Christian Queenship and Inauguration Rites in Early Medieval England

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Declaration

I confirm that the work submitted is my own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others. This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement. The right of Florence Harriet Rose Scott to be identified as Author of this work has been asserted by Florence Harriet Rose Scott in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of the ideology of queenship and its conception as a Christian role in early medieval English inauguration rites. Its primary source materials are the two earliest surviving liturgical rites for the making of English queens: 1) the 856 Judith *Ordo*, and 2) the rite for a queen found in eight tenth- and eleventh-century English pontificals.

This thesis foregrounds queenship as an analytical lens through which to study these rites. The Judith *Ordo* belongs to a specific context, and thus an in-depth analysis of its specific context, contents and authorship is possible. By contrast, the queen's rite that circulates in early English pontificals is general and circulated widely. Previous scholarship has understood this queen's rite as part of the king's rite with which it usually travels in manuscripts, terming these two rites 'The Second English *Ordo*'. This *Ordo* has been analysed only to the extent that it can indicate for which king it was produced. This thesis instead focuses on the independent textual history of this queen's rite, opening up possibilities that have hitherto not been considered, such as a wider date range and prospective place of origin. It argues that the queen's rites in the Second English *Ordo* and the Frankish Erdmann *Ordo* are witnesses to the same text.

This thesis does not look for single turning points, instead presenting a range of contexts for developments in the inaugurations of queens through the ninth to the eleventh century, with some consideration of their possible antecedents. Though previous discussions of this material have prioritised Wessex and Francia, this thesis also makes a case for Mercian influence. It demonstrates what focusing on queenship and the independent textual history of the rites of queens can contribute to wider considerations of liturgical, ideological and political developments in this period.

Contents

Abbreviations

ASC A	*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, 3: MS A*, ed. by J. Bately (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986)
ASC B	*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, 4: MS B*, ed. by S. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983)
ASC C	*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, 5: MS C*, ed. by K. O'Brien O'Keefe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)
ASC D	*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, 6: MS D*, ed. by G. Cubbin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
ASC E	*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, 7: MS E*, ed. by S. Irvine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)
Anderson Pontifical	London, British Library, MS. Additional 57337
Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts	Helmut Gneuss and Michael Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A Bibliographical Handlist of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2014)
CCCC 44	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 44
CCCC 163	Cambridge Corpus Christi College, MS. 163
Claudius II	London British Library, MS. Cotton Claudius A. iii, ff 9b-18; *The Claudius Pontificals*, ed. by Derek Howard Turner (Chichester: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1971)
Douay Rheims	*The Holy Bible: Douay-Rheims Version* ed. by Richard Challoner (Baltimore: John Murphy, 1899)
Dunstan Pontifical	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS. Latin 943
Ecclesiastical History	*Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969)
Egbert Pontifical	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS. Latin 10575; *Two Anglo-Saxon Pontificals (the Egbert and Sidney Pontificals*), ed. by Harry M. J. Banting (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1989)
Encomium	*Encomium Emmae Reginae*, ed. by Alistair Campbell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
Erdmann *Ordo*	'Ordo XIII: Erdmann Ordo', in *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A. Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 142-53

Judith *Ordo*	'Ordo V: Marriage and Coronation of Judith', in *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A. Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 73-79
Lanalet Pontifical	Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. A.27 (368); *Pontificale Lanaletense*, ed. by Gilbert Hunter Doble (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1937)
Leofric Missal	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 579 (S. C. 2675); *The Leofric Missal vols. I and II*, ed. by Nicholas Orchard (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 2002)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
Vitellius A. vii	London, British Library, MS. Cotton Vitellius A. vii
Robert Benedictional	Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS Y.7 (369); *The Benedictional of Archbishop Robert*, ed. by Henry Austin Wilson (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1903)
S + number	*Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks*, ed. by P. H. Sawyer (London: Beekman, 1968), now 'The Electronic Sawyer': <https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/about/index.html> [accessed 12 July 2024]
Samson Pontifical	Cambridge Corpus Christi College, MS. 146; 'Second English Coronation Order', in *English Coronation Records*, ed. by Leopold G. Wickham Legg (Westminster: Archibald Constable, 1901), pp. 15-29
Vita Alfredi	Asser, *Asser's Life of King Alfred: Together with the Annals of Saint Neots erroneously ascribed to Asser*, ed. by William Henry Stevenson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1904)
Vulgate	*Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgata Versionem*, ed. by Robert Weber and Roger Gryson, 5th edn (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007)

Introduction

This thesis is a study of the ideology of queenship and its conception as a Christian role in early medieval English inauguration rites.[1] Its focus is the ninth to mid-eleventh centuries, from the inauguration of Queen Judith to the developments of the queen's inauguration associated with Queen Emma. It will also consider earlier periods, which are essential to interpreting these central developments. Its primary source materials are the two earliest surviving liturgical rites for the making of English queens: 1) the 856 Judith *Ordo*, which survives only in modern printed editions, and 2) the rite for a queen found in various tenth- and eleventh-century English pontificals.[2]

This thesis will analyse surviving inauguration rites in order to determine the extent to which they conceive of a distinctly Christian role for queens in early medieval England. Its focus is on how queenship was idealised and conceptualised within liturgical texts for use in Christian inauguration rituals. It is as concerned with what focusing on queenship can reveal about the surviving liturgical texts, as it is with what the contents, contexts, production and circulation of these rites can reveal about queenship. This thesis is not an assessment of the practical political actions of queens, nor is it primarily concerned with the careers of individual queens. However, it does examine how the role that was prescribed for queens during religious rituals might have had an impact on their subsequent careers. It looks at the relationship between liturgical evidence and political history, and the formation of an ideology of queenship within this relationship. It analyses the extent to which the relative power of queens was reflected in their inauguration ceremonies and vice-versa.

The period under consideration in the title of this thesis, 'early medieval', is deliberately general, because the development of ideas in which the thesis is interested is gradual and indefinite, and the source material is scarce and ambiguous in its dating. We will begin with the earliest stages of the Christianisation of England in the later sixth century and end with the latest evidence of the circulation of the first 'standardised' religious rite for the anointing of a queen in England in the eleventh century. This is the period in which a notion of Christian queenship first developed by means of ritual inauguration ceremonies – this thesis is concerned with how and why this

[1] The topic of this thesis has some overlaps with the topic of my non-academic, public-facing newsletter *Ælfgif-who?*, which looks at the lives of English women 500-1100 AD. While writing this newsletter I have occasionally adapted my thesis research. Care has been taken to avoid repeated material, but small similarities in approach, topic and/or wording may remain, albeit with a very different analytical focus: Florence H R Scott, *Ælfgif-who?* (2021-2024) <https://florencehrs.substack.com/> [accessed 30 July 2024].

[2] This queen's rite is found in the Dunstan Pontifical, Robert Benedictional, Anderson Pontifical, Samson Pontifical, Lanalet Pontifical, Claudius II, CCCC 44, and Vitellius A. vii; see Table 2.

development took place. This thesis resists attempts to provide defined dates for developments in the inaugurations of queens, instead favouring an approach that considers a range of possibilities, doing justice to the intangible and elusive nature of the ideas present in liturgical sources. The geographical focus of this thesis, 'England', is also general, encompassing periods before and after the unification of the kingdom of England in the early tenth century. However, as we shall see, liturgical texts and innovations in monarchy did not honour the boundaries of kingdoms, and cross-channel interchange between England and Francia within this sphere is a factor that will be highlighted in this thesis.

All references and Latin quotations in this thesis are from the Stuttgart Vulgate Bible. For convenience, all Bible quotations in English are from the Douay Rheims edited by Richard Challoner, an eighteenth-century edition of an English translation of the Clementine edition of the Latin Vulgate.[3]

This introduction will summarise the previous scholarship on early royal inauguration rites and queenship, and identify trends in the way this material has previously been understood. It will outline the approach of this thesis, and the ways in which it will contribute to wider questions about both queenship and inauguration liturgy. It will then go on to highlight some of the peculiar problems and challenges of using and understanding the liturgical sources found in early medieval pontificals as historical documents. Finally, it will summarise the thesis, outlining the questions that each chapter will address.

Scholarship

The bulk of scholarship on the early English inauguration rites has been conducted by political historians. Percy Ernst Schramm (1894-1970) is perhaps the historian who has been most influential in the study of royal liturgy – *Ordines-Studien* – particularly English and Frankish inauguration ceremonies.[4] Schramm's scholarly output on the ideology and symbolism of medieval royal power was produced both before and after the Second World War, during which he joined the Nazi Party, volunteered for service in Hitler's Wehrmacht, and became an official historian of

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[3] Challoner worked closely with the King James version of the Bible in his edition of the Douay Rheims, which has produced a hybrid translation that is arguably closer to the King James than the original Douay Rheims: see John Henry Newman, 'The History of the Text of the Rheims and Douay Version of Holy Scripture', *The Rambler*, 1.2 (1859). Nevertheless, this is the printed English translation of the Bible that is closest to the medieval Latin Vulgate.

[4] Percy Ernst Schramm, 'Die Krönung bei den Westfranken und den Angelsachsen von 878 bis um 1000', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Kanonistische Abteilung*, 23 (1934), 117–242; Percy Ernst Schramm, 'Ordines-Studien II: Die Krönung bei den Westfranken und den Franzosen', *Archiv für Urkundenforschung*, 15 (1938), 3–55; Percy Ernst Schramm, 'Ordines-Studien III: Die Krönung in England', *Archiv für Urkundenforschung*, 15 (1938), 305–91.

the German Army's High Command.[5] He testified at Nuremberg in 1946, and in the 1960s he published an essay on Hitler's personality that was met with accusations of Nazi apologism.[6] Schramm published the first surveys of Frankish and English royal rites in 1934 and 1938, one in the year after the Nazis came to power in 1933, and the other in a year that saw the Anschluss, the takeover of the Sudetenland and finally Kristallnacht.[7] Schramm's work during this time had to be acceptable to the authorities – thus, his scholarly output has inevitably been shaped by Nazi ideology, and approved by the Nazi government. To my knowledge, this has never been overtly addressed in modern scholarship on the early royal rites. That the foundations of this field were laid by a Nazi is not something that should be brushed over, nor should his work be referred to uncritically in this regard.[8] Schramm's scholarship is primarily concerned with using these rites to reconstruct northern European displays of (male) authoritarian power. Though it is not within the remit of this thesis to analyse the ideology of Schramm's scholarly output in depth, I bring this to the reader's attention in the hope that it will inspire useful future criticism. That a fascination with symbols of power might go hand in hand with fascism is perhaps unsurprising, but work on the ideology of medieval power can also deliberately oppose racist interpretations: Schramm's career can be contrasted with that of his colleague and contemporary Carl Erdmann (1898-1945), another influential and prolific voice in the study of royal liturgy, whose opposition to fascism – both personally and within his scholarship – had him ostracised from the German academy.[9] Erdmann was conscripted into service as a translator in 1943. He died two years later of typhus in an army camp in Zagreb and was buried in a mass grave. Erdmann's influence on the field, though still substantial, was severely limited due to his principled opposition to fascism, and many of his works were published posthumously.[10]

As a historian of the symbols of power, Schramm's *Ordines-Studien* set a precedent for attempting to link each of these surviving consecration texts with the consecrations of specific kings and emperors.[11] Rather than analysing these texts on their own terms, this approach favoured utilising

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[5] Donald S. Detwiler, 'Percy Ernst Schramm, 1894–1970', *Central European History*, 4.1 (1971), 90–93 (p. 91).
[6] Percy Ernst Schramm, *Hitler als militärischer Führer: Erkenntnisse und Erfahrungen aus dem Kriegstagebuch des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht* (Frankfurt: Athenäum Verlag, 1962); 'One Hundred and Fiftieth Day: Saturday, 8 June 1946', in *Nuremberg Trial Proceedings*, Avalon Project (New Haven, CT: Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library, 2009), XV <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/06-08-46.asp> [accessed 3 June 2024]; Detwiler, p. 92.
[7] Schramm, 'Die Kronung' (1934); 'Ordines-Studien II' (1938); 'Ordines-Studien III' (1938).
[8] Detwiler, p. 92.
[9] Folker Reichert, *Fackel in der Finsternis: Der Historiker Carl Erdmann und das 'Dritte Reich'*. (Darmstadt: WBG Academic, 2022).
[10] Carl Erdmann, *Forschungen zur politischen Ideenwelt des Frühmittelalters* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1951); Carl Erdmann, 'Der Heidenkrieg in der Liturgie.', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 46 (1932), 129–42.
[11] Shane Bobrycki, 'The Royal Consecration Ordines of the Pontifical of Sens from a New Perspective', *Bulletin du centre d'études médiévales d'Auxerre*, 13 (2009), 131–42.

them as sources that might augment our understanding of known political events. This approach has become a feature of scholarship on the royal inauguration rites that feature in this thesis, for example in the efforts of Janet Nelson and David Pratt to determine definitively for whose inauguration the Second English *Ordo* was composed, a discussion which will be outlined fully in Chapter 3. This thesis will take a different approach, while still recognising the value of the arguments in this previous scholarship. This thesis seeks to examine the full range of possibilities left open by the extant liturgical rites, rather than argue for a single, most plausible scenario. As Shane Bobrycki argues, 'consecration ordines are primarily evidence for the motives, perceptions, and beliefs of their compilers, only secondarily for actual rituals'.[12] Most rites survive as textual witnesses in manuscripts that significantly post-date their original composition, with little to indicate the history of their practical usage. They are a combination of calculated rhetoric and generalisation. This is not to say that there are no rites that have clearly been produced for use on a specific occasion – Chapter 2 will examine one such rite, the Judith *Ordo*. However, such rites are the exceptions that merely demonstrate the features that other surviving rites lack.

Schramm established the precedent for discussing these rites as they appear in pontificals as '*Ordines*'. This convenient designation obscures the variation in the substance of these rites by bringing together all royal texts included side-by-side in a pontifical under one label, despite varying functions.[13] As we shall see, what has been termed the Second English *Ordo* in fact consists of the rite for the inauguration of a king, followed by the rite for the inauguration of a queen, and then by a mass for the king – the text of which varies between manuscripts. Likewise, the so-called Erdmann *Ordo* is comprised of three separate texts – as per Bobrycki, 'two separate *ordines* and, four pages later, a 'benediction".[14] Chapter 3 will problematise such designations, which encourage the assumption that the respective texts within a singular '*Ordo*' share an origin and provenance, and which has inhibited consideration of the queen's rite as a separate text. The prioritisation of kingship over queenship as a subject worthy of study in previous scholarship about these rites has also obscured the independent textual history of the queen's rite. In his influential 1995 edition of the various medieval Frankish coronation *Ordines*, Richard Jackson warns against assuming that the rites of a king and a queen placed next to each other in a manuscript should be understood as having any relationship at all – 'the king and the queen's ordines have nothing to do with each other either in the Erdmann *Ordo* or in other early ordines, and their juxtaposition in no way reflects a joint coronation'.[15] Nevertheless, Jackson's edition does not revise the titles that combine such rites into single *Ordines* – maintaining the very approach that he critiques. Thus, despite his astute

[12] Bobrycki, p. 131.
[13] Bobrycki, p. 132.
[14] Bobrycki, p. 133.
[15] 'Ordo XIII: Erdmann Ordo', in *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A. Jackson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 142-53 (p. 142).

warning, the influence of Jackson's edition has only served to cement such inaccurate designations, and the queen's rite has been assumed to be a constituent part of the king's.

The history of queenship is not synonymous with 'women's history' – queenship is a form of institutional and monarchical power held by a very few women, the significance of which transcends the personal experiences of even these privileged few. However, the study of queenship is a facet of the history of women, and those who have worked in this area have undoubtedly had to navigate many of the same questions and challenges as those working in other neglected areas of history. One of these challenges is in establishing the history of women as an essential facet of wider historical enquiry, resisting a narrative that isolates the study of women as a pursuit with no wider significance. Just as it must be recognised that women are a present and significant facet of most areas of history, queenship must be recognised as a central facet of monarchy. Underpinning this thesis is an approach to the history of queenship that recognises its importance as an area of study that can influence and enlighten well-established historical subjects and questions about monarchy, religion and power. Throughout her career Nelson has undertaken substantial work on queenship, especially foregrounding the rites of queens in the study of these early medieval royal rites.[16] The result is that any scholars wishing to engage with Nelson's arguments on the *Ordines* have had to engage with the queen's rite directly. However, even when specific attention has been paid by scholars to the rites of queens, this has often been within a context of understanding the rites of queens only as constituent parts of larger *Ordines*, or as a source that can contribute to our understanding of a rite for a king.[17] The result has been that the main purpose of analysis of the queen's rite has been to determine, as explored above, when and for whom the 'accompanying' king's rite was composed and/or used. Chapter 3 will explore the ways in which special attention paid to the queen's rite within the Second English *Ordo*, by scholars such as Nelson and Pratt, has unintentionally served to underscore the queen's rite as subordinate to the king's, by utilising it

[16] Janet Nelson, 'The Second English Ordo', in *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 1986), pp. 361–74; Janet Nelson, 'The Earliest Royal *Ordo*: Some Liturgical and Historical Aspects', in *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 1986), pp. 341–60; Janet Nelson, 'Early Medieval Rites of Queen-Making and the Shaping of Medieval Queenship', in *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe: Proceedings of a Conference Held at King's College London, April 1995*, ed. by Anne Duggan (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1997), pp. 301–15; Janet Nelson, 'The Queen in Ninth-Century Wessex', in *Anglo-Saxons: Studies Presented to Cyril Roy Hart*, ed. by Simon Keynes and Alfred P. Smyth (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), pp. 69–77; Janet Nelson, 'Queens as Jezebels: The Careers of Brunhild and Balthild in Merovingian History', in *Medieval Women: Dedicated and Presented to Professor Rosalind M. T. Hill on the Occasion of her Seventieth Birthday* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), pp. 31–77; Janet Nelson, 'Queens as Converters of Kings in the Earlier Middle Ages', in *Agire da donna: Modelli e pratiche di rappresentazione (secoli VI-X)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 95–107.

[17] Only a few articles have focused on the queen's rite as source for understanding queenship: Nelson, 'Early Medieval Rites of Queen-Making', pp. 301–15; Julie Ann Smith, 'The Earliest Queen-Making Rites', *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, 66.1 (1997), 18–35.

primarily to understand political developments in kingship.[18] This thesis instead seeks to foreground queens and queenship as the primary topic of study, and to utilise the surviving rites of inauguration to illuminate ideological and political developments in queenship. Since the publication in 1983 of her book *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers*, Pauline Stafford has assembled a substantial body of work that analyses the political power of early medieval queens, particularly in England.[19] Stafford's work has primarily engaged with the practical aspects of queenship – diploma appearances, land ownership, patronage – as well as the ideological basis of queenship as a role. Stafford's foregrounding of queenship as a worthy subject of inquiry within itself was innovative, and has indelibly shaped subsequent inquiry into the politics of early medieval England. Queenship as a substantial facet of monarchy in this period could simply no longer be ignored. This thesis is indebted to Stafford's approach, taking this foregrounding of queenship and applying it to a discrete body of sources – early medieval inauguration rites.

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[18] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo'; Nelson, 'First Use of the Second Anglo-Saxon Ordo'; David Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 47 (2017), 147–258.

[19] Pauline Stafford, *Queens, Concubines, and Dowagers: The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1983); Pauline Stafford, 'Sons and Mothers: Family Politics in the Early Middle Ages', in *Medieval Women*, ed. by Derek Baker (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), pp. 79–100; Pauline Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', *Past & Present*, 91.1 (1981), 3–27; Pauline Stafford, 'Women in Domesday', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 15 (1989), 75–94; Pauline Stafford, 'Women and the Norman Conquest', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6, 4 (1994), 221–49; Pauline Stafford, 'The Portrayal of Royal Women in England, Mid-Tenth to Mid-Twelfth Centuries', in *Medieval Queenship*, ed. by John Carmi Parsons (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1994), pp. 143–67; Pauline Stafford, 'Queens, Nunneries and Reforming Churchmen: Gender, Religious Status and Reform in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century England', *Past and Present: A Journal of Historical Studies*, 163 (1999), 3–35; Pauline Stafford, '"Cherchez La Femme". Queens, Queens' Lands and Nunneries: Missing Links in the Foundation of Reading Abbey', *History: The Journal of the Historical Association*, 85.277 (2000), 4–27; Pauline Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-Century England* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001); Pauline Stafford, 'Political Women in Mercia, Eighth to Early Tenth Centuries', in *Mercia: An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. by Michelle P. Brown and Carol A. Farr (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), pp. 35–49; Pauline Stafford, 'Writing the Biography of Eleventh-Century Queens', in *Writing Medieval Biography, 750-1250: Essays in Honour of Professor Frank Barlow*, ed. by David Bates, Julia Crick, and Sarah Hamilton (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 99–109; Pauline Stafford, 'Chronicle D, 1067 and Women: Gendering Conquest in Eleventh-Century England', in *Anglo-Saxons: Studies Presented to Cyril Roy Hart*, ed. by Simon Keynes and Alfred P. Smyth (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), pp. 208–23; Pauline Stafford, 'Reading Women in Annals: Eadburg, Cuthburg, Cwenburg and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles', in *Agire da donna* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 269–89; Pauline Stafford, 'Edith, Edward's Wife and Queen', in *Edward the Confessor: The Man and the Legend*, ed. by Richard Mortimer (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009), pp. 119–38; Pauline Stafford, 'Royal Women and Transitions: Emma and Ælfgifu in 1035-1042/1043', in *Patterns of Episcopal Power: Bishops in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Western Europe*, ed. by Ludger Körntgen and Dominik Wassenhoven (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 127–44; Pauline Stafford, 'Gender and the Gift: The Giving and Receiving of Women in Early Medieval England', in *Italy and Early Medieval Europe: Papers for Chris Wickham* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 73–86.

Methods and Sources

This thesis will consider early English Christian queenship primarily through analysis of the earliest surviving liturgical documents for the inauguration of queens. There are two rites that are central to this: the first is the Judith *Ordo*, the rite for the inauguration of a specific queen, and the second is a more general queen's rite which circulated widely in England, and has previously been considered only as a constituent part of wider *Ordines* that incorporate the inauguration of a king (namely the Erdmann *Ordo* and the Second English *Ordo*). While the Judith *Ordo* was used on a single occasion and thus remains stable, the more general rite that circulated widely was updated and changed over time. Those changes and how we should interpret them form one of the central questions of the thesis.

The inauguration ceremonies under consideration in this thesis are religious rituals in which monarchs are typically anointed, crowned and given various insignia. The term 'inauguration' as used in this thesis is intended to convey a sense of establishment within a role or office. Though 'inaugurations' might be typically understood as something that occurs at the very beginning of a reign, there are other circumstances in which kings or queens, or their heirs, may have their status confirmed or re-confirmed. Inauguration rituals are not reflections of political realities, nor are their ideas enforceable. The royal inauguration ritual is by definition a hope for things to come – an expression of the potential of a political figure, not a retrospective judgment on their career. And, as Nelson warns us:

> Successive recensions of ordines ought not to be treated like set texts in a Political Ideas course. Liturgy is not the place to look for polemic, and though political ideas can be found in the ordines, they are of the most general, uncontentious and normative kind. To say that many of the prayer-texts are catenae of clichés, scriptural or liturgical, is not perhaps a very helpful observation: nevertheless, the would-be seeker-out of new claims or theories in these formulae will find it disappointingly often true.[20]

Liturgy is a form of text that is shaped by precedent and tradition. Established prayers and formulae are borrowed and reconstructed to form 'new' texts. Thus, the paradoxical nature of liturgical texts as both reflections of past practices and expressions of expectations for the future make them a tricky source for understanding political realities. This thesis will make a virtue of their 'general, uncontentious and normative' nature, using them to explore some fundamental ideas about Christian queenship. Insofar as they are concerned with the establishment of queenship as a role or office, they are important sources for contemporary notions of both.

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[20] Janet Nelson, 'The Rites of the Conqueror', in *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 1986), pp. 375–401.

This thesis refers to royal consecration ceremonies as 'rituals'. Philippe Buc warns against such a designation in *The Dangers of Ritual*, in which he views the term as part of an over-simplification which prioritises anthropological theory over the specific intentions of the partisan medieval writers who wrote about rituals.[21] The discussion that followed this publication, reduced to its most simplistic interpretation, is a debate over whether we should view political ceremonies as human expressions of belief in the sacred, or as pragmatic attempts to assert power using, as Buc argues, 'violence and distortions'.[22] The answer is, of course, that they are both. Buc's reminder that texts are 'forces in the practice of power' is pertinent to this thesis, but he does not extend his argument to liturgical texts, only to commentary.[23] It is useful to consider that royal rites have both a religious and political purpose. They are crafted as assertions of political power, and this power is both derived from and expressed through the religious, symbolic, and traditional aspects of the ceremony. For this reason, it is necessary to clarify that the term 'ritual' as used in this thesis in no way precludes an interpretation of political function.

As the approach of this thesis is to utilise liturgical sources to form the backbone of a study of queenship, a discussion of the particularities of this kind of source material is necessary. The rites discussed in this thesis consist of textual formulae for the performance of the inauguration rites of queens. Two very different liturgical texts are explored in this thesis. The first source under consideration, the Judith *Ordo*, survives in a sixteenth-century printed copy. This source is specific to one particular ceremony, and therefore its contents can be analysed alongside the political events known to have taken place around its composition. Its author is also known – the prolific liturgist and theologian Hincmar of Rheims. Chapter 2 will thus analyse this source in light of its known context. However, the remainder of the thesis – Chapters 3, 4 and 5 – will deal with a more general text, that is found in eight surviving English manuscripts, and many more continental ones. The questions around this rite, its textual history, and its variations, are different from those that can be asked of the Judith *Ordo*. Rather than exploring the place of the rite in one specific context, many contexts have to be considered. Identifying the correct questions to ask of this material must be prioritised over finding certain answers. The nature of liturgical evidence warrants an approach that exposes the complexities of this material, and resists attempts to simplify. A discussion of the particular form in which this liturgical evidence survives is necessary in order to demonstrate these complexities.

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[21] Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).
[22] Geoffrey Koziol, 'The Dangers of Polemic: Is Ritual Still an Interesting Topic of Historical Study?', *Early Medieval Europe*, 11.4 (2002), 367–88; Philippe Buc, 'The Monster and the Critics: A Ritual Reply', *Early Medieval Europe*, 15.4 (2007), 441–52.
[23] Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual*, p. 259; Sarah Hamilton, 'Review of *The Dangers of Ritual. Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory*, by Philippe Buc', *History*, 89.1 (2004), 82.

From the ninth century onwards, royal inauguration rites were recorded in pontificals – liturgical books that belonged to bishops and contained a collection of rites that bishops may perform. Some of the pontificals survive as complete manuscripts, while others survive only in fragments. Around twenty-one different pontificals from early medieval England are extant: of the twenty-one surviving manuscripts containing early English pontificals, ten include a rite for the inauguration of a king, while eight of these ten also include a rite for the inauguration of a queen.[24] Richard Pfaff gives an upper estimate of how many pontificals may have been in existence in the period 950-1100 equal to the total number of bishops in existence: between 100 and 120. An even greater upper estimate than this one may be required, not least because one of the surviving pontificals (that which contained the Trinity-Yale fragments) has a *terminus post quem* of 930, and as early as 816 there was an expectation that all English bishops had liturgical books.[25] If it is factored in that some pontificals show evidence of having belonged to religious houses rather than individual bishops, this estimate may be increased even further.[26] As the contents of pontificals vary so significantly, it may have been the case that one bishop could have possessed several pontificals simultaneously – for example, the Leofric Missal and Vitellius A. vii were both at Exeter at the same time and were probably added to by Bishop Leofric concurrently.[27] Of course, once these manuscripts were created, some survived for generations of bishops and circulated between multiple religious houses, but evidence indicating the exact extent to which this occurred is lacking. Certainly, some pontificals can be attached to particular bishops; for example, the Dunstan Pontifical which belonged to Archbishop Dunstan (d. 988), Claudius I which has been linked to Archbishop Wulfstan (d. 1025), or the Sidney Pontifical which probably belonged to Archbishop Oswald of York (d. 992).[28] The survival of these pontificals demonstrates that they were clearly preserved after their owners died. However, detailed information about their transmission is rare. Thus, it is impossible to say exactly how many pontificals would have existed, but our sample of just twenty-one extant pontificals is certainly a mere fraction of the total number.

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[24] See n. 2 and Table 2. The two pontificals that contain only a king's rite are the Leofric Missal and Egbert Pontifical.

[25] The 816 Council of Chelsea assumed that every bishop had a *liber ministerialis* containing an *ordo* for the consecration of a church; Nicholas Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury: Christ Church from 597 to 1066* (London: Leicester University Press, 1996), p. 164; Janet Nelson and Richard Pfaff, 'Pontificals and Benedictionals', *The Liturgical Books of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. by Richard Pfaff (Kalamazoo, MI: Richard Rawlinson Center for Anglo-Saxon Studies, 1995), 87–98 (p. 88).

[26] Such as Vitellius A. vii or CCCC 163.

[27] Elaine M. Drage, 'Bishop Leofric and Exeter Cathedral Chapter (1050-1072): A Re-Assessment of the Manuscript Evidence' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1978), pp. 144, 149, 169–70; K. D. Hartzell, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1200 Containing Music* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 265–70.

[28] Dunstan Pontifical; Claudius I, London, British Library, MS. Cotton Tiberius A. iii, ff 39–86; Sidney Pontifical, Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS. 100 (Δ.5.15).

Almost half of the extant pontificals contain royal *Ordines*, but it is unlikely that this proportion is representative. It is not always obvious if a manuscript is complete in the form in which it now exists – these books rarely contain original contents pages to check the contents against, and it can be unclear whether quires are missing from the beginning or end of the manuscript. Several of the extant pontificals that do not contain royal rites are known to be incomplete (Claudius I and Sidney), while some of the examples we have are mere remnants of otherwise lost pontificals, the full contents of which remain unknown.[29] These fragments, though currently showing no trace of having contained royal *Ordines*, may well have once belonged to larger pontificals that did contain them. These gaps in evidence make certain pressing questions regarding the patterns of royal rites difficult to answer: what factors dictated whether a royal *Ordo* was copied into a pontifical? Which bishops possessed pontificals that included inauguration liturgy, and which did not? Such questions can be answered only partially, as the relationships between the contents of pontificals and the identify of their owner, place of origin and purpose is often complex and unclear.

The difficulties in determining the relationship between the preservation of a rite in a pontifical and its actual use in liturgical ceremonies can be exemplified by the discussion surrounding CCCC 163. This manuscript, which dates to 1068/69, contains an English version of the Romano-German Pontifical, a particular form of pontifical compiled in the first decade of the eleventh century at the court of Henry II for the foundation of Bamberg.[30] CCCC 163 is most closely related textually to a manuscript originating in Germany: London, British Library MS. Additional 17004. In his study of CCCC 163 published in 1981, Michael Lapidge observed that:

> CCCC 163 includes all the ordines for the consecration of women which are found in other copies of the Romano-German Pontifical. […] By contrast, it omits all the ordines, masses and prayers for the ordaining of abbots and monks which are found in Addit. 17004 and other copies of the Romano-German Pontifical. This conscious selection of ordines found in CCCC 163 can be best explained, in my view, by the assumption that it was copied at or for use in a nunnery.[31]

Though Lapidge's analysis is well-reasoned, the contents of this text are more complicated than one might ascertain from his comments. CCCC 163 also includes many rites that would not have been practical in an English nunnery, perhaps the most striking example being blessings over an emperor. Though Lapidge mentions that the text may have been 'for use' in a nunnery, David

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[29] Hereford, Cathedral Library, MS. P.6.i (last flyleaf, f.177); Cambridge, Trinity College, MS. B. 1.30A and New Haven, CT, Yale, University Library, MS. 320; Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS. Lat. fragm. 1; Oslo, Universitetsbiblioteket, MS. Lat. fragm. 16.
[30] Henry Parkes, 'Henry II, Liturgical Patronage and the Birth of the "Romano-German Pontifical"', *Early Medieval Europe*, 28.1 (2020), 104–41. It was previously thought that the Romano-German Pontifical was composed at Mainz in c. 961: Cyrille Vogel and Reinhard Elze, *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du dixième siècle, vol. I* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana, 1963).
[31] Michael Lapidge, 'The Origin of CCCC 163', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 8.1 (1981), 18–28.

Dumville has commented that the manuscript in question shows very little evidence of having been used at all.[32] Therefore, in the case of this particular pontifical, the conclusion that certain rites were copied up because of more frequent use seems rather hasty, and it is worth questioning what kind of 'use' these books had. It may be the case that pontificals were not always objects created for practical daily use, but instead to record a certain form of liturgy for study, or mere preservation. Indeed, there must be other reasons for the inclusion of rites in a pontifical than practicality for any imperial rites to travel in England. Although the deliberate inclusion or omission of rites may indicate something of a pontifical's use, CCCC 163 illustrates that it would be a mistake to assume that all rites included in a pontifical are relevant to their setting.

Indeed, the potential reasons for the copying of liturgy into pontificals are many, and it should not be assumed that this process was always linked with the practical performance of liturgy. As Helen Gittos notes about the recording of liturgy:

> Given the oral nature of the transmission of liturgy in the Middle Ages, it is even more important than ever to ask: Why were texts written down? Sometimes it was for a practical purpose: in order to manage long and complex services, for use when out in the field, to note down recently encountered texts and chant, to try to ensure revisions were carried out as anticipated, to mitigate the problems caused by a rapid turnover of people, to establish definitive texts. […] It has been argued that liturgies could be written down in order to control, suppress, limit or fossilize particular practices.[33]

Following Gittos' reasoning, we must exercise high levels of caution in attempting to link the preservation of a rite with actual practice. There are limits to the extent to which pontificals can be used to provide evidence for the practical use of liturgical rites. Buc's reminder that texts about 'rituals' are often highly partisan is pertinent here. The recording of certain rites is not merely a neutral activity that mirrors reality, but an interpretive exercise designed to influence or comment on reality. Gittos adds that:

> The creation of this new type of liturgical book seems to have been part of a strategy to emphasize the power of bishops in the later ninth and early tenth centuries. In some cases pontificals were associated with attempts by archiepiscopal sees to assert control over bishops within their provinces. […] Some manuscripts were intended both to memorialise the pontificate of individual bishops and serve as institutional histories.[34]

Returning to our questions regarding the royal rites, the nature of inauguration ceremonies as special, generally infrequent, and always somewhat unpredictably timed rituals means that many

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[32] David Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History of Late Anglo-Saxon England: Four Studies* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1992), p. 68, 73, 91.
[33] Helen Gittos, 'Researching the History of Rites', in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. by Helen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton (London ; New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 13–37 (p. 21).
[34] Gittos, 'Researching the History of Rites', p. 22.

pontificals containing royal inauguration rites were probably never used for such an occasion. Thus, it does not follow that a pontifical containing a royal *Ordo* was owned by a bishop who was ever called upon to consecrate a king and queen: Bishop Leofric of Exeter had two different rites for the inauguration of a king and one for the inauguration of a queen in his library, despite not being an archbishop.[35] Therefore, using the extant pontificals to establish any rules, trends or tendencies about the ways in which royal inauguration rites circulated and were used in actual inauguration ceremonies is highly problematic. This is an important factor to keep in mind when engaging with a body of historical scholarship that has tended towards linking surviving liturgical documents with actual events. As, for example, the argument for anointing in Mercia in Chapter 4 will demonstrate, keeping in mind the possibility that inauguration rituals took place that have left little trace in the liturgical record, and that an unknown number of witnesses to inauguration texts might have existed that have now been lost, opens up new interpretations. This thesis will remain open-minded about the extent to which pontifical evidence can be extrapolated to reflect single points of actual use, and will instead use the pontifical record as a general indication of ideological shifts in the approach to queenly inauguration.

Chapter Synopsis

Chapter 1 considers a period prior to any surviving liturgical evidence of royal inauguration ceremonies, and prior to evidence of a defined Christian role for queens, in order to identity possible antecedents of these phenomena. The chapter will begin with the widespread Christianisation of England in the late sixth century – the earliest point from which the idea of 'Christianity' within conceptions of the role of queen can be assessed. This chapter will identify roles that previous scholars have identified were available for queens within early Christianity in England. Two roles will be focused on: the queen as converter, and the queen as royal abbess. Then it will explore the history of anointing, and the advent of religious anointing ceremonies in the mid eighth century in Francia under Pippin and Bertrada. It will then turn to the earliest expressions of the influence of these ceremonies in England within the kingdom of Mercia under Offa and Cynethryth, focusing on the role of Cynethryth within the ideology of dynasty-building during the so-called 'Mercian hegemony'.

Chapter 2 looks at the circumstances in which the earliest surviving inauguration text for a queen – the Judith *Ordo*, the rite for the inauguration of the twelve-year-old daughter of Charles the Bald upon her marriage to Æthelwulf of Wessex – was created and used. It will first explore the circumstances in which this source was created on both sides of the channel, and the political context of the kings between whom this marriage alliance was brokered. It will then consider how Judith's queenship is presented within this rite by its author, Hincmar of Rheims, looking at both

[35] Drage, pp. 144, 149, 169–70.

the elements of marriage and inauguration within the one text, and addresses how that presentation corresponds to the context in which it was created.

Chapters 3 and 4 assess the process by which the ritual inauguration of queens became 'standardised', as represented by the wide circulation of a queen's rite in England that is found in eight extant tenth- and eleventh-century pontificals. Chapter 3 will revise previous understandings of this rite as a constituent part of wider '*Ordines*' for the inaugurations of kings. It will focus on the rite itself, its textual history and contents, and outline previous approaches that have not considered this rite as a text worthy of individual study. It will look at what kind of queenship is presented as an ideal within this rite. This chapter will outline previous arguments that have focused on the question of which king the Second English *Ordo* was used for, and explore what can be revealed about this '*Ordo*' if queenship, rather than kingship, becomes the focus of study. Though previously understood to have a Frankish provenance, this chapter will outline evidence for the possibility that the text of the queen's rite is English in origin, and that it is a witness to the same text as the queen's rite in the Erdmann *Ordo*.

Chapter 4 will evaluate the various possible circumstances in which this queen's rite might have begun to circulate in England – either through importation into England, or through composition in an English context – though resisting previous attempts to link these developments to any one specific circumstance. This chapter will argue that there may have been an established practice of royal anointing in Mercia earlier than that in Wessex, evidence for which has hitherto been understood as absent from the extant liturgical record. It will evaluate the possibility that the extant queen's rite found in early English pontificals has a Mercian provenance. It will then outline a wide range of other feasible political circumstances for the provenance of this rite and its eventual circulation in Wessex, beginning with a late-Alfredian context and addressing the comments made on the status of the wives of kings by Asser. It will progress through the reigns of Edward the Elder and Æthelstan, with specific attention paid to the marriage alliances made between Æthelstan's sisters and various European rulers, and into the mid-tenth century, focusing on the long career of Queen Eadgifu.

Chapter 5 will look at the evidence for the continuing use and circulation of this rite in England, and two distinct processes of change that took place within the text. The first is a rubric that was added to the queen's rite, that has been linked in previous scholarship to the joint inauguration of Edgar and Ælfthryth. The thesis will then end with the latest evident changes to this rite: by the eleventh century, there is evidence of adaptation this queen's rite that stresses shared Christian rule with the king – changes that have previously been linked to the ideas of shared rule evident within the reign of Cnut and Emma. This chapter will evaluate the evidence of distinct changes to the

queen's rite and their meaning, while exploring several possible political events that may have inspired such changes.

Thus, during the period under consideration in this thesis, between the Christianisation of England and the early eleventh century, a Christian conception of queenship and inauguration ceremonies developed in tandem. This thesis is an analysis of this process using the surviving liturgical rites as primary evidence.

Chapter 1: Early Christian Queenship

The natural starting point of a thesis examining Christian queenship and inauguration ceremonies in early medieval England is to identify the earliest possible antecedents of these concepts. This chapter will first outline the development of queenship during the early stages of Christianisation in England, beginning in the late sixth century and lasting until the early eighth century, assessing to what extent queenship could be said to have a religious significance in this early period. Although the period of conversion and earlier developments of queenship fall outside the period where we have surviving written evidence to show that ritual inauguration took place, some consideration of them as a preliminary is pertinent. Our discussion will then focus on the steady development of royal anointing ceremonies for both kings and queens in early medieval Europe, that begins in c.751 within the fundamentally Christian ideology of Carolingian monarchy in Francia, and which continued to develop symbiotically with developments within the Church. We will then return to England, to assess the extent to which these continental developments had an impact on England, when, and in what ways. This chapter will argue that it is during the reign of King Offa of Mercia and his queen Cynethryth, contemporaries of Charlemagne, that we see the first expressions of this ritualistic, Christian form of dynastic monarchy in England. It is thus during the ritualisation of dynasties on both sides of the Channel in the second half of the eighth century that we first see a religious ideological basis for queenship.

Queenship and Early Christianity

The Christianisation of England, which began in the late sixth century, represents the point at which Christianity and queenship might have first intersected in England in the early Middle Ages. It is important to understand what it meant to be a queen in this early period of Christianisation if we are to understand later developments. This section will provide an overview of the roles ascribed to queens in the first stages of the conversion of royal families to Christianity, and then in the second phase of establishing the Church and its relationship with these Christian rulers. As this is a consideration of the background to the primary focus of this thesis, discussion will mainly be restricted to an overview of existing scholarship.

Our central source for the role of queens in early Christianity in England is Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*.[36] Bede has been the primary focus of scholars looking to illuminate the careers of elite

[36] *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

women in this period, though there are some other contemporary documents that provide information about queens.[37] Bede's principal concern is with the Christianisation of the political and religious elites, including elite women. The elite women Bede is concerned with are almost exclusively royal women or abbesses, and these categories are by no means discrete. Though many of the women that Bede mentions are queens, he is not primarily concerned with queenship as a role. It must be remembered that his account is highly partial and provides only selective information. As such, there are constraints on the extent to which it is possible to gain a full understanding of queenship in this period when we are so reliant on the narrative with which Bede presents us. Nevertheless, many of the queens mentioned in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* only exist for us through Bede's work, making it an essential source for questions about the role of queens in conversion.

Much of the discussion surrounding early English queens has been grounded in an exploration of Bede's historical treatment of elite women. This scholarship attempts to address to what extent Bede's account of these women is historical, to what extent we can isolate the intentions behind his narrative, and how that impacts on his presentation of them. In analysing Bede's queens, historians who intend to do justice to previously underexamined historical women have tended to adopt one of two approaches. One approach is to restore these women to history, which can involve stressing their agency or power by extrapolating from what little the source material tells us. The other approach is to stress the suppression of women through the persistent misogyny of partial source material and patriarchal society, which can result in seeing women as victims or at least as deprived of agency. In taking either of these approaches to the source material, the primary focus has been Bede and his written works. Since the 1990s the prevailing view about women in Bede's works has been that Bede intentionally diminished the significance and achievements of the elite women whom he discussed.[38] There have been recent attempts to revise these conclusions and instead

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[37] For example [Eddius] Stephanus, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid* ed. by Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 14–15, 48–49 contains references to queens as 'Jezebels', for a discussion of which see Stacy S. Klein, *Ruling Women: Queenship and Gender in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), pp. 133–34; and Nelson, 'Queens as Jezebels', pp. 31–77; other sources relevant to queenship that will be discussed further below include *The Durham Liber Vitae: London, British Library, MS Cotton Domitian A.VII : Edition and Digital Facsimile with Introduction, Codicological, Prosopographical and Linguistic Commentary, and Indexes* , ed. by David Rollason, Lynda Rollason, and A. J. Piper (London: The British Library, 2007) and Gregory I, 'Gregorius Bertae Reginae Anglorum', in *Gregori I Papae Registrum Epistolarum, II*, ed. by Ludo Hartmann, MGH (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), pp. 304–05.

[38] Stephanie Hollis, *Anglo-Saxon Women and the Church: Sharing a Common Fate* (Boydell & Brewer, 1992); Dorsey Armstrong, 'Holy Queens as Agents of Christianization in Bede's Ecclesiastical History: A Reconsideration', *Medieval Encounters: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue*, 4.3 (1998), 228–41; David A. E. Pelteret, 'Bede's Women', in *Women, Marriage, and Family in Medieval Christendom: Essays in Memory of Michael M. Sheehan, C.S.B.* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1998), pp. 19–46; Clare A. Lees and Gillian R. Overing, *Double Agents: Women and Clerical Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Klein.

concentrate on the information Bede does provide, but the fundamental focus on Bede as author remains the same.[39] To circumvent our reliance on Bede for knowledge of these women, some scholars have looked to other contemporary sources and compared their treatment of elite women. They have read into the biblical, patristic and hagiographical models with which Bede would have been familiar. They have examined other works by Bede, looking to his exegesis to gain a better sense of his values and objectives. Indeed, some have even taken on the task of attempting to understand Bede through speculative psychoanalysis.[40] The other angle from which some of these early Christian queens have been approached is through studies of female monasticism.[41] Such works thoroughly assess many queenly figures when enacting the roles of abbess or nun, but do not assess the role of queen *per se*. Thus, a focus on Bede's treatment of elite women or on the role of elite women in monasticism, has meant that the queens mentioned by Bede have been considered in scholarship, but often that the ideology of queenship is not the primary focus.

In spite of this lacuna in scholarship, Bede's surviving work demonstrates some ways in which this early period of Christianity in England presented unique opportunities for queens to take on roles that were central to early conversion and Christianisation. When queens are included in the *Ecclesiastical History,* they generally occupy one of two main roles. The first is as potential converters in the initial stages of Christianisation in England – as Christian wives to non-Christian kings who eventually convert. This is a role that operates only in that political yet domestic sphere of royal marriage, and thus can only be occupied by queens. The second role is as royal abbess; queens who are widowed or retire to become churchwomen, and who have prominent leadership roles in royal houses that were centres of power and learning in early Christian England. The role of royal abbess was not the sole preserve of queens, and many of the royal abbesses discussed by Bede were the daughters or kinswomen of kings. These women had central roles in contemporary politics and dynastic commemoration. Some were even venerated as saints. These two roles in particular arise presumably due to the themes of the *Ecclesiastical History*: Bede was particularly interested in the conversion narrative and in early church politics. As Bede is our principal source, the roles we are able to identify for queens are restricted to his narrative. These two roles – converters and royal abbesses – will now be examined.

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[39] Máirín MacCarron, 'Royal Marriage and Conversion in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 68.2, 650–70.
[40] Sarah Foot, 'Bede's Kings', in *Writing, Kingship and Power in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 25–51; Pelteret.
[41] Sarah Foot, *Veiled Women I and II* (London: Routledge, 2000); Barbara Yorke, *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses* (London: Continnuum, 2003).

Queens as Converters

The process of conversion was the primary focus of the Northumbrian historian Bede, whose work the *Ecclesiastical History* outlines the growing importance of Christianity in England from the late sixth century onwards, and the conversion of the political elites to Christianity. During the Roman occupation, British inhabitants had been introduced to Christianity through the Roman Empire, although the extent of this conversion is not known. Limited evidence suggests that some Britons were still practising Christianity when non-Christian immigrants arrived in England in the fifth century. These immigrants, who according to Bede belonged to three 'Germaniae populi' – Saxons, Angles, and Jutes – were probably vastly outnumbered by the existing British inhabitants. Despite this, they apparently reshaped the culture of the politically dominant class in the area now known as England.[42] During the late sixth and seventh century missionaries arrived in England hoping to convert the political elites to Christianity. The earliest recorded missionary, Liudhard, arrived in England in the retinue of a Frankish queen in c. 580.[43] Missionaries sent by Pope Gregory arrived in Canterbury in 597 and got to work in the southern English kingdoms, also sending missions northwards two decades later. From the 630s onwards Irish missionaries from Iona were also active in Northumbria, and in the southern kingdoms via Francia.

It is important to stress that there is not such a neat division as 'pre-Christian' and 'Christian' England. 'Conversion' should not be seen as a single turning point, but as a process enacted by a series of missions that took place over a period of time.[44] There would have been an initial period in which the royal courts were exposed to Christianity, for example through contact with the British population, and through trade with and migration to and from other prosperous Christian societies.[45] This contact may have made these royal courts more amenable to Christianity when the missionaries arrived. While conversion was an active process, converted Christians lived side by side with non-Christians, and they often intermarried. Bede gives us many examples of such marriages, all royal, in the *Ecclesiastical History*. Within marriages Christian and non-Christian

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[42] *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 50-51 (1.15). The impact this migration had on contemporary society has been re-estimated in recent decades following archaeological evidence. Many previous assumptions about the process have been challenged by Susan Oosthuizen, *The Emergence of the English* (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019).

[43] *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 73-77 (1.25-26).

[44] This is a point that has been made most notably by Barbara Yorke, 'From Pagan to Christian in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Introduction of Christianity into the Early Medieval Insular World: Converting the Isles, I* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), pp. 237–57; Barbara Yorke, 'The Reception of Christianity at the Anglo-Saxon Royal Courts', in *St Augustine and the Conversion of England* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1999), pp. 152–73.

[45] Yorke, 'From Pagan to Christian', p. 243.

religious beliefs were even held and practised simultaneously.[46] The royal marriage is an important arena for those seeking to understand the process of conversion among the political elites.

In his *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede outlines five royal marriages between Christians and non-Christians. Four of these marriages are between Christian women and non-Christian kings, while one is between a Christian king and a non-Christian wife.[47] In each of the five 'mixed marriages' in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* the wife's religion is ultimately accepted by her husband, but even so, Christian queens are not necessarily portrayed by Bede as having an active role in their husband's conversion to Christianity. The discussion in recent historiography about queens and conversion in this period has been part of the wider aforementioned debate about Bede's treatment of elite women in general, focusing on to what extent he ascribed them roles as active converters. In 1978, in one of the first articles examining queens and conversion in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Joan Nicholson argued that it is evident from the source material that 'conversion was incumbent on the heathen ruler who acquired a Christian bride, and in this respect women played a major part in the propagation of Christianity, although they sometimes needed a little outside support'.[48] Her view is that Bede shows us how queens were central to their husband's conversion. Taking an opposing view, Stephanie Hollis remarks that 'Bede offers no portrait of a queen converter', adding that 'queens in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, then, in contrast to kings, are not active as proselytizers, either in public or private'.[49] She takes Bede's account as accurate, concluding that it is unlikely that 'queens, even devoutly Christian queens, were active in the conversion of their husbands' people', adding that a change of religion 'required the agreement of the king's council; for the king and his people to accept the customs of his wife and her people was tantamount to accepting their overlordship'.[50] The assessments of Nicholson and Hollis both take Bede at his word, but their interpretations of what his word conveys about the historical reality differ hugely. These two interpretations exemplify the two approaches outlined earlier in this chapter: while Nicholson aims to restore women to history by emphasising their role in conversion, Hollis stresses the suppression of women both through Bede's narrative and due to contemporary inequality.

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[46] See discussion of Raedwald and his wife below.
[47] The Christian queens who married non-Christian kings are Bertha and Æthelberht of Kent, *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 73-77 (1.25-26); Æthelburg and Edwin of Northumbria, *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 162-66 (2.9); Ealhflaed and Peada of Mercia, *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 278-79 (3.21); Eafe and Æthelwealh of the South Saxons, *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 372-73 (4.13). The non-Christian queen married to a Christian king is the wife of Raedwald, *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 188-91 (2.15); see also MacCarron, p. 654.
[48] Joan Nicholson, 'Feminae Gloriosae: Women in the Age of Bede', in *Medieval Women. Dedicated and Presented to Professor Rosalind M. T. Hill on the Occasion of Her Seventieth Birthday* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), pp. 15–29 (p. 23).
[49] Hollis, pp. 226–27.
[50] Hollis, p. 234.

For some, the question is less about historical reality and more about the ideas behind Bede's narrative constructions of these queens. In 1998 Dorsey Armstrong was the first scholar to set out explicitly not to explore the historical reality of the converting queens in the *Ecclesiastical History*, but instead to 'investigate how holy queens function in terms of the guiding design and purpose that informs Bede's text'.[51] Armstrong concludes that 'the role played by the queens diminishes, until they disappear altogether; further analysis reveals that this deliberate marginalization is a function of Bede's overriding desire to present accounts of true conversion to the Christian faith'.[52] Her argument is that in understating the role of the queen, Bede 'demonstrates that kings in Bede choose to accept baptism because of their new-found belief in Christianity', making the decision more personal and thus more valuable to his narrative of conversion.[53] Stacy Klein is another scholar whose aim is to understand Bede's approach to these women as literary constructs, although with a specific focus on queenship. In her 2006 monograph *Ruling Women*, she comments that queens in the *Ecclesiastical History*:

> …Do not appear to be active proponents of even their own faiths, let alone those of others. Their Christianity is figured as merely another facet of their lineage, a way of life bequeathed to them from birth and remarkably removed from spiritual struggle or any other acts of piety or devotion that might suggest these women as fitting exemplars for influencing the spiritual lives of those around them.[54]

Klein argues that the reason for this is that Bede is motivated by 'a desire to rewrite a very secular history of politically motivated royal conversions.'[55] Like Armstrong, Klein sees Bede's side-lining of the role of queens as part of a wider narrative of personal, spiritual conversion that underplays political marriage alliances. This approach resonates with Henry Mayr-Harting's argument that adopting the religion of an ally could be seen as an act of political subservience – Klein argues that this is part of the reason why Bede favoured explaining conversion through spiritual means rather than political.[56] However, this idea is turned on its head by Claire Lees and Gillian Overing, who agree that Bede downplays the role of queens, but remark that this is because Christian queens were 'of lesser importance to Bede than the dynastic allegiances cemented by these newly Christian kings'.[57] Although there have been varied ideas about Bede's approaches to converting queens, scholarship has been in general agreement for some decades that queens are deliberately downplayed in the narrative.

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[51] Armstrong, p. 231.
[52] Armstrong, p. 240.
[53] Armstrong, p. 240.
[54] Klein, p. 45.
[55] Klein, p. 45.
[56] Henry Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to England* (Schocken Books, 1972), p. 63.
[57] Lees and Overing, p. 40.

Recent scholarship by Máirín MacCarron has sought to revise the prevailing view that Bede diminished the role of queens. Her argument is that 'the importance of Christian queens can be detected in Bede's *Historia* when attention is paid to scriptural imagery and exegetical allusions in his text'.[58] MacCarron posits that Bede's complex presentation of Christian queens married to pagan kings is due to his complex exegetical beliefs about inter-religious marriages, as an opportunity for conversion for the non-Christian party whilst also a spiritual threat to the Christian party. Royal marriages between Christians and non-Christians are a particular preoccupation of Bede, but conversion through marriage is not an issue peculiar to the *Ecclesiastical History*. The scholarly works discussed thus far have all concentrated on Bede's view of the role of queens in conversion, despite evidence for this in other sources, not least in papal letters to queens that pre-date the *Ecclesiastical History* which will be explored further below. The idea of the converting queen as a prevailing motif in early medieval conversion narratives has also been explored by Janet Nelson.[59] Nelson has demonstrated that viewing the converting queen as an exegetical *topos* can help us understand the wider implications of Bede's narratives, and it can also help us to put wider ideas about queenship into sharper focus. It is thus worth discussing some of the general context of this *topos*.

The idea of a spouse religiously influencing their partner has Biblical precedent, in 1 Corinthians 7.14: 'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband: otherwise your children should be unclean; but now they are holy'. The earliest known case of a Christian queen converting her royal husband is not found in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, but in the writing of two sixth-century Frankish bishops: Nicetius of Trier and Gregory of Tours. Nicetius wrote a letter to Clothild's granddaughter Chlodoswinth in c. 564, urging her to convert her Arian husband to Roman Christianity, and recalling the role of her grandmother:

> You have heard how your grandmother, the lady Clotild of good memory, came into Francia, how she led the Lord Clovis to the Catholic faith […] You have heard the saying, 'The husband without faith shall be saved by the wife with faith'. You should know that she first receives salvation and forgiveness who causes the sinner to be converted from his error.[60]

Gregory of Tours also wrote an elaborated version of this conversion story, though attributing Clovis' eventual baptism to Clothild's 'unceasing' efforts to Christianise her husband, though with the intervention of Saint Remigius.[61]

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[58] MacCarron, p. 650.
[59] Nelson, 'Queens as Converters', pp. 95–107.
[60] Nicetius of Trier, 'Letter to Clotild', *Epistulae Austrasicae*, 8, ed. by W. Gundlach (Brussels: Turnhout, 1957), p. 419-23, at p. 423, cited in Nelson, 'Queens as Converters', pp. 99-100.
[61] Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks: Book II*, trans. by Ernest Brehaut (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1916), pp 38-41.

Another type of source we have for the converting queen *topos* is papal letters. Pope Gregory I wrote to Clothild's great-granddaughter Bertha, wife of King Æthelberht of Kent, to intreat her to ensure her husband's conversion, and he also wrote a letter to her husband at the same time.[62] This was not only a tactic employed by the Pope to persuade non-Christians: Gregory also wrote to Theodelinda, wife of the Arian King Agilulf of the Lombards, encouraging her more cautiously to uphold her Catholic orthodoxy against her husband's heresy. Employing a similar tactic to Gregory I, in 625 Pope Boniface V wrote to Edwin of Northumbria and Queen Æthelburh, urging the queen to convert her husband.[63] Bede narrates the conversion to Christianity of both Æthelberht and Edwin in the *Ecclesiastical History*: indeed, these are Bede's most expansive conversion narratives. Many scholars have concentrated on Bede's retrospective narratives of the role of these two queens in the conversion of the husbands without taking the contemporary evidence into account. The following section will briefly outline what the source material tells us about these two queens and the conversions of their husbands.

Bertha and King Æthelberht (Ecclesiastical History 1.25–6)

Bede explains that when the Augustinian mission landed, King Æthelberht of Kent already had some knowledge of Christianity because he had a Christian wife.[64] He mentions that the missionaries utilised a Roman church, in which Queen Bertha would pray, to deliver their message. After an indeterminate period of time, the missionaries succeeded in converting the king. Though being married to Bertha had familiarised Æthelberht with Christianity, it was not until the missionaries arrived that Æthelberht accepted Christianity. Bertha is not discussed any further by Bede, though our understanding of her role in conversion can be supplemented with a letter to Bertha from Pope Gregory written in 601. Bede does not utilise it in his narrative, indicating he may have been unaware of its existence – though he does reproduce the counterpart letter from Gregory to Æthelberht.[65] The letter begins with Gregory applauding Bertha for assisting Augustine. After a laudatory comparison between Bertha and Helen, the mother of Constantine, it states:

> …As a true Christian you should/must have already inclined the heart of our glorious son your spouse to follow the faith that you cherish for the salvation of his kingdom and his soul, so that both from him and through him by the conversion of the whole race worthy recompense might arise for you in heavenly joys.[66]

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[62] 'Gregorius Bertae Reginae Anglorum', pp. 304-05.
[63] *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 172–75 (2.11).
[64] *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 73–77 (1.25-6).
[65] *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 111–15 (1.32).
[66] 'A Letter from Gregory I, Pope (601, June)', ed. by Joan Ferrante, trans. by Ashleigh Imus, *Epistolae: Medieval Women's Latin Letters* <https://epistolae.ctl.columbia.edu/letter/1254.html> [accessed 11 July 2024]; Gregory I, 'Gregorius Bertae Reginae Anglorum', in *Gregori I Papae Registrum Epistolarum, II*, ed. by Ludo Hartmann, MGH (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), pp. 304–05.

Gregory is urging Bertha to convert her husband, as he also did in his letter to Theodelinda – he may also be suggesting that she should already have done so. It is clear the Pope sees a role for her in Æthelberht's conversion, to an extent that is never explicit in Bede's account. However, Nelson emphasises that Gregory does see a role for Bertha in the conversion of her husband, but not in the conversion of her people:

> A moment's comparison between Gregory's letters to Bertha and Æthelbert makes it clear that in Gregory's view the king's role in converting his people was incomparably larger than the queen's. Bertha's participation in the project had its moment, perhaps, but was in fact ancillary.[67]

To Gregory, then, Bertha's role was fundamentally a domestic one. While Æthelberht's responsibility was to his people, Bertha's was to her husband. This was not a queenly role, but a marital one, consistent with 1 Corinthians 7.14.

Æthelburg and Edwin (Ecclesiastical History 2.9-20)

The other expansive conversion narrative involving a queen in the *Ecclesiastical History* is the conversion of King Edwin, who was married to Queen Æthelburg, the daughter of King Æthelberht and possibly Queen Bertha.[68] The conversion of Edwin is the most detailed conversion narrative in the *Ecclesiastical History*. Edwin promised upon their marriage that he would not prevent his queen from practising her religion and he did not deny the possibility of his conversion. Æthelburg went to Northumbria with the bishop Paulinus, who would ensure she would not be 'polluted by contact with the heathen'.[69] When Queen Æthelburg gave birth to a daughter, Eanflaed, Paulinus told the king that this birth was thanks to God, and Edwin swore that if he had victory over the king who tried to kill him, he would give his infant daughter to Christianity. Edwin won the battle, and the infant Eanflaed was the first Northumbrian to be baptised, with eleven others of the household. But Edwin was still reluctant to convert to the new religion. At this point in the narrative Bede includes the full text of letters sent to Edwin and Queen Æthelburg by Pope Boniface. In these letters, Boniface urges Edwin to be a Christian ruler like his brother-in-law Eadbald, and to give up idolatrous worship, sending him gold robes as a gesture of good faith. His letter to Æthelburg, meanwhile, concerns her personal responsibility in ensuring her husband converts for her own sake:

> This caused us no small grief, that he who is one flesh with you should remain a stranger to the knowledge of the supreme and undivided trinity. Therefore […] you should not hesitate to labour so that, through the power of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ, he may be added to the number of the Christians, so that you may thereby enjoy the rights of marriage in undefiled union. For it is written 'They twain shall be one flesh': how then can it be said that there is unity between you if he continues to be

[67] Nelson, 'Queens as Converters', p. 101.
[68] *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 163–207 (2.9-20).
[69] *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 162-63 (2.9).

> a stranger to your shining faith, seeing that the darkness of detestable error remains between you?[70]

He goes on to implore her to teach her husband about God, quoting Paul: 'Then the testimony of holy scripture will be clearly and abundantly fulfilled in you: 'the unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife'. After this letter, Bede tells the story of a miraculous vision of Paulinus Edwin had in his youth, and according to Bede the meaning of this vision finally revealing itself by means of Paulinus is ultimately what led Edwin to convert.

As stated above, Stacy Klein has argued that Bede deliberately underplayed the roles of queens in these conversions because he did not want to present conversion as occurring through political marital alliances, and instead favoured a narrative in which an individual arrives at their own conversion through genuine faith.[71] However, MacCarron has argued that Bede's conversion narratives can only be understood through his biblical exegesis, which reveals he had an understanding of marriages between Christians and non-Christians as a threat to the Christian party as much as an opportunity for salvation for the non-Christian party.[72] Bede's narrative reveals this anxiety by describing a series of negotiations about the marriage, and MacCarron argues that his inclusion of the letter to Æthelburg and not the letter to Bertha can be explained by the former simply being more consistent with Bede's scriptural anxieties about the corrupting influence of marriages between Christians and non-Christians. The question 'what role did queens have in the conversion of English kings to Christianity?' is difficult to answer. Perhaps a more pertinent question would be 'what roles have been attributed to queens in extant source material?'. Through Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and the papal letters, the role is a personal one – ultimately 'domestic rather than public', as Nelson argues.[73] Stacy Klein points out that Bede only presents us with conversion narratives for kings: though there are Christian queens who may themselves have been converted to Christianity, there are no conversion narratives of queens. Queens in the *Ecclesiastical History* 'thus do not appear to be active proponents of even their own faiths, let alone those of others'.[74] There is no fundamental relationship between queenship and Christianity. What is ultimately at stake, in the theological *topos* as used by Bede, Gregory and Boniface, is the Christianity of the king and the kingdom. Even though the biblical quotation from 1 Corinthians itself, known to Bede and quoted in the papal letters, is clear in its equal applicability to both husband and wife, 'converter' becomes a gendered role in order to support narratives about the conversions of kings and their kingdoms that reduce queens to the wives of kings.

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[70] *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 172–75 (2.11).
[71] Klein, pp. 29–39, 45–52.
[72] MacCarron, p. 667.
[73] Nelson, 'Queens as Converters', p. 107.
[74] Klein, p. 23.

Ecclesiastical Royal Women

The other role that queens occupy in the surviving sources from early Christian England is the role of abbess in the early royal monastic houses. Sources of this period sometimes consider the role of abbess and queen as interchangeable, while at other times they exist uneasily alongside each another. This was a role that was occupied by many queens, but also royal daughters and granddaughters. The role of king's wife was clearly not compatible with the role of abbess, a monastic position that involved celibacy. For this reason, it was mostly occupied by queens in their widowhood, as a way of providing ongoing influence and security, or in rare cases queens would obtain permission from their husbands to enter the monastic life, as we see in the case of Saint Æthelthryth. In Bede's version of the life of St Æthelthryth in his *Ecclesiastical History*, Æthelthryth's life as queen of Northumbria sits uneasily with her monastic vocation as Abbess of Ely, demonstrated through a bright red tumour that adorned her neck where she used to wear necklaces, status objects for elite women, in her life as a queen.[75] This story presents something of a conflict between the role of queen and the religious life – though Æthelthryth has been both queen and abbess, these are roles that sit uneasily beside one another in Bede's narrative. It suggests that Bede at least thought that a saintly life was incompatible with the excess and feminine frivolity of being the queen of a secular ruler – this is in spite of him finding places for saintly kings who do not renounce their kingship for a monastic life, such as Oswald, within his narrative.[76] Stephanie Hollis uses the example of Æthelthryth to argue that Bede's writing lacks a queenly ideal compatible with secular power:

> Bede appears to be entirely unacquainted with any form of ideal or stereotype of an influential queen. Given that the *History*'s exemplary queen is Æthelthryth, who withdraws to a monastery under the guiding influence of Bishop Wilfrid, it may also be true that Bede preferred to give the impression that the episcopal capture of the queen had already taken place and that queens had effaced themselves from the public stage and betaken themselves to piety, leaving the advancement of the church, very properly, to kings and bishops.[77]

However, the Durham *Liber Vitae*, a ninth-century document with an earlier origin possibly in the reign of the Northumbrian king Ecgfrith (r. 670-75), gives the impression that the roles of queen and abbess are so linked as to be one and the same. While a list of kings and dukes, separated but side by side, is under the heading 'kings or dukes' ('reges vel duces'), the queens and abbesses are listed together in a mixed order as 'queens and abbesses ('reginarum et abbatissarum'). The

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[75] *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 390–401 (4.17-20).
[76] Foot, 'Bede's Kings'; Clare E. Stancliffe, 'Oswald, "Most Holy and Most Victorious King of the Northumbrians"', in *Oswald: Northumbrian King to European Saint* (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1995), pp. 33–83; Susan J. Ridyard, 'Monk-Kings and the Anglo-Saxon Hagiographic Tradition', *Haskins Society Journal: Studies in Medieval History*, 6 (1995), 13–27; Yorke, 'The Reception of Christianity at the Anglo-Saxon Royal Courts'.
[77] Hollis, p. 220.

organisation of these names is thought to be replicated from the earliest stage of the text.[78] Though many queens did become abbesses in widowhood, it is worth emphasising that this is not a list of queens who became abbesses: some queens on the list were never abbesses. Moreover, many of the abbesses listed were not queens or even of royal birth. Barbara Yorke has noted that abbesses and queens may have been listed together due to the similarities of their roles; both were public roles of political significance in which women, often royal, had control over land, property and wealth. Hollis' argument that Bede presented the ideal queen as one who has 'betaken to piety' has merit, but does not take into account the active and political role abbesses could have in this period, which surely presents just as much a barrier to a pious exit from the 'public stage' as queenship.[79]

Indeed, Yorke argues that conversion presented an opportunity for royal women to have influence through monasticism. She posits that pre-Christian kings relied on a convention of legitimacy by supernatural power – descent from Gods. She argues that this influenced the ways in which early Christianity was practised, with the roles of royal women transitioning into ones that promoted Christian dynasties in the monastic sphere.[80] Monasticism, she argues, was particularly suitable for royal women as opposed to royal men, as women were unable to hold royal office or lead armies. Indeed, there are examples of royal women becoming champions of their royal dynasties in their monastic houses, such as with the transformation of Whitby into a mausoleum for the royal families of Deira and Bernicia, and the fostering of a cult of Saint Edwin of Northumbria under Abbess Ælfflaed, his granddaughter.[81] In Yorke's argument we see a possible antecedent of later ideas about dynastic legitimacy conferred through queens that will be explored below and in later chapters of this thesis. However, the roles that Yorke sees as a Christianisation of pre-Christian customs are those of royal women in general, and not specifically queens. Abbess Ælfflaed promoted her family at Whitby as a royal daughter, given to a monastic life as a child – not as a queen. While the office of abbess was a Christian role that retired queens would often undertake, the Durham *Liber Vitae* demonstrates that queen was a role that was ill-defined enough to be categorised alongside other royal women and abbesses.

The question remains as to what extent we can find possible antecedents for a ritualised, Christian form of queenship in this period. One matter that has not been considered in scholarship is Bede's reference to queens in those specific terms – 'regina' – and not simply as the wives of kings. This royal title seems to denote an elevated status of some kind, but it is unclear how queens acquire this

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[78] Yorke, *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses*, p. 146.
[79] Hollis, p. 220.
[80] Yorke, 'From Pagan to Christian in Anglo-Saxon England'.
[81] Alan Thacker, 'Memorialising Gregory the Great', *Early Medieval Europe*, 7 (1998), 59-84 (p. 61); Catherine Karkov, 'Whitby, Jarrow and the Commemoration of Death in Northumbria', in *Northumbria's Golden Age*, ed. by Jane Hawkes and Susan Mills (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999), pp. 126-135.

status, and there are no traces of ritual inauguration in the *Ecclesiastical History*. The absence of any evidence for king- and queen-making rituals in this period may lead us to conclude that these roles were largely secular realities rather than religious offices. Without a religious inauguration ceremony, a king is a king when he has the power to rule as one, and a queen is a queen when she marries him. Inauguration rituals may well have been practiced, but the evidence simply does not exist. Thus far in this chapter we have looked at the two main roles that queens could inhabit according to the source material – the converter, and the royal abbess. That these are both religious, Christian roles is hardly surprising given the remit of the source material, and our reliance on Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* for our main narrative. However, it is clear that neither of these roles are inherent to queenship as a fundamentally Christian role. The converting queen *topos*, originating in Biblical sources as a non-gendered marital role and then perpetuated as a role specifically for queens through ecclesiastical writers and the papacy, is in its essence a wifely role. The queen's place is to aid in her husband's conversion, and thus allow him to lead in the conversion of his kingdom. Within this *topos* her own conversion, and her own place in Christianity, is only important insofar as it impacts on the king. In the *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede is interested in how the non-Christian beliefs of Raedwald's unnamed wife function to corrupt her husband.[82] He is arguably more interested in this form of influence than the ways in which the many Christian queens influenced their nonbelieving husbands. This suggests that the 'converting queen' *topos* can be fairly easily stripped of its Christianity, and at its root is a broader anxiety about how wives might influence their ruling husbands. To reiterate – there is nothing about this *topos* that pins the importance of the queen on her queenship as opposed to her role as the wife of a king. This is an important distinction.

The role of royal abbess was often occupied by queens, to the extent that these roles were considered comparable in their function – as in the Durham *Liber Vitae*. However, the position of abbess could only be occupied in widowhood, not simply taken up alongside a marriage to a king. The obvious exception to this is Æthelthryth, but she had to abandon her marriage in order to enter a religious life, and the tumour on her neck described by Bede surely illustrates the conflict between a queenly life and a religious one. There is an inherent friction between these roles presented to us by Bede. More than this, the role of royal abbess, one that was central to the idea of royal dynasty, was one that was often occupied by royal daughters and kinswomen as well as queens. While Yorke has demonstrated that early Christianity presented unique opportunities for royal women, these were not yet developed enough to provide queens with a distinct role of their own.[83] Being a royal abbess was an important way in which royal women could exert political power and work to establish royal dynasties, and this was a purpose that overlapped and coexisted with queenship, but was not exclusive. If queenship in this period was a role – let alone an office –

[82] *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 189–91 (2:15).
[83] Yorke, 'From Pagan to Christian in Anglo-Saxon England'.

that had its own distinct religious meaning, this is not evident in either of the roles – converter or royal abbess – that have hitherto been identified in the sources and explored in scholarship.

The Development of Ritual Inauguration

Tracing the development of Christian inauguration rituals, with particular focus on the involvement of queens in these ceremonies, provides the ground on which to begin to build our picture of Christian queenship. The early history of ritual inauguration in early medieval Europe for either kings or queens is difficult to grasp with certainty. We have very few sources pertaining to pre-Christian inaugurations in Europe, and almost no concept of how kings became kings before the development of Christian inauguration rituals involving anointing with oil. The earliest evidence arises after the church became involved in these ceremonies, though this evidence is still fragmentary and, in many cases, problematic. In his *Vita Columbae*, written sometime between 688 and 704, Adomnán describes how Saint Columba 'ordained as king' ('in regem … ordinavit') Áedán mac Gabráin of Dál Riada, on Iona in 574, laying his hands on his head and blessing him.[84] If we believe this ordination occurred, this would be the earliest Christian ritualised royal inauguration for which we have evidence. However, this account is problematic for a number of reasons. The first is that it is not clear what is meant by 'ordination' here – the text is vague on this point, describing a laying of hands on the head but not with any reference to anointing with oil, and it is unclear how the word relates to kingship as opposed to the ordination of a priest. Adomnán's account was written over a century after the alleged incident, and its veracity has been cast into doubt by a number of scholars who note the vague nature of the account, the relative youth of Iona as an institution at this point in time, and the lack of a tribal link between Iona and Dál Riada. Michael Enright has argued that Adomnán was using scriptural models of kingship in order to emphasise the rights of the abbots of Iona in his own day to carry out the consecration of kings and control the royal elections of Dál Riada.[85] This point has been refuted by Meckler, who believes the account is historical, and Miho Tanaka, who does not agree with Enright's conclusion that Admonán was attempting to secure ordination rights for the abbots of Iona, but nevertheless remains sceptical of the historicity of the account.[86] While the meaning and origin of the story are both up for debate, its existence at least demonstrates that by the later seventh century, when Adomnán was writing, the idea of a religious royal ceremony existed, and in a form that held some ideological importance,

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[84] Adamnan, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, ed. by William Reeves (Dublin: University Press, 1857), p. 198.
[85] Michael Enright, *Iona, Tara, and Soissons: The Origin of the Royal Anointing Ritual* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011).
[86] Miho Tanaka, 'Iona and the Kingship of Dál Riata in Adomnán's Vita Columbae', *Peritia*, 17–18 (2003), 199–214; Michael Meckler, 'Colum Cille's Ordination of Aedán Mac Gabráin', *Innes Review: The Journal of Scottish Catholic History*, 41.2 (1990), 139–50.

though substantial evidence for a ritual actual taking place in the British Isles at this point is lacking.[87]

Another early description of the consecration of a king can be found in the *Historia Wambae Regis*, composed by Julian, Archbishop of Toledo (d. 690), which recounts the anointing of King Wamba in Visigothic Spain in 672.[88] Joaquín Martínez Pizarro posits that:

> …it remains uncertain whether Wamba was the first Visigoth to be thus made king, especially in light of the references to kings as the Lord's anointed in the famous canon of Toledo IV, the acts of which are attributed to Isidore. On the other hand, it is also quite possible that the ceremony was used for the first time—since it was familiar from Scripture—to enhance the legitimacy of Wamba, who would soon have to confront quite predictable challenges to his authority in Gallia and the Tarraconensis.[89]

If anointing originated with Wamba, it is useful to consider the circumstances in which this may have arisen – Martínez Pizarro here links it to Wamba's need to strengthen his kingly authority in order to withstand challenges. Though Nelson argues that anointing arose in Visigothic Spain on the occasion of Wamba's consecration in 672, she sees this practice originating in national synods, such as Toledo IV (633), which resulted in a 'crystallisation of the clergy's needs and expectations of kingship'.[90] It is important to note that Wamba's successor King Erwig also 'took up the power of ruling by means of sacred unction' ('sacrosanctam unctionem'), which Nelson has suggested indicates that anointing quickly became an 'indispensable' act of king-making.[91] Despite the possibility that anointing arose as an established practice in Spain in this early period, it is unknown to what extent this Visigothic ceremony might have influenced the development of ritual Christian inauguration in other parts of Europe, like Francia and England, if at all.

751: A European Turning Point for Monarchy?

In Francia, we have very little evidence about inauguration rituals before the anointing of Pippin and Bertrada, the first Carolingian king and queen, in 751. The evidence for Merovingian inauguration ceremonies is fragmentary, and it is not certain there was a fixed ritual, although there are hints to ceremonies in the historical record.[92] These ceremonies may have centred on an

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[87] The text is later seventh century, and our earliest manuscript evidence is close to this date: Sharpe argues no later than 713 when the scribe died, but it may have been copied much earlier: see 'Notes', *Life of St Columba*, ed. by Richard Sharpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995), p. 253.
[88] Julian of Toledo, *The Story of Wamba: Julian of Toledo's Historia Wambae Regis*, ed. by Joaquín Martínez Pizarro (CUA Press, 2005).
[89] Toledo, p. 41.
[90] Janet Nelson, 'National Synods, Kingship as Office, and Royal Anointing: An Early Medieval Syndrome', in *Councils and Assemblies: Papers Read at the Eighth Summer Meeting and the Ninth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. by G. J. Cuming and Derek Baker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 41–59 (p. 255).
[91] Nelson, 'National Synods', p. 248.
[92] For example, see Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', p. 286, on the Passion of St Leudegarius.

enthronement, though there was no coronation.[93] When exactly they became 'Christian' as such is difficult to say, though regal benedictions in eighth- and ninth-century manuscripts that describe a king's 'elevation' to the kingdom seem to have a Merovingian origin.[94] It is also not clear what involvement Merovingian queens had in any king-making ceremonies, and there is no evidence that queens were ceremonially inducted into their roles. The earliest evidence we have for queen-making rituals in Europe is at the advent of the Carolingian dynasty. The Merovingian kings had become politically weak figureheads by the second quarter of the eighth century, and the senior magnate, Charles Martel, held the power of the kingdom, and divided it between his two sons Pippin and Carloman. After Carloman retired to a religious life in 747, Pippin became sole ruler of the Franks as his father had been, with the Merovingian king Childeric III ruling in name only. In 750, Pippin sent an embassy to Pope Zacharias to petition him that Pippin should be allowed to become king.[95] According to near-contemporary sources, Pippin and his wife Bertrada were 'elevated to the kingdom' in 751, in a ceremony in which they were consecrated by Frankish bishops at Soissons. The contemporary *Continuation of Fredegar's Chronicle*, written by Pippin's uncle, alludes to the anointing:

> Pippin by the election of all the Franks to the throne of the kingdom, by the consecration of bishop and by the subjection of the lay magnates, together with the queen Bertrada, as the rules of ancient tradition require was elevated into the kingdom.[96]

The joint anointing of Pippin and Bertrada took place in November at St-Médard, in Soissons, the burial place of the Merovingian king Clothar I and the site where Childeric II had been deposed in March. This was the site of a regime change, marked by ritual, but stressing continuity. In 753, Pope Stephen II travelled to Francia and anointed Pippin again along with his two sons Charlemagne and Carloman. A new royal family was established - not just a new king, but the beginnings of a new dynasty - to compete with the dynastic longevity of the Merovingians. Bertrada's anointing as queen in 751, a ritual which has little biblical precedent, was necessary for this dynastic legitimacy.

751 has been seen as a turning point in Christian kingship. Fritz Kern described the moment of Pippin's anointing as a 'revolution', in which the 'primitive beliefs' of the Merovingians were replaced by 'Christian principles.[97] However, as argued by Nelson, this view is incompatible with

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[93] Reinhard Schneider, *Königswahl und Königserhebung im Frühmittelalter: Untersuchungen zur Herrschaftsnachfolge bei den Langobarden und Merowingern* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1972), pp. 187–239; Nelson, 'National Synods', p. 264 n. 25, 286.
[94] Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', p. 286.
[95] Janet Nelson, 'Kingship and Empire', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c.350-c. 1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 211–51 (pp. 213–14).
[96] *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar*, ed. by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, trans. by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1960), cap. 33.
[97] Fritz Kern (1954), quoted in translation by Nelson, 'Kingship and Empire', p. 214.

what we know of the extent of the process of Christianisation of Merovingian Francia in the seventh and eighth centuries. Moreover, it is difficult to see how an ultimately Christian and ecclesiastical legitimation of Pippin would have held any ideological power had the Franks not already become a fundamentally Christian people, with a Christian nobility and a powerful Church. What 751 did signify is the advent of a kingship in Francia legitimised by a formal, ecclesiastical rite. It was the coming together of secular and ecclesiastical interests in two people – the royal couple. Bertrada's involvement in this ceremony, as well as the anointing of their sons, also strongly suggests that this was a heavily dynastic legitimation, requiring a potent ceremony that might bestow dynastic as well as individual legitimacy. Like in the case of Wamba, this was a move ultimately borne out of instability. The anointing ceremony was created in response to Pippin's immediate political need to establish a form of kingship that had staying power – a necessary move if he was to emphasise himself as a legitimate ruler rather than being seen as a usurper.

Christian Monarchy and Dynasty in Mercia

Thus, by 751 a formal Christian anointing ceremony, administered with the involvement of the church, had certainly been established as a potential method of kingmaking in western Europe, as had the practice of exalting a queen, Bertrada, alongside the king using religious ritual. The remainder of this chapter will explore when comparable practices first appear in English sources. A major purpose of Pippin's anointing ceremony was to establish legitimacy, not only for him but for his dynasty. There are a number of parallels between the ways that Pippin and Bertrada, and Offa of Mercia (r. 757-96) and his queen Cynethryth, used the power of dynasty, queenship, religious ideology, and ritual in an attempt to secure dynastic legitimacy in somewhat adverse circumstances.[98] Cynethryth had an elevated status during Offa's reign, and their son Ecgfrith's consecration during his father's lifetime is the earliest occasion for which we have evidence of a religious inauguration in England. The following section will explore how it is in Mercia, in Offa and Cynethryth's time, that we first see evidence of both a religious royal inauguration ritual and an elevated, religious queenship.

The reign of Offa of Mercia occurred within a period during which Mercia had a dominant role in relation to the other kingdoms of England. This so-called 'Mercian Supremacy' was consolidated during the reign of King Æthelbald (716-57) in which, according to Bede, the king gained de facto power over all lands south of the river Humber.[99] After a period of civil war following Æthelbald's assassination, Offa succeeded to the kingdom and embarked anew on the process of the political

[98] Wamba, too, was probably anointed as a way to bolster an insecure reign, but it is uncertain if this had any cultural legacy that was felt in England or indeed Francia: Toledo, p. 41.
[99] *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 558-59 (5.23); phrase coined by Frank Merry Stenton, 'The Supremacy of the Mercian Kings', *The English Historical Review*, 33 (1918), 433–52.

subjugation of lands peripheral to Mercia, subjecting some of these areas to Mercia's direct rule.[100] This period of Mercian supremacy coincides, somewhat paradoxically, with a relative lack of extant narrative source material emanating from Mercia itself. Though there are notable sources from this period for which a Mercian origin has been argued, for example regnal lists or the Tribal Hidage, there are no surviving chronicles or narrative works by a Mercian author: much of what we understand of Mercia in this period is thus from those peripheral kingdoms it sought to dominate.[101] The state of Mercian hegemony that endured throughout the eighth-century also coincided with the flourishing of the Carolingian polity which culminated in the coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor in 800. That the reigns of both Offa and Charlemagne were long (as a point of comparison, in the same period as Offa reigned in Mercia, eight different kings reigned in Northumbria) allowed both rulers to establish more developed political strategies, and a closer political relationship with each other.[102]

During his long reign, Offa engaged in clear attempts at dynasty-building. Central to this was the position of his wife Cynethryth and their son, Ecgfrith. Queen Cynethryth's career is remarkable in a number of ways. Alongside hints of the practical applications of her power we also see a queen whose role and position are bolstered by an ideology that stresses legitimacy. In spite of her high status and a number of exceptional features of her reign as queen, which will be discussed further below, there has been very little written on Cynethryth's queenship. She has featured in important work by Pauline Stafford on Mercian queenship, but she has yet to warrant her own study.[103] Aside from this, much of what has been said of Cynethryth relates to the fact that a relatively large number of coins during Offa's reign were minted in her name.[104] There are at least forty-three surviving silver pennies minted in Canterbury during King Offa of Mercia's reign, inscribed not with Offa's name, but that of Cynethryth, styled 'Regina M(erciorum)'. The portraits on some of these coins are the earliest extant depictions of an English queen. These are also the earliest coins depicting a queen from medieval western Europe – though Irene, the first Byzantine empress to rule in her own right, had her own coinage around the same time in the 780s, it is unlikely that these inspired Cynethryth's coinage or vice-versa.[105] The coins of ancient Roman emperors, issued

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[100] Mercia's power base is complex and should not be considered as an attempt to unify southern England: see Simon Keynes, 'England, 700-900', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History: Volume 2*, ed. by Rosamund McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 18–42 (pp. 31–37).
[101] Joanna Story, *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia, c. 750-870* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); Keynes, 'England, 700-900'.
[102] Story, p. 171.
[103] Stafford, 'Political Women', pp. 35–49.
[104] Rory Naismith, *Money and Power in Anglo-Saxon England: The Southern English Kingdoms, 757-865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
[105] S. Zipperer, 'Coins and Currency: Offa of Mercia and his Frankish Neighbours', in *Völker an Nord- und Ostsee und die Franken*, ed. by Uta von Freeden, Ursula Koch, and Alfried Wieczorek (Bonn: Habelt, R, 1999), pp. 121–27.

in the names of their wives, are a more likely inspiration for Cynethryth's coinage.[106] Coins of Helena, mother of Constantine, were in circulation in England in this period, and stylistic connections have been made between Cynethryth's coins and coins minted in the name of Faustina, the wife of Emperor Antoninus Pius.[107] Though the increasingly regulated issue of diverse coinage in Kent during the eighth century was influenced by monetary developments in the Carolingian world, there is no evidence of coins having been issued in the name of a medieval queen consort before Cynethryth's. Cynethryth's coins almost certainly inspired the recently discovered coins of Queen Fastrada, the wife of Charlemagne, which were minted in 793, and included the same abbreviated form 'REGIN' as is evident on some of Cynethryth's coinage.[108]

Cynethryth's coinage can be brought into the context of dynastic politics. Rory Naismith has argued that:

> The very point of the coinage was a royal couple in harmony; whether Cynethryth herself enjoyed formal title to the privilege is of secondary importance, and the fact that her separate coinage did not survive into the last phase of Offa's coinage after 792/3 suggests that it only ever functioned as a branch of the royal coinage. Cynethryth's exceptional issue should thus probably be viewed as a Roman-style representation of familial power, one which could have functioned under the auspices of either king or queen (probably both) but which made a special statement about the importance of Cynethryth in the ruling regime.[109]

Of course, in a study of queenship rather than coinage, Cynethryth's power over this coinage is not an issue of 'secondary importance'. While Naismith's argument that the coinage functions within Offa's assertion of dynastic power is pertinent, this does not mean that Cynethryth did not have actual power over her currency. At least thirty-two different dies were used to cast the forty-three surviving coins – the volume of finds alone suggests that they functioned separately to Offa's regular coinage.[110] Gareth Williams has postulated that the coins could signify a grant of income to Cynethryth of coins minted by a particular moneyer, in this case Eoba in Canterbury. This fits with another curiosity in Offa's coinage, that of coins minted in the name of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Jaenberht. Williams posits that Offa may have revoked Jaenberht's existing right to mint coins in his name and given it instead to his wife, in an ongoing attempt to undermine the authority of Canterbury that also saw Offa attempt to establish an archdiocese at Litchfield.[111]

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[106] C. E. Blunt, 'The Coinage of Offa', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins, Studies Presented to F. M. Stenton*, ed. by R. H. M. Dolley (London: Methuen, 1961), pp. 39–62.
[107] Naismith, pp. 63–64.
[108] Simon Coupland, 'A Coin of Queen Fastrada and Charlemagne', *Early Medieval Europe*, 2023 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/emed.12640> [accessed 7 June 2023].
[109] Naismith, p. 124.
[110] Derek Chick, cited by Anna Gannon, *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage: Sixth to Eighth Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 40.
[111] Gareth Williams, 'Mercian Coinage and Authority', in *Mercia: An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. by Michelle P. Brown and Carol A. Farr (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), pp. 211–28 (p. 217).

Likewise, Stafford has argued that Cynethryth's coinage was part of a wider assertion of Mercian hegemony.[112] There is little evidence of active Mercian mints in this period, and Offa certainly relied on those at Canterbury and London for his coinage. These coins were minted in Kent, which illustrates the reach of Mercian power in this period. Indeed, Cynethryth's coins have been discovered in Mercia, Kent, Sussex, Essex, Wessex and East Anglia.[113] Thus, however Cynethryth's coinage functioned, its creation and usage are inseparable from the context of the re-assertion of Mercian political power over Kent in the latter part of his reign.[114] Simon Coupland has argued that the coinage of both Cynethryth and Fastrada reflects the high esteem in which both women were regarded by their husbands, going so far as to discuss Fastrada's coin in terms of Charlemagne sharing power with his wife.[115] Given that even before the discovery of her coinage, Nelson identified Fastrada as someone who could operate as a stand-in for her husband, and who has 'political importance in her own right', it is worth considering that Cynethryth might be an antecedent to Fastrada in more than just coinage.[116]

One thing that is particularly notable about Cynethryth's coinage, along with the portrait – the earliest portrait of any English queen, though modelled on that of Offa – is the fact that she is framed unequivocally as 'Cynethryth Regina M(erciorum)'. This elevation of status can also be seen in other areas of his rule, not least in charter evidence. Charters refer to her as *regina*, *regina Merciorum* or in one instance in 780 '*Cyneðryð Dei gratia regina Merciorum'*, 'Queen of the Mercians by the grace of God'.[117] Thus, in title, Cynethryth is unambiguously a queen, and most importantly a queen whose power is attributed to God's grace. This is the earliest evidence of an English king's wife whose role as queen was defined by a relationship to divinity. Evidently, Cynethryth's high status, and her Christian queenship were mutually advantageous to both her and Offa in terms of royal dynasty-building. Cynethryth is recorded as a witness of several of her husband's charters from 770 until the late 780s, a period in which dynasty was most important for her and Offa. Stafford states that 'it was not the marriage but the birth, or at least the first charter appearance, of her son Ecgfrith in 770 which marked Cynethryth's public recognition'.[118] Her main charter appearances in the later 780s also coincide with a time in which marriage negotiations were possibly taking place for Eadburh and Ælfflaed, daughters of Offa and Cynethryth who married kings Beohrtric of Wessex and Æthelred I of Northumbria respectively.[119] The purpose of Cynethryth's charter involvement is surely dynastic, aimed at securing the royal family's position as supreme in

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[112] Stafford, 'Political Women', pp. 35–49 (pp. 39-40).
[113] Naismith, p. 219.
[114] Keynes, 'England, 700-900'.
[115] Coupland, pp. 8–13.
[116] Janet Nelson, *King and Emperor: A New Life of Charlemagne* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2021), pp. 282, 303-4.
[117] S 118; Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 39.
[118] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 38.
[119] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 38.

England. Indeed, Cynethryth regularly appears in charters until the year after Ecgfrith's consecration as Offa's heir in 787.

Offa's reign is also when we see the earliest evidence of royal consecration – not for Offa or Cynethryth, but for their son Ecgfrith. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* state that King Offa of Mercia had his son Ecgfrith 'to cyning gehalgod' ('hallowed/consecrated to king') in 787.[120] In all previous references in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* to a change in regime, the phrase 'feng to rice' is used, to denote that someone 'took the kingdom'. This latter phrase is obviously not an applicable phrase to a situation in which someone is being made king during their father's lifetime, but the religious terminology is conspicuous. Much discussion has surrounded the word 'gehalgod' and what it actually implies.[121] Indeed, this is ambiguous, as up until this point in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* it is generally used to refer to a process of consecration, such as in the case of bishops but also churches – it does not necessarily denote an anointing with oil, although this is one very possible reading. Whatever 'gehalgod' means in terms of how the process was carried out, this ceremony must have had a spiritual function – as opposed to the purely political function of conferring rule of the kingdom – to have any significance when performed on an heir during his father's lifetime. There is no evidence that this ceremony installed Ecgfrith as a sub-king, for example. The purpose was clearly to transform Ecgfrith's status as Offa's heir. It is likely that Offa was inspired by the anointing of Charlemagne and his brother Carloman alongside Pippin as young boys in 754.

Cynethryth's high status, her unequivocal claim to queenship, and the connection of this queenship to God's grace specifically, can be viewed as part of the same dynastic project as Ecgfrith's consecration as heir. This is because as Ecgfrith's mother, Cynethryth's status could transfer to her son. The letters of Bishop George of Ostia, who visited Offa's court, reveal something about the significance of the status of the king's wife to the legitimacy of his heir. In the 780s Pope Adrian I sent George on a mission:

> …to travel across the sea to the people of the English … so that if any tares had spoilt the crop which blessed Pope Gregory had sown through the mouth of St Augustine, we might uproot anything noxious and ensure the propagation of only the healthiest fruit.[122]

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[120] ASC A, ASC B, ASC C, ASC D, ASC E, 785; The events of this annal occurred in 787, see *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, ed. by Dorothy Whitelock, with David C. Douglas and Susie I. Tucker (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1961), p. 35.

[121] J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Charlemagne and England', in *Early Medieval History* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1976), pp. 155–80 (p. 159); Janet Nelson, 'The Problem of King Alfred's Royal Anointing', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 18.2 (1967), 145–63 (p. 155, n. 3); Michael Swanton, *Crisis and Development in Germanic Society, 700-800: Beowulf and the Burden of Kingship* (Kümmerle Verlag, 1982), p. 58; Brooks, p. 118; *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, p. 35, n. 2.

[122] '…trans mare in gentem Anglorum peragrare … ut si qua zizania messem optimo semine satam, quam beatus Gregorius papa per os sancti Agustini seminavit, inritasset, funditus eradicare quod

George's report back to Adrian outlines a capitulary that had been formulated at the Northumbrian court and then taken to Offa's court in Mercia, where the recommendations were agreed upon. One of these recommendations is central to ideas of queenship. As Joanna Story states:

> The capitulary signed by the worthies of both the Mercian and Northumbrian courts laid down two relevant principles on royal inheritance and regicide: that only men born to a legitimate marriage may be christus domini … et rex totius regni, 'the Lord's anointed and king of the whole kingdom'.[123]

Though it would certainly be a mistake to assume that this was in any way a prescriptive rule, George's report indicates that there was an idea in the Mercian court at this time that marital legitimacy had a strong bearing on royal legitimacy and sacred kingship. Thus, in elevating Cynethryth's status, Offa was able to strengthen his dynastic plans by also elevating the status of their children.[124]

In emphasising the ways in which Cynethryth's status was utilised in Offa's dynastic plans, we might re-centre Cynethryth herself and the ways in which this may have allowed her to exercise influence. Alcuin describes her as the *dispensatrix domus*, or 'steward of the household', in letters. Story argues that this aligns Cynethryth with Carolingian expectations of a queen consort:

> The *De ordine palatii* (compiled by Hincmar in 882 but based on material from Charlemagne's day) assigns the management and provisioning of the palace to the queen and her chamberlain. Hincmar envisaged the royal palace as a microcosm of the empire; the smooth running of the palace was thus a pre-requisite for a stable and prosperous kingdom, and in this the queen played an essential role.[125]

Here we see a definition of the role of a Carolingian queen consort in terms that draw on male rulership, i.e. imperial or kingly power, but in the domestic domain. Though no letters written between Cynethryth and Alcuin survive, there is evidence that they corresponded: in one letter to a nun named Hunðryð, Alcuin requests that she speak with Cynethryth on his behalf, emphasising his loyalty to Cynethryth and adding that he would have written directly to her 'if the King's business had permitted her to read it'.[126] The meaning of this phrase is ambiguous, and it seems to suggest either that Alcuin was worried Offa might not take kindly to his letter, or else that Alcuin's prior letters to Cynethryth had previously gone unanswered. Another letter may mention Cynethryth: Alcuin asks the nun to whom he is writing to 'greet that dear lady in my name', and perhaps echoes his earlier sentiments, adding 'we have always been loyal to her'. The letter then

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noxium et fructum saluberrimum stabilire summo conamine studuissemus'; George of Ostia, 'Epistola Ad Hadrianum', in *Epistolae Karolini Aevi II*, ed. by E Dümmler, MGH (Berlin: Weidmann, 1895), pp. 19–29, translation by Story, p. 58.

[123] Story, p. 187.

[124] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 38.

[125] Story, p. 182.

[126] Alcuin, *Alcuin of York: His Life and Letters*, trans. by Stephen Allott (York: William Session, 1974), no. 36.

states that Alcuin 'always desired her progress towards the salvation of her soul, for which she has always had to strive, but now most of all since she has survived the death of her most excellent lord the King. I wish her to live in happiness and to serve God faithfully'.[127] It is important to note that this letter may be concerned with one of Offa's daughters, not Cynethryth herself. However, the content of this letter and its monastic recipient does fit within the context of Cynethryth's widowhood, which she spent as Abbess of Cookham priory. This house had been transferred into Cynethryth's personal ownership during Offa's lifetime, and at the Synod of Clovesho in 798 Cynethryth was named as Offa's heir during a dispute over property with Archbishop Ethelheard.[128] If it was Cynethryth about whom Alcuin was writing, he need not have been concerned about her survival after Offa's death. Her status was secured during his lifetime, and as this policy was dynastic, this status was designed specifically to outlive him.

Despite Offa having engaged in dynasty-building throughout his reign, his son Ecgfrith reigned for a mere 141 days before his untimely death. Through elevating Cynethryth as his only wife, Offa had succeeded in elevating Ecgfrith as his heir, but he had failed to produce more than one. Ecgfrith's consecration, intended to cement and make sacred his status as Offa's heir, the first recorded ceremony of its kind in England, had ensured his succession but not protected him against an early death. Alcuin saw not only an irony in these circumstances but a moral judgement, noting in a letter to a nobleman, Osberht:

> That most noble young man has not died for his sins, but the vengeance for the blood shed by the father has reached the son. For you know how much blood his father shed to secure the kingdom upon the son.[129]

Judging by Alcuin's damning words, and the fact that Ecgfrith was succeeded by a distant kinsman, Coenwulf, it can be assumed that Offa had arranged the death of many of his male relatives in order to ensure his son's undisputed succession to the Mercian kingship. Offa and Ecgfrith's family links in the Mercian royal genealogy are suspect, and their ties to the previous Mercian royal line are distant.[130] It may well be that Offa had real anxieties about legitimacy, that he addressed by cementing the status of his wife and heir. Stafford has posited that Cynethryth may have been descended from the Mercian king Penda, as she shares the Cyne- in her name with his queen Cynewise, and their daughter Cyneburh.[131] If Offa's claims to links with the Mercian line are

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[127] Alcuin, no 43.
[128] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 41.
[129] Alcuin, no. 46; 'Ecgfrith', in Ann Williams, *A Biographical Dictionary of Dark Age Britain: England, Scotland and Wales c.500-c.1050*, ed. by Alfred P. Smyth, D. P. Kirby, and Ann Williams (London: Seaby, 1991); translation by D. Whitelock, *English Historical Documents 500-1042, Vol 1* (London: Routledge, 1979), pp. 912-13.
[130] Catherine Bromhead, 'Legitimisation of Sacral Kingship in Early Medieval Ireland and England, 6th to Mid-8th Centuries AD' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 2021), pp. 64–65, 156–57.
[131] Stafford, 'Political Women', pp. 36–37.

questionable, it may well be that he was dependent on Cynethryth to provide legitimacy to his dynastic line. This would account for her high status and a strong concentration on family politics during his reign.

Though the so-called 'Mercian supremacy' was marked by two long and relatively stable reigns, those of Æthelbald and Offa, Æthelbald was ultimately murdered by his own bodyguards, and these reigns were separated by a period of civil war, in which Offa deposed another claimant to the throne, Beornred. It should not be taken for granted that the ground on which Offa walked as king of Mercia was steady. We can see parallels here between the reigns of Offa and Pippin. Both had deposed a previous king and were attempting to cement themselves as the beginnings of a new dynasty. I do not believe it is a coincidence that it is in these two reigns that we see the earliest evidence of kingly consecration in Francia and England respectively. Pippin's attempts to cement his new dynasty involved his whole family: his queen Bertrada was anointed beside him, and later as were his sons and heirs. One of those sons, Charlemagne, inherited the kingdom and ruled contemporaneously with Offa. Offa may well have seen the success with which Pippin had begun his dynasty and used similar tactics. Though we have no evidence of Offa or Cynethryth having been anointed themselves – though the possibility cannot be discounted, see below Chapter 4 – the fact that Cynethryth's queenship was brought explicitly into a context of divine will demonstrates that similar claims were being made about the religious legitimacy of their dynasty. Cynethryth rose to prominence alongside her son and heir, bestowing her legitimacy onto her family. Ecgfrith's consecration was the culmination of this project. Divine legitimacy and dynastic politics were just some of the tools at Offa's disposal, even if, as Alcuin hints, the others were murder weapons.

Conclusion: Cynethryth's Legacy

This chapter began with the aim to trace the possible antecedents of a Christian form of queenship, by surveying queenship from the very outset of Christianisation in England. Though in this period there were roles set out for queens, most notably 'converting wife' and 'royal abbess', these were roles not inherent in queenship as a role in itself, but suitable for those who occupy royal familial roles connected to kingship. In this period, we have no trace of a ritualised, Christian role of queenship in England. It is worth noting that from the moment that a ritualised inauguration ceremony for kingship was enacted in Francia in 751, the queen was central to it, and her divine legitimacy was central to the creation of a new dynasty. As a reciprocal relationship developed between the two powerful kingdoms of Offa's Mercia and Charlemagne's Francia, it is no surprise that the legitimacy of Ecgfrith and Offa as kings was also viewed as dependent on Cynethryth's legitimacy as queen. The influence was multi-directional: Cynethryth's queenship can be viewed as a model to which Charlemagne's wife Fastrada later subscribed.[132] This is not to say, however, that

[132] Coupland.

the very moment ideas about consecrated kingship and divine queenship were found in England, this was a singular turning point. As we will see in the following chapters of this thesis, the process of development for these ideas was gradual, and the evidence for them piecemeal.

The religious legitimacy of queens was not a light switch that had been flicked on in the English kingdoms during Cynethryth's reign. Though Stafford has demonstrated that the status of Mercian queens in this period was generally high compared to in the neighbouring kingdom of Wessex, it was also dependent on circumstance. A glance towards the forms of queenship that directly followed Cynethryth in Mercia demonstrates that there was no simple upward trajectory of the status of queens sparked by Cynethryth's reign. Coenwulf (r. 796-821) was married to a woman named Ælfthryth (fl. 804-818), who may have been his second wife, though no record survives of his first. Her name is recorded, as '*Ælfthryth regina*', in charter evidence between 804 and 818, but her occurrences as witness become especially common after 811. It is in this year that Coenwulf held a royal meeting in which his heirs gathered: his nephew Coenwald, his kinsman Cynebehrt, and his daughter, Cwoenthryth. It is possible that this meeting occurred as a response to the death of Coenwulf's son, Cynehelm.[133] Like Cynethryth, Cwoenthryth is another example of a Mercian royal woman being made heir to a king. As in the case of Cynethryth, here again we see a woman's rise to prominence in the source material occurring specifically alongside matters of dynasty and succession.

Though it may seem as if the prominence of Cynethryth had set a precedent for powerful queens in Mercia, no trace of a queen consort can be found in the historical record in the 820s during the reigns of Coenwulf's brother Ceolwulf (r. 821-23), or the usurpers Beornwulf (r. 823-26) and Ludeca (r. 826-27). There are a number of reasons that might explain the absence of consorts from the historical record during this time. The first reason is that these kings may not have had wives. The limited length of each of their reigns means that they were less able to establish legitimacy and engage in dynastic politics, whether married or otherwise. Offa's reign of twenty-nine years allowed him to secure power enough to elevate his queen, but Cynethryth rose to prominence in charter evidence thirteen years into his reign, with the birth of Ecgfrith. It should also be noted that a shorter reign in this context almost certainly means fewer opportunities for extant charter evidence, often the only place where the names of queens are found. The 820s in Mercia were a time of increasing instability, that saw Ceolwulf deposed, Beornwulf defeated by King Ecgbert at the battle of Ellendun, thus breaking the Mercian hegemony in the south-east, and Ludeca murdered.[134] Though Cynethryth is an example of an especially powerful and prominent queen even in a

[133] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 41.
[134] Simon Keynes, 'Mercia and Wessex in the Ninth Century', in *Mercia: An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. by Michelle P. Brown and Carol A. Farr (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), pp. 310–28 (p. 313).

Europe-wide context, the three reigns in the years 821-27, contrasted with the longevity of Offa and Coenwulf's reigns, reveal something of the precariousness of queenship in Mercia. During the reign of Ludeca's successor Wiglaf (r. 827-39, with a disruption in 829-30), his queen Cynethryth, whose name 'seems to hark back to the kin of Coenwulf if not earlier royal lines', witnessed both his extant charters in 831 and 836.[135] Likewise, in the reign of his successor Beohrtwulf (840-49), his queen Saethryth witnessed every one of his extant charters.[136] This is also true for Beohrtwulf's successor Burgred (r. 852-74) and his queen Æthelswith.[137] Each of these kings have significantly longer reigns than their three predecessors, but the prominence of their queens in charters may also have something to do with the status of those individual queens. Æthelswith, for example, was the daughter of King Æthelwulf of Wessex. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* link their marriage with a defensive military alliance between Burgred and Æthelwulf in 853, in order to bring the Welsh under subjection, and this likely extended to defence against Viking invasion.[138] Affording Æthelswith due respect would have been an important part of this alliance. It must be emphasised that there is a significant lack of evidence from ninth-century Mercia, and so the full implications of these queens featuring in charters cannot be ascertained. Even in the case of important and prominent queen consorts their careers are obscured, and we see only hints of them in the historical record.

Though we might look in the sources for the advent of a queenship defined by Christian principles, there is no such one moment. Definition by Christian principles was a gradual process. A lack of source material is one obstruction in tracing this development. Another is the longevity of reigns, for ideology must be given time and space to develop. Another is simply the individual circumstances of each ruler and their priorities. While we will not have the opportunity to examine the eventual culmination of Mercian queenship until Chapter 4, Chapter 2 will look at the earliest extant religious inauguration rite for a queen, which was created in circumstances entirely separate from the legacy of Cynethryth and Offa.

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[135] S 188 and S 190; Stafford, 'Political Women', pp. 42–43.
[136] S 191, S 192, S 205, S 193, S 194, S 195, S 196, S 204, S 198, and S 199.
[137] S 206, S 207, S 208, S 209, S 210, S 211, and S 214. In the latter she is described as 'coronata', see below Chapter 4.
[138] ASC A, ASC B and ASC C, 853; ASC D and ASC E, 852.

Chapter 2: The Judith *Ordo*

The earliest liturgical evidence for the ritual inauguration of English queens appears in the mid-ninth century. Bertrada's anointing alongside her husband Pippin in 751 established a precedent for queenly inaugurations in Europe, though we do not have any surviving sources that outline the specifics of this ceremony. The earliest extant western European text that contains directions for the performance of the inauguration of a queen is the Judith *Ordo*. The Judith *Ordo* is so-called as it was written for Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald (reigned 840-77), upon her marriage to the West-Saxon King Æthelwulf (reigned 839-58) in 856. As such, the *Ordo* has a dual function as both a marriage rite and an inauguration rite. It was composed by Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims (845-82), and is largely an adaptation of an English rite for the inauguration of a king.[139] The text survives only in seventeenth-century printed editions, and little is known about the original manuscript.[140] In spite of the limits of the physical evidence, we have an unusually clear picture of the circumstances in which this source was created. It is a rarity within the context of early medieval inauguration liturgy that we can be reasonably certain of a text's provenance and authorship, its political context, and the royal figure for whom it was intended. Liturgical sources, and especially inauguration *Ordines*, can be particularly difficult to pin to any specific context, as these are sources that are often created and amended with no single ceremony in mind. In the case of the Judith *Ordo* we have a rare example of a rite that was composed for a particular occasion and to which we can ascribe a particular context, and as such its significance is substantial. In his composition of this inauguration rite in 856, Archbishop Hincmar was tasked with creating an *Ordo* that presented both the responsibilities of a king's wife and the sacred significance of queenship. But rather than merely serving as a general prescription of queenly and wifely duties, this *Ordo* and the ceremony for which it was created were also influenced by remarkable contemporary political circumstances. As the origins of this *Ordo* are known to us, the relationship between its contents and context can thus be explored.

Political Circumstances in Wessex and West Francia

In 855, two years after sending a mission to Rome including his two youngest sons Æthelred and Alfred, King Æthelwulf of Wessex himself embarked on a papal pilgrimage. He entrusted the kingdom to his two adult sons, stipulating that the eldest, Æthelbald, would rule Wessex while

[139] Nelson, 'Earliest Royal *Ordo*', pp. 29–48.
[140] Judith *Ordo*, pp. 73-4.

Æthelberht, the second eldest, would rule his territory in the south-east and Kent.[141] In this same year, presumably in preparation for his journey, Æthelwulf also 'conveyed by charter the tenth part of his land throughout all his kingdom to the praise of God and to his own eternal salvation', an act that has been termed his 'decimation'.[142] He took with him a large retinue, including a six-year-old Alfred, who would now possibly undertake his second journey to Rome in two years.[143] On his outward journey through West Francia, Æthelwulf visited the court of King Charles the Bald. Prudentius of Troyes remarks in the *Annals of St Bertin* that Æthelwulf was given a 'reception' there but nevertheless was 'hastening on his way to Rome', and was escorted by Charles to the border.[144] After he arrived in Rome he stayed there for a year, during which time, according to Pope Benedict III's biographer, the king bestowed impressive gifts of precious objects, gold and silver upon the Diocese of Rome and its people.[145] On his return journey he again stayed at Charles' court, and this time for longer; the *Annals of St Bertin* state that it was on his way back from Rome in July 856 that he was betrothed to Judith, and the marriage itself occurred on 1 October 856, at the royal palace of Verberie sur l'Oise in Charles' kingdom of West Francia. During this ceremony, in which she was anointed and crowned, Judith's status was cemented not only as Æthelwulf's wife but also his queen. At this point Æthelwulf was around fifty years old and had been ruling Wessex for twenty-seven years. He'd been married to a woman named Osburh, who was almost certainly dead by 856, for reasons which will be outlined below.[146] He already had four living sons, two of whom were men mature enough to have the kingdom left in their hands in his absence. By contrast, his bride

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[141] Though Æthelwulf's first-born son Athelstan was ruling Kent as sub-king from 839 until c. 851, he disappears from contemporary source material at this point, presumably due to his untimely death.

[142] 'Ęþelwulf cyning teoþan dęl his londes ofer al his rice Gode to lofe 7 him selfum to ecere hęlo', ASC A, ASC D and ASC E, 855; ASC B and ASC C, 856: translation by Whitelock, *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, p. 43; S. E. Kelly, ed., *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 65–66; Simon Keynes, 'The West Saxon Charters of King Æthelwulf and his Sons', *English Historical Review*, 109, 434 (1994), 1109–49.

[143] Asser, *Asser's Life of King Alfred: Together with the Annals of Saint Neots erroneously ascribed to Asser*, ed. by William Henry Stevenson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1904), p. 9 (cap. 12); Asser, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*, trans. by Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), pp. 69–70; Simon Keynes, 'Anglo-Saxon Entries in the Liber Vitae of Brescia', in *Alfred the Wise: Studies in Honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of Her Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. by Jane Roberts, Malcolm Godden, and Janet Nelson (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), pp. 99–119. For doubts about Alfred making two journeys to Rome see Nelson, 'The Problem of King Alfred's Royal Anointing'.

[144] *The Annals of St-Bertin*, trans. by Janet Nelson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), p. 80 (855); Story, p. 238.

[145] *Le Liber pontificalis: texte, introduction et commentaire (Volume 2)*, ed. by Louis Duchesne (Paris: Thorin, 1892), p. 148.

[146] We know from Asser's *Life of Alfred* that Æthelwulf had previously been married to a woman named Osburh, Alfred's mother. It is not clear whether Osburh is also the mother of Alfred's older brothers, or whether they were products of other marriages or unions. In the famous poetry book incident in chapter 23 Asser is ambiguous on this point, writing that Alfred's mother set a reading challenge to Alfred and his brothers ('sibi et fratribus'), not specifically to her sons; *Vita Alfredi*, p. 20 (cap. 23). It is likely that Osburh died before Æthelwulf's remarriage to Judith (see below).

Judith was just twelve or thirteen years of age. It was at some point during Æthelwulf's journey home from Rome that his eldest son, Æthelbald, rebelled against him, supported by many of the kingdom's nobles and councillors. The rebellion forced Æthelwulf to placate his son by dividing his kingdom between them.[147] To decipher the meaning behind Judith's inauguration as queen and her marriage to Æthelwulf, we must first understand the events that surround it.

That Æthelwulf decided to embark upon this journey to Rome when his kingdom was under threat from Viking attack has puzzled historians. Although the West Saxons had won a number of victories over the Vikings in recent years, attacks were becoming more frequent and the invading warbands larger – indeed, it was in the early 850s that the Vikings had begun overwintering on the Isles of Thanet and Sheppey in Kent, right on Æthelwulf's doorstep.[148] An alliance between Wessex and Mercia in the form of Æthelwulf's daughter Æthelswith's marriage to King Burgred in 853 demonstrates that Æthelwulf had an ally, but may indicate that allies were sorely needed. Æthelwulf's pilgrimage to Rome at this pivotal time when the Viking threat loomed large has thus been interpreted in a number of ways, varying widely. One unflattering interpretation, put forward most notably by Frank Stenton, is that Æthelwulf's journey to Rome signified a shirking of the kingly duties of war and politics, and a mishandling of the external threat due to excessive personal piety.[149] Another view is that the pilgrimage was a desperate attempt to appease God's wrath, being meted out in the form of Viking invasion.[150] A more flattering interpretation is that the journey was a show of strength and prestige by a king who had both his kingdom and his enemies firmly in hand.[151]

On the matter of Æthelwulf's personal piety, Æthelwulf does seem to be an outwardly pious king, and perhaps even unusually so, indicated by his gift of three hundred mancuses of gold to be sent yearly to Rome, and what Asser tells us about extensive charitable provisions made after his death towards the poor men of Wessex:

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147 On the division of the kingdom see Simon Keynes, 'Introduction' in *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and other contemporary sources*, trans. by Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), pp. 9-58 (p. 15); *Vita Alfredi*, pp. 9-10 (cap 12); *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred*, p. 70, p. 235.

148 In Thanet in 851, and Sheppey in 855: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, pp. 42–43; ASC A, ASC B and ASC C, 853, 856; ASC D and ASC E, 851, 855.

149 For the piety argument, see: Kelly, p. 91; Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 245; Michael Enright, 'Charles the Bald and Aethelwulf of Wessex: The Alliance of 856 and Strategies of Royal Succession', *Journal of Medieval History*, 5.4 (1979), 291–302 (p. 291).

150 For the divine wrath argument, see: Martin J. Ryan and Nicholas J. Higham, *The Anglo-Saxon World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 255.

151 For the show of strength and/or prestige argument, see: Janet Nelson, 'Britain, Ireland, and Europe, c. 750 - c. 900', in *A Companion to the Early Middle Ages: Britain and Ireland, c. 500 - c. 1100*, ed. by Pauline Stafford (Chichester: Blackwell, 2009), pp. 231–47 (p. 240); D. P. Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1991), p. 164; Story, pp. 228–30.

> For the benefit of his soul (which from the first flower of his youth he was keen to care for in all respects), he enjoined on his successors after him, right up to the final Day of Judgement, that for every ten hides throughout all his hereditary land one poor man (whether native or foreigner) should be sustained with food, drink and clothing; on this condition, however, that the land should be occupied by men and livestock, and not be waste. He also ordered that every year a great sum of money, namely three hundred mancuses, should be taken to Rome, and be divided up there in this way: one hundred mancuses in honour of St Peter, especially for the purchase of oil with which all the lamps in that apostolic church were to be filled on Easter eve, and likewise at cockcrow; one hundred mancuses in honour of St Paul, on the same terms, for the purchase of oil for filling the lamps in the church of St Paul the Apostle on Easter eve and at cockcrow; and one hundred mancuses for the universal apostolic pope.[152]

Both Asser and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* state that Æthelwulf gave away a tenth of his land, but what this so-called 'decimation' actually entailed has been a matter of debate among historians.[153] As early as 839, as outlined in the *Annals of St Bertin*, an English king had written to the court of Louis the Pious seeking permission to travel through West Francia on the way to Rome, and this same letter also contained a warning relayed by a priest who had experienced a portentous dream, in which, due to the sins of Christian men, pagans would come forth with fire and swords and lay waste to the kingdom.[154] The identity of the author is not certain – a West-Saxon king is likely but given that the date of the letter is Æthelwulf's year of accession, both he and his father Ecgbert have both been put forward as candidates. Nevertheless, this annal demonstrates that not only had a royal pilgrimage to Rome been on the cards for a long time in Wessex, but also that such an act of piety had been considered in response to the Viking threat – not, as Stenton would have it, in ignorance of it.[155] The king's personal piety notwithstanding, the idea that by travelling to Rome Æthelwulf was neglecting his kingly duty and knowingly putting his kingdom in danger is highly questionable. His sons, both adults and – in the case of Æthelbald – experienced in battle against the Vikings, were able caretakers in his absence.[156] Whether his main motivation was piety or

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[152] 'Pro utilitate namque animae suae, quam a primaevo iuventutis suae flore in omnibus procurare studuit, per omnem hereditariam terram suam semper in decem manentibus unum pauperem, aut indigenam aut peregrinum, cibo, potu et vestimento successoribus suis, usque ad ultimam diem iudicii, post se pascere praecepit; ita tamen, si illa terra hominibus et pecoribus habitaretur et deserta non esset. Romae quoque omni anno *magnam pro anima sua pecuniam id est* trecentas mancussas, portari praecepit, quae taliter ibi dividerentur: scilicet centum mancussas in honorem Sancti Petri, specialiter ad emendum oleum, quo impleantur omnia luminaria illius apostolicae ecclesiae in vespera Paschae, et aequaliter in galli cantu, et centum mancussas in honorem Sancti Pauli, eadem condicione, *ad comparandum oleum in ecclesia Sancti Pauli Apostoli ad implenda luminaria in vespera Paschae et in galli cantu*, centum quoque mancussas universali papae apostolico', *Vita Alfredi*, pp. 15-16; translation by Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred*, pp. 72–73.
[153] ASC A, ASC D and ASC E, 855; ASC B and ASC C, 856; On the so-called 'Decimation Charters' see Simon Keynes, 'The West Saxon Charters of King Æthelwulf and his Sons', 1109-49.
[154] *The Annals of St-Bertin*, 44–45 (839).
[155] Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 245.
[156] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* tell us that Æthelbald helped his father secure a victory at *Aclea* in 851; ASC A, ASC B, ASC D and ASC E, 851; ASC C, 853.

prestige – to the extent, of course, that these can be separated in the context of medieval Christian kingship – Æthelwulf did not carelessly abandon a kingdom in peril.

Janet Nelson and Joanna Story both stress that Æthelwulf's position in 855 was one of relative strength. He had won a number of recent military victories against the Vikings, helped the Mercians in successfully subduing the Welsh, and recently brokered a marital alliance with neighbouring Mercia that may even have indicated Mercia's subordination to Wessex.[157] Nelson argues that by sending his youngest sons to Rome, and then following himself, Æthelwulf was acting in imitation of Carolingian rulers and engaging in imperial strategy. Indeed, Lothar I's eldest son had been invested with a belt by the Pope in 844 in the same way that the young Alfred also had on his first pilgrimage to Rome in 853.[158] Æthelwulf's generous gifts to the Pope while he was in Rome – which included a golden crown weighing four pounds, a gilt sword, two golden goblets, two golden images, four silver-gilt bowls, two golden silk tunics and two golden veils – reflect not just piety but a distinctly kingly prestige.[159] Story remarks that:

> Æthelwulf 's gifts easily rivalled those of Carolingian donors, or those sent to Benedict by the Byzantine emperor as described in the preceding chapter of the *Vita*, and were clearly chosen to reflect the personal generosity and spiritual wealth of the West Saxon king; here was no Germanic 'hillbilly' from the backwoods of the Christian world but, rather, a sophisticated, wealthy and utterly contemporary monarch.[160]

Story also suggests that, given Æthelwulf was in possession of a crown, and given that in 856 Hincmar adapted an English inauguration *Ordo* that could have been obtained from someone in Æthelwulf's retinue as a model for Judith's, perhaps Æthelwulf was hoping for a papal coronation to bring him in line with Carolingian emperors.[161] This is an interesting idea, especially given Æthelwulf had installed his sons as rulers of two separate dominions before his departure, but it is also one that must be considered with some important caveats – Æthelwulf was definitely not crowned by the Pope (it is hard to imagine Alfredian sources would have been silent on this matter) and yet gave generously to Rome in his will, indicating a relationship undamaged by the Pope's refusal. It is also certainly possible that Hincmar obtained the English *Ordo* another way – short texts are, after all, eminently portable. What is clear about Æthelwulf's papal expedition is that it presented an opportunity to bring him more in line with Carolingian models of kingship. In light of this, it is not a stretch to conclude that for the ageing Æthelwulf 855 was an opportune moment to travel to Rome – such a journey presented plenty of opportunities to guarantee the safety of his

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[157] Janet Nelson, 'The Franks and the English in the Ninth Century Reconsidered', in *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe: Alfred, Charles the Bald, and Others* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), pp. 141–58; Story, pp. 228–30.
[158] Nelson, 'The Franks and the English', pp. 145–46. A more in-depth discussion of this episode will follow in Chapter 4.
[159] Duchesne, II, p. 146.
[160] Story, p. 239.
[161] Story, pp. 242–43.

soul and his kingdom, but would also enable him to strengthen the relationship already burgeoning between Wessex and West Francia, gain the Pope's favour with lavish gifts, and return with enhanced prestige and divine favour in the face of his enemies both internal and external.

Indeed, if Æthelwulf's journey had been executed purely on grounds of piety, it seems peculiar to return to Wessex a year later with a young, prestigious Frankish bride. Æthelwulf's decision to marry Judith and make her his queen has invited almost as much deliberation from scholars as his decision to travel to Rome, with one concluding the marriage was the 'folly of a man senile before his time'.[162] The marriage is an anomaly in many ways – one of which is in terms of West Saxon dynastic strategy. It was not only a wedding that took place at Verberie, but a royal inauguration. The author of the entry for 856 in the *Annals of St Bertin* thus notes that when Æthelwulf gave Judith the title of Queen, this was something 'not customary before then to him or to his people'.[163] Asser tells us in his *Life of Alfred*, written c. 893, that it was not the custom of the West Saxons to bestow the title of 'queen' upon the king's wife.[164] Moreover, Æthelwulf's actions throughout his reign thus far, in entrusting two separate kingdoms to his two eldest sons and sending his two youngest sons to Rome to meet the Pope in 853, indicate that he recognised the claims of all his existing sons and intended the succession to pass fraternally among them. Indeed the king's will, conveyed to us through Asser, apparently stipulated that the kingdom would be split between his two eldest sons, and Alfred's own will would have it that Æthelwulf specified that fraternal succession would follow in Wessex and that whosoever of Æthelbald, Æthelred and Alfred should live longest 'was to succeed to everything' – the question remains as to how Æthelberht and Kent were to figure in this strategy.[165] Asser places Æthelwulf's writing of his will after his return from Rome, though drafting a will that outlined the succession would have been advisory when he was preparing to embark on his journey to Rome, particularly after the death of his first son Æthelstan, who had been ruling Kent until his disappearance from sources in the early 850s.[166] The picture of succession, though conveyed through complex source material, seems relatively straightforward in 855 – two adult sons were ready to inherit the kingdoms of Wessex and Kent, with two younger sons on their tails. Nelson sees this splitting of territories between sons as a distinctly imperial tactic; indeed these terms of succession are similar to those of the O*rdinatio Imperii*, an imperial decree in which Louis the Pious divided his empire between his sons.[167] Æthelwulf's decision to then go on to marry Judith a year later, in a ceremony that evoked fertility and confirmed her status

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[162] Robert Howard Hodgkin, *A History of the Anglo-Saxons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), p. 514.
[163] *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 83 (856).
[164] *Vita Alfredi*, p. 10-12 (cap. 13), *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 83 (856).
[165] *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred*, pp. 72–73, p. 174; *Vita Alfredi*, p. 14-16 (cap. 16).
[166] For a full discussion of the likely dating of Æthelwulf's will see: Pauline Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance: A Gendered Perspective on Alfred's Family History', in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 251–64 (p. 256 n. 17).
[167] Nelson, 'The Franks and the English', pp. 145-46.

as a divinely anointed queen, is a strong departure from this apparent initial plan. Judith and her powerful father were certainly a great threat to all four of Æthelwulf's sons.

However, the sequence of events is difficult to decipher – did Æthelbald, upon hearing that his father was returning with a young bride who might give him more heirs, rebel out of fear that the powers given to him by his father would be withdrawn, and crucially, not be able to be regained? Or did Æthelwulf, upon hearing that Æthelbald was rebelling, decide to take a prestigious bride as his queen in order to fortify his own position?[168] If we accept the former circumstance, in which the marriage occurred before the rebellion, an explanation is necessary as to why Æthelwulf defied his own dynastic strategy and that of his people in order to make Judith his queen. Both external and internal matters could have forced the king's hand here. Many scholars, in light of the growing Viking threat, have argued that the situation warranted a marriage alliance between Wessex and West Francia. As Pauline Stafford has argued, this marriage, along with Æthelswith's marriage to King Burgred of Mercia, stands in a long line of dynastic alliances made to secure these western European kingdoms against Viking attack.[169] These were surely extraordinary times that warranted a departure from existing custom. The question does arise as to why in this circumstance Æthelwulf decided to marry Judith himself, rather than having her married to one of his sons.[170] It is possible that Æthelbald had already indicated his rebellious nature before 855, and Æthelwulf was acting in response to this challenge to his power. Indeed, Nelson sees a possible purpose of Æthelwulf's journey to Rome as strengthening his hand against sons who were already vying for kingship.[171] He may have hoped that placing his sons as regents would placate them, and that he would return a more prestigious king with more powerful allies; his marriage to Judith might be taken alongside his journey to Rome as part of this same enterprise. It must be stressed that if this was the king's plan, it backfired spectacularly. Æthelwulf's absence gave Æthelbald the opportunity to gain the support of many of Æthelwulf's nobles and councillors, and presumably also gave him a chance to demonstrate that he was a worthy and capable ruler.

The second possibility is that word of the rebellion reached Æthelwulf before his betrothal to Judith, which then happened as a result. In this circumstance, Æthelbald must have had a different cause for which to rebel. King Æthelwulf's journey to Rome was fairly ordinary, but his return unusual. Several English kings had travelled to Rome in pilgrimage before him, but in each case the king had either been exiled or had abdicated the throne and gone to Rome to retire. In light of the preparations that Æthelwulf had made, in granting the succession of the kingdoms to his eldest

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[168] Enright, 'Charles the Bald and Aethelwulf of Wessex', pp. 291–302.
[169] Pauline Stafford, 'Charles the Bald, Judith and England', in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom. Papers Based on a Colloquium Held in London in April 1979*, ed. by Margaret Gibson, Janet Nelson, and David Gibson (Oxford: British Archeological Reports, 1981), pp. 137–51.
[170] Story.
[171] Nelson, 'Britain, Ireland, and Europe, c. 750 - c. 900', p. 240.

sons and giving away a large amount of lands ostensibly for the good of his soul, Story posits that 'Æthelwulf must have given the impression that he was retiring to Rome, leaving the way open for his sons to succeed'.[172] Whether or not he intended to return, and indeed whether or not he made his intentions clear to his sons, Æthelwulf's actions in entrusting the kingdom to his sons and making donations for his soul indicated that he knew return was no guarantee. It may be that Æthelbald was surprised to hear of his father's return and rebelled against him in anger, or it may be that he had simply decided he did not want to relinquish his recently obtained power. This sequence of events would also explain why Æthelwulf stayed so long in West Francia on his return; he was in exile, unable to return to his kingdom safely. Enright posits that it was in response to this rebellion that Æthelwulf was forced to marry Judith, in order to return to Wessex in a stronger position, with a bride promising new high-status heirs born to a queen, and a father-in-law who might fight to protect them.[173]

Both situations are plausible, and it is difficult to say, without new evidence clarifying the sequence of events, which one is more likely. Enright suggests that 'the most telling argument against an anti-Danish alliance… is the simple fact that no evidence whatsoever for any joint Frankish-West Saxon action against Danes or other Vikings can be found'.[174] That there is no evidence of the fruition or success of a military alliance is on the surface a compelling argument against this being the main motivation of the marriage. But it prompts the question: what evidence do we have of the success of a marital alliance on any other grounds? Though Æthelwulf was able to return to Wessex, he was diminished as a king and was forced to give a large portion of his territory over to his son, with the further promise that his son would inherit the rest upon his death. This arrangement seems more like the compromise of a man who was on the back foot than the power play of a king with enhanced prestige and powerful allies.

In attempting to understand the reasons behind this marital alliance, there is another side that must be taken into consideration; the West-Frankish perspective. It is worth noting that Charles the Bald was challenged by a series of political events that by 858 had developed into a crisis, when West Francia was invaded by his half-brother Louis the German and he fled in exile, and so any military promises made to Æthelwulf in 856 would have been placed on the back burner. Furthermore, Charles the Bald had his own reasons for arranging the marriage and inauguration in 856. If Æthelwulf was a king with imperial ambitions, Charles the Bald was surely even more so.[175] Nelson

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[172] Story, p. 240.
[173] Enright.
[174] Enright, p. 292.
[175] Janet Nelson, 'Translating Images of Authority: The Christian Roman Emperors in the Carolingian World', in *The Frankish World, 750-900* (London: Hambledon, 1996), pp. 89–98 (pp. 91–98).

sees the key to these ambitions being the exertion of influence over sub-kingdoms, and new opportunities were presenting themselves in the mid-850s:

> The death of Charles' eldest brother, the emperor Lothar, in 855 had been followed by a parcelling out of Lothar's realm among his three sons: the eldest of them ruled, as the West Frankish annalist put it, as "so-called emperor of Italy." After 855, Carolingian political relationships altered fundamentally, and north of the Alps new prospects of empire-building opened up. Charles the Bald's initiatives in later 855 and early 856 must be seen in the light of a response to the new conditions. So too must the marriage of Charles' daughter to Æthelwulf: it brought the West Saxon king into Charles' "family of kings," succeeding where Charlemagne had in a sense failed with Offa. But Charlemagne was certainly his grandson's model for (at this stage) a *Romfrei* imperial ideal.[176]

This marriage alliance may have been the key to the subjugation of Wessex to West Francia, especially once the royal couple produced an heir. Events did not conspire to test this hypothesis, as Judith appears to have remained childless until her husband's death, which came relatively quickly in 858. Their childlessness may be due to Judith's young age. As such, it is not clear what influence Charles the Bald would have asserted in Wessex had the succession of his progeny been a consideration. But Æthelwulf must have understood that these were the terms of the marriage – that he was signing himself up for a future of interference from his father-in-law. It is this that leads me to believe that Æthelwulf was in a position of weakness relative to Charles the Bald when the marriage was negotiated in 856, and this points to his son's rebellion being the leading factor. The alliance would allow him the chance to regain his kingdom – in part or in whole – from his son, which was surely worth the risk.

However, the marriage was not only a risk to Æthelwulf – Judith's safety was at risk. It was not common for Frankish kings to have their daughters married off: indeed, none of Charlemagne's ten daughters were married, and Louis the German and Lothar I had most of their daughters enter a religious life – it was even rarer for a Frankish royal daughter to be married to a foreigner.[177] Marriage to a foreign king would be a concerning prospect for any young girl, but this was particularly perilous for Judith. She was being sent to Wessex, where the status of the king's wife had been low since the accession of Ecgberht.[178] Moreover, the possibility that she would provide Æthelwulf with a new heir made her ongoing existence a threat to Æthelwulf's existing sons who sought to inherit the throne. As Stafford has argued, it is for reasons of Judith's safety that Charles the Bald took the unparalleled step of having Hincmar draw up an inauguration rite:

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[176] Nelson, 'The Franks and the English', p. 143.
[177] Janet Nelson, 'Women at the Court of Charlemagne: A Case of Monstrous Regiment?', in *The Frankish World, 750-900* (London: Hambledon, 1996), pp. 223–42; Anton Scharer, 'Charlemagne's Daughters', in *Changing Perspectives on England and the Continent in the Early Middle Ages* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 269-82; Stafford, 'Charles the Bald, Judith and England', pp. 137–51 (p. 140).
[178] Pauline Stafford, 'King's Wife in Wessex', 3–27; *Vita Alfredi*, p. 10-12 (cap. 13), *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 83 (856).

> It is no surprise that her father Charles the Bald took every precaution to ensure her security, most notably the unprecedented step of having her anointed as queen. Judith's anointing was to work the church's magic in her favour. Her position was to be enhanced by the deep changes brought about by the pouring of holy oil; her fertility was to be assured and the claims of the son she would therefore produce would be enhanced by the special status of his mother.[179]

There are perhaps two sides to this decision, however. Although confirming her high status and implicating the divine in her queenship might guarantee her safety, to Æthelwulf's sons it simultaneously makes her a more objectionable prospect. The issues of fertility and status-changing in the *Ordo* will be discussed in more detail below, but that Judith's offspring might have some magical, divine legitimacy carried through her blood and that of her prestigious ancestors could place a larger target on her. I would posit that, rather than Charles having his daughter crowned and anointed in an attempt to secure her safety, his main occupation was ensuring the recognition of his dynasty's prestige through Judith. By emphasising sacred status and fertility, the *Ordo* cements the throne-worthiness of Judith's offspring – any benefit to Judith herself was an added bonus.

Judith was ultimately safe in Wessex. Asser states that:

> …Without any disagreement or dissatisfaction on the part of his nobles, [Æthelwulf] ordered that Judith, the daughter of King Charles [the Bald] whom he had received from her father, should sit beside him on the royal throne until the end of his life, though this was contrary to the (wrongful) custom of that people.[180]

It is unclear how Æthelwulf was able to square this situation with both his sons and King Charles the Bald. As already discussed, his will, as conveyed by Asser, stipulates the succession was to go to his existing sons, and we must imagine that they had his assurance on this for Æthelbald's rebellion to be pacified and for Judith to remain his queen. Judith did make it out of her marriage alive in 858. Her status as a queen and her prestige was certainly recognised in Wessex, as her stepson Æthelbald controversially married her upon his father's death, a clear breach of canon law. Æthelbald died two years later, this marriage also apparently having produced no heirs. At this point Judith sold the lands she had acquired in England and returned to her father's court, twice widowed and still only in her teens. She later eloped with Baldwin, the count of Flanders. As the remainder of this chapter will demonstrate, Judith's second marriage was a testament to the power of the inauguration ritual and its capacity to convey status.

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[179] Pauline Stafford, 'King's Wife in Wessex', pp. 16–17.
[180] *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred*, p. 71; 'et Iuthitham, Karoli regis filiam, quam a patre suo acceperat, iuxta se in regali solio [suo,] sine aliqua suorum nobilium controversia et odio, usque ad obitum vitae suae, contra perversam illius gentis consuetudinem, sedere imperavit', *Vita Alfredi*, p. 11 (cap. 13).

The Judith *Ordo*

As previously stated, the Judith *Ordo* functions both as a marriage rite and an inauguration rite. This source is central to our understanding of the early development of royal ritual in western Europe, as not only the earliest example of a queen's inauguration *Ordo*, but also the only example of an *Ordo* that combines the rites of marriage and inauguration, and a rare early example of a marriage rite.[181] The *Ordo* is one cohesive text that for the purpose of analysis can be separated into two consecutive parts reflecting the dual function of the ceremony, both of which will be considered here. The first chiefly concerns the marriage of Judith to Æthelwulf, while the second is a queenly inauguration rite for Judith based on the First English *Ordo*; an English rite for the inauguration of a king. The marriage rite within the *Ordo* includes (listed in order of occurrence): a blessing over the bride, the veiling of the bride, a prayer over gifts ('dotes'), the gift of a ring to the bride representing the marital bond, a pledge ('despondeo te…') that evokes several Old Testament wives and widows, and then a fertility prayer over the royal couple, a version of which can be also found in the Gelasian Sacramentary, which was created at the convent of Chelles in the mid-eighth century.[182] Then follows the inauguration rite, principally adapted from the First English *Ordo*, which begins with a blessing over Judith, followed by a 'lift up your hearts' ('sursum corda') that precedes the anointing prayer, then a coronation prayer that is an original composition by Hincmar, and then blessings for the fertility of Judith and Æthelwulf, and also the fertility of their kingdom. The final blessing is again over 'gifts' that have been taken up (in this instance, 'dona'), though the gifts themselves are not specified.

The main textual model for the inauguration of Judith was the First English *Ordo*, with the exception of the coronation prayer, which was lacking an exemplar in the king's rite, and the final blessing. The First English *Ordo* is an early version of an inauguration rite for a king found in the Leofric Missal, the Lanalet Pontifical and the Egbert Pontifical. The most significant work elucidating this *Ordo* was published by Nelson in 1980, in which she established the English origin of the rite and the fact that it is likely the earliest extant royal inauguration rite, as well as its relationship to the Judith *Ordo*.[183] Before Nelson's substantial revisions, most scholars were under the impression that the First English *Ordo* was adapted from the Judith *Ordo*, because the First English *Ordo* appeared to begin with prayers adapted from the rite for the consecration of nuns ('consecratio virginum') found in the Gelasian Sacramentary. The assumption was that it must have

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[181] Cyrille Vogel, 'Les Rites de la célébration du mariage: Leur signification dans la formation du lien durant le haut moyen âge', in *Il matrimonio nella società altomedievale* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1977), pp. 397–472 (pp. 430–32); Korbinian Ritzer, *Formen, Riten und religiöses Brauchtum der Eheschliessung in den christlichen Kirchen des ersten Jahrtausends: Anmerkungen und Verzeichnisse* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1952), pp. 330–32.
[182] *Liber sacramentorum romanae aeclesiae ordinis anni circuli*, ed. by Leo C. Mohlberg, L. Eizenhofer and P. Siffrin (Rome: Herder, 1960), pp. 208–10.
[183] Nelson, 'Earliest Royal *Ordo*'.

been adapted from the queen's *Ordo*, for as Percy Ernst Schramm asked, 'how could anyone in the case of a king have conceived the idea of putting a prayer over virgins at the base of the *Ordo*?'.[184] To maintain this argument, Schramm had to invent a lost, more substantial version of the Judith *Ordo* to account for the fact that it did not include, as the First English *Ordo* did, full versions of these prayers. It was also assumed that the *Ordo* found in the Leofric Missal, Lanalet Pontifical and Egbert Pontifical was not English in origin. By close-reading the liturgy, Nelson carried out substantial work to revise these conclusions, establishing that the prayers in the First English *Ordo* do not originate in the *consecratio virginum* as suspected, that the *Ordo* itself was English in origin, and that Hincmar clearly adapted this earlier *Ordo* in his composition of the Judith *Ordo*. These ground-breaking revisions led to the conclusion that the First English *Ordo* was in existence earlier than 856, and so is the earliest extant royal inauguration rite currently known to scholars.[185]

That Hincmar chose this *Ordo* on which to base his liturgy for Judith is significant in a number of respects. Firstly, it suggests that there was no existing queen's rite for Hincmar to adapt, and might even indicate that the Judith *Ordo* was the first queenly inauguration ritual to be formalised in writing. Hincmar's use of a king's *Ordo* as a model demonstrates that kingship and queenship were comparable institutions, at least insofar as the inauguration is concerned. However, this brings into question why Hincmar did not base Judith's inauguration rite on a West Frankish king's *Ordo.* As Joanna Story posited, it could be that Hincmar obtained the First English *Ordo* from Æthelwulf himself or one of his entourage; indeed, this was possibly the rite that was used at Æthelwulf's own inauguration – we can be fairly certain he had one, as it is unlikely he would consent to his wife being formally made queen in a sacred ceremony otherwise.[186] As Judith was to be a West-Saxon queen, it is entirely appropriate that she should be inaugurated using a West-Saxon rite. Another possibility is that there simply was no other rite of kingly inauguration for Hincmar to adapt. As we possess no evidence of a West-Frankish *Ordo* as early as this, it cannot be ruled out that the First English *Ordo* may have been the first ever formalised, recorded *Ordo*.

Archbishop Hincmar created four inauguration *Ordines* in his career, of which Judith's is the earliest. The second was an *Ordo* for the inauguration of Queen Ermentrude, wife of Charles the Bald, in 866. The third *Ordo* was for Charles the Bald's inauguration as King of Lotharingia at Metz in 869, and the fourth was for his son Louis the Stammerer's inauguration as King of the West Franks in 877. In each of these cases Hincmar drew largely on existing liturgical material where he could. Richard Jackson approaches Hincmar's role in the creation of these *Ordines* with an important caveat, stating that:

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[184] Percy Ernst Schramm, 'Ordines-Studien III: Die Krönung in England', *Archiv Für Urkundenforschung*, 15 (1938), 305–91 (p. 9, n.3); quoted in Nelson, 'Earliest Royal *Ordo*', p. 344.
[185] Nelson, 'Earliest Royal *Ordo*'.
[186] Story, pp. 228–30.

> It has been and would be misleading to say that he composed them or that he wrote them, because in each case he borrowed so heavily. He essentially compiled the texts, and his own contribution was limited to making the least number of modifications necessary to fit the circumstance.[187]

I would argue the Judith *Ordo* is the sole exception to this. Apart from the one prayer which is also found in the Gelasian Sacramentary, the marriage rite in the Judith *Ordo* is individual to this source and was apparently composed by Hincmar for the occasion. Likewise, although the model for the inauguration portion of the *Ordo* is clearly the First English *Ordo*, there is no model for the coronation prayer, which was also thus likely an original composition by Hincmar, and the text of the First English *Ordo* was rewritten and rearranged for Hincmar's purpose. For these reasons, it is not inaccurate or misleading to say that Hincmar both composed and compiled the Judith *Ordo*.

Hincmar and Marriage

Although the rite of inauguration is central to the main questions posed by this thesis, it would be erroneous to neglect the nuptial aspect of the Judith *Ordo*. As a queen's role relates to her marriage to the king, marital legitimacy is surely key to queenly legitimacy. That Judith's inauguration as queen and her marriage to Æthelwulf were performed together in the same ceremony demonstrates a connection in their functions. As we saw in Chapter 1, in the capitulary signed by the kings of Northumbria and Mercia, marital legitimacy could have bearing on the legitimacy of an heir and his suitability to rule. The nuptials in the Judith *Ordo* in fact warrant particular attention, as there are so few sources illuminating the form and function of early medieval marriage ceremonies. The Judith *Ordo* is one of only a few marriage rites from this early period, which makes it an invaluable source for understanding how the ritual of marriage could be interpreted.[188] Marriage underwent significant changes between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries as it became subsumed under church authority, but before this point the Christian aspects of marriage, though present, had not yet been formalised.[189] Marriage was largely a secular arrangement, and thus it is difficult to find detailed information pertaining to marital practices. There are two key authorities for understanding what a high-status, Christian marriage should have looked like in the ninth century; one is Hincmar himself, to whom we will inevitably return in due course; the other is Pope Nicholas I. In 866 Nicholas wrote a letter to the Bulgarian Khan Boris, a convert to Christianity, in order to explain the Roman Church's nuptial process.[190] He first outlines the process of betrothal ('sponsalia'), which he states is the 'promised agreements' ('promissa foedera') of the 'future nuptials' ('quae futurarum sunt nuptiarum'), which require the consent ('consensus') of both those who contract

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[187] Richard Jackson, 'Who Wrote Hincmar's Ordines?', *Viator*, 25 (1994), 31–52 (p. 47).
[188] Vogel, p. 430.
[189] Jean-Baptiste Molin and Protais Mutembe, *Le rituel du mariage en France du XIIe au XVIe siècle* (Paris, Beauchesne, 1974).
[190] 'Nicolaus capitulis 106 ad Bulgarorum consulta respondet', *Epistolae Karolini Aevi IV*, MGH (Berlin: Weidmann, 1925), pp. 568-600.

the pact and those who have power over them (i.e. their parents or kin). The 'male betrothed one' ('sponsus') will have betrothed ('desponderit') the female betrothed one ('sponsam') to him with the pledges ('arrhis'), through the finger marked in faith to him with a ring.' The betrothed male then presents his bride-to-be with a dower gift ('dotem') and a written document that confirms the agreement ('scripto pactum'). Then, after a suitable time ('apto tempore'), and not before the lawfully appointed time ('tempus lege diffinitum') has passed, they shall both be led to the nuptial agreements ('nuptialia foedera'). In this ceremony, the couple enter the church with gifts ('oblationibus') that must be offered to God. They receive a blessing and then the 'heavenly veil' ('velamen caeleste suscipiunt'), the latter only if it is not their second marriage. Then they leave the church wearing crowns ('coronas') that belong to the church for use on such occasions. Nicholas also remarks, however, that he 'does not claim it is a sin if all these things do not occur in a marriage agreement' ('peccatum autem esse, si haec cuncta in nuptiali foedere non interveniant, non dicimus'), as many people are too poor to fulfil each of these steps. The only real requirement is the consent ('consensus') of those being married, for all other festivities are in vain ('frustrantur') if they lack consent ('consensus […] defuerit'). It is not copulation but free will ('voluntas') which makes a marriage. Thus, in Pope Nicholas' letter we have a description of what the highest church authority expected from a marriage, but also what was in his eyes the most significant element: the consensual betrothal of the man and woman to each other.

There is no other source that prescribes the Christian process of betrothal and marriage in this early period apart from the Judith *Ordo* itself, and other key writings by Hincmar relating to marriage.[191] It is thus pertinent to compare Nicholas' letter with the Judith *Ordo*. The marriage rite laid out by Hincmar fulfils much of what Nicholas expects from a Christian marriage: many elements of the betrothal process are present, with the giving of a ring to Judith, the gifts likely symbolising the dower, and the veiling of only the bride – not Æthelwulf who had been married previously. Judith is given a crown, although functionally – as indicated by the contents of the coronation prayer, which will be explored more fully below – this is a symbol of her queenship as distinct from her status as a wife. Hincmar is clearly operating within the same general framework as Nicholas in 866, but his conception of marriage in the Judith *Ordo* is different. What is particularly interesting about the marriage rite that Hincmar constructed is the way in which it combines two processes that Nicholas sees as distinct phases separated by a period of time: the betrothal agreement (the 'sponsalia', or 'promissa foedera') and the marriage agreement ('nuptialia foedera'). As previously

[191] Hincmar was very interested in marriage: see Hincmar of Rheims, *De divortio Lotharii regis et Theutbergae reginae*, ed. by Letha Böhringer, MGH (Hannover: Hahn, 1992); *De Divortio*, trans. by Rachel Stone and Charles West (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), pp. 15, 26, 45–54; Also De Raptu, a treatise on the abduction of women: Sylvie Joye, 'Family Order and Kingship According to Hincmar', in *Hincmar of Rheims: Life and Work*, ed. by Rachel Stone and Charles West (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), pp. 190–210; and Hincmar of Rheims, 'Epistola 136', in *Epistolae Karolini aevi VI*, ed. by Ernst Perels, MGH (Berlin: Weidmann, 1939), pp. 88-107.

noted, the *Annals of St Bertin* state that the betrothal ('desponsatam') between Judith and Æthelwulf occurred in July and the marriage ('matrimonium') in October. It is possible, according to Nelson, that Hincmar retrospectively wrote this part of the annal himself when he became the author of the Annals in the first half of the 860s.[192] Despite the time that elapsed between the two events, within the Judith *Ordo* there is little sense that Hincmar intends to portray the betrothal and marriage as distinct stages; the ceremony begins with the veiling signifying the marriage, and then goes on to the blessing of the dower and giving of the ring signifying the betrothal. It is possible that the betrothal between Judith and Æthelwulf in July was purely a secular agreement that did not receive an ecclesiastical blessing, and thus Hincmar has chosen to include the process within his marriage rite. It thus may be more accurate to describe the Judith *Ordo* as having three functions as opposed to two: Hincmar was already tasked with composing an *Ordo* that combined the rites of marriage and royal inauguration, and he likely saw no reason why he should not also ensure the betrothal agreements – so central to the marital process – were sanctified in the process.

There is a significant difference between how Pope Nicholas and Hincmar conceived of marriage, and that is in the relative importance they put on each stage. Nicholas admits that the only real requirement for a marriage in the Roman church is the initial consent of the couple to be betrothed to one another. Hincmar would have agreed that consent ('consensus') was an important part of any Christian marriage – and it should be stressed here that consent would apply to the will of Judith's father, not Judith herself.[193] But taking into account Hincmar's writings on a marital dispute in 860, it is clear that he would have disagreed with Nicholas that this is the only requirement for a marriage. Along with *De Divortio*, his famous tract on the divorce case of King Lothar and Queen Theutberga, he also wrote a letter advising two bishops on how to conduct a tribunal on the marriage of Stephen, an Aquitanian count.[194] Stephen's father-in-law Count Raymund of Toulouse had complained to the bishops that his daughter's husband was refusing to consummate his marriage. Stephen claimed that there was an impediment to consummation. Stephen said that he had had a sexual relationship with a close relative of Raymund's daughter. Despite this, he knowingly pursued her hand in marriage, and they became betrothed. He then sought the advice of his confessor, who deemed the match incestuous. After an apparent attempt to avoid the marriage, Stephen found his hands were tied by political circumstance, and not wishing to displease Raymund he publicly wedded his daughter, then had a crisis of conscience and refused to consummate. He believed consummating the marriage would bring both him and his wife into sin. The bishops were not sure how to judge the case, as to do so the complaint should come from the countess herself – Raymund had already given her to Stephen in marriage he thus no longer had authority over her.

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[192] Janet Nelson, 'Introduction', in *The Annals of St-Bertin*, trans. by Janet Nelson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), pp. 1-19 (pp. 14–15).
[193] Joye, pp. 198–200.
[194] 'Epistola 136', pp. 88-107.

Nevertheless, worried about the possible scandal, the bishops met with Stephen, and decided that his case must be tried by a public synod. The bishops thus sought Hincmar's counsel.[195]

Hincmar's response to this case provides interesting insight into his opinions of the relative importance of the stages of the marital process. Within the letter he gives a short prescription of what a marriage should involve:

> We set out this much as is necessary to say: that they undertake a legitimate coupling between free born and equal people; when the woman has been asked and legally betrothed, gifted, and honoured in public nuptials, by the parents between whom it is accepted, she is tied with the bond of marriage, and out of the two of them one body and one flesh is created, as it is written: 'The two will be in one flesh; now the bodies are not two but one'; and 'What God joins, let not man separate.'[196]

Where Nicholas explicitly states that copulation does not make a marriage, Hincmar discusses the consummation as an important part of marriage, quoting Christ's dictum from Matthew 19.6, in which the couple become 'one flesh'. Hincmar's prescription of a Christian marriage does not, as Nicholas' does, leave room for neglect of any of the stages, but it does stop short of suggesting the involvement of the church or a priest was necessary. For Hincmar, the public ceremony is important, but it is not the church that joins the couple, but God himself. This is also reflected in the ring-giving prayer of the Judith *Ordo*, in which the same phrase from Matthew 19.6 is utilised, 'what God has joined together, let no one separate'. Philip L. Reynolds argues that in Hincmar's composition of the Judith *Ordo*:

> Hincmar changed the quod ("what") of the original verse to quos ("those whom"). With quod, the statement seemed to posit a law that God had enacted in the beginning. The quos form suggested that God himself joined the spouses in the present day, just as he had joined Adam and Eve in Eden. To make this implication explicit, Hincmar also changed the tense from past to present, saying not "what God has joined," but "those whom God joins."[197]

By adjusting Christ's words in this way, Hincmar conveys that the process of God joining the couple is happening in the present, at the marriage ceremony itself. Three stages of the marriage process are thus implicated in this sacramental joining of the couple by God – in his letter to Stephen it is implicitly the consummation, and in the Judith *Ordo* this phrase is used within the ring-giving, a stage of betrothal that is nevertheless being enacted within the public nuptials. To

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[195] Philip L. Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments: The Sacramental Theology of Marriage from Its Medieval Origins to the Council of Trent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 222-24.

[196] 'Tantum dicere necessarium duximus, quia inter ingenuos et inter aequales legitima fiunt coniugia, cum a parentibus, quorum inter est, petita et legaliter desponsata, dotata et publicis nuptiis honorata femina coniugii copulae sociatur et ex duobus unum corpus unaque caro efficitur, sicut scriptum est: 'Erunt duo in carne una; iam non duo, sed una sunt caro'; et: 'Quod Deus iunxit, homo non separet."; translation my own.

[197] Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments*, p. 92.

Hincmar, each of these processes holds sacramental weight. Sacramental theology was not formalised or doctrinal in the ninth century, but Saint Augustine's definition of a sacrament applies here: 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace.'[198] Hincmar perceives marriage – that is, the enduring state of being married as opposed to the temporary act of getting married – to be something in which God was directly involved.[199]

Hincmar believed that Stephen's marriage could and should be dissolved. This decision rests not on the fact that the marriage had not been consummated, but that Stephen and his wife were unable to consummate the marriage. They could physically have sex, but in Hincmar's view, this would not be a consummation of a marriage, as the consummation of marriage is a sacrament of Christ and the Church and thus cannot be a debased act. Stephen's marriage simply cannot achieve 'the sacrament of incorporation into the unity of Christ and the church'.[200] Hincmar argues that if a marriage has no capacity to be consummated, as in cases of incest, it thus cannot be sacramental, so Stephen's marriage was never a marriage and should be dissolved. He believed that consummation, and thus the capacity to consummate, a matter dismissed by Nicholas, is essential to a marriage. This is further cemented when Hincmar writes that a couple that have undergone public nuptials but have not yet consummated their marriage are 'wedded but unmarried' ('nuptiati sed innupti').[201] However, he also argues that if the couple had been able to come together in sexual union without impediment, the marriage would have become irrevocable at the point of the nuptial ceremony, not the consummation. He gives the example of the marriage at Cana, following the tradition that John the Evangelist was the bridegroom, and that he abandoned his bride to be a disciple of Jesus.[202] He states that if John had been called to Christ before the full celebration of nuptials, both could choose whether to remain celibate or to remarry, but if it was after the nuptials but before the consummation, neither would be free to remarry and both must remain chaste:

> Regarding which – namely John's wife to be – if the Lord had called him not only before the union of the flesh, but also before the full celebration of the nuptials, we do not read whether she remained in continence like the wife of blessed Peter, who persevered most continently, or – perhaps – chose to marry another according to the old law, so that seed might be left to Israel. It would not have remained in her choice had they nuptially copulated after the legal nuptials, nor would it have been permitted for John to leave her, according to the evidence of the gospels, if he had led her (once she was betrothed, gifted, and honoured) in public nuptials, even before the union of the flesh, had he not clearly decided to remain in continence, but to marry another.[203]

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[198] Saint Augustine, *Liber de catechizandis rudibus* (London: Methuen, 1915), p. 75 (cap. 26).
[199] Reynolds, p. 231.
[200] Reynolds, pp. 225–30.
[201] Reynolds, p. 215. 'Epistola 136', p. 103.
[202] Hincmar often referred to this story: see Stone and West, *De Divortio*, p. 45.
[203] 'De cuius scilicet Iohannis futura uxore, nisi eum Dominus non solum ante carnis unionem, verum et ante nuptiarum percelebrationem vocaret, sicut de beati Petri uxore, quae continentissime

This passage gives a strong indication that although valuing the betrothal, nuptials, and consummation as essential stages of the sacramental process of marriage, Hincmar believes the public nuptials are the point at which a marriage becomes permanent.

Any analysis of marriage in the Judith *Ordo* must be conducted with an awareness of its nature as a single text, for a single occasion, with a single author. The ninth century was a period in which the theological implications of such ceremonies were still being developed and debated; Hincmar's treatises and letters on various marriage cases during the 860s are testament to this. While Pope Nicholas saw the key aspect of marriage to be the initial consent of the couple to be betrothed, Hincmar places an essential value on all three stages of marriage; the betrothal, the nuptial ceremony, and the consummation. All three of these are reflected in the Judith *Ordo*, which is in itself a prescription of the stage which Hincmar sees as the point of no return in a marriage; the public ritual. Richard Jackson has commented that Hincmar's composition of royal *Ordines* primarily served his 'politico-religious goals, the foremost of which was to enhance the power and prestige of the archbishop of Reims'.[204] The Judith *Ordo* reflects a ceremony that does it all, bringing together several stages of marriage and a ritual crowning and anointing. Hincmar's particular *raison d'être* was to elevate his own status as Archbishop and the status of his see.

We have a relative abundance of material enlightening us on Hincmar's political theological viewpoint on marriage. This is not the case with queenship. Hincmar's *De Divortio* is a lengthy treatise on King Lothar's attempt to divorce Queen Theutberga and marry his concubine Waldrada.[205] If one reads this source hoping to find Hincmar's thoughts on queenship, disappointment will follow. Hincmar is entirely concerned with the theology of their marriage and the repudiation of Theutberga as a wife, with no mention of the political implications of the repudiation of a queen. As Theutberga's queenship rested on the validity of her marriage, marriage was the primary issue. That said, it is tempting to wonder whether Theutberga had been officially inaugurated, or religiously anointed, and whether this public ritual would have had a bearing on how pressing her continuance specifically as queen was to Hincmar. Hincmar certainly demonstrates concern about queenship in his assessment of Lothar's decision to crown Waldrada in his entry for 862 in the *Annals of St Bertin*:

> Lothar had been demented, so it was said, by witchcraft and ensnared in a blind passion by the wiles of his concubine Waldrada for whom he had cast aside his wife Theutberga. Now with the backing of his uncle Liutfrid and of Walter, who because

perseveravit, non legitur, utrum in continentia manserit an secundum legem veterem, ut semen in Israel relinqueret, alii nubere forte delegerit. In cuius hoc arbitrio non maneret, si post legales nuptias fuissent nuptialiter copulati, nec Iohanni esset licitum secundum evangelii documentum, si deponsatam, dotatam et publicis nuptiis honoratam duxisset, etiam ante unionem carnis relinquere, si non delegisset ex consensus in continentia permanere, sed aliam ducere'; translation my own.

[204] Jackson, 'Who Wrote Hincmar's Ordines?', p. 47.

[205] *De divortio Lotharii regis et Theutbergae reginae*; *De Divortio*.

> of this were his special favourites, and with the consent – an abominable thing this is to say – even of certain bishops of his realm, Lothar crowned Waldrada and coupled with her as if she were his lawful wife and queen, while his friends grieved and spoke out against this action.[206]

It is unclear from this annal whether Lothar had Waldrada anointed; the text states only that she was crowned, but it also stresses the consent (and thus involvement) of bishops. Hincmar is concerned about Theutberga's repudiation and what he sees as the unlawful marriage of Lothar and Waldrada, but he is also particularly concerned that Waldrada has been made queen. The Judith *Ordo* has something to tell us about Hincmar's thoughts on the permanence and indissolubility of being ritually and religiously made queen through anointing, which will be discussed further below. That Hincmar was particularly concerned about Waldrada's false claim to queenship is not to say that Hincmar would have been more likely to defend the marriage of an anointed or inaugurated queen as opposed to a king's wife – marriage and queenship were connected but separate issues. This leads us back to an earlier question about the circumstances in which Æthelwulf and Judith were married. Hincmar's strong views on the indissolubility of marriage and the capacity to remarry laid out in the *De Divortio*, his Letter to Stephen and this entry in the *Annals of St Bertin* lead me to conclude that Æthelwulf's previous wife Osburh was certainly dead by 856. I do not imagine that Hincmar would have performed a marriage ceremony between Æthelwulf and Judith if Æthelwulf already had a living wife.

A Fertility Rite?

As we have seen in the case of Offa and Cynethryth, a queen's status could be raised in order to strengthen the legitimacy of her heirs, and thus the royal dynasty. It follows that ability of the royal couple to produce heirs would be a primary concern after a royal wife had been raised to the status of queen. The two earliest extant *Ordines* of Frankish origin are the Judith *Ordo* and the Ermentrude *Ordo*, both compiled by Hincmar and both written for the anointing of queens.[207] Ermentrude's anointing was conducted in very different circumstances to those surrounding the Judith *Ordo*, given that it occurred twenty years after Charles the Bald and Ermentrude were first married. Taken together, these two early anointing ceremonies have prompted much discussion about queenly anointing rituals of this period having the primary purpose of bestowing a 'divinely-blessed fertility' onto the queen.[208] Ermentrude's consecration at Saint-Médard in Soissons, the location of Pippin

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[206] *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 102 (862).
[207] 'Ordo VI: Ordo of Ermentrude', *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 80-86.
[208] I explored the topic of fertility in the Judith *Ordo* in a public-facing article written on behalf of Leeds University Union Medieval Society for LGBT history month: Florence H R Scott, 'The King's Womb and the Queen's Semen? Debunking Essentialist Views of Fertility in Early Medieval Royal Inaugurations', *Medium* (2021) <https://luumedievalsociety.medium.com/the-kings-womb-and-the-queen-s-semen-40b0ab5cd085> [accessed 30 July 2024].

and Bertrada's joint inauguration in 751, took place at a time when Charles the Bald was facing something of a dynastic crisis: although he had had many sons by Ermentrude, by 866 they had all either become bishops, had died young, or had become incapacitated by disability or injury.[209] Charles was in need of a suitable heir, but at the time of Ermentrude's anointing she was around forty-three years old. The liturgy in the Ermentrude *Ordo* contains some references to fertility, compiled by Hincmar from marriage liturgy. However, it is the *adlocutio*, an address given by two bishops to be said before the liturgical ceremony, that survives separately from the *Ordo* itself, that cemented fertility as the principal purpose of the ceremony in the minds of scholars. This *adlocutio* was written by Hincmar but read aloud in the ceremony by Bishop Herard of Tours. Herard first explains the dynastic difficulties Charles was experiencing, and then goes on to state that through the mediation of the bishops, he wished for an episcopal blessing to come upon Ermentrude, so that 'from her the Lord may deign to give him such offspring that the holy church may find relief and the kingdom a needed defence'.[210] He then justifies this request by evoking the biblical examples of Abraham and Sarah, who were given the ability to conceive by God in advanced age, and their son Isaac and his wife Rebecca, who were able to conceive despite Rebecca's infertility.[211] Zubin Mistry has explored how the contents of this *adlocutio* have influenced the meaning that scholars have placed on the *Ordo* and the anointing ceremony itself.[212] In 1955, following the interpretation of P. E. Schramm, Ernst Kantorowicz wrote that Ermentrude's anointing ceremony had the 'effects of a *Fruchtbarkeitszauber*', a fertility spell.[213] This was corroborated by Nelson in 1977 who referred to Ermentrude's consecration as a 'fertility charm', and Jane Hyam in 1990 and Richard Jackson in 1994, who both deem the Ermentrude *Ordo* a 'fertility rite'.[214] Mistry provides much-needed nuance to the idea of the Ermentrude *Ordo* as solely a fertility rite, arguing that the special importance of fertility, a 'fleeting refrain' in the *Ordo* itself, would 'fall apart' were it not for the *adlocutio*.[215] He places the request for a blessing over Ermentrude's fertility within the context of Carolingian kingship and dynasty, an argument to which I will return in due course.

Despite the *Ordo* itself lacking a particular concentration on fertility, the interpretation of Ermentrude's anointing has irrevocably influenced how queenly anointing is viewed in general, and

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[209] Zubin Mistry, 'Ermentrude's Consecration (866): Queen-Making Rites and Biblical Templates for Carolingian Fertility', *Early Medieval Europe*, 27.4 (2019), 567–88 (pp. 572–74).
[210] Herard of Tours, quoted in Mistry, p. 581, n. 75.
[211] Genesis 17; Genesis 25.
[212] Mistry, pp. 582-86.
[213] Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, 'The Carolingian King in the Bible of San Paolo Fuori le Mura', in *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honour of Albert Mathias Friend, Jr.*, ed. by K Weitzmann (Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 293.
[214] Janet Nelson, 'On the Limits of the Carolingian Renaissance', in *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 1986), 49-67 (p. 65); Jackson, 'Who Wrote Hincmar's Ordines?', p. 35; Jane Hyam, 'Ermentrude and Richildis', in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, ed. by M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (Aldershot: Routledge, 1990), pp. 154–68 (p. 160).
[215] Mistry, 579-580

it has also influenced analysis of the Judith *Ordo*. In 1977 Nelson differentiated between kingly and queenly anointing in the early medieval period:

> Since in the early medieval West 'society' was a kingdom or accumulation of kingdoms, to consecrate a king was to assert a society's identity. And its continuity through time? Here, finally, is where the queen's anointing came in; for it was through the provision of heirs to the royal house and the implied confining of heirs to a single line, that the queen's divinely-blessed fertility helped assure the integrity and the continuance of society itself.[216]

Michael Enright took this argument to extremes in his analysis of the Judith *Ordo* in 1979. Echoing interpretations of Ermentrude's anointing as a *Fruchtbarkeitszauber*, he saw 'no good reason […] why the same interpretation may not also be applied to the anointing of Judith'.[217] He goes on to describe Judith's anointing as a 'fertility charm', and the queenly anointing ceremony as having 'the magico-religious purpose of making her fertile'. For Enright, fertility was the queen's feminine purpose in the same way that martial ability was the king's masculine purpose:

> For all that we know queenly anointing may always have been popularly regarded as a fertility charm. It is clear, for example, that one important reason for anointing a king was to strengthen him in face of enemies of the Church and of the realm. Unction, in other words, made the king better able to fight. Martial vigor was the most important and respected male characteristic for many long centuries. Fecundity was the corresponding primary female characteristic.[218]

In 1983 Stafford also analysed Judith's anointing in light of Ermentrude's but with more nuance, taking care to differentiate between the two: fertility was the 'sole purpose' of Ermentrude's anointing, whereas Judith's was 'partly a fertility rite'. Stafford's argument ultimately remains in line with Nelson's, as she argued that 'these anointings served less to transfer powers to a queen than to underline her function as the producer of heirs to the throne'.[219] In 1997 Julie-Ann Smith published a revisionist article that sought to move away from the interpretation that queenly anointings such as those of Judith and Ermentrude are primarily concerned with fertility; choosing instead to explore some of the political and liturgical implications of both *Ordines*.[220] Following Mistry's example in his work on the Ermentrude *Ordo* I would like to return to the idea of fertility in the Judith *Ordo* and conduct a full analysis of how it is used and how it can be interpreted afresh once we have shed existing gendered assumptions.

Past scholarship has cemented the idea that the anointing, when performed on a queen, has the particular function of making her fertile. Both Nelson and Enright differentiate this process from

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[216] Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', p. 304.
[217] Enright, 'Charles the Bald and Aethelwulf of Wessex', p. 298.
[218] Enright, 'Charles the Bald and Aethelwulf of Wessex', p. 298.
[219] Pauline Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers*, pp. 130–31.
[220] Julie Ann Smith, 'The Earliest Queen-Making Rites', *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, 66.1 (1997), 18–35.

the kingly anointing, the purpose of which is inherently masculine; to assert an idea of 'society' and to strengthen the kingdom itself. The anointing of queens has been seen as having the purpose of fertility because fertility is 'the primary female characteristic'.[221] This argument takes a gender essentialist view of the anointing practice in which it is the participant's maleness or femaleness that dictates the effects of the anointing ceremony. But is such an interpretation borne out in the text of the Judith *Ordo*? That the *Ordo* is concerned with fertility is indisputable; the final marriage prayer that the *Ordo* shares with the Gelasian sacramentary is concerned with the married couple producing offspring, and the final blessings contain numerous references to Judith's fertility.[222] However, there are no such references in the particular stage of the inauguration which supposedly conveys fertility: the anointing prayer. Furthermore, the argument that mentions of fertility within the *Ordo* are particular to queenship, in opposition to kingship, is difficult to maintain. I would go so far as to say that not only is there nothing distinctly queenly about fertility in the Judith *Ordo*, but there is nothing distinctly female about it either. This can be revealed through a systematic analysis of the contents of the *Ordo*.

References to fertility in the Judith *Ordo* may be separated into three distinct categories. The first category is comprised of references to fertility in the marriage rite portion of the *Ordo*, which are contained within the final blessing before the inauguration. The prayer begins thus:

> God, who in the beginning of the world blessed those who were increasing that they should multiply their offspring, hear our prayer, and pour the power of your blessing on this your male servant and on this your female servant, so that in conjugal consort, according to your good will, equal in affection, similar in mind, they may be joined together in mutual sanctity. Enrich them with holy fruits and blessed works. Make them beget such offspring, which may come to the inheritance of your paradise.[223]

As this is a blessing concerned with the marriage and borrowed from an existing marriage rite, it is not specific to queenship, anointing or inauguration. The references within this prayer are designed to invoke fertility and offspring in both participants, and to promote the mutual consummation of their marriage. It is unsurprising that Hincmar chose to stress this within the marriage rite. As we have already seen from Hincmar's response to the marriage of Stephen, he believes the capacity to consummate to be a necessary and sacramental aspect of a marriage. But his rhetoric on consummation applies equally to both parties, regardless of gender. These evocations are clearly

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[221] Enright, 'Charles the Bald and Aethelwulf of Wessex', p. 298.
[222] Judith *Ordo*.
[223] 'Deus qui in mundi crescentis exordio multiplicande proli benedixisti, propitiare supplicationibus nostris, et huic famulo tuo, et huic famulae tuae, opem tuae benedictionis infunde, ut in coniugali consortio secundum beneplacitum tuum, affectu compari, mente consimili, sactitate mutua copulentur. Dita eos fructibus sanctis et operibus benedictis. Fac illos talem sobolem generare, quae ad tui paradisi pertineat haereditatem': Judith *Ordo*, p. 77; own translation.

directed at both the bride and groom, and nowhere in this prayer is fertility specifically portrayed as the responsibility of Judith as the female participant. This fertility blessing is thus gender neutral.

The second category of references to fertility in the *Ordo* are those that exist within the inauguration portion of the rite but have been borrowed from the First English *Ordo* – a rite for a king. These blessings have been rearranged, recompiled and adapted to a female subject, but are taken from an *Ordo* with a male subject. For example, references that stress fertility in a way that emphasises the fruitfulness of the land and kingdom are numerous in the blessings of both *Ordines* and most are direct borrowings – 'may her land be filled with the fruits of the increase of heaven' is a borrowing from the First English *Ordo* with a feminine pronoun added, as is a second reference to the 'fruits of the land', and the request to 'give them abundant grain and wine from the richness of the earth'. At first glance, it might be assumed that 'fill her with the blessings of the breasts and the womb' ('uberum et vulvae') is the most explicit equation of Judith's femaleness with fertility – but this is not the case, as even this is a borrowing from the First English *Ordo*. In the case of the First English *Ordo* the fertility blessings are 'over you [the king]', an opposed to here where Judith is being filled with them, but the sense is similar. The source of this phrasing is Genesis 49.25, in which Jacob blesses his sons. Both the original liturgical and biblical subjects are thus male, and so there is nothing inherently feminine about its adaptation in the Judith *Ordo*. Therefore, no blessing that is present in both the Judith *Ordo* and the First English *Ordo*, even in an instance where the blessing itself refers to female reproductive organs, can be read as distinctly feminine, but in fact can clearly be applied to a subject regardless of their sex or gender.

The third category of references to fertility comprises of instances where the blessings of the First English *Ordo* have been adjusted to more strongly emphasise fertility; specifically, instances where the *Ordo* refers to *semen*, or 'seed', where its model does not. There are two instances where this specific word is added into a blessing from the First English *Ordo*. The first comes directly after the reference to 'grain and wine': where the First English *Ordo* reads 'the people serve you and the tribes adore you', Hincmar has altered the prayer to 'the people might serve her and her seed, and that, to your honour, the tribes may adore her and her seed'.[224] The second occurrence of *semen* is just after the blessing of the 'breasts and the womb', where the First English *Ordo* reads 'may the blessings of the ancient fathers be comforts to you' but the Judith *Ordo* has 'may the blessings of the ancient fathers be comforts to her, and to her seed, as you promised to your servant Abraham and his seed forever'.[225] That the same short blessing contains references to both *uberum et vulvae* and *semen* is worth remarking on. An essentialist view of queenly anointing such as that of Enright

[224] 'Ut serviant illi ac semini eius populi, et in honore tuo tribus illam et semen eius adorent', Judith *Ordo*, p. 79.
[225] 'Reple eam benedictionibus uberum et vulvae. Benedictiones patrum antiquorum confortate sint super eam, et super semen eius, sicut promisisti servo tuo Abrahae, et semini eius in saecula', Judith *Ordo*, p. 79.

cannot be maintained in light of a blessing that so thoroughly blurs distinctions between male and female. Here we have a reference to the breasts and womb from a source about a king, being re-applied to a queen, whose own fertility, her *semen*, is drawn into the concept of Abrahamic seed, and thus she is compared to Abraham himself. These references taken together blur distinctions between female and male fertility, to the extent that the concept of fertility as applied to Judith is entirely ungendered.

The specific ideas that are invoked here also blur gendered distinctions. Dominique Alibert and Zubin Mistry have both stressed a strong link between imagery of Abrahamic seed and Carolingian kingship.[226] As in Herard's *adlocutio* at Ermentrude's consecration, the Abrahamic imagery in the Judith *Ordo* brings the queen into a context of distinctly Carolingian fertility that has its foundations in kingship and dynasty building. Mistry evidences how this is a staple of Carolingian dynastic rhetoric:

> A letter from Pope Stephen II to Pippin in 757 expressed the hope that God would extend the new king's semen and bless it forever more. Surviving in the Codex Carolinus (re)assembled under Charlemagne in 791, this was one way in which the beginnings of Carolingian power were being remembered in the later eighth century. […] Abraham provided the template for election and descent of kings in *Deus inenarrabilis*, a regal blessing that survives in liturgical manuscripts from around the turn of the ninth century but likely predates Charlemagne's reign. It recalled how God had 'pre-elected future kings for the world from the womb of your faithful friend, our patriarch Abraham'.[227]

Mistry provides many other examples, but the most potent brings Abrahamic seed into a context of royal anointing. Writing a decade after Louis the Pious' papal anointing in 816, Ermoldus Nigellus put the following words into Pope Stephen IV's mouth:

> May the almighty, who increased the semen of Abraham, grant that you see children born, whence you will be called grandfather. May He grant you progeny, may He double and triple your descendants, so that a fruitful harvest may grow from your semen, which will rule the Franks as well as powerful Rome.[228]

Mistry summarises his arguments about Ermentrude's anointing by reiterating that 'Abraham's semen evoked Carolingian semen and its divine sanction'.[229] This is an important point that I will now extend to the context of Judith's anointing. Both the Judith *Ordo* and the Ermentrude *Ordo* (plus its *adlocutio*) have dynastic concerns at their centre, and scholars such as Nelson and Stafford are right to conclude that dynasty and succession are at the heart of the *Ordines*. Though ideas about fertility were clearly present in both ceremonies, it would be a mistake to assume that, merely

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[226] Dominique Alibert, '"Semen eius in aeternum manebit ...": remarques sur l'engendrement royal à l'époque carolingienne', in *Mariage et sexualité au moyen age: accord ou crise?* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2000), pp. 135–45; Mistry, 582-86.
[227] Mistry, p. 584.
[228] Ermoldus Nigellus, quoted in Mistry, p. 585.
[229] Mistry, p. 585.

because the participants had womanhood and queenship in common, fertility must be a feature inherent and central to queenly anointing rites. I would argue the contrary, that Judith and Ermentrude are being brought into line with masculine, imperial, kingly, Carolingian ideas about dynasty. Returning to a point made in the first half of this chapter, Charles the Bald's primary concern in having Judith anointed was ensuring the recognition of his dynasty's prestige, which may have been of greater concern than his daughter's safety. Discussions of queenly *Ordines* as fertility rites, and of queenship as conveying succession are not incorrect, but such arguments have the capacity to falsely equate queenship with a gender essentialism that is not inherent in the source material. This is compounded by the gendered connotations of words like 'fertility' compared with words like 'dynasty' and 'succession'. Judith's 'fertility' is presented as central to her dynasty's succession, and brought into the same context as Abraham's fertility, and by extension her father's fertility, and her grandfather's fertility. Nothing in the Judith *Ordo* presents fertility as the domain of women.

The Anointing

The idea that the special power of anointing lies within making the queen fertile thus cannot be substantiated by the text of the Judith *Ordo*. Though succession is an important aspect of the rite, the anointing prayer itself gives no indication of fertility being anointing's central purpose. It is now necessary to analyse the anointing prayer in the Judith *Ordo* to establish what the meaning of this stage of the ceremony is. The prayer for Judith's anointing is as follows:

> Lift up your hearts. Holy lord, omnipotent father, eternal god, strength of the elect, and height of the humble, who in the beginning wanted the sins of the world to be purged by the effusion of the Flood, and showed the return of peace to the lands through a dove carrying an olive branch, and again anointed your servant Aaron a priest by the unction of oil: and afterwards through the infusion of his ointment, perfected priests, kings and prophets, to rule the people of Israel, and foretold the face of the Church to be gladdened in oil with the prophetic voice of your servant David, which also gladdened the face of your servant Judith with ointment to the liberation of your servants and the confusion of their enemies, and rendered the face of your maidservant Esther greatly radiant with the anointing of this your spiritual mercy, so that the heart of the king was moved to mercy and the salvation of those who believed in you, hear these prayers. We beseech you, omnipotent God, that by the richness of this creature, you make her worthy of the peace, simplicity, and modesty of a dove. In the name of Our Lord, your son Jesus Christ, who shall come to judge the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end.[230]

[230] 'Sursum Corda. Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, aeterne Deus, electorum fortitudo, et humilium celsitudo, qui in primordio per effusionem diluvii crimina mundi purgari voluisti, et per columbam ramum olivae portantem pacem terris redditam demonstrasti, iterum Aaron famulum tuum per unctionem olei sacerdotem unxisti: et postea per eius unguenti infusionem, ad regendum populum Israeliticum, sacerdotes, reges, et prophetas perfecisti, vultumque ecclesiae in oleo exhilarandum prophetica famuli tui voce David esse praedixisti, qui hoc etiam unguento famulae tuae Iudith ad liberationem servorum tuorum, et confusionem inimicorum, vultum exhilarasti, et

This prayer is introduced by a *sursum corda*, a phrase which is difficult to render accurately in English but has the sense of hearts or spirits being raised to heaven, and the standard modern translation of which is 'lift up your hearts'.[231] The use of this invocation, which is part of an exchange with the congregation, is predominantly used in Eucharistic liturgy from the sixth century onwards, and its use here, like its use in the Eucharist, indicates that the following prayer has a sacramental nature. The *sursum corda* is in effect an invitation, or perhaps more of a command, for the congregation to cast their minds towards heaven, where the sacred element of the ritual is ultimately accomplished.[232] The use of the *sursum corda* reinforces the sacred and status-changing element of the anointing phase of the liturgy: Judith is not merely being proclaimed queen politically on earth, her transformation is also a sacred and other-worldly one. This is further reinforced by the fact that the anointing prayer is in essence Trinitarian. In the performance of this prayer Hincmar invokes God and Christ directly by name, and the Holy Spirit metaphorically as a dove. By describing the process of anointing in these terms, Hincmar is suggesting the presence of the Holy Spirit in Judith's transformation. This dove imagery, evocative of Christ's baptism in which the Spirit descends upon him like a dove, is a further confirmation that Hincmar considered Judith's anointing sacramental.[233] In this ceremony it is God who ratifies Judith and upholds her as queen.

In this anointing prayer, as in the blessing that names Abraham, Hincmar draws on male biblical models, evoking the status-changing anointings of King David and the priest Aaron. These examples have been lifted from the text of the anointing prayer for kings found in the First English *Ordo*.[234] Again we see an instance where Hincmar seamlessly transferred male, kingly examples onto Judith. However, these are not the only models of anointing in the prayer. There is no instance in the bible where a woman is anointed to cement her status, in a way equal to that of David's kingship and Aaron's priesthood, but Hincmar does draw on two instances where biblical women are anointed. The first is Judith's anointing in the Book of Judith.[235] The second is Esther's anointing in the book of Esther – another apt example given that she is a queen.[236] In both these

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ancillae tuae Hester faciem hac spiritali misericordiae tuae unctione adeo lucifluam reddidisti, ut efferatum cor regis ad misericordiam, et salvationem in te credentium, ipsius precibus inclinares. Te quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, ut per huius creature pinguedinem, columbae pace, simplicitate, ac pudicitia decoram efficias. Per dominum nostrum, Iesum Christum filium tuum, qui venturus est iudicare': Judith *Ordo*, pp. 73-79; own translation. The 'pingue' of this passage is difficult to translate, as it conveys a sense of fattiness/greasiness. As this might convey something disgusting in English, I have chosen 'richness'. Though 'fertility' is a possible translation, it is much more likely that here it refers to the oil, or 'fat', used for the anointing.

[231] The Latin is translated as 'Lift up your hearts' in the Anglican liturgy and this is also often used in the Roman Catholic tradition – probably a product of Thomas Cranmer's sixteenth century revisions.

[232] A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), p. 168-69.

[233] Matthew 3.16.

[234] *Leofric Missal*, p. 429-30.

[235] Judith 10.3.

[236] Esther 2.12.

instances, the women are anointed with oil in order to prepare themselves for entering a man's bedchamber; in Esther's case, she is anointed with oil for six months and perfume for another six before being sent into King Ahasuerus, with whom she spends the night; in Judith's case, she removes her hair cloth and widow's garb in favour of fine garments and jewellery and anoints herself, in order to seduce and then behead General Holofernes. In these instances, the anointing is both a sensual and cosmetic act that increases the sexual desirability of the anointed, performed before the woman accesses the bedchamber of a powerful man. Could this be evidence of Enright's view that the queenly anointing is intended to cement the queen's distinctly female fecundity? I would argue not, given that a key element of the Judith story is that she retains her chastity. It should also be stressed that neither Judith nor Esther are maternal figures – their fertility does not feature in either story.

The reason for specifically including Esther and Judith as examples is that they are both saviours of their people. Esther uses her intimacy with the king, as his queen and a member of his harem, to save her people from a genocidal plot by the evil Haman, the king's trusted counsellor. Judith enters the camp of the General Holofernes, a foreign conqueror of the Jews, with the intention of ingratiating herself with him, and then killing him – which she does. These women are biblical heroines because of their capacity to use their influence and put their access to the bedchambers of powerful men to good use. They are politically significant and their anointings are understood to precede and prefigure the salvation of the Jews. Hincmar is thus using the scriptures to imply that queens have some duty of care to the people of the kingdom, and that the kingdom's welfare is entrusted to the queen. In this anointing prayer, Esther and Judith's anointing becomes a status-changing rite that parallels that of King David and the priest Aaron, even though this meaning is not overt in the scriptures themselves. Hincmar was obviously comfortable using male biblical models to underline the significance of queenly anointing, and the way in which he utilises the biblical anointings of Judith and Esther draws them into the same context as the status-changing anointings of men.

What would have been especially important to Charles the Bald's political interests, in the context of a marriage made to solidify a political alliance, is that both Judith and Esther ensure the safety and interests of their own people and kin. The significance of the biblical Judith and Esther in the *Ordo* goes deeper when we consider a third Judith, the Empress Judith, mother of Charles the Bald, second wife of Louis the Pious and grandmother to our Judith. Michael Enright has very astutely linked the references to these biblical women with the pivotal political role that the Empress Judith had in securing her son's place in the succession provisions of the aforementioned *Ordinatio Imperii.*[237] In 834 the abbot and scholar Hrabanus Maurus composed a commentary on the Book of

[237] Enright, 'Charles the Bald and Æthelwulf of Wessex', p. 298.

Judith, dedicated to the Empress herself in a poem that compared her political triumphs in the face of her enemies (read: her stepsons) to those of both Judith and Esther.[238] This was a sentiment repeated by Hrabanus two years later in his *epistola dedicatoria* to the Book of Esther.[239] Enright concludes that:

> In the context of the time this was certainly a political as well as a literary act for it associated the empress with a famous biblical heroine of the same name and thus indirectly castigated her stepsons. It made them enemies of right order and disturbers of the peace of the kingdom. […] As in 834, references to the biblical Judith in the Frankish court setting of 856 were arrows aimed at rebels.[240]

Like in the blessings that reference the very Carolingian concept of Abrahamic seed, Judith is being drawn into a context of dynastic biblical rhetoric. This time the models are women. Judith's grandmother and namesake serves as an implicit model for Judith as someone who was a political champion of her son in the face of his competition – competition who continued to be a threat to him. Charles was likely hoping that his daughter Judith would serve his cause against his enemies as effectively as his mother had. The defeat of enemies can be read in different ways – in a general sense by promoting his dynasty in Wessex, by cementing an alliance against the Vikings, or, as Enright sees it, by winning the civil war against the rebellious Æthelbald. The Jews could arguably serve as a model for both Judith's new kingdom, Wessex, and her own people, the West Franks.

The Coronation

The coronation prayer merits particular attention as a likely original composition by Hincmar. Although thus far the anointing has been discussed as the most transformative and sacred aspect of the inauguration liturgy, there is also a distinct scriptural and theological significance to the coronation. From the eleventh century onwards, inaugurations are frequently referred to simply as 'coronations', and perhaps this is because it became the most symbolically and iconographically potent element of the rite.[241] In scripture, crowns have taken on meanings that transcended their basic use as delineators of political status. They can have a distinctly spiritual meaning as a heavenly reward that is earned in life but can be obtained only after judgement. An 'incorruptible' ('incorruptam') crown features in 1 Corinthians 9.25 as a reward for religious striving. This crown is not a royal one; it is compared to a trophy, and contrasted with the 'corruptible' crown, a laurel wreath, won by the athlete who wins the race. The 'crown of life' ('coronam vitae'), referred to in James 1:12 and Revelation 2:10, is a crown that rewards perseverance through suffering, and

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[238] Hrabanus Maurus, 'Expositio in Librum Judith', *Patrologia Latina Volume 109*, ed. by J. P. Migne (Paris: Garnier, 1864), col. 0539-0592.
[239] Hrabanus Maurus, 'Expositio in Librum Esther', *Patrologia Latina Volume 109*, ed. by J. P. Migne (Paris: Garnier, 1864), col. 0635-0670.
[240] Enright, 'Charles the Bald and Aethelwulf of Wessex', p. 302.
[241] Nelson, 'Rites of the Conqueror', p. 388, n. 58.

unwavering faith.[242] In 1 Peter 5:4, an 'unfading crown of glory' ('immarcescibilem gloriae coronam') signifies the heavenly reward given to those clergy who care for their flock, and in 1 Thessalonians 2:19 Paul says that his reward, his 'crown of glory' ('corona gloriae') is in the conversion of the Thessalonians, which is again echoed in Philippians 4:1. In essence, all of these crowns seem to be one and the same, in that they are the heavenly reward for good earthly deeds, and have no distinctly royal connection. However, there are also crowns in the bible that indicate earthly rule, the most prominent of which being King David's crown, mentioned in 2 Samuel 12:30 and 1 Chronicles 20:2. This crown is gold, and contains the 'most precious' gems.[243] The lexis with which this latter crown is described is similar to that of the coronation prayer of the Judith *Ordo*:

> May the Lord crown you with glory and honour, and place upon your head a crown of spiritual precious stone, so that whatever is signified in the splendour of the gold and the varied shine of the gems, may it ever shine in your habits, and in your deeds. May he deign to bestow this, he to whom there is honour and glory throughout all ages.[244]

At first glance it seems that it is David's crown that Hincmar has chosen to invoke in this particular prayer. There is no mention of a crown as a reward in heaven, or indeed of any reward for earthly behaviour. That Judith's queenly crown is being likened to David's crown, specifically a crown of kingship, is significant given the mention of David in the anointing prayer. However, the crown is also described as consisting of 'precious stone' ('lapide pretioso'), which evokes the imagery of Revelation 21, in which this phrase is used to describe the light emanating from the New Jerusalem, as well as the foundations of its walls. In linking Judith's crown to the prophecy of the New Jerusalem alongside King David's crown, Hincmar is merging the two types of crown; the earthly, secular crown and the crown only attainable as a reward after death.

Although the inauguration liturgy uses the word 'corona' to describe the crowning of Queen Judith, this terminology is not consistent in all accounts of the inauguration. Judith's inauguration as queen is also described in the entry for the year 856 in the *Annals of St Bertin*, quoted in full above. From the 840s until 861 they were written by Prudentius of Troyes and by Hincmar of Rheims thereafter. Interestingly, Judith's crown here is referred to as a 'diadem' ('diademate') rather than a *corona*.[245] Could it be that 'diadem' denotes a lower status, or more feminine type of crown, and that this is a

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[242] James 1.12, Revelation 2.10.
[243] 2 Samuel 12:30, 'Et tulit diadema regis eorum de capite eius pondo auri talentum habens gemmas pretiosissimas et inpositum est super caput David sed et praedam civitatis asportavit multam valde'; 1 Chronicles 20:2, 'Tulit autem David coronam Melchom de capite eius et invenit in ea auri pondo talentum et pretiosissimas gemmas fecitque sibi inde diadema manubias quoque urbis plurimas tulit'.
[244] 'Coronatio. Gloria et honore coronet te Dominus, et ponat super caput tuum coronam de spiritali lapide pretioso, ut quicquid in fulgore auri, et in vario nitore gemmarum significatur, hoc in tuis moribus, hoc in actibus semper refulgeat. Quod ipse praestare dignetur, 'cui est honor et gloria in saecula saeculorum.': 'Ordo of Judith', *Ordines Coronationis Franciae,* pp. 73-79; own translation.
[245] *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 83 (856).

deliberate attempt by Prudentius to differentiate between the crowns of a king and a queen? This is unlikely given that the same term is used to describe David's crown in 2 Samuel 12:30 and 1 Chronicles 20:2. In her edition of the *Annals of St Bertin*, Nelson addresses the possibility that Hincmar may have edited or adjusted earlier annals to suit his purposes.[246] She argues that it is unlikely that he did this extensively given that he annotated a particular entry that he found objectionable rather than deleting it altogether, but isolates three instances where it is likely that the annals were tampered with by Hincmar. One of these is the annals of 856. She believes that it is specifically the sentence about Judith's inauguration that can be considered an insertion. If we take this to be true, this means that the *Ordo* and the phrasing of the annal had the same author, making it unlikely that *corona* and *diadema* had drastically different connotations. Given that Hincmar had already made a deliberate link between King David and Judith in the *Ordo*, it is even possible that in his use of the term 'diadem' he is making a deliberate attempt to again link Judith's queenship to Davidian kingship.

From the annal itself, it is not clear exactly who placed the diadem on Judith's head. 'Imposito capiti eius diademate' only conveys that the diadem was placed on her head, and not by whom. However, the *Ordo* makes it clear that it is God who crowns Judith in the formula 'coronet te Dominus', making it likely that it was Hincmar, as Archbishop, who performed this religiously significant part of the ceremony. However, it is interesting that the annal has King Æthelwulf, and not Hincmar, formally confer the title of queen on Judith. If we take for granted that this section of the annal was written by Hincmar himself, then we can be fairly sure about the veracity of this account. However, that this took place is not evident in the liturgy itself. As the conferring of the title is said to have occurred after Judith was anointed and crowned, perhaps she was formally declared queen by her husband after the ritual had taken place. It seems likely that this was a political announcement rather than a liturgical one. Though the *Annals of St Bertin* create the impression that Judith was ultimately made a queen by her husband, this does not mean that Judith derived her power from Æthelwulf. Although the ceremony took place alongside her marriage, and it was after all her marriage that led her to being made queen, it is clear that in Hincmar's eyes a greater power than the king is responsible for Judith's change in status. It is reasonable to say that Æthelwulf 'conferring the title of queen' is a demonstrative announcement on a constitutive sacred transformation that had already taken place during the anointing prayer.

Hincmar deliberately elicited specific connotations from the anointing scenes in the books of Esther and Judith in order to ascribe a particular function and religious significance to Judith's queenship. Hincmar's *Ordo* for Judith, taken together with the 'diadem' of the annal of 856, consistently attempts to link Judith's queenship to a male, regnant, Davidian kingship; the kind of

[246] Nelson, 'Introduction', pp. 14–15.

kingship used to prefigure Christ's heavenly rule. His use of both male and female biblical examples, brought into the same scriptural tradition of status-changing consecration, has important implications regarding the notion of queenship elicited by the liturgy itself. That both male and female models are used throughout the *Ordo* demonstrates a neutrality to how Hincmar conceived the ritual making of a queen. Hincmar did not use only female or feminine models in the *Ordo*, nor did he re-gender Judith as masculine in order to emphasise her royalty or sanctity as a queen. His use of Esther and Judith as models shows his willingness to tie David's kingly power to female and queenly models. It is clear from the wording of the crowning and anointing prayers that Hincmar chose to emphasise a sacred queenship, and a heavenly as well as earthly transformation of the queen's status. It is this sacred status that Hincmar intended to ensure the enduring prestige of Judith and her family in the kingdom of Wessex. Such conclusions are made possible by the Judith *Ordo*'s rare nature as a liturgical text that can be viewed within its specific context.

Conclusion: Inauguration and Dynasty-Building

In Chapter 1, we looked at the origins of the royal anointing ceremony as a way of strengthening a new regime and bolstering the continuation of a dynasty, in the circumstances of Pippin and Betrada's anointing as king and queen of Francia in 751. We saw how the ideology of this development could be found in the reign of Offa and Cynethryth of Mercia, in which Cynethryth's queenship was emphasised as legitimate and divinely sanctioned while their son Ecgfrith was 'hallowed' to king as his father's heir. However, it is not a queen of Mercia who we see as the first certainly anointed and crowned English queen, but Judith, a Frankish royal daughter and the queen of Wessex. Judith's inauguration, making her queen of a kingdom where hitherto queenship had been forbidden, is not a direct continuation of Cynethryth's queenly power and must be contextualised within Carolingian dynastic politics and rhetoric and the political circumstances in Wessex at this time. However, the high status of Judith and Cynethryth can both be attributed to the influence of a Carolingian ideology developed to strengthen legitimacy; in Judith's inauguration ceremony we see an even more direct continental influence on the ideology of queenship and the legitimacy of an English queen.

The liturgy of the Judith *Ordo* was performed in a particular political circumstance, written with specific political aims. As such, it would be a mistake to view the Judith *Ordo* as evidence of a single master narrative about the meaning of queenly anointing. Hincmar's stress on the sacramental, important, divine nature of the rites he performed must be viewed in a context where this emphasis also increased his own prestige and that of Rheims. However, it is worth exploring what anointing was able to do for queens at this time. Judith's queenship was sacramental, status-changing, and permanent. This ideological development had real-life consequences for Judith when Æthelbald married her after his father's death. Though I have argued strongly that emphasis on the Judith's

Ordo as evidence that the purpose of queenly anointing is female fertility has been misplaced, fertility as a means of ensuring dynastic prestige and succession is a key element of this text. Judith's inauguration had both male and female biblical models, and her fertility was not framed within a feminised, wifely capacity for childbirth but within her queenly capacity to contribute to the succession of her family.

Chapter 3: Standardising the Queen's Inauguration

The previous chapter looked at the Judith *Ordo*, which is considered the earliest surviving liturgical document that can be linked to a queen's inauguration. When Judith was crowned as Æthelwulf's queen in 856, prayers of the First English *Ordo* were adapted to create a new *Ordo*, formulated to suit the specific political circumstances of the ceremony. Though some of its individual prayers had lasting influence, the Judith *Ordo* was composed for and used on a single occasion. The use of this text can be contrasted with that of its model. The First English *Ordo* has a *terminus ante quem* of 856 due to its use as a source for the Judith *Ordo*, but it survives in three pontificals that significantly post-date its composition (see Table 3), which suggests a more general use.[247] Indeed, the Judith *Ordo* is a special case – all other extant early English inauguration rites are found in multiple copies and seem to have had broader relevance than one particular figure or occasion. As well as the First English *Ordo* we also have the Second English *Ordo*, a newer rite for the inauguration of the king which survives in seven pontificals (see Table 2). Crucially, we also have a queen's rite that survives in eight pontificals, occurring in one instance alongside the First English *Ordo*, and in seven instances alongside the Second English *Ordo*. Hitherto, this rite has been considered by scholars as a constituent part of the Second English *Ordo*: therefore, they have assumed that both rites originate from the same process of composition. However, in this chapter I will maintain a distinction between the rite of the Second English *Ordo* which pertains to the king, and the queen's rite by which it is usually accompanied in English manuscripts. I will argue that this queen's rite should not be considered as a constituent element of the Second English *Ordo*, but should be considered as a separate text. I will argue that it is so textually similar to another rite which has previously been assumed to be West-Frankish, the queen's rite within the Erdmann *Ordo*, that it should be considered an English witness of this same text. This Erdmann *Ordo* queen's rite, when likewise treated as a separate, independent text rather than subsumed into a king's rite that accompanies it, has an uncertain provenance, which opens up much wider possibilities than have hitherto been considered for its place of composition and date of origin. One such possibility is that this queen's rite was composed in England, rather than imported from a West Frankish context through the Erdmann *Ordo* as has previously been assumed. A full discussion of the history of this rite in

[247] On the use of the First English *Ordo* see David Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 47 (2017), 147–258 (p. 10); P. L. Ward, 'The Coronation Ceremony in Medieval England', *Speculum*, 14 (1939), 160–78 (pp. 162–66); C. A. Bouman, *Sacring and Crowning: The Development of the Latin Ritual for the Anointing of Kings and the Coronation of an Emperor Before the Eleventh Century* (Groningen: J.B. Wolters, 1957), pp. 15, 156–57.

England, which will subsequently be referred to simply as 'the queen's rite', is crucial to any analysis of queenship and inauguration in this period.

The suitability of this rite for general use and its circulation indicates that it became, as with the First and Second English *Ordines*, a somewhat standard rite. The term 'standard' by no means implies that this rite was used upon every single feasible occasion during its circulation, but the mere fact of its circulation indicates that it had ongoing consequence as a liturgical ceremony. With the composition or introduction in England of this queen's rite, with its generalist liturgy and its survival in multiple pontificals, queenly anointing can be recognised as a standardised – if not continuous – practice in an English context. What did the circulation of a standard queen's rite in an English context mean for queenship? The remainder of this thesis will focus on this rite for anointing a queen, its circulation and development, by which the ritual inauguration of queens became standardised according to the extant documentary record. This chapter will look at the surviving liturgical evidence for the queen's rite, as well as that of the Second English *Ordo* king's rite by which it is often accompanied, and which has previously been assumed to be another part of the same text. It will then summarise the composition, contents, and date of this queen's rite, with a focus on how it portrays queenship. Chapter 4 will then consider the possible historical contexts in which this queen's rite was first composed or introduced in England, and Chapter 5 will consider the changes made to this rite as it continued to circulate in England in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Documentary Evidence

All of the early English royal rites survive in pontificals: books owned by bishops containing a collection of liturgical rites.[248] Around twenty-one pontificals from early medieval England are extant: of these twenty-one, ten include a rite for the inauguration of a king, and of these ten, eight also include a rite for the inauguration of a queen. Three of these pontificals (Lanalet, Egbert and the Leofric Missal) contain a version of the First English *Ordo*, while seven (Samson Pontifical, Anderson Pontifical, Claudius II, Dunstan Pontifical, Robert Benedictional, Vitellius A. vii and CCCC 44) contain a version of the Second English *Ordo* alongside the queen's rite (see Table 2). Just one English pontifical, Lanalet, contains the king's rite from the First English *Ordo* and the queen's rite. These occur separately in the manuscript, demonstrating that this queen's rite had the capacity to travel independently from the king's rite. However, the Second English *Ordo* king's rite is accompanied by the queen's rite in all extant manuscript evidence. No extant pontifical contains only the queen's rite without that of a king elsewhere in its contents. The earliest extant English witness of this queen's rite occurs alongside the Second English *Ordo* within the Dunstan Pontifical, which can be dated to the 960s. The Second English *Ordo* utilises material from the First English

[248] See Introduction for some of the challenges with using pontificals as historical sources.

Ordo, but prayers found in several Frankish rites were also used in its composition, creating a king's rite that was new in many significant respects. Given that the queen's rite has been subsumed into discussions about the Second English *Ordo*, and given that the Second English *Ordo* king's rite is always found with the queen's rite in English pontificals, consideration of this inauguration rite will be necessary.

These rites do not only survive together in English pontificals, but also in an entirely separate continental recension consisting of seventeen medieval manuscripts dating from between the 980s and the fourteenth century (as well as three early modern manuscripts).[249] These texts for the inauguration of the king and queen were transmitted together into a continental context in the mid-tenth century through a single, now lost English exemplar (see Table 1). Two main recensions of the Second English *Ordo* have been identified by Janet Nelson, who refers to them as the 'A' and 'B' recensions – a designation which has endured in scholarship and will be maintained here.[250] The A recension is the one that stems from an insular pontifical that made its way to the continent in the mid-tenth century and does not survive in any extant insular pontificals.[251] The manuscript that made its way to the continent did not preserve the original composition and the continental texts show signs of adaptation, and so we must rely on a theoretical reconstruction based on the two surviving recensions.[252] The earliest extant documentary evidence from England dates to around the 960s and represents a later recension – the B recension. The origin of the A recension is older than the B recension, and they developed entirely separately. Any attempt to contextualise the original composition and introduction of the rites of the Second English *Ordo* into England thus relies on hypotheticals. The liturgical evidence poses a series of complex questions about the dating, composition, transmission, and subsequent uses of this king's rite, as well as those of the queen's rite by which it is accompanied. The matter of dating the Second English *Ordo* has received attention in scholarship, though a definitive consensus has yet to be reached. Given the dating of the queen's rite has previously been subsumed into this discussion, the various arguments will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Table 1 demonstrates the stemma of the seventeen medieval manuscripts, that are all continental in provenance, labelled as A1-17, along with three early modern examples, labelled A18-20.[253] The manuscripts labelled X1-8 represent manuscripts that are no longer extant. The stemma begins with

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[249] 'Ordo XV: Ratold Ordo', *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 168-200.
[250] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', pp. 361–74 (p. 361).
[251] 'Ordo XV: Ratold Ordo', pp. 168-200.
[252] References to 'Saxons, Mercians and Northumbrians' found in the continental recension are incongruous with references to 'both peoples': see Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 365.
[253] Each of these manuscripts and their collective stemma is described by Jackson in 'Ordo XV: Ratold Ordo', pp. 168-200.

the hypothetical single English exemplar that travelled to the continent, but which does not survive (X1). Two versions of the *Ordo* were created directly from this hypothetical exemplar (A1 and X2). One (A1) is found in the Sacramentary of Ratold, abbot of Corbie (copied c. 980), and this is the earliest extant witness of the A version. It is useful to keep in mind that one of the problems of using and dating these sources is that the earliest extant manuscript may be much later than the creation of the text, and even later than subsequent versions of the text. This manuscript may be considered the closest text we have to the original text of the Second English *Ordo*. The core of this manuscript comprises material from the earlier pontifical from England, and a version of the Second English *Ordo* is within this pontifical. The text clearly originates in England and this version has been only partially adapted for a Frankish context: the text contains inconsistent references to 'the church of all Albion', 'the royal throne namely the sceptres of the Franks', and 'the kingdom of all Albion namely equally of the Franks'.[254] The other sixteen surviving continental medieval manuscripts and the three early modern manuscripts derive from the hypothetical X2, a version of the *Ordo* adapted from X1 that has also not survived. In this version, the redactor has approached the references specific to an English context in a different way to the redactor of the *Ordo* in the Ratold Sacramentary (A1), but with comparable inconsistency. The references to 'Albion' were extracted and replaced with the more neutral phrases, such as 'the church of the whole kingdom' instead of 'the church of all Albion' and 'the kingdom equally' instead of 'the kingdom of all Albion' – however, the phrase 'the royal throne of the Saxons, Mercians and Northumbrians' was retained from the English exemplar. As a result, ten of the fifteen manuscripts that stem from X2 (shown in green in Table 1) also preserve this formula. Because of this, the manuscripts stemming from X2 are often referred to as the 'SMN' recension. As the table demonstrates, this phrase was not reproduced in several versions of this text over the centuries – as is the case with A3, the manuscripts stemming from X6, and all versions created after 1600 – but this correction was made comparatively rarely. The result was that up until the French Revolution, kings of France were crowned using liturgy that proclaimed them rulers of the Saxons, Mercians and Northumbrians. By this point, it was not known why this was part of the ceremony, or what relevance it had, leading some to believe the French monarchy had some ancient claims to England.[255] That neither those responsible for the Ratold *Ordo* nor those responsible for X2 saw it necessary to adapt the *Ordo* wholly to a Frankish context is interesting. The conclusion one might draw from this example is that suitability and functionality of a text within an actual ceremony was not always of primary concern when adapting, copying or distributing liturgical texts. This is an important consideration in attempting to determine the relationship between liturgical texts and the occasions on which they were used.

[254] Jackson, in 'Ordo XV', pp. 168-70.
[255] Jackson, in 'Ordo XV', p. 170.

The B recension is clearly an adaptation of the version of the Second English *Ordo* found in the continental A recension, and a number of changes have been made between the two recensions (see Table 5). The main textual differences between the A and B recensions are within the promise initially made by the king: the B version has updated the declaration of the A version to a full coronation oath – a promise modelled on the three precepts in the concluding section of the First English *Ordo*. The queen's rite that accompanies the Second English *Ordo* remains relatively stable in comparison, but has also been adjusted between the continental version and the English version – the 'adesto, domine…' prayer has been removed. Every surviving pontifical of English provenance containing the Second English *Ordo* contains the B recension. Most of the pontificals containing B survive as complete manuscripts, while one survives as fragments (see Table 2). Analysis of the B recension found in English pontificals reveals evidence of a process of adaptation that indicates the ongoing usage of this rite during the mid-tenth and eleventh centuries.

Table 2 presents each of the extant English pontificals containing royal rites, using the general dating of each based on codicological and palaeographic work summarised by Helmut Gneuss and Michael Lapidge in *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*.[256] This table reflects only a broad understanding of the manuscript's production dates based on standard dating practices for easy reference – where relevant, more specific information about the dating of these manuscripts will be supplied within the text of the thesis. As can be seen from Tables 3 and 4, the names 'First English *Ordo*' and 'Second English *Ordo*' reflect only the sequence of their composition, not their circulation – the Second *Ordo* did not necessarily cause the First *Ordo* to fall out of circulation, and may not have immediately or entirely superseded its use. Paying attention to the windows of time in which these manuscripts may have been produced, we are able to make a series of general observations about the productions of these two *Ordines* that demonstrates the possibility that they were circulating at the same time. Firstly, the First English *Ordo* in Ecgbert could have been copied into the manuscript at the same time or later than the Second English *Ordo* was copied into the Dunstan Pontifical, Robert Benedictional, Anderson Pontifical or Samson Pontifical. Secondly, the First English *Ordo* was almost certainly copied into Lanalet later than the Second English *Ordo* was copied into the Dunstan Pontifical or Robert Benedictional. Thirdly, the First English *Ordo*'s king's rite in Lanalet crosses over with the estimated date windows of the Second English *Ordo* in Samson, Claudius, CCCC 44, or Vitellius A. vii. Table 4 integrates this information to demonstrate the potential hundred-year crossover where both versions of the king's royal inauguration liturgy were still being copied into pontificals. This paints a much more complex picture than might be assumed given the neat designations of 'First English *Ordo*' and 'Second English *Ordo*'.

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[256] Helmut Gneuss and Michael Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A Bibliographical Handlist of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

Though demonstrative, there are several reasons to use this manuscript evidence cautiously. First of all, these windows of production are educated approximations, some of which encompass several decades. It is also important to emphasise that manuscript dates rarely reflect the composition dates of texts. The earliest date for the composition of the First English *Ordo* is pre-856, given its use in the composition of Judith *Ordo*, though the earliest manuscript evidence dates to c. 900. It is also interesting that the likely composition date of the Second English *Ordo*'s king's rite, c. 880-925, which will be discussed more fully below, predates the latest known copying of the First English *Ordo* by a century. Moreover, using extant pontificals to establish any rules, trends, or tendencies about the ways in which the First and Second English *Ordines* were actually used in royal inauguration ceremonies is problematic. As explored in the introduction of this thesis, an upper estimate of how many pontificals existed in the period 950-1100 may be greater than 120. As already stated, there are twenty-one extant manuscripts containing pontificals or manuscript fragments from pontificals, just under half of which certainly contain a royal *Ordo*, but it is unknown whether this proportion is representative of the early medieval English pontificals. To whom the pontifical belonged is also a factor – an archbishop would have been more likely to be called upon to conduct an inauguration ceremony than another bishop. It is not always obvious if a manuscript is complete in the form in which it now exists – these books rarely contain original contents pages to check the contents against, and it can be unclear whether quires are missing from the beginning or end of the manuscript. Several of the extant pontificals are known to be incomplete, while some of the examples are mere remnants of otherwise lost pontificals, the full contents of which remain unknown.[257] These fragments, though currently showing no trace of having contained royal *Ordines*, may well have belonged to larger pontificals that did contain them. The absence of a pontifical of English provenance containing the Second English *Ordo* A recension, despite its clear English origin, exemplifies the extent to which our manuscript evidence is incomplete. These gaps in the manuscript evidence make certain pressing questions regarding the patterns of *Ordines* difficult to answer: what factors dictated whether a royal *Ordo* was copied into a pontifical, and which bishops possessed pontificals that included inauguration liturgy, and which did not? Such questions can be answered only in part, as the relationships between the contents of pontificals and the identity of their owner, place of origin and purpose is often complex and unclear.

What is clear is that the First English *Ordo* continued to be copied into pontificals a century after the composition of the Second English *Ordo*, and that there was an overlap period in which both texts were in circulation. There are two ways to interpret this evidence. Firstly, if we assume that the copying of the *Ordines* into pontificals reflects their actual use in inauguration ceremonies, we also

[257] For example, Hereford, Cathedral Library, MS. P.6.i (last flyleaf, f.177); Cambridge, Trinity College, MS. B. 1.30A and New Haven, CT, Yale, University Library, MS. 320; Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS. Lat. fragm. 1; Oslo, Universitetsbiblioteket, MS. Lat. fragm. 16.

have to allow for the possibility that the First English *Ordo* may have been in use in the inaugurations of kings after the composition of the Second English *Ordo* king's rite. A pontifical containing the First English *Ordo*, the Ecgbert pontifical, may have been created as late as the early eleventh century, which allows for the possibility of this *Ordo*'s use in an actual inauguration ceremony until at least this date. This has interesting implications for queenship, as this pontifical contains no queen's rite – despite the inclusion of a king's rite, there is no sign that the compiler of this pontifical felt their liturgical repertoire was missing something by eschewing a rite for a queen, though it is possible one was not available. Conversely, the unique inclusion of a combination of the First English *Ordo* and the queen's rite in the Lanalet pontifical, dating to the first quarter of the eleventh century, could be used as evidence that the anointing of queens was by this point ubiquitous enough to seek out a separate queen's rite that did not otherwise travel with the First English *Ordo*. Thus, if we accept that the pontificals reflect the usage of these rites, the picture for their use in actual ceremonies in early medieval England is as complex as it is unclear.

However, there is an alternative possibility. We might consider, as previously explored, that pontificals regularly contained irrelevant, unsuitable material unrelated to their practical use. We might also consider that inauguration ceremonies were very rare occasions, and it would be extremely unlikely that most bishops would ever be expected to perform one. Links between the contents of pontificals and the performance are therefore problematic, to the extent that we could even disregard the notion that the inclusion of a rite within a pontifical reflects anything at all about its use. In this case, copies of the First English *Ordo* that post-date the Second English *Ordo* could be considered obsolete rites that were never intended to be used in an actual inauguration ceremony, included simply for reference, curiosity or to complete the pontifical. This allows for the interpretation that each new version of a royal rite was composed with the intention of entirely superseding the last in terms of actual practice. Of course, it is likely that the relationship between what is copied into pontificals, and what is in use in actual inauguration ceremonies, varies between instances. In each instance we must be open to both possibilities: that the rite was intended for practical use, and that it was not. Thus, although the introduction of the first standard queen's rite in England is significant, we must remain open-minded about what the copying and dissemination of a rite reflects about its use in actual ceremonies.

Structure and Textual Models

A brief summary of the structure of the Second English *Ordo* king's rite A and B and the queen's rite based on the examples of the Ratold *Ordo* and Samson Pontifical is demonstrated in Table 5. This king's rite is significantly different from the First English *Ordo*. The First English *Ordo* begins with preliminaries, then the king is anointed, then a sceptre and a baculus are given, a helmet is placed on his head, there is a mass for the king, and then the king makes a three-fold decree to his

subjects.[258] The king's rite of the Second English *Ordo* A begins with preliminaries in which the king prostrates himself before the altar. Then the anointing takes place, followed by the giving of the insignia (in this case a ring, sword, crown, sceptre, and rod), then a three-fold decree based on the First English *Ordo* is said. In the queen's rite, which follows the king's rite of the Second English *Ordo* in all of its seven manuscripts, she prostrates herself, then she is anointed, given a ring and crowned. These rites also usually travel alongside a mass for the king (see Table 6), which follows after the queen's rite. The version of the king's mass used varies between extant pontificals: the Samson Pontifical, Dunstan Pontifical and Anderson Pontifical contain the same king's mass while Claudius II and CCCC 44 contain a different version. None of the extant pontificals contains a mass for the queen, so it might be the case that if the queen were to be inaugurated without her husband (for example, if they married when he was already king), a regular mass would be performed.

The assumption that the Second English *Ordo* king's rite and the queen's rite that accompanies it are one text has inevitably assumed a single process of compilation for both rites. Table 5 lists the rites that have been attributed as this *Ordo's* models. The compiler of the Second English *Ordo* king's rite clearly had access to – and utilised – a copy of the First English *Ordo*, and a number of prayers from this source were transmitted into the new *Ordo*. However, the compiler also utilised elements that occur in three West-Frankish *Ordines*. Nelson identified these as the Erdmann *Ordo*, Hincmar's *Ordo* for the consecration of Charles the Bald as King of Lorraine in 869, and the '*Ordo* of Seven Forms'.[259] Table 5 outlines the structure of the Second English *Ordo*'s inauguration rites for both the A and B recensions, and the *Ordo* each component has been attributed to is listed. The influence of the 869 *Ordo*, written by Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims for the occasion of Charles the Bald's inauguration as King of Lorraine, is suggested by a prayer that occurs between the anointing and the giving of the insignia. Given that this material is so limited, it may be that the compiler of the Second English *Ordo* only had access to part of this *Ordo*, or to a now lost text that had this prayer in common.[260] More West-Frankish influence can be seen from the Seven Forms *Ordo*, which has contributed a prayer following the anointing, the giving of the rod, and the prayer

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[258] The mass for the king is present in the First English *Ordo* found in the Lanalet and Egbert Pontificals but has been omitted in the Leofric Missal.
[259] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', pp. 361-74 (pp. 361-365): Nelson, 'Early Medieval Rites of Queen-Making', pp. 301–15 (pp. 309-10): 'Ordo VII: Ordo of Charles the Bald', *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 87-109; 'Ordo XIV: Ordo of Eleven Forms', *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995) pp. 154-67; 'Ordo XIII: Erdmann Ordo', *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 142-53.
[260] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 105, n. 207.

for the designation of the king's status to the Second English *Ordo*. David Pratt has argued convincingly that the Seven Forms *Ordo* utilised by the redactor of the Second English *Ordo* is not, as was previously assumed, the fuller version found in a thirteenth-century pontifical from Liège, but an earlier lesser-known shorter version, a king's rite termed the Leiden *Ordo*, found in a fragment of a Gregorian sacramentary dated to c.1000.[261] Pratt argues that this was probably composed for the anointing of Charles the Simple by Fulk of Rheims in 893. The biggest influence on the composition of the Second English *Ordo* was the Erdmann *Ordo*, most of which was transmitted into the new text. The Erdmann *Ordo* has been assumed to be West-Frankish in origin as its earliest textual witness is in a pontifical from Sens.[262] Just as in the case of the Second English *Ordo*, the Erdmann *Ordo* is actually two separate rites – one for a king and one for a queen. It has previously been understood that the Erdmann *Ordo* is the earliest royal *Ordo* that is comprised of both a king and queen's rite – though we must remain aware that these texts were not necessarily composed concurrently or for the same occasion. It is also understood to only have West-Frankish witnesses, of which the earliest is in the Pontifical of Sens. It is not known for which occasion(s) the rites within the Erdmann *Ordo* were first used. C. A. Bouman has suggested a date of composition around 900, while Nelson favours an earlier date in the 880s or 890s, on the basis that the Erdmann *Ordo* probably served as the rite for one of the six inauguration ceremonies that took place in West Francia between 877 and 893.[263] The authors of a hitherto unpublished edition of the Pontifical of Sens, in which a witness of the Erdman rites is found, have claimed that the manuscript could date as early as 850 – though given that the Erdmann king's rite has adapted material found in *Ordines* composed in 877 (the *Ordo* of Louis the Stammerer) and 878 (the royal *Ordo* found in the sacramentary of Saint Thierry, for Louis the Stammerer's papal coronation), we can safely assume that the text and the manuscript post-date these occasions.[264] Erdmann provided the Second English *Ordo* with the preliminaries, part of the anointing prayer, many of the insignia prayers including the ring, sword, crown and sceptre. As Table 5 demonstrates, the Second English *Ordo* represents a substantial update to the existing available king's rite that utilised large amounts of new, Frankish material.

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[261] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 178-87.
[262] Saint Petersburg, National Library of Russia at Saint Petersburg, MS. Lat. Q. v. I, No 35.
[263] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 361; Bouman, pp. 15–17; Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 173–74.
[264] The early dating was proposed by Pavel Konakov and Guy Lobrichon. See Jackson, *Ordines Coronationis Franciae*, p. 26, n. 50; 'Ordo VIII: Ordo of Louis the Stammerer', *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995) pp. 110-23; 'Ordo IX: Royal Texts in the Sacramentary of Saint-Thierry', *Ordines Coronationis Franciae, Volume 1: Texts and Ordines for the Coronation of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard A Jackson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 124-29.

However, the picture surrounding the queen's rite is different. Table 5 indicates the relationship between the queen's rite found in English pontificals, and the Erdmann queen's rite found in the Pontifical of Sens, which have previously been considered as two separate texts. These rites are almost identical, though there are some minor textual departures, which will be discussed in further detail below. As can be seen in Table 5, the king's rite is demonstrably a patchwork of different rites that have been stitched together by a compiler who had very specific intentions for this rite, but the queen's is a prayer-by-prayer duplicate of a text which has hitherto been considered its model. A simple explanation for a faithful transmission of the Erdmann queen's rite from a West-Frankish context into an English context might be that whoever compiled the rites in the Second English *Ordo* had no other example of a queen's rite. However, there have been no obvious attempts to incorporate the range of texts used in the king's rite of the Second English *Ordo*. The contrast between the way these two rites have apparently been compiled opens up questions about the process of composition – specifically, whether we are to understand the putting together of the Second English *Ordo* and this queen's rite as arising from a single process of compilation, or two separate processes. The following section will consider previous scholarship that has attempted to illuminate the context of the compilation of these rites in more detail, and highlight the limitations of these discussions.

Linking the Second English *Ordo* to a King

As discussed previously, it has been the case that a king's and a queen's rite that tend to travel together within pontificals have been considered by scholars as two parts of the same text – one *Ordo*. It has thus hitherto been understood that a single text termed the Second English *Ordo*, found in a continental recension and seven manuscripts of English provenance, included both a king's rite and queen's rite side by side, followed by a mass over the king. However, in the introduction to his edition of the Erdmann *Ordo* in his *Ordines Coronationis Franciae*, Richard Jackson warns us that:

> The king and the queen's ordines have nothing to do with each other either in the Erdmann Ordo or in other early ordines, and their juxtaposition in no way reflects a joint coronation or implies that the two were to be used for a joint coronation […] Therefore, if scholars have sought the presence of king's and queen's ordines in the Erdmann Ordo as proof that the Ordo might have been composed for a specific joint coronation, they have been led astray by a simple succession of texts in liturgical manuscripts.[265]

This reminder is instructive about whether we consider these 'joint' *Ordines* as single texts or separate texts. In the case of the king's rite of the Second English *Ordo* and the queen's rite, I am sceptical about the conclusion that two rites that almost always travel together, and that could be, hypothetically, used concurrently in the same ceremony, have 'nothing to do with each other'. At the same time, Jackson's warning is a necessary reminder that considering two separate rites as one

[265] Jackson, in 'Ordo XIII', p. 142.

Ordo can obscure the reality of the composition, compilation, and use of each. It is quite evident that these rites would not always be used together in one ceremony – for example, only a king's rite would be needed in cases of the inauguration of an unmarried king, and only a queen's rite needed on the occasion of a new queen's marriage to an already anointed king. The Second English *Ordo*'s king's rite is a more dynamic composition than the Erdmann-derived queen's rite – and it thus contains more clues to the context in which it was compiled. There has also been an evident bias in previous historical study of royal inauguration that has prioritised kingship and failed to give queenship the same level of attention. Thus, one of the results of approaching these rites as one text is that any possible independent textual history of the queen's rite has simple been folded into that of the prioritised king's rite.

Scholarship attempting to date these royal inauguration rites has therefore concentrated on the king's rite, and has specifically sought to establish for which king the rite was first used. That it has been compiled from multiple sources, with some original elements, gives clues to a particular context of creation. In 1986 Nelson argued that although many of the continental manuscripts include the phrase 'the royal throne of the Saxons, Mercians and Northumbrians' (indicated in green on Table 1) referring to three peoples, this could not have been its original text, as references to 'both peoples' and 'equally' are also preserved.[266] Taken alongside the references to 'the apex of paternal glory' and 'stabilising and governing [it] unitedly', Nelson argues convincingly that the original text must have been referring to the unification of Wessex and Mercia, and must have been written for a candidate who was succeeding to the throne from a father who ruled these kingdoms together, giving the Second English *Ordo* a West-Saxon origin. Nelson gives 886 as a *terminus post quem*, the year in which Grimbald travelled from Rheims to the West-Saxon court and could have supplied the continental liturgy that was utilised in the *Ordo*'s composition.[267] The reference to 'paternal glory' also suggests a West-Saxon context for its creation, as paternal succession did not occur in Mercia in this period. The two candidates that fit the dating constraints, the rhetoric about unification, and the model of paternal succession, are Edward the Elder (r. 899-924) and Æthelstan (r. 924-39).[268]

Nelson by no means ignores the queen's rite. Her argument about for which king this inauguration *Ordo* must have been composed rests on it. She argues that the queen's rite is not simply a general addition, but was composed for a particular occasion, the same occasion as the king's rite, demonstrated by the changes made to the text of the queen's rite apparently using a second source:

> The A version of the Second English *Ordo* is accompanied in all the manuscripts by a queen's ordo that does not simply replicate its model, the 'Erdmann' queen's ordo, but

[266] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 365.
[267] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 365.
[268] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', pp. 365–66.

> slightly modifies it at two points, and hence must surely have been produced with the possibility of use in mind.[269]

We will return to this argument in due course. Given that Æthelstan never married, and that Edward the Elder was probably married to Ælfflaed by the time of his inauguration at Pentecost in 900, Nelson determined on this basis that Edward the Elder is the likelier candidate.[270]

In 2008, Nelson revised her previous arguments that favoured Edward as the more likely candidate for the *Ordo*'s first use, now instead favouring Æthelstan.[271] This re-assessment of the evidence is based on an edition of the Leofric Missal (which contains an example of the First English *Ordo*, see Table 2), published in 2002 by Nicholas Orchard.[272] In Nelson's revised view, Orchard's identification of the owner of the book as Plegmund of Canterbury, with an earliest production date of 909, means that the First English *Ordo* was still in use until at least this date – and thus still in use at the time of Edward's inauguration in 900.[273] Nelson argues that if the Second English *Ordo* was created late in Alfred's reign for use at Edward's inauguration, its creation would have involved Plegmund as Archbishop of Canterbury. His possession of a copy of the First English *Ordo* a decade later would render this situation highly unlikely. Nelson suggests Athelm, Plegmund's successor, as a likely author of the *Ordo* for use by Æthelstan at his inauguration in 925. She argues that this is consistent with iconographic changes in the depiction of Æthelstan as crowned, as opposed to wearing a diadem as in earlier depictions of West-Saxon kings – this development would match the introduction of the crown into the Second English *Ordo*, where previously in the First English *Ordo* the coronal regalia was a helmet. It is in attempting to link the unmarried Æthelstan to the *Ordo*'s first use that Nelson then considers, but does not elaborate on, a possible separate textual history for the queen's *Ordo*. Contradicting her earlier argument, she concludes that it is 'perfectly explicable as a later supplementation, whether desirable for the sake of completeness, or necessary for subsequent occasions when the *Ordo* was used'.[274] However, she does not explore the full significance of this possibility in terms of what it means for queenship in this period.

A substantial challenge to Nelson's 2008 argument was made by David Pratt in 2019.[275] Pratt favours an origin of the *Ordo* in Alfred's reign, and thus sees Edward as the likely candidate for its first use. Following Nelson, he argues that the possible window for the production of the Second English *Ordo* is between 880 and 925, based on its representation of the king as 'rex Anglorum et Saxonum', a political concept used by Alfred to denote dominion over Wessex and Mercia, which

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[269] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 367.
[270] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 366.
[271] Nelson, 'The First Use of the Second Anglo-Saxon Ordo'.
[272] *The Leofric Missal: II. Text: 114*, ed. by Nicholas Orchard (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 2002).
[273] Nelson, 'The First Use of the Second Anglo-Saxon Ordo', p. 121.
[274] Nelson, 'The First Use of the Second Anglo-Saxon Ordo', p. 124.
[275] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo'.

was superseded by the concept of the 'rex Anglorum' after Æthelstan's takeover of Northumbria in 927. As in Nelson's argument, the only two possible candidates for the first use of the Second English *Ordo* are therefore Edward and Æthelstan, and Pratt favours the former. He argues that the idea of kingship over the Angles and Saxons had more political potency specifically during Alfred's reign.[276] Pratt's argument approaches the question of first use through a thorough examination of the Carolingian textual models underpinning the Second English *Ordo*. As previously mentioned, Pratt identifies one of these sources as the Leiden *Ordo*, a specific earlier form of the *Ordo* of Seven Forms, which he assigns to the consecration of Charles the Simple in 893. Using this information he contextualises the transmission of this source from the Carolingian court to the West-Saxon court late in Alfred's reign through the king's dealings with Rheims. Moreover, Pratt does not accept the validity of the argument put forward by Orchard, upon which Nelson's 2008 argument rests: namely, that the text now known as the Leofric Missal was originally produced for Plegmund. He argues that there is a case to be made for the book's continental origin, resting on the appearance of the script, decoration and its special regard for Vedast, patron saint of Arras.[277] In response to Nelson's comparison between the introduction of the crown and the iconography of Æthelstan's coinage, Pratt also argues that the wider changes to royal iconography do not necessarily reflect the inaugural regalia – this can be demonstrated by the fact that kings appeared on coins wearing diadems while the standard coronal insigne was a helmet.[278] He then states that a separate composition or introduction of the queen's rite is 'arguable', but unlikely. While Pratt's intervention presents the creation of the Second English *Ordo* in Alfred's reign as a plausible scenario rather than a proven reality, he does much to force a necessary reconsideration of Nelson's 2008 conclusions.

Thus, two feasible scenarios for the composition and first use of the Second English *Ordo* have been argued. One hypothesis, argued for first by Nelson and then by Pratt, is that the *Ordo* was produced during Alfred's reign and was first used for his son Edward the Elder. Another hypothesis, argued for by Nelson, is that the *Ordo* was first composed and used by Archbishop Athelm for Æthelstan in 925. Both Pratt and Nelson agree on these two candidates as the only feasible contenders for the Second English *Ordo*'s first use.[279] Nelson's 2008 argument for the unmarried Æthelstan as the candidate for whom the Second English *Ordo* was first used necessitated her reconsideration of the queen's rite.[280] With a joint coronation out of the question, Nelson considered two other possibilities – that the queen's rite was added for some later occasion, or that it was added at the same time with no intention of immediate use. The question of whether

[276] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 216.
[277] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 176–77.
[278] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 211–14.
[279] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 150.
[280] Nelson, 'The First Use of the Second Anglo-Saxon Ordo', p. 124.

the queen's rite should be considered as a part of the king's rite has been considered only briefly by Nelson and Pratt, and in each case has been used as evidence in determining the first candidate to be inaugurated using the king's rite. While the queen's rite has been evaluated as valuable evidence within these arguments, no study has ever considered the context of the introduction of a standard queen's rite into England as a worthwhile question to foreground. This chapter will now address this gap in scholarship.

On the question of the possibility of a separate composition of the queen's rite, Pratt takes a similar line on this question to Nelson's 1986 article.[281] Pratt states that 'the hypothetical production of the Second *Ordo* for Æthelstan faces difficulties arising from the treatment of queenship'.[282] Though he concedes a separate composition of the queen's rite is 'arguable', he briefly outlines three reasons why he thinks it unlikely. First, he states that the Second English *Ordo* king's rite is not known to have travelled separately from the queen's rite. Even if we ignore Richard Jackson's warning that rites which travel together are not necessarily related, Pratt does not take into full account either the incompleteness of the surviving pontifical evidence, or the fact that the queen's rite does appear independent of the Second English *Ordo*'s king's rite in the Lanalet Pontifical. That the rites are separated within Lanalet means that it cannot be taken for granted that they should be considered as one complete text. If the Second English *Ordo* and the queen's rite had always hitherto travelled together, this means that the compiler of the Lanalet pontifical had access to the king's *Ordo* in the Second English *Ordo* but deliberately left it out. Secondly, Pratt states that the queen's rite 'occupies an intermediate position in the text, preceding the Mass settings for the king's ordo'. This phrasing is misleading, as all of the royal inauguration rites of the Second English *Ordo* do not travel with the same Mass setting. As stated above, two separate settings are present in the pontifical evidence, indicating they were interchangeable extra rites and not an integral part of one *Ordo*. Thirdly, Pratt argues, like Nelson in 1986, that 'a number of textual departures indicate a process of adaptation comparable to the handling of sources in the main royal *ordo*. The point is not decisive, but suggests that the drafting of the queen's *ordo* was more than a paper exercise'.[283] The idea that the queen's rite that accompanies the Second English *Ordo* was evidently created alongside the king's rite for specific use, made first by Nelson in 1986 and alluded to here by Pratt, will now be addressed in full.

Despite the similarities between the queen's rite found in the Pontifical of Sens and that found in early English pontificals, which was described as a 'word for word' reproduction by Bouman, Nelson and Pratt have both argued that small textual differences indicate that the Second English *Ordo* contains a new queen's rite that 'must surely have been produced with the possibility of use in

[281] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 218–19.
[282] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 218.
[283] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 218.

mind.'[284] The two modifications to which Nelson refers are both in the anointing prayer. These consist of the word 'affluentem' at the opening of the anointing prayer, and the phrase 'ut numquam postmodum de tua gratia separetur indigna' at the end – instances where the text of the queen's rite of the Second English *Ordo* is closer to the Erdmann *Ordo*'s model, the rite for an abbess found in Frankish Gelasian sacramentaries. This closeness to the Gelasian source material leads Nelson to conclude that the composer of the Second English *Ordo* possessed a Gelasian sacramentary and made a deliberate choice to emulate the abbess's rite more closely than the compiler of the Erdmann *Ordo*.[285] However, there are simpler ways to interpret these differences. It seems unlikely that a redactor would have acquired a Gelasian sacramentary in order to make such a minor change that does not alter the meaning of the text. Moreover, none of the differences between the Erdmann *Ordo* and the English queen's rite represent significant changes in meaning – they are either rearrangements that could be accounted for by scribal error, or they merely rephrase the text or express a similar idea in a different way. None of this indicates that the queen's rite was produced for a specific context, or suggests that it was redacted in the same process as the compilation of the king's rite. It seems much more likely that the queen's rite that is found in early English pontificals is a witness to an earlier version of the Erdmann *Ordo* that has now been lost, but that had not yet departed so far from its Gelasian model. The queen's rite is therefore so close to its 'model' that they should simply be considered two witnesses of the same rite. The tendency of scholars to consider the queen's rite as a constituent of the king's rite is seemingly the main factor that has precluded it from previously being considered as another witness of the rite in the Erdmann *Ordo*. Even if it is the case that the new Second English *Ordo*'s king's rite and the Erdmann's queen's rite were introduced into England from West Francia at the same moment, the queen's rite must thus have been simply copied without consideration of a particular context or event.

Of course, if using 'Second English *Ordo*' to refer to both king and queen's rites as one complete text is problematic, the use of the term 'Erdmann *Ordo*' as an encompassing title for these two particular Frankish liturgical rites for king and queen is similarly problematic. My own use of the term 'Erdmann' for the queen's rite in no way implies its necessary connection in terms of composition or date with the king's rite in the Erdmann *Ordo*. I use it as a matter of convenience for the reader. As quoted above, in his introduction to his edition of the Erdmann *Ordo*, Richard Jackson considers the king and queen's rites to have no certain relationship other than their placement together in a pontifical – he adds that 'texts like these do not necessarily belong together any more than other ordines that occupied the same general area of a liturgical work, for example,

[284] Bouman, p. 17; Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 367; Saint Petersburg, National Library of Russia at Saint Petersburg, MS. Lat. Q. v. I, No 35.
[285] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 367, n. 22.

ordines for the consecration of a bishop or an abbot or a church'.[286] Despite this caveat, Jackson presents his edition as if it *is* one coherent text, retaining and arguably cementing the designation that he problematises. Moreover, it is my contention that Jackson's edition of the queen's rite of the 'Erdmann *Ordo*' is missing a key textual witness – the queen's rite that has been hitherto considered part of the Second English *Ordo*.[287] A fuller revised consideration of the relationship between the rites of kings and queens across early medieval liturgical manuscripts might well produce the need for an alternative way of naming these royal rites. A future study or edition of the queen's rite under consideration in this and the following chapters in this thesis would need to consider all witnesses to this text, both English and continental: these include the twenty continental witnesses in pontificals that contain the A recension of the Second English *Ordo*, the eight witnesses in English pontificals, and the four witnesses considered by Jackson in his edition of the Erdmann *Ordo*.

Establishing a Date Range for the Queen's Rite in England

If the queen's rite that usually accompanies the Second English *Ordo* in pontificals is another witness to – and quite possibly a witness to an earlier stage of – the queen's rite in the Erdmann *Ordo*, it is necessary that we should keep an open mind about how, when, why, and (if relevant) for whom this rite might have emerged in England. Even if we accept, on the basis of convincing evidence put forward by Pratt and Nelson, that the Second English *Ordo* king's rite was composed for a specific occasion and that the only two possible candidates for the first use of this king's rite are Edward the Elder and Æthelstan, there are still many possible explanations for the emergence of the queen's rite. One is that it was transmitted to England from a West-Frankish context. In this case, it may have been imported for use on a specific occasion, or simply added to the liturgical repertoire for future use. Another possibility is that it was actually composed and first used within England. Approaching the queen's rite with an open mind about these possibilities allows us to depart from previous scholarship that has looked at the Second English *Ordo* and primarily sought to answer, 'which king?' Instead, in this chapter I will consider the possible contexts for the introduction of the rite which first standardised the queen's inauguration in England and contributed to a lasting, ritualised form of Christian queenship.

It is important to stress that in the case of the Second English *Ordo*, the question of the date of composition and question of the date of first use are separate matters, in a way that is not true for the Judith *Ordo*, for example. If it cannot be specifically tied to a particular occasion, we must concede the possibility that it was created in speculation of the first occasion on which it would be needed. Pratt's argument underlines this possibility – he considers Alfred's late reign as the likely

[286] Jackson, 'Ordo XIII', p. 142.
[287] This queen's rite is found elsewhere in his book of Frankish coronation liturgy however - under the general banner of the 'Ratold *Ordo*', after its earliest continental witness. See 'Ordo XV'.

context for the creation of the Second English *Ordo*, when Edward the Elder's eventual inauguration could only have been a possibility lurking on the horizon.[288] Nevertheless, Nelson argues that the king's rite indicates in several places that it has been adapted to suit particular political circumstances, in its specific political and geographical references and the inclusion of the word 'paternal'.[289] This is why in the case of the Second English *Ordo*, a question of 'which king?' has been pertinent. But the same cannot be said of the queen's rite, which is a much less specific, and indeed more 'standard' piece of liturgy. I thus do not think that a parallel discussion which merely asks, 'which queen?' would be appropriate. In 2008, Nelson considered that the queen's rite could have been a 'later supplementation […] desirable for completeness'.[290] But this does not mean that the very fact of its emergence, copying, and eventual use was not a significant political and religious development for queenship. Scholarly discussion focusing on the king's rite has pinpointed c. 880x925 as the likely dating for the Second English *Ordo*, and thus Edward and Æthelstan as the only likely candidates for its first use. If we accept the possibility that the queen's rite could have an entirely independent provenance, what is the feasible date range for its composition or introduction in England?

The Erdmann *Ordo* has previously been dated to between 877 and 893.[291] The inclusion of material found in several earlier rites that can be firmly dated (e.g. the 877 and 878 *Ordines*) make it very likely that the Erdmann *Ordo*'s king's rite postdates these rites.[292] However, as the focus in scholarship has been on the king's rite, the basis of this argument rests only on evidence contained in the king's rite, and the texts utilised within it. As per Jackson's warning, it is necessary to treat the Erdmann queen's rite as a wholly separate text. The Erdmann queen's rite has several prayers in common with the Erdmann king's rite, and with the *Ordo* of 878 for Louis the Stammerer, though there is nothing to indicate which text is prior.[293] In fact, the Erdmann king's rite does not contain a single similarity with the *Ordo* of 878 that is not also shared with the Erdmann queen's rite, leaving open the possibility that the prayers of 878 were transmitted into the Erdmann king's rite through the queen's rite. However, some caution is needed when trying to construct textual relationships through the surviving evidence. The approach of Bouman in establishing the chronology of the prayers within the surviving Frankish royal *Ordines* was to be wary about this when 'the material we have at our disposal is too scarce', adding that prayers found in the Erdmann *Ordo* and the *Ordo* of 878 belonged 'to the stock from which redactors of the written Orders, as well as the masters of ceremonies who had to stage an accession ritual, borrowed freely'.[294] In other words, that a prayer

[288] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 216.
[289] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 365.
[290] Nelson, 'The First Use of the Second Anglo-Saxon Ordo', p. 124.
[291] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 361.
[292] Bobrycki, pp. 4–5; 'Ordo VIII' (877); 'Ordo IX' (878).
[293] Erdmann *Ordo*; 'Ordo VIII' (877).
[294] Bouman, p. 105.

occurs in two surviving texts does not always mean that one directly borrowed from the other – and it is unknown how many other arrangements of these prayers used in royal *Ordines* no longer survive.

It is thus important to keep an open mind about textual provenance, and to separate textual from documentary evidence. It has been assumed, for example, that the Erdmann queen's rite is West Frankish in provenance because its earliest documentary witness is within a pontifical from Sens.[295] However, the version of this queen's rite found in English pontificals is closer to one of the text's models, the Gelasian rite for an abbess. As argued above, this indicates that the text in the Sens Pontifical may not reflect the original, or earliest, composition; that the prior textual witness is the version found in English pontificals. Might it not therefore be possible that the text itself emanates from an English context? This would not be the first occasion on which Frankish priority within liturgy has been erroneously taken for granted - the First English *Ordo*, which is now understood to be the earliest extant royal *Ordo*, was originally assumed to have post-dated the Judith *Ordo*, an argument that does not hold up on examination.[296] In terms of dating, it is indeed feasible that the Erdmann queen's rite was a composite of material from the already-existing king's rite, with an added prayer from the abbess' rite in the Gelasian sacramentary, as has been assumed – if this could be established, it would date the queen's rite securely to post-878. In this scenario, the Erdmann queen's rite may well have travelled from West Francia to England alongside the Erdmann king's rite, which we already know was utilised by someone in England in the Second English *Ordo*'s king's rite. This is both a convenient and logical explanation, but not one that can be proven beyond doubt. That both the Erdmann king and queen's rite are quite general texts, contrasting with earlier liturgy produced for particular occasions, does suggest some form of cohesion – however, this cohesion could well be a result of two general rites, which share a lot of material, having been deliberately placed together by the compiler of the Sens pontifical for a particular purpose, as argued by Bobrycki.[297] Nelson's reasoning for dating the Erdmann *Ordo* to between 877 and 893, as discussed previously, is that the Erdmann *Ordo* probably served as the rite for one of the six inauguration ceremonies that took place in West Francia between these dates.[298] However, the general nature of the queen's rite does not link it to any one of these ceremonies. Following Bouman's suggestion that there was a stock of material from which redactors might borrow, we might extrapolate that not every compilation of prayers over a king or queen that exists in a manuscript was created for immediate use. As there is nothing conclusive that indicates either the text's West-Frankish provenance or that dates the text later than the king's rite, some open-mindedness about its provenance, and the nature of its emergence in England, is required.

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[295] Saint Petersburg, National Library of Russia at Saint Petersburg, MS. Lat. Q. v. I, No 35.
[296] Nelson, 'Earliest Royal *Ordo*', pp. 341–60.
[297] Bobrycki, pp. 5–6.
[298] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 36.

Therefore, the *terminus post quem* of c. 878 that has been argued for the introduction of the Second English *Ordo* does not apply to the queen's rite. If the queen's rite did date after 878, the decision to introduce or compose it in England would almost certainly be West-Saxon (or indeed English post-unification), as there is scant opportunity for this to have occurred within the independent kingdom of Mercia, which was already effectively under West-Saxon rule by the 880s. However, if we accept that the queen's rite may date before 878, this opens up many more possibilities, including the possibility that the rite was either imported into, or created in, a Mercian context. The following chapter will consider this possibility.

The text's *terminus ante quem* is similarly complex. If Nelson is correct that the queen's rite could be a 'later supplementation', inserted to accompany the Second English *Ordo* in pontificals, it stands to reason that it could have been added long after 925. The earliest manuscript containing the queen's rite, the Dunstan Pontifical, has a date of 950x975 according to the codicological observations of Gneuss and Lapidge.[299] However, the Dunstan Pontifical can be dated more narrowly due to its contents. This manuscript is so-called because it was likely made for Dunstan during his time as archbishop of Canterbury, which commenced in 959. The manuscript contains a copy of the papal privilege granting Dunstan the pallium, which he collected in September 960 – providing us with a useful indication for the dating of this manuscript. We might suppose, as Helen Gittos has posited, that given the controversy surrounding Dunstan's appointment as archbishop – the title had previously been conferred on another bishop, a decision that was revoked when Edgar became king – 'the copy of the papal privilege may have been included as an assertion of his right to the post'. [300] A dating in the early 960s for the pontifical is thus most likely. In this case, the queen's rite cannot have been introduced after 965. Could the queen's rite found in the Dunstan Pontifical be the earliest English copy of this rite to be produced? This is highly unlikely. The queen's rite in the Dunstan Pontifical is slightly different from that found in the continental A recension, in that it contains a rubric that is not extant in any continental manuscript, but does not include the prostration of the queen before the altar, nor does it include the 'Adesto, Domine…' prayer that follows the prostration found both in its source Erdmann and in the Ratold *Ordo*. Analysis by Nelson of the Second English *Ordo*'s continental A recension and English B recension has concluded that A is the prior version, given that B omits features of its source. the Erdmann *Ordo*, and replaces them with the three-fold promise, so is 'substantially more removed from its sources'.[301] This was a revision of the previous conclusions made by Percy Ernst Schramm, who believed the Second English *Ordo* to have been composed by Dunstan, and thus saw the

[299] *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, p. 633 (879).
[300] Helen Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 42.
[301] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', pp. 363–65.

continental version found in Ratold as a derivative of the version in the Dunstan Pontifical.[302] Given Pratt's sensible conclusions that the portrayal of the king as 'rex Anglorum et Saxonum' indicates an earlier context, this theory can be dismissed. Extending this reasoning to the queen's rite, similar conclusions can be made about the priority of the version found alongside the A recension of the king's rite found in the Ratold Sacramentary and other continental manuscripts. Given the similarities between the queen's rite found alongside the A and B king's rites – specifically the fact that they curiously depart from other witnesses of the Erdmann queen's rite on two occasions within the anointing prayer in the same way – we can rule out the possibility that the Erdmann queen's rite was added to both the A and B recensions of the Second English *Ordo* independently. The version found in the Dunstan Pontifical certainly has a relationship to the version found in the Ratold Sacramentary and other continental manuscripts. We can therefore assume that a prior version of the queen's rite was in existence before the early 960s when it was updated with the version in the Dunstan Pontifical. This means that the full possible date range for a separate queen's rite has no certain *terminus post quem* and encompasses the period up to c. 965, which necessitates a much wider consideration of political context than the c. 880x925 identified by Pratt's analysis of the king's rite.

Understanding the Queen's Rite

Considering this queen's rite as another witness of the queen's rite in Erdmann rather than as part of the composition process of the Second English *Ordo* has an impact on the extent to which its contents – the ideas about queenship contained within its text – might reflect the English context into which they were introduced, given that this rite could be West-Frankish. Copying an existing rite, whether simply for completeness, because it is the only example available, or because the contents are suitable for your needs, is not the same as composing an original document that specifically reflects your purpose. A rite circulating in England might not have been suited to an English context – in the same way that the A recension of the Second English *Ordo* retained entirely irrelevant content and was not adapted to the Frankish context in which it ended up circulating. That being said, whether introduced into England from Francia or composed on English soil, a textual consideration of the queen's rite is essential to understanding the impact of the text's emergence in England – the date of which will be discussed fully in the following chapter. This text formed the basis of the queen's inauguration ceremony in England that lasted until the Norman conquest and beyond – therefore we must consider fully the ideas contained in this text, and how this queen's rite compared to the king's rites alongside which it typically travelled.

The queen's rite is relatively short compared to the king's rite of the Second English *Ordo*. Both are anointed and crowned during the ceremony, but while the king receives an array of additional

[302] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', pp. 368.

insignia including a ring, rod, sword and sceptre, the queen receives only a ring. The queen's rite begins with the queen's prostration before the altar. Then the archbishop reads a short prayer which calls upon God to be present and to work his power within the ceremony. After this, she is anointed in the name of the Trinity, and then a short prayer follows which emphasises the longevity of her role – that today she is established as queen, but that she shall remain worthy of God's sanctification. Then a ring is put on her finger, another sign of the Trinity, which gives her the power to shun heresy and bring barbarous people to the truth, and after this there is again a prayer that hopes for her continuing success in her role. After this, the crown is placed on her head, so that she may be crowned with 'eternal exultations'. A final prayer asks God to grant the queen the ability to carry out her role with dignity and glory. The most obviously noteworthy thing about this text, especially in comparison with a text like the Judith *Ordo*, is just how general and standard it appears to be.

One interesting idea in the anointing prayer, which is carried through from the rite for ordaining an abbess found in the Gelasian Sacramentary, is the stress on status-changing nature of the rite. The 'hodie … abbatissa instituetur' of the abbess' rite becomes 'hodie regina instituitur', while in both sources it is hoped that the woman 'remains worthy and chosen' ('digna et electa permaneat') of God's 'sanctification' ('sanctificatione').[303] On one level, the similarities with the rite for ordaining an abbess might be seen to dilute the potency of the rhetoric about queenship – the redactor of the queen's rite did not formulate an original conception of queenship, and merely replicated a rite for a similar high-status woman. On the other hand, in this queen's rite we have a conception of queenship that is comparable to that of an abbess – a powerful, high-status religious office into which a woman is ordained by God, and a lasting sacred role of which she must remain worthy. Nelson has remarked that:

> The position of abbess was the most authoritative one available to women, not least in the Carolingian period when abbesses, like abbots, were subject to the institutionalised demands of the realm, owing military service, for instance, holding military strongpoints, and sometimes being summoned to assemblies. Abbesses were also magistrae, female-teachers. This combination of functions likewise characterised the later Carolingian queen.[304]

However, this conception of queenship as an office comparable to that of an abbess need not be interpreted as imported wholesale from a Carolingian context, as this idea was already evident in an English context, for example in the overlaps between queen and abbess in the Durham *Liber Vitae* which were explored in Chapter 1.

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[303] Samson Pontifical, f. 148v; 'Second English Coronation Order', in *English Coronation Records*, ed. by Leopold G. Wickham Legg (Westminster: Archibald Constable, 1901), pp. 15-29 (p. 22).
[304] Nelson, 'Early Medieval Rites of Queen-Making', p. 310.

It is not only within this prayer that this idea of the queen becoming 'elect', or 'sanctified', crops up. It is hoped that her anointing will 'benefit [her] unto honour and eternal strengthening' ('prosit […] in honorem et confirmationem aeternam').[305] During the prayer following the giving of the ring, there are hopes that the queen will 'always remain firm' to God ('semper firma maneat') and during the coronation it is said that she will be 'crowned in everlasting gladness' ('aeterna exultatione coroneris'), referring to the eternal reward of a heavenly crown.[306] And, in the final prayer following the coronation, it is hoped that she will 'rule well the rank she has acquired' ('adeptam bene regere dignitatem').[307] The rite is constantly looking forwards to the queen's eternal salvation, while linking it to the rank that is being bestowed upon her within the ceremony; it posits earthly queenship as a status that must be lived up to in order to gain the eternal, heavenly crown. Combined with the parallels between queens and abbesses, we might remark that queenship as presented in this rite is a special status that, if carried out correctly, prefigures heavenly salvation. It is also seemingly a rite that permanently changes a woman's status in a religious sense.

Another compelling idea in the queen's rite is the rhetoric on heresy contained within the ring-giving prayer. This prayer states that the ring, which is a 'sign of the Holy Trinity' ('signaculum sanctae trinitatis'), will enable the queen to 'shun heretical depravity' ('haereticas pravitates devitare') and 'call barbarous people to knowledge of the truth' ('barbaras gentes … ad agnitionem veritatis advocare').[308] The function of this ring, which has been compared to that of a 'knuckleduster', is very different to the function of the ring in the Judith *Ordo*.[309] Far from representing a betrothal or marriage ring, it has a specific role that is in line with the role of the ring in the Erdmann king's rite – which is to 'repel all heresies' ('repellere cunctas hereses') and to 'connect them steadfastly to the catholic faith' ('catholice fidei perseverabilitati conecti').[310] The queen's ring prayer is more expansive than the king's in the Erdmann *Ordo*, which has possibly been noticed by the compiler of the Second English *Ordo* king's rite, as this version of the prayer gives more functions to the ring, which now also becomes the 'strength of [the king's] kingdom' ('soliditatem regni'), and the 'increase of [his] power' ('augmentum potentiae'), which will allow him to 'repel his enemies with triumphal power' ('triumphali potentia hostes repellere') and 'unite his subjects' ('subditos coadunare').[311] The overall effect remains constant – the function of the ring in all these rites, for king or queen, is one of almost imperialistic Christian governance, strengthening the Church through subjugation. That the queen is a sharer in this function has led some to conclude that the

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[305] Samson Pontifical, f. 148v; 'Second English Coronation Order', p. 21.
[306] Sampson Pontifical, f. 149r, 'Second English Coronation Order', p. 22.
[307] Sampson Pontifical, f. 149r, 'Second English Coronation Order', p. 22.
[308] Sampson Pontifical, f. 148v, 'Second English Coronation Order', p. 22.
[309] Walter Ullmann, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 181–82.
[310] 'Ordo XIII: Erdmann *Ordo*' , p. 148.
[311] Ordo XIII: Erdman Ordo', p. 152; Sampson Pontifical, f. 143r, 'Second English Coronation Order', p. 18.

origin of the queen's rite must have pertained to a man – perhaps a king or a bishop.[312] Nelson has refuted these conclusions, which fundamentally underestimate the established queenly role:

> Avoiding heresy and summoning barbarous gentes to acknowledgement of the truth of the faith could be queenly functions. Patronage of missionaries, support for the church, care for the spiritual wellbeing of the household, were characteristic responsibilities of powerful women, and of queens *par excellence*.[313]

The mere presence of this rhetoric within the queen's rite, a rite that had longevity in an English context, refutes the assumption that only a king or male authority figure would be expected to combat religious heresy. Thus within this queen's rite we gain a portrait of a queen whose role is an office – a religious one at that – and who has the religious authority to maintain orthodoxy.

Conclusion: Focusing on Queenship

This chapter has demonstrated that focusing on the rites of queens as independent texts, as opposed to subsuming their textual histories into those of kings' rites, can increase our understanding of liturgical texts and open up a range of historical possibilities. The tendency of previous scholars to categorise pairs of royal rites that appear together in pontificals as single *Ordines* has had the unintended effect of obscuring the rites of queens. In the case of the queen's rite, viewing it as an independent text highlights the possibility of its composition in an English kingdom, and even in Mercia. In either case, whether it was composed in England or imported into an English context, the subsequent use and circulation of this rite is significant. This rite represents the earliest liturgical evidence for the practice of ritual queenly anointing in England. We might suppose that after this rite began circulating in England, the matter of whether each new queen would be anointed was a relevant discussion, whether or not such a ceremony was actually decided upon. However, that this rite is demonstrably 'standard' – does not align to any specific ceremony – prompts important questions about its use. The mere existence of this queen's rite contains few clues to the context and purpose of its introduction or composition in England. Recognising that this rite is not a constituent part of the Second English *Ordo* leaves us with even fewer indications of its context. As the textual history of the continental A recension of the Second English *Ordo* so effectively demonstrates, the contents of a liturgical rite may be entirely unsuited to the context in which it circulates in a significant number of copies. The idea of a 'standard' rite thus has necessary caveats. In Chapter 5, it will become clear that the queen's rite was incrementally adapted within an English context, providing positive evidence of its ongoing use. This eventual utility may not have been wholly anticipated by those who were responsible for its initial introduction. Nevertheless, the recent West-Saxon context of a low status for queens does render the introduction and subsequent use of this rite within the West-Saxon English line conspicuous. This is emphatically a rite for a

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[312] Bouman, p. 131.
[313] Nelson, 'Early Medieval Rites of Queen-Making', p. 310.

queen, not merely a 'king's wife'. With the introduction of the queen's rite in an English context we see what Nelson has summarised as 'an office… being outlined'.[314] While this rite is generalised, non-specific, and fairly succinct, it contains some potent ideas about the role of queen. The conception of that role is rooted in the context in which the queen's rite was composed – a complex line of enquiry in itself – but continues to have relevance in the contexts in which it had ongoing circulation. The uptake of this rite, one that paints the queen as sanctified, as ordained into an official role, as a ruler of peoples and an enemy of heretics, into the royal line of England, is not insignificant. The following chapter will examine the possible circumstances in which this transformation might have taken place.

[314] Nelson, 'Early Medieval Rites of Queen-Making', p. 310.

Chapter 4: Dating the Queen's Rite in England

The previous chapter outlined that the period in which the queen's rite could have been composed or received in an English context is much wider than the 880x925 window for the composition of the Second English *Ordo*'s king rite. It also established that there is a possibility that the queen's rite was not a West-Frankish import, but created within an English context. That the contents of this rite are general and unspecific means that attempting to pin its emergence or reception in England to any one particular context or figure is difficult to justify. This chapter will therefore consider a number of possible scenarios in which this development might have taken place before the 960s, when it first appears in an extant English manuscript. Though the title of this chapter is 'dating the queen's rite', there are a number of unknown variables within the process that culminated in the circulation of this queen's rite in England. This necessitates considerations of broad contexts, rather than ascribing a single date of composition. David Pratt, considering the queen's rite that accompanies the Second English *Ordo* as being a constituent of this latter text, has argued that 'the existence of the Second *Ordo* strongly implies that, from the time of its compilation, queens were regularly anointed'.[315] It is thus tempting to view the creation of this source as a single turning point. However, there are a number of complexities that must be considered. We must keep an open mind about whether this rite was composed in England or whether it was a West-Frankish import. Assigning a particular year or occasion to a rite's composition is one matter, but given this rite may be an import, how can its reception in an English context be dated? The answer is without precision. We know that at some point before 965 the queen's rite was either created or received in an English context, as it was included, with some changes already having been made, in the pontifical of Archbishop Dunstan – and that by the eleventh century it was present in at least seven other English pontificals. It is possible, though not certain, that this rite was first received in England alongside the Erdmann king's rite, when the Second English *Ordo* was composed. But the reception of a rite in England is not the same as a rite being used, nor is it the same as that rite entering into standard use – as discussed in the previous chapter. At some point between the queen's rite's creation or presence on English soil and its first attestation in an English pontifical, a decision was made that Mercia, Wessex, and/or a unified England, needed a queen's rite in its liturgical repertoire. What this looked like in practice is vague and uncertain – it might be represented by the decision to bring the queen's rite from West Francia to an English kingdom, the decision to import it from Mercia to Wessex, or the decision to compose it within Wessex. It might be a lengthy process or a single moment in which a change occurred. Therefore, what we are

[315] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 219.

exploring and attempting to date is not simply the initial reception or composition of this rite in England - but an ideological shift: the impetus to ritually crown and anoint queens.

If the queen's rite dates after 878, its emergence in England was almost certainly a West-Saxon innovation, as there is scant opportunity for this to have occurred within an independent kingdom of Mercia, which was unified with Wessex in the early tenth century. However, if the queen's rite dates before 878, this opens up the possibility that it was either imported into, or created in, a Mercian context. Previously, no liturgical rites have been considered as having a possible Mercian provenance, despite compelling evidence that royal rituals were taking place in some form in Mercia from the 780s onwards. No *terminus post quem* for the composition of the queen's rite or its reception can be proposed that is more specific than a general consideration of the earliest evidence for anointing in England. This chapter will begin by exploring the existing evidence for Mercian anointing rituals as a possible context in which the queen's rite may have been used. Whether or not this text was originally Mercian or used in Mercia, its adoption in a West-Saxon context is not any less significant.[316] As established above, when Asser was writing during the reign of Alfred in Wessex the wife of the king, Ealhswith, did not receive the title of queen. By 965, an inauguration rite for the ritual anointing and crowning of a queen had been included in the pontifical of the Archbishop of Canterbury. All eight surviving English pontificals containing this queen's rite have been linked to locations that had previously been in Wessex before unification (see Table 2). It is difficult to explain such a stark change in the attitude towards queenship without considering possible outside influences. It is worth emphasising the significant political changes that took place during the period now under consideration that united multiple kingdoms. By the 880s, Mercia may have already been under West-Saxon authority, but the annexation of Mercia by King Edward the Elder that took place after the death of Æthelflaed in 918 is when these kingdoms were permanently united under one ruler. The annexation of Northumbria by King Æthelstan in 927 is the earliest point at which it becomes reasonable to discuss a unified England. Thus any discussion about the introduction of the queen's inauguration rite and its reception in England must take into consideration what it meant to unite kingdoms with different practices and understandings of rulership, and specifically queenship. Shifting our focus onto the queen's rite allows us to take full stock of the impact of these political shifts, widening our attention to Mercia and also to Northumbria. The cultural and political interchange between the various English kingdoms is as important as the ongoing cultural interchange between England and Francia. On reflecting on the queen's rite that accompanies the Second English *Ordo*, Janet Nelson has stated that 'whether under Mercian or Carolingian influence, or both, change [to the status of king's wives in Wessex] was clearly envisaged'.[317] Thus, although the political context of Wessex has previously been the focus

[316] West-Saxon is used here in the most expansive sense, including the early decades of a unified England established by the West-Saxon line.
[317] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 367.

when considering the earliest English royal *Ordines*, the influence of factors both within and outside Wessex, and within and outside England, will be crucial for understanding when and why such a change took place.

An Argument for Anointing in Mercia

Hitherto, Wessex has dominated the scholarly discussion about early English inauguration rites. A West-Saxon provenance for the First English *Ordo* has been assumed due to its connection with Æthelwulf: it was used in the composition of the *Ordo* for Judith's inauguration as the Queen of Wessex.[318] A West-Saxon provenance for the Second English *Ordo*'s king's rite has also been surmised due to the arguments about the rite's political rhetoric outlined in the previous chapter – and thus, the queen's rite has also been considered a West-Saxon creation, though understood to be based on a West-Frankish rite (Erdmann). This focus on Wessex is almost paradoxical when it comes to queenship. In several seminal publications on pre-conquest English queenship, Pauline Stafford has contrasted the high-status position of the king's wife in Mercia compared to that of her counterpart in Wessex, who was denied the title of queen.[319] Queenly status was unambiguously available to many Mercian royal wives. Stafford has emphasised that there are 'tantalising hints' of a special queenly status in ninth-century Mercia despite a dearth of documentary evidence.[320] This phenomenon begins with Cynethryth, who as Chapter 1 explored enjoyed a powerful position as a sharer in her husband Offa's rule during the so-called 'Mercian supremacy', and culminates in the rulership of Æthelflaed from 911-18, and the attempt of her daughter Ælfwynn to succeed her mother.[321] There is no surviving Mercian equivalent of the liturgical documentation around Judith's inauguration as queen in 856, nor is there a Mercian commentary on the status of royal women paralleling that of Asser's discussion of the status of the king's wife in Wessex. Giving the queen's rite its due attention as a separate rite with a potentially separate textual history to any king's rite now allows us to consider the possibility that we have an extant rite that may have been created and used in a Mercian context. Undeniably, this is only one possibility of many. However, the previous chapter demonstrated many of the pitfalls in equating the surviving pontifical record with the actual usage of royal rites. Therefore, seriously considering Mercian queenly anointing as a possibility is crucial even without the certainty of surviving liturgical evidence. We will now consider the evidence for ritual Christian queenship in Mercia.

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[318] Nelson, 'Earliest Royal *Ordo*', pp. 351–53.
[319] Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex'; Stafford, 'Political Women'.
[320] Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', pp. 42–43.
[321] Pauline Stafford, 'The Annals of Æthelflaed', in *Myth, Rulership, Church and Charters: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Brooks*, ed. by Julia Barrow and Andrew Wareham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 101–16.

Chapter 1 outlined the high status of Cynethryth as a facet of Offa's dynasty-building that replicated that of the early Carolingians. The ideology of Cynethryth's queenship appealed to the divine – she was explicitly queen 'by the grace of God'.[322] The earliest evidence of ritualised dynastic kingship can be attributed to this period, as Offa and Cynethryth's son Ecgfrith was 'hallowed' to king in 787, during his father's lifetime.[323] Surviving evidence is insufficient to decide definitively whether the reign of Offa and Cynethryth was exceptional in this regard, or whether we can consider late eighth-century Mercia as a crucible for ritual monarchy and Christian queenship. The prominence of subsequent Mercian queens in the somewhat limited charter record, such as Coenwulf's queen Ælfthryth (fl. 804-17), Wiglaf's queen Cynethryth (fl. 831-36), Beorhtwulf's queen Saethryth (fl. 840-49), and Burgred's queen Æthelswith fl. 853-88), demonstrates an (albeit patchy) continuance of high queenly status (see the conclusion to Chapter 1).[324] As Stafford notes, 'unfortunately, the obscurity of ninth century Mercian history makes [the appearances of these queens in charters] difficult to interpret'.[325] However, there is more to remark upon regarding this latter queen, Æthelswith. Æthelswith was the daughter of the West-Saxon king Æthelwulf, who went against the custom of his people and made Judith his queen in 856 (see Chapter 2). Æthelswith had married King Burgred of Mercia and become his queen only a few years earlier in 853, cementing an alliance between Wessex and Mercia. Her claim to her title is most strikingly visible in the inscription 'ÆÐELSVIÐ REGNA' found on a decorative ring portraying the Agnus Dei discovered in West Yorkshire.[326] Stafford draws attention to the potential implications of Æthelswith's queenship on the history of royal ritual:

> What inspired Æthelwulf in 856? Certainly not recent practice from which he departed radically in raising Judith as queen. The most recent royal marriage he had witnessed was that of his daughter Æthelswith to the Mercian king Burgred three years before. Was Æthelswith anointed? Was Hincmar the first to adopt an English king's *ordo* to consecrate a queen? Where does Mercia, with its significance in the history of royal anointing established by the events of 787, stand in the subsequent development of those rites? At the very least Æthelwulf took with him to West Francia the memory of Æthelswith's elevation as a Mercian queen. It does not strain credulity to see it as an inspiration for his young bride's new position.[327]

Contextually, Mercia certainly seems like fertile ground for developing a custom of ritually inaugurating queens. Insufficient attention has been paid to a charter (S 214) in which Æthelswith is listed after her husband, entitled 'likewise crowned, by royal lineage, queen of the Angles' ('pari

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[322] S 118; Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 39.
[323] ASC A, ASC B, ASC C, ASC D and ASC E, 785; though actually 787, see *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, p. 35.
[324] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 42.
[325] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 42.
[326] 'Object: Æthelswith Ring', *British Museum*, AF.458, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_AF-458 [accessed 28 July 2024].
[327] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 44.

coronata stemma regali Anglorum regina').[328] In her article on the First English *Ordo*, Nelson refers to this evidence briefly and only in a footnote:

> It is just possible that a Mercian queen's Ordo existed: Professor Whitelock reminds me that in a charter of 869 […] Burgred's queen Æthelswith appears as 'pari coronata stemma regali', which could imply a consecration-rite for her, paralleling her husband's.[329]

The full implications of Æthelswith's title in this charter have not yet been drawn out in scholarship on the history of English royal anointing rituals. The phrase 'pari' indicates that Æthelswith and Burgred had both been crowned. This, taken along with a charter made in 822 (S 186) for King Ceolwulf of Mercia which states it was written on the day of his consecration by bishops at a Mercian royal assembly, paints a very indicative picture of royal ritual in ninth-century Mercia.[330] The question should therefore not be *if* Mercian kings and queens were inaugurated, but how. Judith remains the earliest English queen for whose inauguration we have undeniable liturgical evidence, but non-liturgical evidence strongly indicates that Mercian queens had been ritually inaugurated before her.

The most compelling and recognised example of a Mercian political woman is Æthelswith's niece, Æthelflaed. The extent to which Æthelflaed can be considered a queen is contentious. She was born in Wessex c. 870, and was the daughter of King Alfred. Mirroring the early career of Æthelswith, by 887 she had married the ruler of Mercia, Æthelred. There is a general consensus among historians that in this period Æthelred of Mercia was ruling Mercia under the overlordship of King Alfred. This subordination of the south English under Alfred's rulership is emphasised in largely West-Saxon source material such as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* and Asser's *Life of Alfred*, but is also indicated the use of non-royal titles for Æthelred in Mercian charters, and the lack of coins issued in his name.[331] Due to the complex picture painted by the available evidence, there has been pushback against a simplified narrative of subordination. For example, Charles Insley has argued that 'it is clear that in many senses [Æthelred and Æthelflaed] were [king and queen of Mercia], or at least

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[328] The exception being a paper delivered at the 2022 Haskins Society conference, available on the author's website: Vanessa King, 'Æthelswith: First Crowned Queen in England', 2022 <https://queenshipinpreconquestengland.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/221026-aethelswith.pdf> [accessed 26 April 2024]. My thanks to Vanessa King for drawing this charter to my attention.

[329] Nelson, 'Earliest Royal *Ordo*', p. 351, n. 51.

[330] David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 73–74.

[331] Charles Insley, 'Southumbria', in *A Companion to the Early Middle Ages* ed. by Pauline Stafford (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), pp. 322–40 (pp. 325-326, p. 329; Charles Insley, 'Collapse, Reconfiguration or Renegotiation? The Strange End of the Mercian Kingdom, 850-924', *Reti Medievali*, 17 (2016), 231–49 (p. 233); Alex Traves, 'Genealogy and Royal Women in Asser's Life of King Alfred: Politics, Prestige, and Maternal Kinship in Early Medieval England', *Early Medieval Europe*, 30.1 (2022), 101–24; Stewart Lyon, 'The Coinage of Edward the Elder', in *Edward the Elder* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 67.

exercised the sort of authority associated with those holding royal titles', citing their issuing of diplomas and independent military campaigns.[332] During the 890s Æthelred became ill and Æthelflaed began ruling Mercia on his behalf. After he died in 911, she ruled in her own right, and like her husband issued her own charters.[333] A collection of annals referred to as the 'Mercian Register' or the 'Annals of Æthelflaed' have a particular interest in the activities of Æthelflaed in the years 902-24, with a concentration on 909-19. Though they survive in three manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, they appear to originate from Mercia.[334] Women are rarely mentioned within the annals of the manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, but appear relatively frequently within these Mercian annals.[335] They describe Æthelflaed as 'Myrcna hlaefdige' ('Lady of the Mercians'), corresponding to her husband's title 'Myrcna hlaford' ('Lord of the Mercians'). However, it has been pointed out that in Welsh and Irish sources, Æthelflaed was unambiguously called queen.[336] Moreover, that Æthelflaed was called 'Lady' rather than 'Queen' is not as telling as it seems – as Stafford points out, 'for the rest of the tenth and eleventh centuries [Lady] was a title of English queens. Its use for Æthelflaed seems yet another instance of studied ambiguity'.[337] 'Yet another', because charter titles used for Æthelflaed are equally ambiguous:

> Charters spoke of [Æthelflaed and Æthelred] "holding the monarchy of the Mercians by the grace of God" (S 221) and of Æthelflaed alone "by the gift of Christ's mercy ruling the government of the Mercians" (S 225 *largiente clementia Christi gubernacula regens Merceorum*) or as "Lady of the Mercians by the virtue of divine grace" (S 224).[338]

These titles are certainly a confirmation that in Mercia, the ideology of rulership was highly religious even when the words *rex* or *regina* were not explicitly used. Might Æthelred and Æthelflaed have been ritually inaugurated? No liturgical document has been hitherto identified as having a possible Mercian provenance, which is unsurprising given the lacuna in surviving evidence from Mercia – but reconceptualising the dating of the queen's rite opens up this possibility.[339] The religious titles used for Cynethryth, Æthelswith, and Æthelflaed clearly reflect a sense of rulership by divine will that is comparable to the kind seen in the queen's rite, and it is not far-fetched to conclude that queens of Mercia were either inaugurated with this rite, or at the very least a similar one.

Thus, how seriously can we take the idea that the queen's rite was created in a Mercian context, perhaps even prior to the creation of the Judith *Ordo*, or even the First English *Ordo*? We know that some of the prayers of this rite are shared by several West-Frankish king's rites, and that this rite

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[332] Insley, 'Collapse, Reconfiguration or Renegotiation?, p. 239.
[333] S 224 and S 225.
[334] ASC B, ASC C and ASC D, 902-24; Stafford, 'The Annals of Æthelflaed'.
[335] Stafford, 'The Annals of Æthelflaed', 102-03.
[336] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 45; Insley, 'Collapse, Reconfiguration or Renegotiation?', p. 239.
[337] Stafford, 'Political Women', p. 47.
[338] Stafford, 'Political Women', pp. 46–47.
[339] My gratitude to Barbara Yorke for prompting me to investigate the possibility of Æthelflaed's inauguration.

also ended up being copied at Sens. How possible is it that a Mercian rite might end up influencing Frankish liturgy? We must be careful not to assume that Francia always takes cultural – indeed liturgical – priority over English kingdoms. English liturgy of this period has been demonstrably influential in a Frankish context. The discovery by Nelson that the First English *Ordo* was created prior to the Judith *Ordo* is testament to that.[340] Attention must also be drawn to the wide influence that the Second English *Ordo* had in a Frankish context, detailed in Chapter 3. That cultural influence travelled from Mercia to Francia and not merely vice-versa has been well documented – even specifically in the case of queenship, such as Fastrada's coinage imitating that of Cynethryth, explored in Chapter 1. Therefore, Mercia should be taken seriously as a possible location for the origin of the earliest queen's rite.

A Late Alfredian Reckoning with Queenship

Another context for the reception or composition of the queen's rite in England is during the later reign of King Alfred. Whether this rite originated in Wessex, or it was imported into Wessex from a West-Frankish or even Mercian context, its uptake in a West-Saxon context is interesting, particularly given the picture of queenship late in Alfred's reign painted by Asser.[341] David Pratt has argued convincingly that the Second English *Ordo* was composed during Alfred's reign after 893. His argument for this relies on a series of observations about the likely circumstances of transmission of the version of the Seven Forms *Ordo* used in its composition – he terms this version the Leiden *Ordo* and he believes it to have been produced in 893 and brought to Alfredian Wessex in the second half of the 890s via the monk and scholar Grimbald of St-Bertin.[342] This is a plausible scenario, and we can perhaps envisage a process in which an English liturgist, possibly a bishop or archbishop, sat down with a group of Frankish texts and composed the Second English *Ordo*'s king's rite in anticipation of the inauguration of Alfred's successor, the ætheling Edward. Pratt has certainly considered the creation of the queen's rite as part of that same process. Though I wish to employ more caution than Pratt on this latter point, that the queen's rite was received in an English context at the same time that the Second English *Ordo* was composed is a plausible possibility. A copy of the Erdmann king's rite was available at the West-Saxon court to be utilised in the Second English *Ordo*, and it may well be that the Erdmann queen's rite, that demonstrably travelled alongside this rite in later West-Frankish manuscripts, accompanied it from West-Francia to England.

Let us now explore the possibility that the queen's rite was composed or introduced into Wessex in a late Alfredian context. Comparisons have been made between Alfred and his Carolingian

[340] Nelson, 'Earliest Royal *Ordo*'.
[341] *Vita Alfredi*, p. 10-12 (cap. 13).
[342] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 206–10.

contemporaries, highlighting Alfred's utilisation, if not complete replication, of Carolingian models of kingship.[343] As was established in Chapter 2, one important purpose of Judith's anointing ceremony was to emphasise and thus secure her ability to convey Carolingian dynastic prowess onto her hypothetical offspring. Crucially, Alfred was almost certainly present as a six-year-old child at the court of Charles the Bald when his father Æthelwulf married Judith, and he may well have witnessed the ceremony first hand.[344] Veronica Ortenberg sees this cross-channel alliance as crucial to Alfred's eventual adoption of Carolingian models. She argues that Judith was:

> …Very likely to have been closely involved with Alfred … As an older teenager, she was closer in age to Alfred, then a younger teenager, by the time she left England after her second husband's death in 860, than to either of her husbands. And Alfred had been to West Francia and stayed at court there. It would be surprising if, equipped with the knowledge of Carolingian rule derived from his visits to Charles the Bald's court, his father's attempts at imitating that court, including his use of a Frankish secretary, and the presence of Judith at his father's and then his brother's court, Alfred had not seen, understood and wanted to use the Carolingian model of kingship.[345]

Further evidence that Alfred's stepmother Judith's few years at the West-Saxon court had a lasting effect on Alfred lies in his decision to have his daughter, Ælfthryth, married to the son of Judith and her third husband Baldwin I, Count of Flanders in the early 890s. This marital alliance has been attributed to the shared interest between the West-Saxons and the Flemish to defend against Scandinavian attacks, though no formal treaty survives.[346] Either way, it is testament to the lasting relationship between Wessex and the Carolingian-descended rulers of Europe that was established by Æthelwulf's marriage in 856.[347]

Indeed, Alfred modelled himself on his idea of Charlemagne, which can be seen in his decision to have an official biography written by Asser, which parallels the biography of Charlemagne by Einhard – and also those of Louis the Pious.[348] Not only this, but he was keen to create parallels in their distinctly Christian kingship – the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* and Asser claim that while on pilgrimage to Rome as a young child Alfred partook in a papal royal anointing ceremony that

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[343] Janet Nelson, 'Alfred's Carolingian Contemporaries', in *Alfred the Great* (Routledge, 2003), p. 303; Veronica Ortenberg, 'The King from Overseas': Why Did Aethelstan Matter in Tenth-Century Continental Affairs?', in *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century*, 2010, pp. 211–36 (pp. 212–13); Anton Scharer, 'King Alfred and Late Carolingian Europe', in *Changing Perspectives on England and the Continent in the Early Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 1–24.
[344] *Vita Alfredi*, pp. 8-9 (cap. 11); Keynes, 'Anglo-Saxon Entries in the Liber Vitae of Brescia'; Nelson, 'The Problem of King Alfred's Royal Anointing', pp. 161-62.
[345] Ortenberg, p. 212.
[346] Philip Grierson, 'The Relations between England and Flanders before the Norman Conquest', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 23 (1941), 71–112 (p. 87).
[347] Sarah Foot, 'Dynastic Strategies: The West-Saxon Royal Family in Europe', in *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison*, ed. by Conrad Leyser, David Rollason, and Hannah Williams (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), pp. 237–53 (p. 245).
[348] Ortenberg, pp. 212–13.

mirrored the anointing that a young Charlemagne received alongside his father in 854.[349] This was likely a simple papal blessing of both Alfred and his young brother rebranded into something more personal and ritually potent, for as Nelson argues, as the youngest of five sons 'his eventual succession to the throne could have been foreseen at this time only by a prophet' – though it should be noted it was not only the heir apparent Charlemagne but also his younger brother Carloman who were anointed alongside Pippin and Bertrada in 754.[350] Whatever the truth of this tale, its significance is the evident desire during Alfred's reign to emphasise a Carolingian-style ritual Christian kingship. According to William of Malmesbury, whose testimony is apparently based on an earlier now lost text, this was further borne out by Alfred's decision to invest his infant grandson Æthelstan with a cloak, belt, sword and scabbard in 898.[351] That Alfred's young heir Edward witnesses a 898 charter as 'rex' after Alfred's 'rex Anglorum' need not be understood directly as a Carolingian dynastic tactic (the land is in Kent, and Alfred was possibly following the precent set by his grandfather Ecgbert of installing West-Saxon heirs as kings of Kent). This would nevertheless further demonstrate that Alfred took securing the succession seriously.[352] Combined with the evidence of cross-channel contact between Wessex and Francia during Alfred's reign outlined by Pratt, via which Frankish rites may have been obtained, a Frankish queen's rite that outlines a queenly office seems a sensible extra facet of Alfred's Carolingian-style dynastic politics. Even if this rite was not West-Frankish in origin, the example set on the continent may well have influenced Alfred to either construct a new rite for a queen, or adopt an existing one from Mercia.

Dynastic politics notwithstanding, a consideration of an Alfredian context for the introduction of a queen's rite in Wessex has significant and necessary caveats. As mentioned in Chapter 2, queens were conspicuous by their absence in Wessex during Alfred's reign. West Saxon kings had wives, but not queens. Asser states in his *Life of Alfred* that it was not a custom of the West Saxons to confer the title of 'queen' on the king's wife, either in practice or in religious ceremony, and Asser sees the low status of kings wives as a 'detestable custom'.[353] Asser tells us that this is because of one particular tyrannical queen called Eadburh, wife of King Beorhtric of Wessex, who poisoned her husband, fled to Europe and was involved in all sorts of depravity. The policy is corroborated

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[349] ASC A and ASC B, 853; ASC C, 854; *Vita Alfredi*, p. 7 (cap. 8); Nelson, 'The Problem of King Alfred's Royal Anointing', p. 162.
[350] Nelson, 'The Problem of King Alfred's Royal Anointing', p. 156; Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 257.
[351] Janet Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe: Alfred, Charles the Bald and Others* (Aldershot: Routledge, 1999), p. 68. For a fuller discussion of the trustworthiness of Malmesbury on Æthelstan see: Sarah Foot, 'Dynastic Strategies: The West-Saxon Royal Family in Europe', in *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison*, ed. by Lecturer in Medieval History Conrad Leyser, David Rollason, and Hannah Williams (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols N.V., 2012), pp. 237–53 (pp. 251–58).
[352] Barbara Yorke, 'Edward as Aetheling', in *Edward the Elder 899-924*, ed. by N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 25–39 (p. 32).
[353] *Vita Alfredi*, p. 10-12 (cap. 13); *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 83 (856).

by a continental source: the *Annals of St Bertin* note that when Æthelwulf gave Judith the title of Queen in 856, this was something 'not customary before then to him or to his people'.[354] It should be emphasised that a tradition that was only about fifty years old at the point when it had to be broken for Judith must have been relatively recently – and enthusiastically – cultivated. Stafford has stated that:

> The absence of royal women from the history of ninth-century Wessex bears out these statements: Asser omits even the name of Alfred's wife Ealhswith; earlier wives are almost anonymous; charter witness lists ignore them, and no oral or written memory survived into the historical legends of the twelfth century.[355]

Alfred married Ealhswith, the daughter of a Mercian nobleman, in c. 868, before he became king, and there is no evidence that she was afforded any status greater than being his wife. However, in this same year the wife of his brother King Æthelred, Wulfthryth, witnessed a charter as *regina*.[356] Ealhswith witnessed no charters in Alfred's lifetime.[357] There was no attempt from Alfred, as there had been by his father and brothers, to benefit from having a high-status anointed queen ruling by his side – he chose to revert back to previous West-Saxon policy. Given the notoriety of late ninth-century Wessex for this policy specifically against queenship, how could it be possible that queenly anointing was introduced in this period? How do we square Alfred's investment in Carolingian-style dynastic politics, and his witness to Judith's queenly status, with his maintenance of this policy?

For this to be possible, we have to allow for a huge ideological transformation to have taken place in the later years of Alfred's reign. Such a transformation might be hinted at between the lines of Asser's narrative. It is important to read Asser as a source written in these later stages of the reign, and thus reflecting and addressing this specific political context. Stafford has encouraged caution in taking Asser's story about the evil Eadburh at face value. She questions why this tale needed to be told in the first place – 'the whole tale and its telling places a question mark over why Alfred laid such stress on a story which successfully justified such a 'detestable' custom'.[358] She adds that:

> Traditional as it was, the practice of not having a queen must have become increasingly problematic in the last decades of the ninth century. Queens had been consecrated by now, including, perhaps in West Francia the wife of one of the new kings of 888. News of this was reaching England. Asser's statement that West-Saxon practice was unusual makes somewhat better sense in c. 890 than in 856. Neither Alfred's wife nor his mother had been consecrated or raised as queens. The issue of the succession loomed increasingly large. Where did the status of Ealhswith leave the claims of her and Alfred's son Edward, especially vis-à-vis his cousin, Æthelwold, whose mother had been recognized as queen in 868? […] West Saxon practice which Alfred has previously upheld may have begun to appear 'detestable', and in the last

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354 *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 83 (856).
355 Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', p. 3.
356 S 340.
357 Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 260.
358 Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 262.

> decade of his reign Alfred may have seen the advantages for his son in having a queen.[359]

Stafford argues that the inclusion of this tale reflects Alfred's anxiety over succession, and intends to assert – in his interest as well as his son Edward's – that West-Saxon heirs do not need queens as mothers. If this is the case, Asser's naming of the practice as 'detestable' certainly undermines Alfred's purpose.[360] Perhaps the inclusion of this story late in Alfred's reign does not cement the continuation of this policy – rather it reflects that the policy had become controversial, the subject of debate among the West-Saxons, worthy of comment and therefore subject to change.

A concern with dynastic politics sits uneasily with a policy of low-status wives. However, there is one Alfredian arena in which women and dynasty are brought together – the royal genealogies in Asser's *Life of Alfred*. Royal genealogies are not uncommon in this period, but female or maternal genealogies are rare. Despite the genealogies of Alfred's wife Ealhswith and his mother Osburh being relatively brief, Osburh's is the most detailed woman's genealogy in any surviving source from this period.[361] This demonstrates just how conspicuous Asser's female genealogies are:

> Concerning his mother's family, Alfred's mother was called Osburh, a most religious woman, noble in character and noble by birth. She was the daughter of Oslac, King Æthelwulf's famous butler. Oslac was a Goth by race, for he was descended from the Goths and Jutes, and in particular, from the line of Stuf and Wihtgar, two brothers - indeed, chieftains - who, having received authority over the Isle of Wight from their uncle King Cerdic and from Cynric his son (their cousin), killed the few British inhabitants of the island whom they could find on it...[362]

Nelson has argued that the inclusion of this genealogy was an attempt to redress his mother's low status, particularly in comparison to his stepmother Judith, by emphasising her 'ancient lineage and a Cerdicing connexion'.[363] Ealhswith's genealogy is shorter, and does not mention her by name:

> King Alfred was betrothed to and married a wife from Mercia, a noble family, namely the daughter of Æthelred (who was known as Mucil), ealdorman of the Gaini. The woman's mother was called Eadburh, from the royal stock of the king of the Mercians.[364]

Alex Traves has argued that the purpose of this genealogy is clear – Alfred wished to emphasise a family connection to, and therefore authority over, Mercia.[365] Likewise, he sees Osburh's genealogy as helping Alfred secure rulership over areas that had recently been subsumed into his kingdom, most notably the Isle of Wight.[366] Traves argues that these claims 'not only justified present political

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[359] Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 264.
[360] *Vita Alfredi*, pp. 10-12 (cap. 13).
[361] *King Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred*, p. 68; *Vita Alfredi*, p. 4 (cap 2).
[362] *King Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred,* p. 68; *Vita Alfredi*, p. 4 (cap. 2).
[363] Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe*, p. 65.
[364] *King Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred*, p. 77; *Vita Alfredi*, pp. 23-24 (cap. 29).
[365] Traves, 'Genealogy and Royal Women', pp. 101–24 (p. 111).
[366] Traves, pp. 105–8.

realities, but sought to secure future dynastic objectives. […] As a descendant of both Æthelwulf and Osburh, Edward was well placed to rule over 'greater' Wessex as a whole'.[367] It is evident from the utilisation of these genealogies by Asser that Alfred was not opposed to emphasising the dynastic legitimacy of his heirs through royal women – which makes the low status of his wife even more conspicuous.

Osburh is not only mentioned by Asser in her genealogy, but also in a more personal story, in which Alfred's mother is depicted encouraging her children to read poetry – an exercise in which Alfred, of course, excelled.[368] Nelson sees a willingness on Alfred's part to emphasise his own mother's piety and nobility – while displaying 'indifference' to the status of his own wife – as possibly emerging from his favouring Æthelstan over Edward as his own heir. She sees his act of installing Æthelstan outlined by Malmesbury as an indication of these intentions:

> Much as Alfred wanted to cast a retrospective aura around his mother's name, in the early 890s strictly contemporary circumstances required that his own wife be kept in the background. Had Alfred at that time wished to secure the 'vertical' sole succession of his own elder son, there would have been every reason to affirm Ealhswith's status.[369]

However, given that Asser also outlines Ealhswith's genealogy when he need not do so, 'indifference' seems an overstatement. Nelson is correct however in attempting to answer the looming question surrounding the incongruence between these genealogies and Alfred's own wife's low status. To explain just this, Traves considers that the inclusion of these genealogies may reflect an attempt towards the end of Alfred's reign to 'rehabilitate the position of royal women in Wessex', a theory that would also allow for the introduction under Alfred of a queen's rite.[370] Regarding Alfred's decision not to affirm Ealhswith's status after such ideological changes had begun to take hold, this might be explained by a belief that such an act could not be performed retrospectively – it would do little to enhance Edward's legitimacy after he had already been born to a mother with no queenly status. Indeed it could even have underlined the low status of Edward's mother – not a successional advantage given the survival of the sons of Æthelred I, whose mother Wulfthryth was, at least by 868, 'regina'.[371] While precedent has been set for late-reign queenly anointing ceremonies in a Carolingian context by Ermentrude's anointing twenty years after her marriage to Charles the Bald in 866, which was discussed in Chapter 2, the specific circumstances of this particular rite – namely Charles' hope for a dynastic heir – are not retrospective, as a similar ceremony for Ealhswith would have been.[372]

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[367] Traves, p. 112.
[368] *Vita Alfredi*, pp. 9-10 (cap 12).
[369] Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe*, p. 65.
[370] Traves, p. 114.
[371] S 340.
[372] Mistry, pp. 567–88.

If there was such an ideological shift late in Alfred's reign, what reason could there be to inspire it? We have already established that anointing had become established in a Frankish context, which made its absence in Wessex conspicuous.[373] But there is another important context, alluded to in our discussion of genealogies, which must be considered more fully: West-Saxon interactions with Mercia. The status afforded to queens in Mercia had historically been different from that in Wessex, and the two have been contrasted in scholarship.[374] There are no West-Saxon equivalents of the careers of figures like Cynethryth. Stafford has remarked that the only West-Saxon women to gain power did so as Mercian queens.[375] Indeed, women acted as agents of interaction between the two kingdoms, as West-Saxon kings married Mercian women and their daughters married Mercian kings. This interchange perhaps reached its zenith around Alfred's reign. As Traves has argued, Ealhswith's genealogy had ideological importance to Alfred in securing his hegemony over the kingdom of Mercia. By the time Asser was writing his *Life of Alfred*, Alfred had arranged the marriage of his daughter Æthelflaed to Æthelred of Mercia, and western Mercia was seemingly being ruled by Æthelred under Alfred's West-Saxon overlordship.[376] As previously discussed, Alfred's own sister Æthelswith had held the title of Queen of Mercia. It is worth considering that the Mercian approach to queenship, an approach of which Alfred was well aware when sending his own daughter Æthelflaed to marry a Mercian ruler in the 880s, had some influence on the West-Saxon court at the point at which the kingdoms became politically united. It may well be that Mercian queenship, or even a precedent for Mercian inauguration, influenced an ideological shift late in Alfred's reign.

As we have established a possible context in which Alfred could have begun to change the West-Saxon policy on queenship via a queen's rite, we now must discuss the implications of such a decision on those who may have been anointed using this rite. Was there a clear dynastic impetus in the late 890s, in the form of a real king's wife, to have a new rite created or introduced? Edward the Elder may have already been married by the late 890s to Æthelstan's mother, whom William of Malmesbury names as Ecgwynn.[377] Æthelstan was probably born c.894, and the couple had one other child, a daughter.[378] Malmesbury records that upon Æthelstan's succession, accusations of 'concubine' were levelled at his mother, and though Malmesbury himself rejects these accusation, Æthelstan's near-contemporary Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim also wrote about his mother having low status, in order to emphasise the superior status of his half-sister Edith, who married Otto I.

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373 Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 264.
374 Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', pp. 3–4; Stafford, 'Political Women'.
375 Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', pp. 3–4.
376 Richard Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 180–84.
377 William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum, The History of the English Kings: Volume I*, ed. by M. Winterbottom, R. A. B. Mynors, and R. M. Thomson (London: Clarendon Press, 1998).
378 Sarah Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 11.

Barbara Yorke argues that we should view rumours about the status of Æthelstan's mother as a product of succession disputes following the death of Edward the Elder.[379] Whatever her status, she is not present in any extant contemporary sources, and so the likelihood of her inspiring a revolutionary project to ritually install queens seems unlikely. Edward married his second wife Ælfflaed around the time of his father's death, but it is not known whether this marriage occurred before or after this event. In 1986 Nelson argued that the queen's rite may well have been introduced for Ælfflaed:

> Was Aelfflaed in fact consecrated? No surviving charter bears her subscription as queen, and she is nowhere accorded that title. Yet her daughter Edith, bride of Otto I, does seem to have been consecrated with him in 936 — an innovation in the East Frankish kingdom. Was Edith perhaps following in her mother's footsteps? A consecration for Aelfflaed would have aptly signified Edward's intention of keeping the succession in his own line, thereby excluding his cousins, one of whom still posed a serious threat to Edward in 900, and was not defeated and killed in battle until 902. I suggest that Aelfflaed's existence, in the circumstances of 900, inspired the preparation of a West Saxon queen's ordo, evidently for the first time…[380]

However, evidence that Edith herself was consecrated is doubtful. Simon MacLean points out that the assertion that Edith was consecrated is absent from contemporary sources and originated decades later with Thietmar of Merseburg, who was projecting backwards from the consecration of Cunigunde.[381] Pratt also argues for the possibility that Ælfflaed could have been the first queen to be inaugurated using the rite in the Second English *Ordo*. He argues that a number of factors indicate her high political profile: the priority of her infant son Ælfweard in a 901 witness list over Æthelstan, her patronage of Frithestan, bishop of Winchester, and like Nelson he points to the apparent high standing of her daughters, though emphasising not Edith but Eadgifu, who married Charles the Simple.[382] Ælfflaed was certainly not as obscure as her predecessor Ecgwynn. This is a feasible scenario for the first use of queenly anointing in Wessex, but one which relies upon circumstances aligning. More problematic perhaps is William of Malmesbury's assertion that Alfred had had his grandson Æthelstan invested in 898.[383] This seems a counterproductive thing to do if he was interested in raising the status of Ælfflaed and her future offspring at the same time. The likelihood of Ælfflaed's own repudiation by Edward before 920 in favour of his third wife, Eadgifu, indicated by evidence that she survived him as a nun at Wilton Abbey, does not reflect the picture of lasting investiture within the wording of the queen's rite.[384] This is not to say that consecration guaranteed that a queen could not be later set aside – merely that looking at the later course of a

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[379] Barbara Yorke, 'Edward as Aetheling', p. 33; Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England*, p. 31.
[380] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 367.
[381] Simon MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 192.
[382] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 221–22; Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England*, pp. 44–52.
[383] Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe*, p. 68.
[384] Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', p. 12.

queen's career in order to determine whether she was consecrated can present conflicting evidence. Ælfflaed is attested in only one of Edward's charters in 901, titled not as regina but 'conjux regis'.[385] This appearance is ambiguous, as Ælfflaed appears alongside Ealhswith who is 'mater regis'. Stafford has argued that this intergenerational diploma should be seen as dynastically significant. Such dynastic awareness could contribute to a context for consecration.[386] Nevertheless, this alone does not indicate a West-Saxon shift towards legitimising queenship. If a change in the circumstances of queens was envisaged by Alfred that led to him creating a new queen's rite, or at least bringing such a rite into a West-Saxon context, this elevated status seems not to have been borne out straightforwardly in the careers of either of the candidates for whom it could feasibly have first been used.

The Two Eadgifus

We might now consider post-Alfredian contexts for the introduction of this queen's rite. Discussions about the Second English *Ordo* that consider the king's and queen's rite as one text have focused on the beginning of a king's reign, a point of succession. However, removing the queen's rite from the textual history of the king's allows for the possibility that the queen's rite was first used in England mid-way through a king's reign – not for a joint inauguration, but for the inauguration of the wife of an already anointed king. Alfred's son Edward the Elder had a third wife, Eadgifu, whom he married two decades after his accession to the throne. The longevity of Eadgifu's career as queen, ebbing and flowing from the late 910s until the 960s, reflects a lasting office comparable with that outlined in the queen's rite. Given the ambiguity of the status of his first two wives, we might consider the possibility that his third wife was the first West-Saxon queen since Judith to be anointed. Stafford has identified Eadgifu as the first West-Saxon woman whose career evidently reflected a change in the status of the wives of kings.[387] However, Eadgifu's position was not consistently one of strength. Eadgifu was in a vulnerable position at the time of her marriage, as the third wife to a king who already had at least eight children. She was probably still a teenager, while Edward was already in middle age. This type of tentative situation is familiar – Judith was in a very similar one when she was crowned and anointed queen of Wessex in 856. However, Eadgifu had independent wealth, inherited from her father Sigehelm after his death at the Battle of the Holme in 902. Unlike Judith, she gave birth to the king's future heirs – she had two sons and at least two daughters with Edward. In 924, after five years of marriage, Edward died and

[385] S 363.
[386] Stafford, 'Edith, Edward's Wife and Queen', p. 132.
[387] Pauline Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', p. 6.

his oldest son Æthelstan, of Edward's first wife Ecgwynn, succeeded to the kingdom. At this time, Eadgifu may have retreated from court, no longer part of the immediate royal family.[388]

In 939, after a fifteen-year reign, Æthelstan died childless, and Eadgifu's fortunes turned. Her sons were now Edward's only living male-line descendants. Eadgifu was prominent during the reigns of her sons Edmund (r. 939-49) and Eadred (r. 946-55), and appeared in the witness lists of their charters as 'mother of the king' ('mater regis'). The frequency and prominence of Eadgifu's appearances in charter witness lists is unmatched by any other pre-conquest queen.[389] Her son Edmund had two wives, Ælfgifu and Æthelflaed, though the evidence indicates that Eadgifu's position at court left no room for another queen.[390] In 955 Eadred became ill and died without an heir, causing Eadgifu's fortunes to turn once more. Edmund's son Eadwig succeeded to the throne, and almost immediately dispossessed his grandmother of her land and wealth, indicating that she had supported the claim to the throne of her other grandson Edgar.[391] Give Eadgifu's prominence at court as dowager, Eadwig may have intended to give her estates to his own queen Ælfgifu. When Eadwig died in 959 Edgar took the throne and restored some of his grandmother's property, but due the prominence of Edgar's own wives she could not return to her previous position at court. Her next and final appearance in the documentary record is as a witness in the New Minster Winchester refoundation charter of 966.[392] By this point she was over sixty years old. It is likely she lived out her later years in a nunnery rather than at the royal court. As Jonathan Tickle has argued, 'that Eadgifu contributed to the tenth-century transformation of queenship certainly has been recognized and is widely accepted, but the exact role that she had remains unclear'.[393]

One figure who requires more than a cursory mention is Eadwig's queen Ælfgifu. That a factional succession dispute took place before Eadwig succeeded to the throne is apparent, and while Eadgifu's historical reputation seems to have greatly benefited from her side in this dispute, Ælfgifu's suffered immensely. Eadgifu had important allies, including relationships with prominent Benedictines like Dunstan and Æthelwold during the reign of her son Eadred. Eadgifu's and Dunstan's fortunes are tied together by the anonymous author of the *Life of Dunstan*, written around the turn of the eleventh century.[394] Just after Eadwig's inauguration in 955-56, around the same

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[388] See below discussion of sources that mention a queen or queen Eadgifu during Æthelstan's reign.
[389] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, pp. 198-204.
[390] Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', p. 18.
[391] Stafford, *King's Wife in Wessex*, p. 24.
[392] S 745.
[393] Jonathan Tickle, 'Changing Queenships in Tenth-Century England: Rhetoric and (Self-) Representation in the Case of Eadgifu of Kent at Cooling', *Early Medieval Europe*, 31.4 (2023), 598-628 (p. 602).
[394] "B., Vita S. Dunstani', in *The Early Lives of St Dunstan*, ed. by Michael Winterbottom and Michael Lapidge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011)

time as Eadgifu was deprived of her wealth, Dunstan was sent into exile.[395] After Edgar had gained the throne, Dunstan was granted political influence. He was promoted to bishop and then archbishop, becoming a saint after his death. In perhaps one of the most striking incidents in his saint's life, Dunstan alledgedly separated Eadwig from a sexual encounter with both his wife Ælfgifu and his mother-in-law, Æthelgifu, that took place during Eadwig's coronation celebrations. The author states that '…his lust suddenly prompted him to rush out to caress these whores… leaving the happy feasters and the seemly assemblage of his great men', and describes them as 'wallowing in a revolting pigsty'.[396] This story is attributable to a substantial revision of history during the reign of Edgar that maligned Eadwig and glorified Edgar's supporters. Queen Ælfgifu has thus been retrospectively vilified in the historical record, but we should not discount that she might have been anointed with Eadwig purely because of the testimony of his rivals. The source indicates that Ælfgifu was present at the coronation, and that she had to be implicated in the scandal that undermined the legitimacy of his reign. In 958, a year in which power was moving in Edgar's favour, and he was accepted as king in Mercia, Archbishop Oda dissolved Eadwig and Ælfgifu's marriage due to claims of consanguinity.[397] The accusation against Eadwig may have leveraged a distant blood relationship in order to dissolve the royal marriage: Ælfgifu was sent into exile. Her exile ended before 966, as she was listed as a witness alongside Eadgifu on the New Minster Winchester refoundation charter.[398] She died between 966 and 975, and the amount of heriot paid to the king on her death is the largest of any extant tenth-century will.[399] Though their marriage had been dissolved, Ælfgifu was buried at Winchester with Eadwig. Everything about Ælfgifu's career and the accusations mounted at her suggests that she was a powerful woman who had to be challenged. Eadgifu's contrasting reputation is largely due to backing the eventual winner in a factional war.

In his argument for the creation of the Second English *Ordo* in a late Alfredian context, Pratt makes much of the career of Eadgifu, arguing that her ongoing prominence indicates that a change in queenly status took place before Æthelstan's 925 inauguration.[400] He argues that it is Eadgifu's priority above her son's wives that mark her special status:

> What makes Eadgifu's attestations especially striking is the absence from witness-lists during Edmund's reign of Ælfgifu and Æthelflæd of Damerham: the favour accorded

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[395] B., Vita S. Dunstani', p. 71.
[396] 'B., Vita S. Dunstani', p. 66-69.
[397] Stafford, Pauline, 'Ælfgifu (fl. 956–966)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <https://www.oxforddnb.com/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-179> [accessed 29 July 2024].
[398] S 745.
[399] Stafford, 'Ælfgifu'.
[400] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 219–20.

> to Eadgifu appears to be an early expression of the principle observed by Stafford, that 'there could not be two queens in the royal household'.[401]

Pratt argues that the continuing influence of Eadgifu throughout her life, even during her son Edmund's reign while he had wives, could be due to her having been anointed. Crucially, this status-changing rite would have endowed her with a title that could not easily be erased upon her husband's death. This argument for Eadgifu's status is persuasive. However, due to his understanding of the queen's rite as having been composed during the same process as the king's, and first used during Edward's accession, the parameters of Pratt's argument do not allow for Eadgifu, who he married later in his reign, to be the candidate for its first use. As previously outlined, he thus considers Edward's second wife Ælfflaed as this candidate, though the evidence to mark out her special status is more limited than that for Eadgifu. In separating the provenance of the queen's rite from that of the king's rite in the Second English *Ordo* we can conceive of a scenario in which Edward introduced a queen's rite mid-reign for this third wife.

It might be again necessary to stress that a queen's subsequent career does not map perfectly on to her status upon marriage, due to the various circumstances that can cause a queen to rise and fall in prominence. Eadgifu's career is a perfect example of this – if succession politics had played out differently, if different members of the family had survived or perished, her career could have looked wildly different. For this reason, a more reliable indicator of whether a queen had been anointed is perhaps the political circumstances of the moment she became queen. We can be certain that Edward was thinking about queenship in the late 910s when he married Eadgifu, because of another Eadgifu – his daughter, who married Charles the Simple around the same time her father married his third wife, between 917 and 919. As stated, Pratt has argued that this politically motivated cross-Channel marriage might indicate the high status of Eadgifu's mother, Ælfflaed.[402] However, this marriage was not necessarily a show of prestige. Charles was not in a position of strength, and had no male heirs when his first queen Frederuna died in 917. MacLean has argued that:

> The marriage of Charles the Simple to Eadgifu at the end of the 910s was a bold move on his part, but one probably born of weakness more than ambition. At the time of the negotiations, his high-handed dealings with members of the West Frankish aristocracy had led to the gathering of opposition around Robert, marchio of Neustria (the area between the Loire and the Seine), who eventually deposed and replaced him in 922.[403]

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401 Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 220; Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex', p. 18.
402 Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', pp. 221–22; Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England*, pp. 44–52.
403 MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship*, p. 30. Also Simon MacLean, 'Cross-Channel Marriage and Royal Succession in the Age of Charles the Simple and Athelstan (c. 916-936)', *Medieval Worlds*, 2 (2015), 26–44 (pp. 26–40).

In fact, Edward's power seemed to be reaching its zenith in this period – he had been declared the king of Mercia after expelling his niece Ælfwynn. Edward may have held the majority of the cards in this marriage negotiation, which need not have required the added prestige of his daughter's birth to an anointed queen. It is not known whether Eadgifu was anointed as Charles' queen in a ritual ceremony upon her marriage, though Charles had certainly shown that he understood the value of such religious symbolism – he had organised his own inauguration for 28 January 893, the anniversary of the death of Charlemagne.[404] Moreover, this diplomatic marriage provides a context in which queenship and the status of queens might have been a critical discussion in the West-Saxon court specifically in the late 910s as Edward was preparing to send his daughter abroad to marry a king, and one whose position looked uncertain. Perhaps this discussion was critical enough to inspire a change in policy for the incumbent queen Eadgifu.

Edward's son Æthelstan never married, which might lead one to conclude that his reign is an unlikely context for the composition or reception of a new queen's rite. Indeed, Pratt argues that 'the hypothesis of 924 × 925 […] seems difficult to reconcile with the novelty represented by the queen's ordo: the scenario would involve an upgrading of queenly status which lacked an immediate purpose'.[405] I disagree that an upgrading of queenly status immediately before or during Æthelstan's reign lacked any immediate purpose. While it is significant that Æthelstan was apparently unmarried during his coronation and remained so during his reign, there are substantial reasons why the status of the wives of kings must have been at the forefront of political considerations in the years before and after 925. It is not the case that the queen's rite must have been introduced or produced with a specific candidate in mind – it may well have been added to the liturgical repertoire for future use. The marriages of Æthelstan's sisters to foreign kings and nobles are a context in which queenship was at the forefront of political discourse, and in which a queen's rite may have been produced or introduced in England. If the queen's rite is indeed West-Frankish in origin, the connections that these marriages created also provide ample opportunity for the exchange of liturgical rites between England and the continent.

A total of five dynastic marriages were arranged between Æthelstan's sisters and various European rulers.[406] The first, as we have seen, was Eadgifu's marriage to Charles the Simple between 917 and 919. The deposition of Charles in 922 led to Eadgifu sending their young son Louis, later king of West Francia (r. 936-54), to Edward's court. Either occasion might have facilitated the transmission

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[404] MacLean, 'Cross-Channel Marriage', p. 30.
[405] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 219.
[406] Many works have looked at these marriages in depth: Foot, 'Dynastic Strategies: The West-Saxon Royal Family in Europe'; Ortenberg; Sheila Sharp, 'The West Saxon Tradition of Dynastic Marriage, with Special Reference to the Family of Edward the Elder', in *Edward the Elder: 899-924*, ed. by N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013); MacLean, 'Cross-Channel Marriage'; MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship*.

of the Leiden *Ordo* to Edward's court, the rite identified by David Pratt as having been used at the coronation of Charles the Simple in 893 and contributing to the formulation of the Second English *Ordo*. Pratt argues that the transmission of this document at this point, when Charles' position was insecure, is unlikely, and argues that the Leiden *Ordo* must have been transmitted during the reign of Edward's predecessor, Alfred, when Charles' rulership was more secure.[407] This argument rests on the assumption that the transmission of royal *Ordines* and their adaptation in new rites was influenced by the relative political success of the royalty for whom they had already been used – but this is not necessarily the case. The Leiden *Ordo* may have been selected for adaptation into the Second English *Ordo* for a number of reasons not related to the relative success of Charles' reign: for example, its liturgical content, or even the scarcity of other suitable material to work from. Manuscript evidence reflects that the rites of the Second English *Ordo* continued to be copied, used and adjusted long after Charles the Simple had been deposed, with no evidence that the inclusion of the Leiden *Ordo* was troubling. In spite of Charles' eventual deposition, the familial ties between the courts of Edward and Charles created by this marriage alliance provide another potential occasion for the transmission of the Leiden *Ordo* and other West-Frankish liturgical rites.

According to William of Malmesbury, in 926 an embassy from Duke Hugh of the Franks arrived at the English court, with lavish gifts and holy relics for the king. These included Charlemagne's lance, Constantine's sword, a crown, and a piece of the True Cross preserved in crystal.[408] MacLean argues that these gifts may have been a gesture of Frankish legitimacy designed to benefit Louis as much as Æthelstan.[409] In exchange, Æthelstan's sister Eadhild was sent to marry Hugh, an alliance that was in the interests of the young Louis and that may have been brokered by Eadgifu.[410] Another continental marriage alliance was made in 929, the most prestigious of all, when Æthelstan's sister Eadgyth went to marry Otto, the son of King Henry I and future Emperor of Rome. This may have led to not only one marriage but two, as Eadgyth was accompanied by her sister and Otto allowed to choose his bride. According to the chronicler Æthelweard, this sister went on to marry 'a certain king near the Alps'.[411] William of Malmesbury misidentifies this prince as Louis, Prince of Aquitaine – Eduard Hlawitschka has argued convincingly that the Alpine husband was in fact Louis, brother of Rudolf II of Burgundy.[412] These marriages must be

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[407] Pratt, 'The Making of the Second English Coronation Ordo', p. 215.
[408] William of Malmesbury, pp. 218–21.
[409] MacLean, 'Cross-Channel Marriage', p. 32.
[410] Foot, 'Dynastic Strategies: The West-Saxon Royal Family in Europe', pp. 237–53; MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship*, pp. 30–31.
[411] Æthelweard, *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. by A. Campbell (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), pp. 1-2.
[412] Eduard Hlawitschka, 'Die Verwandtschaftlichen Verbindungen zwischen dem hochburgundischen und dem niederburgundischen Königshaus: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte Burgunds in der I. Hälfte des 10. Jahrhunders', in *Grundwissenschaften und Geschichte: Festschrift für Peter Acht*, ed. by W. Schlögl and P. Herde (Kallmünz: Lassleben, 1976), pp. 28–57 (pp. 50–57).

contextualised within the wider pattern of dynastic marriages. The intermarriage between English and foreign royal and noble families was comparatively rare both before and after Æthelstan's sisters, with a few notable exceptions. This process of brokering alliances through marriages, begun under Edward the Elder and continued through Æthelstan's reign, thus looks like a deliberate strategy. Sarah Foot has argued that these marriages represent a strategy that both increased Æthelstan's prestige while eliminating possible heirs from the royal line.[413] Edward had three marriages, and this resulted in at least seven daughters. Edward and Æthelstan may have planned around the potential for an excess of cousins vying for the throne. As there is no evidence that Æthelstan himself married or had any heirs, and with three of his sisters in monasteries and four married off to men in different kingdoms, the evidence indicates that he wished to limit the pool of succession.

MacLean has viewed the strategy of these marriages from the perspective of the women themselves, arguing that such marriages created a continental familial network through which the women could operate while separated from the networks of their homeland.[414] In such circumstances, each subsequent continental marriage added to this network and thus strengthened the political alliances which these women represented. There is some evidence that Eadgifu exercised agency in furthering these continental networks, and that she was still considered a queen after the deposition of her husband Charles the Simple. Two sources from Æthelstan's reign mention a 'queen' and a 'queen Eadgifu' alongside the king, and MacLean argues that this is more likely to be his sister than his stepmother. As he points out:

> …A poem of 927 written to celebrate Athelstan's success in gaining overlordship of Northumbria and Scotland […] is addressed to an audience including a ›queen‹ (regina) and ›prince‹ (clito) residing in the ›royal palace‹ (palatium regis), probably Winchester. Athelstan had no queen, and his stepmother Eadgifu is conspicuously absent from the sources for his reign. Could the queen therefore have been Charles the Simple's wife Eadgifu? If so, the ›clito‹ – a term implying eligibility for kingship – may well be young Louis rather than, as commonly supposed, the king's half-brother Edwin.[415]

The second source is continental, the Gandersheim Gospels. MacLean states that:

> A hint that [Eadgifu] remained on the scene is provided by the so-called Gandersheim Gospels, a ninth-century book from Metz that seemingly passed from the West Frankish court to the east during one of the exchanges of this period. The last leaf contains a note added in an English hand: ›Eadgifu the queen – Athelstan King of the Anglo-Saxons and Mercians‹. Eadgifu's name is given prominence here through the ordering and through the fact that it is accompanied by a cross, unlike Athelstan's.

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[413] Foot, 'Dynastic Strategies: The West-Saxon Royal Family in Europe'.
[414] Simon MacLean, 'Making a Difference in Tenth-Century Politics: King Athelstan's Sisters and Frankish Queenship', in *Frankland: The Franks and the World of the Early Middle Ages, Essays in Honour of Dame Jinty Nelson*, ed. by Paul Fouracre and David Ganz (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 167–90; MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship*, p. 34.
[415] MacLean, 'Cross-Channel Marriage', p. 32.

> Moreover, the book is not known to have been in England, so a Continental context for the inscription is likely. These considerations support the identification with Charles's wife rather than Athelstan's step-mother, and the [marriage alliance between Edith and Otto] of 929-30 provide a likely context.[416]

Even if Æthelstan had no wife himself, it is clear from these two sources that a queen was residing with him at the royal court. If this was his sister Eadgifu, as MacLean argues, her presence at the court would facilitate her acting as a highly connected political figure, using her status as queen to further continental networks and promote the legitimacy of her son Louis. Even if instead, the Eadgifu can be identified as Æthelstan's stepmother – which surely warrants some reflection given the continuation of her political relevance into the 960s – it cannot be said that the status of queens was not a primary consideration during Æthelstan's reign.

One more sister of Æthelstan is due attention. When Æthelstan was crowned king in 925, preparations were probably already under way for one of his sisters to marry Sihtric, king of York, in a ceremony that eventually took place in Tamworth on 30 January 926.[417] The marriage surely cemented an alliance between Æthelstan and the Scandinavian king of Northumbria in the form of a non-aggression pact, though the exact terms of this alliance are not known. The marriage was short-lived, as Sihtric died in 927, at which point Æthelstan took control of Northumbria. Later sources flesh out the circumstances of the marriage more thoroughly. A version of the story was recorded at Bury St Edmunds in the twelfth century and was later re-told by thirteenth-century chroniclers Matthew Paris and Roger of Wendover. This version states that Sihtric had been made to convert to Christianity to marry Æthelstan's sister, but that he soon reverted to his old religion.[418] While this is not mentioned in ASC D's contemporary account, Sihtric's conversion as a prerequisite to marrying the king's sister is not at all far-fetched. This tradition then relates that Æthelstan's sister, who is named Edith and is also his full sister by Edward's first wife Ecgwynn, retired to Polesworth, near Tamworth, although Nigel Tringham has argued that the Polesworth Edith was a much earlier figure who has become conflated with Æthelstan's sister.[419] That her name was Edith is also uncertain – it is possible that she was conflated with Æthelstan's other sister Edith. Her being a full sister of Æthelstan is corroborated by the account by William of Malmesbury, who may have possessed a reliable contemporary source about Æthelstan that is now

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[416] MacLean, 'Cross-Channel Marriage', p. 37; Janet Nelson, 'Eadgifu (d. in or after 951), Queen of the West Franks, Consort of Charles III', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004 <https://www.oxforddnb.com/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-39220> [accessed 30 July 2024].

[417] ASC D, 926.

[418] Alan Thacker, 'Dynastic Monasteries and Family Cults: Edward the Elder's Sainted Kindred', in *Edward the Elder*, ed. by N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 248–63 (p. 257).

[419] Thacker, 'Dynastic Monasteries and Family Cults: Edward the Elder's Sainted Kindred', p. 257; Nigel Tringham, 'St Edith of Polesworth and Her Cult', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 71.1 (2020), 1–19.

lost.[420] Malmesbury also states that it was his sister's marriage to Sihtric that enabled Æthelstan to take Northumbria rightfully and lawfully after Sihtric's death. This marriage alliance had huge political consequences for Æthelstan's reign: he remained king of Northumbria for the rest of his life, though the kingdom temporarily slipped from West-Saxon control under his successor Edmund. This marriage was arguably crucial in the eventual unification of England.

Among these exceptional marriages, the marriage of Æthelstan's sister to Sihtric seems in itself an exception. While this sister may have benefitted from being closer to home, her marriage lacked the power of a continental network, and arguably afforded less prestige than those of her sisters. This sister was marrying a king from a different culture where her status and safety would be uncertain. Stafford has emphasised the risk involved in her marriage to Sihtric, and suggested that the way the annals in ASC D report the marriage indicate an attempt to avoid potential criticism.[421] A comparable political situation can be viewed in the marriage in 856 of Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald to Æthelstan's great-grandfather King Æthelwulf of Wessex. As outlined in chapter 2, at this time Wessex typically afforded the wives of kings no special status. The child bride Judith was thus given a consecration ceremony upon her marriage that afforded her the title of queen, so as to protect the status of herself and her family. A special rite was created for her that took into account her dynastic significance.[422] In Edith's case, not only was her status not guaranteed, but she was entering a kingdom in which the rulers were historically hostile, and who had a different culture, language, and religion. The marriage between Sihtric and Edith occurred in the January following Æthelstan's September coronation, while Æthelstan's reign was arguably secure upon his only rival's death, sixteen days after his father's death, in July 924. It is likely that during this delay plans were being made both for Æthelstan's inauguration and for his sister's marriage to Sihtric. I would argue that the political situation in 924/25 was fertile ground for an inauguration rite for a queen to be drafted or sought out. The suggestion by the Bury tradition that Sihtric had converted to Christianity before the wedding indicates that at least one religious ceremony – the rite of baptism – was a prerequisite to the marriage. Imagining that another comparable rite was used, in the form of an inauguration rite, is not so far-fetched.

Another influence that might have elevated queens in Æthelstan's reign and should not be discounted is his connection to Mercia. It is possible that Æthelstan had been educated in Mercia under the guardianship of Æthelflaed and Æthelred in his youth. This is another of William of Malmesbury's tales, of which David Dumville has stated that:

> …Much would be explained thereby, but we must not assume that a mediaeval scholar would be incapable of seeing that too. William is a treacherous witness: for all

[420] Thacker, p. 257.
[421] ASC D, 925 and 926; Pauline Stafford, 'Gender and the Gift', pp. 80–81.
[422] Judith *Ordo*.

> the praise heaped on him in modern times, we must nonetheless recognize that his attitude to evidence is mediaeval and not ours.[423]

Nevertheless, Sarah Foot has argued that there is evidence other than Malmesbury, in the form of another significantly later text from the time of Edward I, which refers to a grant made by Æthelstan in the year of his coronation, and refers to 'the pact of paternal piety which formerly he pledged with Æthelred, ealdorman of the people of the Mercians'.[424] I would argue that the most compelling indication that Æthelstan had some form of strong Mercian connection is that it was Mercia which supported his claim during the complex succession dispute following the death of Edward. Edward's intentions are uncertain, but it seems that he expected that Ælfweard, his son with Ælfflaed, should inherit at least the West-Saxon throne, if not the whole unified kingdom. Wessex elected Ælfweard as their king, while Mercia elected Æthelstan. Circumstances could have played out very differently had Ælfweard not died a mere sixteen days after his father. With his accession to the whole kingdom on what Nelson has termed 'a Mercian ticket', it seems that Æthelstan opted to be crowned at Kingston-upon-Thames, at the boundary between the two kingdoms. Æthelstan's Mercian connections and allegiances, as well as the personal example of the rulership of his aunt, could have inspired Æthelstan to take the position of royal women more seriously than previous West-Saxon rulers had done.

Conclusion: A Range of Possibilities

This chapter has explored several possible contexts for the creation or reception of the queen's rite in England. Given the broad possible dating for this rite, a broad number of contexts have been considered. The high status of queens combined with an albeit patchy history indicating religious conceptions of monarchy in Mercia from the late eighth century onwards provide a context in which the emergence of anointing ceremonies for both kings and queens was highly likely. The evident anxiety within Asser's account of the low status of queens in Wessex during the late reign of King Alfred is a good indication that this policy, by this point, was controversial and in the process of being addressed. The longevity of the political career of Eadgifu, the third wife of Edward the Elder, is a remarkable indication that the possibilities for the wives of West-Saxon kings had changed considerably by this point. Tickle has remarked that due to the length of her career, 'Eadgifu is positioned as something of a stepping stone, experiencing the shift [in the status of queens] first-hand within her own lifetime'.[425] The reign of Æthelstan, in which five of his sisters made important dynastic marriages, provided ample opportunity to consider the benefits of the inauguration of queens, the dynastic roles that queens could perform, and the meaning of the role

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[423] David N. Dumville, *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar – Essays on Political, Cultural, and Ecclesiastical Revival*, Reissue edition (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2016), p. 146.
[424] Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England*, p. 34.
[425] Tickle, p. 601.

of 'queen'. In each of these cases, it must be stressed that factors relating to the influence of both Mercia and Francia on this eventual development are crucial. Any discussion of the development of royal consecration must consider fully the cultural interchange between England and the continent. Each of the developments considered in this chapter indicates something important about the transformation of the status of queens, even if they cannot be linked securely to the composition or reception of the queen's rite. The advantage of keeping a broad view of possible dates for this transformation is that it avoids attributing it to a single moment, thus discounting both the factors that led to the change and the ways in which it developed.

Chapter 5: Changes to the Queen's Inauguration

Chapters 3 and 4 established that before the 960s, a transformation took place that standardised the queen's inauguration rite in England. The continued reception of this rite into the eleventh century is reflected in the manuscript evidence. Eight pontificals survive that contain versions of this queen's rite, dating generally between the 960s and the third quarter of the eleventh century. However, the rites in these eight manuscripts have textual differences that represent occasions on which the rite has been updated – see Tables 8 and 9. Five of these pontificals contain a text that incorporates a rubric that the others lack, while two represent substantial changes to both the king and queen's rites that strongly suggests a single process of redaction, creating one joint royal *Ordo*. That changes have been made to the rite indicates its ongoing relevance and use into the eleventh century. This chapter will consider the possible catalysts for these changes, and evaluate previous arguments that have linked changes to the queen's rite with significant historical events. Richer documentation from the later tenth and eleventh centuries provides a broader comparative framework for ideas about queenship. This chapter will bring this material into play to consider those ideas, and specifically to discuss the changes in the queen's rite that this period witnessed.

A New Rubric

As explored in Chapter 3, Janet Nelson has argued that there are two main recensions of the Second English *Ordo*: the A recension which is reflected in twenty continental manuscripts, and the B recension which is reflected in seven English manuscripts. Though Nelson considers the queen's rite to be a part of the Second English *Ordo*, this designation is based on changes to the king's rite only – indeed, in the article in which she makes this designation, Nelson only includes the king's rite in the tables that demonstrate the different recensions. The designation is based on one major change to the Second English *Ordo*:

> The single significant innovation in this revision is what would later be known as the Coronation Oath. Its substance was derived from the three-fold precept, originally the concluding section of the First English Ordo and taken from it into the A version of the Second Ordo. But the change in place meant a change in function: what had been a royal declaration of intent, a kind of programmatic statement issued literally from the throne by the newly-installed king, was turned by the reviser into a promise that was implicitly a pre-condition of the ensuing consecration.[426]

Nelson considers the version of the Second English *Ordo* in the Robert Benedictional to be the closest to the A recension, and therefore considers it prior to the other witnesses. In terms of

[426] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 369.

changes to the queen's rite, there are no significant examples in this manuscript. Turning to the queen's rite, she states that:

> …This queen's ordo is simply a copy of the existing A queen's ordo: hence its presence in the Benedictional of Robert could be attributed to the scribe's desire for completeness, or even to the conservatism of liturgical manuscripts in general. There is an obvious distinction, anyway, between copying, and composing or adapting, a liturgical text. The 'Robert' queen's ordo, as a straight copy, contrasts strikingly with the restructured king's ordo, and therefore throws no light on the circumstances of the latter's composition.[427]

However, Nelson's designation of A and B does not recognise significant changes that are found among the pontificals of the B recension. One such change is to the queen's rite specifically. A rubric has been added preceding the queen's rite that reads:

> The queen's consecration follows. To do her honour, she is anointed on the crown of her head by the bishop with the oil of sacred unction. And let her be blessed and consecrated in church, in the presence of the magnates, to consortship of the royal bed, as it is shown on the following page. We further decree that she be adorned with a ring for the integrity of the faith, and a crown for the glory of eternity.[428]

This rubric is not present in the Robert Benedictional, but is in the Dunstan Pontifical, Anderson Pontifical, Samson Pontifical, Claudius II, and CCCC 44 (see Table 8). It may have been present in Vitellius A. vii, but the manuscript is extremely damaged. Given the similarities between Vitellius A. vii and CCCC 44, which will be discussed further below, it is safe to assume that this pontifical also contained this rubric. It is not present in Lanalet, the only extant pontifical that contains both the queen's rite and the First English *Ordo*, though placed separately in the manuscript.

Nelson has argued that this rubric was added to the queen's rite for a particular occasion: the consecration of Edgar by Archbishop Dunstan in Bath in 973.[429] The specifics of this event, which occurred fourteen years into Edgar's reign, are contentious. Though often referred to in scholarship as the 'coronation at Bath', the near-contemporary sources that record this event are clear he was anointed, not merely crowned. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* state that Edgar was 'hallowed to king' ('to cyninge gehalgod') and imply that this was his first inauguration, while Byrhtferth of Ramsey's *Life of Oswald*, composed between 997 and 1002, states that the occasion was a 'hallowed anointing' ('unctio beata').[430] However, there is a general consensus among historians that Edgar must also

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[427] Nelson, 'Second English *Ordo*', p. 371.
[428] Translation by Nelson, 'Second English *Ordo*', p. 372: 'Quam consecratio reginae sequitur. Que propter honorificentiam ab episcopo sacri unguinis oleo super verticem fundenda est. Et in ecclesia coram optimatibus ut in sequenti pagina demonstratur. Cum condigno honore regia celsitudine in regalis thori consortium benedicatur et consecretur. Sed et hanc etiam anulo pro integritate fidei et corona pro aeternitatis gloria decorari decernimus'; Samson Pontifical, f. 148v; 'Second English Coronation Order', p. 21.
[429] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo, p. 373.
[430] ASC A, ASC B and ASC C, 973; ASC D, AND ASC E, 972; Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine*, ed. by Michael Lapidge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), iv.6.

have been anointed and crowned at the outset of his reign in 959, as there is 'nothing deficient about Edgar's kingship in the 960s'.[431] Therefore, 973 has been understood as a second anointing for Edgar. This is somewhat controversial given that the rite is intended to be permanently status-changing: Elisabeth van Houts cites Johanna Dale as stating that 'a king or queen could only be consecrated once but could be crowned many times'.[432] Nelson argues that this can be accounted for by 973 being an imperial rather than kingly inauguration, and that this is reflected in its location in the Roman city of Bath.[433] Moreover, there *are* instances where a king was anointed twice – Pippin, for example, for whom the anointing ceremony was an innovation, was anointed twice in the space of a few years.[434] Nelson argues that Edgar's wife Ælfthryth was anointed alongside him during the 973 ceremony, and that the new rubric was added to the queen's rite for this specific occasion. Nelson remains open-minded about whether 973 was a second inauguration for Ælfthryth as well as Edgar. However, as will be demonstrated below, the evidence linking this rubric and Ælfthryth's involvement in this ceremony is dubious. Before considering Nelson's arguments in detail, it is worth reminding ourselves of Ælfthryth's career more broadly, especially the evidence for her status before 973.

Ælfthryth had married Edgar in 964 and was his third wife. She was the daughter of a powerful ealdorman, Ordgar, and her mother was connected to the West-Saxon royal house. There is convincing evidence that Ælfthryth was already an anointed queen by 966. In the signatory list of the New Minster refoundation charter of 966, Ælfthryth is referred to as 'legitima coniuncx'. Edmund, Ælfthryth's first child, is described as 'clito legitimus', while Edward, the son of Edgar's first wife Æthelflaed, is referred to only as 'clito'.[435] The crosses next to Ælfthryth and Edmund's names are gold, while the cross next to Edward is not illuminated. This reads as an attempt by Æthelwold to emphasise Ælfthryth's legitimacy. The question remains how this demarcation of status could be justified. Perhaps the terms 'legitima' and 'legitimus' indicate that Edgar and Ælfthryth had a more legitimate form of marriage than Edgar's first. However, it could equally indicate that only Ælfthryth had undergone a consecration rite. Indeed, Ælfthryth's consecration may have been exploited after Edgar's death in 975 by the faction supporting her son Æthelred in

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[431] Simon Keynes, 'Edgar, Rex Admirabilis', in *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975: New Interpretations*, ed. by Donald Scragg (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2014), pp. 3–59 (pp. 48–49).
[432] Johanna Dale cited in Elisabeth van Houts, 'Cnut and William: A Comparison', in *Conquests in Eleventh-Century England: 1016, 1066*, ed. by Laura Ashe and Emily Ward (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2020), p. 79, n. 66.
[433] Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', 301.
[434] See Chapter 1.
[435] S 745; *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents Relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and its Minsters*, ed. by Alexander R. Rumble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), pp. 93-4.

the succession dispute against his half-brother Edward.[436] This information comes from a later source written sometime between 1093 and 1109 – Eadmer's *Vita Dunstani*.[437] In this saint's life, Eadmer states that Edward's accession was opposed by some because 'they knew that [Edward's] mother, even though she had been legally married in the kingdom, had not been consecrated, and nor had his father, when he was born'.[438] The implication here is that Ælfthryth, the mother of Edward's rival, had indeed been consecrated. Assuming Eadmer's account is trustworthy, that Ælfthryth's anointing could be used in such a way indicates that the process was thought of as constitutive and status-changing, to the extent that it could bestow legitimacy onto an unborn child. If Eadmer preserves genuine tenth-century tradition, this coupled with the evidence of the New Minster charter would indicate that Ælfthryth was first anointed before 966. This evidence is not watertight, but it does suggest that Ælfthryth was anointed upon her marriage to Edgar in 964. In this case, if Ælfthryth was a participant in the ceremony of 973, this would be a second anointing for her as well as Edgar.

Nelson's argument links the composition of the new rubric for the queen's rite to Ælfthryth's inauguration at Bath in 973. As this rubric is present in the Dunstan Pontifical, which was almost certainly produced in the early 960s, this is not possible.[439] Given the prevalence of the idea that Ælfthryth was first anointed in Bath alongside Edgar, it is worth fully unravelling Nelson's arguments.[440] Nelson's argument rests predominantly on an allusion made to the rubric in Byrhtferth of Ramsey's description of the 973 inauguration and ensuing feast in his *Vita Oswaldi*, written several decades later.[441] He describes Edgar's inauguration ritual, and mentions that the queen was present at the feast, but says nothing clear about whether Queen Ælfthryth was crowned and anointed with Edgar. If the mere mention of a queen's presence at an inauguration ceremony in a later source is enough to confirm that she was likewise anointed, then the *Vita Dunstani*'s account that Ælfgifu was present at Eadwig's consecration would be enough to indicate that she was anointed with him – scandalous and incestuous fornication notwithstanding (see Chapter 4). Byrhtferth was seemingly recounting events from a copy of the *Ordo* rather than from first-hand

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[436] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 373; Eadmer, *Eadmer of Canterbury: Lives and Miracles of Saints Oda, Dunstan, and Oswald*, ed. by Bernard J. Muir, and Andrew J. Turner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), pp. 144-45.
[437] Eadmer, *Eadmer of Canterbury: Lives and Miracles of Saints Oda, Dunstan, and Oswald*, p. lxvii.
[438] '... quia matrem eius licet legaliter nuptam in regnum tamen non magis quam patrem eius dum eum genuit sacratam fuisse sciebant'.
[439] See Chapter 3; Helen Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 42.
[440] For example, a widely available trade historical biography about Ælfthryth strongly makes this case in its blurb: Elizabeth Norton, *Elfrida: The First Crowned Queen of England* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2014).
[441] Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine*, ed. by Michael Lapidge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), pp. lxvii-lxviii.

experience, as he replicates the wording of the *Ordo* several times.[442] This alone would account for the replication of the wording of the rubric. Towards the end of his account of the ritual and ensuing feast, Byrhtferth summed up the preceding events with the phrase 'peractis egregiis nuptiis regalis thori'. The reference to a 'marriage bed' here has caused some debate over Byrhtferth 's account – is he perhaps confused, and referencing Edgar and Ælfthryth's marriage, which occurred almost a decade earlier in 964/65?[443] Nelson has translated this as 'when the distinguished nuptials of the royal bed had been completed', and believes it to be a reference to the rubric's 'regalis thori consortium'.[444] Nelson concludes that this is a reference specifically to Ælfthryth's participation in the ritual. Lapidge, in his edition and translation of Byrhtferth's *Vita Oswaldi*, ignores these connotations, believing the phrase 'regalis thori' only refers to Edgar and Ælfthryth, and 'nuptiis' their feast.[445] He concludes that there is 'no reference here to the ceremony of anointing the queen'. The evidence in Byrhtferth's *Vita Oswaldi* is therefore ambiguous at best. Nelson also argues that the reference in the rubric to a 'decree', unusual in a liturgical book, indicates that it was written for a particular occasion in which the decision to crown a queen was controversial – thus, a decree by the witan was required to legitimate it. She sees this as further suggestion that this rubric was written for Ælfthryth in 973, as a second anointing for a queen would be highly unusual – though presumably in this case a second anointing for a king would have been equally controversial.

Nelson presents four further arguments that she believes link this rubric to 973.[446] First, she mentions the evidence that Ælfthryth was certainly anointed given Æthelred's faction's use of this as leverage in Eadmer's *Vita Dunstani*. While this is compelling, it only proves that she was anointed at some point in her career – there is no reason to suppose this did not coincide with her marriage to Edgar in 964. Æthelred was almost certainly born several years before 973 in 966-968, and if Ælfthryth's anointing was utilised to bolster his legitimacy, it is likely that she was anointed before his birth.[447] Secondly, Nelson points out that Ælfthryth was listed on charters as 'queen' in the 960s and early 970s. This merely reinforces the conclusion that she was anointed earlier in her reign than 973. Thirdly, she argues that Ælfthryth had a good relationship and close association with the church leaders who designed the 973 inauguration, though this by no means rules out a 964

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[442] Michael Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth and Oswald', in *St. Oswald of Worcester: Life and Influence*, ed. by Nicholas Brooks and Catherine Cubitt, pp. 64-83: Byrhtferth, *Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine*, pp. 106-10: H. G. Richardson and G. O. Sayles, *The Governance of Medieval England* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1963), p. 400.
[443] Eric John, *Orbis Britanniae, and Other Studies* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1996), pp. 276-89.
[444] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 373.
[445] Michael Lapidge in '*The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine*', p. 110-11, n. 69.
[446] Nelsoln, 'Second English Ordo', p. 373.
[447] Simon Keynes, 'Æthelred II [Ethelred; known as Ethelred the Unready] (c. 966x8–1016), King of England', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-8915?rskey=ALvcPZ&result=7 [accessed 29 July 2024].

inauguration for her. Lastly, she argues that Oswald, Archbishop of York, had possibly witnessed the inauguration of Empress Theophano in the previous year, which could have inspired him to also crown Ælfthryth. The implication here is perhaps that if Ælfthryth was anointed for a second time at Edgar's 'imperial' inauguration, she was being crowned as an empress – though it is important to note the liturgy itself does not go so far as to claim this. It is also important to note that in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*' account of the inauguration, Ælfthryth is not mentioned in the annal for 973 describing Edgar's consecration at Bath, despite the account in the annals of A, B, and C, which is written in alliterative verse, being relatively lengthy and detailed.[448] Even taking into account the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*' tendency to leave women out of the narrative, if she was consecrated beside her husband in Bath, and especially if, as Nelson argues, the decision was controversial, and implied her status as empress, her absence in this record is conspicuous.[449] This does not mean, however, that this rubric was not written for Ælfthryth. It is not unreasonable to consider Ælfthryth as the most likely candidate to have inspired this rubric's composition immediately upon her marriage to Edgar, whether or not she was also consecrated again alongside him in 973. It also does not mean that Ælfthryth was definitely not there alongside Edgar in 973. There is simply no evidence that links this rubric with 973, and the manuscript evidence indicates that the rubric predates 973 by around a decade.

Realistically, this rubric may have been added to the queen's rite at any time between the creation of the queen's rite and the 960s when the Dunstan Pontifical was created. I do not agree with Nelson's conclusion that simply because some versions of the rite exist that do not contain this rubric, the version with the rubric *must* be later – although this is a logical assumption. There are many other possibilities. For example, it is possible that the version in the Dunstan Pontifical, the earliest West-Saxon witness, could be the first queen's rite to be used in an actual ceremony. Was a decree always needed for the consecration of a queen in tenth-century England, especially if not every royal wife was consecrated? Or should we see the need for a 'decree', indicating controversy according to Nelson, as linked to the decision to anoint queens in the first place? This would even allow for Ælfthryth, in 964, to be the first consecrated West-Saxon queen since Judith, the culmination of the developments discussed in the previous chapter, none of which alone had been enough to inspire such a change in policy until Ælfthryth came along. This scenario is not more likely than any other; it is simply useful to illustrate the complete range of possibilities when it comes to the history of this rite, when it is not being subsumed into the history of the Second English *Ordo*. Nevertheless, the first English appearance of this rite, with the rubric, in the Dunstan Pontifical, the dating of the Dunstan Pontifical to around the period of Ælfthryth's marriage to Edgar, and the evidence for her special status in the New Minster charter (see below) create a persuasive case to link Ælfthryth with

[448] ASC A, ASC B and ASC C, 973.
[449] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 372; Stafford, 'The Annals of Æthelflaed', 102-03.

the use of this rite, even if not with 973, or not with the first use. The connection between this rubric, 973, and Ælfthryth has had such traction partly because the inauguration of 973 is a singularly compelling event, and other instances of the privileging of 973 when dating documents will be outlined in this chapter. Moreover, Ælfthryth is a particularly compelling figure because of the political context of her reign. To reverse-engineer the discussion, then, it is worth considering what it is about late tenth-century England that makes it appear such a fertile environment for developments in queenship, and in wider royal ideology.

The Benedictine Movement

In the latter half of the tenth century a series of changes took place in a number of churches in southern England that transformed them from being staffed by secular clergy into Benedictine monastic houses. The canons who were forcibly removed from these churches were regarded as less disciplined than the Benedictine monks and were not required to remain unmarried. These changes were part of wider continental movement, the basic aim of which John Blair describes as 'to establish and disseminate high liturgical, spiritual and pastoral standards'.[450] Nevertheless, the movement took on a particular form in England and reached its zenith during the episcopate of Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester (963-84) and the reign of King Edgar (959-75). This process has been termed the 'Benedictine Reform', a label that has been interrogated by Julia Barrow and found to have little grounding in the rhetoric of the contemporary church leaders who orchestrated and promoted the changes, especially in England.[451] Though there was some use of 'reformare' in contemporary continental monastic documents, Barrow has argued that this was an attempt by monks to put a 'spiritually uplifting' spin on their takeovers of ecclesiastical communities.[452] The modern implications of the term 'reform' place a value judgement on their outcome that implies improvement, and do not adequately reflect the forceful and even illegal moves that were carried out during this period, the victims of which were secular clerics and nuns.[453] I will refer to these changes more neutrally as the 'Benedictine Movement', which reflects the nature of the changes as part of a wider shared goal. This monasticisation and promotion of the Benedictine rule was the objective of bishops like Æthelwold, Archbishop Dunstan of Canterbury and Archbishop Oswald of York, though it was only Æthelwold who implemented the staffing of cathedrals with monks – this was not consistent with continental practice, which retained the secular canons in cathedrals

[450] John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 351.
[451] Julia Barrow, 'The Ideology of the Tenth-Century English Benedictine "Reform"', in *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter*, ed. by Patricia Skinner (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), pp. 141–54.
[452] Julia Barrow, 'Vocabularies and Narratives of Reform', in *Rethinking Reform in the Latin West, 10th to Early 12th Century*, ed. by Steven Vanderputten (Leiden: Brill, 2023), pp. 256–69 (p. 269).
[453] Barrow, 'Vocabularies and Narratives of Reform', p. 269.

while promoting Benedictine monasticism in the monasteries.[454] To enact such disruptive changes Æthelwold required powerful political allies, and he found these in and adjacent to the royal household.[455] The result of this alliance of monarchical and ecclesiastical power was a significant development in royal and religious ideological symbolism.

As on the continent, the monarchy championed the movement in England: King Edgar's role was key to its success, but it must also be noted that Ælfthryth had a significant role in its development. King Edgar's reign in particular was a time of significant monastic change in southern England, a process in which both he and queen Ælfthryth were deeply involved, and influential in its ultimate success. Edgar and Ælfthryth were personally close to Dunstan, who arranged Edgar's inauguration at Bath in 973, and especially Æthelwold, who may have been Edgar's own teacher in childhood.[456] As we saw in the previous chapter, Ælfthryth was not the first queen to make allies of influential churchmen; Edgar's grandmother Eadgifu also had a career that rose and fell alongside those of Dunstan and Æthelwold.[457] Only with the lubricant of royal political power could the minsters of Winchester be transformed into Benedictine houses, through the means of force and benefice confiscation. The geographical extent of the Benedictine movement in England, through the south and into the midlands but not in the north, reflects where royal influence was strongest. Æthelwold and the crown certainly worked together to achieve these changes. King Edgar and Queen Ælfthryth's involvement in the movement was key to the development of its ideology.

Thus, in the latter half of the tenth century the ideology of the Benedictine Movement and the ideologies of both kingship and queenship are intertwined. The concentration on learning within this monasticising movement resulted in a rise in artistic schools centred around book production, and it was under Bishop Æthelwold that manuscript production at Winchester reached its zenith. The central documents of this process of monasticising were written and produced by Bishop Æthelwold in the period c. 966-80, a period that is coincidental with the marriage of Edgar and Ælfthryth, which began 964/65 and ended upon Edgar's death in 975, and encompasses Ælfthryth's ongoing influence as regent for her young son Æthelred into the 980s. The most significant works of the Benedictine movement can be identified as the New Minster Refoundation

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[454] Patrick Wormald, 'Æthelwold and His Continental Counterparts', in *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. by Barbara Yorke (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997), pp. 13–42 (pp. 37–38).
[455] For example, the king's thegn Wulfstan of Dalham used 'royal authority' to expel the clerics of Old Minster: Wulfstan of Winchester, *The Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. by Michael Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991).
[456] Alan Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon', in *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. by Barbara Yorke (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997), pp. 43–64 (p. 52).
[457] Pauline Stafford, 'Eadgifu (b. in or before 904, d. in or after 966), Queen of the Anglo-Saxons, Consort of Edward the Elder', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-52307?rskey=F0ThjD&result=2> [accessed 23 August 2019].

Charter of 966, the proem to the *Regularis Concordia*, and the *Benedictional of Æthelwold*.[458] I will now discuss the ideological content of these documents as well as their images, considering their dating, presentation of royalty as a central theme, and particularly their relevance to Christian queenship. I will also consider the possible connections between the Benedictine movement and the practice of inauguration, especially in connection with Queen Ælfthryth.

Æthelwold and Royal Iconography

The formulation of a new kind of monastic-cum-monarchical ideology began soon after Edgar's marriage to Ælfthryth in 964. In 966, a charter (S 745) was produced by Bishop Æthelwold to confirm the introduction of the Benedictine rule and the flushing-out of the existing canons at the New Minster Winchester, a royal foundation established by King Edward the Elder in 901. The charter, produced in the unusual form of a book of at least thirty-two folios, outlines a theological justification for the removal of the canons and their replacement with monks, partially in a first-person voice speaking as King Edgar himself.[459] The manuscript is particularly lavish with gold text throughout and contains a striking full-page illustrated and illuminated frontispiece. This frontispiece contains a portrait of King Edgar holding the charter itself, standing directly below Christ, who sits in a mandorla and is surrounded by four angels. Edgar is flanked by the two patron saints of the abbey: Mary who holds a palm leaf and a cross, and Peter who holds a key.[460] While Christ and the angels float above, Edgar, Mary and Peter stand firmly on the lower border, creating a separation between the figures standing on earth and the celestial space above. Only Edgar, gesturing reverently towards Christ with the charter itself in his left hand, breaches the space between the two. Thus, while Mary and Peter stand beside Edgar, looking towards him, supporting him by his side on earth, Edgar looks and reaches towards Christ above. It was likely that the 966 rededication of the New Minster added Mary for the first time – as Mary Clayton argues, 'with the Benedictine reform, Marian dedications seem to have become almost an obligatory feature of the English monasteries'.[461]

The image represents a coming together of heaven and earth. While the palm leaf Mary holds symbolises the journey of Christ into Jerusalem, and thus into Paradise, the key is a symbol of the

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[458] *Councils & Synods with other Documents relating to the English Church, 1: A.D. 871−1204*, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C. N. L. Brooke, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1981), pt I: 871−1066; *Regularis Concordia: Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque*, trans. by Dom Thomas Symons (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953); *The Benedictional of Saint Æthelwold: A Masterpiece of Anglo-Saxon Art : A Facsimile*, ed. by Andrew Prescott (London: British Library, 2001); Mechthild Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[459] The particulars of this rhetoric will be discussed in more detail below.
[460] Robert Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 197; Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004).
[461] Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 132.

Christological *clavis David*, the key to Jerusalem and Israel, and an emblem of Christ's power to open or close the gates to heaven and hell. The theme of transformation or a mediation of sacred and earthly space is also present in the inauguration ceremony, in which the king and queen become sacred on earth. Robert Deshman posits that the 'judicial figure of Christ' who resides in the upper half of the frontispiece is intended as the 'celestial archetype' for King Edgar.[462] This image is thematically similar to the text of the Second English *Ordo*, which urges the king to 'punish the wicked, and protect the just', and describes Christ as the 'key of David and the sceptre of the house of Israel'. This *Ordo* would certainly have been known to Æthelwold. The combination of Benedictine monasticism, manuscript production, and the existence of a formalised rite for the inauguration of the king, which could clearly be utilised by church leaders to inform their ideals of kingship, created a portrait in which King Edgar was given Christ himself as his kingly model, an idea which is also drawn out explicitly in the text. Edgar's act of having the New Minster refounded as a Benedictine house has both earthly and divine resonance, as does his status as king. However, the prevalence of Mary in this imagery indicates that the biblical models were not only kingly ones.

Though the production of texts and images relating to the Benedictine movement was clearly under way by the mid-960s, there has been a tendency by historians to ascribe many of the key documents to 973, the date of Edgar's anointing at Bath. What might be argued as the most central document to the tenth-century Benedictine movement is the *Regularis Concordia*, a code of monastic law written by Æthelwold sometime after 964, the date of Edgar and Ælfthryth's marriage. This text sets out in its proem essential roles for both Edgar and Ælfthryth as chief overseers of the Benedictine monasteries and nunneries respectively:

> Thus, in fulfilment of his royal office, even as the shepherd of shepherds, [Edgar] carefully defended from the jaws of the treacherous rabid ones, as if from the gaping throats of wolves, those sheep which by the Lord's grace he had eagerly gathered together. And he instructed his spouse Ælfthryth to defend the pens of the holy ones most carefully, and fearlessly guard their customs; so, that is to say, the male one to the males, the woman to the women, without there arising any scruple of suspicion.[463]

This part of the proem is in reference to Jesus as the *pastor bonus* of John 10, saving his flock of sheep from the wolf. Parallels between the king and Christ are noteworthy, but this comparison does more than that, also bringing Queen Ælfthryth directly into a Christological model of rulership. This is not a role assigned only to the king. That both Edgar and his queen are held up as the defenders of the new monasteries reflects their central role to the movement whilst also

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[462] Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, p. 197.

[463] Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, p. 2, 'Regali utique functus officio veluti Pastorum Pastor sollicitus a rabidis perfidorum rictibus, uti hiantibus luporum faucibus, oves quas Domini largiente gratia studiosus collegerat muniendo eripuit; coniugique suae Ælfthrithae sanctimonialium mandras ut impavidi more custodis defenderet cautissime praecepit; ut videlicet mas maribus, femina feminis, sine ullo suspicionis scrupulo subveriret' (translation my own).

cementing their ongoing commitment to its upkeep; it endows both recognition and responsibility. There can be no doubt that Queen Ælfthryth held a pivotal role in this monastic ideology.

The precise date of the *Regularis Concordia* is not known for certain, but it must be later than Edgar's marriage to Ælfthryth in 964, given the significant role ascribed to her, and earlier than Edgar's death in 975. Textually, the *Regularis Concordia* is very close to the wording of the New Minster refoundation charter, which is perhaps not surprising given that Æthelwold composed both texts. When T. Symons first edited the text, he suggested a date of 970, as he argued that it could not have been written until both Æthelwold and Oswald had begun to found monasteries, and he assumed that Ramsey Abbey could not have been founded earlier than between 968 and 970.[464] Later, he argued that it was written around the time that Edgar was crowned in Bath, c. 973.[465] This date has since been widely accepted in scholarship, though a robust argument has been put forward by Julia Barrow for an earlier date.[466] Barrow argues that the most likely date for the establishment of Ramsey Abbey is c. 965. She sees the climax of monasticising activity as taking place in the mid-960s, and specifically references the activities of Ælfthryth:

> She too was hyperactive in the years 964 to 966, which saw her marriage to Edgar, her production of an heir, and her assistance with the monastic takeover at New Minster. Ælfthryth belonged to a family which was interested in monasticism, she supported Æthelwold and her reward, a very valuable one, was to be put in charge of all the nunneries.[467]

Moreover, there is nothing definitive to suggest this document should be linked with 973 specifically. The Benedictine movement was in full swing several years earlier, as demonstrated by the New Minster charter. I would argue that, as with Nelson dating the rubric in the queen's rite to 973, this is illustrative of a wider tendency to over-ascribe Benedictine documents to coincide with the anointing at Bath, due to the perceived significance of this event.

The most lavishly decorated of the manuscripts to be produced at Winchester was also instigated by Æthelwold, known as the *Benedictional of Saint Æthelwold*.[468] Like the *Regularis Concordia*, this manuscript has been linked to the anointing of 973. Deshman argues that the *Benedictional* was produced alongside the inauguration of Edgar at Bath in 973, and that this is evident in the royal iconography and frequent depiction of crowns in the *Benedictional*. Certainly the *Benedictional* is full of the symbolism of royal power, particularly its use of coronal insignia. There are over thirty crowns

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[464] Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, p. xxiv.
[465] Dom Thomas Symons, 'Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation', in *Tenth-Century Studies. Essays in Commemoration of the Millenium of the Council of Winchester and the Regularis Concordia*, ed. by David Parsons (London: Phillimore, 1975), pp. 37–59 (pp. 40–42).
[466] Julia Barrow, 'The Chronology of the Benedictine "Reform"', in *Edgar, King of the English 959–975: New Interpretations*, ed. by Donald Scragg (Boydell & Brewer, 2008), pp. 211–23.
[467] Barrow, 'Chronology of the Benedictine "Reform"', pp. 222–23.
[468] London, British Library, MS. Additional 49598.

and diadems in the manuscript, and there may have been more on a missing folio.[469] In this manuscript we have the two earliest of the four extant depictions of Saint Benedict wearing a crown, and he also holds a crown in his hand signifying the glory that awaits those who follow his rule: this is perhaps a reference to Edgar's commitment to the Benedictine movement and his eventual reward. The Choir of Confessors is also shown crowned. The manuscript depicts Christ's baptism, in which he is given diadems and a rod or sceptre – this is perhaps the earliest English depiction of Christ with these insignia. Facing this image is that of the adoration of the magi, in which all three magi are crowned, and are presenting Christ with three diadems, reinforcing his position as the King of Kings in an almost imperial sense. This is a theme also present in the depiction of the second coming, where his mantle inscription reads 'King of kings and Lord of lords', and he is holding a rod or sceptre with a cross at the end, which he also holds in the ascension scene. The initial for the Octave of Pentecost portrays Christ as king and judge, and is the earliest known depiction of Christ as a crowned king.[470] Though Christ was obviously used as a model for King Edgar, Æthelwold's 'vision of kingship' – how he saw Edgar and his role in the Benedictine movement – in turn influenced the depictions of both Saint Benedict and Christ, emphasising their royal nature, and depicting them in crowns. Though in Christ's case there is an obvious scriptural precedent for considering him a king and depicting him in a crown, during Edgar's reign this iconography was strengthened to reflect what contemporary churchmen valued most – strong, just kingship that promoted and instrumented Benedictine monasticism.

However, what is perhaps most remarkable about the iconography of the *Benedictional* is its depiction of crowned women, for which there is much less scriptural precedent than in the case of crowned men. In the Choir of Virgins scene thirteen women are depicted, eleven of them crowned. The Virgin Mary is depicted seven times, and was probably depicted once more in the missing folio, but the most significant in terms of its connotations of royalty is the Dormition scene, depicting Mary's death. Here, God's hand holds a crown above Mary's head – this is not only a crowned queen, but a coronation. Though the idea of *Maria Regina* was already established in devotional texts, and images of the already-crowned virgin are already found in Italian iconography, this is the earliest extant depiction of the coronation of the Virgin.[471] The iconography of Mary as a crowned queen has been linked to the growing significance of the queens of England. Deshman argued that:

> The mediaeval conception of a parallel between the organisation of society in heaven and earth was the basis for the belief in an archetype of correspondence between Maria Regina and terrestrial queens.[472]

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[469] Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, pp. 204–14.
[470] Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, pp. 192–200.
[471] Clayton, p. 164.
[472] Robert Deshman, 'The Iconography of the Full-Page Miniatures of the Benedictional of Æthelwold' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Princeton University, 1969), p. 232.

Similarly, Mary Clayton has argued that:

> This emphasis on Mary's royalty is not solely the result of the liturgical and devotional significance of the idea. It can also be related to the position of the queen in contemporary Anglo-Saxon England and the growing significance of her role… Because they were of increasing consequence in England it was natural to invest Mary with the symbols of royalty.[473]

Though queenship is a clear theme of the *Benedictional*, images of the seventh-century Saint Æthelthryth in the *Benedictional of Æthelwold* are also technically portraits of a queen.[474] These images are certainly not traditional ruler portraits, nor are they contemporary with their subject. Before she entered a religious life, Æthelthryth was married to King Ecgfrith of Northumbria in the seventh century. It is perhaps ironic given all the crowned figures in the *Benedictional*, that Æthelthryth is not one, despite being the only 'terrestrial' royal figure – to borrow Deshman's phrasing – depicted in the entire manuscript. However, as it was her decision to reject her queenship that contributed to her saintliness, a crown on her head would perhaps have been deemed inappropriate.[475]

Given the strength of coronal imagery in the *Benedictional,* it is easy to see why it has been linked to the events of 973, and may be seen as bolstering conclusions that Ælfthryth was anointed on this occasion. However, two alternative proposals have been put forward for dating the *Benedictional*. The first, proposed by Michael Lapidge, notes the absence in the *Benedictional* of blessings for the feast of the translation of Saint Swithun to the Old Minster, which took place on 15 July 971. This oversight seems conspicuous given Swithun's importance to Æthelwold's church and that the blessing for his deposition is included in the *Benedictional*. If we accept this objection to the dating, the *Benedictional* must have been created before July 971.[476] Though Lapidge concedes that the text of the manuscript may have been written before 971, and the images produced after the inauguration of 973, this is a somewhat tenuous explanation given there is no evidence that this is the case, and this still does not adequately explain the translation's absence. Catherine Karkov, considering this evidence, has concluded that:

> The Benedictional is dated 973 only because its royal iconography has been tied to Edgar's second coronation in that same year. There is no reason to assume, however, that the iconography had not been developed earlier in Edgar's reign, especially because of the paralleling of Edgar and Christ, King of Heaven, in the New Minster Charter.[477]

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[473] Clayton, pp. 164–65.
[474] See forthcoming, Scott.
[475] *Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 391–401 (4.17-20).
[476] Michael Lapidge, 'The Cult of St. Swithun' (Oxford: Clarendon, 2003), p. 23.
[477] Catherine Karkov, 'Frontispiece to the New Minster Charter and the King's Two Bodies', in *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975: New Interpretations*, ed. by Donald Scragg (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2014), pp. 224–41.

Indeed, this re-dating of the *Benedictional* before 971 may still be consistent with its royal imagery. Could the iconography be explained simply by linking it to Edgar's kingship in general, or even his first inauguration? Might the images of Mary's coronation and the choirs of virgins reflect an earlier inauguration ceremony in which Ælfthryth also participated? These are questions worth considering.

The second attempt at re-dating the *Benedictional* comes from Alison Hudson in her 2014 doctoral thesis. Hudson argues that the *Benedictional*:

> …Might have been made for the rededication of the Old Minster by Godeman, a brother of the Old Minster who became abbot of Thorney. The benediction for the dedication of a church is the only prayer in the Benedictional for a one-off event (as opposed to an annual temporale or sanctorale commemoration). Moreover, the benediction for the dedication of a church is accompanied by an image which appears to depict Æthelwold himself dedicating a church.[478]

Noting Deshman's argument that the *Benedictional* contains royal iconography that links it with the 973 inauguration, Hudson adds that:

> The royal images which Deshman noted perhaps make equal sense as products of the early part of Æthelred's reign. Indeed, images featuring themes of motherhood and queenship— Christ, his mother, and the magi and Mary's heavenly coronation— might have been pertinent in 980, when Æthelred's mother, Ælfthryth, was regent.[479]

This re-dating of the *Benedictional* to Ælfthryth's regency during the reign of her son is also consistent with the *Benedictional*'s iconography. Images evoking Marian queenship are consistent with a period in which a queen, legitimate and anointed, was ruling on behalf of her son, the king. The argument on iconographical lines is fundamentally convincing, though it does not take into account Lapidge's objections about the absence of Saint Swithun's translation. It is true that images of kingship and queenship are consistent with a wider period than merely the inauguration of 973, as the prominence of church dedication and its imagery is consistent with the entire Benedictine Movement. I would argue that, as with the rubricated queen's rite and the *Regularis Concordia*, a connection with 973 has been made without considering all possibilities. The prevalence of crowned women in the *Benedictional*, a clear visual representation of female royal power, has previously been understood to indicate Ælfthryth's involvement in the inauguration in 973. If the imagery of the coronation of Mary and the crowned women in the *Benedictional* does date to before 973, it may reference an earlier 964 inauguration of Ælfthryth, or even, as suggested by Hudson, her time as regent.

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[478] Alison Hudson, 'Æthelwold's Circle, Saints' Cults, and Monastic Reform, c. 956-1006' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2014), p. 92.
[479] Hudson, 'Æthelwold's Circle', p. 93. Also Alison Hudson, *Bishop Æthelwold, His Followers, and Saints' Cults in Early Medieval England: Power, Belief, and Religious Reform* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2022), p. 44.

In addition to a strong theme of coronation, baptismal and water iconography is prevalent in the *Benedictional*, and a wider theme of washing/cleansing is present in much of the rhetoric of the Benedictine Movement. As well as the transformative scene in which Christ is being both baptised and given diadems by angels, there is also a running visual theme of a fluid water-like motif, for example in the background of the Second Coming scene or under the feet of the Magi. Coronation, baptism, and consecration are all evoked by this imagery. Edgar's age at his 973 inauguration, 'in his thirtieth year' according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, has been linked to the age at which priests and bishops were able to be anointed, so designated because it was also the age at which Christ was baptised.[480] The choice of Pentecost as the date of the occasion is also instructive.[481] The 966 New Minster refoundation charter for example outlines a theological justification for the flushing-out of the canons and their replacement with monks. The rhetoric is one of purgation; Æthelwold outlines in elaborate Latin prose the fall of the rebel angels from heaven and subsequently the fall of man from paradise. The expunged 'depraved' ('vitiosus') canons are then brought into this context, and Edgar himself in first person outlines how he, like God after the fall of the angels and like Christ after the fall of man, has engaged in the 'cleansing' ('mundans') of the New Minster.[482] Julia Barrow has argued that the rhetoric of cleansing is one that is central to the tenth-century Benedictine movement, much more so than the idea of 'reform', a label which has been applied widely and firmly to this period in scholarship but nevertheless does not feature in contemporary theology in England.[483] Catherine Karkov has outlined how the rhetoric of cleansing and purification in the New Minster refoundation charter is consistent with themes contained in the rite for the dedication of a church contained in the Egbert Pontifical, for example in the antiphon 'Asperges me domine ysopo et mundabor lavabis me et super nivem dealbabor'.[484] This ideological link makes logical sense in the context of a refoundation charter, the purpose of which is to re-dedicate the church as a Benedictine institution using an *Ordo* like the one found in the Egbert Pontifical, if not that exact text. However, ideas of cleansing are not unique to the refoundation charter; we see them in much of the extant source material relating to the Æthelwold and his Benedictine movement. For example, as Barrow points out, these ideas are also present in the Old English account of *King Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries*, a history of Christianity in England written by Æthelwold c. 966-970 probably for a female monastic audience.[485] This pervasive equation of the secular clerics with

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[480] ASC A, ASC B and ASC C, 973; Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, p. 213.
[481] Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, p. 213.
[482] S 745.
[483] Barrow, 'Ideology of the Tenth-Century English Benedictine "Reform"'. This terminology was present in a small number continental monastic narratives: see Barrow, 'Vocabularies and Narratives of Reform'.
[484] 'Thou shalt sprinkle me, Lord, with hyssop and I shall be cleansed, thou shalt wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow'.
[485]Barrow, 'Ideology of the Tenth-Century English Benedictine "Reform"', pp. 152–53.; David Pratt, 'The Voice of the King in "King Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries"', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 41 (2012), 145–204.

filth and the need to cleanse them from the churches demonstrates the centrality of ideas of church rededication and reconsecration to the whole Benedictine movement. I do not think, therefore, as Hudson argues, that the inclusion of the benediction for the dedication of a church is out of place or means that the *Benedictional* must have been to commemorate such an occasion. The practice of rededication is absolutely central to the ideology of the Benedictine Movement. I would tend towards the arguments put forward by Karkov and Barrow that both the royal imagery and rededication imagery synonymous with the Benedictine movement was already being formulated by the mid-960s when the New Minster charter was created. An earlier dating of the *Benedictional*, and thus its imagery, is in my opinion more convincing.

As has already been established, royal ideology such as that in the 966 charter is central to this movement, as was the practical application of royal power. That the *Benedictional of Æthelwold* contains such imagery does not necessarily, as Deshman argues, connect it with a particular occasion of inauguration – it merely demonstrates that the ideology of royal inauguration was central to the Benedictine project. The conception of inauguration as a kind of second baptism that increases sacred status, perhaps demonstrated most clearly in the *Benedictional*'s portrayal of Christ's baptism in which he is also being given diadems, is consistent with the idea of re-dedicating churches as Benedictine houses. Moreover, the possible re-consecration of Edgar and/or Ælfthryth in 973 needs to be viewed in the context of a movement that relied on the idea of cleansing, purifying and, crucially, re-consecrating – not only the reconsecration of churches, but also of the monarch. I would argue that the 973 coronation was a culmination of the already formulated Benedictine ideology, rather than the coronation inspiring the *Benedictional*'s imagery. We have evidence that suggests that Ælfthryth was consecrated queen upon her marriage to Edgar. Though it is uncertain from available evidence whether Ælfthryth was consecrated for a second time alongside Edgar in 973, such an event would have been entirely in line with the ideology of a movement that emphasised queenly royal power in England more than ever before. The baptising, cleansing, and re-consecrating rhetoric of the Benedictine movement provided perfect justification, if it was needed, for the reconsecration of both Edgar and Ælfthryth.

The evidence indicates that Ælfthryth was likely anointed upon her marriage to Edgar in 964, though this does not rule out a reconsecration alongside her husband in 973. The tendency to link the rubric of the queen's rite to the coronation of 973, for which there is no direct evidence, can be seen as part of a wider tendency among historians to concentrate on this event as the culmination of the Benedictine Movement, despite the fact that much activity was concentrated in the mid-960s onwards. To paraphrase Simon Keynes on Edgar, there was nothing 'deficient' about Ælfthryth's queenship in the 960s.[486] The potency of the idea that Ælfthryth was the first queen anointed with

[486] Simon Keynes, 'Edgar, Rex Admirabilis', in *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975: New Interpretations*, ed. by Donald Scragg (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2014), pp. 3–59 (pp. 48–49).

this rubric in 973, or indeed the highly questionable received idea that she was 'the first wife of an English king known to have been crowned and anointed as queen' (according to Wikipedia), is due to the misattribution of the developing royal ideology, indisputably evident in Ælfthryth's reign, to a single moment.[487] I would argue that Ælfthryth is the first English queen since Cynethryth who appears to be such a constituent part of the ideology of her husband's rulership. This concept of the queen as a sharer in her husband's rule – consortship in the truest sense of the word – will become an even more prominent factor in our discussion of the next adjustment to the queen's rite.

A Joint Inauguration *Ordo*?

Two extant pontificals reflect further changes to the royal inauguration liturgy. These changes demonstrate a revision of the material that made changes to the rites of both the king and the queen during one single process of adaptation. The rite stresses a joint inauguration ceremony involving both a king and a queen. These changes also emphasise imperial rhetoric, and make adjustments that have been considered both as 'generalising' and linked to particular candidates.[488] For the first time it is appropriate to consider the two royal rites as one text – one royal *Ordo*, almost certainly adjusted for one joint inauguration ceremony. The changes to this *Ordo* are not insignificant and demonstrate a calculated revision of the material. In line with how this thesis has approached other developments to the liturgy, the remainder of this chapter will attempt to date these changes, and evaluate possible scenarios for a context in which they were made. It will also explore the significance of these changes to queenship, and particular queens to whom these changes may be connected. Two royal couples will be considered here as likely candidates for whom this joint ceremony was constructed. The first is Emma and Cnut (married in 1017), to whose inauguration Stafford has previously attributed the creation of this *Ordo*. The second is Ælfthryth and Edgar, who have previously not been considered as potential candidates due to the false connection between the version of the liturgy in the Dunstan Pontifical and the coronation of 973, as explored in the first half of this chapter.

The two pontifical manuscripts that contain texts that demonstrate these changes are CCCC 44 and Vitellius A. vii. CCCC 44 has been dated by David Dumville to after c. 1020, given its use of Style-IV Anglo-Caroline script, and Neil Ker places it after 1012.[489] It is probably from Christ Church Canterbury, taking into account its stylistic similarity to other eleventh-century Canterbury

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[487] 'Ælfthryth (Wife of Edgar)', *Wikipedia* (2024) <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=%C3%86lfthryth_(wife_of_Edgar)&oldid=1224114702> [accessed 23 May 2024].
[488] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 381.
[489] David N. Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History of Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), p. 71.

manuscripts.[490] Vitellius A. vii is a fragment of a pontifical that was badly damaged in the Ashburnham House fire of 1731. Though it is clear that this *Ordo* contains some of the same additional material of CCCC 44, the prayers with the most significant changes have been lost.[491] The pontifical likely originates from Ramsey Abbey before 1044, but was supplemented with new material, including the part containing the *Ordo*, at Exeter between 1046 and 1072.[492] This material was probably obtained during the 1050s, when 'a variety of new mass and pontifical texts' were also added to Bishop Leofric's personal pontifical. P. E. Schramm attributed the creation of this version to William the Conqueror's coronation in 1066, though Nelson, believing the *Ordo* to originate from Ramsey before 1044, argued that the 'pre-conquest' date of Vitellius A. vii indicates otherwise.[493] According to Schramm, the most significant clue as for whom the CCCC 44 version of the royal inauguration liturgy was adapted is the removal of the phrases 'by paternal suggestion' and 'rejoicing in the flower of youth up to the present day'. Schramm took these adjustments to mean that the rite had to have been adjusted for the purposes of anointing and crowning William the Conqueror, who was around forty years old when he was crowned, and obviously did not inherit the throne by paternal right. Nelson's interpretation of these changes is that they were made for the purpose of generalising the suitability of the inauguration liturgy, by removing references to the particular circumstances of the king: 'the peculiarities of that ordo … are better explained in terms of a competent liturgist's attempt, in line with the timelessness of liturgical texts as such, to generalise the suitability of the Second English Ordo'.[494] Though it is true that rites might be adapted with no particular ceremony in mind, the changes present a shift that is not merely neutralising or generalising, but also has a political purpose in its presentation of both kingship and queenship.

In other pontificals, the texts can be separated from each other with no disruption to their respective functions. However, this is not the case for the text of the queen's rite in the CCCC 44 version. This revision contains an antiphon after the coronation that describes the event as a 'consecration of the king and queen', suggesting that the queen's inauguration rite was not intended to be removed from the king's.[495] On the continent, from 962 until the mid-thirteenth century, every Imperial inauguration that took place involved both the emperor and empress, unless the

[490] David N. Dumville, 'On the Dating of some Late Anglo-Saxon Liturgical Manuscripts', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 10.1 (1991), 40-57 (pp. 40-1).
[491] Nelson, 'Rites of the Conqueror', pp. 375-401 (p. 382).
[492] Drage, pp. 144, 149, 169–70; K. D. Hartzell, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1200 Containing Music* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 265–70.
[493] Nelson, 'Rites of the Conqueror', pp. 375-401.
[494] Nelson, 'Second English Ordo', p. 381.
[495] CCCC 44, p. 304.

emperor was unmarried, in which case the new empress was inaugurated subsequently.[496] It seems unlikely that, had this version been redacted for the event of a particular king's inauguration, this phrase would have been included unless a queen was also being consecrated alongside him. Even if the *Ordo* was added to the Vitellius A. vii post-conquest, between 1066 and 1072, William is an unlikely candidate due to his inauguration occurring two years before that of his wife Matilda.[497] Moreover, if, as Nelson argues, the purpose of this redaction was purely to 'generalise' the contents of the *Ordo*, the addition of a mention of the crowning of the queen and king together seems counter-intuitive, given how frequent it was for kings to succeed to the kingdom while unmarried.

A series of novel blessings over the queen create new parallels with the role of the king.[498] The queen is portrayed unambiguously as a sharer in his empire:

> May the omnipotent God confer the abundance of his blessing on his servant, namely our queen, he who wanted you to be a participant in his royal empire and with his desire of will may he ever make her perseverant.[499]

Such rhetoric is evocative of a Carolingian epithet that developed during the ninth century and increased during Ottonian rule – the queen as *consors regni* or 'sharer in rule', a reference to Esther's biblical queenship.[500] Simon MacLean argues that such titles were used for Ottonian queens specifically in 'heightened political circumstances' and were 'intended to intensify the queen's 'queenliness', and by extension to project a heightened sense of the king's authority'.[501] Though this is seemingly not an epithet that was used for English queens, the phrasing of this *Ordo* is certainly evocative of the idea. What may seem like a comparably minor difference to the queen's rite is the change from 'regina instituitur' to 'regina constituitur' respectively.[502] However, this change occurs at the pivotal moment in the prayer following the anointing, when it is spoken aloud that the participant in the ceremony has become a queen. Though both of these phrases convey a sense of official appointment or establishment, the typical usage of *instituo* and *constituo* are rather different. *Constituo* is almost uniformly used in the Vulgate to describe God establishing a king, and

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[496] Johanna Dale, *Inauguration and Liturgical Kingship in the Long Twelfth Century: Male and Female Accession Rituals in England, France and the Empire*, Illustrated edition (York: York Medieval Press, 2019), p. 90.
[497] Though as mentioned below, William of Poitiers argued that William had intended for him and Matilda to be crowned together.
[498] Similar blessings are not recorded in the other pontificals, which may mean that these blessings are new, or it could be the case that the compiler of CCCC 44 chose to include blessings that were not usually included in written rites; Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith:* p. 175, especially n. 70.
[499] CCCC 44, p. 304: '*Benedictionis suae dominus omnipotens ancille suae videlicet regine nostrae conferat largitatem. qui regalis imperii te voluit esse participem et in sue voluntatis desiderio eam semper faciat perseverabilem*' (translation my own).
[500] MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship*, pp. 8–9; Franz-Reiner Erkens, 'Sicut Esther regina: Die westfränkische Königin als consors regni', *Francia*, 20 (1993), 15–38.
[501] MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship*, p. 122.
[502] CCCC 44, p. 302.

occasionally about people appointing kings, judges or generals for themselves. It also the word that is used when the prophet Samuel anoints David and Saul.[503] Interestingly, *instituo* was used in medieval sources describing the installation of abbesses and occasionally abbots, while 'constituo' is frequently used of abbots but only rarely used for abbesses.[504] Indeed, the source for the prayer containing 'instituitur' comes from a rite for anointing an abbess. Thus, the redactor of the CCCC 44 version moved the consecration of a queen away from that of an abbess and towards that of a king. The gendered difference between the installation and consecration of an abbess and an abbot, initially also applied to queens through the process of adapting the rite for an abbess, has been removed. It seems that the sense of this prayer has been strengthened, and its sacred nature emphasised, by using the same terminology that is used in the Bible to describe the creation of kings.

The text of the *Ordo* contains other changes. None of the other surviving B version manuscripts of the Second English *Ordo* use the title 'archbishop', only 'bishop'.[505] However, the CCCC 44 version does stipulate the presence of an 'archyepiscopus' in the rubric for the first antiphon in the king's rite.[506] It is also curious that in the rubric preceding the queen's rite, 'vel presbitero' has been removed from the phrase 'incipit consecratio reginae ab episcopo vel presbitero dicenda'.[507] Like the shift from bishop to archbishop in the king's rite, this is an upgrade in status. However, it is not a shift towards equalising the legitimacy of the queen's rite with that of the king. It is interesting that, given other parts of the *Ordo* indicating that this was created for a joint inauguration, that the redactor did not simply stipulate that the archbishop would perform both rites, seeing as he was in attendance. This might indicate that it was standard practice that a different, lower-ranking individual would step in to perform the queen's ceremony. Conversely, these changes need not be understood as a strengthening of royal legitimacy as much as a greater reliance of the monarchy on episcopal authority. If an archbishop redacted this version of the *Ordo*, it is understandable for him to assert that only an authority as great as himself could consecrate the monarch. Perhaps the consecration of the queen did not have such high stakes, and the redactor was looking ahead to future scenarios in which an archbishop might not be present. It is wise to remain aware that even

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[503] For example, Deuteronomy 17 and 28; of Joseph in Genesis 41:41, Acts 7:10; of Moses in Exodus 7:1, of Abimelech in Judges 9; of Samuel in 1 Samuel 8; of Saul in 1 Samuel 10:19, 12:1, 15:11 and 15:35; of David in 1 Samuel 22:2, 25:30; of Isboseth in 2 Samuel 2:9; of Solomon in 1 Kings 1:43, 2:15; of Christ as appointed by God to judge the living and dead, Acts 10:42, of Christ appointed to the right hand of God, Ephesians 1:20. These examples are by no means exhaustive.
[504] Correspondence with William Flynn.
[505] The A recension found in the Ratold Sacramentary, descended from an insular version of the *Ordo*, also says 'archbishop', as do all of the SMN continental manuscripts.
[506] CCCC 44, p. 282.
[507] CCCC 44, p. 301.

if these changes to the *Ordo* were made for a specific occasion, the redactor might also have been considering its longevity – hence the combination of generalising and particularising features.

There are a number of entirely new prayers and antiphons, as well as numerous changes and insertions, that are surely something more than a mere 'generalisation' of the *Ordo* – the additions seem more significant and arguably calculated and political. Within the material that has been added, there are seven new occurrences of ethnonyms that denote the English or 'Anglo-Saxon' people in the king's prayer, and one more in the queen's. This makes the total number ten, adding to the two that were already in the Second English *Ordo*. Similarly, three mentions of 'imperium' have also been added to the king's rite, with a further one in the queen's. So to summarise, at some point, probably before the 1050s, someone chose to adapt the Second English *Ordo* B and the queen's rite in a single process, creating a new royal *Ordo* that emphasised a joint coronation involving both a king and a queen, with a subtle strengthening of the queen's status. This revised *Ordo* is generalising in some respects, removing references to 'paternal' succession and 'youth', but is more specific in other respects, specifying the performance of the king's rite by an archbishop and the queen's by a bishop. The most striking change is the series of ethnonyms that denote the peoples who are to be ruled over, and an emphasis on imperial rule. The remainder of this chapter will address the possible context in which such adjustments may have been made to the royal inauguration liturgy.

Schramm believed that the key to dating the rite was in the removal of the phrases 'by paternal suggestion' and 'rejoicing in the flower of youth'. Thirteen kings took the throne between 899 and the 1050s (see Table 7). Of these cases, only Æthelstan, Edward the Martyr and Harold Harefoot directly succeeded their fathers, but not without considerable controversy in all three cases. It is arguable that during every succession in this period, 'by paternal suggestion' could have been seen as a controversial or inappropriate phrase. As for age at accession, according to the influential Etymologies of Isidore of Seville, youth (iuventus) occurred between the ages of twenty-eight and fifty.[508] Even Edward the Confessor, the oldest king in this period to succeed to the throne, crowned when he was almost forty, would not have been inappropriately old to be 'rejoicing in the flower of youth', nor even would William the Conqueror, as Schramm argued. None of the potential candidates fit the profile of a king who, at a mature age of over fifty, took the throne without paternal precedent. Thus, taken alone, these adjustments do not indicate that these changes were made for a particular king at a particular inauguration ceremony. As noted by Nelson, the adjustments are logical and generalising in a period where paternal succession was rarely smooth, and kings may not always have been youthful. However, if we extend our analysis of these changes beyond these two phrases and look more closely at all the changes made to both the king's and the

[508] Isidore of Seville, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. by Stephen A. Barney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) vol. 2, XI.ii.

queen's rites, there is yet more evidence for viewing the text as more politicised than merely generalised.

It is most pertinent, given that this *Ordo* is so clearly intended for a joint coronation, to begin by identifying the English kings who were married upon their accession to the throne (see Table 7), and whose wives are feasible candidates for having been crowned and consecrated. Given that the CCCC 44 Ordo is only found in eleventh-century pontificals, that it is clearly an update of the version of the rites for king and queen found together in the Dunstan, Anderson, Samson and Claudius II pontificals, it is logical to conclude that the *Ordo* found in CCCC 44 was probably revised in later tenth or first half of the eleventh century. However, as we know that liturgical texts often predate the sources in which they are found, it is worth also considering earlier candidates, even if only to rule them out. Æthelstan, Eadred, and Edward the Martyr never married. Edward the Elder, Edmund, and Edgar were all possibly or definitely married upon their accession to the throne, but as established in the previous chapter, none of the women they were married to cut a particularly significant figure as queen in the source material. Though inauguration rites are expressions of forethought rather than hindsight, a queen for whom a special rite was prepared, demonstrating higher status and favour with the religious establishment upon her inauguration, might be expected to go on to cut a more important figure later in her reign. Likewise, Eadwig's queen Ælfgifu is a figure who may have had high status upon her accession, but this royal couple was much maligned in source material dating from after her reign. This does not mean that the changes inherent in CCCC 44 being produced for Eadwig and Ælfgifu is an impossibility, merely that there is little to go on to connect them to this rite. There is no evidence that Edward the Martyr was married when he was crowned; Æthelred was a child when crowned. Edmund Ironside was probably married when he succeeded to the throne, but it is unlikely that he or his wife were crowned during his brief, tumultuous reign. Harold may have had a son and wife, but the sources are dubious – if he did, there is certainly no evidence his child's mother was his queen.[509] Harthacnut seemingly never married, and Edward the Confessor did not marry Edith until 1045. None of these candidates make for compelling arguments. In my view, this process of elimination leaves two potential couples in whose reigns we see evidence of the kind of rhetoric displayed in CCCC 44: Cnut and Emma; Edgar and Ælfthryth. Recent historical argument has preferred the former, but the discussion of Ælfthryth above has implications which must be considered here. I will begin with Emma and Cnut.

[509] W. H. Stevenson, 'An Alleged Son of King Harold Harefoot', *English Historical Review*, 28 (1913), 112–17.

Cnut and Emma: Shared Rite, Shared Rule

Pauline Stafford has argued that these changes were made to adapt to the joint inauguration of Cnut and Emma in 1017. Given that Emma had already been consecrated upon her marriage to Æthelred in 1002, evidenced in a 1004 charter that discusses her being 'consecrated to the marriage bed', this necessitates that she was consecrated twice.[510] Elisabeth van Houts has argued that 'if she had been consecrated in 1002, she could not receive consecration a second time in 1017', and she concludes that Emma must not have been consecrated in 1002, only crowned.[511] This is highly unlikely given the clear phrasing of the 1004 charter, and if Edgar and/or Ælfthryth had been consecrated for a second time in 973, there would have been recent precedent. Stafford argues that Emma's 1017 consecration alongside Cnut is the most likely scenario for the changes to the royal rites found in CCCC 44:

> It was not only the king's rite, but the hitherto extremely stable Queen's *ordo* which were altered… These blessings and their remarkable contents parallel those of the king. They speak of the Queen's *consors imperii*, a sharer of rule, of her institution as Queen over a people and the peace and prosperity to be wished for in her days. They seem too dramatic for a liturgical exercise without political content. The manuscript evidence suggests that the change occurred between 973 and 1044 and the most likely occasion is the consecration of Cnut and Emma in 1017.[512]

A window of production after 973 and before 1044 would clearly point to Cnut and Emma as the only feasible candidates for a joint coronation. Æthelred's marriages took place after his reign had commenced, as did Edward's marriage to Edith.[513] Given the respective functions of Cnut's two wives during his reign – Ælfgifu of Northampton away ruling Norway while Emma was by his side in England – Cnut and Emma are the only feasible option, discounting 973 itself. The emergence of the manuscript evidence in two eleventh-century manuscripts certainly lends itself to this interpretation. Stafford's date range of after 973 but before 1044 is based on a Ramsey provenance of the Ordo in Vitellius A. vii, and her acceptance of the 973 inauguration at Bath as the occasion for the revision of the rite with the addition of a new rubric. These dates have been questioned above, and we will return to the implications of that questioning for the inclusion of Edgar and Ælfthryth as candidates for these revisions in CCCC 44. However, Stafford's argument rests not only on the dating of the *Ordo*, but on a series of observations about the affinity between the political circumstances of Cnut and Emma's reign and the new rhetorical slant of the *Ordo* in CCCC 44. This context and its possible relationship to the revised *Ordo* requires further consideration.

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[510] S 909: 'Ego Ælfgiva thoro consecrata regio'.
[511] van Houts, p. 79.
[512] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen* Edith, pp. 174-8.
[513] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, pp. 175–76, n. 71.

Little is known of Cnut's inauguration, though the wording of his Second Law Code suggests reference to an earlier coronation charter.[514] The most compelling evidence that Cnut was a crowned king is the depiction of an angel placing a crown on his head on the frontispiece of the Winchester *Liber Vitae*, which will be discussed in detail below. It is not clear from any extant source that either of his wives were consecrated with him as his queen. Stafford has posited that Cnut may have waited until the summer of 1017 to have his inauguration, at which point he would have been married to Emma, providing ample opportunity for a new rite to have been prepared for them both. She argues that archbishops Wulfstan and Lyfing are both potential redactors of the rite – and thus implicitly could have performed the ceremony.[515] Though there is little evidence for Cnut's inauguration, the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, commissioned by Emma and completed in 1041/42, provides an interesting perspective on the involvement of an archbishop in Harold's inauguration.

The Encomiast states that after Cnut's death Harold was chosen as king by the English people, but that Archbishop Æthelnoth refused to consecrate him. He adds that Harold commanded that he should be given the crown and sceptre, and led by the archbishop, 'since it was against divine law that it should be done by another'.[516] This indicates that in 1035 there was an important precedent that an inauguration ceremony could only be performed by the archbishop. Is it perhaps the case that it is the phrasing of the CCCC 44 *Ordo* that caused the Encomiast to write that only an inauguration performed by an archbishop is *fas*? Or was the redactor of this *Ordo* responding to an already-existing political idea? It is possible that this story about Harold and Æthelnoth could be rhetorical: the *Encomium*'s purpose is to create a narrative in which the archbishop must refuse to crown Harold – that simply would not work if Harold could go to any other bishop instead. However, given that the audience of the *Encomium* was most likely the royal court, and thus probably those familiar with or even attendees of inaugurations, a story such as this would not be convincing if its audience knew it to be baseless. One cannot think of another more authoritative document on the divine legality of a ruler's consecration than the liturgy itself. If the Encomiast was referring to a precedent set out in the royal inauguration liturgy, it surely follows that he would have been following the liturgy that was used to crown Cnut and Emma.

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[514] Pauline Stafford, 'The Laws of Cnut and the History of Anglo-Saxon Royal Promises', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 10 (1982), 173–90; van Houts, p. 79.
[515] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 176.
[516] *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, ed. by Alistair Campbell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 41: 'Qui electus metuensque futuri advocat mox archiepiscopum Aelnotum, virum omni virtute et sapientia preditum, imperatque et orat se benedici in regem, sibique tradi cum corona regale suae custodiae commisum sceptrum, et se duci ab eodem, qui ab alio non fas fuerat, in sublime regni solium'.

Though various English kings made rhetorical claims to empire, Cnut is perhaps the early English ruler for whom a genuine 'Empire' is most readily claimed by modern scholars.[517] Cnut became the king of Denmark two years after his accession to the English throne, and later became the ruler of Norway and parts of Sweden in 1027. A 1019 grant to New Minster styles Cnut as 'ruler and basileus of the noble and fair race of the English'.[518] Elaine Treharne has argued that in his 1027 Letter to the English People, Cnut deliberately portrayed himself as a Christian Emperor, describing himself as 'rex totius Anglie et Denemarcie et Noreeganorum et partis Suavorum'.[519] In this year Cnut had attended the imperial coronation of Conrad II and viewed the imperial crown of Henry II.[520] It is tempting to link a rite emphasising *imperium* to Cnut for these reasons, but Cnut did not yet have his 'empire' in 1017, when this hypothetical joint coronation took place. Moreover, imperial terminology in early English royal sources is frequent, and does not denote a physical empire.[521] As Christoph Mauntel argues:

> The term imperator (and partly imperium) was used to highlight the increased power of an individual ruler. The title reflected that this position was conceived as being above the level of a 'normal' king. Hence, notions of 'empire/emperor' … are not about universal domination or sacral kingship, but rather epithets for successful rulers. In this regard, the terms imperium and imperator were useful precisely because of their multifaceted meaning, covering a neutral form of geographically based 'rule' or a militarily connoted 'supreme command' as well as a vague form of hegemony over the neighbouring principalities.[522]

Indeed, the Second English *Ordo*'s description of the kingdom as 'the sceptres of the Saxons, Mercians and Northumbrians' or 'the sceptres of the Angles and the Saxons' suggest that there was certainly already a claim by English kings to the overlordship of various peoples before Cnut. With this in mind, the imperial rhetoric of the CCCC 44 *Ordo* does not point directly to Cnut. However, this does not rule out Cnut by any means – the utilisation of a rhetoric that is evident in the charters of previous English kings would suit the purposes of those charged with revising a rite for Cnut perfectly, as would the frequent added references to the 'Anglo-Saxons' and 'English' in the *Ordo*.

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[517] For example, see: Peter H. Sawyer, 'Cnut's Scandinavian Empire', in *The Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway*, ed. by Alexander R. Rumble (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1994), pp. 10–22; Timothy Bolton, *Cnut the Great* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2017); Matthew Firth, 'The Politics of Hegemony and the "Empires" of Anglo-Saxon England', *Cerae*, 5 (2018), 27–60.
[518] S 956.
[519] Elaine Treharne, *Living Through Conquest: The Politics of Early English, 1020-1220* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 30–37.
[520] M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: England's Viking King: England's Viking King 1016-35* (Cheltenham: The History Press, 2011), pp. 218–38.
[521] Julia Crick, 'Edgar, Albion and Insular Dominion', in *Edgar: King of the English 959-975*, ed. by Donald Scragg (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer), pp. 158–70; Eric John, *Orbis Britanniae*, pp. 1–63.
[522] Christoph Mauntel, 'Ideas of Empire. A Comparative Study in Anglo -Saxon and Spanish Political Thought (from the Eighth to the Twelfth Century)', *Viator*, 48.3 (2018), 1–25 (pp. 23–24).

Indeed, as a conquering king, an emphasis on both continuity and legitimacy would have been advantageous to Cnut. As Stafford argues:

> The King's ritual in 1017 was especially appropriate to a conqueror who was now to be king of the English … the emphasis throughout the king's and queen's rites is on the English on the rule of the English gens and people right (*gens Anglica*, *populus Anglicus*), on the Anglo-Saxons (*Anglosaxonici*), on England (*Anglia*). This is more emphatically than ever before a consecration of an English king, a King and Queen for the English.[523]

This rhetoric likely contributed to Schramm's conclusion that this must be an *Ordo* revised for William the Conqueror – such an emphasis on Englishness in the inauguration rite feels almost compensatory. But this rhetoric is even more evocative of the project in which Cnut and Emma were engaged in 1017. This *Ordo* does not only signify the reign of a new king, but a new royal partnership. Emma began her career as the foreign bride of Æthelred II but became indispensable to his successor due to her status as a consecrated English queen – a circumstance that echoes that of Judith's marriage to her stepson centuries earlier. Stafford stresses that the marriage between Cnut and Emma was itself designed to symbolise continuity, and makes an implicit link between their ruling partnership and the continental rhetoric of *consors regni*:

> As the widow of an English king she already was an English queen; her consecration could now serve as a symbol of continuity if not unity. The fact that it was almost certainly a second consecration marked out its significance even further. Emma's identities in 1016 made her attractive to Cnut and available to the English… There was no doubt that the queen of the English now married to their conqueror was to be a sharer in his power and rule.[524]

Emma also ranked highly and even jointly alongside Cnut in royal charters, such as one grant of land to Old Minster Winchester in 1033, which states: 'I Cnut king of the English with my queen Ælfgyfu confirm my own donation with royal security'.[525] From the very beginning of her reign, Emma's title in charters is usually regina, and she generally appears directly after the king in witness lists. The picture is more ambiguous in two of the earliest charters of Cnut's reign in 1018 and 1019, as Emma is listed after or between the archbishops, and twice in these years she is listed not as queen but as the king's wife.[526] However, in one of these two charters, a grant of land in Dorset in 1019 from Cnut to a man named Agemund, Emma is described as 'consecrated to the royal bed', emphasising her consecration, and directly evoking the text of the rubric in the queen's rite.[527]

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[523] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 177.
[524] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 178.
[525] S 972: Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 182.
[526] S 955 and 956: Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, pp. 231–32.
[527] S 955, '*thoro consecrata regio*': Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 231.

The Winchester *Liber Vitae*: A Portrait of Shared Rulership?

The portrait of Cnut and Emma on the frontispiece of the Winchester *Liber Vitae*, commissioned in 1031 to commemorate their joint donation of a cross, is a striking visual representation of their joint rulership. However, this image is not an unambiguous portrait of a royal couple with equal status as consecrated monarchs developed in the revised *Ordo*. While Cnut is crowned by an angel, Emma received a veil. As a depiction – of sorts – of Cnut's coronation, this image warrants detailed analysis.[528] In this image, the crown has an arched top, perhaps evoking the Imperial crown of Henry II that Cnut had witnessed first-hand.[529] Such a crown is, however, also depicted in the Dormition scene in the *Benedictional of Æthelwold* and may simply be the easiest way to depict a crown being held from above. Cnut has one hand on the donated cross, while his regal sword, part of the coronation regalia, pierces the frame. Cnut is unambiguously a king in this image, but Emma's depiction is more nuanced.

The figure of Emma is prominent, inviting comparison not only with Cnut, with their mirrored positions in the composition, equal size and symmetrical body language, but also with Mary directly above her, with whom she shares a position in relation to Christ.[530] Emma's position on Christ's right has different connotations depending on whether the image is read as a crucifixion or judgement scene. In conventional crucifixion iconography, Mary is positioned on the right side of the cross and St John the Evangelist on his left.[531] We might therefore read Emma's place on the right of the cross at the centre of the image, underneath Mary, as bringing her into conventional Marian iconography. Cnut and Emma donated two gold and silver statues along with the cross; one of Mary and one of St John, perhaps designed to stand either side of the cross.[532] However, it is not St John the Evangelist who stands on the left side of Christ above Cnut in this image, but St Peter, identified by his tonsure and key. The inclusion of St Peter rather than St John is due to Peter and Mary being the patron saints of the New Minster, and Peter's inclusion also corresponds with the function of the *Liber Vitae* as a list of names read by Christ on the Day of Judgement: Christ reads from a book, a meta-reference to the *Liber Vitae* itself, while Peter holds the key to heaven and hell, a symbol of judgement. Indeed, the pages following the frontispiece image contain illustrations of the Last Judgement, including St Peter using his key to open heaven and to hit a demon, and souls

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528 This discussion of the *Liber Vitae* frontispiece has overlaps with my forthcoming publication, 'Emma of Normandy and the Gendered Iconography of Crowns'.
529 M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: The Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century* (London: Longman, 1993), p. 137; Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', in *England in the Eleventh Century*, ed. by Carola Hicks (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1992).
530 Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 178.
531 Barbara Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 97–98.
532 T. A. Heslop, 'The Production of de Luxe Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 19 (1990), 151–95 (p. 157).

being pushed into a hellmouth.[533] When the frontispiece image is read as the first image in a sequence of judgement iconography, Emma's position becomes one of priority, blessed by Christ's right hand, while Cnut occupies the less favoured position on Christ's left. It is notable that in contemporary Ottonian and Byzantine double ruler-portraits the king is always afforded the right-hand side of Christ, while the queen or empress is always on the left.[534] Emma's unusual prominence in this image has been put down to a number of factors: her relative political importance to Cnut's reign, her possible relationship of patronage with the New Minster, and the growing cult of Mary Queen of Heaven, concentrated particularly at Winchester.[535]

Given that the artist emphasises Emma's importance in size and position, it remains curious that she receives a veil while Cnut is crowned. It has been argued by Catherine Karkov that in the *Liber Vitae* image Emma is wearing a diadem under her veil, like that which the Virgin Mary is wearing in the Winchester Quinity image, which unusually affords Mary a place visually alongside the Trinity.[536] This image features Mary and the Christ child, the Father, Christ as judge, and the holy spirit, who is perched atop Mary's diadem. The Father treads a devil under his feet, who is being swallowed by a hellmouth. Alongside the hellmouth are Judas and Arius, the latter of which is directly below Mary. This image invokes the ring-giving prayer of the queen's inauguration rite, which compels the queen to shun heresy.[537] The Quinity and *Liber Vitae* images were possibly drawn by the same artist at Winchester. Karkov argues that Emma's diadem associates her with the image of Mary, but also with Christ, who as we have seen is particularly associated with diadems in the *Benedictional of Æthelwold*.[538] Circlets that rest above the veil, as Mary wears in the Quinity image, are seen in a number of other contemporary depictions of veiled women and may not represent a royal diadem. Gale R Owen-Crocker suggests that the gold 'bend' or 'bænd' found in four pre-Norman wills could refer to these veil-bands, and the Latin 'diadema' and 'nimbus' are glossed elsewhere with the word 'bend'.[539] As bands were worn by non-royal women, whether Emma's headband is interpreted as a diadem is contextual – a band worn by a queen may be read as a diadem simply because its wearer is royal. While Mary's band sits on top of her veil and encircles her head in the Quinity image, Emma's in the *Liber Vitae* lies more subtly beneath her veil and is

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533 Karkov, 'Frontispiece', pp. 121–45.
534 Karkov, 'Frontispiece', pp. 123–24.
535 Karkov, 'Frontispiece', pp. 126–27; Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, pp. 178–79; Clayton, p. 165; Madeline H. Caviness, 'Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons or Intercessors and Matrons?', in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. by June Hall McCash (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), pp. 105–54 (pp. 126–27).
536 London, British Library, MS. Cotton Titus D. xxvii; Karkov, 'Frontispiece', pp. 128–29.
537 Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, pp. 166–67.
538 Robert Deshman, 'Benedictus Monarcha et Monarchus: Early Medieval Ruler Theology and the Anglo-Saxon Reform', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 22 (1988), 204–40 (pp. 207–10).
539 Gale R. Owen-Crocker, *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2004), p. 225; Gale R. Owen-Crocker, 'Wynflaed's Wardrobe', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 47 (1979), 195–222 (p. 215).

shown covering only her forehead. Owen-Crocker has posited that the two narrow strands of fabric that hang down behind Emma's back seem to be streamers from Emma's headband, which is actually fabric and not metal: such an item of clothing can be seen more clearly in an illustration of Pompa in the Psychomachia, though it is worn around her neck, not her head.[540] If Emma's headband is a length of fabric, it is difficult to read as denoting royal status, and is entirely different from the gold circlets linked with Jesus in the *Benedictional*. However, two similar strands of fabric hang from Cnut's cloak, and we might assume that these bands are also representing Emma's cloak fastening, unrelated to the item under her veil. The lack of coloured illumination on most of the image creates a difficulty in distinguishing continuity between items of clothing.

Whether or not Emma is wearing a diadem under her veil, it is the bestowing of the items by the angels that is crucial. Cnut's crown is certainly a symbol of royalty granted to him from heaven, while Emma's headband is simply a partially hidden piece of clothing. What *is* being bestowed upon Emma from heaven is her veil, but the meaning of this veil is difficult to ascertain. Emma's head is already veiled – this double-veiling has no parallels in medieval iconography.[541] Either the image depicts Emma receiving a second veil over her first, or it demonstrates the transition of a single veil from angel's hand to Emma's head. Women are almost never depicted with uncovered heads in this period, with images of the Vices in Prudentius' *Psychomachia* (Cleopatra C viii) being the exceptions that prove the rule.[542] The two veils could be explained by the artist's reluctance to show Emma, a married noblewoman, without a veil already on her head. This does not explain why a second veil was chosen in favour of a crown. Stafford has suggested that the veil being bestowed on Emma is a marital one.[543] Indeed, this interpretation may explain why Emma has two veils, denoting her two royal marriages to Æthelred and then Cnut.[544] Understanding the veil in this way affects how we view Emma's royal power or status – while Cnut is made a king by God, Emma is made a wife. Jan Gerchow has interpreted Emma's veil as a *stola*, signifying salvation on the Day of Judgement, and compares this with images of Ottonian and Salian portraits in which the ruling couples receive heavenly crowns. However, Gerchow adds that Cnut and Emma's differing symbols stress two stories: Cnut's coronation and Emma's marriage.[545] If this veil does denote marriage, the image is conspicuous in the decision of the artist not to reflect Emma's actual participation in one – if not two – inauguration rituals. Emma functions in this image as an extension, or instrument, of Cnut's rule, but not a ruler herself. Whether interpreted as a marker of exalted status or as a representation

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[540] London, British Library, Add. 24199, 21v; Owen-Crocker, 'Wynflaed's Wardrobe', pp. 200, figure 11a, and 215.
[541] Gerchow, p. 225.
[542] Stephanie McGucken, 'Vice & Virtue as Woman? The Iconography of Gender Identity in Late Anglo-Saxon Psychomachia Illustrations', *Medieval Feminist Forum*, 55.1 (2019), 42–63.
[543] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, pp. 178–79.
[544] I am grateful to Jullia Barrow for this suggestion.
[545] Gerchow, pp. 218–38.

of marriage, we are forced to guess at the meaning of Emma's veil. The portrayal of Emma on the Winchester *Liber Vitae* is therefore ambiguous. As arguably the most potent representation of Cnut and Emma's joint rule, it should not be ignored that it is specifically the joint coronation element that is under-emphasised by the artist. This image certainly contrasts with the later portrait of Emma on the frontispiece of her *Encomium*, commissioned by herself, which depicts her unambiguously as a crowned and enthroned queen.[546] Despite holding power more securely during the reign of Cnut, evidenced for example in her exercise of patronage, though produced in a different context, this illustrates that Emma was arguably more able to assert an image of her own power during the reign of her son.[547] The *Liber Vitae* portrays Emma as a subordinate facet of her husband's rule, erasing her claim to coronation. While not definitive, this image at least calls into question the idea that it was during Cnut and Emma's reign that the joint rulership espoused by the CCCC 44 *Ordo* came to full fruition, whether or not this was the *Ordo* used for a joint coronation in 1017.

Edgar and Ælfthryth: Reconsidering the *Ordo* for 973

There is another royal couple that is worth consideration in this regard. While it is true that a date range after 973 and before the 1050s leaves Emma and Cnut as really the only feasible candidates for the use of the adapted CCCC 44 *Ordo*, I would not rule out a potential context for the production of this *Ordo* in 973 itself, for the 973 coronation at Bath. This has hitherto not been seen as a possibility due to the ultimately unfounded connection between the Rubricated version of the royal rites found in the Dunstan, Anderson, Samson and Claudius II pontificals and the inauguration of 973. It is possible that Edgar was married when he originally acceded to the throne, to either Æthelflaed or Wulfthryth, but as established above, he had a mid-reign coronation in 973 at Bath, by which date he was already married to Ælfthryth. This may have been a re-consecration for both parties, and as such, a special revised *Ordo* could have been drafted to reflect the importance of the occasion. Ælfthryth's importance as queen during the Benedictine movement and the hints of shared rulership make her an entirely feasible candidate. In terms of its suitability for Edgar, both the reference to 'paternal suggestion' and the emphasis on 'youth' may have seemed inappropriate for a coronation which was intended to re-establish and strengthen an already-ruling king. The emphasis on rulership over various peoples, and especially the repeated use of the phrase 'imperium' mirrors the Roman location of the ceremony, which parallels the Carolingian royal centre of Aachen and its thermal springs. Appeals to imperial imagery were common during Edgar's reign, as illustrated by a New Minster charter of 961 that describes Edgar as 'the Basileus of the English and the ruler and leader of the other peoples existing in the

[546] See forthcoming, Scott:; Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 232.
[547] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 177.

vicinity'.[548] Undoubtedly, this imperial imagery should not be linked to only 973 specifically. However, as argued in the first part of this chapter, the 973 inauguration at Bath should be seen as a culmination of ideas throughout Edgar's reign, not as a novel ideological phenomenon. The stipulation of archbishop, rather than merely bishop, might well reflect the performance of the rite by Dunstan. For all these reasons, this is a scenario that should now be seriously considered. As argued earlier in this chapter, the initial indications of a royal rule shared between king and queen can be identified in Edgar and Ælfthryth's reign, arguably for the first time in England since Offa and Cynethryth. As already stated, Queen Eadgifu, who was a very important political figure, did not enjoy such prominence alongside her husband. In her argument for the use of this rite for Emma, Stafford argues that 'most of all she is to be an English Queen, a consort in royal power. These ideas have their lineage in, for example, the preface to the *Regularis Concordia*'.[549] Perhaps this is because this *Ordo* was actually produced within the same ideological movement.

Conclusion: Looking Forward

There is some difficulty in connecting changes to the inauguration ritual to actual royal figures. The ideas present in the liturgy at the beginning of a monarch's reign are not always borne out clearly, especially in the limited source material. Though both were almost certainly crowned and anointed queens, once if not twice, it is noteworthy that in the surviving source material both Ælfthryth and Emma are precluded from documents depicting coronation – Ælfthryth's coronation is not mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* for example, while Emma's claim to coronation is erased in the frontispiece of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*. The ongoing use and circulation of the queen's rite in England is indicative of the growing prominence of queens, as is the process of strengthening in its rhetoric. This is reflected in a growing sense of the importance of queens in wider royal ideology and an increasing ability to claim that some queens, in some respects, shared in their husband's rulership. However, it must be acknowledged that the status afforded to a queen within her inauguration rite is not a guarantee that a queen will always be afforded equivalent prominence. It is for this reason that I would argue it is important that, where there is ambiguity in the interpretation of liturgical material, we should not be too quick to reconcile that by ascribing it to a particular figure or circumstance. The liturgical record is simply an insight into one aspect of queenship – its ideological claims to a Christian function. While the claims made in this ceremony obviously feed into the practical applications of a queen's power, the inauguration rite is an expression of hope for the queen's future, perhaps in some cases a product of the context of her inauguration, but not a retrospective reflection on her career.

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[548] Robert Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 195: 'Basileus Anglorum ceterarumque gentium in circuitu persistentium gubernator et rector': S 699. Crick.
[549] Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 177.

It is with Ælfthryth and Emma, and this final change to the queen's rite, that this thesis concludes. It is not possible to determine at what point this queen's rite fell out of circulation, only at what point evidence for its ongoing circulation and adaptation dries up. As has been stated repeatedly within this thesis, there are limits to the completeness of the surviving liturgical record that mean we are unable to precisely date this specific rite's relevance. However, the ideas embedded within this *Ordo* certainly had continued relevance beyond 1017. By the mid-eleventh century, the notion that a king's wife might not be anointed was becoming increasingly unacceptable. William of Poitiers states that William the Conqueror pushed in vain to delay his coronation until his wife Matilda could be crowned with him, stating 'if God granted this honour, he wished to be crowned with his spouse'.[550] Johanna Dale argues that in an imperial context, the joint inauguration of emperor and empress had become standard as early as the inauguration of Otto I and Adelheid in 962.[551] The changes to the inauguration rite in England certainly reflect this same trend towards an emphasis within the inauguration on joint rulership. It is not within the remit of this thesis to make an argument about which queen's rite was used for Matilda at her eventual inauguration ceremony in 1068 – and given what has been argued in this thesis it may be unsurprising that previous scholarship has focused primarily on debating over which version of the inauguration liturgy was used for William.[552] Nor is it useful to speculate about the liturgy used for the inaugurations of Edward and Edith. Certainly, the dates assigned to the surviving manuscripts, especially CCCC 44 and Vitellius A. vii, do not preclude the continuing copying and circulation of this rite in the mid or late eleventh century. The next version of the inauguration liturgy, the Third English *Ordo*, is an updated inauguration *Ordo* that survives in manuscripts from the twelfth century onwards. It is an amalgamation of material from the Second English *Ordo* and the Romano-German Pontifical – this latter text having been compiled in the early eleventh century.[553] This text may have been used from the mid-eleventh century onwards. Dale has argued that:

> The rights for king- and queen-making were inextricably linked due to the very fact that the queen most often merited her inauguration by virtue of her relationship to a king. This is made clear in a [twelfth century] manuscript of the Third Recension of the English *ordines*, now in the Cambridge University library, from which we learn that the queen is anointed for the king's honour. The *ordo* opens with the words 'he begins

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[550] Johanna Dale, 'Royal Inauguration and the Liturgical Calendar in England, France and the Empire c. 1050-c.1250', in *Anglo-Norman Studies, XXXVII: Proceedings of the Battle Conference*, ed. by Elisabeth van Houts (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2015), pp. 83–98 (p. 90); van Houts, p. 83.
[551] Dale, 'Royal Inauguration and the Liturgical Calendar', p. 90.
[552] George Garnett, 'The Third Recension of the English Coronation Ordo: The Manuscripts', *Haskins Society Journal*, 11 (2003), 43–71; Nelson, 'Rites of the Conqueror'; N. Foreville, 'Te sacre des rois anglo-normands et angevins et le serment du sacre', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 1 (1978), 49–62; Percy Ernst Schramm, 'Die Krönung bei den Westfranken und den Angelsachsen von 878 bis um 1000'.
[553] Parkes.

> the consecration of the queen who on account of honouring the king is imbued on the head with holy oil by the bishop'.[554]

While not within the purview of this thesis, it is certainly interesting that the evidence indicates the Third English *Ordo* continued the practice, identified in this thesis as developing within the queen's rite by the tenth and eleventh centuries, that incorporated queenship as a constituent part of Christian monarchy.

[554] Dale, 'Royal Inauguration and the Liturgical Calendar', pp. 89–90; Cambridge University Library, MS EE. II. 3, fol. 90r: 'Incipit consecratio regine que propter honorificentiam regis ab episcopo sacro oleo super verticem perfundenda est'.

Conclusion

This thesis studies the ideology of queenship and its conception as a Christian role in early medieval English inauguration rites. It focuses firmly on the rites of queens as sources worthy of study in their own right, and refuses to treat them as simply an integral part of the king's ordo. It is primarily a study of liturgical texts, foregrounding their value as guides to royal ideology and ideas of queenship as a role and office, in this case specifically Christian. Its main discussion and findings pertain to the centuries from which queens' rites from early England have survived, namely the ninth to eleventh centuries, and it provides a context for these in earlier developments. This thesis does not focus on how queens conceived of or utilised their own power. Rather, the liturgical rites and primary sources used within this thesis are evidence for the ideas of various churchmen on queens and queenship. It was almost certainly elite members of the church who were responsible for composing, compiling, circulating, and updating the liturgical rites for the inaugurations of both queens and kings. Where possible, the views of some specific churchmen have been explored in more detail – for example Bede, Alcuin, Hincmar, Asser, and Æthelwold – with some acknowledgement of their specific motivations. However, this thesis has also demonstrated ways in which queens, and the monarchy in general, could utilise these ideas for their own ends, and become personally involved in the construction of a Christian ideology of queenship that feeds into both royal and dynastic ideology.

During the process of Christianisation in England, two roles have been identified that were ascribed to queens by early churchmen. The first such role is as converter of non-Christian kings, ascribed to her by Popes Gregory and Boniface, and to a debatable extent Bede, with recourse to a selective understanding of 1 Corinthians 7.14. The expectation was that the queen would use her privilege in her marital relationship in order to convert the 'unbelieving' king, and only by extension his kingdom. The other role was as royal abbess, of which Bede gives us many examples. The compiler of the Durham *Liber Vitae* considered the roles of abbess and queen so closely linked that they categorised them in the same list. However, to be an abbess was a monastic role that by definition precluded women who were married to kings – available only to widows or those such as Æthelthryth who had given up their marriage and role as queen. Both converting wife and royal abbess are Christian roles that individual queens might occupy at a particular life stage, but neither of these roles were attached to queenship itself. Therefore, in this early period, there is no evidence of a conception of queenship as a Christian role, and no surviving indication that those within the church in England were interested in conceptualising a specific ideology of queenship.

Special attention has been paid to Mercia, beginning with reign of Offa and Cynethryth. During this period, there are indications of the development of a role for this particular queen that stresses her position within a distinctly Christian ideology of royal dynastic politics, and this idea seems to have had a lasting impact on queenship in Mercia, though the source material is scarce. This is indicative of the two-way relationship of influence between England and Francia in this period. A focus on Mercian queenship illuminates not only this period, but also late ninth- and early tenth-century developments. Chapter 3 argues that it is technically possible that the queen's rite that has hitherto been considered part of a West-Saxon Ordo has a Mercian origin. As is demonstrated in Chapter 4, even without Mercian liturgical sources Mercia is worth consideration as source of developments in queenship in Wessex and/or a united English kingdom, by providing a proximate example of high-status queens. Mercia and Wessex were neighbours, and their royal families inextricably linked by intermarriage. The extent to which Mercian practices might have been adopted into a united England should not be underestimated.

It is in 856 with the Judith *Ordo* that the earliest evidence of a prescriptive role for a queen of Wessex is laid out in a surviving document in considerable detail, but one that had specific relevance to the particular occasion on which it was written. Judith's queenship appears anomalous, with Wessex rejecting queenship as a political or religious role in the decades to come despite the contrasting picture in Mercia. However, it is possible that Judith's anointing ceremony had some lasting impact on West-Saxon politics, especially if, as explored in Chapter 4, the queen's rite was introduced in England in an Alfredian context. As a rare liturgical document that reflects a particular occasion and political context, the Judith *Ordo* can be identified as a product of political circumstances not only in Wessex but, crucially, in West Francia. That Hincmar's authorship of this text is known allows us to link the rhetoric of this rite with Hincmar's attitudes and purposes, singular to this one Frankish churchman. This rite also reflected a distinctly Carolingian sense of dynasty and familiar politics into which Judith was brought. Chapter 2 used the Judith *Ordo* to argue systematically for a rethink of the assumption that the rites of queens in this period are principally fertility rites, or that fertility is treated within the Judith *Ordo* as a distinctly feminine concern.

By the tenth and eleventh centuries ample evidence survives which demonstrates that a standardised rite for the religious inauguration of queens travelled within pontificals in England, and especially within Wessex. This rite was in circulation from at least the 960s – but probably earlier – until as late as the 1070s, and was subject to several updates that demonstrate its ongoing circulation. In its earliest form it prescribes an inauguration for a queen that is fundamentally status-changing, outlining a role that is comparable to offices such as those of kings and abbesses, and finally entrusting to queenship a role whose antecedents we saw in the wives of kings in early Christianity – a responsibility over repelling heresies and converting non-believers. Pontificals were my source material for enquiry into this queen's rite, which posed some specific difficulties. The

survival of the pontifical record is limited, and the rites recorded into them stripped of context, so they do not reveal when they were first composed and when, if ever, they were utilised. However, reflecting on the limits of the pontifical material can be fruitful if one does not seek to construct politically specific explanations, instead allowing the source material to speak for itself. Taking this approach opens up a range of possibilities. Highlighting a range of events over a long period that might have inspired changes in the liturgical record instead of seeking single turning points more effectively reveals a long and gradual process of ideological development.

Looking at queenship as a worthy topic of inquiry within itself necessitated viewing the queen's rite as a standalone source. This approach means that this thesis could not simply contribute to existing lines of enquiry, which accepted designations of pairs of rites as single *Ordines* and asked of these *Ordines*: 'which king?' Instead, my approach has been to criticise and disassemble such convenient labels, which are rooted in existing lines of enquiry and historiographical questions, rather than new historical analysis. This opened up a range of possibilities for the queen's rite that had hitherto not been considered, such as a wider date range and more possibilities than previously understood for the place of origin. There is simply no evidence, in the case of the earliest version of this rite, that it was compiled along with the king's rite as part of either the Erdmann *Ordo* or the Second English *Ordo*. This is only one possibility among many. The outcome of this focus is that considering these rites as separate illuminates our understanding of both queenship and kingship. The dating and context of each rite is no longer bound by that of the other. This approach also illuminated the similarities between the queen's rites of the Second English *Ordo* and the Erdmann *Ordo* that suggest they are witnesses to the same text.

From the tenth century onwards, individual queens such as Eadgifu, Ælfthryth and Emma emerge as political actors with extraordinary careers and personal connections to a growing Christian monarchical ideology in a united England. However, my approach did not place primary emphasis on their careers, and instead allowed me to open up a range of possibilities about the developments and use of the rite and individual queens. Inauguration rites are prescriptive by nature, but this thesis emphasised that the purpose of an inauguration rite is to express hopes for a future reign, not to reflect retrospectively on one. There are limitations, therefore, to linking certain rites with certain figures in the historical record and their careers. Inaugurations predict, but do not ensure, future success. However, where certain figures emerge as high-status in the historical record, it is important to ask by what means they were elevated. In Chapter 5, I sought to dismantle previous assumptions that falsely link the rubricated Second English *Ordo* B recension with Ælfthryth's anointing at Edgar's 973 inauguration at Bath, though it is still important to recognise the ways in which Ælfthryth's career reflected an enhanced Christian role for queens, made available by the Benedictine Movement and especially through the output of Bishop Æthelwold. Though the queen's rite is relatively stable, through gradual changes it ended up stressing an ideology of

queenship that is united with kingship as a facet of shared monarchical Christian rulership. This idea has been seen to culminate in the extraordinary career of Emma, whose role as Queen of England during the reign of Cnut was instrumental within her partnership with this conquering king. My approach also opened up the possibility that this idea may also belong to Ælfthryth and Edgar in the later tenth century, and thus that the rite which enshrines it may date to that same period.

It is thus unarguable that by the first half of the eleventh century a notion of queenship had developed, evident within the development of an inauguration ceremony for queens, that contrasts sharply with the period under consideration at the beginning of this thesis, in which an ideological role for queens can scarcely be found. This thesis has demonstrated the value of looking at the queen's rite as a source worthy of study in its own right, and what highlighting its independent textual history can contribute to wider considerations of liturgical ceremonies. This has revealed the value of approaching the evidence without a prior assumption that queenship is subordinate to kingship and therefore less worthy of study. I have approached the material with a critical eye as to where preconceptions have existed about queenship that incorporate modern misogynistic or gender-essentialist tropes. Separating the king's and queen's rites that have hitherto been considered together as the 'Second English *Ordo*' contributes to our understanding of both texts. This is especially the case when, as demonstrated in Chapter 5, there is a point at which these texts become inseparable in ways they previously have not been. The possibility remains that, as previously assumed, these texts were introduced into England as part of the same process of compilation. However, the approach taken in this thesis has allowed consideration of many other possibilities.

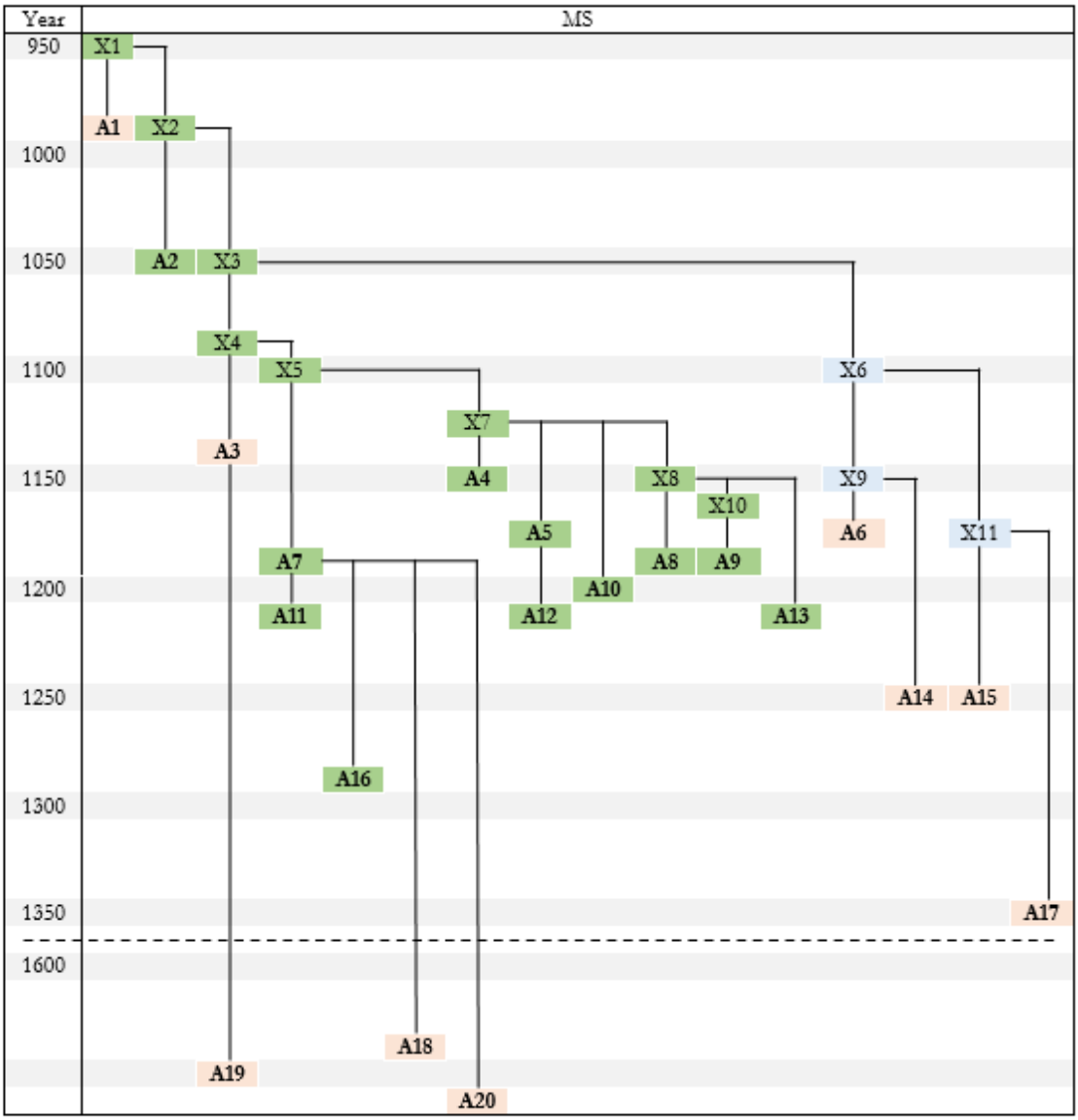
Considering the Judith *Ordo* alongside the standard queen's rite has allowed for comparison between these texts, and informed my approach to the latter material. The clear provenance of the Judith *Ordo*, and the in-depth analysis that is possible around this rite, only serves to emphasise the number of questions surrounding the other early English queen's rite. The previous approach of scholars seeking to use liturgical evidence to chart the development of inauguration rites has been to pinpoint singular moments and attach them to the composition or compilation of particular sources. In resisting this approach, this thesis has shown that there are other possible approaches to this material. There is value in using liturgical sources as a platform from which to suggest a full range of possibilities, explore the wider progression of the ideology of queenship, and thus highlight a more gradual change. In remaining aware of the complexities of liturgical material and the limits of the surviving pontifical record, this thesis has remained open-minded as to how far developments in the ideology of queenship certainly took place that are not reflected in the extant sources. Historically, English inauguration ceremonies have been understood as taking their lead from continental ideological innovation. The focus has been on Wessex as the place from which our liturgical evidence has seemingly emanated. This thesis has established that this process was not

only a West-Saxon and West-Frankish collaboration, and that understanding the influence of Mercia is crucial to the development of queenship in England.

The approach of this thesis has questioned many 'certainties'. Indeed, it has questioned the need to reach for certainties when dealing with a limited source record. In taking this approach, I have brought to the surface as many questions as answers. Though some might find that an unsatisfying approach to history, it is one that is keeping with the nature of the source evidence, and one that provides a more solid basis for future study.

Appendix

Table 1: Second English Ordo A Recension[555]



[555] Based on stemma presented by Jackson, 'Ordo XV: Ratold Ordo', pp. 168-200.

Table 2: Extant Manuscripts Containing Royal Rites

Manuscript	**Pontifical**	**Royal rite(s)**	**Approximate date and location of production (*Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*)**
Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 579 (S. C. 2675)	Leofric Missal	First English *Ordo*	(585) s. ix/x, prob. Canterbury CC (or Arras, Saint-Vaast?)
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Latin 10575	Egbert Pontifical	First English *Ordo*	(896) s. med or x^2 or x/xi, prov. Évreux s. xi
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Latin 943	Dunstan Pontifical	Second English *Ordo* B Erdmann queen's rite	(879) s. x 3/4 [after 959], prob. Canterbury CC
Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. Y.7 (369)	Robert Benedictional	Second English Ordo B Erdmann queen's rite	(923) s. x4/4 (s. xi.2/4?) Winchester NM (for Selsey?)
London, British Library, MS. Additional 57337	Anderson Pontifical	Second English Ordo B Erdmann queen's rite	(302) s. x/xi (or 1020s?), Canterbury CC (or Winchester OM?)
Cambridge Corpus Christi College, MS. 146	Samson Pontifical	Second English Ordo B Erdmann queen's rite	(46) s. xi in., Winchester OM (or Canterbury CC?)
Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. A.27 (368)	Lanalet Pontifical	First English Ordo Erdmann queen's rite	(922) s. xi in. or xi^1, SW England (St Germans?)
London, British Library, MS. Cotton Claudius A. iii, ff 9b–18	Claudius II	Second English Ordo B Erdmann queen's rite	(313) s. xi 2/4 or xi med., prob. Canterbury CC
Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 44	CCCC 44	Second English Ordo B Erdmann queen's rite	(40) s. xi 2/4 or xi med. or xi 3/4, Canterbury (StA or CC?)
London, British Library, MS. Cotton Vitellius A. vii, f. 1-112	Vitellius A. vii (fragment)	Second English Ordo B Erdmann queen's rite	(397) prob. Ramsey after 1030, then Exeter, 1046 × 1072

Table 3: Dates of Pontificals Containing Royal Rites[556]

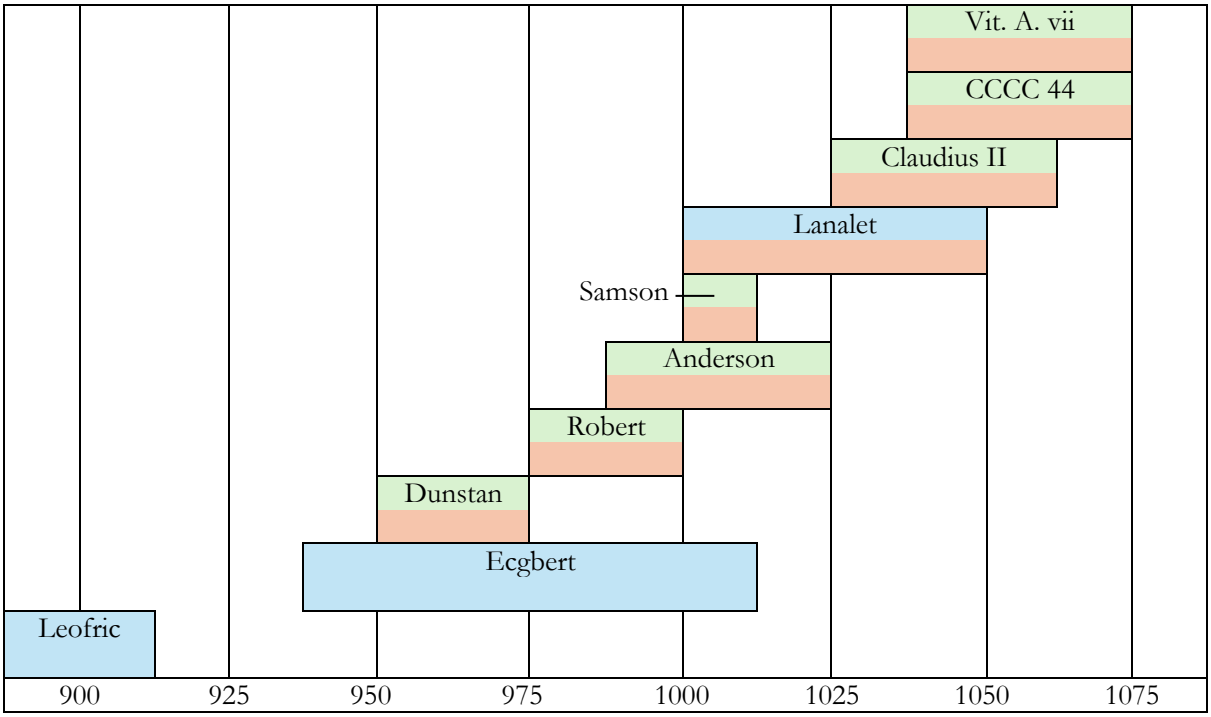
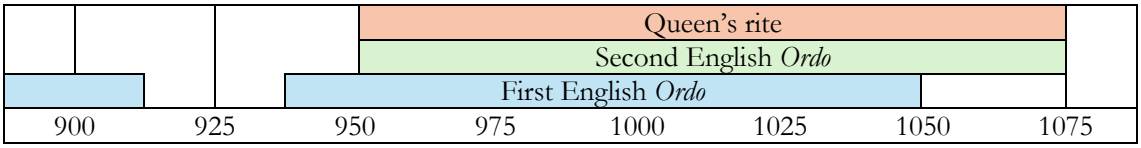


Table 4: Overlap of Pontificals Containing Royal Rites



[556] First English *Ordo* = Blue; Second English *Ordo* = Green; Queen's rite = orange.

Table 5: The Structure of the Second English *Ordo* (A, B and accompanying queen's Rite)[557]

A: 'Ordo XV: Ratold Ordo'		**B: Samson Pontifical**	
King's Inauguration Rite:			
Petition of bishops	Erdmann	Bishops led into church	Original
King responds	Erdmann	Antiphon: *Firmetur…*	Original
Enquiry of bishops	Erdmann		
King's prostration			Original
Hymn: *Te deum laudamus…*			Erdmann
		King's promise: *Haec tria…*	FEO[558]
Prayer: *Te invocamus…*			FEO
Prayer: *Deus qui populis…*			Erdmann
Prayer: *In diebus…*			FEO
Anointing of king and anointing prayer: *Omnipotens sempiterne Deus…*			Erdmann/OSF
Antiphon: *Unxerunt Salomonem…*			FEO
Prayer: *Christe perunge…*			Original
Prayer: *Deus electorum…*			FEO
Prayer: *Deus dei filius…*			OSF
Ring-giving and ring-giving prayer: *Accipe anulum…*			Erdmann
Prayer: *Deus cuius…*			Erdmann
King is girded with sword			Erdmann
		Antiphon: *Confortare et esto…*	Original
Antiphon: *Confortare…*			Erdmann
Sword-giving and sword-giving prayer: *Accipe hunc gladium…*			Erdmann
Prayer following sword-giving: *Deus qui…*			Erdmann
Crowning and coronation prayer: *Coronet te deus…*			Erdmann
Prayer following crowning: *Deus perpetuitatis…*			Erdmann
Sceptre-giving and sceptre-giving prayer: *Accipe sceptrum…*			Erdmann
Prayer: *Omnium domine…*			Erdmann
Rod-giving and rod-giving prayer: *Accipe virgam…*			OSF
Blessing: *Extendat…*			869
Blessing: *Benedic domine…*			FEO
Designation of king's status: *Sta et retine…*			OSF
Three precepts	FEO	Prayer: *Omnipotens det tibi…*	FEO
Acclamation	FEO	Prayer: *Benedic domine…*	FEO
Queen's Inauguration Rite:			
Queen's prostration	Erdmann	Rubric[559]	Original
Prayer: *Adesto, Domine…*	Erdmann		
Anointing of queen and anointing prayer: *In nomine patris…*			Erdmann
Prayer: *Omnipotens sempiterne deus…*			Erdmann
Ring-giving and ring-giving prayer: *Accipe anulum…*			Erdmann
Prayer: *Deus cuius est omnis…*			Erdmann
Crowning and coronation prayer: *Accipe coronam…*			Erdmann
Prayer: *Omnium domine…*			Erdmann[560]

[557] The First English *Ordo* has been abbreviated to 'FEO', the *Ordo* of Seven Forms to 'OSF', and the 869 Charles the Bald *Ordo* to '869'.
[558] This was adapted from the three precepts in the First English *Ordo* (and in the A recension) but in changing its location its function also changed: Nelson, 'Second English *Ordo*', p 369.
[559] In Dunstan Pontifical, Anderson Pontifical, Samson Pontifical, Claudius II and CCC44 (See Table 8).
[560] This is from the king's rite of Erdmann, is a repeat of a prayer used for the king in the Second English *Ordo*, and is not the same prayer as the one used at this point in Erdmann.

Table 6: Inclusions in the pontificals with royal rites

Pontifical	First English Ordo	Second English Ordo	Erdmann Queen's rite	Mass over king
Leofric	YES			
Egbert	YES			YES
Dunstan		YES	YES	YES
Robert		YES	YES	Unknown[561]
Anderson		YES	YES	YES
Samson		YES	YES	YES[562]
Lanalet	YES		YES	YES
Claudius II		YES	YES	YES
CCCC 44		YES	YES	YES
Vitellius A. vii		YES	YES	Unknown

[561] The original pontifical ends after the final prayer for the queen, and everything after that point is a later addition, thus we cannot be certain whether or not a mass over the king followed. As this manuscript has a Normandy provenance, the king's mass was possibly removed due to being redundant. The king's rite was adapted into a rite for making a duke, which is included in the later additions in the manuscript. *Benedictional of Archbishop Robert*, ed. by Henry Austin Wilson (Henry Bradshaw Society, 1903).

[562] The mass in this pontifical is attached to the First English *Ordo*.

Table 7: Royal marriages in Mercia, Wessex and England

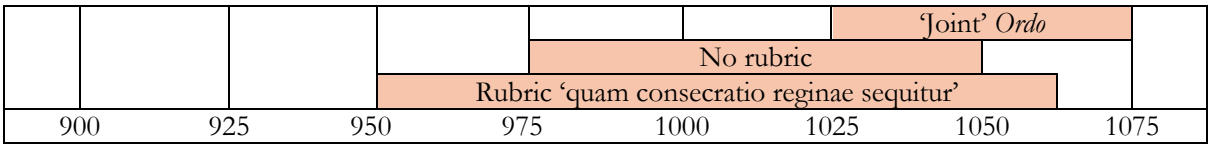
Mercia		**Wessex**	
Ruler and reign	Spouse and date of marriage	Ruler and reign	Spouse and date of marriage
Offa 757-96	Cynethryth <770	Cynewulf 757-86	
Ecgfrith 796		Beohrtric 786-802	
Coenwulf 796-821	Cynegyth? <799? Ælfthryth <804	Ecgbehrt 802-39	
Ceolwulf I 821-23			
Beornwulf 823-26			
Ludeca 826-27			
Wiglaf 827-39	Cynethryth <831		
Wigmund? 840 Wigstan? 840	Ælfflaed?	Æthelwulf 839-58	Osburh c.824-49? Judith 856
Beohrtwulf 840-52	Saethryth <840	Æthelbald 855-60	Judith 858
Burgred 852-74	Æthelswith 853	Æthelbehrt 860-65	
		Æthelred I 865-71	Wulfthryth <868
Ceolwulf II 874-79/83		Alfred 871-99	Eahlswith 868
Æthelred 881-911	Æthelflaed <887	Edward 899-924	Ecgwynn c.893 Ælfflaed c.900 Eadgifu c.919
Æthelflaed 911-18			
Ælfwynn 918			

England	
Reign	Marriage(s)
Æthelstan 924-39	
Edmund 939-46	Ælfgifu of Shaftesbury c.939 Æthelflaed of Damerham c.944
Eadred 946-55	
Eadwig 955-59	Ælfgifu <955
Edgar 959-75	Æthelflaed c.957-59 Wulfthryth c.960-64 Ælfthryth 964
Edward the Martyr 975-78	
Æthelred II 978-1016	Ælfgifu of York 980s Emma of Normandy 1002
Edmund Ironside 1016	Ealdgyth? <1016
Cnut 1016-35	Ælfgifu of Northampton 1014 Emma of Normandy 1016
Harold Harefoot 1035-40	Ælfgifu?
Harthacnut 1040-42	
Edward the Confessor 1042-66	Edith 1045

Table 8: Changes to the queen's rite in English pontificals

English pontificals containing a queen's rite	**Rubric 'Quam consecratio reginae sequitur…'**	**Changes indicating a joint *Ordo***
Dunstan/Sherborne	YES	
Robert		
Anderson	YES	
Samson	YES	
Lanalet		
Claudius II	YES	
CCCC 44	YES	YES
Vitellius A. vii	?	YES

Table 9: Overlaps in the three main versions of the queen's rite in England



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