

The Anglo-Saxon Crypt in Ripon Cathedral (*photographed by Joe Cornish*).

VITA SANCTI WILFRIDI
AUCTORE EDMERO

THE LIFE OF SAINT
WILFRID BY EDMER

*An Edition with Translation,
Historical Introduction and Commentary*

by

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and

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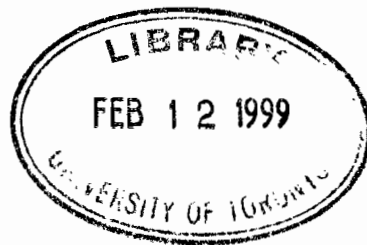
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Summary of the *Vita Sancti Wilfridi*

Wilfrid was born in 634, most probably in the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria. Edmer recounts that heavenly signs seen at the time of his birth indicated that it was of special significance. His mother died while he was still a youth; he left home with his father's blessing at the age of fourteen and presented himself to Queen Eanflæd of Bernicia. By this time he must have been showing scholarly promise for she entrusted him to the monks at Lindisfarne so that he could study the Irish form of monasticism. Edmer tells us that he had a 'keen intellect' and that his external appearance reflected his internal goodness. He learned the Psalms and other texts with ease and was admired by confrères both young and old. He soon outgrew the limited resources available to him among the Irish and sought to visit Rome so that he could study ecclesiastical matters and a more orthodox form of monasticism. He went to the court of King Eorconberht in Kent and later set out for Rome in the company of Benedict Biscop, to whose care he had been entrusted. When they reached Lyon, the archbishop, Dalfinus (i.e. Aunemundus: see Commentary, ¶10) convinced Wilfrid to remain with him for a while, whereas Benedict continued on his journey to Rome without interruption. Wilfrid declined Dalfinus's offer of his niece's hand in marriage—in addition to control over a significant portion of Gaul—and affirmed that he was determined to complete his mission of visiting Rome and studying there.

Edmer recounts how on arriving in Rome in 654 Wilfrid prayed to St Andrew, asking him to grant him the gifts of perspicuity and eloquence, and how the saint answered his prayer; later he would dedicate the church at Hexham to St Andrew as an expression of his gratitude. The archdeacon Boniface, an adviser to the Apostolic See, took him into his tutelage and instructed him in biblical

interpretation, the proper calculation of Easter, and other things that he had not been able to pursue in Northumbria. On the return journey to England, Wilfrid went to see Dalfinus once again and stayed with him for three years (655–8), during which time he received the monastic tonsure. His sojourn was brought to an end by Baldhild, the Queen of the Franks, who caused Dalfinus to be murdered, along with eight other bishops and Fathers of the Church. Wilfrid witnessed his execution and for this was later known as a Confessor of the Church. After seeing to Dalfinus's burial Wilfrid returned to England.

At that time Oswiu and his son, Alhfrith, were ruling Northumbria jointly as king and sub-king. Wilfrid was warmly received by these Christian rulers and Alhfrith bestowed many gifts on him, including the church at Ripon and its entitlements. When Agilbert, the Frankish Bishop of the West Saxons, came to visit the Northumbrian court, the king asked him to accept Wilfrid into the priesthood, which he was most pleased to do. Soon thereafter at the Synod of Whitby Agilbert, whose first language was not English, asked Wilfrid to argue in his stead against the Celtic party led by Colman for the Dionysian reckoning of Easter. King Oswiu, who oversaw the proceedings, was so convinced by the strength of Wilfrid's arguments that he agreed to reject the Celtic form of reckoning and to adopt the orthodox method of the Universal Church. After the synod, Colman, who refused to accept Oswiu's judgement, returned to Ireland and Agilbert returned to Francia. Alhfrith convinced Wilfrid to accept elevation to the pontificate and acceded to his request that he be allowed to go to Gaul to be consecrated canonically by Agilbert; at that time of all the bishops in England only Wine, Bishop of the West Saxons, had been consecrated canonically. Wilfrid was subsequently consecrated by Agilbert and eleven other bishops in Paris.

While Wilfrid was in Paris, Edmer states that a disgruntled group of conspirators convinced King Oswiu to turn against him and to appoint Chad as Bishop of York in his place; he says that they were seeking to be recompensed for injuries done to them, but he does not specify what these might have been—they may have perceived him to be a threat to their position politically because he had acquired disproportionate secular wealth and power. Edmer argues that Chad's consecration was unorthodox because two of the bishops involved in the service had themselves been ordained uncanonically.

On the return journey from Gaul, Wilfrid and his companions were blown off course and disembarked in the territory of the pagan South Saxons, where the inhabitants immediately set upon them with the intent of killing them. With divine assistance Wilfrid's troop

withstood three vicious assaults; as the enemy was regrouping for a fourth attack Edmer relates that the tide miraculously came in early and allowed Wilfrid and his companions to set sail for the port of Sandwich; only five had been lost in the conflict. We are told that, when Wilfrid learned that Chad had been installed as bishop in his place, he accepted it with humility, remained calm and had a cheerful disposition; although subsequent events suggest that such meekness and tolerance would have been out of character for Wilfrid. He retired to his monastery at Ripon, but soon afterwards accepted the invitation of King Wulfhere to live among the Mercians; there he received honours and property, and was regarded with great affection.

When Deusdedit, the Archbishop of Canterbury, died, King Egbert invited Wilfrid to fill the vacant position until a new appointment could be made; he did so for three years (666–9). When Theodore of Tarsus became the new archbishop, he immediately undertook to address the wrongs committed against Wilfrid. Chad was demoted and sent to the monastery at Lastingham and Wilfrid was reinstated in York. In recognition of the fact that he was inherently good—and had not elected to replace Wilfrid but had accepted the appointment out of obedience—Chad was soon afterwards consecrated canonically as Bishop of the Mercians to fill the vacancy created by Bishop Jaruman's death. Edmer relates that Theodore enlarged the area of Wilfrid's jurisdiction and heaped honours upon him and that the people of Northumbria rejoiced in his reinstatement. Wilfrid then restored the ecclesiastical buildings at Ripon and laid the foundations for a new church dedicated to St Peter.

Meanwhile, the Picts attacked the English in an attempt to regain their independence. Bolstered by Wilfrid's prayers, King Ecgrith suppressed the rebellion and peace was once again restored. Wilfrid's life is described as exemplary by Edmer; the miracles that he is empowered to perform are perceived to be evidence of divine approbation. He built a magnificent new church at Hexham, which he dedicated to St Andrew.

Thereafter, the tempestuous period of Wilfrid's life began. Queen Æthelthryth sought to preserve her virginity so that she could dedicate herself to the service of God. Her husband, Ecgrith, was deeply upset when Wilfrid defended her position, but in the end the king agreed to her becoming a bride of Christ and took a second wife, Ermenburg. Ermenburg subsequently tempted her husband and turned him against Wilfrid, arousing jealousy in him over Wilfrid's wealth and success. Ecgrith recommended to Theodore that Wilfrid's see be divided into smaller bishoprics, to which he

agreed; this was done in Wilfrid's absence and without consulting him. Edmer tells us that initially Wilfrid accepted the wrong cheerfully—he was apparently willing to listen to their reasoning and perhaps even accept their actions, if they could justify them. However, he found their explanations offensive and inadequate, and felt compelled to appeal to Rome for a just hearing. Soon afterwards, Ælfwine, the younger brother of Ecgfrith, was killed in battle against the Mercians near the River Trent. Edmer explains his death and the loss to the Mercians as divine retribution against Ecgfrith for his mistreatment of Wilfrid.

On his way to Rome his ship was once again blown off course and he disembarked in Frisia, where at the court of the pagan King Aldgisil Wilfrid was honourably received. He immediately set about preaching the Word of God and converted a great number of the Frisians to Christianity. Edmer tells us that just as their stony hearts were mollified by conversion, so too was their infertile land simultaneously made fertile and productive. A conspiracy to have Wilfrid murdered was hatched by his enemies of old, and the ring-leader, Ebroin, sent letters to Aldgisil in an attempt to have him carry out their scheme for them; the king rejected their advances, and Wilfrid continued his journey to Rome. On the way, he visited the court of Dagobert, King of the Franks, who offered him an episcopal see and generous gifts if he would remain there. But he was determined to make his way to Rome and did so in the company of a bishop named Deodatus.

Wilfrid's case was reviewed by Pope Agatho in the presence of a large number of bishops and of his accusers; he was found to have been wronged and was deemed to be worthy of an episcopal see. It was decreed by a synod that Wilfrid should be reinstated as the rightful representative of the peoples of northern Britain. However, on his return to Northumbria Ecgfrith and Ermenburg rejected the pontifical decrees and had Wilfrid cast into prison. Subsequently, Wilfrid cured the wife of Osfrith, the reeve who was charged with holding him in custody, from a terrible sickness. Everyone who witnessed this miraculous event, including Osfrith, declared that Wilfrid ought to be freed on account of his holiness. When Osfrith put this to Ecgfrith, declaring that he wanted no more to do with Wilfrid's imprisonment, the king moved the saint to Dunbar where he was incarcerated under Tydlin, a man known for his viciousness.

At that time Ermenburg was seized by demonic frenzy and lost control of her faculties. Edmer relates that Ecgfrith's mother recognized this as divine retribution for the unjust imprisonment of Wilfrid. Having confronted both the queen and the king with this observation, she convinced him to release the saint from prison.

Even though it was not expected that he should care about Ermenburg's condition, he cured her before departing from Northumbria. He spent some time with Berhtwald, the brother of Æthelred, King of the Mercians, before he came under pressure to terminate his hospitality towards Wilfrid because it was straining the relationship between the two kings, who were related by marriage.

After his expulsion he travelled further south and was welcomed at the court of Centwine, King of the West Saxons. This hospitality, too, was soon withdrawn under pressure from the king's wife, who was a sister of Ermenburg. Wilfrid travelled eastward to the kingdom of the South Saxons, where he was received honourably by King Æthelwealh and Queen Eaba. With royal consent Wilfrid set about converting the leaders of the South Saxons and many others as well. Æthelwealh, who was pleased by the evangelizing of the saint, gave him an estate at Selsey, where he established a monastery. Wilfrid remained among the South Saxons for five years, until after Ecgfrith's death in 685; there he was greatly loved by everybody. He not only gave those entrusted to him at Selsey spiritual freedom through baptism, but also liberated them from physical slavery on the estate.

Later he visited King Cædwalla of the West Saxons, who was indebted to Wilfrid for supporting him in his efforts to regain control of his kingdom. After Cædwalla succeeded in capturing the Isle of Wight, he drove out the inhabitants and relocated some of his own people there. He gave one quarter of the island to Wilfrid to be used in the service of the Lord. Wilfrid transferred the property to his nephew, Beornwine, who together with a priest named Hildila preached the faith to the inhabitants and converted them to Christianity.

In Chapter 48 Edmer recreates a scene in which Theodore, sensing that his life is drawing to a close, attempts to reconcile himself to Wilfrid—the implication being, of course, that Theodore has put politics first and mistreated the 'man of God' without just cause. Wilfrid is portrayed as magnanimous in victory. The archbishop wrote to Aldfrith, King of the Northumbrians, and Æthelred, King of the Mercians, exhorting them to restore Wilfrid to his former position as Bishop of Northumbria. They agreed to this, but soon afterwards Aldfrith had a radical change of heart and turned upon Wilfrid with great vindictiveness, stripping him of his property and position and expelling him from his kingdom. In order that his actions might appear justifiable, Aldfrith charged Wilfrid before the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Berhtwald, with having disobeyed the decrees of Theodore. Meanwhile, Wilfrid had gone to stay with Æthelred of the Mercians, where he was received with honour.

The charges were formally presented at a synod convened by Berhtwald at Austerfield. Though Wilfrid defended himself competently against the original accusations, his enemies brought new and equally unfounded charges against him. Stripped of most of his rights and property he soon afterwards decided to make a formal plea for justice to Rome. This infuriated Aldfrith, who now sought by any means possible to strike back at Wilfrid. He planned to devastate the buildings and properties that the saint had either established or refurbished in Northumbria, but was prevented by divine providence.

In the meantime, Wilfrid arrived in Rome and had his case heard by Pope John. He was found to have been accused and treated unjustly; Aldfrith and Æthelred were ordered to reinstate Wilfrid under threat of excommunication (though, curiously, the latter had recently treated Wilfrid honourably, according to Edmer, ¶95).

When Wilfrid returned to England he found that Æthelred of the Mercians had retired to a monastery, but that his successor, Cenred, was well disposed towards him. This was not the case in Northumbria. Aldfrith persisted in his hostility to Wilfrid. Edmer relates that God struck the king with a terrible sickness in retribution and, though he relented and offered under physical duress to reinstate Wilfrid, he died before he could do so. His successor, Eadwulf, was even more obdurate and hostile. He threatened to execute Wilfrid's followers if he did not leave his kingdom within six days. Public opinion swelled up against Eadwulf and he was deposed less than two months after succeeding to the throne. Aldfrith's son, Osred, acceded to the throne, and soon afterwards (in 706) a synod was convened at the River Nidd to consider Wilfrid's situation. It was determined that Wilfrid should once again be reinstated as Bishop of Northumbria and that his property and goods should be restored to him. Wilfrid lived his last four years in relative peace and prosperity, and was held in high regard by everyone. He died at Oundle at the age of seventy-five in the forty-fifth year of his episcopate and was buried at Ripon; he was succeeded by Acca at Hexham and by Tatbert at Ripon.

Edmer includes an account of various miracles associated with his relics and the place of his death and burial. His cult gradually went into decline and the church at Ripon itself was destroyed and left in ruins. Oda, the Archbishop of Canterbury, witnessed the devastation at Ripon and moved by concern for Wilfrid's memory and cult, he made arrangements for the translation of Wilfrid's relics to Canterbury where they were afterwards buried with great ceremony at Christ Church. In 1067 fire destroyed the cathedral. Lanfranc, the first Norman Archbishop of Canterbury, had the relics of many

saints including Wilfrid rescued from the ruins and stored safely until they could be deposited properly in the proposed new cathedral; Edmer relates that he witnessed these events as a young boy.

Vita Sancti Wilfridi

auctore Edmero

¶1 Incipit prologus¹ in uitam sancti Wilfridi Eboracensis archiepiscopi et confessoris:²

Britannia, quam Angli, uictis a se proturbatisque Britannis, Angliam uocant et incolunt, omni ex parte oceano cincta, tam ingenitis quam et undecunque allatis diuitiis mirabili copia antiquitus exuberabat, que, ut terrenis rerum copiis, ita quoque sanctissimorum uirorum magna fecunditate pollebat. Quorum exigentibus meritis, in tantum gratia Dei omnipotentis totam insulam sua munificentia decorauit, ut et cultus circa Dei obsequium circumquaue multiplicaretur, et res, tam publice quam familiares, multa pace, felicique prosperitate fruerentur.

¶2 Sed quoniam nichil omni ex parte perfectum mundanis rebus natura concessit, ceca dominatrix animi cupiditas,³ dum interdum quosdam ad hoc perduxisset, ut suis rebus contenti esse nescirent, pacis munimenta dirupit; pax dirupta rapinas, incendia, seditiones, bella omniumque bonorum excidia peperit; que nonnunquam⁴ a sanctis eiusdem prouincie uiris detrita, nonnunquam ipsis in

¹ The *Prologue* is lacking in D; for the significance of this, see the Introduction, §2.3.

² A] lacks *Eboracensis* and has *episcopi* for *archiepiscopi* in the rubric; see the Commentary.

³ A] A letter is erased after the first *i*.

⁴ A] A minim is erased before the third *n*.

The Life of Saint Wilfrid

by Edmer

¶1 Here begins the prologue to the life of Saint Wilfrid, Archbishop of York and Confessor:

Britain, which the English, since they defeated and expelled the Britons, inhabit and call England is surrounded on every side by the ocean and from ancient times has abounded to an amazing extent in riches both native and imported from everywhere. Just as Britain was rich in resources provided by the earth, so too was it in its great abundance of very holy men. The grace of Almighty God, by the exacting merits of these men and out of his own bountifulness, adorned the whole island to such an extent that worship and obedience to him were also increased everywhere; moreover, public as well as private affairs enjoyed much peace and blessed prosperity.

¶2 But since nature has conceded to worldly matters nothing that is perfect in every respect, the blind mistress of the mind—excessive desire—had led certain people to the point of not knowing how to be content with their own affairs, and she tore apart the ramparts of peace; and when peace was thus torn apart, she gave birth to acts of pillage and arson, civil discords, wars and the destruction of all good things. Sometimes the effect of these things was lessened by the holy men of that province; sometimes, because the calamities increased to an immeasurable degree, those who were struggling to prevent them were themselves ground down by the immensity of troubling events. For while the just exerted themselves above all in their endeavour not to give way to the viciousness of men who had gone awry, by which they would have lost the

immensum malis crescentibus, ii qui mala deterrere moliebantur uaria casuum perturbatione attriti. Dum enim studium suum in eo potissimum ponerent, ne peruersorum hominum prauitati amissa sui status rectitudine cederent, dumque illi e diuerso modis omnibus insudarent, ne istorum rectitudini ad sui correctionem sese uel ad modicum darent, idem nequitiam suam modo ui, modo fraudibus exerentes, quos in malitia nequiuerant, hos in communi uita socios habere nullo modo uolebant. Hinc multi propria dignitate priuati, multi a patria eliminati, multi quoque crudelissima morte necati, et a iusto iudice, Deo, gloriosissime coronati. Hec, in primordio coalescentis fidei, partim insuper uenientibus in se predicatoribus est experta; hec in procurso eiusdem fidei, partim in propriis et in se procreatis predicatoribus est perpessa; hec nichilominus eadem fide quaque fundata, partim a suis, partim ab externis hostibus, in suis patribus Anglorum ecclesia est atrociter passa. Hinc, ut alia taceam, uenerandi antistites Mellitus et Iustus Anglia expulsi Galliam petunt; hinc sanctissimus pater Wilfridus totiens a proprie dignitatis sede reicitur; hinc¹ gloriosissimus rex Edmundus,² et beatissimus antistes Ælfegus iniqua morte damnati, martyrii gloria dignissime coronantur; hinc etiam dubio procul uir preclarissimus et excellentissime sanctitatis pater Dunstanus in exilium pulsus fuisse dinoscitur. Sed hec me breui attigisse suffecerit. Maiores etenim nostri de his multa memorie digna cognouere, et luce ueritatis insignita exinde sua posteris scripta reliquere.

¶3 At quoniam ea que de prefato Wilfrido scripta habentur, non simul in uno, sed in diuersis auctoribus sparsa esse probantur, rogatus a nonnullis, quibus me contradicere incongruum duxi, immo, ut uerum fatear, ipsius sanctissimi patris dilectione compulsus, ea que sparsim de ipso scripta sunt, nostro opere in unum componere institui. Siquidem Beda, nobilissimus nostre gentis historie scriptor, in ipsa *Historia* de eodem patre per diuersa loca nonnulla disserit, et beate memorie Odo, sancte Dorobernensis ecclesie pontifex, de uita et conuersatione eius quendam libellum heroico³ carmine edidit, postquam reliquias ipsius sancti de loco, in

¹ AC] add *quoque*.

² AC] *Eadmundus*.

³ AC] omit *heroico carmine*; see the Commentary.

righteousness of their own rank, and while the wicked, by contrast, struggled in every way lest they submit, even to a small degree, to the righteousness of the good in order to mend their ways, the same people, displaying their wickedness, sometimes by force, sometimes in acts of deception, wished in no way to have these people as associates in a common life, people whom they had been unable to have as associates in their wickedness. As a result of this, many were deprived of their rank, many were exiled from their native land, many also were slain by a most cruel death—and these were crowned most gloriously by God, who is a just Judge. The Church of the English experienced these things among its fathers: in the first stages of the faith as it was taking root, when they came to the church as preachers; it endured these things against its own preachers who had been brought forth within it as that faith developed; it suffered these things no less cruelly when the same faith had been established everywhere, at the hands of their own people and at the hands of foreign enemies. And so, to pass over other matters, the venerable priests Mellitus and Justus were expelled from England and made for Gaul; the most holy father, Wilfrid, was removed many times from his seat of personal authority; and the most glorious King Edmund and the most blessed bishop Ælfheah were condemned to an unjust death and were crowned most worthily with glorious martyrdom. So also, it is well known that Dunstan, a very distinguished man and a father of most exceeding sanctity, was driven into exile. But let it suffice that I have touched upon these matters briefly. For our ancestors made note of many things worthy of memory about these people, and subsequently left their own writings—distinguished by the light of truth—for posterity.

¶3 But, since it can be shown that those things which have been preserved in writing about Wilfrid were not set down all at once and by one author, but rather are scattered in diverse authors, when I was asked by several persons with whom I considered it unfitting for me to disagree—nay, rather, to tell the truth, being compelled by love of the very holy father himself—I arranged by my efforts to bring together those dispersed items written about him. Indeed, Bede, the most noble author of the history of our people, in his *Ecclesiastical History* discusses some matters in diverse passages about this same father, and Oda of blessed memory, the high priest of the holy church of Canterbury, produced a certain little book in heroic verse about his life and manner of living, after he had received the remains of that saint from the place in which they had first been buried, and translated them with great honour and

quo primum posite fuerant, excepit, et ad ecclesiam, totius Britannie matrem, que in urbe Cantuarberia¹ sita est, magno deuotionis honore transuexit. Horum igitur dicta per omnia sequens, pene nichil quod eorum auctoritate roborari non possit, nichil autem ex toto quod contrarium sit, dicturum me fore confido. Sane quicumque hec uel legere uel audire dignatus fuerit, precor ut ista me non ita scripsisse accipiat, quasi antiquis, quecunque sunt hac de re, mea uelim scripta preferre; sed potius cogitet et amicis meis, me (ut dixi) rogantibus, morem gerere, et sancto Dei aliquod obsequium mei amoris et reuerentie exhibere uoluisset.

~ Explicit prologus ~

CAPITULUM I

¶4 Incipit uita sanctissimi confessoris atque pontificis Christi, Wilfridi, cuius festiuitas colitur iiii. idus Octobris.²

Anno igitur ab incarnatione³ Verbi Dei sexcentesimo tricesimo quarto, regnante in Cantia filio gloriosissimi Ædelberti⁴ regis Cantuariorum, Eadbald, et in Northumbria⁵ successore nobilissimi Edwini⁶ regis Northanhimbrorum⁷ sanctissimo rege Oswaldo, de inclita gentis Anglorum prosapia puer Dei Wilfridus nobiliter natus, et e uestigio celesti est prodigio mundo nobilissime designatus. Cum enim beatus puer intempeste noctis silentio matris prodiret ab aluo, columna ignis super domum, in qua nascebatur, celitus emissa, omnes circumfuse noctis tenebras radio sue lucis abstersit. Quique igitur⁸ uicinorum, tanta luminis magnitudine subito terrore turbati, e domibus prouunt, et stupore affecti, singuli quod primo capere poterant arripiunt, et in turbam coacti turbato murmure ad ignem concite currunt. Ad domum autem usque peruenientes, flammam, ut ceperat, radios emittentem inueniunt,

¹ A] *Cantuarie*.

² The rubric in D reads *Incipit uita sancti wilfridi eboracensis archiepiscopi; Vita Sancti Wilfridi* is written in the top margin over two lines of erased text. B lacks *cuius... Octobris*. AC have the rubric as printed here. There is also a whitish patch in the bottom margin of D where something has been erased, perhaps a reference to an early owner.

³ C] *incarnationis* for *ab incarnatione*.

⁴ A] *Athelberti*; C] *ÆDELBERTI*; D] *edelberti*.

⁵ ACD] *northumbria*; see the Commentary.

⁶ A] *Eadwini*.

⁷ C] *Nordanhimbrorum*; D] *nordamhumbroꝝ*.

⁸ D] omits.

devotion to that church, the mother foundation of the whole of Britain, which is located in the city of Canterbury. Wherefore, being mindful of what these writers have said in all respects, I trust that I shall say almost nothing which cannot be confirmed by their authority, nothing, to be sure, which may be wholly contrary to what they have said. Certainly, I pray that whoever deigns to read or listen to these things should understand that I have written them in this way, not as if I preferred what I have written to those, as it were, ancient versions, whatever they may be with respect to this matter, but rather that he should think that I wanted both to please my friends, who are asking it of me (as I have said), and to show some indulgence of my love and, at the same time, reverence to this holy man of God.

~ Here ends the prologue ~

¶4 *Here begins the life of the most holy Confessor and Bishop of Christ, Wilfrid, whose festival is held on the twelfth of October.*

Chapter 1 *Wilfrid is born of noble family; portents are seen in the skies.* [A.D. 634]

And so, in the six hundred and thirty-fourth year of the incarnation of the Word of God when Eadbald, the son of the most glorious Æthelberht, King of the people of Kent, was ruling in Kent, and the exceedingly holy King Oswald, the successor of the most noble Edwin, King of the Northumbrians, was ruling in Northumbria, Wilfrid, a child of God, was nobly born of a renowned family of the race of the English, and his birth was signalled to the world in a most celebrated fashion by a heavenly portent. For when in the silence of the dead of night the blessed boy came forth from the belly of his mother, a column of light sent down from heaven upon the house in which he was being born dispersed all the shadows of the surrounding night with its beams of light. Whereupon all of the neighbours in sudden terror were thrown into confusion by such a great magnitude of light and ran out of their homes. They were struck by amazement and each for himself they snatched whatever was at hand; driven together into a throng and shouting confusedly they ran speedily towards the fire. Upon arriving at the house, however, they found the flame emitting beams, just as it had from the first; they gazed in wonderment, moreover, because the house and the things around it were suffering no injury. And so, utterly stunned and afraid, they said, 'How peculiar this is! What sort of a portent do you think this implies for us? Doubtless this is an omen

sed domum et queque uicina nil lesionis pati mirantes aspiciunt. Nimio¹ itaque stupore pauentes², 'Pape!' inquit, 'quidnam signi hoc nobis innuere putas? Nimirum diuini est numinis omen.' Et domum irruere uolentibus occurrerunt mulieres de domo, dicentes: 'Sustinete, sustinete, precamur. Quo ruitis? Si ad causam ignis cognoscendam, quem pre oculis habetis, tantopere tenditis, non aliam esse quam puerum nunc maternis uisceribus editum pro certo noueritis.' Quo cognito, gressu reflexo in sua redeunt, magnalia Dei sua deuotione uenerantes.

¶5 Quid ad hec dicendum? Antiquum³ Moysi famulo Dei ostensum in rubo miraculum uidemus; cum, ecce! in domo pueri Dei ignis estuat, nec comburit; flamma emicat, nec aliquid consumit. Et illud quidem antiquitus factum quid signi pretulerit, iam mundus agnouit. Hoc autem in se ipsa experta, pene totius Anglici regni nobilitas didicit. Re etenim ipsa probatum est quod sicut olim Dominus populum suum ex Egyptia seruitute liberaturus, ipsius liberationis ministerium Moysi per ignem rubi demandauit;⁴ sic et nunc idem Dominus, alium populum suum a tenebris uitiorum educturus, quem eiusdem educationis magisterium habere delegerit, per emissum celitus ignem designauit.

CAPITULUM II

¶6 Primordia⁵ ergo uite beatissimus pater⁶ Wilfridus tante nobilitatis signo accipiens, cum esset puer bone indolis, eidem nobilitati sua industria morum nobilitatem superaddere studuit. Unde etatem moribus transiens, nil puerilis leuitatis, nil insolentie in suis moribus admittere uoluit, sed ita se tempore adhuc tenere etatis

¹ A new section marked by a three-space tall capital in red ink begins here in D. A inserts the numeral *II* and begins a new line with a capital *N* standing half in the outer margin. B and C lack section numbers throughout.

² D] *pauore stupentes*.

³ D] *antiquum*.

⁴ C] *demundauit*.

⁵ The new section is marked by a three-space tall capital in red ink in D; A marks the new section with the numeral *III*. and marks the beginning of the new section with a capital *P*.

⁶ D] *-ater* is written over an erasure.

of a divine godhead.' And other women ran from the house intercepting those intent on rushing into the house, saying, 'Restrain yourselves, restrain yourselves, we beseech you. Whither are you running? If you really mean to discover the cause of the fire which is before your eyes, then you should know, to be sure, that it is no more than that a boy has just now been brought forth from the womb of his mother.' Once they realized this, they retraced their steps and returned to their own affairs, venerating in their devotion the great deeds of God.

¶5 What more ought to be said about these things? The miracle of long ago manifested to Moses, the servant of God, in the bramble bush comes to mind when, lo, here in this case fire burns in the house of the child of God yet does not destroy, flame breaks forth but consumes nothing. Indeed, the world had already realized the significance of that portent that happened long ago; however, when they experienced this thing among themselves, the nobility of almost the entire English kingdom was instructed by it. For truly it was demonstrated by this incident that just as the Lord once, when he was intending to liberate his own people from slavery in Egypt, entrusted the ministry of that liberation to Moses through the burning bush, so also the same Lord now, intending to lead another of his peoples out of the darkness of their vices, revealed by fire sent down from heaven the teacher whom he had chosen for the same mission.

Chapter 2 *Wilfrid's youth; he senses his vocation.* [A.D. 648]

¶6 And so, beginning his life with this sign—intended to mark his nobility—and being a child of innately good qualities, the most holy father Wilfrid strove zealously to add over and above this inherent nobility a nobility of character. And advancing beyond his age in character he tolerated neither childish playfulness nor insolence in his habits, but rather conducted himself while still of tender age so modestly and circumspectly in everything that he was deservedly loved, venerated and embraced by his elders as if he were

modeste et circumspecte in omnibus gerebat, ut merito a maioribus, quasi unus ex ipsis, amaretur, ueneraretur, amplecteretur. Uultus¹ enim magne uenustatis, sed in habitu uultus erat ei multo uenustior mos probitatis. Facunde ut id etatis tenor admittere² poterat, munia lingue, non garrulitati, uel detractiōni, aut contentiōni, sed iis que Dei sunt summo studio dedicare curabat.

¶7 At postquam perfectioris etatis attigit metas, iam defuncta matre, statuit natales relinquere fines, quo liberius posset Domini seruitiis³ operam dare. Quod ubi patri suo retulit, libenter eius uotis ac desideriiis celestibus annuit, eumque salutaribus ceptis insistere iussit.

CAPITULUM III

¶8 Vbi⁴ uero quartumdecimum etatis explicuit annum⁵, comitatus munimine Dei, uenit ad reginam, Eanfledam nomine: a qua benigne susceptus, et aliquandiu magno cum honore detentus, innotuit sibi⁶ propositum sue mentis in eo quampotissimum esse, ut, relicto seculo,⁷ Dei se manciparet obsequio. Quo, regina uenerabilis, agnito, multum eius animi uirtute letata, consilium simul et auxilium tante rei perficiende deuota mentis alacritate largita est. Et quoniam eundem uirum monasticam singulari uitam preferre cognouit, eum, ut ipsi placuit, ad insulam Lindisfarnensem uenire, et monasterio monachorum sociari fecit. Quo constitutus, diligenter⁸ ea que monastice castitatis ac pietatis erant et discere⁹ curabat et agere. Et quoniam acris¹⁰ erat ingenii, didicit quantotius *Psalmos*, et aliquot¹¹ codices; necdum quidem attonsus, uerum eis

¹ In D (here and subsequently), the initial *Vv* combination is written as two capital *Vs* with the second overlapping the first so that they combine to look exactly like the scribe's capital *W*; put more simply, the scribe of D uses a capital *W* for initial *Vv* wherever it appears.

² D] The *d* is inserted above interlinearly.

³ D] *seruituti*.

⁴ The new section is marked by a three-space tall capital in red ink in D; A marks the new section with the numeral *III*. and begins a new line with a capital *V* standing half in the inner margin.

⁵ D] *annum explicuit*.

⁶ A] *ei*.

⁷ D] adds *et*.

⁸ D] omits.

⁹ D] *dicere*.

¹⁰ D] *acri*.

¹¹ D] *aliquos*.

one of them. His face was of great beauty, but the innate goodness of his character apparent in the expression on his face was even more beautiful. As soon as his age gave scope for fluency, he took care to dedicate most zealously the strengths of his eloquence not to garrulity, nor slander, nor dispute, but to those things which pertain to God.

¶7 When his mother had died and he had reached a more perfect age, he resolved to leave the place of his birth so that he might attend more readily to the services of the Lord. And when he made this known, his father gladly assented to both his pleading and his spiritual desire, and encouraged him follow up these wholesome spiritual beginnings.

Chapter 3 *Queen Eanfled recognizes Wilfrid's special calling and orders him to take up monastic life at Lindisfarne.*

¶8 And so when he had completed his fourteenth year, strengthened with God's protection he approached the queen, who was called Eanflæd. She received him kindly and entertained him for some time with great honour; but it gradually became clear to him that he was intent above all else in his mind to abandon worldly business and commit himself to the service of God. When the venerable queen realized this, she rejoiced greatly in the virtue of his soul and with great eagerness she devoutly poured forth advice and assistance for carrying out such a great enterprise. Because she recognized that this young man preferred [communal] monastic life to a solitary existence, she ordered him to go to Lindisfarne and there to be associated with other monks in monastic life, since that was what he wanted to do. Once he had settled there, he took care to learn and to practise diligently those things pertaining to monastic purity and holiness. And since he was of keen intellect, he learnt the psalms as quickly as possible and also a number of other books; indeed, though not yet tonsured, he was more than just

que tonsura maiores sunt uirtutibus, scilicet humilitatis et obedientie, non mediocriter insignitus. Propter quod a senioribus et coetaneis suis iusto¹ colebatur affectu.

CAPITULUM IV

¶9 In² quo monasterio cum aliquot annis Christo seruiret, animaduertit paulatim adolescens minime perfectam esse uirtutis uiam, que tradebatur a Scottis, proposuitque animo Romam³ uenire, et qui ad sedem apostolicam ritus ecclesiastici siue monasteriales seruarentur, uidere. Quod cum fratribus referret, eius propositum laudauerunt, eumque id quod mente disposuerat, perficere suadebant. At ille, confestim ueniens ad predictam reginam, indicauit ei desiderium sibi inesse apostolorum limina uisitandi. Que, delectata⁴ bono adolescentis proposito, misit illum Cantiam ad regem Erconbertum, qui erat filius auunculi sui, postulans ut eum honorifice Romam transmitteret. Quo tempore ibi gradum archiepiscopatus⁵ Honorius, unus ex discipulis beati pape Gregorii, seruabat, uir in rebus ecclesiasticis sullimiter institutus. Ubi cum aliquantisper demoratus adolescens animi sagacis, diligenter iis⁶ que inspiciebat discendis operam⁷ daret, superuenit illo alius adolescens, nomine Biscop, cognomento Benedictus, de nobilibus Anglorum, cupiens et ipse Romam uenire. Huius ergo⁸ comitatu rex beatum Wilfridum sociauit, atque ut illum Romam secum perduceret, iussit.

CAPITULUM V

¶10 Qui⁹ cum Lugdunum peruenissent, a uenerabili Dalfino,

¹ D] omits.

² The new section is marked by a four-space tall capital in red ink in D; A marks the new section with the numeral *V* and begins a new line with a capital *I* standing half in the centre margin.

³ The scribe of D initially wrote *roman*, and subsequently added an extra minim at the end so that the reading looks more like *romani* than *romam* (his intended reading).

⁴ D] *t* is over an altered letter—the scribe seems to have begun to write an *m* for *t* at first, before correcting himself; the final *a* is original.

⁵ A] adds *sanctus*.

⁶ D] *his*.

⁷ D] *opera*.

⁸ D] *iginur*.

⁹ The new section is marked by a three-space tall capital in red ink in D; A marks the new section with the numeral *VI* and begins a new line with a capital *Q* standing half in the centre margin.

moderately distinguished by the virtues of humility and obedience, which are more significant than the tonsure. Because of this he was justifiably and affectionately honoured by both his seniors and others of his own age.

Chapter 4 *Wilfrid goes to King Eorcenberht of Kent; he sets out for Rome with Benedict Biscop.* [c.A.D. 652]

¶9 When he had served Christ in this monastery for a number of years, the young man gradually came to realize that the path of virtue passed down by the Irish was less than perfect; he made the decision inwardly to travel to Rome in order to see what kind of ecclesiastical and monastic rites were observed at the Apostolic See. When he told this to his brothers they praised his proposal and encouraged him to carry out what he had decided upon in his mind. And proceeding at once to Queen Eanfled, he revealed his desire to visit the dwellings of the apostles. She was delighted by the young man's worthy proposal and sent him to her cousin, King Eorcenberht, in Kent, requesting that he send Wilfrid with honour from there to Rome. At that time Honorius, a disciple of blessed Pope Gregory and a man eminently instructed when it came to ecclesiastical affairs, held the office of archbishop in Kent. And when the intelligent young man had been there for a little while attending diligently to learning those things which he was studying, another youth of noble English family, named Benedict Biscop, who was also desirous of going to Rome, approached him. The king therefore made blessed Wilfrid his companion and ordered Benedict to take him to Rome with him.

Chapter 5 *Archbishop Dalfinus receives Wilfrid at Lyon with great honour and urges him to remain there; Wilfrid is determined to resume his journey to Rome.* [A.D. 653]

¶10 Upon their arrival at Lyon, they were honourably received by venerable Dalfinus, the archbishop of that city. The pontiff wished to

eiusdem ciuitatis archiepiscopo, honorifice suscepti sunt. Wilfridus a pontifice detentus, Benedictus Romam usque profectus. Delectabatur etenim¹ antistes prudentia uerborum strenuissimi iuuenis, gratia uenusti² uultus, alacritate actionis, constantia, necne³ maturitate intentionis. Unde queque necessaria habebat, ipsi cum sociis eius, dum secum esse uolebant, abundanter tribuebat. Quin et beato Wilfrido partem Galliarum non modicam regendam obtulit, ac filiam fratris sui uirginem, si coniugem ducere uellet, ei se daturum fore promisit, quatinus ipse illi⁴ in patrem, et ille ipsi esset tali coniunctione in filium. At ille, gratias agens pietati, quam erga se, cum peregrinus existeret,⁵ dignaretur habere, respondit sibi magis propositum alterius conuersationis inesse, et ob hoc relicta patria Romam ire cepisse. Quibus, antistes, auditis, dato itineris duce, simul et iis que tante uie necessitas poscebat, copiose impensis, ipsum Romam transmisit, obsecrans, et multa prece contestans, quatinus de Roma rediens ad se declinaret.

CAPITULUM VI

¶11 Vt⁶ autem Romam uenit, beatissimi apostolorum principis limina orandi gratia petiit, et egressus, germani beati⁷ Petri, eadem causa ductus, oratorium est⁸ ingressus, humique prostratus hac prece fertur pium apostolum, quem mente presentem uidebat, palam rogasse. 'Piissime apostolorum Dei, frater beatissimi⁹ apostoli Petri, en ego, peregrine prouincie ciuis, ad tua limina ueni, ueniam pro peccatis meis postulaturus. Precor te igitur per pietatem, qua ceteris prestare totius orbis attestacione probaris, ut ueniam peccatorum, quam per te obtinere confido, non queram in uanum,

¹ This word is divided over a line break thus in D: *Et / enim* (giving it an extra *e*).

² A] A minim is erased before *s*.

³ D] *necnon*.

⁴ D] *sibi*.

⁵ C] *existere*.

⁶ The new section is marked by a three-space tall capital in red ink in D; A marks the new section with the numeral *VII* and begins a new line with a capital *V* which is inset slightly to accommodate a patched area of the parchment.

⁷ D] *beati germani*, with a small *b* and *a* above them respectively to indicate that their order should be reversed.

⁸ D] *est* inserted above interlinearly with a caret mark below the line.

⁹ This word is divided over a line break thus in D: *beatis/ssimi* (giving it an extra *s*).

detain Wilfrid there, and so Benedict immediately set off for Rome. For the prudence of this intense young man's conversation delighted the bishop, as did the grace of his charming face, his swiftness of action, his constancy, and—not least of all—his maturity of purpose. Wherefore, he offered to Wilfrid and his companions an abundance of whatever they might require of him for as long as they wished to remain there. Furthermore, he offered blessed Wilfrid the rule of a considerable portion of Gaul and pledged that he would give him the virgin daughter of his own brother, should he wish to take a wife; by such a marriage he would become something of a father to Wilfrid and the young man would be like a son to him. But thanking Dalfinus for the affection which he deemed him worthy of, though he was merely a traveller, Wilfrid replied that he was intent upon a different course of life and for this reason he had left his homeland and set out for Rome. On hearing these things the bishop assigned him a guide for the journey and immediately sent him forth on his way to Rome, providing him with an abundance of the things necessary for such a trip; he prayed and earnestly beseeched Wilfrid to make a detour on his return from Rome in order to visit him.

Chapter 6 *Wilfrid arrives in Rome and beseeches Saints Peter and Andrew to enrich his talents.* [A.D. 654]

¶11 When he arrived in Rome he looked for the church of the most blessed Prince of the Apostles so that he might pray there; and driven by a similar urge he then emerged and went to the oratory of the brother of blessed Peter. He prostrated himself on the ground and is reported to have prayed openly with the following words to blessed Andrew, whom he saw before him in his mind: 'O holiest of the disciples of God, brother of most blessed Peter the apostle, I come to the threshold of your church, a citizen of a distant province in order to beg pardon for my sins. You are judged in the eyes of the whole world to excel all others in holiness. Therefore I ask of you that I not seek in vain the pardon for my sins which I believe I may receive through your intercession, and that my lengthy journey here

ne mihi tante progressio uie procedat incassum. Uerum ut experiar uincola mee impietatis per tua merita solui, solue, queso, impedimenta¹ ingenii mei, et lingue mee, quatinus Uerbi Dei mysteria corde percipere, et diserto elocutionis modo eadem aliis ualeam insinuare.²

¶12 O fides famuli Dei! O insigne pietatis indicium apostoli Dei! O larga benignitas, et benigna largitas clementie Dei! Non citius orationis uerba compleuit, quam uiuacissimum mentis ingenium, et promptissimum elocutionis modum sese² percepisse cognouit. Redit in se, et gratiosus miratur, seipsum qui fuerat iam non esse.

CAPITULUM VII

¶13 Rome³ igitur degens, orationique ac meditationi rerum ecclesiasticarum cotidiana, ut animo proposuerat, instantia mancipatus, peruenit ad noticiam uiri sanctissimi atque doctissimi, Bonifacii uidelicet archidiaconi, qui et consiliarius erat apostolici; cuius magisterio et amicitia felix, quatuor ab eo libros *Euangeliorum*, rationabilem Pasche terminum, aliaque nonnulla que in patria sua nequiuerat, didicit.

¶14 Ecclesiastica igitur disciplina magnifice imbutus, et apostolica benedictione perfusus, in iter rediit, Dalfinum⁴ episcopum de suo reditu ualde suspectum letus adiit, eique tribus annis fida societate adhesit. A quo attonsus et, in tanto est amore habitus, ut illum sibi heredem facere cogitaret. Sed ne hoc fieri posset, antistes est crudeli morte preceptus, et Wilfridus ad sue potius, hoc est Anglorum, gentis episcopatum reseruatus. Siquidem regina Francorum ea tempestate seuam ecclesie Christi tempestatem intulerat. Nam demoniaci furoris igne succensa, fortunis omnium bonorum inhiare, inhians rapinis et depredationibus estuare, estuans atroci multos examinatione damnare, et damnatos immani mortis feritate necare.

¹ D] *impedimentum*.

² D] *se*.

³ The new section is marked by a three-space tall capital in red ink in D; A marks the new section with the numeral *VIII* and begins a new line with a capital *R*.

⁴ D] *dolfinum*.

not be fruitless. And so, in order that by your merits I may feel the chains of my impiety slackened, I beseech you to dissolve the impediments of my mind and tongue so that in my heart I am able to understand the mysteries of the Word of God and instil those things in others with eloquence.²

¶12 What faith in a servant of God! O, what remarkable evidence of loving kindness in God's apostle! What an abundance of goodness and a blessed plenitude of God's grace! No sooner had he finished his prayer than he noticed that he had acquired an acute liveliness of thought together with a great facility of speech. He regained his senses and was thankful and filled with wonder to discover that he was no longer as he had been.

Chapter 7 *Archdeacon Boniface instructs Wilfrid in Church doctrine. Wilfrid returns home via Lyon where he visits Dalfinus, who is conspired against by Queen Baldhild and martyred.* [A.D. 655–8]

¶13 And so, while living in Rome he liberated himself by his daily application to prayer and meditation upon ecclesiastical affairs, just as he had set out do in his mind. He came to the attention of a very holy and learned man—namely the archdeacon Boniface—who was also an adviser to the Apostolic See. Blest by the instruction and friendship of this man he studied the four books of the Gospels with him, the arguments for the proper calculation of Easter, and many more things that he had not been able to learn in his homeland.

¶14 At length, Wilfrid set out on his homeward journey with a profusion of apostolic blessings and wondrously enriched in ecclesiastical training. He went back joyfully to Bishop Dalfinus, who had been most anxious that he might not have returned, and remained at his side as a faithful companion for three years. Wilfrid received the monastic tonsure from Dalfinus, who held him in such deep affection that he even considered making him his heir. But so that this might not come about the bishop was snatched away prematurely by a cruel death, and Wilfrid's future as a bishop was reserved for his own people, the English. For in those tempestuous times Queen Baldhild of the Franks had raised a savage attack against the Church of Christ. She was ablaze with a fiery demonic madness; her jaws gaped for the fortunes of all good men; as she gaped she was inflamed to robbery and plundering; inflamed, she

Unde, ut alia taceam, que in innumeros¹ quasi minores crudelia exercuit, octo ecclesiarum patres ense peremit, cum quibus et predictum uenerandum antistitem pari huic uite pena mortis exemit. Quem usque ad locum sue neci dispositum Wilfridus secutus est, cupiens pro eo, si concederetur, aut certe cum eo, si permetteretur, simul gladio mori. Uerum ne id fieret, episcopus modis omnibus interdixit, et ne tantum flagitium flagitiis suis gladiatores adicerent, Christi miseratio, sanctique uiri peregrinatio interdixit, queque tunc temporis magno terrori quamplurimis erat, sua scilicet Anglorum natio interdixit. Corpus tamen occisi debito honore² tumulauit, sicque Angliam prospero cursu repedaui.³

CAPITULUM VIII

¶15 Prefuit⁴ eo tempore genti Nordanhimbrorum⁵ Christianissimus rex Oswius,⁶ successor beatissimi regis et martyris Oswaldi, qui Oswius⁷ filium suum Alfridum regni socium sibi constituit. Fuere autem utrique reges in Christiana religione feruentes, ecclesiarum diligentissimi cultores,⁸ et catholicarum doctrinarum studiosissimi auditores, amatores, sectatores.

¹ In D, the scribe wrote *m* for *inn* initially, and then erased the middle minim and put an abbreviation stroke above each of the remaining minims to give the correct reading.

² The first *o* is altered from an earlier *e* (?) in D.

³ D] This is written over an erasure.

⁴ D], which has up to this point marked new chapters with a three- or four-space high capital letter in red ink, from now on ceases to indicate paragraph breaks in the text. However, a later reader has for the most part marked new sections with paragraph marks, usually placing one in the text and a corresponding one in the left margin. A marks the new section with an unusual symbol, presumably a configuration intended to stand for the Roman numeral IX. The section or chapter numbers stop at this point in A.

⁵ A] *Northanhymbrorum*; D] *Nordanhimbrorum*.

⁶ D] *Oswinus*.

⁷ D] *Oswinus*.

⁸ *cultores...studiosissimi*] D omits through homeoteleuton.

condemned a multitude of people to ferocious torture; and those she condemned, she slaughtered and slew with monstrous savagery. In the course of this frenzy she slew eight Fathers of the Church with the sword, and I am constrained to pass over the cruelties she inflicted on numerous lesser figures; to these eight was added the venerable Bishop Dalfinus, who underwent a penalty of death appropriate for this life [i.e. martyrdom]. Wilfrid followed him right up to the place of execution wishing, if possible, to die by the sword at once in place of Dalfinus or, if permitted, at the very least to die with him. But so that this might not come to pass, the bishop opposed it by every means possible; and so that the executioners might not add such a great offence to their other crimes, the mercy of Christ and the fact that the holy man was a foreigner intervened. But more to the point, the fact that there was at that time a great fear of the English nation among very many men played a part in all this. Nonetheless, Wilfrid buried the murdered bishop with due honour and afterwards returned by prosperous voyage to England.

f. Anthony
Chapter 8 *Meanwhile, Oswiu is ruling Northumbria jointly with his son, Alhfrith.*

¶15 At that time, Oswiu, a very Christian king, had succeeded the most blessed king and martyr Oswald and was ruling over the people of Northumbria; Oswiu appointed his son, Alhfrith, to rule as sub-king with him. Moreover, both of these kings burned with zeal for the Christian religion and eagerly promoted churches; they obeyed, loved and supported Christian teachings most fervently.

CAPITULUM IX

¶16 Cum ergo beatus uir Dei Wilfridus in patriam esset reuersus, fama sanctitatis et prudentie eius, fama eloquentie et apostolice doctrine eius, circumquaque mira celeritate innotuit, necnon ad aures predictorum principum ingenti cum laude processit. Sanctitas quoque et insignis amor Christianitatis, qui regum corda repleuerat noticiam sancti nequaquam fugere poterat.

¶17 Ex hoc curie regis Alfridi presentatus, humane suscipitur; breui, quod antea solo auditu in eo sciebatur, re ipsa cognoscitur, et eo regali amicitie familiariter associatur. Probitas etiam integerrime uite, quam fama primo uulgauerat, et prudens simplicitas, simplexque prudentia, que in illo ad omnes cum humilitate uigebant, non modo regi, uerum et omnibus eum carum exhibebant. Tribus ex hoc annis regalem curiam fouit, et uirtute animi gratiam, gloriam, honorem¹ sibi comparauit. Unde et regio munere auctus tam mobilibus quam et immobilibus rerum bonis, etiam inter animales homines clarus erat. Super hec quoque Ripensi ecclesia, cum iis que sui iuris extiterant, regali munificentia donatus est. Ex eo autem summa cura procurabat, quatinus opes sue magis transirent in uictum indigentium, quam seruaret eas more² auare opes suas recondentium.

CAPITULUM X

¶18 Interea uenit ad regem episcopus Occidentalium Saxonum, nomine Ailbertus,³ uir sanctus, et ecclesiasticis disciplinis apprime⁴ institutus, qui et eidem regi magno fuerat familiaritatis amore coniunctus. Hic, rogatus a rege, Wilfridum ad presbiteratus officium promouit, utpote quem sacerdotio fungi dignissimum esse cognouit.

¹ D] omits.

² D] *eorum* added in the left margin.

³ D] *Albertus*.

⁴ D] *ad prime* (as two words).

Chapter 9 *Wilfrid is received honourably upon his return to Northumbria. Alhfrith bestows gifts upon Wilfrid, including the church at Ripon. [c.A.D. 658]*

¶16 When Wilfrid, the blessed man of God, had returned to his native land, his reputation for sanctity and prudence and his fame for eloquence and apostolic learning became known everywhere with wondrous speed, and so too with lavish praise it came to the ears of these same kings. Conversely, the sanctity and remarkable love of Christianity with which their kingly hearts brimmed could by no means escape the attention of the holy man.

¶17 For this reason he was courteously received once he had been introduced to the court of Alhfrith; in a short while, what had been known earlier about him by hearsay alone came to be known by their experience of him, and consequently he became intimately familiar with royal friendship. The probity of Wilfrid's most wholesome life, which rumour had first revealed generally, his prudent simplicity and simple prudence, which flourished towards all others in his humble manner, made him beloved not only in the sight of the king, but before all men. For the next three years he nurtured the spirit of the royal court and by the strength of his character he won favour, glory and honour. He was further enriched through royal largesse in both portable wealth and property, and even became famous among brutish men. In addition to these things, by the king's munificence he was also presented with the church at Ripon and all things legally attached to it. However, he took the greatest care in this situation to ensure that his wealth should go to feeding the needy rather than that he should preserve his riches in the manner of those who would greedily stockpile them for themselves.

Chapter 10 *Bishop Agilbert ordains Wilfrid to the priesthood. [c.A.D. 663]*

¶18 In the meantime, Bishop Agilbert of the West Saxons, a holy man who was most knowledgeable of ecclesiastical practices, came to visit the king; he too was joined to the king by the great love of his friendship. Acting upon a request from the king, Agilbert advanced Wilfrid to the priesthood, since he acknowledged him to be most worthy of performing that sacred office.

CAPITULUM XI

¶19 Mota est autem ea tempestate questio de obseruatione Pasche, que magna et frequens eatenus extiterat, probantibus simul et confirmantibus eis qui de Cantia et Galliis aduenerant, quod Scotti diem dominicum Pasche celebrarent contra morem uniuersalis ecclesie. Nam Scotti usque ad id temporis scripturarum serie¹ hac de re disputante non plene edocti, sepe dominicum Pasche diem celebrabant cum esset dominica dies in Palmis; ea re quod ipsa die quarta decima luna esset, que terminus est diei paschalis. Istiusmodi secte uir sanctissime uite Aidanus suo tempore grande firmamentum fuerat, in tantum ut a cunctis quasi equo animo toleraretur, dum eximia in opere Dei morum ipsius conuersatio consideraretur. Sed eo defuncto, Finanus, uestigia secte illius per omnia sequens, in episcopatum eius subrogatus est. Quo nichilominus huic uite modum faciente, Colmannus in sectam amborum sedemque successit, cuius temporibus grauior de paschali obseruatione, atque aliis ecclesiastice uite disciplinis controuersia uersata est. Quapropter merito mouit hec questio sensus et corda multorum, timentium, ne forte, accepto Christianitatis uocabulo, in uacuum currerent, aut cucurrissent. Peruenit et ad ipsas² principum aures, Oswii uidelicet regis filiique eius Alfridi, quorum primus a Scottis edoctus, atque baptismi sacramentis imbutus, nil melioris propositi existere posse credebat, quam quod a suis doctoribus acceperat. Porro sequens potioris fidei priuilegio primum precedens, Romane et uniuersalis ecclesie ritum omnibus antestare³ ratum⁴ habebat. Siquidem Christianissimus et doctissimus uir Wilfridus, qui et Rome, ut prediximus, ecclesiastice discipline multa documenta acceperat, et penes Dalfinum Galliarum pontificem Lugduni nonnullis imbutus extiterat, eum suo magisterio rationabili atque catholica eruditione informauerat, ac informatum, omni scrupulositate sublata, in uere fidei stabilitate firmauerat.

¹ A] *seriem hac de re disputantem.*

² D] omits.

³ D] *attestari.*

⁴ C] *a* is inserted interlinearly above original *i*.

Chapter 11 *There is disagreement between the Celtic and Roman Churches over the proper calculation of Easter.*

¶19 At that particular time the question concerning the proper observation of Easter, an important issue which had been much discussed earlier, was once again raised. This was both encouraged and supported by those who had come from Kent and Gaul because the Irish celebrated the Sunday of Easter contrary to the custom of the Universal Church. For up to that time the Irish were not fully familiar with the whole body of writings debating this matter and often they would celebrate the Sunday of Easter on Palm Sunday, even though that was the fourteenth day of the moon, which is the *terminus post quem* for Easter day. Aidan, a most holy person, had been the major supporter of this faction in his day, in spite of which everyone tolerated him with equanimity since they bore in mind the excellent manner of living with which he carried out the work of God. But when he died, Finan, who followed his faction in every detail, was elevated to the bishopric as his successor. And when he reached the end of this life, Colman succeeded to leadership of the faction and to the see of both men. During his tenure the controversy concerning the observation of Easter and other practices relating to ecclesiastic life was debated more heatedly. The thoughts and hearts of many people were justifiably stirred by this question, for they feared that having accepted the designation of being "Christian" they might rush by mischance into a spiritual void, or indeed that this might already be the case. In the end, even the kings—namely King Oswiu and his son Alhfrith—heard about this. Oswiu had been educated by the Irish and had received the sacrament of baptism; he believed that it was impossible for there to be better learning than that which he had received from his teachers. On the other hand, Alhfrith, who was blest with a stronger faith, excelled his father and held the opinion that the rite of the Universal Roman Church had primacy over all other rites. Indeed, the most learned and Christian man, Wilfrid, who (as we have said earlier) had learnt many regulations concerning ecclesiastic discipline in Rome and had become further imbued with many things in the company of Dalfinus, Bishop of the Gauls at Lyon, had informed Alhfrith by his thoughtful teaching and catholic erudition, with every scruple eliminated, and confirmed his student in the stability of the true faith.

*feeling
eloquence*

CAPITULUM XII

¶20 Mota ergo, ut prefati sumus, questione de paschali obseruatione, dispositum est, ut synodus cogi, et hec questio deberet uentilari, terminarique. Ueneruntque illo¹ reges ambo, pater scilicet² et filius, magnopere deprecantes, ut eis adesse dignaretur Spiritus Sanctus. Uenit quoque iam dictus³ Ailbertus antistes, Alfridi regis amicus, cum beato Wilfrido,⁴ et suo Agathone, presbiteris. Contra quos Colmannus cum suis clericis uenit, et Hildem⁵ abbatissam, secte sue fautricem, cum aliis pluribus secum in synodum duxit.

¶21 Silentio itaque facto, primo rex Oswius⁶ prefatione premissa tali fertur modo locutus: “Hactenus, patres uenerandi, scisma in ecclesiis Christi exortum eo quosdam minus ueritati studentes perduxit, ut bis in anno (quod dictu quoque nefas esse probatur) sanctum Pascha sit celebratum;⁷ cuius tamen rei causam bene considerantibus, non adeo mirum uidetur. Dum enim ipsi arietes iter diuersum arripiunt, greges etiam post se diuerso tramite rapiunt. Ubi plane miseriam est uidere, cum ad regnum uia sibimet contraria tendunt, quo communi proposito fidei prosperare⁸ contendunt, et qui⁹ uiam¹⁰ indiuiduam perueniendi ad uitam solummodo Christum noscuntur habere, absonum ualde absurdumque fore dinoscitur, ipsum Christum in suis mysteriis uelle¹¹ dissona obseruatione diuidere. Ea re in hanc me sententiam ipsa rationis necessitas potissimum duxit, quatinus utriusque partis defensores una uenire iussio nostra constringeret,¹² quo, utrinque¹³

¹ D] *illic*. A has *illo* with part 1 of the final letter erased.

² D] *scilicet pater*.

³ *iam dictus*] D] *pre / dictus*.

⁴ D] *l* inserted above interlinearly.

⁵ A] *Hyldem*.

⁶ D] *oswinus*.

⁷ D] *celebrandum*.

⁸ D] *prosperare*.

⁹ D] adds *iam*.

¹⁰ D] *i* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

¹¹ D] *ualde*.

¹² D] *constringerint* with *constringeret* added in the margin—the marginal form actually has a ‘9’ shaped *con-* abbreviation followed by a *t* before the *str-*.

¹³ D] *utrorumque*.

Chapter 12 *At the Synod of Whitby Wilfrid defends Roman observance and Colman speaks on behalf of traditional Celtic practice. The synod decides in favour of the Roman tradition. [A.D. 664]*

¶20 Therefore, once the question concerning the proper observation of Easter had been raised, as we said earlier, it was decided that a synod ought to be called together and that this question should be discussed there and resolved. And both kings, namely the father and the son, came to that place, praying fervently that the Holy Spirit might deign to be present among them. Moreover, the friend of King Alhfrith, Bishop Agilbert, whom I mentioned just previously, came with blessed Wilfrid and his own priest, Agatho. Colman came representing the opposing view with his clerics and led Hild the abbess—a supporter of his faction—with many others into the synod.

¶21 Once silence had been established, King Oswiu is reported to have spoken in the first instance offering this preface as an opening: ‘Hitherto, venerable fathers, a schism arose in the churches of Christ which has influenced certain people less zealous for the truth to the point that the sacred feast of Easter has been celebrated twice in one year (which it is considered blasphemous even to utter); to anyone reflecting seriously on the cause of this, it does not seem that amazing—for whenever the rams stray from the true path, the rest of the flock is drawn after them on the same crooked path. As in this example, it can clearly be regarded as unfortunate whenever people reach out for the kingdom, where they are striving to advance with a shared intention of faith, by a path which defeats their own purpose. And for those who are known to hold Christ alone as the sole path towards achieving true life it is clear that it would be wildly dissonant and absurd to seek to divide Christ himself in his mysteries by discordant religious observances. Accordingly, the very need for rational thinking in this matter has led me most irresistibly to the opinion that by our command the defenders of each faction

ratione audita, quid sequendum, quid fugiendum sit, discusso errore¹ queamus inspicere. Quapropter tu, Colmanne, qui precipue contra morem uniuersalis ecclesie Pascha celebrare a nonnullis calumniaris, cause tue, in qua et ego tecum similis obseruationis coarguor,² primo propugnator assiste, quatinus auctoritate qua nititur agnita, si tanta est, fiat amodo³ nostra sub eadem auctoritate a tantis calumniis obseruatio libera. Quod si ea qua niteris minus firma auctoritate uictus extiteris, profecto nec me, nec quemlibet meorum, tue secte ulterius sectatorem habebis.⁴

¶22 Tum Colmannus: 'Pascha,' inquit, 'a quarta decima luna usque ad uicesimam celebramus, et celebrandum confirmamus, et ita fieri oportere ualide auctoritatis firmamento comprobamus. Beatissimus etenim Iohannes apostolus et euangelista,⁵ Domini Ihesu tam familiaris conuiuia, ut supra pectus ipsius in cena recubuerit, eodem quo nos ordine illud celebravit, et in omnibus quibus prefuit ecclesiis celebrandum fore sua auctoritate prefixit. Hoc per successionem prudentum⁶ et eque sanctissimorum uirorum ad nos usque perlatum, hoc nostrorum doctrina maiorum in nobis stabili firmitate fundatum, hoc a nobis antehac inuiolabili obseruatione seruatum,⁷ et firmamus nulla ratione non esse seruandum.'

¶23 Quo hec et huiusmodi nonnulla dicente, iussit rex et Ailbertum sue morem obseruationis in medium proferre, ut sciretur, quo principio, cuiusue niteretur auctoritatis institutione. Respondit Ailbertus: 'Loquatur, obsecro, uice mea Wilfridus presbiter, quia unum ambo sapimus cum ceteris qui hic assident ecclesiastice traditionis cultoribus,⁸ et ille melius ac manifestius ipsa lingua⁹

¹ D] *terrore*.

² D] *u* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

³ D] *modo*.

⁴ D] *habetis*.

⁵ D] First *a* is inserted above interlinearly.

⁶ D] *ntum* is written over an erasure; an erased letter is visible between this and the following word.

⁷ D] *obseruatum*.

⁸ D] This and the preceding word written over an erasure (?).

⁹ D] *lingua*.

should be compelled to come together; by doing so, once argument has been heard from both sides, with error then dispelled we should be able to see clearly what ought to be followed and what ought to be shunned. Wherefore, you, Colman, who are particularly accused by some of celebrating Easter contrary to the practice of the Universal Church, now first of all defend your case—I too with you am charged with practising similar observance. Once the authority on which it rests is recognized, if it is so great, then thereafter let our observance be by this same authority free from such fierce attacks. But if it turns out that the authority on which you rely is less strong and you emerge defeated, then straightaway you will no longer have either me or any of my subjects as adherents to your faction.'

¶22 Then Colman said, 'We celebrate Easter from the fourteenth day of the moon up to the twentieth, and I would argue that it ought to be celebrated [in this way]; I shall demonstrate that it is fitting to do so on the foundation of a strong authority. For the most blessed apostle and evangelist John, who was such a familiar companion of our Lord Jesus that he used to recline upon his breast at table, celebrated Easter by the same reckoning as ours and established by his own authority that it would be celebrated thus in all churches over which he presided. This has been passed down to us by a succession of prudent and equally very holy men; this has been established among us with unwavering conviction by the teaching of our forefathers; this has been preserved and observed by us till now inviolably, and I state categorically that there are no good arguments for not preserving it.'

¶23 After he had said these things and much more in a similar vein, the king then commanded Agilbert to clarify in their midst the method he observed, so that it might be known on what principles or established authority it rested. Agilbert replied, "I pray you, let Wilfrid the priest speak in my place, since we are both of one mind with the rest of those sitting here who observe ecclesiastical tradition, for he is able to explain what we think in this matter better

Anglorum, quam¹ ego per interpretem, potest explanare que sentimus.' Tunc Wilfridus ad iussum regis exorsus, Colmannum non modo auctoritate beati Iohannis falso niti aperta ratione monstrauit uerum et² contra Iohannem, contra legem et *Euangelium*, necne³ doctrinam apostolorum, immo et contra uniuersalis ecclesie morem eum sentire in paschali obseruatione probauit.⁴ Quam probationem iccirco scribere supersedimus, ne in re huic opusculo non necessaria aliquod fastidium legentibus inferremus.⁵ Si quis autem eam⁶ uelit, in nostre, hoc est Anglorum,⁷ gentis historia requisitam inueniet. Hac⁸ igitur omissa, uitam beati uiri, ut cepimus, ordine persequamur, prout ipse, de quo loquimur, nos adiuuare dignatur.⁹

CAPITULUM XIII

¶24 Finito conflictu, concioneque soluta, Ailbertus domum rediit. Colmannus uero, sue sedis episcopatu dimisso, Scottiam petiit, quoniam ecclesiasticis traditionibus suas traditiones postponere noluit.

¶25 Uir autem Domini Wilfridus ex hoc magne apud omnes est uenerationi habitus, quippe qui et diuinis eruditionibus preclare imbutus, et dominicis comprobatus erat operibus magnifice fultus. Quapropter a rege Alfrido totius plebis acclamatione ad pontificatum eligitur;¹⁰ sed ipse graui reclamationis annisu ne id

¹ D] *q* is followed by a 10 mm. erasure, and a superscript *a* has then been added above it.

² C] This word is inserted above interlinearly.

³ D] *necnon*.

⁴ D] adds *dicens*; cf. the opening words of ¶119.

⁵ This word is divided over a line break thus in D: *infer / rremus* (giving it an extra *r*).

⁶ D] adds *scire*.

⁷ D] This is the last word on the page and is partly obliterated: the top of the *l* is visible, but the rest of the word cannot be read (probably *or* with an abbreviation sign or the *um*).

⁸ D] The ascender of *h* is altered; *ex* is added in outer margin, presumably to go before *hac*, which has a caret mark added just before it.

⁹ D] *dignitur* with a superscript *e* above the *i* indicating an intended reading of *dignetur*.

¹⁰ D] *eligitur ad pontificatum* with a small *b* and *a* above the first and third words respectively to indicate that the order should be: *ad p. eligitur*.

and more clearly in the English language than I am through an interpreter." Then rising at the command of the king Wilfrid not only demonstrated with (clear logic) that Colman relied on a misconstrual of the authority of blessed John, but he further proved that in his observation of Easter Colman opposed John, he was at variance with the Law and the Gospel, and not only was he contrary to apostolic teaching in his thinking, but he was, moreover, at odds with the practice of the Universal Church. We refrain from setting out (the proof of this argument here) lest in doing so we inflict a degree of tedium upon our readers in a matter which is not essential for this little work. If, however, anyone wishes to read about it, he will find what he seeks in the history of our people, that is, of the English. And having left this out, let us therefore pursue the life of blessed Wilfrid in sequence, as we had begun, since he about whom we are speaking deigns to help us.

Chapter 13 *Agilbert, together with eleven other bishops, elevates Wilfrid to the episcopacy in Paris.* [c.A.D. 665]

¶24 When the conflict had finished and the assembly had been dissolved, Agilbert returned home. But Colman sought to return to Ireland; he abandoned his episcopal see, since he did not wish to set aside his own traditions in favour of those of the [Universal] Church.

¶25 However, Wilfrid, the man of the Lord, was deemed worthy of great veneration on account of these events among all men; indeed he was very clearly imbued with divine learning and also showed himself to be an excellent advocate in the Lord's affairs. And because of this Wilfrid was chosen bishop by King Alhfrith with the acclamation of the whole populace; but he resisted with a great

fiat obsistere nititur. Tandem, importunitate omnium uictus id a rege petiuit, ne se inordinate ordinari in Britannia¹ permetteret, uerum,² ut tanta res secundum instituta canonum expleri ualeret, ordinandum sese in Galliam mitteret, uenerabilis nempe Deusdedit, sancte Cantuariensis ecclesie archiepiscopus, iam huic uite subtractus fuerat, nec in tota Britannia episcopus aliquis canonicè ordinatus supererat, excepto Wine Occidentalium Saxonum episcopo. Ailbertus³ siquidem, cuius paullo ante meminimus, relicta Britannia Parisiæ ciuitatis episcopatum sortitus erat. Quoniam igitur⁴ ita se res⁵ habebat, quod petebatur rex promptissime annuit, et consilio⁶ patris sui Oswii beatum patrem ad regem Galliarum direxit, rogans et obsecrans, quatinus uirum honorifice susciperet, atque in gradum pontificatus sua auctoritate sullimari preciperet. Igitur, prout dignum fuit, a rege honorifice suscipitur; ad Ailbertum episcopum cum mandatis dirigitur, quibus ut⁷ summa honorificentia seruum Domini ad ordinem episcopatus promoueat iubetur. Qui mandatis gratiosus obtemperans, eum,⁸ cooperantibus undecim episcopis, honorifice consecrauit.

CAPITULUM XIV

¶26 Quo⁹ post ordinationem suam in transmarinis partibus demorante, ii quorum secte prauitas per eum pridem detecta fuerat atque dissecta, rependendarum iniuriarum sese iam tempus opportunum accepisse putantes, regem Oswium fraudulenta calliditate conuenientes circumueniunt; circumueniendo in eam sententiam ducunt, quatinus Ceaddam Eboracæ ciuitatis episcopum fieri iubeat, ne, ecclesia diutius carente pastore, fides Christi quamlibet¹⁰ iacturam incurrat; presertim cum penitus, iniquiunt,

¹ A] *Britannia*.

² *uerum...mitteret*] D omits through homeoteleuton.

³ D] *Albertus*.

⁴ ACD] *ergo*.

⁵ D] *res ita se*.

⁶ D] *cum filio*.

⁷ D] *in*.

⁸ D] *cum*.

⁹ D] *Qui*.

¹⁰ D] *quemlibet*.

degree of protestation in order that this might not come about. In the end he submitted to their desire. However, he requested of the king that he not allow him to be consecrated irregularly in Britain, but that he send him to Gaul to be ordained so that such a great matter might be carried out according to the regulations of Canon Law. For venerable Deusdedit, archbishop of the holy church of Canterbury, had recently departed this life and in the whole of Britain there was not one bishop remaining who had been ordained canonically, with the exception of Bishop Wine of the West Saxons. Agilbert, whom we mentioned a little earlier, had received the bishopric of the city of Paris after he had left Britain. And so, that being the case, the king very promptly approved the request and upon advice from his father, King Oswiu, he sent blessed father Wilfrid to the King of the Gauls, Clothar III. Alhfrith asked and beseeched him to receive Wilfrid worthily and to order by his authority that he be elevated to the rank of bishop. Therefore, he was received honourably by the king, as was fitting. Wilfrid was sent on direction from the king to Bishop Agilbert; he was ordered to elevate the servant of the Lord to the rank of bishop with due propriety. And acceding most happily to the king's commands, Agilbert consecrated Wilfrid in a fitting manner with eleven bishops concelebrating.

Chapter 14 *Oswiu is corrupted by conspirators and agrees to the consecration of Chad by Wine as Bishop of York in Wilfrid's absence.*

¶26 While Wilfrid was spending time in regions across the channel after his ordination, the men whose sect he had exposed and dispersed earlier because of its corruptness conspired to entrap King Oswiu with their deceitful cunning, thinking that the time was now ripe to be recompensed for the injuries done to them. Through their manœuvring they induced him to issue the order for Chad to be installed as bishop of the city of York, lest the faith of Christ should suffer any sort of injury because the church lacked a shepherd for such a long time, especially since, they said, it was

ignoretur, quo Wilfridus deuenit, quem ad ipsius ecclesie regimen ordinandum in Galliam Alfridus direxit.

¶27 Hac ipsorum uersutia rex Oswius incaute prereptus, dato prefato Ceadde ipsius ecclesie pontificatu, misit eum Cantiam in gradum sacerdotii consecrandum. Quo cum suis ueniens,¹ et eandem sedem pastore uiduatam inueniens, inde diuertit,² predictum Wine episcopum adiit, ut episcopus ab eo consecraretur obtinuit. Assumptis igitur duobus de gente Britonum episcopis, qui contra scita canonum erant ordinati, eundem³ Ceaddam⁴ pari modo inordinate ordinauit. Ordinatus autem Eboracensi ecclesie prelatu est.

CAPITULUM XV

¶28 Cum non post multos dies beatus Wilfridus patriam redire instituens nauem ingreditur, et aliquandiu felici cursu nauis equoreos fluctus transuehitur. Iam autem medio mari transito, et beato uiro cum suis clericis in ea que Dei sunt corde et ore intento, uentus mutatus,⁵ ualidissima tempestas exoritur. Qui magna uexatione quassati, tandem in regionem Australium Saxonum, quam non nouerant, proiecti sunt. Fluctibus uero in sinus suos illico retractis, indigene adhuc gentili errore deuincti⁶ aduolant, nauem et omnia que in ea erant in ius suum uindicare⁷ uolentes, et id propositi obstinato corde tenentes, ut aut captiuitate aut morte sibi resistentes inuoluerent. Quo, uir uenerabilis, agnito, copiosam eis

¹ D] The second *en* written over an erasure.

² C] *deuertit*, with *i* inserted interlinearly above the first *e*.

³ D] *eundam* with an added stroke above the *a* suggesting the scribe tried to correct the form.

⁴ D] *Ceaddem*.

⁵ D] *mutatur*; the scribe initially wrote *n*, but then added a third minim to make an *m*.

⁶ D] *deuicti*.

⁷ D] *uindicare* with an accent above the first *e* as if to change it to the proper reading *i*.

completely unknown where Wilfrid—whom Alhfrith had directed to be ordained in Gaul in order that he should lead that very church—had gone.

¶27 King Oswiu, caught completely off guard by the cunning of these men, rashly sent Chad, whom I just mentioned, to Kent to be ordained to the priesthood, having designated him as bishop for that church. When Chad arrived there with his companions, he discovered that that see was also without a shepherd of its own, and so he redirected his path; he went to Bishop Wine, whom I mentioned earlier, and arranged to be consecrated bishop by him. Therefore Wine, with the assistance of two British bishops who had been ordained contrary to the ordinances of proper Canon Law, consecrated Chad in an equally unorthodox manner. And once he had been consecrated, he was put in charge of the church at York.

Chapter 15 *While returning from Gaul Wilfrid is driven off course and is tossed up on the shore of the South Saxons. They attack Wilfrid and his followers repeatedly, but they are eventually rescued through divine intervention.*

¶28 Meanwhile, but a few days later, blessed Wilfrid boarded ship intending to return to his native land, and for a time he was borne in his vessel across the calm sea on a favourable voyage. But suddenly, when they were more than half way there, the wind changed and a ferocious storm mounted while the holy man and his clerics were preoccupied in heart and voice with those things pertaining to God. They were at length tossed up shaken and greatly agitated onto the shores of the South Saxons, which was unfamiliar to them. And when the waves drew immediately back into the sea, the natives, who were still enslaved by pagan error, rushed towards them intent upon claiming their ship and all that was in it as theirs by right; and sticking to that plan of action with obstinate hearts, they intended to overwhelm anyone who resisted them with either captivity or death. When he realized this, venerable Wilfrid offered them a large sum of money, urging and beseeching them humbly that they retreat from

pecuniam obtulit,¹ et quatinus ab intentione² sua recederent humili postulatione admonuit. At illi ferociores ex illius uerbis effecti, nil se ab eo pro ipsorum dimissione sumpturos fore proclamant, quin etiam non modo omnia sua, uerum et eundem ipsum in ius proprium se accepturos, nulla causa uetante, confirmant. Quid igitur negotii tenor intenderet socii pontificis intelligentes, premissa supplicatione ad Deum, arma arripiunt, magis uolentes more uirorum fortiter bello occumbere, quam ignaua captiuitate longioris uite spatia seruando producere. Quod ubi a paganis cognitum, aciem struere, ac in populum Domini tela dirigere festinabant.

¶29 Stans quoque princeps sacerdotum idolatrie coram paganis in tumulo excelso, suis magicis incantaminibus suos quasi benedicendo confortare, ac socios famuli Dei maledicendo satagebat eneruare. Cui operi cum quantum sua intererat, summo studio, mente, uoce, manuque uacasset, iuuenulus quidam, minister hominis Dei, funda lapidem iecit, et eundem magum traiecta fronte deiecit, extinxit. Rediit mox ad memoriam uiri Dei antiquum per Daud factum in Goliath miraculum Dei, cum subito mire paganorum tumultus exoritur, et in discernitionem³ Christiane partis uires omnium exeruntur. Quid plura! insurgunt acies; miles Christi sese prosternit in preces. Domino autem pro suis pugnante, inimica manus confusa et uicta discedit. Sed post paululum multiplicior in⁴ id ipsum et immanior redit, aciem struit, tela in uacuum dirigit, tela non uacua recipit, pars maxima ruit, et pars residua fugit. Et quid morer? iam tertio uicti cum se ad quartum prelium cum rege suo prepararent, meritis beati Wilfridi multo ante horam mare effluxit, nauem extulit, et sanctum Dei cum omnibus suis, quinque solummodo ex sociis perditis,⁵ prospere in Sandicum portum euexit. Quod⁶ inimici uidentes, cum maxima confusione in sua remeant, et seruuum Domini leta serenitate uictorem abire gemebundi deplorant.

¹ D] *i* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

² D] Someone has added *ab intentione* in the left margin, but this merely duplicates the reading of the text.

³ D] *p* is inserted above with a caret sign below.

⁴ *in id ipsum*] D omits.

⁵ D] *perdidit*.

⁶ C] has *quid* with an *o* inserted above interlinearly.

their intended action. But his words made the South Saxons even more ferocious so that they declared that they would take nothing from him to secure the release of his men; and furthermore, they asserted that since there was nothing forbidding it, they would take as their own not only all his possessions but even his very person. Therefore, since the bishop's companions understood the drift of the negotiations and what they were leading to, they first raised a prayer to God and then took up their weapons, preferring to fall bravely in battle like men than to save their lives by drawing their days out in ignoble captivity. When the pagans perceived this, they drew up in formation and hastened to hurl their weapons at the people of the Lord.

¶29 Moreover, the chief priest of the idolatrous people stood before the pagans on a lofty mound; he busied himself with emboldening his people by magical incantations, just as if he were blessing them, and with weakening the followers of God's servant through his curses. And when he was involved greatly in this task so that he was in a frenzy and devoid of his faculties—mind, voice and hand—a certain youth, an attendant of the man of God, threw a stone with a sling, pierced his forehead, and knocked the magician down dead. With that, God's miracle of long ago achieved through David against Goliath was recalled by the man of God. Then remarkably suddenly a tumult arose among the pagans and every man among them strove to rip the Christian faction asunder. What more can I say! The enemy battle line attacked and the soldier of Christ prostrated himself in prayer. However, with the Lord fighting on behalf of his own people the hostile force withdrew, confused and vanquished. But after a short while, they returned to the fray with greater savagery and greater numbers. They drew up their battle line in vain—they threw their spears, but weapons came back in response that found their mark. The majority of them fell in battle and the remnant fled. To cut a long story short, with the enemy already thrice defeated and preparing together with their king for a fourth attack, the sea flooded in long before its appointed hour on account of blessed Wilfrid's merits and carried their ship away; it conveyed God's holy man and all his companions by prosperous voyage to the port at Sandwich; only five of his companions had been lost. When the enemies saw that, they were greatly troubled and returned to their own business; sighing heavily, they bemoaned that the servant of the Lord had departed victorious and blessedly unscathed.

CAPITULUM XVI

¶30 Patrio itaque portu, patriaque potitus, confestim sibi rumor innotuit, qualiter sue sedi¹ Ceadda substitutus antistes sit. Qui pro re² nichil omnino turbatus, placido uultu et hilari pectore Ripum³ perrexit, ibique seruitiis Dei intentus, magna mentis stabilitate⁴ per aliquod tempus in secretiori habitaculo mansit.⁵ Sed quia ciuitas super montem posita nequit abscondi, a multis, et precipue nobilibus, frequentabatur, eximie sanctitatis eius fama permotis. Rex quoque Merciorum, nomine Wlfarius,⁶ uir Deo ualde deuotus,⁷ famulum Christi adiit, eumque ut loco cederet, secumque maneret, importuna uix prece deflexit, et compos sue uoluntatis effectus, ingenti beatum patrem dilectionis affectu coluit, terris et honoribus auxit.

CAPITULUM XVII

¶31 Metropolitana uero sedes totius Anglie, dum hec ita fierent, pastore carebat, defuncto, ut prediximus, archiepiscopo Deusdedit. Et quoniam tanta sedes absque episcopali prouidentia esse nequibat, rex Cantuariorum, Egbertus, beati Wilfridi prudentia sanctitateque⁸ audita, ad ipsum misit, quam humillima eum supplicatione contestans, ut ecclesiam uiduatam sua dignaretur presentia uisitare, ope consolationis erigere, contra spirituales nequitas clipeo sue admonitionis protegere, et queque tenor ecclesiastice traditionis expeteret, in ea pontificali auctoritate statuere. At ille tali in causa reniti fas esse nequaquam existimans,

¹ A] *sanctus* is inserted above interlinearly.

² D] This is written over an erasure.

³ D] *ripun*.

⁴ D] *subtilitate*.

⁵ ACD] *degit*; *mansit* in B is over an erasure; see the Commentary.

⁶ B] *Wulfarius*.

⁷ D] *u* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

⁸ D] *que* inserted above interlinearly.

Chapter 16 *On learning about the installation of Chad at York, Wilfrid quietly resumes monastic life at Ripon. King Wulfhere of Mercia invites Wilfrid to come to his court; there he is received with great honour.*

¶30 Rumour immediately made known to Wilfrid upon his return as leader to his native port and homeland that Chad had been installed in place of him as bishop of his see. Wilfrid was not at all disturbed by this; he made his way to Ripon with a calm demeanour and cheerful disposition, and intent on the service of God he remained there for some time with great peacefulness in a somewhat secluded dwelling place. But since a city placed upon a mountain cannot be hidden from view, he was regularly visited by many people, especially the nobility, who were greatly moved by his reputation for exceeding holiness. Wulfhere, the King of the Mercians, who was greatly devoted to God, also approached the servant of Christ, and it was only by unrelenting entreaty that he prevailed upon him to abandon that place and to come and stay with him. And having gained his wish, Wulfhere cherished the blessed father with great loving affection and enriched him with property and honours.

Chapter 17 *Upon the death of Archbishop Deusdedit Wilfrid is invited by King Egbert to manage the affairs of the church at Canterbury for a while. [A.D. 666–9]*

¶31 While those things were happening, the metropolitan see for the whole of England lacked a shepherd because Archbishop Deusdedit had passed away, as we related earlier. And because such an important see could not be allowed to go without episcopal oversight King Egbert of Kent, who had heard of the perceptivity and holiness of blessed Wilfrid, contacted him. Egbert tried to convince him with the most humble supplication that he could muster to deign to visit his presence upon the helmless church, to reinvigorate it through the bounty of his sympathetic understanding, to protect it against spiritual evils with the shield of his admonition, and to establish in the church by his episcopal authority whatever was required by the course of ecclesiastical tradition. Believing that it was entirely improper to resist in such an important situation,

regie uoluntati assensum prebuit. Ad ecclesiam igitur uenit, et que per Spiritum Sanctum agenda cognouit, sedulus inibi administravit.

CAPITULUM XVIII

¶32 Is primus erat qui inter episcopos de Anglorum gente creatos catholicum uiuendi morem Anglorum ecclesiis tradere didicerat, unde et perplura catholice obseruationis moderamina quaque¹ per easdem ecclesias sua doctrina diffundebat. Quare factum est, ut, crescente per dies institutione catholica, Scotti omnes, qui tunc morabantur² inter Anglos, aut his manus darent, aut ad suam patriam repedarent.

CAPITULUM XIX

¶33 Beatus autem Wilfridus,³ prout ei facultas inerat, hac illac propter uerbum Dei disseminandum, magna populi frequentia comitatus, pergere consueuerat. Quod cum tempore quodam faceret, deuenit in locum ubi natus fuerat atque nutritus. Cuius loci indigenas uerbo uite celestis enutriens, multos ab amore terreno auertit, et ad amorem omnipotentis Dei conuertit. Unde factum est, ut plures ibidem cellas Deo seruire uolentibus institueret, et quonam⁴ pacto eorum uita componi deberet, unumquemque prudenter instrueret.⁵ Sicque per tres continuos annos, modo Cantuariensis⁶ ecclesie dispositioni, modo illorum et illorum exortationi et correctioni, sue prouidentie curam impendit. Et licet episcopalis cathedre proprium locum nusquam haberet, tamen episcopali officio studiose intentus satagebat, qualiter diabolo sua uasa eriperet, et ea Domino Christo conciliaret, atque in sancte conuersationis proposito corroboraret.

¹ D] *circumquaque*.

² C] *mirabantur* with an *o* inserted interlinearly above the *i*.

³ D] The first *i* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

⁴ D] *quo nam*.

⁵ D] *institueret*.

⁶ *cantuariensis...modo*] D omits through homeoteleuton.

Wilfrid conceded to the king's wish. And so he went to that church and there he zealously attended to those things which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, he perceived had to be done.

Chapter 18 *Wilfrid is successful in further establishing proper orthodox Christian observances throughout England.*

¶32 Wilfrid was the first among the bishops appointed from native stock who had learnt to pass down the traditions of the catholic mode of life to the Church of the English; by his teaching he also spread a great number of regulations concerning catholic observance everywhere throughout the [English] Church. Wherefore, it came to pass that the universal practice of the Church was spreading day by day so that all the Irish who remained at that time among the English had either to concede to them or to return to their native land.

Chapter 19 *Wilfrid performs his episcopal duties admirably for three years.*

¶33 It was blessed Wilfrid's custom to travel hither and thither with a large retinue in order to disseminate the Word of God in so far as he had the ability to do so. While doing this on one occasion, he arrived at the place where he had been born and raised. He nourished the native peoples there with his account of the heavenly life, turning many of them away from a desire for worldly things and converting them to a love of Almighty God. Whence it came to pass that Wilfrid established many cells there for those wishing to serve God; moreover, he wisely instructed each individual as to the appropriate manner in which they ought to regulate their lives. And thus for three years running he devoted his providential care to the direction of the church at Canterbury and to the exhortation and instruction of people both there and elsewhere. And although he did not have anywhere his own place for an episcopal see, he was nevertheless very much occupied with fulfilling a bishop's office in rescuing his charges from the Devil, reconciling them to Christ the Lord, and strengthening them in their holy way of life.

CAPITULUM XX

¶34 *Emenso*¹ autem spatio trium annorum,² Theodorus, a Vitaliano papa archiepiscopus consecratus et missus, Cantiam uenit, susceptaque sede pontificatus in metropoli ciuitate, mox, secundum quod uigorem ecclesiasticum decebat, ea que circumquaque emendanda³ erant, summa prudentia et pontificali auctoritate in melius mutare studebat. Ut uero comperit Ceaddam contra canonum statuta in episcopatus gradum fuisse consecratum, publica illum increpatione redarguit, et quod degradari iure deberet paullo districtius minatus est. At ille, ut erat magne humilitatis et mansuetudinis uir, 'Si me,' inquit, 'asseris contra scita⁴ canonum ordinatum, libenti animo exordinari concedo, cum profecto nunquam tanti apud memet ipsum extiterim, qui loco huiusce⁵ regiminis uel ad horam preesse debuerim, sed obedientie causa iussus subire, hoc, licet indignus, consensi.' Qua responsionis eius humilitate⁶ Theodorus accepta, dixit eum nequaquam gradu sacerdotii se uelle priuare.⁷ Uerum quia (ut diximus) inordinate ad tantum ministerium fuerat ordinatus, ipse ordinationem eius canonica ratione consummauit. Sed ille, considerans se non iuste episcopatum alterius episcopi obtinuisse, penitentia ductus, elegit potius tali honore carere, quam alterius cathedre ulterius iniuste presidere. Discessit igitur episcopatu, et ad monasterium suum, quod erat in Lestingesei, priuatus secessit.

¹ D] The lower half of the second minim of *n* is erased so that the reading appears to be *Emerso*.

² A] adds *uenerabilis*.

³ D] *emendanda*.

⁴ D] *sita*.

⁵ D] *huiuscemodi*.

⁶ A] adds *sanctus*.

⁷ D] *priuari*.

Chapter 20 *Theodore, the newly appointed archbishop, restores Wilfrid to the bishopric of York; Chad, who had retired to the monastery at Lastingham, is subsequently made Bishop of Mercia. [A.D. 669]*

¶34 However, after an interval of three years had elapsed Theodore, once he had been consecrated archbishop and commissioned by Pope Vitalian, arrived in Kent. As soon as he had arrived and assumed his episcopal see in the metropolitan city, he endeavoured in a manner appropriate for an active bishop to change for the better by his great prudence and with pontifical authority those things which everywhere needed correcting. But when he discovered that Chad had been consecrated to the rank of bishop contrary to the statutes of Canon Law, he rebuked and chided him publicly and warned him in a quite severe manner that by right he ought to be demoted from the episcopate. But since Chad was a man of great humility and mildness, he said, 'If you assert that I have been ordained in contravention of the ordinances of Canon Law, then I will agree willingly to be degraded; for truly, in my own estimation I was never prominent enough to have been promoted to a position of such authority even for an hour. However, because I was obliged out of obedience to concede to that, though undeserving, I agreed.' Theodore accepted the humble nature of his response and said that he in no way wished to deprive him of the rank of the priesthood. But since, as we have said, Chad had been ordained to this rank in an irregular fashion, Theodore himself completed his ordination canonically. But, reflecting on the fact that he had not obtained the see of another bishop by right and being drawn by penitence, Chad chose to go without such an honour rather than to be in charge of another's church unjustly any longer. Therefore, once he had been removed from this office he left the see and retired to his monastery at Lastingham.

¶35 Porro¹ Theodorus beatum Wilfridum in episcopatum Eboracensis² ecclesie restituit, necnon et omnium Nordanhymbrorum,³ sed et Pictorum, quousque rex Oswius imperium protendere⁴ potuerat. Sicque uir sanctissimus et animam suam in patientia possedit, et multiplicatus honore, quod suum fuerat, totius populi exultatione recepit. Quo tempore regno Merciorum Wlfarius presidebat, cuius paullo ante meminimus. Qui cum mortuo Iarumanno episcopo sibi suisque alium a⁵ Theodoro dari peteret, non eis ille nouum uoluit episcopum ordinare, sed prefatum uenerabilem Ceaddam eis dedit.

CAPITULUM XXI

¶36 Beatus uero Wilfridus suis redditus, egregia mentis instantia operam dabat, quatinus et ea que longa uetustas aut incuria dissoluerat, in ecclesiis restauraret, et que in subditorum suorum moribus oculis magni Dei offendere poterant, eliminaret. Quibus operibus quanto magis intendebat, tanto⁶ sese in⁷ maiori uirtutum exercitio constringebat, ut subiectis in eius uita esset uidere, qua diligentia deberent uerborum ipsius documenta suscipere.

¶37 Iis autem que destructa reppererat⁸ in integrum restitutis, ecclesiam⁹ in honorem beati Petri apostolorum principis a fundamentis consummauit, et eam multo decore sub immensa principum ac populorum frequentia consecrauit. Ut autem uentum est ad sui sermonis officium, luce clarius uisa sunt dominica in eo¹⁰ uerba compleri, *Non uos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiritus Patris mei*¹¹

¹ A] Porro beatus THEODORVS sanctum (Wilfridum).

² A] Eboracensi.

³ A] Northanhymbrorum; D] nordanhymbrorum.

⁴ protendere potuerat] In D, -dere p- is written over an erasure.

⁵ A] adds sancto.

⁶ D] canto.

⁷ sese in] D] sese.

⁸ D] reppererat.

⁹ D] omits.

¹⁰ CD] ea (perhaps by attraction to uerba).

¹¹ A] uestri; see the Commentary.

¶35 Thereupon, Theodore restored blessed Wilfrid to the bishopric of the church at York, putting him in charge not only of all the Northumbrians, but also of the Picts, to the extent that King Oswiu had been able to impose his authority over them. And so this most holy man, Wilfrid, who had patiently bided his time, had honours heaped upon him, and with the whole of the populace rejoicing he recovered what had been his formerly. At this time Wulfhere, whom we mentioned a little earlier, was ruling the kingdom of the Mercians. And when Bishop Jaruman died, Wulfhere requested that Theodore appoint another bishop for him and his people. The archbishop chose not to ordain a new bishop for them, but instead gave them this same venerable Chad.

Chapter 21 *Wilfrid leads an exemplary life as bishop; he lays the foundations for the church of Saint Peter at Ripon.* [A.D. 671–8]

¶36 And when blessed Wilfrid had been restored to his people, with remarkable and persistent application he turned his attention both to restoring those things in the church which either the long passage of time or neglect had destroyed and to eliminating any practices among his subjects which might be offensive in the eyes of Almighty God. He was accustomed to attend to these duties to the same degree to which he used to subjugate himself to the greater exercise of virtue, so that by the example of his own life his subjects could see with what diligence they ought to take upon themselves his verbal instructions.

¶37 And after those things which he had found in ruins had been restored completely, Wilfrid laid the foundations for a church in honour of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, saw it to completion, and consecrated it with great splendour in the presence of a vast assembly of princes and common people. And as he came to the sermon in the liturgy, the following words of the Lord seemed to be most clearly fulfilled in him, 'For it is not you that speak, but

qui loquitur in uobis. Quod ea re plane licet considerare, cum et populus in Deum magna sit dilectione ex illo affectus, et corda principum tanto timore et amore Dei sint accensa, ut non solum ea que prius ad iura ipsius ecclesie pertinebant, ad uocem illius testamentis confirmarent, sed et quedam de suis ipsi ecclesie condonarent. Triduo post hec, omni secum turba detenta, pane uite tam celestis quam terrestris eam copiose refecit. Ecclesiam preterea magnis muneribus et ornamentis, decori domus Dei competentibus, ditauit. Et cum hec opera laude dignissima faceret, uti mortiferam pestem laudem fugiebat humanam. Ac sic positus in medio populorum omnibus erat speculum, et informatio operum bonorum.

CAPITULUM XXII

¶38 His ita se¹ habentibus, omnipotens Deus, ut merita famuli sui quanti penderet mundo demonstraret,² quem internarum luce uirtutum primo perfudit, etiam exteriorum exhibitione miraculorum decorare uoluit. Hinc est, quod die quadam cum idem uenerabilis pastor oues Dei uerbis et fidei sacramentis imbueret, et antiquo humani generis hosti in eis ius dominandi auferret, atque per sacri chrismatis unctionem septiformis gratie Spiritum iam baptizatis traderet, ecce, per effusas turmas mulier, nimio dolore afflicta, ministro Dei occurrit, defuncte funera prolis miserabili deportatione in ulnis ostentans. Quo uiso, pater obstupuit, hesitque loco, paullumque ab incepti operis ministerio se cohibenti, orbata mulier, acri doloris nimietate turbata, pronior incubuit, gemituque prepedita uix in hec uerba erupit: 'En,' inquires, 'bone domine, quem ad impositionem manus tue confirmandum in Christo portare decreueram, iam non solum ad confirmandum, uerum primo ad resuscitandum a mortuis tue sancte pietati, pieque sanctitati apporto. Christum tuum predicas omnipotentem, quod precor operibus proba, et meum a morte filium unigenitum suscita. Et

¹ ACD] *sese.*

² D] *demonstrauit.*

the Spirit of my Father that speaks in you'. We are clearly justified in drawing this conclusion because the people were moved with great love towards God by this event, and the hearts of the princes were enkindled with such great fear and love of God that not only did they confirm with their charters the earlier established rights of the church according to what Wilfrid had said, but they also granted certain of their own possessions to that same church. During the ensuing three days while he had the attention of the whole multitude, Wilfrid refreshed them frequently with the bread of life, which was as much celestial as earthly. Moreover, he enriched the church with great gifts and furnishings in a manner appropriate for the embellishment of the house of God. And although he carried out these most praiseworthy works, Wilfrid avoided the praise of other men like a deadly plague. And placed thus in the midst of these people Wilfrid was a mirror for them all and a template for good deeds.

Chapter 22 *A distraught woman begs Wilfrid to invoke divine intervention to bring her dead child back to life. Wilfrid intervenes on her behalf and the child is restored to life.*

¶38 And this being the case, in order that he might reveal to the world how greatly he valued the merits of his servant, Almighty God also decided to honour the one whom he had first infused with the light of inner virtue through the external manifestation of miracles. And so it came to pass that one day when that venerable shepherd was imbuing his flock with the words of God and the sacraments of faith, snatching from mankind's ancient enemy the right to rule over them and bestowing the spirit of seven-fold sacramental grace upon those baptized recently through the oils of sacred chrism, behold! through the thronging multitude a woman afflicted by very great sorrow ran straight up to Wilfrid, the minister of God, displaying before him in her arms as her sorrowful burden the remains of her dead child. Father Wilfrid was dumbstruck by this scene and stopped in his tracks; agitated by the extent of her acute sorrow, the bereaved woman threw herself down upon the ground before him as he drew back a little from the task he had begun. Hindered by her excessive groaning, she was scarcely able to blurt out these words: 'O my good master, I bring before your holy piety and your pious holiness one whom I had intended to carry forward to be confirmed in Christ by the laying on of your hand; now, not only does he need to be confirmed, but first he must be raised again from the dead. You declare your Christ to be omnipotent: demonstrate by your deeds that which I beg of you, and rescue from death my only-

quanti hoc est omnipotentie sue paruulum suscitare, et mei doloris stimulos effugare? Re uera, nichili. Quapropter in hoc peto que predicas rata esse potenter¹ ostende, ut² ad meam consolationem unicum filium meum restituas uite.³ Ingeminat querulas uoces; cuius uehementi gemitu coacti, sub uno conuolant omnes.

¶39 Fit plangor grandis. Tandem compassus uenerabilis Domini³ seruus, agit tacitas sancto sub pectore grates, quod turba nondum perfecte fidei, nouit rogare clementiam Domini Christi, moxque solo fusus et faciem lacrimis perfusus; 'O domine pater,' ait, 'non ad merita mea, sed ad tue⁴ pietatis opera, precor, placatus attende, et erumnis huius mulieris opem tue consolationis impende, restituendo sibi incolumem filium suum, per Iesum Christum, Dominum nostrum, unigenitum⁵ filium tuum.'

¶40 Quo dicto surrexit, et caput defuncti dextere manus extensione tetigit; cui ad eius tactum caput exagitant, uir Dei manum porrexit, et erectum uiuum incolumemque cunctis exhibuit. Uulgus in nimios admirationis⁶ ac laudis clamores excitatur, et fide plenissima in Christiane legis obseruantia consolidatur. Puer rediuiuus in Christo per manus impositionem confirmatur; matri cum gaudio redonatur, eo pacto ut septem annis materna cura nutritus uiro Dei restituatur. Quod post prefinitum tempus ne fieret patre suo interdicante,⁷

Exul ad externos fugit cum prole Britannos,

sciens uidelicet puerum nequaquam contra uiri Dei preceptum in proprio secum posse manere. Quid tamen fuga⁸ sua ei contulit? Post parui temporis dies prefectus quidam inuitis parentibus puerum in manus patris reduxit, quem protinus seruitio Dei

¹ D] *potenter*.

² D] *aut*.

³ D] *Dei*.

⁴ D] *pietatis tue*, with *tue* inserted above interlinearly and a caret sign below.

⁵ D] adds *unicum*.

⁶ D] *admirationes*.

⁷ D] *intercedente*.

⁸ ACD] *sua fuga*.

begotten son. For how much effort would it take for one who is omnipotent to raise up my little child and to put to flight the pangs of my sorrow? In truth, none at all. Wherefore, I pray that you demonstrate beyond doubt the truths that you preach by restoring my only son to life for my consolation.' She heaped lament upon lament, and drawn together by her violent groaning all those present flocked around in support of her.

¶39 Great wailing ensued. At length, the venerable servant of the Lord was moved by compassion and offered silent thanks within his holy breast because a crowd not yet fully believing knew how to ask for the clemency of Christ the Lord; and immediately Wilfrid prostrated himself upon the ground, and with tears rolling down his cheeks he said, 'O Lord and Father, I pray, if you have been appeased by this, judge not according to whether I am deserving, but rather on account of your past deeds of loving kindness extend the bounty of your consolation to this woman suffering anguish here by restoring her son to her unharmed, through Jesus Christ our Lord, your only-begotten Son.'

¶40 When he had said this, he rose to his feet and stretching out his right hand he touched the dead child on the head. Thereupon, the boy raised his head and Wilfrid, the man of God, extended his hand and showed him to everyone standing alive and unharmed. The crowd was aroused to great cries of wonder and praise, and with a great fullness of faith they were confirmed in their observance of Christian law. The child who was brought back to life was confirmed in Christ through the laying on of hands; amidst great joy he was given back to his mother on the understanding that he would be returned to the man of God after he had been nurtured by her loving care for seven years. Because the father of the child refused to accept that this should happen at the appointed time 'she fled as an exile with her offspring to the foreign Britons' recognizing clearly that the boy would under no circumstances be able to remain in her custody contrary to the earlier pact with the man of God. Yet, what did her flight avail him? After a few days had passed, a certain official led the boy from his unwilling parents back into the hands of the blessed father who immediately delivered him into the service of

mancipavit, et bene instructum pluribus imitabilem in sancta conuersatione postmodum fecit.

¶41 Hinc quique perpendite, quid signi pretulerit super eius cunabula celitus emissum lumen radiantis flammæ.

CAPITULUM XXIII

¶42 Ea tempestate regnum¹ gentis Anglorum gemino decore nitebat, cum et reges Christianitatis amore feruebant, et pontifices diuini operationem mysterii² summo studio exercebant. Hinc regalis prouidentia hoc potissimum pre se gerebat quosque subditorum magis a prauitate morum abstrahere, quam cupiditate animi res eorum deripiendo distrahere. Nec ulla eis cura fuit³ quam subditis, sed quam bonis ipsi regnarent. Hinc nichilominus sacerdotalis apex sui officii plenissime compos extiterat, eis solummodo sua diligentia operam prebens, ad que ipsius ordinis institutor et auctor Deus ipsum instituit. Hec propter summa quies erat plebi, legalia iura tenenti; terra frugibus et tranquillitate opima suis cultoribus non modo egestatem tollebat, sed et operi Dei absque sollicitudine secularium rerum curam impendere permittebat. Classica dira silent, nec latronum incursio formidatur. Quid plura? ut cuncta breui⁴ edicam,

Promicat ecclesia peccato⁵ federe nexa.

Que ut diabolus uidit, propria sibi malignitate inuidit, et tractans secum pacis interruptioni causas inuenit. Spiritu namque superbie sue inuadit gentem Pictorum in tantum, ut ea gens (quod semper ferre consueuerat) bello a se temptaret excutere iugum Anglorum.

¹ D] *gentis anglorum regnum.*

² D] *ministerii.*

³ ACD] *fuera.*

⁴ D] omits.

⁵ D] *peccato*, with *ec* altered to an *a* to produce the correct reading.

God. Afterwards Wilfrid instructed the child well and by the boy's holy way of life he made him a model for many others.

¶41 Wherefore let everyone consider carefully what that sign betokened when a beam of radiant flame was sent down from the heavens upon Wilfrid's cradle.

Chapter 23 *The Devil finds the peace throughout the land unbearable; he incites the Picts to war against the English.*

¶42 At that time the kingdom of the English peoples shone with twofold splendour, for her kings were enkindled with Christian love and her bishops performed their office of the divine mystery with the utmost zeal. On the one hand the loving concern of these kings manifested itself particularly in that they drew each of their subjects away from moral depravity rather than estranging them by snatching their possessions away with greedy spirit. They were not preoccupied with treating the people merely as subjects, but rather with ruling them as good people. And on the other hand, Wilfrid, the pinnacle of the priesthood, also emerged as complete and utter master of his office, diligently offering the people his undivided attention in those matters for which he had been put in place by God—he who established the priesthood and continues to foster it. Because of this the people lived in the greatest peace and enjoyed their legal rights. The land, being rich both in its fruits and in peace, not only lifted need from its farmers, but by relieving them of care in secular matters also allowed them to devote attention to the work of God. The dire call of the battle-trumpet fell silent and the onset of thieves was no longer dreaded. What more can I say? To put it succinctly, 'bound together in peaceful treaty the Church gleamed forth'. When the Devil saw these things, his inherent malice made him envious and he devised within himself ways of disrupting the peace. And so he infused the Pictish nation with the spirit of his pride to such an extent that they attempted to shake off the yoke of the English in war, as had always been the nature of that nation.

CAPITULUM XXIV

¶43 Prefuit eo tempore regno Nordanhimbrorum¹ Ecfrius, filius Oswii regis, qui patri suo in regnum successerat; uir in armis strenuus, et beati Wilfridi amicitias uehementer astrictus. Hic ergo pontifici negotium² Pictorum, quod incumbibat, exposuit, atque ut rebus³ opem sue intercessionis ferret, supplici⁴ prece admonuit. Cuius dehinc benedictione uallatus, atque sanctissima oratione comitatus, cum parua militum manu Pictis occurrit, Pictos occursantes cateruatim prostrauit, et Pictorum tumorem⁵ gladii ultione repressit. Et quid morer?

Dat stragem late, redeunt in colla catene.

Sicque uictoria leta potitus rediit, et eximias propugnatori suo gratias egit.⁶ Hoc modo genti Anglorum pax restituta per annos aliquot mansit.

CAPITULUM XXV

¶44 At regno Merciorum post hec in dissensionem elato, rex prefatus armis pacem reuocare⁷ desiderans,⁸ obuius eidem regno in bellum processit, <pugnam>⁹ commisit, quam querebat pacem, duce fugato exercituque prostrato, uictor obtinuit. Ea nimirum¹⁰ re huic regi sic processit, quo¹¹ Deus ostenderet preces beati Wilfridi ante se penitus cassari non posse. Nec mirum; qui enim in *Euangelio* dixit, omnia fore possibilis credenti, merito illi quem et fide catholicum, et in operibus eiusdem fidei precipuum ipsa Domini sapientia uidit, que iuste petebat, possibilis esse¹² concedere

¹ A] *Northanhimbrorum*; D] *nordhamhimbrorum*.

² D] The scribe wrote *negotii*, which he subsequently corrected to *negotium*.

³ D] omits.

⁴ D] *simplici*.

⁵ D] *tumorem*, with *r* apparently altered from *l*.

⁶ D] *ægi*; the scribe originally wrote *a* but subsequently a second hand added a loop to the *a* to produce *æ*.

⁷ D] omits.

⁸ D] The first *s* seems to be written over an abbreviation sign.

⁹ Supplied by the editors (proposed by D'Achery and Mabillon); see the Commentary.

¹⁰ D] *ni mirum*; see the Commentary.

¹¹ D] *quod*.

¹² D] *concedere esse*.

Chapter 24 *King Ecgrith suppresses the Pictish uprising and peace is restored.*

¶43 At that time Ecgrith, the son of King Oswiu, who had succeeded his father to the kingdom, was ruling the nation of the Northumbrians. He was a man vigorous in warfare and bound very strongly by his friendly relations to blessed Wilfrid. Thus Ecgrith made his pressing troubles with the Picts known to the bishop and urged him with humble prayer to bring his power of divine intercession to bear on these matters. And so fortified by Wilfrid's blessing and with his most holy prayer for a companion, he attacked the Picts with a small band of soldiers. He laid low in heaps the onrushing band of Pictish warriors and suppressed the arrogance of the Picts with the vengeance of the sword. And why should I restrain myself—He spreads destruction far and wide and puts the chains back upon their necks. And thus he returned, having secured a glorious victory, and gave whole-hearted thanks to him who had fought on his behalf. And in this fashion peace was restored to the English people and it endured for a number of years.

Chapter 25 *Ecgrith's successes in battle are attributed to the power of the prayers of Wilfrid offered on his behalf.*

¶44 But afterwards, dissension arose within the Mercian kingdom, and this Ecgrith, wishing to restore the peace by means of weapons, advanced in arms as an adversary against that nation. He engaged in battle, emerged victorious and gained the peace which he had been seeking once the Mercian leader had been put to flight and the army laid low. Without doubt, this affair unfurled thus for King Ecgrith so that it might be demonstrated that the prayers of blessed Wilfrid could in no way be frustrated in God's presence. And no wonder—for he who said in the Gospel that all things are possible for anyone who believes, was compelled to grant to that man on his merits that those things which he sought justly were possible; the Lord recognized in his wisdom that Wilfrid practised

debut. Nam de illius fidei integritate quis dubitare, aut quis de perfectione operum eius digne ualeat disputare? Ueruntamen paucis opera eius quedam describantur,¹ que et integritati sue fidei testimonium prebeant, et illius cordis deuotionem imitari uolentes quod imitentur² pre oculis habeant.

CAPITULUM XXVI

¶45 Ac primo dicendum quod optimis a puero moribus institutus, nulla quoad³ uixit eisdem potuit ratione abduci. Incommutabilis iustitie cultor, nec fauore remitti, nec detractatione diduci,⁴ nec laudibus decipi,⁵ nec uituperationibus in zelum poterat commoueri. Pernox diuinis insistens obsequiis, corpus suum quod ab omni contagione ex utero matris sue mundum custodierat, tam uigiliis quam frigoribus mire afficiebat, singulis illud noctibus aqua frigida tinguens; nec prius ab hac consuetudine cessans, quam Iohannes, apostolice sedis antistes, eum pro etatis sue grauitate huic proposito finem iuberet imponere. Non⁶ hunc ardor estatis, non frigus hiemis⁷ ab instantia cepti operis Dei detorquere ualebant. Preterea quaquauersum gratia predicandi gratiam Dei pergens, paratus erat pro ipsa quam predicabat ueritate uitam dare, si occasio competens⁸ offerretur, que id fieri postularet. Si quando aliquid deliciarum quouis euentu, et hoc summa cum parcitate, in escam sumebat, id ipsum in se postmodum graui inedia uindicabat.⁹ Hec institutio uite minimum elationis et maximum humilitatis in eius pectore studium comparauit. Hec subditis sibi exemplum sancte¹⁰ conuersionis indixit. Hec eosdem in artam continentie uiam induxit. Hec quoque multos a suo errore conuersos ad Christi¹¹ gratiam duxit. Unde quamplurimi nobilium incitati, filios suos Dei seruitio mancipandos uiro tradebant mirantes, et mirando eius merita dignis laudibus

¹ D] A single letter is erased after this.

² D] *imitantur*.

³ ABCD] *quo aduixit*; see the Commentary.

⁴ D] *deduci*.

⁵ D] *descipi*.

⁶ D] The scribe initially wrote *Nunc*; subsequently he erased final *c* and altered *u* to *o* to produce the required reading. The alteration seems to have been made after the whole passage was copied out, and not 'in progress'.

⁷ D] *iemis*, with *e* inserted above interlinearly (there is an insertion mark below).

⁸ D] *compotens*.

⁹ D] Initial *u* is partly obliterated.

¹⁰ D] *sue*.

¹¹ D] *gratiam Christi*.

the universal faith and was outstanding in his works on its behalf. Who can possibly doubt the integrity of Wilfrid's faith or question the perfection of his deeds? Nonetheless, let me describe certain of his works in a few words. Let them bear witness to the integrity of his faith and let those wishing to emulate the devotion of his heart have before their eyes that which they wish to imitate.

Chapter 26 *Wilfrid practised an exemplary style of Christian living tirelessly throughout his life.*

¶45 But first it must be said that having been infused with the best morals from his boyhood, he was not able to be persuaded in any way to abandon these morals as long as he lived. A single-minded cultivator of justice, he could not be distracted by favours, nor drawn aside by criticism, nor deceived by flattering utterances, nor deterred by vituperative comments against his zeal. While attending dutifully to the divine offices throughout the night, he used to mortify his body, which from the time he was born of his mother he had preserved pure of every defilement, in wondrous fashion, as much with sleepless vigils as with extremes of cold, immersing himself each night in freezing water. He did not refrain from this practice until John, the Bishop of the Apostolic See, ordered him on account of the weight of his great age to put an end to the habit. Neither the heat of summer nor the cold of winter was able to wrench this man away from the dedication to the work of God which he had undertaken. Moreover, travelling hither and thither in order to preach the grace of God, he was prepared to give his life on behalf of the very truth which he was proclaiming, should a situation present itself which demanded such a thing. If on any occasion he partook of a delicacy as part of his meal—and that with his usual great restraint—he used afterwards to repay himself for that very indulgence with severe fasting. This manner of living bought for him a minimum of exaltation, but the greatest bounty of joy in his breast. It enjoined the example of his holy life upon his flock; it induced the same people towards the narrow road of continence; and it also led many others converted from their errors towards the grace of Christ. And on this account, a great number of the nobility were aroused and struck with wonder, and they handed

approbantes, atque suos ipsius probitatis imitatores fieri modis omnibus exoptantes. Sed, sicut sepe, quod, aliquibus prouenit ad uirtutis profectum, aliquibus procedit ad iniquitatis effectum, sic unde nonnulli in amorem et uenerationem famuli Dei profecerunt, inde quidam in odium et contumeliam eius eruperunt. At athleta Dei cum iis¹ qui oderunt pacem erat pacificus, et odio ipsorum sue rependebat obsequium mansuetudinis.

CAPITULUM XXVII

¶46 Preterea in Augustaldensi² oppido templum mirabili opere fecit, quod ipse in honorem beati Andree apostoli Deo dicauit, ad uicem uidelicet beneficii rependendam, quod idem apostolus iam dudum ei impenderat. In cuius templi constructione non defuit inuidia mortiferi serpentis. Nam dum cementarii liniunt³ superiora parietis, precipitante illum aduersario humani generis, unus eorum in⁴ preceps corruit, et sic, ut,⁵ contritis omnibus membris, iam defungi⁶ putaretur.⁷ Qui cum uelut in exhalatione sui spiritus laboraret, concurrunt omnes, utpote ad exequias⁸ funeris eius. Uir autem Domini Wilfridus, cum corpore⁹ absens presentia Spiritus cuncta dinosceret, mox sese in lacrimas¹⁰ dedit, et quosque assidentium quid euenerit ex ordine docens, pro salute fratris eos intercedere¹¹ postulauit. Ubi uero ad egrum uentum est, mox ad patris tactum pristinam receperunt membra salutem, et, si dicendum, letum erubuit, cum per hominem uite se depelli, et homini uitam restitui uidit. Cuius mortis auctor, diabolus, uidens uirum tam internis animi uirtutibus, quam exteriorum exhibitione miraculorum suam confusionem augere, in nimium sue malignitatis

¹ D] *his*.

² D] *Haugustaldensi*.

³ AC] *linunt*. The second *i* is inserted above interlinearly in B.

⁴ D] *in* is inserted above interlinearly.

⁵ D] *U*, which falls at the end of a manuscript line, is written as a dotted *u*, an abbreviation not found generally until the fourteenth century.

⁶ D] *defunctus*.

⁷ D] *deputaretur*.

⁸ D] *exquias*.

⁹ D] *tempore*.

¹⁰ D] *lacrimis*.

¹¹ D] *-ter-* is inserted interlinearly above with a caret sign below.

their own sons over to Wilfrid to be surrendered to the service of God; in their astonishment they approved his merits with fitting praises and hoped that their own sons would emulate his great virtue in every way. But as is often the case, what leads some towards an increase of virtue, leads others to an evil outcome: while on the one hand not a few were moved towards veneration and love for God's servant, others ruptured with hatred and abuse for him. But God's athlete remained peaceful with those who hated peace and paid them back with gentle service for their hatred of him.

Chapter 27 *Wilfrid builds a magnificent church at Hexham and dedicates it to Saint Andrew. Wilfrid miraculously restores to health a workman brought to the verge of death by an accident on the site.* [A.D. 672–8]

¶46 Moreover, in the town of Hexham he raised a wondrously wrought temple; he himself consecrated it to God in honour of the blessed apostle Andrew in order to pay back, as it were, the good deed which the same apostle had bestowed upon him a long time earlier. But the jealousy of the pestilential serpent was not absent during the construction of his temple. For while the stone masons were plastering the upper parts of a wall, one of them fell headlong downwards after he was pushed by the Enemy of the human race; he fell in such a way that all his limbs were smashed and he appeared to be on the brink of death. And as he was labouring as if in the throes of yielding up his spirit, everyone rushed up in expectation of the funeral rites for his corpse. However, Wilfrid, the man of the Lord, immediately broke into tears since he knew everything by the presence of the spirit, even though he was absent in body; he informed those sitting by him of the sequence of events that had transpired and asked them to intercede for the health of their brother. But when he came up to the sick man, his limbs recovered their former strength upon being touched by the father; and if such a thing can be said, death blushed when it realized that it had been deprived of a life by a mortal and saw life restored to a man. The Devil, the perpetrator of this death, on seeing Wilfrid augment his bewilderment as much by his inner spiritual virtues as by his external show of miracles, became incensed in the extreme

furorem accenditur, quibus modis poterat inquirens, qualiter confusionem suam uersa uice in eum retorqueret.

CAPITULUM XXVIII

¶47 Acceperat autem rex Ecfridus coniugem, nomine Ætheldritham,¹ que in uoto uirginitatis potius hanc uitam transigere proposuerat, quam aliena libidine uiolari. Iuncta est tamen regi prefato lege coniugali, non coniunctione carnali. Cuius rei gratia beatum Wilfridum, tam per se quam et² per amicos suos, rex conuenit, orans et obsecrans, et maximarum³ rerum pollicitatione in hoc ipsum allicere temptans, quo negotium regine persuaderet, ut, omisso⁴ uirginitatis proposito, regie⁵ uoluntati assensum preberet. At Wilfridus, sciens scriptum esse, "Vouete et reddite Domino Deo uestro", maluit Ecfrido hac in re non parere, quam suum Deo sacrificium auferre, ne per hoc, non modo uirginis, uerum et sue anime, mortis eterne dispendia pareret. Ergo uirginei uoti fautor existens,⁶ uigilantis animi sagacitate procurabat, ne qua feminee mentis inconstantia propositum uirgo postponeret, et terrenis illecebris animum deuicta supponeret. Egit igitur sua industria, ut uirgo potius diuortium coniugii a coniuge quereret, quatinus libertate potita seculum linquere et thalamis eterni⁷ regis ualeret feliciter inherere. Quod quidem factum est. Nam ubi rex comperit eam nullo pacto a proposito posse mutari, licet inuitus, concessit tamen ut relicto seculo, prout uolebat, acciperet uelamen insigne⁸ uirginitatis. Qua licentia felix, accepto uelamine a beato Wilfrido, que mundi sunt cum mundo deseruit, spreuit, atque a sui desiderio⁹ cordis procul abiecit. Ermenburgis uero regali est copulata coniugio.¹⁰

¹ C] ÆDELDRYÐAM; D] Æteldridam.

² AD] omit.

³ D] A letter is erased before initial *m*.

⁴ D] *ommisso*.

⁵ *regie uoluntati*] D omits.

⁶ D] *existens*.

⁷ D] *eternis*.

⁸ D] *insignum*.

⁹ C] The second *i* is inserted above interlinearly.

¹⁰ D] This is written over an erasure.

ferocity of his malice and sought in whatsoever way he could how he might cast back upon him in turn his own confusion.

Chapter 28 *Wilfrid supports Queen Æthelthryth's commitment to remain a virgin. King Ecgrith unwillingly accepts her decision and remarries to a woman named Ermenburg. [A.D. 678]*

¶47 In the meantime, Ecgrith had taken a wife, Æthelthryth by name, who had intended to see out this life under a vow of virginity rather than be violated by the lust of another. Consequently, she was joined to that king in legal marriage, and not in a carnal relationship. On which account the king approached blessed Wilfrid, as much personally as through his friends; he beseeched and begged, and tried to win Wilfrid over in this matter by the promise of great rewards, in order that he might convince the queen in this matter to set aside her vow of virginity and to offer consent to the royal will. But Wilfrid, recalling that it had been written, 'Vow ye, and pay to the Lord your God', chose not to obey Ecgrith in this matter rather than to undermine his own sacrifice to God, lest in doing so he incur the cost of eternal death not only for the virgin but also for his own soul. And so, taking upon himself responsibility for the vow of the virgin, by the wisdom of his watchful spirit he took care to ensure that she not set aside her vow through any fickleness of the female mind and in defeat subject her soul to earthly enticements. Therefore, he brought it about through his assiduous activity that the virgin sought rather a divorce in the marriage from her husband so that having attained her freedom she would be able to abandon the world and commit herself joyfully to the wedding chamber of the eternal King. And indeed, that is what happened. For when the king discovered that she could in no way be dissuaded from her vow, though unwilling, he nevertheless granted that she receive the glorious veil of virginity, having abandoned this world according to her wishes. Favoured by this permission and having accepted the veil from blessed Wilfrid, Æthelthryth turned her back on this world and all earthly things, rejected them and cast them far away from the desire of her heart. Then Ermenburg was united in marriage to the king.

CAPITULUM XXIX

¶48 Per hanc igitur diabolus odium, quod contra uirum Dei habebat, exerere opportunum¹ existimans, animum illius iniectis quibusdam simultatibus aduersus eum inflammat; quoque ipsi suarum insidias fraudium tendat, uehementer instigat. Cui suggestioni eo facilius cessit, quo muliebris inconstantia mentis, intemperantia lubricae ostentationis, oppressio ac rapina uiolente dominationis, que in ea magno cum tumore uigebant, seruum Domini in redargutionem sui multotiens acerba iniectione armabant. Quamobrem non parum intus offensa, et insuper demoniaco igne succensa, glorie dignitatieque ipsius² magnopere cepit inuidere, et quonam³ modo eum dignitate sua spoliare, ac spoliatum abicere posset, occasiones querere. Considerata igitur gloria uiri, qualiter eum omni ex parte dignitatis affluentia circumfulsisset, regem muliebri facundia conuenit quasi de quibusdam suis utilitatibus actura, re autem uera primo an⁴ animum eius ad⁵ que uellet acclinem posset habere, ex obliquo perquisitura. Quem ubi ad uotum suum esse persensit, ut hominem Dei in inuidiam adduceret, fraudulentis sermonibus eius gloriam regi cepit admirando enarrare. Nam, exposita diuitiarum abundantia, cenobiorum multitudine,⁶ edificiorum magnitudine,⁷ subditorum principum turba, obsequentium militum copia regalibus uestibus et armis instructa, intulit, "Et quid amplius ipse tibi, quam tu sibi? Totum regnum tuum episcopatus ipsius est; quin et si tua potestas eius potestati comparetur, minor est. Terminus enim imperii tui suis finibus coartatur, terminus autem episcopatus eius tuos fines auctoritate progreditur. Et, fateor, fidelibus⁸ et amicis tuis est timendum, ne si aliquando inimici tui contra te arma susceperint, ipse, quam predicat pacem sequendo, suos ab armis immunes retineat, tuque tuorum paucitate inimicis inferior uictus occumbas. Quapropter de negotio ante negotium tracta, et ne in ipsa gestione negotii tua uirtus decidat, que obsunt gnarus

¹ D] *oportunum*.

² D] *-sius* is written over an erasure.

³ *quonam modo*] D] *quomodo*.

⁴ D] omits.

⁵ D] adds *ea*.

⁶ D] *multitudinem*.

⁷ D] *magnitudinem*.

⁸ *fidelibus...timendum*] D] *est tuis fidelibus et amicis timendum*.

Chapter 29 *The Devil incites hatred in Ermenburg towards Wilfrid. Through her cunning she turns Ecgrith against Wilfrid; he confiscates his wealth and subdivides his episcopal see.*

¶48 Thereupon, the Devil, when he had judged it convenient to reveal through this woman his hatred for the man of God and had infused into her spirit certain grudges, set aflame her mind against him and urged her vehemently to direct his own treason and deceit against Wilfrid. She conceded the more readily to this suggestion because the servant of the Lord was time and again incited to reprove her with bitter invective on account of the fickleness of her female mind, the intemperance of her deceitful and ostentatious behaviour, and the oppression and plundering of her autocratic rule, all of which flourished and swelled up greatly within her. Wherefore, because she had been offended deeply in no small way and also incensed by a diabolical flame, Ermenburg began to envy greatly the glory and dignity of this man and to seek in whatsoever way possible opportunities to despoil him of his dignity and, having despoiled him, to cast him aside. Thus she reflected on the glorious nature of the man—how an abundance of dignity shone forth from every facet of his being—and approached the king using a woman's eloquence as if she intended to deal with certain matters to his advantage; however, the truth of the matter was that she intended in the first instance to find out devious means whether she would be able to incline his mind to her designs. When she perceived that he was leaning towards her wishes so that she might lead the man of God into the king's hatred, she began with deceitful words to speak to the king with admiration about Wilfrid's success. And so, she detailed his abundant wealth, his numerous monasteries, the greatness of his buildings, his throng of subject princes, and the great number of obedient soldiers equipped with regal uniforms and arms, and concluded: 'And how much more powerful is he by comparison with you, than you with him? Your entire kingdom is this man's bishopric; and furthermore, if your power be compared with his, it is the lesser. For the extent of your power is confined by your kingdom's established borders; but the boundary of his bishopric advances beyond your borders in its authority. And I dare say that there ought to be cause for deep concern for your friends and those faithful to you that, if at any time your enemies have taken up arms against you, he in adhering to the peace which he preaches might restrain his followers from taking part in battle, and you, being inferior to your enemies in the small number of your men, will be defeated and slain. Therefore, take care of this matter before it becomes a reality; and lest your courage fail you in the execution of this business, act

preordina. Sunt quidem et alia nonnulla, que tibi honeste possunt persuadere, tui honoris nullatenus esse, non dico superiorem, sed parem te quenquam¹ in regno tuo habere. Que nec dici quidem opus esse cognosco, quia non modo tue prudentie, sed et cuius imprudenti clara esse non nescio.” Talibus uerbis rex permotus et, quasi sue utilitati consuleretur, ad ea totus arrectus, melius suis rebus consuli non posse putauit, quam uir Dei suis omnibus² priuaretur, et episcopatus ipsius in plures episcopos distribueretur.

CAPITULUM XXX

¶49 Verum quia id agi preter consensum Cantuariensis archiepiscopi minime poterat, uerba maligne accusationis contra episcopum ipsius sedis³ antistiti Theodoro mandant, et ad sue uoluntatis⁴ effectum deceptum inclinant. Uenit igitur ad regalem curiam⁵ Theodorus, sua auctoritate regiam uoluntatem super⁶ Wilfrido impleturus. Quod factum est. Nam protinus in locum eius tres episcopos, eo absente, ordinauit.

¶50 Res uiro⁷ celari non potuit, et admiratione quam maxima ductus, hilari corde, alacri uultu, modesto gressu regis palatium subit, causam negotii perquisiturus. Cui hoc modo, ut fertur, ad inquisita responsum est: ‘Nec te inpresentiarum alicuius criminis admissione notamus, nec tamen statutum de te iudicium hac uice mutabimus.’ Ille uero talibus uerbis non sibi satisfactum esse consentiens, apostolicam sedem appellauit; et pro eorum iniustitia indignatus, reflexo gressu aulam egredi uoluit.

¹ D] *quemquam*.

² D] A tall *s* is erased before this word.

³ A] adds *uenerabili*.

⁴ D] *uoluntati*.

⁵ A] adds *sanctus*.

⁶ A] adds *beato*.

⁷ A] adds *Dei*.

first since you know what obstacles confront you. Indeed there are many other things which could be said honestly in order to convince you that it in no way enhances your honour to have anyone, I will not say as a superior, but as your equal, in your own kingdom. I realize that there is no need for these things to be said, since I am fully aware that they are abundantly clear not only to your good sense, but even to someone lacking your discernment.’ The king was deeply disturbed by these words and as if he were counselled for his own benefit—but in reality being completely steered towards these views—he thought it not possible to be better advised in his affairs than to have the man of God deprived of all his possessions and to parcel out his episcopal see to several bishops.

Chapter 30 *Archbishop Theodore supports these machinations. The death of Ecgrith’s much beloved young brother, Ælfwine, in battle is seen as an expression of divine disapproval of the king’s mistreatment of Wilfrid.*

¶49 But since that could not be carried out except with the agreement of the Archbishop of Canterbury, they sent evil words of accusation against the bishop to Theodore, the prelate of that see, and having deceived him they inclined him towards the accomplishment of their will. Therefore, Theodore came to the royal court in order to carry out by his authority the king’s desire concerning Wilfrid. And this was done. For in Wilfrid’s absence he ordained three bishops in his place without ado.

¶50 These things could not be concealed from the man of God, and induced by the greatest amazement he approached the king’s palace with a cheerful heart, an alert face and a modest step, seeking to investigate thoroughly the cause of this affair. It is reported that upon his inquiries response was made to him in this manner: ‘At present neither do we brand you with the admission of any crime in these circumstances nor, however, shall we change the judgement imposed upon you by this reversal.’ But Wilfrid, considering these utterances to be quite inadequate, appealed to the Apostolic See; and outraged by their injustice, he turned on his heel and sought to leave the palace.

¶51 Intuens autem quosdam satis fedo suis casibus insultare cachinno: et, 'O,' inquit,¹ 'filii, felici prosperitate ducatis tempora longa: sed noueritis, quantotius² sors infesta resoluet hec gaudia uestra, nec prius hunc annum transisse uidebitis, quam istas quas super me derisiones habetis, acerbo³ merore luatis.'" Que prophetia⁴ ueritas facta est. Nam post non multum temporis conserto graui prelio inter Ecfridum et Æilredum⁵ regem Merciorum iuxta fluuium Treanta, occisus est Ælfwinus⁶ frater regis Ecfridi, iuuenis circiter decem et octo annos habens, utrique prouincie multum amabilis. Ex cuius morte magnus et intolerabilis meror Ecfridum ac suos perculit, omnisque letitia quam de expulsione beati Wilfridi habuerant, iusto Dei iudicio in tristitiam uersa est. Sic ex eo quo a se fortissimum militem Domini repellere non timuerunt, numquam leta uictoria potiti sunt. Sed qui prius parua manu militum eius intercessione muniti ingentes copias strauerant, postmodum cum ingenti copia raro milite uicti cadebant. Nec iniuria. Repulso etenim eo per quem uictores extiterant, nil erat residui, quare passim uinci non debuerint.⁷

CAPITULUM XXXI

¶52 Verum ut ad ordinem instituti operis stili officio redeamus. Beatus Wilfridus, episcopalis cathedre dignitate priuatus, ad sua rediit; filiis et fratribus suis de eius infortunio ualde contristatis uerba consolationis, patientie, et uere caritatis non pauca disseruit, dicens inter alia, nichili esse pendendum, quod constaret nonnunquam⁸ fore perdendum. Ipse uero post hec Romam iturus,

¹ o inquit] D reverses.

² D] *quam* *uocius*.

³ ACD] *acerbi*.

⁴ D] *propheta*, with *i* inserted above before *a* and a caret sign below (later hand in a black ink).

⁵ AD] *ailradum*; C] *Ailredum*.

⁶ C] *Elfwinus*; D] *elwinus*.

⁷ D] *debuerant*.

⁸ D] *nonnumquam*.

¶51 However, perceiving that certain people were insulting his misfortunes with immoderate and mocking derision, he said: 'O my sons, would that you might enjoy long periods of happiness and prosperity; but know you this, an adverse stroke of fate will very soon undo these joys of yours; indeed you will not see this year passed before you have atoned with bitter grief for this mockery which you pour upon me now.' And this prophecy was realized. For not long afterwards, when Ecgrith and Æthelred, King of the Mercians, became entwined in grievous warfare near the River Trent, Ælfwine, the brother of King Ecgrith, a young man of only about eighteen years who was greatly beloved in both kingdoms, was slain. On account of his death a great and unbearable grief devastated Ecgrith and his men, and all the joy which they had had concerning the expulsion of blessed Wilfrid was turned into sadness by the just judgement of God. Thus because of that deed—that they did not fear to drive away the bravest soldier of the Lord from among themselves—they never achieved a blessed victory. But those men who, in a small troop but fortified by his intercession, had earlier laid low huge forces, subsequently died together in a mighty force, defeated by a scanty group of soldiers. And rightly so. For once the one through whom they had emerged as victors had been driven away, there was no reason left why they ought not to be defeated far and wide.

Chapter 31 *Wilfrid sets out for Rome to plead his case before the pope. He is driven off course and lands in Frisia where he is received with great honour by King Aldgisl. [A.D. 678]*

¶52 But now compelled by our duty as an author, let us return to the proper sequence of the work we have undertaken. Blessed Wilfrid, now deprived of the authority of his episcopal see, returned to his own affairs; he expounded to his sons and brothers who were greatly upset about his misfortune many words of consolation, patience and true charity, saying among other things that a thing ought not to be considered of value which, it is agreed, will at some stage be destroyed. But in the wake of these events he set out for

et ne quod scandalum ecclesie Christi propter eum immineret causam suam ante sedem apostolicam expositurus ad mare uenerabili monachorum¹ collegio dextra leuaque stipatus perducitur, nauis imponitur, pia illorum imprecatione perfungitur; prospero cursu uentis uela panduntur.

¶53 At ubi paullulum² nauis processit, mutato uento pulsus est Fresiam, ubi a barbaris ac rege illorum Aldgislo³ honorifice susceptus, ibidemque honorifice conuersatus, ab omnibus summo cum honore, quoad ibi manere cordi fuit, habitus est, licet adhuc tota prouincia idolorum cultui dedita deseruiet. Uicem itaque benignitati eorum rependere uolens, predicabat eis uerbum Dei, et multa milia uerbo ueritatis instituit, ac fonte salutari a suorum peccatorum sordibus lauit; sicque susceptores suos et a Deo suscipi, et Deum in se suscipere fecit. Erat autem ante aduentum beati uiri terra ipsa magne salsitatis magneque sterilitatis, et uelut in modum rupis nimie asperitatis, ac per hoc quibusque animalibus⁴ ad incolendum magne incommoditatis. Uerum ad predicationem uiri Dei eadem gente fidem Domini⁵ suscipiente, sicut corda eorum superne⁶ dulcedinis rore ad fertilitatem operum bonorum mollita, et inhabitationi Spiritus Sancti sunt accommodata facta, ita et terre ipsorum salsitas in dulcedinem, sterilitas in fertilitatem, asperitas in mollitiem atque pinguedinem uersa, omnibus inhabitantibus eam diuerse commoditatis copias lautissime intulit.

CAPITULUM XXXII

¶54 Interea ii qui sua nequitia uicti amicum Christi propria dignitate, possessione, terra proturbauerant, legatos suos tam

¹ *monachorum collegio*] D reverses.

² D] *paululum*.

³ D] *aldgillo*.

⁴ D] adds *et*.

⁵ *domini suscipiente*] D] *suscipiente domini*, with interlinear annotations to indicate that these words should be read in reverse order and a caret sign added to indicate the point at which the reversal takes effect.

⁶ *superne dulcedinis*] D] *dilectionis*.

Rome intending to argue his case before the Apostolic See so that no scandal might threaten the Church of Christ on his account; he was led to the sea by a venerable company of monks who thronged to the left and right of him, was put aboard the ship and sent forth with their holy invocations; the sails were spread out to the winds in a prosperous journey.

¶53 But after the ship had travelled a short distance, there was a change of wind and he was driven to Frisia where he was received honourably by the barbarians and their king, Aldgisl. He dwelt in that place honourably and was held in the highest regard by everyone for as long as he desired in his heart to remain there, even though up until that time the entire province had given itself to the cult of idols and worshipped them zealously. And wishing in turn to repay their kindness he preached the Word of God to them and educated many thousands of them with the Word of truth; moreover, he cleansed them with the font of salvation from the filth of their sins with the result that those who had received him were now both received by God and received God within themselves. However, before the arrival of the blessed man that land was marked by great salinity, acute infertility and was very hard, like rock; on account of this it was wholly unsuitable for cultivation using any sort of animal. Once this people had accepted the Lord's faith upon hearing the preaching of the man of God, just as their hearts were softened by the dew of heavenly sweetness and made fertile for good works and suitable as a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit, so too the salinity of their land was turned to sweetness, its sterility to fertility, its roughness to friability and richness, and it provided a splendid abundance of all kinds of produce for everyone living there.

Chapter 32 *Ebroin and fellow conspirators make an attempt on Wilfrid's life, but mistakenly assault a priest named Wynfrith; they fail to convince King Aldgislo to turn against Wilfrid.*

¶54 In the meantime, those who were overcome by their own wickedness and had driven the friend of Christ from his rightful

fraudibus iniquissime delationis ligatos, quam et diuersis exeniis oneratos in Franciam dirigunt, quo¹ uiro Domini partim fraude, partim munere laqueos deceptionis et captionis, laqueos depredationis, perditionis et mortis instituant. Sed ut laqueus eorum, qui muneribus seducti laqueum instituerunt seruo Dei, ipsos inuolueret, quendam sacerdotem Domini, nomine Winfridum,² nuper a suo episcopatu depositum, et tunc in peregrinationem pro Dei amore euntem, occulto iudicio Dei suis omnibus spoliauerunt, uicinitate nominis propriaque malignitate decepti. Uerum ubi³ hoc ab illis est intellectum,⁴ et⁵ quonam uir Domini ea tempestate degeret recognitum, Ebroinus regalis curie et istius nequitiæ princeps scripta cum magno munere Aldgislo regi direxit, petens ut Wilfridum, omnibus bonis expoliatum, crudeli morte necaret. Rex autem nec precibus, nec donis sub se cadere tam nequiter⁶ adquiescens, missam cartulam magna⁷ cum indignatione diruptam ignibus iniecit, nequitiæque mittentis, ut dignum fuit, exprobrans legatos absque honore dimissos statim remeare precepit.

CAPITULUM XXXIII

¶55 Securus igitur insidiarum presul, in ipsa prouincia totam cum noua Dei plebe hiemem feliciter exigens, deinde pergendi⁸ Romam iter repetiit, et Galliam perueniens nota⁹ sibi regis Dagoberti menia subit. Quem ipse rex uisum mox recognouit, eumque multa cum

¹ D] *qui*.

² D] *Wilfridum*.

³ *ubi hoc*] D reverses.

⁴ D] *intellectum*, with *nte* inserted above interlinearly, and with *intellectum* also written in the outer margin.

⁵ *et...recognitum*] D omits through homeoteleuton.

⁶ D] *nequiter*, with *it* inserted above interlinearly.

⁷ *magna...exprobrans*] D omits.

⁸ *pergendi...repetiit*] D] *iter repetiit romam pergendi*.

⁹ D] *nota*, with *n* written above an erased *t*.

rank, possessions and land sent envoys to the territory of the Franks on their behalf; they were entangled with as many deceits and villainous accusations as they were loaded with all sorts of gifts. They intended to set in place snares of deception and trickery for the man of the Lord, snares of rapacity, ruin and death, partly by deceit and partly by giving gifts. But in order that these men who had been seduced by gifts to set a snare in place for the servant of God might entangle themselves in their own snare, by a secret determination known only to God they robbed of all his possessions a certain other priest of the Lord named Wynfrith, who had recently been deposed from his own bishopric and who was at that time making a pilgrimage for the love of God; they had been misled by the similarity of his name to Wilfrid's and by their own evil natures. But when those men perceived their mistake and discovered where the man of the Lord had been living all this time, Ebroin, the leader at the royal court and the prime mover of this evil deed, sent letters together with a great gift to King Aldgisl requesting that he deprive Wilfrid of all his goods and inflict a cruel death upon him. However, the king would not agree at all to debase himself so wickedly either on account of their pleas or their gifts and threw the parchment sent to him—which he had torn asunder with great indignation—into the flames; as was fitting, he reproached the evil of its sender and ordered the envoys to be dismissed without honour and to return home at once.

Chapter 33 *Wilfrid resumes his journey and arrives at the court of King Dagobert in Gaul where he is received honourably. The king offers him an episcopal see and many gifts in order to induce him to remain there with him, but Wilfrid proceeds to Rome with Bishop Deodatus as a companion.* [A.D. 679]

¶55 Therefore, now safe from treachery the bishop passed the entire winter in the same province in happiness with the new people of God and he thereafter sought to resume his journey on the path to Rome. He arrived in Gaul and entered the fortifications of King Dagobert which were already familiar to him. When he saw him, the

letitia hospitio suscepit, et uocatis hominibus¹ suis, hac² eos uoce alloquitur. 'Virum hunc, quem ecce! coram habetis, magnopere dilectioni uestre commendo, rogans ut illi in quocunque negotio uestri opus habuerit, assistatis, siquidem me, sicut credere fas est, sincera mente amatis. Huius etenim probitate et industria uobis redditus, uobisque, ut inpresentiarum uidetis, regia sum dignitate prelatus. Nam dudum, uelut ipsi recordamini, cum popularibus insidiis fere perditus essem, et exul quaque liberationis mee gratia oberrassem, pelagoque iactatus ad ignauos Hibernos perlatus fuisset, hic me inde adductum magna beniuolentia secum aliquandiu tenuit, ab omni periculo protexit, atque natiuo solo incolumem ac tutum restitui posse donauit. Quapropter³ per meam et uestram uos obtestor salutem, ut, si qua in nobis est fides, tantum seruemus amicum, et uicem exhibite mihi dilectionis ac beniuolentie communiter gratiosi procuremus⁴ ei rependere.'

¶56 Ad hec dicta quique letantur, suamque letitiam uehementi acclamatione testantur. Neque enim leue iudicabatur inter illos quenquam subiectorum uel mutire contra preceptum aut uoluntatem principis sui. Hinc sedes et predia, dignitates et uaria dona sancto a rege offeruntur, atque ut sui regni dignetur terras incolere, ac incolendo iuri⁵ proprio uindicare, multis precibus exoratur. Sanctus autem, sui propositi memor, regie uoluntati non cessit; sed quibusdam necessariis rebus assumptis, quin etiam sociato sibi quodam presule, Deodato nomine, a curia recessit.

CAPITULUM XXXIV

¶57 Inde Campanie ducem, uocabulo Bertherum,⁶ adiit, et ab eo nobiliter susceptus est. Qui post exhibita uere caritatis atque

¹ D] *hommibus*—*in* have clearly been misconstrued as *m*.

² B] adds *h* interlinearly.

³ D] *Quam propter*, with *m* erased.

⁴ D] omits.

⁵ D] The final *i* is altered from *e*.

⁶ A] *Berterum*.

king himself at once recognized Wilfrid and received him with great hospitality and happiness; he called together his people and addressed them in these words: 'I commend greatly to your love this man whom, behold, you have here before you; I ask that you assist him in whatsoever business he will have need of you, if indeed you love me full heartily, as I should expect. For truly it was through his justice and diligence that I was restored to you and have been established before you in my royal dignity, as you can see at this present moment. For as you yourselves will recall, not long ago when I had nearly been destroyed by the treachery of my countrymen, I wandered about hither and thither as an exile in order to retain my freedom; tossed about on the ocean I was conveyed to the land of the indolent Irish. This man here brought me from that place and kept me with him for some time with great kindness; he protected me from every danger and made it possible for me to be restored safe and sound on my native soil. Wherefore, because of my deliverance and yours I entreat you, if we have any good faith, to preserve this great friend and together in gratitude take care in our turn to repay him for the love and benevolence he has shown to me.'

¶56 On hearing these words everyone rejoiced and manifested their happiness with most enthusiastic acclamation. For it was not judged lightly among those people that any of the monarch's subjects should so much as even mutter against his commands or wishes. Thereupon, the king offered the saintly man an episcopal see and an estate, honours and various gifts; he was prevailed upon with many prayers to deign to dwell in the lands of that kingdom and by residing there to lay claim to them as his by legal right. However, being mindful of his former intentions the saint did not concede to the royal will, but accepting only certain necessary supplies and the company of a bishop named Deodatus, he departed from the court.

Chapter 34 *Wilfrid is received by Betherus of Campania. Once again he resists an offer to settle among friends in foreign lands and presses on towards Rome.*

¶57 From there he went to the military commander of Campania, named Bertherus, and he was received nobly by him. After a fitting display of true charity and humanity, Bertherus sat down with the man of God and began to tell him how his enemies wished to

humanitatis officia, cum homine Dei residens cepit ei enarrare, qualiter inimici eiusdem uoluerint eum perdere, et se ad interuentionem¹ eius oblatis muneribus inflectere. 'At ego,' inquit, 'non immemor quid fidelitatis et amicitie quondam in pagano quodam rege reppererim, cum de patria mea pulsus apud eum exularem, nolui minus fidelis inueniri Christianus tibi Christiano, quam homo paganus extitit mihi homini² Christiano. Siquidem rex Hunorum gentilis, cum causa tuende mee salutis me secum degentem retineret, iniit mecum fedus in nomine deorum suorum, quod me nunquam inimicis meis quauis occasione proderet. Post aliquot uero dies nuntiis ad se ex parte inimicorum meorum uenientibus, et ingentem pecuniam pro interitu meo sibi pollicentibus; 'Dii,' inquit, 'uitam meam succidant, si ego pro³ quouis lucro terreno⁴ uobis cedens, in initum fedus quoquo modo dissoluero.' Si ergo homo infidelis, ut falso Deo suo fidus existeret, fedus rumpere noluit, ego gratia Christi fidelis, fidem quam uero⁵ Deo promisi, uiolabo ullius terreni commodi causa? Absit, absit. Immo in sua fide te suscipio, et quoad uelle tibi fuerit, ut mecum maneas⁶ obsecro. Id quoque magnopere desidero a te petere, quatinus si quid in meis affectuosius amas, accipias, utaris, possideas." Hac uiri bonitate, simul et benignitate uir Dei magnifice delectatus, quid potius animo proposuerit, uiro aperuit; sicque, multiplicatus rebus ac sociis, gratus ab eo discessit.

¹ D] *interuentionem*.

² D] omits.

³ D] omits.

⁴ D] omits.

⁵ *uero Deo*] D reverses.

⁶ D] *an* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

destroy him and how they had tried to induce him to murder Wilfrid by offering him gifts. 'But', he said, 'being mindful of the degree of faith and friendship I had once found in a certain pagan king when I had been driven from my own country and was living as an exile with him, I did not want to be found to be less faithful to you, one Christian to another, than a pagan man had shown himself to be to me, a Christian. For the heathen King of the Huns, while he kept me dwelling with him in order to secure my safety, entered into a treaty with me in the name of his gods whereby he would never betray me to my enemies under any circumstances whatsoever. Indeed after a number of days, when messengers came to him from among my enemies and promised him a huge amount of money if he should bring about my death, he said: "May the gods sever me from life, if I should refute the agreement entered into in any way whatsoever and yield to you for any kind of earthly profit." Therefore, if a man lacking Christian faith did not wish to break a pact so that he would keep faith with his false god, shall I, who am faithful for the sake of Christ, violate on account of any worldly advantage the faith which I have promised to the true God? Far be it from me, far be it from me! Nay rather, I receive you in His faith and I entreat you to remain with me as long as that is your heart's desire. Moreover, I wish sincerely to ask of you, if you are especially attracted to anything among my possessions, that you should take it, make use of it, and have it for your own.' The man of God was greatly pleased by the goodness of this man as well as by his kindness, but he made plain to him rather what he had determined in his mind. And so, with the number of his possessions and companions increased, he was grateful and departed.

CAPITULUM XXXV

¶58 Romam uero usque perueniens, ilico fama¹ iam cognite sanctitatis eius quaque percrebuit, et ei quamplurimos² ciuium uenienti in obuiam egit. Aderat, et, magno uulgi fauore susceptus, in aulam beati³ Petri⁴ ueneranter adductus est.

¶59 Pontificatum apostolice sedis beate memorie Agatho tunc regebat, uir iustus et simplex, ac in rebus ecclesiasticis non mediocriter⁵ sollers. In cuius ac plurimorum episcoporum presentia, cum beati Wilfridi causa esset presentibus accusatoribus uentilata, uniuersorum iudicio absque crimine accusatus fuisse, et episcopatu dignus esse comprobatus est.

¶60 Quo in tempore cum idem papa synodum Rome congregaret centum uiginti quinque episcoporum, aduersus eos qui unam in Domino Salvatore uoluntatem atque operationem dogmatizabant, uocari iussit beatum Wilfridum, atque inter episcopos considerentem dicere fidem suam, simul et prouincie de qua uenerat. Cumque catholicus fide cum suis esset inuentus, et ab re sacerdotali dignitate priuatus, placuit ut et Romane sedis decreto in episcopatum restitueretur, et in monumentum sue catholice fidei eiusdem synodi gestis hoc scriptum insereretur.

¶61 'Wilfridus Deo amabilis, episcopus Eborace ciuitatis, apostolicam sedem de sua causa appellans, et ab hac potestate⁶ de certis incertisque rebus absolutus, et cum aliis centum uiginti quinque coepiscopis in synodi iudiciaria⁷ sede constitutus, pro omni aquilonali parte Britannie⁸ et Hibernie, que ab Anglorum

¹ fama iam] D reverses.

² D] *quaquam plurimos.*

³ A] adds *sancti.*

⁴ A] adds *apostoli.*

⁵ D] *inmediocriter.*

⁶ D] *potestatis.*

⁷ C] *iudicaria.*

⁸ D] *Brithannie.*

Chapter 35 *Wilfrid's case is heard by Pope Agatho and an assembly of bishops; he is vindicated and honoured by his appointment to an episcopal synod.* [A.D. 680]

¶58 And finally he arrived at the walls of Rome. There the fame of his sanctity which had already been recognized grew quickly in every direction and compelled a vast number of its citizens to rush out to meet him as he approached. He arrived within and was received with great favour by the throng and led with veneration into the temple of blessed Peter.

¶59 Agatho of blessed memory was then reigning as pontiff of the Apostolic See, a just and humble man, but one who was very skilled in ecclesiastical affairs. When the cause of blessed Wilfrid was aired in the presence of the pope and a great number of bishops, and with his accusers also in attendance, he was deemed by the judgement of everyone to have been accused falsely and to be worthy of an episcopal see.

¶60 At that time, when that same pope convened a synod of one hundred and twenty-five Bishops at Rome to refute those people who propounded the doctrine of a single will and operation in the Lord Saviour, he ordered blessed Wilfrid to be summoned, and having taken his place among the bishops, to state his own faith and at the same time that of the province from which he had come. And since he, together with his people, was found to be catholic in his faith and to have been deprived in this matter of his priestly dignity, it was their pleasure that he be restored to his bishopric by the decree of the Roman see and that this decision be recorded in the acts of the same synod as a testament of his catholic faith.

¶61 'Wilfrid, beloved of God, Bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic See concerning his cause and being absolved by this power in all charges both specified and unspecified, and who has been accepted as a representative on behalf of the entire northern part of Britain and Ireland (which are inhabited by the peoples of the Angles and the Britons, and also of the Irish and the Picts)

ac Britonum,¹ necnon² Scottorum et Pictorum gentibus incoluntur, ueram et catholicam fidem confessus est, et cum subscriptione sua corroborauit.³

CAPITULUM XXXVI

¶62 Apostolico igitur et synodali decreto in episcopatum restitutus, acceptisque ab apostolica sede litteris, regi Ecfrido et³ archiepiscopo Theodoro de sui status redintegratione directis, seruus Dei magno seruorum Dei reliquiarum munere ditatus, iter Angliam ueniendi repetiit; et quia nouerat scriptum, 'Qui ambulat simpliciter, ambulat confidenter', regia uia gradiebatur. Ecce⁴ autem, extra quam putabatur, latronum manus ad interficiendum parata, uiro Domini haud⁵ grata processione occurrit. Erant etenim qui regi Dagoberto insidias tetenderant, eumque nuper gladio in inguine merso necauerant. Hi⁶ ergo uiro Dei occurrentes, animique furorem uultus sui ferocitate⁷ pandentes,

Prelia uibratis intentant cominus hastis

Quorum unus, qui⁸ quasi loco principis inter eos habebatur, excusso quod manu tenuerat telo, militi Christi fedo ore conuiciabatur, 'Delator,' inquires, 'patrie petulans et moribunde uiator, tu quidem iampridem gallica sceptr⁹ uiolasti, tu gallica rura pessumdedisti, tu gallicam libertatem in seruitutem redelegisti, cum tyrannum iuste a nobis iam olim exiliatum tua instantia in regnum constituisti. At ipsius quidem crudelitas iustissima morte punita, te quoque, utpote maximum sue mortis auctorem, te, inquam, eadem morte puniendum¹⁰ esse declamat. Procumbe igitur, pestifer, procumbe, et digna ultione multatus, eidem quam¹¹ contra nos fouisti morti succumbe.'

¹ AC] *Brittonum*.

² D] adds *et*.

³ A] adds *uenerabili*.

⁴ D] The scribe first wrote *Ex*; he then altered *x* to *c* and completed the word.

⁵ D] *haut*, written over an erasure; note that the script is smaller.

⁶ D] *hii*.

⁷ D] *ferocitatem*.

⁸ D] omits.

⁹ D] *ceptra*; note also *scimatis* in ¶65 below.

¹⁰ D] *-ndum* is written over an erasure in a smaller, poorly-formed hand.

¹¹ D] *quem*.

together with another one hundred and twenty-five fellow bishops in order to arrive at a judgement at a synod, has confessed the true and catholic faith and confirmed this with his signature.'

Chapter 36 *Wilfrid sets out on his return journey to England. Certain men who had recently slain King Dagobert assail him; they marvel at his holiness and wisdom, throw down their weapons and beg his forgiveness.*

¶62 And so restored to his bishopric by apostolic and synodal decree and with letters from the Apostolic See directed to King Ecgrith and Archbishop Theodore concerning the restoration of his status, the servant of God, enriched by a great gift of relics of the servants of God, once again sought the road leading to England; and since he knew the Scripture, 'He that walketh sincerely, walketh confidently', he set out upon the road leading back to the king. Behold, however, in an unthinkable fashion a band of robbers who were set upon killing advanced against the man of the Lord in a most unwelcome manner. These were the men who had only recently set an ambush against King Dagobert and slain him by burying a sword in his groin. And so, revealing the madness of their minds in the ferocity of their facial expression, they fell upon the man of God and shaking their spears they intended to engage in close combat. One of the band, who was regarded among them as a sort of leader, shook the spear which he held in his hand and railed against the soldier of Christ with his foul mouth saying, 'O meddling destroyer of our country, traveller who brings death among us, you are the one who hitherto violated the royal authority of Gaul and destroyed the Gaulish countryside; you reduced the freedom of Gaul to slavery when you established by your intervention in the kingdom a tyrant who had long before justly been exiled by us. But indeed, now that his cruelty has been punished by a most deserved death, he cries out that you also, the one most responsible for his death, you, I say, ought to suffer the same death. Therefore prostrate yourself, plague-bearer, prostrate yourself and be punished by a deserved vengeance; may you undergo the same death which you had cherished in your thoughts for us.'

¶63 Et pater, contra: 'si non iure,' inquit, 'feci cum regem regno iniuste depulsum, quantum in me fuit, hereditarie dignitati prefeci, et hoc ita penes se esse iustissimi Iudicis equitas habet, fateor, penas iuste ultionis promptissime pendam. Quod si nequaquam hoc in facto contra ius, sed cum iure feci, uelut ipsa mee innocentia mentis mihi testatur, eo libentius, si uultis occidere, mori desidero, quo me pro iustitia occisum martyrii gloria coronandum fore considero.'¹

¶64 Quibus dictis, ubi uiderunt uirum tanta mentis constantia niti, nimio terrore percussi arma proiciunt, terre² procumbunt, uiri uestigia osculis petunt, ueniam querunt. Qua ad suum uotum inuenta, eius benedictione ditati, uie prosperitati pontificem cum suis omnibus reddunt; ipsi cepto itinere pergunt.

CAPITULUM XXXVII

¶65 Perueniens uir Dei Britanniam,³ regi litteras quas ab apostolica sede acceperat detulit, et earundem litterarum auctoritate subnixus, in conuentu nobilium causam suam uia uoce defendit seque falso accusatum, ac iniuria⁴ degradatum libera protestatione ostendit. Rex autem quanto illum maiori ueritatis ratione uallatum agnouit, tanto se minori ueritatis ratione suffultum indoluit, moremque nequissimorum imitatus, maluit in sua pertinacia contra equitatem perdurare, quam equitatis ratione suam pertinaciam mitigare. Hanc uero sui cordis socordiam magnopere confirmabat antiquorum delatorum inueterata discordia, dum ipsi quos ipsa iam repletos possidebat, uenena sue malignitatis regiis auribus infundebant. Propria itaque rex ira cecatus, et seducentium se adulatione a uero distractus, litteras apostolici pape tumido fastu

¹ D] A word, which fell at the beginning of the manuscript line, is erased before this.

² terre...petunt] D omits (through homeoteleuton).

³ A] Britanniam.

⁴ D] The initial *i* is altered from original *n*.

¶63 But in response to this the father replied: 'If I did not act according to law when to the best of my ability I put back in control of his hereditary authority a king who had been unjustly driven from his kingdom, and the fair decision of the most just Judge in his court holds this to be the case, I concede that I should straightaway receive the punishment of just vengeance. But if I acted in this deed in no wise unlawfully, but rather according to the law, as the very innocence of my mind convinces me, and if you still wish to kill me, then I very willingly desire to die because I deem that having died for justice I ought to be crowned with the glory of martyrdom.'

¶64 When these things had been said and they saw that the man exerted himself with such determination of mind, they were struck with very great fear—they threw down their weapons, prostrated themselves on the earth, and while begging his forgiveness they kissed his footprints. When they received pardon in response to their prayer, enriched by his blessing they returned the bishop and all of his people to their prosperous journey; and when Wilfrid was once again on his way, they departed.

Chapter 37 *King Ecgrith refuses to acknowledge the papal decrees. Conspirators cast Wilfrid into prison and Queen Ermenburg snatches a reliquary casket from his neck.*

¶65 The man of God arrived in Britain and brought the letters which he had received from the Apostolic See to the king; supported by the authority of these letters, he defended his cause in person before an assembly of the nobility and he openly protested that he had been falsely accused and mistreated with injury. However, just as much as the king admitted that Wilfrid was buttressed by reason of a greater truth, he smarted to an equal extent that he himself was propped up by reason of a lesser truth; and so he acted in the manner of the most wicked of men, preferring to endure in his obstinacy against fairness, rather than mitigating it by a principle of fairness. Indeed the entrenched dissension of those subversive men of earlier times, which had fully possessed them for a long while, persisted in strengthening the folly in Ecgrith's heart and they poured the malign poison into the king's ears. And so the king, blinded by his own anger and alienated completely from the truth

despexit, despiciendo irrisit, irridendo a se procul abiecit, ac in famulum Dei nequissimi delatoris crimen iniecit. Tanta regis indignatione nonnulli clientes, immo et quique nobiles oppido permoti, unanimes omnes contra beatum conspersione insurgunt, ac multis eum contumeliis afficiunt; et¹ quo regie maiestati se ad plenum fideles existere monstrent,² indignationi eius plene satisfacere cupiunt, et Dei hominem a regis conspectu auulsum carceris imo detrudendum arripiunt. Ermenburgis autem, bonorum omnium persecutrix, et huius scismatis³ indomabilis auctrix, sese in direptionem illius mediam immersit, capsulam reliquiarum de ipsius collo procaciter abstulit, eumque feda garrulitate et feminea loquacitate derisum abiecit.

CAPITULUM XXXVIII

¶66 Ergo inclitus heros, sociis et opibus omni ex parte priuatus, ad suos, prout potuit, inter iniquorum manus sese conuertit, atque in his uerbis breui⁴ ad eos orationem fecit. 'Non uos,' inquit, 'Domini fratres et filii mei, non uos hec que nobis ingeritur iniuria turbet, nec a ueritatis tramite quoquo modo proturbet.⁵ Pre oculis semper habete, omnes qui uolunt in Christo pie uiuere, necessario tribulationem pati oportere. Uerum licet impii ad tempus piis preualere uideantur, tamen non sic semper erit. Erit enim tempus cum et piorum tribulatio perenni letitia remunerabitur, et impiorum superba elatio perenni tristitia⁶ punietur. Sed ne uos⁷ tribulatio in impatientiam agat, animaduertite quonam modo cana patrum series, multas⁸ perpessa tribulationes, per patientiam meruit, Deo

¹ D] *Ex.*

² D] *monstrant.*

³ D] *cismatis*; note also *ceptra* in ¶62 above.

⁴ D] *breuem.*

⁵ D] *perturbet.*

⁶ D] This is written over an erasure in blackish ink, and in a thinner, poorly-formed script.

⁷ *uos tribulatio*] ACD reverse.

⁸ A] *mutas.*

by the seductive adulation of those men, looked upon the letters of the Apostolic Pope with excessive disdain; and disdainng the letters he laughed derisively at them, and deriding them he flung them away from himself. And thereupon he cast the charge against the servant of God of being a most wicked subversive. A number of retainers and indeed even certain nobles in the town were stirred up by the great indignation of the king and being of one mind they all rose up in a conspiracy against the blessed man and assailed him with many slanders. And in order that they might demonstrate to the royal majesty that they were utterly faithful, they sought to satisfy his indignation fully; they seized the man of God, who had been expelled from the sight of the king, intending to thrust him into the depths of a prison. However, Ermenburg, the persecutor of every good man and the uncontrollable perpetrator of this schism, threw herself into the midst of the crowd of abductors and shamelessly ripped the reliquary casket from Wilfrid's neck; she derided him with a flood of female invective and humiliated him with her foul speech.

Chapter 38 *The conspirators disregard the advice and teachings of Wilfrid and confine him in the darkness of the prison; the darkness is illumined through divine intervention.*

¶66 Thereupon, the illustrious hero, completely deprived of companions and resources, turned to his own people, in so far as he was able to do so while being constrained by the hands of his enemies, and spoke to them briefly in these words: "Brothers in the Lord and sons of mine, do not allow", he said, "do not allow this injustice which is inflicted upon me to trouble you nor let it drive you in any way from the path of truth. Always keep before your eyes that it behoves all who wish to live piously in Christ of necessity to suffer tribulation. In truth, although the impious might seem to prevail over holy men for a time, nevertheless this will not always be the case. For there will come a time when the tribulation of the pious will be rewarded with eternal happiness and the haughty self-exaltation of the impious will be punished by eternal grief. But lest the present suffering compel you to become impatient, reflect upon how the succession of white-haired fathers, who suffered many

iuuante, uincere multiplices hostes. Nec id uestre¹ menti ullatenus uolo abesse, neminem, secundum apostoli dictum, posse coronari, nisi qui contra diabolum studuerit legitime² decertare. Et certe huius temporis certamina parui pendenda, nec multum diutina. Per illa tamen eterna felicitas et felix eternitas regni Dei comparatur. Quam felicitatem, queso, fratres, amate; eam desiderate; ad eam tendite, atque ad eam peruenire tota mentis intentione³ satagite. Quod si feceritis, profecto nichil erit quare istius uite aduersa formidetis.⁷

¶67 Uix uerba compleuerat, cum ecce ii quorum manibus stringebatur, acriori⁴ furore ex ipsis uerbis accensi, eum tenebroso in carcere uinctum detruserunt.

¶68 O constantia uiri! Sic enim tui cordis, sanctissime pater, hilaritatem in tanta tua aduersitate contueor, sic⁵ considero hilarem te esse solere, cum omnia prospera tibi uidebantur arridere; tamen ne pietatis uiscera in tuis filiis aliquatinus perdidisse uidereris, eorum potius quam tuis erumnis piis lachrymas impendebas. Et cum te carcer tenebrosus inuolueret, magis dolebas ab eorum auribus uite uerba separari, quam te presentia corporee lucis expoliari. Interni etenim luminis fulgore nitebas, quo carcerales tenebras pro nichilo contemnebas. Quare quoniam diuine⁶ lucis splendorem Deus in te uigere conspexerat, humanis tenebris te nequaquam diu premi permisit, sed eisdem fugatis radium sue lucis domui quam inhabitabas immisit. Ac⁷ quidem merito, nam quia peruigil eterne luci,⁸ tam in noctis quam carceris horrore, assistebas, dignum duxit sui luminis effusione signare, operibus tuis et caligini tenebrarum nil esse commune. Hanc luminis effusionem custodum uigilia protestatur, que circa medie noctis horam carcerem mire fulgentem non absque graui timore se uidisse testatur. Sed hoc

¹ uestre menti] D reverses.

² legitime decertare] D reverses.

³ D] o is altered from an earlier reading (a?).

⁴ D] acriore.

⁵ D] sicut.

⁶ D] diuini.

⁷ D] This is written over an erasure.

⁸ D] lucis.

tribulations, merited through their patience and with the help of God to overcome a multitude of enemies. Nor do I wish that the thought ever be absent from your mind that, in the words of the apostle, no one is able to be crowned if he has not struggled zealously against the Devil as demanded by the Law. And certainly the struggles of these times ought not to be considered of great importance nor long-enduring. Yet through those things the eternal blessedness and blessed eternity of the kingdom of God are attained. I beseech you, my brothers, cherish this blessed state; long for it, stretch out towards it, and busy yourselves with attaining it with the whole determination of your mind. If you do this, truly there will be no cause for you to fear adversities in this life."

¶67 He had scarcely finished uttering these things when, behold, those men who were dragging him along with their hands, enkindled with an even fiercer fury by those words, chained him and thrust him into a shadowy prison.

¶68 Behold, the constancy of the man! For, most holy father, I perceive the happiness within your heart when you were faced such great adversity; in exactly the same way, I expect that you were accustomed to be happy whenever fortune seemed to smile upon you in all your affairs. Nevertheless, you were pouring forth pious tears on account of the sufferings of your sons rather than for your own sake, lest you seemed to have lost in any way the depths of piety for them. And although the shadowy prison enfolded you, it grieved you more that their ears were cut off from the words of life than that your body was deprived of the benefit of daylight. For truly you shone with the brightness of an inner light which enabled you to reject the prison's shadows as nothing. Therefore, because God saw that the splendour of divine light flourished in you, by no means did he suffer you to be oppressed for long by a darkness of human devising, but having put these shadows to flight he infused the house in which you dwelt with the rays of his own light. And indeed justly so! For because you were accustomed to maintain vigil for the eternal light throughout the dark night just as in the terrible prison, God deigned it fitting to show you by the effusion of his own light that there was nothing in common between your works and the shadows of darkness. The testimony of the vigilant guards bears witness to this effusion of light, for they testify that in great trepidation they saw a wondrous flashing of light coming from the

testimonio te non eguisse¹ perpendit, qui sanctitatis tue merita oculo fideli attendit. Beati Petri apostoli carcerem cum tuo potius considero, teque sibi excepta² liberatione angelica in luminis ostensione comparari uehementer exulto. Quamquam post hec et archangelica³ Michaelis uisitacione sis a mortis periculo liberatus, ut cunctis clarescat, quod gloria regni Dei simul cum ipso apostolo sis coronatus.

CAPITULUM XXXIX

¶69 Inter hec, uxor prefeci Osfridi, qui beatum Wilfridum in custodia habebat, acerrimo languore corripitur, iamiamque ad uite extrema perducitur. Iacet siquidem toto corpore debilitata, solutisque compagibus omni membrorum officio destituta, perditio⁴ insuper sensu, contractis emortua neruis uiscera fluitabant; que res uiro suo magni doloris et⁵ anxietatis stimulos, magne defectionis et horroris causas ingerebat. Quo infortunio motus, Dei uirum lachrymosis questibus adiit, uincula quibus grauabatur absoluit, ad⁶ pietatis affectum inclinauit, et eductum ergastulo sue coniugi medicum salutis aduxit. Affuit uir Dei, et mox⁷ turbas que ad funus mulieris conuenerant, iussit amoueri. Hinc precibus ad⁸ Deum premissis, aquam benedixit, et benedictam super iacentis corpus aspersionem. Mirabile dictu! non prius aqua infirmantis membra tetigit, quam, omni languore depulso,⁹ mulieri perfecta sanitas rediit. Quo facto, ab omnibus qui aderant grates Deo consona uoce redduntur, ac merita beati patris non carcere, sed omni honore dignissima predicantur. Ne autem¹⁰ gratia euadendi carceris magis quam amore

¹ D] The top of the second s appears to have been scraped away to produce the reading *eguisie*.

² D] *accepta*.

³ D] *angelica*.

⁴ D] *o* is altered from *b*.

⁵ D] omits.

⁶ D] *ac*.

⁷ D] This is followed by an erasure (10 mm).

⁸ *ad deum*] D omits.

⁹ D] *depositio*.

¹⁰ D] omits.

prison around the hour of midnight. But he who pays heed to the merits of your sanctity with a faithful eye determined that you should not lack this testimony. Further, I reflect upon your imprisonment and that of the blessed apostle Peter together and I rejoice fervently that you two can be compared in experiencing this display of light, even though he was freed by an angel. However, may you also be freed from the threat of death by the coming of Michael the archangel after these events so that it is clear to everyone that you are crowned with the glory of the kingdom of God together with the apostle himself.

Chapter 39 *The reeve Osfrith beseeches Wilfrid to cure his fatally ill wife. He restores her to health and she subsequently enters into religious life. The king is enraged and orders a second, more vicious reeve, named Tydlin, to confine and torture Wilfrid. Their attempts to bind him with chains fail repeatedly.*

¶69 And while these things were happening the wife of the reeve Osfrith, who was holding the blessed Wilfrid in custody, was seized by a most acute illness and was just then nearing the final moments of her life. Indeed, she lay with her whole body debilitated; her muscles had atrophied and she had lost every function of her limbs. Moreover, she had lost feeling and her bowels, deadened by a contraction of the sinews, were uncontrolled. This was inflicting great pangs of sorrow and anxiety upon her husband, causing him great faintness and shuddering. Transformed by this misfortune he approached the man of God with tearful laments, removed the chains with which he was weighed down, raised in him a feeling of loving compassion, and removing him from the prison led him forth as a doctor and saviour for his wife. When the man of God arrived, he immediately ordered the crowds which had assembled for the woman's funeral to be dispersed. After first offering up prayers to God, Wilfrid blesses the water and then sprinkled the blessed substance upon the body of the woman lying there. And wondrous to relate, no sooner had the water touched the limbs of the enfeebled woman than every weakness was driven away and perfect health returned to her. When this happened, thanks were offered to God unanimously by all who were present there and on account of his good deeds the blessed father was declared to be most deserving not of a prison, but of every honour. However, lest anyone should

pietatis ductus hoc uirtutis signum fecisse ab aliquo putaretur, extra remanere noluit, sed diuinitatis lumine fruiturus, quantotius carceralis custodie septa reuisit. Coniux uero prefecti que fuerat sanitati donata, post paucos dies, spreto seculo,¹ in seruitium Christi sacro est uelamine designata.

¶70 Prefectus autem ex eo tempore seruum Domini in² magna ueneratione habens, regi per nuntios adito dixit: 'Per salutem et regnum tuum te adiuro, quatinus sacerdotem Domini Wilfridum a me diutius detineri non facias, quia fateor melius mihi esse³ mori, quam in eum⁴ aliquid iniuriarum ulterius exercere. Quod si⁵ adiuratione despecta in sententia tua persistere mauis, me simul cum eo tormenta et⁶ mortes⁷ magis uelle subire cognosce, quam eum in tormentis habere.'

¶71 Ad hec rex, uehementer iratus, iussit sanctum duci in urbem suam Dymber, ad prefectum, nomine Tydlin,⁸ utpote ferociorem, precipiens illi ut compedibus et uinculis fortiter astrictum artiori custodie manciparet. Qui iussioni⁹ contraire non audens,¹⁰ uirum suscipit,¹¹ custodie tradit,¹² uincula facit.¹³ Uerum cum in hoc ut ligaretur ministrorum manus elaborarent, aut rupta ab ipsius corpore eadem uincula dissiliebant, aut certe colligari non ualentia diffusa cadebant; et miro moderamine Christi eo minor in eum ligandi potestas extiterat, quo ad ligandum hostilis feritas immanius seuiebat. Unde illi nimium admirati, sed regio terrore suaque

¹ C] This word is added at the end of the line in the right hand margin in a different hand and ink.

² D] omits.

³ esse mori] D reverses.

⁴ D] eo; see the Commentary.

⁵ ACD] add *hac*.

⁶ D] omits.

⁷ A] *mortem*.

⁸ A] *Tidlin*.

⁹ D] A tall *s* is erased before this word.

¹⁰ C] A *minim* is erased after *d*.

¹¹ D] *suscepit*.

¹² D] *tradiidit*.

¹³ D] *fecit*.

think that he had been led to put on this display of miraculous power in order to escape imprisonment rather than out his loving kindness, he wished not to remain outside but, intending to enjoy the light sent from God, he returned as quickly as possible to the confinement of the guarded prison. And after a few days the reeve's wife, to whom good health had been granted, rejected the things of this world and taking the holy veil was ordained into the service of Christ.

¶70 Moreover, the reeve, who from that moment held the servant of the Lord in great veneration, approached the king through messengers and said: 'By your health and royal office I entreat you not to compel me to detain Wilfrid, the priest of the Lord, any longer since I believe that it is better for me to die than that I should cause any further injury to him. But if you reject this entreaty and would rather persist in your judgement, then understand that I wish to suffer torments and death together with him rather than to confine and torture him.'

¶71 On hearing these words the king became extremely angry and ordered the holy man to be led to the reeve named Tydlin in the city of Dunbar because he was more vicious; he ordered him to deliver Wilfrid, bound securely with shackles and chains, to more confined imprisonment. Tydlin, not daring to act in contravention of this command, received the man, consigned him to prison, and prepared the chains. However, when the officers were struggling with their hands to bind him the chains either broke and leapt apart from his body or not being strong enough to bind him securely fell scattered on the ground. And so through the wondrous intervention of Christ the more his cruel enemies raged in trying to bind him, the less they could demonstrate an ability to chain him up. These things greatly

uecordia in barbaricos motus¹ exagitati, alia et alia uincula parant conatu suo, casso labore funditus consumendi.²

¶72 Eia, tibi ligandi potestate sublata, quid furis, O manus insana? Quid tantopere niteris inpugnare, quem nunquam poteris expugnare? Quid totiens et totiens ad uinciendum uincula mutas, et a te uincula quibus ex merito tue prauitatis es uincta non potius mutas? Collo iusti lora³ tua imponi uerentur, quod ipsum iugo Christi subiectum esse digna ueneratione contuentur. Manice tue manibus eius inseri metuunt, quia in fouendis pauperibus eas exertas fuisse attendunt. Trementes catene pedes eius⁴ nexare deuitant, propterea quod illos ad pacem predicandam ueloces extitisse considerant. Omnes ergo uires tuas frustra dispendis, cum illum, quem nequaquam permittis torquere contendis.

¶73 Beatus autem Wilfridus, licet carceralibus tenebris inuolutus, quosque tamen aduentantium lumine Uerbi Dei, prout ei licuit, illuminauit, edocuit, ac baptisate ab omni criminum labe mundauit.

CAPITULUM XL

¶74 Hec inter rex dum suis comitatus ad expletionem sue uoluptatis se quaque deduceret, atque in magna hilaritate letitie frena laxaret;

Ecce repentino turbantur gaudia casu.

Dum etenim regia coniunx tumens nimio fastu impietatis audet raptis abuti reliquiis, ilico uindex ira subit. Siquidem easdem reliquias ferens cum sicuti perdix alacri mente lasciua garriret,

¹ D] *metus*.

² A] *consumenda*; see the Commentary.

³ *lora tua*] D omits.

⁴ ACD] omit.

astonished them. But driven to barbarous deeds by their fear of the king and by their own folly they were doomed to be utterly exhausted by their futile efforts as they prepared more and more chains in their attempt to bind him.

¶72 Why on earth, O mindless mob, do you rage so since your ability to bind has been taken away? Why do you struggle so vigorously to subdue one whom you will never conquer? Why do you time and again change the chains with which you intend to bind him and do not instead remove the chains from yourselves, chains by which you are justly bound because of your depravity? Your leather bindings are afraid to lie upon the neck of the just man because with fitting veneration they perceive that he has been made subject to the yoke of Christ. Your fetters are reluctant to be put upon his hands because they recognize that those hands have been busied in nourishing the poor. The shuddering chains are loathe to shackle his feet because they realize that those feet have shown themselves to be swift in the preaching of peace. Therefore, you spend all your strength in vain when you strive to torture one whom you are not allowed to treat in this way.

¶73 But blessed Wilfrid, though enveloped in the shadows of the prison, nevertheless illuminated each of those who came to him with the light of the word of God, as far as he was allowed; he taught them and through baptism cleansed them of all blemishes of their sins.

Chapter 40 *Ermenburg suffers from demonic possession; the king agrees to release Wilfrid from prison; and Wilfrid restores Ermenburg to health.*

¶74 While these things were happening the king went about his business everywhere with his companions satisfying and indulging himself and giving pleasure its head when, 'Behold his joys are thrown into turmoil by a sudden disaster'. For while the royal spouse, who was bursting with an impious and extravagant pride, dared to desecrate the relics she had snatched from Wilfrid she was peremptorily struck by an avenging anger. Indeed, while she was carrying the relics and was twittering saucily like a partridge in a

contigit ut mox repleta demonio, sicuti uulpecula, perdita mente insana ganniret; quemque sua prius petulantia¹ uolens coluit, hunc postmodum in sui corporis habitaculo nolens fouit. Hec propter quibusque² in stuporem arrectis,³ accessit mater regis, furentemque increpabat huiusmodi uerbis: 'Anne patent,' inquit, 'soror, anne patent ueteris commissa piaculi?'⁴ Wilfridum tuis falsis criminationibus a sede sui episcopatus pepulisti, et nunc, uice mutata, in sedem⁵ tui pectoris demonem recepisti, ut per hoc intelligas, quid peccati illo in facto commisisti. Wilfrido sanctorum reliquias de collo non sancte tulisti, et ecce! ut collum tuum suo Dominio⁶ demon subderet, hinc meruisti. Wilfridi sanctissima uerba et beati Petri⁷ auctoritate suffulta despexisti, et ob hoc demone cor tuum possidente uerborum tuorum ius perdidisti. Wilfridus, diuinitatis lumine plenus, carcerales tenebras per te in eis positus non ueretur, et tuus animus, demoniaco furore repletus per hoc, iam nunc dignissima ultione torquetur.⁸

¶75 Rex aderat oppido⁸ conturbatus, et ingenti furoris igne succensus, uentum naribus quasi fumum emittebat. Quem etiam mater⁹ sua tali uoce est allocuta. 'Iam tandem, fili, iam tandem memor esto tui. Ultio diuina tuam, quam nimium¹⁰ diligis, coniugem, ut cernis, affligit, et fateor, crede mihi, quia bene promeruit tali supplicio fatigari, eo quod ipsa diabolica indignatione succensa seruum Dei Wilfridum non timuit miris afflictionibus insectari. Quapropter hanc uindictam sibi irrogatam ne dubites, obsecro, propter te esse collatam. Quod si hac corrigi sponte contempseris,¹¹ caue ne tua propria corrigaris inuitus. Ergo solue uirum a carcere, quem nullius sui criminis causa nouimus detineri,

¹ D] *petulentia*.

² D] *quibusdam*.

³ D] *erectis*.

⁴ D] *piaculi*.

⁵ D] *sede*.

⁶ D] *demonio*.

⁷ A] adds *apostoli*.

⁸ D] adds *et*.

⁹ *mater sua*] D reverses.

¹⁰ D] omits.

¹¹ D] *contempseris*, with *co* written in a darker ink.

lively fashion, suddenly it befell that she was filled with a demon and losing her rational sense she began to bark gibberish like a little fox. And the devil she had before willingly worshipped in her wantonness, she now fostered unwillingly while he resided within her body. Everyone was dumbfounded and drawn to their feet by these things and the mother of the king approached the frenzied woman and rebuked her in the following vein: 'Are not the consequences of your crime of old obvious, sister? Are they not apparent to you? By your false accusations you drove Wilfrid from his episcopal see, and now, with the tables turned, you have received a demon into residence in your heart so that you might realize what a great sin you have committed by your deed. You sacrilegiously took the relics of the saints from Wilfrid's neck and, behold, you deserved in turn that a demon should place your neck under his control. You spurned the most holy words of Wilfrid, which are supported by the authority of blessed Peter, and because of this a demon has possessed your heart and you have lost control over your words. Wilfrid, who is filled with divine light, does not fear the shadows of the prison in which you have placed him, and your mind, now replete with devilish madness because of your deed, is tortured by a most fitting revenge.'

¶75 The king, who was greatly disturbed, was present in the town; he was ablaze with a mighty fire of madness and the breath was blowing from his nostrils like smoke. But his mother addressed him with these words: 'Now finally, my son, now finally come to your senses. As you can see, a divine vengeance afflicts your wife for whom you have excessive love. I would say that she well deserves to be afflicted by such punishment because she was inflamed with demonic hatred and did not fear to persecute the servant of God with amazing afflictions. On which account, I beseech that you do not doubt that the judgement inflicted here was brought upon her on your account. And if you disdain to be corrected in this matter, take heed lest unwillingly you are corrected on your own account. Therefore, release the man from prison whom I know has been detained through no crime of his own; and if you do not wish for

et si eum in regno tuo manere nolueris, iube illum regno decedere,¹ ne, si diutius fuerit tentus, tunc eum primo dimittere uelis, cum fueris maiori pena multatus.²

¶76 Istis rex ipse admonitus, annuit ut carcerem uir sanctus exiret. Factum est, et e tenebris lux mundo processit. Malens autem seruus Dei bonum pro malo, quam pro malo malum reddere, orauit Dominum et reginam confestim demone² fugato sanitati restituit.

CAPITULUM XLI

¶77 Hinc patriam cognataque rura deserit, et uelut aduena terras australes petiturus, eo ueniendi iter inuadit. Et quoniam ueritatis preconia nulla queunt³ fallacia uiolari, famulo Dei, primo querenti regnum Dei, nichil eorum que uite necessitas exigebat, deesse ualebat. Unde contigit, ut hunc euntem quidam Byrhtwaldus,⁴ regia stirpe progenitus, magno cum honore obuius exciperet, et aliquantisper secum detento queque opus habebat benigne impenderet. At inuidia diaboli ea diu impendi ferre non potuit. Predictum etenim uirum ueneno sue peruersitatis infecit, quoque militem Christi sua munificentia exutum a se suisque omnibus eliminaret, effecit. Erat namque frater Æthelredi⁵ regis Merciorum, qui sororem regis Ecfredi habebat in coniugium. Timens igitur ne fratris animum offenderet, si eum, qui fratrem coniugis sue infensum habebat, secum teneret, non ueritus iniustitiam, Wilfridum abiecit, non tamen absque contumelia, ut per hoc sciamus eum non immunem fuisse in hoc facto a mente maligna. Nam prius tam a se quam ab Æthelredo⁶ rege, suisque uxoribus necne⁷ uoluntatis eorum fautoribus multipliciter afflicto, iniuriatus, multis quoque terroribus ad uiolationem fidei sue atque ad exprobrationem catholice et apostolice traditionis, pro qua maxime impetebatur, incitatus; impulsus, nec prostratus, ad ultimum cum dedecore pulsus est.

¹ D] *discedere*.

² *demone...sanitati*] D] *sanitati fugato demone*.

³ D] omits (there is, however, a blank space at the beginning of the manuscript line where this word belongs).

⁴ A] *Brythwaldus*; D] *Brithwaldus*.

⁵ C] *Ædelredi*; D] *eidelredi*.

⁶ C] *Ædelredo*; D] *eidelredo*.

⁷ D] *nec non*.

him to remain in your kingdom, order him to depart from the realm lest, if he is held any longer, you first wish to release him only when a great punishment has been inflicted upon you.²

¶76 Admonished by these words, the king ordered that the holy man should depart the prison. This was done and out of the shadows a light advanced into the world. The servant of God, however, preferring to return good for evil and not to repay evil with evil, prayed to the Lord and immediately he put the demon to flight and restored the queen to health.

Chapter 41 *Berhtwald, brother of King Æthelwald of the Mercians, at first befriends Wilfrid, but later turns against him.*

¶77 Afterwards he abandoned his home and native countryside, and seeking the lands to the south like an exile he set out on a path that would lead him there. And because the proclamations of truth can never be overcome by falsehood, the servant of God who was seeking the kingdom of God before all else did not lack any of the necessities of life. Thus it came to pass that a certain Berhtwald, who was born of a royal line, approached him in his travels and received him with great honour; and for some time thereafter he generously supplied Wilfrid, whom he had in his care, with whatever he required. But the Devil in his envy could not bear such generosity for long. Indeed, he infected the aforementioned man with the poison of his perversity and caused him to strip the soldier of Christ of the gifts that he had given him and to expel him from his household and all his lands. For Berhtwald was the brother of the King of the Mercians, Æthelred, who was married to the sister of King Ecgrith. Therefore, Berhtwald, fearing lest he offend the feelings of his brother Æthelred by harbouring with him a man who considered Ecgrith, the brother of the king's wife, to be an enemy, but not, however, fearful of injustice threw Wilfrid out. Moreover, he did this with great invective by which we can perceive that he had not been immune from the Devil's influence in this matter. For before he was expelled, he was in divers ways afflicted and abused as much by Berhtwald as by King Æthelred, and also by their wives and sycophantic followers; he was goaded and driven with many fearful threats to violate his faith and to insult the catholic and apostolic traditions—for which above all he was assailed. However, Wilfrid was not overthrown [i.e. he didn't submit], in spite of the pressure from them, and ultimately he was driven out in disgrace.

¶78 Omni ergo humano frustratus auxilio, quo tenderet,¹ quo se uerteret ad hospitandum ignorabat, hoc solum fiducie pre se gerens, quod a Deo nequaquam deseri posset. Qua fiducia magnifice fretus, quicquid ei incommoditatis accidebat, summa cordis alacritate perferebat; quoque magis aduersitatibus feriebatur,² eo amplius in opera Dei toto studio ferebatur.

CAPITULUM XLII

¶79 Venit tandem ad curiam regis cuiusdam, qui Kentwinus³ uocabatur; ubi satis humane susceptus, et bene, uerum breui, habitus est. Nam quemadmodum alias, sic et ibi demonis instinctu femineas passus est iras. Siquidem regia uxor soror erat Ermenburgis, malorum fere omnium que contra uirum Dei fiebant auctricis.⁴ Hec igitur a sua sorore in mentis malignitate non minor, beatum presulem, multis contrarietatibus afflictum, a suis omnibus expulit.

¶80 Quid, diaboli furor immanis, quid⁵ tantopere aduersus famulum Domini⁶ seuendo uagaris?⁷ Quid ei⁸ laqueos tue fraudis innectere tentas,⁹ et tentando illum uaria calumniarum tempestate fatigas? Quid eum¹⁰ ab humani cordis edificatione flectere niteris et ob hoc Christianorum societati coniunctum esse non pateris? Ecce! cum illum a Christianis depellis, ad paganos liberaliter ibit, uelis, nolis; et qui times ne quorundam Christianorum mentes tuis deceptionibus per ipsius conuersationem quoquo modo euacuentur, longe quam putas per ista hoc efficis, ut integra prouincia penitus tua dominatione priuetur.

¹ D] *ostenderet*.

² D] *i* is inserted above interlinearly.

³ D] *Kentiwinus*.

⁴ D] *autrix*.

⁵ D] *qui*.

⁶ D] *Dei*.

⁷ *uagaris*] The first four letters are expuncted in A, and *bacha* is written in the space above.

⁸ D] omits.

⁹ D] *temptans*.

¹⁰ D] The scribe began to write an *a* after *e*, then corrected himself and made a *u*.

¶78 And so Wilfrid, frustrated in the hope of human help in every way—he did not know where to look or where to turn for shelter—manifested this single article of faith, that he could not be deserted in any way by God. Bolstered wondrously by this belief, he consistently endured with great inner gladness whatever setbacks befell him; and the more he was struck by adversities, the more completely he took upon himself full heartily good deeds in God's name.

Chapter 42 *Wilfrid is at first received honourably by King Centwine, but later his queen, a sister of Ermenburg, causes him to be expelled.*

¶79 At length he came to the court of a certain king, who was called Centwine. There he was received with due courtesy and was well thought of—but not for long. For just as he had suffered elsewhere, so too here he was afflicted by the angry outbursts of women who had been incited by the Devil. This king's wife, in fact, was the sister of Ermenburg, the instigator of nearly all the evils which had mounted up against the man of God. Therefore, this woman, who was no less malign than her sister in her mind, inflicted all sorts of adversities upon the blessed bishop and expelled him from all her lands.

¶80 O Devil, in your great madness, why, O why, do you expend yourself so furiously in your hostility towards the servant of the Lord? Why do you attempt to ensnare him with the traps of your deceit and vex him by assailing him with a many a storm of falsities? Why do you struggle to turn him away from his instruction of the human heart and for this reason suffer him not to be part of a Christian community? Lo, whenever you drive him away from Christians, with magnanimity he will walk among the pagans, whether you like it or not. And you who are fearful that the minds of certain Christians may be cleansed of your deceptions in some way by the example of his life bring about by your actions something you had never anticipated, that a whole province is wrenched completely from your control.

CAPITULUM XLIII

¶81 Namque diuertit post hec ad prouinciam Australium Saxonum, que illo adhuc tempore paganis cultibus insudabat, ibique uerbum fidei predicabat, et credentibus lauacrum salutis ministrabat.

¶82 Erat autem rex gentis illius, Edilwalh¹ nomine, non multo ante baptizatus in prouincia Merciorum, et regina, nomine Eabe, fuerat baptizata in sua, hoc est prouincia Huicciorum². Itaque beatus Wilfridus, concedente,³ immo multum gaudente rege, primos prouincie duces ac milites sacro fonte abluebat, presbiteri uero sui ceteram plebem. Antehac⁴ enim tota⁵ ipsa prouincia diuini nominis et fidei erat ignara, preter regem atque reginam. Erat tamen ibi monachus quidam de natione Scottorum, nomine Dicus, habens monasterium permodicum in loco qui uocatur Bosanham, siluis marique circumdatum, et in eo fratres quinque uel sex in humili ac paupere uita Domino famulantes. Sed nullus prouincialium eorum uel uitam emulari, uel predicationem curabat attendere.

¶83 Euangelizans autem genti episcopus, non solum eam ab erumna perpetue damnationis, uerum et a clade infanda⁶ temporalis interitus eripuit. Siquidem tribus annis ante aduentum eius in prouinciam⁷ nulla illis in locis pluuia ceciderat, quamobrem fames acerbissima plebem inuaserat, ac impia nece prostrauerat. Denique ferunt, quia sepe quadraginta simul aut⁸ quinquaginta homines, inedia macerati, ad precipitium aliquod siue ripam maris procedebant, et iunctis misere manibus, pariter omnes aut ruina perituri, aut fluctibus absorbendi decidebant. Uerum ipso die, quo baptismum fidei gens suscepit, ad preces eximii patris pluuia serena, sed copiosa, descendit. Refloruit terra, rediit uiridantibus aruis

¹ A] *Edilwald*.

² There is a gloss above this in ' B ('i' *uigorino* (?)). D] *huiccinorum*.

³ D] *rege concedente immo multum gaudente*.

⁴ *antehac enim*] D *ante enim hoc*.

⁵ D] *o* is altered—the scribe seems to have begun to make an *a* before correcting himself.

⁶ D] *nefande*.

⁷ D] *prouincia*.

⁸ D] *ac*.

Chapter 43 *Wilfrid is received honourably by King Æthelwealh and Queen Eaba of the South Saxons; he saves the South Saxons from a famine and converts many of them to the faith. [c.A.D. 681]*

¶81 For after these events Wilfrid redirected his course to the territory of the South Saxons, which at that time still laboured under the yoke of pagan practices, and there he preached the Christian faith and administered the waters of salvation to believers.

¶82 The king of this people, who had not long before been baptized in the province of the Mercians, was called Æthelwealh; the queen, Eaba, had been baptized in her own province of the Hwicce. And so with the king's consent—indeed, to his great delight—blessed Wilfrid bathed the foremost leaders and soldiers of the province in the sacred font, and his priests baptized the rest of the people. For, with the exception of the king and queen, up until then that whole province was ignorant of the name of God and of the faith. However, there was at that time a certain Irish monk called Dicuill who maintained a very small monastery in a place called Bosham, which is surrounded by woods and the sea; there five or six brothers lived in humility and poverty serving the Lord. But no one living in the province cared either to emulate their lifestyle or to pay attention to their preaching.

¶83 While preaching the Gospel to the people the bishop not only snatched them away from the tribulation of eternal damnation but also saved them from the destructiveness of natural disaster. For it happened that for three years before his arrival in the province no rain had fallen anywhere there, and because of this a very severe famine had fallen upon the people and they had been struck down by a cruel death. In the end they say that often a group of forty or fifty men, wasted away by hunger, used to proceed to some cliff or other or to the seashore and holding hands together in their misery they all jumped at once, intending either to perish in the fall or to be swallowed up by the waves. But on the very day when the people received baptism into the faith, a gentle but plentiful rain fell in response to the prayers of the most distinguished father. The earth

annus letus ac frugifer. Sicque, abiecta superstitione antiqua, exufflata¹ idolatria, cor omnium et caro exultauerunt in Deum uiuum; intelligentes eum, qui uerus est Deus, et interioribus et exterioribus² se bonis gratia celesti ditasse.

CAPITULUM XLIV

¶84 Antistes quoque cum in prouinciam uenisset, tantamque famis penam ibi uidisset, docuit eos piscando uictum querere. Nam mare ac flumina eorum piscibus abundabant,³ sed piscandi peritia genti nulla, nisi ad anguillas tantum, inerat. Retibus igitur anguillaribus undecunque collectis, et ab hominibus antistitis in mare missis, meritis⁴ sui patris diuina sunt largitate adiuti, ceperuntque diuersi generis pisces trecentos; quibus trifariam diuisis, centum in opus pauperum dispenderunt, centum iis a quibus retia acceperant contulerunt, centum in suos usus retinuerunt. Quo beneficio multum antistes cor omnium⁵ in sui conuertit amorem, et eo predicante fiducialius celestia sperare ceperunt, cuius ministerio terrestria bona ceperunt. Quo tempore rex Edilwalh⁶ donauit seruo Domini terram octoginta septem familiarum, uocabulo Selesei, quod latine dicitur Insula Vituli Marini, ubi suos homines, qui exules uagabantur, recipere posset. Hunc ergo locum cum accepisset episcopus Wilfridus, fundauit ibi monasterium, ac regulari uita instituit, maxime tamen ex iis quos secum adduxerat fratribus; quod monasterium usque hodie successores⁷ eius tenere noscuntur. At tamen sedes cathedre⁸ episcopalis in Cicestram⁹ postea mutata est.

¹ AD] *exsufflata*.

² D] The first *i* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

³ D] *habundabant*.

⁴ C] *meriti*.

⁵ *omnium...suu]* D] *multum in suum*; see the Commentary.

⁶ A] *Ethelwald*.

⁷ *successores eius]* D reverses.

⁸ *cathedre episcopalis]* D reverses.

⁹ D] *Cicestriam*.

flowered again and with the fields growing green once more there followed a blessed and bountiful season. And so with ancient superstition cast aside and the worship of idols swept away, the spirit and flesh of everyone exulted in the living God, recognizing that the true God had enriched them with gifts for both body and soul by his heavenly grace.

Chapter 44 *King Æthelwealh gives Wilfrid an estate at Selsey; there he establishes a monastery.* [A.D. 681–6]

¶84 Moreover, when the bishop had come to that province and seen the torment of so great a famine there, he taught them to obtain food for themselves by fishing. For the ocean and rivers of their land abounded with fish, but the people had no fishing skills except only in the catching of eels. Consequently, the bishop's men collected the nets used for catching eels from everywhere and cast them into the sea. They were assisted by the merits of their father Wilfrid and the largesse of God and caught three hundred fish of various sorts. They divided the catch into three parts, apportioning one hundred to the needy poor, giving one hundred to the people from whom they had received the nets, and retaining one hundred for their own consumption. By his good works the bishop turned their hearts towards a great love of him. And as a result of the preaching of him through whose ministry they had received earthly blessings, they began to hope with greater faith for heavenly things. At this time King Æthelwealh presented an estate of eighty-seven hides called Selsey—which in Latin [*Insula Vituli Marini*] means 'the island of the seal'—to the servant of the Lord where he would be able to accommodate his own followers who were also wandering as exiles. And when Bishop Wilfrid had accepted this place he founded a monastery made up mostly of the brothers that he had brought with him and established a rule of life there; it is known that his successors still control this monastery today. But afterwards the cathedral seat of the bishop was moved to Chichester.

CAPITULUM XLV

¶85 Inclitus autem pater Wilfridus illis in partibus annos quinque, hoc est usque ad mortem Ecfredi, mira sanctitate et prudentia peditus, officium episcopatus, omnibus ualde carus et honorabilis, administrabat; ac quoniam illi rex, cum prefata possessione, omnes que¹ ibidem reperte sunt facultates, cum agris et hominibus, donauit, omnes fide Christi imbutos, unda baptismatis lauit. Inter quos, seruos utriusque sexus, numero ducentos quinquaginta, baptizauit, quos ut baptizando a seruitute diabolica liberauit, sic etiam libertati donando humane iugo seruitutis absoluit.

CAPITULUM XLVI

¶86 Post hec cum Cædwalla, qui ab exilio meritis et² tuitionibus beati Wilfridi fuerat reuocatus, regno potitus esset Geuissorum³, Vectam Insulam bello capere, ac expulsis indigenis homines sue prouincie cogitabat eidem insule substituere. Fuerat autem eadem insula eatenus tota idolatrie dedita. Ubi uero ad certamen uentum est, uoto se memoratus princeps, quamuis nondum in Christo regeneratus, astrinxit, quoniam, si uictor insulam cepisset, quartam eius partem, simul et prede, Christo Domino daret. Quod ipse uictoria usus taliter soluit, ut hanc beato Wilfrido utendam pro Domino, offerret. Et quoniam mensura eiusdem insule, iuxta estimationem Anglorum, familiarum est mille ducentarum, data est antistiti possessio terre familiarum trecentarum. At ipse partem quam accepit, commendauit cuidam de clericis suis, cui nomen Bernuinus, qui erat filius sororis eius, dans illi presbiterum, nomine Hildilam, utrisque precipiens, quatinus in ipsa insula quibuscunque ualerent, uerbum ac lauacrum uite ministrarent: qui ministerio predicationis assumpto, meritis et intercessionibus beati patris,⁴ suaque instantia, Christiane fidei iugo prefatam insulam subiecerunt.

¹ D] *qui*.

² C] This word is inserted above interlinearly.

³ A] *geuissorum*; D *geuissorum*.

⁴ D] adds *Wilfridi*.

Chapter 45 *Wilfrid remains among the South Saxons for five years.*

¶85 And so the renowned father Wilfrid, possessed of marvellous sanctity and foresight administered the episcopal office in those regions for five years, that is, until the death of Ecgrith, being greatly beloved and most honourable in the eyes of everyone. And since together with the estate already mentioned the king had presented him with all the resources found there, together with the fields and their inhabitants, he imbued the people with the faith of Christ and bathed them all in the waters of baptism. Among them he baptized slaves of both sexes, two hundred and fifty in total. Just as by baptizing them he freed them from slavery to the Devil, so too he delivered them from the yoke of human slavery by presenting them with their freedom.

Chapter 46 *Wilfrid spends some time with King Cædwalla and establishes a monastery on the Isle of Wight.*

¶86 After these things when Cædwalla, who had been recalled from exile through the efforts and with the protection of blessed Wilfrid, had gained control of the kingdom of the Gewisse, he contemplated conquering the Isle of Wight in battle and, once he had driven the natives off that island, replacing them with people from his own province. However, that island had until then been totally devoted to idolatry. When the day for the battle arrived, the renowned leader, though not yet born again in Christ, bound himself with a vow that, should he be victorious in capturing the island, he would give one quarter of it together with a similar proportion of the booty to Christ the Lord. And Cædwalla, enjoying the fruits of victory, discharged his vow in this way: he offered the specified portion to blessed Wilfrid to be used in the service of the Lord. And since the size of this island is one thousand two hundred hides according to the reckoning of the English, a holding of three hundred hides of land was given to the bishop. But Wilfrid entrusted the portion he had been given to a certain cleric named Beornwine among his followers, who was his sister's son, giving him also the service of a priest called Hildila. He instructed them to administer both the Gospel and the waters of life to whomever they could on that island. Once they had taken upon themselves the ministry of preaching, by their own perseverance and with the efforts and intercession of the blessed father they subjected that island to the yoke of the Christian faith.

CAPITULUM XLVII

¶87 Anno incarnati Uerbi Dei sescentesimo octogesimo quinto, cum Ecfrius rex Nordanhimbrorum¹ temere exercitum ad uastandam Pictorum prouinciam duxisset, hostibus fugam simulantibus, in angustias inaccessorum montium est perductus,² atque cum maxima sui exercitus copia, quam secum adduxerat, extinctus. Et quidem iuste, qui enim uirum uite nullo pacto in amicitiam suam uel in³ iura⁴ potestatis sue est dignatus admittere, merito debuit eo despecto ab eisdem hostibus mori, quos prius eodem sibi familiariter accepto meruit feliciter sue ditioni subicere. Ipsa autem hora qua iste rex graui bello in Pictorum prouincia premebatur, seruus omnipotentis Domini Wilfridus in Suth-Saxonia sacris Missarum celebrationibus intendebat. Cumque dicto 'Sursum corda', responderetur 'Habemus ad Dominum', raptus in mentis excessum uidit eodem momento per Spiritum Dei, Ecfrius, capite cesum, morti procumbere. Qua uisione perterritus, maiori est post modicum terrore percussus. Nam cum⁵ *Sequentia* Misse prosequeretur, et in *Prefatione*, 'Per Christum Dominum nostrum', ab ipso diceretur, aspexit, et ecce! duo maligni spiritus animam eiusdem⁶ regis ante ipsius oculos miserabiliter attulerunt, sicque horrendo gemitu suspirantem secum ad inferni claustra tulerunt. Ilico Accam presbiterum suum uocauit, et ei cuncta que uiderat enarrauit. Ad⁷ que presbiter uehementi stupore attonitus, uix illius uerbis auditum patienter credere potuit. Iussus tamen, diem et horam⁸ regie interfectionis notauit, et eam ipsam fuisse post aliquot dies rei geste attestatio comprobauit.

¹ A] *Northanhymbrorum*.

² D] *perdictus*, with *u* inserted above the *i* by a corrector.

³ D] *in* is inserted above interlinearly.

⁴ D] There is a space between *r* and *a* where a letter is erased.

⁵ D] This word is inserted above interlinearly.

⁶ ACD] omit.

⁷ *ad que*] D] *atque*.

⁸ D] *horem*.

Chapter 47 King Ecgrith is slain in a campaign against the Picts. While celebrating Mass among the South Saxons, Wilfrid has a vision in which he witnesses the death of Ecgrith in battle and sees his soul being borne to hell by devils. [A.D. 685]

¶87 In the six hundred and eighty-fifth year after the incarnation of the Word of God, Ecgrith, king of the Northumbrians, with little foresight led an army into the territory of the Picts intending to lay it waste. However, his enemies feigned flight and drew him into a narrow pass in the inaccessible mountains where he was slain together with the greater part of his forces, which he had led there. And rightly so. For he had chosen not to admit the man of life into his friendship or to let him have any legal rights or powers of his own under any circumstances; and because he spurned him in this way he deserved to die at the hands of the same enemies whom earlier he had happily deserved to subject to his authority when he had included Wilfrid among his circle of intimates. And at the very moment when that king was being crushed in deadly combat in the territory of the Picts, Wilfrid, the servant of the Almighty Lord, was engaged in celebrating the sacred Mass in the kingdom of the South Saxons. And when the words 'Lift up your hearts' were met with the response 'We lift them up to the Lord', Wilfrid was seized by an ecstatic vision and through the power of the Spirit of God he saw at that very moment Ecgrith being struck on the head with a sword and falling dead upon the ground. Though utterly terrified by this vision, he was struck by a still greater horror a few moments later. For when the Sequence of the Mass was in progress and he was uttering the words of the Preface, "Through Christ our Lord", he looked up and, behold, two evil spirits paraded the soul of that same king in all his misery before Wilfrid's eyes and thereupon carried him off sighing and groaning horribly with them to the confines of hell. He immediately summoned his priest Acca and related to him all the things that he had seen. In response to this the priest was struck by great amazement and could scarcely suffer himself to believe what Wilfrid had said. However, he noted upon instruction the day and the hour of the king's death, and after a number of days the official account of that event proved that the vision occurred at that very moment.

CAPITULUM XLVIII¹

¶88 Fama igitur circumquaque regis obitum denuntiante, ueloci relatu ad aures Theodori metropolitane sedis antistitis peruenit; qui delictum quod iam olim in famulum Dei commiserat, consentiendo uidelicet eum tantis perturbationibus, ut prefati sumus, iniuste affligi, hoc, inquam, delictum humili satisfactione corrigere uolens, misit propter eum, et ad se honorifice perductum taliter est allocutus. 'Fili, immo uirtutum meritis sanctissime pater, ego qui ad hoc pre ceteris constitutus eram, ut omni iniustitie, que in hoc regno emergere posset, obuiarem, propria fragilitate subactus, plurimis tibi contra ius aduersantibus, fateor, multum peccando consensi. Sed mihi culpam fatenti, et intimo corde penitentiam agentis, pius,² queso, uenie largitor assiste. Ultima nempe mee, sicut cernis, nunc instant tempora uite; ac per hoc quod deprecor annue, et, suppliciter a me postulatus, intercede pro me.'

¶89 Territus his uerbis, Iesu Christi Domini seruus respondit, 'Et quidem multis me tribulationibus te consentiente afflictum, pastor uenerande, non³ nescio; absit tamen, absit, ut hoc te quauis malitia inductum fecisse crediderim. Uerum, ut autumo, ea potius intentione id fecisti, quia uolebas me per ipsas tribulationes in patientia exerceri, quatinus anxietatibus actus, per iter patientie possem perfectionis culmen attingere. Quapropter multo magis tibi pro tua bona intentione grates agere debeo, quam tu apud me inde ueniam querere, presertim cum nunquam uenia rite petatur,⁴ nisi unde aliqua offensio contracta esse putatur. Sed quoniam te circumquaque oculatum instar celestis animalis esse non nescio, perspicaciter atque subtiliter que sunt uidenda te considerare perpendo. Ea propter si putas te, pater dilectissime, aliquid peccati contraxisse in iis,⁵ que contra me fieri consensisti, quantum

¹ A omits this chapter (paragraphs 88–90) completely.

² D] *pius*.

³ D] omits.

⁴ D] *petebatur*.

⁵ D] *his*.

Chapter 48 *When Archbishop Theodore senses that his death is approaching, he tries to make amends with Wilfrid; the two are reconciled.* [A.D. 686–7]

¶88 And so when rumour was busy announcing the king's death everywhere it was quickly reported to the ears of Theodore, the bishop of the metropolitan see. Because he wished to atone for the offence which he had committed against the servant of God a long time ago by openly consenting for Wilfrid to be persecuted unjustly by such great upheavals in his life, as we said earlier; in order to atone for this, I say, with humble reparation, he summoned him and when he was led honourably before him he spoke these words to him: 'My son—rather, on account of the merit of your virtues I should address you as most holy father—I, who had been appointed before all others to oppose every injustice which might arise in this realm, overcome by personal weakness agreed, I admit, to sinning greatly in many matters when you were accused without justification. But you are pious and able to bestow pardon; wherefore, come to my aid, I beseech you, since I confess my sin and repent with my innermost heart. As you can readily see, the final hours of my life are now upon me; and on this account consent to that for which I pray and intercede on behalf of me because I request this of you in humility.'

¶89 Alarmed by these words, the servant of Jesus Christ the Lord responded: 'Indeed I realize, O venerable pastor, that I was afflicted by many tribulations to which you consented; dispel the thought, however, drive the thought from your mind that I ever believed that you were led to do this through any sort of malice. Indeed, as I affirm, you did that since you wished me to be exercised in patience by these tribulations, and rather with the intention that driven by anxieties I might be able to attain the peak of perfection through the path of patience. Therefore, it is far more appropriate that I should give thanks to you for your good intentions than that you should come to me seeking pardon in this matter, especially since there is no cause for pardon ever to be sought unless any sort of offence is thought to have been taken in a given incident. But because I realize that you are recognized everywhere to be the earthly equivalent of a celestial being, I judge that you consider perceptively and subtly what ought to be perceived publicly. Wherefore, if you think, most beloved father, that you have committed any sort of sin in

mea interest libens indulgeo, et indulgens eterni super te¹ misericordiam iudicis uenire supplicii deuotione deponco.²

¶90 Ex hoc firmissima sanctissimaque inter ipsos uenerabiles uiros pace fundata, pastoralis auctoritate mutuo sese Christo conciliauere, et letitia spirituali iocundantes, que Dei sunt unanimes assertiones tractauere.

CAPITULUM XLIX

¶91 Preterea² Theodorus misit litteras Alfrido, qui in gente Nordanhimbrorum³ regia dignitate, defuncto Ecfrido, fungebatur, in quibus sibi rethorica facundia suasit et persuasit, quatinus beato Wilfrido ex corde amicus fieret, eumque in sedem ecclesie,⁴ de qua iniuste depositus fuerat,⁵ honorifice reciperet.⁶ Ailredo⁷ etiam regi Merciorum, necne⁸ quibusdam aliis super eodem negotio mandauit, quibus ea de re mandare non incongruum iudicauit; qui omnes una cum regibus pari consensione mandatis fauentes, multa cordis alacritate nobilissimum Domini famulum sese in propria recepturos remandauere. Quin etiam rex Alfridus, nuntiis a latere suo directis, debito uenerationis obsequio uirum reuocare precepit.

CAPITULUM L

¶92 Regali ergo inuitatione, necnon pontificali preceptione conuentus, ad ecclesiam⁹ suam redire¹⁰ instituit. Verumtamen

¹ D] omits.

² A] adds *uenerabilis*.

³ A] *Northanhymbrorum*.

⁴ ACD] add *sue*.

⁵ ACD] *erat*.

⁶ D] *susciperet*.

⁷ A] *Ægelredo*.

⁸ D] *nec non*.

⁹ *ecclesiam suam*] ACD reverse.

¹⁰ ACD] *rediit* and omit *instituit...intromissi*.

consenting for these trials to be inflicted upon me, so far as I am concerned I happily yield, and in yielding I request with humble devotion that the mercy of the eternal Judge come upon you.²

¶90 As a result of this exchange the firmest and most sacred peace was established between these two venerable men. By their reciprocal pastoral authority they reconciled themselves for Christ's sake, and delighting in spiritual happiness they performed the work of God with single-minded resolve.

Chapter 49 *Archbishop Theodore urges Kings Aldfrith and Æthelred to befriend Wilfrid and to treat him honourably.*

¶91 Furthermore, Theodore sent a letter to Aldfrith, who since the death of Ecgrith was discharging the royal office among the people of Northumbria. In it using rhetorical eloquence he exhorted and persuaded him to befriend blessed Wilfrid sincerely and to receive him back honourably to the see of his own church from which he had been unjustly deposed. He further instructed Æthelred, the King of the Mercians, in this affair and, in addition, certain others whom he judged it appropriate also to instruct in this business. All of them together with the kings were unanimously well disposed to these commands and sent back word that they would receive the most noble servant of the Lord back into their lands with great gladness of heart. And indeed, King Aldfrith sent messengers from his side to recall Wilfrid with due veneration and obedience.

Chapter 50 *Wilfrid is reinstated in his episcopal see in Northumbria. Later King Aldfrith turns against Wilfrid, charging him with ignoring the decrees of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Wilfrid is expelled from Northumbria, but is welcomed by his old friend, King Æthelred of Mercia. [A.D. 687–92]*

¶92 Therefore, since he was summoned by both royal invitation and pontifical injunction, he decided to return to his own church. However, being mindful of the benefit and honour which he

beneficii et honoris que olim, ut supra meminimus, in ecclesia Cantuariensi adeptum se fuisse sciebat, postposita tribulatione illata, non immemor, uillam quam ex regio munere acceperat, uocabulo Paggaham, cum omnibus appendiciis suis, ipsi ecclesie Cantuariensi ad sua rediens perpetuo iure possidendam donauit. Quo facto, letus et alacer in primam sedem suam reuersus est, remotis primo iis qui, eo abiecto, fuerant, ut diximus, intromissi. O quam felix ille dies omnibus per id locorum commanentibus extitit, quantamque mentis letitiam cunctis in circuitu populis habitantibus, attulit, qui beatum Wilfridum ab exilio reuocatum primus uidere promeruit! Quis huius letitie formam plene capiat? Quis eam cordibus aliorum per sui oris¹ officium infundat? Crebra monachorum examina obuam patri procedunt, clericorum agmina cum totius frequentia plebis suo pastori certatim occurrere contendunt, et omnes, elata uoce Deum benedicentes, eum suscipiunt, ac in² ecclesiam ducunt. In qua ille roboratus, et a qua postmodum³ eliminatis que censura equitatis auferri debere⁴ monstrauit, quicquid terrarum atque reddituum iuri ecclesie competeat, breui recuperauit, nichilominus quoque diuinitatis uerba subditorum cordibus cotidie per illum infunduntur, et in eis⁵ 'fons aque salientis in uitam eternam'⁷ exoritur. Christi fides cum bonorum operum exhibitione recalescit, opus autem perfidie et malignitatis ubique frigescit. Quamobrem pax sincera cordium, tranquilla opulentia rerum, alacritas magna in Dei seruitium, iocunda⁶ delectatio, delectabilisque iocunditas processit in Deum, que omnia magnam contra⁷ ipsum inuidiam diaboli⁸ concitauere. Uerum miles Dei iam bene instructus armatura Uerbi Dei, iamque plurima expertus temptamenta diaboli, quo in bello excitator, eo ad deiciendum difficilior erat, moremque fortissimi bellatoris imitatus, non modo se, sed et suos commilitones hostem cedendo dextra leuaque protegebat. Sicque diabolo impenetrabilis, per quinquennium in sui status dignitate permansit.

¹ D] This is written over an erasure in a thin, uncalligraphic script.

² D] *ad*.

³ C] *post modicum*.

⁴ *debere mons-*] This is over an erasure in D.

⁵ D] *his*.

⁶ D] The scribe first wrote *iocunta* and then altered original *t* by adding an ascender to it.

⁷ D] *contra*; the contracted form is written over an erasure, though the abbreviation sign seems to be original.

⁸ D] omits.

recognized he had formerly received in the church of Canterbury (as we noted above) and with the troubles which had afflicted him now set aside, he granted the villa called Paghham, which he had received with all its associated goods by royal gift, to that church at Canterbury for possession by perpetual right prior to returning to his own lands. When this had been done and once those who had been put in place when he had been expelled (as related above) were removed, he came back happily and enthusiastically to the first see that he had been given. O, what a happy day that was for all those who had remained in those places and how great a joy of mind did that day, which first deserved to see blessed Wilfrid recalled from exile, bring to all the people residing in that area. Who is there who could fully understand the extent of this happiness? Who could infuse that joy into the hearts of others by dutifully relating it? Swarms of monks rushed forward to meet the father. Throngs of the clergy and the entire populace *en masse* eagerly struggled to meet their shepherd and, blessing God with voices raised on high, they all embraced him and led him into the church. By this he was strengthened; and when those things which fair judgement showed ought to be taken away were removed from it, Wilfrid recovered in a short time whatever lands and revenues were appropriate for the church according to its rights. In addition to these concerns he daily poured the words of the Divinity into the hearts of those in his care, and there arose in them 'a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting'. While the faith of Christ once again grew fervent with the display of good works, the work of treachery and malice everywhere grew cold. On account of this there arose in everyone's heart a sincere peace towards God; from this tranquillity sprang a wealth of worldly goods, a great willingness to perform the service of God, a delight in their happiness and a happiness in the things that delighted them—all of these things aroused the great envy of the Devil towards Wilfrid. But the soldier of God was now well equipped with the armour of the word of God; and since he had experienced a great number of assaults by the Devil, he was more vigorous in battle and for that reason he was more difficult to cast down. He emulated the behaviour of the bravest warrior in protecting not only himself but also his companions in arms by striking down the enemy on the right and on the left. And so impervious to the assaults of the Devil, he maintained his honourable estate for five years.

¶93 Sed, O inexterminabilis inuidia diaboli! O uiolenta¹ dominatio eius! et quam difficile ad subterfugiendum ex consuetudine admissum ius possessionis eius! Dum enim uiro uirtutis quid² noui in pacis subuersionem obiceret non inueniret, antiquarum dissensionum persuasores in pristinos motus excitat, et celeriter per eos regem pace discussa in iram³ contra pontificem armat. Nam uerbis delatorum accensus, in uarias et multiplices possessiones eius cepit subita⁴ cupiditate estuare, et eas iuri ecclesiarum, quibus date fuerant, non iure auferre. Cui quoniam Wilfridus episcopali auctoritate contraire non timuit, graui contra se regem iracundia inflammauit. Unde factum est,⁵ ut rex illum omnibus suis spoliatum a regno suo pellere proponeret. Ad quod peragendum ut archiepiscopum Cantuariensem propositi sui executorem haberet, opposuit illi quod statuta pontificum ipsius sedis non seruaret, et precipue uenerabilis Theodori, qui nuperrime uita decesserat. Et quoniam nefas erat ullum episcopum totius Anglici regni in auctoritate haberi, qui statutis cantuariensis archiepiscopi uel leuiter contraire auderet, Wilfridum sese hac de calumnia non omnino excusare ualentem, in regno suo episcopum esse nolebat.

¶94 Siquidem⁶ Wilfridus ea statuta Theodori suscipiebat, eis que debitam obedientiam exhibebat, que a canonibus instituta et primis atque postremis archiepiscopatus sui temporibus in pace constituit, uerum ea que temporibus interrupte pacis, ut fertur,⁷ pro libitu, non pro ratione statuerat, nullo pacto suscipere, nec eis assensum prebere uolebat. Quapropter quasi inobedientie et contumacie macula contra sedem totius Britannie matrem in eo reperta, pristina

¹ D] *uiolentia*.

² D] *quod*.

³ *iram contra*] D] *ira*.

⁴ *subita cupiditate*] D reverses.

⁵ B] omits, A inserts above.

⁶ *siquidem...pristina est*] A reads merely *Qui pristina* for this whole passage; see the Commentary.

⁷ *ut fertur*] D omits.

¶93 O, but the envy of the Devil knows no limits. O, how violent is his tyranny, and once anyone has been accepted into his control by past habits how difficult it is to escape without his notice. For since he could not find any new device to throw up against the man of virtue in order to subvert this peace, he incited the instigators of the quarrels of old towards their former insurrections and when they had disrupted the peace the Devil quickly roused the king in anger against the bishop. For inflamed by the words of these conspirators and struck by sudden greed he began to seethe on account of Wilfrid's various and manifold possessions and to remove them illegally from the rightful control of the churches to which they had been given. Since Wilfrid was not afraid to use his episcopal authority to oppose him, he inflamed the king against him with heavy wrath. And so it came to pass that the king decided to expel him from his kingdom stripped of all his possessions. In order to accomplish this and so that he might have the Archbishop of Canterbury as the executor of his plan, he charged Wilfrid with not observing the ordinances of the bishops of that see—and especially those of venerable Theodore, who had very recently departed from this life. And since it was unthinkable for any bishop anywhere in the English realm, who dared even mildly to oppose the statutes of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to be allowed to maintain his authority, Aldfrith did not wish for Wilfrid, who was not able to exonerate himself completely from this false charge, to be bishop in his kingdom.

¶94 Indeed, Wilfrid was accustomed to acknowledge the ordinances of Theodore which were based upon canonical decrees instituted by him during periods of peace at the beginning and the end of his archiepiscopate and to show due obedience to them. But those which he had decreed, so they say, not out of reason, but rather to suit his will during times when the peace had been interrupted, Wilfrid wished neither to accept in any way nor to offer his assent to them. And so, on grounds that a blemish of disobedience and arrogance towards the see which is the mother of all Britain was

est auctoritate priuatus, et apud¹ Birhtualdum² archiepiscopum, qui³ Theodoro successerat, pro negotio⁴ accusatus.

¶95 Abiectus ergo,⁵ ad fidelem amicum suum regem scilicet Merciorum, nomine Æilredum,⁶ secessit, a quo gloriose susceptus, sub protectione Dei et illius aliquanto tempore conuersatus est.

CAPITULUM LI

¶96 Inter hec, rogatu regis Alfridi,⁷ Birhtualdus⁸ archiepiscopus precepit generale concilium episcoporum totius Britannie congregari in campo qui dicitur⁹ Eastrefeld; cui concilio ut¹⁰ Wilfridus suam presentiam exhiberet,¹¹ ei mandatum est, simulque promissum omnem se iustitiam de iniuria, quam sibi querebatur illatam, recepturum, si tamen iniuriam sibi factam certa ratione ostendere posset. Quid plura? uenit ad synodum, sed nequaquam inuenit ius sibi promissum. Quidam enim episcopi regie uoluntati fauentes, mox in concilio uirum Dei falsis calumniis exagitare, et quibus poterant contrarietatibus perturbare ceperunt. Cumque ea que obiecerant,¹² nulla ueritate subnixa probare ualere, tandem suis obiectionibus id adiecere,¹³ illum decretis archiepiscopi Cantuariensis¹⁴ Theodori minime parere. Quibus ille, 'Decretis,' inquit, 'uenerandi patris Theodori, que¹⁵ pace et canonica auctoritate dictante promulgauit,¹⁶ conscientia teste, deuota mente subdi, eisque, ut iustum est, per omnia obtemperare uolo, et

¹ A] adds *sanctum*.

² A] *Brithwaldum*; D] *brithualdum*.

³ A] adds *beato*.

⁴ A] adds *est*.

⁵ A] adds *de episcopatu suo sanctus Wilfridus*.

⁶ A] *Ægelredum*; C] *Ailredum*; D] *Aeilredum*.

⁷ A] adds *uenerabilis*.

⁸ A] *Brithwaldus*, and adds *cantuariorum*; D] *brithualdus*.

⁹ D] *uocatur*.

¹⁰ A] adds *beatus*.

¹¹ This word is added in the left margin in A, though the initial *ex-* has been cropped.

¹² D] *obicerant*.

¹³ D] The first *e* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

¹⁴ A] adds *beatissimi*.

¹⁵ *que...promulgauit*] A omits this passage.

¹⁶ D] *permulgauit*.

discovered in him, he was stripped of his original authority and charged in this matter before Archbishop Berhtwald, who had succeeded Theodore.

¶95 Once he had been expelled, he withdrew to his faithful friend Æthelred, King of the Mercians. He was received lavishly by him and lived for some time under the protection of God and Æthelred.

Chapter 51 *Archbishop Berhtwald convenes a synod at Austerfeld. Charges of disobedience to the see of Canterbury are brought against Wilfrid, but he defends himself competently. The king contemplates using force against Wilfrid in order to bring him to submission. [c.A.D. 703]*

¶96 While these things were happening, Archbishop Berhtwald ordered at the request of King Aldfrith that a general council of the bishops from all over Britain should gather on the plain which is known as Austerfeld. Wilfrid was instructed that he should appear before this council and at the same time was promised that he would receive every justice concerning the injury which he complained had been done to him, on the condition that he could prove without a doubt that an offence had been committed against him. What more can I say? He appeared at the synod, but in no respect did he find the justice promised to him. For certain bishops who favoured the king's designs soon began to persecute the man of God in that council with false charges and to unsettle him with whatever opposing statements they were able to make. And since they were unable to prove that the words with which they had challenged him were founded on any truth at all, finally they added the further charge to their accusations that he did not in the least obey the decrees of Theodore, the Archbishop of Canterbury. He replied to them, 'With my conscience for witness, I have no objection to submitting with a devout mind to the decrees of the venerable father

secundum ea iudicari pro ratione nullatenus abnuo. Attamen precor mihi dicatis quidnam sit, quod iam per plurimos annos litteris pro¹ me ab apostolica sede directis inobedientes existitis, et² tantopere me accusatis, quod eas institutiones Theodori non recipio, quas ipse, non auctoritate canonica sed discordia dictante, composuit, ut uos ipsi optime nostis?

¶97 Ad que cum uerba penitus ratione carentia turbato murmure iacularentur, iuuenis quidam curialis, uiro³ Domini bene familiaris, circumstantium multitudini se immersit, ac ad illum perueniens ei totius tumultuantis concilii causam aperuit, ut sibi prouideret suasit, confestimque per uiam qua uenerat clanculo in curiam rediit. Premonitus igitur et premunitus relatione fidelis amici, tanto constantius equitatis sibi defensionem asciuit, quanto et ipsos iudices suos scienter contra iustitiam agere sciuit. Stat igitur inter uerborum iacula securus, quoniam⁴ sue libertas conscientie fuerat ei dextra leuaque impenetrabilis murus. Quod ubi compertum habuere, quem uerbis superare nequibant, iniectis minis ad suum uelle detorquere querebant. Quibus cum responsa dare ad illorum uota minime uellet, 'Scito,' inquit, 'quod iusta damnationis sententia punieris, nisi cito⁵ ea que tibi sunt obiecta dato responso deleueris.' At ille, 'Ad maius quod mihi a uobis obiectum esse intelligo, scilicet me decretis gloriosi Cantuariensis ecclesie presulis nolle parere,⁶ iam respondi; et hoc ipsum, si uultis, iterum iterumque respondeo,⁷ quod eius canonicis institutis per omnia subici uolo.' Que uerba fraudulenta mox calliditate ex ore eius rapuerunt, et 'Hoc⁸ eius,' dixerunt, 'canonicum institutum est ut superbi et inobedientes deprimantur, humiles uero et obedientes extollantur. Tu autem et contra dominos tuos hactenus in superbiam es elatus, et nichilominus archiepiscopo tuo⁹ inobediens

¹ A] omits *pro me*.

² *et...nostis*] A omits this passage.

³ D] *i* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

⁴ D] has *qm* with an abbreviation sign above the *m*. The *m* and the diacritic above it are over an erasure; this erased area continues into the space after this word.

⁵ D] *scito*.

⁶ D] *parare*.

⁷ D] *respondebo*.

⁸ *hoc eius*] D reverses.

⁹ D] omits.

Theodore which he promulgated in peace and at the dictates of canonical authority; and to these, as is just, I wish to be obedient in every respect and I have no objection whatsoever to being judged according to them and by rational argument. But I pray you tell me what the issue is here? For you are now revealed as having been disobedient for many years to letters sent to you on my behalf from the Apostolic See and you have the nerve to accuse me of not accepting decrees of Theodore which he composed at the dictates not of canonical authority but of rebellion, as you yourselves know full well.'

¶97 While they were hurling words completely devoid of reason and with confused shouting at Wilfrid in response to what he had said, a certain young man from the court, who was well known to the man of the Lord, worked his way through the pressing crowd and upon reaching Wilfrid revealed clearly to him the real reason for that tumultuous council. He persuaded him to look out for himself and immediately returned in secret to the court by the road by which he had come. And now that he was forewarned and forearmed by this revelation from a faithful friend, he adopted with greater conviction a defence for himself based on fairness in that he now knew in addition that those judging his case were knowingly acting without justice. Therefore, he stood unscathed amid the verbal javelins being hurled at him because the freedom provided by his conscience had raised an impenetrable wall on his right and on his left. When they perceived this, since they could not defeat Wilfrid by argument, they attempted to twist him to their will by hurling threats at him. 'You must understand', they said, 'that you will be punished by a deserved sentence of damnation unless, when you have responded, you immediately desist from those practices to which we have objected'. To which he responded: 'To the more important charge which I understand you to have hurled upon me, that is, that I chose not to obey the decrees of the glorious bishop of the church of Canterbury, I have already responded; and I shall make this reply to you time and again, if you so desire, that I wish to be subjected to his canonical decrees in all matters'. They seized upon these words with deceit and cunning as soon as they had left his lips and said, 'This canon of his was decreed so that the proud and disobedient might be put down and the humble and obedient raised up. But thus far you have been swept up with pride against your lords and shown yourself equally to be insolent to your

comprobatu. Quapropter equa¹ ratione iudicatum est et statutum, ut, omnibus tuis expoliatus, elationis et inobedientie penas exsoluas.⁷

¶98 Quo audito, horror et ipsos inimicos eius inuasit,² dicentes impium esse, uirum quaquauersum nationibus honorabilem sic absque ullo certo crimine suis omnibus expoliari. Unde rex et archiepiscopus a nonnullis interpellati, monasterium quod ipse beatus Wilfridus in Hripis,³ ut superius diximus, construxerat, ei cum omnibus que ad illud⁴ pertinebant concessere, ea conditione proposita, ut illic quietus sederet, et absque licentia regis septa monasterii non exiret, nec curam episcopalis officii ulterius administraret.

¶99 Hac igitur mutati consilii⁵ clementia⁶ coram omnibus accurato sermone exposita, ad hoc laboratum est, et Wilfrido quasi utile consilium datum, quatinus ipsemet propria subscriptione se degradari ab officio episcopali eligeret, quo liber a tumultu secularium contemplationi⁷ uite celestis intendere posset; presertim cum ei felicius esset priuatim (ut dicebant) in Dei seruitio solum conuersari, quam insudantem ministerio pontificali iurgiis hominum cotidie fatigari. Sensit prudentia uiri huiusmodi consilium quali de fonte manauit, et admiratus fraudem illorum, tali omnes oratione confutauit. ‘Virtus,’ ait, ‘ueri consilii, que numeratur in septem donis Spiritus Sancti, nichil in se duplicitatis admittit, ac sic⁸ quo simpliciore fonte procedit, eo locum in animo famuli Dei quo⁹ suscipiatur, liberius inuenit. Uestrum autem consilium, quod simplicitate Spiritus Sancti carere quiuis intelligere potest, tanto a me longius abicio, quanto ex iis¹⁰ que in me primo egistis unde procedat apertius uideo. Mendacia nempe que contra me malitiose composuistis, non potuerunt ex se procreare donum Spiritus ueritatis. Quare secundum consilium uestrum proprii censura iudicii

¹ D] *ea qua*.

² D] *euasit*.

³ AD] *Ripis*.

⁴ D] *illum*.

⁵ ACD] *iudicii*.

⁶ D] *clementiam*, over an erasure.

⁷ B] *contemplatione*; see the Commentary.

⁸ D] *si*.

⁹ D] *quos*.

¹⁰ D] *his*, with *h* altered from a minim.

archbishop. Wherefore, it is adjudged and decreed by fair decision that you shall be stripped of all your possessions and pay the penalty for haughtiness and disobedience.’

¶98 When everyone heard this, horror overcame even his very enemies; they said that it was a sacrilege that a man regarded honourably by nations on every side should be thus despoiled of all his possessions without a single substantiated charge. Therefore, the king and archbishop, who were petitioned by some of the people, conceded to him the monastery which blessed Wilfrid had constructed himself at Ripon (as mentioned earlier), and in addition all things belonging to it, on this stipulation—that he remain there quietly, that he not go beyond the walls of the monastery without the king’s permission, and that he no longer attend to the burden of his episcopal office.

¶99 Therefore, when this concession to change their sentence had been announced with carefully chosen words in the presence of all, they endeavoured to bring it about. And advice was given to Wilfrid, as if to his advantage, that he with his own signature should choose to be degraded from his episcopal office so that being freed of the hustle and bustle of secular affairs he would be able to focus on the contemplation of celestial life, especially—so they said—since he would be happier dwelling alone and in private in the service of God than wearing himself down daily in an episcopal role sweating over disputes between people. In his perspicuity Wilfrid was able to tell from what kind of source advice of this nature flowed, and marvelling at their disingenuousness he confounded them with this fitting response: ‘The virtue of true counsel, which is numbered among the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, admits no duplicity in itself, and so when it flows from a pure fountain the more readily it finds a place where it might be received in the soul of a servant of God. However, the more clearly I see (from the actions you have mounted against me) the source of your advice, the more completely I reject it, since anyone can see that it lacks the purity of the Holy Spirit. Needless to say, the lies which you maliciously concocted against me were not able to generate of themselves the gift of the Spirit of Truth. Therefore, I shall not follow your advice and by the

me gradu sacerdotali non deiciam, quia¹ fateor, quod, licet indignus,² opera tamen pontificatu non mediocriter digna, adiutus Domini³ gratia, feci. Hinc est, quod ecce! per annos quadraginta intemerate fidei uirtutem quibus potui predicauit, et contradicentes inuicta ratione deuici, deuictos ueritatem docendo ab omni errore correxi, correctos lumine Uerbi Dei perlustrauit, ac membris ecclesie Christi copulauit. Hec tamen non ego, sed Deus ipse per me. Ritus insuper ecclesiastice obseruationis, multis per Angliam locis scottica traditione deprauatum, apostolica fultus⁴ auctoritate, correxi. Heccine aliaque perplura,⁵ quorum in presenti reminisci piget, hoc meruerunt, ut quasi legum proditor, patrieque delator nusquam tutus esse permittar? Preceptis saltem apostolice sedis, que me iam simili iniuria accusatum atque damnatum excusauere, et absolutum esse constituere, obtemperaretis,⁶ si nec pro amore, nec pro timore Dei me quietum esse permittere uultis. Sed, ut puto, illa precepta aut obliti estis, aut certe scita et cognita pro nichilo ducitis. Quapropter, licet senio sim confectus, re tamen uera noueritis me Rome coram apostolica sede probaturum esse calumnias, quas mihi pro regis indignatione imponitis, ueras non esse; nec minus uere me predicaturum esse⁷ sciatis, quali studio sacerdotale ministerium geratis, qui magis uultis iniustitie hominum fauere, quam iustitiam Dei tenere. Quod satis est manifestum, dum me contra equum et uerum tanto studio impugnatis, quem ueritati et iustitie studere aperta ratione uidetis; et insuper, nichil aduersi pro iis, de quibus me accusatis, conscientia teste, meritum ad⁸ hoc temptatis perducere, ut contra ius in meipsum sententiam damnationis edicam. Sed hac in re noueritis, quod uobis nequaquam consentiam, sed fiducialiter appello sedem apostolicam. Uestrum autem quisquis mecum agere uult, a me hodie inuitatus, mecum illuc ad iudicium pergat.

¹ D] *quia*, with *a* over an erasure; the superscript *i* was perhaps added when the erasure was made.

² D] *indignus*, followed by an erased letter. The *us* abbreviation may have been added when the erasure was made.

³ D] *Dei*.

⁴ D] omits.

⁵ D] *perplurima*.

⁶ ACD] *obtemperetis*.

⁷ *esse sciatis*] D reverses.

⁸ *ad hoc*] D omits.

censure of my own judgement cast myself down from my rank in the priesthood since, I declare, that though I am unworthy, I have nevertheless performed deeds truly worthy of the pontificate with the help of the grace of the Lord. And, lo, in doing this over a period of forty years I have preached the virtue of unblemished faith to everyone I could, and with unconquerable reasoning I have conquered those who have opposed me; by teaching the truth I have corrected every error held by those I conquered; with the light of the word of God I have purified completely those whom I corrected and I have coupled them to the limbs of the Church of Christ. However, not I, but God himself working through me, did these things. In addition to this, sustained by apostolic authority I corrected the rites and observances of the Church which had been corrupted in many places throughout England by the Irish tradition. Have these and very many other things, which at this time it is irksome to rehearse, earned this for me, that like a betrayer of the law or a destroyer of the fatherland I am nowhere permitted to be safe? If you do not wish to allow me any peace either for the love of God or out of fear of him, I wish that you would at least obey the directives of the Apostolic See, which previously exonerated me and declared me absolved when I was accused and condemned on a similar charge. But it seems to me that either you have forgotten these directives or knowing and understanding them you consider them to be truly worthless. Wherefore, though I am worn down by old age, know for a fact that I shall nevertheless prove in Rome before the Apostolic See that the false charges arising from the king's indignation, which you bring against me, are wholly untrue. And you should know no less assuredly that I shall declare publicly the degree of zeal with which you conduct your priestly ministry, (you who are more concerned with pandering to the injustices of men than with preserving the justice of God. This is abundantly clear while, in spite of what is fair and true, you attack with such zeal one you see striving with candid reasoning after truth and justice; and, furthermore, despite your attempts you are not drawing out anything adverse in these matters in which I am accused which merit, with my conscience as witness, that I should pronounce a damning indictment upon myself against all justice. But let me tell you that I in no way agree with you in this matter, but I am putting my faith in an appeal to the Apostolic See. Moreover, anyone of you who wishes to engage with me in this is today invited by me to go there with me for judgment.)

¶100 Talibus uerbis rex in iracundiam uehementer accensus, uiolentia sui exercitus eum opprimere, et ad¹ subeundum iudicium suum cogere cogitabat, si archiepiscopi consensum in hoc potuisset habere.

CAPITULUM LII

¶101 Post hec concione soluta, uir Domini ad regem Ailredum² rediit, et totius negotii summam sibi aperuit; qui tante fraudis malignitate stupefactus, iniuriam ei illatam uehementer indoluit. Alfridus³ uero, quia⁴ Wilfridum ad uelle suum tractare non potuit, ne⁵ tamen in hac parte nichil posse putaretur, disposuit ea que ipse⁶ ad uictum seruis Christi parauerat, omnino conuellere, dissipare, distrahere, et eum⁷ ipsum locum habitationis eorum penitus desertum efficere. At eterni dispositio iudicis, que humano furori⁸ cedere nescit, locum famulorum suorum in manus peccatorum nequaquam ire permisit. Denique pater Wilfridus, priusquam eundi Romam iter arriperet, ad locum uenit, fratres ut se per omnia Deo commendarent admonuit, et ne hominis iram timerent magnopere iussit, dicens, nil penitus eis posse nocere, si Deum protectorem mererentur habere; haberent autem, si eum uere diligerent, eique semper sincero corde seruirent. At illi uerba sui patris obediendo susceperunt, et ideo contra omnes aduersarios Deum protectorem habere meruerunt.

CAPITULUM LIII

¶102 Cum autem beatus Wilfridus Romam uenisset, magnifice tam ab Iohanne, apostolice sedis antistite, quam et a populo Romano

¹ D] omits.

² A] *Ægelredum*.

³ D] *Alfridus*.

⁴ D] *qui*.

⁵ D] *nec*.

⁶ D] *ipse*, with *e* over an erased letter.

⁷ *eum ipsum*] D reverses.

⁸ D] *furore*.

¶100 The king, who was aroused furiously in anger by these words, was contemplating using the force of his army to overcome Wilfrid and to compel him to submit to his judgment, if only he could get the archbishop to agree to it.

Chapter 52 *King Aldfrith considers ways of punishing Wilfrid, who intends to go to Rome to plead his case before the pope.* [A.D. 704]

¶101 And afterwards, when the assembly had been dissolved, the man of the Lord returned to King Æthelred and gave him a revealing account of the entire business. The king was dumbfounded by the great animosity of such deceit and was greatly grieved by the injury brought against him. Since Aldfrith was unable to bend Wilfrid to his will, lest people think that he was powerless in this matter he decided to uproot completely those things which Wilfrid had established for the sustenance of the servants of Christ, to scatter them, to tear them asunder, and to lay waste utterly their place of habitation. But the plan of the eternal Judge, which knows not how to cede to human madness, in no way allowed the dwelling of the God's servants to fall into the hands of sinners. At length, just prior to hastening upon his journey to Rome, father Wilfrid went to that place and advised the brothers to entrust themselves to God in everything. He bade them ardently not to fear the wrath of any man, saying that there was nothing that could harm them in any way so long as they merited to have God as their protector; moreover, they would always have him if they truly loved him and always served him with a sincere heart. And so they received the words of their father in obedience and on that account merited to have God as their protector against all opponents.

Chapter 53 *Pope John hears Wilfrid's case and decides in his favour; he threatens the English kings with excommunication if they fail to recognize the papal decrees.*

¶102 Moreover, when blessed Wilfrid arrived in Rome he was received just as generously by John, bishop of the Apostolic See, as

susceptus est. Aduentus autem¹ sui causa cum coram apostolico multisque episcopis uentilari deberet, presentibus accusatoribus suis locum sese defendendi accepit. Itaque surrexit, causam suam coram omnibus dixit; quod dixit, sic se habere firma ueritatis ratione probauit. Unde, communis iudicii sententia, uiri Dei innocentia comprobatur, atque accusantium false calumnie reprobantur. Super hec quoque uenerandus papa Iohannes a cunctis exoratur, quatinus apostolica sanctione, et iustitia iusti debito honore subleuetur, et iniustitia resistentium ei congrua damnatione prematur. Iuuit autem causam illius lectio synodi uenerabilis pape Agathonis,² que quondam in sui presentia, sicut prediximus, acta est, cum in concilio episcoporum ipse medius resideret. Nam cum re exigente synodus eadem iussu pape legeretur, et coram nobilibus plebisque frequentia diebus aliquot recitaretur, uentum est ad eum locum, ubi scriptum erat; 'Wilfridus, Deo amabilis episcopus Eborace ciuitatis, apostolicam sedem de sua causa appellans', *et cetera*, que supra posuimus. Quod ubi lectum, stupor apprehendit audientes, et silente lectore ceperunt alterutrum requirere, quis ille Wilfridus episcopus esset. Tunc³ Bonifacius apostolici pape consiliarius, et alii perplures, qui eum temporibus Agathonis pape ibi uiderant, dicebant ipsum esse episcopum, qui accusatus a suis, atque a sede apostolica iudicandus, nuper Romam aduenit; 'qui iam dudum', inquit, 'eque accusatus huc adueniens, mox audita diiudicataque⁴ causa et controuersia utriusque partis,⁵ a beate memorie papa Agathone probatus est contra fas esse a suo episcopatu repulsus. Unde etiam tanti apud eum habitus est, ut ipsum in concilio quod congregat episcoporum, utpote uirum incorrupte fidei et animi probi, residere preciperet'. Quibus auditis, omnes, una cum ipso summo pontifice, dixere, uirum tante auctoritatis, qui per quadraginta prope annos episcopatu functus erat, nequaquam damnari⁶ debere, sed absolutum ad patriam, utpote immunem ab omni culpa, cum honore redire. Scriptum est igitur regibus Anglorum, Æilredo⁷ et Alfrido, ut si anathemate plecti nollent, illum sui episcopatus sede recipi absque retractatione facerent, eo quod ipsum iniuria

¹ D] omits.

² D adds *et*.

³ ACD] *tum*.

⁴ D] *diiudicata est*. The *ii* is written over an erasure—the scribe seems to have written *duu-* at first; then realizing his mistake, he altered the first *u* to *ii* by scraping parts of it away.

⁵ D] adds *et*.

⁶ *damnari debere*] D reverses.

⁷ A] *Ægelredo*; D] *Aeilredo*.

he was by the Roman people. When the reasons for his coming had to be discussed before the pope and many other bishops and in the presence of his accusers, he accepted the task of defending himself. And so he arose and presented his case before everyone; and thus he proved that what he maintained was firmly based on the truth. Accordingly, in the unanimous judgement of all the innocence of the man of God was demonstrated and the false accusations of his accusers were rejected. Furthermore, everyone also beseeched venerable Pope John that by his apostolic decree the justice of that just man should be exalted with due honour and the injustice of those opposing him should be censured by an appropriate condemnation. His cause was helped by the public reading of decrees from a synod of venerable Pope Agatho, which had earlier been conducted in his presence (as already mentioned) while he sat in the midst of the council of bishops. While this business was being transacted the record of the synod was read by order of the pope. When it had been recited for a number of days in the presence of nobles and a throng of commoners they arrived at the point in the text where this had been written: 'Wilfrid, beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic See about his cause', *et cetera*, which we have cited above. When this passage was read those listening were struck by amazement; once the reader had stopped speaking they began to ask one another who that Bishop Wilfrid was. Then Boniface, a counsellor of the Apostolic Pope, and very many others who had seen Wilfrid there in the times of Pope Agatho began to say that this same man was a bishop who had recently come to Rome; he had been charged by his own people and was about to be judged by the Apostolic See. 'Once, long ago', they said, 'he came here accused in the same manner and after the case and argument of both factions had been heard and evaluated, it was adjudged by Pope Agatho of blessed memory that he had been driven from his bishopric unlawfully. Moreover, he held Wilfrid in such high esteem that he ordered him to take up a position in the council of bishops which he had assembled in as much as he was a man of unblemished faith with a virtuous soul.' When these things had been listened to, together with Christ's supreme Pontiff himself they all declared that a man of such great authority who had performed his episcopal office for almost forty years ought not to be condemned in any way whatsoever, but in as much as he was exonerated of every fault should return absolved and with full honour to his homeland. Accordingly, letters were written to the English Kings Æthelred and Aldfrith saying that if they wished not to be punished by excommunication, they should ensure that Wilfrid be reinstated in

depositum fuisse omnes ratum haberent.

¶103 Post hec famulus Domini magnis sanctorum reliquiis locupletatus, et multa multorum ueneratione perfunctus¹ et exhilaratus, patriam remeandi uiam repetiit.

CAPITULUM LIV

¶104 Cumque in partes Galliarum deuenisset, subita infirmitate corripitur. Qua crescente, tanto dolore uexatur, ut equo minime uehi ualeret, sed ministrorum manibus in grabato portaretur. Sicque delatus in Meldum, ciuitatem² Gallie, quatuor diebus ac noctibus similis mortuo iacebat, halitu solummodo pertenui uite se funditus subtractum non esse demonstrans. Cum uero ita sine cibo et potu, sine uoce et auditu, quadriduo perseueraret, quinta demum die, cum iam iamque moriturus a suis plangeretur, sanctus Michael archangelus a Domino mittitur, per quem sanitati pristine restituatur. Cui pater intendens, ac uelut optime cognito pro posse suo uultus alacritate aggaudens, tacitus iacebat, quidnam sibi dicere uellet operiens. Stans itaque angelorum Domini princeps, huiusmodi uerba uiro locutus asseritur: 'Wilfride, conciuus dignissime,³ surge, quid iaces?⁴ Nam licet inter ciues celorum numereris, tamen propter orationes filiorum tuorum hoc tempore non morieris, et precipue per merita et intercessionem beate Marie, genetricis Dei et perpetue uirginis. Orauit enim pro te, propterea quod quedam opera sibi placuerunt facta per te. Scit nempe quid operis Petro feceris, quidque ipsius fratri Andree construxeris. Quapropter nunc quidem a morte reuocaberis, ac uite salutique restitueris; sed paratus esto, quia post quadriennium rediens,⁵ uisitabo te. Patriam uero perueniens, maximam possessionum tuarum, que tibi sunt ablate, portionem recipies,⁶ atque in pace

¹ D] *perfunctus*.

² CD] *ciuitate*.

³ D] The third *i* is inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

⁴ *quid iaces*] D has this twice.

⁵ D] has *uisitabo te residens*, with a *b* above the first word and an *a* above the last to indicate that they should be reversed.

⁶ D] *accipies*.

his episcopal see without further ado because everyone held the opinion that he had been unjustly deposed.

¶103 Afterwards, the servant of the Lord, enheartened and greatly enriched with relics of the saints and having received great veneration among many people, once again took to the road which would return him to his homeland.

Chapter 54 *On his return journey from Rome Wilfrid falls seriously ill in Gaul. Michael the archangel appears to him in a vision; he restores him to health, but reveals to him that he has only four more years to live.* [A.D. 704]

¶104 But when he had reached the lands of Gaul, he was stricken by a sudden weakness. As the illness intensified, he was vexed by such pain that he was in no way able to be borne on horseback, but had to be carried by the hands of his servants on a litter. In this manner he was conveyed to Meaux, a city in Gaul; there he lay as if dead for four days and nights, the only indication that he was not entirely removed from this life being a very light breathing. However, after he had persevered in this way without food or drink or speech or hearing for four days, at last on the fifth day at the very moment when his followers were weeping for him because he was on the verge of death, Saint Michael the archangel was sent by the Lord so that through him Wilfrid might be restored to his former good health. Turning towards him and, as if seeing someone very well known, rejoicing with liveliness of expression as much as he could, the father lay silent in expectation of whatever Michael might wish to say to him. And as the Prince of the angels of the Lord was standing there, it is attested that he addressed the man with words of this kind: 'Wilfrid, most worthy fellow citizen, arise; why are you lying there? For although you are counted among the citizens of heaven, on account of the prayers of your sons you are not destined to die at this time, and especially on account of the merits and the intercession of blessed Mary, perpetual Virgin and the Mother of God. For she offered prayers on your behalf because certain works performed by you have pleased her. Indeed, she knows for certain what sort of work you carried out on behalf of Peter and also what sort of building you erected for his brother Andrew. Wherefore, you are now recalled from the brink of death and will be restored to life and health. But be prepared! for I shall return to visit you four years from now. On your return to your native land you will recover a very great proportion of the possessions which were taken away from you and you will end your life in peaceful tranquillity'. When these

tranquilla uitam terminabis.⁷ Quibus dictis, uisio angeli colloquentis¹ ab eius conspectu elapsa est. At ille protinus, ac si de graui somno expergefactus, surrexit, sedit, apertisque oculis, circa se choros psallentium, flentiumque² fratrum aspexit, ac modicum suspirans, ubinam esset Acca³ presbiter, interrogauit. Qui statim uocatus intrauit, et uidens eum melius habentem, ac loqui ualentem, flexis genibus cum omnibus qui aderant fratribus Deo gratias egit. Et cum parum condesissent, ac de supernis iudiciis⁴ trepidi, aliqua confabulari cepissent, iussit pontifex ceteros ad horam egredi. Dehinc ad Accam presbiterum conuersus, queque uiderat ordine retulit, tremenda illum adiuratione constringens, ne dum huic uite superesset, cuiquam homini uisionem ipsam ediceret. Conualuit igitur episcopus cunctis gaudentibus, ceptoque⁵ itinere Britanniam uenit.

CAPITULUM LV

¶105 Epistolis autem quas a Romane sedis antistite acceperat in conuentu nobilium lectis,⁶ Birhtwaldus⁷ archiepiscopus, et Æilredus⁸ quondam rex, tunc autem abbas, eis libentissime fauerunt; qui uidelicet Æilredus⁹ accitum ad se Coinredum, quem pro se regem fecerat, ortatus est, ut seruum Domini ex animo semper coleret, diligeret, foueret, et contra omnes aduersarios indefessus ei propugnator existeret. Rex annuit.

¶106 Alfridus uero rex Nordanhimbrorum,¹⁰ sicut regni, sic et indignationis fraterne malens successor esse, quam iussioni apostolice deposito rancore mentis assensum prebere, ambagibus quibusdam obiectis nitebatur ostendere sibi penitus non esse

¹ D] *loquentis*.

² D] omits *flentium*; *que* falls at the beginning of a line.

³ D] *accam presbiterem*.

⁴ D] *iudiciis*, with the second last *i* inserted above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

⁵ D] omits *-que*.

⁶ A] adds *sanctus*.

⁷ A] *Brithwaldus*; C] *Birhtwaldus*; D] *britwaldus*.

⁸ A] *Ægelredus*.

⁹ A] *Ægelredus*.

¹⁰ A] *Northanhymbrorum*; D] *norhanybrorum*.

words had been uttered, the apparition of the angel who had spoken to him disappeared from sight. Suddenly, as if waking from a deep sleep, he stirred and sat up and opening his eyes he saw around him a choir of brothers singing the psalms and weeping; and sighing lightly he asked them where Acca the priest was. He was immediately summoned and entered. Upon seeing Wilfrid in improved health and able to speak, together with all the brothers present there he gave thanks to God on bended knee. And when they had sat there a little and because of their fear of these heavenly judgements had begun to discuss some things, the bishop ordered all but his priest to depart for a while. Then he turned to Acca and recounted to him in order the things which he had seen and constrained him under terrible oath not to inform anyone about that vision so long as he endured in this life. Thereafter the bishop recovered to everyone's great joy and taking up his journey once again he arrived in Britain.

Chapter 55 *On his return from Gaul Wilfrid is welcomed in Mercia, but rejected in Northumbria; on account of their mistreatment of Wilfrid, Kings Aldfrith and Eadwulf are punished variously.*

¶105 Once the letters which he had received from the bishop of the Roman see had been read in an assembly of the nobles, Archbishop Berhtwald and Æthelred, who had been king previously but was then an abbot, applauded them with great pleasure. This man, that is Æthelred, summoned Cenred, whom he had made king in his stead, and exhorted him always to revere the servant of the Lord in his heart, to love him, to cherish him, and to be a tireless defender of his against all his enemies. The king consented to this.

¶106 But Aldfrith, King of the Northumbrians, preferred to be successor to his brother's indignation as well as to his kingdom rather than to put aside the rancour of his mind and to offer assent to the apostolic command; he endeavoured to demonstrate by evasive manœuvres that what he was being directed to perform was

possibile quod precipiebatur explere. Uerum omnium secreta cordium scrutans sapientia Dei nequitiam eius attendit, attendens examinavit, examinans damnavit, ac corpus illius acri doloris iniectione sic debilitavit, ut et protinus lecto reciperetur, et omni pene membrorum officio destitueretur. Qui cum se mori cognosceret, adhibitis testibus promisit, quod si Deus uitam sibi concederet, et iussis apostolicis uellet obedire, et Wilfrido omni tempore inclinus¹ existere. Sed ipse quidem sine retractatione a uita recessit, et Eadulfus² quidam ei in regnum successit, predecessorem suum crudelitate et cordis obstinatione precedens. Nam sanctus Wilfridus ad eius curiam de Hripis³ ueniens, per nuntios an paci acquiesceret inquisiuit. Quibus ipse pro antiqua et insita sibi nequitia dure respondens; 'Per meam,' inquit, 'salutem iuro, quia nisi infra spatia sex dierum meo⁴ regno decesserit, quoscunque de suis inuenire potuero,⁵ uita priuabo.' Hec propter, facta coniuratione contra⁶ eum, regno quod⁷ duobus mensibus tenuit depulsus est.

CAPITULUM LVI

¶107 Post quem, regnante Osredo filio Alfridi, cum synodus esset coacta iuxta fluuium Nid, post aliquantum utriusque partis conflictum, tandem cunctis fauentibus beatus Wilfridus in sedem sue ecclesie receptus est. Cuius familiari amicitia rex Osredus magno affectu copulatus, per omnes imperii sui terras precepit, quatinus nemo illi in quolibet negotio contraireret, sed sicut famulo Dei per omnia omnes obedirent. Quod factum est. Siquidem quatuor annis quibus ipse pater⁸ superuixit, nemo qui sibi contradiceret fuit, non quisquam sua dicta spernere, non in sinistrum audebat uel leuiter interpretari. Omnis enim inuidia

¹ ACD] *inclinatus*.

² D] *Ædulfus*.

³ ACD] *Ripis*.

⁴ *meo regno*] D reverses.

⁵ D] *potero*.

⁶ D] This is added later over an erasure; there is a caret sign below the superscript *ra* abbreviation sign.

⁷ D] adds *pro*.

⁸ D] *pater super-* is written over an erasure.

an utter impossibility for him. But God in his wisdom probes the secrets of all hearts: he noted his wickedness, and having noted it, considered it; having considered it, he passed judgment upon him and crippled the king's body with such a bitter attack of pain that he lost the use of his limbs almost entirely and was immediately taken to bed. When he perceived that he was dying, he summoned witnesses into his presence and swore that should God concede life to him he would be willing both to obey the apostolic commands and to be gracious to Wilfrid for all time. But he departed from this life before he could make this retraction and a certain Eadwulf succeeded him to the kingdom; he surpassed his predecessor in his cruelty and in the obduracy of his heart. For when Saint Wilfrid came from Ripon to his court, he asked through the king's messengers whether he would agree to peace. He responded harshly to them on account of his ancient and innate wickedness and said, 'I swear by my soul that unless he has departed from my kingdom within six days from now I shall deprive of life whatever followers of his I am able to find.' Because of these words a conspiracy developed against him and he was driven from the kingdom which he had ruled for only two months.

Chapter 56 *After the synod by the River Nidd, Wilfrid is reinstated and allowed to resume his episcopal ministry.* [A.D. 706]

¶107 After his expulsion, while Osred, son of Aldfrith was reigning, a synod was summoned together beside the River Nidd in 706. There was a certain amount of debate there between the two factions, but finally with the approval of everyone blessed Wilfrid was received back into his own church in his see. King Osred was joined to him with great affection and in close friendship and commanded throughout all the lands under his control that no one should oppose Wilfrid in any business whatsoever, but that everyone should obey him as the servant of God in all matters. And so it came to pass. Indeed, father Wilfrid lived for four more years and during that time there was no one who would contradict him, nor did anyone dare to hold his decrees in contempt or to interpret them in an evil way or treat them frivolously. For everywhere all envy lay

quaquaversum cum¹ amore, tum timore iacebat oppressa. Ipse pater quod sui ministerii cura petebat, circumquaque fideliter exsequens, quanto magis diem sue uocationis imminere cognouit, tanto sollicitius instabat, ut talentum sibi creditum Domino suo fenore multiplicato reportaret.

CAPITULUM LVII

¶108 Et iam tempus angelica reuelatione² promissum instare presensit,³ cum, ecce! graui corporis languore inuaditur, et fatigatus lecto recipitur. Ueneranda fratrum agmina, necnon et plebis cum suis primatibus pars maxima in unum confluit; lectum iacentis flebiliter ambit, fitque pauor grandis ne forte recedat ab illis. At ille se de labore ad requiem, de miseria ad beatitudinem, de tristitia⁴ ad perennem letitiam migrare perpendens, tristia corda circumstantium quibus poterat uerbis consolabatur, dicens eos lugere pro se nullo modo debere, quem non lugubria, sed summe iocunda per mortem adire certissimum possent habere. Ipsam uero seriem uerborum que in eorum consolationem, simul et in sancte uite propositum seruandum exortando, locutus est, quis explicet? Nam quanto magis incommutabilitati⁵ uere consolationis et eterne uite appropinquabat, tanto plenius eius dulcedinem hauriebat, et haustam quorumque assistentium auribus infundebat, et ut eius sacre infusionis uirtutem audientium corda conciperent, que uerbis dicebat, mirabili signorum efficacia in ipsorum oculis sic esse comprobabat. Que signorum efficacia eo magis uirum comitabatur, quo uite huius transitoria fragilitate decedens, summe uirtuti eternaliter copulabatur. Unde fateor dicere meum non esse, quot infirmi per eum infirmum sint ab omni infirmitate sanati, quot demoniaci liberati, quot paralytici solidati,⁶ quot ceci illuminati, quot surdi mutique curati, quot aliis calamitatibus afflicti operante Deo⁷ magnifice⁸ recreati. His aliisque de causis maxima hominum

¹ cum...timore] D reads cum timore cum amore.

² D] adds sibi.

³ D] persensit.

⁴ D] tristia.

⁵ D] incommutabili.

⁶ D] soli-, which falls at the end of the line, is over an erasure and in darker ink.

⁷ ACD] add per eum.

⁸ A] adds sunt / sint (st with a macron over it).

overcome as much by love as by awe. Father Wilfrid faithfully pursued in all respects what was required by the responsibility of his ministry; the more he became aware that the day of his final summoning was at hand, the more he anxiously sought to return the talent entrusted to him by his Lord with manifold interest.

Chapter 57 *Wilfrid continues to instruct his followers even as death approaches.*

¶108 Now he perceived that the hour foreshadowed in the angelic revelation was upon him and, lo, he was assailed by a grievous bodily illness; lacking strength, he was carried to his bed. In great numbers the brothers paid homage to him, and a large throng of the people and their nobles rushed together to join them. They wept as they walked past the bed where he lay, and an overwhelming fear arose that he might chance to depart from them. Wilfrid, who considered himself to be progressing from work to rest, from misery to blessedness, from sadness to eternal joy, consoled the sad hearts of those standing around him with whatever words he could; he said that they ought not to grieve for him in any way since they should believe most assuredly that in death he was approaching not sorrowful but, rather, most pleasant things. But who is there who could describe the sequence of utterances he spoke in order to console them, while all the time exhorting them to preserve the manner of the holy life that they had taken upon themselves? For the more he advanced towards the immutable state of true consolation and eternal life, the more completely he drank in its sweetness. Those sweet things which had been imbibed he poured forth into the ears of everyone who stood nearby; and so that the hearts of his listeners might be strengthened by this sacred infusion he corroborated what he was saying in words with the efficacy of miraculous signs before their eyes. The efficacy of signs was more with Wilfrid now because he was at that time taking leave of the weakness of this transitory life and being joined for all time to the supreme strength. Wherefore, I confess that I am unable to recount how many sick people were cured of every infirmity by him, though sick himself—how many were freed from demonic possession, how many suffering paralysis were made sound, how many blind once again were enabled to see the light, how many deaf and dumb people were healed, how many suffering from every other kind of affliction were restored to perfect health through divine intervention. For these and other reasons a very large multitude of

multitudo ad eum de longinquo properabat, eique se¹ ac suos karissimos² pio studio commendabat. Quos ipse sancto mentis affectu Deo commendans, ortabatur Dei mandata sincera caritate amplecti, eisque per omnia debitam obedientiam cum reuerentia exhibere.

CAPITULUM LVIII

¶109 Instabat igitur tempus et hora, que a nullo mortalium potest preteriri, totaque infirmitas que famuli Dei corpus premebat, uitalia subit. Agmina diuersi ordinis astant, et uota laudis Deo pro illius obitus expectatione persoluunt; ac licet ob desolationem sui nequaquam lugere non possent, spe tamen maxima consolantur,³ quia se spirituali eius presentia nunquam destituendos fore confidunt. Ipse uero pater circumstantium filiorum nimia caritate tenuiter respirans, defessum caput paullisper erexit, atque in his uerbis eos alloqui cepit. 'Gratia diuini amoris ut in uobis iugiter maneat, fratres dulcissimi, tota uirtute operam date: quam gratiam⁴ ut feliciter mereamini perpetualiter obtinere, fraterni amoris officia studiose⁵ inuicem⁶ et in omnes exercere studete. Nil quod uos ab istiusmodi officiosa caritate seducat attendatis, ne ab ea que in Christo est sinceritate cadatis. Maligni insidiatoris quos fidelibus tendit laqueos nostis, querentis⁷ eorum animas deceptoriiis captare figmentis. Que figmenta, sicut a me sepe audistis, omni sollicitudine caute, et, prout me facere uidistis, a uobis procul abicite. Hec facite, et Deus pacis erit uobiscum. Et nunc, fratres mei dilectissimi, nolite moras inferre migranti. Uos equidem,⁸ uos iam olim me ad uitam euntem reuocastis; sed modo parcite, queso. Iuuat enim me, deposito carnis onere, Agnum Dei sequi. Ultra uobis in hac carne non apparebo, donec Christus resuscitet me uobiscum in fine seculi huius. O uiscera mea, ualete.

Urgeor, O⁹ iam defungar, et, O fratres, uigilate,

¹ D] This word is added above interlinearly with a caret sign below.

² ABCD] have the abbreviation *kmos* here, though the full spelling *caritate* is used later in this sentence.

³ A] *consolabantur*. There is an erased letter before *consolantur* in D.

⁴ D] *gratiam*, added later at the end of the line in the outer margin (same hand).

⁵ *studiose...officiosa*] D omits this through homeoteleuton.

⁶ C] *in inuicem*.

⁷ D] *querentes*.

⁸ D] *equidam*.

⁹ D] *et*.

people hastened to him from afar and commended themselves and their dearest kin to him with pious zeal. Wilfrid commended them to God with a holy disposition of mind; he urged them to embrace God's commandments with fervent love and to show due obedience and reverence for them in everything they did.

Chapter 58 *Wilfrid dies at the age of seventy-five, in the forty-fifth year of his episcopacy.* [A.D. 709/10]

¶109 And now the time and the hour beyond which no mortal can pass were upon him; the sickness which was afflicting the whole body of the servant of God descended into his vital parts. A host of people of diverse rank stood near Wilfrid and in expectation of his death rendered vows of praise to God. Though they were unable to restrain their grieving because of their sense of impending loss, nevertheless they were consoled by the greatest hope, since they were confident that they would never be abandoned by his spiritual presence. Indeed, the father was revived slightly by the very great affection of his sons, who were standing all around him, and for a brief moment he raised his weary head and began to speak to them in the following words: 'In order that the grace of divine love may be with you forever, my sweetest brothers, attend now with all your strength: so that you may happily merit to possess this grace perpetually, strive zealously to perform the practice of brotherly love among yourselves and among all people. Pay no heed to anything that might seduce you from the duty of love of this sort which you ought to demonstrate to others lest you fall from that loving condition which resides in Christ. You are aware of the snares of the malign traitor, which he sets for the faithful in order to capture their souls by deceitful illusions. As I have often told you, take every precaution to avoid these illusions and cast them far away from yourselves, just as you have seen me do. Do these things and the God of peace will be with you. And now, my most beloved brothers, do not bring delay upon one about to set off. For you, yes you, have just now called me back as I was about to depart towards life; but spare me now, I beg you. For it is my desire to set aside the burden of flesh and to follow the Lamb of God. I shall not appear to you again in this flesh until Christ raises me together with you at the end of this age. Farewell, mortal body. I am weighed down; O, let me

ne uos somnus perpetue mortis inuoluat.’

Hec ait, et dure prostrauit¹ membra quieti.

Fratribus autem Psalterium ex ordine decantantibus, et iam usque ad uersum Psalmi centesimi tertii peruenientibus, ‘Emitte spiritum tuum et creabuntur’, spiritum suum in manus creatoris feliciter emisit, et sic Agni Dei conuiuium perpetuo recreandus adiuit. Transiit autem anno incarnationis dominice septingentesimo nono, qui est annus uite eius septuagesimus quintus, episcopatus uero quadragesimus quintus.

CAPITULUM LIX

¶110 Sepultus sane est in monasterio suo, quod ipsemet in Rhipum² a fundamentis instituit, ac Deo in honorem beati Petri apostolorum principis consecrauit; ubi ut³ se nequaquam uitam perdidisse, sed in melius mutasse mortalibus probet, que in hac uita positus fecerat, huic uite subtractus miracula, cum res exigit, facere non cessat.

¶111 Uestes⁴ illius, prout ante mortem disposuerat, distribute sunt. Unde interulam eius sanctissimi corporis sudore sepe madentem cuidam religiose⁵ abbatisse deferendam minister accepit, quam mulier quedam paralyti dissoluta, ut tangere mereretur, obnixè rogauit. Sed hec quidem ipsam uestem tangere non meruit, uerum aquam, ubi eadem uestis intincta fuit, in potum accepit, ilicoque sanata est.

¹ *prostrauit...quieti*] ACD read *quieti membra prostrauit*; see the Commentary.

² AC] *Ripum*; D] *Ripun*.

³ D] omits.

⁴ *uestes...ante*] D has this phrase twice.

⁵ D] *religiosissime*.

now die; and, my brothers, keep watch lest the sleep of perpetual death enfold you.’ ‘Thus he spoke and laid his limbs down in harsh repose’. Meanwhile, the brothers were chanting the Psalter in sequential order and when they came to the verse of the one hundred and third Psalm which says, ‘Thou shalt send forth thy spirit and they shall be created’, Wilfrid happily sent forth his own spirit into the hands of the Creator; and thus, in order to be reborn eternally, he approached the banquet of the Lamb of God. He passed away in the seven hundred and ninth year of the Incarnation of our Lord; it was the seventy-fifth year of his life and the forty-fifth of his episcopate.

Chapter 59 *Wilfrid is buried at Ripon. A woman suffering from paralysis is miraculously cured by his relics.*

¶110 For sure, he was buried in his own monastery, which he had established from its very foundations in Ripon and consecrated to God in honour of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles. And so that he might prove to mortals that he had not perished at all, but had moved on to a better state, when he was taken from this life he did not cease to perform miracles like the ones he had performed there while alive in this world, whenever need arose.

¶111 The clothes of Wilfrid were distributed according to arrangements he had made before his death. Thus an attendant was given his inner garment dripping wet profusely with the sweat of his most holy body to hand over to a certain devout abbess. A certain woman laid low by paralysis had asked repeatedly that she might merit to touch it. This woman, indeed, was not found worthy to touch the garment itself; but she was given water to drink, in which that vestment had been dipped, and was immediately cured.

CAPITULUM LX

¶112 Post hec quidam inimici hominis Dei, proprie iniquitatis igne succensi, domum in qua ipse huic uite modum fecerat, iniecto¹ igni succendere conati sunt, at uirtus defuncti uiuentem terruit ignem; domum illesam seruauit, hostes fugauit, taliterque illum uiuere² ueraciter demonstrauit.

CAPITULUM LXI

¶113 A die uero depositionis eius iam anno transcurso, conuenit undecunque maxima populi multitudo, utpote pro³ depositionis illius memoria⁴ excubias celebratura. Cum ergo turba pernox sua Domino uota persolueret, et paterne consolationis affectum irrecuperabiliter⁵ sese in illo perdidisse defleret, aspiciunt et ecce! lux celitus ab oriente demissa totum locum famuli Dei miro splendore irradiauit, omnemque noctis et tenebrarum⁶ horrorem sua presentia fugauit.⁷ Quod uidentes magnifice sunt exhilarati, fixum amodo⁸ pre se habentes, non multum de corporali patris absentia esse dolendum, cum⁹ de spirituali eius presentia, quam aperta lucis ostensione sibi adesse didicerant, multo maxime scirent esse gaudendum. Ex hoc itaque uehemens omnium circa beatissimum patrem Wilfridum ueneratio creuit; id quique certum omnino tenentes, quod sicut ipse sanctissimus pontifex in hac transitoria uita temporaliter degens omnibus erat mitis et affabilis, sic et nunc in illa perenni uita cum Christo eternaliter uiuens, omnibus diligentibus¹⁰ se pius sit et exorabilis.

¹ D] This is written over an erased area in a slightly smaller script by the same hand.

² ACD] *ueraciter uiuere*.

³ D] *ad*.

⁴ D] *memoriam*.

⁵ D] *l* is erased before *p*.

⁶ D] *tenebris*.

⁷ ACD] *effugauit*.

⁸ D] *ammodo*.

⁹ C] *eum*.

¹⁰ D] *diligen-*, which falls at the end of the line, is over an erasure (same hand).

Chapter 60 *Wilfrid's wicked enemies try to set his house ablaze, but it is miraculously preserved.*

¶112 Afterwards, certain enemies of the man of God, ablaze with the fire of their innate wickedness, attempted to set the house in which Wilfrid had reached the end of this life ablaze by throwing torches into it, but the virtue of the deceased man brought terror upon the living flame; it preserved the house unharmed, put his enemies to flight, and thus proved Wilfrid to be truly alive.

Chapter 61 *A sign from heaven one year after his death confirms his eternally blessed status.*

¶113 But now, when a year had passed from the day of his burial, a very great multitude of people came together from all around in order to observe a vigil in memory of Wilfrid's burial. When, therefore, the crowd was busy fulfilling their vows to the Lord throughout the night and weeping because they had irrecoverably lost in Wilfrid the feeling of paternal consolation, they looked up and, lo, a light from the east sent down from heaven lit up the whole monastery of the servant of God with a wondrous radiance, and by its presence put to flight all fear of the night and its dark shadows. On seeing this their spirits were lifted tremendously; they felt that from this time forward they could be assured that there was no need to grieve greatly about the bodily absence of the father since they realized that they ought rather to rejoice much more on account of his spiritual presence, which they had learnt was among them from this most visible display of light. And so on account of this boundless veneration developed in everyone towards the the most blessed father, Wilfrid. Each person was utterly convinced that just as that very holy bishop was gentle and affable towards everyone for the whole time that he lived in this transitory world, so too now that he dwelt forever with Christ in eternal life he would watch over all who loved him and be attentive to their prayers.

CAPITULUM LXII

¶114 Magnitudo itaque signorum quam¹ ad corpus eius de die in diem Dominus operabatur,² merita ipsius longe lateque declarabat, et insigni fama permotos ad memoriam illius innumeros populos aggregabat. Quapropter locus ipse multo tempore summi honoris est habitus, et quibusque infirmitatibus pressis ad recuperandam sanitatem ualde salubris. Dominus quoque hostiles incursus omni ex parte sedauerat, quia deuotionem populi sui quam ad uenerationem famuli sui habebat, perturbatum iri nolebat. Ubi uero pro assiduitate confluentis turbe quidam uicini tedio affici, et iccirco sese a loci uisitatione paullatim cohibere ceperunt, contigit ut ipsorum exemplo et alii a feruore deuotionis³ sue deficerent, nec⁴ locum ipsum amplius more solito uisitent. Sicque factum est, ut qui primo ad studium pie actionis alios studio suo accenderant, postmodum sua desidia a pietatis opere quamplurimos discedere cogent.

CAPITULUM LXIII

¶115 Hec inter accidit, ut hostilis incursus ipsam prouinciam occuparet; occupans, inibi multa hominum milia necaret, ac omnia loca monasterio beati Wilfridi circumiacentia ad instar solitudinis deuastaret. Monasterium ipsum peruasum ac dirutum, quod prius extiterat ymnis et canticis spiritualibus gloriosum, modo erat ferarum et iumentorum sordibus ignominiosum.⁵ Corpus interea ipsius antistitis Christi omni honore priuatum inter ipsas sordes primo sepulture sue loco mansit immotum. Sed⁶ omnipotens Deus, qui sua pietate et iustitia nequit priuari, quorundam bene

¹ D] *que*.

² D] *ba* is added above interlinearly in the same hand with a caret sign below.

³ D] This and the following word are written over an erasure in a light brownish ink (same hand).

⁴ D] *ne*.

⁵ C] A letter is erased at the end of the line after the second *i* (*ignomi / niosum*)

⁶ D] omits a substantial portion of the remaining text from here; see the Commentary.

Chapter 62 *The cult of Wilfrid flourishes initially, but declines as residents become disaffected with the large volume of visitors passing through their neighbourhood.*

¶114 Accordingly, the abundance of divine signs which the Lord performed every day where his body lay, proclaimed the merits of Wilfrid far and wide, and his extraordinary reputation moved huge crowds of people to gather to commemorate him. Wherefore, for a long time that place was held in the highest regard and considered to be most beneficial for all those suffering illnesses in helping them recover their health. The Lord also reduced the threat of hostile incursions on every side since he did not want the devotion observed by his people in venerating his servant to be disturbed. But because of the constant disturbance of many people converging there certain residents began to grow weary of it all and gradually to stop visiting the site themselves; and by their example it happened that others also began to fail in their fervent devotion and no longer visited that place in their accustomed manner. And so it happened that those who by their zeal had at first made others ardent to pursue an act of devotion, afterwards by their apathy induced a great number of people to abandon their holy undertaking.

Chapter 63 *Oda translates Wilfrid's relics to Canterbury from Ripon, which is in ruins. [post A.D. 948]. Subsequently, after the fire at Christ Church, his relics are again translated, at first to a shrine and then to a newly constructed tomb near the high altar. [post A.D. 1070]*

¶115 In the course of these events it happened that a hostile army invaded and occupied that province; and during the occupation they slew many thousands of people there and laid waste all the places around the monastery of blessed Wilfrid so that the region resembled a wasteland. The monastery itself was overrun and destroyed. Whereas formerly it had been glorious and exemplary in its hymns and spiritual chants, now it was dishonoured utterly with the filth of wild beasts and cattle. At the same time, the body of Wilfrid, the bishop of Christ, lacked due honour and remained unmoved from its first place of burial in the midst of this squalor. But Almighty God, who cannot be deprived of the piety and justice

religiosorum mentes in considerationem tante rei excitat, atque ad demutationem illius affectum eis effectumque ministrat. Regebat ea tempestate Christianitatem in Anglia uir bonus et sanctus, Odo Cantuariensis ecclesie archiepiscopus, utpote totius Britannie primas, qui quoniam sua sollicitudine dispositionibus omnium ecclesiarum inuigilabat, ipsas ecclesias, prout ratio postulabat, uisitare solebat. Qua sollicitudine actus, cum quodam tempore Eboracensem prouinciam adisset, et ea pro quibus uenerat strenue peregrisset, ad Rhipum¹ pergit, monasterium beati Wilfridi consideraturus. Aderat, et horrida solitudine uisa lacrimis manat. Quo illis in partibus demorante, ii quorum corda, ut dixi, Deus ad demutationem celestis thesauri tetigerat, rati se opportunitatem ad expletionem sue uoluntatis accepisse, premissa supplicatione ad Dominum, quod diu mente tractauerant, opere implere satagebant. Sicque factum est. Nam statuto die ad locum ueniunt, terram ubi corpus beati Wilfridi sepultum iacebat aperiant, omnia ossa reuerenter cum puluere leuant, et ea uenerabili Cantuariorum archiepiscopo Odoni presentant, quatinus ipse ea Cantuariam secum deferret, et in ecclesia Christi, cui presidebat, pro uoto reconderet. Monasterio etenim ipso quo condita fuerant, secundum quod predictum est, in solitudinem miserandam redacto, nullus inibi locus resederat, in quo locari seruarique tuto ualerent. Quocirca arbitrati sunt nusquam tutius aut iustius ea seruatum iri posse uel debere, quam in ecclesia Cantuariensi; ea uidelicet causa,² quod et illo tempore Cantia magna pace uigebat, et quia ipse beatus uir olim dum fraude quorundam supplantatus, conuersari non posset in ecclesia Eboracensi,³ per sacerdotale officium, ut longe supra retulimus, curam impenderat⁴ eidem ecclesie Cantuariensi. Iustum siquidem illis uisum fuit, ut illic mortuus in pace quiesceret, ubi uiuens in pace quieuit. Preter hec quoque affectus sacri amoris, quem ad uenerandum Odonem habebant, maxima causa fuit. Nam quoniam illum talia dona diligere nouerant, in hoc se eius dilectioni morem gerere ueraciter intelligebant. Ne tamen locus, quem ipse beatus Wilfridus, dum in corpore degeret,

¹ AC] *Ripum*.

² B] adds *ea ratione*.

³ *Eboracensi...Cantuariensi*] AC read *eboracensi eidem ecclesie cantuariensi per sacerdotale officium curam impenderat*, leaving out the clause *ut longe supra retulimus*.

⁴ B] *n* is supplied above interlinearly.

owed him, moved the minds of certain most devout people to reflect upon this important issue and created within them the intention of translating Wilfrid and furnished the means of accomplishing it. At that time Oda, a good and holy man, was archbishop of the church at Canterbury—that is, he was Primate of all Britain; he ruled over Christianity throughout England. Since he was always concerned to oversee the affairs of all its churches, he was accustomed to visit individual churches whenever need arose. When on one occasion he had come to the province of York and had promptly accomplished those things which had brought him there, motivated by his pastoral concern he proceeded to Ripon, intending to inspect the monastery of blessed Wilfrid. When he arrived and saw the horrible wasteland there, his eyes flooded with tears. But God had moved the hearts of certain people, as I have already mentioned, towards translating Wilfrid's body, a heavenly treasure; and while Oda was still in that region, they considered themselves to have received an opportunity to fulfil their desire. After first offering supplication to the Lord, they busied themselves to achieve through their labour that which they had been contemplating for a long time. And thus it came to pass. For on a predetermined day they came to that place. They opened up the ground where the body of blessed Wilfrid lay buried and with reverence raised up all of his bones together with his dust. They presented these to Oda, the venerable Archbishop of Canterbury, so that he might take them away to Canterbury with him and rebury them according to their wish at Christ Church, over which he ruled. For as was mentioned earlier, the monastery itself where they had been buried was now reduced to a miserable wilderness and there was nowhere there where they might be placed and safely preserved. In that matter they decided that his relics could be preserved nowhere more safely or fittingly than in the church at Canterbury, nor ought they to be preserved anywhere else for the manifest reason that at that time Kent was prospering under a great peace; and also, as was recounted much earlier, when Wilfrid had once been displaced through the conspiracy of certain men, the blessed man was not able to remain in the church of York and so in his priestly office he had devoted his attention to that church at Canterbury. Indeed, it seemed fitting to them that in death he should rest in peace in that place where he had enjoyed peace while alive. Moreover, another very strong reason for wanting this was the feeling of spiritual love which they held for venerable Oda. Since they knew that he cherished such gifts greatly, they readily understood in doing this that they would be satisfying his desire. Nevertheless, so that that place which blessed Wilfrid himself loved above all others while he dwelt here in his body might not be

pre ceteris amauit, ipsis reliquiis penitus priuaretur, aliquantula earum pars ab eis est cum puluere tenta, atque in loco conuenienti reposita.

¶116 Porro uenerabilis Odo, tanto munere locupletatus, Cantuariam rediit, ubi magna totius ciuitatis exultatione susceptus, et in aulam Dei sacra cum laude perductus, sanctissimas beati Wilfridi reliquias quas aduexerat, in maiore altari, quod in honorem Domini nostri Ihesu Christi sacratum erat, collocauit. Qua de re ne posteritati dubietas ulla nasceretur, ipse pater, qui easdem reliquias suscepit, transtulit, ac, ut diximus, in altari recondidit, in *Prologo* ipsius operis, quod de uita et conuersatione eius scripsit, hec que diximus¹ breui sententia promulgauit.

¶117 Nos quoque, qui ossa ipsa de prefato loco accepimus, nulla de his dubietate fluctuare permittimur. Nam in ipso loco cum multis annis illibata seruarentur, et iam ab eo tempore quo illic primo locata sunt, centenarius annorum numerus nonnullis annis superaretur, equo Dei omnipotentis occultoque iudicio ciuitas Cantuariorum fere tota igne cremata, atque ecclesia Christi inibi constituta eodem est incendio conflagrata. Cuius conflagrationis anno tertio iocunde simul et gloriose memorie Lanfrancus, Cadomensis cenobii abbas, ipsam ecclesiam regendam² suscepit. Qui, postquam est in ipso patriarchatu prime metropolis Anglorum nobiliter usquequaque roboratus, quicquid ipsius ecclesie uetusti operis resederat, noua omnia constructurus euertit. Cum ergo predictum altare subuerteretur, reliquie beati Wilfridi reperte ac leuate sunt, atque in scrinio collocate. Uerum cum post aliquot annos fratrum uoluntas in eo consentiret, ut magis fixo loco clauderentur, sepulcrum eis in aquilonali parte altaris factum est, et in eo sunt quarto idus Octobris³ incluse.

¹ AC] *dicimus*.

² C] *regenda*.

³ C] adds *reuerenter*.

deprived utterly of those relics, a small portion of them together with the dust was kept by these men and was reburied in a suitable spot.

¶116 Afterwards, venerable Oda, greatly enriched by this gift, returned to Canterbury where he was received with great joy by the entire city; chanting sacred praise they progressed into the temple of God and Oda placed the most holy relics of blessed Wilfrid, which he had carried there, inside the great altar, which had been consecrated in honour of our Lord Jesus Christ. In order that no doubt should ever arise afterwards in this matter, the father, who had received those relics, translated and reburied them in the altar as described here, himself disclosed these things in the *Prologue* to the work which he wrote concerning Wilfrid's life and manner of living—these things we have recounted but briefly here.

¶117 We too, who have accepted these very bones from the aforementioned place, are not permitted to waver under the influence of any doubt concerning the relics. For although they were preserved unharmed in their first setting for many years, and from the time in which they were first placed here a hundred years and more had elapsed, by the just and secret judgment of Almighty God nearly the entire city of Canterbury was then burnt by fire, and the church built in Christ's name there was set alight in the same conflagration. In the third year after this blaze, Lanfranc, of both happy and glorious memory, the abbot of the monastery at Caen, was appointed to govern that church. After he had been honourably confirmed everywhere in the patriarchate of the foremost see of the English, he demolished whatever ancient parts of that church remained because he intended to rebuild everything anew. And when the altar mentioned previously was tipped over, the relics of the blessed Wilfrid were discovered and raised up and placed together in a shrine. When after a number of years there was agreement among the brothers that it would be more fitting for the relics to be enclosed in a permanent position, a tomb was constructed for them on the northern side of the altar and they were placed within it on the twelfth of October.

¶118 Nos quoque his ita de ipso patre quoquo modo digestis, iam tandem scribendi ordinem concludamus, et Deo ac Domino nostro Ihesu Christo gratias de omnibus donis suis persoluentes, finem huic opusculo imponamus. Ueruntamen id in fine adiciendum esse putauimus, ut si quis hec legens uel audiens, indignitatem, uel¹ ingenii mei fatuitatem remota pietate perpenderit, et ea re iis que de tanto patre dicta sunt, fidem prebere contempserit, nouerit quia omnia, que de eo utcunque descripsimus, auctoritate uenerabilium uirorum, Odonis uidelicet archiepiscopi, et² Bede presbiteri, roborata probamus, nil in eis ex nostra parte ponentes, nisi quod propriis oculis intuiti sumus. Illud tamen quod dixi de damnatione regis Ecfredi fateor nusquam legi, sed tot talesque uiri id ita se habuisse confirmant, ut eis nolle credere magne impudentie esse crediderim. Sit³ itaque⁴ laus et gratiarum actio omnipotenti Deo, Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto, per omnia secula seculorum. Amen.⁵

Explicit uita sancti Wilfridi archiepiscopi.⁶

[Witness D appends to the end of the *Vita Sancti Wilfridi* the full account of the debate concerning the proper calculation of the date of Easter between Colman and Wilfrid at the Synod of Whitby to which Edmer refers in ¶23 (*HE* 3.25). It concludes with the metrical epitaph inscribed above Wilfrid's tomb in the Church of St Peter at Ripon, including the passage introducing it (*HE* 5.19). Since the D text is very defective, the following paragraphs are based substantially on *HE*; variant readings from D are noted in the apparatus, though the spellings of the main text throughout are those of D. With minor variations, the translation is based on Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 300–9].

¶119 Probauit⁷ dicens, 'Pascha quod facimus, uidimus Romae, ubi beati apostoli Petrus et Paulus uixere, docuere, passi sunt et sepulti, ab omnibus celebrari; hoc in Italia, hoc⁸ in Gallia, quas

¹ AC] *et*.

² A] adds *beati*.

³ D] recommences here.

⁴ D] omits.

⁵ D] There was something written in the manuscript after this originally (filling the rest of the line), but it is now erased and unrecoverable.

⁶ A] *Explicit uita sancti Wilfridi episcopi et confessoris*; C] *Explicit Vita Sanctissimi Confessoris atque Pontificis Christi Wilfridi*; for closing rubric in D, see ¶128.

⁷ *Probauit dicens*] *HE* omits.

⁸ D] *grecia*.

¶118 Now that these things about father Wilfrid have thus been set out in the way they have, we too should finally draw to a close this series of writings; rendering thanks to God and our Lord Jesus Christ for all their gifts let us impose an end upon this little work. Nevertheless, it occurred to us that we should add this on at the end: if anyone either reading or hearing these things should set aside his piety and judge me unworthy or foolish of mind and on that account disdain to offer credence to these words which have been composed about such a great father, let him be aware that we can prove that all the things that we have described anywhere are corroborated by the authority of venerable men, namely Oda the archbishop, and Bede the priest; we have added nothing on our own to their words, except what we have seen with our own eyes. I confess, however, that I have never read anywhere what I reported about the damnation of King Ecgrith; but so many men of good character confirm that to be the case that not accepting to believe them seemed to me to be a great impudence. Therefore, let us render praise and thanks to Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Here ends the life of Saint Wilfrid the Archbishop.

¶119 He demonstrated this saying, 'The Easter we keep is the same as we have seen universally celebrated in Rome, where the apostles St Peter and St Paul lived, taught, suffered, and were buried. We also found it everywhere in use in Italy and Gaul when we travelled through those countries for the purpose of study and prayer. We

discendi¹ uel orandi studio pertransiuimus, ab omnibus agi conspeximus; hoc Africam,² Asiam, Egyptum, Greciam et omnem orbem, quacumque³ Christi ecclesia diffusa est,⁴ per diuersas nationes et linguas uno ac non diuerso temporis ordine geri comperimus, preter hos tantum et obstinationis eorum complices, Pictos dico et Brytones,⁵ cum quibus de duabus ultimis Oceani insulis, et his non totis, contra totum orbem stulto labore pugnant.⁶

¶120 Cui hec dicenti respondit Colmanus: 'Mirum quare stultum appellare uelitis laborem nostrum, in quo tanti apostoli, qui super pectus Domini recumbere dignus fuit, exempla sectamur, cum ipsum sapientissime uixisse omnis mundus nouerit.'

¶121 At Wilfridus: 'Absit', inquit, "ut Iohannem stultitie reprehendamus, cum scita legis Mosaice iuxta litteram seruaret, iudaizante adhuc in multis ecclesia, nec subito ualentibus apostolis omnem legis obseruantiam, que a Deo instituta est, abdicare, quomodo simulacra, que a demonibus inuenta sunt, repudiare omnes, qui ad fidem ueniunt, necesse est; uidelicet ne scandalum facerent⁷ eis qui inter gentes erant⁸ Iudeis. Hinc est enim quod Paulus Timotheum circumcidit, quod hostias in Templo immolauit, quod cum⁹ Aquila et Priscilla caput Chorinthi totondit, ad nichil uidelicet utile, nisi ad scandalum uitandum¹⁰ Iudeorum; hinc quod eidem Paulo Iacobus ait: 'Vides, frater, quot¹¹ milia sunt in Iudeis qui crediderunt, et omnes hii emulatores¹² sunt legis.' Nec tamen hodie clarescente per mundum euangelio necesse est, immo nec licitum, fidelibus uel circumcidi uel hostias Deo uictimarum offerre carnalium. Itaque Iohannes secundum legis consuetudinem quarta decima die¹³ mensis primi ad uesperam incipiebat celebrationem

¹ D] *dicendi*.

² D] *assuetam*.

³ D] *una cum*.

⁴ D] omits.

⁵ HE has *Brettones*.

⁶ D] *pugnauit*.

⁷ D] *facerant*, with a letter erased after *c*.

⁸ D] *sunt*.

⁹ D] *cumque*.

¹⁰ *uitandum Iudeorum*] D reverses; this is a variant which according to Colgrave and Mynors (300, n. a) appears in the 'c2' manuscript family. There is a brief discussion of witness D's textual relationship to the HE in the Introduction, §8.1.4.

¹¹ D] *quod*.

¹² D] *-latores sunt legis* is written in the lower margin below the last words of the previous line and is preceded by a wrap-mark.

¹³ D] omits.

learnt that it was observed at one and the same time in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and throughout the whole world, wherever the Church of Christ is scattered, amid various nations and languages. The only exceptions are these men and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean the Picts and the Britons, who in these, the two remotest islands of the Ocean, and only in some parts of them, foolishly attempt to fight against the whole world.'

¶120 Colman answered, 'I wonder that you are willing to call our efforts foolish, seeing that we follow the example of that apostle who was reckoned worthy to recline on the breast of the Lord; for all the world acknowledges his great wisdom.'

¶121 Wilfrid replied, 'Far be it from me to charge John with foolishness: he literally observed the decrees of the Mosaic law when the Church was still Jewish in many respects, at a time when the apostles were unable to bring to a sudden end the entire observance of that law which God ordained in the same way as, for instance, they made it compulsory on all new converts to abandon their idols which are of devilish origin. They feared, of course, that they might make a stumbling-block for the Jewish proselytes dispersed among the Gentiles. This was the reason why Paul circumcised Timothy, why he offered sacrifices in the temple, and why he shaved his head at Corinth in company with Aquila and Priscilla; all this was of no use except to avoid scandalizing the Jews. Hence James said to Paul, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them which have believed; and they are all zealous for the law." But in these days when the light of the Gospel is spreading throughout the world, it is not necessary, it is not even lawful for believers to be circumcised or to offer God sacrifices of flesh and blood. So John, in accordance with the custom of the law, began the celebration of Easter Day in the evening of the fourteenth day of the

festi paschalis, nichil curans utrum hec sabbato an alia qualibet feria proueniret. At uero Petrus cum Rome predicaret, memor quia Dominus prima sabbati resurrexit¹ a mortuis ac mundo spem resurrectionis contulit, ita Pascha faciendum intellexit,² ut secundum consuetudinem ac precepta legis quartam decimam lunam primi mensis, eque sicut Iohannes, orientem ad uesperam semper expectaret; et hac exorta si dominica dies, que tunc prima sabbati uocabatur, erat mane uentura, in ipsa uespera Pascha³ dominicum celebrare incipiebat, quomodo et⁴ nos omnes hodie facere solemus.

¶122 Sin autem dominica non proximo mane post lunam quartam decimam, sed⁵ sexta decima aut septima decima aut alia qualibet⁶ luna usque ad uicesimam primam esset uentura, exspectabat eam, et precedente sabbato uespere sacrosancta Pasce sollempnia inchoabat; sicque fiebat, ut dominica Pasche dies nonnisi a quinta decima luna usque ad uicesimam primam seruaretur.⁷ Neque haec euangelica et apostolica traditio legem soluit, sed potius adimplet, in qua obseruandum Pascha a quarta decima luna primi mensis ad uesperam usque ad uicesimam primam lunam eiusdem mensis ad uesperam preceptum est; in quam obseruantiam immitandam omnes beati Iohannis successores in Asya post obitum eius, et omnis per orbem ecclesia conuersa est. Et hoc esse uerum Pascha, hoc solum fidelibus celebrandum, Niceno concilio non statutum nouiter sed confirmatum est, ut ecclesiastica docet istoria.

¶123 Vnde constat uos, Colmanne, neque Iohannis, ut autumatis, exempla sectari neque Petri, cuius traditioni scientes contradicitis, neque legi, neque euangelio in obseruatione uestri Pasche congruere. Iohannes⁸ enim, ad legis Mosaice decreta tempus paschale custodiens, nichil de prima sabbati curabat; quod uos non facitis, qui nonnisi prima sabbati Pascha celebratis. Petrus a quinta decima luna usque ad uicesimam primam diem Pasche dominicum celebrabat; quod uos non facitis, qui a quarta decima usque ad

¹ D] *surrexit*.

² D] adds *et*.

³ D] *pascha uespera*, with interlinear *b* and *a* above to indicate that the order is to be reversed.

⁴ D] omits.

⁵ D] adds *in*.

⁶ D] *quelibet*.

⁷ *seruaretur...primam*] D omits through homeoteleuton.

⁸ D] *Iohannes*, with *e* over an erasure.

first month, regardless of whether it fell on the Sabbath or any other day. But when Peter preached at Rome, remembering that the Lord rose from the dead and brought to the world the hope of the resurrection on the first day of the week, he realized that Easter ought to be kept as follows: he always waited for the rising of the moon on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month in accordance with the custom and precepts of the law, just as John did, but when it had risen, if the Lord's Day, which was then called the first day of the week, followed in the morning, he proceeded to celebrate Easter as we all are accustomed to do at the present time.

¶122 But if the Lord's Day was due, not on the morning following the fourteenth day of the moon but on the sixteenth or seventeenth or any other day until the twenty-first, he waited for it, and began the holy Easter ceremonies the night before, that is, on the Saturday evening; so it came about that Easter Sunday was kept only between the fifteenth day of the moon and the twenty-first. So this evangelical and apostolic tradition does not abolish the law but rather fulfils it, by ordering the observance of Easter from the evening of the fourteenth day of the moon in the first month up to the twenty-first of the moon in the same month. All the successors of St John in Asia since his death and also the whole Church throughout the world have followed this observance. That this is the true Easter and that this alone must be celebrated by the faithful was not newly decreed but confirmed afresh by the Council of Nicaea as the history of the Church informs us.

¶123 So it is plain, Colman, that you neither follow the example of St John, as you think, nor of Peter, whose tradition you knowingly contradict; and so, in your observance of Easter, you neither follow the law nor the gospel. For John who kept Easter according to the decrees of the Mosaic law, took no heed of the Sunday; you do not do this, for you celebrate Easter only on a Sunday. Peter celebrated Easter Sunday between the fifteenth and twenty-first day of the moon; you, on the other hand, celebrate Easter Sunday between the

uicesimam lunam diem dominicum Pasche obseruatis, ita ut tertia decima luna ad uesperam sepius Pascha incipiatis; cuius neque lex ullam fecit mentionem, neque auctor ac¹ dator euangelii Dominus in ea, sed in quarta decima, uel uetus Pascha manducauit ad uesperam uel noui testamenti sacramenta in commemorationem sue passionis ecclesie celebranda tradidit. Itemque lunam uicesimam primam, quam lex maxime celebrandam commendauit, a celebratione uestri² Pasche funditus eliminatis. Sicque, ut dixi, in celebratione summe festiuitatis neque Iohanni neque Petro neque legi neque euangelio concordatis.³

¶124 His contra Colmannus: 'Numquid', ait, 'Anatolius, uir sanctus et in prefata istoria ecclesiastica multum laudatus, legi uel euangelio contraria sapuit, qui a quarta decima usque ad uicesimam Pascha celebrandum scripsit? Numquid reuerentissimum³ patrem nostrum Columbam et successores eius, uiros Deo dilectos, qui eodem modo Pascha fecerunt, diuinis paginis contraria sapuisse uel egisse⁴ credendum est? Cum plurimi fuerint in eis, quorum sanctitati celestia signa et uirtutum que fecerunt miracula testimonium prebuerant; quos ipse sanctos esse non dubitans, semper eorum uitam, mores et disciplinam sequi non desisto.'

¶125 At Wilfridus: 'Constat', inquit, 'Anatolium uirum sanctissimum, doctissimum ac laude esse dignissimum; sed quid uobis cum illo, cum nec eius decreta seruetis? Ille enim in Pascha suo regulam utique ueritatis sequens, circulum decem et nouem annorum posuit, quem uos aut ignoratis aut agnitum⁵ et a tota⁶ Christi ecclesia custoditum pro nichilo contempnitis. Ille sic in Pascha dominico quartam decimam lunam computauit, ut hanc eadem ipse die more Egyptiorum quintam decimam lunam ad uesperam esse fateretur. Sic item⁷ uicesimam die dominico Pasche adnotauit, ut hanc declinata eadem die esse uicesimam primam crederet. Cuius regulam distinctionis uos ignorasse probat, quod aliquoties⁸ Pascha manifestissime ante plenilunium, id est in tertia

¹ D reads as here, but *c* is over an erasure and is also followed by an erased letter.

² D has *ui*, with a macron over it instead of the expected *uri*.

³ D] *reuerentissimum*, with a letter erased after the first *u*.

⁴ D] *legisse*.

⁵ Two or three letters are erased after this in D.

⁶ D] omits.

⁷ D] *iterum*.

⁸ D] *aliquotiens*.

fourteenth and the twentieth day of the moon. Thus you very often begin Easter on the evening of the thirteenth day of the moon, which is never mentioned in the law. This was not the day—it was the fourteenth, in which the Lord, the author and giver of the Gospel, ate the old Passover in the evening and instituted the sacraments of the new testament to be celebrated by the church in remembrance of his passion. Besides, in your celebration of Easter you utterly exclude the twenty-first day, which the law of Moses specially ordered to be observed. So, as I have said, in your celebration of the greatest of the festivals you agree neither with John nor Peter, neither with the Law nor with the Gospel.'

¶124 Colman replied, 'Did Anatolius, a man who was holy and highly spoken of in the history of the Church to which you appeal, judge contrary to the Law and the Gospel when he wrote that Easter should be celebrated between the fourteenth and the twentieth day of the moon? Or must we believe that our most revered father Columba and his successors, men beloved of God, who celebrated Easter in the same way, judged and acted contrary to the Holy Scriptures, seeing that there were many of them to whose holiness the heavenly signs and the miracles they performed bore witness? And as I have no doubt that they were saints, I shall never cease to follow their way of life, their customs, and their teaching.'

¶125 Wilfrid replied, 'It is true that Anatolius was a most holy and learned man, worthy of all praise; but what have you to do with him since you do not observe his precepts? He followed a correct rule in celebrating Easter, basing it on a cycle of nineteen years, of which you are either unaware or, if you do know of it, you despise it, even though it is observed by the whole Church of Christ. He assigned the fourteenth day of the moon to Easter Sunday, reckoning after the Egyptian manner that the fifteenth day of the moon began on the evening of the fourteenth. So also he assigned the twentieth day to Easter Sunday, reckoning that after evening it was the twenty-first day. But it establishes that you have been ignorant of this distinction, in that you sometimes clearly keep Easter Day before

decima luna, facitis. De patre autem uestro Columba et sequacibus eius, quorum sanctitatem uos imitari, et regulam ac precepta celestibus signis confirmata sequi perhibetis, possem¹ respondere, quia multis in iudicio dicentibus Domino, quod in nomine eius prophetauerint² et demonia eiecerint³ et uirtutes multas fecerint, responsurus sit Dominus, quia numquam eos nouerit. Set absit, ut hoc de patribus uestris⁴ dicam, quia iustius multo est, de incognitis bonum credere quam malum.

¶126 Vnde et illos Dei famulos ac Deo dilectos esse non nego, qui simplicitate rustica sed intentione pia Deum dilexerunt. Neque illis multum obesse reor talem Pasche obseruantiam, quamdiu nullus aduenerat, qui eis instituti perfectioris decreta, que sequerentur, ostenderet; quos utique credo, siqui tunc ad eos catholicus calculator adueniret, sic eius monita fuisse secuturos, quomodo ea que nouerant ac didicerant Dei mandata probantur fuisse secuti. Tu autem et socii tui, si audita decreta sedis apostolice, immo uniuersalis ecclesie, et hec litteris sacris confirmata sequi contempnit, absque ulla dubietate peccatis. Etsi enim patres tui sancti fuerunt, numquid uniuersali, que per orbem est, ecclesie Christi eorum est paucitas uno de angulo extreme insule preferenda? Et si sanctus erat ac potens uirtutibus ille Columba uester, immo et noster si Christi erat, num preferri potuit beatissimo apostolorum principi, cui Dominus⁵ ait: “Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram edificabo ecclesiam meam, et porte inferi non preualebunt aduersus eam, et tibi dabo clauas regni celorum?”

¶127 Hec perorante Wilfrido, dixit rex: ‘Verene,⁶ Colmanne,⁷ hec illi Petro dicta sunt a Domino?’ Qui ait: ‘Vere, rex.’ At ille: ‘Habetis’, inquit, ‘uos proferre aliquid tante potestatis uestro Columbe datum?’ At ille ait: ‘Nichil.’ Rursum rex: ‘Si utrique uestrum’, inquit, ‘in hoc

¹ D] *possim*.

² D] *prophetauerunt*.

³ D] *eiecerunt*.

⁴ D] *nostris*.

⁵ D] omits.

⁶ D] *Veri ne*.

⁷ D] The scribe seems to have written *cob-* originally; he then corrected this to *col(m)-* before continuing.

full moon, that is on the thirteenth day of the moon. So far as your father Columba and his followers are concerned, whose holiness you claim to imitate and whose rule and precepts (confirmed by heavenly signs) you claim to follow, I might perhaps point out that at the judgement, many will say to the Lord that they prophesied in his name and cast out devils and did many wonderful works, but the Lord will answer that he never knew them. Far be it from me to say this about your fathers, for it is much fairer to believe good rather than evil about unknown people.

¶126 So I will not deny that those who in their rude simplicity loved God with pious intent were indeed servants of God and beloved by him. Nor do I think that this observance of Easter did much harm to them while no one had come to show them a more perfect rule to follow. In fact I am sure that if anyone knowing the catholic rule had come to them they would have followed it, as they are known to have followed all the laws of God as soon as they had learnt of them. But, once having heard the decrees of the Apostolic See or rather of the Universal Church, if you and your companions refuse to follow them, confirmed as they are by the holy Scriptures, then without doubt you are committing sin. For though your fathers were holy men, do you think that a handful of people in one corner of the remotest island is to be preferred to the Universal Church of Christ which is spread throughout the world? And even if that Columba of yours—yes, and ours too, if he belonged to Christ—was a holy man of mighty works, is he to be preferred to the most blessed Chief of the Apostles, to whom the Lord said, “Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven?”

¶127 When Wilfrid had ended, the king said, ‘Is it true, Colman, that the Lord said these words to Peter?’ Colman answered, ‘It is true, O king.’ Then the king went on, ‘Have you anything to show that an equal authority was given to your Columba?’ Colman answered, ‘Nothing.’ Again the king said, ‘Do you both agree,

sine ulla controuersia consentiunt, quod hec principaliter Petro dicta, et ei clauis regni celorum sint dati a Domino?' Responderunt 'Etiam' utrique. At ille ita conclusit: 'Et ego uobis dico, quia hic est hostiarius ille, cui ego contradicere nolo; sed, in quantum noui uel ualeo, huius cupio in omnibus obedire statutis, ne forte me adueniente ad fores regni celorum non sit qui reserat, auerso illo qui clauis tenere probatur.' Hec dicente rege, fauerunt assidentes quique siue¹ astantes maiores una cum mediocribus, et abdicata minus perfecta institutione,² ad ea que meliora cognouerant sese transferre³ festinabant.

¶128 Finito⁴ conflictu concioneque soluta hec recreandus adiuit. Defunctus⁵ est autem in monasterio suo, quod habebat in prouincia Vndalum sub regimine abbatis Cudbaldi, et ministerio perlatus fratrum in primum suum monasterium, quod uocatur Ripun; positus est in ecclesia beati Petri apostoli iuxta altare ad austrum, ut et supra docuimus, et hoc de illo supra epitaphium scriptum:

Wilfridus hic magnus requiescit corpore presul,
 Hanc Domino qui aulam ductus pietatis amore
 3 Fecit, et eximio sacrauit nomine Petri,
 Cui clauis celi Christus dedit arbiter orbis,
 Atque auro ac tirio deuotus uestiit ostro.
 6 Quin etiam sublime crucis radiante metallo
 Hic posuit tropheum, necnon et quatuor auro
 Scribi euangelii precepit in ordine libros,
 9 Ac thecam e rutilo his condignam condidit auro;
 Paschalis qui etiam sollempnia tempora cursus
 Catholici ad iustum correxit dogma canonis,
 12 Quem statuere patres, dubioque errore remoto
 Certa sue genti ostendit moderamina ritus;
 Inque locis istis monachorum examina crebra

¹ D] *sibi et.*

² *institutione*] D has two letters erased after *u*, and adds *et.*

³ D] *trasferre*, with *n* inserted above interlinearly; the insertion mark below the line has been positioned incorrectly by the scribe.

⁴ At this point *HE* reads, *Finitoque conflictu ac soluta contione, Agilbertus domum rediit* (the opening words of Colgrave and Mynors (308–9); 'When the dispute was ended and the assembly had broken up, Agilbert returned home').

⁵ The passage from *HE* 5.19 (Colgrave and Mynors, 528–31) begins here.

without any dispute, that these words were addressed primarily to Peter and that the Lord gave him the keys to the kingdom of heaven?' They both answered, 'Yes.' Thereupon the king concluded, 'Then, I tell you, since he is the doorkeeper I will not contradict him; but I intend to obey his commands in everything to the best of my knowledge and ability, otherwise when I come to the gates of the kingdom of heaven, there may be no one to open them because the one who on your own showing holds the keys has turned his back on me.' When the king had spoken, all who were seated there or standing by, both high and low, signified their assent, gave up their imperfect rules, and readily accepted in their place those which they recognized to be better.

¶128 ... He died in his own monastery in the district of Oundle, while Abbot Cuthbald was ruling over it; he was carried by the brothers to his first monastery at Ripon and buried in the church of the blessed apostle Peter close to the altar on the south side, as was mentioned before; his epitaph was inscribed over him as follows:

Here lie great Wilfrid's bones. In loving zeal
 He built this church, and gave it Peter's name,
 Who bears the keys by gift of Christ the King;
 Clothed it in gold and purple, and set high
 In gleaming ore the trophy of the Cross;
 Golden the Gospels four he made for it,
 Lodged in a shrine of gold, as is their due.
 To the high Paschal feast its order just
 He gave, by doctrine true and catholic,
 As our forefathers held; drove error far,
 And showed his folk sound law and liturgy.
 Within these walls a swarm of monks he hived
 And in their statutes carefully laid down
 All that the fathers by their rule command.

- 15 Colligit, ac monitis, cauit que regula patrum,
Sedulus instituit; multisque domique forisque
Iactatus nimium per tempora longa periclis,
18 Quindecies ternos postquam egit episcopus annos,
Transiit, et gaudens celestia regna petiuit.
Dona, Ihesu, ut grex pastoris calle sequatur.¹

At home, abroad, long time in tempests tossed,
Thrice fifteen years he bare a bishop's charge,
Passed to his rest, and gained the joys of Heaven.
Grant, Lord, his flock may tread their shepherd's path!

Here ends the life of blessed Bishop Wilfrid.

¹ In D, this is followed by the concluding rubric, *Explicit uita beati Wilfridi episcopi.*

*Breuiiloquium
Vite Sancti Wilfridi*

Auctore Edmero

¶129 *Incipit Breuiiloquium Vite eiusdem Patris*

Spero, fratres karissimi, sanctitatem uestram non latere, quare mos sit in ecclesia Dei dies quibus sancti Dei de hac uita transiere festiuis gaudiis celebrari. Nec enim estimo uos putare iccirco, quod uel martir occisus, uel confessor quiuis sanctus defunctus dicitur esse letandus; sed potius quoniam is qui uel per martirium, uel per bonam confessionem uite presentis laqueos et erumnas euasit, atque ad uite perennis securam felicitatem, felicemque securitatem migravit, in ymnis ac laudibus Dei omni populo esse iocundandus. Hoc est certe quod facitis. Hoc est quod hodierna die in unum conuenientes exultatis. Audistis siquidem quod hac die gloriosus pater noster Wilfridus habitaculum sue carnis egressus, celorum regnum feliciter regnaturus intrauit, suoque introitu ciues eius non modicum exhilarauit. Quare non mirum si letamini, si glorie patris uestri congratulamini, si in eius laudibus, per cuius patrocina uos ad eandem gloriam peruenturos confiditis, iocundamini. Et reuera dubitare non conuenit uos libenti animo audituros qua conuersatione uitam in hoc mundo transegerit, quem huic uite exemptum tot deuotionis uestre officiis exultanter honoratis. Quapropter ab exordio natiuitatis eius loqui incipiemus, et sic non

*A Short Account
of the Life of Saint Wilfrid*

by Edmer of Canterbury

¶129 *Here begins the short account of the life of this father.*

I trust, my most holy and beloved brothers, that it is not unknown to you why it is the custom of the Church of God to celebrate with joyful festivals days on which the saints of God departed from this life. I do not imagine, however, that you think that either the slaying of a martyr or the death of a holy confessor is called a festival because it is cause for celebration; rather, it is because a person, who through martyrdom or firm profession of faith has escaped the snares and the hardships of this present life and who has advanced to the secure happiness and the happy security of eternal life, ought to be the subject of rejoicing in hymns and songs of praise to God by everyone. This is indeed what you are doing. This is the thing in which you rejoice, coming here together as one today for this feast. Indeed, you have heard that on this day our glorious father Wilfrid departed the temporary dwelling-place of his flesh and entered the kingdom of heaven where he is destined to rule joyfully; the citizens there rejoiced greatly upon his arrival. For which reason, it is no wonder that you rejoice, wishing joy for your glorious father and taking delight in his praises; through his patronage you trust that you will attain the same glory. Indeed, it is not becoming for you who are now to hear with willing hearts about the manner in which Wilfrid carried out his life in this world to have any doubts about one taken from this life and whom you honour and exalt with so many devotional offices. And so, I shall begin with the beginning and talk about his birth, and then I shall discuss his life not by

quidem seriatim narrando, sed pauca quedam de uita eius summatim perstringendo, disseremus. Et hoc faciemus cum ut uestro desiderio morem geramus, tum ut nulli uestrum aliquid tedium, Deo nos et uerba nostra regente, ingeramus.

¶130 Igitur cum hic pater noster infantulus prodiret ab utero matris, mox flammea lampas super domum in qua nascebatur celitus emicuit, omnemque circumfuse noctis caliginem radio sue lucis abegit. Uicini tanta luminis claritate exciti, stratis exiliunt, accurrunt, quodam presagio modum figuramque luminis intuentes agnoscunt, sicque ad sua Deum magnificantes redeunt.

¶131 Wilfridus ergo nobiliter natus, nichiloque minus in bonis moribus nobiliter postmodum educatus, habitu subsequendum actuum suorum aperte cunctis innotuit, quod in primordio uite sue non ab re super eum lux e celo resplenduit. Uir autem factus, ac litterarum studiis non inconuenienter imbutus, ut altiora contingeret Romam adiit; ibique nonnulla discipline ecclesiastice documenta, que in patria sua nequibat, Bonifacio eiusdem sedis archidiacono tradente, accepit. Uerum cum in ipso studio esset et hebetioris ingenii, necne lingue impeditioris existeret, ad oratorium beati Andree apostoli sese contulit, leuamen super istis postulaturus. Ubi prostratus humi orauit misericordiam Dei meritis apostoli sui sibi affuturam, ingenii acumen, lingue dissertitudinem largituram. Mira fides hominis. Non prius ab oratione surrexit, quam quod petebat se percepisse mirabiliter intellexit. Redit in se, et gratosus miratur se qui fuerat iam non esse.

¶132 Rome post hec aliquamdiu demoratus, et non modo studiis litterarum intentus, sed et in bonis moribus bene ad omnes conuersatus, ad patriam suam tandem reuersus est. Que uero, quantaue puritas et innocentia fuerit uite ipsius que simplicitas et rectitudo in cunctis operibus ipsius, que mansuetudo et gratia ad omnes in conuersatione ipsius, que mundicia cordis ante Deum in

narrating events in an unbroken line, but by touching cursorily upon a few events in a brief manner. And with God directing both me and my words I shall do this to gratify your desire and in a way that will not bring boredom upon any of you.

¶130 And so, when this father of ours came forth as a tiny infant from his mother's womb, a flaming radiance all at once shone down from the heavens upon the house in which he was born and with its rays of light expelled the darkness of the enveloping night. The neighbours were aroused by such a brilliant light and leapt from their beds and ran together. Seeing the light they were able to perceive by some presentiment its nature and significance and praising God they returned to their own affairs.

¶131 Therefore, Wilfrid had a noble birth and afterwards was brought up in good character just as nobly; it was abundantly clear to everyone by the conduct of his subsequent actions that the light had shone down from heaven upon him at the beginning of his life for their great benefit. However, when he reached manhood and had been suitably instructed in the scholarly pursuits, he went at Rome so that he might partake of loftier things. There, Boniface, the archdeacon of that see, taught him and he received many instructions concerning the discipline of the Church which he was not able to get in his native land. But since he was of rather sluggish disposition in this study and was also somewhat impeded in his speech, he went to the oratory of blessed Andrew the apostle intending to ask for relief from those impediments. There he prostrated himself on the ground and prayed that through the merits of his apostle the mercy of God would come to his aid and generously bestow upon him keen intellect and fluency of speech. How wonderful the faith of that man was! No sooner had he risen from prayer than he perceived that he had miraculously obtained what he had been seeking. He regained his senses and was thankful and filled with wonder to discover that he was no longer as he had been.

¶132 He stayed for some time at Rome after these events and he devoted himself not only to scholarly pursuits but also conducted his life well with good disposition towards all men; but finally, he returned to his own land. And truly the great things which the Lord, who was well disposed to his course of studies, performed through him are proof of the kind and degree of purity and innocence there was in this man's life, what simplicity and rectitude there was in all of his works, what mildness and grace there was in his everyday

cogitationibus et uoluntatibus ipsius, magnalia, que per eum Dominus talibus eius studiis fauens egit, attestantur.

¶133 De quibus hoc quidem inter alia dicendum existimaui, quod Angliam Scottica traditione de Pasce obseruatione deprauatam canonica et apostolica auctoritate correxit.¹ Que res ei magnam apud omnes gloriam peperit, et spirituale exercitium eius in populis notum fecit; factumque est ut, circunquaque diuulgata fama eius, perferretur ad noticiam regum Nordanhimbrorum, Oswii uidelicet et Alfridi filii eius. Qui mittentes, eum ad se uenire fecerunt. Et qui prius fama sanctitatis eius fuerant accensi, postmodum noticia eius, familiari colloquio eius, prudentique consilio eius multo amplius sunt delectati. Intelligentes igitur illum Spiritu Dei per omnia plenum, eum in episcopatum ecclesie Eboracensis, que tunc quidem pastore carebat, sullimari cupiebant. Consensus cleri plebisque requiritur; dignissimus episcopatu a cunctis pronuntiatur. Quid plura? Eligitur. Rapitur. Consecratur.

¶134 Fratres, currimus; et currendo multa in dicendo transilimus, sicut ii nouerunt qui uitam eius uel legerunt, uel certe alio quolibet modo ad plenum agnouerunt. Quam sancte autem se in omnibus et ad omnes in episcopatu positus studuerit habere, non est huius temporis disserere. Quare pretermisissis illis, alia quedam de gestis eius, ut proposuimus, breuiter commemoremus.

¶135 Siquidem apud Augustaldem oratorium in honorem beati Andree apostoli construens, quoddam inibi opus prorsus diuinum operatus est. Unus namque de operariis e summo culmine muri prolapsus in preceps corruit, et elesis omnibus membris contiguus morti fere iacebat exanimis. Beatus uero Wilfridus corpore absens, sed presentia Spiritus hoc ipsum agnoscens, ad egrum impiger tendit, pro illo preces Christo effundit. Confestim ad uocem patris egro sanitas redit, et ad opus intermissum incolumis et alacer redit.

¹ *correxit*] There is an erasure, now illegible, at the beginning of the line before this word.

behaviour towards all men, what cleanliness of heart there was before God in his thoughts and desires.

¶133 Indeed, with respect to these virtues I have thought it fitting to mention among other things that he rectified the situation in England, which had been corrupted by the Irish tradition concerning the celebration of Easter, with canonical and apostolic authority. This brought great glory upon him among all men and revealed his spiritual activity among the people. And it happened, after his fame had become publicly recognized everywhere, that he came to the notice of the Kings of the Northumbrians, namely Oswy and his son Alhfrith. They sent forth messengers and directed him come before them. And whereas beforehand they had been inspired by the fame of his holiness, afterwards they were even more delighted by their acquaintance with him, by their intimate discussions with him and by his prudent counsel. Therefore, sensing him to be full of the Spirit of God in everything he did, it was their wish that he be elevated to the bishopric of the church of York, which indeed was then without a shepherd. The consent of the clergy and the people was sought; he was pronounced most worthy of the bishopric by all. What more need I say? - He was chosen, he was swept up, he was consecrated.

¶134 But my brothers, I am racing and as I race I skip over many matters in what I am talking about, as those will surely know who have read about his life or who have learnt about it in great depth in some other way. But now is not the time to discuss how, when he had been installed in the episcopate, he strove to preserve himself in a holy manner in all matters and towards all men. Therefore, leaving these things aside, let me recall briefly certain other deeds of his, as I had intended.

¶135 And so, when he was constructing an oratory at Hexham in honour of the blessed apostle Andrew, he accomplished a certain deed there which was directly attributable to God. For one of the workmen had fallen from the very top of a wall and plummeted downwards, and with all his limbs shattered he lay almost lifeless and on the verge of death. Indeed, though blessed Wilfrid was absent in body, he perceived this event by the presence of the Spirit and hastened quickly to the injured man; there he poured forth prayers to Christ on his behalf. In response to the father's petition health returned immediately to the sick man, and safe and eager to go he returned to the task which had been interrupted.

¶136 Per id temporis, cum puerorum multitudinem sacri chrismatis unctione firmaret, unus ex illis inter brachia matris a turba compressus extinctus est. Quo, uir Dei, cognito, ingemit, atque pro uita pueri fuis lacrimis orat et impetrat, ac rediuuium salutari in Christo crismate signat.

¶137 Facta hec uehemens erga famulum Dei odium et inuidiam diaboli concitabant. Cuius instinctu coniunx prefati regis¹ Northanhumbrorum Ecfredi,² Ermenburgis nomine, succensa, non solum clam inuidere factis hominis Dei, sed et eis publice detrahare cepit. Mundo enim mundique libidinibus addicta, ipsum hominem Dei se frequenter zelo Dei corripientem ferre non poterat. In tantum igitur exarsit indignatio eius ut, et regem ipsum illi infestum faceret, et de culpa inobedientie apud primatem totius Britannie, Theodorum scilicet archiepiscopum Cantuariensem, eum infamaret. Exigentibus post hec quibusdam ecclesiasticis causis, ipse Theodorus generale concilium episcoporum cogi precepit in prouincia Eboracensi; in quo concilio Wilfridum occasione prefate accusationis ab episcopatu pepulit,³ et episcopatum illius per episcopos tres diuisit. At Wilfridus suis expoliatus, apostolorum limina statuit inuisere, et coram uicario beati Petri sue cause querelam exponere.

¶138 Igitur, mare transiturus, nauem ingreditur, uentis uela panduntur, nauis prospero cursu per undas aliquantis per euehitur. Ecce autem ex insperato uentus contrarius surgit, procellas excitat, nauem concutit, nautas territat. Tandem ualida tempestate quassati, Fresiam pulsi sunt, et applicuerunt. Cuius loci incole, nondum imbuti fide Christi, solo humanitatis affectu eos obuui benigne susceperunt, et releuantes lassitudinem ipsorum queque necessitas exigebat gratis obtulere. Quorum benignitati uolens beatus Wilfridus

¹ *Northanhumbrorum* is added above interlinearly. The syllable *-hum-* is indicated merely by a macron over the *m*. There are caret signs after *regis* and *Ecfredi*; the material to be inserted after the latter is added in the outer margin: *filii regis Oswii*.

² The *ec* of *Ecfredi* is in blackish ink and the *f* in brown darker than the original ink; the three letters are over an erasure. *Ecfrius* is altered again on f. 41, l. 22; the letters *ec* have once again been altered from an earlier spelling.

³ *pepulit*] This is written over an erasure; the original reading has been totally obliterated.

¶136 During that same period, while he was strengthening a multitude of children with the anointment of holy baptism one of them, pressed upon by the crowd, suffocated and died in his mother's arms. When the man of God realised this, he groaned and prayed with an effusion of tears for the life of the boy and it was granted, and by life-giving baptism in Christ he signalled the rebirth of the boy.

¶137 These deeds aroused the violent hatred and envy of the Devil towards the servant of God. By his prompting the wife of Ecgrith, the aforementioned¹ King of the Northumbrians, who was called Ermenburg, became incensed and began not only to envy the deeds of the man of God in secret, but also to disparage them in public. For since she was addicted to the world and the lusts of the world, she could not bear the frequent reproaches of this man of God because of his zeal for God. And so, her indignation blazed up so much that she made the king himself hostile towards him and, moreover, she accused him of the sin of disobedience in the presence of the Primate of all Britain, that is the Archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore. Afterwards, because certain ecclesiastical matters demanded attention, Theodore ordered a general council of bishops to gather in the province of York. At that council on the grounds of the aforementioned accusation, he expelled Wilfrid from his bishopric and divided his see among three bishops. But Wilfrid, when stripped of his possessions, determined to visit the dwelling-place of the apostles and to set forth his cause of complaint before the vicar of blessed Peter.

¶138 Therefore, he boarded a ship in order to cross the sea; the sails were spread to the winds, and for a while the ship was borne through the waves on a prosperous journey. But behold! most unexpectedly a hostile wind arose—it whipped up a storm, buffeted the ship, terrified the crew. They were violently knocked about by the tempest and were driven finally to Frisia where they put into port. The inhabitants of this place, though not yet imbued with the faith of Christ, came out and received them kindly, purely out of their human compassion; they alleviated their exhaustion and offered them free of charge everything their needs required. Blessed

¹ This is a slip on Edmer's part, since he removed the earlier mention of Ecgrith when he reorganized the events recounted in the full *vita*. See the Introduction (§5.1) for a discussion of the narrative structure of the *Breuiiloquium*.

rependere uicem, predicauit eis fidem Christi. Nec mora. Maior multitudo illorum credens baptizata est, considerans sanctam conuersationem eius, et admirans efficaciam uirtutum atque leporem eloquentie eius. Erat autem terra ipsa nimie asperitatis et salsuginis, uixque alicuius boni fructus ferax. Sed hominibus per fidem Christi proferentibus fructum suum in uitam eternam, terra nichilominus in stipendium ipsorum protulit uberrime fructum suum.

¶139 Ecfrius uero et Ermenburgis, rati Wilfridum per Franciam regia uia, ut proposuerat, iter acturum, litteras et pretium mortis eius Ebroino maiori regie domus dirigunt; magnopere postulantes quatinus illum capiat, perturbet, ac perimat. Quibus Ebroinus confestim addictus, et immoderato pecunie amore deuictus, ne directis muneribus careat, uirum Dei diligenter ubi sit inquit quo eum occidat. Qua de re factum est ut quendam alium episcopum de Anglia tunc temporis pro Dei nomine exulantem, Winfridum nomine, trucidaret, uicinitate nominis propriaque malignitate deceptus. Uerum dum comperisset se in morte illius falsum fuisse, et ubi Wilfridus esset certo accepisset, missis litteris cum magnis muneribus per nuncios ad Aldgislum Fresie principem, rogauit ut Wilfridum interficeret. At ipse inuestigans, necne inuestigando perdiscens, pro nulla culpa Wilfridi, sed pro sola auaricia Ebroinum hoc facinus machinari, noluit tam nefande petitioni assensum prebendo turpiter infamari. Spretis igitur muneribus et nunciis, ac litteris in ignem proiectis, eternum Gehenne incendium auaris fratrumque proditoribus imprecatus est. Que res securitatem Wilfrido in ipsa terra manendi dedit; et ideo cum noua Dei plebe, intrans et exiens, illic hiemem totam exegit.

¶140 Post hec recepto itinere Romam uadit. Causam suam coram papa Agathone in Romano concilio agit, cumque diligentius negotium eius in ipso concilio discuteretur, ab¹ re pontificio pulsus

¹ *ab...Quapropter sinodali*] This passage is written over approximately three manuscript lines of erased text. *Qua-* has been squeezed into the right hand margin and *propter sinoda-* into the left margin. The final *-li* of *sinodali* aligns with the left hand line of writing and appears to be original.

Wilfrid, wishing in turn to repay the kindness of these people, preached the faith of Christ to them. There was no hesitation—when they perceived his holy way of life, the vast majority of them believed and were baptized; they admired the strength of his virtue and the charm of his eloquence. And furthermore, the land itself was extremely dry and saline and hardly able to produce any good fruit. But when its population through the faith of Christ offered the fruit of themselves for eternal life, the land in no lesser degree brought forth a great abundance of its own fruits to recompense them.

¶139 But Ecgrith and Ermenburg, thinking that Wilfrid would be making his way through the Frankish kingdom on the royal road, as was his intention, sent a letter and a reward for his death to Ebroin, the Mayor of the Royal Palace; they urged him strenuously to capture Wilfrid, confound his plans, and put him to death. Ebroin at once took their side and overcome by an unrestrained desire for money and fearful lest he be deprived of the gifts sent to him, searched diligently for the man of God, wherever he might be, in order to kill him. In doing this it happened that he cut down a certain other bishop from England called Winfrith, who was at that time in exile in God's name, being deceived by both the closeness of his name and his own malice. But when he discovered that he had been mistaken concerning Wilfrid's death and learned for certain where he was, he sent letters accompanying great presents via envoys to Aldgisl, the ruler of Frisia, asking him to kill Wilfrid. But Aldgisl looked into matters, and having looked into them determined that Ebroin was plotting this evil deed not on account of any fault of Wilfrid, but rather out of avarice alone, and he did not wish to be vilified and disgraced by agreeing to such an unspeakable request. Therefore, he spurned the gifts and messengers, and casting the letters into the fire he invoked the eternal flames of Gehenna upon the greedy and those who betrayed their brothers. This action provided Wilfrid with the security to remain in this land; and thus from his arrival until his departure he spent the whole winter there with the new people of God.

¶140 After these events he once again took up his journey and arrived at Rome. He made his case before Pope Agatho at a Roman council, and when his business had been discussed very thoroughly by this same council, Wilfrid, who had been driven from his seat of

comprobatu est, quippe qui et fide catholicus, et a contemptu mandatorum primatis Anglie, pro quo maxime impetebatur, immunis est a cunctis inuentus. Quapropter synodali sententia absolutus, et auctoritate sedis apostolice fultus, Angliam reuertitur.

¶141 Prefato autem regi Ecgrido et archiepiscopo Theodoro litteras apostolicas deferens, iudicium sibi et iusticiam fieri postulat. Aderat ea tempestate memorata coniunx regis maledico ore concordiam turbans, uirum Dei delatorem nominans, eum non episcopatu sed omni opprobrio dignum clamitans. Quid multa? Regius furor ex uerbis infande mulieris accenditur; sanctus Dei opprobriis et contumeliis multis afficitur; ad ultimum in tenebrosi carceris antro uinctus recluditur. Uerum ubi est in carcerem trusus, mox ruptis uinculis deambulabat, Dominum laudando, solutus. Quod cum regi nunciatum fuisset, aliis uinculis ad hoc ipsum nouiter factis eum strictius uinciri precepit. Sed ubi uincula ipsa sanctum corpus contingebant, statim aut rupta dissiliebant, aut certe colligari non ualentia laxa cadebant. Quapropter custodibus multiplicatis, seruis Dei arctius solito tenebatur, seris undique offirmatis. Intempeste uero noctis silentio, dum famulatum suum persolueret Christo, subito carcer totus illuxit, custodesque magno timore concussit.

¶142 Interea is sub cuius nutu uir Dei positus seruabatur, habens uxorem atroci languore uexatam, ad sanctum supplex accedit, pro salute sue coniugis intercedit, ut eam uisitare dignetur precatur, et obtinet. Ingreditur sanctus ad mulierem iam semimortuam, in orationem se prosternit, a qua surgens aquam benedicit, benedictam super membra infirmantis aspergit. Mira res! Mox ut inualida membra aqua tanguntur, mulier recuperata sanitate in pedes erigitur, unde et grates Deo a cunctis qui aderant persoluuntur.

authority to his detriment, won approval since he was judged by all to be orthodox in his faith and unsullied by contempt for the commands of the Primate of England, the matter in which he was most strongly accused. Wherefore he was absolved by the decision of the synod and, buttressed by the authority of the Apostolic See, he returned to England.

¶141 And bearing apostolic letters to the aforementioned king, Ecgrith, and to Archbishop Theodore, he sought their judgment in his case and that justice be done. At that point in the discussion the infamous wife of the king came forward and threw harmony into turmoil with her slanderous words; she called the man of God a traitor and proclaimed aloud that rather than being suitable for a bishopric he was deserving of every dishonour. What more need I say? The king's frenzy was set ablaze by the words of this unspeakable woman; the saint of God was inflicted with many taunts and insults and in the end was shut up and bound with chains in the shadowy cave of a prison-cell. However, when he was cast into the prison he was all at once freed by praising the Lord and was able to walk about after the chains had broken apart. When this was announced to the king, he ordered that Wilfrid be bound even tighter once they had made some new chains for this purpose. But whenever these chains touched his holy body, they would either spring apart at once in fragments or, indeed, not being strong enough to be linked together, would fall slack. Because of this they greatly increased the number of his guards, and the servant of God was confined more closely than is usual and the bars were strengthened on every side. But in the silence of the dead of the night while he was rendering his service to Christ, suddenly the whole prison was lit up, which struck the guards with exceedingly great fear.

¶142 Meanwhile, the person in whom the fate of the man of God had been placed and who was guarding him had a wife who was afflicted by a frightful illness. He came to the saint as a suppliant, approaching him concerning his wife's health and begging him that he might deign to visit her; and this was granted. The holy man came to the woman who was by now near death and prostrated himself in prayer; rising thereupon he blessed water and sprinkled the holy fluid on the sick woman's limbs. Wondrous to say, as soon as her feeble limbs were touched by the water the woman recovered her health and rose to her feet, on which account, moreover, thanks were rendered to God by all who were present there. However, Wilfrid ascribed nothing to his own merits and spurned the praise of

Wilfridus autem nil suis meritis tribuens, spreta laude hominum, ilico repetiuit sui carceris domum, credens se meliori in ipsis tenebris luce fruiturum. Uir ergo mulieris sanate tantam in seruo Dei uirtutis efficaciam uidens, nequaquam ulterius in sua custodia eum passus est detineri. Quamobrem adito rege, dum sanctum, ut cupiebat, absoluere nequit, abiecto pristinae seruitutis officio, illum nec a se nec a suis diutius fatigari consensit. Ductus est igitur inde beatus Wilfridus, atque in aliam custodiam multo horribiliorem detrusus.

¶143 In qua dum sine omni misericordia custodiretur, contigit ut quadam die rex et Ermenburgis per campos late uagantes immoderate leticie frena laxarent. Cumque ipsa muliebri lasciuia et feminea garrulitate uiro Dei insultaret, subito correpta a demone cepit quasi lupa insaniens ululare. Turbatur rex cum comitibus, et tandem credito suorum consilio, ad liberationem coniugis adductus est pater Wilfridus. Qui noluit merita eorum considerare; sed, fugato protinus demone, bona pro malis studuit eis recompensare. Unde rex aliquantis per in illius uenerationem adductus, annuit ut a custodia liber iret quo uellet; ea tamen conditione,¹ ut in terra sui iuris nullo modo subsisteret.

¶144 Egressus itaque, quo gressum flecteret ignorabat. Ueruntamen semper illud Psalmi pre se habebat, *Non derelinquis querentes te, Domine.*² Quare quocumque Dominum querendo sese conuerteret, sperabat quod Dominus eum non derelinqueret. Incidit ergo ei in mentem adhuc paganis ritibus deditos inuisere Suthsaxonicos Anglos. Uenit igitur illuc, et eos non modo fame uerbi Dei, sed et fame corporis inuenit misere laborantes. Nam et siccitate aeris tellus aruerat, et uicina maria eis pro piscatorum inopia copiam piscium non prebebant. Cum uero predicante beato Wilfrido suscepissent uerbum Dei, mox ad preces eius siccitas aeris in pluuiam, et sterilitas terre in fecunditatem demutatur. Uir ipse cum suis gnarus

¹ (*cond-itione ut in terra*) This phrase is written over an erasure.

² Psalm 9:11.

men; from there he once again sought the house of his prison, believing that he would enjoy a better light in the shadows there. And so the husband of the woman who had been healed, seeing such powerful spiritual strength in the servant of God, could not bear to have him detained any longer in his custody. Wherefore, when he approached the king and he was unable to have the saint released, as he desired, he rejected duties associated with his former service and determined that Wilfrid would no longer be tormented either by him or his charges. Therefore, blessed Wilfrid was led away from there and cast into another prison which was by far more horrible.

¶143 And while he was being guarded there and was deprived of every mercy, it happened on a certain day that the king and Ermenburg were travelling hither and thither through the countryside and were giving full rein to their unrestrained frivolity. And while Ermenburg was insulting the man of God with her woman's wantonness and her feminine chatter, she was suddenly seized by a demon and in her madness began to howl like a wolf. The king and his companions were disturbed and when heed was finally given to the council of his followers father Wilfrid was brought forth in order to release his wife. He had no wish to reflect upon their just deserts, but put the demon to flight immediately, endeavouring to repay their evil with good. And so the king was moved a little towards respecting this man and decreed that, once he was freed from his prison, he could go wherever he wished, but only on the condition that he would in no way remain in the territory under his jurisdiction.

¶144 Therefore, once he was released he did not know where he to turn his steps. Nevertheless, he always kept that phrase from the Psalms before him, *Thou hast not forsaken them that seek thee, O Lord.* And accordingly, wherever he turned seeking the Lord's way, he trusted that the Lord would not forsake him. And so, it occurred to him that he should betake himself to the English people of Sussex who still indulged in pagan rites. He arrived there and discovered that they were not only struggling miserably from hunger for the word of God, but also from physical hunger. For the earth was parched by the dryness of the climate and the seas nearby could not supply them with their plentiful fish because there was a lack of fishermen. But when blessed Wilfrid had preached to them and they had received the Word of God, on account of his prayers rain at once altered the parched climate and the sterile earth became fertile. The man himself, who together with his people was knowledgeable about

piscandi, non solum eis pisces ad uictum ministrat, sed et piscandi peritiam tradit; sicque in breui, destructis simulacris, omnique superstitionis errore sublato, totam prouinciam Christiane religioni subiecit; sibi que habitationem ac sedem episcopalem in Seleseia fecit.

¶145 Ubi cum per septem annos degeret ac per omnia secundum Deum episcopale officium decentissime gereret, accidit ut Ecgfridus in Pictorum prouincia bello uictus occumberet. Quo mortuo, uenerande memorie supradictus antistes Theodorus beatum Wilfridum ad se accersitum in episcopatum suum restituit, eiectis episcopis quibus iam olim episcopatum ipsius eum distribuisse prediximus. Et factum est ut quamdiu post hec Theodorus superuixit, pax et concordia inter ipsos uenerabiles patres semper inuiolata permaneret. Sed cum post decessum Theodori Birhtwaldus in patriarchatum Anglie successisset, et generale concilium episcoporum coadunasset, iterum Wilfridus, de inobedientia accusatus, depositus est. At ille Romam reuertitur, atque secundum quod supra retulimus eum aliam causam suam peregrisse coram papa Agathone, egit et hoc negotium suum coram pontifice apostolice sedis Johanne; similique tenore auditus, absolutus, dimissus est.

¶146 Cumque in Meldum, ciuitatem Gallie, uenisset, graui corporis infirmitate corripitur, ita ut, languore inualescente, per triduum sine uoce et sensu, sine cibo et potu, sine aliquo membrorum motu iaceret, uix tenui halitu se totum spiritum nondum exhalasse designans. Et cum sui iam de exequiis eius dolentes gementesque tractarent, ecce repente ab archangelo Michaele uisitatur, pristineque saluti redonatur. Loquensque cum eo ipse beatorum spirituum princeps, predicit eum in Anglia sua omnia recuperaturum, quatuor annis in pace uicturum, sicque, deuicto seculo ac principe eius, feliciter regna celestia cum triumpho subiturum.

¶147 Quibus dictis, uisio angeli colloquentis abscessit, et Wilfridus resumpto itinere in Angliam perrexit. Fit angelica promissio uera.

fishing, not only provided them with fish to eat, but also taught them the skills of fishing. And thus in a short while, when the idols had been destroyed and every error of superstition had been abolished, he subjected the entire province to the yoke of the Christian religion and established a home and an episcopal see for himself in Selsey.

¶145 When he had lived there for seven years and was carrying out his episcopal duty most becomingly in all matters according to the will of God, it happened that Ecgfrith was defeated in battle in the province of the Picts and was slain. When he died, Bishop Theodore of venerable memory, whom I mentioned earlier, summoned blessed Wilfrid and restored him to his bishopric, once the bishops had been expelled, to whom he had distributed Wilfrid's see a long time before (as I explained earlier). And so it happened that for as long as Theodore lived after these events peace and concord always remained unbroken between these most venerable fathers. But when, after Theodore's death, Berhtwald had succeeded to the patriarchate of England and had called together a general council of bishops, Wilfrid was once again accused of disobedience and deposed. But he went to Rome once more and in the same way as I related earlier that he completed another case then in the presence of Pope Agatho, he now also transacted this business in the presence of John, who was currently Bishop of the Apostolic See. Received similarly, he was heard, he was absolved, he was sent back home.

¶146 And when he had come to Meaux, a city of Gaul, he was seized by such a grave bodily illness that as his weakness increased he lay for three days without word or sense, without food and drink, without any movement of his limbs, the only sign that he had not yet given up his spirit completely being his very shallow breathing. And while his followers were caught up in discussing his funeral amidst their grieving and lamenting, behold! suddenly he was visited by the archangel Michael and was restored to his earlier health. That prince of all blessed spirits spoke with him, predicting that he would recover all of his possessions in England, live four years in peace, and so, having overcome this world and its prince [that is, the Devil], joyfully and triumphantly ascend to the heavenly kingdom.

¶147 When these things had been said, the angel who had been speaking to him in the vision departed and Wilfrid resumed his journey and continued on his way to England. The angel's promise came true, for he recovered all of his possessions, survived four years

Omnia quippe sua recuperavit; quatuor annis in pace superuixit; quinto migrauit. Et prodentibus miraculis, que in transitu et post transitum illius diuina uirtus ad exequias eius ostendit, cunctis patuit quod celi regna felici triumpho potitus intrauit.

¶148 Hec, fratres karissimi, de beato Wilfrido strictius diximus, prout in exordio sermonis nostri polliciti sumus. Est libellus uite eius diffusius scriptus, in quo qui uite ipsius modum et conuersationem desiderat nosse, plenius agnoscere poterit. Uobis autem ad presens hec pauca sufficiant. Sed quoniam uos ad uenerationem festiuitatis eius accendere cupio, quiddam quod Cantuarie, ubi ossa ipsius habentur nostris temporibus, accidit, breui, si placet, referre uolo.

¶149 Est quidam frater ipsius ecclesie monachus, Godwinus uocatus, uir magne simplicitatis et innocentie; secretarii officio fungebatur. Hic cum ex more ipsa nocte festiuitatis beati Wilfridi in oratorio requiesceret, paulo antequam fratres ad uigilias surgerent expergefactus a somno, audiuit in choro quasi conuentum fratrum nocturnas uigilias festiuo modo incipientem. Et dicto Psalmo, *Domine, quid multiplicati sint*,¹ qui post uersum, *Domine, labia mea aperies*,² et, *Deus, in adiutorium meum intende*,³ a monachis in principio uigiliarum dici solet, ecce duo cantores coram altari inuitatorium pronuntiabant; et choro, uti mos est, hoc ipsum repetente, ipsi *Uenite*, secundum cantum primi toni, decantabant. Inuitatorium autem hoc erat: *Unum Deum in Trinitate fideliter adoremus, cuius fide Deo uiuit sanctus presul Wilfridus*. Quod ille frater audiens, ilico surrexit, segnitiem qua se detentum tardius surrexisse estimabat, districta in se examinatione redarguens. Cumque ad introitum chori uenisset, ac personas cantantium coram altari ex uocibus ignotas habuisset, paululum substitit. Ipsis autem *Hodie si uocem eius audieritis*⁴ concinentibus, aliquantulum oculos in chorum direxit. Qui cum neminem intus uideret, et tamen suauitas concentuum, necnon dulcedo uocum eum mirifice demulceret, ratus est hoc sibi contigisse ex oculorum obscuracione que fieri solet ex recenti dormitione. Cum igitur diceretur *Gloria Patri*, chorum

¹ Psalm 3:1.

² Psalm 50:17.

³ Psalm 69:2.

⁴ Hebrews 3:7.

in peace, and in the fifth departed this life. And by the miracles that were happening both at the time of his death and afterwards, and which the divine spiritual power had revealed at his funeral, it was obvious to everyone that he had entered the kingdom of heaven and secured a joyful triumph for himself.

¶148 Most beloved brothers, I have narrated these things about blessed Wilfrid rather briefly, just as I had promised at the opening of this discourse. There exists a short biography written in greater detail in which anyone who desires to know about the scope and conduct of this man's life will be able to discover these things more fully. However, for the present let these few words be sufficient for your needs. But since I wish for you to be inspired to venerate this feast, I want to recount briefly, if it is permitted, a certain event which happened in Canterbury, where the bones of this man are preserved now in our time.

¶149 There is a certain brother and monk of this church, who is called Godwin, a man of great simplicity and innocence, who used to hold the office of sacristan. While this man was resting as usual in the oratory on the night of this festival of blessed Wilfrid, he was roused from sleep a little before the brothers usually arise for vigils and heard in the choir something that sounded like the congregation of brothers beginning the nightly vigils in a festive way. And when the Psalm *Why, O Lord, are they multiplied* had been spoken, which is usually recited by the monks at the beginning of vigils after the verses *O Lord, thou wilt open my lips* and *O God, come to my assistance*, behold! two choristers were reciting the invitatory before the altar; when the choir, as is the custom, repeated this same phrase, these two sang *Come ye* following the melody of the first tone. However, the invitatory was this: *Let us faithfully worship one God in the Trinity, through faith in whom the holy Bishop Wilfrid lives in God*. Upon hearing this, the brother rose on the spot and after a severe examination of conscience he blamed himself for his laziness which he thought had caused him to oversleep and rise too late. And when he had come to the entrance to the choir and had realized by their voices that the persons singing before the altar were unknown to him, he hesitated a little. However, when they sang together *Today if you shall hear his voice*, he cast his eyes into the choir for a moment. Since he saw no one within, and yet the sweetness of their chanting and the charm of their voices continued to soothe him wondrously, he thought that this was because of the cloudiness of his vision, which normally occurs after just awakening from recent sleep. And so when *Glory to the Father* was said, he entered the choir and came

intrauit; locum in quo stare consueuerat adiit; ubi stans, et melodia cantantium suauiter iocundabatur, et clare omnia conspiciens, et neminem uidens, mirabatur. Cum itaque sic stupens staret, necne canentes auscultaret, inuitatorio dicto, ymnus iste, *Confessor*, ab uno incipitur, atque a multitudine susceptus canoris uocibus decantatur. Uerum non iam iuxta se, sed desuper quasi in laquearibus ecclesie psallentes sibi uidebatur audire; sicque canendo ascendentes, et ascendendo auditum fratris intendentis fugientes, ipsi sancti angeli qui uenerant, Deum in sancto suo mirabilem laudantes in ymnis, celestia repetebant.

¶150 Sunt et quedam alia in festo sepedicti patris in eadem ecclesia Cantuariensi uisa, que iccirco referre timemus, ne prolixitate eorum dilectioni uestre quodlibet fastidium generemus. Ueruntamen hoc unum paucis dicemus, quod sequenti anno postquam factum est quod modo retulimus: quidam de senioribus ipsius ecclesie fratribus, Ælfwinus nomine, uir religiosus et credi dignissimus, qui et ipse secretarii ministerio hucusque fungitur, sibi uisum esse testatur. Ait enim quia dum ipsa nocte festiuitatis extra chorum in quodam edito ipsius ecclesie loco coram altari, super quod tunc temporis reliquie beati Wilfridi in feretro erant locate, quiesceret, et nec plene uigilans nec plene dormiens iaceret, aspiciens uidit totam ecclesiam miro et ineffabili fulgore splendere. Altare autem ipsum quasi totum aureum eximio preciosorum lapidum nitens ornatu uidebatur. Preterea in choro quendam magne multitudinis cuneum audiuit nocturnas uigilias de sancto Wilfrido festiuis concentibus decantantem. Cumque ad lectiones et responsoria uentum esset, eos qui uel legere uel cantare debebant, per cocleam ascendere, ac coram altari et corpore beati uiri quasi pro benedictione supplicare contemplatus est. Quo facto, mox redeundo descendebant, et officium legendi atque cantandi, ubi mos est in ecclesia ipsa, decentissime persoluebant.

¶151 Hec nunc quidem dicta sint. Alia uero que licet uera cognoscamus, tamen in presenti melius silentio fore supprimenda,

to the place where it was his custom to stand; when he stood there, and continued to be pleasantly delighted by the chanting of the singers, he could see everything clearly but realized that no one was there, and he was filled with wonder. And while he was thus standing astounded and listening to the singers, after the invitatory had been recited one of them began to sing the hymn *Confessor* and it was taken up by the multitude with melodious voices. But now it seemed to him that he was not hearing them singing psalms nearby, but rather from above, as if they were in the rafters of the church; and so, ascending as they sang and escaping as they ascended from the ears of the brother listening to them, these holy angels who had come, praising in hymns God who lives gloriously in his saint, once again sought the heavenly realms.

¶150 There are also certain other things which have been seen in that church of Canterbury on the feast of this much spoken-about father, which I fear to recount because I might give rise to some sort of boredom in you, beloved brothers, due to the excessive manner in which I talk about them. Nevertheless, I shall say a few words about this one thing, which occurred in the next year after what I have just now narrated; a certain one of the older monks of this same church, Ælfwine by name, a religious man and most worthy of credence, who has also performed the office of sacristan himself up to now, vows that this was seen by him. He says that on the very night of the festival he was resting outside of the choir in a certain elevated place in this church before the altar, above which at that time the remains of blessed Wilfrid had been placed on a bier; and while he was lying neither fully awake nor fully asleep, looking up he saw the whole church refulgent with a marvellous and indescribable light. Moreover, the altar itself seemed to be entirely made of gold and to be gleaming in an abundant array of precious stones. Meanwhile, in the choir he heard a great multitude of people pressed together singing the nightly vigils for Saint Wilfrid with festive music. And when it came to the lections and responses, he noticed that those whose duty it was either to read or to sing were mounting up the spiral staircase and bending down in front of the altar and before the blessed man's body as if to receive a blessing. When they had done this, they at once turned about and came down again and carried out in a most becoming manner the ritual of reading and singing where it is usually done in this church.

¶151 But let these things suffice for now. In truth, in my judgement it would be better if other matters, though I know them to be true, remain veiled by a shroud of silence for the moment, lest you

ne fatigemini, rati sumus. Exortantes itaque precamur uos, domini et fratres dilectissimi, precamur, considerate quantam uenerationem debeatis huic diei, quem tam celebribus modulis etiam in terra uenerantur angeli Dei. Quod si uos gaudetis, et gaudendo gratias agitis Deo pro felicitate qua beatus pater noster Wilfridus sullimatur in celis, indubitanter tenete quia ipse compatiatur, et compatiendo Deum orabit pro uestris miseriis quibus opprimini in terris. Et si pro meritis eius deuotas, quantum potestis, laudes exoluitis Deo, certi estote quod et ipse pro peccatis uestris deuote prosternet preces suas coram eo. Ecce, karissimi, si in uobis nunc remanet, magnum patronum ante Deum uestra fraternitas habet. Grates agendo laudate Christum in illo, firmiter credentes quod ipse eundem uobis placabit pro uobis intercedendo. Quam placationem concedat uobis ipse Deus, qui in se manens eternaliter uiuit, trinus et unus. Amen.

Explicit breuiloquium uite sancti wilfridi archiepiscopi et confessoris.

become weary. Therefore, I beseech and pray you, my lords and most beloved brothers, again I say I pray you, think over how much veneration this day deserves of you, a day which the angels of God venerate with such abundant melodies even here upon the earth. But if you rejoice, and in your rejoicing give thanks to God for the good fortune by which our blessed father Wilfrid was elevated into heaven, rest assured that he will have compassion on you, and in his compassion will pray to God because of the afflictions which oppress you here on earth. And if, as much as you are able, you render devout praise to God because of Wilfrid's merits, you can be certain that he will also strew his prayers devoutly before God on account of your sins. Behold, my beloved assembly of brothers, as long as he remains among you, you have a powerful intercessor before God. By giving thanks, praise Christ in him, firmly believing that through his intercession on your behalf he will reconcile you with Christ. And may God himself permit this intercession to you, he who lives unchanged for ever, both a trinity and a unity. Amen.

Here ends the short account of the life of Saint Wilfrid, Archbishop and Confessor.