**Bede, Willibrord and the Letters of Pope Honorius I on the
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Bede, Willibrord and the Letters of Pope Honorius I on the genesis of the archbishopric of York*

In his *Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, completed in 731, Bede incorporated the texts of fourteen papal letters: eight were from Gregory the Great (590–604); three from Boniface V (619–25); two from Honorius I (625–38); one from Vitalian I (658–72).¹ The two letters from Pope Honorius are the subject of this article. Previously known only through the pages of Bede's *History*, copies of both these letters have been identified within an early eighth-century manuscript that has no other connection with Bede's text. This manuscript was made at Echternach, in modern day Luxembourg, for Willibrord (658–739), the Northumbrian missionary archbishop of Frisia.² This copy of the letters of Pope Honorius I has not been studied before now and analysis of it has far reaching implications for our understanding of a number of important issues, namely: the division of the English Church into two provinces each headed by a metropolitan bishop, as envisaged by Gregory the Great in his letters to Augustine of Canterbury; the circumstances surrounding establishment of the archbishopric of York in 735 and Bede's involvement in that process; the circulation and transmission of Bede's primary sources; networks of communication and the use of 'old records' to solve contemporary problems in early eighth-century Europe; the proliferation of archbishoprics in England and in Francia in the later seventh and eighth centuries.

Archbishops lie at the heart of these issues, and at the outset we need to be clear about a number of points. First, by about the year 600, there was a strict hierarchy of bishops that distinguished the rank of a metropolitan bishop from that of an archbishop: metropolitan bishops were commonplace and, in the Western Church, were usually based in a town of Roman origin; they were responsible among other things for the consecration of new bishops and disciplinary jurisdiction within their province.³ Archbishops, on the other hand, were scarce and the title was very rarely used in the West at this time. There is no contemporary evidence, for example, that Gregory the Great ever called Augustine of Canterbury an archbishop, and neither Augustine, nor any of his first four successors ever styled themselves that way.⁴ Second, during the seventh century this system was in flux and, as Charles-Edwards has said, ‘the distinctions that were admirably clear in 600 may have been not nearly so clear, or even positively untrue, in 700’.⁵ By the time that Bede was writing, the terms metropolitan and archbishop were being used interchangeably, and by then they were linked explicitly with possession of the vestment known as the pallium that had previously been granted by the pope, *ad hominem*, to selected bishops who acted for him as his special representative, or vicar.⁶ The needs of the new Anglo-Saxon Church seem to have helped shape papal practice in this respect and the evolving requirements of a missionary Church were catalysts for change, at first in England and again on the near Continent in the earlier eighth century.

Third, it is important to remember that Bede had a special interest in the reform of the Anglo-Saxon Church in his own day. This reforming agenda pervades much of his later historical and exegetical writing, and fundamental to it was the need to improve pastoral care through the creation of more bishoprics and, specifically, an archbishopric in York.⁷ As he said, when writing to Ecgberht, then bishop of York, in November 734, ‘who does not see how much better it is to divide such a great weight of Church governance among several who

can easily bear their share rather than to overburden one man with a load he cannot carry?'.⁸

Bede's desire to see an archbishop in York in his own day gave him good reason to study the history of that office in Anglo-Saxon England, and to seek out evidence that supported the case for installing an archbishop at the head of a northern province of the English Church. This was finally achieved in 735 when Egberht, 'was confirmed to the archbishopric, having received the pallium from the apostolic see, the first since Paulinus'.⁹ The crucial evidence establishing a precedent for Egberht's elevation was contained in the papal letters that Bede had incorporated into his *History*.

Bede's papal letters

As a group, the papal letters provided Bede with hard, documentary evidence that the evangelisation of the English peoples had been the initiative of Gregory the Great, and that subsequent popes had intervened to assist the English Church in the first century of its existence. The letters from Rome added authentic papal voices to Bede's narrative and – crucially – provided a series of fixed dates by which to anchor his chronology. It has long been recognised that Bede copied his papal sources very carefully, retaining even the unorthodox syntax that reflected the spoken Latin of seventh-century Rome.¹⁰ He also included the formal opening protocols, closing subscriptions and dating formulae of the letters exactly as he found them, and the earliest manuscripts of the *History* even used display scripts for these elements that mimicked papal diplomatic and the scribal habits of the papal notaries.¹¹ Bede and his fellow monks could have observed such details by examining original papal papyri that had been sent to his own community and are likely to have been preserved there, notably the letters of privilege that had been sent by Agatho in 679 and Sergius I, c. 701, or the letter from Gregory II sent after the death of Abbot Ceolfrith in 716.¹²

Alternatively, Bede could have copied these peculiarly papal features of script, syntax and

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4 layout second hand, from the exemplars that had transmitted the texts of the letters
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6
7 northwards.

8
9 Bede tells us how he had acquired the papal letters. In the Preface to the *History*, he
10
11 says that Nothhelm, who was then a priest in London, had gone to Rome where he had
12
13 secured permission from the incumbent pope, Gregory II (715–31), to ‘scrutinize the archive
14
15 of the holy Roman church’.¹³ In these archives Nothhelm had found ‘not a few letters there
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17 from the blessed Pope Gregory and from other pontiffs . . . and returning he brought them to
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19 us for insertion into our *History*’.¹⁴ This makes it clear that Nothhelm was the courier for at
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21 least some of the letters of Gregory and at least some of the letters from other seventh-century
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23 popes, and that these had arrived on Bede’s desk as copies made directly from the register
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25 collections held in Rome. Meyvaert has argued that Nothhelm supplied the texts of 11 of
26
27 Bede’s papal letters: seven from Gregory I; one from Boniface V; two from Honorius I; one
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29 from Vitalian I.¹⁵ Two others, written in late 625 by Boniface to Edwin and his Kentish queen
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31 Æthelburg, he suggests, were acquired from copies preserved in England because they
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33 preserve neither closing subscriptions nor dating formulae, but share an introductory clause
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35 that opens with the phrase; ‘Exemplar epistulae beatissimi et apostolici papae Bonifatii’. This
36
37 formula referring to an ‘exact copy’ is not used elsewhere and may thus indicate a different
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39 route of transmission for these two letters to the Northumbrian court, separate from the main
40
41 dossier of papal letters supplied by Nothhelm.¹⁶

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43
44 Bede is very clear about Nothhelm’s role in the acquisition and transmission of the
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46 papal letters that he includes in his *History*. But it is of course possible that copies of
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48 documents such as these could have been acquired by other means, not least from men of his
49
50 own monastery who had been to Rome. To take but one example, we know that some of
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52 Bede’s brethren embarked on a journey to Rome in June 716 with Abbot Ceolfrith (and the
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54 great Bible pandect known as the *Codex Amiatinus*), and completed the journey after the
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4 death of Ceolfrith en route at Langres. They returned to Jarrow carrying a letter from Gregory
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6 II addressed to Abbot Hwaetberht, Ceolfrith's successor, which expressed condolence for the
7
8 death of his predecessor and thanks for the gifts presented to St Peter.¹⁷ Hwaetberht too had
9
10 been to Rome, c. 701, where he had 'stayed in Rome a good while, learning, copying down
11
12 and bringing back with him all that he thought was necessary for his studies'.¹⁸ While there,
13
14 his brethren had also noted down the inscriptions on the candles in Santa Maria Maggiore that
15
16 recorded the present date, and had brought this information back to Jarrow where it was
17
18 shared with Bede.¹⁹

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24 We know also that by the early 720s Bede had in his possession a copy of the papal
25
26 biographies compiled in the *Liber Pontificalis*, and that his copy included an account of the
27
28 first part of the life of the current pope, Gregory II. Bede drew on it for information about
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30 events in Rome in the year 716, incorporating it into the penultimate chapter of the *Chronica*
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32 *Maiora* that was embedded within his treatise on the reckoning of time, *De temporum*
33
34 *Ratione*, which he had finished by 725.²⁰ Duchesne argued that Ceolfrith's travelling
35
36 companions came home to Jarrow carrying a copy of the *Liber Pontificalis* as well as the
37
38 letter from Gregory II; plausibly they could have been couriers of other documents too.²¹

41
42 Alternatively Bede could have obtained copies of letters via Canterbury. Abbot
43
44 Albinus of the monastery of SS Peter and Paul had examined 'written records and old
45
46 traditions' on Bede's behalf to learn whatever he could about the activities of the missionaries
47
48 in Kent and in surrounding kingdoms.²² Nothhelm had been the courier for this information
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50 too, passing relevant information to Bede in writing and through face-to-face conversation
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52 (*siue litteris mandata . . . siue uiua uoce*). Twice, in the Preface to the *History* and again in a
53
54 letter, Bede tells us that Abbot Albinus had been his main source of information and
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56 inspiration for the *History*. He also says that Nothhelm had come from Albinus on at least two
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58 occasions; his words suggest that a considerable period had passed between these visits, and
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4 that they were separated by Nothhelm's journey to Rome. In the Preface to the *History*, Bede
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6 says that Nothhelm had brought information from Albinus concerning Augustine's mission to
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8 Kent, and that some time later (*postea*) Nothhelm went to Rome where he found letters from
9
10 Gregory I and other popes which he then took on to Bede at Albinus' prompting. Meyvaert
11
12 dates Nothhelm's first journey to Bede to the middle years of the second decade of the eighth
13
14 century, linking this visit to the composition of the *Thirty Questions on the Book of Kings* that
15
16 Bede wrote in response to questions posed by Nothhelm.²³ He argues that Bede worked on
17
18 this short text alongside the longer *Commentary on 1 Samuel*, and had got as far as the end of
19
20 Book 3 of the *Commentary* by June 716 because Bede mentions there his intense distress at
21
22 learning of the departure of Ceolfrith and his companions for Rome.²⁴ The *Thirty Questions*,
23
24 Meyvaert says, must therefore date to the same period, suggesting that Nothhelm had visited
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26 Jarrow c. 715.
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33 Nothhelm's journey to Rome and subsequent visit to Northumbria to deliver the
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35 dossier of papal letters seem likely to have occurred in the mid to late 720s.²⁵ This is
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37 significant because it implies that Bede did not have access to key primary sources for papal
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39 interventions in the affairs of the early English Church until relatively late in his career. An
40
41 important piece of evidence for this date is a late letter from Bede to Albinus, written after
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43 731 when the *History* was complete.
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50 It was with the greatest joy that I received the little tokens of your affection
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52 that you deigned to send to me by our venerable brother, the priest
53
54 Nothhelm, but I was most grateful for the letter (*litteras*) in which you have
55
56 taken care, now for a second time, to assist and instruct me so abundantly in
57
58 the history of the Church among our peoples, a history that some time ago
59
60 (*iam dudum*) you encouraged me to write. And therefore it is most fitting

that I have sent to you in return, as soon as I was able to finish it, that very history for copying (*ad transscribendum*).²⁶

The letter suggests that Nothhelm had visited for a second time quite recently, bringing *litteras* from Albinus that contained more information for the *History*. Meyvaert argues that this was the set of papal letters, translating *litteras* as a plural.²⁷ Elsewhere, however, not least in the introductions to some of the papal letters themselves, Bede uses *litterae* (pl.) as a synonym for *epistula* (sing.) so we cannot be certain that the letter to Albinus refers to specifically to the papal letters, although that remains likely especially if Nothhelm had transcribed them into a dossier or *libellus*.²⁸

There is other supporting evidence to show that Bede did not acquire the papal letters until after 725. In his *De temporum Ratione* (*Chronica Maiora* AM 4557) he was unable to give a precise date for the departure of Augustine from Rome, citing only what he could find out from the *Liber Pontificalis*.²⁹ This implies that by 725, when *De temporum Ratione* was complete, Bede did not yet have the two letters that he later incorporated into the *History* which reveal that the mission had left Rome in 596.³⁰ This has been used to suggest that Bede acquired the key letters of Gregory the Great from Nothhelm after 725, when the composition of the *History* is likely to have been well advanced, and that much of the first book concerning the Gregorian mission had to be recast in the light of the evidence they contain.³¹ Certainly, most of the papal letters fall into two discrete sections at the end of Book I and in Book II of the *History*, perhaps because it proved easier to interpolate them *en bloc* at the ends of pre-existing sections.

The possible exception is the seminal letter from Gregory in which he outlined his plan for the structure of the new English Church with two provinces each led by a metropolitan bishop overseeing twelve suffragans.³² Gregory launched the scheme by

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4 announcing in this letter the grant of a special vestment – the pallium – to Augustine, and his
5
6 intention to send another one to York once a suitable bishop had been appointed there. The
7
8 pallium is a long white woollen band embroidered with crosses that is worn around the neck
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10 of senior bishops in the Western Church as a symbol of communion with the papacy and of
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12 the special jurisdiction that devolves to them from Rome.³³ Its origins, however, were subtly
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14 different, and – importantly – in the early Western Church it was not automatically associated
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16 with promotion to higher episcopal rank although, as we shall see, it had acquired these
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18 connotations by the earlier eighth century. Initially it was an exclusive signifier of papal
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20 status but, during the sixth century, its use was extended as a gift from the pontiff to a few
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22 select bishops, given *ad hominem* usually at royal or imperial request. It was often, but not
23
24 invariably, given to the bishops of Arles and to the archbishops of Ravenna, and latterly also
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26 to Milan and to various bishops in Illyricum (the western Adriatic), and perhaps in Sicily too.
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33 It was under Gregory the Great that the pallium assumed new significance, with
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35 developments in its use that were linked to the particular demands of the missionary Church
36
37 in England. It was Gregory who specified, in this letter to Augustine, that the pallium should
38
39 be worn only when celebrating mass and when consecrating new bishops. These strictures on
40
41 its use were restated in further letters to England by Gregory's successors, especially
42
43 Boniface V and Honorius I.³⁴ Thus, by demanding its use in ceremonies to consecrate
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45 bishops, possession of the pallium increasingly came to signify a bishop of superior,
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47 metropolitan rank who exercised authority over the bishops of the province.
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52 What is more, at St Peter's tomb in Rome, Gregory reconfigured the shrine so that it
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54 incorporated a niche, connected to the tomb by a shaft, into which the pallia were placed prior
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56 to distribution.³⁵ This transformed each pallium into a contact relic, thereby increasing the
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58 potency of the rituals performed by its recipient and reinforcing the sacred link between
59
60 bishop, pope, and apostle; the wearer of the pallium was the 'connecting link' between Rome

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4 and the provincial Church.³⁶ The grant of the pallium to Augustine, as described in this letter,
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6 was the outward sign of the particular and exceptional authority bestowed on him by Gregory
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8 in order to establish a new province of the Church; it marked him out as Gregory's personal
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10 representative, signified the Petrine origin of his power, and was associated specifically with
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12 the needs of the missionary Church in England, namely the consecration of new bishops for
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14 the growing flock. It was for this reason that Gregory promoted Augustine to the rank of
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16 metropolitan bishop, with supervisory powers over the episcopacy that he was to appoint in
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18 England, and the pallium was an overt symbol of this special authority.
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23 Bede transcribed Gregory's letter on the structure of the English Church into the
24
25 *History* (HE I.29) but he clearly knew of its existence by 725 because he refers to it in *De*
26
27 *temporum Ratione* (*Chronica Maiora* AM 4557). However his abridgement of the letter's
28
29 contents there is ambiguous, which may suggest that he did not have a full and accurate copy
30
31 of it at that stage; he says that Gregory 'writing to Augustine . . . decrees that the bishops of
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33 London and York, having received the pallium from the apostolic see (*accepto a sede*
34
35 *apostolica pallio*), ought to be metropolitans'.³⁷ This shows that by 725 Bede knew that
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37 Gregory had intended the English Church to have two metropolitan bishoprics (and that these
38
39 were to be in London and York), and that he thought possession of the pallium prefigured
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41 promotion to this higher episcopal rank. But his summary also suggests that, at this stage,
42
43 Bede thought that Gregory had issued two pallia. In fact the full text of Gregory's letter
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45 makes it clear that the dispatch of two vestments was an aspiration and that, as of the date of
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47 Gregory's letter (22 June 601), only a single pallium had been sent to England, for Augustine.
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56 Letters from Pope Honorius I (625–38)

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59 In contrast to the letters from Gregory, comparatively little attention has been paid to
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the impact of the non-Gregorian letters on Bede's narrative, although, as we shall see, the two

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4 from Pope Honorius contained dramatic news. These letters are quoted *in extenso* in
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6 consecutive chapters of the *History* (*HE* II.17–18). The first was addressed to King Edwin of
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8 Northumbria and the second to the bishop of Canterbury, also called Honorius. The pope's
9
10 letters were written in response to petitions from Bishop Honorius and from 'the kings, our
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12 sons' that had been delivered to Rome by envoys who were able to report the conversion of
13
14 the Northumbrian king and to describe the sincerity of his new faith.³⁸ The pope's words
15
16 imply that the Northumbrian and Kentish kings, Edwin (616–633) and Eadbald (616–640),
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18 were acting in concert to acquire new rights for the clergy of the nascent English Church,
19
20 whose reach now extended into Northumbria. The overlapping content shows that the letters
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22 had been composed at the same time, and the long dating clause of the second one reveals a
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24 date of 11 June 634 (although this caused Bede some difficulties, see below).³⁹ We may
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26 reasonably suppose that Bede received copies of both letters at the same time, and (following
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28 Meyvaert) that they were part of the set copied by Nothhelm from the registers in Rome.
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35 Bede knew of a third letter from Pope Honorius, which had been sent to the Irish in
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37 628/9 on the subject of the correct dating of Easter; he mentioned it at the start of his next
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39 chapter (*HE* II.19) by way of introduction to an extract from another letter to the Irish bishops
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41 that had been written by a group of Roman clerics in the last months of 640 including the
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43 future pope John IV (640–2) as he awaited imperial confirmation of his election to the
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45 pontificate.⁴⁰ Bede had known of this pair of letters for some time, and had mentioned them
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47 in *De temporum Ratione* (*Chronica Maiora* A.M. 4591).⁴¹ But Bede did not quote any of
48
49 Honorius' letter to the Irish and, since it is not known from any other source, its text is now
50
51 lost.⁴² Michael Herren has suggested that Bede did not have a copy of it and that he knew of it
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53 only second hand, via the same Irish contact that had supplied an epitome of the letter of
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55 pope-elect John IV.⁴³ In other words, the Honorian letter to the Irish did not circulate with the
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57 slightly later letters to King Edwin and the archbishop of Canterbury, and it was Bede who
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made the connection between them by placing his chapter on the letters to the Irish (which otherwise interrupts the story of Edwin's reign) immediately after the chapters that contained Honorius' letters to Kent and Northumbria.

Pope Honorius' letter to Edwin celebrates the king's conversion (which Bede dates in the *Chronica Maiora* to 627).⁴⁴ The pope had heard of the sincerity of the king's new faith as described to him by the *portitores* ('couriers') who were to carry this letter back to Northumbria. The pope then made two important statements that must have grabbed Bede's attention. First he says that, 'we have sent a pallium for each of the two metropolitans, that is for Honorius [of Canterbury] and Paulinus [of York]'.⁴⁵ Second, he conceded a most important privilege; namely, that 'when either of them is summoned from the world into the presence of his Creator, the other man may put a bishop in his place by this our authority'.⁴⁶ This privilege is repeated in the pope's letter to Honorius of Canterbury, and Bede's reiterates it in his opening comments to that chapter (*HE* II.18). Here Bede generalises the particular, developing the pope's comment in significant ways. The pope had not named the cities of York or Canterbury in either letter; rather the pallium and metropolitan privileges were a concession from him to the two named individuals, *id est Honorius et Paulinus*, and were a favour to the kings who had petitioned him, reflecting the growth of the Christian faith within their domains. In both letters, the pope made explicit the connection between the grant of the pallium and the right to consecrate a successor to the vacant see when one of these two men died. But Bede, in his introductory comments to the second letter, understood this to be a principle that would apply in perpetuity to the incumbents of the dioceses of York and Canterbury (*Doruuernesis uel Eburacensis antistes*). Bede stresses that they are 'colleagues of the same rank' (*consors eiusdem gradus*) and – retrospectively and anachronistically – calls them archbishops (*pro ordinando archiepiscopo*). These, thus, were the two letters that accompanied the pallia, one for each province of the new English Church, and they provided

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4 Bede with unequivocal documentary evidence deriving directly from the papal archive that a
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6 Northumbrian bishop had once been granted metropolitan status, created by papal authority
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8 and confirmed by dispatch of a pallium.⁴⁷ What is more, in Bede's eyes, the two papal letters
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10 proscribed the mechanism for ensuring the continuity of that office in perpetuity.
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14 Without these letters Bede had no firm proof, only anecdotal evidence, that York had
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16 ever attained the elevated status of a metropolitan that Gregory the Great had always intended
17
18 it to have (*HE* I.29). Throughout Bede's own lifetime no bishop of York, not even the
19
20 charismatic and controversial Bishop Wilfrid (664–709), had been promoted to a higher
21
22 episcopal rank, although Wilfrid may well have considered himself a metropolitan bishop in
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24 the manner of the Gallic Church, having sought and received consecration in Francia in 664.⁴⁸
25
26 Bede knew quite a lot about Northumbria's first bishop, Paulinus, who had been ordained on
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28 21 July 625 by Justus of Canterbury in preparation for his journey northwards with Edwin's
29
30 Kentish bride.⁴⁹ He says that Edwin had established York as the seat of the bishopric (*sedem*
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32 *episcopatus*) and that after the king's baptism at Easter 627 foundations were laid for a stone
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34 church in the city.⁵⁰ He knew too that Paulinus had been forced to flee back south when
35
36 Edwin was killed in battle and his successor reverted to paganism; thereafter the York
37
38 bishopric lapsed until Wilfrid was appointed in 664.⁵¹ This much Bede could have learned
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40 from fellow Northumbrians who had known Paulinus' deacon James, who had remained in
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42 the north and had died within Bede's lifetime.⁵² He would have gleaned more from his
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44 Kentish sources, not least from Rochester where Paulinus had lived out the remainder of his
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46 life, dying as its bishop on 10 October 644. Bede knew, for example, that the golden cross
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48 and chalice that Paulinus had taken south were still preserved at Rochester in his own day.
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50 Bede also records that when Paulinus died, 'he also left in that church the pallium which he
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52 had received from the Roman pope'.⁵³ For Bede, this artefact suggested that Paulinus had
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54 been granted the status of a metropolitan bishop, but the letters from Honorius provided
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unequivocal proof that this office was intended for Edwin's Northumbrian diocese, which Bede knew had been based at York.

So important is the precedent described here that Bede glossed over the chronological difficulties that the letters present. The date of the letters is established by the dating clause that terminates the letter to Canterbury, namely 11 June 634. Bede himself supplied the *Anno Domini* date that was not used in Rome at this time.⁵⁴ However, as Bede tells us, Edwin had been killed at the battle of *Hæthfelth* on 12 October 633 and, 'as there seemed no safety except in flight', Paulinus had been forced to flee to Kent with Edwin's queen and three of the royal children.⁵⁵ It is simple enough to resolve this disparity by arguing that the envoys had left for Rome before Edwin's death, and that news of his killing did not reach the pope before the envoys returned homewards carrying the letters and pallia for the English metropolitans.⁵⁶ It is quite possible, in fact, that the letter to Edwin and accompanying pallium never reached Northumbria, and the messengers from Rome found Paulinus in Kent.⁵⁷ Bede says that more than a year of anarchy followed Edwin's death when Northumbria was ruled by apostate, pagan kings and the kingdom was ravaged by the armies of the British king, Caedwalla.⁵⁸ Bede dealt with this particular chronological awkwardness by reporting Edwin's death after quoting the text of the papal letters, thereby disguising the fact that the king had died before the letter was written. Because he did not quote the dating clause of the letter to Edwin, it is not immediately obvious that it had been composed after the king's death. We cannot be sure, however, whether the absence of this dating clause was a deliberate act on Bede's part (because it would have emphasised the chronological dislocation) or because it was not part of his exemplar.

The lack of chronological clarity helped Bede with another story about Paulinus that seemed to show him performing the actions of a northern metropolitan exactly as described in the letter to Edwin. At the start of *HE* II.18, Bede tells us that Justus of Canterbury had died

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4 on 10 November, and that his successor, Honorius, ‘came to Paulinus to be consecrated,
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6 meeting him at Lincoln’. Bede did not specify the year of Justus’ death – which historians
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8 argue must date to the period 627x31⁵⁹ – but, by mentioning it in the chapter immediately
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10 after the text of the pope’s letter to the king and before that to Honorius, Bede encourages his
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12 readers to think that Paulinus had acted according to the papal privilege described in the
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14 letter. In fact, Paulinus’ actions at Lincoln must have preceded the papal letters by some
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16 years, and Paulinus acted in ignorance of the privilege and without the pallium that was yet to
17
18 come. This episode and the timing of it probably caused Bede some anxiety, which may
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20 explain the obfuscation of the dating evidence: on the one hand, the ordination of Honorius to
21
22 the see of Canterbury provided precious evidence that Paulinus had performed the actions of
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24 a metropolitan while he was bishop in Northumbria; on the other hand, it showed him acting
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26 thus – apparently – before he had the right to do so.
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33 In fact, this is not the problem that it seems at face value to be, and there is no need to
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35 suppose, as some have done, that Paulinus must previously have received another letter, now
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37 lost, that had conferred metropolitan status on him prior to his ordination of Justus’
38
39 successor.⁶⁰ As Bede himself says, Paulinus consecrated Honorius to the rank of bishop, not
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41 archbishop, and his anachronistic use of the title *achiepiscopus* in his discussion of the papal
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43 privilege reflects the contemporary, eighth-century label for the holder of the see of
44
45 Canterbury rather than early seventh-century papal terminology. Paulinus’ actions at Lincoln
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47 were acceptable even if Honorius had been considered a metropolitan at his consecration.
48
49 According to contemporary canonical practice, a metropolitan bishop was elected and
50
51 consecrated ‘in the same way as any other bishop, that is in the presence of a number of men
52
53 of episcopal rank’; Paulinus did not then have to have been a metropolitan bishop himself in
54
55 order to ordain Honorius to that higher rank.⁶¹ Furthermore, if other bishops were in short
56
57 supply, as Gregory had once said to Augustine, ‘a bishop may be consecrated without other
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1
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3
4 bishops being present, if they are at so great a distance from one another that they cannot
5 easily meet'.⁶² So, Paulinus, as bishop of York, performed the ordination because he was by
6 then was the only remaining 'Roman' bishop in Britain and a Gregorian missionary;
7 consecration by him not only strengthened the link with Rome and Gregory the Great but was
8 the only practical solution in a new Church bereft of senior clerics.⁶³ The messengers sent
9 later to Rome by the kings of Northumbria and Kent might then have petitioned the pope to
10 confirm what had essentially been a pragmatic solution to the personnel problems of a new
11 Church that was so far away from Rome; as Gregory had recognised and Pope Honorius
12 concurred, 'it is a long distance by sea and land which lies between us and you'. Pope
13 Honorius' replies suggest that the English kings had requested two pallia, one to formalise the
14 *de facto* metropolitan status of Paulinus whose new bishopric was based in the old Roman
15 city of York and the other for Honorius who had already been consecrated by him; all this in
16 accordance with the scheme for the English Church as had been laid out by Gregory, *magister*
17 *et caput*, whose memory was invoked in both replies.⁶⁴

40 A 'new' copy of Pope Honorius' letters

41
42 Given the importance of the two letters from Pope Honorius to Bede's narrative and
43 contemporary efforts to recreate the northern metropolitan see, it is significant that a copy of
44 both of them was made in an early Insular manuscript unconnected with the *History*, namely
45 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 10837 (referred to hereafter as *Paris*). This
46 book is famous for its major elements, that is, the earliest copy of the Hieronymian
47 *Martyrology* (fos. 2–32) and the *Calendar of St. Willibrord* with its attendant Easter Tables
48 (fos. 34–44).⁶⁵ The letters from Honorius are found on fos. 33–34r but have been discussed
49 neither by the editors of the papal letters, nor by students of the Echternach scriptorium where
50 the book was made, nor by scholars of Bede's *History*. Delisle, Wilson and Lowe noted the
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4 existence of the letters in *Paris* and identified their contents, but Lowe passed no comment
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6 other than repeating Delisle's judgement that they were written in 'in Anglo-Saxon
7
8 minuscule, saec. viii'.⁶⁶ Conventional wisdom would suggest that the copy of the letters in
9
10 this manuscript could not have been made until the 760s when we think that the *History* was
11
12 available in Francia.⁶⁷ The earliest evidence for the *History* on the Continent comes from a
13
14 letter from Bishop Lul of Mainz to Archbishop Æthelberht of York which cannot date before
15
16 767 in which he requested copies of Bede's works as listed in the bibliography at the end of
17
18 the *History* (*HE* V.24); this does not prove that Lul had a copy of the *History* as well as the
19
20 bibliography, but it is suggestive.⁶⁸ And yet, the palaeography of the copy of Honorius' letters
21
22 in *Paris* suggests a date in the first half of the eighth century which would make it either a
23
24 very early witness to the distribution of the *History* or an independent copy of Bede's papal
25
26 sources.
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35 *i) Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 10837*

36
37 The *Paris* manuscript that contains a copy of Honorius' letters is among the most famous of
38
39 all Insular manuscripts. It consists of two distinct elements: a *Martyrology* followed by a
40
41 *Calendar* with attendant Easter tables (see Fig. 1). The Easter tables help to date the *Calendar*
42
43 and are crucial evidence for the history of the Echternach scriptorium as well as the
44
45 chronology of its scripts.⁶⁹ Famously, the *Calendar* also bears a marginal note on fo. 39v
46
47 about Willibrord's career, which is usually (but not universally) thought to be in the hand of
48
49 Willibrord himself.⁷⁰ The note is dated (using *Anno Domini* reckoning) to 728, and this offers
50
51 a reasonable terminal date for the creation of this part of the manuscript. There are good
52
53 reasons, however, for thinking that the core of the *Calendar* should be dated rather earlier, to
54
55 the first decade of the eighth century, and indeed it has been convincingly argued that the
56
57 earliest Easter Table covering the years 684–702 (which is bound in as a singleton at the end
58
59
60

of the volume, and is now fo. 44) was part of Willibrord's baggage when he left Ireland in 690 to begin his missionary life abroad.⁷¹

The first part of the manuscript contains a copy of the *Martyrology* attributed to St. Jerome.⁷² This part can also be dated with some confidence since the scribe Laurentius signed his name on its final folio. By good fortune a scribe called Laurentius also wrote four charters for Echternach between 704 and 722, and we may suppose that he was also the man responsible for the *Martyrology*.⁷³ On historical grounds, therefore, it is possible to date the *Martyrology* to the first quarter of the eighth century, and some have wished to date its creation concurrently with the *Calendar*, that is, to the first decade. Laurentius was, it seems, one of the senior scribes at Echternach; the so-called Augsburg Gospels, which were probably copied by the primary scribe of the *Calendar*, were dedicated to him.⁷⁴ Furthermore, notes in the margin of the *Martyrology*, at fo. 28v, refer to the death and translation of Willibrord, reinforcing the connection between the *Martyrology* and Echternach's founder.⁷⁵

These two texts – the *Martyrology* and the *Calendar* – were originally copied into two separate *libelli*; both originally had blank folios at either end that functioned as soft coverings to protect the first and last pages of text. The two booklets were brought together early in their history, and at some point in the earlier eighth century the Honorius letters were copied onto the blank pages that were now in the middle of the conjoined manuscript. Thus, the letter to Edwin begins at the head the last folio of the *Martyrology* booklet (fo. 33r, *Domino excellentissimo . . . inuitati concedere*), and continues for three lines overleaf (fo. 33v, *ut in omnibus . . . custodiat*). The second letter flows from line 4 of fo. 33v (*Dilectissimo . . . episcopum ordinare*) to fill the first half of fo. 34r, which was the blank recto of the first folio of the *Calendar libellus* (*pro qua etiam . . . dilectissime frater*). The remainder of fo. 34 has the text of the Gospel lection for Palm Sunday, copied in a competent ninth-century Caroline minuscule hand. The calendar for the month of January is on fo. 34v.

< Fig. 1 near here >

Because we can date and localise both the *Martyrology* and the *Calendar* through palaeographic and historical clues, both parts of the manuscript are rightly considered cornerstones of the Echternach scriptorium. It is clear that scribes who made the two main elements of this manuscript were intimately associated with Echternach during the first quarter of the eighth century, perhaps as early as the first decade. Willibrord's autobiographical note in the *Calendar* shows that this part at least was in his possession in 728 – but whether it was conjoined with the *Martyrology* at that point is a question dependent on the date of the hand that copied the Honorius letters – and that is a question that seems not to have been asked before. Perhaps because of the palaeographic and historical importance of the two main parts of the manuscript, the letters of Honorius that bind the two components together have been ignored by scholars except as the proof that the two *libelli* were brought together at some indeterminate point in the eighth century.

< PLATE 1 near here >

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 10837, fo. 33r (detail), showing the opening of Pope Honorius I's *Letter to Edwin*.

ii) Dating the letters of Honorius in Paris

Any palaeographical or textual assessment of the *Paris* copy of the Honorius letters is hampered by the poor condition of the writing. Most of the letter to Edwin on fo. 33r is legible [see **PLATE 1**], but the verso of that folio which carries the last 3 lines of Edwin's letter and the bulk of the letter to Honorius of Canterbury is almost impossible to make out

with the naked eye. The deterioration of the writing on fo. 33v presumably relates to the fact that it had once been the exterior face of the *Martyrology libellus*, until it was bound with the *Calendar*. It is a small but relevant point that fo. 33v does not seem to be significantly discoloured in the way that we might expect if very many years had passed before the external leaf of *Martyrology libellus* became the internal page of the enlarged, composite manuscript.⁷⁶ A page darkened by use and exposure to the air would have made an unattractive surface for the scribe of the Honorius letters – so we may deduce that the verso was relatively clean (if greasy) when the scribe sat down to make his copy. Despite the poor survival of the extant writing, it is possible to make a palaeographic assessment of the script and the quality of the hand that copied the Honorius letters, and – by comparison with other manuscripts – to suggest its date.

First, the script is what Julian Brown called a Phase I cursive Insular minuscule of Type A – the Northumbrian type – verging on current (i.e. speeded up with very many ligatures).⁷⁷ The script was written with a thick pen held at a slanted angle that produced long ascenders and pointed descenders that give a sense of considerable compression. The hand exhibits all of the significant details that Brown ascribed to this grade of Insular minuscule script, namely, looped ascenders, especially in straight **d** and **l**; **e** where the lower bow is reversed and takes the form of an Arabic 8, especially in ligatures; the narrow loop or near loop on the descender of **g**.⁷⁸ To this we can add Bischoff's criteria of frequent ligatures where the second letter hangs below the line, e.g.: **si**, **ei**, **ti**.⁷⁹

Second, the scribe of the Honorius letters was evidently much practiced in writing this utilitarian grade of script. Despite the informality of the grade, the hand is secure and regular, with a rounded aspect, exhibiting flourishes and idiosyncracies of a type that derive from much experience of writing a cursive grade of minuscule. Most striking in this hand is the extraordinary form of the high, reverse **e**, which is shaped like a slanted figure-of-eight. The

scribe writes this letter with a reverse ductus, beginning with the upper bow, looping anticlockwise upwards and straight down the stem that dips below the line, then looping clockwise to the left before crossing the stem to begin the next, adjacent letter. This letter is performed with confidence and regularity. Striking too is the **ti** ligature where the bar slants downwards to the right, below the line, to form the body of the **i**; the pen comes off with an abrupt halt that creates a distinctive dotted foot on the descender, a feature also often seen on terminal **m**.⁸⁰ Notable too is the form of **q** which is shaped like an Arabic 9 with a distinctive angle in the descender.⁸¹ Our scribe also realised errors as he made them, often correcting mistakes before taking the pen from the page.⁸²

We should note too that the scribe used very few abbreviations, using a simple medial punctus for *(q)ue* or *(b)us* endings, also employed as the standard punctuation mark to identify the end of sentences. *Nomina sacra* are abbreviated and marked with a long tick-like superscript flourish, which is also used in the ampersand. An omitted terminal **m** is marked with a hook on the preceding letter (e.g. **PLATE 1**, line 15). An unusual abbreviation is used for the word *salutem* (**PLATE 1**, centre of line 2) where an elongated, long **s** is preceded by a reverse **e** and followed by a zig-zag descender for **m** which is so long that the scribe was forced to split the word immediately below (*ardore*); perhaps this reflected the exemplar or current epistolary practice at the scriptorium. The scribe used only two other abbreviations: the hooked or tufted **p** for *per* (a characteristically Insular abbreviation), and the standard abbreviation for *pro* where the bowl of the **p** loops back to the left of the vertical stroke.⁸³ The scribe used the tufted **p** abbreviation for *per* 5 or 6 times. Twice, in the second letter, it is used as a preposition governing the ablative instead of the accusative.⁸⁴ Mynors argued that this grammatical error reflected the form of Latin spoken in mid seventh-century Rome, rather than that of ‘an Englishman who has been drilled in grammar in his monastic school’.⁸⁵ In other words, Mynors thought that this error was in the exemplar of the letter that had found

its way to Bede's desk and that, in deference to his papal source, Bede had copied it precisely rather than correcting it tacitly. Chiesa and Lapidge suggest another possible explanation: that Nothhelm had confused abbreviations used to indicate *per* and *pro* when copying the letter from the exemplar in Rome.⁸⁶ It is important, therefore, that the *Paris* scribe certainly used the characteristically Insular abbreviation for *per* on these two occasions, suggesting perhaps that this form of the abbreviation was in his exemplar.

But what of its date? To summarise the codicological evidence: first, the *Paris* copy of Honorius' letters is self-evidently later than the *Martyrology* and the *Calendar*. Both of these can be dated with some confidence to the first quarter of the eighth century, and there are good arguments for placing the core of the *Calendar* and perhaps the *Martyrology* too in the first decade of that century. The earliest possible date for the Honorius hand is thus *c.* 710. Second, the secure Echternach origin of both parts of the manuscript makes it likely that the Honorius scribe added the letters to the manuscript at Echternach, otherwise we would have to imagine that both *libelli* were taken elsewhere for the addition of this material.

iii) Palaeographic comparanda

Brown argued that cursive Insular minuscule of this type was produced and developed in the years around the turn of the eighth century, and he thought that this particular version of the script was Northumbrian in origin on the basis of its use in a number of books to which he assigned a Northumbrian provenance.⁸⁷ His dating was based on his understanding of these books and on the evidence of some other manuscripts that have an Echternach provenance.⁸⁸ He cited two such Echternach manuscripts: a copy of *Augustine's* 'De Trinitate' and *Jerome*, 'In Esaïam', alongside the 'Collectio canonum' from *Köln* (perhaps also by an Echternach scribe) and the Vatican *Paulinus* as the key examples of Phase 1 cursive Insular minuscule.⁸⁹

Also relevant is a fragmentary copy of Augustine's commentary 'In Evangelium S. Iohannes' which also has a later Echternach provenance.⁹⁰

Brown dated these books to the early eighth century essentially by comparison with the Echternach Gospels, which he believed were made in Lindisfarne not long after the Lindisfarne Gospels. And the Lindisfarne Gospels, of course, he thought were made for St. Cuthbert's translation in 698.⁹¹ These dates, however, stand on shifting sands, and many scholars now think that they are too early. Michelle Brown's recent re-dating of the Lindisfarne Gospels by as much as two decades, to the years of Eadfrith's episcopacy, 698–721, has a consequential impact on all of Julian Brown's dates, but perhaps not on the relative chronology of the manuscripts he discussed.⁹² David Dumville has also recently argued in favour of pushing the period of the transition of Insular cursive from Phase I (as seen in the *Paris* letters) to Phase II significantly away from Julian Brown's early eighth century date to the middle decades of the eighth century, based on a wholesale re-dating of the two earliest copies of Bede's *History*.⁹³ Without addressing any of the detail of Dumville's argument, it is relevant to note that the Easter Table in the *Calendar* for the years 760–78 was copied in a confident, well-established Phase II minuscule, and must surely pre-date 760; the *Calendar* was a functional manuscript and was kept up to date, so it is inherently unlikely that 19-year tables were copied retrospectively. This is evidence that at least one Echternach scribe was able to write high quality, well-established Phase II Insular minuscule by 760, and this gives us a reasonable *terminus* for the hand of the Honorius letters in *Paris*.

The cursive minuscule used in these other books bears close comparison with the *Paris* hand, and the connections of three of them (*Augustine*, *Jerome*, *Köln*) with Echternach are reinforced by their graphic similarity with our scribe's work. Of particular note is the distinctive 8-shaped **e**, 9-shaped **q** (followed by medial punctus), and rounded loops to the ascender of straight **d** as used by the scribe of the *Augustine* in ways that are strikingly similar

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4 to the habits of the *Paris* scribe. The scribe of *Köln* also shows a very similar treatment of *e*,
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6 and also the heavy terminal dot at the foot of the elongated terminal stroke of *m* (see, **PLATE**
7
8 **2**).⁹⁴ This page from *Köln* also reminds us of a scribe's ability to descend down the grades of
9
10 script while maintaining calligraphic confidence and flair.⁹⁵ However, these examples are
11
12 more compressed, giving a more upright and pointed feel to the script (especially in treatment
13
14 of the descenders, and the thick, wedged serifs) that contrasts with the rounded, more open
15
16 aspect of the *Paris* hand.
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23 <PLATE 2 near here>
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26 Caption: Köln, Erzbisch. Dioezesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 213, fo. 19r (detail).
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30
31 Of the examples discussed here, all bar *Paulinus* have a claim to an Echternach
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33 provenance or origin, though none is definitely by our scribe. However, we should remember
34
35 that the *Paris* letters were written in a grade of script that was yet less formal and more
36
37 utilitarian than the cursive minuscule in the *Augustine* or the *Köln* books, and it is not
38
39 impossible that one of these examples was the more formal version of our scribe's work.
40
41 What these examples do show is that the scribe of the *Paris* letters had a very similar
42
43 background to the scribes of these pieces, very likely in the same scriptorium.
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48 The apparent differences in grade and formality may be one of textual context, since
49
50 cursive was the preferred grade of script for letter writing before c. 800. This much is borne
51
52 out by the earliest extant original letters from the medieval West, especially that which was
53
54 written for Bishop Wealdhere of London to Archbishop Berhtwald of Canterbury in 704/5
55
56 which is the closest epistolary parallel to the script of the *Paris* letters. Julian Brown
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58 described the hand of this letter as 'an elegant little cursive minuscule' and Pierre Chaplais
59
60 showed convincingly on codicological grounds that it is a rare original, not a later copy.⁹⁶ Its

script is rather more compressed than the hand of the papal letters in *Paris*, but both exhibit a similar functionality and share many points of palaeographic detail. Cursive was also preferred for letters in Francia and Italy as shown by those extant originals that date before c. 800.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the term *epistolaris* was used as a label for cursive script in a glossary contained in a late eighth-century manuscript often linked to Charlemagne's court.⁹⁸

Relevant palaeographic parallels can also be found in the additions to the *Calendar* that follow the text of the *Paris* letters. One layer of these was added in cursive minuscule, with the rounded aspect familiar from the hand of the letters. These minuscule additions to the *Calendar* evidently post-date the main text hand, but perhaps not by very much. Wilson thought that 'few, if any' of the minuscule additions to the calendar were added after the marginal addition on Willibrord, that is, in 728, and that some of them were contemporary with the work of the scribe who added entries in a second, half uncial hand.⁹⁹

iv) Textual analysis

Much depends on a comparison of the text of the letters of Honorius as found in *Paris* and the version that was known to Bede and reproduced in his *History*. We can be sure that Bede's version was not dependent on that which was known at Echternach, because *Paris* omits some phrases that were included in Bede's text. Most significantly, *Paris* does not have the long dating clause that closed the second letter to Honorius of Canterbury that Bede quoted in his copy of that letter in *HE* II.18.¹⁰⁰ This leaves open a number of other options: that the *Paris* copy is dependent on the *History* (and thus it post dates the completion of that text in 731); that Bede and the scribe of *Paris* shared an immediate, common exemplar; or that a copy of the letters made from the papal register in Rome found its way independently to Echternach, unconnected with Nothhelm's archival research for Bede. The last option is possible, not least because of what we know of Willibrord's personal connections with Rome,

but it might be judged improbable (and unnecessary) given that Nothhelm was searching the papal archive for letters of just this type at a point between *c.* 715 and 731, that is within the period established by the codicological and palaeographic analysis of the manuscript.

A collation of the letters that compares the reading of *Paris* with that known to Bede can be summarised as follows:

1. The *Paris* text matches Bede's in all those occasions where the syntax reflects the spoken Latin of mid seventh-century Rome (as discussed above)
2. *Paris* shows a number of minor orthographic idiosyncracies, including a preference for archaic forms of words. This could reflect the scribe's exemplar, and thus the habits of the seventh-century papal secretariat, although spellings of this type are notoriously slippery at this time (hence Bede's pronouncements on the subject, and his preference for 'modernising' consonant assimilation).¹⁰¹ For example, *Paris* uses *adsiduis* (for *assiduis*); *adcersitus* (for *accersitus*); *conlata* (for *collata*) but also *affectus* (rather than *adfectus*), *refferat* (for *referat*), *occassionis* (for *occasionis*: the use of *ss* for *s* is a commonplace in early Insular manuscripts)
3. On six occasions *Paris* substitutes a similar word: fo. 33r line 28, *quoniam* for *quam*; fo. 33v line 7, *affectus* for *affatus*; fo. 33v line 9, *exhortamus* for *exoramus*; fo. 33v line 12, *per nos suscitet* for *per uos suscitet*; fo. 34r line 2, *propter* for *pro*; fo. 34r line 7, *conscendere* for *condescendere*. Only one of these variants is found in any other early copy of the *History* and all could be explained as slips made by a scribe working quickly – exemplified by the cursive minuscule script.

It is significant that *Paris* does not follow all the variants made by any other early copy of the *History* (as collated by Lapidge) and so cannot be derived directly from any of

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4 them, nor – where a variant is shared by more than one early copy of the *History* – from their
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6 immediate exemplar.¹⁰² One variant reading may be significant, however; *Paris* used *per*
7
8 *fraternos affectus* ('through brotherly love') rather than *per fraternos affatus* ('through
9
10 brotherly conversations') in the first sentence of the letter to Bishop Honorius (fo. 33 line 7).
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12 *Affatus* is undoubtedly the preferred reading not least because it was particularly favoured in
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14 late antique imperial and papal letters, and here echoes a phrase used often in letters from
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16 Gregory I.¹⁰³ However, the alternative reading – *affectus*, as found in *Paris* – is also found in
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18 two early copies of the *History* that are textually closely related.¹⁰⁴ Lapidge regards these
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20 manuscripts as representing a Canterbury redaction of the *History*, deriving ultimately from
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22 the copy sent by Bede to Canterbury shortly after 731 *ad transscribendum*.¹⁰⁵
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28 Ostensibly, this error of substitution suggests a close textual connection between the
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30 version of the letters represented by these manuscripts of the *History* and that found in *Paris*.
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32 However, any such link must be indirect not least because *Paris* does not use another variant
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34 that is shared by these two books and which must have been in its exemplar.¹⁰⁶ It is also
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36 possible that the substitution of *affectus* for *affatus* could occur independently since both
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38 words make sense in this context, and *affectus* is much the more common of the two – it had
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40 just been used twice in the letter to Edwin, for example. What is more, scribes working
41
42 quickly from an Insular exemplar could easily make this change, since the 'oc' form of 'a'
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44 joined to a half uncial 't' might at a glance be read as 'ect'.¹⁰⁷ As noted above, the scribe of
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46 *Paris* made several other substitutions, and this one is not out of line with them. On one
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48 further occasion – at fo. 33v, line 5 just a few words before the *affectus* substitution – he
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50 began to write the word *donorum* but corrected himself after the first three letters and wrote,
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52 properly, *bonorum munera*. But he didn't erase or expunctuate his mistake and left
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54 *donbonorum munera* on the page. All of these errors suggest a scribe who was working fast,
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56 and whose eye and mind was skipping on to the sense of the phrase that lay ahead.
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5 So, the evidence of the *affatus/affectus* variant alone does not allow us to deduce a
6
7 direct connection between the Canterbury redaction of the *History* and the version of the
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9 papal letters found in *Paris*. In other words, we cannot show that the exemplar for the *Paris*
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11 copy of the letters came from Canterbury or from a copy of the Canterbury redaction of the
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13 *History*. There is thus no proof positive that the *Paris* copy is dependent on Bede's text (in
14
15 any recension); equally, there is nothing in this copy that could not have been derived from
16
17 the copy that was supplied to Bede. The most likely scenario is that *Paris* and Bede shared a
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19 common exemplar, plausibly that which was taken north by Nothhelm.
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23 24 25 Pope Honorius' Letters at Echternach

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28 Why were these particular letters copied into a liturgical handbook that belonged to
29
30 Willibrord? They do not at first glance fit with the contents of the rest of the manuscript, and
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32 this is a major reason why they have been ignored hitherto. The lower grade script and the
33
34 apparent incongruity of the text with its neighbours are reason enough to disregard the letters
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36 merely as infill for blank pages. But, given the importance of the manuscript and its
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38 contemporary association with Willibrord himself, it seems very likely that the Honorius
39
40 letters were copied into that book because they were considered important and relevant as
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42 well as interesting. The composite manuscript was primarily a functional reference book for
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44 ordering the daily and annual liturgical cycles, and the insertion of copies of these two 'old'
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46 papal letters into such a book cannot have been for antiquarian motives alone.
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52 There is an obvious missionary context for these letters that accords with Willibrord's
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54 mission to evangelise Frisia and, as a Northumbrian himself, any primary evidence pertaining
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56 to the story of the conversion of his own homeland would have been of special interest to
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58 Willibrord and his monastic *familia*. In Bede's hands the Honorius letters are found towards
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60 the end of the second book of the *History*. Book Two opens with the long biographical

chapter on Gregory the Great, and moves on to discuss the work of Augustine's successors in southern Britain, concluding with the account of the conversion of the Northumbrians under Paulinus who had accompanied Mellitus and Justus to England at Gregory's command. By structuring the book in this way, Bede tied the conversion of his homeland directly to the inspiration of Gregory the Great, despite the fact that the conversion did not begin in earnest in Northumbria until more than 20 years after Gregory's death. Bede used the two letters from Pope Honorius as the culmination of his narrative of the conversion of the Northumbrians by Paulinus. The long-drawn-out process of Edwin's conversion and his eventual baptism in York on 12 April 627 initiated, according to Bede's account, a period of unprecedented power, peace, and prosperity in Northumbria, and an era of Northumbrian overlordship within Britain.¹⁰⁸ The arrival of a letter from Pope Honorius to Edwin, praising him on the wisdom of his conversion and assuring him of his salvation, followed two from Pope Boniface V urging him to convert, and echoed the earlier congratulatory letter from Gregory the Great to Æthelberht of Kent which stands at a similar place at the end of Book One.¹⁰⁹

The story of Edwin and Paulinus resonates with Willibrord's own efforts to evangelise the Frisians and to secure the conversion of their ruler, Radbod (d. 719).¹¹⁰ Willibrord had come from Ireland in 690 and secured permission to preach to the pagans in Frisia from Pippin II of Herstal, the *maior palatii* of the eastern Frankish kingdom of Austrasia who had recently annexed southern Frisia and who gave the missionaries his protection and patronage.¹¹¹ As such, the success of Willibrord's mission was tied closely to the fortunes of the Frankish ruling elite, just as Paulinus had relied on Edwin's military clout and political supremacy. As in Northumbria, the success of the mission was tenuous: Paulinus aborted his mission after Edwin died in battle and was succeeded in Northumbria by a pagan king; Willibrord was also forced to retreat south from Frisia in 714, when Frankish armies were

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4 rebuffed by Radbod's forces after the death of Pippin.¹¹² Bede too was aware of the parallels:
5
6 he was well informed about the history and progress of Willibrord's mission, and clearly
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8 considered it a relevant part of his account of the *History* of the English Church, extending its
9
10 narrative to the Continent.¹¹³
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13
14 But the common theme of the Honorius letters points to another more precise motive
15
16 for the copying of these rather than any of the other papal documents relating to the
17
18 conversion of the English. As discussed above, their subject is the grant of pallia to Honorius
19
20 of Canterbury and Paulinus of York and a privilege to ensure continuous episcopal authority
21
22 in the English Church. Once again, there is a close comparison to be made between the
23
24 situation described in the letters and Willibrord's own circumstances. Willibrord's
25
26 commission to preach the gospel to the Frisians had come directly from Rome. He went there
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28 twice, first in 690 and again in 695. On his first visit he sought the pope's permission and
29
30 approval for the new mission, as well as relics of saints and martyrs to use in the consecration
31
32 of new churches. He went a second time on Pippin's instruction, 'with the consent of all', and
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34 was consecrated by Pope Sergius in the basilica of St. Cecilia in Rome on 21 November
35
36 695.¹¹⁴ Bede tells us that he was made an archbishop on that occasion with his see at Utrecht
37
38 (*Traiectum*), and that his license was coterminous with the Frisian people: *Fresonum genti*
39
40 *archiepiscopus*.¹¹⁵ This information is corroborated by the *Liber Pontificalis*, which says that
41
42 Willibrord was made archbishop *in gentem Frisonum*.¹¹⁶ His elevation constituted the
43
44 creation of a new metropolitan province that was, as Levison realised, 'comparable to the
45
46 English Church' in that its authority came directly from Rome, it was overseen by an
47
48 archbishop, and enveloped the realm of a *gens*, a whole people.¹¹⁷ The model was, thus, an
49
50 Anglo-Saxon one as befitted Willibrord's origins but it was an innovation in the Frankish
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52 world.¹¹⁸
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5 In the light of what we know about the scarcity of archbishops in the western Church,
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7 it is very significant that the *Liber Pontificalis* records alongside the notice of Willibrord's
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9 promotion, the ordination of two other archbishops, Damian of Ravenna and Berhtwald of
10
11 Canterbury, who is called here, 'the archbishop of Britain'.¹¹⁹ For many years after his
12
13 elevation, Willibrord's nearest fellow archbishop was in fact in Canterbury.¹²⁰ It is
14
15 conceivable that the two letters from Honorius were considered relevant to Willibrord for that
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17 reason alone, because they provided a precedent and a mechanism for securing the succession
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19 to his own see. It was later claimed that he had tried to appoint a successor in Utrecht as early
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21 as 721; but he eventually created a *corepiscopus* (auxiliary bishop) to ease the burden of his
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23 episcopal duties there.¹²¹ As he aged the need for help and the question of succession must
24
25 have become even more pressing. In 728 when the autobiographical note was copied into the
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27 margin of the *Calendar*, he was 70 years old.
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33 But, there is perhaps a more particular historical context for the relevance of the
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35 Honorius letters to Willibrord in his old age. The 730s saw a marked acceleration in the
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37 creation of palliated archbishoprics as part of a concerted effort by the papacy to drive
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39 forward reform in northern Europe.¹²² Gregory III (731–41) issued pallia to the bishops of
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41 three new archdioceses, each one assigned to a *gens*; two were in Francia and the third was at
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43 York, 'for the Northumbrian people'.¹²³ Wilchar of Vienne was said by the interpolator of the
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45 *Liber Pontificalis* to have been given a pallium and made archbishop of the 'regions of the
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47 Franks'.¹²⁴ His promotion was prefigured in 732 by the elevation to archiepiscopal rank of
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49 Boniface, the other great Anglo-Saxon missionary to Germany, whose see was eventually
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51 established in Mainz.¹²⁵ Boniface, who had been sent by the Apostolic Church of God 'to
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53 enlighten the peoples of Germany', was given a pallium with instructions (matching the
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55 strictures of Gregory the Great to Augustine) to wear it only when celebrating mass or when
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57 consecrating a bishop.¹²⁶ Willibrord and Boniface, therefore, acted as archbishops alongside
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each other between 732 and 739 when Willibrord died, in much the way that Pope Honorius had envisaged would happen in England the 630s. One can envisage here another scenario in which scheme for the consecration of a replacement metropolitan as laid out in the Honorian letters was considered a relevant precedent. By 732, when Boniface received his pallium, Willibrord was 74, and the question of if, by whom, and how he might be replaced after his death was clearly urgent. In the event, no one was appointed to succeed Willibrord as archbishop in Frisia, and, as in the northern English province after Paulinus' death, the title lapsed and the province was subsumed within Boniface's purview.¹²⁷

But there is more: the issue of archbishops was a live one in England at the same time. As noted above, in the last phases of his life Bede pressed hard for the reform of the English Church, which he thought should include the creation of new bishops in Northumbria as well as the reform of monasteries. This agenda has been traced throughout his later writing, including the *History*, and was articulated most forcefully in his letter to Bishop Ecgberht of York that he wrote in November 734.¹²⁸ There he reminded Ecgberht of Gregory I's intention that the bishop of York one day be raised to metropolitan status, quoting his own paraphrase of Gregory's letter in *De temporum ratione*, that the bishop of York, 'accepto a sede apostolica pallio, metropolitanus esse deberet'. Bede believed that this could be easily accomplished, 'so that, according to the decrees of the apostolic see, the church of York is able to have a metropolitan bishop'.¹²⁹ The old letters of Honorius provided both the proof that a pallium had been sent once before to a metropolitan bishop of York as well as a mechanism by which a new bishop could be consecrated there without recourse to Rome. The agreement of Gregory III would be needed, sanctioned by the pallium, but the seventh-century precedent meant there was a *prima facie* case for the establishment of a second English province.

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5 However, in order for York to be raised to a metropolitan, the status quo had to be
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7 dismantled. For fifty years, the English Church had been governed efficiently as a single
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9 province by a single archbishop based in Canterbury. It was Theodore (669–90) who had first
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11 used the title archbishop; the 679 decrees of the Council of Hatfield referred to him as
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13 ‘archbishop by the grace of God of the island of Britain and of the city of Canterbury’ and
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15 elsewhere he was ‘the archbishop of the English’; these were titles that effectively blocked
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17 the establishment of a second province as well as Wilfrid’s promotion to the primacy of it.¹³⁰
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19 Theodore’s new title, and the grant of a pallium, seems to have been confirmed by a synod
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21 held in Rome in the same year by Pope Agatho to resolve the tensions within the English
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23 Church.¹³¹ His successor, Berhtwald (692–731), maintained this inflated, maximal view of
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25 Canterbury’s authority and, as the account in the *Liber Pontificalis* shows, he too was
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27 recognised in Rome as *Britanniae archiepiscopus*.¹³² Two letters from Pope Sergius to the
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29 kings and bishops of the English reinforced his claim to this title.¹³³ In Wihtrid’s law code he
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31 was *Bretone heahbiscop* and, to Bishop Wealdhere of London, he was *totius Brettaniae*
32
33 *gubernacula regenti*.¹³⁴ The structure of the English Church in the later seventh and early
34
35 eighth century was, therefore, quite unlike that envisaged by Gregory the Great; instead of
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37 two provinces governed by metropolitans, the English church was overseen by a single
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39 archbishop who claimed authority over the whole island. Crucially, this revised scheme was
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41 recognised and approved in Rome. This may have been a pragmatic strategy to promote the
42
43 unity of the nascent English Church within a single province – Theodore was, after all, ‘the
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45 first of the archbishops whom the whole English Church consented to obey’ – but it
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47 effectively shelved the original plan that had been proposed by Gregory the Great and was
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49 enacted by Honorius.¹³⁵
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59 All this explains much about Bede’s construction of the history of the English Church:
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by asserting the priority of the Gregorian plan for the English Church as revealed through the

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papal letters, the argument for the archbishopric in York was one of revival according to the apostolic blueprint rather than creation of a province *de novo*.¹³⁶ His closing remarks in the penultimate chapter of the *History* frame the episcopacy of his present day within the structure of this unfulfilled apostolic plan; twelve bishoprics are identified south of the Humber, subject to Tatwine, the new archbishop in Canterbury (731–34). But Northumbria had only four bishops, at York, Lindisfarne, Hexham, and Whithorn, showing how far the northern province had to go to fulfil Pope Gregory’s vision, underlining the need for reform of the episcopacy of the Northumbrian Church.¹³⁷

Bede thus played a proactive role in the establishment of York’s metropolitan status by providing a cogent historical context for its revival as well as stressing the urgency of reform. But perhaps an even more important actor was Nothhelm, whose contribution to the revival of the northern province was twofold. As discussed above, Nothhelm had travelled to Rome, secured permission from the pope to search the archives, and found the relevant letters ‘from St Gregory and other popes’. With the approval of Abbot Albinus, he had taken them to Jarrow. Albinus and Nothhelm must have realised the importance of the dossier of letters, not only as a record of the history of the English Church in its earliest phases but also because of its implications for the structure and governance of that Church in their own day. But Nothhelm’s role did not end with the delivery of the dossier to Jarrow. On 30 July 734, Tatwine, the Mercian archbishop of Canterbury died and was succeeded by Nothhelm himself, who was consecrated in 735.¹³⁸ When Bede wrote to Ecgberht in November 734, he probably knew that his friend Nothhelm was in line to be the next archbishop in Canterbury. Nothhelm’s credentials for the post were undoubtedly enhanced by his recent international contacts with Rome and perhaps also – to judge by the evidence of the letters in *Paris* – with the venerable missionary Willibrord. More importantly, the recreation of the northern province can only have happened with the consent of the archbishop in Canterbury, since it

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4 inevitably diminished the size of his province and the range of his authority. Nothhelm was
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6 just the man to embrace and enact this change; he was known in Rome and was familiar with
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8 the detail of the old papal letters (and he may even have been responsible for the Canterbury
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10 redaction of the *History*).¹³⁹ It may thus be relevant that the notice of Nothhelm's
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12 consecration as archbishop begins the sequence of events recorded in the annals for 735, and
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14 is followed by the confirmation of Ecgbert to York *in archiepiscopatum, accepto a sede*
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16 *apostolica pallio*.¹⁴⁰ Nothhelm's own pallium arrived soon after.¹⁴¹ Did Bede know of
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18 Nothhelm's and Ecgbert's promotions? The *Continuatio Bedae* and *Historia Regum* place
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20 the record of Bede's death (on 26 May 735) as the last event in the entry for that year, so it
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22 would be nice to think that he did.
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30 Conclusions

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32 So, the late 720s and early 730s were a period in which the letters of Pope Honorius I
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34 assumed critical relevance, both in Anglo-Saxon England where a campaign to revive the
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36 northern archbishopric was being pursued actively, and in the adjacent 'Anglo-Saxon'
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38 provinces in Germany that were ruled over by two Englishmen who governed the Church
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40 there under direct papal licence in the manner of the English Church. Does this provide a
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42 context for the copying of the Honorius letters into Willibrord's manuscript? This historical
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44 context would suit the date suggested by the palaeography.
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49 The main objection to regarding the 730s as the historical context for the copying of
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51 the two letters is one of the chronology of the transmission of Bede's *History* – if that had
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53 been the source of the letters as copied into Willibrord's manuscript. If the letters had come
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55 via Bede, then this manuscript copy of Honorius' letters would constitute very early evidence
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57 for the distribution of the *History* outside Northumbria – and certainly the earliest evidence
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59 for its use outside England. Even if the copy was not made until, say, 760 when (as the
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4 *Calendar* itself shows us) Echternach scribes were able to write in the new style of minuscule
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6 – this would still be a very early sighting of Bede's *History* on the Continent, earlier in date
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8 than the requests from Lul to York and Wearmouth Jarrow for copies of Bede's works.
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11 If, however, as seems more likely, the Echternach copy of Honorius' letters was not
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13 dependent on the *History*, it would imply that Echternach had acquired the letters
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15 independently, probably from Nothhelm as he travelled back north. It is inherently likely that
16
17 Nothhelm would have broken his journey at Echternach to stay with the eminent English
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19 cleric, just as Wilfrid and Acca had done on their journey to Rome in 704/5.¹⁴² Alternatively,
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21 Willibrord could have obtained the letters from Canterbury where Nothhelm reported his
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23 findings, and where the Honorius letters would doubtless have been copied.
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27 A visit from Nothhelm, en route from Rome to England, carrying a dossier of papal
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29 letters on the conversion of English kings, the creation of senior bishops, and the
30
31 establishment of the Anglo-Saxon Church could well have been a catalyst for Willibrord to
32
33 reflect on his own career. The autobiographical note in the *Calendar* begins with a reference
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35 to his arrival 'from beyond the sea into Francia' in 690 but centres on his consecration as
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37 archbishop in Rome by Pope Sergius in 695, a highly unusual honour in the Western Church.
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39 It was written into the margin of the *Calendar* for the month of November, which records the
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41 feasts of St. Cecilia and St. Clement in Rome in the hand of the primary scribe. Willibrord's
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43 acquisition of the name of Clement is noted twice on the page, in the autobiographical note
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45 and in the body of the *Calendar* where a second scribe added the 'ordinatio domini nostri
46
47 clementis' against the 11th Kalends of December, the vigil of St. Cecilia. The
48
49 autobiographical note concludes with the present date, 'Now in truth in the name of God [is]
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51 passing the seven-hundred-and-twenty-eighth year from the incarnation of our lord Jesus
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53 Christ in the name of God happily'.¹⁴³ The three-fold use of *Anno Domini* dates in the
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55 marginal note is striking and shows that Willibrord was able to apply this innovative form of
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4 dating by the incarnation of the Lord to the milestones of his own life. It may be coincidence
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6 that the year of the composition of this reflective note corresponds so closely with the
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8 accumulated evidence for the date of Bede's acquisition of the dossier of papal letters from
9
10 Nothhelm, including the two from Pope Honorius, which proved so conclusively that a
11
12 pallium had once been dispatched for the metropolitan bishop of York; but the coincidence is
13
14 suggestive. The closing years of the 720s and early 730s provide a compelling historical
15
16 context for interest in the content of Honorius' letters in England and in the Anglo-Saxon
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18 missionfield in eastern Francia, and the copy in Willibrord's Calendar can now be attributed
19
20 to a similar period on palaeographic as well as historical grounds.
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28 Postscript

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30 In the late 780s Charlemagne's reforms of the Frankish Church had extended to the
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32 creation of several new archbishoprics, including, one at Sens and another, closer to
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34 Echternach, at Trier.¹⁴⁴ Sens was some distance from Echternach, but its first incumbent was
35
36 Beornred, an Anglo-Saxon who was also the abbot of Echternach. The exact date of
37
38 Beornred's elevation is unclear, since the sources from the late 780s call him archbishop and
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40 bishop interchangeably, but it is likely that he was indeed an archbishop by the time of his
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42 visit to Rome in 790/1.¹⁴⁵ Trier was but a few miles across the river from Echternach.
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44 Richbod, its first archbishop, was also abbot of the royal abbey at Lorsch, an adviser to
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46 Charlemagne and a student of Alcuin. The presence of an archbishop on the Echternach
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48 doorstep, and their own abbot's tenure of that rank in a distant city, might have given cause to
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50 the fraternity to study the history of the office.
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57 What is more we have some unusual evidence to show that the Honorius letters were
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59 certainly being studied in England this time. In the late 780s, just as in Francia, the king of
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Mercia sought to create a new archbishop. At a 'contentious' synod held at Chelsea in 787 a

new metropolitan see had been created for the Mercian heartland, carved out of the province of Canterbury, with the necessary approval of Pope Hadrian, and Hygberht was made archbishop of Lichfield.¹⁴⁶ In 792 Janberht, the archbishop of Canterbury, died and his old foe, Offa of Mercia, sought to impose his own Mercian candidate on the stubbornly independent men of Kent. Alcuin wrote to Offa with advice on how the new archbishop of Canterbury might be consecrated, and he cited the two letters of Honorius I as precedent, saying that they are to be found in the second book of the Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, which he knew that Offa had to hand.¹⁴⁷ Alcuin was probably in England when this letter was composed. We know that he was in Northumbria in late 792 and that he was back in Francia by the middle of 793; he wrote several letters from Francia on hearing of the sack of Lindisfarne in June that year by viking pirates. It was also at about this time, or perhaps a couple of years later, that Alcuin wrote his *Life of Willibrord*, at Abbot Beornred's request.

The late 780s and early 790s were thus another period in which the creation of archbishops was a hot topic in Francia and in Anglo-Saxon England, impinging directly on Echternach and its historians. We can show that the letters of Honorius I were used by Alcuin at this time for the precedent and papal directive that they provided. Their relevance for Echternach is less direct than in the 730s, but with Alcuin's involvement in the community's history we have the link in the chain that joins Pope Honorius I to York, to Willibrord, to Echternach and to Charlemagne's Francia.¹⁴⁸

JOANNA STORY

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Fig. 1. The structure and content of Paris, BnF Lat. 10837

	flyleaf	Fo. 1	Lections (for the night office) from cc. 3–6 of Alcuin's <i>Vita Willibrordi</i> with responsories, s. xi ¹⁴⁹
<i>Libellus 1</i> (CLA 605)	Q1 ff 2–9	Fos. 2r–32v	<i>Martyrologium Hieronymianum</i>
	Q2 ff 10–17		
	Q3 ff 18–25		
	Q4 ff 26–33	Fos. 33r–v	Letters of Pope Honorius I to King Edwin and Honorius of Canterbury
<i>Libellus 2</i> (CLA 606a+b)	Q5 ff 34–41	Fo. 34r	Letter of Pope Honorius I to Honorius of Canterbury (cont.) & Palm Sunday lection
		Fos. 34v–40r	<i>Calendar</i> of St. Willibrord
		Fos. 40v–41v	Paschal tables, AD703–759
	bifolium	Fos. 42–43	A <i>horologium</i> ; mass for the vigil of the Ascension; Paschal tables, AD 760–797
	singleton	Fo. 44r	Paschal table, AD 684–702
		Fo. 44v	blank (with s. viii pen trial, <i>aodberto hecco</i>)
	flyleaf	Fo. 45	Page from a glossed grammatical text, s. xiii ¹⁵⁰

Captions:

Plate 1. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 10837, fo. 33r (detail), showing the opening of Pope Honorius I's *Letter to Edwin*.

Plate 2. Köln, Erzbisch. Diözesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 213, fo. 19r (detail).

NOTES

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¹ Bede, *H[istoria] E[ccllesiastica gentis Anglorum]*, ed. and trans., B. Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969). Eight letters are from Gregory the Great, three from Boniface V, two from Honorius I, one from Vitalian I: *HE* I.23–24; I.27–32; II.8; II.10–11; II.17–18; III.29. A fifteenth was composed by Pope John IV when awaiting confirmation of his election and is cited in *HE* II.19 following discussion of another letter (also from Honorius I) that is not quoted. There is a long bibliography on the source of the letters known to Bede, whether he copied them from originals preserved in England or from a transcript of the copy retained in Rome in the papal registers. For opposing arguments, see P. Ewald, 'Studien zur Ausgabe des Registers Gregors I', *Neues Archiv* 3 (1878), pp. 433–625, esp. 542–50, and T. Mommsen, 'Die Papstbriefe bei Beda', *Neues Archiv* 17 (1892), pp. 387–96. Also important, especially for the Gregorian letters, are: S. Brechter, *Die Quellen zur Angelsachsenmission Gregors des Grossen*, Beiträge zur

Geschichte des alten Mönchtums und des Benediktinerordens, 22 (Münster 1941); R.A. Markus, 'The chronology of the Gregorian mission to England: Bede's Narrative and Gregory's Correspondence', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 14 (1963), pp. 16–30 reprinted as Ch. X in his *From Augustine to Gregory the Great. History and Christianity in Late Antiquity* (London, 1983); P. Meyvaert, 'The Registrum of Gregory the Great and Bede', *Revue Bénédictine*, 80 (1970), pp. 162–66, reprinted as Ch. XI in his *Benedict, Gregory, Bede and Others* (London, 1977). The letters of Gregory known to Bede are in *S. Gregorii Magni, Registrum Epistularum*, ed. D. Norberg, C[orpus] C[hristianorum] S[eries] L[atina] CXL–CXLA (Turnhout, 1982), VI.53 (*HE* I.23), VI.53 (*HE* I.24), XI.45 (*HE* I.28), XI.39 (*HE* I.29), X.56 (*HE* I.30), XI.36 (*HE* I.31), XI.37 (*HE* I.32).

² For some summaries of the career of Willibrord see, W. Levison, 'St. Willibrord and his place in History', *Durham University Journal*, 32.i (1940), pp. 23–41, reprinted in his *Aus rheinischer und fränkischer Frühzeit* (Düsseldorf, 1948), pp. 314–29; A. Angenendt, 'Er war der erste ...' Willibrords historische Stellung', in P. Bange and A.G. Weiler, eds., *Willibrord: Zijn Weeld end zijn Werk*, *Middeleeuwse Studies*, 6 (Nijmegen, 1990), pp. 13–34; I.N. Wood, *The Missionary Life. Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe 400–1050* (Harlow, 2001), pp. 79–90; M. Costambeys, 'Willibrord [St Willibrord] (657/8–739)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; J.T. Palmer, *Anglo-Saxons in a Frankish World* (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 81–3, 183–5.

³ On the fourfold order of bishops, see the account by Isidore of Seville (d. 636), *Etymologiae*, VII.xii.4; S.A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, O. Berghof, trans., *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 170. On the importance of this distinction in the seventh century, see T. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 242, 416–21, and A. Thacker, 'Gallic or Greek? Archbishops in

England from Theodore to Ecgbert', in P. Fouracre and D. Ganz, eds., *Frankland. The Franks and the World of the Early Middle Ages. Essays in honour of Dame Jinty Nelson* (Manchester, 2008), pp. 44–69. Both these authors draw on the seminal comments by W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946), pp. 18–22.

⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 420; Thacker, 'Archbishops in England', p. 55.

⁵ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 417.

⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 419; Thacker, 'Archbishops in England', pp. 52–5.

⁷ A. Thacker, 'Bede's Ideal of Reform', in P. Wormald, D.A. Bullough and R. Collins, eds., *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 130–53; S. DeGregorio, 'Bede's *In Ezra et Neemiam* and the Reform of the Northumbrian Church', *Speculum*, 79 (2004), pp. 1–25; idem, trans. *Bede. On Ezra and Nehemiah* (Liverpool, 2006), pp. xxxi–xlii, with special reference, at p. xxxiv, to Bede's gloss on the word *pontifex*, 'id est archiepiscopus'.

⁸ Bede, *Epistula ad Ecgberti*, ch. 9, 'Quis enim non uideat, quanto sit melius tam enorme pondus ecclesiastici regiminis in plures, qui hoc dispertitum facilius ferant, diuidi, quam unum sub fasce, quem portare non posit, opprimi'; C. Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae opera historica*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1896), I, pp. 405–23, at 412.

⁹ *Continuatio Bedae*, 735, '... Ecgbertus episcopus, accepto ab apostolica sede pallio, primus post Paulinum in archiepiscopatum confirmatus est ...'; Colgrave and Mynors, ed. and trans., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 572–3. The *H[istoria] Reg[um]* annal for the same year adds that he was made archbishop, *genti Northanhymbrorum*; T. Arnold, ed., *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, 2 vols., Rolls Series, 75 (London, 1882–5), II, p. 31.

¹⁰ Colgrave and Mynors, ed., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p. xl.

¹¹ E.A. Lowe, 'The script of the farewell and date formulae in early papal documents as reflected in the oldest manuscripts of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*', *Revue Benedictine*, 69 (1959), pp. 22–31, reprinted in L. Bieler, ed., *Palaeographical Papers 1907–1965*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1972), II, pp. 450–58, pl. 101–2.

¹² *HE* IV.18; Bede, *Historia abbatum* c. 6, 15; Anon. *Vita Ceolfridi*, c. 20, 39; Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae* I, pp. 242, 369, 380, 395, 403. Lowe, 'Script of the farewell', p. 458; Meyvaert, 'The Registrum of Gregory the Great and Bede', p. 165. The earliest extant original papal letter dates to 788, from Pope Hadrian I to Charlemagne and is now, Paris, Arch Nat K.7. No. 9²; see *Ch[artae] L[atinae] A[ntiquiores]: Facsimile edition of the Latin Charters prior to the ninth century*, 49 vols. (Olten and Lausanne, 1963), XVI, no. 630, and W. Gundlach, ed., 'Codex Carolinus, Appendix 1', *M[onumenta] G[ermaniae] H[istorica] Epp.* III, *Epistolae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi* I (Berlin, 1892), pp. 654–5. It is on papyrus, as were other papal letters until the eleventh century. Its script and layout show much in common with contemporary Carolingian charters.

¹³ *HE* Preface, '... perscrutato eiusdem sanctae ecclesiae Romanae scrinio ...'; Lowe, 'Script of the farewell', p. 456 and n. 2.

¹⁴ *HE* Preface, '... nonnullas ibi beati Gregorii papae simul et aliorum pontificum epistulas. . . reuersusque nobis nostae historiae inserendas . . . adtulit'.

¹⁵ That is: *HE* I.23–4, 28–32; II.8; II.17–18; III.29. Meyvaert, 'Registrum of Gregory the Great'. See also D. Norberg, *In Registrum Gregorii Magni studia critica* (Uppsala, 1939), pp. 30–3 for the argument that all Bede's Gregorian letters except the *Libellus Responsionum* derive from the register copy in Rome, and P. Meyvaert, 'Bede's text of the *Libellus Responsionum* of Gregory the Great to Augustine of Canterbury', in P. Clemons and K.

Hughes, eds., *England Before the Conquest. Studies presented to Dorothy Whitelock* (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 15–33 reprinted as ch. X in his *Benedict, Gregory, Bede and Others* (London, 1977); P. Chiesa and M. Lapidge, eds., *Beda. Storia Degli Inglesi*, 2 vols (2008–10), I, p. 321 nn. 2.22–41. See also, D. Jasper and H. Fuhrmann, *Papal Letters in the Early Middle Ages* (Washington DC, 2001), pp. 70–81.

¹⁶ *HE* II.10–11. Meyvaert, ‘*Registrum* of Gregory the Great’, p. 163. On these letters see also, P. Hunter Blair, ‘The letters of Pope Boniface V and the mission of Paulinus to Northumbria’, in Clemoes and Hughes, eds., *England Before the Conquest*, pp. 5–13.

¹⁷ *Supra* n. 12.**

¹⁸ Bede, *Historia Abbatum* cc. 15, 18 and Anonymous, *Vita Ceolfridi*, c. 20; Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae*, I, pp. 380, 383, 394–5.

¹⁹ The account is given in Bede’s *De Temporum Ratione* c. 47, with a date of *Anno Passionis* 668 (i.e.: AD 701); C. W. Jones, ed., *Beda Venerabilis Opera*, I. *Opera Didascalica*, CCSL 123A (Turnhout, 1975), p. 431; F. Wallis, trans., *Bede: The Reckoning of Time*, Translated Texts for Historians, 29 (Liverpool, 1999), p. 128 and n. 31.

²⁰ Wallis, trans., *Reckoning of Time*, p. 236; R. Davis, trans., *The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes (Liber Pontificalis). The ancient biographies of nine popes from AD 715 to AD 817*, Translated Texts for Historians, 13 (Liverpool, 1992), p. 2.

²¹ L. Duchesne, ed., *Le L[iber] P[ontificalis], text introduction et commentaire*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1886–92), I, pp. ccxxii–iii.

²² *HE* Preface, ‘. . . uel monimentis litterarum uel seniorum traditione . . .’.

²³ Bede, *In Regum librum xxx Quaestiones*, ed., D. Hurst, CCSL 119, pp. 289–322; See also the commentary and translation by W. Trent Foley and Arthur G. Holder, trans., *Bede: A Biblical Miscellany*, Translated Texts for Historians, 28 (Liverpool, 1999), pp. 81–138, and P.

Meyvaert, “‘In the Footsteps of the Fathers: the date of Bede’s *Thirty Questions on the Book of Kings* to Nothhelm’, in W.E. Klingshirn and M. Vessey, eds., *The Limits of Ancient Christianity. Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R.A. Markus* (Ann Arbor MI, 1999), pp. 267–86 at 278, reprinted as Ch. 3 in his *The Art of Words: Bede and Theodulf* (Aldershot, 2008); G. Hardin Brown, *A Companion to Bede* (Woodbridge, 2009), p. 50.

²⁴ Meyvaert, “‘In the Footsteps of the Fathers’, p. 275.

²⁵ P. Meyvaert, *Bede and Gregory the Great*, Jarrow Lecture (1964), pp. 8–13; Markus, ‘Chronology of the Gregorian Mission’, pp. 16–17. For an alternative view see, N.J. Higham, *(Re-)Reading Bede. The Ecclesiastical History in context* (London and New York, 2006), pp. 76–7, where he doubts the authenticity of the letter to Albinus. Gibbs’ claimed that Nothhelm collected the letters in 731, but this is too late for their use in the *History*; M. Gibbs, ‘The decrees of Agatho and the Gregorian Plan for York’, *Speculum*, 48 (1973), pp. 213–46 at 241.

²⁶ This translation is from J.A. Westgard, ‘New manuscripts of Bede’s Letter to Albinus’, *Revue Bénédictine*, 120 (2010), pp. 208–15.

²⁷ Meyvaert, “‘In the Footsteps of the Fathers’”, p. 278; also Hunter Blair, ‘Letters of Pope Boniface’, p. 6.

²⁸ For example, see Bede’s terminology in *HE* I.23, I.29, II.17–18. For an original ninth-century dossier made in 863 by Archbishop Gunthar of Cologne that complied information concerning his claim to the see of Cologne and a ‘covering letter’ to Archbishop Hincmar of Reims, is Köln, Erzbischöflich Diözesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 117, fos. 93–7 (see <http://www.ceec.uni-koeln.de>), and M. Mersiowsky, ‘Karolingische Briefe’, in P. Erhart and L. Hollenstein, eds., *Mensch und Schrift im frühen Mittelalter* (St. Gallen, 2006), pp. 71–3.

²⁹ Wallis, trans., *Reckoning of Time*, p. 226.

³⁰ The date is easily derived from the dating clauses of the letters quoted in *HE* 1.23–24; Bede supplies the date, 596, in the recapitulation in *HE* V.24; Meyvaert, ‘Registrum’, p. 164.

³¹ Brechter, *Die Quellen zur Angelsachsenmission*, 211–12 tempered by Markus, ‘The Chronology of the Gregorian Mission’, p. 17, n. 3; Meyvaert, “‘In the Footsteps of the Fathers’”, p. 279, with particular reference to a passage from Bede’s commentary *De templo* which mentions Augustine’s mission to Britain.

³² *HE* I.29; *Registrum* XI.39.

³³ For what follows see, Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 18–22; Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Bedae*, II, pp. 49–52; and, especially, Thacker, ‘Archbishops in England’, pp. 48–55, and Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 419. On the developments in the use of the pallium in this period see also, S.A. Schoenig, ‘The Papacy and the Use and Understanding of the Pallium from the Carolingians to the Early Twelfth Century’, Columbia University Ph.D. thesis, 2009, pp. 7–13.

³⁴ *HE* II.8, 17–18.

³⁵ J. Toynbee and J. Ward Perkins, *The Shrine of St Peter and the Vatican Excavations* (London, 1956), pp. 220–4, and Fig. 24–5.

³⁶ Thacker, ‘Archbishops in England’, pp. 52–3; Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 20.

³⁷ *DTR* ch. 66 (AM 4557); ‘Gregorius . . . scribens Augustino . . . Lundoniae quoque et Eboraci episcopos accepto a sede apostolica pallio metropolitanos esse debere decernit’; Jones, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis*, p. 526; Wallis, trans., *Reckoning of Time*, p. 227.

³⁸ *HE* II.18, ‘. . . filiorum nostrorum regum’.

³⁹ Two recent editors of Honorius’ letters concur on the shared date of these two letters: A. Thanner, *Papst Honorius I (625–638)*, Studien zur theologie und Geschichte 4 (St. Otilien, 1989), pp. 211–12; P. Conte, *Chiesa e primato nelle lettere dei papi del secolo VII. Con*

appendice critica (Milan, 1971), pp. 414–15, no. 54–5. See also, Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae*, II, pp. 110, 117; P. Jaffé and P. Ewald, eds., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum natum MCXCVIII* (Berlin, 1851), p. 158 (1565–6); J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People. A Historical Commentary* (Oxford, 1988), p. 81.

⁴⁰ The 'John IV' letter is edited by M. Sheehy, ed., *Pontificia Hibernica: Medieval Papal Chancery Documents Concerning Ireland, 640–1261*, vol. 1 (Dublin, 1962), pp. 3–4; Jaffé and Ewald, eds., *Regesta Pontificum*, p. 159 (1582).

⁴¹ Wallis, trans., *Reckoning of Time*, p. 228.

⁴² Conte, *Chiesa e primato nelle lettere*, p. 412 no. 51. Its date is discussed by M. Walsh and D. Ó Cróinín, eds., *Cummian's Letter 'De controversia paschali' and the De ratione computandi* (Toronto ON, 1988), pp. 6–7.

⁴³ M. Herren, 'The Papal Letters to the Irish cited by Bede', in E. Purcell, P. MacCotter, J. Nyhan, and J. Sheehan, eds., *Clerics, Kings, and Vikings: Essays on Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 2012), 000.** See also, A. Thacker, 'Bede and the Irish', in L.A.J.R. Houwen, and A.A. MacDonald, eds., *Beda Venerabilis: historian, monk and Northumbrian*, Mediaevalia Groningana, 19 (Groningen, 1996), pp. 31–59 esp. 38–9, and D. Ó Cróinín, "'New Heresy for Old': Pelagianism in Ireland and the Papal Letter of 640', *Speculum*, 60 (1985), pp. 505–16, reprinted in his *Early Irish History and Chronology* (Dublin, 2003), pp. 87–98.

⁴⁴ *DTR* c. 66 (AM 4591); Jones, ed., *Beda Venerabilis Opera*, p. 525; Wallis, trans., *Reckoning of Time*, p. 228.

⁴⁵ *HE* II.17, 'Et duo pallia utrorumque metropolitanorum, id est Honorio et Paulino, direximus . . . '.

⁴⁶ *HE* II.17, ‘. . . ut dum quis eorum de hoc saeculo ad auctorem suum fuerit accersitus, in loco ipsius alterum episcopum ex hac nostra auctoritate debeat subrogare.’

⁴⁷ Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 20.

⁴⁸ On Wilfrid see especially, *HE* III.25, 28, IV.13, V.19, and the *Vita Wilfridi*, by Stephanus; B. Colgrave, ed. and trans., *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge, 1927), cc. 10, 12, 16 and esp. pp. 56–67. See also, Thacker, ‘Archbishops in England’, pp. 56–7.

⁴⁹ *HE* II.9; Edwin married Æthelburh, the daughter of Æthelberht, king of Kent 560x585–616, and sister of King Eanbald (616–40).

⁵⁰ *HE* II.14.

⁵¹ *HE* III.28 for the consecrations of Wilfrid in Gaul and his rival Chad by bishops in Wessex; E. B. Fryde, D. E. Greenway, S. Porter, and I. Roy, eds., *Handbook of British Chronology*, 3rd edn (Cambridge, 1997), p. 224.

⁵² For James the Deacon see, *HE* II.16.

⁵³ *HE* II.20, ‘in qua ecclesia moriens pallium quoque, quod a Romano papa acceperat, reliquit’.

⁵⁴ Levison, ‘Bede as Historian’, in A.H. Thomson, ed., *Bede, His Life and Times* (Oxford, 1935), pp. 111–51, at 148 n. 3.

⁵⁵ *HE* II.20.

⁵⁶ S. Wood, ‘Bede’s Northumbrian Dates Again’, *The English Historical Review*, 98 (1983), pp. 280–96 at 290–2; contra, D.P. Kirby, ‘Bede and Northumbrian Chronology’, *The English Historical Review*, 78 (1963), pp. 514–27, at 523 where he argued that Edwin died in 634 rather than 633.

⁵⁷ Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae*, II, p. 117

⁵⁸ *HE* III.1.

⁵⁹ Wood, 'Bede's Northumbrian Dates', p. 291.

⁶⁰ Chiesa and Lapidge, eds., *Beda*, I, p. 393, n. 3.38 and p. 400, n. 4.56.

⁶¹ Levison, *England and the Continent*, p. 21; Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 418; Thacker, 'Archbishops in England', pp. 50, 56.

⁶² *HE* 1.27 (answer 6).

⁶³ N.P. Brooks, 'Canterbury, Rome and the Construction of English Identity', in J.M.H. Smith, ed., *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West. Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough* (Leiden, 2000), pp. 221–45, at 226.

⁶⁴ *HE* II.18; 'Et tam iuxta uestram petitionem quam filiorum nostrorum regum'.

⁶⁵ E.A. Lowe, ed., *C[odices] L[atini] A[ntiquiores]: a palaeographical guide to Latin manuscripts prior to the ninth century*, 11 vols (Oxford, 1934–66), nos. 605, 606a, 606b; F. Avril and P. D. Stirnemann, eds., *Manuscrits enluminés d'origine Insulaire VIIe–XXe siècle* (Paris, 1987), pp. 4–5, no. 3. For the *Calendar* see, H.A. Wilson, ed., *The Calendar of St Willibrord from MS Paris Lat. 10837. A Facsimile with Transcription, Introduction, and Notes* (London, 1918); B. Ebersperger, *Die angelsächsischen Handschriften in den Pariser bibliotheken. Mit einer Edition von Ælfrichs Kirchweihhomile aus der Handschrift Paris, BN, lat. 943* (Heidelberg, 1999), no. 48, p. 185.

⁶⁶ L. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque impériale [nationale]*, 3 vols (Paris, 1861–91), II, p. 361, III, pp. 229–30, pl. XIX, 1–4 where no. 1 is of lines 11–13 of the letter to Edwin on fo. 33r; *CLA* 605; Wilson, *Calendar*, p. ix. See also, F. Lifshitz, *The Name of the Saint. The Martyrology of Jerome and access to the Sacred in Francia, 627–827* (Notre Dame IN, 2006), pp. 40–1, 167 where she argues that the *libelli* were bound together after 797, thereby assuming a very late eighth-century date for the hand of the *Paris* letters.

⁶⁷ On the transmission of the *History* to the Continent, see J.A. Westgard, 'Bede and the continent in the Carolingian age and beyond', in S. DeGregorio, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Bede* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 201–15, esp. 204–6. Westgard draws particular attention to the mid eighth-century leaf (now Münster in Westfalen, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Fragmentensammlung Kaps.1.3) which contains a version of the text like those that contain the Northumbrian annals known as *Continuatio Bedae* covering the years 732–66, and which is known only through continental manuscripts (see Colgrave and Mynors, ed. and trans., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, pp. lxxvii–lxxix).

⁶⁸ M. Tangl, ed., *Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus* MGH Epistolae Selectae I (Munich, 1912), no. 125; D. Whitelock, trans. *E[nglish] H[istorical] D[ocuments]*. Vol. I: c. 500–1042 (2nd edn., London, 1979), no. 188. A slightly earlier letter from the abbot of Wearmouth Jarrow dated 764 responds to a request from Lul for *de opusculis vero beatae recordationis Baeda*; Tangl, ed., *Briefe*, no. 116, Whitelock, trans. *EHD* I, no. 185. Earlier letters from Lul's predecessor Boniface (dated 746–7) show that he knew about Bede's oeuvre, but do not demonstrate that he knew the *History*; Tangl, ed., *Briefe*, no. 75 and 76; Emerton, trans. *Letters*, no. 59 and 60. For the counter argument, see N.P. Brooks, 'English identity from Bede to the millennium', *Haskins Society Journal*, 14 (2005) pp. 33–51 at 37–41, based on Boniface's famous query about the authenticity of Answer 5 of the *Libellus Responsionum* (*HE* 1.27), on which see Meyvaert, 'Bede's Text of the *Libellus Responsionum*', pp. 15–16, 24–6. However, since the recension of the *Libellus* known to Bede and reproduced in the *History* also circulated independently (alongside other recensions that included Answer 5), we cannot be sure that the version of the text queried by Boniface was derived from the *History*. Concern over the authenticity of this passage continued, and a short tract, called *De Consanguinitate*, clarifying the canonical position was appended to the

earliest copy of the *HE* (Cambridge, University Library Kk.5.16, fo. 128v) when it arrived in Francia at the end of the eighth century; Colgrave and Mynors, ed. and trans., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, pp. lxii–lxiii. Note too the Tironian *notae* on fo. 17v of this manuscript that corresponds to the problematic passage of the *Libellus*.

⁶⁹ N. Netzer, *Cultural Interplay in the Eighth Century. The Trier Gospels and the making of a scriptorium at Echternach* (Cambridge 1994), p. 5. See also, R. McKitterick, 'Buch, Schrift, Urkunden und Schriftlichkeit in der Karolingerzeit', in W. Pohl and P. Herold, eds., *Vom Nutzen des Schreibens. Soziales Gedächtnis, Herrschaft und Besitz*, *Forschungen zur geschichte des Mittelalters*, 5 (=Denkschriften der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften phil.-hist. klass, 306) (Vienna, 2002), pp. 97–112.

⁷⁰ Doubt was cast on the identity of the scribe of the note by M. Mostert, 'Willibrord', *Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1998), p. 478, and this case has been argued by Y. Hen, 'Wilhelm Levison's Willibrord and Echternach', in M. Becher and Y. Hen, eds., *Wilhelm Levison (1876–1947). Ein jüdisches Forscherleben zwischen wissenschaftlicher Anerkennung und politischen Exil*, *Bonner Historische Forschungen*, 63 (Siegberg, 2010), pp. 187–98. But the note has been overwritten in black ink by a Carolingian-era scribe who used some Caroline letterforms (e.g. *-gen* interlineation between lines 21–22); the original brown ink underlying it is an Insular minuscule script that dates to the earlier eighth century. The length of the note and the confined space of the margin means that it fills at least half the margin, beginning opposite *ui ides* (not *iiii nonas* as Hen says) down to *iiii kl decembris*. The debate about the identity of the scribe is a distraction; the text could easily have been composed by Willibrord and written into the book by an amanuensis. On Willibrord's authorship of the note see, D.R. Howlett, 'Willibrord's Autobiographical Note and the "Versus Sybillae de Iudicui Dei"', *Peritia*, 20 (2008), pp. 154–64.

⁷¹ D. Ó Cróinín, 'Rath Melsigi, Willibrord, and the earliest Echternach manuscripts', *Peritia*, 3 (1984), pp. 17–49 at 28–30, reprinted in his *Early Irish History*, pp. 145–72 at 155–6. Idem, 'Is the Augsburg Gospel Codex a Northumbrian manuscript?', in G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe, eds., *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to A. D. 1200* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 189–201 at 195–6; Netzer, *Cultural Interplay*, p. 5. The primary hand of the Calendar includes the obit of Pope Sergius (d. 704) but not of Wilfrid (d. 709).

⁷² On the importance of this copy of martyrology, see Lifshitz, *Name of the Saint*.

⁷³ C. Wampach, *Geschichte der Grundherrschaft Echternach im Frühmittelalter* (Luxembourg, 1930), nos. 8, 17, 28, 32.

⁷⁴ Augsburg Gospels: Augsburg Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. 1.2.4°2; CLA 8.1215; Netzer, *Cultural Interplay*, p. 5.

⁷⁵ Wilson, ed., *Calendar*, p. viii and pl. XIII,

⁷⁶ The outer and lower margin of fo. 33v is significantly discoloured, unlike the central part of the page that was protected by the *Calendar libellus*. The *Calendar*, at 150 x 218 mm, is substantially smaller than the *Martyrology* (185 x 245mm).

⁷⁷ T.J. Brown, 'The Irish Element in the Insular System of Scripts to circa A.D. 850', in H. Löwe, ed., *Die Iren und Europa im früheren Mittelalter*, 2 vols, (Stuttgart, 1982), I, pp. 101–19, esp. 101, 107 and 111–12; T.J. Brown and T.W. Mackay, eds., *Codex Vaticanus Palatinus Latinus 235. An Early Insular Manuscript of Paulinus of Nola Carmina*. *Armarius Codicum Insignium*, 4 (Turnhout, 1988), esp. p. 17.

⁷⁸ Brown, 'Insular Symptoms', pp. 111–12.

⁷⁹ B. Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography*, pp. 85–6. See **PLATE 1**, **ti** ligature: *edocti* line 6; *in praesenti* line 10. **ei** ligature: *fidei* line 2; *eique* line 10. **si** ligature *excellentissimo* line 1

⁸⁰ For examples of **ti** ligature see note above. Examples of terminal **m** with the dotted foot can be seen in **PLATE 1**: *servorum* and *creatorem* line 2; *uestrum* line 3; *fructum* line 5.

⁸¹ **PLATE 1**, line 9 *ipsumq[ue]*; *eiq[ue]* line 10.

⁸² For example, fo. 33r: line 8 *quod* to *quid* (**o** + **i** ligatured with deletion dot over **o**, see **PLATE 1**). Also, fo. 33r: line 24, *dilectione* to *dilatione*; line 16 *pradicatores* to *praedicatoris*.

⁸³ Fo. 33r: line 22 *per praesentium*; line 28 *pro uestrae*; line 29 *provinciarum*. Fo. 33v: line 8 *pro quibus*; line 11 *perpeti*; line 12 *per nos*; line 13–14 *per . . . exordio*; line 18 *super*; line 23 *per . . . praeceptione*. Fo. 34r: line 1 *Pro qua etiam*; line 10 *pro uenire*; probably also in line 3 *per nostrae* (the text here is barely legible, but there is space for a tufted **p**, rather than the three letters of *per*).

⁸⁴ Fo. 33v: line 13–14 *per . . . exordio*; line 18 *super*; line 23 *per . . . praeceptione*.

⁸⁵ Colgrave and Mynors, ed. and trans., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p. xl.

⁸⁶ Chiesa and Lapidge, eds., *Beda*, I, p. 393, nn. 2.13–3.50.

⁸⁷ Brown, 'Irish Element', p. 111; Brown and Mackay, eds., *Codex Vaticanus Palatinus*, pp. 17–18, with reference to: the Echternach Gospels (*CLA* 5.578) whose scribe also wrote the main part of the Durham Gospels (Durham, Dean and Chapter Library A.II.17, fos 2–102, *CLA* 2.149) and who used a Phase 1 pointed minuscule in some colophons; Köln, Erzbisch. Dioezesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 213 (*CLA* 8.1163); the Vatican copy of the carmina of Paulinus of Nola, Rome, BAV Pal. Lat. 235 (*CLA* 1.87, Brown and Mackay, eds., *Codex Vaticanus Palatinus*). See also Brown et al., eds., *Codex Lindisfarnensis*, pl. 12 and 14, and Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography*, pp. 91.

⁸⁸ Brown, 'Insular Element', p. 112; Netzer, *Cultural Interplay*, p. 6.

⁸⁹ Paris, B[ibliothèque] n[ationale de] France, Lat. 9538, *Augustine*, ‘De Trinitate’ Libri XI–XV (CLA 5.588) and Paris, BnF Lat. 9526, *Jerome*, ‘In Esaiam’ (CLA 5.584); Ebersperger, *Die angelsächsischen Handschriften*, no. 42 and 37. Köln, Erzbisch. Diözesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 213 (CLA 8.1163) is now available in superlative digital facsimile at: <http://www.ceec.uni-koeln.de/>. On this book and the debate about its attribution to

‘Sigibertus’ whose name is found on fo. 143r, see R. McKitterick, ‘Knowledge of canon law in the Frankish kingdoms before 789: the manuscript evidence’, *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s., 36.1 (1985), pp. 97–117, and *eadem*, ‘Frankish uncial: a new context for the Echternach scriptorium’, in Bange and Weiler, eds., *Willibrord*, pp. 374–88 at 383–4.

⁹⁰ Paris, BnF Lat. 10399 fos. 42–3 (CLA 5.595); Ebersperger, *Die angelsächsischen Handschriften*, no. 45.

⁹¹ London, B[ritish] L[ibrary], Cotton Nero D.iv; T. D. Kendrick, et al. eds. *Evangeliorum quattuor Codex Lindisfarnensis*, 2 vols. (Oltun and Lausanne, 1956–60), II, pp. 11–16.

⁹² M.P. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels. Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (London, 2003), pp. 10, 106, 109, 192, 397.

⁹³ D.N. Dumville, ‘The Two Earliest Manuscripts of Bede’s Ecclesiastical History?’, *Anglo-Saxon*, 1 (2007), pp. 55–108, reprinted in his *Anglo-Saxon Essays, 2001–2007* (Aberdeen, 2007); *idem*, *A Palaeographer’s Review* (Osaka, 1999). For a critique of Dumville’s approach, see Brown, *Lindisfarne*, pp. 254–5.

⁹⁴ See especially the word *episcoporum* on fo. 19r, as illustrated here in **Plate 2**. In contrast, Scribe A in *Paulinus*, writes an 8-shaped **e** with a forward ductus, i.e.: the pen starts with the lower loop, pushing up the stem, then looping clockwise to form the upper bow which springs off the stem to form the next letter, e.g. fo. 13va lines 19 and 22 (*et*) and fo. 13vb lines 19 and 24 (*ex*); Brown and Mackay, eds., *Codex Vaticanus Palatinus*, p. 17.

⁹⁵ D. Ganz, 'Risk and Fluidity in script: an Insular instance' in P.R. Robinson, ed., *Teaching Writing, Learning to Write. Proceedings of the XVIth Colloquium of the Comité international de Paléographie latine*, King's College London Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies (London, 2010), pp. 17–23.

⁹⁶ London, BL Cotton Augustus II.18, on which see, P. Chaplais, 'The Letter from Bishop Wealdhere of London to Archbishop Brihtwold of Canterbury: the earliest original 'letter close' extant in the West', in M.B. Parkes and A.G. Watson, eds., *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries. Essays presented to N. R. Ker* (London, 1978), pp. 3–23, superseding arguments that it was a later eighth-century copy as proposed in the comments to *ChLA* 3.185. The letter is translated by Whitelock, *EHD* I, no. 164.

⁹⁷ See the discussion by M. Mersiowsky, 'Preserved by destruction. Carolingian original letters and Clm 6333', in G. Declercq, ed., *Early Medieval Palimpsests*, *Bibliologia* 26 (Turnhout, 2007), pp. 73–98 at 79–80, 83, 86 and 94 with reference to: a fragment of a letter on papyrus in the St Gallen archive (*ChLA* no. 174); a letter from Maginarius, abbot of St Denis, to Charlemagne (*ChLA*, no. 629); and a letter from Charlemagne to Pope Hadrian I (*ChLA*, no. 543). See also, A. Petrucci, G. Ammannati, A. Mastruzzo, and E. Stagni, eds., *Lettere originali del medioevo Latino (VII–XI saec.)*, Vol. I *Italia* (Pisa, 2004), no. 1. See also H. Hoffmann, 'Zur mittelalterlichen Brieftechnik', in K. Repgen and S. Skalweit, eds., *Spiegel der Geschichte. Festgabe für Max Braubach zum 10. April 1964* (Münster, 1964), pp. 141–70.

⁹⁸ Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Diez. B. Sant. 66, p. 34, line 5 (by Hand B, the 'Italian scribe'); *CLA* 8.1044. See, B. Bischoff, *Sammelhandschrift Diez. B. Sant. 66: Grammatici Latini et Catalogus Librorum*, *Codices Selecti* 42 (Graz, 1973), esp. pp. 17–18, 32 and 346; idem, 'The Court Library of Charlemagne', in M. Gorman, ed. and trans., *Manuscripts and Libraries in*

the *Age of Charlemagne* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 56–76 at 68–73; C. Villa, ‘Die Horazüberlieferung und die ‘Bibliothek Karls des Grossen’: zum Werkverzeichnis der Handschrift Berlin, Diez. B. 66’, *Deutsches Archiv*, 51 (1995), pp. 29–52; D. Ganz, “‘Roman Books’ reconsidered: the theology of Carolingian display script’, in Smith, ed., *Early Medieval Rome*, pp. 297–315 at 298.

⁹⁹ Wilson, *Calendar*, pp. xi–xiii

¹⁰⁰ *HE* II.17: intentione et assiduis | intentione adsiduis [P]; uestri domini mei | uestri domini [P]; omnipotenti | omnipenti [P]. *HE* II.18: euangelii elaborantem | laborantem [P] sectantemque magistri et capitis sui sancti Gregorii | sectantemque magistri Gregorii [P].

¹⁰¹ Chiesa and Lapidge, eds., *Beda*, I, pp. cxxviii–cxxxix.

¹⁰² Chiesa and Lapidge, eds., *Beda*, I, pp. cxv, 256–64.

¹⁰³ Letter of Pope Honorius to Bishop Honorius of Canterbury: ‘. . . quoties per fraternos affatus . . .’. The phrase ‘. . . fraternitatem tuam hortamur affatibus . . .’ is used 14 times in letters from Gregory I, e.g.: *Registrum* V.27; 6.22, 7.35 etc. *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, I (Leipzig, 1900), p. 1175.

¹⁰⁴ London, BL Cotton Tiberius C.II (Plummer’s C) and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 33 (Plummer’s O), on which see, Chiesa and Lapidge, eds., *Beda*, I, pp. lxxxvii, xcii.

¹⁰⁵ Chiesa and Lapidge, eds., *Beda*, I, pp. civ–xi For an English summary of Lapidge’s arguments on the early transmission of the *History*, see M. Lapidge, ‘The Latin Exemplar of the Old English Bede’, in S. Serafin and P. Lendinara, eds., *Un tuo serto di fiori in man recando: scritti in onore di Maria Amalia D’Aronco* (Udine, 2008), pp. 235–46; idem, ‘Beda Venerabilis’, in P. Chiesa and L. Castaldi, eds., *La Trasmissione dei Testi Latini del Medioevo / Mediaeval Latin Texts and their Transmission*, Te.Tra., 3 (Florence, 2008), pp. 44–137 at 78–112, esp. p. 90, n. 184 for reference to this variant reading.

¹⁰⁶ C and O, which had a common hyparchetype, transposed – slightly differently – the order of 3 words in the Letter to Edwin; their shared exemplar must have caused the confusion.

Paris, however, maintains the ‘correct’ word order; Lapidge, ‘Beda Venerabilis’, pp. 90, 102; Chiesa and Lapidge, eds., *Beda*, I, pp. xcvi–ii.

¹⁰⁷ See for example the treatment of these letter forms in the early ninth-century manuscript, London, BL Cotton Tiberius C.II, at fos. 53v–55r.

¹⁰⁸ *HE* II.5 and II.9.

¹⁰⁹ *HE* I.32, II.10–11

¹¹⁰ On Radbod see, *HE* V.10

¹¹¹ *HE* V.10.

¹¹² Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 63–4; Wood, *The Missionary Life*, p. 80.

¹¹³ *HE* V.9–10; Wood, *The Missionary Life*, p. 43.

¹¹⁴ 21 November was a Sunday in 695, and the eve of the feast of St. Cecilia; Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 59–60. See also Bede, *HE* V.11, where he says that the consecration took place the following year 696 on the day of St. Cecilia’s festival (which would have been a Sunday in that year). The year 695 is derived from the marginal annotation in *Paris* fo. 39v, and is preferred to that given by Bede by virtue of the provenance of the manuscript.

¹¹⁵ *HE* V.11.

¹¹⁶ *LP* 86.16; Duchesne, ed., *Liber Pontificalis* I, p. 376; R. Davis, trans. *The Book of the Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis): the ancient biographies of the first ninety Roman bishops to AD 715*, Translated Texts for Historians, 6 (Liverpool, 1989), p. 89.

¹¹⁷ Levison, *England and the Continent*, 58.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 59, 96.

¹¹⁹ *LP* 86.16, ‘Hic ordinavit Damianum archiepiscopum sanctae ecclesiae Ravennatis. Hic ordinavit Bertoaldum Britanniae archiepiscopum atque Clementem in gentem Frisionum’; Duchesne, ed., *Liber Pontificalis* I, pp. 376, 381 n. 48; Davis, trans., *Book of the Pontiffs*, p. 89. See also *HE* V.8, for Bede’s account of Berhtwald’s consecration on 29 June 693 in Francia, by Godin, metropolitan bishop of Lyons. Pope Sergius undoubtedly confirmed his appointment as archbishop, conferring the pallium; N.P. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), p. 40.

¹²⁰ R.E. Reynolds, ‘The organisation, law and liturgy of the western church 700–900’, in R. McKitterick, ed., *The New Cambridge Medieval History II, c. 700–900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 587–620 at 590–1 (Map 19). The first archbishop of Köln was Hildebald, elevated in 795.

¹²¹ On Willibrord’s innovative use of *corepiscopi*, see Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 66–8, and also the letter of Boniface to Pope Stephen II (753); Tangl, ed., *Briefe*, no. 109; E. Emerton, trans. *The Letters of Saint Boniface* (New York, 1940), no. 89. The evidence for Willibrord’s attempt to make Boniface his successor in Utrecht in 721 is retrospective and comes from Willibald’s *Vita Bonifatii* written more than 40 years later; W. Levison, ed., *Vitae Sancti Bonifatii Archiepiscopi Moguntini*, MGH SRG 57 (Hanover, 1905), pp. 1–58 at 24–5; trans. C.H. Talbot, in T.F.X. Noble and T. Head, eds., *Soldiers of Christ: Saints and Saints’ Lives from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995), pp. 107–40 at 122–3. See also, Wood, *Missionary Life*, pp. 58–64, for discussion of the bias in Willibald’s representation of Boniface’s career.

¹²² See Schoenig, ‘The Papacy and the Use and Understanding of the Pallium’, pp. 34–7 for the continuation of this process under Pope Zacharias (741–52), linked especially to the attempts by Boniface to elevate Grimo of Rouen, Abel of Rheims, and Hartbert of Sens, to

archiepiscopal status; see Zacharias' letters to Boniface (744) in Tangl, ed., *Briefe*, nos. 57–8 and Emerton, trans., *Letters*, nos 45–6.

¹²³ *HReg.* 735, supra n. 9.

¹²⁴ *LP* 92:18, 'Qui etiam venerabilem virum Wilcharium partibus Franciae in civitate Vegenna dato pallio archiepiscopum eum esse constituit'; Duchesne, ed., *Liber Pontificalis* I, p. 421; Davis, trans. *Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes*, p. 28. On Wilchar see, 'B. Schilling, 'Wilchar von Vienne und das Pallium', in H. Kranz and L. Falkstein, eds., *Inquirens subtilia diversa. Dietrich Lohrmann zum 65. Geburtstag* (Aachen, 2002), 23–36. The exact date of Wilchar's promotion is not known.

¹²⁵ Tangl, ed., *Briefe*, no. 28; Emerton, trans. *Letters*, no. 20; Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, pp. 153, 157. On the creation of archbishoprics in eighth-century Francia see (for example), Reynolds, 'The organisation, law and liturgy', pp. 599–600.

¹²⁶ '... ad inlumptionem gentis Germaniae'; Tangl, ed., *Briefe*, no. 28; Emerton, trans. *Letters*, no. 20.

¹²⁷ For Boniface's account of his dispute with the bishop of Köln, who wished to annex Willibrord's see, Tangl, ed., *Briefe*, no. 109 and Emerton, trans., *Letters*, no. 89.

¹²⁸ Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae*, I, pp. 405–23, and supra n. 8**.

¹²⁹ Bede, *Epistula ad Egbertum*, c. 10, 'Quod si hoc ita, ut suggerimus, Domino adiuuante, perfeceris, facillime etiam, ut arbitramur, hoc obtinebis, ut iuxta decreta sedis apostolicae, Eboracensis ecclesia metropolitanum possit habere pontificem'; Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae* I, p. 413.

¹³⁰ *HE* IV.17, recording the decrees of the Synod of Hatfield (17 September 679) 'praesidente Theodoro gratia Dei archiepiscopo Brittaninae insulae et ciuitatis Doruuernis'; P. Wormald, 'Bede, Bretwaldas and the origins of the Gens Anglorum', in Wormald, et al., eds., *Ideal and*

Reality, 99–129, at p. 125; C.R.E. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils, c. 650–850* (Leicester, 1995), pp. 250–8; A. Thacker, ‘Bede and history’, in DeGregorio, ed., *Companion to Bede*, pp. 170–90, at 177; idem, ‘Archbishops in England’, p. 58. See also Howlett’s observations on the earliest extant Anglo-Saxon charter that dates to the same year (S 45), in which Theodore is described as *archiepiscopus*; D.R. Howlett, *Sealed from Within: Self-Authenticating Insular Charters* (Dublin, 1999), pp. 13–22.

¹³¹ Haddan and Stubbs, eds., *Councils*, III, pp. 131–5; Brooks, *Early History*, pp. 74–5, Thacker, ‘Archbishops in England’, p. 58.

¹³² *LP* 86.16 (supra n. 116).**

¹³³ Haddan and Stubbs, eds., *Councils*, III, pp. 229–31; Brooks, *Early History*, pp. 77–8.

¹³⁴ Brooks, *Early History*, pp. 97–8 and n. 48; Wormald, ‘Bede, Bretwaldas’, p. 125, and supra n. 96.** Contra, Gibbs, ‘The decrees of Agatho’, pp. 219 and 245, n. 116.

¹³⁵ *HE* IV.2; ‘...isque primus erat in archiepiscopis, cui omnis Anglorum ecclesia manus dare consentiret’; Thacker, ‘Bede and History’, pp. 177–8, 183; idem, ‘Archbishops in England’, p. 58.

¹³⁶ Thacker, ‘Bede and History’, p. 185. Compare the efforts made by Offa in the 780s to carve out a new province with an archbishop based in Lichfield, *infra* n. 145.**

¹³⁷ *HE* V.23.

¹³⁸ *HReg.*, 734–5; Arnold, ed., *Symeonis Monachi*, p. 31. *Continuatio Bedae*, 734–5; Colgrave and Mynors, ed. and trans., *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 572–3.

¹³⁹ For this last suggestion, see Lapidge, ‘Beda Venerabilis’, p. 99, n. 217 and Chiesa and Lapidge, eds., *Beda I*, p. cviii n. 2.

¹⁴⁰ *Continuatio Bedae*, 735; Colgrave and Mynors, ed. and trans., *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 572–3; *HReg.*, 735; Arnold, ed., *Symeonis Monachi*, p. 31.

¹⁴¹ *HReg.*, 736; Arnold, ed. *Symeonis Monachi*, pp. 31–2. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the arrival of a pallium for Ecgberht in 735 and for Nothhlem in 736; S. Irvine, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A Collaborative Edition*. Vol. 7, *MS E* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 36.

¹⁴² *HE* III.13.

¹⁴³ Howlett, ‘Wilbrord’s autobiographical note’, pp. 154–64.

¹⁴⁴ Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 95, 235.

¹⁴⁵ M. Costambeys, ‘Beornred (d. 797)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁴⁶ *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* 785 (*recte* 787); ‘Her wæs geflitfullic senop æt Cealchype,** 7 Iænbryht ærcebiscep forlet sumne del his biscepdomes, 7 from Offan kyninge Hygebryht wæs gecoren . . .’ J. Batley, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A Collaborative Edition*. Vol. 3 *MS A* (Woodbridge, 1986), p. 39. For a discussion of the evidence for the creation and dissolution of the Lichfield archbishopric see, Brooks, *Early History*, pp. 118–27.

¹⁴⁷ An edition of the letter is in Levison, *England and the Continent*, pp. 245–6; it is found only in one manuscript (*s. x*), namely, The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek MS 70.H.7, fos. 58–9 alongside Cuthbert’s *Letter on the death of Bede* and Bede’s *Letter to Ecgberht*.

¹⁴⁸ For the link between York and the missionfield later in the eighth century, see especially, I.N. Wood, ‘York en de Angelsaksische missies naar het continent’, *Millenium*. Tijdschrift voor middeleeuwse studies, 2 (2010), pp. 113–23.

¹⁴⁹ W. Levison, ed. *Vita Willibrordi archiepiscopi Traiectensis auctore Alcvino*, MGH SS rer. Merov. 7 (Hanover and Leipzig, 1920), pp. 113–41 at 104, 117–19, with thanks to Helen Foxhall Forbes and James Palmer for discussion of this text.

¹⁵⁰ Perhaps a glossed copy of Eberhard of Bethune’s *Graecismus* or the *Doctrinale Puerorum* of Alexander de Villa Dei, a more popular grammatical treatise (see for comparison London, BL Harley 3583); with thanks to Tessa Webber and Orietta Da Rold for these observations.

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5 In his *Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, completed in 731, Bede incorporated the texts
6 of fourteen papal letters. The two letters from Pope Honorius (625–38) are the subject of this
7 article. Previously known only through the pages of Bede's *History*, copies of both these
8 letters have been identified within an early eighth-century Insular manuscript made at
9 Echternach, for Willibrord (658–739), the Northumbrian missionary archbishop of Frisia.
10 Analysis of this copy of the letters of Pope Honorius I has far reaching implications for our
11 understanding of the structure of the early English Church, the establishment of the
12 archbishopric of York in 735; the circulation and transmission of Bede's primary sources;
13 networks of communication in early eighth-century Europe, and the proliferation of
14 archbishoprics in England and in Francia in the later seventh and eighth centuries.
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Plate 1. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 10837, fo. 33r (detail), showing the opening of Pope Honorius I's Letter to Edwin.
206x150mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Plate 2. Köln, Erzbisch. Diözesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 213, fo. 19r (detail).
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