Eschatology, Crusade and Reform in English Historical Writing, c.1180-c.1220

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Abstract

The extraordinary proliferation of historical writing in late twelfth-century England has attracted much comment, but defies straightforward explanation. As such, this thesis makes no attempt at an all-encompassing elucidation of this diverse range of texts; it seeks instead to study one feature of some of the chronicles produced at this time, just as other studies have illuminated, for instance, the concern for administrative history shared by a number of chroniclers. The feature in question is a marked eschatological awareness. We may identify three factors that contributed to this. First, the fall of Jerusalem and the crusading movement spurred several chroniclers to relate events to the broader arch of Christian history. Against this same backdrop the distinctive Calabrian thinker Joachim of Fiore constructed a radical revision of the Augustinian theology of history; but to contemporaries he presented a simplified though no less influential scheme of history according to which the reign of Antichrist would shortly begin. This was demonstrably an influence on several English chroniclers, who reported his ideas with considerable interest. Joachim was also influential on the papacy: Innocent III co-opted his ideas to propound the crusading and reformist goals that he shared with, and had probably absorbed from, a group of contemporary Parisian theologians, of whom Peter the Chanter was the most important. The reform movement, which rapidly transcended its scholastic origins, was also reported with great interest by English chroniclers, and informed their writing as much as Joachim's ideas had; the two were arguably different sides of the same coin. It is with these various interrelated developments in late twelfth-century Europe, and their impact upon contemporary English historiography, that the present thesis is concerned.

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Introduction

English historical writing in the late twelfth century

This thesis is a study of English historical writing in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. The period in question has been celebrated as a golden age of English historiography.[1] Certainly the roster of names is impressive: we may make particular mention of Roger of Howden, William of Newburgh, Gerald of Wales, Ralph de Diceto, Gervase of Canterbury, Richard of Devizes and Ralph of Coggeshall. This list is not exhaustive: many other chronicles and sets of annals, often anonymous, survive.[2] Nor does it do justice to the diversity of these authors' works: several wrote more than one chronicle, and several distinguished themselves in the writing of theology and hagiography as well as history.

[1] See, for instance, C. R. Cheney, *From Becket to Langton: English church government 1170-1213* (Manchester, 1956), 3; A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550-c.1307* (London, 1974), 219.

[2] We should not ignore the possibility that rates of survival have skewed our impressions of the ebb and flow of historical writing over these hundred years: some historical works are known to have existed but have not survived, while some of the survivals are precarious, existing only in single late manuscripts: see N. Vincent, 'The strange case of the missing biographies: the Lives of the Plantagenet kings of England 1154-1272', in *Writing Medieval Biography: essays in honour of Professor Frank Barlow*, ed. D. Bates, J. Crick & S. Hamilton (Woodbridge, 2006), 237-57, at 250-51. A good example of a work that has not survived is the *Tricolumpnis* of Richard fitz Nigel. Richard makes mention of this work in his treatise on the Exchequer: Richard fitz Nigel, *Dialogus de scaccario*, ed. & tr. E. Amt, OMT (Oxford, 2007), 40-41. See also J. Hudson, 'Administration, family and perceptions of the past in late twelfth-century England: Richard FitzNigel and the Dialogue of the Exchequer', in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. P. Magdalino (London, 1992), 75-98, at 79-81. Richard wrote his treatise at the end of the 1170s, and so we should ascribe the *Tricolumpnis* to those first twenty years of Henry II's reign when very little history appears to have been written. Now we could look at this in another way, and highlight instead the surprising dearth of productions during the first half of Henry II's reign as an unusual interlude in an otherwise fertile century for historical writing. This is the approach suggested by J. Gillingham, 'The cultivation of history, legend, and courtesy at the court of Henry II', in *Writers of the Reign of Henry II: twelve essays*, ed. R. Kennedy & S. Meecham-Jones (Basingstoke, 2006), 25-52, although he notes that until the late 1180s Roger of Howden, in his words, 'ploughed a lonely furrow'; bearing this in mind, and bearing in mind also that Henry of Huntingdon, the Peterborough chronicler and the anonymous author of the *Gesta Stephani* were the only significant historians to persist to 1154, it seems fair to speak of two notable waves of historical production, one in the 1120s and 1130s, and one in the late 1180s and 1190s, separated if not by drought then by a certain lack of enterprise. See also R. L. Poole, *Chronicles and Annals: a brief outline of their origin and growth* (Oxford, 1926), 65-66.

Yet this abundance of riches has received rather less attention than the equally notable proliferation of English historical writing in the early twelfth century. One reason, perhaps, is that the apparent unity of purpose guiding these earlier writers allows them to be more easily studied as a group. William of Malmesbury, Eadmer, Henry of Huntingdon and John of Worcester, and others besides, were writing in the wake of the Norman Conquest. Almost all were Benedictine historians, and were confronted by the ramifications of the Norman invasion and the sweeping changes that it ushered in. Monastic rights and traditions were under threat and needed the steadying hand of history to help secure them; more broadly, writers struggled to integrate recent events into broader narratives of English history and divine providence. The responses varied somewhat, but they were responses to a single event and its consequences.[3] When we turn to the writers of the late twelfth century, we do not find them animated by such a central concern. Their writings vary dramatically in length and organisation. The Benedictines no longer have the predominance that they enjoyed at the start of the twelfth century, in historiography as indeed in monastic life generally. Cistercians, Augustinian canons and, increasingly, secular clerks are represented more than ever before.[4]

However, talk of a golden age of English historiography in the late twelfth century does obscure a rather striking fact: many of its most notable productions were in fact written, or at least begun, in a much narrower space of time, namely the final few years of the 1180s and the first few years of the 1190s. Ralph de Diceto and Gervase of Canterbury began writing their chronicles in 1188, Richard of Devizes not long after 1192, while in 1192 Roger of Howden revised and vastly expanded his earlier attempt

[3] We will return to these chroniclers later in this introduction. See below, 35-44.
[4] There is a helpful table of twelfth-century chroniclers and their affiliations in R. J. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075-1225* (Oxford, 2000), 618.

at a chronicle.[5] In the course of the present study we will be able to add to these: Ralph of Coggeshall, who certainly began writing during the Third Crusade and possibly even before it;[6] and Ralph Niger, whose first chronicle (he wrote two) can be dated to the same period.[7] Most of these chroniclers would continue to write history, either continuations of their original works or new productions, until the end of the 1190s, by which point others had made their own historiographical contributions, such as William of Newburgh; some continued into the 1200s and even beyond, and it is by way of acknowledgement of Ralph of Coggeshall's longevity that we close our study around 1220.

Attempts have been made to isolate features and influences that characterise or explain at least some of these chronicles. The safeguarding of monastic privileges and traditions, so crucial to much historical writing in the wake of the Norman Conquest, remained a concern throughout the twelfth century, particularly after the upheavals of King Stephen's reign: this may account for the numerous cartulary-chronicles of the later twelfth century, notable examples being the Abingdon Chronicle, the Battle Chronicle and the *Liber Eliensis*.[8] Richard Southern observed the interest writers such as Roger of Howden, Ralph de Diceto and Gervase of Canterbury took in the procedures of the Angevin administration, and identified their works, along with more specifically administrative treatises such as 'Glanvill' and the *Dialogus de scaccario*, as part of a growing 'literature of secular government' that was one of England's specific contributions to the Twelfth-Century Renaissance;[9] and where he led, others have

[5] See below, 170-71.
[6] See below, 93-94.
[7] See below, 63-64.
[8] I disagree, however, with Monika Otter's contention that twelfth-century English historiography was primarily oriented around 'practical, local concerns': M. Otter, *Inventiones: fiction and referentiality in twelfth-century English historical writing* (Chapel Hill, 1996), 3.
[9] R. W. Southern, 'The place of England in the Twelfth Century Renaissance', *History* 45 (1960), 201-16, reprinted in his *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies* (Oxford, 1970), 158-80, at 174-79.

followed.[10] Elizabeth Freeman, meanwhile, has studied a number of English Cistercian narratives of the later twelfth century in an attempt to understand how their authors delineated local and national history in the context of a growing sense of Cistercian identity.[11] The influence of the continental schools has been examined in relation to the writings of Ralph de Diceto, the dean of St Pauls.[12] Yet Ralph himself provides a salutary example of the way in which different influences could come to bear on a single work. His world chronicle falls into two parts: the first, known as the *Abbreuiationes chronicorum*, extends from the Creation to 1147 and rests securely on the foundations laid by Hugh of St Victor, who stressed the importance of history and chronology as an aid to biblical exegesis, and whose chronicle was one of Ralph's principal sources; the second, the *Ymagines historiarum*, begins in 1148, the year in which Ralph thought Henry II had been knighted (in fact 1149), and is arguably the closest equivalent to the contemporary dynastic histories produced by the royalist chroniclers of twelfth-century France.[13]

The present thesis is not an attempt to supplant these valuable assessments, but to supplement them. Our study will focus on another aspect of historical writing in this period. For reasons of space, we will pursue this through an examination of the writings of three chroniclers. Of these, two have generally been discussed in other contexts: Roger of Howden as perhaps the most distinguished exponent of the new 'civil service' history and Ralph of Coggeshall as a witness to the formation of Cistercian identity.

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[10] B. Smalley, *Historians in the Middle Ages* (London, 1974), 113-19; M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307* (3rd ed., Oxford, 2013); 158-59, 175-77; W. H. J. Bainton, *History and the Written Word in the Angevin Empire (c.1154-c.1200)* (University of York PhD thesis, 2010). I am extremely grateful to Dr. Bainton for supplying me with a copy of his thesis.

[11] E. Freeman, *Narratives of a New Order: Cistercian historical writing in England, 1150-1220* (Turnhout, 2002).

[12] G. A. Zinn, 'The influence of Hugh of St. Victor's *Chronicon* on the *Abbreuiationes chronicorum* by Ralph de Diceto', *Speculum* 52 (1977), 38-61.

[13] J. Gillingham, 'Royal newsletters, forgeries and English historians: some links between court and history in the reign of Richard I', in *La Cour Plantagenêt (1154-1204)*, ed. M. Aurell (Poitiers, 2000), 171-86, at 178.

While acknowledging the validity of previous interpretations of these authors, we hope to show that they may be approached in other ways. The third, Ralph Niger, has barely been discussed at all. Though other contemporary chroniclers, in England and elsewhere, will not be ignored altogether, it is these three that will receive most attention in what follows. Not coincidentally, it is possible in all three cases to chart with some accuracy the gradual evolution of their writings over time, and hence to gain some insight into their historiographical views and aims, and how they changed.

These three authors are also among the earliest witnesses to the apocalyptic thought of the Calabrian visionary Joachim of Fiore. Joachim's chief legacy was his innovative trinitarian understanding of past, present and future, which offered a notable challenge to the traditional Augustinian theology of history.[14] Our chroniclers offered nothing so distinctive; but their evident interest in his writings gives some indication of their preoccupations. This is the theme for our investigation. In short, we shall argue that their writings were fundamentally products of a distinctive climate of crusade, reform and eschatological enquiry that pervaded Christendom around the turn of the twelfth century, the same climate in which Joachim worked out his own distinctive ideas. In the case of Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall, the fall of Jerusalem demonstrably gave the impetus to their historical writings; in the case of Roger of Howden, his own experience of the Third Crusade seems to lie behind the transformation of his earlier chronicle into a much larger one.

Before we address these individual authors, a certain amount of groundwork must be laid. Our first task is to explore the close connection that existed between historical writing and eschatology from Christianity's earliest days; having done so, we may then attempt to address the vexing question of whether a chronicler in practice had

[14] See below, 136-41.

as much freedom of manoeuvre as this connection theoretically gave him. This will entail a lengthy examination of St Augustine's attack on apocalypticism, a cornerstone in the argument that the medieval chronicler had limited scope to discuss such difficult subjects as the end of the world and its imminence. Having done this, we will be better placed to understand some of the developments in the study of history and eschatology that took place in the twelfth century.

Eschatology and the medieval chronicler

As this thesis owes a considerable debt to the work of Marjorie Reeves, it seems appropriate to acknowledge this at the outset with a quotation from one of her illuminating studies of Joachim of Fiore: 'If history is the remembered past, it is also the expected future, and men can no more ignore the latter than they can forget the former'.[15] With this statement Reeves succinctly points up a key characteristic of her subject, namely this: it was Joachim's grasp of the patterns of history that informed his distinctive conception of the course of future events. Joachim had no specific revelation of future things; the Bible gave him all the material he needed. In short, the study of history provided the key to the future; history was prophecy.[16] The progressive theology of history that Joachim articulated was unusual, indeed controversial, as we shall explore later in the thesis;[17] but the materials out of which he assembled it were not. Prophecy in the middle ages was not simply a matter of predicting the future; it was the God-given understanding of all hidden things, of the divine hand at work in past, present and future. When the prophets of the Old Testament foretold the future, it was

[15] M. E. Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore and the Prophetic Future: a medieval study in historical thinking* (London, 1976; rev. ed., Stroud, 1999), 1.
[16] Cf. M. E. Reeves, 'History and prophecy in medieval thought', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, new series, 5 (1974), 51-75, at 55-60.
[17] See below, 136-41.

merely part of their exposition of the divine will to their contemporaries. In other words, it was through prophecy that the shape of all history, not just its future, could be comprehended.

Understood in this way, as the perception of the hidden workings of God beneath the veneer of events, prophecy undoubtedly was, as Richard Southern put it, 'the chief inspiration of all historical thinking'.[18] To the medieval author the substance of history was the unfolding of the divine plan for man's salvation. Any attempt to delve into matters historical invited consideration of this broader framework of man's fall and redemption, taking in the whole span of human history from the Creation to the end of time. History, as a record of the workings of providence, could only properly be understood through the teleology that drew its course inexorably onwards. This is why historical writing and consideration of the last things were intertwined from the earliest days of Christianity; an awareness of the consummation of the temporal process of salvation was a prerequisite for any attempt to grapple with history and its meaning. We must remember that Christianity was characterised in its earliest stages by a genuine expectation of the imminent end of time in the Second Coming of Christ, since the events of Jesus' life had been construed through the prism of contemporary Jewish apocalyptic traditions. When this expected end failed to transpire, it prompted many Christian thinkers to work out the reasons and implications of this on an historical plane. The first Christian chronographers, Hippolytus of Rome and Julius Africanus, attempted to date Christ's first advent within the pattern of the ages of the world: they reckoned this to have taken place in the 550th year of the world, in other words, 500

[18] R. W. Southern, 'Aspects of the European tradition of historical writing 3: history as prophecy', *TRHS*, 5th Series, 22 (1972), 159-80; reprinted in his *History and Historians: selected papers*, ed. R. J. Bartlett (Oxford, 2004), 48-65, at 49.

years before his second advent.[19] The challenge of relating past and present events to the framework of Christian salvation was without doubt a consistent dynamic of early historical writing, and continued to be so throughout the Middle Ages.

So the medieval chronicler was bound to acknowledge, in theory if not in practice, the reality of eschatological fulfilment as an essential part of the historical process which he set out to delineate. Indeed, one could argue that of all medieval authors his awareness of it was most heightened, insofar as it was he who devoted most attention to chronology and the passing of time.[20] Yet not all historical writing was explicitly concerned with such matters; whether the challenge was taken up or not depended on the willingness of each author to do so, and in consequence was tackled with varying degrees of enthusiasm, or not at all. But the future could not be ignored altogether; however attentive he was in his writing to such things, a chronicler had to be aware of the course of history beyond the bounds which he set on it for his own writing.

This reflective approach to past, present and future was matched by a more practical awareness. Medieval chroniclers did not write for themselves, even though the pleasures and benefits that historiographical enterprise conferred on the author were often stressed alongside, or even in preference to, the value it may have had for the reader.[21] John of Salisbury encapsulated the aims of medieval chroniclers when in the mid-1160s he wrote his *Historia Pontificalis* 'to profit my contemporaries and future

[19] B. McGinn, 'The end of the world and the beginning of Christendom', in *Apocalypse Theory and the Ends of the World*, ed. M. Bull (Oxford, 1995), 58-89.
[20] S. Justice, 'Prophecy and the explanation of social disorder', in *Prophecy, Apocalypse and the Day of Doom: proceedings of the 2000 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. N. Morgan (Donington, 2004), 139-59, at 153-54.
[21] William of Newburgh, for instance, was commissioned to write his chronicle by a local Cistercian abbot, Ernald of Rievaulx, who impressed on him the usefulness of the work for posterity; William, while acknowledging this, also saw the task as a form of mental recreation that took him away from the weightier exposition of theology: William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, ed. R. Howlett, Rolls Series 82 (London, 1884-9), i, 11-408, ii, 416-583, at i, 3-4. Alfred of Beverley, an often overlooked twelfth-century historian from England, expressly wrote during an interdict imposed on the church of Beverley, of which he was sacrist, in 1143. Alfred claims he had little else to do but immerse himself in the histories that were currently being circulated and read by his contemporaries: Alfred of Beverley, *Annales*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford, 1716), 1-3. See also the brief notices in Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 212; S. Lee & J. C. Crick, 'Alfred of Beverley', *ODNB*.

generations'.[22] Often this audience comprised those members of the community in which the work was written, for whom a record of the traditions and privileges of that community was of considerable value; or the audience could be conceived more generally as future generations who would benefit from the moral lessons that the work imparted. In either case, historical writing was inextricably bound up with the needs of its future audience. It was commonplace for chroniclers to commend themselves to their readers in the hope that they would correct any mistakes in the work; many commended themselves also to the prayers of future generations.[23]

It will be clear that these two aspects of the medieval historian's conception of the future, the one reflective, the other more practical, are in fact two sides of the same coin. To invoke John of Salisbury again: if the business of chroniclers was 'to relate noteworthy matters, so that the invisible things of God may be clearly seen by the things that are done', then it necessarily followed that this was of immeasurable value to their readers: 'men may by examples of reward or punishment be made more zealous in the fear of God and pursuit of justice.'[24] The chronicler as such took on the mantle of the prophet. The edificatory purpose of historical writing dovetailed very precisely with the awareness of personal judgement. The picture is somewhat complicated when we consider the awareness of collective judgement. A chronicler writing in the shadow of the consummation of history could not realistically entertain hopes that his work would be valuable to future generations, for by his own reckoning there would be no future generations to read it. At the same time, the edificatory purpose of his writing could

[22] '...idem habens propositum, coetanis et posteris proficiendi': John of Salisbury, *Historia Pontificalis*, ed. & tr. M. Chibnall, NMT (London, 1956), 3.
[23] See below, 40.
[24] 'Horum uero omnium uniformis intentio est, scitu digna referre, ut per ea que facta sunt conspiciantur inuisibilia Dei, et quasi propositis exemplis premii uel pene, reddant homines in timore Domini et cultu iustitie cautiores': John of Salisbury, *Historia Pontificalis*, 3.

take on a new urgency in the face of judgement not only for individual Christians but for Christendom as a whole.

In short, we could say that the writing of history in the Middle Ages was, by virtue of its prophetic underpinning, inherently eschatological in character. Before we proceed further it is worth clarifying what we mean precisely by the term 'eschatological'; and this in turn provides us with an opportunity to define various additional terms that will recur throughout this study. Precision on these points will allow us to tackle with more assurance the next question that arises, which is this: how much freedom did the medieval chronicler have in practice to bring his exposition of the past to bear on the course of the future?

Let us now focus on terminology. It may be helpful to approach this through the juxtaposition of terms that have often, and incorrectly, been considered interchangeable. We can start with 'eschatology' and 'apocalypticism'. These are not synonymous, though it would be equally erroneous to say that they are strictly opposed. Eschatology is the doctrine of the four last things, that is to say Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell. This can be personal and collective, in other words the experience of death, judgement and the afterlife as undergone by the individual soul, as well as the collective fate of Christians and the Christian Church at the consummation of history and the Last Judgement; Christ's Resurrection and Second Coming could be internalised within the individual soul as well as standing as external historical realities. Theologians and historians have distinguished these two dimensions of eschatology as spiritualising eschatology and historicising eschatology.[25] When we characterise medieval historiography as eschatological, as we did above, this encompasses both dimensions;

[25] This is helpfully and concisely set out by B. McGinn, 'Saint Bernard and eschatology', in *Bernard of Clairvaux: studies presented to Dom Jean Leclercq*, Cistercian Studies 23 (Washington D.C., 1973), 161-85, at 161-66; see also the (slightly revised) restatement of this in his *Visions of the End: apocalyptic traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1998), 3-4.

historical writing had as much significance for the individual Christian on his own path to salvation as it did for the Christian community on its journey towards the End Times.[26]

Apocalypticism is a particular view of historicising eschatology. It is the belief that the last things are not only inevitable but imminent, and, furthermore, revealed in the events through which one is living.[27] Now the point at which one moves from eschatological awareness, vigilance even, to more finely-tuned apocalypticism is obviously hard to establish with any precision. Medieval conceptions of the inevitability of the end and its broad contours as delineated by Scripture, along with a general consciousness of living in the old age of the world, need to be separated from the more definite, and more contentious, idea that this end is very close, and, if not precisely dateable, then at least discernible in contemporary events and developments.[28] Or we could express it thus: everyone in the middle ages was eschatological, but not everyone was apocalyptic. Now in this thesis we will be discussing texts that tended to push the historicising eschatological framework to an apocalyptic end; but in order to accommodate the range of opinion found within this, and to include texts traditionally thought of as eschatological, rather than apocalyptic, such as vision narratives, we will predominantly use the term 'eschatological' in the course of our study to characterise the thought of the authors in question.

Apocalypticism is sometimes equated with millenarianism. Again, this is incorrect. If apocalypticism is a subset of eschatology, then millenarianism is a subset of apocalypticism. Millenarianism is the belief in a period of betterment on earth prior

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[26] In much the same way, monastic spirituality held both conceptions of eschatology in unison: see J. Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, tr. C. Misrahi (3rd ed., New York, 1982), 53-70. This owed a lot to the thought of Gregory the Great, on whom see below, 24-25.
[27] R. Landes, 'The fear of an apocalyptic year 1000: Augustinian historiography, medieval and modern', *Speculum* 75 (2000), 97-145, at 101.
[28] McGinn, 'Saint Bernard and eschatology', 165-66.

to the Last Judgement.[29] Though building on a variety of Old Testament prophecies, such as Isaiah 65 and Jeremiah 31, the key text in support of this belief may be found in the twentieth chapter of the Book of Revelation, which talks of the chaining of Satan for a thousand years and the earthly reign of Christ with his saints during this time, before Satan is loosed 'a little season' (Rev. 20:3).[30] In other words, millenarianism in its purest incarnation centred on the expectation of a Sabbath age of one thousand years. It also sat easily alongside early Christian reckonings of the age of the world. The commonplace view in Christianity's first centuries was that the world was to last 6000 years, each thousand-year period corresponding to one of the six days of Creation; this recalled the statement of 2 Peter 3:8 that 'one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day'.[31] Under this scheme, the Sabbath Age corresponded to the seventh day of rest. The two were not, however, inextricably bound. Popular millenarian movements tended to place most emphasis on the imminent arrival of the Sabbath Age, without the chronological framework that it entailed; conversely, many early Christian writers, such as Julius Africanus, held to the 6000-year course of history without believing in the Sabbath Age to follow.[32] But the fact remains that millenarianism, in its apocalyptic and chronological incarnations, was espoused by a wide range of individuals, clerical and lay, in the early Christian era. It came under attack in the late fourth and early fifth century, principally from Augustine and Jerome,

[29] For the purposes of this thesis we may treat the terms 'chiliasm' and 'millennialism' as synonymous with millenarianism: they are used interchangeably in e.g. R. E. Lerner, 'Millennialism', in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, ed. J. J. Collins, B. McGinn & S. J. Stein (New York, 1998), ii, 326-60. McGinn (*Visions of the End*, 290 n. 56) prefers to use chiliasm to refer to the specific Christian expectation centred on Rev. 20:4, and millenarianism to refer to more general hopes of a coming age of improvement (such as anthropologists and sociologists might use), but acknowledges that for most authors the two are interchangeable. Landes ('The fear of an apocalyptic year 1000', 101) distinguishes 'chiliasm', a belief in a period of betterment, from 'millennialism', a belief that this period would be ushered in at the turn of a millennium, a distinction hinging on chronology. This is a useful distinction for him to make for the purposes of his argument, but it does not reflect widespread usage.
[30] On the Old Testament components of millenarianism, see Lerner, 'Millennialism', 326-27.
[31] This is itself an echo of Psalm 90:4: 'a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past'.
[32] M. I. Allen, 'Universal history 300-1000: origins and Western developments', in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. D. M. Deliyannis (Leiden, 2003), 17-42, at 19-20.

and from this point enjoyed significantly less prominence in religious thought until it was recast by Joachim of Fiore in the twelfth century.[33]

The tendency to conflate millenarianism with apocalypticism has had some unfortunate consequences. In his influential work of 1957, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, Norman Cohn presented apocalyptic discourse in the Middle Ages as a perennial conflict between popular millenarian movements and a sceptical church hierarchy.[34] In failing to portray millenarianism as a distinct manifestation of apocalyptic thought, he propagated the notion that apocalypticism was the preserve of the laity, and, conversely, that the Church, in its opposition to these popular movements, showed itself to be profoundly anti-apocalyptic. The fundamental incorrectness of this view has been stated frequently and eloquently, and the present thesis can do no more than implicitly reiterate these criticisms.[35] But it is unfair to make Cohn shoulder all the blame, for his interpretation is in many ways only the corollary of another pervasive view: that the attack on millenarian ideas by Augustine and Jerome was in fact mounted as an attack on apocalyptic thinking in general, and set the parameters of debate for all subsequent clerical writers. By extension, the medieval chronicler was very limited in the scope he could give to questions of the end of the world and its imminence. We must now assess the validity of this argument.

St Augustine's stance on such matters is set out most clearly in Book 20 of *De ciuitate Dei*.[36] Here Augustine addresses the subject of the End Times, and attempts to

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[33] For evidence of the survival of millenarian sects into the twelfth century and their suppression by the authorities, see P. Alphandéry, 'De quelque faits de prophétisme dans des sectes latines antérieures au Joachimisme', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 52 (1905), 177-218.
[34] N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: revolutionary millenarians and mystical anarchists of the Middle Ages* (3rd ed., London, 1970).
[35] E.g. R. K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: a study of medieval apocalypticism, art and literature* (Seattle, 1981), 5; McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 28-36; Justice, 'Prophecy and the explanation of social disorder'. My endorsement of these criticisms is not to impugn the overall quality of Cohn's book, which remains essential and stimulating reading.
[36] Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, ed. B. Dombart & A. Kalb, CCSL 47, 48 (Turnhout, 1955), xx (ii, 699-758).

dispel some of the more fanciful beliefs that have accrued to them. Chief among these is millenarianism, which was being advocated at the time with renewed fervour and a particular emphasis on the material delights of the Sabbath Age.[37] To tackle this, Augustine trained his sights on the key biblical passage in support of it, Revelation 20:3-6. His chief insight was to see the thousand years of Satan's binding as a way of referring to the time of the Christian church, which would endure to the Last Judgement; the thousand years signified not a specific number, but a lengthy period of time, and encompassed not the literal imprisonment of Satan for a set period, but Christ's resurrection and triumph over Satan, which has reduced his power for ever.[38] Now this interpretation was bound up with Augustine's more general aim of stressing the finality of the Incarnation in man's redemption. After the Incarnation, there is to be no progress and no further unfolding of God's divine plan prior to the Last Judgement. The Sixth Age, from Christ to the End, is a time of stasis, not development. In other words, Augustine emphasises the Incarnation as the end-point of salvation and undercuts the importance of the End Times.

Augustine's other key point had been made in Book 18. It is, he says here, pointless to try to compute the date of the Last Judgement. He cites two erroneous beliefs currently in circulation: first, that ten persecutions, corresponding to the ten plagues of Egypt, have been visited on the Christians under successive emperors, and

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[37] R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: history and society in the theology of St Augustine* (Cambridge, 1970; rev. ed., 1988), 19-21. See also J. Hubaux, 'Saint Augustin et la crise eschatologique de la fin du IV siècle', *Académie Royale de Belgique: bulletin de la classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques* 40 (1954), 659-73.

[38] Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xx. 7 (ii, 708-12). Augustine's approach was influenced by that of the Donatist theologian Tyconius, who wrote a commentary on Revelation. Only fragments of Tyconius' commentary survive, but it exerted a strong influence on patristic attitudes towards this most problematic book of the Bible. Jerome used Tyconius' commentary as the basis for his reworking of Victorinus' overtly millenarian commentary. See P. Fredriksen, 'Tyconius and Augustine on the Apocalypse', in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. K. Emmerson & B. McGinn (Ithaca, 1992), 20-37; P. B. Harvey, 'Approaching the Apocalypse: Augustine, Tyconius, and John's Revelation', in *History, Apocalypse and the Secular Imagination: new essays on Augustine's City of God*, ed. M. Vessey, K. Pollmann & A. D. Fitzgerald (Bowling Green, 1999), 133-51.

that the eleventh and final persecution, that of Antichrist, is imminent;[39] second, that the apostle Peter used sorcery to predict that the Church would last for 365 years, and that the end of this period is also imminent.[40] Augustine dismisses the former as an entirely artificial construct, omitting as it does the persecution aimed at Christ himself, and also that aimed at his disciples after the Ascension, during which the protomartyr Stephen was stoned to death, not to mention the more recent persecutions of Julian the Apostate and Valens.[41] The latter is shown to be equally false, for by his reckoning the year of Christianity's supposed extinction has already passed. What is more, that same year witnessed notable assaults on pagan practices launched by Gaudentius and Jovius in Carthage: it was a year of Christian triumph, not defeat.[42] This leads Augustine to make a broader point, which is worth quoting at length:

> It is usual to ask at this point, 'When will this happen?' But this question is entirely inappropriate. For had it been of profit to us to know the answer to it, who better to tell us than the Master, God himself, when the disciples asked Him? For they were not silent on this matter when they were with Him; on the contrary, they asked Him directly, saying, 'Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' But He said, 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.' Now in fact they had not questioned Him concerning the hour or the day or the year, but the time, when they received this answer. In vain, therefore, do we strive to compute and define the number of years that remain for this world, since we hear from the mouth of the Truth Himself that it is not for us to know this. Yet some have said that there may be as many as four hundred, five hundred, or even a thousand years to be completed between the Lord's ascension and His final coming. It would, however, take too long to demonstrate how each of these people supports his opinion. Nor is it necessary to do so; for they make use of human conjectures, and offer no firm evidence from the authority of canonical Scripture. Truly, Christ commands all who make such calculations on this subject to relax their

[39] Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xviii. 52 (ii, 650-51).
[40] Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xviii. 53 (ii, 653). On this belief see Hubaux, 'Saint Augustin', 662-73.
[41] Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xviii. 52 (ii, 651-52).
[42] Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xviii. 53-54 (ii, 653-56).

> fingers and let them rest, when He says, 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.[43]

Put simply, Scripture counsels not to conjecture the time of the end. And once again, Augustine is painting on a larger canvas. One of his principal aims in writing *De ciuitate Dei* was to disentangle salvation history from the fortunes of the Roman Empire.[44] In so doing he ran counter to the well-established tradition of understanding the consolidation of the Empire under Augustus as a crucial development in the spread of the Gospel, and hence of seeing the Empire as an important component in God's plan; such had been Eusebius's view.[45] Augustine thought differently: the fortunes of Rome and the fortunes of the City of God could not be associated.[46] A significant corollary of this was the idea that signposts for salvation history could not be sought in political developments.

This is persuasive enough. Yet the influence of these ideas has perhaps been overstated. The first point to make is that Augustine does not at any point urge disbelief

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[43] 'Hic quaeri solet: Quando istud erit? Inportune omnino. Si enim hoc nobis nosse prodesset, a quo melius quam ab ipso Deo magistro interrogantibus discipulis diceretur? Non enim siluerunt inde apud eum, sed a presente quaesierunt dicentes: "Domine, si hoc tempore repraesentabis regnum Israel?" At ille: "Non est," inquit, "uestrum scire tempora, quae Pater posuit in sua potestate." Non utique illi de hora uel die uel anno, sed de tempore interrogauerant, quando istud accepere responsum. Frustra igitur annos, qui remanent huic saeculo, computare ac definire conamur, cum scire non esse nostrum ex ore Veritatis audiamus; quos tamen alii quadringentos, alii quingentos, alii etiam mille ab ascensione Domini usque ad eius ultimum aduentum compleri posse dixerunt. Quem ad modum autem quisque eorum astruat opinionem suam, longum est demonstrare et non necessarium. Coniecturis quippe utuntur humanis, non ab eis aliquid certum de scripturae canonicae auctoritate profertur. Omnium uero de hac re calculantium digitos resoluit et quiescere iubet ille qui dicit: "Non est uestrum scire tempora quae Pater posuit in sua potestate."': Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xviii. 53 (ii, 652); tr. R. W. Dyson, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge, 1988), 903.

[44] Markus, *Saeculum*, 45-71.

[45] Markus, *Saeculum*, 47-51, 54. A problematic corollary of the Eusebian position was that salvation was in theory limited to those living within the empire's bounds, a notion that Prosper of Aquitaine explicitly set out to counter in his own chronicle, written in the 430s: see R. A. Markus, 'Chronicle and theology: Prosper of Aquitaine', in *The Inheritance of Historiography 350-900*, ed. C. Holdsworth & T. P. Wiseman, Exeter Studies in History 12 (Exeter, 1986), 31-43.

[46] In this respect, Augustine steered clear of the opposite tendency, notably espoused by Hippolytus, which was to see Rome as the embodiment of the evil forces ranged against the people of God: Markus, *Saeculum*, 48-49, 54-55. Tyconius, who has generally been enshrined in the anti-apocalyptic pantheon of patristic authors, not without cause, seems to have regarded the Constantinian settlement as not only damaging to the church but as the work of Antichrist: Markus, *Saeculum*, 115-16.

in the reality of the apocalyptic scenario; while he is concerned to take the sting out of certain problematic passages and lessen the significance of the whole in salvation history, he never denied that an end must come, or suggested that it would be significantly other than described in the Scriptures. Indeed, the distinction between the earthly and heavenly cities that governed his whole treatise is one that is only made manifest in the consummation of earthly things at the end of time, when the citizens of these two cities, hitherto intermingled, are separated. If in many respects he set out to refract the Book of Revelation through the prism of personalised eschatology, locating the First and Second Coming of Christ in the experience of the individual believer, he was not averse to working out the implications of this same text on an historical plane. Book 20 is introduced as follows:

> The whole Church of the true God, then, holds and professes the belief that Christ will come down from heaven to judge the living and the dead. This is what we call the last day, the day of the divine judgment: that is, the last time; for it is not certain how many days this judgement will take.[47]

The following few chapters are spent scouring the Old and New Testaments for scriptural proof of a Last Judgement. When Augustine comes to delineate the course of the End Times prior to the Last Judgement, he does not opt for the allegorising that characterised his treatment of the thousand-year reign of the saints. For example, Revelation 20:3 speaks of Satan being 'loosed a little season'. Having established that Satan's binding should be seen as coterminous with the establishment and duration of the Church, Augustine nevertheless acknowledges that he must be loosed, 'so that the City of God may behold how mighty a foe it has overcome, to the immense glory of its

[47] 'Quod ergo in confessione ac professione tenet omnis ecclesia Dei ueri Christum de celo esse uenturum ad uiuos ac mortuos iudicandos, hunc diuini iudicii ultimum diem dicimus, id est nouissimum tempus. Nam per quot dies hoc iudicium tendatur, incertum est': Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xx. 1 (ii, 699); tr. Dyson, 965.

Redeemer, its Helper, its Deliverer.'[48] As to the length of time indicated by the 'little season', Augustine opts for the three and a half years suggested elsewhere in Revelation and also in the Book of Daniel, and speculates as to the likelihood of men's coming to the faith during that time, and unbaptised children's being baptised: he concludes that 'there will be no lack either of those who fall away from the Church or of those who come to her.'[49]

In other words, Augustine accepted the reality of the End Times as broadly that depicted in the Book of Revelation, at the same time as he allegorised its more flamboyant and controversial passages. Indeed, the concision of his summary of the apocalyptic scenario made these chapters important reference points for future discussion on the subject.[50] And while his approach was in general governed by a theology of history that imputed less importance to the End Times than previous theologians had, it was nevertheless a reaction to the very specific circumstances in which he was writing, when apocalyptic speculation was given to overly literal interpretations of Revelation; so squarely did he take aim at the idea of a millenarian kingdom of *carnal* delights, that in so doing he was almost willing to concede that a millenarian kingdom of *spiritual* delights would not be unacceptable, if that is what the millenarians genuinely meant (though most, of course, did not).[51] Augustine's 'invisible millennium' of the church could itself be appropriated for apocalyptic ends, though not without flagrant disregard of his point that a thousand years signified nothing other than a long period. For example, around the year 1000 various writers merged this concept

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[48] '...ut, quam fortem aduersarium Dei ciuitas superauerit, cum ingenti gloria sui redemptoris adiutoris liberatoris aspiciat': Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xx. 8 (ii, 713); tr. Dyson, 984.
[49] Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xx. 8 (ii, 714); tr. Dyson, 986.
[50] B. E. Daley, 'Apocalypticism in early Christian theology', in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, ii, 3-47, at 32-33.
[51] A point made by R. E. Lerner, 'The medieval return to the thousand-year Sabbath', in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, 51-71, at 53. Some of Augustine's early writings betray sentiments of this kind: Markus, *Saeculum*, 19-20; G. Bonner, 'Augustine and millenarianism', in *The Making of Orthodoxy: essays in honour of Henry Chadwick*, ed. R. Williams (Cambridge, 1989), 235-54.

with older millenarian chronology to underscore the apocalyptic significance of the year 1000 or 1033, depending on whether they saw Christ's birth or death as the inauguration of the Church's millennium.[52]

Nevertheless, Augustine's strictures on calculating the time of the end seem to have held more sway. A key text for him, one that occurs twice in the passage quoted above, was Acts 1:7: 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.' Successive writers were to invoke this passage, and the related words of Matthew 24:36 ('But of that day and hour no one knoweth: no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father alone') throughout the Middle Ages, and indeed beyond. The chief problem is that the text was invoked indiscriminately, by genuinely anti-apocalyptic authors as much as by those who were concerned about the imminent consummation of God's divine plan. The texts themselves were open to interpretation: Augustine himself points out that some of his contemporaries took Matthew 24:36 as a proscription on knowledge of, literally, the day and the hour of the End, and accordingly had no qualms about trying to calculate the year.[53] Eusebius, a century earlier, had taken the opposite approach in relation to Acts 1:7, which he thought to refer to calculations of time in general, rather than specifically to calculations of the Last Judgement; and yet this did not of course prevent him from attempting precisely what the verse seemed to discourage, namely a chronology of world history.[54] Joachim of Fiore, who, as we shall see, devoted his whole career to the working out of the apocalyptic scenario, was not slow to use such words when it suited him;[55] his

[52] Landes, 'The fear of an apocalyptic year 1000', 116-17.
[53] Augustine, *Epistole*, cxcvii. 2 (iv, 232-33).
[54] Milburn, *Early Christian Interpretations of History*, 58.
[55] For instance, he concludes a sermon on the End Times, probably delivered to the brethren at San Giovanni in Fiore, with an invocation of Matt. 24:36: Joachim of Fiore, *De ultimis tribulationibus*, ed. E. R. Daniel, in *Prophecy and Millenarianism: essays in honour of Marjorie Reeves*, ed. A. Williams (London, 1980), 175-89, at 189. See also Joachim of Fiore, *Liber concordie Noui et Veteris Testamenti* (Venice, 1519), f. 40v.

reluctance to tie his schemes to a precise time-frame may have been informed by his adherence to Jesus' pronouncements, but they did not act as a restraint on his apocalyptic speculation in general.

Augustine's specific criticisms of apocalyptic belief were, in any case, outposts of a much more comprehensive theology of history. Divorced from this, it is not clear that they had the force that is sometimes imputed to them. Moreover, Augustine did not attempt to set out his theology of history as an historical narrative. This task he gave to Orosius, even before he had completed *De ciuitate Dei*.[56] Like his master, Orosius attempted to show that the tribulations of Rome after Constantine's conversion were of little account when set against its tribulations before this.[57] In other respects he veered rather drastically from his master's template. When he resumed work on *De ciuitate Dei*, Augustine did not refrain from criticising the work Orosius had done in the meantime. We may recall that Augustine denounced the concordance of the plagues of Egypt with persecutions of the Christians; when he said that 'not a few people hold this view', he had Orosius in mind.[58] More fundamentally, Orosius rejected Augustine's scepticism over the role of Rome in salvation history, opting instead for Eusebian optimism: for him, Rome was the fourth empire of the Book of Daniel, providentially ordained to further the spread of Christianity and endure until the time of Antichrist.[59] This was precisely what Augustine had tried to avoid. But if he failed to represent his master's thought with sufficient accuracy, Orosius arguably exerted more influence on

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[56] Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri septem*, ed. C. Zangemeister, CSEL 5 (Vienna, 1882). Orosius wrote this in 416-17, by which time Augustine had only completed ten books of *De ciuitate Dei*: Markus, *Saeculum*, 1.

[57] Augustine had complained that he did not have time to enumerate as many examples as he could in support of this point: *De ciuitate Dei*, iv. 2 (i, 99-100).

[58] Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, xviii. 52 (ii, 650); Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri septem*, vii. 27 (495-500).

[59] 'Igitur eo tempore, id est eo anno quo firmissimam uerissimamque pacem ordinatione Dei Caesar conposuit, natus est Christus': Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri septem*, iv. 22 (428). See also A. Fear, 'The Christian optimism of Paulus Orosius', in *From Orosius to the Historia Silense: four essays on the late antique and early medieval historiography of the Iberian peninsula*, ed. D. Hook (Bristol, 2005), 1-16.

subsequent historical writing, insofar as his *Libri septem* 'supplied the blueprint for historiography which was missing in the *City of God*'.[60]

As such, Augustine's legacy was muddled.[61] Partly this was due to the grey areas that he left in his own treatment of the end times; partly it was due to the simplification and corruption of his theology of history by Orosius and successive authors.[62] Now in attempting to plot Augustine's theology on a grander historical stage, Orosius had recourse to another set of ideas about history. This came from Jerome. Jerome was as ardently anti-millenarian as Augustine, and nowhere is this more forcefully expressed than in his influential commentary on the Book of Daniel, written in 407.[63] But the same commentary gave prominence to two ideas that in turn could be fruitfully harnessed to a decidedly apocalyptic view of history.

The first of these was Jerome's exegesis of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue (Daniel 2:31-45) and Daniel's dream of the four beasts (Daniel 7). Jerome understood the feet of the statue, made of iron and clay, and the last and most ferocious of the four beasts as the Roman Empire, the final world monarchy that would last until the persecutions of Antichrist and the end of time. Jerome derived this interpretation from the chronicle of Sulpicius Severus, and in turn passed it on to future generations of historians and theologians;[64] one of the earliest to put this exegesis to use was Orosius,

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[60] The phrase is Smalley's: *Historians in the Middle Ages*, 44-45. See also Allen, 'Universal history 300-1000', 30-31; B. Guenée, *Histoire et Culture Historique dans l'Occident Médiéval* (Paris, 1980), 250, 271, 274.

[61] Augustine was, however, prepared to cede some ground here. For instance, Matthew 24:14 stated that the end would only come when the Gospel had been preached across the whole world; in one of his famous rejoinders to Bishop Hesychius on matters apocalyptic, Augustine grudgingly acknowledged that one could assess the extent of preaching to gain some idea, however vague, of the proximity of the end: Augustine, *Epistole*, ed. A. Goldbacher, CSEL 34, 44, 57, 58 (1895-1923), cxcvii. 4 (iv, 233-34).

[62] It is perhaps worth pointing out that Augustine's virulent condemnation of the Apocalypse of Paul did not prevent this becoming one of the most widely disseminated pieces of vision literature in the Middle Ages: J. Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, tr. A. Goldhammer (Aldershot, 1984), 36.

[63] E.g. 'Sancti autem nequaquam habebunt terrenum regnum, sed caeleste. Cesset ergo mille annorum fabula': Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem libri III*, ed. F. Glorie, CCSL 75a (Turnhout, 1964), 848.

[64] On Sulpicius Severus' very distinctly apocalyptic outlook, see McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 51-52.

who found in it a basis for tying the Roman Empire to salvation history, quite the reverse of what Augustine had intended.[65]

Jerome's second contribution to future apocalyptic speculation has been very ably demonstrated by Robert Lerner, and I need only summarise his thesis briefly.[66] Jerome devoted a certain amount of space to the calculation of the length of the period of Antichrist's persecution; and by a process of subtraction, he calculated that a period of forty-five days must elapse between the fall of Antichrist and the Last Judgement.[67] This he allocated for what he termed the 'testing of the saints'.[68] Subsequent authors followed his calculations, with some variation, and the concept of a time after Antichrist in which works could be accomplished and remedial penance undertaken was gradually developed into a theory of earthly progress; and this was not all that distant from the notion of a millenarian kingdom that Jerome, and Augustine, had fought hardest against. In this development, Joachim of Fiore's Sabbath Age, a time of earthly spiritual renewal under the guidance of new religious orders, was the most potent and well-delineated exposition.[69]

Augustine and Jerome stand as witnesses to the persistence of apocalyptic beliefs in spite of, and sometimes because of, their pronouncements to the contrary. It is clear that they both believed in the reality of the End Times, even if they desperately wanted to undermine the fervent speculation that commonly attended this belief. They were caught between the necessity of a belief in eschatological fulfilment and the dangers of the ends to which this could be put in other hands. This dynamic underpins

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[65] Allen, 'Universal history 300-1000', 25-26.
[66] R. E. Lerner, 'Refreshment of the saints: the time after Antichrist as a station for earthly progress in medieval thought', *Traditio* 32 (1976), 97-144.
[67] Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem libri III*, 942-44.
[68] 'Quare autem, post interfectionem Antichristi, quadraginta quinque dierum silentium sit, diuinae scientiae est, nisi forte dicamus: dilatio regni sanctorum patientiae comprobatio est': Jerome, *Commentariorum in Danielem libri III*, 944.
[69] See below, 138-39.

many early medieval chronicles and annals, and has been the subject of an important article by Richard Landes.[70] The import of this study is that Christian annalists and chroniclers unwittingly gave impetus to precisely those apocalyptic sentiments that they supposedly sought to counter; for in continually recalculating their chronological time-frames to neutralise any potential years of doom, they constantly deferred, rather than defused, such expectations. Hippolytus of Rome had paved the way in his commentary on Daniel, written c.204. Here he dated Christ's first coming to 5500 AM (*Anno mundi)*; as he believed, like most of his contemporaries, that the world would last 6000 years, this put Christ's second coming just under 300 years into the future. Hippolytus took as his target contemporary apocalyptic and millenarian beliefs, most notably espoused by Montanus and his disciples. His commentary deferred the Apocalypse; but did not remove the basis for apocalyptic belief, and merely handed the problem to future generations.[71] Three centuries later, to give another example, Julian of Toledo attacked such millenarian chronology in a work of 686 entitled *De comprobatione etatis sexte*, which tried to show that the year 6000 AM had passed without incident in 675 AD; Julian nevertheless could not resist giving his own verdict on the likely date of the end, which he reckoned as 810 AD.[72] Two points may be drawn from this. The first is that historical writing throughout the early Middle Ages consistently engaged with apocalyptic speculation, either through endorsement of the imminence of the End Times or through attempts to undercut the basis for thinking this; the second is that such

[70] R. Landes, 'Lest the millennium be fulfilled: apocalyptic expectations and the pattern of Western chronography 100-800 CE', in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. Verbeke, D. Verhelst & A. Welkenhuysen (Leuven, 1998), 137-211. The article has been praised and criticised in equal measure. See, for instance, the reservations expressed by R. A. Markus in his 'Living within sight of the End', in *Time in the Medieval World*, ed. C. Humphrey & W. M. Ormrod (York, 2001), 23-34, at 29-30. It seems to my mind that Markus has slightly missed the point of Landes's article, which is not to show that annalists' constant adjustment of time-schemes necessarily betrays a belief common among *themselves* of the imminence of the end, but rather to demonstrate that this chronological wrangling points up an awareness on their part of the persistence of apocalyptic speculation and the problems this entailed (even though some annalists undoubtedly did believe in an imminent end).
[71] Landes, 'Lest the millennium be fulfilled', 144-48.
[72] Landes, 'Lest the millennium be fulfilled', 171-72.

engagement was of an elite, rather than a popular nature, and betrays the extent to which apocalyptic ideas could be common currency among those who are supposed to have been traditional exponents of Augustinian strictures on the subject.

The problem of, on the one hand, overstating the effect of Augustine's and Jerome's writings on the apocalyptic debate, and, on the other hand, drawing lines between elite and popular beliefs on the subject, is brought into sharp focus by the person of Gregory the Great. Gregory was in no doubt that the world was in its final stages.[73] He looked with trepidation on the natural disasters and political upheaval of the late sixth century and interpreted these as signs of the imminent end.[74] Many of the accomplishments of his papacy were dictated by the stark realisation that time was short. Yet he was also well-versed in Augustine's writings, and was careful to specify that the precise time of the end could not be known.[75] Chronological caution sat side by side with apocalyptic awareness. Gregory also exemplifies how the medieval outlook could accommodate different strands of eschatological belief. In his understanding of world history and contemporary affairs he pushed historicising eschatology to its apocalyptic end; in his emphasis on the need for contemplation and monastic discipline, he promulgated a conception of spiritualising eschatology that happily sat alongside this. Individual salvation and collective salvation were equally on his mind.

The following has been said of Gregory: 'it is ironic that one whose influence was to have such pronounced effect on the future of Western society did not think that

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[73] On Gregory the Great's apocalyptic views, see G. R. Evans, *The Thought of Gregory the Great* (Cambridge, 1986), 19, 42-44; R. A. Markus, *Gregory the Great and his World* (Cambridge, 1997), 51-67; idem, 'Living within sight of the End', 30-34. This aspect of Gregory's thought has embarrassed many modern historians, who have accordingly tried to ignore, or impugn, the works and passages in which it is most clearly expressed: on this see J. N. Hillgarth, 'Eschatological and political concepts in the seventh century', in *Le Septième Siècle: changements et continuités*, ed. J. Fontaine & J. N. Hillgarth (London, 1992), 212-35, at 214-16, 220-21.

[74] E.g. Gregory the Great, *Dialogorum libri IV de miraculis patrum italicorum*, ed. A. de Vogüé, Sources chrétiennes 251, 260, 265 (Paris, 1978-80), ii, 428-32; Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia*, ed. R. Étaix, CCSL 141 (Turnhout, 1999), 5-11.

[75] E.g. Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 143 (Turnhout, 1979), 24.

that society had any future at all.'[76] This encapsulates the essentially paradoxical nature of Gregory's papacy, insofar as he accomplished so much, and yet laboured in the shadow of the looming apocalypse that seemingly rendered such activity futile. But the paradox is more apparent than real. Consider the work of Bede. Bede's perspective was that of an English monk surveying the results of Gregory's missionary zeal, through which the English people had been brought to the faith. He quotes various letters of Gregory to his disciple Augustine in which the eschatological grounding of the English mission is made plain: the conversion of the English is one aspect of the spreading of the Gospel to the nations, a task made more pressing by forecasts of the fast-approaching end.[77] The opening to the *Historia ecclesiastica* notes the many agreeable qualities of the island, but also emphasises its isolation, and the conversion to Christianity of this far-flung part of the world takes on a special importance.[78] Bede picks up this thread when he considers the preaching missions of his own times. The successes of the German missionaries, such as Willibrord, give considerable cause for rejoicing; but taken alongside the preaching of Augustine in England, what does this augur for the future? Bede is hesitant, but we can read between the lines. It is perhaps significant that Willibrord appears in both the *Historia Ecclesiastica* and the shorter world chronicle that Bede supplies as part of his treatise *De temporum ratione*, written in 725:[79] this, more than the *Historia ecclesiastica*, locates such missionary endeavours in the final age of the world, prior to the Last Judgement. Unmistakeable is the sense of unease that permeates the last few chapters of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, and is stated more emphatically in his letter to Egbert. Like Gregory, Bede puts great emphasis on

[76] McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 62.
[77] A good example of this is Gregory's letter to King Ethelberht: Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, ed. & tr. B. Colgrave & R. A. B. Mynors, OMT (Oxford, 1969), 110-14.
[78] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 14-20.
[79] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 484-86; Bede, *De temporum ratione*, ed. C. W. Jones, CCSL 123b (Turnhout, 1980), 529.

reform, so that the possibility of an imminent end becomes a powerful rebuttal of complacency.[80]

Yet Bede's eschatological outlook has been much debated.[81] This is partly because Bede is unwilling to commit himself to a particular stance. His early commentary on Revelation is squarely in the Tyconian tradition.[82] And in his revival of the *Annus Domini* calculations of Dionysius Exiguus, Bede bequeathed to posterity a dating system that neatly sidestepped the apocalyptic perils of the old *Annus mundi* arrangement.[83] The system was taken up by the Carolingians, who used Bede's temporal works in their curriculum and in their annals; the impact on all subsequent historiography cannot be overstated. This was part of a broader attack on millenarianism, which earned him a considerable amount of hostility. This can be seen in his letter to Plegwin, composed in 708.[84] Here Bede defends himself from the charge of heresy levelled at him by members of Bishop Wilfrid's *familia* on account of his redating of Christ's birth to 3952 AM in his *De temporibus*, written five years earlier.[85] What is especially interesting is that Bede's accusers were not only clerics, but clerics who seem to have believed in a millennial chronology of 6000 years. They could not countenance the idea that Christ, according to Bede's revised scheme, came in the fourth age, rather than the sixth, for this undermined the basis for their apocalyptic

[80] R. A. Markus, 'Gregory and Bede: the making of the Western apocalyptic tradition', in *Gregorio Magno nel XIV centenario della morte* (Rome, 2004), 247-56.
[81] For the view that Bede's writing was underpinned by a very real perception of an imminent end, see G. Bonner, *Saint Bede in the Tradition of Western Apocalyptic Commentary* (Jarrow, 1966), esp. 5, 11-12; R. A. Markus, *Bede and the Tradition of Ecclesiastical Historiography* (Jarrow, 1975), 13-14. For a more sceptical view, see R. Walterspacher, 'Book V of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*: perspectives on salvation history and eschatology', *Archa Verbi: Yearbook for the Study of Medieval Theology* 1 (2004), 11-24. A balanced assessment is given by C. W. Jones, 'Bede as early medieval historian', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 4 (1946), 26-36. There is also a helpful discussion in F. Wallis, *Bede: Commentary on Revelation*, Translated Texts for Historians 58 (Liverpool, 2013), 51-57.
[82] Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos*, ed. R. Gryson, CCSL 121a (Turnhout, 2001); Wallis, *Bede: Commentary on Revelation*, 28-30, 67-73.
[83] Landes, 'Lest the millennium be fulfilled', 176-78.
[84] Bede, *Epistola ad Pleguinam*, ed. C. W. Jones, CCSL 123c (Turnhout, 1980), 617-26.
[85] Bede, *De temporibus*, ed. C. W. Jones, CCSL 123c (Turnhout, 1980), 585-611, at 607.

calculations and speculations, to which Bede explicitly refers.[86] That such views were widespread in clerical circles at the time, including, it seems, Bede's own monastery, provides further evidence against an arbitrary distinction between clerical level-headedness on the subject and untrammelled popular credulity. At the same time, we should not transpose Bede's very definitely expressed views on millenarianism onto his corpus of work as a whole; much of this, as we have seen, is filtered through an eschatological prism even if Bede was unwilling to draw out the implications explicitly.

Before taking this discussion into the twelfth century, we may briefly sum up what we have attempted to establish so far. First, the patristic assault on apocalyptic beliefs, most commonly associated with the work of Augustine and Jerome, was neither as wide-ranging nor as influential as has often been supposed. Many of their ideas were transmitted in simplified or straightforwardly erroneous form by subsequent writers. The notion of a high clerical anti-apocalypticism predicated on this patristic material thus falls down, as does the accompanying notion of apocalypticism as a popular lay phenomenon.[87] Gregory the Great shows that an apocalyptic outlook was not only tenable within the highest ranks of the clergy but was explicitly bound up with the reformist papal agenda that he espoused; Bede, although more cautious, endorsed this, and presents a vivid picture of a writer on the one hand fighting off the predictive millenarian chronology of many of his fellow ecclesiastics, and on the other hand looking anxiously at the future of the English church in the light of his eschatological scheme. Apart from offering some justification for tackling the subject in the first place, this rather lengthy introduction has clarified many of the terms and concepts that will recur throughout the following study. In particular, the intersection of reformist

[86] Bede, *Epistola ad Pleguinam*, 623-25.
[87] It is perhaps worth remarking that apocalyptic texts throughout the Middle Ages were predominantly written in Latin, and far less often in vernacular languages; this of course suggests that the audience for such works was primarily clerical. See P. Damian-Grint, 'Apocalyptic prophecy in Old French: an overview', *Reading Medieval Studies* 26 (2000), 49-76.

ambitions and eschatological awareness provides a useful template for understanding many of the advances in historiography that took place over the course of the twelfth century, which themselves provide the backdrop to our discussion of English historiography at the end of this introduction.

History, eschatology and reform in the twelfth century

The twelfth-century contribution to history and eschatology was twofold. First, there was a new awareness of the historical process and an attempt to read into history the conflicts of the present; second, there were renewed attempts to couch the destinies of empires and nations within the arch of salvation history and in so doing confer a mantle of almost messianic significance on the various rulers involved. The roots of these (not unrelated) developments may be found in the Gregorian reform movement of the late eleventh century, which brought the perennial opposition of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* into sharp focus and, arguably, encouraged the opposing sides to delineate their ambitions on an eschatological plain.[88] That both sides frequently hurled apocalyptically-charged insults at each other is not in itself significant, for enemies of the Church had been consistently denounced as servants of Antichrist throughout Christian history. But in the twelfth century we undoubtedly witness a move from what could be called apocalyptic language to apocalyptic application: reformers were not only labelling their opponents as the foes of the End Times, but grounded this belief in historical schemes.[89] At the same time, the proponents of *regnum*, especially in the

[88] B. E. Whalen, *Dominion of God: Christendom and Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 2009), 31-40.
[89] B. McGinn, *Antichrist: two thousand years of the human fascination with evil* (San Francisco, 1994), 120-21.

Empire, invoked traditional apocalyptic scenarios to carry themselves on a tide of imperial eschatological fulfilment.

The crusading movement gave impetus to both sides. The idea that the First Crusade was underpinned by resurgent apocalyptic ideas has been much debated.[90] What does seem undeniable is that the twelfth century saw a revival of the prominence accorded to the earthly Jerusalem, rather than the celestial Jerusalem, as the focus of Christian hopes.[91] Insofar as the crusading movement was an outpost of the Gregorian reform movement, it was initially lauded as an integral part of the reformers' struggle against the range of forces afflicting the Church, including heretics and pagans; when initial successes gave way to the disasters of the Second Crusade, conventional ascriptions of this failure to the sins of the crusaders and the inhabitants of the Holy Land were deployed to point up with renewed urgency the fundamental truth of the reformist message. At the same time, the crusading movement offered a stage on which the rulers of Christendom could, and did, further their own ambitions, and a number of commentators accordingly placed Jerusalem at the heart of their eschatological glorification of these rulers.

In the reformist camp the chief protagonists were Gerhoh of Reichersberg, Anselm of Havelberg, Honorius Augustodunensis and Rupert of Deutz; they can loosely be grouped under the label of 'reformist apocalypticism'.[92] At the heart of their

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[90] J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia, 1986), *passim*; J. Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven: the First Crusade and the quest for apocalypse* (New York, 2011); J. Ward, 'The First Crusade as disaster: apocalypticism and the genesis of the crusading movement', in *Medieval Studies in honour of Avrom Saltman*, Bar-Ilan Studies in History 4 (Ramat-Gan, 1995), 253-92. For a more sceptical view, see B. McGinn, '*Iter Sancti Sepulchri*: the piety of the first crusaders', in *Essays on Medieval Civilisation: the Walter Prescott Webb Memorial Lectures XII*, ed. B. K. Lackner & K. R. Philp (Austin, 1978), 33-71.

[91] J. Prawer, 'Jerusalem in the Christian and Jewish perspectives of the early middle ages', in *Gli Ebrei nell'alto Medioevo*, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo 26 (Spoleto, 1980), ii, 739-95. See also S. M. Yeager, *Jerusalem in Medieval Narrative* (Cambridge, 2008), 2-4, 6-9.

[92] The term was popularised by K. Kerby-Fulton, *Reformist Apocalypticism and Piers Plowman* (Cambridge, 1990), esp. 1-56. For this paragraph I am indebted to Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 72-99, and McGinn, *Antichrist*, 114-42.

work was an inquiry into the historical process, seen through the prism of contemporary developments in political and religious life: the experience of the crusading movement, the perennial conflict between papacy and empire, and perceptions of a proliferation of heretical sects were significant points of departure. Construing history as a constant battleground between Christians and the forces of heresy, paganism and corruption, they mapped this figurative combat onto contemporary society and urged reform of social and religious institutions with an urgency imparted by their very real sense of an impending end. At this point, the spectre of Gregory the Great is raised, and with it the somewhat counterintuitive idea of reform in an eschatological climate; yet with reference to these authors, we can further explain the paradox. One of the most notable features of their work was the conception of historical progress, particularly with regard to the Church in the sixth age. Gerhoh of Reichersberg foresaw both tribulation and peace in the future: the scourge of Antichrist would be fought by a spiritually renewed papacy, under whose auspices all the peoples of the earth would be gathered into one reformed Christian community awaiting the final judgement.[93] In other words, the apocalyptic scenario was a process, not a straightforward end; through the trials of this period Christendom would be reformed and renewed. Understood thus, we can see why reformist zeal and apocalyptic awareness were by no means strange bedfellows, but rather two sides of the same eschatological coin.

Although a number of the proponents of reformist apocalypticism were inhabitants of the Holy Roman Empire, they had no particular regard for it; indeed, they saw the ongoing conflict between the papacy and the Holy Roman Empire as merely the latest instalment of the perennial conflict between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. There was no scope here for a positive view of the empire. Pro-imperial writers responded with a

[93] Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 95-98.

very different eschatological view of history. Familiar apocalyptic texts allocating a messianic role to the Byzantine Emperor were reworked to serve imperial interests. The tenth-century treatise of Adso of Montier-en-Der on the coming of Antichrist provided the basis for the mid-twelfth-century *Ludus de Antichristo*, which casts Frederick Barbarossa in the role of the Last Roman Emperor.[94] In the course of proceedings he subdues the French and Byzantine rulers, fights with the Babylonian king and delivers Jerusalem out of the hands of its enemies; his surrender of the crown in Jerusalem is the cue for the entry of Antichrist. In all this the pope is a minor character, and the papal reformers are styled as 'Hypocrites'; the pro-imperial agenda of the unknown dramatist could not be clearer.[95]

One who straddled the imperial and reformist camps was the Cistercian Otto of Freising.[96] He has been described as 'the propagandist of the Holy Empire';[97] this may accurately describe him towards the end of his life, but it was not always so. Otto was a grandson of Henry IV, and an uncle of Frederick Barbarossa; yet he had been schooled in Paris, and seems to have imbibed the reformist outlook of a number of his German contemporaries. Otto's first major work, the *Chronica siue Historia de duabus ciuitatibus* was forged in the imperial crisis of the mid-twelfth century; in it we find Otto wrestling with the destiny of the political entity with which he most closely

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[94] Adso, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, ed. D. Verhelst, CCCM 45 (Turnhout, 1976); *Ludus de Antichristo*, ed. K. Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church* (Oxford, 1967), ii, 371-87.
[95] The work appears to have been composed around 1160, when Frederick was at the pinnacle of his success: J. Wright, *The Play of Antichrist* (Toronto, 1967), 24-26.
[96] On the historical and theological responses to the varying fortunes of the German empire at this time, including Otto's, see T. Reuter, 'Past, present and no future in the twelfth-century *Regnum Teutonicum*', in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, 15-36, esp. 31-36; K. F. Morrison, 'The exercise of thoughtful minds: the Apocalypse in some German historical writings', in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. K. Emmerson & B. McGinn (Ithaca, 1992), 352-73.
[97] M.-D. Chenu, 'Theology and the new awareness of history', in his *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century: essays on new theological perspectives in the Latin West*, ed. & tr. J. Taylor & L. K. Little (Chicago, 1968), 162-201, at 195.

identified.[98] The Empire, exhausted by its clashes with the reform papacy over a previous half-century, lay impotent and mired in internal discord, a microcosm of a Christendom torn apart by wickedness. The only glimpse of hope lay in the expansion of religious life: in a reflective passage at the end of the seventh book, Otto hints that these monks are all that holds back the inevitable tribulation of Antichrist and consummation of the age.[99] Nevertheless, the role of the Empire is at the heart of Otto's historical awareness, even if he is evasive in stating precisely what this role is:[100] he notes the traditional view of the Empire as the restraining power of 2 Thessalonians 2:3, but clearly considered it too weak in its present state to fulfil that task, though he cannot quite bring himself to state this explicitly.[101] Otto ends the *Chronica* on a decidedly pessimistic note with a book devoted to the scenario of the End Times, which Otto clearly believed was not far off.[102] It will be clear from this that Otto tramples rather clumsily over his purported inspiration, the concept of the Two Cities as laid out by Augustine, for Augustine's explicit aim was, as we have seen, to disentangle the course of salvation history from the strength or weakness of the empire, or indeed any political entity.[103] More fundamentally, he is torn between two very different conceptions of the historical and eschatological significance of the Empire, one espoused by the reformers and the other by the imperial propagandists. But he had spoken too soon. The

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[98] Otto of Freising, *Chronica siue Historia de duabus ciuitatibus*, ed. A. Hofmeister, *MGH* SS (Hanover, 1912).

[99] Otto of Freising, *Chronica*, 369-74. This rests on an acknowledgement that the 'restraining power' of 2 Thessalonians could refer to the Church, not the Roman Empire, an idea explored by Hugh of St Victor in his commentary on this book of the Bible: Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 91-2.

[100] R. W. Southern, 'Aspects of the European tradition of historical writing 2: Hugh of St. Victor and the idea of historical development', *TRHS*, 5th series, 21 (1971), 159-79; reprinted in his *History and Historians*, 30-47, at 44-45.

[101] The potential apocalyptic significance of the paralysis of the Empire at this time is echoed by other commentators. The Benedictine monk Ralph of Flaix, in an extended passage in his commentary on Leviticus (written not long before 1152), identified the Roman Empire as the sixth head of the dragon of Revelation 17, and, noting the empire's current disintegration, surmised that it could not be long before the seventh head, Antichrist, appeared: see B. Smalley, 'Ralph of Flaix on Leviticus', *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 35 (1968), 35-82, at 39-42.

[102] Otto of Freising, *Chronica*, 393-457.

[103] See above, 16.

resurgence of the Empire under his nephew Frederick Barbarossa gave him an opportunity to revise his views. This he did in his second important work, the *Gesta Frederici*.[104] Though panegyric takes precedence over the sort of historical reflection that characterised the *Chronica*, Otto was able to affirm the triumphal role of the empire, under its new ruler, in holding back the end; the eschatological framework of the *Chronica* therefore remained intact, but Otto has restored his trust in the restraining power that had earlier seemed less than adequate.

In the prologue to the *Gesta Frederici* Otto records how at the time of the Second Crusade a Sibylline prophecy according a messianic role to Louis VII was circulated in France. Given that his own purpose was to do much the same for Frederick Barbarossa, Otto is, unsurprisingly, sceptical.[105] Nevertheless, it is clear that in France prophecy and eschatology were being harnessed for royal purposes just as blatantly as they were in the empire. It is worth bearing in mind that Adso originally wrote his *De ortu et tempore Antichristi* for Queen Gerberga, wife of Louis IV, and one of his aims in doing so was to weave the West Frankish royal line into the apocalyptic scenario by reworking the traditional Byzantine account of the Last World Emperor.[106] No doubt Adso would have been somewhat bemused to see his treatise appropriated for imperial propaganda, as it was by the anonymous author of the *Ludus de Antichristo*. But the thread was also taken up at the court of Philip Augustus. We find conscious efforts by the semi-official chronicler Rigord of St Denis to portray Philip as the fulfilment of a range of prophecies, to which he added a number of miracles that seemed to bear out the king's messianic role.[107] Rigord was not alone. In 1220 Philip's chancellor Guérin

[104] Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici I imperatoris*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH* SS (Hanover, 1884).
[105] Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, 8-9.
[106] See McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 82-84.
[107] Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, ed. & tr. E. Carpentier, G. Pon & Y. Chauvin (Paris, 2006), 176-78, 258-60, 264-66. See also J. Pysiak, 'Philippe Auguste. Un roi de la fin des temps?', *Annales* 57 (2002), 1165-90. In describing Rigord's chronicle as a semi-official production, rather than the straightforwardly

compiled a register which included a Sibylline prophecy appropriating the deeds of the Last World Emperor for Philip himself: he would conquer the whole world, rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and usher in a time of peace.[108] Not only did this set a prophetic seal on Philip's impressive achievements up to that point (including his crusading venture and his spectacular victory at Bouvines in 1214), it also solved a problem inherited from the so-called Valerian prophecy, an earlier Capetian prophecy that assured the continuance of Hugo Capet's line up to the seventh generation; Philip being the seventh, or possibly the eighth, in this line, a means of prolonging this prophecy, or of sidestepping it altogether, was needed, and Guérin neatly supplied the solution. Whether this Sibylline text was simply a means to this dynastic end, or whether credence was firmly attached to its eschatological implications, is not clear. What we can say is that Philip had already been linked with prophetic aspirations. The notorious circle of Amaury of Bène, condemned at the Fourth Lateran Council, had circulated prophetic material highlighting the role of Philip and his son Louis in the End Times; the apocalyptic scenario here owed much to Joachim of Fiore, centring as it did on an imminent Age of the Holy Spirit, which would be inaugurated by Philip's conquests.[109] Philip, it should be remembered, was in Messina when Richard I had his famous interview with Joachim of Fiore; Joachim's exposition of the significance of the Crusade in the apocalyptic scenario, and of the pivotal role Richard was to play in this, perhaps inspired Philip to bolster his own eschatological credentials.[110]

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official work that it is more commonly understood to be, I follow the usage of J. W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus: foundations of French royal power in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1986), 396. As Baldwin points out, 'official history' is a phrase better reserved for Rigord's continuator, Guillaume le Breton.

[108] E. A. R. Brown, 'La notion de la légitimité et la prophétie à la cour de Philippe Auguste', in *La France de Philippe Auguste: le temps des mutations (Actes du colloque international organisé par le C.N.R.S)*, ed. R.-H. Bautier (Paris, 1982), 77-111.

[109] Lerner, R. E., 'The uses of heterodoxy: the French monarchy and unbelief in the thirteenth century', *French Historical Studies* 4 (1965), 189-202. On Joachim's conception of the Age of the Spirit, see below, 139.

[110] For the meeting at Messina see below, 164-69.

History and eschatology in England

Now that we have introduced Richard I into the picture, we must fix the spotlight on England. At the start of this chapter we briefly discussed the proliferation of historical writing in early twelfth-century England; we must now revisit the topic in the light of what we have discussed over the course of this introduction. We may begin with Richard Southern's claim that the monastic historians of early twelfth-century England 'took no account of the end of the world, which (in their sense) ended where the monastic property began'.[111] Broadly speaking this is true, though it merits some discussion. As we said earlier, the impetus for the vast majority of early twelfth-century English chronicles, monastic and secular, was provided by the Norman Conquest. Monastic communities expended much energy producing detailed historical records in defence of their traditions and privileges; sometimes they hired others to do this for them.[112] Faced with the somewhat more pressing concern over their institutional survival, they understandably took little interest in the broader span of Christian history, up to and including its eventual consummation.

This is only half the story. What Southern tended to overlook in his (otherwise magisterial) account was the interest in tackling the English past on a more reflective level, an interest that united monastic and secular observers.[113] William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon provide the best examples. When William of Malmesbury came to write his *Gesta Regum* in the 1120s, he could look back on several centuries

[111] R. W. Southern, 'Aspects of the European tradition of historical writing 4: the sense of the past', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, 23 (1973), 243-63; reprinted in his *History and Historians*, 66-83, at 77.
[112] A good example would be William of Malmesbury's work for the monks of Glastonbury: William of Malmesbury, *De antiquitate Glastonie ecclesie*, ed. J. Scott (Woodbridge, 1981).
[113] See the criticisms of J. Campbell, 'Some twelfth-century views of the Anglo-Saxon past', *Peritia* 3 (1984), 131-50, reprinted in his *Essays in Anglo-Saxon History* (London, 1986), 209-28.

marked by historical writing of limited quantity and variable quality. Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* cast its splendour down through the ages, but no-one had taken up the torch: only the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle filled the historical record.[114] The historiographical chasm dividing William from Bede was therefore vast; but it was not insurmountable. William saw himself as the man who would, in his words, 'mend the broken chain of our history'.[115] It was broken in two ways. It was, first of all, broken in the sense outlined above: that is to say, through lack of output. But it was also broken in another sense: through conquest. William was writing a generation after the Norman invasion had transformed the political and social landscape of the country. If not exactly stated as such, his aim was to tackle the historiographical problems posed by the disjunction of recent events; he wrote in order to come to terms with change. He was ambivalent about the Norman Conquest itself: on the one hand, he largely endorsed Norman propaganda about the degeneracy of the Anglo-Saxon Church, a mainstay of the Norman argument for the legitimacy of their actions;[116] on the other hand, he could speak of 14 October 1066 as a 'fateful day' for the English;[117] and he observed that the England of his day was 'a dwelling-place of foreigners and a playground for lords of alien blood.'[118]

William's achievement was to integrate the Norman Conquest into the framework of English history and construe it as an instrument of God's providence. Perhaps it was a 'fateful day', but there could be no gainsaying divine judgement. Henry, archdeacon of Huntingdon, would have agreed. His contribution to what its

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[114] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, ed. & tr. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson & M. Winterbottom, OMT (Oxford, 1998), i, 14.
[115] '...uoluntati fuit interruptam temporum seriem sarcire': William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, i, 14.
[116] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, 458.
[117] 'Illa fuit dies fatalis Anglie': William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, 456.
[118] 'Anglia exterorum facta est habitatio et alienigenarum dominatio': William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, 414.

most recent editor calls 'historiographical assimilation' was the *Historia Anglorum*.[119] Henry's approach to the Conquest is straightforward but effective. He takes as his key to English history the notion of successive plagues or invasions visited on the island: the Romans; the Picts and Scots; the English themselves; the Vikings; and finally the Normans, who are merely the fifth and most recent of these chastisements by which God rebukes the people for their sins. Henry was a secular clerk, not a monk; his history was not motivated by institutional anxiety. At the same time, he was himself the offspring of mixed parentage, and wrote at the request of Bishop Alexander of Lincoln, whose cross-cultural endeavours are well attested. For him Henry produced a chronicle that interwove the histories of the English and Norman people under the mantle of divine providence.

Both William and Henry were conscious of the sins of the English as a justification for the oppression that had been placed upon them. Here both followed very much in the footsteps of Gildas, the sixth-century monk who had castigated his contemporaries for their indolence and vice in the face of the Saxon invasions.[120] Gildas' chief historiographical legacy was this pronounced sense of sin and judgement, framed in the providential workings of God's might.[121] Orosius had linked the destinies of Rome and Christianity, and provided a model for the application of biblical exegesis to secular national history. Gildas borrowed this, but by placing British history within salvation history, he recast the eschatological framework of the latter in terms of national and personal judgement. Gildas quoted many of the Old Testament prophets; indeed, parts of his treatise are composed of little more than strings of such quotations. He could not fail to invoke some of their more apocalyptic utterances, though he

[119] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. & tr. D. Greenway, OMT (Oxford, 1996).
[120] Gildas, *De excidio Britonum*, ed. & tr. M. Winterbottom, Arthurian Period Sources 7 (London, 1978).
[121] R. W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York, 1966), 44-62.

usually does so without comment.[122] But he does not relate the judgement of the Britons to the judgement of all peoples at the end of time; what apocalyptic sheen his writing has is adduced solely for the purpose of pointing up this instant of national judgement. At the same time as he draws the British people into the arc of salvation history, Gildas scales down the eschatological destiny of Christendom. Reworking Southern's point, we could say that the end of the world, for Gildas, was the end of his people. Gildas was at pains to show that Britain's providential destiny was untenable outside the bounds of the Roman Empire, but paradoxically his own historical vision was conditioned and limited by this same exclusion.

The chief mediator of Gildas' ideas was Bede. Gildas provided Bede with a narrative of British sin and divine judgement; this certainly gave Bede the scope to portray the English as God's instrument of vengeance on the Britons; whether it gave him the scope to build onto this the concept of the English as God's chosen people is more contentious.[123] The fundamental narrative of the *Historia ecclesiastica* is the drawing of the English church into the fold of Rome, and the subsequent golden age of Northumbrian sainthood and monasticism. Gildas had conceived of British Christianity in terms of the Roman Empire, for it was through Britain's incorporation into the Roman Empire that the faith had first come to the island; Bede acknowledged this Orosian vision of the providential link between Christianity and empire, but put much more stress on Britain's incorporation into the Roman Church.[124] In this way Bede follows Gildas in drawing the English into the arc of salvation history, much as Gregory

[122] An exception is his citation of Isaiah 13:6 ('Howl! The day of the Lord is near'), into which Gildas interpolates 'and if it was near then, what are we to suppose today?' ('Si tunc prope erat, quid nunc putabitur?'): Gildas, *De excidio Britonum*, 109.
[123] G. Molyneux, 'Did the English really think they were God's Elect in the Anglo-Saxon period?', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 65 (2014), 721-37, at 726-30.
[124] D. Scully, 'Bede, Orosius and Gildas on the early history of Britain', in *Bède le Vénérable entre Tradition et Postérité*, ed. S. Lebecq, M. Perrin & O. Szerwiniack (Lille, 2005), 31-42.

of Tours had done for the Franks.[125] But the English are not thereby defined as a chosen people of God, merely as one of the many peoples of Christendom. The universality of the Church is what matters. The English dispossessed the sinful Britons of their land and brought it into the orbit of Rome, and, furthermore, sent out missionaries to bring others into it as well. As such, Bede relates his narrative to the broader eschatological framework of salvation history, which Gildas failed to do. But like Gildas Bede infused his *Historia ecclesiastica* with a stern edificatory purpose, even if he avoided Gildas's strident tone. And he arguably goes further than Gildas in transposing the eschatological destiny of all Christian peoples onto the English of his own time. As Hanning puts it, 'God's judging of man ceases in the *Historia* to be a goal toward which all history is moving, and becomes a process carried out in history as a prefiguration of the final reward or punishment awaiting each individual when he passes from this life to the next.'[126] The reception of Bede's *Historia* by future generations shows the substantial truth of this statement.[127]

Gildas and Bede never lost sight of Christendom as a whole; their account of the British and English past, and anxiety about the present, was fundamentally tied to their broader understanding of salvation history and universalism, be it of the empire or of the church. However, their providential model could in other hands become a much more insular vision; and this, I would argue, is how chroniclers in early twelfth-century England chose to construe their sources. Gildas, whose work was especially liable to this alteration, was not the immediate source. Bede cast the longer shadow, and his influence on the historiography and monasticism of twelfth-century England cannot be

[125] Hanning, *Vision of History*, 67-70.
[126] Hanning, *Vision of History*, 75-76.
[127] For recent work on this subject, see G. Molyneux, 'The *Old English Bede*: English ideology or Christian instruction?', *EHR* 124 (2009), 1289-1323.

overstated.[128] But Bede, as we have seen, framed his narrative along the lines that Gildas had pursued earlier, and hence the latter's vision of history was transmitted.

In other words, the historians of the early twelfth century sundered Gildas's themes of national judgement from the universal framework of providence that Gildas, and after him Bede, emphasised. Bede's supposed vision of the providential unification of the English nation was in fact the contribution of Henry of Huntingdon, who refashioned the *Historia Ecclesiastica* to emphasise the creation of one kingdom out of many.[129] He pays little heed to salvation history as the overarching framework of his narrative of English fortunes and chastisement.

Henry of Huntingdon also provides us with a rare comment on the subject of the end of the world. This may be found in the eighth book of the *Historia Anglorum*, entitled 'On exalted matters' ('De summitatibus rerum'). He opens this book with a reckoning of time, according to the regnal year of Henry I, the number of years since the Norman, Saxon, and even British, conquests of the island, the number of years from the beginning of the world, and the number of years since the Incarnation.[130] In a remarkable passage not long after this he addresses readers who will be living in the third millennium from the birth of Christ. He urges the reader to reflect on what has become of him and his generation, and asks for his prayers.[131] But, says Henry, some may dismiss this as fanciful: man will certainly not last that long, and in fact will not last long at all, for the end is upon us now in 1135.[132] To tackle this belief, Henry harks back to Augustine: for each man, his own death is the end of the world, and this is the

[128] R. H. C. Davis, 'Bede after Bede', in *Studies in Medieval History presented to R. Allen Brown*, ed. C. Harper-Bill, C. J. Holdsworth & J. L. Nelson (Woodbridge, 1989), 103-16, reprinted in R. H. C. Davis, *From Alfred the Great to Stephen* (London, 1991), 1-14; A. Gransden, 'Bede's reputation as an historian in medieval England', *JEH* 32 (1981), 397-425, reprinted in her *Legends, Traditions and History*, 1-29.
[129] Campbell, 'Some twelfth-century views', 212-13.
[130] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 494.
[131] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 496. Henry here warms to his theme of 'contemptus mundi', which he developed at greater length in a tract on the subject included later in the eighth book. See also Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 11-48.
[132] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 498.

proper subject of reflection and apprehension, rather than the end of time itself; besides, the date of the latter is not for us to know.[133] Henry also tips his hat in the direction of a more recent authority, Herbert Losinga, bishop of Norwich, who (according to Henry) used to say that the time of grace would last as long, if not longer, than the time of law; for 'truth will endure much longer than symbol, light than shadow'.[134] If 5000 or so years elapsed before Christ, then should we not expect at least another 5000 years of earthly life? Henry is convinced: 'I agreed with the bishop when he said this, and still agree'.[135]

Robert Bartlett has suggested that Henry was unusual in believing what he did.[136] This must remain a matter for conjecture. Henry was clearly taking aim at entrenched opinion on the subject, but we cannot say how widespread this was.[137] In general, on the basis of the evidence adduced, we might be inclined to approve the view of Richard Southern with which we opened this section. But so far we have overlooked one author who should certainly be considered in this discussion: Geoffrey of Monmouth. For in Geoffrey's *Gesta Britonum*, one of the most widely circulated texts of the twelfth century, we have what seems a very obvious interweaving of the destiny of a people and the ultimate fate of the world.[138]

There is some agreement that this intriguing production was an attempt to do for the British people what William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon were doing for the English; whether this was seriously intended or simply a parody has, however,

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[133] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 498.
[134] '...multo amplius durabit ueritas quam figura, lux quam umbra': Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 498-99.
[135] 'Hec dicenti episcopo consentiebam et consentio': Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 498-99. In the mid-fourteenth century this passage was excerpted by Henry of Kirkestede for his anthology of Antichrist texts, on which see below, 207-8.
[136] Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, 655.
[137] One wonders whether the emphatically anti-apocalyptic outlook of the *Vita et visio et finis simplicis Orm*, written by one Sigar around 1126, and addressed to Symeon of Durham, was intended as a contribution to contemporary debates on the subject: see below, 215-16.
[138] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Gesta Britonum*, ed. & tr. M. D. Reeve & N. Wright (Woodbridge, 2007).

been debated.[139] More intriguing, perhaps, is the suggestion that in Geoffrey's work we see the 'removal from history of the idea of eschatological fulfilment', and the substitution of a cyclical interpretation of history in which Britain, 'like other nations, rises, flourishes, and falls'.[140] This I would dispute. Consider Geoffrey's treatment of Arthur. The model for Arthur is, as Judith Weiss has ably demonstrated, the figure of the Last World Emperor.[141] Arthur, like this apocalyptic figure, emerges at a time of crisis, makes sweeping conquests, and brings peace. And Arthur's eschatological role is underscored by the Prophecies of Merlin, which Geoffrey had circulated before *Gesta Britonum* and then incorporated into this larger work.[142] The precise meaning of this intractable text is, perhaps deliberately, left unclear. Yet amidst the gnomic utterances and oblique animal imagery the broad parameters are discernible: the Britons will be restored to their rightful hegemony in the island.[143] This merely articulated an expectation that was current in the twelfth-century among the Celtic peoples; and however much it was derided by Anglo-Norman writers, the belief did prove to be something of a thorn in the side of the Anglo-Norman establishment.[144] But the

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[139] A good range of assessments can be found in C. N. L. Brooke, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth as a historian' in *Church and Government in the Middle Ages: essays presented to Christopher Cheney on his seventieth birthday*, ed. C. N. L. Brooke, D. Luscombe, G. Martin & D. Owen (Cambridge, 1976), 77-91; R. R. Davies, *The Matter of Britain and the Matter of England* (Oxford, 1996); V. I. J. Flint, 'The *Historia Regum Britanniae* of Geoffrey of Monmouth: parody and its purpose. A suggestion', *Speculum* 54 (1979), 447-468; J. Gillingham, 'The context and purpose of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 13 (1990), 99-118, reprinted in his *The English in the Twelfth Century: imperialism, national identity and political values* (Woodbridge, 2000), 19-39.

[140] Hanning, *Vision of History*, 171.

[141] J. Weiss, 'Emperors and Antichrists: reflections of empire in insular narrative, 1130-1250', in *The Matter of Identity in Medieval Romance*, ed. P. Hardman (Cambridge, 2002), 87-102; idem, 'Arthur, Emperors, and Antichrists: the formation of the Arthurian biography', in *Writers of the Reign of Henry II: twelve essays*, ed. R. Kennedy & S. Meecham-Jones (Basingstoke, 2006), 239-48.

[142] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Gesta Britonum*, 143-59. A useful discussion of the prophecies may be found in A. Lawrence-Mathers, *The True History of Merlin the Magician* (London, 2012), 29-30, 70-80.

[143] The animal symbolism inevitably recalls the Books of Daniel and Revelation, but there are also parallels with Byzantine apocalyptic traditions, which developed independently of this. Gildas was also a possible source: M. J. Curley, 'Animal Symbolism in the Prophecies of Merlin', in *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages: the bestiary and its legacy*, ed. W. B. Clark & M. T. McMunn (Philadelphia, 1989), 151-63.

[144] C. Bullock-Davies, '"Exspectare Arturum": Arthur and Messianic hope', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 39 (1981), 432-40. According to Gerald of Wales, the exhumation of Arthur and Guinevere at Glastonbury in 1191 was at the instigation of the now-dead Henry II, who was looking for a way of

Prophetia Merlini did undoubtedly add a new dimension to Geoffrey's historical project, insofar as they show that he is thinking not only in terms of the glorious past deeds of the Britons but in terms of their future. As such, it seems fair to credit Geoffrey with the reinvigoration of a more overtly eschatological historiography than had recently been practised in England.

His success can be measured in terms of the interest in Merlin's prophecies, which was considerable. Numerous commentators observed how contemporary events could be seen as fulfilments of its various cryptic prognostications.[145] Orderic Vitalis and Suger, early readers of the prophecies, noted that Henry I was certainly the 'Lion of Justice' mentioned in them.[146] Suger himself described Merlin as 'one who saw and related the entire future of the English', thus implicitly distancing the prophecies from their more incendiary British roots.[147] John of Cornwall, on the other hand, underscored the ethnic tensions underpinning the work, predicting the overthrow of the Normans and the return of British dominance in the island.[148] This was not, however, the customary approach.[149] Somewhat ironically, Geoffrey's prophecies were also used to cast a mantle of legitimacy over Angevin political ambitions. Gerald set out to offer a prophetic justification of Henry II's conquest of Ireland in his *Expugnatio Hibernica* of

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deflating Welsh and Breton hopes: Gerald of Wales, *De principis instructione*, ed. G. F. Warner, Rolls Series 21 (London, 1861-91), viii, 128.

[145] J. Blacker, 'Where Wace feared to tread: Latin commentaries on Merlin's prophecies in the reign of Henry II', *Arthuriana* 6 (1996), 36-52; Lawrence-Mathers, *Merlin the Magician*, 74-94.

[146] Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. & tr. M. Chibnall, OMT (Oxford, 1968-80), vi, 388; Suger, *Vita Ludouici Grossi regis*, ed. H. Waquet (Paris, 1964), 98.

[147] 'Anglorum sempiterni euentus mirabilis spectator et relator': Suger, *Vita Ludowici*, 98.

[148] John of Cornwall, who was writing around 1153, relied not only on the prophecies of Merlin published by Geoffrey but a number of other prophecies attributed to Merlin, which he claimed to have translated from the Welsh: John of Cornwall, *Prophetia Merlini*, ed. M. J. Curley, *Speculum* 57 (1982), 231-40. See also M. A. Faletra, 'Merlin in Cornwall: the source and contexts of John of Cornwall's *Prophetia Merlini*', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 111 (2012), 304-38.

[149] Some of the anonymous commentaries have been printed: see J. Hammer, 'A Commentary on the *Prophetia Merlini* (Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Book VII)', Speculum 10 (1935), 3-30, & Speculum 15 (1940), 409-31; idem, 'Another Commentary on the *Prophetia Merlini* (Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Book VII)', *Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America* 1 (1942-3), 589-601; idem, 'Bref commentaire de la *Prophetia Merlini* du ms 3514 de la Bibliothèque de la Cathédrale d'Exeter', in *Hommages à Joseph Bidez et à Franz Cumont* (Brussels, 1949), 111-19.

1189, which he usually referred to as the *Historia Vaticinalis*.[150] He intended its third book to be a register of the native Welsh prophecies of Merlin Celidonius, whom he distinguished from Geoffrey of Monmouth's Merlin Ambrosius: the former, he claimed, lived in the time of Arthur, the latter in the time of Vortigern.

This overtly propagandist deployment of Merlin's prophecies was only possible through a highly selective reading of Geoffrey's text, which, however gnomic in detail, left few doubts about the overall course of British history. Yet one could go further and argue that political readings of the text themselves failed to appreciate the breadth of the prophetic vision. For Merlin's prophecies are not only concerned with the future of Britain; in fact, they include the end of the world, which is described predominantly in astrological terms.[151] It is for this reason that they had currency not only in Britain but across Europe, where they often circulated alongside more traditional apocalyptic treatises.[152] And there were commentators in England who picked up on this aspect of the prophecies. Of particular interest is an interlinear commentary found in a manuscript of the *Gesta Britonum*, now British Library, Cotton MS Claudius B. vii. This commentary covers all of Merlin's utterances, rather than ending at the point where the text is held to refer to contemporary events. As such, the prophecies are gleaned not only for their political and national ramifications but also for their eschatological significance. Thus the character who appears at the end to 'intervene with timbrel and lute and soothe the lion's rage' is identified as Enoch, while his

[150] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, ed. & tr. A. B. Scott & F. X. Martin (Dublin, 1978). On Gerald's use of prophecy more generally, see R. J. Bartlett, 'Political prophecy in Gerald of Wales', in *Culture politique des Plantagenêt (1154-1224): actes du colloque tenu à Poitiers du 2 au 5 mai 2002*, ed. M. Aurell (Poitiers, 2003), 303-11.
[151] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Gesta Britonum*, 159.
[152] See Lawrence-Mathers, *Merlin the Magician*, 170-91. I do not subscribe to the view that the prophecies were of merely political and secular import, for which see M. J. Curley, 'A new edition of John of Cornwall's *Prophetia Merlini*', *Speculum* 57 (1982), 217-49, at 228.

apocalyptic companion Elijah is identified with the 'knight in a chariot', who will stand against the Cornish wolf, representing the sedition of Antichrist.[153]

Awareness of the eschatological scope of the prophecies does not of course mean that they were invoked with any sense of apocalyptic urgency. The author of the interlinear commentary discussed above reaches his own time after only a third of Geoffrey's text has been exhausted, and we can only assume that he saw the later stages as quite far off. This conclusion was drawn more emphatically by another commentator, who was writing in the 1170s.[154] He begins his far more extensive commentary by claiming Merlin as a genuine prophet of repute, in the tradition of other pre-Christian seers (such as Job and the various Sibyls).[155] Having exhaustively matched Merlin's utterances to past and present events, in the manner of other commentators, he then devotes a whole book to Merlin's prophecies of future events (future, that is, to the commentator).[156] At the end of this, he is satisfied that Merlin's prophecies of future times are indeed valuable; but he also concludes that the end of history is still far off, for Merlin's prophecies stretch far into the future, and the Roman Empire has not yet fallen away.[157] In other words, he used Merlin's prophecies as a yardstick for the proximity of the end of history. Now it would have been perfectly feasible for another commentator to reach a rather different conclusion by seeing in recent events the fulfilment of later stages of the prophecies; and it is interesting to consider the

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[153] Hammer, 'A Commentary on the *Prophetia Merlini*', 429 (glossing Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Gesta Britonum*, 159).
[154] *Libri septem explanationum in Prophetiam Merlini Ambrosii Britanni* (Frankfurt, 1603). This commentary purports to be the work of 'Alanus de insulis', i.e. Alan of Lille; but this attribution was decisively rejected by G. R. De Lage, *Alain de Lille: poète du XIIe siècle* (Montreal, 1951), 13-15. See also M.-T. D'Alverny, 'Alain de Lille: problèmes d'attribution', in *Alain de Lille, Gautier de Châtillon, Jakemart Giélée et leur temps*, ed. H. Roussel & F. Suard (Lille, 1980), 27-46, at 29-36.
[155] *Libri septem explanationum*, 5. The status of Merlin, as well as the Sibyl and certain Old Testaments figures, was debated at the time. For the disagreement of Clarembald of Arras and a Flemish monk on the issue, see R. Bartlett, 'Political prophecy in Gerald of Wales', 305.
[156] *Libri septem explanationum*, 238-69.
[157] 'Habemus sane certissima quedam indicia, quod nondum instet consummatio mundi, non solum ex libro hoc, qui in tempora adhuc longa prophetat, sed etiam defectionem Romani Imperii, quam precedere oportet': *Libri septem explanationum*, 269.

possibility that in keeping track of the fulfilment of Merlin's prophecies contemporary observers did have one eye on the End Times. Lacking definite evidence in favour of this, we must leave it for now. Nevertheless, it does seem that Merlin was interpreted in more far-reaching terms than those of contemporary Angevin politics and British resentment.

We have now demonstrated that the intersection of historical writing with eschatology in its various degrees of intensity is a fruitful subject for discussion; and, moreover, that we, like medieval chroniclers, need not be unduly restricted by Augustine's legacy when addressing this topic. We have also traced some of the continuities of eschatological discourse, in its spiritualised and historicised forms, through to the resurgence of apocalyptic ideas in the twelfth century, while noting a lack of response from the first wave of English chroniclers after the Norman Conquest. This is where the present thesis picks up the thread.

We should briefly outline the course of what follows. The thesis is divided into five chapters. The subject of the first chapter is the chronicler Ralph Niger. Ralph wrote two world chronicles. In the first and longer chronicle Ralph brings his narrative to a climax of distinct apprehension on the eve of the Third Crusade: he offers an extended account of the ills afflicting Christendom at this time, giving particular attention to the usurpation of church rights by Henry II and Frederick Barbarossa, and seems to suggest that these are signs of the impending end of Christendom. These criticisms of church and society are in fact carried over from a slightly earlier work, *De re militari*: here Ralph expresses scepticism about the crusade preparations currently being undertaken in response to the fall of Jerusalem in October 1187, since crusade, properly understood, must entail individual holiness and commitment to the reform of Christendom as a whole, rather than simply being a matter of pilgrimage to the Holy

Land. In essence Ralph sees the Third Crusade as a distraction from more fundamental problems facing Christendom, which he identifies at length; when he came to write his longer chronicle he sought to put these in the context of Christian history and its imminent end. The existence of Ralph's second world chronicle, a wholly new work written a decade later, may indicate that Ralph was attempting to revise his pessimistic narrative of world history in the light of subsequent events. Unfortunately he does not appear to have finished his chronicle, but it was given longevity, perhaps more than it deserved, at the hands of the Cistercian monks of Coggeshall Abbey. This brings us to our second chapter, which examines the gradual construction of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* of Ralph of Coggeshall. The construction was indeed gradual, involving many accretions over a period of over thirty years, though Ralph's central role in this remained undiminished. We will see how a chronicle initially conceived as a response to the situation in the Holy Land became, like Ralph Niger's, a much wider-ranging narrative of world history underpinned by a particular eschatological awareness; this was partly achieved through the prefacing of the text with Ralph Niger's second chronicle, and partly through the augmentation of the text with details of portents and astronomical phenomena. Far from being a straightforwardly 'national' history, as it is often considered, Ralph's chronicle was a work influenced by much broader and deeper currents of political and religious development. Ralph's interest in the crusading movement may also be seen in his continuation and circulation of a Templar crusading text, the *Chronicon terre sancte*.

Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall both give particular attention to the work of Joachim of Fiore, the Calabrian visionary whose anti-Augustinian theology of history attracted interest and condemnation in equal measure. Yet during his lifetime Joachim's radical views were not so well known; we shall see that in England he was recognised,

more straightforwardly, as a prophet of Antichrist. The third chapter accordingly revolves around the contemporary English chronicle accounts of Joachim, for whom these are among our earliest witnesses. It is striking that Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall, and also the French chronicler Robert of Auxerre, were privy to detailed information on the abbot; in fact all three seem to have consulted the same text, an early schematic diagram drawn up by Joachim to convey his ideas in somewhat simplified form. While this chapter was being written an article was published in a memorial volume for Marjorie Reeves, which covers much of the same ground.[158] While I agree with many of the author's conclusions, particularly on Ralph of Coggeshall, there are points in his argument that I would not support; and I would like, if possible, to throw the net a little wider and look more closely at the accounts of Joachim that he only briefly discusses, where there is, in my view, more to say. For that reason, this particular part of the thesis has been left intact.

The fourth chapter considers the use of Joachim by Roger of Howden. Roger's treatment of Joachim has been recognised as a pivotal part of his *Chronica*, certainly for the purposes of dating the work, though its significance in the context of Roger's overarching narrative has not been considered. We will argue not only that Roger attests Joachim's thought with accuracy, but also that his investment in Joachim's prophecies about Richard I and the Third Crusade form the centrepiece to a chronicle that is marked by an increasing eschatological awareness, which culminates in a remarkable climactic passage on the loosing of the Devil.

In the fifth chapter, we step back from Joachim and the English chroniclers in order to examine the contemporary reform movement. Joachim, after all, was merely

[158] C. Egger, 'A Pope without successor: Ralph of Coggeshall, Ralph Niger, Robert of Auxerre, and the early reception of Joachim of Fiore's ideas in England', in *Joachim of Fiore and the Influence of Inspiration: essays in memory of Marjorie E. Reeves (1905-2003)*, ed. J. E. Wannenmacher (Farnham, 2013), 145-79.

one particularly distinctive voice in this general climate of reformist zeal, perhaps most notably associated with Pope Innocent III and the Parisian circle of Peter the Chanter. The interest our chroniclers took in the personalities and aims of this movement is immediately apparent; and in some cases compelling arguments can be made for their personal connections with the reformers. In this chapter we shall also examine another work of Ralph of Coggeshall, the *Visio Thurkilli*, in which a reformist message is promulgated with a distinctive underpinning of eschatological urgency. Finally, in our conclusion we will devote some space to the St Albans chronicler Matthew Paris, whose *Chronica Maiora* encapsulates many of the preoccupations of our chroniclers while at the same time maintaining the strong institutional focus that they lack.

Ralph Niger

Ralph Niger is one of the least-studied English writers of the twelfth century. If he is known at all, it is usually for his views on two subjects: the Third Crusade, of which he was an unusually outspoken critic, and Henry II, whom he detested.[1] The Third Crusade is addressed in a treatise entitled *De re militari et triplici via peregrinationis Ierosolimitane*, which remains his most famous work.[2] Henry II, meanwhile, is given excoriating treatment in both of Ralph's chronicles, which, along with most of his writings, have not received the attention they deserve.[3] Hanna Krause, the most recent editor of the first and longer of the two chronicles, designated this one the 'World' Chronicle ('die Weltchronik') and the second and shorter the 'English Chronicle' ('die englische Chronik');[4] but this nomenclature is not entirely satisfactory, since both chronicles are, strictly speaking, 'world' chronicles, and the English content of the shorter chronicle, while more extensive than that of its predecessor, is not really sufficient to justify Krause's label. We shall simply distinguish these texts as the longer and shorter chronicles.

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[1] E.g. J. Gillingham, 'Conquering kings: some twelfth-century reflections on Henry II and Richard I', in *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: essays presented to Karl Leyser*, ed. T. Reuter (London, 1992), 163-78; reprinted in his *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 105-18, at 106; C. Tyerman, *England and the Crusades 1095-1588* (Chicago, 1988), 39, 43, 59, 62; W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (London, 1991), 380.

[2] Ralph Niger, *De re militari et triplici via peregrinationis Ierosolimitane*, ed. L. Schmugge (Berlin, 1977). There is a valuable discussion of the text by G. B. Flahiff, 'Deus non vult: a critic of the Third Crusade', *Mediaeval Studies* 9 (1947), 162-88.

[3] One footnote is devoted to them by Gransden: *Historical Writing in England*, 222 n. 16. Both chronicles were edited by Robert Anstruther for the Caxton Society: *Radulfi Nigri Chronica*, ed. R. Anstruther (London, 1854). The longer chronicle was more recently edited by Hanna Krause: Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. H. Krause (Frankfurt am Main, 1985). The shorter chronicle lacks a modern edition; references to this text will be to Anstruther's edition. Still valuable as an introduction to these chronicles is R. Pauli, 'Die Chroniken des Radulfus Niger', *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften und der Georg-Augusts-Universität zu Göttingen* (1880), 569-89.

[4] H. Krause, *Radulfus Niger, Chronica: eine englische Weltchronik des 12. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main, 1985), 18-24.

Ralph did not confine himself to historical writing, and there survives in Lincoln Cathedral Library a seven-volume set of his biblical commentaries, which cover Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Kings, Chronicles and Ezra, but remain unprinted.[5] Also included in this set are his *De re militari*; the self-explanatory *Epithome Veteris Testamenti in Paralipomenon*; a set of Marian offices, entitled *De quatuor festiuitatibus Beate Marie Virginis*; and a treatise on Hebrew names, alternately titled *Philippicus* (after Philip, a convert to Christianity who served as Ralph's Jewish interpreter) or, more prosaically, *De interpretationibus Hebreorum nominum*.[6] As this list suggests, it is somewhat misleading to think of Ralph as principally a chronicler; like Bede, he would no doubt have scorned a label that glossed over his more numerous theological works.[7] Although his chronicles and crusade treatise will attract most of our attention in what follows, we shall see that in some ways these writings were extensions of his theological oeuvre. A distinction between the two is arbitrary and should be avoided.

We may say a little about Ralph's life and career, as far as it is known, though we can only summarise the admirable accounts given elsewhere.[8] He was probably born

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[5] Lincoln Cathedral MSS 15, 23-7. See R. M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln cathedral Chapter Library* (Woodbridge, 1989), 13-14, 18-20. This was originally an eight-volume set; one volume, containing Ralph's commentaries on Genesis and Exodus, was loaned to the canons of Thornton Abbey and never returned. Bury St Edmunds had another set of Ralph's works, of which only a single volume remains, containing his *De re militari* along with some sermons of Peter Comestor and the *Allegorie hystoriarum* that were attributed to the latter. This is now Pembroke College, Cambridge, MS 27: N. R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain* (2nd ed., London, 1964), 17. A note above the list of contents reads 'Hunc librum scribi fecit frater Willelmus de Dice': Pembroke MS 27, f. 1r. William of Diss was at one point schoolmaster of Bury, and we may infer that he was responsible for having the whole set copied. William makes a few appearances in the chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond, and wrote the short piece on the lands of Robert Cockfield that is appended to Jocelin's text in the one complete surviving manuscript, British Library Harley MS 1005: Jocelin of Brakelond, *Chronica*, ed. H. E. Butler, NMT (London, 1949), 44, 113, 138-39.

[6] These last three tracts also remain unprinted. Ralph's command of Jewish sources is assessed by A. Saltman, 'Supplementary notes on the works of Ralph Niger', *Bar-Ilan Studies in History* 1 (1978), 103-13. See also R. Loewe, 'The medieval Christian Hebraists of England: Herbert of Bosham and earlier scholars', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 17 (1953), 225-49, at 247.

[7] 'Later generations, considering the long series of Bede's commentaries, placed him in the succession of the great fathers of the church. He himself would certainly have wished to be remembered by these works of exposition': F. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (3rd ed., Oxford, 1971), 185-6. The same point is made by Markus, *Bede and the Tradition of Ecclesiastical Historiography*, 13.

[8] The most important study remains G. B. Flahiff, 'Ralph Niger: an introduction to his life and works', *Mediaeval Studies* 2 (1940), 104-26. See also A. J. Duggan, 'Ralph Niger', *ODNB*; Krause, *Radulfus*

around 1140, though this date is merely inferred from his presence at the schools in Paris in the 1160s and his designation as 'Magister' by 1168.[9] He first appears in the records in 1166 as the recipient of a letter written by John of Salisbury: this was a response to Ralph's request that John use his influence with Thomas Becket on behalf of Ralph's friend Richard of Ilchester, archdeacon of Poitiers, who had been excommunicated by Thomas Becket that same year.[10] John's reply being deemed unsatisfactory, Ralph wrote again in some urgency, and got another vacillating response; but John at least took the time to applaud Ralph's studies, and it is from this letter that we can locate Ralph in Poitiers (referred to by John as 'a chatterbox and windbag city') in the summer of 1166.[11] We know that Ralph had studied in Paris under the canonist Gerard Pucelle;[12] Gerard left Paris in 1165, implying that Ralph was himself resident in the city before 1165.[13] His master's departure for Cologne may have prompted his own departure to Poitiers. In Paris Ralph very probably had contact with

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Niger, 5-17; L. Schmugge, *Radulfus Niger: De re militari et triplici via peregrinationis Ierosolimitane* (Berlin, 1977), 3-14.

[9] Flahiff, 'Ralph Niger', 104; John of Salisbury, *Epistole*, ed. W. J. Millor, H. E. Butler & C. N. L. Brooke, NMT/OMT (London/Oxford, 1955-79), no. 277 (ii, 590-98, at 594).

[10] John of Salisbury, *Epistole*, no. 181 (ii, 198-204). A letter of Ralph himself to Conrad of Mainz, probably dating from 1182, tells us that Ralph had previously introduced Conrad to Thomas Becket: the letter is printed in M. Preiss, *Die politische Tätigkeit und Stellung der Cisterzienser im Schisma von 1159-1177* (Berlin, 1934), 261. Preiss suggested that this meeting took place at Sens in the summer of 1165, when Ralph was based in Paris but associating with Becket's circle. Anne Duggan believes it could have taken place as early as November 1164: *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury 1162-1170* (Oxford, 2000), i, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

[11] John of Salisbury, *Epistole*, no. 182 (ii, 204-8). Flahiff argued, not unconvincingly, that the reference was to Paris (Flahiff, 'Ralph Niger', 106 & no. 13), but the editors of John's letters observe that the circumlocution was one he had deployed elsewhere when referring to Poitiers.

[12] In the prologue to his *Moralia in libros Regum*, he refers to Gerard Pucelle as his master: Lincoln MS 26, f. 1r. Gerard probably had some influence on the exegetical approach of this particular commentary, in which King David signifies justice, and his sons the various sorts of legal procedure: Amnon, for instance, represents old custom and Absalom, who has Amnon killed, Roman Law. The work has been used as evidence for the tradition that the study of Roman Law began with the elusive Pepo, and was furthered by his successor Irnerius: H. Kantorowicz & B. Smalley, 'An English theologian's view of Roman Law: Pepo, Irnerius, Ralph Niger', *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies* 1 (1941-3), 237-52.

[13] When Gerard Pucelle refused to be reconciled with Becket, John of Salisbury wrote to him (probably in May 1168); John says he has instructed Master Ralph Niger to write to Gerard an account of their recent efforts to have Gerard received back into communion: John of Salisbury, *Epistole*, no. 277 (ii, 594). If Ralph did ever write this, it has not survived.

the school of St Victor; he cites the work of Richard of St Victor, and adopted a similar method of exegesis, in his biblical commentaries.[14]

Gervase of Tilbury named Ralph, 'litteratus ille nostri temporis uir', as a fellow courtier at the court of the Young King.[15] The anonymous continuation to his shorter chronicle states that Ralph was expelled from England by Henry II;[16] we do not know when or how this came about. Possibly it was in some way a result of his association with the Young King, or of his ardent support for Thomas Becket, though, as Flahiff pointed out, Ralph's presence on the continent during the years of the Becket dispute seems to have been expressly for the purpose of study rather than as a consequence of exile, and he was certainly on good terms with Henry II's clerk Richard of Ilchester.[17] Whatever the case, Ralph's hostility towards Henry is very plain: witness the damning remarks about the king in both chronicles, as well as a reference to him as 'my persecutor' in his letter of 1182 to Conrad of Mainz.[18]

By the end of Henry II's reign Ralph seems to have returned to England. He occurs c.1188 with several Lincoln canons in a charter of Boarstall Priory.[19] The possibility that he became a canon of Lincoln, as this charter seems to imply, is

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[14] Schmugge, *Radulfus Niger: De re militari*, 37; and see below, 69.
[15] Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperalia*, ed. & tr. S. E. Banks & J. W. Binns, OMT (Oxford, 2002), 186. Gervase attributes to Ralph a verse gloss on the *Topica* and *De sophisticis elenchis* of Aristotle, and provides two lines from it. Though this work of Ralph's has not survived, we have no particular reason to doubt Gervase's testimony; the association of these two Aristotelian works in Ralph's commentary no doubt reflects their association in manuscript form, a contemporary example being the copy recorded in the late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century catalogue of the Augustinian abbey of Waltham: *The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons*, ed. T. Webber & A. G. Watson, Corpus of British medieval library catalogues 6 (London, 1998), A38.65 (p. 435). There is also a copy recorded in the catalogue of c.1192 from Reading Abbey: *English Benedictine libraries: the shorter catalogues*, ed. R. Sharpe, J. P. Carley, R. M. Thomson & A. G. Watson, Corpus of British medieval library catalogues 4 (London, 1996), B71.177 (p. 445).
[16] 'Hucusque protraxit hanc chronicam magister Radulfus Niger, qui, accusatus apud predictam principem et in exilium pulsus, ob expulsionis iniuriam atrociora quam decuit de tanto ac tam serenissimo rege mordaci stilo scripsit': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 169.
[17] Flahiff, 'Ralph Niger', 106-7. See also L. Schmugge, 'Thomas Becket und König Heinrich II in der Sicht des Radulfus Niger', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 32 (1976), 572-79.
[18] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 274-7, 283-4; Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 167-9; *Die politische Tätigkeit*, 261.
[19] *Fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1066-1300*, ed. D. E. Greenway (London, 1968-2005), iii, 136, 165.

strengthened by his appearance in the Curia Regis Rolls in 1194 contesting a prebend of Lincoln.[20] If he did have such a prebend, then he would have been in good company: Walter Map and Ralph de Diceto also seem to have had prebends at Lincoln around this time.[21] Nor should we overlook Gerald of Wales, who was also based in Lincoln in the latter half of the 1190s as a student of the chancellor William de Montibus.[22] These four authors, all secular clerks, criticised or satirised many of the social and ecclesiastical ills they witnessed around them, and in particular the practices of the Black Monks.[23] As we shall see later in the thesis, Lincoln was a notable centre of reform during the episcopate of Hugh of Lincoln (1186-1200), with links to the circle of Peter the Chanter, and given what we know of Ralph Niger's interests it was perhaps an obvious place for him to go when he returned from exile.[24]

We lose sight of Ralph very early in John's reign: a charter of the king, dated 31 August 1199, confirms to one Roger Crispus the grant of a house in London (that used to belong to 'Willelmi Speciari') under the same terms that he had previously granted it to 'magistro Radulfo Nigro' while Count of Mortain.[25] The original grant must have been in the decade 1189-99, and suggests that Ralph had served in John's administration. The grant to Roger Crispus in turn suggests that Ralph had died by 31 August 1199, though we cannot say for certain; and beyond this we have no evidence.

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[20] *Rotuli Curiae Regis*, ed. F. Palgrave (London, 1835), i, 87. The name of the prebend has been almost completely erased in the original roll; Greenway suggests 'Luwe' a mysterious prebend that is named in connection with other canons: *Fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1066-1300*, iii, 136.
[21] *Fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1066-1300*, iii, 13, 16, 36, 135.
[22] Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, ed. J. S. Brewer, Rolls Series 21 (London, 1861-91), iii, 3-122, at 93.
[23] Walter Map satirised the Benedictines mercilessly in his *De nugis curialium*, ed. & tr. M. R. James, C. N. L. Brooke & R. A. B. Mynors, OMT (Oxford, 1983), 50-62, 68-112; Gerald of Wales took a less satirical, though no less critical, line in such works as his *Speculum ecclesie*, ed. J. S. Brewer, Rolls Series 21 (London, 1861-91), *passim*. In the autograph of his *Ymagines historiarum*, Ralph de Diceto made a number of hostile comments on the Benedictine Order, only to erase these passages in the late 1190s: Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series 68 (London, 1876), i, 267-440, ii, 3-174, at i, 389, 404. For Ralph Niger's criticisms, see below, 59, 71. See also D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 1963), 662-78.
[24] See below, 217-19.
[25] *Rotuli Chartarum*, ed. T. D. Hardy (London, 1837), i, 22.

As we have already observed, Ralph was first and foremost an author of scriptural commentaries and other theological works. He provides a list of them near the end of his first chronicle.[26] In any case, we can be sure that they were completed by 1191, for a letter of Pope Clement III, dated 7 February 1191, instructs Guy of Noyers, Archbishop of Sens, to arrange, at Ralph's request, an examination of his works by the learned men of the province;[27] and we also possess the report of Guy to Clement's successor, Celestine III, stating that the works have been examined and found to be free of error.[28] According to the report, Guy divided up the volumes between himself and Archbishop William of Rheims.[29] Guy himself examined the second part of the *Moralia in libros Regum*, giving the first part to a certain 'magistro Petro Anglico canonico et aliis canonicis', who has yet to be identified. The *Epithome Veteris Testamenti in Paralipomenon* and *Remediarium Esdre* he sent to Abbot Milo of St Marien, Auxerre, while the *Digestum Numeri* went to the abbot and canons of the Cistercian house of Loc-Dieu. We do not know which of Ralph's works were entrusted to William of Rheims, though they probably included his commentaries on Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, and perhaps *De re militari*; the latter work, addressed to Philip Augustus, was begun after the fall of Jerusalem on 2 October 1187 and completed before Philip's departure for the Holy Land in July 1190, and possibly even before the same king's taking of the Cross on 21 January of 1188.[30] The salient point to draw from this is that Ralph, not unusual among medieval authors, took steps to affirm

[26] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 286-7; see below, 61. Ralph claims to have written 'Septem Digesta super Heptaticum', but there is no trace of the commentaries on Joshua and Judges that this assumes.
[27] W. Holtzmann, *Papsturkunden in England*, Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse Neue Folge 25, Dritte Folge 14, 15, 33 (Berlin, 1930-52), ii, no. 258. Clement III died in March 1191, and the commission was repeated by Celestine III on 24 April 1191: Holtzmann, *Papsturkunden in England*, ii, no. 259.
[28] Holtzmann, *Papsturkunden in England*, ii, no. 259. This report very probably dates from 1192, but could not at any rate be later than 1193: Flahiff, 'Ralph Niger', 109 n. 34.
[29] William of Rheims had presumably received an identical command from Pope Clement III.
[30] Schmugge, *Radulfus Niger: De re militari*, 15-16. See below, 66-67.

the orthodox credentials of his writings, perhaps with a view to having them read more widely. That he was successful in this is implied by the swift procurement of his works for the libraries of Lincoln and Bury St Edmunds. This is worth bearing in mind as we look at the contemporary relevance, as well as the potentially rather challenging undercurrents, of his some of his productions.

The longer chronicle

Ralph seems to have embarked on his chronicles late in his career: the longer chronicle was, by Krause's reckoning, a product of the period 1195-7, followed by the shorter chronicle in the couple of years that preceded Ralph's death.[31] But if these are the latest of his works they are by no means the least, and are quite unworthy of the obscurity to which they have been consigned.

The longer chronicle begins with the Creation and ends with the death of Duke Leopold V of Austria in 1194. It is found in two manuscripts, British Library Cotton MS Cleopatra C. x (C) and Lincoln Cathedral MS 15 (L). Both date from the thirteenth century; three different hands can be discerned in C, whereas L is written in one hand only. A crucial difference between the two manuscripts is the division of the narrative in L into four books, a division absent in C. Yet, as Krause observed, the large number of shared errors (including some significant instances of homeoteleuton) point towards the dependence of both manuscripts on a common exemplar; this exemplar was probably itself corrupt, and separated from the original text by at least one intermediary.[32] C was at some point revised with reference either to L or to their

[31] H. Krause, *Radulfus Niger*, 23. The dating of the shorter chronicle is discussed in more depth below, 76-77.
[32] Krause, *Radulfus Niger*, vi-ix.

common exemplar, for in the margin an attempt has been made to supply additional words and give some indication of the division into books.[33]

One omission that was not rectified during the revision of C is the passage that in L closes the third book.[34] Here Ralph acknowledges his reliance hitherto on earlier historical works and announces that for more recent history he will use what he himself heard or saw; he also submits his work to the correction of its readers.[35] Ralph certainly did rely on earlier authorities, in particular the Bible, Jerome's translation and continuation of Eusebius' *Chronicon*, the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Hugh of Fleury, and the world chronicle of Sigebert of Gembloux.[36] We should not of course take at face value his claim to jettison the work of other authorities when he came to his own century, though the terse annalistic style he employs makes it especially difficult to assess this.[37] The fact that he chose to write a world chronicle at all is surely of some significance: he was clearly interested in delineating the course of history in its fullest possible extent.[38] But again, Ralph's concision and clear dependence on earlier authorities makes it hard to identify any particular themes or preoccupations that he himself carried through the text. Krause maintains that Ralph is especially attentive to the struggle between orthodoxy and heresy throughout Christian history, and draws

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[33] Krause, *Radulfus Niger*, ix.
[34] Krause rejects the possibility that this passage was an addition to the exemplar made by the scribe of L: Krause, *Radulfus Niger*, viii-ix.
[35] 'Priora de historiis et cronicis aliorum excepimus et pleraque sequentium. Verum ea que prope tempora nostra acciderunt uel etiam diebus meis accidunt lacius expandi secundum ea que prius audiui aut uidi et a ueridicis latoribus accepi. Ego tamen et de prioribus et de sequentibus non erubesco corrigi meis in quibus deliqui; et ideo hec cronica sicut et alia scripta mea omnia ad emendandum prudentiorum uirorum committo judicio': Lincoln MS 15, f. 55v; Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 259.
[36] On Ralph's sources, see the extensive commentary by Krause: *Radulfus Niger*, 42-135.
[37] Krause strikes a suitably cautious note in his assessment of Ralph's sources, especially for the fourth book; that said, I cannot accept all his suggestions, particularly on Ralph's use of the *Gesta* of Roger of Howden, which is in any case precluded by the probable date of the longer chronicle: Krause, *Radulfus Niger*, 115-23.
[38] The world chronicle enjoyed something of a revival in the twelfth century, being produced in greater quantities and a wider range of countries than ever before. See K. H. Krüger, *Die Universalchroniken*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental 16 (Turnhout, 1976), 37.

sharp contrasts between virtuous defenders of the faith and brutal pagan rulers;[39] but this hardly seems surprising for a work of this scope, and the details are invariably carried over from Ralph's sources.

Occasionally he ventures details not in his source material. One example may be found very early in the chronicle. In his summary of Genesis 5, Ralph mentions Enoch and his removal to Paradise by God. He adds: 'Hence it is foretold that he will come with Elijah in the last days to fight against Antichrist.'[40] Now the tradition that Enoch and Elijah would return to preach and fight against Antichrist was a well-established one, devolving ultimately from earlier exegetical attempts to identify the 'Two Witnesses' of Revelation 11.[41] So there is nothing particularly novel here; but the fact that Ralph has taken the trouble to elaborate on it may give some indication of his outlook at the time of writing.

Ralph only properly shows his hand in the fourth and final book of the chronicle. Of particular interest are the lengthy passages near its end, in which he describes the fall of Jerusalem and offers a captivating, though pessimistic, *tour d'horizon* of Christendom at this time.[42] To summarise briefly: Ralph recounts the battle of Hattin in July 1187, the loss of the Holy Land to Saladin's forces, and the resolution of the Western rulers to launch a crusade.[43] Henry II, having promised to go on crusade after the death of Thomas Becket, was able to evade this promise by bribing Pope Urban III, but was compelled by Urban's successor, Pope Gregory VIII, 'who could not be bribed with any money', and who had previously been the legate assigned

[39] Krause, *Radulfus Niger*, 35-36.
[40] 'Unde uenturus esse preconatur, nouissimis diebus, cum Helya, ad confligendum cum Antichristo': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 3.
[41] 'Et dabo duobus testibus meis, et prophetabunt diebus mille ducentis sexaginta, amicti saccis': Rev. 11:3. For early Christian attestations of Enoch and Elijah's role, see e.g. *Evangelium Nicodemi*, ed. H. C. Kim, Toronto Medieval Latin Texts 2 (Toronto, 1973), 46.
[42] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 278-86.
[43] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 278-9.

to England in the aftermath of Becket's death.[44] Henry II died amidst his sons' revolt in 1189, and Richard succeeded him, whereupon Queen Eleanor was released from captivity.[45]

Ralph then launches into an extended lament for the decline of religious life.[46] Frederick Barbarossa brought schism upon the Church, while Henry II (simply styled 'that king, under whom the blessed Thomas, martyr of the English, suffered')[47] took control of the Curia through money, and so perpetrated much evil, including an attempt to subject the Grandmontines to lay control.[48] But the monastic orders could be complicit in their own ruin. Ralph singles out the Cluniacs and the Cistercians, 'the two chief columns' of the monastic life, whose members had hitherto spurned any aspiration to ecclesiastical office and in so doing had avoided squandering the purity of their ideals; in recent times this high-mindedness has been abandoned.[49] And as the religious life collapsed into laxity and indulgence, so did the secular: luxurious attire and lavish expenditure on military matters were the order of the day, and in fields of learning the

[44] 'Mortuo uero Urbano misere, sedit papa Gregorius septimus, qui nulla pecunia corrumpi potuit, ne prefatus rex uel Crucem acciperet uel ab uniuersa Ecclesia excommunicaretur': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 279-80. In other words, Gregory had been the legate before whom Henry had made his crusading vow at Avranches in 1172: see Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 53. 'Gregorius septimus' is a mistake, for it is clear that Ralph is referring to Gregory VIII. The error may have been Ralph's; equally plausibly, Ralph's autograph read 'VIII', which was then miscopied as 'VII', and then written out as 'septimus' by the scribes of the two extant manuscripts, working from the same corrupt exemplar.

[45] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 282. Ralph says that Eleanor was called 'the eagle of the broken treaty' ('...nobilis regina Alianor, dicta aquila rupti federis'). This phrase derives from the prophecies of Merlin: Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Gesta Britonum*, 149. Ralph does not seem to have applied this to Eleanor himself, given his use of the word 'dicta'. He may have found the epithet in the *Ymagines historiarum* of Ralph de Diceto, who gives a detailed explanation of how Eleanor fulfilled this particular prophecy: Ralph de Diceto: *Ymagines historiarum*, ii, 67. Krause was inclined to believe this (*Radulfus Niger*, 133, 236), but although Ralph de Diceto did initially take his chronicle to 1190, there is no firm evidence that it was circulated in this form, and even if it had been it does seem rather unlikely that Ralph Niger would have been able to obtain a copy so quickly.

[46] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 282-6.

[47] 'Ille rex, sub quo passus est beatus Thomas martyr Anglorum': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 283.

[48] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 282-4. According to Ralph, Henry's nefarious designs on the Grandmontines were thwarted when the monks appealed to Philip Augustus. This appears to be a rather contentious interpretation of the revolt of the order's lay-brothers in the mid-1180s, which was settled in favour of the monks by the intervention of Philip, and then confirmed by Pope Clement III in 1188. See E. M. Hallam, 'Henry II, Richard I and the order of Grandmont', *Journal of Medieval History* 1 (1975), 165-86, at 170-71. Walter Map makes a similar criticism: *De nugis curialium*, 114.

[49] 'Eodem tempore declinauit etiam monastica religio, quoniam precipue columne eius due, uidelicet Scisterciensis abbas et Cluniacensis...': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 284.

study of secular laws prevailed, to the detriment of divine and pagan writings.[50] Indeed, 'the fog of luxury clouded the eyes of princes, so that their lust slavered after men rather than after women'; and women were similarly corrupted.[51] Rounding off this pessimistic tableau is a list of the broader tribulations afflicting the peoples of Europe at this time, including 'strife between kings, slaughters of people, numerous heresies of the impious, and the schisms of crooked men'.[52]

There is nothing unusual about these criticisms. To take one example, his attack on fashions of education, specifically the increasing prevalence of legal over literary studies, echoes that made by his one-time correspondent John of Salisbury, whose *Metalogicon*, completed in 1159, was the most sustained defence of the liberal arts in the face of this threat.[53] Gerald of Wales shared Ralph's and John's concerns; in his *Gemma ecclesiastica*, composed in the late 1190s, he castigated ecclesiastics who studied 'the laws of Justinian' out of greed and ambition. But Gerald also invoked the opinion of one Parisian master that these developments signalled the fulfilment of the Sibyl's prophecy: 'The days will come, and woe to them, in which the laws will wipe out knowledge of letters'.[54] Gerald does not specifically endorse this view. But Ralph Niger, I would argue, does precisely this. He follows his extended critique with a passage that deserves to be quoted in full:

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[50] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 284-5.
[51] 'Excecauit oculos principum fumus luxurie, ut in masculos magis quam in sexum femininum libido despumaret. Nec minus ardor mulierum in sexu suo degenerauerat': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 285.
[52] '...discordie regnorum, strages populorum, hereses impiorum numerose, et schismata peruersorum hominum': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 286.
[53] John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, ed. J. B. Hall & K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (Turnhout, 1991).
[54] 'Episcopus autem ille, de quo nunc ultimo locuti sumus, inter superficiales numerari potuit, cuiusmodi hodie multos nouimus propter leges Justinianas, que literaturam, urgente cupiditatis et ambitionis incommodo, adeo in multis iam suffocarunt, quod magistrum Mainerium in auditorio schole sue Parisius dicentem, et damna sui temporis plangentem, audiui, uaticinium illud Sibille uere nostris diebus esse completum, hoc scilicet: "Venient dies, et ue illis, quibus leges obliterabunt scientiam literarum."': Gerald of Wales, *Gemma ecclesiastica*, ed. J. S. Brewer, Rolls Series 21, ii, 3-364, at 349. On the context of the *Gemma*, see below, 194 n. 33. I have not been able to trace Mainerius's Sibylline quotation; it does not occur in the standard Sibylline text edited by Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen: Pseudomethodius, Adso und die Tiburtinische Sibylle* (Halle, 1898), 177-87.

> In these days Joachim, a Cistercian monk, was suddenly made intelligent, having been almost illiterate; he wrote on the Apocalypse, and, distinguishing the openings of seals through past persecutions, in this way compared the New Testament with the Old Testament, and claimed that the Day of Judgement would soon come to pass, because the opening of the last seal, under which Antichrist would arrive, was now at hand. Geoffrey of Auxerre, once abbot of Clairvaux, also commented on the Apocalypse, with some deliberation, as it seemed. Others also made various compilations. Ralph Niger wrote seven digests on the Heptateuch. And he wrote *Moralia regum*, *Epitome Veteris Testamenti in Paralipominon*, and *Remediarium in Esdram*. He also wrote the book *De re militari et tribus uiis peregrinationis Hierosolymitane*, and the book *De quatuor festiuitatibus beate Marie uirginis*, and the book *De interpretationibus Hebreorum nominum*. And he wrote this chronicle.[55]

This passage contains several points of interest. In the first instance, Ralph was clearly aware of a number of contemporary eschatological writings. Two authors are named: Joachim of Fiore and Geoffrey of Auxerre. Discussion of the extent of Ralph's knowledge of Joachim must be reserved for its own chapter.[56] We may observe here that Ralph appears to have been somewhat cautious about Joachim's ideas. A measure of this can be gauged from his mention of Geoffrey of Auxerre, who wrote on the Apocalypse 'with some deliberation, as it seemed'.[57] Geoffrey did not have a high opinion of Joachim. In one sermon, of which only a fragment survives, Geoffrey delivered a searing attack on the Calabrian and his ideas and attempted to discredit him by claiming that he was of Jewish descent.[58] But we should not imagine that Geoffrey

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[55] 'His diebus Joachim quidam monachus Cisterciencis, a fere illiterato subito factus intelligens, scripsit super Apocalypsim, et apertiones sigillorum per preteritas persecutiones distinguens, quodammodo Nouum Testamentum Veteri Testamento comparauit, et diem iudicii proxime futuram asseuerauit, quia ultimi sigilli apertio, in quo Antichristus uenturus erat, a limine iam immineret. Galfridus quoque Altisidorensis, quondam abbas Clareuallensis, super Apocalypsim commentatus est, ut uisum est, discretius. Alii quoque scripserunt compilationes uarias. Radulfus Niger scripsit septem digesta super Eptaticum. Scripsit et moralia regum, et epithome Veteris Testamenti in Paralipominon et remediarium in Esdram. Scripsit etiam librum de re militari et tribus uiis peregrinationis Hierosolymitane, et librum de quatuor festiuitatibus beate Marie uirginis, et librum de interpretationibus Hebreorum nominum. Scripsit et hec chronica': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 286-7.

[56] See below, 150-60.

[57] 'Ut uisum est, discretius': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 286. Geoffrey is best known as the biographer of Bernard of Clairvaux.

[58] 'Ceterum dissimulare fratres non audeo, unde plurimum doleo, praesertim uidens eos dissumulantes quos nullatenus oporteret. Ecce enim quartus e celo cecidit Cato, nouo genere prophetandi sine certa uel

was necessarily any less convinced than Joachim about the imminence of the End Times. His sermons on the Book of Revelation, delivered to the Cistercian community at Altacomba in 1187-1188, during his final year as abbot there, suggest quite the opposite: Geoffrey is keen to discourage incredulity and evasiveness on the subject, and offers a decidedly Gregorian call to reform and vigilance in the face of the impending *consummatio seculi*.[59] So Ralph has clearly taken some trouble to familiarise himself with a range of contemporary eschatological viewpoints, though we can only speculate as to the nature of the 'compilationes uarias' also cited. However, the important point is this: in introducing these authors here Ralph is attempting to base the developments he has chronicled on an eschatological foundation. Ralph has reached a sustained climax of uncertainty and foreboding. Christendom seems to be in disarray, and, like Master Mainerius in Gerald's report, Ralph imbues this with prophetic significance. Ralph had begun with Creation, and here he nods in the direction of the Last Judgement; the reader has been led through the history of the world and is brought in sight of the end of that history. In short, the chronicle could be seen as Ralph's particular contribution to the proliferation of eschatological writings that he says was characteristic of the time.

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propheticis aliis simili reuelatione, ex abundante scientia uel intelligentia scriptuarum quas sibi inuicem conferunt de aduentu regni Dei et prima quadam resurrection, his qui prurient auribus, iam non modo susurrunt, sed blasphemas disseminans nouitates. Ex iudaeis orta persona est, in iudaismo, quem necdum satis euomuisse uidetur, annis pluribus educate, que sicut per eos qui certius cognouerunt tandem nobis innotuit, licet non solus ipse sed etiam pares suos potissimum a uobis et suas hactenus quam studiose poterant absconderint aquas. Nec mediocrem confert ei auctoritatem ipsum barbarum nomen: dicitur enim Ioachim. Quod de nullo diebus nostris meminimus nos audisse, ut in baptism retinuerit nomen quod in iudaismo prius habuerat. Multorum etiam habitus noster ei conciliat animos, et quod cisterciensis ordinis cum uoluerit monachum sese exhibit et abbatem esse. Nam et olim quidem exstitit, sed ab annis iam...': ed. H. Grundmann, 'Zur Biographie Joachims von Fiore und Rainers von Ponza', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 16 (1960), 437-546, at 546.

[59] E.g. 'Quod prenuntiat Veritas, quod pollicetur cito futurum, sine ulla hesitatione credamus, ne forte, quod absit, longior reputata dilatio fiat perinde dissolutionis, incredulitatis et murmurationis occasio': Geoffrey of Auxerre, *Super Apocalypsim*, ed. F. Gastaldelli (Rome, 1970), 62. Geoffrey retired to Clairvaux shortly afterwards, where he oversaw production of a revised version of the text, now Troyes, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 990. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS Lat. 687, another Clairvaux production, was copied from it not much later. Geoffrey's work should, I think, be seen as another response to contemporary events, an interpretation lent considerable support by its date.

Now the chronicle, as it survives in both manuscripts, continues past this point. We may accordingly be inclined to view Ralph's comments as a record of a passing phase of agitation and reflection on behalf of many writers in Christendom. Yet it is much more likely that he originally intended to end with the passage provided above.[60] After such a lengthy meditation on the contemporary state of affairs, the resumption of the narrative feels decidedly anticlimactic. More significantly, Ralph's mention of Joachim of Fiore and Geoffrey of Auxerre is followed by a list of his own writings, which recalls other, similar, passages with which earlier chroniclers finished their works: we may remind ourselves that Bede closed his *Historia ecclesiastica* in such a way, and he was by no means unusual in doing so.[61] In fact, Ralph's *tour d'horizon* of the state of Christendom is akin to Bede's concluding survey of the state of Britain in 731.[62] That Bede was the model in this case is impossible to establish beyond doubt, but the resemblances are striking and the possibility is certainly tenable in view of Bede's strong influence on twelfth-century historiography.[63]

We now have cause to revise Krause's dating of the chronicle. The evidence suggests that Ralph undertook his chronicle in the years following the fall of Jerusalem, but before the Third Crusade had been properly launched. The last mentioned events up to this point are: the death of Henry II, the accession of Richard I, and Frederick Barbarossa's arrival in Byzantine territory in the late summer of 1189.[64] Ralph's account of Frederick's activities in Byzantine territory is worth considering. According to him, Frederick set out for Jerusalem but directed his forces instead to Constantinople,

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[60] Krause acknowledges this possibility, almost in passing, but disappointingly fails to spell out its implications: Krause, *Radulfus Niger*, 242.
[61] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 566-70. See also Gregory of Tours, *Libri historiarum X*, ed. B. Krusch & W. Levison, *MGH SRM* (Hanover, 1937-51), 534-7. The tradition ultimately goes back to Josephus: M. Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History, 400-1500* (Manchester, 2011), 49.
[62] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 556-60. Cf. Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, vi, 550-56.
[63] See above, 39-40 & n. 128.
[64] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 280-3.

occupying Byzantine territory and besieging the city itself.[65] Frederick in fact did no such thing. It is true that relations with the Byzantine emperor Isaac Angelus were, to say the least, tense: Frederick's army found the routes through Thrace blocked by order of the emperor, and his ambassadors were held captive in Constantinople. Having fought his way through these obstructions, he stationed his army in Thrace while negotiations were conducted. Certainly he contemplated an attack on the city, and wrote to his son and regent Henry VI requesting naval reinforcements for such an enterprise; but in the event Isaac decided that he had insufficient resources to counter this offensive, and a treaty was concluded in Hagia Sophia on 14 February 1190. The German crusaders promptly moved on to the Holy Land.[66] Ralph seems to have been writing this particular passage without any knowledge of the treaty, though seemingly with enough information to infer that Frederick had besieged Constantinople. And if he had known about Frederick's abrupt death in June 1190, we might reasonably expect him to have drawn a moralising conclusion about this monarch's perversion of his crusading vow. With this in mind, our supposition of an early date of composition is strengthened, and we may justifiably suggest that Ralph was writing at the end of 1189 or the beginning of 1190.

The chronicle of course continues to 1194, winding up with the death of the Duke of Austria, so we should assume that after the passing of a few years, when the Third Crusade had foundered, Ralph took up his pen once more.[67] Krause thought the composition of the whole chronicle should be ascribed to the years 1195-1197, for there

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[65] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 282-3.
[66] For the details of this, see *Itinerarium peregrinorum et gesta regis Ricardi*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series 38 (London, 1864), i, 44-7; C. Tyerman, *God's War: a new history of the Crusades* (London, 2006), 421-5.
[67] The death of the Duke of Austria may have provided a convenient stopping place, inasmuch as it could be reckoned a divine judgement for his capture of Richard I. In general the English chroniclers were at pains to emphasise this: see e.g. Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 65-66; William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, ii, 431-34.

is no mention of the death of Henry VI and the events that followed it, which would surely be fit subjects for a world chronicle; indeed, no events after 1194 are mentioned.[68] This is probably an accurate assessment of Ralph's continuation, but will not do for the bulk of the chronicle, which, as we have just explained, is likely to have been written several years earlier.

In the Lincoln manuscript the chronicle is accompanied by some of Ralph's other works, specifically his *De quatuor festiuitatibus Beate Marie Virginis*, *Philippicus* and *De re militari*. The other manuscript of Ralph's longer chronicle, Cotton Cleopatra C. x, is a composite manuscript whose contents were bound together later in the Middle Ages. We do not know what the original manuscript context was. But whoever bound the various texts together seems to have had a particular interest in material relating to prophecy, eschatology and the Holy Land. The Prophecies of Merlin immediately follow the chronicle;[69] another item is a Joachimite work on Antichrist known as the Columbinus prophecy, entitled 'Prophetia de Antechristo secundum sanctum Columbinum'.[70] Separating these are *De miraculis sancti Dei genetricis et perpetue virginis Marie* of William of Malmesbury, a sermon of St Anselm on Luke, an account of the legendary ruler Prester John that circulated in connection with the crusading movement, particularly in the early thirteenth century, and a brief treatise entitled 'Descriptio sanctorum locorum'.[71] The Prophecies of Merlin have been divided by the insertion of 'Ordinatio civitatis Norwicensis super electione maioris anglice', probably in the fifteenth century;[72] conceivably this gives us some indication of the composite

[68] Krause, *Radulfus Niger*, 23-4.
[69] Cotton Cleopatra C. x, ff. 56v, 67r-69v.
[70] Cotton Cleopatra C. x, ff. 157r-158r; on this interesting text, see E. R. Daniel & K. Kerby-Fulton, 'English Joachimism, 1300-1500: the Columbinus prophecy', in *Il profetismo gioachimita tra Quattrocento et Cinquecento: atti del III Congresso Internationale di Studi Gioachimiti*, ed. G. L. Podestà (Genoa, 1991), 313-50; reprinted in Daniel, *Abbot Joachim of Fiore and Joachimism*, article XVI.
[71] Cotton Cleopatra C. x, ff. 101r-144v; 145r-148v; 149r-156v; 156v-157r.
[72] Cotton Cleopatra C. x, ff. 57r-66v.

manuscript's provenance, though the additional insertion of some Glastonbury annals could suggest a connection with that monastery.[73]

Happenstance, rather than design, may have brought these texts together; but if the gathering was intentional, then the fact that the compiler saw fit to include Ralph's longer chronicle is worthy of remark. And from our examination of this text we may conclude that he was justified in doing so. For Ralph, the misfortunes of the Holy Land in the 1180s seem to have lent a new eschatological clarity to a whole host of other contemporary ills, such as the spread of heresy and the decline in monasticism. His chronicle should be seen as a response to this. Yet it could also be seen as a development, and to some extent a re-evaluation, of his views on the state of Christendom expressed in a work slightly earlier in date. To this we now turn.

De re militari

Ralph addressed the social and ecclesiastical ills of his time at greater length in what is now his best known work, the crusading treatise *De re militari et triplici via peregrinationis Ierosolimitane*. In spite of its title, this has almost nothing to do with Vegetius.[74] There is certainly an abundance of military terminology, covering the various arms and machinery of war; but Ralph's interest in them extends only to their symbolic significance.[75] The treatise is addressed to King Philip Augustus of France. It was written after the fall of Jerusalem in October 1187, and more probably after Gregory VIII issued the bull *Audita tremendi*, calling for a new crusade, on 29 October

[73] Cotton Cleopatra C. x, ff. 72r-100r.
[74] The title is Ralph's own, though he is not entirely consistent: in his longer chronicle he refers to it as 'Librum de re militari et tribus viis peregrinationis Ierosolomitane' (Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 287). Ralph was probably familiar with Vegetius' work, which was widely read in the twelfth century, and the echo, however misleading in practice, may have been intentional.
[75] Schmugge, *Radulfus Niger: De re militari*, 25. Schmugge suggests that Ralph may have picked up this knowledge from his time at the Young King's court.

1187. A *terminus ante quem* is provided by Philip's departure for the Holy Land in July 1190. We can be even more precise; given the force of the treatise is to give Philip pause for thought before taking the cross and going on crusade, it seems unlikely that it was begun after Philip had in fact taken the cross, which he did on 21 January 1188.[76] This does not mean that Ralph had necessarily completed his work by this date, for such would imply a remarkably brief period of composition; yet we should note that the treatise does bear many signs of being a hasty production.[77] We certainly do not err if we place the treatise in the years 1187-90, though a date of 1187-1188 seems most probable; and as *De re militari* is included in the list of works found in the longer chronicle, it must certainly predate this work.[78] But given that it stands close in time to the longer chronicle, the bulk of which should probably be dated to 1189-90, as we have seen, then it may be instructive to consider the two texts together rather than as distinct works; and as we shall see, they share similar themes and preoccupations, even if they are approached in somewhat different ways.

De re militari is often thought of as an anti-crusading text. This is not strictly correct. Ralph's professed purpose is in fact to assure the reader that a crusade of the kind being prepared in the West is of little benefit unless its participants undergo their own spiritual pilgrimage as well. He opens the prologue to the work with an elaboration of Hebrews 13:14: 'pilgrimage is the whole life of a man in this valley of tears, in which we do not have a lasting city, but look for the one that is to be'.[79] The following passage, from later in the work, is also indicative of his concerns: 'Whoever does not build Jerusalem within himself makes a physical pilgrimage to it in vain. For he who

[76] Schmugge, *Radulfus Niger: De re militari*, 15-16.
[77] Schmugge himself describes the work as 'frequently uneven and in many passages tiresome and monotonous': *Radulfus Niger: De re militari*, 23.
[78] See above, 61.
[79] 'Peregrinatio est tota uita hominis in hac ualle lacrimarum, in qua manentem ciuitatem non habemus, sed futuram inquirimus': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 92.

does not attain the vision of peace within himself, seeks it in vain outside of himself. He who is constantly at war internally does not delight in peace externally'.[80] Man must fortify himself with the weapons of spiritual combat and renewal before he can profitably undertake such a campaign in real life; Ralph, in the first book, gives an extended commentary on the various weapons and equipment that the knight needs, offering a spiritual interpretation of each. So, for instance, the chainmail of a knight signifies his faith, but it must be bound by the straps that represent good works, for as St James put it, 'faith without works is dead'.[81] His sword is the word of God, the horse which he bestrides is his flesh, which must be brought to obedience and service.[82] Ralph then launches into the account of the three paths of pilgrimage promised by the title. These are illustrated using well-established biblical tropes: one is the Israelites' journey out of Egypt to the Promised Land, the second is the Israelites' return from captivity in Babylon and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, as described in the two books of Ezra; the third is the release of Peter from Herod's prison, as described in Acts 12. We find the same allegorical exegesis deployed, the passage through the Red Sea, for instance, symbolising the sacrament of baptism.

So Ralph's concern is not simply to denigrate the idea of crusade; it is rather to extend its meaning and understand it not just as an external action in a particular field of operation, but an inner process by which one arrives at the celestial city. He certainly has no time for the idea that physical pilgrimage or crusade is a necessary component of salvation, and he remarks at the end of Book 2 that anyone who follows the path he has just set out 'is certainly no less deserving than the one who sets out on pilgrimage to

[80] 'Quicumque igitur in se non edificat Ierosolimam, frustra exterius peregrinatur ad eam. Qui enim uisionem pacis non adipiscitur intra se, frustra querit eam extra se. Non enim pace fruitur exterius, qui iugiter exturbatur interius': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 183.
[81] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 101.
[82] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 103.

Judea and journeys right to it'.[83] His emphasis is on individual reformation and holiness, without which an external crusade cannot be successfully fought. In this respect he may be distinguished from those critics who attacked specific aspects of the conduct of crusade, as well as those who pointed to past failures (in particular, the disastrous Second Crusade) as a warning against undertaking a new crusading enterprise.[84] All the same, Ralph recognises that the crusade will take place, in spite of his reservations, and accordingly he devotes a number of chapters to discussion of the types of people who should or should not go on crusade.[85] Monks, clerks, women, the poor, the elderly and the infirm all fail to obtain Ralph's seal of approval.

De re militari is perhaps best understood as an extension of Ralph's Old Testament commentaries.[86] His exegesis was squarely in the Victorine tradition; like Hugh of St Victor, he appreciated the necessity of understanding first the literal sense of Scripture before embarking on a spiritual interpretation.[87] Having laid this groundwork in his commentaries on the Books of the Pentatech and Ezra, in *De re militari* he was able to construct a tropological exegesis in which, for instance, the tribulations of the Israelites in the wilderness represent the perils of man's pilgrimage through life;[88] and, as we have already noted, he takes his tropological interpretation beyond the Bible to cover the equipment of war.[89] And there is of course a collective dimension to his picture of pilgrimage and salvation. The paths from Egypt to Jerusalem, and from Babylon to Jerusalem, are paths taken by the Israelites, the Chosen People of God.

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[83] 'Pro certo enim non minus ille meretur, qui sibi facit eam, quam ille, qui peregrinatus in Iudeam proficiscitur usque ad eam': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 159.
[84] See E. Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading 1095-1274* (Oxford, 1985), 190-97. Ralph only once invokes a previous crusade to give weight to his argument, namely when he reminds the reader of the burden on resources posed by a large contingent of clergy during the Second Crusade: Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 224.
[85] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 224-28. See also Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading*, 25-46.
[86] On the place of Ralph's commentaries in relation to twelfth-century biblical exegesis, see Schmugge, *Radulfus Niger: De re militari*, 33-40.
[87] Schmugge, *Radulfus Niger: De re militari*, 36.
[88] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 118-30, 143-60.
[89] Schmugge, *Radulfus Niger: De re militari*, 40.

Although Ralph deploys it as an image of personal salvation, it of course entails also the image of Christian society as a whole. And in connection with this Ralph reminds the reader of the host of dangers that assail Christendom no less than the individual. In seeking the earthly Jerusalem one should not lose sight of the heavenly Jerusalem; similarly, in attending to affairs in the East one should not lose sight of Christendom as a whole, nor the tribulations afflicting it.

Ralph thereby sets up a broad-ranging jeremiad against the deficiencies of church and society; though his tirade is disorganised and repetitive, the salient points may easily be extracted. His verdict on the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem is withering. It has become a corrupt den of thieves, so clouded with vice and luxury that its fall is inevitable.[90] Ralph says that he himself saw the Patriarch of Jerusalem and his entourage when they came to Europe, and notes that the luxuriance of their attire surpassed that of the Western princes.[91] This leads him to a straightforward conclusion: if the Christians of the Holy Land are entirely deserving of divine punishment, as they seem to be, is it not God's will that such catastrophe has befallen them? And if so, is it prudent to interfere with what has been divinely ordained? It is here that Ralph, unusual among his contemporaries, follows his argument to its logical conclusion. Many looked to the sins of the Holy Land as an explanation for the tribulations afflicting it; Ralph used this explanation to resist intervention.[92]

It is not quite so straightforward. Ralph, as we have already observed, urged caution rather than outright restraint. This is reinforced in a striking passage in which he advises a more compassionate approach towards the Saracens than was commonly

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[90] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 193-4. Ralph is, however, careful to exempt the Templars and Hospitallers from his strictures: 'Non sugillo Christi milites Templi neque fideles Hospitalarios, sed uulgus et proceres terre' (*De re militari*, 194).

[91] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 186-7. This must refer to the visit of the Patriarch of Jerusalem to Europe in 1184-5, whom Ralph probably saw in France. Ralph repeats the anecdote, adding a little more detail, at *De re militari*, 193-4.

[92] See Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 39.

offered.[93] Ralph reminds the reader that Saracens 'are men of the same condition of nature that we are'.[94] Certainly they must be opposed, but with moderation; what matters is that they come to true faith voluntarily, for 'he who seeks to spread the faith through violence exceeds the teaching of this faith'.[95] Ralph's reservations about the treatment of Saracens point up his reservations about the crusade as a whole. The Saracens are not simply enemies to be driven out, but opponents who deserve to be treated with moderation, befitting their humanity and also their role in the providential scheme, just as a crusade is far from being simply a physical endeavour centring on the Holy Land. In this respect, Ralph seems to point ahead to the following century, in which the missionary dimension of crusading was given greater prominence and prosecuted by the newly established Dominicans and Franciscans.[96] He also anticipates the criticisms of the crusading movement outlined by the followers of Joachim of Fiore.[97]

Consonant with his wide-ranging perspective, Ralph's criticisms extend further than the state of affairs in the Holy Land. He casts a sceptical eye over contemporary society and religious practice, and finds much to criticise. The religious orders, in particular the black monks, have squandered their possessions and let their houses fall into ruin, and have exchanged chastity for sexual indecency.[98] Laymen and prelates

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[93] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 196.
[94] 'Homines sunt eiusdem conditionis nature cuius et nos sumus': *De re militari*, 196.
[95] 'Quicumque ergo per uiolentiam fidem propagare querit, disciplinam fidei excedit': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 196.
[96] Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 149-76; J. R. S. Phillips, *The Medieval Expansion of Europe* (Oxford, 1988), 83-101.
[97] E. R. Daniel, 'Apocalyptic Conversion: the Joachite alternative to the Crusades', *Traditio* 25 (1969), 127-54, reprinted in his *Abbot Joachim of Fiore and Joachimism*, article XI. This discusses the ambivalent views of Joachim of Fiore on the subject, as well as the more flagrantly anti-crusade sentiments of many of his thirteenth-century followers, including the author of the Joachimite tract *Super Hieremiam* (long attributed to the Abbot himself). Joachim's seemingly hopeful predictions for the Third Crusade, as reported by Roger of Howden, are discussed below, 164-70.
[98] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 203. Ralph is careful not to implicate the Cistercians in this register of abuses, and makes a point of praising the order immediately after this condemnatory chapter. But he does observe that some of the poorer Cistercian houses cannot be held blameless; and in a later chapter he accuses the order of confusing acquisition of property with piety, noting that if such a vice has afflicted

alike have been overly ambitions, to the detriment of their offices and ministry, and waste their time in idle pursuits such as hunting.[99] Everywhere business transactions are marked by greed and unscrupulousness.[100] Students squander their talent in astrology; others cloak deceitful actions with eloquent words.[101] Knights have become so luxuriously outfitted that their horses can barely support the weight of their attire; soldiers have developed gluttonous habits.[102]

This is only one side of the coin. Christendom is in a state of moral torpor, but it is also afflicted by enemies within. The Saracens clearly pose a substantial threat, but in concentrating on these adversaries Western leaders have overlooked a more dangerous problem closer to home: heresy. In Ralph's exegetical scheme heresy is one of the dangers to be faced on one's spiritual pilgrimage through the wilderness: the Moabites of the Pentateuch represent the heretical enemies past whom the Israelites must travel safely.[103] But Ralph expands on this later in the treatise with reference to his own time. The West is so riddled with heretical sects 'that there is no-one who fully knows their number and their distinctions'.[104] Pope Alexander III undertook to have them investigated: eighteen were found in Lombardy. On top of this, there are said to be fifty sects across France.[105] In England, 'countless people profess these heresies openly, and have become so haughty that many churches are bereft of worship'.[106] This, in Ralph's eyes, is a more pressing danger than the situation in Palestine. And it will only get

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the otherwise praiseworthy Cistercian order, what can be said of the other religious orders? See Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 204, 211-2.

[99] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 204-6, 219-20.

[100] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 212-18.

[101] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 216, 219.

[102] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 222-3. It is these military vices, according to Ralph, that the clergy has emulated, though it has in many ways gone further in decadence.

[103] 'Per Moab enim, qui de nocte et in spelunca a patre sine matre natus est, intelliguntur heresiarche, quorum rex est Balac, quod est elidens uel inuolutus uel in lambitione': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 152. See also *De re militari*, 111.

[104] '...ut nemo sit qui earum numerum et differentias plene sciat': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 187.

[105] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 192.

[106] 'Infiniti aperte profitentur hereses suas, etiam adeo insolescere ceperunt, ut ecclesie multe omni cultura destituantur': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 192.

worse, if princes insist on emptying their lands of men and resources in order to fight in the Holy Land; for in the absence of these, how can the heretical tide be stemmed?[107] To use Ralph's analogy, who lets his own house be consumed in flames by going to put out another fire elsewhere?[108] The heretics must be fought, and their citadels of iniquity besieged: this gives Ralph the opportunity to deploy more military terms, siege engines representing the councils and synods that must be called to deal with the heretical threat, and battering rams the prelates who will strike down the heretic's walls, to give two examples.[109]

This litany of Christendom's ills should be familiar to us, for we have already encountered it in abbreviated form in Ralph's longer chronicle. The difference of context is interesting. With his first and longer enumeration of these ills Ralph is trying to paint a picture of a Christendom in which the troubled Holy Land is merely one of a number of arenas of moral struggle and reform. In his chronicle account he puts these ills in the context of world history as symptoms of a society on the edge of catastrophe. Now it could be said that this latter signals a new-found pessimism in Ralph's thinking: if *De re militari* was a call to reform and action on the broader stage of Christendom, then the longer chronicle finds Ralph in a more sombre mood, reflecting on the significance of Christendom's tribulations in the overarching scheme of history. By the time he wrote the chronicle, Philip Augustus had of course taken the cross, which Ralph had tried to dissuade him from doing in *De re militari*, and Frederick Barbarossa had already set out for the Holy Land.[110] It is certainly possible to identify ways in which his criticisms have sharpened between the writing of the two texts: one obvious example is his treatment of the Cistercian order, which is measured in *De re militari* but

[107] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 193.
[108] 'Quis usquam irruente incendio domum suam, eo presente ea indefensa, longe peregrinatur ad extinguendum alienum incendium?': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 193.
[109] Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 188-92.
[110] See above, 63-65.

notably harsher in the longer chronicle.[111] But we should be wary. If we think that these texts witness different stages of Ralph's thought, a complete change of opinion even, then we assume an inherent contradiction between, on the one hand, advocating reform of church and society, and, on the other hand, believing that the problems this reform sets out to address are signs of the imminent resolution of history. In fact there is nothing contradictory about this at all, as we have already argued.[112] Indeed, one could argue that the more wide-ranging historical and eschatological perspective evident in the chronicle gave definition to Ralph's views on the limitations of crusade and the need for a broader reform of Christendom. It is perhaps useful, then, to see *De re militari* and the longer chronicle as two facets of the same argument rather than as opposing works.

We should not overlook one particular passage in *De re militari*. Ralph closes the second book with a chapter entitled 'On the abolition of kings' ('De abolitione regum'), noting that just as in Israel and Judea the Babylonian Captivity brought an end to kings and kingdoms, so it may be at the end of time, 'according to what was known in advance through the oracles of prophets and is still predicted from the extensive evidence of difficulties that are arising as the end of time gradually approaches'.[113] Now this typological link between the Babylonian Captivity and the tribulations of the End Times is carried over from Ralph's earlier work, *Moralia in libros Regum*.[114] This commentary on the Books of Kings was written after the Third Lateran Council of

[111] See above, 59.
[112] See above, 30.
[113] '…secundum quod preconatum est prophetarum oraculis et prophetatur adhuc multis indiciis incidentium difficultatum paulatim appropinquante fine temporum': Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 160.
[114] Ralph Niger, *Moralia in libros Regum*, Lincoln Cathedral, MSS 25, 26. I have yet to subject this text to thorough study, so my remarks will be brief. There are some helpful comments on the work in P. Buc, 'Exégèse et pensée politique: Radulphus Niger (vers 1190) et Nicolas de Lyre (vers 1330)', in *Représentation, Pouvoir et Royauté à la Fin du Moyen Âge: actes du colloque organisé par l'Université du Maine les 25 et 26 mars 1994*, ed. J. Blanchard (Paris, 1995), 145-64.

1179, to which it refers, but before *De re militari*, which contains a reference to it.[115] In *Moralia Regum* Ralph takes the story of Israel from the death of King David to the Babylonian Captivity as a representation of the conflict between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* from the time of the first Christian martyrs to the end of the world. Under this scheme the division of the united monarchy under Jeroboam and Roboam signifies not only the division of Christendom into clergy and laity, but also the division between the Eastern and Western churches.[116] The two pillars of the Temple, meanwhile, signify *regnum* and *sacerdotium*; the latter will be destroyed in the End Times just as surely as the former were broken into pieces by the Babylonians prior to the Captivity.[117] And Ralph seems to glance rather tentatively in this very direction. At one point he offers the following elaboration on Christ's famous apocalyptic pronouncements in Matthew 24: 'At the end of time the charity of many shall grow cold, when the colder months shall come up to the end of the age. I certainly believe that we are those on whom the end of the age and the cold months have come'.[118] If Ralph sees in his own times a swift progress towards the apocalyptic resolution of the *Moralia Regum*, then his view on the subject in the longer chronicle is merely an outcrop of ideas that he had been developing for some time, even if the fall of Jerusalem and the launching of a new crusade caused him to think about them in new ways.

We have admittedly neglected much of Ralph's output: his many Old Testament commentaries await careful examination, not to mention a willing editor. But there is one further work that we may use to assess the state of Ralph's thought at the end of his

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[115] Ralph Niger, *Moralia in libros Regum*, Lincoln Cathedral, MS 25, f. 188v; Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 192. Flahiff considered a date of around 1180, on the grounds that John of Salisbury is mentioned in the prologue to the second volume, but with no indication of his death on 25 October 1180: Flahiff, 'Ralph Niger', 119.
[116] Ralph Niger, *Moralia in libros Regum*, Lincoln Cathedral, MS 26, ff. 83r-84r.
[117] Ralph Niger, *Moralia in libros Regum*, Lincoln Cathedral, MS 26, ff. 173v-174r.
[118] 'In fine uero temporum refrigescet caritas multorum, quando uenient menses frigidiores usque in finem seculi. Credo utique, quod nos sumus, in quos fines seculorum deuenerunt et menses frigidi': Ralph Niger, *Moralia in libros Regum*, Lincoln Cathedral Chapter MS 26, f. 23v.

life, even though it is in many ways a deficient text for this purpose. This is Ralph's second and shorter chronicle.

The shorter chronicle

The shorter chronicle was to be Ralph's last work. It begins with the Creation and ends in 1180, fourteen years before the end-point of the longer chronicle; yet as it is not mentioned in the list of writings that initially closed the longer chronicle, it is rightly assumed to be the later of the two. Internal evidence confirms this. The shorter chronicle, in the middle of a passage on Louis the Stammerer, refers to the death of Emperor Henry VI in 1197 and the civil war that followed; as mention is made of the elections of both Philip of Swabia and his rival Otto, the passage must have been written after July 1198, when the second of these took place.[119] A reference to Innocent III as pope confirms the supposition, and when we find 'Hubertus qui regem Johannem iunxit' in a list of the archbishops of Canterbury near the end of the chronicle, we have grounds on which to consider a date of composition after 27 May 1199.[120]

As such, we may reasonably assume that Ralph was working on this chronicle when he died, hence the narrative's somewhat abrupt end in the year 1180.[121] As such, we lack the section of the chronicle that would have been most valuable to us, namely that covering the final two decades of the century. In the absence of this, any attempt to

[119] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 152.
[120] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 153; British Library, Cotton MS Vespasian D. x, f. 34r. Anstruther omitted Hubert's name, possibly because the manuscript is scratched at this point and the words in question are not very legible.
[121] The chronicle concludes with a famous tirade against Henry II, more far-reaching and caustic than anything that appears in the longer chronicle: Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 167-9. The occasion for this screed is not, as one might expect, the death of the king, but rather the death of his contemporary Louis VII, whose outstanding virtues Ralph is at pains to emphasise. If Ralph had envisaged the chronicle stretching further than this point, one wonders why he introduced this material here, unless he saw the death of a virtuous king as a suitable springboard for an attack on one he deemed considerably less virtuous; it is equally plausible that he brought this tirade forward when he knew that he would not live long enough to include it in its proper place.

assess Ralph's outlook at the end of the century is severely constricted. Yet the fact that Ralph attempted a second world chronicle is in itself significant. We may recall that he began his first chronicle most probably in 1189-1190, and then added a short continuation around the middle of the 1190s. Why, then, did he begin a second one? And can this second chronicle illuminate to any degree the workings of the first? The suggestion implicit in Krause's nomenclature is that the second was more concerned with England and England's place in world history; but, as we have said earlier, the designation of this second chronicle as the 'English' chronicle is misleading.[122] But given that this is so, does Ralph merely retread the same ground, or does he offer something new?

Ralph's overly florid preface does not give us any satisfactory answers. After making conventional apologies for the inelegance of what he is writing, Ralph sets out his aim, which is to amalgamate and harmonise writings of past authors, so that 'what we have obtained from wide reading may, at the dictating of style, fall into order, from which everything may be made one, just as one number is created from individual numbers, and one harmonious tune from numerous different sounds'.[123] One could wish for no better statement of the aspirations underpinning the Twelfth-Century Renaissance, and as far as the chronicle is concerned Ralph is true to his word. More emphasis is given to calculations of time. This interest was not wholly absent from the longer chronicle, but in the shorter Ralph seems to be much more intent on comparing a range of scholarly opinions on matters relating to the dates of key Old Testament events, the ages of certain Old Testament characters at death, and ultimately the age of the world itself. The first section of the chronicle is little more than a series of such

[122] See above, 50.
[123] '...ut quod diuersa lectione quesiuimus stylo digerente in ordinem coalescat, unde unum fiat ex omnibus, sicut unus numerus fit ex singulis, unus concentus ex dissonis innumeris': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 105.

calculations: Ralph delineates the various ages of the world and gives their respective lengths in years.[124] In the end, he reckons a total of 5198 years from the Creation to the Incarnation, and notes that the Septuagint reckons 5330, Orosius and Jerome 5199, Isidore 5210 and Bede 4052.[125] Throughout the chronicle events are dated according to the number of years that have elapsed since the Creation.

Ralph prides himself on his calculations, but he is also indebted to a source that he does not seem to have used in compiling his first chronicle. This is the *Scholastica Historia* of Peter Comestor, written around 1170 while he was Chancellor of Notre-Dame.[126] Peter's work was a monumental synthesis of biblical history, classical writings and patristic thought that covered events from the Creation to the Ascension;[127] though Ralph's coverage of this period was, as we have seen, limited (amounting to a mere couple of pages in the printed edition), his use of the *Scholastica Historia* is easy to discern. Sometimes the borrowings are verbatim. Here is Peter Comestor on the duration of the first age of the world:

> Porro Noe fuit decimus ab Adam, in quo prima etas terminata est, ita quod et ipse in ea fuerit. Huius etatis annos LXX ponunt duo milia ducentos quadraginta quatuor, Ieronimus non plene duo milia, Methodius duo milia. Ipse tamen per ciliades secula disponit, nec apponit annos si supersint, et ideo nichil certum de numero annorum tradidit.[128]

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[124] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 106-7.
[125] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 107-8. Bede in fact reckoned this (controversially) as 3952: see above, 26. The error, whether Ralph's or a copyist's, presumably arose from the omission of 'C' from MMMCMLII or IIIMCMLII.
[126] On Peter's career see S. R. Daly, 'Peter Comestor: master of histories', *Speculum* 32 (1957), 62-73.
[127] Particularly good on Peter's sources is M. C. Sherwood-Smith, *Studies in the Reception of the Historia Scholastica of Peter Comestor: the Schwarzwälder Predigten, the Weltchronik of Rudolf von Ems, the Scolastica of Jacob van Maerlant and the Historiebijbel van 1360* (Oxford, 2000), 1-14.
[128] Peter Comestor, *Scholastica Historia: Liber Genesis*, ed. A. Sylwan, CCCM 191 (Turnhout, 2005), 59. Although Ralph's debt to Peter is clear, he has given a different figure for the duration of the first age according to the Septuagint (2142 years, as opposed to Peter's 2144 years). Possibly this was carried over from his own manuscript of the *Scholastica Historia*. Yet Ralph's figure is in fact the correct rendering of the Septuagint genealogies, suggesting that Ralph had in front of him the text of the Septuagint, or, more precisely the Latin version which was based on it, and did not slavishly borrow from Peter Comestor.

And here is Ralph on the same:

> Ab Adam usque ad diluuium sunt anni duo milia, CCXLII, secundum LXX interpretes, secundum Hieronymum non plene II milia, uerum, secundum Methodium cui Dominus in carcere oranti reuelauit de statu prime etatis, fuerunt II milia. Sed hic Methodius martyr etatem mundi per chiliades distinxit.[129]

That Ralph had the *Scholastica Historia* in front of him need not surprise us, for the work swiftly proved popular: within two decades of its publication, there were at least 25 manuscripts in circulation.[130] As he used it so enthusiastically in the second of his chronicles, but not at all in the first, we may reasonably assume that he obtained access to it after he had finished work on the first but before he began work on the second, in other words, during the course of the 1190s. It has been argued that the *Scholastica Historia* was introduced into England via the abbey of St Albans: the house had connections with St Victor, where Peter almost certainly researched his work, and where early copies were produced.[131] The earliest English manuscript to survive is London, British Library Royal MS 7 F. iii, which was written in 1191-2 by a professional scribe, Robert of Bedford, at the instigation of the Abbess of Elstow, a Benedictine nunnery in Bedfordshire.[132] We cannot say where Ralph saw the *Scholastica Historia*, but it seems likely that in deploying it he was taking advantage of

[129] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 106.
[130] A. Sylwan, *Petri Comestoris Scholastica Historia: Liber Genesis* (Turnhout, 2005), xxxii.
[131] Sylwan, *Petri Comestoris*, xxxii.
[132] Sylwan, *Petri Comestoris*, xxxviii. By the end of the twelfth century there was also a copy in the library of Peterborough Abbey; though it does not appear to have survived, we can assign its production to the period of Abbot Benedict's tenure (under whose auspices the copy was made), in other words to 1177-1193. As such, it was probably copied before the production of Elstow's manuscript. See *Peterborough Abbey*, ed. K. Friis-Jensen & J. Willoughby, Corpus of British medieval library catalogues 8 (London, 2001), BP3.12 (p. 17).

the circulation of the text, either for the first time or on a larger scale, in the England of the 1190s.[133]

The *Scholastica Historia* was in the end of limited use to Ralph, as he was most cursory when it was fullest; and there is little evidence that it afforded him a chance to rethink his conception of world history. If an opportunity to use Peter Comestor's work provided the inspiration for this chronicle, then we should expect its influence to loom larger. As it is, the remainder of the chronicle proceeds to cover much the same ground as his previous attempt.[134] Lacking the contemporary detail that would perhaps have clarified its purpose, the shorter chronicle as it stands is, in the end, disappointingly opaque. But whatever his ambitions were, they seem to have necessitated the creation of a new chronicle rather than the revision of an existing one. Any attempt to explain this is bound to be somewhat speculative. Nevertheless, we may venture one possibility. *De re militari* and the longer chronicle were, as we have seen, products of a particularly tumultuous few years between the fall of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade. At a distance from the heady climate in which he had first outlined them, Ralph may have found it expedient to revise his historical and reformist views, especially if the expected end had not materialised. On this reading, the existence of a second attempt at compiling a world history may attest the extent to which the first was underpinned by a specific historical and theological scheme that was somewhat hostage to the circumstances in which it was developed. But if the shorter chronicle did in some way constitute a retraction or rethinking of its author's earlier views, then it is perhaps ironic

[133] It is worth noting that the *Scholastica Historia* was dedicated to William of the White Hands, then Archbishop of Sens and later Archbishop of Rheims; William would later act as one of the censors of Ralph's theological writings in 1191, and it may conceivably have been through him that Ralph obtained access to a copy. William's learning and patronage are discussed by J. R. Williams, 'William of the White Hands and men of letters', in *Anniversary Essays in Mediaeval History by students of Charles Homer Haskins*, ed. C. H. Taylor (Boston, 1929), 365-87.

[134] There are occasional differences, though these tend to be trivial. For example, in the shorter chronicle he locates the ninth wave of persecution of the Christians under the Emperor Aurelian (270-5), whereas in the longer chronicle this reign is noted as marking a change for the better in the status of the church: Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 121; Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 95.

that it was to be appropriated within a few years by a chronicler who in many ways shared these earlier views. This chronicler was the Cistercian Ralph of Coggeshall, the subject of our next chapter.

Ralph of Coggeshall

We now turn our attention to the *Chronicon Anglicanum* of Ralph of Coggeshall.[1] This has been more widely studied than either of Ralph Niger's chronicles, yet its author, like Ralph Niger himself, remains something of an enigma. What little we know about him may be gleaned from the pages of the chronicle with which he has always been associated. Ralph was a monk of the Cistercian house of Coggeshall in Essex, and later its abbot from 1207 to 1218, when he resigned due to ill health after an abbacy of eleven years and two months.[2] The abbey of Coggeshall itself was originally a Savigniac foundation of 1140;[3] the founders were King Stephen, in whose county of Mortain the parent house of Savigny lay, and his wife Matilda, whose father Eustace, Count of Boulogne, had owned the manor of Coggeshall.[4] It joined the Cistercian order, along with all Savigniac houses, in 1147.[5] As abbot, Ralph had to negotiate the difficult latter half of King John's reign, in which the English Cistercian houses suffered especially;[6] the *Chronicon Anglicanum* is less fulsome on these years than one would expect, for reasons that we will shortly discuss. We know that Ralph received commissions from Pope Innocent III and the Cistercian General Chapter: in the first of

[1] The chronicle was edited by Joseph Stevenson for the Rolls Series, and this has remained the standard edition: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, ed. J. Stevenson, RS 66 (London, 1875), 1-208.
[2] Ralph's accession and departure are recorded in the chronicle *sub annis* 1207 and 1218: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 162-3, 187. On the abbey of Coggeshall (and Essex monasticism in general) see *The Victoria History of the County of Essex*, ed. J. H. Round et al. (Oxford, 1903-), ii, 125-6. On Ralph himself, see D. Corner, 'Ralph of Coggeshall', *ODNB*; Freeman, *Narratives of a New Order*, 179-213; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 322-31; Sharpe, *Latin Writers*, 445-46. Ralph's entry in the old *Dictionary of National Biography* claims that he was 'a native of Bernewell, Cambridgeshire': W. Hunt, 'Ralph of Coggeshall', *Dictionary of National Biography* 11 (London, 1887), 223. I have not been able to find any evidence to corroborate this statement.
[3] Coggeshall was one of two Savigniac foundations in Essex, the other being the 1135 foundation at Stratford Langthorne; in 1153 these recently converted Cistercian houses were joined by the monastery of Tilty, colonised by monks of Warden Abbey in Bedfordshire. See *VCH Essex*, ii, 129, 134.
[4] Not long after its foundation the abbey was embroiled in a dispute with the Cluniac priory of Rumilly in Boulogne: John of Salisbury, *Epistole*, i, 5-6.
[5] On the early history of the abbey see G. N. Hartcher, 'Coggeshall Abbey: the first hundred years', *Journal of Religious History* 12 (1982), 125-39.
[6] Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 366-70.

these he was delegated, along with the priors of Holne and Horkesley, to judge a dispute over tithes between the archdeacon of Worcester and the monks of Eye; in the second, he was instructed to discipline the abbots of Beaulieu and Lyse (in Norway) for minor infractions.[7]

The chronicle that bears Ralph's name is ostensibly a narrative of English history written at Coggeshall and covering the period 1066-1224. It survives in several manuscripts. The earliest, British Library, Cotton MS Vespasian D. x, appears to have been written in many hands and contains many alterations; it is almost certainly a first draft. Closely linked to this manuscript are Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 15076 and College of Arms, Arundel MS 11; both are also Coggeshall productions, Arundel 11 having priority over Lat. 15076.[8] Sections of the chronicle are also extant in a number of other manuscripts, though these will not detain us.[9] For ease of reference, we shall follow Stevenson's sigla for the three principal manuscripts. Cotton Vespasian D. x was named by him as 'C'. Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 15076 had previously belonged to the abbey of St Victor, and was accordingly styled 'V'. College of Arms, Arundel MS 11 was styled 'H', as it had previously been in the possession of Lord William

[7] Hartcher, 'Coggeshall Abbey', 133.

[8] J. Willoughby, 'A Templar chronicle of the Third Crusade: origin and transmission', *Medium Ævum* 81 (2012), 126-34, at 128-9 & n. 20. As Willoughby observes, several passages added to Vespasian D. x at a later date have also been added to Arundel 11 but are carried into the main text of Lat. 15076, showing that the two former manuscripts were updated in concert while the latter was copied afterwards. An example of this may be found *sub anno* 1173, when a passage on the homage performed by the Count of St Giles to Henry II for Toulouse has been added in the margins of the Cottonian and Arundel manuscripts, but is in the main text of the Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 17.

[9] A partial copy made from V survives in Lambeth Palace MS 371, ff. 59r-71r. This covers, somewhat intermittently, the period 1190-99. For the date and provenance of this manuscript, see below, 97-98. A complete copy of H survives as Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 343. It was dated to the fourteenth century by M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1912), ii, 176-78. We can be a little more precise. The list of archbishops of Canterbury from Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle goes as far as 'dominus Walterus Reynaldus': Corpus Christi College MS 343, f. 17v. Walter Reynolds was Archbishop from 1313 to 1327, and we may reasonably conclude that the manuscript, which appears to have been copied by one scribe, was produced during these years. I have not consulted Dublin, Trinity College MS 508, but a very similar copy of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* survives in British Library Royal MS 13 A. xii; this is discussed below, 116.

Howard. Henceforth we shall refer to these manuscripts as C, V and H, or, alternatively, as 'the Cottonian manuscript', 'the Victorine manuscript', and 'the Arundel manuscript'.[10]

As Dr. Willoughby has pointed out, the existence of a number of contemporaneous manuscripts produced at Coggeshall itself suggests that the text was intended for circulation.[11] The aim seems to have been to produce a chronicle of interest to a wider audience than the monks of Coggeshall. The chronicle has relatively little to say about the abbey itself. There is of course a note on the foundation of Coggeshall in 1140, and on the dedication of the high altar in 1167.[12] And there are some scattered notes on the successions of abbots. But these are not extensive, and some even appear to have been afterthoughts.[13] A comparison of this text with a chronicle from the nearby Augustinian priory of Dunmow is illuminating: the latter is nothing more than a list of successions, endowments and events relating to the house.[14] Ralph's chronicle is very different: institutional history is given scarcely any prominence. The founding of the Cistercian Order, likewise, is observed in a very late marginal addition to C.[15] This may suggest a monastery somewhat ill at ease with its Cistercian identity, perhaps an understandable feeling given its Savigniac origins.[16] Yet although the union was at first resisted by Savigny's English dependencies, the gulf between the two orders was never

[10] For ease of reference, it seems easiest to preserve Stevenson's slightly awkward use of 'H', rather than changing it to 'A', a more obvious siglum.
[11] Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 129.
[12] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 11, 16.
[13] The entry recording the death of the fourth abbot, Peter, and the succession of Thomas in his place, is a marginal addition in C: Vespasian D. x, f. 68v. The annal for 1169 records the succession of Abbot Odo, but in C his name is written over an erasure, almost as if the original entry was mistaken: Vespasian D. x, f. 45v.
[14] This text, the work of a certain Nicholas de Bromfeld, a canon of Little Dunmow, survives in British Library Cotton MS Cleopatra C. iii, f. 291. It is printed in W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis & B. Bandinel (London, 1817-30), vi, 147-8.
[15] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 4; Vespasian D. x, f. 43v.
[16] This was argued persuasively by H. Walter, 'Becoming Cistercian: the changing identity of Coggeshall Abbey', paper delivered at the 3rd Biennial Oxford/Cambridge Chronicles Symposium, Oxford, 5-7 July 2012. The question of Cistercian identity in the twelfth century has recently been addressed by Constance Berman in her book *The Cistercian Evolution: the invention of a religious order in twelfth-century Europe* (Philadelphia, 2000).

very significant, especially since Vitalis of Savigny had looked to Cîteaux for inspiration in the first place.[17] It is therefore hard to imagine the union being a protracted source of discontent, and certainly not one that rankled right up to, and even beyond, the end of the century.

It is equally erroneous to suggest that the *Chronicon Anglicanum* is a piece of national history, though it is commonly characterised as such.[18] The title 'Chronicon Anglicanum' is misleading, for there is no evidence that the text originally bore this name; the hand that wrote it above the 1066 annal in C is not medieval, and there is no internal reference to such a title.[19] We must therefore be wary of assuming that the chronicle's coverage is determined by its nomenclature. As an English production, the *Chronicon Anglicanum* perhaps inevitably drew on a large amount of English material, but we shall see that its focus is by no means exclusively, or even predominantly, on English affairs. It is, in fact, no more an 'English' chronicle than Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle is an 'English' chronicle.

Lewis Warren, ruing the insufficient attention it gave, in his eyes, to the reign of King John, thought that the *Chronicon Anglicanum* 'is less than the title implies'.[20] Now there is a partial explanation for the chronicle's undeniable reticence on the deeds of King John. That will be discussed shortly.[21] But in general, it seems more accurate to say that the *Chronicon Anglicanum* is rather *more* than the title implies. This is the

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[17] Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 202, 250-1.
[18] E.g. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, 618; Freeman, *Narratives of a New Order*, 179. See also K. Wagner, 'La Croisade Albigeoise vue par le chroniqueur Raoul de Coggeshale: une interprétation de l'histoire sous l'angle du "patriotisme anglais"', *Heresis: revue semestrielle d'Histoire des dissidences médiévales* 35 (2001), 83-89, where Ralph's supposed patriotic feeling is held to colour his portrayal of the Albigensian Crusade, and in particular Count Raymond VI of Toulouse, John's brother-in-law. Ralph, in Wagner's eyes, was torn between his (very Cistercian) desire to see heresy stamped out and his discomfort at a crusade launched against someone related to the English royal house. The argument is problematic on many counts, not least of which being that the terse and non-committal passages on the crusade come from the inserted 1206-12 annals (on which see below, 88-89), and may be considered reticent on the grounds of annalistic brevity rather than Ralph's ambiguity.
[19] Cotton Vespasian D x, f. 46r.
[20] W. L. Warren, *King John* (New Haven, 1997), 8.
[21] See below, 88-89.

point of departure for the chapter. Its argument, briefly, is as follows. Ralph took up his pen in response to the fall of Jerusalem and the subsequent crusade. Initially he was optimistic, and gives the reader a stirring narrative of Richard's deeds in the Holy Land. However, the failure of the crusade and the continuing successes of Muslim forces contributed to Ralph's growing pessimism as the 1190s went on, and increasingly he sought to interpret Christendom's misfortunes on an eschatological plane, spurred on in this respect by his familiarity with the thought of Joachim of Fiore. In the early years of the thirteenth century he transformed the work into a universal history through the addition of Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle, and also fleshed out the narrative with a number of wonder stories and descriptions of meteorological phenomena. From this point Ralph was recording events on a much broader scale than he had originally attempted, and took a keen interest in new crusading endeavours: it is likely that one of the copies of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* was drawn up for circulation around the time of the Fifth Crusade in 1217-1218, and the Fourth Crusade was probably the occasion for his continuation of an earlier crusading text, the *Chronicon terre sancte*. In this respect Ralph was not out of step with the preoccupations of his own religious order, and indeed with broader reformist currents of the time, though this is a theme we shall have to pursue beyond the bounds of this chapter.[22] In short, what originally began as a straightforward record of Richard I's activities on crusade became in the course of writing a much more reflective and forward-looking narrative of events mounted on a stage much larger than England: a monastic counterpart, of sorts, to the longer chronicle of Ralph Niger.

[22] Ralph's other piece of writing, the *Visio Thurkilli*, will be discussed in the final chapter: see below, 207-21.

The *Chronicon Anglicanum* to 1200

The *Chronicon Anglicanum* allows us the unusual privilege of being able to see a chronicle evolve over a lengthy period of time, and accordingly to trace alongside this the development of the views of its author over that same period. As we have noted, the first draft of the text survives, and with it two early copies. Our first priority is to understand how the chronicle was begun, continued and expanded over the course of several years.[23] Even before that, we need to reconcile Ralph's purported authorship of the chronicle with the appearance of the earliest manuscript (C), which contains so many revisions and changes of hand that discerning who wrote what, and indeed when, seems almost impossible.

The 1207 annal that records Ralph's accession as abbot of Coggeshall notes that 'he wrote this chronicle from the capture of the Holy Cross up to the eleventh year of King Henry III, son of King John'.[24] So it seems we can only ascribe this particular section, beginning in 1187 and ending in 1226/1227, to the agency of Ralph of Coggeshall.[25] Now the character of the chronicle certainly changes on reaching the year 1187, abandoning the brief annalistic style hitherto adopted in favour of a much fuller narrative.[26] But it does not actually extend to 1226, finishing instead in 1224. It may well be the case that Ralph did take his chronicle to 1226/1227, and the relevant section

[23] The lengthiest treatment of the chronicle to date has been that of G. N. Hartcher, *Ralph of Coggeshall's Chronicon Anglicanum: an investigative analysis* (Catholic University of America DPhil thesis, 1979). Though still valuable, especially on the sources of the chronicle, some of its contentions must be abandoned in the light of more recent studies by David Carpenter and James Willoughby: D. Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account of the last years of King Richard and the first years of King John', *English Historical Review* 113 (1998), 1210-30; J. Willoughby, 'The hand of Ralph of Coggeshall: chronicle-making in the reign of King John', John Coffin London Palaeography Lecture delivered in Senate House on 7 May 2014. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Willoughby for making the text of his lecture available to me.

[24] '...hanc chronicam a captione Sancte Crucis usque ad annum undecimum Henrici regis III, filii regis Johannis, descripsit': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 163.

[25] Henry III's eleventh regnal year ran from 28 October 1226 to 27 October 1227.

[26] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 21.

has since been lost; or, as James Willougby has convincingly argued, it may be that Ralph died in the eleventh year of Henry III while still at work on the chronicle, even if he had not written it up to that precise point.[27] Alternatively the 1207 annal is simply erroneous, or was written in expectation of a 1226/1227 end-point that was never in fact attained; this remains a matter for conjecture.[28] Ralph's involvement in this section is further complicated by the mysterious character of the annals for 1206-1212. These revert to the straightforwardly annalistic style of the 1066-1186 annals, and appear to have been inserted on a separate leaf (f. 112) to replace missing annals. Antonia Gransden argued that the gathering into which the sheet has been inserted is lacking four leaves, which may represent an earlier text now lost.[29] James Willoughby has recently demonstrated that the loss was in all probability much greater.[30] What appears to have happened is this: Ralph initially wrote a much longer account of King John's reign, the outlines of which can be gleaned from an epitome of the chronicle that survives in the Arundel manuscript;[31] he then decided to expurgate this and replace it with much shorter and more anodyne entries for the period 1206-1212, much in the same spirit that he expurgated earlier passages touching on the wicked deeds of John during his brother Richard's reign. This was not done, as one would expect, during John's reign, but after it: the 1207 annal, part of the replacement folio, clearly refers to Henry III's reign. The corrections fall squarely in the period of failing health that necessitated Ralph's resignation as abbot; this is confirmed by the palaeography of this

[27] Willoughby, 'The hand of Ralph of Coggeshall'.
[28] A closer look at the Cottonian manuscript's rendering of the phrase 'ad annum undecimum Henrici regis III' is instructive. The word 'undecimum' is written over an erasure, and the word 'annum' is a marginal addition at the end of the previous line: Vespasian D. x, f. 112r. We can only speculate as to the original wording, though the space between 'ad' and 'Henrici' was probably only occupied by a single word: in this context 'regnum' would be plausible, based on the grammatical sense and the size of the gap.
[29] Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 323 n. 23.
[30] Willoughby, 'The hand of Ralph of Coggeshall'.
[31] See below, 117-18.

section of the chronicle, which betrays an ailing hand, and they may best be considered a deathbed retraction in the manner of Matthew Paris.

As such, Ralph's responsibility for the chronicle from 1187 to its conclusion can be firmly established. This leaves only the section covering the years 1066-1186. These cannot confidently be ascribed to Ralph's authorship on the basis of the 1207 annal; they are, moreover, brief and derivative, and appear to serve no other purpose than as a preface to the narrative from 1187.[32] Nevertheless, we need to establish as far as we can how the two sections relate to one another. This is no easy task. Yet as before, we benefit enormously from Dr. Willoughby's palaeographical examination. He has shown that Ralph's hand may be found at work on this annalistic section, and hence that Ralph's involvement did indeed stretch beyond what the 1207 annal assigns to him.[33] This insight provides sufficient cause to reject the (not unreasonable) assumption that Ralph began his chronicle-writing enterprise by continuing an existing set of annals that were already at Coggeshall, though he may of course have decided to copy a set of extant annals for his new beginning rather than simply continue the existing manuscript. That the two sections are very much part of the same endeavour is suggested by an examination of C, which contains no change in hand or ink with the annal for 1187, and gives no indication, other than the prolixity of the new annal, that a new writer has begun his work. But the folio on which the annal for 1187 begins, f. 52, appears to be an addition, as is the folio that follows: they are both in a larger and slightly more formal hand, that begins at the top of f. 52r and continues until the top of f. 54r. The first few lines of f. 54r are written in this larger hand over an erasure, and then the original hand (from f. 51) returns. This state of affairs should probably be seen as an attempt to elide the end of the 1066-1186 annals with the annals from 1187. It is likely

[32] Hartcher, *Ralph of Coggeshall's Chronicon Anglicanum*, 111-132.
[33] Willoughby, 'The hand of Ralph of Coggeshall'.

that there was a gap separating the first set of annals from the 1187 annal, this latter being begun on a new sheet; to join the two sections seamlessly, the transition segment was rewritten on two new folios, which were then inserted.[34] In other words, the chronicle from 1187 onwards and the annals for 1066-1186 were separate texts that were yoked together. This in turn suggests that instead of simply continuing an extant set of annals, Ralph was responsible for drawing up the 1066-1186 annals as an afterthought to preface the post-1187 section at some point after he had begun;[35] if Ralph had already written the 1066-1186 annals first then he would surely have followed straight on from these when he came to write his more expansive entries from 1187, without the need to tidy the join.

We cannot say for certain whether Ralph composed these annals himself, or simply copied an extant set of annals to serve in this prefatory role. However he produced them, he must have done so after Richard I's accession: the annal recording the death of King Stephen and the accession of Henry II lists the latter's children, including 'Ricardum Pictauinum et regem'.[36] John, meanwhile, is listed as 'regem, prius comitem Gloecestrie, et Moretannie'; but this information has been squeezed in over an erasure and above the line, a change no doubt made when John's accession to the throne in 1199 necessitated it.[37]

This merely allows us to date the annals to 1189-1199. We can be a little more specific. Consider the entry for 1137.[38] This notes the accession of Louis VII to the French throne, and his marriage in the same year to Eleanor of Aquitaine. The annal goes on to describe the offspring of this marriage, Mary and Alix, and their subsequent

[34] Given the reference to Philip Augustus as 'uictoriosissimus rex' in the annal for 1181 that falls in this section, this may have been done after Philip's conquest of Normandy in 1204: Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account', 1214 n. 3.
[35] *Pace* Lawrence-Mathers, *Merlin the Magician*, 81-2.
[36] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 14.
[37] Vespasian D. x, f. 44r; Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account', 1214.
[38] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 10-11.

marriages, to Henry I of Champagne and Theobald V of Blois respectively. Henry I was succeeded by his son Henry, who then, as the annal recounts, went on the Third Crusade alongside his uncle Philip Augustus. At this point the annal in C ends, but a marginal addition states that 'King Richard gave that kingdom [of Jerusalem] to him [Henry]'.[39] In the other manuscripts of the chronicle, this line is incorporated into the main body of the text. Now Henry II of Champagne became king of Jerusalem (or rather, the de facto ruler, as he was never actually crowned) in May 1192, shortly after the mysterious assassination of the original choice, Conrad of Montferrat.[40] The addition of this note may reflect clumsiness on the part of the scribe, who failed to include it in the proper place; or, more probably, it was added after news of the event reached England. The original annal must of course have been written after the departure of Philip and his nephew Henry for the Holy Land in July 1190; but the need to make the amendment suggests it was written before 1192.

In this context it is also worth considering the previous annal, which supplies details about the descendants of King Stephen and Queen Matilda.[41] Their daughter (Mary, though she is not named) was abducted from a monastery (Romsey Abbey, though again it is not named) and married to Matthew, brother of Count Philip of Flanders. At this point the annal in C ends, though as in the subsequent annal there is a marginal addition to continue the story. As the addition relates, the marriage produced two daughters, one of whom was married to the Duke of Louvain, while the other eventually married the son of the Count of Dammartin. Now the latter union, between Ida and Renaud de Dammartin, was, as in the case of Mary and Matthew, the result of abduction, though according to Lambert of Ardres, it was not entirely contrary to Ida's

[39] '...cui et rex Richardus regnum illud concessit': Vespasian D. x, f. 43r.
[40] He married Conrad's widow Isabella on 5 May, and by virtue of this union assumed power: Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum*, ii, 104.
[41] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 10.

wishes.[42] It occurred in 1191, and was confirmed by Philip Augustus in 1192.[43] The former union took place in 1179, when the daughter in question, Matilda, was only nine years old; her husband, Henry, son of Godfrey III of Louvain, was installed as Count of Louvain in 1183, then became Duke of Brabant in 1191. Taken together, this would rather suggest that the marginal addition was certainly made after the abduction of Ida by Renaud in 1191, and possibly after the confirmation of their marriage by Philip Augustus in 1192. However, if the inaccurate designation of Matilda's husband Henry as Duke of Louvain is taken as an error for 'Count of Louvain', his actual title, that would imply that he had not yet been made Duke of Brabant, as he was in 1191, or at least that news of this had not reached England; and so a date of 1191 for the marginal note would not at all be out of the question. Given the evidence already adduced for locating these annals in the period 1190-92, we have some cause to narrow this further to 1190-91.

In any case, we can certainly ascribe the composition of the 1066-1186 section to the actual period of the Third Crusade's unfolding. And if we are correct to see this as a text written to buttress Ralph's own narrative from 1187, this latter must also have been underway in the very first years of Richard I's reign, and possibly in the last couple of years of Henry II's reign. Corroboration for this may be found in an early addition to Ralph's narrative of the Third Crusade. This comes in the form of an inserted folio outlining how the Duke of Burgundy was bribed by Saladin; also included is an account of a meeting between Richard and a certain hermit.[44] In the course of this meeting the hermit prophesies that Richard will be unsuccessful in the Holy Land, and as proof of the efficacy of his prophecy predicts also that he himself will die in seven

[42] Lambert of Ardres, *Historia comitum Ghisnensium*, ed. J. Heller, *MGH SS* 24 (Hanover, 1879), 557-642, at 605.
[43] Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus*, 201.
[44] Vespasian D. x, f. 59; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 38-41.

days' time. Richard returns to his camp with the hermit, and the hermit indeed passes away on the seventh day following their meeting.[45] This particular story is probably best seen as an addition made in the light of the Third Crusade's failure, and the insertion as a whole may have been occasioned by the receipt of new information from returning crusaders; but it must in any case have been an early addition. Over a century ago Maurice Powicke demonstrated that a section of Ralph's chronicle covering the period 1187-95 was in circulation long before the chronicle assumed the form it has today; it was a copy of this version, subsequently emended by Ralph to remove some withering comments on Count John, that the St Albans chronicler Roger of Wendover used in the process of compiling his own *Flores historiarum* early in the thirteenth century.[46] In other words, Ralph laid down his pen in or soon after 1195, and put what he had written into circulation. The fact that the insertion on the Duke of Burgundy and the hermit was copied by Roger of Wendover shows that it must have been added by 1195, in other words not long after that original narrative of the crusade was written.

The 1207 annal stresses the connection between the loss of the Holy Land and the inception of Ralph's chronicle, and the passage we have just discussed does indeed imply that the chronicle was being written up and supplemented very close in time to the events it describes. We may posit the following sequence: at some point between 1188 and 1192, Ralph of Coggeshall, 'stirred into writing history by the dramatic

[45] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 40-41.

[46] F. M. Powicke, 'Roger of Wendover and the Coggeshall chronicle', *EHR* 21 (1906), 286-96. We are still no clearer on precisely when Roger of Wendover was writing. All that can be certainly stated is that he began work between 1204 and 1231: D. Corner, 'Roger of Wendover', *ODNB*. The text affords some windows onto the process of composition. For instance, he did not write his narrative of the year 1179 until after 1215, as his description here of the Third Lateran Council refers to the condemnation of Joachim of Fiore's trinitarian views in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215: Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, ed. H. G. Hewlett, RS 84 (London, 1886-89), i, 118-23. Corner favours the period 1220-1236 as the most likely period of composition: Wendover had been deposed as prior of Belvoir c.1219, and afterwards returned to St Albans. Powicke thought Roger 'began his work after 1215, probably after 1230': Powicke, 'Roger of Wendover and the Coggeshall chronicle', 287 n. 4. If our argument is correct, and Ralph's work was from an early stage prefaced with a set of annals from 1066, then Roger probably had access to these as well; there is, however, no evidence that he used any of this material, which is perhaps not surprising, given its brief and derivative nature (as well as the expansiveness of other contemporary works to which he also had access, such as Roger of Howden's *Chronica*).

religious and military events of the fall of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade', began a narrative commencing with the former and continuing with the latter;[47] at some point in the writing of this, perhaps very early on, he decided that his narrative would be better served with a prefatory compilation of annals, which were composed afresh from several sources or else copied from an existing text available in or near Coggeshall; the two manuscripts were then elided to form one continuous chronicle from 1066. After this Ralph continued his narrative to the year 1195, and then stopped.

This marked only a temporary break in the chronicle. More recent work by David Carpenter has confirmed what Powicke suggested: that the *Chronicon Anglicanum* was a piecemeal composition, written up in stages and disseminated accordingly: on top of the 1187-95 section identified by Powicke and probably written up in 1195 or soon after, Carpenter identified a second section covering the years 1195-1200, also written up very soon after the events it describes (probably in 1201), followed by successive bursts of writing throughout the 1200s.[48] The 1195-1200 section concludes with the death of Hugh of Lincoln and a letter of Innocent III (quoted at length but not in full) on the state of the Holy Land.[49] There then follows, in a new hand, a section on various wonders that occurred in the reigns of Henry II and Richard I, and after this a number of more mundane entries (though the wonder stories are echoed in the account of some phantom Templars who visited the abbey of Coggeshall during the time of Peter, abbot from 1176 to 1194).[50] This section, covering the period 1200-1201, appears to represent a new phase of writing. A change of hand and ink with the entry for 1202 seems to inaugurate yet another phase of writing, covering the years

[47] I borrow this phrase from Gillingham, 'Royal newsletters', 176.
[48] Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account', 1214-17, 1227-28. As Powicke pointed out, this was not at all an unusual procedure in medieval historical writing: 'Roger of Wendover and the Coggeshall chronicle', 286.
[49] Innocent's letter was issued on 25 December 1199: *The Letters of Pope Innocent III concerning England and Wales*, ed. C. R. Cheney & M. G. Cheney (Oxford, 1967), no. 171 (p. 30).
[50] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 117-28.

1202-1205, and probably written in 1205-7.[51] After 1205 the narrative attains a new degree of complexity, as we shall see; but a similarly staccato pattern of composition (and possibly dissemination) is discernible.[52] The final section of the chronicle, covering the years 1223-1224, was probably written up in 1227, and the author's death in that year or soon thereafter finally put an end to his labours.[53]

Carpenter's research into this somewhat thorny area is most valuable. Its implications for our understanding of contemporary perceptions of King John are clear and have been explored in depth.[54] This will not concern us here. Our interest lies in what this process of composition reveals about the outlook of this Cistercian chronicler and how it changed over time. To this we now turn.

The first thing to say is that the character of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* does rather change over the course of the 1190s. This is immediately apparent in its treatment of King Richard. David Carpenter and John Gillingham have both observed

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[51] Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account', 1228. In his account of the capture of Arthur at Mirabel in 1202, Ralph quotes John's triumphant newsletter to his barons, but an erasure in the address clause implies that he has removed John's title of 'Dux Normannie': Vespasian D. x, f. 100r. This would of course be an understandable correction to make after the loss of Normandy in 1204, but if that were the case, then the original transcription of the letter for the chronicle must have been done before this event. This of course suggests that the 1202-1205 section was written up in two stages, the first before June 1204, and the second not long after 1205. There is also a change of ink and scribe midway through the annal for 1205, at the start of f. 110, though this occurs in the middle of a sentence, and it is hard to imagine that this pause was particularly lengthy.

[52] There is some evidence that the Cistercian abbey of Stanley (in Wiltshire) had access to a section of the chronicle covering the years 1217-20. Compare *Annales Stanleienses*, ed. R. Howlett, RS 82 (London, 1884-9), ii, 503-58, at 524-28, with Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 185-88. This was noted by Howlett, who suggested a common source for both texts: *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I* (London, 1884-9), ii, pp. lxxxix-xc. This has yet to be established, and the possibility that the Stanley chronicler used Ralph of Coggeshall's work should not be dismissed: the section that corresponds with the Stanley material appears to be a distinct unit of the chronicle, marked at beginning and end by changes of hand in C: Vespasian D. x, ff. 19v, 121v. In 1214 Ralph, as abbot of Coggeshall, was instructed by the Cistercian General Chapter to inform the abbeys of Stanley and Beaulieu of arrangements made to settle their dispute: Hartcher, 'Coggeshall Abbey', 133. Conceivably future communication between Coggeshall and Stanley included conveyance of part of Ralph's chronicle.

[53] F. Wormald, 'The rood of Bromholm', *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1 (1937), 31-45, at 36.

[54] Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account'; J. Gillingham, 'Historians without hindsight: Coggeshall, Diceto and Howden on the early years of John's reign', in *King John: new interpretations*, ed. S. D. Church (Woodbridge, 1999), 1-26, at 5-8; Willoughby, 'The hand of Ralph of Coggeshall'. These take as their point of departure J. C. Holt's Historical Association pamphlet on the subject: J. C. Holt, *King John* (London, 1963).

that Ralph makes Richard the hero of the crusade narrative.[55] This is unquestionably true, though the figure of Richard looms large throughout the whole 1187-1195 section of the chronicle. His eventual return from captivity in 1194 provides a suitable moment for rejoicing, and is heralded by an unusual patch of red light in the sky;[56] Ralph is even prepared to forgive the king's rather dubious methods of raising money on his return.[57] The death of the Duke of Austria, one of Richard's captors, in that same year provides a suitable counterpart to this triumphal narrative.[58] But by the time Ralph returned to the chronicle, in 1201, his view was more circumspect. Richard receives a long obituary, but it is hardly a panegyric: it dwells at length on the king's cupidity and failure to live up to the standard he had set in his crusading venture.[59] Such criticisms are not entirely absent from the earlier section of the chronicle, as we have seen; but behaviour Ralph had earlier excused was now condemned. The moral of the story is, as Carpenter points out, a simple one: divine blessings will swiftly be taken away if one does not persist in good conduct.[60] Richard was raised up and then fell from grace.

Yet this is only one of the themes of Ralph's chronicle; and if Ralph has cause to reappraise the king, he also has reason to give him less prominence as the narrative proceeds. For it is striking that the 1195-1200 section of the chronicle is rather less centred on King Richard than the section that precedes it. *Sub anno* 1196 there is a brief account of Richard's dispute with Walter of Coutances over the construction of

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[55] Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account', 1217; Gillingham, 'Royal newsletters', 176.
[56] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 62-3. William of Newburgh records the same celestial phenomenon, but associates it instead with the captivity of the king and the domestic ills England suffered during this time: William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i, 401.
[57] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 63-4. On 28 March 1194 Nottingham Castle, the last rebel stronghold, fell to Richard, and the survivors of the garrison were ransomed: Gillingham, *Richard I*, 269. This Ralph justified on the grounds that the king needed funds to prosecute his war with Philip Augustus. He had previously lamented the heavy taxes levied to pay the king's own ransom, the terrible burden of which he pointed up with a note on the appalling storms and floods at that time: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 60.
[58] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 65-66.
[59] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 89-98; Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account', 1217-19.
[60] Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account' 1218.

Château-Gaillard, then a couple of even briefer notices of the king's grants and ecclesiastical appointments.[61] Richard's bitter war with Philip Augustus, and the devastation and famine it brought in its wake, are described *sub anno* 1197.[62] Richard's victory at Gisors in 1198 is described, largely through the quotation of Richard's own newsletter on the subject, but apart from a short notice of his intervention in the German imperial election on behalf of his nephew Otto, this is the only mention of the king in that year, the annal being mainly taken up with long accounts of the preaching of Fulk of Neuilly and the translation of St Edmund.[63] The king's death in the following year merits a lengthy obituary, as we have seen: this is the most sustained treatment of Richard in this section.

We can put it another way. As we have already observed, a partial copy of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* survives in Lambeth Palace MS 371.[64] M. R. James dated this to the thirteenth century and pointed out that it was almost certainly from Reading Abbey.[65] The manuscript's contents are heavily accented towards the deeds of kings and emperors;[66] in line with this, the scribe seems to have raided the *Chronicon Anglicanum* for material on Richard I, creating in the process what we could describe as a 'Gesta Ricardi'. For the Third Crusade, the scribe has ample material and presents a detailed narrative of Richard's feats, omitting any details tangential to this;[67] but from 1194 he finds much less to work with. His narrative leaps from the death of the Duke of Austria in that year to Richard's newsletter of his victory at Gisors in 1198, and then

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[61] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 70
[62] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 76-77.
[63] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 83-85, 88. See also below, 204-6.
[64] See above, 83 n. 9.
[65] M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace: the medieval manuscripts* (Cambridge, 1932), 503.
[66] Extensive use is made of the *Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum* of Martinus Polonus, which itself suggests a date after 1277, when the third and most popular recension of this chronicle was released: see W.-V. Ikas, 'Martinus Polonus' Chronicle of the Popes and Emperors: a medieval best-seller and its neglected influence on medieval English chronicles', *EHR* 116 (2001), 327-41, at 330.
[67] For instance, the account of the discovery of King Arthur's body at Glastonbury and the following two miracle stories are omitted: Lambeth 371, f. 60v.

again to Richard's death in 1199, where he reproduces about half of Ralph's obituary.[68] He need not have been quite so ruthless, for in the process of doing this he has overlooked various passages in the 1195-1200 section which do in fact describe Richard's activities; but the dearth of material, and in particular material that showed Richard in a favourable light, obviously caused difficulties for our scribe.

This comparative paucity of information is not inexplicable: it may be that Ralph found it more challenging to narrate Richard's deeds in these years without criticism, and preferred to say nothing. Then again, his obituary is so extensive that it is hard to imagine Ralph passing up opportunities to develop his moralistic theme in his account of the years 1195-1199. Another, more interesting possibility is that Ralph's historiographical horizons had broadened somewhat between these two phases of writing; this may partially explain his new attitude towards the king, though we should not labour the point.

There is some indication of this in the conclusion of the 1187-95 section. Carpenter suggested that the occasion for this halt was the long-awaited return of King Richard, which did indeed merit a jubilant account from Ralph, as we have noted.[69] But Richard's return was in 1194, not 1195; and it is in the latter year that Ralph chose to conclude his narrative. After relating Richard's return from captivity, Ralph goes on to describe the death of Tancred of Sicily, the appearance of two large celestial circles on the Feast of the Nativity of St John, the death of the Duke of Austria, and the invasion of Spain by the Saracens. This last item is, I think, particularly significant, for it ends

[68] Lambeth 371, ff. 70r-71r.
[69] Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's account', 1215. A triumphal reading may be better reserved for Ralph de Diceto, who almost certainly wrote up and circulated a version of his *Ymagines historiarum* that did end at this point: Gillingham, 'Royal newsletters', 178.

the first portion of Ralph's chronicle on a note of apprehension rather than triumph: 'all Christendom was greatly perturbed' by the arrival of this large Saracen force in Spain.[70]

When Ralph took up his pen once more, some five years later, he continued the narrative in much the same vein. The first item in this new section is a lengthy account of Joachim of Fiore. This is an especially important description of the career and thought of a remarkable individual, and we will examine it in more detail in the following chapter.[71] Here the key points may be extracted. Joachim's principal claim, based on a system of biblical concordance, was that in 1199 the time of Antichrist would be inaugurated.[72] This does not mean that Joachim, or Ralph, thought the reign of Antichrist, traditionally understood to endure for three and a half years, would begin in 1199, but rather that a new phase in the history of Christendom was beginning, during which Antichrist would appear; Joachim tended to construe the course of history in phases rather than assigning specific events to specific years. This is an important distinction to make, although the reasons behind it will become clearer in the next chapter.

Ralph introduces the passage on Joachim with the conventional expression 'hac tempestate', and it is clear that the account is supposed to refer back to the Moorish invasion of Spain, where he had previously left off, as well as forwards to the imminence of Antichrist.[73] In other words, when Ralph took up his pen to continue the chronicle, he was trying to relate events in Spain to the broader span of Christian history and its possible consummation. Now Ralph does admittedly appear somewhat

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[70] '...omnis Christianitas uehementer turbata est': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 67. Ralph states that these tribulations were announced tearfully by the 'principes terre illius' to the Cistercian chapter, whence he presumably obtained the information. This piece of information is omitted in Roger of Wendover's account of the invasion, which otherwise follows Ralph word for word: Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, i, 239. This is the last item that Roger borrows from Ralph, and supports the argument that a recension of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* ending here was circulated.
[71] See below, 145-49.
[72] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 67-70. See the discussion in Freeman, *Narratives of a New Order*, 186-8.
[73] Freeman, *Narratives of a New Order*, 188.

cautious: 'our successors will be able to judge more clearly what should be made of the assertion, or rather opinion, of this man'.[74] But, significantly, he does go on to endorse much of what Joachim has said: he identifies the occupation of Christian lands and the spreading of the evil of heresy and error as evidence that the 'kingdom of Babylon' has made great advances in the world; and he observes how the onslaught of the Saracens has paved the way for the savage persecution of Antichrist, inasmuch as it has removed any Christian ruler who could withstand him.[75] I would argue, furthermore, that Joachim's ominous predictions weighed very heavily on Ralph's mind as he progressed with his chronicle; and that his outlook was increasingly marked by an awareness of Christendom's precarious position at this time.

As evidence of the former, we may in the first instance consider a fascinating marginal addition to this account in C. This details the interrogation of Joachim in Rome by Adam, the Cistercian abbot of Perseigne, in the course of which Joachim notes that Innocent III will be the last Pope.[76] This interview itself must of course have taken place after Innocent's election as pope in January 1198 and before Joachim's death in 1202, though we have no firm evidence that either Joachim or Adam was in Rome during this period.[77] But Ralph's addition on the subject must date from later, for he did not include the information when writing this passage in or soon after 1200. How much later is hard to say. Christoph Egger contends that the addition was made in the years 1213-16, as the hand of the addition and the hand of these annals is very similar.[78] I see no reason to disagree with this assessment, though I may merely add that the hand is very probably Ralph's own. As abbots of Perseigne and Coggeshall respectively,

[74] 'Quid uero super huius uiri assertione, uel potius opinione, sentiendum sit, successores nostri certius diiudicare poterunt': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 69.
[75] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 69-70.
[76] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68-9; Vespasian D. x, f. 69v.
[77] Joachim did give copies of his two chief works to Innocent III in 1200, but this does not necessarily mean that he came to Rome in person: see below, 135.
[78] Egger, 'A pope without successor', 172-73.

Adam and Ralph would have attended the Cistercian General Chapter during these years, and this may explain how Ralph acquired his information.[79]

Ralph brings this next section of the chronicle to a halt in the year 1200, with Richard I dead and Christendom once more poised on the edge of potentially momentous events, typified by Innocent's call for a new crusade.[80] It is hard not to see some sort of symmetry between this and his earlier halt, in 1195. And it appears that Ralph was keen to conclude specifically with Innocent's crusade bull, for the simple reason that it is chronologically out of sequence. Innocent's bull was issued on 25 December 1199; yet Ralph inserts it at the end of his 1195-1200 section, after John's dispute with the Cistercian Order (which rumbled on from June to late November 1200), the death and burial of Hugh of Lincoln (November 1200), and the Interdict imposed on France (January to September 1200).

Once again, Ralph appears to pick up the thread when he resumes the narrative. The *Chronicon Anglicanum* proceeds *sub anno* 1200 with a collection of stories of the marvellous and miraculous, six in total. The first four accounts are of a decidedly fantastical nature, relating the capture of a merman at Orford in Suffolk, the strange appearance of two green children at Woolpit, also in Suffolk, the discovery of some enormous teeth on the shore in Essex, and the mischievous activities of the spirit Malekin in Dagworth, Suffolk.[81] They are followed by two slightly different, but not unrelated, accounts, one concerning the unmasking of a heretical sect in Rheims, the

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[79] Adam, abbot of Perseigne (c.1188-1221), was a notable adherent of the Parisian reform movement as well as preacher of, and participant in, the Fourth Crusade. Ralph mentions him again in his account of the Cistercian General Chapter of 1201, when Fulk of Neuilly presented a papal letter to the assembled company instructing Adam, along with two other Cistercian abbots, to accompany him as crusade preachers: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 130. Adam's precise movements during the crusade are hard to track; he appears to have been less than enthusiastic about playing any kind of role in the Fifth Crusade, perhaps because of his experiences fifteen years earlier. See A. J. Andrea, 'Adam of Perseigne and the Fourth Crusade', *Cîteaux* 36 (1985), 21-37.

[80] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 113-17.

[81] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 117-21.

other the story of the peasant girl Alpais, who miraculously abstained from food for a number of years.[82]

It is for stories such as these that Ralph's chronicle is perhaps most famous. There is of course nothing inherently unusual about their inclusion: marvels and miracles are a staple of medieval historiography, monastic and secular.[83] But these cannot simply be dismissed as part of the 'world of fancy' in which chroniclers lived;[84] the important point is that they were deemed to have meaning, to point beyond themselves.[85] Portent and fulfilment are often closely linked to one another in the text, and many chronicles leave the reader to draw the obvious conclusions; often their significance could be assumed even if they were not precisely linked to an historical event. Ralph was no different.[86] As such, Ralph's grouping of these stories at this stage in the narrative is worthy of comment. For he has included not only marvels but two lengthy and contrasting narratives about heresy and sanctity; and he has yoked all these together with no apparent regard for chronology. The story of the merman is said to have taken place 'in the time of King Henry the Second, when Bartholomew de Glanville held the castle of Orford'.[87] This puts the event in the period 1169-75, when Bartholomew was sheriff of the county of Suffolk. The story of the green children is not

[82] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 121-8. Gervase of Tilbury played a crucial role in this episode and seems to have told the story to Ralph.
[83] On the use of signs and portents in English chronicles of this period, see C. S. Watkins, *History and the Supernatural in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2007), 47-55; and, more generally, C. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: the writing of history in medieval England* (London, 2004), 22-33. A 'marvel', in the medieval understanding, entailed an event that appeared contrary to nature, but probably did belong to the realm of the natural; this contrasted with a 'miracle', which was very definitely supernatural, in other words, of divine instigation. See C. W. Bynum, 'Wonder', *American Historical Review* 102 (1997), 1-26, at 4-5, 8; and, more generally, R. J. Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2008).
[84] Cheney, *From Becket to Langton*, 169.
[85] Bynum, 'Wonder', 23.
[86] 'Ralph of Coggeshall's chronicle contains numerous references to such phenomena, though he seldom draws out their implications': Watkins, *History and the Supernatural*, 48 n. 90.
[87] 'Temporibus Henrici regis secundi cum Bartholomeus de Glanvilla custodiret castellum de Oreford': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 117. Bartholomew was the uncle of the justiciar Ranulf de Glanville, to whom the *Tractatus de legibus et consuetudinibus regni Anglie* is (probably mistakenly) attributed.

ascribed to any year or reign, though William of Newburgh, who records the same story (though independently of Ralph), states that it occurred 'sub rege Stephano'.[88] The mysterious teeth and Malekin made their appearances 'tempore regis Ricardi'.[89] The narrative then reverts to the time of Louis VII for the account of the heretics.[90] Alpais, meanwhile, was born c.1150, during the reign of Louis VII, and died in 1211; stricken by a severe wasting disease during adolescence, she was miraculously cured one Easter, but afterwards remained almost completely paralysed and refused to take food. By the end of Louis's reign she had become renowned for her fasting, and around 1180 was commemorated by a Cistercian hagiographer.[91] Ralph, writing in 1200/1201, notes that 'she has now for more than thirty years taken neither food nor drink, except for holy communion, only on Sundays'.[92] This seems to be confirmed by the account of Alpais given by Jacques de Vitry in his *Historia occidentalis*, written c.1221, in which he says that Alpais went without nourishment for forty years up to her death.[93]

So the function of these stories in the narrative is somewhat perplexing. Given that Ralph has some notion of date, however vague, for all of the tales, we may wonder why he did not attempt to include them as far as possible in their proper chronological place; after all, he was not averse to fleshing out his earlier narrative, and if the addition was long enough to merit an inserted folio, then so be it: his account of the Third Crusade contains more than one example.[94] It seems that Ralph wanted to gather these stories at that precise point in the narrative. This is the conclusion reached by Elizabeth

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[88] William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i, 82.
[89] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 120.
[90] This incident took place while Gervase of Tilbury was in the service of Archbishop of Rheims but before Louis VII's death, in other words, between 1176 and 1180.
[91] C. W. Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: the religious significance of food to medieval women* (Berkeley, 1987), 336 n. 77.
[92] 'iam plus quam xxx annis nullum omnino sumpserat cibum aut potum, nisi sacram communionem, Dominicis tantum diebus': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 125.
[93] Jacques de Vitry, *Historia occidentalis*, ed. J. F. Hinnebusch, Spicilegium Friburgense 17 (Fribourg, 1972), 87.
[94] E.g. Cotton Vespasian D. x, ff. 59, 61.

Freeman.[95] Freeman is rightly sceptical of the notion that these tales should be seen as light-hearted 'intervals';[96] rather, they should be examined as a whole, and, moreover, as an integral part of a larger narrative. In this respect she is certainly correct. She goes on to argue cogently that the stories attest a wider, and specifically Cistercian, apprehension about heresy and the disintegration of the Christian community at the time of the Fourth Crusade, indeed as a result of the shambolic Fourth Crusade and its exposure of the divisions and limitations of Christendom in the face of the Saracen threat. This is true up to a point. The tone is one of distinct unease, especially in the lengthy discussion of the heretics. But her scenario needs some adjustment. For a start, the narrative context is wrong. We have already discussed the piecemeal composition of Ralph's chronicle, and in the light of this Freeman's argument does not stand up. We must recall that the wonder stories form part of a section ending at the close of 1201 and almost certainly written up shortly thereafter. A new phase of writing begins with the annal for 1202. So by the time this particular section was written, the Fourth Crusade had not happened, though Innocent III's first steps in that direction had been made (and had been chronicled by Ralph).[97] So instead of occupying a pivotal point in the larger narrative of the Fourth Crusade, Ralph's wonder stories form something of a climax in the chronicle as written up to that point.

What seems most convincing is that the stories are introduced at this stage in order to point up the sense of apprehension that Ralph is trying to convey. We must remember the context: Ralph has just transcribed Innocent's letter bewailing conditions in the East, and attempting to set in motion a new crusade. Such features of medieval

[95] E. Freeman, 'Wonders, prodigies and marvels: unusual bodies and the fear of heresy in Ralph of Coggeshall's *Chronicon Anglicanum*', *Journal of Medieval History* 26 (2000), 127-43. See also C. M. Neufeld, 'Hermeneutical perversion: Ralph of Coggeshall's "Witch of Rheims"', *Philological Quarterly* 85 (2006), 1-24.
[96] For this view, see e.g. Hartcher, *Ralph of Coggeshall's Chronicon Anglicanum*, 184.
[97] R. I. Moore makes a similar error in assuming that Ralph wrote his account of the Rheims heretics after the Albigensian Crusade: *The War on Heresy: faith and power in medieval Europe* (London, 2012), 5-6.

narrative are often set out retrospectively; what we have in the case of Ralph of Coggeshall is the deployment of portents with no obvious fulfilment within the narrative. Ralph clearly believes that the stories signify something, or else he would not have gathered them here: what they signify, beyond a general uneasiness, is not specified. Ralph is probably leaving this up to his reader to decide. Yet there can be little doubt that he is looking forward at this point, rather than backward; the momentum of the chronicle points to an uncertain future.

A comparison may be made with the *Historia rerum Anglicarum* of the Augustinian canon William of Newburgh. William includes several stories of the marvellous in his chronicle, including an independent account of the green children. Now this particular story is put in its proper temporal place: William says that it occurred 'sub rege Stephano', and duly includes it in his narrative of Stephen's reign. And in general William intersperses his stories throughout the text, rather than grouping them together. An exception to this is an interesting section on revenants, where five such stories are yoked together not long before the conclusion;[98] but their association may be reasonably attributed to the common subject matter (in a more specific sense than the marvellous). Their precise relevance to the surrounding narrative is harder to assess, given that the chronicle breaks off shortly afterwards, probably owing to the author's death. William's stories, even more than Ralph's, have attracted comment, often for the contrast between these credulous accounts and William's more sceptical treatment of Geoffrey of Monmouth in the preface to his chronicle.[99] Now a case can be made that William uses these stories to point up, for instance, the unstable nature of the

[98] William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, ii, 474-82.
[99] William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i, 11-19. On William's wonder stories see N. F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: the writing of history in twelfth-century England* (Chicago, 1977), 114-40; L. M. Ruch, 'Digression or discourse? William of Newburgh's ghost stories as urban legends', *The Medieval Chronicle* 8 (2013), 263-71.

English realm during Richard I's long absences;[100] and certainly in each case the narrative context of the story demands close attention. Yet William, as far as we can tell, worked on his chronicle over a much shorter period, and did not break off and resume at regular intervals; his wonder stories were from the outset interwoven into the fabric of the chronicle. We do not find William gathering wonder stories that took place over a lengthy period and foregrounding them at a critical moment in his text. This is what Ralph has done.

Now it is possible that Ralph only became aware of these stories after he had taken his chronicle to 1200, even if they actually happened many years earlier. But this seems unlikely, given that the marvels all seem to have taken place in Suffolk or Essex, in other words in Ralph's locality; we may reasonably assume that he heard of them through oral accounts rather than written circulation, and it would be somewhat coincidental if this transmission only took place c.1200. We may also note that William of Newburgh, who includes the story of the green children, was writing before Ralph composed this section of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, yet it is unlikely that he knew of this story before Ralph did, especially if, as seems probable, William obtained his information through Cistercian channels;[101] Ralph, as a Cistercian at work not far from Woolpit, would surely have been privy to the story before William.

It seems, then, that these wonder stories are grouped as they are by authorial intent, not by the circumstances of transmission. This is confirmed by the early copies of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, which preserve the structural integrity of this section. If

[100] A point made by Ruch, 'Digression or discourse?', 266-67.

[101] It is generally assumed that William was writing towards the end of the 1190s, even if the precise dates are debated. The chronicle's abrupt end in May 1198 may be attributed to its author's death not long after this date, perhaps later in 1198 or 1199: Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, 55, 60. But as David Knowles observed (*The Monastic Order in England*, 320 n. 3), there are indications that William began his chronicle before 1196: he describes Hubert Walter's early relations with the monks of Canterbury seemingly without any knowledge of the archbishop's revival of his predecessor's plans for the foundation of a collegiate church, which Hubert undertook in 1196. See William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i, 391-93. Even if we can only surmise that William worked on the text during the latter half of the 1190s, he was still writing before Ralph of Coggeshall wrote down his wonder stories.

Ralph had wanted to redistribute the material gathered at this point, then the copying of H or V gave the opportunity to do so; but the opportunity was not taken. In H the narrative proceeds exactly as C does. V, however, does not; and indeed this manuscript presents something of a conundrum. V, we may recall, is Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 15076, the second copy of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* to be produced at Coggeshall; the first, H, will be examined more closely in the next section. The first item in V is the *Chronicon terre sancte* (ff. 1r-22v); the nature of this text and its significance in Ralph's historiographical outlook will be dealt with shortly. The *Chronicon terre sancte* is followed by the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, but in a confused order: the narrative of 1213-1216 comes first (22v-29r), then the section on wonders entered *sub anno* 1200 in C (29r-34r), and then the *Chronicon Anglicanum* narrative for 1066-1200 (34r-78v). Now this can only have been copied in or after 1216, for the 1213-1216 section follows straight on from the *Chronicon terre sancte*; there is no indication that the quires of the manuscript have been rearranged. But it is not at all clear why the text of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* has been truncated in the way that it has. The scribe was very clearly working from the Cottonian manuscript: for instance, on the final page of the chronicle, which describes Innocent III's call for a new crusade in December 1199, the scribe actually proceeded to copy the beginning of the first wonder story (concerning the merman of Orford), which follows straight on from this in C.[102] He then crossed out what he wrote, presumably when he realised that he was simply repeating information that he had earlier provided: the wonder stories fall, somewhat awkwardly, after the annal for 1216 and before the narrative reverts to 1066. The best explanation, to my mind, is that the wonders section was deliberately included out of place; we will come to this shortly.

[102] Lat. 15076, f. 78v.

The 1213-1216 section in V concludes with King John's final illness. The chapter in question is styled 'De morte regis Johannis' in C, and covers the king's illness, his death at Newark and his burial at Worcester; it then describes the strong winds and fantastical visions that accompanied this.[103] The text in V only incorporates the first few lines of this chapter; John falls ill, but the narrative stops short of his actual death.[104] Now in C a new hand takes over at precisely the point at which V ceases.[105] This would lead us to assume that the scribe of V took his narrative up to the point at which C initially stopped, before the new scribe began his work, were it not for the fact that a marginal note in C at this point reads 'Hactenus', or 'to this point'. This note should probably be read as an instruction to the scribe charged with copying V; and it would be an entirely superfluous command if the scribe of V had in front of him a text that ended at this point anyway. 'Hactenus' is intelligible only if the text in C in fact did run on past the point at which V ends. But this only compounds our difficulties, for there is no clear reason why the scribe of V should have been instructed to end at this point; why recount the king's illness but not his death? And how far did the narrative in C proceed by the time V was copied?

The second of these questions is easier to address than the first, though nothing decisive can be said. It seems unlikely that the chronicle stretched much beyond 1216, for if it did then it becomes increasingly hard to see why this material would not have been included. A further change of hand in the middle of the (relatively brief) annal for 1217 may indicate the chronicle's fullest extent at this point. This in turn would suggest that the manuscript was prepared in 1217-1218.

In any case, it seems that V owes its unusual construction to design rather than accident. Given this, it is telling that the wonders section, allocated to the year 1200 in

[103] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 183-85.
[104] Lat. 15076, f. 29r.
[105] Cotton Vespasian D. x, f. 119v.

V's source, C, is not only preserved intact here but has been taken from its initial location and used in much the same way that it was initially used in C: in other words, as a *tour d'horizon* of recent (and not so recent) miracles and marvels at a climactic point in the narrative. Once again, Ralph seems to peer nervously into the future. If correct, this would rather confirm our interpretation of the wonders section in the original narrative: although chronologically disordered, the section possessed in Ralph's eyes a structural unity that embellished the more straightforward chronicle account, and allowed him to use it again in much the same way when overseeing production of another copy of his manuscript not long after 1216.

In summary, we can say with assurance that the marvels *sub anno* 1200 are not a distraction from the main theme of the chronicle at this point, but a very clear statement of that theme. Ralph had begun his chronicle as a description, indeed a glorification, of Richard's deeds on crusade; by the end of the twelfth century he had begun to assess the crusade in a broader context, one infused with a marked degree of anxiety, even pessimism, and inflected by the ideas of Joachim of Fiore, who clearly made an impression on him. Indeed, it is surely not too much to suggest that Joachim's emphasis on 1199 as a threshold year inaugurating difficult times ahead coloured to a great extent Ralph's distinctive treatment of these years around the turn of the century; not for nothing has Christoph Egger declared that Ralph of Coggeshall 'may be deemed to be Joachim of Fiore's first English follower'.[106] Events in the Holy Land remained a consistent theme, but whereas earlier Ralph had fixed his gaze on the immediate Christian response to Saladin's conquests, now he turned his attention to the underlying significance of these events, and found a new meaning in portents and wondrous happenings.

[106] Egger, 'A pope without successor', 159.

Ralph pursues this thread in his narrative of the early years of the thirteenth century. Speaking of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, Lewis Warren noted, with some exasperation, that 'the weather and the crops, phenomena in the heavens, and strange happenings in East Anglia, have as big a place as King John'.[107] Indeed they do. Ralph pays particular attention to the weather. He gives a vivid description of a storm that followed the Nativity of St John the Baptist in 1201. This outburst of thunder, lightning and excessive rain caused 'great destruction of men, animals and crops, the burning of houses, and the uprooting of trees in many places'.[108] Another, not dissimilar, storm followed fifteen days later, causing additional ruin of crops, death of fish and destruction of bridges. Such was the level of devastation 'that several feared in this torrent of rain that the Flood was once again at hand'.[109] Not long afterwards there was an earthquake in Jerusalem, which Ralph records *sub anno* 1202. This earthquake, says Ralph, 'was such as had not happened from the Passion of the Lord to this time; for nearly the whole of that distinguished city of Tyre was razed by the earthquake, along with very many of its inhabitants; and a third part of Ptolemaïs, or Acre, with its fortress and towers, and other castles, as many in Christian as in Saracen parts, was levelled'.[110] This terrible event was accompanied by similar quakes in parts of England, as well as thunder, lightning, hail-storms and strong winds throughout the month of August.[111] Ralph picks up this thread in his opening narrative for 1203, where he observes that in

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[107] Warren, *King John*, 8.
[108] '...que magnam fecit stragem hominum, animalium, segetum, domorum incensionem, arborum euulsionem pluribus in locis': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 129.
[109] '...ut nonnulli formidarent in illa pluuiarum eruptione iterum instare Dei diluuium': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 129.
[110] '...qualis non contigit a Passione Domini usque ad tempus illud: nam fere tota illa egregia ciuitas Tyrus ex terre motu subuersa est cum habitatoribus plurimis; et tertia pars Tholomaida, id est, Achon, cum castello et turribus, et alia castella subuersa sunt, tam apud Christianos, quam apud Sarracenos': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 141-42.
[111] 'Terre motus etiam particularis in plerisque locis Anglie contigit. Facta sunt horrenda tonitrua et fulgura et grandines crebrius in mense Augusto, et uentus uehemens': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 142.

April of this year the waters rose throughout England, an incident all the more striking for it having been preceded by only scant rainfall.[112]

The most interesting reports of abnormal weather appear in Ralph's entry for 1205. The winter, he says, was harsh; the Thames, and other rivers, froze over, and the land could not be ploughed. This lasted from the Feast of the Circumcision up to the Annunciation, and precipitated food shortages and widespread famine.[113] Then, on the eve of the Feast of St John the Baptist, there were terrifying storms throughout the country. A creature with an ass's head, man's body and limbs of other unidentified animals was struck by lightning near Maidstone. About a month later there was 'over all England, such a fearful crashing of thunder and unceasing display of crackling lightning throughout the night, from the collision of clouds, at one and the same time, that the Day of Judgement was believed to be at hand, and men and animals were nearly driven out of their minds from fear and horror of the expectation that had come over the whole kingdom'.[114] Men and beasts were killed by the lightning, houses burnt, crops destroyed by hail, and trees found uprooted or split down the middle. As in the previous storm, mysterious remains of unknown creatures were discovered afterwards: some said that they were demons struck down by angels in some sort of celestial battle. Now in support of this view, Ralph cites the opinion of 'Hieronimi ex Ethico'. Now this is a reference to Aethicus' *Cosmographia*, an eighth-century work purporting to be Jerome's redaction of, and commentary on, an earlier account of the known and unknown regions of the world by one Aethicus.[115] The identity of the author is not

[112] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 142.
[113] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 151.
[114] 'Tantus fragor horrendorum tonitruorum, et crepitantium fulminum indesinens choruscatio per totam noctem ex nubium collisione per totam Angliam uno eodemque tempore apparuerunt, ut dies Iudicii instare crederetur, exanimatis fere hominibus et animalibus pre timore et expectationis horrore qui superuenerat uniuerso regno': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 155.
[115] Aethicus, *Cosmographia*, ed. M. Herren, Publications of the Journal of Medieval Latin (Turnhout, 2011).

known; the commonly-found attribution to the Irish monk Vergil of Salzburg is doubtful, though the author had certainly spent time in Ireland. Equally murky is the purpose of the work, veering as it does between seriousness and satire. But it did circulate fairly widely in the middle ages, in England as elsewhere: Bury St Edmunds possessed a copy in the late twelfth-century, and Leland saw another at Colchester.[116] Coggeshall may too have stocked the work, and if it did not, Ralph would probably have had no difficulty consulting the text in Colchester or even Bury. Wherever he had access to it, his familiarity with the *Cosmographia* is in no doubt: he quotes several lines from its thirteenth chapter, in which the ethereal struggle of the good and the fallen angels is described.[117] He rounds off with the comment: 'this philosopher has discussed high matters more than others'.[118] Ralph is again cautious about endorsing such claims, but his interest was sufficiently aroused as to place these events on a somewhat grander cosmic stage, in which the struggle between the forces of light and darkness finds an echo in conditions on earth.

The expansion of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*

One could reasonably object that Ralph's interest in portents and unusual occurrences was nothing new, and point to similar stories scattered throughout the chronicle up to 1200. There is some truth in this. His account of the Third Crusade is interrupted by three striking incidents: the exhumation of the body of King Arthur at Glastonbury in 1191, the miraculous restoration to life, by the intercession of the Virgin Mary, of a

[116] *English Benedictine Libraries*, B13.49a, B22.3 (59-60, 108). Ralph de Diceto also knew the work. He includes Ethicus in the list of famous writers that he includes at the start of his chronicle, and later quotes Ethicus' account of Alexander's enclosure of Gog and Magog behind the Caspian Gates: Ralph de Diceto, *Abbreuiationes chronicorum*, 21, 48.
[117] Aethicus, *Cosmographia*, 12-14.
[118] 'Philosophus hic plusquam alii alta disputauit': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 156.

monk of the abbey of Sor, in Dacia, and the vision of the other world experienced by a monk (and future abbot) of Morimond.[119] King Arthur's exhumation was almost certainly a stage-managed event with a view to attracting pilgrims to Glastonbury Abbey, and need not detain us.[120] The other two stories are more significant. The first occupies only a sentence. The second is longer but has in fact been added over an erasure and in the margin, in other words after the original annal had been composed. In other words, only the resurrection of the monk of Sor can be held up as an example of Ralph's incorporation of such stories in the 1187-1195 section of the chronicle.

The 1066-1186 annals, by contrast, do give plenty of space to such portents as earthquakes, along with various meteorological and astronomical phenomena. However, half of these stories were not originally recorded in the main body of the Cottonian text; they were in fact added later as marginal additions, often quite lengthy.[121] The source of these is a matter for discussion. They resemble very closely similar accounts found in the annals of Margam.[122] Now Margam was a Cistercian house in South Wales, and the exchange of material between these two institutions accordingly need not surprise us. But it is unlikely that the information came from Margam to Coggeshall.[123]

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[119] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 36-37.
[120] See A. Gransden, 'The growth of the Glastonbury traditions and legends in the twelfth century', *JEH* 27 (1976), 337-58; reprinted in her *Legends, Traditions and History*, 153-74.
[121] In full, these marginal additions are as follows: a comet in 1097, three celestial circles that appeared in 1104, a comet in 1106, the drying up of the Thames in 1114, a fountain of blood and subsequent famine in 1125, an earthquake of 1132 and the savage weather of 1176: Vespasian D. x, ff. 40v, 41r, 41v, 42r, 42v, 45r; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 3-4, 5-6, 7, 8, 9, 18. The non-marginal entries are as follows (all but the second meriting only a very brief entry): an earthquake in 1089; another earthquake that struck Lombardy in 1117; an eclipse of the moon in 1136; an eclipse of the sun in 1140; an earthquake in 1165; thunderstorms that struck England and Normandy on Christmas Eve 1172; and an earthquake and eclipse of the sun in 1185: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 3, 9, 11, 15, 16, 20.
[122] All but the last of the additions (concerning the weather of 1176) are found in the Margam annals, in almost identical wording: *Annales de Margan*, ed. H. R. Luard, RS 36 (London, 1864-9), i, 3-40, at 6-9, 11, 13.
[123] *Pace* Freeman, who holds that the 1066-1186 annals 'depend on the Margam annals as a source': *Narratives of a New Order*, 182.

To begin with, the last of the marginal additions, describing the adverse weather of 1176, is not found in the Margam annals; but the additions all appear to have been written in the same hand at the same time, making it probable that they were drawn from the same source.[124] On top of this, the Margam annals, as we have them (the only surviving manuscript is missing one or two leaves), run from 1066 to 1232, making it probable that they were compiled in the 1230s or later.[125] A comparison of these with a set of annals contained in Trinity College Dublin MS 507 indicates that both texts share a common source up to the entries for the 1230s.[126] This common source may be the origin of the information in the Ralph's chronicle, though we do not know enough about its transmission to be certain. Yet speculation about the origin of these supplementary pieces of information is rather beside the point, since what matters is

[124] The account of the three celestial circles entered *sub anno* 1104 is worthy of comment. The Coggeshall entry describes the three celestial circles in detail, while the Margam account simply gives a picture: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 5; *Annales de Margan*, 8. Now the picture given by the Margam annalist is not strictly in accordance with that described in the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, omitting, for instance, the detail of the 'goat-like horns' emanating from the two outer circles. This would suggest that the Coggeshall account was not simply a literal rendering of the Margam picture; but the disjuncture turns out to be an illusion propagated by the inaccurate reproduction of the picture in Luard's text. An examination of the original manuscript reveals that the two depictions do align very closely, the Margam picture having the 'goat-like horns' mentioned by Ralph: Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O. 2. 4, f. 3v. This does not suggest that Ralph was actually copying the Margam annals, for the reasons give above; and we may in any case wonder why, if Ralph was copying these annals, he thought it necessary to deliver a laborious written account of the phenomenon instead of simply replicating the diagram in front of him, unless this was for the benefit of those destined to hear the text read out rather than read it for themselves.

[125] The surviving manuscript (Trinity College O. 2. 4) is described by M. R. James, *The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge: a descriptive catalogue* (Cambridge, 1902), iii, 83-4; James gives a date of 1240.

[126] R. B. Patterson, 'The author of the "Margam Annals": early thirteenth-century Margam Abbey's compleat scribe', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 14 (1991), 197-210. Patterson argues that in addition to the Margam annals several other annals from South Wales and South-West England were based on this common source, which he designated Q. Since the Margam annals and, for instance, the annals in Trinity College Dublin MS 507 clearly share this common source right up to their entries for the 1230s, Patterson also posits that Q itself cannot have been compiled any earlier than this. If this is the case, then we cannot date the composition of the Margam annals any earlier than the mid-1230s, a date entirely in line with the manuscript evidence. However, Patterson's dating of Q rather assumes that it was written up and disseminated as a complete text, rather than being released in sections, as the *Chronicon Anglicanum* was. And we should not overlook the possibility that the Margam annals were similarly compiled: see Maurice Powicke's suggestion to the effect in 'The Disappearance of Arthur of Brittany', in his *Ways of Medieval Life and Thought* (London, 1949), 27-37, at 32. Charles Petit-Dutaillis thought that the Margam annals were the work of a sole author, who probably had access to historical notes made by previous members of the foundation, but worked these up into the text that we have now, probably during the reign of Louis VIII or Louis IX (i.e. in the mid-thirteenth century): *Le Déshéritement de Jean sans Terre et le Meurtre d'Arthur de Bretagne* (Paris, 1925), 85-6.

that they were deemed worthy of inclusion at all. For without these additions, the *Chronicon Anglicanum* is, in its initial stages, somewhat lacking in portentous material; rather than interspersing these stories throughout the narrative, Ralph appears to have added most of them retrospectively.

We shall temporarily defer the question of when Ralph made these additions, for there is another, arguably more important, addition to discuss. In C, we find the *Chronicon Anglicanum* preceded by the shorter chronicle of Ralph Niger.[127] Now the shorter chronicle, as we have seen, was almost certainly written in 1199.[128] Hence it must have been appended to Ralph of Coggeshall's chronicle, rather than serving as a basis for the latter. Ralph Niger's chronicle has been copied along with a set of annals covering the years 1162-78, which, as Gransden observed, were probably compiled by the canons of St Osyth's, an Augustinian house in Essex.[129] The sequence was very probably as follows: the canons of St Osyth's acquired a copy of Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle, to which they added a set of annals. This manuscript was then copied by a Coggeshall monk, and the text was added to the Cottonian manuscript of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*.

We should be wary of considering the two chronicles in isolation. And we must remember that Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle, though designated by Krause as the 'English' chronicle, to distinguish it from Ralph Niger's longer, 'World' chronicle, is no less a world chronicle than its counterpart. The *Chronicon Anglicanum* must inevitably take on something of a new character when considered alongside this other text. The intention seems to have been to preface the Coggeshall narrative, which does indeed begin in 1066, with a narrative of world history, for which Ralph Niger's chronicle was no doubt deemed appropriate. Together the two narratives form a work of

[127] Vespasian D. x, ff. 4r-39v.
[128] See above, 76.
[129] Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 331-32.

history that, far from being a specifically insular piece of writing, is concerned with events on the world stage over a far greater period than the long twelfth century alone. We may usefully recall a contemporary work, the chronicle of Ralph de Diceto: this comprises a wholly derivative account of world history from the Creation to 1148 (the *Abbreuiationes chronicorum*) before Ralph begins his own (less derivative) narrative (the *Ymagines historiarum*). I believe that in the light of this important addition we should see the *Chronicon Anglicanum* in much the same way, as the contemporary section of a world history compiled initially from other sources, in this case a single authority, Ralph Niger.

The two texts could not be joined seamlessly in C, and there is a resulting overlap in coverage. However, what could not be perfectly achieved in C was accomplished by another manuscript, British Library MS Royal 13 A. xii. Here the two chronicles have been interwoven to form a continuous narrative to 1211. The manuscript was certainly produced in the Coggeshall area, since the scribe has added some local lore to the text; and Coggeshall itself is the obvious place of origin.[130] The list of archbishops from Ralph Niger's chronicle here mentions the Interdict (though not, strangely enough, Stephen Langton), so the manuscript can only have been drawn up after 1208; the inclusion of Joachim's meeting with Adam of Perseigne suggests a date after 1216. We can be no more specific than this.

We can, however, say more about the date at which Ralph Niger's chronicle was added to the *Chronicon Anglicanum*. The combined text was first copied as H, the Arundel manuscript; and the marginal additions discussed above are incorporated into the main body of the text in this manuscript. If we can date the Arundel manuscript, then we have a *terminus ante quem* for both. But this is no straightforward task.

[130] Willoughby, 'The hand of Ralph of Coggeshall'.

H was certainly begun in King John's reign. The first item in the manuscript is the *Chronicon terre sancte*, to which we will return later in the chapter. This is followed by a short text entitled 'De ducibus Normannie et regibus Anglie', little more than a list of these rulers.[131] Then we have Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle, and then an epitome of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, not unlike the *chronicula* of John of Worcester. The *Chronicon Anglicanum* proper follows. Now the tract 'De ducibus Normannie et regibus Anglie' ends with a brief statement of Richard I's death and burial, the length of his reign, and the accession of John in his place.[132] John's regnal years are enumerated, but in a different hand:[133] the obvious conclusion to draw is that they were added at the king's death, while the rest of the tract must date from during John's reign.[134]

We may tentatively narrow these parameters. A valuable aid for dating this and other manuscripts is the list of archbishops of Canterbury found towards the end of Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle: in the fourteenth-century Corpus Christi manuscript of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, which we briefly mentioned earlier, the presence of Walter Reynolds in this list allows us to date at least part, if not the whole, of the manuscript to between 1313 and 1327.[135] In the case of H, Hubert Walter concludes the list, as he did in C.[136] As there is no mention of Stephen Langton, we may reasonably conclude that H was copied before his election as archbishop in December 1206, or perhaps before his consecration by Innocent III in June 1207.

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[131] The same tract occurs is incorporated into Roger of Howden's *Chronica*, ii, 239-41.
[132] '[Ricardus] regnauit annis ix mensibus vii dies xx, qui in obsidione castelli de chaluz, sagitta percussus, viii idus Aprilis obiit. Cuius uiscera sepulta sunt apud charou, et cor eius apud Rothomagum, et corpus apud fontem ebrardi. Quo defuncto, Iohannes frater eius comes de mortoin successit ei in regnum Anglie': Arundel 11, f. 16r.
[133] '...qui regnum xvii annis et iv mensibus': Arundel 11, f. 16r.
[134] Another clear indication that the copying of H was begun after John's accession may be found *sub anno* 1154: we may recall that Ralph amended this annal in C after John came to the throne (see above, 90), but in H the amendment is incorporated into the main body of the text.
[135] See above, 83 n. 9.
[136] Arundel 11, f. 37r.

There is an obvious difficulty. The *chronicula*, which summarises the whole of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, extends to the year 1225. And as it is immediately followed by the chronicle that it summarises, we are compelled to assume that both texts were copied after 1225, unless the *chronicula* was inserted later. And in fact there is a peculiarity in the text of the *chronicula* that suggests it was, at least partially, a later insertion. The *chronicula* begins on f. 45v. It abandons the two-column format of the previous texts and is written out in full across the page: years are listed down the left-hand margin, and entries next to the relevant year. On f. 49r, however, the text reverts to the two-column format as used previously. This occurs during the entry for 1206; the new folio begins with a note of the consecration of Stephen Langton, as if part of the 1206 annal, though in fact it occurred in the following year. Now this change in format corresponds to the start of the seventh quire, which appears to be an insertion, and the first folio of the eighth quire (f. 57r) changes the format again: here the two columns continue, but the number of lines in each column is reduced from forty to thirty-six. This is perfectly explicable if we envisage the following: the scribe of H compiled the *chronicula* as far as the *Chronicon Anglicanum* extended at that time in C, in other words to 1206. He then copied the actual text of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* as far as it went, and added to it as its exemplar was continued. In or soon after 1225, having copied the *Chronicon Anglicanum* in full, he then went back and completed the *chronicula* through the insertion of a new quire.

This initial section of H, which included the *Chronicon terre sancte*, Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle and the *chronicula* to 1206, was, I would argue, copied not long after this date, though we can perhaps be no more specific than the last years of the 1200s; this in accordance with what we know of the piecemeal process of composition

of C. It follows that Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle must have been added to C in the first decade of the thirteenth century, perhaps no later than the middle of that decade.[137]

Now we must remember that the 1206-1212 narrative as it originally stood in C was replaced by Ralph himself at some point after 1216. No sign of any editorial intervention can be found in H: by the time the copyist reached the entries for this period, C had been altered. This is problematic, for it means that H was copied only very gradually between the early 1200s and, probably, the early 1220s, when Ralph most likely made the change. Such an arrangement is not out of the question, however, and in the absence of evidence to the contrary this will have to stand as the most likely scenario.

We have seen that in the early years of the thirteenth century Ralph was busy expanding his chronicle in two ways: first, through the incorporation, from an unknown source, of various marvels and natural phenomena into his record, in order to complement the wonder stories that he groups *sub anno* 1200; second, through the addition of Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle, so as to turn the whole into a world chronicle. But in the process of doing this Ralph never lost sight of the crusading movement that initially drew his attention; indeed, we have argued that he developed his chronicle from a detailed account of the Third Crusade to a much wider-ranging text that attempted to evaluate the significance of this and other developments in Christendom. And in the early years of the thirteenth century, when he was busy

[137] In the 1162-78 annals found in C, there is a marginal addition next to the entry for 1168. This annal describes the marriage of Henry II's daughter Mathilda to Henry the Lion, and the marginal addition notes that she was the mother of 'Otto, king of Germany' ('Hec fuit mater Othonis, regis Alemannie'): Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Anstruther, 171. This addition could only have been made after 1198, when Otto was elected as a rival to Philip of Swabia; but of course Ralph Niger's chronicle, onto which the annals were appended, itself postdates this. More plausibly, the addition was made in 1208, when Otto became sole king of Germany. Hence the Cottonian text of these annals, and by extension Ralph Niger's chronicle, had probably been copied by this date.

augmenting the chronicle in the ways mentioned above, Ralph found time to make an additional contribution to his record of the Third Crusade.

The *Chronicon terre sancte*

To begin with, the *Chronicon Anglicanum* was an account of the Third Crusade, its preliminaries and its aftermath. Ralph partially constructed this from the testimony of eyewitnesses: for instance, the crusader Hugh de Neville gave Ralph a vivid account of the Battle of Joppa, most likely when he visited Coggeshall in 1204 as justice of the forest, while Richard's chaplain Anselm furnished him with details of the king's capture on his way back from the Holy Land.[138] But Ralph also relied on a written source, an anonymous account of the tribulations afflicting the Holy Land in the years 1186-87 known as the *Chronicon terre sancte*, or, more commonly, according to the editorial title given to it by Stevenson, the *Libellus de expugnatione sancte terre per Saladinum*.[139] In our examination of the manuscripts of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, we have often encountered this text prefacing the *Chronicon Anglicanum*. Now we must give it the attention it deserves.

Ralph himself has often been identified as the author of the *Chronicon terre sancte*.[140] This is not the case; but he does seem to have written a continuation, and undoubtedly played a significant role in its dissemination. The author of the *Chronicon terre sancte* was in fact a Templar who fought at the siege of Jerusalem and was

[138] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 41-51, 54.
[139] Stevenson's edition remains the standard one: *Chronicon terre sancte*, ed. J. Stevenson, RS 66 (London, 1875), 209-62. For what follows I am indebted to Willoughby, 'A Templar chronicle', though there are points on which I disagree.
[140] John Bale was the first to make this influential identification: John Bale, *Index Britanniae scriptorum*, ed. R. L. Poole, C. Brett & J. P. Carley (Woodbridge, 1990), 327-8. It was refuted by Stubbs and, following him, Stevenson: Stubbs, *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I*, RS 38 (London, 1864-5), i, pp. lv-lvi; J. Stevenson, *Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon Anglicanum*, RS 66 (London, 1875), xviii.

wounded for his troubles.[141] In a grandiloquent style rather different from Ralph's more sober tone, he describes the beginnings of Saladin's incursions into the Holy Land, his defeat of Christian forces at Cresson and Hattin and his capture of Jerusalem in October 1187. Then, as Stubbs observed, the narrative changes, losing its eyewitness immediacy and becoming simply a brief recapitulation of the first book of the *Itinerarium peregrinorum et gesta regis Ricardi*, a much lengthier account of the Third Crusade believed to have been composed in the 1220s.[142] The text as we have it is clearly the work of two separate authors.

Now the *Chronicon terre sancte* came to be associated with Coggeshall from an early date; three of its four manuscripts contain the *Chronicon Anglicanum* as well. The oldest manuscript of the *Chronicon terre sancte* (British Library, Cotton MS Cleopatra B. 1) is a Coggeshall production coeval with the autograph manuscript of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*.[143] The text appears also in the two earliest copies of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, H and V. As has been correctly observed, this level of manuscript production points not to internal use but to external dissemination of the *Chronicon terre sancte*, just as we saw in the case of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*.[144] Cressing Temple, the first Templar foundation in England, and a close neighbour of Coggeshall, provides a likely conduit for the text.[145] The scenario we should envisage is that the abbey of Coggeshall, owing to its proximity to this Templar house, was able to obtain a copy of the *Chronicon terre sancte*, and swiftly set about propagating it.

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[141] *Chronicon terre sancte*, 243.
[142] Stubbs, *Chronicles and Memorials*, i, pp. lvi-lviii.
[143] Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 129. This is the only manuscript of the text not to contain the *Chronicon Anglicanum* as well; it has no connection with the other items in the manuscript, the contents having been gathered and bound together by Sir Robert Cotton.
[144] Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 129.
[145] Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 131.

Ralph had already raided the text for his description of the fall of the Holy Land, which was part of the section in existence soon after 1195.[146] The *Chronicon terre sancte* must accordingly have been in existence by this point, and may have been written earlier still: there is no reference in the text to a date later than October 1187, and it may have been written up soon after the fall of Jerusalem. This need not surprise us: the work is decidedly gloomy in tone, more concerned with lamenting the disasters than anticipating a Christian response. One could in fact describe it as a protracted newsletter, comparable to those shorter pieces circulated by the Templars and others in the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem.[147] It is hard to imagine that the *Chronicon terre sancte* was composed at a significant remove from the events it describes. And given Ralph did use it early in his writing process, an early date for the work seems most appropriate.

That Ralph had access to the text from an early date and played a role in its dissemination strongly suggests that he was the author of the continuation to it, drawing heavily on the *Itinerarium peregrinorum et gesta regis Ricardi* to do so.[148] The first, anonymous, author ends, on a suitably downbeat note though somewhat abruptly, with

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[146] Though Ralph's treatment of the years 1186-7 is far briefer than the account in the *Chronicon terre sancte*, there are sufficient indications of borrowing. Compare, for instance, his description of Mareschallia in the former ('in loco qui dicitur Marescaucie, qui locus distat a ciuitate Tyberiadis tribus millibus') with the description in the latter ('casale quod dicitur Marescalcie, in tertio milliario a ciuitate'): Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 21; *Chronicon terre sancte*, 223. I am inclined to disagree with Dr Willoughby on the subject of Ralph's use of the *Itinerarium* ('Templar chronicle', 128). It seems to me that there are no positive indications of borrowing, and sometimes there are outright differences. A couple of examples may suffice. According to Ralph, the siege of Darun lasted five days, whereas the *Itinerarium* gives four: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 37; *Itinerarium*, 352, 356. The two texts also offer a different account of how Richard was presented with a fragment of the True Cross while encamped at Betenoble: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 40-1; *Itinerarium*, 377-8. It is in any case hard to see how Ralph could have used the *Itinerarium* here. He was writing very close in time to the Third Crusade; as we shall see, an early (and much shorter) version of the *Itinerarium* was composed no later than 1192 and was in circulation by the late 1190s, but we cannot assume Ralph would have had access to it, and he may have been writing his crusade narrative as early as 1191-92.

[147] See, for instance, the texts gathered by Peter Edbury in *The Conquest of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade* (Aldershot, 1996), 156-66.

[148] Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 127-8 (which includes details on similarities of phrasing and vocabulary that point up Ralph's probable authorship). Ralph's section, representing approximately one fifth of the whole work, may be found at *Chronicon terre sancte*, 251-62.

the despoliation of Jerusalem by the Saracens in October 1187. Ralph takes the story further, up to the arrival of the kings of France and England, before referring the reader to 'the book which the lord prior of Holy Trinity in London arranged to be translated from French into Latin in a style as elegant as it was truthful'.[149] Appended to this are the letters exchanged between Frederick Barbarossa and Saladin.[150]

When did Ralph add his continuation, and why? The first question is easier to answer than the second. Ralph's use of the *Itinerarium* suggests that he did so after 1222, the *terminus ante quem* of the latter text.[151] However, this is questionable on several grounds. To see why, we must scrutinise the arguments for the authorship and dating of the *Itinerarium*.[152]

It is generally agreed that the *Itinerarium* is a compilation, behind which lies a complex mixture of oral and written sources. The original text seems to have been a narrative of the years 1187-90, possibly by an English crusader writing in 1191-2.[153] This in turn was a compilation, made up of oral material on the fall of the Holy Land, a written narrative of the German crusade, and a written eyewitness account of the siege of Acre in 1190.[154] It was from a manuscript of this version that Jacques Bongars printed the text in his *Gesta Dei per Francos* of 1611; Stubbs referred to this manuscript, now lost, as G, and observed that at least two others like it were once

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[149] '...si quis plenius nosse desiderat, legat librum quem dominus prior Sancte Trinitatis Londoniis ex Gallica lingua in Latinum tam eleganti quam ueraci stilo transferri fecit': *Chronicon terre sancte*, 257.
[150] *Chronicon terre sancte*, 257-61. These are out of place, having been written in 1188. They are found in a number of other contemporary chronicles, as well as the *Itinerarium*: see Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum*, ii, 56-7; Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 62-3; idem, *Chronica*, ii, 356-7.
[151] Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 129.
[152] The most helpful discussion is that of Helen Nicholson in the introduction to her translation of the text: H. J. Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade: a translation of the Itinerarium peregrinorum et gesta regis ricardi* (Aldershot, 1997), 1-17. See also C. J. Tyerman, 'Richard (fl. 1216-1222)' , *ODNB*; Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 130.
[153] *Itinerarium*, 124. The narrative ends with the death of Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury; this is one of a number of items of English interest that have contributed to the tentative identification of the author's nationality, for which see Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 9-10. The date comes from H. E. Mayer, *Das Itinerarium peregrinorum: eine zeitgenössische englische Chronik zum dritten Kreuzzug in ursprünglicher Gestatt* (Stuttgart, 1962), 103-4, and see Nicholson's tentative endorsement in *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 10.
[154] Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 10.

extant.[155] A reconstruction of this version was attempted by Mayer, who labelled it IP1.[156] This version seems to have enjoyed some circulation in the 1190s: it was used by Gerald of Wales and William of Newburgh, neither of whom shows any knowledge of the longer text of the *Itinerarium* as printed by Stubbs.[157] This longer text, in six books, was labelled IP2 by Mayer. The compiler of IP2 appears to have taken the 1187-90 narrative (IP1) and added a number of oral legends about the siege of Acre, and a number of anecdotes about the harsh winter of 1190-91.[158] To this revised text, which was to form the first book of IP2, our author then appended a Latin translation of a French chronicle, to form books 2-6 of the completed work. Nicholson reckons this French chronicle to be the *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*. This was the work of Ambroise, a Norman crusader who accompanied Richard I to the Holy Land, and it was written sometime between 1195 and 1199.[159] But it is more likely that the *Estoire* was itself based on a French prose original that was translated into Latin to make the *Itinerarium*; this French text was probably the work of a Norman from the region of Évreux writing in 1195-96.[160]

IP2 has been ascribed to Richard de Templo, canon and later prior of Holy Trinity Aldgate. Stubbs was the first to make this identification. He invoked the testimony of the early fourteenth-century Dominican chronicler Nicholas Trevet.[161] Trevet borrows heavily from the *Itinerarium* for his chronicle account of the reign of Richard I and the Third Crusade, and explicitly ascribes this work to 'Richard, a canon

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[155] Stubbs, *Chronicles and Memorials*, i, pp. lxxii-lxxiii.
[156] Mayer, *Das Itinerarium*, 7-51.
[157] William begins his annal for 1187 with an almost verbatim transcription of the opening of the *Itinerarium*: William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, i, 249; *Itinerarium*, 5.
[158] Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*,11-12.
[159] For the date of the *Estoire*, see P. Damian-Grint, 'Ambroise (fl. 1188-1195)', *ODNB*; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 240.
[160] J. G. Edwards, 'The *Itinerarium regis Ricardi* and the *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*', in *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait*, ed. J. G. Edwards, V. H. Galbraith & E. F. Jacob (Manchester, 1933), 59-77; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 240.
[161] Stubbs, *Chronicles and Memorials*, i, pp. xl-xli, lxvii.

of Holy Trinity in London'.[162] Stubbs was inclined to believe Trevet, even though the Dominican was writing over a century later; and he found confirmation for Trevet's statement in a passage in the *Chronicon terre sancte* that we have already noted, wherein Ralph of Coggeshall refers the reader to a work that is clearly the *Itinerarium* in its long version, and states that it was translated from the French by the prior of Holy Trinity Aldgate.[163] Now a certain Richard de Templo became prior of this house in 1222;[164] and the statements of Trevet and Coggeshall are entirely comprehensible if we assume that this same Richard was responsible for compiling the *Itinerarium* while a canon of Holy Trinity, and had completed it by the time he became prior. This gives us a *terminus ante quem* of 1222. As Stubbs pointed out, the *terminus post quem* is provided by consistent mention of King John as 'tunc comite', which make it extremely unlikely that the work dates from before 1199.[165] Given these parameters, Mayer and Nicholson both opted for a date of 1217-22, for slightly different reasons: Mayer thought that the author's consistently harsh attitude towards King John precluded a date earlier than 1216, while Nicholson felt that references to Philip Augustus as, for instance, 'the most powerful and prestigious of Christian kings', indicated a date after 1216, by which time the king had made sweeping conquests, defeated the Holy Roman

[162] 'Tricesimum autem secundum etatis sue annum in coronatione compleuerat Ricardus, cuius mores corporisque formam Ricardus, canonicus sancte Trinitatis Londoniensis, qui itinerarium eiusdem regis prosa et metro scripsit, secundum ea que ut ipse asserit presens uidit in castris, per hunc modum describit': Nicholas Trevet, *Annales*, ed. T. Hog (London, 1845), 116. What Trevet seems to describe is a crusade narrative written in prose and verse. This initially seems confusing, for the *Itinerarium* is only in prose. But Leland claims to have seen a verse account of the Third Crusade, written by Richard de Templo, and this is probably what Trevet means. On Trevet, see J. G. Clark, 'Nicholas Trevet', *ODNB*; R. J. Dean, 'Nicholas Trevet, Historian', in *Medieval Learning and Literature: essays presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. J. J. G. Alexander & M. T. Gibson (Oxford, 1976), 328-52.
[163] See above, 123.
[164] *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales*, ed. D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke, V. C. M. London & D. M. Smith (Cambridge, 1972-2008), ii, 415.
[165] Stubbs, *Chronicles and Memorials*, i, pp. lxix-lxx.

Emperor and invaded England.[166] So, in short, we can date the *Itinerarium* to 1217-22, and the *Chronicon terre sancte* to some date after 1222.

These arguments are persuasive but not conclusive; and under close inspection they begin to fall apart. We know that the *Itinerarium* must have been in existence before Ralph wrote his continuation to the *Chronicon terre sancte*; but the manuscript evidence in fact suggests that this continuation dates from before 1216. For a start, the *Chronicon terre sancte*, with Ralph's continuation, is present in V, which we have argued was probably compiled 1217-1218.[167] But it is also extant in H, and James Willoughby has shown that this text was copied directly from the earliest manuscript, Cotton Cleopatra B. i.[168] Now the *Chronicon terre sancte* in H occupies the first two quires of the manuscript, and onto it has been tacked a short genealogy of the Dukes of Normandy and Kings of England.[169] This section of H, along with Ralph Niger's chronicle and the *chronicula* to 1206, we have dated to the late 1200s.[170] The corollary of this, of course, is that the *Itinerarium* must also have been in existence by the late 1200s. One possible resolution to this problem is that Ralph was in fact using IP1, which we know to have been compiled by the middle of the 1190s. But although Ralph concludes his extended paraphrase of the *Itinerarium* in June 1190, he was clearly using the long version of this text (IP2), for he breaks off just after the start of the second book of this longer version;[171] and his referral of the reader to the translation of the French chronicle suggests, as Stubbs observed, a writer grown weary of the laborious process of abridgement.[172]

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[166] Mayer, *Das Itinerarium peregrinorum*, 105-106; Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 11.
[167] See above, 108.
[168] Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 129.
[169] See above, 117.
[170] See above, 117.
[171] *Chronicon terre sancte*, 257. Book 2 of the *Itinerarium* opens with a brief notice of the arrival of Kings Philip and Richard in the Holy Land before jumping back to narrate the crusade preparations of these monarchs in their respective countries: *Itinerarium*, 138.
[172] Stubbs, *Chronicles and Memorials*, i, p. lvi.

The arguments adduced for dating the *Itinerarium* to 1217-22 do not in any case stand up. We have seen that Ralph of Coggeshall was himself writing critically of John during his reign, and on this basis Mayer's argument may be discounted; so too may Nicholson's argument, for it seems probable that the epithets attached to King Philip were part of the French source of the *Itinerarium*, a point suggested by the presence of similar epithets in Ambroise's *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*, which was based on the same source and written by 1199.[173]

What, then, are we to make of the testimony of Trevet and Ralph of Coggeshall? As it happens, the two can be reconciled without difficulty. Ralph does not actually specify which prior was responsible for the *Itinerarium*; it was Stubbs who assumed that he was referring to the same person as Trevet, but in his new capacity as prior. If his continuation to the *Chronicon terre sancte* dates from before 1216, as seems likely, then he clearly cannot have meant Richard de Templo. The prior in question must have been Richard's predecessor, Peter of Cornwall, who occupied this position from 1197 to 1221.[174] Responsibility must accordingly rest with Peter, rather than Richard.[175] But as Mayer himself pointed out, this does not necessarily contradict Trevet's assertion that Richard the canon wrote the *Itinerarium*.[176] Ralph does not state that Prior Peter composed the work himself, merely that he arranged for it to be translated. Richard was in all probability the man commissioned by Peter to carry out this task.

We can pursue this further. Knowing that the oldest extant manuscript (Cotton Cleopatra B. i) is a Coggeshall production, and that the continuation added to it is

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[173] For instance, when discussing the same episode (Philip's untimely departure from the Holy Land), the *Itinerarium* describes Philip as 'the most powerful and most prestigious of Christian kings' and Ambroise's describes him as 'the greatest of earthly kings known among Christians': *Itinerarium*, 237; Ambroise, *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*, ed. & tr. M. Ailes & M. Barber (Woodbridge, 2003), ii, 105.
[174] *Heads of Religious Houses*, i, 174.
[175] A point made by R. Easting & R. Sharpe, *Peter of Cornwall's Book of Revelations* (Toronto, 2013), 28 n. 88.
[176] Mayer, *Das Itinerarium*, 106.

Ralph's work, it may be instructive to compare the hand of this continuation with the various hands that we see in Cotton Vespasian D. x. The hand that wrote the continuation to the *Chronicon terre sancte* turns out to be the same hand that contributed the text of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* for 1202-1205.[177] The presence of the distinctive letter forms recently identified by Dr. Willoughby as peculiar to Ralph (such as capital 'S') shows that this section of the chronicle, and by extension the continuation, is his own writing. So the sequence was very probably as follows: the *Chronicon terre sancte* was originally written not long after the events it describes, in the late 1180s or early 1190s; Ralph then took it upon himself to write a continuation to this text at the same time as he was bringing the *Chronicon Anglicanum* up to date in the first years of the 1200s. Shortly after this the *Chronicon terre sancte*, with Ralph's continuation, was copied as part of an effort to produce a fair copy of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*: this survives as the College of Arms manuscript, H. The *Chronicon terre sancte* was then copied again as part of V, in 1217-1218.

It follows that the *Itinerarium* must have assumed its current (long) form in the early 1200s. Now as Dr. Nicholson rightly observes, 'the history of a crusade was most likely to be written either while it was in progress, in its immediate aftermath or in preparation for the next one'.[178] In the light of this, she suggested that the context for the production of the *Itinerarium* was either the Fourth Crusade or the Fifth Crusade; and in view of her other dating arguments, and the association with Richard de Templo, she opted for the latter, in other words, confirming the date range of 1217-22 suggested

[177] Cotton Vespasian D. x, ff. 99r-111v. This is in fact the same hand that rewrote the earlier account of the Battle of Joppa (1192), based on the testimony of the crusader Hugh de Neville: Cotton Vespasian D. x, ff. 60v-61v. Willougby suggests that this correction was made following a visit of Hugh de Neville, as chief justice of the forest, to Coggeshall in January 1204: Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 130. The evidence of the handwriting seems to confirm this.
[178] Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 10.

by Mayer.[179] We may offer the Fourth Crusade as the more probable context, in other words 1202-1203; this is within the parameters suggested by the references to King John and the hand of Ralph's continuation of the *Chronicon terre sancte*. It seems reasonable to suggest that the impetus for Ralph's continuation was similar. And Ralph was not only keen to supplement the *Chronicon terre sancte*, but also actively tried to circulate it in connection with his *Chronicon Anglicanum*.

For reasons of space, we will have to forego a detailed discussion of the later stages of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*; however, the loss of the original annals for 1206-1212, and the unevenness of many of the annals after this, perhaps as a result of Ralph's declining health, make it harder to discern Ralph's outlook through this period. Yet on the basis of what we have examined in this chapter, we surely have cause to disagree with the following assessment of Ralph's work:

> Ralph of Coggeshall was not an innovative historian, since his *Chronicon* is, in terms of its structure, no more than a traditional set of monastic annals, in which he is content to refer to a standard cyclical view of history to treat the unexpected demise of a king as God's punishment for uncorrected sins, and the death of an archbishop as an *exemplum* of the transitory nature of earthly achievement.[180]

This is not to deny that such observations cannot be found within the framework of the chronicle; but when one takes into account the overarching scheme of the work, these are rather beside the point. Ralph's chronicle was a work that originated in the Crusades, in the hopes and fears that this movement aroused at the end of the twelfth century. Certainly Richard I, the king whose injustices and exactions Ralph was initially keen to excuse, is a dominant figure in this narrative, at least up to the middle of the

[179] Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 11; Mayer, *Das Itinerarium peregrinorum*, 105-106.
[180] D. Corner, 'Ralph of Coggeshall'.

1190s. But thereafter Ralph seems to have turned to the more far-reaching implications of the crusading movement and its place in Christian history, and successive instalments of the chronicle, most notably that ending in 1200 and the brief continuation added to it, reflect a distinctly apprehensive outlook on world events and their significance. It is in this context that we should view the additions made to the text in the very first years of the new century, which match Ralph's broad perspective with a similarly broad narrative of world history and interweave details of signs and phenomena that tally with a seemingly new-found interest in such things. And it is important to remember that Ralph seems to have been keen to share his tentative account. We have seen how a version up to 1195 was assembled and circulated, though a copy of this does not survive; we do, however, possess early copies of the chronicle made at Coggeshall itself, showing that the abbey was by no means a negligible centre of production in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century.

Joachim of Fiore

As we observed in the previous two chapters, accounts of Joachim of Fiore are among the most important details in the chronicles of Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall. In both cases the Calabrian visionary provides a means of focussing their own eschatological awareness, and, I have argued in the case of Ralph of Coggeshall, offers a prism through which to record and understand subsequent events. That does not mean that either chronicler necessarily presented Joachim's ideas with any accuracy. But the fact that they were able to do so at all is striking. As we shall see, Joachim was a controversial and much debated figure even during his lifetime, and aroused the curiosity of a number of authors.[1] To Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall we may add the English clerk Roger of Howden and the French Premonstratensian Robert of Auxerre. These four authors are the earliest contemporary witnesses to Joachim's influence, and as such they deserve to be taken very seriously. This is not to say that they have been unduly neglected by scholars; on the contrary, they have attracted plenty of scrutiny.[2] Attention has been given to the accuracy of their presentation of Joachim's ideas, and by extension to the evidence they give for knowledge of Joachim during his own lifetime. But there is more to say on this point. The aim of this chapter is to illuminate the common ground shared by at least three of these accounts and suggest that a common written source lies behind them; in so doing, we will see that, far from

[1] The literature on Joachim is extensive. A good introduction is provided by Marjorie Reeves in her *Joachim of Fiore and the Prophetic Future*, 1-28. More important still is her definitive work *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: a study in Joachimism* (Oxford, 1969; rev. ed., Notre Dame, 1993). Other valuable introductory surveys may be found in E. G. Gardner, 'Joachim of Flora and the Everlasting Gospel', *Franciscan Essays* (Aberdeen, 1912), 50-70; B. McGinn, *Apocalyptic Spirituality* (London, 1980), 97-112; B. McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 126-30; Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 100-24. Joachim of Fiore's complex figures and number symbolism are covered by M. E. Reeves & B. Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore* (Oxford, 1972), esp. 1-74.

[2] E.g. Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 39-44; Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 86-88; B. McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the history of Western thought* (New York, 1985), 28-29.

offering garbled summaries of ideas reported orally and only dimly understood, the English chroniclers were privy to accurate statements of Joachim's thought drawn up by the abbot himself, and consequently stand as significant witnesses to the early circulation of Joachimite ideas. Before we turn to the chroniclers, however, we should outline what these ideas were, and provide a portrait of the man responsible for them. The sheer fecundity of Joachim's thought, and the diverse ways in which it was expressed, make this no easy task.

The life and works of Joachim of Fiore[3]

Joachim was born in the Calabrian town of Celico.[4] He is often said to have been born in around 1135; however, this rests on a misunderstanding of one of the chronicle accounts, to be discussed shortly, and the truth is that we do not know precisely when he was born.[5] He seems to have served in the Sicilian court at Palermo, as his father had before him, but abandoned this career after a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[6] He then entered the Benedictine monastery of Corazzo in Calabria. By 1177 he had become

[3] Joachim's life is addressed in a monumental study by Herbert Grundmann, which also includes the texts of two early *Vite* of Joachim, an anonymous *Vita* probably written by a Florensian disciple of Joachim, and the *Vita* written by Joachim's secretary, Luke of Cosenza: H. Grundmann, 'Zur Biographie Joachims von Fiore und Rainers von Ponza', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 16 (1960), 437-546. Other useful accounts may be found in McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 18-30; S. E. Wessley, *Joachim of Fiore and Monastic Reform* (New York, 1990), 1-47.

[4] McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 19.

[5] E.g. McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 19; Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 3; Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 101. Ralph of Coggeshall is the authority for this date: in his account of Joachim's meeting with Adam of Perseigne, he comments that Joachim 'uidebatur autem fere sexagenarius' (Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 69); as the meeting is included *sub anno* 1195, a date of birth sixty years earlier than this is adduced. One can easily object that Ralph's statement is too vague to allow such an inference. A more fundamental problem is that, as Christoph Egger has rightly observed, this account is in fact a marginal addition from the early thirteenth century; hence the meeting cannot securely be assigned to 1195: Egger, 'A pope without successor', 145-46, 178. See above, 100.

[6] *Vita beati Joachimi abbatis*, ed. H. Grundmann, *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 16 (1960), 528-39, at 529. The uncertainties and eventual collapse that beset Norman Sicily in the later twelfth century, as well as the paucity of historiographical interest and enterprise in the kingdom, may have influenced Joachim's historical outlook, and it seems that some details of his scheme, such as the identification of the persecutors of the Church, are redolent of this Southern Italian context: T. S. Brown, 'The political use of the past in Norman Sicily', in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. P. Magdalino (London, 1992), 191-210, at 208-209; McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 6.

abbot of the house; he relinquished this position in 1186 and retreated to the remote Sila Plateau along with a handful of the community.[7] Over the course of the previous decade he seems to have devoted a lot of time to reflection on the role of monasticism in history.[8] This prompted him to embrace the Cistercian order: he managed to introduce Cistercian customs into Corazzo, though he did not succeed in achieving its full integration into the order during his abbacy.[9] Eventually he decided to pursue his own particular vision of the ideal monastic life; hence his resignation. His meditations on the past and future of monasticism, which are set out most explicitly in a work of around 1187 entitled *Tractatus de uita sancti Benedicti et de officio diuino secundum eius doctrinam*, was but part of an increasingly ardent desire to explicate fundamental questions of history and eschatology. This resulted in the staggeringly imaginative and complex works for which he is best remembered: *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, a lengthy commentary on Revelation, *Liber concordie Noui ac Veteris Testamenti*, a book setting out various concords between the two Testaments and the course of the future dictated by these, and *Psalterium decem chordarum*, a reflection on the Trinity.[10] This by no means exhausts his output, which was considerable; and, as we shall see, these major works, though extremely influential in the later Middle Ages, were not the channels through which Joachim's thought was disseminated during his own lifetime.

Jaded by the sluggish Cistercian response to his overtures, Joachim founded his own order.[11] This order was based at the newly constructed monastery of San Giovanni in Fiore, in Calabria; its initial success was impressive enough that Gregory IX, some

[7] *Vita beati Joachimi abbatis*, 533-35.
[8] Wessley, *Joachim of Fiore and Monastic Reform*, 5-17, 61-69.
[9] *Vita beati Joachimi abbatis*, 532.
[10] Joachim of Fiore, *Tractatus de uita sancti Benedicti et de officio diuino secundum eius doctrinam*, ed. A. Patschovosky (Rome, 2008); idem, *Expositio in Apocalypsim* (Venice, 1527); idem, *Liber concordie Noui ac Veteris Testamenti* (Venice, 1519), idem, *Psalterium decem chordarum* (Venice, 1527).
[11] Ironically, Joachim's efforts did bear fruit, but only after his departure: Corazzo was officially received into the Cistercian order in 1188.

forty years later, could name the order as one of the four pillars of the Church.[12] Joachim's alienation from the Cistercian order was, unsurprisingly, a cause of friction between him and the General Chapter, which summoned him to appear before it in 1192.[13] Tensions such as these do not seem to have clouded his reputation, and he was on more than one occasion summoned before princes and prelates to advise on matters spiritual. The most famous instance of this was his meeting with Richard I at Messina in the winter of 1190-91.[14] A more fractious encounter was with the emperor Henry VI; according to the anonymous *Vita*, Henry was rebuked by Joachim outside the walls of Naples during his 1191 campaign in the Kingdom of Sicily.[15] This does not appear to have stopped him patronising Joachim's foundation with considerable generosity, and after his death the Empress Constance confirmed her husband's donations in January 1198.[16]

Joachim also remained on good terms with the papacy throughout his lifetime. It was in fact Pope Lucius III who first gave Joachim the encouragement and support he needed to start work on his treatises. The two met at Veroli in 1184; the occasion for this meeting was the discovery of an oblique Sibylline prophecy in a volume belonging to a recently deceased cardinal, Matthew of Anjou.[17] Joachim, who had been staying at the neighbouring Cistercian house of Casamari as part of his efforts to find a suitable motherhouse for Corazzo, was summoned before Lucius to offer an explanation of it.[18]

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[12] Wessley, *Joachim of Fiore and Monastic Reform*, 2. The Florensian order lasted until 1633.
[13] *Twelfth-century Statutes from the Cistercian General Chapter*, ed. C. Waddell (Cîteaux, 2002), 250-1.
[14] See below, 164-69.
[15] *Vita beati Joachimi abbatis*, 535-38.
[16] McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 28.
[17] Matthew was made a cardinal at the Third Lateran Council. Gerald of Wales attended his lectures on canon law while a student at Paris in the late 1170s, and claimed that Matthew asked him to take over his teaching responsibilities while he was away at the Council: Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, 48.
[18] The abbot of Casamari at the time was one Gerald, who went on to play an important role in facilitating the reformist and crusading aims of Innocent III. His monastery occupied an important position on the border between the papal patrimony and the empire, as well as lying close to the roads taken by crusaders travelling south to disembark at Brindisi. In a letter to Innocent III he invoked Joachim's visit to

The resulting work, probably Joachim's earliest, was entitled *De prophetia ignota*.[19] Lucius gave his blessing to Joachim's more ambitious enterprise of writing up his *Expositio in Apocalypsim*; four years later, Clement III urged him to complete his labour.[20] It was only at the very end of his life that this task was accomplished. He submitted his three main tracts to Innocent III in 1200; on his death two years later he left unfinished a work entitled *Tractatus super quatuor Euangelia*.[21]

It was only in 1215, at the Fourth Lateran Council, that Joachim's teachings incurred any kind of official censure, and this extended only to his position on the Trinity.[22] Joachim had attacked the trinitarian views of Peter Lombard in a work that is not known to survive.[23] Peter had expressed the unity of the three persons of the Trinity in terms of an essence common to all three; Joachim saw this as tantamount to admitting a fourth person into the triune majesty. To begin with, the papacy was on Joachim's side: Alexander III tried to condemn Peter Lombard's trinitarian doctrine at

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Casamari as a moment of significance for the renewal of the Cistercian Order. See B. Bolton, 'Gerald of Casamari between Joachim of Fiore and Innocent III', *Florensia* 13/14 (1999/2000), 31-43.

[19] Joachim of Fiore, *De prophetia ignota*, ed. M. Kaup, *MGH: Studien und Texte* 19 (Hanover, 1998). For the context of this meeting, see B. McGinn, 'Joachim and the Sibyl: an early work of Joachim of Fiore from MS 322 of the Bibliotheca Antoniana in Padua', *Cîteaux: commentarii cistercienses* 24 (1973), 97-138, esp. 102-22.

[20] Clement III's letter was dated 8 June 1188; for the text of the letter, see PL 204.1357-8. According to Clement, Pope Urban III had also written to Joachim in a similar vein; the occasion for this was probably the visit of Joachim to Urban in 1186 mentioned by the French chronicler Robert of Auxerre. This meeting seems to have taken place at Verona: see Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, *MGH SS* 26 (Hanover, 1882), 219-76, at 248-9.

[21] Joachim of Fiore, *Tractatus super Quatuor Euangelia*, ed. F. Santi (Rome, 2002).

[22] Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 28-36.

[23] There was a Joachimite work entitled *Liber contra Lombardum*, but this is clearly not the work of Joachim that received condemnation: rather, it is in all probability a work from one of his disciples connected with Fiore, and has been dated to after 1234: Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 55-6. Only one manuscript survives. Joachim had criticised the Lombard's Trinitarian position (without actually naming him) in the first book of the *Psalterium decem chordarum*, which Joachim wrote in 1184 while at Casamari, following the vision of the ten-stringed psaltery that prompted this particular tract: Joachim of Fiore, *Psalterium decem chordarum*, f. 227v, and for the dating of this work, R. E. Lerner, 'Joachim of Fiore's breakthrough to Chiliasm', *Cristianesimo nella storia* 6 (1985), 489-512, at 493. However, attempts to identify the lost tract against Peter Lombard with this first book of the *Psalterium* have not met with general acceptance: R. E. Lerner, 'Joachim and the Scholastics', in *Gioacchino da Fiore tra Bernardo di Clairvaux e Innocenzo III: atti del 5º Congresso internazionale di studi gioachimiti San Giovanni in Fiore (16-21 settembre 1999)*, ed. R. Rusconi (Rome, 2001), 251-64, at 259-60 n. 8. Nor has Foberti's thesis that disgruntled Cistercians were behind Joachim's condemnation, and forged the work on the Lombard in aid of this: F. Foberti, *Gioacchino da Fiore: nuovi studi critici sulla mistica e la religiosità in Calabria* (Florence, 1934), 81-131.

the Third Lateran Council in 1179. The situation was reversed at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, when Joachim's trinitarian views were condemned instead.[24] It is, however, doubtful that Innocent III was the driving force behind this, given his regard for (and use of) Joachim's trinitarian writings in other contexts.[25] And, importantly, the orthodoxy of Joachim's fundamental doctrine of history was not questioned. Forty years later the scandal of the Eternal Evangel saw Joachim's writings twisted into a virulent assault on the continuing relevance of the Old and New Testaments by a radical group of Franciscans based at the University of Paris; as a result of this Joachim's work was subjected to more critical scrutiny, and his theology of history was condemned at the provincial Council of Arles in 1263.[26] However, this unfortunate episode falls outside the bounds of our study; we must be wary of judging Joachim's early reception in the light of these later condemnations and in the light of the radical ends to which his ideas were put by some of his disciples in the thirteenth century and beyond.

Joachim's thought is very hard to summarise; he himself seems to have found it easier to express his ideas through diagrams and figures, many of which were collected around 1200 as the *Liber figurarum*.[27] As this is not an option available to us here, we will attempt some sort of summary. It may be helpful to start with the intellectual breakthrough that preceded the writing of his treatises. In 1183, while staying at the Cistercian monastery of Casamari in order to negotiate the (ultimately unsuccessful) bid to make Corazzo its daughter-house, Joachim was suddenly gifted with spiritual insight.

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[24] G. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, xx, 981-6.
[25] A letter of Innocent III to the retired Archbishop of Lyons, Jean des Bellesmains, draws heavily on Joachim's *Expositio in Apocalypsim*: F. Robb, 'Did Innocent III personally condemn Joachim of Fiore?' *Florensia* 7 (1993), 77-91; idem, 'Joachimist exegesis in the theology of Innocent III and Rainier of Ponza', *Florensia* 11 (1997), 137-52. Furthermore, Innocent's letter of 13 November 1204, addressed to the clerics in the crusading army at Constantinople, incorporated passages taken verbatim from the *Expositio*, and uses Joachimite ideas to re-evaluate the failure of the Fourth Crusade: see A. J. Andrea, 'Innocent III, the Fourth Crusade, and the coming Apocalypse', in *The Medieval Crusade*, ed. S. J. Ridyard (Woodbridge, 2004), 97-106, at 99. See also below, 186-88.
[26] See Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 59-70.
[27] For a discussion of the date and authenticity of this work, see Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 75-116.

He describes it in the *Expositio*; having spent many months wrestling in vain with the meaning of Revelation, the following occurred one night as he sat meditating on this intractable book:

> About the middle of the night's silence, I think, the hour at which our lion from the tribe of Juda is reckoned to have risen from the dead, as I was meditating, suddenly something of the fullness of this book and of the entire concordance of the Old and New Testaments was perceived by a clarity of understanding in my mind's eye.[28]

We noted right of the start of this thesis that Joachim never claimed any prophetic gift that allowed him to see the course of future events; rather, he was a biblical exegete suddenly gifted with the ability to penetrate the deepest mysteries of Scripture.[29] This passage makes this plain.

The remainder of his career was devoted to putting this gift of spiritual understanding into practice through a detailed investigation of the Old and New Testaments. As the passage above suggests, the notion of concordance between the two Testaments was at the heart of his thought. The first organisational principle he deployed was that of twos and sevens, which he used to subdivide the course of world history. The first division was the familiar twofold one: at the Incarnation, the Old Dispensation gave way to the New Dispensation. Joachim then divided each

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[28] 'Circa medium, ut opinor, noctis silencium et horam qua leo noster de tribu iuda resurrexisse extimatur a mortuis, subito mihi meditanti aliquid, quadam mentis oculis intelligentie claritate percepta de plenitudine libri huius et tota ueteris ac noui testamenti concordia reuelatio facta est': Joachim of Fiore, *Expositio*, f. 39v; tr. McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 130 (slightly altered). The incident seems to have made an impression on the community at Casamari, and it may have been as a result of this that Joachim was summoned to nearby Veroli in the following year at the behest of Lucius III: McGinn, 'Joachim and the Sibyl', 122.

[29] Joachim's revelation, as described here, is not unlike Eadmer's account of Anselm's intellectual breakthrough in the writing of his *Proslogion*: Eadmer, *Vita sancti Anselmi*, ed. R. W. Southern, NMT (London, 1962), 30. As Jean Leclercq noted, the combination of devotional grace and intellectual striving encapsulated in Anselm's experience was typical of monastic theology in general: J. Leclercq, 'The renewal of theology', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. R. L. Benson & G. Constable (Oxford, 1982), 68-87, at 78. Joachim, originally a Cistercian, should be seen in this context.

dispensation into seven periods. These seven periods corresponded to the seals of the Book of Revelation;[30] more specifically, the seven seals represented the seven periods of the Old Dispensation, and the openings of the seals represented the seven periods of the New Dispensation.

Each Dispensation was also marked by seven persecutions: under the Old Dispensation, God's chosen people, the Jews, were visited by seven persecutions, and under the New Dispensation the Christian people would also be visited with seven persecutions. Broadly speaking, each persecution corresponded to one of the seven periods of each Dispensation. However, the sixth period of each Dispensation was allocated a double persecution, in order to leave the seventh period free from persecution. To understand why Joachim did this, we must now introduce his next organising principle. This was a pattern of threes, a radically new element inspired by his conception of the Trinity. On first inspection Joachim's view of world history is conventionally Augustinian: he believed that there were six ages of the world, corresponding to the six days in which God created the world, and that Christ had inaugurated the sixth age. The subdivision of each dispensation into seven periods did not replace this scheme, but was merely superimposed onto it, the sixth age of the world corresponding to the New Dispensation with its seven subdivisions. Where he departed from the Augustinian model was in his understanding of the seventh day of Creation. As we have seen, some early Christian commentators used this typology to posit a Sabbath age on earth prior to the Last Judgement, presided over by Christ and the saints: this was known as millenarianism.[31] Since Augustine's time, it was usual to see the seventh day as signifying Eternity. Joachim rejected the latter and adopted a millenarian view, even if his conception of the Sabbath Age was more ambitious than

[30] Rev. 5:1-8:1.
[31] See above, 11-13.

that envisaged by earlier writers.[32] Joachim's Sabbath Age was not a time of carnal pleasures but of reform and spiritual renewal, the sort of millennium that Augustine was almost prepared to concede;[33] and it would be marked by the purification of forms of Christian worship under the auspices of two new orders of religious men. This was not, however, a new dispensation; the two testaments were not abrogated under this new world order, although this radical understanding was advanced by some Joachimites after his death.[34] Joachim was clear that this third period of world history would represent a different way of spiritual life, and that is why he termed it a *status*. The first *status* was the age of the Father, roughly corresponding to the period of the Old Testament and the first five ages of the world; the second *status* was the age of the Son, roughly corresponding to the period from the Incarnation to the present, that is, the sixth age of the world; the third *status* was the age of the Spirit, the seventh age of world history, and was to be inaugurated in the near future. The age of the Spirit was founded upon the twin pillars of the Old and New Dispensation but did not supplant them, just as the New Dispensation was founded on, but did not simply replace, the Old Dispensation. But it did represent the full fruition of the New Dispensation, under which the Christian life would be most perfectly realised.

According to this pattern of twos, threes and sevens, the seventh period of the New Dispensation, corresponding to the opening of the Seventh Seal (when 'there was

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[32] Lerner, 'Refreshment of the saints', 136. One must resist the temptation to draw overly explicit parallels between Joachim's conception of the third *status* and earlier interpretations of Daniel's forty-five days. Richard of St Victor has been invoked as a striking forerunner of Joachim, but his time of bliss is static, not progressive: Richard of St Victor, *Explanatio in Apocalypsim Ioannis*, PL 196:683-888, at 775-76. Another example of Joachim's reworking of heterodox iconography is his use of the triangle as an image for understanding the Trinity. This was deployed by Joachim in the *Psalterium*, but it in fact dated back to the early Christian era, when it was criticized by Augustine for its Manichean associations: Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 57 n. 147.

[33] See above, 18.

[34] Some historians, not unlike the Franciscan radicals, have seen in Joachim's doctrine of three *status* a diminishing of the role of Christ in man's salvation; as Bernard McGinn has pointed out, this is to deny the Christological underpinning of Joachim's visions, in which the Resurrection is the key to the concordance of Old and New Testament: McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 19.

silence in heaven about the space of half an hour'), was the Sabbath Age, a time free of tribulation. For his system of concordance to work, Joachim had to make the seventh period of the Old Dispensation also a time of peace: hence he reallocated the persecution that theoretically should fall in both these periods to the preceding period, creating a double persecution. For the Jews, this was inflicted by the Assyrians and the Persians, and preceded a time of peace between the return from exile and the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes; the Christians of Joachim's time, meanwhile, could look to persecution from the Saracens and then Antichrist himself, the seventh and greatest persecutor of all.[35]

It will be apparent from this that Joachim mixed striking originality of thought with a marked degree of conservatism. If, as is often claimed, he offered the first substantial revision of the Augustinian understanding of history, this was not founded on a complete rejection of Augustine's position, for much of the framework of Joachim's thought was provided by the doctor (notably the pattern of sevens). Moreover, his conception of his own intellectual breakthrough was entirely rooted in the Augustinian understanding of prophecy in its widest sense, which emphasised that an individual needed no special revelation, but could be divinely enlightened so as to perceive the hidden meaning of a text or events.[36] Augustine, it is true, would have had no time for Joachim's system of concordance, which he explicitly attacked in *De*

[35] There is a complication. Joachim thought that the Sabbath Age would be concluded by the persecution of a second Antichrist, symbolised in one of his most famous *figurae* by the tail of the Dragon (on which, see below, 167-68); this adversary he described as Gog, influenced no doubt by the tradition of the ten lost tribes breaking out of captivity at the end of history, and he linked this typologically to the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus in the second century before Christ: Joachim of Fiore, *De Septem Sigillis*, 246-7. Although not entirely consistent in his usage, Joachim seems to have considered these as separate from his two sets of seven persecutions. On the novelty of this understanding of Antichrist, see R. E. Lerner, 'Antichrist and Antichrists in Joachim of Fiore', *Speculum* 60 (1985), 553-570. In other respects Joachim held to the traditional view that there are many 'antichrists' throughout history, but one final 'Antichrist' at the end of the sixth age: see e.g. Joachim of Fiore, *De ultimis tribulationibus*, 182.
[36] Markus, *Saeculum*, 187-96.

ciuitate Dei;[37] but he would surely have approved the Calabrian's essential point that history could only be understood through biblical exegesis.[38]

Where Joachim fundamentally departed from Augustine was in his conception of progress within history since the Incarnation. But in this respect Joachim owed a clear debt to those twelfth-century scholars and reformers who did so much to advance the study of the Sacred Page and understand the workings of history.[39] Hugh of St Victor, who looked for patterns of development within history, paved the way for Anselm of Havelberg to apply this notion of development to the Church in the sixth and final age of world history;[40] both point towards Joachim, the last great writer of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance.[41] It is especially helpful to locate Joachim in his twelfth-century context for this reason: it allows us to understand why contemporaries treated him with a degree of respect, however cautiously expressed. In essence, they breathed the same air. Joachim reshuffled concepts with which most of his contemporaries were familiar, rather than exploding previous categories of historical and eschatological inquiry; that is to say, he worked within the parameters of twelfth-century thought.

As we observed earlier, the reception of Joachim's ideas has not lacked assessment; but it has arguably been somewhat hindered by two assumptions. The first

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[37] See above, 14-15, 20.
[38] Cf. McGinn, *Antichrist*, 137.
[39] A point made by Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 102. See also P. Classen, '*Res gestae*, universal history, apocalypse: visions of past and future', in *Renaissance and Renewal*, ed. Benson & Constable, 387-417, at 411-4; M. E. Reeves, 'How original was Joachim of Fiore's theology of history?', in *Storia e Messaggio in Gioacchino da Fiore: atti del I Congresso Internazionale di Studi Gioachimiti* (San Giovanni in Fiore, 1980), 25-41. Randolph Daniel has made the case more forcefully for seeing Joachim as a monastic theologian in the tradition of Gregory the Great and St Bernard; a problematic corollary of his interpretation is the diminishment of Joachim's interest in the End Times. See E. R. Daniel, 'A new understanding of Joachim: the concords, the exile, and the exodus', in *Gioacchino da Fiore tra Bernardo di Clairvaux e Innocenzo III: atti del V Congresso Internationale di Studi Gioachimiti*, ed. R. Rusconi (Rome, 2001), 209-22; repr. in Daniel, *Abbot Joachim of Fiore and Joachimism*, article V; E. R. Daniel, 'Heresy and Abbot Joachim of Fiore', in idem, *Abbot Joachim of Fiore and Joachimism*, article VIII.
[40] Southern, 'Hugh of St. Victor', 34-45.
[41] 'Joachim was doing for prophetic history what scholastic theologians were doing for the general structure of theology: bringing order into thought by a stricter application of the methods and interpretations of the past and by giving a clear and logical arrangement to the results': Southern, 'History as prophecy', 61.

is that Joachim's disciples, generally, though not exclusively, from the Florensian order that he founded, were the key protagonists in the circulation of his works and ideas.[42] This is held to have occurred after his death in 1202, although not gathering momentum until some way into the thirteenth century, when many of his views were taken up by the Franciscans. Not unconnected to this, there has been a marked concentration on Joachim's most famous writings, chiefly his *Expositio in Apocalypsim* and *Liber concordie Noui et Veteris Testamenti*; these were the most sustained presentations of his particular theology of history, and he continued to work on them until the day he died. But this has obscured his many other works, which, though considerably shorter, are no less worthy of attention, and in nearly all cases predate the completion of the major treatises. We may recall that Joachim's meeting with Pope Lucius III in 1184 produced the brief commentary *De prophetia ignota*. Another early work is his short tract *Intelligentia super calathis*, which has been dated to 1191 and is concerned with the question of ecclesiastical opposition to the German emperor.[43] Other early works will be considered later in the chapter. We have also seen that Joachim was a well-known figure during his lifetime. That he was summoned before Lucius III in 1184 is striking; that he was then summoned before Richard I in 1190-91 is still more striking, and can only point up the reputation he enjoyed while alive. Put this alongside the fact that he had been writing since the early 1180s, and we have good reason to pause before accepting the straightforward account of his influence.

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[42] The classic statement of this view is M. W. Bloomfield & M. E. Reeves, 'The penetration of Joachism into Northern Europe', *Speculum* 29 (1954), 772-793. See also Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 37-44; E. R. Daniel, 'The manuscripts of the *Liber de concordia* and early Joachimism', in *L'età dello Spirito et la fine dei tempi in Gioacchino da Fiore e nel Gioachimismo medieval: atti del II Congresso Internazionale di Studi Gioachimiti*, ed. A. Crocco (San Giovanni in Fiore, 1986), 359-65; reprinted in Daniel, *Abbot Joachim of Fiore and Joachimism*, article X.

[43] Joachim of Fiore, *Intelligentia super calathis*, ed. P. de Leo, *Gioacchino da Fiore: aspetti inediti della vita e delle opere* (Soveria Mannelli, 1988), 135-48.

The second assumption is that Joachim's thought never changed over the period in which he wrote; that his theology of history was always characterised by certain features; and that any work claimed as one of Joachim's must be assessed by these particular criteria. This is a flawed approach. To begin with, there can be little doubt that his major treatises underwent numerous revisions over the twenty years in which they were written. It may be true that the extent of this cannot be determined; but we can gain some indication of changes in Joachim's thought by comparing his shorter works.

Of paramount importance in Joachim's thought was the pattern of the seven seals and their corresponding persecutions under the Old Dispensation, and the openings of the seven seals and their corresponding persecutions under the New Dispensation. The pattern is deployed throughout Joachim's two main works, the *Expositio* and the *Liber concordie*, but not entirely consistently. To give one example: in the *Liber concordie* the opening of the fourth seal under the New Dispensation is equivalent to the period between the Emperor Justinian and Popes Gregory III and Zacharias, and the associated persecution comes at the hands of the Saracens;[44] in the *Expositio*, the opening of the fourth seal marks the period between Justinian and Charlemagne, and the persecution is represented by the 'Agareni'.[45] The change is, in the end, a trivial one; but it does emphasise the broader point, which is that Joachim's thought was not static.

Joachim rationalised and simplified these concords into a tract entitled *De septem sigillis*, which presents the seals of the Old Dispensation and their corresponding openings under the New Dispensation in a most accessible way. The

[44] Joachim of Fiore, *Liber concordie*, *passim*.
[45] Joachim of Fiore, *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, ff. 6v-12r. See also M. E. Reeves & B. Hirsch-Reich, 'The seven seals in the writings of Joachim of Fiore, with special reference to the tract *De septem sigillis*', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 21 (1954), 211-47, at 216-7.

tract survives in several manuscripts and was edited by Marjorie Reeves and Beatrice Hirsch-Reich.[46] But there is a variant text in New York, Pierpont-Morgan Library, MS 631.[47] The differences between the two are striking. Most notably, the Pierpont-Morgan version has no trace of the doctrine of the third s*tatus*, a key characteristic of Joachim's work; there is also more emphasis on the tribulations of the sixth seal, which are reiterated in an introductory passage not found in the original. Neither version is readily datable; but the Pierpont-Morgan version is more likely to represent an older version of this text than the version printed by Reeves and Hirsch-Reich, which is the version most commonly found in the manuscripts, and was thought by them to be a late work.[48] The reason for this is straightforward: from other works of Joachim which can be dated more accurately, it is clear that the notion of a third *status*, however fundamental it was to Joachim's thought, was not always underlined in his earlier writings and *figurae*.[49] This is something to which we shall return later in this chapter. For now, let us make the following crucial point: it is unhelpful to define Joachim's thought by a rigid set of criteria, since this fails to take into account either the fluidity of some of his ideas over time or his emphasis on different aspects of his thought depending on the context for

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[46] Joachim of Fiore, *De septem sigillis*, ed. M. E. Reeves & B. Hirsch-Reich, *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 21 (1954), 239-47.

[47] Joachim of Fiore, *De septem sigillis*, ed. M.W. Bloomfield & H. Lee, 'The Pierpont-Morgan Manuscript of *De septem sigillis*', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 38 (1971), 137-48, at 143-48.

[48] 'We do not, therefore, judge this to be an early work, but rather a late one, put together, perhaps, in the same period as the *Liber Figurarum*, in which he sets out to give to a generation standing at the crucial moment of all time the view of history in its sweep towards final climax for which they were so eager and receptive': Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, 'The seven seals in the writings of Joachim of Fiore', 230-1.

[49] There are good reasons for dating this early version to the time of the Third Crusade. In the prefatory section the sixth head of the dragon is identified as Saladin, whose defeat by Christian forces will herald the arrival of the seventh head or king, that is, Antichrist: Joachim of Fiore, *De septem sigillis*, ed. Bloomfield & Lee, 143. The editors, for reasons which are not entirely clear, assume this to mean that the original version must have been composed in the early thirteenth century, in other words by a disciple of Abbot Joachim: Bloomfield & Lee, 'The Pierpont-Morgan Manuscript of *De septem sigillis*', 139 But then our putative author would have been well aware that the Third Crusade had ultimately failed, that Saladin did not outlive it by many months, and that his death did not signify any turning point in Christian fortunes, which makes his presentation of Saladin slightly peculiar. More believable is a date *during* the Third Crusade, when Christian victory over Saladin was expected but had not yet been achieved; this, after all, was what Joachim was said to have told Richard I in Messina.

which it was presented. The latter is especially important, for as the case of *De septem sigillis* suggests, Joachim was aware of the need to present his ideas in more accessible ways than his major treatises allowed.

We have barely done justice to the complexity of Joachim's thought: books can, and have, been written on the subject. But we must now move to on to our promised discussion of the chronicle accounts of Joachim. By way of transition, it may be apposite to quote the following words of Beryl Smalley, who astutely observed the challenge offered to contemporaries by Joachim and the apparent lack of a response:

> The new pattern suggested by Joachim presented historiographers with an opportunity to revise their views on time schemes. He challenged them to look for signs of progress instead of remaining bogged down in the old age of the world. True, Joachim postulated religious progress only; but religious and secular history hung together. It should have been possible to pick up the threads of optimism to be found in the works of Hugh of St Victor and other twelfth-century writers. Historiographers failed to respond. The story of the abbot and his disciples and of their prophecies appealed to chroniclers as news items. They report the prophecies with varying degrees of scepticism and credulity.[50]

We will have reason to question her conclusions, both on the nature of Joachim's thought as presented to his immediate contemporaries, and on the chroniclers' reactions to it, but this succinct account does provide us with a convenient starting point.

Ralph of Coggeshall and Ralph Niger on Joachim of Fiore

Ralph of Coggeshall was no doubt one of the unresponsive historiographers whom Beryl Smalley had in mind. We have mentioned the intriguing account he gives of Joachim in the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, *sub anno* 1195, and we must now examine it

[50] Smalley, *Historians in the Middle Ages*, 183.

more closely.[51] As Ralph's description is somewhat lengthy, we will attempt a summary. The passage on Joachim, entitled simply 'De abbate Joachim', comes after a break in the writing of the chronicle; the narrative had concluded with the incursions of Muslims into Spain, but Ralph has taken up his pen once more, and the first item he relates concerns Joachim. We have already discussed the relationship of this passage to the overall structure and purpose of the chronicle; it remains to examine the passage on its own terms as a witness to the ideas of the Calabrian visionary.

Joachim, according to Ralph, was from the Cistercian order but barely subject to Cistercian authority.[52] He wrote on the seven visions of the Book of Revelation, having received the divine gift of wisdom after being nearly illiterate.[53] He showed that the Old and New Testaments were in concordance, and that the time of grace would last as long as the law of circumcision. The seven seals were closed under the Old Testament and were opened under the New Testament; six general persecutions of the Hebrews could be linked to six general persecutions of the Christians.[54] The persecution represented by the opening of the fifth seal was currently being carried out by Saladin and would be continued by his successors; this persecution corresponded to the fifth persecution of the Hebrews, under which Jerusalem was destroyed and the people led into captivity by the Babylonians.[55] Joachim also said that in the year 1199 the opening of the sixth seal would take place, ushering in the persecution of Antichrist. But before this persecution

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[51] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 67-70.
[52] 'Hac tempestate exstitit quidam abbas non longe ab urbe Roma, ordinis Cisterciensis, sed Cisterciensibus minime subiectus': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 67.
[53] '...quamdam expositionem super septem uisiones Apocalypsis edidit, accepta diuinitus, ut aiunt, sapientia, cum fere esset prius illiteratus': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 67.
[54] 'Loquitur uero ibi secundum differentiam septem uisionum de mysterio septem sigillorum, ostendens ea fore clausa in Veteri Testamento, reserata autem in Nouo; assignans sex generales persecutiones Hebreorum sex generalibus persecutionibus Christianorum': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 67-8.
[55] 'Quintam uero persecutionem, quam sub quinta uisione et quinti sigilli apertione distinxit, dicit agi temporibus nostris a Salaadino et eius successoribus...Hanc autem persecutionem quintam quinte persecutioni Veteris Testamenti non incongrue assignare uidetur, in qua muri Hierusalem euersi sunt, et Templum concrematum est, et populus in Babylonem a Nabuchodonosor captiuus adductus fuit': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68.

could take place the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be preached to all the peoples of the world.[56] The length of time between the arrival of Antichrist and the opening of the seventh seal is known to God alone.[57]

Initially this is all that Ralph wrote on the subject. But he returned to it later, probably during the years 1213-1216, adding in the margin an account of the meeting in Rome between Joachim and the Cistercian abbot of Perseigne.[58] The abbot asked Joachim whether he had gained his knowledge of the future through prophecy, conjecture or through revelation. Joachim replied that it was through none of these: 'God, who once gave to the prophets the spirit of prophecy, has given to me the spirit of understanding, so that I perceive clearly all the mysteries of Holy Scripture in the spirit of God, just as the holy prophets, who once did everything in the spirit of God, understood'.[59] The abbot of Perseigne then asked what Joachim knew about Antichrist; Joachim responded that he was already an adolescent in Rome.[60] The abbot countered this with 'the predictions of the fathers', namely that Antichrist would be born in Babylon; Joachim's answer was that Rome is in the mystical sense known as Babylon, just as Peter said in his First Epistle.[61] Joachim added that Innocent III would have no

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[56] 'Dicit etiam quod anno Dominice Incarnationis MCXCIX incipiet sexta uisio et sexti sigilli apertio, sub qua uisione probat auctoritate Apocalypsis, quod complebitur omnis Antichristi persecutio, et eiusdem mors et perditio. Sed ante eius persecutionem dicit Euangelium Christi ubique predicandum, et ecclesiam fidelium per omnes gentes dilatandam': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68.

[57] 'Post Antichristi uero interitum, quot annorum uel dierum fieret expletio sigilli sexti, id est, mortuorum resurrectio et septimi sigilli inchoatio, id est, sanctorum eterna glorificatio, soli Deo cogitum esse fatetur': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68.

[58] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68-9. On the date of this passage, see above, 100.

[59] 'Hic Rome interrogatus a uiro uenerabili et in Dei Verbo facundissimo et eque religioso abbate Persenne, quonam ausu talia prediceret, an ex prophetia, an coniectura, seu reuelatione? Respondit se neque prophetiam, neque coniecturam, neque reuelationem de his habere: "Sed Deus," inquit, "qui olim dedit prophetis spiritum prophetie, mihi dedit spiritum intelligentie, ut in Dei spiritu omnia mysteria sacre Scripture clarissime intelligam, sicut sancti prophete intellexerunt, qui eam olim in Dei spiritu ediderunt."': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68.

[60] 'Requisitus autem ab eodem abbate, quid sentiret de Antichristo? Respondit ipsum iam esse adolescentem in urbe Roma': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68-9.

[61] 'Cui obiiceret patrum presagia, quod in Babilonia nasciturus prophetatus sit; statim intulit, Romam mystice Babilonem uocari, iuxta illud beati Petri apostoli in fine Epistole sue prime: "Salutat uos ecclesia que est in Babilone electa;" unde expositor Romam Babiloniam uocat propter confusionem multiplicis idolatrie': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 69. Joachim cites 1 Peter 5:13.

successor;[62] when queried as to the length of time before the reign of Antichrist, he ventured that he would himself live to see his reign, unless death prevented it.[63] Ralph adds that Joachim seemed to be nearly sixty years of age.[64]

There are a number of important points to be extracted from this. The first is that Ralph understood Joachim to have been an illiterate miraculously gifted with intelligence. We know Joachim to have been nothing of the kind, and our first response to Ralph's assessment of the man may be to dismiss it as uninformed hearsay filtered through the distorting glass of that familiar hagiographical topos, the ignorant man divinely graced with spiritual insight and learning. But this would be unwise. We must remember that Joachim himself claimed to have been granted a sudden inspiration that allowed him to unpick the complexities of Scripture and discern the patterns and concords that underpinned it.[65] He did not see himself as a prophet, that is to say, a man granted prophetic foreknowledge so as to warn others of impending doom. By contrast, he saw himself merely as an exegete given the spiritual perception necessary to unlock the keys to time past, present and future contained within the letter of Scripture itself. Yet this is only half the picture. Joachim was clearly no illiterate before he was filled with spiritual insight. Then again, by his own estimation he was no scholar either. In the *Expositio* he described himself, with what degree of false modesty we cannot say, as 'homo agricola'.[66] We need not take Joachim's self-assessment at face value; nor should we abruptly dismiss Ralph's understanding of his spiritual transformation,

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[62] 'Predixit quoque Innocentium Tertium successorem non habiturum': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 69.
[63] 'Respondit, quod nisi morte preueniretur, ipsum etatis permissu uidere posset': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 69.
[64] 'Videbatur autem fere sexagenarius': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 69.
[65] See above, 137.
[66] 'Sepius me dixisse recolo, et adhuc in suis locis repetere idipsum compellor. Nolo uideri quod non sum, fingens aliquid ex presumptione mea. Nolo extimet aliquis exigendum a me qui sum homo agricola a iuuentute mea quod ab ipsis quoque prophetis exigi ante sua tempora non licebat: quia et ipsi ex parte uidebant, et ex parte prophetabant, et nos adhuc ex parte uidemus, et hoc ipsius per speculum in enigmate, et siquidem ipsas partem uisionis pro tempore grandescere oportuerit. Aliud est enim uidere multa, aliud omnia': Joachim of Fiore, *Expositio*, f. 175r.

seeing that it does not necessarily diverge from the presentation Joachim gives in his own writings.

In other respects the accuracy of Ralph's portrayal of Joachim is undeniable. For instance, he understands the nature of Joachim's relationship with the Cistercian order, calling him a nominal Cistercian but recognising that the order in truth has little sway over him, as indeed was the case at this time: Joachim had left Corazzo and by 1195 had founded his own order. Ralph, as a Cistercian, may have been privy to more accurate information on this point than those chroniclers who, as we shall see, thought him an unqualified Cistercian; that said, Joachim's defection from the order does not seem to have unduly prejudiced him against the man's opinions.[67]

As far as Joachim's ideas are concerned, Ralph on the whole appears to summarise them well. He has grasped the pattern of twos in Joachim's work, seeing as he gives a clear account of the concordance of the Testaments and their respective persecutions. Where he does seem to err is in locating the persecution of Saladin under the fifth seal; while Joachim, as we have already noted, was not entirely consistent in his delineation of persecutions, and only occasionally mentioned Saladin, he never referred to him as other than the first of the two persecutions under the sixth seal, Antichrist of course being the second. It is not hard to imagine that the subtleties of Joachim's scheme, which involved the integration of the pattern of Seven Seals into a trinitarian conception of history, would have been lost on many who had to grapple with it, including chroniclers. Ralph correctly identifies Antichrist with the opening of the sixth seal, but in doing so has removed the persecution of Saladin to the preceding seal. He is nevertheless clear that the time of Antichrist is imminent, even specifying a date for it (1199).

[67] A point made by Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 12.

Let us turn now to Ralph Niger, who was also very clear on the imminence of Antichrist. As we have seen, he brought a narrative of world history to a somewhat apprehensive culmination, capping an extended section on the decline of secular and religious life with an account of the apocalyptic works being written at the time, before winding up his narrative with a list of his own writings. Pride of place among the apocalyptic authors cited is given to Joachim of Fiore. We may usefully remind ourselves of the passage in question:

> In these days Joachim, a Cistercian monk, was suddenly made intelligent, having been almost illiterate; he wrote on the Apocalypse, and, distinguishing the openings of seals through past persecutions, in this way compared the New Testament with the Old Testament, and claimed that the Day of Judgement would soon come to pass, because the opening of the last seal, under which Antichrist would arrive, was now at hand.[68]

Now it is immediately apparent that Ralph Niger has a number of observations in common with Ralph of Coggeshall. First of all, there is the understanding of Joachim as an illiterate made intelligent. Then there is the description of Joachim's contribution to apocalyptic discourse, which entails a comparison of the Old and New Testaments. Joachim connects the opening of the seals of the Book of Revelation with past persecutions, and observes that the opening of last of these seals, which is imminent, brings the scourge of Antichrist with it, and thereafter the Day of Judgement.

As with Ralph of Coggeshall, there is on first inspection a misunderstanding of Joachim's thought; but Ralph Niger's mistake is different. Nowhere does Joachim state, as Ralph Niger says he does, that the arrival of Antichrist was associated with the

[68] 'His diebus Joachim quidam monachus Cisterciencis, a fere illiterato subito factus intelligens, scripsit super Apocalypsim, et apertiones sigillorum per preteritas persecutiones distinguens, quodammodo Nouum Testamentum Veteri Testamento comparauit, et diem iudicii proxime futuram asseuerauit, quia ultimi sigilli apertio, in quo Antichristus uenturus erat, a limine iam immineret': Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 286.

opening of the last (that is, seventh) seal. In fact it was crucial to Joachim's interpretation of history that Antichrist would arrive at the end of the second *status* and the sixth age of the world, before the Sabbath Age that his defeat would bring to fruition.[69] What Ralph has done is to confuse the imminence of Antichrist with the consummation of the pattern of seals and their openings. Joachim was in no doubt about the former; but, crucially, this was a period that preceded the glorious Sabbath Age of spiritual renewal, represented by the seventh seal.

Yet, this mistake aside, Ralph Niger's account has the appearance of being merely a paraphrase of the account of Ralph of Coggeshall. Now if we follow Krause's dating and locate the writing of Ralph Niger's chronicle in the period 1195-7, then we could reasonably suggest that Ralph Niger had acquired an early copy of the Coggeshall chronicle and taken his account thence. But if, as we have argued earlier, Ralph originally wrote in 1189-90, then his independence from Ralph of Coggeshall can be assured.[70] So we are left with two possibilities: both writers could have independently composed their accounts from oral information on Joachim that was circulating in the 1190s; or they could have used a common source. Both authors seem to be aware that Joachim has put his ideas into written form: we have the statement of Ralph of Coggeshall that Joachim 'quamdam expositionem super septem uisiones Apocalypsis edidit', and we have Ralph's briefer note that Joachim 'scripsit super Apocalypsim'.[71] The latter, in particular, appears to be an explicit reference to Joachim's *Expositio in Apocalypsim*. But it is very unlikely that either of the two Ralphs had access to this

[69] See e.g. Joachim of Fiore, *De septem sigillis*, 245-6.
[70] See above, 64.
[71] The use of the verb 'edere' is somewhat ambiguous, since it can mean either 'to declare', or 'to write down', and in the latter context one must distinguish the act of writing something down from the act of conveying this written work to a wider audience (as in the modern sense of the word 'publish'). For these different meanings, see the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, ed. R. E. Latham et al. (London, 1975-2013), 746-7, and the discussion in R. Sharpe, 'Anselm as author: publishing in the late eleventh century', *Journal of Medieval Latin* 19 (2009), 1-87, at 1 n. 2. In this context I would incline towards the third meaning.

work, the writing of which occupied Joachim until the very end of his life. Too unwieldy for all but the most devoted follower to tackle, it is improbable that it circulated during Joachim's lifetime.[72] Yet if these references do refer to a writing of Joachim's other than the *Expositio*, can we find a plausible source?

At this point it is worth considering the evidence of Robert of Auxerre. Robert was a Premonstratensian canon of St Marien in Auxerre and a contemporary of both Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall.[73] At the instigation of his abbot, Milo, he wrote a universal chronicle down to the year 1211.[74] The abrupt ending of the chronicle in this year suggests that Robert died around this time. He appears to have begun his work in around 1200.[75]

The passage in question is found *sub anno* 1186. It is worth quoting in full:

> During these days a certain abbot by the name of Joachim came from the region of Calabria to Pope Urban while he was at Verona; about this man they say that, since he had not previously learnt very much, he divinely received the gift of intelligence, so that he could plainly and eloquently disentangle certain problems of Scripture. Accordingly he said that particular mysteries of the Apocalypse had hitherto been hidden, but through him became clear in the spirit of prophecy, just as was made plain to readers from the little book that he wrote. For he said that, just as the scriptures of the Old Testament contain the history of the five ages of the world as they unfolded from Adam up to Christ, so the Book of the Apocalypse set out the course of the sixth age inaugurated by Christ; and that this sixth age was divided into six shorter periods, each of these corresponding harmoniously enough to specific periods of this book. He also said that these things had been revealed at the end of the fifth shorter period, and that sixth would shortly follow, in which various tribulations and manifold pressures would arise, just as is plainly revealed in the opening of the sixth seal

[72] McGinn, 'Joachim and the Sibyl', 97.
[73] There is a limited amount of scholarship devoted to Robert. Most useful for writing this particular section has been C. Neel, 'Man's restoration: Robert of Auxerre and the writing of history in the early thirteenth century', *Traditio* 44 (1988), 253-74. See also De Ghellinck, *L'Essor de la Littérature Latine*, 321-22.
[74] 'Porro ad id peragendum non modice prestitit, quod uenerabilis abbas noster domnus Milo, qui ad agendum nos compulit, in agendo quoque strenue coadiuuit': Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, 226-7.This was, interestingly, the same Milo who acted as a censor of Ralph Niger's theological writings; he was given the *Epithome Veteris Testamenti* and *Remediarium Esdre* to scrutinise.
[75] Neel, 'Man's restoration', 74.

> in the sixth period of the book, when the fall of Babylon occurs. Of the details in his book, this was held to be noteworthy and suspect: that he set a time for the end of the world, and thought that within two generations, which according to him amounted to sixty years, everything that is read about Antichrist would be fulfilled. Anyone may say what he feels, but we reckon it more sensible not to discuss or debate what we do not know, and leave to the judgement of future generations a prediction of events unknown to us.[76]

Once again we find a portrayal of Joachim as a man of limited education suddenly granted the divine gift of spiritual understanding, so that he could elucidate the mysteries of scripture. Robert is careful, more careful indeed than Ralph Niger, to stress that Joachim received not the gift of prophecy, but the gift of spiritual exegesis. As for Joachim's career, so for his doctrine: Robert gives an outline not unlike those we have already examined, albeit more accurate. According to Robert, Joachim delineated five ages of the world from Adam to Christ; this Joachim did indeed outline, as Augustine had before him. He divided the sixth age, initiated by Christ, into six smaller periods, according to the six periods given by the Book of Revelation. He claimed that the imminent sixth period, corresponding to the opening of the sixth seal in Revelation, would witness many tribulations. For Robert, the most contentious view held by Joachim was that within the space of two generations, or approximately sixty years, Antichrist would arrive.

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[76] 'Per hos dies uenit ex Calabrie partibus ad Urbanum papam Verone morantem quidam abbas nomine Ioachim, de quo ferebant, quia, cum prius non plurimum didicisset, diuinitus acceperit intelligentie donum, adeo ut facunde diserteque enodaret difficultates quaslibet scripturarum. Hic itaque dicebat, quedam Apocalipsis mysteria hactenus latuisse, sed modo per eum clarescere in spiritu prophetie, sicut ex opusculo quod conscripsit legentibus liquet. Dicit enim, quia, sicut scripture ueteris Testamenti quinque etatum seculi ab Adam usque ad Christum decursarum hystoriam continent, sic liber Apocalypsis etatis sexte a Christo inchoate cursum exponit, ipsamque etatem sextam in sex etatulas dispertitam earumque singulas singulis huius libri periodis satis congrue designatas. Dicit quoque, hec reuelata fuisse in fine etatule quinte, atque in proximo succedere sextam, in qua tribulationes uarias multiplicesque pressuras perhibet emersuras, sicut in apertione sigilli sexti et in sexta libri perioda, ubi de ruina Babylonis agitur, patenter ostenditur. Id uero in libello eius pre ceteris notabile ac suspectum habetur, quod mundi diffinit terminum, et infra duas generationes, que iuxta ipsum annos faciunt lx, arbitratur implendum quicquid de Antichristo legitur euenturum. Dicat quisque quod senserit, nos tutius iudicamus non discutere quam arguere quod nescimus et rei nobis incerte presagium iudicio relinquere posterorum': Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, 248-9. The passage is briefly discussed by Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 40-1.

What Robert does not give is any indication of biblical concordance: unlike Ralph Niger or Ralph of Coggeshall, he does not identify the pattern of twos manifest in the concordance of Old Testament and New Testament persecutions. He prefers the diminutive 'etatule' to depict the periods of the Sixth Age. More significantly, he connects the imminent time of tribulation, including the arrival of Antichrist, to the opening of the sixth seal; as we have seen, Ralph Niger wrongly associated this with the final seal, that is, the seventh. But this also leads Robert into difficulty, since he thereby fails to clarify what would occur under the seventh seal. Indeed, he seems to believe that the world would end in the upheaval of Antichrist at the end of the sixth age, which is not at all what Joachim believed.

But this does in the end bring us to the same question that our other accounts posed: from what source does this information derive? Fortunately Robert gives us an answer, albeit a partial one. He says that Joachim claimed to be able to clarify the hitherto unnoticed mysteries of the Book of Revelation, 'sicut ex opusculo quod conscripsit legentibus liquet'.[77] He returns to this later in the passage, when he describes the calculation of the time of Antichrist made 'in libello'.[78] Holder-Egger, Robert's editor, in a footnote on the first of these passages, directs the reader to Joachim's *Expositio in Apocalypsim*.[79] Yet it is very unlikely that Robert is referring to this work, for reasons outlined above.[80] Moreover, one could hardly describe the *Expositio* as an 'opusculum' or a 'libellus'; it is by far the longest of Joachim's writings, stretching to well over 200 folios in the 1527 printed edition. Yet, like Ralph of Coggeshall and Ralph Niger, Robert seems to have been familiar with a work of

[77] Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, 249.
[78] Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, 249.
[79] Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, 249 n. 1.
[80] See above, 142.

Joachim; and Robert explicitly points us in the direction of a short work, perhaps one of the many shorter pieces that he produced while working on his larger treatises.

A notable feature of all these accounts is a failure to depict what was a crucial aspect of Joachim's thought: the doctrine of the third *status*, which would come to fruition in the seventh age of world history after the tribulations of Antichrist. The question is whether our authors were using a source that did not emphasise this particular idea, or whether they overlooked or consciously excised it. If the latter, then it would not be hard to posit a reason. We should remember that Joachim's doctrine of the three *status* of history had its roots in early Christian millenarianism. Ralph Niger, for one, makes his own position on these matters very clear: witness his disapproving comments on the early millenarian Cerinthus.[81] It is not hard to imagine that he found this aspect of Joachim's thought entirely unpalatable. Yet it is also possible that it eluded him altogether. Joachim's larger works leave the reader in no doubt about his doctrine of the third *status*, and it is here that the concept is explained most fully. However, in his shorter works, some of which may have been intended for circulation, we do not find this as clearly delineated. We have already seen how the tract *De septem sigillis*, in its earliest extant incarnation, avoids any explicit statement of the doctrine;[82] rather, the emphasis is on the two parallel streams of history, under the Old Dispensation and under the New, and the concords between these.

It is clear that the tract *De septem sigillis* cannot be the source for our chronicle accounts; though it gives little indication of Joachim's doctrine of the third *status*, it lacks the detail provided by our accounts. If we are to search for the 'opusculum' that Robert of Auxerre mentions, then we must identify a work of Joachim that explains the basic pattern of concordances between Old and New Testament, aligns the persecutions

[81] Ralph Niger, *Chronica*, ed. Krause, 72-3.
[82] See above, 144.

of the New Dispensation with the opening of the seven seals, but does not give a clear indication of the third *status*; that is to say, a work in which the pattern of twos is more strongly delineated than the pattern of threes based on persons of the Trinity. One that matches this description is Joachim's Table of Concords, two versions of which can be found in his *Liber figurarum*.[83] Now the *Liber figurarum* was probably put together as a single volume in around 1200, either by Joachim himself or by his disciples.[84] But in many cases the *figurae* themselves predate this. In the case of the two Tables of Concords, we seem to be faced with representations of Joachim's thought at different stages. The Tables of Concords are, in essence, schematic diagrams mapping out the course of history, from the Creation to the *consummatio seculi*; the two Dispensations are laid out side by side so as to demonstrate the alignment between the seals and corresponding persecutions in the Old Testament and their openings and corresponding persecutions in the New Testament. The backbone of each table is the long procession of the generations of man, which in the New Testament takes the form of generations of the Church, each generation reckoned as thirty years; Joachim gives two groups of 21 generations. Accompanying this is a list of Old Testament patriarchs and kings, paralleled by a list of New Testament figures and then popes, so that, for example, Abraham corresponds with Zacharias, Isaac with John the Baptist and Jacob with Christ. Joachim's ideas are indeed well served by such diagrams, further evidence that he thought primarily in terms of images, and was less articulate when translating these into expository passages for his treatises.

[83] Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, ed. L. Tondelli, M. E. Reeves & B. Hirsch-Reich (Turin, 1953), plates III-IV, IX-X. For commentary, see Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 130-41.
[84] Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 97-98.

Of these tables, it is the earlier of the two that is particularly interesting for our purposes.[85] It is thought to be the earlier of the two for this reason: the list of popes only goes up to Alexander III (1159-1181), while in the other table the last named pope is Celestine III (1191-1198). This does not mean we have to place its composition in the pontificate of Alexander III, but a date in the 1180s would be entirely viable.[86] Now in this table the fifth persecution is described as the present one, and is inaugurated by the opening of the fifth seal in 1170.[87] Future events are sketched out as follows: the opening of the sixth seal will take place in 1200, and will be marked by two persecutions, the second being that of Antichrist; this will be followed by the opening of the seventh seal no later than 1260, at which point Elijah will come to restore all things; then Christ will return.

As such, there is little indication of the third *status*; the opening of the seventh seal does not mark the transition to an age of earthly betterment, but the abrogation of earthly things altogether. This corroborates the early date suggested by the list of popes. None of the authors discussed so far has any clear notion of the third *status*; was their source a diagram such as this? It seems very likely that it was. For a start, Ralph of Coggeshall states that the present persecution is the fifth persecution, inaugurated by the opening of the fifth seal, just as the table does. His association of the year 1199 with the opening of the sixth seal and the persecution of Antichrist is admittedly not identical to the table's assignment of this to 1200, yet is close enough to merit attention. But our

[85] Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, plates IX, X; the order of the edition is dictated by the extant manuscripts, resulting in the earlier pair of tables actually appearing after the later one.
[86] Joachim's primary concern is with numbers of generations, each generation reckoned as thirty years: under this scheme the significant dates at the end of the twelfth century are 1170 and 1200. Alexander III was pope in 1170, and as such is mentioned; the next important date is 1200, for which Joachim obviously cannot give a name; but the numerous popes of the 1180s may simply have been passed over. That he lists Celestine III in the other pair of tables implies that he thought it possible that this man would be pope in 1200, and as such suggests a date towards the end of Celestine's pontificate. See Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 94-5.
[87] 'Quinta persecutio, in qua nunc sumus, quid facere ceperit uidimus: quid futurum restet quisquis sane sapiens uigilanter attendat': Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, plate X.

supposition is given additional weight by verbal parallels between the two. Here is Ralph of Coggeshall on the fifth persecution:

> Quintam uero persecutionem, quam sub quinta uisione et quinti sigilli apertione distinxit, dicit agi temporibus nostris a Salaadino et eius successoribus, qui terram Hierosolymitanam inuaserunt, et *matrem Syon a ciuitate sua Hierusalem transmigrare compulerunt*, orbata sancta Cruce, ciuitate et regno, et Christianorum cerimoniis et omni gloria sua illis in locis spoliata.[88]

And here is the Table of Concords on the same:

> Quinta persecutio, in qua nunc sumus, quid facere ceperit uidimus: quid futurum restet quisquis sane sapiens uigilanter attendat. Iam enim tipicum Babilonis regnum suas uires exercet: iam enim *mater Sion ex sua ciuitate transmigrare compellitur*.[89]

Ralph Niger's account is probably too brief to link with any degree of certainty to an extant source; not surprisingly, we find no explicit verbal parallels between this and the Table of Concords.[90] But given that his is by and large a paraphrase of the longer account of Ralph of Coggeshall, it would not be stretching a point to claim that he was dependent on the same source as the Cistercian chronicler. Furthermore, the layout of the table does explain what we identified as a possible error on Ralph Niger's part, namely that he associated the persecution of Antichrist with the seventh, rather than the sixth, seal. The Second Coming of Christ is placed at the head of the table, and on the

[88] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68.
[89] Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, plate X. This parallel has also been observed by Egger, 'A Pope without successor', 169-70. His suggestion of a further parallel between the table's 'Iam enim tipicum Babilonis regnum suas uires exercet' and Ralph's statement that 'nos tamen iam uidemus quod tipicum Babylonis regnum maximum in orbe obtinet principatum...' is not quite so convincing on its own terms, but in concert with the parallel above it is persuasive.
[90] Egger does not consider the possibility that Ralph Niger had access the same source.

right-hand side of the table the persecutions are listed in a column alongside the relevant year or generation. Reading from the top, one finds this:

> Apertio sigilli septimi.
> Helias cum ueniet ipse restituet omnia.
> Sub eiusdem apertione sigilli persecutio septima, que grauis futura est Antichristi.
> Apertio sigilli sexti. Contra misticum Babilonis regnum dirigetur. Sexta persecutio populorum multorum X reges habentium.[91]

When the table says that the persecution of Antichrist will come 'sub eiusdem apertione sigilli', one could easily assume this to refer to the seventh seal, whose opening is described at the top of the column; but in fact it refers to the sixth seal, since the table must be read from bottom to top. 'Sub eiusdem apertione sigilli...' is a continuation of 'Sexta persecutio populorum...' rather than of 'Helias cum ueniet ipse restituet omnia'. Ralph's failure to read it in this way may account for his error.

The other feature of the table that deserves attention is the prominence given to the year 1260. As Reeves and Hirsch-Reich pointed out, this is an unusual instance of Joachim's providing a date in connection with his apocalyptic scenario, even if 1260 is only the year by which the opening of the seventh seal will have taken place.[92] This almost certainly accounts for the comment made by Robert of Auxerre: 'quod mundi diffinit terminum, et infra duas generationes, que iuxta ipsum annos faciunt lx, arbitratur implendum quicquid de Antichristo legitur euenturum'.[93] Given that Robert was writing in around 1200, this expectation for the next two generations seems very obviously drawn from Joachim's tables.

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[91] Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, plate X.
[92] Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 137. The idea of 1260 as a year of apocalyptic significance was developed in much more detail by thirteenth-century Joachimites: Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 45-70.
[93] Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, 249.

It seems almost certain that all three authors independently had access to an early version of Joachim's Table of Concords. Now this must in turn have been compiled before 1189-1190, when Ralph Niger first took up his pen. Conceivably it was prepared for a papal audience, such as the one reported by Robert of Auxerre *sub anno* 1186.[94] How it was then circulated must remain a matter of conjecture. Christoph Egger ventures that the text was disseminated through Cistercian channels.[95] This is entirely possible, if hard to establish for certain. What we can say is that the material in circulation probably encompassed more than this Table of Concords. The latter text by itself cannot account for all the details of the chronicle accounts. For instance, in its extant form it contains no biographical information on Joachim; indeed, there is no indication of authorship whatsoever. And the emphasis placed by our authors on Joachim's exposition of the Book of Revelation is also problematic. The Table of Concords borrows the motif of seven seals from Revelation, but otherwise there seems little warrant to describe this work as, in the words of Ralph of Coggeshall, 'expositionem super septem uisiones Apocalypsis'. Now a simple enough explanation would be as follows: our authors knew certain biographical details on Joachim from reputation; and they were aware of Joachim's having elsewhere written more extensively on the Book of Revelation. We should not, however, overlook the possibility that Joachim's Table of Concords was circulated with some sort of biographical preamble, and, conceivably, other short tracts from his pen. There is indeed evidence to suggest that Joachim was from an early date using another *figura* to convey his ideas more accessibly, as we shall see in the next chapter.

[94] See L. Tondelli, *Il Libro delle Figure dell'Abate Gioachino da Fiore* (2nd ed., Turin, 1953), i, 111-15.
[95] Egger, 'A pope without successor', 169-70

Roger of Howden

Roger of Howden was a royal clerk and chronicler, and a contemporary of both Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall.[1] He derives his name from the parsonage of Howden in Yorkshire, which he seems to have inherited from his father in the mid-1170s.[2] At this same time Roger was demonstrably a clerk of Henry II; he remained in royal service, variously undertaking embassies and acting as an itinerant justice, until September 1189, when he entered the service of Hugh du Puiset, bishop of Durham.[3] He joined the Third Crusade in August 1190, and was with King Richard in the Holy Land until August of the following year, when he accompanied Philip Augustus on his journey back to France. Roger himself seems to have returned to England by April 1192, and returned to the service of Hugh du Puiset until the latter's death in March 1195.[4] This did not mark the end of Roger's royal or episcopal duties; the evidence furnished by his writings suggest, by contrast, that for the remainder of the decade he continued to attend the royal court and undertook diplomatic missions in England, Scotland and Italy.[5] He was dead by Michaelmas 1202.[6]

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[1] On Roger's career, see F. Barlow, 'Roger of Howden', *EHR* 65 (1950), 352-60; J. Gillingham, 'Writing the biography of Roger of Howden, king's clerk and chronicler', in *Writing Medieval Biography: essays in honour of Professor Frank Barlow*, ed. D. Bates, J. Crick & S. Hamilton (Woodbridge, 2006), 207-20; J. Gillingham, 'The travels of Roger of Howden and his views of the Irish, Scots and Welsh', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 20 (1998), 151-69, reprinted in his *The English in the Twelfth Century: imperialism, national identity and political values* (Woodbridge, 2000), 69-91; D. Corner, 'Roger of Howden', *ODNB*.

[2] Barlow, 'Roger of Howden', 354-56.

[3] D. Corner, 'The *Gesta regis Henrici Secundi* and *Chronica* of Roger, parson of Howden', *Historical Research* 56 (1983), 126-44, at 131-39.

[4] J. Gillingham, 'Roger of Howden on crusade', in *Medieval Historical Writing in the Christian and Islamic Worlds*, ed. D. O. Morgan (London, 1982), 60-75; reprinted in J. Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion: kingship, chivalry and war in the twelfth century* (London, 1994), 141-53; Corner, 'The *Gesta regis Henrici Secundi* and *Chronica*', 140-44.

[5] Gillingham, 'Writing the biography', 216-18. On this basis Gillingham rightly questions the notion that Roger 'retired' in the 1190s and turned his thoughts more emphatically to the writing of history, for which view see Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, 631; Smalley, *Historians in the Middle Ages*, 114.

[6] Barlow, 'Roger of Howden', 356.

Like Ralph Niger, Roger has left us two chronicles; but in this case the second was merely an expansion and reworking of the first. The first chronicle was an annalistic account of the years 1169-92 known, somewhat misleadingly, as the *Gesta regis Henrici Secundi*, and thought for many years to be the work of Abbot Benedict of Peterborough.[7] This was written up contemporaneously with events and is best understood as a 'court diary' informed by Roger's proximity to the heart of the Angevin administration during this period.[8] Having brought the *Gesta* up to the spring of 1192, he began work on the *Chronica*, which commenced where Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* ended, in 732.[9] Up until the middle of Henry II's reign the *Chronica* is derivative, being mainly a recapitulation of the Northumbrian *Historia post Bedam* and the Melrose chronicle, though not without some additions and revisions.[10] From 1169 Roger incorporated a revised version of his *Gesta*, and from 1192 augmented his account year-by-year until 1201.[11] The working copy of the *Chronica* has not survived; but in 1199-1201 Roger oversaw production of what has been termed the 'first full edition' of the work.[12] This occupies two manuscripts: British Library, Royal MS 14 C. ii, which contains the text of the *Chronica* to 1180; and Bodleian Library, MS Laud

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[7] Roger of Howden, *Gesta regis Henrici Secundi*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series 49 (London, 1867). Stubbs himself rejected Benedict's authorship, principally on the grounds that he could not have been in the Holy Land in 1191, as the author of the *Gesta* undoubtedly was: W. Stubbs, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis* (London, 1867), i, pp. l-liii. Stubbs did consider the possibility that Roger of Howden was the author both of the *Chronica* and the *Gesta*, but remained unconvinced. It was left to Doris Stenton to establish that Howden was in fact the author of both texts: D. M. Stenton, 'Roger of Howden and Benedict', *EHR* 68 (1953), 574-82. Additional evidence in favour of this was adduced by Corner, 'The *Gesta regis Henrici Secundi* and *Chronica*', 126-30. These conclusions, to my mind indisputable, have not received universal assent: see e.g. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 226-30; Lawrence-Mathers, *Merlin the Magician*, 81.

[8] The phrase is from Gillingham, 'Royal newsletters', 182.

[9] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs, Roll Series 51 (London, 1868-71).

[10] Roger's additions tend to be of a miraculous or anecdotal nature. Examples include a list of the miracles of Edward the Confessor and a story about the disappearance of the Emperor Henry V: Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, i, 108-11, 181. In view of what we shall argue about the *Chronica* in this chapter, this is not perhaps surprising.

[11] On the composition of the *Chronica* see D. Corner, 'The earliest surviving manuscripts of Roger of Howden's *Chronica'*, *EHR* 98 (1983), 297-310. The dating of the *Chronica* is discussed in more depth below, 170-71.

[12] Corner, 'The earliest surviving manuscripts', 310.

Misc. 582, which takes the narrative from 1181 to the conclusion of the chronicle in 1201. It was from these that Stubbs printed his edition.

Assessments of Roger have varied. Stubbs found him frustratingly reticent: 'it is provoking that having found an undoubted eyewitness of the events of a most important reign, we cannot extract from him any reasonable expression of opinion'.[13] He convicted Roger of writing 'a passionless, colourless narrative'.[14] Frank Barlow was inclined to excuse what he identified as the shortcomings of the *Chronica* on the grounds that its author was 'a retired administrator of the second class' and by this standard could not be judged too harshly.[15] Beryl Smalley agreed.[16] More recent evaluations have been kinder, not least because Roger can now be given full credit for the *Gesta*:[17] by one estimate, he 'combined an insatiably inquisitive mind, a well-developed critical sense, and the gift of writing Latin prose'.[18] His 'concern for factual detail' has also been praised.[19] Now, in one way or another, these assessments take as their point of departure the image of Roger as a civil service chronicler with the horizons one would expect of a man immersed in the Angevin administration. This perception has been questioned, not least on the grounds that Roger, by virtue of his diplomatic work, was perhaps 'the most widely travelled of all medieval historians'.[20] In the course of this chapter we hope to show that Roger's horizons were in another sense broader than has commonly been assumed; that in the last decade of his life the

[13] Stubbs, *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene* (London, 1868-71), i, p. lxvi.
[14] Stubbs, *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, i, p. lxix.
[15] Barlow, 'Roger of Howden', 360.
[16] Smalley, *Historians in the Middle Ages*, 114.
[17] A point made by Gillingham, 'Writing the biography', 220.
[18] Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, 616.
[19] Corner, 'Roger of Howden'.
[20] This is the view of Gillingham, 'Royal newsletters', 182.

experiences and outlook of Roger the crusader exercised at least as significant an influence on his writings as did the experiences of Roger the royal clerk.[21]

As our starting point we may take Roger's account of Joachim of Fiore. This is the most sustained treatment of the Calabrian abbot in contemporary English historiography, and centres on the meeting between him and King Richard I in Messina during the winter of 1190-1. Roger has left us two descriptions of the meeting, the first in his *Gesta*, the second in his *Chronica*.[22] We shall consider the *Gesta* account first. As in the case of Ralph of Coggeshall we will offer a summary rather than attempting to reproduce this lengthy passage in full.

Joachim is introduced as the Cistercian abbot of Corazzo in Calabria, who, 'having the spirit of prophecy, used to predict the future to the people'.[23] Being one 'learned in the Holy Scriptures', he interpreted the visions of John the Evangelist.[24] King Richard became aware of his prophecies, his wisdom and his ideas and summoned him for an audience. At this audience Joachim interpreted a passage from the Book of Revelation, namely the description of the red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and the women clothed with the sun, having a crown of twelve stars (Rev.12:1-6). Joachim interpreted the woman as representing the church, and the sun as Jesus Christ; the dragon is, of course, the devil, and his seven heads represent the seven chief persecutors of the church, namely Herod, Nero, Constantius, Mohammed, Melsemutus, Saladin, and Antichrist: these are the seven kings described in Revelation, of whom five

[21] In this respect I hope to build on some of the observations made by Gillingham, 'Roger of Howden on crusade'.
[22] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 151-55; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 75-9.
[23] '...spiritum habens propheticum, uentura populo predicebat': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 151. By this time Joachim was of course no longer abbot of Corazzo, though he had not yet established his own monastery or been threatened with formal sanctions by the Cistercian General Chapter, which may explain why Roger introduced him as he did.
[24] 'Eruditus enim erat in Diuinis Scripturis, et interpretabatur uisiones beati Johannis Euangeliste': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 151.

are said to have passed, one is present, and one is still to come (Rev. 17:10).[25] Saladin, 'who at the present time assails the church of God, and has reduced it to servitude along with the Holy Sepulchre and the holy city of Jerusalem, and the land in which the feet of the Lord stood', is clearly still active.[26] But Saladin would shortly lose the kingdom of Jerusalem, and would be killed, along with his minions, and there would be a great slaughter, 'such as there has not been from the beginning of the world'.[27]

Then Joachim turned to Richard and delivered the following exhortation:

> God has reserved all these things and allowed them to be accomplished through you; He will give you victory over your enemies and will glorify your name for eternity, and you will glorify Him, and He will be glorified in you, if you persevere in the work you have begun.[28]

Richard is thereby accorded a glorious role in the apocalyptic drama, not unlike that traditionally played by the legendary figure of the Last World Emperor and claimed by various European rulers over the course of the twelfth century.[29] But in a sense this was a poisoned chalice, for all Richard's potential achievements would in due course be diminished by the final head of the Dragon, Antichrist himself. On this subject Joachim gave the opinion he would later give to Adam of Perseigne, according to Ralph of Coggeshall: Antichrist had already been born, and was fifteen years of age, though he had not yet come into his full power.[30]

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[25] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 151-2.
[26] 'Et unus est, scilicet Saladinus, qui in presenti opprimit ecclesiam Dei, et eam cum sepulcro Domini, et sancta ciuitate Jerusalem, et cum terra in qua steterunt pedes Domini, in seruitutem redigit': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 152.
[27] 'Et ipse in proximo amittet regnum Jerosolimitanum et interficietur; et miluorum rapacitas peribit, et erit illorum strages maxima, qualis non fuit ab initio mundi': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 152.
[28] 'Haec omnia reseruauit Dominus et per te fieri permittet, Qui dabit tibi de inimicis tuis uictoriam, et Ipse nomen tuum glorificabit in eternum, et tu Ipsum glorificabis, et in te Ipse glorificabitur, si in opere cepto perseueraueris': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 153.
[29] See above, 30-34.
[30] 'De isto Antichristo dicit idem abbas de Curacio, sentire quod iam natus est, quindecim annos habens a natiuitate: sed in potestate sua nondum uenit': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 153.

The assembled company, which included Archbishop Walter of Rouen, Archbishop Gerard of Auxerre, John of Evreux and Bernard of Bayonne, along with a prelate from Pamiers whose name Roger does not know, were in wonder at all that had been said. Richard asked where Antichrist would be born, and where he would reign.[31] He received the following reply: Antichrist had been born in the Roman Empire, and would obtain the Apostolic See.[32] Richard, seemingly in jest, assumed that Pope Clement must be the Antichrist; Roger adds that 'he said this because he hated the pope'.[33] He then offered the account of Antichrist that he knew, namely that he would be born in Babylon from the tribe of Dan, that he would reign in the Temple in Jerusalem for three and a half years, during which time he would dispute with and then kill Enoch and Elijah; after this Antichrist would be killed, and God would allot a space of sixty days in which those who were led astray by Antichrist could do penitence.[34]

Roger then gives Joachim's interpretation of the ten horns and seven crowns of the Dragon. The horns represent heresies and schisms, which are contrary to the Ten Commandments;[35] the crowns are those seven kings and princes who will follow the Devil.[36] And as it is written in Revelation that the tail of the Dragon will drag to earth a third part of the stars of heaven, so will those who follow the Devil be delivered to hell. The tail of the Dragon represents the savage tribes known as Gog and Magog, who at the end of the age will arise and destroy the church of God.[37]As a postscript to this

[31] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 153.
[32] '...Antichristus ille in urbe Romana iam natus esse creditur, et in ea sedem apostolicam obtinebit': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 153.
[33] 'Hec autem dicebat quia papam illum odio habebat': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 154.
[34] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 154. Richard's version of events is taken from the standard work on the subject, Adso's tenth-century treatise *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, on which see above, 31, 33.
[35] 'Decem cornua diaboli sunt hereses et schismata que heretici et schismatici opponunt contra decem precepta et mandata Dei': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 154.
[36] '"Et in capitibus eius septem diademata;" qui sunt reges et principes huius seculi qui in illum crediturі sunt': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 154.
[37] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 155.

account, Roger observes that nearly all the clerics tried to argue otherwise; 'but this matter still remains under judgement'.[38]

Now this detailed narrative is either an eyewitness account, or an account derived from someone who was an eyewitness; Roger accompanied Richard on his crusade from August 1190 to August 1191, and was therefore at Messina in the winter of 1190-1, when the meeting took place. We cannot say for certain that Roger was among the 'many other honest men, clerical and lay' who witnessed Joachim perform his exegesis; that he describes them as 'honest', in other words reliable, perhaps implies that his testimony is second-hand.[39] The account has in any case been questioned by certain scholars of Joachim, who were unable to correlate Joachim's interpretation of Revelation expressed here with that expressed in, for instance, his *Expositio in Apocalypsim*.[40] Scepticism has centred on the identification of the fifth head of the Dragon as the mysterious Muslim king Melsemutus, whom Joachim supposedly never mentions anywhere else. But as Reeves and Hirsch-Reich pointed out, this is not true.[41] Melsemutus is named as the fifth head of Dragon in perhaps the most famous image of Joachim's *Liber figurarum*, the *figura* of the seven-headed Dragon.[42]

There is in fact a close resemblance between the Dragon image and the description of the Dragon provided by Roger of Howden. Now this particular *figura* almost certainly predates the compilation of the *Liber figurarum* in around 1200, as does the Table of Concords examined in the previous chapter.[43] This is apparent from

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[38] 'Tamen adhuc sub iudice lis est': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 155.
[39] '...multis aliis honestis uiris tam clericis quam laicis': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii, 153.
[40] A typical view is that of F. Foberti, *Gioacchino da Fiore e il gioacchinismo antico e moderno* (Padua, 1942), 237.
[41] Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 87-8. The trustworthiness of the chronicle accounts was maintained by E. Jamison, 'The Sicilian Norman Kingdom in the mind of Anglo-Norman contemporaries', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 24 (1938), 237-85, at 265.
[42] This *figura* is reproduced in Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, plate XIV. For commentary, see Reeves & Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 146-52.
[43] See above, 156-60.

the text that accompanies the image, in which Saladin is referred to as still living.[44] Saladin died in early March, 1193.[45] The original *figura* must therefore have been based on an original made before the middle of 1193 at the very latest. It should be noted that the role accorded Saladin in this picture is vague. Joachim believes that the sixth king will suffer a defeat, symbolised by the wound given to one of the heads of the beast from the sea.[46] But just as the sixth head was healed, so will the sixth king rise up again, even deadlier than before; but at this point, Joachim is not clear whether Saladin will himself rise up again, or whether it will be another king altogether.[47] As such, it seems that in this scheme Joachim understands the sixth head, somewhat loosely, as the threat in the East, a threat manifest in Saladin but possibly in others also.

The other point to be made here is that Joachim, in the *figura* of the Dragon, foresees a Christian victory, after which the sixth king (whoever he is) will rise again in even greater force.[48] Now it seems unlikely that he would have made such a confident prediction in the light of the Third Crusade's failure; but it makes perfect sense to see this as a somewhat optimistic reading of the situation at a time when the outcome of the crusade was not known. This would associate the *figura* even more closely with the period in which Joachim had an audience with Richard; and we should remember that, according to the account of Roger of Howden, Joachim did indeed foresee victory on this occasion. One may reasonably object that, in the circumstances, Joachim may have

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[44] Post plagam ergo istam que iam ex parte aliqua inchoata est, erit uictoria Christianis, et gaudium timentibus nomen Domini, prostrato capite illo bestie, super quo regnat sextus rex, et usque pene ad internecionem et consumptionem deducto. Deinde post paucos annos curabitur plaga eius, et rex qui erit super illud, *siue sit iste Saladinus si adhuc uiuet*, siue alius pro eo, congregabit exercitum multo maiorem quam prius et concitabit prelium generale aduersus electos Dei et multi coronabuntur martirio in diebus illis': Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, plate XIV (my italics).
[45] This was widely recorded by English writers: see e.g. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 213; Ralph Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 61; Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum*, ii, 106.
[46] Rev. 13:3.
[47] 'Deinde post paucos annos curabitur plaga eius, et rex qui erit super illud, siue sit iste Saladinus si adhuc uiuet, siue alius pro eo': Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, plate XIV.
[48] 'Post plagam ergo istam que iam ex parte aliqua inchoata est, erit uictoria Christianis': Joachim of Fiore, *Liber figurarum*, plate XIV.

felt he could say little else; and perhaps some allowance should be made for exaggeration on Roger's part. But the similarities between these two accounts of Joachim's thought should not be overlooked; and if they are products of the same tumultuous period, then one possibility should be considered: that Joachim in fact drew up this *figura* for his meeting with Richard at Messina.[49]

Roger's account certainly deserves to be taken very seriously, both as an accurate reflection of Joachim's own thought at this particular stage in his career, and, more tentatively, as evidence for the transmission of this thought, at least in part, through one of his own works, in this case the *figura* of the Dragon. Scholars of Joachim have not been slow to acknowledge the importance of Roger's account, though in my view they have not pursued it far enough. Yet there is another dimension to all this, which we shall now explore. The question here is what Roger himself made of Joachim and his ideas. The *Gesta* does not yield any obvious answers. But some indication is given by his treatment of the same event in his later work, the *Chronica*.[50] To this we now turn.

The *Chronica* account is, of course, taken over from the *Gesta*. But Roger has made a number of interesting changes. The first comes when Joachim is discussing Saladin, the sixth head of the Dragon. We may recall that in the *Gesta*, Saladin's imminent overthrow is predicted, and Joachim accords Richard a triumphal role in this action. Here the tone is not so jubilant. Richard, on being told that Saladin will lose the Holy Land, asked when this would be. Joachim gave the following reply: 'When seven years have elapsed from the day of the capture of Jerusalem'.[51] This seems to have

[49] In my view, this is dismissed too readily by Reeves and Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, 86. They point out that Roger makes no mention of such an illustration as part of the meeting; but this is not in itself conclusive, and if Roger did obtain his information second-hand, though very close to the event, this detail could well have been lost in the telling.
[50] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 75-9.
[51] 'Quando septem anni elapsi erunt a die captionis Jerusalem': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 77.

troubled Richard, for he then asked why in that case he needed to begin his crusade so quickly; Joachim told him that his arrival was necessary, 'because God will give you victory over His enemies, and will exalt your name over all princes of the earth'.[52]

These are not the only changes. Others appear in the following passage, in which Joachim talks about the arrival of Antichrist. Joachim outlines the rise of Antichrist in much the same way as he had done before, but here his current age is not given as fifteen, as it was in the *Gesta*. Richard's joke about Pope Clement III is also omitted (Clement III had died in March 1191). Finally, Roger clarifies the coming of Gog and Magog (left rather vague in his original version) as immediately preceding the Last Judgement.

Now it seems clear that Roger has altered Joachim's predictions in the light of subsequent events. Saladin's loss of the Holy Land is still assumed, as is Richard's role in achieving this, but is deferred to 1194. Now this of course tells us a great deal about when Roger began work on the *Chronica*, as David Corner has ably demonstrated. The modified passage certainly cannot date from later than the end of 1194, by which point the seven years of the prophecy would have been completed; but Roger would hardly have changed Joachim's prediction in this way had he known of Saladin's death on 4 March 1193; nor indeed does it seem he would he have done so had he known of Richard's capture by the Duke of Austria, news of which reached England early in 1193. Indeed, the revisions would have been entirely superfluous had Roger known of the ultimate failure of the Third Crusade; why substitute one failed prophecy for another?[53] Corner therefore locates the initial composition of the *Chronica* in the years

[52] 'Tunc ait rex Anglie, "Ergo quare uenimus huc tam cito?" Cui Joachim respondit, "Aduentus tuus ualde necessarius est, quia Dominus dabit tibi uictoriam de inimicis Suis, et exaltabit nomen tuum super omnes principes terre': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 77-8.

[53] A different interpretation is offered by A. A. M. Duncan, 'Roger of Howden and Scotland, 1187-1201', in *Church, Chronicle and Learning in Medieval and Early Renaissance Scotland*, ed. B. E. Crawford (Edinburgh, 1999), 135-59, at 140. He argues that this revised version betrays a date of composition after,

1192-3, that is to say, immediately following his final revision of the *Gesta*, which ended in the spring of 1192.[54] But it seems that this could be narrowed to the latter half of 1192. Some crusaders returned to England not long before Christmas 1192, as Roger records in his *Chronica*; when asked about the king, they could not say where he is, but report that his ship had been seen at Brindisi.[55] It seems unlikely that Roger revised Joachim's prophecy in the knowledge that Richard had left the Holy Land, and if he knew of Richard's voyage before the end of 1192 then he must have made his revisions by this time. By extension, the vast majority of the *Chronica*, if not the whole, must have been completed by the end of 1192.[56]

A more important question for our purposes is this: why did Roger see fit to make these alterations in the first place? The likely answer is that he recognised that the protracted nature of the crusade rather gave the lie to Joachim's triumphant prediction; in order for the prophecy to remain valid, it would have to be adjusted. But it is significant that Roger did want to keep the prophecy valid. A more sceptical chronicler would perhaps have left the prophecy intact, as an interesting but unimportant curiosity, or would have removed it altogether. Consider how Robert of Auxerre reports the meeting. His account, the only other record of this event, appears *sub anno* 1190:

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not before, 1193; the reference to Saladin's loss of the Holy Land is intelligible if one counts the years inclusively (according to which seven years from 1187 is 1193), thereby turning the prophecy into an *ex eventu* account of Saladin's death in March of that year. In other words, Roger is trying to salvage something positive from the failure of the crusade. I find this unconvincing. For a start, in Roger's revised version Joachim still accords Richard a triumphal role in proceedings, even if his campaign is to be a protracted one; this would scarcely be tenable in the light of the king's capture. Furthermore, Joachim explicitly predicts Saladin's loss of the holy land 'when seven years have elapsed from the day of the capture of Jerusalem' ('Quando septem anni elapsi erunt a die captionis Jerusalem'). Counting the years inclusively is not an option here. Roger's revision of the prophecy certainly reflects his disappointment with the course of the crusade, and is borne out by another addition to the *Chronica* that we shall discuss below, 173; it does not reflect his despair at its failure.

[54] Corner, 'The earliest surviving manuscripts of Roger of Howden's *Chronica'*, 303.

[55] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 194.

[56] It is also worth pointing out that the revised version of Joachim's prophecy would have been redundant in the light of the treaty concluded between Richard and Saladin at Jaffa on 2 September 1192, since this established a truce of nearly four years: see Gillingham, *Richard I*, 218. If news of this arrived in advance of the returning crusaders, then we must narrow our parameters still further.

> Abbot Joachim was summoned from the monastery he had founded in Calabria and came to meet [the kings]; questioned by them about the future, he replied that they would cross the sea, but would accomplish little or nothing, and that the time had not yet come for Jerusalem and Outremer to be liberated.[57]

This is an altogether more pessimistic view of proceedings. Joachim is vague about the course of future events, but does not hold out hope for the success of the crusade, which will achieve 'little or nothing'. Robert himself, writing in or after 1200, has clearly filtered this account through the prism of the crusade's failure. Now Roger was admittedly not making his revisions with the same hindsight. We can only speculate as to how he would have dealt with the passage in the light of the definite failure of the crusade. But it does seem that he was sufficiently invested in Joachim's prophecy to keep it alive.[58]

As Robert Bartlett has pointed out, Roger was writing administrative history, not royalist history.[59] He was often critical of the Angevin rulers, and there was certainly nothing 'official' about his chronicles, even if they emanated from within the Angevin government.[60] The prophetic sanction Joachim gave to Richard's activities was no doubt very valuable from the king's point of view, especially given the similar aspirations of his contemporaries Frederick Barbarossa and Philip Augustus.[61] But Roger's reworking of Joachim's prophecies speaks as loudly about the disillusionment he felt with the course of the crusade as it does about his underlying optimism over its

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[57] 'Venit ad eos abbas Ioachim, de suo euocatus monasterio in Calabria constituto, qui ab eis de futuris sciscitatus respondit, quod mare transituri forent, sed aut nichil aut parum proficerent, necdumque adesse tempora, quibus liberanda foret Iherusalem et regio transmarina': Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, 255.
[58] Roger's omission of the age of Antichrist, previously given as fifteen, could also be seen as a deliberate blurring of the specifics of Joachim's prophecy in order to give it more longevity.
[59] Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, 631. Roger 'cared more for the machine than for its master': R. W. Southern, 'England's first entry into Europe', in his *Medieval Humanism*, 135-57, at 150.
[60] See e.g. Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i, 105; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 366. For Roger's ambivalence towards King John, see Gillingham, 'Historians without hindsight', 9-23. His treatment of Philip Augustus could also be caustic: Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 4.
[61] See above, 31-34.

eventual success. This disillusionment is evident elsewhere. In the *Chronica* entry for 1185 he included a story that he had not included in the *Gesta*. This concerns a pregnant woman who, fearing the wrath of her parents, runs away from home. Seeking shelter in a storm, she first calls on the help of God, and then, because 'her prayer was not immediately heard by the Lord', on the Devil.[62] The Devil dutifully appears and provides her with food and shelter; and before he is driven off by the local villagers, he reveals to her the present state of the infernal regions: 'from the time when Jesus Christ despoiled hell, there has not been such grief or pain there as there is now on account of the crusade'.[63] But, adds the Devil, grief will shortly be turned to joy, for the crusaders will succumb to sin and iniquity, and will be erased from the book of life by God.[64] And so it transpired, as Roger concludes.[65]

Both passages show that in writing the *Chronica* Roger was increasingly concerned to cast the veil of prophecy over recent events, and in so doing to allay his own disappointment in the achievements of the Third Crusade up to this point and still hold out hope for eventual victory. Further additions to his original account of the meeting at Messina underline the extent to which Roger was actively looking for an interpretative framework into which recent events could be place. He provides two other views of Antichrist and the End Times: under the title 'Alia opinio de aduentu Antichristi' is a verbatim transcription of Adso's *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*;[66] and this is followed by 'Item alia opinio de aduentu Antichristi, que dicitur inuenta fuisse in codicibus Beati Gregorii pape', a short account of the End Times purporting to be the

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[62] 'Ecce tempestas ualida pluuie et uentus apprehendit eam fugientem in campo soliuagam, et petentem a Domino auxilium, et domum refugii; et quia oratio eius statim non erat exaudita a Domino, decidit in desperationem, dicens: "Si tu Deus despicis orationem meam, diabolus succurrat mihi"': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 302.
[63] '...ex quo Jesus Christus spoliauerat infernum, non erat tantus luctus neque dolor in inferno, quantus erat propter captionem crucis': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 303.
[64] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 303.
[65] 'Quod de post facto apparuit': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 303.
[66] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 80-85.

work of Gregory the Great. This passage is couched as an utterance of Christ to John the evangelist.[67] Christ's description begins with a short list of signs of the approaching end, including the darkening of the sun, blood dripping from trees and stones giving voice; then Antichrist arrives and performs many miraculous feats, and the world is torn apart by strife. The remainder of the account is merely a précis of Adso's treatise. As well as the obvious biblical touchstones (in particular Matthew 24), the tract also seems to draw on the legend of the fifteen signs preceding the Day of Judgement.[68] Its provenance must remain a mystery, though we have Ralph Niger's testament that numerous compilations of eschatological material were being made around this time, and it is perhaps to one of these that Roger owes his acquaintance with Adso and the pseudo-Gregorian tract.[69] That they are included at all is, in the end, a more important point. The writing of the two versions of the meeting must have been separated by only a short space of time, possibly less than a year. In this short time Roger appears to have sought further material with which to elucidate the predictions of Joachim of Fiore.

That Roger was, at the time he undertook the *Chronica*, increasingly attentive to matters of prophecy and eschatology is suggested by another substantial addition he made to the *Gesta*. In the latter work, Roger had recorded *sub anno* 1184 the astrological predictions made and circulated by a certain Corumphiza: the prediction was that the alignment of planets in 1186 would result in widespread calamity, with the implication that these were indeed the End Times.[70] This was followed by an account of

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[67] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 85-6.
[68] On this legend see W. W. Heist, *The Fifteen Signs Before Doomsday* (East Lansing, 1952). It was most commonly attributed to Jerome, though sometimes also to Bede, among whose works it was printed in *Patrologia Latina*: PL 94.555.
[69] See above, 61.
[70] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i, 324-5. On this particular letter, and its deployment over the course of the following century, see M. Gaster, 'The Letter of Toledo', *Folklore* 13 (1902), 115-34. See also A. Cutler, 'Innocent III and the distinctive clothing of Jews and Muslims', *Studies in Medieval Culture* 3 (1970), 92-116, at 94-5; Bernard McGinn suggests that the widespread anxiety this letter aroused across Europe may partly lie behind Pope Lucius' audience with Joachim of Fiore at Veroli in 1184: 'Joachim and the Sibyl', 120-21.

a trance undergone by a certain Anselm in Worcester, which reinforced the prediction of Corumphiza.[71] Roger then notes that 'on hearing these [predictions], fear of death arose among the people'.[72]

In the *Chronica* these accounts are left intact.[73] What Roger adds is a letter of William, a clerk of the constable of Chester, which reiterates Corumphiza's predictions and gives a more specific timeline for the events of 1186.[74] He also adds a letter of an astrologer from Cordova called Pharamella, which debunks the previous astrological predictions and reassures the reader that the year 1186 will pass without event.[75] Now Pharamella's letter is a blunt statement of the failure of the previous predictions, if any were needed. But why was it needed? The year 1186 had of course passed without incident. In the *Gesta*, no mention is made *sub anno* 1186 of the significance accorded this year by the astrologers of 1184; though Roger was sufficiently interested in the letters to include them at all, he does not spell out the failure of their prophecy. What Roger has done in the *Chronica* is twofold: first, he has fleshed out the panoply of apprehensive astrological texts from that year with the addition of the letter of William of Chester; second, he has cast all these documents into relief by including the more sceptical letter of Pharamella. Roger could have left the section as it stood in the *Gesta*, and, by extension, left implicit the inaccuracies of the predictions by showing how uneventful the year 1186 actually was. He did not, and this deserves explanation. What I would suggest is that Roger wanted to explain the failure of these predictions by exposing their mistakes through the use of Pharamella's letter. He appears to be engaging more openly with these texts: if they were wrong, why were they wrong? To leave them as he had in the *Gesta* would perhaps imply a degree of scepticism over any

[71] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i, 325-8.
[72] 'His auditis, fiebat pauor mortis in populo': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i, 328.
[73] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 290-91, 293-96.
[74] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 292-93.
[75] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 297-98.

attempt to predict the course of the future; the inadequacy of these texts did not need to be spelt out. This in turn suggests that by the time he wrote the *Chronica*, such eschatological predictions had taken on a new significance in his mind. His revision of Joachim's prophecies arguably entailed a more emphatic statement on the failure of the astrological predictions of 1184. He wanted to show that they were incorrect, rather than fundamentally misconceived.[76]

According to John Gillingham, 'it is not evident that the content and tone of Roger's writings changed significantly in the 1190s'.[77] With this I would disagree: the passages we have discussed above imply that Roger's outlook was indeed rather different in the early years of the 1190s, when he was putting together his *Chronica*, than in the previous two decades, when he was at work on his *Gesta*. As such, it is not unreasonable to suggest the *Chronica* was itself a product of Roger's new-found engagement with matters eschatological. One could object that the undertaking of the *Chronica* merely shows that Ralph had more freedom to undertake such a work after he had returned from the Third Crusade. But, as we have seen, Roger was no less active in these years; we cannot meaningfully talk of his 'retirement'.[78] The *Chronica* is better understood as the product of a new historical outlook.

This new outlook may also serve to explain a notable difference between the *Gesta* and the *Chronica*. Stubbs, who edited both under the apprehension that they were the work of different men, drew attention to the ways in which, as he saw it, Roger of Howden had amplified or altered his source material. One notable difference was the treatment of the marvellous and the miraculous. Stubbs noticed that Roger's willingness to devote space to portents, miracles and freaks of weather stood in marked contrast to

[76] For Gervase of Canterbury's reaction to the prophecies see below, 231.
[77] Gillingham, 'Writing the biography', 216-18.
[78] See above, 161 & n. 5.

the more sober approach taken by his source.[79] Indeed, this seems to have increasingly preoccupied Roger as the 1190s progressed.[80] We have the advantage over Stubbs in knowing that the two authors are in fact one and the same; but that increases, rather than diminishes, the interest of Stubbs's observation. It will not do to suggest that Roger only had recourse to 'rumour and romance' when cut off from the less fanciful material supplied by his experience of the court in the 1170s and 1180s;[81] this rests on the now debunked notion of his 'retirement' in the 1190s. On the same grounds we should reject another tempting line of argument: to dismiss such stories as the product of an ailing mind. The fact that Roger died in 1201/1202 while engaged in writing his chronicle could lend support to the idea that his 'intense credulity' developed only in the shadow of his own death.[82] But Roger was no less active during the first two years of King John's reign than he had been throughout the previous decade;[83] unlike Ralph of Coggeshall, traces of whose declining health can be observed both in manuscript and in

[79] Stubbs, *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, iv, pp. ix-xxiv. See also Gillingham, 'Historians without hindsight', 9 n. 54. Stubbs perhaps drew too fine a distinction between *Gesta* and *Chronica*. The *Gesta* does contain a handful of marvels. When he came to draw up the *Chronica*, Roger by and large left these intact. One that he alters slightly concerns the English earthquake of 1185, in which Lincoln cathedral was severely damaged. In the *Gesta* Roger remarks that 'qualis nunquam antea in terra illa auditus est': Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i, 337. In the *Chronica* this is rendered as 'qualis ab initio mundi in terra illa non erat auditus': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 303. This may appear trivial; the meaning is certainly not much altered. That does, however, raise the question of why Roger should bother to reword this passage at all. One (very tentative) suggestion would be as follows: the new wording immediately calls to mind the short Pseudo-Jerome tract *De quindecim signis*, which we have already mentioned. On the ninth day before the Day of Judgement, according to this work, 'there will be an earthquake, the like of which there has not been since the beginning of the world' ('Nona die erit terremotus, qualis non fuit ab initio mundi'): *De quindecim signis*, PL 94.555. Roger clearly could not have believed that this was genuinely the ninth day prior to the Last Judgement. But the possibility of treating these fifteen signs as portents spread over a longer period than fifteen days had opened up by Peter Comestor, who included this text in his *Scholastica Historia*, and commented 'Hieronymus autem in annalibus Hebreorum inuenit signa quindecim dierum ante diem iudicii, sed utrum continui futuri sint dies illi, an interpolatim, non expressit': Peter Comestor, *Scholastica Historia*, PL198.1045-1722, at 1611.

[80] 'This spirit of credulity marks some of the most important additions made in this compilation to the earlier writers; it runs through the whole work, and is indeed the only characteristic of the kind that does so; it increases in intensity in the fourth and last portion': Stubbs, *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, iv, pp. ix-x.

[81] J. Gillingham, 'The unromantic death of Richard I', *Speculum* 54 (1979), 18-41; repr. in his *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 155-180, at 161-62. However, this was written before research by David Corner and Gillingham himself had undermined the view that Howden was detached from court life after the Third Crusade.

[82] Gillingham, 'Writing the biography', 208.

[83] Gillingham, 'Historians without hindsight', 12-23.

the circumstances of his career as far as we know them, Roger does not seem to have flagged.[84]

But the evidence so far adduced suggests that the desire to revisit his earlier material and rework it into a grander project was connected to his coverage of the crusade, and was most likely prompted by it. As such, it seems more sensible to suggest that the treatment of the miraculous and the marvellous proceeds from the same historiographical outlook that led to the compilation of the *Chronica* in the first place. In other words, the interest in such details was integral to the enterprise, rather than simply a by-product of it. And Stubbs was undoubtedly correct to observe that the *Chronica* gives far more attention to miracles, wonders and astronomical phenomena in its final section, covering 1192-1201. We may enumerate the stories of weeping crosses at Poitiers and Dublin;[85] the miracle of the two German crusaders;[86] the demonic possessions in Genoa;[87] the miracles and visions that followed the death St Hugh of Lincoln;[88] the appearance of five moons in the night sky over York, and the earthquake that followed this;[89] and the miracles that accompanied the preaching of Eustace of Flay.[90] This does not exhaust the list, but gives some indication of the tenor of the last section of the chronicle.

Ralph of Coggeshall, we may recall, did not explicitly identify the advent of Antichrist, even though he was undoubtedly aware of its imminence. Roger, however, does precisely this. *Sub anno* 1201, not long before the *Chronica* concludes, Ralph breaks off his narrative to provide a panorama of the rulers of Christendom, followed

[84] See above, 88-89.
[85] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 17, 29-30.
[86] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 26-27.
[87] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 67-68.
[88] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 140-46.
[89] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 146, 156.
[90] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 170-72. Roger's attention to the work of Eustace of Flay and other reformers will be examined at greater length in the next chapter: see below, 196-202.

by the alarming statement that the Devil has finally been loosed: 'Woe on the land and those living in it, because if the Devil has brought so many grievous ills on the world when bound, how many more will he bring when unbound?'[91] Roger urges Christians to pray and concludes with an apocalyptic reworking of the sixth-century hymn *Iam lucis orto sidere*, traditionally sung at the office of Prime.[92]

The key to this passage is found in the twentieth chapter of the Book of Revelation, in which Satan is bound for one thousand years in the bottomless pit and then loosed 'a little season', prior to the consummation of earthly things; as we noted in the introduction, these troublesome lines stoked the flames of millenarian expectation for hundreds of years, and the Church Fathers spilled much ink in an attempt to discourage a literal interpretation. Roger is vague about the source of his belief: 'our teachers predicted that the old serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, would be loosed, saying, "Woe, woe, woe to those living in the land, because the old serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, has been loosed", according to the account of the Blessed John, apostle and evangelist'.[93] But this is no millenarian statement: Roger seems to follow in the footsteps of Augustine, linking the thousand years of the Devil's binding to the time

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[91] 'Vae terre et habitantibus in ea, quia si diabolus ligatus tot et tanta intulerit mala mundo, quot et quanta inferet solutus?': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 162. Roger had earlier described Philip Augustus' reaction to the treaty of June 1193 between Richard and Emperor Henry VI, which was to warn Prince John that 'diabolus iam solutus erat': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii, 216-17. If that was a somewhat humorous notice, there is nothing of the kind about the 1201 entry, which is entirely serious.

[92] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 162-63. The reworking consists of the substitution of the fourth stanza and doxology with the following lines:

> Ut cum Judex advenerit
> Christus in fine Seculi,
> Nos sempiterni gaudii
> Faciat esse compotes.

These lines come from another hymn, *Exultet celum laudibus*. As the fourth stanza of the hymn *Iam lucis orto sidere* was concerned with the passage from day to night, the substitution, offering by contrast a sense of passage from the darkness of the End Times to the light of the Second Coming, may be adjudged a reasonable one.

[93] '...doctores nostri praedicaverunt solutum esse draconem illum antiquum, qui est diabolus et Satanas; dicentes, "Vae, vae, vae habitantibus in terra, quoniam solutus est antiquus draco, qui est diabolus et Satanas, iuxta illud Beati Johannis apostoli et evangeliste': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 162. This exclamation is merely a conjunction of various phrases from Revelation.

of the Church on Earth, rather than to the earthly paradise presided over by Christ and his saints.[94] The thousand years is therefore purely figurative, and is mentioned incidentally to the chief point, that the Devil has been loosed and the end of all things is imminent. The question remains as to why Roger believed this to be the case, and why he chose to enter it in his chronicle where he did. What is the source for his belief that the year 1201 presaged imminent doom? In the light of his interest in Joachim's prophecies, it is tempting to suggest that he had seen the same Table of Concords that Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall consulted; given that this short text was in existence by the time of Richard's interview with the abbot at Messina in the winter of 1190-1191, it is certainly not beyond the bounds of probability that Joachim distributed copies of it here, especially since it was, like the dragon figure discussed above, an accessible statement of his doctrine entirely suitable to such an occasion.

It is true that in Joachim's Table of Concords 1200, not 1201, is the significant year. But 1200 is the year of the opening of the sixth seal, not the year in which Antichrist would begin his reign; Joachim gave no specific date for the later. This does not of course prove that Roger had consulted Joachim's Table of Concords, or was even aware of its pronouncements. And there is another explanation that should be considered. The passage in question is included after Roger's account of the events of Easter 1201, which included the coronation of John and Isabella at Canterbury on Easter Day itself. Now Easter Day in 1201 fell on 25 March, as Roger notes. There was a well-established tradition that the coincidence of Easter Day with the Feast of the

[94] 'Thus, the devil is bound throughout the whole period embraced by the Book of Revelation, that is, from the first coming of Christ to the end of the world, which will be Christ's second coming': Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, ii, 711; tr. Dyson, 983. Roger also seems to echo Augustine's observation that the binding of the Devil does not stay his hand completely, for which reason his unleashing at the end of history holds a particular terror: see above, 17-18.

Annunciation would witness, or at least herald, the end of the world.[95] This alone may account for Roger's belief, or in his eyes it may have dovetailed neatly enough with Joachim's predictions: the latter is an attractive hypothesis, given that Roger clearly does not refer to the end of the world, but merely to the loosing of the Devil, which would be compatible with Joachim's prediction of the arrival of Antichrist at some point after the opening of the sixth seal in 1200.

This chapter could be seen as an expansion of Professor Vincent's suggestion that Roger's writing was 'essentially moralistic and eschatological'.[96] But Vincent makes this point in relation to the *Gesta*, which he sees as a narrative of royal redemption following the murder of Thomas Becket. This to my mind takes things further than the evidence will allow, though it remains an intriguing possibility; and the term 'eschatological' is used rather too loosely. But he is undoubtedly right to see the *Gesta* as a work of wider scope and critical engagement than its title implies;[97] and this chapter has attempted to show that the *Chronica* represents a further step away from an Anglo-centric narrative informed by court connections. What we see in the *Chronica* is, by contrast, eschatological in the general sense, and represents an enlargement and reorientation of his earlier narrative in the light of this preoccupation. Roger himself did not live to see the evils that he believed Satan would waste no time in visiting upon the faithful; but his handling of Joachim of Fiore, the predictions of 1184 and the

[95] The best study of this is D. C. Van Meter, 'Christian of Stavelot on Matthew 24:42, and the tradition that the world will end on a March 25th', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 63 (1996), 68-92. A variation, discussed by Van Meter, was that the coincidence of Good Friday and the Feast of the Annunciation would augur the End. This was the view of Matthew Paris, on whom see below, 236-39.
[96] Vincent, 'The strange case of the missing biographies', 253.
[97] As Vincent points out, Roger frequently errs in precisely those details that one would expect a chronicler of the deeds of a king to get right: Vincent, 'The strange case of the missing biographies', 243-44. For instance, Roger on several occasions throughout the *Gesta* and *Chronica* makes Fulk of Anjou the uncle, rather than the grandfather, of Henry II: Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i, 330-31; *Chronica*, i, 186, 274. We have already observed that Roger could be severely critical of the king on occasion: see above, 172 n. 60.

expectation of an end does undoubtedly point up a rather neglected aspect of 'the first civil-service historian in English history whose work survives'.[98]

In all three chronicles we have examined, attention to the prophecies of Joachim of Fiore is very significant. At the start of the previous chapter we invoked Beryl Smalley's assessment of contemporary reactions to Joachim. We are now better placed to question some of her conclusions. Joachim, in truth, did not invite contemporary historiographers 'to look for signs of progress instead of remaining bogged down in the old age of the world'. The conceptual challenge of the third *status* was not immediately promulgated; instead, his writings stressed the imminence of tribulation. To his contemporaries, Joachim was a prophet of Antichrist. But in this garb he was no less influential than as the radical visionary we more commonly understand him to have been. And the chronicle accounts of him are not simply 'news items', but are windows onto the broader eschatological concerns underpinning their works. The question of whether these chroniclers were to any extent propelled down their distinctive historiographical paths by their encounters with Joachim, or whether they took a particular interest in him because they had already committed themselves to such enterprises, is hard to answer. In the case of Ralph Niger, Joachim's work was merely one of a range that he consulted during a time that was to him, and others, charged with eschatological significance. Ralph of Coggeshall, who, not a little disturbed by the news of Muslim victories in Spain, initially stopped writing in 1195, seems to have come across Joachim's work during the few years that elapsed before he started writing again; it is not hard to imagine that he had actively sought out an exposition of history that could explain the significance of events he had recently chronicled. Roger of Howden, meanwhile, was sufficiently intrigued by Joachim's predictions at the Messina meeting

[98] Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, 631.

(which he may himself have witnessed) that he was prepared to rework them in the light of subsequent events and also seek out other apocalyptic writings for more guidance on these matters. But in their use of Joachim's ideas the English chroniclers were certainly not alone. In the following chapter we will observe how Pope Innocent III harnessed the Calabrian's doctrine of history for his reformist agenda; this will serve as an introduction to the broader topic of reform in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century. Attention to the reform movement is another notable characteristic of several English chronicles of this time, including those we have already examined, and indeed is another significant facet in their eschatological outlook.

Reform

By the end of the thirteenth century, Joachim of Fiore's reputation had suffered considerably; the radical ideas at the heart of his work, and the still more radical ideas built onto these by some of his followers, had been subjected to considerable scrutiny and eventually condemned. But it was not always so. To his contemporaries Joachim presented a more acceptable face. In fact, we should understand Joachim not as an eccentric working outside the parameters of twelfth-century theological debate but as a distinctive exponent of an intense climate of crusading zeal and reform. This chapter attempts to examine these widespread reformist impulses in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century and demonstrate that to a great extent they informed the writing of history in England at this time. Indeed, the particular concerns common to the chroniclers so far examined cannot be fully understood outside this broader reformist context, in which Joachim of Fiore, it will hopefully become clear, was merely one of a number of theologians attempting to tackle a particular problem. The problem was in essence the one so bluntly diagnosed by Ralph Niger and several other commentators: Christian society was confronted by enemies internal and external, but was fatally hindered in addressing these by the laxity into which clergy and laity had fallen. This is a substantial topic, and one that we cannot hope to treat comprehensively in what follows. As such, we shall confine our remarks to three related areas of discussion. First, we shall examine the chroniclers' presentation of the ideas and personalities of the reform movement; second, we will return to the Cistercian chronicler Ralph of Coggeshall and study another of his writings, one that encapsulates his reformist and eschatological outlook; third, we will attempt to argue that some of the chroniclers were not only interested in the reform movement but had particular connections to it.

The reform movement of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century

To open up this topic, we may first consider Joachim's relationship with the papacy. Joachim enjoyed the patronage of successive popes: Lucius III had encouraged him to work on his *Liber concordie* and *Expositio in Apocalypsim*; Urban III had also given his encouragement; Clement III reiterated their words, and freed Joachim from his abbatial obligations at Corazzo.[1] There is nothing to suggest that for these popes Joachim's work was merely an amusing diversion. On the contrary, it appears to have dovetailed rather neatly with their own aspirations. This best explains Joachim's meeting with Lucius III at Veroli in 1184, and Lucius' desire that he interpret the perplexing Sibylline text found among the papers of Cardinal Matthew of Anjou.[2] Lucius was attempting to build on the promising foundations of papal-imperial reconciliation laid by his predecessor Alexander III and Frederick Barbarossa at the Peace of Venice in 1177. Part of his design was to unite the forces of the papacy, the empire and other European powers in an assault on the Saracens in the Holy Land and heresy at home; his consultation with Joachim seems to have been tied up with these grander schemes, on which the obscure prophecy was thought to have some bearing.[3] In other words, Joachim's apocalyptic ideas were from an early date co-opted into the reformist ambitions of the papacy.

Lucius' ambitions were severely hampered by the anti-imperial party in the curia, as well as by ongoing difficulties with a truculent Roman senate seeking to break away from papal control. His plans did not survive his death in November 1185, and their only legacy was the promulgation (jointly with Barbarossa) of the anti-heretical

[1] See above, 135.
[2] See above, 134-35.
[3] McGinn, 'Joachim and the Sibyl', 108-21.

bull *Ad abolendam* in November 1184.[4] Lucius' successors were elderly 'caretaker' popes elected on the assumption that they would lack the provocative reformist zeal of their predecessors. By and large they did. But the thread was to be picked up at the end of the twelfth century by Innocent III, who espoused a programme of reform and crusade very similar to that of Lucius III, and was much more effective in achieving it. And, like Lucius, Innocent swiftly enrolled Joachim of Fiore in his schemes. In August 1198, six months after his election, and shortly after his proclamation of a new crusade, Innocent appointed Joachim, along with several others, as a crusade preacher.[5] Two years later Joachim presented the completed texts of his *Liber concordie* and *Expositio in Apocalypsim* to the pope; two years after that, Joachim died. But his influence on Innocent outlived his death. The pope made extensive use of Joachim's writings in the letters that he addressed to the crusading army at Constantinople in 1204 and 1205. The Fourth Crusade had not proceeded according to plan. The crusaders had first directed their energies towards a siege of Zara, an important trading-post in Hungarian hands that the Venetians wanted to recapture; this was in fact made a condition of Venetian participation, which was essential for the transport of the crusading army. Zara fell in November 1202, whereupon the crusaders set their sights on another Christian target and besieged Constantinople; this city fell in April 1204.[6] Innocent was greatly perturbed by these developments: he excommunicated the Venetians in the aftermath of the attack on Zara, and condemned the misdirection and misdeeds of the crusading army in Constantinople.[7] But he seems to have reconsidered this: in a letter of 13 November 1204, addressed to the clerical participants in the crusade, he in fact reversed

[4] Lucius III, *Ad abolendam*, ed. E. Freiberg, *Corpus iuris canonici* (Leipzig, 1879-1881), ii, cc. 780-2.
[5] *Die Register Innocenz' III*, ed. O. Hageneder et al. (Graz-Cologne, Rome, Vienna, 1964-), i, 513-14. See also P. J. Cole, *The Preaching of the Crusades to the Holy Land, 1095-1270* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991), 85-87.
[6] See, generally, D. E. Queller & T. F. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: the conquest of Constantinople* (2nd ed., Philadelphia, 1997).
[7] *Die Register Innocenz' III*, v, 315-20.

his earlier condemnation and placed the conquest of the Greeks in the eschatological context of the return of the Greek Church to the Roman Church prior to the End Times.[8] This was reiterated in a letter to the new emperor Baldwin in January 1205.[9] Both relied heavily on Joachim of Fiore's *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, extracts from which were incorporated verbatim.[10]

Not deterred by the ostensible failure of the Fourth Crusade, and alert to the opportunities it presented, Innocent's thoughts turned once again to the Holy Land. As before, he was keen to frame his ambitions within a distinctly eschatological context. This is particularly apparent in his crusade appeal of April 19, 1213, which identified Mohammed with the Beast of the Apocalypse, and observed that of the predicted 666 years of Mohammedan rule nearly 600 had passed.[11] Innocent's crusading ambitions and more general reformist ambitions intersected in the Fourth Lateran Council in November 1215. The reforming agenda of this council is well known, but it was as much concerned with Innocent's continuing aim of setting in motion a new crusade, the details of which Innocent outlined in an address to the council, noting in particular the privileges that would be offered to any participant.[12] At first sight this council represents an attack on pervading Joachimite influences, seeing as Joachim's trinitarian doctrine was condemned in the second canon. But, as we saw in the previous chapter, this condemnation was a specific one, and efforts were made to leave the rest of his

[8] *Die Register Innocenz' III*, vii, 264-70.
[9] *Die Register Innocenz' III*, vii, 354-60.
[10] These two letters, and Joachim's influence on Innocent more generally, are discussed by Andrea, 'Innocent III'. See also Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 125-48.
[11] Innocent III, *Quia maior*, PL 216:817-22; The calculations concerning Mohammed appear to have been derived from the writings of Eulogius and Alvarus, ecclesiastics prominent in the apocalyptic Martyrs' movement in ninth-century Spain: see A. Cutler, 'The ninth-century Spanish Martyrs' movement and the origins of Western Christian missions to the Muslims', *The Muslim World* 55 (1965), 321-39.
[12] Innocent III, *Ad liberandum*, in *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. G. Alberigo et al. (3rd ed., Bologna, 1973), 267-71.

doctrine untarnished.[13] And there is evidence to suggest that Joachim's shadow hung over some of the other canons promulgated at the council.[14]

Innocent III, then, provides a key witness to the continuing relevance of Joachim's ideas on a wider stage of crusading and reformist ambition.[15] But although Joachim provided much of the urgency underpinning Innocent's programme of reform, that programme itself had a different origin. To some extent it was a reinvigoration of long-term papal goals over the previous half-century; yet it received impetus from a more immediate source. This was the programme of pastoral theology and moral reform spearheaded by ecclesiastics associated with the Parisian master Peter the Chanter.[16] Innocent III had been a student in the Paris schools, possibly under Peter the Chanter; and the ideas of Peter and his circle were to exercise as much influence over Innocent's reformist agenda as the designs of his papal predecessors.[17] It was largely thanks to

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[13] See above, 135-36.

[14] A. Cutler, 'Innocent III and the distinctive clothing of Jews and Muslims', *Studies in Medieval Culture* 3 (1970), 92-116, argues that the strictures on the attire of Jews and Muslims laid out in Canon 68 of the Fourth Lateran Council were motivated by Innocent's wish to delineate these groups according to the roles he thought they would play in the imminent End Times. Though a little speculative, Cutler's argument receives some support from comments Innocent made elsewhere on this subject: his belief in the conversion of the Jews during the End Times was carried over from Joachim's *Expositio* and stated clearly in his letter of November 1204.

[15] Other traces of Innocent's apocalyptic thought can be found in his letters and decretals, though they incline more to generalised rhetoric than to specific details of the eschatological scenario; see for instance, his letter of November 13 1209 to the army of Simon de Montfort in the Languedoc, which couches the heretical targets of Simon's attack as the 'forerunners of Antichrist' (*Die Register Innocenz' III*, xii, 267). Prior to becoming pope Innocent had written a widely-circulated treatise entitled *De miseria humane conditionis*, a rather gloomy picture of man's life lived in the shadow of the possibility of individual damnation and the terrors of the Apocalypse: Innocent III, *De miseria humane conditionis*, ed. R. E. Lewis (London, 1980), esp. 205-33. It may be overstating the case somewhat to say that this outlook predisposed him to see the events of his papacy through an eschatological lens (as suggested by Cutler, 'Innocent III', 100); *De miseria* is probably best seen as an attack on the vices of the papal curia, in which Innocent spent much of the 1190s: J. C. Moore, 'Innocent III's *De miseria humane conditionis*: a *Speculum curie*?', *Catholic Historical Review* 67 (1981), 553-64.

[16] On Peter the Chanter and his circle, the standard work remains J. W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: the social views of Peter the Chanter and his circle* (Princeton, 1970). See also J. W. Baldwin, 'Masters at Paris from 1179 to 1215: a social perspective', in *Renaissance and Renewal*, ed. Benson & Constable, 138-72; J. L. Bird, *Heresy, Crusade and Reform in the Circle of Peter the Chanter, c.1187-c.1240* (University of Oxford DPhil thesis, 2001); F. M. Powicke, *Stephen Langton* (Oxford, 1928), 49-74; B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (3rd ed., Oxford, 1983), 196-263.

[17] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 343; J. Sayers, *Innocent III: leader of Europe 1198-1216* (London, 1994), 18-19, 197; P. D. Clarke, 'Peter the Chanter, Innocent III and theological views on collective guilt and punishment', *JEH* 52 (2001), 1-20.

Innocent that the reforms advocated by Peter and his followers were at least partially implemented, the Fourth Lateran Council being the definitive step in this process.[18]

Peter was cantor of Notre-Dame from 1183 until his death in 1197, though he had probably been a master in Paris from at least the early 1170s.[19] His concern was with pastoral theology and the moral reform of both clergy and laity. He wanted to bring scholastic theology to bear on the practical questions posed by day-to-day life, and to transmit the fruits of this study to those engaged in parochial work. Earlier masters, such as Peter Lombard, had dealt with often difficult and obscure questions of theology, treating such important but lofty matters as the Trinity and the Atonement; Peter, while not neglecting these altogether, was concerned with questions of a more pragmatic nature. He pursued his objectives through a voluminous output of writings, of which the best-known was, and still is, the *Verbum abbreuiatum*, composed around 1192.[20] This was intended to help preachers compose their sermons, providing them with both the raw material for this endeavour, in the form of *exempla*, and stylistic guidance. The title of the work immediately points up Peter's principal instruction, namely the need for directness and simplicity in preaching and writing. His other

[18] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 315-43.
[19] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 3-11. Peter's presence at Paris in the period 1170-73 is suggested by a debate conducted there in those years between Peter and one Master Roger over whether Thomas Becket had been a martyr or a traitor, a debate that presumably took place before Becket's canonization in 1173: Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. J. Strange (Cologne, 1851), ii, 139-40; J. W. Baldwin, 'A debate at Paris over Thomas Becket between Master Roger and Master Peter the Chanter', in *Collectanea Stephan Kuttner*, ed. G. Forchielli & A. M. Stickler, *Studia Gratiana* 11-14 (Bologna, 1967), i, 119-32.
[20] The *Verbum Abbreuiatum* survives in three versions: Peter the Chanter, *Verbum Abbreuiatum:textus prior*, ed. M. Boutry, CCCM 196A (Turnhout, 2012); idem, *Verbum Abbreuiatum:textus alter*, ed. M. Boutry, CCCM 196B (Turnhout, 2012); idem, *Verbum Abbreuiatum:textus conflatus*, ed. M. Boutry, CCCM 196 (Turnhout, 2004). The editor believes that the short version (*textus prior*), of which the largest number of manuscripts survive, was written first and then expanded with the addition of the *textus alter* to make the long version (*textus conflatus*); thus she argues against Baldwin's argument that the long version came first and was then condensed to make the short version: Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, ii, 246-65. Baldwin restated his case in 'An edition of the long version of Peter the Chanter's *Verbum Abbreuiatum*', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 57 (2006), 78-85. We need not dwell on the particulars of this dispute, as it has no bearing on this chapter.

works, which include biblical commentaries, *questiones* and *distinctiones*, follow this admonition, though their quantity is somewhat daunting.[21]

Peter and his followers were not waging a new conflict. They trained their fire on familiar objects of reformist zeal: clerical concubinage, non-payment of tithes by laymen, simony, and pluralism. Church councils over the course of the twelfth century had attempted to suppress these vices, though they were not successful in eradicating them. The broader conflict between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* continued to rage; for Peter and his fellow masters the Becket conflict was merely the most recent engagement in this long-term struggle.[22] And we should not overstate the novelty of the Chanter's theological response: his emphasis on pastoral theology and the practical moral questions posed by day-to-day secular life had a long heritage, and indeed may be categorised as a distinct form of twelfth-century theology alongside the speculative theology of Abelard and Gilbert of Poitiers and the monastic theology of St Bernard and William of St Thierry.[23]

Where the Chanter and his circle did break new ground was in tackling sacramental questions that hinged on the role of the priest in the community: for instance, it was the work of Peter that was instrumental in the development of medieval theories of penance, and led directly to the confessional handbooks produced by

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[21] The Chanter's commentaries are still unedited, save for the first three chapters of his commentary on Genesis: Peter the Chanter, *Glosse super Genesim*, ed. A. Sylwan (University of Göteborg PhD thesis, 1992). His *questiones* were collected in a *Summa*, which is incompletely printed in Dugauquier's edition: Peter the Chanter, *Summa de sacramentis et animae consiliis*, ed. J.-A. Dugauquier, Analecta mediaevalia Namurcensia 4, 7, 11, 16, 21 (Paris, 1954-67). His *Distinctiones Abel*, also known as *Summa Abel*, is an early example of the genre of *distinctiones* that proliferated in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century; in it Peter gathered 600 words from the Bible and glossed them according to the various sense of Scripture. Fragments were printed in *Spicilegium solesmense*, ed. J. B. Pitra, (Paris, 1852-8), ii, iii, *passim*; a useful introduction to the work is M. Rust, 'A *florilegium* from Peter the Chanter's *Summa Abel*', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 56 (2012), 305-25. The Chanter's writings are surveyed by Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 12-16.

[22] B. Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools: a study of intellectuals in politics in the twelfth century* (Oxford, 1973), 202-205.

[23] Leclercq, 'The renewal of theology', 77-80.

Thomas of Chobham and Robert of Flamborough, both his pupils.[24] And in other respects too the reform movement of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries can be distinguished from earlier reform movements; or we could say that certain conditions allowed it to articulate and pursue these perennial reformist objectives in a more compelling, and ultimately more successful, fashion. In the first instance, this movement originated in the schools. Masters were able to deploy all the tools of a century of scholastic development in aid of traditional reform goals; for instance, their new understanding of parochial ministry was only possible in the wake of new theological clarity on the sacraments. That said, in emphasising the role of the masters we must not overlook the extent to which the movement was able to transcend clerical affiliations and co-opt the new religious orders into the prosecution of reform. For without the involvement of, in particular, the Cistercian order, the reform movement would not have had the impact it did. The Cistercians shared the Parisian reformers' anxieties about the limitations of the Church in the face of contemporary challenges to its authority, though the Cistercians had thus far made greater efforts to tackle the problem. They had mounted successive campaigns against heresy from the early days of their existence. The proliferation of heresies cast a glaring spotlight on the inadequacy of pastoral care in those regions, such as the Languedoc, where it flourished, as St Bernard had been quick to notice.[25] He saw that the expansion of heretical beliefs and the absence of a robust parish clergy were two sides of the same coin; the development of a programme of preaching and mission to combat heresy was, however, only part of the solution.[26] What was needed to address the situation properly

[24] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 53-54.
[25] Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermones super Cantica canticorum*, in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq, C. H. Talbot & H. M. Rochais (Rome, 1957-77), nos. 64-66 (ii, 166-88).
[26] In 1145 St Bernard had spent a year in Aquitaine preaching against the heresies of, among others, Henry of Lausanne: G. Bounoure, 'Le dernier voyage de saint Bernard en Aquitaine: la piété des Périgourdins, l'utilité des dimanches et la vitesse du cheval de saint Bernard', *Bulletin de la Société*

was a means of tackling the deficiencies of the parish clergy, and this is what the Parisian masters provided. They could fruitfully appropriate the networks evolved by the Cistercians for the circulation of anti-heretical material, and so the struggle was renewed and fought by Cistercians and secular reformers in unison. In addition, the co-operation of the papacy in this programme was correctly understood as vital by the reformers. Peter the Chanter died in 1197, but within a year of his death there was a new incumbent on the papal throne who was more than willing to pick up where he left off and turn reformist ideals into reality, using all means available to him. It was under the leadership of this triumvirate of pope, Parisian masters and monastic reformers that the movement made the advances that it did.

The reform movement of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries can therefore be classified as a distinct programme of crusade, pastoral mission and spiritual renewal that readily enrolled monks, secular masters, prelates and even the laity in the pursuit of its objectives. In the words of John Baldwin, the most eminent scholar of this subject from the past fifty years, 'the Chanter's influence among the conflux of men residing at Paris at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries spread like the ring of ripples produced by a pebble cast into a pond, diminishing as they proceed from the center of the circle.'[27] Much ink has been spilt on those scholars most closely linked to Peter, men such as Stephen Langton, Robert of Courson, Peter of Poitiers, Robert of Flamborough, Jacques de Vitry and Thomas of Chobham.[28] That does not of course mean that interest, or indeed participation, in the activities of the reform movement was limited to those who can be traced, however laboriously, to the personalities at its heart.

Historique et Archéologique du Périgord 115 (1988), 129-35; B. M. Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade in Occitania, 1145-1229: preaching in the Lord's vineyard* (Woodbridge, 2001), 78-108. In the following year he was active preaching the Second Crusade at the instigation of Pope Eugenius III: Cole, *Preaching of the Crusades*, 40-61. See also Bird, *Heresy, Crusade and Reform*, 81-120.

[27] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 17.

[28] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 17-46.

If this chapter achieves nothing else, then it should hopefully emphasise how pervasive the idea of reform was in late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Europe.

Reform and reformers in English historical writing

In England, the struggle for reform of clergy and laity was waged with no less vigour than on the continent. To observe this we may examine the career of Gerald of Wales; this will also serve as a convenient introduction to the intersection of reformist concerns and historical writing. Gerald is best remembered for his ethnographic writings on the Welsh and Irish, and for his abortive attempt to secure for himself a metropolitan archbishopric at St David's; this particular project consumed him for many years, and inspired many of his most personal, and most embittered, writings.[29] It was, however, only one strand of a long and wide-ranging career. Gerald, like so many of his learned contemporaries, was a product of continental teaching and scholarship. He had studied in Paris on two separate occasions, first mastering the liberal arts before proceeding to advanced studies in theology and law.[30] This brought him into contact with the reform programme of Peter the Chanter.[31] Gerald attended the lectures of the Chanter, probably during his second sojourn in Paris;[32] and he was to borrow heavily from the Chanter's

[29] Studies of Gerald are numerous. Among the most useful are R. J. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales 1146-1223* (Oxford, 1982); F. M. Powicke, 'Gerald of Wales', in his *The Christian Life in the Middle Ages and other essays* (Oxford, 1935), 107-129; D. Walker, 'Gerald of Wales, Archdeacon of Brecon', in *Links with the Past: Swansea & Brecon Historical Essays*, ed. O. W. Jones & D. Walker (Llandybie, 1974), 67-87. A valuable assessment of Gerald's early writings is M. Richter, 'Giraldiana', *Irish Historical Studies* 22 (1979), 422-37. See also Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 242-46.

[30] Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, 23, 45-48. The dates of these periods of study cannot be determined with precision. We know that during the first period Philip Augustus, son of Louis VII, was born, that is to say in 1165: Gerald of Wales, *De principis instructione*, ed. G. F. Warner, Rolls Series 21, viii, 292-93. Gerald's returned to Paris in the late 1170s; as we noted in the previous chapter, Matthew of Anjou, whose lectures he used to attend, was summoned to the Third Lateran Council in 1179 and deputed Gerald to cover for him until he returned: Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, 48.

[31] Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 5-6, 29, 68, 190-1.

[32] We have no evidence for the Chanter's presence in Paris before 1170: see above, 189 & n. 19.

works for his own writings.[33] When he returned from Paris, he immediately set about implementing in Wales the reformist ideas that he had absorbed. As archdeacon of Brecon, Gerald launched a vigorous programme of reform, chasing unpaid tithes and deposing married clergy. Unsurprisingly, this aroused strong hostility, and Gerald had to back up his reformist ambitions with the entire arsenal of ecclesiastical sanctions available to him.[34] His frustration was considerable: in his *De iure et statu Meneuensis ecclesie*, written around 1218, he urged the archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, to visit Wales and help him enact the clerical reforms which he had been struggling to implement.[35] Stephen needed no encouragement. He had been a student of Peter the Chanter in Paris, and was similarly dedicated to the cause of reform.[36] Like his predecessor Hubert Walter, his ambitions had been compromised by the ongoing political troubles of John's reign; nonetheless, both were proactive in convening councils and co-operating with the papacy in the rooting out of clerical vice.[37] Innocent III, for his part, appointed a number of Paris-trained scholars to preach the crusade in England.[38] Other Paris-trained men took up positions in cathedral chapters and bishoprics.[39]

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[33] The debt is most pronounced in his *Gemma Ecclesiastica*, which draws heavily on the short version of the Chanter's *Verbum abbreuiatum* to produce a similar manual for correct priestly observance, in this case aimed at the clergy of Wales. Gerald appears to have composed this in the late 1190s, before presenting it to Innocent III in 1199: Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 218. See also E. M. Sanford, 'Giraldus Cambrensis' debt to Petrus Cantor', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 3 (1945), 16-32. Much of the same ground was covered, independently, by A. Boutemy, 'Giraud de Barri et Pierre le Chantre: une source de la *Gemma Ecclesiastica*', *Revue du Moyen Age Latin* 2 (1946), 45-62. Gerald quotes from the *Verbum abbreuiatum* in other works, e.g. *Speculum Duorum*, ed. Y. Lefèvre, R. B. C. Huygens & M. Richter (Cardiff, 1974), 148-50.

[34] Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 27-57.

[35] Gerald of Wales, *De iure et statu Meneuensis ecclesie*, ed. J. S. Brewer, Rolls Series 21, iii, 101-373, at 114. For the date of this work, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 219.

[36] J. F. Veal, *The Sacramental Theology of Stephen Langton and the Influence upon him of Peter the Chanter* (Rome, 1955).

[37] Cheney, *From Becket to Langton*, 140-45; idem, *Hubert Walter* (London, 1967), 64-69; Powicke, *Stephen Langton*, 151-53.

[38] These included Walter, Archdeacon of London, John of Kent and Philip of Oxford: Innocent III, *Pium et sanctum*, PL 216:822-23; *The Letters of Pope Innocent III concerning England and Wales*, no. 918 (p. 152). See also A. J. Andrea, 'Walter, archdeacon of London, and the *Historia Occidentalis* of Jacques de Vitry', *Church History* 50 (1981), 141-51; Bird, *Heresy, Crusade and Reform*, 6-7.

[39] Bird, *Heresy, Crusade and Reform*, 1-30.

Gerald was very much a product of the contemporary European intellectual scene; and his historiographical output often displays the concerns fostered by his education on the continent.[40] He sheds considerable light on his own reformist activities and the course of study that underpinned it. Arguably he does so to the exclusion of his fellow reformers. If they are in general casualties of Gerald's egocentricity, we do nevertheless obtain some glimpses. One may be found in his *Vita Sancti Hugonis*. Gerald tells the story of a woman driven insane by her insistence on doing manual labour after nones on Saturday.[41] She is eventually cured, one of the many posthumous miracles of St Hugh of Lincoln that Gerald records. It is, however, the context for her punishment that is most interesting: the cause, as Gerald tells us, is her defiance of the strictures on Sunday work that had recently been reiterated throughout England by the preacher Eustace of Flay.[42]

Eustace was abbot of the Benedictine house of St Germer in Flay from 1200 until his death in 1211.[43] He undertook two preaching tours throughout England in 1200 and 1201;[44] as Gerald tells us, his chief instruction was the strict observance of the

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[40] 'Gerald's years at Paris and the internationalism of twelfth-century culture in general mean that he cannot be understood by reference to the English (or British) context alone. He must be related to the development of scholasticism and naturalism in the Latin West': Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 5.

[41] Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Hugonis*, ed. & tr. R. M. Loomis (New York, 1985), 46-50. This story is found in Book 2, which along with its predecessor was written c.1213; a third book was added by 1219: Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 218.

[42] 'Cum tamen uir uenerabilis abbas de Flai, ex transmarinis partibus in Angliam ueniens et predicacionis officio fungens, inter cetera laudabilia duo predicando monuit et suasit, ut diebus dominicis a publicis foris et mercaturis cuncti cessarent et omni die sabbati post nonam a quolibet opere seruili feriarent, multos etiam utriusque sexus homines ad uotorum induxerat emissionem': Gerald of Wales, *Vita Sancti Hugonis*, 46-48.

[43] The best study of Eustace remains J. L. Cate, 'The English mission of Eustace of Flay (1200-1201)', in *Études d'histoire dédiées à la mémoire de Henri Pirenne*, ed. F. L. Ganshof, E. Sabbe & F. Vercauteren (Brussels, 1937), 67-89.

[44] Why Eustace focused his efforts on England is not entirely clear. Flay was located in a region much disputed by the French and Norman kings, and St Germer itself had been patronised extensively by Norman rulers from Henry I onwards, seemingly as part of their continental policy. Eustace, as abbot, may have had connections with the royal court, and on this basis chose to preach in England; if so, he must have been disappointed by the reception he got from king and prelates. Having said that, evidence for Eustace's continental preaching is not entirely absent. It is true that he is not mentioned in any continental chronicles of the time, but some Sunday markets in Northern France (such as that held in Cheux by the monks of St Étienne, Caen) were transferred to a week-day during the 1210s; whether this was due to Eustace's preaching, or to another cause, is not clear. See Cate, 'Eustace of Flay', 72, 77.

Lord's Day. Jocelin of Brakelond records how Eustace came to Bury St Edmunds in 1201, and preached with the assent of Abbot Samson, causing Bury's Sunday market to be moved to Tuesday;[45] 'this same abbot did the like in many cities and boroughs of England'.[46] As we shall see, this estimation of Eustace's success was not shared by all; but there is corroborative evidence to suggest that his preaching did make an impact, at least in the short term. The justices-in-eyre in 1202-1203 found that in several counties a number of markets had been transferred from Sunday to another day of the week: in Rothwell, Northamptonshire, this change was explicitly attributed to Eustace's preaching, and the same may reasonably be assumed in other places. As the right to hold a market was granted by the king, and as his permission was needed to change the date on which it was held, the justices wasted no time in reversing many of the alterations.[47] But if its effect was only temporary, Eustace's campaign did nevertheless leave an impression on contemporaries, and should undoubtedly be seen in the context of the reformers' aim of ordering Christian society for the better.[48]

The most sustained treatment of Eustace of Flay is found in the *Chronica* of Roger of Howden.[49] It is worth rehearsing Roger's narrative in detail, for the pious, almost hagiographic, tone he adopts speaks volumes about his investment in Eustace's reformist agenda; and his lengthy recital of Eustace's miracles was one of the key pieces of evidence Stubbs adduced to show Roger's increasing credulity, which, we

[45] Jocelin of Brakelond, *Chronica*, 132.
[46] 'Consimiliter operatus abbas ille in multis ciuitatibus et burgis Anglie': Jocelin of Brakelond, *Chronica*, 132.
[47] Cate, 'Eustace of Flay', 80-82. In one sense, as Cate points out, Eustace did fail, and that is in his rigid definition of Sunday, which lasted from nones on Saturday to prime on Monday. Most of the miracles associated with his preaching happened to people working on Saturday evening; but many of the markets were in fact moved from Sunday to Saturday, and as markets usually lasted until sun-down, this was technically in violation of Eustace's pronouncements.
[48] In his diocesan statutes for Canterbury, Stephen Langton condemned the practice of Sunday trading: Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants*, i, 266.
[49] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 123-24, 167-72.

have argued, owed less to senility than to a heightened eschatological awareness.[50] On his first tour, Eustace comes to England from Normandy, preaches in London and many other parts of the country, and does several wondrous deeds: in the village of Wye in Kent he blesses a fountain, and many come to drink and be cured of their ailments; and in Romney he ends a drought by striking a rock with his staff and producing a flow of water.[51] Eustace preaches an end to usury, and encourages the people to take the cross for the aid of Jerusalem; he commands that lamps be lit in church where the sacrament is displayed, and urges all to put aside a daily portion of food for the poor. His preaching is not received without opposition, for Satan inspires several (including, it is implied, some of the prelates) to accuse him of interfering where he has no right to interfere; and so he returns to the continent.[52] But Eustace returns in the following year, preaching against the holding of markets on Sunday, and supporting his strictures with the aid of a letter supposedly deposited on the altar of St Symeon on Golgotha by God himself; this letter, which threatens disasters, including rain, hail and the onslaughts of pagan tribes, if due observance of Sunday and Holy Days is not carried out, Roger inserts into his chronicle.[53] Eustace preaches in York at the request of Archbishop Geoffrey, and moves many to renounce markets and the performance of servile work on Sundays. He reiterates his stipulation that the rich give some of their daily repast to the poor. As before, his preaching attracts opposition, Roger specifying on this occasion that the king himself was against Eustace.[54] Roger ends his account by listing some of the miracles that accompanied Eustace's preaching: in Beverley, for instance, a

[50] Stubbs, *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, iv, pp. ix-x, xiii-xiv, xxiii-xxiv.
[51] This is presumably an intentional echo of Exodus 17. Similar Mosaic imagery is used by Rigord to describe Philip Augustus: Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, 258-60.
[52] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 123-24.
[53] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 167-69.
[54] This is difficult to corroborate. John was of course indirectly responsible for the actions of the justices-on-eyre in 1202-1203, inasmuch as they were enforcing his regalian rights; but there is no evidence that he had a personal animosity towards Eustace or his reform programme: Cate, 'Eustace of Flay', 83.

carpenter decided to work on the Sabbath and fell down paralysed, while a woman in Lincolnshire who attempted to bake bread on the Sabbath was repeatedly unsuccessful, the bread coming out of the oven raw on every occasion.[55]

Even though it did not meet with outstanding success in his eyes, Eustace of Flay's mission appears to have captured Roger's imagination. Roger sides firmly with Eustace against the 'ministers of inquity' who oppose him, and his anguish at the merely temporary effects of Eustace's preaching is readily apparent: putting earthly gain above heavenly gain, the people quickly return to their old ways 'as a dog to its vomit' (Proverbs 26:11).[56] It is tempting to link this with the pessimistic outlook apparent elsewhere in the annal, most notably in Roger's startling announcement that the Devil has been loosed.[57] At the same time, the failure of Eustace's second mission may have been all the more dispiriting in the light of the reformist successes of the previous year. It is true that Eustace's first mission encounters opposition. But Roger's narrative of 1200 seems in other respects more optimistic. The quarrel of Archbishop Geoffrey of York with his chapter is resolved, as is the dispute between Archbishop Hubert Walter and the monks of Christ Church, Canterbury.[58] After these two accounts of reconciliation Roger notes that Hubert Walter was able to summon a council at Westminster in September, contrary to the wishes of the justiciar, Geoffrey Fitz Peter.[59] This council was an early attempt to put into practice in England the reformist principles of the Parisian masters, with its emphasis on priestly conduct and the proper administration of the sacraments. Along with the 1195 Council of York, this was the first attempt in a generation to legislate for the English church, drawing on the decrees

[55] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 170-71.
[56] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 172.
[57] See above, 178-81.
[58] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 126-28.
[59] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 128.

of the Third Lateran Council of 1179 to do so but adding much in the process.[60] Roger lists its decrees in full.[61]

Roger's treatment of Eustace of Flay is one of the most striking aspects of the chronicle's last annals. But Eustace in fact makes an earlier appearance in the *Chronica*, in a passage entered *sub anno* 1182.[62] A servant of Abbot Eustace, named Walter, hears a voice from heaven one night telling him to deliver a message to King Henry II. The message is 'In nomine Christi, prodele, endele'; and if the king fails to do this, he will die along with his sons.[63] The Latin of this message is nonsensical, and one imagines that the words have been garbled somewhere in the process of transmission.[64] That said, the import of the message was clearly felt by Walter, who protests that he is not worthy to deliver such a message; accordingly he is told to address himself to the archbishop of Rouen, the archbishop's chaplain, and Abbot Eustace, who will arrange for his passage to England. The Archbishop and his chaplain are unable to participate, but Eustace makes the crossing with his servant, and the servant narrates his vision, and its warning, to the king. The king pays no heed to the vision, and shortly afterwards his sons Henry and Geoffrey die. Roger notes that the vision happened at a time 'when the Publicani were being burnt in many places throughout France, which the king would not permit to be done in his own land, although there were very many heretics there.'[65] This gives us some indication of the tenor of Walter's vision: we may reasonably assume that, however cryptically, the celestial voice was encouraging, or rather commanding, Henry

[60] Cheney, *From Becket to Langton*, 141-42.
[61] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 128-37.
[62] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 272-73.
[63] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 272.
[64] Finding 'perdele' in a slightly later manuscript of the *Chronica*, Stubbs offered it as an alternative to the Laudian manuscript's 'prodele', but this makes the meaning no clearer. Both 'perdele' and 'endele' are listed as dubious words in the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, 778, 2196. 'Prodele' receives no mention at all.
[65] 'Tempus uero, in quo hec uisio contigit, erat tunc quando Publicani comburentur in pluribus locis per regnum Francie, quod rex nullo modo fieri permisit in terra sua, licet ibi essent perplurimi': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 273.

to take action against heresy in his kingdom. Henry's failure to act along the lines of Philip Augustus incurs admonishment, and then the deaths of his sons.

Roger only included this story in the *Chronica*; it makes no appearance in the *Gesta*. As we saw in the previous chapter, we do not have the original text of the *Chronica* in the form in which it was assembled in 1192-93.[66] But we could reasonably assume that the anecdote was incorporated during this process. The revised section on Joachim of Fiore, *sub anno* 1190, provides the *terminus ante quem* for this first version of the *Chronica*, and as the story of Eustace and his servant falls chronologically before the Joachim narrative, this shows that it must have been incorporated by this time, if not a little earlier. There is a difficulty, however. Eustace was not abbot of Flay in 1182, as Roger claims; he was elected to the abbacy in October 1200.[67] Now Eustace's first preaching tour of England took place in that year, and the chroniclers unanimously describe him as abbot. Conceivably Eustace came to England after October 1200; perhaps more likely is that the chroniclers, writing in the aftermath of his second tour, made when he was indeed abbot, imposed the title on him retrospectively, not knowing when he assumed that position. But how do we explain Roger's earlier anecdote about Eustace? It is possible that there were two different abbots of Flay, both called Eustace, and Roger's anecdote here concerns the earlier; but, as Stubbs observed, it is more likely that this Eustace is the same as the later Eustace, and that the story was inserted in the light of the abbot's English mission at the turn of the century, possibly deriving from his own testimony.[68]

Stubbs did not pursue this suggestion; but, as ever, he was correct. In the second part of the fair copy of the *Chronica*, Bodl. MS Laud Misc. 582, each annal has some space left at the end, usually little more than a page. That this was intentional, rather

[66] See above, 162.
[67] Cate, 'Eustace of Flay', 74.
[68] Stubbs, *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, ii, p. liii.

than accidental, may be demonstrated with reference to the annal for 1181. This comes to a close at the foot of f. 6r with the seizure by Henry II of Durham castle from its bishop, Hugh du Puiset.[69] There then follows an erasure of several lines, which continues to the top of f. 6v.[70] Enough remains of the original text to see that the scribe had mistakenly continued on to the next annal, for 1182; he then realised his error, erased what he had written and began again at the head of f. 7r, leaving the intervening page ruled, but blank.[71] The conclusion we must draw is that spaces were deliberately left; material could then be added at a later date to supplement the account of the year in question. And this is precisely what seems to have happened in the case of the story under consideration. This is in fact the last entry in the 1182 annal; and when we turn to the relevant part of the Bodleian manuscript, we find that it does not follow straight on from the previous entry (which concerns the death of Bishop Waleran of Rochester) on f. 9r, but appears overleaf, on f. 9v. Moreover, the hand is different from the one that wrote the rest of the annal, and indeed everything in the manuscript up to this point.[72] In other words, a later scribe, either Roger himself or someone under his direction, has

[69] Laud Misc. 582, f. 6r; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 265-66.
[70] Laud Misc. 582, ff. 6r-6v.
[71] A similar mistake seems to have occurred between the annals for 1189 and 1190. The annal for 1189 ends at the top of f. 60v; then there is an erasure of four lines, and then the rest of the page is blank, the annal for 1190 commencing on f. 61r. The erasure here was more thorough than the erasure on ff. 6r-6v, and it is virtually impossible to work out what the original text said. But the probability that we are looking at the same kind of error is very high indeed. This may in turn suggest that the exemplar for the Bodleian manuscript was written out continuously, without space at the end of each annal; had such a gap existed at the conclusion of 1181, then the copyist would surely have been prompted to replicate the arrangement he had in front of him; while if there was no such gap, then it would have been easy to run on into the following annal, before realising the error.
[72] I have not been able to identify the hand that made this addition with any of the others that occur in the Laudian manuscript. The account of Eustace's missions of 1200 and 1201 is part of a protracted section of the manuscript written by Roger himself, in a cursive hand that is visible from time to time in the earlier sections: Corner, 'The earliest surviving manuscripts', 309-10. This is not the hand that made the addition *sub anno* 1182, which is in a hand closer to, though not the same as, the more formal hand that transcribed the Royal manuscript and the first part of the Laudian manuscript.

taken advantage of the space left at the end of the 1182 annal to include this anecdote, which was presumably heard in 1200-1201 and inserted in the relevant place.[73]

The anecdote therefore takes on considerable significance. We already observed how Roger of Howden transformed his *Gesta* into a more far-reaching narrative in close conjunction with the fortunes of the Third Crusade. We are now able to see that Roger not only conceived of the *Chronica* as a work in progress that could be fleshed out as well as continued, but used this flexibility to recast earlier events through the prism of the reformist ideas to which he was exposed in the 1190s and very early 1200s. In adding this particular story, Roger not only points up the threat of heresy, a preoccupation of the reformers, but explicitly connects Henry's failure to suppress it with his fortunes as king. That the warning was divinely transmitted cloaks the reformist agenda in the veil of prophetic sanction that men like Innocent III were so keen to invoke. In other words, Roger is deploying the sort of moralistic *exemplum* typical of the proponents of the reform movement, and this only underlines the extent to which Roger's historiographical outlook had by this point become bound up with the reform agenda that he elsewhere describes at such length.[74]

At this point it is worth remarking on a very similar anecdote told by Gerald of Wales in his *Itinerarium Kambrie*. Here Henry II is accosted by a mysterious stranger in Cardiff in 1172, and receives an admonition about the necessity of keeping Sunday

[73] We cannot know whether the source of this anecdote, either Eustace himself or someone else, ascribed it to a specific year, or whether Roger simply included it *sub anno* 1182 so as to associate it closely with the death of the Young King in 1183.

[74] There is another interesting dimension to this. Prior to becoming abbot of Flay, Eustace had been secretary to Philip of Dreux, Bishop of Beauvais and cousin of Philip Augustus. Philip of Dreux was notorious in England for the part he played in spreading the rumour that Richard I had been responsible for the murder of Conrad of Montferrat, and was in fact captured in 1197 at Richard's instigation; when Philip complained to Pope Celestine III, a letter of Celestine justifying Richard's actions was forged in response, presumably in the royal chancery. This letter was quoted by Roger of Howden and, via Roger, by William of Newburgh: Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 23-24; William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, ii, 494; see also Gillingham, 'Royal newsletters', 184-85. Conceivably Roger was unaware of Eustace's connection with Philip. If he was aware of it, then he must have been sufficiently impressed by Eustace's preaching to overlook it; or else he was less interested in Philip's calumny and eventual downfall than one would imagine a royal servant like Roger to have been. To my mind, this gives further evidence that Roger's horizons were rather broader than the royal court in the 1190s.

free from all work and trade.[75] Henry is dismissive, but the stranger persists: if Henry does not promote these strictures in his kingdom, then he will suffer misfortune to the end of his days. And so it proved: the next year sees the rebellion of his sons, which, Gerald notes, caused him great unease for the rest of his life. This was not in Gerald's original text of the *Itinerarium*, drawn up around 1191, but was included in the second recension, drawn up around 1197.[76] Although different in detail, the story makes much the same point as Roger's: Henry's failure to pay heed to currents of reform spells disaster for him. Gerald does not connect the stranger's admonitions with Eustace of Flay; he was writing this before Eustace made his first appearance on the English scene. But this in itself shows that there was a distinct reformist interest in Sunday activities independent of the abbot of Flay. It is perhaps no coincidence that around the same time Gerald was working on his *Gemma ecclesiastica*, the manual for the correction of the Welsh clergy in which we see most clearly the guiding hand of his Parisian masters.[77]

Roger of Wendover's treatment of Eustace of Flay is also worth considering, for it attempts to tie Eustace's preaching more closely to the agenda of Innocent III. When Roger came to compile his *Flores historiarum*, probably in the 1220s, he condensed Roger of Howden's two accounts into one, which he enters *sub anno* 1200:[78] for the most part he follows the first account, concerning Eustace's preaching in Wye and Romney, but he prefaces it with the transcript of the heavenly letter that Roger of Howden included as part of Eustace's second tour.[79] Whereas Roger of Howden merely gave the text of the letter, Roger of Wendover gives some background to it. So he tells us that the letter hung over the altar of the church of St Symeon for three days and

[75] Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambrie*, ed. J. F. Dimock, Rolls Series 21, vi, 1-152, at 64-65. He repeats the story in *De principis instructione*, 180-81; and it also appears as a late insertion into his own copy of the *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 108-12.
[76] For the dates of these recensions, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 216.
[77] See above, 194 n. 33.
[78] On the dating of Roger of Wendover's *Flores*, see above, 93 n. 46.
[79] Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, i, 295-99.

nights, causing those who saw it to throw themselves to the ground in contrition;[80] it is then consulted by the Patriarch Zacharias and all the clergy of the Holy Land, who decide to send it to the Pope and await his instructions.[81] Innocent, on receiving the letter, immediately appoints preachers to convey its message throughout the world; and Eustace is assigned to visit England.[82] In other words, Roger gives explicitly what Roger of Howden only hints at, namely a wider reformist context; Eustace is merely one of a number of preachers delivering God's word throughout Christendom.

Another reformer mentioned briefly by Gerald of Wales is the preacher Fulk of Neuilly.[83] Fulk embodied the aims of the reform movement; initially a dissolute parish priest, he resolved to start afresh, and undertook training in Paris at the feet of Peter the Chanter; this gave him the impetus to preach throughout northern France, which he did until his death in 1202.[84] In 1198 he was appointed as a crusade preacher by Innocent III.[85] Gerald describes Fulk as 'a virtuous and holy man through whose agency God has wrought many unquestionable miracles in the kingdom of the French in our own days';[86] and the amusing anecdote of his encounter with Richard I is told. Fulk criticises the king for not giving away his three 'daughters', 'Pride', 'Extravagance' and 'Greed'. Richard, momentarily nonplussed, recovers: 'I have already given these daughters away in marriage. 'Pride' I gave to the Templars, 'Extravagance' I gave to the Black Monks,

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[80] Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, i, 295-96.
[81] Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, i, 297-98.
[82] Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, i, 298.
[83] Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambrie*, 44. Like the sabbatarian anecdote discussed above, this passage was a later insertion, this time part of the third edition of c.1214 dedicated to Stephen Langton.
[84] On Fulk, see M. R. Gutsch, 'A twelfth-century preacher – Fulk of Neuilly', in *The Crusades and other Historical Essays presented to Dana C. Monro*, ed. L. J. Paetow (New York, 1928), 183-206; J. O'Brien, 'Fulk of Neuilly', *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society (Literary and Historical Section)* 12 (1966-1968), 105-48; Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 36-38; Cole, *Preaching of the Crusades*, 87-92.
[85] *Die Register Innocenz' III*, i, 597. There is no contemporary evidence to support Norman Cohn's claim that Fulk was a subversive prophet who preached a crusade of the poor: Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium*, 89.
[86] '...uiro bono et sancto, per quem Deus in Francorum regno nostris diebus multa proculdubio signa fecit': Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambrie*, 44.

and 'Greed' I gave to the White Monks.'[87] The same story is repeated by Roger of Howden as part of the narrative of Fulk's preaching that he gives after his incorporation of Innocent's crusade bull of 1198.[88] Roger adduces this story less as an example of the king's sense of humour than as a mark of his arrogance; as in the case of Eustace of Flay, who is here mentioned as one of Fulk's preaching associates, Roger sides with Fulk in the face of his adversities.[89] The clerics of Lisieux, whose worldly life Fulk attacks, actually succeed in having him imprisoned; but the chains cannot bind him, and he escapes prison with ease; later, in Caen, he is again imprisoned, this time by the castle guards, who thought this would please the king.[90] And, like Eustace, Fulk's preaching is accompanied by many miracles: 'the Lord gave to him power to give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and voice to the mute, and to cure others weighed down by divers illnesses, and to drive out demons.'[91]

There is a longer account of Fulk's preaching in the *Chronicon Anglicanum* of Ralph of Coggeshall.[92] Ralph was as impressed by Fulk as Roger of Howden was. He notes Fulk's special attention to the sins of usurers and prostitutes, which he denounced in strident tones. Initially few paid any attention to him; whereupon God made his words like arrows, so that through his preaching he could reduce even the most wicked to tears and penitence.[93] His preaching was accompanied by marvellous signs and

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[87] 'Cum inter cetera uir ille sanctus regi dixisset: "Tres filias habetis, que quamdiu penes uos fuerint, nunquam Dei gratiam habere poteritis; superbiam scilicet, luxuriam, et cupiditatem." Cui rex, post modicam quasi pausationem, "Iam," inquit, "maritaui filias istas, et nuptui dedi; Templariis superbiam, nigris monachis luxuriam, albis uero cupiditatem."': Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambrie*, 44. He repeats the anecdote in his *Speculum ecclesie*, ed. J. S. Brewer, Rolls Series 21, ii, 54-55.
[88] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 76-77.
[89] At the time of writing, Roger could not properly identify the preachers who accompanied Fulk, except for Eustace of Flay, and accordingly gives their names as 'magistrum Petrum de ' and 'dominum Robertum de ', with gaps to be filled in later: Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 76. Baldwin has conjectured that these refer to Peter de Roissy and Robert of Courson: *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 37. Both were students of the Chanter.
[90] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 77.
[91] '...deditque ei potestatem cecos illuminare, claudos, mutos, et alios diuersis languoribus oppressos curare, demones effugare': Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 76.
[92] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 80-83.
[93] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 80-81.

healing miracles, and he signed many with the cross. Not everyone who came to Fulk was healed: 'for he had a certain gift of the Holy Spirit, namely the discernment of spirits, and through this he understood on which of the infirm and at what time the privileges of healing should be lavished';[94] and some he turned away because their time of healing had not yet come. After spreading the word throughout France and accomplishing what neither royal power nor ecclesiastical censure had been able to accomplish, Fulk goes to the Cistercian General Chapter, in order to commend himself to the abbots present; there he himself took the cross, along with the former abbot of Clairvaux, now Bishop of Langres, but failed to encourage others to do so. But on leaving the chapter he attracted a large following from all sections of society, who willingly took the cross.[95]

The most detailed account of Fulk of Neuilly is by the crusade preacher Jacques de Vitry.[96] Yet Ralph's account comes a close second. There is in fact a still more interesting description by Ralph of a leading reformer, to which we shall return later in this chapter.[97] However, we will now make what may initially appear to be something of a digression, and examine a work of Ralph's that we have hitherto overlooked. The reasons for doing so may be plainly stated: it is in this work that we find Ralph most clearly harnessing his dynamic eschatological vision to a tangible reformist agenda. In other words, we can see in this text both the investment of Ralph in the reform movement of the time, and also his willingness to contribute to it through the circulation of what is, in effect, a series of *exempla* underpinned by a strong sense of urgency. This text is the *Visio Thurkilli*.

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[94] 'Habebat siquidem quoddam Sancti Spiritus munus privilegiatum, scilicet, discretionem spirituum, per quod intelligebat quibus infirmis et quo tempore curationis priuilegia largiretur': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 82.
[95] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 82-83.
[96] Jacques de Vitry, *Historia occidentalis*, 89-90, 94-101.
[97] See below, 223-27.

The *Visio Thurkilli*

Ralph's interest in portents and stories of the miraculous is one of the most striking features of his chronicle, and deserves to be taken seriously as an indication of the increasingly eschatological cast of his mind. But this interest seems to have taken him beyond the pages of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*. He excuses the brevity of one such story in the chronicle, involving the miraculous resurrection of a monk of Sor, on the grounds that he has written a fuller account of it elsewhere.[98] And we have the intriguing testimony of the 1207 annal, where it is recorded that Ralph wrote down several visions 'for the edification of many'.[99] It is unclear whether this refers specifically to a collection of such narratives or rather to those somewhat brief accounts that Ralph gives of visions in the text of the chronicle.[100] Either way, Ralph clearly considered this to be an important duty. But there is support for the idea that he did compile a separate book of visions. Testimony to this effect comes from the bibliographer Henry of Kirkestede, a monk of Bury St Edmunds in the mid-fourteenth century. He is most famous for his monumental guide to authoritative writers and the locations where their works could be read, a guide modelled partly on Jerome's *De uiris illustribus* and partly on the earlier Franciscan bibliographical list, the *Registrum Anglie*, drawn up some thirty years earlier.[101] A by-product of Henry's research for this

[98] 'Que omnia quia alibi literis plenius mandauimus, hic etiam replicare fastidiosum duximus': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 37.
[99] '... ac quasdam uisiones quas a uenerabilibus uiris audiuit, fideliter annotare ob multorum edificationem curauit': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 163.
[100] These are the accounts of the vision of the monks of Eynsham and Strata Florida: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 71-2, 141. The vision of the monk of Eynsham was recorded at greater length by Adam, the prior of that house and chaplain and hagiographer of Hugh of Lincoln: see Adam of Eynsham, *Visio monachi de Egnesham*, ed. H. E. Salter, in *The Cartulary of the Abbey of Eynsham* (Oxford, 1908), ii, 285-371, and below, 216-19.
[101] R. H. Rouse & M. A. Rouse, *Henry of Kirkestede, Catalogus de Libris Autenticis et Apocrifis*, Corpus of British Medieval Library catalogues 11 (London, 2004), lxxxiv-lxxxix.

project was his production of an anthology of writings on Antichrist, compiled from various tracts which he found in a variety of monastic libraries.[102] Included in this is Ralph of Coggeshall's account of Joachim of Fiore.[103] This was not extracted from the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, as we might expect, but from a book of visions available at Coggeshall itself and the nearby Cistercian house of Sibton.[104] It seems highly probable that this book of visions was itself compiled at Coggeshall. We can only guess at the other contents; but vision narratives of the sort that Ralph frequently includes in his chronicle very probably constituted a major part of it. We cannot say for certain that Ralph himself was responsible for the compilation, but as we have some grounds on which to believe that he did compile such a tome, then the probability that this is what Henry of Kirkestede consulted is high.[105] And the inclusion of Joachim's prophecies in a book of visions is itself striking. It suggests that for Ralph, or whoever compiled it, all the included texts pointed in the same direction.

As it happens, there is additional evidence to confirm the statement of the 1207 annal. This comes in the form of an extended account of a vision experienced by a certain East Anglian villager called Thurkill in 1206, and written down by Ralph of

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[102] On this anthology see E. R. Daniel, 'Henry of Kirkstede's *De antichristo et de fine mundi*', in his *Abbot Joachim of Fiore and Joachimism*, article XVII; R. E. Lerner, *The Powers of Prophecy: the Cedar of Lebanon vision from the Mongol onslaught to the dawn of the Enlightenment* (New York, 2008), 93-101.

[103] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 404, ff. 66r-66v.

[104] 'Hec in libro visionum apud Sibetone et apud Coggeshale': Corpus Christi College, MS 404, f. 66v. Ralph mentions the foundation of Sibton *sub anno* 1149: *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 13.

[105] Henry's excerpt is not complete. It leaves out the passage in which Adam queries Joachim about Antichrist, and learns that he has already been born and that Innocent would not have a successor: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68-69. This may seem a strange passage to omit in an anthology about Antichrist, but, as Robert Lerner points out (*The Powers of Prophecy*, 96 n. 27), the information here was demonstrably incorrect: Innocent III had not of course been the last pope. Yet Henry does retain Joachim's statement that the opening of the sixth seal would occur in 1199, and that Antichrist would begin his reign soon afterwards. This detail would surely have appeared equally mistaken in the mid-fourteenth century when Henry was at work. This suggests, to my mind, that Henry copied the text as he found it, and that the book of visions contained a truncated version of the prophecies. It would not be implausible to date the book of visions to Ralph of Coggeshall's lifetime on these grounds, though this can only be a conjecture: the alteration to the prophecies must have been made by one who knew that Innocent III did in fact have a successor, but thought that the persecutions of Antichrist under the sixth seal inaugurated in 1199 were still to come. In other words, a date perhaps not long after 1216 would be entirely feasible.

Coggeshall himself.[106] Thurkill, a peasant from the village of Stisted, near Coggeshall in Essex, is conducted on a tour of the afterlife by St Julian the Hospitaller and, latterly, St Domninus, and told to make public all that he has seen;[107] to do so he is made miraculously eloquent and amazes his listeners, who were unaccustomed to this display 'because before he was almost illiterate and always shy on account of his great simplicity'.[108]

As the text itself does not identify its author, we should first rehearse the arguments for ascribing it to Ralph. H. L. D. Ward was the first to edit the text, and the first to attribute it to the abbot of Coggeshall.[109] He did so for several reasons. First, the preface to the *Visio* refers to a number of other visions, several of which are also referred to by Ralph in the *Chronicon Anglicanum*.[110] The *Visio* is, moreover, written in the same straightforward Latin as the *Chronicon*; and though direct textual parallels between the two texts are too scarce to support any firm conclusions, in connection with

[106] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, ed. P. G. Schmidt (Leipzig, 1978). For commentary, see P. G. Schmidt, 'The Vision of Thurkill', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978), 50-64; C. S. Watkins, 'Sin, penance and purgatory in the Anglo-Norman realm: the evidence of visions and ghost stories', *Past and Present* 175 (2002), 3-33, at 18-22. Le Goff, who only discussed this text very briefly, noted that Purgatory is not mapped out very clearly in it: *The Birth of Purgatory*, 373.

[107] The presence of St Julian and St Domninus as guides has attracted comment; neither feature in this capacity in earlier vision literature. St Julian was venerated by the Augustinians at Colchester; St Domninus, however, is an unusual saint to find here, for his cult was restricted to southern France, northern Italy and Yugoslavia. He appears to have been patron saint of Borgo San Donnino in northern Italy (now Fidenza); Thurkill may have encountered this saint while on a pilgrimage to Rome, or else knew of him from other pilgrims on this route. Further evidence of pilgrimage has been adduced from the fact that that at one point in the vision Thurkill encounters St James, who greets him as 'peregrinus meus': had Thurkill therefore been on pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostela? See Schmidt, 'The Vision of Thurkill', 56-59; G. G. King, 'The Vision of Thurkill and Saint James of Compostela', *Romantic Review* 10 (1919), 38-47. This of course assumes that Ralph transmitted faithfully what Thurkill told him; if he did not, the references probably say more about Ralph's own interests, which is in itself telling. The question of how much of the narrative is Thurkill's and how much Ralph's own invention or interpretation is interesting but ultimately impossible to answer: Watkins, 'Sin, penance and purgatory', 18-19.

[108] '...cum antea fere elinguis et uerecundus pre nimia simplicitate semper extiterit': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 9.

[109] H. L. D. Ward, 'The Vision of Thurkill, probably by Ralph of Coggeshall', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 31 (1875), 420-59. See also H. L. D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1893), ii, 506-15.

[110] Strata Florida is referred to in the same way ('strefur in gualiis') in both texts.

other evidence they should not be overlooked.[111] There is also the statement that the vision occurred in 'in partibus nostris';[112] Coggeshall was the nearest monastery to Stisted. It is true that doubts have been raised. P. G. Schmidt, the most recent editor of the *Visio Thurkilli*, who inclined to believe the attribution proposed by Ward, did nevertheless point out other monasteries as potential candidates. The last place visited by Thurkill on his ethereal journey is a chapel in the temple of the mountain of God, in which he sees three saints: St Katharine, St Margaret and St Osyth.[113] The presence of St Osyth in this list reminds us of her cult at the Augustinian house of St Osyth, Chich. Schmidt raised the possibility that the *Visio* could have originated at this Essex foundation.[114] But a connection with St Osyth need not rule out a Coggeshall provenance. A particular interest in St Osyth might narrow the field to Essex, but not necessarily to her own shrine. Ralph noted the deaths of the first two abbots of St Osyth's, Abel and Ralph.[115] Moreover, it was probably from St Osyth's that Ralph obtained his copy of Ralph Niger's shorter chronicle; we may recall that the latter came accompanied by a set of annals written at this house.[116]

For Schmidt, the question was settled by his investigation of a manuscript from the Cistercian abbey of Salem in Germany.[117] The manuscript in question, Heidelberg Codex Salem IX. 31, is a collection of prophetic, visionary and miraculous material, including the prophecies of Merlin, St Patrick's Purgatory, the vision of the monk of

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[111] So, for instance, Adam of Eynsham is praised in both texts for writing in 'eleganti stilo': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 3; idem, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 71.
[112] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 1.
[113] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 36-37.
[114] Schmidt, *Visio Thurkilli*, vi. St Osyth's had some literary tradition at this time: see D. Bethell, 'The Lives of St Osyth of Essex and St Osyth of Aylesbury', *Analecta Bollandiana* 88 (1970), 75-127.
[115] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 20, 162.
[116] See above, 115.
[117] P. G. Schmidt, 'Die Vision von Vaucelles (1195/1196)', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 20 (1985), 155-63. Eberhard of Salem, like Ralph of Coggeshall, appears to have played a significant role in the promulgation of crusading material. He either wrote or commissioned the *Liber duelli*, an exhortatory text circulated at the time of the Fifth Crusade: *Liber duelli Christiani in obsidione Damiate*, ed. R. Röhricht, *Quinti Belli Sacri Scriptores Minores* (Geneva, 1879), 143-66; Bird, *Heresy, Crusade and Reform*, 123-24.

Eynsham and the vision of the monk of Vaucelles, along with a host of shorter accounts.[118] Among these shorter accounts are two of the wonder stories related by Ralph of Coggeshall *sub anno* 1200, concerning the merman of Orford and the green children of Woolpit.[119] A note in the margin of the manuscript tells us that these stories were brought to the community at Salem by a certain English monk called Reginald;[120] another supplies the additional information that Richard de Calne, who took in the green children, became a monk of Coggeshall in later life.[121] For these and other reasons Schmidt concluded that the exemplar for the Salem manuscript almost certainly derived from Coggeshall, and that the abbey must have possessed a copy of the vision of Vaucelles.[122] This strengthened his conviction that the author of the *Visio Thurkilli*, who was certainly familiar with the vision of Vaucelles, was Ralph of Coggeshall himself. While these particular conclusions are perhaps open to debate, the overall weight of evidence strongly suggests that Ralph of Coggeshall was in fact the author of this text. We shall proceed accordingly.

The *Visio Thurkilli*, like the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, seems to have enjoyed some circulation. Our earliest manuscript of the *Visio Thurkilli,* British Library Royal MS 13 D. v, comes from St Albans, where it was used by the chroniclers Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris; given that Roger of Wendover also used the earliest recension of the Coggeshall Chronicle, that is to say, in its 1187-95 incarnation, this channel of dissemination need not surprise us.[123] Peterborough Abbey also seems to have been a recipient of the *Visio Thurkilli*: the late fourteenth-century library catalogue

[118] The shorter accounts were edited from the manuscript, with commentary, by A. Liebers: 'Rigor Ordinis – Gratia Amoris (I)', *Cîteaux: commentarii cistercienses* 43 (1992), 161-220; idem, 'Rigor Ordinis – Gratia Amoris (II)', *Cîteaux: commentarii cistercienses* 44 (1993), 36-151.
[119] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum,* 117-20.
[120] Schmidt, 'Die Vision von Vaucelles', 156.
[121] Liebers, 'Rigor Ordinis – Gratia Amoris (II)', 42.
[122] Schmidt, 'Die Vision von Vaucelles', 156-7.
[123] Roger of Wendover, like Ralph, includes an account of the vision of the monk of Eynsham, though Roger's is much longer and represents an independent redaction of Adam of Eynsham's original text: *Flores historiarum,* i, 246-66.

includes two copies of the work.[124] Fourteenth century copies also survive from St Martin's, Dover, and Quarr Abbey.[125] There was also, by the fifteenth century, a copy at the Augustinian priory of Thurgarton.[126]

Visions of the otherworld are of course eschatological insofar as they concern the afterlife; but the eschatology that underpins them is the spiritualising, or vertical, eschatology espoused by many religious orders, in which the emphasis is placed on the fate of the individual soul. By extension, they are fundamentally didactic. Usually the vision is intended as a moral lesson for the individual who undergoes it, and for those who hear the tale.[127] The strong didactic tone is very clear in the *Visio Thurkilli*. Thurkill encounters a range of individuals, some known to him personally and others who are not named but are identified as leading ecclesiastics and secular figures. So, for instance, he sees a demon dragging away the soul of a man 'ex proceribus regis Anglie', who is destined for hell. Another, who is being subjected to torments in an arena specially devoted to such things, is a judge who repeatedly took bribes while alive: 'this man was well-known in high and middle circles throughout all parts of England for his boundless eloquence and skill in law; but in the same year he ended his long though disreputable life with a disreputable death.'[128] Roger Picoth, the former lord of Stisted, is prevented from reaching the heavenly temple by his failure to pay the

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[124] *Peterborough Abbey*, BP21.212b, BP21.314a (pp. 132, 166).
[125] British Library, Cotton MS Julius D. v and Cambridge University Library, MS Mm. VI 4, respectively: Schmidt, *Visio Thurkilli*, viii.
[126] *The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons*, A36.44d (425).
[127] Not untypical is Bede's account of the vision of Dryhthelm, one of the most influential vision narratives of the middle ages. Dryhthelm's vision occurs so as 'to arouse the living from spiritual death' ('ad excitationem uiuentium de morte anime'), and after his experience Dryhthelm himself avers that 'I must not live as I used to, but in a very different way' ('non tamen ea mihi, qua ante consueram, conuersatione sed multum dissimili ex hoc tempore uiuendum est'): Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 488. However, Bede follows this vision with two shorter visions, and the accumulation of these towards the end of his history has been taken to suggest a degree of eschatological anxiety on Bede's part: see above, 25-26. On the transmission of this vision see P. G. Schmidt, 'Bède et la tradition des récits visionnaires', in *Bède le Vénérable entre Tradition et Postérité*, ed. Lebecq, Perrin & Szerwiniack, 261-66.
[128] 'Hic autem per totius Anglie fines inter summos et mediocres famosissimus habebatur pro sua exuberanti eloquentia et legum peritia; sed eodem anno longeuam, sed illaudabilem uitam illaudabili morte terminauerat': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 23.

requisite dues to the canons of St Osyth's while he was alive.[129] Thurkill even finds his own father, hideously deformed and like Roger Picoth barred from the temple on account of fraud committed during his life; the Archangel Michael informs the son that his father can only be spared this torment if thirty masses are said for him on earth, which Thurkill agrees to arrange.[130]

But unlike the protagonists of many earlier visions, such as Dryhthelm, Thurkill is not unduly singled out for misdemeanours committed in his own life. One of the first things that Thurkill sees on his arrival in the otherworld is the gathering of the recently departed in a basilica, where those who did not pay their tithes are swiftly cloaked in a black miasma that emanates from a pit; the miasma engulfs Thurkill as well, and he is rescued from it only on the understanding that he redress his own failure to pay tithes.[131] But this is mentioned almost in passing. Thurkill is not so much an example but a conduit for the moral edification of society in general. The gallery of sinners and sins on display lends the *Visio* the appearance of an extended reformist *exemplum*: fraud, non-payment of tithes and the sale of justice were precisely the sorts of vices against which the contemporary reform movement was engaged in fighting.[132] And there is more. One of the penitential areas seen by Thurkill is a lake in which sinners are compelled to stand, some up to their necks and some up to their knees, depending on the severity of their offences. But they do have some respite, for the angel Uriel drains the lake by means of an aqueduct on the Sabbath after the ninth hour; the souls are accordingly freed of their penance out of reverence for the Lord's Day, after which the

[129] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 30.
[130] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 31-32.
[131] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 10. The allusion to the smoking pit of Revelation 9:2 is presumably intentional; the phraseology of Revelation was commonly deployed in such texts: R. K. Emmerson, 'The Apocalypse in medieval culture', in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, 293-332, at 310-11.
[132] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants*, i, 185-92, 229-35, 270-311.

lake is refilled by another aqueduct.[133] We are reminded of the sabbatarian preaching of Eustace of Flay, which Ralph had firmly endorsed in the *Chronicon Anglicanum*.[134]

At the same time, Ralph seems to want to intersect the 'vertical' eschatology of the *Visio Thurkilli* with the 'horizontal' eschatology of the *Chronicon Anglicanum*. Consider the following passage from the prologue:

> In our times many unexpected revelations are occurring in divers regions concerning the state of souls, and the closer the end of the present age and the vicinity of the general resurrection comes, so do incredible revelations occur more clearly and more frequently everywhere, so that hidden things may be brought into the light, and so that what was doubtful may become certain and evident, as our wavering faith is fortified by certain arguments and charity, cooled almost completely, may be inflamed by the spurs of these frequent visions.[135]

For Ralph, the proliferation of such visions in his time is directly connected to the approaching end of the sixth (and final) age of the world. He offers the text to strengthen the resolve of the faithful in the face of the imminent conclusion of earthly things. Now although vision literature tended to be produced in the context of a spiritualised eschatology centred on the fate of the individual, this did not necessarily preclude a more apocalyptic approach. Yet such an approach seems to have been comparatively rare;[136] and sometimes the message is decidedly anti-apocalyptic. Consider, for instance, the visions found in a late twelfth-century manuscript from the Cistercian house at Louth Park. The manuscript in question is Bodleian Library, MS

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[133] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 33-34.
[134] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 133-34.
[135] 'Temporibus etiam nostris plures et insolite in diuersis prouinciis fiunt reuelationes de statu animarum, et quanto magis finis seculi presentis et uicinitas generalis resurrectionis appropinquat, tanto clarius et frequentius fient passim mire reuelationes, ut occulta in lucem prodeant et que dubia erant certa et euidentia fiant, quatinus fides uacillans certis roboretur argumentis et caritas pene refrigerate frequentium uisionum inflammetur incitamentis': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Visio Thurkilli*, 2.
[136] For an eleventh-century example, emanating from the apocalyptic climate that surround the year 1000, see S. Roubach, 'The hidden apocalypse: Richard of Saint-Vanne and the otherworld', *Journal of Medieval History* 32 (2006), 302-14.

Fairfax 17; alongside several other items, it contains five visions in total. One is the vision of Dryhthelm, excerpted from Bede;[137] another is the vision of a monk of Much Wenlock related by St Boniface;[138] and another is that reported by Waldef of Melrose.[139] Accompanying these is a brief vision of purgatory, of unknown date and provenance.[140] The fifth vision is that of Orm, which took place in 1125 and was written up by Sigar, parish priest of Newbald in the East Riding of Yorkshire.[141]

The first four visions offer the customary picture of the torments of hell and the delights of heaven, and seem to be oriented purely around devotional monastic use; another item in the manuscript is a short *Lamentatio* by Abbot Gervase of Louth Park on the theme of *contemptus mundi*, and in this respect the vision narratives complement it nicely. But the vision of Orm is noteworthy for the way in which it explicitly counters an overtly apocalyptic reading. Orm, a boy of 13, is visited by the Archangel Michael and conducted on a tour of the other world, in which he is shown heaven, hell and the purgatorial realms. On awakening from this vision, he tells it to Sigar, as instructed to do by the archangel, and dies shortly thereafter.[142] Having heard Orm's account, Sigar interrogates the boy further. One question he asks is this: did Orm see Elijah or Enoch? On receiving a negative response, he persists: did Orm hear anything about Antichrist? This receives the following response: 'There is still a good space of time before his arrival.'[143] The outcome of this interrogation seems to be foreshadowed by the initial appearance of the Archangel Michael, who holds a book opened at approximately two

[137] Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 17, ff. 83r-85v
[138] Fairfax 17, ff. 73r-77r.
[139] Fairfax 17, ff. 78r-81v. On this vision see H. Birkett, 'Visions of the other world from the Cistercian monastery of Melrose', *Mediaeval Studies* 74 (2012), 101-41.
[140] Fairfax 17, ff. 81v-83r. See also H. Farmer, 'A monk's vision of purgatory', *Studia Monastica* 1 (1959), 393-97.
[141] Sigar, 'Vita et visio et finis simplicis Orm', ed. H. Farmer, *Analecta Bollandiana* 75 (1957), 76-82. The vision is addressed to Symeon, precentor of Durham and historian in his own right.
[142] Sigar, 'Vita et visio et finis simplicis Orm', 81.
[143] 'Item quesiui ab eo utrum uidisset Heliam et Enoch, et dixit: "Non." Iterum dixi: "Audisti aliquid de Antichristo?" Qui ait: "Adhuc bonum spacium est usque ad aduentum eius"': Sigar, *Vita et visio et finis simplicis Orm*, 82.

thirds of the way through; as Farmer pointed out, this can be taken to mean that a third of human history had still to be completed.[144]

In other words, a historicising eschatological dimension to vision literature is unusual;[145] and precisely because Ralph of Coggeshall does locate his vision narrative in such framework, it deserves to be taken seriously. A complication duly presents itself. Ralph's prologue is in fact a condensation of a much longer prefatory passage in a text that Ralph had read: the *Visio monachi de Egnesham*, Adam of Eynsham's account of the vision experienced by his brother Edmund in 1196. In his prologue Adam develops the idea of earthly life being akin to the shadows of the night, which will eventually give way to the glorious light of day, whereupon all the elect will rejoice in the kingdom of the Father. The dawn of this day is the general resurrection and last judgement, when light will be divided from dark, and the just from the unjust. Adam goes on to observe that the frequency of visions, offering glimpses of the everlasting day that is to come, increases as the day of judgement and the general resurrection draw nearer; such is the testimony of the present vision, which seeks to offer support to wavering faith as the end is imminent.[146] Ralph may of course have shared the

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[144] 'Librum apertum aureis litteris scriptum in manibus tenebat, cuius due partes ad sinistram erant uerse, pars tercia adhuc reuoluenda erat': Sigar, *Vita et visio et finis simplicis Orm*, 78.

[145] Robert Easting argues that vision narratives are 'quite distinct from prophetic visions of the end', and notes the comment on Antichrist in the vision of Orm as 'a rare apocalyptic sentiment': R. Easting, 'Personal apocalypse: judgement in some other-world visions', in *Prophecy, Apocalypse and the Day of Doom*, ed. Morgan, 68-85, at 68.

[146] 'Uti uero de die mundi premisimus, quod oculis iugiter cernimus, quia ipso iam iam terris imminente noctis umbra tenuatur et uicine lucis candor magis et magis aperitur, sic nimirum eterne uicinitas diei, mundi scilicet fine quasi obscurissime noctis termino instante, lucis sue graciam euidencius aperire ubique pene terrarum cepit, et fiunt passim mire uite future reuelationes; ut ea que patres per fidem cernebant in speculo et in enigmate, non manifesta quidem reuelatione, ab aliis quidem uideantur, et audita per illos qui uident ab aliis cercius agnoscantur; pluraque eciam huic seculo semper inaudita et quasi ab oculis in hac mortalitate degencium penitus oculta ipsis reuelationibus producuntur in lucem, et fiunt certa que dubia erant, et que prorsus latuerant claris uisibus exponuntur. Legimus quoque nonnullas huiusmodi manifestationes, que nostris diebus et reuelate sunt diuersis, et per fideles excepte scriptoque mandate personas, quibus et fides non incertis roboretur argumentis, animetur spes, et caritas inflammetur; maxime autem inicium sapientie, scilicet timor domini, adquiratur: cautela quoque augeatur, que in uite presentis lubrico gressum dirigit et a lapsu protegit tendencium ad patriam superne hereditatis': Adam of Eynsham, *Visio monachi de Egnesham*, 285.

sentiments expressed here, and in the light of his other writings we may reasonably assume that he did. But how should we understand Adam's vision narrative?

Adam was chaplain to St Hugh of Lincoln from 1197 to 1200, and around 1213 set down Hugh's life in the *Magna uita*. The *Visio monachi de Egnesham* is probably best understood in the context of the preoccupations of St Hugh and the Lincoln chapter at this time. In his life of St Hugh, Adam tells us that Edmund had a number of visions, several of which were written down on the instruction of the bishop and became widely known.[147] We may reasonably assume that the *Visio monachi de Egnesham* was one of them. Another, which Adam relates in the *Magna uita*, occurred on All Saints Day 1194. Edmund, at this point not a monk but a clerk, was in a church reciting the psalter in commemoration of the faithful departed when a voice commanded him to go to Bishop Hugh and tell him that he must urge the Archbishop of Canterbury to 'devote himself more zealously than hitherto to the reform of the Church and clergy'.[148] The voice then gave a list of clerical vices that should be tackled, principally lechery and general irreverence, which profane the sacraments, but also the farming and leasing of churches to others, and the contamination of their flocks through their own poor conduct.[149] After this the voice concluded: 'God's fury and indignation will speedily fall on all the inhabitants of this land, and immediate disaster threaten this unhappy people, if correction does not at once anticipate the scourge of the divine vengeance now about to smite'.[150] Edmund was initially confused and not a little alarmed; but on

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[147] 'Cui plurima quoque spiritualium uisionum misteria postmodum fuisse reuelata certissime experti sumus. Ex quibus non pauca, litteris dudum de mandato sancti presulis tradita, longe lateque uulgata noscuntur': Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 91.
[148] 'Vox quedam subito auribus meis illapsa est que uerbis absolutissimis diceret, "surge," inquiens, "fili, et perge cito ad Lincolniensem episcopum, dicesque ei ex parte Dei quatinus moneat diligentius Cantuariensem Archiepiscopum, ut pariter secum solito uigilantius intendat ad corrigendum statum cleri et ecclesiarum': Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 87.
[149] Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 87-88.
[150] 'Hinc grandis furor et ira Dei imminet tam populo quam uniuersis pariter inhabitatoribus terre huius. Hiis festinum inferetur exitium genti huic misere, si non anticipet acclerata correctio iamiam impendens flagellum celestis uindicte': Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 88.

resuming his devotions the voice repeated exactly what it had said before. Not feeling himself worthy to stand in the presence of such a mystery, Edmund attempted to leave the church, but in doing so was accosted by the church's anchorite, who knew that he had just been given a divine instruction, even though she was unaware of its precise content.[151] Still troubled by this, Edmund retired to bed, only to hear the voice a third time, and was assured that the bishop would listen to him; and when finally the clerk delivered the message Hugh did indeed listen. Hugh assured Edmund that he would do as instructed, but advised him to take monastic vows, which Edmund duly did.[152]

Edmund's vision of the afterlife, which occurred two years later, was in many ways simply an enlargement on this critique of clerical vice.[153] A third vision that Adam relates, much more briefly, concerns Jerusalem. It was revealed to Edmund that 'the holy city, which was captured recently in our own day by the Saracens, would be miraculously recovered from them also in our lifetime, through the mercy of our Saviour.'[154] Adam adds: 'I am completely convinced that this will take place in God's good time, for I have seen many things come to pass which he told me it had been revealed to him would happen.'[155] So we have in total three visions, which encompass crusade, reform, and the imminence of eschatological consummation; and we know that

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[151] Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 89.
[152] Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 90-91.
[153] E.g. 'De publica autem presbiterorum et clericorum incontinencia maxime periclitantur moderni pontifices, quia tam enorme scelus in iniuriam celestium sacramentorum, in quibus omnis fidelium salus et uita consistit, que isti, quantum in ipsis est, temerare, cum sint polluti et fedi, non uerentur, corrigere dissimulant. De negligencia decanorum, officialium et archidiaconorum pleraque que uidi referre supersedeo, et qualiter, illis uel consencientibus uel propter numerum aut personarum accepcionem dissimulantibus, Christianitatis status omnis euertitur. Id enim in uiuencium operibus uel moribus euidencius ostenditur. Horum itaque dissolucio et languor erga zelum domus dei tum maxime clero et populo tum precipue et sibi et suis auctoribus dampnacionem adquirit eternam': Adam of Eynsham, *Visio monachi de Egnesham*, 344.
[154] '...sanctam ciuitatem Hierusalem que pridem nostris temporibus a Saracenis occupata est, nostris quoque diebus miraculose ab eorum instantia omnipotentissima Redemptoris nostri eripiet clementia': Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 91-92.
[155] 'Quod eo magis, fauente eiusdem Domini nostri pietate, confidimus adimplendum, quo iam plurima uidemus impleta que implenda adhuc ei didicimus similiter preostensa': Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 92.

Hugh of Lincoln took a great interest in these and the others that Edmund is said to have had, even encouraging their circulation, as Adam implies.

There can be no doubt that the tenor of these visions elided with Hugh's own interests: Adam records at great length the efforts of the bishop to reform his diocese and its clergy.[156] On his election as bishop Hugh immediately set about reforming the clergy with his synodal decrees of 1186, the only ones of their kind to survive from twelfth-century England.[157] This activity need not surprise us, for Hugh's links to the Parisian reform movement can be established. A plausible conduit for this, as Henry Mayr-Harting has suggested, was the Parisian master William de Montibus, who in 1191 was appointed chancellor of the cathedral.[158] However, Hugh's reforming efforts swiftly followed his accession as bishop, and it is perhaps more likely that William was induced to come to Lincoln as part of this reforming endeavour. Adam of Eynsham memorably describes Hugh's search throughout England and the continental schools for learned men to fill Lincoln's prebends and benefices.[159] Gerald of Wales was to describe the Lincoln schools under William as the finest outside Paris.[160]

So when Ralph came to record Thurkill's vision, he set out to couch a reformist message in a distinctly eschatological framework; and there was available to him a ready template for this endeavour, namely Adam's *Visio monachi de Egnesham*, itself the product of the same reformist climate in which Ralph was working. Now we must remember that the reform of Christian society and the crusading movement of the early thirteenth century were very much part of the same broader project. In the light of this, it is not unreasonable to see the *Visio Thurkilli* and the *Chronicon Sancte Terre*, which

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[156] E.g. Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, ii, 95-97. See, more generally, D. M. Smith, 'Hugh's administration of the diocese of Lincoln', in *St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. H. Mayr-Harting (Oxford, 1987), 19-47.
[157] Cheney, *From Becket to Langton*, 143. Roger of Howden included the decrees in his *Gesta*, i, 357.
[158] H. Mayr-Harting, 'Hugh of Lincoln', *ODNB*.
[159] Adam of Eynsham, *Magna uita*, i, 110-21.
[160] Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, 93.

Ralph extended and circulated around the same time, as interrelated projects, themselves both connected to the promotion of reform and crusade by Innocent III during his pontificate.

We may conclude this section by drawing attention to a contemporary of Ralph who was engaged in much the same sort of activity. The Augustinian canon Peter of Cornwall is perhaps best known for his *Liber reuelationum*, arguably the most important of all English vision collections in this period. Peter was prior of Holy Trinity Aldgate from 1197 to 1221, and compiled the *Liber reuelationum* in 1200-1201.[161] There can be little doubt that Peter would have included the *Visio Thurkilli* had he known of it: he had already been in contact with Thomas, Ralph's predecessor as abbot of Coggeshall, who supplied him with a story concerning a prior of that house.[162] Coggeshall also paid a rent to Holy Trinity.[163] But it does not ostensibly appear that Peter shared the concerns found in Ralph's work. He does not connect his collection of revelations with any awareness of the end times. Nor is his work strictly a call to repentance; rather, it is a call to faith. There are many in the world 'who, thinking that God does not exist, reckon that the world has always been as it is now and ruled by chance rather than by the providence of God'; and 'there are many who, considering only that which they see, believe neither that there are angels good or bad, nor that the soul of man lives after the death of the body, nor that there are other things spiritual and invisible'.[164] At such persons Peter aims his treatise. Like Ralph, he aspires to a wider audience than his own institution, or indeed his own order, though in this respect he seems to have enjoyed less success than Ralph: the *Liber reuelationum* survives in a

[161] Easting & Sharpe, *Peter of Cornwall's Book of Revelations*, 35-6.
[162] Peter of Cornwall, *Liber reuelationum*, 294.
[163] Willoughby, 'Templar chronicle', 130.
[164] '...nonnulli sunt qui Deum non esse putantes mundum semper fuisse sicut nunc est et casu potius quam prouidentia Dei regi estimant, multique sint qui solum ea que uident pensantes, nec bonos angelos siue malos esse, nec animam hominis post mortem corporis uiuere, nec alia spiritualia et inuisibilia esse credant': Peter of Cornwall, *Liber reuelationum*, 74.

single manuscript, Lambeth Palace Library MS 51, and we have no indication that the text circulated in the Middle Ages.[165] But another work that may be connected to Peter did undoubtedly enjoy wide circulation: the *Itinerarium peregrinorum et gesta regis Ricardi*. Earlier we identified Peter as the man who most probably commissioned this work, as a translation of the same French source on which Ambroise's *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte* was based.[166] Our dating of the *Itinerarium* suggests that it was produced at the time of the Fourth Crusade, and in this respect should perhaps be understood as an exhortatory piece of crusade literature such as were being widely produced in connection with the crusades of the early thirteenth century.[167] Ralph of Coggeshall's swift access to this text, which can be gauged by his use of it in his continuation of the *Chronicon Sancte Terre*, may easily be explained by the connections that existed between the two houses. As one who, like Ralph, bestrode vision literature and crusade literature, it is tempting to see Peter of Cornwall as a writer carried by the same tides of crusade, reform and eschatological anxiety that buoyed his Cistercian contemporary, though this must await further investigation.

The English chroniclers and the reformers

In the final section of this chapter, we will consider what evidence there is for connecting our chroniclers more precisely to the personalities and centres of reform. Let us begin with Ralph Niger. We know that he was in Paris and Poitiers in the 1160s, as we saw earlier; he studied under Gerard Pucelle and was 'Magister' by 1168.[168] This probably puts him beyond the direct pedagogical influence of Peter the Chanter, who

[165] Easting & Sharpe, *Peter of Cornwall's Book of Revelations*, 12, 14.
[166] See above, 127.
[167] Bird, *Heresy, Crusade and Reform*, 121-24.
[168] See above, 52.

cannot be securely located in Paris until the early 1170s.[169] But *Moralia Regum*, Ralph's lengthy delineation of the conflict between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, is of a piece with the writings of the Chanter and his circle, as Philippe Buc noted;[170] and we could say the same of Ralph's assessment of the state of Christendom in the longer chronicle and *De re militari*.

Whether or not Ralph was involved with the reform movement while in France is a matter for conjecture. We can perhaps say a little more about his contact with reformers in England. We have good grounds on which to associate Ralph with the chapter of Lincoln in the 1190s.[171] The chancellor of Lincoln cathedral at this time was, as we have already noted, William de Montibus.[172] We may say a little more about him here. William was probably born in Lincoln, and as a boy had served in the household of Gilbert of Sempringham. In the 1160s he went to study in the Paris schools, just as Ralph Niger did, and like Ralph earned the title of 'magister';[173] he went on to teach in Paris, and it was as a lecturer on the Mont Sainte-Geneviève that Gerald of Wales encountered him during his second period of study in the city.[174] By 1188 William had returned to England and become a canon of Lincoln; by 1194 he was master of the school. His interest in pastoral theology dovetailed with that of his bishop, Hugh, and William may have been sought out as part of Hugh's plan to reform his diocese. It is not clear that William had actually studied under Peter the Chanter; nevertheless, his own writings show a clear affinity for the ideas of the Chanter and his circle. William was interested in producing works to aid preachers in his own diocese, and most of his

[169] See above, 189.
[170] Buc, 'Exégèse et pensée politique', 153.
[171] See above, 53-54.
[172] The best studies on William are J. Goering, *William de Montibus (c.1140-1213): the schools and the literature of pastoral care*, Studies and Texts 108 (Toronto, 1992), 3-99; H. MacKinnon, 'William de Montibus, a medieval teacher', in *Essays in Medieval History presented to Bertie Wilkinson*, ed. T. A. Sandquist & M. R. Powicke (Toronto, 1969), 32-45.
[173] Goering, *William de Montibus*, 8-12.
[174] Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, 93.

output was oriented towards this aim.[175] William's reformist mission seems to have extended also to acquiring relevant texts for the Lincoln cathedral library; and it was in this capacity that William was responsible for obtaining the set of Ralph's writings that survives at Lincoln to this day. Given the reformist flavour of Ralph's commentaries and other works, we may reasonably suggest that William sought them out as adjuncts to his programme.

We can say little about the education of Roger of Howden. Some manuscripts of the *Chronica* refer to him as 'magister', but it seems that this was not a title he was prepared to give himself; he may have been educated in the school at York.[176] In the case of Ralph of Coggeshall, we seem to come up against a similar dearth of information. But some clues may be found in his chronicle. Ralph was one of the few contemporary historians to mark the death of Peter the Chanter, and the only one to do so at length.[177] His obit, entered *sub anno* 1197, gives an interesting account of the Chanter's career. As such, it deserves some scrutiny:

> In this year died Master Peter of Reims, cantor of the church of Paris, a man of venerable life, famous for the integrity of his morals, illustrious in doctrine, speech and action; a man who at this time was held in particularly high regard among the learned for his theology. Among his many works, which he wrote with more religious and moral style than pompous eloquence, insofar as he avoided verbal ornament, he composed certain new glosses, short and lucid, on the Psalms, and on the Epistles of Paul, in all respects mindful of the weariness of readers and the weakness of memory, and, not least, the poverty of students. In these glosses he did not in any way deviate from the sense or from the path trodden by previous fathers, but in his own words he succintly condensed their numerous and lengthy expositions into one series. After the death of Master Maurice, bishop of Paris, who began that famous and extraordinary basilica of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the same city, Peter was elected to the episcopal

[175] Goering, *William de Montibus*, 12-16.
[176] Gillingham, 'Writing the biography', 207-8.
[177] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 79-80. Much briefer accounts of the Chanter's death may be found in the chronicles of Robert of Auxerre and Alberic of Trois-Fontaines: Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, 257; Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, *Chronicon*, 874.

> office by all the clergy and people, and with the king granting his permission, but absolutely declined to take up so important a job, lest the fall from this higher position be more severe. Afterwards, when asked, indeed forced, by William, archbishop of Reims and by all the clergy and citizens of that city, to become dean of the church of Reims, he did not willingly give his assent; but at last won over by the relentlessness of the entreating people, who in beseeching him threw themselves at his feet, he agreed on this condition, that he could ask permission from the chapter of Paris. When he set out for Paris from the city of Reims, to obtain this permission, he came on his journey to a certain abbey of the Cistercian order, called Longpont, so that he could commend himself to their prayers, and take a certain book with him from the library. There he was quickly seized by a serious illness and brought to death's door, and made his will and testament, and took a monk's habit in great cheerfulness of spirit; in this way he was released from all the cares of this age, and capped his praiseworthy life with a praiseworthy end. From this it can reasonably be inferred that he was taken so that the malice of this world could not alter his mind, nor the chimera of human praise deceive his soul.[178]

This is a remarkably warm, almost hagiographical, piece of writing. Immediately following this passage Ralph mentions the death of a rather less praiseworthy cleric, the oft-criticised Hugh de Nonant, bishop of Coventry, who had, notoriously, ejected the monks from his cathedral in 1189; the contrast could not be clearer.[179] He then launches into the lengthy account of Fulk of Neuilly that we discussed earlier. Worthy of

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[178] 'Hoc anno obiit magister Petrus Remensis, cantor Parisiacensis ecclesie, uir uite uenerabilis, morum probitate conspicuus, doctrina, uerbo, et actione clarus; qui in theologia his temporibus precipuus inter doctores habebatur et summus. Hic inter plura opuscula, que potius religioso ac morali stylo digessit quam pompatico eloquio, utpote uerborum phaleras deuitans, nouas quasdam glossas super Psalterium et super Epistolas Pauli breues et dilucidas composuit, fastidiosis lectoribus atque labili memorie, necnon et paupertati scholarium, in omnibus consulens. In quibus glossis non a sensu uel a tramite precedentium patrum in aliquo aberrauit, sed expositiones multiplices atque profusas in unam seriem compendiosius propriis uerbis coarctauit. Hic post decessum domni Mauricii Parisiacensis episcopi, qui illud preclarum atque eximium opus basilice Beate Marie in eadem urbe inchoauit, ad pontificatus honorem ab uniuerso clero et populo, rege annuente, electus, tam graue onus suscipere, ne ab altiori gradu grauior fieret casus, omnimodis recusauit. Postmodum uero a domno Willelmo Remensi archiepiscopo et ab uniuerso clero et ciuibus eiusdem urbis rogatus, immo compulsus, ut decanatum eiusdem ecclesie susciperet, non facile assensum prebuit; sed tandem deuictus importunitate precantium ciuium, qui se ad pedes eius in rogando prostrauerant, hac conditione consensit, si licentiam a capitulo Parisiensi impetrare posset. Dumque a Remensium urbe Parisius proficisceretur, ut hanc licentiam impetraret, deuenit in itinere ad quamdam abbatiam ordinis Cisterciensis, cui uocabulum Longus Pons, ut eorum orationibus se commendaret, ac quemdam librum secum de armario asportaret; ubi mox graui infirmitate correptus et ad extrema deductus, testamentum suum disposuit, atque habitum sancte religionis in magna spiritus alacritate suscepit; sicque omnibus huius seculi curis exoneratus, uitam laudabilem fine laudabili terminauit. Ex qua re satis coniici potest quia raptus est, ne malitia temporis huius mutaret intellectum eius, aut ne fictio humane laudis deciperet animam illius': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 79-80.

[179] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 80. Hugh died on 27 March 1198.

comment are the details Ralph provides about the Chanter's various ecclesiastical appointments in the couple of years prior to his death. Ralph is our only authority for Peter's election to the episcopacy of Paris on the death of Bishop Maurice of Sully, and for his refusal to take up the position. Ralph is also our best source for Peter's reluctant acceptance of the deanship of Reims and his death at Longpont before he could assume his decanal responsibilities.[180]

As a Cistercian, Ralph was obviously very well-informed on matters relating to his own order; and it is not hard to surmise that through these very same channels he received much of his information on the Chanter. Longpont was a Cistercian house, and the death here of such a distinguished theologian would no doubt have been well publicised, within the Order and outside it. And as an explanation for why Ralph chose to devote so much space to the Chanter's career and death, this would appear sufficient. But his account may yield more. It is worth noting, for instance, that Ralph singles out the Chanter's glosses on the Psalms and Epistles.[181] Peter was best known, as he still is today, for such works of moral theology as the *Verbum Abbreuiatum*, the lengthy manual that he wrote to assist preachers in their work. Beyond this we might recall that Peter was the first master to gloss the entire Bible.[182] Certainly the range of the Chanter's achievements was not lost on contemporaries.[183] Ralph does not mention this. Instead he mentions Peter's glosses on the two parts of the Bible that had hitherto received most attention from commentators, namely the Psalms and Epistles. Why is this? Conceivably Ralph was interested in the Chanter's achievements insofar as they fitted within customary exegetical practice; in other words, he was interested in how the

[180] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 10-11.
[181] '...nouas quasdam glossas super Psalterium et super Epistolas Pauli breues et dilucidas composuit': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 79.
[182] Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i, 12; Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 180.
[183] The obituary given by Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, short though it is, mentions the Chanter's *Summa*, his *Verbum abbreuiatum*, his glosses on the Psalms and notes that he composed 'multa alia': Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, *Chronicon*, 874.

Chanter contributed to the study of those parts of the Bible most commonly glossed. It is equally plausible, however, that Ralph was familiar with these writings only. If this is true, then this should probably be ascribed not to hearsay but to personal acquaintance with these works. We should recall that Ralph does not commonly invoke other writings, even when it is obvious that he is dependent on them. One place where he is more forthcoming is in his report, a few pages earlier, of the vision of the monk of Eynsham, when he directs the interested reader to Adam of Eynsham's much longer account. This he praises for its 'clear and elegant style'.[184] Now we know that he had read Adam's account, for he used it as a template for his own account of the vision of Thurkill ten years later, and here commended Adam's style in identical terms.[185] So when we find Ralph praising the straightforward, unpretentious writing style of the Chanter's glosses on the Psalms and Epistles, we may reasonably conclude that he did have firsthand acquaintance with them. But it is also significant that he conveys very directly one of the Chanter's chief preoccupations, namely the need for concision and relevance in glossing the Bible, as well as in preaching. Peter's strictures on this subject are perhaps most accessibly set out in the second chapter of the long version of his preaching manual, the *Verbum abbreuiatum*;[186] but this chapter is itself merely a reworking of the prologue to his commentary on the Psalms, which makes the same points at somewhat greater length.[187]

If Ralph was indeed familiar with these works of Peter the Chanter, it has unfortunately left no trace, as far as I can tell, outside of this particular passage. And it

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[184] '...preclaro atque eleganti stylo': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 72.
[185] See above, 209.
[186] Peter the Chantor, *Verbum Abbreuiatum:textus conflatus*, I. 2 (9-15).
[187] E.g. 'Quare igitur appendimus contra Ysaiam argentum nostrum sanctum scilicet scripturam non in panibus et laborem et studium nostrum non in saturitate, sed in superfluitate et sarcina glosarum que aures preteruolant nec animam satiant? Sacra scriptura nauicula nostra per quam exire debemus de egipto huius mundi; que ne periclitetur non est oneranda sabulo et harena sed sufficientibus et necessariis. Breues dies hominis sunt, et operibus potius quam glosarum superfluitatibus uacandi': Peter the Chanter, *Glosse super Psalterium*, Bodleian Library, MS e Musaeo 30, f. 1r.

does not of course follow that he had necessarily been a student of Peter. But the possibility should certainly be considered. As far as we know, Peter's commentaries on the Psalms and Epistles were among his earliest writings;[188] it need not surprise us that his first steps in exegesis followed this well-trodden path. Had Ralph heard the master at this stage of his career, we can understand why he remembered him for these early works; his monastic career took him away from the city and out of the immediate circles in which Peter's new works were heard, read and disseminated. One wonders, for instance, whether the remark about the poverty of students may reflect personal experience.[189] And given the general warmth of the obituary it would not be wholly perverse to read this passage as a tribute from a monk to his former master.[190]

This putative connection between Ralph and Peter has not gone unremarked. Dom Morin used the passage we have discussed to put forward Ralph as the author of a set of *distinctiones* compiled in the early thirteenth century.[191] A *distinctio*, in its simplest form, was a table of meanings that could be given to an individual word according to the different senses of scripture; each meaning was supported with a relevant biblical quotation.[192] To give an example: 'Jerusalem' may refer to the church (historically), to the church militant (allegorically), to the soul (tropologically) and to the heavenly kingdon (anagogically). Many collections of these have survived from the thirteenth century; though not without patristic antecedents, the earliest examples were

[188] Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 199.
[189] Christoph Egger has observed that Ralph's account of Joachim of Fiore betrays some knowledge of the theological terminology of prophecy and revelation: he has Adam of Perseigne question whether Joachim knows what he does 'ex prophetia, an coniectura, seu reuelatione': Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 68. This could be adduced as further evidence of Ralph's training in the schools: Egger, 'A pope without successor', 175.
[190] A comparison may be made with the crusade preacher Jacques de Vitry. We know that Jacques studied in Paris; his portrayal of Peter the Chanter in the *Historia occidentalis* strongly implies that it was under this master that he studied: Jacques de Vitry, *Historia occidentalis*, 94-95. The criticisms that he airs are often those expressed by the Chanter's circle, and in his own career we find him putting into practice the reformist ideals that he seems to have imbibed in Paris.
[191] G. Morin, 'Le cistercien Ralph de Coggeshall et l'auteur des *Distinctiones monasticae* utilisées par Dom Pitra', *Révue Bénédictine* 47 (1935), 348-55.
[192] Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 246-48.

compiled in the late twelfth century. We have already mentioned the *Summa Abel* of Peter the Chanter;[193] and the Augustinian Peter of Cornwall has left us a detailed account of a sermon he heard Gilbert Foliot preach, in which *distinctiones* were used extensively.[194] The work with which we are concerned is known as *Distinctiones monastice et morales*, and was put together around 1225 by a Cistercian author writing in all probability in the east of England.[195] It covers 281 words spread across five books, and survives complete in a single manuscript, Paris Mazarine MS 3475.[196] It has been described as 'more personal in tone than any of the other early collections of *distinctiones'*.[197] Morin, not unreasonably, identified Ralph of Coggeshall as an author who matched the relevant criteria, inasmuch as he was a Cistercian at work in the east of the country at this time. Significantly, he pointed out that the author not only made extensive use of the Chanter's *Summa Abel* but spoke of him as his master.[198] The suggestion was overturned by Dom Wilmart, and his objections upheld by Richard Hunt.[199] Hunt observed that the religious centres with which the author was conversant were more northerly than Coggeshall, and suggested instead the Lincolnshire monastery of Louth Park as a possible location.[200] That seems to provide a better geographical fit,

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[193] See above, 189 n. 21.
[194] R. W. Hunt, 'English learning in the late twelfth century', *TRHS*, 4th Series, 19 (1936), 19-42, at 33.
[195] See the brief description of the work in Rigg, *History of Anglo-Latin Literature*, 162-3.
[196] Richard Hunt identified a portion of the work as extant in Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C. 22: R. W. Hunt, 'Notes on the *Distinctiones monasticae et morales*', in *Liber Floridus: mittellateinische Studien*, ed. B. Bischoff & S. Brechter (St Ottilien, 1950), 355-62, at 357. Extracts from the Mazarine manuscript were printed in *Spicilegium solesmense*, ed. J. B. Pitra (Paris, 1852-8), ii, iii, *passim*.
[197] Hunt, 'Notes on the *Distinctiones monasticae et morales*', 355-6. In the view of Christopher Holdsworth, the author of the *Distinctiones* was rivalled (among Cistercians) only by Matthew of Rievaulx for his command of classical and patristic learning: C. J. Holdsworth, 'John of Ford and English Cistercian writing 1167-1214', *TRHS* 11 (1961), 117-36, at 130.
[198] 'Bone memorie magister Petrus, quondam cantor Parisiensis, solebat super hunc uersum dicere, quod Christus auditur in clericis bene litteratis, sed inuenitur in rusticis bene morigeratis': *Distinctiones monasticae et morales*, ed. Pitra, ii, 128.
[199] A. Wilmart, 'Un répertoire d'exégèse composé en Angleterre vers le début du XIII[e] siècle', in *Mémorial Lagrange* (Paris, 1940), 307-46, at 310 n. 3; Hunt, 'Notes on the *Distinctiones monasticae et morales*', 355.
[200] Hunt, 'Notes on the *Distinctiones monasticae et morales*', 356. Louth Park was a Cistercian establishment with some literary tradition: we have already noted the presence of the *Lamentatio* composed by its first abbot, Gervase, in the visions manuscript discussed earlier: see above, 215.

though Coggeshall clearly had extensive contacts with Cistercian, and indeed Benedictine, houses throughout the east of England. One of Wilmart's central objections, that the author of *Distinctiones* betrays more animosity towards prelates that Ralph was capable of showing, is more telling:[201] though Ralph could be very critical of contemporary prelates, what decides the matter, to my mind at least, is the very different treatment of Hubert Walter, who on the occasion of his death receives a lengthy and positive assessment from Ralph in the *Chronicon Anglicanum*, but is castigated in the *Distinctiones*.[202] Nevertheless, the Cistercian who wrote these *Distinctiones* seems to have proceeded from a scholastic training in Paris to a monastic career in provincial England, and it seems entirely plausible that Ralph did the same.

We may end with a caveat. This last section should not be viewed as an attempt to include these various authors in the circle of Peter the Chanter, for this would be to strain a point. At the same time, it is perhaps misleading to imply that their evident interest in matters of reform must have been rooted in personal acquaintance with any of the numerous figures and centres of this movement. For as we observed at the beginning of the chapter, the reform movement was in many ways simply a reinvigoration of long-term reformist aspirations; and it became a point of reference for monks, clerics and even laymen across Christendom, to the extent that it transcended any immediate difference or dissension between them. The English chroniclers we have examined differed in background and institutional affiliation, yet were all united in their commitment to reform, just as they were united in their apprehension over the eschatological significance of the times through which they lived.

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[201] Wilmart, 'Un répertoire d'exégèse', 310 n. 3.

[202] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 156-61; *Distinctiones monasticae et morales*, ed. Pitra, ii, 265. It is possible that Ralph had changed his opinion of Hubert by 1225; yet he seems to have been making changes to his chronicle around this time precisely in order to remove such criticisms, and it is unlikely that he would have been more vociferous elsewhere. That Ralph was probably very ill by this point, and made his corrections in the manner of a deathbed retraction, as Dr. Willoughby has shown, is another factor militating against his authorship of the *Distinctiones*. See above, 88-89.

Conclusion

It is as well to reiterate a point made at the start of the thesis: we have not, in the course of this study, sought to account for the whole range of historical writing produced in England during this unusually productive period. That would perhaps be a futile goal. At the same time, we should not let this impressive array of texts obscure the undoubted continuities that existed in English historical writing over the course of the twelfth century. Chronicles continued to be written, for instance, in those well-established Benedictine monasteries whose uncertain future prompted so much research and writing in the earliest decades of the century, and whose historiographical outlook was merely an emanation of the institution's concerns. Gervase of Canterbury provides a salutary example. Gervase began writing his best-known work, the *Chronica*, in the late 1180s; but his gaze rested not on the tumultuous events in the East but on the problems of his own monastery, Christ Church Canterbury.[1] The monks were at the time embroiled in a struggle with their archbishop over his plans to found a new collegiate church at Hackington. The intervention of Richard I alleviated the struggle to some extent; Baldwin abandoned the Hackington scheme and joined the Third Crusade, but not before announcing his plan to resume the project on land he had acquired in Lambeth. He died at Acre in November 1190. In 1196 his successor, Hubert Walter, turned his attention to the idea, and revived Baldwin's designs for Lambeth, until Innocent III settled the matter in favour of the monks.[2]

Gervase's chronicle begins in 1135, but by far the bulk of the narrative is taken up with the Canterbury dispute. Events that inspired so much apprehension in Ralph

[1] Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series 73 (London, 1879-80), i.
[2] For a useful description of these disputes, see Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 316-27.

Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall are here considered for their effect on the case at hand. Gervase did not look for eschatological significance in the fall of Jerusalem; he was more concerned about the death of Urban III in that same month, for this deprived the Canterbury monks of a steadfast supporter in their quarrel with Archbishop Baldwin.[3] Very little attention is given to portents or wonders. The Toledan prophecies, discussed earlier, are mentioned, but seemingly as a stick with which to beat the archbishop, who took them seriously enough to institute a three-day fast throughout the province in 1186.[4] Gervase himself is scornful: 'the abundance of the harvest, the prosperity of men's affairs, and not least the favourable condition of the air made a mockery of their prophecies'.[5] The only storms that year, he observes, were of Baldwin's own making.

Meticulous in his record if conservative in his outlook, Gervase carried the standard of insular monastic historiography at a time when many of his contemporaries were looking rather more fearfully beyond their monastic walls and national borders. And on first inspection it is the tradition of monastic historiography represented by Gervase that seems to have won out. The dominant chroniclers of the thirteenth century were to be found at St Albans, in the form of the equally cantankerous Benedictine monk, Matthew Paris and his rather more elusive predecessor Roger of Wendover. But caution is needed. The chronicle of Matthew Paris in fact encapsulates many of the themes of this study, as well as some the underlying continuities discussed above; and we may usefully bring some of these contours into relief by casting our gaze forward some fifty years to this most celebrated of English chroniclers.[6] Matthew's output was considerable; we will concentrate on what is arguably his most important work, and our

[3] Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica*, i, 388-89.
[4] Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica*, i, 335.
[5] 'Sed abundantia frugum et opulentia rerum, sed et serenitas eris eorum infatuauit prophetiam': Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica*, i, 335.
[6] R. Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge, 1958; rev. ed., Cambridge, 1979), remains the key study. Also helpful are Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 356-79; V. H. Galbraith, *Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris* (Glasgow, 1944).

remarks must be brief. Such a short survey will nevertheless provide a suitable conclusion. The work in question is the *Chronica Maiora*, a world chronicle stretching from the Creation to 1259.[7] Matthew's other chief historical works, the *Historia Anglorum* and the *Flores historiarum*, were both derived from the *Chronica Maiora*; the *Historia Anglorum*, for instance, was created largely by excerpting from the *Chronica* those passages that related to English history.[8] This in itself gives some indication of the scope and outlook of the *Chronica*.

In compiling his *Chronica*, Matthew relied heavily on the *Flores historiarum* of Roger of Wendover, which ended in 1234;[9] Matthew's own contribution was therefore limited to the years 1234-1259, but these annals fill several volumes in the Rolls Series edition and amount to around 300,000 words.[10] As such, the *Chronica Maiora* is primarily a record of contemporary history, albeit an extremely full record, couched in an overarching narrative of world history; as in the *Chronicon Anglicanum* of Ralph of Coggeshall, the emphasis is squarely on contemporary events, and the scope extends far beyond English affairs. Indeed, some have regarded Matthew as the first to treat European history with in the same depth as he treated English history. The following assessment by Antonia Gransden is not untypical:

> Since the Norman Conquest historians in England had shown an increasing interest in European history. But their interest was nearly always in events connected however tenuously with English affairs. Matthew expanded this interest to such an extent that European history becomes in the *Chronica* a subject in its own right, and he himself an important authority.[11]

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[7] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series 57 (London, 1872-84).
[8] Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 61-65, 110-14.
[9] The precise point at which Roger ended and Matthew began has been debated; to my mind the question was settled in favour of 1234 by R. Kay, 'Wendover's last annal', *EHR* 84 (1969), 779-85.
[10] I take this figure from Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 125.
[11] Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 361.

This overstates Matthew's originality, for the ground had in fact been prepared by his historiographical predecessors over the previous half-century. And it is worth pointing out that a number of these earlier accounts form the backbone to the *Chronica Maiora*. Matthew revised and extended Roger of Wendover's *Flores historiarum*, but Roger himself borrowed copiously from Ralph of Coggeshall and Roger of Howden;[12] and Roger's own contribution was by no means Anglo-centric.[13] If these chroniclers provided the material, then we could say that Gervase of Canterbury provided the theme. Roger and Matthew, like Gervase, were members of an ancient Benedictine foundation increasingly beleaguered in a fervid atmosphere of religious change and reform. St Albans claimed to be England's pre-eminent religious house, but this status was under attack at a time when the centralisation of royal and papal power had severe consequences for the rights and privileges of the great religious houses. At the same time, the Benedictine order was fighting a new engagement in its century-old struggle against the increasing prominence of the new religious orders; in this case, it was the arrival of the Franciscans and Dominicans that presented a new challenge.

Both Roger and Matthew accordingly devote much space to these various encroachments on the abbey's privileges, and on those of the order as a whole.[14] Yet Matthew's criticisms were even harsher than his predecessor's, and in his revisions to

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[12] We have already noted the monastery's possession of a copy of the *Chronicon Anglicanum* of Ralph of Coggeshall: see above, 92. Amery Chauou is probably wrong to suggest that Matthew Paris did not see Roger of Howden's *Chronica*: A. Chauou, 'Faire l'histoire: la culture historique à la cour Plantagenêt et les réseaux ecclésiastiques (1154-1199)', in *Culture politique des Plantagenêt (1154-1224): actes du colloque tenu à Poitiers du 2 au 5 mai 2002*, ed. M. Aurell (Poitiers, 2003), 269-86, at 283. It was, as we have seen, a source used by Roger of Wendover (see above, 202-3), and presumably there was a copy at St Albans. Matthew of course need not have referred directly to Roger of Howden's work, but there is some evidence that he did**.** His rewriting of William fitz Osbert's insurrection seems to have prompted a return to Howden's earlier account, on which see below, 234-35; and his brief description of the preaching of Fulk of Neuilly, which Wendover had neglected, may also have come from Roger of Howden: Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, ii, 452. St Albans also possessed a copy of the world chronicle of Ralph de Diceto, now British Library, Royal MS 13 E. vi; Matthew's use of marginal signs as a means of cross-referencing those documents that he included in his *Liber addimentorum* was probably inspired by Ralph's similar notation.

[13] See, for instance, the lengthy accounts of the Albigensian Crusade and the capture of Damietta: Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, ii, 87-93, 228-51.

[14] Galbraith, *Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris*, 5-7.

Roger's narrative he often reads the struggles of the 1240s and 1250s back into the early thirteenth century and indeed the twelfth.[15] For Matthew, the pope was a meddling autocrat, and the mendicant orders his willing henchmen. A sizeable amount of Matthew's own contribution to the *Chronica Maiora* is taken up with the pope's attempts to extract money from English prelates, benefices and monasteries.[16] Henry III and his officials fare little better, being guilty in Matthew's eyes of similar depredations.[17] The king is often attacked for his weakness, and sometimes for his actual connivance, in the face of the papal onslaught.[18] The vehemence of Matthew's opposition to what he saw as unnecessary financial burdens gives rise to some striking passages. One of the most telling is his account of the insurrection of William fitz Osbert in 1196. Roger of Wendover had carried this over virtually intact from the *Ymagines historiarum* of Ralph de Diceto, one of his principal sources for the period 1195-1199.[19] Ralph, who claims to have witnessed the insurrection, is not wholly unsympathetic to the financial grievances at its heart, but any trace of sympathy towards William is entirely lacking: Ralph presents him as a seditious upstart, who persecuted his own brother to death and exploited the discontent of the poor for his own ends. Roger preserves this narrative, whereas Matthew completely rewrites it so as to present William as an agitator for a worthy cause, and his downfall as the result of the vested

[15] A good example is Innocent's attempt to levy his crusade tax on the Cistercian order. This was fiercely resisted by the Cistercian General Chapter, and the dispute rumbled on from 1199 to 1201, when the pope supposedly relented through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, who appeared to his confessor Rainier of Ponza urging the pope to cease his demands: Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, 130-33; Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ii, 7-8. Matthew inserts a brief note of this dispute into the narrative of Roger of Wendover, but claims that the pope was in fact levying the tax 'to gratify his own avarice', which neither Ralph nor Caesarius claimed: Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, ii, 460.
[16] We may use one annal as a specimen. Matthew's entry for 1240 runs to 80 pages in the Rolls Series edition: Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 1-80. Passages relating to the pope's attempted exactions may be found at 6-7, 10-11, 14-19, 31-32, 35-43, 55, 60-61. Not unreasonably, Matthew's concluding summary for 1240 describes it as 'regno Anglie inimicus, ecclesie sancte aduersarius': Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 80.
[17] From the same annal: Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 3, 9-10, 14-15, 16-19, 34-36, 55, 60-64, 72-73.
[18] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 10, 36, 55, 60.
[19] Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, i, 244; Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum*, ii, 143-44.

interests of the aldermen, whose attempt to pass the tax burden onto the poorer classes had aroused William's ire in the first place.[20] In Roger's account, as in Ralph's, William takes refuge in the church of Mary-le-Bow and on finding that he is surrounded sets fire to the place and attempts to escape under cover of this; in Matthew's account, his sanctuary is violated at the instigation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Hubert Walter, who is responsible for having the church burnt.[21] The likely source for this rewriting was Roger of Howden, who also ascribes the burning to the Archbishop and notes the outrage voiced over this by the monks of Christ Church, Canterbury, who were at the time embroiled in their own disagreement with Hubert Walter.[22] If so, Matthew has rewritten the account. And in any case he goes much further than Roger: commenting on William's execution, Matthew ventures that he was a martyr.[23]

As such, Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris perceived events through a decidedly institutional prism. Contrast this with the outlook of Ralph of Coggeshall, who had little to say about his own monastery, at least when he started writing, and was not unduly restricted by the interests of his own order; or with the outlook of Roger of Howden and Ralph Niger, who had no institutional affiliations and cast a dispassionate eye over contemporary church and society. Moreover, these authors took a great interest in the continental sweep of crusade and reform; Matthew, not without reason, found only corruption, arrogance and failure in the efforts of his contemporaries.

That said, we should not overlook some of the continuities that can undoubtedly be detected. In two distinct ways, Matthew's *Chronica*, even more than Roger of Wendover's *Flores*, attests the persistence of ideas and concerns that underpinned so

[20] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, ii, 418-19.
[21] Roger of Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, i, 244; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, ii, 419.
[22] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 6. Roger of Wendover of course had access to this account, but used that of Ralph de Diceto in preference.
[23] 'Unde cum constet causam martyrem facere, inter martyres uidetur merito computandus': Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, ii, 419.

much of the historical output of an earlier generation. In the first instance, it is clear that Matthew's resolute defence of his monastery's rights, and his criticism of those who sought to impinge on it, was often tied to the broader conflict between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, much as Ralph Niger had done. There is no evidence that Matthew had read Ralph Niger, and yet, as we have stressed over the course of this thesis, the same contemporary climate that gave rise to Ralph's reflections could provoke similar responses from writers of various stripes. Underscoring much of this was a consistent scrutiny of novelties, particularly meteorological novelties, the accumulation of which over a number of years prompted Matthew to draw some alarming conclusions. In these two interconnected strands, I would argue, we see a development and expansion on the interests of his historiographical predecessors, even if he was inclined to reject the reformist model around which they were oriented.

This is brought into sharp focus in the *Chronica* entry for 1250. Matthew initially intended his narrative to end in this year, and laid down his pen in considerable anxiety as to the future. This is worth outlining in detail. Matthew's last proper entry in this year concerns some papal letters sent to the abbots of St Albans and Waltham during Advent; among other things, these restated papal demands for payment of procuration fees.[24] In the margin of his autograph manuscript, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 16, is a note of the death of the Emperor Frederick II; news of this reached Matthew in February 1251, which shows that by this point he had completed his annal for 1250.[25] In other words, Matthew was writing very soon after the events he describes, a practice he had been following throughout the 1140s, when each annal was

[24] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 190. Each religious house and parish visited by a bishop had to pay the bishop's expenses, which were known as procuration fees: C. R. Cheney, *Episcopal Visitations of Monasteries in the Thirteenth Century* (2nd ed., Manchester, 1983), 104-18.
[25] Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 60-61.

written up during the following year.[26] He follows his account of the papal letters with the statement that 'twenty-five half-centuries have been completed since the time of grace', and then launches into a protracted reflection on the peculiarities of the previous half-century (in fact, forty years, as he later stipulates): for, as he observes, 'in none of these half-centuries, namely the first twenty-four, have so many singular and unusual novelties occurred, as in this last one, namely the twenty-fifth, which has now elapsed'.[27] This was a view shared by 'some, indeed many, writers and careful investigators of histories'.[28] And, what is more, 'greater events than these are now expected'.[29]

Matthew goes on to survey these novelties and prodigies in a lengthy section that details: the incursions of the Mongols; the signs that accompanied the preaching of Oliver of Paderborn in Germany; the secession of the Greek church from the corrupt Roman church; the capture and loss of Damietta; the Interdict and civil war in England; numerous eclipses, celestial portents, and earthquakes; papal vacancies; the emergence of the mendicant orders, their initial high-mindedness giving way swiftly to corruption; the comparable (and accelerating) decline of the Benedictines and Augustinians; the destruction of various heresies; and the occupation of the archbishopric of Canterbury by one totally unsuited for it (Matthew is clearly referring to Boniface of Savoy).[30] Then Matthew recapitulates some of the key events of the last year of this period (that

[26] Frederick's death is mentioned in the survey of recent events that concludes the annal for 1250, but this is entered over an erasure: Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 61.
[27] 'Completo igitur hoc anno, iam fluxerant de tempore Gratie uiginti quinque quinquagene annorum, id est, mille ducenti et quinquaginta. Notandum autem est et non leuiter attendendum, quod in nulla illarum quinquagenarum, scilicet uiginti quatuor, sicut in ista ultima quinquagena, scilicet que iam preteriit, uidelicet uicesima quinta, tot mirabilia et insolite nouitates euenerunt, ut in ultima': Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 191; tr. R. Vaughan, *The Chronicles of Matthew Paris: monastic life in the thirteenth century* (Gloucester, 1984), 273.
[28] 'Et sunt quidam et multi historiarum scriptores et diligentes inspectores, qui dicunt, quod nec in omnibus aliis quinquagenis uisa sunt tot prodigia et nouitates admirande, sicut in hac iam terminata': Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 191.
[29] 'Et his tamen maiora cum formidine expectantur': Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 191.
[30] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 191-96.

is, 1250 itself): the Saracens have triumphed and the Christian army has been slaughtered in Egypt, Louis IX being captured in the process, while Christendom has been disturbed by the continuing struggle between the papacy and the Emperor Frederick (called 'the wonder of the world').[31] Matthew then concludes with an observation of the unusual occurence of Easter 'suo loco proprio' (on 27 March) in a jubilee year (that is, the fiftieth year).[32] But he cannot quite bring himself to stop even here, and goes to add yet more to the portentous tableaux that he has so far depicted: the elements 'suffered unusual and improper degradation' in the same year: fire tore apart the skies at Christmas, unnatural thunder and storms disturbed the air, the sea rose above its accustomed bounds, and the earth was shaken by quakes.[33]

So Matthew Paris encapsulates, in these passages as elsewhere, the distinctively anxious outlook that we have identified as being a feature of several chronicles of a previous generation. This was, moreover, a trepidation built into the structure of the chronicle, and Matthew is at pains to signpost the direction in which he is heading. In his entry for 1147, Matthew records an earthquake that struck in February, affecting London in particular and causing much damage.[34] This earthquake caused particular alarm, because it was so unexpected: Matthew refers to the view of 'philosophers' that earthquakes predominate where there are extensive underground cavities, which could not be said of London and its region in general.[35] Lacking a natural explanation, the earthquake was thought to signify more profound changes afflicting the world, and indeed to foreshadow the end of the world. Matthew reports the general state of opinion, rather than his own view; but he notes in addition that the earthquake was the first to strike England since 1133, that it was accompanied by an unprecedented

[31] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 196.
[32] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 197.
[33] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 197-98.
[34] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 603-604.
[35] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 603.

cessation of the tides all around England, and that a period of bad weather followed it for a period of some months.[36] Matthew preserves a measure of ambiguity in this account, but no such equivocation is to be found in his account of a similar earthquake in the year 1250.[37] This time the location was St Albans and the surrounding area. For the same reasons as before, such an event was unexpected and all the more troubling for it. This time, Matthew draws his own conclusions: natural explanations again being deficient, he turns to the Bible, and specifically to Christ's apocalyptic pronouncements in Matthew 24: 'there shall be earthquakes in divers places'.

These observations do not run counter to the flow of the narrative. For instance, Matthew includes *sub anno* 1247 an account of Innocent IV's attempt to crown the landgrave of Thuringia as king of Germany in an attempt to undermine Frederick II. This proved disastrous, as Matthew relates: Frederick's son Conrad found out where the coronation was supposed to take place and attacked the landgrave's forces, resulting in a massacre of the latter and the total failure of the pope's plan.[38] This is stated as taking place 'lest the above-mentioned earthquake should fail in its threatening significance';[39] in other words, Matthew seems to locate the continuing strife between pope and emperor, and the particular slaughter of this event, in the eschatological context that he had earlier advanced. And although the explicit gospel parallel is not drawn here, as earlier, it is entirely plausible that Matthew had the pronouncements of Matthew 24 in mind.

Ralph Niger may have changed his mind on the eschatological significance of contemporary events; the existence of his second world chronicle gives us some basis for thinking this, though we cannot know for sure. Matthew Paris presents a similar

[36] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 603-604.
[37] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 187.
[38] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 610-12.
[39] '...ne terremotus supramemoratus minaci careret significatione': Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, iv, 610.

problem. He did of course take up his pen once more, and continued his narrative to 1259, in which year he probably died; certainly he did not bring his chronicle to the resounding conclusion that he managed in 1250.[40] Does this resumption of his chronicle indicate a retraction of the eschatological warning that he seemed to offer in that year? It is not entirely clear. Matthew continues to be preoccupied with the same themes, especially the damage caused by the inadequate incumbents of the English and papal thrones; his perception of Henry III was of course sharpened by the growing strife between the king and his barons over the course of that decade. His attention to 'novelties' and their significance is just as obvious: consider his account of the storms of May 1251, which are described in as anxious a tone as Matthew had used so far.[41] We perhaps err if we suppose that Matthew stopped writing in 1250 with a precisely-defined end in mind; as others have pointed out, the year 1250, for all its ominous significance, had passed by the time Matthew had finished writing it up.[42] But Matthew need not have thought in such rigid terms. A recurrent theme of this study has been the notion that medieval conceptions of the End Times were more often than not thought of as a process rather than a straightforward conclusion. The apocalyptic scenario was a complex one that incorporated much more than a simple date for the end of the world; this was true for Joachim as for more orthodox interpreters. The corollary of this is that medieval chroniclers' conception of living through such times need not be overlooked for lack of any precise attempt to understand this in terms of simple chronology, as we have hopefully demonstrated in the case of the chroniclers here under discussion. We should see Matthew Paris in the same light. And we should also see in Matthew Paris the continuing influence of an eschatological understanding of history that was given its most distinctive expression by a handful of late twelfth-century English chroniclers.

[40] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 748.
[41] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, v, 263-65.
[42] E.g. Justice, 'Prophecy and the Explanation of Social Disorder', 157.

Abbreviations

CCCM	Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
EHR	*English Historical Review*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*
NMT	Nelson's Medieval Texts
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Online edition (Oxford, 2004)
OMT	Oxford Medieval Texts
PL	Patrologia Latina
RS	Rolls Series
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*

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