keck, Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 178-179.

[9] Keck, p.179.

[10] Jacques Hourlier, "Les Sources Ecrites De L'Historie Montiose Antericure," Millénaire Monastique du Mont Saint-Michel [Mélanges commémoratifs] (Paris: Lethielleux, 1966-1971), pp. 120-26.

Michel remained uncertain until 966 when its plight came to the attention of Richard I, a descendant of Rollo, the founder of the line of the Duchy of Normandy.[11]

The arrival of the Norsemen in Frankish territory occurred late in the eighth and in particular in the ninth century. By the middle of the ninth century, the Norsemen had sacked Nantes and Rouen. The Annals of Saint Bertin tell of Danish pirates raiding Rouen and besieging Paris in 885-86. Other places in this trans-Channel area also affected by Norse raids included Boulogne, Lympne, and Appledore, and a direct result of the raids was the building of a large number of castles.[12] In 911, after the Norsemen's defeat at Chartres by Charles III's army, the Norse leader Rollo agreed to be baptized by the Archbishop of Rouen and to marry Charles's daughter. As a reward for his conversion and homage Rollo was granted an area that would be later called Upper Normandy. [13] This land grant would be the beginning of the Duchy of Normandy which would have such a great influence in both French and English history. The charter of St-Clair-sur-Epte commemorated these events.[14] Charles's gift seems to have been tied to his desire

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[11] The early history of the Mont Saint Michel is shrouded in mystery and there is much scholarly debate regarding whether the Dukes of Normandy helped a existing monastery or founded a monastery to replace an oratory that had fallen into decay. Jack Lindsay, The Normans and Their World (London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, 1974), pp. 14-15.

[12] Lindsay, pp. 14-15.

[13] David Bates, Normandy Before 1066 (Longman: London and New York, 1982), pp. 15-20.

[14] The authenticity of this charter is questionable but it does provide scholars with an understanding of how the Norsemen eventually won the right to rule Normandy. Bates, pp. 8-9.

to stop Rollo and his men, as well as other marauding Norsemen, from destroying the countryside. As part of the settlement Rollo became the ruler of this new territory. Whether or not it could be classified as a duchy at such an early stage in its development is debatable. Rollo and his successors continued to expand their territory, and by 930 Rollo's son had added Lower Normandy to his father's territory. While the expansion into Normandy occurred rapidly, the Norsemen continued to fight with the Franks over the exact boundaries of their new territory. From 937-945, French politics including those of the Duchy of Normandy were complicated by competition among potential successors to the French throne and conflicts with foreigners. By the end of the tenth century the "Dukes of Normandy" had established themselves as the rulers of their duchy who owed feudal obligations to the French kings. The role that Michael played in the newly settled Norse, and mainly non-Christian, territory is uncertain.[15]

As the Norsemen converted to Christianity, Michael's popularity in the duchy grew. Michael's role as a heavenly warrior may have appealed particularly to a Norman code of values that celebrated warfare and the warrior. There is evidence that the Normans first conceived of Michael as the Christian Woden.[16] This comparison was possibly the result of the early missionaries' attempts to convert the Germanic tribes. Faced with an inability to force these non-believers to refrain from warfare, which was a central tenet of their society, the missionaries

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[15] Bates, pp. 32-37.

[16] J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, The Barbarian West: The Early Middle Ages , A.D. 400-1000 (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 40.

chose to emphasize warfare which supported the Christian cause.[17] A figure who would most appeal to the warlike ethos of the Germanic tribes was Michael, the armour-wearing leader of the angelic army, who Wallàce-Hadrill suggests was "Woden under fresh colors."[18] As the Normans slowly converted to Christianity, Michael acquired more attributes that were based on the Irish perception of the archangel and in particular the image of Michael as a supreme warrior whose main task was to protect all believers from evil. Michael also took on the attributes of the Norman god of the sea, another belief that may be attributed to Irish traditions surrounding the archangel. The Irish traditions regarding Michael and the sea make a connection between Michael and the control of ocean squalls and waves; as a result, sailors would pray to Michael to ensure a safe trip and return.[19]

From the start, veneration of the Archangel Michael in Normandy was heavily dependent upon the goodwill of the Norman rulers. For example, the planned desertion of the monastery at Mont Saint Michel was reversed with the arrival of Richard I, Duke of Normandy, in 966. There has even been some suggestion that Richard I should be credited with the founding of the monastery itself, although, as stated above, evidence does suggest that a monastery existed

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[17] Wallace-Hadrill, p. 40.

[18] Wallace-Hadrill, p. 40.

[19] For a detailed discussion of the Celtic traditions regarding Michael see Appendix I and Alexander Carmichael, Carmina Gadelica Hymns and Incantations (Hudson: Lindisfarne Press, 1992), p. 589.

prior to Richard's receiving the duchy. Whether or not he actually founded the monastery, Richard I donated money for its repair, and transferred a group of monks to run the monastery and complete its building. Richard also donated manors to ensure that the monastery had a continual source of funds, thus allowing the monks to support themselves and expand the monastery's library.[20] No explanation has been found for the duke's sudden interest in the monastery but, whatever his motivation, his donations provided for its expansion and the creation of a large library and scriptorium. Anglo-Saxon scribes were imported from English monasteries so that the monastery could have a scriptorium worthy of a duke's interest and financial support. Richard's death in 996 did not end the family's interest in the monastery, for his son, Richard II, and grandson, Robert I, continued the tradition of donating manors and funds to the monastery.[21]

Norman devotion to Michael may have been involved in Duke Robert I's offer of sanctuary to Prince Edward, son of Ethelred II of England, when Edward was forced to flee England upon the death of his father in 1116.[22] The extent of Edward's devotion to Michael before his arrival in Normandy is unclear, but it is apparent that he did develop a fondness for the heavenly figure. Saint Michael's Mount in England and numerous churches were dedicated to the archangel

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[20] Hourlier, pp. 120-125.

[21] Hourlier, pp. 120-125.

[22] C. Warren Hollister, The Making of England, 55 B.C.-1399 (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1983), pp. 90-95.

following Edward's return to England.[23]

After the death of Duke Robert I on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1035, the dukedom passed to William, his bastard son. William's rise to power and his consolidation of his Norman kingdom are well documented. Less well known is the role that the archangel and Mont Saint Michel played in William's life. As had his forefathers, William donated manors to the monastery. One could claim that William was only continuing a family tradition, but a surviving charter indicates that William was personally devoted to the archangel and donated manors to ensure that the monks would pray to the Archangel Michael to intercede for both William's and his wife's souls.[24] William's initial interest was limited to donating land and seeking absolution for his sins; this would all change with events in England and William's plans for invasion.

The complicated series of events leading to the Norman Conquest of England began with Edward the Confessor's search for an heir to the English throne. Surviving records indicate that Edward sent Harold Godwinson, an Anglo-Saxon noble, to Normandy sometime after 1054.[25] Whether the original intent of Godwinson's mission was to inform William that he would be the heir to the

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[23] Edward's interest in Michael has been discussed in detail in the previous chapter. See also P.L. Hull, The Cartulary of St. Michael's Mount (Torquay: The Devonshire Press Ltd., 1962), pp. vii-xi.

[24] These prayers were to include William's wife and were directed at Michael in order that he would personally intervene for them. Hourlier, pp. 120-122.

[25] Hollister, pp. 90-95.

English throne is questionable, but following Godwinson's mission, William apparently believed that he had a claim to the English throne. Why Edward chose William over the numerous Anglo-Saxon or Danish nobles in England is also uncertain; Edward's decision could be linked to his friendship with William's family during his Norman exile or his dislike for the Anglo-Saxon nobles who were making his life difficult in England. It is unlikely that scholars will ever know the exact reasons for Edward's decision. Whatever the reasons, Edward's choice of William did disturb many Anglo-Saxon nobles.[26] Particularly perturbed was Harold Godwinson, who felt that he had just as a legitimate a claim to the throne as William. Harold's belief that he deserved the throne and his dislike of Normans resulted in his and other Anglo-Saxon nobles' rebelling. The result was the exile of numerous Norman bishops which was discussed breifly in the previous chapter, and Edward's loss of control over the government. Harold had become the *de facto* ruler of England during the last years of Edward's reign and did not intend to relinquish his throne to an outsider.[27]

Complicating the issue was the fact that Harold had allegedly sworn fealty to William on his previous visit to Normandy, as well as telling the Duke that he, William, was Edward's heir. As a result William may have considered himself the

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[26] For a more detailed discussion of Edward's life prior to reaching the throne and after as well as the events surrounding Godwinson's swearing of fealty to William, see the previous chapter and Frank Barlow, Edward the Confessor (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), pp. 42-53.

[27] Frank Barlow, The Feudal Kingdom of England (New York: Longman, 1988), pp. 58-63.

rightful heir to the English throne and Harold thus as a traitor. Whatever the nature of his mission, a storm forced Harold's ship to land on the Norman coast, where he and his crew were captured by one of William's vassals. As pictured in the Bayeux Tapestry, the events surrounding the storm and Harold's forced landing are the stuff of legend. It is even possible that the ship's grounding was seen not as an accident but as divine intervention on the part of the Norman saint of sailors, the Archangel Michael, since his monastery makes an unusual appearance in the Bayeux tapestry, one of the main sources for the events preceding the Conquest.[28]

Mont Saint Michel is the only Norman ecclesiastical building of the three depicted in the tapestry, the other two being an unidentified Anglo-Saxon parish church and Westminster Abbey, where William was crowned.[29] The fact that Mont Saint Michel is the only Norman church building does seem odd since Bishop Odo, who historians believed commissioned the tapestry, apparently had little if any contact with Mont Saint Michel and the monks within.[30] The scene that depicts the monastery shows a soldier being rescued from the quicksand that surrounds the island where the monastery stood. The identity of this soldier is unknown, nor do we know why Harold, William, and other nobles surrounded the

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[28] David Wilson, The Bayeux Tapestry (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1985), pp. 197-99.

[29] See p. 142 for the depiction of Mont St Michel in the Bayeux Tapestry.

[30] Wilson, pp. 197-199.

unidentified soldier when he fell into the quicksand. There has been a suggestion that it was Harold who rescued the unidentified soldier, which act won him praise from William and other Normans at the scene.[31] We are left to ponder the exact meaning of the soldier and quicksand event in the tapestry but it *is* apparent that Mont Saint Michel is central to the scene.[32] The monastery's name is embroidered into the depiction of the building, ensuring that all who view the tapestry would know the exact building being depicted.[33]

Another event depicted in the tapestry and mentioned in the English *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* is the appearance of Halley's comet. Both the Anglo-Saxons and Normans interpreted the comet's appearance as a portent of great events to come; in England the comet was seen as a warning of a great tragedy,[34] but it is unclear what the comet was thought to signify in Normandy prior to the Conquest. After the Norman success at Hastings, the appearance of the comet was linked to the archangel, following the Irish tradition that Michael took the form of a bright light in the sky. This image of Michael as a star is supported by the

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[31] Wilson, pp. 178-179.

[32] Kenneth Macleish in a National Geographic article on Mont Saint Michel suggests that Godwinson swore fealty to William at the Mont. His source was a resident monk and historian who may have had access to primary sources not available to the lay-person. No other source, primary or secondary, supports this monk's claim. Kenneth Macleish, "Mont Saint Michel," National Geographic (June, 1977), p. 235.

[33] Wilson, p.178. See Appendix IV for Mont Saint Michel's appearance in the Bayeux Tapestry.

[34] Frank Barlow, The Feudal Kingdom of England, p. 77.

Corpus Christi 41 text which states that Michael "is a bright star in the sky." [35]

One other person depicted in the tapestry is Robert of Mortain, William's half-brother and Bishop Odo's younger brother. Robert would play an important role in the conquest of England and the expansion of the veneration of Michael in the new Anglo-Norman kingdom. Few details of the relationship between Robert of Mortain and William have survived. Robert's date of birth was around 1035. Little is known of his life prior to 1050 when he received, at the age of twenty-four, the dukedom of Mortain.[36] The former Duke of Mortain and his family were threats to William's plans to consolidate power, so he replaced the duke with a man he could trust, his half-brother. Aside from our knowing that William trusted him, little is known of Robert of Mortain's personality. Orderic Vitalis does comment that Robert was intellectually slower than his brother, Odo, and his half brother, William.[37] Robert's participation in events prior to the Conquest are unknown, although he is depicted in the Bayeux tapestry at a meal with both William and Odo.[38] Robert's other contribution to William's quest for the English throne was the donation of a large number of ships and men for

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[35] Raymond Grant, Three Homilies from Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41(Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1982), p. 63.

[36] According to the sources Robert's donation was the largest amongst those of all the Norman nobles. Brian Golding, "Robert of Mortain," Anglo-Norman Studies 1990 (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 1991), pp. 119-121.

[37] Frank Barlow, The English Church (New York: Longman Group Limited, 1979), pp. 113-116.

[38] See p. 142 for the depiction of Robert of Mortain, Odo of Bayeux and William feasting in the Bayeux tapestry.

transportation of troops to England and the following battle.[39] As we shall see, Robert's connection with Michael was possibly stronger then William's. He carried the banner of Michael into the Battle of Hastings and after the Norman success credited the archangel with both the Norman success at Hastings and personally with the safe arrival of his son.

After Edward's death it became apparent that William was not going to be crowned the King of England. William consequently began planning the conquest of England. One of his first duties was to raise enough funds, equipment and manpower for an invasion. For military support, William turned to his vassals for ships and men. William also solicited outside support for his planned conquest. As discussed earlier, Edward's Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert of Jumièges, alongside numerous foreign bishops had been forced to flee England and return to the Continent.[40] Since Robert was still alive, Godwinson theoretically did not have the right to appoint another archbishop to replace him, but he appointed Stigand regardless; Stigand did receive papal blessing as the new archbishop, so he could accept the post. The matter became complicated as the schismatic Pope Benedict X, who ordained Stigand as archbishop, was declared an antipope after his death with the result that any papal decrees, including any ordination of archbishops during his tenure, could be and were rescinded. The next legitimate Pope, Alexander II, was concerned about matters in England and wanted the church

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[39] Golding, pp. 119-120. See Appendix V for this depiction.

[40] Barlow, The English Church, pp. 113-114.

reformed, but did not have sufficient influence to complete the task himself. William offered the perfect solution; if he received papal support for the invasion he promised to remove Stigand and reform the English church. The Pope agreed, and William received a papal banner in recognition of the agreement.[41]

With papal support and sufficient manpower organized into a unified troop in Normandy, all that remained was to sail the Channel and confront Godwinson. When exactly William wished to sail for England is unknown, since contrary winds kept him and his fleet trapped on the Normandy coast. [42] Compounding William's problem was the foundering of several ships, with the loss of all on board. William feared the news of the foundering would have a disastrous effect on morale and had the dead secretly buried. The fleet was delayed due to the lack of suitable winds for so long that William was forced to take action; he insisted that the relics of St Valery be brought to him, donned the relics, and supposedly stalked the beach praying to St Valery to bring favorable winds.[43]

While this evidence may suggest a diminution of Michael's role in William's thinking, there is a sound reason why William chose St Valery as opposed to the archangel; Michael lacked a corporeal form and did not have relics that could be used to request a miracle. It may also be suggested that Michael's

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[41] Barlow, The Feudal Kingdom, pp. 78-79.

[42] Terence Wise, 1066 Year of Destiny (London: Osprey Publishing Limited, 1979), pp. 134-135.

[43] Wise, p. 135.

role as the guardian of sailors and controller of seas meant that he should have intervened; however, no tradition has ever honored Michael as controller of winds, and William may have been more confident in using the actual relics of St Valery which were nearby and easily accessible to the fleet.[44] Interestingly, even though William prayed to St Valery for the needed winds to sail, he chose to cross the ocean on September 29th, the official feast day for the worship of St Michael in the Roman tradition.[45]

Upon his arrival in England, William dia not immediately muster his troops, but settled in the area of Pevensey and began building fortifications. For almost two weeks, William appeared uninterested in confronting Godwinson, who was occupied with the Scandianian attempt on the English throne. One could assume that William was attempting to ensure that his army was adequately prepared for battle, but he may have been delaying for another reason. Evidence demonstrates that William *did* attempt to negotiate with Harold after Harold's success at Stamford Bridge with regard to who should be crowned King of England, which suggests that William was attempting to end the matter before a battle ensued.[46] Even after the negotiations stalled, William delayed his attack; it

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[44] Lindsay, p. 219.

[45] According to one version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, William sailed on the eve of Saint Michael's feast day while another version of the Chronicle suggests that William departed on the feast day itself. Whatever the exact time and date of the fleet's departure, it is apparent that William timed the departure so that it would be on the most auspicious day possible since the fleet faced adverse weather and a night crossing of the channel. Anne Savage, The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles (London: Phoebe Phillips/Heinemann Book, 1982), p. 194-195.

[46] The fact that the battle occurred on a hill is interesting as St. Michael was often associated with high places, for reasons unknown. One must wonder if William intended to fight

appears that he was waiting for a specific event or date to fight Harold, and a most auspicious date was October 16th, the date on which the saint of both warriors and seafarers, the Archangel Michael, had appeared in Normandy. William's tactics delayed the battle for approximately two weeks, but on October 14th Harold's surprise arrival forced William to engage in the famous battle on Senlac Hill that led to the Norman Conquest of England.[47]

Michael's involvement in the events leading to the Battle of Hastings was more than the dates on which William chose to sail the English Channel or his delay in fighting Harold. Michael also appeared on Robert of Mortain's standard at the Battle of Hastings.[48] One may wonder why William, who was considered to be a faithful worshiper of Michael, did not carry his standard himself, but his standard had been given to him by Pope Alexander II to show his support for William's actions in England and so personal choice may not have been involved here.

Michael's role in the Norman Conquest of England did not disappear with William's success at Hastings. The new Norman rulers of England would use Michael's role as a messenger of war and peace in their attempts to unite the newly conquered people under their new rulers. At first finding connections

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Harold at a high spot in an attempt to ensure heavenly intervention. Barlow, The Feudal Kingdom, pp. 81-82.

[47] Barlow, The Feudal Kingdom, pp. 81-82.

[48] Golding, p. 143.

between the Norman conquerors and their Anglo-Saxon subjects with regard to their worship of Michael was difficult. At least one Old English scholar has argued that the new Norman rulers removed many of the Anglo-Saxon saints from the new Anglo-Norman calendar.[49] While Michael could not be removed from the calendar, it was thought that the Normans allowed the Anglo-Saxon traditions surrounding Michael to wane. However, scholars have recently taken issue with the theory that the Normans attempted a wide scale eradication of Anglo-Saxon saints,[50] and it is argued that the Normans were selective and removed only those saints whose sanctity and actual existence were in doubt.

Evidence suggests that, in fact, the Normans reawakened English interest in the archangel compared to the sparse Anglo-Saxon dedication to the archangel is sparse since only a few texts remain.[51] There is no surviving information regarding any rituals surrounding Michaelmas prior to the Norman Conquest. The existence of the Corpus 41 text, the one surviving piece of Anglo-Saxon literature dedicated exclusively to Michael's functions, has been the main source for modern arguments regarding the existence of veneration of Michael in Anglo-Saxon England, but by itself does not prove that the Michael cult was widespread. Indeed, evidence suggests that the text was used more by Normans than the

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[49] Richard Pfaff, "Lanfranc's Supposed Purge of the Anglo-Saxon Calendar," Liturgical Calendars, Saints, and Services in Medieval England (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 95-108.

[50] Pfaff, pp. 99-102.

[51] Grant, pp. 42-51.

Anglo-Saxons in promoting devotion to the archangel and as a way of reconciling the conquerors and the conquered. [52]

To understand how the text may have been used in this fashion, one must first understand the relationship between the man who may have been instrumental in preserving the text and promoting the Archangel Michael in the new Anglo-Norman kingdom, Bishop Leofric of Exeter and Crediton. Knowledge about Leofric's life prior to the Conquest is limited and what is known has been discussed in detail in the previous chapter.[53]

During the first year or two after the Conquest, William consolidated his power in England and quashed rebellions throughout the land. Included in these reforms was the removal of many of the Anglo-Saxon bishops. Leofric was one of the few bishops to survive the immediate reforms of William and the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Lanfranc.[54] Lanfranc was chosen to replace Stigand by William, an appointment acceptable to Pope Alexander II, and after the Conquest Lanfranc reformed the Anglo-Saxon church, removing many of the Anglo-Saxon

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[52] Max Förster claims that the text was preserved by a Norman monk, not a Anglo-Saxon one, which suggests that the Normans were the ones interested in the text and not the Anglo-Saxons. Other evidence is linked to the number of treaties between the new Anglo-Norman leaders and Saint Michael's Mount. Max Förster, " The Donations Of Leofric to Exeter," The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry: With Introductory Chapters by R.W. Chambers, Max Förster, and Robin Flower (London: P. Lund, 1933), pp. 11-12.

[53] See previous chapter pp. 60-65.

[54] Trevor Rowley, Book of Norman England (London: B.T. Batsford, 1997), pp. 69-70.

bishops.[55]

At first glance, one might assume that Leofric's survival was a result of his lack of political significance, but evidence has appeared which suggests otherwise. Leofric's bishoprics were in lands held by Robert of Mortain whose land holdings, which comprised the largest lay estate after the king's, required close supervision. Robert therefore required trustworthy leaders in the community to ensure that his vassals would not stray back to their former leaders. One of the men who held a great deal of power in Robert's holdings in Cornwall was the Bishop of Exeter, Leofric. From all surviving evidence, Leofric attempted to prevent uprisings against Robert and the other Norman leaders.[56]

Evidence also suggests that Leofric did not have total success. In 1066 there was an attempted revolt in Exeter which was quickly suppressed by the Normans. From the sparse evidence it is apparent that many local administrators lost their positions, and some were "possibly" executed. A second revolt led by Harold's mother which occurred in 1068 is discussed later in this chapter. One person who was neither exiled nor lost his position was Leofric, who was rewarded by William for his loyalty and assistance throughout the Conquest and consolidation of Norman power in England. It is possible that Leofric's help was

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[55] Lanfranc and William's relationship had not always been friendly as Lanfranc had not approved of William's marriage to Matilda. Eventually the rancour turned to friendship and William chose Lanfranc as his closest church advisor. John Godfrey, The Church in Anglo-Saxon England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), pp. 419- 420.

[56] The exact number of revolts and whether anyone was executed by William is difficult to ascertain as the surviving records are contradictory. Trevor Rowley, Book of Norman, pp. 69-70.

in making William aware of the various planned revolts ensuring that the Norman leader was able quickly and relatively quietly to end this threat to the new position. It is also possible that William's unwillingness to act too harshly against the Exeter rebels led to another revolt which was also unsuccessful but did result in the building of the castle in Exeter.[57] Leofric's survival after both revolts does strongly suggest his commitment to William which is supported by the existence of a surviving Anglo/Norman charter that proclaims William's praise of Leofric as well as presenting the bishop with numerous estates and other rewards.

Even more fascinating is the connection between Leofric and Robert of Mortain, the Norman lord of Cornwall. One of the surviving charters from Saint Michael's Mount granting freedom for the monks at the monastery, which lay in Leofric's bishopric and was included in Robert's estate, notes that Leofric was a witness to Robert's donation of manors to the Cornish monastery. Robert's explanation for his kindness to the Cornish monastery was linked to Michael's role in the Norman Conquest of England. Robert also granted the land to Saint Michael's Mount as a way of thanking the archangel for saving Robert's sickly son.[58] Many scholars believe that this particular charter is a forgery, an argument based on the date contained within the French version of the text. If the date of the charter is accurate, *circa* 1085, then many of the supposed witnesses, including

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[57] Trevor Rowley, Book of Norman, pp. 65-73.

[58] Golding, p. 143.

Leofric, had been dead for several years.[59] However, two other versions of this specific charter have survived, one again at Saint Michael's Mount. Once more, these are considered to be crude forgeries by P. L. Hull for reasons not stated in her analysis of the charters. It should be noted that the version of the charter preserved at the Cornish monastery is dated *circa* 1068-1070, when everyone who witnessed the charter was still alive. Another undated version of this specific charter, without the claim to ecclesiastical freedom, exists in the Saint Michael's Mount Cartulary and does not appear to be a forgery.[60] The lack of dating does not aid the reader although it does link Robert to the Cornish monastery and does suggest a strong relationship between Leofric and Robert of Mortain. [61]

A possible recourse in authenticating these charters would be to turn to the mother house in Normandy. However, much of the material that referred to Mont Saint Michel was destroyed during the Second World War making documentary comparisons between the records of the English and Norman monasteries no

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[59] The dating of this charter has proven even more problematic than originally thought as at least one copy of the charter is dated 1070 which is prior to Leofric's demise, while the French copy , which contains the signature of Leofric, was copied after the bishop's death. A third copy of this charter exists at Exeter but no provenance has survived, so it is believed to be a later forgery. Hull suggests that charters were forged at Mont Saint Michel to ensure control over the Cornish monastery as well as freedom from Royal interference except in cases where murder occurred, which was successful as this charter was used until the dissolution of the monasteries. Hull, p. 2.

[60] Hull does note that these three versions of the manuscript are later copies and it is possible that problems with dating are a result of scribal error. Hull, pp. 2-3.

[61] Hull, pp. 1-4.

longer possible.[62] In any case, Golding suspects the charter on the grounds that Robert's interest in both the Norman and Anglo-Saxon monasteries dedicated to Michael was ambiguous if not occasionally hostile.[63] Golding's evidence is based on the fact that Robert may have removed two manors from the control of the Cornish monastery. Robert's withdrawal of the manors may be a result of other factors, however, ert also donated lands to Saint Michael's Mount after the removal of these estates, perhaps suggesting an exchange rather than a punishment.

Golding has surmised that Robert also had an ambivalent relationship with Mont Saint Michel in Normandy,[64] his evidence being based on Robert's lack of donations to Mont Saint Michel. Robert's lack of interest in the Norman monastery is perhaps not a surprise, considering his branch of the family worshiped a different saint, Saint Grestain, whose abbey received more attention from Robert and his immediate family. [65] Golding has to accommodate one other factor in the relationship between Robert and both the English and Norman monasteries, William the Conqueror. Robert may not have appreciated either monastery, but William and his forefathers had donated a great deal to the Norman monastery and William appeared interested in the Cornish monastery as

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[62] Hull, pp. vii-xi.

[63] Golding, pp. 142-144.

[64] Golding, pp. 140-144.

[65] Golding, p. 141.

well.[66] Robert may have decided that, while he did not particularly favour either of these institutions dedicated to Michael, it was more convenient, and safer, to donate some lands to both monasteries and to ensure that he was not seen as alienating an institution favored by William, a reasonable fear considering what happened to those who opposed or upset William. Robert's caution in dealing with William and the institutions to which he showed favor may explain why Robert was one of the few Anglo-Norman lords who survived William's temper.[67]

Other evidence suggests a stronger connection between Robert of Mortain, Leofric, and the Archangel Michael. The first is the above-mentioned Anglo-Saxon text in Corpus 41. As noted in the prior chapter, scholars assume that the text must have been written prior to the Conquest since it is in Anglo-Saxon. While this assumption could be correct, it is inaccurate to assume that Anglo-Saxon disappeared immediately after the Conquest. For at least a century after the Conquest one could find manuscripts which contained Anglo-Saxon texts; the best known example is the Peterborough or Laud Chronicle. A reason for dating Corpus 41 as being preserved prior to the Conquest has been the handwriting contained within the manuscript's margins. Ker, who is considered the foremost handwriting expert with regards to Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, dates the main hand s.xi^{i} (about the middle of the first half of the eleventh century) and the

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[66] Golding , pp. 139-143.

[67] Golding, pp. 143-144.

marginal hand s.xi^{i} or xi med).[68] However, it is possible that the manuscript was created or preserved after the Conquest and not before. This is a possibility confirmed by Förster who proposes that the manuscript must be dated after the Conquest since the hand is in an "ugly Carolingian minuscule."[69] This raises the prospect that the person who recorded the text was a Norman monk who understood Anglo-Saxon, a distinct possibility around Exeter where the manuscript including the text was preserved, as monks from Mont Saint Michel were involved with the running of Saint Michael's Mount and had been since the foundation of the monastery during Edward the Confessor's reign.[70]

Whether or not the text was created or preserved shortly before the Conquest or shortly after will never be definitely decided. However, it is possible to demonstrate that the text's preservation may be linked to Leofric's desire to keep his bishopric after the Conquest through appealing to the Norman interest in the archangel. It is apparent when one reads the text that it could appeal to both the conquered and the conquerors. The conquerors' actions are validated by the fact that the text talks of how the chosen people are successful as a result of Michael's aid, especially through references to war and the sea, things for which the Normans were famous. As well, there are several specific stanzas which

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[68] N. R. Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), pp. 43-45.

[69] Förster, pp. 11-12.

[70] Golding, pp. 140-144.

appear to have little if any relationship to Anglo-Saxon beliefs about Michael but can be linked to events surrounding Michael and events immediately prior to the Conquest.[71] Stanza 21 makes a reference to Michael being like a bright star in the sky, which is a reference to Halley's comet.[72] The nautical theme, which may have appealed to the Normans' sea-faring ancestry, is repeated throughout the text,[73] and is found, for instance, in Stanza 22:

> This is the holy Archangel St Michael the glorious ship-master, the skillful pilot and the most renowned sailor, who fills his ship and fills it with heavenly dead, that is, with holy souls; and under the veil of divine fulfillment he guides it over the waves of the ocean, that is, through the dangers of this earthly world, and leads the holy souls to the sea of the heavenly life. [74]

Conversely, the appeal of the text to the Anglo-Saxons can be seen in the stanzas where the speaker tells readers that Michael will protect all believers no matter the situation and reward the righteous in heaven.[75] Many Anglo-Saxons may have realized the futility of rebelling against the Normans, and could only hope that their vengeance would be a heaven free of their conquerors.

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[71] In particular the reference to Michael being a bright star in the sky. Grant, pp. 57-65.

[72] Barlow, The Feudal Kingdom, p. 77.

[73] Stanza 4 states that "This is the holy Archangel St Michael who is guardian of men; and with the help of the Lord he saved the lives of Noah, his three sons, and their four wives in the great flood." As well, Stanzas 26 and 27 also mention the rising of the souls of the drowned for judgement and the consignment of sinners' souls back to the sea. Grant, pp. 57-65.

[74] Grant, p. 63.

[75] The final stanzas would give hope to any who believe they have been wronged and will not receive justice on earth. Grant, pp. 63-65.

Any argument regarding the use of the text is irrelevant without evidence to suggest that the text was actually read during a ceremony or other event. Keck, in his work on medieval angelology, notes the existence of a twelfth-century Anglo-Norman play that included a sword-wielding cherub. It is possible that this text was performed as a play or trope, a sort of Anglo-Norman version of our modern Nativity scene, with the focus being the archangel. [76] Grant has suggested that it was read at a dedication ceremony for a monastery or cathedral,[77] but there seem to have been no cathedrals or monasteries dedicated to Michael in the new Anglo-Norman kingdom. We are therefore left in doubt as to the purpose of the text and the link to Leofric, Robert of Mortain, and Michael.

The answer, however, is found within the text itself. The reader is told in Stanza 1 that the text is meant to be read on the day and in the place where Michael appeared so that the monks at this monastery would glorify Michael in the manner that he deserved.[78] This can mean it is to be read only at Saint Michael's Mount or at Mont Saint Michel, as these are the only two sites in the new Anglo-Norman kingdom at which Michael had appeared.[79] This could be a possible explanation for why one does not find new monasteries or cathedrals

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[76] Keck, pp. 184-185.

[77] While one can find cathedrals dedicated to the archangel, I have found no examples of cathedral dedications to Michael during the Norman reign. Grant, pp. 50-53.

[78] Grant, p. 57.

[79] There are other sites at which Michael was said to have appeared in Western Europe such as Mount Garganus, Rome, on isolated islands in the Hebrides. The Cornish and Norman sites are the only ones either in England or Normandy where he made an appearance.

since Michael had not blessed the new church buildings dedicated to the archangel with an appearance in the new Anglo-Norman kingdom. Therefore, it is more than plausible that Leofric, knowing of the importance of Michael to William and Robert, utilized any material dedicated to Michael to win Norman support. His goal was to ensure his position in the new Anglo-Norman kingdom, and his success is supported by Leofric's surviving the church reforms of 1071 which saw the removal of all but two of the Anglo-Saxon bishops.[80]

The conquest of Devon and Cornwall was not immediately successful, most likely due to Godwin's link to the area. In 1067-68, Gytha, Harold's mother, attempted to lead some of the surviving Anglo-Saxons unsuccessfully into revolt against William. As a result numerous local officials lost their positions, although William did not execute any who were involved but instead exiled what remained of Harold's family and their supporters. One of the few to retain his post was Leofric. One could claim that Leofric's survival was a result of non-intervention, but for a bishop who had spent twenty years in Exeter it seems unlikely that he would not be involved in or at least aware of the locals', in particular the surviving Godwin family's, plans. A plausible explanation, and one discussed in the previous chapter, is that William never had to worry about Leofric's loyalty because he always supported the Norman cause. It also may explain why Edward assigned Leofric, his friend, to two of the poorer sees in England so that he had proximity to the monks of Saint Michael's Mount who were directly tied to

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[80] Barlow, pp. 126-127.

Normandy and could also keep an eye on the members of the Godwin families who had lands in Exeter. This fact may explain the charter in which William and his wife donated land to Leofric's bishopric as a reward for Leofric's aid during the Conquest. Since there is no evidence that Leofric participated in the Conquest itself, William may have been rewarding Leofric for services rendered prior to the invasion, and for helping him stop Harold's mother's and his brothers' attempt to regain the throne. Leofric's support of the Normans could also explain Robert of Mortain's lack of interest in visiting Exeter or Devon. As the largest landowner besides William, Robert may not have had the time to spend in Exeter or Devon once the rebellion had been quelled and since the bishopric was already controlled by a Norman supporter, Mortain may have felt that his other land holdings deserved more attention.

Leofric's longstanding collaboration with the Normans does help to explain his preservation of Anglo-Saxon material in order to promote his image as a loyal Anglo-Saxon and also explains the preservation of the Michael text. If Leofric was aware that William would attempt to claim the throne, as he believed he was justified in doing, one of the more problematic areas could be Devon and Cornwall because of their connection to the Godwin family. So in an attempt gradually to introduce Norman ideals Leofric began promoting figures such as Michael, a figure worshiped by both Anglo-Saxons and Normans, who could appeal to the newly conquered Anglo-Saxons.

All arguments regarding the text's being used by Leofric to win Norman support may be weakened by the fact that the text is in Anglo-Saxon, and so perhaps it was meant for the common man, not the elite who understood Latin or French. Why would Leofric be interested in having his parishioners listen to a text about the Archangel Michael? It may have been Leofric's way of ensuring peace in his bishoprics as the Normans reformed the Anglo-Saxon church, in particular the calendar. Michael gained greater prominence in the calendar, as Lanfranc insisted that Michael's feast day be celebrated with almost the same solemnity as Christmas and Easter.[81] So, as the more questionable Anglo-Saxon saints were removed from the calendar, Michael could take their place, for why pray to just a saint when one can pray to a more powerful heavenly body to intervene on one's behalf?

This concept may explain what happened with regard to church dedications to Michael throughout all of England, as shown in Maps I and II, which show church dedications to Michael for Anglo-Saxon[82] and Anglo-Norman churches respectively. As noted above, there were fewer than forty churches dedicated to Michael in Anglo-Saxon England and sixteen of them were dedicated to Michael after Edward the Confessor returned from Normandy in 1042. In the Norman period it is possible to find over two hundred and fifty churches dedicated

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[81] David Knowles, trans., The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1951), p. 59.

[82] There were fewer than thirty churches dedicated to the Archangel Michael in all of Anglo-Saxon England. After the Conquest there were over two hundred.

to Michael, a dramatic increase from the Anglo-Saxon period. There are several possible explanations for the increase. The first is that the data is suspect, which is a possibility since few churches surviving from the early medieval period retain any information regarding the original church dedication. It is also possible that a church may have been rededicated at a later date.[83] Another and more significant problem is the accurate dating of any surviving church's dedication. As noted in the previous chapter, the best techniques for dating a building is the architectural structure itself, and there are inherent difficulties in accurately dating many of the early English structures because of the tendency to reuse material from earlier buildings. Even more problematic is determining whether a church has retained the original dedication or been rededicated at a later date. [84]

After taking all this into account, it would still appear that a dramatic increase in the number of churches dedicated to Michael occurred in the Norman period. There is a strong geographic pattern to the church dedications after the Conquest with the greatest concentration found near the Celtic fringes or in the east of England. One wonders if t these regions interest in Michael in was also influenced by the lateness of the Anglo-Saxon Conquest in this part of England. Like Cornwall, this part of England may have retained a pre-Anglo-Saxon tradition regarding Michael which were mainly lost after their conquest. The

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[83] Churches were often rededicated, especially after renovations occurred, with a new name making it difficult to know for certain the original dedication.

[84] This data was gathered from Nikolaus Pevsner et al., eds., The Buildings of England (60 vols. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951).

concentration of Michael dedications may suggest that these communities still had a strong connection to their Celtic roots, which may explain the popularity of church dedications to Michael, since Michael played a much more important role in the Celtic church.[85] As one moves away from the Celtic fringes and deeper into England, there are far fewer church dedications to Michael; this is possibly connected to the waning of Celtic influences.

The areas nearest the English Channel also contained a high incidence of church dedications to Michael. The increase in number could be linked to the counties' proximity to Normandy which, as has been seen, had a strong interest in Michael. William may also have encouraged the dedicating of churches to Michael in areas such as the south coast, where revolt would be highly problematic. Whatever the reason and whatever the reliability of the information, it is apparent that there was a dramatic increase in the number of church dedications to Michael.

We are left to wonder what caused such a dramatic increase.[86] The

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[85] For a detailed discussion of the Michael cult in Ireland and Scotland see Carmichael, pp. 588-593.

[86] Another possible explanation for this dramatic increase was the Cistercian Renaissance, which resulted in the building of many new monasteries throughout England, including very isolated areas where settlements were sparse. Yet when one studies the Cistercian expansion it becomes apparent that the explosion of new monastic building attributed to Cistercian expansion occurred at least thirty years after the Norman Conquest, and so does not directly impact the dramatic increase in church dedications to Michael. It is difficult to link the Cistercian expansion to the dramatic increase in parish churches since the Cistercians focused more on building monasteries. From my research the dramatic increase in church dedication to Michael noted in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries did not extend to monasteries or cathedrals but to parish churches. Bennett Hill, English Cistercian Monasteries and Their Patrons in The Twelfth Century (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1968).

answer may be found with the common people, or at least the local lords, of the individual parishes who lacked any "real" political power and who had limited interest in who ruled the kingdom and whose time was spent dealing with their own estates and not plotting the downfall of kings. As admitted above, it is unlikely that the Normans attempted a wholesale eradication of cultic interest in Anglo-Saxon saints, but it is apparent that saints whose existence was questionable were removed from the calendar, leaving a void for those who worshipped these saints.[87] The Archangel Michael, promoted by William, Robert of Mortain and others, could easily fill that void with the myriad roles he could play, from the protector of believers, the conveyor of souls to heaven, and the judge of all humanity, to heavenly warrior. These actions may have been of particular importance in the Celtic fringes where Anglo-Saxon control over the land had occurred last and where the people were heavily influenced by Celtic traditions and, to a lesser extent, by the Celtic church. Those people may well have remembered Michael's importance in these Celtic fringes and his re-emergence may have appealed to their sensibilities.[88]

The time-specific nature of Michael's appeal in the immediate post-Conquest period is strengthened by the fluctuations that occurred in the number of church dedications to Michael after the absorption of the Norman conquerors into English society and as the Anglo-Norman relationship with Normandy and France

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[87] Pfaff, pp. 101-104.

[88] Carmichael, pp. 588-595.

turned to enmity. After the twelfth century there are still churches being dedicated to the archangel but the numbers are not as dramatic as those seen after the Conquest. By the fourteenth century dedications dwindled. It is possible that the slowing of church dedications to Michael may be linked to an increased interest by the crown and the aristocracy in St George.[89] This increased interest in a corporeal saint, albeit one who bears a marked similarity to his heavenly counterpart, may be linked to the Hundred Years' War and the reawakening of French interest in the archangel. Michael was chosen as their new patron saint in an attempt to ensure no more losses to the English. It is possible that this decision was based on William's long-remembered success in England and his claim that Michael aided in his victory. As French interest in the archangel increased, there is a decrease in English interest in Michael which was probably accelerated by Edward III's decision to create a feast day for George and to use him in battle cries against the French, a process which took a generation and did eventually end with George's becoming the patron saint of England.[90]

To sum up, traditional discussions regarding the Norman Conquest of England and the effect the Conquest had on the Anglo-Saxons argue that the Normans systematically attempted to eradicate the worship of Anglo-Saxon

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[89] Even with the decreased interest in Michael, believers still saw a relationship between his English and Norman monasteries as seen in the cover plate of this thesis. The Limborurg Brothers, Les Tres Riches Heures du duc du Berry, 1409-15, fol 195: *St Michael defeating the dragon above Mont St Michel. (Musee Conde, Chahtilly, Ms65/1284).*

[90] "Saint George in English History: origin, influence and significance" Saint George In English History Cultural Reference Database 10 Feb. < 2001http:/www.angelfire.com /mi/resumeandarticles/index. html>.

saints. Even saints who did not originate on the island and were accepted in the Roman calendar but were worshiped by the Anglo-Saxons were seen to have been negatively affected by the Conquest.[91] This view also extended to Anglo-Saxon worship of Michael. Until quite recently, scholars argued that there was widespread devotion to Michael in Anglo-Saxon England. This argument was based on surviving bits of Anglo-Saxon literature and the fact that Michaelmas was widely celebrated.[92] The strongest evidence for the cultic devotion to Michael is the twenty-eight stanza "hymn" discussed above, found in Corpus Christi 41, a text which is unique in both content and structure. Due to its uniqueness the text often has left scholars pondering its purpose.[93] Usually scholars argue that the text represents a large cultic following of Michael, but the evidence seems limited to this text and to the existence of Saint Michael's Mount in Cornwall. No records of any special events or celebrations around Michaelmas have survived, and the evidence suggests that Michael played a very limited role in Anglo-Saxon England. Church dedications show some regard for Michael in Anglo-Saxon England, but they were far fewer than after the Conquest. In short, far from suffering from the Conquest, the cult of St Michael grow markedly after 1066.

In the end, many of these arguments are based on supposition. As so many of the records and sources from this period are either garbled or lost, it is

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[91] Pfaff, pp. 99-105.

[92] Grant, pp. 47-49.

[93] Grant, pp. 7-8.

impossible to prove absolutely that there is any connection between the Norman Conquest of England and the Archangel Michael. But the surviving evidence does provide a reasonable amount of circumstantial evidence that there was some connection between Michael, William the Conqueror, Robert of Mortain, and Leofric. What needs to be discussed is whether there is enough evidence to claim that the interest in the archangel by these notables extended to lesser members of the community. It has been argued above that the dramatic increase in church dedications and the surviving Anglo-Saxon text found in Corpus 41 constitute evidence that there was increased interest in Michael among the laity. Eventually Michael was to be replaced by George, but it is instructive to see what happened to George during the period when the Normans dominated England (see Appendix III).

Evidence throughout this chapter seems to prove that interest and worship of Michael had an impact on both the politics and the history of England prior to and after the Norman Conquest. From the surviving evidence, such as pilgrimage sites,[94] church dedications, and legends, it is apparent that Michael was important

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[94] While not discussed in detail in the body of the paper, places where Michael appeared often became central pilgrimage sites for believers. Mount Garganus in Italy was a favoured site for pilgrimage as the cave in which Michael had appeared and where his relics were preserved were famed for their curative powers. Alongside Michael's relics one could find the implements that the sick left behind after they were cured. Closer to England, Mont Saint Michel was also a major pilgrimage site for believers until the French Revolution. Of particular note were the mass pilgrimages of children to the Mount from 1333-1442 after Saint Elmo's fire had been spotted on the spire of the monastery. These spontaneous pilgrimages ended with the threat of excommunication for any that participated (Keck, pp. 179-184). In England, there seemed to be less interest in pilgrimages to Michael's apparition site at Saint Michael's Mount in Cornwall and while it seems the monastery did receive alms it is unclear whether pilgrims gave these gifts (Hull, p 2).

to believers in Medieval Europe. In the past, scholars have been hesitant to examine whether or not Michael's popularity was ever used to control or influence a society. The actions of the politicians and churchmen and their desire for success and their relationship with Michael deserve closer attention, and with it one finds that Michael was given an important role in the events that led up to the Conquest and after. In fact, Michael was the Norman angel of war; William and Robert used the archangel as a way to promote their cause and, by finding connections between events and the archangel's role in the heavenly hierarchy, these men may have convinced themselves of the archangel's support. With this conviction it appears that William believed he had the right, with both papal and heavenly support, to take the English throne. After the Conquest, William, his half-brother, and some surviving churchmen used Michael's role in the heavenly hierarchy to replace Anglo-Saxon saints and to give the surviving Anglo-Saxon population a saint whom both they and the Normans could worship, as was seemingly reflected in the dramatic increase in church dedications to Michael that occurred after the Conquest. In the end, however, despite his impressive credentials, Michael eventually lost his high place in the saintly rankings.

Conclusion

This project began with the study of a text found in the margins of an Anglo-Saxon version of Bede. This marginalia, dedicated to the Archangel Michael, has confounded scholars, as both the structure of the text and its contents remain unique in the surviving Anglo-Saxon corpus. Therefore, the original goal of the project was to identify a possible source for this particular piece of marginalia, and its possible usage by those dedicated to the Archangel Michael in Anglo-Saxon England. As other scholars had earlier noted a possible link between the content of the poem and Celtic traditions, the initial plan for the thesis was to strengthen the argument that the source for the text was indeed linked to Celtic traditions.

Possible links to Celtic traditions, in particular Irish monasteries, were suggested by texts which seemed distantly related to the poem and which also suggested a possible Byzantine link. Another discovery made in the initial stage of this project was that devotion to Michael in the Celtic lands and the Byzantine empire was a complicated affair involving more than the acknowledgement of Michael on his feast day. In order to understand whether "In Praise to the Archangel St Michael" was used in the worship of Michael, and thereby to postulate some conclusions on the purpose of the text and its unique structure, research was expanded to include the area where the text was found and the figure who was credited with preserving the text, bishop Leofric of Exeter. It was hoped that in studying Leofric and the areas of his sees, the origins of the Michael cult in Anglo-Saxon England could be discovered, especially in relation to the first monastery dedicated solely to the Archangel in Anglo-Saxon England, Saint Michael's Mount in Cornwall. It was thought that the existence of this monastery would undoubtedly prove that there was widespread Anglo-Saxon devotion to Michael, which possibly culminated in a special day dedicated solely to worshipping Michael at a monastery dedicated to the archangel himself. Again, the evidence did not suggest such a case. The monastery itself was relatively new, although tradition suggested long-term worship of the archangel may have occurred on the site, so the project was again expanded to include who had dedicated the site to Michael. We were led to Edward the Confessor, the last king of the Anglo-Saxons, who was also connected to Leofric of Exeter.

Edward the Confessor's interest in Michael did not appear to be connected to his brief time in England prior to his exile. Upon his return, however, one discovers that sixteen of the thirty-five churches dedicated to Michael in Anglo-Saxon England were dedicated in Edward's reign. To discover if any Norman traditions regarding the dukes of Normandy, who cared for Edward during his exile, may have influenced Edward, it was also decided to investigate whether there was any widespread interest in the archangel in Normandy. While this project allowed for the opportunity to reassess Leofric's involvement in the politics of Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England, it also allowed for a new perspective on the Normans, the worship of archangels, and a possible connection between Leofric, Saint Michael's Mount, Mont Saint Michel, and Exeter.

Norman interest in Michael started with the monastery dedicated to the archangel. This is not a new fact, but one which becomes more interesting when one realizes that the main sponsors of this religious house were the dukes of Normandy, including William. Other evidence also suggests that Norman interest in Michael, unlike that of the Anglo-Saxons, was much more active. This is seemingly confirmed by the numerous links to Michael, such as the date William's fleet sailed, the appearance of the monastery in the Bayeux tapestry, and the interpretation that some gave to the appearance of Halley's comet immediately prior to the Norman Conquest of England. Church dedications to Michael also increased dramatically after the Conquest, suggesting that somehow the Normans had influenced those in charge to dedicate more churches to Michael than ever before.

This phenomenon becomes more interesting when one reads the Michael text, as its language, content, and style support the suggestion that this work was intended to win over the masses who would not understand Latin or Norman French, and who were better able to understand sermons presented in more prose-like fashion than longer texts. The presence of Mount St. Michael plus the Michael poem's reference to Træleg (presumably in Cornwall) already suggests a widespread devotion to Michael in the southwest before 1066 than in other parts of England. Leofric, and possibly Robert of Mortain or William the Conqueror, may have consequently used the poem to attempt to win peace in an area controlled by Godwin's family and the Danes. Maybe the reason why the Exeter revolts were so unsuccessful is because of Leofric, Robert, and William's success in convincing the population that their lives would not be radically changed by the Normans. Another possibility is that the newly conquered inhabitants of Exeter were won over by William's interest in Michael as well. In any case, Exeter survived the revolts with less bloodshed and destruction than found elsewhere, while retaining its bishop.

Overall, the discovery of the Norman angle, while leaving us with numerous unanswered questions, paints very a different picture than other scholars have produced. The possible link between Leofric and Normandy prior to the Conquest suggests that Leofric was already collaborating with the Normans. This is a fact possibly confirmed by the survival of a charter noting the donation of land to the English monastery to St. Michael and preserved in various copies at Leofric's Cathedral, Saint Michael's Mount, and Mont Saint Michel. On the surface, this seems odd, since the Cathedral at Exeter did not appear linked to either monastery unless Leofric was some how involved in the affairs of both. Other evidence supporting the suggestion of Leofric's possible collaboration is his sudden increase in wealth in an area noted for its poverty. In sum, Michael's sudden and dramatic appearance after the Conquest had much to do with politics.

With regards to the Michael text, this thesis also advances a possible explanation for its preservation: that is, its unique structure and content. The text's preservation may be directly due to its focus on the archangel Michael. Leofric may have had the text inscribed in the marginalia so that it could be preserved if needed for his own use. This thought suggested further investigation into the type of man Leofric was, and whether one could link the preservation of the poem directly to Leofric himself. Evidence suggests that modern scholarship may have greatly underestimated Leofric's talents for survival. An example of this can be found in his arrangement of the movement of the head of his see from Crediton to Exeter. The surviving evidence demonstrates that Leofric received official papal permission for the transfer, an oddity since matters such as this were handled internally in England in this period. Even odder was the explanation for the transfer, Leofric's fear that pirates would again appear and attack Crediton. The move to Exeter is sensible as it was a larger, walled establishment, but the fear of pirates would seem to be stronger there, as it is a seabound port and not inland like Crediton.

Another significant discovery regarding Leofric is his remarkable longevity in a turbulent time. Scholars have advanced different explanations for Leofric's successful survival of the difficulties during Edward's reign and the reforms of the Anglo-Saxon church by the Normans. A current theory regarding Leofric's survival has centred around his lack of political involvement, with the suggestion that he was a boring antiquarian, and yet the surviving documentation demonstrates that at the very least Leofric was very calculating in what texts he preserved. This was paralleled by his connections with both local Anglo-Danish lords, Anglo-Saxon nobility, and later, the Norman conquerors. Perhaps the best example of his skills is the fact that even after two uprisings in Exeter after 1068, William not only allowed him to retain his post but rewarded him for his loyalty to the Norman cause.

Aside from these discoveries regarding Leofric's true role in political matters in Exeter and relationships with Edward and William, this thesis demonstrates the problems with assuming that interest and devotion to a saint, especially a heavenly one, reflected a straightforward religious cult, involving all levels of society. As noted earlier, it had been assumed that there was widespread interest in Michael in Anglo-Saxon England and that it was the Normans who eradicated this devotion along with other Anglo-Saxon saints. This thesis, to the contrary, suggests that in fact there was very limited interest in Michael before 1066 and that it was the Normans who encouraged the worship of the archangel, perhaps in hopes of providing them with a saintly figure that both ethnic groups could worship without conflict.

All this can be seen in the Michael text itself. Although difficult to understand with regards to purpose, the text was probably intended for an audience that may not have appreciated complicated theology or sermons, but who would appreciate the simplicity as well as the subject of the text. It had the added bonus of appealing to both the conquerors and the conquered by promising that worthy actions would be rewarded by Michael in heaven. The text may also have been appealing to believers by being presented in a number of ways, either as a detailed series of wall paintings or as drama by performers presenting each stanza as a vignette.

In conclusion, this small piece of marginalia found in the margins of CCCC 41 has allowed us a rare window of opportunity to understand better Anglo-Saxon society in the tumultuous period of change in the eleventh century. Perhaps more importantly, this thesis demonstrates the importance of interdisciplinary study. Without the combined influence of English, History and Religious Studies in this project, our expanded knowledge of the relationships between Leofric, Edward the Confessor, William the Conqueror, and above all the Archangel Michael would have not occurred. Nor would we have discovered a possible explanation for the preservation and usage of the Michael text. However, the end of this project in a sense is just the beginning, for as Michael gained a prominent role in the new Anglo-Norman kingdom, he would soon lose to his human counterpart Saint George, another saint whose appearance and importance to England has also been misunderstood.

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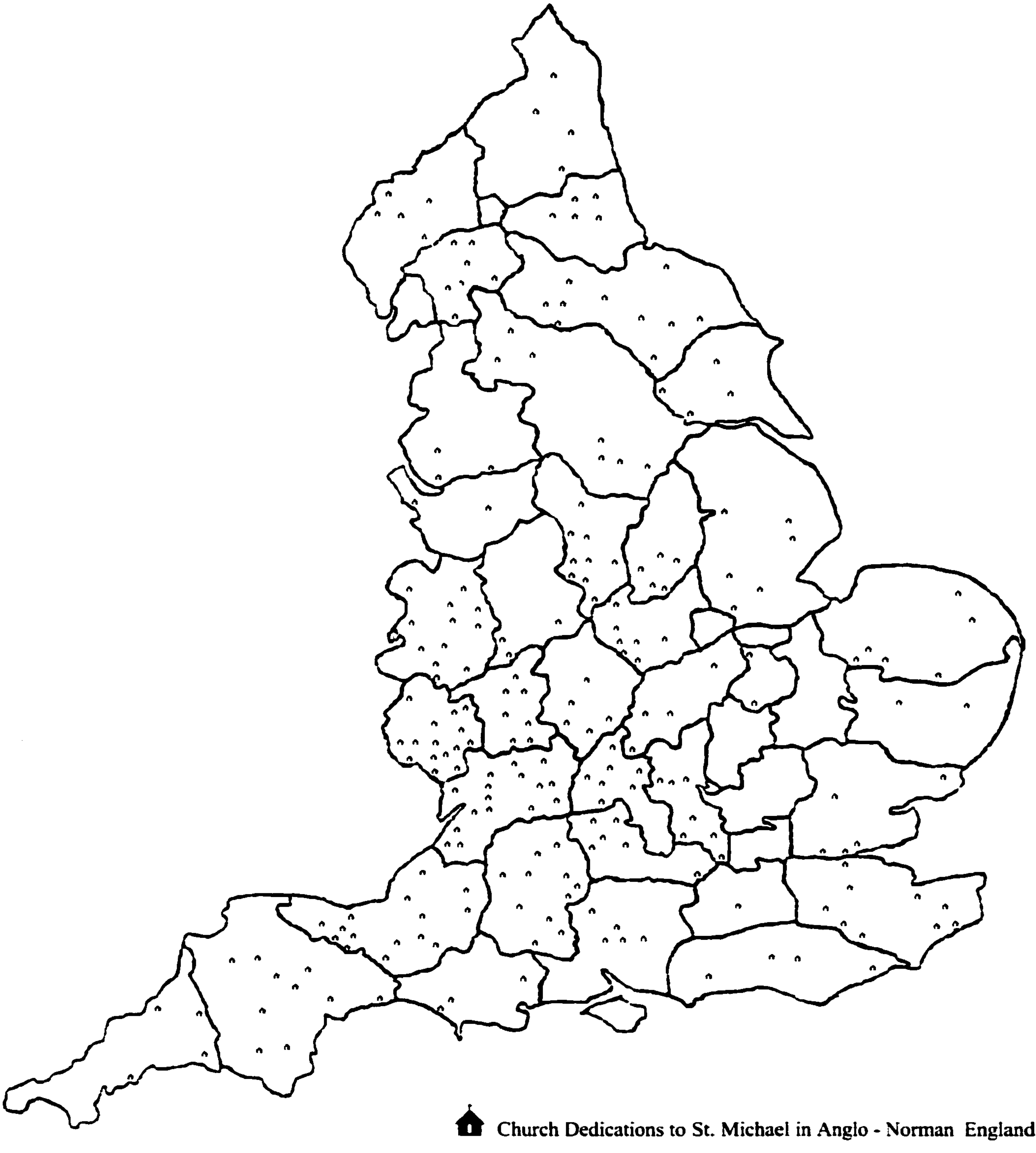
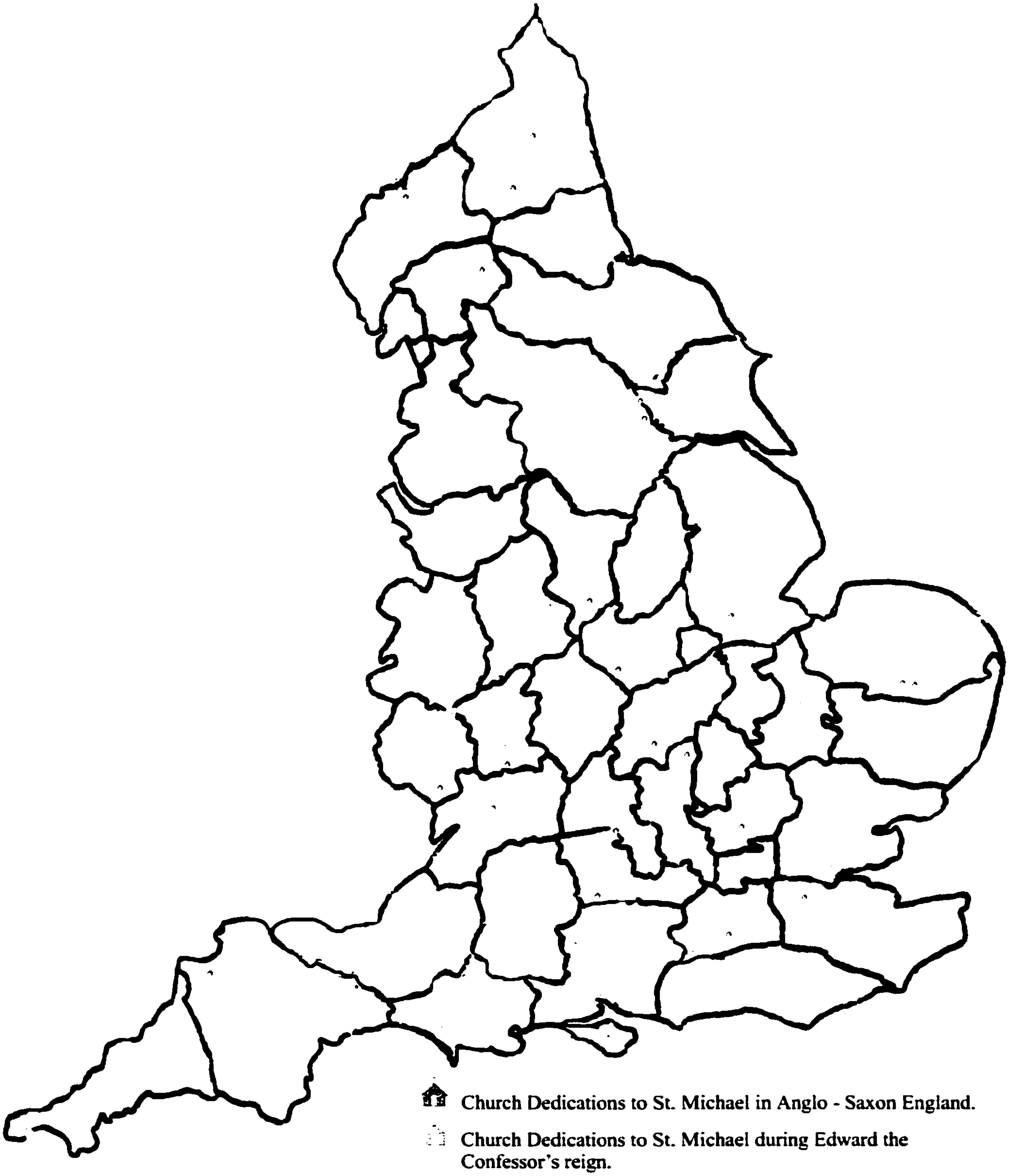
Norman Church Dedications to St. Michael



🏠 Church Dedications to St. Michael in Anglo - Norman England.

Anglo - Saxon Church Dedications to St. Michael



⛪ Church Dedications to St. Michael in Anglo - Saxon England.

⛪ Church Dedications to St. Michael during Edward the Confessor's reign.

Appendix I: Michael In The Celtic Lands.

Many of the missionaries to Ireland and the other Celtic lands[1] focused their attention on ensuring that the recently converted remained faithful. Others chose Ireland and Scotland in which to reenact the life of Anthony and other ascetics who had rejected life in regular society and instead lived isolated in the deserts of the Eastern Roman Empire. While Ireland had no deserts, it did provide the ascetics with the isolation they desired in the form of deserted islands on which the monks could spend their time in prayer and contemplation of Christ. When not praying, many of the monks dedicated their time to the creation of artwork and literature that celebrated the life of Christ and members of the heavenly hierarchy. The resulting artwork and literature would make Ireland famous.[2] So great was the output from these monasteries that the Irish monks have sometimes been credited with preserving the last remnants of literature and learning that survived from the Western Roman Empire.[3]

While the monks whiled away the time in their isolated monasteries, others were ensuring the creation of the ecclesiastical structure of the Celtic lands.

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[1] Celtic is a general reference and does not assume to suggest that the traditions discussed within this appendix were found in all of the Celtic communities found in Great Britain. This disucssion, in particular the events of Michaelmas, are only suggestive of the difference between English devotion to the archangel and are by no means conclusive.

[2] Thomas Cahill. How The Irish Saved Civilization (New York: Doubleday Dell Pub., 1995), pp. 101-140.

[3] Cahill, pp. 3-8.

Since the Celtic lands were not as fertile as those of England, the land was inhabited by tribes who did not necessarily settle in one area. Each tribe had to be converted individually, and even after conversion each tribe was ruled individually which prevented the formation of a unified kingdom and a unified church. Many of the tribes would settle in the vicinity of the local monastery and receive continuous aid both physical and spiritual, and often these monasteries would become the seats of authority in the Celtic sees and control how believers practiced their faith which often bore a closer resemblance to the Eastern tradition than the Western. [4]

In England conversion began at the top of the social hierarchy through either marriage to converts or missionaries sent to the local kings. As England was more settled than the other regions of the island, it was easier to create a more traditional ecclesiastical structure; the towns became the centres of the sees and the monasteries were isolated from the communities, which was unlike the trend in the Celtic lands. The development of Christianity in the Celtic tradition was guided and shaped by monks who had access to more literature and very different ideas than the English church. The results of these different developments were radically different approaches to saints and other heavenly creatures. In the Celtic tradition, Michael played a very integral part in the church with duties that are found nowhere else. The differences between the churches would eventually result in synods' being called in the seventh century. The goal

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[4] Kathleen Hughes, The Church In Early Irish Society. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 1-25.

was to end the debates between the monks from the Celtic tradition and those from the English. The main divisions discussed at the Synod of Whitby in 664 CE were the tonsure and the date for Easter. In the end, the Celtic church was found at fault and was forced to submit to the Roman church; however, this submission did not extend to the Celtic church's approach to saints and their lives.[5]

As noted above, the Irish and Scottish churches were more accepting of the more "fantastical" Christian literature [6], a possible result of the northern island's proximity to the East and the Eastern church and the monks' access to material from the late Western Roman Empire. The result was a church whose prayers, hymns, liturgy, saints' lives, and other Christian-related literature contained fantastical elements, such as heavenly banquets where all the patriarchs gathered to praise the guest of honour, Michael, a theme most commonly found in the Eastern traditions.[7] This could explain the origins of one of the longest Celtic Christian poems called the "Saltair Na Rann." The "Saltair Na Rann" details the origins of the earth and the human race, and numerous stanzas of the poem are dedicated to discussing how God created the winds and their matching colors,[8] a discussion found nowhere in the Roman tradition.

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[5] Hughes, pp. 104-106.

[6] "...Fantastical" refers to the Celtic acceptance of more esoteric traditions regarding saints, angels, and other Christian figures. One example of this fantastical literature is the Sailtiar Na Rann which presents the reader with a version of Genesis which includes a long discussion of the four winds and the colours represented by the winds. Whitley Stokes, ed., The Saltair Na Rann (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883).

[7] E.A.W Budge, ed., Saint Michael the Archangel: Three Encomiums by Theodosius, Archbishop of Alexandria, Severus, Patriarch of Antioch and Eusrahius, Bishop of Trake (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1894).

[8] Whitley Stokes, ed., The Saltair Na Rann.

In its approach to the lives of the saints, the Celtic church also had a differing view. Unlike the Roman one, the Celtic church empowered its saints with more power to protect and assist believers in the crises that faced them in their everyday lives.

Michael's first appearance in the Celtic lands is unknown. The first missionaries in their bringing of biblical texts to the islands most likely introduced the Irish to the Archangel Michael. Little is known about Michael's role in the general population in the first century of conversion. There is evidence that some of the most isolated monasteries elevated Michael's role in the heavenly hierarchy, the most famous of these monastic orders being the "Ceili de." While much of the traditions and beliefs of the *Ceili de* have been lost, some surviving literature hints at Michael's importance to one of its earliest bishops and the surrounding community. Little is known about Maelruain except that he was the abbot of the monastery of Tallaght and had a great influence on the *Ceili de* and the development of their specific order. Noted for his extreme asceticism, Maelruain based his rule on the concept of Christ's suffering. The surviving literature from Tallaght tells of a very regimented lifestyle wherein those who did not or could not follow the rules were harshly punished.[9]

However strict an abbot Maelruain was, the interesting aspect of his rule was his dedication to the saints, in particular to Michael. Maelruain supposedly incorporated numerous prayers to the archangel in his daily ritual which all the other monks were expected to follow. None of Maelruain's specific prayers have

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[9] Lisa Bitel, Isle of the Saints (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp.229-230.

survived; however, several poems dedicated to Michael have been linked to the abbot. The first poem was composed by sailors caught in a squall and fearing death who were supposedly saved after reciting the prayer now known as "the hymn of Colman mac Murchon."[10] Proinseas has argued that this text is the one that Maelruain recited in the daily service. If Proinseas is correct, then there is the possibility of the hymn of Colman mac Murchon being connected to an obscure Anglo-Saxon text dedicated to the archangel.[11] The Anglo-Saxon text has no Irish counterpart, but may represent the lost Irish original that Maelruain may have recited, the connection to Ireland being the greatly expanded duties of the archangel and other fantastical elements found within the text. If there is a connection between the Anglo-Saxon text and Ireland, it is possible that a third text is also linked to Maelruain. In a mainly undecipherable manuscript in Old Irish, Michael is praised for his aid in protecting numerous Old Testament figures and completing other tasks not usually assigned to Michael, suggesting that Maelruain's interest in the archangel was the first step in expanding Michael's role in Celtic Christianity.[12] These expanded duties included active involvement in the daily lives of believers.

Other sources for information regarding the worship of Michael in the Celtic tradition are church and monastic dedications to the saint. As in England,

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[10] Proinseas Ni Chathain, "Discussions of Life in Tallaght Monastery," Famulus Christi: Essays In Commemoration of the 13th Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede, ed. Gerald Bonner (London: SPCK, 1976), pp. 229-233.

[11] Chathain, pp.229-230.

[12] Charles Wright, The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 262.

Scotland and Wales, Michael's importance did not include the naming of a cathedral after the archangel. There is no surviving evidence that suggests any monasteries on the major Celtic islands were dedicated to Michael. However, ascetic monks most interested in living isolated from the outside world in the fourth-seventh centuries would often live on deserted islands in the Hebrides or other isolated storm tossed islands near Ireland or Scotland. According to several legends, the monks would often turn to Michael for his protection and aid in settling these islands. The prayers must have been successful, as numerous of these islands were settled by monks.[13] It has been suggested that many of these monastic islands were dedicated to the archangel, but the exact number of these settlements is unknown.[14] One of the most famous was known as Skellig Michael after Michael's appearance on the island ended the storms that were driving the monks away. It is unclear for how long the island remained inhabited by the monks, although surviving structures and legends suggest that the island was inhabited for several centuries until the Viking incursions forced the monks inland. Even after the monks deserted the island, pilgrims would make the grueling boat journey to the island and the even more frightening climb up to Michael's rock at the very top of the island.[15]

Even with the limited surviving evidence from the early Celtic church and ecclesiastical writings it is apparent that the Celtic church's approach to Michael

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[13] Des Lavelle, The Skellig Story Ancient Monastic Outpost (Dublin: O'Brien Press Ltd., 1993), p. 12.

[14] Lavelle, pp. 5-20.

[15] Michael Kirby, Skelligside (Dublin: Lilliput Press Ltd., 1997), pp. 30-36.

was beginning to differ from the Roman tradition. Scholars interested in Celtic culture and belief prior to the twentieth century most often turn to the *Carmina Gadelica.*[16] This six-volume work presents some useful and vivid accounts of rituals that had been practiced for centuries but were beginning to be forgotten. The work was the result of Carmichael's fascination with the "old ways" which were being lost as people emigrated to North America and elsewhere. It contains all the prayers, poems, incantations and other miscellaneous information he could gather from lesser members of society most often forgotten on isolated islands, some of which had been inhabited by monks centuries earlier.[17] References to Michael can be found sprinkled throughout these volumes, mainly in the prayers.

The majority of prayers in which Michael is mentioned are for protection in sleep, during travels, from animals, for animals, and from demons. One is struck by how often Michael is mentioned whereas other archangels receive much less notice, suggesting that Michael's rank as the chief of angels meant that he received the most attention. If a poem contained references to a multitude of archangels, Michael is often the first to be mentioned or his high rank in the heavenly hierarchy is noted.[18] Most frequently Michael is referred to as the chief of hosts. When not being mentioned alongside other angels, Michael is often paired with the Virgin Mary. The exact nature of their relationship is unknown

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[16] While there may be difficulties regarding Carmichael's scientific methods in collecting data, his work is one of the few sources we have for traditions practiced in Ireland and Scotland. Alexander Carmichael, Carmina Gadelica Hymns and Incantations (Hudson: Lindisfarne Press, 1992).

[17] Carmichael, pp. 19-31.

[18] Carmichael, p. 38.

but the texts seem to suggest they were considered to be equal in stature or maybe a "couple." In one "sleep blessing," the image of Michael and Mary acting as a pair is emphasized by a reference to the "cross of Mary and of Michael over me in peace." [19] In a prayer entitled "Sleep Conservation" there is a even rarer reference to "Mary, Christ, and the pure-white Michael."[20]

"The pure-white Michael" is one of the many titles that Michael receives in these prayers. The most common references are to his rank as the chief of the angels, but there are other more intriguing titles associated with Michael. The most interesting and difficult to explain are references to colors. Michael is often called "pure-white," but the exact meaning of this title is unclear; it is most likely a reference to Michael's clothing and maybe to his appearance before believers.[21] "White" seems to represent cleanliness or purity which suggests that it was a colour difficult to find in nature. One would assume that Mary or Christ would have received this designation, but no reference, in Gaelic, to either Mary or Christ being labeled pure-white has been discovered. Although in the Old Norse tradition Christ is the "White Christ" (hvítr Krist) .[22]

In another sleeping prayer Michael is described as being "red-white" as he goes to meet a soul. The reference to red is again unclear,[23] but it may be

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[19] Carmichael, p. 53.

[20] Carmichael, p. 33.

[21] Carmichael, p. 33.

[20] William, Craigie ed., An Icelandic-English Dictionary. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962) p. 101.

[23] Carmichael, p. 57.

linked to Michael's meeting of the soul early or late at night which may refer to the colours of sunrise or sunset and the colors that infuse the sky when either of these events occurs. In one description, Michael is called the sun.[24] The references to red and white in describing Michael may be connected to his title "sun-radiant" in another poem.[25]

In another poem Michael is called "kindly." Again there is no explanation for this label, but it may refer to Michael's image as the protector of believers.[26] However, "kindly" does not fit with Michael's image as the leader of God's heavenly army or the slayer of Satan. Another poem refers to Michael as "mild," which suggests that Michael was seen as forgiving; but again this image contrasts with Michael's role as heavenly

warrior.[27] Possibly Michael received the titles "kindly" and "mild" as a result of his interaction with humanity; perhaps the authors are thanking Michael for his aid and for forgiving transgressions which Michael would be judging in heaven. Other titles Michael receives in prayers in the *Carmina Gadelica* are "militant" and "victorious."[28] Both references are obviously referring to Michael's role as the heavenly warrior, his victory over Satan, and his protection of all believers.

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[24] Carmichael, p. 34.

[25] Carmichael, p. 96.

[26] Carmichael p. 68.

[27] Carmichael, p. 47.

[28] Carmichael, pp. 85-87.

The most interesting poem dedicated to the archangel and found in *the Carmina Gadelica* has little to do with Michael, focusing instead on Brian, Michael's horse. In this prayer Michael is called a "god."[29]According to Carmichael, the term is "*brian*" but elsewhere in the text, he translates this term as "righteous one or strong," suggesting that there has been a mistranslation of the text.[30] However, considering Michael's role in the various prayers already discussed, one wonders if the Celts perceived Michael as some lesser "god"? This possibility and this point will be discussed in more detail at the conclusion of the appendix.

Michael most frequently appears in prayers for protection or aid. In particular, Michael's responsibilities as conveyor of souls and protector of humanity make him a favorite subject of sleeping prayers. Many prayers for troubled times focused on the archangel and ask for his protection. Prayers that mention Michael also seek protection for one's livestock and from wild animals. Michael's aid was even requested for completing tasks such as milking or making cheese.[31]

Michael was also important to sailors, and in the *Carmina Gadelica* several of the "Sea" prayers refer to Michael's protection at sea.[32] As noted above, numerous monk-inhabited islands were named after the archangel to

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[29] Carmichael, pp. 588-589.

[30] Carmichael, pp. 588-589.

[31] Carmichael, pp. 590-591.

[32] Carmichael, p. 242

ensure protection from sea-storms and, according to a variety of legends, Michael was the protector of sailors, ships and islands. To ensure that believers knew of his relationship with the sea Michael was often depicted in Celtic artwork with a trident and a sword.[33]

While references to Michael are sprinkled throughout many prayers in the *Carmina Gadelica*, prayers wholly dedicated to the archangel are much rarer. One is known as "Michael Militant," wherein the author asks specifically for Michael's protection of his people. This prayer provides specific knowledge regarding some of Michael's duties in Ireland and Scotland; Michael is asked to "shield" the people with his sword as well as use his wings over all the land and sea to protect his chosen people. [34] The author asks Michael to protect believers when the people are fighting a battle and also when journeying on a pilgrimage, suggesting that the author and the intended audience had little difficulty in praying to an archangel who was associated with both war and peace. The remainder of the poem is a reworking of the first two stanzas except for the two opening lines, which are vaguely reminiscent of titles such as "Son of man" and "Son of God" which were given to Christ. In these two lines Michael is called the "chief of chiefs," a direct reference to his role as leader of the angels. He is also called the "chief of the needy," a reference to humanity. One wonders if the author is suggesting Michael had some human qualities that seem unlikely considering Michael's personal history. However, at least one of the communities

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[33] Carmichael, pp. 588-589.

[34] Carmichael, p. 260.

that Carmichael visited claimed to have Michael's burial mound near the church, which suggests that some of communities that worshipped Michael may have considered him human.[35]

Another poem dedicated to the archangel is called "Michael of the angels," and is similar to the above-mentioned "Michael militant" poem as it asks yet again for Michael's protection in the form of a sheltering wing as one goes out to face one's enemy. The most interesting aspect of this brief poem is the speaker's demand for Michael's protection from foes in heaven, on earth, in hell, and in concealment, suggesting that the author and the intended audiences expect Michael to oversee all aspects of their lives and protect them at all times.[36]

The third and most interesting poem dedicated wholly to Michael and known as "Michael the Victorious" is the most specific of the three and explains in detail where the author expects Michael's help as well as some of the rituals necessary for gaining the archangel's aid.[37] In the first stanza, the author states that he is making a circuit under the archangel's shield, which may be reference to a journey or to a particular rite preformed by the supplicant to receive Michael's aid.[38] The remainder of the stanza refers to Michael's role in the killing of the dragon in *Revelation* as well as the usual reference to Michael as a warrior

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[35] Carmichael, p. 592.

[36] Carmichael, pp. 87-88.

[37] Carmichael, p. 87.

[38] Carmichael, p. 87.

and the odder reference to Michael as a "ranger of heaven." [39] This suggests that Michael's duties included the protection of the heavens and the beasts within as well as all those on the earth. In the first stanza the author also refers to Michael as "My pride and my guide,"[40] alluding to Michael's role as guardian and guide to believers. What is meant by the reference to Michael's being "my pride" is less certain. The text suggests that the author has a power relationship with Michael but that the control is with the speaker. The final sentence refers to Michael as "the glory" of the author's eye,[41] apparently a reference to Michael's grandeur but suggesting that the author has seen the archangel, which could explain how the author is able to make the circuit under his shield.

The second stanza specifies how Michael will protect the speaker no matter where he is traveling. With Michael's aid, no harm "can ever befall" him as long as he is protected by Michael.[42] The only other significant line in the second stanza is the reference to Michael's being the "jewel" of the author's heart.[43] The third stanza repeats the themes of the first two and asks for peace to be with the author and all his possessions. The only item of note is that the author

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[39] Carmichael, p. 87.

[40] Carmichael, p. 87.

[41] Carmichael, p. 87.

[42] Carmichael, p. 88.

[43] Carmichael, p. 88.

has asked for protection for everything from a sheaf of wheat to all his furnishings.[44]

To understand fully how many duties Michael had in the Celtic traditions one must turn to Michaelmas. The Roman tradition surrounding Michaelmas centered on prayers and the church;[45] there is little evidence that any other celebration occurred outside the church. The Celtic traditions surrounding Michael were complicated rituals that involved one's church, one's home, and the whole community. So complicated were they that one must analyze them fully to understand Michael's role in the Celtic tradition.

The exact date of Michaelmas is unclear. In the Roman Catholic calendar the date was September 28th or 29th. However, different nations celebrated Michaelmas on different days. In the East, Christian Egyptians supposedly held a feast day for Michael once a month with a larger celebration occurring in June.[46] In Normandy the traditional date for celebrating Michael's appearance at Mont Saint Michel was October 16th, whereas the English retained the Roman tradition and made Michaelmas the time of the yearly reckoning.[47] From events that occurred on Michael's feast day a fall date is most likely, as the grain crops would have to be large enough to harvest and the lambs of sufficient size for sacrifices. It is also uncertain whether each community celebrated the same

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[44] Carmichael, p. 88.

[45] Frederick Holweck, " Saint Michael," Online Catholic Encyclopedia: 21 Aug. 2000<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10275b.htm>.

[46] Holweck, " Saint Michael."

[47] Holweck, " Saint Michael."

Michaelmas date or whether it varied according to locations and proximity to other communities. One also must wonder if the exact date of Michaelmas varied according to the weather, as many of the events of the feast demanded outdoor work.

The events of Michaelmas can be divided into pre-feast events and the feast itself. The main pre-festival event was the gathering of the "currian," or carrots, which were most likely unrelated to the carrots of today but resembled parsnips and when forked vaguely resembled a human form.[48] Several weeks before Michaelmas, the communities would begin discussing the coming events and who would bear the responsibility of guarding the carrot crop. No reason is given for why the fields needed guarding, although the "carrots" of this tradition were difficult to locate and considered quite rare. This suggests that different communities may have competed for the choicest plots.[49]

The Sunday afternoon known as "Domhnach Curran" immediately preceding Michaelmas was devoted to the digging up of the carrots by the women of the community. The women would either retrieve the vegetables by hand or would dig them up with a special spade-like tool called the "sliopag." This tool had three prongs like the trident Michael carried. The torcan, which was three-sided and supposedly resembled Michael's shield, was used to create a space between the earth and the carrot so that the root would not be damaged upon removal. As the women dug up the carrots they would sing a ritual prayer

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[48] Carmichael, p. 589.

[49] Carmichael, p. 589.

dedicated both to Michael and the carrots, asking for Michael's aid in ensuring that they would become pregnant during the year. Women who dug up forked carrots were considered specially privileged, and the women would celebrate the great find with a song. The collecting of the carrots was not always a peaceful event, as the women competed for the best and the most carrots. Once collected, the carrots, carried in a special bag called the "crioslachan," were taken home to be washed and sorted into small bunches. These bunches were tied with decorative yarn and buried in sandpits near each woman's hold to be kept until the day itself.[50]

No other events occurred until Michaelmas Eve when the women would be occupied with the baking of the "struan," a loaf of bread which represented the produce from the fields. The creation of the loaf involved complicated rituals even before the bread dough could be mixed. Some of the rituals included the collecting by young men of special rocks on which to roast the bread and the collection of the sacred wood. Oak, ash and bramble were acceptable for the fire, while firewood from "crossed" trees such as the aspen were avoided. Cereals from all the crops had to be gathered and ground together, and ewes had to be encouraged to nurse until shortly before the festival to ensure that there was sheep's milk for the making of the dough.[51]

The struan was made with all the cereals grown on the farm that year moistened with sheep's milk and also contained butter, eggs and cream. Once

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[50] Carmichael, pp. 589-90.

[51] Carmichael, p. 590.

shaped, the loaves would be placed on a lambskin that would be baked with the bread. The inclusion of the sheep's milk and the lambskin is attributed to the importance of sheep to the Irish. The bread dough was mixed following a specific order, and during the shaping of each loaf the intended family member's name would be chanted over the loaf. All the family members had their own individual loaves as well, and the loaves would be of uniform size but could be in different shapes, the most common being the three-cornered one that represented the Trinity. The wives and their daughters would produce one communal loaf and a smaller loaf for each member of the family still residing in the home. Any leftover dough was made into loaves for the poor and for family members absent from the area. The struan was so important to the ritual that all the crumbs that fell from the loaves or any leftover flour, known as the "fallaid," would be gathered up and sprinkled over the flocks on Michaelmas to bring "piseach agus pailteas agus ealtraidh."[52] Occasionally the families would keep the fallaid year after year and use it on the flocks throughout the seasons. [53]

Making the struan could be hazardous, as the breaking of any of the rituals could result in serious hardship for the baker and her family. The nature of the harm depended on what occurred to the cake. The baker herself would fall ill if the bread fell apart, whereas the cracking of the stone the bread was being baked

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[52] "progeny and plenty and prosperity." Carmichael, pp. 590-591.

[53] Carmichael, p. 591.

on and the falling of the loaves into the fire warned that an ill omen would affect the whole family.[54]

Another event that involved cooking and occurred on Michaelmas Eve was the selecting and sacrificing of Michael's lamb. The male lamb was to be without blemish and would be slaughtered and dressed the night before by each family unit. It is unclear whether the meat was cooked that night or after the church service.[55]

At first glance one could assume that the men had a limited role in the events prior to Michaelmas, but while the women were occupied in the baking of the bread and the collecting of the carrots the men spent their time guarding the horses. Michaelmas Eve was known as the "eve of watching the steeds," as tradition allowed anyone to steal a horse on Michaelmas Eve, retain it for the day, and then return it. Anyone stealing a horse on these two days could not be punished even if the animal was harmed. [56]

The connection between Michaelmas and horses may at first sound odd, but is linked to Michael's image as a warrior. Michael was often depicted as fighting Satan astride a white horse, and the Celtic tradition adopted this horse as a magical figure that also could answer prayers and aid believers. The result was that the horse received the name "Brian," which "means strength and nobility",

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[54] Carmichael, p. 591.

[55] Carmichael, pp. 590-91.

[56] Carmichael, p. 591.

and several prayers were written to the beast.[57] All the prayers refer to the animal's whiteness, his swiftness, and his magnificence. How horse stealing became part of the ritual worship of Brian and Michael is unclear; however, it may be linked to the horse races that occurred on Michaelmas.[58]

The feast day itself was also filled with complicated rituals and celebrations. The first event of the day involved early mass and required all who could travel to go to their parishes churches for this event. At the service the local priest would bless the struan and the lamb meat, and exhort the congregation to praise Michael for his protection of the community and for all the fruits of the fields, the flocks, the forests and the seas that Michael had provided. The orphans and the poor at the service were commended to God and to the care of the community. At home after the service the eldest male in the household, preferably the patriarch, would place the blessed and communal struan on a pure white board and slice the loaf. The meat would than be sliced and both would be placed in the center of the table. Each family member would take a little piece of bread and lamb and all would hold hands and sing the "Triumphal Song of Michael" prior to consuming the struan. After the bread and the meat were consumed, any leftovers were collected by the husband and wife and then taken to the church along with extra cheese and butter to be distributed amongst the poor, the sick, and outcasts

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[57] Carmichael, p. 626-627.

[58] Carmichael, p. 592.

from the community. As these people were receiving these donations they were expected to sing loudly the praises of Michael for providing for them.[59]

Once these rituals were completed the husband and wife returned home to begin the next ritual, the circuiting of St Michael's burying-ground. Whether this burying-ground was actually the local graveyard or Michael's burial mound is uncertain. The text suggests that it was not a main church but the site of a shrine. The number of these sites is uncertain. One would assume that an archangel who lacked corporeal form could not die, but the text does suggests that something was in the burial mound. In this ritual the very old and the very young were left at home to take care of any tasks that could not be avoided even on a feast day. The rest of the family would gather and mount their horses or ones they had "borrowed," according to the ritual. The usual seating pattern for this ritual was brother, sister, and brother on one horse and father and mother on another. Each family would ride to the burial-ground, and as they rode all the neighbors and people from the surrounding communities would join them to enter the burial-ground to begin the next ceremony.[60]

The priest mounted on a white horse would lead the group into the site from the east with those on horses behind him and those on foot following immediately behind the mounted riders. As the group circled the mound and the shrine in the middle, the priest recited a variety of prayers. The first praised Michael and Brian and thanked both for aid accorded. The second prayer focused

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[59] Carmichael, p. 591-592.

[60] Carmichael, p. 592.

on Michael's role as provider as the speakers asked for "progeny and prosperity on thy lying and rising,"[61] At the end of this prayer the woman would present bundles of carrots to their chosen mate. Other gifts would be presented to the participants, many of whom had not seen each other since the previous Michaelmas.[62]

After performing this pilgrimage, the community would return to town to finish the celebrations. Prior to the feasting and the dancing, there would be horse races and foot races. Both races would require minimal clothing and the riders raced bareback. It is unclear what the prizes for winning were or whether the races were an opportunity for the community to gather and celebrate a successful harvest or year. Betting on the outcome of the races was encouraged. It is also noted that during these "athletics" couples who had exchanged carrots would wander into the hills for their own private celebration of Michaelmas. [63]

As the day turned into night, the final celebration, the "ball," would occur. The communities would gather to celebrate the end of the feast day with music, dancing, singing, and other festivities. Part of the festivities required that every man who had won a bet on the races donated all of his winnings to pay the musicians. As the evening progressed the women would give away their remaining bundles of carrots to favored men and they exchanged small gifts. At

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[61] Carmichael, p. 592.

[62] Carmichael, p. 592.

[63] Carmichael, p. 592-93.

the close of the night the people would return home, with the men returning any borrowed horses.[64]

One other ritual could occur on Michaelmas, but was dependent on the birth of a child. If a woman was lucky enough to bear child on Michaelmas, the child whether boy or girl would receive the title of "leanabh Micheil" as a mark of its arrival and to remember all the aid that Michael had given the community.[65]

The surviving evidence suggests that Michael held a important role in the mindset of both ecclesiastical and lay believers and his importance disappeared only with the dramatic changes that occurred in the Celtic lands of the 19th and early 20th century. The margins of Corpus 41 contain six Old English and five Latin charms. These charms have three main interests—the Old English charms 1-4 are all concerned with theft; the Old English charm 5 and the Latin charm 2 are both against the scribes' big worry, eye-strain, and belong with the Latin charms 3 and 4 against earache and illness; and the Latin portions of the Old English charm 4 were used to save the soul from demons or the body from yellow plague, that is, as a lorica for one's protection, which serves to link this charm in tone with the Old English journey charm 6, with the Latin charms 1 and 5, and with one possible interpretation of *Solomon and Saturn*. The compiler of the marginalia in Corpus 41 therefore either chose charms to be copied according to subject or copied from a set of charms already so ordered. Corpus 41 takes its

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[64] Carmichael, 592.

[65] Carmichael, p. 625.

place as one of the three major Old English charm collections alongside *Lacnunʒa* and *Læceboc.*

Most interesting of the charms is the Old English charm 4 with its Latin portions. The common impression that this charm is concerned with the recovery of stolen cattle derives from consideration of only the Old English prose introduction, beginning *Gif feoh sy undernumen*; but this is followed by a verse incantation in Latin and Old English, beginning *7 sinʒ ærest uprihte hit* and invoking the aid of Irish saints, and by a third, Latin section which consists of part of a hymn, beginning *Xr̄s illum siue elegit*, and a prose incantation, beginning *Crux Xr̄i reducat*. The 'hymn' consists of the last three stanzas, the opening stanza and one antiphon of the *Hymnus S. Secundini in Laudem S. Patricii*, traditionally supposed to have been composed in praise of St Patrick's character by St Sechnall on the occasion of their reconciliation after a quarrel. The hymn was written *secundum ordinem alphabeti*, and the final three stanzas for X, Y and Z enjoy a particular efficacy, for "Its grace," said Patrick, "shall be on the last three capitula." These stanzas were used not to recover stolen cattle but to save the body from yellow plague or the soul from demons. Their appearance in charm 4 in Corpus 41 therefore converts that charm into a lorica for one's total protection during and after life and hints at an Irish influence on the selection of the Corpus 41 marginalia which reappears in *Solomon and Saturn*, the Martyrology, and the homilies. The portion of the Old English Martyrology for the period December

25-31 has been printed by Cockayne, Herzfeld and Kotzor.[66] It is not as strange as it might at first appear that these short notices of the lives and martyrdoms of saints opposite their festival days in the Church year share a manuscript with the *Historia Ecclesiastica* in translation. Bede himself was very interested in *Passiones martyrum* and *Vitae sanctorum*, using some fifty hagiographical texts as authorities for his own *Martyrologium*, written after 725 and before 731 during his later life. He had in his library a copy of the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, which may have been his model. None of the other surviving Old English manuscripts contains the Martyrology for the period December 25-31, so the text in Corpus 41 (D) has to be left out of the stemma of the Old English Martyrology texts; yet if Corpus 41 is indeed a Leofric donation, it is worth pointing out that text C (Corpus 196) is closely connected to Corpus 191 and 201 and that all three have been localised to Exeter.

The verse text, beginning *Saturnus cwæð hwæt Ic iȝlanda eallra hæbbe boca onbyrȝed* and continuing for some hundred lines, is part of the Old English poem *Solomon and Saturn*. Saturn, representing pagan tradition, questions Solomon, representative of Judaeo-Christian wisdom, about the power of the 'palm-twigged' Paternoster. In reply, Solomon enumerates the powers of the Paternoster letter by letter in a manner reminiscent in theme, tone and alphabetic technique of the Old English charm 4 and the Latin charm 5. The text in Corpus

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[66] Cockayne, Thomas Oswald, ed., "Yule Week," *The Shrine: A Collection of Occasional Papers on Dry Subjects*, in 13 parts (London, 1864-70), pp. 29-35, and Herzfeld, Georg(e), ed., An Old English Martyrology, Re-edited from manuscripts in the Libraries of the British Museum and of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, EETS, OS, no. 116 (London: Oxford University Press, 1900, reprinted New York, 1975), pp. 2-10; Kotzor, Günter, ed., Das altenglische Martyrologium, 2 vols. (München: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981), II. 1-8.

41 has been printed by Menner and Dobbie,[67] and Grant has shown that the compiler of the marginalia has chosen to copy only that portion of *Solomon and Saturn* which can be used as a lorica.[68] Grendon and Menner discuss the use of the Paternoster in charms,[69] and Menner shows that the poem contains echoes of Irish apocryphal literature.[70]

The unique text in praise of St Michael in the margins of Corpus 41 thus has Celtic and Irish connections which form colourful threads in the tapestry of our discussion of the manuscript in general and of the purpose of the Michael hymn or trope in particular.

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[67] Robert J. Menner ed., The Poetical Dialogues of Salomon and Saturn, The Modern Language Association of America, Monograph Series XIII (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, and London: Oxford University Press, 1941), 80-86, and Dobbie, Elliott van Kirk, ed., The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records VI (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942, 1958), 30 ff.

[68] Grant, The Loricas and the Missal, pp. 23-26.

[69] Felix, Grendon ed., "The Anglo-Saxon Charms," The Journal of American Folklore 22 (1909,reprinted New York 1930), 151, and Menner, pp. 37-45.

[70] Menner, p. 25.


ODO:EPS:
ROTBERT:
WILLELM:


MICHAELIS
ET

Appendix II: Anglo-Norman worship of George

English devotion to Saint George originated with the coming of the first missionaries or shortly after. Like Michael, George also had a limited role in the Anglo-Saxon church. In a survey of ten English counties there is one mention of a church dedicated to George prior to the Conquest, although there is a reference to interest in George in Bede, and Alfred's will includes a reference to a church dedicated to the saint at Doncaster.[1] In a survey of fifteen counties only one Anglo-Saxon dedication to George was found.[2] Even after the Norman Conquest of England and the removal of the more questionable Anglo-Saxon saints, George only gained a handful more dedications to himself whereas Michael's cult greatly expanded. It was not until Edward III in his search for a holy patron to be borne on standards during attacks on the French that George gained an important position in the English church. One must wonder why Edward did not choose Michael, one of the greatest military saints as well as the protector of believers. Edward's choice might be due to the saint's relationship with the Normans and his role in the conquest of England or it may be directly linked to Michael's lack of corporeal

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[1] "Saint George in English History origin, influence and significance" or Samantha Riches, St George Hero, Martyr and Myth (Thrupp-Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2000).

[2] See Appendix II.

form.[3] It has also been argued that the increased interest in the archangel Michael can be linked to an underground movement created by Anglo-Saxon worshipper of George who pretended to worship Michael while continuing to worship George and other Anglo-Saxon saints. [4] However, no surviving evidence supports this theory and it is more likely that George's role in society was limited until the fourteenth century. When one compares the two saints there are some marked similarities. Michael is often depicted in battle dress astride a white horse with his sword drawn, as is Michael. So striking are the similarities between the artistic depictions of both saints that often the only differences between the two images are Michael's wings. The most famous traditions surrounding George involved the slaying of a dragon threatening the countryside. Michael is also credited with slaying a great dragon, and the enemy of man, Satan. George is considered a military saint, as is Michael.[5] The only significant difference between the two seems to Michael's lack of a corporeal form and his role in the Old and New Testament. So why than did Michael lose his popularity? I believe it was due to changing attitudes towards angels and other fantastical beings in Christianity. As people began questioning the motives and theology of the Roman Catholic Church during the Reformation, they also changed their

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[3] "Saint George in English History origin, influence and significance"

[4] In all likelihood this proposal is wrong as their little evidence that there was widespread interest in George prior to the Norman Conquest. Any evidence regarding a growing cult to George dates from the 13th century and later. Riches. St George. pp. 20-26.

[5] "Saint George in English History origin, influence and significance."

attitude towards angels. They may not reject their existence but archangels like Michael were seen as beings that would not trouble themselves with the earth or its inhabitants. It would be just as easy for Michael to judge the souls of the dead in heaven where he could also protect the heavens from evil.

Michael's disappearance may also be linked to events in France where Michael became the patron saint after the cataclysmic losses faced by the French in the Hundred Year's War. As the English continually and successfully invaded the French coasts, Mont Saint Michel became a symbol of French independence and strength as the English were never able to take the Mount. This could possibly explain Edward's decision to name Michael the new patron saint of France and why the English chose George as their patron saint, one free from French and Norman connections unlike Michael.[6] All these reasons may have contributed to the fading of Michael's importance in England and how George became the patron saint of England.

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[6] "Saint George in English History origin, influence and significance."

Survey of Church Dedications to George in Anglo-Saxon and Norman England

County	Anglo-Saxon Dedications	Norman Dedications
Cumberland	0	0
Dorset	1	0
Durham	0	0
Essex	0	0
Gloucesteshire	0	0
Hertfordshire	0	1
Lincolnshire	0	0
Oxfordshire	0	0
Shropshire	0	3
Somerset	0	2
South Devon	0	0
Suffolk	0	0
Warwickshire	0	0
West Moreland	0	0
West Sussex	0	2

Appendix III: The Manuscript Itself.

MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41 was originally intended as a second-rate, working copy of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* in Old English translation known as 'B' most likely because the old name for Corpus was Bene't. With its unique 'Metrical Epilogue,' the Old English Bede constitutes Corpus 41's sole original text, written by two scribes working simultaneously. The manuscript was made in the early eleventh century in a southern English Benedictine centre whose illuminators belonged to the 'Winchester' school. It then had a number of texts of varied character and interest in both Old English and Latin added in its margins and blank spaces by a single scribe during the first half of the eleventh century. The additional material is confined to the margins except for the Old English homily on the Passion and the bilingual record of gift to Exeter. The added texts are all by a third hand which had no role in the copying of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* and is of the same or only slightly later date than the two main hands. A fourth hand is, of course, responsible for the bilingual Leofric inscription. Detailed descriptions of the manuscript are offered by Wanley, Miller, Schipper, James, and Ker, while Grant's detailed description is forthcoming in the *Old English Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile* series.[1]

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[1] Wanley, Humphrey, ed., Catalogus Historico-Criticus (Oxford, 1705, reprinted New York, 1970), pp. 114-115; Miller, Thomas, ed., The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People, 4 vols., I.1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1890, repr. 1959, repr. New York, 1976) EETS, OS 95, introd., xvi-ii, and II.1, (London: Oxford University Press, 1898, repr. 1963), EETS, OS 110, intod., ix-x; Schipper, Jakob M., ed., König Alfreds Übersetzung von Bedas Kirchen-geschichte. Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Prosa IV, vol. I (Leipzig, 1897), xxv-viii; James, Montague Rhodes, ed., A Descriptive Catalogue of the

Corpus 41 is not mentioned in the list of Leofric's benefactions drawn up during his lifetime, so it is most likely Leofric obtained the manuscript and donated it to Exeter Cathedral after the compilation of the donations list. The Leofric inscription does not localise Corpus 41 to Exeter but permits one to state that the manuscript was at Exeter in the possession of Leofric within less than half a century of its compilation, so it is reasonable to assume that at some time between the middle of the eleventh century and his death in 1072 Leofric procured the volume and gave it to Exeter Cathedral's library. We do not know when it was alienated from Exeter, but it may have been at the of the Dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII.

The writing centre at which Corpus 41 was copied was probably one where variation, not standardisation, was the norm, and the practitioners were following their own devices and were responsible for their own productions. The result started out as a manuscript which was the ambitious project of a minor scriptorium rather than a second-rate product of a major scriptorium; then the attitude to the book changed. The Old English Bede text is not a luxurious one,

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Alfreds Übersetzung von Bedas Kirchen-geschichte. Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Prosa IV, vol. I (Leipzig, 1897), xxv-viii; James, Montague Rhodes, ed., A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), I. 81-5; and Ker, Neil R., Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, repr. 1990), no. 32, pp. 43-45. A mihrofiche version of Corpus 41 will also be published shortly.

anyway, and the entire manuscript may shortly afterwards have been used as a liturgical and homiletic archive. This shows a piecemeal process, one of flexibility in the function and use of a book outside a major scriptorium and maybe outside the influence of Regularis Concordia and the Benedictine Revival.

Corpus 41 contains six Old English homilies, five in the margins and one written on the full pages at the end of the main (Bede) text. They are all of great interest, and nos. 2, 5 and 6 are unique; editions, however, are few. The homilies have a unity of interest in that they all are filled with apocryphal and apocalyptic ecclesiastical fiction of the type liked so much by the Celtic church. Willard suggests that these homilies belong to an early period,

> to what one might call the unreformed, or pre-Ælfric, period, and to the stratum of the Blickling Homilies, the Vercelli Homilies, and many of those attributed to Wulfstan. Practically all of them abound in apocryphal material of an uncanonical nature, what, indeed, might be called ecclesiastical fiction.[2]

Homily 5 (Ker, art. 17), on pages 402-417 and beginning *Men ða leofestan, us is to worðianne 7 to mærsianne seo ʒemind þæs halʒan heahenʒles Sc̄e Michaeles*, enumerates the functions of St Michael. It is not so much a homily but a hymn or incantation which may be arranged into twenty-eight stanzas of varying length of which twenty-five open with the formula *Đis is se halʒa heahenʒel Sc̄s Michael* which is probably derived from the Roman liturgy's *Hic*

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[2] Willard, Rudolph, "Two Apocrypha in Old English Homilies," Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie 30 (1935), 2; reprint by Johnston Reprint Co., New York, 1970.

est Michael Archangelus. This unique text has been edited by Grant,[3] and in its apocryphal and Celtic interest takes its place in Corpus 41 alongside the other rare apocryphal homilies on the Assumption, Doomsday and the Ascension and alongside the Latin portion of charm 4.

It has proven difficult throughout discussion of the unique text in praise of St Michael contained in Corpus 41 to know exactly what to call it. It is not in the form or length usual for a homily, and while it is more in the form of verse than of prose its structure is not sufficiently rigorous in stress patterns and alliteration to call it a poem. It looks more like a hymn or incantation than anything else although the length and complicated structure excludes either form, but its dramatic quality might also lead the critic to think it is a trope. Tropes began in Winchester shortly after the beginning of the Benedictine Reformation in the latter half of the tenth century with the well-known *Quem quaeritis in sepulchro* trope and instructions for its acting out,[4] and certainly the St Michael text would lend itself brilliantly to visual as well as verbal spectacle.

Explication of the text stanza by stanza helped to make its trope-like nature clearer, and investigation of the various claims made on behalf of the archangel demonstrated that they were not all biblical; some of them turned out to be apocryphal and pseudepigraphical, some turned out to be of Eastern (Coptic) or Celtic origin, and others proved themselves unique to the Corpus 41 text—an

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[3] Grant, Raymond J. S., ed., Three Homilies from Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41: The Assumption, St Michael and the Passion (Ottawa: The Tecumseh Press, 1982), pp. 42-77.

[4] See Frere, W. H., The Winchester Troper (London: AMS Press, 1894).

interesting mélange, indeed, of the kind characterised by Willard as "ecclesiastical fiction." It rapidly became clear that this was a text of greater importance to Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England than has hitherto been acknowledged when investigation into its various contexts proceeded. Its context in the margins of Corpus 41 is amongst fragments of an Old English martyrology, Old English homilies, *Solomon and Saturn*, charms in both Latin and Old English, and selections from a Latin missal; and this context indicated apocryphal, Celtic and Eastern interests on the part of the compiler and the owner of the manuscript. It is impossible to tell if the marginalia were added to Corpus 41 before or after Leofric of Exeter obtained the manuscript, or if the copying of the marginalia proceeded in Exeter, but one can be certain of the close interest taken in the marginalia by Leofric.