INTRODUCTION

THE AUTHOR

The *Gesta Guillelmi* of William of Poitiers has survived only in an incomplete form. It was edited in 1619 by André Duchesne from a unique, but damaged, manuscript, whose first and last folios were missing. The manuscript subsequently disappeared, probably in the fire in the Cottonian Library (1731). So the preface and concluding chapters, which may have contained information about the author, are now lost; and almost all that is known about him comes from the *Ecclesiastical History* of Orderic Vitalis.[1]

According to Orderic, he was a Norman by birth, who came from Préaux. He was evidently well born; his sister became abbess of Saint-Léger-de-Préaux, a house planned by Humphrey of Vieilles and founded by Roger of Beaumont.[2] The house attracted postulants from wealthy families; WP's father may have been a vassal of the Beaumonts. Like many young men of noble and knightly families in the mid eleventh century, WP trained as a knight and fought for a time in secular warfare.[3] He turned, however, to the Church, and studied for a time in the schools of Poitiers, from which he took his name. WP himself, in one of his rare autobiographical notes, corroborates this by saying that he was 'in exile in Poitiers' at the time of the siege of Mouliherne (1049).[4] If his fighting took place during Duke William's minority in about 1042–3, he might have been born *c.*1020. His accomplished Latin style, and his thorough familiarity with a wide range of classical authors, are clear proof that he studied for several years at Poitiers before returning to Normandy. There he

[1] OV ii. 78–9, 184–5, 258–61.

[2] OV ii. 258–9; *GC* ix. 853; *Annales Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*, ed. J. Mabillon, 6 vols (Paris, 1703–39), iv. 361–2; *Neustria pia*, ed. A. du Moustier (Rouen, 1663), pp. 520–3, 526. His sister has sometimes been assumed to have been Emma, the first abbess. But Emma, who was old enough to be made an abbess *c.*1040, must have been considerably older than William; her successor, Ansfrida, who became abbess *c.*1075 (*Annales OSB*, v. 655, no. lxxxiv; *Neustria pia*, p. 523) and may have been a professed nun at Préaux for many years, could have been William's sister.

[3] OV ii. 258–61.

[4] *GG* i. 11.

served for many years as one of Duke William's chaplains.[5] He was also at some time archdeacon of Lisieux, serving under both Bishop Hugh, who died in July 1077, and Hugh's successor, Gilbert Maminot.[6] The date of his appointment is not known. The first probable reference to William as archdeacon of Lisieux in any charter occurs in an agreement (*c.*1075) whereby William, son of Anschetil, granted land in Éturquereye and Colletot to Saint-Léger in return for a payment which he received from the abbess, Ansfrida, to enable him to go to Spain. Witnesses to the charter include William, archdeacon of Lisieux,[7] and this is most likely to be William of Poitiers, particularly in view of his connection with Saint-Léger, though William de Glanville is a possibility.[8]

In his later years, Orderic wrote, WP was forced by unfavourable circumstances to abandon his work on the *Gesta Guillelmi*, which he would have continued until the death of King William. He gave himself up to silence and prayer, and composed verses and sermons; he was so far from envy that he invited his juniors to criticize and improve his verses.[9] Evidently he lived until after 1087, the date of the king's death; but whether failing health or a fall from favour forced him into retirement is not known. Possibly he retreated to a monastery, and the 'juniors' mentioned by Orderic were young monks. Since Orderic went to Saint-Évroult, which was in the diocese of Lisieux, in 1085,[10] it is just possible that he met the old archdeacon. He could certainly have derived his information from those who had known him.

Apart from WP's probable attestation of the transaction at Saint-Léger *c.*1075, there is no trace of him as a witness in any Norman ecclesiastical charters that have yet come to light. Although he was one of the chaplains of William the Conqueror

[5] OV ii. 184–5.
[6] OV ii. 258–9.
[7] *Neustria pia*, p. 523. I am grateful to Professor David Bates for sending me a copy of the pancarte of Saint-Léger (no. 217 in his forthcoming edition of the charters of William I).
[8] See the list of archdeacons in David Spear, 'L'administration épiscopale normande. Archidiacres et dignitaires des chapitres', *Les évêques normands du xi^e siècle*, ed. Pierre Bouet et François Neveux (Caen, 1995), pp. 81–102, at 85.
[9] OV ii. 184–5, 258–61.
[10] OV iii. 6–9.

he has proved equally elusive in ducal and royal charters.[11] In Domesday Book, however, there is a statement that the prebends of the church of St Martin's, Dover, formerly held in common, had been divided between the canons by Bishop Odo of Bayeux; and one of the canons is 'Willelmus Pict[avensis]'. The close connection between St Martin's and the English royal chapel makes the identification of this William with the Conqueror's chaplain all the more likely.[12] Moreover the possibility of a connection between WP and Bishop Odo is consistent with his fulsome praise for the bishop,[13] and may help to explain why a panegyric dedicated to the Conqueror was never completed. Odo's close connection with Robert Curthose, whose first rebellion against his father began in 1077, and his later disgrace and imprisonment, must have caused many of those closely associated with him to fall from favour.[14] The connection cannot be proved conclusively; but if it existed it would suggest that some of WP's information about the actual battle of Hastings originated with Odo himself, and consequently had a partial slant towards the Bayeux version of the Conquest.

Something of WP's character and ability can be deduced from his writing. Orderic was certainly justified in admiring his learning, for he was an unusually accomplished Latinist, and clearly enjoyed showing off his learning. The schools of Saint-Hilaire-le-Grand in Poitiers, where he may be presumed to have studied, had been made famous under the direction in 1024–8 of Hildegar, the pupil of Fulbert of Chartres.[15] Hildegar had connections with Normandy.[16] And the church of Saint-Hilaire, dedicated on 1 November 1049, had been built largely at the expense of Emma, daughter of Duke Richard I of Normandy and wife

[11] A *Willelmus Pictavensis* witnessed a charter of Serlo of Lingèvres (1079–82) making a grant to Saint-Étienne-de-Caen; but he is not described as a clerk (Musset, *Abbayes caennaises*, nos. 7, 18).
[12] Davis, 'William of Poitiers', p. 90, n. 2.
[13] *GG* ii. 37.
[14] Davis, 'William of Poitiers', pp. 90–3.
[15] Ibid., pp. 86–7.
[16] *The Letters and Poems of Fulbert of Chartres*, ed. F. Behrends (OMT, 1976), nos. 67, 68.

successively of King Æthelred and King Cnut of England.[17] As a result of his studies, WP had a thorough mastery of Caesar's *De bello gallico* and *De bello ciuili* and Vergil's *Aeneid*, and he modelled his style on these and on a number of other Latin authors. He used Sallust as well as Caesar for battles, Cicero and St Augustine for moral dissertations; he also made use of the *Satires* of Juvenal, the *Agricola* of Tacitus, the *Thebaid* of Statius, the *Lives* of Suetonius and Plutarch, Lucan's *Pharsalia*, and Justin's *Epitome*. Some of his knowledge of legends of the Trojan war may have come from the *Ilias latina*.[18] His references to legal principles are too general to indicate any serious legal studies at Poitiers; but he was certainly familiar with Norman customary law as it was enforced by the dukes, and was aware of some at least of the different English customs.[19] He showed himself a supporter of church reform in so far as it was encouraged by Duke William; his interest in the eucharistic controversy and the condemnation of the views of Berengar appears only obliquely in his comments on the duke's devotion to the sacraments.[20]

His years in Poitiers left one other mark on his work: knowledge of events in the region and an interest in Poitou. In his account of the revolt of Guy of Brionne he points out that Guy, who was a nephew of William, count of Poitou, went after his defeat to Burgundy, where he plagued his brother, William Tête-Hardie, for ten more years.[21] He also twice mentions Aimeri, vicomte of Thouars (the most important castle in the marches between Poitou and Anjou), stating that Aimeri both took part in the Conquest of England and was the spokesman of those who wished Duke William to be crowned king.[22] Surprisingly, he

[17] 'Istud monasterium magna ex parte construxerat regina Anglorum per manus Gauterii Coorlandi', *Chronicon Sancti Maxentii Pictavensis*, in *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, ed. P. Marchegay and E. Mabille (Société de l'histoire de France, 1869), p. 397.

[18] For details, see Foreville, pp. xxxviii–xliii, and below, Index of Quotations and Allusions.

[19] *GG* ii. 33.

[20] *GG* i. 49–56.

[21] Davis, 'William of Poitiers', p. 87; *GG* i. 9, 29.

[22] *GG* ii. 22; for Aimeri, see G. Beech, 'The participation of Aquitanians in the Conquest of England 1066–1100', *Battle*, ix (1987), 1–24, at pp. 6–15.

makes no mention of the interests of the lords of Bellême in the region. This drastic simplification of the situation of Domfront in particular may have been politically motivated; he wished, both there and more generally in Maine, to make a case for the claims of the earlier Norman dukes, which had been actively taken up by Duke William.[23] There is no indication that WP ever held office in the schools of Poitiers, or returned there after his departure for Normandy in the early 1050s. His life thereafter was spent in Normandy, with an interlude for some years after 1066 in England. The date of his death, not before 1087, is unknown.

2. THE *GESTA GVILLELMI*

Secular clerks, unlike monks, did not have the resources of a monastic library at their elbow. The *Gesta Guilelmi* is full of echoes of classical texts; but it is difficult to be certain what library resources WP had at hand when he was actually writing it. His close comparison of the British campaigns of Julius Caesar with the campaigns of William the Conqueror[24] suggests that he may have had a copy at least of *De bello gallico* with him; on the other hand, the occasional slips over names could mean that he relied on an almost, but not quite, perfect memory of what he had studied intensively at Poitiers. Most of the echoes of other classical sources could have been remembered from his student years; the occasional phrases and aphorisms are of the kind that memory most readily retains. Contemporary works, such as the histories of Dudo of Saint-Quentin and William of Jumièges, could have been seen in the great abbeys, particularly at Fécamp, adjacent to a favoured ducal castle,[25] or at Jumièges or Saint-Wandrille. If he finally settled at Lisieux and was writing there he would have had the resources of the cathedral library to draw upon. On the whole, the originality of the *Gesta Guillelmi* suggests that it is above all a book of memoirs, written by a man of letters who had been well drilled in youth in such of the classics as were

[23] See Louise, pp. 290–5, 301–3.

[24] *GG* ii. 39, 40.

[25] For Fécamp, see Renoux, *Fécamp*, pp. 481–2.

then available, but had spent his mature years nearer to the seats of power, both secular and ecclesiastical. Remote as WP's preconceptions were from those of the nineteenth century, his work has, in some ways, more in common with the reminiscences of a Victorian statesman than with the monastic chronicles of his own day.

The *Gesta Guillelmi*, even in its unfinished form, is the earliest extended biography of any duke of Normandy. It was planned after 1066 to show how Duke William prepared for, and achieved, the Conquest of England; and to justify his succession to the throne. In an early chapter describing Earl Godwine's responsibility for the murder of the ætheling Alfred, WP refers to the retribution that was to come with the defeat and death of Godwine's son Harold.[26] He continued his history, as Orderic Vitalis tells us, up to the death of Earl Edwin (in 1071), and was then obliged to leave it unfinished.[27] Although he may have begun writing of the Conqueror's Norman campaigns at any time after the Conquest, most of the evidence points to a date after 1071 for the bulk of the writing. His statement that Stigand was tolerated for a time as archbishop of Canterbury because of his influence, and was removed only when the king was ready to appoint Lanfranc,[28] supports this dating. He wrote of Hugh, bishop of Lisieux, who died on 17 July 1077, as though he were still alive; and although a reference to the dedication of Saint-Étienne-de-Caen (on 13 September 1077)[29] seems to imply that this had taken place, WP may have had in mind a dedication that was planned, but not completed, or may have added the reference in a late revision. The evidence suggests outside limits of between 1071 and 1077 for the bulk of the writing. He certainly wrote after William of Jumièges had completed his *GND*.[30] It is perhaps worth noting that the last dated reference to Gilbert fitz Osbern

[26] *GG* i. 4. [27] OV ii. 260–1. [28] *GG* ii. 33.

[29] *GG* i. 52; OV iii, 14–17. R. Foreville, following Lemarignier, gave the date of the dedication as 1073 (Foreville, p. 128 n. 2); but Musset, *Abbayes caennaises*, pp. 14–15, has since proved that the date was 1077, as stated three times by Orderic (OV ii. 148; iii. 10; iii. 158–60).

[30] Elisabeth van Houts has shown that WJ finished his chronicle early in 1070 (*GND* i. p. xxxii).

as archdeacon of Lisieux is 1071.[31] If WP took up more of the archidiaconal duties at that date, at the same time ceasing to be King William's chaplain, he may have wished both to leave a record of what he knew and, by dedicating the work to the king, to earn future promotion. This, however, is speculation.

In planning the *GG* he was strongly influenced by classical models, and to a lesser extent by the shorter accounts of dukes put together by Dudo of Saint-Quentin and WJ. He knew Suetonius and Plutarch, even if he had never read Einhard. Something may have been derived from a different type of biography: the *Vitae* of the bishops and archbishops of Rouen, though these would have suggested little more than the church benefactions to be included in any eulogy of the duke.[32] For the most part he was innovating. The classical influence is apparent in his general plan. His division of the work into an account of the deeds of William the duke and those of William the king echoes the rhetorical device of *partitio* or *divisio*.[33] There is, too, a certain amount of arrangement by topic. Duke William's character and relations with the church are treated separately from his campaigns. Even within the more political parts of the narrative, arrangement is not simply chronological: themes are important. Besides this, WP was writing from memory some twenty years after the events. After a description of the disturbances during William's minority, relations with Anjou are outlined in a section which begins over a decade earlier.[34] Any attempt to date the long sieges of Domfront and Arques from the sequence of events in WP's narrative is bound to lead to confusion and contradiction.

For the most part, the classical influence is indirect and subtle. It appears in his style; he enjoyed imitating Caesar, Cicero,

[31] Spear, 'L'administraton épiscopale normande' (above n. 8), p. 85.

[32] He may not have known the *Acta episcoporum rothomagensium* of which one copy was written in the late eleventh century (E. Martène, *Veterum scriptorum et monumentorum collectio nova* (Rouen, 1700), ii. 233–43), but *Vitae* based on the lives of the popes in the *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. L. Duchesne (3 vols., Paris, 1886–1957), were becoming common.

[33] Cf. Suetonius, *Vita Augusti*, c. lxi: 'Now that I have shown how he conducted himself in civil and military positions and in ruling the State . . . I shall next give an account of his private and domestic life.' The principle of *divisio* is discussed by G. B. Townsend, 'Suetonius and his influence', in *Latin Biography*, ed. T. A. Dorey (London, 1967), pp. 79–111, at 84–5.

[34] *GG* i. 11.

Sallust, or Vergil. In particular, consciously or unconsciously, he wrote with two different kinds of rhetorical conventions, of panegyric and of history.[35] He claimed that, unlike the poets, he did not wander over the fields of fiction, but stated only what was true history.[36] Granted that he did not claim to tell the whole truth, this may approximate to his aim in the historical parts of his narrative. But no eleventh-century historian ever aimed at Lord Acton's unattainable ideal of writing history 'just as it happened'. Grammar itself was an art, and some rhetoric was bound to seep into even the most sober historical work of any writer trained in the schools. The declamatory passages used a much more exaggerated rhetoric. When, for example, WP apostrophizes Harold after his death and burial, and comments that his body lies in a tumulus on the seashore,[37] he seems to forget that he has just expressly said that the proposal to bury Harold on the seashore had been made in jest.[38] Similarly, he reproaches the English for rebelling against their new king in terms that do not quite square with his comments on the justice and moderation of the measures taken by William, and on his warm reception during his progress through the country. His lavish praise of the king stretches credulity to such an extent that within a generation Orderic Vitalis, who had been in England as a boy and knew the truth about William's acts of brutality, omitted it in recording the history of the years after 1066, largely from the pages of WP.[39] Yet this does not invalidate WP's more sober assessments, or the value of his more straightforward historical passages. These Orderic thought worthy of repeating, and they give a precious insight into many topics, particularly the campaigns of the duke and his skill as a military commander.[40]

As a former knight, WP could write of campaigns with authority. Like most of his educated contemporaries, he knew and cited Vegetius, though many of the general principles laid down by Vegetius could as well have been reached by practical

[35] Classical biographies were written under the influence of the rhetorical technique of *encomium*; see A. J. Gossage, 'Plutarch', in Dorey, *Latin Biography*, p. 47.
[36] *GG* i. 20. [37] *GG* ii. 25. [38] *GG* ii. 25.
[39] Gillingham, pp. 143–60, assesses the value of WP for military history.
[40] Ibid., pp. 145–9.

experience combined with common sense. The qualities he admired in the duke were his speed, his prudence, and above all his careful planning. Duke William could move rapidly from one trouble-spot to another so as to appear without warning, leaving a small contingent of men in quickly constructed siege-castles to carry on a siege in his absence. He was prudent in not risking the doubtful outcome of battle except as a last resort;[41] he had, indeed, though WP does not openly admit as much, no practical experience of commanding an army in any major battle before 1066. At Val-ès-Dunes, as WJ makes clear, the rebels were routed by an army led by the king of France; and there are grounds for thinking that Varaville was not really a pitched battle. At Mortemer battle was forced on the Normans by French aggression; and the duke himself was not present when victory was won by Count Robert of Eu. It is possible that, on some occasions (as WP suggests), enemies were so impressed by William's reputation in war that they retreated before he appeared on the scene.[42] In general, up to 1066, Duke William succeeded by concentrating on castles and starving out his opponents in a series of resolute and successful sieges. The invasion of England, however, demanded an aggressive policy. William must have known that nothing but success in a battle in which his rival had to perish could win him the crown of England. As a churchman, writing after Ermenfrid of Sion's penitential ordinances had imposed severe penances on all guilty of bloodshed even in battle,[43] WP could hardly say so openly. He could, however, attempt to show Harold's duplicity in taking the crown, and adding (perhaps because of a lingering suspicion that Harold's coronation may have conferred some regality on him) direct references to the classical doctrine of the virtue of tyrannicide.[44] He could also bring out in vivid detail Duke William's meticulously careful preparations for an extremely hazardous enterprise. As he pointed out, Caesar was not always

[41] Cf. Vegetius, iii. 8.
[42] *GG* i. 33.
[43] *Councils and Synods*, i. 581–4.
[44] *GG* ii. 25; cf. ii.32.

sufficiently careful in laying his plans; but William never failed to prepare for all eventualities.[45]

In the light of this, it is reasonable to ask whether in fact the duke was delayed for a month at the mouth of the Dives by unfavourable winds. Since a similar story occurs in the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio*[46] it is likely that rumours to that effect spread among the troops preparing for the invasion. But they may have been spread deliberately by the duke, in order to confuse Harold's spies. WP tells how one of these spies was caught and sent back to Harold with a defiant message.[47] It is not unreasonable to suppose that a leader who certainly made use of military intelligence[48] would have been aware of the value of a little misinformation to confuse his enemies. Certainly Harold had to keep his forces spread out along the south coast from the Isle of Wight to Kent, ready to intercept a landing at any point, until his food supplies ran out, many of the men went home, and the English fleet withdrew to the river Thames.[49] Duke William meanwhile, as his biographer shows, organized and paid for food supplies for his men.[50] He knew that once across the Channel he could, as an invader, feed them by ruthlessly ravaging the lands of Harold himself and his men,[51] whereas Harold could not afford to do so. Duke William may not have intended necessarily to move to the adequate, but less good, moorings at Saint-Valery-sur-Somme; but he kept his options open. Moreover the crossing was shorter from Saint-Valery than from the estuary of the Dives; and the monks of Fécamp, one or more of whom accompanied him,[52] had

[45] *GG* ii. 40. Nevertheless here and elsewhere in describing William's preparations, WP may have had in mind the comments of Suetonius, *Vita Caesaris*, c. lviii: 'In obeundis expeditionibus dubium cautior an audactior, exercitum neque per insidiosa itinera duxit umquam nisi perspeculatus locorum situs, neque in Britanniam transvexit, nisi ante per se portus et navigationem et accessum ad insulam explorasset.'

[46] *GG* ii. 6; *Carmen*, lines 40–63.

[47] *GG* ii. 4.

[48] J. O. Prestwich, 'Military intelligence under the Norman and Angevin kings', in *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy*, ed. G. Garnett and J. Hudson (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 1–30, discusses (pp. 3–9) William the Conqueror's use of military intelligence from 1067 onwards.

[49] *ASC* (C) s.a. 1066.

[50] *GG* ii. 2.

[51] The ravaging by William's army around Hastings is illustrated in the *Bayeux Tapestry*, pl. 47, 52.

[52] *GG* ii. 12.

lands in Sussex and knew the landing places and the hinterland.[53] Above all, he needed to assemble his ships and train the men who made up his motley army.

Successful warfare in the eleventh century depended partly on small disciplined troops of mounted men under the command of an experienced leader, and partly on the skilful use of foot-soldiers and archers.[54] The duke's army was made up, not merely of his own well-trained household troops, Norman vassals, and auxiliaries like the men of the count of Boulogne, but of adventurers from other regions who had joined the enterprise through hope of gain. Nothing but rigorous training could have welded them into a force sufficiently disciplined to overcome the heavy, but unknown, odds that they were bound to encounter. William must have known that, though he might tempt Harold into battle by deliberately ravaging his lands, Harold, as the defender, could choose where to make his stand. William could hardly have imagined a site more unfavourable to the attacker than the hill at Battle, where tightly packed crack troops could form a solid shield wall that could not be by-passed. His achievement was to be capable of winning against formidable odds. WP's narrative makes clear, sometimes only by implication, how he achieved this.

Naturally WP made much of the story of the wind that changed as the result of prayers at Saint-Valery; this was what his master wished to be believed. It would be a sign that God favoured a just enterprise. Winds that yielded to prayer were a stock element in miracle stories. Yet, sometimes indirectly, WP shows other factors that were important. He mentions that during the wait boats were being built in harbours near to the Dives.[55] He shows the care taken to procure adequate provisions. And he mentions the monk of Fécamp: a reminder, surely, that although

[53] Pierre Chaplais, 'Une charte originale de Guillaume le Conquérant pour l'abbaye de Fécamp: la donation de Steyning et de Bury (1085)', in P. Chaplais, *Essays in Medieval Diplomacy and Administration* (London, 1981), ch. xvi.

[54] See Stephen Morillo, *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings 1066–1135* (Woodbridge and Rochester, NY, 1994). pp. 182–5, 187–8.

[55] *GG* ii. 6. This alleged delay must be compared with William's swift crossing on his return from Normandy to England in bitter weather and rough seas on 6 December 1067 (OV ii. 208–11, quoting WP; see below, p. xxxvii and n. 99).

winds might blow from the wrong direction for a few days, in the long run what mattered was good seamanship and a knowledge of the Channel crossings. This was something possessed by the sailors in the little ports controlled by Fécamp, experienced as they were in cross-Channel trading in all weathers.[56] The reality of the dangers appears in WP's mention of the ships that were wrecked during the move from the Dives to Saint-Valery,[57] and of the fate of the men who became separated from the fleet during the crossing, and landed on the wrong beach at Romney.[58] The amount of training that must have taken place during the six weeks of anything but idle and fretful waiting is shown by the remarkable manoeuvres carried out during the battle itself, which led to a hard-fought victory against courageous and formidable forces fighting for their freedom.

The rhetorical passages need to be interpreted with caution. WP was stating the case for Duke William's claim to the English throne, as it was promulgated in Normandy. There are elements common to the accounts of WJ, WP, and the Bayeux Tapestry, which were probably derived at least in part from a written statement. This may have been a claim sent to Rome to obtain papal support.[59] But part of the case had been made earlier, for the *Inventio Sancti Wulfranni*, written before 1053, had stressed the blood-relationship between King Edward and the Norman dukes, had claimed that Edward returned to England with Norman support, and had blamed Earl Godwine, Harold's father, for the murder of Alfred.[60] WP gives the most complete and coherent statement of William's case, stressing right of inheritance, victory in battle as a sign of divine approval, election by Normans and English, and coronation by a properly-constituted archbishop. He insists that Edward designated William as his heir; that Harold, who had become William's vassal during his visit to Normandy,

[56] See L. Musset, *Autour du pouvoir ducal normand en Normandie du xi^e au xiii^e siècle*, Cahiers des Annales de Normandie xvii, ch. vii, pp. 113–28, at pp. 114–18, 127.

[57] *GG* ii. 6.

[58] *GG* ii. 27.

[59] As suggested by G. Garnett, 'Coronation and propaganda: some implications of the Norman claim to the throne of England in 1066', *TRHS*, 5th ser., xxxvi (1986), 91–116, at pp. 110–11. See also van Houts in *GND*, i. pp. xlvi–xlviii.

[60] Van Houts, 'Historiography', pp. 248–51.

perfidiously broke his solemn oath and seized the crown.[61] WP is alone in knowing the English custom that gave special importance to death-bed bequests, and the use of that custom to justify Harold's claim.[62] He met the objection head-on and rejected it, by suggesting that William had been prepared to defend his claim by proceedings under either English or Norman law, or in single combat; and that Harold had spurned the offer and insisted that the issue must be decided in battle. WP wavers only very slightly in his statement of the case, by occasionally (but only occasionally) calling Harold 'king'.[63] There is a slight illogicality here, if coronation by the excommunicate Stigand invalidated the ceremony, as was asserted by the Normans within a year. But, for the first months after the victory, Harold had been called king even by his conquerors,[64] and perhaps memories of that slipped into WP's narrative. He was careful, however, not to call William king until after his coronation; this was the Church's case, to which WP, like WJ,[65] gave full support.

3. THE SOURCES USED BY WILLIAM OF POITIERS

The written sources which could have been used by WP consisted mainly of histories of the dukes of Normandy by Dudo of Saint-Quentin and William of Jumièges. Elisabeth van Houts has shown that WJ finished the greater part of his *GND* by 1060, and revised and extended it between 1067 and 1070.[66] Besides the ducal histories, the *Inventio et miracula Sancti Vulfranni*, which was completed by 1053/4, included a short chapter on Anglo-Norman relations. Raymonde Foreville demonstrated that WP certainly cited one or two short passages from *GND* in his early chapters; but she was hesitant in attributing any deliberate use of the work for the events of which he had independent oral reports.[67] There

[61] *GG* i. 14, i. 41, ii. 12. [62] *GG* ii. 11. [63] *GG* ii. 23, ii. 25, ii. 30.

[64] See V. H. Galbraith, *Domesday Book: Its Place in Administrative History* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 176–9; Garnett, 'Coronation and propaganda', pp. 98–9.

[65] *GND* ii. 170–3.

[66] *GND* i. pp. xxxi–xxxiv.

[67] Foreville, pp. xxxiv–xxxv.

is every reason to accept this. Indeed the debate between Jean Marx and Louis Halphen on whether WP enlarged upon WJ or WJ abbreviated WP is merely tilting at windmills.[68] Eleventh-century chroniclers in search of facts did not as a rule pay much attention to the written work of their contemporaries, when they had independently heard reports of the same events.[69] Similarities often occur because two writers heard similar oral testimony, whether reliable or unreliable. Earlier influences were potent in building up traditions of writing. Both Dudo and WJ developed the theme of the perfect warrior duke, who adds piety, wisdom, and justice to his military virtues; and WP improved upon it in his biography.[70]

Verbal echoes occurring in two sources are often due to common knowledge of classical authors.[71] Such echoes are most noticeable in *GG* and the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio*; and they do not imply direct imitation, and do not help to solve the problems of whether either author knew the work of the other, or when the *Carmen* was written. The date is a controversial question. Internal evidence, such as the mention of two archbishops as participants in King William's coronation,[72] makes it likely that the *Carmen* was written either before Stigand's disgrace in 1070, or in the twelfth century, when memories might have been dim. A number of scholars, notably the editors of the *Carmen*, supported by van Houts, favour the earlier date; R. C. H. Davis's argument for a twelfth-century date has been accepted by a few others. Some more recent work, notably that by Giovanni Orlandi, supports the early date and accepts Guy, bishop of Amiens, as the author.[73] The balance is now inclined towards the earlier date.

[68] Foreville, p. xxvi.

[69] This was a very well-established tradition of historical writing, first clearly enunciated by Thucydides. See A. D. Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography* (London, 1969), pp. 214–18.

[70] See Jean Flori, *L'essor de la chevalerie xi^e–xii^e siècles* (Geneva, 1986), pp. 144–8.

[71] See e.g. *GG* ii. 15, and *Carmen*, lines 321–2.

[72] *Carmen*, lines 801–4.

[73] See Orlandi, pp. 117–27; Greenway, *Huntingdon* p. cvi; and the debate led by R. H. C. Davis and L. J. Engels, in *Battle*, ii. (1980), 1–20. Davis argued for a twelfth-century date in 'The *Carmen de Hastingae proelio*', *EHR* xciii (1978), 241–61, reprinted in R. H. C. Davis, *From Alfred the Great to Stephen* (London and Rio Grande, OH, 1991), pp. 79–100, with a postscript (p. 100) still maintaining his position after E. M. C. van Houts, 'Latin poetry and the Anglo-Norman court, 1066–1135; the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio*', *Journal of Medieval History*, xv (1989), 39–62, had put the case for Guy of Amiens as author.

Since Guy of Amiens came to England in the household of Queen Matilda,[74] it is difficult to believe that WP, as one of the king's chaplains, would not have known about his poem. WP may even have had it in mind when he spoke of the poets who roam freely through the fields of fiction. This, however, does not prove conclusively that the poem by Guy, which was mentioned by Orderic Vitalis, was the *Carmen*. There were other poems about the conquest of England; Baudri of Bourgeuil later wrote one for Adela of Blois,[75] and there could have been other songs of Hastings. Words and phrases common to both *GG* and the *Carmen* might have been picked up from the works of Juvenal, Justin, or other earlier writers. If the two authors had heard the same stories, they decided independently what was reliable and worth recording. Both had heard and believed that Duke William was delayed at the mouth of the Dives by unfavourable winds.[76] Both had heard the suggestion that Harold might appropriately be buried on the seashore; but whereas WP took this to be a jest the author of the *Carmen* gave full vent to his imagination, and described the burial with all the trimmings of saga.[77] If WP had seen the accounts of the *Carmen* on the death of Harold and the negotiations leading up to the surrender of London,[78] he did not regard them as reliable, and preferred independent information, or, in the case of Harold's death, lack of information. The possibility that no survivor of the battle knew exactly when or how Harold died should never be overlooked. On the other hand, if WP deliberately rejected the *Carmen*'s account of the surrender of London, in which

[74] OV ii. 184–7, 214–15.

[75] Baudri's poem, written before 1102, has been published most recently by K. Hilbert, *Baldricus Burgulianus: Carmina* (Heidelberg, 1979), no. 134. For recent discussion, see S. A. Brown and M. W. Herren, 'The *Adelae Comitissae* of Baudri of Bourgeuil and the Bayeux Tapestry', *Battle*, xvi (1994), 55–73.

[76] *GG* ii. 6; *Carmen*, lines 40–63.

[77] *GG* ii. 204; *Carmen*, lines 585–92. The influence of saga is discussed by K.-U. Jäschke, *Wilhelm der Eroberer: Sein doppelter Herrschaftsantritt im Jahre 1066*, Vorträge und Forschungen, xxiv (Sigmaringen, 1977), pp. 39–45. Jäschke (ibid. pp. 46–7) also notes classical parallels in Statius and the *Iliad*.

[78] *Carmen*, lines 673–750.

Ansgard[79] was said to have taken part, he may have thrown away a few reliable details together with the imaginative elaboration of events.

The date of one pictorial source, the Bayeux Tapestry, is debatable, but it was certainly later than *GG*.[80] Both Bishop Odo and Bayeux are central to its narrative; and since WP knew and admired Odo he and the designer of the tapestry probably had some oral sources in common. There are marked similarities in the two descriptions of the Battle of Hastings, though there are also some conspicuous differences in the role assigned to Eustace of Boulogne.

The judgement of individuals and their purpose in writing were bound to influence their handling of fluid and variable oral sources; and WP's sources were almost entirely oral. From the time when his own experience began, he preferred his own recollections, both of what he had seen himself and of what other eye-witnesses had told him, to any written chronicle. This had, indeed, been the normal practice of historians from the time of Thucydides.[81]

The identification of oral sources is difficult, and can rarely result in more than a plausible hypothesis. WP must have been close to Duke William during the years when he was a ducal or royal chaplain. If he was for a time the duke's confessor, this might account for his frequent, but generalized, interpolations on William's piety.[82] Though much of this is conventional special pleading, it is interesting that he draws a picture of a man indifferent to omens,[83] a pious Christian trusting in the will of God in order to further righteous ends. From the time he knew

[79] Ansgard, mentioned in the *Carmen* (line 690), can probably be identified as Asgar or Esgar the staller, the grandson of Tovi the Proud (*Waltham Chronicle*, pp. xvii–xviii).

[80] For the Bayeux Tapestry, the volume edited by Sir Frank Stenton (*The Bayeux Tapestry*, 2nd edn., London, 1965) is still fundamental; citations to scenes in the tapestry are taken from the plate numbers in this edition. S. A. Brown, *The Bayeux Tapestry: History and Bibliography* (Woodbridge and Wolfeboro, NH, 1988), provides a comprehensive bibliography up to 1988. There is a critical French edition by L. Musset, *La tapisserie de Bayeux* (La-Pierre-qui-Vire, 1989).

[81] See above, p. xxviii.

[82] *GG* i. 49–52, ii. 14, ii. 44 and *passim*.

[83] *GG* ii. 14, where William merely laughed at accidentally putting on his hauberk back to front before the battle.

the duke he wrote as William's mouthpiece. For the earlier campaigns, when he was studying at Poitiers, he must have relied on accounts of the participants, and on general reports of the duke's reputation. He never mentions particular individuals as his informants, though his career suggests an association in later life with Odo of Bayeux. He was not himself present on the battlefield at Hastings, but he appears to have used information from men who had fought there. The details of later campaigns, which are known only from the work of Orderic Vitalis, must have come from individuals who had been with the armies. It is very likely that WP was still William's chaplain, and accompanied him on some at least of these campaigns.

Unfortunately eye-witness accounts were often distorted in the telling by *chansons*. The view that *chansons* could not have penetrated into written sources very soon after the events they described can no longer be sustained. It is certain, for example, that in Spain the disastrous battle of Fraga had been transformed by legend within three or four years.[84] So there is no need to try to explain the epic elements in *GG* by suggesting that WP himself composed heroic poetry.[85] Legendary feats of arms might have been attributed to Duke William from the first moment that his reputation grew; and in recording information probably received from the duke's knights, WP enhanced it in imitation of classical models. On one occasion he stated openly that he did not know exactly what William said to his troops; but he invented a speech to embody the arguments that would have been appropriate.[86] Other speeches were certainly, though less overtly, invented; this was a common device of rhetoric, and readers of Latin would have accepted it as such.[87] Probably too they would not have been deceived by the embellishments WP added from classical authors. It was to be expected that any parent would wish to have the body of a son slain in battle; so Harold's mother is represented as pleading to be allowed to bury her son, as Priam had pleaded for

[84] See OV vi, pp. xxii–xxiii.

[85] See Foreville, pp. xliii–xliv.

[86] *GG* ii. 15.

[87] See T. P. Wiseman, *Clio's Cosmetics* (Leicester, 1979), pp. 27–40, citing Cicero, *De orat.* ii. 36; OV i. 80 n. 1.

the body of Hector.[88] If Caesar occasionally helped to lighten the burden of a sick colleague, William must do the same, or better.[89] If Vergil described feasts celebrated by Aeneas at critical moments, William must equal or surpass him by celebrating a feast in mid-Channel.[90] This was part of WP's technique in his rhetorical passages. In those that were more strictly historical, he relied more directly on oral testimony, some of which came from eye-witnesses.

4. THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

William of Poitiers did not, as he himself said, hear the discourse with which the duke encouraged his troops before the battle, and he was not an eye-witness of the battle. He stated significantly, 'We have not the means, and it is not our intention, to describe all the exploits of individuals as their merit deserves. The most eloquent writer who had seen the battle with his own eyes could scarcely have followed every detail.' His account is based on oral evidence; it is most precise on the ordering of the troops for battle, a point on which many eye-witnesses could agree. Once the action had started, individuals would have lost sight of the whole picture and been aware only of the particular actions in which they were engaged. So it is not surprising to find that some of the closest resemblances to the account in the *Carmen*, also drawn from oral sources, are in the opening stage of the battle. Both state that Harold's troops emerged from woods and took their stand on foot in densely packed formation at the top of a hill, approached by a steep, rough slope.[91] Both agree that the front line of the Norman army was made up of archers on foot, shooting arrows and bolts; the mention of bolts shows that they included cross-bowmen. Among the mailed, mounted knights the duke himself commanded the centre, with Bretons and other auxiliaries on the

[88] *GG* ii. 25; Cf. *Ilias latina*, lines 1009–45.

[89] *GG* ii. 9; cf. Suetonius, *Vita Caesaris*, c. lxxii: 'Amicos tanta semper facilitate indulgentiaque tractavit, ut Gaio Oppio comitanti se per silvestre iter correptoque subita valitudine deversoriolo eo, quod unum erat, cesserit, et ipsi humi et sub divo cubuerit'.

[90] *GG* ii. 7; Vergil, *Aen.* i. 168–215.

[91] *GG* ii. 16; *Carmen*, lines 365–72.

left and the Normans on the right (the *Carmen* reverses the left and right, but may have been describing the line from the opposite side). WP, however, is much more exact; he mentions a second line of foot-soldiers, more heavily armed and wearing hauberks, between the archers and the rank of mounted knights led by the duke. He describes the first stage of the fighting carefully: the archers and foot-soldiers advanced first, and met fierce resistance from the English. The knights followed, those who had been behind (presumably the mounted knights) advancing to the front; and these fought hand-to-hand with swords.[92] He does not indicate whether there had been a charge with couched lances; but in an uphill charge against foot-soldiers the couched lance would not have been a very effective weapon,[93] and the knights would certainly have needed to draw their swords to make any impact. There is no suggestion in WP that a jongleur, called Taillefer, rode in front to encourage the troops and strike the first blow, as alleged in the *Carmen*.[94]

Both sources agree in general on the next phase: part of the attacking line gave way, panic broke out among the Bretons, and then spread to other contingents when it was rumoured that the duke was dead. William raised his helmet to show that he was still alive; his forces rallied, turned, surrounded, and massacred the pursuing English. From this point the *Carmen* and WP differ more and more. WP states quite clearly that the first flight was genuine; but its unexpected success when William's forces turned on the English persuaded the Normans to retreat twice more in flights that were feigned. The *Carmen* is a little confused on the number of flights, and implies at one point that the first was feigned. Details of the later stages of the battle vary. WP mentions a heroic charge led by Robert of Beaumont, of which he may have heard through his association with the Beaumont family in Normandy. He mentions that in the final onslaught the Normans shot arrows; it is interesting to note that in the Bayeux

[92] *GG* ii. 16, 17; *Carmen*, lines 373–84.

[93] See below, ii. 17 and n. 76.

[94] *Carmen*, lines 391–405. The 'Taillefer' episode reappears in the twelfth century in the work of Henry of Huntingdon (Greenway, *Huntingdon* pp. cvi, 392–3) and Wace (*Rou*, pt. iii, lines 8013–39 (ii. 182–4)).

Tapestry the archers, who had been shown leading the advance during the first phase of the battle, now appear in large numbers in the lower margin. He does not attempt to state when or how Harold and his brothers, Gyrth and Leofwine, were killed. He mentions the last stand of some of the retreating English, who took advantage of a maze of ditches and broken earthworks to try to halt their pursuers.[95] The only other details he provides relate to the valour of the duke himself, who fought with a broken lance after three horses had been killed under him, and refused to listen to Eustace of Boulogne, who was urging him to retreat. The *Carmen*, on the other hand, embroiders the narrative with individual exploits appropriate to epic descriptions of battles. The author describes in detail how William seized one horse from a man of Maine and was given another by Count Eustace; how Gyrth and Leofwine were killed, and how the duke, Count Eustace, and two others attacked and killed Harold. All these episodes are most probably either taken from songs about the battle, or imagined by the author of the *Carmen*.

The resemblances between the two sources that appear, particularly in the early stages of the battle, could be explained by similar oral sources known to both authors. WP is far more convincing in his sober account, only carried away by his wish to praise his hero, and perhaps by his readiness to believe the worst of Eustace of Boulogne. The role of Eustace in the battle is one of the most difficult to interpret. The Bayeux Tapestry, like the *Carmen*, gives him a leading role,[96] whereas WP presents him as something of a coward. WP, who began to write soon after Eustace had been disgraced by his treacherous attack on Dover, even though he continued long enough to see his restoration to favour, probably listened to the worst stories about him. The *Carmen* was written either before Eustace disgraced himself or long after his restoration to favour. The Bayeux Tapestry was certainly designed after Eustace had re-established his position.

[95] This is probably the 'malfosse' incident that Orderic placed during the pursuit after the battle and greatly enlarged (OV ii. 176–7).

[96] His role is discussed by S. A. Brown, 'The Bayeux Tapestry: Why Eustace, Odo and William?', *Battle*, xii (1990), 7–28.

What he actually did in the battle must remain an open question. On the whole, when the sources for the battle are compared, WP emerges as the most valuable: the most exact, and (in spite of passages of restrained rhetoric), the least carried away by imagination. He knew from experience the practical side of fighting. And victory, in view of the formidable resistance of the English and the difficulty of the terrain, was an achievement so remarkable that praise of the leader needed very little embellishment.

5. THE USE OF *GESTA GVILLELMI* BY ORDERIC VITALIS

Orderic Vitalis had a complete manuscript of the *Gesta Guillelmi*, which was his principal source for the campaigns of 1066–1071 and for William's right to the English throne. He used it with discretion,[97] omitting the long passages of comparison with Caesar and the Vergilian episodes such as the mid-Channel banquet. While he abbreviated the rhetorical passages, he retained many expressions of admiration for William's courage, leadership, and kingly qualities. But the many passages praising William's mercy towards the conquered English are either omitted altogether or directly contradicted. Brought up in England from 1075 to 1085, Orderic had heard the English side of the story, and knew how much injustice and suffering were caused by the dispossession of many landowners, and the ravaging of William's armies. Comparison of passages in the *GG* and the *Historia Ecclesiastica* illustrates the way he treated his source.

[97] Orderic's use of WP is discussed from different standpoints by P. Bouet, 'Orderic Vital, lecteur critique de Guillaume de Poitiers', *Medievalia Christiana xi^e–xiii^e siècles. Hommage à Raymonde Foreville*, ed. C. E. Viola (De Boeck Université, Éditions universitaires, 1989), pp. 25–50; and by R. D. Ray, 'Orderic Vitalis and William of Poitiers: a monastic reinterpretation of William the Conqueror', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, l (1972), 1116–27.

Gaufredi non triste acceperunt hoc eum fuisse detrimento mulctatum, asseruerantes gloriam solius Guillelmi comitis ultionem multorum esse de periuro ac praedone.

41. Per idem fere tempus Edwardus rex Anglorum suo iam statuto haeredi Guillelmo,[1] quem loco germani aut prolis adamabat, grauiore quam fuerit cautum pignore cauit. Placuit obitus necessitatem praeuenire, cuius horam homo sancta uita ad caelestia tendens, proximam affore meditabatur. Fidem sacramento confirmaturum Heraldum ei destinauit,[2] cunctorum sub dominatione sua diuitiis,[a] honore, atque potentia eminentissimum: cuius antea frater et fratruelis obsides fuerant accepti[3] de successione eadem. Et cum quidem prudentissime, ut ipsius opes et auctoritas totius Anglicae gentis dissensum coercerent, si rem nouare mallent perfida mobilitate, quanta sese agunt.

Heraldus, dum ob id negotium uenire contenderet, itineris marini periculo euaso litus arripuit Pontiui, ubi in manus comitis Guidonis incidit.[4] Capti in custodiam traduntur ipse et comitatus eius, quod infortunium uir adeo magnus naufragio mutaret. Docuit enim auaritiae calliditas Galliarum quasdam nationes execrandum consuetudinem, barbaram et longissime ab omni aequitate christiana alienam. Illaqueant potentes aut locupletes, trusos in ergastula afficiunt contumeliis, tormentis. Sic uaria miseria prope ad necem usque contritos eiciunt saepissime uenditos magno.

Directi ad se dux Guillelmus euentu cognito, propere missis legatis, precatu simul ac minis extortum obuius honorifice suscepit eum. Guidoni benemerito, qui nec pretio nec uiolentia compulsus, uirum quem torquere, necare, uendere potuisset pro libitu, ipse adducens apud Aucense castrum sibi praesentauit,

[a] *M F;* diuersis *D*

[1] See above, i. 14.

[2] Harold, earl of Wessex and Kent, son of Earl Godwine.

[3] Wulfnoth and Hakon; see above, i. 14 and n. 27. According to Eadmer (*HN*, pp. 5–6) they were taken by King Edward as hostages for the good faith of Earl Godwine, and sent to Duke William in Normandy for safe-keeping. Eadmer's account adds that Harold's visit was undertaken to attempt to secure their release. The visit, which took place in the summer of 1064, is also described in the Bayeux Tapestry (pl. 1–30), the *Carmen* (lines 295–6, p. 20) and *GND* ii. 158–60, including the interpolations of Orderic.

army. And the neighbours learnt without regret that Geoffrey had been punished and overthrown; they asserted that the glory of Count William was in itself the vengeance of many on a perjurer and brigand.

41. About the same time Edward, king of the English, protected the position of William (whom he loved as a brother or son and had already appointed his heir)[1] with a stronger pledge than before. He wished to prepare in advance for the inevitable hour of death, which, as a man who strove for heaven through his holy life, he believed to be near at hand. To confirm the pledge with an oath, he sent Harold,[2] the most distinguished of his subjects in wealth, honour and power, whose brother and nephew[3] had been received as hostages for William's succession. And this was very prudently done, so that Harold's wealth and authority could check the resistance of the whole English people, if, with their accustomed fickleness and perfidy, they were tempted to revolt.

Harold, after escaping the dangers of the crossing as he sailed to undertake this mission, landed on the coast of Ponthieu, where he fell into the hands of Count Guy.[4] He and his men were seized and taken into custody; a misfortune that a man as proud as he would gladly have exchanged for shipwreck. For certain Gallic peoples have been led through avarice to adopt a cunning practice, which is barbarous and utterly removed from Christian justice. They lay ambushes for the powerful and wealthy, thrust them into prison, and torture and humiliate them. When they have reduced them almost to the point of death they turn them out, usually ransomed at a very high price.

When Duke William heard of the fate of the man who had been sent to him, he immediately despatched envoys, got Harold out of prison by a mixture of prayers and threats, and went to meet him and receive him honourably. Guy behaved well and, without

[4] Eadmer (*HN*, pp. 6–7) says that a storm drove Harold onto the coast of Ponthieu, and that only the threats of Duke William secured his release from Count Guy. The Bayeux Tapestry (pl. 8–17) shows him taken to Guy's castle of Beaurain ('Belrem'); for the episode, see A. J. Taylor, 'Belrem', *Battle*, xiv (1991), 1–23.

grates retulit condignas, terras tradidit amplas ac multum opimas,[1] addidit insuper in pecuniis maxima dona. Heraldum uero sufficientissime cum honore in urbem sui principatus caput Rothomagum introduxit, ubi multiplex hospitalitatis officiositas uiae laborem perpessos iucundissime recrearet. Nimirum gratulabatur tanto super hospite, sibi omnium carissimi propinqui et amici legato, quem inter se et Anglos, quibus a rege secundus erat, mediatorem sperabat fidissimum.

42. Coadunato ad Bonamuillam[2] consilio, illic Heraldus ei fidelitatem sancto ritu christianorum iurauit. Et sicut ueracissimi multaque honestate praeclarissimi homines recitauere, qui tunc affuere testes, in serie summa sacramenti libens ipse haec distinxit:[3] se in curia domini sui Edwardi regis quandiu superesset ducis Guillelmi uicarium fore; enisurum quanto consilio ualeret aut opibus ut Anglica monarchia post Edwardi decessum in eius manu confirmaretur; traditurum interim ipsius militum custodiae castrum[4] Doueram, studio atque sumptu suo communitum; item per diuersa loca illius terrae alia castra, ubi uoluntas ducis ea firmari iuberet, abunde quoque alimonias daturum custodibus. Dux ei, iam satelliti suo accepto per manus, ante iusiurandum terras eius cunctumque potentatum dedit petenti. Non enim in longum sperabatur Edwardi aegrotantis uita.

43. Deinde, quia ferocem et noui nominis cupidum nouit, ipsum et qui uenerant cum ipso armis militaribus et equis delectissimis instructos secum in bellum Britannicum duxit; hospitem atque legatum quasi contubernalem habens ut eo quoque honore quodam sibi magis fidum et obnoxium faceret.

[1] Wace (*Rou*, pt. iii, lines 5663–4 (ii. 97), mentions a manor on the Eaulne that was given.

[2] Sources disagree on the place where Harold took an oath to the duke, but WP was close to the court and was probably right. The Bayeux Tapestry (pl. 28) named Bayeux; Orderic (OV ii. 124–6) named Rouen; Eadmer and WJ did not specify any place.

[3] Eadmer (*HN*, p. 7) considered that Harold swore under constraint, and did not regard himself as bound by any oath ('Sensit Haraldus in his periculum undique; nec intellexit qua evaderet'). Although WP does not mention any proposal of marriage between Duke William's daughter and Harold at this point, he later referred to one (below, p. 156 n. 6).

being compelled by force, himself brought the man whom he could have tortured, killed, or sold at pleasure to the castle of Eu, and handed him over to William. William thanked him appropriately, giving him lands that were both extensive and rich,[1] and adding very great gifts of money besides. He escorted Harold most honourably to Rouen, the chief city of his principality, where every kind of hospitality restored and cheered those who had suffered the trials of the journey. He congratulated himself warmly on having so great a guest, the envoy of the kinsman and friend who was especially dear to him, hoping to have in him a faithful mediator between himself and the English, to whom Harold was second only to the king.

42. In a council summoned to Bonneville,[2] Harold swore fealty to him according to the holy rite of Christians. And, as the most truthful and distinguished men who were there as witnesses have told, at the crucial point in the oath he clearly and of his own free will pronounced these words[3] that as long as he lived he would be the vicar of Duke William in the court of his lord King Edward; that he would strive to the utmost with his counsel and his wealth to ensure that the English monarchy should be pledged to him after Edward's death; that in the mean time the castle[4] of Dover should be fortified by his care and at his expense for William's knights; likewise that he would furnish with provisions and garrisons other castles to be fortified in various places chosen by the duke. The duke, after he had received him as his vassal and before he took the oath, confirmed all his lands and powers to him at his request. For there was no hope that Edward, already sick, could live much longer.

43. Then, because he knew Harold to be high-mettled and anxious for new renown, he provided him and the men who had accompanied him with knightly arms and the finest horses, and took them with him to the Breton war. He treated his guest and envoy as his companion in arms so as to make him by that honour

[4] There were ancient fortifications at Dover; work on the castle itself may have been begun immediately after the Conquest (see below, p. 144, n. 1).

Britannia namque praefidenter aduersus Normanniam fuit omnis armata.[1]

Huius audaciae princeps erat Conanus Alani filius.[2] Is in uirum ferocissimum adultus, a tutela diu tolerata liber, capto Eudone patruo suo, atque uinculis ergastularibus mancipato, prouinciae quam dono paterno accepit magna cum truculentia dominari coepit. Paternae dehinc rebellionis renouator, Normanniae hostis, non miles, esse uoluit. Dominus autem eius antiquo iure, sicuti Normannorum, Guillelmus, castellum quod sancti Iacobi appellatum est, interim opposuit in confinio,[3] ne famelici praedones ecclesiis inermibus, aut ultimo terrae suae uulgo, excursionibus latrocinantibus nocerent. Emit namque rex Francorum Karolus pacem atque amicitiam a Rollone primo duce Normannorum ac posteriorum parente, natam suam Gislam in matrimonium, et Britanniam in seruitium perpetuum ei tradens. Exorauerant id foedus Franci non ualentes amplius resistere gallico ense danicae securi.[4] Annalium paginae attestantur.[5] Exinde comites Britannici e iugo Normannicae dominationis ceruicem omnino soluere nunquam ualuerunt, etsi multotiens id conati tota ui obluctando. Alanus et Conanus, quanto Normanniae rectores consanguinitate propius[6] attingebant tanto gloriantibus animis contra eos elatiores existebant. Conani in tantum iam temeritas creuit ut quo die terminos Normanniae aggrederetur, denuntiare non formidaret. Homini acrioris naturae, feruidae aetatis, ministrauit plurimum fiduciae regio longe lateque diffusa, milite magis quam credibile sit referta.

[1] There is no corroboration of this statement.

[2] Conan II, son of Alan III, had freed himself from the tutelage of his uncle *c.*1057. See above, p. 46 n. 2, p. 52 n. 4. WP probably regarded his refusal of homage to the duke of Normandy as rebellion.

[3] Duke William began the building of the castle of St James de Beuvron during this expedition, and entrusted it to Richard, vicomte of Avranches. It served both as a defence against border raids by Breton lords and as part of the system of fortifications protecting the frontier (Yver, 'Châteux-forts', pp. 58–9; V. Ménard, *Histoire religieuse, civile et militaire de Saint-James de Beuvron depuis sa fondation jusqu'à nos jours* (Avranches, 1897), pp. 2–24, 417–19).

[4] WP appears to have taken this information from Dudo (ii. 29, 'Dedit itaque rex filiam suam, Gislam nomine, uxorem illi duci . . . totamque Britanniam de qua posset vivere'). WJ (*GND* i. 64) claimed only that King Charles gave 'terram maritimam ab Epte flumine usque ad Britannicos limites cum sua filia nomine Gisla'.

more faithful and beholden to him. For the whole of Brittany was overconfidently up in arms against him.[1]

The leader of this audacious enterprise was Conan fitz Alan.[2] He had grown up to be an aggressive man; free from a tutelage he had long endured, he captured Eudo, his paternal uncle, imprisoned him in chains, and began to lord it with great truculence over the province which his father had left to him. Then, renewing his father's rebellion, he wished to be the enemy, not the vassal, of Normandy. Meanwhile [William, who was his lord by ancient right as well as being lord of the Normans, established a castle called St James at the frontier between them,[3] so that hungry predators would not harm defenceless churches or the common people in the remotest parts of his land by their pillaging raids.] For Charles [the Simple], king of the Franks, had bought peace and friendship from Rollo the first duke of Normandy and ancestor of the later dukes, by giving him his daughter Gisla in marriage and Brittany in perpetual dependence. The Franks had asked for this treaty, as they no longer had the strength to resist the Danish axe with the Gallic sword.[4] The pages of annals bear witness.[5] Since then the Breton counts have never been able to free their neck from the yoke of Norman domination, even though they often attempted to do so, struggling with all their might. Because they were close blood relations of the dukes of Normandy,[6] Alan and Conan treated them in an arrogant and boastful way. Conan's daring had grown to such a point that he was not afraid to announce a date on which he would attack the frontiers of Normandy. This man, aggressive by nature and at an impetuous age, was bountifully served by the fidelity of a region which extended far and wide, and was crammed full of more fighting men than anyone could have believed.

[5] Possibly a reference to the annals of Flodoard (*Les annales de Flodoard*, ed. Ph. Lauer (Paris, 1905), pp. 1, 6).

[6] Count Alan III's father, Geoffrey of Rennes, count of Brittany, married Hawise, daughter of Duke Richard I of Normandy; and Duke Richard II of Normandy married as his first wife Judith of Brittany, sister of Count Geoffrey.

44. Partibus equidem in illis miles unus quinquaginta generat, sortitus more barbaro denas aut amplius uxores, quod de Mauris ueteribus refertur, legis diuinae atque pudici ritus ignaris.[1] Ad hoc populositas ipsa armis et equis maxime, aruorum culturae aut morum minime student. Vberrimo lacte, parcissimo pane, sese transigunt. Pinguia pabula gignunt precoribus loca uasta et ferme nescia segetum. Cum uacant a bello, rapinis, latrociniis, caedibus domesticis aluntur, siue exercentur.[2] Praelia cum ardenti alacritate ineunt, dum praeliantur furibundi saeuiunt. Pellere soliti, difficile cedunt. Victoria et laude pugnando parta nimium laetantur atque extolluntur, interemptorum spolia diripere ut opus decorum uoluptuosumque amant.

45. Nihil pendens terribilitatem hanc dux Guillelmus, in quem diem aduentum Conani meminit denuntiatum, eo ipse intra fines eius occurrit. Ille quasi fulminis ictum, proxime imminentem extimens, in loca propugnatura citissimam fugam instituit, castri terrae suae Doli oppugnatione omissa.[3] Id enim rebelli aduersum iustae causae fidum stabat. Sistere tentat Conanum castri praeses Ruallus,[4] reuocat illudens, morari biduum precatur, sufficiens huic morae stipendium ab ipso sumpturum. Homo misere exterritus, pauorem potius audiens, cursu instituto longius profugit. Ductor terribilis qui depulit instaret fugitanti, ni manifestum periculum animaduerteret agere militem numerosum per regiones uastas, famelicas, ignotas. Si quid residuum erat inopi terrae ex his quae nata fuerant anno superiore, id in tutis locis incolae cum pecoribus abdiderant. Stabant in aristis fruges immaturae. Igitur ne sacrilega praeda diriperent, si qua reperirent ecclesiarum bona, menstrua penuria fatigatum exercitum reducebat, magno animo praesumens Conanum pro uenia delicti et gratia propediem deprecaturum. At

[1] Cf. Sallust, *Bellum Iugurthinum*, lxxx. 6, 'Etiam antea Iugurthae filia Bocchi nupserat. Verum ea necessitudo apud Numidas Maurosque levis ducitur, quia singuli, pro opibus quisque, quam plurimas uxores, denas alii, alii plures habeat, sed reges eo amplius.'

[2] Cf. Caesar's description of the Germans (*De bello gallico*, vi. 22–3, 'Agriculturae non student, maiorque pars eorum victus in lacte, caseo, carne consistit'; ibid. vi. 23, 'Latrocinia nullam habent infamiam').

[3] Cf. the scene in the Bayeux Tapestry (pl. 23, 24), 'Et uenerunt ad Dol et Conan fuga uertit Radnes.' For events in Brittany and the Breton campaign, see K. S. B. Keats-Rohan, 'William I and the Breton contingent . . .', *Battle*, xiii (1991), 157–72, esp. pp. 162–6.

[4] Ruallon of Dol, who rebelled against Conan and became an ally of Duke William.

44. Indeed in those parts one warrior sired fifty, since each had, according to their barbarous custom, ten or more wives, as is related of the ancient Moors who were ignorant of divine law and chaste morals.[1] Moreover, this multitude devotes itself chiefly to arms and horses, and very little to the cultivation of fields or improvement of customs. They live on plentiful milk and very little bread. Wide open spaces provide rich grazing for cattle and crops are almost unknown. When they are not making war, they live on or occupy themselves with plunder, brigandage, and domestic feuds.[2] They rush joyfully and eagerly into battle; while fighting they hit out like madmen. Accustomed to repulse the enemy, they give ground with reluctance. They rejoice and glory in victory and praise won in battle; they love stripping the slain of their spoils, for this is both an honour and a pleasure to them.

45. Undismayed by these terrifying practices, Duke William, on the day which he remembered Conan had fixed for his coming, went himself to the frontier to meet him. The latter, thinking that a thunderbolt was about to strike him, fled as fast as possible to fortified places, abandoning the siege of Dol,[3] a castle in his own land. This castle, hostile to the rebel, remained faithful to the just cause. Ruallon,[4] the defender of the castle, tried to restrain Conan: he called him back in jest, begging him to stay for two more days and claiming that he would win the cost of the delay from him. The wretched man, frightened to death and hearing only the sounds of panic, carried on his way and fled further. The terrible leader who pursued him would have pressed the fugitive further, if he had not been aware of the manifest danger of taking a numerous force through uninhabited country, which was infertile and unknown. If any remnants of the previous year's produce were left in the impoverished land, the inhabitants had hidden them in safe places with their flocks. The crops were standing green in the fields. So, to avoid the sacrilegious looting of church goods, if any were found, he led back his army, which was exhausted by the lack of regular provisions. Moreover he assumed magnanimously that Conan would come very soon to

excedenti iam Britanniae limitem repente indicatur Gaufredum Andegauensem[1] cum ingentibus copiis Conano fuisse coniunctum, et ambos postero die praeliatum affuturos. Itaque aperitur conflictus eo cupidior, quod gloriosius intelligebat triumphum de hoste bino, utroque immani, uno consequi certamine. Ad hoc fore multiplicem eiusdem triumphi fructum.

Ruallus autem, cuius in territorio tentoria figebantur, affatur querela. Haberi quidem gratum quod ab inimica ui per eum fuerit ereptus, si proficuum non deleat incommodo. Nam si praestolaturus consideat, regionem modice foecundam nimis attenuatam funditus deuastari. Nec penes agricolas interesse, Normannico an Britannico exercitu consumpti[a] anni laborem amiserint. Sibi modo ad famam ualuisse, non ad conseruationem rerum, Conani depulsionem. Considerandum esse dux respondens, ne discessio properantior opinionem pariat minus honoram, detrimenti recompendium in auro plenissimum promittit. Statim Rualli segetes militibus interdicit ac pecora. Obtemperatum est praecepto ea continentia ut frumenti manipulus unicus ad recompensandum omne damnum superabundaret. Certamen nequicquam fuit expectatum, aduersario magis in ulteriora profugiente.[2]

46. Receptus in sua, percarum[b] hospitem Heraldum apud se post moratum aliquandiu, donis onustum omisit; digne utroque et cuius iussu et pro cuius honore ampliando uenerat. Qui etiam fratruelis eius,[3] alter obses, cum ipso redux propter ipsum redditus est. Paucis igitur te affabimur Heralde. Qua mente post haec Guillelmo haereditatem auferre, bellum inferre, ausus es, cui te gentemque tuam sacrosancto iureiurando subiecisti tua et lingua et manu?[4] Coercere debuisti, et perniciosissime concitasti. Infeliciter secundi flatus, qui nigerrimis

[a] *M F;* consumptae *D* [b] *F;* per charum *D;* percharum *M*

[1] Geoffrey le Barbu, who became count of Anjou in 1060.

[2] The whole episode is characteristic of Duke William's preference for wearing down an enemy by a war of attrition rather than fighting a pitched battle. Conan evidently employed the same tactics. See Gillingham, pp. 157–8.

[3] Hakon, the grandson of Godwine.

[4] WP reverts to his central theme, the justification of Duke William's conquests; he stresses that Harold had sworn an oath on the relics, and had both sworn fealty and performed homage.

seek mercy and pardon for his crime. But he had scarcely crossed the frontiers of Brittany when he learnt that Geoffrey of Anjou[1] had joined Conan with huge forces, and that both would be ready to give battle on the next day. And so the fight appeared more desirable than ever to him, for he knew that it would be more glorious to triumph over two enemies, both of them redoubtable, in one conflict. This would give a manifold gain as the fruit of one victory.

But Ruallon, on whose territory the tents had been pitched, broke into complaints. He would have been grateful (he said) to have been rescued by William from the enemy's power if the damage were not to cancel out the gain; for if he were to pitch camp and await his enemy the region (which was very infertile and greatly exhausted) would be totally devastated. It made no difference to the peasants whether they lost the labour of the previous year to the Norman or Breton army. So far the expulsion of Conan had brought fame, but not the preservation of property. The duke replied that they must bear in mind that a hasty retreat might be considered dishonourable, but he promised full recompense in gold for any damage done. At once he forbade his men-at-arms to touch the crops and herds belonging to Ruallon. This command was obeyed with such restraint that a single sheaf of corn would have amply sufficed as compensation for all damage. The battle was awaited in vain, as the enemy fled further away.[2]

46. On his return home William, after keeping his valued guest Harold with him for a while longer, sent him away loaded with gifts worthy of both of them and of the man at whose command and to increase whose honour he had come. Furthermore his nephew,[3] the second hostage, was, out of respect for his person, released to return with Harold. Just a few words, O Harold, will we address to you! With what intent dared you after this take William's inheritance from him and make war on him, when you had with both voice and hand subjected yourself and your people to him by a sacrosanct oath?[4] What you should have suppressed you perniciously stirred up. How unfortunate were the following

uelis[1] tuis aspirauerunt redeuntibus. Impie clemens pontus qui uchentem te hominem teterrimum ad littus prouehi passus est. Sinistre placida statio fuit quae recepit te naufragium miserrimum patriae afferentem.

47. Inter occupationes tamen rerum bellicarum siue domesticarum, quas mundanas appellant, studia optimi principis in diuinis egregia extitere; quae per singula ac pro magnitudine sua recitare non sufficimus. Nouerat enim non solum principatus in mundo florentes breui occasu terminari, uerum etiam ipsius mundi figuram praeterire;[2] unicum autem regnum immobiliter stare, huic praesidere imperatorem ineffabilem dominatu aeterno, rerum uniuersalitatem quam condidit, coaeterna sibi prouidentia gubernantem; terrenorum dulcedini nimium deditos tirannos momento conterere potentem; diademata atque palatia inaestimabili perpetim fulgentia decore satellitum suorum perseuerantiae disponentem in illa gloriosissima ciuitate ueri summique boni patria. Genitorem suum inclytum ducem Rodbertum post memoranda merita, quibus domi claruit, fasces dignitatum seposuisse, peregrinum iter ac periculis plenum arripuisse, desiderio imperatoris illius in superna Sion conspiciendi.[3] Ipsius crucem in fronte, dilectionem in mente, reuerentiam in actu, Richardos[a] ac superiores auos potentia sublimes, fama praeclaros, humiliter gestauisse.[4] Pensauerat, ut prudentis animae homo, quam sit miserum atque indecorum spoliatos honore caduco in exilium caliginosum damnari, ubi flamma inextinguibili ardebunt, non consumentur; plangent in miseriis absque clementia, errata lamentabuntur absque uenia. Econtra felix atque pulchrum[b] esse post consulatus terrae stola immortalitatis redimitos angelorum ciues ordinari; ubi uoluptate omni delectabuntur, Deum sicuti est contemplabuntur, in eius laude perpetua iocundabuntur.

[a] *D M;* Ricardos *F* [b] *M F;* pulcrum *D*

[1] A reference to the legend of Theseus. A black sail was to indicate the failure of Theseus to slay the Minotaur.

[2] Cf. 1 Cor. 7: 31, 'praeterit enim figura huius mundi.'

[3] For Duke Robert's pilgrimage to Jerusalem and death at Nicaea, see WJ, *GND* ii. 80–5.

winds which filled your black sails on the way home![1] How impious the smooth sea which suffered you, most abominable of men, to be carried on your journey to the shore! How perverse was the calm harbour which received you, who were bringing the disastrous shipwreck of your native land!

47. In the midst of the warlike activities and domestic occupations which are called worldly, this most excellent prince nevertheless devoted his greatest efforts to things divine; they are too many and too great for our humble pen to describe in detail. For he knew not only that the flourishing principalities of this world are cut off in an instant, but also that 'the fashion of this world passeth away';[2] that there is only one kingdom which stands immutable, ruled with eternal lordship by an ineffable Emperor, who governs with coeternal providence the universe which He created. He, in His power, crushes in a moment those tyrants who surrender themselves too much to earthly delights; but to His servants who persevere He grants diadems and palaces shining eternally with inestimable beauty in that most glorious city; home of the highest truth and beauty. William also knew that his father, the famous Duke Robert, after distinguishing himself at home with memorable achievements, laid down the symbols of his office and took the perilous road of a pilgrim, out of a yearning to see his Master in the heavenly Sion.[3] He knew that the Richards and their earlier ancestors, powerful and famous, had in all humility borne the Lord's cross on their brow, His love in their heart, fear of Him in their deeds.[4] As a prudent man he had weighed up how wretched and shameful it is for those who, stripped of transitory honours, are condemned to outer darkness, where they are burned with inextinguishable flames, not consumed, where they will bewail their wretchedness without remission and lament their misdeeds without pardon. On the other hand he knew how happy and glorious are those who, after fulfilling their office on earth, are clothed with the robe of immortality and made fellow-citizens of the angels, to dwell in every delight, seeing God face to face and rejoicing in His perpetual praise.

[4] Cf. Dudo, ii. 3; iii. 36, 58; *GND* i. 132–4; ii. 38.

PARS SECUNDA

1. Verus namque rumor insperato uenit, Anglicam terram rege Edwardo orbatam esse et eius corona Heraldum ornatum. Nec sustinuit uesanus Anglus quid electio publica statueret consulere; sed in die lugubri quo optimus ille humatus est, cum gens uniuersa plangeret, periurus regium solium cum plausu occupauit,[1] quibusdam iniquis fauentibus. Ordinatus est non sancta consecratione Stigandi, iusto zelo apostolici et anathemate ministerio sacerdotum priuati.[2]

Dux Guillelmus habita cum suis consultatione[3] armis iniuriam ulcisci, armis haereditatem reposcere decreuit,[4] tametsi complures maiorum id ingeniose dissuaderent, ut rem nimis arduam, Normanniae uiribus longe maiorem.[5] Habuit in consiliis ea tempestate Normannia praeter episcopos et abbates laici ordinis praestantissimos uiros, quorum in collegio splendidiora quaedam eius lumina atque ornamenta emicuere: Rodbertus Moritoliensis comes;[6] Rodbertus Aucensis comes, Lexouiensis episcopi Hugonis (de cuius uita supra scripsimus) frater;[7] Ebroicensis comes Ricardus Rodberti archiepiscopi filius; Rogerus de Bellomonte;[8] Rogerus de Montegomerico;[a 9] Guillelmus filius

[a] *F*; Montegomerici *D M*

[1] King Edward died at Westminster on 4 or 5 Jan. 1066; Harold was crowned in Westminster Abbey the next day. 5 Jan. is the date accepted by most authorities (see F. E. Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs* (Manchester, 1952), p. 560, corrected by Barlow, in *Vita Edwardi*, p. 124 n. 329). For Harold's oath, see above, i. 42. The *ASC* (E) 1066 says that he was chosen; and he could have been accorded formal acclamation by the bishops and magnates assembled at Westminster for the consecration of the new church the week before. JW ii. 600 says 'Haraldus . . . quem rex ante suum decessum regni successorem elegerat, a totius Anglie primatibus ad regale culmen electus . . .'.

[2] Archbishop Stigand was excommunicated by Leo IX after he received the pallium from the anti-pope Benedict X, and the sentence was renewed by Nicholas II and Alexander II. See Brooks, *Canterbury*, pp. 304–11, for the weakness of Stigand's position; after January 1059, when Benedict X was deposed and his acts annulled. Stigand is not known to have consecrated any bishops before the Norman Conquest. The Worcester/York tradition, which stated that Harold was crowned by Ealdred, archbishop of York (*Chronicon pontificum ecclesiae Eboracensis*, in *Historians of the Church of York*, ed. J. Raine, 3 vols. (RS, 1879–94), ii. 348; JW ii. 600) is probably to be preferred to the Norman tradition, which shows a hardening of the legend to Harold's discredit after Stigand's deposition in 1070 (Brooks, *Canterbury*, p. 389, n. 158; OV ii. 136–8 and n. 1).

PART II

1. A true report came unexpectedly, that the English land had lost its king and that Harold was wearing its crown. And this mad Englishman could not endure to await the decision of a public election, but on the tragic day when that best of all men was buried, while all the people were mourning, he violated his oath and seized the royal throne with acclamation,[1] with the connivance of a few wicked men. He received an impious consecration from Stigand, who had been deprived of his priestly office by the just zeal and anathema of the pope.[2]

Duke William, after taking counsel with his men,[3] determined to avenge this injury with arms, and claim his inheritance[4] by force of arms, although many of the greater men argued speciously that the enterprise was too arduous and far beyond the resources of Normandy.[5] At that time Normandy had in its counsels, besides the bishops and abbots, outstanding men of the secular order, shining luminaries who were the pride of that assembly: Robert count of Mortain;[6] Robert count of Eu, the brother of Hugh bishop of Lisieux (of whose life we have written above);[7] Richard count of Évreux, son of Archbishop Robert; Roger of Beaumont;[8] Roger of Montgomery;[9] William fitz

[3] William's consultation with his vassals is described by OV ii. 140–2, who added some details to the information he took from *GG*, in particular, the names of the bishops and, among the laymen, the names of Ralph of Conches, William of Warenne, Hugh of Grandmesnil, Roger of Montbray and Baldwin and Richard, the sons of Count Gilbert of Brionne.

[4] WP continues to insist on William's hereditary right through King Edward's mother Emma (see above, i. 14, 41).

[5] OV ii. 142–3 amplifies this, mentioning specifically the dangers of the crossing, the problem of raising a fleet, and Harold's resources in manpower.

[6] Robert of Mortain was Duke William's half-brother. For his career, see B. Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', *Battle*, xiii (1991), 119–44. He was given the county of Mortain after the downfall of William Warlenc (1053 × 1063). He provided 120 ships for the invasion fleet (van Houts, 'Ship list', p. 169 and App. 1).

[7] For Robert, see above, i. 31; for Hugh, i. 58.

[8] Roger of Beaumont-le-Roger, son of Humphrey of Vieilles.

[9] Roger II of Montgomery, vicomte of the Hiémois. For his family and early career, see Kathleen Thompson, 'The Norman aristocracy before 1066: the example of the Montgomerys', *Historical Research*, lx (1987), 251–63.

Osberni;[1] Hugo uicecomes.[2] Horum ingeniis atque industria conseruari posset incolumis: nec adeo senatoribus ducentis indigeret freta his Romana respublica,[3] si quanta apud ueteres nunc polleret. In omni tamen deliberatione prudentiae principis a cunctis concessum fuisse comperimus, ac si mente diuina quid agendum foret aut uitandum praenosceret. 'Pie agentibus Deus dedit sapientiam',[4] ait quidam peritus diuinorum. Ille autem ab infantia pie operabatur. Quantum uero iubere libuit, tantum nisi necessitas obsisteret paruere cuncti.

2. Quam igitur prudenti ipsius dispositione naues fierent, armis, uiris, commeatu aliisque rebus quae bello sunt usui instruerentur, qualiter totius Normanniae studia feruerent, prolixum est per singula enarrare.[5] Neque minus prouide disposuit, qui Normanniam se absente gubernarent ac tutarentur.[6] Conuenit etiam externus miles in auxilium copiosus,[7] quos ex parte notissima ducis liberalitas, uerum omnes iustae causae fiducia contraxit.

Rapina omni interdicta, stipendio ipsius millia militum quinquagenta alebantur, dum uentorum incommoditas ad portum Diuae detinebat mora menstrua.[8] Ea illius temperantia fuit ac prudentia: militibus et hospitibus abunde sumptus ministrabatur; nemimi rapere quippiam concedebatur. Prouincialium tuto armenta uel greges pascebantur seu per campestria seu per tesqua. Segetes falcem cultoris intactae expectabant, quas nec attriuit superba equitum effusio, nec demessuit pabultor. Homo

[1] The son of Osbern 'of Crepon', steward of Normandy, and Emma, daughter of Raoul, count of Ivry. See D. C. Douglas, 'The ancestors of William Fitz Osbern', *EHR* lix (1944), 62–79.

[2] Hugh the vicomte was Hugh II of Montfort, first named as a vicomte in a charter of 1055 (Fauroux, no. 137; Bates, *Normandy*, p. 142 n. 93). He subscribed a number of Duke William's charters (Fauroux, nos. 110, 137, 145, 194, 229). His name does not occur in Orderic's list.

[3] The number of senators in the Roman republic was greater; there were 300 at the beginning of the Republic and more later (Foreville, p. 149 n. 7).

[4] Ecclus. 43: 37 ('omnia autem Dominus fecit et pie agentibus dedit sapientiam').

[5] Details of shipbuilding are shown in the Bayeux Tapestry, pls. 37, 38, 39. For the provision of ships, see below, p. 108 and n. 2.

[6] See below, ii. 43.

[7] See below, ii. 19.

[8] In fact it is unlikely that the month's delay was due to unfavourable winds (see above,

Osbern;[1] Hugh the vicomte.[2] It was thanks to their wisdom and their efforts that Normandy could be kept in safety; supported by these the Roman republic would not have needed two hundred senators,[3] if she had preserved her ancient power in our own time. However, we have ascertained that in every debate all gave way to the wisdom of their prince, as if by divine inspiration he foreknew what was to be done and what avoided. 'To those who live righteously God gives wisdom',[4] said a man who was well versed in holy learning. He had worked dutifully from childhood. Indeed, whatever he was pleased to command, all obeyed him unless necessity prevented them.

2. It would take too long to narrate in detail how under his prudent direction ships were built and equipped with arms, men, provisions, and the other things necessary for war, and how all Normandy eagerly bent to the task.[5] No less wisely did he determine who should govern and protect Normandy during his absence.[6] Foreign knights flocked to help him in great numbers,[7] attracted partly by the well-known liberality of the duke, but all fully confident of the justice of his cause.

After forbidding all plunder, he supported 50,000 men-at-arms at his own expense while unfavourable winds delayed him for a month at the mouth of the Dives.[8] Such was his moderation and wisdom that abundant provision was made for the soldiers and their hosts, and no one was permitted to seize anything. The cattle and flocks of the people of the province grazed safely whether in the fields or on the waste. The crops waited unharmed for the scythe of the harvester, and were neither trampled by the proud stampede of horsemen nor cut down by foragers. A man who was weak or unarmed could ride singing on his horse

Introduction, pp. xxiv–xxvi). The logistics involved in provisioning William's army have been discussed by B. S. Bachrach, 'Some observations on the military administration of the Norman Conquest', *Battle*, viii (1986), 1–25. He estimates the probable number of men in William's army as about 14,000 (the number given in the *Chronique de Saint-Maixent 751–1140*, ed. J. Verdon (Paris, 1979), p. 136), of whom 10,000 could have been effective fighting men. Other historians have suggested a lower figure (e.g. R. Allen Brown, 'The battle of Hastings', *Battle*, iii (1981), 1–21, at p. 10, suggests 7,000 for the force at Hastings).

imbecillis aut inermis, equo cantans qua libuit uectabatur, turmas militum cernens non exhorrescens.[1]

3. Tempore eodem sedebat in cathedra sancti Petri Romae papa Alexander dignissimus, cui obediret quemque consuleret ecclesia uniuersa. Responsa etenim edebat iusta salutariaque. Is praesul Luciensis, cum altiorem gradum nullatenus appeteret, uiolento plurimorum consensu, quorum apud Romanos tunc praecellebat auctoritas,[a] ingenti concilio assentiente, in eo locatus est primatu, quo praesulum orbis terrae caput existeret atque magister.[2] Allectionem hanc sanctitate meruerat atque doctrina. Per eadem post ad ortum solis et occasum effulgebat. Neque sui cursus limitem sol immutabilius natura, quam per ueritatis ille directum tendebat uita: quodquod ubiquaque per mundum potuit iniquum corrigens, nulli concedens.[3]

Huius apostolici fauorem petens dux, intimato negotio quod agitabat, uexillum accepit eius benignitate uelut suffragium sancti Petri, quo primo confidentius ac tutius inuaderet aduersarium.[4] Et Romanorum imperatori Henrico, Henrici imperatoris filio, nepoti imperatoris Chounradi, nouiter iunctus fuit in amicitia, cuius edicto in quemlibet hostem Germania ei, si postularet, ueniret adiutrix.[5] Rex quoque Danorum Suenus fidem legationibus ei spopondit, sed inimicis eius amicum

[a] *F*; authoritas *D M*

[1] The whole passage, 'Prouincialium . . . exhorrescens' is reproduced word for word below, ii. 45.

[2] Anselm, bishop of Lucca, was elected pope as Alexander II on 30 Sept. 1061. He had the support of Archdeacon Hildebrand and all the cardinal bishops, who met outside the walls of Rome for the election, and he was enthroned under the protection of Prince Richard of Capua and the Normans. His election was contested unsuccessfully by the party of the young king, Henry IV of Germany, who set up Cadalus, bishop of Parma, as antipope (H. E. J. Cowdrey, *The Age of Abbot Desiderius* (Oxford, 1983), p. 118; *Chronica monasterii Casinensi*, ed. H. Hoffmann, *MGH SS*, xxiv (1980), 385–6).

[3] WP's lavish praise may have been prompted by Alexander II's support for Duke William. Papal policy towards the Normans, both in Normandy and in South Italy, had been hostile, or at least cautious, in the early 1050s; after the defeat of Nicholas II at Civitate in 1059 relations improved in both areas, and Alexander II carried on the policies of his predecessor. See François Neveux, 'Quelques aspects de l'impérialisme normand au xi^e siècle en Italie et en Angleterre', in *Les Normands en Méditerranée*, ed. P. Bouet and F. Neveux (Caen, 1994), pp. 51–62, at 52–3.

wherever he wished, without trembling at the sight of squadrons of knights.[1]

3. At that time the see of St Peter at Rome was occupied by Pope Alexander, a most worthy man who was obeyed and consulted by the universal Church, for he gave just and salutary replies. When he was bishop of Lucca and sought no higher dignity, he was placed in the primacy by the impetuous concurrence of many of those whose authority prevailed at that time among the Romans and with the consent of a large assembly, so that he might be the head and master of the bishops of the whole world.[2] He deserved this promotion because of his holiness and learning. Through these he shone thereafter to the East and to the West. Nor did the sun proceed more immutably on its course in nature than he proceeded in his life on the straight line of truth; whatsoever and wheresoever in the world he could, he corrected wrong and gave way to no one.[3]

Seeking the approval of this pope, whom he had informed of the business in hand, the duke received a banner with his blessing, to signify the approval of St Peter,[4] by following which he might attack the enemy with greater confidence and safety. Also he had recently made a friendly pact with Henry, emperor of the Romans, son of the emperor Henry and grandson of the emperor Conrad, by the terms of which Germany would, if requested, come to his aid against any enemy.[5] Swein, king of the Danes, also pledged his faith to him through ambassadors; but he

[4] The *GG* is the only contemporary written source to mention the papal banner. But there is corroboration by Orderic Vitalis; for although Orderic relied partly on *GG* he had some independent information, and named Gilbert, archdeacon of Lisieux, as the envoy sent to seek support from Alexander II, who brought back the banner (OV ii. 142–3). It cannot be identified with certainty among the flags depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry (Renn, 'Burgeat', pp. 189, 191–2).

[5] There is no other evidence for this alliance, though William may well have taken steps to guard against any attack in the course of an inevitably very perilous and protracted enterprise. K. J. Leyser, 'England and the Empire in the early twelfth century', in his *Medieval Germany and its Neighbours 900–1250* (London, 1982), pp. 191–213, points out (p. 191) that the permission of the emperor given to men wishing to accompany the expedition could have assisted Flemish knights from fiefs held of the Empire in joining William's army.

exhibebat se fidelem, sicut in sequentibus legendo ipsius detrimenta spectabis.[1]

4. Heraldus interea promptus ad decernendum praelio siue terrestri, siue nauali, plerumque cum immani exercitu ad litus[a] marinum operiens,[2] callide subornatos transmisit exploratores.[3] Quorum deprehenso uni, causamque sui aduentus qua praeceptum est specie obtegere conato, dux animi sui magnitudinem prodidit his uerbis: 'Non indiget', inquit, 'Heraldus auri uel argenti iactura tuam aliorumque fidem atque solertiam emere, qui subdole speculatum[b] nos ueniatis. Quid consulatur, quid apparetur apud nos certior eum quam uelit et opinione eius citior index, quippe mea praesentia, docebit? Hoc ex me refer illi mandatum, nec ullam aduersitatem ex nobis ei suscipiendam esse, quominus reliquam aetatem securus agat, nisi intra annuum spacium, ubi tutiorem locum suis pedibus sperat, me conspexerit.'

Stupentes uero grande promissum primores Normannorum, multi diffidentiam suam non reticent. Amplificant oratione, quam desperatio dictauit, opes Heraldi, suas diminuunt. Thesauris illum abundare, quibus partis suae duces et reges praepotentes conducantur; classem habere plurimam, homines in ministeriis nauticis peritissimos, qui saepius pericula et praelia maritima sint experti; terra illius, uti diuitiis, ita militis copia, hanc multipliciter superari. Quis enim iuxta praestitutum naues perfici aut perfectis remiges inueniri annuo spatio posse speraret? Quis noua hac expeditione pulcherrimum statum patriae in omnem redigi miseriam non timeret? Quis Romani imperatoris opes ea uinci difficultate non affirmaret?

5. Erexit autem diffidentes dux hac elocutione: 'Innotuit nobis', ait' 'Heraldi sapientia: terrorem nobis ingerit, sed spem auget. Sua

[a] *D*; littus *M F* [b] spectaculum *D M F*

[1] Swein II Estrithson, king of Denmark (1043–74), was the son of Cnut's sister Estrith and himself had pretensions to the English throne. WP's account of his attack on England in 1069 was contained in the later part of his work, now lost; for its substance, see OV ii. 224–9.

[2] Cf. *ASC* (C) 1066, 'King Harold assembled a naval force and a land force larger than any king had assembled before in this country, because he had been told as a fact that Count William from Normandy, King Edward's kinsman, meant to come here and subdue this country.'

was to show himself the faithful friend of the duke's enemies, as you will see in reading in what follows of the harm he did.[1]

4. Harold meanwhile, ready to give battle on land or sea, spread out a vast army over the greater part of the sea-coast,[2] and sent spies whom he had cunningly suborned across the sea.[3] One of these was captured, and when he tried to conceal the purpose of his journey with the pretext he had been taught, the duke showed his magnanimity in these words: 'Harold is not short of gold and silver with which to buy the loyalty and skill of you and others who come to spy on us. As to what our plans and preparations are, would not my presence instruct him more certainly than he might wish, and more swiftly than he imagines? Take this message to him from me: he will have nothing to fear from me and can live the rest of his life secure if, within the space of one year, he has not seen me in the place he thinks safest for his feet.'

Marvelling at this audacious promise, many of the leaders of the Normans did not conceal their doubts. Desperation prompted them to exaggerate Harold's wealth in their discourse, and minimize their own. They said that Harold had abundant treasure with which to tempt dukes and powerful kings to join his side; he had numerous ships in his fleet and men skilled in nautical arts and hardened in many dangers and sea-battles; and both in wealth and numbers of soldiers his kingdom was greatly superior to their own land. Who could hope that within the prescribed space of one year a fleet could be built, or that oarsmen could be found to man it when it was built? Who would not fear that this new expedition would reduce the prosperous condition of their native land to utter wretchedness? Who would not affirm that the resources of a Roman emperor would be unequal to such a difficult enterprise?

5. But the duke encouraged the doubters with this speech. 'We know', he said, 'Harold's wisdom; it inspires us with fear, but increases our hope. He spends his wealth uselessly, scattering his

[3] There is no doubt that the English no less than the Normans made use of military intelligence. See above, p. xxiv.

quidem inutiliter expendet, aurum dissipans, non consolidans honorem. Non eo animi uiget robore quo uel minimum quid meorum polliceri audeat. At arbitrio meo pariter quae mea sunt, quaeque dicuntur illius, promittentur atque dabuntur.[1] Hostem haud dubie superabit qui non minus quae hostis possidet quam propria largiri ualet. Nauigio, quo sufficiente citius gaudebimus, non praepediemur.[2] Sint illi experti, quae nos cum felicitate maiori[a] experiamur: uirtute melius quam numero militum bella geruntur. Praeterea ne rapinam amittat ille pugnabit; nos quae dono accepimus, beneficiis comparauimus, requirimus. Quae partis nostrae prima fiducia periculum omne depellens, laetissimum triumphum nobis, summum decus, praeclarissimum nomen dabit.'

Etenim constabat uiro catholico ac sapienti, quod omnipotentia Dei, nihil uolens iniquum, iustam causam cadere non sineret, praesertim consideranti sese, qui non tantum ditionem suam et gloriam augere, quantum ritus christianos partibus in illis corrigere intendit.[3]

6. Iam tota classis prouidentissime exornata ab ostio Diuae uicinisque portubus, ubi Nothum, quo transmitterent, diutius expectauere, Zephyri flatu in stationem Sancti Gualerici delata est.[4] Ibi quoque precibus, donis, uotis, caelesti suffragio se commisit optime confidens princeps, quem neque mora siue contrarietas uenti, neque terribilia naufragia, neque pauida fuga multorum, qui fidem spoponderant, frangere praeualent. Quin et consilio aduersitatibus obuius, submersorum interitus quantum poterat occultauit, latentius tumulando;[5] commeatum in dies

[a] maiore *D M F*

[1] William's promises may have secured the offers of ships and men.

[2] For the ships contributed by Duke William's followers, see van Houts, 'Ship-list', p. 179. There is evidence too for the development of the port of Rouen under Duke William; see Gauthiez, 'Hypothèses sur la fortification de Rouen' (above, p. 12 n. 3), pp. 61–77. Ships may have been kept in the safe anchorage there as well as in the coastal harbours. WP's statement here that the fleet was being built and assembled contradicts his previous statement (ii. 8) that the delay was due to the wind.

[3] The theme of the need to reform the English church, developed by Norman apologists at the time of the Conquest, was later taken up by William of Malmesbury (*GR* ii. 304–5) and by Orderic Vitalis (OV ii. 236–49).

[4] For a discussion of the reason for the delay, see above, pp. xxv–xxvi. The *ASC* (C) 1066 entry gives a more convincing explanation: 'When his [King Harold's] fleet was assembled, he went into the Isle of Wight and lay there all that summer and autumn; and a land force was kept everywhere along the sea, though in the end it was of no use. When it was the Feast of the Nativity of St Mary [8 Sept.] the provisions of the people were gone, and nobody could keep them there any longer. Then the men were allowed to go home, and the king rode inland, and the ships were brought up to London, and many perished before they reached there.'

[5] Cf. the misfortunes of the English fleet (ibid.). This is the only early source to mention the shipwreck of some Norman ships on the way to Saint-Valery. Such loss was only to be expected with very large fleets moving along the Channel coasts. Cf. the damage suffered by Caesar's fleet during his first invasion of Britain (Caesar, *De bello gallico* iv. 28, 29).

gold without consolidating his lands. He had not the boldness of spirit to dare to promise even the least of what belongs to me. On the other hand both the things that are mine and those said to be his will be promised and given at my will.[1] Without doubt the man to triumph over his enemy will be he who has the confidence to distribute his enemy's possessions no less than his own. We will not be hindered by lack of shipping, for very soon we shall enjoy enough.[2] Let them experience what we will experience with greater good fortune: wars are waged more successfully with the courage than with the number of fighters. Besides, he will fight for fear of losing the things he has wrongly seized; we are claiming what we have received as a gift and earned by our favours. This fundamental confidence of our side, dispelling all danger, will give us a splendid triumph, great glory, and a famous name.'

For this wise and Christian man was firmly convinced that the omnipotence of God, which wills no evil, would not allow a just cause to fail, particularly since his intention was not so much to increase his own power and glory as to reform Christian observance in those regions.[3]

6. Presently the whole fleet, equipped with such great foresight, was blown from the mouth of the Dives and the neighbouring ports, where they had long waited for a south wind to carry them across, and was driven by the breath of the west wind to moorings at Saint-Valery.[4] There too the leader, whom neither the delay and the contrary wind nor the terrible shipwrecks nor the craven flight of many who had pledged their faith to him could shake, committed himself with the utmost confidence by prayers, gifts and vows, to the protection of heaven. Indeed, meeting adversity with good counsel, he concealed (as far as he could) the loss of those who had been drowned, by burying them in secret;[5] and by

augendo, inopiam leniuit. Ad hoc hortamine diuerso retraxit exterritos, animauit pauentes. Sacris supplicationibus adeo decertauit, ut corpus etiam acceptissimi Deo confessoris Gualerici, contra praepedientem et pro secundo uento, extra basilicam deferret, concurrente in eadem humilitatis arma concione profecturorum cum ipso.[1]

7. Spirante dein aura expectata, uoces cum manibus in caelum gratificantes, ac simul tumultus inuicem incitans tollitur; terra quam properantissime deseritur, dubium iter quam cupientissime initur. Eo namque celeritatis motu impelluntur, ut cum armigerum hic, socium inclamet ille, plerique immemores clientum, aut sociorum, aut rerum necessariarum, id solum ne relinquantur cogitant ac festinant. Increpat tamen atque urget in puppes ardens uehementia ducis, si quos ullatenus moram nectere notat.

Verum ne prius luce litus[a] quo intendunt attingentes, iniqua et minus nota statione periclitentur, dat praeconis uoce edictum, ut cum in altum sint deductae, paululum noctis conquiescant non longe a sua[2] rates cunctae in anchoris fluitantes, donec in eius mali summo lampade conspecta, extemplo buccinae clangorem cursus accipiant signum.[3]

Memorat antique Graecia Atridem Agamemnona fraternos thalamos ultum iuisse mille nauibus:[4] protestamur nos Guillelmum diadema regium requisisse pluribus.[5] Xerxem fabulatur illa Seston et Abidon ponto disiunctas urbes nauium ponte coniunxisse.[6] Guillelmum nos reuera propagamus, uno clauo suae

[a] *D*; littus *M F*

[1] For the alleged delay at Saint-Valery, see above, pp. xxv–xxvi. WJ does not suggest that there was any undue delay (*GND* ii. 164–7). King William's 1068 grant of land in Essex to the abbey of Saint-Valery was made as a thank-offering for the safe outcome of the whole enterprise (H. E. Salter, *Facsimiles of Early Charters in Oxford Muniment Rooms* (Oxford, 1929), p. 29); and not specifically for the favourable wind.

[2] WP may have had in mind both the experience of Caesar (*De bello gallico* iv. 23–6) and the fate of a small number of ships which became separated from the main fleet and landed at Romney; a misfortune he refrains from mentioning until describing Duke William's vengeance (below, ii. 27) after the battle of Hastings.

[3] The ship-list (above, p. 108 n. 2), names the ship *Mora*, and states that it was given by Duchess Matilda; Orderic names the ship's master as Stephen, son of Ainard (OV vi. 296–7). The description of the Channel crossing is full of Vergilian echoes, both in language and in picturesque detail (Foreville, pp. xli–xliii, 159 n. 3). In addition, some episodes are

daily increasing supplies he alleviated want. By divers encouragements he retained the terrified and put heart into the fearful. He strove with holy prayers to such a point that he had the body of Valery, a confessor most acceptable to God, carried out of the basilica to quell the contrary wind and bring a favourable one; all the assembled men-at-arms who were to set out with him shared in taking up the same arms of humility.[1]

7. At length the expected wind blows; voices and hands are raised to heaven in thanks, and at the same time a tumult arises as each one encourages the other. The land is left behind with all speed, and they embark eagerly on the hazardous journey. Their haste is so great that, as one calls for his squire and another for his companion, most, heedless of their dependants or friends or their necessary baggage, hurry forward fearful only of being left behind. The duke meanwhile, eager and vehement, admonishes any laggards he can see and urges them to embark in the ships.

But for fear that they might reach the shore to which they were bound before dawn and run into danger in a hostile and unknown landing place,[2] he has an order proclaimed by a herald that when they reach the open sea they should all rest at anchor for a short watch of the night not far from his ship, until they see a lamp lit at his masthead, and hear the sound of a trumpet as a signal to sail on.[3]

Ancient Greece tells us that Agamemnon of the house of Atreus went to avenge the violation of his brother's bed with a thousand ships;[4] but we protest that William claimed a royal crown with more.[5] Greece also tells the story of how Xerxes joined the towns of Sestos and Abydos, separated by the sea, with a bridge of boats.[6] As for us, we proclaim in truth that William

reminiscent of Caesar, who also became separated from part of his fleet and had to wait offshore for the remaining boats (*De bello gallico* iv. 22).

[4] Cf. *Ilias latina*, lines 120–9, 171–5, where the numbers add up to 1,086; the number 1,000, however, is more probably taken from Vergil, *Aeneid* ii. 197–8, 'quos neque Tydides nec Larissaeus Achilles, | non anni domuere decem, non mille carinae'.

[5] Wace gave the number 696 (Wace, *Rou* pt. iii, line 6425 (ii. 123)); if all kinds of transport are included 1,000 is not excessive. The number 3,000 given by WJ (*GND* ii. 164) is certainly inflated.

[6] The account of the bridge of boats built by Xerxes is fullest in Herodotus (vii. 33–6), whose work cannot have been known to WP. He probably took the reference from Lucan, *Pharsalia* ii. 672–5 and vi. 55–6, where both Sestos and Abydos are named.

potestatis Normannici soli et Anglici amplitudinem copulauisse. Guillelmum, qui a nullo unquam superatus patriam inclitis ornauit trophaeis, clarissimis locupletauit triumphis, superiore hostis manu deuicto Xerxi et sine classe aequandum, ac fortitudine anteponendum censemus.[1]

Solutis noctu post quietem nauibus, uehens ducem retro ceteras agillime reliquit ardentius ad uictoriam properantis, imperio suae uelocitatis parilitate quasi obtemperans. Iussus mane remex mali ab alto num quae ueniant consequae speculari, praeter pelagus et aera prospectui suo aliud nihil comperere[a] indicat. Confestim anchora iacta, ne metus atque moeror comitem turbam confundaret, abundans prandium nec baccho pigmentato carens, animosissimus dux, acsi in coenaculo domestico, memorabili cum hilaritate accepit; cunctos actutum affore promittens, Deo, cuius eos tutelae credidit, adducente. Non indignum duceret Mantuanus poetarum princeps laudibus Æneae Troiani, qui priscae Romae ut parens gloria fuit, securitatem atque intentionem huius mensae inserere.[2] Inquisitus denuo speculator, naues quatuor aduenire, tertio tantas exclamat, ut arborum ueliferarum uberrima densitas nemoris praestet similitudinem. Quo proinde spes ducis gaudio sit mutata, quam ex intimo corde diuinam glorificauerit pietatem, coniiciendum cuiuis relinquimus.

8. Peneuesellum prospero flatu prouectus, libere nauibus egreditur, pugna nulla obstante.[3] Equidem Heraldus in Eboracensem pagum recesserat, cum fratre suo Tostillo[4] et Heraldo Noricorum

[a] *M F*; comparere *D*

[1] An account of the Persian campaign against Greece and the ignominious retreat of Xerxes after the Greek victories at Salamis and Mycale (480 and 479 BC) is given by Justin, *Epitome*, ii. 10–13.

[2] WP may have had in mind the feasts described on various occasions by Vergil (e.g. *Aeneid* i. 695–747; vii. 107–34; viii. 175–83), though none of these actually took place at sea.

[3] WP never gives an exact date for the embarkation; later (ii. 38) he indicates that it was 'Octobris circiter calendas, die quo memoriam archangeli Michaelis ecclesia concelebrat.' The *ASC* (D) 1066 says that William came from Normandy to Pevensey on Michaelmas Eve; (E) that he landed at Hastings on Michaelmas Day (29 Sept.). Freeman argued ingeniously that both are right; William landed at Pevensey on 28 Sept. and moved to Hastings next day. The question of the exact date and place of landing is still open. Sussex archaeologists have questioned whether either Pevensey or Hastings is precisely right: E. H. Rudkin, 'Where did William land?' (*Sussex Magazine*, Feb. 1928) argued for a landing at a number of small places, in particulr Bulmer-Haven (near Bexhill) and Hastings-Haven (cited Foreville, p. 164, n. 3). It is possible that the landings of the very large number of boats were spread out over several beaches and harbours from Pevensey to Hastings.

[4] This is WP's first mention of Harold's brother Tostig, who was earl of Northumbria from 1055 until a rebellion of the Northumbrians forced him into exile in 1065 (*Vita Edwardi*, pp. 76–80 and nn. 188, 190).

linked together by his sway the wide extent of the Norman and English lands. We consider that William, who had never been conquered by anyone and had enriched his native land with famous trophies and splendid triumphs, was equal in strength and surpassing in courage to Xerxes, who was defeated by a stronger foe and had no fleet.[1]

When the ships set sail at night after the halt, the vessel carrying the duke at a great pace left the others behind, as if it responded to his command as he hastened to victory, by trying to equal his ardour by its speed. In the morning an oarsman, ordered to look out from the top of the mast for those following, reported that as far as he could see there was nothing but sea and sky. At once the anchor was dropped and, so that fear and grief might not trouble his companions, the mettlesome duke partook of an abundant meal, accompanied by spiced wine, as if he were in his hall at home, asserting with remarkable cheerfulness that all the others would arrive before long, guided by God to whose safekeeping he had entrusted them. Vergil, the prince of poets, would not have thought it unfitting to insert in his praise of the Trojan Aeneas (who was the ancestor and glory of ancient Rome) an account of the confidence and purpose of this banquet.[2] On being asked again, the look-out saw four ships following; the third time he exclaimed that there were so many they resembled a dense forest whose trees bore sails. We leave it to everyone to imagine how the duke's hope was turned to joy, and how much he glorified God's mercy from the depths of his heart.

8. Carried by a favourable breeze to Pevensey, they disembarked easily from the ships, without having to offer battle.[3] In fact Harold had gone away to Yorkshire to fight against his brother Tostig[4] and Harold, king of the

rege dimicaturus.[1] Nec mirere quod germanus permotus iniuriis, inuasi honoris aemulus, arma externa adduxit in Heraldum, quem germana[2] quoque illi moribus absimillima, cum armis non ualeret, uotis impugnabat et consilio, luxuria foedum, truculentum[a] homicidam, diuite rapina superbum, aduersarium aequi et boni. Voluit autem uirilis prudentiae femina intelligens honesta quaelibet ac uita colens, Guillelmum Anglis dominari, quem Edwardi regis mariti sui adoptio, filii loco, sibi succedere statuit: sapientem, iustum, fortem.[3]

9. *Bellum inter Guillelmum ducem et Heraldum regem Anglorum.*[4] Gaudentes arrepto littore, Normanni prima munitione Peneuessellum, altera Hastingas occupauere; quae sibi receptaculo, nauibus propugnaculo forent.[5] Marius, aut Magnus Pompeius, uterque eximius calliditate atque industria meritus triumphum, hic[b] adducto Romam in uinculis Iugurtha,[6] ille coacto Mithridate ad uenenum,[7] sic in hostium fines delatus formidaret agens militem uniuersum, se in periculum seorsim ab agmine cum legione segniter daret. Fuit illorum, et est ducum consuetudinis, dirigere non ire exploratores: magis ad uitam sibi, quam ut exercitui prouidentiam suam conseruarent.[8] Guillelmus uero cum uiginti quinque, non amplius militum comitatu promptus ipse loca et incolas explorauit. Inde reuertens, ob asperitatem tramitis pedes

[a] *M F*; truculutum *D* [b] *M F*; haec *D*

[1] Tostig had gone to Flanders in November 1065, and then sailed either by way of Normandy or directly to the Isle of Wight in April or May 1066. Orderic, the Hyde Chronicle, and *Quedam exceptiones* mention a visit to King Harold of Norway (*GND* ii. 162, n. 3, appendix, p. 302; OV ii. 168 and n. 1).

[2] His sister was Edith, the wife of Edward the Confessor. There is an element of sheer invective in WP's attack on Harold; but there is independent evidence, particularly in Domesday Book, of his great wealth, partly granted by King Edward and partly taken from various churches without their consent (see Robin Fleming, *Kings and Lords in Conquest England* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 84–5, 88–9). The charge of lasciviousness may have been prompted by his long association with his concubine, Edith Swan-neck, or with other concubines. Very different estimates of his character are given in the *Vita Edwardi* (pp. 46–8), and in the chronicle of the church he founded at Waltham (*Waltham Chronicle*, pp. 22–9 and *passim*).

[3] Queen Edith succeeded in making peace with William and may have endorsed his claim. See Pauline Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith* (Oxford, 1997), p. 275.

[4] The heading in Duchesne's edition probably marks the point where WP began the second part of his history. This edition, however, follows the division preferred in Foreville's edition.

Norwegians.[1] It is not surprising that his brother, incensed by his injuries and eager to regain his confiscated lands, should have brought foreign arms against Harold, while his sister, so unlike him in morals but unable to take up arms against him, fought him with prayers and counsel; for he was a man soiled with lasciviousness, a cruel murderer, resplendent with plundered riches, and an enemy of the good and the just.[2] This woman of masculine wisdom, who knew what was good and revered it in her life, wished William, who was wise, just and strong, to rule over the English, since her husband, King Edward, had chosen him as his successor by adoption in place of a son.[3]

9. *The battle between Duke William and Harold king of the English.*[4] The Normans, rejoicing after they had landed, occupied Pevensey with their first fortification, and Hastings with their second, as a refuge for themselves and a defence for their ships.[5] Marius and Pompey the Great, each eminent for his astuteness and achievements, deserved a triumph, the former having brought Jugurtha in chains to Rome,[6] the latter having forced Mithridates to take poison;[7] but though daring to lead a whole army into enemy territory, each was chary of putting himself into danger away from the main army, with only a legion. It was their custom, as it still is the custom of leaders, to send out scouts, but not to go themselves on reconnaissance, being more concerned with preserving their own lives than with making provision for the army.[8] But William was quick to investigate the region and its inhabitants with a company of no more than twenty-five knights. When he returned on foot because of the difficulty of the path (not without

[5] For Pevensey, see A. J. Taylor, 'Evidence for a pre-Conquest origin for the chapels in Hastings and Pevensey castles', *Château-Gaillard, European Castle Studies*, iii (London, 1969), 144–51. The Norman fortifications were constructed within the walls of the Roman fortress. The Bayeux Tapestry shows a motte under construction at Hastings (*Bayeux Tapestry*, pl. 51). A. J. Taylor has suggested that 'the motte that survives in much mutilated condition on Hastings cliff today is indeed the motte seen under construction in the Tapestry' ('Belrem', *Battle*, xiv (1992), 1–23, at p. 19).

[6] Cf. Sallust, *Bellum Iugurthinum*, cxiv. 3, 'Sed postquam bellum in Numidia confectum et Iugurtham Romam vinctum adduci nunciatum est, Marius consul absens factus est et ei decreto provincia Gallia, isque kalendis Ianuariis magna gloria consul triumphavit.'

[7] For Pompey's triumphs, cf. Lucan, *Pharsalia*, viii. 794–815.

[8] See Vegetius, iii. 6 (pp. 75–7).

(re non absque risu gesta, quanquam lector forte rideat) seriae laudi materiam dedit, gestans in humero sociatam suae loricam satellitis, dum nominatissimum ui corporis ut animi, Osberni filium Guillelmum ferreo fasce leuauit.[1]

10. Diues quidam finium illorum inquilinus, natione Normannus, Rotbertus[a] filius Guimarae nobilis mulieris,[2] Hastingas duci domino suo atque consanguineo nuntium destinauit his uerbis, 'Praeliatus cum fratre proprio rex Heraldus et cum rege Noricorum, quo fortiorem sub caelo nullum uiuere opinio fuit, pugna una ambos occidit, ingentes eorum exercitus deleuit. Animatus eo successu festinus redit in te, numerosissimum populum ducens ac robustissimum; aduersus quem non amplius tuos quam totidem despectabiles canes aestimo ualere.[3] Prudens uir computaris, domi militiaeque cuncta hactenus prudenter egisti. Nunc tibi consule, prouide labora, ne per temeritatem in discrimen unde non euadas temet ipse praecipites. Suadeo: intra munitiones mane; manu ad praesens confligere noli.' Dux contra nuntio, 'Pro mandato', inquit, 'quo mihi dominus tuus uult esse cautum, quanquam sine contumelia suadere decuerit, gratias ipsi et haec refer. Non me tutarer ualli aut moenium latebris, sed confligerem quamprimum cum Heraldo; nec diffiderem fortitudine meorum cum suis eum contritum iri, uoluntate diuina non resistente, tametsi decem sola millia uirorum haberem, quales ad sexaginta millia adduxi.'[4]

11. Quadam uero die,[5] dum custodiam nauium uiseret dux, indicatum est forte spatianti prope naualia, monachum Heraldi

[a] *D M*; Rodbertus *F*

[1] This appears to be one of the legends that quickly gathered round Duke William. If it is true, William probably carried the hauberk as they approached camp as a joke at fitz Osbern's expense. A well-made hauberk feels lighter when worn than when carried, and to take it off far from camp when reconnoitring enemy country would be foolhardy.

[2] Robert fitz Wimarch was of Breton or Norman origin. He was established in Essex by 1052 and occurs in charters from 1059. Normally he is styled 'minister'; but he is called king's kinsman in a charter for Waltham, 'procurator' in one for Wells, and 'regalis palatii stabilator et eiusdem regis propinquus' in the *Vita Edwardi* (see S. Keynes, 'Regenbald the chancellor (*sic*)', *Battle*, x (1988), 185–222.

[3] Whether or not Robert fitz Wimarch sent a warning couched in these insolent terms, King William made him sheriff of Essex and increased his property (J. Green, 'The sheriffs of William the Conqueror', *Battle*, v (1983), 129–45, at p. 132).

laughter, though the reader may laugh) he deserved genuine praise, for he carried on his own shoulders both his own hauberk and that of one of his followers, William fitz Osbern, renowned for his bodily strength and courage, whom he had relieved of this iron burden.[1]

10. Robert, son of the noblewoman Guimara, who was a wealthy inhabitant of those parts and a Norman by birth,[2] sent a messenger to Hastings to the duke, his lord and kinsman, with these words: 'King Harold has fought with his own brother and with the king of the Norwegians, who passed for the strongest man living under the sun, and has killed both in one battle and destroyed huge armies. Encouraged by this success, he is advancing against you by forced marches, leading a strong and numerous troop; against him I consider that your men would be worth no more than so many wretched dogs. You are reckoned a prudent man; up to now you have always acted prudently in peace and war.[3] Now I advise you, act circumspectly so as not to fall through rashness into a danger from which you will not escape. I urge you: stay behind fortifications; do not offer battle for the time being.' But the duke replied to the messenger, 'For the message in which your lord wishes me to be cautious (although it would have been decent to give advice without insult) give him my thanks and this reply: "I will not take refuge in the shelter of ditch or walls, but I will fight with Harold as soon as possible; nor do I lack confidence in the courage of my men to fight and destroy him with his men, if God so wills, even if I had only 10,000 men of the quality of the 60,000[4] I have brought with me".'

11. One day,[5] when the duke was inspecting the guard of the ships, he was told as he happened to be walking along near to

[4] The number is rhetorical exaggeration, characteristic of literary speeches. For the probable numbers, see above, p. 102 n. 8.

[5] The account of messages carried by a monk between Harold and William has some points in common with that in the *Carmen* (lines 209–46), and possibly originated in a similar oral tradition. WP, however, makes use of the exchange to spell out in detail the case for William's claim to the throne, and is much more specific on points of law. WJ, much briefer at this point, does not mention any exchanges (*GND* ii. 166–9). Orderic, using a different tradition, imagines exchanges between Harold, his brother Tostig, and his mother Gytha, both in his Interpolations (*GND* ii. 166–9) and in his *Ecclesiastical History* (OV ii. 170–2).

legatum adesse. Ipse protinus illum conuenit ingeniosa hac elocutione: 'Proximus', infit, 'ego sum Guillelmi comitis Normannorum ac dapifer. Eum alloquendi nisi per me copiam habere non poteris; quod affers mihi narra. Libens ille cognoscet idem per me, quia neminem suorum cariorem habet me. Post opportune, uti uoles, mea opera, coram loquutum uenies.' Legatione percepta, patefaciente monacho, sine cunctatione dux legatum hospitio recipi et officiosa humanitate curari praecepit. Ipse interim secum et cum suis quid mandatis responderet deliberabat.

In crastino discumbens in medio primatum suorum cucullato aduocato dixit, 'Ego sum Guillelmus, Dei gratia Normannorum princeps.[1] Quae mihi hesterno die retulisti, in horum nunc praesentia refer.' Legatus ita elocutus est, 'Haec tibi mandat rex Heraldus. Terram eius ingressus es, qua fiducia, qua temeritate, nescit. Meminit quidem quod rex Edwardus te Anglici regni haeredem fore pridem decreuerit, et quod ipse in Normannia de hac successione securitatem tibi firmauerit.[2] Nouit autem iure suum esse regnum idem, eiusdem regis domini sui dono in extremis illius sibi concessum.[3] Etenim ab eo tempore quo beatus Augustinus in hanc uenit regionem, communem gentis huius fuisse consuetudinem, donationem quam in ultimo fine suo quis fecerit, eam ratam haberi. Quapropter de terra iuste cum tuis te regredi postulat. Alioquin amicitiam et cuncta pacta per ipsum in Normannia tibi firmata soluet, penes te omnino relinquens ea.'

12. Auditis Heraldi mandatis, dux monachum inquisiuit num legatum suum ad Heraldum cum salute perducere uellet. Ille salutis eius ut propriae curam se habiturum spopondit. Dux illico

[1] The formula, 'Dei gratia', was frequently used by William in his ducal charters (Fauroux, nos. 94, 102, 109, 110, 115 and *passim*). His title in charters varies between 'dux' and 'comes', more rarely 'marchio', and occasionally 'princeps' (e.g. Fauroux, no. 177, 'ego Willelmus, Normannorum, Dei gratia, princeps').

[2] Part of the case for William, repeatedly stressed by WP.

[3] Cf. Eadmer, *HN*, p. 8, 'obit Edwardus, et juxta quod ipse ante mortem statuerat in regnum ei successit Haroldus.' The reference shows that WP was familiar with the English custom that gave overriding right to death-bed ('verba novissima') bequests, and was at pains to show that it had no force on this occasion. See J. S. Beckermann, 'Succession in Normandy, 1087, and in England, 1066: the role of testamentary custom', *Speculum*, xlvii (1972), 258–60; H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Death-bed testaments', *Fälschungen im Mittelalter* (*MGH Schriften*, 6 vols., Hanover, 1988–90), iv. 703–24, at pp. 716–20; Ann Williams, 'Some notes and considerations on problems connected with the English royal succession, 860–1066', *Battle*, i (1979), 144–67, at pp. 165–7.

the moorings that a monk had arrived as an envoy from Harold. He went to meet him at once, and made this skilful speech, 'I am the steward of William, count of the Normans, and the person nearest to him. You cannot have access to speak to him except through me; tell me the message that you bring. He will hear it willingly from me, for he holds no one dearer. After I have done my work you may come at a convenient moment as you wish, to speak with him.' After hearing the message, as the monk revealed it, the duke ordered the envoy to be lodged without delay and entertained with humanity and courtesy. Meanwhile he deliberated within himself and with his men, as to how he should reply to the message.

In the morning, sitting in the midst of his magnates, he said to the cowled advocate, 'I am William, by the grace of God prince of the Normans.[1] Repeat now in the presence of these men what you told me yesterday.' The envoy spoke as follows: 'King Harold sends you this message. You have invaded his land, whether from confidence or rashness he does not know. He recalls, indeed, that King Edward formerly decreed that you should be heir to the English kingdom, and that he himself gave you surety in Normandy for this succession.[2] He knows, however, that the kingdom is his by right, by gift of the same king his lord, made to him on his deathbed.[3] For ever since the time when St Augustine came to these parts, the common custom of this people has been that the gift that anyone made at the point of death shall be held as valid. Wherefore he rightly demands that you should leave this land with your men. Otherwise he will end the friendship and break all the pacts made by him to you in Normandy, leaving the responsibility entirely with you.'

12. After hearing Harold's message the duke asked the monk if he would be willing to escort his own envoy to Harold in safety. The monk promised to care for his safety as for his own.

uerbis his monachum Fiscannensem[1] quendam instruxit, quae citius Heraldo deferret, 'Non temere neque iniuste, sed consulto et aequitatis ductu in hanc terram transuectus sum; cuius me haeredem, ut Heraldus ipse fatetur, statuit dominus meus et consanguineus rex Edwardus, ob maximos honores et plurima beneficia quae illi atque fratri suo, necnon hominibus eorum, ego et maiores mei impendimus; et quoniam omnium, qui genus suum attingerent, me credebat excellentissimum, qui optime ualerem uel ei, quamdiu uiueret, subuenire, uel posteaquam decederet regnum gubernare. Sane neque id absque suorum optimatum consensu, uerum consilio Stigandi archiepiscopi, Godwini comitis, Leurici comitis, Sigardi comitis, qui etiam iureiurando suis manibus confirmauerunt, quod post Edwardi decessum me reciperent dominum, nec ullatenus peterent in uita illius patriam hanc ullo impedimento contra me occupari. Obsides mihi dedit Godwini filium ac nepotem.[2] Postremo Heraldum ipsum in Normanniam transmisit, ut quod pater eius atque caeteri supranominati hic mihi iurauere absenti, is ibi praesens iuraret praesenti. Qui dum pergeret ad me, in periculum captionis incidit, unde mea eum prudentia ac fortitudine eripui. Se mihi per manus suas dedit, sua manu securitatem mihi de regno Anglico firmauit.[3] Praesto ego sum ad agendum causam contra illum in iudicio, siue placet illi iuxta ius Normannorum, siue potius Anglorum. Si secundum aequitatis ueritatem decreuerint Normanni aut Angli, quod ille regnum hoc iure debeat possidere, cum pace possideat. Si uero mihi iustitiae debito reddendum esse consenserint, mihi dimittat. At si conditionem hanc repudiauerit, non duco iustum ut homines mei uel sui concidant praeliando, quorum in lite nostra culpa nulla est. Ecce paratus ego sum capite

[1] The appearance of the monk of Fécamp in William's company is certainly authentic. The royal monastery of Fécamp had received lands in Sussex from Cnut and Edward the Confessor: although some were taken over by Harold, the abbey retained property called 'Rameslie' in the hundred of Guestling, and some tolls in the port of Winchelsea. See above, pp. xxiv–xxv. The monks were familiar with Hastings and its hinterland, and could have provided guides for the Norman invaders. Remigius of Fécamp had also given a ship with twenty knights (van Houts, 'Ship-list', pp. 178–9); and William of Malmesbury recorded that King William recognized a debt to him when he made him bishop of Dorchester (*GP* pp. 312–13, 'Remigius, ex monacho Fiscannensi, qui Willelmo comite Normannorum in Anglia venienti auxilium in multis praebuerit, episcopatum, si vinceret, pactus nec fuit Willelmus segnior in dando quam Remigius in accipiendo').

[2] See above, i. 14.

[3] See above, i. 41, 42. WP here indicates both that Harold became William's vassal and that he swore a handfast oath.

Whereupon the duke instructed a certain monk of Fécamp[1] in the words he was to take forthwith to Harold: 'Neither rashly nor unjustly, but after taking counsel and guided by equity I have crossed the sea to enter this land, of which my lord and kinsman King Edward (as Harold himself says) made me his heir, on account of the great honours and numerous benefits which I and my ancestors conferred on him and his brother and their men; also because, of all those belonging to his line, he believed me to be the most worthy and the most able either to help him while he lived, or to govern the kingdom after his death. Certainly he did not do this without the consent of his magnates, but in truth with the advice of Archbishop Stigand, Earl Godwine, Earl Leofric, and Earl Siward, who also confirmed with a handfast oath, that after the death of Edward they would receive me as their lord, and that during his lifetime they would not seek at any time to deprive me of the kingdom through any impediment. He gave me the son and grandson of Godwine as hostages.[2] Finally he sent Harold himself to Normandy, so that he might swear to me there and in person what his father and the others named above had sworn to me in my absence. When he was on his journey, he fell into a perilous captivity, from which I rescued him by my prudence and power. He made himself my vassal by giving his hands to me, and gave me surety with his own hand concerning the kingdom of England.[3] I am ready to put my case against him to judgement, by the law of the English or of the Normans as he prefers. If according to a true and equitable judgement the Normans or the English decree that he ought by right to possess this kingdom, let him possess it in peace. If they agree that it should justly be surrendered to me, let him abandon it to me. But if he rejects this proposition, I do not consider it right that either my men or his should fall in battle, for they have no guilt in our dispute. See, I am ready to assert, by my

meo contra caput illius asserere, quod mihi potius quam illi iure cedat regnum Anglicum.'[1]

Hanc uerborum ducis diligenter compertam sententiam magis quam dictatum nostrum in oculos plurimorum uenire uolumus, quia plurimorum perpetuo fauore eum desideramus laudari. Pulchre colligetur et ex ea, quod uere prudens, iustus, pius ac fortis extiterit. Rationum namque copia, sicut liquet attento, quas infirmare nec ualeret eloquentiae romanae maximus author Tullius, Heraldi rationem destruxit. Denique iudicium, quod iura gentium[2] definirent, accipere praesto fuit. Anglos inimicos mori ob litem suam noluit; singulari certamine proprio capite causam determinare uoluit.

13. Vt ergo mandata eadem Heraldo appropinquanti per monachum sunt relata, stupore expalluit, atque diu ut elinguis obticuit. Rogitanti autem responsum legato semel et iterum, primo respondit: 'Pergimus continenter'; secundo: 'Pergimus ad pretium.'[a] Instabat legatus ut aliud responderetur, repetens: non interitum exercituum, sed singulare certamen Normanno duci placere. Nam uir strenuus et bonus iustum aliquid ac laetum renuntiare, nec multos occumbere uolebat; Heraldi caput, pro quo minor fortitudo, aequitas nulla staret, casurum confidens. Tum leuato Heraldus in caelum uultu ait: 'Dominus inter me et Guillelmum hodie quod iustum est decernat.'[3] Regnandi siquidem cupidine caecatus, simul ob trepidationem oblitus iniuriae, conscientiam in ruinam sui rectum iudicem optauit.

14. Interea exploratum directi ducis iussu probatissimi equites, hostem adesse citi nuntiant. Accelerabat enim eo magis rex

[a] *D F*; praelium *suggested M*

[1] The judicial duel was established in the custom of Normandy, not in that of England (Tardif, i. xli, pp. 34–5); F. Pollock and F. W. Maitland, *The History of English Law before the Time of Edward I* (2nd edn., Cambridge, 1968), i. 74. Such an offer, if made, would have been unacceptable to an Englishman. In the well-established practice of Normandy and northern France an offer of the ordeal or trial by battle was frequently a manœuvre never intended to be taken up, made to gain a judicial advantage; see S. D. White, 'Proposing the ordeal and avoiding it: strategy and power in Western French litigation, 1050–1110', *Cultures of Power: Lordship, Status and Process in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Thomas N. Bisson (Philadelphia, 1995), pp. 89–123.

head against his head, that the English kingdom should be mine rather than his by right.'[1]

We wish to bring the tenor of the duke's own words (which we have diligently sought out) rather than our own composition to the notice of many, because we desire him to have the widest possible esteem and praise for ever. From his words it is beautifully clear that he showed himself truly prudent, just, dutiful and valiant. For a host of sound arguments, as clearly appears to those who are attentive (which even Cicero, the greatest writer of Roman rhetoric could not have weakened), destroyed the case of Harold. In short, William was ready to accept a judgement determined by the laws of peoples.[2] He did not wish the English to die as enemies on account of his dispute; he wished to decide the case by risking his own head in single combat.

13. When the envoy had conveyed these messages to Harold as he advanced, he turned pale with astonishment and for a long time remained silent as though dumbstruck. As the envoy asked again and again for a reply, he answered first, 'We continue to advance', and secondly, 'We go on to victory.' The envoy urged him to give another reply, repeating that the Norman duke did not want the destruction of armies, but only single combat. For this brave and good man preferred to renounce something that was just and agreeable rather than cause the death of many men, being confident that Harold's head would fall since his courage was less and his cause unjust. Then Harold, lifting his face to heaven, said, 'May the Lord decide today between me and William what is just.'[3] So, blinded by the desire to rule and forgetful, in his confusion, of the wrong he had done, he chose his conscience as his just judge, to his ruin.

14. Meanwhile experienced knights, who had been sent out scouting, reported that the enemy would soon be there. For the

[2] By the 'laws of peoples' WP meant the different legal customs of the Normans and the English; this is not the *ius gentium* of Roman law.

[3] The *Carmen* also (lines 303–4) makes Harold declare that God will judge between them. Cf. Gen. 16: 5, 'Judicet Dominus inter me et te'.

furibundus, quod propinqua castris Normannorum uastari audierat.[1] Nocturno etiam incursu aut repentino minus cautos opprimere cogitabat. Et ne perfugio abirent, classe armata ad septingentas naues in mari opposuerat insidias.[2] Dux propere quotquot in castris inuenti sunt (pleraque enim sociorum pars eo die pabulatum ierat) omnes iubet armari. Ipse mysterio missae quam maxima cum deuotione assistens, corporis ac sanguinis Domini communicatione suum et corpus et animam muniuit. Appendit etiam humili collo suo reliquias, quarum fauorem Heraldus abalienauerat sibi, uiolata fide quam super eas iurando sanxerat. Aderant comitati e Normannia duo pontifices, Odo Baoicensis et Goisfredus Constantinus, una multus clerus et monachi nonnulli. Id collegium precibus pugnare disponitur.[3] Terreret alium loricae, dum uestiretur, sinistra conuersio. Hanc conuersionem risit ille ut casum, non ut mali prodigium expauit.[4]

15. Exhortationem, qua pro tempore breuiter militum uirtuti plurimum alacritatis addidit, egregiam fuisse non dubitamus; etsi nobis non ex tota dignitate sua relatam.[5] Commonuit Normannos, quod in multis atque magnis periculis uictores tamen se duce semper extiterint. Commonuit omnes patriae suae, nobilium gestorum, magnique nominis. Nunc probandum esse manu, qua uirtute polleant, quem gerant animum. Iam non id agi, quis regnans uiuat, sed quis periculum imminens cum uita euadat. Si more uirorum pugnent, uictoriam, decus, diuitias habituros.

[1] Quite apart from the need to obtain provisions for the army, wasting the lands of an enemy was a normal practice in medieval warfare (cf. *Jordan Fantosme's Chronicle*, ed. R. C. Johnston (Oxford, 1981), lines 449–50, 'Issi deit l'en cumencier guerre—ço m'est vis— | Primes guaster la terre e puis ses enemis'). William's purpose was to provoke Harold to a decisive battle (cf. *Bayeux Tapestry*, pl. 52). Harold had considerable estates in Sussex (Ann Williams, 'Land and power in the eleventh century: the estates of Harold Godwineson', *Battle*, iii (1981), 171–87).

[2] There may have been rumours of a possible naval ambush, but it is unlikely that Harold would have had time to bring his ships out of their winter quarters in the Thames (*ASC* (C) 1066), or to make up anything like 700 from any ships remaining in the Channel ports.

[3] WP insists both on the piety of Duke William and on the canonically correct non-combatant role of the two bishops, Odo of Bayeux and Geoffrey of Coutances, both of whom were capable of leading troops in battle. In a similar vein, Odo is shown in the Bayeux Tapestry (pl. 68), dressed in a padded tunic, not a hauberk, and encouraging the troops with a mace, not a sword. For Geoffrey, see J. Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray, bishop of Coutances, 1049–1093', *EHR* lix (1944), 129–61; Chibnall, 'Geoffroi' pp. 279–93.

furious king was hastening his march all the more because he had heard that the lands near to the Norman camp were being laid waste.[1] He thought that in a night or surprise attack he might defeat them unawares; and, in case they should try to escape, he had laid a naval ambush for them with an armed fleet of up to 700 ships.[2] The duke hastily ordered all who could be found in the camp (for a large number of his companions had gone off foraging) to arm themselves. He himself participated in the mystery of the Mass with the greatest devotion, and strengthened his body and soul by receiving in communion the body and blood of the Lord. He hung around his neck in humility the relics whose protection Harold had forfeited by breaking the oath that he had sworn on them. Two bishops who had accompanied him from Normandy, Odo of Bayeux and Geoffrey of Coutances, were in his company, together with numerous clerks and not a few monks. This clerical body prepared for the combat with prayers.[3] Anyone else would have been terrified by putting on his hauberk back to front. But William laughed at this inversion as an accident and did not fear it as a bad omen.[4]

15. We do not doubt that the exhortation, brief because of the circumstances, with which he added still greater ardour to the valour of his troops, was outstanding, even though it has not been transmitted to us in all its distinction.[5] He reminded the Normans that in many and great dangers they had always come out victorious under his leadership. He reminded them all of their fatherland, of their noble exploits and their great fame. Now they were to prove with their arms with what strength they were endowed, with what valour they were inspired. Now the question was not who should live and rule, but who should escape alive from imminent danger. If they fought like men they would have victory, honour, and wealth. If not, they would let themselves either be

[4] See above, p. xxx. Cf. the attitude of Caesar to omens (Suetonius, *Caesar*, c. lix). The story grew and was embellished in time in the *Brevis relatio* (p. 7) and Wace, *Rou*, lines 12637–68.

[5] For the substance of William's speech, cf. Sallust, *Bellum Catilinum*, lviii. 4–21. Medieval chroniclers followed their Roman forerunners by providing the imagined contents of speeches; WP is unusual in stating explicitly that he has imagined the words probably spoken by the duke of this occasion.

Alioquin aut ocius trucidari, aut captos ludibrio fore hostibus crudelissimis. Ad hoc ignominia sempiterna infamatum iri. Ad effugium nullam uiam patere, cum hic arma et inimica ignotaque regio obsistant, illinc pontus et arma. Non decere uiros multitudine terreri. Saepenumero Anglos hostili ferro deiectos cecidisse, plerumque superatos in hostis uenisse deditionem, nunquam gloria militiae laudatos. Imperitos bellandi strenua uirtute paucorum facile posse conteri,[1] praesertim cum iustae causae praesidium caeleste non desit. Audeant modo, nequaquam cedant, triumpho citius gauisuros fore.

16. Hac autem commodissima ordinatione progreditur, uexillo praeuio quod apostolicus transmiserat.[2] Pedites in fronte locauit, sagittis armatos et balistis,[3] item pedites in ordine secundo firmiores et loricatos; ultimo turmas equitum, quorum ipse fuit in medio cum firmissimo robore, unde in omnem partem consuleret manu et uoce.[4] Scribens Heraldi agmen illud ueterum aliquis, in eius transitu flumina epotata, siluas in planum redactas fuisse memoraret.[5] Maximae enim ex omnibus undique regionibus copiae Anglorum conuenerant. Studium pars Heraldo, cuncti patriae praestabant, quam contra extraneos tametsi non iuste, defensare uolebant. Copiosa quoque auxilia miserat eis cognata terra Danorum. Non tamen audentes cum Guillelmo ex aequo confligere, plus eum quam regem Noricorum extimentes, locum editiorem praeoccupauere, montem siluae per quam aduenere uicinum.[6] Protinus equorum ope relicta, cuncti pedites constitere

[1] Cf. Vegetius, iii. 26 (p. 122), 'Amplius iuvat uirtus quam multitudo.'

[2] For the battle order, see above, pp. xxxii–xxxiii.

[3] The question of the use of cross-bows at the battle of Hastings is discussed by Morton and Muntz, *Carmen*, App. C, pp. 112–15.

[4] Cf. Sallust, *Bellum Iugurthinum*, c. xcviii, on the leadership of Marius in battle, 'Neque in eo tam aspero negotio Marius territus aut magis quam antea demisso animo fuit, sed cum turma sua, quam ex fortissimis magis quam familiarissumis paraverat, vagari passim ac modo laborantibus suis succurrere, modo hostis, ubi confestissumi obstiterant inuadere; *manu consulere militibus* quoniam imperare conturbatis omnibus non poterat.'

[5] Cf. Juvenal, *Satires*, x. 173, especially, 'credimus altos defecisse omnes epotataque flumina | Medo prandente . . .', and Justin, *Epitome*, ii. 10, on the advance of the army of Xerxes, 'flumina ab exercitu eius siccata . . . et montes in planum deducebat et convexa vallium aequabat.' A similar figure of speech occurs in the *Carmen* (lines 321–2), where the translation of 'siluas' as 'forests [of spears]' must surely be an error.

[6] Harold's housecarls accompanied him in the rush south after Stamford Bridge, and he was certainly joined by the local troops. The English sources tended to understate and the Norman to exaggerate the size of the English army (see Freeman, iii, note LL). Both the *ASC* (E) 1066 and the Worcester Chronicle (JW ii. 604) state that Harold fought the battle before all his troops had assembled (though *ASC* (D) 1066 says that Harold assembled a large army). WP's statement that the Danes sent support is uncorroborated. Even today, after the top of the hill at Battle had been levelled for the building of Battle Abbey, the strength of Harold's position is impressive. Harold may have supposed that he could effectively bar William's advance towards London, and that William would not attempt to attack on such unfavourable terrain.

slaughtered, or captured to be mocked by the most cruel enemies—not to mention that they would bring on themselves perpetual ignominy. No way was open to flight, since their way was barred on one side by armed forces and a hostile and unknown country, and on the other by the sea and armed forces. It was not seemly for men to be terrified by numbers. Many times the English had fallen, overthrown by enemy arms; usually, defeated, they had surrendered to the enemy; never were they famed for the glory of their feats of arms. Men who were inexpert in warfare could easily be crushed by the valour and strength of a few,[1] especially since help from on high was not lacking in a just cause. Let them now dare and never yield, and they would soon rejoice in a triumph.

16. Now this is the well-planned order in which he advanced behind the banner which the pope had sent him.[2] He placed foot-soldiers in front, armed with arrows and cross-bows;[3] likewise foot-soldiers in the second rank, but more powerful and wearing hauberks; finally the squadrons of mounted knights, in the middle of which he himself rode with the strongest force, so that he could direct operations on all sides with hand and voice.[4] If any author of antiquity had been writing of Harold's line of march he would have recorded that in his passage rivers were dried up and forests laid flat.[5] For huge forces of English had assembled from all the shires. Some showed zeal for Harold, and all showed love of their country, which they wished to defend against invaders even though their cause was unjust. The land of the Danes (who were allied by blood) also sent copious forces. However, not daring to fight with William on equal terms, for they thought him more formidable than the king of the Norwegians, they took their stand on higher ground, on a hill near to the wood through which they had come.[6] At once dismounting from their horses,

densius conglobati. Dux cum suis neque loci territus asperitate, ardua cliui sensim ascendit.

17. Terribilis clangor lituorum pugnae signa cecinit utrinque. Normannorum alacris audacia pugnae principium dedit. Taliter cum oratores in iudicio litem agunt de rapina, prior ferit dictione qui crimen intendit.[1] Pedites itaque Normanni propius accedentes prouocant Anglos, missilibus in eos uulnera dirigunt atque necem. Illi contra fortiter, quo quisque ualet ingenio, resistunt. Iactant cuspides ac diuersorum generum tela, saeuissimas quasque secures, et lignis imposita saxa.[2] Iis, ueluti mole letifera, statim nostros obrui putares. Subueniunt equites, et qui posteriores fuere fiunt primi. Pudet eminus pugnare, gladiis rem gerere audent.[3] Altissimus clamor, hinc Normannicus, illinc barbaricus, armorum sonitu et gemitu morientium superatur. Sic aliquandiu summa ui certatur ab utrisque. Angli nimium adiuuantur superioris loci opportunitate, quem sine procursu tenent, et maxime conferti; ingenti quoque numerositate sua atque ualidissima corpulentia; praeterea pugnae instrumentis, quae facile per scuta uel alia tegmina uiam inueniunt. Fortissime itaque sustinent uel propellunt ausos in se districtum ensibus impetum facere. Vulnerant et eos qui eminus in se iacula coniiciunt. Ecce igitur hac saeuitia perterriti auertuntur pedites pariter atque equites Britanni, et quotquot auxiliares erant in sinistro cornu; cedit fere cuncta ducis acies, quod cum pace dictum sit Normannorum inuictissimae nationis. Romanae maiestatis exercitus, copias regum continens, uincere solitus terra marique, fugit aliquando, cum ducem suum sciret aut crederet occisum. Credidere Normanni ducem ac dominum suum cecidisse. Non ergo nimis pudenda fuga cessere; minime uero dolenda, cum plurimum iuuerit.

[1] WP possibly had in mind his own experience of the conduct of suits in the Norman courts.

[2] For the axes used by the English in the battle, see I. Peirce, 'Arms, armour and warfare in the eleventh century', *Battle*, x (1988), 237–57, at pp. 245–6.

[3] The use of the couched lance by mounted knights was restricted in this battle, because of the nature of the terrain; hence the sword, or the javelin thrown from a distance, became particularly important. See above, p. xxxiii; and, for the use of the lance, Jean Flori, 'Encore l'usage de la lance . . . la technique du combat chevaleresque vers l'an 1100', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, xxxi (1988), 213–40.

they lined up all on foot in a dense formation. Undeterred by the roughness of the ground, the duke with his men climbed slowly up the steep slope.

17. The harsh bray of trumpets gave the signal for battle on both sides. The Normans swiftly and boldly took the initiative in the fray. Similarly, when orators are engaged in a lawsuit about theft, he who prosecutes the crime makes the first speech.[1] So the Norman foot-soldiers closed to attack the English, killing and maiming many with their missiles. The English for their part resisted bravely each one by any means he could devise. They threw javelins and missiles of various kinds, murderous axes and stones tied to sticks.[2] You might imagine that our men would have been crushed at once by them, as by a death-dealing mass. The knights came to their rescue, and those who had been in the rear advanced to the fore. Disdaining to fight from a distance, they attacked boldly with their swords.[3] The loud shouting, here Norman, there foreign, was drowned by the clash of weapons and the groans of the dying. So for a time both sides fought with all their might. The English were greatly helped by the advantage of the higher ground, which they held in serried ranks without sallying forward, and also by their great numbers and densely-packed mass, and moreover by their weapons of war, which easily penetrated shields and other protections. So they strongly held or drove back those who dared to attack them with drawn swords. They even wounded those who flung javelins at them from a distance. So, terrified by this ferocity, both the footsoldiers and the Breton knights and other auxiliaries on the left wing turned tail; almost the whole of the duke's battle line gave way, if such a thing may be said of the unconquered people of the Normans. The army of the Roman empire, containing royal contingents and accustomed to victory on land and sea, fled occasionally, when it knew or believed its leader to have been killed. The Normans believed that their duke and lord had fallen, so it was not too shameful to give way to flight; least of all was it to be deplored, since it helped them greatly.

18. Princeps namque prospiciens multam partem aduersae stationis prosiluisse, et insequi terga suorum, fugientibus occurrit et obstitit, uerberans aut minans hasta.[1] Nudato insuper capite detractaque galea exclamans:[2] 'Me', inquit, 'circumspicite. Viuo et uincam, opitulante Deo. Quae uobis dementia fugam suadet? Quae uia patebit ad effugiendum? Quos ut pecora mactare potestis, depellunt uos et occidunt. Victoriam deseritis, ac perpetuum honorem; in exitium curritis ac perpetuum opprobrium. Abeundo mortem nullus uestrum euadet.' His dictis receperunt animos. Primus ipse procurrit fulminans ense, strauit aduersam gentem, quae sibi, regi suo,[3] rebellans commeruit mortem. Exardentes Normanni et circumuenientes aliquot millia insecuta se, momento deleuerunt ea, ut ne quidem unus superesset.

19. Ita confirmati, uehementius immanitatem exercitus inuaserunt, qui maximum detrimentum passus non uidebatur minor. Angli confidenter totis uiribus oppugnabant, id maxime laborantes, ne quem aditum irrumpere uolentibus aperirent. Ob nimiam densitatem eorum labi uix potuerunt interempti.[a] Patuerunt tamen in eos uiae incisae per diuersas partes fortissimorum militum ferro. Institerunt eis Cenomanici,[4] Francigenae, Britanni, Aquitani,[5] sed cum praecipua uirtute Normanni. Tiro quidam Normannus Rodbertus, Rogerii de Bellomonte filius, Hugonis de Mellento comitis ex Adelina sorore nepos et haeres,[6] praelium illo die primum experiens, egit quod aeternandum esset laude: cum legione, quam in dextro cornu duxit, irruens ac sternens magna cum audacia. Non est nostrae facultatis, nec permittit intentio nostra, singulorum fortia facta pro merito narrare. Copia dicendi

[a] *F*; interemi *D*; interemti *M*

[1] Cf. Suetonius, *Caesar*, c. lxii, 'Inclinatam aciem solus saepe restituit, obsistens fugientibus, retinensque singulos et contortis faucibus convertens in hostem.'

[2] Cf. *Bayeux Tapestry*, pl. 68; *Carmen*, lines 447–8.

[3] In general WP refrained from giving the title 'rex' to William before his coronation; in this rare instance, 'legitimate' must be understood.

[4] Although WP does not name any of the men of Maine who took part in the battle, Jean Dunbabin has suggested that Geoffrey of Chaumont may have been one of them (Dunbabin, p. 112).

[5] Among these was certainly Aimeri, vicomte ('*praeses*') of Thouars, twice named by WP (see below, ii. 22, 29; Jane Martindale, 'Aimeri of Thouars and the Poitevin connection', *Battle*, vii (1985), 224–45, at pp. 224–5).

18. For the leader, seeing a great part of the opposing force springing forward to pursue his men, rushed towards them, met them as they fled and halted them, striking out and threatening with his spear.[1] Baring his head and lifting his helmet,[2] he cried, 'Look at me. I am alive, and with God's help I will conquer. What madness is persuading you to flee? What way is open to escape? You could slaughter like cattle the men who are pursuing and killing you. You are abandoning victory and imperishable fame, and hurrying to disaster and perpetual ignominy. Not one of you will escape death by flight.' At these words they recovered their courage. He rushed forward at their head, brandishing his sword, and mowed down the hostile people who deserved death for rebelling against him, their king.[3] Full of zeal the Normans surrounded some thousands who had pursued them and destroyed them in a moment, so that not a single one survived.

19. Emboldened by this, they launched an attack with greater determination on the main body of the army, which in spite of the heavy losses it had suffered seemed not to be diminished. The English fought confidently with all their might, striving particularly to prevent a gap being opened by their attackers. They were so tightly packed together that there was hardly room for the slain to fall. However paths were cut through them in several places by the weapons of the most valiant knights. Pressing home the attack were men of Maine,[4] Frenchmen, Bretons, Aquitanians,[5] above all Normans, whose valour was outstanding. A certain young Norman knight, Robert the son of Roger of Beaumont, nephew and heir of Hugh count of Meulan through Hugh's sister Adeline,[6] while fighting that day in his first battle performed a praiseworthy deed, which deserves to be immortalized; charging with the battalion he commanded on the right wing, he laid the enemy low with the greatest audacity. We have not the means, and it is not our intention, to describe all the exploits of individuals as their merit deserves. The most eloquent writer who had seen that

[6] For Roger of Beaumont, see above, ii. 1. His wife Adeline was a daughter of Waleran I, count of Meulan; her brother Hugh became a monk at Bec. In 1066 young Robert was only heir presumptive. He was granted extensive lands in England by King William, and was made earl of Leicester by Henry I *c.*1107 (*CP* vii. 523–4).

ualentissimus, qui bellum illud suis oculis didicerit, difficillime singula quaeque persequeretur.[1] At huc[a] nos illo properamus, ut finita Guillelmi comitis laude, Guillelmi regis gloriam scribamus.[2]

20. Animaduertentes Normanni sociaque turba, non absque nimio sui incommodo hostem tantum simul resistentem superari posse, terga dederunt, fugam ex industria simulantes.[3] Meminerunt quam optatae rei paulo ante fuga dederit occasionem. Barbaris cum spe uictoriae ingens laetitia exorta est. Sese cohortantes exultante clamore nostros maledictis increpabant, et minabantur cunctos illico ruituros esse. Ausa sunt ut superius aliquot milia[b] quasi uolante cursu, quos fugere putabant, urgere. Normanni repente regiratis equis interceptos et inclusos undique mactauerunt, nullum relinquentes.

21. Bis eo dolo simili euentu usi, reliquos maiori cum alacritate aggressi sunt: aciem adhuc horrendam, et quam difficillimum erat circumuenire. Fit deinde insoliti generis pugna, quam altera pars incursibus et diuersis motibus agit, altera uelut humo affixa tolerat. Languent Angli, et quasi reatum ipso defectu confitentes, uindictam patiuntur. Sagittant,[4] feriunt, perfodiunt Normanni: mortui plus dum cadunt, quam uiui, moueri uidentur. Leuiter sauciatos non permittit euadere, sed comprimendo necat sociorum densitas. Ita felicitas pro Guillelmo triumpho maturando cucurrit.

22. Interfuerunt huic praelio[5] Eustachius Boloniae comes,[6] Guillelmus Ricardi Ebroicensis comitis filius,[7] Goisfredus

[a] *F*; hoc *D M* [b] *D*; millia *M F*

[1] This statement shows that WP was not an eye-witness of the battle. It also emphasizes that even an eye-witness could have seen only a part of the action.

[2] This rhetorical device (*partitio* or *divisio*), where the writer indicates in advance another topic to be taken up, was characteristic of earlier Latin prose biographies; see above, p. xxi.

[3] Both the feigned flights, and the ability of the Norman forces to turn genuine flight into renewed attack in the previous incident, illustrate the remarkable skill of manœuvre in mounted combat achieved by the knights making up the mixed force.

[4] The importance of the archers during this phase of the battle is illustrated in the Bayeux Tapestry, where no fewer than 23 archers are shown in the lower border (pls. 68, 69, 70, 71); cf. H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Towards an interpretation of the Bayeux Tapestry', *Battle*, x (1988), 49–65, at p. 62: 'it is the archers who turn the tide of the battle'.

[5] WP is a principal source for the modest list compiled by G. H. White of the 'companions of the Conqueror' known to have fought at Hastings (*CP* xii (i), app. L). The list was enlarged to twenty-seven by D. C. Douglas, 'Companions of the Conqueror', *History*, xxvii (1943), 129–47. Of the many others rewarded with English lands it is impossible to be absolutely certain who actually fought in the battle, and who, like Roger of Montgomery, came shortly afterwards.

[6] Eustace II, count of Boulogne. For his career, see Tanner, 'Counts of Boulogne', pp. 251–86.

[7] William, the son of Richard count of Évreux and Adela, the widow of Roger de Tosny, succeeded to the county in 1067.

battle with his own eyes could scarcely have followed every detail.[1] But now we hasten on to complete the praise of William the count so as to tell of the glory of William the king.[2]

20. When the Normans and the troops allied to them saw that they could not conquer such a solidly massed enemy force without heavy loss, they wheeled round and deliberately feigned flight.[3] They remembered how, a little while before, their flight had brought about the result they desired. There was jubilation among the foreigners, who hoped for a great victory. Encouraging each other with joyful shouts, they heaped curses on our men and threatened to destroy them all forthwith. As before, some thousands of them dared to rush, almost as if they were winged, in pursuit of those they believed to be fleeing. The Normans, suddenly wheeling round their horses, checked and encircled them, and slaughtered them to the last man.

21. Having used this trick twice with the same result, they attacked the remainder with greater determination: up to now the enemy line had been bristling with weapons and most difficult to encircle. So a combat of an unusual kind began, with one side attacking in different ways and the other standing firmly as if fixed to the ground. The English grew weaker, and endured punishment as though confessing their guilt by their defeat. The Normans shot arrows,[4] smote and pierced; the dead by falling seemed to move more than the living. It was not possible for the lightly wounded to escape, for they were crushed to death by the serried ranks of their companions. So fortune turned for William, hastening his triumph.

22. Those who took part in this battle[5] were Eustace count of Boulogne,[6] William son of Richard count of Évreux,[7] Geoffrey son

Rotronis Moritoniae comitis filius,[1] Guillelmus Osberni filius,[2] Haimerius Toarcensis praeses,[3] Gualterius Giffardus,[4] Hugo de Monteforti,[5] Rodolphus de Toneia,[6] Hugo de Grentmaisnil,[7] Guillelmus de Guarenna,[8] aliique quamplures militaris praestantiae fama celebratissimi et quorum nomina historiarum uoluminibus inter bellicosissimos commendari deceat. Guillelmus uero, dux eorum, adeo praestabat eis fortitudine, quemadmodum prudentia, ut antiquis ducibus Graecorum siue Romanorum qui maxime scriptis laudantur, aliis merito sit praeferendus, aliis comparandus. Nobiliter duxit ille cohibens fugam, dans animos, periculi socius; saepius clamans ut uenirent, quam iubens ire. Vnde liquido intelligitur uirtutem illi praeuiam pariter fecisse militibus iter et audaciam. Cor amisit absque uulnere pars hostium non modica, prospiciens hunc admirandum ac terribilem equitem. Equi tres ceciderunt sub eo confossi. Ter ille desiluit intrepidus, nec diu mors uectoris inulta remansit.[9] Hic uelocitas eius, hic robur eius uideri potuit corporis et animi. Scuta, galeas, loricas, irato mucrone et moram dedignante penetrauit; clipeo suo nonnullos collisit. Mirantes eum peditem sui milites, plerique confecti uulneribus, corde sunt redintegrati. Et nonnulli, 'quos iam sanguis ac uires deficiunt',[10] scutis innixi uiriliter depugnant, aliqui uoce et nutibus, cum aliud non ualent, socios instigant, ne timide ducem sequantur, ne uictoriam e manibus dimittant. Auxilio ipse multis atque saluti fuit.

Cum Heraldo, tali qualem poemata dicunt Hectorem uel Turnum, non minus auderet Guillelmus congredi singulari certamine, quam Achilles cum Hectore,[11] uel Aeneas cum

[1] Geoffrey, son of Rotrou I count of Perche. If he acquired any lands in England after the Conquest, he was no longer holding them in 1086 (J. F. A. Mason, 'The companions of the Conqueror: an additional name', *EHR* lxvi (1956), 66; see also OV ii. 266 n. 4).

[2] See above, p. 26 n. 3.

[3] Aimeri, twice given by WP the general title of 'praeses', was vicomte of Thouars. Like Geoffrey of Perche, he was not a landless younger son, but a highly born young man who stood to inherit lands and title, and joined the expedition for reasons other than a wish to win estates in England. See above, p. xviii.

[4] See above, p. 48 n. 6.

[5] See above, p. 48, n. 5.

[6] Ralph II of Tosny, son of Roger of Tosny; for his career see OV ii. 90, 106, 140, 358.

[7] He was the husband of Adela of Beaumont and the son of Robert I of Grandmesnil, one of the founders of the abbey of Saint-Évroult. After the Conquest he became castellan of Leicester and acquired extensive lands in England, which passed to the Beaumont family in the reign of Henry I (OV ii. 64–5 and n. 5; iv. 336–9).

of Rotrou count of Mortagne,[1] William fitz Osbern,[2] Aimeri vicomte of Thouars,[3] Walter Giffard,[4] Hugh of Montfort,[5] Ralph of Tosny,[6] Hugh of Grandmesnil,[7] William of Warenne,[8] and many others of military distinction and great renown, whose names deserve to be remembered in the annals of history amongst the very greatest warriors. But William, their duke, so surpassed them in courage as well as in wisdom that he deserves to be placed above certain of the ancient generals of the Greeks and Romans, who are so much praised in their writings, and to be compared with others. He led his men nobly, checking flight, giving encouragement, courting danger, more often calling on them to follow than ordering them to go ahead. From this it is plain to see that his valour in the van opened the way for his followers and gave them courage. No small part of the enemy lost heart without being injured at the sight of this astounding and redoubtable mounted warrior. Three horses were killed under him and fell. Three times he sprang to the ground undaunted, and avenged without delay the loss of his steed.[9] Here his speed, here his physical strength and courage could be seen. With his angry blade he tirelessly pierced shields, helmets, and hauberks; with his buckler he threw back many. Marvelling at seeing him fight on foot his knights, many of them smitten with wounds, took heart again. Some even, 'weakened by loss of blood',[10] leant on their shields and fought on courageously; others, incapable of more, encouraged their companions by word and gesture, to follow the duke without fear, so that victory should not slip through their hands. He himself helped and saved many of them.

Against Harold, who was such a man as poems liken to Hector or Turnus, William would have dared to fight in single combat no less than Achilles against Hector,[11] or Aeneas against

[8] William I of Warenne, who became earl of Surrey just before he died in 1088 (*CP* xii/1, p. 493).

[9] The *Carmen* (lines 470–522) gives a long and fanciful account of William's loss of two horses. For a closer parallel, cf. William of Apulia's account of how Robert Guiscard lost three horses in the battle of Civitate, 'Ter deiectus equo, ter viribus ipse resumptis | Maior in arma redit; stimulos furor ipse ministrat', Mathieu, *Geste*, ii. 226–7 (p. 144).

[10] Caesar, *De bello gallico* vii. 50.

[11] The account of the victory of Achilles over Hector in Homer (*Iliad*, xxii. 247–360), may have been known to WP through the *Ilias latina*.

Turno.[1] Tydeus aduersum insidiatos quinquaginta rupis petiuit opem:[2] Guillelmus par, haud inferior loco, solus non extimuit mille. Scriptor Thebaidos uel Æneidos, qui libris in ipsis poetica lege de magnis maiora canunt, ex actibus huius uiri aeque magnum, plus dignum conficerent[a] opus uera canendo. Profecto, si quantum dignitas materiae suppeditaret carminibus ediscererent condecentibus, inter diuos ipsorum stili uenustate transferrent eum. Nostra uero tenuis prosa, titulatura ipsius humillime regnantibus pietatem in cultu ueri Dei, qui solus ab aeterno in finem seculorum et ultra Deus est, praelium quo tam fortiter quam iuste uicit, ueraci termino breuique concludat.

23. Iam inclinato die haud dubie intellexit exercitus Anglorum se stare contra Normannos diutius non ualere. Nouerunt se diminutos interitu multarum legionum; regem ipsum et fratres eius, regnique primates nonnullos occubuisse;[3] quotquot reliqui sunt prope uiribus exhaustos; subsidium quod expectent nullum relictum. Viderunt Normannos non multum decreuisse peremptorum casu, et quasi uirium incrementa pugnando sumerent, acrius quam in principio imminere; ducis eam saeuitiam quae nulli contra stanti parceret; eam fortitudinem quae nisi uictrix non quiesceret. In fugam itaque conuersi quantotius abierunt, alii raptis equis, nonnulli pedites; pars per uias, plerique per auia. Iacuerunt in sanguine qui niterentur, aut surgerent non ualentes profugere. Valentes fecit aliquos salutem ualde cupiens animus. Multi siluestribus in abditis remanserunt cadauera, plures obfuerunt sequentibus per itinera collapsi. Normanni, licet ignari regionis, auide insequebantur, caedentes rea terga, imponentes

[a] *D marg. M F*; considerent *D*

[1] For the victory of Aeneas over Turnus, see Vergil, *Aeneid* xii. 697–952.

[2] See Statius, *Thebaid* ii. 548–62; iv. 596–602.

[3] WP makes no attempt to state how, or at what point in the battle, Harold was killed: an indication, perhaps, that no one who knew had survived the battle. The Bayeux Tapestry (pl. 64, 71) puts the death of Harold's brothers Gyrth and Leofwine a little before his; *GND* (ii. 168), followed by Orderic (OV ii. 176), states, most improbably, that Harold was killed early in the battle. The earliest written source to attribute his death to an arrow in the eye was the Montecassino chronicle of Amatus, now known only in a French translation (Aimé du Mont Cassin, *Storia di Normanni*, ed. V. de Bartholomeis (Rome, 1935), i. 3, p. 11). The original chronicle was written before 1080; it is an interesting

Turnus.[1] Tydeus, when ambushed by fifty men, defended himself with a rock;[2] William, his equal and in no way inferior in standing, single-handed did not fear a thousand. The authors of the *Thebaid* or the *Aeneid*, who in their books sing of great events and exaggerate them according to the law of poetry, could make an equally great and more worthy work by singing truthfully about the actions of this man. Indeed, if by the beauty of their style they could equal the grandeur of their subject matter, they would rank him among the gods. But our feeble prose will bring humbly to the notice of kings his piety in the worship of the true God, who alone is God from eternity to the end of the world and beyond, and will briefly and truthfully bring to a close this account of the battle which he bravely and justly won.

23. Towards the end of the day the English army realized that there was no hope of resisting the Normans any longer. They knew that they had been weakened by the loss of many troops; that the king himself and his brothers and not a few of the nobles of the kingdom had perished;[3] that all who remained were almost at the end of their strength, and that they could hope for no relief. They saw that the Normans were not greatly weakened by the loss of those who had fallen and, seeming to have found new strength as they fought, were pressing on more eagerly than at first. They saw that the duke in his ferocity spared no opponent; and that nothing but victory could quench his ardour. So they turned to escape as quickly as possible by flight, some on horses they had seized, some on foot; some along roads, others through untrodden wastes. Some lay helplessly in their own blood, others who struggled up were too weak to escape. The passionate wish to escape death gave strength to some. Many left their corpses in deep woods, many who had collapsed on the routes blocked the way for those who came after. The Normans, though strangers to the district, pursued them relentlessly, slashing their guilty backs and putting the last touches

independent corroboration of the scene in the Bayeux Tapestry. The fanciful account in the *Carmen* (lines 503–24), evidently inspired by the licence that WP attributed to poetry, cannot be taken at its face value. See G. H. White in *CP* xii/1, app. I.

manum ultimam secundo negotio. A mortuis etiam equorum ungulae supplicia sumpsere, dum cursus fieret super iacentes.

24. Rediit tamen fugientibus confidentia, nactis ad renouandum certamen maximam opportunitatem praerupti ualli[a] et frequentium fossarum.[1] Gens equidem illa natura semper in ferrum prompta fuit, descendens ab antiqua Saxonum origine ferocissimorum hominum. Propulsi non fuissent, nisi fortissima ui urgente. Regem Noricorum, magno exercitu fretum et bellicoso, quam facile nuper uicerunt.[2] Cernens autem felicium signorum ductor cohortes inopinato collectas, quamuis nouiter aduenire subsidium putaret, non flexit iter neque substitit, terribilior cum parte hastae[3] quam grandia spicula uibrantes, Eustachium comitem cum militibus quinquaginta auersum, et receptui signa canere uolentem, ne abiret uirili uoce compellauit.[4] Ille contra familiariter in aurem ducis reditum suasit, proximam ei, si pergeret, mortem praedicens. Haec inter uerba percussus Eustachius inter scapulas ictu sonoro, cuius grauitatem statim sanguis demonstrabat naribus et ore, quasi moribundus euasit ope comitum. Dux formidinem omnino dedignans aut dedecus, inuadens protriuit aduersarios. In eo congressu Normannorum aliqui nobiliores ceciderunt,[5] aduersitate loci uirtute eorum impedita.

25. Sic uictoria consummata, ad aream belli regressus, reperit stragem, quam non absque miseratione conspexit, tametsi factam in impios; tametsi tyrannum occidere sit pulchrum, fama gloriosum, beneficio gratum. Late solum operuit sordidatus in cruore flos Anglicae nobilitatis atque iuuentutis. Propius regem fratres

[a] *F OV*; uallis *D M*

[1] This late stand of the English was developed later by Orderic, in both his Interpolations in WJ (*GND* ii. 168–71) and in the *Ecclesiastical History* (OV ii. 176), into the 'Malfosse' incident.

[2] A reference to the battle of Stamford Bridge.

[3] Possibly he had couched his lance to charge the English, and it had broken off in the impact, though, as Renn ('Burgeat', p. 188 n. 52) has pointed out, this is not a necessary assumption.

[4] The sources differ considerably on the role of Eustace. WJ does not mention him; Orderic (OV ii. 178) follows WP. The *Carmen* (line 535) named him as one of four who, the poet claimed, combined to kill Harold. The evidence of the Bayeux Tapestry is ambiguous, and depends partly on whether the banner-bearing figure by Duke William when the latter raises his helmet (pl. 68) is correctly identified as Eustace; this is discussed by S. A. Brown, 'The Bayeux Tapestry: Why Eustace, Odo and William?', *Battle*, xii (1990), 7–28. She, like Tanner, 'Counts of Boulogne', pp. 270–2, argues that Eustace probably did play an important part in William's victory.

[5] Orderic names Engenulf of Laigle among those killed at this point (OV ii. 176–7).

to the victory. Even the hooves of the horses inflicted punishment on the dead as they galloped over their bodies.

24. However confidence returned to the fugitives when they found a good chance to renew battle, thanks to a broken rampart and labyrinth of ditches.[1] For this people was by nature always ready to take up the sword, being descended from the ancient stock of Saxons, the fiercest of men. They would never have been driven back except by irresistible force. Recently they had easily defeated the king of the Norwegians,[2] who was relying on a huge, warlike army. But when the duke at the head of the conquering banners saw that the troops had massed unexpectedly, although thinking them to be a newly-arrived relief force, he neither changed course nor halted. More terrible with only the stump of his lance[3] than those who brandished long javelins, he raised his strong voice and ordered Count Eustace, who had turned tail with fifty knights and wished to sound the retreat, not to withdraw.[4] But Eustace for his part, whispering familiarly in the duke's ear, argued for a retreat and predicted his speedy death if he pressed forward. As he was uttering these words, Eustace was struck a resounding blow between the shoulders; its violence was immediately shown by blood streaming from his nose and mouth; and, half dead, he escaped with the help of his companions. The duke, utterly disdaining fear and dishonour, charged his enemies and laid them low. In that encounter some of the noblest Normans fell,[5] for their valour was of no avail on such unfavourable ground.

25. So, after completing the victory, William returned to the battlefield and discovered the extent of the slaughter, surveying it not without pity, even though it had been inflicted on impious men, and even though it is just and glorious and praiseworthy to kill a tyrant. Far and wide the earth was covered with the flower of

eius duo reperti sunt. Ipse carens omni decore, quibusdam signis, nequaquam facie, recognitus est,[1] et in castra ducis delatus qui tumulandum eum Guillelmo agnomine Maletto[2] concessit, non matri pro corpore dilectae prolis auri par pondus offerenti.[3] Sciuit enim non decere tali commercio aurum accipi. Aestimauit indignum fore ad matris libitum sepeliri, cuius ob nimiam cupiditatem insepulti remanerent innumerabiles. Dictum est illudendo, oportere situm esse custodem littoris et pelagi, quae cum armis ante uesanus insedit.[4]

Nos tibi, Heralde, non insultamus, sed cum pio uictore, tuam ruinam lachrimato,[a] miseramur et plangimus te. Vicisti digno te prouentu, ad meritum tuum et in cruore iacuisti, et in littoreo tumulo[5] iaces, et posthumae generationi tam Anglorum quam Normannorum abominabilis eris. Corruere solent qui summam in mundo potestatem summam beatitudinem putant; et ut maxime beati sint, rapiunt eam, raptam ui bellica retinere nituntur. Atqui tu fraterno sanguine maduisti,[6] ne fratris magnitudo te faceret minus potentem. Ruisti dein furiosus in alterum conflictum, ut adiutus patriae parricidio regale decus non amitteres. Traxit igitur te clades contracta per te. Ecce non fulges in corona quam perfide inuasisti; non resides in solio quod superbe ascendisti. Arguunt extrema tua quam recte sublimatus fueris Edwardi dono in ipsius

[a] *F*; lachymato *D M*

[1] There is agreement in the English sources too that Harold's body was almost unrecognizable (*Waltham Chronicle*, pp. 54–5).

[2] The *Carmen* (lines 587–8) states that William entrusted the burial of Harold's body to 'quidam partim Normannus et Anglus | Compater Heraldi. . .' This description might fit William Malet. The difficult question of William's parentage and family has been discussed most recently by Vivien Brown (*Eye Priory Cartulary and Charters*, ed. V. Brown, Suffolk Records Society, Suffolk Charters, 2 vols., 1993, 1994), ii. 4–7. She concludes that if the *Carmen* meant William Malet, his mother must have been English, and that he held some land in Lincolnshire before the Conquest. It is possible that a daughter of his was the mother of the famous Countess Lucy, whose first husband was Ivo Taillebois. He could therefore have known Harold before the Conquest; 'compater' might imply either some sponsor in baptism or intimate friendship. The *Waltham Chronicle*, pp. 50–5, with a totally different version of the burial, says that the body was given for burial to Osgod and Æthelric, two canons of Waltham, the college founded by Harold.

[3] Cf. the account in the *Iliad* of Priam's plea to Achilles for the body of his son Hector (*Ilias latina*, lines 1009–45). However Priam's gifts, which included 10 talents of gold, were accepted. The version in the *Waltham Chronicle* is that the canons offered 10 marks of gold, which Duke William rejected when he granted their request.

the English nobility and youth, drenched in blood. The king's two brothers were found very near to his body. He himself was recognized by certain marks, not by his face, for he had been despoiled of all signs of status.[1] He was carried into the camp of the duke, who entrusted his burial to William surnamed Malet,[2] not to his mother, though she offered his weight in gold for the body of her beloved son. For he knew it was not seemly to accept gold for such a transaction.[3] He considered that it would be unworthy for him to be buried as his mother wished, when innumerable men lay unburied because of his overweening greed. It was said in jest that he should be placed as guardian of the shore and sea, which in his madness he had once occupied with his armies.[4]

As for us, we do not revile you, Harold; but we grieve and mourn for you with the pious victor who weeps over your ruin. You have reaped the reward that you deserved, and have fallen bathed in your own blood; you lie in a tumulus[5] on the seashore and will be an abomination to future generations of English no less than Normans. So fall those who think that supreme power in this world is the greatest blessing, and who in their wish to be particularly blessed seize power, and strive to retain it by force of arms. Moreover you have stained yourself with your brother's blood,[6] for fear that his power might diminish yours. Then you have rushed madly into another conflict, so that you might retain the royal dignity by the impious destruction of your fatherland. So you brought down on your own head the disaster you yourself had prepared. Behold, you will not rejoice in the crown which you seized perfidiously, nor will you sit on the throne which you proudly mounted. Your end proves by what right you were raised through the death-bed gift of Edward. The comet, terror of

[4] Among the early sources only WP, followed by Orderic, and the *Carmen*, suggest that Harold was buried on the seashore. See above, p. xxix. If the Waltham tradition (*Waltham Chronicle*, pp. xliii–xlvi, 54–5) is accepted, William Malet may have been assigned some role in the burial; perhaps it was he who identified the body, or provided the safe-conduct which the chronicler said was promised by Duke William.

[5] The word 'tumulus' was used by Lucan to describe Pompey's humble tomb on the seashore after his defeat and death (*Pharsalia*, viii. 816).

[6] A reference to Tostig, who was killed at Stamford Bridge.

fine. Regum terror cometa,[1] post initium altitudinis tuae coruscans, exitium tibi uaticinatus fuit.

26. Verum omissa naenia, felicitatem quam eadem stella portendit disseramus. Argiuorum rex Agamemnon habens in auxilio multos duces atque reges, unicam urbem Priami dolo uix euertit obsidionis anno decimo.[2] Quae fuerint eius militum ingenia, quae uirtus, carmina testantur. Item Roma sic adulta opibus, ut orbi terrarum uellet praesidere, urbes aliquot deuicit singulas pluribus annis. Subegit autem urbes Anglorum cunctas dux Guillelmus copiis Normanniae uno die ab hora tertia in uesperum, non multo extrinsecus adiutorio.[3] Si tuerentur eas moenia Troiana, breui talis uiri manus et consilium exscinderint Pergama.[4]

Posset illico[a] uictor sedem regiam adire, imponere sibi diadema, terrae diuitias in praedam suis militibus tribuere, quosque potentes alios iugulare, alios in exilium eiicere. Sed moderatius ire placuit atque clementius dominari. Consueuit namque pridem adolescens temperantia decorare triumphos. Par fuisset Anglorum, qui sese per iniuriam tantam pessundederunt in mortem, carnes gula uulturis lupique deuorari, ossibus insepultis campos fore sepultos. Ceterum illi crudele uisum est tale supplicium. Volentibus ad humandum eos colligere liberam concessit potestatem.

27. Humatis autem suis, dispositaque custodia Hastingas cum strenuo praefecto,[5] Romanaerium accedens, quam placuit poenam exegit pro clade suorum, quos illuc errore appulsos fera gens adorta praelio cum utriusque partis maximo detrimento fuderat.[6] Hinc Doueram contendit, ubi populum innumerabilem

[a] *M F*; ilico *D*

[1] This is WP's first reference to the comet (Halley's comet), which was observed in places as far apart as France, Germany, Italy, and Scandinavia, as well as in Normandy and England. It was variously regarded as an omen, though not always of the same event. See E. van Houts, 'The Norman Conquest through European eyes', *EHR* cx (1995), 832–53. The Bayeux Tapestry (pl. 35) dramatically links it with the first rumours of the preparation of Duke William's invasion fleet.

[2] Cf. Vergil, *Aeneid* ii. 197–8.

[3] This is rhetorical exaggeration; the battle of Hastings was decisive, but not final; WP himself in his later chapters describes some of King William's campaigns to put down rebellions in the west country and Yorkshire.

[4] Poetically the name 'Pergama' designated the citadel of Troy; it occurs frequently in the *Aeneid* (i. 466; ii. 177, 291 and *passim*). WP may have had in mind 'Nec posse Argolicis exscindi Pergama telis' (ii. 177).

[5] Humphrey of Tilleul.

[6] WP is the sole authority for the Romney incident. It shows that, although the greater part of the English army had been withdrawn from the coast before William landed, some men were still guarding at least parts of it.

kings, which burned soon after your elevation, foretold your doom.[1]

26. But, omitting a funeral dirge, let us enlarge on the felicity that the same star portended. Agamemnon, king of the Argives, with the help of many leaders and kings, barely succeeded in reducing Priam's single city after a ten-year siege.[2] Songs tell how fine was the character, how great the courage of his soldiers. Likewise Rome, after growing so great in wealth that it wished to rule over the whole world, conquered a few cities one by one, over many years. But Duke William with the forces of Normandy subjugated all the cities of the English in a single day, between the third hour and the evening, without much outside help.[3] Even if the walls of Troy had defended its citadel,[4] the strong arm and counsel of such a man would soon have destroyed it.

As victor, he could have gone on immediately to the royal seat, placed the diadem on his head, and distributed the riches of the realm as booty to his knights, slaying some of the magnates and driving others into exile. But he preferred to act more moderately and rule with greater clemency. For from his youth he had been accustomed to show temperance in his triumphs. It would have been right for the flesh of the English, who through so great an injustice had rushed headlong to their death, to be devoured by the mouths of the vulture and the wolf, and for the fields to have been covered with their unburied bones. But to him such a punishment seemed cruel. He gave free licence to those who wished to recover their remains for burial.

27. After burying his own men and placing Hastings in the charge of an energetic castellan,[5] he proceeded to Romney and there inflicted such punishment as he thought fit for the slaughter of his men, who had landed there by mistake; they had been attacked by the fierce people of the region, and scattered after heavy losses on both sides.[6] Then he went to Dover, where he

congregatum acceperat; quod locus ille inexpugnabilis uidebatur. At eius propinquitate Angli perculsi, neque naturae uel operis munimento, neque multitudini uirorum confidunt. Situm est id castellum in rupe mari contigua, quae naturaliter acuta undique ad hoc ferramentis elaborate incisa, in speciem muri directissima altitudine, quantum sagittae iactus permetiri potest, consurgit, quo in latere unda marina alluitur. Cum tamen castellani supplices deditionem pararent, armigeri exercitus nostri praedae cupidine ignem iniecerunt. Flamma leuitate sua uolitans pleraque corripuit. Dux, nolens incommoda eorum qui secum deditionaliter agere coeperant, pretium dedit restituendarum aedium, aliaque amissa recompensauit. Seuerius animaduerti praecepisset in auctores incendii, ni uilitas et numerositas ipsorum occultauisset eos. Recepto castro, quae minus erant per dies octo addidit firmamenta.[1] Milites illic recentibus carnibus et aqua utentes, multi profluuio uentris extincti sunt, plurimi in extremum uitae debilitati discrimen. Aduersa tamen et haec fortitudinem ducis non fregerunt. Custodiam inibi quoque relinquens, et dissenteria languentes, ad perdomandum quos deuicit proficiscitur.

28. Occurrunt ultro Cantuarii haud procul a Douera, iurant fidelitatem, dant obsides. Contremuit etiam potens metropolis metu, et ne funditus caderet ullatenus resistendo, maturauit impetrare statum obediendo. Veniens postero die ad Fractam Turrim castra metatus est;[2] quo in loco grauissima sui corporis ualetudine animos familiarium pari conturbauit aegritudine. Volens autem publicum bonum, ne exercitus egestate rerum necessariarum laboraret, noluit indulgere sibi moras ibi agendo, quanquam fuerit commune proficuum ac ualde optandum, optimum ducem ad sanitatem conualere.

[1] In referring to a 'castellum' WP either used the term loosely, or (if he had ever seen Dover) had in mind the fortifications built by William after he occupied the site. Before the Conquest there were some Anglo-Saxon fortifications on the hill above the town, around the Roman lighthouse and the church of St Mary-in-Castro. R. Allen Brown, *Dover Castle* (HMSO 1974), pp. 4–5, describes the terms 'castrum' and 'castellum' which are used in some early sources, even in the Worcester Chronicle, as 'merely the product of loose terminology'; and suggests that before the Conquest the 'castle' was an Anglo-Saxon *burh*, occupying the site of an ancient Iron Age encampment which preceded it; and that William the Conqueror built extra defences within the older fortifications.

heard that a great multitude had gathered because the place seemed impregnable. But the English, terror-stricken at his approach, lost all confidence in the natural defences and fortifications of the place, and in the multitude of men. This castle stands near to the sea on a rock which is naturally steep on all sides, and has furthermore been patiently chipped away with iron tools, so that it is like a wall of towering height equal to the flight of an arrow on the side washed by the sea. When, however, the garrison were preparing to make humble surrender, the squires in our army, greedy for booty, set the place on fire. The volatile flames spread quickly and took hold of most buildings. The duke, not wishing to injure those who had begun to parley with him for surrender, paid for the repair of the buildings and gave compensation for other losses. He would have ordered those responsible for the blaze to be severely punished, had not their low condition and great number concealed them. After the surrender of the castle, he spent eight days in fortifying it where it was weakest.[1] Whilst the soldiers were there they ate freshly killed meat and drank water, with the result that many died of dysentery and many were so weakened as to be on the verge of death. However even these adversities did not break the determination of the duke. Leaving there a garrison and the men suffering from dysentery, he set out to subjugate those whom he had defeated.

28. The men of Canterbury of their own accord came out to meet him not far from Dover; they swore fealty and gave hostages. Even the mighty metropolitan city shook with terror, and for fear of total ruin if it resisted further, hastened to secure its status by submission. Coming next day to the Broken Tower, the duke pitched his camp.[2] In that place he was afflicted with a severe illness, which caused great anxiety to his closest followers. But for the sake of the general good he did not wish to indulge himself by delaying there, lest the army should suffer from a shortage of supplies, although it was greatly to be desired and in the public interest that the admirable duke should be restored to health.

[2] This place has not been identified; possibly Duchesne misread a name, but even Faversham is not very likely.

Interea Stigandus Cantuariensis archipraesul, qui sicut excellebat opibus atque dignitate, ita consultis plurimum apud Anglos poterat,[1] cum filiis Algardi[2] aliisque praepotentibus praelium minatur. Regem statuerant Edgarum Athelinum,[a] ex Edwardi regis nobilitate annis puerum.[3] Erat uidelicet eorum uoti summa, non habere dominum quem non habuere compatriotam. Verum qui dominari debuit eis intrepide approperans, ubi frequentiorem audiuit eorum conuentum, non longe a Lundonia consedit. Praeterluit eam urbem fluuius Tamesis, peregrinas e portu marino diuitias aduectans. Cum solos ciues habeat, copioso ac praestantia militari famoso incolatu abundat. Tum uero confluxerat ad ipsam hospes turba propugnatorum, quam licet ambitu nimis ampla non facile capiebat. Praemissi illo equites Normanni quingenti, egressam contra se aciem refugere intra moenia impigre compellunt, terga caedentes. Multae stragi addunt incendium, cremantes quicquid aedificiorum citra flumen inuenere, ut malo duplici superba ferocia contundatur. Dux progrediens dein quoquouersum placuit, transmeato flumine Tamesi, uado simul atque ponte ad oppidum Guarengefort peruenit.[4] Adueniens eodem Stigandus pontifex metropolitanus, manibus ei sese dedit, fidem sacramento confirmauit, abrogans Athelinum[a] quem leuiter elegerat. Hinc procedenti statim ut Lundonia conspectui patebat, obuiam exeunt principes ciuitatis; sese cunctamque ciuitatem in obsequium illius, quemadmodum ante Cantuarii, tradunt; obsides quos et quot imperat adducunt. Orant post haec ut coronam[5] sumat una pontifices

[a] *F*; Adelinum *D M*

[1] For the power and wealth of Stigand, see in particular M. Frances Smith, 'Archbishop Stigand and the eye of the needle', *Battle*, xvi (1994), 199–219.

[2] The sons of Ælfgar, earl of Mercia, were Edwin, earl of Mercia, and Morcar, earl of Northumbria; Harold had married their sister Edith, and they were committed to his cause.

[3] Edgar was the son of Edward Ætheling and grandson of Edmund Ironside, half-brother of King Edward.

[4] According to the Worcester Chronicle (JW ii. 606) and *ASC* (D) 1066, the army continued to ravage up to the time of the submission, which the chronicles placed at Berkhamsted, not Wallingford. JW specifies that William laid waste the counties of Sussex, Kent, Hampshire, Middlesex, and Hertfordshire. The *ASC*, which does not name Stigand, continues, 'there he was met by Archbishop Aldred and Edgar *cild* and Earl Edwin and Earl Morcar, and all the chief men from London. And they submitted out of necessity.

Meanwhile Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, who, outstanding for his wealth and dignity, was equally powerful in the counsels of the English,[1] was threatening battle together with the sons of Ælfgar[2] and other nobles. As king they had chosen Edgar Ætheling, of the noble stock of King Edward, but a boy in years.[3] It was indeed their highest wish to have no lord who was not a compatriot. But indeed the man who ought to reign over them was approaching resolutely, and took up a position not far from London, where he heard that they most often held their meetings. The river Thames flows past this city, carrying foreign riches from a sea port. Although it is inhabited only by citizens, it abounds in a large population famous for their military qualities. At that time, indeed, a crowd of warriors from elsewhere had flocked thither, and the city, in spite of its great size, could scarcely accommodate them all. Five hundred Norman knights, sent there in advance, quickly forced the troops that had made a sortie to retreat shamefully inside the walls, killing those in the rear. They added fire to the great carnage, burning all the houses they could find on this side of the river, so that the fierce pride of their enemies might be subdued by a twofold disaster. The duke, advancing wherever he wished, then crossed the river Thames by both a ford and a bridge and came to the town of Wallingford.[4] Stigand the archbishop, coming to him there, did homage to him, confirmed his fealty with an oath, and renounced the ætheling, whom he had elected without due consideration. As soon as William, advancing from there, came in sight of London, the chief men of the city came out to meet him; they submitted themselves and the whole city to him just as the men of Canterbury had done previously. They produced as many hostages as he required. After this the bishops and other leading men begged him to take the crown,[5] saying that

And they gave hostages and swore oaths to him, and he promised that he would be a gracious liege lord, and yet in the mean time they ravaged all they overran.'

[5] The *Carmen* (lines 635–750) gives a dramatic and lengthy account of the capitulation of London, alleging that William prepared to bombard the city with siege engines, and that the surrender was negotiated by a certain 'Ansgard', who hoped to trick the Conqueror in negotiations, but was himself tricked. Much of the detail is implausible; but since Ansgard can probably be identified as Asgar or Esgar the staller, a man of some importance in 1066, he may have been involved in the negotiations. For Asgar, see *Waltham Chronicle*, pp. xvii, xviii, and R. H. C. Davis, 'The *Carmen de Hastingae proelio*', in his *From Alfred the Great to Stephen* (London and Rio Grande, OH, 1991), pp. 79–100, at 88–9.

atque caeteri summates, se quidem solitos esse regi seruire, regem dominum habere uelle.[1]

29. Consulens ille comitatos e Normannia, quorum non minus prudentiam quam fidem spectatam habebat, patefecit eis quid maxime sibi dissuaderet quod Angli orabant: res adhuc turbidas esse; rebellare nonnullos; se potius regni quietem quam coronam cupere. Praeterea si Deus ipsi hunc concedit honorem, secum uelle coniugem suam coronari.[2] Denique non oportere nimium properari, dum in altum culmen ascenditur. Profecto non illi dominabatur regnandi libido, sanctum esse intellexerat sancteque diligebat coniugii pignus. Familiares contra suasere, ut totius exercitus unanimi desiderio optari sciebant; quanquam rationes eius apprime laudabiles dignoscerent, ex arcano uberrimae sapientiae manantes.

Aderat huic consilio Haimerius Aquitanus, praeses Toarcensis,[3] lingua non ignobilior quam dextra. Is demirans et urbane extollens modestiam inquirentem animos militum, num uellent dominum suum regem fieri: 'Ad disceptationem', inquit, 'huiusmodi milites nunquam aut raro acciti sunt. Non est diu trahendum nostra deliberatione quod desideramus fieri quam ocissime.' At prudentissimi et optimi uiri nequaquam ita cuperent in alto huius monarchiae illum locari, nisi praecipue idoneum peruiderent, licet ipsorum commoda et honores per exultationem eius augeri uolentes. Ipse iterum omnia secum perpendens, adquieuit tot petentibus totque suadentibus;[4] praesertim sperans ubi regnare coeperit rebellem quemque minus ausurum in se, facilius conterendum esse.[a] Praemisit ergo Lundoniam qui munitionem in ipsa construerent urbe, et pleraque competentia regiae magnificentiae praepararent, moraturus interim per uicina. Aduersitas omnis procul fuit, adeo ut uenatui et auium ludo, si forte libuit, secure uacaret.[5]

[a] *M F*; a se *D*

[1] Orderic added the word 'coronato' here: 'hoc etiam diuino nutu subacti optabant indigenae regni, qui nisi coronato regi seruire hactenus erant soliti' (OV ii. 182).

[2] Matilda was not able to come to England to be crowned until Pentecost, 1068 (OV ii. 214; probably Orderic took the information from the lost chapters of WP).

[3] For Aimeri, vicomte of Thouars, see above, p. xviii.

[4] Orderic realistically cut out all panegyric, and reduced the whole discussion to, 'Hoc summopere flagitabant Normanni, qui pro fasce regali nanciscendo suo principi, subierunt ingens discrimen maris et praelii' (OV ii. 182).

they were accustomed to obey a king, and wished to have a king as their lord.[1]

29. He consulted the men who had come with him from Normandy, whom he had perceived to be as wise as they were loyal, and explained to them what chiefly dissuaded him from doing as the English begged: the situation was still confused, some people were rebelling; he desired the peace of the kingdom rather than the crown. Besides, if God granted him this dignity, he wished his wife to be crowned with him.[2] Finally, it was not seemly to rush too much when climbing to the topmost pinnacle. Indeed he was not dominated by the passion to rule; he had learnt that marriage vows were holy and respected their sanctity. His closest friends urged the opposite course on him, as they knew that this was the unanimous wish of the whole army, though they recognized that his arguments were particularly laudable, proceeding as they did from the depths of his inexhaustible wisdom.

Aimeri the Aquitanian, *praeses* of Thouars,[3] a man whose eloquence equalled his prowess, was present at this counsel. He, while admiring and courteously praising the modesty of a lord who consulted the opinions of his knights on whether they wished their lord to become a king, said, 'Rarely or never have knights been admitted to a debate such as this. There is no need to delay by our debate what we wish to be done as quickly as possible.' But these wise and powerful men would never have been so anxious to raise him to the throne of this kingdom had they not recognized that he was outstandingly suitable, although they wished their gains and honours to be increased by his elevation. He himself, after carefully reconsidering everything, gave way to all their requests and arguments;[4] he hoped above all that once he had begun to reign any rebels would be less ready to challenge him and more easily put down. So he sent men ahead to London to build a fortress in the city and make the many preparations necessary for royal dignity, while he himself remained in the neighbourhood. All opposition was so remote that he could, if he wished, spend his time in hunting and falconry.[5]

[5] Cf. above, i. 17.

30. Die ordinationi decreto, elocutus ad Anglos condecenti sermone Eboracensis archiepiscopus[1] aequitatem ualde amans, aeuo maturus, sapiens, bonus, eloquens, an consentirent eum sibi dominum coronari, inquisiuit. Protestati sunt hilarem consensum uniuersi minime haesitantes, ac si caelitus una mente data unaque uoce. Anglorum uoluntati quam facillime Normanni consonuerunt, sermocinato ad eos ac sententiam percunctato Constantiniensi[a] praesule. Ceterum, qui circa monasterium in armis et equis praesidio dispositi fuerunt, ignotae ⟨linguae⟩[b] nimio strepitu accepto, rem sinistram arbitrati, prope ciuitati imprudentia flammam iniecerunt. Sic electum consecrauit idem archiepiscopus aeque sancta uita carus et inuiolata fama; imposuit ei regium diadema, ipsumque regio solio, fauente multorum praesentia praesulum et abbatum, in basilica sancti Petri apostoli, quae regis Edwardi sepulchro gaudebat, in sacrosancta solemnitate Dominici natalis, millesimo sexagesimo sexto Incarnationis Dominicae anno. Repudiauit eum consecrari a Stigando Cantuariensi, quem per apostolici iustum zelum anathemate reprobatum didicerat. Nec minus insignia regum decuerunt personam eius, quam ad regimen idoneae extiterunt uirtutes eius. Cuius liberi atque nepotes iusta successione praesidebunt Anglicae terrae, quam et hereditaria delegatione sacramentis Anglorum firmata, et iure belli ipse possedit: coronatus tali eorundem consensu, uel potius appetitu eiusdem gentis primatum. Et si ratio sanguinis poscitur, pernotum est quam proxima consanguinitate regem Edwardum attigerit filius ducis Rodberti, cuius amita Ricardi secundi soror, filia primi, Emma, genitrix fuit Edwardi.[2]

Post celebratam ordinationem—non, ut solitum est, post honorum augmenta fieri—remissius laudabilia gerere coepit, sed nouo admirandoque ardore ad honestos et ingentes actus accenditur dignissimus rex: quod nomen, posito ducis nomine, libens

[a] Constantini *D*; Constantiniensis *OV* [b] *Supplied from OV*

[1] WP continues to insist on the role of Archbishop Ealdred in the coronation and acceptance of William. The *Carmen* (lines 803–4) states that two archbishops took part in the ceremony: an indication that it must have been written either before Stigand's disgrace in 1070 or in the twelfth century.

30. On the day fixed for the coronation, the archbishop of York,[1] a great lover of justice and a man of mature years, wise, good, and eloquent, addressed the English, and asked them in the appropriate words whether they would consent to him being crowned as their lord. They all shouted their joyful assent, with no hesitation, as if heaven had granted them one mind and one voice. The Normans added their voice most readily to the wish of the English, after the bishop of Coutances had addressed them and asked their wishes. But the men who, armed and mounted, had been placed as a guard round the minster, on hearing the loud clamour in an unknown tongue, thought that some treachery was afoot and rashly set fire to houses near to the city. When William had been elected in this way the archbishop, renowned for both his holy life and his spotless reputation, consecrated him, placed on his head the diadem of kings, and seated him on a royal throne, in the presence and with the consent of many bishops and abbots, in the basilica of St Peter the apostle, which boasted of possessing the tomb of King Edward, on the holy feast of Christmas in the year of Our Lord 1066. He had indeed refused to be consecrated by Stigand, the archbishop of Canterbury, having learnt that he had been pronounced excommunicate through the just zeal of the pope. The royal insignia were no less fitting to his person than were his virtues to kingly rule. And his children and grandchildren will rule by lawful succession over the English land, which he possesses both by hereditary designation confirmed by the oath of the English, and by right of conquest. He was crowned by the consent, or rather by the wish, of the leaders of the same people. And if anyone asks the reason for this blood claim, it is well-known that he was related to King Edward by close ties of blood, being the son of Duke Robert, whose aunt, Emma, the sister of Richard II and daughter of Richard I, was Edward's mother.[2]

After the coronation ceremony he did not relax in his performance of good works, as usually happens after honours have been increased, but, with admirable new zeal, he was inspired to great and noble undertakings, as a most worthy

[2] Here WP sums up all the elements making up William's claim to the throne, which have already been introduced at earlier points in his narrative.

acceptat stilus noster.[1] Secularibus namque ac diuinis operam impendebat strenuam utrisque; ad seruitium tamen regis omnium regum cor propensius habebat; quippe cui suos prouectus reputabat, contra quem potentia aut uita neminem mortalium potiri diu posse sciebat; a quo gloriam interminabilem, ubi temporalem finiret, expectabat. In huius ergo imperatoris quasi tributum large erogauit, quod Heraldi regis aerarium auare inclusit.[2]

31. Terrae illi sua fertilitate opimae uberiorem opulentiam comportare soliti sunt negotiatores gaza aduectitia. Maximi numero genere, artificio thesauri compositi fuerant, aut custodiendi ad uanum gaudium auaritiae, aut luxu Anglico turpiter consumendi. Quorum partem ad ministros confecti belli magnifice erogauit, plurima ac pretiosissima egenis et monasteriis diuersarum prouinciarum distribuit. Id munificentiae studium adiuuit non modicus census, quem undique ciuitates et locupletes quique obtulerant nouitio domino.[3] Romanae ecclesiae sancti Petri[4] pecuniam in auro atque argento ampliorem quam dictu credibile [a]sit, et ornamenta[a] quae Bizantium percara haberet, in manum Alexandri papae transmisit. Memorabile quoque uexillum Heraldi, hominis armati imaginem intextam habens ex auro purissimo:[5] quo spolio pro munere eiusdem apostolici benignitate sibi misso par redderet;[6] simul et triumphum de tiranno Romae ulteriusque optatum pulchre indicaret. Quanti famulorum Christi

[a-a] *D*; sit; ornamenta *M F*

[1] WP's insistence that William's royal title began only with his coronation was in line with Capetian royal practice (in contrast to the earlier English practice of dating a new reign from the death of the previous king), and with the insistence of the Church on coronation as an essential element in regality. See G. Garnett ('Coronation and propaganda', above, p. xxvi n. 59), p. 111, who suggests that Lanfranc may have influenced the presentation of the case for William.

[2] There is ample evidence of Harold's appropriation of estates (see above, p. 14, n. 2). But, at least before his coronation, he was generous in his gifts to favoured churches, in particular his own foundation at Waltham (*Waltham Chronicle*, pp. 26–33).

[3] The 'spontaneous' gifts were made, as even WP's account of the surrender of Canterbury and London admits, to prevent spoliation. WP characteristically presents a case wholly favourable to William. The *ASC* (D) 1070, complained that 'the king had all the monasteries that were in England plundered.' Both the Worcester and Ely chronicles, however, show that the plundering was not indiscriminate; some property seized had been placed in monastic houses by lay persons, and some was recovered (FW ii. 4–5; *Liber*

king—a title which our pen gladly takes up in place of that of duke.[1] He devoted himself with equal energy to both secular and divine business, but his heart was more inclined to the service of the King of Kings. For it was to Him that he attributed his advancement, knowing that in opposition to Him no one could long enjoy power or life; and from Whom he hoped for eternal glory when earthly glory came to an end. And so, as tribute to the Sovereign Lord, he distributed liberally what Harold had avariciously shut up in the royal treasure store.[2]

31. To this most fertile land merchants used to bring added wealth in imported riches. Treasures remarkable for their number and kind and workmanship had been amassed there, either to be kept for the empty enjoyment of avarice, or to be squandered shamefully in English luxury. Of these he liberally gave a part to those who had helped him win the battle, and distributed most, and the most valuable, to the needy and to the monasteries of various provinces. This munificence was assisted by the substantial tribute which cities everywhere and individual rich men offered to their new lord.[3] To the church of St Peter in Rome he sent more gold and silver coins than could be told credibly;[4] and he presented to Pope Alexander ornaments which Byzantium could have considered most precious;[5] also Harold's famous banner in which the image of an armed warrior was woven in pure gold. By the gift of this booty he made an equal return to the pope for the gift sent to him through the pope's generosity;[6] and at the same time he indicated aptly his victory over the tyrant, a

Eliensis, p. 196). In the redistribution the Norman monasteries were the chief gainers; see below, ii. 41, 42. C. R. Dodwell (*Anglo-Saxon Art: A New Perspective* (Manchester, 1982), pp. 230–2) notes the meagre share of the treasures given or restored to English churches.

[4] This is probably a reference to Peter's Pence, which had been paid somewhat irregularly, and occurs in Anglo-Saxon sources at least from the tenth century (*Councils and Synods*, i. 62, 100, 308, 351, 627, 629; W. E. Lunt, *Financial Relations of the Papacy with England to 1327* (Cambridge, MA, 1939), pp. 31–3, 45–7.

[5] The phrase 'quae Bizantium percara haberat', used by Robert of Torigni in a different context (*GND* ii. 244), is one of the indications that Torigni may have been familiar with *GG*.

[6] A reference to the papal banner sent to William; see above, ii. 2. Harold's banner is presented differently in the Bayeux Tapestry, where it shows a wyvern 'presumably representing the dragon of Wessex' (Renn, 'Burgeat', p. 187).

caetus tum laeti gratiarum hymnos canebant pro uictore, antea fautores illius precum armatura, summatim recitamus. Mille ecclesiis Franciae, Aquitaniae, Burgundiae, nec non Aruerniae, aliarumque regionum perpetuo celebre erit Guillelmi regis memoriale.[1] Beneficii magnitudo semper uiuens mori benefactoris memoriam non patietur. Aliae cruces aureas admodum grandes insigniter gemmatas, pleraeque libras auri uel ex eodem metallo uasa, nonnulla pallia, uel pretiosum aliud quid accepere. Splendide adornaret metropolitanam basilicam, quod minimum in his donis coenobiolum aliquod laetificauit. Ducibus atque regibus haec, et scripta in hoc libello complura innotescere uelim ad exemplum aut incitamentum.

32. Munera quidem gratissima Normanniae aduenerunt a suo dulci nato, pio patre, festinante affectu missa, cum saeuitia temporis atque maris, intrante Ianuario, esset acerrima. Nuntium uero euentus, cuius expectatione intenta fuit ex anxia, milies cariorem accepit. Nec enim adeo gratum acciperet quicquid Arabia[2] pulchrum aut suaue donare posset. Nullus unquam illuxit ei dies laetior, quam cum certo resciuit principem suum, auctorem sui quieti status, regem esse. Vrbes, castella, uillae, monasteria, multum pro uictore, maxime congratulabantur pro regnante. Lux quaedam insolitae serenitatis prouinciae subito exorta uidebatur. Quae licet destitutam se putaret communi patre dum eius praesentia careret, sic tamen abesse uolebat eum, magis ut summa potentia ipse uteretur, quam ut sibi praesidio foret aut decori amplius potens. Tantum namque cupiebat Normannia illius maiestatem quam ille Normanniae commoda siue honorem. Profecto dubium erat illum patria, an patriam ille, plus diligeret, qualiter est olim dubitatum de Caesare Augusto et populo Romano.[3]

[1] The geographical spread of the mother churches of the later 'alien priories' (which included the great houses of Cluny and Marmoutier) is an indication of the continental beneficiaries of the Conquest (see D. Knowles and N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* (London, 1971), pp. 83–103). The absence of benefactions to houses in Brittany at this early period, in spite of the large contingent of Bretons in the Conqueror's armies, is noteworthy; and Brittany rightly does not appear in WP's list.

[2] Cf. Ps. 71: 10, 'Reges Tharsis et insulae munera offerent; reges Arabum et Saba dona adducent', and Ps. 71: 15, 'Et vivet, dabitur ei de auro Arabiae.'

victory greatly desired at Rome. We will relate briefly how many communities of the servants of Christ were happy to sing hymns of praise for the victor, whom they had previously supported with the armament of their prayers. In a thousand churches of France, Aquitaine, and Burgundy, and also Auvergne and other regions, the memory of King William will be celebrated for ever.[1] The magnitude of the benefaction, always living, will not allow the memory of the benefactor to die. Some churches received very large golden crosses, wonderfully jewelled; many others pounds of gold, or vessels made of the same metal; quite a few vestments or something else of value. The least of these gifts with which he delighted the smallest cell would have been a splendid enrichment for a metropolitan basilica. Would that I could make known to leaders and kings these things, and many others written in this book, as an example and an incitement.

32. But the most welcome gifts came to Normandy from its kind son and pious father, sent with considerate haste when the severity of the weather and sea (for it was the beginning of January) was at its worst. The news of the outcome awaited with such eager and anxious hope was received a thousand times more dearly. Normandy could not have received the most beautiful and delightful gift from Arabia[2] with such thankfulness. No happier day ever dawned on her than that on which she learned for certain that her leader, to whom she owed her peaceful condition, was a king. Towns, castles, villages, monasteries, rejoiced greatly for the victory, still more for the kingship. A light of unaccustomed serenity seemed suddenly to have dawned on the province. For although she thought herself deprived of her common father when he was not present, she accepted that he should be absent, more so that he might enjoy supreme power than that he should be a stronger defence or a greater glory for her. Normandy indeed was as eager for his greatness as he was for the interest and honour of Normandy. It was doubtful which was the greater, his country's love for him or his love for his country, just as it was once doubted of Caesar Augustus and the Roman people.[3]

[3] Cf. Suetonius, *Augustus*, c. lviii, for the substance rather than the exact words.

Diligeres ac maximi haberes eum et tu, Anglica terra, totamque te eius pedibus laeta prosterneres, si abesset imprudentia atque iniquitas tua, quo meliore consilio diiudicare posses in qualis uiri potestatem deueneris.[1] Praeiudicare noli, dignitatem eius diligentius cognosce, et quotquot exegisti dominos, parui habebis cum eo comparatos. Eius honestatis pulchritudo optimo te colore decorabit. Didicit per legatum suum ualentissimus uir, rex Pyrrhus, tales fere, qualis erat ipse, Romam habere cunctos.[2] Illa ciuitas, parens regum orbis, terrae caput et domina, hunc, qui tibi dominaturus est progenuisse, et ipsius manu defensari, sapientia gubernari, imperio parere gauderet. Huius milites Normanni possident Apuliam, deuicere Siciliam,[3] propugnant Constantinopolim, ingerunt metum Babyloni.[4] Nobilissimos tuorum filiorum, iuuenes ac senes, Chunutus Danus trucidauit nimia crudelitate,[5] ut sibi ac liberis suis te subigeret. Hic ne Heraldum uellet occubuisse. Immo uoluit patris Goduini[a] potentiam illi ampliare, et natam suam, imperatoris thalamo dignissimam, in matrimonium, uti fuerat pollicitus, tradere.[6] At si haec tibi mecum non conueniunt, profecto sustulit a ceruice tua superbum crudelemque dominatum Heraldi; abominandum tirannum, qui te seruitute calamitosa simul et ignominiosa premeret, interemit;[7] quod meritum in omni gente gratum habetur atque praeclarum. Benefacta uero saluberrimae dominationis, qua eris exaltata, in sequentibus aliqua contra tuam inuidiam testabuntur. Viuet, uiuet

[a] *D M*; Godwini *F*

[1] Here WP recognizes that, in spite of his claims, the English did not accept the Conquest without rebellion.

[2] Cf. Plutarch, *Pyrrhus*, xxix. 6.

[3] The Norman conquest of South Italy and Sicily by the sons of Tancred of Hauteville progressed rapidly after their acceptance by Pope Nicholas II in 1059. By 1066 substantial gains had been made in both Apulia and Sicily; by the time WP wrote the conquests had been completed with the capture of Bari in 1071 and Palermo in 1072. See, most recently, Bouet and Neveux, *Les Normands en Méditerranée* (above, p. 104 n. 3), pp. 18–21. There is an interesting parallel with one statement in the *Carmen* (lines 259–60) that has puzzled commentators, but now makes sense as textually emended by Orlandi (pp. 125–7) from 'Apulus et Calaber, Siculus, quibus iacula feruunt | Normanni . . .' to '[Normanni], quibus Apulus, Calaber et Siculus incola seruit'. This emendation removes the alleged South Italian contingent from the battlefield of Hastings, where no other chronicler noticed them. The passage now refers to the triumphs of the Normans, including their conquest of South Italy and (part of) Sicily, and is exactly parallel to this statement in WP.

And you too, you English land, would love him and hold him in the highest respect; you would gladly prostrate yourself entirely at his feet, if putting aside your folly and wickedness you could judge more soundly the kind of man into whose power you had come.[1] Be not prejudiced, learn to appreciate his worth, and all the lords you have endured will appear petty in comparison with him. The splendour of his reputation will cast great lustre on you. The most valiant King Pyrrhus learnt through an ambassador to regard all the Romans as comparable to himself.[2] That city, mother of the kings of the world, sovereign mistress of the earth, would have rejoiced to have given birth to the man who is to rule over you, and to be defended by his arm, governed by his wisdom, and submitted to his rule. His Norman knights possess Apulia, have conquered Sicily,[3] defend Constantinople, and strike fear into Babylon.[4] Cnut the Dane slaughtered the noblest of your sons, young and old, with the utmost cruelty,[5] so that he could subject you to his rule and that of his children. This man (William) did not desire the death of Harold, but rather he wished to increase for him the power of his father Godwine, and give him in marriage to his own daughter,[6] who was worthy to share an emperor's bed, as had been promised. But if you do not agree with me on these matters, at least he has lifted from your neck the proud and cruel lordship of Harold; he has killed the execrable tyrant who was forcing you into a servitude that was both disastrous and shameful.[7] Such a service is held by all peoples to be a famous and praiseworthy deed. The benefits of the most salutary rule, by which you will be raised up, will subsequently bear witness to some extent against your ill-will. King

[4] Erroneously translated 'have attacked Constantinople' by Foreville, p. 229. The reference is to the Normans fighting in the imperial service against the Turks (Mathieu, *Geste*, pp. 5 n. 4, 399). Normans were being employed as mercenaries in Constantinople from the middle of the eleventh century; their skill as cavalry was particularly appreciated (J. Shepard, 'The uses of the Franks in eleventh-century Byzantium', *Battle*, xv (1993), 275–305).

[5] The *ASC* (CDE) 1017 lists the English leaders, including Eadric Streona, ealdorman of Mercia, killed after Cnut became king; and the poet Sigvatr Thórðarson recorded 'soon Cnut killed or drove away the sons of Æthelred, yea, everyone of them' (Keynes, 'Æthelings', p. 174).

[6] See OV ii. 136 n. 1.

[7] For the justification of tyrannicide, cf. above, i. 18, ii. 25.

in longum rex Guillelmus, et in paginis nostris, quas tenui orationis figura scribere placet, ut res pulcherrimas dilucide plures intelligant, praesertim cum praecipui oratores, quibus dicendi grauiter copia magna fuit, humili sermone, dum historias scribunt, usi reperiantur.[1]

33. Multa Lundoniae posteaquam coronatus est prudenter, iuste, clementerque disposuit, quaedam ad ipsius ciuitatis commoda siue dignitatem, alia quae genti proficerent uniuersae, nonnulla quibus ecclesiis terrae consuleretur. Iura quaecunque dictauit [a]optimis rationibus sanxit.[a][2] Iudicium rectum nulla persona ab eo nequicquam postulauit. Specie uindicandi reatus auaritiam plerumque uelat regnans iniquitas, supplicio addicit innocentem, ut possessionem addicti rapiat. Ille neminem damnauit, nisi quem non damnare iniquum foret; nam uti aduersus libidines alias, ita aduersus auaritiam inuictum animum gerebat. Intellexerat esse regiae maiestatis illustri munificentia praestare, nihil ubi aequitas contradicit accipere.[3]

Suis quoque primatibus digna se et grauitate praecepit, et diligentia suasit aequitatem. Esse iugiter in oculis habendum, cuius uicerint praesidio, aeternum imperatorem. Nimium opprimi uictos nequaquam oportere, uictoribus professione christiana pares, ne quos iuste subegerint, iniuriis ad rebellandum cogerent. Ad hoc decere, ne quid turpiter in externis agitando, terrae ubi natus uel altus est dedecus infligeret. Milites uero mediae nobilitatis atque gregarios, aptissimis edictis coercuit. Tutae erant a ui mulieres, quam saepe amatores inferunt. Etiam illa delicta quae fierent consensu impudicarum, infamiae prohibendae gratia uetabantur. Potare militem in tabernis non multum

[a] [a] *Omit F*; optimis rationibus sanxit *D M O V*

[1] See above, p. xxii. Classical writers had distinguished between the 'stilus maior' in which panegyric was written, and the simpler style more suitable for history (S. MacCormack, 'Latin prose panegyrics', *Empire and Aftermath, Silver Latin II*, ed. T. A. Dorey (London and Boston, 1975), pp. 143–205).

[2] There is some evidence of King William punishing oppressive royal officials before 1071 when they were denounced legally by powerful ecclesiastics; for cases involving the archbishop of York and the abbot of Abingdon, see R. C. van Caenegem, *English Lawsuits from William I to Richard I*, 2 vols. (Selden Society, London 1990–1), i. nos. 1, 4.

William will live long, he will live too in our pages, which we are happy to write in a simple style, so that a great many people may easily understand such shining deeds, particularly since you will find that the greatest orators, who have a special capacity for writing impressively, employ a plain style when they are writing history.[1]

33. At London, after his coronation, he made many wise, just, and merciful provisions; some were for the interest and honour of the city, others to the profit of the whole people, and some to the advantage of the churches of the land. Whatever laws he promulgated, he promulgated for the best of reasons.[2] No one ever sought a just judgement from him in vain. When iniquity reigns it most often veils its greed under the pretext of avenging crimes, condemning the innocent man to punishment in order to confiscate his possessions.[3] He condemned none save those whom it would have been unjust not to condemn; for he kept his mind free from avarice, as from other passions. He understood that the essence of royal majesty was to excel in conspicuous generosity, and to accept nothing which was contrary to fair dealing.[4]

To his magnates he taught conduct worthy of him and of his dignity, and as a friend counselled equity. He warned them to be constantly mindful of the eternal King by whose aid they had conquered, and that it was never seemly to overburden the conquered, who were Christians no less than they themselves were, lest those they had justly defeated be goaded into rebellion by their injuries. He added that it was not honourable to act disgracefully when abroad in such a way as to bring dishonour to the land where one was born or brought up. He restrained the knights of middling rank and the common soldiers with appropriate regulations. Women were safe from the violence which passionate men often inflict. Even those offences indulged with the consent of shameless women were forbidden, so as to avoid scandal. He scarcely allowed the soldiers to drink in taverns, since

[3] This was a common charge; cf. *Vita Edwardi*, pp. 78–9 and n. 194.

[4] WP here uses 'aequitas' in the sense in which it occurs in Scripture (e.g. Ps 9: 9 (8), 'et ipse iudicabit populos in aequitate'). There is no suggestion of the 'equity' of Roman law.

concessit, quoniam ebrietas litem, lis homicidium solet generare. Seditiones interdixit, caedem et omnem rapinam, frenans ut populos armis, ita legibus arma. Iudices qui uulgo militum essent timori constituti sunt, simul acerbae poenae in eos qui deliquerent decretae sunt; neque liberius Normanni quam Britanni uel Aquitani agere permittebantur.[1] Scipionem aliosque priscos duces proponunt imitandos, qui de disciplina militari scriptis docent.[2] Prorsus aeque aut plus laudanda exempla ab exercitu Guillelmi regis in promptu est accipere. Sed festinando dicamus alia, ne diu suspendamur a memorando reditu, quem Normannia intenta expectabat.

Tributis et cunctis rebus ad regium fiscum reddendis, modum qui non grauaret posuit.[3] Latrociniis, inuasionibus, maleficiis locum omnem intra suos terminos denegauit. Portus et quaelibet itinera negotiatoribus patere, et nullam iniuriam fieri iussit.[4] Pontificium Stigandi, quod nouerat non canonicum, minime probabat; sed apostolici sententiam expectare melius quam properantius deponere existimabat.[5] Suadebant et aliae rationes, ut ad tempus pateretur atque honorifice haberet illum, cuius inter Anglos auctoritas erat summa. In sede metropolitana meditabatur sanctum uita, fama carum, eloquentia diuini uerbi potentem,[a] qui suffraganeis episcopis congruam formam praebere, et ouili Dominico praeesse sciret, cunctisque prodesse cuperet studio uigilanti.[6] Item de ordinationibus aliarum ecclesiarum praecogitabat. Omnino proba eius in regnando initia fuere.

34. Egressus e Lundonia, dies aliquot in propinquo loco morabatur Bercingis, dum firmamenta quaedam in urbe contra

[a] *M supplies* ponere *or* locare *after* metropolitana, *F after* potentem

[1] Direct evidence of King William's enforcement of discipline is lacking; but he was certainly even-handed in his distribution of estates to Bretons, Flemings, and others, no less than to Normans, as Domesday Book shows.

[2] Cicero, *Epistulae ad Familiares*, ix. 25, refers to military treatises by Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, and his minister Cineas.

[3] There is a different picture in *ASC* (D) 1067, 'And the king imposed a heavy tax on the wretched people, and nevertheless caused all that they overran to be ravaged'; and in Orderic (OV ii. 202), 'Amissa itaque libertate Angli uehementer ingemiscunt, et uicissim qualiter intolerabile iugum sibique hactenus insolitum excutiant subtiliter inquirunt.'

[4] There is some corroboration in the summing up of the reign in the *ASC* (E) 1087, 'Amongst other things the good security he made in this country is not to be forgotten, so

drunkenness leads to quarrels and quarrels to murder. He forbade strife, murder, and every kind of plunder, restraining the people with arms and the arms with laws. Judges were appointed who could strike terror into the mass of the soldiers, and stern punishments were decreed for offenders; nor were the Normans given greater licence than the Bretons or the Aquitanians.[1] Those who write about military science hold up Scipio and other early leaders as models to be imitated.[2] In future they will readily accept the examples of King William's army as equally or more praiseworthy. But let us pass rapidly to other matters, lest we defer too long the account of his memorable return, which Normandy was eagerly expecting.

He set a limit that was not oppressive to the collection of tribute and all dues owed to the royal treasury.[3] He allowed no place in his kingdom for thefts, brigandage, or evil deeds. He ordered that merchants should go freely in the harbours and on all highways, and should suffer no harm.[4] He did not approve of the pontificate of Stigand, which he knew to be uncanonical, but thought it better to await the pope's sentence than to depose him hastily.[5] Other considerations persuaded him to suffer him for the time being and hold him in honour, because of the very great authority he exercised over the English. He was considering placing in the metropolitan see a man of holy life and great renown, a master in expounding the word of God who would know how to furnish a suitable model for his suffragan bishops, and how to preside over the Lord's flock, and who would wish to procure the good of all with vigilant zeal.[6] He also gave thought to making provision for other churches. All the first acts of his reign were righteous.

34. Leaving London, he spent a few days in the nearby place of Barking, while fortifications were being completed in the city as a defence against the inconstancy of the numerous and hostile

that any honest man could travel over his kingdom without injury with his bosom full of gold.'

[5] Stigand was deposed in the Council of Winchester, 1070, presided over by King William with three cardinals sent by Pope Alexander II (*Councils and Synods*, i. 563–70).

[6] This anticipates the appointment of Lanfranc as archbishop of Canterbury in 1070.

mobilitatem ingentis ac feri populi perficerentur.[1] Vidit enim inprimis necessarium magnopere Lundonienses coerceri. Ibi ueniunt ad obsequium eius Eduinus[a] et Morcardus maximi fere omnium Anglorum genere ac potentia, Algardi illius nominatissimi filii, deprecantur ueniam si qua in re contra eum senserant, tradunt se cunctaque sua eius clementiae;[2] item alii complures nobiles et opibus ampli. In his erat comes Coxo, quem singulari et fortitudine et probitate regi, post et optimo cuique Normanno placuisse audiuimus.[3] Rex eorum sacramenta, ut postulauerunt, libens accepit, liberaliter eis donauit gratiam suam, reddidit eis cuncta quae possederant, habebat eos magno honore.

35. Inde progrediens diuersas partes regni accessit, ordinando ubique utilia sibi et incolis terrae.[4] Quaqua pergebat, in armis nemo manebat. Iter nullum obstruitur, occurrunt passim obsequentes aut explicantes. Omnes ille clementibus oculis respexit, clementissimis plebem. Saepe uultu miserantem animum prodidit, iussit multotiens misericordiam, cum supplices conspiceret aut egenos, matres animaduerteret uoce et gestibus precari cum liberis. Adelinum, quem post Heraldi ruinam Angli regem statuere conati fuerant, amplis terris ditauit,[5] atque in carissimis habuit eum, quia regis Edwardi genus contigerat; ad hoc ne puerilis aetas nimium doleret non habere honorem ad quem electus fuerat. Eiusdem liberalitatis dono acceperunt Angli complures, quod a parentibus uel[b] prioribus dominis non acceperant. Custodes in castellis strenuos uiros collocauit, ex Gallis traductos, quorum fidei pariter ac uirtuti credebat, cum multitudine peditum et equitum. Ipsis opulenta beneficia distribuit, pro quibus labores

[a] *D M*; Edwinus *F* [b] *D M*; a *F*

[1] A reference to the building of the White Tower in London, and possibly also to two other early Norman castles in the city: Baynard's castle and Montfichet (Brown and Curnow, p. 5).

[2] The *ASC* (D) 1066 placed the submission of Edwin and Morcar at Berkhamsted, before the coronation. Douglas, *Conqueror*, p. 207, suggested that WP may have confused Barking with Berkhamsted.

[3] See below, ii. 48.

[4] After this sentence Orderic (OV ii. 194) retained only 'Custodes in castellis . . . distribuit' in this chapter. He omitted all reference to King William's alleged compassion for the English, including the statement that nothing was taken from any Englishman unjustly.

[5] If this statement is true, the Ætheling never gained possession of the lands. Orderic omits the passage.

inhabitants.[1] For he saw that it was of the first importance to constrain the Londoners strictly. It was there that Edwin and Morcar, sons of the famous Ælfgar and perhaps the most noble and powerful of all the English, came to submit to him;[2] they sought his pardon for any hostility they had shown him, and surrendered themselves and all their property to his mercy. Various other wealthy nobles did the same, amongst them Earl Copsi who, on account of his singular courage and loyalty, subsequently—as we have heard—gave pleasure to the king and all the best Normans.[3] The king readily accepted their oaths, as they had requested, freely granted them his favour, restored all their possessions, and treated them with great honour.

35. From there he went on to other parts of the kingdom, and everywhere decreed measures to the advantage of the inhabitants as well as of himself.[4] Wherever he went, everyone laid down his arms. No way was barred to him; on all sides people flocked to submit or negotiate. He showed clemency to all, especially to the common people. Often his face revealed the pity in his heart; often he commanded mercy to be shown when he saw supplicants or poor people, or noticed mothers and their children pleading with voice and gesture. The Ætheling, whom the English had tried to make their king after Harold's downfall, he endowed with ample lands;[5] he held him among his dearest friends, because he was of the stock of King Edward, and also so as to ensure that he, still a mere boy, did not grieve too much at not having the honour to which he had been elected. Very many Englishmen received through his generous gifts what they had not received from their kinsmen or previous lords. As custodians of castles he assigned stalwart men whom he had brought across from Gaul, on whose loyalty and valour he relied equally; and with them he placed a multitude of foot-soldiers and knights. To these he distributed rich fiefs, for the sake of which they would

ac pericula libentibus animis tolerarent. Nulli tamen Gallo datum est quod Anglo cuiquam iniuste fuerit ablatum.

36. Guenta[1] urbs est nobilis atque ualens. Ciues ac finitimos habet diuites, infidos et audaces. Danos in auxilium citius recipere potest. A mari, quod Anglos a Danis separat, millia passuum quatuordecim distat.[2] Huius quoque urbis intra moenia munitionem construxit. Ibidem Guillelmum reliquit Osberni filium, praecipuum in exercitu suo, ut in uice sua interim toti regno Aquilonem uersus praeesset.[3] Hunc ex omnibus Normannis paterno more[4] sibi fidissimum domi bellique perspexerat, simul fortitudine egregium et consilio siue rei domesticae, siue militaris; necnon Domino caelesti multo affectu deuotum. Hunc Normannis carissimum, Anglis maximo terrori[a] esse sciebat. Hunc prae caeteris familiaribus a pueritia utriusque dilexerat et exaltauerat in Normannia.

37. Castrum uero Doueram Odoni fratri suo commissit, cum adiacente ora australi, quae nomine uetusto Cantium dicta,[5] Galliam propius spectat, unde et a minus feris hominibus incolitur. Consueuerant enim merces cum Belgis mutare. Perhibetur etiam, attestante pagina uetustatis, maritimam hanc regionem a Gallis olim fuisse possessam, quibus eo transuectis praedae ac belli inferendi causa agri fertiles placuere.[6] Odo ille, Baiocarum praesul, cognitus fuerat talis qui optime negotia sustinere ualeret, ecclesiastica et secularia. Bonitatem eius et prudentiam primo

[a] *M F*; terrore *D*

[1] Freeman believed 'Guenta' to be Norwich, and was followed by many other historians. The identification appeared for the last time in 1963 in R. A. Brown, H. M. Colvin, and A. J. Taylor, *The King's Works*, i (London, 1963), p. 754. Foreville, however (pp. 238–9), had identified it as Winchester in 1952; and Frank Barlow, 'Guenta' (appendix to M. Biddle, 'Excavations at Winchester 1962–3', *Antiquaries Journal*, xliv (1964), 217–19), proved conclusively that it must be Winchester.

[2] At that time attacks could come from the Irish kingdoms (FW ii. 2–3), sometimes loosely called 'Danish', though originally settled by invaders from Norway as well as Denmark.

[3] From this point William fitz Osbern could cover the route northwards to the crossings of the river Thames at Oxford and Wallingford. He received extensive estates in the Isle of Wight as well as Hereford (OV ii. 260). As Barlow wrote ('Guenta', p. 219), 'if . . . the Normans had only an extended beachhead in 1067, Winchester was an excellent headquarters for ruling the kingdom towards the north, if this meant, as it surely did, cowing the Mercians and preventing an irruption across the Thames.'

willingly bear toil and danger. However nothing was given to any Frenchman which had been taken unjustly from any Englishman.

36. The town of Winchester[1] is famous and strong. Its citizens and neighbours are rich, untrustworthy, and bold. It can quickly receive help from the Danes. It is fourteen miles from the sea which separates England from the Danes. William built a fortress within the walls of the city, and left there William fitz Osbern, the chief man in his army, so that he could govern all the kingdom of England to the north in his place during his absence.[3] He had recognized that this man above all the Normans was, like his father before him,[4] the most loyal in peace and war, being outstanding in courage and counsel in both domestic and military affairs, and being by his great piety devoted to the Lord of Heaven. He knew that he was greatly cherished by the Normans and greatly feared by the English. He had loved him above all the other members of his household since they had been boys together, and had raised him to power in Normandy.

37. As for the castle of Dover, he entrusted it to his brother Odo, together with the adjacent south coast, which goes by the old name of Kent.[5] Looking across to Gaul, which is quite near, it is inhabited by less savage men, for they used to engage in trade with the Belgae. It is also alleged, as ancient writings testify, that this maritime region was once held by Gauls who, having crossed over for the sake of war and plunder, were attracted by its fertile fields.[6] This Odo, bishop of Bayeux, was well known to be the kind of man best able to undertake both ecclesiastical and secular business. The church of Bayeux first benefited from his virtue and wisdom,

[4] He was the son of Osbern of Crépon, who was the son of Countess Gunnor's brother, and had been steward of the young duke, William, during his minority (*GND* ii. 92–3 and n. 6).

[5] Odo, bishop of Bayeux, received extensive estates in 22 counties; his lands in Kent were granted very shortly after the Conquest. See D. Bates, 'The character and career of Odo, bishop of Bayeux (1049/50–1097)', *Speculum*, l (1975), 1–20, at p. 10.

[6] See Caesar, *De bello gallico* v. 12. '[Britanniae] . . . maritima pars ab iis qui praedae ac belli inferendi causa ex Belgio transierant . . . et bello illato ibi permanserunt atque agros colere coeperunt'; v. 14, 'Ex his omnibus large sunt humanissimi qui Cantiam incolunt, quae regio est maritima omnis, neque multum a Gallica differunt consuetudine.'

testatur ecclesia Baoicensis, quam ipse multo studio egregie ordinauit atque ornauit, iuuenis adhuc aetate, animi canicie senibus praeferendus. Dein omni Normanniae utilis fuit ac decori. In sinodis ubi de Christi cultura, in disceptationibus ubi de seculi rebus agebatur, intelligentia pariter atque facundia enituit. Liberalitate parem non habuit Gallia, ita opinio publica consensit. Nec minus aequitatis amore meruit laudem. Arma neque mouit unquam, neque uoluit moueri: ualde tamen timendus armatis. Bellum namque utilissimo consilio, cum necessitas postularet, iuuabat, quantum potuit religione salua. Regi, cuius frater erat uterinus, quem tanto amplectabatur amore ut nec inter arma uellet ab illo separari, a quo magnos acceperat atque sperabat honores, unice constantissimeque fidelis fuit. Libentes eidem obsequebantur, ut acceptissimo domino, Normanni atque Britanni. Nec Angli adeo barbari fuerunt quin facile intelligerent hunc praesulem, hunc praefectum, merito timendum esse, uenerandum quoque ac diligendum.[1]

38. Rex ita commissa regni cura Peneuesellum se recepit, quem locum in nominandis ponendum censemus quoniam ipso portu primo litus[a] illud attigit. Stabant naues ad transmittendum paratissimae, quas uere decuerat albis uelis more ueterum adornatas esse.[2] Erant enim reuecturae gloriosissimum triumphum, nunciaturae maxime optatum gaudium.

Conuenit eodem multus Anglorum equitatus.[3] Ex his abducere secum decreuerat, quorum praecipue fidem suspiciebat ac potentiam, archipraesulem Stigandum, Adelinum propinquum regis Edwardi,[4] tres comites, Edwinum, Morcardum et Gualleuum; simul alios complures altae nobilitatis: ut ipsis auctoribus nihil

[a] *D*; littus *M F*

[1] This passage of warm praise for Odo augments WP's brief notice about his appointment as bishop. Together with evidence from Domesday Book, it suggests that WP may have had some connection with Bishop Odo (Davis, 'William of Poitiers', pp. 120–3, and above, p. xvii).

[2] Cf. above, i. 46, where Harold is said to have returned from Normandy with black sails. The reference to the ancients is probably to the legend of Theseus.

[3] 'Equitatus' is here used in its classical sense as 'men of rank'. The whole passage echoes Caesar, *De bello gallico* v. 5 ('eodem equitatus totius Galliae convenit numero milium quattuor principesque ex omnibus civitatibus . . .'), where Caesar describes taking some of the leading men of Gaul with him in his second invasion of Britain, as hostages to prevent rebellion when he was away.

[4] For Edgar Ætheling, see above, p. 146 n. 3. Waltheof was earl of Huntingdon; for his later career and rebellion see OV ii. 262, 312–44. The Worcester chronicle, followed by Orderic (OV ii. 196), names Æthelnoth of Canterbury (FW ii. 1, 'nobilem satrapam Agelnothum Cantwariensem').

for he governed and adorned it with great zeal when, though still young in years, he was to be preferred to his seniors for the maturity of his mind. Afterwards he was useful to the whole of Normandy, and a great ornament to it. In synods where there were discussions about Christian worship or secular affairs he shone equally for his intelligence and for his eloquence. It was the unanimous opinion of all that Gaul did not have his equal in munificence. He deserved no less praise for his love of justice. He never took up arms, and never wished to do so; nevertheless he was greatly feared by men at arms, for when need arose he helped in war by his most practical counsels as far as his religion allowed. He was singularly and most steadfastly loyal to the king, his uterine brother, whom he cherished with so great a love that he would not willingly be separated from him even on the battlefield, and from whom he had received great honours and expected to receive still more. Normans and Bretons obeyed him willingly as a most acceptable lord. And the English were not so barbarous that they could not recognize that this bishop, this leader, deserved to be feared, but also to be venerated and loved.[1]

38. The king, having thus provided for the governance of the kingdom, betook himself to Pevensey—a place whose name, we consider, deserves to be remembered because it was there that he had first landed. The ships were waiting, all ready for the crossing; it had seemed fit to equip them with white sails in the manner of the ancients,[2] for they were to carry back a most glorious triumph and to announce the greatest joy that could have been desired.

Many Englishmen of high rank assembled there.[3] Of these he had determined to take away with him those whose loyalty and power he particularly suspected: Archbishop Stigand, the Ætheling, kinsman of King Edward,[4] the three earls Edwin, Morcar, and Waltheof, and many others of high rank; so that during his

sub decessum suum nouaretur, gens uero tota minus ad rebellionem ualeret spoliata principibus. Denique eos potissimum, ueluti obsides, in potestate sua tali cautela tenendos existimabat, quorum auctoritas uel salus propinquis et compatriotis maximi esset. Sic autem fuere subacti, ut obsequentissime facerent imperata: nam et si petere quid malebat, praecepti uice audierunt; praesertim cum non traherentur ut captiui, sed dominum suum regem proximi comitarentur, ampliorem ex hoc gratiam atque honorem habituri. Hanc enim eius animaduertebant humanitatem, unde optima quaeque expectanda forent, nihil metuendum crudele uel iniurium. At milites repatriantes, quorum in tantis negotiis fideli opera usus fuerat,[1] larga manu ad eundem portum donauit ut opimum fructum uictoriae secum omnes percepisse gauderent.

Ita solutis nauibus omnium animis laetissimis, in altricem terram prouehitur secundo et uento et aestu. Transmissio haec mare diu pacauit, pirata omni procul fugato.[2] Felicitatem actorum, quae qui nouerit merito admiratur, multo magis admirandam celeritas fecit. Siquidem Octobris circiter calendas, die quo memoriam archangeli Michaelis ecclesia concelebrat, terram ad hostilem, dubius quem consequeretur euentum, abiit; mense Martio in sinum patriae redditus est, melius quam scripta nostra exponant rebus gestis.

39. Iulius Caesar bis transuectus in ipsam Britanniam nauibus mille (nam Angliae[a] nomen antiquius est Britanniae) non aeque magna peregit prima uice,[3] nec a littore longius progredi, nec in littore, tametsi patria consuetudine castra munierit, diutius morari ausus est.[4] Transiit in extremo aestatis, rediit ante aequinoctium quod prope instabat.[5] Perturbatae sunt legiones eius magno metu, cum naues partim fractae aestu maritimo aut fluctibus, partim

[a] *M F*; Anglis *D*

[1] Some of the men of rank who returned a few years later are named by Orderic; they included Hugh of Grandmesnil and Humphrey of Tilleul (OV ii. 220–1).

[2] Probably a reference to Scandinavian pirates.

[3] The comparison that follows is based on Caesar, *De bello gallico*. In fact Caesar gave the numbers of ships as 98 for the first invasion (iv. 22) and over 800 for the second (v. 8).

[4] The camp is mentioned by Caesar, iv. 31.

[5] ibid. iv. 20; iv. 38.

absence no revolt instigated by them might break out, and the general populace, deprived of their leaders, would be less capable of rebellion. Finally he thought it essential as a precaution to hold in his power, as hostages, men whose authority and safety were of the greatest importance to their kinsmen and compatriots. Being subjected in this way they carried out his orders most compliantly; for even if he chose to express a wish they interpreted it as a command, chiefly because they were not led about as captives, but accompanied their lord the king in his retinue, so as to have greater favour and honour in this way. For they had taken note of his humanity, from which they could expect the best of everything and fear nothing cruel or harmful. As for the knights who were returning home after serving him faithfully in so great an enterprise,[1] he rewarded them generously at the same port, so that they could all rejoice to share with him the abundant fruits of victory.

So as the ships set sail amid general rejoicing William was carried to his native land by a favourable wind and tide. This crossing ensured the safety of the sea for a long time, as all pirates had been driven away.[2] The happy outcome of the enterprise, which was justly admired by all who heard of it, was made still more admirable by the speed with which it was accomplished. In fact it was about the kalends of October, on the day on which the Church celebrates the feast of the archangel Michael, that he left for an enemy land, uncertain of the outcome; in the month of March he returned to his fatherland, having performed deeds even greater than it is possible for us to describe in writing.

39. Julius Caesar, who twice crossed over to this same Britain (for the ancient name of England is Britain) with a thousand ships,[3] did not perform deeds as great as this the first time, nor did he dare to advance far from the coast or to stay long on the coast, even though he had fortified a camp in the Roman fashion.[4] He crossed over at the end of summer and returned before the following equinox.[5] His legions were overcome with great fear when his ships were partly broken up by the tides and waves of the sea, and partly rendered useless for navigation by

inutiles ad nauigandum essent armamentis amissis.[1] Aliquae ciuitates, quoniam in otio agitare quam populum Romanum, cuius tremenda erat per mundum opinio, hostem tolerare mallebant, obsides ei dederunt. Ceterum quos in continentem obsides adducere imperauit, praeter duas cunctae neglexerunt, quanquam in Belgio cum immani exercitu hibernare eum nouerint.[2] Secundo pedites Romanos et equites ad millia fere centum transportauit, una ex ciuitatibus Galliae primos quamplures cum eorum equitatu.[3] Quid igitur huius uiri, quem scribimus, conferendum laudibus hac uice patrauit?

40. Equitatus Britannorum et essedarii cladem illi non paruam intulerunt, aequo loco audacissime cum eo confligentes,[4] Angli uero Guillelmum pauidi in monte operiebantur. Caesarem praelio saepius adorti sunt Britanni;[5] Anglos adeo Guillelmus die uno protriuit, ut post secum dimicandi fiduciam nullatenus reciperent. Cum idem imperator ad flumen Tamesim peruenisset, in fines Cassiuellauni, qui contra se bellum administrabat, exercitum ducens, in aduersa ripa hostes instructi obstabant: aegerrime milites Romani uada transierunt, ex aqua capite solo extantes;[6] at cum in eandem regionem dux Normannorum aduentaret, obuiam ei clementiam deprecando processerunt ciuitates et municipia: militibus eius traiectum ultra flumen ponte, si id collibuisset imperare, sine mora parauissent. Caesar, ut agros uastaret igne ac praeda, equitatum suum effudit, quos latius uagari Cassiuellaunus prohibebat, ex essedis pugnare peritos immittendo;[7] Guillelmus autem pacifica iubens incolis, terram quam citius euertere posset, incolas cum terra sibi conseruauit. Defendit Caesar ab iniuria Cassiuellauni Mandrubatium et ciuitatem, cuius imperium

[1] Caesar iv. 29 ('Compluribus navibus fractis, reliquae cum essent, funibus, ancoris, reliquisque armamentis amissis ad navigandum inutiles . . . totius exercitus perturbatio factus est'). [2] ibid. iv. 27, 38.

[3] WP's number is exaggerated. The figures given by Caesar (v. 8) are 2,000 horsemen and 5 legions, with a contingent of cavalry equal to that left behind. A legion numbered 5,000 in theory, but in practice 3,500 at most. He also took with him some of the Gallic leaders with their attendants, more or less as hostages (v. 5).

[4] ibid. v. 8, 9; the level ground may be implied by the descent of the British from higher ground to the river to join battle, 'Illi equitatu atque essendis ad flumen progressi ex loco superiore nostris prohibere et proelium committere coeperunt.'

[5] ibid. v. 15–17.

the loss of their tackle.[1] A few cities gave him hostages because they preferred to live at ease rather than have the Roman people (whose renown made the whole world tremble) as their enemy. But all except two of them failed to send to the continent the hostages he had demanded, although they knew him to be wintering in Belgica with a huge army.[2] On the second expedition he transported Roman infantry and cavalry to the number of 100,000, together with many chiefs from the cities of Gaul with their horsemen.[3] What then did he accomplish that deserves the praise to be given to the man of whom we are writing?

40. The horsemen of the Britons and their charioteers inflicted no little damage on Caesar, bravely fighting against him on level ground;[4] the English, by contrast, trembling with fear, waited for William on a hill. The Britons often gave battle to Caesar;[5] whereas William crushed the English so thoroughly in one day that afterwards they could not muster the courage to fight him again. When the same emperor came at the head of his army to the river Thames, on the frontiers of the territory of Cassivellaunus who was waging war against him, the enemy was drawn up in line of battle on the opposite bank; the Roman soldiers crossed the ford with great difficulty, with only their heads showing above the water.[6] But when the duke of the Normans arrived in the same region, the inhabitants of cities and towns flocked to meet him, begging for mercy; if it had pleased him to command it, they would without delay have provided a bridge for his troops to cross the river. Caesar sent out his cavalry to lay waste the fields with fire and plunder; but Cassivellaunus restricted their movements by sending out men skilled at fighting from chariots.[7] William, on the other hand, made peace-offerings to the people, and so preserved with its inhabitants the land which he could have devastated utterly in a short time. Caesar saved Mandrubatius and his city from the attacks of Cassivellaunus, and restored the

[6] ibid. v. 18, 'Caesar . . . ad flumen Tamesim in fines Cassivellauni exercitum duxit; quod flumen uno omnino loco pedibus, atque hoc aegre, transiri potest. Eo cum venisset, animum advertit alteram fluminis ripam magnas esse copias hostium instructas . . . Sed ea celeritate atque eo impetu milites ierunt, cum capite solo ex aqua exstarent, ut hostes impetum legionum atque equitum sustinere non possent ripasque dimitterent ac si fugae mandarent.' [7] v. 19.

reddidit Mandrubatio;[1] liberauit in perpetuo Guillelmus gentem omnem a tirannide Heraldi, atque solium obtinuit ipse; unde regionibus quae sub multis regibus quondam egerant, unus imperitaret.[2] Romani solum ex Britanniae maioribus Cingetorigem ceperunt,[3] mille ex ipsa natione illustres in uincula, si placuisset, coniecissent Normanni. Quanta partibus in ipsis Romani gesserunt tempore aestiuo, quanta Normanni hiberno: hiemem ad res bello gerendas minus quam aestatem opportunam esse pernotum est. Caesari satis fuerat ad laudem uel utilitatem praelia cum Britannis, uti cum Gallis, imperando facere: equidem sua manu raro pugnauit.[4] Haec multa ducum antiquorum consuetudo fuit: attestantur *Commentarii* eloquentia ipsius dictati. At dedecus uisum est Guillelmo, ac parum utile, in eo conflictu quo contriuit Anglos, officia praestare imperatoris, nisi praestaret officia quoque militis, uti bellis aliis consueuerat: in omni enim certamine ubi praesens aderat, primus aut in primis gladio suo pugnare solitus erat. Si Romani illius, et nostri principis acta attentius perspexeris, illum temerarium atque fortunae nimis confidentem, hunc omnino prouidum hominem, qui magis optimo consilio quam casu res bene gesserit, recte dices.[5]

Postremo Caesar, ciuitatibus aliquot in deditione et obsidibus a Cassiuellauno acceptis, necnon aliquanto uectigali, quod in annos singulos Britannia populo Romano penderet, constituto, exercitum difficile duobus commeatibus in Belgium reportauit, nauibus quippe refectis et minoris quam adduxerat[a] numeri, ob incommodum, quod ex tempestate acciderat.[6] Tali minime Guillelmus difficultate angebatur. Pareret ei gens eadem imperanti nauigia noua ad numerum et modum quem uellet, insuper metallo

[a] *F*; adduxerit *D M*

[1] Caesar v. 20. Mandubratius, whose father (the king of the Trinobantes) had been killed by Cassivellaunus, had sought out Caesar in Gaul to ask for his help, and had accompanied the invasion (v. 20).

[2] WP exaggerates. He may have meant to include Scotland (see above, p. 16 n. 3). England had been effectively a single kingdom since the tenth century.

[3] An error for Lugotorix (*De bello gallico*, v. 22).

[4] Although Suetonius stated that Caesar led his troops on the march (*Caesar*, c. lvii, 'In agmine nonnunquam equo, saepius pedibus anteibat, capite detecto, seu sol, seu imber esset, longissimas vias incredibili celeritate confecit'), and that he could rally a retreating force (ibid., c. lxii, 'inclinatam aciem solus saepe restituit obsistens fugientibus, retinensque

city to Mandrubatius' rule;[1] William freed the whole people for ever from the tyranny of Harold, and himself took the throne, so that the regions which had formerly been subject to many kings might be ruled by one.[2] The Romans captured only Cingetorix[3] of the leaders of Britain; the Normans, if it had been thought desirable, could have thrown a thousand of the most illustrious men of that people into chains. The Romans did no more in those parts in summer than the Normans in winter; and it is well known that winter is less suitable than summer for the waging of war. To Caesar it was sufficient for his glory and his interest to fight with the Britons or the Gauls by commanding; indeed he rarely fought with his own hand.[4] This was the normal custom of the generals of the ancients, as attested in the eloquent language of the *Commentaries*, which Caesar himself composed. But to William it seemed dishonourable and of little use, in that battle in which he crushed the English, to carry out the duties of a general unless he also carried out those of a soldier, as had been his custom in other wars. For in every battle in which he was present he was accustomed to be the first, or among the first, to fight with his sword. If you look closely at the deeds of this Roman and those of our leader, you will rightly say that the Roman was improvident and trusted too much to luck, whereas William always acted with foresight and succeeded more by good planning than by chance.[5]

Finally, Caesar, after accepting the surrender of some cities and hostages from Cassivellaunus and deciding the modest tribute Britons should pay each year to the Roman people, transported his army back to Belgica with difficulty in two separate crossings, for his ships had needed to be repaired and were fewer than those he had brought with him, on account of the damage suffered in a storm.[6] William did not experience nearly so much difficulty. The populace would have prepared for him, had he so ordered, as many ships as he wished of the type specified, and—what is

singulos et contortis faucibus convertens in hostem'), he did not claim that he actually led attacks in the front line.

[5] WP here insists on good planning rather than luck. Cf. above, p. xxiv. In fact Caesar too was a careful planner; see Suetonius, *Caesar*, c. lviii, for the care with which he ventured on new ground.

[6] Caesar, *De bello gallico*, v. 23; cf. iv. 29, 31; v. 1, 11.

pretioso decorata, uelis purpureis[1] adornata, peritis remigibus, delectis gubernatoribus instructa. En quam gloriose reuectus est, non trahens, ut Romani, uulgus captiuum; sed habens in comitatu et obsequio suo totius Britanniae episcoporum primatem,[2] atque magnos in transmarinis coenobiis abbates, et filios Anglorum tam stemmatis[a] quam opum dignitate reges appellandos. Attulit non aliquantulum uectigal, non rapinas, sed quantum ex ditione trium Galliarum[3] uix colligeretur argentum atque aurum, quod rectissimo iure acceperat; quod ubi honestissimae rationes postularent, expendere cogitabat. Cari metalli abundantia multipliciter Gallias terra illa uincit. Vt enim horreum Cereris dicenda uidetur frumenti copia, sic aerarium Arabiae auri copia.[4] Mentionem super Iulio Caesare, quae forte notetur quasi derogans, omittamus. Fuit itaque eximius dux lectione doctus Graecorum praecepta militaria,[5] militia Romana cum laude ab adolescentia usus, uirtute consecutus urbis consulatum. Bella multa cum bellicosis gentibus feliciter atque celeriter confecit, nouissime Romam, Africae et Europae atque Asiae praesidentem, regnum suum bellando effecit.

41. Vespasiani filio Tito, qui dum recta uehementer amaret orbis amor dici meruit,[6] nunquam Italia laetior quam Normannia occurrit Guillelmo regi principi suo. Dies erant hiberni, et qui poenitentiae quadragesimalis rigori uacant.[7] Ceterum ubique agebantur tanquam summae festiui temporis feriae. Sol aestiua serenitate lucidus uidebatur, gratia dierum solita longe maior. Minorum siue remotiorum locorum incolae in urbes, aut alio ubi

[a] *M F*; stematis *D*

[1] WP had earlier described the sails of William's fleet as white (above, ii. 38).

[2] WP used the term 'primas' three times of secular leaders (i. 11; ii. 23, 33), once of the Pope (i. 53), and once of the archbishop of York (ii. 49). The title here given to Stigand, 'totius Britanniae episcoporum primatem', seems, however, to echo the language of the Council of Winchester (April 1072), which referred to the archbishop of Canterbury as 'primas totius Britanniae' (*Councils and Synods*, i. 601–2). WP may have had first-hand knowledge of this Council when he was writing.

[3] Cf. Caesar, *De bello gallico*, i. 1, 'Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres, quarum unam incolunt Belgae, aliam Aquitani, tertiam qui ipsorum lingua Celtae, nostra Galli appellantur.'

[4] For the resources of England, see P. H. Sawyer, 'The wealth of England in the eleventh century', *TRHS*, 5th ser., xv (1965), 145–64.

more—decorated lavishly with precious metal, fitted with purple sails,[1] and manned by skilled oarsmen and chosen steersmen. How gloriously he returned! not bringing with him a crowd of captives in the Roman fashion, but having in his entourage and allegiance the primate[2] of the bishops of all Britain, many great abbots from the overseas monasteries, and sons of the English worthy by both ancestry and wealth to be called kings. He brought back with him neither a small tribute nor booty, but as much gold and silver as might have been collected with difficulty from the subjection of the three parts of Gaul,[3] which he had received entirely lawfully and was proposing to spend wherever it was most clearly needed. This kingdom is many times richer than Gaul in its wealth of precious metals; it seems as if it should be called the granary of Ceres because of the abundance of its corn, and the treasury of Arabia because of its richness in gold.[4] We omit further mention of Julius Caesar, as it may perhaps be considered disparaging. He was indeed a distinguished general, who had learnt the military science of the Greeks from books[5] and practised Roman warfare from youth with acclaim, his valour leading him to consulship. He brought many wars against warlike people to a swift and successful close, and finally, by force of arms, he made Rome, the mistress of Africa, Europe, and Asia, his kingdom.

41. Italy did not run more happily to greet Titus the son of Vespasian (who through his ardent desire for justice deserved to be called the favourite of the world)[6] than did Normandy to meet its ruler, King William. It was a time of winter, and of the austere lenten penances.[7] Nevertheless everywhere celebrations were held as if it were a time of high festival. The sun seemed to shine with the clear brightness of summer, far more strongly than usual at this season. The inhabitants of humble or remote places flocked to

[5] One of these authors would probably have been Polybius, who wrote a treatise on tactics, and in his *Historiae*, x. 23, discussed cavalry training.

[6] Cf. Suetonius, *Titus*, i. 1, 'Titus, cognomine paterno, amor ac deliciae generis humani, tantum illi ad promovendum omnium voluntatem vel ingenii, vel artis, vel fortunae, superfuit.'

[7] William sailed for Normandy in March 1067 (above, ii. 38). Easter Sunday fell on 8 April.

facultas conspiciendi regem daretur confluebant. Cum in metropolim suam Rotomagum introiret, senes, pueri, matronae, cunctique ciues spectatum processerant: conclamabant salutantes reducem, adeo ut ciuitas illa uniuersa applaudere putaretur, sicuti Roma quondam Pompeio suo applaudans tripudiauit.[1] Monasteria certabant monachorum atque cleri, quodnam in aduentu sui carissimi tutoris ampliorem officiositatem impenderent. Nihil relinquebatur quod in studio talis honorificentiae agi solitum est. Praeterea si quid nouum adinuenire potuit, addebatur.

42. Quam pietatem ipse confestim lucro multiplici recompensauit, donans pallia, libras[2] auri, aliaque magna altaribus ac famulis Christi. Nullius unquam regis aut imperatoris largitatem in oblationibus maiorem comperimus. Item quas ecclesias non praesentia sua, muneribus uisitauit iterum. Cadomensi basilicae, modo specieque admirabili suis impendiis ad titulum beati Stephani protomartiris a fundamento, ut ante est memoratum, extructae, tum diuersa donaria aduexit, materia artificioque pretiosissima, quae ad seculi terminum honora permanere ualeant.[3] Singula descriptionibus aut nominibus designare spatiosum foret. Voluptuosum est ea perspectare hospitibus maximis, et qui saepe nobilium ecclesiarum thesauros uiderant. Transiret illac hospes Graecus aut Arabs, uoluptate traheretur eadem. Anglicae nationis feminae multum acu et auri textura egregie, uiri in omni ualent artificio.[4] Ad hoc incolere apud eos Germani solebant talium artium scientissimi.[5] Inferunt et negociatores, qui longinquas regiones nauibus adeunt, doctarum manuum opera.

Potentes nonnulli sanctis inique largiuntur, plerumque in iisdem donationibus laudem suam in mundo, delicta sua coram

[1] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, viii. 794–815, after describing Pompey's unworthy burial, recalls his three earlier triumphs in Rome: 'ter cunibus actis | Contentum multos patriae donasse triumphos.'

[2] If Duchesne correctly transcribed 'libras', gold bullion must be meant; but if it is an error for 'libros', it could refer to the service books whose bindings were decorated with gold, which were plundered from the English churches (D. N. Dumville, 'Anglo-Saxon books: treasure in Norman hands?', *Battle*, xvi (1994), 83–99).

[3] The Waltham Chronicle complained that William Rufus had plundered Waltham to enrich Saint-Étienne-de-Caen, but it is possible that the treasures were taken by his father (*Waltham Chronicle*, pp. 58–9).

[4] For the skill of English needlewomen and craftsmen, see *Bayeux Tapestry*, pp. 44–5;

the towns or anywhere else where there was a chance of seeing the king. When he entered his metropolitan city of Rouen old men, boys, matrons and all the citizens came out to see him; they shouted out to welcome his return, so that you could have thought the whole city was cheering, as did Rome formerly when it joyfully applauded Pompey.[1] Communities of monks and clerks vied with each other as to who could show the greatest complaisance at the arrival of their beloved protector. Nothing which ought to have been done in celebration of such honour was left undone. Furthermore, if anything new could be devised, it was added.

42. He rewarded this dutiful affection immediately with treasures of many kinds, giving vestments, gold bullion,[2] and other magnificent gifts to the altars and servants of Christ. We have not heard of any king or emperor who showed greater liberality in his gifts. Similarly, he honoured in turn with his gifts the churches that he could not honour with his presence. To the basilica of Caen, admirable both in design and decoration, which he had built from its foundations entirely at his own expense and had dedicated in the name of the protomartyr St Stephen (as previously described), he brought such diverse gifts, so precious in both material and workmanship that they deserve to be remembered to the end of time.[3] It would take too much space to describe or even enumerate each one. To gaze at them is a rare delight for the most eminent guests, even for those who have often seen the treasures of the noblest churches. If a Greek or Arab visitor passed that way he would be overwhelmed by the same delight. The women of the English people are very skilled in needlework and weaving gold thread, and the men are outstanding in craftsmanship of all kinds.[4] Moreover Germans, most skilled in such arts, are accustomed to live among them.[5] Traders too, who travel to distant regions in their ships, bring objects of skilled workmanship.

There are some powerful men who endow the saints wickedly, for the most part increasing with these gifts their glory in the

C. R. Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Art: A New Perspective* (Manchester, 1982), pp. 216–17 and *passim*.

[5] For German craftsmen working in England in the time of Edward the Confessor, see Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, pp. 65, 78.

Deo adaugentes. Spoliant ecclesias, et rapinis ipsis alias ditant. Rex uero Guillelmus nunquam nisi bonitate sinceram famam sibi comparauit, donans uere sua; mente ad spem interminae mercedis, non ad gloriam quae deperibit, intentus. Abundantes ecclesiae transmarinae aliqua ei libentes, quae in Galliam transferret, dederunt quoniam ea multuplo redemit rebusaliis.[1]

43. Patriam non minus regno caram sibi, praecipue causa probae gentis, quam principibus terrenis fidam, culturae Christi ualde deditam, nouerat, in statu quem uolebat inuenit. Optime quidem egerat in gubernaculo domina nostra Matildis, iam nomine diuulgato regina etsi nondum coronata.[2] Illius prudentiam uiri adiuuere consilio utilissimi, in quibus locum dignitatis primum tenebat Rogerus de Bellomonte, Humfridi hominis generosissimi filius, ob maturitatem aeui liberior ad negotia quae domi geruntur; filio adolescenti, super cuius fortitudine in praelio contra Heraldum paucis diximus,[3] officio militari tradito. Verum quod finitimi incursionem nullam ausi fuerant, cum terram fere militibus exhaustam scirent, regi ipsi,[a] cuius reuersionem uerebantur, primo ascribendum arbitramur.

44. Ad coenobium sanctae Trinitatis Fiscanni[4] Pascha celebrauit Dominicum, redemptorem resurrectionis suae festo reuerendissime honorans, cum frequentia uenerabilium et praesulum et abbatum. Humiliter adstans ille choris ordinum religiosorum ludicra intermittere, concurrere ad diuina militum plebisque turbas coegit. Regis Francorum uitricus intererat huic curiae Rodolphus praepotens comes,[5] multaque nobilitas Franciae. Curiose hi cum Normannis cernebant crinigeros alumnos plagae

[a] *M F*; ipsius *D*

[1] For a different view see above, p. 153 n. 3.

[2] Matilda, together with Roger of Beaumont and others, had been entrusted with the care of the duchy; see OV ii. 208, 210; D. Bates, 'The origins of the justiciarship', *Battle*, iv (1982), 1–12, at p. 6. She was crowned at Pentecost (11 May) 1068 (*ASC* (D) 1067 for 1068; FW ii. 2; OV ii, 214).

[3] See above, ii. 19. Roger's father was Humphrey of Vieilles.

[4] The royal abbey of Fécamp was closely associated with the royal palace, and the duke had been accustomed to celebrate the major church feasts there. On its symbolic importance for the new king, see Renoux, *Fécamp*, p. 482, 'Le couronnement dynastique

world and their sins before God. They despoil churches and enrich others with the booty. But King William won true fame through his goodness alone, by giving only the things that were truly his; his mind was fixed on the hope of an eternal reward, not on a perishable glory. Countless overseas churches freely gave him things which he could take to Gaul, because he redeemed them many times over with other gifts.[1]

43. He found his native land (which was no less dear to him than his kingdom, because he knew that its virtuous people were loyal to their secular princes, sincerely devoted to the worship of Christ) in the state which he desired. For its government had been carried on smoothly by our lady Matilda, already commonly known by the title of queen, though as yet uncrowned.[2] Men of great experience had added their counsel to her wisdom; amongst them the first in dignity was Roger of Beaumont (son of the illustrious Humphrey), who on account of his mature age was more suitable for home affairs, and had handed over military duties to his youthful son (of whose courage in the battle against Harold we have already said a little).[3] But in truth the fact that neighbours had not dared to make any attack though they knew the land to be almost emptied of knights, must, we think, be attributed primarily to the king himself, whose return they feared.

44. He celebrated Easter Sunday at the abbey of the Holy Trinity at Fécamp,[4] most reverently honouring the Saviour on the feast of His resurrection, with a great gathering of venerable bishops and abbots. Humbly standing near the choirs of the religious orders, he compelled crowds of soldiers and people to leave their games and come to divine service. The stepfather of the king of the Franks, the mighty Count Raoul,[5] was present at this court, together with many of the French nobles. These men, like the Normans, looked with curiosity at the long-haired sons of the

anglais est le point d'aboutissement d'une idéologie dont Fécamp a été l'un des creusets majeurs.'

[5] Raoul, count of Crépy and Valois, who married Anne of Russia, the widow of King Henry I of France. On his wealth and prominence, see Guibert de Nogent, pp. 58–60.

Aquilonalis: quorum pulchritudini Galliae comatae[1] formosissimi iuuenes inuiderent. Nec enim puellari uenustati cedebant. Regis autem regiorumque satellitum indumenta spectantes intexta atque crustata auro, quaeque[a] antea uiderant uilia aestimauere. Item uasa argentea siue aurea admirabantur, quorum de numero uel decore uere narrari possint incredibilia. His tantum ex poculis[b] coenaculum ingens bibebat, aut cornibus bubalinis metallo decoratis eodem circa extremitates utrasque. Denique plurima huiuscemodi competentia regali munificentiae notabant, quae reuersi domum ob nouitatem praedicarent. Ceterum talibus longe insigniorem atque plus memorandam ipsius regis cognouere honestatem.

45. Aestiua illa, et autumnum partemque hiemis citra mare transegit, tempus hoc patriae amori omne donans; quae neque hac mora, neque superioris anni expeditione suas opes attenuatas fuisse dolebat. Ea illius temperantia fuit ac prudentia: militibus et hospitibus abunde sumptus ministrabatur; nemini rapere quippiam concedebatur.[2] Prouincialium tuto armenta uel greges pascebantur, seu per campestria, seu per tesqua. Segetes falcem cultoris intactae expectabant, quas nec attriuit superba equitum effusio, nec demessuit pabulator. Homo imbecillis aut inermis equo cantans qua libuit uectabatur, turmas militum cernens, non exhorrens.

46. Interea Baoicensis praesul Odo et Guillelmus Osberni filius praefecturas in regno uterque suam laudabiliter administrabant: interdum simul agitantes, modo diuersi. Si quando necessitudo postulabat, festinam alter alteri ferebat opem.[3] Per amicam qua sincere uoluntatem concordabant, amplius ualuit prudens eorum uigilantia. Mutuo sese, regem aequaliter, diligebant; affectu ardebant pari ad continendum in pace gentem christianam,

[a] *D M F; M F suggest that possibly* quaecumque *should be read* [b] *M F;* populis *D*

[1] Cf. Suetonius, *Caesar*, c. xxii, for the expression 'Gallia comata'. The long-haired style of the Anglo-Saxons is illustrated in the *Bayeux Tapestry*.

[2] This and the following sentences repeat word for word the account of Duke William's orderly preparation for the invasion (above, ii. 2).

[3] Orderic (OV ii. 202–5) gives a different account of their administration, describing it as oppressive and unjust; the *ASC* (D) 1066 wrote 'And Bishop Odo and Earl William

northern lands, whose beauty the most handsome youths of 'long-haired Gaul'[1] might have envied; nor did they yield anything to the beauty of girls. Indeed as they looked at the clothes of the king and his courtiers, woven and encrusted with gold, they considered whatever they had seen before to be of little worth. Similarly they marvelled at the vessels of silver and gold, of whose number and beauty incredible things could truthfully be told. At a great banquet they drank only from such goblets or from horns of wild oxen decorated with the same metal at both ends. Indeed they noted many such things, fitting the magnificence of a king, which they praised on their return home because of their novelty. But they recognized that far more distinguished and memorable than these things was the splendour of the king himself.

45. He spent that summer and part of the autumn and winter on this side of the sea, devoting all his time to love of his native land, which did not have cause to grieve for loss of wealth either because of this stay or because of his expedition in the preceding year. Such was his moderation and wisdom that abundant provision was made for the soldiers and their hosts, and no one was permitted to seize anything.[2] The cattle and flocks of the people of the province grazed safely whether in the fields or on the waste. The crops waited unharmed for the scythe of the harvester, and were neither trampled by the proud charges of horsemen nor cut down by foragers. A man who was weak or unarmed could ride singing on his horse wherever he wished, without trembling at the sight of squadrons of knights.

46. Meanwhile Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and William fitz Osbern were administering their prefectures in the kingdom, each praiseworthy in his own, working sometimes together, sometimes separately; if ever necessity demanded it, one gave speedy help to the other.[3] Their wise vigilance was made all the more effective by the friendly willingness with which they genuinely agreed. They loved each other and the king equally; they burned

stayed behind and built castles far and wide throughout the country and distressed the wretched folk'.

consilio alter alterius aequanimiter assentiebantur. Aequitate utebantur maxima, uti rex praemonuerat, qua homines efferi et inimici corrigerentur et beneuoli fierent. Item praefecti minores, ubi quisque in munitionibus locatus fuerat, strenue curabant. Verum Angli neque beneficio neque formidine satis coerceri poterant, ut quietem serenam quam res nouas ac turbidas mallent. Consurgere palam in arma non confidunt, sed regionatim de prauis conspirationibus tractant, si quibus forte dolis praeualeant ad nocendum. Ad Danos, uel alio, unde auxilium aliquod speratur, legatos missitant. Vltro in exilium aliqui profugiunt, quo extorres uel a potestate Normannorum sint liberi, uel aucti opibus alienis contra eos reuertantur.[1]

47. Regi ea tempestate Eustachius comes Boloniae aduersabatur, qui filium de fide ante bellum in Normannia obsidem dederat.[2] Ei persuadent hi maxime qui Cantium inhabitant, uti castrum Doueram inuadat, ipsis utens adiutoribus.[3] Equidem fore, si firmissimo loco hoc sit potitus cum portu marino, ut potentia eius latius distendatur, sicque potentiam Normannorum diminutum[a] iri. Nam quia Normannos odere, cum Eustachio pridem sibi inimicissimo, concordauere. Eum bellandi peritum atque in praelio felicem experimentis cognouerant. Si erat seruiendum non compatriotae, noto seruire atque uicino satius putabant. Accidit ut occasio temporis euentum rei quam affectabant promitteret.

Abierant ultra flumen Tamesim[b] primi munitionis custodes, praesul Baiocensis atque Hugo de Monteforti militum parte maiori secum ducta. Eustachius itaque, accepto nuncio Anglorum, cum suis ad eos noctis conticinio transiuit, ut incaute opprimeret

[a] dimunutam *D M*; dimunutum *F* [b] *OV*; Tamisim *D M F*

[1] A number went to join the forces of the Greek emperor in Constantinople (OV ii. 202).

[2] From the time of Duke William's marriage to Matilda, Eustace had been apprehensive of his growing power, and had openly sided with William of Arques against him; see *GND* ii. 104–5 and n. 3). For the uneasy relations between Eustace and the duke, see Tanner, 'Counts of Boulogne', pp. 270–6. WP is the only source to mention that Eustace's son was given as a hostage. In spite of receiving extensive estates in England, Eustace returned to the continent not later than Easter 1067 (Tanner, p. 272).

[3] Various motives have been suggested for the action of Eustace. Douglas, *Conqueror*, p. 212, thought that he might have been motivated by political changes after the death of

with a common desire to keep the Christian people in peace, and deferred readily to each other's advice. They paid the greatest respect to justice, as the king had admonished, so that fierce men and enemies might be corrected and brought into friendship. The lesser officials were equally zealous in the castles where each had been placed. But neither benefits nor fear could sufficiently force the English to prefer peace and quiet to changes and revolts. They had not the courage to rise in arms openly, but dealt in vile conspiracies in different regions, to see if by any deceit they could succeed in inflicting damage. They repeatedly sent envoys to the Danes or some other people from whom they might hope for help. In addition, some fled abroad where, as exiles, they might either be free from the power of the Normans, or, having gained foreign help, might return to fight against them.[1]

47. At that time Eustace, count of Boulogne, who had given his son as a hostage for his loyalty in Normandy before the war, was working against the king.[2] In particular, the inhabitants of Kent persuaded him to attack Dover castle with their help.[3] If indeed he had been able to gain possession of that strong site with its seaport his power would have been extended more widely and that of the Normans correspondingly diminished. It was because they hated the Normans that they reached an agreement with Eustace, formerly their bitter enemy. They knew by experience of his prowess in war and fortune in battle. They thought that if they were not to serve one of their own countrymen, they would rather serve a neighbour whom they knew. It happened that favourable circumstances promised the outcome that they desired.

The custodians of the first fortress, the bishop of Bayeux and Hugh of Montfort, had gone away across the river Thames, taking most of their troops with them. Eustace therefore, after receiving a message from the English, sailed across with his men

Baldwin V, count of Flanders, on 1 September 1067. Barlow, *Confessor*, app. C, pp. 307–8, suggested that he might have acted on behalf of a hypothetical grandson, his descendant by his first wife Goda. Tanner, 'Counts of Boulogne', pp. 273–4, argues that either he was disappointed in his hope of recovering lands he had previously controlled through his wife, or he wished to hold Dover in order to control the main passageway to England from his port of Wissant.

castellanos. Classem duxit militibus delectis oneratam, relictis equis praeter admodum paucos. Vicinia omnis adfuit armata, auctior numerus ex ulterioribus accederet si mora biduana obsidio traheretur. Ceterum custodiam inuenerunt minus opinione remissam, plus ⟨in statu⟩[a] ad defensandum ualidam. ⟨Eustachium uero⟩[a] eripiunt uelocitas equi, notitia tramitis nauisque paratior. Nobilissimus autem tiro, nepos eius,[1] comprehensus est. Angli per diuerticula plura eo facilius euaserunt quo minus commodum erat paucitati castellanorum insequi per diuersa. Iure id Eustachio dedecus atque detrimentum contigit. Equidem si rationes, quae eius liti controuersantur, depromerem, regis eum gratiam atque regis dono accepta beneficia ex aequo et bono amississe plane conuincerem. Neque sententia errauit, dicta consensu Anglorum et Gallorum, qua de reatu multo conuictus est. Sed parcendum sentimus personae multifariam illustri, comiti nominato, qui reconciliatus nunc in proximis regis honoratur.[2]

48. Eodem fere tempore Coxo comes, quem placuisse Normannis diximus, morte occidit immerita et quam deceat propagari.[3] Vt igitur uiuat laus eius atque per exemplum oriatur in posthumis innocentia defuncti, literis efficere iuuat. Prosapia ac potentatu Anglus hic iuxta praecelsus, magis animi singularitate prudentis et omnino honesti excelluit. Hic regis causam et ipsum fauore multo probabat. Sui uero satellites ab ipso dissidebant, factionum deterrimi fautores ac socii. Proinde eum ab officio transuertere tentabant, saepe monentes, quasi per amicitiam, de priuato honore, ut libertatem a proauis traditam defenderet; nunc obsecrantes atque obtestantes, tanquam gratia rerum publicarum,

[a] in statu *and* Eustachium uero *supplied from OV*

[1] The text printed by Duchesne is corrupt, possibly because of damage to the end of the MS; and the omission of the name of Eustace (copied by Orderic from a better MS) makes it almost unintelligible. The identity of the 'nepos' (a term used for various kinsmen, including a grandson, nephew or bastard son) is uncertain. Barlow favoured grandson, Tanner ('Counts of Boulogne', p. 266 n. 26) more plausibly speculated that he may have been Eustace's bastard son, Geoffrey.

[2] For the reconciliation and Eustace's English estates, see Tanner, 'Counts of Boulogne', pp. 274–6 and app. B, pp. 280–5.

[3] Royal authority was 'intermittent and probably ineffective' in Northumbria. King William first attempted to control the region through local officials; Copsi had served

in the first part of the night, in order to catch the garrison off their guard. He led a fleet with picked knights on board, leaving all but a few of the horses behind. The whole district was under arms, and their numbers would have been increased from further parts if the siege had lasted more than two days. But they found the garrison less slack than they expected and more capable of defending themselves. [Eustace himself] was saved by the speed of his horse, his knowledge of the path, and a ship more ready to weigh anchor. But a young knight of very high birth, his kinsman, was captured.[1] The English escaped more easily by numerous byways, because it was not practicable for the small numbers of the garrison to pursue them in different directions. It was just that this disgrace and defeat happened to Eustace. Indeed if I were to spell out the matters that were in dispute in his quarrel I would easily convince you that it was just and right that he lost the king's favour and the fiefs he had received from the king. Nor was the sentence, pronounced with the consent of English and French, by which he was convicted of serious crimes, unjust. But we feel that this man, illustrious in many ways and a distinguished count, ought to be spared because he is now reconciled and honoured among those closest to the king.[2]

48. About the same time Earl Copsi, who, as we have said, had won favour with the Normans, died an unjust death that deserves to be widely known.[3] I am therefore glad to record it in writing so that the praise of the dead man may live and his innocence may be handed down as an example to future generations. This Englishman, equally outstanding in lineage and in power, excelled still more by his remarkable wisdom and his total integrity. He was entirely favourable to the king and supported his cause. But his subordinates did not share his views, and were the worst instigators and allies of faction. Furthermore, they tried to turn him from his duty, often urging him, under the guise of friendship, that he should defend the liberty handed down from his

under Earl Tostig, but his rule lasted for barely five weeks before his assassination by Osulf, a rival claimant to the earldom on 12 March 1067. See W. M. Aird, 'St Cuthbert, the Scots and the Normans', *Battle*, xvi (1994), 1–20, at pp. 9–10.

ut extraneos deserens optimorum hominum suae nationis et consanguinitatis uoluntatem sequeretur. Sane diutina uariaque calliditate haec suggerebant, et huius modi alia. Sed ubi mentem firmiter in tenore boni fixam taliter dimouere nequeunt, comprouinciales ad inuidiam concitauere quam necessario placaret ab rege deficiendo. Postremo augescente in dies maleuolentia ipsorum, cum ille popularium odia omnemque iniuriam perpeti quam integritatem fidei temerare mallet, per insidias oppressum interfecere. Ita eximius uir suo casu, quod maiestas domini sui stare deberet, asseruit.

49. Sane pontifices quidam obsequio regio studebant, maxime Adelred primas Eboracensis . . .[1]

[1] The text breaks off here. WP may have gone on to describe how certain Englishmen like Copsi helped King William. Orderic, using WP, wrote, 'Tunc Adeldredus primas Eborachensis aliique pontifices quidam utilitati regiae studebant . . . Tunc etiam aliquot sapientissimi ciuium urbanorum et nonnulli ex militibus ingenuis quorum nomen et opes ualebant, et multi ex plebeis contra suos pro Normannis magnopere insurgebant' (OV ii. 208 and n. 1).

forebears as a matter of personal honour; now beseeching and imploring him, as if for the sake of the public good, to desert the foreigners and fall in with the wishes of the best men of his nation and line. For a long time they urged these things and others of the same kind with various sorts of cunning. But when they failed by these means to change his mind, which was firmly fixed on the pursuit of good, they stirred up the people of the province to hatred, so as to force him to desert the king in order to placate them. Finally, as their malevolence increased from day to day, and as he preferred to suffer the hatred of the people and every kind of outrage rather than violate his faith, they laid an ambush and murdered him. So this eminent man asserted by his death that the majesty of his lord should stand secure.

49. Certain bishops showed great zeal in the king's service, notably Ealdred, archbishop of York . . .[1]