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The Anglo-Saxon Bishop and his Book

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In view of the ambitious programmes undertaken by several recent Toller lecturers,1 it may be well to make plain from the outset that my rather bland title is both deliberately unspecific and literally meant. I do not intend to dwell on any one Anglo-Saxon bishop nor on any particular book, still less with every book that such a bishop may have consulted or used during his episcopate. Rather, I hope to lay out some considerations that would have applied to any Anglo-Saxon bishop engaged in his most distinctive activity, the performance of episcopal rites — rites most often contained in a distinctive book.

It may therefore be helpful to begin with a word about what I mean by the phrase ‘the Anglo-Saxon bishop’s book’. Theoretically, I intend these words to cover whatever text a bishop in Anglo-Saxon England would have used when performing distinctively episcopal services. It is clear from Continental sacramentaries of the eighth and ninth centuries that forms for some episcopal rites were commonly included in those books,2 and it would not be surprising if texts were sometimes used in other than codex form — especially in pontifical rolls, of which at least three survive from later medieval England.3 We must also keep in mind the degree to which certain rites, at least, were executed by bishops from memory. (In what is arguably the most frequently

1 This article is an expanded version of the T. Northcote Toller Memorial Lecture delivered at the University of Manchester on Monday, 9 March 1998. I am grateful for their assistance to Michelle Brown, Gill Cannell, Catherine Clark and Joseph Wittig. Throughout, BL = London, British Library; BN = Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale; Bodl. = Oxford, Bodleian Library; Cbg. = Cambridge; HBS = Henry Bradshaw Society.


3 BL, Cott. Charter Roll xiii.4; Cbg., Emmanuel College MS 230; Oxford, Keble College, MS s.n. All date from the 13th or early 14th centuries.
reproduced illustration of a medieval bishop at work, that of pope Urban II consecrating the third church at Cluny in 1095, there is no book visible, although it would seem unlikely that any bishop would have memorized the extremely complex rite for the dedication of a church.4)

If, in terms of the performance of episcopal rites, it makes little or no difference in what format the bishop uses the necessary texts, in practice the evidence we have for the texts of such rites comes overwhelmingly from the books called pontificals (along with the detachable components of episcopal blessings, sometimes produced separately as benedictionals). We know that the pontifical emerged in late Carolingian circles, and may suppose that such books were made for English bishops, or even in England, in the time of Alfred and the two succeeding generations; but the earliest English books of that sort that survive are a handful datable only to fifteen years or so on either side of 975. A list of these, and of the other, somewhat later books under consideration — we shall take as our terminal date the end of the eleventh century — will be offered presently.5

Before we consider the pool of surviving episcopal books, however, we ought to glance at the pool of bishops who would have been using them in the period with which we are concerned, c.960 to 1100. It is a fairly simple matter to reach a meaningful approximation of the total number of persons who functioned as bishops in the fifteen to seventeen dioceses of England in that period: in the order of 120, a number I shall try to explain shortly.6 Unfortunately, however, we cannot calculate what we would most like to know: how many episcopal books were extant at the time. But to keep in mind the relationship between the ascertainable number of bishops and the unknowable number of books is basic to our enquiry, as is shown by three questions that immediately form themselves.

4 This depiction comes from the 'Chronicon Cluniacense,' formerly at St Martin des Champs: BN, MS lat. 17716, fo. 91. A recent semi-popular book which reproduces it in colour is The Oxford illustrated history of the Crusades, ed. J. Riley-Smith (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), facing p. 20.


The first is, can we suppose that every bishop had, or at least had easy access to, a pontifical? Secondly, can we further suppose that if he were translated to another diocese, as was not uncommonly the case in our period, he took that book with him, or was the book supposed to be both personal and, so to speak, see-specific? Thirdly, to what extent did religious houses also possess pontificals, presumably for the use of a bishop when he came? This third question may seem far-fetched, but the fact that one surviving pontifical can reasonably be connected with Ramsey abbey and one somewhat hesitantly with a yet unidentified nunnery means that it is a possibility that we have to keep in mind.

The likeliest reality is of course a flexible combination of all three points. While all bishops may have possessed these distinctive books, some clearly must have, whether or not the particular books are extant; and the books that do survive, albeit small in number, present us with the challenge, even the necessity, of associating them with particular bishops: as, to take the most obvious cases, we do for the benedictional now BL Add. 49598 with Æthelwold and, almost as clearly, for the pontifical now BN lat. 943 with Dunstan. As to the second question, it would seem likely that at least in some cases pontificals must have accompanied their owners to new sees; but we have only one or two books upon which to base this ‘must have’. Similarly with the third question: as has just been mentioned, at least two surviving books suggest that some religious houses possessed pontificals not, in the ordinary sense, owned by individual bishops; but there is no reason to think that this situation was widespread.

Back, then, to the number of possible owners of these books. There seem altogether to be roughly 165 names on lists of bishops in England between 950 and 1100. But because of translations, a number of these appear twice or even three times in calculations of episcopal lists (Dunstan, bishop successively at Worcester, etc.)

7 See Dumville 1992 (note 5 above), 93-4.
9 For a summary of the arguments pointing towards Dunstan’s ownership, see Nelson and Pfaff 1995 (note 5 above), 89-90. Dumville (1992, 93), offers eight suggestions as to connections between specific books and archbishops of Canterbury, in pursuit of his idea that ‘we may have reason to think that, at least from Dunstan’s time, a new pontifical was created for each archbishop as he took up office’.
10 If it is true of Claudius I — for explanation of nicknames, see the list on p. 6 — that, as Dumville asserts (1992, 79) it is ‘fairly certain that this was the pontifical of Wulfstan himself’, then the question arises whether it came into his possession when he was bishop of London 996-1002 or only when he became archbishop of York 1002-23 (jointly as bishop of Worcester 1002-16); that he wrote in the book in or after 1008 (Nelson and Pfaff 1995, 91) does not preclude his having owned it earlier. Similarly, if Lanalet was owned by Lyfing when bishop of Wells 991-1013, he could have taken it with him to Canterbury when he became archbishop in 1013.
London, and Canterbury, being the obvious example of tripllication). So, with allowances made for these and for several shadowy figures whose existence is not clear, it looks as though there were something between 100 and 120 men who functioned as bishops in the period we are concerned with: which is therefore the number of putative owners of episcopal books — not counting any religious houses (which could also of course include cathedrals) that may have owned such books.

This somewhat wearisomely arrived-at figure is useful in giving a vivid idea of the disparity between the evidence that may once have existed for our subject — something probably in the neighbourhood of 120 books, possibly more — and the number of books of this kind that survive: by the most generous definition, nineteen. (In the list given below, the nicknames by which these manuscripts will subsequently be referred to are offered as conveniences rather than as immutable assignments; nor are the dates intended as more than approximations.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>here referred to as</th>
<th>rough date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris, BN lat. 843</td>
<td>Dunstan Pont.</td>
<td>960-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Add. 49598</td>
<td>Æthelwold Bened.</td>
<td>963-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris, BN lat. 987</td>
<td>(Ps.-)Ramsey Bened.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;ea&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Add. 57337</td>
<td>Anderson Pont.</td>
<td>c.1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris, BN lat. 10575</td>
<td>(Ps.-)Egbert Pont.</td>
<td>c.1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cbg., Sidney Sussex 100</td>
<td>Sidney Pont.</td>
<td>c.1000?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouen, B.m. 368 (A.27)</td>
<td>Lasalet Pont.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;ia&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Cott. Claud. A.iii(I)</td>
<td>Claudius I Pont.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;ia&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cbg., Corpus Christi 146</td>
<td>Samson Pont.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;ia&lt;/sup&gt; + xi&lt;sup&gt;ea&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouen, B.m. 369 (Y.7)</td>
<td>(Abp.) Robert Pont.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;12/4&lt;/sup&gt;?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Harley 2892</td>
<td>Canterbury Bened.</td>
<td>c.1030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cbg., Corpus Christi 44</td>
<td>Corpus-Cant. Pont.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;med&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Cott. Claud. A.iii(II)</td>
<td>Claudius II Pont.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;med&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Cott. Vit. A.vii</td>
<td>?Ramsey Pont.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;med&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Add. 28188</td>
<td>?Exeter Pont.</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;3/4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodl. Bodley 579</td>
<td>Leofric Missal</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;med&lt;/sup&gt; + xi&lt;sup&gt;3/4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Cott. Vit. A.xviii</td>
<td>Giso Sacramentary</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;3/4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cbg., Corpus Christi 163</td>
<td>PRG, English copy</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;3/4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL Cott. Tib. C.i</td>
<td>Eng. addns to PRG</td>
<td>s. xi&lt;sup&gt;3/4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these, three are considerably less than whole: Claudius I, Claudius II, and Sidney; one, Vitellius A.vii, is seriously mutilated as a result of the Cotton Library fire in 1731; three are benedictionals only (Æthelwold’s, Paris 987, and Harley 2982); and two are sacramentaries with considerable pontifical material, Leofric and Giso. This means that at most ten of these books are anything like complete pontificals: Dunstan, Egbert, Anderson, Corpus-Canterbury, Lanalet, Exeter, Robert, Samson (both parts taken together), and two that are largely copies from the Roman-German pontifical, Corpus 163 and Tiberius C.i.

As we come now to look at certain characteristics, as well as peculiarities, that these books have, it must be kept steadily in mind that they are a highly diverse lot. So there is little point in trying to extrapolate anything like a ‘typical’ pontifical in such respects as size or weight — all the more because of the disparity just noticed, between the number that survive and the number that must have existed. We cannot even say confidently, in the case of those that survive only in part, that they would have included such-and-such features, for those that survive do not by any means contain the same range of contents. Even less is this true of the order of contents, which varies widely; indeed, one of our persisting questions must be, how did the bishops who used them find their ways around these books?

Let us begin this consideration of concrete characteristics with the most obvious physical aspects — not, let me remind you as a kind of ground-bass, from the standpoint of codicologists or palaeographers but from that of the tenth- and eleventh-century bishops who used these books. We think, then, of one of our bishops, appropriately vested, having held open for him by an assistant a pontifical. What is its magnitude? The page size seems (vagaries caused by cropping are always possible) to range from 340 x 250 mm. (Corpus-Canterbury) to 180 x 120 (Exeter), with written space proportional (Corpus’s 230 x 145 to Exeter’s 135 x 85). The number of folios ranges from just over 200 (Corpus-Canterbury, Tiberius) to as few as 144 (Anderson).

In every case the lines are long (that is, single-column format), numbering between nineteen (Exeter, and also Æthelwold’s Benedictional) and twenty-seven (Samson) to a page. Weight is harder to assess, because much depends on the weight of the (almost always) later binding, and also because libraries are not invariably keen on having their MSS weighed. The heftiest, as befits its size otherwise, seems to be the Corpus-Canterbury, which weighs in at nine and a half pounds. Despite the reluctance of libraries just noted, the immensely helpful officials at the Parker Library not only had the College’s kitchen scales fetched but co-opted a student to play at being acolyte, holding the book appropriately while I pretended to consecrate an altar.

12 It has also the largest letters.
of any of these books, some five to ten mm. high, whereas three to six mm. is the more usual range (Sidney, Corpus 163), with the five to eight mm. of Æthelwold and of Samson (both parts) unusually large, and the two to four mm. of Exeter excessively small.\(^{13}\)

As the bishop comes to use such a book, the questions about ownership which were asked earlier become pressing. If, at one extreme, each bishop would have known only one book, it may have been the case that no selection of contents or arrangement or other peculiarity would have struck him as odd or undesirable; but, in proportion as that extreme case may have become a reality, the matter of who made such decisions for that one book — about contents, order, the wording of rubrics, and the like — will be vital. At the other extreme, if there should turn out to be anything like a pair or trio of more or less standard models (a point to which I hope to return in further work) the additional question of who decided which model to follow will be equally pressing.\(^{14}\) In fact, whereas one can fairly state that there are standardizing influences evident in, say, Sarum missals of the fourteenth century, with our dozen or so pontificals there is so little standardization that such questions will almost certainly have to be left open.

Nonetheless, if we look at the surviving books in the aggregate, we may come up with some idea of what a 'complete' eleventh-century pontifical would contain. There are five or six major kinds of services, or parts of services, distinctive to bishops, with a further two or three pertaining to either bishops or priests.\(^{15}\) These major blocs are, in summary form, as follows: i) ordinations; ii) dedications (alias consecrations) of churches and related rites; iii) consecrations of persons (apart from sacramental ordination); iv) confirmation; v) pontifical blessings at the time of communion; etc.

\(^{13}\) Even larger than the Corpus–Canterbury script is that of fos 1–16 of the Canterbury Benedictional (BL Harley 2892), not usually taken into account when the book itself is discussed (nor is this section printed in R.M. Woolley's edn, HBS, 51, 1917). The writing on these folios is in an ugly hand, with letters six to eleven mm. in height and only fourteen lines to the page. The matter is the blessing of oils on Maundy Thursday, incomplete at both beginning and end, with rubrics in an equally massive hand; one (fo. 8) speaks of 'letanias ut super in dedicatione ecclesiae continentur', which means almost certainly that it was originally part of a separate pontifical — one that, we can conjecture, was written for a user with weak eyesight.\(^{14}\) One cannot ignore T.A.M. Bishop's division of Latin minuscule bookhands of the decades either side of c.1000 into two styles which seem to depend on whether Æthelwold's or Dunstan's influence was paramount at the houses where these seem to have been written (English Caroline minuscule, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971, xxi–xxiii), and the extension of this analysis by T.A. Heslop in his provocative paper, 'The production of de luxe manuscripts and the patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma', Anglo-Saxon England, 19 (1990), 151–95, esp. 162–5. Heslop's arguments are drawn mainly from gospelbooks but his primary exemplar of Æthelwoldian style is the famous benedictional. This kind of analysis is of vital importance, but it cannot carry the entire story.\(^{15}\) Other major sections are sometimes included, like the 'Ordo librorum catholicorum qui ponuntur in anno circulo in ecclesia romana', but these are omitted here as not pertaining to distinctively pontifical services.
and vi) sometimes services for specific days — mainly Candlemas, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and the Easter Vigil. Easter Vigil ceremonies are strongly concerned with baptism, itself intimately connected to the episcopal rite of confirmation; but, perhaps because baptism was by the time we are concerned with normatively performed by priests, the orders for baptism and (occasionally) confirmation are sometimes found in a separate section in pontificals. This is true also for services for the visitation of the sick (including unction) and burial of the dead, offices again common to bishops and priests, and for sets of miscellaneous prayers, blessings, and exorcisms: these latter include forms for those marrying, becoming pilgrims, or undergoing the ordeal.

The various forms shared with priests (sometimes summed up as ‘manual offices,’ the services that comprise the post-eleventh century-book called the manual) may be scattered throughout the pontifical, and can only roughly be considered as a bloc. Indeed, the various components of the three biggest blocs, as described here, may sometimes be dispersed also. This is specially true of ordinations, where the forms for examination and consecration of a bishop may well be separated from those for the major orders (priest, deacon, subdeacon), which in turn may be separated from those for the minor orders; and even truer for the highly diverse consecrations — the omnibus word will have to do for a variety of shades of setting apart — of several kinds of persons: monks and nuns, abbots and abbesses, virgins and widows, and kings and queens (apparently in case the bishop comes across a monarch who needs to be crowned). Only with the remaining bloc, that of rites clustered around the dedication of churches, is there a genuine discreteness: usually, after the dedication rite itself — the longest and most elaborate service in the book, concluding with the dedication mass — , forms for the consecrations of relics, of shrines, and of cemeteries, followed by the reconciliation of defiled churches.

All of this makes for a complicated book, as indeed it must be to include the complex set of distinctive services which a bishop may perform, with a frequency ranging from probably several times a year to annually to a few times in his episcopate to (most likely in the case of coronations) never. How, then, would a book containing all or most of these services be organized? Here we must consider three separate but related points: the possible range of contents, the order in which the services are laid out, and any helps there may be towards finding one’s way around such a large as well as complicated book.

The latter aspect, of anything like a table of contents, can be dealt with all too quickly. Leaving aside the fact that, as the books have come down to us, such matter, coming logically at the
beginning, is likeliest to become detached, we find an indication as to contents in only three of our pontificals. The Dunstan book contains a list of capitula for pontifical services proper and one each for the blessings in, roughly, the temporale and sanctorale. There is a similar list of the blessings in the benedictional section of Robert. And the Samson Pontifical has a now partial list of the book's occasional blessings, which may originally have included many more items. But in none of these cases is any page or folio reference given; so even here, as in all the rest of the extant books, the bishop was, as far as we can tell, left to find his way around the varied contents as best he could.  

This leads us back to the question of the range or 'totality' of contents: if the bishop did not have some sort of table to provide an overview of his book's contents, how did he know that it was for his purposes complete? I say 'for his purposes' because there is a circularity in our understanding of the matter: whatever the bishop's purposes are should define what is included in the book, but those purposes are in a sense defined by what the episcopal books contain. Still, in view of the major blocs of contents set out above, blocs which in the aggregate give a fairly complete picture of the liturgical activity distinctive to a bishop, we can get some idea as to the relative completeness of those books that survive (as near as we can tell) whole.

In the eight pontificals for which it is clear that we know the entire range of contents (whether or not the actual opening and closing leaves have survived) — in effect, the ten mentioned above minus Exeter and Tiberius —, the basic set of common contents comprises the blocs for ordinations, the dedication of churches and appurtenant rites, and the setting apart of certain classes of persons. The liturgies for special days are sometimes placed in separate sections but are most often found in the benedictionals, whether within the pontificals or as separate books; for example, the Canterbury Benedictional contains the bulk of the episcopal liturgies for Candlemas, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Holy Saturday. As we shall see later, there is frequently a complex relationship between the book the bishop is using as bishop and whatever massbook he is using as celebrant — the two roles being distinguishable in theory if scarcely in practice. Whether or not these massbooks also contained manual offices, that material is almost totally lacking from our pontificals, save, curiously, for blessings for various aspects of the ordeal, which can be found in

16 In the Anderson book the main items are numbered (e.g., fo. 73: XVIII Oratio ad capillaturam), which suggests concordance with a table of contents, but the first leaf is/leaves are missing.

17 That such rites were accessible in bishops' massbooks is shown by their presence in both the Leofric and Giso sacramentaries.
six of the eight. Otherwise, the marriage blessing is found only in Egbert, Robert and Samson, while Robert alone provides for the burial of the dead. Even more surprising is that confirmation rites are found as discrete sections only in Egbert and in the fourteen vestigial folios of Sidney. (That benedictional sections are included in a number of these books — for example, Anderson, Lanalet, Robert and Samson — probably means that we may infer freestanding benedictionals as complements to many if not all of the other books, just as Æthelwold must have had a pontifical to complement his surviving benedictional).

If it was not easy for a bishop to know what was contained in his pontifical, either by something like a table of contents or by comparison with the contents of anything like a standard or 'typical' book, the difficulty was intensified by the fact that (as was mentioned earlier) there was apparently nothing like a single fixed order for whatever contents were included. Roughly speaking, there tend to be two ways in which the (still) complete pontificals begin. In one, the bloc of forms centering around the dedication of a church comes first: Dunstan, Anderson, Corpus-Canterbury (more or less: the examination of a bishop to be ordained actually begins the original book), Lanalet, Robert (preceded by the benedictional), Samson. In the other, ordinations come first, followed — whether immediately or not — by the dedication rites; this is true only of Egbert among the complete pontificals but also, in those where enough survives for us to establish a sequence of contents, of Claudius I and of the Leofric Missal's pontifical material (much of it of Lotharingian origin, as is true of the sacramentary at its core).

Beyond the question of which of those two major blocs begins these books, their other contents seem to be arranged according to no discernible plan. For example the coronation rites — I single them out because they are almost certainly not what the bishop is trying to find in his book — come in Corpus-Canterbury, Lanalet, Claudius II, and also Corpus 163, in some proximity to the consecration of bishops or the pallium-ceremony for archbishops, but follow the Maundy Thursday hallowing of oils in Dunstan and Anderson, the benedictional in Egbert, and the setting apart of a widow in Robert; while in Lanalet the coronation of a queen (fo. 56) precedes the blessings of virgins and widows but the king's crowning comes many folios later (fo. 88), after the ordination of a bishop. Clearly a pontifical would have to be carefully marked in advance to the particular service required, although how this was done is not apparent to me; I have noticed no signs of tabs or ribbons such as are common in later medieval and modern service books.

18 The Dunstan, Anderson, Corpus-Canterbury, Lanalet, Samson and Giso books, and also the badly-mutilated Ramsey Pontifical.
Once the place is found, in most cases the service will be laid out as a discrete whole, so that flipping back and forth is not necessary as it is with missals and many office books. But each service is a discrete whole also in that there is no section of general rubrics which apply throughout. This means that every service appears as a combination of text and rubric: rubric, that is, of the prescriptive kind, specifying what is to be said or sung or done, as distinct from a mere heading in red. From that combination, plus whatever training for his job the bishop may have had (a subject we would much like to know about, but one which is quite outside the scope of the present enquiry) and whatever his liturgical assistants whisper into his ear, he performs the rite. This brings us to what is probably our key question: what can we suppose about the relationship between what is on the page and what actually took place in the church in question? There seems no reason to assume that the text was not regarded as prescriptive, and I think we can be fairly confident that (late) Anglo-Saxon bishops actually did say most of the words indicated. But how closely did they — in some cases, could they — follow the ostensibly equally prescriptive rubrics?

Let us choose, as an obvious case to observe, the consecration of a church as given in the Lanalet Pontifical: 'obvious' because it contains a full-page illustration (itself a rarity in pontificals) of that rite, showing the bishop, with an attendant crowd of both clerics and laymen, standing outside and knocking on the church door with his staff (cambutta).\(^\text{19}\) As was mentioned earlier, the ceremonies for the dedication of a church and the appurtenant rites are highly complex, and we must suppose that the officiating bishop needs all the help he can get from his book, and specifically from the rubrics. Of these there are plenty, but the first thing we notice about them is that they are grammatically inconsistent. The majority are in the third person singular subjunctive — circumeat, ueniat, dicat, percutiat, and the like. But often the third person indicative is used (dicit, dat, incipit), sometimes in the same rubric where the subjunctive is employed. It is unlikely that anything is meant by this grammatical variation; but what is the force of the occasional participial construction (‘Inde faciens crucem cum incenso super altare cum antifona fumificante turribulo’, fo. 15/ page [in the printed edition] 13), and especially of shifts to the second person singular (lauas, extergas, p. 18) or to the imperative mood (‘Hic fac signum de oleo sancto’, p. 19)? Subjunctive, indicative, imperative; third person or second: do these make any difference in practice? Does the bishop even notice? It seems likely that the passive voice indicates something the bishop himself does not do: at the subsequent blessing of a bell, ‘Primitus lauetur

\(^{19}\) Illustrated in G.H. Doble's edn, Pontificale Lanaletonse, HBS, 74 (1927), pl. I.
signum de aqua benedicta ita dicendo' appears to suggest that someone besides the bishop washes the bell. That aside, it is hard to match grammatical variation to presumed action.20

However these grammatical niceties were dealt with in the bishop's mind, there are places where the rubric seems to call for him to make overt decisions. At the consecration of the (a?) cross within the dedication service there are words ('Radiet hic unigeniti filii tui splendor', p. 19) to be said 'si crux adornetur, alioquin pretermittantur', which requires either that the bishop be informed in advance or decide on the spot as to whether the cross is to be considered a 'decorated' one or not. This decision is made easier in the Corpus-Canterbury book: 'Si crux argenteo uel auro seu gemmis est ornata benedicatur his uerbis, alioquin pretermittantur (sic) hee orationes' (p. 130).21

Other points to which the bishop must be alert include singulars and plurals, Roman numerals, cross-references, and fill-in-the-blank names. Although they could be amply illustrated from many books, we can see them all exemplified in Lanalet's dedication service. There we can find interlinear indications as to whether one or more altars are being blessed (p. 13); reminder to the bishop that duodecin ends differently from septem through having the last three letters of each word written superscript after their Roman numerals (also p. 13); and reference to a 'consuetudo ... in festiuitatibus' — in what format we can only guess — as a guide for the solemn mass that follows the dedication proper (p. 24).

All-purpose name indications appear in the prayer over the newly-consecrated altar, 'in honore et nomine sancti martyris tui .ill.' (where the bishop has beforehand to inform himself of the name of the saint, and also presumably switch to 'confessoris' or even 'virginis' if the altar's dedication so warrants; p. 15), and, more trickily for the bishop, in the collect at the 'Missa specialis edificantis ecclesiam', where there has to be specified not only 'apostolo tuo .ill.' but also 'famulus tuus .ill. [qui] hoc in edificio deputavit' — one can almost hear the bishop turning to an attendant just before the prayer and whispering 'What is that chap's name again?' (p. 27).

A further point to note from this service in Lanalet is when the bishop needs to ignore the rubrics altogether, or rather to adapt them in however impromptu fashion is necessary. One element in the rites under consideration is the inclusion of relics within the main altar. As the rubric makes plain, the form for this in the Lanalet book is the 'Ordo quomodo in sancta romana ecclesiam reliquiae condantur' (p. 22). This ordo (the origin of which is not

20 Even here one cannot be certain; in the same rubric Anderson has laues (fo. 67v), Claudius I Iauabis (fo. 66).
21 All three Corpus Christi MSS noticed here, 44, 146, and 163, are paginated, not foliated; none has a printed edition.
our concern, but it is clearly meant to be understood as ‘Roman’
) specifies that at the climactic moment the bishop hides (recondet)
the relics ‘in confessione altaris,’ first putting chrism in the form
of a cross in the confessio. Almost surely this should not be
understood as a crypt-style confessio (such as may possibly have
existed at Wing in Buckinghamshire) but as a recess under or
within the altar: in which case it is hard to see how the bishop can
get his arm, connected as it is to the rest of his body, into the
opening so as to make a chrism-cross by touching, as is specified,
each of its four corners (‘per anculos [sic] III’, p. 23).

Specially in the dedication rites, but to a considerable degree in
other episcopal services also, the magnitude of the space in which
the bishop was to function would have varied greatly from occasion
to occasion and from location to location, so that to be heard he
would have had to vary the volume of his voice. For the most part
the rubrics say nothing about this, not surprisingly; but there are
sometimes indications as to level of voice for what might be called
liturgical effect. The fullest set of such indications seems to be in
the Corpus-Canterbury book. The rubrics here occasionally specify
modulando (pp. 125, 150) or moduletur (pp. 303, 334), alta uoce
(p. 43; or, as I take to be the same thing, clara uoce, p. 279), and
altiboando (pp. 247, 319). Modulando and moduletur may indicate
no more than pleasant or tuneful singing as applied to an antiphon
(the word usually seems to occur in our books in relation to an
antiphon).23

Consistently unclear is the adjective sonorus and its adverbial
form sonoriter. Does it refer to a particular volume or pitch of
voice, or does it merely express hope for a euphonious sound
rather than the opposite? Those who have heard many bishops of
our own day chanting may feel the latter interpretation to be
reasonable, but there seems really to be no point in such a bland
indication as that. What, then, do we make of this specification in
Lanalet: early in the dedication service, after the triple procession
around the church and the ceremony of knocking on the closed
door, just as the bishop is about to enter he says ‘Dominus
uobiscum’, and so on, sonora uoce (p. 5). The other pontificals
have simply dicente or dicit here; what is the force of the insertion
of these two words in Lanalet? And — the thrust of the present
enquiry — how did the officiating bishop respond when he saw

22 H. M. and Joan Taylor, Anglo-Saxon Architecture, II (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ.
Press, 1965), 665–72; they describe the original form of the crypt (much altered in the late
10th or 11th century) as ‘a large open chamber with a small reliquary chamber . . . or
confessio, at the west. Only later were the internal piers and vaults added, to produce the
present plan with its central chamber surrounded by a narrow ambulatory’ (666).

23 Cf. Byrhtferth of Ramsey, Vita S. Oswaldii, on Oswald’s gifts: ‘vocis pulchritudinem et
pulchritudinis suavitatem et altitudinem cum vocis modulations’: ed. J. Raine, Historians
of the Church of York, I (Rolls Series, 1879; there printed as Anonymous), 417.
them in that rubric? Did he overlook them, or ignore them, or do his best to sing tunefully?

The clearest of these indications would seem to be *altiboando* and its cognate forms. This word is perhaps most vividly used at the consecration of a bishop in Corpus-Canterbury: as the ordinand is being given his *sanctae crucis labarum*, the archbishop is instructed to belt out (which I take to be the force of *altiboare*) the verse ‘Elegit te dominus’ (p. 247). But how literally should this word be understood? A rubric in the coronation service prescribes that, after the newly-crowned king is girt with the sword, the antiphon ‘Diuina protectione’ *roboetur* (presumably by the scola; p. 289), while at the clothing of a new monk it is directed that an antiphon should be sung ‘ab omni choro altiboando’ (p. 319).²⁴ Possibly the word should be taken to connote nothing more than vigorous singing. On balance, we may regard it as doubtful that bishops paid much attention to these rubrical indications as to volume or pitch of voice.

Did they, we wonder next, pay closer attention to rubrical directions about singing as opposed to speaking? More broadly, what are we to understand to be the relation between the amount of music in pontificals and what happened during services? As a general rule, I am inclined to think that the presence of music in liturgical books is a sign that they are meant to be used, on the principle that writing notation, whether neums in *campo aperto* or (later) notes on staves, is a good deal of trouble and therefore unlikely to be included unless for practical use. This general principle breaks down, however, with many of our pontificals, which tend to include a lot of music, only a fraction of it to be sung by the bishop. So why is it included? And what can we suppose the bishop(s) did with it?

These questions are complicated somewhat by the facts that the neums in pontificals often seem to have been added subsequent to the initial writing of the book, and that it is extremely difficult to ascertain when this is the case and when neums are part of the book’s original design.²⁵ In general the dedication rite is the most heavily noted, the majority of the music being for the numerous

²⁴ Compare the Canterbury benedictional, fo. 71 (edn, p. 38), at the consecration of chrism: ‘duo cantores altiboando incipiant letanias’.

²⁵ How difficult these matters are for even an expert eye is indicated by the remarks of Susan Rankin, ‘Some reflections on liturgical music at late Anglo-Saxon Worcester’, in *St Oswald of Worcester: life and influence*, eds Nicholas Brooks and Catherine Cubitt (Leicester: Leicester Univ. Press, 1996), 325–48, esp. 343: ‘There are no tried and tested ways of working out whether one notating hand is the same as another’. The problem is compounded for modern students by the typographical conventions used to indicate noted sections in several HBS editions: either setting off by asterisks, as in H.A. Wilson’s of Robert (24, 1903) and of the twelfth-century Magdalen Pontifical (39, 1910), and also Doble’s of Lanlet (74, 1937); or printing in smaller type, as in Turner’s of the Claudius Pontificals (91, 1971); or merely providing a list of the folios containing music, as in Banting’s of (together) Egbert and the Sidney Sussex fragment (104, 1989).
antiphons sung by the *scola*, not the bishop. This in itself raises an important ancillary question, which may fittingly be taken up here, about the *scola*. Even if we think of it as a body of singers, no matter how constituted, resident at cathedrals, or perhaps major abbeys, and assume those to be the sites of ordinations and of many of the main ceremonies at which the bishop would have officiated, we still have to ask who did the singing at the dedication of a church, the rite which by definition is not performed at a cathedral or monastic church (except, obviously, once), and which contains by far the largest quotient of music of any pontifical service. When, for example the Egbert book stipulates that at this service, as the church door is dramatically opened, ‘scola vero uersificet totum psalmum cum ipsa antifona’ (edn, p. 36), where does that *scola* come from? How many, or how few, singers may have been involved? Guesses may readily range from a dozen down to two.

Let us consider the case of the church at Bitton in southwestern Gloucestershire, midway between Bath and Bristol but during our period in the diocese of Wells. It seems to have been built around the year 1000, with a nave some 100 feet long and two (or more) porticus near the east end and another (which survives) on the north wall. If we provisionally accept the argument advanced recently that the Lanalet pontifical is best understood as belonging to a bishop of Wells, it might very feasibly have been used by, say, Lyfing (bishop 999–1013) in consecrating this church; this would be most satisfactory, because the Lanalet book is the one that has the illustration of a bishop consecrating a church. Its consecration service contains a lot of notation, including two sung litanies, one invoking sixty-seven saints by name, the other sixty-one. Although often the rubrics in this book cast the instruction as to singing in the singular, most usually as a gerund (*cantando, canendo*), in prescriptions such as that the bishop ‘pergat extra ecclesiam desuper cantando’ (p. 10), it seems clear that there is meant to be a complement of singers. This complement can scarcely have come from that village church; on the other hand, Bitton is by road roughly twenty miles from Wells.

The puzzle about the *scola* aside, some of the indications as to music show a clear expectation that the bishop will do a good deal of singing himself. The Samson pontifical is specially instructive here. In the older and larger part (pp. 61–318) of this composite book, made probably at Canterbury but with a strong Winchester flavour, in the first decade or so of the eleventh century, the general

26 Taylor and Taylor I (as in note 22), 73–6.
27 Dumville 1992 (as in note 5), 92 and 117.
pattern is that the notes (stemmed neums) are given for the scola’s chants — for example, all of the numerous antiphons — above texts which are written in a markedly smaller hand, while for the bishop himself some neumatic indications are given for his proper prefaces. This happens with the prefaces in the middle of the dedication rite and at the consecration of altars, in both cases after a Sursum corda dialogue. Proper prefaces within the mass, both of the newly dedicated church and of a newly dedicated cemetery, are given neums (stemmed) only at the ends of prefaces, as the transition is made to the concluding ‘Et ideoque’ [‘Therefore with angels ... ’] formula. The implication seems to be that the bishop will be able to intone the rest of the preface on his own.

The newer part of the same book, written in various later eleventh-century hands and complete by the episcopate of the eponymous Samson (1096–1112) at Worcester, gives neums, sometimes stemmed, of antiphons and other formulas which the bishop sings, or at least intones the beginning of, in rites for the ejection of penitents on Ash Wednesday (p. 18) and their reconciliation on Maundy Thursday (pp. 33–5): at the latter, for example, he is to sing what must have been a rather dramatic ‘Uenite, uenite’, followed by Kyries from choirs on the right and the left.

Noticing the dramatic aspects of this service can lead us beyond music to a consideration of our next point: the bishop’s bodily actions, beyond blessing, laying on hands, anointing, signing with the cross, and a certain amount of drill with his pastoral staff. The most notable of these is probably the prostration he is to perform in the reconciliation service — or so the rubric (in the Samson book and elsewhere) says. Whether this in fact happened at any given service must surely have depended in part on a particular bishop’s age and physical condition. A complete prostration executed by a middle-aged or elderly man in episcopal vestments tends to be distinctly ungraceful, and in some case it would have been impossible. Again it seems that we need to imagine a rubric honoured in the breach.

Less strenuous but requiring some dexterity would have been the act of tonsuring. Late medieval pontificals that sometimes illustrate episcopal ceremonies most often show the bishop himself administering the tonsure, and many of our books contain an antiphon to be used ‘dum tondis eum’. How grateful we would be for a comparable illustration from our period, above all one that would show something of the apparatus of scissors, book, razor, and (I hope) soap and water that would have been needed by the bishop in accomplishing this act — often, perhaps usually, for more than one new cleric at a time, for the interlinear plurals are

29 For example, Egbert (edn, p. 4), Robert (edn, p. 114), Lanalet (edn, p. 44), Samson (MS, p. 109: tondes), Corpus-Canterbury (MS, p. 195).
profuse in these parts of our books. Probably the bishop’s action here is limited to an initial snip, or perhaps scrape, and the job is polished off by assistants; but we are not told this.

It would seem natural to suppose that the ordeal forms often found in our books required some noteworthy physical action on the part of the ecclesiastical celebrant, but the curious fact is that where there are in pontificals extensive rubrics about administration of the ordeal they speak of the *sacerdos* or sometimes *presbiter* but not of the *episcopus*; so we cannot be certain that whatever actions are specified were undertaken by the bishop, no matter whether included in his book or not. On the other hand, physical action of a negative kind, a three-day fast, is prescribed for the bishop before the ‘Exorcismus contra demonum’ is undertaken: a rite presumably therefore reserved (as later language would put it) to the bishop.

The rite of confirmation is the episcopal service that is at once the broadest (in involving the largest number of participants) and, candidly put, the most humdrum. As was mentioned earlier, there appears to be such a service in only two of our books, Egbert and Sidney. In both the service is very brief. Egbert’s contains only two rubrics, both cast in the *debet*-plus-infinitive mode: that the bishop ought to put chrism on the forehead of the candidate and that he ought to recite a formula (called *oratio*), ‘confirmet te deus pater’, and so on. No mention is made of a laying on of hands, the element that begins the service in Sidney. (Sidney has also just two rubrics, one of which mixes imperative with second person singular verbs while the other uses the third person subjunctive!)

In Sidney’s service not only does the bishop lay his hand on the head of each candidate and then, after a preliminary prayer, signs each with a cross; he is also apparently to say the name of each — I say ‘apparently’ because the construction in the rubric is a not quite clear ablative, ‘distinctis propriis nominibus’, and because there is the practical problem of how the bishop is informed of the names he is to pronounce.

Is there any significance in the difference in heading between the two pontificals? Egbert’s confirmation rite is headed ‘confirmatio hominum’, Sidney’s ‘Oratio ad pueros consignatos’, with the

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30 These rubrics seem fullest in Corpus-Canterbury, (365–81); mention exclusively of *sacerdos* is all the odder because the heading reads ‘Benedictio ferri ab episcopo danda’ (362).

31 For example, Samson, 314; Lanalet, edn, p. 111.

32 Fragments of confirmation formulas are discernible in the badly-damaged Vit. A. vii, fo. 99, but this seems to be within the baptismal rite (probably that of the Easter vigil) rather than as a freestanding service.

33 Fos 16–18 in Egbert, 12v–13v in Sidney; both available conveniently in Banting’s edition, pp. 14–5 and 168–9 respectively.

34 The modern editor, H.M.J. Banting, notes that this heading seems unique (edn, p. 14); but so few confirmation services appear in our books that it is hard to generalize meaningfully.
rubric that immediately follows specifying the laying on of hands 'super capud [sic] infantis', (but several are clearly meant; plural forms are provided as well as singular, feminine as well as masculine); the final blessing is headed 'super pueros'.

It might seem dubious to make too much of this difference between homines and pueri, if it were not for a possibly comparable distinction in the writings of Ælfric. In his Pastoral Letter for Wulfsige (III) he enumerates one of the bishop’s distinctive duties (that is, from those of a mass-priest) as being to confirm children (biscopigenne cild), whereas the comparable phrase in his First Old English Letter for Wulfstan is 'to confirm men' (men to biscopigenne). And, for what it may be worth, we note that in Egbert, where the heading is 'Confirmatitio hominum' and the element of individual naming and laying on of hands is omitted, is it specified that the newly-confirmed are to make their communions, with an additional blessing provided 'ad missam post confirmationem'. This might suggest that the Sidney rite, explicitly aimed at children (ad pueros), is not necessarily thought of in the context of the mass.

As I hope will by now be apparent, my topic, ostensibly as dry as its title is bland, keeps spilling over into large areas of bewilderment and fascination: like, here, the matter of the age at which and numbers to whom confirmation is most usually administered in late Anglo-Saxon England. If the witness of the Sidney book enables us to move a little way towards visualizing one of our roughly hundred-and-twenty bishops at the rather workaday task of confirmation, it also casts doubt on the claim of Colman, biographer of Wulfstan of Worcester, that the saintly bishop sometimes confirmed two, even three, thousand children in a day. If the rite he used was anything like that in Sidney, this would have been impossible: our alternatives in understanding being either to discount for hagiographical exaggeration or to suppose that Wulfstan simply disregarded any rubric that may have required that he lay his hand on each child's head and pronounce the name of each.

35 D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke, eds Councils and synods, with other documents relating to the English Church, I: A.D. 871–1204, 2 vols (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1981), part i, p. 205, where the apparatus points out that these words are omitted in two of the three MSS (CUL Gg.3.18 and Bodl., Junius 121), being present therefore only in CCC 190, s. xi4.

36 CCS (as above), p. 283.

37 These paragraphs were written before I encountered the similar treatment by Alicia Corrêa in her article on 'The liturgical manuscripts of Oswald's houses', in St Oswald of Worcester (above, note 25), 285–324 at 302–6. She considers also the evidence of Vat. Reg. lat. 338, a Continental manuscript with some Anglo-Saxon contents, but in any case not a pontifical.

But would he have used a book at all? It seems unlikely that a bishop of any experience with confirmation would not have memorized his part in the rite. Certainly of all the distinctively episcopal services, this would have been the easiest, and from its frequency probably the most natural, to get by heart. With this service, in short, the book may tell us far less about the bishop's performance of pontifical rites than we should either like or, in a sense, expect. Of course it would be supremely fascinating to possess what I am morally certain must have existed, Wulfstan's pontifical. Given what we know about the portiforium which almost without doubt was put together for him with extreme care c.1062, and the homiliary almost as certainly owned by him by 1070, the pontifical he used would have been a prime object of our enquiry. But would it have contained the brief rite for confirmation, or did he just memorize those formulas?

At the other extreme, the relationship between book and bishop must have been at its closest in the episcopal blessings at communion. The benedictionals (or benedictional sections of pontificals) must always have been to hand, for in general each blessing was used once a year at most, so that there would be virtually no question of memorization. (The possible exceptions would be the blessings for weekdays and various votive occasions; I think it extremely doubtful that the former were ever used, and the latter were, obviously, occasional.) How they came to be collected at all is another of the intriguing byways into which we cannot be diverted, but by considering a single aspect of the general phenomenon we may gain a bit of insight into one of our large problems.

That is the difficulty alluded to earlier, of how the bishop finds his way around — in this case — his collection of blessings. We saw that one or two of our books include lists of the benedictiones episcopales contained in them, and recourse to such a list would certainly ease his task. While careful marking of the correct place before the service started would provide the practical solution, there remains the more complex problem of securing correspondence with the massbook being used. Remembering that the episcopal blessing fits into a liturgy which is otherwise, so to speak, self-contained enables us to see that the two books, massbook (whether a sacramentary or a nugatory missale plenum) and benedictional need to correspond.

To show how this would work in perfect detail we would need a pair of such books that we could confidently point to as having

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39 The portiforium is CCCC 391; its Easter tables suggest that it was written c.1062. It is also possible that the homiliary, now Bodl. Hatton 113-114 was owned by Wulfstan, and as early as 1070, because there is inserted into it the summons by papal cardinal-legates to the council of Winchester in that year: Vita Wulfstani (ut sup.), p. 189; N.R. Ker, Cat. of MSS containing Anglo-Saxon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), no. 330.
been used at the same time (and, ideally, place) by the same bishop: which is of course precisely what we lack, at least as far as we know. Even in the Giso sacramentary, the one massbook that contains a complete benedictional — originally complete, that is, lacking now the leaves with blessings of the temporale until the Sunday after Easter — there was inconsistency. The mass sets of the proper of time (temporale) begin with Christmas Eve, but the blessings of the temporale end with the twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost, which means that that segment must have started with Advent, not Christmas. So the arrangement of Giso's mass sets does not correspond with that of its benedictional. Among the books we have noticed, the sequence of blessings that begins I–II–III–IV Advent is certainly found (Æthelwold, Claudius I, Canterbury); but Lanalet's runs 'Ante natale domini' V–IV–III–II–I, while Robert's goes like the mass prayers in Giso, beginning with the Vigil of Christmas and ending with the Advent season — where, however, we find two ways of reckoning combined, Advent I and II being followed by Dominica II and I 'ante natale!' This one example will have to do to suggest that, if there was little complexity about delivering the episcopal blessings, getting the relevant blessing lined up with its service as a whole could sometimes be a complicated matter.

It should, from this example and indeed from everything said hitherto, now be plain that we need steadily to keep in mind the obvious but easily overlooked point that every bishop who expected to perform the full range of services appropriate to his order would have to have had access to all the texts necessary for those services. Whether what was being used was a pontifical with episcopal blessings included, or a pontifical plus separate benedictional, or (as with the Leofric and Giso books) a massbook with some pontifical elements, the simple fact is that whatever was not included in one component had to be found in another. Again, only one case can be considered here. This has to do with the liturgy of Candlemas, the feast of the Purification (2 February). The ceremonies of the day include, in our period, a special blessing of candles and a procession, followed by the mass. As with several other aspects of our subject, it is not possible to say what is the definitive form of the rite at that time; the fact that a number of prayers have as headings a mere alia suggests that there has been a good deal of conflation from earlier books. Our purpose will be served by simply noting how the material for Candlemas is laid out in some of the books that we have. (Before we do that, however, we must just remind ourselves that a bishop is not necessary for the ceremonies of the day, so that in a sense his only distinctive function is to pronounce the pontifical blessing; but where he was present he would be the chief celebrant).
Indeed, because the liturgy of the day is really only a mass preceded by a procession, we can bring in another witness: the so-called Missal of Robert of Jumièges (Rouen, Bibl. mun. Y.6), a splendidly illuminated early eleventh-century sacramentary of monastic origin (most likely Ely or Peterborough, just possibly Canterbury) but clearly intended for use by a bishop; indeed, it contains some forms that would ordinarily, or even exclusively, be used by a bishop, albeit with highly minimal rubrics. Its forms for Candlemas come in the Proper of Saints, between Brigid and Agatha; nowhere is it indicated that a bishop is either expected or needed. The mass prayers follow the forms for blessing and procession immediately, so that the entire Candlemas service is complete: except, in this book clearly designed for use by a bishop, when a bishop is officiating, for the episcopal blessing is lacking, which means that in such a case a benedictional would be needed alongside this sumptuous massbook.

A similar inconsistency obtains within the strictly episcopal books, pontifical and benedictional. Æthelwold’s book has just one prayer, headed super candelas (not what is usually the main blessing-prayer), followed by a fairly standard threefold blessing; this is located, along with the other select feasts of 19 January to 4 April, in the proper of time, between the sixth Sunday after Epiphany and Septuagesima. In Dunstan, on the other hand, Candlemas is placed right after Epiphany, and, except for the benedictio ignis with which the forms in Jumièges begin, contains a complete ordo for the day, concluding with a long rubric which is unusual in being of a spiritualizing sort (e.g., ‘... accensis luminaribus materialibus, in cordibus nostris amore Christi ardentess’; fo. 105) and which specifies that mass is to follow. The mass prayers themselves are not found here, however, and would have to be sought by the bishop in a separate massbook — but one which would, nonetheless, have to contain the blessing of candles and other prayers to allow for the full liturgy when the celebrant was not a bishop. If a bishop was there, of course, the episcopal blessing would be used, and this the Dunstan book supplies, but back in the temporale part of its benedictional section (fo. 111).

So Dunstan’s episcopal book had, like Æthelwold’s, two of the three elements of the Candlemas liturgy in his episcopal book but

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40 Edited by H.A. Wilson (HBS, 11, 1896); the case for a Canterbury origin is made most fully by D.N. Dumville, English Caroline script and monastic history (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1993), 116–20.

41 Virtually the only one is (as we have noticed elsewhere) in the form for making a cleric: ‘Dum tondis cum dico’, the word tondis having been, the modern editor notes, added above the line, probably by the original hand.

42 One leaf is missing (between fos 113 and 114), but not one that would have contained information material to the above point.
not the mass formulas. Similarly in Lanalet, its putative user, Bishop Lyfing, would have found, in the section of this codex headed ‘Benedictiones in festiuiter [sic] sanctorum’, largely the ordo as in the Robert of Jumièges missal. Here, however, before the antiphon ‘Aue [spelled ‘Haue’] Maria’ there is a rubric stating that it is to be sung ‘ad stationem sanctae Mariae’ (this presumably refers to a Lady Chapel, entirely possible at the Wells cathedral of the time; the rubric may of course also merely have been in the book’s immediate model). After the same long spiritualizing rubric as in Jumièges and Dunstan comes the threefold episcopal blessing; once again the user would have required recourse to a massbook for the mass prayers themselves, awkward as it may have been to have two books in use nearly simultaneously during the key part of the mass, the prayer of consecration leading to communion.

The argument heads toward full circle when we remember the simple fact that any bishop needed texts for his pontifical services as soon as he took up his office — or at least as soon as he took it up seriously. To consider only the most obvious case, that of Æthelwold: when he became bishop of Winchester in 963 it is highly unlikely that he pronounced no episcopal blessings until his splendid benedictional was ready; indeed, the usual and cogent dating considerations for that book suggest 971, the eighth year of his episcopate, as the terminus a quo. From the time of the first ordination or dedication or even confirmation that he performed, as well as the first mass at which he was to pronounce a blessing, he would have needed texts in some form: texts that at once could have shaped the way he executed these rites and also have prompted ideas about what he wanted, and did not want, in commissioning his own book or books — both the benedictional we are fairly sure that he commissioned and the pontifical (not, of course, extant) that I find it difficult to believe he did not commission as well.

That we do not have many books of episcopal texts from our period — not to mention from before the mid-tenth century — should not obscure for us the fact that they must have existed. No more, in the books that we do have, should the scarcity of information about the use of their contents in practice preclude attempts to open the subject. It is a further historiographic limitation that the few accounts of Anglo-Saxon bishops that we possess, whether Vitae like those for Æthelwold, Dunstan, Oswald, and Wulfstan of Worcester, or summary notices like, above all,

43 Actually in a somewhat fuller form, because the material almost certainly on the missing page in Jumièges, notably a prayer beginning ‘Perfice in nobis’, is present here.
those in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum*,\(^4\) pay almost no attention to how these men functioned in their liturgical roles as bishops. Hence the necessity for the kind of imaginative extrapolation from the extant pontificals and benedictionals that has been attempted here.

To regard these books as in themselves objects of study is of course entirely legitimate; they have a great deal to contribute to our knowledge of — to name just a few obvious areas — palaeography, art history, music history, and the development of religious sentiment. And of course they are among the prime data for the student of the medieval liturgy as a whole. But in terms of what seems to me to be at the heart of the study of history overall, which is to try to establish the sense of the particular, and not just the generalized, past, these books are (so to speak) static witnesses; their evidence becomes meaningful in proportion as it can be informed by an effort to comprehend them in actual use. My hope has been that trying to imagine at their liturgical work some of the roughly ten dozen English bishops of the period 960–1100, in relation to the twenty or so extant books which we can be fairly sure were used by them, may conduce to a closer understanding of one set of moments — those of pontifical occasions — in this particular past, and by doing that may quicken understanding of at least the late Anglo-Saxon church.