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An Evaluation of Lanfranc's Ecclesiastical Reform in Relation to the Gregorian Movement

William Joseph Bosch
Loyola University Chicago

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AN EVALUATION OF LANFRANC'S ECCLESIASTICAL
REFORM IN RELATION TO THE
GREGORIAN MOVEMENT

by
William J. Bosch, S. J.

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LIFE

William Joseph Bosch was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 28, 1928.

He was graduated from Aquinas Institute, Rochester, New York, in June, 1945. He spent one year at Fordham University, New York City, New York. In September, 1947, he entered the St. Andrew Novitiate of the Society of Jesus, at Poughkeepsie, New York. For the four years spent there he was academically connected with Fordham University.

In August of 1951 he transferred to West Baden College of Loyola University, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts from that institution in June, 1952. There he entered the Graduate School of Loyola University in July, 1953.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the ninth and tenth centuries the Church of Rome reached a spiritual depth that has not been sounded either before or after in its history.\(^1\) This condition resulted from the Church having fallen victim to the social, political, and economic system of that age, namely, feudalism. This institution clericalized the state while secularizing the Church.\(^2\) During this period when feudalism held sway, the system of proprietary churches began to make its appearance in the countries of Europe.\(^3\) This was a situation whereby one of the wealthier kings or lords gave land and revenue for the establishment of a monastery or church. In return he assumed the official role of

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proprietor. Among the privileges he derived from this office was the hereditary right of providing a successor to fill the position that his donation had created, whenever it might become vacant. Through donations and legacies these ecclesiastical offices came to involve control over great revenues. Therefore, many churchmen soon looked upon their governance merely as lucrative positions to be won from the lord who had the right of provision. These circumstances naturally led to the practice of offering the lord money or other forms of wealth to obtain ecclesiastical posts whose future exploitation promised such a great financial reward. Such men, since they had such low motives in acquiring these Church offices, would tend not to fulfill the spiritual obligations that these positions likewise entailed. Clerical marriage became a besetting vice of the western Church despite some disciplinary legislation that was passed at great intervals from the fifth to the tenth century. Thus simony and clerical concubinage flowed from the same evil


5 Carl Mirbt, Die Publizistik im Zeitalter Gregors VII, Leipzig, 1894, 261-262.

6 R. Cardwell, "Gregory the Seventh," The Month, London, XXIII, March, 1875, 349.
practice of the feudal system, namely, lay investiture, which, based on the system of the proprietary church, had transferred to the secular lords the power of election and installation to church offices.

In the middle of the eleventh century, the Church began to show its eternal regenerative powers and a spirit of reform swept through Christendom. There were three main facets of this reform movement aimed at the evils and vices that were rampant in the Western Church as a result of the influence of the feudal system: the stamping out of clerical marriage, ridding the Church of simony and its source lay investiture, and, finally, centralization of the different parts of the Church under the Pope at Rome. Pope Saint Gregory VII, the foremost leader of this movement, summarised his policy and program in these words: "I have labored with the utmost diligence that Holy Church, the spouse of God, our queenly Mother, returning to her proper splendor, might remain free, pure and Catholic." The meaning of these words of Gregory is shown in the following

7 Christopher Dawson, Medieval Religion and other Essays, New York, 1934, 21.

8 Gregorius VII, "Operum pars secunda—Epistolae extra Registrum Vagantes," Patrologiae Latinae, J.-P. Migne, Parisiis, 1678, Epistola LXIV, CXLVIII, c. 709. "... summopere procuravi, ut sancta Ecclesia sponsa Dei Domina et mater nostrorum proprium rediens decus, libera, et casta, et Catholica permaneret." This source will be referred to in the future by the abbreviation: PL.
comment of Augustin Fliche:

Free, pure, Catholic, all the work of Gregory VII is contained in these three words; he had desired a church free from temporal control by the suppression of lay investiture and the elimination of simony, liberated from the servitude of the flesh by the complete extermination of Nicholism, shining throughout the whole world under the direction of the apostolic See. 

These aims were pressed in almost every part of Europe. Their influence finally reached England despite of its insular isolation.

This reform, called generically, the Gregorian reform, was carried to England by William, Duke of Normandy, when in 1066 he defeated the Anglo-Saxon army under Harold at Hastings. The conquering leader took a lively interest and an active part in this ecclesiastical movement. William was motivated by a number of reasons of varying importance. First, Pope Alexander II, one of the reforming popes, had blessed his banner and sanctioned his invasion of England. This action gave the duke a great psychological impetus in an age that worried about legality. William was truly grateful for this expression of


10 Willelmus Pictaviensis, *Gesta Willemi Conquestoris*, PL, XXLIX, c. 1246.
papal good will. In return the duke gave his promise to effect an ecclesiastical reform once he had conquered. There was also the fact that the Norman Church was in the forefront of the spiritual revival upon the continent. Ecclesiastical conditions had been greatly influenced by the Lotharingian and Cluniac monastic movements. William, who by nature was faithful to customary procedure, took the reform movement for granted and looked on it as an integral part of the ecclesiastical situation. He was also spurred on by the practical aspect arising from the fact that the bishops and greater abbots of England, as of every European country of this period, were great land owners. As a consequence they were important political leaders in the predominantly agricultural society of the

11 William of Malmesbury, De Gestis Regum Anglorum, ed. William Stubbs, in The Rolle Series, London, 1889, II, 299. This source will be referred to in the future by the abbreviation: RS.


13 Willelmus Pictaviensis, "Gesta Willelmi Conquestoris," PL. CXLIX, c. 1240.
mid-eleventh century.14 By furthering the changes necessary for the accomplishment of the reform, William would be able to take the major ecclesiastical positions out of the control of the English incumbents and put them in the hands of Norman ecclesiastics. He hoped he could trust these Normans to be his devoted followers.15

That this was clearly William's policy is shown by the fact that the king never appointed any Englishman to an important position in the Church. On the other hand, he did allow those English bishops who had not been convicted of any evil (eight out of the fifteen bishops in England at the time of the conquest) to keep possession of their sees and abbeys as long as they lived.16 By the time of the Conqueror's death, there were only two English bishops who survived from the days of King Edward, and only two important abbeys, Ramsey and Bath, that had English abbots.17 As a consequence of William's policy, the Church in England had become thoroughly Normanized on its higher levels by 1087.


17 Z. N. Brooke, The English Church and the Papacy: From the Conquest to the Reign of John, Cambridge, 1931, 156.
Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England, 671.
Motivated by these reasons William brought the reform movement from the theoretical sphere to the practical by appointing Lanfranc, the abbot of the monastery of St. Stephen at Caen, archbishop of Canterbury. He established Lanfranc as his chief deputy in dealing with the Church in England.

The relationship that existed between William and Lanfranc in Church affairs has been under dispute. Few reliable documents exist that would support any view as definitive. The extreme opinions may be excluded. On the one hand, Lanfranc suffered no little interference from the temporal power; certainly he did not dominate the King during his rule as archbishop. On the other hand, little credence is to be placed in the opinion that Lanfranc was merely the king's puppet with no mind of his own. Against the former opinion, there are the letters of the popes accusing Lanfranc of following William's orders instead of those of his ecclesiastical superiors. Lanfranc's letters and the enactments of the councils during this period also indicate a true dependence upon the king's wishes.

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18 The basis for this opinion seems to be the statement of Malmesbury: "Ejus concilio rex primum se faceret, ut nihil negandum duceret quod is faciendum diceret." William of Malmesbury, De Gestis Regum, RS, II, 329.


Lanfranc writes: "What you order concerning the Lord Orricius I receive willingly, but I presume neither to ask nor order anything against the will of the king."21 At the Council of London in 1075 a true dependence on the king was shown by the deferential attitude of the churchmen. The council declared that the proposal: "concerning some bishops who still remained in villages or hamlets, was postponed for the king's hearing, who was at that time waging war across the channel."22

Nevertheless, Lanfranc was no mere figure-head. This is clearly revealed in his appeal to Rome against a privilege granted by William to an English bishop.23 His personal initiative and independent action are indicated by his letters.24 Thus it seems that the king recognized a clear distinction between actions pertaining to the internal government of the church and those which he considered as having some political character. The Conqueror left the former totally in the

21 Lanfrancus, "Opera," Epist. LII, PL, CL, c. 546. "Quod de domino Orricio (Orricius) mandatis, grantanter accipio, sed contra praeceptum regis nihil rogare et nihil jubere praesumo."

22 John D. Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio, Paris and Leipzig, 1903, XX, c. 449. "De quibusdam, qui in villis seu vicis adhuc degebant, dilatum est usque ad regis audientiam, qui in transmarinis terris tunc temporis bellum gerebat."


24 Lanfrancus, "Opera," Epist. XXXIV, PL, CL, c. 534.
archbishop's power. In the latter instances the king demanded and received the obedience of Lanfranc. In this way a clear policy was established which proved to be expedient if not always in accord with strict principles.

It seems therefore, that, after William had made this appointment of Lanfranc as archbishop of Canterbury, he tended for the most part to exercise merely a negative control over the Church. All strictly ecclesiastical legislation and policy was left to Lanfranc. Clothed with this power the archbishop tried to bring about a reform in the Church of England.

25 As may be seen in Lanfranc's dealings with the antipope Clement III. F. Liebermann, "Lanfranc and the Antipope," The English Historical Review, New York, XVI, April, 1901, 328.


CHAPTER II

LANFRANC'S EARLY LIFE

As with many important figures of the Middle Ages, little is known of Lanfranc's early life. It is certain that he was not a Norman but an Italian, because his birthplace was Pavia in Lombardy. According to the most reliable sources his parents were of the local nobility; his father was a senator of the city. Lanfranc was born sometime about the year 1005. His early training was directed towards the profession of law. Yet he seems to have had an equal zeal and ability in the studies of the Trivium and Quadrivium that were given as a general course to the younger students in the medieval schools. In fact his skill in classical studies always remained a source of renown.

1 Milo Crispinus, "Vita Lanfranci," PL, CL, c. 29.


3 David Knowles, in The Monastic Order in England, Cambridge, 1941, 107, holds 1010 as the date of his birth because of the fact that Lanfranc kept full possession of his faculties to the end of his life in 1089. A. J. Macdonald, on the other hand, in his Lanfranc, A Study of His Life, Work, and Writing, London, 1926, 145, gives senility as a possible reason for Lanfranc's unfortunate handling of the Thurstan affair.
throughout his life. This knowledge of the classical authors is given as one reason for William's seeking his companionship.

It was also a source of prestige among the bishops of England. This was true, in spite of the fact that, Lanfranc refused to answer questions on classical matters. The archbishop considered such interest in secular learning unbecoming to a man in his position. These studies also are the reason why he won the praises of the antipope Clement III.

The way in which Wibert flatters Lanfranc is interesting. It is not as the powerful reformer of the British hierarchy that Lanfranc is commended in these letters, but as the teacher of the trivium and quadrivium. These features of an earlier time still constitute Lanfranc's European fame in the eyes of an Italian.

When Lanfranc's studies in the classics and in law were completed, he started to travel through France. He finally came to the city of Avranches. Here he taught school for some time and gained a wide renown for his teaching of literature.

4 Crispinus, "Vita Lanfranci," PL, CL, c. 30. He was chided on this ability by Matthew of Paris, Historia Anglorum, ed. Frederick Madden, R.S., I, 15.

5 Crispinus, "Vita Lanfranci," PL, CL, c. 41.

6 Lanfrancus, "Opera," Epistola XXXIII, PL, CL, c. 532.


8 Crispinus, "Vita Lanfranci," PL, CL, c. 29-30.
It was while he was a teacher in this city, that his goal and way of life was changed.

The colorful story of this transformation is related by Crispinus, the contemporary biographer of Lanfranc.\(^9\) While on a journey from Avranches to Rouen, Lanfranc fell among robbers, who took everything from him and threatened his life. In this dire strait, Lanfranc vowed to reform his life and enter a monastery, if he was spared. In a short while help came. True to his promise, Lanfranc asked his deliverers for the nearest and poorest religious house. When it was indicated to him, he begged for admission there. In this way, according to his biographer, Lanfranc entered the monastery of the White Benedictines at Bec.\(^10\) This event occurred late in his life. The year was 1040; he was already thirty five years old.

At the monastery of Bec, which was undergoing a rejuvenation in its religious and intellectual life, Lanfranc came in contact with the holy and learned abbot Herluin. It was this gifted man who provided Lanfranc's religious formation.\(^11\) Though Lanfranc had sought peace and retirement by his entrance into monastic life, this was not to be. The world soon learned

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\(^10\) Ibid., c. 31.

\(^11\) Ibid., c. 32.
of the two talented men at Bec. In a short while, the wealthy and powerful of Europe were sending their sons and relations there for instruction. After a period, Herluin appointed Lanfranc head-master of the monastery school. His talents as a teacher soon made him so famous that he even overshadowed his former teacher, the renowned Berengarius of Tours. When the latter fell into heresy, Lanfranc took an active part in the councils that tried to bring him back to orthodoxy. Some of these councils took place in Rome where Lanfranc conceived an unfavorable impression of the papacy, for although the reform


13 Lanfranc's intellectual greatness was noted even by the popes. eg. Nicholas II, "Epistolae," PL, CXLIII, c. 1349. and Alexander II, "Epistolae," PL, CXLVI, c. 1353. Anselm, one of his pupils, later sent him the text of his Monologium "for correction or approbation." St. Anselm, "Epistolae," Liber IV, Epistola CIII, PL, c. 252.

14 This term "took an active part" has been used here deliberately as the evaluation of Lanfranc's role is still in doubt. Macdonald seems to have gone to an extreme in doubting Lanfranc's orthodoxy and in his viewing Berengarius as a harbinger of a true theological reform. On the other hand, this author does show that Lanfranc was not Berengarius' main opponent on the side of orthodoxy. Lanfranc, 50-55. Hughes, History of the Church, II, 295. and Horace K. Mann, The Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages, London, 1925, 94. seem naively to take some of the chroniclers at face value and make Lanfranc the hero of the affair. This is to overlook Malmesbury's statement, (who is an author that is never wont to minimize Lanfranc's importance): "Respondent ei libris Lanfrancus archiepiscopus, sed praesidio et fortiter Guismundus prius monachus de sancto Leufredo Normanniae, postea episcopus Aversanus Apuliae, nostri temporis eloquentissimus." Malmesbury, De Gestis Regum, RS, II, 338.
movement had begun ten years before this Council was held, there was still much in the center of Christendom to bring down the censure of Lanfranc. The reform was not a matter of a day. It was a long hard struggle against inveterate vices and deep rooted customs which covered decades and even centuries. The evils that were nourished by the feudal system flourished in Rome and Italy as in no other region of Europe. Thus, though true progress had been made, Lanfranc conceived at the time of this Roman Council a prejudice against the papacy. This unfavorable attitude, according to some historians, had a great influence upon him during his later primacy in England.

Lanfranc's first encounter with the other great factor in his life, William, Duke of Normandy, was anything but indicative of their future good will. When William brought his territories under a papal interdict because of his uncanonical marriage with Matilda, the daughter of Baldwin of Flanders, Lanfranc openly and violently condemned the duke. William in turn ordered Lanfranc to leave Normandy and commanded his feudal levy to burn the farm at Bec.

15 The reform movement began in 1049 with the election of St. Pope Leo IX. The Roman Council against Berengarius was held in 1059.

16 Brooke, English Church and the Papacy, 147-148.


18 Ibid.
This situation however, soon took a change for the better. The chronicler relates that as Lanfranc started on his exile, he met the duke, and by his conversation won him to a change of heart. In fact, he gained the ruler's respect and friendship to such a degree that William chose Lanfranc to aid him in obtaining a dispensation for his marriage. Consequently, Lanfranc was able to fulfill two tasks by his journey to Rome in 1059. Not only was he in attendance at the Council against Berengarius, but at the same time he had an opportunity to confer with the Pope, Nicholas II, concerning the Duke's marriage. When Lanfranc explained the case, the Pope readily granted the necessary dispensation under the provision that William would establish two monasteries as an offering in thanksgiving. The Duke readily agreed to this stipulation. He and his wife constructed at Caen the monastery of St. Stephen for men and the convent of the Holy Trinity for women.

Lanfranc, as a reward for his efforts, was soon transferred from his office of prior at Bec to the newly

19 Crispinus, "Vita Lanfranci," PL, CL, c. 34.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., 37.
22 Willemus Calculus Gemmaticensis Monachus, Historia Northmannorum, PL, CILIX, c. 861.
23 Ordericus Vitalis, Ecclesiastical History, 432, 36.
created position of abbot of St. Stephen's. 24 During his rule here he became William's spiritual father and the most trusted of the Duke's councilors. As a result, after the Conquest William often left the care of the realm to Lanfranc's guardianship when he was absorbed by affairs in Normandy. 25

Naturally, then, when William was faced with the major task of reorganizing the English Church, he selected this ecclesiastical leader as the man for the enterprise.

In the meantime, Duke William of Normandy, came into his hereditary kingdom of England, and established laws on those matters that he wished; then he set about to improve the condition of the Church. Therefore, King William, acting upon the advice and request of Alexander, the supreme pontiff of the universal church, a man outstanding by his life and learning, and with the ready consent of all the lords of England and Normandy, adopted that plan which was most beneficial and the only feasible one, and chose the most learned man in the memory of all, that is Lanfranc, to undertake this task. 26

The opportunity to make the desired appointment of Lanfranc canonically came at the Council of Winchester in 1070.


26 Crispinus, "Vita Lanfranci," PL, CL, c. 38. "Interea dux Normannorum Willelum hereditarium sibi regnum Angliae pervadens ad quae voluit jura disposuit; deinde ad meliorandum Ecclesiae statum, animum intendit. Igitur Alexandri universalis Ecclesiae summi pontificis, viri vita et scientia excellentissimi, consulto et rogatu omnium quoque Anglici et Normannici imperii magnatum libentissimo assensu, rex Willelum, quod potissimum solumque acceptabat concilium, doctorem supra memoratum, Lanfrancum scilicet, ad hoc elegit negotium suscipiendum."
This council was held when the whole of England had finally been pacified. At that time Stigand, who had been made archbishop of Canterbury by the instigation of Earl Godwin, was formally deposed as an intruder. William immediately expressed his wish that Lanfranc be appointed to fill the vacated see. The king's choice was approved by the clergy and nobles in England. Lanfranc struggled against this new dignity with a great and sincere repugnance to the honor. He finally accepted the proffered position, succumbing to the entreaties of William, the papal legates, and particularly his "father in Christ," Herluin. Lanfranc ruled the see of Canterbury from 1070 to 1089 the year of his death.

From a study of Lanfranc's early life, it is seen that this man, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1070, was an individual with exceptional abilities. He had strong, intimate friends who trusted and admired him. He was a man trained in the

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28 Mansi, XIX, c. 1079-1080.
29 Malmesbury, De Gestis Pontificum, RS, 39.
31 Malmesbury, De Gestis Pontificum, RS, 73.
classics and in the law, a man of great intellectual powers which were recognized by all his contemporaries. When Lanfranc assumed control of his see, he had not only been successful as a teacher, but he had also been trained in the ways of sanctity. This was accomplished during his thirty years as a Benedictine monk. Herluin was his guide, a spiritual director renowned in his day. Lanfranc was a close friend of William the Conqueror who had been one of the first to recognize his ability for governance. He had the good will of Pope Alexander II who had been one of his students at Bec. During this early period, the reform movement does not seem to be an integral part of Lanfranc's life, nor of any great concern to him. In fact, there are some indications that he was not too well disposed to the claims of the papacy. Because of the vice and corruption customarily attributed to the papacy during this period, he did not associate Rome with reform. As will be seen, each of these factors in Lanfranc's early life had an important influence upon him in his administration of the Church in England.


CHAPTER III

ECCLESIASTICAL REFORM: LANFRANC'S EFFORTS FOR UNITY

In order to get a proper understanding of Lanfranc's efforts to reform the Church in England, it is apparent that the situation that existed when he assumed control of the see of Canterbury, must be known. This information is of prime importance because it reveals what actions must be attributed to Lanfranc's individual efforts, and what policies he received as an inheritance from his predecessors. Naturally, in matters of ecclesiastical reform, it is much easier to continue a mode of procedure than it is to inaugurate one. By ascertaining the situation that prevailed in pre-Conquest England, the originality of Lanfranc's work and the obstacles that he had to overcome will stand out clearly. This will indicate what in these efforts was a part of a definite policy or program which the archbishop had firmly resolved upon and attempted to realize.

Since this is so, an attempt will be made to point out, first, the state of the Anglo-Saxon Church on the points to be considered and, secondly, the steps that Lanfranc employed in his administration.
In attempting to evaluate the state of the Anglo-Saxon Church in 1070, certain factors must be constantly taken into account. In our inquiry problems arise first of all in the gathering of original information and evidence. This comes partly from the natural silence concerning the good and the notoriety accorded to evil. Moreover, the personal nature of the information sought presents an obstacle. In the case of the late Saxon Church these difficulties have been augmented because no visitation records of any of the bishops have survived. The few chroniclers of the period have not had proper critical study devoted to their works; this had led to many false conclusions.

Further, personal prejudice and subjective interpretation must be guarded against. This is true, not only in the original partisan Norman or Anglo-Saxon chroniclers, but also, in practically every commentary, narrative, or history about this period as well. Since the Glorious Revolution of 1688

1 Though one of the chroniclers does try to balance his statements by: "Sed haec mala de omnibus generaliter Anglis dicta intelligi nolim; scio clericos multos tunc temporis simplici via semitam sanctitatis trivisse; scio multos laicos omnis generis et conditionis Deo in eadem gente placuisse ... " Malmesbury, De Gestis Regum, RS, II, 305.


4 Galbraith, Historical Research, 26.
the Norman Conquest has taken on political implications, which have found their way into historical works.

The Norman Conquest, by being so long an issue almost of contemporary politics, was studied with a consistent zeal which would otherwise have been lacking, but as a consequence this eleventh-century crisis has been strangely and erroneously presented in terms of modern nationalism of Whig theory, or Protestant fervour, and nineteenth-century liberalism. The shadow of polemic has hung heavily over these studies, and we are even now only tardily escaping from the consequent anachronisms.

The rise of modern historical scholarship has not eliminated the variant interpretations of this period. A study of contemporary authors on the Conquest will reveal that their attitudes and evaluations fall into two groups.

The first of these opinions may be generically called the "old theory", or the "Norman theory". It ante-dates the rise of the second school of thought by about thirty years. The first group started about the close of the last century with the publication of Böhmer's, Kirch und Staat in England und in der Normandie, Leipzig, 1899. This interpretation is found in most text-books and general studies, until about ten


6 The reason why this school has been the only one for such a long period is that this first authoritative book by Böhmer was a work of monumental scholarship and as such was held in awe by scholars of this era.
years ago this evaluation was almost universally accepted by scholars of the period of the Conquest.

This "old theory" held that the Church in England at the time of the Norman Conquest had reached a depth of depravity which rivaled the worst evils of the rest of Christendom. The reform under William and Lanfranc practically refounded the Church and raised it to new spiritual heights.7 Stenton writes: "We have to set the undoubted fact that with the Norman Conquest the English Church passes at once from a period of stagnation to a period of exuberant activity."8 Macdonald simply states: "The dioceses and monasteries of England were entirely overhauled. From the abbeys of Normandy and France, monks trained in the new reforming principles were brought over and filled the English bishoprics and abbeys."9

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8 Frank Merry Stenton, William the Conqueror, London, 1908, 400.

The "new theory" or the "Anglo-Saxon theory," as we may call it, is in direct opposition to the "old theory." This group holds that the Church at the time of the Conquest had not sunk to the depths of the Church on the continent. The reason they adduce for this good fortune, is the absence of feudalism in pre-conquest England. Also, they hold that there was a reform movement already in progress to eliminate the evils that did exist in the ecclesiastical structure. Church life was vigorous, union with Rome was intimate. Therefore the role of the Normans was merely to continue these efforts at reform. David Knowles writes:

We may say, then, that the monasteries of England on the day when King Edward "was alive and dead," were as a body living and powerful. There was no trace of serious moral decadence, nor of that lay encroachment which in previous centuries had such disastrous consequences both in England and abroad.


12 Robinson, Times of St. Dunstan, 131.


15 Knowles, Monastic Order, 81.
G. O. Sayles summarizes, at least negatively, the attitude of this new school:

The contemporary view implies that the Anglo-Saxon Church needed to be completely reorganized and purified; the modern view implies that this was done by the Normans. Neither implication can be accepted, for the first does, as we have seen, less than justice to the pre-Conquest Church, and the second exaggerates and even misinterprets the reforms of the Conqueror and Archbishop Lanfranc.16

The extremists of this theory would claim that this reform in the Church of England in the period preceding the Conquest, if adequately considered, was a greater success than that instituted by Lanfranc.17

As in most cases of such wide divergence as this the truth probably lies somewhere between these two conflicting views. This will be brought out by the following study of Lanfranc's activities—their novelty and effectiveness.

Although Lanfranc's efforts at reform are usually considered chronologically, nevertheless, since this study wishes to establish the relation of his activities to the efforts and policies of the Gregorian Movement, it will treat his endeavors topically. This mode of procedure will not only show Lanfranc's activities in relation to that larger reform, but it

will also provide a more systematic study of Lanfranc's work on these vital points. It will give a safer foundation for any evaluation of the ultimate success of his efforts; help to discover the true innovations and what in his efforts was mere continuation of activities inaugurated and developed by the Anglo-Saxon Church. This method will reveal what was the situation when Lanfranc was appointed, and what he handed on to his successors. Therefore, in this study Lanfranc's efforts shall be considered under the three major heads of centralization, elimination of clerical marriage, and the eradication of simony.

The unity within the late Anglo-Saxon Church can be ascertained with some certainty. We shall prescind from the question of unity with Rome. This shall be treated later. Here we will concentrate our attention upon the situation in England itself. In the century before the Conquest a reform movement had taken control of the English Church. At the head of this reform stood three great bishops: Dunstan, Oswald, and Aethewold. The greatest of these was Dunstan. Taking over the administration of Canterbury in 960 he soon exerted influence over the king in having men favorable to the reform, and his intimate friends

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established in the important positions in the English Church. While he ruled Canterbury from 960 to 965, Aethelwold held the see of Winchester from 965 to 984. Oswald cared for Worcester from 961 to 972. This prelate was transferred to York, which he ruled from 972 to 992. Therefore, during this period of about thirty years, these sees and many of the lesser positions were held by men who acknowledged Dunstan's leadership. As a consequence, unity of action was given to the Church. The issuance, in 970, of the Regularis Concordia also provided uniformity to a portion of the Church. This document established a common rule for the monasteries. Its strong "nationalistic" tone indicates that the Church in England had adopted an attitude of at least territorial solidarity.

In spite of these elements tending toward unity, pre-Conquest England shared the characteristic note of the "Dark Ages" throughout Europe. This was decentralization. The lack of transportation and communication, the establishment of


20 Robinson, Times of St. Dunstan, 132.


22 Robinson, Times of St. Dunstan, 145.
self-containing economic and social units on the manorial basis all tended to isolate the Church, as well as the nation, into small units. To this general condition must be added the strong tendency of the Saxons towards dispersion rather than unity. This characteristic is vividly seen in their avoidance of cities, even those that were in existence at the time of their conquest. These Teutonic invaders instead established small tribal units throughout the land. 23

This Anglo-Saxon tendency was clearly operative in the slackening of unified action consequent upon the death of the leaders of the tenth century reform. It seems that the movement's centralizing tendency was embodied in its leaders and not in any policy or program. 24 The men appointed to the see of Canterbury after this movement had passed its peak were weak men. Although they should have been the leaders of the Church in England, they did not use their position to exert their authority.

In the period immediately preceding the Conquest,


24 Knowles, Monastic Order, 83.
Stigand of Winchester dispossessed the legitimate occupant of Canterbury. This seizure of the chief see was obviously a serious blow to the unity of the English Church. When Stigand was excommunicated for his action, the bishops of England stood loyally by the Holy See and refused to recognize the usurper as the true archbishop of Canterbury. Because of this dissension, the Church was in a state of confusion since it was left almost leaderless. Although Wulfstan of Worcester stood out among the rest of the bishops, he did not have any legal or traditional authority over the rest of the Church.

To the uncanonical seizure of Stigand was added the unrest consequent upon the Conquest itself. This turmoil tended to upset the country and break down the unity found in that earlier period. Therefore, though there had been efforts at centralization and unification in the late Anglo-Saxon Church, the period immediately before Lanfranc's occupancy of Canterbury was one in which there was a deterioration in this unity.

Lanfranc's efforts for centralization of the Church began immediately upon his consecration as archbishop. He

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26 For clarification it might be noted that this is Wulfstan II of Worcester who ruled the see from 1062 to 1095.

27 Macdonald, Lanfranc, 110.
realized that the task he set himself could only be accomplished by united action under a single head. It must be noted here that Lanfranc conceived this aspect of reform in a manner different from the ecclesiastical leaders of the rest of Europe. To these leaders, who were imbued with the Gregorian spirit, centralization always meant union with the papacy, freedom from lay control and the transfer of jurisdiction to the pope at Rome. This does not appear to be the aim of Lanfranc's policy of centralization. The center to which all should be directed in his program was ultimately the archbishop of Canterbury, proximately the individual bishops. This policy was not primarily due to a spirit of independence, though that seems to have been present. A more important factor in the formation of this program was that Lanfranc was a man who held fast to custom and tradition. He had been brought up in an age of a decadent and weak papacy that exerted little control outside of Rome. Therefore, he looked upon the efforts of the reforming papacy at centralization as innovations that could not be


29 Hughes, History of the Church, II, 451.


31 Caspar, Register, Liber Primus, Epist. XXI, 51-52.
tolerated. Lanfranc also held that the hope of the Church in England was the continual support and aid of the king and he felt that this royal good will and help would be alienated by the application of the Gregorian principles of centralisation. He was confirmed in this view when William, soon after his conquest, had promulgated laws that effectively limited papal activity in England.

That this was Lanfranc's mind can be clearly seen in the fact that he never objected to any of the king's limitations upon the papacy. This attitude stands out in his pragmatical "wait and see" policy in the conflict between the Roman pontiff and Henry IV's antipope. His traditional outlook is revealed in his handling of the appeal to Rome by William of Calais, Bishop of Durham, and in his attitude towards monastic immunity from episcopal, and especially from metropolitan, jurisdiction.

It is also indirectly seen in the letters of Gregory VII. This correspondence stressed the supremacy of Rome and complained of Lanfranc's disobedience to papal wishes and commands.

32 Brooke, English Church and the Papacy, 132.
33 Eadmerus, "Historia Novorum," PL, CLIX, c. 352.
36 Caspar, Register, Liber VI, Epist. XXX, 443-444.
Lanfranc's first efforts to establish Canterbury as ultimate center of authority were taken when a dispute arose between the archbishop of York and himself.\(^37\) The crux was the primacy in England.\(^38\) Before Lanfranc would consecrate Thomas of Bayeux, archbishop of York, he demanded a written profession of obedience to Canterbury.\(^39\) Thomas refused, because from the time of St. Augustine, the question of the primacy had been a subject of conflict and debate between York and Canterbury. Thomas gained William's favor for a short time,\(^40\) but Lanfranc soon convinced the king that it was politically inexpedient to have a Northern bishop entirely independent of the southern primate. Such a prelate might at some later date crown another king, selected from the leaders of the Danes, Northmen, or Scots.\(^41\) William was won over. At first the king resorted to entreaties and promises in dealing with Thomas. He emphasized the point that his submission was necessary for the unity of kingdom. He met with no success.\(^42\) Finally, William threatened

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\(^{39}\) Crispinus, "Vita Lanfranci," PL, CL, c. 47.

\(^{40}\) Malmesbury, *De Gestis Pontificum*, RS, 40.

\(^{41}\) Macdonald, *Lanfranc*, 221.

\(^{42}\) Malmesbury, *De Gestis Pontificum*, RS, 40.
to expel Thomas from England. This overcame the archbishop-elect's opposition. He submitted his oath of obedience and Lanfranc performed the rites of consecration. 

Thomas later brought up the question of the primacy at Rome. Lanfranc, who was also in the Holy City at that time, convinced the Pope that it would be better to let this question be decided at a general council in England. This course of action was agreed upon. At Winchester in 1072, Lanfranc was completely victorious in his claims to the primacy. He was supreme in England.

At this council at Winchester, Lanfranc conceived the plan of obtaining papal confirmation of his authority over England. When he attempted this, archdeacon Hildebrand, the future Gregory VII, adroitly answered him with the promise that his claim would receive attention, if he appeared personally at Rome. This was in line with the standard policy of the

43 Malmesbury, De Gestis Regum, II, 352.
44 Ibid.
46 The primacy was established by means of forged documents but Lanfranc was not conscious of this fact. Hippolytus Delehaye, "Review of: A. J. Macdonald, Lanfranc," Analecta Bollandiana, Brussels, XLV, 1927, 525.
48 Gregorius, "Opera," PL, CXVIII, c. 733.
Gregorian reform movement. Control over the granting of the
primateship was a cardinal feature in the papacy's attempt to
exert jurisdiction over the different sections of the Church. Lanfranc never complied with Rome's stipulation. Nevertheless, the outcome of this contest was that during Lanfranc's life time, Canterbury was in command of the ecclesiastical situation. This control is reflected in the letters of Lanfranc. In these, he claims jurisdiction over the whole of England. He writes to Bishop Herfast:

Nor would anyone reasonably have considered this to be rashly presuming anything in the diocese of another, when through God's mercy, the whole island, that they call Britain is evidently the diocese of our single church.

And to Roger, one of the rebels against William's rule, he writes:

Therefore by canonical authority I condemn and excommunicate you and your associates and exclude you from the entrance to Holy Church and the gathering of the faithful, and I command this same to be done throughout all of England by my pastoral authority.


50 Lanfrancus, "Opera," PL, CL, Epist. XXIII, c. 528. "Nec sobrius quisquam putaverit hoc essse in aliena parochia aliquid temere praesumere, cum per misericordiam Dei totam hanc, quam vocant Britannicam insulam, unam unius nostrae Ecclesiae constet esse parochiam."

51 Ibid., Epist. XLI, c. 516. "Canonica igitur auctoritate te et omnes adjutores tuos malevili et excommunicavi, atque a liminibus sanctae Ecclesiae et consortio fidelium separavi, et per tota Anglicam terram hoc idem pastoralis auctoritate fieri imperavi."
Lanfranc was quick to use this new authority to revive the practice of general church councils. Through these meetings he hoped to provide a unified policy and program of action for the church.\textsuperscript{52} These councils were indeed an innovation. National ecclesiastical assemblies as effective means of church legislation and discipline had fallen into abeyance for nearly two hundred years after the death of Theodore. This occurred, partly because of the Danish invasions, partly, because of the weak men elected to Canterbury. These churchmen allowed the predominance established by Theodore to diminish. To say that these councils were innovations does not mean, on the one hand, that councils were not held by the bishops during the late Anglo-Saxon period. Their decrees however, reveal that the scope of these assemblies was usually restricted to land disputes and land grants. These councils rarely entered into the field of Church policy.\textsuperscript{53} Nor does the statement that they were innovations mean that there was no legislation for the Church during these two hundred years. In this period it was customary for the kings to enact disciplinary decrees at the

\textsuperscript{52} Macdonald, \textit{Lanfranc}, 95.

insistence of the more powerful and influential archbishops. Yet the fact remains that, as a body, the Church in England during this period of two hundred years had not laid down statues for its own governance and well-being through the usual episcopal debate, discussion, and vote, but had given this power to an external authority.

Lanfranc was aided in his reestablishment of the system of national councils by the influence of papal example for, starting with the first pope of the reform, Leo IX (1049-1054), there was a continual convening of councils as instruments of reform. This provided a modus operandi for the western Church.

The exact number of councils held by Lanfranc is difficult to ascertain because of conflicts and inaccuracies.


55 Caraman, "Late Saxon Clergy," Downside Review, XLIII, 177. But Sayles in his Medieval Foundations, 256, claims that there was no distinction in legislation between the late Saxon and the early Norman Period. His arguments seem to ignore some factors of vital importance and be colored with a too extreme "new theory" attitude.

56 MacDonald, Lanfranc, 95.
in the manuscripts. The first council, of which we have any certain record, was the Winchester Council of 1072. Here the question of the primacy was settled. In 1074 a major council was held at Winchester; it was followed by the famous London Council of 1075. This assembly laid the basis of Lanfranc's ecclesiastical policies. The council concerning clerical marriage in the following year was again held at Winchester. This meeting in turn was followed by another assembly at London in 1076, which dealt with the deposition and appointing of bishops. Therefore, in Lanfranc's rule of Canterbury there were at least five great councils. These assemblies, moreover, enjoined upon the individual bishops the holding of a yearly synod. At these meetings the decrees of the general councils could be applied to the different sections of the country.

57 Ibid., 96 note 1. gives a critical evaluation of the texts that are extant.
58 Mansi, XX, c. 399
59 Ibid., 439.
61 Mansi, XX, c. 462.
62 Ibid., c. 606.
These councils were of prime importance because they supplied Lanfranc's program with an organization and unity which made possible a constant supervision of activities and a uniformity of policy. In this way order and system, virtues so characteristically Norman, were introduced into the haphazard methods of Saxon ecclesiastical government which had been so totally dependent upon the personal initiative of the individual ecclesiastical leaders. This order supplies the most striking contrast between the period of Norman control of the Church and that of the late Saxon.

Lanfranc's activity in the study and application of canon law in England is another influence of prime importance that must be considered in any discussion of his work of centralization and unification. Although his efforts did not have the exact result that he intended, they were of the utmost importance in the unification of the English Church.

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64 Macdonald, *Lanfranc*, 125.


67 This subject is exceptionally well treated in: Brooke, *English Church and the Papacy*, 55-83.

Lanfranc had been trained in the profession of law before he became a monk. Therefore, it was natural that he should be deeply interested in, and well acquainted with, legal matters. When he became archbishop he sought in the laws of the Church both the answers to his problems and confirmation of his privileges. For this purpose Lanfranc not only gained access to the collection of decrees which he had read and studied while a monk at Bec, but he also ordered that new copies be made. This collection consisted of a copy of the more noteworthy Decretals, including the famous "false decretales", and also the decrees of the major Church Councils. The importance of this copy can be seen in the fact that Lanfranc's version was the only one in England during the eleventh century. It held this exclusiveness up to the middle of the twelfth. Whenever new collections were made, they were copied from Lanfranc's version. Therefore, during this period a copy of his collection was probably found in every cathedral library in England. It was both the only source of instruction in canon law for clerical students and the sole norm for decisions in ecclesiastical

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69 This is seen clearly in his letters: Lanfrancus "Opera," PL, CL, Epist. XI, c. 519; Epist. XIII, c. 521; Epist. XXII, c. 526-527; Epist. L, c. 545.

70 Brooke, English Church and the Papacy, 62.

71 Ibid., 79.
The diligent employment of Lanfranc's collection can be seen by the bishop of Durham's use of it against the Archbishop himself.

Yet more to the point that already in the reign of Rufus, William of St. Calais, bishop of Durham, when accused of treason in the king's court, shows that he has the pseudo-Isidorian doctrines at his fingers' end, demands a canonical tribunal, which Lanfranc refused, formally pleads an *exceptio spolii*, appeals to Rome, and even—for so it would seem—brings a book of canon law into court.73

Lanfranc's collection of canon law was of major significance because he used it to gain control of the English Church by stressing his rights as metropolitan and primate. But another facet of its importance was that it laid the foundation for the revolt against the system of Church government which Lanfranc and William had instituted and striven to maintain.74 By this collection, the churchmen were constantly impressed with the legality of Rome's claims and with the rightful authority and jurisdiction of the Pope.75 Therefore, when the strict Gregorian theory of centralization to Rome came to its fulfillment under Anselm it had as one of its foundations

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72 Ibid., 60.


74 Brooke, English Church and the Papacy, 93.

75 Ibid. Lanfranc makes a totally different use of these documents. Lanfrancus, "Opera," PL, CL, Epist. XXIII, c. 527.
Lanfranc's efforts in canon law. 76

The full import of the archbishop's introduction of this collection of ecclesiastical law into the Church in England can only be realized if the companion action of the separation of the Church courts from the temporal be considered.

Under his [Lanfranc's] guidance he [William] applied the ideas of Gregory VII in relation to ecclesiastical jurisdiction and put an end to the confusion of powers which existed in the Anglo-Saxon period. Church tribunals were established to give judgment according to Canon Law in all cases which were subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, because of the people concerned or the issues involved. 77

This innovation, besides relieving the ecclesiastical officials of an onerous task in which they might gain much ill-will, also eliminated the practice of laymen taking part in the decisions of purely ecclesiastical affairs. 78 By the time that Lanfranc died in 1089 an "uninterrupted sphere had been provided for the operation of the canon law through the creation of separate ecclesiastical courts." 79 Over this new jurisdictional set-up Lanfranc held practically complete control. The King not only

76 Freeman, Norman Conquest, IV, 607.
78 Stenton, William the Conqueror, 386. Davis, England under the Normans and Angles, 51.
did not interfere in these courts but he demanded that the churchmen of England make use of them. In this way, his promulgation of this decree of separation, and its acceptance by the Church tended to establish uniform procedure in ecclesiastical judicial procedures.

Since Lanfranc's version of canon law was the only one in England for such a long period there tended to be a regularity in the decisions of the courts. The practice was also established of looking to Canterbury as the last court of appeal in ecclesiastical cases just as to the king in temporal matters.

Another aspect of Lanfranc's attempts to make Canterbury the center of unity was his establishing of this see's authority over the other bishops of England. Though this policy has been clearly indicated in his struggle with York, it is also indirectly revealed in his leadership at the councils of this period. It becomes more patent and explicit in his letters to the bishops. In this correspondence the Archbishop of Canterbury shows himself to be both the supreme

80 Willelmi Conquestoris, "Epistolae," PL, CXLIX, c. 1291.


82 Willelmi Conquestoris, "Epistolae," PL, CXLIX, c. 1291. Where he tells Remigius the bishop of Lincoln: "... non secundum Hundret, sed secundum canones, et episcopales leges, rectum, Deo et episcopo suo faciat."
ecclesiastical judge in England, and the chief advocate for the Church with both King and Pope.

Lanfranc's role of judge was exercised in the settlement of moral and liturgical questions raised by his bishops such as the interpretation of the marriage laws, the manner of administering the sacraments, and the rites of dedication of a church. His juridical competence also included the most complicated question of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. These latter arose from the conflicting ambitions of the higher churchmen, as well as from the genuine confusion of title to ecclesiastical authority. Through his letters Lanfranc also guided and ruled his bishops in their relations with the monks or their abbeys. Instances of this are numerous since problems were bound to arise whenever bishops tried to press their episcopal control and jurisdiction over the monasteries. But the bulk of Lanfranc's letters concern the enforcement and interpretation of regulations for the discipline

84 Ibid., Epist. XXXIII, c. 532.
85 Ibid., Epist. XIII, c. 520-521.; Epist. XXXII, c. 531-532.
86 Ibid., Epist. X, c. 518.; Epist. XXXVII, c. 535.; Epist. LI, c. 545-546.
of the English Church. Right order was to be achieved through
the action of the bishops in their individual sees and through
the control of Canterbury over the bishops.87 This latter
feature is patently shown in his famous letter to the recalcitrant
bishop Herfast. In this epistle Lanfranc insists on his rights
as metropolitan of the Church of England. He stresses his
authority as archbishop of Canterbury over the rest of the
bishops. Thus Lanfranc writes:

There are many other passages on the precedence and power
of primates and archbishops, both in the writings mentioned
above and in other genuine writings of orthodox Fathers,
which, if you had read more studiously, and when read had
remembered, you would not think disrespectfully of your
mother Church, nor have said what you are reported to have
said. . . . Nor would anyone reasonably have considered
this to be rashly presuming anything in the diocese of
another, when through God's mercy, the whole land, which
they call Britain is manifestly the diocese of our
single church.88

Another way in which Lanfranc exerted control over

87 Ibid., Epist. XV, c. 522-523.; Epist. XVII, c. 524.;
Epist. XXI, c. 526-527.; Epist. XXIII, c. 527.; Epist. XXIV,
c. 528.; Epist. XXVI, c. 529.; Epist. XXVII, c. 529-530.; Epist.
XXIX, c. 530-531.; Epist. XXX, c. 531.

88 Ibid., Epist. XXIII, c. 526. "Sunt alia plurima de
excellentia et potestate primatum et archiepiscoporum, tam in
praefatis scriptis quam in alis orthodoxorum Patrum authenticis
libris; quae si studiosius legeres, lecta memoriae commendas,
nihil inconvenientis contra tuam Matrem Ecclesiam sentires; quod
dixisse diceris, non dixisses. . . . Nec sobrius quisquam
putaverit haec esse in aliena parochia aliquid temere presumere
cum per misericordiam Dei totam hanc, quam vocant Britannicam
insulae unam unius nostra Ecclesiae constet esse parochiam."
the other bishops was by establishing himself as the normal intermediary and advocate with the king and the pope. By this policy the bishops were forced of necessity to proceed through him in their appeals. That he was successful in gaining for himself this position is evident both from his letters and the decrees of the king. The royal grants often explicitly mentioned Lanfranc as the intermediary between the royal power and a specific portion of the English Church. 89

The actual influence which he gained from this position and its part in the unification of the Church is difficult to estimate. It is obvious that Lanfranc's role did have a great psychological influence upon the other bishops. They realized that Canterbury not only claimed the primacy in England but was also acting the part. They also knew that the royal power would probably be at Lanfranc's disposal if there was any indication of a bishop adopting the role of opposition. 90

Another section of the church felt Lanfranc's efforts for unity though in a much less direct manner. His work to

89 Davis, Regesta Regum, I, 13 no. 49, no. 50.; 14, no. 54. 16, no. 60.; 25, no. 96, no. 97.; 26, no. 98, no. 99, no. 100, no. 102. Lanfrancus, "Opera," PL, CL, Epist. XIV, c. 528.; Epist. XXIX, c. 530-531.; Epist. XXXIV, c. 532.; Epist. XXXVIII, c. 536-537.; Epist. XXXIX, c. 537.; Epist. XLI, c. 538.

90 Davis, Regesta Regum, I, 23.
promote monastic unity was not too effective. This was primarily true because there was so little precedent, except in the influence of the Regularis Concordia. Lanfranc's importance arose from his writing the Monastic Constitution. This rule was produced ostensibly as a guide for the monks of Christ's Church over which Lanfranc had direct control. Yet internal evidence suggests that Lanfranc expected others to apply his rule to their monastic situation. This rule was in fact adopted, at least in great part, by a dozen or more of the principal abbeys of England. Because of the number of houses that used this rule, some authors claim that this work of Lanfranc made his sharpest impression on English religious life. Most writers agree that it was certainly a major step in laying the foundation for some form of unity among the monasteries.

Some of the ways that furthered Lanfranc's policy of establishing Canterbury as the ultimate center of unity have been considered. There remain to be investigated his efforts to

91 Knowles, Monastic Constitution, xxii.
92 Ibid., xx.
93 Ibid., xxii.
establish the individual bishops as the immediate authority in his system of centralization.

The first step in this phase of Lanfranc's program was the transference of the bishop's residence from out of the way and thinly inhabited areas to the centers of population. The former situation had come about because there were no great cities or towns in early Anglo-Saxon times. The Germanic tribes, as mentioned above, had a phobia against the cities and walls which had been built by the Romans. Of necessity therefore, the bishops who were appointed to administer to these invaders took up a central location among the small tribal units scattered throughout a portion of the land. The episcopal residence became a place of rest and repose after apostolic trips rather than a center of activity.95

Lanfranc was accustomed to the contrary continental plan. Further, as stated above, he was trying to establish the bishops as proximate centers of authority. He therefore saw the advantages in having the bishops live in populated centers. In this way they could keep a better watch over their subjects, have more control over their clergy, and be more accessible to their people.96 Therefore, the Council of London

95 Macdonald, Lanfranc, 101.

in 1075 enacted this decree:

... it was granted by royal favor and the Council's authority for the aforesaid three bishops to transfer from villas to cities—Herman from Sherborne to Salisbury, Stigand from Selsey to Chichester, Peter from Lichfield to Chester.97

Nor were these the only transfers that took place during Lanfranc's occupancy of Canterbury. By his intercession98 Bishop Remigius was able to move his see from Dorchester to the city of Lincoln.99 In 1078 Bishop Herfast of Elmham moved to Thetford.100 In the later days of Lanfranc's episcopate (c. 1086), the bishop of Chester made a second move to Coventry.101

It must be noted that this localization of sees in more populated centers was not really an innovation of Lanfranc. The process had already begun in the late Anglo-Saxon period when Leofric, Bishop of Devonshire and Cornwall, transferred his episcopal center to Exeter with the authorization of Pope

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97 Mansi, XX, c. 451. "Concessum est regi munificentia, et synodali auctoritate, praefatis tribus episcopis, de villis ad civitates transire, Herimanno de Syraburna ad Scriberiam, Stigando de Seleugo ad Cicestrum, Petro de Licifeldo ad Cestrum."

98 Davis, Regesta Regum, I, 74.


100 Macdonald, Lanfranc, 101.

101 Ibid.
Leo IX. 102. It may be argued that this transfer was motivated by consideration of the need for defence and safety of the bishop, whereas Lanfranc's changes were steps in a planned reorganization. Yet it appears that this former factor may also have been operative in the Archbishop's case. 103

Another means used by Lanfranc for maintaining episcopal authority and jurisdiction were his efforts against monastic immunity from episcopal control. His general policy may be inferred from the fact that, although William conferred many financial privileges on the English monasteries, 104 the King seemed to have granted immunity from the bishop's control to only two, Battle Abbey and Bury St. Edmunds. When we remember that the grant to Battle Abbey is considered spurious by a competent modern historian, 105 and the other to Bury St. Edmunds was but the confirmation of one of Edward the Confessor's privileges which William, if only for political reasons, had to respect, the success of Lanfranc's efforts becomes apparent. 106

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103  Lanfrancus, "Opera," PL, CL, Epist. XXIV, c. 528-529.
104  Willelmis Conquestoris, "Diplomata," PL, CXLIX, c. 1454, 1357.
105  Davis, Regesta Regum, I, 16. Lemarignier, Studia dea Privilegibus, 275. claims that it is genuine.
In this latter document, at least in the best texts of the exemption from episcopal control, there is inserted a clause which reveals Lanfranc's zeal for a united church in England—

\[ \textit{salva primatis episcopi canonica reverentia}. \]

Since grants of immunity from episcopal control are not common in pre-Conquest England, it is true that in this attitude Lanfranc was continuing a tradition of the Anglo-Saxon Church. Nevertheless a factor must be considered in Lanfranc's case that is not found in the former. During the Anglo-Saxon period, the weak and decadent papacy neither had as its policy, nor attempted to put in practice, a program of centering authority over monasteries in the hands of the Pope. On the other hand, in Lanfranc's time, as we have seen, the papacy did have a definite policy of centralization. Moreover, one of the chief means for effecting this unification was the granting of immunity from the control of the bishops. Such a privilege made monasteries directly dependent upon Rome. This policy is clearly shown in the letter of Gregory VII:

\[ \text{Are you not cognizant that the holy fathers generally exempted monasteries from the control of bishops, and bishoprics from the supervision of a metropolitan see, because of the oppression by the higher prelates, and by grants of perpetual privilege sanctioned their union to the Apostolic See as chief members to their} \]

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head? Read through the privileges of the holy fathers and you will find that in most monasteries the intervention even of archbishops is prohibited unless requested by the abbot. . . . 108

On the question of monastic immunity, Lanfranc's policy clashed directly with the papal program and Gregory was at pains to indicate this fact to the Archbishop.109 The pope pressed his claims, but Lanfranc, with the king's support, carried the day.

Another of Lanfranc's specific means of securing episcopal jurisdiction over the monasteries was through control over the appointment of abbots and priors. These actions were theoretically wrong according to both the Constitution of Cluny, and the Monastic Constitution, 111 which Lanfranc himself wrote. Both of these granted the right of free election to the monks. His own violation was clear in the case of Christ Church, his Cathedral chapter. Even more blatant was his action against the

108 Caspar, Register, Liber II, Epist. LXIX, 226. "An ignoras, quod sancti patres plerumque et religiosae monasteriae de subjectione episcoporum et episcopatus de parroechia metropolitanae sedis propter infestationem presidentium divisernut et perpetua libertate donantes apostolici sedi velut principalia capiti suo membra adhaerere sanctiont? Percurre sanctorum patrum privilegia et invenies ipsis etiam archiepiscurum episcopos officium, nisi forte ab abbate vocatis, in plerisque cenobiis factere prohibitum esse. . . ."

109 Ibid., Liber I, Epist. XXXI, 51-52.

110 "Consuetudines Cluniacenses," PL, CXLIX, c. 731.

111 Knowles, Monastic Constitution, 72.
abbey of St. Augustine. In this instance Lanfranc set aside
the man whom the monks had elected and installed his own choice. 112
In this way, he gave an example to the other bishops of England
of episcopal control over the monasteries. 113

These were the activities of Lanfranc on behalf of
centralization. They consisted in unification under Canterbury
through the establishment of the primacy, the reintroduction
of the councils, the inception of the study and diffusion of
canon law, the securing of control over the bishops, and the
spread of the use of the **Monastic Constitutions**. His efforts
also involved centralization under the individual bishops
through the transfer of sees, through his opposition to
monastic immunity from episcopal control, and by his domination
of monastic appointments.

112 Freeman, Norman Conquest, IV, 412.

113 Lanfranc's attitude toward monasticism is still
disputed but Macdonald seems to have made a mistake in urging as
proof that he was adversely disposed the fact that at Lanfranc's
death most of the cathedral chapters were composed of seculars.
Lanfranc, 150. The fact itself is true but there is a
consideration that is overlooked. Under Lanfranc's rule the
cathedrals with monks increased from three to nine. Cathleen
Edwards, The English Secular Cathedral in the Middle Ages,
Manchester, 1949, 11.
CHAPTER IV

LANFRANC'S EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE CLERICAL MARRIAGE AND SIMONY

Lanfranc's activities on behalf of unification of the Church, the first facet of the Gregorian program, have been considered. The next aim of the reform, the extirpation of clerical marriage, must now be investigated.

The question of clerical celibacy in the Anglo-Saxon Church is a subject of serious dispute among modern historians. Many controversial elements are unable to be determined with any exactness. Hasty judgments have frequently been made in the past on this subject. These arise because of the lack of knowledge concerning the late Saxon period, and also because of apparent religious bias.\(^1\) Some points at least can be stated with certitude, though it will be seen that these facts can be interpreted in two ways.

The mere fact that Lanfranc made efforts against clerical marriage was certainly not an innovation. A firm

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1. Herbert Thurston, "Clerical Celibacy in the Anglo-Saxon Church," The Month, London, CXIV, Aug., 1909, 185. The most obvious example of this religious bias is, of course, Lea's Historical Sketch of Sacerdotal Celibacy in the Christian Church, London, 1867.
tradition against this vice existed in the law of the pre-Conquest Church. In the period before Lanfranc's arrival in England, we find such notable examples as the decree in 942 of archbishops Oda and Wulfstan: "Those in holy orders whose duty it is to teach God's people by the example of their life should observe the celibacy befitting their estate whether they be men or women." This injunction was repeated in the laws of Edgar. During the tenth century clerical celibacy was strictly demanded by the trio of great reformers, Dunstan, Oswald, and Aethelwold.

The strong tradition in the Anglo-Saxon Church in support of clerical celibacy is not only shown directly by decrees against marriage by the clergy, but also in the penalties that are laid down for the violations of this disciplinary legislation. These sanctions are found in the different books of penances. Another source, indicating that


4 Mansi, XIX, c. 969.; c. 975.

the law of celibacy was well known, was its repetition in the Homilies of Aelfric. This was one of the most widely circulated works of the late Anglo-Saxon period. The author gives this exhortation:

We must overcome greediness by moderation in eating and drinking; overcome fornication or libidinoseness by chastity, so that the layman hold to his wife, and the ordained minister of God ever continue in chastity, as the canon plainly tells him.

And even more directly:

Chastity is befitting to every man, and above all to the ordained servants of God. The chastity of a layman is, that he hold to his marriage, and lawfully, for the increase of people, beget children. The chastity of a man in orders, of those who serve God, is, that they wholly abstain from fleshly lusts, and it is befitting them that they beget to God the children which laymen have begotten to the world. To priests of common order is it allowed, according to St. Gregory, that they may chastely enjoy wedlock. But to mass-priests and deacons all sexual intercourse is wholly forbidden.

The strict legislative temper of the Anglo-Saxon Church is also revealed in the action of Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester. This prelate enforced the strict decrees of Gregory VII in place of Lanfranc's more lenient ones.

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8 Ibid., 95. Cf. also: 97.

declared that the married clergy of his diocese had to abandon either their wives or their churches.\textsuperscript{10}

Through these statements and many more that could be adduced, it is rather simple to learn what legislation was proclaimed in the Anglo-Saxon Church. It is quite another matter to determine the observance of these laws. Moreover, the existence of this legislation has been interpreted in different ways. Some historians claim that it proves that the Church was in a high state of reform;\textsuperscript{11} others that the Church was steeped in vice.\textsuperscript{12}

Even though any generalization concerning the extent of clerical marriage is hard to substantiate, still modern scholarship has tended to revise the bleak picture drawn by historians of a few generations ago. These modern studies have stressed the difference between clerics, who at that time were allowed to marry, and mass-priests, to whom marriage was forbidden.\textsuperscript{13} Again, the phrase commonly found in manuscripts, namely, "son of a priest," may mean a spiritual rather than a

\textsuperscript{\textbf{10}} Darlington, \textit{The Vita Wulfstanii}, 53.
\textsuperscript{\textbf{11}} Caraman, "Late Saxon Clergy," \textit{Downside Review}, XLIII, 178.
\textsuperscript{\textbf{12}} C. L. White as cited in Thurston, "Clerical Celibacy," \textit{The Month}, CXIV, 185.
Another explanation of parentage that must be taken into account is that "a large proportion, if not the majority, of the ordinary parish clergy were married men with families before they received ordination."15 Because of this, one must be careful not to judge the observance of the law of celibacy from the mention of the wives and children of the clergy. These churchmen may have separated from their family upon ordination.16

Even after all these factors have been taken into consideration, it must be remembered that throughout the whole of tenth and early eleventh century Christendom, clerical celibacy "was honored more in the breach than in the practice."17 Many indications show that the Saxon clergy did, in fact, have wives. Therefore, if clerical marriage was not a universal situation, at least it occurred frequently.18 This is clearly reflected in

14 Thurston, "Clerical Celibacy," Month, CXIV, 193.
15 Ibid., 190.
16 Thorpe, Homilies, 95.
18 Whitelock, "Wulfstan," English Historical Review, LVI, 15.
church legislation, especially in the famous Northumbrian Priest Law. 19 To this evidence must be added the frequent condemnations of the moral state of the clergy. These charges emanated from the kings, especially Edgar, and from the chroniclers of the period. 20 The former of these indictments must be tempered by the knowledge that these condemnations helped to further the king's plan to replace seculars by monks. 21 The latter testimony must be evaluated in the light of the fact that these writers were mostly Normans who would be open to prejudice in their judgment. 22 Also, we know that these chroniclers are not the best sources of information. Eadmer lived at least fifty years after the Saxon period. Malmesbury's statements on this point are at least confused; often they can be disproved by modern scholarship. 23 Orderic Vitalis's direct knowledge of English conditions was restricted to his five week visit to

19 Thorpe, Ancient Laws and Institutes, 297, 301.
21 Knowles, Monastic Order, 95.
Croyland and a shorter stay at Worcester. Furthermore, Croyland abbey was situated in East Anglia, the area most beset by the vice of clerical marriage.

In short, the evidence that may be gathered from the documents of this period allow these conclusions concerning the law and observance of clerical celibacy in the Anglo-Saxon Church to be stated. In the first place, there were many laws passed by the ecclesiastical authorities which recognized and established clerical celibacy as an integral part of Church law. Secondly, many factors indicate that the observance of these laws, though it might not fall short of the contemporary standard on the continent, was deficient in many ways.

The reforming papacy started its program for the elimination of clerical marriage with Leo IX's universal prohibition. The reform movement was then only in its infancy and therefore had no power to make its decrees effective. Consequently, the prohibition of clerical marriage did not become an issue of acute importance until Gregory VII issued his famous decrees at the Roman Synod of 1074. Letters were dispatched

25 *Mansi*, XIX, c. 796-797.
26 Ibid., IX, c. 413-417.
from this council ordering the metropolitans to make similar
demands for clerical celibacy at their provincial councils and
to take steps to see that the order was carried into effect. 27

The decrees of Lanfranc's council at Winchester were
his answer to Gregory's demand. They dealt at length with the
problem of clerical marriage. 28 Lanfranc however started an
innovation in his legislation. While the cathedral clergy
were forbidden to have wives, and while it was decreed also that,
in the future, no priest or deacon was to be ordained until he
had sworn to observe the rule of celibacy, yet the parochial
clergy, in both town and country, were allowed to retain the
wives to whom they were already married. 29 This decision
directly contradicted the Gregorian legislation which had
ordered separation of the clergy from their wives under pain
of degradation from orders. 30

Lanfranc's action may be interpreted in two ways.
Either he was playing the role of a statesman, seeking a
practical solution rather than an impossible ideal; 31 or, on the

27 Ibid., XX, c. 430.
29 Mansi, XX, c. 459.
30 Ibid., c. 413. Mirbt, Die Publizistik, 262.
31 Macdonald, Lanfranc, 265. Stenton, Anglo-Saxon
other hand, he was a politician motivated by temporal expediency. Stenton voices the former opinion:

But their moderation and respect for existing conditions which they display are in singular contrast to the uncompromising tenor of the papal ordinances. For Lanfranc was not an enthusiast, and his decrees reflect the attitude of a statesman, prepared to sacrifice consistency if he could thereby secure his more essential aims.32

Caraman, on the other hand, holds:

The phrase "vel in castallis vel in vicis" of the Winchester decrees of Lanfranc suggests that the archbishop was making special allowances for these parts [i.e. about East Anglia]. They formed the area of the country most disaffected to the Normans, and such measure of indulgence may well have been dictated by political motives.33

An indication of the correct judgment on Lanfranc's attitude toward clerical marriage may be found in his letters.34

In this correspondence he seemed to take a more definite stand on the subject. Lanfranc wrote to bishop Herfast:

... obviously since he had not received orders, he was made a deacon by your fraternity. When I asked him if he was married he said that he was and that he was unwilling to give up his wife. Wherefore, by divine authority I decree that since this is the case he should be advised as follows as a punishment: Take the deaconate away from him; promote him to the other minor orders at the proper times. However let him never receive the order

of deaconate unless he will live celibately, and unless he promises under canonical oath that he will remain celibate the remainder of his life.35

Other evidence of his mind in this matter is shown in his letter to the Archbishop of Rouen:

You recalled that many have informed you that I find fault with some of your actions, and especially do I disapprove of the fact that you have poorly understood the decrees of the holy Fathers in regard to the observance of clerical celibacy, and in addition I state that you do not capably manage ecclesiastical discipline.36

This and other correspondence of Lanfranc give proof of his desire to combat the vice of clerical marriage.37 Yet there seems little ground from the statement, made by some in the past, that Lanfranc and William began the elimination of the practice of marriage among the clergy in England. Even if one were to say that they were outstanding in their condemnation

35 Lanfrancus, "Opera," PL, CL, Epist. XXI, c. 526. "... videlicet cum nullius esset ordinis, a fraternitate vestra factum esse diaconum; interrogatus a me si uxorem haberet, uxorem se habere nec eam se velle dimittere reponit. Propterem tali pacto consulendum ei divina ultus auctoritate decerno: Diaconatus ei suferte, ad casteros minores ordines congruis eum temporibus provete. Diaconatus vero ordinem numquam recipiat, nisi caste vivat, nisi de reliquo se caste victurum canonica attestatione promittat."

36 Ibid. Epist. XVII, c. 524. "Retulistis vobis a multis fuisse relatum quod ego quaedam vestra facta carpo, et maxime quod instituta sanctorum Patrum de servanda clericorum castitate male vos intellexisse redarguo, adjuncto quod ecclesiasticae disciplinae moderamina non bene vos tenere affirmo."

37 Ibid.
of this practice this would leave a few facts unexplained. First, this interpretation overlooks the Anglo-Saxon legislation mentioned above. It also fails to notice that, from the study of various records of this time and that which immediately followed, little if any improvement is found in the morals of the clergy on this point. This is true in spite of the fact that Anselm followed Lanfranc with decrees that were more stringent and carried heavier penalties. Also the fact that two of William's chaplains and chancellors, Herfast and William of Beaufoy, were married men is not taken into account. Both of these William, with Lanfranc's approval, appointed to the bishopric of Elyham. With the example of official approbation of such men one could not expect better from their inferiors.

The last of the three special aims of the Gregorian reform was the elimination of the "heresy of simony."

40 Mansi, XXI, c. 356. Canon 7 reads in part: "Concubinae vero presbyterorum et canoniconum. . . .ministris ecclesiae tradantur et ecclesiasticae disciplinae vel servituti episcopali judicium mancipiuntur."

41 Francis Bломfielid, An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk, London, 1806, II, 49; III, 465. "William Galsagas, Belfagus, de Bellofago, Beaufoy. . . . died about 1091, leaving his family, as well as See, very rich and so it continued many ages. . . ." The History of King Edmund the Martyr and the Early Years of His Abbey, ed. Lord Francis Harvey, London, 1924, 54.

42 Ephraim Emerton, The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII, New York, 1932, XXX. This phrase had a very technical use as many of the reformers did hold simony to be an real heresy.
Although the Anglo-Saxon Church did make some efforts in disciplinary legislation against this evil, it is difficult to say to what extent it had been common in England in the period before Lanfranc became archbishop. Historically creditable cases of simoniacal transactions are not numerous during the late Anglo-Saxon period. The evidence for most of these illegal transactions can be traced to statements of William of Malmesbury which modern scholarship finds "either suspicious or incorrect." It would be expected that this practice would be found most commonly among the bishops of the late Saxon Church. Yet, from the records it can not be definitely said that any one of them was guilt of simony. None of the bishops were deposed by the Norman conquerors on this ground. One author claims that the anarchy during William's military campaigns caused simony to become prevalent. His only proof is the counciliar decree of 1075 against the selling of church offices. This does not seem a valid conclusion, for the mere existence of the decree does not tell either the extent

44 Darlington, "Ecclesiastical Reform," English Historical Review, LI, 400.
46 Macdonald, Lanfranc, 102.
or the character of this evil. Moreover, the council explicitly states that the motive for this legislation on simony is the desire to renew a body of customary church law.47

William's own personal administration was almost entirely free from this evil.48 It is true that Remi of Dorchester was accused at Rome of having bribed the King to secure his episcopal see, but this was an exception to the general rule.49 Notwithstanding this favorable situation, the general Council of London in 1075 passed a decree which forbade the purchase of holy orders, and offices or benefices to which a spiritual charge was attached.50 As was stated above, the churchmen felt that a corpus of basic legislation, formerly enacted, should be renewed. This was a necessity because it had been so long since the convening of a general council. This decree, and a minor enactment at Winchester in 1072, seem to be the only action taken on this point.

The conclusion presented here is opposed by Macdonald

47 Mansi, XX, c. 452.
49 Macdonald, Lanfranc, 102.
50 Mansi, XX, c. 452. "Ut nullus sacros ordines, seu officium ecclesiasticum, quod ad curam animarum pertineat, emat vel vendat."
who states: "Simony was uprooted though we hear nothing of the details." 51 This claim of major ecclesiastical reform during the period of Lanfranc's rule is based upon a statement in a letter to William from Pope Alexander. 52 It seems on careful investigation that this is either merely a general commendation of the king, or a reference to his activities in Normandy. 53 First, the letter is dated 1071. This is only a few years after William had gained full control of the country and one year after Lanfranc's appointment. There is no record of any action against simony by the Conqueror for the Church in England. 54 A point that is especially to be noticed is the fact that none of the Saxon bishops, who were deposed, were charged with this crime. 55

The root cause of simony, lay investiture, was not affected by Lanfranc. This was true in spite of the fact that the Gregorian reform warred against this practice with such diligence during the pontificate of Gregory. The famous decrees

51 Macdonald, Lanfranc, 230-231.
52 Alexander, "Epistolae," LXXXIII, PL, CLXV, c. 1365.
53 Mansi, XIX, c. 751.
54 Willelmus, "Leges Willelmi," PL, CXLIX, c. 1291.
of the Roman synod of 1075 were never put into operation in England during Lanfranc's life-time.\textsuperscript{56} It is probable that this legislation was not even published there for all the bishops during this period were appointed and invested by the king. The only exception were Ernest and Gundulf of Rochester.\textsuperscript{57} This see Lanfranc claimed as an \textit{Eigenkirche}.\textsuperscript{58}

Another practice closely united to lay investiture and simony was the practice of rewarding royal officials with ecclesiastical offices. Though the seeds for this custom are to be found in the Anglo-Saxon period, the practice flourished under the Normans.\textsuperscript{59} Out of the eighteen bishops that William appointed, eight were given their sees in reward for their work in the chancery. Three others were probably promoted for the same reason.\textsuperscript{60} This situation led to clashes with the interests of reform. As has been seen, it resulted in the appointment of two married men to bishoprics because of their service to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{56} Augustin Fliche, "Y a-t-il eu en France et en Angleterre une querelle des investitures?" \textit{Revue Bénédictine,} Abbey de Maredsous, XLVI, 1934, 283-284.
\item \textsuperscript{57} "Vita Gundulfi," \textit{PL,} CLIX, c. 820.
\item \textsuperscript{58} Smith, \textit{Collected Papers,} 82-102.
\item \textsuperscript{59} Davis, \textit{Regesta Regum,} I, xv.
\item \textsuperscript{60} Darlington, "Ecclesiastical Reform," \textit{English Historical Review,} LI, 398-399.
\end{itemize}
In another instance, William gave command of a rebellious province, Bernicia, to Walcher, Bishop of Durham. This task certainly did not aid the bishop in caring for his see.62

Not an inch was conceded by William or demanded by Lanfranc on the question of the royal control of the Church.63 It must be added that an important factor here is William's general use of this privilege to further the interests of the Church.64 The king in his actions, was merely exercising a privilege that had always been his in the Norman Church, and which had been looked upon as an accepted custom before the advent of the Gregorian reform.65

Although the three aims of the Gregorian reform

61 Hervey, History of King Eadmund, 54, 56.
64 Lemarignier, Étude sur les Privileges, 139-140; Brooke, English Church and the Papacy, 145.
considered above do not exhaust Lanfranc's ecclesiastical work they are certainly his essential activities and a fair index of his labor in behalf of the Church.
CHAPTER V

LANFRANC AND THE PAPACY

The most important consideration in the relationship between Lanfranc's ecclesiastical reform and the Gregorian movement is to determine the state of affairs that existed between the Archbishop and the reforming popes. Here again, our first task is to establish the situation that existed before the advent of Lanfranc in order to evaluate accurately his actions, policy, and program.

Historians in the past tended to stress the isolated character of England, primarily because of the lack of exact information concerning the late Anglo-Saxon period. In other cases, this interpretation was the result of the historical presupposition that an "Ecclesia Anglica" existed. These authors claimed that there was little contact with the continent and still less with the papacy. Most modern historians, however, have taken an almost contradictory view. They hold that

1 Herbert Thurston, "The Figment of a National Church," The Month, London, CXIX, June, 1912, 605-615.
strong bonds of union existed between Rome and Saxon England. This union was brought about by means of varying importance among which were: papal legates, the pallium, Peter's Pence, the exercise of papal power in England, and the receptive attitude of the English to these interventions by the papacy.

The use of papal legates for the transaction of business by the Holy See is a mode of procedure established by the Holy See only on the advent of the popes of the Gregorian movement in 1049. After this date there are frequent references to the activities of these officials, who were sent to the Island to conduct papal affairs with the King and various bishops.

Since the reception of the pallium always implicitly implied an oath of allegiance to the papacy, the granting of it to different episcopal officials was another important bond between England and Rome. The conferring of this insignia became, during the rule of the Gregorian popes, more than a mere

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symbol of ecclesiastical office; it was "an instrument of power and control exercised over the metropolitans." The custom started about 925 of journeying to Rome to receive the pallium and therefore was of long standing in the Anglo-Saxon Church. From this date to the Norman Conquest, nine out of the fourteen archbishops appointed to Canterbury traveled to Rome for this insignia of their authority. By the reign of Cnut, it became customary for the archbishop of York also to obtain his pallium at the Eternal City. In this way, the bonds that united the English hierarchy with the papacy grew through the conferring of this insignia.

A very practical indication of English union and dependence on the papacy is Peter's Pence which was a firmly established custom in the Anglo-Saxon Church. Even if we


7 Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England, 460.

8 Ibid.


did not have references to the practice during the period itself\textsuperscript{11} the fact that it was a customary procedure is verified in William the Conqueror's answer to the pope's request for an acknowledgment of papal lordship. In this letter the king refused to accord the pope temporal fealty but stated that the customary Peter's Pence would be continued.\textsuperscript{12}

The reforming popes not only claimed headship of the universal Church, but they also acted as if it were a fact. They were quick to exert their authority in the Church in England. The popes demanded attendance of the English ecclesiastics at the general Church councils which they were convening as means of reform.\textsuperscript{13} They also asserted the right, not only of consultation, but of decision on important Church matters. This was exemplified in the transfer of episcopal sees.\textsuperscript{14} Papal power was exercised even more patently in rejecting a royal candidate for the episcopate,\textsuperscript{15} in placing a monastery under papal

\begin{enumerate}
\item Gregorius VII, "Opera," Epist. Diver., PPL, CXLVIII, c. 748.
\item Darlington, "Ecclesiastical Reform," English Historical Review, LI, 418.
\item Ibid. Darlington, "Ecclesiastical Reform," English Historical Review, LI, 418.
\end{enumerate}
protection,\textsuperscript{16} and in threatening a noble, who was oppressing a monastic establishment, with excommunication.\textsuperscript{17} Papal power was also demonstrated in the excommunication and deposition of Stigand from the see of Canterbury.\textsuperscript{18}

Finally, the statements of the different bishops and kings of the late Saxon period attest the devotion of England to papal authority. They acknowledged the pope's power throughout Christendom.\textsuperscript{19} Consequently, it seems that Stenton is essentially correct in his judgment:

As king of England he [William] became the sovereign of a country where respect for the papacy was a matter of national tradition. It was compatible with extreme insularity in thought and custom, but it was a genuine feeling which coloured the whole of English religious life.\textsuperscript{20}

This was the situation when Lanfranc assumed his role as archbishop of Canterbury.

Four popes reigned at Rome during the period of Lanfranc's occupancy of Canterbury: Alexander II (1061-1073), Gregory VII (1073-1085), Victor III (1087), and Urban II (1088-1099). The third and fourth had little to do with Lanfranc:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16} Birch, \textit{Cartularium Saxonicum}, III, 294, 567.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 569.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Stenton, \textit{Anglo-Saxon England}, 459.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Birch, \textit{Cartularium Saxonicum}, III, 254, 262.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Robinson, \textit{St. Oswald}, 17.
\end{itemize}
Victor because of the shortness of his reign; Urban because of Lanfranc's death in the second year of his pontificate, 1089. Therefore, to determine Lanfranc's relation to the papacy his dealings with Alexander II and Gregory VII must be considered.

The mutual good will, affection, and esteem of Alexander and Lanfranc is apparent from the correspondence and actions of these two men. Alexander was one of Lanfranc's pupils at the monastery school of Bec. As pope, he sent his relations to be instructed by the future archbishop. Alexander, who may have been instrumental in Nicholas II's invitation to Lanfranc to join the papal curia, worked energetically to bring about his selection as archbishop of Canterbury. He was also a prime mover in winning Lanfranc's acceptance of the dignity.

The early relations between the Pope and the Archbishop were likewise very friendly. When Lanfranc journeyed to Rome to receive the pallium, Alexander went out of his way to

21 Crispinus, "Vita Lanfranci," PL, CL, c. 21.
23 Ordericus Vitalis, Ecclesiastical History, II, 212.
show his esteem for the new archbishop. The pope greeted Lanfranc at the time by rising from his seat. This was considered a sign of great honor. Then he gave him two pallia instead of the customary one. The correspondence of this early period reflects the good will that existed between these two men. Nevertheless, there seems to be some indication of a slight change in Alexander's attitude appeared as time went on. The pope began to realize that the English king was exerting an unwarranted influence upon the archbishop.

There are a number of factors that contributed to the harmony that existed between Lanfranc and Alexander. The pope was motivated by his personal friendship for Lanfranc and his high esteem for the archbishop's intellectual capacities. These latter he referred to with much more insistence than to any of Lanfranc's ecclesiastical achievements. Another reason

26 Ibid., c. 49. "... alterum vero in indicium... sui amoris."
30 Ibid. Mensi, XIX, c. 950.
for this friendly relationship was that, during the period of Alexander's pontificate, moral reform was stressed rather than lay investiture's elimination. Consequently the political questions, that were so important in Gregory's pontificate, were not a major obstacle between Lanfranc and Alexander. The former, as a good, devout monk naturally was in full accord with the moral reformation that the Papacy was pursuing. Therefore, his work with the pope on these points always was harmonious.

Lanfranc preserved and confirmed this good will with the papacy during this period. He did this not only because of the genuine affection that he had for Alexander but also because of a personal advantage that accrued from following such a policy. When he obtained from Pope Alexander immunity from episcopal control for his monastery of Caen, he was indeed furthering the papal policy of centralization. On the other hand, this grant also gave him new freedom in his governance, and a new dignity to the monastery. Later, in his early days as archbishop, it was to his advantage to obtain papal good will in his struggle for the primacy, since this ecclesiastical honor

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was, at least in theory, a papal gift. That Lanfranc was conscious of this need of the pope’s help can be seen in his report to the pope of the council at Winchester. The short narrative of that assembly is patently pro-papal in tone.\(^3\)

The discordant note apparent in the later period of Alexander’s pontificate may be attributed to the growth in papal reform theory. This development was brought about by the wider acceptance of the theory of the papal statesman, Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida.\(^3\)

Humbert stressed the fact that lay control was the root vice afflicting the Church. Therefore, this evil had to be destroyed before any true moral reform could be hoped for.\(^36\)

This insistence upon the political note foreshadowed the conflict that would ensue.

Gregory VII’s relationship with Lanfranc was based on an open policy of the superior dealing with his inferior. For while there are indications of a true spirit of good will on Gregory’s part, yet most of the correspondence from the pope requested compliance with some feature of the papal reform movement. Often these letters contained a frank reminder that...


the archbishop was primarily the official and agent of the pope, rather than of the king.\textsuperscript{37}

In 1072, by demanding that Lanfranc come to Rome for his desired confirmation of the Council of Winchester which established Canterbury's primacy over York, Gregory, in his capacity as papal secretary to Alexander II, stressed Rome's authority.\textsuperscript{38} In the first year of his own pontificate, 1073, he issued a rebuke over Lanfranc's mishandling of the troublesome Bishop Herfack. This bishop was pressuring the monks of the monastery of St. Edmunds' in spite of their privilege of immunity from episcopal control.\textsuperscript{39} Gregory here explicitly recalled Rome's authority over the rest of the Church.

But the chief interest of the letter lies in the wide claim made by Gregory to intervene in the affairs of local churches, on the ground of divine right, and especially to consecrate churches, priests, and bishops, without the licence of any other authority, particularly when requested to do so by the petitioners at Rome. The foundation of the vast appellate jurisdiction of the medieval church was being laid down, and in this case Lanfranc was ordered to refer the dispute to Rome, in the event of being unable to settle it himself.\textsuperscript{40}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{37} Philip Jaffe, \textit{Registrum Gregorii VII, in "Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum"} (Monumentum Gregoriana), Berlin, 1865, II, Liber I, Epist. XXXI, 49; Liber VI, Epist. XXX, 366-367.
  \item \textsuperscript{38} Gregorius VII, \textit{"Opera," PL, CXVIII}, Epist. Diver., II, c. 734.
  \item \textsuperscript{39} Lanfrancus, \textit{"Opera," PL, CL}, Epist. XXXII, c. 527.
  \item \textsuperscript{40} Macdonald, \textit{Hildebrand}, 118.
\end{itemize}
Although unfortunately, the correspondence between the pope and the archbishop for the years 1073 to 1079 has been lost, still from Gregory's letter in 1079 we know that the pope had frequently requested, and indeed demanded, Lanfranc's presence at Rome. On March 25, 1079, he declared: "Igitur de met fraternitatem tuam... ad apostolicam sedem quantotius propeare teque ipsum nostris obtutibus, ut octans usque saepe mandavimus, presente..." In this letter the Pope also rebuked Lanfranc for having been dissuaded because of fear of the King's wrath from appearing at the Eternal City.

In 1082 Gregory again wrote to Lanfranc repeating his request that the Archbishop fulfill his long delayed ad limina visit to Rome. The pope's attitude towards the archbishop's neglect of duty is patent. He demanded compliance with the papal command under pain of degradation from episcopal office.

We have often requested your fraternity by apostolic legate to come to Rome for the confirmation of faith and the Christian religion. Up to this time, as it seems, you, trying our patience either out of pride or negligence, have not conformed... Wherefore by the apostolic authority we command you that, the fourth month after our instruction will have come to your attention, you take care to be present in Rome on the feast of All Saints... But if the apostolic command still fails to effect you and, ignoring them, you prefer to remain in a state of contempt

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41 Caspar, Register, Liber VI, Epist. XXX, 444. "Therefore it is fitting that your Fraternity hasten forthwith to the Apostolic See and place yourself under our protection, as we have often requested and demanded."

42 Ibid., 443.
and do not hesitate to incur the danger of disobedience.

... realize that without a doubt, by the power of blessed Peter, you shall be removed and taken entirely away from his authority, thus clearly, if within the set time you do not come to us, you will be suspended from all official functions.43

This threat of deposition was not enforced even though Lanfranc never complied with the demand of the pope. By this date (1082) the German situation had reached a crisis. Therefore, the pope could ill afford to incur the displeasure of another European kingdom, especially one on whom he relied for financial support.44

The popes did not only talk to Lanfranc about obedience, they also acted in order to make it a reality. One of the primary means used to achieve this was the appointment of legates. These officials were to exercise papal jurisdiction in England.45

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43 Ibid., Liber IX, Epist. XX, 600-601. "Sepe fraternitatem tuam apostolica legationem invitavimus Romam venire etiam pro fidei et religionis christianae comprobatione. Quod hucusque, sicut appareat, aut superbe aut negligenter nostra habutens patientia distulisti. . . . Quare apostolica tibi auctoritate precipimus postquam quattuor mensium haec nostra mandata ad notitiam tuam pervenerint, festo Omnium Sanctorum Romae adesse procuras. . . . Quodsi nec adhuc te mandata apostolica moverint, sed ea dissimulans in contemptu durae malueris et periculum inhobaeidentiae incurreas non herubaueris . . . a beati Petri gratia scias te procul dubio removendum et ejus auctoritate omnino fierendum ita videlicet, ut, si intra prefixum spatium ad nos non veneris, ab omni sis officio episcopali suspensus."

44 Gregorius, "Opera," PL, CXLVIII, Epist. Diver., c. 748.

45 Lemarignier, Étude sur les Privileges, 145.
We find that Ermenfred, the bishop of Sion, and two cardinals were present at William's coronation. They were also in attendance at the Council of 1070 which deposed Stigand and elected Lanfranc to Canterbury. In 1072 the legate, Humbert, was the pope's representative at the settling of the dispute between Canterbury and York. We learn from a letter of Gregory to William that the two cardinals, mentioned above, were still in England in April, 1074. In 1077 Gregory sent two legates to treat with the English king about the recalcitrant bishop of Dol. According to the best scholarship it was the legate Humbert, who in 1082 personally delivered Gregory's request for fealty from the English king. A cardinal was sent in 1088 to collect Peter's Pence.

Thus, frequently during Lanfranc's rule as archbishop,


49 Caspar, Register, Liber IV, Epist. XVII, 323.


legates came from Rome empowered with papal authority. Their power was superior to any that the archbishop could wield. 52 By their mere presence, as well as by their actions, these legates stressed Rome's claim to obedience.

From the correspondence cited above and the activities of the legates it might appear that Lanfranc and Gregory were totally opposed to each other. The pope it would seem was constantly attempting to limit the power of the archbishop. This is far from the total picture. Many instances of harmonious action of these two great men are revealed in their correspondence. Gregory appointed the archbishop as his personal judge in different cases that were appealed to Rome. 53 He worked through Lanfranc as primate of England in his dealings with that land. 54 On the other hand, Lanfranc often showed a true deference and respect for the power of the pope. 55 The fact that during this period no conflict arose between Lanfranc and the papal legates sent by Gregory is worthy of note. Certainly there


would have been some misunderstandings if Lanfranc and the Pope had held totally contradictory views on ecclesiastical policy. From this evidence therefore, it would seem that there were cross-currents of union and conflict in the relations between Lanfranc and Gregory. These apparent contradictions seem to indicate the key to the understanding of the attitudes of these two men towards each other and toward Church government. They were two great personalities; they were champions of two great policies. On some points they were in harmony, on others, at cross purposes.

Gregory had lived in the reform movement of the newly regenerated papacy from its earliest years. He had been brought to Rome by Leo the IX, the first pope of the reform, in 1049, the date of the reform's inception. With that simplicity that is only possible in a saint his thoughts and actions were totally concentrated upon the furtherance of that reform in all its aspects. By 1075 Gregory had determined on the key to the accomplishment of the reform. It was the establishment of the supremacy of the spiritual power over the temporal. Moreover, he thought it essential to centralize the whole movement of

56 Hughes, History of the Church, II, 257.
reform in Rome through strict obedience. Consequently, Gregory seemed to have looked on the different posts and men in the church, even the bishops and the pope, as means and instruments in effecting the needed reform. He felt that their main work should not be self-seeking, nor the furthering of their own personal ambitions or the interests of their country and king. It should be the sublimation of these desires and interests in the effort needed for the great task that faced the church.

Lanfranc, on the other hand, had come to associate the papacy with the very vices and corruption that the reform movement wished to uproot. His early years were spent in an Italy that was the hot-bed of turmoil and evil. He had taken up residence in Normandy before the first of the reform popes had begun to wield papal power for good. Therefore, it apparently was natural for Lanfranc to associate Rome, not with reform, but with corruption.

In contrast to this unfavorable impression of the papacy, Lanfranc at Avranches and Bec was the eye witness of the

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60 Brooke, *English Church and the Papacy*, 147-148.
reform measures of William in the duchy of Normandy. He noted the results of the Lotharingian monastic revival which rose and fell in proportion to its support or rejection by European royalty. Before Lanfranc came to England, he had lived over thirty-five years in Normandy. It seems that he had become accustomed to the idea of the beneficial results of royal domination and control of the Church. This policy was a strong tradition in the duchy. Consequently, it can be seen why there were clashes and differences in opinion between Lanfranc and Gregory.

The idea of a centralized Church directly controlled in all its parts by the Pope was novel to him [Lanfranc], and therefore untenable; it involved a breach of tradition and custom, quite apart from the menace to his own authority.

The result of these variations in the interpretation of the reform movement was that in matters of moral reform there was a whole-hearted union of purpose and action between these two ecclesiastical leaders. In matters of ecclesiastical control and direction there was conflict. Lanfranc was obedient to the Pope in those things that were customarily within the

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61 Mansi, XIX, c. 751.; c. 841.; c. 1027.
63 Haskins, Normans in European History, 165.
64 Brooke, English Church and the Papacy, 132.
papal competence; the direction of his king was followed on matters that were traditionally within the royal sphere. The journey to Rome to obtain the pallium was traditional, but the ad limina visits were an innovation of the reforming papacy. Lanfranc complied with the former, refused the latter. The use of councils was of long standing; the granting of immunity from episcopal control to monasteries as a means of centralisation was a recent practice. Lanfranc acted accordingly.

CHAPTER VI

AN EVALUATION OF LANFRANC'S REFORM

Although the three special aims of the Gregorian reform treated in this study do not exhaust Lanfranc's ecclesiastical work, they are certainly his essential activities. These topics provide a fair criterion of his labor in behalf of the Church. From the evidence that has come down to the modern historian, a fairly accurate evaluation of Lanfranc's efforts can be formed. The facts show, on the one hand, that the ecclesiastical movement was not a revolutionary reform without precedent. Many features of Lanfranc's activities were rooted in the Anglo-Saxon Church. In these, the archbishop was merely following a path well marked out for him. On the other hand, Lanfranc's reform was not merely a substitution of Norman for English officials. It did not merely effect a political change with no impact upon ecclesiastical history. Therefore, Lanfranc's efforts must be looked upon as an effectual development of forces already at work within the Church in England. To these he added a few major innovations for the good of the church, and some factors that worked to its detriment.
His efforts on behalf of the first aim of the Gregorian movement, centralization and organization, show Lanfranc acting with his greatest initiative and talent. Whereas the councils as an effective force in the life of the Church had died out, Lanfranc gave them a new vitality. This was of prime importance in the later history of the Church in England. In his activity in behalf of canon law Lanfranc was also a true innovator, and the influence of his efforts was felt for centuries in the ecclesiastical set-up in England. This is true in spite of the fact that its effects were directly contrary to what Lanfranc had intended.

His other works of centralization were neither new nor very successful. The question of the primacy of Canterbury was old in his time. The dispute was resumed immediately after his death. His work of locating sees in larger centers was not an innovation, but merely a step in a continual process that had begun before his time and would continue as the country became more "urbanized." Lanfranc's Monastic Constitution, though of great importance in English religious life, really could not bring about an essential unification in the monastic

1 Mansi, XX, c. 451. "Et quia multis retro annis in Anglicano regno usus conciliorum obsolverat. . ."

life of England. The whole tendency of the people was against it. His efforts at episcopal control of the monasteries was modified drastically during the rule of Anselm. His control of the bishops by Canterbury was based almost exclusively upon his own personality. Consequently, the continuation of this directive power would of course depend upon the strength of his successors. This was exactly the situation when he assumed the occupancy of Canterbury.

In his contribution to the second aim of the Gregorian reform, the elimination of clerical marriage, Lanfranc's legislation was built on an ancient and hardy tradition of the Anglo-Saxon Church. The effects of his personal efforts seem to be meager and short-lived. To legislate is one thing; to make that legislation an actuality is something different. The tradition of practice within the English Church, the attitude of the English people on the subject, and the social conditions were totally in favor of the marriage of the lower clergy. Therefore, we find in a period somewhat later:

The Popes themselves found it necessary to make exceptions in the case of England. Pascal II in 1107 gave a dispensation to Anselm to allow the sons of priests to hold

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3 Ibid., 63.


5 Brooke, English Church and the Papacy, 123. cf. Mourrat, La Chretiente, IV, 174.
benefices, so much was this the custom in England even then; and Alexander III's decree of some seventy years later granted similar dispensations. 6

One essential reason why any efforts of Lanfranc against clerical marriage would have been still-born is the fact that the monarchy under the Conqueror's son revolted from the reform movement. 7

The third aim of the reform, extirpation of simony and its root lay investiture, shows the weak side of Lanfranc's administration. He did not have the foresight to realize that a few decrees against the buying and selling of offices was not the solution. An attack upon the radical evil of lay control of the Church was demanded. Because his whole reform program was built on royal support, such a policy, it would seem, never occurred to Lanfranc. Although this situation of strict union between Church and State apparently yielded abundant fruit during Lanfranc's life-time it was a legacy of inherent weakness. When William Rufus used his right of investiture to the detriment of the Church, there was no defense against him.

In his relations with the papacy, Lanfranc revealed himself as an ecclesiastic of more than ordinary independence. His attitude seems to be explainable by two facts: the archbishop's


7 Sayles, Medieval Foundations, 258.
own self-confidence and, much more important, his being guided by a sense of tradition. He did not favor papal intervention in the various divisions of Western Christendom.

The conclusion indicated by the foregoing study seems to be that this movement of reform essentially reflects the character of its author. For Lanfranc was a man who was highly gifted with talents for administration and organisation to meet the requirements of the moment:

... rather than a creative genius who would keep his eye fixed upon the lodestar of a single end; and that on the deepest plane of the spirit, for all the strength of his religious convictions and his real nobility of soul, he remained an ecclesiastic dependent upon and moved by the changing, temporary circumstances of the time rather than a saint who, with whatever limitations of mental outlook, directed his every action to the forwarding of the kingdom not of this world.8

Despite these real limitations, this is still true. No man who filled the see of Canterbury "between Augustine and Cramner, save only Theodore of Tarsus, had a greater share than Lanfranc in organizing the Church in this country."9 Blessed and burdened by effects which he bequeathed to it, the Church in England for four and a half centuries followed the line which Lanfranc indicated.10

8 Knowles, Monastic Order, 142-143.
9 Ibid., 143.
10 Stenton, William the Conqueror, 376.
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Charles H. Metzger, S.J.
Signature of Adviser